



## UNPLEASANT START

Actor Manushi Chhillar says when she entered the film industry, she was told that pageant girls can't act

LEISURE P2



## UKRAINE'S NATO MEMBERSHIP

North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) leaders agree to allow Ukraine to join 'when allies agree and conditions are met'

INTERNATIONAL P10



## 1ST TEST STARTS TODAY

All eyes on debutant Yashasvi Jaiswal as India face a wounded West Indies in the first Test of the two-match series

SPORTS P12

## Train mows down 2 jumbos in Keonjhar

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Keonjhar, July 11:** At least two elephants were killed and another sustained injuries after being hit by a goods train in Keonjhar district, Forest department officials said, Tuesday.

The incident took place in the morning on the Jakhapura Bansapani railway line under the Brahmanipal forest range, the officials said, adding that the goods train hit the jumbos while they were crossing the rain line in a herd. Forest officials, including Anandpur DFO Abhay Dalei, have visited the place and initiated a probe.

The injured elephant was located in a nearby Forest. The Forest officials claimed that they had informed the railways regarding the presence of the elephant herd near the railway track.

As per the rule, the train speed should be limited within 40 kmph when there is information regarding the presence of elephants near the track.

Railway officials could not be contacted for comments on elephant death. Though Forest officials often claim they are taking measures and using technology to monitor movement of the elephants, the latest jumbo deaths speak the other way round.



**RAIN AFTERMATH:** Earthmovers on restoration work as massive landslide after heavy monsoon rainfall damaged buildings at Shanti in Solan district of Himachal Pradesh, Tuesday

## Now, 28% GST on online gaming cos

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 11:** The Goods and Services Tax (GST) Council Tuesday decided to impose a 28 per cent tax on the turnover of online gaming companies, horse racing and casinos.

The panel, headed by the Union Finance minister, also lowered the service tax levied on food and beverages consumed in cinema halls to 5 per cent and tweaked the definition of an SUV for attracting a cess over and above the GST rate.

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said presently the definition of an SUV for levy of cess includes four parameters -- should be popularly known as SUV, should be of length of 4 meters or above and engine capacity of 1,500 cc and above, and unladen ground clearance of minimum 170 mm.

**GST Council tweaked the definition of an SUV for attracting a cess over and above the GST rate**

Now, the SUV definition will include only the length (4 meters and above), engine capacity (1,500 cc and more), and ground clearance (unladen clearance of 170 mm and more), she said.

The Council decided to levy 5 per cent GST on food and beverages served in cinema halls.

She said the panel decided to levy a 28 per cent GST on the face value or payments made for playing online games, bets in casinos and on racing. It decided to exempt cancer fighting drugs and medicines for rare diseases from the levy, she said.

## IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Can't we book monsoon under UAPA?

# ED chief's extensions illegal: SC

TOP COURT CURTAILS SANJAY MISHRA'S EXTENDED TENURE TO JULY 31

KULDEEP SINGH, OP

**New Delhi, July 11:** The Supreme Court Tuesday held as 'illegal' two successive extensions of one year each granted to Enforcement Directorate (ED) chief Sanjay Kumar Mishra, holding that the Centre's orders were in 'breach' of its mandamus in its 2021 verdict that the IRS officer should not be given further term.

The SC order in which it also curtailed Mishra's extended tenure to July 31 came as a setback to the Centre even as it upheld the amendments under which a maximum of five-year tenure can be given to ED and CBI directors. The amendments were made to the Central Vigilance Commission (Amendment) Act, 2021 and the Delhi Special Police Establishment (Amendment) Act, 2021 as well as to the Fundamental (Amendment) Rules, 2021.

A Bench of Justices BR Gavai, Vikram Nath and Sanjay Karol



### STINT SO FAR

- 1984-batch IRS officer Sanjay Kumar Mishra was first appointed as the ED director for 2 years November 19, 2018
- By an order dated November 13, 2020, the Centre modified the appointment retrospectively & Mishra's 2-year term was changed to 3 years

The Centre promulgated ordinances in 2021 under which tenure of ED and CBI chiefs could be extended by up to three years after the mandated two-year term

said in view of the peer review being conducted by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) this year, and to enable smooth transition, Mishra's tenure will be till July 31. "The impugned orders dated November 17, 2021 and November 17, 2022 granting extensions to the tenure of the respondent No.2 (Sanjay Kumar Mishra) for a period of one year

each are held to be illegal," the Bench said, while partially allowing the writ petitions challenging the extension given to the officer. It said the orders are not 'valid in law'.

The 1984-batch IRS officer was otherwise to remain in office till November 18, 2023, according to the November 17, 2022 order of the Centre.

The Bench gave the verdict on a batch of petitions, including those filed by Congress leaders Randeep Singh Surjewala and Jaya Thakur, and TMC leaders Mahua Moitra and Saket Gokhale, challenging the extensions granted to Mishra.

Mishra was first appointed the ED director for two years November 19, 2018. Later, by an order dated November 13, 2020, the Centre modified the appointment letter retrospectively and his two-year term was changed to three years.

The government also promulgated ordinances in 2021 under which the tenure of the ED and CBI chiefs could be extended by up to three years after the mandated term of two years.

The Bench said though the court has held that orders dated November 17, 2021 and November 17, 2022 granting extensions to Mishra are not valid in law, it is inclined to consider the concern expressed by the Centre with regard to FATF review.

## ₹50K for ST, SC students

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 11:** The Odisha government will provide a one-time financial assistance of Rs 50,000 to scheduled tribe (ST) and scheduled caste (SC) students from poor families for pursuing general degree course in any state-run institution, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik said, Tuesday.

The chief minister made the announcement while presiding over a Tribal Advisory Council meeting here.

"A one-time financial assistance up to Rs 50,000 to needy ST-SC students from underprivileged backgrounds pursuing general degree course in any government institution in the state will be provided from this year," Patnaik said.

Noting that education is a key vehicle for boosting the socio-economic uplift of people, Patnaik said Odisha is one of the leading states in providing residential facilities to tribal students.

Hostel facilities are available to over 6 lakh students from 4.2 lakh households in 1,735 schools functioning under the department, Patnaik said.

In the last 20 years, the number of high schools under the ST and SC Development department has increased from 215 to 422 in the last 20 years

students in the state, the CM said.

Claiming that the state government has been taking initiatives to improve the socio-economic conditions of tribal communities and realise their educational needs, Patnaik said education, livelihood and protection of their rights have been the state's focus area.

Special Development Councils (SDCs) have been playing a vital role to focus on the promotion, protection and preservation of tribal culture and traditions, heritage, and identity by involving people of indigenous communities.

This year, the programme has been expanded to 172 blocks of 23 districts, covering over 84 lakh ST people, the CM said.

Noting that Odisha is considered a pioneering state in the implementation of the Forest Rights Act, the CM said the state has launched a new scheme 'Mo Jungle Jami Yojana' to ensure the right to hold and live in forest land to all eligible ST forest dwellers.

Odisha has also introduced the 'Mukhya Mantri Jivika Mission' as one of the largest exclusive tribal livelihood promotion initiatives, he said.

"With a budgetary allocation of Rs 500 crore, the scheme will provide support to 1.5 lakh tribal households in 121 TSP (tribal sub-plan) blocks of the state over a three year period from 2022-23," he said.

## 'ORANGE LIKE SUN' Tourists throng Iceland's latest volcanic eruption

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

**Reykjavik, July 11:** Despite warnings to stay away from Iceland's latest volcanic eruption near Reykjavik, a group of curious visitors said they couldn't resist the lure of lava that is 'orange like the sun'.

While volcanologists say the eruption remains 'low intensity' for now, initial estimates indicate that its flow is significantly more powerful than the two previous eruptions in 2021 and 2022 on the Reykjanes peninsula.

"When the wind is coming in this direction, it's not so hot... it's warm like a campfire," said Niall Lynch, a 23-year-old Irish guide AFP met in front of the fresh lava flows next to the small peak of Litli Hrutur.

But on the other side of the



**"I was thinking a lot more like the darker colours of blacks and browns, like the rock when it starts to solidify. But right in the centre it's pure orange like the sun. It's amazing"**

NIAL LYNCH | IRISH GUIDE

300 metres initially, according to the latest update from the Icelandic Meteorological Office (IMO) Tuesday.

"When you look in the centre of the lava flow, it's a lot brighter than I was expecting it to be," Lynch said. "I was thinking a lot more like the darker colours of blacks and browns, like the rock when it starts to solidify. But right in the centre it's pure orange like the sun. It's amazing."

"Dangerously high" levels of

volcanic gases, particularly sulphur dioxide, will accumulate close to the eruption, warned the IMO, which advised tourists not to visit the area. Access to the site was closed Monday evening.

During the six months of the March 2021 eruption, and the three weeks of the August 2022 eruption, hundreds of thousands of visitors came to admire the hypnotic spectacle of lava on the outskirts of Mount Fagradalsfjall and the Meradalir and Geldingadalir valleys.

Unlike explosive eruptions that spew out thousands of tonnes of dust, such as the famous Eyjafjallajokull eruption that paralysed air traffic in Europe in 2010, so-called "effusive" eruptions have little impact, apart from lava flows and locally toxic gas spikes.

### SHORT TAKES

#### Article 370 abrogation: SC hearing from Aug 2

**New Delhi:** The Supreme Court Tuesday said it will commence day-to-day hearing from August 2 on a batch of petitions challenging abrogation of Article 370 of the Constitution that bestowed special status on the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir. A five-judge Constitution Bench headed by CJI DY Chandrachud, which passed several procedural directions, fixed July 27 as deadline for filing of submissions and convenience compilations by different parties.

#### 7th cheetah dies in MP's Kuno

**Bhopal:** One more African cheetah died in Madhya Pradesh's Kuno National Park (KNP) Tuesday due to suspected infighting, a senior forest department official said, the seventh feline fatality in four months. The male cheetah, Tejas, was brought to KNP in Sheopur district from South Africa in February this year. With this, seven felines have died at KNP since March, in a setback to the reintroduction programme launched in September last year.

# leisure



## RYAN GOSLING FLAUNTS HIS MUSICAL TALENT

Actor Ryan Gosling shows off his musical talent in a new trailer for the movie *Barbie* as he sings a moving song called *I'm Just Ken*, reports [dailymail.co.uk](http://dailymail.co.uk). The actor, 42, is seen as his character Ken in the clip as he sings about living in the shadow of Barbie (Margot Robbie).

## ROBERT DOWNEY JR. HAD RESERVATIONS ABOUT *DOLITTLE* BEFORE IT FLOPPED

*Iron Man* actor Robert Downey Jr. spoke of his film *Dolittle* and opened up about it flopping at the box office. In a new interview with *The New York Times Magazine*, the actor said that he had reservations about the movie before it even flopped.



### FORTUNE FORECAST

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#### ARIES

Positive thinking can change the world, and you could do with some today. No matter how tough the going gets, take it in your stride, says Ganesh. If you think you can do it, you will. You have the magic touch today to initiate a new business strategy.

#### TAURUS

The time you previously spent on certain activities may not yield results as expected, predicts Ganesh. You will be reluctant to travel today. Your may find yourself wanting more space and freedom of expression. A stroll with your sweetheart, hand in hand, may be the highlight of your day, says Ganesh.

#### GEMINI

Today, it's time to meet those who are close to you, and maybe even those who were close to you at some point of time. Also, it's time to revive old friendships, old memories and sink into nostalgia. You may want to buy a valuable historic artefact, says Ganesh.

#### CANCER

It is about time that you cultivated healthy eating habits. Today, you will be prone to doing everything in excess. You may overeat or get swept away by emotions, or it may lead to unwanted complications.

#### LEO

You sure love playing a team sport, but that does not diminish the fact that you are a tough player to compete with, says Ganesh. If only they had a rugby team at the local club! You derive a sense of completion from the fact that you have given your best effort to any endeavour. You take on challenges with a nonchalant air of 'come as they may'.

#### VIRGO

A shadow grows large in your mind today. An unknown fear will haunt your day, warns Ganesh. But be ready to take a hike. You are most likely to end up spending on your foreign associates. Be careful of those expenses, says Ganesh.

#### LIBRA

Sometimes, you lend a helping hand and people end up taking the entire arm. Well, that's kids for you! So beware, because young ones around you may try to take undue advantage of your sympathetic nature today, hints Ganesh. Minor issues and problems may dampen the high spirits that you are in today.

#### SCORPIO

Today, there are chances that you would be disturbed by continuous flow of negative thoughts in your mind. Try to divert your mind and look for positive people or friends who would cheer you up. Understanding needy people and living up to their expectations would bring some respite to your disrupted mind, says Ganesh.

#### SAGITTARIUS

It's time for you to sit back, relax and let your actions do the talking. After all, actions speak louder than words, they say. You will also wrap up with all the pending tasks today, says Ganesh. You play an important role in resolving troubles, either for yourself or for others.

#### CAPRICORN

Success never comes easy, but in your case, it will make an exception, says Ganesh. You will meet with success in social as well as professional life, and this will also make heavy your treasure box. At work, prepare to get loaded with new assignments and simultaneously deal with existing work pressure. But it won't be as fatiguing as it sounds; evening recreations will charge you up for the next day.

#### AQUARIUS

Things barely move today. But just like the proverbial tortoise, you seem to be winning the race, for many opportunities will come your way. There won't be any cash crunch, so you needn't lose sleep over that, says Ganesh.

#### PISCES

The apple of your eye is what you will have your sights set on today. It is likely that you will find yourself attending a Parent-Teacher meet, says Ganesh. However, fortunately, it is likely only to receive news about how proud your children are making you.

## Ridhima opens up on her private life

**Mumbai:** Ridhima Pandit, reality TV star who became briefly famous when she was lip-kissed by Neha Bhasin in the last season of *Bigg Boss OTT*, has broken her silence on her private life and said she is dating 'someone'.

In the news recently for being among those film personalities who have frozen their eggs for later use, Ridhima went out of circulation a few years ago after she broke up with Eshaan Roshan, son of music composer Rajesh Roshan, and Hrithik's cousin.

Now, it looks like she has someone in her life and was recently spotted outside a salon, getting much-needed TLC before heading out for a date.

Talking to the media, Ridhima said: "I am going out on a date, but I am not going to tell you where and with whom."

After becoming an instant sensation as the humanoid daughter-in-law in *Bahu Hamari Rajni Kant*, Ridhima appeared in reality shows such as *Fear Factor: Khatron Ke Khiladi 9*, *Khatra Khatra Khatra* and *Bigg Boss OTT*.

Ridhima said she is not following *Bigg Boss OTT 2* at the moment, though she looks forward to seeing Pooja Bhatt on it.



## Jawan teaser sets up new peak

**New Delhi:** The pre-release video of Shah Rukh Khan starrer *Jawan* effortlessly surpassed all previous records held by teasers and trailers in the Indian film industry in terms of 24-hour view counts.

With 112 million views across all platforms, the video's immense traction has shattered the exist-

ing benchmarks, establishing a new pinnacle for the Indian film industry.

*Jawan's* Prevue reigns supreme as the most-watched video in the first 24 hours, a testament to SRK's widespread popularity, the universal appeal of the film and the rising anticipation surrounding the film's release.

Presenting an all new bald look of SRK, with hard-core action



by Nayanthara, the 'prevue' is beaming with Atlee's magic earning love and appreciation from the audience. Fighting with an army of women, it features Shah Rukh's innate swag and high octane action by the entire star cast. It also gives a glimpse of stars Vijay Sethupathi, Deepika Padukone and Sanya Malhotra.

The record-breaking views for *Jawan*

signify the power of engaging storytelling and effective marketing in an increasingly competitive entertainment landscape. The video has surpassed all expectations and left a significant mark on the Indian digital landscape.

Produced by SRK's wife Gauri Khan, *Jawan* will release September 7 in Hindi, Tamil and Telugu languages.

## 'I was told beauty queens can't act'

**Mumbai:** Actress Manushi Chhillar just completed one year in the Hindi film industry. The former Miss World reflected upon her lessons from the industry. Manushi said, "Now I am getting used to it. People used to call me a doctor and then Miss World. When I began working on my film, I used to wonder what I call myself. I am not a medical student anymore or Miss World. I was going to be an actor. I grew up so far away from the industry. I think for a long time I didn't know what box I fit in. Finally, I am an actor. It's still fairly new."

"When I came here, people in the industry told me 'Oh you know people think pageant girls cannot act, beauty queens can't act'. Even at YRF, they told me 'You have to work a little harder because you have to overcome the preconceived notions.' I didn't realise it as such back then", added the *Samrat Prithviraj* actress.

"Being part of the pageant industry brought valuable experiences, yet as an outsider, it presented challenges. Now that I look back, I feel I got what I wanted from the film. There was a section of people who liked it. Luckily I didn't stop working and got involved in other projects," she concludes.



## Nepotism giving too many second chances: Arshad

**Mumbai:** Actor Arshad Warsi admits the presence of unfairness in the industry but has no complaints about it.

In an interview, he shared, "It is a sad thing but what can you do? There is a certain segment of actors, who are a little more privileged than the other segment. Yes, I am talk-

ing about kids connected to the film industry. Then there are people who are not connected to the industry."

He added, "I can't complain, the film industry has given me a lot, and I love it and I thank them all the time. Every morning, I thank Joy Augustine, Jaya Bachchan,

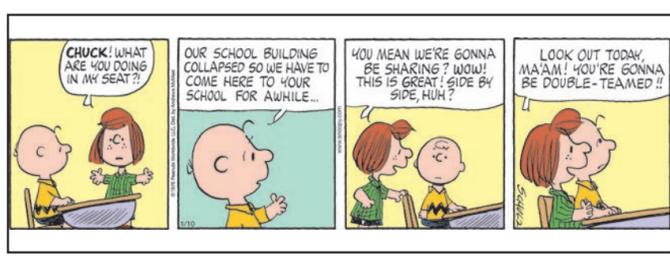
and Amitabh Bachchan for giving me what I have. So, nothing against the industry but this is the norm."

The *Bachchan Paandey* actor said, "I am not even complaining, I accept it. The sad part is I probably would do the same things with my kids. But yes, it is a difficult thing. You

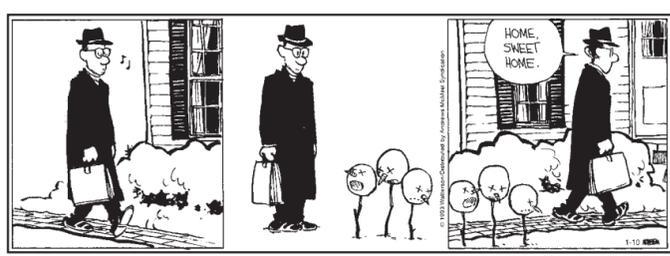
have a segment of actors who will get multiple chances to give a hit and then you have another segment who do not get that. You give one flop, you are doomed; So that is a sad part."

On the work front, Arshad is winning hearts for his portrayal as Dhananjay Rajput aka DJ in *Asur 2*.

### PEANUTS



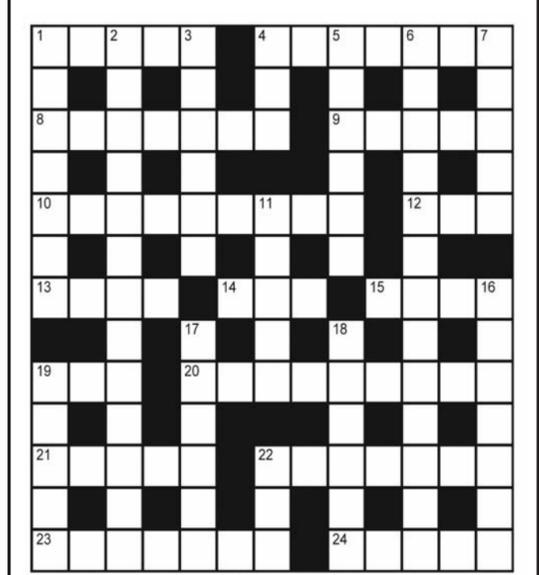
### CALVIN AND HOBBS



### BREVITY



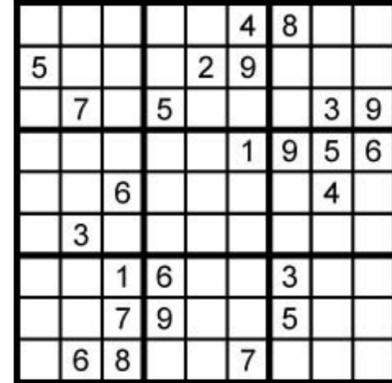
### FUN post CROSSWORD



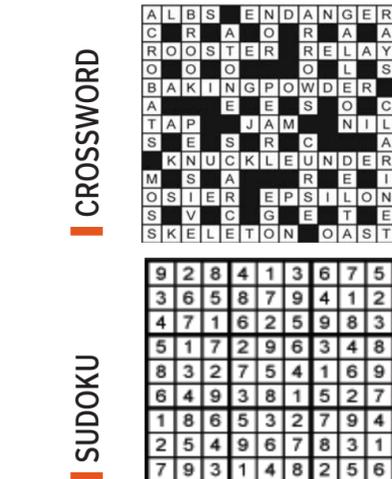
- Across**
- 1 Picks up
  - 4 Hot sauce
  - 8 Sweeping tool
  - 9 Title holder
  - 10 Do away with
  - 12 German river
  - 13 Palm starch
  - 14 Fruit tree
  - 15 Up in the air
  - 19 Swedish rug
  - 20 Pilot's reading
  - 21 Black tea
  - 22 Warhead
  - 23 They practice girth control
  - 24 Skinned
- Down**
- 1 Journals
  - 2 Spinner and gaff, e.g. (7,6)
  - 3 Kind of tank
  - 4 Crayola color
  - 5 Tamed, like a horse
  - 6 Comic's trait (5,2,6)
  - 7 Cruel sorts
  - 11 Foreign
  - 16 Gave way
  - 17 Shirt part
  - 18 Straightened out (4,2)
  - 19 Swift
  - 22 Dance step

### 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

## FASTag-based smart parking at City airport

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 11:** In an attempt to provide more convenience to car users at City airport, Airtel Payments Bank has collaborated with Park+ to enable FASTag-based smart parking solution at the Biju Patnaik International Airport (BPIA) here.

FASTag-based smart parking solution enables automatic cashless payments at airport parking, making vehicle movement in the parking zone frictionless and time efficient. With this smart solution, parking fee is deducted through the valid FASTag associated with the vehicle, thereby reducing the time required to make the payment.

The two entities are working together to streamline the payment process by reducing the time spent in queues at major parking lots across the country. They will soon make the service available at other airports in the country.

Chief operating officer of Airtel Payments Bank Ganesh Ananthanarayanan said, "We aim to offer a simple, secure, and seamless payment experience to our customers. We are delighted to partner with Park+ to introduce a FASTag-based smart parking solution at Bhubaneswar airport. This will help save a lot of time amidst the growing crowd at airport



### TECH BOON

- FASTag-based smart parking solution enables automatic cashless payments at airport parking, making vehicle movement in the parking zone frictionless and time efficient
- With this smart solution, parking fee is deducted through the valid FASTag associated with the vehicle, thereby reducing the time required to make the payment
- By downloading Park+ app, Bhubaneswar residents can recharge their FASTag, discover a car insurance offer, discover a car maintenance partner, find a parking spot and track their challans

parking lots and help smoothen the travel experience."

Park+ founder and CEO Amit Lakhota said, "Park+ has been making conscious efforts to partner with like-minded organisations to enhance car ownership experiences for users. As part of this strategy, we are excited to collaborate with Airtel Payments Bank and Airport Authority of India (AAI) to bring our FASTag enabled cashless parking management system to Bhubaneswar."

Revealing more about the initiative, Lakhota said, "We at

Park+ have taken something that has historically been painful & intimidating - finding a parking spot - and made it effortless. By downloading Park+ app, Bhubaneswar residents can also recharge their FASTag, discover a car insurance offer, discover a car maintenance partner, find a parking spot and track their challans. Our aim is to remove parking anxiety for all car owners in Bhubaneswar and we aim to expand our smart parking services exponentially, in the next 3-4 months."

## 2 students drown in Kuakhai; 2 missing

GYAN RANJAN MOHAPATRA, OP

**Bhubaneswar, July 11:** In a tragic incident, two students drowned and as many went missing while taking bath in Kuakhai river at Dhabalahar under Baliaanta police limits here, Tuesday. The deceased were identified as Aryan Mishra, a native of Jamshedpur area in Jharkhand, and Kumar Abinash of Cuttack district.

Rohit Parida of Khantpada area in Balasore district and Pratik of Balikuda area in Cuttack district went missing. The deceased and the missing students were pursuing MBA in a private college of the City.

Sources said the victims along with four of their friends had gone to a place near the riverbed at Dhabalahar to have a party Tuesday afternoon. After having their lunch, Aryan, Abinash, Rohit and Pratik went to take a bath in the river. However, they slipped into deep waters and were swept away by the current.

Informed, fire services personnel started searching for the missing students and fished out Aryan and Abinash, who were rushed to Capital Hospital where doctors declared them brought dead. However, the fire services personnel failed to find out Rohit and Pratik. The operation was stopped by the fire services personnel due to the lack of enough light.

## City to have Draper Startup House soon

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 11:** In a bid to promote startup ecosystem in Odisha, a Draper Startup House is going to be established in the Capital city here soon.

It all started in January, 2023 when Startup Odisha's Executive Chairman Omkar Rai had a meeting with billionaire venture capitalist Tim Draper in Bhubaneswar during the latter's visit to the state wherein the duo discussed the prospects of establishing a Draper Startup House in the state capital. Now, six months down the line, the slated visit of Karan Bahadur, Co-Founder & Head of Operations at Draper Startup House, India to Startup Odisha elicits hope that these efforts will likely bear fruits and a 'Draper Startup House' in Bhubaneswar would soon be a reality.



**RAIN PAIN:** Commuters negotiate a waterlogged stretch at Bomkhal in Bhubaneswar following a downpour, Tuesday

OP PHOTO

## Nod to 902 new posts for upgraded high schools

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 11:** As part of its continued efforts to strengthen higher secondary education, the state government Tuesday approved creation of 902 new posts in higher secondary schools across Odisha.

School and Mass Education department had proposed recruitment of 642 post-graduate

teachers (PGT) and 260 non-teaching staffers to meet the needs of 106 recently upgraded higher secondary schools. The proposal has received the approval of the government.

This upcoming recruitment is a part of the massive employment drive under the leadership of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, said sources. Several departments have been asked to proactively

identify staff crunch, while also exploring new avenues for job creation. With the transformation and upgradation of schools across the state, requirement for new jobs are being simultaneously proposed to support the upgraded infrastructure. As per sources, altogether 106 new schools were upgraded this year to add Class XI and Class XII. It was done to benefit the local students

to continue their higher education in the same school. With the addition of these new classes, opportunities for teaching faculties and non-teaching administrative staff and assistants were created. The approved non-teaching posts include 24 posts of laboratory attendants, 106 posts of assistant librarians and 106 posts of junior clerks.

## Silence can be 'heard', can distort one's perception of time: Study

**AN AUDITORY ILLUSION, SIMILAR TO AN OPTICAL ILLUSION WHICH TRICKS WHAT PEOPLE SEE, IS WHERE A LISTENER 'HEARS' SOUNDS THAT SHOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE GIVEN THE CIRCUMSTANCE ON HOW THEY WERE CREATED, SAY THE RESEARCHERS**

Silence can not only be heard, it can also distort people's perception of time, a team of philosophers and psychologists have found using auditory illusions in 1,000 people.

An auditory illusion, similar to an optical illusion which tricks what people see, is where a listener 'hears' sounds that should not be possible given the circumstance on how they were created.

"We typically think of our sense of hearing as being concerned with sounds. But silence, whatever it is, is not a sound -

it's the absence of sound," said lead author Rui Zhe Goh, a graduate student in philosophy and psychology, Johns Hopkins University, US.

"Surprisingly, what our work suggests is that nothing is also something you can hear," said Zhe Goh.

For this study, the scientists adapted familiar auditory illusions such as the 'one-is-more', in which participants have been known to find one long beep longer than two short consecutive beeps even when the two sequences were equally long.

They inverted these illusions such that brief periods of silence abruptly punctuated soundscapes depicting the din coming from crowded places like busy restaurants, markets and train stations.

"Our approach was to ask whether our brains treat silences the way they treat sounds. If you can get the same illusions with silences as you get with sounds, then that may be evidence that we literally hear silence after all," said Chaz Firestone, an assistant professor of Psychological and Brain



Scientists, who directs the Johns Hopkins Perception & Mind Laboratory.

The researchers found the same results - people thought one long moment of silence was

longer than two short moments of silence.

Other silence illusions too yielded the same outcomes as sound illusions, they said in the study published in the journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS).

The idea wasn't simply that these silences made people experience illusions, but that the same illusions that scientists thought could only be triggered with sounds worked just as well when the sounds were replaced by silences, the researchers pointed out.

"The kinds of illusions and effects that look like they are unique to the auditory processing of a sound, we also get them with silences, suggesting we really do hear absences of sound too," said co-author Ian Phillips, professor of Philosophy and Psychological and Brain Sciences.

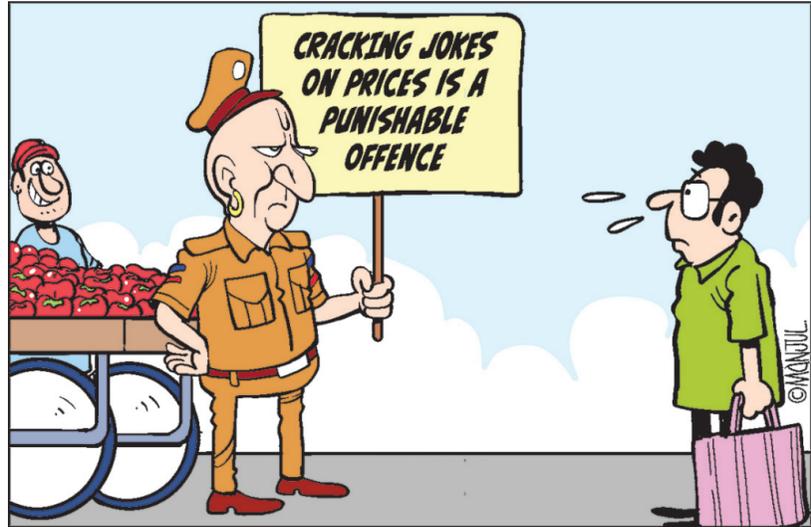
The findings establish a new way to study the perception of absence, the team which intends to investigate visual disappearances and other examples of things people can perceive as being absent said.

## GREEN DRIVE

Cuttack Mayor Subhash Chandra Singh along with teachers and students of Tulasipur Saraswati Sishu Mandir participated in a plantation drive in Cuttack, Tuesday



## POLITICKLE by MANJUL



## Abhijeet sent to jail as 4-day remand ends

GYAN RANJAN MOHAPATRA, OP

**Bhubaneswar, July 11:** The Special Task Force (STF) of state Crime Branch Tuesday produced Abhijeet Sanjay Jambure, one of the prime accused in OTP sharing scam, before the court after the end of his four-day remand.

The accused was interrogated by several security agencies including the officials of Intelligence Bureau (IB) and National Investigation Agency (NIA) to unearth his alleged links with the officials of Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) and other terrorist outfits.

The court remanded Abhijeet

### OTP SHARING SCAM

to judicial custody as the STF did not seek further extension of the remand. He was later sent to the special jail at Jharpada.

The STF during investigation into the OTP sharing scam found that Abhijeet had several times sent money to Pathanisamant Lenka, another prime accused in the case. The officials, during examination of Abhijeet's mobile phone and his laptop, came to know about his links with one Danish alias Syed Danish Ali Naqvi of Khanki, Faizlabad in Pakistan who later introduced Abhijeet to his friend Khurram

alias Abdul Hamid of Karachi.

Khurram is a senior Pakistan Army intelligence officer having a big network of agents in India. Following the revelation, the officials of IB, NIA and Mumbai AT'S reached Bhubaneswar and carried out marathon interrogation of Abhijeet to find out his involvement in acts of terror and links with ISI agents.

The security agencies have reportedly elicited vital information regarding Abhijeet's close links with ISI agents during the interrogation. However, they are yet to find out any concrete evidence about Abhijeet's activities amounting to treason, a senior STF official said.

## Expand PVTG livelihood scheme, Centre urged

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 11:** The state government has submitted a proposal to the Centre for expansion of Odisha PVTG Empowerment & Livelihoods Improvement Programme for implementation in newly notified 1,138 PVTG villages for a period of seven years from 2024-25 onwards.

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik informed this while addressing a meeting of Tribes Advisory Council here, Tuesday.

Patnaik said the state government has introduced its own funded scheme - Mukhya Mantri Jivika Mission, which is one of the largest exclusive tribal livelihood promotion initiatives.

With a budgetary allocation of ₹500 crore, the scheme will provide support to 1.5 lakh tribal households in 121 tribal sub-plan (TSP) blocks of the state over a three-year period from 2022-23 to 2025-26, he said.

The state has urged the Union government for expansion of the PVTG Empowerment & Livelihoods Improvement

Programme in the 1,138 particularly vulnerable tribal group residing villages for seven years.

"My government has been taking sustained interventions to improve the socio-economic conditions and realize the educational needs of our tribal communities. Education, livelihood and protection of their rights have been our focus area," he said.

Special Development Councils have been playing a vital role to focus on promotion, protection and preservation of the tribal culture and traditions, heritage, and identity by involving tribal people. This year, the programme has been expanded to 172 blocks of 23 districts, covering more than 84 lakh tribal people, he pointed out.

Stating that education is key to socio-economic upliftment, the Chief Minister said Odisha is one of the leading states in providing residential facilities to tribal students. Hostel facilities are available to more than 6 lakh students from 4.2 lakh households in 1,735 schools functioning under the SC, ST Development department.



BAHANAGA TRAIN MISHAP

# Court grants remand of accused for 4 more days



July 7, the sleuths arrested senior section engineer (signal) Arun Kumar Mahanta, section engineer Mohammed Amir Khan and technician Pappu Kumar, all posted in Balasore district

The CBI officers interrogated the trio at the Chandaka police station on the outskirts of Capital city. They were also taken to the Bhanaga railway station for enquiry late Saturday night

enquiry late Saturday night.

Several other railway officials, including the station master of Bhanaga railway station, have also been summoned by CBI for questioning. Sources claimed the station master had known about the error in signaling system before the tragic accident involving three trains: Shalimar-Chennai Coromandel Express, Bengaluru-Howrah Superfast Express and a stationary goods train.

Notably, a high-level inquiry Commission of Railway Safety (CRS) has found 'wrong signaling' to be the main reason for the accident and flagged lapses at multiple levels in the signaling and telecommunication (S&T) department, but indicated the tragedy could have been averted if past red flags were reported.

senior section engineer (signal) Arun Kumar Mahanta, section engineer Mohammed Amir Khan and technician Pappu Kumar, all posted in Balasore district. They were later produced before the court that remanded them to 5-day custody for further enquiry into the case.

Meanwhile, accused Mahanta and Amir Khan Tuesday moved the court seeking bail in the case. The three have been arrested under Sections 304 (culpable homicide not amounting to murder) and 201 (destruction of evidence) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC).

The CBI officers interrogated the trio at the Chandaka police station on the outskirts of Capital city. They were also taken to the Bhanaga railway station for



PRIZE DISTRIBUTION: Women and Child Development Minister Basanti Hembram and BMC Mayor Sulochana Das among dignitaries during prize distribution ceremony of a drawing competition organised by Women and Child Development department and Odisha State Council for Child Welfare in Bhubaneswar, Tuesday

## Cooperative system made food safety robust: Nayak

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, July 11: The cooperative system in Odisha, often applauded at international forums, has made the implementation of food safety schemes strong and robust, said Cooperation Minister Atanu Sabyasachi Nayak at the International Cooperative Alliance Committee on Cooperative Research (ICA CCR) Global and European Cooperative Research Conference being organised in Leuven, Belgium.

Nayak, who is on an eight day visit to Belgium, said that with a vision to make cooperatives

the most viable medium for all-round economic development of the state, Odisha government has always been progressive in adopting innovations in the field, which have proven to empower the marginalised and vulnerable sections of society.

"The primary agricultural credit societies/large area multipurpose cooperative societies (PACS/LAMPCS) of the state have been mandated to market the agricultural produce of farmers. They procure paddy from farmers at government declared minimum support price (MSP). And through price support scheme of the government, they

ensure that agri-produces like pulses and oil seeds are sold above MSP," he said.

Emphasising how Odisha has successfully used cooperatives in both food production and procurement, Nayak said, "Today Odisha is a food surplus state supplying food grains to other states. World Food Programme (WFP) has appreciated the state government's food security schemes and initiatives. Ours is one of the unique systems being adopted across the food security process."

The minister also highlighted the innovative measures adopted by the state govern-

ment to ensure good governance through cooperatives, like digitization of the agricultural cooperative credit structure, making PACS one-stop-shops, creation of new PACS/LAMPCS, and bringing a separate cooperative policy.

Notably, the ICA CCR Global and European Cooperative Research Conference is organised to bring together academics, researchers, and cooperative practitioners from all over the world, as well as policy-makers from the European Union, to discuss the latest research and policy developments in the area of cooperative governance.

## Heavy rain likely in 6 districts: IMD

Bhubaneswar: The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has warned of heavy rainfall in six Odisha districts while light to moderate rain or thundershower is very likely to occur at many places over the interior districts of the state, south coastal Odisha and at a few places over the north coastal districts the next 24 hours. "Heavy Rainfall is very likely to occur at one or two places over the districts of Malkangiri, Koraput, Rayagada, Gajapati, Ganjam, and Puri during the next 24 hours," the IMD said. The weather agency has issued 'yellow warning' for the aforementioned districts. In its forecast for Bhubaneswar and its neighbourhood for the next 24 hours, the IMD has said that the sky will remain generally cloudy with one or two spells of rain or thundershower.

# Lack of charging points worrisome for EV buyers

SMRUTI REKHA BARIK, OP

Bhubaneswar, July 11: Ever increasing number of automobiles in Odisha is a cause of concern for the state as the vehicles emit gases which are hazardous to the environment and contribute to global warming. In order to alleviate the situation, the state government has started promoting sale of electronic vehicles (EVs). Though the citizens initially welcomed the initiative and even started opting for the environment-friendly vehicles, they soon started facing a number of problems including the availability of sufficient charging points.

However, the experts said the situation will improve soon as the government is taking various steps to address the issue.

Infrastructure development takes time and the government is putting all the efforts, said Jaya Krishna Panigrahi, Secretary Orissa State Commission.

"Despite being the third largest automobile market, India re-



mains a straggler in electronic vehicles (EV). Even if the domestic sale of EVs has doubled in the last couple of years, the makers have not been able to address various factors worrying the buyers. Lack of charging spots have been a major problem for the intra-state travelers," said Prithvi, who travels around 40 kms in a day.

"I purchased a high-end two wheeler EV a year back with

the solo intention of contributing to the environment. With time, the batteries started wearing out and they also run out mid-way when I am stuck in traffic. I have experienced sudden slowing down and it increases chances of crashing as well. The government should increase investment on the charging infrastructure to make the transition from automobiles to EVs a success", he adds.

"Building infrastructure takes time and I believe this is the phase of transition towards a better looking world. Enough efforts are being made by the government to reduce carbon footprints and embracing all the alternatives that don't lead towards damaging the earth", said Jaya Krishna Panigrahi, Secretary OSC.

"I thank all our tech-savvy guys for their extensive research by which we will be able to charge vehicles at our homes in future. An attempt towards adding charging infrastructure in every petrol pumps is being made. All the government expects is a little patience and cooperation from the companies that are manufacturing vehicles and the people," he added.

"By providing charging points at locations where vehicles tend to park, EV users can charge their vehicles while they are parked, thereby saving time, and eliminating the distance one must travel to access public charging. A dense network of normal-power EV charging

points reduces the need for high power and ultra-high power charging points, which are more expensive and can be detrimental to EV battery health if over-used", said Manoj, an automobile engineer based in Bhubaneswar.

"Normal power charging points are not only less expensive, but they also require less electricity and less space, which further reduces capital costs. They can be connected to low-voltage single- and three phase distribution networks, which are widely available in buildings and public spaces", he added.

In the last two years, more than 25 EV showrooms have been launched in Bhubaneswar but reports show many of them shutting down as well. It is because of low after sales service that they lose the customers and can't find the break even, said Jitendra Das, owner of Utkal EV, Bhubaneswar. "Another reason which is mostly frequently observed is the low quality engines and batteries that ignite fire while in motion or in the showroom," he adds.

## Moquim assures CM's cousin of all help

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Cuttack, July 11: Congress MLA Mohammed Moquim Tuesday said he has assured all required help to Dilip Patnaik, the cousin of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik.

Moquim, the MLA of the Barabati-Cuttack assembly segment said he visited Dilip Patnaik at Anand Bhavan in the Tulasipur area under his assembly segment jurisdiction after being informed about his illness and bad living condition.

Taking to Twitter, Moquim said, "I went to meet the Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik's elder brother and a senior citizen of my constituency, Dilip Patnaik, at his residence. I promised to provide necessary assistance after a discussion with him."

Moquim said, "I do not want to go into politics. As an elected representative, I have come to look into the matter and he (Dilip) needs help. I would only urge Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik to help Dilip Patnaik as he takes care of the 4.5 crore people of Odisha."

# Facing uncertain future, ants do budgeting like humans

Imagine you are looking for a parking spot at a crowded event. You find one far from your destination. Do you decide to take it, or invest more time into hunting a better spot which may or may not exist?

You might resolve this decision by "budgeting": limiting the resources (time) you will spend looking for a better option before settling for the inferior one. This strategy, which allows us to cut our losses when things don't pan out as we had hoped, is commonly used when we cannot know the payoff of our choices in advance. Making decisions under uncertainty is a problem we all face. In new research published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, we show weaver ants (*Oecophylla smaragdina*) - much like humans - manage it by budgeting their investment into a task with an uncertain payoff.

Weaver ants bridge gaps with their own bodies

Weaver ants link their bodies together to form bridge-like structures called "hanging chains", which they use for crossing gaps encountered along trails. Chains span several times the size of an individual ant and, most strikingly, are self-organised. This means chains are formed without the help of leaders or external blueprints. Instead, each individual responds solely to its surroundings and local interactions with neighbours.

Understanding self-organisation is central to understanding collective behaviour in animal groups - from flocks of birds to insect swarms - and other systems, including human crowds and traffic flow.

Chains are a gamble Building a chain comes at a cost to the colony. Ants in the chain can't participate in important colony tasks such as defending the nest and foraging. The cost of the chain is proportional to its length: longer chains



are more costly, as they keep more ants occupied.

Chains provide a major benefit too: they allow ants to explore areas that would otherwise be inaccessible, which may offer food sources to the colony. Whether an area contains a profitable resource, however, is unknown to the ants until the chain has been completed.

This makes chain-building a gamble. Colonies must invest capital (a number of ants) into forming a chain, which may or

may not pay off. In our study we asked whether, like humans, ants budget their investment into a task when the payoffs are unknown. We expected ants would stop forming chains when the gap to be bridged became too tall, as the cost of the chain would become too great.

A simple mechanism for a complex decision

We initially challenged ants to bridge vertical gaps of 25mm, 35mm and 50mm in height. Ants could comfortably form chains

within this range, which allowed us to precisely determine the rules they use to build chains.

A detailed analysis of the ants' behaviour revealed that joining and leaving events happen primarily in the lowest part (1cm) of chains. This indicates that ants are unable to leave their position if one or more individuals start hanging from them.

We then found ants decide how long to stay in a chain by visually assessing their distance from the ground below. The closer to the ground, the longer an ant remains in the chain.

Chain formation is thus modulated by a simple rule: each ant remains in the chain for a length of time proportional to her distance to the ground, and remains stuck in place if one or more ants start hanging from her. The ant will then be able to move only if the other ant(s) leave.

Can this rule predict a distance beyond which ants stop forming chains? We answered

this question using a mathematical model, which predicted ants should stop forming chains when the gap is taller than 89mm.

To confirm these predictions, we asked ants to form chains over gaps of 110mm - a distance well beyond the threshold predicted by our model. As expected, ants never formed chains over these gaps.

Tricking ants into investing more

If ants use vision to assess their distance from the ground, we should be able to trick them into building very long chains (greater than 90mm) by keeping the ground at a constant distance from the bottom of the chain. We ran an additional experiment where we could lower the platform ants had to reach using a slider. As the chain grew, we lowered the platform, keeping it just out of reach of the ants. Using this apparatus, we tricked ants into forming chains as long as 125mm.

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# Problems plague 128-yr-old Jajpur-Keonjhar rly station

DESPITE BEING GRANTED 'A' STATUS, THE STATION LACKS BASIC FACILITIES FOR PASSENGERS WITH NO SIGNS OF DEVELOPMENT



Despite being called Jajpur-Keonjhar Road railway station, not a single train travels from here to Keonjhar for which passengers want renaming of the station

corded 'A' category status, but it is yet to witness the development befitting its gradation.

A large number of long distance trains including the Rajdhani Express do not stop at this station causing a lot of inconvenience to the passengers. The station also lacks a proper cloakroom and an air-conditioned waiting hall, sources said.

The Rail Users' Consultative Committee has over the years adopted various proposals for the development of the station, but nothing has been implemented by the authorities.

The Jajpur-Keonjhar Road railway station has been included in the 'Amrit Bharat' scheme of the Union Government.

However, none of the development work has been implemented for the station.

Passengers have been demanding for long, the shifting of the goods shed, proper parking facilities and the removal of vegetable vendors who block the road leading to the railway station. However, till date the problems persist. Frequent traffic congestions cause tremendous hardships to those visiting the station. The demand for setting up a ticket counter on the southern side of the station is also yet to materialise, locals said.

Residents have warned that they will soon resort to protests and agitations if their demands are not looked into in a proper manner.

son. They have also demanded the construction of an underpass and a flyover to the east of the station.

Sources pointed out that the Railways annually earn more than ₹3 crore from the station. However, nothing is being done for development of the station, they added.

Peeved over the development, local residents, led by Bhagirathi Acharya, Convener of Advisory Committee of Jajpur-Keonjhar Road railway station, have written to PM Modi over the problems faced by commuters. Their demands include plying of all express train through the station and accordance of divisional status.

Locals pointed out that the Kalinganagar industrial area is dependent on this railway station with thousands of passengers from both India and abroad using it. The station has also been ac-

counted 'A' category status, but it is yet to witness the development befitting its gradation.



DEMO OVER TEACHERS' CRUNCH: Protesting shortage of teachers, students of Lakshmisubal Vidyapitha at Gunthi-Sansarpala village under Pattamunda block in Kendrapara district staged a demonstration outside their school premises, Tuesday

## ICU starts functioning at Sundargarh DHH

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Rourkela, July 11:** The Sundargarh district headquarters hospital (DHH) here has got a shot in the arm with the inauguration of a five-bed ICU which was inaugurated Monday by District Collector Parag Gavil Harshad.

Harshad stated that the setting up of the ICU will certainly be beneficial for patients. "The infrastructure for the ICU was already there. However,

due to lack of trained professionals it was not functioning," Harshad stated.

"Now however, we have two trained persons specifically designated for the ICU. We also have other specialists belonging to different fields and now the ICU will be very handy. There will also be an ICU specialist who will oversee all operations," added Harshad.

The district collector also stated that in future, the number of beds in the ICU will be in-

creased to 20. "Earlier we were sending serious patients to other hospitals. That will stop now as critical care will be available at the DHH," stated Harshad.

Dr Saroj Kumar Mishra, CDMO Sundargarh informed that "as this is a co-opted hospital for Sundargarh Government Medical College so the activation of the ICU is a big thing." "We already have all the necessary infrastructure like ventilator and other equipment and now we have trained staff, so there will

be no difficulty in managing the ICU," said Mishra.

Sundargarh Medical College Dean, Daitary Routray who was also present on the occasion expressed his happiness over the setting up of the ICU. "This is good news for Sundargarh and for us also. I am hopeful that residents of this district can avail of proper healthcare. There is scope to expand the ICU and it will happen so in the near future," Routray stated.

## Mystery shrouds death of 2 brothers in Berhampur

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Berhampur, July 11:** The bodies of two men were found in a pond at the Biju Patnaik park under Berhampur Town police limits Tuesday morning. The two deceased have been identified as K. Janardan Rao (65) and K. Ranga Rao (62), both residents of Rajamma Sahi area under Badabazar police limits in Ganjam district. Police said that they were related as brothers. On being informed, personnel from Town police station reached the spot and recovered the two bodies and sent those for post-mortem.

Mystery shrouds the death of the two brothers as they do not



have any injury marks on their bodies. Security guards of the park told the police that they have no idea as to how the two entered

the park and got drowned in the pond. Police are now examining the CCTV footage of the cameras installed inside the park to as-

certain the cause of death of the two persons. Also the police did not find any entry ticket on the bodies of the deceased. So the question remains as to how they entered the park.

Sources however, pointed out that the two brothers may have consumed liquor inside the park. They said that the two slipped into the pond, which does not have a boundary wall, in an inebriated condition. Police said only the post-mortem report will reveal whether the two deceased had consumed alcohol. Police after registering two cases of unnatural deaths (Nos 16/23 and 17/23) have handed over the bodies to their family members for cremation.

## Newly-wed found dead in Kendrapara

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Kendrapara, July 11:** A newly-wed man was allegedly murdered by unidentified persons in this district, police said Tuesday. The body of the deceased, identified as Sudhanshu Biswal (28) of Kalikapur village under Rajkanika police station, was found on the Jayanagar-Singhpur road at Terantapada Chowk Monday

## Biswal had fallen in love with a girl of Palei village but her parents objected to their affair

afternoon, police informed. Biswal had fallen in love with a girl of Palei village but her parents objected to their relationship, police said. "Despite objections by the girl's parents, they got married June 25 after she eloped with him," police stated.

"We suspect the man was riding a two-wheeler when he was waylaid and murdered by unidentified men. His blood-soaked body was found by locals and they rushed him to a hospital. He succumbed to injuries while being shifted to a hospital," said Bilwamangal Sethi, inspector of Rajkanika police station.

Forensic experts visited the spot and collected evidence from the crime scene.

"Police are investigating the case from all angles. We have registered a case and are collecting CCTV camera footage to identify the killers," Sethi added.

## Ray's new letter gets rumour mills ticking

Analysts feel another political comeback on anvil



RAJESH MOHANTY, OP

**Rourkela, July 11:** Former minister both at the Centre and in Odisha, Dilip Ray has suddenly written a letter to the Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik. This development has created a flutter here. People are wondering whether Ray is planning a comeback into politics.

Ray is known to play his game keeping cards close to his heart. Even his closest allies can only guess what he is planning. The last time Ray returned to politics, he did so by writing letters to the Centre and Odisha government regarding the second bridge on Brahmani river.

In his latest letter Ray has demanded heritage status for the 'Ved Vyas Dham', famous for its very old Shiva temple. This is where Vyas had written the 'Mahabharata'. Now the temple is a very popular destination for the 10th-day death ritual. Immersion of ashes after cremation is also done here as the place is known as the 'second Sangam'. Even the state gazette recognises the presence of Saraswati river which merges into the rivers Koel and Sankh at a particular point and is known as 'confluence' of the three.

The one-and-half page letter keeps on highlighting the benefits if 'Ved Vyas Dham' is declared a heritage site. "Accordance with heritage status will bring numerous benefits to the dham and areas nearby. It will increase tourist footfalls as well as visits by scholars and spiritual people. In the process, tourism will get a boost and generate economic activities for the local community," the letter states.

However, the concluding part is more interesting. "It (heritage status) will reinforce a state which cherishes its spiritual and intellectual legacy, contributing to the larger narrative of India's cultural tapestry," the letter ends.

Political observers feel that another letter to the Centre on the same issue will soon be sent. "Another letter in this tone will go to the Centre as Ray is concerned about culture and spiritualism," said one political observer, who did not want to be named.

## Driver killed as vehicle overturns

**Paralakhemundi:** A man died in a road accident at Sariapalli village under Gosani block in Gajapati district Tuesday morning. The deceased was identified as B. Lingaraj a resident of Pedabidimi village in Shreeakulam district of Andhra Pradesh. Police said Lingaraj was driving towards this town when the vehicle overturned trapping him and leading to his death.

**EAST COAST RAILWAY**  
e-Tender Notice No.: eT-M-AMC-KB-PUI-14-2023, Dtd.03.07.2023

**Name of Work:** ANNUAL MAINTENANCE CONTRACT OF AXLE MOUNTED DISC BRAKE SYSTEM OF KNORR BREMSE MAKE IN LHB TYPE COACHES AT COACHING DEPOT PURI FOR A PERIOD OF TWO YEARS.

**Approx. Cost of the Work:** ₹ 11,90,20,310.60  
**EMD:** ₹ 7,45,100/-

**Completion Period:** 24 (TwentyFour) months  
**Tender Closing Date and time:** At 1300hrs. on 24.07.2023

The Tender documents complete details available at <http://www.ireps.gov.in>

Sr. Coaching Depot Officer, Puri  
PR-328/O/23-24

**EAST COAST RAILWAY**  
Tender Notice No.: SBP-ELECT-2023-T-166, Dtd.04.07.2023

**Name of Work:** COMPREHENSIVE MAINTENANCE OF DIESEL GENERATOR SETS OF RATING 15 TO 250 KVA INSTALLED AT VARIOUS LOCATIONS OVER SAMBALPUR DIVISION FOR A PERIOD OF THREE YEARS.

**Approx. Cost of the Work:** ₹ 13,47,825.98  
**EMD:** ₹ 27,000/-

**Completion Period:** 36 (ThirtySix) Months  
**Tender closing Date and time:** At 1630hrs. on 27.07.2023

No manual offers sent by Post/ courier/ Fax or in person shall be accepted against such e-tenders even if these are submitted on firm's letter head and received in time. All such manual offers shall be considered invalid and shall be rejected summarily without any consideration.

Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-tender is available in website <http://www.ireps.gov.in>.

The tenderers/bidders must have Class-III Digital Signature Certificate and must be registered on IREPS portal. Only registered tenderers/bidders can participate on e-tendering.

**NOTE:** The prospective tenderers are advised to revisit the website 15 days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes/compendia issued for this tender. website: <http://www.ireps.gov.in>

Div. Elect. Engineer(G), Sambalpur  
PR-330/O/23-24

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

Notice is hereby given to all concerned that, Rajlaxmi Kumari, W/o Arjun Nag, At-Kurebhana, Po-Chhatapipal, Ps-Puintala, Dist.-Balangir has sworn an affidavit on dt.06.07.2023 and has reported to LIC, Town PS, Balangir on dt.07.07.2023 regarding loss of original link Regd. Sale Deed No.10311102940, Vol-60 dt.25.10.2011 of Registering Officer, Balangir.

Rajlaxmi Kumari W/o Arjun Nag has applied to the LIC HOUSING FINANCE LTD., Sambalpur to avail loan on the above property by mortgaging the said property documents.

All concerned therefore, having any claim over the property purchased under the said document Regd. Sale Deed No.10311102940, Vol-60 dt.25.10.2011 of Registering Officer, Balangir is required to fill his claim with the undersigned within 15 (Fifteen) days from the date of publication of this notice, failing which it will be presumed that, the property having link with the said document/s is/are free from encumbrances and any claim in respect thereof against the applicant as a mortgager and the company as the mortgagee shall be void and ineffective after the lapse of 15 (Fifteen) days of publication of this notice.

**Sd./-Ashwini Ku.Debta**  
Advocate, LIC Housing Finance Ltd.  
At/Po-Modipara,Sambalpur,Odisha  
Mobile No.9437158519

Sambalpur  
Dt.10.07.2023

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**DIRECTOR**

No. A-316

**GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA**  
**DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES**  
**OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER,**  
**RAIRANGPUR IRRIGATION DIVISION, RAIRANGPUR**  
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**'e'-Procurement Notice No. 02.RID/2023-24**

1. Name of works	Canal improvement work, Road & Bridges works and Building works as mentioned in the website.
2. Total No. of works	12 Nos. (Twelve) only
3. Amount put to tender	Varies from 5.06 Lakh to 10.40 Lakh
4. Class of Contractor	'C' & 'D'
5. Period of completion	As mentioned against work.
6. Other details as follows:	
(i) Procurement Officer	Superintending Engineer, Rairangpur Irrigation Division, Rairangpur
(ii) Availability of Tender online for bidding	14.07.2023 from 10.00 hours to 28.07.2023 up to 17.00 hours.
(iii) Date, time and place of opening of Bid	On 29.07.2023 at 11.00 hours in the O/o the Superintending Engineer, Rairangpur Irrigation Division, Rairangpur
(iv) Date of Transparent Lottery to be conducted (if required)	On 04.08.2023 at 11.00 A.M. in the O/o the Superintending Engineer, Rairangpur Irrigation Division, Rairangpur

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FOCUS ART MARKET

# INSATIABLY SEEKING STATUS



Since the 2008 financial crisis, Art Basel has become a leading indicator of the state of the super-rich and, consequently, of rising global wealth inequality

effort. The global gallery Gagosian has expanded to 21 locations, and rival Hauser & Wirth has 18 spaces, including remote lifestyle facilities in Somerset and Menorca designed to lure wealthy collectors. Both galleries employ large sales teams and actively promote their artists. But potential new clients travel less and are more costly to acquire. Meanwhile, the Chinese, historically significant marginal buyers, have retreated amid a shift toward deglobalisation.

Investors tend to construct reassuring narratives such as “the Powell pivot” and the “Greenspan put.” As the Nobel laureate economist Robert J. Shiller observed, market prices are often influenced by such narratives and can diverge significantly from fundamental values, giving rise to speculative bubbles.

Assessing the fundamental value of art, however, presents a unique challenge, as it does not generate dividends and lacks functional utility. So, participants find themselves placing too much weight on price trends. Rising prices, as Shiller suggested, can fuel positive sentiment and create a self-reinforcing cycle that contributes to the formation of speculative bubbles. Others, however, argue that the true value of art is not financial but “positional” – in other words, it confers status.

To be sure, status is subjective. During Art Basel’s first VIP day, for example, Hauser & Wirth proudly announced the sale of Louise Bourgeois’ bronze sculpture Spider IV for \$22.5 million. For some, paying millions of dollars for an ominous metal spider suggests wealth and sophisticated taste. For others, it is as gauche as wearing a Louis Vuitton T-shirt or paying for a Twitter blue checkmark. Rather than signifying status, it may imply impressionability and insecurity.

*The writer is the author of Swiss Made: The Untold Story Behind Switzerland’s Success (Profile Books, 2013).*

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Billionaires are not accustomed to waiting in line, especially not in scorching heat. But Art Basel, the world’s most influential art fair, often triggers a feeding frenzy at 11 am on opening day as the most substantial and eager buyers vie to purchase rare works or discover an elusive piece missing from their collections. This year’s edition, recently concluded, featured 284 galleries from 36 countries showing works by 3,200 contemporary artists.

The Sotheby’s Mei Moses Index, the most authoritative measure of art prices, has increased eightfold over the past five decades since Art Basel was launched in 1970. In 2017, Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman made global headlines by paying \$450 million for Leonardo da Vinci’s “Salvator Mundi,” the most expensive painting ever sold.

The law of supply and demand suggests that art prices should continue to increase. On the supply side, the fact that most of the world’s preeminent artists are dead and that museums and long-term collectors acquire the finest artworks means that the available stock is constantly shrinking. Moreover, each artwork is essentially a monopoly, owing to its inherent uniqueness.

On the demand side, owning a prized piece by a renowned artist has become the ultimate status symbol. After all, purchasing a Patek Philippe watch, a Bentley, or even a swanky Hamptons estate is nothing compared to buying a Picasso. By spending \$100 million on a painting, collectors are signaling their ability to devote a colossal sum of money to an object that will never generate dividends or rent. Their pleasure is complete when a rival buys a piece off them at a higher price.

But there are signs that the market may be turning. Since the 2008 financial crisis, Art Basel has become a leading indicator of the state of the super-rich and, consequently, of rising global wealth inequality. As billionaires’ fortunes grew by more than 380% since 2009, art sales have surged as well, with sales

exceeding \$10 billion increasing by nearly 700%.

Just over a decade ago, Benjamin Mandel, then an economist at the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, began studying the art market. Initially, he thought that the market was expanding at an unsustainable pace, because prices were growing faster than global GDP. But, having dug deeper, Mandel determined that the fine art market does not reflect the state of the broader global economy, only part of it. Simply put, it is a market created by and for the super-rich, and billionaires play by different rules than the rest of the world.

Mandel’s logic was straightforward. With the population of ultra-wealthy buyers and their fortunes growing much faster than the available supply, the art market mirrors the increase in wealth inequality. With this in mind, it is hardly surprising that some of the world’s most prominent collectors are also some of its wealthiest investors, such as Citadel CEO Ken Griffin, TPG founding partner David Bonderman, and Point72 CEO Steve Cohen.

But recent trends have called into question Mandel’s thesis. Despite the surge in the number of billionaires, art purchases

and prices have plateaued. The prevailing mood at this year’s Art Basel was one of anxiety, as dealers roamed the halls searching for answers. Some speculate that the state of the art market indicates declining confidence among the world’s richest people. When the economy is booming, collectors are more inclined to invest in art and take on leverage, especially when borrowing costs are low. But these dynamics can shift quickly during downturns. The 2008 crisis, for example, caused art prices to fall by 60%.

The art market is notoriously illiquid. Given that a handful of remote buyers set the prices, contractions tend to be sharp and abrupt. The same collectors who were eager to buy when prices were rising are suddenly reluctant to bid when prices are falling. The art-market crash of the early 1990s, which was preceded by the stock-market crash of 1987 and the collapse of the Japanese asset-price bubble, is a case in point.

Rising prices require the entry of new buyers, leading some established dealers to worry that the market has reached the point of exhaustion. As one respected gallerist told me, “The higher the prices, the thinner the air.” This is not due to a lack of



R. James Breiding

**THE ART MARKET IS NOTORIOUSLY ILLIQUID. GIVEN THAT A HANDFUL OF REMOTE BUYERS SET THE PRICES, CONTRACTIONS TEND TO BE SHARP AND ABRUPT**

## Rajasthan Race

There is no greater courage than that of recognising one’s own mistakes.

THE MOTHER



The truce brokered by the Congress high command between Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot and his former deputy Sachin Pilot looks like an ominous development for the BJP. It comes at a time when the ruling BJP is merrily going ahead with its 2024 Lok Sabha electoral strategy of breaking up regional parties, weakening them and forming alliances with the splintered groups. The BJP has been euphoric after splitting first the Shiv Sena and then the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) in Maharashtra. This has indeed been a body blow to the Opposition unity, especially after the latter’s big show in Patna which came in the wake of the Congress’ spectacular success in Karnataka. NCP’s Sharad Pawar is a fulcrum of Opposition unity with his astuteness and huge experience in both state and national politics. The revolt by his nephew Ajit Pawar along with several MLAs has left the senior Pawar stunned and lowered his standing as one of the country’s tallest politicians and master strategists.

Since the BJP’s debacle in Karnataka, all eyes are on Rajasthan where a victory in the Assembly polls, four months away, would help the saffron party regain much of the ground lost in southern India. The long running feud between Gehlot and Pilot was tailor-made for the BJP’s brand of “tor-phor” (break and split) politics to decimate the Opposition both at the regional and national levels.

The Congress high command did well to bestir itself and try to prevent the situation from spinning out of control as it had happened earlier, especially in Madhya Pradesh. Pilot had for the past few weeks been dangerously moving towards splitting the party by confronting his senior and party veteran Gehlot and taking sweet revenge for thwarting his ambition to become the state Chief Minister. In a swift move to appease Pilot, the party sought to erase the trust deficit between the two leaders and announced the reformation of the Rajasthan Public Service Commission and stringent punishment for those who are found to be involved in the leak of question papers set for recruitment examinations. These are the pet demands of Pilot who, along with the issue of alleged corruption by the previous Vasundhara Raje government of the BJP, had made the question paper leak and reforms in the Public Service Commission major grouses against his own government.

It seems the Congress is learning from its earlier mistakes that cost it dearly as it wasted no time in making overtures to the Pilot camp and urged both Gehlot and Pilot followers to make corruption under the BJP a major poll plank. At the same time, it did sound a note of caution that any partyman taking internal matters outside the party forum would face action.

Also, the high command sought to appease Gehlot by calling for a door-to-door campaign on the success of his governance. This is significant, since Rajasthan is known to vote out incumbent governments. Gehlot is making a bold move for his re-election by projecting his government as one that is working to provide relief from inflation and other forms of distress. The result is the slew of schemes, including cooking gas cylinders at a subsidised cost of Rs 500 and health insurance for every family up to Rs 25 lakh. The Chief Minister has been touring the state extensively to publicise these schemes. While all these sop offerings might be considered acceptable in today’s climate, citizens must not forget the grievous damage inflicted on the democratic edifice of India by the Congress. The UPA decade is solely responsible for the terrible times that India is facing currently. The unquenchable thirst for corruption and misuse of power brought about the fall of the Congress and that has reflected on the body politic of the country.

### WISDOM CORNER

Learn from yesterday, live for today, hope for tomorrow. The important thing is not to stop questioning.

ALBERT EINSTEIN

Remember not only to say the right thing in the right place, but far more difficult still, to leave unsaid the wrong thing at the tempting moment.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

Your living is determined not so much by what life brings to you as by the attitude you bring to life; not so much by what happens to you as by the way your mind looks at what happens.

KAHLIL GIBRAN

### WORDSWORTH

#### Ludibrious

In 1807, the American diplomat, politician and poet Joel Barlow published his epic, Columbiad, which was widely regarded as a pompous and grandiose vision of the New World (even he admitted that he was no genius as a versifier). A lesser criticism concerned the many words he coined. The Edinburgh Review wrote that some “were as utterly foreign, as if they had been adopted from the Hebrew or Chinese” and that others had been contorted from existing English words. The review recorded multifluvian, vagrate, inhumanise, conglaciate, micidious, luxed, fulminent, utilise (which has since had some success) and many others. “His new words are not necessary,” commented Washington Irving, “and very uncouth, such as cosmogyre, cosmogyral, fiuvial, ludibrious, croupe, brume, gerb, colon [not in the anatomical or punctuation senses but meaning a colonist], coloniarch, numen, emban, contristed, asouth ...” Irving was wrong about ludibrious, but it’s noteworthy that he believed it to be new. It had actually been in the language since about 1570 but had never been common. During its history it had done an about-turn. It meant at first that the thing referred to was the subject of mockery, but Barlow used it – in the line, “Leaves to ludibrious winds the priceless page” – in its later sense of something that was itself scornful or mocking. It appeared a few times in later works before finally dying out. “I wonder where that Paddy of mine has spirited himself away to,” said I, in a tone meant to be ludibrious, but really on the other hand somewhat lugubrious instead (Harper’s New Monthly Magazine, Aug. 1863). Both senses are in its Latin source, ludibrium, which could mean playful behaviour or joking but also mockery or derision. It derives from ludere, to play. At one time we had other words from the same source – and it’s still present in disguise in words such as collude, delude and prelude – but the one that we’re most likely to recognise today is ludicrous, which began with the idea of lightheartedness or playfulness but moved to our sense today of something ridiculous, which gives rise to laughter that’s derisive rather than jolly.

#### Lorinery

Lorinery, meaning the craft of making the various metal parts of a horse’s harness, is rare enough that there’s no entry for it in the Oxford English Dictionary; it seems to be relatively recent and not at all common in print, though it is found quite a lot online. The oldest known example is this: Mr. Chavasse, in returning thanks, made some interesting remarks upon the history of lorinery, and pointed out that the “rozettes,” which it was formerly the loriner’s business to make, were still represented as emblems on the company’s coat-of-arms (St James’s Gazette (London), 29 Oct. 1891). Lorinery is carried out by loriners; the Worshipful Company of Loriners, one of the livery companies of the City of London, says: “A loriner makes and sells bits, bridles, spurs, stirrups and the minor metal items of a horse’s harness, together with the saddle tree.” There aren’t any loriners in the City of London nowadays, the centre of the British craft being in Walsall, which is perhaps why the Company no longer has a London headquarters (a hall, in the jargon).

### IN JEST THIS

## Employers need to recognise ‘right to nap’

A new study has found that daily naps can help us improve the size of our brains as we get older. Brains tend to shrink as we age, just like other body parts I won’t mention here.

The study, published in the journal “Sleep Health” and based on an analysis of data from 378,932 people aged 40-69, found a connection between larger total brain volume and more frequent napping. Previous research has shown that napping may improve our memory, concentration, creativity and performance, while reducing stress and anxiety.

That raises an important question: what’s stopping everyone from taking daily naps? The answer, of course, is the presence of certain individuals in our lives known as “bosses.” Bosses do not like it when we take naps. They think we’re being lazy, when in fact, we are just trying to be more productive.

Boss: “Hey, hey, hey! Were you just taking a nap?”

Me: “Yes, it helps me work better. It improves my memory, concentration, creativity and performance.”

Boss: “Okay, but don’t do it again! Sleeping on the job is against the rules.”

It’s not just bosses at work who keep us from napping. It’s also bosses at home. If you’re married, you know what I mean. I’m not just saying that wives sometimes boss over husbands or husbands boss over wives. I’m saying that the mere presence of a spouse (or significant other) in the house often gets in the way of a guilt-free nap.

Wife: “Why are you lying down?”

Me: “Just taking a quick nap. I didn’t get enough sleep last night.”

Wife: “A nap??? But we were supposed to go to the gym.”

Me: “I know we were supposed to go to the gym, but that was before I got sleepy.”

Wife: “Can’t you take a nap after we go to the gym?”

Me: “I won’t be sleepy after

we go to the gym.”

Wife: “Problem solved then.”

But even if you have a spouse who isn’t keen on naps, you can usually sneak in a nap on weekends – or whenever you have a day off work. The real challenge is sneaking in a nap while you’re at work.

I’ve never intentionally napped at work, but on a few occasions, I’ve dozed off for several minutes. It would have been longer, but unfortunately my employer does not recognise my “right to nap.”

My employer does, however, recognise my “right to eat.” I get 30 minutes for lunch. If I wanted, I could skip lunch and take a nap instead. But it doesn’t seem fair, having to choose between a bigger brain and a bigger stomach.

That’s why I was pleased last year to hear about the initiative of Wakefit Solutions, the Bangalore-based startup company that sells mattresses, beds and other furnishings. Wakefit co-founder Chaitanya Ramalingegowda sent an email

to employees telling them that they would be granted the “right to nap” from 2 to 2.30 pm. This time slot would be blocked off as “official nap time” on employee calendars.

I’m so envious. If I wrote the words “nap time” on a calendar at my workplace, “nap time” would soon become “boss-in-your-face time.”

I’d have to tell my boss about all the scientific research on the benefits of napping, including the work of Dr. Mattie Toma, an assistant professor at Warwick University in England. Toma conducted research among low-income urban workers in India and found that half-hour afternoon naps improved their attention, wellbeing and productivity.

I don’t know if my boss will ever let me nap at work. But perhaps I can persuade him to give me some time for a daily prayer.

“Dear God,” I would say, “thank you for giving me this time to close my eyes and take a short nap.”

### Major setback

Sir, This refers to “Foxconn blow to India’s chip making dream,” Orissa Post, July 11. Barely a year into signing an ambitious \$19.5 billion deal to manufacture semiconductors in India, the Foxconn-Vedanta deal went sour and it was curtains on Monday. While Foxconn did not give a reason for the same, Union Minister of State for Electronics and IT Rajeev Chandrasekhar had a view on why the deal to set up a facility in Gujarat went wrong indicating that both the companies had no prior semiconductor experience or technology and were expected to source Fab tech from a tech partner. Vedanta had entered into an agreement with the Taiwanese major which is known as the iPhone component maker – to make 20-28 nm size chips. It is noteworthy here that India plans to become a semiconductor manufacturing destination and get a slice of Taiwan’s pie which manufactures over 90% of chips currently. Semiconductor chips are essential components in electronic devices, and their manufacturing is key to gaining an edge over China. The JV had gone through many delays, and has now gone completely kaput. The reports suggest government had raised posers on the costing provided to request incentives from the government. The government has also decided to keep open the \$10 billion financial incentive scheme with a 50% subsidy on investments for making semiconductors in India for potential applicants. However, it’s a setback for PM’s make in India initiative.

N Sathasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

### Browbeating tactics

Sir, There was hardly any surprise that the Gujarat High Court would decline to stay Rahul Gandhi’s conviction in the criminal defamation case for his ‘Modi’ surname remark, in which he was sentenced to two years in jail by a Surat court. Politics in the aftermath of this judgement will surely play out. Indian criminal defamation law seems, in both letter and spirit, to have become only more regressive since it was first enacted in 1860. Since the law criminalises “any imputation concerning any person,” it means that even if the rhetoric in question did not directly name the complainant, he/she can still initiate criminal action. The dangers that criminal defamation laws pose to Indian democracy are evident in Rahul’s conviction, as they appear to protect the ruling class and browbeat critics into silence.

Ranganathan Sivakumar, CHENNAI

## 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

## Goa targets to construct 100 check dams by 2024



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Panaji, July 11:** To cater the water for irrigation purposes, Goa government has decided to construct 100 'Bandharas' (check dams) by May 2024.

Speaking to reporters, Water Resource Minister Subhash Shirodkar said that his department takes care that farmers get water through these bandharas.

"My department deals with storage. Hence we intend to construct small bandharas particularly for irrigation purposes across the state. As of now work on 20 bandharas is started and we have set a target to construct around 100 bandharas (including 20) by May 2024," Shirodkar said.

He said that water storage in all dams of the state is currently sufficient due to the incessant rain in the past few days.

Chief Minister Pramod Sawant July 5 said that the government will not tolerate opposition to the construction of bandharas, as water storage is important to combat water shortage issues.

"Due to the delay in rain this year, we faced a shortage of water. We need to construct bandharas at new places. We tried to construct one at Curti-Ponda in South Goa but the people are opposing it. But in future we will not tolerate such opposition," Sawant said.

"People should support such projects. If they don't (support)

then we will have to suffer. If we can store water in large volumes then it can be supplied after purifying for potable use," Sawant stated.

Many places in the coastal state faced water scarcity issues due to the delay in the monsoon by almost ten days. Locals from many areas had vented their anger over the irregular supply of potable water.

The people of Goa fighting to protect the Mhadei river have on many occasions expressed concern that the state will face water scarcity if the Mhadei water is diverted by Karnataka. Goa and Karnataka are currently locked in a dispute before a central tribunal over the Kalasa-Banduri dam project across the Mhadei river.

### Goa to develop 'Waterfall Circuits'

**Panaji:** Goa Forest Minister Vishwajit Rane recently said that the state government is planning to develop 'Waterfall Circuits' within the forest areas by involving the local community. There are a number of monsoon seasonal waterfalls in the forest area of the coastal state, where many tourists from the neighboring states arrive to explore the hinterlands. Considering the attraction towards this waterfall, the government has now decided to come up with 'Waterfall Circuits'.

**Chief Minister Pramod Sawant July 5 said that the government will not tolerate opposition to the construction of bandharas, as water storage is important to combat water shortage issues**

## UP to bring new litigation policy for speedy trials

*The new policy will also focus on bringing absconding and jailed gangsters to justice and the cases pending in MP/MLA courts*

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Lucknow, July 11:** The Uttar Pradesh government is bringing a new litigation policy that aims at time-bound completion of trials in cases filed under the POCSO Act sections and those involving sex-related crimes against women.

According to official sources,

the new policy would be notified very soon, replacing the present one which was brought by the Samajwadi Party (SP) government in 2012.

"The draft of the Uttar Pradesh Litigation Policy, 2023, has been discussed and drafted by senior officials of the law and the prosecution departments," said a state government spokesman.

The proposed policy lays down guidelines for using video conferences as a tool to hear the cases against the absconding mafias who are lodged in jails outside Uttar Pradesh and get them punished speedily by effective pleading against them from the prosecution.

It also aims at the completion



of court trials of cases under the POCSO Act, as well as cases involving sexual crimes against women, within one month of filing of the charge sheet in the court to get the maximum number of accused convicted by producing carefully-drafted charge

sheets in courts.

The new policy is also expected to lay focus on a speedy trial of cases pending against lawmakers in the special MP/MLA courts in the state.

Currently, 60 MLAs and MPs are facing trial in special courts.

As per a report sourced from the state government, as many as 71,193 POCSO Act cases were pending in various courts in the state at the beginning of 2013 and of them, 3,622 (5.08 per cent involving 4,630 accused) were disposed of till June 15.

However, the accused were punished only in 1,336 of the 3,622 cases disposed of till mid-June, while in 2,283 cases, the accused (3016) were let off by courts, the conviction rate being merely

36.88 per cent.

Six of the accused in POCSO Act cases were awarded the death penalty and 168 accused in 135 such cases were awarded life imprisonment.

Similarly, a total of 1,31,161 cases pertaining to sexual crimes against women were pending in courts in January this year.

Only 2,382 (5.87 per cent) of those cases involving 4,119 accused could be disposed of in six months till June 15.

The conviction was done only in 1,060 of the 2,382 such cases disposed of by courts, and in 1,207 cases, the accused (2,544) were freed by courts.

Only in 44 per cent of the cases, the accused (1,575) were convicted.

## Goa BJP chief files nomination for RS

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Panaji, July 11:** Bharatiya Janata Party's Goa unit president Sadanand Shet Tanavade Tuesday filed his nomination papers for the election to the lone Rajya Sabha seat from the coastal state. The Rajya Sabha election would be held July 24.

BJP's Vinay Tendulkar is currently member of the Upper House of Parliament from Goa and his term his expiring this month-end. Tanavade filed his nomination papers before Returning Officer Namrata Ulman at the Goa Assembly complex in the presence of Chief Minister Pramod Sawant and other MLAs.

"I am thankful to BJP president J P Nadda, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, BJP general secretary B L Santhosh, Goa Chief Minister Dr Pramod Sawant and my party for giving me this opportunity," Tanavade said after filling the form. He claimed all MLAs of the BJP and supporting parties were present during filing of the nomination.

Tanavade said he will request even the opposition MLAs to vote for him. The BJP and its allies have 33 MLAs in the 40-member Goa Assembly. The opposition Congress has three MLAs, Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) has two members, and the Goa Forward Party and the Revolutionary Goans Party have one legislator each.

Meanwhile, AAP's Goa president Amit Palekar said his party will not field its candidate for the Rajya Sabha poll as it does not have the required numbers and it will also not participate in the election process. "We don't want to waste the precious time of the Assembly. We don't appreciate that. We will contest the Rajya Sabha election whenever we have numbers in the Goa Assembly," Palekar told reporters.

Asked about supporting the Congress candidate, Palekar said the party is yet to announce its candidate for the election.



Tourists at the Agra Fort during monsoon rainfall in Agra, Uttar Pradesh

PTI PHOTO

## Goa govt to scrap abandoned vehicles

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Panaji, July 11:** Authorities in Goa have decided to scrap all the abandoned state government vehicles that are currently dumped within the premises of their respective departments.

Chief Minister Pramod Sawant said that these vehicles will be cleared within next two months from the government properties.

"We have selected three contractors to remove abandoned government vehicles that are currently located within the premises of various departments. Process has started and in the next two months all vehicles will be cleared from the government properties," he said.

According to him, the decision was taken as part of the implementation of the vehicle scrapping policy.

He said that all vehicles have been put up for tender, and three contractors are appointed for the removal process.

"Not a single abandoned government vehicle will be seen around these premises after two months," he said.

He said that the 'solid waste management' will complete the full process of scrapping these vehicles.

Sources informed that the vehicles that are older than 15 years will be scrapped as per the Centre's scrapping policy.



## Credsquare Technologies to set up R&D hub in Goa

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Panaji, July 11:** Credsquare Technologies Private Limited, a Bengaluru-based artificial intelligence company, Tuesday said it plans to set up a Research and Development hub in Goa.

The move marks the company's commitment towards advancing Make in India artificial intelligence (AI) technology and fostering innovation in the state under the Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative, the company said. The centre will serve as a hub for AI research, development, and experimentation, focusing on creating groundbreaking AI solutions that cater to the unique needs of the region, it added. Further, the company is looking to raise over Rs 600 crore, which will help fund the project, it said. Gaurav Sharma, founder and chief executive officer, Credsquare Technologies, said, "We are excited to bring our R&D hub to Goa, a vibrant and progressive state."



"We are raising over Rs 600 crore and are in advanced stages of due diligence with numerous investors globally. The fundraising will help Credsquare Technologies expand its footprint in Goa and set up the R&D infrastructure under the Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative," he said. The company said it aims to create opportunities for skill development and entrepreneurship, empowering Goans to participate in the AI revolution and contribute to the state's growth story.

"By setting up our facility here, we aim to tap into the local talent and contribute to the technological growth of the region," he said.

## UP: Donor cards can now be redeemed at all blood banks

*The state blood transfusion council (SBTC) announced that the blood donor cards issued by any of the government blood banks after voluntary blood donation can be redeemed at all the state blood banks*

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Lucknow, July 11:** The Uttar Pradesh government has decided that voluntary blood donors can now use their donor cards in exchange for blood from any of the state-run blood banks in the state.

The state blood transfusion council (SBTC) announced that the blood donor cards issued by any of the government blood banks after voluntary blood donation can be redeemed at all



the state blood banks. Earlier, the donor card could be exchanged only at the same blood bank that issued the card.

Donor cards are issued for each unit of blood donated voluntarily and for which blood is not obtained in exchange. In case blood is obtained for patient in exchange of the donation, no donor card is issued.

"The decision has been taken by the state core committee of the SBTC. This decision came after it was observed that donors who wanted to get blood in exchange of a donor card faced difficulty when they were in need but in another district or when they visited any blood bank, other than where they donated blood,"

said a letter sent to all state-run blood banks in Uttar Pradesh by SBTC.

Dr Tulika Chandra, head of department, transfusion medicine at the King George's Medical University said, "Healthy people often donate blood so that they may get blood in exchange if they or their loved ones need it. This decision will help a lot of people who do not find a donor at time of need but can use donor card."

"Sometimes blood group is not available at one blood bank and people go to another. If one donor card is valid for many blood banks, it will be a relief, else those with a donor card too would have to look for a donor. Getting a donor at a place where you do not know anyone is a difficult task as often searching for donor takes time," said Dr Abhishek Shukla, secretary general, association of international doctors.

All the state-run blood banks have been asked to comply with the order and inform the SBTC.

## PILIBHIT TIGER RESERVE ON ALERT OVER POACHING THREAT

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Pilibhit, July 11:** Field patrolling has been increased in the Pilibhit Tiger Reserve (PTR), following an alert issued by the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB) about possible poacher intrusion in 11 tiger reserves across the country, including Pilibhit and Amargarh Tiger Reserves in Uttar Pradesh.

The principal chief conservator of forest (wildlife) of Uttar Pradesh, Sudhir Kumar Sharma, who also serves as the chief wildlife warden of the state, stated that the WCCB's action was based on intelligence in-

puts received from their sources.

The authorities have initiated an intensive search and vehicle checking operation on all roads passing through the reserve.

Additionally, they have directed the identification of sensitive spots within the reserves and increased vigilance in those areas.

People residing near railway stations, bus stations, public shelter camps, temples, and aban-

**The country reported the deaths of 117 tigers in the previous year, with 10 cases involving the seizure of tiger body**



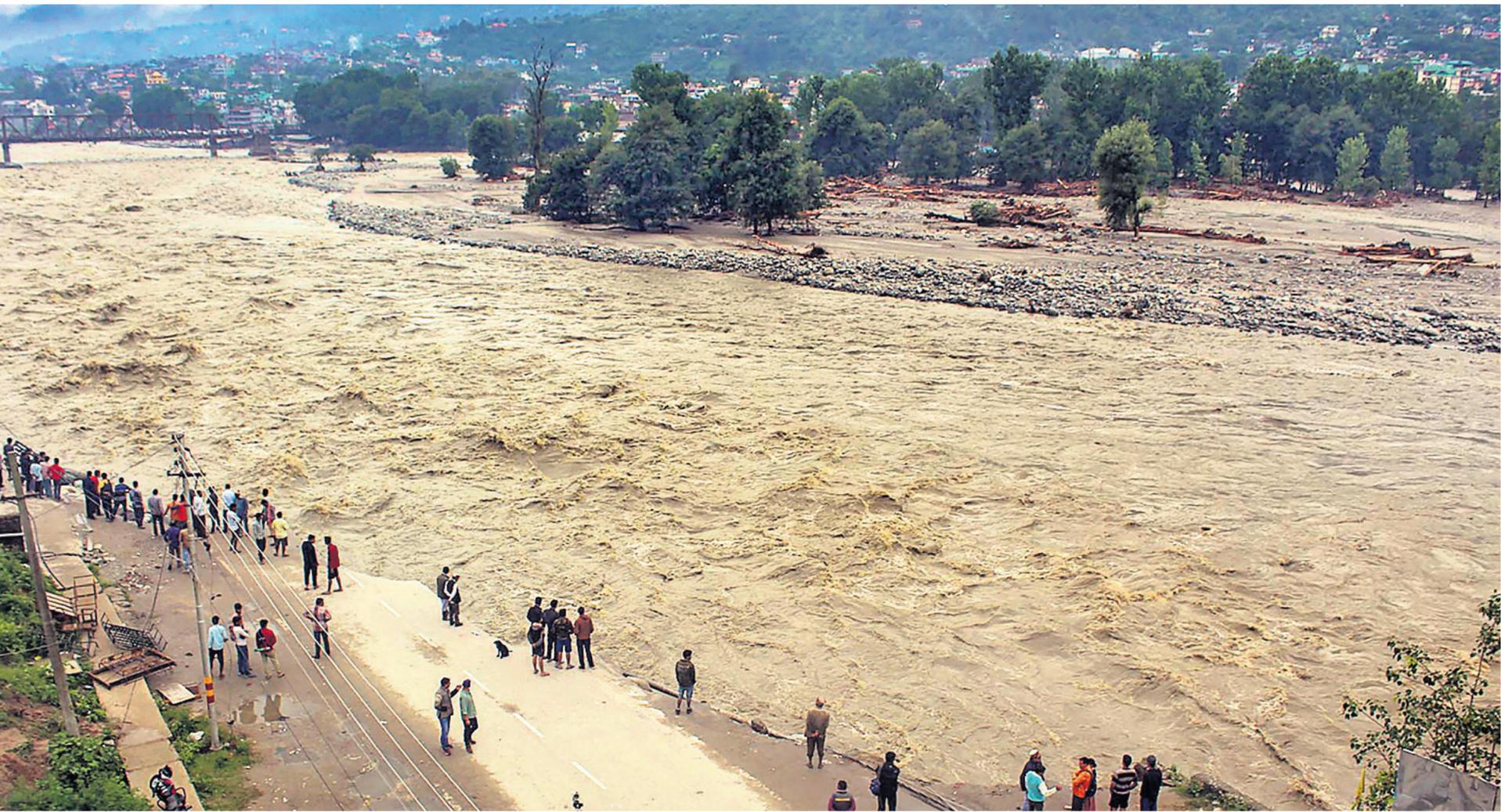
andoned structures are being checked. The police officials have been requested to assist forest personnel in identifying individuals, especially nomads, and conducting seizure operations when necessary.

The divisional forest officer (DFO) of PTR, said, "The monsoon season is crucial in terms of safety and security. Due to waterlogging, routine field patrolling becomes challenging during this time, which can be exploited by poachers and wildlife criminals."

He added, "The wildlife criminals previously subjected to punitive action are under sur-

veillance, and the local residents known as 'Bagh Mitra' living in villages within the eco-sensitive zone of the reserve have been instructed to keep a watchful eye on such individuals. They are encouraged to immediately report any suspicious information to the PTR authorities. Protective operations, including round-the-clock vehicle checking, are being carried out."

According to a report by the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA), the country reported the deaths of 117 tigers in the previous year, with 10 cases involving the seizure of tiger body.



Locals walk along the eroded riverbank damaged by the swollen Beas following heavy rain in Kullu



The Launch Vehicle Mark-III (LVM3) M4 vehicle with Chandrayaan-3 at the launch pad at Satish Dhawan Space Centre after the conclusion of a simulation of the entire launch preparation and process, in Sriharikota



Panchvaktra Temple during a flood following heavy rain in Mandi



Seventh edition of the Japan-India Maritime Exercise 2022 hosted by the Indian Navy concludes with a customary steam past in the Bay of Bengal



Swedish climate activist Greta Thunberg speaks during a demonstration outside the European Parliament in Strasbourg, eastern France. Protesters and legislators are converging on the European Union parliament in Strasbourg as the bloc faces a major vote on protecting its threatened nature and shielding it from disruptive environmental change. The vote is a test of the EU's global climate credentials



Children play in a flooded area near the Old Yamuna Bridge (Loha Pul) in New Delhi



Mumbai police personnel during flagging off ceremony of new vehicles for Nirbhaya Squad and Beat Marshals in Mumbai



Assam Congress supporters protest against the rise of vegetable prices, in Guwahati





**The Modi government tries to be clever but ends up becoming too clever by half. The unreasonable restrictions placed on sale of rice under the Open Market Sale Scheme at ₹34/kg has misfired badly with the extremely low offtake of rice**  
JAIRAM RAMESH | CONGRESS LEADER

## NIA RAIDS 5 LOCATIONS IN J&K

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) Tuesday carried out raids at five locations in the Kashmir valley in a crackdown on newly-floated offshoots of proscribed Pakistan-backed terrorist groups operating in the Union territory, officials said



## of the day quote

A large proportion of traders do not pay GST – some out of compulsion, some intentionally. A few days ago, the Centre also brought the GST within the purview of the ED. It means that now, if a businessman does not pay the GST, the ED will arrest him directly and bail will not be granted

One needs to have a broad mind and must support party workers. The one who is insecure cannot develop a party. Late Balasaheb Thackeray used to stand behind us firmly. He (Uddhav Thackeray as CM) did not even sign on a single file during his two-and-half year tenure and hardly left his house

The BJP is trying to revive the National Democratic Alliance ahead of the 2024 general election as winning the polls will not be as easy as it wants to project

## Double murder rocks Bangalore

**Bangalore, July 11:** The Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of a private firm were allegedly killed in a terrifying double murder during the day by a former employee Tuesday, police said. The police identified the deceased as Phanindra Subramanya and Vinu Kumar, who were MD and CEO of Aironics Media Private Limited respectively. The accused barged into the Aironics office and attacked the MD and CEO with a "sharp object", DCP Northeast Laxmi Prasad said. Both persons died on the way to the hospital. The incident occurred at Pampa Extension in Amrithahalli, a residential area here, where Aironics was functioning from a house converted into an office building.

## SC EXTENDS INTERIM BAIL OF ASHISH

**New Delhi, July 11:** The Supreme Court Tuesday extended till September 26 the interim bail of Union minister Ajay Kumar Mishra's son Ashish, facing prosecution in the 2021 Lakhimpur Kheri violence case. A bench of Justices Surya Kant and Dipankar Datta noted that trial was going on in the case and adjourned the matter. The top court on April 24 had said that it may not be possible to direct the trial court to conduct day-to-day hearings in the case as it may affect other cases pending there. While hearing the matter on March 14, the apex court had said the trial in the case was not "slow paced" and directed the sessions judge concerned to keep apprising it about the future developments of the trial. The top court had observed though it is not monitoring the trial, it is having an "indirect supervision" on it.

# TMC set to dominate Bengal rural polls

**Kolkata, July 11:** TMC looked set to sweep the violence-scarred rural polls keeping intact the mandate it won two years back during the Assembly polls by taking a seemingly unassailable lead in results declared till now by the State Election Commission. The ruling TMC has won in 28,985 gram panchayat seats, besides leading in 1,540 seats, according to the SEC as of 10:30 pm on Tuesday. Its nearest rival BJP has won 7,764 seats and is leading in 417 seats. In all, elections are being held for 63,229 gram panchayat seats. The Left Front has won 2,468 seats, of which the CPI(M) alone has won 2,409. The Left is currently leading in 260 seats. The Congress won 2,022 seats and is leading in 139. Other parties won 725 seats and led in 23 seats, while independents which included TMC rebels won 1,656 seats and led in 104 seats. The ruling TMC won 2,155 Panchayat Samiti seats while leading 493 seats. BJP has won 214 and is leading in 113 seats, while CPI(M) has won 47 seats and is



TMC supporters celebrate the party's lead during the counting of votes of West Bengal panchayat polls in Howrah

leading in 48 others and Congress has won in 38 seats and is leading in 23 seats. Elections were held for 9,728 Panchayat Samiti seats. TMC has also won all 77 Zila Parishad results declared so far and is leading in 92 others while CPI(M) has is leading in 5 seats, while Congress is leading in 1 and the BJP in 10. In all, there are 928 Zila Parishad seats. Trinamool leader Abhishek Banerjee on Tuesday thanked rural Bengal for voting in favour of the party and said the opposition's campaign of "no vote to

Mamata" has turned into "Now vote for Mamata" and has paved the way for the "party's unwavering success in next year's Lok Sabha polls". The elections are being seen by all parties as an indicator of which way the wind will blow in the 2024 parliamentary elections from this part of the country. The violence which rocked the panchayat polls held on Saturday has claimed at least 15 lives with 11 of them from the ruling TMC. Since elections were announced last month, the number of peo-

ple who died in poll-related incidents has been 33, with the ruling party suffering 60 per cent of the deaths. Allegations of vote tampering and violence by various parties forced the SEC to order re-polling in 696 seats on Monday, which passed more or less peacefully. Intervention by the Calcutta High Court had seen the deployment of central police forces on both election and counting days. A voter turnout of 80.71 per cent was recorded on Saturday, whereas a vote percentage of 69.85 was recorded till 5 pm in 696 booths across West Bengal, where repolling was held on Monday. Governor CV Ananda Bose who had rushed to Delhi to give a report on the violence told newsmen "political parties should realise elections are not grounds to examine one's physical strength". Counting of votes for the three-tier panchayat polls to nearly 74,000 seats which besides the gram panchayat seats, also includes 9,730 panchayat samiti seats and 928 zilla parishad seats, began at 8 am on Tuesday peacefully amid tight security, officials said.

## Six dead as bus driving on wrong side rams SUV

**Ghaziabad (UP), July 11:** Six members of a family died and two were severely injured Tuesday morning when their SUV collided head-on with a school bus moving on the wrong side of an expressway here, a senior police official said. Additional Deputy Commissioner of Police, Traffic (Ghaziabad), Ramanand Kushwaha said the accident took place around 6 am on the Delhi-Meerut Expressway. Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has expressed grief over the loss of lives in the accident. In a tweet in Hindi, his office said, "#UPCM @myogiadityanath has expressed deep sorrow over the loss of lives in the road accident in district Ghaziabad." The chief minister has instructed officials of the district administration to immediately take the injured to a hospital and provide them with proper treatment. He also wished for the speedy recovery of the injured, the tweet said. Kushwaha said the bus had gone to Delhi and was plying on the wrong side of the expressway after refilling CNG near the Ghaziapur border. The family was travelling in the SUV, which was headed for Gurugram from Meerut, he said. Two people are undergoing treatment for severe injuries, the official said, adding that there were eight people in the car. "The bus driver (identified as Prem Pal) has been arrested. He was at complete fault as he was moving on the wrong side," Kushwaha said. The deceased have been identified as Narendra (45), his wife Anita (40), sons Deepanshu (15) and Himanshu (12), niece Vanshika (7) and sister-in-law Babita (35). Narendra's brother Dharmendra (40) and his son Kartik (5) sustained severe injuries and are undergoing treatment at a private hospital, police said.

## SHORT TAKES

**Man arrested**  
**Pune:** A 24-year-old man has been arrested from Mahad in Raigad district for allegedly threatening to kill Maharashtra ministers Chhagan Bhujujal and Dhananjay Munde, both members of the Ait Pawar camp of NCP, a Pune Police officer said Tuesday. Bhujujal and Munde were sworn in as ministers in the Shiv Sena-BJP government on July 2 along with six other MLAs of NCP, while Ait Pawar took oath as Deputy Chief Minister. The man, who identified himself as Prashant Patil, allegedly called on the phone number of Bhujujal's personal assistant (PA) on Monday night, saying he had taken "supari" (contract) to kill Bhujujal, the police officer said.

**Terrorist killed**  
**Jammu:** A terrorist was killed after the Army foiled an infiltration bid along the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir's Rajouri district, officials said Tuesday. Alert troops detected suspicious movement of a group of terrorists near the LoC in the Nowshera sector on Monday night, defence spokesman Lt Col Suneel Bartwal said.

**Heroin seized**  
**Guwahati:** A suspected drug peddler has been arrested and contraband worth ₹16 crore recovered in an operation near Guwahati, a police officer said Tuesday. The heroin, packed in soap cases, was being brought from Manipur when it was recovered on Monday.

**Two labourers shot dead**  
**New Delhi:** Two daily wage labourers were allegedly shot dead by unidentified assailants in northeast Delhi's Welcome area in the early hours of Tuesday, police said. The deceased were identified as Pradeep and Bablu, both aged 40 years, they said.

**Woman kills two daughters**  
**Vadodara:** A 43-year-old woman allegedly killed her two daughters due to financial hardship and attempted to hang herself before being rescued by a neighbour in Gujarat's Vadodara city, police said Tuesday. Daksha Chauhan allegedly poisoned her daughters and later strangled them in their rented accommodation in Karelibaug locality of the city on Monday night, deputy commissioner of police Panna Momaya said.



Boats anchored during fishermen's protest against the proposed introduction of motorboats in the Ganga river, in Varanasi

## Law panel gets 46L responses on UCC

*June 14, the Law Commission initiated a fresh consultation process on the Uniform Civil Code by seeking views from stakeholders, including public and recognised religious organisations, on the politically sensitive issue*



lakh responses. On June 14, the Law Commission initiated a fresh consultation process on the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) by seeking views from stakeholders, including public and recognised religious organisations, on the politically sensitive issue. Earlier, the 21st Law Commission, the term of which ended in August 2018, examined the issue and solicited the views of all stakeholders on two occasions. Subsequently, a consultation paper on "Reforms of Family Law" was issued in August 2018. "Since more than three years have lapsed from the date of is-

suance of the said consultation paper, bearing in mind the relevance and importance of the subject and also the various court orders on the subject, the 22nd Law Commission of India considered it expedient to deliberate afresh over the subject," the panel had said in a 'public notice'. Appearing before a parliamentary committee earlier this month, representatives of the law panel had defended the fresh consultation exercise, noting that the preceding commission had brought out its suggestions in 2018 and its term had also come to an end. That is why they have begun a fresh initiative which is essentially "informational". In its consultation paper issued on August 31, 2018, the previous Law Commission headed by Justice B S Chauhan (retd) said while the diversity of Indian culture can and should be celebrated, specific groups or weaker sections of the society must not be "disprivileged" in the process.

# Islam holds a 'position of pride' in India: Doval

**New Delhi, July 11:** Asserting that terrorism is not linked to any religion, National Security Advisor Ajit Doval Tuesday said it is no coincidence that despite there being around 200 million Muslims, the involvement of Indian citizens in global terrorism has been "incredibly low". Noting that India has been a melting pot of cultures and religions that have co-existed in harmony for centuries, he also said Islam occupies a unique and significant "position of pride" amongst the religious groups in the country. Doval was speaking at an event here organised by the Khuro Foundation and the India Islamic Cultural Centre in honour of Muslim World League (MWL) Secretary-General Sheikh Dr



Mohammed bin Abdulkarim Al-Issa, who is on an India visit. On his part, Al-Issa said Muslims in India are proud of their nationality and the Indian Constitution. Doval also hailed Al-Issa as an authentic global voice of moderate Islam and a profound scholar with a deep understanding of Islam. He also said India as the world's largest democracy and the mother of democracies is a land of incredible diversity.

# North India counts its losses, rescue efforts gather pace

**New Delhi, July 11:** Rainfall activity ebbed in north India on Tuesday after three days of onslaught, revealing the extent of death and destruction as authorities reported at least 20 more fatalities and ramped up relief and rescue efforts. The death toll mounted to 31 in Himachal Pradesh, which had reported 18 deaths till Monday, while neighbouring Uttarakhand witnessed five fatalities. Uttar Pradesh, Punjab and Rajasthan reported one death each in rain-related incidents. Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu conducted an aerial survey of the Kasol, Manikaran, Kheer Ganga and Pulga areas. In

Kull's Sainj area alone, around 40 shops and 30 houses were washed away, he said, as he interacted with people in a relief camp in Kullu and shared a meal with them. He said seven people were airlifted from the tourist spot Chandertal in Lahaul and Spiti. Two of them have been admitted to a hospital. Tourists stranded in Manali would be evacuated by Tuesday night as the Kullu-Manali road has been partially restored and mobile connectivity was also back in Manali after a day, the CM said. He said tourists stuck in any part of the state including Chandertal and Sissu in Lahaul and Spiti would be evacuated by Wednesday. Officiating Director General of Police



Satwant Atwal said 31 people have died in the recent rains in the past three days. He said 250 tourists are stranded in Chandertal and 300 in Sissu in the Lahaul and Spiti district and 300 in parts of Mandi district. Many areas in Jammu and Kashmir, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh

and Rajasthan recorded "heavy to extremely heavy" precipitation over the past three days. This flooded rivers, creeks and drains that massively damaged infrastructure and disrupted essential services in Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Punjab. In the national capital, the Yamuna river has exceeded the danger mark of 206 metres, prompting the relocation of people residing in flood-prone areas to safer locations and a closure of the Old Railway Bridge for road and rail traffic. In Uttarakhand, five pilgrims from Madhya Pradesh died and seven more were injured when a landslide buried three vehicles near the Gangnani bridge on the Gangotri National Highway

in Uttarkashi district on Monday night. Three of the four bodies have been recovered and efforts are underway to pull out the fourth from the rubble, an official said, adding that two of the seven people injured are in serious condition. Floods in the Jummagad river in Chamoli district on Monday night washed away a bridge built on it, blocking the Indo-Tibetan border road and snapping contact with over a dozen border villages. The bridge was located near Jumma village on the Joshimath-Niti highway, about 45 km from Joshimath. In Himachal Pradesh, two teams have been deputed for road restoration - one from the Losar side and the other from Kaza.

## of the day quote

Blessed to begin the day by paying a visit to the Ramakrishna Mission in Kuala Lumpur. Offered my tributes to 'Global Youth Icon' Swami Vivekananda ji

The parties in Yemen need to immediately stop military provocations and prepare for and agree to a sustainable nationwide ceasefire

I have already notified beforehand the counteraction of our army upon authorization. In case of repeated illegal intrusion, the US forces will experience a very critical flight

## SHORT TAKES

### Abortion curbs eased in Australia

**Canberra:** Medical abortions will be made more accessible in Australia after the medical regulator Tuesday announced the easing of restrictions. Under the changes, announced by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA), prescribers and chemists dispensing MS-2 Step will no longer require special certification or registration to do so, reports said.

### Sri Lanka to conduct new round of census

**Colombo:** Sri Lanka President Ranil Wickremesinghe has issued a gazette notification to conduct a new round of census of population and housing in the country, an official said here Tuesday. Anura Kumara, director general of the Department of Census and Statistics, told journalists that the census would be carried out in four stages, namely mapping, listing, data capture and publishing the data, reports Xinhua news agency.

### Panda twins born in SK for the first time

**Seoul:** A giant panda has given birth to twin cubs at a theme park in South Korea. Ai Bao gave birth to the cubs, both female, last Friday at the Everland theme park near Seoul, the park's operator, Samsung C&T resort group, said in a statement Tuesday. It's the first time that panda twins have been born in South Korea, the resort group said. Both Ai Bao and her newborns are in good health, it said.

### Bizman's body found in freezer

**Bangkok:** The dismembered body of a missing German businessman was found in a freezer inside a house in southern Thailand, police said Tuesday. Tawee Kudthalaeng, the police chief in the town of Nong Prue, said the body of 62-year-old Hans-Peter Mack was discovered at about 11 p.m. Monday. Mack had been missing for a week. Investigators located his body by using security camera videos from the area, Tawee said.

### Trial begins for 2019 NZ volcano tragedy

**Wellington:** A landmark trial began in New Zealand Tuesday in connection to the deadly White Island volcano disaster in 2019 which claimed the lives of 22 people. Twenty-two people died when the country's most active volcano suddenly erupted December 9, 2019 after it had been showing signs of unrest for weeks, reports the BBC.



**Failure to make progress means inequalities will continue to deepen, increasing the risk of a fragmented, two-speed world**  
ANTONIO GUTERRES | UN SECRETARY-GENERAL

## THAILAND'S PM QUILTS POLITICS

Thailand's Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha, who served almost nine years in office after seizing power in a 2014 military coup, said Tuesday that he is leaving politics. His announcement was widely expected after his military-backed United Thai Nation party was thumped in a May 14 election, in which it won just 36 of the 500 house seats. He will remain caretaker premier until a new government is formed



# NATO welcomes Ukraine's membership

AGENCIES

**Vilnius (Lithuania), July 11:** NATO leaders agreed Tuesday to allow Ukraine to join "when allies agree and conditions are met," the head of the military alliance said, hours after President Volodymyr Zelenskyy blasted the organisation's failure to set a timetable for his country as "absurd."

"We reaffirmed Ukraine will become a member of NATO and agreed to remove the requirement for a membership action plan," NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg told reporters, referring to a key step in joining the alliance. Although many NATO members have funneled arms and ammunition to Zelenskyy's forces, there is no consensus among the 31 allies for admitting Ukraine into NATO's ranks. Instead, the alliance leaders decided to remove obstacles on Ukraine's membership path so that it can join more quickly once the war with Russia is over.

Zelenskyy pushed back sharply against the decision. "It's unprecedented and absurd when a time frame is set neither for the invitation nor for Ukraine's membership," Zelenskyy tweeted as he headed to the summit. "While at the same time, vague wording about conditions" is added even for inviting Ukraine. It seems there is no readiness to invite Ukraine to NATO or to make it a member of the Alliance."

Asked about Zelenskyy's concerns, Stoltenberg said that the most important thing now is to



**N**ATO leaders agree Ukraine's future lies within the alliance  
**T**hey stop short of handing Kyiv an invitation or timetable for joining  
**N**ATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg says NATO to invite Ukraine to join the military alliance when 'members agree and conditions are met'  
**Z**elenskyy had earlier assailed NATO leaders for not offering a timeframe for membership

ensure that his country wins the war, because "unless Ukraine prevails there is no membership to be discussed at all." The broadside from Zelenskyy could renew tensions at the summit shortly after it saw a burst of goodwill after Turkey agreed to advance Sweden's bid to join NATO. Allies hope to resolve the seesawing negotiations and create a clear path forward for the alliance and its support for Ukraine.

"We value our allies," Zelenskyy wrote on Twitter, adding that "Ukraine also de-

veloped respect." He also said: "Uncertainty is weakness. And I will openly discuss this at the summit." Zelenskyy is expected to meet with US President Joe Biden and other NATO leaders Wednesday.

There have been sharp divisions within the alliance over Ukraine's desire to join NATO, which was promised back in 2008 even though few steps were taken toward that goal. In addition, the Baltic states — including Lithuania, which is hosting the summit — have pushed for a strong show of support and a

clear pathway toward membership for Ukraine.

However, the United States and Germany urged caution. Biden said last week that Ukraine was not ready to join. Members of NATO, he told CNN, need to "meet all the qualifications, from democratization to a whole range of other issues," a nod toward longstanding concerns about governance and corruption in Kyiv.

In addition, some fear that bringing Ukraine into NATO would serve more as a provocation to Russia than as a deterrent against aggression. White House national security adviser Jake Sullivan said allies were debating the "precise nature" of Ukraine's pathway to membership. However, he promised that the summit would demonstrate how Russian President Vladimir Putin's hopes for fractures within NATO will go un-

fulfilled. The dispute over Ukraine stands in contrast to a hard-fought agreement to advance Sweden's membership. The deal was reached after days of intensive meetings, and it's poised to expand the alliance's strength in Northern Europe.

According to a joint statement issued when the deal was announced, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan will ask Turkey's parliament to approve Sweden joining NATO.

Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban, another holdout, is expected to take a similar step. Hungary's foreign minister said Tuesday that his country's ratification of Sweden's NATO membership was now just a "technical matter."

Erdogan has not yet commented publicly. The outcome is a victory as well for Biden, who has touted NATO's expansion as an example of how Russia's invasion of Ukraine has backfired on Moscow.

Finland has already become the 31st member of the alliance, and Sweden is on deck to become the 32nd. Both Nordic countries were historically nonaligned until the war increased fears of Russian aggression.

Erdogan met with Biden Tuesday evening but remained mum on the deal to advance Sweden's membership in NATO.

Although Biden made a reference to "the agreement you reached yesterday," Erdogan said nothing about it. It was a conspicuous omission from Erdogan, who has not commented on the issue publicly during the summit.

## SIX DIE IN NEPAL COPTER CRASH

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Kathmandu, July 11:** All six people, including five members of a Mexican family, were killed in a fiery crash of a private commercial helicopter near Mount Everest in eastern Nepal Tuesday, a senior airport official said.

The Manang Air NA-MV chopper took off from Surke Airport in Solukhumbu district at 10:04 am for Kathmandu and suddenly lost contact at an altitude above 12,000 feet at 10:13 am, said Gyanendra Bhul, Manager at Tribhuvan International Airport (TIA).

The helicopter crashed in the Lamjura area of Likhupike Rural Municipality in the remote mountainous Solukhumbu district.

TIA spokesperson Tkeknath Sitaula said all six bodies were found at the crash site during a search operation.

They were returning to Kathmandu from Surke after enjoying a mountain flight. The flight was conducted from Lukla, the gateway to Mount Everest, Sitaula said.

All six people aboard the chopper have died in the accident, The Kathmandu Post newspaper quoted operation and safety manager of Manang Air Raju Neupane as saying.

Six people including Captain Chet Bahadur Gurung and five Mexican nationals were aboard the aircraft, the official said. All five foreign passengers are members of a Mexican family. Founded in 1997, Manang Air is a helicopter airline based in Kathmandu.

# ISRAELIS BLOCK HIGHWAYS IN NATIONWIDE PROTESTS

The demonstrations came after PM Benjamin Netanyahu's parliamentary coalition gave initial approval to a Bill to limit the Supreme Court's oversight powers, pressing forward with contentious proposed changes to the judiciary despite widespread Opposition



ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Jerusalem, July 11:** Thousands of Israeli protesters took to the streets Tuesday and blocked highways leading to Jerusalem, Haifa and Tel Aviv as part of nationwide demonstrations against the government's planned judicial overhaul that has divided the nation.

The legislation is one of several Bills proposed by Netanyahu's ultranationalist and ultra-Orthodox allies. The plan has provoked months of sustained protests by opponents who say it is pushing the country toward authoritarian rule. Anti-overhaul activists called

for nationwide mass demonstrations throughout the day, including protests at Israel's main international airport that could disrupt travel.

On Tuesday, 300 reservists from the military's cyber unit signed a letter saying they would not volunteer for service, explaining the government has demonstrated "it is determined to destroy the state of Israel".

Police used a water cannon to clear protesters who blocked a main artery leading to Jerusalem. Officers arrested several others who had obstructed a highway next to the central city of Modiin. Demonstrators blocked a main

highway in Haifa with a large banner reading "Together we will be victorious," snarling traffic along the beachfront.

Police said 42 people were arrested for public disturbance during the protests.

Arnon Bar-David, head of the country's national labor union, the Histadrut, threatened a possible general strike that could paralyse the country's economy.

Netanyahu's allies have proposed a series of changes to the Israeli legal system aimed at weakening what they say are the excessive powers of unelected judges.

The proposed changes include giving Netanyahu's allies control over the appointment of judges and giving parliament power to overturn court decisions.

The Netanyahu government, which took office in December, is the most hard-line ultranationalist and ultra-Orthodox in Israel's 75-year history. His allies proposed the sweeping changes to the judiciary after the country held its fifth elections in under four years, all of them seen as a referendum on Netanyahu's fitness to serve as prime minister while on trial for corruption.



Rescuers conduct a search operation for the missing persons at the site of a landslide in Karatsu, Saga prefecture, southern Japan. Rain falling in the regions of Kyushu and Chugoku since the weekend caused flooding along many rivers, triggered mudslides, closed roads, disrupted trains and cut the water supply in some areas

## Indonesia seizes Iranian-flagged tanker

REUTERS

**Jakarta, July 11:** Indonesia's coast guard said Tuesday it seized an Iranian-flagged supertanker suspected of involvement in the illegal transshipment of crude oil, and vowed to toughen maritime patrols.

The MT Arman 114 was carrying 272,569 metric tons of light crude oil, valued at 4.6 trillion rupiah (\$304 million), when it was



seized last week, the Indonesian authorities said.

The Very Large Crude Carrier (VLCC) was suspected of transferring oil to another vessel without a permit Friday, the Southeast Asian nation's maritime security agency said.

The vessel was captured after being spotted in Indonesia's North Natuna Sea, carrying out a ship-to-ship oil transfer with the Cameroon-flagged MT S Tinos, the agency's chief, Aan Kurnia, said.

# UN praises India's 'remarkable' poverty reduction

The UN report noted that deprivation in all indicators declined in India and "the poorest states and groups, including kids & people in disadvantaged caste groups, had the fastest absolute progress"

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**United Nations, July 11:** A total of 415 million people moved out of poverty in India within just 15 years from 2005/2006 to 2019/2021, the UN said Tuesday, highlighting the remarkable

achievement by the world's most populous nation.

The latest update of the global Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) was released by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI) at the University of Oxford.

It said that 25 countries, including India, successfully halved their global MPI values within 15 years, showing that rapid progress is attainable.

These countries include Cambodia, China, Congo, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Morocco, Serbia, and Vietnam.

In April, India surpassed China to become the world's most populous nation with 142.86



crore people, according to UN data. The report demonstrates that poverty reduction is achievable. However, the lack of comprehensive data during the period of the Covid-19 pandemic poses challenges in assessing immediate prospects, it said.

The report noted that deprivation in all indicators declined in India, and "the poorest states and groups, including children and people in disadvantaged caste groups, had the fastest ab-

In India, 415 million poor people moved out of poverty from 2005/2006 to 2019/2021, with incidence falling from 55.1 per cent in 2005/2006 to 16.4 per cent in 2019/2021

In 2005/2006, about 645 million people were in multidimensional poverty in India, with this number declining to about 370 million in 2015/2016 and 230 million in 2019/2021

absolute progress."

According to the report, people who are multidimensionally poor and deprived under the nutrition indicator in India declined from 44.3 per cent in 2005/2006 to 11.8 per cent in 2019/2021, and child mortality fell

from 4.5 per cent to 1.5 per cent.

Those who are poor and deprived of cooking fuel fell from 52.9 per cent to 13.9 per cent, and those deprived of sanitation fell from 50.4 per cent in 2005/2006 to 11.3 per cent in 2019/2021, according to the report.

In the drinking water indicator, the percentage of people who are multidimensionally poor and deprived fell from 16.4 to 2.7 during the period, electricity (from 29 per cent to 2.1 per cent) and housing from 44.9 per cent to 13.6 per cent.

While 17 countries that did so had an incidence under 25 per cent in the first period, India and Congo had a starting incidence above 50 per cent.



It is important for MSME pharma companies to be alert to quality of drugs and expeditiously move towards Good Manufacturing Processes through self regulation

**MANSUKH MANDAVIYA** | UNION MINISTER

## WHITE COLLAR HIRING DIPS 3 PC IN JUNE

White collar jobs witnessed a 3 per cent annual decline in June due to cautious recruiter sentiments in sectors including IT, BFSI, manufacturing, according to leading talent platform foundit.



## of the day quote

Every year, more than 12 million people join the workforce. But with rapid changes in technology, there is a huge gap between academia and industry in making the youth job-ready

**RAJIV BAJAJ**  
BAJAJ AUTO MANAGING DIRECTOR

We are exploring business spaces that we think will shape the healthcare of the future. These include deepening our presence in nutraceuticals, cell and gene therapy and new chemical entities

**K SATISH REDDY**  
DR REDDY'S LABORATORIES CHAIRMAN

A younger, well-travelled and discerning customer base, who are ready to wait for their cars and plan their purchases well in advance have been fuelling the growth of top-end luxury vehicles

**SANTOSH IYER**  
MERCEDES-BENZ INDIA MD & CEO

## SHORT TAKES

### 'Stable coins threat to policy sovereignty'

**Mumbai:** RBI Deputy Governor T Rabi Sankar Tuesday went public with India's concerns on stable coins, saying that they pose an "existential threat" to most countries' policy sovereignty. "We should ideally aim for a global financial system which rests on central bank digital currencies issued by each country to settle global payments, and not rely on stable coins," Sankar said while interacting with bankers here. He also hit out at banks' tendency to charge wide margins for executing cross-border remittances, saying it as "not justifiable". Sankar cited a World Bank study, according to which small value remittances are charged 6% by banks through their corresponding banks, which is "too high". Such a move leads to calls for reducing costs and in-turn looking for alternatives like cryptocurrencies.

### NCLT reserves order on Zee, Sony deal

**Mumbai:** The National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) has reserved its order on the merger of Zee Entertainment Enterprises and with Culver Max Entertainment (earlier known as Sony Pictures Networks India). The Mumbai bench of NCLT, comprising H V Subba Rao and Madhu Sinha, reserved the order on Monday, after hearing arguments from creditors who objected to the scheme including Axis Finance, JC Flower Asset Reconstruction Co, IDBI Bank, Imax Corp and IDBI Trusteeship. In December 2021, Zee Entertainment and Sony Pictures had agreed to merge their businesses.

### RBI cancels licence of 2 co-op banks

**Mumbai:** The RBI Tuesday cancelled the licence of two cooperative banks -- Sri Sharada Mahila Co-operative Bank, Tumkur, Karnataka and Harihareshwar Sahakari Bank, Wai, Satara -- as the lenders do not have adequate capital and earning prospects. Harihareshwar Sahakari Bank ceases to carry on banking business, with effect from the close of business on July 11, 2023, the RBI said in a statement. About 99.96 per cent of the depositors of Harihareshwar Sahakari Bank are entitled to receive the full amount of their deposits from Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation (DICGC). In the case of Sri Sharada Mahila Co-operative Bank, about 97.82 per cent of the depositors are entitled to receive the full amount of their deposits from DICGC.

# Foxconn targets India's chip sops after pulling plug on \$19.5 bln JV

The Taiwanese electronics manufacturing giant says it intends to apply for incentives under India's semiconductor production plan

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 11:** A day after announcing withdrawal from its chip-making JV with Indian conglomerate Vedanta, Foxconn Tuesday said it is working on plans to apply for incentives under semiconductor and display fab programme, as the contract manufacturer pledged its commitment to India.

The Taiwanese electronics manufacturing giant said it has been actively reviewing landscape for optimal partners. The comment assumes significance as Foxconn has pulled out from the USD 19.5 billion semiconductor JV with Vedanta.

"We welcome a diverse set of stakeholders, both inside India and abroad, who also want to see India get to the next level and can complement Foxconn's world-class supply chain management and manufacturing efficiency," Foxconn said in a statement Tuesday. Pledging its commitment to India, Foxconn said it "is working toward submitting an application related to Modified Programme for Semiconductors and Display Fab Ecosystem."



Foxconn said it sees the country successfully establishing a robust semiconductor manufacturing ecosystem. "It will take time. Foxconn first entered India in 2006 and we are still here. The group looks forward to growing alongside India's nascent semiconductor industry," it said.

"Foxconn has sound channels of communications with government stakeholders across India, and we have been consistent and clear with them at all levels about our continued commitment to invest in India," it said. On its decision to pull out of the JV with Vedanta, Foxconn said both parties mutually agreed

to part ways. "This is not a negative. There was recognition from both sides that the project was not moving fast enough, there were challenging gaps we were not able to smoothly overcome, as well as external issues related to the project," it said.

On reports citing the withdrawal as a negative example of the group's investment integrity, Foxconn asserted "that is absolutely not the case." "When Foxconn course corrects, it is done only after heavy considerations on the near term impact to our stakeholders, and on the long term corporate health to the group and our shareholders."

# Deal values plummet 78% due to economic challenges

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, July 11:** Deal making by India Inc has suffered severely due to economic challenges in the first half of this year, a report said Tuesday.

There were only 676 deals with an underlying value of USD 23 billion in the January-June 2023 period, 78 per cent down in value terms and a fall of 42 per cent in terms of volume, consultancy firm Grant Thornton Bharat said.

Merger and acquisition activity suffered the most, with the values down 92 per cent to USD 6.685 billion, the report said, adding that there was a much higher base in the year-ago period which witnessed the mergers of HDFC-HDFC Bank and also LTI with Mindtree. "The first half of 2023 witnessed a decline in deal activity in India, primarily due to uncertainties causing supply chain disruptions, leading to inflation, and fluctuating interest rates," its partner Shanthi Vijeta said.

Vijeta, however, feels more optimistic about the future quar-

ters, given macroeconomic conditions, reduced market volatility, and stable interest rates.

In the private equity/venture capital (PE/VC) funds space, 521 deals totalling USD 16.4 billion were recorded, which represented a 40 per cent decline in volumes and a 35 per cent decline in terms of value, the report said.

Three billion-dollar deals and 29 high-value deals in the PE/VC sector helped mitigate the impact of the downturn in the mergers and acquisition activity, it said.

The pharma, healthcare, and biotech sectors emerged as the leader in terms of value on the back of a one-billion-dollar deal and three other high-value deals within the sector, which were valued at USD 3.45 billion, the report said.

In the first half of 2023, there were as many as 11 initial public offerings (IPOs) worth USD 1.4 billion, a 35 per cent decline in terms of volume and a 77 per cent decrease in the total value compared to the same period in 2022.

# Markets climb on foreign fund inflows

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, July 11:** Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty rallied Tuesday tracking a positive trend in the global markets and unabated foreign fund inflows.

Buying in index major Reliance Industries, Infosys and ITC also helped markets extend their previous day's gain.

The 30-share BSE Sensex advanced 273.67 points or 0.42 per cent to settle at 65,617.84. During the day, it rallied 526.42 points or 0.80 per cent to 65,870.59. The NSE Nifty climbed 83.50 points or 0.43 per cent to end at 19,439.40.

From the Sensex pack, Sun Pharma, Maruti, Tata Motors, ITC, Nestle, Larsen & Toubro, Infosys, Asian Paints, Titan, Tech Mahindra, Power Grid and Reliance Industries were the major gainers.

Bajaj Finance, Axis Bank, HCL Technologies, State Bank of India, HDFC, HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank and Bajaj Finserv were among the laggard from the 30-share pack.

In the broader market, the BSE midcap gauge climbed 0.97 per cent and smallcap



index rallied 0.82 per cent. Among the indices, telecommunication climbed 2.05 per cent, capital goods jumped 1.79 per cent, industrials rallied 1.56 per cent, consumer

durables (1.35 per cent), power (1.34 per cent), auto (1.34 per cent), FMCG (1.21 per cent) and consumer discretionary (1.15 per cent). Metal, commodities, financial services

and bankex were the laggards. FIIs continued their buying momentum as they bought equities worth ₹1,197.38 crore Tuesday, according to exchange data.

# Twitter rival Threads surges to 100 million users

THE META LAUNCH HAS DETHRONED CHATGPT AS THE FASTEST-GROWING ONLINE PLATFORM TO HIT THE MILESTONE

REUTERS

**San Francisco, July 11:** Meta Platforms' Twitter rival Threads crossed 100 million sign-ups within five days of launch, CEO Mark Zuckerberg said Monday, dethroning ChatGPT as the fastest-growing online platform to hit the milestone.

Threads has been setting records for user growth since its launch last Wednesday, with celebrities, politicians and other newsmakers joining the platform that is seen by analysts as the first serious threat to the Elon Musk-owned microblogging app.

"That's mostly organic demand, and we haven't even turned on many promotions yet," Zuckerberg said in a Threads post announcing the milestone.

The app's sprint to 100 million users was much speedier than that of OpenAI-owned ChatGPT, which became the fastest-growing consumer application in history in January about two months after its launch, according to a UBS study. Twitter had nearly 240 mil-



lion monetisable daily active users as of July last year, according to the company's last public disclosure before Musk's takeover, although data from web analytics companies indicates usage has dropped since then. Twitter's web traffic was down 11% from the year prior in the days after the Threads launch, compared to the 4% it was down year-over-year as of June, ac-

ording to Similarweb. Matthew Prince, CEO of internet infrastructure firm Cloudflare, shared a graph showing a similar trajectory in a tweet Sunday and said Twitter's traffic was "tanking." Twitter CEO Linda Yaccarino tweeted Monday that the platform last week had its "largest usage day" since February, without providing details. "There's

only ONE Twitter," she tweeted. While Threads is not the first attempt to challenge Twitter, other burgeoning competitors such as Mastodon, Bluesky, Truth Social and T2 all remain relatively small at this point. Threads, like other would-be rivals, bears a strong resemblance to Twitter. It allows posts that are up to 500 characters long and supports links, photos

and videos of up to 5 minutes. The app also does not yet have a direct messaging function and lacks a desktop version that certain users, such as business organizations, rely on.

It also currently lacks hashtags and keyword search functions, which limits its appeal to advertisers and its utility as a place for following real-time events like users frequently do on Twitter. Still, analysts said the turmoil at Twitter, including an uproar over recently imposed limits on the number of tweets users can see, could help Threads to attract those groups.

Currently, there are no ads on the Threads app and Zuckerberg said the company would only think about monetization once there was a clear path to 1 billion users. Instagram head Adam Mosseri said last week Meta was not trying to replace Twitter and that Threads aimed to focus on light subjects like sports, music, fashion and design.

Meta shares closed up 1.2 per cent Monday and have gained more than 140 per cent so far this year.

# Online gaming cos say 28% GST to hit their business

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 11:** Online gaming companies Tuesday said that levying of 28 per cent GST will limit their ability to invest in new games, impact cash flows as well as business expansion.

The GST Council has agreed to impose a 28 per cent tax on online gaming, casinos and horse racing. The tax would be levied on the full face value. The All India Gaming Federation said the decision by the council is unconstitutional, irrational, and egregious.

"The decision ignores over 60 years of settled legal jurisprudence and lumps online skill gaming with gambling activities. This decision will wipe out the entire Indian gaming industry and lead to lakhs of job losses and the only people benefitting from this will be anti-national illegal offshore platforms," AIGF CEO Roland Landers said. He said when the government has been supporting the industry, it is unfortunate that such a legally untenable decision has been taken, ignoring views of most GoM states who studied this matter in detail.

Team India start transition phase against wounded West Indies as first Test begins today

# ALL EYES ON JAISWAL

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Roseau (Dominica), July 11:** The Indian team is set to hit the transition button with much-anticipated debut of Yashasvi Jaiswal in the two-Test series against a wounded West Indies, which is searching for a road to redemption.

While the hosts, after their shock elimination from the ODI World Cup Qualifiers would be eager to prove that they are still relevant in world cricket, the Indian team too is beset with certain challenges.

Cheteshwar Pujara's much-debated exit has created a slot in the Indian top-order and the immensely talented Mumbai left-hander will hope that he lives up to his 'name' and promise that he has shown at the first-class level before being thrown at the deep end of the pool.

While the strait-jacketed solution is putting the debutant at one drop but Shubman Gill is more naturally suited in the middle-order. Jaiswal, 21, usually opens for Mumbai, West Zone and Rest of India in red-ball cricket. But to settle his nerves first up, No.3 isn't a bad slot to begin with.

Against a bowling attack comprising of seasoned Kumar Roach, Shannon Gabriel, Alazarri Joseph and Jason Holder; it will be a baptism by fire for young Jaiswal before he faces South Africa in Rainbow nation at the end of the year and the mighty Australians during the 2024-25 winter.

India's new World Test Championship cycle will be a way tougher assignment compared to the previous two editions, when a set team reached back-to-back finals riding on a top-notch pace bowling unit.

But in the absence of an injured Jasprit Bumrah, who might find it difficult to play Test matches on a regular basis and the skilful Mohammed Shami, rested for this series, the Indian attack would surely lack the sting that made the current team a world beater.

Of the two others, who were part of the famed quartet, Ishant Sharma will be making his commentary debut in this series while Umesh Yadav at 36, might find it difficult to get a recall after recovering from a hamstring injury.

Hence the five-man attack, led by 19-Test old Mohammed Siraj and supported by Shardul Thakur with nine long-form games in his kitty, does look really thin on experience in comparison to the West Indies pace attack.

It will again boil down to how West Indies measure up against the guile and artistry of Ravichandran Ashwin (474 wickets) and Ravindra Jadeja (268), who have close to 750 Test scalps between them.

The choice of four bowlers is automatic with picking one among Mukesh Kumar, Jaydev Unadkat and Navdeep Saini might not be an easy proposition.

Similarly, with two spinners in operation Kona Bharath is a bet



ter bet behind the stumps than Ishant Kishan but the former is on borrowed time due to his performance in front of the wicket.

Kishan's flair and being a left-hander can't be ignored for long till Rishabh Pant gets his place back in the side.

The Windsor Park hasn't hosted a Test match in the last six years but this is one format where the assortment Caribbean nations have been at their best in recent years.

It will be foolhardy on India's part to think that West Indies' World Cup qualifier show will impact their Test match performance and that could be a bit of a misnomer.

In their pace attack, the two primary bowlers are Roach (261 wickets), a veteran of nearly 15

years and Gabriel (164 wickets), who has been a potent new ball enforcer. Gabriel doesn't play white ball cricket.

On the Caribbean tracks, both are more than a handful and the 'Holy Trinity' of Indian batting order - skipper Rohit Sharma, the peerless Virat Kohli and comeback-man Ajinkya Rahane, will have more than a job at hand. All three have to face different kind of challenges.

## MATCH SCHEDULE

Time: 7:30 pm

Telecast

DD Sports (only on free cable networks, not on DTH)

Live stream

Jio Cinema & FanCode

## LOW-SCORING THRILLER

# Deepti, Shafali help India secure series

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mirpur, July 11:** Spinners Deepti Sharma (3/12) and Shafali Verma (3/15) held their nerves during death overs as India pulled off a nail-biting eight-run victory over Bangladesh to take an unassailable 2-0 lead in the three-match T20I series, here Wednesday.

Off-spinner Sultana Khatun claimed a career-best 3/21 as the hosts grounded a star-studded India to a below-par 95/8, their lowest-ever total against Bangladesh in the women's T20I.

However Bangladesh stumbled to 87 all-out in 20 overs as India took a series-clinching lead with an inconsequential third match set to be played Thursday.

From a comfortable 86/5, Bangladesh lost their last five wickets for just one run in a space of eight deliveries in what seemed to be an inexplicable batting collapse.

The two young Indian spinners - offie Minnu Mani (4-1-9-

2) and left-arm orthodox Anusha Baredy (1/20) made early inroads before the seasoned duo of Deepti and Shafali pulled off a heist with controlled bowling in the 19th and 20th over. Shafali in fact got all her wickets in the final over in which she gave away only solitary run when 10 were needed with four wickets intact.

Bangladesh's chase was steered by skipper Nigar Sultana (38, 55b) - the only batter of their side to reach double-digits. But the skipper failed to finish it off and was brilliantly stumped by Yastika Bhatia in the penultimate over bowled by Deepti that triggered the collapse.

However credit should be given to skipper Harmanpreet as she has shown a lot of faith in giving full quota of overs to both Minnu and Anusha, who were equal to the task.

Minnu, the first woman senior India cricketer from Kerala, dismissed Shamima Sultana (5). Spin from both ends yielded result as Deepti gave another break-

through in Shathi Rani (5). But the Bangladesh skipper held fort with some support from Shorna Akter (7).

The duo added vital 34 runs in the middle as one saw a few drooping shoulders in the Indian ranks. It was then Deepti turned it around when she induced a leading edge off Shorna to break the partnership, and there was no looking for India from there onwards.

Eyeing an unassailable 2-0 lead, India skipper Harmanpreet opted to bat as they were off to a flyer with Smriti Mandhana (13) and Shafali (19) adding 33 in 26 balls before visitors lost half of their side for 58 runs just after the 14th over started. And they failed to recover from that.

## BRIEF SCORES

India Women 95/8 (Shafali Verma 19, Amanjot Kaur 14; Sultana Khatun 3/21, Fahima Khatun 2/16) beat Bangladesh Women 87 (Nigar Sultana 38; Deepti Sharma 3/12, Shafali Verma 3/15, Minnu Mani 2/9) by 8 runs.



Shafali Verma was the top scorer for India Women after bowling a splendid final over against Bangladesh eyes

## 'Lord Hanuman' is official mascot of Asian Athletics Championships



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bangkok, July 11:** 'Lord Hanuman', one of the most revered Gods in India, will be the official mascot of the Asian Athletics Championships starting here Wednesday. The event is being held on the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the continental governing body.

"As Hanuman exhibits extraordinary abilities in (Lord) Rama's service, including speed, strength, courage, and wisdom... Hanuman's greatest ability is, in fact, his incredibly staunch loyalty and devotion," the Asian Athletics Association explained on its website. "The 25th Asian Athletics Championships 2023 logo indicates the athletes participating in the games, skills, teamwork of athletes, showcase of athleticism, dedication, and sportsmanship."

## Semenya wins appeal against testosterone rules

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Washington, July 11:** Double Olympic champion runner Caster Semenya won an appeal against track and field's testosterone rules Tuesday when the European Court of Human Rights ruled she was discriminated against and there were "serious questions" about the rules' validity.

World Athletics, which enforces the regulations, said in reaction to the decision that its rules would remain in place, however, meaning there would not be an immediate return to top-level competition for the South African runner.

Semenya's case at the rights court was against the government of Switzerland, and not World Athletics itself, although the decision was still a major moment in throwing doubt on the future of the rules.

Semenya was legally identified as female at birth and has identified as female her entire life, but regulations introduced by track and field's governing body in 2019 forced her to artificially suppress her natural testosterone to be allowed to compete in women's competitions.

Semenya has been challenging the testosterone rules in the courts for years, but had previ-



ously lost an appeal at sport's highest court in 2019 and a second challenge against the rules at Switzerland's supreme court in 2020. That second rejection of her appeal was the reason why the Swiss government was the respondent in the European Court of Human Rights case.

The Strasbourg-based rights

court ruled in Semenya's favor by a 4-3 majority of judges on the complaint of discrimination. Tuesday's ruling was in many ways a criticism of the 2019 decision by CAS.

The sports court kept in place the rules that require Semenya and others with so-called differences in sex development con-

ditions, or DSDs, to take birth control pills, or have hormone-blocking injections, or undergo surgery to be allowed to run at top competitions such as the Olympics and world championships.

The rules were initially enforced in certain events but were expanded and made stricter by World Athletics this year. Athletes such as Semenya were forced to lower their testosterone further if they wanted to run in any race.

The decision by the Switzerland-based CAS that rejected Semenya's first appeal had not properly considered important factors. The European rights court also found Semenya's second legal appeal against the rules at the Swiss supreme court should have led to "a thorough institutional and procedural review" of the rules, but that did not happen when that court also ruled against Semenya.

The government of Switzerland was ordered to pay Semenya 60,000 euros (USD 66,000) in respect of costs and expenses by the European rights court.

Tuesday's decision could force CAS and ultimately World Athletics to re-examine the regulations, although the path and timeline to a possible rollback of the rules is unclear.

## Svitolina stuns Swiatek, enters Wimbledon semis

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Wimbledon, July 11:** Three months after returning from maternity leave, Elina Svitolina reached the Wimbledon semifinals by beating top-ranked Iga Swiatek 7-5, 6-7(5-7), 6-2 Tuesday.

The 28-year-old Ukrainian gave birth to her daughter in October and returned to the WTA tour in April. She received a wild-card entry to the grass-court tournament one month after reaching the quarterfinals at the French Open.

Swiatek, a four-time major champion, won her third French Open title last month but was playing in the Wimbledon quarterfinals for the first time.

At one point, Svitolina won 20 of 22 points against Swiatek on Centre Court, including 16 of the final 18 points in the first set.

Svitolina will next face Marketa Vondrousova for a spot in Saturday's final. It will be the Ukrainian's second appearance in the Wimbledon semifinals. She lost to eventual champion Simona Halep at that stage in 2019.

Svitolina has been ranked as high as No.3 in the world and also reached the US Open semifinals in 2019. She is currently ranked 76th. To reach the semifinals this year, she has beaten four Grand Slam champions - Venus Williams in the first round, Sofia Kenin in the third, Victoria Azarenka in the fourth and

Swiatek in the quarterfinals.

Vondrousova won five straight games in the final set to beat fourth-seeded Jessica Pegula 6-4, 2-6, 6-4 on No.1 Court. The left-handed Czech who reached the French Open final in 2019 trailed 4-1 in the third set but didn't lose another game after that.

Pegula is now 0-6 in Grand Slam quarterfinals. The 29-year-old American was playing at this stage at Wimbledon for the first time. Vondrousova had won only four matches on grass heading into the tournament at the All England Club. But she has won five in a row on the surface over the last eight days.

The victory for Vondrousova is her fourth over a seeded player at this year's Wimbledon tournament. She beat No.12 Veronika Kudermetova in the second round, No.20 Donna Vekic in the third round and No.32 Marie Bouzkova in the fourth round.

Later in the day, men's eighth seed Italian Jannik Sinner sailed past Roman Safiullin 6-4, 3-6, 6-2, 6-2 in their quarterfinal match to seal a place in the last four stage.

## BOPANNA-EBDEN IN QUARTERS

The sixth-seeded pairing of Rohan Bopanna and Australian Matthew Ebden beat Reese Stalder and David Pel 7-5, 4-6, 7-6(10-5) to enter the men's doubles quarterfinals. They will next meet the Dutch duo of Tallon Griekspoor and Bart Stevens.

## IOA'S REQUEST REJECTED

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 11:** The Hangzhou Asian Games Organising Committee (HAGOC) has rejected the IOA's request for further extension of deadline for sending entries by name of the Indian wrestling team for the continental multi-sporting event.

The IOA had earlier requested the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA) to extend the deadline to send entries by name of the Indian wrestlers to August 5, but they were only given an extension of seven days (July 22).

The HAGOC has set July 15 as the date for all competing countries to send the names of their athletes for the Asian Games

(September 23 to October 8). Monday, the IOA again requested the OCA to re-consider extending the date to sometime in August, which was finally been rejected by HAGOC.

"The Hangzhou Organising Committee has rejected the IOA's request for further extension. They conveyed it to the OCA and OCA has told this to the IOA," an Indian Olympic Association source told PTI.

With the July 22 deadline fast approaching for picking the Indian wrestling team and sending the names to HAGOC, the IOA's ad-hoc panel will have to race against time to organise the trials and select the team for the prestigious event.

## Emotional Tour stage win for Bilbao

REUTERS

**Issoire (France), July 11:** Pello Bilbao claimed a tear-jerking victory as he prevailed in the 10th stage of the Tour de France Tuesday, less than a month after his Bahrain-Victorious team mate Gino Mader died following a crash in Switzerland. Bilbao outsprinted breakaway companions Georg Zimmermann of Germany and Australian Ben O'Connor, who were second and third respectively.

Defending champion Jonas Vingegaard of Denmark retained the overall leader's jersey as Bilbao moved up to fifth overall from 11th, giving Spain their



first stage win on the Tour since Omar Fraile in 2018.

The 33-year-old Basque rider, who will retire at the end of the season, is donating one euro

(USD 1.10) to an association helping replant on deforested land for every rider finishing a Tour stage behind him.

It follows an initiative by Mader, who died after crashing in a descent at the Tour de Suisse June 16. "It's an incredible feeling. The longer you wait for such a moment the sweeter it is when it happens," said Bilbao.

"I had to win for Gino. I wanted to wait for the biggest moment to win for him. When I crossed the line it was an incredible explosion of feelings. It's such a special Tour for me with the race having started from home (in Bilbao)," the Guernica-born rider said.

