



KRITI'S DIGITAL DEBUT

Actor Kriti Sanon will produce and star in a digital film, exploring her interest in production

LEISURE P2



ANOTHER GAIN

Ukrainian military officials say their troops have retaken another southeastern village from Russian forces

INTERNATIONAL P10



EYES ON PRANNOY

HS Prannoy will be in the spotlight as shuttlers gear up for the Indonesia Open

SPORTS P12

Oppn seeks probe into CoWIN 'data breach'

Congress alleges it is a case of 'criminal negligence' and asks why the government is sitting on a data protection law

AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 12: Opposition parties Monday demanded an inquiry into claims about breach of data of citizens registered on the CoWIN platform and asked the government to take deterrent action.

The government has termed such reports as 'mischievous' and 'without any basis,' while asserting that the CoWIN portal is completely safe with adequate safeguards for data privacy.

Rajeev Chandrasekhar, Union Minister of State for Information Technology, said the nodal Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In) immediately responded and it does not appear that the CoWIN app or database has been directly breached.

Congress leaders alleged it was a case of 'criminal negligence' and asked why the government was sitting on a data protection law.

"In its Digital India frenzy, GoI has woefully ignored citizen privacy. Personal data of every single Indian who got the COVID-19 vaccination is publicly available. Including my own data. Who let this happen?"

Why is GoI sitting on a data protection law?" Congress MP Karti Chidambaram tweeted.

Minister of Electronics and Information Technology Ashwini Vaishnaw must answer, he said.

TMC national spokesperson Saket Gokhale also attacked Vaishnaw.

"This is a matter of serious national concern. And predictably, the Minister-in-charge of this is Ashwini Vaishnaw who heads the Electronics, Communications, and IT portfolios in addition to Railways. How long will incompetence of Ashwini Vaishnaw be ignored by PM Modi?" he said.

Congress spokesperson Shama Mohamed claimed the personal information of all Indian citizens, who registered themselves on the CoWIN portal, has been leaked on Telegram. "This includes their phone numbers, Aadhaar and PAN card details. The Modi government has compromised the security and privacy of Indians! This is criminal negligence!" she alleged.

In a statement, CPI(M) demanded a thorough inquiry: "This is of serious concern and an infringement of the right to privacy which was declared by the Supreme Court as a fundamental right of all Indians. CPI(M) demands a thorough investigation be conducted and those responsible for such a major breach in the security of personal information of Indians must be identified followed by deterrent action," it said.



CYCLONE ALERT: High sea waves crash at the Gateway of India in Mumbai, Monday, ahead of the landfall of cyclone 'Biparjoy' off Gujarat coast June 15.

PTI PHOTO

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



The Modi Ji Thali with khichdi, saag, dhokla & rasgulla is only available in the US. Here, you'll only get free rations

MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VALUE	VARIATION
SENSEX	62724.71	↑ 99.08
NIFTY	18601.50	↑ 38.10
DOLLAR	82.53	↓ ₹0.03
EURO	88.6330	↑ ₹0.01
GOLD	₹59,663	↓ ₹158
SILVER	₹73,090	↓ ₹706

WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
MAX	44.3°C	43.2°C
MIN	29.0°C	29.4°C
Humidity	59%	54%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil
Forecast	Clear sky mainly	

China's nuke arsenal growing

According to Stockholm International Peace Research Institute's estimate, the size of China's nuclear arsenal increased from 350 warheads in January 2022 to 410 in January 2023 and it is expected to keep growing

AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 12: China has been increasing its nuclear arsenal, while other nuclear-armed states including the US, Russia, the UK, France, China, India and Pakistan continue to modernise their weapons, leading Swedish think-tank Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) said Monday.

Several nuclear-armed states deployed new nuclear-armed or nuclear-capable weapon systems in 2022, SIPRI said in its yearbook.

According to the watchdog's estimate, the size of China's nuclear arsenal increased from 350 warheads in January 2022 to 410 in January 2023 and the report said it is expected to keep growing.

"Depending on how it decides to structure its forces, China could potentially have at least as many intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) as either the USA or Russia by the turn of the decade," it said.

The SIPRI said India and Pakistan appear to be expanding their nuclear arsenals, and both countries introduced and continued to develop new types of nuclear delivery systems in 2022.

"China has started a significant expansion of its nuclear arsenal,"



Nuclear arms control and disarmament diplomacy suffered major setbacks following Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022

While Pakistan remains the main focus of India's nuclear deterrent, India appears to be placing growing emphasis on longer-range weapons, including those capable of reaching targets across China

said Hans M Kristensen, associate senior fellow with SIPRI's Weapons of Mass Destruction Programme and director of the Nuclear Information Project at the Federation of American Scientists.

While Pakistan remains the main focus of India's nuclear deterrent, India appears to be placing growing emphasis on longer-range weapons, including those capable of reaching targets across China, the report said.

"The nine nuclear-armed states

-- the United States, Russia, the United Kingdom, France, China, India, Pakistan, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea) and Israel -- continue to modernise their nuclear arsenals and several deployed new nuclear-armed or nuclear-capable weapon systems in 2022," the SIPRI said.

"Of the total global inventory of an estimated 12,512 warheads in January 2023, about 9,576 were in military stockpiles for potential use -- 86 more than in January 2022," it

said. "Of those, an estimated 3,844 warheads were deployed with missiles and aircraft, and around 2,000 -- nearly all of which belonged to Russia or the US -- were kept in a state of high operational alert, meaning that they were fitted to missiles or held at airbases hosting nuclear bombers," the SIPRI said.

It said Russia and the US together possess almost 90 per cent of all nuclear weapons.

The sizes of their respective nuclear arsenals seem to have remained relatively stable in 2022, although transparency regarding nuclear forces declined in both countries in the wake of Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, the report said.

"In addition to their useable nuclear weapons, Russia and the USA each holds more than 1,000 warheads previously retired from military service, which they are gradually dismantling," it said.

"We are drifting into one of the most dangerous periods in human history," said SIPRI director Dan Smith. "It is imperative that the world's governments find ways to cooperate in order to calm geopolitical tensions, slow arms races and deal with the worsening consequences of environmental breakdown and rising world hunger," he said.

CS asks Tata Power to address energy woes

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 12: Amid statewide protests and gherao of Energy Minister PK Deb's official residence here over frequent power outages during the scorching summer heat, Chief Secretary PK Jena Monday asked Tata Power to promptly address the electricity supply problems.

Jena also asked all four distribution companies owned by Tata Power to take immediate steps whenever power disruption is reported and to carry out quick restoration work, particularly after nor'wester or any other weather-related incidents.

The issue was highlighted following power supply disruption and frequent power cuts in the state capital following the June 8 nor'wester. Jena issued the direction at a meeting of top officials of the power distribution companies and energy department. The objective of the meeting was to find a solution to unannounced power cuts at a time when the entire state was reeling under scorching heat. He asked the power distribution

Tomatoes hurled at Energy Minister's residence

The student wing activists of Congress Monday hurled tomatoes at the residence of Energy Minister Pratap Keshari Deb in protest against frequent power cuts in many parts of the state including Bhubaneswar at the peak of summer. Hundreds of Chhatra Congress supporters carrying lanterns and handmade palm leaf fans shouted slogans and pelted tomatoes at the minister's residence.



Sambalpur India's hottest at 46.1°C

Severe heatwave conditions continued to prevail across Odisha with Sambalpur recording a maximum temperature of 46.1 degrees Celsius to become the hottest place in India for the day, Monday. At least 31 places of Odisha recorded a day temperature of 40 degrees or above, of which 16 places registered above 43 degrees. Hirakud recorded a maximum temperature of 45.6 degrees followed by Sonepur (45), Bargarh (44.9) and Bhubaneswar (44.3). Bolangir, Boudh, Titlagarh, Nayagarh and Talcher sizzled at 44 degrees while it was 43.9 degrees at Angul, 43.4 at Jharsuguda and 43.2 at Rourkela, Dhenkanal, Cuttack and Nuapada.

companies to receive complaints from people over the phone and also respond to social media posts.

CM sanctions ₹184cr for 42 ULBs

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, June 12: Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Monday approved ₹183.81 crore for 42 urban local bodies (ULBs) spread across 10 districts of Southern Revenue Division under the state's flagship scheme MUKTA for 2023-24 fiscal.

The districts include Ganjam, Gajapati, Kalahandi, Nuapada, Koraput, Rayagada, Nabarangpur, Malkangiri, Kandhamal and Boudh. The objective of the Mukhyamantri Karma Tatpara Abhiyan Yojana (MUKTA) is to decrease the unemployment rate.

The scheme, which was launched by Patnaik in 2020, creates job opportunities for the urban poor and



migrant labourers. The CMO said all the 42 ULBs have developed ward-wise feasible annual action plans under MUKTA through a participatory process involving local citizens and key stakeholders.

These projects are demand driven, technically feasible and environmentally sustainable and will be executed directly by Mission Shakti Groups as the implementing agency.

Climate change making air travel bumpier: Study

CLEAR-AIR TURBULENCE, WHICH IS INVISIBLE AND HAZARDOUS TO AIRCRAFT, HAS INCREASED IN VARIOUS REGIONS AROUND THE WORLD

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 12: Climate change has made travelling by planes more turbulent today than it was four decades ago, according to a study.

The researchers from the University of Reading in the UK found that clear-air turbulence, which is invisible and hazardous to aircraft, has increased in various regions around the world.

The study, published in the journal Geophysical Research Letters, found that at a typical point over the North Atlantic -- one of the world's busiest flight routes -- the

total annual duration of severe turbulence increased by 55 per cent from 17.7 hours in 1979 to 27.4 hours in 2020.

Moderate turbulence increased by 37 per cent from 70.0 to 96.1 hours, and light turbulence increased by 17 per cent from 466.5 to 546.8 hours, the researchers said. The team noted that the increases are consistent with the effects of climate change. Warmer air from carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions is increasing windshear in the jet streams, strengthening clear-air turbulence in the North Atlantic and globally.

"Turbulence makes flights



bumpy and can occasionally be dangerous. Airlines will need to start thinking about how they will manage the increased turbulence, as it costs the industry USD 150-500 million annually in the US alone," said Mark Prosser, a PhD researcher at the University of Reading. "Every additional minute spent

travelling through turbulence increases wear-and-tear on the aircraft, as well as the risk of injuries to passengers and flight attendants," Prosser said.

While the US and North Atlantic have experienced the largest increases, the study found that other busy flight routes over Europe, the

Middle East, and the South Atlantic also saw significant increases in turbulence.

"Following a decade of research showing that climate change will increase clear-air turbulence in the future, we now have evidence suggesting that the increase has already begun," said Professor Paul Williams, an atmospheric scientist at the University of Reading who co-authored the study.

"We should be investing in improved turbulence forecasting and detection systems, to prevent the rougher air from translating into bumpier flights in the coming decades," Williams added.

leisure

FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
If you are in the mood to be alone, go ahead and indulge, says Ganesh. No need for friends and no need for music. Rush to the outskirts and mingle with nature. If you deal in money matters, says Ganesh, there may be some money coming your way.

TAURUS
There is a strong possibility that you will put off those you love and respect on account of your unpleasant behaviour. Ganesh underlines the need to hold your temper as well as your tongue. You need to keep extra cool this day. This is a day full of romantic possibilities.

GEMINI
A marathon brainstorming session with your colleagues, a scamper for meeting deadlines, and a demanding spouse will leave you quite stressed out by the end of the day. You, however, are an expert in dividing time between business, home and pleasure.

CANCER
This is your big moment. You are going to deal with a huge amount of money – the kind of amount you would want to fill your swimming pool with and swim in it. Statutory warning issued by Ganesh: Don't dive in it, for you may hurt yourself as something or someone is likely to pull the plug, draining out most of the wealth that was amassed overnight.

LEO
Your wish to be in a cocoon, protected from the vagaries of the world, may come to fruition today. You remain sensitive and protected, says Ganesh. At work, you will be filled with a sense of purpose, and a feeling of solidity. But it is the evening that you should look forward to, as you are assured of a fantastic time with your family and loved ones.

VIRGO
Your professional life may just bounce up higher than ever today, predicts Ganesh. Expect incentives as well today. Executing plans to perfection will come naturally to you. In the evening, family will drown you in their unconditional love. A bright, charming day, says Ganesh.

LIBRA
We all have our own worlds to manage, and play the superhero for. And our family, friends and work are what make up our world. Ganesh foresees a day in which you shall remain engrossed in managing these different aspects of your life. Expect to find your financial prospects shine bright on the professional front, and bask in the approval that you receive for your actions.

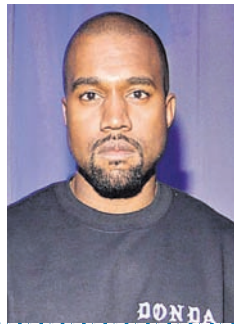
SCORPIO
Proposals of your choice will come your way today says Ganesh. You shall probably retreat into your shell in the afternoon. But the passing hours will bring out a different you. At work, you shall greatly impress your boss with sparkling results, predicts Ganesh.

SAGITTARIUS
You may just strike the notes of your beloved's heart today. Your presence and presents will make them realise how much you do indeed love them. Expect a trip to posh showrooms and designer shops to buy them expensive gifts. But don't neglect work or your long-term goals, advises Ganesh.

CAPRICORN
It's not every day that you wake up with a positive feeling, one that pushes you to make right everything that has been going wrong around and within you. Today, you may be in one of those high-spirited moods, says Ganesh. At home, you will strive to gain the confidence of your family members while at work, you will slog hard the entire day and get adequately rewarded for the same.

AQUARIUS
You are fully charged and raring to go! Your friends are supportive of your new schemes, and your bosses are pushing you to complete pending projects. This shouldn't be a problem, considering your current levels of energy and enthusiasm, says Ganesh.

PISCES
Not the best of days for you, haunted as you will be by feelings of insecurity. However, do not be in too much of a hurry to get in the mood to grieve, for the evening brings you pleasant times in the company of your soul mate, says Ganesh.



KANYE WEST ACCUSED OF USING WOMEN AS SUSHI PLATTERS

Rapper Kanye West is in the center of another controversy that he had included the Japanese practice Nyotaimori at his 46th birthday party, which involves serving sashimi or sushi off the naked over the weekend, according to reports.

LANA DEL REY QUILTS INSTAGRAM

The *Summertime Sadness* hitmaker Lana Del Rey said that she is quitting Instagram and no longer requires to use the social media platform as her tour dates have been published and her dad Rob Grant's record *Lost at Sea* - on which she features on two songs, *Hollywood Bowl* and the title track - has been released, reports *Female First UK*.



It's crucial to discover your passion: Kriti

Mumbai: Actress Kriti Sanon who is one of the most loved actresses, and has an entertaining line up on films ahead is putting together a digital film, which she will produce as well.

"Kriti has always been very keen to explore different aspects of film-making, and has a keen interest in production too. So when she heard this script, she not only wished to star in it but wanted to back it too. It will get a direct-to-ott release. Next year, Kriti also completes 10 years in the film industry and feels this is the right time to make the move. Rest of the details about this yet untitled project is kept under the wraps," informs a source close to the development.

The *Bhediya* actress said, "I believe it's crucial to dis-

cover your passion. Whether it's acting or entrepreneurship, pursuing what you love will lead to success. When you're passionate about your work, it never feels like a job. Finding and pursuing your passion is paramount for a fulfilling career.

Kriti will next be seen in Om Raut's *Adipurush* with Prabhas, and has an untitled film with Shahid Kapoor, and *The Crew* with Kareena Kapoor Khan and Tabu.



The Trial character felt personal: Kajol

Mumbai: Actress Kajol, who is gearing up for the release of her upcoming OTT project *The Trial - Pyaar, Kaanoon, Dhokha*, has shared that her character in the show, Noyonika, felt very "personal" and she instantly felt protective about her.

Shedding light on her character, the *Tanhaji* actress said, "The complexities are what defines a character to me and the layers surrounding Noyonika are what spoke to me when this role first came over. Noyonika felt personal, I instantly felt protective about her and that reaffirmed my faith in choosing *The Trial - Pyaar, Kaanoon, Dhoka*."

"Suparn Varma has built a world where vulnerability of characters meets the cruel situations posed by life. The audience will feel one with Noyonika, as she makes difficult choices, because I did," she added.

The Trial - Pyaar Kaanoon Dhokha is a format of the original US series *The Good Wife*, which was created by CBS Studios in association with Scott Free Productions and King Size Productions.

The Trial - Pyaar, Kaanoon, Dhokha, stars Sheeba Chaddha, Jisshu Sengupta, Alyy Khan, Kubbra Sait and Gaurav Pandey in key roles and will begin streaming July 14 on Disney+ Hotstar.

IAN S



Nepotism dominates South industry: Avika

Mumbai: Actor Avika Gor shot to fame as a child actor with her performance as Anandi in the Television show *Balika Vadhu*, said in a new interview that the South film industry is all about nepotism, but the hype around the topic exists only in Bollywood.

In an interview, the *Sasural Simar Ka* actress said, "In terms of star power, the South is known for its abundance. Similarly, when it comes to nepotism, a word we're weary of, the South is no exception. The situation remains unchanged; the only difference is that audiences don't perceive it there as they do here. Over time, a bias has formed regarding Bollywood and Hindi films, leading us to judge their every creation. At one point, many South films were remade, which created the impression that we merely copy films."

Further talking about nepotism in the South film industry, she added, "Telugu industry is full of nepotism... I think people have hyped it a lot. I hope with time social media will relax along with it."

Avika Gor is all set to make her Bollywood debut with the horror film *1920 Horrors Of The Heart*.

AGENCIES

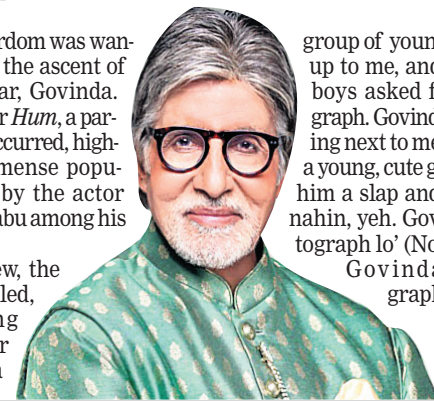
When Big B accepted the decline in his stardom

Mumbai: Stardom has a definite era. For some stars, it lasts a few years, and for some decades. But superstars have a legacy that spans over a few decades, and one such superstar is Amitabh Bachchan.

Big B, renowned for his movies such as *Deewar*, *Sholay*, and *Paa*, quickly gained fame as the Angry Young Man and dominated the film industry for many years. However, during a pe-

riod when his stardom was waning, he observed the ascent of another superstar, Govinda. While shooting for *Hum*, a particular incident occurred, highlighting the immense popularity achieved by the actor known as Raja Babu among his fans.

In an interview, the *Piku* actor recalled, "I was shooting with Govinda for *Hum* when a



group of young kids came up to me, and one of the boys asked for an autograph. Govinda was standing next to me. There was a young, cute girl who gave him a slap and said, 'Woh nahin, yeh Govinda ka autograph lo' (Not him. Take Govinda's autograph)."

However, the

Shenhshaah gracefully accepted his decline and his stardom getting blurry and the actor added, "People will want to watch the younger lot. I made mistakes and kept trying to rectify them in film after film. But there's no denying that it is the turn of the younger boys now because today's audiences are between 18 and 30."

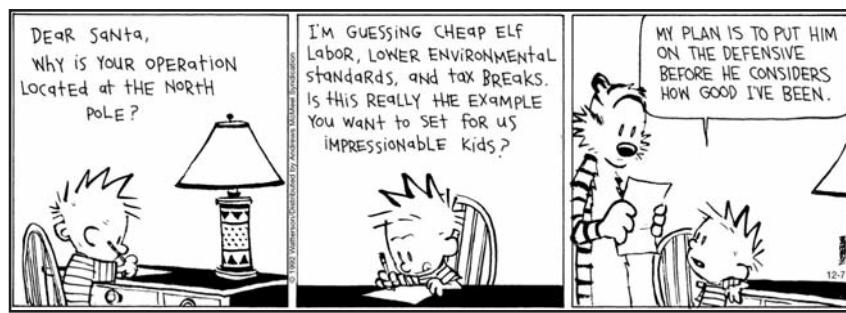
Amitabh Bachchan, and Govinda have starred together in *Hum* and *Bade Miyan Chote Miyan*.

AGENCIES

PEANUTS



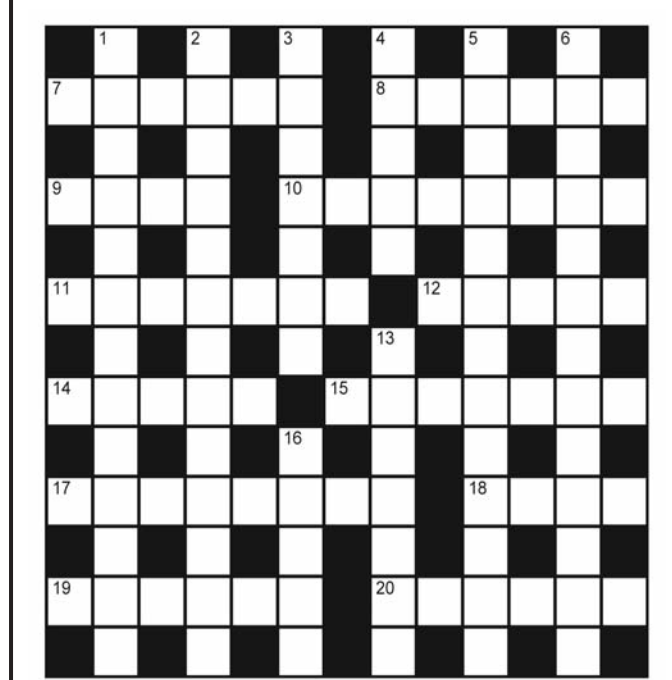
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



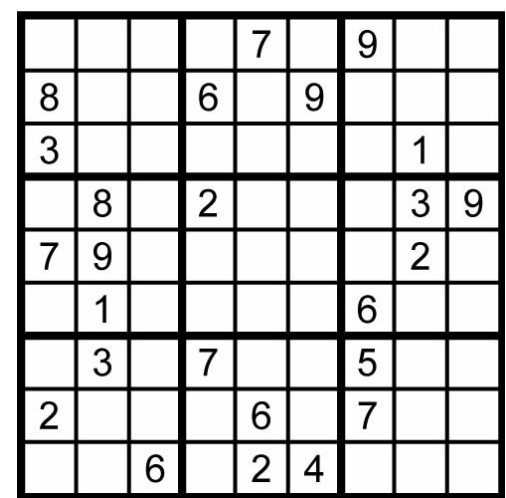
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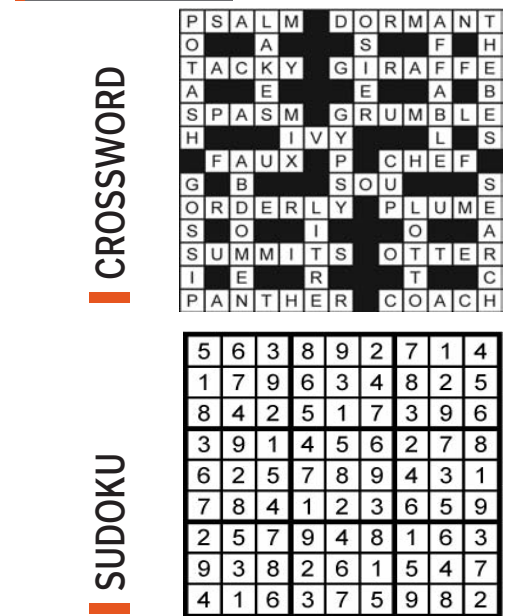
- Across
- 7 Spanish city famous for steel and swords
 - 8 African carrion eaters
 - 9 Archaeological find
 - 10 Sham
 - 11 Pressing need
 - 12 Parachute material
 - 14 Wedding band, perhaps
 - 15 Sneaky aircraft?
 - 17 Earth tremors
 - 18 Wild goat
 - 19 Nero's tutor
 - 20 Overage
- Down
- 1 Decorator's choices (6,7)
 - 2 Extreme nervousness (6-7)
 - 3 Liaison
 - 4 Young hog
 - 5 Marital bump in the road? (5-4,4)
 - 6 Compass heading (4,9)
 - 13 Put away for later
 - 16 Voracious eel

SUDOKU

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



SOLUTIONS



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Prime Minister Narendra Modi

13 June, 2023 / 10:30 AM



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NGT stays construction work at Sikharchandi



OP PHOTO

“The Committee may meet within one week, undertake visit to the site, interact with the concerned stakeholders including Water Corporation of Odisha (WATCO) and after ascertaining factual position, particularly with regard to illegal felling of trees, loss of bio-diversity and other damage to environment, including cutting of the hill, and submit a factual and action taken report (ATR) to this tribunal within three weeks, ie on or before July 3,” directed the tribunal.

The committee has also been directed to initiate a broad demarcation of the Sikharchandi hill to determine permissible and non-permissible activities.

The petitioners had mentioned that Sikharchandi Hill, part of Eastern Ghat mountain range, is extremely rich in bio-diversity with varied flora and fauna. There are many rare species of wild and medicinal plants abundant in this hill area, well documented in various research journals.

They alleged that the WATCO is involved in cutting down hundreds of trees, rock blasting and other illegal works for the construction of a 30 million liter Water Reserve Tank on the hill top. There is no forest clearance for cutting of trees as per Forest (Conservation) Act.

intervention was needed in the matter to stop further damage to the bio-diversity, particularly the rare and endangered medicinal and wild plant species, and to the overall integrity of the hill.

The tribunal also announced that a four-member joint committee will be set up to study the situation on ground by visiting the hill area and holding discussions with all the stakeholders. The committee will be headed by the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change regional office Chief Conservator of Forest (CCF) and comprise the representatives of Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), the state Pollution Control Board (SPCB) and Khurda District Magistrate.

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 12: The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has put a stay on all construction work at the bio-diversity rich Sikharchandi hills as part of various development projects of the state government. The tribunal issued the directions acting on a petition filed by social activists, Sachin Mahapatra, Kuna Jena of the Maa Sikharchandi Anchalika Suraksha Samiti.

“Having considered the irreversible consequences of the ongoing project, we direct that the project, in question, may be held in abeyance till next date of hearing (July 5, 2023)”, directed the tribunal. The NGT explained that the in-



SUCCULENT TREAT: Fruit offerings from Biswanath Ashram, the Kakatpur branch of Hatiakhada Mutt, reached Puri Srimandir, Monday, as part of the Anasara rituals of the Trinity

OP PHOTO

CENTRE RELEASES ₹5,356CR TAX DEVOLUTION TO STATE

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, June 12: The Union government Monday released ₹5,356 crore to Odisha as third instalment of tax devolution to enable the

state to speed up capital spending and finance its development related expenditure.

According to the Finance Ministry, ₹1,18,280 crore were released to the states as third tranche

of tax devolution Monday. The amount was higher than the normal monthly devolution of ₹ 59,140 crore, the ministry said.

One advance instalment in addition to the regular instalment due

in June 2023 is being released to states to enable them to finance their welfare related expenditure and also to make available resources for priority projects/schemes, the Finance ministry said.

Govt recruits 108 teacher educators

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 12: In an effort to enhance the professional development of teachers and improve their training efficiency in primary education, School and Mass Education (S&ME) department is recruiting 108 teacher educators through Orissa Staff Selection Commission (OSSC).

These teacher educators will be

posted at District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETs) and Block Institutes of Education and Training (BIETs) across the state.

The selection process for the position has been completed by the Odisha Staff Selection Commission, and the chosen candidates will soon be issued appointment letters by the department.

“The deployment of these highly

skilled teacher educators will ensure the continuous professional development of primary teachers and equip them with the necessary knowledge and skills to excel in their profession,” a department official said.

Teacher educators will work closely with the S&ME department to design and deliver effective training programmes. They will conduct workshops and seminars, provide

guidance on pedagogy and curriculum development apart from fostering a culture of innovation in teaching practices, the official added.

The deployment of these teacher educators marks a milestone in the government’s mission to improve the quality of education by addressing the long-standing issue of vacant positions within the S&ME department.

NCST seeks report from Posts secy

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 12: The National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST) has issued notice to the secretary of Posts department under the Communications Ministry seeking action taken report in connection with the issue of non-release of postal stamp honouring famous tribal saint Bhima Bhoi.

The Commission has directed the Posts department secretary Vinnet Dubey to submit a reply in this regard within 15 days of receipt of the notice.

The NCST issued the notice acting on a petition filed by Supreme Court lawyer and rights activist Radhakanta Tripathy.

“Whereas a petition/complaint has been received by the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes from Radhakanta Tripathy May 15 and the Commission has decided to investigate/inquire in to the matter in pursuance of the powers conferred upon it under Article 338A of the Constitution of India, you are hereby requested to submit the facts and information on actions taken on the allegations/matters to the undersigned within 15 days of receipt of this notice either by post or in person or by any other means of communication,” the NCST notice dictates.

The petitioner sought the Commission’s intervention on the issue alleging unfair treatment and discrimination of the great poet and saint by the department of post.

CM’s nod to welfare scheme for vehicle drivers, workers



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 12: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has approved the welfare scheme for motor vehicle drivers and workers. The Chief Minister has also approved the welfare board proposal to be formed to implement the scheme.

This welfare scheme is being implemented in view of the welfare of motor vehicle drivers and other workers.

The board will be initially funded by the government. In turn, the board will administer the scheme by collecting funds from registration fee collection, transport vehicle owner contributions and other sources.

Initially the following facilities have been provisioned for transport drivers and other workers.

In case of death due to road ac-

cidents, ₹4 lakh shall be paid to the nominee of the deceased driver/employee.

In case of severe injuries, ₹80,000 will be provided. ₹1, 50,000 shall be paid to the motor transport driver/ employee in case of permanent disability.

In case of ordinary death, ₹2 lakh shall be paid to the nominated person.

Apart from this, the drivers and other workers will be eligible for inclusion in Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojana (BSKY) and Madhu Babu Pension Scheme.

More than 5 lakh motor vehicle drivers and other workers will benefit from the implementation of this scheme.

The welfare board to be constituted for this purpose will have government members as well as representatives of motor transport drivers/other workers.

Vig glare on Cuttack assistant engineer

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 12: Vigilance sleuths carried out searches at multiple locations, including Bhubaneswar, related to an assistant engineer in Sadar block of Cuttack on allegations of amassing disproportionate assets (DA) and claimed to have found the official in possession of property worth crores of rupees.

The anti-corruption wing sleuths searched Bikash Chandra Bhubyan’s residential house at Soubhagya Nagar in the City, house at his native place at Lehenga under Narsinghpur police limits in Cuttack, a relative’s house at Chakaisani in the Temple City and his office chamber at Cuttack Sadar block.

During the search, the sleuths claimed to have found a multi-storey building at Soubhagya Nagar in Bhubaneswar and seven plots in prime locations of the twin cities of Bhubaneswar and Cuttack, gold and silver jewellery worth ₹38 lakh, ₹1.23 lakh investment in crypto currency, and a four-wheeler and three two-wheelers worth ₹13.40 lakh belonging to the assistant engineer.

“Bhubyan has spent ₹1 crore on the education of his two children. The measurement and valuation of the building and plots were being carried out by Vigilance technical wing,” said an official.

Meanwhile, the anti-corruption wing sleuths nabbed a technical consultant at Khariar NAC of Nuapada district while receiving ₹10,000 bribe from a PMAY beneficiary for submission of completion certificate and facilitating release of final bill.

Following the trap, simultaneous searches were going on at two locations of Dev Chandan Rout in Nuapada district when the last report came in.

₹271.7cr Srimandir budget presented

POST NEWS NETWORK

Puri, June 12: The Shree Jagannath Temple Managing Committee, chaired by Gajapati Dibyasingha Deb, Monday presented a full-term budget of ₹271.7 crore for fiscal 2023-24.

While the temple body aims at receiving ₹262.54 crore in 2023-24, it pegs the expenditure at ₹271.7 crore for the period.

The temple managing committee meeting was held in two sittings. While the first sitting saw presentation of the temple annual budget, the second leg witnessed discussions on a hassle-free Rath Yatra, scheduled to begin June 20.

According to Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA) chief administrator Ranjan Kumar Das, the committee has decided to introduce a host of measures to increase the earning of the 12th cen-

₹16.62 crore has been allocated for Rath Yatra	
₹5 crore has been allocated for health insurance of servitors and their families	
₹5 crore will be spent on construction of Gurukul	

tury shrine.

“Sale of Srimandir land under Uniform Policy and 200 stone quarries in state beside installation of more donations boxes will go a long way to boost income of Srimandir. We’ll rope in online financial platforms like Paytm and PhonePe to get donations directly to the temple’s account,” Das pointed out.

Das said ₹16.62 crore has been allocated for Rath Yatra. “Rs 5 crore has been allocated for health insurance of servitors and their fam-

ilies and another ₹5 crore will be spent on construction of Gurukul and ₹3.5 crore for Sevak Awas Yojana to provide houses to homeless servitors.”

He said ₹50 crore will be deposited in the corpus fund account.

The completed portion of Parikrama project will be opened for use by devotees from June 15, said an official of the project executing agency. Devotees visiting the temple could use toilets, resting places and use water fountains in Parikrama area.

WORLD DAY AGAINST CHILD LABOUR

CHILD LABOUR IN ALL FORMS MUST BE ABOLISHED: CM

CM asks people to reaffirm the pledge to end child labour in all forms in Odisha and create a healthy environment for children to prosper

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 12: Children are future citizens of the nation and deserve conducive environment to prosper, said Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on World Day Against Child Labour.

In his social media account, he said, “Reaffirm the pledge to end child labour in all forms in Odisha

and create a healthy environment for them to realise their true potential.”

Meanwhile, the Odisha State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (OSPCPCR), in collaboration with UNICEF, released two posters as part of a sensitisation programme against child labour in Bhubaneswar Monday.

The posters depict contrasting images of a child as a labourer and another as a student, with a line in Odia and English to convey the message against child labour. This poster highlights the importance of keeping children in schools while ensuring a safe and secure future for them.

Speaking on the occasion, Odisha State Commission for Protection of



Center for Child and Women Development, in association with ActionAid, taking out an awareness rally in City on World Day Against Child Labour, Monday

Child Rights (OSPCPCR) chairperson, Mandakinee Kar said, “All

children have the right to a safe, labour-free childhood. It is the duty

of every citizen to ensure that children stay where they belong- in the classroom not in the workplace. Therefore, we all should take a pledge to contribute at our level to end child labour.”

She encouraged the students who were present there to put a placard in front of their house saying, “Ours is a child labour free house.” In this way, every child, can be a part of the awareness campaign against child labour, she added.

UNICEF officer-in-charge, chief of field office Sugata Roy said, “Child labour is a worse form of violence. The children’s rights are violated if the child is not in school. Our focus should be on moving the child from occupation to education. We all should think and find a way to push

for a child-labour-free society.”

Umi Daniel Director, Migration & Education Thematic unit at Aide et Action South Asia, informed “After Covid, many children are out of school and get into child labour. If we want to have a child-labour-free society, then we have to work together and ensure that every child gets an education.

The event was attended by Manna Biswas, Specialist, Child Protection at UNICEF Bhubaneswar, Members of the OSCPCR and the students of Sai International School Bhubaneswar.

Similarly, Center for Child and women development (CCWD) in association with ActionAid observed awareness rally against child labour in the slum areas of the City.

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MOMENT TO CHERISH: Ahead of the Golden Jubilee celebration of leading Odia daily Dharitri, 'Mo College' chairperson Akash Dasnayak lights the lamp to inaugurate a seminar on "Media, Democracy and the Youth" at Sanskruti Bhawan in Jaipur Road, Monday, as **Dharitri** and **Orissa POST** Editor Tathagata Satpathy, the newspapers' Chief Executive Adyasha Satpathy and Vyasanagur Autonomous College English lecturer Pragyban Prabartika Dash look on

Dry riverbeds, greenery loss shoot up mercury

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sonepur, June 12: Loss of green cover, dry riverbeds of Mahanadi and Tel, and radiation from the sand beds have added fuel to the intense heatwave condition prevailing in Subarnapur district, as per a report.

Reports said Titilagarh town in neighbouring Bolangir district was once dubbed as 'Tatalagarh' a few years back because of the intense heatwave prevailing in the town during summer. However, Sonepur town, the district headquarters, has replaced Titilagarh recently with the maximum temperature crossing over 40 degree Celsius. The sharp rise in mercury in Sonepur town as well as in the entire district despite being in proximity to rivers has sparked concern among the environmentalists.

The maximum temperature recorded at Sonepur was 44.3 degrees Celsius Sunday. Similarly, the maximum temperature recorded in the town was 44.6 degrees Celsius June 8, 44.8 degrees Celsius June 9 and 44.5 degree Celsius June 10.

The heatwave has intensified to such an extent that it has become unbearable for the residents. Meanwhile, the spurt in temperature in the district which do not have any industries has raised a few eyebrows. Things have come to such a pass that people fear to step out after 10am and prefer to stay

SUBARNAPUR TURNS HOT CAULDRON



home. While there is no respite from the heatwave, the low voltage problem, undeclared power cut and drinking water problems have multiplied the woes of the residents.

Environmentalists alleged that rapid destruction in forest cover (even on the riverbanks), dying Mahanadi, Tel and other rivers; soil erosion, construction of concrete roads and mushrooming brick kilns are some of the reasons behind the sudden increase in temperatures in the district.

They claimed that as the rivers are accumulating silt, sand and stones in dried-up rivers are radiating heat which is contributing to the searing heat. They said that the district should have 33 per cent of forest cover according to its size. However, the forest cover in the district stands at only 18 per cent.

The state government and the

Centre are spending crores every year in plantation drives and forest protection programmes but they are only in pen and paper.

Though forests are being destroyed to pave way for new human settlements, the Forest department has failed to check the obliteration of greenery.

Several pucca houses and concrete roads have been built after Subarnapur was carved out of Bolangir as a new district.

The rise in forest fire is also contributing to the sweltering heat. The heat and smoke arising out of the wildfire spreads towards human settlements and heats up the atmosphere.

The local intelligentsia and environmentalists said that the residents can get respite from the heatwave if construction of Khairamal and Godhaneswar barrages takes place on Mahanadi river.

Sambalpur Univ sets up incubation centre

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Sambalpur, June 12: To encourage and mentor innovative startups, Sambalpur University has set up an incubation centre, on the premises of the institution Monday.

The 'Sambalpur University Start-up Forum' was inaugurated by the vice-chairperson of the Higher Education Council, Ashok Das through video conferencing.

Vice-chancellor Bidhu Bhusan Mishra, registrar, Nruparaj Sahu and PG Council chairman, Sanjukta Das besides other senior teachers of the institution were present during the inauguration.

The incubation centre will be looked after by the teachers of different departments of the varsity. The primary goal of the incubation centre is to provide support to the entrepreneurs, especially the student entrepreneurs in every possible way and guide them at every step in their journey of entrepreneurship.

The centre will offer a range of facilities including mentoring, networking opportunities with investors, training on business-related topics as well as workspace, etc.

Slow agri census irks farmers

POST NEWS NETWORK

Kendrapara, June 12: The 11th agriculture census which was postponed due to Covid-19 resumed in August 2022 but the drive moving at snail's pace has irked the farming community and the intellectuals of the district, as per a report.

The census, which is held in every five years, is quite crucial for the agrarian economy. Meanwhile, 10 months have passed since the census began in Kendrapara district but its implementation is quite disappointing with enumerators yet to cover 551 out of 1,591 revenue villages to be surveyed in the district.

Similarly, out of 140 enumerators 12 are yet to start their work in areas under six blocks. The negligence in data collections has raised questions on the farm census, farmer leaders and local intelligentsia alleged.

The matter came to the fore during a review meeting on the agriculture census held recently at the Collectorate here. The meeting presided over by ADM Nilu Mohapatra was attended by sub-collector Niranjan Behera and offi-



cialists from agriculture, revenue and statistics departments.

According to available information, 734 villages have been allotted to Statistics department, 380 to Agriculture department and 477 to Revenue department. Altogether 140 officials are overseeing the implementation of census programme in nine tehsils of the district.

Meanwhile, the census drive has started in 1,040 villages out of 1,591 revenue villages while it has been completed in 353 villages. Moreover, census data of 171 villages - just 16 per cent of the work of the census drive - has been uploaded in the portal.

Farmer leader Gayadhar Dhal, Bidhu Bhusan Mohapatra, Bijay Parida, and local intellectuals Ganesh Chandra Samal and Radhakant Mohanty said that the

agriculture census first started in financial year 1971-72 in order to get a detailed picture of agriculture and farmers which drive the national economy.

The prime objectives of the census is to know the amount of land under cultivation, land ownership and the types of crops suitable for cultivation on the particular land. This will help in providing irrigation facilities to the farmlands and better marketing facilities for the harvested crops.

The current census which is 11th in a row has been digitised as mobile phones and tablets are being used during the drive.

Enumerators participating in the drive are being provided with training beforehand so that they will not face any hassles during the census.

However, the census drive is allegedly being overlooked and neglected by the district administration. When contacted, ADM Mohapatra admitted that the survey has been slowed down for which the officials concerned have been pulled up during the review meeting. He said that show-cause notices will be issued to the officials who would be found delaying the survey.

ALL-FAITH PRAYER FOR BAHANAGA MISHAP VICTIMS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Balasore, June 12: Hundreds of people from Bahanaga took part in an all-faith prayer meeting in memory of the 288 people who lost their lives in the Balasore train accident June 2.

Energy Minister PK Deb, who was also present on the occasion Monday, prayed for the speedy recovery of the injured.

The prayer meet was held near Bahanaga High School where bodies of passengers of the ill-fated Coromandel Express were kept.

According to Jaykrushna Sarangi, one of the organisers of the prayer meet, the objective of performing 'Dashaha Karma' (10th-day ritual) Sunday and 'Ekadashaha' (11th-day ritual) Monday was for salvation of the deceased.



The prayer meet was held near Bahanaga High School where bodies of passengers of the ill-fated Coromandel Express were kept

"Since we do not know the religion of the deceased, we decided to organise the all-faith prayer meet," he said.

"The prayer meet will continue for three days. Hundreds can pay tributes to the departed souls and offer prayers for the recovery of injured," said social activist Sarat Raj.

There are also plans to light 5,008 diya and perform a 'Maha Yajna'. Arrangements have also been made to prepare 'prasad' for 1,500 people, an organiser said.

Rly Board issues orders to fill vacancies

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 12: The Railway Board Monday directed its zones to launch a "special drive" to fill promotional vacancies especially in the safety category, a move that comes amidst criticism over vacant posts in the transportation behemoth following the Balasore three-train accident in which 288 people lost their lives.

The internal order, accessed by PTI, has been sent to general managers of all railway zones and states that instructions have been issued by the Board from time to time emphasising the need for filling up promotional vacancies.

"It has been reiterated that Railways should ensure making use of all modes of promotions such as Selection/Non-Selection/Trade Test/LDCE (Limited Departmental Competitive Examination)/GDCE (General Departmental Competitive Examination) liberally to fill up the vacancies timely by chalking out a suitable action plan for the same," it said.

The order said that zonal railways should have by now assessed their vacancies and planned for filling them up as per their fresh selection calendars.

Fuel crunch grips Balasore

JALESWAR: Residents of Balasore district have been severely hit by fuel shortage due to closure of train services on Kharagpur-Bhadrak section following the triple train tragedy at Bahanaga Bazaar station, a report said Monday.

Repairing of the railway tracks and some other works have started after the train mishap following a direction by the authorities of South Eastern Railway. As a result, plying of several trains have been cancelled and train services



here have virtually come to a halt. As fuel laden wagons are not plying on the route for the last 12 days, petrol and diesel are not avail-

able at the depots of Indian Oil, Bharat Petroleum, Reliance Petroleum and others. Things have come to such a pass that every petrol pump in the district is facing fuel crunch for which two-wheelers, cars and cargo vehicles are feeling the pinch.

Realising the situation, petrol pump owners in Balasore are reportedly procuring fuel from Paradip through tankers by road. However, that has failed to meet the increasing demand.

"It is reiterated that they may undertake a special drive to fill the promotional vacancies, especially of safety category posts, through selection/General selection/non-selection/trade test, whichever is applicable in the matter," it said.

The order has also said that it has been noticed that the Zonal Railways are not regularly filling up the data regarding monthly promotion and quarterly targets on the google-sheets shared with them. These sheets create a central database of vacancies across railways, officials said.

"It is requested that the requi-

site data may please be arranged to be got filled up immediately as the position is being monitored at the highest level," it said.

Overall, officials said that staff shortage has remained a perennial issue with the national transporter. While the latest vacancy data has not been provided by the Railways, according to the information given by Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnav in Rajya Sabha in December 2022, there were a total of 3.12 lakh non-gazetted posts in the Indian Railways lying vacant pan-India.

Among them, a total of 14,815 vacancies were in the signal and

telecommunications department and 62,264 in the traffic transportation department.

The highest number of vacancies according to his reply was in the civil engineering department, with 87,654 vacancies across the country, followed by 64,346 in the mechanical department and 38,096 in the electrical department.

The South Eastern Railway under which the Bahanaga Bazaar station - the site of the June 2 tragedy - falls has 17,811 vacancies for non-gazetted posts and 150 vacant gazetted posts as of February 3, 2023, Vaishnav informed Rajya Sabha.

Odia expat pledges lottery money to train crash victims

ABU DHABI-BASED CHEF SAHAJAN MOHAMMAD HAD RECENTLY WON A CASH PRIZE OF MORE THAN ₹4 LAKH IN A LOTTERY

AGENCIES

Dubai, June 12: A 28-year-old Abu Dhabi-based Odia chef who recently won a cash prize of more than ₹4 lakh in a lottery has pledged to donate a portion of his winnings to the victims of the Odisha train accident that claimed 288 lives, a media report said.

Sahajan Mohammad, who hails from Jaspur town of Odisha won Dh20,000 (Rs 4,48,885) cash prize in Dream Island's scratch card game last week, the Khaleej Times newspaper reported.

Talking about Odisha's train

tragedy June 2, Mohammed said, "Fortunately, none of my known persons were involved in this horrific accident... There are a few people from my locality who have been injured in this accident. I will be helping those who are affected in my village first."

The train collision in Balasore district is one of the worst railway accidents in decades. At least 288 people were killed and more than 1,200 were injured in the accident.

Apart from helping the train tragedy victims, he will also use the prize money for his personal



expenses in his home construction and for some of his relatives who

are in need. Mohammad, who works as a

chef at a hotel in Abu Dhabi City and earns around Dh2,000 a month, had earlier tried his luck at different raffle draws in the past but to no avail, the report said.

"I am flying home June 25. I have become a father now. I will be meeting my baby girl. She has brought this luck," an ecstatic Mohammad was quoted as saying.

According to him, "life is a game" which he will continue to play. "I will keep playing Dream Island's scratch card games. My other friends and cousins also play it and have won," he added.

इंदिरा गांधी राष्ट्रीय जनजातीय विश्वविद्यालय
Indira Gandhi National Tribal University
अमरकंटक (स.प्र.) | Amarkantak (MP)
(A National University established by an Act of Parliament)

Advt.No.IGNTU/Rec.Cell/2023/NT-01 Date 29.05.2023

Advertisement for recruitment in Non-teaching posts

Applications are invited from eligible Indian Citizens for the post of Registrar (UR-1) and Finance Officer (UR-1) on tenure basis at IGNTU Amarkantak. Interested candidates are required to apply online in the prescribed format through www.igntu.ac.in. Minimum Qualification, Experience, Pay scale and other terms and conditions, etc. are available in University website (www.igntu.ac.in). Amendments (if any) shall be published in the University website only.

> Date of start of online application: 29.05.2023
> Last date for submission of online application: 27.06.2023
> Last date for receiving of hardcopy of application: 10.07.2023

CBC 21346/12/0001/2324 Registrar

OFFICE OF THE NOTIFIED AREA COUNCIL, NUAPADA
1st CORRIGENDUM
No. 1284, Dt.09.06.2023

No.C-558:Due to some typographical error the following changes has been made to the Tender Call Notice No.1273, Dt.07.06.2023 of NAC, Nuapada.

1. The Work SI.No.2, the column No.6 may be read as 'D' class contractor. All other terms & conditions of above Tender Call Notice are remain unaltered.

Sd./- Executive Officer, NAC, Nuapada
OIPR-13158/11/0006/2324

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER
GANJAM (R&B) DIVISION NO.1, BERPAMPUR
Phone/Fax:(0680) 2233683, e-mail:sermb1.ganjam@yahoo.com
No.B-330 "e" Procurement Notice
Bid Identification No. SE R&B Divn.No.I Bam 07/2022-23
Lr.No. 6283, Dtd.8.6.2023

Name of work : Electrical Works
No. of Works : 1 (One) No.
Estimated Cost : Approximately Rs. 12.00 Lakh
Period of Completion of agreement : One Calendar Month

Date and Time of availability : From 10.00 hours of 16.06.2023 to 16.00 hours of 26.06.2023
of bid document in the portal
Last date/time for receipt of bids in the portal : Upto 16.00 hours of 26.06.2023.

Name & Address of the Officer Inviting Bid : Superintending Engineer, Ganjam (R&B) Division No.1 Berhampur

Further details can be seen from the e-Procurement portal: <https://tendersodisha.gov.in>.

Sd./- Superintending Engineer
Ganjam (R&B) Division No.1, Berhampur
OIPR-34109/11/00012/2324

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA, No.MM-58:
FOREST, ENVIRONMENT & CLIMATE CHANGE DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE DIVISIONAL FOREST OFFICER,
KALAHANDI NORTH DIVISION
NEAR OLD GOVT. BUS STAND, BHAWANIPATNA, KALAHANDI, ODISHA - 766001
E-mail ID: dfo.kalahandinorth@odisha.gov.in, north_kalahandi@yahoo.co.in
Phone No. 06670-230526

Bid Identification No. DFOKLDN-01/2023-24 Dt. 09.06.2023

Sl. No.	Name of the Work	Procurement of different Planting Materials for Plantation Season 2023-24
1	Estimated Cost	Depending upon funds availability
2	Period & time of completion	15 days from the date of issue of orders
3	Date & time of availability of the bid document in the portal	12.06.2023 to 04.07.2023
4	Last date/Time for receipt of bids in the portal	Up to 5.00 PM of 04.07.2023
5	Date & Time of bid opening	11.30 hours on Dated. 05.07.2023
6	Name & Address of the officer inviting Bid	Divisional Forest Officer, Kalahandi North Division, PIN - 766001

Others can see the details from Notice inviting Tenders, available in website- <https://kalahandi.nic.in/> Corrigendum if any, shall only be published in the above website.

Sd./- Divisional Forest Officer
Kalahandi North Division
OIPR-08107/11/0001/2324

Do not pretend - be. Do not promise - act. Do not dream - realize.

THE MOTHER



Method in Madness

After tasting bitter defeat in the recent Karnataka Assembly elections only few months before the 2024 Lok Sabha polls, the BJP seems to be in a tearing hurry to re-invent its main political narrative of communal polarisation. This seems to be more so as it has not much to show on the economic front. The subtext of the communal plot will be to remind voters of the old choice between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Congress leader Rahul Gandhi for the prime ministerial post. This could be the reason why the ghost of the 17th century Mughal emperor, Aurangzeb, is being resurrected to demonise Moslems and sharpen communal divide. The communal clashes in several places in Maharashtra during the past few days and the utterances of BJP leaders, including Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Deputy Chief Minister of Maharashtra, Devendra Fadnis, point towards the crystallisation of such an electoral strategy of the saffron brigade in the coming days.

In the same state, a man who allegedly used Aurangzeb's image as his WhatsApp profile picture was arrested after the issue was raised by a Hindoo organisation. The screenshot of the profile picture was submitted to the police by the organisation, leading to registration of a case against the Navi Mumbai resident and prompt action.

Aurangzeb died more than three centuries ago, but the BJP has exhumed him for reaping electoral dividends. This Mughal emperor is tailor-made for whipping up communal sentiments since he is known to be a bigoted and intolerant person. Some Hindoo outfits claim that Aurangzeb demolished thousands of temples. This claim is not substantiated. On the other hand, historians say he was responsible for the destruction of a few dozen temples. This is why no other Mughal ruler suited the anti-Moslem political narrative after Hindoo sentiments against Babur - the founder of the Mughal empire - had been fully exploited through the demolition of Babri Masjid and the Supreme Court's ruling on the construction of the Ram temple in the complex.

The BJP used, with barely any success, the sentiments over Lord Hanuman to sway voters in Karnataka. This was done after the Congress, in its election manifesto, promised to ban groups like the Bajrang Dal if they were found to foment communal trouble and breach peace. The Karnataka voters, however, saw to it that the communal agenda was not allowed to distract attention from economic issues. The other plank was the much talked about '40% commission' by the then incumbent BJP in the state which helped nail its poll prospect. The Congress ended up dislodging the Basavaraj Bommai government.

This seems to have caused panic in the BJP leadership which probably has now made it desperate to go for a high pitched electoral campaign with communal overtones. Here steps in the figure of Aurangzeb as its new political tool. The weapon can be sharpened most in Maharashtra where Aurangzeb is regarded as a hated figure for his war with the state's iconic hero Shivaji. Aurangzeb also killed Shivaji's son and his tomb is located in the state. As such he can be easily made the rallying point of Hindoo mobilisation. In fact, PM Modi himself had begun the process of turning Aurangzeb into the focal point of anti-Moslem sentiments in 2022, while speaking from the Red Fort in New Delhi, built by the Mughals, at a programme to mark the 400th birth anniversary of Guru Tegh Bahadur, the ninth Sikh guru. He had then said, "Aurangzeb severed many heads, but he could not shake our faith."

Political parties, including the Shiv Sena (UBT), the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) and the Congress blamed the BJP and the Shiv Sena (Shinde) for exacerbating communal tension in Maharashtra. Amit Shah deliberately raised the question of Aurangzeb's bigotry at a rally in the state to stoke communal passion. He also insisted the Opposition is trying to pit Rahul Gandhi against Narendra Modi for the top post. Sharad Pawar of the NCP was quick to understand the ploy and he immediately said the Opposition needs only to get united and its choice of the PM would be decided later.

The country, it seems, will see more such communal polarisation as the days for the 2024 LS polls approach. It will finally be for the voter to decide which is more relevant for her: A better life or a more stringent religion.

WISDOM CORNER

When everything seems to be going against you, remember that the airplane takes off against the wind, not with it. HENRY FORD

If you don't design your own life plan, chances are you'll fall into someone else's plan. And guess what they have planned for you? Not much. JIM ROHN

We keep moving forward, opening new doors, and doing new things, because we're curious and curiosity keeps leading us down new paths. WALT DISNEY

WORDSWORTH

Jollop

Americans may know it better as jalap, since jollop is principally a British spelling. It's a liquid medicine of some sort, particularly cough syrup or a laxative. "Listen," said Granny, "if you give someone a bottle of red jollop for their wind it may work, right, but if you want it to work for sure then you let their mind make it work for them" (Equal Rites, by Terry Pratchett, 1987). The jollop pronunciation was known in English dialects for many decades before it began to be put into writing. A century ago, the English Dialect Dictionary found it in Lincolnshire and Lancashire and recorded that it then meant "a semi-fluid mess of anything; a big mess of food, a 'dollop'." It's a variation on the much older jalap, a purgative drug obtained from the root of a Mexican plant and named after the town of Xalapa or Jalapa in that country, now formally called Xalapa-Enriquez. It had become jalap in English after passing through Spanish and French. Its spelling and pronunciation as jollop may indeed have been as a result of the influence of dollop, though that way of saying it created a minor controversy a century earlier: JALAP. The pronunciation of this word, as if written Jollop, which Mr. Sheridan has adopted, is, in my opinion, now confined to the illiterate and vulgar. A Critical Pronouncing Dictionary, and Expositor of the English Language, by John Walker, 1791. The person he censures is not the playwright Richard Brinsley Sheridan, but his father, Thomas Sheridan, who published A General Dictionary of the English Language in two volumes in 1780. In it he did indeed suggest that way of saying the word ("dzhol-lup"). Jollop has been recorded in American dictionaries as a slang term for a measure of strong liquor. The American Century Dictionary of 1895 said that it was an English provincial term for the cry of a turkey, which no British dictionary admits to knowing about. On the other hand, jollop was at one time a name for the wattles of the bird, probably from dewlap. Many readers wondered if there might be a link between the older jalap form of this word and either julep or jalopy. A julep, before it was that minty drink that we associate with Scarlett O'Hara, was a sweetened liquid medication, so in that sense there's certainly a connection. However, there's no doubt about the origin of julep (via French and Latin from Persian words meaning "rose water") and the two words are etymologically unconnected. As to jalopy, the origin of this US slang term for a dilapidated old car is unknown, though one of the many stories that tries to explain it does unavailingly try to link it with Jalapa in Mexico.

LOOKING TO ADAM SMITH

FOCUS ECONOMICS



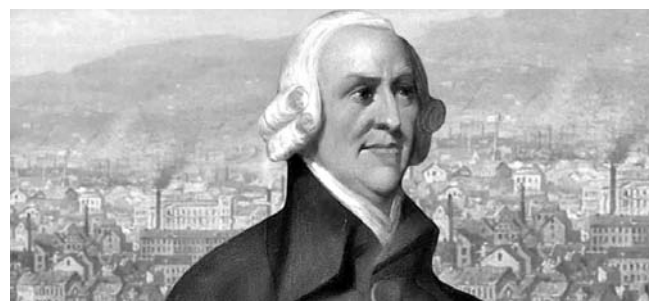
Ajit Ranade

MARKETS CAN FUNCTION WELL WHEN THERE IS FREE SPEECH, FREE EXPRESSION, FREE DEBATE, DISSENT, AND EVEN FREEDOM TO OFFEND

June marks the three hundredth birth anniversary of Adam Smith, the Scottish philosopher considered to be the father of modern economic thinking. His most famous book, "An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations" was published in 1776, the same year that America declared independence from the United Kingdom. This coincidence is of great significance since the US is the first and most enduring bastion of free enterprise in the modern world. It is the biggest and most prosperous economy, not least because it is based on the principle and functioning of free markets. Economic growth in a market economy happens due to individual enterprise and the pursuit of self-interest. This was Smith's basic insight. He wrote famously in the Wealth of Nations: "It is not from the benevolence of the butcher, the brewer, or the baker, that we expect our dinner, but from their regard to their own interest. We address ourselves, not to their humanity but to their self-love, and never talk to them of our own necessities but of their advantages."

Pursuit of self-interest promotes social good and prosperity, so long as it is pursued under well-defined rules (for instance, property rights). That basic insight remains valid to this day. When entrepreneurs or investors pursue profit, the generation of that profit signals improvement in the lives of others. Smith also warned in the same book, that economic growth is best achieved by letting individuals manage their assets (i.e. capital) and not by governments interfering, or worse doing "central planning." No government can do better than what markets can achieve, and to hand over to governments the power to determine capital allocation is unwise and possibly ruinous.

Friedrich Von Hayek's "Road to Serfdom" was a warning, surely inspired by Smith and later liberal philosophers, about the dangers of too much market inter-



Smith wanted societies to evolve toward more freedom in an organic, consensual, conversational way. His thoughts are as valid and compelling today, as they were three centuries ago

vention by the State. One intervention leads to another, and soon you are totally shackled. Indian agriculture put price caps to keep wage good low, and then subsidised inputs to farmers to undo the impact of price caps, and topped it with massive government procurement. Indian agriculture is a classic example of a spaghetti of often contradictory State interventions, resulting in the shackling of the Indian farmer, trapped in penury. The recent thinking on interventionist industrial policy will also undoubtedly have side effects, which will call for more intervention. If you don't let markets work you get bad outcomes. Karl Marx, writing four decades later than the Wealth of Nations was following in the footsteps of Smith, and saw capitalism as necessary. Of course, unlike Smith who believed that capitalism led to prosperity, Marx predicted that capitalism would be doomed by its internal contradictions.

Incidentally, Smith was aware of the dangers of cartels and monopolistic practices in the context of markets. He wrote, "people of the same trade seldom meet together, even for merriment or diversion, but the conversation ends in conspiracy against the public, or in some contrivance to raise prices." This dictum applies to

this day, as watchdogs like the Competition Commission of India keep a vigil on cartels. Smith was against mercantilism which might have made him unpopular in his time. But he had a gentle way of making this point. He said if you tried to grow grapes and make wine in Scotland it would be thirty times more expensive, and equally good if brought from abroad (i.e. imported). "Would it be a reasonable law to prohibit the importation of all foreign wines, merely to encourage the making of claret and burgundy in Scotland?" Can we be self-sufficient in everything? America does not grow a gram of coffee or sugarcane and yet is the highest consumer of both. Singapore imports food, energy and even drinking water. How then is "Atmanirbhar" to be understood in the context of Smith's philosophy?

However, our understanding of Smith only from the lens of his Wealth of Nations is incomplete and misleading. He wrote another book, "The Theory of Moral Sentiments" seventeen years earlier in 1759. This is the book that he considered his most important contribution. In this book his stature as a leading light of Scottish enlightenment shines brightly. He was acutely concerned about justice and fairness. He also believed

that people do not want to do better for themselves by hurting others. We have a "spectator self," which one can interpret as an inner conscience, which guides us. He wrote, "The chief part of human happiness arises from the consciousness of being beloved." Here being loved, is not about pleasing people, but about being admired and respected. Man wants not only to be loved, but to love. That is worthy of love, and live that high moral standard.

Indirectly echoing this, the founder of Infosys, Narayan Murthy, once said, that he wanted his company, not to be the biggest, or most profitable or with the highest market value, but to be the most respected. Smith wrote that we may not understand the predicament of others because we have never experienced it. Nevertheless, we can imagine it, or put ourselves in the shoes of others. This is the essence of empathy, which he championed. Smith would be the first one to argue that too much inequality is unjust and unfair: But he believed that the betterment of the lives of others would come through beneficence, and through philanthropy, not government's coercion. Of course this can be debated, but his concern for fairness and justice cannot. Smith held the Chair of Logic and Rhetoric at the University of Glasgow. Naturally, the art of persuasion was central to his thesis.

Markets are conversations, and we are constantly trying to persuade others about our ideas. "The offering of a shilling," or rather offering to buy something from the seller is also an act of persuasion. Markets can function well when there is free speech, free expression, free debate, dissent, and even freedom to offend. Smith wanted societies to evolve toward more freedom in an organic, consensual, conversational way. His thoughts are as valid and compelling today, as they were three centuries ago.

The writer is a noted economist. @THEBILLIONPRESS

SPECTRUM ASIAN SECURITY

All talk & no dialogue

The International Institute for Strategic Studies' Shangri-La Dialogue, Asia's largest security conference, has wrapped up its 2023 meeting in Singapore. The context for this year's summit was not propitious: Russia's bloody invasion of Ukraine grinds on, while Chinese President Xi Jinping continues his uncompromising approach to global affairs.

If one thing was obvious during the two days of defence diplomacy, it is that the Sino-American competition is far from being managed effectively. A robust bilateral dialogue is almost non-existent at the ministerial level, with military-to-military contact even more limited. Efforts by US President Joe Biden's administration to restart talks fizzled earlier this year after a Chinese spy balloon was shot down in American airspace. Some senior officials are in contact, potentially paving the way for high-level visits. But for now, China is in no hurry to re-engage.

As the United States warns of an alarming increase in ominous intercepts from Chinese military aircraft and vessels amid escalating tensions over Taiwan, America's partners want China to talk. The focus, they argue, should be on better military-to-military communication to build confidence. In delivering this year's Shangri-La keynote, Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese described more dialogue

as the "first and most fundamental" guardrail on US-China relations.

In his speech at the conference, US Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin also emphasised bilateral dialogue, especially between military leaders. The right time to talk, Austin said, was "anytime and every time."

Despite this appeal, Chinese Defense Minister Li Shangfu rebuffed Austin's request to meet. That's not surprising, given that Li has been under US sanctions since 2018 for buying Russian weapons. Nevertheless, China's adamant opposition to broader defence diplomacy is inexcusable. When asked about the need for guardrails and confidence-build measures, including to manage confrontations at sea or in the air, Li said the answer was not military-to-military dialogue; rather, the West should "mind its own business" and stay out of the waters and airspace near China.

The US and its partners, Li argued, were using freedom of navigation as a pretext for "hegemony." Making it clear that China has no interest in examining its own conduct in the Indo-Pacific, Li repeated the now-familiar lines that his country would never bully or coerce others and has no hegemonic aspirations. The irony of such remarks was not lost on many of the delegates. The Philippines, for example, challenged Li on the "dis-

connect" between China's words and its actions in recent years, not least in the South China Sea.

Li was unperturbed. China's narrative is aimed at a domestic audience, as well as any regional elites disillusioned with the West and reflexively suspicious of the US. The Chinese delegates, predominantly from the People's Liberation Army, were quick to encourage Southeast Asian "autonomy" and to portray the Quad and AUKUS security groupings as undermining the centrality of ASEAN and regional stability.

The second takeaway from the conference concerns Russia's invasion of Ukraine: while the war preoccupies the US and its close partners, Southeast Asia remains indifferent. The argument that Russia's aggression must be opposed, not least to guard against the possibility of a similar situation in Asia, was repeated ad nauseam at the conference. For the West, this is self-evident.

But in many less-developed parts of Asia, the Russian and Chinese narrative of the war and its causes, including "provocation" by NATO, has gained considerable traction.

The half-baked initiative was dead on arrival. European Union High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Josep Borrell, Ukrainian Defence Minister Oleksii Reznikov, and many others quickly condemned the plan, ar-

guing that it would result in an unjust peace. But Chinese delegates welcomed the proposal, and some Southeast Asian attendees, who complained that calls for negotiation were automatically seen as pro-Russian, sympathised with the idea.

Equally striking, the "power of partnerships" - as the Biden administration describes it - was on full display at the conference. Leaders and ministers from the US, Europe, the United Kingdom, Japan, Australia, and Canada sang from the same song sheet on both Russia and China, harmonising their calls for dialogue and deterrence. Moreover, US-led trilateral meetings were held on the sidelines, a "new Quad" meeting of the US, Japan, Australia, and the Philippines took place, and senior defence officials from the Five Eyes intelligence alliance (the US, the UK, Australia, New Zealand, and Canada) held discussions. India was notably absent, though, with the defence minister skipping the event yet again.

For all its quiet hedging, Southeast Asia continues to worry about the risk of war. But regional leaders are determined to avoid the "invidious choice" between the US and China, no matter how much their rivalry shapes the agenda and dominates discussions.

The writer is a senior fellow at the Asia Society Policy Institute. @PROJECTSYNDICATE



Richard Maude

FOR ALL ITS QUIET HEDGING, SOUTHEAST ASIA CONTINUES TO WORRY ABOUT THE RISK OF WAR

Control the mind

Sir, The brutal killing of a woman in Thane by her live-in partner has sent shockwaves across the country. It's especially frightening that there are signs of the new modus operandi of disposing off a woman's body staying here. Provocation for the killing and cutting of a human body apart, it is important for psychologists to go deep into why cold blooded murders like the Thane one are executed without a fear in the world by some modern day killers. By all accounts, however, none among the two couples of Delhi and Thane had retained any kind of ties with relatives which in itself speaks about the intricacies of social isolation. Therefore, notwithstanding the other factors that may have contributed to the deadly killing and body disposal, everything boils down to the mind. Either you control the mind or the mind controls you because mind is a wonderful servant but a lousy master. Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA

Dangerous ideologies

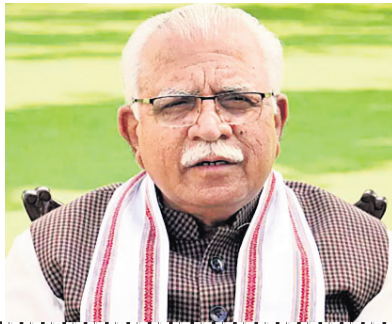
Sir, The recent tableau depicting the assassination of Indira Gandhi during a 'shaheedi' march in Brampton, Canada on the anniversary of Operation Blue Star is a distressing reflection of the existence of dangerous ideologies within certain segments of the Sikh community. This act of glorifying a heinous crime goes against the principles of basic human decency, showing a complete disregard for compassion and empathy. However, it is important to remember that these extremist forces represent a minority within the Sikh community, as the majority firmly opposes such acts of violence. India and Canada share a long-standing relationship founded on democratic values and mutual respect. Unfortunately, recent incidents involving Khalistan supporters displaying anti-India graffiti have strained this relationship. Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's criticism of the Indian government's response to the farmers' protests, which were predominantly led by Sikh farmers, has further added to the tension. In such circumstances, it is crucial for both governments to engage in open dialogue and address the underlying issues that contribute to the rise of extremism. It is imperative to recognise that the actions of a few individuals do not represent the entire Sikh community or the larger Indian diaspora in Canada. The vast majority of Sikhs and Indians strongly condemn any form of violence or the glorification of such acts. It is vital to avoid generalisations and stereotypes that can further divide communities and impede progress towards harmonious coexistence. Bishal Kumar Saha, MURSHIDABAD

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
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People are getting direct benefits from the schemes in our government. Now the assistance amount (under various schemes) goes directly to the beneficiary's account
MANOHAR LAL KHATTAR | HARYANA CM

'NO HONKING DAY' TOMORROW

In order to control noise pollution and its adverse health effects, Mumbai Police's Traffic Control Branch has announced a 'No Honking Day' Wednesday (June 14) to arrest the trend of unnecessary use of horns among motorists, a top official said



of the day quote

I firmly believe that everyone has to be optimistic. Bihar is a place where a large number of international events happen and become successful. Nitish Ji is working for a good cause. The leaders of different political parties are assembling in Patna for the opposition unity and it has to become successful

JITAN RAM MANJHI | FORMER BIHAR CM

They don't acknowledge the contributions of Bapu (Gandhi). Even those from that party like late Atal Bihari Vajpayee, who did such a fine job (as Prime Minister) are not spoken about. Murlidhar Joshi has also been forgotten

NITISH KUMAR | BIHAR CM

We have held discussions to restart the Indira Canteens. One Indira Canteen has to be opened in every ward (of Bangalore). I have instructed to take measures to start a minimum 250 Indira Canteens in Bangalore city

SIDDARAMAIAH | KARNATAKA CM

SHORT TAKES

Nitin Agarwal named as new BSF chief

New Delhi: IPS officer Nitin Agarwal has been appointed as the Director General of the Border Security Force (BSF). A 1989 batch Kerala cadre officer, Agarwal has previously served as the Additional Director General, Operations, of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF). The BSF has been without a full-time chief since the retirement of Pankaj Singh on December 31, 2022. CRPF Director General Dr. Sujoy Lal Thakur was holding additional charge as its chief.

Four children feared drowned

Mumbai: Four children are feared drowned and one has been rescued after they ventured into the rough seas at Juhu here Monday, a civic official said. The incident occurred at Juhu Koliwada in the western suburbs, where a group of five boys, in the age group of 12 to 15 years, ventured into the sea around 5.30 pm, he said. The civic authorities had initially received information that six people had ventured into the sea, but now it has been confirmed that five boys drowned, the official said.

Ex-MLA's wife killed in Delhi road mishap

New Delhi: The wife of former Congress MLA Rajesh Liothia died after her car was hit by another vehicle near Kashmere Gate early Monday, police said. The deceased was identified as Madhu, 55, a resident of Anand Parbat. Police said upon receiving a call regarding the incident, the Kashmere Gate police station dispatched a team to the scene. Upon arrival, the police discovered that Madhu had already been rushed to the Trauma Centre by a CAT ambulance but was declared brought dead by doctors there at 6.03 a.m.

Drone shot down by BSF

Jaipur: A suspected Pakistani drone that intruded into Indian territory along the International Border in Rajasthan's Sri Ganganagar district was shot down by BSF jawans Monday, police said. Hearing the sound of a drone entering village 23 O along the International Border late Sunday night, BSF jawans fired at it and shot it down, Karanpur SHO Balwant Ram said.

PROTEST AT INDIAN MISSION IN LONDON

NIA seeks public help, releases CCTV footage

In the latest update on the attack on the High Commission of India in London by alleged Khalistani supporters, the NIA released five CCTV footages of the attack on Monday and sought help from the public to identify the culprits.

AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 12: Broadening its probe into attempts to vandalise the Indian Mission premises in London, the National Investigation Agency (NIA) Monday released five videos and sought the help of the general public in identifying individuals involved in the violent protests there in March this year. The nearly two-hour-long footage from CCTVs was posted by the NIA on its website and the link shared on its official Twitter handle while urging people to provide any information regarding the persons seen in the videos to the agency. The NIA said in a statement that the CCTV footage of the attack by anti-national elements on the High Commission of India in London March 19 this year has been uploaded.

"All the members of public are requested to provide any information regarding the persons seen in the footage to the NIA in public interest," the statement said, adding the information would be kept secret. The agency also provided a WhatsApp number +917290009373



OFFICIALS FROM THE MISSION HAD SAID THE "ATTEMPTED BUT FAILED" ATTACK WAS FOILED AND THAT THE TRICOLOUR WAS NOW FLYING "GRANDER"

THE METROPOLITAN POLICE SAID THAT TWO MEMBERS OF SECURITY STAFF SUSTAINED MINOR INJURIES WHICH DID NOT REQUIRE HOSPITAL TREATMENT

INDIA HAD SUMMONED THE BRITISH DEPUTY HIGH COMMISSIONER BASED IN NEW DELHI AND DEMANDED AN EXPLANATION OVER THE COMPLETE "ABSENCE OF SECURITY"

for conveying the information.

This comes after a team of the NIA visited London to get details of the case besides interacting with officials of the Scotland Yard, officials in know of the developments said.

The agency took over the probe from the Special Cell of the Delhi Police which had registered a case under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act and the Prevention of Damage to Public Property Act as it involves illegal activities car-

ried out by certain people holding Indian nationality abroad.

Pro-Khalistani protesters tried to vandalise the Indian High Commission in London and pulled down the national flag while holding protests outside the High Commission complex on March 19. It happened a day after Punjab Police launched a crackdown against radical preacher Amritpal Singh in Punjab.

The Counter-Terrorism and Counter Radicalisation unit of the Ministry of Home Affairs had handed over the case to the NIA and the decision was taken after Union Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla held a meeting with representatives of the British government in April this year.

Earlier, Union Home Secretary Bhalla had flagged the issue with a UK delegation which was led by Permanent Secretary, Home Office, Sir Matthew Rycroft. He had "specifically" conveyed New Delhi's concerns on the misuse of the UK's asylum status by pro-Khalistani elements to abet terrorist activities and requested better cooperation, increased monitoring of extremists and proactive action.

India's concerns over the breach of security at the Indian High Commission were also emphasised in that meeting.

5 rail employees under scanner

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 12: Five railway employees, including the station master of Bahanaga Bazar, are being investigated in connection with the three-train accident in Odisha's Balasore district that claimed 288 lives, official sources said Monday.

The four other employees perform signalling-related job and were on duty at the time of the accident earlier this month, they said. The sources said the five employees are discharging their duties at present and any future action would depend on the accident probe report prepared by the Commissioner of Railway Safety (CRS).

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) is conducting a separate probe into alleged criminal negligence leading to the accident at Bahanaga Bazar station June 2. Railway Ministry officials have indicated a possible manual tampering of the interlocking system which turned the signal for the Coromandel Express to green and guided it to the loop line where it collided with a stationary goods train. An interference with the interlocking sys-



tem, which is an automated signalling system, is being seen as the major cause of the incident. "Five railway personnel are currently at the centre of the probe. A final report from the CRS is expected soon," a senior rail official, who did not wish to be named, said. Three possible scenarios are being probed - whether the tampering of the system was intentional or by mistake or a consequence of maintenance work underway in the area - the sources said. Meanwhile, two rail workers' unions have come out in support of the national transporter amidst harsh criticism from the Opposition parties over the accident in which more than 1,000 people were injured.

CRS PROBE INTO TRAIN TRAGEDY

BENGAL PANCHAYAT POLLS Violence mars 3rd day of filing nominations

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kolkata, June 12: The third day of filing nomination for the forthcoming panchayat polls in West Bengal was marred by sporadic incidents of violence reported from different corners of the state.

Polling for the three-tier panchayat system will be conducted July 8, and the results will be announced July 11.

On Monday morning, the uncle of a Congress candidate at Nakashipara area in Nadia district was beaten up allegedly by Trinamool Congress activists as he tried to save his nephew from the attack. He is under treatment at a local hospital with a broken limb.

At Sonamukhi in Bankura district, BJP candidate Dibakar Gharami was severely beaten up by some unknown miscreants. He is under treatment with severe head injuries.

Earlier Monday, Minakhan in North 24 Parganas district turned into a virtual battlefield follow-

ing clashes between the Trinamool Congress and CPI(M) activists. The CPI(M) leadership has accused the ruling party workers

Similar clashes between the Trinamool and CPI(M) were reported from Barsul in East Burdwan district during the nomination period Monday. Several persons were injured following brick-batting between the two rival groups.

Meanwhile, BJP Lok Sabha MP and actress-turned-politician Locket Chatterjee entered into a heated conversation on Monday with the police after she was stopped from entering the nomination centre at Pandua in Hooghly district.

However, Chatterjee argued her way and finally entered the nomination centre. In the closing hours of filing nomination Monday, reports came about the severe clashes between the Trinamool and the All India Secular Front (AISF) supporters.



NO RESPITE: Visitors at the India Gate lawns alongside Kartavya Path on a hot day in New Delhi

PTI PHOTO

₹4,500cr under PMJVK lying unused with states

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 12: An amount of about ₹4,500 crore under the Pradhan Mantri Jan Vikas Karyakram (PMJVK) of the Ministry of Minority Affairs is lying "unused" with the states, officials said Monday.

Till the state governments make use of these funds and submit "utilisation certificates", it is not possible for the Centre to make more

funds available to them under the scheme, they said.

The officials also said more than 58,000 "units" under infrastructure projects that were part of the PMJVK sanctioned from 2008 to 2018-2019, which the states said were unviable, have been cancelled or dropped after the Ministry of Minority Affairs spoke to the states.

The officials said an amount of about ₹12,000 crore was spent for the welfare of minorities under

the UPA rule while in nine years of the Narendra Modi government, an amount of ₹31,000 crore has been spent for the purpose.

The PMJVK, a centrally-sponsored scheme, is an area development programme under which community infrastructure and basic amenities are being created in the identified areas. The infrastructure built up under the scheme is for the benefit of all the people living in an area.

Cong planning 'bigger role' for Priyanka

On Monday, Priyanka kicked off her first public meeting in poll-bound Madhya Pradesh and announced the five guarantees in the state which included ₹1,500 per month to women, LPG cylinder for ₹500, 100 units of free electricity and only half the price till 200 units, implementation of the old pension scheme and restarting the farm loan waiver scheme

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, June 12: Even as Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra kicked off her poll campaign for Madhya Pradesh on Monday and announced five guarantees for the state, party sources said that she is likely to play a bigger role in the party in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections.

According to party sources, Priyanka Gandhi, who campaigned aggressively in Himachal Pradesh last year and in Karnataka earlier this year, will keep on campaigning for the party in the poll bound states of Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Telangana and Rajasthan.

Priyanka Gandhi has already addressed a public meeting in Telangana's Hyderabad May 8. She had targeted the Bharath Rashtra Samithi government in the state led by Chief Minister K Chandrababhan Rao over unemployment and several other issues during her first public meeting in the southern state.

On Monday, she also kicked off her first public meeting in poll-bound Madhya Pradesh and an-



nounced the five guarantees in the state which included ₹1500 per month to women, LPG cylinder for ₹500, 100 units of free electricity and only half the price till 200 units, implementation of the old pension scheme and restarting the farm loan waiver scheme.

A source cited the success in Himachal Pradesh, where Priyanka Gandhi single handedly pulled off the election in favour of the party against the mighty BJP where Prime Minister Narendra Modi also campaigned aggressively The

victory in the hill state has helped her to create her own space in the party because during the Himachal Pradesh assembly elections former party chief Rahul Gandhi was busy in the Bharat Jodo Yatra and she led from the front, the source said.

It was Priyanka Gandhi who made the slogan 'Aa rahi hai Congress' popular and her guarantee of the implementation of OPS, an important issue in the hill state during the polls, connected with the people, the

source added.

Even in Karnataka, she along with her brother Rahul Gandhi campaigned extensively and made all the five guarantees a hit among the people, he said. "Thus looking at her aggressive form, the party wants Priyanka Gandhi to lead the campaign for the party in other poll bound states too," the source added.

Another source said that Priyanka Gandhi is likely to be made the chairperson of the Congress' Campaign Committee for the 2024 Lok Sabha elections to project her in a bigger role. The source added that the assembly polls in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh and Telangana may be just a kind of preparation for her ahead of the big role in the crucial 2024 Lok Sabha elections, where the party wants to make a comeback at the national level. The source said that a final call on this will be taken by the party leadership including party president Mallikarjun Kharge in the coming months ahead of the 2024 Lok Sabha elections when several committees will be formed.

MANIPUR CLASHES

Congress demands all-party delegation to restore peace

The Congress demanded that if Modi is unable to visit the border state, President Droupadi Murmu should make efforts to help bring peace and normalcy in Manipur

PNN/AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 12: The Congress Monday asked Prime Minister Narendra Modi to break his "silence" on the situation in Manipur and send a message of goodwill besides allowing an all-party delegation to visit the violence-hit state to help restore peace. The party also urged the prime minister to visit the northeastern state to listen to the "agony of the people there".

While taking jibe on Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Man ki Baat, Congress leader Jairam Ramesh said that the Prime Minister should do at least one Manipur ki Baat.

"He has done 100 Man ki Baat, he should do at least one Manipur ki baat. The PM should break his silence on Manipur violence and



he should also make a visit to Manipur," Jairam Ramesh said. Ramesh also asked if the prime minister can go to Balasore after the train accident, "why can't he visit the violence-hit state".

Congress leader Mukul Wasnik said the situation in Manipur is agonising and at this time, the prime minister should visit the state to help wipe the tears of the affected people and listen to their agony.

Another Congress leader Bhakt Charan Das, who is also the AICC in-charge for Manipur, alleged the BJP government in Manipur is not honest in its efforts and that its approach was not democratic.

Das asked why not a team of Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha MPs or an all-party delegation be sent to Manipur and a democratic initiative taken up to help restore peace and normalcy there.

STRAY DOG MENACE RETURNS BJP remains a divided house in K'taka

Last September, the state government had announced the vaccination drive and also its attempts to find locations for more Animal Birth Control (ABC) centres in the wake of 19 deaths due to dog bites in 2022 till the end of August



Rights (KSCPCR) to intervene in the matter. Both commissions suo motu registered cases in connection with the incident and sought a detailed report within two weeks from the Muzhappilangad grama panchayat. The child rights panel also sought detailed reports within two weeks from the Secretary Local Self Government, Secretary of the district panchayat and the SHO of Edakkad police, KSCPCR chairperson K V Manoj Kumar said. He further said that if the commission found any failure or negligence on the part of any of these authorities, appropriate action would be recommended to the state government. He also said the commission would mull whether to intervene in a stray dog related case going on in the Supreme Court. "In the next meeting, we will hold a discussion on intervening in the stray dog related litigation going on in the Supreme Court. Children

should be able to walk around without the fear of being bitten by stray dogs," Kumar said. The 11-year-old boy was found grievously injured in some bushes several hundred metres away from his home. A resident who lives near the place where the boy was found told the media that Nihal used to come there frequently to ride on the swings in a nearby park. "We heard the dogs barking a lot yesterday. We did not hear the boy. Later when they were searching for him, we searched the area where the dogs were barking and found him," he said. Another resident said there have been stray dog attacks in the area in the recent past and a complaint was given to the district administration, but nothing was done. Some residents said the ABC centre in the area was non-functional. In the wake of the incident, TV visuals showed dog catchers turning up in the area, catching stray canines in nets and taking them away.

Bangalore, June 12: Even after the drubbing in the Assembly elections and losing its base in entire south India ahead of the Lok Sabha polls in 2024, the Karnataka BJP unit still remains a divided house. The party leadership is struggling to foster unity and the spirit of fighting against the odds among the cadre. The saffron party that once showed all the signs of emerging as a strong force in the region and making inroads into the south Indian states, has lost miserably and is waiting for a momentum to carry it forward. It is almost a month since the results were declared on May 14 and the BJP is still to appoint the Leader of the Opposition in the legislative assembly and the council. Sources in the party maintained that C.T. Ravi's outbursts were aimed at former CM B.S. Yediyurappa and his son B.Y. Vijayendra. The statements by former CM D.V. Sadananda Gowda further demoralized the party cadres and showed that all is not well within the party. He claimed that 13 MPs have approached him over being maligned and the party high command's silence on the matter is intriguing. Sadananda Gowda stated that there is an attempt to malign 13 MPs among the total 25 as useless.

It is almost a month since the results were declared on May 14 and the BJP is still to appoint the Leader of the Opposition in the legislative assembly and the council

Sources in the BJP said that the party is not showing any seriousness in trying to understand why 54 sitting MLAs, including ministers, lost the elections



A systematic attempt has been made to bring down the morale of senior parliamentarians. The state as well as national leaders must intervene and clear the confusion at this stage, he demanded. There is still a year's time for the Lok Sabha elections. At this juncture, MPs are targeted and maligned. "I don't know who is behind this. Rumours are being spread that 13 MPs have not carried out any development in their constituencies and some have fallen sick and won't be given tickets," he alleged. Sadananda Gowda advised in-

tervention over the defeat. The BJP held a meeting of its legislators and defeated candidates recently. These candidates have questioned the decision of the party to allot them tickets very late and sending wrong signals to the people of the state. However, the party has postponed the scheduled core committee meeting. Karnataka in-charge Arun Singh has taken the opinions of various leaders and the party is looking towards the high command. On the other hand, the Congress is making giant strides in consolidating its support in the state. As promised the grand old party is implementing the first guarantee scheme of free bus travel for women. There is a festive mood in the Congress as the party has directed the districts in-charge ministers to celebrate the inauguration of all the five guarantee schemes with much fervour. The party has filled the full quota of the cabinet and has already started preparations for the significant Bengaluru civic polls and the upcoming Lok Sabha elections. The Congress is targeting and questioning the ideology of the BJP and the RSS. The high command is ensuring harmony between CM Siddaramaiah and Deputy CM D.K. Shivakumar. The combination of the duo is looking dangerous for the BJP.

Kerala employee conquers Mount Denali in Alaska

Thiruvananthapuram, June 12: Thirty-six-year-old Shaikh Hassan Khan, a Kerala government employee, has successfully conquered Mount Denali in Alaska. A determined Khan reached Alaska last month with an impressive CV of having climbed Mount Everest and Kilimanjaro and set his target of climbing the tallest peaks of 185 countries in five years, Denali being the first. On June 7, he achieved the feat amidst risking his own life. After conquering it, he observed that Denali is a beautiful mountain but Everest is mighty. "Climbing Denali is more difficult than climbing Mount Everest. If you climb Denali, you could be better called a Mountaineer," said Khan from Denver. "It was midnight of June 6 in Denali Mountain of the Alaskan ranges. Only 200 miles from the North Pole. We started our journey to the summit on June 6 local time around noon. There was a small weather window for the summit. It's difficult to predict Denali's weather. Denali creates its own weather and this year it was the worst in the last 10 years," said

Khan. "Me and my partner Subir Bakshi skipped Camp 5 and started walking towards the summit. We were roped together. After 18,000 feet the winds started picking up. As we approached 19,000 feet, the wind speed was between 30 and 45 miles per hour. We were walking through the ridges of the mountain. Many times, the wind almost blew us away. All the guided groups returned to camp 5 but we continued. The wind chill created a temperature drop of -60 degree Fahrenheit (-51 degree Celsius). It was cloudy. Visibility was very less. We continued and summited the North America's highest mountain on June 7 at 12.30 am. We just made it," said Khan. But the descent he said was more scary. "We were unable to descend through the fixed lines at 16,000 feet. Wind was violently blowing up carrying snow. My friend developed frost bites as we stayed there for around 8 hours at -40 degree Celsius. Cold pierced through our summit suits. We were in a condition to lose our life. Our radio battery was out. No one was coming up or going down. At last we were rescued. It was a mission accomplished," recalls Khan with a shudder.



A man rides a two-wheeler during rainfall in Kozhikode
PTI PHOTO



Bangalore to host Incredible Chef's Challenge

Bangalore, June 12: The Incredible Chef's Challenge (ICC), an annual competition that brings together the best chefs and academia, will be held at Palace Grounds in the city from June 13-15. The event is organised by World of Hospitality (WHO) and South Indian Chefs Association (Sica), as part of the World of Hospitality Expo. The expo is also held in Mumbai, Goa and New Delhi. Apart from the competition, the three-day event will host sessions decoding the latest trends and un-

veil new technologies that are transforming the hospitality sector. "The competition is open to chefs and students from Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. This year, 200 chefs have registered under seven categories. Owing to the fact that this is a millet year, the third day of the event will be dedicated to lost recipes prepared using millets. We are encouraging the participants to contemporise these traditional recipes so that they can be plated in modern style," said Nageshwaran A, Executive Officer of Sica, and Sous Chef at GRT Hotels and Resorts, Chennai.



"The competition is a highly sought-after platform for several chefs in the city to bag accreditation for their skills and also to improve by listening to the detailed feedback from the internationally acclaimed chef jury panel. The dedicated master classes hosted by partner brands will further help them choose their ingredients wisely and also open vivid net-

working opportunities, hence bolstering the industry-supplier relations," Steena Joy, organiser of the event and Editor of World of Hospitality News, said. "As everything around us is transforming, the culinary arts too need to change to be relevant. Only innovations can lead the industry to thrive and we a younger generation that can push the boundaries in bringing to the table unexplored dishes," said Chef Kasi Viswanathan, Vice-president of Karnataka chapter, Sica and Director of Food and Beverage, Radisson Blu Atria, Bengaluru.

Dutch vlogger manhandled

Bangalore, June 12: A Dutch vlogger and YouTuber was allegedly harassed and manhandled by a man at the busy 'chor bazaar' in the City market here, following which police swung into action and have arrested the miscreant. The video of the incident has gone viral on the social media, with people seeking strict punishment for the culprit, who is said to be a local vendor, for his misbehaviour. In the video, it can be seen that as the YouTuber Pedro Mota was recording his experience in the market, suddenly a man grabbed his hand and questioned him for recording a video. Even as the foreign national initially greets the man by saying namaste and then asks him to let go of his hand, the man pushes him. Soon, Mota hurriedly leaves the spot. Posting the video of the incident on his YouTube channel "Madly Rover" on Monday, Mota wrote, "Foreigner traveling in India experiences the thieves market in Bangalore, also known as the Sunday market or chor bazaar. But exploring the area started out on the wrong foot as an angry man attacked me by grabbing and twisting my hand and arm, lunging after me as I tried to escape. After I had some street food, met great local Indian people and haggled for a new buttoned shirt."



EVEN AS THE VIDEO OF THE INCIDENT HAS GONE VIRAL ON SOCIAL MEDIA, WITH PEOPLE SEEKING STRICT PUNISHMENT FOR THE CULPRIT, WHO IS SAID TO BE A LOCAL VENDOR, FOR HIS MISBEHAVIOUR

Small boat fishers struggling to survive

COASTAL COMMUNITIES IN KERALA THAT DEPEND ON FISHING FOR SURVIVAL ARE FACING AN UNPRECEDENTED EXISTENTIAL THREAT AS THERE IS NO RECOURSE IF THEIR BOATS GET WRECKED DUE TO ROUGH SEAS OR STORMS

Kochi, June 12: Fishers returning to shore with their bounty starkly juxtaposed with a graveyard of storm-ravaged boats in south Chellanam here is a grim reminder of how climate change is snatching away the livelihoods of people in coastal Kerala. According to a 2021 study in the journal Climate Dynamics, there was a 52 per cent increase in the frequency of cyclonic storms in the Arabian Sea between 2001 and 2019. While the increment in cyclonic storm duration was 80 per cent, very severe cyclonic storms witnessed an almost threefold rise as compared to the period between 1982 and 2000. Coastal communities in Kerala

that depend on fishing for survival are facing an unprecedented existential threat as there is no recourse if their boats get wrecked due to rough seas or storms. In 2019, 56-year-old V S Podiyal of south Chellanam had gone out to fish, but his boat capsized due to rough seas. "When high waves started hitting, my boat flipped. There were 18 of us and we were rescued after four hours, but my boat was damaged beyond repair," he said. Podiyal's boat 'Rosemary' now sits in the "boat graveyard" with weeds poking through its rotting wood, surrounded by other broken boats. "There is no way to repair it and no scheme from the government to help us. If the equipment is lost, the government has no com-



pensation scheme. Several fishermen are facing this problem," he said. P V Wilson, standing next to him, has a different struggle. Like Podiyal, he also lost his boat to sea in 2021 which forced him to give up fishing as he could not afford to buy a new one. As

Wilson looked at other boats returning to the shore with their catch, he said, "At times, I wonder how different my life would have been if I was still fishing." "I had plans to send my children for higher education but after my boat capsized we had no savings,"

a dejected Wilson added. My two daughters wanted to become teachers but had to give up their education as I had no savings, he added. As climate change is making the sea unpredictable, several small boat fishers are wondering how to continue with their limited resources in the face of uncertainty. "Earlier, the sea was not this rough, we knew the sea, we knew the waves but now the sea feels like a stranger; an unknown unpredictable entity," he said. Father John Kalathi, vicar of St George Church in south Chellanam, said there are 600 families in his parish and 99 per cent earn their livelihood through fishing. "But the situation is terrible for them because of climate change, weather, change in sea and water.

The fish catch is reducing but the expense is very high for them to carry on fishing," he said. "This community loves the sea, however, the sea does not love them back often," he added. Moreover, debt traps by loan sharks are adding to the woes of the fishers, Kalathi said. Most fishermen who lost their boats to rough seas have to take loans at high-interest rates from loan sharks to meet their financial requirements and they are getting trapped, Kalathi said. Podiyal, who took a loan of Rs 25,000 at an interest rate of 10 per cent per month, is one of them. "Now that amount has risen to Rs 40,000 and I have no means to pay the loan back. I fear that the loan sharks would start threatening me soon," he said.

Responding to a tweet seeking action against the guy who misbehaved with Mota, Bengaluru police said, action has been taken and the person concerned rounded up. Strict action will be taken against him. No such misbehaviour with foreign tourists will be tolerated. City Police Commissioner B Dayananda tweeted, "It's an old video which has come into circulation now. The person harassing in the video has been identified, traced and action taken. No scope for such high-handedness in Namma Bengaluru against anybody."

of the day quote

Earlier, the farmers were only annadata (grain providers). Now, they have become urjaadata (energy providers), and we are going to make them daamardata. The parali (crop residue) will be used in preparing bitumen, and my department is bringing a scheme in this regard

NITIN GADKARI | UNION MINISTER

Amarnath Yatra is not a political issue. It is a symbol of the collective culture of the country and Jammu and Kashmir. The Hindu devotees join the yatra in large numbers and are welcomed by Muslims of Kashmir who also made arrangements for them

JITENDRA SINGH | UNION MINISTER

A few leaders from the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) also attended the Maha-Rally held at Ramliila Ground yesterday, and they were also saying that Prime Minister Modi did not do the right thing by bringing this ordinance

ARVIND KEJRIWAL | DELHI CHIEF MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Five injured in Manipur gunfight

Imphal: At least five persons were injured in a gun battle between a Village Defence Force (VDF) and a group of militants at Khamenlok along the border of Imphal East and Kangpokpi districts in Manipur Monday. Police officials said that the five injured were admitted to a Imphal hospital, where the condition of one is stated to be critical. After the gun fight broke out between the VDF and the militants, security forces rushed to the area and then the armed militants managed to flee. There were reports that a militant was killed in the firing but officials were yet to confirm it.

11 injured in road accident

Jammu: Eleven people were injured in a road accident in J&K's Poonch district Monday, officials said. Officials said that a vehicle went out of the driver's control and plunged into a rivulet in Mendhar area of Poonch. "All the injured have been shifted to Mendhar hospital for treatment," an official said.

Kids forced into begging rescued

Srinagar: Officials of the Juvenile Justice Board and the local police Monday rescued many children forced into begging in Jammu and Kashmir's Srinagar district. "A team of Juvenile Justice Board and police raided Parimpora area on the outskirts of Srinagar city today and rescued many local and non-local children who had been forced into begging by brokers. Rescued children include three from Parimpora area and others belonging to different other areas," police.

Fire at Ghazipur landfill site in Delhi

New Delhi: A fire broke out at the Ghazipur landfill site in east Delhi Monday, officials said. A call about the incident was received around 1.30 pm, they said. A total of 13 fire tenders were rushed to the spot along with a robotic machine to control and douse the blaze, a senior official of the Delhi Fire Service said. In March 2022, a massive fire broke out at the dumping yard of the landfill, leading to a huge cloud of smoke enveloping the region and neighbouring areas. Delhi Environment Minister Gopal Rai last year launched a 9-point action plan to prevent incidents of fire at landfill sites.



The Congress government in Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh and Chhattisgarh has restored the OPS. Our government in Karnataka has cleared the five guarantees (the poll promises made by the party there)

PRIYANKA GANDHI | CONGRESS GENERAL SECRETARY

GREAT INITIATIVE

Drones are now being used by the Lucknow Electricity Supply Administration (LESA) to check power theft through air surveillance



NCMC reviews cyclone preparedness

Cyclone Biparjoy, expected to cross the Gujarat coast on June 15, is on course to become the cyclone with the longest lifespan in the Arabian Sea

AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 12: The National Crisis Management Committee (NCMC) Monday reviewed the preparedness of the Gujarat government and central agencies for the impending Cyclone Biparjoy and assured the state of all help.

The India Meteorological Department's director general briefed the NCMC, chaired by Cabinet Secretary Rajiv Gauba, about the current status of extremely severe cyclonic storm Biparjoy over the east central Arabian Sea, according to the statement.

The cyclone is very likely to move northward till Wednesday morning and then cross Saurashtra and Kutch and adjoining Pakistan coasts between Mandvi (Gujarat) and Karachi (Pakistan) near Jakhau Port (Gujarat) by Thursday noon.

By that time, it will downgrade to a very severe cyclonic storm with a maximum sustained wind speed of 125-150 kmph, the statement said. The chief secretary of



Police personnel restrict visitors entering the sea water at Juhu Beach PTI PHOTO

Fishermen have been advised not to venture into the sea and those at sea have been called back to safe berth

A total of 21,000 boats have been parked so far and a list of all vulnerable villages has been prepared for the purpose of evacuation

It will also be the third cyclone to hit the western state in June since 1965, the meteorological office said

Gujarat apprised the NCMC of the preparatory measures being taken to protect the population in the expected path of the cyclonic storm and measures being taken by the local administration, it said.

Details of salt pan workers have also been gathered for shifting them to safe places. Adequate shelters, power supply, medicine and emergency services are being ready. Ten teams of the State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) are being deployed, the statement said.

The National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) has already deployed 12 teams and three additional teams are on standby in Gujarat. In addition, 15 teams - five each at Arrakonam (Tamil Nadu), Mundli (Odisha) and Bathinda (Punjab) - are on alert for airlifting on short notice, it said.

Rescue and relief teams of Coast Guard, Army and Navy along with ships and aircraft are also on standby. An adequate number of teams and assets of Army, Navy, Air

Haryana farmers block Delhi-C'garh highway

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kurukshetra, June 12: Farmers Monday blocked the Delhi-Chandigarh highway after holding a mahapanchayat in this district to press for minimum support price for sunflower seed.

The "MSP Dilao, Kisan Bachao mahapanchayat", called by Bharatiya Kisan Union (Charuni), was held at a grain market in Pipli close to the National Highway-44. After the mahapanchayat, the farmers gathered on the highway and blocked it. Police were diverting traffic from Delhi through the Kurukshetra bypass.

Apart from leaders of various khaps and Bharatiya Kisan Union leader Rakesh Tikait, Olympic medal-winning wrestler Bajrang Punia, one of the grapplers who have been demanding action against outgoing Wrestling Federation of India chief Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh, were present at the mahapanchayat. Farmers from Haryana, Punjab, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan too attended the gathering.

At the mahapanchayat, farmer leader Karam Singh Mathana said the local administration had assured them of a meeting with Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar to discuss their demands. "But now they say the



The "MSP Dilao, Kisan Bachao mahapanchayat", called by Bharatiya Kisan Union (Charuni), was held at a grain market in Pipli close to the National Highway-44

After the mahapanchayat, the farmers gathered on the highway and blocked it. Police were diverting traffic from Delhi through the Kurukshetra bypass

chief minister has left Karnal". "Because of this, the local committee, which organised the mahapanchayat, decided to block the National Highway-44 till our demands are met," Mathana said. The Deputy Commissioner of Kurukshetra, Shantanu Sharma, told PTI that the district administration has been holding talks with BKU leaders since Sunday to resolve the issue of procuring sunflower seed on MSP.

On June 6, farmers led by Bharatiya Kisan Union (Charuni) chief Gurnam Singh Charuni blocked National Highway-44 near Shahabad here demanding that the government procure sunflower seeds at minimum support price.

No bike-taxi in Delhi for now as SC stays HC order

In a public notice issued earlier this year, the government had cautioned bike-taxis against plying in Delhi and warned that violations would make aggregators liable for a fine of up to ₹1 lakh

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 12: The Supreme Court Monday stayed the High Court order that essentially allowed bike-taxi aggregators Rapido and Uber to operate in the national capital by asking the Delhi government not to take any coercive action against them till a new policy was formulated.

A vacation bench of Justices Aniruddha Bose and Rajesh Bindal granted liberty to the two aggregators to request urgent hearing of their pleas by the Delhi HC.

The bench, which stayed the May 26 order of the Delhi HC, also recorded the Delhi government counsel's submission the final policy will be notified before July-end. The top court was hearing two separate petitions by the AAP

government challenging the High Court order that no coercive action should be taken against the bike-taxi aggregators until the final policy was notified.

Last week, the top court had sought a response from the Centre on the pleas of Delhi government. Earlier, senior advocate Manish Vashisht, appearing for the Delhi government, said the high court's decision to stay the government's notice till the final policy is notified is like virtually allowing Rapido's writ petition.

On May 26, while issuing a notice to the Delhi government on Rapido's plea challenging a law that excludes two-wheelers from being registered as transport vehicles, the high court directed that no coercive action should be taken against the bike-taxi aggregator till the final policy was notified.

The high court, which listed Rapido's plea August 22 before the registrar for completion of pleading, said, "The counsel for the petitioners (Rapido) submits that policy is under active consideration."

In a public notice issued earlier this year, the government had cautioned bike-taxis against plying in Delhi and warned that violations would make aggregators liable for a fine of up to ₹1 lakh.



RAGING INFERNNO: Firemen douse a blaze that broke out on the third floor of Satpura Bhawan, a building housing offices of various departments of the Madhya Pradesh government, in Bhopal PTI PHOTO

NIA attaches 17 properties of Zahoor Watali

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar, June 12: The National Investigation Agency (NIA) Monday attached 17 properties of Kashmiri businessman Zahoor Ahmed Shah Watali in a terror funding case, the agency said.

Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front chief Yasin Malik is currently undergoing life imprisonment in the case.

The NIA said the case relates to terrorist and secessionist activities in Jammu and Kashmir carried out by proscribed ISI-backed organisations such as Lashkar-e

TERROR FUNDING CASE

Toiba (LeT), JKLF, Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM), and others.

These outfits were spreading terror and perpetrating violence in the Valley by promoting and conducting attacks on civilians and security forces, it said.

The investigating agency said 17 properties belonging to "financier of terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir" Watali in the Handwara area of Kupwara district were attached on the orders of Special NIA Court, Patiala House, under section 33(1) of the Unlawful Activities

(Prevention) Act (UAPA) (UAPA).

These banned terrorist groups were using the Hurriyat Conference, "which was formed in 1993 as a front for carrying out and supporting secessionist activities" in Kashmir, it said.

Investigations revealed that the secessionists, arraigned as accused in the case, including the Hurriyat, had entered into a criminal conspiracy and adopted a strategy of instigating the general public to create a surcharged atmosphere in the Kashmir valley and also to resort to violence, the NIA said.

Raigad sees more than 1K snakebite cases in 17 months

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Alibag, June 12: At least 1,118 cases of snake bite were reported in Maharashtra's Raigad district in the last 17 months and 14 persons have died in such incidents, an official from the civil hospital here said Monday.

In light of rise in incidents of snake bite, the civil hospital has appealed to people to go for immediate medical intervention at the nearest hospital instead of consulting quacks or using traditional remedies, the official said.

A total of 1,118 cases of snake bite were reported in the district from January 1, 2022 to June 3 this year, and 14 persons have died in these incidents, he said.

Most of the cases were reported in Alibag, Panvel, Khalapur, Mahad and Mangaon talukas, the official said, adding that there are 14 locations in the district where treatment for snake bite is available.



Remember the past or you're condemned to repeat it

Bhartiya Janata Party seems to have opted against learning from the kick in Karnataka and decided to persist with a majoritarian menu to salivate Hindutva-prone taste buds in the ensuing elections to five states due this year. Ahead of the big fight Lok Sabha elections of 2024, polls will be held in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Telangana and Mizoram.

have been following him from his RSS days find it relatively easy to decipher. The bulk of his decision making is an extension of this period including his record 12 year plus stint as Chief Minister of Gujarat. The state still remains his laboratory for national political experiments.

Take the case of the sudden spurt in interest of both the Centre and the Gujarat government in celebrating the ancient bond between Gujarat and Tamil Nadu. A ten-day Saurashtra Sangamam programme was held in April wherein over 3,000 people of Gujarati origin were brought to Somnath by a special train and were taken around the state. Earlier, in 2022 a month long

Kashi Tamil Sangamam was organised by the Union Ministry to similarly 'rediscover and reaffirm' the age old links between Tamil Nadu and Varanasi, the



Lok Sabha constituency of the PM. Interestingly the historic Sengol recently installed besides the Speaker's seat in the new Parliament building inaugurated by the PM was reportedly presented by a group of Adheenam priests from Chennai ahead of

the event says a published report. The same Sengol had been handed over to India's first Prime Minister more than 75 years ago on the eve of the country's Independence by the deputy chief priest of a Shaivite murti located in present day Tamil Nadu. Besides the fact that the symbol of India's secular democracy, its new Parliament building has a religious mooring-symbol, the sequence of events narrated here clearly points to Modi having set his long and short term sights on this southern state. Elections in Tamil Nadu fall due in 2026, three years from now but the state accounts for 39 seats in the Lok Sabha elections due next year.

For a party perennially in election mode and in unending search of potent props, a steady stream of religious leaders are vending their wares around. The latest among them to organise a string of high profile mass congregations in Gujarat is Bagehsvar Dham's Dhirendra Shastri from Madhya Pradesh. The controversial self-styled Godman has a string of 'divine durbars' in Rajkot, Surat though rains interrupted his plans in Ahmedabad. Published reports of his discourses saw frequent forays into non-religious territories and the more than normal efforts to collect people for the gatherings indicated political intent. In Surat he was quoted as saying that he could turn Pakistan into a Hindu na-

tion. The MP government had last month granted Y-category security to the Godman and had urged other states he was visiting to do likewise.

Films have also now been sucked into the vortex of poll-propaganda usage and interested groups had organized free shows of the controversial film "Kerala Files" in Gujarat. In fact several BJP legislators in Gujarat had demanded tax-exemption in the state for the controversial film 'Kerala Files'. The film was exempted from taxes in BJP-ruled states like Madhya Pradesh, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh but not in non-BJP ones. Polarisation, political or otherwise, inevitably leads to fish-finger like fragmentation.

international



Artificial Intelligence doesn't respect traditional national borders so we urgently need global cooperation between nations and labs
RISHI SUNAK | UK PM

MAN DETAINED

A British man was detained after climbing more than half way up the world's fifth-tallest skyscraper in Seoul with only his bare hands, Monday



of the day quote

PTI was formed after the hard work of 26 years, and was disintegrated in 26 minutes. The chapter of chaos and anarchy has ended and now the journey of progress will begin

Friendly relations between the North and Russia are a precious strategic asset and we will make efforts to ceaselessly develop such cooperative ties

Pakistan has fulfilled all the preconditions and is hopeful that the agreement with the IMF will be signed during the current month. There is no need to be nervous... We have met all conditions of the IMF, removing obstacles in finalising an agreement with it



People watch an Air Canada plane take off at Trudeau Airport from Jacques de Lesseps Park in Montreal

10 killed in Australia bus crash

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Canberra, June 12: A bus carrying wedding guests rolled over on a foggy night in Australia's wine country, killing 10 people and injuring 25, police said Monday.

The 58-year-old driver was arrested and being held at a Cessnock police station and will be charged, Police Assistant Commissioner Tracy Chapman said. She would not detail the allegations, including whether speed was a factor, but told reporters "there is sufficient information... For us to establish that there will be charges."

The crash happened just after 11:30 p.m. Sunday in foggy conditions at a roundabout on Wine Country Drive in the town of Greta in the Hunter Valley region of New South Wales state north of Sydney. The guests had earlier attended a wedding at the Wandin Estate Winery and were heading for their accommodation in the town of Singleton, Chapman said. One guest told Seven News it had been a nice day and a fairytale wedding.

TRAGIC DEATH



A motorist who drove past the crash scene, identified by Australian Broadcasting Corp.

Only as Alison, said the fog was so heavy she could not make out the colors of the flashing lights of police cars, ambulances and fire trucks. "The fog was terrible," she told the ABC. "It was super foggy. You could barely see in front of you."

Of the 25 people injured, 21 remained in hospitals late Monday morning and one was in critical condition, the state government said. The conditions of the others were described as stable. Another 18 passengers were uninjured.

TO COUNTER CHINESE INFLUENCE

US to rejoin UNESCO

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Paris, June 12: UN cultural and scientific agency UNESCO announced Monday that the United States plans to rejoin — and pay more than USD 600 million in back dues — after a decade-long dispute sparked by the organization's move to include Palestine as a member.

US officials say the decision to return was motivated by concern that China is filling the gap left by the US in UNESCO policymaking, notably in setting standards for artificial intelligence and technology education around the world.

The US and Israel stopped funding UNESCO after it voted to include Palestine as a member state in 2011, and the Trump administration decided in 2017 to withdraw from the agency altogether the following year, citing long-running anti-Israel bias and management problems.

US Deputy Secretary of State for Management and Resources Richard Verma submitted a letter last week to UNESCO Director General Audrey Azoulay formalizing the plan to rejoin.

Verma noted progress in depoliticising debate about the

Middle East at UNESCO and reforming the agency's management, according to the hand-delivered letter, obtained by AP.

Applause rang out in the solemn UNESCO auditorium as Azoulay announced the plan to ambassadors at a special meeting Monday, and delegate after delegate stood up to welcome the news. The return of the US, once the agency's biggest funder, is expected to face a vote by its 193 member states next month, according to a UNESCO diplomat.

The decision is a big financial boost to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, known for its World Heritage program as well as projects to fight climate change and teach girls to read.

China's ambassador to UNESCO, Jin Yang, said his country "appreciates" UNESCO's efforts to bring the US back, saying its absence had a "negative impact" on the agency's work.

"Being a member of an international organization is a serious issue, and we hope that the return of the US this time means it acknowledges the mission and the goals of the organization," the ambassador said.

US officials say the decision to return was motivated by concern that China is filling the gap left by the US in UNESCO policymaking, notably in setting standards for artificial intelligence and technology education around the world

SHORT TAKES

Woman in custody after abusing son

Berlin: A woman is in custody in Austria after reportedly abusing her 12-year-old son by shutting him in a dog crate, pouring cold water over him and leaving him exposed to freezing temperatures. A police spokesman in Lower Austria province, Johann Baumschlager, confirmed Monday that the 32-year-old woman is under investigation on suspicion of attempted murder among other offences, the Austria Press Agency reported.

Suspicious item sent to Japan court

Tokyo: A court in Japan said it received a suspicious item on Monday that was delivered the same day the man indicted for murdering former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe was scheduled to attend a pretrial. According to Nara District Court officials, all staff and visitors were evacuated as the police and investigators conducted safety checks, reports Xinhua news agency.

Three tourists die

Cairo: Three British tourists who went missing after a scuba diving boat they were cruising in caught fire in the Red Sea off the Egyptian coast have died, a UK-based tour operator said Monday. Egyptian authorities said the three British nationals went missing when a medium-sized scuba vessel named "Hurricane" went up in flames off the southern Red Sea resort town of Marsa Alam Sunday. The blaze was caused by an electrical short circuit in the boat's engine room, they said.

COUNTEROFFENSIVE OPERATIONS ROLL ON

Ukraine recaptures another village from Russia

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kyiv, June 12: Ukrainian military officials said Monday their troops have retaken another southeastern village from Russian forces, among the first — small — successes in stepped-up counteroffensive operations as the war drags on into its 16th month.

Western analysts and military officials have cautioned that an effort to rid Ukraine of entrenched, powerfully armed and skilled Russian troops could take years, and the success of any Ukrainian counteroffensive is far from certain.

Despite their small size, capturing the villages is an incursion into the first line of Russian defences and could allow Ukrainian forces to try a deeper thrust into occupied areas. Russian forces now control land totalling about one-fifth of Ukraine's total territory, though that's far less than they held before blistering Ukrainian counteroffensives last year that retook the northern city of Kharkiv and southern city of Kherson.

On Saturday, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said "counteroffensive, defensive actions are taking place" without specifying whether it was an all-out counteroffensive, a day after Russian President Vladimir Putin asserted that the counteroffensive had started and Ukrainian forces were taking



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Deputy Defence Minister Hanna Maliar wrote on Telegram that Ukraine's flag was again flying over the village of Storozhiv

"significant losses."

He did not elaborate, and Ukrainian authorities have not publicly specified losses among their troops.

Deputy Defence Minister Hanna Maliar wrote on Telegram that Ukraine's flag was again flying over the village of Storozhiv.

A day earlier, Ukrainian officials said they had taken three other small villages — Blahodatne, Makarivka and Neskuchne — south of the town of Velyka Novosilka in the eastern Donetsk region.

The small villages — Blahodatne, for example, had a pre-invasion population of about 1,000 people —

are located in the so-called "Vremivka salient," a section of the front line where the Russian-controlled area protrudes into territory held by Ukraine. While it is just a few kilometres deep, the area has become one of several epicentres of intense fighting.

Ukrainian forces have focused on other patches of the vast front line, including in the Zaporizhzhia region, and near the devastated city of Bakhmut to the north in Donetsk. Vladimir Rogov, an official with the Moscow-appointed administration of the Zaporizhzhia region at the west end of the front line, said "heavy battles are raging" in the

3 DEAD, 3 INJURED IN SHOOTING

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Annapolis (US), June 12: Three people were killed and three wounded in a shooting Sunday night at a house in Maryland's capital city, police said.

Annapolis Police Chief Edward Jackson told reporters at a media briefing that the shooting stemmed from what he described as an "interpersonal dispute" and that there was no further threat to the public.

"It's a very active and fluid investigation. We're still trying to

determine everything that occurred. We're still piecing it together. We have a lot more work to do," Jackson said. He declined to elaborate on the relationship between the people involved, but said those killed ranged in age from their 20s to their 50s. He said that authorities hadn't established a firm motive for the shooting.

"It wasn't random," Jackson said, noting that the victims "died outside" the home. Numerous police cars were seen in the residential area where the shooting happened.

HONOURS LIST ROW

Sunak slams Johnson

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, June 12: British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak Monday slammed former premier Boris Johnson for asking him to overrule a panel vetting his resignation list appointments to the House of Lords, saying it was "something I wasn't prepared to do".

The British-Indian leader's comment at a public function stemmed from a long-running row over Johnson's honours list, and specifically the list of people he wanted to award peerages to. Johnson's long-awaited honours list, approved nine months after he resigned as Prime Minister, included 38 honours and seven peerages. The resignation honours list is a tradition that allows outgoing prime ministers to nominate people for honours.

As a departing prime minister, Johnson has the right to nominate people for seats in the House of Lords, and for other honours such as knighthoods. By convention, current prime ministers pass on the list of nominees to the House of Lords Appointments Commission (HOLAC).

The list of new peerages did not include many of the former Conservative party leader's nominees. Just three hours after its publication, Johnson stepped down as an MP late on Friday and furiously attacked Sunak's agenda. In his first public response to the row, Sunak on Monday accused Johnson of asking him to overrule the House of Lords Appointment Commission and wave through the rejected nominees.



- Johnson's long-awaited honours list, approved nine months after he resigned as Prime Minister, included 38 honours and seven peerages
- The resignation honours list is a tradition that allows outgoing Prime Ministers to nominate people for honours

Sunak said Johnson asked him to override their recommendations, or "make promises to people". But Sunak said he refused, adding it was "something I wasn't prepared to do". "I wasn't prepared to do that, I didn't think that was right. And if people don't like that, then tough," he told a tech conference in London.

The intervention marks a new point in an escalating war of words over Johnson's controversial resignation honours list, the BBC reported. When Johnson, 58, resigned from office last September, he left a list of nominations for Damehood, Knighthoods etc, as well as people he wanted to award seats in the House of Lords, the lower house of the UK's Parliament.

The government customarily submitted the list to the House of Lords Appointment Commission.

Berlusconi, scandal-scarred ex-Italian leader, dies

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Milan, June 12: Silvio Berlusconi, the boastful billionaire media mogul who was Italy's longest-serving premier despite scandals over his sex-fueled parties and allegations of corruption, died Monday, according to his television network. He was 86.

Mediaset announced his death with a smiling photo of the man on its homepage and the headline: "Berlusconi is dead." Berlusconi was admitted to the San Raffaele Hospital in Milan on Friday, his second recent hospitalisation for treatment of chronic leukemia.

He also suffered over the years from heart ailments, prostate cancer and was hospitalized for COVID-19 in 2020. A state funeral will be held Wednesday in Milan's Duomo cathedral, according to the Milan Archdiocese.

A onetime cruise ship crooner, Berlusconi used his television net-

works and immense wealth to launch his long political career, inspiring both loyalty and loathing. To admirers, the three-time premier was a charismatic statesman who sought to elevate Italy on the world stage.

To critics, he was a populist who threatened to undermine democracy, wielding political power as a tool to enrich himself and his businesses. His center-right Forza Italia political party was a junior partner in the government of current Premier Giorgia Meloni, a far-right leader who came to power last year, although he held no position.

His friendship with Russian President Vladimir Putin put him at odds with Meloni, a staunch supporter of Ukraine. Meloni remembered Berlusconi as "above all as a fighter." "He was a man who had never been afraid to defend his beliefs. And it

To critics, he was a populist who threatened to undermine democracy, wielding political power as a tool to enrich himself and his businesses



was exactly that courage and determination that made him one of the most influential men in the history of Italy," Meloni said on Italian TV.

Former Premier Matteo Renzi recalled Berlusconi's divisive legacy on Twitter. "Silvio Berlusconi made history in this country. Many loved him, many hated him. All must recognize that his impact on political life, but also economics, sports and television, has been without precedence."

Berlusconi often boasted of his libido and entertained friends and world leaders at so-called "bunga bunga" parties in his villas. "I love life! I love women!" he said in 2010. In 2013, guests included an underage Moroccan dancer whom prosecutors alleged had sex with Berlusconi in exchange for cash and jewellery.

After a lurid trial, a court initially convicted

Berlusconi of paying for sex with a minor and using his office to try to cover it up. Both denied having sex, and he later was acquitted. The Catholic Church, sometimes sympathetic to his conservative politics, was scandalised by his antics, and his second wife of nearly 20 years divorced him. Berlusconi was unapologetic, declaring: "I'm no saint."

As he aged, some derided his perpetual tan, hair transplants and decades-younger girlfriends. For many years, however, Berlusconi seemed untouchable despite the scandals. Investigations targeted his parties or his businesses, which included the soccer team AC Milan, the country's three biggest private TV networks, magazines and a daily newspaper, and advertising and film companies. Criminal cases either ended in dismissals in Italy's slow-moving justice system, or he won on appeals.

of the day quote

While artificial intelligence offers exciting new opportunities, such technologies also bring with them new risks, threats to personal privacy and concerns about fake news

AMITABH KANT | G20 SHERPA

Our target is to achieve more than ₹5,000 crore profitability at EBITDA level and over ₹50,000 crore turnover in the next five years

BABA RAMDEV | FOUNDER, PATANJALI GROUP

With this round, we are on our way to be the leading energy transition platform in the country

PINAKI BHATTACHARYYA | FOUNDER, AMP ENERGY

SHORT TAKES

Deal activity dips

Mumbai: Deal activities fell a steep 87 per cent in May to \$4.6 billion in value and by 45 per cent in volume terms to just 106 deals, according to an industry report. May 2022 witnessed four multi-billion-dollar deals totalling \$31.5 billion, while the reporting month saw big-ticket transactions, industry tracker Grant Thornton said Monday. M&As saw a steep 98 per cent fall in value and 45 per cent decline in volume compared to last May, recording only 22 deals valued at \$675 million as there were practically no cross-broader deals, owing to global macroeconomic challenges, concerns of a potential recession and uncertainty surrounding valuations.

FinMin to pitch for rating upgrade

New Delhi: The Finance Ministry officials will showcase India's strong economic fundamentals and pitch for a sovereign rating upgrade in a meeting with US-based Moody's June 16. Moody's Investors Service has a 'Baa3' sovereign credit rating on India, with a stable outlook. 'Baa3' is the lowest investment grade rating. Economic Affairs Secretary Ajay Seth, Chief Economic Advisor V Anantha Nageswaran and other senior officials from key ministries would talk about the ongoing economic reforms, government thrust on infrastructure development and forex reserves nearing \$600 billion, sources said.

Sebi bans Zee Ent's Chandra, Goenka

New Delhi: Markets regulator Sebi Monday barred Essel Group chairman Subhash Chandra and Zee Entertainment Enterprises Ltd (ZEEL) MD and CEO Punit Goenka from holding the position of a director or key managerial personnel in any listed company for siphoning off funds of the media firm. The case pertains to Chandra, who was also the chairman of ZEEL during the alleged violation, and Goenka having abused their position as directors or KMPs of a listed company for siphoning off funds for their own benefit.

HDFC set to raise ₹10K-cr via NCDs

New Delhi: Mortgage lender HDFC Monday said it will raise ₹10,000 crore by issuing non-convertible debentures (NCDs) on a private placement basis to shore up its resources. These unsecured NCDs have a tenure of 10 years, and the coupon rate will be decided on the electronic bidding platform, HDFC said in a regulatory filing. The object of the issue is to augment the long-term resources of the corporation, it said.



I pitch for a multi-pronged policy response to reignite and sustain productivity and growth at a time when multiple factors which can influence the economy are at work

MD PATRA | DEPUTY GOVERNOR, RBI

OYO TO ADD 300 HILL STATION HOTELS

Hospitality and travel-tech firm OYO Monday said it will onboard and add 300 hill station hotels to its portfolio by August 2023 to cash in on the summer vacation rush. In north India, the new hotels will be in places such as Manali, Mussoorie, Nainital, Srinagar, Shimla, Dalhousie, and Haridwar while in the South, it will be Ooty, Munnar, and Kodaikanal, the company said



OVER 2-YEAR LOW

May retail inflation cools

THIS IS THE FOURTH STRAIGHT MONTH WHEN RETAIL INFLATION HAS DECLINED AND THE THIRD MONTH IN A ROW THAT CPI-BASED INFLATION REMAINED WITHIN RBI'S COMFORT ZONE OF BELOW 6%

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

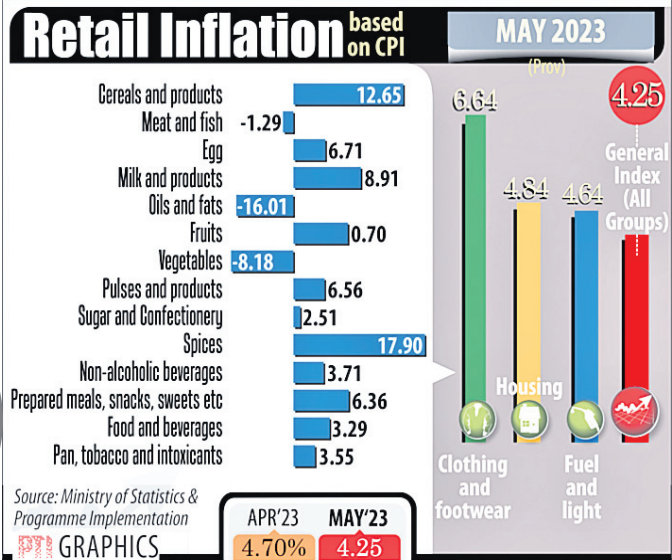
New Delhi, June 12: Retail inflation declined to a 25-month low of 4.25 per cent in May mainly on account of softening prices of food and fuel items, with experts saying that RBI is expected to hold interest rates steady in the current fiscal.

CPI-based inflation stood at 4.7 per cent in April and 7.04 per cent in May 2022.

At 4.25 per cent, retail inflation is the lowest since April 2021 when it was 4.23 per cent.

Inflation for the food basket was at 2.91 per cent in May, lower than 3.84 per cent in April. The food basket accounts for nearly half of the CPI. Inflation in fuel and light eased to 4.64 per cent, from 5.52 per cent in April.

CPI inflation print for May eased more than expected, with the positive surprise chiefly driven by the food and beverages segment.



Nevertheless, concerns loom on the horizon regarding the potential impact of a sub-par monsoon on food inflation in the second half of this fiscal.

The decline in inflation was mainly driven by food items led by 'oils and fats' and vegetables

where inflation fell by 16 per cent and 8.18 per cent respectively.

However, inflation in cereals and pulses came in higher at 12.65 per cent and 6.56 per cent respectively.

Experts said the monsoon forecast and performance will hold clues to future movements in food

The headline CPI inflation may rise mildly to 4.5-4.7 per cent in June 2023 based on the early uptrend in the prices of most of the food items, barring edible oils. We expect an extended pause by RBI through FY2024, and the stance to remain unchanged over the next couple of policy meetings

ADITI NAYAR | CHIEF ECONOMIST, ICRA

inflation, and pulses will be more vulnerable in this context.

India Ratings and Research (Ind-Ra) said going forward inflation is expected to remain in the 4.4-5.4 per cent range for the rest of this fiscal. It expects RBI to maintain a pause on interest rates for the rest of the current fiscal.

Last week, the Reserve Bank kept policy rates unchanged at 6.5 per cent and projected retail inflation for the current fiscal to average 5.1 per cent. June quarter inflation was projected at 4.6 per cent.

DEMAND ON PEAK

Plants using imported coal to operate at full capacity till September

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 12: The Ministry of Power Monday extended the time period of its direction to all thermal plants using imported coal to operate at full capacity by three-and-a-half months till September 30 to avoid electricity shortage amid rising demand in the country.

Peak power demand met or the highest supply in a day touched a record high of 223.23 GW June 9, 2023.

A power ministry notice shot off Monday to 15 imported coal-based thermal power projects, stated: "It has now been decided to extend the time period for Section 11 to imported coal-based generators up to September 30, 2023."

Earlier in February, the ministry asked these imported coal based plants to operate at full capacity from March 16, 2023, to June 15, 2023, invoking Section 11 of the Electricity Act 2003 to avoid any outage due to a sudden rise in power demand.

Peak power demand was estimated to touch a record high of 229GW during this summer. However, unseasonal rains affected the demand as people used fewer cooling appliances like air conditioners which guzzle electricity.

The 15 imported coal-based (ICB) power plants include Tata Power and Adani Power's plants in Mundra in Gujarat; Essar power plant in Salaya; JSW Ratnagiri; Tata Trombay; Udipi Power; Meenakshi Energy; and JSW Torangallu.

Stock limits on wheat imposed till March

Wheat prices in mandi rose to ₹2,302 per quintal June 7 from ₹2,129 per quintal a month before

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 12: For the first time in 15 years, the government Monday imposed stockholding limits on wheat with immediate effect till March 2024 in order to contain rising prices of the key commodity.

The government also decided to offload 15 lakh tonne of wheat to bulk consumers and traders from



the central pool in the first phase under the Open Market Sale Scheme (OMSS).

"There has been an uptick in wheat prices in the past month. There has been an increase of close to 8 per cent at mandi level. Though

Govt transfers 3rd tranche of tax devolution to states

CURRENTLY, 41% OF TAXES COLLECTED BY THE CENTRE IS DEVOLVED IN 14 INSTALMENTS TO STATES DURING A FISCAL YEAR

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 12: The Centre has released ₹1.18 lakh crore as the third instalment of tax devolution to states in June, the Finance Ministry said Monday.

One advance instalment, in addition to the regular instalment due in June 2023, is being released to states to enable them to speed up capital spending, finance their development/welfare-related ex-



penditure and also to make available resources for priority projects/ schemes.

"The Union Government has released 3rd installment of tax devolution to State Governments amounting to ₹1,18,280 crore on 12th June 2023, as against normal monthly devolution of ₹59,140 crore," the ministry said in a statement.

Currently, 41 per cent of taxes collected by the Centre is devolved in 14 instalments to states during a fiscal year.

IIP GROWS 4.2% IN APRIL

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 12: India's industrial production growth rose to 4.2 per cent in April from 1.7 per cent in March 2023, mainly due to good performance by the manufacturing and mining sectors, according to official data released Monday.

The factory output growth measured in terms of the Index of Industrial Production (IIP) stood at 6.7 per cent in April 2022.

As per the IIP data released by the National Statistical Office (NSO), the manufacturing sector's output grew 4.9 per cent in April 2023 against a 5.6 per cent expansion a year ago.

Power generation declined 1.1 per cent in April 2023 compared to a growth of 11.8 per cent.

Mining output, however, rose by 5.1 per cent during the month under review against a growth of 8.4 in the year-ago period.



As per use-based classification, the capital goods segment recorded a 6.2 per cent growth in April compared to a 12 per cent expansion a year ago.

Consumer durables output during the month declined by 3.5 per cent against a 7.2 per cent growth a year ago.

Consumer non-durable goods output grew 10.7 per cent against a contraction of 0.8 per cent a year earlier.

Infrastructure/construction goods posted a growth of 12.8 per cent compared to a four per cent expansion in the same period a year ago.

The data also showed that the output of primary goods logged 1.9 per cent growth in the month against 10.3 per cent in the year-ago period.

The intermediate goods output in April grew by 0.8 per cent compared to a 7.1 per cent growth during the corresponding month last year.

For fiscal 2022-23, the growth in IIP works out to be 5.2 per cent, down from 11.4 per cent in the preceding year.

India's outsourcing giants cut hiring; hurting economy, students

The slowdown, triggered by global uncertainty in demand, is unprecedented in an industry that is one of the biggest hirers in India's services sector since the 1990s and provides an assured career path and prosperity to hundreds of thousands of students each year

REUTERS

Bangalore, June 12: India's outsourcing giants are slashing hiring and getting projects done with existing workers, a rare pullback that could weigh on the economy and affect engineering students who have seen information technology as the sector of choice for decades.

"Weak IT hiring could be for two different reasons: short-term negative demand shock or a long-term displacement resulting from

labour-saving technologies," said Rohit Azad, an economics professor at New Delhi's Jawaharlal Nehru University.

"The impact of weak hiring would depend on which is the primary cause driving it. A negative multiplier effect in the immediate would be there nevertheless," Azad added.

The IT sector accounts for about 8% of India's GDP versus less than 1% about 30 years back, according to Rishad Premji, the chairman of Wipro, one of the country's IT giants.

Overall, the Indian tech sector employs over 5.4 million people, according to trade group Nasscom, although the number is dominated by the IT sector: About 290,000 new jobs in the tech sector were created in the financial year that ended in March, but Nasscom



warned of "global headwinds" in the current year.

With IT employees seen as big spenders on everything from cars, durables and second homes to travel and entertainment, they are likely to have had some effect on the sluggish 0.5% sequential growth in private consumption in January-March.

"Some slowdown in IT hiring

intentions could contribute to the flat-lining in consumption that is already underway," said HDFC Bank Principal Economist Sakshi Gupta.

There are pockets of optimism elsewhere in the services sector - especially in accounting, where there is a surge in hiring. But the numbers are still dwarfed by the IT industry.

RECESSION FEARS

IT firms, which count global heavyweights such as Apple, Citigroup and American Express

The post-pandemic phase saw companies ramping up production to meet new demands in the market, leading to a growth in hiring across IT companies. This boom, however, soon fizzled out in the face of the global economic crisis and a looming recession

SACHIN ALUG | CEO, NLB SERVICES

among its clients, went on a hiring binge during the pandemic that fuelled a digital services boom.

However, things changed this year as recession fears gripped the world and the collapse of three US regional banks and the forced sale of Europe's Credit Suisse to UBS left the global financial industry shaken, making IT clients across sectors cut spending.

NLB sees a 20-25% drop in IT employee additions in the first half of the current financial year, while TeamLease Digital expects a 40% decrease for the entire year.

Jobs portal Naukri.com's parent Info Edge flagged in May that its recruitment business was seeing "cautious" spending by IT customers.

IT bellwether Tata Consultancy Services said this month it had "recalibrated" its hiring after a drop in attrition. It added 22,600 people in the last financial year, taking its overall headcount to 614,795.

Infosys, another IT giant, warned in April its annual revenue growth would hit a six-year low and refrained from its usual practice of setting a target of fresh hires at the start of the financial year.

India's engineers might find it hard to find jobs even beyond the IT sector as startups too have been laying off employees in recent months due to a funding squeeze.

The dismal outlook is worrying many students as the IT sector typically absorbs 20-25% of the 1.5 million engineers who graduate every year in India and was a rare bright spot during the pandemic, when most other industries put hiring on ice.

Time for new faces

Ahmedabad to host India vs Pak, Oct 15

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 12: India will open their ODI World Cup campaign against Australia in Chennai October 8 while Ahmedabad will host their much-anticipated match against arch-rivals Pakistan a week later, according to BCCI's draft schedule for the tournament.

"The BCCI shared the draft schedule with the ICC, which then sent it to the participating countries for feedback before a final schedule is put out early next week," ESPNcricinfo reported Monday.

As per the initial draft, the tournament will begin October 5 with reigning champions England taking on last edition's runner-up side New Zealand in Ahmedabad, which will also host the final November 19. The venues for the semifinals, which are likely to be played November 15 and 16, are yet to be decided.

Hosts India, who last won the ODI World Cup in 2011 at home, will play their league phase matches across nine cities, including, Kolkata, Mumbai, New Delhi and Bangalore. They will take on Pakistan October 15. Pakistan, meanwhile, will play their league matches across five cities.

"Pakistan are slotted to meet the two teams progressing from the Qualifier October 6 and 12 in Hyderabad, and then Australia in Bengaluru (October 20), Afghanistan (October 23) and South Africa (October 27) in Chennai, Bangladesh in Kolkata (October 31), New Zealand in Bengaluru (November 5, day match) and England in Kolkata (November 12)," the report read.

Australia's match against Trans-Tasman rivals New Zealand in Dharamsala October 29 and against England in Ahmedabad November 4 are some of the other big fixtures.

A total of 10 teams will partic-

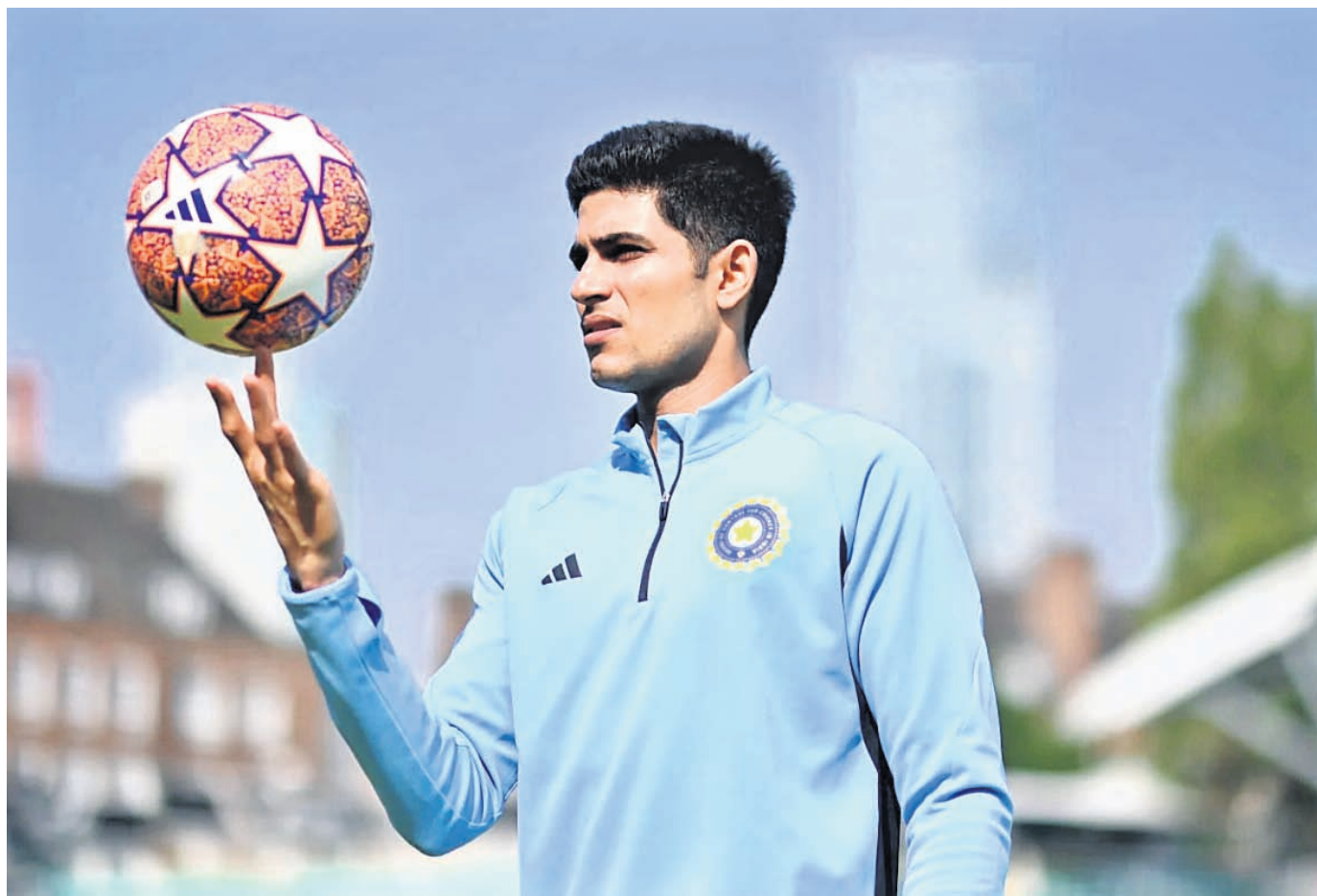


ipate in the tournament. Out of these, eight teams have already been decided and while two other teams will qualify for the main tournament via the qualifiers.

With a little over four months left for the marquee event to begin, there has been an unprecedented delay in releasing the schedule. The schedule of the last two editions of the tournament – 2015 and 2019 – was finalised over a year in advance.

INDIA'S TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

India vs Australia, Oct 8, Chennai
India vs Afghanistan, Oct 11, Delhi
India vs Pakistan, Oct 15, Ahmedabad
India vs Bangladesh, Oct 19, Pune
India vs New Zealand, Oct 22, Dharamsala
India vs England, Oct 29, Lucknow
India vs Qualifier, Nov 2, Mumbai
India vs South Africa, Nov 5, Kolkata
India vs Qualifier, Nov 11, Bangalore.



tour of Bangladesh last December. "Look, Umesh is at the business end of his career but with no A tour programme, you don't know who all are ready. There was a time we had Mayank Agarwal, Rishabh Pant, Hanuma Vihari, Mohammed Siraj, Navdeep Saini ready through consistent A tours and shadow series. Now you don't know. I presume only form bowler is Mukesh Kumar but he is a seamer and not an express pacer," the selector said.

Rohit's Test future
While one can't put a date on KL Rahul's comeback from a thigh

surgery, he is no longer in leadership contention. Will skipper Rohit Sharma, considering his current form and fitness, continue to play Test cricket for two more years and complete the next cycle, when he would be nearly 38? That's a million dollar question at the moment.

Another question is who is a better bet as vice-captain in next one year if Pujara is phased out considering that the West Indies is one Test team against whom a youngster would have easy initiation.

For many, Shubman Gill at 23 is at the correct age where he can be

prepared over time for a leadership role. A short-term solution could be to hand it over to a sure-shot all-format player like Ravindra Jadeja. However, Gandhi asked why not someone like R Ashwin, who has a fantastic cricket brain.

Eyes on Rinku, Jitesh

One format where there won't be any ambiguity is T20 Internationals where Hardik Pandya will lead India, including in next year's T20 World Cup in the Americas (West Indies and USA).

The T20I team would be purely based on IPL performers and one

can expect the likes of Rinku Singh and Jitesh Sharma to make the cut in the final squad, as teams in the past lacked finishers.

Ruturaj Gaikwad's comeback and Yashasvi Jaiswal's inclusions also look imminent while Mohit Sharma could earn a well-deserved comeback after his 27 wickets in last IPL.

While Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli are being phased out of the shortest format, the likes of Mohammed Shami, Mohammed Siraj could be rested considering their workload and the upcoming ODIs before the World Cup.

WFI ELECTIONS PLANNED FOR JULY 4

IOA appoints Mittal as returning officer

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 12: The Indian Olympic Association (IOA) Monday appointed former Jammu and Kashmir High Court Chief Justice Mahesh Mittal Kumar as the returning officer to conduct the impending Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) elections July 4.

Sports Minister Anurag Thakur, after his meeting with protesting wrestlers June 7, had said that WFI elections will be conducted by June 30 but it was clear that this deadline will be difficult to follow because a 21-day notice is required to call the Special General Meeting (SGM) of the WFI. The elections can be conducted either at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) or SGM.

Thakur had assured the wrestlers that the government will not allow any of the family member or associates of outgoing WFI chief Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh to contest elections, following which the wrestlers had halted their stir till June 15.

IOA CEO Kalyan Chaubey communicated Justice Mittal Kumar about his appointment and sought

his acceptance for the role.

"IOA has to take steps forward to conduct elections of the WFI Executive Committee and we are pleased to appoint you as a returning officer to conduct the elections of the WFI. You may consider appointing one assistant returning officer and other staff to assist in conducting the elections," Chaubey wrote in the letter.

"Elections are required to be conducted in the SGM of the WFI called 4th July and the schedule of the election will be required to be drawn accordingly. We look forward to your confirmation of acceptance and also smooth conduct of elections of the WFI July 4."

Sources, however, said Justice Mittal Kumar can decide the date of the SGM and the elections on his own and it will be up to him to hold the polls July 4 or a few days later.

Singh's son Karan was vice president in the previous WFI setup and is also associated with the UP wrestling association. His son-in-law Vishal Singh is the president of the Bihar Wrestling Association. They are both eligible to contest as state body representatives.

Chhetri goal helps India pip Vanuatu

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, June 12: Charismatic captain and soon-to-be father Sunil Chhetri played the role of saviour to perfection once again as he scored the lone goal in India's 1-0 win over lower-ranked Vanuatu in the Intercontinental Cup here Monday.

Chhetri struck in the 81st minute to settle the nerves of the Indians – both players and fans – at the Kalinga Stadium to put the home side in a strong position for a spot in the final. India had earlier beaten Mongolia 2-0 in their opening match Friday.

The 38-year-old Chhetri, who consolidated his place as the third-most prolific active player with his 86th-minute strike in his 135th international match, celebrated the goal by letting the world know that he is going to be a father soon as he slid the ball below his jersey and into his belly. His wife Sonam was shown clapping on the big screen.

With six points from two wins, India are currently on top of the table. They play Lebanon Thursday in their last round-robin league match.

The 101st-ranked India were clearly the better side in the first half with 62 per cent ball possession and at least a dozen attempts on opposition goal but most of them were off target. Vanuatu,



Sunil Chhetri celebrates his goal against Vanuatu at Kalinga Stadium, Monday

ranked 164th in the world, did not have a single shot on target in the first half.

Debutant Nandhakumar Sekar had a decent outing as he was in the thick of things in the middle of the park and was involved in several Indian build-ups. But he wasted India's lone real chance of the first session, hitting wide off a fine through ball from Mahesh Naorem in the 36th minute.

With half time approaching, India pressed for a goal and they were all over the Vanuatuian final third but a goal eluded Igor Stimac's side. A goal still eluding them, India mounted pressure but the home side could not get a clear chance against the Vanuatuians who crowded their defence and played on the counter.

India's hard work seemed to have almost paid off in the 61st minute when Naorem sent yet another fine cross, this time from the left, and Chhetri won the header but it went wide by a few feet as his vision was blocked by goalie Massing Kalotang.

Later, Chhetri showed his class one more time to save the day for the home side. An overlapping Shubashish Bose floated a pinpoint cross on the left flank into the Vanuatu defence and Chhetri's left-footed volley was too good for goalie Kalotang who stood still even as the ball hit the net with nine minute left for the end of regulation time.

Djokovic returns to top position after record win

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Paris, June 12: Novak Djokovic returned to No.1 in the ATP rankings Monday, replacing Carlos Alcaraz there, after winning the French Open for a men's-record 23rd Grand Slam title.

Djokovic now will add to the record he already held for the most weeks leading the tennis rankings – men's or women's – since the computerised system was set up a half-century ago.

Iga Swiatek, the women's champion at Roland Garros, kept her spot atop the WTA rankings, where she has been for more than a year. She could have been overtaken by No.2 Aryna Sabalenka, depending on the results in Paris.

Djokovic had been No.3 going into the year's second major tournament, but winning it for the third time after exiting in the quarterfinals a year ago provided the points boost he needed to jump up to No.1.

Carlos Alcaraz dropped to No.2, Daniil Medvedev slid one place to No.3 after a first-round exit in Paris, while Casper Ruud remained at No.4.

Swiatek earned her third French Open trophy in four years and her fourth Grand Slam title overall. Swiatek has been at No.1 since April 2022, when she moved there after Ash Barty retired.

Indonesia Open: Prannoy to lead Indian challenge

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jakarta, June 12: In-form HS Prannoy will be in the spotlight as India's top shuttlers gear up for some tough opening round matches at the Indonesia Open, a BWF Super 1000 tournament, beginning here Tuesday.

Prannoy, who claimed the Malaysia Masters Super 300 title last month, looks promising to go deep into the tournament, where the creme-de-la-creme of world badminton is set to compete this week.

The World No.8 Indian will be up against Kenta Nishimoto of Japan and a first round win is likely to pit him against China's Shi Yuqi in the second round.

Double Olympic medallist PV Sindhu and 2021 world championships silver medallist Kidambi Srikanth will also look for impressive starts to their campaign, though they haven't been in the best of form this season.



Sindhu made first round exits from the last two events, while Srikanth had a couple of quarterfinal finishes at Malaysia and Spain and they will have their task cut out against Indonesia's Gregoria Mariska Tunjung and China's Lu Guang Zu respectively in the opening round.

Lakshya Sen showed sparks of regaining some form when he reached the semifinals at Thailand Open. The 2021 world championships bronze medallist will open his campaign against World No.10 and eighth seed Lee Zii Jia of Malaysia.

Commonwealth Games champion and World No.5 men's doubles duo of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty will face nemesis Marcus Fernaldi Gideon and Kevin Sanjaya Sukamuljo of Indonesia in the opening round.

Satwik and Chirag had claimed the Swiss Open title this season and will have to dig deep into their reservoir to get the better off the

Indonesian pair, whom they have never beaten in 11 meetings.

MR Arjun and Dhruv Kapila too will have a tough ask as they face eight seeds Malaysian pair of Ong Yew Sin and Teo Ee Yi in the men's doubles. In another clash, former World No.1 Saina Nehwal is pitted against seven seeded Chinese Wang Zhi Yi.

Women's doubles pair of Treasa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand Pullela will square off against Japan's Rin Iwanaga and Kie Nakanishi in the opening round.

The BWF World Tour is divided into six levels, namely World Tour Finals, four Super 1000, six Super 750, seven Super 500, and 11 Super 300. One other category of tournament, the BWF Tour Super 100 level, also offers ranking points. The Super 1000 is a Grade 2 (level 2) event in the BWF tournament ranking system, offering highest points and prize pool.

Mongolia hold Lebanon, earn 1st point in tourney

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, June 12: Lower-ranked Mongolia earned their first point in the Intercontinental Cup as they held fancied Lebanon to a goalless draw here Monday.

Mongolia, who lost their first match against India, now have one point from two matches in the four-team round robin. Lebanon have three points from two matches. In the first match, they defeated Vanuatu 3-1.

Mongolia defender Batbaatar Amgalanbat enjoyed a good day in the office while thwarting a wave of attacks by the rivals and was adjudged the player of the match.

Lebanon had an opportunity to go ahead in the 15th minute. A lack of communication between Mongolia's goalkeeper Enkhtavhan Munkherdene and defender Erdenechimeg Unur-Erdene pro-

vided a perfect opportunity for Karim Darwich to open the scoring, but his attempted shot was cleared off the line by Bat-Erdene Uuganbat.

Lebanon's forwards kept the Mongolian goalkeeper on his toes throughout the match with constant attempts at the goal, which included several shots from distance.

Darwich once again came close to securing the lead for Lebanon as he met a perfectly-weighted cross inside the Mongolian penalty box but he failed to give it the finishing touch. Hassan Maatouk, the Lebanon captain, was also a constant threat to the Mongolian defence as he kept pushing for the elusive goal.

Lebanon's coach, Aleksandar Ilic made several strategic changes and substitutions in the second half in search of a goal but a resilient display from the Mongolian defence foiled his plans.