



KANGANA COMES CLEAN

Actor Kangana Ranaut criticises Mumbai star kids for their foreign influence, praises South Indian film industry's groundedness

LEISURE P2



PAK BRACES FOR CYCLONE

Thousands living in coastal towns of Pakistan leave their homes for safety ahead of the approaching Cyclone 'Biparjoy'

INTERNATIONAL P10



INDIA FACE LEBANON

India meet Lebanon in their Intercontinental Cup tie aiming to boost rankings

SPORTS P11

SHORT TAKES

BMC's first mayor breathes his last



Bhubaneswar: Former chairman of Bhubaneswar Municipality (now a municipal corporation), Dr Jagannath Mohapatra passed away at his residence here Wednesday. He was 84. He had been suffering from various health issues for a long time, family members said. Mohapatra was the last chairman of Bhubaneswar Municipality in 1997 before the civic body was transformed into a Municipal Corporation. After the formation of BMC in 2000, Mohapatra, a doctor by profession, became the first non-elected Mayor of the Corporation.

74K evacuated for 'Cyclone Biparjoy'

Ahmedabad: As the powerful cyclone 'Biparjoy' is all set to make its landfall in Gujarat, authorities have evacuated more than 74,000 people from vulnerable areas in a massive operation, officials said Wednesday. The cyclone is expected to make landfall near Jakhau port in Kutch district Thursday evening. At the time of the landfall, the wind speed is expected to be between 125km to 135km, officials said.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



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MARKET WATCH	
INDEX	VARIATION
SENSEX	63228.51 ↑ 85.35
NIFTY	18755.90 ↑ 39.75
DOLLAR	81.96 ↓ ₹0.32
EURO	88.91 ↑ ₹0.15
GOLD	₹59,346 ↑ ₹128
SILVER	₹72,729 ↑ ₹635

WEATHER		
	BHUB	CTK
TEMP MAX	34.4°C	35.0°C
TEMP MIN	27.8°C	26.0°C
Humidity	77%	78%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil
Forecast	PARTLY CLOUDY SKY	



IN FESTIVE MOOD: Girls dressed in colourful attires enjoy 'paan' during Raja celebrations at Bikash Bhawan in Cuttack, Wednesday

PHOTO: RAJKISHORE MOHANTY

Rly Board slams signalling staffers for faulty work

Press Trust of India
New Delhi, June 14: The Railway Board pulled up its signalling staffers in April for using 'shortcuts' in the way signalling gears were re-connected by them after maintenance work without proper testing of points. In a letter dated April 3, the board said five such incidents came to light from various zones. "Five incidents on the unsafe side involving points have taken place on various zonal railways," the board had said, and termed these 'alarming and an issue of serious concern'. The letter said, "The signalling gears were reconnected by signal and telecom staffers without proper testing of points after blocks for switch/turnout replacement, wrong wiring during preparatory works, attending signal failures etc." The development assumes significance in light of the Coromandel Express accident which took place June 2. Railway officials and Minister had Ashwini Vaishnaw had indicated signal interference as the possible cause of the accident. A total of 288 people lost their lives and over 1,000 were injured.

9 dead in fresh Manipur violence

THE LATEST ATTACK HAS BEEN BLAMED ON VARIOUS KUKI INSURGENT GROUPS STAYING IN CAMPS ALONG THE INDIA-MYANMAR BORDER

AGENCIES

Imphal, June 14: At least nine people were killed and 10 injured when miscreants attacked a village in the Khamenlok area of ethnic strife-hit Manipur, officials said Wednesday. The armed insurgents surrounded the village in Khamenlok area bordering Imphal (East) and Kangpokpi districts and launched the attack at around 1.00am, officials said. In the gun battle that ensued, both sides suffered casualties and injuries. Unofficial sources have put the toll at 11. Among those dead was a woman.

The area where fresh violence erupted lies along the borders of the Meitei-dominated Imphal (East) district and tribal-majority Kangpokpi district. Hence officials informed that the attack had been carried out by armed Kuki insurgents.

Meanwhile, the district authorities have cut short the curfew relaxation hours from the usual 5.00am to 6.00pm in Imphal (East) district and Imphal (West) district to 5.00am to 9.00am. Curfew remains in force in 11 of the 16 districts of Manipur, while internet services are suspended in the entire northeastern state.



So far more than 120 people have lost their lives and 350 others have been injured in the ethnic violence between Meitei and Kuki community people in Manipur which broke out little more than a month ago. Army and para-military personnel were deployed to restore peace in the state, but now it seems that nothing is working. Various peace meetings have also failed to have the desired results. A visit by Union Home Minister Amit Shah has also not been fruitful to end the strife in the state. Clashes first broke out May 3 after a 'Tribal Solidarity March'

was organised in the hill districts to protest against the Meitei community's demand for Scheduled Tribe (ST) status. Meiteis account for about 53 per cent of Manipur's population while tribals, Nagas and Kukis constitute another 40 per cent.

Sources said that the miscreants who attacked the village were using sophisticated weapons. They added that security forces are apprehensive that the situation in Manipur may force fresh challenges if the state's 'insurgent groups staying in camps across the India-Myanmar border step in'. The sources informed that many Kuki insurgent

groups like 'Kuki National Army' and 'Kuki Revolutionary Army' stay in such camps and they may well disturb the peace in the state.

Monday night, nine people were injured in a gunfight in the Khamenlok area in exchange of fire between militants and village volunteers, officials said. The security forces also exchanged fire with Kuki militants at Phoungakchao Ikhai in Bishnupur district, Tuesday, they said. The Kuki militants were trying to make bunkers close to Meitei localities when they were challenged by security forces resulting in the exchange of fire.

Meanwhile in a separate development, the official quarters of woman Manipur minister Nemcha Kipgen in Lamphel locality in Imphal (West) district was set on fire by unidentified people Wednesday night, an official said. However, no one was inside the quarters when the incident took place. Firefighters reached the spot and doused the flames before the blaze could spread to the neighbourhood. Kipgen incidentally is a Kuki community leader. No group has owned responsibility as yet for the fire.

The Congress on the other hand, asked why has the 'double engine' BJP government failed to restore peace and normalcy in Manipur.

Oppn blasts Centre over Balaji's arrest

The accused was an AIADMK minister when he allegedly committed the crime and BJP is still an ally of the same party

AGENCIES

Chennai, June 14: Tamil Nadu minister V Senthil Balaji was arrested here Wednesday by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in a cash for jobs scam case in the Transport department, making the 47 year-old DMK strongman from Karur district the first member in the MK Stalin-led Cabinet to face such a central probe agency heat. Incidentally Balaji was part of the AIADMK, an ally of the BJP, during the period of crime (2014-15) and was the Transport Minister. Chief Minister MK Stalin questioned the need for a long probe even after Balaji assured full cooperation to the investigation and sought to know if such an 'inhumane action' by the ED sleuths was warranted. Along with Stalin, the Congress and various other opposition parties hit out at the Centre over Balaji's arrest. A local court later sent Balaji to judicial custody till June 28.

Stalin while meeting his Cabinet colleague questioned the need for such a long probe. "The cruel intentions of those that had deployed the officials are evident from this," Stalin said. The CM also stepped up his attack on the BJP over the arrest.

TN WITHDRAWS CONSENT TO CBI

Chennai: Tamil Nadu government withdrew Wednesday the general consent to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) to carry out probe in the state, joining nine non-BJP ruled states who have done so earlier. The states are Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Kerala, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Punjab, Rajasthan, Telangana and West Bengal. The move came on a day when state Electricity and Prohibition and Excise Minister V Senthil Balaji was arrested by the ED.

The Congress and AAP also joined the nation-wide protest against the arrest. "President Mallikarjun Kharge condemns the late-night arrest of Tamil Nadu Electricity Minister Shri V. Senthil Balaji by the ED," the Congress said in a statement. AAP supremo and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal meanwhile said that the 'BJP-led Centre is pursuing vendetta politics to divert the public attention from the real issues such as unemployment, inflation and 'alarming' data breaches from the CoWin App.

Croc kills boy in front of mom

POST NEWS NETWORK

Kendrapara, June 14: A 10-year-old boy was killed Wednesday in a crocodile attack in front of his mother at Nimpur village under Pattamundai police limits in this district.

This is the third crocodile attack in the district in the recent past. In the first incident a 42-year-old woman from Kharinashi village near Bhitarkanika National Park was killed by a crocodile while she was fishing in a creek near the village March 20. Earlier in November last year, a man survived an attack by a crocodile in Rajkanika block of this district, but suffered grievous wounds. Overall in the last 12 years 26 people have lost their lives due to crocodile attacks. Locals informed that the deceased Ashutosh Acharya and his mother had gone to the Brahmani river to take a bath Wednesday

morning. Suddenly the crocodile attacked the boy dragging him into deep waters. His mother screamed for help and locals rushed to the spot, but they failed to save the boy. Locals later alleged that despite informing the Forest department officials, they were late in arriving at the spot. The mutilated body of the Class V student was recovered a couple of hours later.

Meanwhile officials informed that they have been urging locals to be careful while going into the river as this is the breeding time of the reptiles and they turn violent during this period. They added that this is not the first croc attack in the district in this time of the year. They urged people to be more cautious. Officials said that they are trying their best to develop awareness among people about crocodile attacks. However, unless the people themselves are careful, there will be loss of lives, they said.

As per government data, 26 people have lost their lives due to crocodile attacks in Odisha in the last 12 years

6.5K millionaires set to leave India

Complex tax rules and the lack of a robust system facilitating smooth investments are the main reasons why Indian HNWIs are migrating elsewhere with Dubai and Singapore being the preferred destinations

AGENCIES

London, June 14: India is expected to witness an exodus of large number of millionaires in 2023. The country may lose 6,500 high-net-worth individuals (HNWIs) this year according to the 'Henley Private Wealth Migration Report 2023', which tracks wealth and investment migration trends worldwide. According to 'Henley & Partners' HNWIs are people with investable wealth of \$1 million or more.

In the report, China has been ranked first in terms of the outflow of millionaires from the country this year. It is predicted to lose 13,500 HNWIs, followed by India, which has secured second place. However, despite the exodus of such a large number of millionaires,

India's position in the overall migration report is likely to improve. This is because in 2022, a total of 7,500 HNWIs left India and settled abroad. However, Andrew Amoils, head of research at New World Wealth points out says India shouldn't be too bothered with the exodus. "The outflow of so many HNWIs should not be concerning as India produces far more new millionaires than it loses to migration," Amoils said in the report.

According to Dr Juerg Steffen, CEO of Henley & Partners, millionaire migration has grown steadily over the past decade with around 1,22,000 and 1,28,000 millionaires expected to migrate globally in 2023 and 2024, respectively.

According to Sunita Singh-Dalal, Partner, Private Wealth & Family



Offices at Hourani, 'prohibitive tax legislation coupled with convoluted, complex rules relating to outbound remittances that are open to misinterpretation and abuse, are but a few issues that have triggered the trend of investment migration from India'. This has

prompted many HNWIs to seek better opportunities abroad.

The latest report states that Henley & Partners has recorded the highest number of enquiries for investment migration schemes in the first quarter of this year. Most of these enquiries have come from

Indians and Americans. As far as migration is concerned, Dubai and Singapore remain preferred destinations for wealthy Indian families. The former, also known as the '5th City of India', is particularly attractive for its government-administered global investor 'Golden Visa' programme, favourable tax environment, robust business ecosystem, and safe, peaceful environment.

The report also states that Australia will welcome the highest number of millionaires at 5,200 followed by the UAE which is expecting 4,500 HNWIs this year. Other countries where a large number of millionaires from across the world will possibly migrate are Switzerland, Canada, Greece, and New Zealand.

leisure



JOHNNY DEPP DONATES EX-WIFE'S SETTLEMENT MONEY TO CHARITY

Actor Johnny Depp is donating the settlement money he received from ex-wife Amber Heard to charity. The actor will reportedly distribute portions of the \$1 million settlement from Amber to five different charities, with \$200,000 to each charity.

CHARLIE PUTH ADMITS KISSING MEGHAN TRAINOR

Singer and songwriter Charlie Puth has revealed his recollection of the night he and Meghan Trainor locked lips for the first time. In 2015, Trainor, 29, and Puth, 31, made quite the scene when they made out on stage at the American Music Awards, and until recently, no one knew they shared an off-camera kiss too, reports *People magazine*.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES

Think positive today and watch the world around you changing. Regardless of how difficult things may seem, Ganesh advises you to take it without getting upset. If you set your mind to something, you can do it. You have the Midas touch today, so it is a good time to introduce a new strategy.

TAURUS

Ganesh urges you to be prepared for setbacks and disappointments today. Your efforts may end in being a waste of precious time and energy. The results you get are likely to be far below your expectations. Falling short of your target is likely to weigh you down with stress and anxiety.

GEMINI

You will be in a state of heightened sensitivity today. Therefore you need to curb down on your emotions. You will be able to successfully express your feelings to someone, and your feelings will play a vital part in your life, says Ganesh.

CANCER

Ganesh suggests you not to be sentimental or hasty. Try to handle things deftly in stead of dodging bad episodes or turning a blind eye to them. You will give priority to domestic and private life in stead of career or business aspects.

LEO

You will feel more emotional today and share your feelings with your friends and near ones. For those who are searching for a life-partner, this might be the time when you will get hitched. You will develop a new perspective on some issues in the office. Your day will be different than normal, says Ganesh.

VIRGO

Ganesh predicts that you will be rewarded today for all the good work done earlier. You will prefer to manage things in your own way, rather than taking orders from others. However, Ganesh advises you not to throw your weight around, but to stay calm and composed.

LIBRA

Nothing comes for free – keep this in mind as you may have to pay your dues for the success you desire today, especially if it is a new project that you have undertaken. Be prepared to invest a considerable amount of time and effort in your endeavours. Spare money can be used to purchase new assets that may pay dividends in the future. Either that, or put it in a bank. In short, Ganesh advises prudence in money matters.

SCORPIO

In all probability, your mood is extremely hawkish today. Your belligerence may even put off Lady Luck for the time being. Ganesh advises you to stay away from confrontations and troubles of any kind. The evening, however, promises to be relaxing.

SAGITTARIUS

Lady luck is all smiles for you today, predicts Ganesh. Suddenly, you feel like multi-tasking and becoming a jack of all. This is likely to keep you busy, almost throughout the day. If need be, your colleagues and peers will lend a helping hand.

CAPRICORN

You are in hot water, but do not lose hope during these turbulent times. Maintain a calm head over your shoulders and deal with the problems, guides Ganesh. Also, do not jump to conclusions or be argumentative with the people around you, as you may end up being at the losing end.

AQUARIUS

You will not need a reason to party today. Be it the news of a friend getting married or you buying a new car, you are in a mood to celebrate life like anything! Apart from this, you will have a smooth sailing through out the day, foresees Ganesh. If you are a businessman or a professional, you will move one step closer to your target.

PISCES

A day of mixed fortunes awaits you, where taking risks could prove to be your undoing, or provide you with handsome returns, says Ganesh. This is because you could come out on top by treading cautiously, but uncalculated risks will probably throw your calculations out of gear. Your success rate is unlikely to be too high; hence it may be a tough day for you.

Kangana launches attack on star kids

Mumbai: Actress Kangana Ranaut never shies away from calling a spade a spade, who never misses a chance to call out Bollywood actors, films and filmmakers, often makes headlines for her controversial comments.

The *Queen* actress slammed star kids for talking in English, eating with knives and forks and talking differently. She even drew comparisons with South Film Industry and hailed them for being down to earth.

During her interview, she said, "The way they have a connect with their audience, it is very strong. I wouldn't say fans, it's more than that. With us what happens is that their (stars') kids go abroad to complete their studies. They talk in English, watch only Hollywood films. They eat only with knives and forks and talk differently. So, how will they connect? Dekhne me bhi ajeeb se aise lagte hai jaise uble hue ande (They even look weird like boiled eggs). Their entire look has changed so people cannot relate. I don't mean to troll anyone."

Further comparing it to *Pushpa*, the *Fashion* actress said, "Look how Pushpa looks like someone we know. Every labourer is able to connect with him. Tell me which of our heroes can look like a labourer in today's times? They cannot. So,

their culture (of South Indian film industry) and their grounded nature are paying them off. I hope they don't start taking inspiration from the West. It's important to stay connected to people within your country."

AGENCIES



Mumbai: Actress Richa Chadha, who is celebrating the tenth anniversary of her comedy film *Fukrey*, has shared that the film holds a special place in her heart because it gave her one of the most loved characters and also introduced her to her life partner, Ali Fazal with whom she tied the knot with in 2022. Expressing excitement about the anniversary of comedy flick *Fukrey*, the *Sarbjit* actress said, "It's incredible that it has already been 10 years since *Fukrey* was released. This film has been a game-changer for me in so many ways." She further mentioned, "Not only did it give me the opportunity to portray a character like Bholi Punjaban, which has become an iconic role in my career, but it also introduced me to the love of my life, Ali. *Fukrey* will forever hold a special place in my heart." The third part of the franchise is set to bow in theatres on December 1, 2023.

Richa: *Fukrey* holds special place in my heart

AIANS

Hansika Motwani challenges herself

Chennai: Actress Hansika Motwani who is known for her roles in *Shaka Laka Boom Boom*, *Koi Mil Gaya* will be seen next in a Tamil female-centric thriller ironically titled *Man* and also in a web series *MY3*, a rom-com which is an adaptation of a Korean drama *I'm Not A Robot*.

Talking about her experience in the industry, the 31 year old actress said, "I have been in this wonderful industry for two decades. Yes, there have been ups and downs. But the journey has been amazing. It has taught me a lot about patience. And it's taught me how to keep going, keep working hard. And I wouldn't want it any other way."

On her upcoming film *Man*, directed by Igore, she said it is quite a responsibility doing a female-centric film.

"When I do female-centric films, I get to do more rounded characters, so I am just very happy about that. And the sense of responsibility is definitely higher than before. But I'm ready to take up the challenge."

AIANS



'Actor should not be worried about release platform'

Mumbai: Actor Arshad Warsi, who made his OTT debut with the streaming series *Asur* and has been garnering a lot of positive response, feels that if an actor is getting good work and enjoys his work, one should not be worried about its release platform.

As the OTT fever grips the audience owing to its accessibility, the actor spoke about the revolution it has brought. He said, "OTT is a great thing that has happened. It is giving work to a lot of good actors and the audience is getting to see the

acting of some very good actors."

He further mentioned, "See, films and OTT are two different things altogether and they will always be different. I enjoy cinema and I enjoy OTT as well. If you enjoy your work and you are getting good work to do, I think one should not worry about where the work is getting released."

Talking about what made him to say yes to *Asur* for his OTT debut, he said, "I loved the story. Actually, I loved many things about it. When

I heard the idea of the show, I enjoyed it so much because I knew this will surely work with the Indian Audience. I found it interesting and that made me to say yes to it." *Asur 2* is currently streaming on Jio Cinema.

AIANS



FUN post

PEANUTS



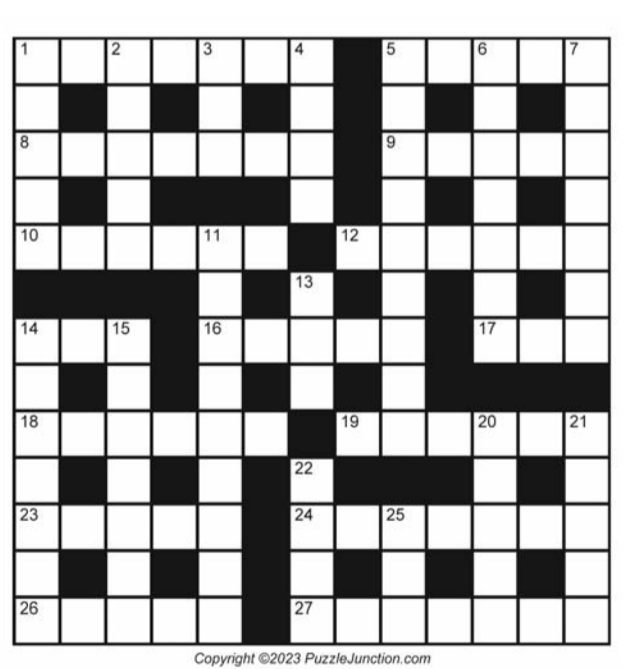
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



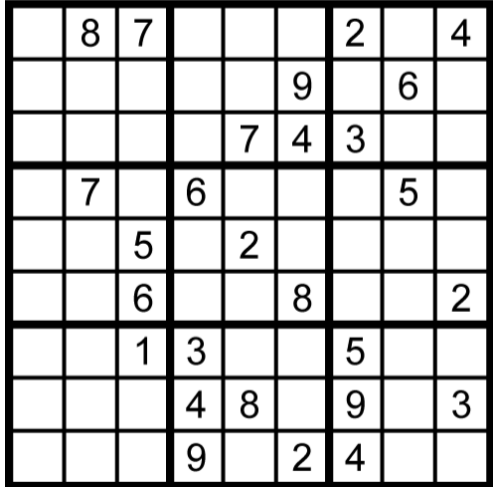
CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 Prepared for a photo
 - 5 Litter member
 - 8 Oblivious
 - 9 Insurance fraud
 - 10 Spirited
 - 12 Thar or Gibson, e.g.
 - 14 Varnish ingredient
 - 16 Cantina freebie
 - 17 Witness
 - 18 Apparition
 - 19 Fish hawk
 - 23 Exceed expectations
 - 24 Church feature
 - 26 Premature
 - 27 Sleazy
 - 6 Spectral colours
 - 7 East China Sea feeder
 - 11 Courtroom attestation
 - 13 Variety
 - 14 Svelte
 - 15 Mouse, bunny, chipmunk, e.g.
 - 20 Drive away
 - 21 Submit
 - 22 Horned goddess
 - 25 Australian flightless bird
- Down**
- 1 Light downy material
 - 2 Ring-tailed animal
 - 3 Massage locale
 - 4 Face-off
 - 5 Table linens (5,4)

SUDOKU

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

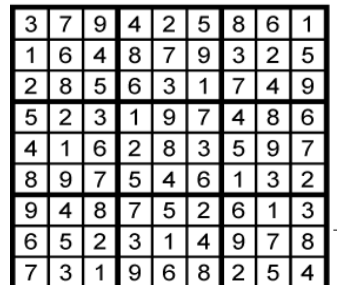


SOLUTIONS



CROSSWORD

SUDOKU



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

Parties protest over power cut, LPG price

Bhubaneswar, June 14: The BJP and BJD staged demonstrations against frequent power cuts and LPG price hike respectively, while the Congress announced to gherao GRIDCO office here June 19 to protest against erratic power supply and high electricity tariff in Odisha, Wednesday.

Carrying lanterns and handmade fans, hundreds of saffron party workers held demonstrations in front of Tata Power offices across the state in protest against frequent power cuts. The party will continue the protest Thursday as well, it was learnt.

Countering BJP's protest, ruling BJD workers staged demonstrations near Raj Bhawan condemning the steep rise in LPG price. "The state government claims that Odisha is a power surplus state. Then, why is the power not reaching the people? Who is consuming the power?" asked a protesting BJP worker.

Prithviraj Harichandan said people are facing a lot of difficulties due to frequent power cuts as the government has no control over the power distribution system. "We are holding the protest to raise the voice of the public against

BJD leader Srimayee Mishra said that the price of a domestic gas cylinder has gone up to Rs 1,130 from Rs 410 in 2014. It has been impacting household budgets significantly.

Similarly, Ujjwala has become a

with high power tariff and frequent disruptions in electricity supply. The Centre also exploited the people by raising the LPG price to such a high that it has become a dream for the poor now, he said.

The Congress leader said that Rs 20,000 crore was allotted by the Centre and state for power infrastructure development in Odisha. However, Rs 5,000 crore was given to Tata Power and no one knows about the rest Rs 15,000 crore, Pattanayak said.

The Congress leader demanded the state government to publish a white paper on the issue giving details about the amount provided and utilized for the development of the power sector.

He said the party will gherao GRIDCO office June 19 to condemn erratic power supply and demand concrete steps to ensure uninterrupted electricity to the people.

Senior Congress leader Panchanan Kanungo said, "Odisha should propose before OERC that electricity bill should be handed over to people on a particular date."

CONGRESS TO GHERAO GRIDCO OFFICE JUNE 19

the government and Tata Power over frequent power cuts across Odisha. Besides, Tata Power should also face public ire for the power disruptions," he said.

On BJD's counter protest, the BJD leader said, "By protesting against the LPG price hike today, the ruling BJD proved that they are protecting Tata Power and no one can raise fingers towards the company even though it exploits the people."

BJD leaders and activists, who staged a protest here against the rising LPG prices, submitted a memorandum to the President through the Governor demanding an immediate reduction in LPG prices.

dark scheme as the beneficiaries are unable to refill their cylinders. The poor women are returning to wooden chulhas. BJD will continue to protest against the hike in gas prices if the Centre does not reduce the price immediately, Mishra said.

Odisha Pradesh Congress Committee (OPCC) president Sarat Pattanayak alleged that both the BJD and BJP are in a race to harass people. One party is protesting power cuts while the other is demonstrating against LPG price hike. Both BJD and BJP are cheating the people of Odisha, he said.

He alleged that the state government is exploiting the people



Construction of chariots of Lord Jagannath and His siblings nearing end at Rath Yard in Puri, Wednesday

NCST seeks report from Centre, Odisha

GYAN RANJAN MOHAPATRA, OP

Bhubaneswar, June 14: The National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST) has sought action-taken report (ATR) from the Chief Secretary and Ministry of Jal Shakti Secretary within 15 days in connection with the rehabilitation and resettlement of tribals affected by the Polavaram project—an under construction multi-purpose irrigation project on the Godavari River in Eluru and East Godavari districts of Andhra Pradesh.

The commission's move came after going through the replies from Polavaram project authorities, Andhra Pradesh government, and the rejoinder submitted by Supreme Court lawyer and rights activist Radhakanta Tripathy May 15, 2023.

Acting on a petition filed by Tripathy June 10, 2021, the NCST

POLAVARAM DISPLACEMENT

had sought initial replies from all stakeholders involved or affected due to the project.

In the rejoinder, Tripathy had informed the commission that the Andhra Pradesh government has misconstrued the order of Orissa High Court (writ petition 3669/2006, March 22, 2006) and proposed embankments along the limbs of Sabari and Sileru to avoid submergence in Odisha due to increase in design flood. Tripathy said the embankments proposed by the Andhra Pradesh government were not acceptable to Odisha as preliminary survey for rehabilitation and resettlement, and land acquisition was yet to start. The Supreme Court lawyer also alleged that the environment and

forest clearance and R&R clearance was given to Polavaram project on the assumption that there will be no submergence in Odisha.

"The clearances were accorded without any public hearing and without a thorough examination of the project," Tripathy said. As many as 913 families out of 1,002 in eight revenue villages of Malkangiri district belong to ST category and are considered project-affected families. "The Polavaram project is nearing completion. And it is assessed that 6,316 persons in Odisha and 11,766 persons in Chhattisgarh will be affected. Though a rehabilitation plan and construction of protective embankments was proposed, the project authority is yet to begin the actual work," alleged Tripathy.

Odisha has been opposing the project for its design which could pose a danger to the state.

Cong slams Centre over RBI's June 8 notice

KULDEEP SINGH, OP

New Delhi, June 14: The Congress Wednesday attacked the Centre over the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) allowing banks to go for a compromise settlement of fraud accounts and wilful defaults and demanded that the central bank immediately repeals its instructions and also reveal if there was any 'pressure' from the government to issue the notification.

Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh sought a clarification from the RBI as to why it has changed its own rules on 'wilful defaulters' and 'frauds'.

"The Prime Minister (Narendra Modi) has always eagerly bent or changed rules to help his friends in a few large business groups. The most powerful example of this

RBI must repeal notice allowing banks to undertake compromise settlement of wilful defaults: Cong

is, of course, the Adani Group, on which we have already posed 100 questions to the PM in our HAAK (Hum Adani ke Hain Kaun) series," Ramesh said in a statement.

He said the latest example was a 'clean chit' to all wilful defaulters and frauds who have run away with public money.

In his statement, Ramesh said that June 8, the RBI issued instructions under a 'Framework for Compromise Settlements and Technical Write-offs' that allowed banks and other financial entities to 'undertake compromise settlements or technical write-offs in respect of accounts categorised as wilful defaulters or fraud without prejudice to the criminal

proceeding underway against such debtors'.

These accounts will be permitted to take fresh loans after a 12-month 'cooling period', he noted.

He said the All India Bank Officers' Confederation and the All India Bank Employees' Association, that represent 6 lakh bank employees, have both opposed this policy.

"They pointed out that it will not only lead to erosion of public trust in the banking sector but also undermine the confidence of depositors. They warned that such leniency serves to perpetuate a culture of non-compliance and moral hazard, leaving banks and their employees bearing the brunt of

the losses," Ramesh said.

"As recently as May 29, 2023, the RBI governor warned about the many ways in which defaulters and fraudsters conceal the true status of distressed loans. Will the RBI clarify if the Modi government has pressured it to take this U-turn?" he asked.

Indians paid a high price for fraud and wilful defaults, Ramesh said, claiming that banks wrote off loans worth 10 lakh crore between 2017-18 and 2021-22.

Banking frauds have risen 17-fold under the Modi government, from Rs 34,993 crore in 2005-14 to 5.89 lakh crore in 2015-23, he claimed.

The Congress, he said, demands that the RBI must immediately repeal its instructions and prevent banks from settling with wilful defaulters and fraudsters.



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GAON AMBA PASARA

ORMAS sells mangoes worth ₹13L



ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, June 14: The six-day long 'Gaon Amba Pasara bazaar' organised by Odisha Rural Development and Marketing Society (ORMAS) near the State Institute for Rural Development (SIRD) campus concluded Tuesday. Around 229 quintal mangoes including Aamrapali and Dusheri were sold in the bazaar and Rs 13 lakh worth business was done.

With the mango season round the corner, like every year ORMAS organised 'Gaon Amba Pasara' from June 8 to June 13, hosting the bazaar that features a variety of mangoes from seven districts of the state, namely Angul, Bolangir,

Panchayati Raj and Drinking Water minister Pradip Kumar Amat had commended ORMAS's efforts in linking the farmers to markets through training, procurement and online sales programmes

ORMAS official. A large number of varieties, including Lengra, Baiganpalli, Totapuri and Mallika were available at the mango bazaar.

In her address, Chief Executive Officer Guha Poonam informed that the Odisha Mango logo is a tribute to fresh and naturally ripened mangoes grown by farmer groups of the state, with the help of ORMAS in pre and post harvest operations and marketing.

"ORMAS has formed ties with Mother Dairy, NAFED, Reliance and other local traders for mango supply. Since 2019, 110 metric tonnes of mangoes have been supplied with a turnover of 2.98 crore benefitting more than 2,000 farmers across 48 producers groups and companies," she informed.



MOMENT OF GLORY: Aakash Byju's Institute in Bhubaneswar felicitated students who excelled in NEET examinations including state topper, Swayam Shakti Tripathy, Wednesday

OPGC's remarkable performance in FY 2022-23

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, June 14: Odisha Power Generation Corporation (OPGC) Limited has announced its financial performance for the FY 2023 which establishes that the company has achieved remarkable milestones.

Through the successful implementation of many improvements in the last two years in Unit 3 and 4, annual PLF has improved to 77 per cent in FY 23 from 49 per cent in FY 20.

This has enhanced the energy security of the state by supplying more power at a competitive price. During the ongoing summer, units are running at 90 per cent PLF and providing a good support to the state.

OPGC has achieved an un-



precedented level of revenue growth of more than 50 per cent from Rs 2,867 crore last year to Rs 4,317 crore in FY23.

Through scrupulous financial management and cost optimisation measures, OPGC has achieved exceptional profitability with the highest-ever EBIDTA margin of 48 per cent. The company, which was suffering loss during the last three financial years, has achieved

a profit of Rs 1,126 crore as a result of improved PLF, lowering of operational cost and finalization of tariff. Focus on improving operational efficiency by improving PLF, lower operational cost and streamlining processes has resulted in enhanced margins and a sound financial foundation.

During the financial year 2023, OPGC has achieved strong financial ratios like debt equity ratio

lower than 2 which signifies higher solvency and current ratio of more than 3.

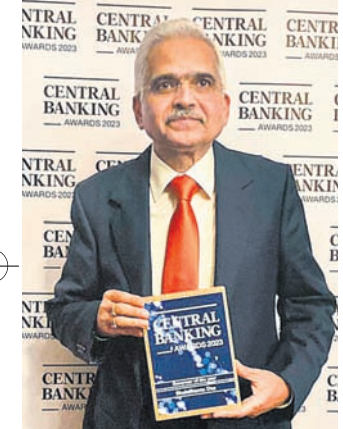
Commenting on the exceptional financial performance, in the board of directors' meeting June 12, Energy department Additional Chief Secretary NB Dhal expressed his pleasure and attributed the success to the unwavering dedication and hard work of the entire OPGC team. He stated that the board is incredibly proud of the remarkable financial performance.

Moving forward, OPGC remains committed to its strategic vision, continuing to innovate and adapt to the evolving needs of the power requirement of the state. By leveraging its strong financial performance and industry expertise, the company is poised for continued growth and success.

Global award for RBI Governor Das

AGENCIES

London, June 14: Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor, Shaktikanta Das has been honoured with the 'Governor of the Year' award by London's Central Banking Awards 2023. The Central Banking Awards 2023 winners were announced in late March this year. Two top prizes went to the National Bank of Ukraine - which was declared the 2023 'Central Bank of the Year', and the Reserve Bank of India's Shaktikanta Das - who got the 'Governor of the Year'.



Das has been recognised for his role during Covid-19, the Russia-Ukraine war, and the subsequent fight against inflation. India is top among countries whose inflation is under control and the growth prospects bright.

Das, who is currently in this city participated in and addressed the opening plenary session of summer meetings that were organised by Central Banking, London, UK. He was also presented with the award during the session.

KIIT extends support to Kasturba Trust students



ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, June 14: Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology (KIIT) has extended educational assistance to the students of Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust located at Salipur of Cuttack district.

May 17, KIIT & KISS founder Achyuta Samanta had visited the Trust and promised to provide free higher education to the students.

Wednesday, Samanta visited the Trust and celebrated Raja with the students by distributing among them fruits and new clothes.

On this occasion, he garlanded the statue of Madhubabu and par-

ticipated in a special programme organised by the trust. As per the promise, Samanta announced names of 3 matriculated students from the trust for admission in KIIT polytechnic. These students will study diploma courses at KIIT and all expenses for their studies will be borne by KIIT.

Samanta said that KIIT will also provide necessary support to the students for future study, if needed. The programme was attended by many dignitaries including Salipur MLA Prashanta Behera and Regional Business Manager, East Alok Ranjan.

To add to the festive cheer for the customers, Tanishq has also introduced special offers. Tanishq is offering free gold coins with every Jewellery purchase or up to 20 per cent off on diamond value and on making charges of gold jewellery. The offer is valid across all Tanishq stores in Odisha.

Tanishq launches special jewellery collection 'Dibyani'

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, June 14: Tanishq, India's largest jewellery retail brand from the house of Tata has announced the launch of a special jewellery collection 'Dibyani' on the auspicious occasion of Rath Yatra.

The collection was launched by Tanishq Retail - Head Vijesh Rajan, Regional Business Head East Somprabh Singh and Regional Business Manager, East Alok Ranjan.

To add to the festive cheer for the customers, Tanishq has also introduced special offers. Tanishq is offering free gold coins with every Jewellery purchase or up to 20 per cent off on diamond value and on making charges of gold jewellery. The offer is valid across all Tanishq stores in Odisha.

Speaking on the launch of the new collection, Ranjan, said, "Step into a world where ancient temples and timeless craftsmanship converge, as we proudly unveil our



Ratha Yatra collection 'Dibyani' jewellery handcrafted to adorn the women of Odisha. Our collection inspired by the tradition and culture of Odisha, including its magnificent temples and crafts, is a heartfelt tribute to the vibrant

spirit and the rich cultural heritage of Odisha. Experience the magic of our Rath Yatra collection and celebrate the unity and beauty of Odisha. On behalf of Tanishq, we wish everyone a blessed Rath Yatra!"

ODM School's Diptesh excels in NEET exams

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, June 14: The students of ODM Public School in Bhubaneswar have once again brought laurel to their school with spectacular performance in NEET Examination 2023. While 178 students have qualified in the AIR list, Diptesh Kumar Behera excelled in the exam by securing 571 Rank.

The Principal Satyabrata Minaketan, the Director and Manager Indumati Ray and the Chief Operating Officer Swoyan Satyendu congratulated all the successful students, their parents and teachers for this glorious achievement.



Red Cross organises felicitation programme

Bhubaneswar: On the occasion of World Blood Donor Day, a felicitation programme for blood donors and blood camp organisers was held at Red Cross Bhawan here Wednesday. The Red Cross counsellors all over the state and staff members who had donated blood maximum times during the period 2022-23 were felicitated with Blood Hero Award. Similarly, the outfits that had organised blood camps in association with Red Cross Regional Blood Centre were felicitated with Blood Super Hero Award. Those present in the programme were honorary treasurer Bhabani Prasad Nanda, honorary secretary of John Ambulance, Nidhi Kumar Routray, Medical Officer Pradeep Kumar Moharana, Ex Director of SBTC Debi Prasad Rath, joint secretary Red Cross Regional Police Commissionerate Branch DC Lalitendu Mohanty.

Over 60% youth in India susceptible to e-cigarettes

Almost 61 per cent of people aged between 15-30 in India who have never used electronic cigarettes (e-cigarette) before are susceptible to taking up vaping in the future, according to a new study.

The study, based on an international survey of 4,007 people, including 456 from across India, identified exposure to e-cigarette advertising as having the second greatest effect on susceptibility, after current or past tobacco use, while perceived harmfulness reduced the likelihood of susceptibility.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), susceptibility to e-cigarette use among young



people is a major public health concern due to the adverse health effects of nicotine on the developing brain and potential negative outcomes from other chemicals present in the devices.

"There is a growing concern that young people in India are becoming increasingly susceptible to the use of e-cigarettes. Urgent interventions and comprehensive campaigns addressing the risks and impact of e-cigarette use are imperative," said Sudhir Raj Thout, Research Fellow, at the Institute in India.

Further, the survey showed that in India, 51 per cent, who had never used e-cigarettes before were curious about them, 49 per cent said

they would use them if offered by a friend, and 44 per cent had intentions to use them in the next year. Researchers also found that almost half (47 per cent) of Indian respondents had seen e-cigarette advertising. These results were comparable to the UK (63 per cent),

China (51 per cent), and Australia (30 per cent) where the study also took place. The findings are published in the journal Drug and Alcohol Dependence.

It is to be noted that the majority of the Indian respondents in the study had a higher education and could be categorised in the high-income group.

However, they were less likely to believe that e-cigarettes are addictive (66 per cent) or harmful (66 per cent) compared to those in Australia (87 per cent and 83 per cent, respectively), where susceptibility was the lowest (54 per cent).

The researchers called for a complete ban on e-cigarette advertising along with raising awareness on its

harmful effects.

The tobacco market in India is one of the largest in the world. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), around 27 per cent of the Indian population use tobacco in some form.

In 2019, India introduced the Prohibition of Electronic Cigarettes (Production, Manufacture, Import, Export, Transport, Sale, Distribution, Storage and Advertisement) Act to protect its significant young population from the harms of e-cigarettes.

However, despite the huge penalties, young people still have access to e-cigarettes through non-compliant retailers without featuring any health warning.

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Locals up in arms against fly ash dumping yard



said that due to ash, land is losing its fertility and much of the forest cover has been destroyed. They pointed out that both domestic and wild animals are dying as the ash is affecting the habitat.

The sarpanch of Kabrapali panchayat and environmentalists have lodged complaints before the district collector and the state pollution control board (SPCB) on this issue, but their concerns are yet to be addressed.

Mystery surrounds the permission given to set up a new dumping yard in Jujumura. Earlier, the Forest department had rejected the proposal of setting up a mega market in the same space where the dumping yard has now been set up. This happened after the Chief Minister laid the foundation stone for the market. People are questioning as to how the company got the clearance to set up the dumping yard which will cause greater pollution than any market.

In a letter (No 547) dated December 29, 2022, the sarpanch of Kabrapali panchayat even requested the district collector not to give the no-objection certificate (NOC) for establishment of the dumping yard. However, it seems that his plea on deaf ears. Locals have demanded a thorough probe on the issue by the SPCB.

SPCB's regional officer Satyanarayan Nanda informed Tuesday that he will look into the matter. He said that SPCB only gives permission for projects after clearances from the local tehsildar and district collector.

The dumping of ash has sparked fear over loss of forest cover and threat to humans and livestock. However, transporters are having a good time and reaping rich rewards for dumping fly ash, sources said. People said that most of the dumping yards have been set up illegally and with the alleged involvement of politicians and influential people.

Locals alleged that even when a company has the requisite permission it rarely follows the rules regarding dumping of fly ash.

Sources said an ash dumping yard has been established at Niladunguri (Keshidera) area under Jujumura tehsil. The area is surrounded by a village. In close vicinity are the National Highway-53, a training centre of the Agriculture department, forests and farmlands. However, now all of them have a thick coat of ash on them.

Most of the houses in the village have a thick layer of fly ash both inside and outside. People

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sambalpur, June 14: Dumping of fly ash has become a major problem for people after establishment of various industries in Jharsuguda and Sambalpur districts, sources said Tuesday. They added that residents of various parts in Jharsuguda district were facing problems due to dumping of ash.

Now, however, the problem has affected people residing in areas under Jujumura tehsil of Sambalpur district. Residents said that since fly ash is a major pollutant, it will create health hazards for people of Jujumura.

The problem is likely to aggravate in future as an industrial firm has received permission to establish its dumping yard in Sadar sub-division. Already many parts in Sadar sub-division have huge amounts of fly ash. The addition of a new dumping yard will only aggravate the pre-existing problems, people said.



BACK TO BUSINESS: Fishermen at Balaramgadi fishing jetty ready their boats and trawlers ahead of their sea-ward journey after a two-month fishing ban was lifted, Wednesday, in Rupsa area of Balasore

5 OF FAMILY DIE IN ROAD MISHAP

PNN & AGENCIES

Bolangir, June 14: In a tragic incident, five members of a family including two children died in a major road accident near Chuinbandha on Sambalpur-Bolangir National Highway-26 in Bolangir district late Tuesday night.

Bolangir SDPO Tofan Bag said seven family members were travelling in a car which rammed into a truck parked on the National Highway-26 late Tuesday night killing five members.

The impact of the collision was



so furious that all five of them died on the spot. The police on being informed about the accident rushed to the site, recovered the bodies and rescued two injured persons

from the ill-fated car. The injured persons were admitted in the VIMSAR hospital in Burla. All the deceased belonged to Bolangir and have been identified.

The deceased were identified as Atmaj Nayak (25), who was driving the vehicle, his sister Ipsita Sai (27), her daughter Riya (6), Atmaj's uncle Deepitranjan Sai (35) and Deepitranjan's daughter Anvi (6). Atmaj's mother Arati (47) and Deepitranjan's wife Rasmita (29) sustained critical injuries in the mishap.

Police said the accident occurred when the family members were returning home after attending a wedding event. The driver lost control over the wheels and rammed into a stationary truck parked on the roadside.

Steam leak in Tata Steel plant: 2 in intensive care

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, June 14: Two persons injured in an accidental steam leak at Tata Steel's Meramandali plant in Dhenkanal district remain in intensive care while 16 others remain hospitalised, a company statement said Wednesday.

The steam leak occurred at around 1pm Tuesday during inspection work at the plant and affected workers and engineers.

"Of the 18 burn cases admitted to a private hospital in Cuttack,



two remain in intensive care... The other injured persons are in stable condition, receiving continuous, high-quality care. Another person

initially admitted for a panic attack at the incident site is now in good health and expected to be discharged shortly," Tata Steel said in a statement.

Dhenkanal SP Gyanaranjan Mohapatra Tuesday said that around 19 persons were injured in the incident.

The injured persons were immediately shifted to the Occupational Health Centre inside the plant premises and then to Cuttack for further treatment.

Meanwhile, the Directorate of

Factories and Boilers has started investigation into the cause of the steam leak at the blast furnace section where engineers and workers were undertaking an inspection. The steam line busted and hot water fell on the workers during the inspection, an official of the directorate said.

The company has also started its internal probe to ascertain the cause of the accident. Notably, the Dhenkanal Collector and the Superintendent of Police visited the accident site.

Miscreants break ATM, steal cash

Bhawaniapatna: Unidentified miscreants decamped with cash after cutting open an unattended ATM of the State Bank of India (SBI) here in Kalahandi district in the wee hours of Wednesday. As per reports, three masked miscreants entered the ATM and looted the cash after breaking open the machine using a gas cutter and other instruments. The whole act of looting cash from the ATM has been captured in the CCTV camera of the kiosk. The miscreants have also damaged the CCTV cameras installed near the kiosk.



BRAVING THE SUN: Workers clean a drain in scorching heat near Samaleswari Temple in Sambalpur, Wednesday

YOUTH AWARDED 20 YRS RI FOR KIDNAP, RAPE OF MINOR

POST NEWS NETWORK

Nayagarh, June 14: Nayagarh district POCOS court judge Niranjan Panda convicted a youth for kidnapping and raping a school girl and sentenced him to 20 years of rigorous imprisonment (RI) along with ₹30,000 penalty, Wednesday.

According to special public prosecutor Amiya Pattanayak, a 13-year-old girl from Odagaon area was going to her school as usual when Bulu Nayak of Chadheyapalli village under Sarankul police limits kidnapped the girl October 9 in



2018. Later he raped the girl in a forest. In the evening, he took the girl to his home where he again forced himself upon the minor.

Unable to find the girl, her family members complained at Odagaon PS the next day. After the complaint Odagaon police rescued the girl from the accused's house

at Chadheyapalli and after hearing the girl's ordeal police registered a kidnapping and rape case (214/18) and forwarded the accused to court after arresting him.

After being denied bail the accused was sent to jail. After some days the accused managed to get bail from the High Court. The POCOS court heard the case Tuesday and delivered its verdict after hearing 14 eyewitnesses and basing on the medical report and the case diary. The judge also directed the district legal services authority (DLSA) to provide ₹4 lakh as compensation to the victim.

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Tusker electrocuted in Boudh district

POST NEWS NETWORK

Kantamal, June 14: A tusker died near Guchangi village in Kantamala forest range in Boudh district after it came in contact with a high-tension live wire Wednesday morning. Its carcass was spotted near a farmland by the villagers.

As per the villagers, the pachyderm came in contact with an 11KV live wire while roaming in a farmland and died on the spot after being electrocuted. They added that they heard the elephant trumpet twice in the morning. When the villagers followed the trumpet sound, they stumbled upon its carcass lying in a nearby field.

On being informed, forest officials reached the spot and initiated a probe. DFO Debapriya Kampa reached the spot around 10am Wednesday and investigated

the matter. After preliminary investigation it was found that the elephant died of electrocution after coming contact with a live wire, said the DFO. An investigating team from Bhubaneswar will reach the spot and the details will be ascertained after the probe, he added.

Meanwhile, veterinary doctor Bhabesh Kumar Behera from Kantamal reached the spot and conducted the post mortem after which the carcass was buried inside the forest.

Earlier Tuesday, an ailing tusker undergoing treatment died at Basiapada beat of Sadar range. According to Sambalpur DFO Viswanath Neelannavar, the ailing tusker around 20 years old got separated from its herd of 16 at Basiapada Nala of Sadar range and was roaming alone.



KILLER HIGHWAY

NH-16 turns death trap in Gopalpur

LOCALS HERE HAVE BEEN DEMANDING FLYOVERS FOR RANDHA CHOWK, GOLANTHARA CHATI CHOWK AND KANISI HAT CHOWK FOR LONG

POST NEWS NETWORK

Gopalpur, June 14: The stretch of National Highway (NH-16) from Girisola to Jagannathpur Chowk in Ganjam district has become a death trap due to the utter negligence of the district administration and the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI), sources said Wednesday.

At least seven to eight accidents are happening on various squares on this stretch of the highway. These road tragedies not only result in the loss of valuable lives



FILE PHOTO

and disability of survivors but also breaks the financial backbone of the affected families. Sorala Road, Golanthara Chati, Randha, Kanisi Hat and some other areas have been identified as accident-prone blackspots by the administration and NHAI authorities.

It is pertinent to mention that locals here have been demanding flyovers for Randha Chowk, Golanthara Chati Chowk and

Kanisi Hat Chowk for long. The action plan for the same was also prepared by the authorities but till now work for the same has not been started.

It seems that the prayers of the locals are falling on deaf ears even after continuous demands. Kanisi Hat Chowk is an important spot which houses Rangeilunda block office, Kanisi tehsil office, sub-registrar office and two boys' and girls' high

schools making it the busiest square in the locality. This square is used as a commercial hub by more than 20 villages' residents and locals regularly depend on this road for daily commute. A divider on this stretch of the highway has been closed by the administration and the NHAI for the last two to three months making it difficult for the locals to cross the road.

The closest divider is more than 1.5 km away from the square. Schoolchildren are forced to cross the divider near the chowk but as hundreds of vehicles ply continuously it is fraught with risks for the children.

Despite the fact that higher ups in the administration, MPs and MLAs are regularly using this road, they are not looking into the issue, locals alleged. Authorities deliver many promises when accidents take place but those promises are never realised, they said. Locals alleged that due to a lack of political will, no action has been taken by the authorities to construct an overbridge in order to prevent road accidents.

Jeweller tortured, looted at gun point

POST NEWS NETWORK

Morada, June 14: Some miscreants looted a jeweller at Satabhaya Chowk under Suliapada police limits and Morada block in Mayurbhanj district, Wednesday.

The victim jeweller was identified as Swarneswar Singh of Adheikula village under Chadheigaon panchayat in the district.

According to police sources, Swarneswar was returning to his home after closing his jewellery shop at Kostha Bazar when he was waylaid by four miscreants on two bikes. They took him hostage at gun point and took him to a nearby forest. They tortured him for more than five hours by tying him with a tree. At around 11pm in the night they took him to his jewellery shop at Kostha Bazar and forced him to open his shop. After he opened his shop the miscreants decamped with all the jewellery and cash available in the shop leaving the jeweller at the spot.

The jeweller somehow reached Suliapada police station and registered a complaint there. Subsequently, Suliapada police along with Baripada SDPO, scientific team and dog squad reached the crime spot and kicked off an investigation.

FOCUS NATION

FEDERALISM'S DECLINE



The BJP's dominance in Parliament combined with its centralising tendency raises serious concerns about the future of federalism in India

word over allocating resources to states.

There has been an observable change of rhetoric in BJP's 2014 campaign and its 2019 campaign. In 2014, Narendra Modi catered to middle class voters who were frustrated with increasing statism and ineffectual institutional mechanism. Slogans like "maximum government, minimum governance" catered to the section of voters who were aspirational and against the politics of statism. Two successive election defeats in Bihar and Delhi led to a recalibration of the BJP's rhetoric. The personal charisma and larger-than-life personality built around Prime Minister Modi combined with the government's emphasis on "one-ness" helped in the strengthening of centralisation. Welfare schemes were rebranded and launched targeting housing, toilets and cooking gas connections. The cash transfer programme "PM-KISAN" was launched in 2019 aiming at the country's marginalised farmers. The renaming of the scheme with the prefix "Pradhan Mantri" helped in conveying the direct relation to the Prime Minister. Though Rajiv Gandhi tried to establish direct connection with district administration, he had to relent owing to large opposition. PM Modi's charisma and the BJP's stronghold over most states ensured he faced no such obstruction.

The BJP's dominance in Parliament combined with its centralising tendency raises serious concerns about the future of federalism in India. The BJP is not averse to utilising central agencies and national security agencies to detain critics, journalists and Opposition leaders. As the party with a massive majority in Lok Sabha, it has a moral responsibility to ensure that the interests and concerns of states are not ignored or unaddressed by the Centre. Cooperative federalism with harmonious Centre-state relations enriches democracy.

The writer is an author and a student at the Jindal School of International Affairs.

Federalism in India emerged out of the unique historical circumstances of partition as well as the romanticisation of the emerging strong state as an efficient tool for national development and progress that prevailed in modern nations as well as the Soviet Union. The idea of a decentralised federal model was discarded by India's founding fathers in favour of a strong central government. The Centre and state were both granted the right to exercise sovereign power. Differentiating with other versions of federalism, BR Ambedkar points out the unitary and unchanging nature of American federalism. Indian federalism, on the other hand, has the capacity to be both unitary and federal depending upon the circumstances and times. In times of war and emergency, the Centre will have unitary power in order to achieve stability with minimum external or internal disturbances.

The impact of historical events on the structure of Indian federalism cannot be understated. The Objective Resolutions proposed by Jawaharlal Nehru in December 1946 considered states to be autonomous units. The envisioning of a decentralised federal structure was partly in the hopes of the Muslim League remaining a part of the Indian Constituent Assembly. As the carnage of partition occurred in the next few months, the founding fathers veered towards a model with a strong and sovereign Centre.

The experience of partition resulted in increasing worries concerning security and the territorial integrity of India. There was a fear among the founding fathers that providing more powers to the states would result in India becoming a cauldron within months. The conversion of the state into a unitary power in India was enabled through the Emergency provisions. Article 355 proclaimed that it was the duty of the Union to protect itself from external aggression and internal disturbances while Article 358 laid the groundwork for suspension of fundamental rights during Emergency.

Centralisation was partly facilitated by the presence of INC as the dominant political party and the lack of organised political opposition.

Multiple extraordinary laws were enacted in Independent India under the pretext of dealing with "crimes of terror." Laws like Terrorist and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) Act, Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act and Armed Forces Special Powers Act form the backbone of India's security state. The national security state is further cemented by various laws enacted by state governments like Public Safety Act in Jammu and Kashmir and Chhattisgarh Special Public Security Act. A commission on Centre-state relations set up in 2007 dealt with internal and national security. The report envisioned national security as a matter of common interest of both the Centre and the state. Nevertheless, the Centre was given the preeminent position by giving it the power to supersede the state in matters concerning national security, public order and the police.

The election of the BJP in 2014 and 2019 with a majority has led to a reiteration of the need to evolve a form of cooperative federalism. The formation of the National Institution of Transforming India was done with the aim of fostering collabora-

tive and competitive federalism among the Centre and the states. This has not come to fruition. The central government has attempted to impose President's rule in the states of Arunachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand by taking advantage of struggles within the Opposition party.

While the NITI Aayog was established to promote Centre-state cooperation, it has turned into a technocratic platform enabling the Union government. Chief Minister's sub-committee report remains unimplemented and thus redundant. Instead, the NITI Aayog engages with the states through rankings and scores to increase competitive dynamics. The "Aspirational Districts" programme sought to develop and improve India's poorest regions has reduced the state's role to a minimum. Moreover, the programme ensures the direct connectivity of the government of India to district administration, reducing the state's influence on regional administration. The Planning Commission, along with the National Development Council, ensured the participation of state through negotiation with the Centre over plan allocation. In contrast, NITI Aayog was provided with no such institutional mechanism. It is the Ministry of Finance now which has the last



Anwesh Satpathy

WHILE THE NITI AAYOG WAS ESTABLISHED TO PROMOTE CENTRE-STATE COOPERATION, IT HAS TURNED INTO A TECHNOCRATIC PLATFORM ENABLING THE UNION GOVERNMENT



Peter Singer

How do our own capacities to suffer differ from those of animals, and how can we compare the capacities for suffering of different kinds of animals?

The whole world yearns after freedom, yet each creature is in love with his chains; this is the first paradox and inextricable knot of our nature.

SRI AUROBINDO



Our Moral Progress

In recent weeks, I have been touring the United States and the United Kingdom, promoting Animal Liberation Now, my new book on the ways in which we are inflicting suffering on hundreds of billions of nonhuman animals, especially in factory farms. The persistence of this vast, entirely unnecessary suffering is one of the great moral issues of our time.

Some people doubt this claim because they think that humans matter incomparably more than animals. But it is increasingly accepted, among the general public and ethicists, that preventing suffering is morally important, irrespective of the species of the being who is suffering.

But this concern for other species raises a much more difficult question: how do we compare the suffering of animals of different species? Given our limited time and resources, how many chickens should we help instead of helping one human? An equally perplexing question can be asked about the decision to focus on preventing the suffering of some animals – say, pigs – rather than others, when we are harming many more of the latter. For example, each year we raise, in close confinement, and then kill, without prior stunning, more than 15 times as many fish as the entire human population of the planet. What moral standing does their suffering have?

Here, we need to consider some essential philosophic and neuroscientific issues. How do our own capacities to suffer differ from those of animals, and how can we compare the capacities for suffering of different kinds of animals? We also need to ask: Is preventing suffering all that matters, or do other things matter, too, like thwarting individuals' future-oriented preferences? If it is wrong to thwart such preferences, then the differences between humans and other animals, and between different species of nonhuman animals, may become more significant.

Rethink Priorities, an American think tank, has been studying these questions. Researchers surveyed hundreds of studies of animal sentience to provide a basis for estimating how much we should weigh the suffering of a range of animals, relative to the weight we give to the suffering of humans.

To simplify the task, they assumed the utilitarian view that promoting happiness and preventing suffering is all that matters. They also assumed that we should not care any less about suffering experienced by an animal only because it is not human. Provided that the intensity and duration of suffering are equal, we should care about it equally, no matter who experiences it.

To investigate how much animals suffer, as compared to humans, the researchers began by accepting, in accordance with current scientific understanding, that the basic neurochemistry that underlies emotional feelings is essentially similar, at least in all mammals. The researchers then looked at both behavioural and physiological evidence of the suffering of various species of animals.

In Animal Liberation Now, I discuss one clear example of behavioural evidence. Commercially raised chickens have been bred to grow so fast that their immature leg bones have difficulty in supporting their weight. As a result, they often become lame, trying not to put weight on one leg.

In one study, chickens taken from commercial flocks were offered two differently coloured foods, one of which contained an anti-inflammatory drug. Lame birds soon learned to choose more of the food with the drug, and their limping decreased in proportion to the dose they consumed. This indicates that lame chickens are likely to be in pain when they walk and suggests a close parallel with the effect that relieving pain has in humans.

Other relevant behavioural evidence indicating pain can include changes in heart rate, blood pressure, pupil dilation, perspiration, hormonal levels, and metabolic activity. Here, too, chickens bred for rapid growth serve as an example: the skeletal, heart, and lung problems that they experience are evidence of suffering.

Drawing on this evidence, the researchers at Rethink Priorities developed a set of estimates for how we might weigh the suffering of some representative animals. If we assign the value 1.00 to humans (and round the estimates to two decimal places, to mitigate any misplaced sense of exactitude), their estimates suggest that we might value pigs at 0.52, chickens at 0.33, and octopuses at 0.21. They ranked all fish at less than 0.1, with carp at 0.09 and salmon at 0.06. Interestingly, they ranked bees between these two fish species, at 0.07, and crayfish lower, at 0.04.

Obviously, this effort to draw on the best available empirical research to compare the capacities of animals of different species, and even of different phyla, is open to challenge. But the importance of the effort is indisputable. The possibility of our own species' moral progress may depend on it.

The writer, Professor of Bioethics at Princeton University, is Founder of the charity The Life You Can Save.

PROJECT SYNDICATE

WISDOM CORNER

All that is gold does not glitter, not all those who wander are lost; the old that is strong does not wither, deep roots are not reached by the frost. **JRR TOLKIEN**

Everything comes to us that belongs to us if we create the capacity to receive it. **RABINDRANATH TAGORE**

A creative man is motivated by the desire to achieve, not by the desire to beat others. **AVN RAND**

WORDSWORTH

Jubilee

Jubilee looks as though it comes from the Latin word that also gave us jubilation and its relatives. In truth they're not connected, but we have the Romans to blame for getting them mixed up. Jubilee is actually from the ancient Hebrew yobel for a ram and, by extension, a ram's horn (the word used today for the ram's horn, shofar, is unconnected). Every fifty years a special year of emancipation and restoration was set aside, in which fields were left uncultivated and slaves were freed (for the details, see the Old Testament book of Leviticus, chapter 25). As the ram's horn announced it, the word was transferred to the year itself. It travelled via Greek to Latin, where it became confused with jubilate, to shout or cry out (used by early Christians in the sense of shouting for joy). By the time the word had arrived in English, the two senses of celebration and of something happening every fifty years had become so mixed up that it was used for a fiftieth anniversary or its celebration. So it is strictly correct to refer to the current event as a jubilee, with no qualification. Until the end of the nineteenth century the word could only be used in this way: for a fiftieth anniversary. Queen Victoria changed all that. She reigned for so long that her subjects had to find a way of distinguishing between the dates of her 50 years and 60 years on the throne, in 1887 and 1897. The term Diamond Jubilee was invented specifically for the 1897 celebration. The diamond modifier was borrowed from its existing use to describe a sixtieth wedding anniversary. This – plus silver, golden and some others – had appeared in the language at about the middle of the nineteenth century, introduced via American English from German. Even after the 1897 celebration became known as the Diamond Jubilee, the 1887 one was still called The Jubilee or The Royal Jubilee; only later did it become known as the Golden Jubilee, so people could unambiguously distinguish it from the later one. And then jubilee started to be used with other qualifiers, such as silver for a 25th anniversary, so losing its link to the fiftieth year altogether and changing its sense to little more than "special anniversary".

SPECTRUM FINANCIAL MARKETS

US debt ceiling and its impact



Sourajeet Pradhan

NO COUNTRY CAN ENTIRELY BE INSULATED BY THE EVENTS TAKING PLACE IN THE US SINCE IT IS THE BIGGEST ECONOMY AND CONTRIBUTES MORE THAN 25% TO GLOBAL ECONOMY

Recently, the US debt ceiling bill was passed by both houses of Congress by a wide margin. The democratic setup in US is such that while the Republicans have majority in the House of Representatives, the Senate is controlled by the Democrats. Hence passing a bill by the US Congress has its own challenges.

The US' constitutional framework in the policy formulation process is similar to that of India, wherein no 'bill' can become an 'act' unless it is ratified by both the houses. Hence the Republicans used this opportunity as a bargaining power to cut down the expenses on certain populist schemes of the government. The bill resolves the debt issue until the start of 2025 and sets limitations on government spending for the next two years, except for higher limits on defence spending and increases for inflation.

The bill doesn't raise taxes or touch major programmes like social security and medicare. But it would end a 3-year freeze on student loan payments, cut IRS funding, claw back some unused COVID-19 funding, and expedite large-scale energy and infrastructure projects. Before getting into the impact of the relief received in the debt ceiling issue, one needs to first un-

derstand what exactly is the US debt ceiling issue. The debt ceiling is the maximum amount that a government can raise by issuing government securities and bonds. It is similar to passing of 'Appropriation Bill' and 'Financial Bill' in the Indian Parliament. The ceiling was created in 1917 and is considered to be the statutory debt limit for the US government.

The limit was set up so that the government doesn't have to ratify the statutory obligation every time they have to spend on its schemes. If the sovereign debt limit crosses the debt ceiling, then the government has to find extraordinary means to fund its obligations and expenditures. It will have to use the funds from its revenue. This will lead to further debt. The debt ceiling has been relaxed multiple times in the past to avoid a default.

Since the last one year, the global market sentiments are driven by the political, economic and financial activities taking place in the US. No country can entirely be insulated by the events taking place in the US since it is the biggest economy and contributes more than 25% to global economy.

But, the passage of the debt ceiling bill will not have a substantial impact on Indian market. The mar-

ket had anticipated and factored in the relaxation of the debt ceiling and rationality to prevail. This was very much visible with the market rally on the announcement of the relief, amidst the prevailing chaos.

Instead, the market will be closely monitoring the outcome of the Federal Reserve monetary policy meeting. RBI has continued with its rate pause stance while Fed is expected to opt for a rate pause this time. The expectation from the market is that the rate cut is anticipated from November onwards.

More than the rate, it is the message communicated by the central bank governor that determines the mood of the market. The inflation rate for an emerging nation like India is pretty much under control (CPI for the month of April is at 4.7%). The inflation in US may not be as per the desired level, but has been cooling off substantially in the last few months.

A potential interest rate hike would disturb the market sentiments, considering the precarious situation of the global growth recovery process. The eurozone has already embarked on the state of recession, while the US is at the cusp of one. The markets will also be vigilant regarding the uncertainties surrounding the Indian southwest monsoon. Apprehensions regard-

ing an imminent 'El Nino' would have catastrophic implications.

For Indian investors, the macro indicators act as headwinds for the equity benchmarks. The GDP growth for FY23 being 7.1% has beaten all expectations. The Foreign Portfolio Investors have been investing aggressively in the Indian equity market, which is a very positive sign. The GST collections have been at all time high. The decline in the crude oil prices by 4% has helped the cause in improving our balance of payment and current account deficit. These positive macro-economic data have provided the requisite resilience to the market.

From a sector perspective, the large cap tech stocks have been recovering steadily but still there is space for more rally. The automotive sector along with the financial sector is attractive to invest at this point of time.

The only concern is the high valuation of Indian equity market, which has been there since quite some time now. The recent market rally led to profit booking by retail domestic investors. This can negate inflows from FIIs and FPIs. The 'sell-off' due to the recent rally will provide entry points for investors.

The writer is an investment banker. Views are personal.

Power of protests

Sir, Mass movements and protests are integral to India's democratisation process and they have long occupied a central role in shaping public policy and legislations in the country. India's genesis itself is a product of popular struggle against the British Raj. Our founding fathers, especially Mahatma Gandhi, strongly believed in the idea of a common man standing up for himself and expressing his dissent to the policies of a regime. Public demonstrations have the power to drag the legislators to the ground and make them address the problems of the protesters. Like how the 2020-21 farmers' protests in India had seen the participation of millions, which is arguably the largest protest the world has ever seen, and which had brought the Narendra Modi-led BJP government to its knees, let us believe that the relentless protests by the wrestlers, who have accused the Wrestling Federation of India chief and BJP MP Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh of sexual harassment, will force the government at the Centre to throw in the towel sooner than later.

Ranganathan Sivakumar, CHENNAI

Chess greats

Sir, One of the best chess players to grace the game, Magnus Carlsen has said that India would soon emerge as the world's leading chess playing nation. None would dispute the Norwegian Grand Master. The country has produced some great chess players, and many are on the anvil. With 82 Grand Masters and 124 International Masters apart from 23 Women Grandmasters and 42 Women International Masters, India's top ten men and women players have excellent average Elo ratings. The five-time world chess champion has seen in close quarters the phenomenal rise of exceptionally talented players like D Gukesh and R Praggnanandhaa both of whom have outplayed Magnus Carlsen in different tournaments. India has been a host to a world chess championship final match at Chennai, and the icing on the cake was the Chennai Chess Olympiad in July last year that saw the participation of 187 countries. Talent and motivation was always there; extensive sponsorship and exhaustive electronic media coverage of the game have provided great fillip to the players.

Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA

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

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Now, the BJP is saying that most of its seats in Uttar Pradesh are in 'red zone'. So it means that the pro-people party -- the Samajwadi Party -- is showing its colours. SP's 'red power' is the red zone for the BJP

AKHILESH YADAV | SAMAJWADI PARTY CHIEF

FLOOD FURY

Nearly 21,000 people have been affected by flood in Assam, an official bulletin said Wednesday. According to the daily flood report of the Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA), more than 20,900 people have been hit due to flooding in Dhemaji and Lakhimpur districts



of the day quote

I spoke to all three service chiefs and reviewed the preparedness of the armed forces for the landfall of Cyclone Biparjoy

RAJNATH SINGH | DEFENCE MINISTER

I have been observing everything and those rowdies have to repay with interest. Those who are filing false cases too will be taken to task

NARA CHANDRABABU NAIDU | TDP PRESIDENT

Opposition unity will benefit only when there is something for both sides. There may be a difference in the share of benefits for the two -- it can be 50-50 or 60-40 -- but in this case, both sides have nothing to offer to the other

GHULAM NABI AZAD | DEMOCRATIC PROGRESSIVE AZAD PARTY (DPAP) CHIEF

SHORT TAKES

Man jumps into Yamuna

New Delhi: A 24-year-old man died after he jumped into the Yamuna river from the Delhi Noida Direct (DND) flyover Wednesday afternoon, the police said. The deceased has been identified as Vijay Singh, a resident of Hissar in Haryana, who was working as an electrician in Sector-27, Noida. According to the police, a PCR call was received at around 1:45 p.m. at the Sunlight Colony police station Wednesday, informing that a man had jumped into the Yamuna river from the DND flyover following which a police team was rushed to the spot.

Undertrial hangs self

Jaipur: A 55-year-old undertrial prisoner allegedly died by hanging himself at Parbatsar prison in Rajasthan's Nagaur district, police said Wednesday. Mannaram Gurjar, who was under judicial custody in a murder case, hanged himself in his barrack on Tuesday night, they added. The police took him to a hospital where doctors declared him brought dead, they said. Mannaram had allegedly murdered his wife and two daughters on April 4. He was stated to be mentally unstable, the police added.

Cow vigilantes lynch Thane man

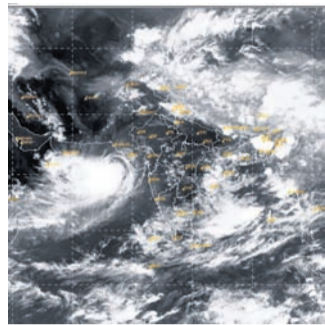
Nashik: In a shocking incident, at least six cow-vigilantes have been arrested by the Igatpuri Police for allegedly lynching a Thane man to death and injuring another, on suspicion of cattle smuggling, the said here Wednesday. The alleged lynching that took place last week came to light after the police recovered the body of the victim, identified as Lukman Sulaiman Ansari (25) of Padgha in Thane district, on Saturday (June 10).

10 arrested for murder, snatching

Ranchi: Police have arrested 10 persons in connection with murder, snatching and various other crimes, an official said. Those arrested include the killers of one Tanveer Ahmed alias Bittu, 21, who was shot dead June 6. Senior Superintendent of Police, Ranchi, Kishore Kaushal said that Tanveer Ahmed was shot dead at Edalhatu Niche Tola. "A team under Ranchi City SP and DSP Sadar Ranchi was constituted to arrest the killers identified as Rohan Kumar alias Rohan Srivastav, Mohammed Aarif, Ankit Kumar Singh, Deepak Kumar Singh and Ankush Kumar Singh alias Lucky after an FIR was registered in the case," the SSP said.

CYCLONE BIPARJOY 50K evacuated in Gujarat

The IMD said Biparjoy was set to change the path Wednesday and begin moving north-eastwards towards Kutch and Saurashtra but it will still have landfall as a very severe cyclonic storm with wind speed ranging from 125-135 kmph, gusting to 145 kmph from morning to evening Thursday



Porbandar and Rajkot districts received more than 50 mm of rainfall in the 24 hours ending on Wednesday morning. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) said Biparjoy was set to change the path on Wednesday and begin moving north-eastwards towards Kutch and Saurashtra but it will still have landfall as a very severe cyclonic storm with wind speed ranging from 125-135 kmph, gusting to 145 kmph from morning to evening Thursday. The Gujarat government has undertaken a massive exercise to evacuate people living in villages within a 10 km radius of the coast, with a special focus on Kutch which is likely to be most affected by the cyclone, and move them to temporary shelters. The evacuation is in progress and is expected to be completed by Wednesday evening, officials said. "The cyclone is nearly 290 km away from Kutch at present. As a precautionary measure, we have already shifted nearly 50,000 people living in coastal areas to temporary shelters. The evacuation process is still on and the remaining 5,000 persons will be shifted by this evening to safer places" said State Commissioner of Relief, Alok Kumar Pandey. Of the 50,000-odd evacuees, nearly 18,000 people

AGENCIES

Ahmedabad/Mandvi/New Delhi, June 14: As powerful cyclone 'Biparjoy' approaches the Gujarat coast, authorities have evacuated 50,000 people from vulnerable areas in a massive operation and deployed disaster management personnel for relief and rescue measures in the state set to be most impacted by the second storm to hit it in just two years, officials said Wednesday. With the cyclone, expected to make landfall near Jakhau port in Kutch district Thursday evening, barreling towards the Gujarat coast, parts of the Saurashtra-Kutch region received heavy rains accompanied by a strong winds. Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel took stock of the situation with senior officers, while at the central level, Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh separately reviewed the preparedness to deal with the impact of the cyclone. Nine talukas in Devbhumi Dwarka, Jamnagar, Junagadh,

BENGAL PANCHAYAT POLLS Clashes over nomination filing continue for 5th day



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, June 14: Violence continued to rock parts of West Bengal over the filing of nominations for the July 8 panchayat poll for the fifth consecutive day Wednesday, as activists of the ruling TMC and opposition parties. Clashes were reported in parts of South 24 Parganas and Bankura districts prompting the police to use force to disperse the mobs. Supporters of Indian Secular Front (ISF) and TMC clashed in Bhongore area of South 24 Parganas, nearly 30 km from Kolkata. A huge police contingent was rushed to the spot, which resorted to baton charge to control the situation. Bombs were hurled and several cars were ransacked as supporters of the two parties tried to

stop each other from filing nominations. Several activists belonging to the two parties were injured, the police said. ISF MLA from Bhongore, Naushad Siddique, went to meet Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee in the afternoon to brief her about the situation in his constituency. The legislator, however, could not meet Banerjee due to her "pressing engagements" and left. "I had come here to meet Banerjee at the state secretariat and inform her about the situation in Bhongore where opposition candidates were threatened and stopped from filing nominations. But since she was busy, I could not meet her," Siddique told reporters. A senior official at the Chief Minister's Office told PTI that the meeting could not be held because of Banerjee's pressing engagements. When contacted, a senior officer of Bhongore Police Station said that they were yet to arrest anyone for the clashes there. Similar scenes were witnessed in Canning area of the district, as miscreants alleged to be members of dissident groups of the TMC tried to stop filing of nomination of the party's official candidates.

3 years after Galwan clashes, border standoff lingers on

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 14: India has significantly enhanced military infrastructure, surveillance and combat capabilities along the nearly 3,500 km-long Line of Actual Control (LAC) with China since the deadly clashes in Galwan Valley in 2020, sources in the defence establishment said Wednesday on the eve of the third anniversary of the hostilities. India has managed to significantly reduce the "infrastructure differential" with China along the LAC in the last three years in view of consistent focus on building heliports, airfields, bridges, tunnels, troop habitats and other required facilities, the sources said

when asked about measures that have been taken following the Galwan clashes. "The infrastructure development along the entire LAC is taking place at a fast pace. The main focus has been to bring down the infrastructure differential," said a source. "Our troops and equipment are adequately deployed now to deal with any eventualities, the sources said. We are maintaining a posture

The Indian and Chinese militaries are engaged in talks to reduce tensions along the frontier as the two sides are still locked in a standoff in a few friction points though they managed to disengage from some others. The Galwan Valley clashes June 15, 2020 were the first deadly skirmish between the two militaries along the LAC in five decades and they significantly strained the bilateral ties.



A worker arranges flags of Trinamool Congress at a shop for sale ahead of the West Bengal Panchayat elections in Kolkata

PTI PHOTO

Monsoon set to advance further from June 18: IMD

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 14: The southwest monsoon is set to advance further into the southern peninsula and eastern parts of the country from Sunday after an initial delay in its onset over Kerala. India Meteorological Department (IMD) Director General Mrutyunjay Mohapatra said Cyclone Biparjoy has com-

pletely detached itself from the monsoonal flow and will have no impact on the progress of the seasonal rainfall system. "Had Cyclone Biparjoy moved north-westwards towards Oman, it would have affected the monsoonal flow," he said. Mohapatra said the cyclone had helped the progress of the monsoon by strengthening the cross-equatorial flow as it lingered over the

southeast Arabian Sea. Conditions were becoming favourable for further advance of the southwest monsoon over some more parts of the south peninsula and east India and adjoining areas between June 18 and 21. The southwest monsoon hit India June 8 with its onset over Kerala against the normal date of June 1. Research shows that a delay in the onset of monsoon over Kerala does not neces-

sarily mean a delay in the monsoon onset over northwest India. India is expected to get normal rainfall during the southwest monsoon season despite the evolving El Nino conditions, the IMD had earlier said. El Nino, which is the warming of the waters in the Pacific Ocean near South America, is generally associated with the weakening of monsoon winds and dry weather in India.



that is focused on defeating any evil design by the adversary, they said. The sources identified strengthening of all forms of surveillance including electronic ones as another significant aspect of boosting overall military pre-

paredness by the Indian armed forces. It is learnt that senior commanders of the Army's Northern Command would review the overall situation along the LAC in eastern Ladakh on Thursday

The need for quick mobilisation of troops and weapon systems gained renewed focus in the wake of the lingering border row between India and China in eastern Ladakh. Following the escalation in tension in eastern Ladakh standoff, the Army has taken a series of measures to boost its operational capabilities in the eastern sector that included procurement of all terrain vehicles, precision guided ammunition, high-tech surveillance equipment, radars and weapons. The militaries of the two countries held 18 rounds of high-level talks so far with an objective of taking forward the disengagement process in the remaining friction points and restoring peace and tranquillity along the LAC in eastern Ladakh. The 18th round of high-level

military talks between the two sides were held on April 23 during which they agreed to stay in close touch and work out a mutually acceptable solution to the remaining issues in eastern Ladakh at the earliest. The two sides completed disengagement in several areas following extensive diplomatic and military talks. India has been maintaining that its ties with China cannot be normal unless there is peace in the border areas. On June 8, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said that any expectation of normalisation of India's ties with China when the border situation in eastern Ladakh is not normal is unfounded. The eastern Ladakh border standoff erupted on May 5, 2020, following a violent clash in the Pangong lake area.

MAHAPANCHAYAT ISSUE

U'khand HC to hear plea today



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Uttarkashi/New Delhi, June 14: The Uttarakhand High Court will Thursday hear a plea to prevent Hindu outfits from holding a 'mahapanchayat' against "love jihad" in Purohita town, where the local administration has imposed prohibitory orders to prevent the gathering from taking place. The Association for the Protection of Civil Rights moved the court Wednesday after the Supreme Court earlier in the day refused to entertain its plea against the mahapanchayat, but allowed the petitioner to approach the HC or any other authority. In protest against the imposition of section 144, which bars assembly of people, local trade bodies called for a bandh in Uttarkashi district, in which Purohita falls, Thursday. The administration has not given permission for the mahapanchayat. Communal tension has been brewing in Purohita and some other towns of Uttarkashi district after two men, one of them Muslim, allegedly tried to abduct a Hindu girl May 26. The girl was rescued and the accused sent to judicial custody. Local trade bodies and right wing Hindu outfits have run a sus-

tained campaign against what they call were cases of "love jihad" in Purohita and neighbouring towns, including Barkot, Chinyalisaur and Bhatwari. In the Supreme Court, a vacation bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Ahsanuddin Amanullah earlier in the day asked advocate Shahrulk Alam, who appeared for the NGO, to avail remedy available in law and granted her liberty to approach the high court or any other authority concerned. The NGO's plea sought to prevent the 'mahapanchayat' and registration of an FIR against hate speeches allegedly targeting members of a particular community. "We are not short circuiting the legal process. There is a high court and district administration, you can approach them. Maintaining law and order is the responsibility of the state government, why do you think no action will be taken if matter is brought to its notice. You should have faith in the high court," the bench said. In its order, the bench recorded that Alam sought to withdraw the writ petition to enable the NGO to approach the High Court or any other authority. "Permission granted. The Writ Petition is dismissed as withdrawn with liberty as prayed for," the bench said.

NIA arrests banned PFI's master weapons trainer



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, June 14: The National Investigation Agency (NIA) Wednesday said that they have arrested a Popular Front of India (PFI) master weapons trainer, living under an assumed identity in Karnataka, for his involvement in the Nizamabad terror conspiracy case.

The case pertains to a criminal conspiracy hatched by the leaders and cadres of banned outfit PFI to recruit and radicalise youth and provide them with arms training to promote and carry out terrorist activities with the ultimate objective of establishing Islamic rule in India.

"The accused Nossam Mohamed Yunus alias Yunus (33) of Nandyal, was working in the inverter business of his elder brother. When his house was searched in September 2022, he was found to be absconding along with his wife

and two minor sons," said the official.

The NIA investigations have revealed that he had shifted his entire family from Andhra Pradesh and was hiding out in the Cowl Bazar area of Bellary district of Karnataka, where he had assumed a new identity - Basheer, and a new profession as a plumber.

Yunus was a master weapons trainer and was providing weapons training to the youth recruited by PFI in the Andhra Pradesh and Telangana region. He was also the PE Training State Coordinator for these two states in the Nizamabad PFI case.

"Yunus, who has been giving evasive replies during NIA interrogation, has named one Shaikh Ilyas Ahmed as also being involved in the PFI Weapons Training programme. Ilyas is currently absconding," the NIA said.

With his arrest, NIA has once again exposed PFI's radical nefarious plans to drive a communal wedge among the communities and to use innocent Muslim youth to disturb and disrupt peace and communal harmony in the country.

Telangana Police had initially registered an FIR in the case on July 4, 2022.

Later on the NIA took over the case. The NIA has so far filed two charge sheets against sixteen accused in this case.



WRATH OF NATURE: High tides crash at the damaged houses due to sea erosion, at Bettampady, ahead of cyclone Biparjoy, on the outskirts of Mangalore, Wednesday.

PTI PHOTO

Telangana wins Green Apple awards

IT IS FOR THE VERY FIRST TIME THAT ANY BUILDINGS/STRUCTURES FROM INDIA ARE BEING AWARDED THE PRESTIGIOUS GREEN APPLE AWARDS AND TELANGANA GETS THE HONOUR OF RECEIVING ALL FIVE AWARDS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Hyderabad, June 14: Five buildings/structures from Telangana have been selected for the 'International Green Apple Awards for Beautiful Buildings' under the Urban and Real Estate Sector category, from London-based independent non-profit organisation - 'The Green Organisation'.

Mozzam-Jahi Market (in the Heritage category - for the excellent restoration and reuse), Durgam Cheruvu Cable Bridge (in the Bridge category for the unique design), B R Ambedkar Telangana State Secretariat Building (in the aesthetically designed Office/work-space building category), Integrated Command Control Centre of Telangana Police (in the unique Office category) and Yadadri temple (abode of Lord Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy - in the excellent Religious structures category) have been selected for the awards, an official release said here Wednesday.

"It is for the very first time that any buildings/structures from India are being awarded the prestigious Green Apple awards and Telangana gets the honour of re-



ceiving all five awards," the release said.

Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao expressed his happiness on the five structures built and renovated by the state government and receiving the international awards.

The Chief Minister said Telangana

brought laurels to the country by becoming the first state to win the big number of Green Apple awards, an official release said.

The awards ceremony is scheduled to be held in London June 16.

Municipal Administration and Urban Development Special Chief Secretary Arvind Kumar has been

deputed by the Telangana government to receive these awards.

The Green Organisation, established in 1994 in London, is an independent non-profit organisation dedicated to recognising, rewarding and promoting environmental best practice around the world, the release added.

CENTRE DENYING REQUIRED RICE TO KARNATAKA: CM

Alleging that the Central government was playing politics on the issue, Siddaramaiah called it 'anti-poor' for trying to 'scuttle' the scheme which would benefit the needy

AGENCIES

Bangalore, June 14: Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah Wednesday accused the BJP-led government at the Centre of conspiring to 'fail' the Congress administration's poll guarantee, by ensuring that the state doesn't get the required amount of rice to implement its 'Anna Bhagya' scheme, which provides additional rice for poor.

Alleging that the Central government was playing politics on the issue, he called it 'anti-poor' for trying to 'scuttle' the scheme which would benefit the needy.

The Chief Minister also said his government was making all efforts to get rice from other sources and producing states, aimed at supplying it to the needy on time, as promised.

Opposition BJP has hit back at the Chief Minister accusing of playing a 'drama' by pointing fingers at the Centre.

Addressing a press conference here, the CM said the Central government has taken a political decision not to provide rice to Karnataka government, as they



fear Congress party earning a good name by implementing the scheme which will benefit the poor.

"The Centre is trying to scuttle the scheme that would have provided another 5 kg of free rice for the poor. The Centre is trying to do politics on this issue. FCI officials had said that they have seven lakh tonne rice stocks, despite that they have backtracked, what is the intention behind it. It is to scuttle the programme. BJP is anti-poor," he added.

Hitting back, Karnataka BJP in a tweet accused Siddaramaiah of playing 'drama' by pointing at the Centre with regards to implementation of free rice scheme for poor.

Taking a dig at the Chief Minister and the government with regards to implementation of guarantees, it said "People have understood your guaranteed conspiracy of trying to get 'anticipatory bail', by pointing fingers at the Centre, even before providing free rice."

BJP national general secretary C T Ravi in a tweet said "The BJP government led by Narendra Modi is giving five kg of rice every month to every poor person in the state. Mr Siddaramaiah according to your manifesto, provide every poor person ten kg of rice. If rice cannot be arranged then put the market price of ten kg of rice to the bank account of every poor."

Women make most of free bus travel

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bangalore, June 14: After launch of the 'Shakthi scheme' for free travel by women by the Congress government in Karnataka, state-owned buses are seeing women passengers turning out in great numbers, an official statement said Tuesday.

A Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) statement said that from midnight June 12 to 12 p.m., 41.34 lakh women passengers have travelled in government owned buses across the state. The cost incurred by the government is Rs 8.83 crore.

As many as 17.57 lakh women travelled in Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTTC) buses in and around the state capital,

while 11.40 lakh women travelled in KSRTC, 8.30 lakh women in NWKRTC and 4.40 lakh in KKRTC. The data of bus schedules which are returning to the depot after midnight are not included in the above data.

June 11 between 1 p.m. to 12 p.m., 5.71 lakh women passengers availed the scheme by traveling free and the cost incurred is Rs 1.40 crore.

The KSRTC has also mandated the drivers and conductors to initiate precautionary measures at all buses to ensure safety of passengers, especially students, by ensuring the closure of doors of the bus while traveling. The direction is given against the backdrop of the death of a school student in Haveri district while traveling on the footboard of the overcrowded bus.



Why is KCR targeting Cong, going soft on BJP?

CONGRESS IS NOT SURPRISED OVER THE DEVELOPMENT AS IT BELIEVES THAT KCR ALWAYS HAD A SECRET UNDERSTANDING WITH THE SAFFRON PARTY

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad, June 14: The sudden shift in the strategy of Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao by going silent on BJP while targeting Congress has sparked speculation in the political circles in the run-up to the Assembly polls scheduled later this year.

At three public meetings he addressed in different parts of the state during the last one week, the Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) went all out against the Congress but spared the BJP.

Leaders of the Congress, however, are not surprised over the development as they believe that KCR always had a secret understanding with the BJP.

"After the victory of Congress in Karnataka elections, both BJP and BRS have taken a step back. KCR now sees Congress as the party



which can defeat him," senior Congress leader and former minister Mohammed Ali Shabbir told IANS.

He is not surprised that KCR has started singling out the Congress for his attacks while sparing the BJP, which had been his main target for the last couple of years.

The speeches made by KCR at

public meetings in Nirmal, Nagarkurnool and Gadwal over the last one week have baffled the political circles as he went all out to attack the Congress but avoided criticizing the BJP.

The content and tone and tenor of his speeches indicate a shift in strategy ahead of the Assembly elections, which are due to be held

in November-December 2023.

"This is nothing but part of a package between BRS and BJP. The BJP has been using the same tactic in almost every state by threatening to use the CBI, ED and other central agencies," said Shabbir in an obvious reference to the allegations against KCR's daughter K Kavitha in the Delhi liquor policy case.

The CBI and ED recently questioned Kavitha, a former MP and now a state legislator.

The Congress leader pointed out that the BJP used the same tactics against Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy, against whom CBI cases are pending for alleged disproportionate assets.

"The BJP has been using smaller parties against the Congress. There is nothing new in it," said Shabbir.

At the recent public meetings, the BRS chief slammed the Congress and called on people to throw the party in Bay of Bengal. Not long ago, KCR was using the same words for BJP.

At most of his public meetings over the last two years, KCR minced no words to attack BJP and Prime Minister Narendra Modi over a host of issues ranging from hate politics to discrimination against Telangana. His silence on BJP at the public meetings raised eye-

brows in political circles.

Political analysts say that changed political equations in the wake of BJP's poll debacle in Karnataka may have led to KCR changing tack.

After its win in two Assembly by-elections and impressive performance in Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) polls, the BJP had replaced Congress as the main political opposition.

Before elections in the neighbouring state, the BJP was in an aggressive mode in Telangana but the poll drubbing has dealt a blow to the party's morale.

The BJP which has been trying to project itself as the only viable alternative to BRS over the last couple of years, now appears to be on the backfoot. The infighting in the saffron party has dealt another blow to its confidence.

Political observers say that leaders who quit BRS or were expelled from the party in recent times may now prefer Congress over BJP in the changing political dynamics in the state.

Till the 2019 Lok Sabha polls, KCR used to dismiss BJP as a non-existing force in state politics. However, by winning four Lok Sabha seats out of 17 seats in the state, the BJP made its presence felt. The win in two Assembly by-elections had further bolstered it.



Delhi's water crisis will be resolved within the next two-three years with the government taking steps to enhance the water supply capacity by up to 300 million gallons a day (MGD)

ARVIND KEJRIWAL | DELHI CHIEF MINISTER

DIGITAL HEALTH CARDS FOR STUDENTS

The Gujarat government has taken the initiative to issue digital health cards for monitoring the cognitive development and nutrition level of school children. Under the Shala Arogya-National Child Health Program (SHRBSK), Gujarat has become the first and only state in the country to implement such a system



of the day quote

I met Nitish Kumar earlier this month. I was accompanied by MLAs of my party who wanted to share some concerns about their respective constituencies. The meeting continued for 45 minutes, most of which were taken up by the chief minister's harangue on our party's merger with JD(U)

JITAN RAM MANJHI | HAM FOUNDER

All possible arrangements are being made by the central and state governments to deal with cyclone Biparjoy

MANSUKH MANDAVIYA | UNION HEALTH MINISTER

I like when me or my government is criticised. It may be that there are some areas where there is scope for improvement. What's the problem with that? If I don't like criticism, how will the truth come out? The allegations levelled by the Twitter co-founder (Jack Dorsey) are serious, the situation is not good

ASHOK GEHLOT | RAJASTHAN CM

Political slugfest over Balaji's arrest

BALAJI, ARRESTED BY THE ED UNDER PMLA AFTER A LONG SESSION OF QUESTIONING, IS THE FIRST MINISTER IN THE M K STALIN-LED GOVERNMENT TO FACE SUCH ACTION FROM A CENTRAL AGENCY



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 14: The Opposition Wednesday condemned the arrest of Tamil Nadu Electricity Minister V Senthil Balaji by the Enforcement Directorate and alleged that it was "political harassment and vendetta" by the Modi government.

The agency alleged that he "misused" his office for illegal gratification and "engineered" a job racket scam in the state transport undertakings during 2014-15 with purported kickbacks paid by candidates through his associates.

"Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge condemns the late-night arrest of Tamil Nadu Electricity Minister Shri V. Senthil Balaji by the ED," the Congress said in a statement.

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and CPI general secretary D Raja slammed the Tamil Nadu minister's arrest.

The Aam Aadmi Party accused the BJP-led Centre of pursuing "vendetta politics" to divert the public attention from the real issues such as unemployment, inflation and "alarming" data breaches from the CoWin.

CPI(M) Secretary Tamil Nadu State Committee K Balakrishnan strongly condemned the "central government and its ED wing" for the arrest of Balaji.

In a tweet, Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) supremo Lalu Prasad said, "Not shocked or surprised to see yet another act of vendetta by the Union Government and its agencies against TN Minister Thiru Senthil Balaji. Till the 2024 General Elections this shall continue. Make no mistake -- we shall fight, we shall win. In solidarity with Thiru @mkstalin, CM Tamil Nadu."

Rajya Sabha MP Kapil Sibal

also hit out at the BJP, saying when there is an Opposition party in power in a state, the "double engine government" becomes the "double barrel" government -- the two barrels being ED and CBI.

Jammu and Kashmir-based National Conference (NC) and Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) expressed with solidarity with the DMK and Balaji.

NC vice president Omar Abdullah slammed the ED sleuths' "behaviour" during the arrest.

Citing the minister's medical report, "We strongly condemn the way they (ED personnel) behaved with the minister... I think the central government and these agencies should rethink about their behaviour," Abdullah said.

The ED, in its submission to the court, said it issued the minister a summons to appear before it for questioning but he allegedly "refused to sign and receive" them.

The agency claimed Balaji "shouted and yelled" at the agency officials present at his house and the agency then attempted to record his statement there in the presence of two witnesses.

It charged the minister of being "completely non-cooperative" during the proceedings and hence he was arrested around 1:30 am. It said the arrest was executed in the presence of two independent witnesses as the minister "refused" to sign the arrest memo.

If not arrested, Balaji could have "tampered and destroyed" the evidence, the agency said.

The PDP said central agencies were first "weaponised" in J-K and later it was replicated in the rest of the country.

The ED raids are not just limited to Tamil Nadu but have happened in Maharashtra and Karnataka as well, PDP spokesperson Najmus Saqib said.

Fire breaks out in Kolkata airport



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, June 14: A fire broke out near a departure gate of the Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose International Airport Wednesday night, officials said.

Firefighting arrangements were pressed into service to douse the blaze as panic-stricken passengers were moved to a safe place, they said. No casualty was reported.

The entire area inside the airport was engulfed with thick black smoke after the fire broke out at portal D near 3C departure gate at around 9.12 pm. The fire was fully extinguished by 9:40 PM. "Since there was a rush of passengers, airport authorities took no chance and used their firefighters to douse it. At the moment, it is under control and the cooling process is being done," a police officer said.

Officials said after an initial investigation that short circuit could be the reason for the fire. In a tweet, the authorities stated, "All passengers have been safely evacuated, and the check-in process has been temporarily suspended due to the presence of smoke in the area. Check-in operations will resume by 10:15 PM."

Law Commission initiates fresh consultations on UCC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 14: The Law Commission Wednesday initiated a fresh consultation process on uniform civil code by seeking views from stakeholders, including public and recognised religious organisations, on the politically sensitive issue.

Earlier, the 21st Law Commission, whose term ended in August 2018, had examined the issue and solicited the views of all stakeholders on two occasions. Subsequently, a consultation paper on "Reforms of Family Law" was issued in 2018.

"Since more than three years have lapsed from the date of issuance of the said consultation paper, bearing in mind the relevance and importance of the subject and also the various court orders on the subject, the 22nd Law Commission of India considered it expedient to deliberate afresh over the subject," the panel said in a "public notice".

"Accordingly, the 22nd Law Commission of India decided

again to solicit views and ideas of the public at large and recognised religious organisations about the Uniform Civil Code," the statement said.

Those who are interested and willing can present their views within a period of 30 days from the date of notice to the Law Commission.

The 22nd Law Commission, which recently got a three-year extension, has accordingly begun examining issues related to UCC on a reference sent by the Ministry of Law and Justice in June 2016

If need be, Commission may call upon any individual or organisation for a personal hearing or discussion, it said. In its consultation paper issued on August 31, 2018, the 21st Law Commission headed by Justice B S Chauhan (retired) had said that while the diversity of Indian culture can and should be celebrated, specific groups or weaker sections of the society must not be "dis-privileged" in the process.

It said the Commission dealt with laws that are discriminatory rather than providing a uniform civil code "which is neither necessary nor desirable at this

stage". The consultation paper said most countries are now moving towards recognition of difference, and the mere existence of difference does not imply discrimination but is indicative of a robust democracy.

In short, a uniform civil code means having a common law for all citizens of the country that is not based on religion. Personal laws and laws related to inheritance, adoption and succession are likely to be covered by a common code. Implementation of a uniform civil code has been part of the BJP's election manifestos.

States such as Uttarakhand are in the process of framing their common code. The BJP had promised a uniform civil code in Karnataka ahead of the recent assembly elections.

The then law minister Kiren Rijiju had told Rajya Sabha in a written reply in December 2022 that states were empowered to enact personal laws that decide issues such as succession, marriage and divorce, in their endeavour to secure a uniform civil code. Article 44 of the Constitution, part of the Directive Principle of State Policy, provides that the State shall endeavour to secure for the citizens a uniform civil code throughout the territory of India.

SHORT TAKES

Amit Shah's public meeting postponed

Hyderabad: Union Home Minister Amit Shah's visit to Telangana has been postponed in view of the severe cyclonic conditions in the West Coast, state BJP said Wednesday. Telangana BJP president Bandi Sanjay Kumar in a release said the proposed public meeting of Shah in Khammam June 15 has been postponed.

Couple killed in road mishap

Vijayapura (K'taka): A newlywed couple died in a road accident here Wednesday morning, police said. According to police, Mallu Terdal (31) was travelling with his wife Gayatri (24) on a bike, which collided with a tanker on Solapur bypass road. They had got married last month, police said. A case has been registered in this regard and an investigation has been launched.

CBI charge sheets former IT officials

New Delhi: The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has filed a charge sheet against former Additional Commissioner and Assistant Commissioner of Income Tax, Ahmedabad, and a private individual in a bribery case. The CBI filed the charge sheet in a special court against then Additional Commissioner Santosh Karnani, Assistant Commissioner Vivek Johri, and private person Malav Mehta. It registered a case against Karnani October 12, 2022, based on a request from the Gujarat government.

Police seize cough syrup worth ₹20cr

Guwahati: The Assam Police have confiscated at least 95,000 bottles of cough syrup valued at around ₹20 crore from near the Assam-Tripura border, officials. Two people were arrested during the seizure, who have been identified as Bhabesh Kumar and Saminur Islam.

Man kills four, dies by suicide

Patna: In a shocking case, a man killed his wife and three daughters and then committed suicide in Ekania village of Bihar's Khagaria district Wednesday, police said. Amitesh Kumar, the Superintendent of Police of Khagaria said that the accused, Munna Yadav was a fugitive in a criminal case.

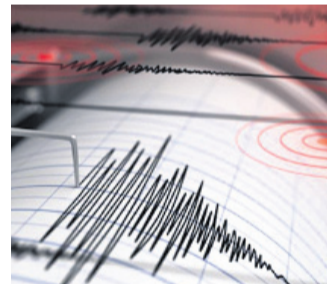
Five earthquakes hit Jammu region in a day

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Doda/Jammu, June 14: Five earthquakes jolted the Jammu region on Wednesday and triggered panic among residents, a day after a 5.4 magnitude quake hit the Doda district of the Union Territory.

The fresh earthquakes have prompted the administration to shut down educational institutes in twin mountainous districts of Doda and Kishtwar.

Officials said the earthquakes that occurred in the Jammu region on Wednesday causes some damage to property but there were no reports so far of any casualties. In Kishtwar, a 3.3 magnitude



quake was recorded at 8:29 am. Its epicentre was at a depth of five kilometers, according to the National Centre for Seismology (NCS). Prior to that, tremors of magnitude 3.5 were recorded in Doda at 7:56 am and the epicenter was at a depth of 10 kilometers, data from the NCS showed.

Two more earthquakes were recorded in the early hours of the day as well.

At 2:20 am, a 4.3 magnitude quake was recorded in the Doda district at a depth of 10 kilometers, according to the data. The other quake, which had a magnitude of 2.8, occurred 74 kilometers east of Katra in Reasi district at 2:43 am, according to the NCS. Its epicentre lay at a depth of five kilometres.

Khaps, farmers block Rohtak-Delhi NH in Haryana for 2 hours

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chandigarh, June 14: Khap members and farmers blocked the Rohtak-Delhi National Highway in Haryana for about two hours as part of a 'Haryana Bandh' call given in support of protesting wrestlers, farmers and other issues.

Ramesh Dalal, a senior leader of the Bhumi Bachao Sangharsh Samiti, led the protesters who

squatted on NH-9 in Bahadurgarh, resulting in a pile-up of vehicles on the road. The blockade was lifted after two hours following assurance to the protesters that their demands will be taken up with the authorities concerned, officials said. Some protesters also tried to squat on the Kundli-Manesar-Palwal (KMP) Expressway but the police dispersed them from there. The strike call did not have any impact in other parts of Haryana and nor



mal life remained unaffected. Dalal told reporters at the site

they have a list of 25 demands including justice for wrestlers protesting against outgoing Wrestling Federation of India chief Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh, loan waiver for farmers, legal guarantee to Minimum Support Price and enhanced compensation for land acquisition.

He said Jhajjar's Deputy Commissioner Shakti Singh assured them the government will hold talks with them in next three

days over their demands, some of which can be addressed by the Haryana government.

Resignation of Haryana Minister Sandeep Singh, who has been booked in a sexual harassment case, and handing over to the Army the construction of SYL canal are also among their demands, Dalal said. Additional police forces were deployed in Bahadurgarh and adjoining Rohtak in view of the Bandh call.

16% older women in India suffer abuse: Survey

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 14: About 16 per cent of elderly women in India have faced abuse, mostly in the form of physical violence followed by disrespect and psychological abuse, a new report published Wednesday showed.

Published by HelpAge India on the eve of UN-recognised 'World Elder Abuse Awareness Day' Thursday, the report 'Women & Ageing: Invisible or Empowered?' surveyed 7,911 women in the age group of 60-90 years for one month from May to June.

A total of 40 per cent of the surveyed women reported the main perpetrators as their sons, while 31 per cent pointed out their relatives and 27 per cent their

daughters-in-law. These figures are worrisome as they indicate that the abuse extends beyond the immediate family circle, the report said. The survey also found that despite being abused, most elderly women did not report it to the police, primarily due to fear.

While 18 per cent cited "fear of retaliation or further abuse" as the top reason, 16 per cent said they were unaware of the resources available and 13 per cent thought their concerns would not be taken seriously. Data from the report suggested about 56 per cent of older women lacked awareness of abuse redressal mechanisms, with only 15 per cent being aware of the Maintenance and Welfare of



Parents and Senior Citizens Act. A huge percentage of the surveyed women - 78 per cent - said they were unaware of any government welfare schemes, the

report said. The survey found that the social status of the older women only further added to their woes, indicated by 64 per cent facing social

The non-profit organisation selected its respondents from both rural and urban India across 20 states, two UTs and five metro cities, covering various socio-economic categories

The report revealed abuse against older women at a rate of 16 per cent. Of those abused, 50 per cent reported physical violence, making it the top form of abuse

It was followed by 46 per cent being disrespected and 40 per cent facing emotional/psychological abuse

discrimination due to their marital status, especially widowed, and 18 per cent being discriminated against due to their gender.

On the economic front, 53 per cent of the older women said they did not feel financially secure.

In matters concerning digital inclusion, the country's elderly women are far behind, the report showed. While 60 per cent of them have never used digital devices, 59 per cent said they do not own smartphones and only 13 per cent said they would like to enroll on a skill development programme online. A significant 48 per cent of the respondents were found to have at least one chronic condition, yet 64 per cent are not health insured.

About 67 per cent of older women still undertake caregiving roles in their families, while 36 per cent are unable to do so, the report said.

business

of the day quote

The ISA should set up a de-risking mechanism and should also tap more green funds and thus promote grid-scale solar energy projects in the African continent

RK SINGH | UNION MINISTER

Departments implementing PLI schemes may study the Target Plus scheme misuse and be vigilant. The risk compounds when incentive is granted on quarterly production

AJAY SRIVASTAVA | CO-FOUNDER, GTRI

Supply issue is still around us but I believe that we should go back close to the 2018 number which was our peak

JYOTI MALHOTRA | MD, VOLVO CAR

SHORT TAKES

Strict vigil on Tur, Urad prices

New Delhi: The Central government has directed the states to take strict action against hoarders of pulses, mainly Tur and Urad, whose poor supply and rising price have forced the Centre to impose stock limits on them. In a high-level meeting by the Department of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution on Wednesday with all states via video conferencing, it was decided that focus should also be shifted to consumption of other pulses like Chana. It was felt that since there has been a shortfall in production of Tur and Urad, which led to their price rise and subsequent hoarding, people should be encouraged to consume other varieties of pulses, especially Chana.

IOC to set up jet fuel plant

New Delhi: Indian Oil Corp will set up an 80,000 tonne sustainable aviation fuel plant with LanzaJet in Haryana, the refiner's chairman said Wednesday. The company is looking at an investment of about ₹23 billion (\$280.1 million), SM Vaidya said on the sidelines of an industry event in New Delhi. The refiner is also running a pilot project for green fuel in association with Praj Industries in the western state of Maharashtra, Vaidya added.

BSE sells 4.5% stake in CDSL

New Delhi: Leading stock exchange BSE Wednesday divested a 4.5 per cent stake in Central Depository Services Ltd for ₹468 crore through an open market transaction. Central Depository Services (India) Ltd (CDSL) is the only listed depository in the country which facilitates holding and transacting in securities in the electronic form and facilitates settlement of trades on the bourses. According to the bulk deal data available with the National Stock Exchange (NSE), BSE offloaded 47,44,000 shares, amounting to a 4.5 per cent stake in CDSL. The shares were disposed of at an average price of ₹985.98 apiece, taking the transaction value to ₹467.74 crore.

Renault touches production feat

Chennai: Car maker Renault India will enter the bigger vehicle segment rolling out two models as well as an electric vehicle (EV) in a couple of years time, said a top company official. He also said the company has reached the production milestone of 10,00,000 vehicles. The company which announced fresh investments of ₹5,300 crore through its joint venture partner Nissan Motor, expects to roll out the first product by 2025.



The US is actively working to help India attract more private sector capital to close its infrastructure gap

JANET YELLEN | TREASURY SECRETARY, US

EU ASKS GOOGLE TO BREAK UP DIGITAL AD BUSINESS

European Union antitrust regulators took aim at Google's lucrative digital advertising business in an unprecedented decision, saying Wednesday that the tech giant must sell off some of its ad business to address competition concerns



WPI inflation at over 7-year low

This is the second straight month when WPI has been in the negative zone and a negative WPI inflation, technically termed as deflation, means that overall wholesale prices have been falling year-on-year

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 14: The wholesale price-based inflation rate fell to a seven-and-half-year low of (-) 3.48 per cent in May on easing prices of food, fuel and manufactured items, strengthening the case for the RBI to continue with the rate hike pause in the current fiscal.

This is the second straight month when WPI has been in the negative zone, mainly due to a higher base and falling prices of fuel and manufactured goods. Food prices also eased during May.

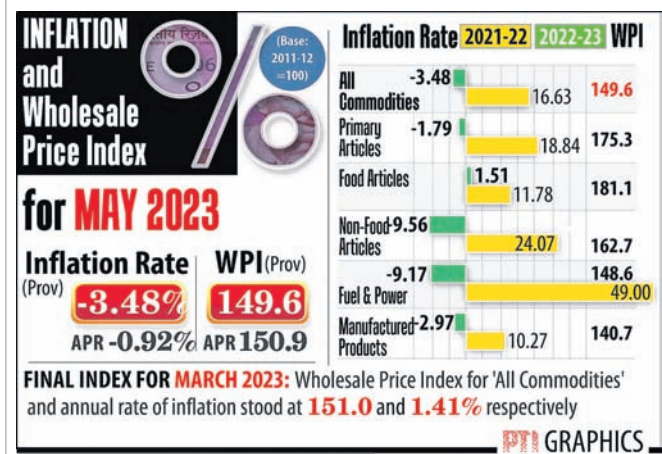
The wholesale price index (WPI) comes within days after the government data showed retail inflation, closely tracked by the RBI to decide on monetary policy, dipped to a 25-month low of 4.25 per cent in May.

The decline in the WPI-based inflation rate is usually reflected in the retail inflation data with a time lag. "Decline in the rate of inflation in May 2023 is primarily contributed by fall in prices of mineral oils, basic metals, food products, textiles, non-food articles, crude petroleum & natural gas and chemical & chemical products," the commerce and industry ministry said on Wednesday.

This is the lowest WPI inflation print since November 2015, when it was (-) 3.7 per cent. In May 2022, WPI inflation was at 16.63 per cent. Last month, it was (-) 0.92 per cent.

Inflation in food articles eased to 1.51 per cent in May from 3.54 per cent in April.

Vegetables saw a decline in in-



Indeed, India has doubled its imports of low-cost Russian oil over the past year. This has helped keep the cost of energy manageable and helped to tame its high inflation

STEVE COCHRANE | ANALYTICS CHIEF, MOODY'S

IN MAY 2022, WPI INFLATION WAS AT 16.63%. LAST MONTH, IT WAS (-) 0.92%

INFLATION IN FOOD ARTICLES EASED TO 1.51% IN MAY FROM 3.54% IN APRIL

FUEL, POWER BASKET INFLATION EASED TO (-) 9.17% IN MAY AGAINST 0.93% IN APRIL

flation at (-) 20.12 per cent, while the same in potato and onion was (-) 18.71 per cent and (-) 7.25 per cent, respectively.

However, inflation in pulses saw a sharp uptick at 5.76 per cent, and in wheat, it was 6.15 per cent.

Fuel and power basket inflation eased to (-) 9.17 per cent in May against 0.93 per cent in April.

In manufactured products, the inflation rate was (-) 2.97 per cent in the month under review against (-) 2.42 per cent in April.

Assocham Secretary General Deepak Sood said the negative trajectory in wholesale prices should help the overall input cost in the value chain.

"While we expect the trend to continue, we need to watch out how monsoon plays out as food prices are influenced a lot more by rains than manufactured goods," Sood said.

Icra, in a note, said the WPI deflation is likely to print at 2.5-3.5 per cent in June 2023, supported by an elevated base in the year-ago month.

Barclays MD and Head of EM

Asia (ex-China) Economics Rahul Bajoria said wholesale prices fell further last month as pressures eased across food, fuel and core. Falling commodity prices are reducing input costs for producers, but delayed pass-through to retail prices means the gap between CPI and WPI inflation has widened.

"We expect retail inflation to be on a moderating trajectory in the near term, which suggests the MPC is likely to be on hold for the rest of fiscal 2023-24," Bajoria said, adding that the "RBI will want to see headline (and ideally core) CPI inflation moving towards the 4 per cent target on a durable basis, before considering rate cuts".

IDFC First Bank, in a research note, said for the full fiscal, WPI inflation is tracking at 0.4 per cent against 9.6 per cent in the last fiscal, with negative inflation prints persisting till the September quarter.

The RBI, in its policy review last week, kept benchmark interest rates unchanged at 6.5 per cent on account of easing inflation.

CHECKING PRICE RISE

Govt discontinues sale of rice, wheat under OMSS to states

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

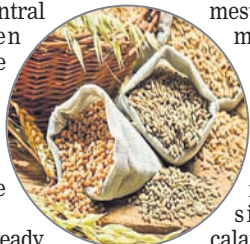
New Delhi, June 14: The Centre has discontinued the sale of rice and wheat from the central pool under the Open Market Sale Scheme (OMSS) to state governments, a move that will hit some states, including Karnataka, offering free grains to the poor.

This decision has already been conveyed to the Karnataka government, which had sought 13,819 tonne of rice for its own scheme under the OMSS without e-auction for July at the rate of ₹3,400 per quintal.

According to a recent order issued by the Food Corporation of India (FCI), "The sale of wheat and rice under the OMSS (domestic) for state governments is discontinued".

However, the sale of rice under the OMSS will be continued for northeastern states, hilly states and states facing law and order situations, natural calamities at an existing rate of ₹3,400 per quintal, it said.

FCI may liquidate rice under the OMSS to private parties from the central pool stock as per the requirement in order to moderate the market prices, it added.



Seafood exports touch all-time high

Export improved in quantity terms by 26.73%, in rupee terms by 11.08%, and in dollar terms by 4.31%

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, June 14: India achieved an all-time high in exports of seafood, both in terms of volume and value (both dollar and rupee), by shipping 17,35,286 million tonne of seafood worth ₹63,969.14 crore during 2022-23 despite several challenges in its major export markets like the US.

According to the Commerce Ministry data, during 2022-23, the export improved in quantity terms by 26.73 per cent, in rupee terms by 11.08 per cent, and in dollar terms by 4.31 per cent.



In 2021-22, India had exported 13,69,264 million tonne of seafood worth ₹57,586.48 crore.

Frozen shrimp remained the major export item in terms of both quantity and value while the US and China turned out to be the major importers of India's seafood.

Frozen shrimp, which earned ₹43,135.58 crore, retained its position as the most significant item in the basket of seafood exports, accounting for a share of 40.96 per cent in quantity and 67.72 per cent of the

total dollar earnings. Shrimp exports during the period increased by 1.01 per cent in rupee value. The overall export of frozen shrimps during 2022-23 was pegged at 7,11,099 million tonne.

The US, the largest market, imported (2,75,662 million tonne) of frozen shrimp, followed by China (1,45,743 million tonne), the European Union (95,377 million tonne), South East Asia (65,466 million tonne), Japan (40,975 million tonne), and the Middle East (31,647 million tonne).

Frozen fish, the second largest exported item, fetched ₹5,503.18 crore, accounting for 21.24 per cent in quantity and 8.49 per cent in dollar earnings.

This year, the export of frozen fish has increased by 62.65 per cent, 58.51 per cent, and 45.73 per cent in quantity, rupee and dollar value terms, respectively.

As for overseas markets, the US continued to be the major importer of Indian seafood in value terms with an import worth \$2,632.08 million, accounting for a share of 32.52 per cent in terms of dollar value.

Exports to the US declined by 21.94 per cent in dollar terms due to sluggish demand.

Frozen shrimp continued to be the principal item exported to the US with a share of 92.70 per cent in dollar terms.

China emerged as the second largest seafood export destination from India in terms of quantity and dollar both with an import of 4,05,547 million tonnes worth \$1,508.43 million, accounting for 23.37 per cent share in quantity and 18.64 per cent in dollar terms.

Exports to China market grew by 51.90 per cent in quantity, 32.02 per cent in rupee value and 28.37 per cent in dollar value.

US corporate sector upbeat about India ahead of Modi's visit

US TRADE ADVOCACY BODY URGES MODI, BIDEN TO TARGET \$500-BILLION-A-YEAR BILATERAL TRADE GOAL

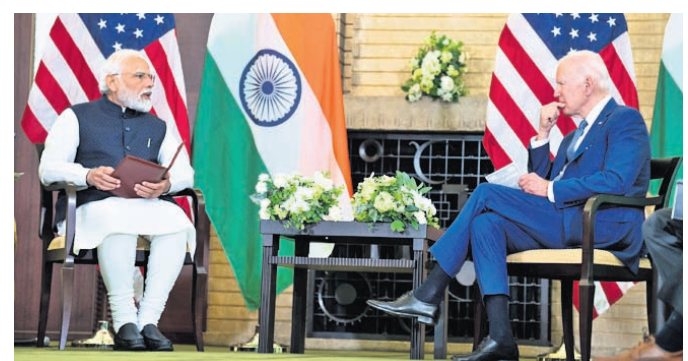
AGENCIES

Washington, June 14: Ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's State Visit to the US, American corporate sector leaders have said they are upbeat and excited about India and want to see a deepening of technological convergence between the two countries in industries like semiconductors, defence, cybersecurity and telecoms.

On Tuesday, the US India Business Council (USIBC) hosted its annual India Ideas Summit, which was the largest gathering of Indian and American CEOs, before the next week's State Visit, which was probably the only topic

being discussed at the meeting. Modi has been invited by President Joe Biden and First Lady Jill Biden for an official State Visit, which will include a State Dinner June 22.

"The mood was great... Very positive mood. Everyone is happy about the State Visit coming up. Everybody wants to see our technological convergence deepen on things like semiconductors, defence as well, cybersecurity, telecoms, 5G, and 6G. There are so many areas of convergence in deep tech and future tech, everyone wants to see more work on that," Atul Keshap, president of the USIBC told PTI in an interview.



I'd like to see more defence deals. Defence deals are really important for deterrence. When we host Indus X here next week, we're gonna try to see how that startup incubator of ideas and convergence can have even more impact on the US-India relations

ATUL KESHAP | PRESIDENT, USIBC

"They want to see deal flow between the two countries. We want

to see the quantum of trade expand as rapidly as possible to \$500

billion," he said.

Vivek Lall, chief executive at General Atomics Global Corporation said the mood is very upbeat. "It's going to be a watershed event when the Prime Minister arrives here in Washington, DC next week. I think the business community and certainly the government community is very keenly looking forward to the visit; very keenly looking forward to how there can be a step function in various areas of cooperation," he told PTI on the sidelines of the summit.

This, he said, will then set the tone and the pace of this relationship for decades to come. The Official State Visit is of, uh, huge significance and importance, he added. All the sectors in particular, the business community that's present here are looking forward to great outcomes from the bilateral

meetings, he noted.

In critical and emerging technologies, there are a lot of synergies not only among big corporations but also with startups.

"We do feel that the areas, whether they're quantum, artificial intelligence, defence innovation, they're all areas of huge potential between both countries. That shows the seed for future development and progress," Lall said.

B J Arun, TIE Global Board of Trustees, said there's a lot of excitement about the visit.

"We are extremely excited and very bullish about what has happened (in India). Because he (prime minister) is so business friendly. Even in the past we've had political leaders come, but we've never followed through, we have never actually seen it result in policy changes," he said.

INDIA EYE DOUBLE-DIGIT RANK

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, June 14: Buoyant India will take on a higher-ranked Lebanon with an aim to break into top-100 in FIFA rankings, in their last round-robin clash of the Intercontinental Cup here Thursday.

In pursuit of a second title, the Blue Tigers have sealed a spot in the final with wins over Mongolia and Vanuatu, which will serve as a prelude to Sunday's summit clash for the Igor Stimac-coached side.

The match is crucial for India as Lebanon are currently placed at 99 and the hosts at 101, and a win for the Blue Tigers will see them overtake the Cedars and break into the top-100 again.

Incidentally, India's Intercontinental Cup triumph in its inaugural edition in 2018 also saw them break into top-100 the last time. India had achieved their best-ever FIFA rankings of 94 in February 1996 in the golden era of Bhaichung Bhutia and IM Vijayan.

As for Lebanon, it's a do-or-die



opportunity after failing to beat Mongolia. A draw will be enough for Aleksandar Ilic's side to set up a rematch against the hosts in the final, but should Mongolia beat Vanuatu in the earlier kick-off, a defeat will see the equation coming down to goal difference.

"We're playing at home, and we

come out in every game with the only aim of winning it," said Stimac. "It doesn't matter how Lebanon fared in their previous game. They found it tough to play two games at four in the afternoon.

"For us, it's going to be a difficult match, as some of their players have enormous quality. They do

have weaknesses also, of course, which we could see. So, it will be an interesting game, maybe not beautiful, but definitely interesting," the Croat added.

India are yet to concede a goal in the tournament but they have struggled to score up front as well. It took a brilliant strike from Sunil

Chhetri late in the 80th minute to seal the game against little-known Vanuatu Friday.

"Many things were not as I wanted them to be, and we will work on them. But many things were beautiful as well, which we could enjoy," Stimac said. "It's important to break teams down early because as time progresses, it gets tougher and tougher. We saw that in Lebanon's game against Mongolia as well," Stimac added.

With a much closer contest on the cards against India, the Cedars know they will have to make the most of every opportunity.

"India are the best challenge for us in this tournament, and we really need to improve our level for that game. We are still not qualified for the final since things still depend on the Mongolia-Vanuatu match and our game with India," said Ilic. "It's been tough playing every three days in such weather, but we knew of the conditions before arriving here and will give our best," the Lebanon coach signed off.

Top athletes to strive for Asian Games selections

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, June 14: Olympic champion Neeraj Chopra is expectedly not competing but all the other top athletes of the country, led by long jumper Murali Sreeshankar, will look to seal Asian Games berths when the National Inter-State Championship begins here Thursday.

Chopra is recovering from an injury but he would have got exemption even if he was fit since he was to train to be ready for top-level global events in the run-up to the World Championships in August in Budapest.

Avinash Sable was also exempted from taking part in the National Inter-State Championship, which is the final selection event for the upcoming Asian Games in Hangzhou, China.

The AFI had early this year made it clear that participation in the National Inter-State Championship will be mandatory for athletes who



Athletics coach Radhakrishnan Nair speaks to mediapersons, Wednesday

want to be considered for the Asian Games (September 23 to October 8).

In the absence of Chopra and Sable, long jumper Sreeshankar will be the star attraction in the championship after his maiden third place finish at the Paris Diamond League last week with an 8.09m effort.

He will renew his rivalry with Jeswin Aldrin who had snatched his national record with an 8.42m jump earlier in the year. Aldrin, though, struggled after that with two sub-8m jumps and one just above that mark.

Archer Aditi breaks U-18 WR

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Medellin, June 14: Teenager Aditi Swami smashed the U-18 world record to qualify top in the third stage of the Archery World Cup in Medellin, Colombia.

The 16-year-old, who won a silver at the Asia Cup Leg 3 in Sharjah last December, topped the compound women's field with 711 points out of a possible 720, here Tuesday.

In her maiden World Cup season, Aditi beat the previous best of 705, set only recently - in May - by Liko Arreola, who was also making her debut for the US senior team, finishing ninth (698).

"I feel amazing and I am very happy," said the Indian teenager. "I didn't expect that I was going to shoot like that and that score, but now I am very happy with that score because I'm only 16 years old."

Aditi finished ahead of com-



patriot and multiple World Cup gold medalist Jyothi Surekha Vennam and home favourite Sara Lopez in the 72-arrow 50-metre qualification.

The Indian women's compound team of Aditi, Jyothi (708) and Parneet Kaur (700) also topped the qualification but only to miss the team world record set by the Korea (2120) by just one point.

Making a comeback, veteran

Abhishek Verma who was sidelined in the first two stages of the World Cup finished eighth (707 points) to top among the Indians. Ojas Deotale finished 13th with 703 while Prathamesh Samadhan Jawkar ended at 19th place, one-point adrift.

Rajat Chauhan (698) was 28th as the Indian compound men's team totalled 2112 points to bag the second spot behind USA.

LAKSHYA, SRIKANTH REACH 2ND ROUND AT INDONESIA OPEN

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jakarta, June 14: Commonwealth Games champion Indian shuttler Lakshya Sen and compatriot Kidambi Srikanth eased into the second round of the men's singles at the Indonesia Open World Tour Super 1000 event with straight-game wins over their respective rivals here Wednesday.

While Lakshya quelled the challenge of World No.11 over Zii Jia Lee of Malaysia 21-17, 21-13, Srikanth beat Guang Zu Lu of China 21-13, 21-19. But it will be curtains for either Lakshya or Srikanth in the next round as they will take on each other.

Another Indian Priyanshu Rajawat got a walkover from Kunlavut Vitidsarn of Thailand. Aakarshi Kashyap lost to second seed An Se young of Korea, losing 10-21, 4-21.

India's 2023-25 WTC schedule released

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, June 14: India will begin the 2023-2025 ICC World Test Championship (WTC) cycle with the upcoming tour to the West Indies in July and over the next two-year period will play some high-profile bilateral series against Australia and England among others.

India will travel to West Indies next month to play two Test matches in Dominica (July 12-16) and Trinidad (July 20-24). India have been finalists in the first two editions of the WTC, losing to New Zealand (2021) and to Australia (2023) in the final. The WTC 2023-25 cycle will begin with the Ashes, when England face Australia in Birmingham Friday.

After the tour to Windies, India's next WTC assignment will be on away shores against South Africa between December 2023 and January 2024.



ICC WORLD TEST CHAMPIONSHIP

Followed by that, India will host England for a five-match Test series in January-February 2024. They will then lock horns with Bangladesh in September-October 2024 at home and immediately after that New Zealand will visit the sub-continent for a three-match Test series in October-November 2024.

After those two relatively easy home schedules, India will travel to Australia for the Border-Gavaskar Trophy, a five-match series, against Australia between November 2024 and January 2025, which also marks

the end of India's WTC engagements.

Wasim Khan, ICC's General Manager of Cricket said: "This championship has invigorated Test match cricket, bringing context for players and fans, and a high level of competitiveness as teams battle it out to be crowned World Test Champions at the end of the two-year cycle."

"The big turnout out at The Oval over the five days and the incredible viewership levels across the globe for the final is testimony to the continued popularity of Test cricket."

The structure of the nine-team WTC remains intact with each side playing three home and as many away series over a two-year period culminating in the final of a one-off Test. The points percentage system used in the previous edition will determine the leaderboard with teams getting 12 points for a win, 6 for a tie and 4 for a draw.

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Shri Naveen Patnaik
Hon'ble Chief Minister, Odisha

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18 JUNE	INDIA	Vs	LEBANON
	7:30 PM		
	GROUP TOPPER	FINAL	GROUP RUNNERS UP
	7:30 PM		

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international

of the day quote

The support that we are providing together for Ukraine is now making a difference on the battlefield as we speak. Because the offensive has launched, and the Ukrainians are making progress, making advances

JENS STOLTENBERG | SECRETARY-GENERAL, NATO

China is willing to strengthen coordination and cooperation with the Palestinian side to promote a comprehensive, just and lasting solution to the Palestinian issue as soon as possible

XI JINPING | PRESIDENT, CHINA

The tagline for the India-US relationship, which I like the most, is a partnership like no other. And you may think, that this is what, good diplomats say, about every relationship. Believe me: this is unique!

TARANJIT SINGH SANDHU | INDIA'S AMBASSADOR TO THE US

SHORT TAKES

Cormac McCarthy passes away at 89

New York: Celebrated author Cormac McCarthy, an unflinching chronicler of America's bleak frontiers and grim underbelly, died Tuesday aged 89, his publisher said. The Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist who wrote "The Road" and "No Country for Old Men" -- both of which became feature films -- passed away at his home in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Over his nearly six-decade long career, McCarthy won major literary awards and gained international acclaim for a dozen sparsely written, soul-wrenching novels.

World's largest kidney stone

Colombo: A group of Sri Lankan Army doctors have set a Guinness World Record by removing the world's largest kidney stone, surpassing the previous record registered by Indian doctors in 2004. The stone, removed early this month at the Colombo Army Hospital, is 13.372 centimetres long and weighs 801 grams.

SKorea sues North

Seoul: South Korea filed a 44.7 billion won (\$35 million) damage suit against North Korea Wednesday for blowing up a joint liaison office just north of their border in 2020, which highlighted a revival of tensions between the rivals following the collapse of larger nuclear talks between the US and North Korea. The symbolic lawsuit filed with the Seoul Central District Court comes amid a prolonged freeze in diplomacy and growing concerns over North Korea's nuclear weapons and missile programs. South Korea had until this Friday to claim damages, when a three-year statute of limitations over the incident would expire.

China rebukes US

Washington: China's foreign minister Qin Gang urged the United States to stop meddling in its affairs and harming its security in a phone call with his US counterpart Wednesday, a tense preview to Antony Blinken's visit to Beijing expected in coming days. Qin told Blinken to respect China's core concerns, such as the Taiwan issue, in an effort to arrest declining relations between the superpowers, according to China's foreign ministry. Blinken stressed the need for communication "to avoid miscalculation and conflict" and said the US would continue to raise areas of concern as well as potential cooperation with China, the State Department said.



The United States wanted to paralyse our people with threats and sanctions, but it hasn't been able to do it

EBRAHIM RAISI | PRESIDENT, IRAN

COVID SURGE IN CHINA

China witnessed a more than fivefold surge in the number of people diagnosed with Covid-19 at hospitals across the country since April. The Chinese Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released data that shows, it has reached more than 40 per cent of those tested at the end of May



CYCLONE BIPARJOY Thousands of Pakistanis forced to flee

Pakistan is still recovering from losses caused by unprecedented floods last year in which more than 1,700 people were killed, and over 33 million people were affected

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Karachi, June 14: Thousands of people living in coastal towns and small islands in Pakistan left their homes for safer places ahead of the approaching Cyclone Biparjoy that is expected to make landfall in the country Thursday. Strong winds, showers and high tides heralded the arrival of Cyclone Biparjoy, which means disaster or calamity in the Bengali language. Classified as a "very severe cyclonic storm" of category 3, Biparjoy is expected to make landfall with winds of approximately 140-150 kilometres per hour (km/h) and gusts up to 170 km/h.

According to the latest forecast, the cyclone was expected to maintain a northward trajectory and then it was likely to re-curve eastward and make its landfall between Keti Bandar in Thatta district and India's Gujarat coastline. The areas likely to be affected included Thatta, Badin, Sajawal, Tharparkar, Karachi, Mirpurkhas, Umerkot, Hyderabad, Ormara, Tando Allahyar and Tando Mohammad Khan, according to weather experts. Information shared by the Sindh Chief Minister's House showed that out of the total vulnerable population of 71,380 residing in seven talukas of three districts (as

estimated by the government), a total of 56,985 people were evacuated by Tuesday evening. Of these, over 22,000 people were evacuated voluntarily. The evacuation took place in Keti Bandar and Ghora Bari, part of Thatta district; Shah Bandar, Jati and Kharochann, part of Sujawal district; Shaheed Fazil Rahu tehsil (district Badin) and Badin. Thirty-seven relief camps have been set up at different sites including government schools and colleges. The Pakistan Navy said that troops had evacuated 700 people from various villages of Shah Bandar and 64 fishermen were rescued from the sea.



Naval emergency response and medical teams had been deployed at coastal areas of Balochistan and rural areas of Sindh including Hyderabad, Shaheed Benazirabad,

Sukkur and Sanghar, while naval ships were maintaining vigilance in the open sea, it added. Climate Change Minister Sherry Rehman urged people to stay calm,

adding that the federal government was engaged with the Sindh and Balochistan governments while the prime minister was supervising risk mitigation and reduction efforts and had directed all relevant ministers to remain engaged on a 24/7 basis until the emergency is resolved. She said that the cyclone was "still on path". In view of the storm, the prime minister also ordered the establishment of mobile hospitals in the coastal areas to ensure adequate emergency medical assistance there. He also ordered for provision of clean drinking water and food at the camps.

Belarus welcomes Russian N-weapons

Russian President Vladimir Putin in March announced a plan to deploy tactical nuclear weapons in Belarus, Moscow's first move of such warheads outside Russia since the 1991 fall of the Soviet Union

REUTERS

Minsk, June 14: Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko has said his country has started taking delivery of Russian tactical nuclear weapons, some of which he said were three times more powerful than the atomic bombs the US dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. The deployment is Moscow's first move of such warheads - shorter-range less powerful nuclear weapons that could potentially be used on the battlefield - outside Russia since the fall of the Soviet Union. "We have missiles and bombs that we have received from Russia," Lukashenko said in an interview with the Rossiya-1 Russian state TV channel which was posted on the Belarusian Belta state news agency's Telegram channel. "The bombs are three times more powerful than those (dropped on) Hiroshima and Nagasaki," he said, speaking on a road in a forest parked with military vehicles nearby and some kind of military storage facility visible in the background.



We have always been a target. They (the West) have wanted to tear us to pieces since 2020. No one has so far fought against a nuclear country, a country that has nuclear weapons

ALEXANDER LUKASHENKO | PRESIDENT, BELARUS

Russian President Vladimir Putin said Friday that Russia, which will retain control of the tactical nuclear weapons, would start deploying them in Belarus after special storage facilities to house them were made ready. The Russian leader announced in March he had agreed to deploy tactical nuclear weapons in Belarus, pointing to the US deployment of such weapons in a host of European countries over many decades. The United States has criticised Putin's decision but has said it has no intention of altering its own stance on strategic nuclear weapons and has not seen any signs that Russia is preparing to use a nuclear weapon. The Russian step is nonetheless being watched closely by the United States and its allies as well as by China, which has repeatedly cautioned against the use of nuclear weapons in the war in Ukraine. Lukashenko, a close ally of Putin, told Russian state TV in the interview, which was released late Tuesday, that his country had numerous nuclear storage facilities left over from the Soviet-era and had restored five or six of them. He played down the idea that Russian control of the weapons was an impediment to using them quickly if he felt such a move was necessary, saying he and Putin could pick up the phone to each other "at any moment". Earlier Tuesday, he had said separately that the Russian tactical nuclear weapons would be physi-

cally deployed on the territory of Belarus "in several days" and that he had the facilities to host longer-range missiles too if ever needed. Lukashenko, who has allowed his country to be used by Russian forces attacking Ukraine as part of what Moscow calls its "special military operation", says the nuclear deployment will act as a deterrent against potential aggressors. Belarus borders three NATO member countries: Lithuania, Latvia and Poland. The 68-year-old former Soviet collective farm boss, who has ruled Belarus since 1994, making him Europe's longest-serving leader, said he didn't simply ask Putin for the weapons, but "demanded" them. Lukashenko has repeatedly accused the West of trying to topple him after mass protests against his rule erupted in 2020 in the wake of a presidential election the opposition said he had fraudulently won. Lukashenko said he had won fairly, while conducting a sweeping crackdown on his opponents.

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Record 110mn forcibly displaced across the globe: UN

RUSSIA'S WAR IN UKRAINE, REFUGEES FLEEING AFGHANISTAN AND THE FIGHTING IN SUDAN HAVE PUSHED THE TOTAL NUMBER OF REFUGEES FORCED TO SEEK SHELTER ABROAD, AND THOSE DISPLACED WITHIN THEIR OWN COUNTRIES, TO AN UNPRECEDENTED LEVEL

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Geneva, June 14: A record 110 million people worldwide have been forcibly displaced from their homes, the United Nations said Wednesday, branding the huge upsurge an "indictment" of the world. At the end of last year, 108.4 million people were displaced, UNHCR, the UN refugee agency said in its flagship annual report, Global Trends in Forced Displacement. The number was up 19.1 million from the end of 2021 -- the biggest-ever increase since the records began back in 1975. Since then, the eruption of the conflict in Sudan has triggered further displacement, pushing the global total to an estimated 110 million by May. Numbers likely to increase. Of the 2022 global total, 35.3 million were refugees who fled abroad,



with 62.5 million being internally displaced. There were 5.4 million asylum-seekers and a further 5.2 million other people -- predominantly from Venezuela -- needing international protection. "My fear is that the figure is

likely to increase more," said UNHCR chief Filippo Grandi in a press conference in Geneva. He said the swelling displacement this year was being increasingly met with "a more hostile environment, especially when it comes to refugees, al-

2 PIOs stabbed in separate incidents

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, June 14: An Indian-origin woman and an Indian woman from Hyderabad were stabbed to death in separate incidents in Britain, police said Wednesday. The victim has been identified as Tejaswini Kontham from Hyderabad in India, the Metropolitan Police said in a statement Wednesday evening. Meanwhile, Grace O'Malley Kumar, 19, was reportedly with fellow University of Nottingham student cricketer friend - Barnaby Webber, also 19 - when the as-yet-unnamed attacker is said to have fatally stabbed the duo in the early hours of Tuesday on the streets of Nottingham, central England. Nottinghamshire Police said the 31-year-old suspect, who remains in custody, then went on to stab a man in his 60s to death and also attempted to run over three people - still in hospital - with a van stolen from that man. Floral tributes have been piling up for both teenagers on the spot at Ilkeston Road in Nottingham city centre where they were found dead.

79 dead after boat capsizes in Greece

Death toll expected to rise in Greece's deadliest migrant shipwreck this year

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Athens, June 14: At least 79 people have died and dozens are feared missing off the coast of southern Greece after a fishing boat carrying migrants capsized and sank, authorities said Wednesday. A large search and rescue operation was launched in the area. Authorities said 104 people have been rescued so far following the nighttime incident some 75 kilometres southwest of Greece's southern Peloponnese region. Four of the survivors were hospitalised with symptoms of hypothermia. It was unclear how many passengers might remain missing at sea after the Greek coast guard reported 79 dead. Six coast guard vessels, a navy frigate, a military transport plane,



an air force helicopter, several private vessels and a drone from the European Union border protection agency, Frontex, were taking part in the ongoing search. The Italy-bound boat is believed to have sailed from the Tobruk area in eastern Libya. The Italian coast guard first alerted Greek authorities and Frontex about the approaching vessel on Tuesday. On Sunday, 90 migrants on a US-flagged yacht were rescued in the area after they made a distress call. Separately Wednesday, a yacht with 81 migrants on board was towed to a port on the south coast of Greece's island of Crete after authorities received a distress call.

FIRST-EVER NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY Germany calls Russia biggest threat

The document provides an overview of Berlin's foreign policy, which has shifted towards prioritising security more over economic interests in the year-and-a-half since Russia's invasion of Ukraine

REUTERS

Berlin, June 14: Germany announced its first National Security Strategy Wednesday, calling Russia the biggest threat to Europe and warning about growing rivalry with China as Beijing tries to use its economic might to achieve political goals. "This is a major change being carried out by us in Germany in how we deal with security policy," moving away from military strategy alone and towards an integrated security concept, Chancellor Olaf Scholz said at the presentation of



the document. The plan also aims to ensure a more cohesive cross-ministry approach to security, although the government was unable to agree on

the creation of a National Security Council due to disagreements within Scholz's three-way coalition over where it should be housed. One of the few specific pledges made in the strategy however refers to military preparedness. Days after Russia's invasion in February 2022, Scholz made a speech heralding a "turning of an era" or "Zeitenwende" in which he said Germany from now on would invest more than 2% of economic output on defence after years of resisting pleas from NATO allies to do so. China is increasingly threatening regional stability and international security as it seeks to exert its economic power to reach political goals and assert its regional hegemony, the document said, reflecting Germany's toughening stance on its top trade partner.

SECRET DOCUS CASE Not guilty: Trump

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Miami, June 14: Donald Trump denied dozens of criminal counts of willfully mishandling US government secrets and scheming to prevent their return, in a historic first appearance Tuesday in federal court. It was the former president's second arraignment as he battles a deluge of legal threats, coming just 10 weeks after he was charged with a string of felonies in Manhattan over hush money payments to a porn star. Trump appeared before a judge in Miami to be formally presented with 37 charges brought by the government following a special counsel probe that opened after an FBI raid of his Florida mansion last August. "We are certainly entering a plea of not guilty," Todd Blanche, his attorney, told the hearing. Donald Trump can continue his campaign for another term in the White House even as the beleaguered former US president has been indicted for illegally retaining classified government documents after leaving office in 2021.