



## HUGE COMPLIMENT

Actor Tamannaah has been referred to as the Indian Shakira by her fans in song *Kaavaalaa* of Rajinikanth starrer *Jailer*

LEISURE P2



## FOCUS ON CLIMATE CHANGE

President Joe Biden and King Charles III use their first meeting to highlight the generational issue of climate change

INTERNATIONAL P10



## LAKSHYA REIGNS SUPREME

Lakshya Sen notches up his second BWF Super 500 title with a straight-game win over Li Shi Feng in the Canada open final

SPORTS P12

# Foxconn blow to India's chip making dream

OTHER INVESTORS LINED UP, SAYS VEDANTA

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, July 10:** In a major setback to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's plans of making India a chip-manufacturing hub, Taiwanese chip-making giant Foxconn Monday announced that it has withdrawn from a USD 19.5 billion joint venture with India-based industrial giant Vedanta.

In a statement, Foxconn, the world's largest contract electronics maker, said it has determined it will not move forward on the joint venture with Vedanta.

Foxconn, best known for assembling iPhones and other Apple products, and Vedanta had signed a MoU in 2022 to establish semiconductor and display production parts in Gujarat, the home state of PM Modi.

Anil Agarwal's metals-to-oil conglomerate Vedanta responded saying it was fully committed to its semiconductor fab project and we have lined up other partners to set up India's first foundry.

It however did not give details of the new partners. European chipmaker STMicroelectronics was being roped in as a technology partner for the venture but talks were deadlocked.

Most of the world's chips are manufactured in a handful of countries and India, which expects its semiconductor market to be worth USD 63 billion by 2026, is a late entrant.

Three applications - one from the Vedanta-Foxconn joint venture, another from a global consortium of ISMC and one from Singapore-based IGSS Ventures - were received in response to

the government's incentive scheme for local manufacture of semiconductors.

The other two applications too haven't made much progress.

Just last week, Vedanta announced that it will acquire the semiconductor and display glass units from group company Twin Star Technologies Ltd.

It is to buy 100 per cent of Vedanta Foxconn Semiconductors Pvt and Vedanta Displays Ltd from Twin Star, a unit of Vedanta's ultimate parent Volcan Investments Ltd.

In a statement Monday Foxconn said In order to explore more diverse development opportunities, according to mutual agreement, Foxconn has determined it will not move forward on the joint venture with Vedanta.

Foxconn said it is working to remove the Foxconn name from what now is a fully-owned entity of Vedanta.

Foxconn has no connection to the entity and efforts to keep its original name will cause confusion for future stakeholders, Hon Hai Technology Group (Foxconn) said.

The statement said that for over a year, Hon Hai Technology Group (Foxconn) and Vedanta have worked hard to bring a great semiconductor idea to reality. It has been a fruitful experience that can position both companies strongly going forward.

"Foxconn is confident about the direction of India's semiconductor development. We will continue to strongly support the government's 'Make In India' ambitions and establish a diversity of local partnerships that meet the needs of stakeholders," it said.



IN SPATE: Locals cross a bridge over the swollen Beas river during heavy rainfall in Kullu district of Himachal Pradesh, Monday

PTI PHOTO

## NIA GRILLS ACCUSED OVER 'PAKISTAN LINK'

**Bhubaneswar:** A team of National Investigation Agency (NIA) reached Bhubaneswar Monday and started interrogation of arrested accused Abhijeet Sanjay Jambure, who was allegedly in regular touch with some Pakistani intelligence officials. The Special Task Force (STF) of Odisha Police had arrested Abhijeet, a software company employee, from Pune, Maharashtra June 29. He is now on four-day police remand, informed KK Panigrahi, superintendent of police, STF. Abhijeet has links with at least seven Pakistan citizens and 10 Nigerian citizens through WhatsApp, said the SP.

# Cab okays 'Ama Odisha Nabin Odisha' scheme

THERE IS BUDGET PROVISION OF ₹4,000 CRORE UNDER THE SCHEME FROM THE STATE BUDGET | THE SCHEME WILL COVER ALL GRAM PANCHAYATS IN EACH BLOCK OF THE STATE WITH ENTITLEMENT OF ₹50 LAKH

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 10:** Ahead of 2024 elections, the state Cabinet Monday decided to modify the existing 'Ama Gaon Ama Bikash' programme by giving it a new dimension in the form of 'Ama Odisha Nabin Odisha' under state plan. The scheme will be implemented with effect from the current FY 2023-24.

Energy Minister Pratap Keshari Deb said the Cabinet has decided to modify the existing 'Ama Gaon Ama Bikash' programme by giving it a new dimension in the form of 'Ama Odisha Nabin Odisha' under state plan for taking up measures to augment rural infrastructure leading to accelerated growth as well as to promote, preserve and protect Jagannath culture and tradition of the state.

The vision of the intervention is to transform Odisha to modern and aspirational Odisha retaining the essence, soul and spirit of Jagannath culture and spreading it to the world, Deb said.

The main objective of the scheme is to provide missing links to the existing small and

essential projects and development of infrastructure and also achieving empowerment of women and youth, bridging critical gaps in education, digital and sports facilities, Deb said.

The scheme will help in the improvement of infrastructure for primary education and also provide missing links to the existing development infrastructure, construction, modernisation and expansion works.

Through this scheme, the government is also eyeing to create additional facilities for Mission Shakti Groups at panchayat level, provide banking facilities and improve digital access in terms of mobile connectivity, optical fibre connectivity, WiFi and internet connectivity in the rural areas.

The minister informed that projects with cost ranging from ₹2.50 lakh to ₹10 lakh would be undertaken under the new scheme. The projects under the scheme will be suggested/recommended by local people/community organisations/public representatives and other stakeholders, he said.

The consolidated GP wise project

list of the block will be submitted to Panchayati Raj and Drinking Water department with signatures of Collector and Zilla Parishad President of the district for due examination and approval of the government.

The Panchayat Samiti would execute the work departmentally following due procedure. The Collector shall be authorised to select any other agency/agencies for execution of work.

Transparency measures such as a web-based MIS for monitoring of the scheme and a dedicated app for sharing of photographs before, during and after for each project along with GIS tagging will be developed under the scheme, he added.

Ahead of the 2019 elections, the state government had launched the 'Ama Gaon Ama Bikash' programme through which Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik was directly interacting with panchayat representatives and locals. After hearing them, he was approving necessary projects for the panchayats. So, the state government would resume the programme as the election is approaching, sources said.

## SHORT TAKES

### Putin met Wagner chief, says Kremlin

**Kyiv:** The Kremlin's spokesman says Russian President Vladimir Putin met with Wagner leader Yevgeny Prigozhin days after a short-lived rebellion by the mercenary chief and his private army. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Monday that the three-hour meeting took place June 29 and also involved commanders from the military company Prigozhin founded. Wagner mercenaries have fought alongside Russian troops in Ukraine. Prigozhin has a long-simmering conflict with Russia's top military brass which June 24 culminated in an armed mutiny in which he led his fighters into Russia. Prigozhin ended the mutiny after a deal was brokered for him to be exiled in Belarus. P10

### China kindergarten stabbing claims six

**Beijing:** A man with a knife killed six people and wounded one more Monday at a kindergarten in south-eastern China, police and a news report said Monday. A 25-year-old man was arrested following the 7:40am attack in Lianjiang, a city in Guangdong province, a police statement said. A news outlet, Dafeng News, cited an unidentified witness as saying the attacker's child had been struck earlier by the car of one of the people who was killed at the school.

## IRREGULAR by MANJUL



The govt has fulfilled another wish. We always wanted a pool in our house

# Torrential rains batter north India for 3rd day

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 10:** Incessant rains unleashed more death and destruction Monday in parts of north India with 37 people killed in landslides and other rain-related incidents in the last two days even as the Army and NDRF teams stepped in to intensify the relief and rescue operations.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has spoken with chief ministers of Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand about the situation and assured them of all help and support from the Central gov-

ernment. Modi also spoke with senior ministers and officials and took stock of the situation in the wake of excessive rainfall in parts of the country, his office said.

Flash floods and landslides claimed 18 lives over the past two days in Himachal Pradesh, while nine people died in Punjab and Haryana, seven in Rajasthan and three in Uttar Pradesh in different rain-related incidents.

Several rivers in north India are in spate. In cities and towns across the region, many roads and residential areas were submerged. More P7 & 9

## MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VAIATION
SENSEX	65344.17 ↑ 63.72
NIFTY	19355.90 ↑ 24.10
DOLLAR	82.58 ↑ ₹0.34
EURO	90.73 ↑ ₹0.58
GOLD	₹58,630 ↓ ₹152
SILVER	₹71,142 ↓ ₹168

## WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
TEMP MAX	36.0°C	35.5°C
TEMP MIN	26.0°C	26.6°C
Humidity	87%	79%
Rainfall	0.1mm	Nil

Forecast: Cloudy sky with light rain

# Like a mirror: Most reflective exoplanet identified

AGENCE-FRANCE PRESSE

**Paris, July 10:** A scorching hot world where metal clouds rain drops of titanium is the most reflective planet ever observed outside of our Solar System, astronomers said Monday.

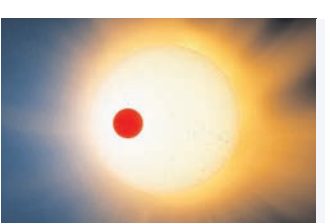
This strange world, which is more than 260 light years from Earth, reflects 80 per cent of the light from its host star, according to new observations from Europe's exoplanet-probing Cheops space telescope.

That makes it the first exoplanet comparably shiny as Venus, which is the brightest object in our night sky other than the Moon.

First discovered in 2020, the Neptune-sized planet called LTT9779b orbits its star in just 19 hours. Because it is so close, the side of the planet facing its star is a sizzling 2,000 degrees Celsius, which is considered far too hot for clouds to form.

Yet LTT9779b seems to have them. "It was really a puzzle," said Vivien Parmentier, a researcher at France's Cote d'Azur Observatory and co-author of a new study in the journal *Astronomy and Astrophysics*.

The researchers then "realised we should think about this cloud formation in the same way as condensation forming in a bathroom after a hot shower," he said



IT WAS REALLY A PUZZLE. IT'S A PLANET THAT SHOULDN'T EXIST  
VIVIEN PARMENTIER | RESEARCHER, FRANCE'S COTE D'AZUR OBSERVATORY

in a statement. Like running hot water steams up a bathroom, a scorching stream of metal and silicate - the stuff of which glass is made - oversaturated LTT9779b's atmosphere until metallic clouds

formed, he said. Surviving 'Neptune desert' The planet, which is around five times the size of Earth, is an outlier in other ways.

The only exoplanets previously found that orbit their stars in less than 24 hours are either gas giants 10 times bigger than Earth - or rocky planets half its size. But LTT9779b lives in a region called the "Neptune desert", where planets its size are not supposed to be found. "It's a planet that shouldn't exist," Parmentier said. "We expect planets like this to have their atmosphere blown away by their star, leaving behind bare rock."

than 24 hours are either gas giants 10 times bigger than Earth - or rocky planets half its size.

The planet's metallic clouds "act like a mirror", reflecting away light and preventing the atmosphere from being blown away, according to the ESA. The research marks "a big milestone" because it shows how a Neptune-sized planet could survive in the Neptune desert. "It's a bit like a shield, like in

It is the first exoplanet comparably shiny as Venus, which is the brightest object in our night sky other than the Moon

those old Star Trek films where they have shields around their ships," he told AFP.

The research marks "a big milestone" because it shows how a Neptune-sized planet could survive in the Neptune desert, he added.

The European Space Agency's Cheops space telescope was launched into Earth's orbit in 2019 on a mission to investigate planets discovered outside our Solar System.



# leisure

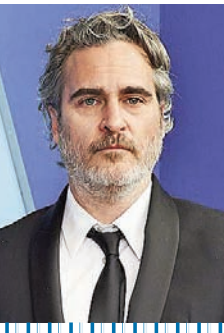


## WILL SMITH MAKES FUN OF SON JADEN

Actor Will Smith has mocked his son Jaden for not having any children yet. The King Richard actor shared an Instagram post recently to mark the *Karate Kid* star's 25th birthday but took the opportunity to suggest it was time for him to become a grandfather, reports *Female First UK*.

## PHOENIX TRANSFORMS AS NAPOLEON BONAPARTE

Actor Joaquin Phoenix and director Ridley Scott have come together once again for another grand historical military film. Sony and Apple have unveiled the initial trailer for *Napoleon*, helmed by Scott and featuring Phoenix in the role of the renowned French commander Napoleon Bonaparte, reports *Variety*.



### FORTUNE FORECAST

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#### ARIES

Old, fond memories will define your mood today, which will show up in the manner in which you deal with work, where your mellow side will be visible to others. You are also circumspect with money and tend towards saving it. Ganesh says people dealing in cash and money-lenders will benefit.

#### TAURUS

You may find yourself compromising against your will today, predicts Ganesh. Stand strong despite things going awry instead of feeling disillusioned due to poor results. Ongoing negotiations might come to a logical end and a few important decisions are likely to be delayed due to lack of proper information.

#### GEMINI

You have been ignoring a few problems that have been plaguing your family members for quite some time now. It's time you looked into the matter, says Ganesh. Irrespective of how difficult the challenges are, today you will emerge victorious.

#### CANCER

Your strange and unconventional behaviour doesn't always go down well with many people. If you think you are different, and maybe even better than others, it is advisable that you keep it under the wraps.

#### LEO

Some people have the world at their feet. And today, you are one of them, says Ganesh. With your gorgeous appearance and gregarious attitude, it is easy for you to open all doors with just a touch. So, you have the luxury to choose — either you entertain yourself through multiple avenues such as movies, theatre and music, or you be the entertainer with your superior performing skills.

#### VIRGO

Financial affairs will face a major obstruction today. Ganesh advises you to allow your mind to prevail over your heart. Take extraordinary care of your precious personal possessions, apart from your legal duties and new projects keeping in view their long-term effect on your mind.

#### LIBRA

It's a day of reaching new heights when it comes to finances. The cosmos favours moneylenders and stock marketeers. Call it the special touch that you give to all transactions monetary, but today you have the uncanny knack of raking in the moolah from all sources. Sit back and see your tenacity multiply your fortunes, says Ganesh.

#### SCORPIO

Your energy levels are high as you gear up for new events. However, there are chances that these events may not meet your expectations. But, don't lose hope and get disappointed. Keep your spirits high. Implement the first lesson learnt in school: try & try till you succeed!

#### SAGITTARIUS

Your business is all set to expand with you making the most of your overseas contacts. Effective communication skills will help you sail through your tasks. And you are making all the right moves to become the leader of your pack.

#### CAPRICORN

Patience is tested when one is in trouble; your patience could be tried today. The trick is in keeping your composure, says Ganesh. Avoid getting into an argument or scuffle with those around you, as luck may not be on your side.

#### AQUARIUS

Get ready for a gala evening as you will party at the smallest excuse! You may toast a friend's success, or may be ecstatic about finding your lost pet. Otherwise it's the usual, says Ganesh. You plan a bit and march ahead successfully in your business or profession.

#### PISCES

Looking at your planetary positions for today, there is a likelihood that you will suffer from reversals in fortunes financially. Hence be wary when it comes to financial dealings.



## Sara defines three levels of success

New Delhi: Actress Sara Ali Khan has three levels of success, and the actor says her latest film *Zara Haike Zara Bachke (ZHKB)* helped her tick all of them. "For me, there are three levels of success. There's perceptual success. This film helped me achieve all three levels of success. Vicky, Dino sir and I said, (when) the film will make Rs 50 crore, we'll be publicly successful. Right now, touchwood, we are touching Rs 85 crore," said the Simmba actress. "Then there's mental success when my mother and my brother like my work. I'm proud of my work. Finally, there's really internal success which comes the day you know you have given your 100 per cent. Being

able to give your 100 per cent every day is the only kind of success that's not fickle," the 27-year-old actor told PTL. Asked about the secret to *ZHKB*'s success, she said, "Simplicity of the story is the secret. Being Somya with Vicky as Kapil under Laxman sir's guidance was the most special for me." On the work front, Sara has *Ae Watan Mere Watan, Metro...In Dino*, and *Murder Mubarak*. PTL

## Won't ever go nude for a project: Nargis

Mumbai: Actress Nargis Fakhri shares her excitement about exploring the OTT space, which she says pushes boundaries and allows actors to explore their limits. "Knowing that the OTT space has exploded with so much content, I was always very much curious about being a part of it. OTT content pushes boundaries and allows actors to explore their limits. Any actor including me would want to do that," says the Rockstar actress. However, the Madras Cafe actress has her reservation

on shedding clothes before the camera. She added, "I am open to take on challenging roles that may involve portraying characters with diverse sexual orientations or unconventional storylines including homosexuality, which has been a point of debate lately. I wouldn't mind that because playing a homosexual or being shown as a woman married to another woman doesn't bother me. Playing any character for me is part of my job. You're acting and I think that's totally fine. But I would never be naked for a project. I have a problem with nudity." AGENCIES

## BEING OLD IS WONDERFUL: ZEENAT AMAN

Mumbai: Actress Zeenat Aman is happy as her style statement has encouraged several people, especially women, to stop dyeing their grey hair. Talking to Instagram, she wrote, "Grey weather, grey hair... and a splash of colour to offset it all!" She continued, "I didn't intend for my grey hair to be a statement, but a statement it has become. In fact, yesterday I read a tweet by someone who said they know at least three people who have been inspired to stop colouring their hair since I made my Instagram debut! I thought this was a wonderful compliment. If embracing my natural hair is encouraging others to do the same, then I'm all the happier for it." Talking about the different standards offered to men versus women when it comes to ageing, she said, "I was initially reluctant to stop dyeing my hair. Some well wishers even said it would negatively impact my work opportunities. It was only once I contemplated upon my own hesitations that I realised I really don't care to buttress our society's idolisation of youth. Being young is wonderful, but so is being old. It thrills me to see more and more silver-haired women (of all ages) challenge the status quo." AGENCIES



## Tamannaah gets Indian Shakira tag

Chennai: Actress Tamannaah Bhatia responded to her fans, who referred her as the Indian version of Shakira in the recently released song called *Kaavaalaa*, which she starred in alongside Rajinikanth. The fans have taken it upon themselves to add a unique touch to the music video by using Shakira's song *Waka Waka* as its background music. Sharing the clip on Twitter, a fan wrote, "Indian Shakira @shakira Semma

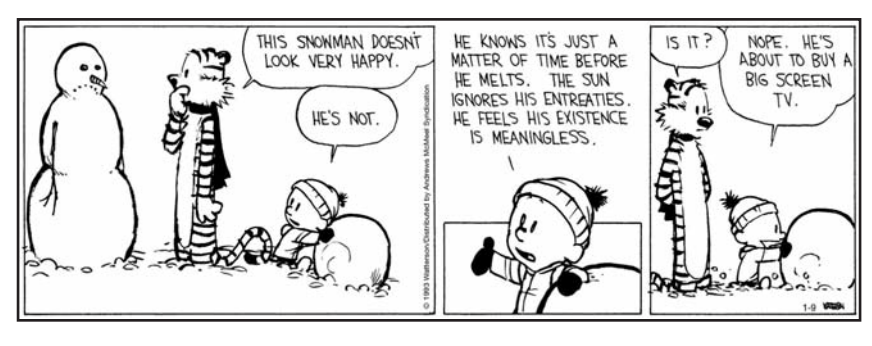
(awesome) Sync @tamannaahspeaks." Responding to it, Tamannaah wrote, "Have to admit the sync is pretty good (wink face emoji)." Reacting to the post, a fan wrote, "Indian Shakira is a great name too!!" A Twitter user said, "Ya it is looking like you are dancing to the 'This time for Africa' song of Shakira. You are our Indian Shakira." Tamannaah will be seen with Rajinikanth in *Jailer*. Recently, talking about it with a news agency, Tamannaah had said, "It is a dream come true to work with him (Rajinikanth). I will always cherish the memories spent on *Jailer* set. He gifted me a book on a spiritual journey. It was so thoughtful of him. He had even autographed it." On the work front, Tamannaah was last seen in *Lust Stories 2* and will be seen next in *Bholaa Shankar*. AGENCIES



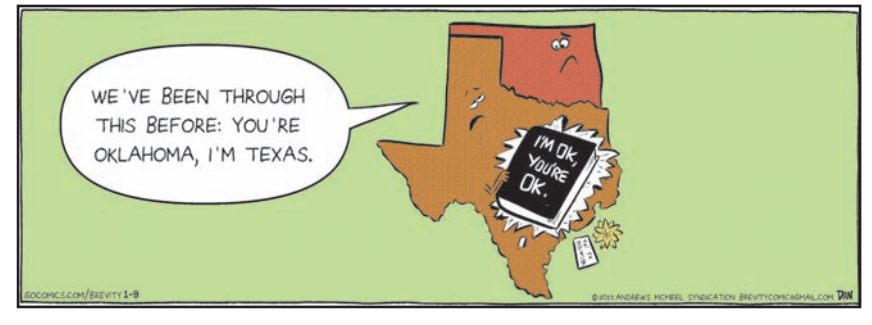
### PEANUTS



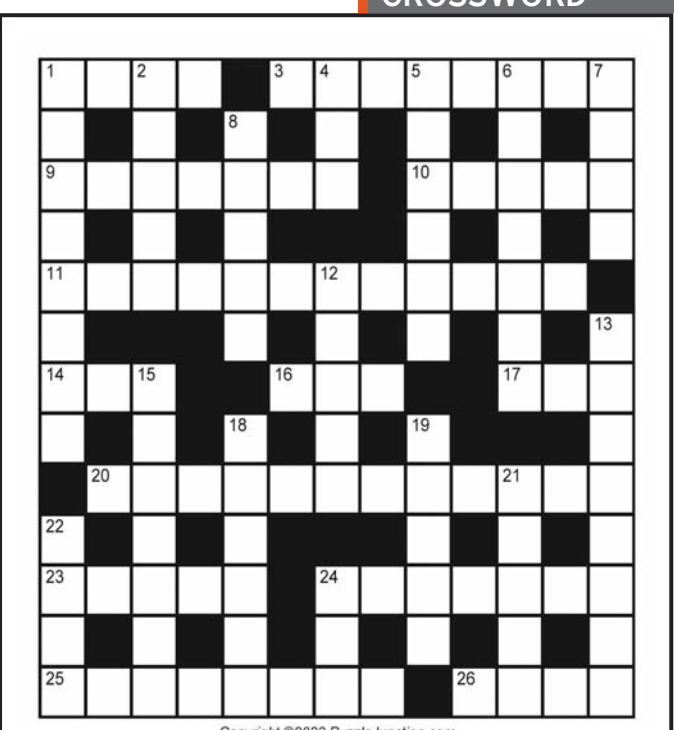
### CALVIN AND HOBBS



### BREVITY



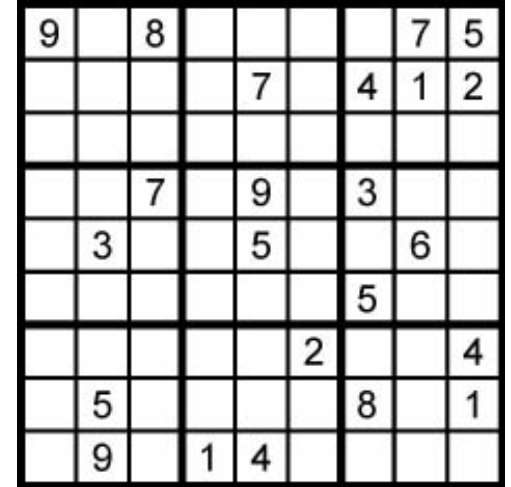
### FUN post CROSSWORD



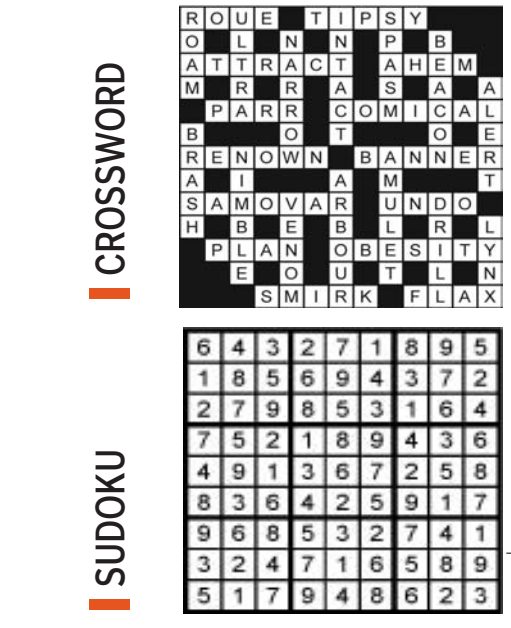
- Across
- 1 Priestly garb
  - 3 Imperil
  - 9 Nature's alarm clock
  - 10 Track event
  - 11 Leavening agent (6,6)
  - 14 Kind of dance
  - 16 Toast topping
  - 17 Zippo
  - 20 Yield (7,5)
  - 23 Willow twig
  - 24 Greek letter
  - 25 Halloween costume
  - 26 Brewer's kiln
  - Down
  - 1 Circus performers
  - 2 Small stream
  - 4 Neither's partner
  - 5 Cupid's projectiles
  - 6 Old Spanish vessel
  - 7 Some stingers
  - 8 Do penance
  - 12 Necklace item
  - 13 Single-reed woodwind
  - 15 Thoughtful
  - 18 Hard to find
  - 19 Witch's spell
  - 21 River feature
  - 22 Forest growth
  - 24 Sense of self

### 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

## RAISING VOICE

Congress MLA Sura Routray joined a protest by Kalinga Nagar Phuleswari slum residents who demanded homestead land pattas and a police station in Bhubaneswar, Monday



# 11 industrial projects of ₹3,266cr get go-ahead

## FILLIP TO INDUSTRY



■ The projects would be from diverse sectors like metal downstream and ancillary, chemicals, food processing, agro processing, plastics, textiles apparel, IT & ESDM, and renewable energy

■ As per the decision, the projects will be set up mostly in Balasore, Bolangir, Kalhandi, Khurda and Jajpur districts

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 10:** The State Level Single Window Clearance Authority (SLSWCA), chaired by Chief Secretary PK Jena, Monday approved ₹3,266 crore worth 11 industrial projects that, if grounded, would generate employment opportunities for at least 9,146 persons in Odisha.

Spread across diverse sectors like metal downstream and ancillary, chemicals, food processing, agro processing, plastics, textiles apparel, IT & ESDM, and renewable energy, the projects will be set up mostly in Balasore, Bolangir, Kalhandi, Khurda and Jajpur districts.

Nestlé India Limited will be setting up a food processing unit in Khurda with an investment of over ₹890 crore, providing employment opportunities to over 800 people.

The 119th SLSWCA meet approved a proposal of M/s Colortone Garments Pvt Ltd – a

subsidiary of First Step Baby-Wear and India's second largest baby-wear manufacturer – to set up an integrated apparel manufacturing facility along with 1.2 MW rooftop captive solar power plant in Khurda. With an investment of ₹200 crore, the initiative will be providing jobs to over 4,820 people.

Himadri Speciality Chemical Limited also received the SLSWCA go-ahead to set up a chemical manufacturing unit in Jajpur with an investment of ₹980 crore. The unit would provide employment opportunities to at least 1,400 people in Odisha.

The SLSWCA approved three proposals in plastics sector.

The proposal of IDVB Recycling Operations Pvt Ltd to set up a unit of recycled pet flakes and recycled per resin products in Khurda with an annual capacity of 63,000 MT got the state's approval.

With an investment of ₹318 crore, the initiative would gen-

erate jobs for 240 people.

Similarly, Purv Packaging Pvt Ltd will be setting up a new manufacturing unit for plastic caps, Pet preforms and other allied products having an annual capacity of 1,017.70 million Pcs in Khurda district.

With an investment of ₹152 crore, the unit would provide employment for over 133 people.

RDB Rasayans Ltd, on the other hand, also got a green signal for setting up a manufacturing unit for flexible intermediate bulk containers and other allied products with an annual capacity of 6,000 MT in Balasore. The company would invest ₹59 crore in the project that would help provide jobs to 390 people.

The state government approved two projects in the metal downstream and ancillary sectors. Beekay Utkal Steel Private Limited's proposal to set up to set up a steel flat product processing unit in Jajpur with an investment of ₹111.02 crore got the SLSWCA approval. The unit would generate jobs to 150 people.

The state government approved a proposal of IFGL Refractories Limited to set up a refractory unit in Khurda with an investment of ₹150 crore. The Khurda unit would provide employment to 200 youths.

In the IT & ESDM sector, the committee approved a proposal of Nisum Consulting Private Limited to set up a software development centre in Khurda. With an investment of ₹200 crore, the facility would provide jobs to over 640 people in Odisha.



**MATTER OF FAITH:** Bol Bam devotees made a beeline at Lingaraj Temple in Bhubaneswar to offer water to the deity on the occasion of first Monday of Shrawan month as per Odia almanac

# ₹1,284.49 crore to address low voltage

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 10:** The state Cabinet Monday approved the Chief Minister's Power Development Programme (CMPDP) under which ₹1,284.49 crore will be spent during 2023-24 and 2024-25 financial years to address low voltage issues in rural areas.

CMPDP will be executed by power distribution companies under Phase-V of Odisha Distribution System Strengthening Programme (ODSSP), said Chief Secretary Pardeep Kumar Jena.

According to Jena, the state government had earlier sanc-

**The state Cabinet has sanctioned ₹97.24 lakh for construction of a bridge over Kharasrota river on Nua Bazar-Balitara Ghat Road in Kendrapara**

tioned 473 primary sub-stations (33/11 KV) and associated lines in Odisha with an outlay of ₹3,843 crore. The construction of the most of these projects has been completed.

He said, the state government has approved setting up of 99 33/11 KV sub-stations and 64 independent lines with an outlay

of ₹1,796.73 crore under Phase-IV of ODSSP. At present, these projects are under execution.

Phase-V of ODSSP under CMPDP has been formulated as there is a need to take up further system improvement works, the Chief Secretary said.

The Cabinet also decided to recommend inclusion of Kui language in the 8th Schedule of the Constitution of India.

Further, the state government has decided to construct a high-level bridge over Kharasrota river on Nua Bazar-Balitara Ghat Road in Kendrapara district with a cost of ₹97.24 lakh. It will provide connectivity to the missing link between Aul and

Rajkanika blocks of the district.

It will also bring connectivity to Chandabali block in Bhadrak district. The project is targeted to be completed within 30 months.

The Cabinet has also decided to sanction the lease of 5-acre government land in Brahmaniput Mouza under Machhakund tehsil of Koraput district in favour of Lamtaput Degree College on free of premium. The state government has decided for sanction of lease of 8.693-acre government land in Balangir Mouza in favour of Rajendra University for infrastructure development of the university on free of premium and incidental charges basis.

# Mahanadi tribunal hearing today

POST NEWS NETWORK

**New Delhi, July 10:** The Mahanadi Water Dispute Tribunal (MWDIT) will hold a crucial hearing on the applications filed by Odisha and Chhattisgarh regarding the river water sharing dispute between the neighbouring states Tuesday.

A three-judge bench of the tribunal headed by retired Supreme Court judge Justice AM Khanwilkar would pass directions on the matter as it is going to hold a crucial hearing after the site inspection in both the states. The judges of the tribunal along with assessors and teams of Odisha and Chhattisgarh had visited Mahanadi basin in Chhattisgarh and Odisha in April and May to take stocks of the ground realities. The tribunal had visited around 37 places.

**A three-judge bench of the tribunal headed by retired Supreme Court judge Justice AM Khanwilkar would pass directions on the matter**

The assessors would submit reports on site inspection Tuesday following which the tribunal would pass directions.

Earlier, Odisha had alleged before the tribunal that the state of Chhattisgarh had violated the 1947 arrangement with respect to Mahanadi water sharing. Odisha had alleged that the upper riparian state has developed infrastructure for about 11 million acre feet water which is in excess of its equitable share and in violation of arrangement of 1947.

# CM nod to policy for devt of rurban areas

PNN & AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, July 10:** Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has approved Odisha Rural-Urban Transition Policy aiming at removing rural-urban divide in providing essential urban infrastructure, amenities and services to all citizens residing in the fast-growing rural areas adjoining the cities.

This is a first-of-its-kind policy which intends to introduce a series of progressive and pragmatic measures to address the challenges of unplanned and unregulated urbanisation, an official said Monday.

At present, 19 per cent of state's population resides in urban areas and it is expected to reach 21 per cent by 2031. The growth of census towns or peri-urban areas account for nearly 40 per cent of the urbanisation in the state. However, these peri-urban and

**BRIDGING RURAL-URBAN GAP**

<p>At present, 19% of state's population resides in urban areas and it is expected to reach 21% by 2031</p>	<p>The growth of census towns or peri-urban areas account for nearly 40% of the urbanisation in the state. However, these peri-urban and rurban areas have been grappling with the challenge of inadequate access to social infrastructure and civic amenities and services</p>
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THE RURAL-URBAN TRANSITION POLICY HAS BEEN BROUGHT TO PROVIDE URBAN CIVIC AMENITIES OF SERVICES TO THE PEOPLE IN THE IDENTIFIED RURAL AREAS MUCH BEFORE THE AREAS ARE FORMALLY NOTIFIED AS URBAN AREAS

rurban areas have been grappling with the challenge of inadequate access to social infrastructure and civic amenities and services even after declaring such areas as urban areas, the official said.

After intensive consultations with the experts and practitioners, it has emerged that absence of a comprehensive policy and robust institutions to contain unplanned urbanisa-

tion has been the primary reason for this situation.

As a significant shift from the previous system, therefore, the Rural-Urban Transition Policy has been brought to provide urban civic amenities of services to the people in the identified rural areas much before the areas are formally notified as urban areas.

The policy also allows creation of a special budget for

implementation of infrastructure projects and delivery of services while actively involving the elected representatives, officials, and all other stakeholders in the planning, execution, and monitoring of the transition process. Under the policy, rural areas after an intensive process of identification will be declared as urban areas coming into effect from the date on which the tenure of the existing elected representatives expire.

During the interim period, the notified rural area will be taken up for upgradation of infrastructure and services to provide all urban services on par with the adjacent urban areas. During the transition period, ward delimitation and other administrative measures will also be put in place so that from the effective date, the area will start functioning as a full-fledged urban area with all required

urban infrastructure and services.

The new policy provides for the constitution of steering and implementation committees with top officials of the state government including the Chief Secretary and experts driven from various domains like urban planning, finance, engineering, management and information technology (IT).

This will ensure convergence of government schemes and inter-departmental coordination for a smooth and seamless transition of the peri-urban and rurban areas into full-fledged urban areas.

The policy proposes to adopt a 'Hub and Spoke' model with the State Urban Development Agency (SUDA) at the state-level and District Urban Development Agencies & development authorities at the city-level serving as the Hub and Spokes, respectively.

# Pradhan for Uttarakhand Jagannath Temple revamp

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

**Bhubaneswar, July 10:** Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan Monday spoke with Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhama urging him to develop the reportedly neglected Jagannath Temple at Sald village in Uttarkashi.

In his official social media account, Pradhan said, "I discussed with Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhama through videoconferencing about the maintenance and improvement work of Sreejagannath Temple in Sald Village, Uttarkashi. Thank You CM Dhama fo fulfilling the request and promising to improve the worship and Nitikanti in the temple of Odia's worshipping deity Sri Jagannath and to beautify the temple."

He added that this has become possible due to the interest of the people and the will of the Lord. This Jagannath Dham at Uttarakashi will strengthen the cultural and spiritual ties of Uttarakhand and Odisha and will symbolise one India, the best India.



**ODISSI TREAT:** Renowned Odissi exponent Meera Das of Gunjan Dance Academy performed during the celebration of 75th birth anniversary of Guru Gangadhar Pradhan at Guru Kelu Charan Mohapatra Odissi Research Centre in Bhubaneswar, Monday

# Frame RERA-compliant rules in 3 months: HC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Cuttack, July 10:** The Orissa High Court Monday asked the state government to formulate rules for implementing the Apartment Ownership and Management Act within three months.

The court, however, refused to vacate the stay it had imposed in May last year on the regis-

tration of sale deeds related to apartments and flats.

"The High Court embargo will continue until the government frames the necessary rules to implement the amended act," said advocate Mohit Agarwal, who was representing a Bhubaneswar-based petitioner.

The petitioner had challenged the validity of an amended rule made in 2021 on the ground that

it was contrary to the Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act, 2016. Putting a ban on the registration of sale deeds last year, the High Court had directed the government to frame RERA-compliant rules.

When the matter came up for hearing Monday, the state government's counsel informed the court that the rules would be in place within three months.

# 'OSMCL godown had no fire safety measures'

GYAN RANJAN MOHAPATRA, OP

**Bhubaneswar, July 10:** The Odisha State Medical Corporation Limited (OSMCL) godown at Mancheswar Industrial Estate, where a major fire broke out late Sunday night reducing medicines and medical equipment worth lakhs of rupees to ashes, lacked adequate fire safety measures, said a Fire official, Monday.

However, there was no report of any injury as the fire broke out late in the night. The fire was suspected to have been caused due to electrical short circuit, the of-

ficial said. "During initial enquiry, adequate fire safety measures at the building were found missing in brazen violation of norms," a senior Fire official told **Orissa POST**, requesting anonymity.

Earlier in the day, the Health and Family Welfare department took to Twitter to say, "Accidental fire broke out at Mancheswar MARKFED Godown number 3 at late night on 9th July, 2023. Some OSMCL supplies were stored in this godown (PPE kits, sanitisers and empty cylinders). All goods are under insurance coverage."

# Sanjukta's fresh plaint

**Bhubaneswar:** Woman BJD leader Sanjukta Mahala Monday filed a fresh complaint at Mahila police station here against former Labour minister and Polasara MLA Srikanta Sahu. She had alleged physical and mental harassment by Sahu in her previous complaint filed in April this year. Mahala Monday alleged that some anti-social elements at the behest of Sahu have been harassing her. The BJD leader also alleged that the said criminals have been stalking her. Mahala claimed that she stopped stepping out of her house since Sunday evening out of fear.



Passenger train at Atri

**Bhubaneswar:** The East Coast Railway (ECOR) Monday informed that proposal for opening Passenger Halt at ATRI at KM in between Khurda Town (KURT) and Begunia (BYZA) in Khurda-Balangir over Khurda Road Division has been approved by GM ECOR.

# 5T Secretary visits Angul, reviews various projects



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 10:** As per the directions of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, 5T Secretary VK Pandian visited Angul district to review the progress of various developmental works and redressal of public grievances.

He visited Chhendipada Community Health Centre (CHC) and discussed its development with the officials. After holding a public grievance meeting, he informed the Chief Minister over video call about the huge demand for including the CHC under Ama hospital. Chief Minister immediately approved the proposal and directed health department to take further steps to start the project in Chhendipada CHC.

Pandian visited Maa Hingula temple and interacted with the

temple committee members, priests and locals and assured them regarding the development of the temple and providing pilgrim facilities.

He then proceeded to Talcher college playground and interacted with locals, heard their grievances and assured them of timely redressal.

Also, he reviewed the progress of mega pipe-water supply project plan for Talcher, Kaniha and parts of Banarpal. The project at an estimated cost of ₹357 crore will be completed by August this year and will benefit 124 villages. He reviewed the in stream storage structure across the Brahmani river which will be completed by July 2025 at an estimated cost of ₹221 crore.

Later, he proceeded to Maa Bayani Pitha, Patrapada under Chhendipada block and discussed with the temple committee mem-

bers the government's plan to develop the temple and provide pilgrim facilities.

Pandian reviewed the progress of mega pipe water supply project plan for Chhendipada which will be completed in August, 2023 with an estimated cost of ₹415 crore. The project will benefit 172 villages of the block.

Then he proceeded to Bantala and reviewed the progress of mega piped-water supply project plan for Angul and parts of Banarpal. The project, with an estimated cost of ₹357.92 crore, will be completed in March, 2025 and will benefit 278 villages.

Pandian proceeded to Biju Maidan in Angul town and addressed intermediate students and graduates from different colleges of Angul. He informed them about the Chief Minister approval for development of 47 degree colleges under 5T with an estimated cost of ₹15.25 crore.

At the PTC field, he interacted with the Mission Shakti groups and heard their grievances. He appreciated their initiatives and encouraged them to become entrepreneurs.

He visited advanced rehabilitation centre, world class library and museum and reviewed the Ama hospital works.

Special Secretary to CM, R Vineel Krishna, DIG Brijesh Rai, Collector Siddharth Swain, SP and district officials accompanied Pandian during the visit.



ALL EARS: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik interacted with KALIA farmers at his residence in Bhubaneswar, Monday OP PHOTO

## 'No act of harassment should go unnoticed'

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

**Bhubaneswar, July 10:** With support of the National Commission for Women (NCW), the Odisha State Commission for Women (OSCW), in collaboration with FICCI Ladies Organisation (FLO), organised here Monday an awareness training session for members of the internal complaint committee (ICC) under the Sexual Harassment of Woman at Workplace (prevention, prohibition, and redressal) Act 2013.

This initiative aims to address and mitigate the issue of sexual harassment in workplace. OSCW chairperson Minati Behera said, "The main aim of this workshop is to make women aware of the existence of ICC and its functions because ICC is mandated and required at every workplace, both government and non-government. Women should feel safe at their workplaces and no act of sexual harassment should go unnoticed."

"By conducting this training, the OSCW and FICCI Ladies Organisation aim to empower



ICC members with the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively address incidents of sexual harassment and ensure a safe and inclusive work environment for all employees. The programme aligns with the mandatory training requirements defined by the government, making it essential for all committee members in industries and firms to participate," said FLO chairperson Poonam Mohapatra.

The training programme brought together 100 participants from the ICC of the com-

mercial and industrial sector. And this collaborative effort between OSCW and FLO underscores their shared commitment to promoting gender equality and ensuring safety and well-being of women in the workplace.

FLO, which is an exclusive business forum for women entrepreneurs and professionals associated with the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), aims to empower women and promote their economic and social wellbeing.

## Fisheries in Odisha will grow rapidly: Naik

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

**Bhubaneswar, July 10:** ICAR-Central Institute of Freshwater Aquaculture (CIFA) observed National Fish Farmers' Day at its campus here Monday.

The day is observed in remembrance of scientists KH Alikunhi and HL Chaudhuri who had successfully induced bred one of the carp species July 10, 1957.

N Thirumala Naik, State

Mission Director-cum-CEO, department of Mission Shakti was the chief guest on this occasion. While speaking on this occasion, he appreciated the institute for the service it is rendering to the nation and exhorted the scientists to develop customised technology packages for women farmers.

He urged the farmers and SHG members to organise their production with better efficiency. Self-Help Groups (SHGs) have

to graduate to thriving enterprises.

With over six lakh SHGs in the state and priority leasing of gram panchayat tanks given to them, fisheries in Odisha will grow rapidly, said Naik.

ADG, ICAR BP Mohanty stressed on gender mainstreaming in aquaculture. He said that women need to be actively involved in aquaculture as it supports family's nutrition as well as economy.



ANTI-ENCROACHMENT DRIVE: An excavator deployed by BDA razing down unauthorised constructions in Nicco Park area of Bhubaneswar, Monday OP PHOTO

## WORLD POPULATION DAY

SMRUTI REKHA BARIK, OP

**Bhubaneswar, July 10:** It marked a milestone moment when India inducted women cadets into the National Defense Academy, sending a signal to the society that women too have the physical strength and knowledge to match men in performance. But it was only the first step towards women empowerment. Though the females make up 49.7 per cent of global population, they are often ignored in discussions of demographics.

This year's theme on World Population Day is 'Unleashing the power of gender equality: Uplifting the voices of women and girls to unlock our world's infinite possibilities.'

The continued discrimination against women in form of girls being kept out of school, declining participation of women in the workforce, rise in instances

## 'Women's health, security important for devpt'

of violence against them and deaths from preventable causes during childbirth, only makes the theme more relevant. On this occasion, Orissa Post spoke with experts to get their views on the state of women in Indian society and what can be done to improve the situation.

Chairperson of Odisha State Commission for Women, Minati Behera said, "Both the public and the government are now aware of the importance of gender equality. And positive changes have been observed towards it in various fields like education and health. Women are now focusing on making themselves competitive in every field. The government is also promoting women empowerment."

She added, "I believe women empowerment begins at home and in society and only our approach can bring a greater change. The health and security of women and girls are important



for our growth and development." "Known as 'bus guides' of Odisha, Capital Region Urban Transport (CRUT) employed 50 per cent women as bus conductors engaged in public transport service for creating more friendly atmosphere for women passengers which resulted in women empowerment," said an ex-worker associated with the Mo

Bus services. Speaking about the condition of women in the public sphere, Saubhagya Mohanty, parent of a female journalist, said, "The journalists of the country face many challenges everyday in their career. The gender-based violence they are exposed to implies stigmatization, sexist hate speech, trolling, physical assault, rape

and even murder."

About the contentious issue of women's reproductive rights, renowned social activist Namrata Chadha said, "The dramatic growth of population trends like urbanization, global warming have deeper impacts on women's lives. Under Article 21 of the Indian constitution, women's reproductive choice falls under the right to personal liberty, which means that the right to reproduce and terminate the pregnancy solely rests with women."

"Sharing posts on social media about women empowerment is easier than really implementing it. To run a home, you need contributions of both the partners, be it emotional or financial. But usually you won't see men contributing to household chores. When the financial burdens are shared by both, how difficult it is to distribute household chores," questions Subhashree Das who works for an MNC.

## ₹33.28cr for Cuttack renovation projects

**Cuttack:** An estimated ₹33.28 crore has been earmarked for 16 developmental projects in Cuttack. A foundation stone laying ceremony for this purpose was held Monday which was attended by Mayor Subhash Chandra Singh, Deputy Mayor Damayanti Majhi, CMC Commissioner Nikhil Pavan Kalyan, Barabati MLA Mohammed Moquim, Choudhury MLA Souvic Biswal, corporators and officials of Cuttack Municipal Corporation. The City will have smart bus stops and bio-toilets near Barabati stadium, Biju Patnaik Park and Windsor Palace. Also, a prefab food court will be built at Barabati stadium. Similarly, modern prefab smart libraries will be constructed at Dhableswar gada, Judge Patha CDA Sec-12, Nimpur, Krushak Bazaar, Laxmanpur Muslim Sahi, Tarala Sabar Sahi, Adivasi Sahi, and Potapokhari. Smart footpaths will be constructed at Badambadi and Madhupatana. Besides, beautification work will be undertaken from Naya Bazaar Flyover Bridge to Mo Bus stop area near PHD office.

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# Stopped in its tracks

PRESENCE OF NINE SLUMS ON RAILWAY LAND PREVENTING COMPLETION OF PROJECT

RAJESH MOHANTY, OP

**Rourkela, July 10:** Alleged political interference has stalled the development of a third railway track passing through the station in this town. Foundation for the third track was laid way back in 2015. However, with only 8.9 kilometres left for completion, the project has been stalled. This particular track once completed, will connect Jharsuguda to Howrah. It has reached Bandhamunda on the eastern side and Klunga on the western side. After that there has been no development. The initial plan was to complete the project in three years. However, now uncertainty hangs over its completion.

Rourkela is a very important railway junction with 170 different kinds of trains passing through it. These days' majority of trains passing through Rourkela get delayed, because of severe congestion. Many important trains are forced to wait outside the station for lengthy periods due to shortage of tracks. The third track would have helped in the smooth movement of trains. The Railways has com-

pleted the third bridge over Brahmani river. However, the presence of nine slums on Railway land between the station here and Panposh has delayed the completion of the project.

These nine slums are home to over four thousand families and hence are very crucial for all the major political parties. As a result no one dares to take any steps for clearance of the land. The Railways and district administration officials have met a number of times to work out a possible plan for freeing the land. However, nothing fruitful has worked out.

"Nothing has happened and nothing will," said a top Railway official on conditions of anonymity. "The families had moved court and it ruled against them. However, nothing has happened because of political compulsions," he added.

The Railways had given notice for eighty-five feet of land to be freed from the tracks. The encroachers wanted this to be sixty-five feet. They had gone to the court, but lost. Repeated attempts to talk to the ARM of Railways and ADM Rourkela failed as they did not respond to calls.



**DEMO OVER REHABILITATION:** Members of Mula Nivasi Sena staging a demonstration outside the District Collectorate in Sambalpur demanding rehabilitation of slum dwellers of Cheruapada in the town, Monday

# 12 contractors show-caused for delay in PMGSY projects

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Chhatrapur, July 10:** Show-cause notices have been issued to 12 contractors for inordinate delay in Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojna (PMGSY) road construction, stopping the work half-way and not completing projects within a specified deadline. The superintending engineer, Rural Works Division-II, Berhampur has issued these notices under SBD clause (52.2).

In the notice, contractors have been directed to answer within a week of receiving it as to why their contracts will not be cancelled and why compensation

will not be recovered from them. As per reports, the road construction under PMGSY in Ganjam district have seen unprecedented delays. In some cases, construction has been done haphazardly, and in some others, work has been stopped mid-way. In some cases, work has not been completed even after the deadline.

The superintending engineer in Ganjam district has sent many show-cause notices to the contractors regularly, but that hasn't helped. The department only sends show-cause notices to the contractors and becomes a silent spectator as no strict action is

taken against these contractors, sources alleged.

As per reports, only 34.21 per cent work on the Karatali-Brahmaniapalli road project via Shreerampur has been completed. The deadline for it was in September 2022. Similarly, only 37.23 per cent construction has been completed on NH-5 to Kharida via P Ramchandrapur, the deadline for which is over.

While the Dikili via Nuagadapheta Baritala-Khamarigaon road construction has progressed only 18.86 per cent, more than 84 per cent of the road to Chikiti block border via Panhama Randa-Golanthara-

Matrindi-Biswanathpur has been constructed. However, it also has missed the completion deadline which was more than a year back.

Meanwhile work on the PWD road connecting Sanagopalpur to Lauputu has progressed only 56.30 per cent. Among other road construction work the Mahurikana-Kharida Chowk via Semapur Chowk is over 91% complete, Rangunipalli-Nayagarh road 51.45 per cent complete, Sikiri-Nandika via Lalaba road 61.78 per cent complete and Jakar Road-Biribatia via Manikpur-Ambapur 21.08% complete. All these projects

have missed their deadlines by considerable margins.



# 1 dead, 3 injured as 2 bikes collide

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Malkangiri, July 10:** One person was killed and three others suffered serious injuries in a bike accident near Champakhari ghati under Sadar block in this district Monday.

The deceased was identified as Biswanath Madkami, of Padarapalli village. He was a DBF jawan working at the Reserve Police district headquarters here. The injured were identified as Sunadhar Kope, Baram Pujari and Bala Putia of Kotameta village in this district.

As per the report, Biswanath was returning to his residence on his bike when he met with a head-on collision with another two-wheeler coming from the opposite direction. All the four were injured in the collision.

Locals rushed them to the district headquarters hospital where doctors declared Biswanath 'dead on arrival'. Initially the three injured were being treated at the hospital here. However, later in the day, two of them were shifted to a hospital in Koraput as their conditions deteriorated.

After the accident, police reached the spot and launched a probe. Malkangiri SP Nitish Badhwani also visited the hospital to pay his last respects to the deceased jawan.

# LOBBYING STARTS IN BJD FOR POLL TICKETS

KOREI ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCY CYNOSURE OF ALL EYES AS ASHOK, AKASH VIE FOR NOMINATION

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Jajpur, July 10:** Hectic lobbying has started for tickets among various political parties with the 2024 general and state elections drawing near, sources said here Monday. Similar activities are also being witnessed in the Korei Assembly segment in this district where the fight for getting a BJD ticket has been titled as 'blood versus tree' by workers and political observers. This is because of the activities by the two aspirants - Ashok Bala and Akash Das Nayak.

Incumbent MLA Bala along with Bhaba Prasad Das (Lala), the brother of BJD's organising secretary Pranab Prakash Das (Bobby), has been organis-

ing blood donation camps all over the Assembly segment. On the other hand, Akash is on a 'Green Mission' planting saplings left, right and centre to develop green cover in the constituency.

Sources said that development of Korei has taken a back-seat due to fielding of a new candidate in every Assembly elections. As a result, the MLAs after getting elected do not show any inclination for developing the constituency, they alleged.

To end this merry-go round, the BJD is trying to find a permanent candidate for Korei, a person who will be answerable to the voters. Bala knows he has a chance of getting re-nominated and that is one of the reasons for his outreach



to the public.

Not to be outdone, Akash has launched his 'Mission Green' from July 5. He and other invitees planted over 200 saplings at the Maa Kamudei shrine, the pre-

siding deity of Paramanandapur village under Pacchikote panchayat in the Korei Assembly segment, Thursday.

Akash and others also distributed a free sapling to each household in the village. He asked the residents to usher in green cover in all areas of Korei Assembly segment.

On the other hand, Bala organised a blood donation camp June 28, the birthday of Pranab. Over 1,300 units of blood were collected in the camp which was attended by senior district leaders of the BJD.

However, the MLA's detractors were quick to question on social media the shortage of blood at the Jajpur Road blood bank. "When so much blood is

being collected, why is there shortage always in the blood bank," they asked.

BJD's vote share decreased by 5.91 per cent in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections. BJD had got 55.78 per cent votes in the 2014 elections which came down to 49.81 per cent in 2019. The BJP was the biggest gainer with its vote bank increasing to 40.5 per cent 2019 from 15.53% (2014). Congress got 22.77 per cent votes in 2014 but it decreased to 8.39% in 2019.

In the Zilla Parishad and Vyasagar Municipality elections held in 2022, BJD however, reigned supreme. Its vote share rose to 60 per cent while that of BJP fell to 25 per cent and Congress to 15 per cent.

# DOCTOR DUO TURNS GOOD SAMARITANS

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Sambalpur, July 10:** A doctor couple here has opened a free clinic for patients at Sarlakani in this town, locals informed. Drs Geetanjali and Sanjiv Mishra are working at the VSS Institute of Medical Sciences and Research (VIMSAR) at Burla in this district. To attend to the needs of the poor, they have opened a free



clinic near their residence only and have named it 'Arogya'. They see patients from 6.30pm to 8.30pm Monday to Saturday. Bargarh MP Suresh Pujari re-

cently inaugurated the clinic. Speaking to this correspondent, Sanjiv said that he always dreamt of opening a 'free' clinic for the needy. "The clinic is for people living in slums, people who work as labourers and daily wagers and cannot afford proper treatment," Sanjiv said. "A lot of time is consumed when a patient visits a hospital. The patient has to run from one department to an-

other for treatment. The clinic on the other hand will give them the chance of getting free treatment," Sanjiv added.

Sanjiv informed that not only he and his wife treat patients free of cost, but also help them to find shops from where they can buy medicines at the cheapest price. "After my official duty is over, I attend to patients in the clinic," Sanjiv said.

# Lack of aircraft mars Rourkela connectivity

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Rourkela, July 10:** Fliers in this city are slowly getting disenchanted due to the regular cancellation of flights. In the last two days, the Alliance Air flight, the only one which operates out of this town, has been cancelled. Initially the reason for cancellation of the flight was attributed due to the absence of the instrument landing system (ILS).

Now what is an ILS? Well it is an instrument which comes in handy and helps in landing during heavy clouds or fog. These natural phenomena take place during the monsoon and winter. During the Men's Hockey World Cup played here in January, a number of flights had to be cancelled due to heavy fog. Similarly in May, flights on two days were cancelled due to storm and heavy clouds. Immediately, the media and social organisations started demanding the installation of



an ILS.

However, more surprise was in store. July 8, the weather was good with no rains and bright sun. In spite of that, the flight was cancelled. It left a number of passengers in the lurch. Forty nine people were booked to fly out of this town and 51 were to fly in here from Bhubaneswar. A

similar incident took place Sunday. The decision to cancel the flights left passengers fuming. "What is use of having such connectivity? It is nothing but having fun at our expense," said a passenger. Airport manager of Alliance Air, Rahul Singh attributed the cancellations due to 'operational reason' but did not elaborate.

Former secretary of the Steel Executive Federation of India and convener of the Rourkela Sangharsh Samiti, Bimal Bisi said that the lack of sufficient number of aircraft was the reason for cancellation of flights. "The sole aircraft operates on the routes Bhubaneswar-Kolkata-Mizoram and Kolkata-Jharsuguda-Bhubaneswar-Rourkela-Bhubaneswar-Kolkata. We need a couple of airline companies to come here. Only then cancellation of flights will end," Bisi stated. "Only if the number of aircraft is increased a solution will be found," added Bisi.

**For sale/Auction:** Water Damaged Dalmia Cement -6750 Bags lying at Junagarh, Orissa. Contact Person at Site: Mr. Akash Goyal - 7008851692 Last Date For Inspection & EMD Deposit -17.07.2023 & Date of E-auction-18.07.2023 (3 PM), Auctioneer:Sidharth - 9625739880 / 9625137014 (Insurance Claim Material Will Be Sold On 'As Is Where Is', 'Whatever There Is' And 'No Complaint' Basis).

**For More Details:** www.Salvagemanagers.Com Support@Salvagemanagers.Com

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**OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER**  
**RURAL WORKS DIVISION-II, GANJAM, BERHAMPUR**  
Government of Odisha, e-Procurement Notice  
Bid Identification No. Online Tender/04/SERWD-II/2023-24  
Phone: 0680-2404096, E-mail: eerwgmt@yahoo.co.in  
Memo No. 4003/RWD-IIGB, Date 27.6.23

1 Name of the Work	:: Road Works
2 Estimated Cost	:: Rs. 5.04 to 16.81 Lakhs
3 Period of Completion	:: 30(Thirty) to 60 (Sixty) Days as per Annexure
4 Date & Time of availability of Bid document in the Portal	:: 14.07.2023 at 10.00 AM to 24.07.2023 upto 3.00 PM
5 Last Date/Time for receipt of Bids in the Portal	:: 24.07.2023 upto 3.00 P.M.
6 Name and address of the Officer Inviting Bid	:: Superintending Engineer, Rural Works Division-II, Ganjam, Berhampur

Further details can be seen from the e-Procurement portal tendersodisha.gov.in/nicgp/app.

Sd./- Superintending Engineer  
R.W.Division-II, Ganjam, Berhampur  
OIPR-25073/11/0004/2324

**OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER**  
**RURAL WORKS DIVISION-II, GANJAM, BERHAMPUR**  
Government of Odisha, e-Procurement Notice  
Bid Identification No. Online Tender/06/SERWD-II/2023-24  
Phone: 0680-2404096, E-mail: eerwgmt@yahoo.co.in  
Memo No. 4096/RWD-IIGB, Date 3.7.23

1 Name of the Work	:: Road Works
2 Estimated Cost	:: Rs. 21.80 lakhs
3 Period of Completion	:: 60(Sixty) Days as per Annexure
4 Date & Time of availability of Bid document in the Portal	:: 24.07.2023 at 10.00 AM to 04.08.2023 upto 3.00 PM
5 Last Date/Time for receipt of Bids in the Portal	:: 04.08.2023 upto 3.00 P.M.
6 Name and address of the Officer Inviting Bid	:: Superintending Engineer, Rural Works Division-II, Ganjam, Berhampur

Further details can be seen from the e-Procurement portal tendersodisha.gov.in/nicgp/app.

Sd./- Superintending Engineer  
R.W.Division-II, Ganjam, Berhampur  
OIPR-25073/11/0007/2324



FOCUS WORLD POPULATION DAY

# DEMOGRAPHIC DILEMMA



Economic growth is both a prerequisite as well as consequence of India's demography. The coming years will reveal whether our young demography is a boon or bane

One sixth of humanity is in India, which is the most populous country on this planet. Seven of the eight billion people who live in the world today were born just in the past two hundred years. That's how rapid the growth of world population has been in a very short span as compared with the long time span of millennia. The world population will stabilise at around 11 billion people in the next 100 years.

Some of the mega trends regarding population are as follows. First is the rapid fall in fertility rates. Just 50 years ago, the total fertility rate (TFR), i.e., the average number of children born to a woman of child-bearing age was 4.5. That has fallen to 2.5. This is the world average. A TFR of 2.1 is called the replacement rate, after which the population size becomes stable, as the growth rate becomes zero. Rich countries have a lower TFR while poor ones have high ones. The TFR number is as low as 0.84 in South Korea. It is 1.28 in China, 1.5 in Russia, 1.64 in the United States and 2.05 in India. Higher TFRs are mostly found in poorer countries of Africa with Niger at 4.6 and Democratic Republic of the Congo at 5.8. The 54 countries of Africa together have a population roughly equal to India, and the economic size is also comparable in dollar terms. Economic growth in Africa is around 6% and might grow in coming years.

The second mega trend is the increase in lifespan. It was believed (wrongly) that more people are alive today in the world than were ever born. But this statement even though wrong, makes the point quite dramatically about the rapid rise in population. India's own life expectancy has doubled from under 40 years before Independence. This has an implication for the increase in elderly population. In India, since the elderly have

very little income or health security in their old age, it is a big social burden that we as a society have to bear. The cost of income and health security of elderly is borne by their own savings and pensions funded from their income during their working lifetime in developed countries. But in India it may have to be borne from the general exchequer. Which means tax burden on younger working generation. Thankfully India's young to old, i.e. the dependency ratio is quite favourable. There are roughly five working age people for every retired person in India (as against 2 to 1 in Germany and other graying societies).

The third mega trend is that of urbanisation. In 2007 the world passed an important landmark in that more than 50% of the world population lives in urban areas. In India this number is still closer to 35%. Although there is some debate regarding the exact share due to undercounting of urban population in India's census. Even then, India faces the prospect of rapid urbanisation in coming decades, contributing to city congestion. Cities are also drivers of economic growth and have a much higher share of India's GDP. But India's city governance model does not have an adequate revenue base to pay for the huge demand for infra-

structure, such as local transport, convention centres, schools and colleges, parks and recreation centres. Unlike rural areas which get funded through the rural development department of the state government, the cities only depend on property tax or a share of GST. This funding model has to change. The cities must get more autonomy and decentralised power, as envisaged by the 74th amendment to Constitution.

The fifth mega trend in the world is the growing imbalance of population growth, density and spread. The more affluent West is ageing while the less developed countries of Asia, Africa and South America are younger and poorer. The imbalance also manifests as shortage of labour in affluent nations. The surplus labour countries can easily fill the gap. But unlike goods, services, financial capital and ideas which can flow freely across borders, people cannot move freely. There are immigration rules and hurdles, which prevent young workers from going to affluent countries where jobs await them. Every person going across the border to do a job or deliver a service is treated as a potential immigrant to the affluent land, and hence the imbalance continues to exist. The world has a

coexistence of labour shortage in rich countries, and job shortage in poorer countries. Thus population concerns are inter-linked with issues of migration and free movement of labour. Which brings us to population issues in India.

Firstly, more than half of the Indian states already have a TFR below 2.0, the replacement rate. These are typically higher in per capita income, higher in female literacy and mostly located in the South or East. But some of the states in the Hindi belt continue to have higher TFR leading to a countrywide average of 2.05. In the coming years we will see large scale migration of labour from high TFR states to lower TFR states. This freedom of movement within the country for economic opportunities is guaranteed by our Constitution, and migration patterns serve to fill gaps caused by labour shortage. Secondly, the delimitation exercise is due in 2026, which will call for changing the overall size of Parliament and also the number of representatives across states of India. The variation of representation of current MPs is too extreme, wherein an MP may represent a constituency whose population can vary from ten thousand to ten lakh. Thus Madhya Pradesh and Tamil Nadu have roughly the same population but very different numbers of MPs (29 vs 39).

Thirdly, India's demography is advantageous when it comes to dependency ratio, but that presupposes that it is able to generate at least five to eight million new jobs every year for a few decades. Thus, economic growth is both a prerequisite as well as consequence of India's demography. The coming years will reveal whether our young demography is a boon or bane. Wishing all Indians a happy World Population Day!

The writer is a noted economist.  
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## THE WORLD HAS A COEXISTENCE OF LABOUR SHORTAGE IN RICH COUNTRIES, AND JOB SHORTAGE IN POORER COUNTRIES



Ajit Ranade

## Red Card to Rahul

It cannot be a coincidence that the lower court that had convicted Congress leader Rahul Gandhi for defamation and the High Court single-judge Bench that subsequently refused to suspend the lower court's order of his conviction are located in Gujarat. The most astounding aspect of the HC verdict is the fact that it failed to make out the difference between Rahul's remark and the charge levelled against him.

The fact is the Congress leader, during an election campaign in 2019, sought to expose the two fugitives - Nirav and Lalit Modi - who had allegedly looted hundreds of crores of taxpayers' money and fled the country, while the Prime Minister patronised Gautam Adani allegedly involved in multi-million dollar worth scams. His target seemed to be these "thieves" - a handful of alleged perpetrators of colossal fraud with the last names Modi. What Rahul had said could be considered legitimate criticism of government policies and alleged patronage of a few corrupt men. This pertains to freedom of speech and expression, articulated especially during a key process of preserving democracy, namely elections.

The lower court in Surat held Rahul guilty of the charge of defamation and slapped the maximum sentence under the relevant sections. The punishment is patently disproportionate to the alleged crime. The motive for awarding the sentence at once became clear as it is linked with the minimum jail term one has to serve to be disqualified from remaining a Member of Parliament. It left no one in doubt as to the government's intent to deny Rahul Gandhi the opportunity to expose the Modi government's various acts of omission and commission on the floor of the Parliament - as he was doing prior to this event. Allowing Rahul to use such a platform to mobilise public opinion against the government may, as the BJP seems to be scared, seriously harm the prospect of Modi's victory third time in a row in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections.

The judiciary adjudicating the case seems to have lost sight of this fact and sought to put the seal of approval to the government's resolve to keep Rahul out of the Parliament and electoral politics for six years as the legal provision entails. The judge in Gujarat HC, Hemant Prachchhak, called Rahul's conviction "just, proper and legal" and said "no injustice" would be done to the politician by refusing to grant his plea. Rahul's lawyer confirmed they would now take the case up to Supreme Court seeking a stay on the conviction so his client could contest in the next general elections.

The judge's observations in the case appear to reflect a biased mind. For, he brought up other pending cases filed against Rahul Gandhi which have yet to be heard by the courts and were unrelated to the defamation case. What is even worse is the judge's sermon that there was a "need for purity in politics." If purity be the issue, then the judge could have landed himself in a tight spot due to his wordings. He would then be required to go after BJP ministers and leaders, some of whom have in the past openly exhorted their followers to gun down government critics. The nation still remembers the 'Goli maaro saalon ko' call. It was definitely aimed at a certain minority community and the perpetrators did walk away unscathed. While today some of us may sit back and think it is 'not us' but 'them', deep down all of us are also aware that tomorrow the sword, most likely, could fall on us too.

The case of defamation against Rahul Gandhi is not merely a personal matter. What is of concern is the government's repeated attempts to weaponise the judiciary as part of its attacks on the political Opposition, government critics and the civil society.

Preventing Rahul Gandhi from contesting the coming Lok Sabha elections and shutting him out from the precincts of the Parliament only shows how the ruling dispensation is scared of Rahul Gandhi. That Rahul has committed many faux pas is also an accepted fact. The former MP and former All India Congress Committee President has exposed his immaturity very many times and those set his party back by a long way each time. For example, the tremendous achievements of his padyatra titled Bharat Jodo Yatra may have been an important cause for the Congress winning Karnataka. However, sadly for the Congress, instead of continuing the battle, Rahul left for the UK with Sam Pitroda and spoke against the current Indian setup on alien soil. Such acts have undermined the confidence that was building up in Rahul's favour among many in India.

### WISDOM CORNER

- If you want something you have never had, you must be willing to do something you have never done. **THOMAS JEFFERSON**
- Life begins at the end of your comfort zone. **NEALE DONALD WALSH**
- The greatest pleasure in life is doing what people say you cannot do. **WALTER BAGHOT**

### WORDSWORTH

#### Loophole

A typical medieval English castle would have had - in addition to barbicans, machicolations, crenellations, a portcullis or two and other useful features - a number of loops. This loop isn't a "doubling or return into itself of a portion of a string, cord, thong, or the like, so as to leave an aperture between the parts", as the Oxford English Dictionary explains it. (Defining geometric shapes is a good test of a lexicographer's skill. It may remind you of the trouble Dr Johnson had with network: "Any thing reticulated or decussated, at equal distances, with interstices between the interstices.") These castle-type loops were small gaps or holes in the fortified walls for keeping watch, for archers to shoot through, or to let light into a chamber. Later, the word was applied to arrow-slits to the exclusion of the other senses. There's no connection between the two meanings of loop, though one nineteenth-century scholar did attempt to square the semantic circle by suggesting that the apertures were in the shape of loops. It's likely, the experts suggest, that it comes from the old Dutch verb *lûpen*, to watch or peer, or *glûpen*, to spy or lurk, to watch with narrowed eyes, whose source is a word for a crack or slit. In the sixteenth century, loop began to be expanded to loophole. It seems that Englishmen were as puzzled and confused then by the two senses of loop as we might be today and added the second part to make it clear they were talking about openings in walls and not doubled-over bits of string. Around the middle of the following century loophole began to be used figuratively for a means of escape and by 1700 could have our modern sense of an ambiguity or inadequacy in rules or laws that allows somebody to evade their provisions.

#### Lope

It's ancient, traceable to prehistoric Germanic. The Old English version of the word was *hleapan*, meaning to run, jump or throw oneself violently at something. This eventually changed into our modern leap, which kept the latter senses, but gave up the former to run, another ancient German word. In the fifteenth century, a Scots or northern English dialect relative of the Old English word moved into the standard language to form our modern lope, for the sense of running with a long bounding stride that has something of leaping about it. It's also the source of elope, to run away to get married, and also possibly of interloper. This last word is said to have been coined in the sixteenth century on the model of the older and now obsolete landloper for a vagabond, somebody who "runs through the land".

### SPECTRUM GEOPOLITICS

## What Ukraine brings to NATO

This week, almost every Ukrainian will be looking longingly toward Lithuania's capital, Vilnius. It is there, at the summit of NATO's leaders, that our place in Europe and the West will begin to be decided.

Although virtually all Ukrainians dream of NATO membership, the brutal fighting in which we have been forced to engage since Russia invaded our country nearly 18 months ago has taught us hard lessons in realism. So, we are well aware that making our NATO dream a reality will be no easy feat. I am certainly aware: in 2008, I co-signed Ukraine's application letter to NATO's secretary-general. Yet Ukraine remained outside the alliance - with devastating consequences.

No one expects Ukraine to be offered NATO membership while war rages on our territory. This would, after all, compel the alliance, under Article 5 of its founding treaty, to intervene in the conflict. The idea of a full-scale war between NATO and Russia - a nuclear-armed country that has already demonstrated a criminal degree of recklessness - appeals to no one, Ukrainians included.

But the current war won't last forever. The skill and bravery of

our soldiers, together with the commitment of our allies and friends - not only NATO members, but also dozens of other countries, as far away as Japan - to supplying us with the tools we need to expel Russia from our territory will see to that. NATO membership for Ukraine, then, is about what is needed after the war ends. It is about restoring and maintaining peace in Europe, and thus fulfilling NATO's most fundamental purpose.

Yet, within the alliance, there are doubts about the wisdom of making us members. Let me try to dispel some of them.

Some seem to worry that Ukraine will become a kind of free-rider, offering NATO nothing but headaches. But there can be no better evidence to the contrary than our effective resistance - and ultimate defeat - of Russia on the battlefield. In fact, our battle-tested, supremely confident military will be a major asset for transatlantic security for decades to come.

On battlefields of Ukraine, a new type of warfare has been born, and it is Ukrainian troops - not those of Russia - who have devised new and often ingenious tactics. Whereas almost all NATO members have scant experience with large-scale warfare in the twenty-first century, Ukraine's

military - from newly enlisted soldiers to general staff - understands that technology and individual decision-making, down to the platoon level, will be the key to military success in the decades ahead. Ours is the new model army that Europeans will want to emulate in terms of training, tactics, and the responsibility given to every soldier.

The fact is that Ukraine's military is the best fighting force, by far, that one will be able to find in Europe for the foreseeable future. And NATO can be certain that it will always be kept at peak readiness. We paid a heavy price for being unprepared for war in 2014, when Russia first invaded our territory and seized Crimea. That will not happen again. We will be an ally ready and able to defend every inch of NATO territory from the very first day that we join.

That solemn commitment to defend our allies is one that I am certain Ukraine will uphold. NATO members should recall that, when the war began, we were "alone" in the same way that Winston Churchill saw the UK as alone in the spring of 1940. But we did not hesitate to stand and fight. Our unity, tenacity, and steadfastness in those dark hours, days, and weeks should command the respect of all

NATO members. Ours is a nation that will fight for liberty no matter the odds.

As to the nuclear threat, it is precisely Ukraine's status as a non-NATO member that has enabled the Kremlin's nuclear sabre-rattling. No nuclear threats had been heard in Europe for decades before Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022. But, because Ukraine is not a NATO member, Russia's leadership has repeatedly threatened to deploy tactical nuclear weapons during the current conflict.

There is yet another reason why Ukraine will be an asset to NATO: when the war is over, Russia will still be next door. I possess no crystal ball; I cannot begin to guess who will govern Russia at that point. But I know that ordinary Russians - having endured decades of despotism and having now lost 100,000 or more of their sons in a failed war of aggression - will be looking for an example of the society they wish for themselves. A thriving Ukrainian democracy, fully integrated into NATO and the European Union, can and must be that shining example. We have paid too high a price to settle for anything less.

The writer is a former Prime Minister of Ukraine.  
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### Blessing & curse

Sir, Population is a blessing as well as a curse. Blessing when a government can effectively cater to a small population for involving them as active policy participants, and a curse when a voluminous population acts as a hindrance to sustainable development especially in relation to environmental issues. Eighty million people are added to the world every year. Similar to other "rights", the "right to family planning" is also enshrined in the annals of the United Nations which began marking the World Population Day on July 11 starting 1990. Improving the standard of healthcare and empowering women can put a brake on population. Controlled population is an excellent method tough to bypass when stemming population is deliberated. Race, religion, economic status, marital status and gender should not act as roadblocks to a systematically undertaken family planning. The tools should be accessible as well as acceptable to the common man.

Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA

### Major breakthrough

Sir, Cervavac—the first indigenous vaccine against cervical cancer—developed and manufactured by Serum Institute of India (SII) is now available in the private market. The vaccine is expected to be rolled out in the government sector by the end of this year. Sources in the SII said they have a 2-3 million dose production capacity and a single dose of the two-dose vial is priced at ₹2000 in the market. Cervical cancer is the second most prevalent common cancer in India. The country accounts for nearly one-fifth of the global burden of cervical cancer. Every year, 1.23 lakh new cases and around 77,000 deaths are reported in India. Cervavac is manufactured by SII—the world's largest vaccine manufacturer—in association with the Department of Biotechnology, Ministry of Science and Technology along with Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. "The SII's vaccine is approved in India for girls aged nine to 26 and is priced relatively lesser than Merck's HPV vaccine," Dr Smita Joshi, principal investigator for Serum Institute of India's HPV vaccine study at Ruby Hall Clinic, said. HPV vaccination of adolescent girls and cervical cancer screenings of adult women using an HPV test are the two tools available to prevent cervical cancer.

Asit Mohanty, JAJPUR

## 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)

Orissa POST  
B-15, Rasulgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010



# Himachal has not seen such rains in 50 yrs: CM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Hamirpur/Shimla, July 10:** Himachal Pradesh has not witnessed such 'widespread heavy rains' in the past 50 years and the state has suffered a loss of about Rs 3,000 crore in this monsoon season so far. Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu said Monday.

About 17 persons have died in rain-related incidents in the state in the past two days, he said, adding that efforts are afoot to rescue 400 tourists and locals stranded at Chandertal and between Pagal and Teilgi nallah in Lahaul and Spiti.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Congress and BJP national presidents are in touch and worried about the situation, the chief minister told reporters in Hamirpur.



Sukhu said that bridges were broken in Baddi, Kullu and Una, and Largi power project in Kullu was submerged in water.

In late evening Sunday, the chief minister spoke to all the deputy commissioners and took stock of the situation regarding the damage caused and gave necessary instructions to provide immediate relief to the affected, an official statement said.

Staying awake all night, the CM monitored the rescue operations to evacuate the stranded people safely, the statement said.

Sukhu said that since last night, 29 people trapped in Manali's potato ground and six persons in Nagwayin village in Mandi have been rescued by the National Disaster Relief Force (NDRF) and police teams.

The chief minister also directed the Lahaul and Spiti district administration to gear up to provide adequate food, medicines and other essential items to the stranded tourists near Chandertal Lake and to ensure that the rescue operations could be conducted on time.

"I appeal to the people to avoid travelling unnecessarily and avoid venturing out near the streams and the rivers," he said.



People near the flooded Foy Sagar Lake following heavy monsoon rains in Ajmer, Rajasthan, Monday

PTI PHOTO

## Two Jaipur temples introduce dress code for devotees

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Jaipur, July 10:** For the first time in Jaipur, two temples in the Rajasthan state capital have introduced dress codes for devotees.

Management officials at the Jharkhand Mahadev temple and Sadashiv Jyotirlinga Mahadev temple have requested devotees to wear decent dresses and avoid wearing miniskirts and distressed jeans.

This is for the first time that a temple in the state capital has introduced a dress code for worshippers.

The famous Jharkhand Mahadev temple has placed a notice on its gate saying shorts, bermudas, mini skirt, jeans and frocks were not permitted in the temple premises.

"We hope that you all share co-operate in following Indian culture smoothly," the notice says.

The Babbu Seth Memorial Trust president Jaiprakash Somani said this was just an advisory.

"We request all devotees to maintain discipline. There will be a Swayamsevak at the gate who will monitor if these advices were being followed."

Meanwhile, the Sadashiv Jyotirlinga Mahadev temple has also placed a similar notice which says that devotees should wear traditional attire so that the religious sentiments of people are not affected.

Earlier this week, a poster asking for the implementation of dress code was put up at Udaipur's oldest Shri Jagdish Mandir premises. Please take special care of this rule. If you do this, you will not be able to enter the temple," it said.

However the state's Devasthan Department got these posters removed Thursday saying they were put up without permission.

# Raj Cong, BJP projecting no CM face leaves party workers confused

While the two camps of ruling Congress have been silenced by the party high command's statement that there will be no chief ministerial face for the upcoming polls, the Opposition BJP has already announced that the party will contest the polls on the face of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his schemes

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Jaipur, July 10:** The Congress after its recent Delhi meeting has announced that the party will be going for the Rajasthan assembly polls without any chief ministerial face.

The announcement comes as a shocker as the present CM Ashok Gehlot has been working hard to ensure the return of the party while the rival camp headed by Sachin Pilot was expecting that their leader will be announced as the CM face.

While the two camps have been silenced by a statement of the party high command, many leaders claim it to be a victory of the Pilot camp as it says that indirectly, it is a message for Gehlot to stay silent as of now.

A party leader on condition of anonymity said, "If you are in government, the party leader trusts you and your leadership. When the party leadership is so confident about you, why is your face not being made the CM face in the next election." It means the party is doubtful about your performance, he added.

Veteran BJP leader Laxmikant Bharadwaj said, "The Congress has announced to go faceless during this election to fool the



**Right from the formation of its government in Rajasthan in 2018, the Congress has been garnering attention for its factionalism. Similar is the condition of the BJP in the state where the party is busy tackling factionalism**

people. Last time, they made Pilot the face to take the votes of Gujjars, this time, they have announced to go faceless again to confuse the voters and to give the message that Pilot can be the CM and for others that Gehlot can

also be the CM." "However, elections this time will be contested on issues like poor law and order, crime against women, unemployment, etc. The people know the reality and the Congress wants to hide the facts and hence they are going faceless."

Meanwhile, the opposition BJP has already announced that the party will go to the polls without a CM face and will contest on the face of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his schemes.

In fact, both the parties are sharing many similarities in the desert state.

While the feud is limited to the Gehlot-Pilot camp in the Congress, it is divided in different camps in the BJP as there is a long list of those who want to be the CM. So the party is

shying away from naming a CM face, said party sources.

Meanwhile, the two parties' strategy of going faceless has left the party workers confused. While the Congress leaders are confused which camp they should go to, the grassroots workers are all the more confused as prominent positions in district PCC offices are lying vacant.

Similar is the plight of the BJP where the leaders are inclined to particular camps and hence the party is failing to project a united face. While the recent rally in Kota called by Vasundhara Raje loyalist Prahlad Gunjal failed to see veteran party leaders, the same was the case at the BJP core committee meeting when Raje was absent while other senior leaders marked their presence.

## Water crisis grips Shimla; blame on damaged pipes

Several areas of Shimla have not received clean water for the past two days. People have started storing rain water as they say the situation could worsen in the coming days

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Shimla, July 10:** A water crisis looms large over the capital city of Himachal Pradesh with heavy rains in the past few days damaging supply schemes and causing silt in water resources.

According to Shimla Jal Prabandhan Nigam Limited (SJPNL) officials, the city received 11.03 mld (million litre per day) Monday against the average 42-45 mld. They said it would take three to four days for the water supply to get normalised as flooding has hampered the supply operations.

Water is supplied to Shimla from six sources - Gumma, Giri, Churot, Seog, Chairh and Koti Brandi - and the supply from Gumma and five other sources was 7.82 mld and 3.21 mld, respectively.

Himachal Pradesh received 271.5 mm of rainfall during the monsoon season from July 1 to July 9, against the normal rainfall of 160.6 mm, an excess of 69 per cent.

Talking to PTI, the officials

said Chaba pumping station has been damaged, while Nautikhad has been flooded and only one pump is working at the Gumma station.

Although the turbidity in Giri has come down from 9,700 Nephelometric Turbidity Unit (ntu) to 7,400 ntu, there is no mechanism to deal with turbidity over 2,000-25,00 ntu, they said, adding that transmitting pipes have also been damaged at several places due to the down-pour.

SJPNL spokesperson Sahil Sharma urged the city residents to utilise water judiciously and use rainwater for non-drinking purposes. He also advised them to use water in storage tanks for drinking.

Several areas of Shimla have not received clean water for the past two days. People have started storing rain water as they say the situation could worsen in the coming days. "We are storing rainwater in buckets and utensils to use it for purposes other than drinking," Guddy, a resident of Kaithu, said.



# Single smart card for entry to tourist sites in Raj soon

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Jaipur, July 10:** The Rajasthan government is working on a system under which tourists will have access to multiple monuments and transport facilities through a single smart card.

A portal will be developed by the department of information technology under the plan for which the tourism department is the nodal agency and transport department is also a part.

An official of the tourism department said initially, tourists will have access to multiple monuments through one smart card which will have to be recharged.

"A portal will be developed for this purpose. The tourists will have the convenience to visit the monuments without purchasing tickets at each monument. One single card will be



valid at government protected monuments in the state. Integration of this card will be done with the services of roadways," the official said.

He said in the initial phase, only super luxury buses will be

included in the service for intrastate travel.

Another official said the validity of the smart cards will be decided in such a manner that it can also help in crowd management at monuments.

"Depending upon the response of the system, the service will be expanded and private museums or monuments will also be covered under this. This will end the requirement to stand in queue for tickets and will save time

## KEY ATTRactions

TOURISM IS ONE OF THE KEY INDUSTRIES IN RAJASTHAN, WITH 1087.5 LAKH TOURISTS VISITING THE STATE IN 2022

APART FROM FORTS AND PALACES, WILDLIFE, LAKES AND RELIGIOUS PLACES ALSO ATTRACT A LARGE NUMBER OF TOURISTS TO THE STATE FROM THE COUNTRY AND ABROAD

and resources," the official said. "The scope of this system is large. Integration of other tourist services that include stay in Rajasthan Tourism Development Corporation (RTDC) owned hotels, private hotels and resorts, cab services can also be done

after successful implementation at a smaller scale," he added.

Gajendra Singh, a tourist guide based in Udaipur, said ticket purchase has become a time-consuming exercise for tourists, particularly during peak seasons and if this system is rolled out, it will give a significant ease to the travellers.

"Such a system will definitely give a positive message about the tourism industry of the state," he said.

Tourism is one of the key industries in Rajasthan, with 1087.5 lakh tourists visiting the state in 2022.

Apart from forts and palaces, wildlife, lakes and religious places in Rajasthan also attract a large number of tourists from the country and abroad, including the US, France, UK, Italy, Germany, Spain and Australia.

## High-altitude areas in HP get season's first snowfall

**Shimla:** High-altitude tourist destinations in Himachal Pradesh Sunday witnessed season's first snowfall, the weather office in Shimla said. However, the state capital Shimla and Manali experienced overnight rain, pushing the mercury down by several notches. The high-altitude Spiti and Lahaul valleys experienced moderate snowfall, making hill stations Kaza, Losar and Chicham more picturesque. Hills overlooking the picturesque tourist destination of Chitkul, a village close to China border, in Kinnaur district and the majestic Rohtang Pass (13,050 feet), located 52 km from Manali, experienced snowfall. "High-altitude areas of Lahaul and Spiti, Chamba, Kullu, Kinnaur and Shimla districts have been experiencing light to moderate snow since Saturday night, while mid and lower hills getting widespread rain," a Met official told IANS.





Swollen Beas river during heavy rainfall in Kullu district, Himachal Pradesh. Swollen rivers threatened to sweep into residential areas as rescue operations continued till late in night using anchored rope, and harness and cranes



A man walks down a road blocked by boulders during rainfall in Kullu district



Debris of washed away trees and construction material floats through a street during flash floods following heavy rain at Thunag area in Mandi district



Vehicles being swept away during flash floods at Parwanoo in Solan district



Rescue teams shift flood-affected people to a safer place after overflow of the Badi River in Patiala, Punjab



A section of a road washed away due to heavy rainfall in Panchkula, Haryana



SDRF personnel rescue Kanwariyas from drowning in the Ganga during the holy month of Shrawan in Haridwar, Uttarakhand

PTI PHOTOS



Locals use a tractor trolley to move through flooded street in Mathura, Uttar Pradesh



# national

## of the day quote

We were demanding a special legislation for the Ram temple construction but they (government) did not have the guts to bring it

UDDHAV THACKERAY | SHIV SENA (UBT) CHIEF

Governors in opposition ruled states: 1) have Hindutva agenda 2) destabilise & interfere 3) incite hate. Stalin is right to ask for Ravi's removal

KAPIL SIBAL | RAJYA SABHA MP

No one will do politics or other kinds of discrimination in such cases...After the police got to know about the incident and the complaint was filed, Police have immediately swung into action, and have arrested the culprits. They have recovered the body parts that were dumped in a borewell pit and have taken necessary action. I compliment the police for the swift action

G PARAMESHWARA | K'TAKA HOME MINISTER

## SHORT TAKES

### 9 killed, 7 injured in road crash

**Pratapgarh (UP):** Nine people were killed and seven injured in the Lilapur area here Monday afternoon when a gas tanker overturned on the tempo they were travelling in, police said. The accident took place on the Lucknow-Varanasi highway here, about 15 km away from the district headquarters, Additional Superintendent of Police (West) Rohit Mishra said.

### Symbol row: SC to hear Uddhav's plea July 31

**New Delhi:** The Supreme Court Monday agreed to hear July 31 Uddhav Thackeray's plea against the Election Commission's order allotting the name 'Shiv Sena' and the undivided party's bow and arrow election symbol to the Eknath Shinde faction. A bench of Chief Justice DY Chandrachud and Justice PS Narasimha said the matter was listed for hearing after advocate Amit Anand Tiwari sought its urgent listing.

### Top court extends Jain's interim bail

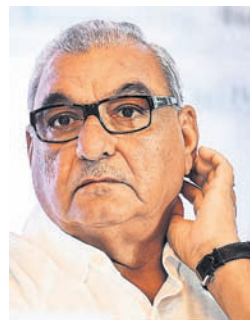
**New Delhi:** The Supreme Court Monday extended the interim bail granted to Aam Aadmi Party leader and former minister Satyendar Jain on medical grounds in a money laundering case registered against him by the Enforcement Directorate. A bench of Justices AS Bopanna and MM Sundresh directed senior advocate Abhishek Manu Singhvi, appearing for Jain, to place medical reports on record and extended the interim bail till July 24.

### Delhi BJP protests against AAP govt

**New Delhi:** The Delhi BJP Monday protested near the AAP office at DDU Marg here against the inconvenience caused to people due to extensive waterlogging on several roads and stretches across the city. Delhi BJP president Virendra Sachdeva alleged a "scam" in desilting of drains in the city.

### 1 dead, 3 missing in fishing boat accident

**Thiruvananthapuram:** Tension prevailed in Muthalappozhi area near here Monday when a few local residents staged protests against the Kerala ministers' visit to the coastal village for overseeing the mission to rescue three fishermen who went missing after their boat capsized in the seas in the early hours of Monday.



The rain has once again exposed the reality of the arrangements of the BJP-JJP government. From roads, streets, parks, to government offices, everything is submerged. Houses and shops have been flooded

BHUPINDER SINGH HOODA | CONGRESS LEADER

## CHANDRAYAAN-3 TO LEAP TOWARDS MOON FRIDAY

Loaded with more fuel, a slew of fail-safe measures and a bigger landing site, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is set to make yet another attempt to land on the Moon with the launch of Chandrayaan-3 Friday. Chandrayaan-3, set for lift-off at 2:35 pm Friday, will be a follow-up mission after the crash-landing of Chandrayaan-2 in September 2019 due to a software glitch



## 37 killed as heavy rains batter north



PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA MODI HAS SPOKEN WITH CHIEF MINISTERS OF HIMACHAL PRADESH AND UTTARAKHAND ABOUT THE SITUATION AND ASSURED THEM OF ALL HELP AND SUPPORT FROM THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

MODI ALSO SPOKE WITH SENIOR MINISTERS AND OFFICIALS AND TOOK STOCK OF THE SITUATION IN THE WAKE OF EXCESSIVE RAINFALL IN PARTS OF THE COUNTRY, HIS OFFICE SAID

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, July 10:** Incassant rains unleashed more death and destruction Monday in parts of north India with 37 people killed in landslides and other rain-related incidents in the last two days even as the Army and NDRF teams stepped in to intensify the relief and rescue operations.

Flash floods and landslides claimed 18 lives over the past two days in Himachal Pradesh, while nine people died in Punjab and Haryana, seven in Rajasthan and three in Uttar Pradesh in different rain-related incidents. Several rivers, including the Yamuna in Delhi, in north India are in spate.

In cities and towns across the region, many roads and residential areas were submerged in knee-deep water with the civic system unable to hold on in the face of record rains Sunday. While 14 teams are working in Punjab, a dozen are deployed in Himachal Pradesh, eight in Uttarakhand and five in Haryana.

### 1 civilian killed, 2 injured in clashes

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Imphal, July 10:** A civilian was killed and two were injured Monday in violent clashes in two villages located along Manipur's Imphal West and Kangpokpi districts, officials said.

There was a brief lull between 3 am and 6 am before the sounds of indiscriminate firing from Phayeng and Singda villages in the Kangchuk area along the two districts resumed. Earlier officials had said that a policeman had died in the violence but it was later clarified that the victim was a civilian, who was carrying a .303 rifle believed to have been stolen from the police armoury. "Joint search of the area of Gelfang was carried out and one body along with a .303 rifle was recovered from the spot", officials said.

### MANIPUR VIOLENCE

### WB PANCHAYAT ELECTIONS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Kolkata, July 10:** A total of 69.85-per cent voter turnout was recorded till 5 pm in 696 booths in 19 districts of West Bengal, where polling for the panchayat elections was declared void, officials said.

No major incident was reported in the repolling ordered by the State Election Commission (SEC) Sunday evening amid allegations of tampering with ballot boxes and the violence that left 15 people dead, they said.

The repolling started at 7 am amid tight security with four central forces personnel deployed in each booth, besides state police. Voting started late in a few booths as ballot boxes did not reach on time, officials said.

These booths will be given extra time to complete the polling,



PURE DEVOTION: Devotees arrive to offer prayers to Lord Shiva on the first Monday of the holy month of 'Shravan' in Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh

## Apex court issues notice to Centre on Delhi govt's plea

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, July 10:** The Supreme Court Monday refused to grant an interim stay on the Centre's recent ordinance on control over services in Delhi, while it agreed to consider the AAP government's submissions July 17 on a decision by the lieutenant governor to fire 437 independent consultants hired by the Arvind Kejriwal dispensation.

Issuing a notice to the Centre on the Delhi government's plea challenging the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (Amendment) Ordinance, 2023, a bench of Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud and Justice P S Narasimha asked senior advocate Abhishek Singhvi, appearing for the AAP government, to amend its petition and include the lieutenant governor as a party to the case.

"This is an ordinance. We will have to hear the matter," the bench said and posted the matter for hearing July 17. At the outset, Singhvi sought a "qualified" stay, saying the ordinance

### ORDINANCE ROW



takes away the powers of elected representatives.

He said the 437 independent consultants engaged by the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) have been fired by the LG. "There are a number of instances where the Supreme Court had stayed an Act of Parliament, leave aside an ordinance... Can your lordships imagine a meeting where a chief minister sits in a minority and two bureaucrats say that we believe prima facie this proposal is illegal. First, those two will outvote the CM. They will then refer it to the LG who is the super CM," Singhvi said, mounting a challenge to the ordinance.

In its plea, the AAP government has called the ordinance

an "unconstitutional exercise of executive fiat" that attempts to "override" the top court and the basic structure of the Constitution. Besides quashing the ordinance, the Delhi government has sought an interim stay on it. The Centre had May 19 promulgated the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (Amendment) Ordinance, 2023 to create an authority for transfer and posting of Group-A officers in Delhi. The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government has termed it a "deception" with the Supreme Court verdict on control of services.

The ordinance, which came a week after the Supreme Court handed over the control of services in Delhi excluding police, public order and land to the elected government, seeks to set up a National Capital Civil Service Authority for transfer of and disciplinary proceedings against Group-A officers from the Delhi, Andaman & Nicobar, Lakshadweep, Daman and Diu and Dadra and Nagar Haveli (Civil) Services (DANICS) cadre.

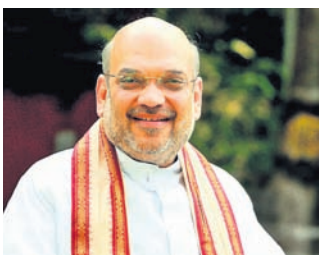
### 'STRENGTHENING PACS THROUGH FPOs'

## Shah to inaugurate mega conclave July 14

POST NEWS NETWORK

**New Delhi, July 10:** Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation Amit Shah will inaugurate a day-long mega conclave "Strengthening PACS through FPOs" here July 14, 2023. The conclave is aimed at discussing ways to strengthen Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS) through Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs).

The conclave will witness participation of experts from the sector as well as members from the FPOs across the country. The mega conclave is being organized by the National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC) in collaboration with the Union Ministry of Cooperation.



Being collective entities formed by farmers, enabling them to pool resources and enhance their bargaining power, the FPOs are one of the major vehicles for agricultural transformation. In order to realise the Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of 'Sahkar se Samridhi' and with the efforts of Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation Amit Shah, recently a decision was taken to form 1100 New FPOs in Cooperative Sector.

With an important initiative of Ministry of Cooperation Ministry, the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare has recently allocated additional blocks to NCDC to form and promote 1100 FPOs in Cooperative Sector through strengthening of PACS under the scheme to bolster the cooperative sector and provide comprehensive support to small and marginal farmers.

## Repolling in nearly 700 booths



they said. "No major untoward incidents were reported from the districts where repolling is underway. A couple of stray incidents happened and those were managed by the police," an SEC official said.

However, one person died due to cardiac arrest while standing in the queue to vote in Tehatta sub-division of Nadia district, po-

lice said. Counting of votes, including those in the repolling, will be held July 11.

In Malda, locals blocked a booth in Dogachi in Raniganj panchayat in Gazole block, preventing the repoll.

Polling could not be held Saturday, too, as the locals boycotted the vote demanding the repair of a road. A road was

blocked at Tehatta in Nadia in the morning, but it was later cleared by the police. Voters also demonstrated outside a booth at Mayna in Purba Medinipur district, he said.

Commenting on the repolling, Leader of Opposition Suvendu Adhikari said the BJP submitted a list of 6,000 booths to the SEC, demanding re-election. Meanwhile, BJP leader Rahul Sinha demanded that the "elections should be held again under the watchful eyes of courts".

Repolling was also being held at 89 booths in Nadia, followed by Cooch Behar (53), North 24 Parganas (46), Uttar Dinajpur (42), South 24 Parganas (36), Purba Medinipur (31) and Hooghly (29), they said. No repolling was ordered in Darjeeling, Jhargram and Kalimpong districts, they said.

## THE GUJARAT MODEL OF GOVT EDUCATION!

Fallacies, more than facts, stir politics. Take the case of 'Shaala Praveshotsav' introduced by Gujarat Chief Minister Narendra Modi in 2003 with the motto that no child shall be deprived of going to school. At the launch of the enrolment 'festival' for class one, the entire bureaucracy, Chief Minister and his cabinet colleagues included, fanned out state-wide to give effect to this dictum. Last year even vice-chancellors of state universities were roped into the process and this year it was held from June 12 to 14. Officialdom declared it a success what with 46,600 government nominees visiting 27,368 primary schools in 27 districts overseeing 2.30 lakh children, get admission in

class-1 and 9,77,513 children admitted into kindergarten. According to Education minister Dr Kuber Dindor construction of 28,973 classrooms at the cost of Rs 5,200 crores was on the anvil. Number of schools scoring less than 50 per cent three years ago had decreased by 11 per cent this year while the number of schools scoring more than 50 per cent had increased from 23,885 to 28,946.

Mutual back slapping and chest thumping notwithstanding the damper came days later when the report submitted by one of the IAS officers, Dhaval Patel who visited six schools in tribal areas leaked out. The report was a damning indictment of the state of education affairs in these schools. Many of them in



class eight could neither add single-digit numbers nor read a word in Gujarati, their effort confined to alphabet-by-alphabet stutter-stammer reading. The officer classified the education level of students as 'very poor' and the teachers' response as inadequate.

Interestingly, the Education minister also holds the tribal development portfolio and by his own admission is also from a tribal area. In the run up to the Gujarat elections last year an

aggressive Arvind Kejriwal led AAP pitted his government's model schools against the Gujarat model after reports appeared that over 700 government primary schools in PM's home state functioned under a single teacher and 8500 of them under two teachers.

The Annual Status of Education Report (ASER), 2022 for rural areas released early this year by Pratham Foundation was warning enough for the Gujarat government but seems to have gone unheeded. Patel's report was a confirmation of ASER findings for rural areas of the state. It had reported a 20 percentage point decline in class 8 where only 52 per cent of students in government schools

could read class 2 level basic text. In 2023 this figure stood at 72 per cent. It represented the steepest decline across all states. The number of class five students who could read class 2 level basic text also fell from 57 per cent in 2018 to 33.9 per cent in 2022. However the redeeming factor between pre and post-Covid situation was the rise in number of children attending government schools, up from 85.66 per cent in 2018 to 90.9 per cent in 2022. The main reason for the dismal state of school education affairs is largely because of over 28,000 teacher vacancies in government schools.

Half of teaching posts in granted colleges in the state are vacant. Give or take a minor percentage, there are 285 granted

colleges with a sanctioned strength of 335 but only 206 vacancies have been filled. Three districts have no government colleges. There are no Arts, Science or Commerce government colleges in Vadodra, Morbi and Mahisagar districts.

As things stand eight government universities in Gujarat were without a fulltime vice-chancellor for good off one to two years. In March 2022, the apex court quashed the appointment of Sardar Patel University VC Shirish Kulkarni, for lack of teaching experience to hold the post and hauled the Gujarat government over the coals for not complying with UGC regulations sending a message that officialdom could ignore only at its own cost.



# international



India and China are rising economic powers and their influence is increasing... Nepal enjoys a traditional friendship with both the neighbours, which needs to be further nurtured

## PAK ON FLOOD ALERT

After India released about 185,000 cusecs of water, Pakistan's National Disaster Management Authority has issued a flood alert and warned of heavy rain in the next 24 to 48 hours



## of the day quote

Now is the time to clearly demonstrate that the international community's determination to deter North Korea's nuclear weapons program is stronger than North Korea's desire to develop nuclear weapons

YOON SUK YEOL | SOUTH KOREA'S PRESIDENT

I do think my China trip has been successful in forging those relationships and creating the opportunity for a deeper set of more frequent contacts at our staff levels

JANET YELLEN | US TREASURY SECRETARY

New Zealand and the European Union have signed a ground-breaking Free Trade Agreement that will provide significant new trade access to the country's fourth-largest trading partner

CHRIS HIPKINS | NEW ZEALAND PM

## SHORT TAKES

### Palestinian gunman killed

Jerusalem: Israeli troops shot and killed an alleged Palestinian gunman during new unrest in the West Bank Monday, as a wave of violence in the occupied territory showed no signs of slowing. The Israeli military said troops stopped a motorist in Deir Nidham, a town west of Ramallah, to question him. It said the man got out of his car, threw a grenade and fired shots toward soldiers, who then opened fire. The Palestinian Health Ministry confirmed that a 33-year-old man had been killed, but gave no further details.

### Dutch PM to retire from politics

The Hague: Just two days after the collapse of his government, Mark Rutte, the longest-serving Dutch Prime Minister, on Monday announced his departure from politics. In a brief statement prior to the debate on the fall of his fourth government in The Hague, Rutte stated that he will no longer be available as leader of his People's Party for Freedom and Democracy (VVD) in the next elections slated to take place later this year, reports Xinhua news agency. Saturday, the 56-year-old had announced the collapse of his government after a failure to reach an agreement on an immigration policy between the four coalition parties.

### Uzbek President re-elected

Tashkent: Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev has been re-elected with 87.1 per cent of the vote cast in a snap election, the country's Central Election Commission said Monday. Candidate of the Liberal Democratic Party of Uzbekistan, Mirziyoyev promised in his pre-election campaign that he would continue his reform agenda to liberalize the economy and develop green energy, education, health, and tourism, as well as to better protect people's fundamental freedoms, reports Xinhua news agency.

### Eight firefighters injured in Iran

Tehran: Fire erupted at an oil refinery in southern Iran and injured eight firefighters Monday, the official IRNA news agency reported. The news agency did not say what caused the fire but reported the firefighters were hurt while trying to put out the blaze burning in two of the five tanks at an oil depot near Iran's port of Banda Abbas.

## LATEST TWIST

# Wagner boss met Putin after mutiny

THOUGH PUTIN BRANDED PRIGOZHIN A TRAITOR AS THE REVOLT UNFOLDED, THE CRIMINAL CASE AGAINST THE MERCENARY CHIEF WAS LATER DROPPED AND HIS ULTIMATE FATE REMAINS UNCLEAR

THOUGH MERCENARIES ARE ILLEGAL IN RUSSIA, WAGNER TROOPS HAVE FOUGHT FOR RUSSIAN INTERESTS AROUND THE GLOBE AND PLAYED A VITAL ROLE IN THE CAPTURE OF BAKHMUT IN THE WAR'S LONGEST AND BLOODIEST BATTLE

ADDING TO THE UNUSUAL NATURE OF THE MEETING WAS THAT UNTIL VERY RECENTLY, PUTIN HAD DENIED ANY LINK BETWEEN THE STATE AND PRIGOZHIN'S FORCES

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Moscow, July 10: Russian President Vladimir Putin hosted mercenary chief Yevgeny Prigozhin at the Kremlin days after the commander led a short-lived rebellion, a senior government spokesman said Monday, the latest twist in a baffling episode that has raised questions about the power and influence held by both men.

The three-hour meeting took place on June 29 and also involved commanders from Prigozhin's Wagner Group military contractor, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said. Putin gave an assessment of Wagner's actions on the battlefield in Ukraine — where the mercenaries have fought alongside Russian troops — and of the revolt itself. The Wagner forces pledged loyalty to Putin, according to Peskov.

The confirmation that Putin met face-to-face with Prigozhin, who led troops on a march to Moscow last month in order to demand a change of defense minister, was extraordinary. Though Putin branded Prigozhin a traitor as the revolt unfolded, the criminal case against the mercenary chief was later



dropped and his ultimate fate remains unclear.

Adding to the unusual nature of the meeting was that until very recently, Putin had denied any link between the state and Prigozhin's forces. Though mercenaries are illegal in Russia, Wagner troops have fought for Russian interests around the globe and played a vital role in the capture of Bakhmut in the war's longest and bloodiest battle.

But throughout the war, Prigozhin has criticized decisions made by Russia's top military brass, leading to tensions with the Kremlin that culminated on June 24 in an armed mutiny in which he led his fighters into Russia.

The rebellion severely weakened Putin's authority, even though Prigozhin claimed that the uprising was not aimed at the president but at removing Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu and military chief Gen. Valery Gerasimov. Prigozhin ended his mutiny after a deal was brokered for him to go to Belarus.

Russia's Defence Ministry published a video featuring Gerasimov on Monday — the first time he has been seen since the rebellion. The twin updates appeared to be another attempt by the Kremlin to show it's in control after a turbulent period. But many questions remain, including about the deal that ended

Prigozhin's revolt.

Days after the revolt, Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko said Prigozhin was in Belarus. But last week the president said the mercenary chief was in Russia while his troops remained in their camps. Peskov said that during the June 29 meeting, Putin offered an "assessment" of Wagner's actions on the battlefield in Ukraine and "of the events of June 24". The president also "listened to the explanations of the commanders and offered them options for further employment and further use in combat", the Kremlin spokesman said.

"The commanders themselves presented their version of what happened. They underscored that they are staunch supporters and soldiers of the head of state and the commander-in-chief, and also said that they are ready to continue to fight for their homeland," Peskov said.

A total of 35 people took part in the meeting, Peskov said. Meanwhile, a Russian airstrike on a school in southern Ukraine killed four adults as people gathered to receive humanitarian aid, the governor of Ukraine's Zaporizhzhia region said Monday, branding the attack "a war crime".

## MONEY LAUNDERING CASE

# PM Shehbaz's son acquitted

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Lahore, July 10: A special court in Pakistan Monday acquitted Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's son Suleman Shabbaz and all other accused named in the Rs 16 billion money laundering case filed by the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA). The special court here issued its order on pleas filed by Suleman and others accused in the case seeking their acquittal. The prime minister's son was present alongside his counsel before the court at the time of the announcement, Geo News reported.

Suleman, who returned to Pakistan in December last year after a four-year self-exile in London, was not only accused in the case but was also named in an assets-beyond-means reference. He was declared a proclaimed offender in both cases.

Ahead of his arrival, the Islamabad High Court restrained both the FIA and NAB from arresting him. The FIA, this January, cited a lack of proof and cleared him in the sugar mills case. Meanwhile, the FIA has submitted the answers to the 27 questions related to the case in the court.

Judge Bakht Fakhar Behzad inquired regarding those involved in the inquiry of the money laundering case. FIA's lawyer told the court that the inquiry was conducted by a joint investigation team headed by a late FIA official.



Defence minister Rajnath Singh inspects a Guard of Honour ahead of his meeting with Defence minister of Malaysia Dato' Seri Mohamad Hasan, in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

# BIDEN, CHARLES ZERO IN ON CLIMATE CHANGE

Biden's royal visit was paired with his sixth meeting with the British Prime Minister since Rishi Sunak took office. The two discussed a range of global issues

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Windsor (UK), July 10: President Joe Biden and King Charles III, aging leaders who've waited decades to reach the pinnacle of their careers, used their first meeting in their respective roles Monday to highlight the generational issue of climate

change as they prod private companies to do more to bolster clean energy in developing countries.

The meticulously choreographed gathering at Windsor Castle injected substance into the type of encounter between president and monarch that historically has been more about the pomp and circumstance. After



the arrival formalities, Biden and Charles participated in a climate-focused roundtable with officials from the financial and

philanthropic sectors. John Kerry, the U.S. Envoy on climate, attended.

The 74-year-old Charles, who was crowned in May, has already made the environment a significant part of his policy legacy and has long fought to protect wildlife and battle climate change. Biden, for his part, identified climate change as one of the four crises he was determined to confront as president. He signed a sweeping legislative package last year that includes nearly \$375 billion

in climate-related incentives.

Biden, 80, last had formal talks with Charles, then prince, at the COP26 U.N. Climate summit in Glasgow, Scotland, in November 2021. The US President also attended the state funeral of Charles's mother, Queen Elizabeth II, in September as well as a reception for heads of state at Buckingham Palace the night before the service. Biden did not attend Charles's coronation, sending first lady Jill Biden instead.

# Cheerleaders in Japan fighting to keep traditions alive

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Tokyo, July 10: They are drenched in sweat, their hands bloodied from clapping, and their voices hoarse from shouting -- meet Japan's predominantly male and unashamedly macho "leadership section" cheerleaders.

The cheerleaders are part of a century-old tradition that some fear faces an existential crisis, with fewer students showing an interest in the hardcore art form. And now there is a push for the squads and their counterparts in Japan's traditional "oendan" cheering groups to be registered as part of the country's "intangible" cultural heritage.

The "leadership section" cheerleaders are a formidable sight. Dressed in old-fashioned school-style uniforms, they are a mass



The cheerleaders are part of a century-old tradition that some fear faces an existential crisis, with fewer students showing an interest in the hardcore art form

of black at college baseball games as they belch out chants, bang taiko drums and thrust their fists in rigid, martial moves. "We give it our all to the point of

ridiculousness, and that's what makes us so cool," said Taisuke Ono, 21, a member of a squad at Tokyo's Waseda University. "Even if we're trailing by 10

points and there's almost no chance of a comeback, we somehow manage to convince ourselves we can still win." Squads like Ono's

typically perform alongside brass bands and American-style, mostly women cheerleaders -- a triumvirate known as "oendan" or "rooters". But the men-dominated "leadership sections" have seen their ranks shrink at a pace that far outstrips their counterparts, with around a dozen groups disappearing over 15 years, according to one survey. Pandemic-era bans on shouting and restrictions on crowds only deepened the malaise.

Alarmed by the situation, dozens of universities joined forces last year in a campaign to win designation of the tradition as an "intangible cultural property". The label is awarded by Japan's culture minister to activities seen as having unique importance, like calligraphy and traditional sake brewing.

Campaigners say the recognition would increase the squads' prestige and encourage fresh recruits, while activities that have obtained the distinction in the past have been awarded government subsidies.

"We're now at a phase where the culture is about to vanish," said Jun Tochimoto, who has spearheaded the campaign. "At the heart of what these cheerleaders do is the idea that they're training and improving them-

selves through the art of cheering -- that's the mindset we hope will be preserved," he said.

The decline began in earnest several decades ago, with potential recruits scared away by macho images and rumours of hazing. A holdover from Japan's Meiji period (1868-1912) counterculture, the squads are said to have been infused with a military style by students who were demobilised after WWII. A draconian hierarchy prevailed in post-war years, with senior-year students deified as the "emperor" and freshmen roughed up as "slaves," recalled Hiroshi Imazu, a 1970 graduate of Tokyo's Chuo University.

They were sometimes even tasked with battling left-wing students whose activism paralysed some universities, the former squad member recalled.

## NEW CONDITION

# Turkey calls for new EU membership talks

It was the first time that Erdogan linked his country's ambition to join the EU with Sweden's efforts to become a NATO member



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Vilnius (Lithuania), July 10: Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan Monday introduced a new condition for approving Sweden's membership in NATO, calling on European countries to "open the way" for Turkey to join the European Union.

The surprise announcement by Erdogan before departing to a NATO summit in Lithuania's capital added new uncertainty to Sweden's bid to become the alliance's 32nd member, which Turkey initially blocked saying Sweden was too soft on Kurdish militants and other groups that Ankara considers security threats.

It was the first time that Erdogan linked his country's ambition to join the EU with Sweden's efforts to become a NATO member. "Turkey has been waiting at the door of the European Union for over 50 years now, and almost all of the NATO member countries are now members of the European Union," Erdogan told reporters in Istanbul.

"I am making this call to these countries that have kept Turkey waiting at the gates of the European Union for more than 50 years." "Come and open the way for Turkey's membership in the European Union. When you pave the way for Sweden as we did for Finland,"

he added.

Earlier, Erdogan's office said he told US President Joe Biden during a telephone call Sunday that Turkey wanted a "clear and strong" message of support for Turkey's EU ambitions from the NATO leaders to the meeting in Vilnius. The White House readout of the Biden-Erdogan call did not mention the issue of Turkish membership in the EU.

Erdogan and Swedish Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson were expected to meet later Monday in Vilnius. Asked about Sweden's comments, NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg said he supports Turkey's ambition to join the EU but noted that it wasn't among the conditions listed in an agreement that Sweden, Finland and Turkey signed at last year's NATO summit in Madrid.

Stoltenberg reiterated that Sweden had met those conditions and said he thinks it is "still possible to have a positive decision" on the country's pending membership during this week's summit in Lithuania.

Turkey is a candidate to join the EU, but democratic backsliding during Erdogan's presidency, disputes with EU-member Cyprus and other issues have held up the country's progress toward admission in the 27-nation bloc.

I am making this call to these countries that have kept Turkey waiting at the gates of the European Union for more than 50 years. Come and open the way for Turkey's membership in the European Union. When you pave the way for Sweden as we did for Finland

RECEP TAYYIP ERDOGAN | TURKISH PRESIDENT



## of the day quote

Excluding this deal, private equity activity remained subdued owing to a high interest rate environment and global uncertainties



**SHOBHIT AGARWAL** | MD & CEO, ANAROCK CAPITAL

Long duration energy storage is critical to decarbonizing the country's energy consumption and reducing greenhouse gas emissions



**PRATIK AGARWAL** | DIRECTOR, SERENTICA RENEWABLES

The government's strong push, coupled with the RBI's decision to pause the repo rate in the last two instances, along with moderate inflation, have played a pivotal role in revitalizing the residential market



**SIVA KRISHNAN** | SENIOR MD AND HEAD (RESIDENTIAL), JLL

## SHORT TAKES

### Power use grows

**New Delhi:** Power consumption grew by 4.4 per cent to 139.23 billion units in June this year compared to last year. In the year-ago period, power consumption stood at 133.26 billion units (BU), higher than 114.48 BU in June 2021, according to government data. The peak power demand met, which is the highest supply in a day, rose to 223.23 GW in June 2023. The peak power supply stood at 211.72 GW in June 2022 and 191.24 GW in June 2021. The power ministry had estimated the country's electricity demand to touch 229 GW during the summer season. But the demand did not reach the projected level in April-May this year due to unseasonal rains. Power consumption was affected in March, April and May this year due to widespread rains in the country.

### Zee's plea junked

Securities Appellate Tribunal Monday dismissed an appeal by former Zee Group Chairman Subhash Chandra and Zee Entertainment CEO Punit Goenka to lift the markets regulator's ban on the duo holding board positions in publicly listed companies. SEBI issued the ban June 12, alleging that Chandra and Goenka were actively involved in diverting company funds to the group's other listed entities. It refused to vacate the regulator's directions, saying it did not find any illegality or irrationality in SEBI's order and saw no merit in interfering.

### Go First invites Eols

**New Delhi:** The Resolution Professional (RP) of Go First Monday invited expressions of interest (Eoi) for the grounded airline. The deadline to submit the Eols is August 9, 2023, while the final list of eligible prospective resolution applicants (RPAs) will be declared August 19, Go First RP, Shailendra Ajmera, said in a public notice. The last date for submission of objections to the provisional list is August 24, according to the notice.

### Bids for oil blocks

**New Delhi:** State-owned ONGC, mining baron Anil Agarwal's Vedanta and a consortium of Reliance Industries Ltd and BP Plc put in 13 bids for 10 areas offered for finding and producing crude oil and natural gas in India's latest bid round, according to regulator DGH. India offered 10 blocks for bidding in the eighth round of the Open Acreage Licensing Policy (OALP) in July last year. After extending the bid deadline a few times, the round closed last week.



India is poised for big jump in e-Commerce exports in next few years. Enabling easier interstate sales will be the first step in that direction. The GST provision should be the same for within and across states' supplies

**AJAY SRIVASTAVA** | CO-FOUNDER, GTRI

## GST COUNCIL MEETS TODAY

The GST Council at its meeting Tuesday is likely to deliberate on a host of issues including taxation of online gaming, definition of utility vehicles and tightening of norms for registration and claiming ITC



## ALL-TIME HIGH

# Q1 securitisation volumes rise 60%

ANNUAL SECURITISATION VOLUMES IN FY24 WILL EXCEED THE PREVIOUS PEAK OF ₹1.9 LAKH CRORE IN FY19

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, July 10:** Robust loan collections and high credit growth at non-bank lenders led to a 60 per cent jump in securitisation volumes to ₹55,000 crore in the April-June quarter of FY2023-24, a report said Monday. This is the highest ever in the first quarter of a fiscal year, rating agency Crisil said, attributing the growth to high demand from banks and non-banking finance companies (NBFCs) resorting to securitisation as a funding route.

Securitisation refers to an activity where a financier or lender transfers future receivables on a loan or a bunch of loans to other financiers, which helps with immediate liquidity requirements.

During the first quarter, the number of transactions went up to over 250 from 160 in the year-ago period, it said, adding that private and public sector banks continued to be the dominant investors, followed by foreign banks.

There were 80 originators and 50 investors active during the quarter, the agency said.

There was a 9 percentage point increase in the share of vehicle loan securitisation, including commercial vehicles and two-wheelers, in the first quarter volumes to 37 per cent, primarily driven by top originators in the commercial vehicle segment that have relied on securitisation as an alternative funding tool to support their strong credit growth.

This rise, along with continued momentum in other asset classes, has led to a relative de-



Securitisation is allowing banks to do two things: keep driving their credit growth without impacting their direct exposure limits to NBFC balance sheets, and diversify exposure to granular retail loans, which are showing robust collection performance

**KRISHNAN SITARAMAN** | SENIOR DIRECTOR AND CHIEF RATINGS OFFICER, CRISIL

cline in the share of retail mortgage-backed securitisation by 13 percentage points to 34 per cent, it said, adding that micro-finance securitisation and gold loans cornered 10 per cent and 8 per cent, respectively, during the quarter.

The share of direct assignment transactions fell to 50 per cent, which was at 55-65 per cent in the past three fiscal years. This was on account of the drop in the share of mortgage-backed securitisation,

which are largely undertaken via the direct assignment route, according to Crisil.

So far, direct assignments have largely been dominated by mortgages and gold loans, given the relatively higher safety in these asset classes, while pass-through certificates (PTCs) found greater acceptance in the vehicle, micro-finance, and unsecured loan segments, it said.

Foreign banks focused on investing in PTCs, while public sector banks preferred direct assignment pools and private sector banks invested in a mix of direct assignments (mostly mortgage and gold loan pools) and PTCs, the agency said.

The merger of HDFC and HDFC Bank is also expected to have an impact on the securitisation market, the agency said, expecting the share of mortgages and direct assignment in securitisation volume to reduce further. Hence, the share of PTCs will further improve.

## LOWEST SINCE 2020

# PE inflows drop 61% in Jan-June

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, July 10:** Continuing global macroeconomic uncertainties and geopolitical headwinds, along with tight credit markets, pulled down private equity investments into the country by 61 per cent in the first half of 2023 to \$6.1 billion, according to a report.

The value is the lowest in the January-June period since 2020, shows data collated by Refinitiv, a London Stock Exchange Group subsidiary and one of the world's largest financial markets data and insights providers.

Despite the funding winter in the space, startups continued to attract the largest share of private equity capital, which in absolute terms was a steep 69 per cent decline year-on-year.

However, in volume terms, PE deals jumped 53 per cent on a sequential basis to 300 transactions and rose 0.8 per cent in value terms on a quarter-on-quarter basis to \$2.6 billion.

Given the record amount of \$13.7 billion raised by India-based PE funds in 2022, there is substantial capital waiting to be deployed.

Internet-specific companies, including computer software and utilities, continued to attract maximum PE investment with \$2.04 billion in the reporting period.

While in value terms the inflows into the online space fell 68.8 per cent, the number of deals declined to 188 from 262 a year ago. As a result, computer software segment saw a massive 80.8 per cent year-on-year drop, followed by transportation, which received 48.3 per cent less capital.

On the other hand, financial services saw a much higher fall at 83.2 per cent, while consumer-related companies saw the funding tap drying up by 80.7 per cent.

However, the industrial/energy sector saw inflows jumping 354 per cent.

Meanwhile, domestic funds saw money inflow dipping by 2.7 per cent to \$2.63 billion.

# Rice sale under OMSS sees tepid response

In the first round of e-auction held July 5, the FCI had offered 3.88 lakh tonne of rice but only 170 tonne was sold to five bidders. The next auction is scheduled July 12



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 10:** The Centre Monday said there has been a lukewarm response to the sale of rice to small traders under the open market sale scheme in the first e-auction round and indicated that it is open to tweaking the policy.

While ruling out allowing states to participate in the Open Market Sale Scheme (OMSS) for rice, Union Food Secretary Sanjeev Chopra also said the Centre will watch how the subsequent e-auction rounds go before deciding on the next course of action.

Congress-ruled Karnataka and the Centre have locked horns over the OMSS rice, with the latter maintaining that it does not have enough stocks to meet the demand if all states start seeking rice from the central buffer stock.

According to Chopra, 15 states and Union Territories (UTs), including Tamil Nadu and Odisha, are of the view that the Centre's surplus food stock should be used in the larger interest of 140 crore population and "not for a particular section and particular class of people".

Apart from these two states, others that shared similar views during the recently concluded food ministers' conference were Arunachal Pradesh, Bihar,

Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Puducherry, Nagaland, Manipur, Maharashtra and Haryana.

In a media briefing, the Food Secretary asserted that the OMSS for rice has been started after many years and this has been done to give a signal to the market against any artificial price rise in the retail market.

"Let's not get discouraged with one round not getting good response. ... Usually, FCI does not do routine OMSS for rice. It is primarily done for wheat. For rice, it just started. We expected more (response) for rice, but it has not happened," Chopra said.

More than the quantity of rice sale under the OMSS, he said, "the intention was to give a signal to the market that the stock is with the government and will use it in the interest of common man to bring down the prices. ... That signal is more important."

The sale of rice under the OMSS has not ended. It will be continued until March 31, 2024, and sales will happen via e-auction every week, he added.

The Secretary also mentioned that the small traders were not aware of the OMSS rice sale.

The FCI is doing publicity of the same and the government expects more participation in the coming rounds of e-auction.

# NET DIRECT TAX MOP-UP GROWS 16% THIS FISCAL

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 10:** Net direct tax kitty swelled 16 per cent to ₹4.75 lakh crore so far this fiscal, a reflection of economic activity gaining traction.

The Income Tax department in a statement said the collection has touched 26.05 per cent of the total budget estimates of direct taxes for full 2023-24 fiscal of ₹18.23 lakh crore.

Direct Tax collection, net of refunds, stands at ₹4.75 lakh crore which is 15.87 per cent higher than the net collections for the corresponding period of last year.

Refunds amounting to ₹42,000 crore have been issued during April 1- July 9, 2023, which are 2.55 per cent higher than refunds issued during the same period in



the preceding year.

On a gross basis, collection from direct taxes, which includes income and corporate taxes, grew 14.65 per cent to ₹5.17 lakh crore.

The 2023-24 budget has pegged direct tax collection at a little over ₹18.23 lakh crore, a 9.75 per cent higher than ₹16.61 lakh crore mopped up last fiscal.

# NFO PUSH Equity MFs inflow hits 3-month high

MUTUAL FUNDS' FOLIOS OR INVESTORS ACCOUNT REACHED AN ALL-TIME HIGH OF 14.91 CRORE IN JUNE COMPARED TO 14.74 CRORE IN THE PRECEDING MONTH

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 10:** Strong inflow in new fund offers (NFOs) and consistent SIP flow helped equity mutual funds attract ₹8,637 crore in June, which is the highest level in three months.

Of these flows, the small-cap category continues to be the major driver with a record infusion of ₹5,472 crore in the month under review. This could be primarily due to attractive valuations offered by these stocks following the price correction seen during 2022-23.

In comparison, equity mutual funds logged an inflow of ₹3,240 crore in May and ₹6,480 crore

in April. Before that, the number was ₹20,534 crore in March, data released by the Association of Mutual Funds in India (Amfi) showed on Monday.

"A good amount of the net inflows seen in the equity asset class could be attributed to the six newly launched funds which mopped up around ₹3,038 crore during the month," Melvyn Santarita, Analyst - Manager Research, Morningstar India, said.

Overall, a total of 11 schemes were launched, all in the open ended category, raising a total of ₹3,228 crore in June.

Investors continue to flock towards the SIP route for making investments as inflow through



EQUITY MUTUAL FUNDS ATTRACT ₹8,637CR IN JUNE

INFLOW OF ₹3,240CR IN MAY & ₹6,480CR IN APRIL

the category was at ₹14,734 crore last month as compared to ₹14,749 crore in May.

Overall, the 43-player mutual fund industry saw a withdrawal of ₹2,022 crore, on contributions from debt-oriented schemes. This comes following a net investment of ₹57,420 crore in the preceding month.

However, average assets under management of the industry rose to a record high of ₹44.8 lakh crore at June-end from ₹42.9 lakh crore at the end of May in line with the bullish trend witnessed in the Indian equity indices.

This growth in the asset base could be attributed to buoyant stock market, which was boosted by a strong flow from Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) in June.

# India pips China as most attractive emerging mkt for investing

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 10:** India has overtaken China as the most attractive emerging market for investing, according to 85 sovereign wealth funds and 57 central banks representing \$21 trillion in assets.

India is increasingly viewed positively for its improved business and political stability, favourable demographics, regulatory initiatives, and a friendly environment for sovereign investors, according to a report by global investment management firm Invesco.

The report titled 'Invesco Global Sovereign Asset Management Study' included views from 142 chief investment officers, heads of asset classes along with senior portfolio strategists from 85 sovereign wealth funds and 57 central banks.

Sovereign wealth funds, it said, favour fixed income and private debt, while Emerging Markets (EMs) with solid demographics, political stability, and proactive regulation, particularly India, have emerged as prime investment destinations.

"Among the Emerging Markets, India has piqued sovereign investors' interest, overtaking China," it said.

India, it said, exemplifies the attributes sought by sovereign investors. "India has now overtaken China as the most attractive Emerging Market for investing in Emerging Market debt."

A development sovereign fund based in the Middle East noted, "We don't have enough exposure to India or China. However, India is a better story now in terms of business and political stability. Demographics are grow-



ing fast, and they also have interesting companies, good regulation initiatives, and a very friendly environment for sovereign investors." India is among a num-

AMID PERSISTENT HIGH INFLATION AND REAL INTEREST RATES, INVESTORS ARE RECALIBRATING PORTFOLIOS

ber of countries, including Mexico and Brazil, that are benefiting from increased foreign corporate investment aimed at both domestic and international demand

through 'friend-shoring' and 'near-shoring'.

This was seen as helping fund current account deficits as well as support currencies and domestic assets including debt.

On the scale of attractive EM markets for increasing exposure, India and South Korea continue to be the most attractive destinations, it said.

One central bank based in the West explained that they were looking at increasing their exposure to EM debt and in particular focused on debt targeting real estate and infrastructure as well as other diversified industries.

**INFLATION TO SURGE** According to the report, more than 85 per cent of the 85 sovereign wealth funds and 57 central banks noted that inflation will be higher in the

coming decade.

In such a situation, gold and emerging market bonds are being seen as good bets. This shift may have been triggered due to the freezing of almost half of Russia's \$640 billion of gold and forex reserves by the West in response to the Ukraine invasion.

The survey showed a "substantial share" of central banks were concerned by the precedent that had been set. Almost 60 per cent of respondents said it had made gold more attractive, while 68 per cent were keeping reserves at home compared to 50 per cent in 2020.

India's PMI for manufacturing did not contract in the past year, but against expectations, FDI inflows fell 22 per cent to \$46.03 billion in FY23 amid high inflation and recessionary trends in developed economies.



# SENSATIONAL

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Calgary, July 10:** Star Indian shuttler Lakshya Sen dished out a badminton masterpiece to notch up his second BWF Super 500 title with a straight-game win over Li Shi Feng of China in the final of the Canada Open.

The 21-year-old Indian, who had claimed his maiden Super 500 title at the 2022 India Open, mixed incredible speed and power to outshine reigning All England champion

## LAKSHYA SEALS CANADA OPEN TITLE BEATING ALL ENGLAND CHAMPION FENG IN THE FINAL

portunity with a smash. He then collapsed on the ground in relief and happiness after an intense match.

"It has been an amazing week for me. I got better as the event progressed, I got used to the conditions and played a good tactical game yesterday and today (Sunday), so I am happy with my performance," Sen said.

The two players played some extraordinary rallies, filled with fast-paced exchanges at the net, and it was Sen who kept things tight to notch up his fifth win in seven meetings against the Chinese. This win will be a much-needed boost for Sen, who had slipped to World No.19 after struggling to find his form early in the season.

A former World No.6, Sen, who claimed bronze at the 2021 World Championships, had undergone nose surgery for a deviated septum after the World Championships last August and took a lot of time to recover post-treatment.

In a battle of power and precision between the two youngsters, it was Sen who showed better control and temperament to come up trumps against the world No. 10 from China.

Sen kept it tight at the net and produced a series of down-the-line and cross-court smashes to trouble Li who fell behind 2-6 at the start of the opening game.

The duo played a high-speed game with both dishing out some eye-catching jump smashes. While Li sent down two 390kmph smashes, Sen unleashed a couple of 400 kmph thunderbolts.

At the mid-game interval, Sen managed to hold a three-point cushion after Li failed to negotiate a body return from the Indian.

Both the players sent down a series of hard smashes from the back to gather points but unforced errors saw Li trail 12-15. He managed to level par at 15-15 but Sen grabbed three game points with another trademark straight smash. Another precise return on his opponent's forehand helped him earn the bragging rights.

The Chinese waited for his opportunity, engaging Sen in some sensational rallies at the net and pounced on anything weak from the Indian. He grabbed the momentum after an initial duel which left them at 5-5 to soon enter the break with a four-point lead.

With Li winning the net battle, Sen tried to change his tactics and made it 13-14 at one stage. But the Chinese managed to move ahead and grabbed four game points with a powerful return which Sen miscued.

However, Sen showed his grit as a forehand body smash was followed by another hard smash. Li then faltered at the net and Sen followed it with another smash to level the score.

Another rally ended with a precise return on Li's forehand as it was advantage Sen and the Indian sealed it with another power-packed smash in the end.

The BWF World Tour is divided into six levels, namely World Tour Finals, four Super 1000, six Super 750, seven Super 500, and 11 Super 300. One other category of the tournament, the BWF Tour Super 100 level, also offers ranking points.

## Archer Parth creates history

■ Maharashtra lad becomes 1st Indian to claim men's recurve gold at Youth Worlds

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Limerick (Ireland), July 10:** Parth Salunkhe became the first Indian male archer to win a gold in the recurve category of the Youth World Championships as the country's contingent finished with its highest-ever tally of 11 medals.

The 19-year-old from Satara in Maharashtra provided the perfect icing on the cake by defeating a Korean in the U-21 men's recurve individual final here on Sunday.

Salunkhe, who topped the rankings round, bounced back from behind to down seventh seed Song Injun 7-3 (26-26, 25-28, 28-26, 29-26, 28-26) in a hard-fought five-setter.

"I try to live in the present and don't see whom I'm up against. By doing yoga and meditation, it has helped me keep calm, which helped immensely in the final," Salunkhe told PTI from Dublin.

India also clinched a bronze medal in the U-21 women's recurve individual section when Bhaja Kaur defeated Su Hsin-Yu of Chinese Taipei 7-1 (28-25, 27-27, 29-25, 30-26).

India finished with six gold, one silver and four bronze medals, which was the highest in the standings in terms of total number of medals. But in overall rankings, they finished second behind Korea who ended with six gold and four silver medals.

Salunkhe trailed 1-3 after Injun hit two perfect 10s and three 9s from the first six arrows. Just when it seemed a familiar Korean dominance over India, the former senior national champion Salunkhe fought back clinching the third set by two points, drilling one arrow closer to the centre (X) to make it three-all.

Pressure was writ large on Injun as Salunkhe went on to



hit two 10s and one 9 to snatch a 5-3 lead before finishing off in style with two Xs.

Son of a secondary school English teacher, Salunkhe, whose talent was first tapped by coach Pravin Sawant in 2018-19, became the first male archer to become a youth world champion.

After Sawant discovered his talent, Salunkhe trained under Ram Awdhesh at the SAI centre in Sonapat. "He has been like God to us, he made some technical changes and as a result Parth has improved vastly under him," his father Sushant Salunkhe said.

In women's recurve section, Deepika Kumari had become cadet and youth world champion in 2009 and 2011, a feat that

was emulated by her Jharkhand state mate Komalika Bari in 2019 and 2021.

Overall, Salunkhe is the sixth Indian archer to become World Champion in the youth showpiece. Compound archers Palton Hansda (2006) and the duo of Aditi Swami and Priyanshu who won here are the other youth world champions from India.

Salunkhe had won a silver in the Singapore Asia Cup Leg 3 in June, and two bronze medals in the same event in Sulaymaniyah and Sharjah last year.

With the World Championships and Asian Games teams already decided, Salunkhe will be eyeing to make the senior team at the Asian Championships trials in October.

COMING INTO THE OLYMPIC QUALIFICATION YEAR, IT WAS TOUGH AS THINGS DIDN'T GO MY WAY. SO THIS WIN WILL BE A BIG BOOST TO MY CONFIDENCE  
LAKSHYA SEN

## INDIA EVES AIM TO SEAL SERIES



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mirpur, July 10:** The supremely talented Shafali Verma would like to make an impact with the willow after a poor start in the lung opener as Indian women aim to clinch the three-match T20 International series against Bangladesh with another dominant performance in the second game here Tuesday.

India coasted to an easy seven-wicket victory in the opening match on Sunday with skipper Harmanpreet Kaur blazing her way to an unbeaten 35-ball 54 and Smriti Mandhana looking equally dangerous during her short but significant knock of 38.

The slow bowlers were also on target as the two debutants Anusha Baredy and Minnu Mani gave a good account of themselves under senior off-spinner Deepti Sharma.

However, what stuck out like a sore thumb was Shafali's three-ball duck and once again the distinct lack of footwork was evident against medium pacer Marufa Akter.

The young Haryana woman is one of the biggest batting talents in the country and has already played 57 T20I games even before completing her 20th birthday.

While she could be breathing when on song, her consistency has been an issue with only one score of 50-plus in the last 10 games in the shortest version.

Her last half century in T20Is came last year against Australian women during a home series and since then had a quiet World Cup in South Africa. There are still a few technical issues which one expects chief coach Amol Muzumdar would address in the coming days.

Bangladesh are such opponents which will give Shafali a good chance to regain some form and notch up a big score at the top of the order.

Harmanpreet's unit has shown the gulf in cricketing standards between the two teams and it will be a huge upset if Bangladesh win Tuesday and restore parity in the series.

The difference in quality between the two teams was there to be seen when Bangladesh batted, as the only batter to at least score at run-a-ball strike-rate was Shorna Akter.

What has worked to India's advantage is the fact that all of Bangladesh's top seven batters are right-handers and that has allowed the Indian skipper to stick to one particular line on a Sher-e-Bangla track where the ball at times stops before coming onto the bat.

Harmanpreet's clever ploy of loading the off-side cordon with five fielders worked wonderfully well as the Bangladeshi batters were often seen trying to fetch the deliveries pitched on the imaginary fourth or fifth off-stump and hit them through the vacant on-side.

## Djokovic reaches quarterfinals

REUTERS

**London, July 10:** Defending champion Novak Djokovic was temporarily knocked off course by big-serving Pole Hubert Hurkacz but quickly got back in the groove on Monday to reach the Wimbledon quarterfinals.

Having edged two tie-breaks late Sunday before being beaten by the tournament's strict 11pm curfew, the 36-year-old returned to lose his first set of the tournament before sealing a 7-6(8-6), 7-6(8-6), 5-7, 6-4 victory.

Djokovic was not at his best as Hurkacz briefly threatened a comeback but the record 23-time Grand Slam men's champion found a solution.

He has now moved equal in second place with Jimmy Connors for Wimbledon quarter-finals reached and will face Russia's seventh seed Andrey Rublev Wednesday. Remarkably the Serbian has now reached 56 Grand Slam quarterfinals, second behind only Roger Federer.

**EASY FOR MEDVEDEV**  
Russian third seed Daniil Medvedev reached the Wimbledon quarterfinals for the first time Monday when his fourth-round opponent Jiri Lehecka retired injured after losing the first two sets 6-4, 6-2.

**EUBANKS STUNS TSISSIPAS**  
It was a case of better late than



never for Christopher Eubanks as the gentle American giant was roared on to a 3-6, 7-6(7-4), 3-6, 6-4, 6-4 win over Greek fifth seed Stefanos Tsitsipas in the fourth round.

Aged 27, Eubanks after finally making it into the Wimbledon main draw for the first time this year, he ensured he enjoyed a run to remember as he made it into the quarterfinals of a Grand Slam for the first time.

**RYBAKINA SAILS THROUGH**  
Holder Elena Rybakina was given an easy ride into the Wimbledon quarterfinals after Brazilian opponent Beatriz Haddad Maia retired midway through the first set with a back injury.

**END OF FAIRYTALE RUN**

American Madison Keys recovered from a set and a break down to end Mirra Andreeva's fairytale Wimbledon debut as the 16-year-old Russian was beaten 3-6, 7-6(7-4), 6-2 in the fourth round Monday.

World No.102 Andreeva was looking to become the youngest player to reach the last eight of the grasscourt Grand Slam since Anna Kournikova in 1997.

**SABALENKA ADVANCES**  
Second seed Aryna Sabalenka continued her march towards a second Grand Slam title this year with a comfortable 6-4, 6-0 victory over Ekaterina Alexandrova to power into the quarters.

## Gukesh finishes 5th, Anand ends tied 7th

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Zagreb (Croatia), July 10:** Young Indian Grandmaster D Gukesh finished fifth while his illustrious compatriot Viswanathan Anand could only manage a tied seventh place in the third leg of the 2023 SuperUnited Rapid and Blitz chess tournament.

Gukesh, who had a moderate performance on day 1 of the Blitz segment, bounced back well on the second day to pick up 6.5 points which included wins over Anand and top players like Fabiano Caruana (USA) and Jan-Krzysztof Duda (Poland).

Gukesh, who beat Anand for the first time ever in tournament play in the Rapid segment, got the better of the five-time world champion in 34 moves in the blitz on Sunday.

The 17-year old Indian star began the second day of the Blitz section with a win over Richard Rapport (Romania) and then stunned the highly-rated Caruana.

After going down to World No.1 Magnus Carlsen (Norway), Gukesh turned the tables on Anand. A defeat to Alireza Firouzja was followed by three straight wins - over Constantin



Lupulescu (Romania), Duda and Ivan Saric (Croatia). He ended the tournament with a draw against Ian Nepomniachtchi and a score of 19.5 points (Rapid + blitz).

Anand, who had started the tourney in style in the Rapid segment, had to endure a poor run, scoring only three points on day one of the Blitz and then logged 3.5 points on the second day. The veteran Indian ended with 16.5 points.

World No.1 Carlsen capped off an incredible blitz performance to win the top prize a score of 26 points out of a possible 36, taking home a first place prize of USD 40,000. Finishing in second place was Nepomniachtchi (22.5), with Caruana (21.5) taking third place and Firouzja (21) fourth.

## Sixth British GP crown on trot for Verstappen

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Silverstone (England), July 10:** On a day when Brad Pitt joined the Formula One grid to shoot his new movie, defending champion Max Verstappen was reduced to a cameo role in his own win with F1 fans gripped by the fight for second place.

Apart from losing the lead to Lando Norris at the start — and then taking it back — Verstappen's cruise Sunday to yet another win — his sixth in a row — lacked the Hollywood-style drama of Norris' battle with seven-time champion Lewis Hamilton for second.

That fits a pattern this season of dominant wins for the Red Bull driver and increasingly hard-fought battles behind him

as Mercedes, Ferrari, Aston Martin and now McLaren jostle to be the second-fastest team.

Filming for Pitt's upcoming F1-themed movie had been taking place all weekend around the F1 sessions, using black-and-gold cars from the fictional APX team. Pitt himself and co-star Damson Idris joined the grid in racing suits before the start.

Verstappen extended his overall lead to 99 points over teammate Sergio Perez. First place in a race earns 25 points.

Starting on pole position, Verstappen was overtaken off the line by McLaren's Norris in what he later admitted was a "terrible" start but swept back into the lead on lap five and held on until the end. Red



Bull has won all 10 races this year, 11 in a row including the final race of 2022, matching the record of McLaren with 11 consecutive wins in 1988.

Hamilton had started seventh and credited the crowd for powering him to a 14th career podium finish at Silverstone. McLaren rookie Oscar Piastri was a career-best fourth ahead of Hamilton's Mercedes teammate George Russell as McLaren's upgraded car proved far more competitive than even the team had predicted.

Perez was off the podium for the fourth time in five races, finishing sixth after starting 15th, with seventh for Aston Martin's Fernando Alonso and an impressive eighth for Alexander Albon of Williams.