



UNPLEASANT REFERENCE

Kangana terms Ranbir Kapoor, who's set to portray Lord Rama in upcoming film Ramayana, as 'a skinny white rat'

LEISURE P2



UKRAINE IN TROUBLE

Ukraine says it has put the last operating reactor at Europe's largest nuclear power plant into a "cold shutdown"

INTERNATIONAL P10



EVES REACH FINAL

India edge past Japan to enter Women's Junior Asia Cup hockey final

SPORTS P12

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SHORT TAKES

Praful, Supriya NCP working presidents

New Delhi: Marking a generational shift in Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) and virtually sidelining Ajit Pawar, who is known to display rebellious streaks, NCP chief Sharad Pawar Saturday declared Praful Patel and Supriya Sule working presidents of the party. Pawar made the announcement at a function to celebrate the 24th anniversary of the foundation of the Nationalist Congress Party here. "Praful Patel will shoulder the responsibility of the Working President of the Nationalist Congress Party. Supriya Sule will also be the Working President of the party," Pawar said in the presence of senior leaders including Ajit Pawar, Chihagan Bhujbal, Sunil Tatkare, Fouzia Khan, among others. P7

Boris Johnson quits as UK lawmaker

London: Former British Prime Minister Boris Johnson has abruptly resigned as a lawmaker, claiming he was the "victim of a witch-hunt", after being told by a parliamentary committee that he will be sanctioned for misleading Parliament over lockdown-breaking parties at Downing Street during his premiership. Johnson, 58, one of the main architects of Brexit, compared the Privileges Committee probe to a "kangaroo court" as he quit. Johnson's decision to resign as a Member of Parliament came Friday as he received a confidential letter from the MP-led Privileges Committee over the crucial matter. P10



COMBAT PROWESS: Indian Navy carried out a demonstration in Arabian Sea, Saturday, involving aircraft carriers INS Vikramaditya & indigenously-built INS Vikrant, and over 35 fighter planes. P11 PHOTO

300 pre-activated SIM cards seized; 8 nabbed



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 10: The cyber police in Cuttack Saturday seized 300 pre-activated SIM cards and arrested eight persons of a well-oiled racket operating in the state. As many as 799 SIM cards, including 300 pre-activated ones, have been seized from the eight of whom seven are employees of a private telecom company, the police said. Briefing the media, Cuttack deputy commissioner of police (DCP) Pinak Mishra said that while investigating a cyber fraud case, it was found that the SIM used in the fraud was activated in Odisha, and that the cybercriminals from Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh were involved in the fraud. He, however, said that the cybercriminals are yet to be traced, as several technical aspects are pending. During the investigation,

a pre-activated SIM racket was found involved in the crime. The gang sold the SIM cards to the scamsters, Mishra added. The accused had come in contact with a fraudster from outside the state and learnt the tricks to activate SIM cards by becoming vendors and misusing the identity of the consumers, he said. The accused hail from Puri district, and the police have seized 16 mobile phones and ₹2,600 from their possession, the Cuttack DCP said. He added that the gang was in contact with interstate fraudsters and used to hand over the pre-activated SIM cards to them. Recently the Special Task Force of Odisha Police had arrested four cybercriminals for sharing OTPs of pre-activated SIMs to some criminals suspected to be Pakistani agents.

'Debt burden tripled since 2014'

Congress claims that India's debt burden has gone past ₹155 lakh crore from ₹55 lakh crore in 2014 due to 'economic mismanagement' of Narendra Modi govt

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 10: Launching a scathing attack on the Centre, the Congress Saturday alleged that India's debt has nearly tripled to ₹155 lakh crore in nine years under Prime Minister Narendra Modi and economic disparity has widened while it demanded a white paper on the state of the economy. Congress spokesperson Supriya Shrinete alleged the Modi government's "economic mismanagement" is responsible for the present state of the economy and claimed that ₹100 lakh crore of debt has been added since the present dispensation assumed charge in 2014. "As Chief Minister of Gujarat, Modi used to blame those on the other side of the political spec-

trum as inefficient, incompetent and corrupt - adjectives that today suit him and his government more than anyone else. After ruining India's economic growth story, creating huge unemployment, raging inflation, Modi has done the unthinkable, which is an addition of over ₹100 lakh crore to India's debt, which is at an alarming level," she said at a press conference. The Congress leader also said India's debt in 2014 was at ₹55 lakh crore, which has now gone past ₹155 lakh crore. She claimed that India's debt under 14 Prime Ministers in 67 years was ₹55 lakh crore while Modi alone has increased it by over ₹100 lakh crore. "Economic management is not the same thing as headline management. It cannot be done through teleprompters and definitely not through WhatsApp forwards. We demand a white paper on the Indian economy because the fault lines are only getting deeper," she said. Shrinete also claimed that the bottom 50 per cent of Indians who own three per cent of the country's wealth paid 64 per cent of the GST collected. The richest 10 per cent, on the other hand, own 80

CONG CHARGES

- Bottom 50%, who own 3% of country's wealth, paid 64% of GST collected
- The richest 10%, who own 80% of country's wealth, pay only 3% of GST collected
- 23 crore people have been pushed below poverty line
- 83% Indians have seen their incomes dip
- Over 11,000 MSMEs have shut down in a single year

per cent of the country's wealth but pay only three per cent of the GST collected. India has the costliest LPG cylinder, the third costliest petrol and the eighth costliest diesel in the world, Shrinete claimed. The Congress leader said a debt of ₹155 lakh crore means every Indian is reeling under a burden of ₹1.20 lakh. "The Modi government in its tenure has bought debt of ₹4 lakh rupees every second," she claimed. She also added that the government has to pay an annual interest

of ₹11 lakh crore on this debt. India's debt-to-GDP ratio has risen to 84 per cent, the Congress spokesperson claimed, and said it is alarming when compared to other developing and emerging market economies where the average debt-to-GDP ratio is at 64.5 per cent. "India is bearing an annual cost of ₹11 lakh crore to service this mounting debt. Questions are now being raised on India's debt servicing capacity. According to the CAG report, government debt was 52.5 per cent of GDP in 2019-20 and the debt sustainability had turned negative that year. With debt at 84 per cent of the GDP, debt sustainability is suspect," she asserted. "But, the big question is who are the beneficiaries of this rising debt because quite clearly it is not the poor, not the middle class and not the MSMEs. Twenty-three crore people have been pushed below the poverty line, 83 per cent Indians have seen their incomes dip, over 11,000 MSMEs have shut down in a single year but the number of billionaires in India have gone up from 102 in 2020 to 166 over two years.

Will participate in Asiad if issues resolved: Sakshi

AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 10: Amid ongoing talks to resolve wrestlers' issues, grappler Sakshi Malik Saturday said they will not participate in Asian Games unless the matter is completely resolved. Talking to reporters in Sonapat, Malik said that no one understands what the wrestlers are going through mentally each passing day. The 30-year old reached Sonapat to attend the Mahapanchayat to decide on the future course of action for wrestlers, who have been demanding the resignation of outgoing Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) president Brij Bhushan Singh over allegations of sexual harassment. "We will participate in Asian Games only when all these issues will be resolved. You can't understand how mentally exhausting this is and what we are going through every day," Sakshi said. Sakshi's comments came at a time when trials for the Asiad are scheduled to take place in the on-

Grappler Sakshi Malik's comments came at a time when trials for the Asiad are scheduled to take place this month

going month. All the wrestlers, including those involved in the protest, need to compete at trials and earn their place in the India team for the Asian Games, which will be held in Hangzhou, China from September 23 to October 8, 2023. Bajrang Punia, one of the key members of the protest, while speaking during the panchayat, insisted that no politics is involved in their stir against the WFI chief. Speaking to media, he said, "We had called this Panchayat to inform everyone the discussion we had. If a strong action is not taken by June 15, we will resume our protest." He said they have not yet decided on the venue of the protest and it could be either 'Jantar Mantar or Ram Leela Maidan'. The police has already made it clear that the wrestlers will not be allowed back to Jantar Mantar. Vinesh Phogat was not part of the discussion when Thakur had invited wrestlers for an interaction and she was absent even Saturday.

Man doubts wife's fidelity, kills son

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, June 10: In a shocking incident, a man killed his 4-year-old son and hanged his body suspecting fidelity of his wife after the latter left for her aunt's house here, Saturday. The accused was identified as Raju Lakra, 20, a resident of Sitalpada slum under Uditnagar police limits in Steel City. According to sources, fed up with repeated quarrel with her husband, Gunu Lakra had gone to her aunt's house leaving her husband Raju Lakra and their 4-year-old son Aryan Lakra two days ago. Raju allegedly killed his child out of fury and hanged the body with a stole inside his house Saturday morning. However, Gunu claimed that Raju killed her son in her absence at home. "My husband killed my son. I don't know the reason why he did so. We had fought over some issues the day before. I went to my aunt's house, and he did not allow me to take my son with me. Today, he killed my son," alleged Gunu. A case has been registered at Uditnagar police station following the complaint lodged by Gunu Lakra.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



I believe in upholding law & order. I take revenge on my enemies either when they're in custody or in a courtroom

4 kids found alive 40 days after Colombia plane crash

The children, who had gone missing after a plane crashed in Amazon forest May 1, have been rescued after an intense search operation by the Colombian authorities

AGENCIES

Bogota (Colombia), June 10: Four indigenous children who disappeared 40 days ago after surviving a small plane crash in the Amazon jungle were found alive Friday, Colombian authorities announced, ending an intense search that gripped the nation. The children were alone when searchers found them and are now receiving medical attention, President Gustavo Petro told reporters upon his return to Bogota from Cuba, where he signed a cease-fire agreement with

representatives of the National Liberation Army rebel group. The president said the youngsters are an "example of survival" and predicted their saga "will remain in history." No details were immediately released on how the youngsters managed to survive on their own for so many days. The crash happened in the early hours of May 1, when the Cessna single-engine propeller plane with six passengers and a pilot declared an emergency due to an engine failure. The small aircraft fell off radar a short time later and a frantic search for survivors began. Two weeks after the crash, May 16, a search team found the plane in a thick patch of the rainforest and recovered the bodies of the three adults on board, but the small children were nowhere to be found. Sensing that they could be alive, Colombia's army stepped up the hunt for the children and flew 150



Colombia's army stepped up the hunt for the children and flew 150 soldiers with dogs into the area to track the group of four siblings, aged 13, 9, 4 and 11 months

soldiers with dogs into the area to track the group of four siblings, aged 13, 9, 4 and 11 months. Friday, the military tweeted pictures showing a group of soldiers and volunteers posing with the children, who were wrapped in thermal blankets. One of the soldiers held a bottle to the smallest child's lips. The air force later shared a video

on Twitter showing soldiers using a line to load the children onto a helicopter that then flew off in the dark. The tweet said the aircraft was headed to the town of San Jose del Guaviare, but gave no further details. "The union of our efforts made this possible" Colombia's military command wrote on its Twitter account. During the search, in an area where visibility is greatly limited by mist and thick foliage, soldiers on helicopters dropped boxes of food into the jungle, hoping that it would help sustain the children. Planes flying over the jungle fired flares to help search crews on the ground at night, and rescuers used megaphones that blasted a message recorded by the siblings' grandmother, telling them to stay in one place. The group of four children had been travelling with their mother from the Amazonian village of Araracuara to San Jose del

Guaviare, a small city on the edge of the Amazon rainforest. They are members of the Huitoto people, and officials said the oldest children in the group had some knowledge of how to survive in the rainforest. Friday, after confirming the children had been rescued, the president said that for a while he had believed the children were rescued by one of the nomadic tribes that still roam the remote swath of the jungle where the plane fell and have little contact with authorities. But Petro added that the children were first found by one of the rescue dogs that soldiers took into the jungle. As the search progressed, soldiers found small clues in the jungle that led them to believe the children were still living, including a pair of footprints, a baby bottle, diapers and pieces of fruit that looked like it had been bitten by humans.

WEATHER		BHUB	CTK
MAX	38.2°C	38.2°C	
MIN	29.2°C	29.5°C	
Humidity	51%	50%	
Rainfall	Nil	Nil	

Forecast: Clear sky mainly

leisure



AMY BLASTS CELEBS FOR LYING ABOUT THEIR WEIGHT LOSS

American actress Amy Schumer has called out a bunch of celebrities, claiming they are lying about their weight loss. She blasted the stars for saying they lost weight by simply eating 'smaller portions' and 'lying' about not using the Ozempic drug for their weight loss.

I'VE ALWAYS BEEN AN UNDERDOG: EVA

Hollywood actress Eva Longoria has revealed that she can really relate to her new biopic, *Flamin' Hot*. She said: "I've always been an underdog and this story is about when people underestimate you - not only as a person, but as a community."



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
Something unexpected may happen. Though you may not comprehend all that takes place, Ganesh says it is fine. Stay away from stressful activity, as you may need to go out in the evening. Put on the glitter and gloss, as some good music and dance are expected to come your way.

TAURUS
Today, you are likely to face it difficult to impress or influence others. If you have set your mind on acquiring something, you may face initial setbacks but eventually you will succeed in getting hold of it. Everything you engage in will work out fine. Be friendly and outgoing to all, more so during the latter half of the day.

GEMINI
Religious pursuits will take up a large chunk of your time today. You will incur expenses on religious rituals and charity work. You will find yourself going to a place of worship in search of peace and solitude, says Ganesh.

CANCER
Ganesh says you will win over people with your oratory. So it will speed up your work. In the afternoon, you will get news of monetary gain in the office. Be on the guard, minor ailments may bother you, warns Ganesh.

LEO
Ganesh foresees today as a day full of duplicities, as you foster amazing feelings and astonishing fears. It's like you don't know whether to be happy or scared. At work, you may do well to anticipate a sudden turn of events as hectic business activities take their toll on you.

VIRGO
You will be smitten by the love bug today. And Ganesh says make the most of it. In matters regarding your career, you will soon sight your destination, and make renewed efforts to reach it as fast as you possibly can. A candle-light dinner will put you in high spirits.

LIBRA
Ganesh says that you will find happiness and enhanced vigor today. You will make plans to go with your friends or family members for a short trip or excursion. You will be confused about something in the day which will drive you to seek answers in religious or philosophical discourses.

SCORPIO
You may come across unexpected monetary gains today, says Ganesh. You are likely to be tagged as a 'reliable' employee of the company and you may be entitled for many other benefits that your company has to offer. This may increase your energy and enthusiasm towards work.

SAGITTARIUS
Time and tide waits for none, they say. To make the most of the present times, you need to pull up your socks. You will soon take up the challenging task of getting organised in your ways and focusing on the goals of life. At work, you leave no stone unturned to achieve your goals, but may fail to fulfil your superiors' expectations.

CAPRICORN
All the factors responsible for a successful life, be it positive attitude, perseverance, time management or strong and supportive well-wishers, are favouring you. But, do not take it very easy, advises Ganesh. You understand the importance and seriousness of the situations, and try to take your colleagues along with you to accomplish your goals. Spending more time with family will make you realise that how important you are for your loved ones.

AQUARIUS
You need a break! Plan a trip, go for a movie, join a weekend meditation retreat. You may be burning yourself out. A little holiday will get you going once again. If nothing else, a game of tennis, or a brisk walk in the evening should do the trick.

PISCES
Frustration born out of a sense of stagnation will make you aggressive today. And while you are not likely to be able to meet all your deadlines, you will still make enough of an impact for people to realise the importance of your presence. Worry not, for things will take a turn for the better soon, says Ganesh.

Rakul goes beyond limit for I love you

Mumbai: Actress Rakul Preet Singh has pushed the envelope for her upcoming film *I Love You*. For one of the scenes in the film, the actress was required to stay under water for two minutes 30 seconds and to prepare for that the actress did everything she could.

Talking about the training the actress stated, "The film required me to be in a certain frame of mind to understand emotions deeply. 'On the whole, I did rigorous prep for a month of truly connecting with my emotions. On training for the underwater sequence, there was a scuba instructor who trained me for underwa-



ter holding." The sequence was shot from 2 in the afternoon to 4 a.m. She was required to shoot under water for the day and night sequence both. Wrapping up, she shared, "They were pouring hot water over me after every shot so that my body does not get extremely cold. Of course, you have burning eyes due to the chlorine in the water and that is also a challenge but I really enjoyed this challenge because it helped me push myself a lot."

The movie is all set for its direct-to-digital premiere June 16 on Jio Cinema. The film also stars Akshay Oberoi and Kiran Kumar. AGENCIES

Big B, Rajini to unite after 32 years!

Chennai: Acting legends Rajinikanth and Amitabh Bachchan have shared the frame in hits like *Hum*, *Andhaa Kaanoon* and *Geraftaar*, but in the past three decades, they have hardly ever crossed paths onscreen. If recent buzz is to be believed this powerful duo has signed up for a collaboration!

According to latest reports, Rajinikanth and Amitabh Bachchan will be working to-

gether after 32 years. After wrapping Jailer and Lal Salaam, Rajinikanth will start work on *Jai Bhim* director T J Gnanavel's next venture. Since it is Rajini's 170th venture, the movie has been tentatively titled *Thalaivar 170*. It will feature Amitabh in a pivotal role. This project was reportedly



first offered to *Ponniyin Selvan* actor Chiyaan Vikram. *Thalaivar 170* is scheduled to go on floors later this year. Amitabh is currently shooting for *Section 84*, which is being directed by Ribhu Dasgupta. This film is said to be an intense courtroom drama. Apart from this, Big B also has Nag Ashwin's *Project K* in the pipeline co-starring Deepika Padukone and Prabhas. AGENCIES

JESSICA ALBA CALLS PRIYANKA 'STUNNING'

Mumbai: American actress Jessica Alba was in awe of actress Priyanka Chopra Jonas' pictures from Rome and called her 'stunning'.

Priyanka was attending the opening of the Bulgari Hotel in Rome. The actress took to Instagram, where she dropped pictures from the event.

In the photos, the actress was seen wearing an all-white thigh-high slit gown with a plunging neckline and white heels. She tied her hair into two pigtailed and completed her look with a necklace. Along with the pictures,

Priyanka wrote: "Congratulations to my @bulgari family on the inauguration of @bulgarihotels in Rome #BulgariHotelRoma #BulgariHotels."

Taking to the comment section, Jessica Alba wrote: "Stunning."

On the work front, Priyanka was seen in *Love Again* and spy series *Citadel*. The actress will next be seen in *Jee Le Zara* by Farhan Akhtar. IANS



Mumbai: Kangana Ranaut responded to multiple reports suggesting that Alia Bhatt and Ranbir Kapoor are set to portray Goddess Sita and Lord Ram, respectively, in the highly anticipated film *Ramayana*, directed by Nitesh Tiwari. According to these reports, actor Yash is also being considered for the role of Raavan. Sharing her thoughts on social media, Kangana penned a lengthy note expressing her criticism of the casting choices for the film.

Kangana took to Instagram and wrote, "Recently I am hearing news about another coming up Bolly *Ramayana*... Where a skinny white rat (so-called actor) who desperately needs some sun tan and conscience he is infamous for doing nasty un-

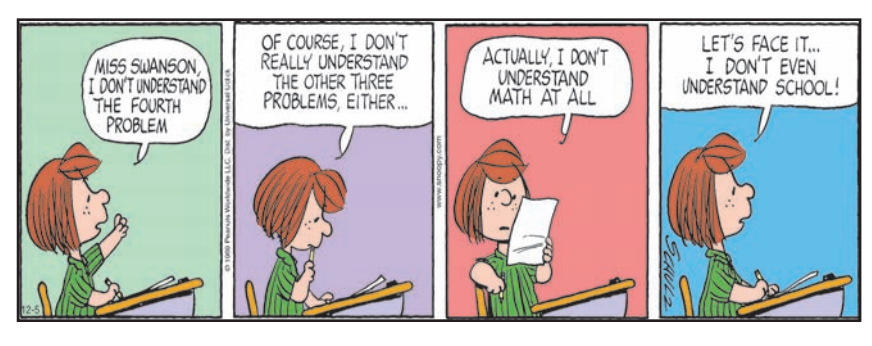
der-hand PR about almost everyone in the industry... known for womanising and drug addiction after desperately trying to prove himself Lord Shiva in a trilogy (which no one watched or wanted to make more parts of) has now grown fancy to be Lord Rama..."

She further added, "Whereas a young southern superstar who is known to be self-made, a devoted family man a traditionalist also according to Valmiki ji description he looks more like Lord Rama in his complexion, demeanour and facial features... is offered to play Ravana... What kind of Kalyuga is this?? No pale-looking druggie soy boy should play Lord Rama Jai Shri Ram." IANS

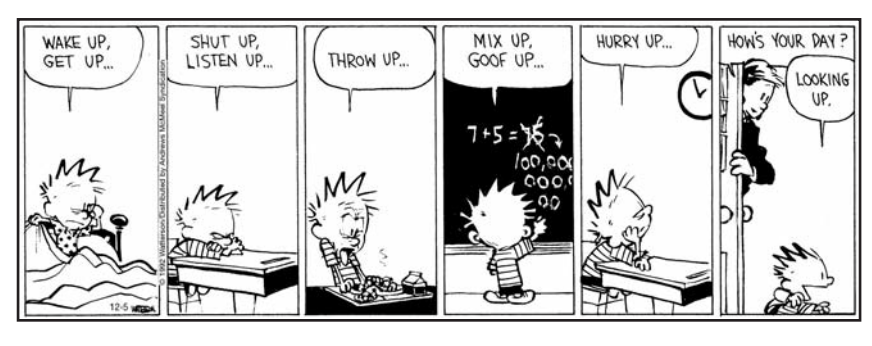


Kangana refers to Ranbir as 'a skinny white rat'

PEANUTS



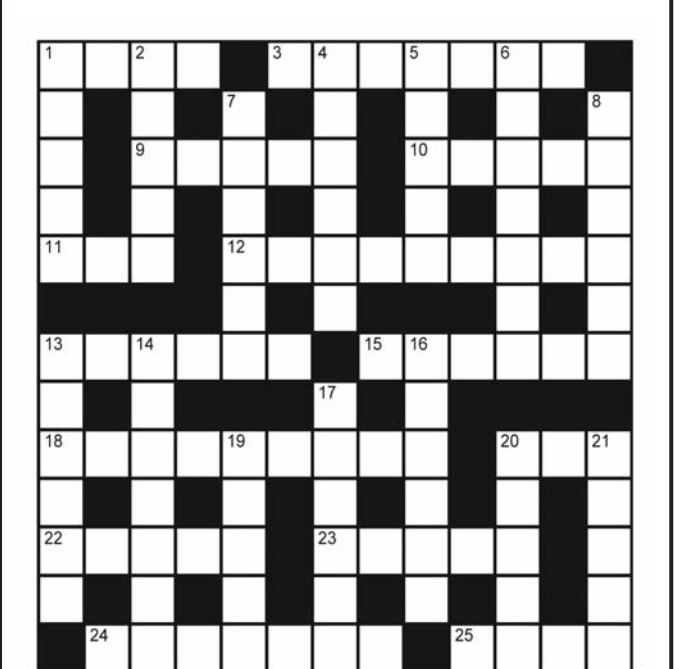
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



FUN post CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 Bakery buy
 - 3 Actor's wish
 - 9 Colorful parrot
 - 10 Words to a lazy bloke (3,2)
 - 11 Appetite
 - 12 Floor covering
 - 13 Young swan
 - 15 Packing a wallop
 - 18 Not quite there yet
 - 20 Lose resilience
 - 22 Glove material
 - 23 Noted wine valley
 - 24 Let in
 - 25 Inspid
 - 6 Silhouette
 - 7 Winter hanger
 - 8 Water source
 - 13 Shade of red
 - 14 Sailing ship of yore
 - 16 Acquire
 - 17 Narrative song
 - 19 Angler's basket
 - 20 Primitive weapon
 - 21 Wild pumpkin, e.g.
- Down**
- 1 Toothsome
 - 2 Like some numerals
 - 4 Foil
 - 5 Scoundrel

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.

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

SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

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

SUDOKU

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

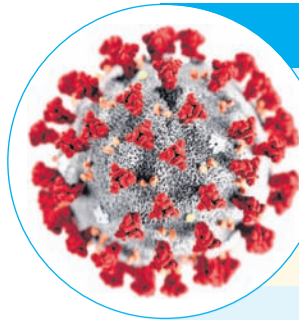
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown



CAR TURNS TURTLE

BARANG: At least four persons were injured, one of them critically, after the car in which they were travelling turned turtle on Sandhapur-Naraj Road under Godi Sahi outpost limits here, Saturday. Locals rescued the injured and rushed them to a nearby healthcare facility. "One of the car occupants has suffered critical injuries," Godi Sahi outpost in-charge Bichitrnanda Pradhan said.

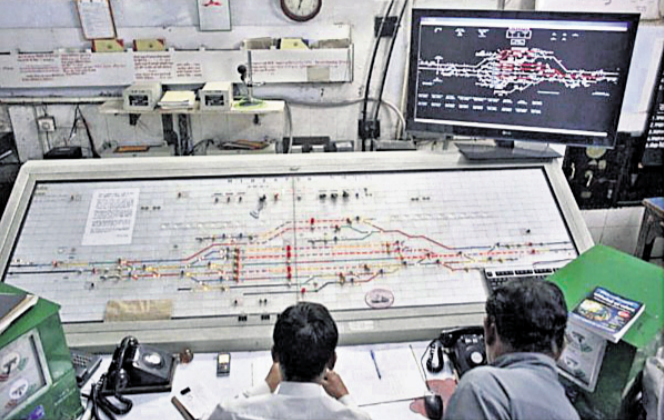


COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	69,00,68,151	66,24,96,191	68,89,432
India	4,49,92,293	4,44,57,720	5,31,886
Odisha	13,36,304	13,26,915	9,204

Rlys for double-locking of all signalling assets

The missive to the railway zones is the latest in a series of directions issued since the June 2 accident involving three trains in Balasore which killed 288 people



AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 10: The Railway Board Saturday ordered a double-locking arrangement for all relay rooms with train controlling mechanisms, relay huts housing signalling and telecommunication equipment of level-crossings, and point and track circuit signals, officials said.

The missive to the railway zones is the latest in a series of directions issued since the June 2 accident involving three trains in Balasore which killed 288 people.

The order indicates that the 'access to the relay room' was key to the 'signalling interference' that caused the Coromandel Express to take the loop line at Balasore and crash into a stationary goods train.

With enough evidence to show that some kind of tampering was done with the interlocking system,

has been properly closed and locked, by the maintenance staff who is returning the key," the order stated.

Officials said one of the aspects that emerged from the preliminary probe is some work was going on near the location of the accident.

A disconnection memo (to shut down interlocking system and start work) and a reconnection memo (reconnection of the system indicating the end of work) was received by the station manager, they said.

However, in reality, the technician bypassed the system because the work was not complete and he rigged the location box to get a 'green signal' for the Coromandel Express, they said.

The present order, thus, laid down proper disconnection-reconnection protocols which are to be followed for signal maintenance, repairs, alteration works.

It said that after completion of any work, once the reconnection is accepted by the SM, for the first train, the reception signal (signals control the reception of trains into a station) should not be taken off and it shall be brought to a stop at the first stop signal.

Similarly, the departure signal (the signal provided to dispatch the train from the station) for run-through trains should be taken off only after the first train has occupied berthing portion (when berths are all lined up at their set locations).

This is the third such orders on signalling issued by the Railway Board since the accident which is now being probed by the CBI.

the job now is to make it 'tamper-proof', senior officials said.

"This double-locking will ensure that no one can access these locations in isolation," said an officer.

The order said that level crossing gate (goomy/cabin), housing signalling and telecommunication equipment in station yard, should be treated as a relay hut and till double-locking arrangement is provided, the key of the present single lock would be with the Station Master (SM).

"The relevant entries regarding issue and deposit of the key should be maintained by SM in the same manner as being done for station relay room. The proforma for handing over/taking back of the key by the ASM (assistant station manager) on duty shall have a column specifying that the location for which key had been taken by maintenance staff



MAKING A POINT: Puri SP KV Singh holds discussions with Rapid Action Force (RAF) personnel on Grand Road before a mock drill ahead of Rath Yatra in the Pilgrim City, Saturday

MOVIE PRODUCER SANJAY BOOKED

Bhubaneswar: The Maharashtra Police has registered a case against Odia movie producer Sanjay Nayak following a written complaint by actress Prakruti Mishra alleging defamation, an official said Saturday. On the basis of Prakruti's complaint, the Dadabhai Naoroji police in Andheri West have registered a non-cognizable case (871/23) against Nayak under Sections 500, 504 and 506 of the IPC. The controversy began after Prakruti, in a television interview, accused Nayak of sexually exploiting newcomers on the pretext of providing role in movies. Two actresses too came forward in support of the charges levelled by Prakruti. Meanwhile, the filmmaker in a press conference rubbished the allegations levelled against him.

Bhimkund to be developed as world-class tourist spot

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 10: If things go well, Bhimkund in Patna block of Keonjhar will be developed as a world-class tourist spot, with 5T Secretary VK Pandian, who is on a two-day visit to the mineral-rich district, directing the authorities to prepare a Detailed Project Report (DPR) for the purpose, Saturday.

As per the direction of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, the 5T Secretary is on a visit to Keonjhar to assess various developmental initiatives.

During his interaction with the locals, Pandian listened to their grievances and assured them that their requests regarding various temples and mosques would be placed before the Chief Minister for consideration.

He announced that the 'Drink from Tap' project will be commissioned in Champua NAC in another one month. He said that all the major ULBs have been covered under 'Drink from Tap' mission at a cost of ₹175 crore.

The 5T Secretary assured that the 'Rural Mega Piped Water Supply' project would be completed within the stipulated timeline this year.

Pandian instructed the officials to expedite any pending work. Subsequently, he addressed a local



gathering at Nehru Stadium, where he acknowledged the demand for floodlights and committed to fulfilling the requirement within a week.

The 5T Secretary visited the Barbil Community Health Centre and inspected the ongoing work at the Nutrition Rehabilitation Centre and Dialysis Centre.

Expressing satisfaction, he noted that the facility was effectively catering to the needs of mothers and patients, even from neighbouring state Jharkhand.

He instructed the Collector to take initiative to expand the benefits to the larger public. He also inspected the Barbil Ring Road project which is being constructed at a cost of ₹1,440 crore and directed the authorities to complete the

project in time.

Later, 5T Secretary appreciated the commendable efforts undertaken by the Adivasi Vikash Samiti to provide facilities for tribal students in Jodha block. He announced that the state government would bear the academic costs for the 900 students of Adivasi Vikash Samiti.

The 5T Secretary reviewed the ongoing projects at the Joda fly-over site, where officials from OBCC confirmed that the work was progressing as scheduled and would be completed by December 2023.

He also announced that funds for the improvement of all the government and aided higher secondary schools and Plus III colleges of the district have been sanctioned by the government.

Seized drugs worth ₹600cr destroyed in a yr

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 10: Odisha Police has destroyed drugs, including brown sugar, worth over ₹600 crore in the last one year, an official said, Saturday.

A record 220 tonne of ganja worth ₹550 crore seized in 1,434 cases and 78 kg of brown sugar worth ₹78 crore recovered in 129 cases have been destroyed in the last one year following strict rules and regulations, said Special Task Force (STF) inspector general (IG) Jay Narayan Pankaj.

The STF IG said destroyed contrabands were seized under NDPS cases in which trials are yet to



As many as 1,405 persons have been arrested and 879 quintal of ganja seized in 1,125 cases of illegal transportation of the drug till end of April this year

be completed.

"The officials followed a complex legal and administrative process involving judiciary, police, forensic science laboratory, pollution, excise and revenue wings be-

fore the pre-trial disposal of the contraband items in NDPS cases," Pankaj said.

Notably, the seized contrabands are disposed of as per the sub-section (3) of Section 52A of the

NDPS Act 1985.

For destruction of drugs, a committee is formed in each district/establishment under the chairmanship of superintendent of police (SP). The Excise superintendent, a deputy Collector and a deputy SP are members of the Drug Disposal Committee, it was learnt.

STF sources said as many as 1,405 persons have been arrested and 879 quintal of ganja seized in 1,125 cases of illegal transportation of the drug till end of April this year.

The cops have seized 11 kg of brown sugar and arrested 301 drug peddlers by registering 161 cases in the period.

TRIPLE TRAIN TRAGEDY

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bhubaneswar, June 10: The Odisha government, treated as a model state in disaster management, has once again proved that it can quickly respond and manage any kind of disaster. The quick action and team work with proper co-ordination with line agencies saved many precious lives from the devastating triple train accident that took place on evening of June 2.

Even though 288 persons were killed in the accident, the death figure could have been much higher, if the government had not acted timely, an official said.

Within just minutes of the accident at Bahanaga, a rural area of Balasore district, the entire state administration, starting from Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik to the block and village-level officials, swung into action and saving lives of at least 1,200 people injured in the mishap.

The locals of the area were the first ones to respond to the accident and started a massive rescue operation without waiting for any outside help. This shows how the common people of the state came together to help others, people who are entirely strangers to them.

All of this reflects the success of Odisha government's community participation initiatives in disaster management.

Friday evening, Balasore Collector Dattatraya Bhausaheb Shinde got a call from his field official about the accident of a passenger train. He immediately informed the control room and asked ODRAF and fire service teams sta-

Quick response helps save 1,200 lives



tioned in the district to quickly move to the spot.

The Collector, who himself was on way to the accident spot, quickly informed Chief Secretary Pradeep Kumar Jena about the mishap at around 7.10 pm.

When the news flashed in different media channels, no one had a clue that such a massive accident could happen in their vicinity.

Sensing the gravity and scale of the tragedy, its consequences, Jena along with development commissioner Anu Garg rushed to the state emergency control room and prepared an action plan to tackle the disaster.

Nine senior officers of the state government were sent to Balasore within 45 minutes - among them

were Special Relief Commissioner (SRC) Satyabrata Sahu, Industries Secretary Hemant Sharma, Fire Services DG Sudhanshu Sarangi, Transport Commissioner Amitabh Thakur, and IAS officers Balwant Singh, Aravind Agarwal, IG Himanshu Lal and Government Railway Police DG.

When the larger picture came to fore, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik instructed Revenue Minister Pramila Mallik to move to the accident spot, who monitored the entire rescue operation throughout the night.

Chief Secretary Pradeep Kumar Jena along with three of his colleagues started closely monitoring the situation from state headquarters with coordination with all line departments and agencies.

By 12 at night, almost all injured persons, around 1,200, had been rescued by local people, ODRAF teams and Fire Service officials. Then, NDRF teams also reached there and recovered the dead bodies

SATYABRATA SAHU | SPECIAL RELIEF COMMISSIONER

A proper supply chain and management structure was established immediately in the night. The Control Room at the SRC office started functioning with full capacity. The state team ensured free flow of all required resources to the spot.

All required equipment like ambulances, flood light, gas cutters, cranes, DG sets, doctors, medicines, stretchers, etc, were made available quickly at the accident spot.

Not only the district administration of Balasore and Bhadrak engaged in the operation, all other neighbouring districts including Mayurbhanj, Jajpur, Cuttack and Khurda came in rescue of the victims.

Sharing details of the massive operation before the media, SRC Sahu said he got information about the accident around 7.55 pm. As he was out of town, he reached the accident site at 11.30 pm. Other senior officers also rushed to the spot by that time.

"By 12 at night, almost all injured persons, around 1,200, had been rescued by local people, ODRAF teams and Fire Service officials. Then, NDRF teams also

reached there and recovered the dead bodies," Sahu said.

Within golden hours, the injured persons have been rescued and admitted in hospitals, he said, adding, the most challenging part was to carry out the rescue in the night. Immediately, flood lights were arranged and the entire area was lit, Sahu said, adding, "Due to a complete team effort, we were able to save 1,200 precious lives."

Industries secretary Hemant Sharma, who was also a part of the team, shared, "This was an unfortunate incident. But the death toll could have been much much higher, if the government of Odisha would not have intervened immediately with efficiency."

As the ODRAF and Fire Service teams prepared with all required equipment reached the accident spot on time, the lives of all these people has been saved, he said.

"Within a short period of time, we made all advanced arrangements like mobilisation of adequate doctors, ambulances, medicines and other essential items. That's why the local hospitals were able to handle such a huge number of injured persons at one time," Sharma added.

The state government did not stop after the rescue operation and admitted the injured in the hospitals, and is still in a mission mode to handover the dead bodies to their family members and send them home safely free of cost.

The state government is bearing the transportation cost of bodies of the triple train accident victims, Chief Secretary Pradeep Kumar Jena said.

Docs: Balasore mishap survivors show PTSD

PNN & AGENCIES

Cuttack, June 10: Even as many Balasore triple train accident survivors are recovering from physical injuries, around 40 of the 105 patients admitted in SCB Medical College and Hospital (SCBMCH) here are showing tendency of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), doctors said Saturday.

Considering the mental health condition of the survivors, the hospital has started counselling of all patients, SCB Clinical Psychology associate professor Jashobanta Mahapatra said.

Mahapatra said it was natural for such an accident to have severe impact on the minds of the survivors. "Many were found to be severely stressed, fearful, panicked at times and silent. We are counselling them and talking to them along with their family members," he said. Mahapatra said the hospital has set up four teams to counsel the survivors.

"Each team comprises a psychiatrist, a psychologist, a social worker and one or two members of the patient's family," he said.

The survivors often wake up from their sleep after dreaming about the accident, a nurse in the surgery department said, adding that the attendants keep constant vigil on all patients.

A 23-year-old man, whose both hands and legs have been broken in the accident, fails to sleep during the day or at night.

"He fears to close his eyes as scenes of the accident flash before

CRASH AFTERMATH

■ SCBMCH has set up four teams to counsel the survivors

■ Each team comprises a psychiatrist, a psychologist, a social worker and one or two members of the patient's family

■ Of the 105 patients being treated at SCBMCH, three have completely lost their legs, while others have broken their legs and limbs and some have sustained injury on their spinal cord

him," a doctor said, adding that the man was rescued from under a seat where he was for three hours.

Another young man, who lost his close friend, often wakes up from sleep calling out his friend's name, another doctor said, adding that some patients are just staring at the wall. Of the 105 patients being treated at the hospital, three have completely lost their legs, while others have broken their legs and limbs and some have sustained injury on their spinal cord.

"These patients cry on seeing their condition while some other laugh hysterically," another doctor said, adding that these symptoms can be cured with time.

Claiming that all the patients are stable, Mahapatra said he is optimistic that each survivor will recover from the mental stress, while adding that some other sensitive patients may require some more time than others.

Heatwave to continue till June 15

STATE CAPITAL RECORDED A HUMIDITY LEVEL OF 95% WITH THE MERCURY RISING TO 38.2 DEGREES C



PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, June 10: Heatwave conditions scorched Odisha Saturday with Jharsuguda recording the highest temperature of 44.8 degrees Celsius, officials said.

At least seven places in the western part of the state recorded temperatures of more than 44 degrees Celsius, they said.

According to a bulletin of India Meteorological Department (IMD), 20 places of Odisha recorded a maximum temperature of 40 degrees Celsius or above.

Amid the heat, the accompanying humidity added to the discomfort of the people. The Capital city recorded a humidity level of 95 per cent with the mercury rising to 38.2 degrees C.

Sambalpur and Boudh recorded

Bargarh, Sambalpur, Sundargarh, Jharsuguda, Sonepur, Bolangir, Boudh, Keonjhar and Mayurbhanj.

According to a bulletin issued by the weather office, there will be no large change in maximum temperature during the next four days.

"Maximum temperature is likely to be above normal by 3-5 degrees Celsius at a few places over the districts of Odisha during the next four days. Consequently, hot and discomfort weather is likely during the next four days," the bulletin read.

People are advised to take precautionary measures (avoid heat exposure, keep cool, and avoid dehydration) while going outside during day time between 11am to 3pm, the weather office said in its advisory.

Director General of IMD Mrutyunjay Mohapatra told the media that sweltering heat and high humidity usually prevail before the arrival of monsoon.

"The southwest monsoon normally arrives in Odisha around June 12 and this has been delayed as it has hit the Indian mainland with onset over Kerala seven days behind schedule. There is a forecast for rain in Odisha from June 15. But no prediction has been made so far on the onset of monsoon over Odisha. It will be done in the next couple of days," he said.

44.6 degrees Celsius, Sonepur was at 44.5 degrees Celsius, Bargarh was at 44.4 degrees Celsius, Balangir was at 44.3 degrees Celsius, Hirakud recorded 44.2 degrees Celsius and Sundargarh was at 44.1 degrees Celsius.

Similarly, western Odisha towns Bhawanipatna and Titlagarh witnessed a maximum temperature of 43.5 degrees Celsius each, whereas it was 43 degrees at Rourkela.

The other places, which recorded a temperature of 40 degrees or more are—Phulbani, Nayagarh, Keonjhar, Talcher, Kendrapara, Malkangiri, Angul, Paralakhemundi and Baripada.

The IMD Saturday issued yellow warnings for heatwaves for several places in Odisha.

The districts for which yellow warning has been issued are—



AFTER THE STORM: One of the trees at Lower PMG uprooted following gusty winds Thursday evening in Bhubaneswar, Saturday

OP PHOTO

Research on failure of Centre, states by NHRC

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 9: The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has initiated a research on the failure of both Centre and state governments, including Odisha, to provide social security to the different strata of the society, especially the down-trodden and deprived population across the country, as per the Code on Social Security, 2020.

Acting on a petition filed by Supreme Court lawyer and rights activist Radhakanta Tripathy, the apex rights body has decided to conduct this research. The Chairperson and all other members of NHRC will take a conclusive decision regarding the petition on the basis of the research outcomes.

The petitioner had alleged that the Central and the state governments have failed to discharge

CODE ON SOCIAL SECURITY



their responsibilities by not implementing the Code on Social Security, 2020. He pointed out that the Code on Social Security, 2020, was notified with an objective to amend and consolidate laws relating to social security with a goal to extend social security to all employees and workers irrespective of them belonging to organised, unorganised or any other sectors.

"For that reason, the definition of 'employee' and 'employer' in sections 2 (26) and 2 (27) of the code were given a wider perspective. The Code contains elaborate provisions for constitution of National Social Security Board as well as State Unorganised Workers Board, defining their roles and powers and also contains provisions for provident

fund scheme, Employees State Insurance Corporation and Insurance fund for payment of benefits and medical treatment to insured persons, provisions for accidents during the course of employment, occupational diseases, permanent disablement benefits, payment of gratuity, maternity benefits and facilities," says Tripathy.

He further alleged that the Code was to come into force from the date of notification by the Central government but the legislation has not been implemented in its proper perspective till now despite notification. Neither Central government nor the state governments have come forward with a scheme for the Code's implementation.

The NHRC asked its Research Division to present its inputs on issues raised by Tripathy in his petition.

FARMERS' ISSUE

Congress to set up taskforce committees

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, June 10: Congress will set up taskforce committees in all the 30 districts of Odisha to find out reasons for various problems faced by the farmers in the state.

Odisha Kisan Congress, the farmers' wing of the Odisha Pradesh Congress Committee (OPCC) Chairperson Amiya Patnaik said agriculture experts, voluntary organisations, intellectuals and experienced employees who have worked in the field of agriculture will be taken in the taskforce which will be set up in all the districts from June 21.

Based on the reports of the taskforce, the OPCC will chalk out strategies for the development of agriculture and farmers in the state.

Patnaik said for the last two and half decades the farmers and the agriculture sector are passing through a difficult period. Instead of solving the problem, it is moving towards a critical situation.

Farmers are not getting the right price for their produce. There are not adequate godowns and cold storage for storage of

'Blood transfusion needed for critical patients'

Bhubaneswar: Ahead of World Blood Donors Day June 14, Apollo Hospitals in Capital city appealed to the people aged 18-65 years to come forward and donate blood to save life. In a message, hospital's COO and Director Medical Services Alok Srivastava said "To cater to the needs of the patients of a tertiary care hospital like Apollo, we require regular blood donors continuously. Many times attendants of patients coming from distant areas search blood donors for their patients who require blood transfusion for survival. The voluntary blood donor comes to them like a divine blessing in their hour crisis. We salute the voluntary donors for their noble gesture and dedication." Best gift of life is to donate blood and bring smile to the patient. We in Apollo Hospitals, Bhubaneswar believe in safe blood transfusion, said Director Lab Services and Sr. Consultant of Haematology department Dipika Mohanty. The Blood Centre of Apollo Hospitals is conveying its sincere thanks to all blood donors. We are encouraging new blood donors and creating an awareness to donate blood. Through our social media campaign we are encouraging people to register and donate blood. Even within the hospital we are informing doctors, staff and patient relatives to come forward to donate blood to save life, said Blood Bank Officer of Apollo Blood Bank Satish Mishra. "At Apollo Hospitals, we prepare 100 per cent blood components from the collected whole blood it means from a single donor we prepare three blood components such as packed red blood cell," said Mishra.



CAPTIVATING SHOW: Young artistes from SRJAN Dance Academy perform Odissi during an event at Rabindra Mandap in Bhubaneswar, Saturday

OP PHOTO

EPFO releases victim's claim amount

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 10: EPFO Bhubaneswar released the PF, pension and insurance benefits to the family of Late Jitendra Kumar Sahoo, an employee of L & P Associates, Bhubaneswar within 7 days of the tragic train accident at Balasore.

EPFO, by utilising its field machinery in Khurda, Balasore and Jajpur district, collected data/information about deceased persons. From the mobile numbers, Aadhaar details, UAN and PF Account Numbers of the deceased were ascertained and claim form was obtained from the family members at Jajpur. EPFO further facilitated the family members in opening of the bank account and thereafter for

TRIPLE TRAIN MISHAP



attestation of claims from the concerned company.

EPFO Regional Commissioner, Bhubaneswar PB Verma informed that the entire data of identified deceased persons of the tragic train accident has been collated. Nine persons, including Late Jitendra Sahoo

are found to be covered under EPFO. In another similar case relating to one Late Mithilesh Sahni, claim forms have been obtained by Bhubaneswar office from Muzaffarpur Bihar and sent to Coimbatore office, where Late Sahni worked in a company.

In a bid to expedite the claim disbursement process to the family, EPFO has permitted to accept certificate of railway authority/district administration as proof of death instead of death certificates.

It was further appealed to family of any deceased member to confirm, if the deceased was working with any EPF covered establishment, to share details with Regional Office Bhubaneswar for release of social security benefits.

Taurine supplements could slow ageing process: Study

Deficiency of taurine, nutrient produced in the body and found in foods such as meat, dairy, fish, could be a driver of ageing, according to a new study published in the journal Science.

Lead researcher, Vijay Yadav, assistant professor of genetics and development at Columbia University Vagelos College of Physicians and Surgeons, US, and his colleagues found that administering taurine externally slowed down ageing in mice and monkeys, in addition to enhancing their health.

After conducting experiments in mice, who received taurine supplements for a year, Yadav and his team including other ageing researchers studying effects of taurine supplementation in several species found taurine to have increased the average lifespan in female mice by 12 per cent, in male mice by 10 per cent.

That meant three to four months more in mice, equivalent to seven or eight human years.

Studying the mice's health parameters, the researchers detected many benefits including suppressed age-associated weight gain in female mice including the menopausal ones, enhanced energy usage, bone mass and muscle strength.

They also found in mice reduced depression-like and anxious behaviours, insulin resistance and, overall, a younger-looking immune system being promoted.

In addition to living longer, healthier lives, they also found multiple benefits at the cellular level, such as reduced "zombie cells", increased stem cells of some tissues promoting quicker healing after injury, reduced DNA damage, among others.

In rhesus monkeys, the team found that taurine prevented weight gain, increased bone density in



the spine and legs, and improved their immune systems' health. In humans, while it unknown yet if taurine supplements will enhance health or longevity, the researchers said that the outcomes of two experiments they conducted suggested taurine's potential.

In the first, Yadav and team stud-

ied approximately 50 health parameters in 12,000 European adults aged 60 and over and their taurine levels. They found higher taurine levels to be associated with better health, with fewer cases of type 2 diabetes and reduced levels of obesity, hypertension and inflammation.

Researchers found that administering taurine externally slowed down ageing in mice and monkeys, in addition to enhancing their health

Lead researcher, Vijay Yadav at Columbia University Vagelos College of Physicians and Surgeons said that taurine should also be considered for clinical trials as a potential anti-ageing drug, along with metformin, rapamycin, and NAD analogs

"The results are consistent with the possibility that taurine deficiency contributes to human ageing," said Yadav, despite the results not establishing causation.

The second investigated taurine's response to health improvement interventions such as exercise.

Taurine levels were found to be significantly increased in a variety

of male athletes and sedentary individuals, levels which were measured before and after both the groups finished a strenuous cycling workout.

"All had increased taurine levels after exercise, which suggests that some of the health benefits of exercise may come from an increase in taurine," said Yadav, adding that only a randomized clinical trial in people will determine if taurine truly had health benefits.

Yadav said that taurine should also be considered for clinical trials as a potential anti-ageing drug, along with metformin, rapamycin, and NAD analogs.

"It has some advantages; Taurine is naturally produced in our bodies, it can be obtained naturally in the diet, it has no known toxic effects, and it can be boosted by exercise," said Yadav.

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Unrestrained poaching in Nayagarh sparks concern



some poachers, which is often proved to be the tip of the iceberg considering the number of animals killed on a daily basis, it is alleged. The scale of poaching is so big that if not checked immediately, it can spell disaster for the entire eco-system, affecting prey-predator balance in the forests, fear the environment lovers.

Though herbivores like sambar, barking deer and deer of Bandhamunda, Sankhajodi, Nelipada, Bhetabara and Bajrakote areas of Mala reserve forest and in forests under Ranpur forest range in the district are mostly killed, wild boars are the favourites of the poachers, according to sources.

A private estimate reveals that five sambar, seven barking deer, one deer and 200 wild boars have been killed through snares, electrocution and guns during the last two months. The smuggling of animal meat from Barbara and Dhuannali jungles in Khurda district as well as from forests under Ranpur forest range has become a regular affair.

Poachers mostly hunt wild boars in the Gochha, Gayalsingh jungles under the Odagaon forest range while the Gajendrapali, Chorakhol, Halangapali, Chemedi, Banpur, Kuradhigasa jungles are used for killing of other herbivorous animals.

When contacted, DFO Khshyama Sarangi said the forest officials are conducting raids, arresting poachers and seizing arms and meat. She also assured that such raids would continue in the coming days.

smuggled from forests of neighbouring Ganjam district and sold regularly at Odagaon, Panchrida, Badaput, and Sarankul areas in the district.

The easy availability of wild boar, deer, and sambar meat in the Godapada area is indicative of the extent of poaching in the district and the presence of a veritable market for the meat of wild animals.

Poaching of deer has become rampant in Baisipali Wildlife Sanctuary in Gania of the district, as well as in Manibhadra, Satpuri, and Khandapara jungles. Even poachers from the Narsinghpur area in neighbouring Cuttack district visit the areas in the district close to them and sell deer meat.

The seizure of wild animal meat from the residence of Nandan Hotel owner in Gania and his arrest and that of his son is another case in point.

Despite this, forest personnel have failed to curb these crimes and are often found oblivious to such incidents. At times, they conduct raids and manage to arrest



SUMMER FRUIT: Fruit vendors arranging jackfruits for sale as Raja festival draws near at Simulia in Balasore district, Saturday

OP PHOTO

POST NEWS NETWORK

Nayagarh, June 10: Wild animals living in the jungles under Nayagarh forest division and in Ranpur forest range under Khurda forest division have of late become easy targets for poachers, a report said.

The poachers target the herbivores that stray into human settlements in search of food and water during the summer, sparking concerns among the locals.

It was learned that they are also employing wild dogs to kill the animals.

Other methods like the laying of snares, electric wires drawn from high powered transmission lines and the use of guns are also adopted for this purpose. After killing the animal, the poachers chop it up and sell its meat openly in various villages, nearby towns and roadside hotels.

The regular availability of wild animal meat at Ranganipatna Square and at Baghua Square under the Odagaon forest range is a case in point. Moreover, deer meat is

Tender process for new bridge on Baitarani ends

POST NEWS NETWORK

Anandapur, June 10: The construction of a new bridge on Baitarani river here in Keonjhar district moved a step ahead following the completion of the tender process, a report said.

A private consultancy firm Rajveer Construction Private Ltd was awarded the Rs 79 crore project.

A letter (5072, dated—07.06.2023) issued by Odisha Bridge and Construction Corporation Ltd (OBCC) said that two firms Rajveer Construction Private Ltd and Iron Triangle Ltd had participated in the tender process, but the project was decided in favour of the former.



This has spread cheer among the residents as they wait with baited breath for the start of the project.

The old bridge over the Baitarani river which connects the State Highway-53 and National Highway-20 is in a dilapidated state. It is ap-

prehended that the situation might spin out of control anytime soon given the condition of the bridge.

A team of officials took stock of the old bridge and recommended a new one in its place and subsequently a tender was floated. With the number of heavy vehicles passing on the bridge increasing day by day, the new project was a bare necessity, senior officials said.

The bridge developed snags after a bearing slipped from one of its spanners in 2019. Later, it was repaired thrice between 2019 and 2023 with cost exceeding Rs 1 crore.

However, the tender process never had a smooth sail as the deadline was extended on several occasions. At the outset the roads

and buildings department was to construct the bridge but later the task was handed over to OBCC Ltd. The OBCC in a letter (1062, dated-February 2, 2023) floated a tender inviting bids to reach its office by February 28, 2023.

Later, the state-owned company in a fresh letter (1885, dated-March 4, 2023) again extended the last date for receiving the bids to March 9, 2023.

The OBCC again in a letter (2761, dated- March 31, 2023) asked the bidders to submit their bids online between March 14, 2023, and April 3, 2023. The last date for submission of tender was again changed to April 17, 2023 and finally to April 27, 2023.

COAL-LADEN WAGON CATCHES FIRE

POST NEWS NETWORK

Balasore/ Rupsa, June 10: Coming close on the heels of triple train mishap at Bahanaga railway station and another at Jajpur Road-Keonjhar Road station, a coal laden wagon caught fire at Rupsa railway station in Balasore district, Saturday.

However, no casualties were reported as fire personnel reached the spot and doused the fire before it could spread further.

According to station manager SK Padhi, the wagon was detached from a coal laden train few days back and had been parked inside the station. However, it caught fire due to excessive heat wave, it was learned.

Smoke was seen billowing out of the wagon June 7 and the fire was extinguished by the fire personnel. The incident reoccurred Saturday and fire was brought under control by the firemen. Later, the coal was unloaded from the wagon, added Padhi.

UTP ends life in Malkangiri jail



POST NEWS NETWORK

Malkangiri, June 10: An under trial prisoner (UTP) lodged in Malkangiri sub-jail here committed suicide by hanging in the wee hours of Saturday.

The victim was identified as Bidhan Mirdha, a resident of MPV-33 village under Kallimela police limits in this district. Bidhan was lodged in jail as an UTP along with his second wife in a murder case four years ago. He reportedly went inside the jail toilet at 4 am and hanged himself with his napkin to end his life.

After rescuing, jail officials rushed him to the district headquarters hospital where he was pronounced brought dead. The officials also called his family members over the phone and asked them to reach the hospital. Family members cried foul over his death and termed it as murder after they found him to have died after reaching the hospital. They demanded a high level inquiry into the incident.

Later, jail DIG reached the sub-jail and launched an investigation. The jail superintendent stated it to be a case of suicide as the incident was recorded in CCTV camera.

NDRF team conducts safety inspection of Hirakud Ropeway



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Sambalpur, June 10: A team of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) conducted a safety inspection of the ropeway located at the Hirakud dam site here in this district, an official said.

Sambalpur Municipal Corporation (SMC) Enforcement Officer Subhankar Mohanty said the SMC had moved the NDRF for inspection of the ropeway, and subsequently they visited the site recently.

While inspections are conducted annually, this was the first time that a 30-member team of the NDRF accompanied by their

commander visited the site to assess the ropeway.

The team inspected various aspects including the tower height, rope, trolley, hook and other things. Moreover, they also conducted a mock drill and trained the ropeway staff on how to respond if any mishap occurs, he said.

The ropeway connects Jawahar Udyan with Gandhi Minar at the Hirakud dam site. Jawahar Udyan is a picturesque park below the Hirakud Dam. The Gandhi Minar is a watch tower that provides a bird's-eye view of the vast Hirakud reservoir and the dam. Twelve trolleys ferry between Jawahar Udyan and Gandhi

The team inspected various aspects including the tower height, rope, trolley, hook and other things. Moreover, they also conducted a mock drill and trained the ropeway staff on how to respond if any mishap occurs

Minar under the ropeway service, which started operation in 2019. Each trolley can accommodate four people.

"The NDRF team has provided some suggestions to enhance safety. We will comply with those suggestions at the earliest," said Mohanty.

A Kolkata-based firm, Damodar Ropeway & Infra Limited (DRIL), installed the 421-metre-long ropeway project, which is run by the SMC. The maintenance of the ropeway has been assigned to Damodar Ropeways.

"The ropeway service here witnessed a large footfall during the tourist season," said an SMC official.

Rail Wheel Plant/Bela
(Distt. - Saran), Bihar 841221
E-Open Tender Notice No. : SRWPE/6/2023-24 dated : 08.06.2023
Principal Chief Materials Manager/Rail Wheel Plant, Bela for and on behalf of the President of India invites online "E-Open Tender", through Indian Railways E-Procurement Website www.reps.gov.in for supply of following Stores Item at RWP/ Bela. The closing time of all tenders is 14:00 Hrs.
SN. 1. Tender No. 01231052, Short Description of Item: Asbestors Gasket, Quantity: 8000Nos., Date of Tender Closing/Opening: 10.07.2023 at 14:00 Hrs.
1. Website address, on which full tender details can be seen and downloaded from, is www.reps.gov.in
2. The prospective firms/bidders submitting bid are advised to remain in touch with the above website for updates including Addendum/Corrigendum/ Cancellation with respect to the above tender. However, this information will also be invariably published in the all concerned newspaper. PCMM/RWP/Bela RWP/CPRO/Adv/2023-24/29

EAST COAST RAILWAY
File No. DRM/Engg/KUR/23-24/
E-Tender/35, Dt. 05.06.2023
Tender No. : e-Tender-CENT-KUR-104-2023, Dtd. 31.05.2023
Description : PROVISION OF 07 BAYS RDSO TYPE PLATFORM SHELTER ON PLATFORM NO. 1 AND 2 AT TALCHER STATION OF KHURDA ROAD DIVISION.
Approx. cost of the work : ₹ 94.48 Lakh, EMD: ₹ 1,89,000.00.
Completion period : 06 (Six) Months.
Tender closing Date & Time : At 1500 hrs. on 23.06.2023.
No manual offers sent by post/courier/Fax or in person shall be accepted against such e-tenders.
Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-tender is available in website : <http://www.reps.gov.in>
Note : The prospective tenderers are advised to revisit the website 10 (Ten) days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes/corrigendum issued for this tender.
Divisional Railway Manager (Engg.)
PR-254/O/23-24 Khurda Road

No train to halt at Bahanaga Bazar

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, June 10: No train will halt at Bahanaga Bazar station as the CBI investigating the train accident has sealed it after seizing the log book, relay panel and equipment, a railway official said Saturday.

After restoration of both the up and down lines, at least seven trains, mostly local, were halting at Bahanaga Bazar where a triple train crash took place June 2 killing 288 persons and leaving 1,208 others injured.

Of them, the railways has al-



ready provided ex-gratia to 709 passengers, it was learnt.

South Eastern Railway Chief Public Relations Officer, Aditya Kumar Chaudhary told reporters that the CBI has sealed the station after seizing the log book, relay

panel and other equipment.

"The relay interlocking panel has been sealed prohibiting access of the staff to the signalling system, no passenger or goods train will stop at Bahanaga Bazar till further notice," Chaudhary told reporters.

Though around 170 trains pass through the Bahanaga Bazar Railway station every day, only passenger trains like Bhadrak-Balasore MEMU, Howrah Bhadrak Baghajatin Fast Passenger, Kharagpur Khurda road fast passenger, used to stop at the station for a minute.

30 is an unlucky number for Rajaram

A HAUNTING TALE OF RAIL TRAGEDY

THE BAHANAGA-BASED ADVOCATE ALONE PULLED OUT 29 PASSENGERS TRAPPED INSIDE A COACH TO SAFETY ON THAT FATEFUL EVENING

DEBI MOHANTY

Forty-two-year old advocate Rajaram Mohapatra has begun going to his work place, the district court at Balasore. He and the rest eleven Bahanaga government high school's managing committee (SMC) members attended the meeting at the Balasore collector's office June 9, too.

"It's about the raging of the school building and the construction of a brand new one. We have been assured that our school is going to be a model institution with all facilities including a playground," informs Rajaram.

A few other SMC members including Banshidhar Upadhyay and Ashis Sahoo nod their heads in

agreement.

This school had been turned into a makeshift mortuary after the tragic triple-train accident at the Bahanaga Bazar passenger halt June 2. Over two hundred bodies were kept in the school standing next to National Highway (NH) 16.

As the talk veers to that ill fated incident, Rajaram's expressions take a visible turn. Even after a week after the rail tragedy, he says he can't sleep properly at night. "My head also reels, at times," Rajaram, who claims to have received the best advocate's award this year, concedes.

He was at home, a few hundred metres away from the station when the accident took place.

On hearing a terrible noise, a



Rajaram Mohapatra

startled Rajaram, like the other locals, paced quickly to the spot and swiftly swung into action. They worked like a machine in unison and saved hundreds of lives.

He and many others were busy throughout the night, rescuing

passengers, sending the severely injured ones to hospitals in ambulances.

He, though, thinks 30 is an unlucky number for him.

Reason- After much difficulty, he and other villagers successfully managed to open the jammed doors of the affected coaches. By his own admission, Rajaram alone pulled out 29 passengers trapped inside. Most of them had injuries, but not very severe ones.

However, when he pulled the passenger no 30 out, he was shocked to see the person bleeding profusely. "A heavy iron piece had pierced into his thing, he was in terrible pain," recounts the advocate.

As Rajaram and his friends were planning to send him to a hospital, he saw the person, signalling at something. "He was unable to utter a word," Rajaram adds.

However, it didn't take time for him to understand that the passenger was asking him to take out

from his pocket the mobile phone that was ringing non-stop and inform the caller about him.

Rajaram, tried to do exactly that, taking out the mobile phone soaked in fresh blood.

However, before he could utter 'hello', the man's face slowly turned to a side. Horrified, Rajaram, sat down for some time, unable to understand what had just happened in a flash. He was experiencing live, the fragility of life.

"I couldn't muster the courage to inform his relatives as desired by him, immediately," says Rajaram.

However, about half an hour later, he and his friend dialled the number. On the other side, they heard people speak Bangla, which made Rajaram believe that the unfortunate passenger was from West Bengal.

"It'll be a life-long regret that we could not help him survive. "Maybe number 30 is not lucky for me," he murmurs.

EAST COAST RAILWAY
EMPLOYMENT NOTICE NO. 02/2023-CMP, Date : 06.06.2023
APPLICATIONS ARE INVITED FOR ENGAGEMENT OF "CONTRACT MEDICAL PRACTITIONER" ON CONTRACT BASIS AT DIVISIONAL RAILWAY HOSPITAL, SAMBALPUR. WILLING MBBS DOCTORS, WHO FULFILL THE QUALIFICATION/ ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA SPECIFIED BELOW, MAY APPLY FOR THE ABOVE ENGAGEMENT ON MAIL ID OF cms_sbp@srbp.railnet.gov.in. THE ENGAGEMENT WILL BE OFFERED PURELY ON CONTRACT BASIS FOR A PERIOD OF ONE YEAR OR TILL THE SCHEME BECOME AVAILABLE OR POSTING OF A REGULAR INCUMBENT WHICHEVER IS EARLIER, WHICH CAN BE RENEWED AS A FRESH CONTRACT ON YEAR TO YEAR BASIS. THE LAST DATE FOR SUBMISSION OF APPLICATION ON ABOVE MAIL ID IS 05.07.2023.
Eligible and willing candidates may send the scanned copy of their application in the prescribed format along with scanned copies of their certificates/work experience certificates (if any)/testimonials on mail id cms_sbp@srbp.railnet.gov.in. After scrutiny of the application, interview through video conferencing/video calling would be taken of eligible candidates for which they would be intimated through their e-mail & whatsapp number. Selected candidate will be intimated through the whatsapp number/email id of the candidate. While reporting for duty, the candidate will be required to bring all the original certificates/testimonials for verification and two passport size photographs. After due verification of the certificates/testimonials, the final engagement order will be issued.
TOTAL NO. OF REQUIREMENT : 01 No. (General Duty Medical Officer) on full time basis at Divisional Railway Hospital/Sambalpur.
Mode of Selection through Video Conferencing/Video Calling.
N.B.: For application format, educational qualification/eligibility, age, remuneration, and other terms & conditions please refer to website of ECoR (<http://www.eastcoastrail.indianrailways.gov.in>).
PR-255/O/23-24 Divisional Railway Manager (P), Sambalpur

“We find in others what is in us. If we always find mud around us, it proves that there is mud somewhere in us.”



THE MOTHER

Never Forget

This month marks five years since the first arrests in the Bhima Koregaon case. A total of 16 people were arrested in the case, including one, Father Stan Swamy, who died in custody. Most of them remain in jail. None has been convicted in the case, none has been connected with violence in the place for which the matter is named. If there is a case that exemplifies the draconian nature of the law they have been arrested under, the cruelty of the State intent not on prosecuting cases but keeping people jailed indefinitely, it is this one.

It is important that we not forget it or those jailed under it. Less than 10 per cent of all cases under UAPA have ended and only a fourth of all cases adjudicated end in convictions. In this particular case, this set of activists, which includes academics, professors, lawyers, poets and activists, has been accused of waging war against the State.

The man who filed the complaint on the basis of which the arrests were made says he follows a “simple” rule for his Hindutva: “We should keep things which are helpful for Hindus; rest should be abandoned.” After his complaint, the case would be spun to include accusations of attempting to overthrow the government and assassinate the Prime Minister.

When the BJP was defeated in the Maharashtra elections, the case was taken away from the Pune police. Uddhav Thackeray was sworn in on 28 November 2019. The Union government told Maharashtra that it had given the case to the NIA on 24 January 2020. One can infer from that what one wants but all of this has been accompanied by mistreatment of the accused by the government. The media firm NewsLaundry made a list of some of these things.

Stan Swamy, suffering from Parkinson’s disease, was disallowed a glass with a sipper straw in jail for weeks. Shoma Sen, suffering from arthritis, found it difficult to use the Indian commode in jail. Her daughter brought her a commode chair but was turned away.

Surendra Gadling asked to access books including the UAPA and IT Acts, some paper to take notes on and four books by Swami Vivekananda. The government opposed this vehemently, with the prosecutor even saying she was unsure whether Vivekananda’s books were banned or not in India.

After the court allowed the books to be brought, prison authorities still did not allow them to be given to Gadling. He was disallowed a sweater despite a court order, being told that only thermal sweaters were allowed and not woolen ones. When his wife brought him a full-sleeved thermal sweater, this was disallowed saying that only half-sleeved ones were allowed.

Seventy-year-old Navlakha’s spectacles were stolen in prison. He was virtually blind without his glasses. But he was not permitted to make a call to ask for a replacement for three days. His partner sent a pair to the jail but the jail authorities refused to accept it though they had been informed that the packet was coming.

When Gadling’s mother died, he applied to be allowed to attend the funeral. It was denied on the grounds that his application didn’t have her death certificate without which the NIA would not accept that she was dead. The family could not get the certificate because of the lockdown. When the certificate was produced, the NIA said the funeral had already been conducted so they saw no reason to let him out temporarily. When Gadling applied to go to the condolence meeting, this was turned down because he hadn’t submitted a “copy of the meeting” with his application.

When Sudhir Dhawale’s brother died, the application was supported with documentary evidence, an announcement card for the post-funeral meeting and the death certificate. This application was rejected only on the grounds that bail could not be given because the offence was ‘serious’. Mahesh Raut’s sister married while he was in jail as an undertrial. When Vernon Gonsalves’ mother died in May 2021, he chose not to put his family through the rigmarole of attempting to get him bail.

In February 2021, The Washington Post reported that the letters ‘found’ by the police on Rona Wilson’s laptop had been

planted. Malware had been used to introduce them to the computer, an independent analysis had found. These letters, including the one allegedly on the Modi assassination, had been created using a newer version of Microsoft Word that did not exist on Wilson’s computer, the report said. There was no evidence that the documents or the hidden folder were ever opened. In April 2021, a leading firm in digital forensics said it had ‘irrefutable’ proof that Wilson’s computer was hacked. Files were planted on it on 11 January 2018, 11 days after the Bhima-Koregaon violence.

Despite all this, most of the accused remain in jail. The Bhima Koregaon case is not the only instance of the government misusing the law to go after those who dissent. Umar Khalid has spent over 1000 days in jail for being one of the most eloquent voices against what the BJP is doing to India. Of course minorities, the poor and the marginalised face the brunt of the brutal State and always have. This is not in dispute. But Bhima Koregaon is emblematic. It represents what the government can do in India against well meaning people who speak up against atrocities, who stand up for the weak and the dispossessed and for this reason alone as seen as enemies of the State and kept in prison for as long as the government can manage. So long as the rest of us do not speak up against this misbehaviour by the State, so long as we forget about those who have been made its victims, this behaviour will continue. The Bhima Koregaon 16 must not be forgotten.

WISDOM CORNER

- “If you can’t fly then run, if you can’t run then walk, if you can’t walk then crawl, but whatever you do you have to keep moving forward.” **MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.**
- “If you focus on success, you’ll have stress. But if you pursue excellence, success will be guaranteed.” **DEEPAK CHOPRA**
- “Our greatest weakness lies in giving up. The most certain way to succeed is always to try just one more time.” **THOMAS A. EDISON**

WORDSWORTH

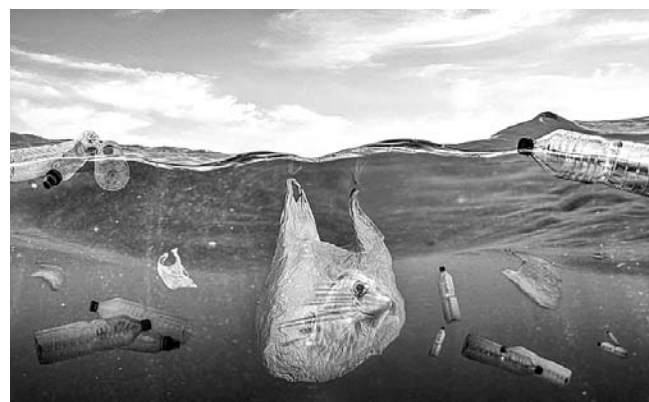
Jobation

A particularly erudite thesaurus may offer you in its place the verbs rebuke, scold, tell-off, lambast, censure, give a piece of one’s mind, read the Riot Act, criticise, take to task, haul over the coals, or some dozens more – such is the size of our vocabulary when it comes to giving somebody an earful. Jobation may have been an academic joke. At least, it turns up in A Collection of College Words and Customs, an obscure American work of 1856 by Benjamin Homer Hall. He defined the word thus: “At the University of Cambridge, England, a sharp reprimand from the Dean for some offence, not eminently heinous.” The Oxbridge connection may be supported by its appearance five years later in Tom Brown at Oxford, Thomas Hughes’s sequel to Tom Brown’s Schooldays: “Don’t be angry at my jobation; but write me a long answer of your own free will.” The recently revised entry in the Oxford English Dictionary online counters that it is more likely to be an English colloquial or regional term. Since it is recorded in Admiral Smyth’s Sailor’s Word-Book of 1867, in which he says it is like a cabin-lecture, a private but severe reprimand, we must accept the colloquial part. In the speech of some English regions it has appeared as jawbation, a neat version that evokes extended exertion of the mouth muscles in castigation. The origin is biblical, from the Old Testament book of Job. You may recall that the poor man was much troubled by sanctimonious friends who reproved him at length. From the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries, to job or to jobate was to harangue somebody about their personal failings.

WAY OUT OF ‘PLASTISPHERE’

FOCUS POLLUTION

Our planet is choking with plastic we produce, consume and dispose of. Plastic has become entangled with tradition and modernity. While plastic has been increasingly and immeasurably integrated in our daily lives for the last several decades, littering of single use plastic items in our ecosystem has severe adverse and hostile effects on terrestrial, aquatic and marine ecosystems. To do away with this anthropogenic transformation of the ecosystem into the ‘plastisphere’ the countries have agreed in Paris (May 29 – June 2) to produce a binding global treaty on plastic pollution under the aegis of the UN by the end of 2024.



Of more than 8 billion tonnes of plastic waste generated globally so far, less than 10 per cent has been recycled

At the beginning, the Second Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for Plastics (INC-2), established by the UNEP and hosted by UNESCO in Paris, was expected to produce a draft on plastic pollution including the marine environment for further negotiations. However, the INC secretariat was guided by countries to collate a zero draft for the next INC meeting in Kenya. This is the second of five meetings due to take place to complete the negotiations by the end of 2024. At the first meeting (INC-1), held in December 2022 in Uruguay, some countries pressed for a legally binding global mandate on plastic pollution, some for unilateral voluntary solutions and others for both. However, campaigners and advocacy groups are pushing for the treaty to not only deal with the pollution, but also drastically curb the scale of plastic production.

Meanwhile, India’s official position has been to ensure the “fairness, equity, shared responsibility, collective commitments and consensus-based actions” rather than majority-based decision making. India argues, as a common strategy in all multilateral environ-

mental negotiations, that it must be acknowledged that countries have different levels of development, unique circumstances and differential contribution to plastic pollution as we are witnessing now. Therefore, India prefers a mix of both global mandate and largely voluntary approach to tackle the plastic menace. In a tacit move, India with Saudi Arabia, China and Russia called for all government parties to have a veto power in deciding the future provisions of the plastic treaty, which delayed the talks for a while. Many external stakeholders have pointed to India and Saudi Arabia as obstructionist to a global legally binding plastic treaty in Paris.

Currently, the UNEP estimates that the world produces about 400 million tonnes of plastic waste every year. Of more than 8 billion tonnes of plastic waste generated globally so far, less than 10% has been recycled. Even recycling plastic is not all risk free. One of the released recent studies, Forever Toxic – the science of health threats from plastic recycling, found that recycling plastic not only increases the toxicity of

plastics, but poses threat to the health of consumers, frontline communities, and workers in the recycling sector.

Many of us use plastic products every day without even thinking about where they are ending up. Are we consciously aware that one million plastic bottles are purchased every minute around the world, while up to five trillion plastic bags are used worldwide every year? In total, half of all plastic produced is designed for single-use purposes – used just once and then thrown away. We are addicted to single-use plastic so much that it is unthinkable to get rid of it immediately. As per the UNEP, plastics contain more than 13,000 chemicals, with more than 3,200 of them known to be hazardous to human health with the rest having not been assessed yet.

Despite current efforts, how is it probable that 75 to 199 million tonnes of plastic are found in the oceans? It is obvious that a lot comes from rivers channelling trash directly into lakes and oceans.

Plastic waste in India can be seen everywhere. India as the second plastic waste producing coun-

try annually produces 26.33 million tonnes (2016) and is the second country to release 1,26,513 tonnes of mismanaged plastic waste (2021) into the oceans.

Unilateral ‘casual’ measures date back to early 2000 when states had imposed a ban on plastic bags. After two decades of complete failure, India has banned 19 identified single-use plastic items, which have low utility and high littering potential, since 1 July 2022 through the Plastic Waste Management Amendment Rules, 2021. India also prohibits manufacture, import, stocking, distribution, sale and use of plastic carry bags having thickness less than seventy-five microns from September 2021, and having thickness less than one hundred and twenty microns from December, 2022. Nonetheless, we keep on using and abusing our surroundings and asking vendors to provide the banned products. Awareness programmes are not effective yet. A multi-prong strategy can be justified to end the plastic pollution. To reach a successful global treaty, countries must thrash out principles of reuse, reorient, regulate and diversify the dependence on plastic. The ambitious treaty may anchor on provisions for re-designing and rethinking the way we package, accelerate research and development on sustainable, affordable, accessible alternative to plastics, and improve waste management infrastructure to cope with massive inflow of plastic waste. Likewise, it is time to change how we produce, consume and dispose of the plastic we use. This is absolutely possible when we change our mindset and behaviour.

The writer is principal scientist with Periarban Initiative at IIT Madras and a senior fellow at SSPC, a Delhi based think tank.

SPECTRUM GROWTH

Strengthening the global balance sheet

In recent decades, the world’s wealth has soared – at least on paper – as low interest rates drove up asset prices. But the global balance sheet remains rife with fragilities, which the recent financial-sector turbulence has exposed. Now, how the world borrows, lends, and creates wealth may be set to change fundamentally.

From 2000 to 2021, asset-price inflation created about \$160 trillion in paper wealth. But while asset valuations grew rapidly, investment and growth remained sluggish. Moreover, every \$1 in investment generated \$1.90 in debt. But, recently, headwinds have confronted the world economy: in 2022, households lost \$8 trillion of wealth.

The only certainty now is an unusually high degree of uncertainty. The economic, banking, and investment landscape may well look materially different in the next ten years than it did in the last 20. But the range of possible paths forward is wide. As part of its ongoing research exploring the global balance sheet, the McKinsey Global Institute has modeled four plausible scenarios.

The first scenario is a “return to the past,” in which the current volatility proves temporary and balance-sheet expansion resumes. For some, this may sound attractive, but an expanding balance sheet would continue to raise the risk

of economic shocks. It would also come at the expense of growth in the real economy, and would exacerbate inequality.

In the second, “higher for longer” scenario, inflationary pressure becomes entrenched, but concerns about financial stability moderate policy tightening. Demand would remain strong, as investment picked up to support imperatives like the clean-energy transition, the reconfiguration of supply chains, and defence. The savings glut would wane. This scenario has parallels with the stagflation that the United States experienced in the 1970s, albeit with somewhat lower inflation – around 4%, rather than 9%. In 2030, the balance sheet would look healthier relative to GDP than it does today, because inflation would lower the debt burden and asset prices in real terms.

The third scenario, a “balance-sheet reset,” represents the worst case. Here, interest rates would continue to rise, contributing to financial-system stress or even failures. This would lead to a sharp correction in asset values, with many debt-financed assets ending up under water. A drawn-out deleveraging process and a long recession could follow, with the value of US equities and real estate potentially dropping by more than 30% in real terms between now and 2030. This scenario recalls what happened in

Japan in the 1990s, after its real-estate and equity bubble burst.

But a fourth, far more desirable “productivity acceleration” scenario is also plausible. This is the Goldilocks scenario that is good for both growth and wealth. Faster productivity gains would support strong GDP growth, bolster incomes and wealth, and lead to a healthier balance sheet. Achieving this best-case scenario would require fiscal and monetary policymakers to strike a delicate balance: some tightening is needed to mitigate inflation, but too much tightening would deplete wealth and cause financial stress.

The difference between the best- and worst-case scenarios – in terms of growth and (even more so) balance-sheet health – would be enormous. In the US, annual average GDP growth in a balance-sheet-reset scenario would be an estimated 1.7 percentage points lower than in a productivity-acceleration scenario. Household wealth would be \$48 trillion lower.

With such a wide variety of possible future shapes of the economic, banking, and investment landscape, businesses will find it unusually difficult to define their strategies. Reacting to shifts in the macro environment will no longer suffice. Firms will need to plan for a sufficiently broad set of outcomes, identify signs that can help indicate

which scenario is taking shape, and solidify risk-management approaches – all while adjusting their business models and seeking new growth opportunities.

In other words, businesses will have to ensure that they are prepared for anything. But they should also strive for the best outcome: higher productivity growth. While doing both simultaneously will not be easy, it is imperative. If firms act only defensively, based on the expectation of a negative outcome, the investment climate could become hostile.

In fact, expectations of a growth slowdown or recession could become a self-fulfilling prophecy. Rather than making investments that could contribute to better economic outcomes, firms might decide to wait. Real-estate developers anticipating lower prices might delay new projects. Banks focused on strengthening their balance sheets could raise lending standards, reducing the supply of credit.

To avoid such a spiral, leaders in both the public and private sector can make the case for a productivity-acceleration scenario, and devise policies and strategies that advance it. Higher productivity growth is achievable. But it will not happen by itself.

The writers are directors at the McKinsey Global Institute.

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Olivia White & Jonathan Woetzel

THE ECONOMIC, BANKING, AND INVESTMENT LANDSCAPE MAY WELL LOOK MATERIALLY DIFFERENT IN THE NEXT TEN YEARS THAN IT DID IN THE LAST 20

Social message

Sir, School should be the child’s only workplace. “Any work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential and their dignity, and that is harmful to physical and mental health” is child labour, according to the International Labour Organisation. Since child labour is a fertile breeding ground for social ills like poverty, unemployment, illiteracy and population growth, the governments have stepped in to stem the menace. Child and Adolescent Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986, prohibits employment of a child below 14 in any employment including domestic work. It did well to ban the working of below 14-year-old children except in family-run or-owned enterprise. After all, education and awareness are two handy tools. The biggest challenge, however, was to define the employment that fell under the ambit of family-owned enterprise. Its intent was to educate all children; they would work only after school hours. All Collectors and the Superintendents of Police would do well to do an extensive study on why the conviction rate is abysmal for child labour offenders.

Ganapathi Bhat, Akola

More polarisation

Sir, This refers to “Trump faces federal charges,” Orissa POST, June 10. The indictment of former US President Donald Trump by a federal grand jury in the investigation by the Department of Justice (DoJ) into his alleged mishandling of hundreds of classified documents creates an unprecedented political situation ahead of the 2024 American presidential election. This is the first time in US history that a federal government is bringing charges against a former President. He already faces criminal charges in investigations over the payment of hush money to an adult film actor in 2016. A prosecutor in Georgia is probing alleged attempts by Trump and his allies to topple the results of the 2020 presidential elections. Going forward, Trump is the leading contender for the Republican presidential ticket and he is not only a former President but also the key potential rival of Biden in 2024. Trump has already seized the political angle, calling the cases a Democratic witch hunt and asking his supporters “not to surrender” the country “to the radical Left”. As he seems determined to use the cases for political mobilisation, America’s divided polity is set to see further polarisation. Amid this chaos, the DoJ cannot afford to be seen as partisan. It should ensure transparent investigations and build watertight cases based on legal merits.

N Sadhasiva Reddy, WASHINGTON

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

Orissa POST

B-15, Rasulgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010



Some politicians established their monopoly over the health, education, transport and other sectors by ruining the government institutions
BHAGWANT MANN | PUNJAB CM

NOVEL INITIATIVE

To curb the menace of dumping waste by people on roads and open public spaces, the Kerala government has now come up with a novel scheme to reward all those who report such acts and earn up to ₹2,500 for each reporting



of the day quote

We are launching one of the five guarantees at Vidhana Soudha at 11 am. All women will be entitled to travel within the state free of cost in all the (state-owned) buses other than AC and Volvo including express bus services
SIDDARAMAIAH | KARNATAKA CM

When coal reserves of 361 billion tons are there in the country, they say we will privatise electricity, coal mines and close jobs related to electricity and hand over Singareni to private people. What is this bad policy? What is happening in the country?
K CHANDRASEKHAR RAO | TELANGANA CM

I read in a newspaper that the Punjab government is planning to convene a special Vidhan Sabha session claiming that central government was not giving ₹800 crore grant under the National Health Mission. We haven't stopped any grant. They do politics in everything... We are saying there cannot be politics on health matters
MANSUKH MANDAVIYA | UNION HEALTH MINISTER

Ajit proposed Sule's name for working president: Pawar

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 10: Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) chief Sharad Pawar Saturday dismissed suggestions that the appointment of his daughter Supriya Sule as the working president of the party has upset his nephew Ajit Pawar, asserting he himself had mooted the proposal.

"The suggestion was made by him (Ajit Pawar). So, where is the question of him being happy or unhappy?" Pawar said here to questions on the Maharashtra Leader of Opposition being upset about Sule's elevation. The veteran leader announced earlier in the day three-term Lok Sabha member Sule and Praful Patel will be the working presidents of the NCP.

Ajit Pawar was seen as an heir-apparent in the NCP but his dalliances with the BJP, including an early morning swearing-in as Maharashtra deputy chief minister along with chief minister Devendra Fadnis in 2019, had not been received well by the party.

"There is no vacancy now. We can talk about it when there is a vacancy," Pawar quipped when asked if Patel or Sule could become NCP chief in the future. Sule was also appointed the chairperson of the party's Central Election Authority as well as the in-charge of Maharashtra, the only state where



NCP chief Sharad Pawar with party's senior leaders at the flag hoisting ceremony during the party's foundation day celebrations in New Delhi

the NCP has a formidable electoral presence, ushering in a generational shift in the party.

The BJP was quick to take a dig at the announcement made by the NCP chief. "If only Sharad Pawar loved his nephew as much as Mamata Banerjee loves hers..." BJP Information Technology Department in-charge Amit Malviya said on Twitter.

Pawar also said elevating Patel and Sule was a "conscious" decision taken by the entire party. "This is a conscious decision by the entire party and not me alone. If I had to make a decision, why would I have waited all these years," the NCP supreme shot back when asked about the allegations of nepotism. Pawar said there was "not even

one per cent truth" in reports of Ajit Pawar being upset with the decision. "Jayant Patil is already the president of Maharashtra unit of NCP. Ajit Pawar is the Leader of Opposition in the assembly. Praful Patel and Supriya Sule did not have any such responsibility in the party and were ready to devote time for the party," Pawar said.

He said senior party leaders had made suggestions to the effect and the proposal was under discussion within the party for the past one month and he had only made the announcement on Saturday. Pawar said Sule being a Lok Sabha member has to work in Delhi and has been given responsibility of adjoining states of Haryana and Punjab, besides Maharashtra.

Dalit man thrashed, dies

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Vadodra, June 10: A Dalit man died after being allegedly thrashed by a hotel owner belonging to an upper caste community and his accomplice following an argument, during which they also hurled casteist slurs at the victim in Gujarat's Mahisagar district, police said Saturday.

The victim, Raju Vankar (45), died while undergoing treatment at a government hospital in Vadodra city on Friday night, two days after being thrashed by the hotel owner and his counter manager, an official of Bakor police station said.

Dalit leader and Congress MLA Jignesh Mevani demanded immediate arrest of the accused, whom he called "casteist goons" and warned of a protest.

As per the first information report (FIR), Vankar, an autorickshaw driver, went to the hotel to have dinner on June 7. After the meal, he also asked the hotel staff to pack food for him to carry home.

However, when he raised an objection before the hotel owner regarding the quantity of food packed for him saying that it less than what he paid for, the two accused started arguing with him and hurled casteist abuses at him. They then thrashed him, leaving him badly injured, the police official said.

The victim returned home and told the family members about the incident. Later at night, he started complaining about acute pain in his abdomen.

His wife called an ambulance and took him to a hospital at Mahisagar, he said.

Omar may stay away from grand alliance

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Rajouri/Jammu, June 10: National Conference Vice President Omar Abdullah Saturday hinted at his party staying away from the grand alliance against the BJP in next year's general elections, saying most such parties remained silent when Article 370 was abrogated.

He also said the talks on a pre-poll alliance in Jammu and Kashmir would be premature before the sounding of bugle for the assembly elections in the Union Territory. "What we have (to contribute) outside Jammu and Kashmir? We have a total of five (Lok Sabha) seats and what storm these seats can create? We have to fight against the BJP on these seats and what is going outside J&K is a secondary question," Abdullah told reporters on reaching the border district of Rajouri.

The former chief minister was responding to a question on the possibility of the National Conference joining hands with other parties against the BJP in the run up to the 2024 Lok Sabha elections.

"Compulsions aside, I do not see any benefit from such an alliance for the party and Jammu and Kashmir. I am repeatedly saying that when they need us, they knock on our doors. When (Delhi Chief Minister Arvind) Kejriwal is in trouble, he needs our support but where were these leaders in 2019 when we faced a big deceit," he said, referring to the abrogation of Article 370 and bifurcation of J&K into the Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh by the central government.

Abdullah asked who among them stood with the people of Jammu and Kashmir. "Where were those who are raising hue and cry today for safeguarding the Constitution and democracy when we faced the murder of democracy? They did not speak against it and the fact of the matter is that they supported the



Compulsions aside, I do not see any benefit from such an alliance for the party and Jammu and Kashmir. I am repeatedly saying that when they need us, they knock on our doors. When (Delhi Chief Minister Arvind) Kejriwal is in trouble, he needs our support but where were these leaders in 2019 when we faced a big deceit
OMAR ABDULLAH | NC VICE PRESIDENT

move (in Parliament)," the former Jammu and Kashmir chief minister said.

However, he said there are only four parties - DMK, Mamata Banerjee-led TMC and two left parties - "which always stood with the people of Jammu and Kashmir". "Leave these parties aside, show me someone among other parties who wholeheartedly supported us. We will fight against the BJP on our five seats, let them do whatever they want to," Abdullah said.

On the possibility of a pre-poll alliance ahead of assembly elections in J&K, he said the question is premature as elections are nowhere visible. "Let the election bugle be sounded, we will sit together to take a call on this. The opinion or decision of one person is not acceptable, all the leaders of the party (NC) will discuss the issue, weigh its pros and cons and reach a consensus," he said.

The National Conference leader said the bugle has yet to reach the person who is going to sound it, so such questions serve nothing.

SHORT TAKES

India, Bangladesh border talks today

New Delhi: India and Bangladesh will hold biannual talks between their border guarding forces in Delhi from June 11 during which the two sides are expected to discuss a host of issues related to combating cross-frontier crimes and measures to create better synergy. A 15-member delegation of the Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB), led by its director general (DG) Major General AKM Nazmul Hasan, landed in Delhi Saturday.

Three charred

Bhind: Three minors, including two girls, were charred and four others injured, two of them critically, after a fire broke out in a house in Madhya Pradesh's Bhind district Saturday, police said. Police suspect that the fire started due to leakage of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) during cooking. The incident occurred at Danekapura village under Gormi police station limits, Sub Divisional Officer of Police (SDOP) Rajesh Rathore said. A 4-year-old boy, his sister, aged 10 years, and their 5-year-old cousin sister were charred in the fire, he said.

Girl raped in UP

Meerut (UP): A 12-year-old girl was allegedly raped by a judo instructor at a school here, police said Saturday. According to a complaint lodged by the victim's father, the minor had joined a judo karate course in a school located in Kankarkheda police station area. On June 2, the girl along with her brother went for the classes at around 7 am. The instructor around 10 am allegedly dismissed all the children but stopped the victim on the pretext of extra practice, he said in the complaint. The instructor took the girl to the guard's room and raped her and later told her brother that she has been hurt due to stretching and was bleeding and dressing has to be done.

Three drown

Garhwa (Jharkhand): Three children, aged between 7 and 13, drowned while bathing in a dam in Jharkhand's Garhwa district Saturday, a police official said. The incident took place at Babhanikhanda dam, about 210-km from Ranchi.

BENGAL RURAL POLL: VIOLENCE CONTINUES

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, June 10: Incidents of violence continued on the second day of nomination filing for West Bengal panchayat polls Saturday, with the opposition BJP, Congress and CPI(M) alleging their candidates were prevented from submitting papers by

the ruling TMC activists and goons.

A mob entered a Block Development Office in South 24 Parganas district and assaulted an employee allegedly for distributing nomination forms to opposition candidates, while a local Trinamool Congress leader was caught with a handgun in

Murshidabad district.

The TMC, however, thrashed the charges saying the nomination filing process was by and large incident free and the opposition was making false charges as they are sure about the imminent loss in the panchayat polls having very little support base among the rural populace. A State Election Commission

(SEC) official said: "Action has been taken on the basis of receiving every report and the nomination process was going on smoothly across the state." The official said that as many as 1,360 nomination papers were filed on the first day across the state, and the process was smooth barring "some stray incidents" in a few pockets.



Cadets celebrate after their passing out parade at the Indian Military Academy in Dehradun

PTI PHOTO

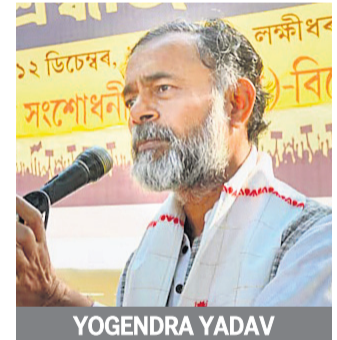
Out of question, NCERT tells Suhas Palshikar, Yogendra Yadav

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 10: Political scientists Suhas Palshikar and Yogendra Yadav Saturday reiterated their request to NCERT to drop their names as chief advisors from political science textbooks, saying they cannot be forced to introduce a textbook they no longer recognise.

In a letter to NCERT on Friday, they said a rationalisation exercise has "mutilated" the books beyond recognition and rendered them "academically dysfunctional" and asked for dropping their names from the books.

In a statement on Saturday, they stated that the textbooks which were a source of pride for them earlier have now become a source of embarrassment. The National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT), however,



said the withdrawal of anyone's association is out of question as textbooks at the school level are developed on the basis of knowledge and understanding on a given subject and at no stage, individual authorship is claimed. In the statement, Palshikar and Yadav said, "We have not raised issues of authorship, copyrights and

NCERT's legal authority to modify these textbooks. Our point is very simple - If they can use their legal right to distort and mutilate the text, we must be able to exercise our moral and legal right to dissociate our name from a textbook that we do not endorse. If the name of the textbook development committee is there to acknowledge our contribution, as the NCERT claims, then we must be free to decline this generosity."

"If the names of this committee are reported as a matter of record, as claimed in this statement, then it must also be recorded that we do not approve of the present version. The continuation of our names inside the present version of the book creates a false impression of endorsement, and we have every right to dissociate with this insinuation," they said.

SHARP RISE IN UNEMPLOYMENT

MIGRANT WORKERS FEEL THE HEAT IN KASHMIR

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar, June 10: Jobs are drying up in the new Kashmir which was split in 2019, with CMIE reporting 23 per cent unemployment for April, even as the data was disputed by the government officials.

A large number of workers - mostly from Bihar, Punjab, West Bengal, and Jharkhand - flocking to the valley to earn a good livelihood for decades are reporting finding little to now work as compared to pre-COVID levels.

Naba Paswan, a daily wage labourer from Bihar, has been coming to Hawal Chowk every morning in the hope of getting some work. "Before COVID, work was good but now there is no work, I have been sitting idle for 10 days. There is no work and now the wages are also low," Paswan said. Bikhari Ram, another labourer from Bihar, said the number of working days

has dropped drastically.

"We travelled thousands of kms to earn something but there is no work here. I have a family to feed. What can we do? I am not earning enough for my own survival. What can I do for the family?"

"There is no work. We only get 15 days of work in one month and sometimes just 10 days or even only five days," he added. Faika Javid, a graduate, said educated youth are falling into depression due to unemployment.

"Youth are completing degrees and sitting at home. This leads to depression and increase in suicidal cases. It's not only about Kashmir, there are other states of India also where unemployment is a big issue," she said. Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE) in its April report claimed that the unemployment rate in Jammu and Kashmir was a whopping 23 per cent.



However, an official of the Jammu and Kashmir government dismissed the report saying it was not reflective of the real situation. "There are different views about it. The survey has not been conducted accurately which could

have actually determined the rate of unemployment.

"According to the Department's survey in coordination with District Development Commissioners, the unemployment rate was 7.04 per cent for last financial year.

Thereafter we did a survey according to the method of one village and one tehsil in every district," Director Employment Nisar Ahmad Wani said. "We covered 206 villages with 206 tehsils of UT but urban areas have not been in-

cluded. The unemployment rate carried out by that survey came out to be 8.04 per cent," he said.

Wani said according to the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation the unemployment rate for the last two quarters is 13 per cent to 13.02 per cent respectively. Wani said there were two lakh youth registered as unemployed on the portal of the Employment Department.

In an exercise carried out by the government in 2012, more than six lakh youth had registered themselves with the department as unemployed. In 2020, Jammu and Kashmir Service Selection and Recruitment Board conducted a written examination for 10,000 posts. As many as 5.94 lakh candidates appeared in that examination, indicating that the number of unemployed were more or less the same since 2012, at least among the educated youths.

Shivraj counters anti-incumbency with freebies; MP's debt balloons

The government is announcing a series of populist schemes and freebies to woo voters while the state is reeling under debt of around Rs 3.5 lakh crore

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bhopal, June 10: In the run-up to the Assembly elections in Madhya Pradesh due to be held later this year, the ruling BJP government led by Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan is leaving no stone unturned to fight the anti-incumbency factor.

The state government is announcing a series of populist schemes and freebies to woo the voters while the state is reeling under debt of around Rs 3.5 lakh crore.

Experts say that the average per capita debt in the state has sharply increased in the past five-six years. If the debt figures are taken into consideration, every citizen in the state has a debt of Rs 41,000. It was estimated at Rs 13,853 by the end of March 2016, compared to Rs 10,896 recorded in FY 2013-14. They claim that the Madhya Pradesh government is "going through a period of severe economic crisis."

The economic condition of Madhya Pradesh can be understood by the fact that in the previous year 2022-2023, the state presented an annual budget of Rs 2.79 lakh crore, while the mounting debt on the government was at Rs 3.31 lakh crore.



Even the Rs 3.14 lakh crore 'self-reliant' annual budget presented in March this year by the Shivraj government for the financial year 2023-2024 could not surpass the total debt of Rs 3.29 lakh crore on the state.

Shashikant Trivedi, a senior journalist who has been covering Madhya Pradesh's economic status for over two decades, said the economic structure had started deteriorating since 2005-2006, but the enormous changes introduced after 2008 made the situation worst.

According to him, 'carousel fraud' was one of the main reasons. "People only understand the GDP growth, which the government highlights but it does not elaborate on the factual data of the state's economic condition. The depth of the economy of the state needs to be transparent to a

degree that a layman can understand. For instance, GDP has gone very high, but does it reflect in daily life?"

Congress has held the Shivraj-led BJP government responsible for the 'very poor' economic condition of the state.

Senior Congress leader Tarun Bhanot, who was Finance Minister in Kamal Nath's 15-month government, said: "BJP government claims it borrowed loans from banks for the developments of the people, while the situation is quite different. The debt during Digvijaya Singh-led Congress government was at Rs 26,000 crore, now it has reached close to Rs 4 lakh crore, and the financial condition of the people in the state continues to decline."

The former minister claimed the situation has worsened to such an extent that students were not given dues of their scholarship for the last two years.

"During the 15-month government, Kamal Nath has made several reforms and multiple revenue resources were created without putting any extra burden on citizens. The Shivraj government has pushed the state 10-15 years back (in terms of economic development)," Bhanot added.

Kuki tribals reiterate separate state demand

BOTH BIREN SINGH AND AMIT SHAH, AFTER THE LATTER'S FOUR-DAY MANIPUR VISIT, CATEGORICALLY REJECTED THE SEPARATE STATE DEMAND FOR THE TRIBALS

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Imphal, June 10: The Kuki tribals in Manipur have again reiterated their demand to create a separate administration, equivalent to a separate state for them, even though the Central and state governments, on a number of occasions, rejected any division of the northeastern state.

The Kuki Inpi Manipur (KIM), an apex body of the Kuki tribals, in a letter to Union Home Minister Amit Shah, claimed that the ongoing violence in Manipur was a pre-planned ethnic cleansing campaign against the Kuki community by the majority Meiteis and this has become clearer day by day.

KIM general secretary Khaikhoradh Gangte, in the letter, alleged that during a recent interview to media, Meitei Leepun chief Pramot Singh made a damning revelation that he and his organisation were in the know about the 'genocide' being planned against the Kuki people.

"How the hate campaign against the Kuki people transformed into ethnic cleansing under a very communal government was also very clear through the contents of the interview given by Meitei Leepun chief Pramot Singh," Gangte said and demanded to declare the Meitei Leepun as outlawed organisation.

The KIM said that in the inter-



view, "filled with hatred and malice against the Kuki people, Pramot Singh categorically issued a stern warning to the Kuki people that the Meiteis are still discussing among themselves on how to go about annihilating the Kuki people."

Demanding the arrest of Pramot Singh, the KIM said: "The enemy to them is the Kuki community and living together with a group of people who want to annihilate us is impossible. Hence, the urgent need for total separation from Manipur where the Kuki commu-

nity can live peacefully as dignified Indian citizens, living in their ancestral lands under the Constitution of India."

A week after the ethnic violence started in Manipur, 10 MLAs belonging to Kuki tribals (including seven ruling BJP members) demanded a separate administration equivalent to a separate state for the tribals in Manipur.

After the May 3 and the subsequent ethnic violence, all the 10 MLAs belonging to the Kuki community have accused the N Biren

Singh government of 'failing miserably' to protect the community. Therefore, they have resolved to pursue a "separate administration under the Constitution of India and live peacefully as neighbours with Manipur."

Both Biren Singh and Amit Shah, after his four day Manipur visit, categorically rejected the separate state demand for the tribals.

The tribals constitute around 37 to 40 per cent of the total 2.72 million people (as per the 2011 census) of Manipur.

MP hijab row now linked to terror funding case

AMID ALLEGATIONS OF 'RELIGIOUS CONVERSION' AND 'TERROR FUNDING', CM SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN HAS ORDERED A HIGH-LEVEL INQUIRY INTO THE MATTER

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bhopal, June 10: In a new twist to the hijab row in poll-bound Madhya Pradesh, the management of the school - where the controversy erupted over a poster of topper students (girls) wearing head scarves -, has been accused of having terror links.

The controversy broke out at a private English medium school 'Ganga Jamuna' in Damoh district when a poster of topper students, including Hindu girls, wearing hijab emerged.

Amid allegations of 'religious conversion' and 'terror funding', Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has ordered a high-level inquiry into the matter.

MP BJP head VD Sharma, who has levelled serious allegations against the school management and is pushing for an inquiry, said DGP Sudhir Saxena and Chief Secretary Iqbal Singh Bains will supervise the high-level inquiry ordered by Chief Minister Chouhan.

Meanwhile, state Home Minister



Narottam Mishra said investigation in the matter was at primary stage and the names of accused involved in alleged 'religious conversation' will be revealed soon. When asked about the alleged terror funding link, Mishra said the central agency will conduct an inquiry.

"Central agency NIA will in-

vestigate the terror funding link issue. As of now, NIA has not approached MP police for the same. If MP police asks for assistance, there will be full cooperation," Mishra said while briefing the press Thursday.

Mishra also said that staff members of Ganga Jamuna school will

be interrogated to identify the particular person who forced students for alleged 'religious conversion'.

"As the investigation proceeds, the name of the particular accused involved in the case would be revealed. An FIR against the school management was lodged Wednesday and accordingly a case has been registered under Section 289 A, 506 B of IPC along with Juvenile Justice Act," he added.

Damoh district SP Rakesh Singh has said the issue has become very sensitive and further action would be taken on the basis of statements of women (students) who were allegedly forced to convert their religion.

"Regular directions were being issued from the state government, following which an investigation was carried out. Cognisance was taken on the basis of statements of two women and the FIR was lodged," Rakesh Singh stated.

The state government had ordered derecognition of the Ganga Jamuna school within 24 hours when the controversy broke out last week.

Anonymous arms dropbox a big draw in Imphal valley

Local youth take advantage of the anonymous facility to deposit 130 weapons including sophisticated automatic rifles

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Imphal, June 10: A dropbox for returning weapons snatched from security forces set up at the home of a BJP legislator from Imphal East has become a popular attraction with local youth, who have taken advantage of the anonymous facility to deposit 130 weapons including sophisticated automatic rifles.

A large poster at a covered shed outside the home of L Susindro Meitei, who is currently a Minister in the Manipur government, says: "Please drop your snatched weapons here" both in English and Meitei language.

A tagline below this adds "feel free to do so", an indication that questions will not be asked how



the weapons were in the possession of those who drop by in the first place. A few weapons including a couple of automatic rifles and live ammunition belts were actually present in the box when a PTI reporter went there Saturday morning.

Susindro who was touring his constituency persuading young villagers to join in the peace process by depositing their weapons, later told PTI over the phone that he had set up the facility as, "Many a time those who come to surrender arms hesitate out of fear of the police... that's why this anonymous box."

He said that some 130 weapons have been received so far since it was set up a few days ago. "The keys to the box are kept with the police and they can come anytime

to pick up the weapons," the MLA added. Large numbers of weapons were looted from police stations in early May when ethnic violence broke out in the state of Manipur.

Since then both Chief Minister N Biren Singh and Union Home Minister Amit Shah have appealed to people to surrender their weapons. Army and para-military forces in collaboration with state police have been carrying out combing operations to defang communities and bring back peace here.

At least 35 weapons and warlike stores were recovered during joint combing operations by security forces Friday, an official said.

At least 100 people lost their lives and 310 others were injured in the ethnic violence in Manipur that broke out a month ago.

A total of 37,450 people are currently sheltered in 272 relief camps. Clashes first broke out May 3 after a 'Tribal Solidarity March' was organised in the hill districts to protest against the Meitei community's demand for Scheduled Tribe (ST) status.

Mahua flowers unlock new income model for tribals

THE TRIBALS NOT ONLY COLLECT THE FLOWERS BUT ALSO PROTECT THE TREES AS THEY ARE VENERATED IN THE COMMUNITY AND HOLD A SPECIAL PLACE IN THEIR CULTURE AND CUSTOMS

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Betul, June 10: Nisha Bele (37), a Korku tribal from Ratamati village in Betul district, distinctly remembers waking up at the crack of dawn and engaging in work till the sun was over her head in the sweltering summer to gather about 25 to 30 kg of mahua flowers every day.

The fear of wild animals also preyed upon her as she toiled on the forest floor, a part of Bhainsdehi forest range.

"The flowers had to be picked up one by one from the ground. The earlier we reached, the better chance we had of finding a tree that had not been marked by someone else for picking," she said.

Now, she can gather the same quantity in about 15 to 20 minutes, thanks to the Madhya Pradesh forest department's initiative to encourage net-quality mahua, wherein



nets are spread around the trees to catch the flowers as they fall naturally from the tree.

The small, yellowish-white flowers of mahua (madhuca longifolia) trees are known for their sweet fragrance. The flowers usually fall between 4 am and 12 noon from mid-April to May. The tribals not only collect the flowers but also protect the trees as they are venerated in the community and hold a special place in their culture and customs. They do not cut or harm these trees.

The Korku tribals have received community forest rights under the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006. They also have protection under the Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996.

Net-quality flowers are consid-

ered to be of a higher grade as they do not fall on the forest floor, thus significantly reducing the risk of contamination. The purity of flowers is also assured. They are used to produce oil, food products and beverages such as mahua tea. "They fetch us a higher price, too," added Bele.

In fact, impressed by the quality of mahua flowers collected by the tribal communities in Madhya Pradesh, OForest, a UK-based company, had reached an agreement by which the forest department will procure 200 tonnes of the minor produce to fulfil the commitment by year-end.

The company will process the flowers to make mahua tea, which is said to have antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties and can relieve stress. The flowers will be dried and roasted to brew tea that

has a slightly sweet and nutty flavour.

This is the first time that the villagers of Betul district are dealing with such a large order for mahua flowers. Together, Rateda Kala Samiti of Amla range and Chandu Van Samiti of Bhainsdehi range collect flowers from 1,250 trees by involving as many as 500 people. Four and eight villages coming under these respective ranges are part of the project.

The collectors sun-dry the flowers, allowing them to wither naturally. This step is crucial to preserve the flower's aroma and flavour. Once done, they are carefully packed and sent to the head office of the forest department in Bhopal, from where MP State Minor Forest Produce Federation takes charge of shipping the items internationally.

Centre constitutes Peace Committee for Manipur

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, June 10: To bring normalcy in the violence-hit Manipur, the Central government Saturday said that it has constituted a Peace Committee with the state's Governor Anusuiya Uikey as the Chairperson.

The Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) said that besides the Governor, the Committee will also include Chief Minister N. Biren Singh, few state Ministers, MPs, MLAs, leaders from different political parties, former civil servants, educationists, litterateurs, artists, social workers and representatives of different ethnic groups.

The MHA said that the mandate of the Committee will be to facilitate the peacemaking process among various ethnic groups of the state, including peaceful dialogue and negotiations between conflicting parties or groups.

"The Committee should strengthen social cohesiveness, mutual understanding and facilitate cordial communication between various ethnic groups," it added.

While addressing a press conference in Manipur June 1, Union Home Minister Amit Shah had announced that a Peace Committee under Governor Uikey will be set up which will have representatives of all political parties, besides representatives from the ethnic communities and social organisations.

Sarma, Singh meet to discuss situation in violence-hit Manipur

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Imphal, June 10: Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma Saturday called on his Manipur counterpart N Biren Singh to discuss the ongoing situation in Manipur where sporadic violence continues a month after ethnic clashes began in this northeastern state.

Sarma flew down from Guwahati earlier this morning for this meeting.

Sources said that the Assam CM was carrying a message from Delhi as all sides work to find a solution to the ethnic violence in the state that claimed over 100 lives since May 3.

No official briefing was held to inform the media about the meeting.

However, a senior BJP leader who was present at the meeting said, "We highlighted the issues of the state concerning the violence. Himanta Biswa Sarma as-

sured us he will work at his level best to restore peace in Manipur."

The leader, who did not want to be quoted, told PTI: "Sarma said the Manipur BJP should not hesitate to ask what is needed and he will make sure those requirements are met."

The Assam chief minister also asserted that he will inform Prime Minister Narendra Modi about the situation and will be back here again in a few days.

A total of 37,450 people are currently sheltered in 272 relief camps. Clashes first broke out May 3 after a 'Tribal Solidarity March' was organised in the hill districts to protest against the Meitei community's demand for Scheduled Tribe (ST) status.

Meiteis account for about 53 per cent of Manipur's population and live mostly in the Imphal Valley.

Tribals Nagas and Kukis constitute another 40 per cent of the population and reside in the hill districts.



of the day quote

The BJP has coined a word. They (BJP) are saying that it seems we too are going on the path of soft Hindutva. There is no need to panic. We have been very soft and the need now is to become hard

AKHILESH YADAV | SP PRESIDENT

The new Parliament building is a symbol of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's firm commitment towards national development

S JAISHANKAR | EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER

A united opposition could work a miracle in next year's Lok Sabha polls

SHATRUGHAN SINHA | TRINAMOL CONGRESS MP



It is not appropriate for the ED to work under pressure. Be it CBI, ED, or Income Tax Department, if these agencies work impartially, without pressure, then we will welcome them

ASHOK GEHLOT | RAJASTHAN CM

GUJARAT HC DENIES BAIL

The Gujarat High Court Saturday rejected the bail application of Afsalbhai Kasambhai Lakhani, who has been accused of posting objectionable content against Prime Minister Narendra Modi



THANE MURDER

Residents still in shock, scared

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Thane, June 10: Three days after the chopped body parts of a woman were recovered from a flat of a building in Maharashtra's Thane district, the residents of this housing complex say they are still in a state of shock and yet to come to terms with the fact that such a horrific incident occurred right where they live.

The police Wednesday recovered the chopped body parts of the 32-year-old victim, Saraswati Vaidya, from the seventh floor flat of Akashdeep building in Mira Road (East), where she resided with her 'live-in' partner Manoj Sane (56).

The couple had been living in this rented flat for the last three years. It is suspected that the murder took place on June 4, but came to light on June 7 after the police broke open the door of the couple's flat after their neighbours complained of foul smell emanat-



Police personnel take accused Manoj Sane into custody

PTI PHOTO

ing from there.

When the police and some of the neighbours entered the flat during Sane's absence, they were shocked to find some buckets and utensils filled with the chopped body parts. On the kitchen platform, they found boiled human

flesh in a pressure cooker and in a few vessels with the woman's hair lying on the floor. Horrified by the blood-curdling details of the crime that occurred in the building, its residents said they are yet to recover from the shock.

An eerie silence pervades the

entire housing society premises located in the bustling district adjoining Mumbai. Talking to reporters, Pratap Aswal, secretary of the society, said "Even now, the residents are in a state of shock and scared of moving around. The foul smell is still experienced in the premises and we are now sanitising the entire complex."

He also said that learning a lesson from this episode, the society management has decided to go for strict verification of the tenants' identity and background.

Sane, who worked at a ration shop, has claimed that Vaidya committed suicide by drinking poison and he only tried to dispose of her body by chopping it up. The accused, arrested on Thursday, also allegedly told the interrogators he was HIV-positive and never had any physical relationship with Vaidya. He has also told the police that Vaidya was his wife and not live-in partner.

Man gets death penalty for killing 5



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, June 10: A division bench of the High Court of Karnataka has confirmed the death sentence on a man who killed five persons including his three minor children.

The HC has also issued several directions to the prosecution in cases where it is seeking the death penalty. "The atrocity of the crime resulting in five deaths including 3 children below 10 years of age and the brutality with which the same has been committed, leaves us no option but to confirm the order of death sentence passed by the trial court, which we do with a heavy heart."

This in our considered opinion qualifies the test of rarest of rare cases requiring the award of death penalty," the bench of Justice Suraj Govindaraj and Justice G Basavaraja said disposing of two petitions filed by the convict and the State.

The HC had reserved the judgement on the petitions after completing the hearing on November 22, 2022 itself. But it had sought several pieces of information including certain records and reports.

These records, the court said were necessary to issue directions to be followed in all cases where the prosecution seeks for award of the death penalty. The accused Byluru Thippaiah, a labourer from Kenchanagudda Halli in Kampli, Hosapete, Ballari, suspected his

The High Court while confirming the death sentence, ordered for payment of compensation to Rajeshwari, the only child that survived the massacre

The High Court had reserved the judgement on the petitions after completing the hearing on November 22, 2022 itself. But it had sought several pieces of information including certain records and reports

wife of 12 years was having an affair which led to quarrels.

They had four children, and Thippaiah declared that only one of them was born to him. On February 25, 2017, he attacked his wife, Pakkeeramma with a chopper.

He also attacked his sister-in-law Gammamma and his children Pavithra, Nagaraj and Rajappa. All the five succumbed to their injuries. The Sessions Court at Ballari which conducted the trial against him, examined 36 witnesses and 51 material objects before finding him guilty and awarded the death sentence on December 3, 2019 under Section 302 (murder) of the IPC and directed him "to be hung till death."

Thippaiah approached the HC against the sentence imposed by the Trial Court while the prosecution approached the HC for confirmation of the death penalty. The HC in its judgment said that it was shocked at the brutality.

"The manner in which the offence has been committed by the appellant is having attacked two women and three children in the house, hacked them and chopped them resulting in multiple injuries being caused to them and the Appellant coming out of the house and proclaiming that he has killed the prostitutes while holding chopper covered in blood. The same would shock the conscience of anybody and has indeed shocked our conscience, despite us having dealt with so many cases of offences relating to murder," the HC said.

Gujarat ATS busts ISKP module; 4 held

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ahmedabad, June 10: The Gujarat ATS has busted an Islamic State of Khurasan Province (ISKP) module and arrested three men and a woman, in operations carried out in Porbandar and Surat, police said Saturday. The men hail from Srinagar in Jammu and Kashmir.

Acting on a tip-off, the Anti-Terrorist Squad (ATS) arrested three men from Porbandar and a woman from Surat city and seized from them "incriminating" materials that showed their association with the banned terrorist organisation, said Director General of Police (DGP) Vikas Sahay.

A first information report (FIR) has been registered against the four under the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA) and efforts are on to nab a wanted accused in this connection, Sahay said. The ISKP is a transnational Salafi-



Jihadist organisation and a UN-designated terrorist organisation.

"The three men were planning to use a fishing boat from Porbandar to cross the International Maritime Boundary Line and reach Afghanistan via Iran and join ISKP," Sahay told reporters. They were detained from Porbandar on Friday morning and were identified as Ubed Nasir Mir, Hanan Hayat Shol and Mohammad Hajim Shah, all residents of Srinagar, Shah said.

During preliminary interrogation, they revealed that they were trained and radicalised by a handler identified as Abu Hamza.

They also told the ATS that two more persons, identified as Zuber Ahmed Munshi from Srinagar and Sumerabanu Hanif Malek of Surat, were also members of the ISKP module and associated with them.

SHORT TAKES

Priest sent to judicial custody

Hyderabad: A city court Saturday remanded a priest of a temple in Hyderabad's Saroornagar to judicial custody for the murder of a 30-year-old woman with whom he was having an extramarital affair. Ayyagari Venkata Sura Sai Krishna, priest of the Maisamma temple who was arrested on Friday, was produced before a magistrate Saturday morning. He was remanded to judicial custody and was subsequently shifted to Cherlapally Jail.

Two arrested

New Delhi: Customs officials at the Indira Gandhi International (IGI) here have arrested two passengers for allegedly smuggling gold worth Rs 62, 82,379, officials said. The two individuals were apprehended based on APIS profiling at Terminal 3. "Both were found to be involved in a meticulously designed plan to smuggle foreign-origin gold into India using the domestic leg of a foreign-origin aircraft," the officials said. Detailed examination of baggage and a personal search of both passengers led to the discovery of 1,200 grams of gold.

Two held

New Delhi: Delhi Police have arrested two men after a septuagenarian woman was killed while her husband was injured by a group of armed robbers, who had entered their house and robbed them in northeast Delhi, an official said Saturday. According to police, on June 8, information was received regarding five-six persons, who had entered a house at street no-5 in Ambedkar Basti, Maujpur and robbed the residents of the house at knifepoint following which a police team was dispatched for the spot.

Man dies

New Delhi: An 85-year-old man died after a fire broke out in an apartment in Delhi's Dwarka area, a fire department official said Saturday. The deceased was identified as Sadan Chandra. Director of Delhi Fire Service (DFS) Atul Garg said that a call regarding a blaze in a flat on the seventh floor in Mass Apartment in Sector-10, Dwarka was received on Friday at 8.26 p.m.

NCB nabs three

Mumbai: The Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) has busted a drug trafficking racket by arresting three persons here and recovering 20 kg of mephedrone, worth Rs 50 crore, cash and gold ornaments in search operations, an official said Saturday.

Bihar BJP chief likens Rahul to Osama bin Laden

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Patna, June 10: In a scathing attack, Bihar BJP chief Samrat Chaudhary Saturday likened Congress leader Rahul Gandhi to slain Al Qaeda chief Osama bin Laden, saying that by just growing a beard, one cannot become the Prime Minister of a country.

While addressing a gathering in Araria to inform the people of the Central government's achievements in the past nine years, Chaudhary said: "Rahul Gandhi while enhancing the beard like Laden and roaming in the country will not make him Prime Minister. We perceive him as a 50-year-old child in politics. The state BJP chief also went on to say that if the party comes to power in Bihar, it will stop practices like cattle murder, love jihad and illegal intrusions.

Friday, Shrikant Shinde had said

BJP will make Shinde camp cry: MVA

Friday, Shrikant Shinde had said some leaders were trying to create hurdles in the alliance in Dombivli area (under Kalyan Lok Sabha seat) for their own selfish politics and that he was ready to leave the seat

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, June 10: The Shiv Sena (UBT) and the Nationalist Congress Party Saturday said the Bharatiya Janata Party will make the Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena "cry" for every Lok Sabha seat, the statements coming amid strife in the ruling alliance in Kalyan Lok Sabha seat represented by Shinde's son Shrikant.

Friday, Shrikant Shinde had said



some leaders were trying to create hurdles in the alliance in Dombivli area (under Kalyan Lok Sabha seat) for their own selfish politics and that he was ready to leave the seat since the aim was to ensure the Narendra Modi government returns with a thumping majority in the 2024 LS polls.

Latching on to the strain there,

Shiv Sena (UBT) Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Raut said the Kalyan-Dombivli area was a stronghold of the (undivided) Shiv Sena and the party had been winning from there for years now.

"The same seat was given to Shrikant Shinde who had no connection with the party. Uddhav Thackeray had pampered Shinde's

son. Let him fight his battle. The BJP will make them (Shinde-led Shiv Sena) cry for every single seat," Raut said.

The NCP said the BJP had plans to ditch Shinde in Kalyan and eventually force all Shiv Sena leaders to contest on its lotus symbol. "Looks like @BJP4Maharashtra has all plans to ditch MP Dr Shrikant Shinde in Kalyan Lok Sabha Constituency. Eventually BJP will force all others from Shinde camp to contest on BJP ticket or face permanent political isolation. @NCPspeaks," the party's spokesperson Mahesh Tapase said.

On Friday, in a bid to defuse the situation, Shrikant Shinde had said he would "back whichever candidate the senior leadership of BJP-Sena decides" for Kalyan as everyone was "working towards the BJP-Shiv Sena forming government at the Centre". Shrikant Shinde has been MP from Kalyan since 2014.

COMBAT PROWESS

Navy conducts mega operation in Arabian Sea

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 10: In one of the biggest demonstrations of its combat prowess in recent years, the Indian Navy has carried out a mega operation in the Arabian Sea that involved two aircraft carriers, multiple warships, submarines and over 35 frontline planes amid China's increasing presence in the Indian Ocean region.

The Navy's aircraft carriers -- INS Vikramaditya and newly inducted INS Vikrant -- were the centrepieces of the exercise as they served as floating airfields for a wide array of aircraft, including MiG-29K and helicopters such as MH60R, Kamov and Advanced Light Helicopters, officials said on Saturday.

The twin carrier CBG (carrier battle group) operations were held recently, they said without di-



vulging the specific date of the exercise. The Indian Navy said the "seamless operational" integration of the two aircraft carriers as well as the fleet ships and submarines is a powerful testament to the "pivotal role" of sea-

based air power and India's role as the preferred security partner in the Indian Ocean and beyond.

A carrier battle group or carrier strike group is a mega naval fleet comprising an aircraft carrier, accompanied by a large num-

ber of destroyers, frigates and other ships. "The Indian Navy has undertaken the twin-carrier CBG operations with more than 35 aircraft in Arabian Sea, demonstrating its formidable capability in ensuring sustained air operations across the vast maritime expanse and underscoring our commitment to safeguarding India's national interests," Indian Navy Spokesperson Commander Vivek Madhwal said.

He said the exercise marked a "significant milestone" in the Indian Navy's pursuit of enhancing maritime security and "power-projection" in the Indian Ocean and beyond. He said the exercise involved a seamless integration of two aircraft carriers along with a diverse fleet of ships, submarines and aircraft, showcasing India's technological expertise in the maritime domain.

"This demonstration of naval prowess underscores India's commitment to safeguarding its national interests, maintaining regional stability, and fostering cooperative partnerships in the maritime domain," Commander Madhwal said.

It is the first mega exercise involving the two aircraft carriers after induction of the indigenously-built INS Vikrant in September. The officials said almost all air assets of the Navy operated from the two aircraft carriers and they operated as mobile bases.

The exercise demonstrated that INS Vikrant and INS Vikramaditya can be positioned anywhere, allowing for increased mission flexibility, timely response to emerging threats and sustained air operations to safeguard national interests across the globe, they said.

international

of the day quote

The safer Taiwan is, the safer the world is. We would work to improve our rescue and defence capabilities with new technologies

TSAI ING-WEN | PRESIDENT, TAIWAN

All targets in this budget are artificial and not realistic like last year. The budget has a new external debt target of \$8.5bn but this would not be possible without the IMF

HAMMAD AZHA | PTI LEADER, PAKISTAN

India's commitment to import 10,000 MW of clean energy from Nepal in the next ten years has opened a new door for hydropower development

PUSHPA KAMAL DAHAL PRACHANDA | PM, NEPAL

SHORT TAKES

Biggest counterfeit haul in Turkey

Istanbul: Turkish security forces seized \$1 billion of counterfeit money in Istanbul and arrested six people involved in the operation, including one Ghanaian and three Swedish nationals, the governor's office said Friday. The counterfeit haul was the largest in Turkey's history, the office said. Gendarmerie forces tracked the suspects to a storage space in Istanbul's Kagithane district, where they seized the fake \$100 bills meant to be sent to African countries, the office said.

Jets collide on ground in Tokyo

Tokyo: Some flights were delayed at Tokyo's Haneda airport Saturday after two planes appeared to have collided on the ground near a taxiway, public broadcaster NHK reported, citing Japan's transport ministry. No injuries occurred, NHK and one of the airlines said, but the incident led to the closure of one of four runways at the airport from about 11 am. The broadcaster showed footage of jets from Taiwan's Eva Airways and Thai Airways on the ground.

Trudeau visits Kyiv

Kyiv: Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau visited Kyiv on Saturday in a gesture of support as Ukraine braces for a major counter-offensive against Russian forces and grapples with regular air strikes. Trudeau paid his respects at a memorial site in central Kyiv to Ukrainian soldiers who have been killed fighting pro-Russian forces since 2014. NATO member Canada, which has one of the world's largest Ukrainian diasporas, has supplied military and financial assistance to Ukraine during the full-scale invasion launched by Russia in February 2022.

SL lifts import bans

Colombo: Sri Lanka lifted import restrictions on 286 items, the Finance Ministry said Saturday, a fresh sign the South Asian nation is starting to emerge from its worst economic crisis in decades. The island off India's southern coast plunged into crisis last year as its foreign exchange reserves ran out. The government limited imports on more than 3,200 items, including seafood, electronics, and even musical instruments. Its fortunes have improved over the past nine months as Sri Lanka secured a \$2.9 billion bailout from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), moderated its onerous inflation and embarked on rebuilding its foreign exchange reserves.



The humanitarian situation in Ukraine is hugely worse than before the Kakhovka dam collapsed

MARTIN GRIFFITHS | UNDER SECRETARY-GENERAL, UN

LITTLE RELIEF FOR PAK'S ECONOMY

Pakistan's Finance Minister Ishaq Dar Saturday declared that the country was out of the economic vulnerability phase and the government would make payments to multilateral lenders on time while seeking bilateral debt restructuring



Trump's indictment to shake US Prez run

Former President Donald Trump described a Pentagon "plan of attack" and shared a classified map related to a military operation, according to a sweeping 37-count felony indictment related to the mishandling of classified documents that was unsealed Friday and that could instantly reshape the 2024 presidential race

AGENCIES

Washington, June 10: The latest twist in Donald Trump's attritional war with US law enforcement, as with so much else in the former president's story, throws the United States into unprecedented territory.

Facing multiple federal charges over his hoarding of government secrets, the mercurial Republican presents the country with the possibility of a winning candidate moving into the White House while under indictment - or running the government from a jail cell.

The defiant billionaire has dismissed the notion that he would ever drop out of his party's primary contest, reverting instead to a fa-

vored tactic of accusing his "corrupt" political adversaries of election interference.

"It likely won't sway undecided voters but it will galvanize Trump supporters who might be wavering or looking to a candidate with less baggage," Matt Shoemaker, a national security analyst and former intelligence officer, told AFP.

Constitutional crisis

Prosecutors in both the federal documents case and the state-level financial fraud probe targeting Trump in New York will hope to have him face justice before the country goes to the polls in 17 months.

But there is no guarantee of ei-



ther case wrapping up that quickly and Trump also faces federal and state-level probes into his efforts to subvert the 2020 election.

He would likely torpedo any outstanding federal prosecutions were he reelected, by attempting to pardon himself - an unprecedented scenario that would almost certainly spark a constitutional crisis.

But he would have little influence over state-level cases and his more immediate worry is the damage his legal woes could do to his campaign to win the Republican nomination in the first place.

The latest indictment allows Trump's primary challengers --

Florida Governor Ron DeSantis, former vice president Mike Pence and others - to level the criticism that the runaway frontrunner is unfit for office.

But they run the risk of alienating Trump's loyal base, whose support has only grown more fervent since the Manhattan indictment.

As a result, many rivals have rallied to Trump's side, perhaps hoping to keep their powder dry until he is finally taken out of the running by further indictments expected in the coming months.

Trump is under federal investigation over his role in the January 6, 2021 US Capitol insurrection and media reports suggest racketeering and conspiracy charges are set to drop in Georgia in August over the tycoon's campaign to overturn the election there.

Prosecutors Friday said Trump had been charged with almost 40 counts filed under multiple charges, including illegal retention of government secrets, obstruction of justice and conspiracy.

FIGHTING, FLOODING CONTINUES

Ukraine shuts last reactor at Europe's largest nuke plant



THE DECISION WAS TAKEN AS A SAFETY PRECAUTION AMID CATASTROPHIC FLOODING FROM THE COLLAPSE OF A NEARBY DAM AS RUSSIA'S WAR ON UKRAINE DRAGS ON THROUGH ITS 16TH MONTH

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kyiv, June 10: Ukraine's nuclear energy agency says it has put the last operating reactor at Europe's largest nuclear power plant into a "cold shutdown" - a safety precaution amid catastrophic flooding from the collapse of a nearby dam as Russia's war on Ukraine drags on through its 16th month.

Russian forces continued pummeling the country with missiles and drones overnight, with Ukrainian officials reporting at least four deaths and damage to a military airfield.

Five out of six reactors at the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant, which is occupied by Russian forces, are already in a state of cold shutdown, in which all control rods are inserted into the reactor core to stop the nuclear fission reaction and generation of heat and pressure.

Energoatom, the Ukrainian nuclear agency, said in a statement late Friday that there was "no direct threat" to the Zaporizhzhia plant due to the breach of the Kakhovka dam further down the Dnieper River, which has forced thousands of people to flee flooding and also sharply reduced water levels in a reservoir used to help cool the facility.

The last reactor was put into

cold shutdown Thursday, Energoatom said, adding that other factors in the decision included shelling near the site which has damaged overhead lines connecting the plant to Ukraine's energy system.

With all nuclear reactions stopped, temperatures and pressure inside reactors gradually decline, reducing the required intensity of water cooling of the radioactive fuel. This is a nuclear power plant's safest operating mode. Energoatom employees are still working at the power plant, although it remains controlled by the Russians.

The site's power units have not been operating since September last year. The head of the International Atomic Energy Agency is due to visit Ukraine in the coming days.

Analysts and Russia say that Ukraine has launched a counteroffensive in southern Ukraine, potentially aiming to retake territory near the plant.

New battlefield gains by Ukraine

Counterattacking Ukrainian forces have advanced up to 1,400 metres at a number of sections of the front line near the eastern city of Bakhmut in the past day, a military spokesman said Saturday. The advance is the latest in a series of similar gains reported this week by Kyiv near Bakhmut, which Russia said it had fully captured last month after the bloodiest and longest battle since it began its full-scale invasion in February 2022. "We're trying to conduct strikes on the enemy, we're counterattacking. We've managed to advance up to 1,400 metres on various sections of the front," the spokesperson for the eastern military command said, when asked about fighting near Bakhmut.

BREXIT TO 'PARTYGATE'

Johnson quits UK Parl

Former UK PM Boris Johnson quits as UK lawmaker after being told he will be sanctioned for misleading Parliament over lockdown-breaking parties at Downing Street during his premiership

REUTERS

London, June 10: Former British Prime Minister Boris Johnson abruptly quit as a member of parliament Friday in a furious protest against lawmakers investigating his behaviour, reopening deep divisions in the ruling Conservative Party ahead of a general election expected next year.

Johnson had been under investigation by a parliamentary inquiry looking into whether he misled the House of Commons about lockdown-breaking parties in Downing Street during the Covid-19 pandemic.

After Johnson received a confidential letter from the committee, he accused lawmakers investigating him of acting like a "kangaroo court" and being determined to end his political career.

Accusing the committee of mounting a "political hit job", Johnson said in a statement: "I am being forced out by a tiny handful of people, with no evidence to back up their assertions."

Parliament's privileges committee - the main disciplinary body for lawmakers - had the power to recommend Johnson be suspended from parliament. If the suspension is for more than 10 days, voters in his constituency could have demanded he stood for re-election to continue as their representative.

Johnson hinted that he could return to politics, declaring he was leaving parliament "for now".

But the decision to resign may be the end of his 22-year political



I am not alone in thinking that a witch hunt is underway to take revenge for Brexit and ultimately to reverse the 2016 referendum result. My removal is the necessary first step, and I believe there has been a concerted attempt to bring it about

BORIS JOHNSON | FORMER PM, UK

career, where he rose from parliament to mayor of London and then built a profile that tipped the balance of the 2016 European Union referendum in favour of Brexit.

Johnson, whose premiership was cut short in part by anger in his own party and across Britain over Covid rule-breaking lockdown parties in his Downing Street office and residence, said the committee had not found "a shred of evidence" against him.

The investigation is chaired by a senior Labour Party lawmaker, but the majority of lawmakers on the committee are Conservatives.

The committee said it will meet on Monday to conclude its inquiry and will publish its report soon. A spokesperson for the committee said Johnson had "impugned the integrity" of parliament with his resignation statement.

ATTACK ON SUNAK

The resignation will trigger a by-election for his constituency in west London. It is the second in a day for Prime Minister Rishi Sunak after an ally of Johnson, Nadine Dorries, announced she would step down.

Angela Rayner, deputy leader

of the Labour Party, said: "The British public are sick to the back teeth of this never-ending Tory soap opera played out at their expense."

Johnson came to power nearly four years ago, promising to deliver Brexit and rescue it from the bitter wrangling that followed the 2016 referendum. He shrugged off concerns from some fellow Conservatives that his narcissism, failure to deal with details, and a reputation for deceit meant he was unsuitable.

Some Conservatives enthusiastically backed the former journalist, while others, despite reservations, supported him because he was able to appeal to parts of the electorate that usually rejected their party.

Johnson used his resignation statement on Friday to deliver an attack on the premiership of Sunak, whom he partly blames for ending his government. The men, who worked closely together during the pandemic, have had a feud since Sunak resigned as finance minister last summer in protest against Johnson's leadership.

FORCIBLY CONVERTED TO ISLAM

Pak court refuses to send Hindu girl with parents

Kidnapping and forced conversions of young girls in the interior of Sindh have become a menace for Hindu families

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Karachi, June 10: A 14-year-old Hindu girl, who was allegedly kidnapped, forcibly converted to Islam and married off to a Muslim man in Pakistan's Sindh province, has appeared before a district court which refused to send her with her parents despite her insistence that she wanted to go with them.

Sohana Sharma Kumari was allegedly kidnapped at gunpoint from her home in the Benazirabad district of the southern Sindh province June 2 in front of her mother by her tutor and his accomplices.

Her father Dilip Kumar filed a complaint with the police, saying she was kidnapped. Later, the girl

appeared in a video stating clearly under duress that she had converted to Islam and married a Muslim man.

Her parents however insisted that she was underage.

The girl was recovered by police from a house in the district, five days after being kidnapped, after a lot of hue and cry on social media.

Sohana was brought to the district court in Larkana Friday where she in her statement told the judge she was abducted and forcibly converted to Islam and wanted to go with her parents.

However, the judge adjourned the hearing until June 12 stating that she appeared to be under pressure while giving her statement and sent her to a shelter home for women.

Her mother, Jamna Sharma, told the media at the court that her daughter was taking tuition at home and a few days back the teacher had told her he needed a Rs 100,000 loan.

In this Greek island, women hold power

IN CONTRAST TO MOST OF PATRIARCHAL GREECE, THE WOMEN OF OLYMPOS PLAY A COMMANDING ROLE IN VILLAGE LIFE

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Karpathos, June 10: "Here it is women who command!" declared Rigopoula Pavlidis, as she sang the virtues of her remote village on the island of Karpathos, one of Greece's rare matriarchal societies.

Sitting at a desk across the room painting religious icons, her husband Giannis nodded silently.

"My husband can't do anything without me, not even his tax return," Pavlidis laughed as she embroidered a traditional dress inside her workshop.



Many women still call themselves by their mother's surname and not their husband's

GIORGOS TSAMPANAKIS | LOCAL HISTORIAN

this centuries-old tradition, which has survived the Ottoman Empire in the 16th century and Italian rule in the 20th. Until the 1980s, there was no asphalt road to Olympos.

Among the traditions that survive is a Byzantine-era inheritance system that gives a mother's property to the eldest daughter, said local historian Giorgos Tsampanakis.

Rigopoula, the seamstress, is one of the beneficiaries of the tradition. She inherited 700 olive trees from her mother.

"The families did not have enough property to divide among all the children... and if we had left the inheritance to the men, they would have squandered it," she said.

Greek women traditionally moved into their new husband's home upon marriage. In Olympos, the opposite takes place. And women's prominence is also reflected in their names.

"The eldest daughter took the first name of the maternal grandmother, unlike the rest of Greece, where it was that of the paternal grandmother," said Tsampanakis.

The role of women in Olympos was further strengthened in the 1950s when the village men began to emigrate for work - mainly to the United States and European countries -- leaving their wives and daughters behind to manage families and farms on their own.

'We had no choice'

"We had no choice but to work in the absence of the men. It was our only way of surviving," recalled 67-year-old Anna Lentakis as she picked artichokes in the hamlet of Avlona near Olympos.

A few years ago, Lentakis ran the Olympos tavern. This has now passed into the hands of her eldest daughter Marina.

"I don't know if we were early feminists... but I like to say that the man is the head of the family, and the woman the neck," said Marina, who is in her 40s.

Marina's daughter Anna is only 13 years old, but she knows that one day she will take up the torch. "It's my grandmother's legacy and I'll be proud to take care of it!" she said.

But the "feminist" inheritance system only benefits the eldest children, said Alain Chaboz of the Geographical Society of Geneva, who has studied the subject.

"The youngest sons were forced into exile, and the youngest daughters had to stay on the island at the service of the elders. A kind of social caste was created," he said.



The possible deal between General Electric and Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd to co-manufacture jet engines in India will have a ripple effect across the American and Indian defence industries
ATUL KESHAP | INDIAN BUSINESS COUNCIL, US

US FED MAY PAUSE RATE HIKES

Most economists expect the Federal Reserve to pause interest-rate increases next week for the first time in 15 months and leave policy on hold through December, even as it confronts a resilient US economy and persistent inflation. The Federal Open Market Committee will keep rates steady at its June 13-14 meeting at the 5%-5.25% range, though officials face a closer call in July on what to do



of the day quote

We are committed to putting in place a concept to reduce the average release time of cargo to one hour in the future



VIVEK JOHRI | CHAIRMAN, CBIC

No other platform has this power and no other place has the people I've met this week. Stay tuned -- we're making history



LINDA YACCARINO | CEO, TWITTER

TVS Credit has demonstrated exceptional performance, achieving robust and profitable growth. Within a short span of time, our company's Assets Under Management have surpassed ₹20,000 crore supported by a strong balance sheet



SUDARSHAN VENU | CHAIRMAN, TVS CREDIT

SHORT TAKES

Ola Electric starts IPO proceedings

Mumbai: India's Ola Electric will hold talks next week with investors in Singapore and the United States on its planned stock market listing, the first of a series of meetings for its up to \$1 billion IPO, two sources with direct knowledge said. The sources said Ola, which makes electric scooters and is backed by investors such as SoftBank and Temasek, has plans to raise between \$600 million and \$1 billion in its initial public offering (IPO), which is planned for late 2023. With the IPO still some way off, Ola is embarking on investor meetings earlier than usual to explain the business potential of India's nascent EV market. Ola's founder and CEO Bhavish Aggarwal will travel to Singapore, United States and United Kingdom over the next two weeks, said the two sources, who declined to be named as the plans are confidential.

TVS Credit raises capital of ₹480cr

Chennai: Non-banking finance company TVS Credit Services Ltd has successfully raised equity capital of ₹480 crore from Premji Invest to fuel its growth plan including advancing its digitisation journey, the city-based company said Saturday. Premji Invest, the investment arm of Wipro founder Azim Premji's endowment, would pick up 9.7 per cent equity stake in TVS Credit for ₹737 crore as part of the transaction via a combination of primary and secondary investments. The primary capital raised would be utilised to further strengthen the efforts of TVS Credit in expanding its customer base in new markets, increasing the channel partner network, and advancing its digitisation journey.

WhatsApp rolling out new interface

San Francisco: Meta-owned WhatsApp is reportedly rolling out a new interface for a group setting screen on iOS. According to WABetaInfo, the group administrators that use the stable version of WhatsApp from the App Store can now experiment with a new interface for the group settings screen after installing the new update. Along with a redesigned group setting screen, the company is adding a new 'Add Other Participants' option that allows group administrators to choose who can add new members to the group. Moreover, the report noted that those who don't have this feature may receive it over the coming weeks.

CLOSER TO CASHLESS

India tops digital payments space

India's digital payments sector has been achieving significant milestones in terms of both value and volume, highlighting the strength and widespread acceptance of the country's payment ecosystem

AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 10: India has emerged as frontrunner in the global rankings in digital payments for the year 2022, data from government's citizen engagement platform MyGovIndia showed Saturday.

During the year under review, there were 89.5 million digital transactions in the country. India accounted for 46 per cent of the global real-time payments in 2022, which was more than the combined digital payments the next four top countries.

India has witnessed new milestones in digital payments, in both value and volume terms, as per statements by RBI experts. This shows the robustness of India's payment ecosystem as well as the country's acceptance of the digital, the experts pointed out.

MyGovIndia tweeted to mark the feat, "India keeps dominating the digital payment landscape! With innovative solutions and widespread adoption, we're leading the way towards a cashless economy."

Brazil took the second place, with the country clocking 29.2 million digital transactions. China followed at third spot with 17.6 million transactions.

Thailand was number four with 16.5 million transactions. South Korea followed with 8 million transactions, MyGovIndia data revealed.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has said that, "India is number one in digital payments. India is one of the countries where mobile data is the cheapest. Today, the country's rural economy is transforming."

Digital India Bill

During a press briefing Friday



India accounted for 46% of worldwide real-time payments with 89.5mn digital transactions in 2022

Brazil ranked 2nd with 29.2mn transactions, while China stood in 3rd place with 17.6mn transactions

Thailand secured 4th position with 16.5mn transactions, while SK recorded transactions worth 8mn

IT minister Rajeev Chandrasekhar gave a presentation on how far India has travelled in terms of digitisation in the last nine years. Chandrasekhar said AI will be regulated to ensure that it doesn't harm 'digital citizens'.

He added that the new digital personal data protection bill will be introduced in Parliament soon, and consultations with stakeholders will begin this month on the Digital India Bill.

India's position as a global leader in digital payments not only showcases its technological prowess but also underscores the country's commitment to building a more inclusive and efficient financial system. The country's continuous advancements in digital infrastructure have created an environment conducive to the growth of digital payments.

CERC to begin coupling power exchanges

IN THE PRESENT SCENARIO, BUYERS AND SELLERS AT EACH EXCHANGE DO TRADING OF ELECTRICITY AND DISCOVER SPOT PRICE SEPARATELY AT THESE EXCHANGES. AFTER COUPLING OF EXCHANGES, THE PRICE DISCOVERY WOULD BE UNIFORM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 10: The power ministry has asked Central Electricity Regulatory Authority (CERC) to initiate the process of coupling multiple power exchanges, a mechanism which seeks to ensure uniformity in price discovery of energy at trading platforms.

At present India has three power exchanges -- Indian Electricity Exchange (IEX), Power Exchange



The move is also expected to bring down the power tariff in the country significantly

NAVEEN SINGH | HEAD (BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT), HINDUSTAN POWER EXCHANGE

of India (PXIL) and Hindustan Power Exchange (HPX).

In the present scenario, buyers and sellers at each exchange do trading of electricity and discover spot price separately at these exchanges. After coupling of exchanges, the price discovery would be uniform.

In a communique to the power regulator CERC, the ministry said, "Several stakeholders approached the Ministry of Power on the subject of market coupling in the context of multiple power exchanges. The ministry of power has decided to go ahead with the process...CERC

is requested to take suitable action, so that the process of consultation and the finalisation of the construct for its implementation is done expeditiously and the same can be implemented."

Naveen Singh, head, business development at Hindustan Power Exchange, said in a statement that the decision to implement market coupling on power exchanges is a welcome move for the power market.

"We thank the power minister and the power ministry for initiating such a transformative re-

form. We are confident that the CERC would soon come up with the necessary regulatory framework to ensure its implementation at the earliest."

He pointed out that this will give a fillip to the service levels in the power market, and ensure better transparency and uniform prices discovery across exchanges.

An IEX spokesperson said, "Today in India we have a voluntary market framework where all exchanges have equal opportunities. Market coupling is done to couple different markets operating in different geographies, which is not applicable in our case."

The spokesperson explained that in India all the regions are already coupled and the country has one market and one price.

"Government has requested the CERC to initiate the process of consultation and finalisation of construction. I am sure all aspects like the objective of coupling and need in the current market framework will be examined," the spokesperson added.

The IEX has the largest market share of 88 per cent in total power trade at multiple exchanges in India.

Count of publicly held firms shrinking in US

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New York, June 10: A strange trend that has surfaced in the American financial landscape is that the number of publicly held companies is shrinking, a media report said.

The count of publicly listed companies traded on US exchanges has fallen substantially from its peak in 1996, CNN reported.

Back then, the number exceeded 8,000 companies. Today, that count has dropped by more than 50 per cent to just 3,700, according to data from the Center for Research in Security Prices.

It's not that America has half as many companies as 30 years ago it's that companies are increasingly staying private, largely outside the scrutiny of the public eye, CNN reported. In 2022, the US IPO market fell 94.8 per cent to \$8 billion, a 32-year low.

Unemployment rate falls in May

Decline in labour participation in May 2023 was considerably higher in rural India compared to urban India

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, June 10: The unemployment rate in India fell to 7.7 per cent in May due to a decline in the labour participation at 441.9 million, according to a data released by private economic think tank CMIE.

Unemployment rate in India among people aged 15 years and above fell to 7.7 per cent in May 2023, from 8.5 per cent in the previous month, CMIE's Natasha Somayya K said in an analysis on its website.

The unemployment rate inched down as a consequence of a fall in the labour participation, which



implies a fall in the number of people who entered the labour market in search of work.

Compared to April, labour participation rate (LPR) fell by 1.1 percentage point to 39.6 per cent in May, she said.

She stated that in urban India, the labour force shrank by close to 4.5 million. There were around 147 million people in the urban labour

force in April, which inched down to 142.5 million in May.

According to the CMIE (Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy) data, the urban labour market recorded a fall in the number of employed as well as unemployed people.

The 4.5 million fewer people in the urban labour force in May was the result of a combination of a decline in jobs by around 2.4 million and a fall in the number of unemployed in urban India by 2.1 million, it said.

This resulted in a total of 129.5 million people in the urban workforce, and around 13 million unemployed persons, it added.

Rural India also displayed a similar trend, posting a fall in both employment and unemployment numbers. The rural labour force reduced to 299.4 million in May from 306.5 million in the previous month.

The rural labour force reduced to 299.4 million in May from 306.5 million in the previous month.

'Oil prices to fall if int'l crude cost remains stable'

PETROLEUM MINISTER SAID THAT OIL FIRMS HAVE RECOVERED SOME OF THEIR LOSSES AND CAN CUT RATES IF THEY DO WELL IN THE NEXT QUARTER

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 10: Petroleum Minister Hardeep Singh Puri said Saturday that oil marketing companies (OMCs) will be in a position to look at the issue of reducing petrol and diesel prices if the international crude cost remains stable at around \$74-75 and these firms have a good next quarter.

The Narendra Modi-led government has ensured that there is no rise in oil prices since April 2022, the BJP leader said and noted that it will make certain that consumers suffer no hardship.

To questions on whether a reduction in oil prices was under consideration, he said he was not in a position to make an announcement on the issue. "As we



go along we will see what can be done," the minister said.

He said state-run oil marketing companies did "okay" in the last quarter. "They have recovered some of their losses. They have been very good corporate citizens. As we go along we will see

what can be done," he said.

The issue of pricing is a dynamic matter, he said, adding that the government has taken several welfare measures in its nine years term to help people.

Puri said the non-BJP state governments are most vocal about

petroleum prices even when they sell petrol and diesel at higher prices than BJP governments by not reducing VAT.

In this context, he referred to the situation in neighbouring countries like Pakistan and Sri Lanka without naming them and noted the power crisis they have suffered.

The western neighbour has to cut down on electricity after evening, the minister said and lauded Modi for pursuing policies that kept availability and affordability under control while also pushing sustainability by promoting green energy.

The government is also working to push the country's refining capacity to 400-450 million metric tonne from around 252 MMT now, he said.

BIZ BUZZ



V Guard Industries, leading electricals and home appliances manufacturer of the country, organised an event to felicitate the winner under RISHTA Program 2022-23 in Sambalpur Friday. Sushil Kumar Mishra (electrician) won the bumper prize and was presented with a brand new Hyundai I20. Biswanath Bhandari (General Manager - East), Sumanta Kumar Pradhan (Branch Manager - Bhubaneswar Branch) were present in the event along with 30 electricians, dealers, distributors and V Guard staffers.

Netflix, Amazon, Disney-backed group protests new tobacco rules

THE NEWLY-NOTIFIED RULES MAKE IT MANDATORY FOR OTT PLATFORMS TO DISPLAY ANTI-TOBACCO WARNINGS AND DISCLAIMERS AS SEEN IN MOVIES SCREENED IN THEATRES AND TELEVISION PROGRAMMES

REUTERS

New Delhi, June 10: An Indian group representing Netflix, Amazon and Disney has told the government its new tobacco warning rules are impossible to implement for streaming giants and will impinge on content creators' freedom of expression, a letter seen by Reuters showed.

As part of India's anti-tobacco drive, the health ministry last month ordered streaming platforms to insert static health warnings during smoking scenes within three months. Also, India wants at least 50 seconds of anti-tobacco disclaimers, including an audio-visual, at the start and in the middle of each program.

The three companies, and Indian billionaire Mukesh Ambani's streaming platform JioCinema, were recently part of a privately held discussion to consider push-back options, including a legal challenge, as executives worried that the rules would require editing of millions of hours of Indian and Hollywood content.

The amount of multilingual content on platforms "is very high ... there is a practical impossibility associated with including such warnings across content," the letter by the Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI) stated.

IAMA asked the health ministry to revisit the "onerous" rules, saying a survey had shown viewers were indifferent to depictions



of smoking on streaming platforms, the letter said.

Beyond Hollywood content, streaming companies Netflix, Amazon, Disney and JioCinema have become increasingly popu-

lar in India. Popular Hindi content starring Bollywood actors on such platforms have smoking scenes.

Activists have welcomed India's new rules, saying it would dis-

courage smoking in a country where tobacco kills 1.3 million people each year.

The companies believe content descriptors - which warn users with a label "smoking" in a video alongside its title at the start - were more effective, IAMA said.

The "disruptions" caused by warnings, the group said, were "problematic for creators that put in considerable investments."

All smoking and alcohol drinking scenes in movies in India's cinemas and on TV, under law, require health warnings, but there were so far no regulations for the streaming giants.

In 2013, Woody Allen stopped his film, Blue Jasmine, from being screened in India after learning that mandatory anti-tobacco warnings would be inserted into its smoking scenes.

Sanjay Seth of non-profit Sambandh Health Foundation said there should be no difference in how smoking is discouraged in cinema, and on digital platforms. "They must implement this. It will save lives," Seth said.

IAMA has cautioned that the rules will significantly impact consumer viewing experience, and "throttle creativity and artistic expression"

KOHLI STANDS IN AUSTRALIA'S WAY AS INDIA NEED ANOTHER 280 TO WIN WORLD TEST CHAMPIONSHIP

AUSSIES STILL IN CONTROL



Ajinkya Rahane gets a fist bump from Virat Kohli during their unbroken partnership against Australia at the Oval, Saturday

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, June 10: A focused Virat Kohli stood between Australia and World Test Championship mace as India require another 280 runs to create history on what promises to be an intriguing final day of the summit clash.

Kohli was batting on 44 (60b, 7x4) and had Ajinkya Rahane (20 batting) for company during a

stand of 71 for the fourth wicket as India ended the fourth day on 164/3 in pursuit of world record chase of 444.

Having been set a mammoth target, India lost Shubman Gill (18) to a contentious catch before skipper Rohit Sharma (43, 60b, 7x4, 1x6) and Cheteshwar Pujara (27) brought about their own downfall to make it 93/3 in 31st over.

Australia had declared their sec-

ond innings at 270/8 midway into the afternoon session after an unbeaten 66 from Alex Carey.

Though the highest chase at The Oval is 263, Indian fans will not lose hope going into day five with Kohli and Rahane hardly facing any trouble with batting not looking so difficult on the penultimate day. The pitch continues to have variable bounce but played better than the first three days.

Kohli looked in sublime touch and used his strong wrists to play the flick between mid-wicket and mid-on off the Australian pacers.

He also whipped Nathan Lyon (1/32) for a crisp on drive before leaning into a straight drive off Mitchell Starc towards the end of day's play.

The Indian openers, Rohit and Gill, made a brisk start and were not afraid to go for their strokes against the formidable duo of Pat

Cummins and Scott Boland.

However, at the stroke of tea, Boland got one to bounce little extra from length and it flew from ball the shoulder of Gill's bat only to be lapped up by a diving Cameron Green at gully.

It was the second time in the game that Green took a screamer though replay suggested it was a close call with the ball very close to the ground. Lyon was brought into the attack in the 20th over break the stand between Rohit and Pujara and he did exactly that.

Next to depart was Pujara, who played an uncharacteristic shot – a non-existent ramp shot off Cummins, to get caught behind. Rahane, who did not take the field in Australia's second innings to protect his bruised finger, looked comfortable in the middle.

In the first session, India picked up a couple of wickets but Australia chugged away to take extend their overall lead to 374 runs after reaching 201/6 at lunch.

Australia had to battle hard to get 78 runs in 26 overs from the morning session. On the hottest morning of the game, the pitch continued to play plenty of tricks with both seamers and spinners being in business.

Australia, who resumed the day at 123/4, lost Marnus Labuschagne (41) in the third over of the day. The Aussie batter was not able to add to his overnight score as he edged a beauty from Umesh Yadav (2/32) that pitched around off-stump and nipped away.

Mohammed Siraj, who has troubled the Aussie batters the most in the game, got one to kick off from the spot and hit Green's right shoulder. Ravindra Jadeja (3/45) was brought into the attack after eight overs and his tactics were pretty clear – get the ball to turn sharply from outside the leg stump.

BRIEF SCORES: Australia 469 & 270/8 (Alex Carey 66 n o, Mitchell Starc 41; Ravindra Jadeja 3/58, Mohammed Shami 2/39); India 296 & 164/3 (Virat Kohli 44 batting, Rohit Sharma 43; Nathan Lyon 1/32). Match to continue.

'Aggression in bowling very important' for Siraj



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, June 10: India pacer Mohammed Siraj believes aggression brings the best out of him, saying being aggressive on the ground is the recipe for his success. Siraj has received a lot of international success since making his Test debut against Australia in 2020.

The Hyderabad pacer has been India's stand-out performer with the ball in the ongoing World Test Championship final against Australia at The Oval, picking four wickets in the first innings.

"Aggression is very important in my bowling. Test cricket is based on aggression. It's not just about delivering simple ball and walking away without saying anything," Siraj said in a video posted by the ICC.

"When I bowl with aggression, I keep my body engaged. Unlike some other bowlers who bowl here and there with aggression, my bowling is precise. The more aggression I put into my game, the more success I achieve. I thoroughly enjoy playing with aggression," added Siraj, who is known for bowling hostile spells.

Just like any cricketer, Siraj considers Test cricket as the pinnacle of the game and rues the fact that his father could not watch him make his Test debut.

Siraj's father Mohammed Ghouse had died just a few weeks before the pacer made an impressive Test

debut in Melbourne December 26, 2020, picking up 5/77.

"That year was difficult for me personally because I lost my dad during that time. Afterward, I wasn't sure if I would make my debut or not. However, I played my first match because (Mohammed) Shami bhai was injured. Then I got the opportunity to play in Melbourne," he said.

"At that time I used to think how proud my dad would have been if he was alive because he wanted me to make Test debut for India and play Test cricket. Playing Test cricket is a matter of immense respect and honour."

By his own admission, Siraj started playing the game for fun and leisure. "Initially I used to play a lot of tennis-ball cricket. I never thought that I would become an Indian player. When I used to play tennis-ball cricket, I always used to give my 100 percent," he said.

"Then gradually I started playing in the league, I held the seasoned ball for the first time. At that time I didn't know about outswing and inswing. Nonetheless, I took five wickets on my debut. From then on, I continued playing consistently and then my confidence grew.

"The idea of playing for India never crossed my mind but I kept enjoying the game. If I had thought playing for India, I wouldn't have been able to achieve it," Siraj said. "I stuck to my plan and earned the opportunity to wear India cap. I am very proud of myself."

Djokovic eyes history with 23rd GS crown

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Paris, June 10: Novak Djokovic pursued Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal for quite some time. They were the guys he measured himself against. The players who established the standards he sought to surpass.

Sure, when Djokovic looks across the net in Court Philippe Chatrier during the French Open final Sunday, he will see Casper Ruud trying to prevent him from earning a men's-record 23rd championship at a Grand Slam tournament.

Neither Federer (who announced his retirement last year) nor Nadal (who is out since January with a hip injury and recently had arthroscopic surgery) will be at Roland Garros, racket in hand and ready to present a challenge, of course.

Still, it's important to remember that the milestone Djokovic is chasing now is in many ways defined by his two great rivals. Entering the 2011 season, Federer owned 16 major championships, Nadal nine and Djokovic one. Just five years ago, Federer was at 20, Nadal 17 and Djokovic at 12.

Since then? Djokovic has collected 10 of the last 19 Slam titles and made clear his intention to keep adding to his total. Federer stopped at 20; entering Sunday, Djokovic and Nadal are tied at 22. The only players in tennis history to exceed that number are Serena Williams, whose 23 are the most in the Open era, and Margaret Court,

whose 24 came in part during the amateur era.

Ruud will see what he can muster in an attempt to be the champion at a major for the first time. While this is Djokovic's 34th appearance in a major final — tied with Chris Evert for the most by a man or woman — it will be Ruud's third.

Ruud is 0-2 so far, and both losses came in 2022: against Nadal at Roland Garros, and against Carlos Alcaraz at the US Open. Ruud mentioned repeatedly that he will aim to avoid feeling pressure Sunday.

"It's just a matter of not thinking, like, I need' to win this match. This is a word that I try to sort of avoid. Obviously in the beginning of the tournament, that's sort of what you feel more and what you think about more, like: This is important to try to get this win and get going in the tournament," said Ruud, a 24-year-old from Norway who is coached by his father, Christian, a former professional player.

"But now I'm in the final. It's been a great two weeks, no matter what happens on Sunday, and I'm going to, of course, give it my all," Ruud said, "but sometimes you play your best tennis when you don't think too much."

He will see if he can devise a better way to attack the problems presented by Djokovic, a 36-year-old from Serbia. They have played four times previous, twice on hard courts and twice on clay, and not only is Djokovic 4-0, but he has won all eight sets.

INDIA PIP JAPAN TO REACH FINAL

EYES EYE JUNIOR ASIA CUP TITLE AFTER SEALING WORLD CUP QUALIFICATION

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kakamigahara (Japan), June 10: Sunelita Toppo fired a field goal as India eked out a narrow 1-0 win over hosts Japan to enter the final of the Women's Junior Asia Cup hockey tournament here Saturday.

The win also sealed their berth in the FIH Junior World Cup slated to be held in Santiago from November 29-December 10 this year. The top three teams from the Women's Junior Asia Cup 2023 make the cut for the global showpiece. This was also India's only second entry in Junior Asia Cup final after 2012.

After goalless three quarters, Sunelita finally broke the deadlock in the 47th minute to seal the issue. India will play either China or Korea in the final Sunday.

It was a keenly-contested match between the two sides and both looked in no mood to give an inch to each other till Sunelita's strike. Both India and Japan had ample scoring chances, including as many as 12 penalty corners each but failed to utilise the set pieces.

India started on an aggressive note and enjoyed early possession besides also making a couple of circle penetrations. Japan too got their footing in the match after India's early domination.

There was hardly anything to separate between the two sides with the backline of the two teams pro-



ducing resolute performance. A minute before the first quarter, Japan secured a penalty corner but Indian custodian Madhuri Kindo easily blocked a feeble dragflick.

Japan ended the quarter on a strong note, earning another penalty corner but the effort went wide of the target. Three minutes into the second quarter Japan secured another penalty corner but Madhuri once again came to India's rescue.

Minutes later it was India's time to earn a penalty corner but Vaishnavi Phalke fired her flick straight to Japanese goalie Misaki Saito. Both the sides fought tooth and nail but failed to strike the first blood in the opening two quarters.

After the change of ends, Japan enjoyed the share of possession and had more attacks to keep India on backfoot. The Indians, however, got a golden chance to take the lead in the 39th minute when they

were awarded a penalty stroke, but Annu failed to convert the opportunity.

India were guilty of missing scoring opportunities from penalty corners as the stalemate continued after 45 minutes. But the deadlock was finally broken two minutes into the final quarter when Toppo scored a brilliant field goal after being fed by good build up from Mahima Tete and Jyoti Chhatari.

Indian archers finish with six silver, 1 bronze

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Singapore, June 10: Indian archers crumbled under pressure against the mighty Koreans and Chinese to lose all their six summit clashes to conclude their Asia Cup Stage 3 campaign in fifth spot in the medal standings, here Saturday. Even without a single yellow metal, India ended up with seven medals – six silver and one bronze.

The archery powerhouse Korea accounted for four gold, one silver and two bronze medals to top the medal standings. China finished second with four gold and three bronze medals.

Indian team of Sakshi Chaudhary, Pragati and Deepika went down to Korea by two points (232-234) in the compound women's team final.

The compound men's team, comprising Ridhi Phor, Ruma Biswas and Aditi Jaiswal, followed suit as they lost out from being 59-all to go down 235-238.

In the men's recurve final, India lost to China 1-5. Parth Salunkhe conceded his men's recurve gold medal match to Qi Xiangshuo of China 2-6.

Indian woman compound archer Ruma Biswas went down to AN Qizuan of China 2-6. Pragati won a bronze medal for India defeating her teammate Deepshikha 147-146 in the compound women's individual third place playoff.

Victims are being pressurised: Protesting wrestlers

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Sonepat, June 10: The WFI chief Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh is using his influence to put sexual harassment victims under pressure and forcing them to change their statements, the protesting wrestlers alleged Saturday, threatening to resume their stir if a strong action is not taken against him by June 15.

The government had assured the wrestlers that a charge-sheet will be filed against the outgoing Wrestling Federation of India chief Singh by June 15, following which they had halted their protest.

The wrestlers called a 'Panchayat' at Chhotu Ram Dharamshaala in Sonepat district, inviting khap,

farmers and members from women organisation, who have supported them in their "fight for justice".

The wrestlers apprised their supporters of the discussion they had with Sports Minister Anurag Thakur Wednesday. Olympic medalist Sakshi Malik said efforts are being made to break the victims.

"It's proved, the statements were recorded under section 161 and 164 and it changed. We can't understand," Sakshi said referring to withdrawal of sexual harassment charges by a minor, who is one of the seven complainants in the case.

"It is clear that father of the minor was under pressure. Pressure is being built. For how long we will fight then," she said. "Bajrang



is getting calls, bik jao, toot jao (take bribe, end the protest). Wrong narratives are being set (by media).

It breaks our hearts," she said. "That is why we had said first arrest him and then investigate. If

he is in police custody, he can't pressurise. Otherwise, one by one, victims will break. Till he is out, an atmosphere of terror will remain."

Bajrang Punia, one of the key members of the protest, while speaking during the panchayat, insisted that no politics is involved in their stir against the WFI chief.

He said they not yet decided on the venue of the protest and it could be either "Jantar Mantar or Ram Leela Maidan". The police has already made it clear that the wrestlers will not be allowed back to Jantar Mantar.

Vinesh Phogat was not part of the discussion when Thakur had invited wrestlers for an interaction and she was absent even today.