

United Nations, June 20: China Tuesday blocked a proposal by India and the US at the United Nations to designate Pakistan-based Lashkare-Taiba (LeT) terrorist Sajid Mir, wanted for his involvement in the 26/11 Mumbai terror attacks, as a global ter-

Beijing blocked the proposal that had been moved by the US and co-designated by India to blacklist Mir under the 1267 Al Qaeda Sanctions Committee of the UN Security Council as a global terrorist and subject him to assets freeze, travel ban and arms embargo.

In September last year, it was learnt that China had put a hold on the proposal to designate Mir at the UN. Beijing has now blocked the proposal.

Mir, believed to be in his mid 40s, is one of India's most wanted terrorists and has a bounty of USD 5 million placed on his head by the US for his role in the 26/11 Mumbai terror attacks.

In June last year, Mir was jailed for over 15 years in a terror-financing case by an antiterrorism court in Pakistan.

Class XI admission extended till June 26

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, June 20: The deadline for submitting online application for admission into Class XI in state's higher secondary schools through the Student Academic Management System (SAMS) has been extended from June 20 to June 26, the School and Mass Education (S&ME) department said Tuesday

According to a notification issued by the S&ME department, the first selection merit list will be published July 2 instead of June 28. Similarly, the first phase of admission of students will commence July 3 and continue till July 8, the notification

The second selection merit list will be published July 16 and the admission process will be completed by July 19, it said.

Likewise, the online spot admission will commence July 17 and continue till July 27.

However, the classes will begin as per the schedule – July 29.

Ram Charan, Upasana blessed with baby girl

WISHES POUR IN

Yatra of Lord Jagannath, I extend

On the occasion of the

commencement of the Rath

my heartiest congratulations

and best wishes to all the

countrymen, especially the

devotees of Lord Jagannath

Rath Yatra greetings to

and spiritual enrichment

NARENDRA MODI | PM

pave the way for the

NAVEEN PATNAIK | CM

DROUPADI MURMU | PRESIDENT

everyone. As we celebrate this

journey of Lord Jagannath fill

With the blessings of the Lord

and your cooperation, let us

development of New Odisha

sacred occasion, may the divine

our lives with health, happiness

Hyderabad, June 20: RRR star Ram Charan and wife, entrepreneur Upasana Kamineni became parents to their first child, a baby girl, Tuesday morning.

Both the mother and the baby are doing well, said the hospital, where Upasana was admitted Monday.

"Miss Upasana Kamineni and Ram Charan Konidela had a baby girl on 20th June 2023, at Apollo Hospital Jubilee Hills -Hyderabad. The baby and mother are doing well," the hospital said

Telugu megastar Chiranjeevi

On Tuesday, the megastar, who earlier visited Ram, Upasana and the baby girl in the early morning hours at the hospital, took to Twitter to share his joy and send blessings to the baby girl

and proud parents.

@AlwaysRamCharan & @upasanakonidela and us grandparents, Happy and Proud!!"

Chiranjeevi along with his wife Surekha were among the first to reach the hospital and congratulate the couple.

Actor Jr NTR took to Twitter to congratulate Ram Charan and Upasana. "Welcome to the parents club. Every moment spent with the baby girl will be an unforgettable memory for a life time. May God bless her and you all with immense happiness," he wrote.

Ram and Upasana have been married for 11 years and are ab-

Ram and Upasana have been married for 11 years and are elated with the arrival of their first baby

solutely elated with the arrival of their first baby.

Meanwhile, on the work front Ram would be seen in the upcoming movie tentatively titled 'RC 15' which is set to release next year.

Ram, 38, and Upasana, 33, announced their pregnancy in December.

The couple tied the knot in 2012 after dating for years.



platoons (one platoon

comprising 30 personnel) of police of both the state and central government deployed to look after law and order, and

special trains to Holy City of

lakh drinking water bottles besides numerous public water fountain points for providing relief to devotees from heat and

prevent incidents of drowning

dedicated teams stationed to avert fire mishaps

RREGULAR by MANJUL

If surrounded by problems, you

should do yoga. By the time you finish, problems will be over

SENSEX **63327.70** 159.40

18816.70

VARIATION

61.20

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MARKET WATCH

FURO

GOLD

WEATHER

SILVER

LAKHS WITNESS RATHA JATRA

POST NEWS NETWORK

Puri, June 20: Braving hot and humid weather, over 10 lakh devotees thronged the seaside town of Puri to catch a glimpse of Lord Jagannath and His siblings – Lord Balabhadra and Devi Subhadra – on chariots as the deities embarked on a nineday annual sojourn to their aunt's place – Gundicha Temple here,

Chanting of 'Hari Bol', clanging of cymbals and blowing of conch rented the air as the sibling deities came out of Srimandir sanctum sanctorum in ceremonial procession (Pahandi) through the 22 steps to the Lions' Gate, where the three chariots were parked to

take them to Gundicha Temple. As per the tradition, Shankaracharya Swami Nischalananda Saraswati paid obeisance to the deities on their

chariots. Puri Gajapati Dibyasingha Deb performed the ceremonial sweeping (Chhera Panhara) on the chariots.

Later, servitors removed the wooden ladder (Charamala) and installed the wooden horses on the chariots for the deities to embark on their nine-day annual sojourn.

Governor Ganeshi Lal and Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik symbolically started the car fes-Completion of rituals much be-

fore time paved way for the hour ahead of the schedule. Pulling of the chariots commenced at 3:05pm. Lord

Balabhadra's Taladhwaja chariot was the first to be pulled, followed by Darpadalana chariot of Devi Subhadra, and then rolled Nandighosha, the chariot of Lord Jagannath.

Gongs and cymbals beat in

Nandighosha halts at Balagandi and Darpadalana at Bada Sankha, while Taladhwaja réaches

Gundicha Temple

unison as devotional fervour reached a crescendo. Many danced with joy and sang devotional songs as the chariots

moved toward their destination. Though it was scheduled earlier that all the chariots will reach the destination - Gundicha Temple – by 6pm, only Lord Balabhadra's Taladhwaja could reach the destination, while Devi Subhadra's Darpadalana remain stranded near Bada Sankha (about 200 metres from the destination) by 8pm. Lord Jagannath's Nandighosha chariot was stationed near Balagandi Square. The two chariots will be pulled to Gundicha Temple Wednesday morning.

Elaborate arrangements have been made for smooth conduct of the annual car fest.

Around 180 platoons (one platoon comprises 30 personnel) of police of both state and Central governments have been deployed to look after law and order, crowd management, and other such is-

weather conditions, the administration procured 40 lakh water bottles for distribution among devotees free of cost. A large number of water sprinklers were used to cool the atmosphere.

Special wards were created at Puri district headquarters hospital for treatment of heat-affected devotees.

With 5 onboard, Titanic tourist sub goes missing

Boston, June 20: A submersible taking five wealthy tourists to visit the site of the Titanic wreckage in deep waters off the coast of Canada was missing for a third day Tuesday, as US and Canadian ships and planes swept a huge area trying to find the

One pilot and four passengers were on board the submersible that went missing Sunday, the US Coast Guard said, adding the vessel could stay underwater for up to 96 hours, although it was unclear if it had resurfaced but was unable to communicate.

Those aboard the submersible called Titan, the highlight of a tourist expedition that costs \$250,000 per person, included British billionaire Hamish Harding – who collaborated with the Indian government to reintroduce eight wild cheetahs from Namibia to India—and Pakistani businessman Shahzada Dawood with his son Suleman.

The 77-year-old French explorer Paul-Henri Nargeolet and Stockton Rush, founder and CEO of the vessel's US-based operating company OceanGate, were also reported to be on board.

"We are very grateful for the

concern being shown by our col-

leagues and friends and would



like to request everyone to pray for their safety," Dawood's family said Tuesday.

US and Canadian ships and planes began swarming the area Monday about 900 miles (1,450 km) east of Cape Cod, some dropping sonar buoys that can monitor to a depth of 13,000 feet (3,962 metres), US Coast Guard Rear Admiral John Mauger said.

'We are deploying all available assets to make sure that we can locate the craft and rescue the people on board," he told reporters Monday. "It is a remote area and it is a challenge to conduct a search in that remote area." He said officials had asked commercial vessels to help.

The wreckage of the Titanic that sank in 1912 after hitting an iceberg lies at about 12,500 feet (3,810 metres). The Titan submersible usually takes two hours to descend to the wreck.

OceanGate Expeditions, the private company that operates the submersible, said it was 'mobilizing all options' to rescue those aboard the Titan.

BALASORE TRAGEDY CBI grills signal JE for 6.5 hours

POST NEWS NETWORK

Balasore, June 20: Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) officials Tuesday grilled Soro Section Signal Junior Engineer (JE) Amir Khan for a marathon 6.5 hours in connection with the triple train mishap near Bahanaga Bazar Station in Balasore district June 2.

The central investigating agency had sealed the rented house of Khan at Kamarpur in Soro after a raid Monday.

A six-member CBI team opened the house Tuesday in the presence of Khan and verified the papers and documents inside.

There the sleuths interrogated Khan for a marathon 6.5 hours regarding the train mishap. They also verified his bank accounts. Later, they took him into custody and some officials docu ments along with them. Khan and his family mem-

bers were not present at the house during the raid Monday. However, neither the CBI

team nor Khan spoke about the interrogation to media present

Meanwhile, South Eastern Railway refuted claims that one of its Signal JE was missing after interrogation by CBI in connection with the train tragedy.

in the medical bulletin.

Konidela, the father of 'RRR' star Ram Charan, is on cloud 9 with the arrival of Ram and Upasana's baby girl.

He tweeted, "Welcome Little Mega Princess. You have spread cheer among the Mega Family of millions on your arrival as much as you have made the blessed parents







eisure



TOM CRUISE GETS EMOTIONAL AT **MISSION IMPOSSIBLE-7 PREMIERE**

Actor Tom Cruise got emotional at Mission: Impossible - Dead Reckoning Part One's world premiere in Rome. Speaking to media about his film, Cruise said cinema 'bridges walls, it breaks them down and allows people to be able to share an experience'.

SASHA CALLE KEEN TO RETURN AS SUPERGIRL

American Superhero film The Flash has received positive response for its cast and storyline. One of the actors who was acclaimed by critics and fans alike is actress Sasha Calle for her portrayal of Kara Zor-El or Supergirl. She has now expressed her desire to return as Supergirl.





GaneshaSpeaks.co™ accuracy • reliability • trust 🚨

You can make a difference to others' lives. Considerate and thought ful, today, you will be treasured more than ever as a boss, colleague, parent or beloved. Utilise this exchange of energy to sort out difficult issues. Ganesha gives a thumbs up to mega projects

TAURUS

Ganesha sees you taking a day off from your work and immersing your self in domestic activities. A lot of time will be spent blissfully with your family folk chatting away or doing this and that. The idea of getting your interiors redone and give your house a new look will surely occur to you.

GEMINI

There is a likelihood of some household disturbance cronning up today. Your family members could make a lot of demands from you. You may feel angry because of your inability to meet all their needs and wants. Unexpected expenses are also indicated. You need to control your spending, says Ganesha

CANCER

Watch out for winds of change and ac accordingly Ganesha warns you of drowning in a strong current. Your task will be easier if you adjust to circumstances. Fun and entertainment are today's password. In the social secto business, you will have success. This is the right time to enhance social prestige

You are advised to be more attentive to your work today. You will try to do the best work possible by putting in your maximum efforts. However, the results might turn out to be lower than your expectations. You need to be wary of excessive expens es or financial loss today.

VIRGO

Family affairs will predominate today. They will even control your thoughts to the exclusion of everything else. Things will look up on the business front. You may spend time relaxing in the evening. Ganesha says a trip to a place of worship

Ganesha says you will give

more importance to your member. There may be news from abroad regarding the health of a close family member, which may disturb you today. Do maintain your mental balance today and remember that this too shall pass.

SCORPIO A cloud of emotions sur-

rounds you today and you would like to spend the entire day in introspection and self-analysis. You will try to raise your bar at professional level. Your far sightedness and capability to understand human psychology promises a leader in you, says Ganesha.

SAGITTARIUS

Tough times do not last, but tough people do, remember this fact and move ahead in life. Try to make the complicated life simpler by your optimistic approach. Speak up when it is required and don't get bogged down by unnecessary pressure.

CAPRICORN

You will have heard of many emotional fools who let sen-timents rule their lives. Try not be one of them, and if it's too difficult a task, at least pretend not to be one of them, for Ganesha says going by your feelings can leave you at a low ebb. In other words, your feelings can come in the way of your success.

AQUARIUS

You know how to examine the nuts and bolts of every assignment or project, and it consumes your resources to a great extent. But, like a stitch in time saves nine, your meticulous planning minimises the chances of a loss or a failure, feels Ganesha.

PISCES

You could find yourself reestablishing contact with long lost friends abroad, pos sibly on matters of business. You will also likely find yourself attending social events. There is a possibility that those who are unmarried, may find their match in these social settings. Long term personal or business relationships will likely be established today, says Ganesha.



talent &

into the film industry. When asked on launching an outsider and newcomer, the Dhaakad actress said "Yes I'm launching a new-

bringing talent and outsiders into the film industry. I want to work with Avneet Kaur again but I haven't

of their brands, events and films for the rest of their life" Kangana mentioned that she doesn't want them to bow down and come to her or control their life. On launching Avneet, she said, "She has all my love and blessings and is completely free to follow her dreams. Also in future whoever I

tice with any newcomers, and to take up a huge percentage

lives and career. Nawazzuddin Siddiqui and Avneet Kaur will be collaborating for the first time on the quirky love story *Tiku* Weds Sheru which will stream on Prime video.

launch, will never ever try to control their



not focusing on capitalism, I'm focusing on genuinely done any three films contract which is a very common prac-



Mumbai: Actor Rashmika Mandanna has penned a long note for the team of her upcoming film Animal. Taking to Instagram Stories Tuesday, Rashmika heaped praises on her film's co-star, actor Ranbir She wrote, "20/6/2023. Dear

diary, I want to share about my recent experiences. After a night shoot, I returned to Hyderabad and will soon begin working on Pushpa 2. But before that, I want to express my love for the #Animal set and my excitement to work with the entire team. The Pushpa actress

wrote, "Rkaaaaaaay. I think initially because he is #ranbirkapoor, I was a super nervous but my god!! Our little cret

god has

taken his

really

him perfect ya..Brilliant actor (green check mark emoji) Amaaaaazing human - (green check mark emoji) Everything else - (green check mark emoji) Crazy no? Love it.. but what a beautiful human he is ya..I only wish the best for him for life and woahhhh...wait! Haveeeee to say this, RK in Animal is (bomb emoji). I don't think people are ready for him yet but

the release is coming soonnnn.." On the work front Rashmika will be seen in Animal and Pushpa 2.



Sayani used to sit in gay bars every day

Mumbai: Actor Sayani Gupta feels glad to see that Indian audience has evolved over the years and started negating the stigma around LGBTQIA+ content in films and shows. However, she is quick to mention that she didn't not care about the acceptance of the audience when she played actor Kalki Koechlin's love interest in Margarita With A Straw (2013) On whether she did any additional research or prepa-

ration to play a homosexual character, Sayani reveals, "I went to New York and I used to go and sit in gay bars every day. I did it for two weeks and it was very weird. It was very eye opening for me and a bit of a new thing. There were things that I was seeing and learning for the first time. It was extremely educational, not just in terms of what is possible, but how free the world can be. We as people have to be empathetic and mindful of becoming more and more inclusive.

Looking back, the actor is somewhat happy to see things in the last one decade since her film released. Nowadays, the younger as well as the older generation is becoming much more aware, open, and inclusive. We are walking in the right direction, we haven't started running yet. But walking is important so you can run," the actor shares metaphorically.

Adipurush writer triggers fresh row -

Mumbai: Adipurush has been receiving a lot of flak for its dialogues, portrayal of Gods in a loose manner, inaccurate facts, and many more things which can be counted. Om Raut and his team have been constantly defending their film making more blunders, and one more feather has been added to their cap, with writer Manoj Muntashir making some further claims on his film.

A clip has been going viral on the internet where Manoi Muntashir, decided to explain his Hanuman from the film. While talking to a channel, the writer said, "Hanuman was a devotee not a God. He could not have intellectual conversations like Lord Rama.' After this, furious netizens erupted

on social media. A user wrote, "Manoj has gone mad,

nd needs treatment." One more user shared a meme featuring Jethalal which said, "Chup Ho Jaa Saatvi Fail"

Another user wrote, "Good morning to all Hanuman bhakts except fraud



Manoj Muntashir who thinks that_

Earlier, in an interview the writer claimed that Adipurush was made for today's generation since there was nothing made on our real superheroes for a long and he was worried that today's kids will forget our superheroes like Ram, Hanuman, and Angad over Captain

PEANUTS



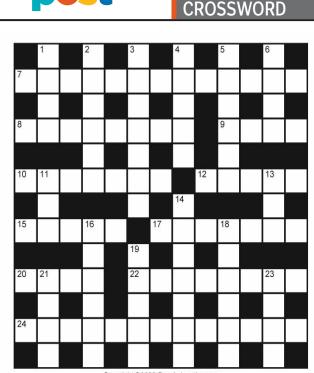
CALVIN AND HOBBES



BREVITY



FUN POST



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seeds

20 Mercedes

follower

22 Sweater type

financial gain

24 Exploit for

17 Sprinkle, like

Across

- 7 When the camel and the straw meet (8,5)
- 8 Mexican pepper
- 9 Toy on a string (2-2)
- 10 Dakar locale 12 School
- assignment 15 Lazybones
- Down
 - 2 Appetiser

(4,3)

- 1 Ionian gulf 3 Sage, e.g.
- 18 Pirouettes 19 Disdain
 - 21 Cupid, to the Greeks 23 In addition

4 Ice house

e.g.

6 Jealousy

11 Terminus

tool 14 Biting

13 Lumberjack's

16 Skin disorder

5 Sea anemones,

Hanuman ji is not a God."

America and Hulk.

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.

7			8			5	9	4
			25		d		1	95
	3			4	6			7
				6		3		
9	4				5	8	2	Se
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	8			3	1			Se
3							7	

SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

SUDOKU

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

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



Ratha Jatra special



THE JUGGERNAUT ROLLS ON

Ratha Jatra festivities reached its zenith as the breathtakingly massive chariots of Lord Jagannath and his siblings rolled on Grand Road in Puri, Tuesday. The clinking of the bronze temple bells synced perfectly with the electrifying atmosphere as the deities began their 9-day sojourn at Gundicha Temple. With the entire state getting overwhelmed with devotion, **Orissa POST** picks up some of the amazing moments of the opening day













Governor Ganeshi Lal, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik and Forest, Environment and Climate Change Minister Pradip Kumar Amat releasing 'Odisha Review' in Puri



Gajapati Dibyasingh Deb performing Chhera Panhara on a chariot



Artistes performing in front of Srimandir



Srimandir adorned with flowers



Lord Balabhadra, Devi Subhadra, Lord Jagannath and Lord Sudarshan being carried to the chariots from the sanctum sanctorum of Srimandir through Pahandi procession











Vaishnaw announces ₹2cr for Bahanaga development



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 20: Union Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw Tuesday visited Bahanaga in Balasore district where the triple-train tragedy took place June 2 evening that killed 292 people and announced Rs 2 crore for the development of Bahanaga village.

Thanking the local people for rescuing the mishap victims, the minister announced Rs 1

crore from his MP local area development (LAD) fund and another Rs 1 crore from Railways funds for the development of Bahanaga village and the hospital

He appreciated and thanked the people of Bahanaga for the way they came out and worked in unison with the administration and the Railways on the day of the accident.

Talso had discussions with the people of the village about the done here. Accordingly, Rs 2 crore has been sanctioned for the development of the village and the hospital," Vaishnaw told

Speaking about the restoration work at the station, the Railway Minister said, "Almost all the work has been finished. Only signalling work is pending. It should be done within the next four days... I reviewed all the restoration work going on in Bahanaga Bazar station and interacted with the locals here. Whatever requests locals have made will be fulfilled soon.'

When asked about the progress made in the ongoing probe into the horrific train accident, he said, "Investigation into the incident is underway. An independent investigation is going

CBI and the Commission of Railway Safety (CRS) are investigating the incident.



ALWAYS AT SERVICE: Twin city Police Commissioner Soumendra Priyadarsi joins members of Bhubaneswar Bar Association as they distribute water bottles to devotees on their way to Puri near Tankapani Road in Bhubaneswar, Tuesday

14 injured, 82 faint during Ratha Jatra

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Puri, June 20: At least 14 people were injured during the pulling of Lord Balabhadra's Taladwaj chariot here Tuesday, officials said. The incident took place in the

afternoon when the Taladwaj chariot reached Marichikote They have been admitted to

Puri District Headquarters Hospital. "We have received 14 injured persons and one of them is critical," a doctor said.

Officials said a woman devotee fell down while walking in the crowd leading to a stampedelike situation.

Security personnel, however, soon brought the situation under control. Some of the injured were provided first-aid at the centres set up on Bada Danda before being taken to the hospital

Chariot pulling started at 3:04pm with Lord Balabhadra leading the procession riding Taladhwaja amid chants of "Jai Jagannath", "Hari Bol" followed by Devi Subhadra's Darpadalan chariot and Lord Jagannath's Nandighosh.

Around 82 people were given first-aid as they fainted due to excessive heat and humid weather condition.

CLASSIFIED

AFFIDAVIT

I, Saroj Kumar Paul, age 43 years, S/o- Prafulla Kumar Paul, resident Haripur Road, Holding No.613/C, P.O-Buxi Bazar, PS-Purighat, Cuttack-753001. That, my actual name SAROJ KUMAR PAUL (as per Aadhaar Card, PAN Card & Voter Card), which has been mentioned as SAROJA KUMAR PAUL in my 10th **HSCE** Certificate bearing Roll No. 47BA126. That, SAROJ KUMAR PAUL & SAROJA KUMAR PAUL in aforesaid documents i.e. one and same person belongs to my name.

I, Tabasum Ara Begum, W/o- SK Anwar Allam, residence of village Santa Sahi, Po - Tarakote, Ps -Korai, Dist-Jajpur, Odisha -755025, declare by this affid no- 274/2023, Dated -05.05.2023 that onwards I shall be known as Sayeda Tabasum Ara Begum for all future purposes.

recognition for Santhali

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, June 20: President Droupadi Murmu played a pivotal role in convincing then Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee to include her mother tongue Santhali in the Eighth Schedule in 2003 when she was a minister in the Odisha government, according to a new book. India's first tribal president,

who turns 65 Tuesday, went out of her way to plead the case for constitutional recognition to Santhali, City-based journalist Sandeep Sahu says in his recent book "Madam President: The Biography of Droupadi Murmu." Murmu did it all -- be it talking

to Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik numerous times or getting a resolution seeking the inclusion of Santhali language in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution passed at a meeting of the Tribal Advisory Council. However, what clinched the

deal for Murmu, minister in Odisha's BJD-BJP coalition government from 2000 to 2004, was her meeting with Vajpayee, says the

Murmu, now the 15th president of India, felt the matter needed attention at the highest level of the Union government and approached M Kharavela Swain -- the three-time BJP MP from Balasore constituency -- to facilitate a meeting with Vajpayee.

Accompanied by Swain and her private secretary Bijay Nayak, she met Vajpayee and presented



him a book titled "Santhali: The Base of World Languages" by Parimal Chandra Mitra.

"Thanks to Kharavela Bhai, we got an appointment with the PM in just 10 minutes... Vajpayee ji flipped through the book and muttered, 'Aacha (good).' He was very impressed when I told him that unlike most Indian languages, Santhali has no 'matras' (vowel diacritic). He assured me that he would ensure its inclusion in the Eighth Schedule," the book quotes Murmu. Six months later, Santhali got constitutional recognition with its inclusion in the Eighth Schedule.

In 2003, the 92nd Constitutional Amendment Act added Santhali to Schedule Eighth to the Constitution of India, which lists the official languages of India, along with the Bodo, Dogri and Maithili languages.

According to the 2011 Census of India, over 70 lakh people speak Santhali across Odisha, West Bengal, Tripura, Mizoram, Jharkhand and Bihar, besides parts of Bangladesh, Bhutan and Nepal. The Ol Chiki script, developed by tribal scholar Pandit Raghunath Murmu in 1925, is the official writing system for Santhali.

When Murmu ensured Car fest in Capital with much fanfare

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, June 20: As chariots of the three Lords were pulled by the devotees with much devotion and fanfare in Puri, various organisations and institutions of the Capital City also organised Ratha Jatra at several Jagannath temples, Tuesday.

Major among these Ratha Jatras were those organised at VSS Nagar, Old Town, Utkal University campus, KISS, Niladri Vihar and Laxmi Sagar.

On Utkal University premises, the festival was celebrated in the presence of students and vice-chancellor Sabita Acharya, who performed the Chhera Panhara ritual, after which the Rath was pulled by the university students.

At KISS Shrivani Kshetra, the Ratha Jatra was observed with the completion of religious ceremonies like mangala arati, mailama, tadapalagi, rosha homa, abakasha and surya puja in the forenoon. While the chariots were consecrated as per the prescribed norms, the ceremonial Chhera Panhara was performed by KIIT-KISS founder Achyuta Samanta.

At around 4:30pm thousands of devotees pulled the three chariots of Lord Jagannath, Balabhadra and Devi Subhadra up to the newly-built Gundicha Temple near the KIIT-Sikharchandi Road.

The atmosphere along the Ratha Danda near KISS was filled with devotees' religious



recitals and chanting of Jai Jagannath. The special thing about Ratha Jatra at Shrivani Kshetra is that the chariot of Devi Subhadra is pulled by women devotees. And in Shrivani Kshetra, during this nine-day festival, there will be 'bhajan samaroh' near Gundicha Temple every evening.

Similarly, residents of the Veer Surendra Sai Nagar observed their 16th Ratha Jatra this year with strict observance of all rituals, while at the Jagannath Temple at OUAT Colony in the Unit-VIII area, people celebrated the festival with much excitement as this year marks their golden jubilee. Managing trustee of the temple Ajit Kumar Kar said, "Though we use only one chariot, we try to incorporate all the elements from the three chariots of the Ratha Jatra in Puri.'

Followers at the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (Iskcon) temple at Nayapalli also celebrated the car festival in a big way with the three chariots being pulled by devotees from the temple front to 'Mausima Temple' in Unit-VIII.

OTDC Nimantran launches veg platter for Ratha Jatra BHUBANESWAR: In a bid to celebrate the festive spirit of

Ratha Jatra, Odisha Tourism Development Corporation's (OTDC) Nimantran restaurant here Tuesday launched a special vegetarian platter for the nine-day long annual car festi-The platter containing more than 15 dishes prepared without

onion and garlic will be exclusively served from June 20 to 28 at Nimantran Bhubaneswar at just Rs 549 including taxes. The menu is dynamic and on each day, during the festive period, Nimantran will serve a variety of authentic Odia dishes as part of this platter. Speaking on the occasion, OTDC chairman Lenin Mohanty

said, "Tourism department along with OTDC has been taking strategic strides over the years to popularise Odia culture, festival and cuisine among the masses. Through Nimantran, which is an authentic Odia-cuisine restaurant, a special vegetarian platter has been curated with an aim to popularise Odia 'Sattvik Cuisine' generally consumed by the masses during this nine-day holy festival of Ratha Jatra in Odisha. We invite the citizens of Bhubaneswar to join us in this effort towards popularising authentic Odia The platter containing over 15 dishes prepared without onion and garlic will be exclusively served from June 20 to 28 at Nimantran at just ₹549

cuisine."

On this occasion, a food tasting ceremony was organised which saw participation of more than 150 food bloggers, social media influencers and media personnel. The participants' views and expert opinions were taken so as to offer visitors a platter with an unmatched taste for the next nine days. Officer on special duty, Tourism, Ansuman Rath, company secretary, OTDC, Prashant Panda, divisional manager, OTDC, Ranjan Mishra and executive chef, Nimantran, Sanjoy Sarkar were also present on the occasion. It is pertinent to mention that

the restaurant won't be serving any non-vegetarian dishes during this period. The entire kitchen as well as the dining area was thoroughly cleaned while handling of any non-vegetarian ingredients has been completely prohibited in the restaurant till Bahuda Yatra.

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF YOGA

Yoga can help achieve better work-life balance: Experts

ARINDAM GANGULY & SMRUTI REKHA BARIK, OP

he International Day of Yoga is being celebrated across the world every year June 21 since 2015, following its inception in the United Nations General Assembly in 2014, with the primary objective to raise awareness about the holistic practice for promotion of mental and physical well-being.

Speaking on the 102nd episode of 'Mann ki Baat' Sunday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the theme for this year's Yoga Day as 'Yoga for Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' or 'Yoga for the welfare of all as one world-one

The theme embodies the essence of Yoga, which connects and unites everyone, said the PM. For the occasion, the PM appealed people to integrate Yoga into their lives and make it a part of their daily routines. On the occasion, Orissa POST speaks with experts about the

benefits of the practice and it can benefit the mankind Priyanka Singhdeo, a Yoga teacher and fitness expert says, "Yoga can be beneficial for working and married women in a va-

riety of ways. It can help reduce stress and increase feelings of calm and relaxation. It can also improve strength and flexibility, helping to keep the body fit and strong. She adds that regular yoga practice can help improve focus

and concentration, which can be useful for completing tasks and staying on top of work. "It can also cultivate a more positive outlook and create a greater sense of harmony in relationships with spouses and other family members. Finally, yoga can help to create better balance in work/life responsibilities, al-



lowing women to better manage their time and achieve greater work/life satisfaction,'

she says Sasmita Patanaik, another yoga instructor, says, "By definition we know Yoga reduces stress, brings calmness and improves energy. Its benefits don't differ between age, spirituality

etc. Before I started Yoga, I was feeling a kind of restlessness, too many thoughts running in my mind and my breath was too fast. I started practicing and after few weeks I experienced calmness of mind, structured

thoughts and no restlessness.' After that she started spreading the message to people around her and many have acknowledged the benefits after practicing. "Working ladies are able to handle the problems in a very composed way and they have been more empathetic in approach which has yielded more productivity and collaborations,' Pattnaik said. Amrit Pattajoshi, health ex-

pert says, "Yoga is the science of life, science of health and an art of living of special importance in today's era as it empowers us to discover ourselves. It not only cures problems but takes us on a path of positive health.

Yoga helps by developing immunity and achieving homeostatic balance for our body and mind, by strengthening the defense mechanisms and preventing diseases. It helps people recover from addiction, anxiety, depression, sleep and

Ranjan Patra, another Yoga

eating disorders.

instructor, says, "You can unlock your energy through Yoga. The word yoga means skill, skill to live our life, to manage our mind, to deal with our emotions. to be with people, to be in love and not let that love turn into hatred. Yoga is not a religion. Yoga is a science of well being and youthfulness, integration body,

mind and soul.' Yoga means to be in perfect tune; our body, mind and spirit are in absolute harmony with existence. When we fine tune ourselves to such a point that everything functions beautifully within us, the best of our abilities will naturally flow out of us, he adds.

He further explains, "When we activate our energies through yoga, we can function in a different way. If we bring in a simple yogic process and do a little bit of servicing everyday for our body and mind then we will function much better.'

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MANIPUR

Corruption whiff in Sambalpur canal renovation

Farmers allege use of sub-standard materials and misappropriation of government funds



Sambalpur, June 20: The renovation of various canals in this district has come under a cloud of suspicion. Many have alleged use of sub-standard materials in renovation while others pointed out that there has been rampant misappropriation of funds. All these complaints assume significance with the guard wall of Sasan canal collapsing at many places even after renovation.

Canals like Sasan, Humatail and Paramanpur, emerging from the Hirakud reservoir are being renovated and concretised for fair distribution of water to the farmlands. The renovations have been taken up from last year after the Odisha government sanctioned ₹123 crore for the projects.

The renovation of canals is being done under the direct supervision of Odisha Construction Corporation (OCC) while an agency from Bhubaneswar is

The renovation has to be supervised in a proper manner. Unless it is done so, government's money will go down the drain

DEBENDRA PRADHAN | FARMER

implementing the projects. However, farmers have alleged large scale irregularities and misappropriation of funds during renovation. They have lodged complaints with the officials of Irrigation department but their pleas are yet to be addressed. Farmers alleged that the officials are yet to take any action

regarding their complaints. Sources informed that the renovation of the three canals is being supervised by a junior engineer of the OCC and a technical team. However, they also did not have anything to say regarding the complaints.

Farmer Debendra Pradhan alleged that most of his clan is aware about the sub-standard work. At times they have even protested wherever work has not been done in a proper manner. He pointed out that despite

assurances from the agency that they will do the work in a proper manner, no concrete step has been taken.

Pradhan alleged that the shoddy work can easily be ascertained by the collapse of the concrete and guard wall of Sasan canal when water was released last year. He stated that proper supervision needs to be done, otherwise the entire money will go down the drain and the efforts of the government will be of no use. "Unless the canals are renovated properly, farmers will not get water for irrigation," Pradhan pointed out.

Farmers fear that once the authorities release water into the canals this year, the shoddy work of the agency will once again be exposed. They demanded a probe into the spending of the fund allocated by the government.

When contacted, an official of the Irrigation department said that it will conduct verification after completion of renovation and submit a report. He added that the implementing agency has been warned after complaints lodged by the farmers.

Sundargarh town water crisis a

man-made one, say residents

POLITICKLE by MANJUL

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, June 20: The water crisis in Sundargarh town could have been avoided with proper thinking. It is nothing but a man-made problem, alleged many residents.

The river Ib, the lifeline of Sundargarh and its adjoining areas, has gone totally dry now. Investigations have revealed that officials instead of solving the water scarcity are busy blaming one another. In fact June 4, the entire town went dry as the PHD stopped water supply. It said that the water table at the main intake well at Ranibagicha had become 'alarmingly low'.

Assistant engineer Nikunja Bilasini Kalo had then said, "We are trying to get water from 'Saitana Darah'. The situation is under control and normalcy will return June 5." However, the situation still remains grim and water scarcity is acute at many places.

We are not getting water for more than 15 minutes. The situation could have been avoided had the sandbag embankment been in place on river Ib, but no one did anything," alleged Sachin

Sundargarh Swabhiman Manch. Another person alleged, "Just because the MP, MLA and chairman all belong to BJP, the district administration did nothing though it was aware of the looming crisis." It should be stated that

Biswakrma, convenor of

Sundargarh MLA Kusum Tete earlier had informed that despite attracting the attention of the Collector on the water crisis issue, nothing was done. Earlier the Sundargarh Sadar

block authorities were erecting sandbag embankments. However, this time they declined to do so. The block officials pointed out that it was useless to spend money for the municipality when there was no benefit from it.

Chairman of Sundargarh Municipality, Tanya Mishra said despite all her efforts, officials of the Sadar block had refused to set up the embankment. "I knocked on all doors. I spoke to the Collector, the Irrigation department as the PHD said it is not their duty to create an embankment. Even I tried to speak to block officials, but no one listened," Mishra said. "It is not the duty of the municipality to look into the water supply, but even then as the chairman, I pleaded with everyone, but no one paid heed," she added.

Two-and-a-half years back the foundation stones of two barrages at Kopasingha and Kudabaga was laid by CM Naveen Patnaik. Of the two, the Kopasinga barrage would have solved the water problems faced by residents of this town. However, nothing much has happened since then on the projects.

Officials raze criminal's house

POST NEWS NETWORK

Marshaghai, June 20: The Kendrapara district administration and local police in a joint operation Tuesday razed the house of a hardcore criminal. The house belonging to Sajan Behera of Dhaniapada village, had been constructed illegally on government land, officials said. They added that a number of criminal cases have been registered against Behera at the Marshaghai police limits in the Sources informed that local

villagers had informed the district administration about the illegally constructed structure. Officials moved court and got the demolition order. Then with the help of the police, the house was demolished.

Jharsuguda, June 20: Schools

in this district have extended

the summer holidays by a day

and those in Sundargarh and

Bargarh districts by a couple of

days respectively due to the on-

going heatwave, officials said

Tuesday. Also the timings of the

schools in these three districts

have been revised, they added.

had announced that schools will

reopen June 21 after the sum-

mer holidays. However, for seven

districts, including the three men-

Earlier the Odisha government

POST NEWS NETWORK

Prime accused in duping US man held from Pentha

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rajnagar, June 20: Delhi Cyber police in a joint raid Monday with Rajnagar police nabbed Subrat Das from the Pentha sea beach locality in Kendrapara district. Das has been accused of defrauding an American citizen of rupees five crore through the 'Teamviewer' app. Das was produced before the Rajnagar JMFC court Tuesday and was taken on remand by the Delhi police for further interrogation. The accused Das is a native of

Chandanpur village under Rajnagar police limits in Kendrapara district.

Rajnagar police station IIC, Sreekant Barik said the laptop of US citizen Jose Antonio Coderch

tioned above, it had left the de-

cision on the collectors. Officials

here stated that schools (both

government and private) in this

district will open January 22 in-

stead of January 21. Classes will

be held in the morning only and

end around 10.00. Similarly

schools in Bargarh and

Sundargarh will open June 23.

Classes in schools of both the

districts will be conducted from

6.30am to 10am till further no-

tice, officials said. Decision of

changing the timing of classes will

be taken only after heatwave sub-

sides, officials added.

School summer vacay extended in 3 dists



had developed some problems. So he contacted a Greek company for repair work. Das and two of his associates contacted Coderch pretending to be employees of the Greek software company. They informed Coderch that his laptop had been hacked and asked him to download the 'Teamviewer' app.

Once Coderch did that, Das and his associates managed to hack the laptop and got access to the victim's bank accounts. The accused then allegedly transproximately ₹5 crore in Indian currency) to their own accounts and cut off all contact with Coderch. They were able to do so as Coderch had provided his account number to Das for making an online payment for the repair work.

Suspecting that he had been cheated, Coderch lodged a complaint with the Delhi Cyber Crime police station. During investigations, police found out that Das was staying at his inlaws place in Malliabuda village under Rajnagar police limits, by tracking his phone. A fourmember team arrived from Delhi and with the help of personnel from the Rajnagar police sta-

Rourkela nor'wester brings relief, misery

EXTENDED POWER CUTS, WATER SCARCITY HIT RESIDENTS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, June 20: Even though son brought relief to the residents of this city from the scorching heat, it also created a lot of misery. Residents welcomed the gusty winds and the rain that followed Monday evening, but then they did not know what was in store for them.

The entire 'Sector' area, the captive township of Rourkela Steel Plant (RSP), remained

under a lengthy spell of darkness as power connections snapped. Uprooted trees and branches blocked the roads and disrupted vehicular movement, but even then people were happy as temperatures decreased

The 'Sector' area, which is one of the greenest areas in this city, bore the brunt of the storm. Massive trees were uprooted near Ispat General Hospital. Sectors-19, 20 and four respectively. At many places trees and branches fell on electrical cables, leading to extended power cuts. At some places power was not restored till Tuesday morning. Luckily however, there were no loss of lives and damage to properties. Extended power cuts created hardships both in the slums and posh localities of this city. Water scarcity was noticed

at some places. However, RSP was quick to react to the situation and made the roads motorable keeping in mind the Rath Yatra celebra-



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RWP/CPRO/Advt/2023-24/33

OFSDP-II providing new ray of hope to tribals



POST NEWS NETWORK

Sundargarh, June 20: Collection and sale of forest produce in tribal areas of Sundargarh district is the main source of livelihood for people after agriculture. The poor and tribal traditional forest dwellers have been collecting varieties of produce like mohua flowers and seeds, Sal seeds, kendu leaf and bhuin neem for a long period and managing their livelihood by selling these products. Earlier due to lack of proper marketing facilities, these people however, failed to get sufficient monetary benefits.

Sources pointed out that due to

Trading of Sal seeds was launched by the Van Surakhya Samities (VSS) through OFSDP-II in Sundargarh forest division when thousands of families lost their livelihoods during the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020-21

excessive intervention of middlemen in villages, primary collectors and traditional forest dwellers were being forced to sell the forest 1,668 primary collectors got better livelihoods by collecting 8,291 quintals of Sal eeds

Record sales of the second largest forest produce after honey

Money going directly to the bank account of the primary collector

produce at rates below the minimum support price (MSP). However, now the second phase of the Odisha Forestry Sector Development Project (OFSDP-II) has created a new ray of hope for these tribals.

After the end of the mohua flower season, people usually have no other means of livelihood. Then collection of Sal seeds (Shorea Robusta) is the lifeline for tribal and forest dwellers. Every year in April and May, Sal seeds ripen and fall. Earlier local traders and middleman took advantage of the ignorance of the tribal collectors and fleeced them by buying the seeds at very low rates.

Hence the primary collectors slowly lost interest in collection of Sal seeds as they were not getting the right price for their labour. Trading of Sal seeds was launched by the Van Surakhya Samities (VSS) through OFSDP-II in Sundargarh forest division when thousands of families lost their livelihoods during the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020-21. At that time, many families managed to earn

their livelihood by selling 2,600 quintals of Sal seeds at ₹20 per kg to the Tribal Development Cooperative Corporation (TDCC).

This year, from the start of the Sal seed season, a large amount of the produce has been collected by motivating the primary collectors under each VSS level in Ujalpur, Lephripara, Hemgir, Sundargarh and Bargaon field management units of Sundargarh forest division. This has helped in reducing the unnecessary intervention of middlemen and agents while the primary collectors are benefitting as the money is directly being transferred to their bank accounts. The success achieved by the members of Sagarpali Vana Surakshya Samiti

in Ujalpur is a case in this point. A total of 1,668 families of 44 VSSs have so far sold 8291.31 quintals of Sal seeds with the continuous efforts and awareness of the members of partner organisation 'Sewak' and with the cooperation of the staff of the divisional and field management units. With a total cost of more than ₹1.65 crore as its MSP, it can contribute to the economic growth of many poor

tribal people and forest dwellers. When contacted, Gopal Chandra Shukla, an expert of OFSDP-II under Sundargarh divisional management unit informed there has been a bumper collection and more than 2.000 quintals sal seeds are available at the VSS level for sale.





इंडिया पोस्ट

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Not Much Expected

he much publicised US visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi beginning June 21 is supposedly about strengthening the two countries' mutually beneficial economic, defence and strategic ties. Both Modi and US President Joe Biden are also poised to face their respective electorate soon. Getting re-elected is extremely important for both. Not just for personal politics but also what they both think they stand for. This seemingly prompts the two leaders to showcase the visit and resultant trade and defence agreements as a high point of their foreign policy success so as to enhance their public ratings and influence the electoral verdict at home.

Containment of China seems to be the main driving force behind the visit. Both countries see their strategic interests converge in taking on China which has become increasingly expansionist and ambitious on the global stage. For the US, China is its biggest competitor in the spheres of economic and defence influence, while India has been embroiled in territorial disputes in the Himalayas since the encounter between Indian and Chinese military forces in Galwan of Ladakh in 2020 that left 20 Indian soldiers dead. China's close ties with Pakistan have also resulted in the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) as part of the Belt and Road Initiative that passes through a section of Kashmir occupied by Pakistan. This is an additional concern for India that may influence Delhi gravitating toward Washington.

Through its help to shore up India's economic and defence capabilities, the US hopes to enlist the former's support to tackle global challenges as part of its long-term interests. The US desperately needs to create a framework of deterrence to curb Chinese expansionism. From the example observed in Ukraine, the new US policy seems to have drastically changed from the past. Even as recent as Afghanistan, the US was mostly getting directly involved in wars that were fought on far shores. It is also possible that domestic pressures, both for the American leadership as well as its allies, is curtailing military intervention on foreign soil. Probably from that need was born Ukraine to contain Russia. Now with China too, it is possible that the West wants a proxy war led by Taiwan and India with Australia and Japan helping from the back. India therefore occupies an important position in this scheme of things of the US administration.

Against this backdrop, Biden will meet Modi on an official state visit in Washington D.C, which includes a South Lawn welcome, a state dinner, and an address to a joint session of Congress

The US had banned Modi's visit to the country for the pogrom against Moslems during Gujarat riots in 2002 when he was the state Chief Minister. But, things changed once he became the PM and the US accorded a red carpet welcome to him in September 2021, where he held a bilateral meeting with Biden. This is the miracle power of India as a vast 'market' and has nothing to do with policies on human rights.

The brouhaha over the visit might not be enough to push under the carpet criticisms against the Modi government over degradation of democratic values and free speech in India. The track record of Modi government in this regard is suspect in the eyes of many international bodies, including the prominent US Press watchdog Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ). In a statement timed to coincide with Modi's US visit, it said journalists critical of the Indian government and the ruling BJP have been "jailed, harassed and surveilled." Since Modi came to power in 2014, there has been an increasing crackdown on India's media, CPJ's president Jodie Ginsberg has said. The CPJ has urged the US administration to take up the matter with Modi during his visit so that India lives up to its reputation and a free and independent media can function.

WISDOM CORNER

The past, like the future, is indefinite and exists only as a spectrum of possibilities.

Any idiot can face a crisis - it's day to day living that wears you out.

The only thing worse than being blind is having sight but no vision

WORDS**WORTH**

Kettling

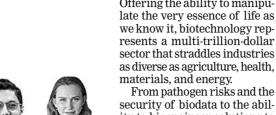
This jargon term of the British police first came widely to public notice during the G20 summit in London in April 2009. It was in the news again in late 2010 as a result of demonstrations in London against steep rises in university tuition fees. Demonstrators are kettled by herding them into a limited area and stopping them from leaving. As they are often constrained for many hours without food, water or toilet facilities, opponents of the method regard it as unlawful imprisonment. We might guess that the image behind it is of demonstrators starting to boil out of control, so they're contained in a figurative kettle. But the term puzzles experts because it seems to have no obvious English precursor. The nearest analogy, which isn't very close, is the US term kettling for the circling and soaring of a group of migrating hawks or other birds within air currents to gain height, which is said to resemble the swirling motion of water boiling in a kettle. The most plausible suggestion is that the word is from German. in which Kessel is the everyday word for a kettle or similar vessel, such as a central-heating boiler (it is sometimes translated as the more evocative cauldron). The derived verb einkesseln ("to enkettle") means to encircle or surround, principally in the military. This may come from an older sense of Kessel for a semi-circular ring of hunters driving game before them. The best-known example of the military sense is the Stalingrad Kessel of 1942, so called at the time by the German forces besieged in the Russian city. Two films, Enemy at the Gates of 2001 and Stalingrad of 2003, renewed interest in the battle among English speakers. German police employ the same technique as the British, calling it Polizeikessel. The term is older than the English kettling (it appears in the publications Die Zeit and Der Spiegel in June 1986 and may well be earlier). Might it be that sharing knowledge of the technique between the national police forces lead to kettling being created by the British police as a loan translation?

■ Killick

his word has been around in its literal sense of an anchor since the sixteenth century. To start with, it usually referred to a rock or big stone that a ship used in lieu of a metal anchor. A fairly modern example is in Jim Davis, by John Masefield: "In the shallow water near the beach, we dropped our killick". Nobody seems to know where the word comes from, though it has been argued it's from the Irish word killech for a wooden anchor (you might think that a wooden anchor would uselessly float, but it actually consists of a wooden frame enclosing a rock, an ancient type of anchor that's still used in places). The Concise Scots Dictionary, on the other hand, suggests that killick comes from Scots gellock or gavelock for the head of a pickaxe and that the anchor was given that name because a pickaxe is much the same shape as the conventional image of an anchor. The records show the word has been spelled in so many ways that it was clearly a colloquial or slang term that was passed on mainly in speech. It is now pretty much obsolete in British English, other than as a jargon term in the Navy, though it is known in Australia under the spelling kellick. A leading hand in the Royal Navy is nicknamed that because his badge of rank has a single small anchor on it. Those who know the sea novels of Patrick O'Brian will remember that Captain Aubrey's steward is called Preserved Killick - no accident.

FOCUS TECHNOLOGY

A BIOTECH ALLIANCE



Jafer Ahmad & Abigail Kukura

A NEW ERA IS

BEGINNING AT

A TIME OF HEIGHTENED COMPETITION **BETWEEN DEMOCRATIC AND AUTHORITARIAN COUNTRIES THAT APPLY DIFFERENT NORMS AND VALUES TO**

BIOTECHNOLOGY

ike electricity and artificial intelligence, biotechnology is poised to drive a general-purpose leap in human history. Offering the ability to manipulate the very essence of life as we know it, biotechnology represents a multi-trillion-dollar sector that straddles industries as diverse as agriculture, health, materials, and energy.

security of biodata to the ability to bioengineer solutions to our most intractable challenges, the coming era presents both considerable perils and immense opportunities to transform our world at both the molecular and global levels. And the new era is beginning at a time of heightened competition between democratic and authoritarian countries that apply different norms

and values to biotechnology. Fortunately, the United States and its allies and partners have a head start. According to Pitchbook, the US remains the world's leading originator and destination of biotech investments, with US-based firms raising \$466 billion in 2022 - roughly ten times the amount of Chineseorigin capital. Close to 90% of that US capital goes toward domestic investment, highlighting America's role as both a global innovation hub and a marketplace for leading-edge biotech.

As of 2022, this has resulted in the US being home to the world's largest number of biotech companies, nearly three times more than in China. The US government has also begun to set the strategic course for durable biotechnology leadership with the Executive Order on the Bioeconomy and the creation of the National Security Commission on Emerging Biotechnology and the Advanced Research Projects Agency for Health (ARPA-H)

Meanwhile, Europe is a world leader in biotech patents. The continent secured more than 40,000 health-related biotech patents over the past five years, and outperforms the US on biotech patents related to food, macromolecular chemistry, and environmental technology



Offering the ability to manipulate the very essence of life as we know it, biotechnology represents a multi-trillion-dollar sector that straddles industries as diverse as agriculture, health, materials, and energy

French DNAScript and UKbased Nuclera are leaders in producing "desktop" DNA synthesisers. And the UK and Canada have established meaningful national biotechnology strategies dating back to 2017.

But an increasingly authoritarian China is determined to lead the world in biotechnology by 2035. The People's Republic is investing heavily to address impending domestic demographic and healthcare challenges and even weaponise biotech innovations for military advantage. While total Chinese biotech investment is far below the US level, it now has the second-highest number of biotech companies listed in the Forbes Global 2000.

The implications for US national-security interests are farreaching, because collaboration and links between the countries' life-science ecosystems mean that US advances could also accelerate China's biotech development.

In the context of international competition, enduring leadership in this general-purpose technology cannot be left to chance. It requires sustained focus by the government, greater public-private collaboration, and a willingness to make strategic bets on our biotech future.

Given the biotech sector's unique nature, it's worth focusing on where the US and its allies and partners can coordinate efforts. As biotechnology's building blocks are inherently local and distributed, it is more diffuse, accessible, and interconnected than other technologies, offering distinct benefits and risks in the context of global tech competition. The US and its allies and partners should capitalise on these distinct benefits to work together more closely in facing a determined competitor like China.

First, because biology knows no borders, bioresponse capabilities must be both local and global. By creating a globally accessible information-sharing portal - a "Bionet" - to enable early-warning systems, the US and its allies and partners could enable rapid localised responses to biotech-related incidents.

Second, setting standards is crucial to gaining and sustaining leadership in any technological sector. The US and its allies and partners should work to shape industry and ethical standards toward democratic principles, respect for individual rights, and promotion of a fair economic playing field. They should also deprive strategic rivals of the opportunity to shape biotech standards in their interests. This requires coordinated and consistent engagement with the International

Standards Organisation, the OECD, and other relevant multilateral organisations to develop and advance common po-

Third, the US and its allies and partners should turn disparate genomic-data ecosystems into a strategic resource greater than the sum of its parts. They should consolidate open and proprietary datasets on human, animal, and plant genomes in a central biobank that is well-curated, interoperable, easy for researchers to access and use, and maintains strong privacy protections for human genetic data.

Fourth, the US and its allies and partners must improve their ability to attract and retain global biotech talent, including from China. They should update and leverage relevant employment-based, research, and investor visas to give priority to applicants with expertise in biotech, as well as supporting reciprocal biotech research fellowships.

Fifth, the US and its allies and partners should create a democratic biomanufacturing alliance to enable "design anywhere, grow everywhere" network effects, secure democracies' supply chains, and enhance geopolitical soft power. Here, the US should develop data-sharing agreements within existing and future alliance structures to enable shared access to an interface for local biomanufacturing capabilities.

Last but far from least, a baseline for global biotechnology cooperation must be established. Advances in biotech require cooperation and collaboration, sometimes even among competitors.

Harnessing the power of biotechnology requires the US and its allies and partners to work together to craft a shared vision that puts democratic values front and center, especially in an era of international competition with authoritarian countries

Jafer Ahmad is Director and Abigail Kukura is Associate Director at the Special Competitive Studies Project. ©PROJECT SYNDICATE

IN JEST THIS

Mock weddings don't go far enough



Melvin Durai

PRETENDING TO GET MARRIED IS MORE FUN THAN ACTUALLY **GETTING MARRIED**

've been to many weddings in my life, but I've never been to a mock wedding. A mock wedding is a wedding in which two people pretend to get married. Why do people organise mock weddings? Well, let me list just three reasons:

(1) Pretending to get married is more fun than actually getting married. There is no stress about impressing guests and no worries about marrying the wrong person. "So what if he never takes a shower - we'll be together for only an hour." (2) It may help you prepare

for an actual wedding. You get to experience a solemn ceremony that many brides and grooms experience only twice or thrice in their lifetimes.

(3) A mock wedding may help you realise the importance of making the right choice and not settling for just any wedding

The New York Times recently wrote about mock shaadis being organised at North American universities by students of South Asian origin. In one of these weddings, held recently at Columbia University in New York City, the groom, Bilal Nasir, wore a golden sherwani and arrived on a white horse. The bride, Samar Iqbal, wore a white gharara suit. They were students at different institutions and had never met before, so it was almost like a mock arranged marriage, except there was no mock dowry. (No mock fights between mock in-laws either.)

Many students attending the mock shaadi were thrilled to wear traditional attire and celebrate their culture. They joyfully danced to music from the Indian subcontinent, while wishing Bilal and Samar a lifetime of mock happiness.

Bilal enjoyed being a groom and seeing all his friends – both desi and non-desi – have so much fun. "Most people only get married once," he said. "I had the chance to practice.'

In case you're wondering, the "practice" ended with the wedding. There was no mock wedding night. Nor was there a mock honeymoon to a mock island in a mock ocean. That's too bad because the

wedding is usually the easiest part of the marriage, even if a lot of planning goes into it. What young couples – or even older couples – need to practice are mock scenarios such as these: (1) Mock mother-in-law visit.

The groom's mother visits the happy couple, wishes them well, and promptly takes over the kitchen. "My son is too thin after marriage," she says. "He is missing my cooking." The bride tries to avoid her mother-in-law's cooking and before long, she is the one who is too thin.

(2) Mock mother-in-law extended stay. The groom's mother decides to extend her visit from a few days to a few decades. The groom still considers her a guest, the bride still considers her a pest.

(3) Mock household chores. The bride and groom squabble over division of labour in the house. If she does all the cooking and cleaning, he's willing to do all the looking and leaning. (4) Mock anniversary. The groom forgets the anniversary of their mock wedding. The bride forgets he exists.

(5) Mock jealousy. The groom is jealous that the bride spends too much time with another man: her boss. He's young and handsome. "Do you want me to quit my job?" she asks. The groom shakes his head. "I want him to quit his job.'

(6) Mock bedroom activity. The groom is unhappy that there isn't enough activity in the bedroom. The bride comes to bed with a pack of playing cards.

(7) Mock parenting. The bride gives birth to a baby girl. The bride and groom have a huge argument on what her future career will be. The bride wants her to be a doctor, the groom wants her to be Minister of Health.

(8) Mock financial distress. The groom loses his job, their landlord doubles their rent, and they're forced to cancel their Netflix subscription. How will this marriage survive?

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, opinior and suggestions, preferably by email, to: edit@orissapost.com

rissapost B-15, Rasulgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

Diplomatic initiative

Sir, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has taken a major diplomatic initiative by proposing G-20 membership to the African Union. This is a big endeavour for various reasons. The next G-20 meeting will be held in September in New Delhi. This group is now led by India. It has previously advocated for developing countries' increased presence and strength in international forums. Even during its chairmanship of the G-20, it worked hard to make the group more relevant and effective by increasing the participation of developing countries. In this vein, it held the Voice of the Global South Summit at the start of the year to include poor and developing-country issues on the G-20 agenda. Most African countries attended this meeting, and the question of membership among these countries gained traction as a result. It is worth mentioning that just one African country, South Africa, is a member of this club, but the European Union has its own membership, along with five other European countries. This proposal from India is significant. For one thing, it at least pushed the issue to the forefront. Another critical factor is India's desire to gain permanent membership in the United Nations Security Council. India's desire is not hidden. Since the beginning, it has been known for bringing up the issue of small and developing countries in international forums. This has not only strengthened its image but also highlighted its ties to African countries. The African Union has permanent observer status at the UNGA, and the 54 African countries represent a sizable voting bloc

Abhijit Roy, JAMSHEDPUR

Well done Karnataka

Sir, Karnataka has done well to look for alternatives to provide free rice to BPL families in the wake of OMSS-Domestic restrictions. The Congress government has promised an additional 5 kg of rice to Priority Households (PHHs) under the Anna Bhagya scheme. The government was banking on the availability of rice under OMSS-D to buy the additional five kg required for the project. Chhattisgarh declared they would provide 1.5 lakh metric tonnes for only one month, but Punjab is ready to give extra rice. This must come as a shot in the arm for Karnataka.

NJ Ravi Chander. BANGALORE



TWOSTATES





WEDNESDAY | JUNE 21 | 2023 | BHUBANESWAR

Stop usage of banned nets: TN fishermen

The fishermen leaders called upon the state and central governments to take stringent action against those involved in using banned fishing nets that destroy the fish wealth

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chennai, June 20: Fishermen organisations in Chennai have urged the fisheries department to prevent the usage of banned fishing nets and high-powered Chinese motors during fishing by certain mechanised boats.

According to the fishermen association leaders, the usage of these are leading to a dwindle in fish wealth and many vessels were returning home empty handed or with meagre revenue



the sea.

Thankaselvam, a leader of the Fishermen Association of Tamil Nadu, said, "After the fishing ban was over, some mechanized boats went to the sea even as the authorities have not allowed fishing till June 20 due to bad weather. However they could get only a low quantity of catch in the range of 80 to 100 kg. This is much lower when compared to around 250 kg of catch which fishermen

used to get in earlier days. He said that the usage of banned fishing nets and Chinese high speed motors is leading to the dwindling of fish wealth in

N.J. Bose, President of the Federation of All Mechanised Boat Fishermen welfare association told media persons that the fish wealth has dwindled mainly due to the usage of banned fishing nets which destroys and damages the sea floor and coral reefs. This leads to a reduction in fish population.

The fishermen leaders called upon the state and central governments to take stringent action against those involved in using banned fishing nets that destroy the fish wealth.

Fishermen also said that the pollutants from big ships and dumping of waste was creating major problems for the presence of fish in the sea. The fishermen wanted the Government of India to create awareness of waste dumping in the sea.

Another factor is that most of the fishermen and fishermen leaders confirmed that there was a cartel in the market involving fish traders and middlemen who take the catch at a low price. This issue, according to fishermen leaders, could be resolved only with the direct intervention of the state government in the procurement of fish from the fishermen who bring it



Army jawans practice yoga on a bridge in Jammu

Rains damage Kharif crops in Kashmir No power cuts in

Srinagar, June 20: Incessant rains coupled with low temperatures in May have put Kharif crops, mainly paddy, in Kashmir at risk of getting wasted, farmers and officials said here.

The low temperature has resulted in stunted growth of the saplings of various food grains and vegetables, which in turn resulted in delaying the transplantation season from the fortnight spread over May and June to the middle of June this year. "We suffered huge losses this

season because of low temperatures and incessant rainfall. The farming activity started very late. Every year, we used to complete the sowing of rice saplings by the 15th of May but this year you can see it is June and we are still on it," Aijaz Ahmad, a farmer, said.

Ahmad is worried that the water level in paddy fields was still on the higher side. As per traditional wisdom, the trans-

plantation of the rice saplings has to be done before June 21, which marks the summer solstice in the northern hemisphere.

Ghulam Mohamad Dar, another farmer, said the water level this season is high due to excessive rainfall. "The plants which, generally grow in dry soil like gourd and pumpkin, are damaged. Farming started very late as we usually start sowing of rice saplings in the last week of May up to 10th or 12th June. This season saplings are also damaged," Dar said. Manzoor Ahmad Dar said the farming community faced a lot of difficulties due to erratic weather this spring.

"First, there was the shortage of electricity (for irrigation purposes) then rainfall caused havoc and fields are filled up with excessive water. We started seeding in early May but that was also delayed and we don't expect good crop this season because it was raining every day and that damaged seeds as well," he added.



Deputy Director Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) Mukhtar Ahmad admitted that low temperatures affected the germination of seeds."If we talk about the overall precipitation of this year from the month of January, we received two good spells ... during the month of May, usually the weather was cloudy and every

second day we received active spell of rain that filled not only precipitation but in some areas there was excessive rainfall that bought the temperatures down in the whole month of May." the IMD official said.

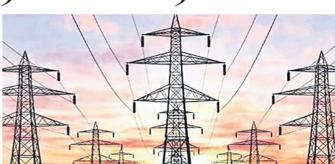
He said the May temperatures were recorded below normal which had adversely affected crop grows at a particular temperature during initial, mid and later stages (harvesting time) of the crop. In paddy, the early phase of crop the sowing of seedling in nurseries then transferred in large scale fields. That process of transplanting should happen up to 15th May but this couldn't happen till the end of May because of low temperatures and proper germination couldn't happen," he added.

The official said this can lead to a low yield in the paddy crop this season.

"The blossom period of horticulture crops like apple, peach, plum and pear was also affected due to hailstorms, which can also lead to low production particularly in Shopian and northwestern parts like Kupwara, Uri and in some areas of Baramulla and Hardwara," he said.

The officer said the horticul ture yield can be down by 30 to 40 per cent while the losses in paddy crop can be between 15

Jammu: JKPDD



Dozens of agitated residents Tuesday staged a protest in Talab Tillo area on the outskirts of Jammu against recurring power cuts, while frequent protests were also reported from different parts of the city over the past fortnight

The announcement came at a time when protests against the department over frequent outages were gaining momentum amid hot and humid weather conditions in the region where the mercury is hovering around 40 degrees Celsius

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jammu, June 20: Jammu and Kashmir Power Development Department (JKPDD) Tuesday said there will be no power curtailment in Jammu city, while the power cuts in rural and unmetered areas will be restricted to below six hours.

The announcement came at a time when protests against the department over frequent outages were gaining momentum amid hot and humid weather conditions in the region where the mercury is hovering around 40 degrees Celsius.

The JKPDD said its decision to go for no power cuts in Jammu city and restrict the curtailment below six hours in unmetered areas from June 20 was part of its endeavour to provide respite to the consumers from the scorching hot weather.

Dozens of agitated residents Tuesday staged a protest in Talab Tillo area on the outskirts of Jammu city against recurring power cuts, while frequent protests were also reported from different parts of the city over the past fortnight.

Almost all political parties including the Congress, PDP,

Apni Party, National Conference and National Panthers Party criticised the administration for its alleged failure to provide uninterrupted power supply to the consumers in the city and else-

A JKPDD spokesperson attributed the improvement in the power supply situation to certain recent developments in the power sector like J-K's own power generating plant i.E. 900 MW Baglihar HEP, which was generating at a reduced capacity due to low discharge of water in river Chenab, has now picked up and generating power at its full rated capacity.

Similarly, the power allocation from the Centre has increased by 200 MW from hydro generating stations located outside J-K from where the union territory imports power, due to improved generation in central sector hydro generators such as Naptha Jhakri, Koldam and Tehri, he said.

Additionally, there has been an improvement in thermal generation also by around 60 MW, leading to a higher allocation of power to the union territory, the spokesperson

Kashmiri Pandits bristling with anger



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jammu, June 20: Migrant Kashmiri Pandits living in government-provided townships here are bristling with anger over the Jammu and Kashmir administration's decision to levy electricity charges on them.

Hundreds of Pandits settled in the Jagti township along the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway near here staged a peaceful protest to demand immediate revocation of the order to levy electricity charges on In a recent order, the Jammu

Power Development Corporation Limited (JPDCL) directed charging consumers living in migrant camps for electricity consumption."We appeal to the government to reconsider its decision of charging electricity bills from the migrants languishing in different camps for the past 33 years, waiting for their return and rehabilitation in the Valley," All Party Action Committee Migrant Camps Chairman HN Raina said. Electricity bill at the migrant

camps was earlier covered under the security and relief measure

On May 23, the JPDCL issued an order to charge the consumers living in the camps for their

power consumption. Raina said, "The Pandits in the camps live on government relief and are not in a position to pay electricity bills... This order needs to be revoked." He also threatened to intensify the agi tation to press for their demand.

Electricity bill at the migrant camps was earlier covered under the security and relief measure

■ May 23, the JPDCL issued an order to charge the consumers living in the camps for their power consumption

Vijay Bakaya, general secretary of the Apni Party, slammed the decision to charge electricity tariff from the migrant settlers. He said, "These displaced people have been living in these camps for the last over three decades and, unlike many others, are not in a position to build their own houses because they are not financially well off."

He also appealed to the government to reconsider the move."They are those who subsist on relief of ₹13,000 for a family of four and free ration. Therefore, charging them for electricity consumption would be a great burden on their limited income and affect their daily

lives." Bakaya said. Sunil Pandit, a prominent social activist and an inhabitant of the township, said they have temporary quarters and ration cards. "I am not here by choice and the government has failed to ensure our permanent rehabilitation so far. Charging (us) for power bills will be a great in-

justice to us," Pandit said. He said they have already submitted a memorandum to Lt Governor Manoj Sinha and other officers concerned for revocation of the order.

Balaji to undergo surgery today

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, June 20: Arrested Tamil Nadu Minister V Senthil heart surgery at a private hospital here on June 21, Health Minister Ma Subramanian said on Tuesday, a week after the beleaguered DMK leader was advised a bypass surgery.

The surgery will be performed Wednesday, early on Subramanian said here. "Since the surgery has to be mandatorily performed on Senthil Balaji it will be done tomorrow," he said."We are in touch with hospital administration.. They are going to do openheart surgery early morning tomorrow," Subramanian added.

Balaji was arrested by the Enforcement Directorate in a cash-for-jobs scam last week.

He was initially admitted to a government hospital after he complained of chest pain but



was shifted to the private facility following a court order.

The government hospital had June 14 said Balaji had then undergone Coronory Angiogram which had revealed "triple vessel disease" and advised Coronary Artery Bypass Graft (CABG) surgery at the

'earliest Tuesday, Subramanian said his colleague was not aware of the "critical blocks" before they were diagnosed last week by

the government doctors

His family doctor as well medical experts from the ESI Hospital, referred to by the ED, endorsed it and said the sur gery was required, he added.

'Now the doctors (at Kauvery Hospital) are ready for the surgery," he said. Earlier, certain medicines that Balaji was prescribed earlier had to be stopped and only "5-6 days" from then could the surgery be done, the health minister said.

Mild quakes can prevent large disasters: Expert

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhaderwah/Jammu, June 20: The recent spate of mild earthquakes accompanied by aftershocks in Jammu and Kashmir's Doda-Ksihtwar region, particularly in the Bhadarwah Valley, has left residents

in a state of panic However, seismic experts note that these smallscale earth tually help prevent larger dis-

asters. Neeraj Sharma, head of the Institute of Mountain Environment at its Bhaderwah campus, said the continuous occurrence of small-scale earthquakes and aftershocks can release tectonic stress, thus preventing major disasters.

"Large tectonic plates, in-

cluding the Kishtwar fault and the Reasi fault, spread over hundreds of square kilometres in Jammu and Kashmir are very active. I believe the repeated earthquakes in the Bhaderwah region could be the

Neerai result of the Kishtwar Sharma, head of the fault, **Institute of Mountain** Sharma said. Environment at its Bhaderwah He campus, said the continuous also exoccurrence of small-scale pressed conquakes can ac- earthquakes and aftershocks can cern

about the release tectonic stress, thus Reasi fault. preventing major Unlike the Kishtwar fault. disasters the long-term stress $\,$ build-up in the Reasi fault is not being released.

"If the small strains continue to develop and release energy in the form of mild earthquakes up to an intensity of 5 or 5.5, then we can say that we are rel-



atively safe and the possibility of a larger earthquake is reduced," he added

The Doda district has experienced a series of tremors and aftershocks since Tuesday when the first earthquake of 5.4 magnitude shook the entire Chenab Valley. Ten tremors and aftershocks have been felt since then with the majority centred in or around the Bhaderwah Valley.

Numerous structures, including government buildings. schools, and residential houses,

have suffered significant damage due to these tremors. Struggling to cope with the frequency of the tremors, residents are resorting to the use of wooden poles to support roofs and ensure safety

Murtaza Ali Khan, a resident of Upper Dandi village in Bhaderwah, highlighting the difficulties faced by the affected families, said, "We are trying our best to support the cracked roofs with wooden poles. It is dangerous to reside in such a structure with a family but we have no other option as most houses in our neighborhood are in a similar state.'

Although the tremors have been of mild intensity, they have caused panic and brought back memories of the 2013 earthquakes when Bhaderwah Valley experienced 47 quakes within two months.

During that period, people were forced to seek shelter in the open or in tented accommodations for more than three months. Around 70 per cent of the residential structures had suffered partial damage. The people of the Chenab Valley remain apprehensive of a major tremor, partly due to a study conducted by US scientists in 2015, they said.

The study predicted the possibility of a major earthquake in Jammu and Kashmir that can endanger the lives of up to a million people, according to the Oregon State University study.



Students perform yoga at a swimming pool on the eve of International Yoga Day in Jabalpur $\,$



French President Emmanuel Macron and his wife Brigitte Macron wait for South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol and his wife Kim Keon Hee before a working lunch at the Elysee Palace in Paris



Racegoer Ines Hernandez arrives for day one of the Royal Ascot horse racing meeting at Ascot Racecourse in Ascot, England



Dutch Queen Maxima and King Willem Alexander, left, and Belgium's King Philippe and Queen Mathilde wave to the crowd from the balcony of the Grand Place in Brussels, as part of the activities of the Dutch Royals state visit to Belgium. The Dutch royals are on a three-day visit to Belgium



A vendor sells rain jackets on a rainy day at Mysore road in Bangalore



Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) working president Supriya Sule along with party workers protest to mark the anniversry (Gaddar Day) of then Shiv Sena leader Eknath Shinde's rebellion against the party that resulted in the fall of the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government, outside NCP office in Mumbai



German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, right, greets Chinese Premier Li Qiang in front of the Federal Chancellery before the reception with military honors for the German-Chinese government consultations in Berlin, Germany



Farm labourers plants paddy saplings in Jalandhar



national



The insensitive Modi government is anti-Dalit, antitribal, anti-backward class and anti-economically weaker sections that is reason why it is not filling vacant posts

MALLIKARJUN KHARGE | CONGRESS PRESIDENT

FLOOD FURY IN ASSAM

The flood situation in Assam was serious Tuesday with nearly 31,000 people still reeling under the deluge across 10 districts of the state, an official said. The India Meteorological Department has issued a 'Red Alert' and predicted 'very heavy' to 'extremely heavy' rainfall across several districts of Assam over the next five days





Today, there is no violence in Kashmir. Now, there is a demand from Pakistanoccupied Kashmir that they want to be a part of India. Nobody wants to stand with 'daridra' (penniless) Pakistan

YOGI ADITYANATH UTTAR PRADESH CM

I pray to Lord Jagannath for the souls of those who died in the train accident. I also pray for the peace and prosperity of the people of the world, the country, of West Bengal. May the Lord bless everyone with prosperity and happiness

MAMATA BANERJEE | WEST BENGAL CM



government started free yoga classes for the people of Delhi. About 17,000 people started doing yoga every day. Last year, they stopped these yoga classes. Who benefits from this? Should public welfare programmes like this be stopped? Yoga day for me will be the day when I will again start free yoga classes for my Delhiites

ARVIND KEJRIWAL DELHI CHIEF MINISTER

SHORT **TAKES**

CBI questions Sam D'Souza

New Delhi: The CBI Tuesday questioned accused Sanville alias Sam D'Souza in connection with alleged bribe demand of ₹25 crore from actor Shah Rukh Khan for not implicating his son Arvan Khan in the 2021 Cordelia cruise drug bust case, officials said. The agency had given a third notice to D'Souza last week to appear for questioning at its Delhi office. they said. He has not yet been guestioned by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) in the case which was registered by the agency May 12. D'Souza is listed as accused number 5 in the CBI FIR.

4 suspected UNLF militants arrested

Imphal: Four suspected cadres of the proscribed militant outfit United National Liberation Front (UNLF) were arrested in Thoubal district of ethnic violence affected Manipur, the Army said Tuesday. A 51 mm mortar, an anti-personnel bomb, was recovered from the four cadres.

Cong, BJP spar over rice supply in K'taka

Bangalore: The politics over supply of rice to Karnataka heated up Tuesday with the ruling Congress and the opposition BJP staging demonstrations in various parts of the state. The Congress staged protests in all district headquarters of the state against the BJP led Centre for allegedly denying rice for the Karnataka government's Anna Bhagya scheme. On the other hand, several BJP leaders including former CM Basavarai Bommai were detained while holding protests in some parts of the state against the Congress government's alleged failure to provide 10 kg rice to each member of the BPL family.

Dozen inmates hurt in jail brawl

Pune: At least a dozen inmates were hurt in a rioting that suddenly broke out Monday in the historic Yerawada Central Jail (YCJ), official sources said here Tuesday. The scuffle started over some minor unknown issue and soon erupted into a huge free-forall involving more than a dozen inmates housed at the YCJ - one the most famed prisons in the country.

WEST BENGAL PANCHAYAT POLLS

SC RULES IN FAVOUR OF CENTRAL FORCES

New Delhi, June 20: Holding elections cannot be a "licence for violence", the Supreme Court said Tuesday as it dismissed the petitions of the West Bengal government and the State Election Commission (SEC) challenging the Calcutta High Court order directing the state poll panel to deploy central forces across West Bengal for the July 8 panchayat

Several people have been reported killed in clashes in the run up to the July 8 polls, including some June 15, the last day for filing nominations, prompting the Calcutta High Court to order deployment of central forces across the state. Polling will be held in over 61,000 booths, many in sensitive areas.

In a setback to the state's TMC government, a vacation bench of Justices B V Nagarathna and Manoj Misra rejected the two petitions, observing "Holding election cannot be a licence for violence. Elections cannot be accompanied by violence.'

"The fact remains that the tenor of the order of the high court is ultimately to ensure that there is free and fair election conducted in the entire state of est Bengal since the state is conducting the said elections for the local bodies on a single date

Punjab Assembly passes

Bill to replace Governor

from Chancellor's post

Chandigarh, June 20: The

Punjab Assembly Tuesday

passed a bill to replace the

governor with the Chief

Minister as the chancellor of

state-run universities following

Addressing the House during

the debate on the Punjab

Universities Laws (Amendment)

Bill, 2023, Chief Minister

Bhagwant Mann said the West

Bengal Assembly too passed a

In December last year, the

Kerala Assembly also passed

a bill to replace the governor

as the chancellor of univer-

sities in the state and appoint

eminent academicians to the

Aadmi Party (AAP), the bill was

supported by the Shiromani

Akali Dal (SAD) and the lone

Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP)

ON APPOINTING DGP

The Punjab Assembly passed

a bill that appears to circumvent

the role of the Centre's Union

Public Service Commission in selecting the state police chief.

According to the amend-

ment bill, a state-appointed

committee will come up with

a panel of three Indian Police

Service (IPS) officers to be

considered for the post of the

Director General of Police.

The state government will

According to the current practice, however, the states

send the names of several el-

igible officers to the Centre's

The UPSC then zeroes on to

three officers, from which the

state government chooses one.

then pick one.

HOUSE PASSES BILLS

member of the House.

Apart from the ruling Aam

similar bill last vear.

top post.

AGENCIES

a brief debate.



OBSERVED THE TENOR OF THE HIGH COURT ORDER WAS TO ENSURE FREE AND FAIR ELECTION IN THE STATE

■ BENGAL INVARIABLY TURNS INTO A **CAULDRON OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE DURING ELECTIONS, AND OVER 20 PEOPLE** WERE KILLED AND SCORES OTHERS INJURED IN THE LAST PANCHAYAT POLLS IN 2018

and having regard to the number of seats which are going to the polls...," the bench said. It said the order of the high court does not call for any interference, and the top court is not inclined to interfere with any other directions issued by the high court with regard to holding elections to the three-tier panchayati raj institutions.

The bench said West Bengal is one of those states where democratic set up exists even at the lowest level and it is at the grassroots level that the elections are taking place. "But, at the same time, elections cannot be accompanied by violence. If per-

sons are not able to go and file their nominations or those who have filed their nominations are ultimately finished off, or there are group clashes, where is free and fair election?" it said.

The counsel for the state government said sometimes facts and figures are different from the impressions. Senior advocate Meenakshi Arora, appearing for the SEC, said the poll panel is aggrieved by two directions of the high court, including the one which says it will requisition central forces and deploy them across the state.

She said it is not within the jurisdiction of the SEC to requi-

sition and deploy central forces for the conduct of elections. "Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the SEC to conduct free and fair elections." the bench said, adding, "The question is, how are you aggrieved by the order? The point is this. You have yourselves requested for deployment of forces to the state government. Now, from where the forces come is not your concern. How is your SLP (special leave petition) maintainable?"

The bench told the counsel appearing for West Bengal that even according to the state, the police force, as of now, was inadequate to meet the situation and therefore, it has requisitioned police force from half a dozen states. The apex court said there has to be coordination among the security forces to ensure free and fair elections in the state

It said having regard to the past incidents, the high court dealt with the petitions filed before it and passed these directions. The bench noted the advocates representing the state and the SEC have contended that the high court's direction for requisition and deployment of central forces for all the dis-



MANIPUR VIOLENCE Oppn upset over PM's silence



AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 20: Leaders of ten opposition parties from violence hit Manipur, led by Congress, Tuesday accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi of ignoring the people of the north eastern state and not meeting the opposition leaders before leaving for his US visit.

The Congress criticised Prime Minister for meeting the film writer Manoj Muntashir, who wrote obscene dialogues for the movie Adipursh, but has no time to meet senior leaders of the country.

Congress leader Ajoy Kumar claimed that the writer Muntashir met Modi without any appointment for 45 minutes while the leaders from the violence ridden state, including even those from the BJP, were not able to get audience with him (PM Modi).

Addressing a joint press conference at the party headquarters, Congress leader Ajoy Kumar said: "Since June 10, several senior leaders of Manipur, including political leaders, civil society people are waiting here to meet Prime Minister Modi. Even Manipur Chief Minister N Biren Singh, and the Assembly speaker are waiting for the appointment."

Opposition's memorandum

The memorandum submitted by the Opposition leaders highlighted that more than 150 people have died while over 1,000 people were injured. More than

COUGH SYRUP ROW

Zero tolerance on spurious

SC refuses urgent listing of plea seeking protection of tribals

New Delhi: The Supreme Court Tuesday refused to hear the interlocutory application (IA) filed by the Manipur Tribal Forum alleging that even after the Centre's assurances to this court. 70 tribals were killed in violence in the state. Mentioned before a vacation bench of Justices Surva Kant and M.M. Sundresh by senior Advocate Colin Gonsalves, he submitted that the IA was for the security of the tribal areas and that people were being killed even after the Central government's assurances to the apex court. However, the bench said that it will hear the matter once the court resumes its normal functioning post summer break

5,000 houses have been burned down and more than 60,000 people are displaced. Hundreds of churches and temples have also been burnt down.

and listed it for hearing July 3.

The memorandum also alleged that it was the "BJP's politics of divide and rule" that had led to the present crisis.

The memorandum referred to the demand of 10 MLAs, in-_ cluding two Ministers in the government, belonging to Kuki tribe, demanding a "Separate Administration" for Kukis. It warned against any move to divide the Manipur state.

AI signs pacts with Airbus, Boeing to buy 470 planes

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 20: Air India Tuesday signed agreements with Airbus and Boeing for acquiring 470 planes for an estimated \$70 billion at list prices.

The Tata Group-owned airline had announced that it will buy 470 aircraft, including wide-body planes, in February this year.

The "firm orders include 34 A350-1000, 6 A350-900, 20 Boeing 787 Dreamliners and 10 Boeing 777X wide-body aircraft, as well as 140 Airbus A320neo, 70 Airbus A321neo and 190 Boeing 737MAX narrow-body aircraft," the airline said in a release. The purchase agreements were signed on the sidelines of the ongoing Paris Air Show. Boeing in a statement said the two companies have finalised an order for up to 290

new Boeing jets, including 70 on option and expanded services. Air India said the agreements go "one step further in its \$70 billion (based on list prices) fleet expansion program that it announced in February this year". The Airbus A350 will lead the deliveries of the new aircraft later this year, with the bulk of the order to arrive from mid-2025 onwards, it said.

Air India has already started taking delivery of 11 leased B777 and 25 A320 aircraft to accelerate its fleet and network expansion.

Campbell Wilson, Air India CEO and MD, said its ambitious fleet renewal and expansion programme will see the airline operate the most advanced and fuel-efficient aircraft across its route network within five years.

medicines, says Mandaviya

New Delhi, June 20: Asserting that India follows a zero-tolerance policy on spurious medicines, Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya has said 71 companies have been issued show-cause notices following concerns raised in some quarters about reported deaths due to contaminated India-made cough syrups and 18 of them have been

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

asked to shut shop. In an exclusive interview with PTI video, the minister also said an extensive risk-based analysis is done continuously to ensure the production of quality med-



icines in the country, and the government and regulators are always alert to ensure that no one

dies due to spurious medicines. "We are the pharmacy of the world and we want to assure everyone that we are the 'quality pharmacy of the world'." he said.

In February, Tamil Nadu-based Global Pharma Healthcare recalled its entire lot of eye drops. Before that, India-made cough syrups were allegedly linked to the deaths of 66 and 18 children in Gambia and Uzbekistan, respectively, last year.

India exported cough syrups worth USD 17.6 billion in 2022-23 as against USD 17 billion in 2021-22. Overall, India is the largest provider of generic drugs globally, supplying over 50 per cent of global demand for various vaccines, about 40 per cent of generic demand in the US and about 25 per cent of all med-

Court allows man to pay maintenance dues to wife in coins

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jaipur, June 20: In a bizarre case, a man was allowed by a court here to give ₹55,000 in one and two rupee coins to his wife as maintenance dues for 11 months after his family brought the money filled in seven sacks to the court following his arrest for non-payment.

While the counsel for his wife objected to it, terming it "mental harassment", the judge allowed the payment but asked the man to count the coins in court to make packets of ₹1000 each and hand them over to her at the next hearing on June 26, according to lawyers from both sides.

The couple's divorce case is being heard in a family court. The court had directed the husband, Dashrath Kumawat, to give the maintenance amount of ₹5000 per month but he was not paying it for the last 11 months. Dashrath, a resident of Harmada area in Jaipur, was arrested June 17 after family court number 1 issued a recovery warrant against him for non-payment of maintenance.

"Since the husband refused to give the amount, the police arrested him. The family court was closed due to holidays so



he was produced in the link court of Additional District Judge (ADG)-number 8. "In the court, the family members of Dashrath reached with coins

worth ₹55000 to give to his wife," Raman Gupta, the advocate of the husband, told PTI Tuesday

He said that the coins were in the denomination Re 1 and ₹2 and were stuffed in seven and make packets of ₹1000 each sacks. The advocate of his wife before handing them over to objected to this, but it was argued on behalf Seema Kumawat's of the husband that these coins advocate Ramprakash are legal tender and no one can

Kumawat said that giving coins to the woman was "equal to mental harassment"

"equal to mental harassment". "It was done in a preplanned manner just to harass the woman. However, the court has permitted him to give the coins," he said.

the wife in the court,"

he said. Wife Seema

Kumawat's advo-

Ramprakash

Kumawat said

that giving

coins to the

woman was -

husband to give the coins after counting them on the next hearing in the family court on June 26. Till then, the coins will remain in the custody of the court. The husband will have to count the coins

refuse to accept

"The court then allowed the

them

international



The scale and speed of Sudan's descent into death and destruction is unprecedented ANTÓNIO GUTERRES

ESTONIA TO ALLOW SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

Estonia's lawmakers approved legislation Tuesday allowing same-sex marriage as of next year, making Estonia the first of the three Baltic countries to do so





needs to have a discussion about

future role should be in the absence of a political solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that would mean

PHILIPPE LAZZARINI COMMISSIONER GENERAL OF UNRWA

Why do we still need to buy often? Because

standardized much and they themselves have federal agencies that provide massive subsidies to their manufacturers

Tunisia doesn' want to be Europe's migration







SHORT **TAKES**

New York: A fire that started in a New York City e-bike shop early Tuesday spread to upper-floor apartments, killing four people and injuring several others, authorities said. City fire officials said the blaze was reported shortly after midnight on the Lower East Side of Manhattan in a six-story building that houses HQ E-Bike Repair. A pile of burned bikes, scooters and other debris was seen on the sidewalk outside the building.

Four killed

Jerusalem: A Palestinian attacker opened fire at a gas station near an Israeli settlement in the West Bank Tuesday, killing at least four people and wounding several others, Israeli medics said, as violence continued to roil the occupied territory. Israeli security forces said they shot the gunman and were still searching for other attackers near the Jewish settlement of Eli north of the Palestinian city of Ramallah. The condition of the attacker was not immediately clear. Photos circulated of a man lying face-down in the street beside what appeared to be an M16 rifle.

One dead, two dozen injured

Louin: Multiple tornadoes swept through Mississippi overnight, killing one and injuring nearly two dozen. officials said Monday. State emergency workers were still working with counties to assess the damage from storms in which high temperatures and hail in some areas accompanied tornadoes. The death and injuries were reported by officials in eastern Mississippi's Jasper County. The small, rural town of Louin bore the brunt of the damage. Drone footage and photos showed wide expanses of debris-covered terrain. decimated homes and mangled trees. At least one person was lifted from the wreckage in a stretcher.

Pakistan gearing up for polls

Islamabad: Pakistan, currently in the throes of a major political as well as economic crisis, has started preparations for the general elections with a meeting of the election body chaired by its chief reviewing the arrangements made so far to organise polls in a fair and free manner later this year. Chief Election Commissioner Sikandar Sultan Raja was on Monday briefed by the officials of the Election Commission of Pakistan, a constitutional body tasked to organise elections in the country, according to an official statement.



Demonstrators wear masks depicting German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, left, and Chinese President Xi Jinping during a protest in front of the Federal Chancellery against the human rights situation in China on the occasion of the German-Chinese government consultations, in Berlin, Germany

Hunter Biden charged with tax, gun offences

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Washington, June 20: President Joe Biden's son Hunter has been charged with failing to pay federal income tax and illegally possessing a weapon and has reached an agreement with the Justice Department, according to a letter filed in US District Court in Delaware.

As part of the agreement, made public on Tuesday, Hunter Biden will plead guilty to misdemeanour tax offences and is expected to reach an agreement with prosecutors on the felony charge of illegally possessing a firearm as a drug user.

It is somewhat unusual to resolve a federal criminal case at the same time the charges are filed in court, though it is not totally unheard of. The deal ends a long-running Justice Department investigation into Biden's second son, who has acknowledged struggling with addiction following the 2015 death of his brother Beau Biden.

have generated days or weeks or distracting headlines for a White House that has strenuously sought to keep its distance from the Justice Department. Christopher Clark, a lawyer for the younger Biden, said in a statement that it was his understanding that the five-year investigation had now been resolved.

"I know Hunter believes it is important to take responsibility for these mistakes he made during a period of turmoil and addiction in his life," Clark said. "He looks forward to continuing his recovery and moving forward.'

The news comes as congressional Republicans pursue their own investigations into nearly every facet of Hunter Biden's business dealings, including examining foreign payments and other aspects of his finances.

It also comes days after a 37-count indictment came down against former President Donald Trump for mishandling classified documents on his Florida estate, another case with even more dramatic political implications.

Four die in fire

RUSSIAN DRONES Ukraine's air defences have been reinforced with sophisticated weapons from its Western allies, allowing it a higher success rate recently against incoming drones and missiles

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kyiv, June 20: Ukrainian air defences downed 32 of 35 Shahed exploding drones launched by Russia early Tuesday, most of them in the Kyiv region, officials said, in a bombardment that exposed gaps in the country's air protection after almost 16 months of war.

Russian forces mostly targeted the region around the Ukrainian capital in a nighttime drone attack lasting around three hours, officials said, but Ukrainian air defences in the area shot down about two dozen of them.

The attack was part of a wider bombardment of Ukrainian regions that extended as far as the Lviv region in the west of the country, near Poland. The Shahed drones made it all the way to Lviv because of the inability of a broad area, Ukrainian air force spokesman Yuriy Ihnat said.

UKRAINE DOWNS

Air defence systems are mostly dedicated to protecting major cities, key infrastructure facilities, including nuclear power plants, and the front line, he said."There is a general lack of air defence assets to cover a country like Ukraine with a dome like Israel has," he said, in a reference to Israel's Iron Dome aerial defense system.

In the Lviv region, the Russian strike hit a critical infrastructure facility, starting a fire, according to Lviv Gov. Maksym Kozytskyi. Russia also struck the southern Zaporizhzhia region of Ukraine with ballistic missiles.

Ukraine's air defences have been reinforced with sophisticated weapons from its Western allies, allowing it a higher success rate recently against incoming drones and missiles. Previously, a winter bombardment by Russia damaged Ukraine's power supply, though speedy repairs blunted that Kremlin effort

The latest aerial assaults behind Ukraine's front line coincided with the early stages of a Ukrainian counteroffensive, as it aims to dislodge the Kremlin's forces from territory

occupied since Russia's fullscale invasion in February 2022. air defense assets to cover such

THE INSTALLED **CAPACITY OF THE EXISTING FOUR POWER PLANTS IS** 1,330 MEGAWATTS,

ACCORDING TO THE PAKISTAN ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION

Islamabad, June 20: China Tuesday inked an agreement

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

worth a whopping USD 4.8 billion with cash-strapped Pakistan to set up a 1,200-megawatt nuclear power plant as a sign of increasing strategic cooperation between the two all-weather allies.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif witnessed the signing of the deal under which Beijing would build a 1,200-megawatt Chashma-V nuclear plant at Chashma in the Mianwali district of Punjab. In his address. Prime Minister Sharif termed the nuclear power plant agreement signing as a



Pak, China sign MoU for nuclear power project

token of increasing economic cooperation between Pakistan and China and vowed to complete the project without any

"We will kick start it without any further delay," he said, as he lambasted the previous government under Imran Khan for delaying the key power project. He said under a difficult economic situation, Pakistan was getting an investment of USD 4.8 billion from China in this project, which "sends the message that Pakistan is a place where Chinese companies and investors continue to show their trust and faith'

Sharif said the Chinese companies gave special concessions which would save billions of rupees in this project. He expressed confidence that Pakistan would come out of the current economic difficulties with the help of China and other friendly countries.

Sharif said Pakistan was also engaged with the International Monetary Fund to finalise the 9th Review and met all conditions required by the Washington-based global lender. "We are deeply

Chashma-V nuclear plant at Chashma in the Mianwali district of Punjab obliged to President Xi Jinping, and the Chinese leadership for their generous help to Pakistan,' he said, as he also lauded Saudi

Arabia, United Arab Emirates

and Qatar for extending help to

Prime Minister Shehbaz

signing of the deal under

build a 1,200-megawatt

Sharif witnessed the

which Beijing would

his cash-strapped government. Pakistan's Chashma power plants are considered a key in the production of cheap nuclear power. The installed capacity of the existing four power plants is 1,330 megawatts, according to the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission.

Two other nuclear

plants are also operational in Pakistan.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, June 20: British MPs have voted overwhelmingly to approve a damning House of Commons committee report that found former Prime Minister Boris Johnson deliberately misled Parliament about Covid lockdown law-breaching parties at

Downing Street. The 59-year-old, whose exit from 10 Downing Street last year had been hastened by the 'partygate' scandal, had repeatedly denied that lockdown rules were broken within government quarters when asked in the Commons.

Johnson has already resigned as Member of Parliament (MP)



MPs endorse report against Boris over 'partygate'

from West London after the findings of the Privileges Committee report were known to him. He will now lose the privilege of special access to Parliament accorded to former MPs.

Many of his colleagues and Opposition members gathered in the Commons on Monday to debate the report's findings and a

majority condemned the former prime minister's actions. Lawmakers approved the finding that Johnson was in contempt of Parliament by 354 votes to seven.

British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, along with several other Tory MPs, chose not to attend the debate or comment on the report's findings, something several Opposition Labour Party MPs called out during the session that ran into hours.

"It's a crying shame that the prime minister of this country cannot even express how he would vote if he were to turn up today. In my view, that is a dereliction of duty," Labour Party's Jess Phillips said.

Modi to lead unique yoga session at UN **Headquarters today**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

United Nations, June 20: India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi will lead a unique yoga session Wednesday in a historic celebration to commemorate the 9th International Day of Yoga at the UN Headquarters here that will see participation from top UN officials, envoys from across and the world and prominent individuals.

Modi will be in New York on the first leg of his US visit at the invitation of US President Joe Biden and First Lady Jill Biden. Nine years after Prime Minister Modi first proposed from the United Nations General Assembly podium to mark International Yoga Day as an annual commemoration, the Indian leader will for the first time be at the UN Headquarters to lead the yoga session in a historic commemoration of the day.

India's Permanent Representative to the UN Ambassador Ruchira Kamboj told PTI in an interview that the yoga celebration this year will be a very "unique occasion" because it was Prime Minister Modi who had given this vision and it was his leadership that ensured that June 21 every year is celebrated as International Yoga Day.

"So about nine years later, the 🗦 author of that vision comes to the United Nations," she said, adding that now Yoga Day is a UN-mandated occasion. "So the coming together of the two- the visionary leader and the United-Nations, I think, is in itself very unique," Kamboj said.

Nepal seeks report on murals in new Parliament

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kathmandu, June 20: The Nepal government has instructed its embassy in New Delhi to ascertain facts and send a report on the mural installed in the new Indian Parliament building which has created a controversy in the Himalayan nation, the country's foreign minister said on Tuesday.

Answering questions raised in the newly constructed Indian parliament building depicts the



expanded territory of Indian emperor Ashoka during his reign," the foreign minister told the par-

"After discussing with the Indian side, instructions have already been issued to the Nepalese Embassy to send a report on the matter," Saud said while answering questions raised in the House of Representatives IRC about the recent official visit by Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal "Prachanda" to India. The Indian government has relayed its official position about the mural which includes Lumbini, Kapilvastu and other places, he said. The issue has drawn a huge uproar in Kathmandu. However, Nepal Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal "Prachanda" has said that during his visit to New Delhi, the Indian side had clarified that it was a cultural map and not a political one. Prachanda had made the remarks in Parliament when the opposition lawmakers slammed him for not

The issue has drawn a huge uproar in Kathmandu. However, Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal has said that during his visit to New Delhi, the Indian side clarified that it was a cultural map and not a political one

ing the issue of the 'Akhanda Bharat' map, which, they claimed, also consists of Nepal's territory. India has downplayed the issue of a mural in the new Parliament building, describing it as an artwork that depicted the spread of the prehistoric Ashokan Empire. Prachanda visited India from

May 31 to June 3, his first official trip abroad since assuming office in December

2022. The ties between India and Nepal came under severe strain after Kathmandu published a new political map in 2020 that showed three Indian territories --Limpiyadhura, Kalapani

and Lipulekh -- as part of Nepal. India reacted sharply, calling it a "unilateral act" and cautioned Kathmandu that such "artificial enlargement" of territorial claims will not be acceptable to it.

by lawmakers, Foreign Minister N.P. Saud during the federal parliament's International Relations Committee (IRC) meeting on liamentary committee. Tuesday said that Minister for External Affairs S. Jaishankar had already made India's stance official that the map was a cultural one and did not involve any political issue. "The mural installed

business



We have every hope, will come together to represent the best of modern aviation to the world

N CHANDRASEKARAN | CHAIRMAN OF TATA SONS AND AIR INDIA

SUZUKI TO MAKE 'FLYING CARS' WITH SKYDRIVE

Japanese automaker Suzuki Motor Corp said Tuesday it had reached an agreement with SkyDrive Inc to make 'flying cars'. The companies will use a Suzuki Group factory in central Japan to make electric vertical takeoff and landing aircraft and aim to begin production by around spring next year. Suzuki said in a statement.



growing from a fleet size of 400 in 2014, we have witnessed a 75-per cent growth. We have witnessed the birth of many countrywide carriers, regional carriers and many others. But we have also witnessed orders being placed by India's foremost carriers, which are greater than the size of India's total fleet

JYOTIRADITYA SCINDIA UNION MINISTER

The government is right on the path to achieve the \$300 billion electronics manufacturing target

Huge

which will be a massive 20-25 times growth in almost a decade RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR UNION MINISTER OF STATE FOR ELECTRONICS AND IT

capacities of **Pumped Hydro** projects are coming up. At the same time we need to build batteries for grid storage. We need to have another PLI scheme for grid-scale storage, so that we can augment capacity and have round-the-clock renewable energy. We will keep adding storage to ensure that demand goes up and

investment keeps happening **RK SINGH** UNION POWER AND NEW &

Adani cos' valuation halves against 6 per cent decline for top 500 firms

THE TOP 500 COMPANIES **UNDERPERFORMED WHEN COMPARED TO** BENCHMARKS LIKE THE 30-SHARE SENSEX, WHICH WAS FLAT DURING THE SIX MONTHS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, June 20: Valuation of Adani Group's eight companies more than halved in the six months to April 2023 against just a 6 per cent decline in the top 500 non-government companies, a report

said Tuesday. Adani Total Gas lost 73.8 per cent of its value, Adani Transmission saw a decline of 69.2 per cent, while Paytm and Policybazaar Adani Green Energy was declined by ₹7.872 crore down by 54.7 per cent, the report by Axis Bank's Burgundy Private and Hurun India said.

"The eight companies in the Adani Group have a combined value of ₹9.5 lakh crore and constitute 4.5 per cent of the total

value of 500 top companies. The Adani Group companies in the review period decreased their value by 52 per cent or ₹10.25 lakh crore against a decline of just 6 per cent by the top 500 companies," the report said. Adani Enterprises

Unlisted and Adani Total Gas also moved vaccine maker out of the top **Serum Institute of India** most valuable saw a 13% decline in its firms durvaluation at ₹1.92 lakh crore, ing the pe while among listed unicorns, the under re valuation of Nykaa, Zomato, view, the report said.

> US-based shortseller published a scathing report alleging governance lapses and other shortcomings in the Adani Group. which led to a massive fall in

It can be

noted that in

late January, a

tities. The Gautam Adani-led group has denied any wrongdoing. The report said Reliance Industries was the most valuable Indian company at ₹16.3

lakh crore despite a 5.1 per cent

decline, and was followed by

Tata Consultancy Services at

₹11.8 lakh crore and HDFC Bank

at ₹9.4 lakh crore. The value of the top 500 companies decreased marginally by 6.4 per cent to ₹212 lakh crore from ₹227 lakh crore as on October 30, 2022.

The top 500 companies underperformed when compared to benchmarks like the 30-share Sensex, which was flat during the six months.

adani

Unlisted vaccine maker Serum Institute of India saw a 13 per cent decline in its valuation at ₹1.92 lakh crore during the period, the report said.

Among the listed unicorns. the valuation of Nykaa, Zomato, Paytm and Policybazaar declined by ₹7,872 crore during the review period, it said.

To make it to the list of the top 500 non-state-owned companies, an entity was valued at over ₹5,500 crore or USD 672 million.

IMF working on global platform for CBDCs

Rabat, June 20: The International Monetary Fund (IMF) is working on a platform for central bank digital currencies (CDBCs) to enable transactions between countries. IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva said Monday.

"CBDCs should not be fragmented national propositions... To have more efficient and fairer transactions we need systems that connect countries: we need interoperability," Georgieva told a conference attended by African central banks in Rabat, Morocco.

"For this reason at the JME we are working on the concept of a global CBDC platform," she said.

The IMF wants central banks to agree on a common regulatory framework for digital currencies that will allow global interoperability. Failure to agree on a common platform would create a vacuum that would likely

be filled by cryptocurrencies,

A CBDC is a digital currency controlled by the central bank, while cryptocurrencies are nearly always decentralised.

Already 114 central banks are

at some stage of CBDC exploration, "with about 10 already crossing the finish line," she said. "If countries develop CDBCs

only for domestic deployment we are underutilizing their capacity," she added. CBDCs could also help pro-

mote financial inclusion and make remittances cheaper, she said, noting that the average cost of money transfers stands at 6.3% amounting to \$44 billion

Georgieva stressed that CBDCs should be backed by assets and added that cryptocurrencies are an investment opportunity when backed by assets, but when they are not they are a "speculative investment.



SHORT **TAKES**

Janakiraman new RBI dy guv

New Delhi: The government Tuesday appointed Swaminathan Janakiraman as a deputy governor of the Reserve Bank of India for three years from the date of joining. Janakiraman, currently the managing director of State Bank of India , will succeed Mahesh Kumar Jain, whose tenure ends June 22. Jain was appointed as a deputy governor in June 2018 for three years. He was reappointed in June 2021 for a further two-vear period. Jain is in-charge of the department of supervision, financial consumer education and protection, among others. The deputy governor portfolios, however, can see a tweak from time to time.

Sales, tech roles in demand: Report

Mumbai: The banking, financial services and insurance (BFSI) sector is witnessing significant demand for sales and technologyrelated job roles, a report said Tuesday. Customer engagement jobs in sales and technology functions like software development, cybersecurity, data analytics and digital marketing have witnessed a growing demand, a research report by Ciel HR Services stated. The report by the talent solutions provider is based on a survey of HR executives of 60 BFSIs, employing 11 lakh workforce. and an analysis of 33,774 job postings for the sector on portals between March 15 and May 15, 2023.

Stake in 2 insurers: **CCI nod for HDFC**

New Delhi: Competition watchdog CCI Tuesday granted its approval to mortgage lender HDFC to acquire a certain stake in **HDFC Life Insurance Company** and HDFC ERGO General Insurance Company Ltd. These approvals will help pave way for merger of HDFC into HDFC Bank. In April, RBI allowed HDFC Bank or HDFC to increase shareholding in HDFC Life Insurance Company and **HDFC ERGO General Insurance** Company to over 50% prior to effective date of merger. The CCI approved the acquisition of additional shareholding of **HDFC Life Insurance Company** Limited by HDFC.

Sensex, Nifty rebound on fag-end buying in IT, oil

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, June 20: Benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty bounced back from early lows to close higher in a volatile session Tuesday helped by fag-end buying in IT, teck, power and utilities shares The 30-share BSE Sensex set-

tled higher by 159.40 points or 0.25 per cent to 63,327.70. The index traded in negative territory for the most part of the session and hit a low of 62,801,91.

The NSE Nifty advanced 61.25points or 0.33 per cent to end at

From the Sensex pack, Tata Motors, HCL Technologies, Power Grid, Tech Mahindra, NTPC, Axis Bank, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Larsen & Toubro, Wipro, Nestle, Tata Consultancy Services and Infosys were among the major gainers.

Bajaj Finance, Bajaj Finserv, Mahindra & Mahindra, UltraTech Cement, IndusInd Bank and State Bank of India were the major laggards. In the broader market, the

BSE midcap gauge climbed 0.47per cent and smallcap index advanced 0.40 per cent. Among the indices, power

gained 1.02 per cent, utilities jumped 0.94 per cent, auto (0.85 per cent), IT (0.78 per cent), teck (0.67 per cent) and metal (0.63)



Mcap of BSE-listed firms hits fresh record high

New Delhi: The market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms hit a fresh all-time high of ₹293.51 lakh crore Tuesday as the benchmark Sensex rebounded to settle in the positive territory. The 30-share BSE benchmark advanced 159.40 points or 0.25 per cent to settle at 63,327.70. Fag-end buying helped the benchmark climb 271.89 points or 0.43 per cent to hit the day's high at 63,440.19. The Sensex is just 255.37 points away from its intra-day record peak of 63,583.07 hit December 1 last year. The recovery in equities helped the market capitalisation (mcap) of BSE-listed firms reach an all-time high of ₹2,93,51,462.45 crore at the end of the trade. The market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms reached a record of ₹292.78 lakh crore Friday last week.

Services, oil & gas, energy and industrials were the

laggards. In Asian markets, Tokyo ended

in the green, while Seoul,

USD 77.02 a barrel.

Shanghai, and Hong Kong settled in the negative territory. ing to exchange data.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude climbed 1.22 per cent to

Foreign institutional investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth ₹1,030.90 crore Monday, accord-

Retail inflation for farm, rural workers eases in Mav

The All-India Consumer Price Index Number for Agricultural Labourers and Rural Labourers for the month of May 2023 increased by 6 & 5 points to stand at 1186 points and 1197 points respectively

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 20: Retail inflation for farm workers and rural labourers eased to 5.99 per cent and 5.84 per cent, respectively, in May. Point-to-point rate of infla-

tion based on the CPI-AL (consumer price index-agricultural labourers and CPI-RL (rural labourers) stood at 6.50 per cent and 6.52 per cent respectively in April 2023 and 6.67 per cent and 7.00 per cent respectively during the corresponding month (May 2022) of the previous year, a labour bureau statement said.

It stated that food inflation stood at 6.31 per cent & 6.07 per cent in May 2023 compared to 6.67 per cent & 6.52 per cent respectively in April 2023 and 5.44 per cent & 5.51 per cent respectively during the corresponding month of the previous year.

The All-India Consumer Price Index Number for Agricultural Labourers and Rural Labourers for the month of May 2023 increased by 6 & 5 points to stand at 1186 points and 1197 points respectively.

The CPI-AL and CPI-RL were 1180 points and 1192 points respectively in April 2023. The major contribution to-

wards the rise in general index of Agricultural Labourers and Rural Labourers came from food group to the extent of 5.29 & 4.72 points respectively mainly due to increase in prices of rice, pulses, milk, meat goat, chillies dry, garlic, ginger, vegetables & fruits, etc.

The rise/fall in index varied from State to State. In case of Agricultural Labourers, it recorded an increase of 2 to 17 points in 11 States and a decrease of 1 to 5 points in 8 States while it remained stationary for Himachal Pradesh State.

Tamil Nadu with 1371 points topped the index table whereas Himachal Pradesh with 918 points stood at the bottom.

In the case of Rural Labourers, it recorded an increase of 1 to 17 points in 12 States and a decrease of 1 to 5 points in 7 States while it remained stationary for Kerala State. Tamil Nadu with 1360 points topped the index table whereas Himachal Pradesh with 968 points stood at the bottom.

Amongst states, the maximum increase in the Consumer Price Index Numbers for both Agricultural Labourers and Rural Labourers was experienced by Andhra Pradesh State (17 points each) mainly due to rise in the prices of rice, jowar, ragi, pulses, green/dry chillies, onion,

EPFO adds 17.20L net members in April

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 20: Retirement fund body EPFO added 17.20 lakh members on a net basis in April this year, according to payroll data released Tuesday.

"Out of 17.20 lakh members added during the month, around 8.47 lakh new members have come under social security coverage of the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) for the first time," a labour ministry statement said

Among the newly joined members, 54.15 per cent of new members are in the age group of 18-25 years, indicating the majority of the members joining organised sector workforce are mostly first-time job seekers.

The EPFO's provisional roll data indicated a significant increase in several key parameters. It revealed that EPFO has added 17.20 lakh net members in the month of April 2023 as compared to the net addition of 13.40 lakh during the previous month of March 2023.

FM for identification of credit deficient dists



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, June 20: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman Monday suggested identification of credit-deficient districts in each state and carrying out special credit outreach camps

She also suggested holding a special district level review committee meeting between July 15 to August 15 and inviting MPs from such districts to further brainstorm on ideas of financial inclusion by opening Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) accounts. She said this while chairing a

meeting of a consultative committee attached to the finance ministry, which focussed on financial inclusion. During the deliberations, Sitharaman reviewed the progress made under PMJDY, Jan Suraksha schemes and MUDRA Yojana. The meeting was also attended by the MoS for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary and Bhagwat Karad,as well as MPs of consultative committee from LS and RS.

Pharma exports may touch \$28bn in FY24

THE US FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS' INSPECTION ON INDIAN MANUFACTURING SITES HAVE NOT PICKED UP AND IS YET TO REACH THE PRE-COVID LEVELS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Hyderabad, June 20: Indian pharma exports may touch USD 28 billion during the current fiscal against USD 25.39 billion in FY 23, Udaya Bhaskar, Director General of Pharmaceuticals Export Promotion Council of India (Pharmexcil), a body under the Department of Commerce said Tuesday.

Speaking to reporters here he said during the current fiscal the exports cloaked over 10 per cent and 0.7 per cent growth in April and may respectively.

"In FY 23 we exported USD 25.39 billion worth of pharma goods with 3.25 per cent growth. When most commodities are not doing so well, India pharma made this and achieved this despite so many headwinds and global challenges," Bhaskar said replying to a query.

'I am ambitious that we may touch around USD 28 billion in FY 24. That is my expectation," he further said.

Justifying the target the official said the US market which has over 31 per cent share in overall exports last year has stabilised and it is positive sign indicating continuous growth. exports

Commonwealth of Independent States (Russia and others) was down by 8.42 per cent to USD 1.15 billion due to disturbances in some countries, he said. To another query, he said

the US Food and Drug

Administration officials in-

spection on Indian manufac-

turing sites have not picked up

and is yet to reach the pre-

Covid levels

Commerce is aware of the situ-He said the Ministry of ation and is taking up the issue

Meanwhile, the ninth edition of the International Pharma Exhibition (IPHEX), a flagship event of the Pharmexcil is being organised with the support of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, from July 5 to 7 here.

For the last eight editions, a total of 4,500 plus foreign delegates including regulatory officials, public procurement agencies, journalists and importers from 120 plus countries, 3,500 exhibitors and over one lakh

visitors attended, Bhaskar said. The ninth edition of IPHEX, is a special edition being organised on the occasion of G20 presidency by India, with exhibition, business meetings and an exclusive "G20 focussed CEOs Round Table" inviting delegates from over 120 countries, he added.

OrissaPOST

England, France march on

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Paris, June 20: England and France made it four straight wins in European Championship qualifying while Switzerland dropped their first points.

Harry Kane and Kylian Mbappe continued their goal scoring form for their respective sides. Kane netted twice in England's 7-0 home rout of North Macedonia, in a match where Bukayo Saka struck a hat-trick, while Mbappe slotted in a penalty at the second attempt as Les Bleus edged visiting Greece 1-0. The Swiss were coasting and then conceded two late goals against Romania in a 2-2 home

Mbappe's twice-taken penalty in the second half moved him onto 40 goals for Les Bleus and only one behind fellow great Michel Platini — at the age of 24 — while Kane opened and closed the scoring with his record-extending 57th and 58th goals for England.

England's forward line of Kane, Saka and Marcus Rashford all scored at Old Trafford, where Rashford plays for Manchester United. Substitute Valentin Mihaila pounced in the 89th and in stoppage time for second-placed Romania in Lucerne.

GROUP B

Mbappe's 54th goal overall for France and Paris Saint-Germain this season beat the national record for club and country set by the late Just Fontaine in the 1957-58 season — the year Fontaine also set an

SHORT TAKES

Mascot unveiled

SPLENDID SHOW: Bukayo Saka (No.7) and Harry Kane celebrate a goal against North Macedonia, Monday

individual scoring record with 13 at the '58 World Cup.

World Cup runner-up France has yet to concede a goal, while third-placed Ireland beat Gibraltar 3-0 in the other game to finally open its account.

GROUP C

Kane and defender Stefan Ristovski needed treatment after a clash of heads early on. By the 29th minute, Kane was back on his feet and turning in Luke Shaw's cross from close range. After Rashford's goal and Saka's triple, substitute midfielder Kalvin Phillips

scored before Kane's penalty. Second-placed Ukraine labored to a 1-0 home win against Malta thanks to Viktor Tsygankov's 72nd-minute penalty. Ukraine is six points back from England.

GROUP D With Croatia involved in the Nations League, Turkey moved further ahead at the top with a 2-0 home win against Euro 2016 semifinalist Wales.

The Welsh were reeling from

and fell to goals in the last 20 minutes by striker Umut Nayir and midfielder Arda Güler.

Turkey has nine points, three ahead of Armenia, which moved up to second place after an injurytime penalty from Tigran Barseghyan helped them beat last-placed Latvia 2-1.

GROUP H

Finland and Kazakhstan won and were level on nine points, two ahead of Slovenia and Euro 2020 semifinalist Denmark after they drew 1-1 in Ljubljana.

Striker Andraž Šporar put Slovenia ahead in the 25th, only for Rasmus Højlund to equalize in the 42nd with his sixth goal in qualifying.

Finland routed last-placed San Marino 6-0. Forward Daniel Håkans helped himself to a second-half hat trick after coming off the bench with 30 minutes left. Veteran striker Teemu Pukki completed the scoring for the Finns with his 38th international goal.

Kazakhstan won at Northern Ireland 1-0 thanks to Abat Aimbetov's 88th-minute goal.

GROUP I

Switzerland looked on course for victory No.4. Forward Zeki Amdouni notched his fourth and fifth goals in qualifying to put the Swiss in control at the break. But Romania stunned the Swissporarena fans in Lucerne to stay unbeaten, and in close contention.

Third-placed Israel were one point behind Romania after beating Andorra 2-1, and Belarus won at home to Kosovo 2-1.

BLUE TIGERS START FIRM FAVOURITES

Hosts face arch rivals Pakistan in their SAFF Championship campaign opener today

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, June 20: Buoyed by the recent triumph in the Intercontinental Cup, the Indian football team will enter the SAFF Championship 2023 as a confident unit and look to extend their dominance in the tournament.

India will face Pakistan in their opening outing at the Sree Kanteeraya Stadium Wednesday and the match is all set to be played as per schedule after the latter received their India visa Monday night.

Placed low in the pecking order, Pakistan might not offer India a massive challenge but the Blue Tigers will be eager to start their campaign on a rousing note, and give other aspirants a strong message.

Eight-time champions India are drawn into Group A alongside Nepal, Kuwait and Pakistan. The other competing teams are Lebanon, Maldives, Bhutan and Bangladesh who have been drafted into Group B.

The Intercontinental Cup victory will add to their desire to land another trophy to the cabinet. India had warded off strong opponent Lebanon 2-0 Sunday at the Kalinga Stadium to win the event.

It was India's first victory over Lebanon in 46 years and that skipper and No.1 striker Sunil Chhetri managed to etch his name on the score sheet would boost Indians' morale.

The Indian team would hope for Chhetri to continue in the same vein in the SAFF Championship as well. If one needs a bit of personal motivation, Chhetri can look to surpass Mokhtar Dahari of Malaysia, who has 89 goals against his name, as the second

2021, Manju finished fourth at

senior Nationals. The next year

she got a silver with a national

record and the dream came true

when she won the National cham-

pionship this year in Ranchi

and also breached the Asian

Games qualifying mark. Her

family, especially her grand-

events to pick from track and

field disciplines, why did Manju

opt to for the less-popular race

walk? "You need to lift your

knees in a certain way while

running. But even when I was

running, it ap-

peared as If I

Preetpal

was walking.

My coach

Kaur noticed

and advised

While there are many popular

mother is proud of her.

MATCH SCHEDULE

Kuwait vs Nepal 3.30 pm India vs Pakistan 7.30 pm

FanCode app & website

highest-scoring Asian footballer. Chhetri has 87 goals for India from 137 matches and three more goals in the SAFF tourney will propel him to a rare milestone.

Beyond those personal milestones, India will also have a proud team record to preserve. They are the defending champions, having won the tournament in 2021 but that is just one glittering leaf in a total of 8 SAFF title wins.

So, India will be eager to add a 9th title to their kitty here. India have won the tournament in 1993, 1997, 1999, 2005, 2009, 2011, 2015 and 2021. The only teams who have managed to snatch the glory away from India are Maldives (2008, 2018) and Bangladesh (2003).

A victory in the SAFF tournament will also help India gain some valuable FIFA Ranking points and go up in the ladder.

The squad:

Goalkeepers: Gurpreet Singh Sandhu, Amrinder Singh, Phurba Lachenpa Tempa; Defenders: Subhasish Bose, Pritam Kotal, Sandesh Jhingan, Anwar Ali, Akash Mishra, Mehtab Singh and Rahul Bheke; Midfielders: Liston Colaco, Ashique Kuruniyan, Suresh Singh Wangjam, Rohit Kumar, Udanta Singh, Anirudh Thapa, Naorem Mahesh Singh, Nikhil Poojary, Jeakson Singh, Sahal Abdul Samad, Lalengmawia Ralte, Lallianzuala Chhangte, Rowllin Borges, Nandha Kumar; Forwards: Sunil Chhetri, Rahim Ali, Ishan Pandita.

Chirag-Satwik rises to career-high World No.3

issued Tuesday.

Gelsenkirchen (Germany): The mascot for next year's European Championship in Germany will be a teddy bear - and this time it won't be naked from the waist down. The mascot made its first appearance Tuesday morning by surprising children at a primary school in appear again later before the team's friendly game against Colombia. The large-headed mascot with big eyes has shorts in contrast to the 2006 World Cup mascot, a lion named "Goleo" that was widely ridiculed for not having pants. The as-yet unnamed teddy bear also has a football jersey, socks and boots. Fans were to help name it by choosing between Albärt, Bärnardo, Bärnheart or Herzi von Bär. "Bär" is the German

Contrasting wins

word for bear.

Halle: Stefanos Tsitsinas, Daniil Medvedev and Denis Shapovalov progressed from the first round of the Halle Open, though some had an easier time at the grass-court tournament. The second-seeded Stefanos Tsitsipas needed 2 hours, 22 minutes before he eventually prevailed against French player Gregoire Barrere 6-7(6-8), 6-4, 7-6(7-Tsitsipas was headed for another loss as he trailed by a set and a break at 3-1 down in the second set. but he recovered for a secondround meeting with Nicolas Jarry. Top-seeded Medvedev defeated American qualifier Marcos Giron 6-4, 6-3. Shapovalov beat South African Lloyd Harris 7-6(7-1), 6-4.

Title on the line

Mong Kok (Hong Kong): The India U-23 team will take on Bangladesh in the summit clash of the Women's Emerging Asia Cup after their semifinal against Sri Lanka was washed out here Tuesday. The match was originally scheduled for Monday before being postponed by a day due to rain. In a bizarre run of events, India have played only one game in the run-up to the final, their opener against hosts Hong Kong, which they won by nine wickets. India's other three matches, including the semifinal, were washed out without a ball being bowled. Bangladesh defeated Pakistan by six runs in the other semifinal Tuesday.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA New Delhi, June 20: Fresh from winning their maiden Super 1000 men's doubles title, star Indian shuttlers Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty achieved a career-best World No.3 in the latest BWF ranking

The Commonwealth Games gold medallists upstaged reigning world champions Aaron Chia and Soh Wooi Yik of Malaysia in straight games to win the Indonesia Open, becoming the first pair from the country to claim a Super 1000 event Sunday.

The Indian duo is in the middle of a dream 2023 having won two World Tour titles already, besides the Swiss Open alongside a gold medal at the Badminton Asia Championships.



In men's singles, Kidambi Srikanth climbed three places to get into top 20 (No.19), following Lakshya Sen closely on World No.18. Sen moved up by two

notches. HS Prannoy was the best-ranked Indian, holding on to his ninth spot.

Rising shuttler Priyanshu Rajawat also secured a careerhigh ranking of No.30, jumping four places. With Rajawat, four Indians figure inside top-30 in men's singles.

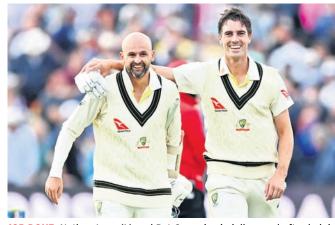
Double Olympic medalist PV Sindhu arrested her slide and moved up two places to World No.12 in women's singles while veteran Saina Nehwal rose to No.31, moving up by one place.

In women's doubles, Treesa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand remained on 16th place. At 41st place after slipping by two notches, Ashwini Bhat and Shikha Gautam were the next

Indians in the BWF rankings. Indian mixed pair Rohan Kapoor and Sikki Reddy jumped two places to No.33. Tanisha Crasto and Ishan Bhatnagar were the next Indians on the list, slipping one place to No.38



Cummins, Lyon secure Manju opens up on her journey to the top thrilling win for Aussies



JOB DONE: Nathan Lyon (L) and Pat Cummins in jolly mood after helping Australia win the match, Tuesday

Birmingham, June 20: Skipper Pat Cummins (44 n o, 73b, 4x4, 2x6) and Nathan Lyon (16 n o, 28b) stitched together an unbeaten 55 runs in 12 overs to help Australia script a thrilling twowicket victory in the first Ashes Test here, Tuesday.

With 227/8 on the board after the dismissal of Alex Carey the last recognised batter – while chasing 281-run target, the odds were against the visitors. However, Cummins kept most of the strike taking his side closer to the target, having solid support from Lyon at the other

The match turned drastically post tea, when Aussies were reduced to 227/8 having lost three wickets – first Cameron Green (28), then well-set Usman Khawaja (65, 197b, 7x4) and Carey – in just 44 runs.

Earlier, Australia were in need

of 98 more runs to win the match after reaching tea at 183/5 as the cricket thriller headed into its final session on the last day at Edgbaston.

Khawaja was patiently moving the visitors toward the winning target of 281. He had the company of Green when tea was taken as the duo had already added 40 runs for the sixth wicket.

Forced to leave the field the day before with a painful blistered finger, England spinner Moeen Ali (1/50) returned earlier to give England a key wicket of thirdranked batter Travis Head (16). The morning session was lost to rain and players took an early lunch at the Birmingham ground.

BRIEF SCORES: England 393/8d & 273 lost to Australia 386 & 282/8 (Usman Khawaja 65, Pat Cummins 44 n o; Stuart Broad 3/64, Ollie Robinson 2/43) by 2

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 20: Manju Rani had to jump a few hurdles before she learnt to walk. It was an arduous task for a class six student to secure permission for staving away from the eyes of a protective family, living in Khaira Khurd – a small village in Punjab's Mansa district – and

pursue a career in sport. Her grandmother was apprehensive and denied permission but a supportive father understood the burning desire of a mother-less child to become an athlete and eventually let her move to the SAI centre, Badal in Muktsar district. It was not a bad gamble. Manju, 24, is now

country's top race walker. "It took a lot of cajoling to convince my father. It was not normal to let a girl child live away from family. The SAI training centre was 100kms away from my village. My 'dadi' kept denying the permission," Manju Rani told this agency.

"One day over a cup of tea, finally my father agreed. But he said to me, 'Pagg nu daag na layee' (keep the family's honour intact)."

Manju kept her promise and has now brought laurels to the family and the state of Punjab by becoming the first Indian woman to clock a sub-3 hour effort in 35km race walk. That winning timing of 2:57:54.00 in Ranchi at the National Race Walking Championships in February was also good enough for the Asian Games qualifica-

In Bhubaneswar, competing at the Inter-State National Athletics championship, she won gold again but could clock only 3 hours, 21 minutes and 31

seconds due to scorching heat. Manju did not aspire to become a race walker initially. She was a handball player and had appeared in a selection trial at a school but found that the sport was not on its roster. A coach there, suggested her to try race

"I had never race-walked before that but I managed to finish third. The coach was impressed with my performance and advised that I must go and train at a better place if I have to grow into a better athlete," she narrated the incident. "My father was sup-

portive and my journey began in 2015. In three months' time, I had won a bronze medal at state level junior champi-Games. I was at Badal centre till 2017.



MORE CHALLENGES

The initial struggle to get the family backing was over but more challenges awaited her. Her father had to mortgage their two acre land to manage the expenses. When Manju moved to National Centre of Excellence (NCOE) in Bhopal, she had to arrange for accommodation her-

"My name was yet to be added to the list, so I spent about 5-6 months in a rented accommodation. I had to arrange for it on my own. Also, the shoes are pretty expensive. It costs about Rs 17000 for a pair of shoes and they last just one month. I got some support when I got a job with Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB)

"I had got a salary of Rs 21000 at that time but still a lot of money was required for good training. Shoes, supplements, diet, it is a costly affair to be a sports person. My father mortgaged his agricultural land. Much of the money was sent to me and a bit was spent on my grandfather's treatment," she

However, the financial constraints were still troubling her and she had to take a personal loan of Rs 8 lakh in 2019. "I am paying a monthly installment of Rs 17000 out of my Rs 32000 salary. The loan is for seven years. But the amount helped me. The good shoes are available in Japan and UK only. I order shoes from there.

"If I had a sponsorship, it would have helped but as of now I am managing it on my own. There is no point training with inferior shoes. It will lead to injury. I have no other option. I have to do well in my sport.