

Oppn seeks visit by all-party team to Manipur as Shah chairs meet AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 24: An allparty meeting convened by Union Home Minister Amit Shah Saturday had a detailed discussion on the situation in Manipur during which several opposition parties sought an all-party delegation visit to the northeastern state but the government remained non-committal, sources said.

While the Congress demanded immediate sacking of Chief Minister N Biren Singh, the Samajwadi Party and a few others sought imposition of President's rule in the state that has witnessed sporadic violence in since May 3.

However, the government asserted it was doing its best to bring back normalcy there, sources said.

Home Minister Amit Shah said all efforts are being made to restore peace in Manipur on instructions of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the BJP's Manipur in-charge Sambit Patra told reporters after the meeting. The home minister also told the meeting that since the violence

began in the state, there has not been a single day when he did not speak to PM Modi on the situation or the prime minister did not give instructions, Patra said.

Leaders of various political parties, including the BJP, Congress, Trinamool Congress, DMK, AIADMK, Aam Aadmi Party and the Left, attended the meeting which was convened by the home minister to discuss the prevailing situation in the state. Nearly 120 people have lost their lives and over 3,000 are injured since the ethnic violence broke out in the state May 3.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



POURING FROLIC: Children enjoy rain at a waterlogged road in Solapur town of Maharashtra, Saturday

Wagner chief halts march

REBEL RUSSIAN MERCENARIES WILL TURN BACK TO AVOID BLOODSHED: YEVGENY PRIGOZHIN

AGENCIES

Moscow, June 24: The head of the private Russian military force Wagner said Saturday he has ordered his mercenaries to halt their march on Moscow and retreat to their field camps in Ukraine to avoid shedding Russian blood.

The announcement from Yevgeny Prigozhin appeared to defuse a dramatically escalating crisis that represented the most significant challenge to



All those who prepared the rebellion will suffer inevitable punishment. . The armed forces and other government agencies have received the necessary orders VLADIMIR PUTIN

RESIDENT, RUSSI

Regarding the

12 PAGES + SUNDAY POST | ₹5.00

10 held for Similipal deputy ranger's killing

BHUBANESWAR: Ten people were arrested Saturday in connection with the killing of a deputy ranger at Similipal Sanctuary in Mayurbhanj district, police said. Mathi Hansdah was shot dead allegedly by a group of poachers when he was out on patrol on the night of June 16, they said. Those arrested in connection with the murder belonged to Edelbeda village in Thakurmunda police station area, police said in a statement. The investigation was continuing to find others involved in the killing, Superintendent of Police B Gangadhar said.

Rout arrested; assets worth ₹5.21cr found

BHUBANESWAR: Additional Sub-Collector of Nabarangpur Prasanta Kumar Rout was arrested Saturday by the Odisha Vigilance Department after being found in possession of disproportionate assets worth ₹5.21 crore, officials said. After a search warrant issued by special judge, vigilance, Sundargarh, vigilance teams conducted simultaneous raids on the properties of Rout, an Odisha Administrative Service official, at 9 locations Friday, SP, Vigilance, M Radhakrishna said.

PTI PHOTO

Ex-MLA convicted for murdering wife

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 24: A Special court in its verdict Saturday held former MLA of Gunupur Ram Murty Gomango guilty of killing his wife at his quarters in Kharavela Nagar area here 28 years ago in 1995. The quantum of punishment is likely to be pronounced by the court during the next hearing of the case, June 27.

As per the case file, Ram Murty

reached Kharavela Nagar po-

lice station 29 August, 1995 and



ful day. Meanwhile, Ram Murty allegedly killed his wife and later burnt her body to destroy evidences.

Earlier, police had registered an unnatural death case in this regard. However, the Kharavela



Not heat wave, he has just heard the news of opposition unity efforts

WEAT	HER		
	BHUB	СТК	
<mark>€</mark> MAX	30.0°€	29.8°	
₩ MIN	26.0°C	26.2°	⊆ Forecast
Humidity	97%	92%	Light rain
Rainfall	6.5mm 5	5.8mm	

President Vladimir Putin's leadership in his more than two decades in power.

shut down, and the mayor urged

motorists to stay off some roads.

men were just 200 kilometers

from Moscow he decided to turn

them back to avoid "shedding

has responded to his demand to

oust Defense Minister Sergei

Shoigu. There was no immedi-

ate comment from the Kremlin.

a statement from the office of

Belarusian President Alexander

Lukashenko saying that he had

The announcement followed

He didn't say whether Moscow

Russian blood.'

Prigozhin said that while his

Lukashenko's negotiations with Wagner Moscow had braced for the arleader Evgeny Prigozhin rival of a private army led by the resulted in an "absolutely rebellious mercenary commander beneficial and acceptable' by erecting checkpoints with arway to end the crisis mored vehicles and troops on its southern edge. Red Square was

The negotiations were conducted after speaking with and in coordination with **Russian President Vladimir** Putin

Belarusian Prez Alexander

guarantees for Wagner troops, Lukashenko's office said. It didn't elaborate.

Putin had vowed harsh consequences for organisers of the armed uprising led by his onetime protege, who brought his forces out of Ukraine, seized a key military facility in southern Russia and advanced toward Moscow

negotiated a deal with Prigozhin In a televised speech to the nation, Putin called the rebelafter discussing the issue with Putin. Prigozhin agreed to halt lion a "betrayal" and "treason". the advance in a proposed set-"All those who prepared the rebellion will suffer inevitable tlement that contains security

punishment," Putin said. "The armed forces and other gov ernment agencies have received

the necessary orders. Authorities declared a "counterterrorist regime" in the capital and its surrounding region, enhancing security and re stricting some movement.

On the southern outskirts, troops erected checkpoints, arranged sandbags and set up machine guns.

Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyanin warned that traffic could be restricted in parts of the capital and declared Monday a non-working day for most residents.

The dramatic developments came exactly 16 months after Russia launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine, Europe's largest conflict since World War II. which has killed tens of thousands, displaced millions and reduced cities to rubble.

Ukrainians hoped the Russian infighting would create oppor-

betrayal of the motherland, the president was deeply mistaken. We are patriots of our homeland

YEVGENY PRIGOZHIN IEAD OF WAGNER MERCENARY GROUP

tunities for its army to take back territory seized by Russian forces.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Moscow was suffering "full-scale weakness" and that Kyiv was protecting Europe from "the spread of Russian evil and chaos.'

Prigozhin's private army has been fighting alongside regular Russian troops in Ukraine. His goals weren't immediately clear, but the rebellion marks an escalation in his struggle with Russian military leaders, whom he accused of botching the war in Ukraine and hobbling his forces in the field.

The Defense Ministry denied attacking the Wagner camps.

lodged a report informing that his pregnant wife Sashirekha had committed suicide in the bathroom of his government quarters at DS-18/1, MLA colony here. Police along with scientific team immediately reached the spot and initiated probe into the suspicious death of Sashirekha who had suffered almost hundred per cent burn injuries. The cops recovered the body and sent it for post-mortem.

The post mortem report and other scientific examinations of evidences collected from crime scene revealed that the deceased had deep wound marks on her head. The recovery of matchstick box and kerosene bottle near the body also indicated foul play.

The cops during the course of investigation found that the couple had had a heated altercation after the deceased woke up late in the morning on the fate-

Nagar police later lodged an FIR under various sections of the IPC on the basis of the report lodged by the investigating officer September 1, 1995. Ram Murty was arrested by the Kharavela Nagar police on the next day.

The court of special judge (MP-MLA), Sasmita Parhi after examining the statements of 11 witnesses and 15 documentary evidences declared Ram Murty guilty of charges under 302 (murder) and 201 (Causing disappearance of evidence of offence). Special Public Prosecutor Rashmi Ranjam Brahma has been conducting the trial on behalf of the state.

The accused was forwarded to Special Jail, Jharpada following his conviction in the case. Ram Murty had won assembly elections from Gunupur con-

stituency twice in 1990 and 2000.

squally weather with gusty sur-

face winds speed reaching 45 to

55 kmph would prevail over

north Bay of Bengal adjoining

west central Bay of Bengal, along

and off Odisha coast during

June 25 to June 27 morning.

Therefore, the Met of-

fice advised fishermen

not to venture into the

sea along and off

Odisha coast, north

Bay of Bengal adjoining

west central Bay of

Bengal during the period.

Low pressure area to form over BoB today

Heavy

to very

and 26

FRACAS IN VEGAS Musk, Mark 'dead serious' about cage match

AGENCIES

San Francisco, June 24: Forget about famed boxing bouts like the Rumble in the Jungle or the Thrilla in Manila -- billionaire social media moguls Elon Musk and Mark Zuckerberg have been egging each other into a mixed martial arts cage match in Las Vegas.

In recent days, Twitter owner Musk and Facebook parent Meta CEO Zuckerberg - whose social media platforms duke it out daily for advertising dollars - have been trading bluster about going mano a mano.

According to UFC president Dana White, Musk and Mark are "dead serious" about fighting each other in a cage match. Reportedly, both the tech giants



have even spoken to White since using their social media platforms to agree on a fight.

Both guys are absolutely dead serious about this. They both want to do it DANA WHITE

The brouhaha began Tuesday when Musk tweeted he was up for a cage match with Zuckerberg, who's trained in ji-ujitsu. On Wednesday,

platform, asked Musk, 51, to "send location" for the proposed throwdown.

of

'Vegas Octagon,' Musk tweeted, referring to an events center where mixed martial arts (MMA) championship bouts are held. "If this is for real, I will do it," the Tesla chief tweeted.

He later said on Twitter that he had this great move that "I call 'The Walrus', where I just lie on top of my opponent & do noth-

ing". The odds that such a fight will really take place appear slim, though. The two CEOs have a history of drawing attention to themselves. In 2021, Zuckerberg rode a motorised surfboard while waving an American flag; Musk has generated headlines with his controversial tweets.

Asked about Zuckerberg's post Wednesday, a Meta spokesperson said, "The story speaks for itself."

Musk did not immediately respond to an emailed request for comments.

POST NEWS NETWORK

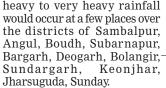
Bhubaneswar, June 24: The India Meteorological Department (IMD) Saturday said that a fresh low pressure area is likely to form over Bay of Bengal

Sunday. The cyclonic circulation formed over heavy rainfall northwest Bay of expected over Bengal adjoining north Odisha June 25 Odisha-West Bengal coasts extending up to 7.6 km above mean sea level

tilting southwestwards with height persisting. The circulation will convert into a low pressure area over the same region dur-

ing the next 24 hours, the IMD said in a bulletin, Saturday.

Under the influence of anticipated low pressure system,



As per the forecast of the IMD,





Zuckerberg, 39 who has posted pictures matches he's won on his company's Instagram



leisure

ASHTON KUTCHER SAYS HE'S THE 'LUCKIEST MAN ALIVE'

re

on the

OTT

plat-

form

AGENCIES

June 23

leased

ActorAshton Kutcher has paid a rare tribute to his wife Mila Kunis. Expressing himself on his instagram post featuring his wife he wrote "I'm the luckiest man alive,". The photo featured Kunis standing in front of a blue ocean.

McCARTNEY DEFENDS NEW BEATLES SONG FOR USING AI

The Beatles legend Paul McCartney has claimed there will be nothing 'artificially or synthetically created' on the upcoming new song. Last week, the 80-year-old announced that work had been finished on 'the final song' by the group using Artificial Intelligence (AI).



FORTUNE FORECAST GaneshaSpeaks.com accuracy • reliability • trust FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181

ARIES A lot of material progress

will be made today. And. says Ganesha, you will want to shower your family with abundance. You anyway need to pay more attention to your family. You will also feel like medi tating and will be grateful to the lord for his generosity

TAURUS

This day you are going to be very creative, very imagina tive in all that you do. Ganesha assures you that your skills and talents will be amply recognized and rewarded. Your colleagues and superiors are going to be pleasantly amazed at the way you perform today

GEMINI

You will face conflicting emotions today on account of burying your emotions deep in your heart. You could fly into a rage on account of this and take some hasty decisions. You will express your opinions harshly on vital matters. You need to care fully consider the pros and cons of any decision you take today, says Ganesha.

CANCER

You will plan for a good future. You mobilise all resources. Be warned before taking a step, counsels Ganesha Beware of middlemen and agents to save yourself from a major financial loss.

LEO

You consider yourself better than others. You will experience pride in your capabili ties today. You will put yourself first before others. You should hold onto you viewpoints strongly, but do not disregard good advise especially in matters related to business. You will be able to make substantial gains this way, says Ganesha

Family affairs will dominate and will take up most of your time today. Your persuasive skills and your charismatic personality will help you get a lot of work accomplished, says Ganesha. Emotional matters will demand your time, but you will take care of them rather easily. At night, you will spend the time sorting out intimate affairs with your partner.



Avneet on biggest risk she's taken in her life

Mumbai: Actress Avneet Kaur is currently rocking headlines for her big Hindi film debut with Nawazuddin Siddiqui in Tiku Weds Sheru.

In an interview with the news portal, Avneet Kaur revealed that she faced challenges speaking in English during the initial stages of her career.

The actress shared that she didn't know English well when she shifted to Mumbai. But gradually, she learned English and also picked up a bit of Marathi in school

Eloborating further, the actress added that she was a little weak in English. She was from Punjab and was not that fluent in English there, and her confidence was also a bit low.

When asked about the biggest risk she has taken in her life, Avneet added that the biggest risk for her was shifting to Mumbai because she had no idea

that her entire family would actually shift here. The actress further

added that her dad even relocated her entire business and everything for her. So, it was the biggest risk for all of them, not knowing what the future held. She was just 7 years old when she moved.

Directed by Sai Kabir Srivastav, the movie is produced by Kangana Ranaut under the banner of Manikarnika Films. The film was

Rhea opens up on being labeled ence of an abusive boyfriend and various

Mumbai: Actress Rhea Chakraborty, who serves as the Gang Leader on the youth adventure reality show MTV Roadies - Karm ya Kaand, has spoken up on the tough times she faced in life when she was la-

belled by people. In the upcoming episode Rhea will be seen sympathising with contestant Shuly Nada during the auditions over the subject of body positivity. Rhea will be seen re-

calling her experience where she chose to rise above and combat all the hatred, rather than succumb to it. She will mention: "A lot of people will say a lot of things. I have been labelled with many names, and many things have been said about me. But will I accept those labels? Will that stop me from living the life I want, certainly not. Let them go. Who are those people to comment on me?"

The upcoming episode will see Shuly Nadar, a gifted callisthenics athlete, sharing her trau matic ex peri

discriminatory labels she fought owing to her skin colour. Her story will leave all the gang leaders emotional. MTV Roadies - Karm ya

Kaand airs Saturday and Sunday on MTV India and Jio Cinema.

Sanu recounts when he sang in hotels for money

Mumbai: Legendary playback singer, Kumar Sanu will be seen recollecting his struggling times when he had to sing in hotels

to earn money, in India's Best Dancer 3.

Watching the performance of one of the con testants, Vipul Kandpal, choreo

graphed

by

Panka

Thapa to his iconic song Ladki Badi Anjaani Hai from the movie Kuch Kuch Hota Hai, Kumar Sanu recalled his own hard past whilst commending the con-

He said: "Vipul started working at a young age and so he could earn money to pay his own fees. I did the same thing. I used to sing in hotels for money. I met a music director there and got an opportunity.

same. I have reached here because of that, and I am sure Vipul too will have a great future. Have faith in your dream and continue to pursue it and never lose hope. Also, the concept of your act was very nice and there was a scene in the act because of which Aankho Ko Sukoon Mila.' Also, the episode will feature the Indian Idol

added: "Our story is the

contestants - Rishi Singh and Debosmita Roy, and dancers Sanam

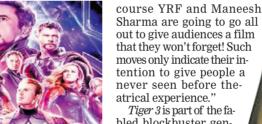
Johar. Shashank Khatri

Tiger 3 has an *Avenger: Endgame* connection

Mumbai: The makers of Salman Khan and Katrina Kaifstarrer upcoming offering Tiger 3 have onboarded top Hollywood action coordinator Chris Barnes, who has worked on Marvel's historic hit Avengers: Endgame.

Chris Barnes is a veteran in creating action spectacles and his bio suggests that he specialises in marine action. Chris has also worked in

huge Hollywood blockbusters like The Bourne Ultimatum. I



Tiger 3 is part of the fabled blockbuster generating YRF Spy Universe and is the third film from the Tiger franchise after

testant

office because of extra responsibilities on you. This will result in you paying less attention to your family members. You will also be more carefu about spending money today and will be wary of your mounting expenses

Am Legend, Joker, Doctor Strange, Spider-Man: Far From Home and Avengers: Infinity War among others

today and *Tiger 3* will bring its own, unique flavour to the

Universe is the coolest film markably distinct from Pathaan franchise that we have in India or War franchises.

"Action is the mainstay for these action entertainers and of IAN:

two humongous hits Ek Tha Tiger and Tiger Zinda Hai.

FUN



SCORPIO

Make it a point to believe only what you see and believe to avoid confusion and confrontations, says Ganesha. Keep your eyes and ears open, so you do not miss out on important happen ings around you.

SAGITTARIUS

Ganesha foresees a profitable day in the calender of all the businessmen. It's time to live your dream as the loan you were waiting for has been sanctioned now. Along with your near and dear ones, you will make your beloved feel special

CAPRICORN

Your jokes and humour will keep your loved ones in a happy mood. After all, laughter is the best medicine. Their desire to spend more time with you is a testimony to your friendly and jovial nature, feels Ganesha. Your tactics and approach towards problems will certainly get you noticed. You will enjoy being a part of a social circle.

There are times when nothing goes as per you plans and all you get at the end is sheer disappointment. Be prepared, if today is one of those unfavourable days, warns Ganesha, Problems at work place can be solved with diligence, patience, and positive approach.

PISCES

It is in your nature to love and care for others, and hence people will be extremely fond of you in return too. You will feel like helping others and forgetting and forgiving past wrongs. Post afternoon is a good time to sit down with your family and talk about important issues that need your attention, says Ganesha.

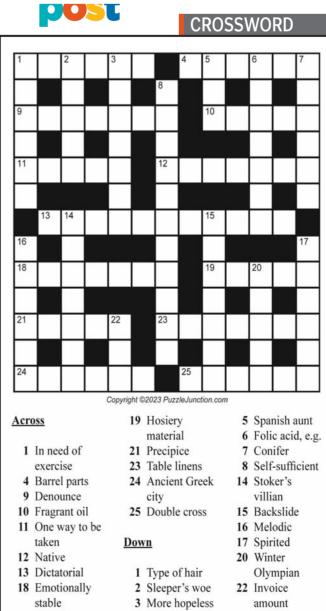












CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

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.

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

SOLUTIONS ACERBIC

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ERICA

SUDOKU

5

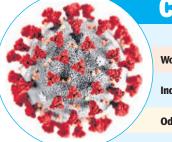


downtown



SAFETY FIRST

Officials inspect condition of one of the chariot wheels at Saradhabali in Puri, Saturday



COVID-19 TRACKER

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

Stay prepared for floods: CM

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 24: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Saturday directed officials to remain prepared for floods with monsoon setting in over the state.

Chairing a meeting of the State-Level Natural Calamity Committee, Patnaik said at least 24 districts were affected by heavy rains and floods last year.

'The period from June to October is crucial for us, during which drought, flood or cyclone may occur." he said.

He said the state managed the calamities successfully last year, and got Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose Award from the Centre for it.

'We should also remain prepared this year for any other kind of exigencies. Adequate measures must be taken in respect of early warning systems, rescue and relief operations, supply of drinking water, and health and veterinary services," Patnaik said.

The Odisha Disaster Rapid Action Force (ODRAF) and Fire Services should remain alert for immediate response at all times, he said.

OAV buildings inaugurated

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, June 24: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Saturday inaugurated 13 aca demic buildings and 28 hostel facilities of Odisha Adarsa Vidvalaya (OAV) Sanghatan and laid foundation for 276 Adarsha Vidvalava hostel buildings.

Addressing the gathering on this occasion, Patnaik said that this infrastructure will pave way for development of quality education ecosystem for our students.

He said that the Odisha Adarsha Vidyalayas were established to provide quality education in English to all deserving children, preferably from rural areas, and make these schools a role model for the country. Now the OAVs are functioning in all 314 blocks of Odisha, he said. The Chief Minister also congratulated all the new entrants who have been selected through the OAV Entrance Test, while he also felicitated meritorious students from CBSE Class X and XII, including those who qualified for NEET, JEE Advance. He expressed his hope that the constant effort of teachers, parents, school management and local community in general would transform OAVs to centres of excellence in coming years. Among others, School and Mass Education Minister Sudam Marndi, Chief Secretary Pradeep Kumar Jena, OAVs advisor Upendra Tripathy spoke on the occasion.

THE ODISHA DISASTER RAPID ACTION FORCE (ODRAF) AND FIRE SERVICES SHOULD REMAIN ALERT FOR IMMEDIATE **RESPONSE AT ALL TIMES**

THE CONTROL ROOMS IN THE DISTRICTS SHOULD BE FUNCTIONAL ROUND THE CLOCK

'SATARK' APP WHICH HAS BEEN DEVELOPED TO DISSEMINATE REAL-TIME UPDATES SHOULD BE USED AS A SINGLE-WINDOW PLATFORM TO COMMUNICATE INFORMATION TO PEOPLE

PROVISION FOR GREEN FODDER AND OPENING OF CATTLE CAMPS DURING FLOODS MUST BE ENSURED

The control rooms in the districts should be functional round the clock, he said, adding that 'SATARK' app which has been developed to disseminate real-time updates should be used as a single-window platform to communicate infor-

mation to people. Directing the Food Supplies department to ensure a sufficient

quantity of food, Patnaik asked the Fisheries and Animal Resources Development department to store adequate cattle feed in vulnerable and inaccessible areas Provision for green fodder

and opening of cattle camps during floods must be ensured, he said.

The Chief Minister asked Collectors to give special attention to pregnant women, differently-abled people, children, widows and the elderly during rescue and relief operations. There should be immediate

clearance of relief lines, repair and restoration of lifeline infrastructure and restoration of livelihoods in the aftermath of disasters, he added. The Chief Minister also re-

called the tragic train accident near Bahanaga station in Balasore in which 292 people died and hundreds of passengers were injured.

The state responded quickly, rescued the trapped passengers and shifted the injured to hospitals through a green corridor mobilising hundreds of doctors and paramedics thereby saving

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP Bhubaneswar/Sambalpur, June 24: Debrigarh Wildlife Sanctuary has one tiger, 82 leopards and a prey density of 46

per square km, as per the data obtained from the Wildlife Census (Sign Survey) conducted in the sanctuary from May 29 to June 3 by Hirakud Wildlife Division.

three days of the census was carnivore sign survey and the last three days was herbivore sign survey

Herbivore or prey density of Debrigarh was pegged at 46 per square km while chital/spotted deer population density is found to be the highest at 90 per sq km. Other species of animals which have the highest density include wild boar, gaur/bison, sambar deer and chowsingha (fourhorned antelope).

Around 1,099 carnivore signs were recorded during the census with a lion's share of bear and leopard signs.

The leopard count is stated to



More than 1,000 carnivore signs were recorded during the census with a majority being bear

informer on each information regarding traps/snares or illegal hooking or poaching incidence. Recently, three poachers with country guns have been arrested by night patrolling squads.

People's participation in wildlife conservation, protecting the interest of forest dependent communities surrounding Debrigarh, active informer networking, strict action and discipline among the frontline forest officials have helped boost the prey density,

said Forest department sources. After relocation of 400 families of four villages from Debrigarh Sanctuary, more space of around 500 hectare has been created for wild animals inside the sanctuary which has minmised the wildlife depredation and reduced man-animal conflict. Principal Chief

Conservator of



IN MEMORIAM: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik pays tribute to former CM Nabakrushna Choudhury on his death anniversary in Bhubaneswar, Saturday

1 tiger, 82 leopards in Debrigarh sanctuary

thousands of lives, he pointed out. ₹158cr connectivity boost for Malkangiri

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 24: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Saturday approved 21 road projects worth ₹158 crore covering 172.53 km in Malkangiri district.

According to the Chief Minister's Office (CMO), these road projects will improve connectivity in Chitrakonda, Kalimela, Korukonda and Podia blocks of the tribal-dominated district

The projects will be taken up by the Rural Development (RD) department under the Mukhva Mantri Sadak Yojana-Connecting Unconnected Villages in Difficult Areas (MMSY-CUVDA), it said. A pathbreaking initiative fully funded by the state government, MMSY-CUVDA reflects its commitment to improve rural connectivity in Maoist-affected and challenging areas.

to the infrastructure develop-

ment efforts in the state, it pointed out. The suggestions for these projects have been made in the public grievance interaction dur-

ing the Malkangiri district visit of 5T Secretary VK Pandian. The Chief Minister was briefed by the 5T Secretary on the significance of these projects, and the Chief Minister immediately

> prepare the estimates for the projects. The RD department took up the survey and estimates on top priority and submitted those for the government approval. According to the CMO, the (32km) road from Muduliguda to Amalibeda in Chitrakonda will be constructed at a cost of ₹30 crore, while Pollur to Kursanpalli, another key road (11.6km), will be built at a cost of ₹9 crore, the CMO said.

directed the RD department to

According to sources, the first

Feat for KIIT

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 24: In a remarkable feat, KIIT Deemedto-be-University here has secured 13th position among Indian universities, and 147th spot in Asia, in the prestigious Times Higher Education Asia University Ranking.

"This achievement is particularly noteworthy considering that KIIT was placed in the 201-250 range in the previous year's rankings. Moreover, KIIT has emerged as the leading university in Odisha, surpassing both public and private institutions in the region," said a KIIT staff.

The rankings were determined based on various criteria including teaching, research, citation, international outlook, and industry income. KIIT's strong performance across these areas contributed to its significant rise in the list.

It marks a significant boost

be approximately 82 while presence of one tiger is confirmed during the last 7-8 months. This is first time in last so many decades that a tiger is recorded in Debrigarh sanctuary during this census.

As many as 12 teams, with three operational control rooms, are monitoring the tiger moveand leopard signs

ment 24X7. Mobile numbers of all control rooms have been displayed in all villages adjoining the sanctuary. Regular meetings and informer networking are being carried out in 48 villages situated on Debrigarh boundary on priority basis. Self-help

trolled by cooperation and support of villagers

and EDCs are

sensitised for

tiger conser-

vation and

fire points

could be con

number of 💹

Mobile patrolling vehicles are covering the periphery of the sanctuary from 4pm to 6am next morning daily with sufficient squads and team leaders. This apart, ₹1,000 is given to

Popli, said, "The results have been encouraging due to participation of local community surrounding Debrigarh and hard work by frontline staffers. I have myself interacted with villagers and staffers and in future too they will continue their good work.'

Nabarangpur addl sub-Collector arrested for amassing 506% DA

GYAN RANJAN MOHAPATRA, OP

Bhubaneswar, June 24: A day after carrying out simultaneous raids at multiple places related to Nabarangpur Additional Sub-Collector Prasanta Kumar Rout on allegations of amassing disproportionate assets (DA), Vigilance sleuths Saturday arrested the OAS officer on charges of possessing 506 per cent DA.

Vigilance sources said a case has been registered against Rout and his spouse under multiple sections of Prevention of Corruption (Amendment) Act, 2018. During searches, the anticorruption wing sleuths claimed to have found a two-storey building at Kanan Vihar in Bhubaneswar and five plots four in prime locations of Cuttack and Bhubaneswar and one 'benami' plot at Umerkote of Nabarangpur district.

During the search operation, Vigilance sleuths had recovered ₹3,02,30,800 in cash from Rout's Bhubaneswar and Nabarangpur residences. Bank and insurance deposits over ₹92.34 lakh, including ₹38.64 lakh deposits in two 'benami' accounts, gold and silver jewellery and household articles worth over ₹27.27 lakh were also recovered.

In addition to these assets, it

was found that Rout has spent ₹87 lakh on education of his daughter and son.

About the case, Vigilance SP M Radhakrishnan said, "As per our estimates so far, Rout has amassed unaccounted money to the tune of ₹5,21,09,659 which is 506 per cent of his known sources of income. He failed to provide the source of the money and assets. A case in this connection has been registered at Rourkela Vigilance police station. He has been taken into custody.'

"He has opened many bank accounts and handled cash transactions through them. We have seized several passbooks and ATM cards from him. We are in the process of verifying all the details and we will come to a conclusion soon enough," he added.

Vigilance sources said that Rout was arrested November 6, 2018 during his tenure as block development officer (BDO) of Bisra in Sundargarh district while taking ₹1 lakh bribe. He was place under suspension. He later joined service as Additional-Sub-Collector of Nabarangpur January 18, 2020.

BRAVE AT HEART: Two persons perform a daredevilry show in Chandini Chowk area of Cuttack, Saturday OP PHOTO











downtown

₹11.17cr released to 34 Aahaar Societies of state

Odisha now has a total of 167 Aahaar centres, which are spread across all 115 ULBs of the state. Each day through this initiative, approximately one lakh people are served food at an affordable price

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, June 24: Giving a push to the Mission Shaktiled Aahaar initiative in urban local bodies (ULBs), Housing and Urban Development department has released Rs 11, 17, 25,821 to 34 District Aahaar Societies and City Aahaar Societies for the second quarter of financial year 2023-24.

"The fund would facilitate smooth distribution of quality food in the 167 Aahaar centres of the state and ensure the SHGs do not face any problems," said, Aahaar nodal officer Sarada Prasad Panda.

Aahaar, which once began as a modest effort of the state government to ensure food security of common citizens, with

Int'l conference on Nursing Sc & Healthcare

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Indonesia, June 24: Society for Nursing Practices (SFNP), headed by Odia academic entrepreneur Rudra Bhanu Satpathy, in collaboration with Radhikabai Meghe Memorial College of Nursing, Datta Meghe Institute of Higher Education & Research, Maharashtra and Teerthanker Parshvnath College of Nursing, Teerthanker Mahaveer University, Moradabad,



Uttar Pradesh organised 6th International Conference on Nursing Science and Healthcare in Indonesia. The two-dav conference was organised virtually from June 16 which brought together nursing professionals from across the world. The con-



POST NEWS NETOWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 24: Siksha

'O' Anusandhan Deemed to be

University (SOA) Saturday signed

Understanding (MoU) with the

ICMR-Regional Medical Research

Centre (ICMR-RMRC) here for

mutual cooperation in the field

As per provisions of the MoU,

both ICMR-RMRC and SOA

would undertake joint collabo-

rative research by applying for

taskforce studies and projects

for state, national and interna-

force for five years, was signed

by SOA Vice-Chancellor Pradipta

Kumar Nanda and ICMR-RMRC

Pati said the MoU contained

several aspects as regards health

Director Sanghamitra Pati.

The MoU, which will be in

tional grants.

of academics and research.

Memorandum

only 21 Aahaar centres in five municipal corporations, has now gained a powerful presence.

"Odisha now boasts a total of 167 Aahaar centres, which are spread across all 115 ULBs of the state. Each day through this initiative, approximately one lakh people are served food at an affordable price. The scheme ensures that no one goes to bed

hungry. As of today, over 150 million meals have been served to those in need," informed the official.

Notably, to encourage community participation, the state government had allowed engagement of Mission Shakti selfhelp groups (SHGs) in the dayto- day operations of this programme.

'The responsibility for operating and maintenance of all 167 Aahaar centres and 27 Aahaar kitchens have been handed over to SHGs. To support the financial needs of the SHGs, the government has directed ULBs to offer all necessary assistance and ensure timely release of remuneration to them by the 7th of each month without fail," Panda informed.

research and public health con-

cerning Odisha. As SOA was a

multi-disciplinary university

and ICMR-RMRC handled di-

verse research activities, both

could complement each other

to strong bonding as both or-

ganisations could complement

Sanghamitra Mishra, Dean

of Institute of Medical Sciences

and SUM Hospital, SOA's fac-

ulty of medical sciences, Neeta

Mohanty, Dean of Institute of

Dental Sciences, SOA's faculty of

dental sciences, Manas Kumar

Mallick, Director, Pramod Kumar

Panda, Chief Administrative

Officer of SOA, Subhendu Kumar

Acharya and Mahesh Chandra

Sahu, Scientists at ICMR-RMRC

were present during the sign-

ing of the MoU.

Nanda said the MoU will lead

and become stronger.

each other.



MAGAZINE RELEASE: Dignitaries including linguist Debi Prasanna Pattanayak, Dharitri and OrissaPOST Editor Tathagata Satpathy, Kendrapara MLA Sashi Bhushan Behera and social activist Pravas Acharya releasing magazine 'Pabani' during 12th Children's Festival organised by Saraswat Samaj in Bhubaneswar, Saturday

'SOA & ICMR-RMRC could Odissi performers enthrall audience complement each other'

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

New Delhi, June 24: People gathered at the Ratha Jatra Mahotsav-2023, organised by the Jagannath temple in Thyagraj Nagar, here witnessed splendid Odissi performances by disciples of Odissi maestro Kasturi Pattanaik, associated with the Sankalp Foundation.

The evening began with the auspicious 'Mangalacharan or Pushpanjali,' set to the melodious rendition of 'Hari Om Namo Narayan' by the renowned artiste Anup Jalota.

It was followed by the mesmerizing 'thei ghara nata,' featuring the soulful 'Raga Majkhamaj' and 'Taal Triputta.' gracefully accompanied by intermittent Khemta beats.

The piece, conceptualised. composed, and choreographed by Pattanaik, holds a special place in the Odissi dance repertoire.

The third performance showcased the art of 'Abhinaya,' expressing deep emotions through movements of ʻUma Maheswara Stotram', originally written by Adi Shankaracharya and expanded by Sanskrit Scholar Nityananda Mishra as a celestial homage



Raut.

Sunita Manikarnika, Shubhashree

Pradhan, and Ankita Jena, who

gracefully presented the

'Mangalacharan' and 'Abhinaya.'

performed by Apara Maity,

Abhirami A. Banashree Dhal.

Jaydisha Mohanty, Anushka

Ghosh, Priyanka Dash, and

The Narayani Pallavi was

beautifully portrayed by

Abhirami A, Apara Maity,

Banashree Dhal, Priyanka Dash

and Reenika Mohapatra.

Reenika Mohapatra.

The 'Thei Ghara Nata' was

to Lord Shiva.

The choreography for the piece was skillfully crafted by Pattanaik, while the music composition was handled by Guru Swapneswar Chakraborty.

The grand finale featured 'Narayani Pallavi', a mesmerizing composition based on Raag Narayani and Taal Ektali. Both the dance and music of this Pallavi were intricately composed by Pattanaik, showcasing her artistic brilliance.

The performances were brought to life by dancers Anita

NHPC-GRIDCO ink MoU

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, June 24: NHPC Limited, the largest hydropower development organisation in India, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with GRIDCO, Odisha, for "development of pumped storage projects (PSPs) and renewable energy in the state of Odisha". The MoU envisages setting up self-identified pumped storage projects of at least 2,000 MW and renewable energy projects (ground-mounted solar projects / floating solar projects) of at

The MoU was signed June 23 by NHPC Strategy Business Development and Consultancy Executive Director Rajat Gupta and GRIDCO Managing Director Trilochan Panda in the presence of Department of Energy Additional Chief Secretary and **GRIDCO** Chairperson Nikunja Bihari Dhal, NHPC Director (Projects) Biswajit Basu and other senior officers of both or ganisations



least 1,000 MW in the state.

Biswal,

ference was aimed at having a discussion on advanced global healthcare. Speaking on the event Satpathy, who is the CEO of SFNP, said, "It is a matter of pride for me that Odisha is the first state in the country to have a fully functional Directorate of Nursing since 2013. As the world celebrates the International Year of the Nurse and Midwife, the conference emphasised on how strengthening nursing is crucial for achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and nurses & midwives globally must be ready to seize this opportunity. SFNP is looking forward to take nursing in Odisha to the global forum." More than 250 abstracts were submitted for the conference, and after a rigorous peer review process, over 150 abstracts were accepted for presentation.

e-challans for not affixing HSRP

Bhubaneswar: As many as 455 vehicle owners were issued with echallans for not applying/affixing HSRP (High Security Registration Plate) Friday, according to the State Transport Authority (STA). The STA has informed that a total of 637 vehicles were found plying without HSRP across Odisha June 23. According to the Rule 50 of CMVR. 1989, all the vehicles have to be affixed with HSRP, the STA has added.

POST NEWS NETWORK Bhubaneswar, June 24: In a significant development, the ADGP of Railway and Coastal Security, forts

Dayal Gangwar, chaired a coordination meeting for the first time at the town hall in Puri. The primary objective of the meeting was to discuss and strategize the safety and security measures for the Car festival.

The meeting saw the participation of officers from various departments including GRP. Coast Guard, Navy, Marine Police, Fire Service, and Fishery Department. The collaborative gathering provided an opportunity for the attendees to share insights, coordinate efforts, and formulate effective plans to ensure the smooth conduct of the festival while prioritizing the safety and security of the rail-

way station and coastal areas. A briefing parade on the deployment of forces and their duties was conducted June 18, in Puri by the ADGP of Railways and Coastal Security followed by field briefing and deployment

by DIG, SCRB, Satyajit Naik. A control room for marine and coastal security was established at Penthakata marine police station. Officers and personnel from the Indian Navy, Coast Guard and Fisheries department coordinated their ef-

An advanced light helicopter of the Coast Guard conducted an aerial reconnaissance June 19 after taking off at 2:30pm and landing at 4:30 pm. A mock drill for medical assistance and casualty salvage was carried out by the Indian Navy medical and lifeguard team at Baliapanda and Golden Sea Beach in Puri June 19.

Communication was established with the helicopter, marine police stations, FIBs (Fast Interceptor Boats), and fishing trawlers, provided by the Fisheries Department since June 19th, 2023, and found to be satisfactory. A coordinated mock drill in-

volving all stakeholders was conducted on June 19th, 2023. Forces were deployed June 20 including one fast patrolling ves-

sel, one FIB, and the deployment of an advanced light helicopter by Coast Guard. The Navy set up medical and lifeguard teams at Golden Beach and Baliapanda Beach. They handled one drowning case, transferring the pa-



Coastal and railway security on watch amid Ratha Jatra

tient to the district hospital for treatment.

The Fisheries department deployed one mechanized fishing boat and three motorized fishing boats at various marine police stations for sea patrolling. Marine police stations with 12-ton boats were deployed to enforce criminal laws and provide security in the territorial waters of Puri Coast.

A control room was set up, with nodal officers from the Coast Guard, Navy, and Fisheries Department overseeing operations under the supervision of AIGP (Assistant Inspector General of Police) and DSP (Deputy Superintendent of Police) of Marine and Coastal Security

Regular inspections were carried out by the ADGP Gangwar, DIGP Satyajit Naik, AIGP and DSP of marine and coastal security at designated posts established for Ratha Jatra 2023. Good work done by coastal security

Coastal security successfully rescued a young boy who was in deep water. This kind of rescue requires skill and prompt action to ensure the safety of the individual. It's commendable that they were able to bring the boy to safety and prevent a potential drowning incident. Another commendable res-

cue performed by coastal security involved a woman who had twisted her ankle, which may have resulted in a fracture.

The coastal security team demonstrated their commitment by rescuing the woman, offering her the necessary medical attention, and ensuring her wellbeing

Railway Security for Ratha Jatra

An empowered group was formed to ensure proper accommodation arrangements for the officers and personnel mobilised for the festival in consultation with the railway authorities, Puri District Police and civil administration.

June 21, one coordination meeting took place at Puri GRPS, chaired by the ADGP of Railway and coastal security, with senior officers from Odisha Police, GRP and RPF in attendance.

Important issues were discussed, and decisions were made, including joint deployment of RPF and GRP staff for effective communication, timely sharing of train movement information, eviction of unauthorised shops/stalls, and restrictions on unauthorised parking in the railway area.

Special actions taken during the festival included the introduction of a Face Recognition System at the Integrated Control Room for identifying criminals, the establishment of control rooms in crowded areas for assisting passengers and keeping a lookout for criminal activities, traffic management outside the main road of the station, distribution of two-wheelers to officers for easier movement, and the use of lighter vehicles for

transportation. Good work done by railway security

The railway security personnel have accomplished commendable work, as evidenced by the following instances:

A missing senior citizen, a 71vear-old male, was successfully rescued by the Puri GRP staff. The CCTV footage from Puri Railway Station played a vital role in locating the individual, and he was reunited with his relatives.

During a joint operation with Childline, Puri, three minor children were rescued on the day of the Car festival. The collaborative effort ensured the safety and well-being of these children.

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NHRC ISSUES CONDITIONAL SUMMONS TO **KORAPUT DM** AGENCIES

Kendrapara, June 24: The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has issued conditional summons to the Koraput District Collector for his failure in submitting the requisite Action Taken Report (ATR) in the violation of human rights

of one Guru Pangi. The NHRC, acting on a petition filed by Human Rights Activist Radhakanta Tripathy, passed the order Thursday.

Tripathy in his petition alleged that due to the failure and negligence of revenue authorities and district administration of Koraput, the correction of records under PMAY and BKY was not done for which the victim Guru Pangi was deprived of the benefits of various social welfare schemes of the Odisha government

The commission took cognizance in the matter March 24, 2023 and had asked for an ATR on the aforesaid issue within four weeks.

However, no intimation was made in this regard to the commission in the issue for which a reminder was also served March 12, 2023. As the district administration failed to submit the requisite document within stipulated time period, the commission has issued conditional summons to the District Magistrate, u/s 13 of the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993, to appear in person before the Commission August 31 next along with requisite report.

In case the requisite report is received in the Commission on or before 24.08.2023, his personal appearance shall stand dispensed with.

Youth dies in train mishap

Bhadrak: A youth died Friday near Baudapur railway station in this district after being hit by Jan Shatabdi Express. The deceased was identified as Abinash Rout of Ichhapur village under Bhadrak block and district. As per the report, Abinash was crossing the railway track when the speeding Jan Shatabdi Express hit him. He died on the spot. Later GRP police seized the body and registered a case of unnatural death. The body was sent to the district headquarters hospital for post-mortem.

Maoist posters in Kandhamal

Body camera to track criminals' movement

The development came after the Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPRD) issued a standard operating procedure (SOP) asking the jail authorities to attach body cameras to the uniforms of officials

POST NEWS NETWORK

Berhampur, June 24: With seve eral hardcore criminals lodged in the Berhampur Circle Jail, warders will put on body cameras to keep track of the movement and activities of the inmates, a report said.

The development came after the Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPRD) issued a standard operating procedure (SOP) asking the jail authorities to attach body cameras to the uniforms of jail officials. Therefore, the Berhampur Circle Jail authorities have decided to follow the SOP

Being the most sensitive jail in South Odisha due to the presence of a large number of hardened criminals, the security of the inmates in the Berhampur Circle Jail has always remained a priority for the officials.

This new system will soon be implemented in the Berhampur Circle jail, where efforts have been launched to train the warders. Later, a special control room will be set up on its premises, from



where officials will keep a tab on the shots being recorded in body cameras. After this new surveillance system is implemented, all the inmates in and outside the wards will remain under the close watch of the authorities.

Reports say that there have been several hardcore criminals lodged in this jail for the last several years who have turned the jail into their transit home. Even some of them have become so powerful and influential that they are calling the shots from their cells. The jail also houses Maoist

leader Sabysachi Panda and many other rebels from the banned outfit. Even persons arrested in illegal cannabis and drug trade, interstate dacoity, looting, and contract killing cases have been lodged in this jail.

Sources said that the jail authorities have installed CCTV cameras in every ward of the jail to keep track of the movements of the inmates inside the jail premises.

Besides, they have also deployed armed police personnel to keep a close watch on the inmates from the watch towers erected around the jail. Despite these measures, infighting among the inmates is often reported in the jail.

The authorities have failed to keep a record of cases of infighting and violence that take place out-

डंडियन बैंक 🦝 🛛 Indian Bank

side due to the absence of any surveillance system.

In such circumstances, the body camera will help the jail officials keep a watch on the movements of the history-sheeters lodged in the jail.

The body camera will also help jail personnel keep a close watch on the hardcore criminals while they are being taken to court for an appearance or to the hospital for treatment.

There are instances when hardcore criminals tried to flee, taking advantage of slack security measures during their production in court or while being rushed to a hospital. In these situations, the body camera will come in handy for the jail authorities.

Contacted, jailor Satya Narayan Behera confirmed the development, stating that the authorities have decided to install body cameras in the uniforms of the warders. Steps will be taken in this regard after getting clearance from the higher-ups. The jail has the capacity to house 914 inmates, but currently there are 833 inmates in the jail, he added

Woman dies falling off bike

POST NEWS NETWORK

Tihidi, June 24: A 45-year-old woman died Friday after she fell off a motorcycle at Kanpada Chhaka on Mangarajpur-Ishwarpur road under this block in Bhadrak district.

The deceased was identified as Jyotshnarani Bhanja of Palatpur village under Nandapur panchayat in the district. The incident occurred pillion when rider Jvotshnarani was on her way to Kuanrchatar village under Gobindapur panchayat to at-

tend the funeral of her uncle \rightarrow on a motorcycle.

She fell from the bike as the rider applied a sudden brake to prevent the bike from hitting an ox on the road. After suffering injuries to her head, Jyotshnarani was rushed to a nearby hospital in a critical condition. However, the doctor declared her dead.

Police registered a case of unnatural death and sent the body for post-mortem. The deceased Jvotshnarani was the elder sister of Manas Ranjan Nayak, a journalist from Tihidi.



Interested candidates may apply online on Prasar Bharati web link https://applications.prasarbharati.org/ within 15 days from the date of publication in newspaper along with self attested copies of supporting documents. All details are available on above link.

In case of any difficulty in submission of application, it may be e-mailed to: hrcpbs@prasarbharati.gov.in along with screenshot of erro

POSSESSION NOTICE

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SIMILIPAL WILDLIFE SANCTUARY 10 poachers arrested for deputy ranger's murder



POST NEWS NETWORK

Baripada/Thakurmunda, June 24: Eight days after a deputy ranger was shot dead by poachers at Similipal Wildlife Sanctuary in Mayurbhanj district, police arrested 10 poachers in this connection. Saturday

Two country-made guns, two bows, three arrows, two axes, iron bars and lathis were seized from their possession.

The accused were identified as Turi Kandean, 30, Ramai Kandean, 61, Mora Ho, 43, Manikram Kandean, 43, Gopabandhu Kandean, 32, Dillip Kandean, 25, Ramsingh Gundua, 32, Singa Ho, 32, Gameya Ho, 32, and Chanmpai Ho, 26, of Edelbeda, Burusahi village under Thakurmunda police limits.

Police also conducted search

Similipal while more poachers will be arrested and weapons seized with the help of a joint task force of police, he added.

ranger

Earlier, the team detained 10 persons in two days and formed search operation and cyber cell teams following the progress in investigation. They were arrested after credible evidence was found against the accused. The poachers had entered the jungle to poach animals for meat and their body remains. Any

The SP said that a joint team of senior police personnel comprising Karanjia SDPO Sudarshan Gangoi, DSP Ajay Kumar Barik, Raruan IIC Prabhu Kalvan Acharya, Thakurmunda IIC Ranju Hasini Kulu and Jashipur IIC Panchanan Mohanty launched an investigation following the murder of the forest deputy

🛆 इलाहाबाद	ALLAHABAD		3/1B, IRC Villa ubaneswar-75		APPENDIX - IV [Rule-8(1)] (for Immovable property)
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Late Chakradhar P Narayan Pal, S/o.	tan Kumar Pal, S/o.: al /Guarantor: Mr. Rabi Late Charkradhar Pal,	+ interest and other expenses thereon	19.06.2023	74/1, Plot No.: 236/39 at House No.: HIG-05	el of EM property at Khata No.: 1(Part), Area: 2461 sq.ft, situated 5, Composit Housing Scheme at
Both are at: VIM - Bhubaneswar - 75	286, Sailashree Vihar, 1021			Bounded by North: Hous	se No.: HIG 6, South: House No.:

NAYAPALLI BRANCH

Place: Bhubaneswar, Date: 23.06.2023



Baliguda: Maoist posters were sighted Saturday at Kambarikia Chhak near Sudra under Baliguda police limits in Kandhamal district. The Kandhamal. Kalahandi. Boudh. and Nayagarh (KKBN) divisional committee of the CPI Maoist has put up these posters, a report said. In the posters, the Red rebels have called for a 12 hour bandh Sunday in Kandhamal. Kalahandi. Boudh and Nayagarh districts against the alleged police oppression and fake encounters.

tions at Edelbeda, Kashibeda, Saleibeda and nearby villages under Saleibeda panchavat and seized two country made guns from the house of Jenamani Sov at Mathurasahi village. This was stated by SP B Gangadhar at a press meet held here, Saturday

A case was registered at the Thakurmunda police station and the accused persons produced in the court, he said

Meanwhile, a search operation is underway in villages on the foothills of

other person involved with them will soon be arrested, the SP added.

Notably, deputy forest ranger Mathi Hansda was shot dead by poachers while he was patrolling in Gamuchhajharan area under Barahakamuda forest range of South division of Similipal Tiger Reserve, late June 16 night. The officials spotted poachers while patrolling and tried to stop them when one of the poachers shot at them. Hansda died after a bullet fired by the poachers hit his chest.

TIMBER SCARCIT	Y FOR RATH	A JAT	RA	
Forest dept grows	'phasi'	for	char	iots

The plantation drive has been undertaken on a patch of 10-hectare at Sarabadi and Bajra regions of the Gumma forest area under the Badagarh range



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Berhampur, June 24: In a bid to address timber scarcity during annual Ratha Jatra in Puri, the state Forest department has planted around 30,000 'phasi' saplings in Ganiam district, according to a report. This specific variety of log is required for the construction of chariots during the festival in Puri.

The wheels of the chariots are made from 'phasi' logs. As many as 72 such logs of 14 feet in length and six feet in girth are required for making the wheels of the three chariots of the deities every year.

"To meet the requirement for timber in the future, we have planted around 30,000 phasi and 2,000 neem plants in two major areas of Ghumusar South Forest Division in Ganjam district," said Prabhakar Nayak, assistant conservator of forests (ACF) of the division.

The plantation was made on a patch of 10-hectare in Sarabadi and Bajra of the Gumma forest area under the Badagarh range, the official added. The plantation was undertaken after procuring the saplings from different forest divisions, said Nayak adding most of the saplings are alive due to proper care and preservation.

"We will be replacing the plants that have died in the area. We have raised a nursery for the replacement of the dead plants," said the ACF.

While the 'phasi' plants were inside the area, the neem trees were planted on the boundaries. The entire area has been enclosed with green fencing to prevent the entry of outsiders. Besides, forest guards have been deployed to protect the plants, he further said.

The forest personnel will take care of the trees till they become mature, which will take around 50 years, the ACF said.

The Srimandir administration has been facing difficulty in collecting the woods, particularly the 'phasi', for some years due to the dwindling of the species in the forest areas. With little choice left, the administration has been collecting this species from private lands as donation, it was learnt.

Ghumusar South and North divisions in the district have supplied some logs, including 'phasi' to the temple administration this year for the construction of chariots, said Sudarshan Behera, Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) Ghumusar North, who is also in-charge of Ghumusar South.

Mayar, Dhubaneswar, Ouisna-751001, 3) Sint. Subhalaxini Misina, W/O. Sh Ashutosh Fauni, L5/5, Ohit-	
3, Labour Colony, Kharavel Nagar, Bhubaneswar, Odisha-751001	Cost and expenses
Property No.1: All that piece and parcel of land and building belonging to Sri Ashutosh Padhi situated ov	er Plot No.: 6(P), Khata
No.: 474/1607, corresponding to IDCO Plot No.: A-24/D, in Revenue Mouza: Patia, Chandaka Industria	I Estate, P.S.: Infocity,
Tahasil: Bhubaneswar, Dist.: Khurda to an extent of Area: Ac.0.197 Dec. (8581 Sqft), Bounded by North: I	Road, South: IDCO Plot
No.: A/27 & A/29, East: IDCO Plot No.: 24/C, West: IDCO Plot No.: A/28.	
	FIG 666

Reserve Price: ₹2,17,48,590/- / Earnest Money to be deposited: ₹21,74,859/- / Bid Increment Amount : ₹40,000/-PURI MAIN BRANCH, Infront of Town Police Station, Grand Road, Puri, Ph. No.: 7000355515, Email: ubin0539449@unionbankofindia.bank

Name & Address of Borrowers /Guarantors:

Amount Due Borrowers: 1) Mr. Laxman Sahoo, 2) Mrs. Durgamani Sahoo, W/o: Mr. Laxman Sahoo, Both are At ₹ 4,91,573/- as on Radhagobinda Lane, P.O.: Markandeswar Sahi, Puri, Dist.: Puri, Odisha-752001 / Guarantors: 24.02.2012 with 1) Mr. Purna Chandra Sahoo, S/o: Laxman Sahoo, 2) Mr. Manmohan Sahoo, S/o: Laxman Sahoo, Both further interest. Cost and expenses are At: Radhagobinda Lane, P.O.: Markandeswar Sahi, Puri, Dist.: Puri, Odisha-752001

Property No.2: All that piece and parcel of Land and Building situated at Mouza: Dolamandap Sahi, Puri, Khata No.: 507, Plot No. 229, Area: Ac.0.032dec., standing in the name of Mr. Laxman Sahoo, Bounded by North: Budhima Thakurani, South: CC Road, East: Kashinath Pradhan, West: Jhali Sahoo.

Reserve Price: ₹19,00,000/- / Earnest Money to be deposited: ₹1,90,000/- / Bid Increment Amount : ₹10,000/-

Name & Address of Borrowers/Co-applicants/Co-obligants/Guarantors/Mortgagors:	Amount Due
1) Mr. Prasanna Kumar Mohapatra, S/o.: Late Bhagawan Mohapatra, 2) Mrs. Kunja Lata	
Mohapatra, Both are At: Khakimatha, Nua Sahi, Hariom Lodge, Puri, P.S.: Kumbharpara,	
Dist.: Puri, Odisha - 752001	Cost and expenses

roperty No.3: All that piece and parcel of Land at Plot No.: 183/550, Khata No.: 264/330, Mouza: Puri Sahar Unit No.: 33 Siddha Mahabir, DSRO: Puri, Dist.: Puri, State: Odisha, PIN - 752002, Standing in the name of Mr. Prasanna Kumar Mohapatra, Bounded by North: Sridhar Mohapatra, South: Bijaya Krushna Das, East: Loknath Mohanty, West: Shantilata Mohanty

Reserve Price: ₹35,00,000/- / Earnest Money to be deposited: ₹3,50,000/- / Bid Increment Amount : ₹20,000/-

Name & Address of Borrowers/Co-applicants/Co-obligants/Guarantors/Mortgagors:	Amount Due
 M/s. Laxmi Nrushingha Store, Prop.: Mr. Ranjan Kumar Nayak, At: Madhuban Lane - 2, Nabakalebar Road, Dist.: Puri, Odisha - 752002, 2) Mr. Sujit Kumar Nayak, S/o.: Bhikari Charan Nayak, At: Jagannathpur, Tadasramhanspur, Dist.: Puri, Odisha - 752012 	

Property No.4: All that piece and parcel of Land at Khata No.: 231/298, Plot No.: 364/904, Sthitiban, Area: Ac.1.50 Dec., Sub Divisional Basti Plot No.: 1/C, Village/Mouza: Alikia, P.S.: Puri Sadar No.: 148, Tahasil: Puri Sadar No.: 712, DSRO: Puri, Dist.: Puri, State:Odisha, PIN - 752002, Standing in the name of Mr. Ranjan Kumar Nayak, Bounded by North: 20" Wide Road, South: Rev Plot No.: 364. East: Sub Plot - 1/D. West: Sub Plot - 1/C(P)

Reserve Price: ₹5,50,000/- / Earnest Money to be deposited: ₹55,000/- / Bid Increment Amount : ₹20.000/-

Name & Address of Borrower/Guarantors/Co-Borrowers:	Amount Due
Borrower: Smt. Jayashree Mohapatra, W/o: Ajit Kishore Mohapatra, Surangi Matha Lane, Harachandi Sahi, Puri, Odisha-752001 / Guarantors/ Co-Borrowers: 1) Sri Ajit Kishore Mohapatra, S/o: Late Jugal Kishore Mohapatra, Hajuri Lane, Harachandi Sahi, Puri, Odisha-752001, 2) Sri Biswajit Mohapatra, S/o: Ajit Kishore Mohapatra, Manikarnika Sahi, Hajuri Lane, Banamber Temple, Puri, Odisha-752001	30.06.2022 with
Property No.5: All that part and parcel of Land with Building bearing Plot No.: 51, Khata No.: 149, Area: A Manikarnika Sahi, Harachandi Sahi, Surangi Matha Lane, Puri, Odisha, Standing in the name of Smt. Ja W/o: Ajit Kishore Mohapatra, Bounded by East: Road, West: Jagannath Rana, North: Road, South: Bana K Reserve Price: ₹19,15,600/- / Earnest Money to be deposited: ₹1,92,000/- / Bid Increment Amou	ayashree Mohapatra Khuntia.
DATE & TIME OF E-AUCTION : 27.07.2023 between 11:00 A.M. to 05:00 P.M. (with 10 minutes unlimited auto extension), e-Auction Website : www.mstcecomment	
LAST DATE FOR SUBMISSION OF EMD : On or before the commencement of E-Au	uction
For Registration and Login and Bidding Rules visit:	
https://www.mstcecommerce.com/auctionhome/ibapi/index.jsp	
For detailed terms and condition of the sale, please refer to the link provided in	
https://www.unionbankofindia.co.in/english/home.aspx or https://ibapi.in/Sale_Infe	o_Home.aspx
For further details please contact to Respective Branch	
This May also be treated as Notice under rule 8(6) / rule 9(1) of Security Interest (Enforcement) Ru Borrower(s)/ Guarantor(s) of the said loan about the holding of E-Auction Sale on the above me	

Place : Bhubaneswar, Date: 23.06.2023

Sd/- Authorized Officer, Union Bank of India







FOCUS BANKING

The principle of Yoga is the turning of one or of all powers of our human existence into a means of reaching divine Being.

SRI AUROBINDO

Action Sans Thought

🗂 2019, energised by his terrific Lok Sabha win the Prime Minister set off a series of ideological reforms. The gutting of Article 370, L the legislation of the citizenship law and the criminalisation of Muslim divorce. All these came from the Union and the BJP states, similarly enthused, wrote laws criminalising interfaith marriage and on beef and hijab and such things. The Ayodhya judgement also came around the same time. December 2019 was the high watermark of this period when there seemed to be no opposition to implement the nationwide NRC and CAA. Unfortunately for the Prime Minister a series of reversals followed the flow of victories. Protests across India ended the NRC-CAA policy. Though it was in the BJP's manifesto it remains unimplementable three and a half years later. The Census was likely also sacrificed because of this. In Ladakh, the strong leader narrative began to unravel quickly as discretion was chosen over valour (unlike Nehru). Kashmir remains a mess and the only part of undivided India today not under democratic rule. Events in Manipur have shown fully the absence of application and out paid to claims to good (or even any) governance. COVID affected the world but few nations saw the extreme trauma of the second wave and India's overflowing crematoria became a global

story. Opposing ordinances passed without debate during the pandemic, the farmers' protest forced the government to reverse its laws and issue an apology.

Since that period of reversals no new masterstroke has come. And with good reason: when action without thinking produces failures and stalemates then one most pause to consider what went wrong

And yet now there is talk of the Uniform Civil Code being floated as one of the key issues of the 2024 election. Like Kashmir and the NRC it is on the party manifesto, which says that "BJP believes that there cannot be gender equality till such time India adopts a Uniform Civil Code, which protects the rights of all women, and the BJP reiterates its stand to draft a Uniform Civil Code. drawing upon the best traditions and har monising them with the modern times."

There is a level of complexity required in this harmonisation and that is one of the reasons it has not happened till now. The BJP inserted the promise most recently into its manifesto in Karnataka, but it had little traction and that is for good reason. It is not only one community that will see its personal laws on inheritance, adoption, marriage and divorce change but all communities if there is a UCC.

The NDA has 350 Lok Sabha and 100 Rajya Sabha seats. If it has a draft bill on the UCC it should table and pass it. Talking about it is a waste of time when one is already in power and able to affect the change one wants.

However there is a larger issue. The second term of Modi has so far delivered an average GDP growth rate of under 4 per cent per year. COVID is only partly to blame. The economy had slowed before the pandemic same reasons that are slowing it now. Mainly insufficient private investment, flat private consumption and flat merchandise exports. The first because of a lack of confidence in corporate India about the medium term economic future; the second because slow growth has cut what people have earned and can therefore spend; and the last because our exports rise and fall with global trade which is currently on decline. Unemployment is over 7 per cent and labour participation levels at 40 per cent remain way below where they were 30 years ago.

These things will not be solved by a Uniform Civil Code. Just as these things were not solved by a new temple, another statue, change in the status of Kashmir or persecuting minorities through law. The large problems will remain. What floating the UCC balloon will do instead is to keep the focus of politics and media away from the economy, from Ladakh, from Manipur and Kashmir. Or at least attempt that and we must accept that previous attempts have been successful. A generation grew up thinking the main issue of Indian democracy should be what was ultimately a dispute over property in one city. A significant part of national energy was expended on Ayodhya and the nation emerged from it exhausted. The same period also saw what is called liberalisation and the expansion of caste reservations but these were normalised and accepted. The communal issue was kept going. There will be many ways of responding to the BJP on this from political and civil society opposition to litigation in courts (which will be inevitable) and all of these are valid. But there are two that also merit consideration, particularly for those people who have no strong feelings about the Uniform Civil Code. And they are to say to the BJP: Fine, go ahead with it if you have the votes for it. Show the draft legislation and get on with it. Let Parliament decide if it is to happen. Another would be to say: Fine, this is on your manifesto but so is economic growth and jobs, so is integrity in Ladakh and safety in Manipur. How does doing this now address the failures and problems in the rest? The likelihood is that the BJP will do neither. It will instead merely talk about it, stoke it using its stranglehold on media and communalise and polarise politics and society around it as it has successfully done often in the past. It is for the nation to determine whether these, like the BJP issues before it, are the ones that politics and voting should be about.

Aakar Patel

What floating the UCC balloon will do is to keep the focus of politics and media away from the economy, from Ladakh, from Manipur and Kashmir

LEGALISING FRAUDS, DEFAULTS

n 8 June, in a contentious move, the RBI issued instructions under "Framework for Compromise Settlements and Technical Write-offs" that allow banks and other financial entities to "undertake compromise settlements or technical write-offs in respect of accounts categorised as wilful defaulters or fraud without prejudice to the criminal proceeding underway against such debtors." A fraudster is one who intentionally cheats the bank with false documents/information and misappropriates money. But there is vast difference between a defaulter and a wilful defaulter. One may be a defaulter due to inability to repay debt. But a wilful defaulter is one who chooses not to honour obligations to banks, despite the ability to do so

What is perplexing is that in the past, the RBI has itself been against providing scope to such borrowers. In its "Prudential Framework for Resolution of Stressed Assets" (June 7, 2019), the RBI had made it clear that borrowers who have committed fraud/malfeasance/wilful default will remain ineligible for restructuring. Two years ago, RBI had clearly stated that wilful defaulters would not be allowed to access capital markets or take fresh loans.

Recently, the RBI governor had warned about the many ways in which defaulters and fraudsters conceal the true status of distressed loans, especially engaging in evergreening of loans. Evergreening loans, a form of zombie lending, is a practice of extending new or additional loans to a borrower who is unable to repay existing loans, thereby concealing the true status of the NPAs.

Probably, the RBI is browbeaten to change the rule to suit fraudsters and defaulters -- may be pressure from crony capitalists, corporate behemoths or the ruling dispensation at Centre.

By allowing wilful defaulters to settle loans under the compromise, the RBI is effectively condoning their actions, placing the burden of their misdeeds on the shoulders of ordinary citizens

The Opposition parties, bank unions and economists have expressed their apprehension that this move would perpetuate a culture of non-compliance and leave banks and their employees bearing the brunt of the losses. Such negotiated transactions can compromise the integrity of the banking system, create a moral hazard and undermine the efforts to combat wilful defaulters effectively. By allowing wilful defaulters to settle loans under the compromise, the RBI is effectively condoning their actions, placing the burden of their misdeeds on the shoulders of ordinary citizens.

What is reprehensible is that the central bank has also directed banks to permit such accounts to take fresh loans after a 12-month "cooling period". In countries with impunity.

The corporate debt restructuring process too resulted in lenders taking huge haircuts. For example, banks have taken an average haircut of ₹69 as losses for everv ₹100 of their claims admitted for the resolution of stressed assets under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC). Creditors have realized ₹2.35 lakh crore in about 517 IBC cases till June 30, 2022, out of the total claims of ₹7.67 lakh crore.

Similarly, Banks and depositors are affected by loan write off. According to Finance Minister Nirmal Sitharaman (December 13, 2022), in the last five years, banks have written off bad loans worth ₹10,09,511 crore. But what is perplexing is that during the same period only 13% of loan written off has been recovered. By write-off, NPAs are reduced, the balance sheet looks good, the bank gets tax benefits, net profit of the bank increases. But the question remains: who are the beneficiaries of those unrecovered amounts? How did the bank manage losses due to write-off amounts?

This sudden change in the framework by the RBI will not only lead to corrosion of public trust in the banking sector but also devastate the confidence of depositors. It is immoral, unethical, unscrupulous, and illegal to have a compromise with big fraudsters and loan defaulters who wilfully reneged on their obligations and run away with public money. This compromise is tantamount to legalising frauds and wilful defaults. This is very painful especially when honest borrowers are groaning and struggling to repay their loans due financial problems and are never shown any mercy.

The writer is an Odisha-based economist and columnist. Views are personal.

SPECTRUM TECHNOLOGY

Santosh Kumar

THIS SUDDEN

THE RBI WILL

CHANGE IN THE

FRAMEWORK BY

NOT ONLY LEAD

TO CORROSION

TRUST IN THE

DEVASTATE THE

CONFIDENCE OF

DEPOSITORS

OF PUBLIC

BANKING

SECTOR

BUT ALSO

Mohapatra

An economic model for the AI age

n April, Alphabet CEO Sundar value to the global economy an- GDP growth in a new era of per-Pichai predicted that artificial nually. L intelligence would have an impact "more profound" than any other human innovation, from fire to electricity. While it is impossible to know precisely what that impact will be, two changes appear particularly likely: demand for labour will fall, and productivity will rise. In other words, we appear to be moving toward a labour-less economic model, in which fewer human workers are needed to sustain growth. Jobs in back-office support, legal services, and accountancy seem to face the most immediate risk from new generative AI technologies, including large language models like ChatGPT-4. But every sector of the economy is likely to be affected. Because language tasks account for 62% of employees' time, a recent report by Accenture notes, large language models could affect 40% of all working hours. Accenture estimates that 65% of the time spent on these language tasks can be "transformed into more productive activity through augmentation and automation." And a new McKinsey report predicts that the AI-driven productivity boost could add the equivalent of \$2.6-4.4 trillion in

tivity boosts economic growth.

sistent structural unemployment? adjustments will reverberate But, even as higher produc- The most obvious likely response is a shift to greater redistribu-

May 2007, through a letter to

the Indian Banks' Association,

the RBI barred wilful defaulters

and fraudulent borrowers from

institutional finance for five

vears - a norm that remained un-

The major portion of the

mammoth ₹340,570 crore in-

volving the 15,778 wilful default

accounts that India's banks had

at the end of 2022 may be writ-

ten off. The top 50 wilful de-

faulters in India owed banks as

much as ₹92,570 crore as of

March 2022. Similarly, from 4306

in 2013-14, the number of bank

frauds rose to 9.103 in 2021-22. Those who are involved in such

frauds and wilful defaults may

have the support of politicians

especially belonging to the rul-

ing class. Some of the default-

ers have left the country and

are leading cosy lives in foreign

changed.

The effects of such corporate throughout the economy. Reduced demand for capital by firms will put downward pressure on the cost of capital, and companies will have less need to borrow from banks, causing overall activity in capital markets also to decline. Higher taxes on corporate profits (or revenues) would create additional challenges. While the state will need to increase revenues to support the growing number of unemployed, this could leave corporations with lower retained earnings to reinvest, despite the additional profits generated by AI-driven productivity gains. This is bad not only for the companies themselves. Lower investment in the economy would undermine growth, shrink the economic pie, and lower living standards. It would also narrow the tax base, erode the middle class, and widen inequality between the owners of capital and the traditional labour force. In the age of AI, workers may do little to drive growth, but they must benefit from it.

WISDOM CORNER

- Die to everything of yesterday so that your mind is always fresh, ways young, innocent, full of vigor and passion IIDDU KRISHNAMURTI
- Crave for a thing, you will get it. Renounce the craving, the object will follow you by itself.
 - SWAMI SIVANANDA
- There is only one thing in life worse than being talked about, and that is not being talked about.

OSCAR WILDE

WORDS**WORTH**

Knucker

he most famous knucker or water demon was said to live in a pool at Lyminster, near Arundel in Sussex. This was one of many knucker holes in the flat areas between the South Downs and the sea, which were held in local folklore to be bottomless. Not the least of the odd things about them was that they were reputed never to freeze in winter nor to dry up in summer. Knucker is a modern spelling of the Old English nicor or nicker for an imaginary being that lived in water. Nickera appears in the Anglo-Saxon poem Beowulf to refer to a lake monster. The word is linked to similar monsters in several Scandinavian languages and to Nixie, a German term for a female water-elf or water-nymph. It might also be a source for Old Nick, one of many names for the Devil, and for the German Nickel for a sort of goblin that lived in mines and from which we get the name for the metal.



Dambisa Moyo

EVEN AS HIGHER PRODUCTIVITY BOOSTS **ECONOMIC GROWTH. THE DIMINUTION OF** LABOUR WOULD **UNDERMINE IT. MEANING THAT, ULTIMATELY. GROWTH COULD** WELL STAGNATE

etters

are most welcome to contribute letters

postal address/email ID. They may also

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

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B-15, Rasulgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

send in their valuable comments, opinion

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TO THE EDITOR

Readers of Orissa POST

(200 words), articles and

requested to send their contact numbers and full

columns (between 750-1250 words). Contributors are

the diminution of labour would undermine it, meaning that, ultimately, growth could well stagnate. Reduced demand for human workers implies a steep rise in unemployment, especially since the world population is set to continue growing.

Unemployment is already a persistent problem. According to the International Labour Organisation, the total number of unemployed young people (15-24 years old) has remained around 70 million for more than two decades. And the global youth unemployment rate has been trending up, from 12.2% in 1995 to just under 13% after the 2008 global financial crisis to 15.6% in 2021

AI will exacerbate these trends. And because AI's impact on labour markets is likely to be structural, the rise in unemployment would amount to a permanent dislocation. Structural unemployment could return to levels last seen in the deindustrialisation of the 1980s, when joblessness in the UK, for example, remained above 10% for the better part of the 1980s.

How can governments support

tion, with governments raising taxes on the proceeds from AIdriven productivity gains and using those revenues to support the wider population, including by implementing some version of a universal basic income.

To ensure adequate revenue to support expanded social safety nets, governments might move beyond taxing excess profits generated by AI-driven productivity gains to taxing the revenues of the firms reaping the biggest rewards. That way, the state – and, in turn, the general population would claim a greater share of the AI windfall.

Of course, the AI revolution also has profound implications for businesses. For starters, companies will have to adjust their strategies and operations to account for the combination of higher productivity and a smaller labour force, which will enable them to generate more output with less capital. Companies that adjust as needed, and deliver low cost-to-income ratios, will attract investors; those that are slow to change their operating models will lose competitiveness and could fail.

The writer is an international economist. ©PROJECT SYNDICATE

Structural racism

Sir, Police violence has a long history in the United States and remains a pervasive problem till today. It is intricately linked to deep and persisting racial inequalities and economic class divisions. Reform efforts, if anything to be meaningful and effective, need to address societal conditions. Therefore, instead of asking the police to address societal problems, the US should invest in services that directly address underlying issues such as mental health care and support and poverty. Establishing effective and independent oversight bodies and necessary legal tools to ensure accountability are crucial to limiting police violence in the US. Nevertheless, the brutal killing of George Floyd has opened the eyes of many people within the US for the need to address the harms of racially biased, coercive policing and the inherent structural racism within which policing exists in the country

Ranganathan Sivakumar, CHENNAI

Misuse of power

Sir, Using its veto power, China has once again blocked the move by the US and co-designated by India to blacklist LeT leader Sajid Mir. Mir is a global terrorist but it has become impossible to designate him as such with China coming in the way of efforts to blacklist him. The contention of China is that there is no sufficient evidence to designate him as terrorist. Wearer only knows where the shoe pinches. India knows much better than any country about the involvement of Mir in the 26/11 Mumbai attacks. China's move is politically motivated. Further, even if all the permanent members in the UN support India's permanent membership, China has been consistently vetoing. It means, India deserving permanent membership in the UN has not been meriting consideration. This is nothing but the misuse of veto power. Acceptance or rejection should be based on merit or demerit. India will never gain permanent membership so long as China will be vetoing any move in this direction in the UN. There is need to bring changes in the veto powers. If two-thirds of member countries support any move, such move has to be accepted.

KV Seetharamaiah, BANGALORE





TWOSTATES





PROTESTS IN ASSAM AGAINST DELIMITATION PROPOSALS

Guwahati, June 24: Protests against the delimitation proposals continued in Assam Saturday, with allies of the ruling BJP-led coalition as well as Opposition parties venting their discontent.

Terming the draft delimitation proposal an attempt by the BJP to polarise voters on religious lines disregarding the sentiment of the people, Opposition parties decided to present the 'grievances' of the citizens before the Election Commission.

Protests by Asom Gana Parishad (AGP) leaders took place in the Amguri Assembly constituency in Sivasagar district Saturday.

The constituency is represented by Pradip Hazarika of the AGP, an ally of the BJP.

"Our Amguri constituency is being merged with another constituency and we are losing our identity. We will not accept it and continue our agitation," a local AGP leader said.

Opposition AIUDF held

protests in Barak Valley districts Friday. The protestors demanded that status quo of boundaries and the name of

constituencies be maintained. It has been decided that a delegation of 12 Opposition parties, including the Congress, will visit Sivsagar district June 30.

"We chose Sivsagar as the different communities, tribes and sub-groups are feeling hurt and betrayed. The BJP has ignored their sentiment and the EC has not taken into consideration the historical perspectives," state Congress president Bhupen Kumar Borah said.

After Sivasagar, the delegation will tour the Barak Valley districts of Cachar, Karimganj and Hailakandi July 2 and 3. "Population has increased

everywhere, maybe in varying degrees. So, we fail to understand why the number of assembly constituencies in Barak Valley was decreased by two (in the delimitation draft). That's why our team will be going there," he said. A delegation of the 12 parties

will visit New Delhi July 7-8, during which they will submit a memorandum on their findings to the ECI.

The only motive of the BJP behind the draft proposal is re-ligious polarisation, without any regard for the people. We cannot allow that to happen. We will approach the ECI with the findings based on our interaction with the people," Bora said. In the draft delimitation doc-

ument released June 20, the EC has proposed to retain the number of assembly seats in Assam at 126 and the Lok Sabha constituencies at 14.

The commission has also planned to alter the geographical boundaries of most of the constituencies, both assembly and the Lok Sabha, while eliminating some seats and creating a few new ones.



MONSOON MAGIC: Rain bearing clouds hang low over the hills following rainfall in Shimla, Saturday.

PTI Photo

Villagers blame builders as rain floods houses

AGENCIES

Shimla, June 24: Villagers in Bilaspur's Ghumarwin and Hamirpur's Tauni Devi blamed construction companies for poor planning as heavy rain in these areas Friday flooded houses and submerged roads and bridges, disrupting normal life.

As heavy rain battered Daghol village in the Ghumarwin area of Bilaspur district, a newly built bridge in the area got submerged, leading to long queues of vehicles on both sides.

A portion of a road got flooded due to strong water currents. Water from a swollen canal swept away a car, which was later found near the flooded bridge.

Agitated villagers of Daghol squatted on the road to voice their resentment against the construction company, which they alleged constructed the new bridge without completely dis-

Assam flood situation grave; 4.88L affected Himanta's 'Hussain MAJOR RIVERS REMAINED IN SPATE ACROSS THE STATE WITH THE METEOROLOGICAL **DEPARTMENT WARNING OF MORE RAINFALL AND THUNDERSTORM IN DIFFERENT PARTS**

AGENCIES

Guwahati, June 24: The flood situation in Assam remained grave Saturday with over 4.88 lakh people affected so far, an official report said.

Major rivers remained in spate across the state with the meteorological department warning of more rainfall and thunderstorm in different parts.

A Central Water Commission report Friday evening said the Brahmaputra was flowing over the danger level in Nematighat (Jorhat).

The water level of the Puthimari and Pagladiya rivers have breached the red mark in Kamrup and Nalbari districts respectively, it added.

As per an official report, more than 4.88 lakh people in 16 districts are currently reeling under floods. Two persons have been killed in floods this year so far.



Villagers use a makeshift bamboo bridge to cross the Daranga River after collapse of the concrete bridge due to floods, at Kumrikata in Baksa district

sonnel and local people, have been assisting the administration in carrying out rescue and relief operations

Roads, bridges and other infrastructure have been damaged in different districts, including

are Bajali, Chirang, Darrang, Baksa, Barpeta, Biswanath, Bongaigaon, Dhemaji, Dhubri, Dibrugarh, Goalpara, Golaghat, Kamrup, Kokrajhar, Lakhimpur, Nagaon, Nalbari, Tamulpur, Udalguri, according to the ASDMA. Bajali district remains the worst hit by the floods with 267,253 affected people, followed in the second place by Barpeta (73, 233).At least 35,142 flood-affected people have taken shelter in 225 relief camps operated by the state administration across 14 districts. The highest number of camps were opened in Bajali where 15,841 people have taken shelter in 73 relief camps. According to a senior official

of the state government, the district administrators have been providing necessary food, medicine, and other essentials to the flood-affected people.

SDRF and the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) teams have been placed on high alert in all the flood-prone districts. Meanwhile, over 10,782 hectares of cropland are submerged by the flood water which may result in the damage of large amounts of agricultural products, according to the farmers. Apart from humans, 427,474 animals have also been affected. According to ASDMA data, more than 200 animals, domestic and wild, have been washed away.

Erosions and damage to important infrastructures like bridges, schools, and houses were reported from several districts.

Opposition Saturday. have suffered damage in three districts. Other infrastructure damages were reported in 213 areas in 14 districts. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has predicted 'heavy rainfall' and issued a 'Yellow Alert' till Sunday. The Brahmaputra, Manas, Puthimari and Pagladiya rivers are all flowing above the danger level. Due to the torrential rain, urban floods were reported in Kokrajhar and Darang districts.

Obama' remark draws flak from Oppn parties



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Guwahati, June 24: Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma's cryptic 'Hussain Obama' tweet drew major flak from the

At least 14 river embankments

This was in reference to the former President saying in a TV interview this week that there was danger of India pulling apart if ethnic minorities and

Muslims were not protected. Condemning Sarma's remark, Sivasagar MLA Akhil Gogoi sought an apology from the Chief Minister and termed his tweet as 'nonsense'

In a video message, the MLA said: "Himanta Biswa Sarma made a communally perverted comment to the former US President. He has the habit of making such comments. I, as a brother of Himanta Biswa Sarma and a fellow MLA in the Assam Assembly, apologise to Barack Obama on behalf of the Chief Minister.'

Meanwhile, Trinamool Congress Raiva Sabha MP Sushmita Dev said that the Chief Minister's "communal comments are not only unconstitutional, these are actually against the law of the land which prevent any person from making divisive comments." "It is now interesting to see whether the Assam police which persecute people cutting across the state boundaries on the allegation of 'unlawful' comments will take any action against Sarma for his comments.

mantling the old bridge.

Traffic in the area resumed only after the police reached the spot and pacified the protestors.

Meanwhile, gushing water entered some houses in Thana Dorgan village in the Tauni Devi area of Hamirpur district Friday damaging household goods and electronic gadgets.

The affected people blamed the construction company executing the Mandi-Hamirpur National Highway project.

Worst affected has been the Bajali sub-division where 2.67 lakh people have been hit by the deluge.

Nalbari and Barpeta districts are also among the severely hit with around 80,000 and 73,000 people affected respectively. More than 35,000 people are

staying in 140 relief camps. Another 75 relief distribution centres are also functional. Different agencies, including

NDRF, SDRF, civil defence per-

Bajali, Baksa, Barpeta, Cachar, Chirang, Darrang, Dhemaji, Dhubri, Goalpara, Karimganj, Kokrajhar, Majuli and Nalbari. Reports of erosion have been recorded in Baksa, Biswanath, Bongaigaon, Chirang, Dhubri,

Kokrajhar, Dibrugarh, Sivsagar, Sonitpur, South Salmara, Udalguri and Tamulpur. Landslides and urban flooding have also been reported from

different parts, the report added. The 19 flood-affected districts

Friday, the Chief Minister had tweeted: "There are many Hussain Obama in India itself. We should prioritize taking care of them before considering going to Washington. The Assam Police will act according to our own priorities."

Sarma said this in response to a question on the micro-blogging platform on whether an FIR was registered in Guwahati against former US President Barack Obama for hurting sentiments.

Project to decongest 'Queen of Hills' to cost ₹100cr

ABOUT 72 LAKH TOURISTS HAVE VISITED THE STATE TILL MAY 2023 AND THE STATE GOVERNMENT AIMS TO **INCREASE THE NUMBER FROM THREE TO FIVE CRORE IN** THE NEXT FIVE YEARS



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Shimla, June 24: Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu Saturday said the state government has prepared a comprehensive blueprint to decongest Shimla and increase tourist footfall at an estimated cost of over Rs 100 crore.

Sukhu said approximately Rs 77 crore will be spent for land acquisition and to compensate the private owners whose properties would be demolished to widen the roads, while Rs 20 crore has been earmarked for the development and widening of the road. Additionally, Rs 3.50 crore has been provisioned for the construction of a flyover from Metropole to High Court Junction, he said.

The state government has a clear vision to boost tourism in Himachal Pradesh and to create an environment conducive to the growth of the tourism industry by providing visitors with an unforgettable experience, Sukhu said in a statement issued here.

He said that Rs 97 crore has been released for this and the state government would provide more funds if needed.

Parking lots will also be constructed in Shimla city to address the problem of parking, the chief minister informed

The Himachal government is also focusing on promoting

lesser-known tourist ₹77cr destinations and will be spent for plans are underway to spend land acquisition and to about Rs 3,000 compensate those crore to develop infra whose properties would structure in be demolished to Kangra district, which would widen the roads emerge as the

tourism capital of the state, he added.

About 72 lakh tourists have visited the state till May 2023 and the state government aims to increase the number from three to five crore in the next five years, Sukhu said, adding that they are also planning to formulate a new Tourism Policy.



PHOTO POST





Security personnel patrol ahead of the West Bengal panchayat elections in Kharagpur

Regoliate. No Stop killing cach olher. lay down arms, negoliate. No solve issues. Stop killing cach other-lay down arms - negot iate



British MP Barry Gardiner (L) and Simon Brook (R) – son of late British theatre director Peter Brook, received the Padma Shri from Indian High Commissioner to the UK Vikram Doraiswami at India House in London

Nuns in Guwahati take part in special prayers for peace and harmony in Manipur

OrissaPOST

SUNDAY | JUNE 25 | 2023 | BHUBANESWAR





P8

People from the LGBT community and supporters participate in Pride Parade in Mumbai

AIIMS, Delhi, Director M Srinivas (C) rides a bicycle donated by EPACK Durable Private Limited in New Delhi. EPACK Durable Private Limited, a leading OEM (Original Equipment Manufacturer) and ODM (Original Design Manufacturer) company, has donated 560 bicycles to the hospital



A pigeon flys as Iranian pilgrims pose for a selfie outside the Grand Mosque, during the annual hajj pilgrimage in Mecca. Muslim pilgrims are converging on Saudi Arabia's holy city of Mecca for the largest hajj since the coronavirus pandemic severely curtailed access to one of Islam's five pillars

A security personnel stands guard at Yatri Niwas base camp ahead of the commencement of the Amarnath Yatra 2023 in Jammu







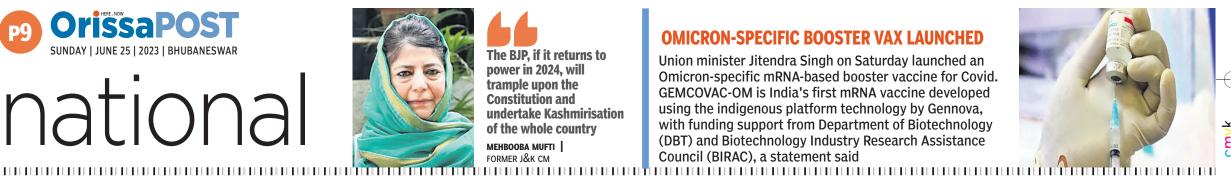
national



The BJP. if it returns to power in 2024, will trample upon the **Constitution and** undertake Kashmirisation of the whole country MEHBOOBA MUFTI FORMER J&K CM

OMICRON-SPECIFIC BOOSTER VAX LAUNCHED

Union minister Jitendra Singh on Saturday launched an Omicron-specific mRNA-based booster vaccine for Covid. GEMCOVAC-OM is India's first mRNA vaccine developed using the indigenous platform technology by Gennova, with funding support from Department of Biotechnology (DBT) and Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC), a statement said





We are not scared of any probe. And when you (government) want to probe, then you also probe Thane

municipal corporation, Pimpri-Chinchwad, Pune and Nagpur civic bodies

UDDHAV THACKERAY | SHIV SENA (UBT) CHIEF

I have requested **Eknath Shinde** and Devendra Fadnavis to make Nagpur Collector the Joint MD of MIHAN as it will enable its expeditious development

NITIN GADKARI UNION TRANSPORT MINISTER

This opposition unity will also collapse like a pack of cards ANURAG THAKUR UNION MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Brother slaughters newlyweds, 3 others

Mainpuri (UP): A day after their wedding, a 21-year-old man and his wife, along with two other family members and a friend, were axed to death in their sleep by his brother in a village here Saturday, police said. Mainpuri Superintendent of Police (SP) Vinod Kumar said accused Shiv Veer Yaday (28) also injured his wife and a maternal aunt before shooting himself dead with a pistol. SP Kumar identified the deceased as newly married couple Sonu Yadav and Soni (20), Sonu's brother Bhullan Yaday brother-in-law Saurabh and friend Deepak (20).

Delhi BJP protest at DJB headquarters

New Delhi: The Delhi BJP, led by its chief Virendra Sachdeva, held a protest at the Jal Board headquarters Saturday over a "shortage" of drinking water in the city. Many of them held placards with messages in Hindi demanding "clean water or resignation" as they staged their stir at the 'Varunalaya', the headquarters of the Delhi Jal Board. Various other senior BJP leaders such as Leader of **Opposition in Delhi Assembly** Ramvir Singh Bidhuri and Kuljeet Singh Chahal also joined in.

TMC blames Centre for 'trying to turn Manipur into Kashmir'

"When Manipur burns, Assam is affected, Meghalaya is affected, the entire North-East is affected. The whole nation is affected. Is the Union Government trying to turn Manipur into Kashmir?," the TMC said

AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 24: The Trinamool Congress Saturday demanded an all-party delegation be sent to violence-hit Manipur within a week as it questioned the Centre's handling of the situation and wondered if the government was "trying to turn Manipur into Kashmir"

During an all-party meeting chaired by Union Home Minister Amit Shah here on the situation in the northeastern state, TMC's Rajya Sabha MP Derek O'Brien accused the Centre of "ignoring" the needs of the people of Manipur, the party said in a statement.

Amit Shah told that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been monitoring the situation in violence-hit Manipur since day one and "guiding us with full sensitivity" to find a solution to the problem. Leaders of different political parties, including the BJP, Congress, TMC, Left parties and others, are taking part in the meeting which is underway.

Home Minister Amit Shah said all efforts are being made to restore peace in Manipur on instructions of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the BJP's Manipur in-charge Sambit Patra told reporters after the meeting. The home minister also told



the meeting that since the violence began in the state, there has "not been a single day" when

he did not speak to PM Modi on the situation Congress or the prime minisaturday said peace in ter did not give inviolence-hit Manipur is structions, Patra not possible under Chief said. In a statement, Minister N Biren Singh an the TMC tabulated a demanded that the Prime Minister replaces him timeline of the violence in the state, highimmediately

lighting the story of a seven-year-old boy who was alwas much delayed as it came allegedly burned to death with most four weeks after the viohis mother and aunt while on his lence broke out, and even then way to a hospital with a bullet he "only visited camps and met selected people." "He did not wound. The party said there is meet the people on the streets a pervading sense of hopelessness, fear, and desperation in who have been affected, who are the state with lives lost, students living through the trauma. The three-day visit by the Home unable to take exams, patients affected and people living in fear. Minister did not improve the situation at all. In fact, it dete-

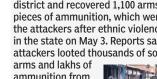
Over 4.000 houses have been attacked and destroyed, 60,000 peo-

Mob torches minister's pvt godown

IMPHAL: A mob has burnt down a private godown of Manipur minister L. Susindro Meitei at Chingarel in Imphal East district, reducing to ashes plastic pipes worth Rs 120 crore besides other materials,

police said Saturday. Police said that after setting the godown afire Friday night, the mob tried to attack the residence of the minister at Khurai in the same Imphal East district. Due to timely intervention of the security forces, the attack was prevented and the mob dispersed. Security forces fired several rounds of tear gas shells till Friday midnight to disperse the mob from the Khurai areas, police said.

Another bridge Youth stabbed in Delhi: in Bihar caves in



stations and security posts during the

riorated after that," it said. 10 militant bunkers busted

ternet services suspended across

the state for over 50 days, vi-

olating the Supreme

Court judgment, it said.

'There is complete a

collapse of the con-

stitutional machin-

ery in the State," the

The party also said

party alleged.

Home Minister Amit

Shah's visit to the state

IMPHAL: Security forces Saturday busted 10 militant bunkers in Manipur's Kangpokpl district and recovered 1,100 arms and 13,702 pieces of ammunition, which were looted by the attackers after ethnic violence broke out in the state on May 3. Reports said that the attackers looted thousands of sophisticated

ammunition from different police

paramilitary deployed



Guj man arrested for posing as PMO official, conning private school

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Vadodara, June 24: A man from Gujarat's Vadodara city has been arrested for posing as a PMO official to secure the admission of two children in a private school here and trying to dupe it of huge sums with his fake identity, an official said Saturday.

The arrest of Mayank Tiwari Friday comes months after an Ahmedabad resident, Kiran Patel, was held from a five-star hotel in Jammu and Kashmir for posing as a senior official from the Prime Minister's Office (PMO). Hospitality apart, Patel had also enjoyed security cover by tricking officials in the Valley.

Identifying himself as a director (strategic advisory) at the PMO in New Delhi, Tiwari first got in touch with the school and its trustee in March 2022, during the admission season, said the official from Waghodia police station in the city. Tiwari, a middle-aged man, sought the school's help with the admission of two sons of his "family friend" whom he described as Indian Army official Mirza Baig and said he was being transferred to Vadodara from Pune, the official said.

The school's director asked Tiwari, whose WhatsApp status said he was a "PMO official", to meet the trustee, who is also associated with a private university in Vadodara.

To impress upon the trustee, Tiwari told her that he could use his clout as a "PMO official" and get the school involved in the field of education research and get them various projects if they took care of the expenses, the official said.

A few months later, the trustee had doubts about Tiwari's claims of being a PMO official and the education research projects mentioned by him.

The trustee later found out that Tiwari was not a PMO official and had conned them by spinning a tale about his "immense influence"

Also, his profession was not clear, said the FIR. The trustee then alerted the school last month.

AKHILESH WARY OF SHARING SEATS WITH CONGRESS



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Lucknow, June 24: Opposition unity in Uttar Pradesh is likelv to remain a pipe dream ahead of the general elections 2024 since the two main opposition parties in the state -- the Samajwadi Party and the Bahujan Samaj Party -- agree to disagree on almost all issues.

Even as the Samajwadi Party and the Bahujan Samaj Party reiterate their commitment to defeating the BJP, they are averse to the idea of sitting together -or with the Congress -- for forging an alliance against the rul-

ing BJP. Though Akhilesh Yadav seems to have softened his stand towards the Congress and attended the Patna conclave, he is unwilling to share seats with the Congress in UP.

Both the Samajwadi Party (SP) and the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) were born from the vote base of the Congress - the BSP with Dalits and the SP with Muslims.

Muslims, Dalits, along with the Brahmins, were once the mainstay of the Congress in Uttar Pradesh.

'Aligning with the Congress at this point when the party is looking towards a revival after the Bharat Jodo Yatra (BJY) would amount to political harakiri. We cannot give our own vote bank (Muslim in this case) a political option. What is the guarantee that Muslims will not return to the Congress if we forge an alliance with them?' asked a senior SP leader.

The SP leadership wants to continue projecting itself as the only alternative to the BJP in UP.

Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav has consciously avoided being seen in the same frame with Rahul Gandhi. Even though several top Congress leaders visited his Saifai home to offer condolences when his father Mulayam Singh passed away in October last year, Akhilesh did not soften his stand and refused to join the BJY.

Similarly, BSP leader Mayawati, who suffered a major erosion of her vote bank in the last assembly elections -- with a large part of her Dalit vote bank shifting to the BJP -- is now wary of the Congress which is blatantly targeting the Dalits.

The Congress leadership in Uttar Pradesh now comprises of leaders culled from the BSP from Brijlal Khabri to Nakul Dubey to Naseemuddin Siddiqui - all of whom are claiming to use their previous connect with the BSP to bring the Dalits closer to the Congress.

The Congress, for obvious reasons, is now considered a nonentity in UP and parties are naturally wary of joining hands with it and losing their own ground.

The Congress, too, does not seem very interested in making friends with the SP, especially after the 2019 debacle when the two parties allied with the 'Do ladke' slogan.

continuing violence.

Monsoon set to hit Mumbai in 48 hrs

Mumbai: The monsoon has advanced up till Alibag in Maharashtra's Raigad district and is likely to move further and hit Mumbai in the next 48 hours, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said Saturday. Incidentally, Mumbai, where the normal date for onset of monsoon is June 11, and areas around it received light rain during the day.

146 activists, students booked

Hyderabad: The development of Telangana police department invoking Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) against 146 activists. including students and retired professors for alleged links with banned CPI(Maoist), has triggered a debate across the state. The National Alliance of People's Movements (NAPM). a forum known for launching social movements, has sent a letter to the Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao in this regard.

Gangster held

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Gurugram: The crime branch unit Sector-39 of the Gurugram Police has arrested an inter-state gangster Sandeep aka Bandar, carrying a reward of Rs 1 lakh declared by the National Investigation Agency (NIA), officials said Saturday.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kishanganj, June 24: Barely three weeks after an under-construction bridge over the Ganga collapsed in Bihar's Khagaria district, a portion of another bridge in Kishanganj district Saturday, caved-in an official said.

In the incident, which took place around 400 km from state capital Patna, a pillar of the bridge over river Mechi collapsed, said Arvind Kumar, project director of National Highway Authority of India (NHAI).

'The under-construction bridge on NH-327E would have

linked Kishanganj and Katihar upon completion", the official said.

Claiming that nobody was injured in the accident, the official said, "a five-member team" of experts has been constituted to investigate the cause.

"Prima facie it seems to be an instance of human error during the piling process," the official said. The state government, meanwhile, clarified that the structure was part of a central project and the authority to take action rested with the NHAI. Deputy Chief Minister Tejashwi Yadav, who holds the road construction portfolio, said, "The bridge is being constructed by the NHAI as part of the Centre's Bharat Mala project. It has nothing to do with Bihar

government.'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 24: A 20-yearold vouth was allegedly stabbed by his neighbour in a petty dispute in northeast Delhi's Dayalpur area, police said Saturday.

On Friday around 10 pm, Rahul from Brijpuri had gone to have ice cream with his cousin Sonu, 19, after dinner near Shibban School, a senior police officer said. There Rahul had an encounter

with a 20-year-old Mohammad Zaid who lives in the same street as he does, and got into fight with him, during which Zaid stabbed Rahul in the lower abdomen, the officer said. Sonu also got knifed in hand.

Paramilitary has been deployed in the area to prevent any communal flareups, police

said. The investigation so far has revealed that the two had some ego clash. Zaid works as a carpenter with his father, while Rahul supplies chips and other edibles, and his father sells candy.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (northeast) Joy Tirkey said, "It was a trivial issue that led to a scuffle between them. Zaid, who was alone that time. was having a sharp object most likely a knife and attacked Rahul. When Sonu came to his rescue, he also received injury in his hand. Efforts are being made to nab him." Zaid, absconding, has been booked under IPC section 307 (attempt to murder) and 324 (voluntarily causing hurt by dangerous weapons or means) at Dayalpur Police Station, the officer said. Rahul is currently admitted in the ICU ward of GTB hospital.



WALKING IN THE RAIN: Pedestrians cross road during rain at Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus in Mumbai ртгрното

Biparjoy played killjoy, delayed SW monsoon by a week

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, June 24: Cyclone Biparjoy has played killjoy with the much awaited south-west monsoon in India, as the extremely severe storm pushed the arrival of the rainy season by at least a week

In fact it managed to reach Maharashtra and parts of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh by only the third week of June. Rajasthan has also been witnessing heavy rains for the past seven days.

IMD scientists are expecting that by next week, it will pick up momentum and cover parts of eastern, central and northern India

In the month of June, there has



THIS TIME HOWEVER DUE TO CYCLONE BIPARJOY, ITS ARRIVAL IN SOUTHERN INDIA WAS DELAYED BY MORE THAN 10 DAYS

cent. Oilseeds sowing also plunged by 14 per cent, as per official estimates.

Economists say that shortfall in availability of food items would lead to higher retail inflation. Even the Reserve Bank

of India in its latest bulletin for June has said that rising retail inflation has slowed down personal consumption expenditure, which has resulted in scaling down of corporate sales and reduction in private investment towards capacity creation.

"Bringing down inflation and stabilising inflation expectations will revive consumer spending, boost corporate revenues and profitability, which is the best incentive for private capex,' the bulletin's article on "State

of the Economy" said. Moving forward, experts feel that the El Nino may also leave an impact on the monsoon season in days to come.

El Nino is a weather phenomenon which causes disrup-

tions in ocean currents, temperatures and weather conditions across the world, leading to changes in global atmospheric circulation and longer, colder winters in certain regions.

In India, it causes the monsoon season to experience belownormal rainfall, droughts and inadequate crop yield.

According to the IMD, there is a 70 per cent probability of El Nino impacting the monsoon season in India. The weather phenomenon is detrimental to crops, resulting in damaging yields, leading to rise food prices.

If the weather department's prediction turns out to be accurate, then El Nino may im-pact the agriculture sector this season.





been an estimated shortfall of

37 per cent of monsoon rainfall,

Owing to this, sowing of rice

has seen a shortfall of 15 per

cent till June 20, while that of

pulses fell by a massive 57 per

experts have said.







international

With Rishi Sunak as Prime Minister, Britain remains uniquely placed to reap the dividends of a deeper friendship with India. To do so, we'll need to up our game across the whole of government DOMINIC RAAB | MP, UK

FIRST ANNIV OF US ABORTION LAW

Activists and politicians are marking the one-year anniversary of the US Supreme Court ruling that overturned a nationwide right to abortion by both bashing and celebrating it. Rallies on both sides were scheduled for Saturday in Washington and across the country



RUSSIA-UKRAINE WAR MUTINY BY MERCENARIES

Russian President Vladimir Putin is facing the most serious threat to his hold on power in all the 23 years he's run the nuclear state. The Wagner showdown marked the most dramatic escalation in a long-running feud between the mercenary leader and Russia's defense establishment that's spiraled into what is the biggest challenge to Putin's authority since he sent troops into Ukraine 16 months ago

AGENCIES

Moscow, June 24: Russian President Vladimir Putin vowed to punish "traitors" from the Wagner mercenary group, after its leader swore he would topple Moscow's military leadership.

Yevgeny Prigozhin, 62, released a series of messages from late Friday into Saturday, claiming that he and his mercenary troops had entered the southern Russian city of Rostov-on-Don and taken control of its military sites.

What sparked the rebellion?

For months, Prigozhin has been locked in a power struggle with the military top brass, blaming them for his troops' deaths in eastern Ukraine

He has repeatedly accused them of failing to equip his private army adequately, of holding up progress with bureaucracy, while claiming victories won by Wagner as their own.

On Friday, Prigozhin's anger

SHORT TAKES

Chinese jets cross Taiwan Strait

Taipei: Eight Chinese war planes crossed the Taiwan Strait's median line and approached close to the island's contiguous zone that is 24 nautical miles (44 km) off its coast Saturday, the



appeared to boil over, as he accused Moscow's military leadership of ordering strikes on Wagner's camps and killing a large number of forces.

He said they had to be stopped and vowed to "go to the end". He later claimed his forces had downed a Russian military helicopter.

Hours later, the leader of the mercenary group said he had military sites in southern Russia's Rostov-on-Don "under control"

How is Moscow reacting?

Probe launched

REUTERS

into Titan deaths

Ottawa, June 24: Canadian

safety officials Friday opened

an investigation into the un-

dersea implosion of a tourist

submersible that killed all five

people aboard while diving to

The Kremlin had said overnight that "measures are being taken" against the mutiny. Russia has tightened security in Moscow and several regions

such as Rostov and Lipetsk. President Putin has called the Wagner mutiny a "deadly threat" to Russia and urged the country to unite. Branding the action by Wagner mercenaries as "treason", he vowed "inevitable pun-

ishment" Who are the Wagner troops? The private army had been in-

volved in conflicts in the Middle East and Africa but always denied involvement.

Prigozhin last year admitted he had founded the group, recruiting the soldiers from Russian prisons in exchange for amnesty.

In eastern Ukraine, the mercenary unit has been spear-

heading Russia's costly battles. It had been at the forefront of the months-long assault for Bakhmut, capturing the site for Russia, but at huge losses.

How this affects Russia's war? The rebellion marks the most serious challenge yet to Vladimir Putin's long rule and Russia's most serious security crisis since

he came to power in late 1999. It would divert attention and resources away from the battlefields in Ukraine, at a time when Kyiv is in the midst of a coun-

are washing ourselves in blood. What they tell us is the deepest deception. Why did the special military operation begin? YEVGENY PRIGOZHIN | CHIEF, WAGNER GROU

teroffensive to seize back territory. Ukraine's army has said it was "watching" the infighting between Prigozhin and President Putin.

Moscow meanwhile has warned that Kyiv's army was seizing the moment to concentrate its troops "for offensive actions" near Bakhmut.

The significance of the mutiny was also not lost on world leaders, with leaders of the United States, France and Germany all saying that they are watching developments closely.

'All 25K ready to die'

Moscow: The head of the Wagner mercenary group said Saturday he had crossed into Russia with his forces to topple Moscow's military leadership, saying he and his 25,000 fighters were "ready to die"

"All of us are ready to die. All 25,000, and then another 25,000," Yevgeny Prigozhin, 62, said in an audio message after earlier accusing the Russian top

brass of launching strikes against his men. In response, Russian authorities said security had been tightened in several regions and the mayor of Moscow announced that "antiterrorist" measures were being taken in the capital. The FSB security service accused Prigozhin of attempting to launch a "civil conflict" and urged Wagner fighters to detain him. "We will destroy everything that stands in our way," Prigozhin said earlier, in the most audacious challenge to President Vladimir Putin since the start of the offensive in Ukraine last year. Prigozhin said his forces, who have spearheaded much of Russia's offensive in Ukraine, had entered the southern Russian region of Rostov, and had also shot down a Russian military helicopter. "Law enforcement agencies are doing everything necessary to ensure the safety of residents," Rostov governor Vasily Golubev said. Videos and pictures posted online, including by TASS, showed armed

men surrounding administrative buildings in Rostov and tanks deployed in the city centre. It was not clear who the armed men were. In Moscow, critical facilities were "under reinforced protection", the TASS state-run news agency reported, citing a law enforcement source. Prosecutor General Igor Krasnov had informed Putin of "the initiation of a criminal case in connection with an attempt to organise an armed rebellion", Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said, adding the president was getting regular updates on the situation. In recent months, Prigozhin has become embroiled in a bitter power struggle with the defence ministry, accusing the military of attempting to "steal" his victories in Ukraine.

Anyone who chooses the path of evil destroys themselves: Zelenskyy

Kyiv: Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Saturday that "Russia's weakness is obvious" and that the longer Moscow keeps its troops and mercenaries in Ukraine, the more chaos it would invite back home. He made the comments on the Telegram messaging app amid an apparent mutiny on Saturday by Wagner mercenary chief Yevgeny Prigozhin against the Russian military. "Anyone who chooses the path of evil destroys themselves. For a long time, Russia used propaganda to mask its weakness and the stupidity of its government. And now there is so much chaos that no lie can hide it. Russia's weakness is obvious. Full-scale weakness," Zelenskyy wrote. "And the longer Russia keeps its troops and mercenaries on our land, the more chaos, pain and problems it will have for itself later."



Over the coming hours, the loyalty of Russia's security forces, and especially the **Russian National Guard, will** be key to how this crisis plays out. This represents the most significant challenge to Russia in recent times

REACTION TO TURMOIL The United States will

coordination with Allies and partners as the situation

stay in close

continues to develop

ANTONY BLINKEN | US SECRETARY OF STATE

BRITAIN'S DEFENCE MINISTRY

NATO is monitoring the situation

OANA LUNGESCU | NATO SPOKESWOMAN

Prime Minister Meloni is closely following events in Russia, which show that its assault on Ukraine is causing instability within Russia

ITALIAN PRIME MINISTER GIORGIA MELONI'S OFFICE

President Tayyip Erdogan spoke by telephone with his **Russian counterpart Vladimir** Putin on Saturday and urged him to act with common sense

TURKISH PRESIDENCY

Minsk remained an ally of **Russia and that internal** disputes were "a gift to the collective West"

BELARUS SECURITY COUNCIL

BIDEN-MODI MEETING

Pak hits out at US, India

Chechen units were moving towards the zones of tension and would act to preserve **Russia's units and** defend its statehood. Prigozhin's behaviour a knife in the back **RAMZAN KADYROV** LEADER, CHECHE

MODI ARRIVES IN EGYPT

This is the first bilateral visit by an Indian Prime Minister to Egypt in 26 years

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Cairo, June 24: Prime Minister



Pakistan said it was "deeply concerned" over the planned transfer of advanced military technologies to India, saying such steps would not prove helpful in achieving peace in South Asia



MAIDEN STATE VISIT

Taiwanese defence ministry said, in a further rise in tensions. China's air force over the past three years has routinely flown into the air space around Taiwan.

Indian chef jailed for molestation

Singapore: A 44-year-old chef from India has been sentenced to three months and four weeks' jail for molesting two teenage girls in Singapore. Sushil Kumar pleaded guilty to two charges of molesting the victims, reported TODAY newspaper Friday. Just about three months after he first molested a teenage girl in broad daylight near a subway train station, he targeted another girl whom he touched without consent and declared his "love" for her even though she did not know him.

the century-old wreck of the Titanic, raising questions about the unregulated nature of such expeditions.

A debris field from the submersible Titan was found at the bottom of the North Atlantic Thursday by a robotic diving vehicle deployed from a Canadian search vessel, ending an intense five-day international rescue effort.

Fragments of Titan, which lost contact with its surface support ship about one hour and 45 minutes into a two-hour descent on Sunday, littered the seabed about 1,600 feet (488 meters) from the bow of the Titanic wreck, about 2-1/2 miles (4 km) below the surface, U.S. Coast Guard Rear Admiral John Mauger said.

He told reporters Thursday the debris was consistent with "a catastrophic implosion of the vehicle," meaning the 22-footlong vessel ultimately collapsed and was crushed under the immense hydrostatic pressure at that depth.

Narendra Modi arrived here Saturday for a two-day state visit during which he will hold talks with the Egyptian leadership, including President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi, as the two nations seek to enhance their strategic partnership.

Modi is visiting Egypt at the invitation of Egyptian President El-Sisi. In a special gesture, Modi was welcomed at the airport here by Egypt's Prime Minister Mostafa Madbouly with a warm embrace.

He was accorded a ceremonial welcome and a Guard of Honour upon his arrival.

"I am confident this visit will strengthen India's ties with Egypt. I look forward to talks with President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi and attending other programmes," Prime Minister Modi tweeted after landing in Cairo. "I thank Prime Minister

Mostafa Madbouly for the special gesture of welcoming me at the airport. May India-Egypt ties flourish and benefit the people

of our nations," he said.

Waving the Indian tricolour, members of the Indian community welcomed the Prime Minister to chants of 'Modi, Modi' and 'Vande Mataram' when he reached the hotel here. An Egyptian woman dressed in a saree greeted Modi with the

popular song 'Yeh Dosti Hum Nahi Chhodenge' from the movie 'Sholay'

Modi will meet Egyptian President El-Sisi Sunday.

The Prime Minister will join a roundtable discussion with the India Unit of the Egyptian Cabinet led by his counterpart

Madbouly.

Modi will call on Egypt's grand mufti Dr Shawki Ibrahim Abdel-Karim Allam and later hold discussions with prominent Egyptian intellectuals.

On Sunday, Modi will visit the 11th Century Al-Hakim mosque, which was renovated with assistance from the Dawoodi Bohra community.

The Prime Minister's "very quick reciprocal visit" to Egypt was taking place within six months of President El-Sisi's visit to India as the chief guest of the Republic Day celebrations this year.

REUTERS

Washington, June 24: Pakistan Friday criticised the United States and India after President Joe Biden met Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the White House and both leaders called on Pakistan to ensure its territory was not used as a base for militant attacks

Pakistan's foreign ministry said a joint US-Indian statement was "unwarranted, one-sided, and misleading". The reference to Islamabad in it was "contrary to diplomatic norms," it said. The ministry added that it

was surprised by the joint statement and said it had "close counterterrorism cooperation" with the United States.

Relations between India and Pakistan have been fraught for years. Since independence from

Britain in 1947, India and Pakistan have fought three wars, two of them over the Muslim-majority Himalayan region of Kashmir, which they both claim in full but rule in part.

The joint US-Indian statement said: "They (Biden and Modi) strongly condemned cross-border terrorism, the use of terrorist proxies and called on Pakistan to take immediate action to ensure that no territory under its control is used for launching terrorist attacks.

Pakistan's foreign ministry said India was using the allegations of extremism against Islamabad to deflect from the situation in Kashmir and the treatment of minorities in India.

New Delhi has for years accused Pakistan of launching militant attacks in India.

cluded SARSCoV-2 or a close

progenitor, nor any direct evi-

dence that a specific research-re-

lated incident occurred involving WIV personnel before the

pandemic that could have caused

the Covid pandemic," the report

said. The origins of the coron-

avirus pandemic have been a

matter of furious debate in the

United States almost since the

first human cases were reported

March signed a bill declassifying

in Wuhan in late 2019.

No evidence Covid started in Wuhan lab: US Beijing sizzles under worst heatwave

AGENCIES

Taipei, June 24: Beijing and parts of northern China are experiencing record temperatures, with authorities urging people to limit their time outdoors.

The Naniiao observatory in southern Beijing Saturday for the first time recorded temperatures above 40 degrees Celsius for a third consecutive day, according to the China Meteorological Administration.

In nearby Hebei province and the port city of Tianji, temperatures have also soared above 40 C over the past few days, prompting authorities to issue 'red" alerts for extreme weather.

In China's four-tier weather alert system, the red indicates the



most severe conditions.

On Thursday, Beijing experienced its second-hottest day on record - with temperatures soaring to 41.1 C. It was also the highest temperature ever recorded in China's capital during the month of June.

Beijing's all-time high of 41.9 C, since modern records began, occurred July 24, 1999.

Chinese meteorologists say the current heat wave has been caused by warm air masses as-

sociated with high-pressure ridges in the atmosphere and compounded by thin cloud covers and long daylight hours around the summer solstice. Other countries in Asia have experienced deadly heat waves in

recent weeks, which scientists say are aggravated by rising global temperatures, caused partly by the burning of fossil fuels.

In China, the heat wave has coincided with a three-day public holiday, the Dragon Boat Festival, devoted to eating rice dumplings and racing boats propelled by teams of paddlers.

Beijing's weather authorities urged residents to avoid exercising outdoors for long periods and take measures to shield from the sun.

The report said that while "extensive work" had been conducted on coronaviruses at the Wuhan institute, the agencies had not found evidence of a specific incident that could have caused the outbreak

REUTERS

Washington, June 24: US intelligence agencies found no direct evidence that the Covid-19 pandemic stemmed from an incident at China's Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV), a report declassified Friday said.

The four-page report by the



Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI) said the US intelligence community still could not rule out the possibility that the virus came from a laboratory, however, and had not been able to discover the origins of the pandemic.

'The Central Intelligence Agency and another agency remain unable to determine the precise origin of the Covid-19 pandemic, as both (natural and lab) hypotheses rely on significant assumptions or face challenges with conflicting reporting," the ODNI report said. "We continue to have no in-

dication that the WIV's pre-pandemic research holdings inorigin of Covid-19.

information related to the origins of the pandemic. Biden said at the time of signing that he shared Congress' goal of releasing as much information as possible about the

US President Joe Biden in ২









business

Prime Minister's visit is being viewed as a turning point in Indo-US relations in a fastchanging world order which would see both the countries emerge as the most influential economies with strategic prowess in the unfolding international political economy DEEPAK SOOD SECRETARY GENERAL, ASSOCHAM

EXPORT OF DRONES EASED

To facilitate Indian drone makers to access larger markets and compete on a global scale, the government has simplified and liberalised the policy for export of drones or unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) meant for civilian end uses





The Bank of England's fight against inflation comes at a potentially high cost to the UK economy, which may slip into

recession later this or next year AXEL RUDOLPH MARKET ANALYST, IG

In the previous session, gold prices corrected nearly 1.0 per cent following a wave of interest-rate hikes from central banks and more hawkish commentary from Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell SAUMIL GANDHI SENIOR ANALYST

(COMMODITIES), HDFC SECURITIES

With the Hyundai EXTER we are venturing into a new segment that further enhances our position as a full range SUV manufacturer EXTER UNSOO KIM MD AND CEO, HYUNDA

SHORT TAKES

HDFC Life gets GST demand notice

Mumbai: HDFC Life Insurance Friday said it has received a demand notice of more than ₹942 crore for non-payment of GST. The matter relates to the claiming of input tax credit against supply of services. which the Directorate of Goods and Services Tax (GST) Intelligence (DGGI) believes are ineligible for such claims. it said. "HDFC Life Insurance Company has received a show cause cum demand notice from the Directorate General of GST Intelligence, Mumbai Zonal Unit asking the Company to show cause why a tax of ₹942.18.46.028 pertaining to the period July 2017 to FY 2022, should not be demanded from the Company," HDFC Life said in a regulatory filing.

HI-TECH HANDSHAKE 'Moment to invest in India'

Modi urged the business community to step forward and take full advantage of this opportunity

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Washington, June 24: In a strong pitch to US entrepreneurs. Prime Minister Narendra Modi said "this is the moment to invest in India" as governments of both countries have done the groundwork for businesses and companies to take advantage of the opportunity and to "play and proposer"

Addressing business leaders and philanthropists from India and the US as well as other prominent members of the Indian-American community at the Kennedy Centre here Friday, he stressed that the India-US partnership is not of convenience but one of conviction, shared commitments and compassion. Highlighted the profound

transformation currently underway in India and the strides being made in various sectors, the prime minister invited the professionals to forge partnerships with India.

'In Washington DC, had an engaging interaction with leading professionals across various fields. Glad that @SecBlinken also joined the programme. Highlighted the vast opportu-

Microsoft talks AI with Modi

statement to IANS.

Microsoft Chairman and CEO Satya Nadella, who met Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the US, discussed several key topics with him and one important subject was how Artificial Intelligence (AI) can help improve the lives of Indians. "While these conversations were private, one important topic was the power of technology, particularly Artificial Intelligence (AI), to help improve the lives of Indians," Microsoft said in a



In India's growth story, there are unlimited opportunities for America and for the country's corporate community. For you, it is the time to take the first and fast mover advantage NARENDRA MODI PRIME MINISTER

Google to invest \$10bn; open fintech centre

Washington: Internet giant Google is investing \$10 billion in India's digitisation fund, its CEO Sundar Pichai has told Prime Minister Narendra Modi, a step that will recognise India's leadership on fintech and will support small and large businesses in India, the US and around the world. Pichai met Prime Minister Modi here Friday and also announced the opening of Google's global fintech operation centre in the Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT) in Gandhinagar. "It was an honour to meet Prime Minister Modi during the historic visit to the US. We shared with the Prime Minister that Google is investing \$10 billion in India's digitisation fund," Pichai said.

nities India offers. Reiterated how this is THE moment to invest in India's growth story,' Modi tweeted. From defence to aviation, ap-

plied materials to manufacturing, and the IT and space sectors, India and the US are now moving forward as most reliable partners. Prime Minister Modi said at the event organised by the US-India Strategic Partnership Forum.

The event was attended by around 1,000 leading professionals hailing from diverse fields, according to the Ministry of External Affairs. Every development project of

Bitcoin hits over 1-year high

India has the capacity to further strengthen the American dream. Modi said, citing that India was investing a record \$125 billion in infrastructure development.

Modi said in the past three days, he and President Joe Biden spent a lot of time discussing several historic issues

In their meetings, the two leaders had concrete discussions over the future of India-US relations and have decided to follow a clear strategy ahead.

The India-US technological handshake meeting in the White House sent a message to companies, businesses, manufac

Amazon raises its investment to \$26bn

New Delhi: Amazon.com Inc said Friday it will take its investments in India to \$26 billion by 2030, adding \$6.5 billion in new planned investments in an announcement made after CEO Andy Jassy met Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the United States. Though Jassy gave no breakdown, the announcement follows Amazon's cloud computing unit Amazon Web Services saying last month it will invest ₹1.06 trillion (\$12.9 billion) in the country by the end of 2030. Earlier, Amazon had announced a \$6.5 billion investment plan, largely to boost its e-commerce business where it competes with Walmart's Flipkart and billionaire Mukesh Ambani's Reliance Retail.

turers and innovators that "this is the moment", he said, adding, "The governments of India and the US have done the groundwork for you.

Asserting that whenever India has become strong, the world has benefited, the prime minister said this was seen during the Covid pandemic that when the world needed medicines, India increased its production and provided medicines

He also said the basis of India's success and its development's biggest driving force is the aspiration of its people.

In the last two and two and a half years. US companies have invested more than \$16 billion in India, Modi noted

India is the world's youngest nation and it has the world's biggest youth talent pool and skilled and professional force. the prime minister said and asserted that whichever country joins India at this time, it is bound to benefit.

FIRST OF ITS KIND Bribes-for-jobs scam uncovered at TCS; 4 executives sacked

The ₹100cr scandal comes as a surprise, as big organisations such as TCS are expected to have robust safeguards to prevent corruption that could hamper operations and sully their image

AGENCIES

Chennai, June 24: India's largest IT firm, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), has been rocked by a ₹100 crore scandal after the company discovered that some of its senior executives, who had been trusted to hire thousands of critical employees, accepted bribes from staffing firms.

According to reports, a few senior personnel at the company were accepting bribes from staffing firms for giving jobs to their candidates, for years. This has led to the company sacking four officials from its resource management group (RMG) and

banning three staffing firms. The report said that earlier, a whistleblower at the company wrote to the company's CEO and COO stating that the global head of RMG, ES Chakravarthy, had been accepting commissions from these staffing firms for vears.

An executive on condition of anonymity said it is not known for how long this alleged scam was going on. The executive said the company hired over 3,00,000 people in the past three years. Even if ten per cent of the recruitment was made via selected staffing firms who gave a commission on each person recruited,

then the scale of the scam would be at least ₹100 crore.

The most preferred routes for hiring executives, as well as contractors for IT companies like TCS, are employee referral programmes and staffing firms. These firms provide lists of candidates to the company, which then conducts tests or interviews and later hires them as per the need.

"While there are complaints regarding code of conduct violations that arise from time to time, the company has robust processes for investigating and resolving them to closure," a TCS spokesperson said.

The RMG division of TCS has around 3,000 people and places around 1,400 engineers on projects daily. The average comes out to be one placement every minute. Last year. TCS earned \$27.93 billion in revenue and has 6,14,795 employees.

The two preferred routes for hiring experienced executives for IT services firms such as TCS are employee referral programmes and staffing firms. Even temporary workers or contractors are hired through staffing firms.

This is also the first such scandal that has been reported in TCS. It comes just days after K Krithivasan took over as the company's chief executive officer (CEO).

India saves 249bn units energy in FY22–(

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 24: India con-

electricity to save ₹1.60 lakh

crore in bills for the 2021-22 fi-

nancial year, according to a BEE

report. The report titled National

REUTERS **RBI fines 3 banks**

New Delhi: The Central Bank Friday imposed a penalty of t2.5 crore on Jammu and





days amid a burst of institutional interest," said Kate Laurence, general partner of Bloccelerate VC, which invests in crypto projects.

New Delhi: Paradeep Phosphates Limited (PPL) is once again recognised for its overall effort in maintaining best industrial safety practices. Greentech





BIZ BUZZ

Kashmir Bank for noncompliance with certain directions, including one related to 'time-bound implementation and strengthening of SWIFTrelated operational controls'. A penalty of ₹1.45 crore has also been imposed on Bank of Maharashtra for noncompliance with certain directions issued by RBI on 'Loans and Advances Statutory and Other Restrictions' and Advisory on 'Man in the Middle (MiTM) Attacks in ATMs'. In another statement, the RBI said a penalty of ₹30 lakh has been imposed on Axis Bank. The lender, it said had levied penal charges in certain accounts for late payment of credit card dues, though the customers had paid the dues by the due date, through third-party platforms.

WB approves \$255.5 million

New Delhi: The World Bank has approved a \$255.5 million loan for improving the quality of technical education in government-run institutions in India. Over the next five years. the project will support around 275 government-run technical institutions in selected states across the country, benefitting more than 350.000 students each year. The Multidisciplinary Education and Research Improvement in **Technical Education Project** will support improving student skills and employability by focusing on better research, entrepreneurship, and innovation: and improve governance in technical institutions. As part of the project, students will get access to upgraded curricula including emerging technologies in communication and climate resilience.

high Friday, capping a week of gains helped in part by BlackRock's plans to create a bitcoin exchange-traded fund despite heightened US regulatory scrutiny on the digital asset sector.

BlackRock, the world's biggest asset manager, filed last week to launch iShares Bitcoin Trust, an ETF that would have Coinbase Custody as its custodian as well as offer institutional investors exposure to the cyptocurrency.

Crvpto exchange EDX Markets, backed by investment firms Charles Schwab, Fidelity and Citadel Securities, also announced earlier this week that it will allow trading on some cryptocurrencies.

The moves have revived investor interest in cyptocurrencies, which have been in the doldrums after a series of crypto company meltdowns including the sudden collapse of exchange

Bitcoin, world's largest crypt

rose as high as \$31,458 Ethereum, second-largest crypto, is trading at 1,903.20

FTX late last year.

Compounding negative sentiment has been increased regulatory scrutiny, including the **US** Securities and Exchange Commission's move this month to sue crypto giants Coinbase Global and Binance, alleging violation of its rules. The pair deny the allegations. Bitcoin has gained nearly 25%

in value since BlackRock's filing. It rose as high as \$31,458 Friday the highest level since June 7, 2022, and was last up 3.29% at \$30,872.

"The dark clouds overshadowing crypto have lifted in recent

"The likes of BlackRock, Charles Schwab, Fidelity and Citadel throwing their hats into the crypto ring is hugely significant because it shows that institutions are very serious about the space - despite the recent

regulatory crackdown.' Investors piled into cryp tocurrencies when interest rates were low, pushing the market to a peak value of \$3 trillion in 2021. But they turned cautious as rates rose, with the value of the market now standing at around \$1.24 trillion, according to CoinGecko data.

Ethereum, the world's secondlargest cryptocurrency, has risen more than 16% since last week. It was up 1.63% at 1,903.20 Friday. Some market-watchers said the SEC crackdown may be good for bitcoin, which is generally considered a commodity rather than a security and therefore beyond the SEC's remit.

Foundation committed to recognise and celebrate ethos of outstanding performance in envi-



ronment, health and safety issues conferred the 'Greentech Foundation Safety Award' for the year 2023 on PPL. In presence of Kamaleshwar Saran, Chairman, Greentech Foundation; Nihar Kanti Rout, Jt General Manager (Fire & Safety) of PPL received the award from Shelly Oberoi, Mayor, Delhi and Ved Prakash Mahabir, Ex-Director, ONGC at a function in New Delhi. This award will inspire PPL to scale new milestones in the field of industrial safety.

Go First cancels flights till June 28

AGENCIES

New Delhi, june 24: Cashstrapped airline Go First Saturday announced that its scheduled flight operations will remain cancelled till June 28, adding that a full refund will be issued to the passengers. Earlier, it was supposed to be till June 16. "Due to operational reasons,

Energy Data: Survey and Analysis 2021-22 was released by Union Minister for Power, New and Renewable Energy RK Singh Friday in the national capital. The report by the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) has been prepared in collaboration

with Niti Aayog, the Ministry of Power said.

Electricity saving of 249 BUs has happened, the data showed.

The total energy savings worth ₹1,60,721 crore happened as an impact of various energy conservation policies, it said.

While releasing the report, the minister underlined the need for data on energy usage, such as the comparative cost of gas-based cooking and solar cooking.

Oil firms may cut petrol, diesel prices as state polls near

OMCs may be asked to cut petrol and diesel price by ₹4-5/ltr from Aug onwards given the key state elections likely from Nov-Dec onwards INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE New Delhi, June 24: Oil marketing companies (OMCs) may

have to cut petrol and diesel price by ₹4-5 a litre from August onwards given the key state elections likely from November-December onwards.

Though OMCs' FY24 P/B valuations appear reasonable, there exists significant uncertainty on earnings in the fuel marketing business given risk of OPEC+ strong pricing power driving high crude price during the next election-heavy 9-12 months, JM **Financial Institutional Securities**

said in a research. Hence, optimism on OMCs will be contingent on crude sustaining below \$80/bbl and government fully compensating for FY23 fuel under-recoveries.

OMCs valuations appear reasonable but sharp jump in crude price during elections could pose risk to OMCs marketing earnings, the report said.

However, OMCs marketing segment earnings could come under risk if Brent crude price jumps above OMCs break-even crude price of \$85/barrel or if any fuel price cut is followed by rise in crude price, as reversal of fuel price cut might be unlikely during the election period

Upside risk to crude price exists as we believe OPEC+ will continue to support Brent crude price at \$75-80/bbl, which is the fiscal break-even crude price for



Saudi Arabia, given their strong pricing power, the report said.

OMCs may be asked to cut petrol/diesel price by ₹4-5/ltr from August onwards given the key state elections likely from November - December onwards. Media reports suggest that the oil ministry may nudge OMCs

to cut petrol/diesel prices as OMCs' balance sheet have largely got repaired and are likely to report strong profits in Q1FY24; however, the reports didn't mention the likely timeline and quantum of possible cuts as it will depend on level at which crude price and INR/USD exchange

OMCs' balance sheets have largely got repaired and are likely to report strong profits in Q1FY24

Go First flights until 28th June

2023 are cancelled. We apologise

for the inconvenience caused."

Go First's resolution profes-

sional Shailendra Ajmera has

sought ₹425 crore in interim fi-

nance from the airlines financiers

to get a revival plan going that

could help restart operations.

according to multiple sources.

Go First said in a tweet.

rate stabilises.

"Our calculation suggests that OMCs can potentially cut petrol/diesel prices by ₹4-5/ltr from August'23 onwards, based on current crude price/product cracks, given the series of elections in the next 12 months (starting November - December'23)", the report said.

The latest IEA report presents a completely grim picture for the refiners. Spare global refinery capacity is likely to reach 8 million bopd by CY28 amid ca-

pacity additions, slowing oil demand from transportation sector and competition from non-refined products, Motilal Oswal Financial Services said in a note.

China will play a key role in balancing the global refined product market as 44 per cent of the upcoming capacity during the next six years and 40 per cent of global spare capacity in CY28 will be concentrated in China.

Oversupply may lead to a glut of refined products in global markets that may weaken refining margins structurally over the medium term. IOCL will be the most hit by declining GRMs due to its highest refining lever-age among OMCs, the research said.











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PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 24: Former India captain Sunil Gavaskar has lashed out at the national selectors for making Cheteshwar Pujara the "scapegoat" and ignoring prolific domestic scorer Sarfaraz Khan for the two Tests in the West Indies next month.

Referring to Sarfaraz's nonselection, Gavaskar questioned the logic behind having the Ranji Trophy if performance in the country's premier domestic tour nament is not looked into while picking the Indian red-ball teams instead of taking into account the players' record in the IPL.

"Sarfaraz Khan has been scor ing at an average of 100 in all past three seasons. What does he have to do to be picked in the squad? He might not be in the XI, but you pick him in the team," Gavskar said of the Mumbai batter to Sports Today.

"Tell him that his performances are being recognised. Otherwise, stop playing Ranji Trophy. Say, it's of no use, you just play IPL and think you are good enough for the red-ball game as well.

With the help of three centuries, Sarfaraz amassed 556 runs in six games at an average of 92.66 in the 2022-23 Ranji Trophy. The 25-year-old right handed batter had scored 982 runs at an average of 122.75 in the 2021-22 Ranji season, including four hundreds. In all,

BACK TO WORK A DAY AFTER SNUB

New Delhi: The doughty Cheteshwar Pujara hit the ground running and batted in the middle a day after being dropped from the Indian Test team for the upcoming West Indies tour, taking the axing in his stride. Pujara uploaded a nine-minute video clip of him batting in a ground and playing few shots. The senior Indian batter was Friday dropped from the Indian Test squad travelling to the West Indies for a two-match series next month. Pujara was subjected to harsh criticism after his underwhelming performance in the recently concluded World Test Championship Final at The Oval in London. With Pujara being dropped from the Windies tour, it is being speculated in certain sections that the India veteran may have played his last Test. However, Pujara's father and coach Arvind said his son can make a comeback to the national side and has already started his preparation for the Duleep trophy. "He is mentally very strong. I can't comment about selection. But from what I have seen, he is batting at his best. In fact, he was working hard in the nets the same day post the WI team announcement," he said. "He has started preparing for the Duleep trophy and will continue playing on the county circuit. As a father and coach, there is no reason for me to believe why he can't comeback."

Sarfaraz has scored 3,505 runs in 37 first-class matches at an avturies.

erage of 79.65, including 13 cen-

As far as Pujara is concerned, his absence from the Indian Test team for the Windies tour has been one of the talking points. He said not having millions of followers on social media platforms, like some of the other India stars such as Virat Kohli and Rohit

Sharma, is no reason to drop anyone. "Why has he been made the scapegoat for our batting failures? He has been a loyal servant of Indian cricket, a quiet and able achiever. But because he doesn't have millions of followers on whatever platforms who would make a noise in case he gets dropped, you drop him? That is something beyond understanding," said Gavaskar.

'What is the criteria for dropping him and keeping the others who failed. I don't know because nowadays there is no media interaction with

the selection committee chairman or whoever where you could actually ask these questions,' he added

The highly promising and inform Yashasvi Jaiswal could be taking up the No.3 spot that Pujara made his own over the last decade. Continuing, the batting great said that age should not be a criteria for selecting players.

"Yes he has been playing County cricket, he knows what the red ball is all about," said Gavaskar about Pujara. "Nowadays players can play till they are 39 or 40, there is nothing wrong with that. They are all very fit and as long as you are producing runs or taking wickets, I don't think age should be a factor.

"Clearly only one man has been singled out while the others also failed. To me, the batting failed (in WTC final). Apart from Ajinkya Rahane, there was nobody who got any runs. So why Pujara has been made the fall guy is something the selectors need to explain," he said

Jaiswal look to keep things simple $\frac{1}{2}$

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai. June 24: For Yashasvi Jaiswal, who got his maiden callup in the India Test side Friday when the BCCI announced the squad for the upcoming two-Test series in the West Indies, it was the culmination of a journey he had embarked on almost a decade ago.

Having left his home in Bhadohi, Uttar Pradesh, spending early teenage years at a tent at the Azad Maidan here and doing hard yards in Maximum City under his coach Jwala Singh, an India cap wasn't everything for the 21-year-old batting prodigy, but the only thing he aspired for.

It was never about how he would get there but when. Friday afternoon the news came, and there was pure joy and elation in equal measure for the stylish southpaw

The young batter told this agency in an exclusive interview that he was both nervous and excited over the possibility of his call-up to the India Test side, a dream that turned into reality after putting in splendid performances across formats in domestic cricket as well as in the IPL.

"My father started crying (when he got to know)," said Jaiswal, adding that he would head to the National Cricket Academy (NCA) in Bangalore perhaps in a couple of days to prepare for the West Indies

tour. Having returned recently to his home here, Jaiswal revealed he had a busy day Friday, as he was out for a training session followed by a shoot - which is

when he got to learn about his India selection.

lit up the IPL this year with sensational batting that followed dominating performances with the red ball in the domestic circuit, received his maiden call-up

Jaiswal was among the reserve players for the World Test Championship final earlier this month and a call-up for the West Indies tour for two Tests was inevitable after proving himself across formats.

"I am feeling good, I will try to do my best," Jaiswal said. "I am excited but at the same time I just want to go out and express myself," he added.

Jaiswal said he was nervous till the time he saw his name in the squad announced by the BCCI. "I was a little nervous, till the time you do not get to know that your name is there in the team, there are butterflies.

11

But it is a good feeling. "My preparations have been going good and I got to interact

The 21-year-old Jaiswal, who to the Indian Test team.

end 'it is all about you, how you take it going forward'," said Jaiswal, adding that he has interacted a lot with Rohit Sharma, Virat Kohli and Ajinkya Rahane. Jaiswal said he would not keep any batting position as preference

while approaching the West Indies tour: "It depends on the situations in the match, how it goes and what is happening, we will have to see. I can only figure that out once we go there, cannot speak about it at this moment," he said.

a lot with the senior players.

The conversation has been very

simple — to focus on my work.

I learned from them that in the

The left-handed batter said India coach Rahul Dravid's message has been for him to keep doing things that work for him "It has just been about keeping my focus on the right things and keep doing what I have been doing all this while. I have to keep things simple and maintain discipline, these are very easy things to say but are really important (in application), Jaiswal said.

"It was a good feeling to learn that I am now a part of the Indian team, but it is also a fact that I try to control myself (emotionally) as much as I can. I know that there are both good and bad sides of things, I try to keep myself stable on both these aspects," added Jaiswal, for whom being grounded is one of the qualities that stand out.

ALIFY FOR SAFF C'SHIP SEMIS Aphaoba joins Odisha IND FC on three-year deal PRESS TRUST OF INDIA India play Kuwait June 27 to

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar. June 24: Odisha FC announced the signing of Aphaoba Singh Saturday on a three-vear deal from Roundglass

in different tactical approaches. Whether it be deploying him as an out-and-out winger, or even as a forward, his adaptability will hopefully make him a valuable asset to the squad.

Bangalore, June 24: Captain Sunil Chhetri found the target yet again as India beat a spirited Nepal 2-0 in their second group match to book a berth in the SAFF Championship semifinals

here Saturday. Chhetri (61st minute) score his fourth goal of the tournament before Mahesh Singh (70th) struck to notch up the home side's second consecutive win. India had beaten Pakistan 4-0 in their opening match on Wednesday with Chhetri scoring a hat-trick. Chhetri (91 goals from 139 matches) had already become the second most prolific scorer among Asians – after Ali Daei (109 from 148 matches) of Iran and third among active players in the world. He is the most prolific goal-getter among active Asian players. With six points from two wins, India qualified for the semifinals from Group A along with Kuwait (also six points), who beat Pakistan 4-0 earlier in the day for their second victory



decide the group winner. Nepal and Pakistan are out of the reckoning for a semifinal spot as they lost two matches each.

Before India broke the deadlock, they had to ward off a strong fight from Nepal. India entered the match with large scale changes as only Chhetri, Anirudh

not execute a volley.

India showed more urgency and purpose in the second half, and the result came their way in the 61st minute. Sahal and Mahesh engaged themselves in a lighting one-two to evade Nepalese defence before finding an unmarked Chhetri inside the box, and the forward just had

Punjab FC (RPFC). The promising attacker, known for his blistering speed and versatility is a vital addition to the Kalinga Warriors.

Aphaoba's ability to exploit wide areas and stretch opposition backlines will undoubtedly provide the Bhubaneswar-based side a new dimension in their attacking options.

Aphaoba has previously played for Roundglass Punjab FC in the I-League where he won the title last season, Minerva Academy in the I-League 2nd Division and represented India in the AFC U-20 Asian Cup Qualifiers.

With a strong focus on developing young talent, the club has consistently aimed to provide a platform to young prodigies who can go on to represent the firstteam regularly in the future.

Furthermore, Aphaoba's versatility allows him to be used

Earlier in the week, Odisha FC had roped in Dinliana – also on a 3-year deal – adding more steel to the backline. The ISL League Shield winner from Mizoram has showcased his defensive prowess and potential in various clubs over the years, and his new chapter with OFC promises to be exciting.

Dinliana's football career began in the Mizoram Premier League (MPL) with Chhinga Veng, where he plied his trade and honed his skills with impressive performances on the field. His dedication and talent caught the attention of the

football community, and he soon found himself representing Mizoram in the prestigious Santosh Trophy in

It was during this time that Dinliana's abilities as a defender started to gain recognition.

India skipper Sunil Chhetri in action against Nepal, Saturday

Thapa and Sahal Abdul Samad retained their places in the starting 11 from the previous match against Pakistan.

Nepal ran India close the whole of first half with a fine display of solid defence and quick counterattacks. The first clear chance of the match came Sahal's way but his header from a cross sailed just wide of the goal post in the 21st minute.

Nepal could have gone 1-0 up in the match had Bimal Ghatri was a bit quicker with his shot. as it was kicked away by Rohit Kumar close to the goal line in the 34th minute.

In the 41st minute, Mahesh, who made a fine run down the right flank, jinked a lovely cross to Sahal inside the box but the latter overran the ball and could to beat goalkeeper Kiran Limbu.

The goal energised the Indian players and they continued the search for another with Sahal marshalling the midfield brilliantly. The Kerala man along with Mahesh Singh worked the engine room of India in the second half.

The second goal was a tribute to Sahal's speed and skills. The midfielder made a bull run through the centre and his pass found Chhetri but his shot deflected off Limbu. However, Mahesh was right in place to head the ball into the net in the 70th minute as India gained a decisive 2-0 lead.

Despite conceding a two-goal lead, Nepal tried gamely to stage a comeback. But India were able to keep the scoreline intact.

DIKSHA IN LEAD AT CZECH LADIES

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Beroun (Czech Republic), June 24: Diksha Dagar produced a stunning bogey free 7-under 65 to build a five-shot lead after two rounds in the Czech Ladies Open here.

Diksha moved to 10-under 134 with rounds of 69 and 65 as was five clear of Spain's Ana Pelaez Trivino (70) and English duo of Cara Gainer (68) and Gabriela Cowley (67), who were now 5-under 139 with one more round to go.

Diksha, who won the Women's South African Open in 2019, is seeking her second title on the Ladies European Tour. A win for her will mean a second LET win for Indians, as Aditi Ashok earlier in the season won the ২ Kenya Ladies Open.

Another Indian, Pranavi Urs, who like Diksha did well on her home Tour — the WPG Tour earlier — had two eagles on the front nine after starting late in the second round.

2017.

War of words continues between Yogeshwar, protesting wrestlers

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 24: Facing opposition from fellow wrestlers for receiving exemption from Asian Games trials, the protesting wrestlers Saturday denied demanding such a favour from IOA and said they will quit wrestling if it is proved.

London Olympic bronze medallist Yogeshwar Dutt Friday questioned if these grapplers were agitating to get such favours and exhorted the junior wrestlers, their coaches and parents to raise voice against this injustice.

'We did not ask for exemption from trials, just asked for time to prepare," said Sakshi after going live on social media. "If you had problems with onebout trial, you should have gone



to the sports minister. But you chose to spread poison through social media," Bajrang said.

'We are ready to quit wrestling $\ if \ it \ is \ proved \ that \ we \ asked \ for \\$ exemption. We never wrote any letter for exemption."

It was first reported by PTI Thursday that six protesting wrestlers-the troika, Bajrang's wife Sangeeta Phogat, Sakshi's



husband Satywart Kadian and Jitender Kinha - will have to win just one bout against the winner of stage-one trials to be on the Indian team for the Asian Games and World Championships.

The wrestlers also vowed to continue their fight. "We will continue our fight till Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh is punished, we are waiting for chargesheet," Vinesh said.

Sakshi, Bajrang and Vinesh Phogat have been demanding arrest of former WFI chief Brij Bhushan for allegedly sexually harassing women wrestlers.

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