



## PROUD INDIAN

Actor Vaani Kapoor says, she always aspires to showcase the best of India to the world at her foreign tours

LEISURE P2



## FRANCE PROTESTS EASE

President Emmanuel Macron will meet the leaders of parliament as protests in France appear to be easing

INTERNATIONAL P10



## TITLE ON THE LINE

India look for their ninth SAFF Championship football tournament title when they take on Kuwait in the final today

SPORTS P12

### SHORT TAKES

#### UFO seen over PM residence?

**New Delhi:** An "unidentified flying object" was reportedly seen over the Prime Minister's residence here in central Delhi Monday morning, police said. However, police have not found anything suspicious. A PCR call was received around 5am that a drone-like object was seen flying over the Prime Minister's residence, police said. However, police and other security agencies did not find anything suspicious, a senior officer said, adding that the Air Traffic Control (ATC) also did not find anything.

#### Sensex ends above historic 65K mark

**Mumbai:** Benchmark equity indices continued their rally Monday, with the BSE Sensex ending above the 65,000 mark for the first time ever, propelled by a rally in global equities and persistent foreign fund inflows. Hectic buying in index majors Reliance Industries, ITC and HDFC twins also added to the market momentum, traders said. Rallying for the fourth straight session, the 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 486.49 points or 0.75 per cent to settle at its all-time closing high of 65,205.05. During the day, it rallied 581.79 points or 0.89 per cent to its lifetime intra-day high of 65,300.35.



**VENTING ANGER:** West Bengal Pradesh Congress Committee (WBPC) activists protest at a vegetable market against skyrocketing prices of essential commodities in Kolkata, Monday

## CRS: Odisha train tragedy could have been averted

**Press Trust of India**  
**New Delhi, July 3:** A high-level inquiry has found "wrong signaling" to be the main reason for the Balasore train accident and flagged "lapses at multiple levels" in the signalling and telecommunication (S&T) department, but indicated the tragedy could have been averted if past red flags were reported. The independent inquiry report submitted by the Commission of Railway Safety (CRS) to the Railway Board said notwithstanding the lapses in signalling work, remedial actions could have been taken by the S&T staff if "repeated unusual behaviour" of switches connecting two parallel tracks were reported to them by the station manager of Bahanaga Bazar, the spot of the accident. The report also suggested that the non-supply of station-specific approved circuit diagram for the works to replace the electric lifting barrier at level crossing gate 94 at Bahanaga Bazar station was a "wrong step that led to wrong wiring". It said that a team of field supervisors modified the wiring diagram and failed to replicate it. The report also said that there was a similar incident May 16, 2022 at Bankranayabaz station in Kharagpur Division of South Eastern Railway, on account of wrong wiring and cable fault. "Had corrective measures been taken, after this incident, to address the issue of wrong wiring the accident at BNBR would not have taken place," the report said. The accident June 2 resulted in the deaths of 292 people and over 1000 were injured. The CRS report has also said that the initial response to such a disaster should be faster an advised the Railways to review the system of disaster-response in the zonal railways.

## Odisha Police to guard Similipal

**Post News Network**  
**Bhubaneswar, July 3:** The state government has deployed police personnel to provide protection to Similipal Tiger Reserve (STR) in Mayurbhanj district, as the protection assistants and non-gazetted forest officials are on a cease-work strike. The developments have come following the murder of two of their colleagues by poachers in the national park. While 30 armed police constables have already been deployed in 16 critical ranges, another 100 police personnel will be deployed there soon, said Regional Chief Conservator of Forests (RCCF) of STR Prakash Chand Gogineni, Monday. Mayurbhanj Superintendent of Police (SP) B. Gangadhar said two platoons of police force have been deployed in STR for search operation and patrolling. Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (PCCF)-wildlife, SK Popli said other forest officials from nearby ranges have also been mobilised to the STR. The non-gazetted forest officials have been in protest since June 19 over a 7-point charter of demands. They are on duty, but not conducting patrolling in the forest area. The officials have threatened to go on leave en masse from July 10, if their demands are not fulfilled. On the other hand, the protection assistants of STR have been on indefinite strike since July 2. Their demands include provision of bulletproof jackets, ₹30 lakh compensation to the kin of the deceased who died in the line of duty, remuneration against 24-hour duty, hike in salary and insurance benefits among others. PCCF Debidutta Biswal said the state government is positively considering their demands, which can be fulfilled immediately. He again appealed to the protesting forest officials to withdraw their protest and join duty. On protection of forest and wildlife, the PCCF said the DFOs have been asked to take action against the field officials, if the safety and security of the forest and wildlife was compromised anywhere. Meanwhile, the police Monday unearthed an illegal arms manufacturing unit in Mayurbhanj district during a special search operation, a top police official said. The police also arrested a man in this connection and charged him with supplying country-made guns to poachers. A country-made gun along with several equipment required to manufacture guns was seized during the operation in Bhejidiha village under Mahuldiha police station, Mayurbhanj Superintendent of Police B Gangadhar said. In another house of the village, the police found 110 pangolin scales, the SP said. The owner of the house, who is allegedly a poacher, managed to escape. Stating that the operation was launched in the wake of poachers killing two forest officials in Similipal National Park, the SP warned the villagers to surrender all illegal weapons in their possession by July 31. Otherwise, strong action will be taken against them, he said.



- The forest officials have threatened to go on leave en masse from July 10, if their demands are not fulfilled
- Just 30 armed police constables deployed in 16 critical ranges, while another 100 police personnel will be deployed soon
- Police bust illegal arms manufacturing unit supplying country-made guns to poachers in Mayurbhanj district along with an arrest
- Villagers have been warned of strong action if they do not surrender all illegal weapons in their possession by July 31

## Woman jumps into well with 3 kids

**Post News Network**  
**Berhampur, July 3:** The tragic fallout of domestic dispute was in display as a woman tried to end her life after throwing her three children including two daughters and a son into a well at Lauguda village under Karadakana panchayat and Sheragada block in Ganjam district, Sunday night. The woman identified as Rashmita Goud, 32, wife of Balaram Goud and elder daughter Gunjan Goud, 10, were rescued from the well by the fire personnel and locals. However, her son Ayush Goud, 5, and younger daughter Alisha Goud, 1, drowned in the well and their bodies were subsequently re-

### 2 CHILDREN DEAD

covered by the fire services personnel. Rashmita and Gunjan sustained critical injuries in the incident and were admitted to Sheragada hospital. Rashmita was shifted to MKCG Medical College and Hospital in Berhampur after her condition deteriorated. As per reports, Balaram and Rashmita got married 12 years ago. They were soon blessed with two daughters and a son. As their condition was weak financially, it was very difficult for Balaram to meet the daily expenses of his family. In search of a job, Balaram went to Chennai leaving his family back in village. However, it was of no help as his financial condition did not improve even after he joined work in Chennai which in turn gave way to disputes in the family. An ugly spat broke out between the couple over telephone, Sunday night. Subsequently, Rashmita jumped into a well along with the three kids to commit suicide. On the other hand, acting on the complaint filed by Kora Gouda, father-in-law of Rashmita, at Sheragada police station, police have registered a case (no-345/23) under the sections 302 and 307 of IPC against her. A four-member police team has been guarding Rashmita at the hospital. The incident has sent showaves in the area.

## RIVAL NCP GROUPS GO ON SACKING SPREE IN MAHA

**Press Trust of India**  
**Mumbai, July 3:** A full-blown intra-party tussle broke out in the NCP as rival factions went on a sacking spree Monday to tighten their grip over the organisation and sought disqualification of lawmakers in each other's camps, a day after sudden induction of Ajit Pawar as deputy CM caused a political upheaval in Maharashtra. Soon after NCP president Sharad Pawar removed party working president Praful Patel and general secretary Sunil Tatkare for engaging in "anti-party" activities, the faction owing allegiance to Ajit Pawar hit back by sacking state unit president Jayant Patil and making new appointments. Patel appointed Ajit Pawar as the leader of the NCP legislature party. The tit for tat actions came a day after Ajit Pawar joined the Eknath Shinde-BJP government as deputy chief minister along with eight other NCP MLAs who were inducted as ministers. Sharad Pawar, in a tweet, said, "I, as the National President, of Nationalist Congress Party hereby order the removal of the names of Shri Sunil Tatkare and Shri Praful Patel from the Register of Members of NCP Party for anti-party activities." He tagged Patel, a Rajya Sabha MP who was appointed as NCP working president last month, and Tatkare in his tweet.

## LAND-FOR-JOBS SCAM CBI files chargesheet against Yadav family

**Press Trust of India**  
**New Delhi, July 3:** The CBI has filed a chargesheet against Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Tejashwi Yadav, his father and former railways minister Lalu Prasad and mother and former chief minister Rabri Devi in connection with the land-for-jobs scam case, officials said Monday. The chargesheet, which also names 14 others, is the second charge sheet in the case. It has been filed on the basis of documents and evidence that surfaced after the first charge sheet was submitted in the case, they said. Besides members of the Yadav clan, the CBI has also named AK Infosystems and several middlemen in the case, they said. The chargesheet was filed in a special CBI court. The officials said the second chargesheet was filed as the alleged roles of the accused could not be completed by the time the initial report was filed. The CBI has alleged that favourite candidates were appointed in the railways in violation of norms and procedures, without any advertisement or public notice. During Lalu Prasad's tenure as minister in the UPA government from 2004 to 2009, The agency claims that substitutes from Patna were appointed in various zonal railways located in Mumbai, Jabalpur, Kolkata, Jaipur and Hazipur. As a quid pro quo, the candidates, either directly or through their immediate family members, allegedly sold land to Lalu Prasad's family members at highly-discounted rates.

### IRREGULAR by MANJUL



No, not actor. I'm going to Mumbai to become deputy CM

### MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VAIATION
SENSEX	65205.05 ↑ 486.49
NIFTY	19322.55 ↑ 133.50
DOLLAR	82.06 ↑ ₹0.07
EURO	89.36 ↑ ₹0.35
GOLD	₹58,450 ↑ ₹239
SILVER	₹69,473 ↑ ₹538

### WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
MAX	37.2°C	34.6°C
MIN	28.4°C	28.4°C
Humidity	78%	82%
Rainfall	0.7mm	5.2mm

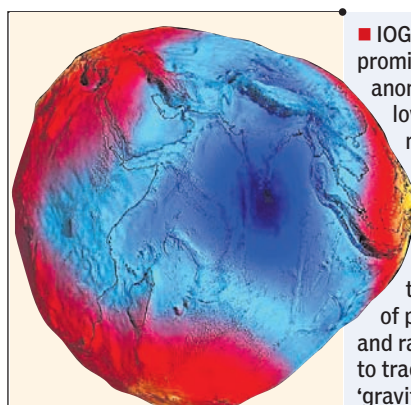
Forecast: Light to moderate rain

## Origin of Indian Ocean's giant gravity hole revealed

**THE 'GRAVITY HOLE', A COLOSSAL AND ENIGMATIC PHENOMENON IN INDIAN OCEAN, HAS INTRIGUED SCIENTISTS FOR LONG**

**Indo-Asian News Service**  
**New Delhi, July 3:** A team of Indian scientists has identified what caused the giant "gravity hole" covering more than three million square kilometres in the Indian Ocean. Known as the Indian Ocean geoid low (IOGL), it is Earth's most prominent gravitational anomaly, where the gravity is lower than average, thus making the sea level there 106-metre lower than the global average. The study published in Geophysical Research Letters, showed that the IOGL is a consequence of mass deficit inside the Earth's mantle beneath the Indian Ocean.

Previous studies on the gravity anomaly focused solely on its present-day state, without delving deeper into its origins. However, this new research utilised over a dozen computer models to provide insights into the ancient forces that shaped the IOGL. Scientists from the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) in Bangalore reconstructed the last 140 million years of plate tectonic movements and ran computer simulations to trace the origin of the "gravity hole". They found that some sections of tectonic plates have sunk through the mantle under Africa, generating plumes from under the Indian Ocean.



"Here we assimilate plate reconstruction in global mantle convection models starting from 140 Ma and show that sinking

slabs from the long-lost Tethys sea, which once separated the supercontinents of Gondwanaland and Laurasia, perturbed the African Large Low Shear Velocity province and generated plumes beneath the Indian Ocean, which led to the formation of this negative geoid anomaly," the scientists wrote in the study. They explained that the interplay of these processes beneath the Indian Ocean might have determined the position and shape of the IOGL. "These plumes, along with the mantle structure in the vicinity of the geoid low, are responsible for the formation of this negative geoid anomaly," lead author Debanjan Pal and Atreyee Ghosh from the IISc wrote in the study. According to the scientists, the IOGL likely took its present

shape about 20 million years ago, when the plumes started to spread within the upper mantle. And it will probably last as long as mantle material flows. "When the temperature anomalies causing this low geoid shift out of the present-day location, the geoid low will start to dissipate," Pal was quoted as saying to the Scientific American. As further research explores the secrets hidden within the depths, scientists hope to unravel more mysteries surrounding this awe-inspiring phenomenon. The "gravity hole" serves as a reminder that the Earth still holds many enigmas, waiting to be explored and understood.

IOGL is Earth's most prominent gravitational anomaly, where the gravity is lower than average, thus making the sea level there 106-metre lower than the global average. Scientists from IISc, Bangalore reconstructed the last 140 million years of plate tectonic movements and ran computer simulations to trace the origin of the 'gravity hole'.

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# leisure



## KEKE PALMER EXPRESSES GREAT DISTRUST IN US GOVERNMENT

American actress-singer Keke Palmer, who is known for her role in the film *Akeelah and the Bee*, took to social media to express her great distrust in the current United States administration, claiming that the way things are being run just 'isn't working'.

## KHLOE KARDASHIAN CAN'T WAIT TO BE IN HER 40S

Reality TV star Khloe Kardashian, who turned 39 last week, has described her 30s as 'the worst decade ever.' "I hate being in my 30s, like, it's the worst decade ever. And I cannot wait to be in my 40s," she said.



### FORTUNE FORECAST

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FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181

**ARIES**  
You have chosen to pay more attention to the voice of your inner self, and Ganesh approves of it. You crave for perfection in everything you do. You will be practical and rational. Ganesh says being a bit adventurous will help.

**TAURUS**  
Though this day appears to be like all other normal days it will be a very hectic one. Ganesh sees you buried under files and papers, trying hard to cope up with the overload, getting completely drained out and, possibly and falling sick. There is nothing wrong in staying active and occupied. But overdoing is bad strategy.

**GEMINI**  
You will feel that your personal life is much more important than your professional needs today. Therefore you will concentrate more on your family members and their needs. It is a day filled with joy and happiness, says Ganesh.

**CANCER**  
You will be in high spirits and shall be feeling energetic today. Common sense will prevail at work, and as you get on with the day, better things will follow. Ganesh predicts that you will be showered with love and affection by your lover. Now, what can be better than this! Have fun.

**LEO**  
It is an auspicious time to undertake journey related to business. Religious and educational pursuits will be amply rewarded. The later half of the day will see you divert your attentions in the correct direction to resolve some issues. You will have to take on a lot of mental labour today, says Ganesh.

**VIRGO**  
Ganesh predicts that your leadership qualities may come to the fore today, and you may control the work agenda. You may go window-shopping in the afternoon, checking out on gifts that you want to give to your beloved. And in the evening, you will spend the time discussing your long-term goals with a close member of your family or a good friend.

**LIBRA**  
Ganesh says that officials and colleagues will be very impressed with your working capacity and your skills and you will do your work satisfactorily with your never give up ability and your intelligence. You will be able to meet and get along with unknown people and circumstances. Around evening you may get impatient and edgy.

**SCORPIO**  
A systematic organiser and a perfect planner, that's what you are, when it comes to work. According to Ganesh, this attitude of yours would help you develop fondness towards your work. You may even have the knack of solving problems and hurdles in the professional field.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
Blood will be thicker than water today. And your relatives - near and distant - will bring much pleasure today. But Ganesh portends you being at loggerheads with your colleagues. However, progress will not elude you today.

**CAPRICORN**  
If you do something, you put your heart and soul into it. Such dedication gets you the best. You tend to exert your energies though, says Ganesh, so you will need to learn the art of delegation. It will not only take load off your shoulders but also enhance the quality of final output.

**AQUARIUS**  
Your curiosity will work wonders for you today. You have spent a lot of time and energy for planning your future, be it a business venture or higher studies, and now you will start executing those plans, foresees Ganesh. Keep working hard, you will surely get the rewards for your efforts.

**PISCES**  
You will be ready to lay down your life for your near and dear ones today. Even if you don't do anything so melodramatic, you will end up sacrificing your comfort to benefit someone close to you. It is best to postpone important decisions for a day, or three. Do not indulge in taking risks, for they are unlikely to pay off, says Ganesh.

## 'Film industry judges a lot'

**Mumbai:** Actress Ameesha Patel is currently promoting *Gadar 2*. Though she didn't belong to a film family, she did come from a privileged side with her grandfather being a barrister. Early on, she was also judged for travelling in her Mercedes, wearing luxury jewellery and more.

When asked if a male star would have been judged the same way she was, Ameesha Patel shared, "If I belonged to a film family and I came in Mercedes and my hero was in Maruti 1000, I wouldn't have been judged. In fact, for *Gadar*, when I walked into Anil Sharma's office, he to date tells everybody 'You know, I never thought she'd work hard. She'd arrive in a Mercedes, wear designer clothes, and don big solitaires Rs. 1-2 crore worth on her hands. I wondered if she'd work hard at all. She doesn't have fire in her. I was surprised she used to work harder than me.' We make the mistake of judging a book by its cover and we shouldn't do that. This industry definitely does that a lot and that's sad."

Ameesha Patel is now gearing up for the release of *Gadar 2*, a sequel to *Gadar: Ek Prem Katha*.



## Angad: Lust is as important as love for a healthy marriage

**Mumbai:** Actor Angad Bedi, who is garnering a lot of positive response for his streaming anthology *Lust Stories 2*, feels that for a successful marriage, lust also plays an important role along with love.

In his segment *Made For Each Other*, a young couple, played by Angad and Mrunal Thakur, is suggested to go on a 'test drive' for sexual compatibility by Neena Gupta, who plays cool 'daadi' to Mrunal.

Angad feels sexual compatibility is a very important point that is hardly spoken about.

Talking about the same, the actor said, "For a healthy marriage, along with love, it is also important to have healthy sexual compatibility. In today's time and age, we still hesitate to speak about it, but there are so many marriages which have fallen apart because of sexual incompatibility."

He added, "In our society, lust is a very misunderstood word, but it is an important part that strengthens the bond between husband and wife."

Angad's segment *Made For Each Other* is directed by R Balki. The anthology is currently available to stream on Netflix.

**Vaani aspires to showcase best of India to the world**

**Mumbai:** Actress Vaani Kapoor, who is known for roles in films *Shudh Desi Romance*, *Chandigarh Kare Aashiqui* and *War*, will be embarking on two global tours which include a three-week US trip and concerts in UK where she will be performing alongside Hrithik Roshan.

She said: "It has been a whirlwind year for me as I did my maiden USA tour early this year, I'm doing a UK tour with my co-star Hrithik Roshan now."

She further added: "I'm a proud member of the artiste community of India who constantly aspires to showcase the best of India to the world. So, I always look forward to doing global tours where I could take our loved Hindi films and its music to that audience."

Apart from her job as an actress, Vaani Kapoor is also a self-taught dancer who has cemented her position as one of the best dancers of the industry through her chart-busting songs like *Ghungroo*, *Nashe Si Chadh Gayi* and *Ude Dil Befikre*, among others.

Talking about her love of performing on stage she said: "I have always loved performing and entertaining audiences either through my movies or through my on stage performances. I want to always give my 100 per cent either on screen or on stage and I have been fortunate enough to receive a lot of love for my efforts."

**The 'War' actress will be embarking on a three-week US trip and performing alongside Hrithik Roshan in the UK**



## Nikki to venture into OTT space

**Mumbai:** Actress Nikki Tamboli, who appeared in *Bigg Boss Season 14* and *Khatron Ke Khiladi*, is all set to make her OTT debut with the streaming film *Puppy Love* in the lead role. She plays a Punjabi NRI in the film.

Talking about the film, she said: "I am extremely excited for *Puppy Love* as this film marks my entry into the OTT space. My Punjabi NRI character is something I am playing for the first time. It is going to give shivers and jitters to my fans and audiences, and I am very much excited to see their reaction for the same."

She further mentioned: "It took me a lot of hopping and being impulsive, to get into the look of the character. I was always on the lookout for a suitable role for my debut and I think this is the perfect way to start this new phase of my life."

Directed by Hari Santosh, *Puppy Love* will showcase Nikki as the lead actress opposite actor Tanuj Virwani.

### PEANUTS



### CALVIN AND HOBBS

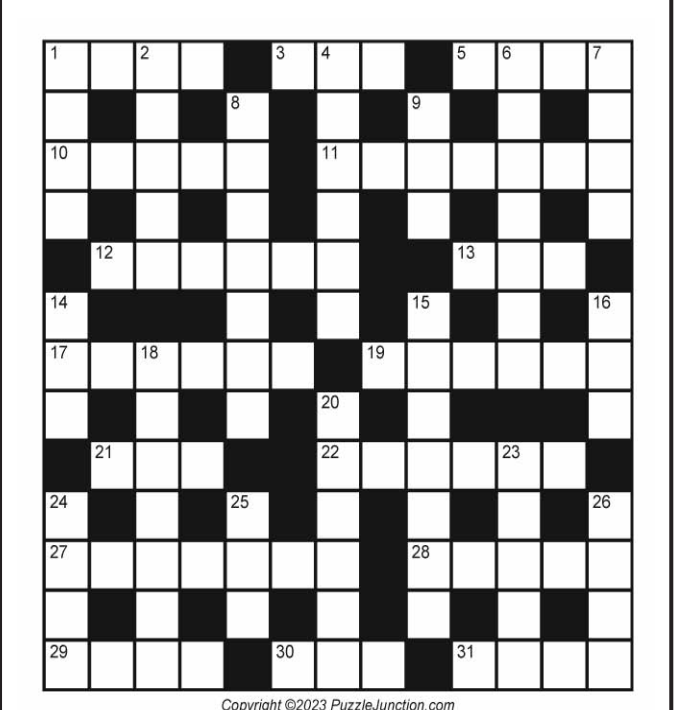


### BREVITY



### FUN post

### CROSSWORD



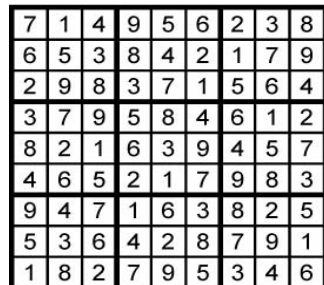
- Copyright © 2023 PuzzleJunction.com
- Across**
- 1 Extinct bird
  - 3 Auction unit
  - 5 Self-satisfied
  - 10 Trend
  - 11 Hot sauce
  - 12 Sushi condiment
  - 13 Beast of burden
  - 17 Apprentice
  - 19 Organ stop
  - 21 Coffee holder
  - 22 S.A. river
  - 27 Rattle
  - 28 Sang-froid
  - 29 Malt kiln
  - 30 Swedish shag rug
  - 31 Make a sweater
- Down**
- 1 Swimmer's action
  - 2 Article of faith
  - 4 Clothing ensemble
  - 6 War paint
  - 7 Rum drink
  - 8 Auto expense
  - 9 Subside
  - 14 Subsidy
  - 15 Full of fight
  - 16 Genteel affair
  - 18 Despots
  - 20 Napoleon locale
  - 23 Burger topper
  - 24 Martial art
  - 25 Circle segment
  - 26 Waistcoat

### 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

## SOARING PRICES

Women Congress workers sell tomatoes at Master Canteen Square in Bhubaneswar, Monday, in protest against skyrocketing prices of vegetables in the state



**FOR A CAUSE:** Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik with students after inauguration of Bhima Bhoi Govt Vocational Higher Secondary School in Unit III area of Bhubaneswar, Monday

## FILLIP TO JUDICIARY

# State gets 50 more paperless courts

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

**Cuttack, July 3:** Orissa High Court Chief Justice S Muralidhar, in presence of HC Artificial Intelligence and Information Technology (AI&IT) Committee chairman S Talapatra, inaugurated 50 paperless courts covering 23 districts of the state on digital mode, Monday.

The Chief Justice of India had inaugurated 34 paperless courts covering 30 districts of Odisha September 17, 2022.

During the National Conference on Digitization, Paperless Courts and e-Initiatives organised by the HC in Cuttack May 5 and 6 this year, Justice Muralidhar had pledged to open 100 paperless courts in Odisha within three months.

With this, the number of paperless courts in the state stands at 84.

Speaking on the occasion, the HC CJ said inauguration of 50 paperless courts is yet another milestone crossed by the Odisha judiciary. The HC has plans to unveil 50 more such courts within a month, he said.

Justice Muralidhar said master trainers and the technical team, headed by the Central Project Coordinator, have imparted training to judicial officers on paperless courts. He complimented the judiciary for taking the lead in adopting technology for functioning of courts.



Litigants and lawyers can file cases through e-filing 3.0 and the said cases shall be directly consumed by the courts

The e-filing module has integrated the payment of e-court fees which is not only economical but also environment friendly

There is also provision for serving summons through email to the defendants

Ganjam has become the first district in Odisha to have all the courts paperless

Pre-trial procedures can be accelerated by utilizing the aforesaid paperless modes

During trial, depositions of witnesses can be recorded in paperless mode and their signatures can be obtained digitally obviating the requirement of paper depositions

He said the Covid-19 pandemic has accelerated the use of technology in judiciary, and technology would change the way judicial officers approach their work.

Sharing his experience, Justice Muralidhar said, "Working in paperless court makes it much easier for the judge to access relevant documents in digital case records which is far more difficult in voluminous physical records. It leaves a positive impact on the mindset of the judge."

Citing the issue of digital divide among lawyers, the HC Chief Justice said free bookmarked softcopies of the paper books supplied by lawyers would

be provided to them which would be a great incentive for younger lawyers to get on to e-mode.

He emphasised on the impact of paperless court on the re-configuration of space and the whole architecture of the courts.

Thanking Odisha Computer Application Centre (OCAC) for the technical support, Justice Muralidhar said all the measures of digitisation, e-filing and paperless courts are to make access to justice more affordable, more efficient and more effective.

Members of the AI&IT Committee and Orissa HC judges were present during the inaugural occasion. District judges and judicial officers of the state joined the event through virtual mode.

# SC nixes plea against Samaleswari revamp

KULDEEP SINGH, OP

**New Delhi, July 3:** The Supreme Court Monday dismissed a petition challenging the rehabilitation and resettlement scheme for Samaleswari temple renovation plan in Sambalpur.

A two-judge bench of Justices BR Gavai and JB Pardiwala refused to interfere with the order passed by the Orissa High Court.

"We are not inclined to interfere with the impugned judgement and order passed by the High Court. The special leave petitions are dismissed accordingly," the bench said.

During the hearing, advocate

Sibo Sankar Mishra appeared for the Odisha government and opposed the special leave petition (SLP) filed against the Orissa High Court order. He submitted that the state government has decided to develop Maa Samaleswari Temple area into an attraction of unparalleled nature and deliver sustainable and inclusive development for the people of western Odisha. For implementation of Samaleswari Temple Area Management and Local Economic Initiative (SAMALEI), it was necessary to acquire private land and remove encroachment on government land to develop the area

**Petitioner Rakesh Suna had earlier pleaded in Orissa HC for quashing of the 'Rehabilitation and Resettlement scheme for SAMALEI Plan'**

around Samaleswari temple, he said, adding that ex gratia for the relocation of slum dwellers has also been envisaged in the Rehabilitation and Resettlement (R&R) scheme.

Earlier January 31, the Orissa High Court had issued direction

to the Sambalpur Collector to consider the representation of the petitioner.

Petitioner Rakesh Suna had pleaded in the HC for quashing of the "Rehabilitation and Resettlement scheme for SAMALEI Plan" and seeking a direction to the state government "to formulate a new scheme for Rehabilitation and Resettlement of the petitioners in accordance with the provisions of the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013" (hereafter the '2013 Act').

# Disburse aid to Rengali dam displaced: Pradhan

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 3:** Senior BJP leader and Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan has urged Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik to disburse the compensation money to families displaced due to the Rengali dam project.

Writing to the CM, Pradhan said the dam which was built on the Brahmani river in 1980s is the second largest dam project in Odisha. Due to the project, the state's irrigation and hydro power generation potential has increased substantially.

Though four decades have passed, the displaced people are still in distress. The 'Rengali Dam Basachyuta Surakhya Samiti', which was formed in 1997, is witness to this distressing situation, Pradhan said.

Between 1978 and 1984, about 13,000 families from 236 revenue villages were displaced for the irrigation project. Due to lack of proper rehabilitation and compensation, thousands of such families are in distress. Though several protests, hunger strikes, and demonstrations were held, the plight of these families has not been addressed yet, he said.



Between 1978 and 1984, about 13,000 families from 236 revenue villages were displaced for Rengali irrigation project

Due to lack of proper rehabilitation and compensation, thousands of such families are in distress

As per the instructions of the Chief Minister, in September 2010 the compensation amount required to pay the displaced families was estimated at Rs 152 crore. But regrettably, this money has not reached the victims till date, Pradhan said in his letter.

He has sought the intervention of the Chief Minister to provide land pattas to these families and accord revenue village status to the villages where they are staying now.

# Sarangi appointed director of OAVS

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 3:** In a minor reshuffle among bureaucrats, state government Monday appointed IAS officer Yamini Sarangi as state project director of Odisha Adarsha Vidyalaya Sangathan (OAVS).

The post of state project director, OAVS, is considered equivalent to the status and responsibility of additional secretary in the IAS cadre of the state, the government said in a notification.

Sarangi, a 2008-batch officer, is also allowed to remain in additional charge of the additional secretary to Finance department. IAS officer Sangram Keshari Mohapatra, who is now serving as project director of OAVS, is appointed additional secretary to School & Mass Education department.

Similarly, 2020-batch IAS officer Vedbhushan is appointed the commissioner of Sambalpur Municipal Corporation (SMC). The post of SMC commissioner is declared equivalent in status and responsibility to the post of under secretary provided in the IAS cadre of the state. Moreover, OAS officer and Finance department special secretary Nrusingh Charan Swain is transferred as Collector of Boudh.

# Vigilance unearths three more plots, ₹1.2 crore of OAS officer

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 3:** Vigilance sleuths Monday claimed to have found more assets belonging to former Nabarangpur additional sub-collector Prasanta Kumar Rout, who has been arrested on charges of possessing disproportionate assets (DA) worth over Rs 5 crore June 24 this year.

Vigilance sources said during interrogation of the tainted Odisha Administrative Service (OAS) officer, three more plots in the name of his spouse have been unearthed.

"Rout had confessed to have deposited Rs 1.2 crore in six benami accounts opened in the name of multiple individuals. Moreover, the OAS officer, who was given compulsory retirement by the state



government June 27, had also been maintaining a locker with UCO Bank's Bhadrak branch," said a senior Vigilance official.

The anti-corruption wing sleuths claimed to have recovered cash amounting to Rs 3,02,30,800 from Rout's residence in Bhubaneswar and Rs 77 lakh from his Nabarangpur residence during raids June 23.

The OAS officer was also found to have owned five plots, including four in Cuttack and Bhubaneswar, a 'benami' plot at Umerkote in Nabarangpur district, bank and insurance deposits amounting to over Rs 92.34 lakh, vehicles, jewellery and household articles worth over Rs 27.27 lakh.

A day later, Rout was arrested for possession of DA worth Rs 5,21,09,659 which is 506 per cent of his known sources of income.

Rout has been booked under various Sections of the Prevention of Corruption (Amendment) Act, 2018.

Soon after, the state government ordered compulsory retirement of Rout 'in line with its zero-tolerance policy towards corruption'.



DSPL-131

## HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE DEPARTMENT, ODISHA

### GUIDELINES ON PREVENTION OF VECTOR (MOSQUITO) BORNE DISEASES

Due to onset of monsoon rain across the state there is possibility of increase in mosquito breeding and spread of diseases like Malaria, Dengue, Japanese Encephalitis, etc. The following preventive measures may be taken to get rid of the above diseases.

- Drain out stagnant water from the vicinity atleast once a week.
- Clean the flower vase, cooler, water tank and defrost-collection-chamber of the freeze etc., weekly.
- Damage or displace the rejected container, bottle, old tyre, coconut cell, earthen pot & bamboo stumps.
- Keep your house premises clean.
- Use mosquito net regularly. It is better to use fine nets at window-sil to prevent mosquito entry.
- Wear full-sleeve dresses.
- Mosquito repellants may be used in need.
- In case of fever, shivering, pain in joint / muscle / eye, immediately test blood and get treated at the nearest health facility.

OIPR-10003/13/0075/2324

# 185 dengue cases recorded in state



Though the majority of the cases (more than 50 per cent) are from Khurda, 12 cases are from Jajpur, 10 from Balasore and the remaining are from the other districts

A total of 11,464 persons have been tested for the disease, out of them 185 have tested positive. During the corresponding period last year, 5,981 people were tested, out of whom 353 had come positive

Mayor Sulochana Das to halt and reverse progress of the vector-borne disease.

In a recent corporation meeting, BMC commissioner Vijay Amruta Kulange had directed all officials to take action towards the betterment of citizens' health. Emphasizing the need to raise awareness at the grassroots level, officials were instructed to educate residents about preventive measures and the activities they should avoid.

Under the supervision of the zonal deputy commissioner in each zone, along with the assistant commissioner, ward officers, sanitary inspectors, Swachh Sathi volunteers, sanitation supervisors, and anti-larvae workers, extensive monitoring was conducted throughout the wards.

The dedicated team engaged with each household, delivering awareness messages and seeking permission to identify and address potential breeding sites.

informing that standard operating procedure (SOP) has been issued for all districts as a precautionary measure.

"All medical colleges and the Capital Hospital have been instructed to keep beds, medicine and platelets stock ready for dealing with any kind of emergency. Adequate amount of medicines have been stocked up. So there is no reason for the people to worry, as the death percentage in dengue is around one per cent," he clarified.

Mishra further added that accumulation of rainwater and puddles during monsoon creates the perfect environment for mosquitoes to breed, so people should take precautionary steps and clean all those places.

Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) had organised a mass cleanliness drive in City Sunday, and an awareness campaign, with participation of

AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, July 3:** Like every year, with the arrival of monsoon, the state has witnessed a rise in dengue cases. As many as 185 cases have been registered in 16 districts, with Khurda, which hosts the Capital city, reporting 96 cases, informed Public Health director Niranjan Mishra here Monday.

Though the majority of the cases (more than 50 per cent) are from Khurda, 12 cases are from Jajpur, 10 from Balasore and the remaining are from the other districts. A total of 11,464 persons have been tested for the disease, out of them 185 have tested positive. During the corresponding period last year, 5,981 people were tested, out of whom 353 had come positive.

"Despite double the number of persons tested, the test positivity rate is very low," said Mishra,



**ENSURING GOOD HEALTH:** Dignitaries, including government chief whip Prasanta Kumar Muduli and Odisha University of Health Sciences vice-chancellor Dattaswar Hota, launch a souvenir at National Homeopathy Congress-2023 organised at Soochana Bhawan in Bhubaneswar, Monday

## Eviction of villagers in Bolangir: NHRC moved

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

**Bhubaneswar, July 3:** Environment activist and president of Lok Shakti Abhiyan Prafulla Samantara has written a letter to the chairperson of National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) seeking a direction to Bolangir district administration to stop eviction of villagers during rains.

He has also written to Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik requesting him to direct the Bolangir Collector to stop forced eviction of villagers of Dunguripali during rainy season. In the letter to NHRC, Samantara said people of 14 vil-



lages which face submergence owing to construction of a dam on Lower Suktel river in Bolangir district have been demanding fair and just compensation and rehabilitation before eviction. Without proper rehabilitation

and temporary camps with basic facilities, the district administration has started forceful eviction. Moreover, water is allowed to enter the dam though construction work is yet to be completed, he mentioned in the letter.

Schools are closed and transfer certificates (TCs) have been given to schoolchildren without making any provision for temporary schools, he added.

Samantara also said, "Where would the displaced families, their elderly members and children go since the rain has started? At present, the villagers of Gadasankar Dunguripali are in utter distress as water and

electricity have been disconnected while houses are being bulldozed."

This is inhuman treatment by the government and rights are being violated, he stated.

"Therefore, my appeal to your good office to direct the Bolangir district administration and also to the Chief Secretary of Odisha to stop eviction and allow villagers till they get proper and just rehabilitation. Flow of water to inundate the villages be stopped till the end of rain season," he mentioned.

Urgent action is need of the hour to save lives of the affected people, said the environment activist.

## 5T Secy reviews SCBMCH devpt



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 3:** Acting on the direction of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, Secretary to CM (GT) VK Pandian, Monday, reviewed the development work at SCB Medical College and Hospital (SCBMCH) in Cuttack.

The state government has decided to transform SCBMCH into an AIIMS Plus institution with world-class facilities.

Patnaik had approved the redevelopment plan which includes construction of new medical blocks, high-rise residential apartments for doctors, staffers and nurses, new hostel accommodation for students among other facilities. A new playground for SCBMCH is also proposed in the redevelopment plan.

The 5T Secretary also held discussions with officers concerned about the project.

## Laxmi Sagar Govt High School gets infra boost

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

**Bhubaneswar, July 3:** In collaboration with the state government's Mo School initiative, several non-profit organizations, including Round Table India (RTI), recently dedicated a newly-constructed block of four classrooms and two toilets blocks here at the Laxmi Sagar Government High School.

The other organizations that were part of this collaboration included: Ladies Circle India (LCI), Bhubaneswar Knights Round Table 230 (BKRT230) and Bhubaneswar Queens Ladies Circle 130 (BQLC130).

The school transformation is part of the Freedom Through Education (FTE) initiative, which aims to bridge the education gaps and create transformative changes in school infrastructure by constructing smart classrooms, toi-



lets and drinking water facilities.

"In the last decade, RTI & LCI have built one classroom a day, every day across India. The Mo School Abhiyan, a initiative by the state government has been instrumental in providing a great platform for individuals and organizations to contribute towards improving the infrastructure and quality of education in schools," said Anand Poddar, chairman of BKRT230, thanking the state government.

The newly constructed classroom and toilet blocks, representing more than just bricks

and mortar, signify a renewed commitment to nurturing the dreams and aspirations of these deserving children, added Poddar underscoring the profound impact of good infrastructure on education. MLA Ananta Narayan Jena said, "By investing in these classroom blocks, we are investing in the limitless potential of these children, enabling them to thrive academically and beyond." He thanked RTI and LCI for their effort in executing the project in record 85 days and urged them to take up more such initiatives in the City.

Amrita Kedia, chairperson of BQLC130, expressed immense pride in the project and said, "We firmly believe that education is the cornerstone of progress, and through initiatives like FTE, we strive to provide equal opportunities for all children to receive quality education."

## SK Mishra, new CGM of Nabard Odisha

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 3:** Sudhanshu K Mishra took charge as the chief general manager (CGM) of Nabard Odisha Regional Office here Monday. He has earlier served in head office and at other regional offices of Nabard.

Mishra also has experience in academia as a faculty at BIRD, Lucknow, and specialises in supervision, corporate governance, investment and treasury management and regulatory issues. Having worked on Central government projects for 'Short Term Cooperative Credit Structure and Revival of Handloom Sector,' he keeps an active interest in cooperatives. Prior to this posting, he was the Chief General Manager of Nabard, Himachal Pradesh Regional Office.



## ServiceNow to train SOA students in digital skills

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 3:** City based Siksha 'O' Anusandhan University (SOA) recently announced its partnership with ServiceNow, a leading digital workflow company, to train students in digital skills and improve their job prospects opening paths to employment. The programme will benefit 300 students every year and is part of a global skilling initiative called 'RiseUp with ServiceNow.'

The integrated curriculum, centered around training and certification on the ServiceNow platform, would enable students to pursue learning in a holistic way, which can result in greater intellectual curiosity, enhanced problem solving, critical thinking and higher understanding of digital skills while in the university.

Siksha 'O' Anusandhan vice chancellor Pradipta Kumar Nanda said, "We always believed



that industry collaborations are essential for developing research and qualified workforce, students should get an opportunity to work on pertinent technologies and problems either as interns or on design projects. We are pleased to collaborate with ServiceNow and integrate the curriculum through semester offerings, I am confident it would empower students to acquire ServiceNow platform skills, become job ready and get placed in highly coveted technical roles."

Sumeet Mathur, vice president and managing director of ServiceNow said, "Through this partnership, we aim to empower students with cutting-edge industry-relevant tech skills."

## Childhood pleasure reading boosts mental wellbeing later: Study

**CHILDREN WHO BEGIN READING FOR PLEASURE EARLY IN LIFE TEND TO PERFORM BETTER AT COGNITIVE TESTS AND HAVE BETTER MENTAL HEALTH WHEN THEY ENTER ADOLESCENCE**

Children who start reading for pleasure early in life tend to perform better at cognitive tests and have better mental health when they enter adolescence, according to a study of more than 10,000 young adolescents. In the study, published in the journal Psychological Medicine, researchers included 10,243 par-

ticipants, and found reading about 12 hours a week was linked to improved brain structure.

It led to a positive performance in adolescence on cognitive tests that measured such factors as verbal learning, memory and speech development, and at school academic achievement. These children also had better mental wellbeing, as assessed using a number of clinical scores and reports from parents and teachers, showing fewer signs of stress and depression, as well as improved attention and fewer behavioural problems such as aggression and rule-breaking.

Children, who began reading for pleasure earlier, also tended to spend less screen time - for example watching TV or using their smartphone or tablet - during the week and at weekends in their adolescence, and also tended to sleep longer.



Brain scans taken in adolescence, showed that children read at an early age had moderately larger total brain areas and volumes, including in particular brain regions that play critical roles in cognitive functions. Other brain regions that were

different among this group were those that have been previously shown to relate to improved mental health, behaviour and attention.

"Reading isn't just a pleasurable experience - it's widely accepted that it inspires thinking

and reduces stress. But on top of this, we found significant evidence that it's linked to important developmental factors in children, improving their cognition, mental health, and brain structure, which are cornerstones for future learning and well-being," said Professor Barbara Sahakian from the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Cambridge.

Reading for pleasure can be an important and enjoyable childhood activity. Unlike listening and spoken language, which develop rapidly and easily in young children, reading is a taught skill and is acquired and developed through explicit learning over time. During childhood and adolescence, our brains develop, making this an important time in which to establish behaviours that support our cognitive development and promote good brain health.

"We encourage parents to do their best to awaken the joy of reading in their children at an early age. Done right, this will not only give them pleasure and enjoyment, but will also help their development and encourage long-term reading habits, which may also prove beneficial into adult life," added Professor Jianfeng Feng from Fudan University in Shanghai.

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Bhitarkanika wetlands face pollution threat

DISCHARGE OF POLLUTANTS IN THE RIVERS AFFECTING THE GROWTH OF PLANTS AND FOLIAGE



POST NEWS NETWORK

Kendrapara, July 3: Lack of adequate rainfall despite the arrival of southwest monsoon in the state has resulted in acute water scarcity in this district, sources said Monday.

Even the Brahmani, Baitarani and Mahanadi river systems flowing through the Bhitarkanika National Park in this district have dried up considerably. To compound problems, the release of polluted materials into the rivers will harm the Bhitarkanika wetlands that are known for their rich bio-diversity, sources pointed out.

Environmentalist Kshitish Kumar Singh said that even the Orissa High Court has expressed concern over ingress of polluted water in Bhitarkanika. Amicus Curiae in the case, Mohit Agarwal, has also expressed serious concerns on the development.

Khitish pointed out that Brahmani river water is the major

lifeline for the Bhitarkanika wetlands. He pointed out that various industrial units, including a well-known aluminum plant regularly discharge pollutants in the Brahmani river. Among the three river systems, the Brahmani is the most polluted, said Khitish.

Harmful and toxic chemicals like fluoride, nitrogen, cyanide, chromium, fly-ash and other chemicals along with coal and various effluents are released into the Brahmani. Further polluting of the river water takes place due to mushrooming of illegal prawn fisheries, rampant movement of fishing boats and denudation of forest cover by illegal Bangladeshi immigrants, Khitish said.

"The Bhitarkanika wetlands have survived because till now the supply of fresh water has not been severely hampered. The wetlands get their share of fresh water from seven rivers including the Brahmani, Baitarani and Mahanadi. However, polluted material in the Brahmani can hinder the flow of fresh water. If it happens, then it will be the doomsday for Bhitarkanika," Khitish said.

Environmentalist Hemant Kumar Rout said that lack of fresh water will result in destruction of mangrove forests in Bhitarkanika. The forests act as a shield in protecting human habitats from natural calamities like cyclones. Rout pointed out that the prin-

cipal rivers like Mahanadi, Brahmani and Baitarani as well its tributary Kharasrota are slowly losing their fresh water due to pollution. The construction of Kalma and other barrages by the Chhattisgarh government has affected the flow of fresh water into the Mahanadi. Without proper supply of fresh water, the growth of plants and foliage in Bhitarkanika will be seriously hampered, Rout added.

Educationist Bhuban Mohan Jena pointed out that the construction of a mega reservoir on Mahanadi for supply of drinking water at Santara under Kujang block in neighbouring Jagatsinghpur district will also affect the flow of fresh water into Bhitarkanika wetlands that are on the downstream of the river. The reservoir will also supply drinking water to around 200 villages in Mahakalpara and Marshaghai blocks in Kendrapara district.

Moreover, construction of a reservoir on Baitarani near Jajpur town and development of two mega drinking water projects and two irrigation facilities on its tributary Kharasrota in Kendrapara district will also hinder the flow of fresh water into Bhitarkanika wetlands, opined Jena.

Maoists torch 2 vehicles close to Malkangiri

POST NEWS NETWORK

Malkangiri, July 3: Maoists set on fire two vehicles at Nayapara locality in Chhattisgarh close to the border with Malkangiri district Monday. Sources said that both the vehicles were engaged in transportation of iron ore from the Amdai mines in



Chhattisgarh. Both these vehicles were carrying iron ores

when the Maoists waylaid those and set them on fire. Luckily however, the trucks did not suffer much damage as locals doused the fire quickly. The Maoists have been opposing mining in this area for a long time. Sources said that the Maoists torched the vehicles to put an end to mining activities.

Drone to curtail agriculture risk

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, July 3: Drobotics Dynamics Pvt Ltd is a start-up based out of this city. The company, incubated under the FTBI initiative of NIT, Rourkela, is developing a drone prototype for agricultural use. Sanjeev Patro and Anjan Mirdha are the co-founders of the company formed in March 2023.

The drone being developed is meant to minimise the risks in the agricultural sector, provide security and assistance to the farmers and make the technology affordable to the farmers. The drone can map the field through coordinates.

Once the drone has sufficient input of information, it can fly and keep watch on the designated coordinates.

The drone will have the capability to fly five feet above the ground level. It will conduct surveys of various types of agricultural plots and it will produce images and precise locations of land patches with any anomaly. The drone will have some unique advantages like detecting land patches infected by insects and those affected by soil pollution and infertility. It can also be used for pesticide and liquid fertiliser applications, mapping of water spread areas and water sampling.



SPOILT FOR CHOICE

A little girl looks at toys sold by a woman vendor at the Kandhei Jatra at Khaspa Sahi in Berhampur, Monday

OP PHOTO

1 dead, 3 hurt in road mishap

POST NEWS NETWORK

Malkangiri, July 3: A man died and three others suffered serious injuries Monday afternoon after their bikes met with a head-on collision at Titibiri in this district. The deceased was identified as Muka Madkami of Nuaguda village. Among the three injured, two are from Telengana and one from Korukonda locality in this district.

Immediately after the accident on the road which connects this town with Jeypore, locals rushed all the four grievously injured people to the district headquarters hospital here. However, doctors pronounced Muka dead on arrival.

Illegal sand mining rampant at Korei

LOCALS ASK COLLECTOR TO TAKE ACTION, THREATEN AGITATION

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jajpur, July 3: There was a lull for a few days, but now once more the sand mafias are active at Korei area in this district. Sand mining is being carried out at Nisanagar Balighat on the riverside of the Baitarani in broad daylight without any lease or permit, sources said Monday.

Hundreds of Hyva vehicles have been engaged on a daily basis to take away huge quantities of sand. Due to the running of these heavy trucks, the rural roads are also suffering damages.

Locals are questioning as to how the loot of sand is being carried out, despite the presence of the tehsildar, Revenue department in-



spector and supervisor at the Vyananagar office.

Locals alleged that with the tehsildar on leave, some leaders with political clout are carrying out sand mining with impunity. They are being helped by some dishonest officials.

The 'Korei Sangram Samiti' has protested against the sand mafia. They have written a letter to the District Collector requesting him to step in and stop the illegal sand

mining. The members of the 'Samiti' have demanded that stringent action should be taken against the guilty and their vehicles and earthmovers should be seized.

Not only is the government losing huge royalty amount, the roads constructed under the rural development schemes are being damaged, alleged locals.

STP lies under-utilised due to public apathy

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, July 3: The newly-done sewage treatment plant (STP) at Balughat on the bank of Brahmani river here is unable to function at its full capacity. Sources however said that it is not due to any technical fault.

Built at a cost of ₹240 crore the entire system is meant to service a large locality including Udit Nagar, Civil Township, Chhend Colony, Basanti Colony, Panposh and Orampara. "The project has the capacity to cover 12,000 households," said superintendent engineer (SE) of the Sewage Board here, Basant K Dakia.

"The STP has a capacity of 40 million litres per day, but currently we are receiving just eight million litres. This is because only 1,450 households have connected to the plant," Dakia added.

Explaining the low connectivity Dakia said the end users, 'are not showing enough interest'. Others attributed the low connectivity, due to



FILE PHOTO

the desire to get everything for 'free'. One of the users of the system however, pointed out that most of the residents are not aware that the connectivity is free of cost. "When you apply for power or water connection you pay a charge but here there is no issue. Despite this, the residents are showing very flimsy grounds for not availing the STP system," the user added.

However, there is also a catch involved. Connectivity to the STP is free of cost. However, each and every household will have to bear the expenses of getting connected to the STP or the nearest manhole.

However, it is a one-time expense, which people should utilise, pointed out Dakia.

"We are providing residents with technical assistance while they are getting the connection done. In some cases even our person visits the spot to help out," Dakia added.

The official also informed that his department is keen to get every household connected. "We are conducting meetings, door-to-door campaigns to develop awareness among the people about the utility of the STP. I am hopeful that very soon many more people will get connected to the system," Dakia said.

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OFFICE OF THE DIVISIONAL FOREST OFFICER, SUNDARGARH FOREST DIVISION. Invitations for bids through e-Procurement. Bid Identification No: DFO/SNG-02/2023-24.

FORM No. 13 BEFORE THE DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL, CUTTACK, ORISSA. C-71, SECTOR - 7, CDA, CUTTACK, ODISHA. O. A. No. 776/2022. Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd. Applicant. Md. Shabaaz Mansuri and Another Defendant(s).

EAST COAST RAILWAY. File No.: DRM/Engg/KUR/23-24. E-Tender/42, Dtd.29.06.2023. (1) Tender No.: e-Tender-CENT-KUR-126-2023, Dtd.23.06.2023. Description: RENEWAL OF WORN OUT CURVE SWITCHES WITH NEW THICK WEB SWITCHES AT DIFFERENT YARDS UNDER SR. DEN (CENTRAL) OF KHURDA ROAD DIVISION.

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To stand for the Truth in all circumstances, to declare it if necessary in the teeth of the worst opposition and to be ready to all you can for its sake, is the definition of heroism.



THE MOTHER

## Census By States

Just like no one yet knows, even after a month has passed, the exact number of deaths that occurred due to the triple train accident at Bahanaga of Balasore in Orissa, similarly no one is aware of the correct number of deaths during the CoVID-19 period in India. Data is vital for any modern governance system to effectively function and deliver services to the citizens. While India seems to be constantly collecting all kinds of data from citizens for God knows what purposes, yet the system seems to be extremely averse to conduct the Census operations that should have been completed by end 2021 and all relevant data thus collected should have been made public by 2022-23.

This exercise has been purposefully stopped. The decadal Census operations had commenced in India in 1881. This is the first time the 10 year gap has been maliciously flouted. Reasons could be multiple. For example, initially it was claimed that CoVID-19 was the terrible deterrent for such a large scale activity that would expose the entire population to great danger. Interestingly, multiple state elections were held without adhering to CoVID protocols during that terrible period. The states of Bihar, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Kerala, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand went to polls with much campaigning and fanfare during CoVID-19 pandemic. Also to be noted is the fact that countries like the UK, the US and our not so friendly neighbor, the populous China, globally recognised as the 'Mother of CoVID' have since completed their Census activities.

What then scares the Government of India about conducting the Census which should have been completed in 2021? There could be many reasons. Certain states including Bihar are demanding a Census of Castes. Many states in the South would like to showcase their efficacy in implementing family welfare measures, thereby limiting population growth. The Government of India would not approve exposing such valuable facts because it would be politically detrimental to the currently ruling BJP. Thriving on religion based politics, the Census of Caste could put a huge spanner in the Hindutva narrative. So also the efficiency of Southern states would show how the more populous Northern states have economically and education-wise fallen by the roadside in the march towards development. The intentions behind introducing CAA and NRC and the slogan of 'Hindoo khatre mein hai' might come out a cropper if correct data on religion, caste, education and economic status could be accessed. Economic situation would also expose the true status of the citizen as against the falsified claims of the Government of India. It is estimated that 10 million people have been left out of the PDS benefits just because Census has not been held. Their inclusion in the list would be a tight slap to the government while simultaneously bringing this huge number of people under the social security net.

The Registrar General of India has postponed Census innumeration to 2024-25. The powers that be probably hope that they can play around with the data collected if they are reelected in 2024. This would enable them to create more constituencies based on religion for their political furtherance. It could also help them corrupt the data in such a fashion so as to negate international exposés. The only solution to this problem could be achieved by dismantling the national level Census. It may be noted that Census operations are carried out by the machinery of each state while the data is collated at the Centre. Therefore, states should be guided by a centrally prepared questionnaire while the results should be made public by individual states mandatorily within a specific timeline. While there could be room for errors as in everything else, this would be in keeping with the federal structure of the nation.

**Piate**  
Tathagata Satpathy



Jagdish Rattanan

ANTI-GANDHI THINKING IS BY ALL ACCOUNTS FLOURISHING

Gandhian thought, institutions and the Mahatma himself are under unprecedented attack today. From positions of power in government to poisoned minds among activists and a wide variety of loose cannons, Gandhi and his ideas are routinely run down and presented using narrow lenses designed to misrepresent and even demonise the Father of the Nation. It is no surprise that Gandhians are aghast. But there is also a sense of despondency, fatigue and resignation at the ferocity of the attacks and the sheer volume of venom that is spewing out across media channels. What should Gandhians do? How should they respond?

Ironically, these were precisely the questions at the centre of a discussion for a conference that was planned and scheduled by Mahatma Gandhi himself to be held at Wardha on February 2, 1948. The context was different though – to consolidate efforts in post-Independent India. Gandhi was assassinated three days before that conference, which then was rescheduled to March and carried the theme: Gandhi is gone. What should we do now?

That conference from March 13-15, 1948 marked the birth of the Sarva Seva Sangh. Among those present were Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, Education Minister Maulana Azad, Congress president Rajendra Prasad as the Chair, and those like Acharya JB Kripalani, JC Kumarappa, Jayaprakash Narayan, Vinoba Bhave, who spoke "with candour, self-criticism, and a refreshing objectivity that (did) not exempt even their martyred mentor," as an account in the book 'Gandhi is Gone. Who Will Guide Us Now' (Editor Gopalkrishna Gandhi, published by Permanent Black) put it. Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was to

### FOCUS NATION

# THREAT TO GANDHIAN OUTFITS



We can and must blame the powers that be, those that shape the narrative and fill up endless hours of airtime and social media beacons to sell the idea that Gandhi is not our real hero

attend but could not due to ill-health.

It is this Sarva Seva Sangh and its facilities in Varanasi that are now fighting a demolition notice in the High Court against the local administration and the railways who claim to have the title of the land the Sangh sits on. The demolition notices and the dates fixed for the actual razing have come up with lightning speed, quite unlike the way the government machinery is known to work. The case highlights, what one member said, "the plight and the threat Gandhian organisations are facing today." As he put it: "Sarva Seva Sangh in Varanasi is under attack. We are doing everything to save it." If the richness of its history, the purity of its intention and the galaxy of leaders who got together to give the impetus that became the organisation could not stop the authorities from moving to demolish Sarva Seva Sangh buildings, then almost no one from among those left of the Gandhian movement can be considered safe.

There is no question that this anti-Gandhi direction is despicable. Every effort must be made to resist it. Yet, the anti-Gandhi thinking is by all accounts flour-

ishing. The question raised in 1948 is the question staring us in 2023; the only difference is that "our" government is now accused of open hostility, of fostering disharmony and creating divisions that strike at the root of Gandhian thinking.

We can and must blame the powers that be, those that shape the narrative and fill up endless hours of airtime and social media beacons to sell the idea that Gandhi is not our real hero. But that they are able to carry this narrative so successfully also tells us that Gandhi's ideals are not really embedded in the hearts and minds of Indians. So, blame also must be shared by all of those who are known as Gandhians. There is little dispute that as the Gandhians of an earlier generation aged and moved on, there has been a lack of new energy (barring a few exceptions) to build Gandhian thinking and offer it to a new generation for a new era. A vast majority of the youth memorised Gandhi's messages for a formal exam but never really critically examined or accepted the thinking, let alone internalising it. The charade of paying obeisance to Gandhi while disregarding all that he said

and stood for continued to play out in the India that bought more modernity, more liberalisation and an economic boom riding on consumerism as a key marker of success. All of this may have accelerated recently but the trendline has been in the direction of the slide for a long, long time. Some trace it back to the rejection of Gandhi's ideas in 'Hind Swaraj' by Nehru. Today, violence is deeply embedded in the Indian State, increasing exponentially over the years. Justice is difficult to get, particularly for the underprivileged. Power speaks and the reality is that truth can be crushed with this power, at least in the short-run.

There is hardly a Gandhian organisation that called out this trendline of decline over the years. It is one thing to be episodic and pick events, and quite another to look at the thematic collapse that has brought us here. New leaders have not been nurtured. New and exciting material is not brought to the classrooms. Challenges are suppressed rather than allowed to flourish. In an insightful paper published almost a decade ago, the Gandhian Dr Sudarshan Iyengar wrote: "Many (Gandhian) institutions ... appear in peril. Their core seems to have weakened, reflecting both poverty of thought and rigidity in practice. There is limited availability of committed persons ... In general, broad social support for Gandhian ideas and work, except for benign social service, is almost non-existent." At the 1948 conference, Rajendra Prasad had said: "The nation's moral fibre has gone slack." We could say that again and again.

The writer is a journalist and faculty member at SPJIMR. Views are personal.

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### SPECTRUM POLITICS

## The axis of denial

Generally, you expect to see a situation more clearly from the outside than when you are immersed in it. But sometimes, it is precisely this external position that blinds you to the truth. One finds a similar dynamic in the West's support for Ukraine. We turn a blind eye to the fact that a domestic clique of oligarchs will likely emerge as the biggest winner of the Ukrainian struggle. Yet we should not be surprised if post-war Ukraine turns out similar to pre-war Ukraine, a place corrupted by oligarchy and colonised by big Western corporations that control the best land and natural resources. While we make our own sacrifices for the war effort, we fail to see that the gains will be appropriated by others.

Can we avoid this trap? On June 20-22, 2023, the pan-European organisation Europe, a Patient held discussions in London on the need to protect Ukrainian communities from economic exploitation after the war. Such initiatives are needed more than ever, because support for Ukrainian defence must go hand in hand with ecological and social-justice concerns. All are equally important for the country's future.

The combination of military, environmental, and socioeconomic struggles is becoming

increasingly difficult to ignore. Matters of war and ecology collided dramatically with the destruction of the Kakhovka Dam near Kherson in early June. But Ukraine is hardly alone. Around the same time, wildfires in Canada ended up smothering New York City under a cloud of brown smoke, giving the city's residents a taste of what people across the Global South know all too well. While paying lip service to the climate crisis and ecological breakdown, rich Western countries continue to do little about them.

This blinkered perspective is not confined to the right and the corporate sector. Many on the left today claim to support peace while favouring compromise with brutal, revisionist authoritarian regimes. To understand this "pacifist" opposition, we should return to the situation at the beginning of World War II, when there was also a right-left coalition opposing US involvement in foreign wars. Then as now, the "pacifists" argued that the situation in Europe did not concern America. They harbored strange sympathies for the aggressor, and they claimed that going to war would merely enrich the military-industrial complex. When Nazi Germany told the United Kingdom, in the summer of 1940, that it wanted

peace, they thought Britain should have accepted Hitler's generous offer.

Like all good lies, this one contains some grains of truth. The American conservative commentator Patrick J. Buchanan offered a version of this argument in 2008, arguing that if Winston Churchill had accepted Hitler's 1940 offer, the Holocaust would have been less severe. Moreover, just as Churchill led the British Empire to ruin by causing unnecessary wars with Germany, the argument goes, US President George W. Bush led the US to ruin by following Churchill's example. Like many on the left, Buchanan does not believe the US should offer guarantees to countries where it has no vital interests. One hears a new variation of this motif in the context of the Ukraine war. Supposedly, the Soviet Union's disintegration had the same effect as the Versailles Treaty: it created a predictable desire for revenge against the victors of the last war. As in the past, this new right-left alliance is guided by conspiracy theories, like those peddled about vaccines by Robert Kennedy, Jr., and Donald Trump's followers. It denounces anti-COVID measures as an instrument of control. It rejects helping Ukraine, since that would serve the NATO military-in-

dustrial complex. And in a model case of denial, it dismisses the biggest threats we face as mere ploys by big corporations to exploit the working class.

The politics of denial is, of course, overtly optimistic. It implies that we do not have to address any new dangers; we can carry on as if they do not exist. It is a product of populism on both the left and the right, and it is one of the main reasons why we are now in a "democratic recession."

To escape our predicament, we cannot just cling to multiparty liberal democracy. Rather, we must find new ways of building social consensus and establishing active links between political parties and civil society. The immediate task is to oppose the new left-right populists, and that may require aligning with exponents of capitalist liberal democracy – just as WWII-era Communists fought alongside Western "imperialist" democracies against Fascism, knowing full well that imperialism was their ultimate enemy. These were strange bedfellows, but they at least could see what was really going on.

The writer is Professor of Philosophy at the European Graduate School.

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### WISDOM CORNER

Most people do not really want freedom, because freedom involves responsibility, and most people are frightened of responsibility.

SIGMUND FREUD

The greatest and most important problems of life are all fundamentally insoluble. They can never be solved but only outgrown.

CARL JUNG

If you don't stand your ground, then all that happens is people push you backwards.

JORDAN PETERSON

### WORDSWORTH

#### Linhay

This is a lean-to shed with an open front. It's mainly an English West Country word, from the counties of Somerset, Dorset, Devon and Cornwall. However, it has also been recorded in Northern Ireland and Northumberland, which suggests it derives from an ancient English word once more widely distributed. The Oxford English Dictionary tentatively suggests the Old English *hlinian*, to lean. A related West Country word, *mowhay*, means a stack-yard or other enclosure. A *mow* is a heap of some item, usually a useful crop such as hay, wheat, or barley (it seems to be related to words in Swedish and Norwegian but is otherwise obscure in origin). The second element is from Old English and means an enclosed space (it derives from the same root as *hedge*, which could at one time mean any enclosing barrier, not necessarily a row of bushes or small trees). So a *linhay* is a leaning enclosed space. It has largely been the preserve of writers about the West Country, such as R D Blackmore, in whose *Lorna Doone*, set on Exmoor, the word may be found a number of times: "That faithful creature, whom I began to admire as if she were my own (which is no little thing for a man to say of another man's horse), stopped in front of a low black shed, such as we call a 'linhay.'" Thomas Hardy used it many times in his books set in the fictional Wessex, in reality Dorset. This is in *The Return of the Native*: "To dissipate in some trifling measure her abiding sense of the murkiness of human life she went to the 'linhay' or lean-to-shed, which formed the root-store of their dwelling and abutted on the fuel-house." Other writers with West Country connections who used it include Eden Phillpotts, John Galsworthy and Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch. Like Blackmore and Hardy, most felt the need to explain this dialect word. These days it seems to crop up most often in the names of self-catering cottages converted from old barns. An older spelling is *linny* or *linney*, which more accurately reflects the way it is said.

#### Linsey-woolsey

Back in Tudor times in England there was a coarse linen material called *linsey*, whose name was formerly believed to have come from the dialect word *lin* for linen, but is now thought to be from *Linsey*, the name of the village in Suffolk where it was first made. Linen was woven with wool to make a less costly fabric that became known as *linsey-woolsey*, with the ending of wool changed to make a rhyming couplet. Henry Smith, who was a Church of England clergyman and a renowned preacher – he was known as Silver-Tongued Smith – included this comment in his sermon, *A Preparative to Marriage*, that was published in 1591: "God forbid the people to wear *linsey woolsey*, because it was a sign of inconstancy." He was referring to the Biblical prohibition against wearing clothes made from a mixture of linen and wool. Rather later, *linsey-woolsey* became an inferior coarse cloth of wool woven on cotton. You can tell its humble status from Elizabeth Gaskell's mention of it in *Sylvia's Lovers* of 1863: "How well it was, thought the young girl, that she had doffed her bed-gown and *linsey-woolsey* petticoat, her working-dress, and made herself smart in her stuff gown, when she sat down to work with her mother."



Slavoj Žižek

THE POLITICS OF DENIAL IS, OF COURSE, OVERTLY OPTIMISTIC. IT IMPLIES THAT WE DO NOT HAVE TO ADDRESS ANY NEW DANGERS; WE CAN CARRY ON AS IF THEY DO NOT EXIST

### Harmony in plurality

Sir, India is a country with heterogeneous languages, cultures and traditions, and which is plural in both letter and spirit. Hence, expecting people to act on the same laws based on a Uniform Civil Code is unreasonable. We need to respect every minority community, its personal choices and its laws, and this is what has led the nation to live in peace. As Muslims and Christians form a sizable population of the country, any move towards enforcing Uniform Civil Code will certainly receive a heavy backlash from people of these two religions. A secular India is what the founding fathers promised when they formulated the Constitution. The ruling BJP must respect the emotions of the minority population and decide on whether to infringe upon the personal laws or not. Uniform Civil Code can only emerge through an evolutionary process, which preserves India's rich legal heritage, of which all the personal laws are equal constituents. The plural democracy is an identity of modern India. Therefore, efforts must be focused on harmony in plurality rather than introducing a blanket uniformity by codifying Hindu personal laws. To achieve a Uniform Civil Code in India, a brick-by-brick approach is the way forward rather than an omnibus approach.

Ranganathan Sivakumar, CHENNAI

### Just & appropriate

Sir, This refers to the news report "Cong seeks Rail Minister's scalp" (*Orissa POST*, July 2). I am of the opinion that when the outcome of the inquiry into the recent tragic railway accident conducted by the Commissioner of Railway Safety (CRS) speaks volumes of the deficiency in the services of the Railways authorities, the resignation of the Railway Minister should be considered as just and appropriate. The report submitted by the CRS has ruled out in no uncertain terms the conspiracy theory of the Union government. The accident as per report occurred due to mechanical/technical and system failure. The report should be made available to the public as a mishap of this magnitude justifiably demands proactive action by the government against the wrongdoers without any further loss of time.

Arun Gupta, KOLKATA

## 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](mailto:edit@orissapost.com)

OrissaPOST

B-15, Rasulgari Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

MANIPUR VIOLENCE

# SC seeks updated status report from state govt



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi, July 3:** The Supreme Court Monday called for an updated status report from the Manipur government after its claim that the situation was improving in the north-eastern state after clashes broke out between the Kuki and Meitei communities.

A bench, led by Chief Justice of India (CJI) DY Chandrachud was hearing the application filed by NGO Manipur Tribunal Forum seeking deployment of the army in tribal areas to control the conflict.

"The situation is improving but slowly. CAPF companies have been deployed. The curfew has been reduced to 5 hours. There is an improvement," Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, representing the state govern-

ment, informed the court. On the contrary, senior advocate Colin Gonsalves argued that several militant group leaders were openly threatening to annihilate the Kukis.

He said that Sunday night, three Kukis were killed, including one being beheaded.

The SG opposed Gonsalves' claims and said that "communal angle" should not be given, adding that "real human beings are being dealt with."

"We will look at the report now. We will take this up Monday," said the top court while adjourning the matter for July 10.

It directed the state government to include details like rehabilitation camps, law and order situation, and recovery of arms in its status report.

Ethnic violence was triggered between the Kuki and Meitei communities in the northeastern state in wake of the Manipur High Court asking the state government to include the majority Meitei community under the ST category.



An Indian Youth Congress worker being detained during a protest to demand the resignation of Manipur Chief Minister N Biren Singh, in New Delhi, Monday.

PTI PHOTO

# Manipur's lifeline NH-2 reopens after 54 days

The economic blockade imposed by various organisations in the wake of the ethnic violence has been lifted

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Imphal, July 3:** After 54 days, movement of vehicles carrying essentials resumed along the Imphal-Dimapur National Highway (NH-2) as the economic blockade, imposed by various organisations in the wake of the ethnic violence in Manipur, was lifted Sunday.

Officials in Imphal said that with the reopening of the NH-2 (via Nagaland), the lifeline of Manipur, the supply of essentials, food grains, transport fuels and life saving drugs would be easier in all the 16 districts of the northeastern state.

After the blockade of the NH-2 since early last month, Manipur was fully dependent on the Imphal-Jiribam National Highway (NH-37) through southern Assam in procuring essentials, food grains, transport fuels, life-saving drugs and other ma-



terials from other states of the country. The United People's Front (UPF) and the Kuki National Organisation (KNO), in a joint statement, said that they decided to lift the blockade of the national highway passing through Kangpokpi district to ensure uninterrupted supply of essential commodities in Manipur.

The development comes, notwithstanding the anger and



anguish of the Kuki-Zo community people, keeping in view Union Home Minister Amit Shah's concern to restore peace and harmony in the state and alleviate the plight of people in general.

The joint statement signed by UPF spokesperson Aaron Kipgen and KNO spokesperson Seilen Haokip said that the decision to lift the blockade was taken after wide-ranging consultations with

various civil society organisations, village chiefs, youths and women leaders on several occasions. It highlighted that Manipur has been witnessing ethnic violence between Meiteis and Kuki-Zo communities since May 3 and recurring violence has led to loss of precious lives and destruction of property besides hundreds being injured and thousands being displaced.

The ongoing conflict has disturbed the traditional communal harmony in the state, the statement said, claiming that the Kuki-Zo people have suffered immensely in continued offensives by miscreants and have urged the authorities to protect their lives and properties.

The Kuki-Zo organisations had earlier met the Union Home Minister and requested him to provide security in the vulnerable villages in the bordering and foothill areas, the statement said.

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Panaji, July 3:** Goa Tourism Development Corporation Sunday launched 'Monsoon Trekking' programme from Tambdi Surla-Mollem in south Goa to attract tourists in hinterland areas.

GTDC chairman Ganesh Gaonkar speaking on the occasion said that the concept of 'Atithi Devo Bhava' (guest is equivalent to God) would be made meaningful in the coastal state. "Every tourist visiting here should be safe and enjoy the monsoon trekking," Gaonkar said.

Mahadev temple located at Tambdi Surla at Mollem is the most ancient temple in Goa. The temple was built in the twelfth century. The small, beautifully carved and perfectly propor-



**MORE THAN EIGHT MILLION TOURISTS VISIT GOA EVERY YEAR**

**BUT NOW, THE GOA GOVERNMENT IS ALSO FOCUSING ON HINTERLAND TOURISM**

**MOST OF THEM PREFER 'SUN, SAND AND SEA' (BEACHES) TO ENJOY THEIR MEMORABLE TIME**

tioned black basalt temple is dedicated to Lord Shiva. Many tourists visit this temple and this area to explore the hinterland. Gaonkar said that this activity will boost the economy and will generate employment.

"Locals will get employment through this activity," he said. More than eight million tourists visit Goa every year. Most of them prefer 'sun, sand and sea' (beaches) to enjoy their memorable time.

# Satellite imagery to identify CRZ violations

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Panaji, July 3:** The Goa government will engage a company with expertise in satellite imagery to map structures that existed on the state's shoreline before 1991 to understand the extent of the Coastal Regulation Zone violations, a senior official said, Monday.

During a public redressal meeting in North Goa Monday, State Environment Minister Nilesh Cabral said the state government will file an affidavit before the Bombay High Court listing out the structures that existed

before 1991, a cut-off date as per the CRZ regulations.

The Goa State Coastal Zone Management Authority had issued show cause notices to 275 structures, giving them time to respond with documentation to prove that they existed before 1991. The notices were issued after the October 2022 order of the High Court against the gross violations in CRZ areas, the senior GSCZMA official said.

Speaking at the meeting, Cabral said the state government will engage a company with expertise in satellite imagery to map the area post 1991.

# Mizo govt to raise funds for displaced Manipuris

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Aizawl, July 3:** Mizoram government Monday said that it is likely to raise funds from government officials, staff and the public for relief and rehabilitation of people of Manipur who have migrated to the state following outbreak of violence.

"Donation would likely be sought from the government officials, employees and the people in general," a Home Department official said. He said that a delor from the state led by Tourism Minister Robert Romawia last month met officials of the Union Home Ministry including Home Secretary Ajay Kumar Bhalla and requested



them to provide funds for the relief and shelter to the displaced people from Manipur. He said that the response of the Home Ministry officials was positive, but the state has yet to receive any financial support. Mizoram Chief Minister

Zoramthanga has also written two letters to Prime Minister Narendra Modi May 16 and May 23 and sought financial support of ₹10 crore to provide relief to the displaced people from Manipur. The tribals belonging to the

Kuki-Zo-Zomi community started trickling in Mizoram soon after the ethnic violence broke out in Manipur May 3.

Mizoram currently houses 12,000 displaced people from Manipur. The displaced people took shelter in relief camps, rented and relatives' houses, churches, community centers and other places in all the 11 districts of Mizoram. Mizoram has been accommodating around 35,000 refugees from Myanmar due to the military coup in February 2021; over 1,000 refugees from Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh, where Army crackdown forced the tribals to leave their villages and to take shelter in Mizoram.

# NCP's Goa unit pledges support to Sharad Pawar

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Panaji, July 3:** In the wake of the political developments in Maharashtra that led to a vertical split in the National Congress Party (NCP), its Goa unit Monday pledged support for party chief Sharad Pawar.

Talking to PTI, the party's state unit president Jose Philip D'Souza said the entire unit of Goa is strongly behind Sharad Pawar and will not break away from the NCP.

NCP leader Ajit Pawar Sunday led a vertical split in the party to become the deputy chief minister of Maharashtra, shocking his uncle Sharad Pawar, who founded the party 24 years ago.

# Manipur entrepreneurs stare at uncertain future

Corporate leaders who had returned to Manipur after serving long stints at global MNCs outside the Northeast are now questioning their own decisions of investing time and money in their home state

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Imphal, July 3:** With Manipur witnessing violence for over two months, the business community in the state is bleeding red with economic activities almost coming to a standstill.

A number of entrepreneurs in the state said Monday that irrespective of the communities, all sections of the people and their economic activities have been affected by the violence that began May 3.

Corporate leaders who had returned to Manipur after serving long stints at global MNCs

outside the Northeast are now questioning their own decisions of investing time and money in their home state.

"The impact has been huge. Almost everyone, irrespective of the communities, has been affected. Before May 3, life was pretty normal. For the last couple of years, we were on a path of progress. Businesses were flourishing, people were progressing on day-to-day lives as we were recovering from the COVID-19 impact. Then this (ethnic clashes) happened. Now our lives have changed, and the way people do business has changed. In



fact, it has sent us quite a few years back," Addble Solutions Pvt Ltd founder Yaikhomba Ningthemcha told PTI.

Talking about the impact on the business community, he said that the sector was suffering.

"Apart from all the normal transactions stopping, businesses relying on the internet have

come to a standstill. We need the internet for paying back our loans. Consumers are not able to pay us. Filing of GST has been affected as we are not able to file it on time because there is no internet," Ningthemcha said.

Ningthemcha was working at a multi-national company in Bengaluru for more than 15

years and returned to his hometown in 2018 to start his own business. Addble Solutions is a cloud-based IT firm that provides B2B digital commerce platforms to companies.

"We were ramping up in 2019-20, when the pandemic came in. Post COVID-19, we were servicing a lot of retail and F&B businesses in Manipur. We are the first from the Northeast to be a part of the Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC)."

"We are now questioning ourselves if it was the right decision to come back and start a business in Manipur. Our intention was to uplift our state and bring in the brighter side. That's why I came back," he said.

N Sundeep Meitei, a stockbroker from Sangaithel village in Imphal West district, said that businesses have gone

down completely. "There is no transportation, there is no internet. Without the internet, how can we transfer the money? Without transportation, there cannot be any infrastructure development. That means, the progress is zero," he said.

Stating that the deadly clashes and mistrust among communities have caused long-lasting damage to industries, Sundeep said that it is also affecting the lives of common people.

"Those who are in hospital, elderly and minor patients, are not getting money. Their treatment is affected. This is a very painful situation here. I am not talking about one community. Even though I am a Meitei, the violence is affecting every community in Manipur," he said.



Eight NCP leaders were also sworn in as ministers in the Eknath Shinde-Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government.

The entire unit has faith in Sharad Pawar's capabilities to rebuild the party even after such moves by some leaders, D'Souza said.

"We have seen him do it some 15 years ago when a similar incident had happened," he said. D'Souza further said he will hold a meeting of his unit later in the day to discuss the political developments in Maharashtra.



A man with a child wades through a waterlogged street in Nadia district



Artists of the French 20 Street Ballet perform during the B-FIT in the Street international festival in Bucharest, Romania



Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav meets Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao in Hyderabad



Karnataka Governor Thawar Chand Gehlot arrives for the joint session of state Assembly, at Vidhana Soudha in Bangalore



Madhya Pradesh's under-construction flyover from Damoh Naka to Madan Mahal area, that is said to be one of the longest bridges in the state with a stretch of 8 km, in Jabalpur



HUDA City Centre station, on the Delhi Metro's Yellow Line, is pictured from outside, that will be renamed Millennium City Centre, as DMRC announced Monday



Ukrainian soldiers pet a kitten in a shelter under the Russian shelling on the frontline in the Zaporizhzhia region, Ukraine



Britain's King Charles III during his visit to Kinneil House in Edinburgh, Scotland marking the first Holyrood Week since his coronation



# national

## of the day quote

The BJP cleverly sings the slogan of 'sabka saath, sabka vikaas' but will development reach everyone merely by saying 'sabka saath'?

AKHILESH YADAV | SAMAJWADI PARTY CHIEF

The state government is considering a pension scheme for unmarried people in the 45-60 age group

MANOHAR LAL KHATTAR | HARYANA CHIEF MINISTER

All the leaders, including Ajit Pawar, whom the BJP used to accuse of corruption, were inducted in the cabinet. The BJP has been nervous ever since the opposition parties started coming together, due to which it is breaking regional parties by putting pressure from central agencies

ASHOK GEHLOT | RAJASTHAN CM



Our party is not against the UCC, but it does not endorse the way in which the BJP and its government seek to implement it in the country

MAYAWATI | BSP CHIEF

## NEW SCHEME

The Centre Monday launched a scheme to provide shelter, food and legal aid to minors who have been abandoned by their families due to pregnancy from rape. Women and Child Development Minister Smriti Irani said the new scheme is aimed at ensuring both infrastructural and financial support for pregnant minor victims



# PARL PANEL HEAD BATS FOR KEEPING TRIBALS OUT OF UCC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 3: Chairman of parliamentary panel on law and BJP MP Sushil Modi Monday advocated keeping tribals, including those in the North East, out of the purview of any likely Uniform Civil Code (UCC) at a meeting while some opposition members questioned the Law Commission's timing of the move to begin consultations on the contentious issue, sources said.

Most opposition members, including those from the Congress and the DMK, linked the push for the UCC to the next year's Lok Sabha polls, sources said. The meeting of the parliamentary standing committee, first after the law panel initiated the consultation process on the common civil code, was held to hear the views of representatives of the law panel and legal affairs and legislative departments of the law ministry on the consultation process.

Last month, the Law Commission issued a public notice inviting views from the various stakeholders on the UCC under the "Review of Personal



Laws' subject. According to sources, Shiv Sena's Sanjay Raut questioned the timing of the consultations while Congress MP Vivek Tankha and DMK MP P Wilson submitted separate written statements, asserting that there was no need to have fresh consultations on the emotive issue.

In his letter, Tankha also reiterated the view of the previous Law Commission that providing a uniform civil code was "neither necessary nor desirable at this stage". Questioning the intent behind the move, Tagore linked the law panel move to the polls. The Law Commission was

Most opposition members, including those from the Congress and the DMK, linked the push for the UCC to the next year's Lok Sabha polls, sources said

Last month, the law commission issued a public notice inviting views from the various stakeholders on the UCC under the "Review of Personal Laws" subject

represented in the meeting by its member-secretary K Biswal.

Sources said the Law Commission representative also defended the fresh consultation exercise, noting that the preceding commission had brought out its suggestions in 2018 and its term had also come to an end. That is why they have begun a fresh initiative which is essentially "informational", they said.

Sushil Modi in his comments pitched for keeping tribals out of the ambit of any proposed UCC and noted that all laws have exceptions. It was also pointed out in the meeting that the central laws are not applicable in some

North Eastern states without their concurrence.

BJP's Mahesh Jethmalani made a strong defence for the implementation of UCC as he cited debates in the constituent assembly to assert that it was always considered imperative. Meanwhile, sources indicated that the possibility of a bill on UCC is remote in the monsoon session of Parliament beginning July 20.

In a presentation during the meeting, Law Commission officials said 19 lakh suggestions have been received so far in response to its public notice on June 14. The exercise will continue till July 13. Sources said 17 out of 31 members of the panel attended the meeting.

Uniform Civil Code is aimed at replacing personal laws based on religions, customs, and traditions with one common law for everyone irrespective of religion, caste, creed, sexual orientation, and gender. Personal laws and laws related to inheritance, adoption and succession are likely to be covered by a common code.

Implementation of a UCC has

been part of BJP election manifestos and Prime Minister Narendra Modi while addressing BJP workers in Bhopal last month made a strong push for it, asking how can the country function with dual laws that govern personal matters, and accused the Opposition of using the UCC issue to "mislead and provoke" the Muslim community.

Uttarakhand is already in the process of implementing its common code. Opposition parties, however, had attacked the prime minister for his comments on the UCC with the Congress saying he was making such remarks only to divert attention from real issues such as unemployment and the Manipur violence.

AIMIM leader Asaduddin Owaisi asked whether the country's pluralism would be "snatched away" in the name of UCC. In its consultation paper issued on August 31, 2018, the 21st Law Commission headed by Justice B S Chauhan (ret'd) said while the diversity of Indian culture can and should be celebrated, specific groups or weaker sections of the society must not be "dis-privileged" in the process.

## EXCISE POLICY SCAM

# Delhi HC denies bail to Sisodia

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 3: In a fresh setback to senior AAP leader Manish Sisodia, the Delhi High Court Monday declined him bail in a money laundering case linked to alleged irregularities in the city government's excise policy, saying the charges against him were "very serious in nature".

Sisodia was arrested in connection with the case on March 9. This matter has to be visited with a "different approach" as a deep rooted conspiracy involving huge loss of public funds has been alleged, the court observed while rejecting his bail application.

Justice Dinesh Kumar Sharma said the former deputy chief minister of Delhi has not been able to pass the "triple test" for bail under the anti-money laundering law in which the court has to see whether an accused is likely to flee from justice, tamper with evidence or influence witnesses.

## SHORT TAKES

### IAF chief on Malaysia visit

New Delhi: Air Chief Marshal VR Chaudhari is currently on an official bilateral visit to Malaysia with an aim to expand bilateral defence ties. The Indian Air Force said the visit of the Chief of Air Staff (CAS) is aimed at discussing areas of mutual interest and cooperation with senior officials of the Malaysian armed forces. "The CAS, Air Chief Marshal V R Chaudhari, is on an official bilateral visit to Malaysia. During his visit, he will be meeting various officials of the Malaysian Armed Forces with whom he will discuss areas of mutual interest and cooperation," the IAF tweeted.

### Delhi LG sacks 400 'specialists'

New Delhi: Lt Governor V K Saxena has terminated the services of around 400 'specialists' appointed by the AAP government in different departments, officials said Monday, a decision that could trigger a fresh round of confrontation between the ruling party and the LG. They were engaged in a "non-transparent manner" and without the mandatory approvals of the competent authority, the LG office said in a statement while alleging several irregularities in the recruitment process. The appointments also did not follow the mandatory reservation policy for SC, ST and OBC candidates prescribed by the Department of Personnel and Training, it added. No immediate reaction was available from the Kejriwal government.

### PM to host virtual summit of SCO

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will host Chinese President Xi Jinping, his Russia counterpart Vladimir Putin, Pakistan's Shehbaz Sharif and other leaders of the SCO nations at a virtual summit of the bloc Tuesday that is expected to focus on regional security situation and ways to boost connectivity and trade. It will be Putin's first participation in a multilateral summit after a mercenary group launched a short-lived armed rebellion last week that rocked Moscow.

### EC sets up portal for parties

New Delhi: The Election Commission Monday launched a portal to allow registered political parties file their financial statements, including contribution reports, audited annual accounts and poll expenditure statements, a move seen as an effort to bring in more transparency in disclosures made by political entities.



Devotees at a Sai Baba temple on the occasion of 'Guru Purnima', in Bangalore, Monday  
PTI PHOTO

## ED grills Anil Ambani in fresh FEMA case

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, July 3: Reliance ADA Group Chairman Anil Ambani Monday appeared before the Enforcement Directorate (ED) here and recorded his statement in connection with an investigation linked to the alleged contravention of the foreign exchange law, official sources said. The industrialist and his wife Tina Ambani have been summoned again for a similar round of questioning later this week.

Ambani, 64, departed at the office of the federal agency in south Mumbai, where he arrived at around 10 am and left at 6 pm. Ambani's statement was recorded as part of a fresh case filed under various sections of the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA), the sources said.

The investigation against the couple pertains to the possession of certain alleged undisclosed assets abroad and linked movement of funds, they said without elaborating. Anil Ambani had appeared before the ED in 2020 in a money laundering case against Yes Bank promoter Rana Kapoor and others.

## SC goes paperless, to have free WiFi

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 3: The first five courtrooms of the Supreme Court have become WiFi-enabled, Chief Justice of India (CJI) D Y Chandrachud announced on Monday, in a significant step towards the digitisation of the top court.

The court has made facility available to all lawyers, litigants, mediapersons, and other stakeholders visiting the premises. The step was taken as part of the e-initiatives and the facility can be availed by logging in to "SCI WiFi".

"We have made courts 1 to 5 WiFi-enabled. The bar rooms are WiFi-enabled as well. All courtrooms will now be like that - no books and papers - which is not to say that we will not rely on books and papers at all," the CJI said at the outset of the day's proceedings in the refurbished courtroom. "Please give me the feedback whether everything is working well," Justice Chandrachud said.

The top court reopened Monday after the six-week summer vacation. For using the WiFi facility,



A view of a courtroom of the Supreme Court of India with digital enhancements implemented as part of green initiatives for optimum use of technology in justice delivery systems, in New Delhi

one has to enter his mobile number, get a one-time password (OTP) and use it for authentication, an apex court official said.

In a circular, the court said, "As part of the e-initiatives in the Supreme Court of India, the facility of free Wi-Fi is made available for advocates, litigants, media persons and other stakeholders visiting the Supreme Court of India." For the present, this facility will be available at the Chief Justice's Court, Court Nos. 2 to 5, including corridor and Plaza in front, both waiting areas in front of plaza canteen and

Press Lounge-I and II, with effect from 03.07.2023."

Later, the top court, in a press statement, said that it has undertaken "futuristic upgrades" as part of green initiatives for optimum use of technology in justice delivery systems.

"A series of futuristic upgrades have been implemented in Court No. 1 to 3 at the Supreme Court of India under the dynamic vision of the Hon'ble the Chief Justice of India, Dr Dhananjaya Y Chandrachud to enhance the use of technology in Judicial Systems," it said.

# After NCP split, Oppn meet rescheduled

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 3: The next meeting of opposition parties will be held in Bangalore on July 17 and 18, the Congress announced on Monday, and asserted that their resolve to defeat the BJP has been strengthened by the "Mumbai operations" of the "BJP washing machine".

Announcing Opposition meeting dates on Twitter, Congress general secretary (organisation) KC Venugopal said "we are steadfast in our unwavering resolve to defeat the fascist and undemocratic forces." "After a hugely successful all-opposition meeting in Patna, we will be holding the next meeting in Bangalore on July 17 and 18. We are steadfast in our unwavering resolve to defeat the fascist and undemocratic forces and present a bold vision to take the country forward," Venugopal said.

Meanwhile, Congress general secretary (Communications) Jairam Ramesh took a dig at the BJP over the NCP's Ajit Pawar and eight other leaders being inducted into the Eknath Shinde-led Maharashtra government.

"Yesterday when the BJP Washing Machine restarted in Mumbai with its ICE (Income tax, CBI, ED) detergent, BJP-inspired obituaries on Opposition unity were being planted. The obit writers will be disappointed. The next meeting of the parties that met at Patna on June 23rd will be held in Bangalore on July 17th & 18th," he said.

"If anything the Mumbai operations have strengthened Opposition resolve," Ramesh said on Twitter. In a swipe at Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Ramesh posted a meme of 'Modi Washing Powder' with the tagline 'saare daag chutkiyon mein dhule (removes all stains in a jiffy)'.

TMC's leader in Rajya Sabha Derek O'Brien also tagged Venugopal's tweet and said, "Bengaluru Summit. All For One. One For All." Sources in



After a hugely successful all-opposition meeting in Patna, we will be holding the next meeting in Bangalore on July 17 and 18. We are steadfast in our unwavering resolve to defeat the fascist and undemocratic forces and present a bold vision to take the country forward

KC VENUGOPAL | CONGRESS GENERAL SECRETARY (ORGANISATION)

the Opposition camp said the leaders will meet in the evening of July 17 in an informal setting apart from bilateral meetings followed by a more formal interaction the next day.

A senior leader said that the Bengaluru meeting will focus on issues of broad agreement among the parties and added that all future deliberations between the top opposition leaders will be called 'summits'.

Earlier, NCP chief Sharad Pawar had said the next opposition meeting will be held in Bangalore on July 13-14. Those dates were said to be clashing with the Assembly sessions in a few states.

The first meeting of opposition parties was held in Bihar's Patna on June 23. At that meeting, Opposition parties had resolved to take on the BJP unitedly in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, even as fissures had emerged with the AAP asserting that it would be difficult for it to be part of any such gathering in the future till the Congress publicly supports it on the ordinance issue.

# MOTORMOUTHS MUDDY A MODI MASTERSTROKE!

RK MISRA

A tongue is best behind the teeth with the mouth closed, for vocal extravagance can reduce the sublime to the ridiculous. Moreso when heads are engaged in delicate statecraft across the seas.

Thus it was that maudlin motormouths at home, 'shooting' out of turn, turned an aha moment into an avoidable embarrassment during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's US visit recently. The high profile visit from June 21 to 23, for which the Indian establishment had laboured long and hard, had gone off without a hitch. Initially, it was averse to the

Indian Prime Minister fielding questions from the media but relented after US officials made it clear that this was a standard part of the state visits. Thereupon, it was decided that he would take one question each from the foreign and the Indian press.

The joint press conference by US President Joe Biden and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi on June 22 saw the Indian journalist from the PTI ask a question on climate change and a Wall Street Journal (WSJ) on human rights violations and religious discrimination in India.

The Indian Prime Minister's reply to the WSJ reporter's

question was detailed and by the book. Extracts of it read, "Democracy is in our spirit and we live it, it's in our Constitution. There is no question of discrimination on the grounds of caste or religion. India believes in moving forward with everybody, with trust and with everybody's efforts".

Without going into merits and demerits of issues at stake, a question was asked as is the right of a reporter and was comprehensively answered by the Indian Prime Minister. The exchange was complete and the matter stood closed. That is until the social media stalwarts and motormouths nearer home got to work muddying the wa-

ters. This unsavoury aftermath definitely detracted from the takeaways from an immensely important diplomatic foray for India and its Prime Minister.

The WSJ White House correspondent Sabrina Siddiqui was subjected to heavy trolling within India. BJP's IT cell chief Amit Malviya termed her questions as motivated.

The trolls included some top politicians. June 26, the White House denounced the harassment campaign against Siddiqui and termed it unacceptable. "We're aware of the reports of that harassment. It's unacceptable, and we absolutely condemn any harassment of journalists anywhere under

any circumstances" White House, National Security Council (NSC) Coordinator for Strategic Communications, John Kirby responded to a question by NBC News reporter Kelly O'Donnel, seeking his reaction to the "intense online harassment" of Siddiqui including by politicians who "have close associations with the pro-Modi government".

On June 27, the White House Correspondents Association (WHCA) president Tamara Keith issued a statement of condemnation.

"Siddiqui represented the White House press corps incredibly well and asked the questions many of us had at the

top of our lists. Unfortunately since then she has been subjected to intense online harassment, including from people with ties to the prime minister's political party, questioning her motives, her religion and her heritage. This is unacceptable. The WHCA stands by her and the questions she chose to ask," the statement read.

Clearly motormouths and fawning foghorns had ended up denting a superb Modi image enhancer through sheer guileless inaptitude. It was not for nothing that the PM had in April 2018 warned his party motormouths to exercise restraint but alas in vain.

# international

## of the day quote

Let's show the fascists by putting up the PTI flag that nothing will stop us from our mission of Haqqeeqi Azadi (real freedom)



IMRAN KHAN | PAKISTAN'S OUSTED PM

One thing that politicians of all stripes do not like to admit: such an Apocalypse is not only possible, but also quite probable



DMITRY MEDVEDEV | RUSSIA'S FORMER PREZ

The Russian government has so far declined our request to access the areas under its temporary military control



DENISE BROWN | UN HUMANITARIAN COORDINATOR FOR UKRAINE

## SHORT TAKES

### Kenya President lifts six-year logging ban

**Nairobi (Kenya):** Kenyan President William Ruto has lifted a six-year ban on logging over the concerns of environmentalists. The president said Sunday it was "foolish" to have mature trees rotting in forests while local industries lacked timber. "This is why we have decided to open up the forest and harvest timber so that we can create jobs for our youth," he said.

### Thai Oppn party struggles for power

**Bangkok:** Thailand's new Parliament convened Monday nearly two months after a progressive opposition party won a stunning election victory, but there was no clear sign that its leader will be able to become prime minister and end nine years of military-dominated rule. To form a government, a party must have the backing of a combined majority of the elected House of Representatives and the military-appointed Senate, which represents the country's traditional conservative ruling class.

### Quake shakes part of Papua

**Jakarta:** An earthquake shook Indonesia's easternmost province Monday, but there were no immediate reports of serious damage or casualties. The U.S. Geological Survey said the magnitude 5.4 quake was centered 135 kilometers (83 miles) southwest of Apepura, a subdistrict in Jayapura, the capital of Papua province. It occurred at a depth of 13 kilometers (8 miles).

### Heatwave hits parts of Japan

**Tokyo:** Temperatures climbed in many places from western to northern Japan, with the Japan Meteorological Agency (JMA) warning that scorching heat is expected to continue in the regions Monday. Daytime highs Sunday hit 35.3 degrees Celsius in Toyota City in Aichi prefecture, 35.1 degrees in Shimanto City in Kochi prefecture, and 31.7 degrees in central Tokyo, report said.

### Indian-American attorney indicted

**New York:** An Indian-American attorney who once ran for a seat in the US House of Representatives has been indicted by a federal jury in Boston for defrauding clients of more than \$5 million in escrow funds. Abhijit "Beej" Das, 50, was arrested last week in connection with a scheme to defraud a business-to-business supply company based in India of millions of dollars, and using client funds for business and personal expenses, including the purchase of a \$2.7 million home in Florida.



Freedom of speech should never be used as a means to despise others and allowing that is rejected and condemned

POPE FRANCIS | HEAD OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

## GRIM SITUATION

Heavy flooding has displaced thousands of people around China as the capital had a relative respite from sweltering heat. Beijing reported 9.8 straight days when the temperature exceeded 35 C (95 F), the National Climate Centre said Monday



# PAK SEES 79% SURGE IN MILITANCY ACTS

AGENCIES

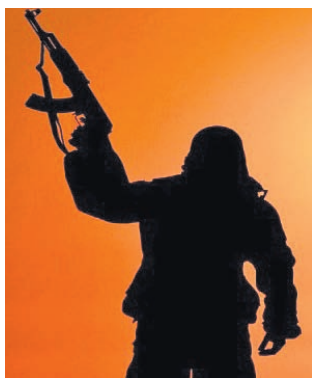
**Islamabad, July 3:** Terror activities in Pakistan have soared by 79 per cent during the first half of 2023, a media outlet reported, citing a statistical report released by independent think tank Pakistan Institute for Conflict and Security Studies (PICSS).

The think tank voiced alarm in its report, stating that at least 271 militant attacks took place during the last 6 months, resulting in the loss of 389 lives and injuring 656 individuals.

The situation in the same timeframe last year was better as compared to the current, as

the first half of 2022 saw 151 attacks and 293 deaths, and 487 injuries, The News reported.

These figures represent a staggering 79 per cent increase in militant attacks during the first half of this year compared to the corresponding period last year. Furthermore, the latter half of 2022 recorded 228 attacks, resulting in 246 fatalities and 349 injuries. Thus, the first six months of 2023 witnessed an 18 per cent rise in attacks compared to the latter half of 2022, accompanied by a 58 per cent increase in fatalities and an 88 per cent increase in injuries, the media outlet reported. Pakistani security forces have



also stepped up their response against terrorism and killed at least 236 militants across the country while 295 suspected militants were also arrested dur-

## 'Pak set to become 4th biggest IMF debtor'

**Islamabad:** Debt-trapped Pakistan will become the fourth largest IMF borrower in the world after receiving a fresh loan of USD 3 billion in the next nine months under the standby arrangement reached with the global lender. Pakistan will move to the fourth place in this list when it receives another \$3 billion in the next nine months under the Stand-By Arrangement made with the Washington-based global lender Thursday. The deal, which still needs to be approved by the IMF's board, comes after an eight-month delay. Earlier, in terms of loans from the IMF, Argentina ranked first with \$46 billion, Egypt stood in second place with \$18 billion, Ukraine came in third with \$12.2 billion, Ecuador took the fourth spot with \$8.2 billion, and Pakistan was at fifth position with \$7.4 billion.

ing the first six months of 2023. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa emerged as the most affected province during the first half of this year, with 174 reported militant attacks. These attacks

claimed the lives of 266 individuals and injured 463.

Balochistan reported 75 terror incidents in the first half of 2023, resulting in 100 deaths and 163 injuries.

# NATO's military plans to defend against Russia

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Brussels, July 3:** Russia's armed forces are bruised but by no means beaten in the war in Ukraine, a top NATO military officer said Monday, as he laid out the biggest revamp to the organisation's military plans since the Cold War should Moscow dare to widen the conflict.

"They might not be 11 feet tall, but they are certainly not 2 feet tall," the Chair of the NATO Military Committee, Admiral Rob Bauer, told reporters. "So, we should never underestimate the Russians and their ability to bounce back." Bauer said that NATO's new planning is based on the strength of the Russian army before President Vladimir Putin launched the war on Ukraine almost 17 months ago.

"What we see in general is that the Russians are careful around NATO. They are not for seeking a conflict with NATO. I think that is a sign that they are very, very busy," he said. "In the land domain, I don't think they have a lot of forces available to do anything to anyone else."



■ NATO, as an organisation, does not provide weapons or ammunition to Ukraine

■ It's sought to avoid being dragged into a wider war with nuclear-armed Russia. At the same time, it is massively reinforcing the security of member countries near Russia, Ukraine and Belarus

■ Under its new plans, NATO aims to have up to 300,000 troops ready to move to its eastern flank within 30 days

"But we are convinced that the Russians are going to reconstitute," he said. "We will continue to look at them as a serious threat, in the maritime, and in the air especially, and in space, they are still very, very, capable, let alone of course in nu-

clear." A revolt by Wagner mercenaries in Russia late last month raised deep security concerns in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland after a deal was reached for their leader, Yevgeny Prigozhin, to be allowed to take refuge in Belarus. Lithuanian President Gitanas Nausėda said that neighbouring countries would face a heightened danger if the Wagner Group deploys its "serial killers" just over their border. Vilnius lies around 35 kilometers (22 miles) from the Belarus border.

Lithuania wants to have a permanent NATO presence on its territory. Germany signaled last week that it would be prepared to base soldiers there if requested. For the moment, though, NATO sees no imminent threat coming from Belarus. NATO's 31 member countries took part in a "force generation conference" last week in an effort to understand how many troops and how much equipment the alliance might have at its disposal to respond to any Russian attack, both in the short and longer term.

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Paris, July 3:** President Emmanuel Macron will meet the leaders of both houses of parliament as violent protests in France over the police shooting of teenager Nahel M appeared to be easing after five nights of unrest during which thousands of people have been arrested amid widespread destruction.

Police made 49 arrests nationwide Sunday, French media reported, citing the interior ministry, down significantly from 719 arrests the day before, and 1,300 Friday.

Macron will also meet Tuesday with the mayors of 220 towns and cities affected by the protests, his office said, after a crisis meeting Sunday night with government ministers, *The Guardian* reported.

The president had been due to fly to Germany Sunday for a state visit that was cancelled due to the ongoing crisis.

Meanwhile, the interior minister, Gerald Darmanin, an-

nounced the death of a 24-year-old firefighter, who died tackling a blaze in an underground car park in the Paris suburb of Saint-Denis after several vehicles were set alight Sunday evening.

On Saturday, rioters rammed a burning car into the home of Vincent Jeanbrun, the mayor of L'Hayles-Roses, nine miles (15 km) south of Paris, at about 1.30 a.m. while his family were asleep.

Jeanbrun was at the town hall at the time, but his wife and one of his two children, aged five and seven, were injured as they fled. Jeanbrun's wife sustained a broken leg.

More than 3,000 people have been detained since Tuesday, after the mass deployment of 45,000 police officers around the country.

Over the weekend, Darmanin said the deployment would be unchanged, after protesters torched cars, looted shops, damaged infrastructure and clashed with police Saturday night.

## Israel launches major air strike on West Bank city

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Ramallah, July 3:** The Israeli army Monday launched a major air strike on the West Bank city of Jenin, one of the biggest military operations in the Palestinian territory in years, according to eyewitnesses and the Israeli military.



Dozens of armoured vehicles backed by drones and helicopters stormed the city and the refugee camp, said Palestinian eyewitnesses, adding that airstrikes were carried out during the exchange of fire between Palestinian militants and Israeli soldiers.

The Israeli military said it struck a "joint operations center" which served as a command center for fighters from the Jenin Brigades, an armed unit comprised of fighters from different militant groups. It declined to specify whether Monday's strike also involved a drone.

At least five Palestinians were killed and 28 injured in the attack that began at about 1 a.m. Monday, with the death toll likely to rise, the Palestinian health ministry said, *The Guardian* reported. The incursion into Jenin is the first since the 2002 Battle of Jenin during the second intifada, when more than 50 Palestinians and 23 Israeli soldiers were killed in over a week of fighting, including 13 Israeli soldiers in a single incident.

Monday's incident brought the death toll of Palestinians killed this year in the West Bank to 133, part of more than a year-long spike in violence that has resulted in some of the worst bloodshed in that area in nearly two decades, *The Guardian* reported.

## Iran executes 354 people in the first half of 2023: Report

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

**Paris, France, July 3:** Iran has hanged at least 354 people in the first six months of 2023, a rights group said Monday adding that the pace of executions was much higher than in 2022.



Rights groups have accused Tehran of increasing the use of the death penalty to spread fear across society in the wake of the protest movement that erupted last September over the

death of Mahsa Amini, who had been arrested for allegedly violating strict dress rules for women. Norway-based Iran Human Rights said the 354 people figure for the first six months up to June 30 was up 36 percent on the same period in 2022, when 261 people were executed.

Emphasising concerns that non-Persian ethnic groups are disproportionately affected by executions in Iran, it said 20 percent of all executions were of members of the Sunni Baluch minority. It said 206 people were executed for drug-related charges, a 126 percent rise compared to the same period last year.

Six women were among those executed in the period while two men were publicly hanged, it added.



## WAR DEEPENS

A Ukrainian serviceman of the 3rd Assault Brigade fires a 122mm mortar towards Russian positions at the front line near Bakhmut, Donetsk region, Ukraine

AP/PTI PHOTO

## CLIMATE CHANGE FUELS 2023 EXTREMES

AGENCIES

**Singapore, July 3:** The target of keeping long-term global warming within 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 Fahrenheit) is moving out of reach, climate experts say, with nations failing to set more ambitious goals despite months of record-breaking heat on land and sea.

As envoys gathered in Bonn in early June to prepare for this year's annual climate talks in November, average global surface air temperatures were more than 1.5C above pre-industrial levels for several days, the EU-funded Copernicus Climate Change Service (C3S) said.

Though mean temperatures had temporarily breached the 1.5C threshold before, this was the first time they had done so in the northern hemisphere summer that starts June 1 sea temperatures also broke April and May records.



"We've run out of time because change takes time," said Sarah Perkins-Kirkpatrick, a climatologist at Australia's University of New South Wales.

As climate envoys from the two biggest greenhouse gas emitters prepare to meet next month, temperatures broke June records in the Chinese capital Beijing, and extreme heatwaves have hit the United States.

Parts of North America were some 10C above the seasonal av-

erage this month, and smoke from forest fires blanketed Canada and the US east Coast in hazardous haze, with carbon emissions estimated at a record 160 million metric tons.

In India, one of the most climate vulnerable regions, deaths were reported to have spiked as a result of sustained high temperatures, and extreme heat has been recorded in Spain, Iran and Vietnam, raising fears that last year's deadly summer could

# World hits record land, sea temperatures

- Temperature records topple around the world
- Sea temperatures also hit record high
- Climate talks failing to respond to extreme weather emergencies
- US climate envoy Kerry expected in Beijing in July

become routine.

Countries agreed in Paris in 2015 to try to keep long-term average temperature rises within 1.5C, but there is now a 66% likelihood the annual mean will cross the 1.5C threshold for at least one whole year between now and 2027, the World Meteorological Organisation predicted in May.

Global average sea surface temperatures hit 21C in late March and have remained at record levels for the time of year throughout April and May.

## UN chief urges shipping industry to go carbon neutral by 2050

**UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres Monday called for a strategy to reduce the shipping industry's emissions to net zero by 2050 as a key meeting of the International Maritime Organisation started here, aiming for a consensus among the 175-member states to critically reduce the carbon emissions in the sector.**



In a video message at the start of the Marine Environment Protection Committee's 80th session here, Guterres also urged for a science-based targets by 2030 - both on absolute emissions reductions and the use of clean fuels. The shipping industry accounts for almost 3 per cent of global emissions.

Australia's weather agency warned that Pacific and Indian ocean sea temperatures could be 3C warmer than normal by October. Global warming is the major factor, said Piers Forster,

professor of climate physics at the University of Leeds, but El Nino, the decline in Saharan dust blowing over the ocean and the use of low-sulphur shipping fuels were also to blame.

# business



**The innovation and startup ecosystem is strongly positioned to find solutions to challenges facing the world today. There is no shortage of funds for good startups, with strong business models**

AMITABH KANT | SHERPA, G20

## 'OIL COS TO TURN PROFITABLE IN FY24'

State-owned oil marketers are likely to turn profitable on fuel marketing in the current fiscal ending March 31, 2024, following large losses in the previous year, Fitch Ratings said Monday. The rating agency expects India's petroleum product demand to grow by mid-single digit percentage in the medium term, supported by forecast that the GDP will grow by 6-7 per cent in the next few years



## of the day quote

Transparency is more important than uniformity and states should ensure that everything gets reported in some form or the other because the market values transparency

BVR SUBRAHMANYAM | CEO, NITI AAYOG

The white collar job market of India is witnessing a structural shift. For a long time, jobs in the tech sector and in top metros were the key drivers of white collar job growth. Of late, jobs in the emerging sectors such as real estate, oil and gas, pharma and BFSI have emerged as significant contributors to job growth

PAWAN GOYAL | CHIEF BUSINESS OFFICER, NAUKRI.COM

India's energy transition must progress unabated to meet the dual objectives of its ever-increasing energy requirements and the fight against climate change

AKSHAY HIRANANDANI | CEO, SERENTICA RENEWABLES

## SHORT TAKES

### Tata hikes PV prices again

**Bangalore:** Tata Motors said it will increase prices of its passenger vehicles by an average 0.6% across models and variants from July 17 Monday. The price hike is meant to offset the residual impact of past input costs, the company said in a statement. Tata Motors had announced price hikes of 1.2% in January and 0.6% in April, citing increased input costs and regulatory changes, respectively. The company's total expenses for the quarter that ended March 31 climbed nearly 30% from a year earlier on an increase in the cost of materials consumed. Vehicle prices across segments have increased in India after the government mandated automakers to fit them with a device to monitor emissions, sparking an increase in cost.

### IDFC to merge with banking arm

**Mumbai:** IDFC First Bank Monday announced merger of its parent IDFC Ltd with itself in an all-stock transaction, marking another major deal in the Indian banking space days after the amalgamation of the HDFC twins. The boards of IDFC First Bank and IDFC have approved the reverse merger. While the bank did not provide the likely valuation of the merged entity, based Monday's closing prices of the two firms on BSE, the valuation is Rs 71,767 crore. Under the proposed reverse merger scheme, an IDFC shareholder will get 155 shares for every 100 shares she/he holds in the bank. Both stocks have a face value of ₹10 each, IDFC First Bank said. The share exchange ratio will result in a premium of about 20% on the closing market price of the shares of IDFC vis-a-vis IDFC First Bank as of June 30, 2023.

## STOCKS ON A ROLL

# SENSEX SCALES 65K PEAK

MARKETS AT RECORD HIGHS FOR THIRD SUCCESSIVE SESSION

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 3:** Equity benchmarks Sensex and Nifty soared to fresh closing record highs for the third successive session Monday, with the 30-share index crossing the historic 65,000 mark on strong foreign fund flows and a rally in global equities.

Hectic buying in index majors Reliance Industries, ITC and HDFC twins also added to the momentum, traders said.

Rallying for the fourth straight session, the 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 486.49 points or 0.75 per cent to settle at its all-time closing high of 65,205.05. During the day, it rallied 581.79 points or 0.89 per cent to its lifetime intraday high of 65,300.35.

In a reflection of broader investor bullishness, the 50-share Nifty surged to a record high as sectors ranging from energy to financials to FMCG rallied. The Nifty climbed 133.50 points or 0.70 per cent to end at a record high of 19,322.55. In intra-day trade, the benchmark zoomed 156.05 points or 0.81 per cent to hit its all-time intraday peak of 19,345.10.

Market benchmarks settled at record highs for the third



**The market's record-breaking momentum continued as the robust June GST collections, and the monsoon covering most parts of the country in the last few days brought cheers to investors**

SHRIKANT CHOUBHAN | HEAD OF RESEARCH (RETAIL), KOTAK SECURITIES

## BSE-listed firms' mcap skyrockets

The market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms reached a record high of ₹298.21 lakh crore Monday as the benchmark Sensex ended above the 65,000-mark for the first time ever amid bullish investor sentiments. Thanks to the ongoing record-breaking rally in equities, the market capitalisation (mcap) of BSE-listed companies jumped to ₹2,98,21,576.81 crore. Investors' wealth have gone up by ₹7.54 lakh crore in four days of market rally. On Friday, the market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms touched an all-time high of ₹296.48 lakh crore.

straight session Monday.

Reliance Industries was the top gainer in the Sensex chart, rising 2.53 per cent, followed by ITC, Bajaj Finance, State Bank of India, HDFC, UltraTech Cement, NTPC, HDFC Bank, Mahindra & Mahindra, Tata Steel, Bajaj Finserv and ICICI Bank.

In contrast, Power Grid, Maruti, Larsen & Toubro, Tata Consultancy Services, Tech Mahindra, Nestle and Tata Motors were among the laggards, skidding up to 1.86 per cent.

As many as 1,972 stocks advanced while 1,721 declined and 147 remained unchanged on BSE.

In the broader market, the BSE smallcap gauge climbed 0.56 per cent and the midcap index advanced 0.30 per cent.

Among the indices, oil & gas jumped 2.28 per cent, energy rallied 2.08 per cent, metal (1.11 per

cent), FMCG (1.09 per cent), financial services (1.02 per cent), realty (0.85 per cent), commodities (0.81 per cent) and bankex (0.78 per cent).

Capital goods, auto, IT, teck, power and industrials were among the laggards.

Meanwhile, the rupee appreciated by 15 paise to close at 81.96 (provisional) against the US dollar Monday.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude climbed 0.97 per cent to \$76.14 a barrel.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) bought equities worth ₹6,397.13 crore Friday, according to exchange data.

GST collections crossed ₹1.60 lakh crore mark for the fourth time since the roll-out of the indirect tax regime, rising 12 per cent to over ₹1.61 lakh crore in June, the Finance Ministry said Saturday.

**RALLYING FOR 4TH STRAIGHT SESSION, SENSEX ENDS AT 65,205.05**  
**NIFTY SETTLES AT A RECORD HIGH OF 19,322.55**  
**NIFTY TRADING AT ABOVE 20X THE ESTIMATED FY24 EARNINGS**

## HDFC twins hog limelight

Shares of HDFC twins were in the limelight Monday and ended in the positive territory, the first day of trading after the merger, amid an overall bullish equity market trend. The stock of HDFC climbed 1.76 per cent to settle at ₹2,871.20 on the BSE. During the day, it jumped 3.70 per cent to its 52-week high of ₹2,926. Shares of HDFC Bank went up by 1.05 per cent to end at ₹1,719.55. In intra-day trade, it advanced 3.29 per cent to ₹1,757.80 - its 52-week high. The combined market valuation of HDFC and HDFC Bank stood at ₹14,93,119.33 crore on the BSE.

## THIRD FAILED ATTEMPT Govt calls off Pawan Hans disinvestment

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 3:** The government Monday decided to call off the strategic disinvestment of Pawan Hans as the successful bidding consortium Star9 Mobility Pvt Ltd was disqualified in view of pending legal cases, making it the third unsuccessful attempt to privatise the helicopter service provider.

The government owns a 51 per cent stake in Pawan Hans, while public sector oil major ONGC holds 49 per cent. In December 2020, the government had invited eoi (expression of interest) for selling Pawan Hans along with ONGC's stake.

The government had in April last year decided to sell the helicopter service provider for ₹211.14 crore to Star9 Mobility Pvt Ltd - a consortium of Big Charter



Private Ltd, Maharaja Aviation Private Ltd and Almas Global Opportunity Fund SPC.

However, in May the sale process was put on hold after it came to light that the lead member of the winning bidder consortium -- Almas Global Opportunity Fund SPC -- has a case pending against it at the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT).

In a statement, the Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM) Monday said the government has examined the adverse orders of NCLT and NCLAT.

## 76% of ₹2,000 notes returned to banks: RBI

In value terms, ₹2,000 notes in circulation has come down to ₹84,000 crore as June 30 from ₹3.56 lakh crore on the day of announcement of withdrawal May 19

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, July 3:** As much as 76 per cent of the ₹2,000 currency notes in circulation have either been deposited or exchanged at banks, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said Monday and asked the public to turn in the remaining notes before September 30.

In a statement, RBI said 87 per cent of the notes returned have been deposited in bank accounts by public while the remaining 13 per cent were ex-

changed by them in other denominations.

The central bank, in a surprise move, May 19 announced withdrawal of ₹2,000 notes from circulation but gave public time till September 30 to either deposit such notes in accounts or exchange them at banks.

Unlike the November 2016 shock demonetisation when old ₹500 and ₹1,000 notes were invalidated overnight, the ₹2,000 notes will continue to be a legal tender till September 30.

The total value of ₹2,000 banknotes in circulation, which amounted to ₹3.62 lakh crore as March 31, 2023, had declined to ₹3.56 lakh crore as at the close of business May 19, 2023.

"According to the data received from the banks, the total value of ₹2,000 bank notes received back from circulation after the announcement on May 19 is ₹2.72 lakh crore up to June 30, 2023.



**87% OF ₹2,000 NOTES DEPOSITED IN BANK ACCOUNTS**  
**13% OF THE NOTES WERE EXCHANGED TO OTHER DENOMINATIONS**

Consequently, ₹2,000 bank notes in circulation as at the close of business on June 30 stood at ₹0.84 lakh crore. Thus, 76 per cent of the ₹2,000 bank notes in circulation as on May 19, 2023 have since been returned," the central bank said in a statement.

Further, RBI said that data collected from major banks indicates that out of the total bank notes in ₹2,000 denomination received back from circulation, about 87 per cent is in the form of deposits and the remaining around 13 per cent has been exchanged into other denomination bank notes.

"Members of the public are requested to utilise the next three months to deposit and/or exchange the ₹2,000 bank notes held with them to avoid any rush in the last few days before September 30, 2023," it added.

It may be noted that RBI has not yet clarified what would be the status of ₹2,000 notes in private hands after September 30. After announcing demonetisation in 2016, the government had made it an offence to hold the withdrawn ₹500 and 1,000 notes (beyond a specified limit) after expiry of the deposit deadlines.

## IHL to raise \$1.5bn to fund RCap buy

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, July 3:** Hinduja group-owned IndusInd International Holdings (IIHL), the promoter of IndusInd Bank, Monday announced a \$1.5-billion capital raising plan to fund the proposed acquisition of Reliance Capital and increase its stake in the lender.

The board of the Mauritius-registered IIHL also decided to increase its holding in the fourth-largest private sector lender to 26 per cent from the present 15 per cent, a statement issued from Port Louis said.

It can be noted that June 29, the lenders to the crippled Reliance Capital accepted the revised ₹9,661 crore bid by IndusInd Bank.

IIHL had made the highest cash offer of ₹9,661 crore in the auctions and secured as much as 99 per cent of the lenders' votes. The bid also includes the ₹500-crore cash balance with RCap going to the lenders, taking the overall recovery to ₹10,200 crore or about 65 per cent of ₹16,000 crore principal secured debt the crippled company owed to lenders.

"The decision to raise \$1.5 billion opens boundless opportunities to expand our business horizon in the country and also other global geographies, in the BFSI sector. Our aspirations will not be capital constrained as raising capital is not an issue at all for us," chairman of IIHL Ashok P Hinduja was quoted as saying in the statement.

The board also approved increasing its shareholding in IndusInd Bank to 26 per cent from the current 15 per cent.

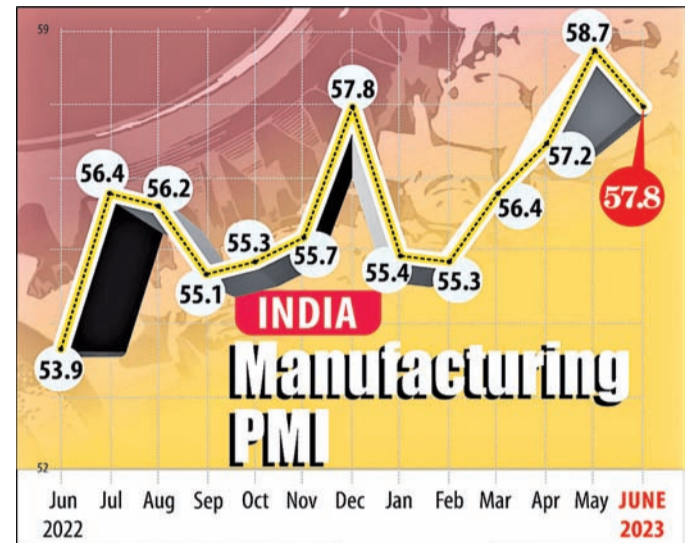
The statement claimed that global sovereign funds and private equity funds have expressed interest in participating in the fundraising/bank's growth story.

The statement further said the group is likely to take IIHL public next year. The board also approved a buyback scheme for partial dilution for its original shareholders at \$20.



## June manufacturing activity moderates

According to PMI, the overall level of business confidence rose to a six-month high



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 3:** Manufacturing sector activities in India moderated in June from a 31-month high in May but output remained in the growth territory, as new work orders expanded sharply amid favourable demand conditions, a monthly survey said Monday.

The seasonally adjusted S&P Global India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) fell from 58.7 in May to 57.8 in June.

## Global factory output slumps

Global factory activity slumped in June, business surveys showed Monday, as sluggish demand in China and in Europe clouded the outlook for exporters. Across the euro zone manufacturing contracted faster than initially thought, as persistent policy tightening by the European Central Bank squeezed finances, and in Britain the pace of decline steepened as optimism faded.

In Asia, while factory activity expanded marginally in China, it contracted in Japan and South Korea as Asia's economic recovery struggled to maintain momentum.

**The surge in input buying underscored the optimism and proactive stance of manufacturers, as they sought to capitalise on favourable market conditions and obtain resources to support production growth**

POLLYANNA DE LIMA | ECONOMICS ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, S&P GLOBAL MARKET INTELLIGENCE

Despite the fall, the headline figure pointed to a considerable improvement in operating conditions, the survey said, adding that the demand strength positively impacted several other measures such as sales, production, stock building and employment.

The June PMI data pointed to an improvement in overall operating conditions for the 24th straight month. In PMI parlance, a print above 50 means expansion while a score below 50 indicates contraction.

Demand strength, new client enquiries and marketing efforts underpinned optimistic forecasts towards growth prospects.

On the employment front, goods producers sought to expand capacities by taking on additional workers in June. Employment rose at a moderate pace that was broadly similar to May.

## '2G Mukh Bharat' Jio rolls out internet-enabled phone at ₹999

The new Jio Bharat phone is the firm's latest attempt to ensure everyone reaps the benefits of digital society

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 3:** Jio Monday launched internet-enabled Jio Bharat phones at ₹999, packing in cheaper monthly plan of ₹123 for unlimited voice calls and 14 GB data.

The new offering aims to accelerate the '2G Mukh Bharat' vision, as India still has 250 million mobile subscribers trapped in the 2G era with feature phones.



While India is leading the 5G revolution on one side with the transformational Jio True 5G network, there is a section of society that is unable to reap the benefits of digital technology in entirety.

"Jio Bharat is being launched

**There are still 250 million mobile phone users in India who remain trapped in the 2G era, unable to tap into basic features of the internet at a time when the world stands at the cusp of a 5G revolution**

AKASH AMBANI | CHAIRMAN, RELIANCE JIO

with the objective of empowering every Indian with the power of digital services, especially those who cannot afford a smartphone. This will truly mark the beginning of digital freedom for the 250 million feature phone users in India and will bridge the digital di-

vide," Jio said in a statement. Beta trial for first 1 million Jio Bharat phones starts from July 7, 2023.

Besides Reliance Retail, other phone brands (starting with Karbonn) will adopt the 'Jio Bharat platform' to build 'Jio Bharat phones'.

Jio Bharat is priced at ₹999, "the lowest entry price for an internet-enabled phone", it said. It is offering 30 per cent cheaper monthly plan and 7 times more data compared to feature phone offerings of other operators.

"Rs 123 per month for unlimited voice calls and 14 GB data, compared to other operators' ₹179 plan for voice calls and 2GB data," the statement added.

## Oil rallies on Saudi, Russian output cuts

**BOTH RIYADH AND MOSCOW HAVE BEEN TRYING TO PROP UP PRICES BY TIGHTENING GLOBAL SUPPLIES**

REUTERS

**London, July 3:** Oil rose Monday after top exporters Saudi Arabia and Russia announced supply cuts for August, overshadowing concern over a global economic slowdown and the potential for further increases to US interest rates.

Saudi Arabia Monday said it would extend its voluntary cut



**SAUDI EXTENDS PRODUCTION CUTS THROUGH AUGUST**  
**RUSSIA TO CUTS AUGUST EXPORTS BY 500,000 BPD**

of one million barrels per day (bpd) for another month to include August, the state news agency said.

Russia, seeking to nudge up global oil prices in concert with Saudi Arabia, will reduce its oil exports by 500,000 bpd in August, Deputy Prime Minister Alexander Novak said Monday,

further tightening global supplies.

Brent has dropped from \$113 per barrel a year ago, sent lower by concerns of an economic slowdown and ample supplies from major producers.

Brent crude futures were up 0.9%, or 68 cents at \$76.09 a barrel by 1021 GMT after gaining 0.8% Friday US West Texas Intermediate crude rose nearly 1%, or 69 cents to \$71.33, having gained 1.1% in the previous session.

"Investors are turning upbeat as the second half of the year kicks off; they expect tighter oil balance and buoyant equities also suggest that recession will be avoided, albeit probably narrowly," said PVM analyst Tamas Varga.

## BLUE TIGERS FACE KUWAIT IN THE FINAL FOR THEIR NINTH SAFF CHAMPIONSHIP CROWN

# India eye cloud '9'



**MATCH TIMING**  
India vs Kuwait  
Time: 7:30 pm  
Telecast: DD Sports

opener against Pakistan. However, India, under the talismanic Sunil Chhetri, had shown a streak of determination to rise above obstacles. After scoring in three successive matches in the group stage, Chhetri was not able to find the back of the net in the semifinals against Lebanon. Of course, he converted a penalty in the shootout, but the striker would like to make a heftier contribution in the summit clash.

India would also hope that Sahal Abdul Samad, Mahesh Singh and Udanta Singh will continue to be energetic on the field, feeding Chhetri with those dreaded crosses. Mahesh, who is usually deployed as a winger, was fielded behind Chhetri against Lebanon to add more support to the skipper. Gawli indicated a continuation of that strategy in the final as well.

"We wanted him to play there (in wings) and feed the wingers and Sunil Chhetri. He was doing that. We kept Ashique (Kuruniyan) on the left because

of the physicality, and he was doing well. He was running a lot. We did not want to change that," Gawli said. But the Indians know that Kuwait are a battle-hardened side, and nothing less than their best would suffice.

## Jhingan confident of triumph

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, July 3: Without disregarding the strength of Kuwait, India defender Sandesh Jhingan Monday said the hosts are confident of winning the SAFF Championship here Tuesday.

"Our focus is now on Kuwait, it is going to be a tough game. They are a very good team. They have an experienced coach. We are looking forward to it. We have done well together and sky is the limit for this batch," said Jhingan during the pre-match press conference.

"They have very technical players, and individually, they are also good. About their (FIFA) ranking (141), everyone knows that they aren't where they should be. If you don't do your thing for 10 seconds, they score against you," added Jhingan.

Jhingan just can't wait to take the field after missing the semi-final against Lebanon due to the two accumulated yellow cards in the group matches against Pakistan and Kuwait.

"I missed being on the field (against Lebanon) like any other footballer. I don't want to miss the big games. But the team did really well, and I don't think I was missed much. Mehtab Singh did well and Anwar Ali did well, and the entire backline did well. It is all about team philosophy and unity. I was personally confident that we will get through



Sandesh Jhingan addresses media persons during the pre-match press conference, Monday

to the final," he said.

The veteran defender had words of appreciation for Anwar, who was exceptional against Lebanon. "We all know about Anwar's condition (Hypertrophic Cardio Myopathy). Coming out of it needs a strong mentality, and credit to his family for supporting him. He is doing very well at the moment," Jhingan added.

India have never lost a final at home since 2005, and assistant coach Mahesh Gawli hoped his side will handle the pressure well. "There is pressure because

we want to win. The team is doing very well and I hope they play the same as they were doing," Gawli said.

India and Kuwait were involved in a heated Group A match, which ended in a 1-1 draw, a few days ago. However, Gawli said he has told the players to remain calm and focus on the task at hand.

"The last match against Kuwait was very heated. But we have spoken to the boys and asked them to be calm and cool because it is a game, and we have to win," he said.

## Djoko, Swiatek seal wins at Wimbledon

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Wimbledon, July 3: Novak Djokovic and Iga Swiatek advanced with straight-set victories Monday despite a rain delay as Wimbledon got started. Venus Williams and Coco Gauff are among the other big names in action later on Day 1.

It is the year's third major tournament — and Djokovic won the first two: the Australian Open in January and the French Open in June. That puts him halfway to the first calendar-year Grand Slam in men's tennis since 1969. He seeks a fifth consecutive title at the All England Club and eighth overall, which both would tie records for men.

Djokovic, the No.2 seed, beat Pedro Cachin 6-3, 6-3, 7-6(7-4) after a rain delay that lasted more than an hour. Groundskeepers used leaf blowers to dry the grass.

Swiatek, who owns four major



NOVAK DJOKOVIC



IGA SWIATEK

**SCHEDULE (TOP 10 SEEDS) WITH ESTIMATED TIME**

**Men's singles**  
D Thiem vs S Tsitsipas (5); 3:30 pm  
D Medvedev (3) vs A Fery; 3:30 pm  
H Rune (6) vs G Loffhagen; 3:30 pm  
C Alcaraz (1) vs J Chardy; 5:30 pm

**Women's singles**  
M Sakkari (8) vs M Kostyuk; 3:30 pm  
B Krejckikova (10) vs H Watson; 3:30 pm  
E Rybakina (3) vs S Rogers; 6:00 pm  
O Jabeur (6) vs M Frech; 7:30 pm  
A Sabalenka (2) vs P Udvardy; 9:15 pm

Telecast: Star Sports channels

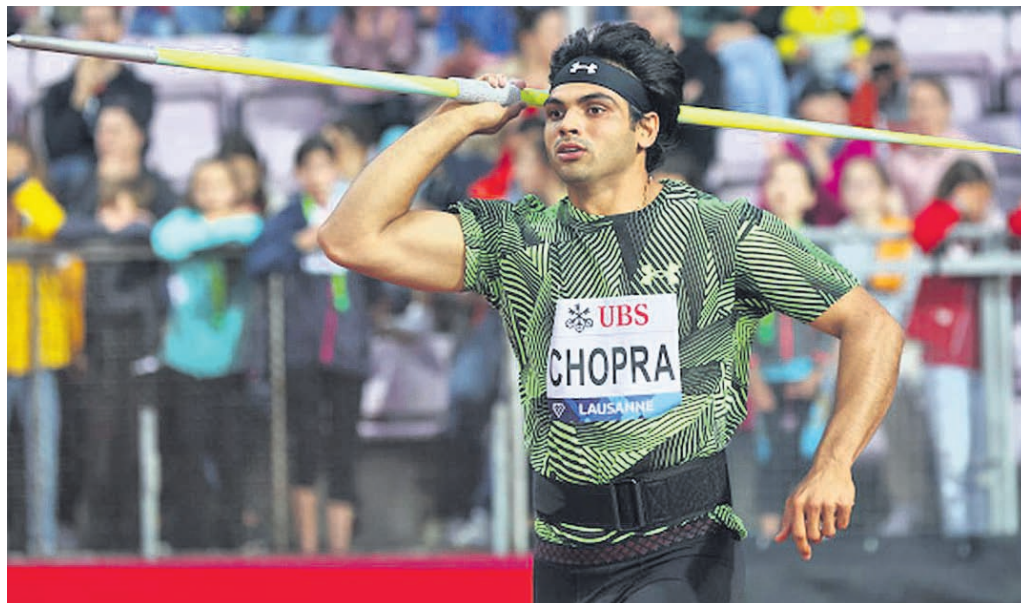
titles but hasn't been past the fourth round at the All England Club, beat Zhu Lin of China 6-1, 6-3 at No.1 Court, winning the final two games after the roof was closed following a rain delay.

Barbora Strycova, a semifinalist in 2019, became the first winner of this year's tournament by beating Maryna Zanevska 6-1, 7-5. On the men's side, seventh-seeded Andrey Rublev beat Max Purcell 6-3, 7-5, 6-4 on No.3 Court.

After the event, Chopra said that his next competition will be in Budapest. It means that he may miss a couple of international events before that.

The Hungarian capital of Budapest will host the World Athletics Championships from August 19 to 27. The javelin throw competition begins with the qualification round August 25.

## Neeraj yet to gain full fitness



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 3: Olympic champion Neeraj Chopra Monday admitted that he was in a quandary whether to go full throttle in Lausanne because he was returning from an injury and his fitness level was still not at the desired level.

The star javelin clinched his second consecutive Diamond League title on June 30 with a throw of 87.66m — an effort that was not close to his best in recent past.

After the event, Chopra said that his next competition will be in Budapest. It means that he may miss a couple of international events before that.

The Hungarian capital of Budapest will host the World Athletics Championships from August 19 to 27. The javelin throw competition begins with the qualification round August 25.

"Overall, my fitness level was a bit low (in Lausanne). Because of the injury, there was a question mark on my mind also whether I am 100 per cent fit or not, whether I have to push myself or not," Chopra said during a virtual media interaction. "I need to improve my fitness, work on it (fitness) through training so that I can give my best at the World Championships and fulfill the dream of winning gold there."

The 25-year-old Chopra, who had also won the season-opening Diamond League in Doha May 5, had sustained a muscle strain while training, which he had announced May 29.

He said saving himself from injury will be his main goal this season as three major competitions — World Championships in August, Diamond League Finals in September and Asian Games in October — are lined up.

"I have to go with 100 per cent fitness in these events. If I am not

physically fit, I will also be not mentally ready. Not only the physical aspect, the mental aspect is also important," he said.

"There is a lot of time now to work on my fitness and be ready for the World Championships and other major events."

Chopra has already got 16 Diamond League points after winning two legs, which should suffice to earn a place in the grand finale in Eugene, USA, September 16-17.

There are still two Diamond League events which have javelin throw on the roster before the grand finale — in Monaco July 21 and in Zurich August 31. Chopra, however, said that he has not finally decided that he will skip the Monaco leg.

"There is still time before Monaco. We will see for up to seven days and decide on whether to compete there or not. If I feel that I am good and up for it, I will go there and compete."

## Sindhu, Lakshya look to regain lost touch



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA



the Indian still holds a 14-10 win-loss advantage over Yamaguchi.

Commonwealth Games champion Lakshya Sen too has slipped out of top 10 with a slew of first round exits this year. The 19-ranked Sen has suffered first-round exits in four events with his best performance being the Indonesia Masters in January where he reached the quarterfinals.

Sen is battling to regain form after he underwent a nose surgery for a deviated septum after the World Championships last August. The surgery was followed by frequent illness and allergies for over eight months, he said. Unlike Sindhu, Sen has a tough road ahead as he is up against second seeded Kunlavut Vitidsarn of Thailand in the opening round.

In the men's doubles, the Indian challenge will be led by Krishna Prasad Garaga and Vishnuvardhan Panjala, who open their campaign against Julien Maio and William Vilerger of France.

Calgary, July 3: Star Indian shuttlers PV Sindhu and Lakshya Sen will look to find their mojo and gain valuable ranking points in the ongoing Olympic qualification cycle when they begin their campaign at the Canada Open World Tour Super 500 tournament here Tuesday.

Former World Champion and two-time Olympic medallist Sindhu has hit a rough patch after returning from an injury. The former World No.2 slipped to 12 in the BWF women's singles rankings and she will have to make up for the lost time in the Paris Olympics qualification cycle (May 1-April 28, 2024).

Sindhu, who sustained a stress fracture en route to winning her maiden Commonwealth Games gold in Birmingham last year, is still fighting to regain full fitness.

Sindhu is in the half of top-seeded Akane Yamaguchi. The Japanese defeated Sindhu in the Singapore Open last month, but

## Philipsen wins 3rd stage, but Yates keeps overall lead

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Bayonne (France), July 3: Belgian cyclist Jasper Philipsen won the third stage of the Tour de France in a bunched sprint Monday, while Adam Yates of Britain kept the race leader's yellow jersey.

The 25-year-old Philipsen was expertly led to the front by his Alpein-Deceuninck teammate Mathieu van der Poel and comfortably held off German rider Phil Bauhaus and Australian Caleb Ewan as they dashed to the line.

Danish sprinter Fabio Jakobsen was fourth ahead of Belgian standout Wout van Aert. They all clocked 4 hours, 43 minutes, 15 seconds on the 193-kilometer (120-mile) route from Amorebieta-Etxano in Spain's Basque country to Bayonne in France.

Yates maintained his six-second lead over two-time Tour winner Tadej Pogacar and his twin brother Simon Yates in third. Defending champion Jonas Vingegaard of Denmark stayed sixth.

## Pride of playing for WI has to be brought back: Formers

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, July 3: For those who have seen the glory days of West Indies cricket, the sight of them missing the bus to ICC World Cup 2023 was deeply painful.

The legendary Gordon Greenidge and Joel Garner know the feeling of winning a World Cup. They were part of Clive Lloyd's invincible outfit that lifted the trophy in 1979, beating England at Lord's.

When PTI reached out to the legendary duo, the feeling of disappointment was very evident after the West Indies failed to qualify for the 50-over World Cup in India.

"See! I don't watch too much cricket these days, especially the white ball ones. Earlier a West Indies defeat used to hurt a lot but now it doesn't that much as our standards have fallen over the years. But yes, a World Cup without the West Indies is quite unimaginable.



"We have no more depth to hit," Greenidge told this agency.

The view of the 72-year-old former West Indies opener found an echo in Garner's words. "We are not what we were, right! Earlier, there used to be a lot of pride in playing for the West

Indies. It was our motivation. Now, the young players are getting more attracted to T20 leagues. No blame on them as everyone looks around for security," said Garner.

"Our generation also did not get too much money; it came

mainly from County cricket. But now this generation of cricketers has many avenues to earn, and they cannot be blamed for using them. The pride of playing for the West Indies has to be brought back," added the 70-year-old Barbadian.

When the West Indies failed to enter the Super 12 of ICC T20 World Cup 2022, then Cricket West Indies president Ricky Skerritt had promised a thorough investigation and revamp. But going by the recent occurrences, nothing much has evolved since. Understandably, Skerritt is disappointed.

So, what is the way forward for the West Indies to regain their pomp? "I have always said that we need to pick the right teams, ensure availability of the best players for big tournaments and practice games ahead of them. It assures cohesion.

"It assures that we remain competitive and if you are not competitive enough then the big teams might not be interested in playing against the West Indies. Crowd will stay away from the stadiums. We will go down the pecking order. It should not happen," Skerritt notes.

His words hold a lot of truth

in them as West Indies' preparation for the World Cup qualifiers was bordering on the doltish. For the qualifiers, which are being held in Zimbabwe, the West Indies played practice matches in the UAE. The conditions in both the nations are as different as chalk and cheese.

It has been often said that former players are not actively involved in the development of cricket in the Caribbean, leaving the young cricketers with no one to look up to.

"We are around. We are willing to help. But there has to be a proper definition of roles as clarity in communication is very important. I don't think there is any scarcity of talent in the West Indies.

"But we need a proper system to keep the young players motivated and focused. It is an effort to be made by all the stakeholders, not just by one section or one person," said Garner. Cricket lovers from around the world will be hoping for that!