



UNTAPPED TALENT

Actor Tara Sutaria says there's so much potential in her that hasn't been tapped yet by the directors

LEISURE P2



N KOREA WARNS OF WAR

North Korea holds rallies on Korean War anniversary where people shouted slogans vowing a 'war of revenge' to destroy US

INTERNATIONAL P10



SPECTACULAR LAUNCH

ICC launches CWC Trophy Tour, sending the coveted prize into the stratosphere before making a stunning landing

SPORTS P12

SHORT TAKES

OPSC gets two new members

Bhubaneswar: Governor Ganeshi Lal Monday appointed two eminent persons as the members of Odisha Public Service Commission (OPSC). Choudhury Suryakant Mishra, former director, Basic Sciences, Odisha University of Agriculture and Technology (OUAT) and Gauranga Charan Sahu, retired chief engineer (Buildings), Works department have been appointed as the members of OPSC for a period of six years, said a notification issued by the General Administration and Public Grievance (GA&PG) department. The Governor made the appointments by exercising the powers conferred by Clause (1) of the Article 316 of the Constitution, read with Regulation 5 of the OPSC (Conditions of Service) Regulations-1952, added the notification.

Class XI application date extended

Bhubaneswar: The last date of submission of applications for admission into Class XI in Higher Secondary Schools across the state has been extended to June 30, the School and Mass Education (S&ME) department said, Monday. The department has extended the last date of submission of online applications for admission into Class XI for the second time following requests of the parents, said an official. The S&ME department had earlier extended the last date to June 26.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



10am to 10.30am, you've to praise the PM, 11am attack opposition, 12pm praise the PM, 1pm abuse Obama...

MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VALUE	CHANGE
SENSEX	62970.00	↓ 9.37
NIFTY	18691.20	↑ 25.70
DOLLAR	81.94	↓ ₹0.06
EURO	89.50	↑ ₹0.20
GOLD	₹58,420	↑ ₹113
SILVER	₹69,192	↑ ₹1,109

WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
TEMP MAX	29.7°C	30.0°C
TEMP MIN	26.0°C	25.4°C
Humidity	95%	90%
Rainfall	5.1mm	1.6mm

Forecast: Light rain likely



RAIN PAIN: Commuters wade through waterlogged service road of the Delhi-Gurugram Expressway after heavy rainfall during the onset of monsoon, Monday

PTI PHOTO

Heavy rain batters north, west India

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi/Shimla/Jaipur, June 26: At least four people were killed in lightning strikes in Rajasthan Monday and hundreds were stranded in Himachal Pradesh as monsoon rains lashed a large part of north and west India triggering flash floods, landslides and roadblocks at some places.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) said the south-west monsoon further advanced into some more parts of north Arabian Sea, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Haryana and Punjab, and remaining parts of Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh.

In Rajasthan, four people were killed and as many others injured in incidents of lightning strikes as first monsoon rains drenched some parts of the state.

In Mumbai, four persons were injured when a two-storey house collapsed on an adjacent structure in Mumbai's Ghatkopar area Monday. The city and its suburbs received moderate to heavy rains in the last 24 hours.

Meanwhile, hundreds of commuters including tourists were stranded in Himachal Pradesh's Mandi district as the Chandigarh-Manali National Highway was blocked following flash floods and landslides, officials said.

A total of 301 roads are closed in the state following heavy rains, while 140 power transformers are disrupted.

Ganjam bus had no permit ₹4,528cr for Odisha

Action against owner of the 25-year-old bus looms as the vehicle, which collided with a state-run bus in Digapahandi area and left 11 dead, was plying on roads sans permit and insurance

POST NEWS NETWORK

Berhampur, June 26: The private bus, which collided head-on with an Odisha State Road Transport Corporation (OSRTC) bus at Khemundi College Square under Digapahandi police limits in Ganjam leaving 11 members of a marriage party dead late Sunday night, neither had a permit nor insurance, Ganjam Regional Transport Officer (RTO) Manas Sahu said, Monday.

According to the Ganjam RTO, the private bus (OR-10A-6875) was registered March 26, 1998, and its insurance expired in April this year. "The private bus of the wedding guests had no permit and insurance," Sahu said, adding that the owner of the private bus was responsible for the accident as the 25-year-old vehicle was plying on roads without any permit.

The accident occurred late Sunday night at Khemundi College Square on Berhampur-Taptapani Road under Digapahandi police limits, around 35 km from here, when the private bus ferrying the wedding guests



The mangled private bus in Digapahandi area of Ganjam, Monday

collided with a state-run OSRTC bus (OD-02BY-1938), Berhampur Superintendent of Police (SP) Saravana Vivek M said. After attending a wedding ceremony at Berhampur, they were returning to Khandadeuli village near Digapahandi when the two buses crashed, leaving 11 dead and at least 12 injured.

The deceased were identified as Shivani Pradhan, 25, Rupali

Pradhan, 15, Sugyani Pradhan, 31, Sangita Dakua, 32, Litu Nayak, 40, Tripati Pradhan, 48, Ramesh Pradhan, 62, Sitaram Pradhan, 60, Sanjay Medin Ray, 50, Dibyanshu Pradhan, 3, and Hardhik, 1. A team of police personnel rushed to the spot, rescued the injured and shifted them to hospitals, the SP said. The injured were undergoing treatment at MKCG Medical College and

Hospital and Digapahandi Hospital. "One of them has been shifted to SCB Medical College and Hospital in Cuttack," the officer said.

President Droupadi Murmu, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik expressed grief over the death of people in the accident and wished for the speedy recovery of those injured.

The PM and the CM announced ex gratia for the next of kin of the deceased. "Pained by the bus accident in Ganjam district, Odisha. Condolences to those who lost their loved ones. May the injured recover soon. An ex-gratia of ₹2 lakh from PMNRF would be given to the next of kin of each deceased. The injured would be given ₹50,000," the Prime Minister's Office tweeted.

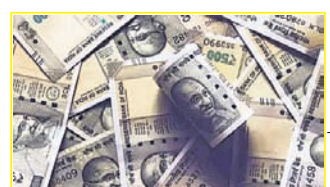
The CM announced an ex gratia of ₹3 lakh to the next of kin of each deceased and free treatment of injured persons. Meanwhile, a team of Ganjam police, with the help of twin city Commissionerate Police, nabbed the OSRTC bus driver from Khandagiri area of Bhubaneswar in the evening.

KULDEEP SINGH, OP

New Delhi, June 26: The Ministry of Finance has approved ₹4,528 crore for Odisha under the 'Special Assistance to States for Capital Investment 2023-24' scheme, an official said, Monday.

Odisha is among the 16 states for which the Centre approved ₹56,415 crore under the 'Special Assistance to States for Capital Investment 2023-24' scheme that was announced in the Union Budget 2023-24. Among the 16 states, Bihar has the highest allocation with ₹9,640 crore, followed by Madhya Pradesh (₹7,850 crore), West Bengal (₹7,523), Rajasthan (₹6,026 crore) and Odisha with ₹4,528 crore.

Capital investment projects in diverse sectors have been approved, including health, education, irrigation, water supply, power, roads, bridges, and railways. Funds for meeting the state share of Jal Jeevan Mission and Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana have also been provided to the states under this scheme to enhance the pace of the projects in these sectors, according to



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With the less than a year left for crucial General Elections, sources said, the government is mulling to spend more on infrastructure projects in next two quarters

the Department of Expenditure. The scheme for financial assistance to states for capital investment or expenditure, first instituted by the Ministry of Finance in 2020-21, in the wake of Covid-19 pandemic has given a very timely boost to capital spending by states.

With the less than a year left for crucial General Elections, sources said, the government is mulling to spend more on infrastructure projects in next two quarters.

OPPOSITION CONFIDENT OF OUSTING MODI GOVT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, June 26: The Shiv Sena (UBT) Monday claimed the Opposition parties will dislodge the Narendra Modi government through the ballot box by using the path of non-violence.

An editorial in the Sena (UBT) mouthpiece 'Saamana' drew a parallel between Wagner mercenary group's 'revolt against Russian President Putin' and the meeting of Opposition parties in Patna last week. Drawing the battle lines, over 32 leaders of more than a dozen Opposition parties held a crucial meeting in Patna hosted by Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar Friday and resolved to take on the BJP

unitedly in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls. The editorial in Saamana said the 'Wagner group' has shown dictatorship can be challenged.

"Be it Modi or Putin, they have to face rebellion. The government in India will be dislodged by a non-violent Wagner and that route will be through the ballot box," it claimed. Like Putin, Modi has to go, but in a democratic manner, it said.

"The Wagner group came together in Patna as a protector of democracy," it said, referring to the conclave of the Opposition parties in Bihar capital last week. It said the EVMs will not decide the results in 2024, but people will.

2 of 3 teens targeted by sextortion schemes: Study

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

San Francisco, June 26: Nearly two out of every three teenagers have been targeted by sextortion schemes on social media applications, a new study has shown.

According to Snap (the parent company of Snapchat), sextortionists primarily target young men for money on social media applications such as Snapchat, Instagram, Tumblr, Twitter, and Facebook, though girls are also targeted for explicit images and photos, reports Fox Business.

"For young males who have experienced a sextortion incident -- and the majority are males -- regularly tell us that when they share the situation with their

Around 56% of teens turned to friends, parents or other trusted adults after being threatened online

Nearly 50% reported the incident to the platform they were using



parents, they feel relieved. We advise them to report to hotlines and helplines, to report to the platforms and to tell their parents, a friend or a trusted adult," Arda Gerkens, president of Offlimits,

the Dutch child abuse hotline formerly known as EOKM, was quoted as saying. The survey included 760 teens in the US.

According to the study, about 65 per cent of teens on Snapchat

About 40% blocked the perpetrator and 30% updated their account security settings

HOW IT WORKS

Typical sextortion schemes involve scammers coercing victims into sending explicit images, then demanding payment to keep the images private or delete them from the web

and other applications said they or their friends were victims of sextortion in which they were either 'catfished' -- tricked into speaking with people lying about their identity online -- or hacked

for private information, including explicit photos, that were then used against them.

About 51 per cent said they or their friends fell victim to catfishing, and 47 per cent said they were hacked.

Nearly one out of three teens who became targets of these scams shared explicit or private images, the study said.

Moreover, around 56 per cent said they turned to friends, parents or other trusted adults after being threatened online, while 50 per cent said they reported the incident to the platform they were using.

About 40 per cent blocked the perpetrator and 30 per cent updated their account security settings.

leisure

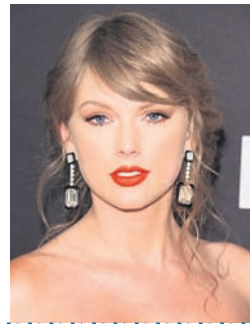


RAY J VOWS TO BE A BETTER HUSBAND TO PRINCESS LOVE

American singer Ray J has promised to 'be better' in his relationship with wife Princess Love. The couple first split in May 2020 after almost four years of marriage, but reconciled that July, only for J to again file for divorce in September. Later, he withdrew the petition.

SWIFT APPEALS FOR KINDNESS AND GENTLENESS TO FANS

Singer-songwriter Taylor Swift has urged her fans to show kind and gentleness online and not to lash out at the people they think she has written songs about. She doesn't care what happened in her younger years but now her supporters shouldn't turn on the people they think she's written songs about, explained Swift.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
You may feel empty, and completely down-and-out today. Ganesha says that this may make you feel a bit more inclined to spirituality. Meditation and prayer will engage more of your attention. You will also make considerable material progress.

TAURUS
You are likely to be in a mood to get away from the daily grind and take a much needed break. You would naturally try to stay free from future concerns and commitments and keep all your woes and worries aside for the day. An adventurous and fun filled outing or a trip to some happening resort, along with your friends and family members is a near certainty, assures Ganesha. Don't miss out on this opportunity.

GEMINI
Today, you may encounter unusual challenges, says Ganesha. You will come up with new thoughts and tactics, which will bring about positive changes and results. Avoid any confrontation with those living around you. Ganesha advises you to keep your cool during the day.

CANCER
Financially, you may be in a bit of a bother today. Payment of bills, taxes and loans may keep you busy for most part of the day. You may even contemplate borrowing money to meet the demands. However, you are likely to receive one of your pending payments, which will be enough to get you out of the fix.

LEO
Today, Ganesha advises you to keep the Bhagavad Gita's verses in mind, and persist in fulfilling your duties without bothering about the fruits of your labour. Put in some extra effort to finish off whatever you undertake today. Patience bears its fruits and they are always sweet.

VIRGO
You better identify your worth in the realms of emotions, feelings and sentiments. You shall warm up to and about everything - from play to colleagues to family. Simultaneously, you may realise where your limitations are. Ganesha predicts that the artist in you will flourish beginning today.

LIBRA
Well, today is just not your day. The prospects sure aren't looking too good. However, there's no point in getting anxious over this triviality. Remember, 'not good' does not necessarily mean bad. In any case, if it's a stressful day you have had, be sure to have an equally enjoyable evening. Ganesha guesses that you may want to discuss certain intimate issues with your sweetheart today!

SCORPIO
A creative thought or an innovative idea may spice up your routine work. Apparently, you may seem all worked up and disorganised, but actually you may be quite systematic when it comes to your work. Keep the enthusiasm in you alive to make life happier, tips Ganesha.

SAGITTARIUS
Going to private parties is a high probability today. All in all, make the most of it as you get nostalgic with old friends and make plans with new ones. Moreover, relatives will be pleased to meet you after a long time.

CAPRICORN
Whatever field you are in, your career matters will top your priority list. You will put your personal life on the back burner for a while. This change of places will surely bring you great rewards as your performance will drastically improve and everyone will appreciate your efforts.

AQUARIUS
Aim. Shoot. Achieve. Today, you will concentrate your energies to execute your plans with precision. Naturally, your work progresses by leaps and bounds. By sundown, you will achieve far more than everyone's estimation. That's the way to go, says Ganesha.

PISCES
You will have difficulty in interpreting the behaviour of your life partner today. It is better to bring transparency in your relationship rather than to doubt it. Speak freely about your problems and communicate with your spouse.

'My potential hasn't been tapped yet'

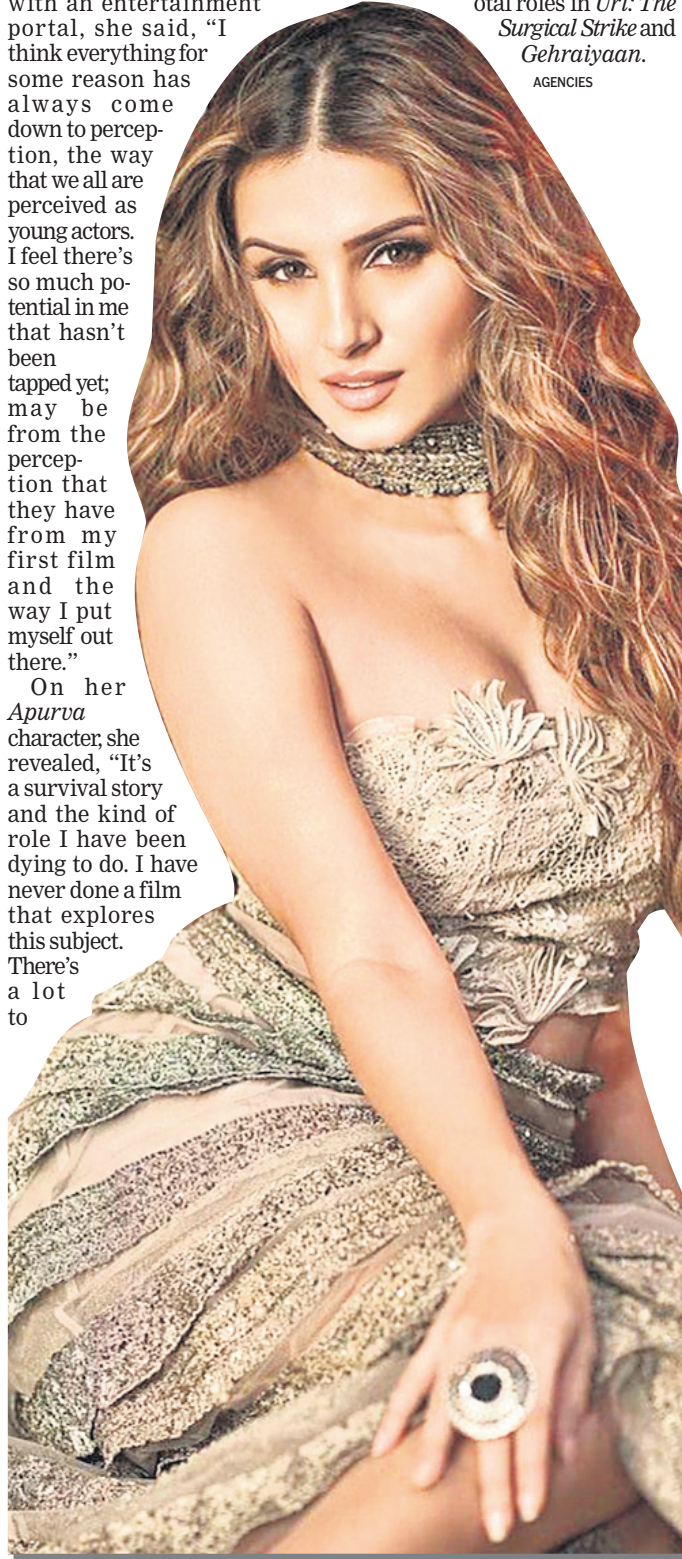
Mumbai: Tara Sutaria is happy to have completed *Apurva*, directed by Nikhil Nagesh Bhat, because she believes that the film will break a certain perception that people have towards her as an actress.

During a recent interview with an entertainment portal, she said, "I think everything for some reason has always come down to perception, the way that we all are perceived as young actors. I feel there's so much potential in me that hasn't been tapped yet; may be from the perception that they have from my first film and the way I put myself out there."

On her *Apurva* character, she revealed, "It's a survival story and the kind of role I have been dying to do. I have never done a film that explores this subject. There's a lot to

the girl's character that people certainly wouldn't expect me to do."

Apurva will see Tara star opposite Dhairya Karwa. He played the important role of Ravi Shastri in Kabir Khan's cricket drama *83*. He has also played pivotal roles in *Uri: The Surgical Strike* and *Gehraiyaan*.



'Emergency made me better understand Indian history'

Mumbai: Actress-director-producer Kangana Ranaut, who is gearing up for the release of her upcoming directorial *Emergency*, has shared that working on the film gave her a deeper understanding of modern Indian history.

Emergency, which stars Kangana as the former Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, follows the events of the state of Emergency declared by Gandhi in 1975, which is considered to be one of the darkest periods in Independent India as all civil rights including the press freedom were curbed.

Talking about the same Kangana shared, "Through the course of filming *Emergency*, learning about the events that unfolded in 1975 gave me a deeper understanding of Indian history. People call it the darkest phase in Indian history, but a lot of people don't understand why Indira ji made that decision. With the film, I aspire to bring that side of the story out too. I am sure, a lot of people will view those events in a different light after watching the film."

The film also features the late Satish Kaushik, Anupam Kher, Shreyas Talpade, Mahima Chaudhry, and Milind Soman in pivotal roles.

Emergency is scheduled to release on November 24, 2023.

Mumbai: Television actress Ridhi Dogra, who is looking forward to the release of two big films, Shah Rukh Khan starrer *Jawan* and Salman Khan starrer *Tiger 3*, recently revealed why she chose to be a part of these films.

Ridhi said in an interview that *Jawan* and *Tiger 3* are not projects she usually associates herself with.

She is doing it to learn, to challenge herself and to put herself in an uncomfortable spot.

Elaborating further, Ridhi added that she did *Tiger 3* so that she will get to work with Maneesh Sharma. She revealed that she loved Maneesh's *Band Baaja Baarat* and she has known him since he was an AD and she was not even an actor. The actress shared that when she was approached for the role and heard that it is him directing *Tiger 3*, she said she is doing it only for him; only to be on set with him.

According to her, she does not plan or strategise in life. With *Jawan* also she has only done it for Shah Rukh Khan and Atlee. Someday, she would also like to do something else with SRK and that would be a dream come true for her, concluded the *Asur 2* actress.



Ridhi likes to put herself in uncomfortable spot

Abhishek embarrassed being called a superhero

Mumbai: Actor Abhishek Bachchan has said that he is embarrassed to talk about filmmaker Apoorva Lakshia's statement that if Hindi film stars are all superheroes, Abhishek is Batman.

The Dhoom actor said, "I am very embarrassed. Apu (poorva) is family to me. From the first time we met, when he came to pitch *Mumbai Se Aaya Mera Dost* to now, he instantly became family. He's been a part of my life for over 20 years."

He added, "He's a close collaborator of mine, he's like my elder brother. He's a

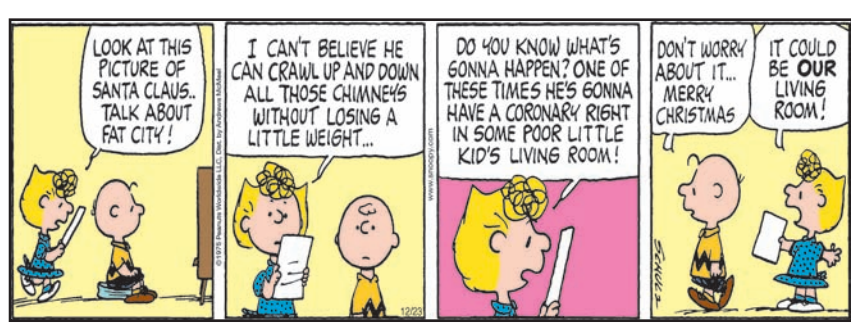
part of every momentous occasion in my life - be it my wedding or my daughter's birth or any milestone. He's considered family at home as well. So, I think his emotions towards me may have made him say that."

Apoorva had told in an interview, "If everyone is a superhero in the film industry, let's say Salman Khan is Superman, Shah Rukh Khan is Spiderman, then Abhishek is Batman because he is not a superhero, he is a human being."

Abhishek was last seen in *Bhola*, *Dasvi* and *Breathe: Into the Shadows* and will be seen next in *Ghoomer* and *SSS7*.



PEANUTS



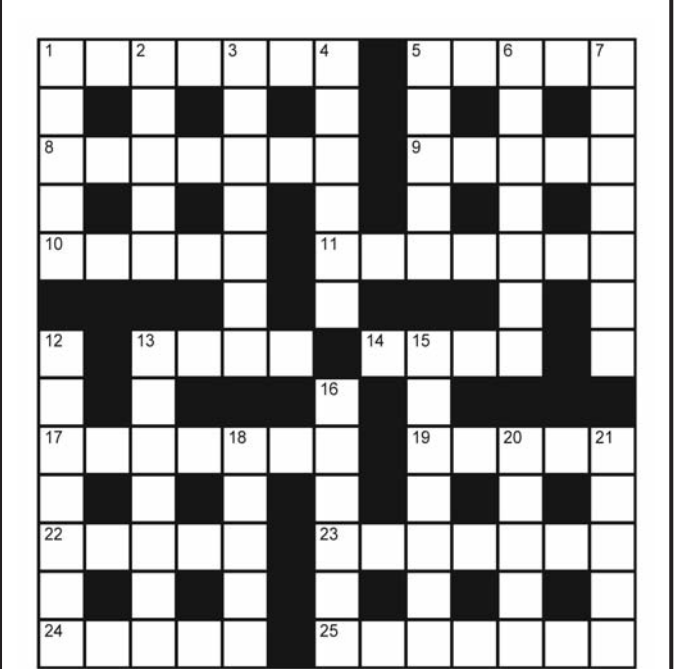
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



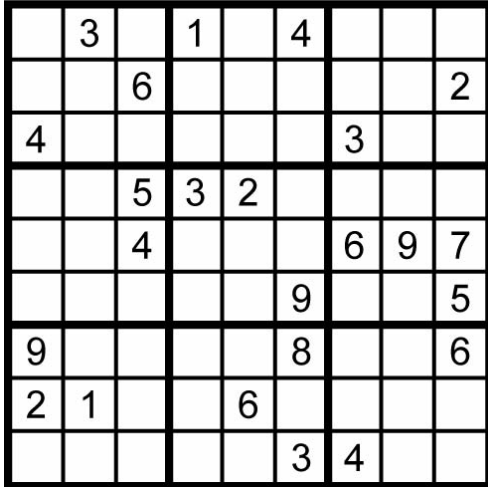
FUN post CROSSWORD



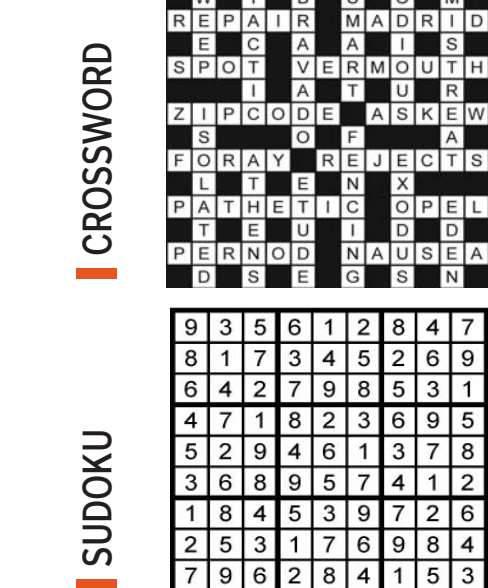
- Across**
- 1 Forced
 - 5 Ivory source
 - 8 Make-up
 - 9 Healed
 - 10 Hungarian composer
 - 11 Breakfast staple
 - 13 Yorkshire river
 - 14 Joint problem
 - 17 Enigma
 - 19 Kind of treat
 - 22 Emulate Cicero
 - 23 Bulldozer
 - 24 Retains
 - 25 Day play
- Down**
- 1 Caravan beast
 - 2 Relieves
 - 3 Drink holder
 - 4 Large lizard
 - 5 Understood
 - 6 Loch Ness creature?
 - 7 Equestrian gear
 - 12 Poisonous plant
 - 13 Provide relief
 - 15 Veteran sea dog (3,4)
 - 16 Modus operandi
 - 18 Decorative jugs
 - 20 Atlas, for one
 - 21 Multitude; the Golden ___

SUDOKU

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



SOLUTIONS



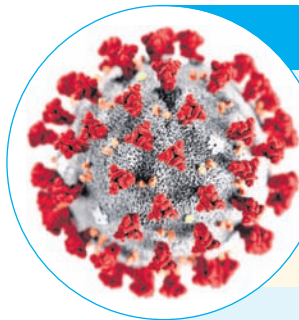
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown



GRACEFUL MOVE

An artiste performing during the annual function of Jagruti Cultural Academy at GKCM Odissi Research Institute in Bhubaneswar, Monday



COVID-19 TRACKER

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

Heavy rain likely in 21 dists: IMD

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, June 26: As many as 21 districts in Odisha are likely to experience heavy rain while some out of those are likely to experience very heavy rainfall and light to moderate rain or thundershower is very likely to occur at most places over the districts of Odisha during the next 24 hours, according to the India Meteorological Department (IMD).

Light to moderate rain and thundershower very likely to occur at most places over the districts of north Odisha and at many places over the districts of south Odisha in the next five days, met officials said.

According to MeT sources, low pressure area formed over north-interior Odisha Sunday now reported over north interior Odisha and adjoining south Jharkhand and north Chhattisgarh.

It is very likely to move to



wards north Madhya Pradesh during the next 2 days.

Southwest monsoon has been active with widespread light to moderate rainfall activity with isolated heavy to very heavy rainfall realised over the districts of Odisha.

Under the influence of low pressure area over northwest Bay of Bengal adjoining north Odisha-West Bengal coast, squally weather with gusty surface wind speed reaching 45 to 55 kmph very likely over North

Bay of Bengal adjoining West Central Bay of Bengal, along and off Odisha coast during next 24 hours.

The fishermen are advised to not venture into the sea area of along and off Odisha coast, North Bay of Bengal adjoining West Central Bay of Bengal during next 24 hours.

Met sources has issued orange warning in districts of Nabarangpur, Kalahandi, Koraput, Kandhamal, Dhenkanal, Cuttack, Jajpur, Bhadrak, Balasore, Mayurbhanj where heavy rainfall very likely to occur at one or two places.

It has also issued yellow warning for the districts of Nabarangpur, Kalahandi, Koraput, Kandhamal, Dhenkanal, Cuttack, Jajpur, Bhadrak, Balasore, Mayurbhanj where rainfall very likely to occur at one or two places over the districts while heavy Rainfall over at one or two places over these districts.



UP IN ARMS: Members of Nikhila Odisha 'Madhyahna Bhojan Pachaka Pachika Mahasangh', a union of mid-day meal (MDM) workers of the state, staging a protest at Lower PMG in Bhubaneswar, seeking fulfillment of their 10-point charter of demands, Monday

CM thrust on role of quality in every sphere of activity

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, June 26: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Monday emphasised the role of quality as a key aspect in every sphere of human activity. He was addressing the Odisha Quality Mission (Odisha Gunvatta Sankalp) organised by state government and Quality Council of India (QCI), in collaboration with industry associations ASSOCHAM, FICCI, EEPC, OASME, PHDCCI, CIPET and FHRAI here.

The mission was flagged off by Chief Secretary Pradeep Kumar Jena in the presence of Development Commissioner Anu Garg. Several policymakers, industry leaders, practitioners and members of academia, discussed the ways to promote and prioritise quality across various sectors in the state to pave an ecosystem of quality that underlines the idea of "a progressive and Sashakta Odisha".

"Odisha, with its abundant natural resources, talented &

ODISHA QUALITY MISSION



hardworking workforce and an enabling administration, is poised to be one of the few states leading the mantle in India's growth story. It is making great strides in the sports sector. Today, we are here to create a connection with the grassroots and permeate the idea of quality in the DNA of each and every citizen in every part of India," said QCI chairperson Jaxay Shah.

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik graced the occasion through a recorded message that empha-

sised the role of quality as a key aspect in every sphere of human activity. "Odisha's dynamic 5T initiative has made significant inroads in bringing about quality across domains such as public service delivery, heritage tourism, healthcare, education and skilling, drinking water and so on. We must be able to leverage the role played by quality as a metric that can be measured, tracked and scaled, and work together to create a new and empowered Odisha," said the

Chief Minister. The Chief Secretary said, "Kalinga stadium was renovated for the Athletic Championship in just 98 days. This year, we built the largest hockey stadium in Rourkela in 15 months enabling two consecutive Hockey World Cups to be organised in the state. This was a quality project executed within a short span of time, with quality being engineered into the project from the beginning. Even in Ratha Jatra, medical services were smoothly provided to the 1.5 million participants. In Odisha, we spend the highest percentage of our budget on infrastructure, and therefore, we have the resources and the willingness to ensure that quality forms a core component and becomes part of the value system of Odisha," remarked Jena.

Garg stated that the government is taking up around 40-50 irrigation projects instead of 5-10 as it did earlier. "While there are three international flights operating from Bhubaneswar, there are also flights under

Chief Minister.

Mukhyamantri Vayu Swasthya Seva air health services wherein special doctors reach remote regions. When public feedback was sought under Mo Sarkar across departments, we have found a positive response. We have conducted monthly programmes for quality assurance and discuss common topics related to quality. However, there is much to do and QCI can assist us in finding gaps and going the extra mile that Odisha requires to achieve transformational change and ensure quality of life for its people," asserted the Development Commissioner.

"The Odisha government has been extremely supportive of the Gunvatta Sankalp initiative. Our discussions with secretaries across MSME, Electronics and IT, and skilling have yielded focused interventions in the domains of ZED, LEAN and ONDC. QCI will be working closely with the government to make sure that these interventions get materialised at the earliest," said secretary general of QCI Ravi P Singh.

Chief Minister.

Naga sadhus detained over theft suspicion

GYAN RANJAN MOHAPATRA, OP

Bhubaneswar, June 26: The Commissionerate Police Monday picked up five naga sadhus from Mancheswar industrial estate area on the suspicion of theft in the City. The police interrogated them at the Mancheswar police station and later let them go.



Sources said some locals informed the police that some sadhus in a four-wheeler were wandering suspiciously in the locality. Informed, police immediately reached the spot and brought the sadhus to police station for questioning. Police later came to know that the sadhus had come from Bareilly of Uttar Pradesh

Man electrocuted

Bhubaneswar: In an unfortunate incident, a person died of electrocution while trying to save his wife in Kharvela area here Monday afternoon. The deceased was identified as Suresh Malla of Press Colony area. According to sources, Malla's wife came into contact with electric wire while putting her wet clothes on a hanger for drying. Their son who rushed to her help also got stuck. Hearing their scream, Malla went to help them but he was electrocuted in the process. Though his wife got well soon, their son is still undergoing treatment in the intensive care unit of a City hospital.

to watch the Ratha Jatra in Puri. They later came to the Capital to visit different places. Speaking to media persons, a senior police official said, "We are verifying the information provided by the sadhus and will take action if we find their involvement in any crime."



REVELLERS' DELIGHT: Girls take a selfie during a photo exhibition organised at Pallishree Mela in Puri, Monday, on Ratha Jatra and Suna Beshha of the sibling deities

MoU for disaster mgmt curriculum

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, June 26: The Odisha State Disaster Management Authority (OSDMA), Odisha State Open University (OSOU), Sambalpur and Higher Education department inked a tripartite memorandum of understanding (MoU) Monday to develop a curriculum for the training programme on disaster management.

The MoU was signed in the presence of Revenue & Disaster Management Minister Pramila Mallik, Higher Education Minister Atanu Sabyasachi Nayak, Special Relief Commissioner Satyabrata Sahu, Higher Education Commissioner-Secretary Aravind Agrawal, Information & Public Relations Director Saroj Kumar Samal, Odisha State Open University (OSOU) vice chancellor



Odisha State Open University will provide technical assistance in developing the courses of studies, training and skill improvement

Sambalpur Arka Kumar Das Mohapatra. Under this MoU, all government officials (Group D to A) will be trained on disaster

management as per the May 29, 2021 resolution of the Council of Ministers.

OSDMA Managing Director Gyana Das, Higher Education Special Secretary Birendra Korkara and OSOU Registrar Manas Ranjan Pujari were the signatories on the MoU.

OSOU will provide technical assistance in developing the courses of studies, training and skill improvement.

OHRC MOVED OVER ASSAULT ON YOUTH

Bhubaneswar: A City-based rights activist Monday filed a petition before the Odisha Human Rights Commission (OHRC) seeking justice for a youth, who was allegedly thrashed by an unruly mob at Palasuni Market here a few days back on the suspicion of being a thief. The petitioner alleged the mob tore off the clothes of the victim Shyam Kumar Rao of Jharkhand and tied him to an iron gate. Later, some other people assembled there started attacking him with slippers and sticks. They also allegedly hit the sensitive parts of the youth and also spit on him. The angry mob didn't pay any heed to the victim who was pleading innocence. Sources claimed that some women present at the spot informed the police who reached the spot and rushed the youth to a hospital. "When asked about the reason for the delay in taking action against the accused, Mancheswar police said the place where the incident took place is not under their jurisdiction," the petitioner alleged.

NASA improves water recovery rate from recycled pee

THE FEAT IS ACHIEVED USING THE STATION'S ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL AND LIFE SUPPORT SYSTEM (ECLSS), COMPRISING VARIOUS PIECES OF HARDWARE THAT INCLUDE THE WATER RECOVERY SYSTEM AND THE WATER PROCESSOR ASSEMBLY

Astronauts on board the International Space Station (ISS) have achieved a remarkable milestone by successfully restoring 98 per cent of water, a development that holds great promise for future space missions. NASA announced that this impressive water recovery rate was attained by recycling the astronauts' urine and sweat into potable or drinkable water.

Each crew member on the ISS requires approximately one gallon of water per day for drinking, food preparation, and personal hygiene.

The feat is achieved using the station's Environmental Control and Life Support System (ECLSS), comprising various

pieces of hardware that include the Water Recovery System and the Water Processor Assembly.

ECLSS comprises various hardware components, including a Water Recovery System responsible for collecting wastewater and directing it to the Water Processor Assembly (WPA), which produces drinkable water. According to Space.com, one specialised component of the system employs advanced dehumidifiers to capture moisture released into the cabin air from the astronauts' breath and sweat. In parallel, another subsystem known as the Urine Processor Assembly (UPA) recovers water from urine through vacuum distillation. However, this process generates brine as



a by-product, which still contains some usable water. To address this, a Brine Processor Assembly (BPA) was added to the UPA to extract the remaining wastewater.

Another subsystem, the Urine Processor Assembly (UPA), recovers water from urine using vacuum distillation.

"Distillation produces water and urine brine that still contains

some reclaimable water," NASA said. "A Brine Processor Assembly (BPA) developed to extract this remaining wastewater has been on the space station as a demonstration of its operation in microgravity. Recent assessments found that the BPA helped the system achieve the 98 per cent water recovery goal."

Christopher Brown, part of the Johnson Space Center team working on the orbital outpost's life support system, described the recovery level as "a very important step forward in the evolution" of such systems, explaining: "Let's say you collect 100 pounds of water on the station. You lose 2 pounds of that and the other 98 per cent just keeps going around and around.

Keeping that running is a pretty awesome achievement."

The team admits that the idea of drinking recycled urine might not sound particularly attractive to some folks, but it claims that the water produced by the system is "far superior" to that produced by municipal water systems. "The processing is fundamentally similar to some terrestrial water distribution systems, just done in microgravity," said Jill Williamson, ECLSS water subsystems manager.

"The crew is not drinking urine. They are drinking water that has been reclaimed, filtered, and cleaned such that it is cleaner than what we drink here on Earth."

Bargarh cancer hosp to be completed by December

During his visit to Bargarh, Pandian informed that 56 colleges and higher secondary schools of the district will be taken under 5T transformation at a cost of ₹26.75cr



At Barpali, the 5T Secretary connected the Chief Minister to the people present in a grievance redressal meeting over the phone. The CM informed the public that he has sent his secretary to address their grievances

ance redressal meetings. At Barpali, the 5T Secretary connected the Chief Minister to the public present in the meeting over the phone. The CM informed the public that he has sent his secretary to address their grievances.

At Bargarh, Pandian visited Sambalpuri Bastralaya and overviewed various activities undertaken there. He interacted with weavers and assured them support on behalf of the Chief Minister. He also visited the district headquarter hospital and interacted with patients, reviewed the progress of ongoing works under 'Ama Hospital' initiative.

Later, the Secretary visited the Indoor Stadium at Barpali to review the progress of ongoing works. He interacted with the public and sports persons and directed district administration for timely completion of works for promotion of sports. He visited the birth place of Gangadhar Meher in Barpali and paid homage.

Afterwards, he met the college students and staff from various educational institutions, where he announced the approval of the Chief Minister to take up 56 colleges and higher secondary schools under 5T Transformation at a cost of Rs 26.75 crore.

and to facilitate redressal of public grievances.

He visited Saranda 5T High School in Attabira block and interacted with students and teachers present there regarding the 5T High School Transformation initiative. He encouraged the students to keep working hard to fulfil their goals and aspirations.

He interacted with the public at Ananda Kalyan Mandap, Attabira, Ram Chandi Kalyan Mandap, Attabira, listening to their grievances. In spite of the heavy rains, a large number of people participated in the griev-

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 26: The under-construction cancer hospital in Bargarh's Bhatli block will be completed by December this year.

As per the directions of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, Secretary to CM (5T), VK Pandian Monday visited the hospital site, reviewed its progress and directed the district administration for completion of works by December.

Pandian was in Bargarh to review the progress of various development works in the district



ASTEP AT A TIME: Children take part in an awareness rally near Judicial Academy Square, in Cuttack, organised by the district administration on International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, Monday

CM promotes healthy lifestyle for a drug-free society

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, June 26: Drug use negatively affects the well-being of families and that of the broader society, so we should create awareness about these ill-effects and take steps to promote healthy behaviour, said Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking Monday.

Through his official social media account, the CM said, "Let's create awareness about ill effects of drug abuse and

promote healthy lifestyle for a drug free society."

In view of the huge scale that drug menace has assumed in Odisha, there has to be adequate strategy to control the problem. Government needs to address urgently issues like adequate staffing, training, adequate equipment and inter-agency coordination challenges, said experts

The magnitude of substance abuse among youths and children in the state has reached alarming heights with the state government's efforts to curb the

menace having little or no impact at all. The frequent hauls of several illegal drug items, including cough syrups, narcotics, cannabis and brown sugar have revealed the demand of the banned substances in the state. A number of such hauls have been made in the recent times by the police as well as drug inspectors.

The busting of gangs involved in smuggling of ganja, opium, brown sugar, banned cough syrups and more have become frequent affairs in different parts of the state in recent

times indicating that Odisha is slowly becoming a hotbed of drug smugglers and consumers.

Odisha government, last year, formally constituted a task force led by the former state police chief to formulate policy on narcotics within the context of national policy. The mandate of the task force is to coordinate, suggest actions to reduce demand of drugs, raise community awareness, increase community participation and public cooperation, with focused intervention in schools, colleges and among youth.

Be honest and impartial in work: Chief Secretary

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, June 26: General Administration and Public Governance department organised a one-day training programme (exposure visit) for 51 Odisha Judicial Service (OJS) probationers at the Lok Seva Bhawan Convention Centre here Monday.

State Chief Secretary Pradeep Kumar Jena joined as the chief guest in the programme and in his address focused on the role of judiciary in smooth functioning of the administrative system of the state. The Chief Secretary advised the newly appointed officers to maintain honesty and impartiality in their work.

At the outset, Law department principal secretary Dhaneshwar Mallik briefed the probationers about the role of the department in the state administration and the aim and objective of the training programme.

Addressing the OJS probationers, the Chief Secretary shared bits from his long years of experience with the judiciary, working in different district as well as holding various important positions in the state's administration. Jena also discussed about the various challenges faced during the work and how those can be resolved with the support of judiciary. Judiciary is important to implementation of various welfare schemes and policies of the government and the trainees need to understand the importance of the philosophy behind it, he said.

Jena also advised the OJS probationers to take decisions based on available records and data without being influenced by money and power. "The poor and vulnerable people shall not be able to get proper justice if officers are influenced by power and money," Jena said.

In different sessions of this exposure visit, OJS probationers were imparted training on service condition matters of Lok Seva Bhawan.



PROTECTING CULTURAL HERITAGE: Priests perform 'yagna' on first day of the three-day 'Bhumi Pujan' ceremony for Ekamra Prakalp in Bhubaneswar, Monday

BJP demands CBI probe into PMAY irregularities

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 26: Alleging 'massive scam' in allocation of PMAY houses in Odisha, BJP Monday urged the state government to prove transparency and handover the inquiry to CBI.

Speaking to reporters here, BJP state general secretary Prithviraj Harichandan alleged that poor deserving people of the state have been deprived of houses under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) for three years due to the inefficacy of the BJD government.

Rejecting the ruling party's allegation that BJP MPs have conspired to stop PMAY in Odisha, he said, due to the faulty beneficiary list prepared by the state government in 2019, deserving people haven't been able to get a house till now.

As the 2024 general elections are nearly here, the ruling BJD is creating new 'dramas' one after another to cover up its in-



competence. But because of this incompetence, the poor man has been waiting for a pucca house for 3 years now, he alleged.

Harichandan further alleged that leaders of the ruling party are collecting money from people to allocate houses under the scheme. Therefore, for transparency, the state government should order a CBI probe into the 'scam' and take strong actions against all those who are involved in it, he demanded.

On the other hand, BJD leader and Cuttack Mayor Subash Singh rejected the allegations, saying utmost transparency has been maintained in the allocation of PMAY. That's why people of the state have been imposing faith on the BJD government, he said.

The next big advance in cancer treatment could be a vaccine

The next big advance in cancer treatment could be a vaccine.

After decades of limited success, scientists say research has reached a turning point, with many predicting more vaccines will be out in five years.

These aren't traditional vaccines that prevent disease, but shots to shrink tumors and stop cancer from coming back. Targets for these experimental treatments include breast and lung cancer, with gains reported this year for deadly skin cancer melanoma and pancreatic cancer.

"We're getting something to work. Now we need to get it to work better," said James Gully, who helps lead a centre at the National Cancer Institute that develops immune therapies, including cancer treatment vaccines.

More than ever, scientists un-

derstand how cancer hides from the body's immune system. Cancer vaccines, like other immunotherapies, boost the immune system to find and kill cancer cells. And some new ones use mRNA, which was developed for cancer but first used for Covid-19 vaccines.

For a vaccine to work, it needs to teach the immune system's T cells to recognize cancer as dangerous, said Nora Disis of UW Medicine's Cancer Vaccine Institute in Seattle. Once trained, T cells can travel anywhere in the body to hunt down danger.

"If you saw an activated T cell, it almost has feet," she said. "You can see it crawling through the blood vessel to get out into the tissues."

Kathleen Jade, 50, learned she had breast cancer in late February, just weeks before she and her husband were to depart



Seattle for an around-the-world adventure. Instead of sailing their 46-foot boat, Shadowfax, through the Great Lakes toward the St. Lawrence Seaway, she was sitting on a hospital bed awaiting her third dose of an experimental vaccine. She's getting the vaccine to see if it will shrink her tumor before sur-

gery. "Even if that chance is a little bit, I felt like it's worth it," said Jade, who is also getting standard treatment.

Progress on treatment vaccines has been challenging. The first, Provenge, was approved in the US in 2010, to treat prostate cancer that had spread. It re-

quires processing a patient's own immune cells in a lab and giving them back through IV. There are also treatment vaccines for early bladder cancer and advanced melanoma.

Early cancer vaccine research faltered as cancer outwitted and outlasted patients' weak immune systems, said Olga Finn, a vaccine researcher at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine. "All of these trials that failed allowed us to learn so much," Finn said.

More vaccines that prevent cancer may be ahead too. Decades-old hepatitis B vaccines prevent liver cancer and HPV vaccines, introduced in 2006, prevent cervical cancer.

"Vaccines are probably the next big thing" in the quest to reduce cancer deaths, said Steve Lipkin, a medical geneticist at New York's Weill Cornell

Medicine, who is leading one effort funded by the National Cancer Institute. "We're dedicating our lives to that."

Drugmakers Moderna and Merck are jointly developing a personalized mRNA vaccine for patients with melanoma, with a large study to begin this year. The vaccines are customized to each patient, based on the numerous mutations in their cancer tissue. A vaccine personalized in this way can train the immune system to hunt for the cancer's mutation fingerprint and kill those cells.

But such vaccines will be expensive. "You basically have to make every vaccine from scratch. If this wasn't personalized, the vaccine could probably be made for pennies, just like the Covid vaccine," said Patrick Ott of Dana-Farber Cancer Institute in Boston.

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Shrubs take over state's first Doppler station

7-yr RI for minor's rape

POST NEWS NETWORK



Balasure, June 26: A special POCSO court Monday sentenced a youth to seven years of rigorous imprisonment (RI) after convicting him in the rape case of a minor.

The convict was identified as Debashis Jena, 31, a resident under Basta police limits in Balasure district. The special POCSO court judge Ranjan Kumar Sutar also slapped a penalty of ₹2,000 on Jena, apart from the punishment. The judge passed the order on the basis of the statements of 11 witnesses, 13 documents and the police charge-sheet in the case. The judge also directed the district legal services authority (DLSA) to give away ₹1.5 lakh ex-gratia to the survivor, public prosecutor Pranab Kumar Panda said.

The incident occurred when the survivor had gone to her ma-

ternal uncle's house at a village under Basta police limits for Shiv Ratri festival. She was watching video with her grandmother inside the temple premises when she got up in the middle of the show and left for the house, March 10, 2023. Finding the girl alone, Jena picked her up and took her to a haystack at a deserted place and raped her.

Her grandmother came searching and heard her scream forcing Jena to run away from the spot. The elderly woman rescued the minor and lodged a complaint at the Basta police station. Police registered a case and arrested Jena during an investigation.

POST NEW NETWORK

Paradip, June 26: Odisha's first Doppler radar station here in Jagatsinghpur district is in a neglected condition with grass and shrubs growing all around it, a report said Monday.

The seven-storeyed building of 39 metre height built at a cost of ₹20 crore is in a rickety condition and needs urgent repair and makeover. The Doppler radar built in China appears from a distance like a giant football placed on top of this seven storied building. It helps in predicting formation of cyclonic circulations five days before the calamity.

However, the building is lying in a bad shape due to lack of proper upkeep and timely facelift. Wild grass and shrubs have taken over the building including the road connecting to the station. The asbestos roof on the parking shed has broken while its steel railings have corroded. The glass panes of the building have broken at most places while the fibre coverings have peeled out. Much of the external and internal infrastructure is in a dilapidated condition.

The Doppler radar station was constructed by the Central Public



- The establishment of Doppler radar station was necessitated after the Super Cyclone-1999 brought widespread devastation in Jagatsinghpur and Kendrapara districts
- The calamity caused extensive damage as there was no system in place in the country to forecast such calamities in advance
- The Chinese-made radar was installed at the station in Paradip and unveiled at a function, November 21, 2015

Works department (CPWD). The construction style of the station, modern workmanship and its height used to draw visitors from state and outside. Schools used to conduct excursions to the station while the many Odia

films and albums were shot here due to its scenic location.

The establishment of Doppler radar station was necessitated after the Super Cyclone-1999 brought widespread devastation in Jagatsinghpur and

Kendrapara districts. The calamity caused extensive damage as there was no system in place in the country to forecast such calamities in advance.

Realising the gravity, the then Union government led by Atal Bihari Vajpayee launched efforts to get advance warning about any approaching calamity and announced establishment of five Doppler radar stations across the country under the aegis of Union Ministry of Earth Sciences.

Among the five radars, the first Doppler radar was decided to be established near the lighthouse at Paradip port town in Jagatsinghpur district of Odisha. The construction of the Doppler radar station got delayed following a change in government at the centre.

It was initially said that the state-owned Bharat Heavy Electronics Ltd (BHEL) will install the Doppler radar. Later, the Union government changed its decision in 2009 and decided to install a Chinese-made Doppler radar.

The radar arrived in Paradip from China in 2010. However, the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) at Chandipur in Balasure district advised not to install the

radar as it might be used for surveillance in our country. As a result, the installation of the radar was put on hold for five years. However, the radar installation finally received an approval in 2014 after a change in government at the Centre. The state-owned BHEL checked the radar and stopped some signals beaming following which radar was installed at the station in Paradip and unveiled at a function, November 21, 2015. The Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) had installed small radar in the prohibited area of Paradip port town before the installation of the Doppler radar.

The small radar was of very less significance as it could then forecast only rain, wind speed and temperature and has been closed since 2012.

When contacted, radar officer (in-charge) Dhanish K said that the Doppler radar could make forecast about any approaching cyclonic storms five days before its occurrence and make a review of 500 km radius of the sea. He said he has informed the CPWD and concerned officials about the rickety condition of the building since last two years and this year the repairing might take place.

Semi-rolled plates at Rourkela Steel Plant

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, June 26: Rourkela Steel Plant (RSP) has successfully semi-rolled plates with a thickness of 70 mm and 1,250 mm width and 14,000 mm length at its Hot Strip Mill - 1

Department for the first time to cater to the need of NMDC Steel Plant, Nagarnar, a Greenfield

project. The first lot of 11 numbers of SRPs weighing 108.66 tonne was dispatched by road in the presence of Subrat Kumar, CGM and other senior officials.

The SRPs have very specialised use at NMDC Steel Plant and it placed an order for 24 numbers plates. The mill took up the challenge to produce the

non-standard SRP for their hot strip mill at Nagarnar plant. The rolling and dispatch of the rest of the 13 SRPs will be done shortly.



MOMENT OF PRIDE: A girl student speaks at a debate competition on 'Media, Democracy and the Youth' held at the Government Ayurvedic College in Bolangir ahead of the Golden Jubilee celebration of premier Odia daily Dharitri, Monday

Vehicle turns turtle injuring 13 in Tihidi

Tihidi: As many as 13 people sustained injuries after a Bolero overturned Sunday night near Purunahat area under Tihidi police limits in Bhadrak district. As per reports, the Bolero (Regd no: OD 22 C 4839) was returning from a wedding reception party in Nuabandha village under Barasara panchayat and Pirhat police limits to Guagadia village under Basudepur police limits when the accident took place. While eight passengers got seriously injured in the mishap, five others received minor injuries. All critically injured were rushed to Tihidi Hospital and later shifted to Bhadrak DHH as their conditions deteriorated. Due to sudden brake applied by the Bolero driver the vehicle lost balance and turned turtle on the road side. Locals immediately came to their rescue and lifted the vehicle and took the injured to hospital. Tihidi police seized the Bolero and detained the driver for further investigation.



TEACH THEM YOUNG: Students take out an awareness rally organised by the district administration and Excise department on the occasion of International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking at Sambalpur, Monday

DENIAL OF FREEDOM FIGHTER PENSION

NHRC asks Chief Secy to take action against erring officials

PNN & AGENCIES

Kendrapada, June 26: National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has directed the Chief Secretary to take appropriate action against the officials responsible for denying freedom fighter pension to Meera Devi, who died in Covid sans her legitimate rights.

Meera Devi was the youngest daughter-in-law of late Laxmikanta Mohapatra, the author of 'Bande Utkala Janani' the state anthem of Odisha.

The NHRC passed the order recently acting on a petition filed by human rights activist Radhakanta Tripathy.

The Commission after considering various reports from the state and district administration of Bhadrak and the reports of Union home ministry, directed Bhadrak district Magistrate to provide complete administrative assistance to Meera Devi, 87, spouse of late Gour Chandra Mohapatra.

The copy of the proceeding was also forwarded to Union Home Secretary, and to Odisha Chief Secretary, for information and for ensuring compliance of direction of the Commission.

Pursuant to the directions of the Commission, Bhadrak Collector, mentioned that the requisite documents of the victim have been submitted to the Union Home Affairs Under

Secretary, for grant of dependent SSSY pension in favour of Meera Devi.

The Union Under Secretary expressed its inability as the complainant has stated that the victim has died during the pendency of her complaint before this Commission and requested the DM & Collector, Bhadrak, to verify the same.

As per the Bhadrak District Magistrate report May 17, 2023 Meera Devi has already expired June 15, 2021, a day after NHRC took cognizance of the case.

But the Bhadrak DM in its report March 17, 2023 mentioned that complete administrative assistance has been provided to Meera Devi.

As a result various documents have been collected and same have been duly attended by Deputy Collector, Bhadrak. Documents including attested copy of specimen signature, identification marks, self photograph, affidavit, date of birth and family details have been forwarded to union Under Secretary (EZ), FFR Division.

Stating that the reports are contradictory in nature the Commission asked the Odisha Chief Secretary, to look into the same and take appropriate action against the officials responsible, if found guilty.

The Union Home Secretary and the Odisha Chief Secretary are further recommended to take appropriate action as per rules.

Two poachers arrested

COUNTRYMADE FIREARM SEIZED WITH 20 BULLETS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Nilagiri, June 26: The prevalence of poachers has been increasing day by day at Kuldiha sanctuary in Balasure district as two poachers were arrested with one firearm, Sunday night. Rampant poaching has threatened the wild animals' security in the sanctuary.

As per the report, Kuldiha forest ranger Ananta Kumar Jena



along with the green force arrested two poachers and seized a country-made firearm along with 20 lead shots, ammunition, red powder, knife, traps and matchsticks from their possession at Bharattanga Chhak under Kuldiha forest range under Nilagiri police limits in

Balasure district while conducting night patrolling, Sunday.

The arrested poachers were identified as Udaya Dhanika (47) of Jadibali village under Nilagiri police limits and Ajaya Singh (45) of Balichua village under Berhampur police limits in Balasure district.

"Kuldiha forest department registered a case (No- 3K/2023-24) under Wildlife Protection Act Monday afternoon against the arrested poachers and forwarded them to court," said Kuldiha forest ranger Jena.

Fugitive drug peddler held; 110 gram brown sugar seized

Raibania: A wanted drug peddler who had been giving slip to the police was finally arrested during a surprise raid at his Patharpura village under Jaleswar police limits in Balasure district, Monday. The accused was identified Sheikh Taj of Patharpura village. Over 110 gram brown sugar, a mobile phone, an Aadhaar card and cash worth ₹1,400 were seized from his possession. The seized contraband is worth ₹11 lakh in the market. A case was registered in this connection and the accused produced in the court. The accused was involved in brown sugar trade and had expanded his network by giving slips to police each time it would try to nab him. Later, police prepared a blueprint and a team led by the SDPO conducted a surprise raid at Patharpura village and nabbed him. The accused is a noted history-sheeter and has three cases registered in his name under NDPS at Jaleswar police station and one at Biridi police station in Jagatsinghpur.

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- (iii) Assistance to Match Officials, Coaches and Support Personnel for appearing in qualifying examinations organized by international bodies or National Sports Federations (recognized by the Department of Sports on the date of application)/ IOA and for undergoing specialized training in the relevant disciplines/ areas;
- (iv) Assistance for Research projects in sports-related disciplines;
- (v) Publications/e-Publications of Outstanding Works/Journals/e-Journals/web-based applications (apps) having significance for sports and games.

3. Interested individuals/organizations must submit their applications well before time of the scheduled meeting of Designated Committee and not later than 20th day of preceding month of the scheduled meeting of the Designated Committee.

Kindly visit this Ministry's website link <https://yas.nic.in/sports/scheme-human-resources-development-sports-0> for further details.
CBC 47108/11/0001/2324

Sd./J- Vimal Anand, Director (Sports), vimal.anand@nic.in

UCO BANK Zonal Office, UCO Bank Building, 2nd Floor, C-2, Ashok Nagar, Bhubaneswar-751009, Tel: 0674-2620423

POSSESSION NOTICE
For Immovable Property

(Under Section 13(4) of the Securitization & Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002 for Immovable Property)

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of UCO Bank, Suryanagar Branch under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (No. 54 of 2002) and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13 (12) read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a Demand Notice under section 13(2) of the said Act calling upon the Borrower/Guarantor to repay the amount with interest at the contractual rate together with incidental expenses and costs within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said Notice. The Borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrower/Guarantor and the public in general that the undersigned has taken POSSESSION of the property described here-in below in exercise of powers conferred on him under section 13 (4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said Rules. The Borrower/Guarantor in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the UCO Bank, Suryanagar Branch for an amount plus interest & expenses thereon.

SURYANAGAR BRANCH/ Name and Address of the Borrower/ Guarantor	Amount Outstanding as on Specified Date	Date of Demand / Possession Notice	Description of the Immovable Property
Borrower: Subhasis Pattnaik, S/o.: Sarat Chandra Pattnaik / Guarantor: Baby Pattnaik, W/o.: Subhasis Pattnaik, Both are at Plot No.: 240/91, Aerodrome Area, P.S.: Airfield, Bhubaneswar - 751020	₹ 41,42,330/- as on 27.10.2022 + further interest & other charges thereon	27.10.2022 / 21.06.2023	All that part and parcel of immovable property standing in the name of Subhasis Pattnaik, Mouza: Bhipmur, Thana No.: 64, Tahasil: Bhubaneswar, Khata No.: 544/374 & 544/484, Plot No.: 1390, 1392, 1393, 1394, Area: Ac.0.219 Dec, Built up Area: 955 Sqft, Description of Flat- Flat No-Type-3 (3 rd Floor), Ratna Castle

Place : Bhubaneswar, Date: 26.06.2023

Authorised Officer, UCO Bank

FOCUS GEOPOLITICS

WHY IS CHINA RANKLED?



China views Modi's US visit as a gathering storm for its ambitions to dominate Asia in military, economic and technological spheres

China has been watching PM Modi's visit to the US. There are many stakes for China in the emerging US-India strategic partnership. These range from the emerging power distribution at regional and global orders to addressing supply chain and technology disruptions caused by the global financial crisis, COVID-19 and the Ukraine conflict.

The US NSA Jake Sullivan stated that US Secretary of State Antony Blinken's visit to Beijing will not be the "most significant event" for US foreign policy but PM Modi's visit to the US will be a "transformational moment." Blinken's visit to China proved to be a damp squib. Yan Xuetong, a leading US expert at Tsinghua University, mentioned that little progress can be achieved in relations with the US due to the latter's guarded "small yard, high fence" policy—which essentially refers to the US restricting hi-tech components exports to China.

China noticed Modi's speech to the US Congress when he mentioned "dark clouds of coercion and confrontation are casting their shadow in the Indo-Pacific" and that "the stability of the region has become the central concerns of our partnership [with the US]." Clearly, he was critical of China's armed intrusions in Galwan valley violating several agreements with India, but also to the massive mobilisation of forces in Taiwan Straits, on Senkaku islands and the South China Sea.

Officially, China is tight-lipped on Modi's visit to the US, even though during Blinken's visit to Beijing, President Jinping said that China opposes "small cliques." On the other hand, China's analysts dish out the narrative ad nauseum on India-US ties being aimed to "contain China" even while China's containment of India continues through Pakistan and the Indian Ocean region. For instance, coinciding with PM Modi's visit, China signed an agreement for a 1200 MW nuclear plant with Pakistan valued at

\$4.8bn. This is the seventh such plant that China has given to Pakistan. Even though China has close ties to the "major non-NATO ally" Pakistan which it terms as an "all weather" friend and an "iron brother," yet, it is opposed to India evolving defence ties with the US. In fact, some Chinese analysts argue that closer India-US relations were one of the reasons for China's aggression in Galwan in June 2020. Some Chinese have mentioned that "balancing China" is the main goal of India-US ties. Some Chinese analysts also raised human rights issues in India, ignoring the one million incarceration issue in Xinjiang or the "sinicize Buddhism" campaign in Tibet.

Others like Zhao Gancheng of the Shanghai Institute of International Studies moaned that India would become a "US geopolitical pawn (and) sacrificing India's strategic autonomy and national interests." Others have gone to the extent of saying that the US wants "to turn India into a war agent of the US."

More significantly, China's analysts identify the May 2022 India-US Initiative on Critical and Emerging Technologies (iCET) mentioned again in the US-India joint statement of June 22, as a crucial variable that

could influence the strategic environment in Asia for the medium term.

The hi-tech component of the India-US agreements is unnerving to China, also due to the October 2022 US ban of exports of high-performance computing chips to China. In contrast, US Micron is setting up a chip unit in Gujarat worth \$825mn, besides skill training programme by Lam Research. GE-F414 jet engines will be produced by HAL in Bangalore. Thirty-one MQ-9B advanced drones to be supplied to India. A space programme to launch astronauts to the moon has been agreed to with Artemis, while synthetic aperture radar satellite technologies will be shared with India. With Huawei 5G trials removed and US-India open RAN (5G Radio Access Network) implemented, China loses hundreds of billions of dollars of contracts in the Indian market in the telecom sector.

China's analysts believe that the "US seems to ramp up efforts to push India to confront China and harass China's economic progress." Some analysts also stated that "Washington's vigorous efforts to strengthen economic and trade cooperation with India is primarily to slow down China's economic development." However, for India,

trade with the US has proved to be beneficial. For instance, India-China trade in 2022-23 was \$113bn, while US-India trade shot up to \$128bn in the same period. More significantly, India's exports to the US increased to over \$78bn, while that to China was \$15bn due to protectionist trends in the China market. That is while India earns much more from trade with the US. Another aspect that is beneficial to India is the investment profile. While US investments in India stood at \$54bn, China's is less than \$8bn. Moreover, US investments in India are generally in hi-tech sectors, while China's is in low-tech sectors.

China is also concerned with losing supply chains. With the pandemic originating in Wuhan in late 2019, one of the major casualties has been an intensive disruption in the global supply chains that were centered in China. This has led to a drastic decline in growth rates for every country. To mitigate this challenge, India-Japan-Australia initiated the Supply Chain Resilience Initiative by emphasising on digital trade. The US-India joint statement also mentions supply chain restoration plans.

Thus, China views Modi's US visit as a gathering storm for its ambitions to dominate Asia in military, economic and technological spheres. That these are due to China's recent political and strategic choices is ignored. China's rise, with the help of the US, has created conditions for the country's recent assertive behaviour. Beijing is not only challenging the US globally, but also major powers in Asia. China is imposing its leadership over Asia, a part of which is to question the independent decision-making powers of India, Vietnam, Indonesia and other countries. Modi's visit to US has come at this churning point in Asia's destiny.

The writer is Dean of the School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University.

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Srikanth Kondapalli

CHINA'S RISE, WITH THE HELP OF THE US, HAS CREATED CONDITIONS FOR THE COUNTRY'S RECENT ASSERTIVE BEHAVIOUR

Mutiny or Trap

Care not for time and success. Act out thy part, whether it be to fail or to prosper.

SRI AUROBINDO



Things unfolded in the most dramatic fashion with breathtaking speed in Russia during the past few days when Yevgeny Prigozhin, chief of Russia's mercenary force, Wagner, rebelled against President Vladimir Putin. The world was taken by surprise by the suddenness of the development and what followed the mutiny in quick succession. Prigozhin slammed Russian Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu and Commander-in-Chief Valery Gerasimov and questioned the rationale of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Thereafter, Putin declared him a traitor and eventually gave him free passage to Belarus. The whole sequence of events is so baffling that no easy interpretation is possible. At this stage, it would be risky to read too much into the so-called rebellion which may be an outcome of Prigozhin's own unbridled ambition or a ploy by Putin himself to either cut his own Defence Minister and Commander-in-Chief to size or hoodwink the West and Ukraine to open up a new frontier from Belarus with the help of Prigozhin. The time of war is used by many leaders to spread propaganda, lies and deception intended to confuse and mislead the enemy engendering in the latter a sense of false hope about the aggressor being in disarray.

True, the Wagner group's armed mutiny, though very short-lived, has lowered Putin's stature as a formidable man in full control of Russia in the eyes of the world. But then Putin has never been known to bother about his image. The mercenaries had taken over the Russian southern military command in Rostov-on-Don, a logistical hub for the Ukraine invasion, before racing towards the capital Moscow. Apparently, Putin was forced to warn of "a deadly threat to our state" and Moscow's mayor urged residents to stay at home.

It could be that Prigozhin's revolt was a desperate act to stop his private army from being incorporated into regular forces which would severely curtail his immense clout. This may also thwart his ambition to get greater importance in Putin's hierarchy. He has been assiduously groomed by the President himself. His rise from a criminal to the leader of a mercenary force that supplied soldiers for fighting in at least 30 countries in the Arab world and Africa had the blessings of Putin.

Putin had himself pulled up Shoigu and Gerasimov in public recently for the way the latter had conducted the war with Ukraine. Viewed in this backdrop, Prigozhin could be working at the behest of Putin when he decried the two. But, confusion was confounded when Prigozhin attacked not only the execution of the war but its very rationale. This was a direct challenge to Putin's leadership since it was the Russian President who had planned the invasion. No wonder, Putin immediately accused him of treason. It tended to create the impression that Prigozhin would be crushed as Putin had said in a recent BBC interview that he could pardon anyone except a "traitor." Such a show of conflict did appear to indicate a serious power struggle in Russia.

But then there was another dramatic development with Prigozhin calling off the revolt as suddenly as he had begun, ostensibly to avoid Russian "bloodshed" meaning internecine war. The President of Belarus, Alexander Lukashenko, another protégé of Putin, appeared from nowhere. He negotiated a settlement with Prigozhin who was given safe passage to his country, while Moscow announced no action would be taken against his soldiers.

This could mean the whole thing was scripted to fool Ukraine and its Western allies about Putin's plan to cleverly move Prigozhin and his soldiers to Belarus for launching attacks on Ukraine from there as the Wagner has proved its mettle in carrying out ruthless war producing results in Bakhmut in Ukraine and other foreign soils.

Now the question is if the whole episode had Putin's approval, has he not taken too many risks since his grip over the country would appear to be loosening? The answer could be that the Russian President can claim to his people that he has shown his astuteness by packing Prigozhin off to Belarus, while later events may prove whether the rebellion was a master strategy to open a new theatre of war against Ukraine. It is unlikely and difficult to believe that a master spy that Putin is, was unaware of or in the dark when the rebellion was brewing in his private army.

WISDOM CORNER

The happiness of your life depends upon the quality of your thoughts: therefore, guard accordingly, and take care that you entertain no notions unsuitable to virtue and reasonable nature.

MARCUS AURELIUS

Wealth consists not in having great possessions, but in having few wants.

EPICETUS

If you know the enemy and know yourself you need not fear the results of a hundred battles.

SUN TZU

WORDSWORTH

Lame duck

Lame ducks, of course, can be incompetent or ineffectual firms or governments as well as individuals – British political life has seen many examples of both described as lame ducks down the decades. However, the specific reference here is to American politics, an association that began back in the 1860s. Despite that, for its origin we have to look to Britain and to the stock market of the middle of the eighteenth century. The disabled bird belongs with the other members of the market's menagerie, the bulls, bears and stags (more on the first two here). London stockbrokers and jobbers operated from coffee houses such as Jonathan's and Garraway's in a little street called Exchange Alley, close to the main commodity trading centre, the Royal Exchange. The street name was often abbreviated to Change Alley or just the Alley. It still exists, now officially called Change Alley, as a network of five back streets of no particular distinction in the City of London. The coffee houses are long gone; the jobbers and brokers left even earlier, decamping to a specially constructed building in Sweeting's Alley in 1773, which later became the Stock Exchange. About 1760, some wit created the term for stock market traders who failed to pay up when bills became due, effectively bankrupting themselves and leading to their being barred from trading. Among the first people to use the term was the antiquarian and MP Horace Walpole, the son of Sir Robert Walpole, the man usually regarded as the first British prime minister. He was puzzled by the language of the trade: *Apropos, do you know what a Bull, and a Bear, and a Lame Duck are? Nay, nor I either: I am only certain that they are neither animals or fowl* (A letter to Sir Horace Mann by Horace Walpole, 28 Dec. 1761). Walpole clearly kept a close ear on evolving language because the currently earliest known example appeared in the Newcastle Courant on 5 September that year, in a brief report of moneys being paid by subscription into the Bank of England, with a note that there were "No lame ducks this time". Within a couple of months the term began to appear in London newspapers and quickly became common. This is the earliest metropolitan example: *Thursday a Lame Duck disappeared from J---s, to the no small Mortification of his Brother Bulls and Bears, whom he has touched very considerably. ... Yesterday four more Lame Ducks took their Flight* (London Evening Post, 21 Jan. 1762). It's easy enough to see how the lame part came about, a figurative reference to a person injured through inability to maintain his financial position.

SPECTRUM EQUITY MARKET

Indices reaching all-time high: What now?



Sourajeet Pradhani

THE EQUITY MARKET HAS BEEN SUBSTANTIALLY UNCERTAIN AND VOLATILE SINCE NOVEMBER 2021 AND RETAIL INVESTORS HAVE FINALLY WITNESSED SOMETHING POSITIVE AFTER A LONG GAP

Both Nifty and Sensex reached an all-time high value. This may act as a trigger to review one's portfolio - whether to buy, sell or rebalance it. Interestingly, within Nifty 500 stocks, only 15% of companies are close to their all-time highs. Bottom 250 companies (without looking at market cap) are at an average distance of 20% from 52-week highs. But there are companies, where distance from all time highs is 48% on an average.

From a sectoral perspective, half of the IT sector companies are 15% (average) away from 52-week highs and 41% away from all-time highs. Although it is important to note that 'all time highs' can often be misleading from an investment opportunities perspective. Similarly, for financial sector, half of the stocks are around 19% away from their 52-week highs.

Industrials as a sector has the largest 'positivity' wherein, barring construction-related firms, a lot of the companies have peaked to their 52-week high values – the 'Make in India' theme

is clearly visible here.

Due to the recent market rally, we have witnessed a lot of redemptions and profit booking. The equity market has been substantially uncertain and volatile since November 2021 and retail investors have finally witnessed something positive after a long gap.

The rally is predominantly because of the positive domestic macro indicators. The GST collections have reached an all-time high number. The GDP forecast has been positive while inflation level has been under control. The positive global indicators led by the US inflation report have bolstered the market with the requisite impetus.

There are many reasons to be cautious about. If one is over-invested, this is indeed a good trigger to rebalance portfolio in line with asset allocation as per one's risk profile. One needn't stop SIPs (Systematic Investment Plans) unless significantly over-invested.

India's macros are in best of shape, which means that Indian markets may continue to remain

expensive on relative basis. Over-valuation is not a reason to sell as of now, hence one may remain invested. One must maintain 'equal weight' towards equities. One can invest in a staggered manner over a period of 6 to 9 months, but must expect meaningful upsides only in the second half of calendar year 2024, as the new cycle begins and rates head lower. Multi-asset funds (having allocation into equity, debt and gold) can be the preferred bet on risk adjusted basis. Mid & small cap funds have delivered a return of 17% - 19% since March. Existing SIPs may continue in these categories, but investors can explore 'diversified funds' for incremental money.

Last year, value-based investment strategy outperformed growth and quality-based investment strategy. This year, growth and quality stocks are expected to make a bounce back. Investment in large cap and bluechip stocks would be a lucrative opportunity.

The high interest rate phase provided an opportunity in locking the yields. Deposits are pre-

ferred over bonds in the fixed income space, unless one is looking at locking over longer duration. Global interest rate cycle can still induce volatility in bonds, unless invested for longer duration.

Gold as an asset class can still be used as a 'hedge', although it has already witnessed substantial rally. From a diversification perspective, REITs (Real Estate Investment Trusts) can also be explored.

The key risk may be the impact of El Nino. It may upset food supplies, leading to higher cost-push inflation. Globally, US corporate earnings recession remains the key downside risk. Also, the economic situation in Europe may not be clear in the near future.

China is the first big economy which has begun easing monetary policy to stimulate the market. Hence, most of the emerging nations, including India, may follow suit.

The writer is an investment banker. Views are personal.

Civilisational partners

Sir, Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Egypt after ending his state visit to the USA. This is the first state visit from India to Egypt after 26 years. Both countries share civilizational and historical ties. India and Egypt held bilateral talks to strengthen the ties between the two countries. President El Sisi and PM Modi signed an agreement on a strategic partnership. The two countries signed MoUs in the fields of agriculture, archaeology, antiquities and competition law. Modi was also bestowed with the highest honour of the land- The Order of the Nile. This visit will take the two countries closer. India is also expecting to export Indian-made defence products to Egypt. So establishing sound relations with Egypt will pave the way for new defence deals and establish strong trade relations. India is also trying to improve relations with African nations where Egypt as a major developing nation can help India in this regard. Both countries are major stakeholders of the Global South and Cairo can help New Delhi's ambition to become the voice of the Global South.

Deba Prasad Nayak, CUTTACK

Caribbean challenge

Sir, The Indian Test squad for the two-match Caribbean series is mostly on expected lines. Cheteshwar Pujara has been dropped, and this may even be the end of the road for the stalwart. Had he scored heavily in the West Indies, the selectors would have had no option but to retain him for a couple of more series thereby proving detrimental to the aspirations and ambitions of young cricketers. The inclusion of the dashing Yashasvi Jaiswal means the five wise men have provided a great opportunity for the youngster to seal his place in tests, and most probably make Pujara's number three position his own. Ajinkya Rahane has rightly been persisted with after his 89 and 46 in the two innings in the World Test Championship final where big guns flopped. Another player who has been shown the door is pacer Umesh Yadav who did precious little in the WTC final. Pacer Mukesh Kumar, is not exactly young but may prove handy on Caribbean pitches.

Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

Readers of Orissa POST are most welcome to contribute letters (200 words), articles and columns (between 750-1250 words). Contributors are requested to send their contact numbers and full postal address/email ID. They may also send in their valuable comments, opinion and suggestions, preferably by email, to: edit@orissapost.com

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Withdraw Sikh Gurdwaras Bill or face stir: SGPC chief to govt

The SGPC chief asserted that neither the Centre nor the Punjab government has any right to amend the law



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Amritsar, June 26: SGPC chief Harjinder Singh Dhami Monday warned that an agitation will be launched against the AAP-led Punjab government if the Sikh Gurdwaras (Amendment) Bill, 2023 was not withdrawn. Dhami also slammed Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann, accusing him of interfering in SGPC matters and trying to implement the "anti-Sikh thinking" of AAP supremo Arvind Kejriwal with a motive of "capturing" the SGPC. Dhami was addressing a special general house session of the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) here against the state government's move of bringing the bill.

The Punjab Assembly June 20 had passed the Sikh Gurdwaras (Amendment) Bill, 2023, which is aimed at ensuring free telecast of Gurbani from the Golden Temple.

Addressing SGPC members here, Dhami, while condemning the Bill, asked the Punjab government to withdraw it immediately.

If the state government does not stop interference in Sikh matters, then a morcha (agitation) will be started against it after performing 'ardas' (prayer) at the Akal Takht and then it will be the responsibility of the state government, he said.

Dhami said any amendment in the Sikh Gurdwaras Act, 1925 can be made only with the approval of a two-third majority of SGPC members.

The SGPC chief asserted that neither the Centre nor the Punjab government has any right to amend the law.

On Mann's charge that Dhami was being dictated by SAD leaders, the SGPC chief said he cannot be dictated.

Taking a swipe at Mann, Dhami said the chief minister speaks what he is asked to say by Kejriwal.

"It is not happening like this. It is the conspiracy of 'Babu' Kejriwal", said Dhami while apparently referring to the Bill.

Mann Sunday had slammed the SGPC chief for his meeting with the SAD leaders and had said Dhami would announce an already "decided verdict" on opposing the bill.

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Imphal, June 26: In a major setback to the peace efforts of the governments, an influential tribal organisation - Indigenous Tribal Leaders' Forum (ITLF), which has been demanding imposition of President's rule in Manipur, Monday rejected any offer of dialogue with Chief Minister N. Biren Singh or his government.

The ITLF spokesman Ginza Vualzong said that the Chief Minister's intention of reaching out to stakeholders following a meeting with Home Minister Amit Shah comes too late after the loss of so many innocent lives and properties and the untold hardships faced by the Kuki-Zo tribals, and there is no point in talking about peace without a political solution.

He said that around 106 tribals have been killed, 201 villages burnt, over 5,000 houses burnt and 355 churches destroyed, while 41,425 tribals have been displaced by the conflict.

"We have reached a point where the Kuki-Zo community can no longer live together with the Meiteis. N. Biren Singh, the perpetrator of the current ethnic violence whose hatred for the Kuki-Zo community resulted in the genocide of the Kuki-Zo community, cannot be the harbinger of peace," Vualzong told the media.

Returning from New Delhi, where he met Union Home Minister Amit Shah and discussed the prevailing situation



in the state, Singh Sunday evening said that efforts to restore peace would be further intensified involving all.

"In the peace process, Civil Society Organisations (CSO) of all communities, leaders of churches, varied communities and other concerned stakeholders would be involved. No stone would be unturned to restore peace and normalcy at the earliest," he told the media in Imphal.

Biren Singh, who holds the home portfolio, said that the security forces have given maximum efforts in 47 vulnerable areas in different districts.

The ITLF, which along with 10 tribal MLAs (seven of them belonging to the ruling BJP), has been demanding a separate administration (equivalent to separate state) for the tribals, in a statement said that all tribals and a large section of his (Biren Singh) own Meitei community have lost faith in his leadership and his government.

The ITLF has held talks with various dignitaries including Union Home Minister Amit Shah, where Kuki-Zo tribals have voiced their demands including their political aspiration of total separation from Manipur, the statement said.

It said: "Our political demand is in sync with the demand of our 10 MLAs and other CSO groups. The ITLF has exhausted our avenues for dialogue, and it is now crucial for the Government of India to concentrate on finding a solution to our political demand as soon as possible to bring lasting peace in Manipur."

The ITLF also urged all CSOs and tribe leaders from the Kuki-Zo community to maintain unity and not to participate in any form of dialogue with the Chief Minister and his administration.

If anyone is known to be in contact with the state govern-

“We have reached a point where the Kuki-Zo community can no longer live together with the Meiteis. N. Biren Singh, the perpetrator of the current ethnic violence whose hatred for the Kuki-Zo community resulted in the genocide of the Kuki-Zo community, cannot be the harbinger of peace”

GINZA VUALZONG | ITLF SPOKESMAN

ment, stringent action would be taken as necessary, the ITLF statement said.

The Manipur Chief Minister had also said that the Central government has deployed 40,000 security force personnel including the Army, to maintain the law and order situation.

The Union Home Minister continuously monitors the Manipur situation.

He has been briefing Prime Minister Narendra Modi about every detail. He also said that to further tighten the security, he would soon meet the unified command of the various Central and state forces.

Biren Singh said that the Union Home Minister has assured that the Central government would take all possible steps to bring back peace and normalcy in Manipur and has advised him to strengthen the work towards achieving everlasting peace and also sought the cooperation of every stakeholder in Manipur to ensure that peace prevails in the state.

'Changing nature of violence a concern'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Imphal, June 26: Manipur Chief Minister N Biren Singh said that Union Home Minister Amit Shah has expressed concern over the changing nature of violence in the northeastern state.

The union home minister is reportedly concerned over the shifting of violence and civil unrest from peripheral areas to districts in the Imphal valley.

"The changing nature of violence from exchange of fire in the peripheral areas to the civil unrest in the valley districts has become a matter of concern for Amit Shah ji," the chief minister told reporters here after his return from New Delhi late Sunday night.

Singh briefed Shah in New Delhi about the "evolving situation" in Manipur and said the state and central governments have been able to control the violence to a 'great extent'.

"Shah raised issues such as the attacks on the house of Union Minister of State for External Affairs RK Ranjan Singh and the residence of state minister Sushindro Meitei, the ongoing arson and destruction of government properties and the hampering of movement of security forces," the chief minister said here.

Singh said that he has submitted a report to the Centre on the measures taken up by the state government to restore peace and normalcy in Manipur.



Ethnic faultlines in Manipur spoil BJP's party in northeast

Ongoing ethnic violence in Manipur and its after-effects in the neighbouring states would be hurdles for the saffron party before the parliamentary polls



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Agartala, June 26: Even as the BJP now has some electoral advantage in the northeastern region ahead of the 2024 Lok Sabha polls, internal feuds in the party, anti-incumbency and the ongoing ethnic troubles in Manipur and its after-effects in the neighbouring states would be hurdles for the saffron party before the parliamentary polls.

Though the internal rifts are not so visible in Arunachal Pradesh, Assam and a few other northeastern states, disputes and differences of opinion are evident in Tripura and Manipur.

Before the ethnic violence began in Manipur May 3, expressing their resentment against Chief Minister N. Biren Singh between April 13 and April 24 four BJP MLAs — Thokchom

Radheysham, Karam Shyam, Raghurami Singh and Paonam Brojen Singh — quit their government posts.

All the four MLAs claimed that they were not given due responsibility, funds and authority to function in their posts.

Biren Singh, however, had claimed that there are no differences of opinion and resentment among the legislators.

The issue was discussed in an "inconclusive" party meeting April 27 in Imphal. The BJP's northeast co-ordinator and national spokesperson Sambit Patra and state BJP president A. Sharda Devi were present at the meeting.

According to political analysts, the ongoing ethnic violence, which broke out May 3 and has so far claimed over 120 lives, injured over

400 people of different communities and displaced over 65,000 people besides destroying a large number of properties and vehicles, is likely to affect the electoral prospects of the ruling BJP in Manipur.

Amidst the ethnic violence, a section of BJP leaders and MLAs have been demanding replacement of Biren Singh as Chief Minister. However, leaders and legislators close to the Chief Minister claimed that his (Biren Singh) efforts to curb the drug menace, illegal trade in drugs from Myanmar, illicit poppy cultivation and infiltration from across the border annoyed unscrupulous people and they are conspiring against him.

Keeping in mind next year's Lok Sabha elections, the BJP held a "crucial meeting" in Guwahati in the first week of April to chalk out strategies to win all the 25 parliamentary seats in the eight northeastern states, including Sikkim.

Even as the BJP remains in an advantageous position by virtue of running the governments in four out of the eight states in the north-eastern region, the regional parties are expected to play a significant role in next year's Lok Sabha elections.

The All India United Democratic Front in Assam and the tribal-based Tipra Motha Party in Tripura are currently not with the BJP or the Congress.

The Muslim-based party AIUDEF, headed by Lok Sabha MP Badruddin Ajmal and former royal scion Pradyot Bikram Manikya Deb Barman-led TMP have a strong base in their respective areas and might pose a challenge to both the BJP and the Congress.

Situation fluid for both AAP, Cong in Punjab

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chandigarh, June 26: The situation, they say, seems fluid for both the archrivals. Both AAP and the Congress have never been on the same page in the state politics, which is largely dominated by the Congress and the Akali Dal, since the former's meteoric rise in the 2014 parliamentary polls.

Since the 15-month helm of AAP, which trounced the traditional players that ruled the state for over seven decades by capturing 92 out of the 117 Assembly seats, has edged over all rivals, the Bhagwant Mann-



led dispensation has sharp differences with all Opposition parties — the Congress, the BJP and the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD).

AAP recently at the mega Opposition meeting, hosted by Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar to chalk out a roadmap for the formation of an anti-BJP front for the 2024 Lok Sabha polls, made it

clear that it will be difficult for it to be part of any alliance where the Congress is.

Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann often accuses the BJP and the Congress of working together to topple the AAP government.

For the weakened Congress, which ruled the state from 2017-2022, the mass exodus of leaders, comprising loyal and veteran lawmakers like Capt Amarinder Singh, Manpreet Badal, Gurpreet Kangar, Rana Gurmeet Singh Sodhi, Raj Kumar Verka, and Sunil Jakkhar, a prominent Hindu face, left the party struggling for revival.

Popular Sikh face from Delhi, Manjinder Singh Sirsa, has also joined the saffron brigade.

Congress watchers feel Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Yatra has somehow managed to energise the cadres that had been demoralised after the Assembly elections rout in March last year and the mass exodus of their leaders.

Fifteen months into the government in Punjab, Chief Minister Mann and his team are accused of being remote-controlled by the party bosses in Delhi with law and order and drug problems at the lowest ebb.

National Highways & Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited (A Govt. of India Undertaking)

Corporate Office: 3rd Floor, PTI Building, 4-Parliament Street, New Delhi-110001

F.No.NHIDCL/2(16)/Rectt.PS/2023/HR Dated: 19.06.2023

National Highways & Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited has been set up by the Government of India as a Corporation under the Ministry of Road Transport & Highways to fast pace construction/ up-gradation/ widening of National Highways in the North-Eastern Region and areas that share International boundaries with neighbouring countries. Applications are invited from dynamic, effective and experienced eligible Officers working in Central/ State/UT Government Ministries/ Departments, Indian Army/Navy/Air- Force, Border Road Organization (GREF), Central/State Autonomous Bodies, Central/ State Public Sector Undertakings, etc. on Transfer on Deputation basis for the following posts:

Sl. No.	Name of the Posts	No. of Vacancies*	Pay matrix Level in CDA pattern
1.	Deputy Manager (HR)	02	Pay Matrix Level-10 (Rs.56,100-1,77,500/-) [Pre-revised PB-3 of Rs. 15,600-39,100/- plus Grade Pay of Rs.5,400/-]
2.	Assistant Manager (HR)	03	Pay Matrix Level-8 (Rs. 47,600-1,51,100/-) [Pre-revised PB-2 of Rs.9,300-34,800/- plus Grade Pay Rs.4,800/-]
3.	Assistant Director (Official Language)	01	Pay Matrix Level-10 (Rs. 56,100-1,77,500/-) [Pre-revised PB-3 of Rs.15,600-39,100/- plus Grade Pay Rs.5,400/-]
4.	Principal Private Secretary (at NHIDCL Hqrs)	01	Pay Matrix Level-11 (Rs.67,700-2,08,700/-) [Pre-revised PB-2 of Rs.9,300-34,800/- plus Grade Pay of Rs.6,600/-]
5.	Private Secretary (at NHIDCL Hqrs)	02	Pay Matrix Level-8 (Rs. 47,600-1,51,100/-) [Pre-revised PB-2 of Rs.9,300-34,800/- plus Grade Pay of Rs.4,800/-]
6.	Personal Assistant (at NHIDCL Hqrs)	07	Pay Matrix Level-7 of 7th CPC (Rs.44,900-1,42,400/-) [Pre-revised PB-2 of Rs.9,300-34,800/- plus Grade Pay of Rs.4,600/-]
7.	Deputy Manager (Finance)	08	Pay Matrix Level-10 of 7th CPC [Pre-revised PB-3 of Rs. 15,600-39,100/- plus Grade Pay of Rs.5,400/-]

*Number of vacancies in the posts may vary, depending upon the requirement. Further, NHIDCL reserves the right to prepare a panel of selected candidates for filling up the indicated and future vacancies that may arise in NHIDCL.

Last date for submission of Application: 04 (Four) weeks from the date of publication of the advertisement in the Employment News. Date of Publication of the Advertisement in the Employment News shall be displayed on the NHIDCL Website www.nhidcl.com.

For Eligibility Criteria and detailed Terms and Conditions please visit-NHIDCL Website www.nhidcl.com.

Applications shall have to be submitted only in on-line mode for which link has been posted on the NHIDCL website www.nhidcl.com. No applications in any other mode like By Hand or By Post or By E-mail shall be accepted under any circumstances.

NOTE 1: Crucial date for deciding eligibility (viz. age, length of service, etc.) of the Candidates shall be 01.07.2023.

NOTE 2: Candidate submitting application on Transfer on Deputation basis shall be required also to submit his/her application through proper channel. He/she will be allowed to appear in the interview, even if shortlisted for a post, only if his/her application is received through proper channel along with copies of ACRs/APARs for last five years, No Objection Certificate (NOC) and Vigilance Clearance (VC) from his/her parent organization.

NOTE 3: Retired Officer(s) who have served in the Government and satisfy the prescribed eligibility criteria, may also apply for the post on Contract basis provided he/she has not attained the age of 62 years as on the crucial date for submission of applications.

NOTE 4: Any change or amendment in this Vacancy Circular will be posted on the NHIDCL Website only.

NOTE 5: Incomplete applications or those received after the prescribed date shall be summarily rejected.

CBC-37112/12/0003/2324 **Dy.General Manager (HR)**

BUILDING INFRASTRUCTURE, BUILDING THE NATION



An installation depicting a sea turtle made from used plastic bottles is displayed at Edward Elliot's Beach to create awareness among locals in Chennai, Tamil Nadu



Students of Queen Mary's College take part in a demonstration on the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, near Marina beach in Chennai, Tamil Nadu



Muslim boys guide a flock of goats at a market, ahead of Eid al-Adha in Jalandhar, Punjab



A devotee prepares to take a holy dip as part of rituals on the commencement of the 'Kharchi Puja' festival, on the outskirts of Agartala, Tripura



Students pose for photos during the convocation of Nalanda Open University, at Babu Auditorium in Patna, Bihar



Members of All India Students' Association (AISA) raise slogans during a protest against suspension of four teachers of South Asian University at Jantar Mantar in New Delhi



A pro-Kremlin activist holds a flag with an image of Russian President Vladimir Putin and the words in Russian 'For the Motherland, for the sovereignty, for the Putin', near the Kremlin in Moscow, Russia



A view of swollen Beas River after heavy rainfall in Kullu, Himachal Pradesh

national

of the day quote

On International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, I extend my greetings to all the anti-narcotics warriors for putting up a brave fight against the menace of drugs

The important thing is that labourers, farmers, small businessmen who had lost their hard earned money should get it back. The entire embezzled money will be recovered and returned to account holders

The first budget after independence was twenty one crore three lakh rupees, today it is about three lakh nine thousand crore rupees. I will be presenting a new budget on July 7 it may be (of the size) three lakh thirty to thirty five thousand crore rupees

SHORT TAKES

Man drinks friend's blood for 'revenge'

Chikkaballapura (K'taka): A man has allegedly slit the throat of a person and tried to drink his blood, suspecting him of having an affair with his wife, in Chintamani taluk of this district, police said. Police, who got to know about the crime after coming across a video of the incident in circulation, arrested the accused Sunday. The incident is said to have taken place June 19, and the victim has survived the attack, police said.

Man lynched by 'cow vigilantes'

Mumbai: A 32-year-old man was lynched allegedly by a group of 'cow vigilantes' on suspicion of transporting beef in Maharashtra's Nashik district, police said Monday. Police have arrested 11 persons for the crime. This is the second incident in Nashik in nearly two weeks of killing of a person by 'gau rakshaks'. The latest incident occurred at around 5.30 pm Saturday near Gambhirwadi on Ghoti-Sinnar Road in Igatpuri area of Nashik, located more than 150 km from Mumbai, an official said.

NIA conducts searches in 4 Kashmir districts

Srinagar: The National Investigation Agency (NIA) conducted a series of raids across four districts in Kashmir Monday as part of its probe into an alleged conspiracy involving newly-floated offshoots of proscribed Pakistan-backed terror outfits to destabilise Jammu and Kashmir. "Twelve locations in the four districts of Kulgam, Bandipora, Shopian and Pulwama were raided as part of the crackdown," the NIA said in a press release.

3 minor drown

Muzaffarnagar: Three children drowned in a water pit at a brick kiln here Monday, police said. The incident took place in Dabheri village under the Budhana police station area, they said. The bodies were recovered and handed over to the family without conducting a post-mortem at the request of the families, he said.

Hardwar Dubey dies

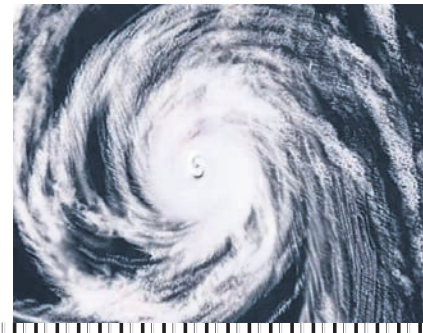
New Delhi: Hardwar Dubey, a BJP Rajya Sabha MP from Uttar Pradesh, has died at a private hospital here, sources said Monday. He was 74. He was admitted to Fortis Escorts Heart Institute on June 12 and breathed his last there, sources at the facility said.



PM's assurances in USA about Indian minorities being safe is followed by absurd statements from BJP ministers. One mocks Obama's muslim surname & issues veiled threats. Another justifies BJs mistreatment of minorities by invoking bombing of muslim countries. BJP's doublespeak
MEHBOOBA MUFTI | PPP PRESIDENT

BIPARJOY LONGEST DURATION CYCLONE

Cyclone Biparjoy, which wreaked havoc in Gujarat earlier this month, was the longest duration cyclonic storm in the northern Indian Ocean since 1977, the India Meteorological Department said



Wife entitled for equal share in property: HC

Chennai, June 26: The Madras High Court has ruled that a wife is entitled to equal share in the property bought by her husband and said the many roles played by her cannot be less equated with the 8-hour job of the husband.
Justice Krishnan Ramasamy gave the order recently over a property dispute involving a couple, with the original appellant, since deceased. He claimed ownership for the property, while alleging she was also involved in

an extra-marital affair. His children were later implicated in the case following his death.
The judge said the defendant woman being a homemaker, though she did not make any direct financial contribution, she played a vital role in managing the household chores by looking after the children, cooking, cleaning and managing day-to-day affairs of the family without giving any inconvenience to the plaintiff who had gone abroad for work.
"In generality of marriages, the wife bears and rears chil-



dren and minds the home. She thereby frees her husband for his economic activities. Since it is her performance of her function which enables the husband to perform his, she is in justice, entitled to share in its fruits," the judge observed.
A wife, being a homemaker

performs many tasks—a Manager, Chef, "Home Doctor" and also "Home Economist" with financial skills, the judge said.
"Therefore, by performing these skills, a wife makes the home as a comfortable environment and her contribution towards the family, and certainly it is not a valueless job, but it is a job doing for 24 hours without holidays, which cannot be less equated with that of the job of an earning husband who works only for 8 hours," he said. When the husband and wife are treated as two wheels of a family cart,

then the contribution made either by the husband by earning or the wife by serving and looking after the family and children, would be for the welfare of the family and both are entitled equally to whatever they earned by their joint effort, the court added.
In the present case, if the first defendant/ wife was not there, certainly, the plaintiff (deceased man) would not have gone abroad and earned all the money, the court said and ordered equal share for either in certain immovable property.

35 BRS leaders join Congress

New Delhi, June 26: As many as 35 BRS leaders, including former MP Ponguleti Srinivas Reddy and ex-minister Telangana government Jupally Krishna Rao, joined the Congress and met the party's top leadership here Monday.



The Bharat Rashtra Samithi leaders formally joined the Congress in the presence of Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and former party chief Rahul Gandhi. Party general secretary (organisation) KC Venugopal and Congress chief of its Telangana unit A Revanth Reddy were also present at the meeting.
After meeting the Congress top brass, the BRS leaders announced at a press conference that they are joining the Congress. They will later address a public rally in Khammam, Telangana expected to be held in the first week of July with the likely presence of AICC general secretary Priyanka Gandhi.

In a big boost to the Congress party's prospects, more and more people are aligning with us to take the message of love and prosperity forward."
"Today, senior leaders from Telangana joined the Congress party in the presence of Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge, former Congress President Rahul Gandhi, General Secy (Org.) KC Venugopal, AICC Telangana Incharge Manikrao Thakre, Telangana PCC President Vevanth Reddy and other senior leaders at AICC HQ, New Delhi,"

BSF trying to scare voters, says Mamata

Cooch Behar (WB), June 26: West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee Monday accused the BSF of scaring voters in the bordering areas of the state at the behest of the saffron camp and asked the police administration to keep a close watch on their activities.
"I have information that in the run up to the panchayat election, some BSF officials are visiting the border areas, threatening voters and forcing them not to vote. I will ask people not to be scared of their tactics and fearlessly participate in the elections," she told an election rally in the bordering district.



While referring to the alleged shooting of villagers by the BSF last year, whom the border force claimed as smugglers, Banerjee said, "Police will lodge FIRs in such cases and the law will take its own course." "They don't have the right to shoot and kill anyone. No one is above the law; it seems killing people in Cooch Behar district has become a norm," she said.
She asserted "law and order is a state subject" and the Centre has no role in it. Asserting that Trinamool will defeat BJP in the three-tier rural polls, Banerjee said, "We will then oust the BJP

from the Centre and bring a development-oriented government in the country."
The BJP dubbed the allegations of using BSF to serve its political purpose baseless. "Such comments are unacceptable and an insult to our security forces. These remarks reflect the mindset of TMC as they have been up against the BSF since its jurisdiction was increased," BJP national vice-president Dilip Ghosh said.

Around 5.67 crore voters are likely to exercise their franchise in the July 8 panchayat polls to elect nearly 75,000 candidates in zilla parishads, panchayat samitis and gram panchayats

CBI books former director of CIMFR, chief scientist

New Delhi, June 26: The CBI has booked former director of the CSIR-Central Institute of Mining and Fuel Research P K Singh and Chief Scientist A K Singh for alleged corruption in the distribution of intellectual fee amounting to Rs 137 crore for coal-sampling projects, officials said Monday.

Singh received Rs 9.04 crore of the intellectual fee through 304 coal-sampling projects in violation of the CSIR Guidelines for Technological Transfer and Knowledge Base, 2005 and 2017.

The agency has alleged that ineligible persons, including librarians, MBBS doctors and technical officers, were paid the money in the projects for testing the quality of coal to be used by various companies, without their contribution in the respective category of innovators and principal contributors, the officials said.
It is alleged that P K Singh received Rs 15.36 crore while A K

power utilities and coal companies at a meeting October 28, 2015, chaired by the minister of coal, power and new and renewable energy.
Four memoranda of understanding were signed by the institute with coal producers and power companies for a tenure of 10 years, which could be extended by another five years on mutual consent.
The intellectual fee comprises manpower plus inputs.



SEEKING SHELTER: A man looks for cover amid rainfall during the onset of monsoon in Jaipur, Rajasthan

LOVE IN THE CROSS-HAIRS OF POLARISING POLITICS

Courts are the last resort of individuals when politics seeks to overwhelm their lives. On June 12, 1967, the US Supreme Court issued its landmark decision in the case of Loving v. Virginia which ruled unanimously that state laws prohibiting interracial marriage violated the promise of equal protection before law.
The case became a touchstone of civil rights laws says Anastasia Boden in a treatise titled 'The Courts are a haven from political fights' whose extracts find place on Pacific Legal Foundation, a non-profit legal organisation that defends Americans' liberties when threatened by government overreach and abuse.
According to Anastasia, The Constitution (and by extension,

the justices who enforce it) take some aspect of our lives off the political table so that we can live free of the backdoor deals, lobbying, cajoling, compromising and unholy alliances that come with partisan politics.
Last week, in an interesting case of similar vein, the Gujarat High Court upheld a woman's right to choose her spouse and junked the family's custody plea. She had married a Muslim man who converted to the Hindu faith.
The Ahmedabad based mother sought custody of the daughter suspecting coercion in marrying a man of a different religion though she had been mailed a marriage certificate to prove that the marriage had taken place according to Hindu rituals at an Arya Samaj Vaidik



Sanskar setup in Delhi. After the marriage the couple had approached a single judge bench of the High Court requesting police protection and had been granted the same.
According to published reports, the love jihad laws being enacted in BJP-ruled states are nothing but old wine in new bottles. Since these are beyond existing legal bounds, age-old anti-conversion laws or the Freedom of Religion Acts that deal with forced conversions are being re-dressed with 'majoritarian' intent to fulfill po-

litically polarising purposes. According to available information, these laws were passed or sought to be passed in at least 9 Indian states—Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand and Uttarakhand.
Gujarat is a case in point for Narendra Modi's initiatives in his home state became the sacrosanct template for the country after he assumed power at the Centre in 2014.
In 2003 when he was Chief Minister, the Gujarat Assembly passed a Bill providing for freedom of religion by prohibition of conversion from one religion to another by the use of force or allurement or by fraudulent means. It received the assent of the Governor and was published in the Gujarat Government

Gazette April 8, 2003. In April 2021, the Gujarat government was back in the State Assembly with a Gujarat Freedom of Religion (Amendment) Bill 2021 that prohibited forcible conversion by marriage. The amended Bill that includes better lifestyle as an allurement and awards imprisonment punishment of three to ten years for religious conversion was passed by the BJP with majority but Congress opposing. Since conversion is not possible, even for marriage under the Gujarat Act, couples seek safer havens in other states to by-pass Gujarat. Basic instincts are least ennobled of laws or politically delineated boundaries.
Interestingly 'Love jihad' is a Sangh Parivar coined term to conceptualise a 'muslim' con-

spiracy to convert unsuspecting 'Hindu' women to Islam.
However, it again fell to the lot of the judiciary to stand up for the Constitution when in August 2021, Gujarat High Court granted parties in inter-faith marriages protection from being "unnecessarily harassed" and stayed the operation of several sections of the Freedom of Religion Amendment Act, 2021 including the provision that termed inter-faith marriages as means for forceful conversion. The Gujarat government moved the Supreme Court against the stayed sections even though the then Deputy Chief Minister, Nitin Patel went on record to state that the Constitution, secularism will last only as long as Hindus are in majority in Gujarat.

international



The friendship between the United States and India is among the most consequential in the world. And it's stronger, closer, and more dynamic than ever
JOE BIDEN | PRESIDENT, US

ISRAEL TO HOUSE THOUSANDS
Israel's far-right government approved plans to build thousands of new homes in Jewish settlements in the West Bank. The decision defied growing US criticism of Israel's settlement policies. It also raised tensions with the Palestinians at a time of rising violence in the occupied territory



of the day quote

I am not sure whether the Chinese have been seeing the Ukrainian war the way other countries are seeing it. Russia, with one of the largest militaries in the world, is having difficulties in its invasion of Ukraine
JAUSHIEH JOSEPH WU | FOREIGN MINISTER, TAIWAN

Germany stands by its commitment as a NATO member, as Europe's biggest economy, to stand up for the protection of the eastern flank
BORIS PISTORIUS | DEFENCE MINISTER, GERMANY

Mis and disinformation sows division within the community, undermines trust and can threaten public health and safety
MICHELLE ROWLAND | MINISTER FOR COMMUNICATIONS, AUSTRALIA

73RD KOREAN WAR ANNIVERSARY

North Korea held mass rallies where people shouted slogans vowing a "war of revenge" to destroy US

Seoul, June 26: Tens of thousands of North Koreans marched in anti-US rallies in the nation's capital over the weekend, pledging "merciless" revenge against "US imperialists," as the country marked the 73rd anniversary of the start of the Korean War, state media said Monday. More than 120,000 people participated in Sunday's mass ral-

North Korea pledges 'to punish the US'

lies in Pyongyang, North Korea's official Korean Central News Agency said. While the 1950-53 conflict was triggered by a North Korean surprise attack, the demonstrators mobilized in Pyongyang promoted their government's version of events and accused the United States of provoking the war and leaving Koreans with "wounds ... That can never be healed." They also expressed pride in



North and South Korea remain technically at war because their 1950-53 conflict ended in a truce, not a treaty

North Korea's expanding nuclear weapons and missile programs, insisting their country now has the "strongest absolute weapon to punish the US imperialists and the

war deterrence for self-defense which no enemy dare provoke." Photos published by the North's Rodong Sinmun newspaper showed a Pyongyang stadium packed with likely tens of thousands of people in Covid-19 masks,

raising their fists in the air and holding signs that read: "Let's eradicate US imperialist invaders" and "The entire US mainland is within our striking range." The weekend rallies came amid heightened tensions in the region, as the pace of North Korean weapons demonstrations and the United States' joint military exercises with South Korea have both intensified in a cycle of tit-for-tat. Since the start of 2022, North Korea has test-fired around 100 missiles of various ranges as leader Kim Jong Un attempts to display a dual ability to conduct nuclear strikes on both the US mainland and South Korea.

NEW EVIDENCE

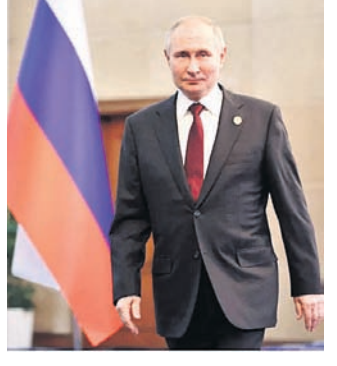
China spy balloons hovering over Asia

London, June 26: The British media Monday reported new evidence of China's spy balloon programme, including flights over Japan and Taiwan, months after US-China relations were derailed when one such airship was shot down off the US coast. Working with Synthetiaic, an artificial intelligence company which sifted through huge amounts of data captured by satellites, the BBC has found multiple images of balloons crossing East Asia. The company's founder, Corey Jaskolski, found evidence of one balloon crossing northern Japan in early September 2021. These images have not been published before, the BBC reported. Jaskolski also believes the evidence points to this balloon having been launched from deep inside China, south of Mongolia. US-China relations were thrown into turmoil in February this year, when a Chinese spy balloon, said to be the size of three buses, was shot down by American fighter jets over the Atlantic Ocean off the Eastern Seaboard of the United States. China has repeatedly claimed the balloon seen over the US airspace was a civilian airship, used for scientific research such as meteorology - and that it was an unintended and isolated event. The incident led to US Secretary of State Antony Blinken postponing his visit to China in early February. He finally visited Beijing last week in a bid to ease tense bilateral ties. The US State Department says it believes the Chinese balloons are equipped to gather signals intelligence. It says the aircraft it discovered over the US had "multiple antennas, likely capable of collecting and geo-locating communications".

MERCENARIES' MUTINY

Russia PM calls for unity behind Putin

The rebellious mercenary soldiers who briefly took over a Russian military headquarters on an ominous march toward Moscow were gone Sunday, but the short-lived revolt has weakened President Vladimir Putin just as his forces are facing a fierce counteroffensive in Ukraine



We need to act together, as one team, and maintain the unity of all forces, rallying around the president
MIKHAIL MISHUSTIN | PM, RUSSIA

investigated, the Kommersant newspaper and Russia's three main news agencies reported Monday, citing unidentified sources. President Vladimir Putin Saturday vowed to crush what he called a treasonous mutiny by Wagner Group fighters. European Union ministers urged caution Monday over a failed revolt by mercenary soldiers in Russia. This came after the incident raised troubling questions about Russian President Vladimir Putin's grip on power and whether Wagner group fighters might install themselves just over the border in Belarus. At the talks in Luxembourg, some EU foreign ministers likened the short-lived uprising led by Wagner Group leader Yevgeny Prigozhin to Putin unleashing Frankenstein's monster of his own creation, and to some powerful and evil spirit. But several others, concerned that they might be seen to be offering support, were at pains to point out that the revolt remains an internal Russian affair, and that many questions remain unanswered, including Prigozhin's precise whereabouts and whether he may be taking troops with him. The armed rebellion against the Russian military may have been over in less than 24 hours, but the disarray within the enemy's ranks was an unexpected gift and timely morale booster for Ukrainian troops.

- Moscow cancels counter-terrorism measures
- Mutiny case against Prigozhin remains open
- No sign of Putin or Prigozhin after deal ending revolt

Moscow, June 26: Russia has faced "a challenge to its stability" and must remain united behind President Vladimir Putin, its prime minister said Monday, after mercenaries briefly occupied a strategic command centre for its Ukraine war and marched on Moscow. The armed mutiny over the weekend by the powerful Wagner Group and its abrupt ending with no apparent penalties for the perpetrators or their leader were followed Monday by official moves to return the country to normal. The extraordinary events left governments, both friendly and hostile to Russia, groping for answers to what could happen next in the country with the world's largest nuclear arsenal. Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin said during a televised government meeting that Russia had faced "a challenge to its stability". "We need to act together, as one team, and maintain the unity of all forces, rallying around the president," he said. Russia's national Anti-

Terrorism Committee said the situation in the country was stable and Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyanin said he was cancelling a counter-terrorism regime imposed in the capital. Wagner mercenaries fighting in Ukraine who crossed into Russia Saturday halted their advance on Moscow, withdrew from the southern Russian city of Rostov and headed back to their bases in the evening under an amnesty granting them safety. Their commander, Yevgeny Prigozhin, who had demanded that Russia's defence minister and the army's top general be handed over to him, would move to Belarus under the deal mediated by Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko. Prigozhin, who has accused both men of gross incompetence and corruption, said he wanted to "restore justice". A Russian criminal case against mercenary leader Yevgeny Prigozhin for mutiny remains open and is still being in-

SHORT TAKES

Pashupatinath shrine reopens

Kathmandu: Nepal's famed Pashupatinath Temple was reopened for devotees Monday as the country's anti-graft agency initiated a probe into the missing gold in the 'Jalhari' within its premises amid claims of irregularities in the construction of the newly-installed ornament, officials said. Pashupatinath - the oldest Hindu temple in Kathmandu - was shut for devotees on Sunday after the Commission for Investigation of Abuse of Authority took control of the temple premises to investigate allegations that 10 kilograms of gold were missing from the ornament weighing 100 kgs.

Indian student dies

London: A 25-year-old student from Tamil Nadu who was pursuing his postgraduate degree in the UK died after being pulled from a canal in the city of Birmingham, police said Monday. Jeevanth Sivakumar, a student at Aston University in Birmingham, was found in the Worcester and Birmingham canal at Matrons Walk, Selly Oak, by West Midlands Police in the early hours of Wednesday. The West Midlands Ambulance Service was called in but they later said in a statement that "it sadly became apparent nothing could be done to save the man". "His death is not being treated as suspicious and will be referred to the coroner in due course," West Midlands Police said.

Israel PM in soup

Jerusalem: A billionaire Hollywood mogul took the stand for a second day Monday in Benjamin Netanyahu's corruption trial, acknowledging that the long list of champagne, cigars and jewelry he systematically gave to the Israeli prime minister may have been excessive. Arnon Milchan, whose production credits include "Pretty Woman," "12 Years a Slave," and "Bohemian Rhapsody," is a key witness in one of three cases brought against Netanyahu. Prosecutors are trying to prove that Netanyahu committed fraud and breach of trust.

Pak sacks 3 officers

Islamabad: Pakistan Army Monday announced that three officers including a Lieutenant-General were sacked and action was taken against three major-generals and seven brigadiers for failing to protect the military installations during the May 9 violent protests following the arrest of former prime minister Imran Khan.

LANDSLIDE VICTORY

Mitsotakis sworn in as Greek PM

CONSERVATIVE NEW DEMOCRACY PARTY WINS GREEK ELECTIONS FOR SECOND 4-YEAR TERM

Athens, June 26: Kyriakos Mitsotakis promised to rebuild Greece's credit rating, create jobs, raise wages and boost state revenues after he was sworn in for a second term as prime minister Monday following a re-sounding election win. His centre-right New Democracy party got 158 seats in the 300-seat parliament in the repeat election Sunday, well ahead of the 48 secured by left-ist Syriza which ran Greece from 2015-2019 at the height of the decade-long economic crisis. "I have committed that in this second term we will realise the big changes that the country so much needs," Mitsotakis told President Katerina Sakellaropoulou after receiving an official mandate to form a government. The 55-year-old former banker and scion of a powerful political family was prime minister from 2019 until stepping down in favour



of a caretaker premier following an inconclusive May 21 vote. He has promised to push ahead with reforms to rebuild the credit rating after the debt crisis, boost revenue from the vital tourist industry and increase wages to near the European Union average. Mitsotakis is due to announce his cabinet. A source with knowledge of the matter told Reuters he will appoint Kostas Hatzidakis as his finance minister. Sunday's vote saw a heavy defeat for Alexis Tsipras's Syriza party, which lost more than 30 lawmakers. "Mitsotakis's absolute dominance, with no opponent," Greek newspaper Ta Nea wrote on its front page.

WORLD DRUG DAY

Cocaine market booming as meth trafficking spreads: UN

Vienna, June 26: Cocaine demand and supply are booming worldwide and methamphetamine trafficking is expanding beyond established markets, including in Afghanistan where the drug is now being produced, a United Nations report said Sunday. Coca bush cultivation and total cocaine production were at record highs in 2021, the most recent year for which data is available, and the global number of cocaine users, estimated at 22 million that same year, is growing steadily, the UN Office on Drugs and Crime said in its annual World Drug Report. The report coincided with the UN's International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking or World Drug Day which is observed June 26 every year to strengthen action and



cooperation in achieving a world free of drug abuse. Cocaine seizures have, however, grown faster than production, containing the total supply to some extent, the report said. The upper band of the estimated total supply was higher in the mid-2000's than now. "The world is currently experiencing a prolonged surge in both supply and demand of cocaine, which is now being felt across the globe and is likely to spur the development of new markets beyond the traditional confines," the UNODC report said.

Prince William follows Diana's footsteps

The heir to the British throne launches 5-year project to end long-term homelessness in UK

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, June 26: Britain's Prince William Monday launched a major five-year campaign to tackle homelessness in the country, following in the footsteps of his late mother - Diana, Princess of Wales. William, the Prince of Wales, is using his charitable Royal Foundation to provide GBP 3 million of start-up funding for a locally-led programme to make homelessness "rare, brief, and un-repeated".

The 41-year-old heir to the British throne launched Homewards in south London as one of six flagship locations to get new space and tools to prevent and end homelessness in these areas as a template for wider impact. "I am pleased to stand here today officially at the start of our path to ending homelessness. Over the next five years, I believe that we have a unique



My first visit to a homelessness shelter was when I was 11 with my mother. The visits we made left a deep and lasting impression
PRINCE WILLIAM | UK

opportunity to develop innovative new solutions and scale tangible impact. This will inspire belief throughout the UK - and beyond - that homelessness can be ended for good," William in his speech. "Through Homewards, we will demonstrate that together we can finally end homelessness,"

he declared. There are believed to be more than 300,000 people currently homeless across the UK, which includes those who are stuck in hostels and temporary accommodation, living in cars and sofa-surfing - or those without a proper base, as well as people

who are rough sleeping. With his new initiative, William aims to change attitudes and show how many people can be affected. Recently, he opened an affordable housing project for young people with jobs but who still needed help with accommodation. Kensington Palace said Prince William's plan is to bring together local coalitions of housing experts, charities and private industry to develop housing projects and support services, addressing different ways that homelessness occurs, whether in big cities or coastal towns. "Homewards will take a transformative approach to the issue of homelessness and put collaboration at its heart, giving six flagship locations new space, tools, and relationships to show-case what can be achieved through a collective effort focused on preventing and ending homelessness in their areas," the palace said.

of the day quote

Going by the current situation, we expect a growth of 10-15 per cent

RUTUPARNA DOLE | VICE-CHAIRMAN, IOPEPC



We are at a critical juncture in global health and healthcare, as mounting headwinds threaten collective wellness as well as employers, economies, budgets and societal resilience

SHYAM BISHEN | HEAD OF THE CENTRE FOR HEALTH AND HEALTHCARE, WEF



We are bringing in the India-patented anode manufacturing technology to the US and leveraging it to contribute to the vision that the US has for the EV battery ecosystem

VIKRAM HANDA | FOUNDER AND MD, EAM



SHORT TAKES

Meta, CAIT set to upskill 10L traders

New Delhi: Meta Monday announced it has partnered with the Confederation of All India Traders to upskill 10 lakh traders on how to use the WhatsApp Business App over the next three years in a bid to reach more customers and scale up their businesses. The owner of WhatsApp, Instagram and Facebook also announced the launch of Meta Small Business Academy, a new programme to enable emerging entrepreneurs to learn digital marketing skills and earn a certification.

Shree Cement dips after fraud raid

Bangalore: India's Shree Cement fell Monday, after reports that tax evasion amounting to ₹230 billion was found in searches at multiple company locations Saturday. Deductions claimed by Shree Cement are false and the company siphoned ₹12 billion to ₹14 billion every year, the report added, citing sources. Shares of the company opened 10% lower Monday at ₹22,630.75, their steepest intraday drop in over three years, and were last down around 7.2%. The company's standalone tax expenses fell over 58% YoY to ₹2.31 billion in the financial year ended March 31, while profit fell 44% to ₹13.28 billion on a surge in other costs.

Airtel Business CEO Ajay quits

New Delhi: The Chief Executive Officer of Bharti Airtel's enterprise arm Airtel Business, Ajay Chitkara, has resigned from the company, according to a filing. Following the resignation, Bharti Airtel has restructured leadership in the enterprise arm by dividing it into three segments. Airtel Business will now operate as three businesses and channel segments - Global business, led by Vani Venkatesh, Domestic business, led by Ganesh Lakshminarayanan, and Nxtra Data Centers, led by Ashish Arora, the company said.

CIAL posts record profit of ₹267.17cr

Kochi: The Cochin International Airport Ltd, the first Greenfield airport setup in Public Private Partnership (PPP) model in the civil aviation infrastructure sector in the country, Monday declared a record net profit of ₹267.17 crore for the year 2022-23. In a statement here, the company also announced the highest dividend of 35 per cent for the last fiscal year.

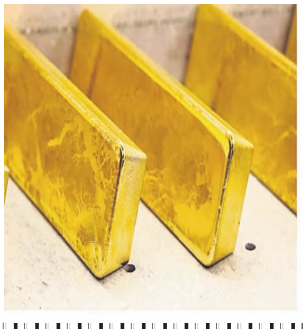


This is India's time. Armed with a growing young population, a focus on digital public infrastructure and large strides in the adoption of green energy, India stands at the focal point for growth globally

NITIN PARANJPE | CHAIRMAN, HUL

NMDC TO FORAY INTO GOLD MINING

State-owned Indian iron ore miner NMDC is likely to invest around ₹5 billion in its planned first foray into gold mining, a source with direct knowledge of the matter said Monday. NMDC is "on track" to secure a lease for the Chigargunta-Bisanatham gold block soon, having signed a letter of intent over the project with the state government late last year, the source said



Firms to get 1st carbon accounting rules globally

The poor quality of data and lack of common standards allow companies to burnish their climate credentials, or to greenwash their reputations

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Paris, June 26: Companies around the world will soon have a uniform set of standards on sustainability issues after the body governing international accounting rules published Monday its first guidelines on reporting greenhouse gas emissions. Currently, most large compa-

nies report how many tonnes of carbon they emit into the atmosphere each year, but the data is often not reliable.

The International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) Foundation launched an effort in 2021 to fill that gap, creating a special board to work on sustainability disclosure standards.

On Monday, the International Sustainability Standards Board (ISSB) issued its first standards - IFRS S1 and IFRS S2 - that will be available for use from next year.

"The standards will help to improve trust and confidence in company disclosures about sustainability to inform investment decisions," the ISSB said. "And for the first time, the



standards create a common language for disclosing the effect of climate-related risks and opportunities on a company's prospects," it added.

Countries are adopting measures to achieve carbon neutrality by mid-century in the hopes of limiting the increase in global temperatures at 1.5 degrees

When you have lots of countries all making regulations and requirements at the same time, that's a bit of a nightmare scenario for companies. The whole idea of this is to hold firms accountable

KATE LEVICK | ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR FOR SUSTAINABLE FINANCE, E3G

Celsius in line with the 2015 Paris climate pact.

This is creating a patchwork of regulations for firms to comply with and the financial stakes in the transition are becoming more and more important, both for the firms and their shareholders. IFRS accounting standards are required in many coun-

tries, while many companies in other countries use them in order to better tap international finance.

The ISSB believes that a number of states, including Japan and Britain, will quickly make the new climate standard mandatory, and hopes China, which boasts the world's second-largest economy, will adopt it as well.

The measures also define how companies measure their direct and indirect emissions, using a method that is widely used but until now has not been mandatory - the Greenhouse Gas Protocol.

The standards also require companies to audit their emissions data and ensure their climate strategy is adopted by the top management.

INFOSYS SIGNS \$454MN DEAL WITH DANSKE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 26: IT major Infosys has bagged a digital transformation deal from Denmark-based Danske Bank estimated to be around \$454 million for five years, the company said Monday.



As part of the strategic collaboration with Danske Bank, Infosys will acquire Danske Bank's IT centre in India, which employs 1400 digitally skilled professionals

"Danske Bank, a leading Nordic bank, has selected Infosys as Strategic Partner to accelerate the bank's digital transformation initiatives with speed and scale. This collaboration will help Danske Bank achieve its strategic priorities towards better customer experiences, operational excellence, and a modernised technology landscape, powered by next-gen solutions," Infosys said.

Nordics is a strategic market for Infosys and this collaboration further enhances our commitment to the region.

"The estimated deal value is \$454 million for a period of 5 years with an option to renew for one additional year for a maximum of three times," the company said. Infosys said that it will acquire a 100 per cent stake in Danske Bank's IT centre in India in an all-cash deal for about ₹16 crore, according to a regulatory filing.

"We expect the transactions to be completed before the second quarter of the financial year 2024, subject to customary closing conditions," Infosys said.

NEW MILESTONE

Passive funds gain traction; May AUM surpasses ₹7L-cr

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 26: The popularity of passive funds like exchange-traded funds (ETFs) and index funds has been growing consistently, with assets under management surpassing the ₹7 lakh crore mark in May-end.

During the last five years, the asset base of the passive fund industry has increased with an annualised growth rate of 53 per cent. It rose from ₹80,755 crore as March 2018 to ₹6.75 lakh crore in March 2023, National Stock Exchange (NSE) said.

In addition, the number of passive funds available in the country has also climbed from 90 to 349 during the period.

After achieving ₹6.75 lakh crore, the AUM of the passive funds has further shot up to ₹7.17 lakh crore as May 31 this year, the exchange noted.

The financial year 2022-23 was a landmark year for the Indian passive funds industry as it registered record fund inflows of ₹1.55 lakh crore and 121 new passive products were launched during the period.

Overall, there are 356 unique numbers of products available in the market. This includes 228 equity products and 107 debt products with AUM of 4.93 lakh crore and 1.98 lakh crore, respectively.

Further, there are 13 gold and 8 silver products available in the market for investors.

A passive fund is targeted at tracking the returns of the benchmark index, on the other hand, in active investing, the fund manager is entirely involved in the investment process.

Further, the AUM of passive funds (ETF and Index Funds) tracking Nifty indices has crossed a new milestone of ₹5 lakh as of May 31, 2023. Besides, 251 passive funds were tracking 101 unique Nifty indices as of May.

Nifty indices-linked passive funds account for about 72 per cent of total equity and debt passive funds AUM and 75 per cent of the total number of equity and debt passive funds in the country.

SPECIAL ASSISTANCE FOR CAPEX

16 states get ₹56,415cr

As part of the 2023/24 Union Budget, the government had announced it would provide special assistance to states by extending 50-year interest-free loans worth ₹1.3 trillion during the ongoing financial year

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 26: The Ministry of Finance has approved capital investment proposals of ₹56,415 crore for 16 states in the current financial year under a special assistance scheme announced in the budget.

In order to boost capital spending by states, the 'Special Assistance to States for Capital Investment 2023-24' scheme was announced in the Union Budget



2023-24. Under the scheme, special assistance is being provided to the states in the form of a 50-year interest-free loan up to an overall sum of ₹1.3 lakh crore during the financial year 2023-24.

The Department of Expenditure has approved capital investment proposals of ₹56,415 crore to 16 states in the current financial year under the 'Special Assistance to States for Capital Investment 2023-24' scheme, a finance ministry state-

ment said. Capital investment projects in diverse sectors have been approved, including health, education, irrigation, water supply, power, roads, bridges, and railways.

Funds for meeting the state share of Jal Jeevan Mission and Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana have also been provided to the states under this scheme to enhance the pace of the projects in these sectors. The highest amount of assis-

stance totalling ₹9,640 crore will be given to Bihar. It will be followed by Madhya Pradesh at ₹7,850 crore and West Bengal at ₹7,523 crore. The lowest allocation will go to Goa at ₹386 crore. It will be followed by ₹388 crore to Sikkim and ₹399 crore to Mizoram.

A similar scheme titled 'Special Assistance to States for Capital Investment for 2022-23' was also executed by the finance ministry in the last financial year. Under the scheme, capital investment proposals of ₹95,147.19 crore were approved and an amount of ₹81,195.35 crore was released to the states in the last financial year.

The scheme for financial assistance to states for capital investment/expenditure, first instituted by the Ministry of Finance in 2020-21 in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, has given a very timely boost to capital spending by states.

BIZ BUZZ

BoM inaugurates Jeypore branch

BHUBANESWAR: Bank of Maharashtra, one of the leading public sector banks inaugurated its Jeypore branch near Hanuman Temple, bye-pass road, NH-26, Jeypore, Koraput. The new office is the 44th branch in the state and second in Koraput district. It was inaugurated by OAS Sidharth Patnaik, Executive Officer, Jeypore Municipality, IPS Harisha BC, SDPO, Jeypore Division was the guest of honour for the inauguration. Sanjib Kumar Dash, Deputy Zonal Manager, Bhubaneswar Zone, Kalla Srinu, Branch Manager, Jeypore branch along with customers were present on this occasion.



Canara holds outreach programme



BHUBANESWAR: Under the leadership of Jagdish Chander, General Manager & Circle Head, Canara Bank Bhubaneswar Circle, the bank has organised customer outreach programme this weekend. All Canara Bank employees from circle office, regional office and branches were on the street at the customer doorsteps to bring awareness about banking products and benefits. The focus was to reach out to the customers for products under MSME/agri, corporates, housing loan, vehicle loan, education loans, reaching builders, vehicle dealers and educational institutions. Customers were informed about bank's easier terms and lowest RoI on HL, VL and lower RoI under Vidya Turant scheme.

Flexible batteries, designer phages among top-10 emerging techs

The technologies analysed for WEF's 'Top ten emerging technologies report 2023' were those promising major benefits to societies and economies, as also those considered to be disruptive, attractive to investors and researchers, and expected to have achieved considerable scale within five years

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 26: A new type of AI capable of generating new and original content, designer phages, flexible batteries and sustainable aviation fuel are among the technologies poised to have the most positive impact on the world in the next 3-5 years, the WEF said on Monday.

Listing the top ten such emerging technologies, the WEF said the list also includes wearable plant sensors, metaverse for mental health, spatial omics, flexible neural electronics, sustainable computing and AI-facilitated healthcare.

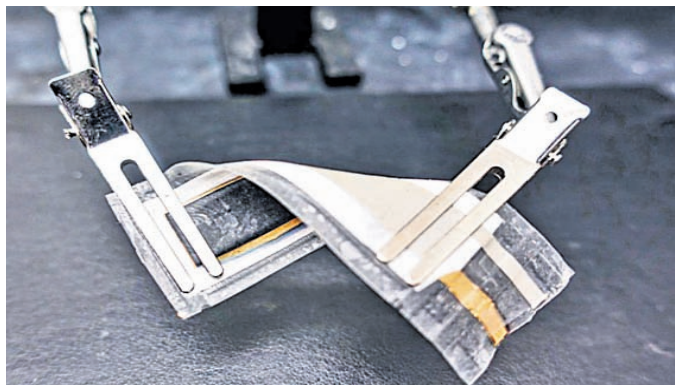
The WEF's 'Top ten emerging technologies report 2023' assessed how each technology will impact people, the planet, prosperity, industry and equity and

was produced in collaboration with Frontiers, a publisher of peer-reviewed, open-access, scientific journals.

Since the first edition in 2011, the report has identified little-known technologies that went on to have a global impact. These include genomic vaccines, featured in the 2016 report and later became the technology underpinning most Covid-19 vaccines, and AI-led molecular design, featured on the 2018 list, two years before the first AI-discovered drugs entered clinical trials.

Talking about the selected top ten, the WEF said standard rigid batteries may soon be a thing of the past as thin, flexible batteries - made of lightweight materials that can be twisted, bent and stretched - reach the market.

This new generation of battery



technology - expected to hit a market value of \$240 million by 2027 - has applications across medical wearables, biomedical sensors, flexible displays and smartwatches.

On generative AI, it said this new type of AI capable of generating new and original con-

tent by learning from large datasets that was catapulted into public dialogue at the end of 2022 with the public release of ChatGPT.

Evolving rapidly, generative AI is set to disrupt multiple industries, with applications in education, research and beyond, the

WEF said.

On sustainable aviation fuel, the report said with 2-3 per cent of annual global CO2 emissions coming from aviation, and no sign of long-haul electric flights, this fuel produced from biological (such as biomass) and non-biological (like CO2) sources could be the answer to decarbonize the aviation industry in the short to medium term.

On designer phages, the report said 'phages' are viruses that selectively infect specific types of bacteria.

Equipped with increasingly sophisticated genetic engineering tools, scientists can now re-programme phages to infect the bacteria of their choosing, allowing them to target one type of bacteria in a complex community of co-existing types of bacteria such as in plant, animal

and human microbiomes.

Though many of the near-term applications will be in research, there are signs these 'designer' phages could eventually be used to treat microbiome-associated diseases or eliminate dangerous bacteria in food supply chains.

Also, responding to the growing mental health crisis, product developers are starting to build shared virtual spaces to improve mental health.

"Video games are already being used to treat depression and anxiety and VR-enabled meditation is on the rise. Combined with next-generation wearables that allow the user to feel touch and or respond to the user's emotional state, the future metaverse could be ripe for improving mental health," the WEF said.

BLUE TIGERS TAKE ON FORMIDABLE KUWAIT IN THEIR LAST LEAGUE MATCH OF THE SAFF CHAMPIONSHIPS

Stern test awaits India



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, June 26: Already through to the semifinals, India will face their sternest test in the SAFF Championship football when they face formidable Kuwait in their last league match here Tuesday.

With six points from two wins, the same as India, Kuwait have also entered the semifinals and Tuesday's match at the Sree Kanteerava Stadium will decide the Group A winner.

Pakistan and Nepal face each other in the other match of the day, which has been rendered inconsequential as both the sides are already out of contention for the semifinals after losing their two earlier matches.

India had brushed aside Pakistan 4-0 but had to work hard in their 2-0 win over Nepal. Their defence looks in fine fet-

tle having managed a clean sheet for a record eight successive matches.

However, the midfield and frontline will have to perform a notch higher against a strong side like Kuwait. India had struggled for more than an hour to penetrate Nepal defence, and Kuwait could pose even taller hurdles with a much more organised and experienced defence.

India's primary weapon for finding goals still remains the talismanic Sunil Chhetri, who struck a hat-trick against Pakistan and then opened the scoring against Nepal. It was just an understatement when Sahal Abdul Samad said other players, including himself, need to find the target more often than not to take the burden off Chhetri.

It is imperative for India to find multiple goal-scorers ahead of playing against fancied op-

MATCH SCHEDULE

Pakistan vs Nepal 3:30 pm
India vs Kuwait 7:30 pm

Telecast: DD Sports

ponents as they will hardly give any wriggle room for Chhetri.

"Every aspect (of the game) has room for improvement. It's a possession game, keep the ball as much as we can and score the goals. We have a fantastic player who scores goals for us," Sahal had said. "The coach asked us to change that, and we need to start scoring. Not just Sunil (Chhetri) bhai."

On the other hand, Kuwait, who enjoy a 2-1 head-to-head record against India, have so far dished out a very disciplined game in the tournament. They were authoritative while script-

ing 3-1 and 4-0 victories over Nepal and Pakistan respectively.

They would want to continue in the same vein against India, despite taking time to acclimatise with the conditions here. It will also put them in a good frame of mind ahead of the semifinals.

"We sometimes play well, but our ball possession can get better. Before coming here, we played difficult matches with African teams," said Kuwait head coach Rui Bento. "It is very difficult to play in this weather, because the humidity is very high. But I have to congratulate our players for the previous two matches."

This is the first time India are facing Kuwait since an international friendly in November 2010. The two teams have undergone layers of transformation in the interim, and they would not want to settle for anything less than a win.

Gundogan joins Barca for free

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Barcelona, June 26: Ilkay Gundogan ended his trophy-laden seven-year stay with Manchester City by agreeing to join Barcelona on a free transfer Monday.

The Germany midfielder's last act as a City player — and as the team's captain — was to lift the Champions League trophy, which completed a treble of major titles for the English club.

Now, he is heading to Spain on a two-year contract for a new experience, even though Pep Guardiola wanted to keep the 32-year-old Gundogan — the first signing of the City manager's era from 2016.

"This club made me realize all my dreams and I will forever be thankful for this opportunity," Gundogan said. "I will carry City always in my heart. Once a blue, always a blue."

Having missed out on securing the return of Lionel Messi, Barcelona made the signing of Gundogan a priority to add some experience to a midfield already containing youngsters Pedri González and Gavi Páez, two of its pillars going forward, but no longer including veteran leader Sergi Busquets, who is leaving the club.

Frenkie de Jong also played an important role last season for Barcelona coach Xavi Hernández, despite efforts by the club to sell him in the off-season of 2022. Barcelona has set Gundogan's buyout clause at 400 million euros (about USD 435 million).

In a statement, the Spanish champions described their latest signing as a player "who reads the game to perfection" and "one of the world's best midfielders of the last decade or so."

Gundogan's arrival comes while debt-ridden Barcelona is still struggling to meet the Spanish league's financial

rules. Only recently was it able to find a way to officially register Gavi as a first-team player. It is widely expected that the club will need to sell players to reduce its expenses, and the addition of Gundogan will only add to that burden unless compensated by exits.

While Barcelona sold off part of its future television revenues and other assets to have the cash necessary to sign Robert Lewandowski and other players last year, its financial problems have increasingly forced the club to find free agents who want to come to Spain.

Last year, the team picked up current players Andreas Christensen, Marcos Alonso and Franck Kessie on free transfers, while other free agents like Memphis Depay have come and gone in recent years.

City was reportedly only offering Gundogan a one-year deal, whereas he wanted a longer contract for some security for his family.

He will go down as a City great, not just for being the team's captain in its greatest ever season but because of some of the crucial goals he scored and performances he delivered in the midfield, where he could play box-to-box, as an anchorman or — in his favored role — as a player supporting the striker.

No goals were more important than the two he scored to complete City's late comeback from 2-0 down to Aston Villa on the final day of the 2021-22 season, winning the team another league title.

After joining from Borussia Dortmund, where he was a Bundesliga champion in 2012, Gundogan won five Premier League titles, two FA Cups, four English League Cups and the Champions League with City. Gundogan now arrives at a club that won the Spanish league title last season but failed for a second straight campaign to move past the group phase of the Champions League.



Yin second Chinese woman to bag a Major



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Springfield (New Jersey), June 26: Becoming the second woman from China to win a major championship left Ruoning Yin in awe, even an hour after being handed the Women's PGA Championship trophy at Baltusrol.

"When I was walking to this tent, I just said: Oh, wow, major winner!" It's amazing. It's just unreal," Yin said Sunday.

Yin made a birdie putt from about 10 feet on the final hole to beat Yuka Saso by one stroke. The 20-year-old closed with a 4-under 67 to finish at 8-under 276 and take a place in Chinese sports history next to Shanshan Feng.

"I would say she's definitely the goal that I'm chasing," Yin said. "But I think she is the person who inspired me the most."

Feng, now national golf coach in China, won 23 events worldwide, including 10 on the LPGA Tour. Yin wasn't even playing golf when Feng won this event — then known as the LPGA Championship — in 2012.

She was 9 years old and didn't take up the game for another 18 months. Her main sport was basketball and she idolized Stephen Curry, but her shorter stature led her to turn to golf.

Yin has really turned it on the past two years. She picked up her first LPGA Tour win earlier this year in Los Angeles and now is the third player to win twice this season, joining Lilia Vu and World No.1 Jin Young Ko. This came with a USD 1.5 million paycheck.

Yin earned it with her fourth birdie on a bogey-free day. After Saso made birdie ahead of her on

the par-5 18th hole to move into a tie for the lead, Yin found the rough with her tee shot, then hit her third shot into an ideal spot and curled in the right-to-left breaking putt, pumping her fist after it dropped.

Rose Zhang, who won in her professional debut three weeks ago, also in New Jersey, made a charge with a final-round 67 and finished in a tie for eighth, three shots back.

Saso, the US Women's Open champion in 2021, shot 66. The championship had a mid-round delay of nearly two hours because of severe weather, and Yin made three of her birdies after the re-start.

Saso, from Japan, thought she had blown her chance to win when she missed a 10-foot birdie attempt to tie the lead at No.17. She got up-and-down from a greenside bunker to birdie the final hole.

Xiyu Lin, who either led or shared the lead during most of her back nine, found the water with her drive on the 18th and made bogey to shoot 67 and finish two shots back alongside Carlota Ciganda (64), Anna Nordqvist (65), Megan Khang (67) and Stephanie Meadow (70).

Lin, also from China, rents a house in Florida to Yin and has joked that she is going to raise the rent. Yin was asked about it after winning.

Leona Maguire, who won last week and led after the second and third rounds, shot 74, ending a run of eight straight rounds in the 60s. Seeking to become the first woman from Ireland to win a major, she finished four shots back.

CLAIMS AGAINST SARFARAZ QUASHED

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 26: Sarfaraz Khan's omission from the Indian team has been linked to fitness and disciplinary issues but sources in Mumbai cricket insisted that there was no truth in the claims.

While it is perceived in BCCI circle that Sarfaraz needs to work on his fitness and also be a bit more disciplined both on and off the field, people associated with Mumbai cricket defended the middle-order batter.

Sarfaraz's gesture of pointing finger towards the dressing room after scoring a crucial hundred against Delhi in the previous season was not appreciated. It was perceived as a dig at one of the selectors watching the match.

"Sarfaraz's celebration during a Ranji match in Delhi was meant for his teammates and coach Amol Mjumdar, who had doffed his hat. The selector present was Salil Ankola and not Chetan Sharma. Sarfaraz took the team out of pressure situation and the celebration was one of relief," a

source close to cricketer told PTI Monday.

"Is it even wrong to be exalted in your celebration and that too when you are pointing towards your own dressing room," the source said.

There was also an incident where apparently MP coach Chandrakant Pandit was not happy with his attitude but the source said that Pandit always has been affectionate towards him.

"Chandu sir treats him like a son. He has always had good things to say about him and knows him since he was 14 years old. He would never be angry on Sarfaraz," the source said.

People close to Sarfaraz do want to know why he has been ignored in the Indian

team despite scoring heavily.

The current Indian team has a fitness criteria of 16.5 and he has cleared it and as far as cricketing fitness goes, he has at times batted for two days and fielded for another two days.



SARFARAZ HAS NEVER BEEN DISRESPECTFUL TOWARDS ANYONE: SOURCE CLOSE TO PLAYER

NEWS IN BRIEF

Magnificent show

BERLIN: India ended their Special Olympics World Games campaign with a whopping 202 medals, including 76 gold, with the last pair of yellow metal coming from athletics here. The Indian athletes bagged six medals from the track events (2 gold, 3 silver, 1 bronze) on the concluding day on Sunday with Aanchal Goyal (400m, Level B Female) and Ravimathi Arumugam (400m, Level C Female) standing on top of the podium. Saket Kundu, who had earlier grabbed a silver medal in the mini javelin Level B, also won a bronze in the Level B 400m race, a rare double in track and field. India secured 76 gold, 75 silver and 51 bronze medals in the global multi-sport spectacle that celebrates unity, diversity and special skills among people with intellectual disabilities.

Oz eves triumph

NOTTINGHAM: England's five remaining wickets fell on the final morning of the one-off women's Ashes test and Australia seized the advantage in the multi-format series with an 89-run victory Monday. England resumed their second innings on 116/5 in pursuit of a winning target of 268 on the last day at Trent Bridge. England collapsed to 178 all out despite 54 from Danni Wyatt. Off-spinner Ashleigh Gardner's 8/66 saw her walk away with a 12-wicket haul as Australia collected four points ahead of the ODI and T20I games. England will have to win five of the six white-ball contests against the ODI and T20 world champions to retrieve the urn for the first time since 2015. Sophie Ecclestone took a 10-wicket haul for England.

Jhulan, Knight, Morgan join MCC WCC

LONDON: Legendary Indian woman cricketer Jhulan Goswami and two English players in Heather Knight and Eoin Morgan have joined the MCC World Cricket Committee (WCC) ahead of its meeting at the Lord's, the club said Monday. Besides Jhulan, England women's team skipper Knight and 2019 ODI World Cup winning captain Morgan too have joined the WCC, which is an independent body comprised of current and former international cricketers, umpires, and officials from across the world. Often regarded as one of the fastest bowlers in the women's game, Goswami retired from international cricket last year, and fittingly her final appearance was at Lord's in the ODI against England, where she was given a guard of honour. The seamer enjoyed a career spanning two decades, taking over 300 wickets in white-ball cricket across 272 appearances, as well 44 wickets in 12 Test matches. She was made an Honorary Life Member of MCC in April this year. The WCC will meet Monday and Tuesday at Lord's ahead of the second Ashes Test between England and Australia, with various outputs from the meeting to be communicated after the conclusion of the match.

CWC Trophy Tour launched in 'stratospheric' fashion

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dubai, June 26: The ICC Men's ODI World Cup Trophy Tour 2023 has been launched on a stratospheric scale, giving fans around the world a unique opportunity to interact with the coveted trophy, ahead of the marquee event in India later this year.

The Tour was launched in spectacular fashion, with the Trophy being launched into the stratosphere — 120,000 feet above the earth — before making a stunning landing at the Narendra Modi Cricket Stadium in Ahmedabad.

This was achieved after the trophy was attached to a bespoke stratospheric balloon, and some stunning shots were captured of the trophy sitting on the edge

of the Earth's atmosphere from 4k cameras.

The 2023 edition of the Trophy Tour will be the biggest by far, giving the fans a chance to connect with the coveted piece of silverware in various countries and cities around the globe.

Starting June 27, the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup Trophy will travel to 18 countries around the world, including Kuwait, Bahrain, Malaysia, USA, Nigeria, Uganda, France, Italy, the United States of America and the host country India, according to an ICC release.

Through innovative activations and events in different countries, the Trophy Tour will provide a chance to one million fans to have their own personal interactions with the coveted piece of silverware.



"The ICC Men's Cricket World Cup Trophy Tour is an important milestone in the countdown to what will be the biggest ICC Men's Cricket World Cup ever," ICC Chief Executive Geoff Allardice said.

"This Tour will see the iconic silverware meet heads of states, launch community initiatives

and support cricket development programmes in addition to visiting some of the most iconic landmarks around the globe.

"Cricket has more than a billion fans and we want to give as many people as possible the opportunity to get up close to this famous trophy that has been held aloft by some of the great-

est legends of our sport."

BCCI secretary Jay Shah added, "Cricket unites India like no other sport and excitement is building across the country as we prepare to host the 10 best teams in the world over six weeks of heart-stopping cricket.

"As we countdown to the World Cup, the Trophy Tour is a fantastic chance for fans to be part of the event wherever they are. The Tour will travel extensively across India and seek to inspire communities to share the excitement of cricket's greatest spectacle, while providing an opportunity to showcase iconic venues, cities and landmarks throughout the country."

The Trophy Tour will begin June 27 in India, travel around the globe and then return to the host nation September 4.