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## JANET JACKSON REACHES OUT TO MADONNA TO WISH HER WELL

Singer-songwriter Janet Jackson has contacted Madonna to bury the hatchet and wish her a speedy recovery after the *Material Girl* suffered a serious health scare. Last month, fans were shocked to learn Madonna's own family and friends feared she was going to die when she contracted a bacterial infection.

## RITA'S STRUGGLES OF BEING SINGLE

Singer Rita Ora has admitted it was difficult to watch her friends get married and have babies while she was still single, and she has poured out her feelings in her new album. The 32-year-old singer and actress tied the knot with Hollywood director Taika Waititi, 47, last year.



### FORTUNE FORECAST

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#### ARIES

You will be in a tight fix as the day starts. However, that's exactly the kind of situation in which your skills are tested. In the evening you will draw a lot of praise for your excellent performance. If Ganesh chooses to shower his blessings on you, you will sign new deals.

#### TAURUS

This day is meant for taking some time out from your busy schedule, and seeking some fun and relaxation. So says Ganesh. It is possible that you will be getting together with your friends and family members for a fun filled evening followed by a great dinner and a late night movie.

#### GEMINI

You are likely to be in a romantic mood today. You may just end up falling in love today. A difficult situation will bring out the competitive streak in you and spur you on to physical and mental excellence. Your capacity and intelligence will be testified to by your work, says Ganesh.

#### CANCER

You will focus on financial matters and plan accordingly. Compared to expenses, you will save more. A beneficial day for cashiers, money lenders and petty traders. Ganesh counsels hard work to achieve success.

#### LEO

You will be unable to express the feelings that rise up inside you in spite of wanting to. However, keep them close to your heart. You will be very serious about your work today. There is a possibility of some delay in your schedule today due to unforeseen problems, says Ganesh.

#### VIRGO

In all likelihood, you will be eager to grab the monetary challenges that come your way, as they only enhance your desire for success. You will bring up new ideas and better methods of tackling the challenges on hand. Ganesh gives you an assurance that your present business views will do you a world of good.

#### LIBRA

Ganesh advises you not to take stress about small issues or matters. To avoid tension and to gain mental peace it is advised you perform yoga or meditation. There will be pressure put on you regarding certain matters at the work-front. You should take decisions regarding critical matters only after carefully weighing the pros and cons.

#### SCORPIO

Thank Ganesh that you have the grace to handle pressure at work, because today, you are going to be bogged down with a lot of work pressure. By the end of the day, try some stress busting activities like yoga, meditation of listening to soft music.

#### SAGITTARIUS

Ganesh predicts a day full of romantic developments today. Mushy talks and whispering sweet nothings in your beloved's ears may give you little joys of life. However, brace yourselves as there are times when relationships do not work-out, and you may experience this soon.

#### CAPRICORN

Your lover is in for many pleasant surprises today. You'll be in a completely romantic mood, making every wish of your sweetheart your command. Both of you will go shopping, and have fun. Extravagant expenditures will keep you charged up for the day. You will achieve what you had wanted, that is the happiness of your sweetheart.

#### AQUARIUS

Travelling is on the cards for you today. Ganesh advises you to travel alone, because if you take people with different tastes along with you, their preferences may dampen your mood and spoil the trips.

#### PISCES

Your planetary configuration not being favorable, you are advised not to start any new projects today. The benefits accrued by any project you take up today might not justify the risks associated with it. Businessmen need to be extra careful in all their dealings. Personal life should be peaceful with Ganesh's blessings.

# Kriti

## resonates with butterflies

**New Delhi:** Kriti Sanon, who has created a big wave of excitement with the announcement of her production house Blue Butterfly Films, has explained the real reason of her choosing this title.

Taking to social media, Kriti has shared a video of her journey, explaining and showing visuals of her high points so far, and also revealed how she has been using the 'blue butterfly' emoji since her debut.

Kriti also said that how she truly resonates with the title of her production house.

In the video, she said: "So why Blue Butterfly Films -- I do love butterflies and I do love the colour blue, it's there on my insta bio since ages, I use it in my captions, I use it when I write poetry, I think it signifies dreams, wings, flight, freedom, liberal, positivity, happiness all of it. I feel like a butterfly is beautiful but it starts off with you know, being a caterpillar, turning into a cocoon and then turning into a butterfly."

The *Shehzada* actress went on to add, "It is a slow steady process and becoming the most beautiful version of yourself and I think my life on my journey has kind of been like that, I've learnt everything on the job, I've slowly gotten to where I am today, evolved into the person I am today."

ANS



## Abhishek to explore career in politics!

**Mumbai:** With projects like *Breathe*, *Ghoomer*, *Dhoom 4*, and *Housefull 5* in his kitty, Abhishek Bachchan has his hands full with work. But that apparently wouldn't stop him from exploring a career in politics. Reports suggest, the actor will follow in the footsteps of his star parents and step into politics soon.

According to Hindi news portal, Junior B will reportedly join Akhilesh Yadav's Samajwadi Party, and contest elections from the Allahabad

constituency just like his dad.

However, there has been no official announcement either from Abhishek or the Samajwadi Party about the same. The buzz of Abhishek joining politics has created quite a stir, especially in Uttar Pradesh.

Speaking about a political career in an interview in 2013, Abhishek had said, "My parents have been into politics but I don't see myself doing it. I might take on a politician's role on screen but in real life it's a big no. I will never get into it."

Looking back, Big B had taken a break from acting and entered politics for a short while. He had won the 8th Lok Sabha election in 1984, but he resigned in July 1987 after allegations of his involvement in the Bofors scandal. Jaya Bachchan was also elected as an MP from the SP.

AGENCIES



## Sunny on career in adult film industry

**Mumbai:** Having started her career in the adult entertainment industry before transitioning to Hindi film industry, Sunny Leone is determined to break free from the perception of being merely a glamour doll. In a recent interview, she opened up about her journey in the adult film industry, highlighting both the positive and negative aspects.

"I worked with the best of the best companies. When I say best, I can only compare it here with Dharma Productions or Yash Raj Films. That was my world. That's something that materialised as time went by. I think this idea of having business and street smarts really helped me out. For me, I didn't need the whole brain to figure out how it all functioned," she shared with a YouTube channel.

The 42-year-old actress further added, "It all had to come down to facts about the company or facts about how things work. I read every single contract and corrected them too so that the companies would get what they wanted and I would get what I wanted. So, there was no situation where I was being taken advantage of."

Coming to the professional front, Leone will be next seen in Anurag Kashyap's *Kennedy*. The film was recently premiered at the Cannes Film Festival 2023. However, the makers haven't announced the release date, as of now.

AGENCIES

## Raja Kumari showers love on 'King Khan'

**New Delhi:** Grammy-nominated artist Raja Kumari, who has written a high-energy, captivating rap for megastar Shah Rukh Khan for the action entertainer *Jawan*, has now expressed her profound love for 'King Khan'.

Taking to micro-blogging site Twitter, the Indian-American rapper wrote, "I got locked out of my twitter for weeks and I only came back to tell @iamsrk that I love him!"

Replying to her message, SRK said, "I do too...my Thunder! Big hug and love to you."

Raja Kumari responded to SRK's tweet and wrote, "SRK

& RK 4EVA", with a red heart and an Indian flag emoji.

The *King Khan* Rap, written and performed by Raja Kumari, brings an electrifying and dynamic element to the film. The rap encapsulates the essence of SRK in the film, serving as a testament to the star power of King Khan.

Raja Kumari's unique style infuses the rap with an energy that perfectly complements the grand scale of *Jawan*.

The flick is a Red Chillies Entertainment presentation, directed by Atlee, produced by Gauri Khan and co-produced by Gaurav Verma.

ANS

### FUN post

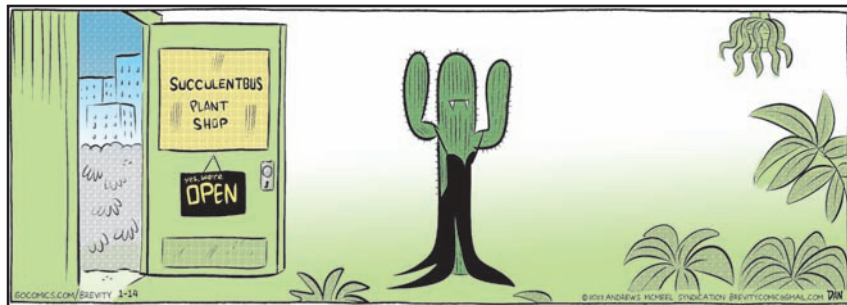
#### PEANUTS



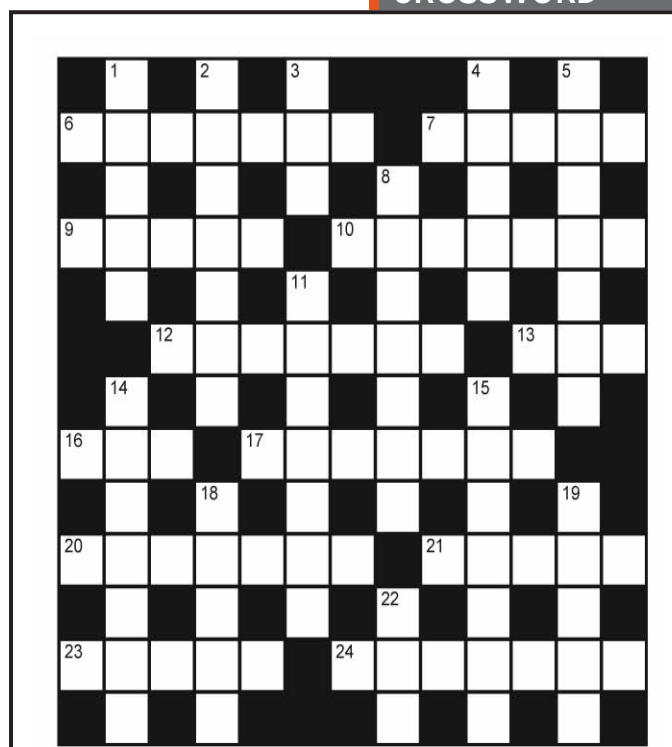
#### CALVIN AND HOBBS



#### BREVITY



#### CROSSWORD



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- Across**
- 6 Odourless gas
  - 7 Sachet scent
  - 9 Cockeyed
  - 10 Erode
  - 12 Study
  - 13 Sri Lanka export
  - 16 Like some scientists
  - 17 Rocket
  - 20 Retail come-on
  - 21 Throw out
  - 23 Winged supporter?
  - 24 Older woman
- Down**
- 1 Slow on the uptake
  - 2 Legendary Arabian bird
  - 3 African antelope
  - 4 Textile
  - 5 Rotating shaft
  - 8 Make unhappy
  - 11 Treeless grassy plain
  - 14 Rabbit tunnels
  - 15 Loafer
  - 18 Dissuade
  - 19 Animal life
  - 22 Cygnet's father

#### 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.

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

#### SOLUTIONS

##### CROSSWORD

L	Y	R	E	S	T	H	R	I	V	E	S
O	A	E	A	O	O	H					
B	L	I	S	T	E	R	M	E	L	B	A
S	T	T		E	C	F					
T	R	A	I	L	R	I	O	T	A	C	T
E		E	U								
R	E	F	E	R	E	N	C	E	B	O	O
C	H	A	L	A	N	L	A				
C	H	U	T	N	E	Y	E	M	M	E	T
O	X	Y		G	E	E	Y				
P	U	P	I	L	A	D	A	P	T	E	D
R	A	O	W	N	T	R	E	I			
A	R	S	E	N	A	L					

##### SUDOKU

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

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



**KOREA BACKS UKRAINE**  
South Korean Prez Yoon Suk Yeol visits Ukraine, offers support for the country invaded by Russia

INTERNATIONAL P8



**INDIA, UAE BOOST TIES**  
RBI and CBUAE sign two agreements in Abu Dhabi to establish a framework for cross-border transactions in local currencies

BUSINESS P9



**MAIDEN GS FOR VONDROUSOVA**  
Czech Republic's Marketa Vondrousova stuns Tunisia's Ons Jabeur 6-4, 6-4 to win the Wimbledon women's singles title

SPORTS BACK PAGE

**SHORT TAKES**

**Anti-poaching drive: 3 held in Similipal**

**Baripada:** Three people were arrested Saturday after more firearms were seized from Similipal National Park in Mayurbhanj district as the drive against illegal poaching continued, police said. One country-made gun each was found at the houses of the three accused, following which they were arrested, IGP (Eastern Region) Himanshu Lal said. Five more guns were found hidden in the jungle near Bahalda in Khunta police station area, he added. Three platoons of armed forces have been deployed in the tiger reserve area after two forest personnel were killed by poachers in May and June, Lal said.

**IIT Delhi campus in Abu Dhabi soon**

**New Delhi:** The Union Ministry of Education and Abu Dhabi's Education and Knowledge Department (ADEK) Saturday signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) for setting up an Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi campus in the Gulf country. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is currently on an official visit to the United Arab Emirates (UAE). IIT Delhi is the second IIT to announce setting up an offshore campus after IIT Madras. Last week, IIT Madras signed an MoU for setting up a campus in Tanzania's Zanzibar.

**Surname case: Rahul moves SC**

**New Delhi:** Congress leader Rahul Gandhi moved the Supreme Court Saturday challenging the Gujarat High Court's July 7 order which dismissed his plea seeking a stay on his conviction in a defamation case over his 'Modi surname' remark. Gandhi was disqualified as an MP March 24, 2023 after a Gujarat court convicted him and sentenced him to a two-year imprisonment on charges of criminal defamation for comments he made about the Modi surname.

**IRREGULAR by MANJUL**



Chandrayaan is here. You are looking at inflation, dear!

WEATHER	
BHUB	CTK
TEMP MAX 27.2°C	27.0°C
TEMP MIN 25.4°C	25.2°C
Humidity 100%	98%
Rainfall 46.4mm	24.0mm
Forecast Rain likely	



**MONSOON MAYHEM:** Damaged Shimla-Kalka National highway near Dharampur in Solan district of Himachal Pradesh after a flood following heavy rain, Saturday

**UTP'S DEATH IN JAIL SPARKS ROW**

**Bhanjanagar, July 15:** An undertrial prisoner (UTP) lodged in the special sub-jail here in Ganjam district died over unknown reasons Saturday morning. The deceased was identified as Charan Behera, 40, a native of Nuatanarada under Belguntha police limits in the district. Jail officials rushed him to Bhanjanagar hospital where doctors pronounced him dead. The death of Behera sparked anger and resentment among his family members and villagers as the body bore multiple injury marks. They kept the body at Tanarada Square and staged a road blockade. Agitating villagers demanded rehabilitation of the next kin of Behera and compensation to the bereaved family. They also demanded a high-level enquiry into the incident. Jail superintendent Dandapani Patra said, "Behera fell sick Friday and was hospitalised. He again fell sick Saturday morning and was rushed to the hospital but he was pronounced dead." No one has attacked Behera inside the jail and the injury marks on his body might be the result of some fall, he added.

# 44 pc Odisha MLAs have criminal cases

The nationwide survey by Association for Democratic Reforms and National Election Watch examines affidavits by legislators in Assemblies and Union Territories of the country

PNN & AGENCIES

**New Delhi, July 15:** Since law does not bar criminals to enter politics, infiltration of law-breakers and corrupt individuals into the political system continues unabated, if a recent analysis by Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) and National Election Watch (NEW) is any indication. The analysis claimed that an approximate 44 per cent of MLAs in the assemblies across India, including Odisha, have criminal cases against themselves. The data revealed that 64 (44.13 per cent) out of 145 MLAs analysed in Odisha have declared criminal cases against them. Similarly, 46 (32 per cent) legislators have declared serious criminal cases against them. While two Odisha lawmakers have declared cases of murder, 11 declared cases of attempt to murder and 12 declared cases of crime against women. Moreover, one MLA from the

state has a rape case registered against him. The data also revealed that 45 out of 113 Biju Janata Dal MLAs have criminal cases while 32 declared serious criminal cases against them. The nationwide survey examined the affidavits of current MLAs in state Assemblies and union territories across the country. The data was extracted from the affidavits filed by the MLAs prior to contesting their most recent elections. The analysis encompassed a total of 4,001 MLAs out of the 4,033 individuals serving across 28 state Assemblies and 2 Union territories. Of the MLAs analysed, the ADR said 1,136 or about 28 per cent have declared serious criminal cases against themselves, including charges related to murder, attempt to murder, kidnapping, and crimes against women, among others. In Kerala, 95 out of 135 MLAs, accounting for 70 per cent, have

**PAN-INDIA SCENARIO**

- About 28% MLAs have declared serious criminal cases against themselves
- A total of 114 MLAs have declared cases pertaining to crimes against women, including rape
- Average assets per MLA from state Assemblies were found to be ₹13.63 crore
- Karnataka has the highest number of billionaire legislators

declared criminal cases against themselves. Similarly, in Bihar, 161 out of 242 MLAs (67 per cent), in Delhi, 44 out of 70 MLAs (63 per cent), in Maharashtra, 175 out of 284 MLAs (62 per cent), in Telangana, 72 out of 118 MLAs (61 per cent), and in Tamil Nadu, 134 out of 224 MLAs (60 per cent) have self-declared criminal cases in their affidavits. Additionally, the ADR reported that 37 out of 70 MLAs (53 per

cent) in Delhi, 122 out of 242 MLAs (50 per cent) in Bihar, 114 out of 284 MLAs (40 per cent) in Maharashtra, 31 out of 79 MLAs (39 per cent) in Jharkhand, 46 out of 118 MLAs (39 per cent) in Telangana, and 155 out of 403 MLAs (38 per cent) in Uttar Pradesh have declared serious criminal cases against themselves. The analysis also unveiled disturbing statistics related to crimes against women. A total of 114 MLAs have declared cases pertaining to crimes against women, with 14 of them specifically declaring cases related to rape (IPC Section-376), as highlighted in the report. Apart from criminal records, the analysis also examined the assets of the MLAs. The average assets per MLA from state Assemblies were found to be ₹13.63 crore. However, the average assets of MLAs with declared criminal cases stood higher at ₹16.36 crore as compared to ₹11.45 crore for those with no criminal cases.

# Congress suspends Moquim, Chiranjib

The party takes the matter seriously as the duo had raised questions on OPCC leadership ahead of Jharsuguda byelection this year



KULDEEP SINGH, OP

**New Delhi, July 15:** The Disciplinary Action Committee (DAC) of the Congress party Friday said that it has decided to suspend Barabati-Cuttack MLA Mohammed Moquim and ex-legislator Chiranjib Biswal from the party with immediate effect for indulging in anti-party activities. Member Secretary of DAC Tariq Anwar said that following a complaint from Odisha Pradesh Congress Committee (OPCC) president Sarat Pattanayak, the DAC had issued notices to both the leaders seeking their explanations. "The replies received from them were carefully considered by the DAC and found them unsatisfactory. Accordingly, the DAC decided to place both of them under suspension from the party with immediate effect," Anwar said. Pattanayak had complained to the All India Congress

Committee (AICC) that both the leaders were indulging in anti-party activities which were against the interests of the party. The AICC had referred the matter to DAC which issued show-cause notices to the leaders for their remarks against the party affairs during a function in Bhubaneswar May 8, two days ahead of the Jharsuguda bypoll. According to reports, Biswal had said that though Congress has nine MLAs in the state, 20 leaders aspire to become chief minister which has affected the unity of party. Moquim was earlier served show-cause notice for voting in favour of President Droupadi Murmu during the Presidential election. This action comes ahead of the 2024 polls. So, this may affect the party's mission to win 90 MLA seats from the 9 seats it had won in 2019. "We accept and welcome the decision of the party high command," said the OPCC president.

# Chandrayaan-3 launched, but pay eludes HEC techies

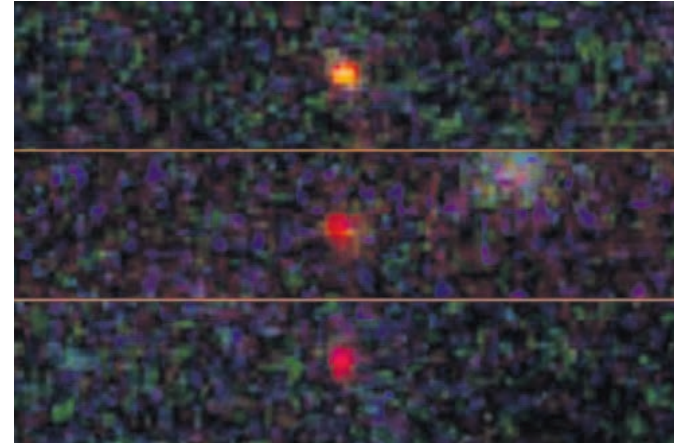
**Ranchi, July 15:** As the entire nation and world witnessed India's 'Moon Mission' taking another realistic step Friday with the launch of Chandrayaan-3, the workforce that played an instrumental role in the successful launch of the 'Bahubali' rocket into the space was cheering despite not receiving salaries for over a year now. The engineers of Heavy Engineering Corporation (HEC) in Ranchi, despite not being paid for the past 17 months, left no stone unturned to complete the work order received from ISRO for Chandrayaan-3. The firm delivered the mobile launching pad, among other crucial and complex equipment, in December 2022 ahead of schedule, even as the staff including the engineers, senior officials and workers have been going unpaid. The HEC is a public sector undertaking (PSU) under the Ministry of Heavy Industries located in Ranchi's Dhurwa area. It has been learnt that the HEC has been facing a financial crisis for the last two-three years. Over 3,000 engineers and workers employed work with the HEC, and they have not been paid for the last 17 months. According to sources, the HEC has requested the Ministry of Heavy Industries several times to provide working capital of Rs 1,000 crore. The Ministry, however, has apparently submitted that the Centre cannot extend any help. Meanwhile, the debts have increased to such an extent that employees are not getting paid.

# Astrophysicists spot possible first-ever 'dark stars'

STARS POWERED WITH DARK MATTER STILL NEED PROVING BUT COULD REVEAL CLUES ABOUT THE NATURE OF ONE OF THE UNIVERSE'S GREAT MYSTERIES

AGENCIES

**New York, July 15:** Data from National Aeronautics and Space Administration's (NASA) James Webb Telescope has caught a glimpse of possible first-ever 'dark stars'. Stars powered with dark matter still need proving but could reveal clues about the nature of one of the universe's great mysteries. A team of three astrophysicists - Katherine Freese at The University of Texas at Austin, in collaboration with Cosmin Ilie and Jillian Paulin '23 at Colgate University - analysed images from James Webb. They found three bright objects that might be 'dark stars', theoretical objects much bigger and brighter than our sun, powered



by particles of dark matter annihilating. If confirmed, dark stars could reveal the nature of dark matter, one of the deepest unsolved problems in all of physics, said the study published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences. "Discovering a new type of star is pretty interesting all by itself, but discovering it's dark matter that's powering this --

- The astrophysicists found three bright objects that might be 'dark stars', theoretical objects much bigger and brighter than our sun, powered by particles of dark matter annihilating
- If confirmed, dark stars could reveal the nature of dark matter, one of the deepest unsolved problems in all of physics, said the study published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences
- Although dark matter makes up about 25 per cent of the universe, its nature has eluded scientists

that would be huge," said Freese, director of the Weinberg Institute for Theoretical Physics. Although dark matter makes up about 25 per cent of the universe, its nature has eluded sci-

entists. Scientists believe it consists of a new type of elementary particle, and the hunt to detect such particles is on. The three candidate dark stars were originally identified as galaxies in December 2022 by the JWST Advanced Deep Extragalactic Survey (JADES). Using spectroscopic analysis, the JADES team confirmed the objects were observed at times ranging from about 320 million to 400 million years after the Big Bang, making them some of the earliest objects ever seen. Dark stars could theoretically grow to be several million times the mass of our sun and up to 10 billion times as bright as the sun. "We predicted back in 2012 that supermassive dark stars could be observed with JWST," said assistant professor Ilie.

# Brace up for flash floods, DMs told

# ₹6.41cr for depvt of Veer Surendra Sai birthplace

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 15:** As heavy rain lashed many parts of the state Saturday and the IMD predicted heavy rainfall activities in several districts till July 19, the state government alerted district Collectors and municipal corporations to take precautionary measures in order to tackle possible waterlogging and flash floods.

Many parts of the state, including the twin cities of Bhubaneswar and Cuttack, witnessed waterlogging, Saturday. The waterlogging in the state capital led to traffic jams and caused difficulty for people to drive vehicles in knee-deep water in many places, while many slums and low-lying areas were submerged under water.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) said that the state recorded an average rainfall of 10.3 mm during the last 24 hours. Similarly, the average rainfall recorded from July 1 to July 15 was 98.1 mm against the July monthly average of 339.9 mm. It said the highest 118.4 mm rainfall was recorded at Jharsuguda, followed by 68.2 mm at Chandbali, 35.2 mm in Bhubaneswar, 13.5 mm in

## IMD PREDICTS HEAVY RAIN TILL JULY 19



Balasure, 6 mm in Paradip, 7.2 mm in Puri and 10.6 mm in Sambalpur between 8.30 am and 11.30 am. The IMD said that intense rainfall activities were observed in many areas before 8.30 am. "Bhubaneswar and Cuttack recorded 14.7 mm and 41.8 mm of rainfall respectively by 8.30 am," it said. The IMD also

warned that moderate to intense rainfall was in the store for the state capital Bhubaneswar and Cuttack. It cautioned of temporary traffic congestion, slippery roads and waterlogging in low-lying areas of twin cities. The 'Dadhinauti' of Rameshwar temple on the premises of the Mausima Mandir in Old Town area here was damaged

allegedly owing to lightning. The incident occurred while the rituals were in progress in the temple and priests as well as devotees were inside. Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) officials visited the spot. An official said the ASI team would examine the temple after the rain to assess the damage. The weatherman said that a cyclonic circulation is likely to form over the northwest Bay of Bengal around Sunday. Under its influence, a low-pressure area is likely to form over the same region during the subsequent two to three days. Under its influence, several Odisha districts are likely to experience enhanced rainfall activities till July 19.

Meanwhile, Special Relief Commissioner (SRC) Satyabrata Sahu Saturday alerted the district Collectors/District Magistrates (DMs) and municipal corporations to take all precautionary measures to tackle possible flash floods and waterlogging due to the heavy rainfall.

"On the effect of heavy rainfall, flash-flood-like situation/waterlogging may arise in low lying areas. Keeping in mind you are requested to take immediate action," the SRC said. The SRC has asked the Collectors to alert the field-level functionaries in strategic locations of flash flooding and waterlogging and they should not leave the headquarters. In urban areas, in case of heavy rain, the people in low-lying areas can be shifted to safer locations temporarily, he suggested.



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 15:** Khinda, the birthplace and memorial of Veer Surendra Sai in Sambalpur district, will be developed as a tourist destination, with Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik sanctioning Rs 6.41 crore for the purpose, Saturday.

5T Secretary VK Pandian visited Khinda and paid tribute to Veer Surendra Sai. After interacting with the locals and family members of the legendary freedom fighter, Pandian apprised the CM over phone about the situation in Sambalpur district and the development proposal. The Chief Minister immedi-

ately directed the Tourism department to examine and process the proposal. Within an hour, the sanction letter to take up the project worth Rs 6.41 crore was issued.

The 5T Secretary also interacted with the college students in Sambalpur and informed them about Chief Minister's approval of Rs 27.75 crore for transformation of 59 colleges under the 5T initiative. He motivated the students to work hard in studies and personality development.

Pandian visited Maa Ghanateswari Temple and discussed the temple development and pilgrim facilities with shrine officials.

## Burn centre to come up at KIMS

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

**Bhubaneswar, July 15:** Kalinga Institute of Medical Sciences (KIMS) will establish a burn section to address the increasing number of burn-related cases and provide high-quality treatment.

The announcement was made Saturday during the celebration of World Plastic Surgery Day, which was attended by KIMS Principal Ambika Prasad Mohanty, Medical Superintendent RC Das, KIMS Super Specialty and Cancer Centre Facility Director Shaktimaya Mohapatra, Vice-Principal Subhranshu Patro, Deputy Medical Superintendent Ashwini Sharma, Haribandhu Mohanty and Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery department head Sumil Kumar Rout.

The hospital will also offer free cleft lip and cleft palate surgeries for the benefit of patients. The establishment of the burn



section aims to alleviate the suffering of patients seeking quality treatment for burn injuries.

Speaking at the event, Das highlighted KIMS' exceptional facilities in Odisha and the region for plastic surgery cases, boasting an experienced team of surgeons who have been providing critical services to both general and corporate patients.

Mohanty emphasised the historical origins of plastic surgery, crediting the great Indian sage Sushruta, known as the father of modern surgery, for its development. Rout highlighted the variety of procedures available, such as those addressing congenital defects, cleft lip and cleft palate surgeries, burn injuries and their subsequent complications, cancer reconstruction surgeries among others.

## City AIIMS observes 11th Foundation Day



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 15:** Successfully completing the glorious journey of its first decade, AIIMS Bhubaneswar celebrated its 11th Foundation Day Saturday. On this occasion, the premiere national health institute started the E-office facility.

The facility will make the administrative process faster and bring more transparency in the health care process, said AIIMS Bhubaneswar Executive Director Ashutosh Biswas. In an endeavour to fulfil Prime Minister's mandate of Digital India mission, AIIMS Bhubaneswar has started the E-office to bring more productivity as well as quick delivery of the things, added Biswas.

He also informed that "AIIMS Dharmasala" started functioning from Saturday. Any patient or his/her attendant requiring accommodation should approach the Dharmasala reception or Medical Superintendent office.

Dharmasala would be fully functional (occupancy) in a phased manner. The treating doctors need to sign in the request form for the patients interested to avail the facility, informed Biswas.

Joining as chief guest, AIIMS Patna Executive Director Gopal Krushna Pal shed light on deeper scientific insights regarding the art of breathing. He stressed upon practising 'Pranayam' for a healthier and long life. Pal also congratulated AIIMS Bhubaneswar for securing 17th rank in NIRF and 18th in India Today ranking.

Addressing the gathering, founder Director of AIIMS Bhubaneswar Ashok Kumar Mahapatra emphasised on the significance of spiritual health in human life.

AIIMS Bhubaneswar President Akshya Kumar Bisoi said that the institute has earned many accolades and has won the hearts of people of Odisha as well as from the neighbouring states.

## 'Eliminating unemployment among youths priority'

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

**Bhubaneswar, July 15:** As a show of its commitment to prepare the youth of today for an ever-changing world, City-based Utkal University observed World Youth Day here Saturday. On the occasion, several competitions and programmes were organised by the university for the students.

Inaugurating the programme, vice-chancellor Sabita Acharya said that there is a need for this type of initiatives to increase the employment and self-employment of youths. "The ultimate goal of this day should be to eliminate unemployment among the youths and to bring about their social and economic development," she said.

## 5 nabbed for illegal mining

**Bhubaneswar:** The Special Task Force (STF) of the state Crime Branch Saturday nabbed five persons on the charge of operating illegal stone mining in Dhenkanal district. STF sources here said on the basis of intelligence input regarding operation illegal stone mining in Rasol, Balimi and Motugan, multiple raids were conducted by STF team with the help of Dhenkanal district police. During raids, two breakers, two Porcelains, a JCB, two trucks, two compressors, three drill machine, battery, six pump sets and 200 pieces of detonator and 50 kg of ammonium nitrate were seized. All the accused persons have been nabbed and handed over to local police for necessary legal action at their end.

## Goods train bogie detached



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 15:** Several trains stranded as the bogie of a goods train detached at Vani Vihar railway station here Saturday evening. The trains stranded at the spot include Visakha Express, Puri-Angul and Nayagarh-Bhadrak.

The dolomite laden goods train (432/28) was heading towards Meramandali in Dhenkanal. Meanwhile, the 24 number bogie detached from

the moving train due to some technical snag

Informed, the technical team reached the spot and repaired the problem in the centre buffer coupler. Traffic on the track resumed after the completion of repair work after a hour-long operation.

A major train accident was also averted as the speeding passenger train was just 50 meters away from the detached bogie of a goods train on the same track.

## 'SYNERGY' HELD AT LOYOLA

SMRUTI REKHA BARIK, OP

**Bhubaneswar, July 15:** Loyola school Bhubaneswar Saturday organised an exhibition 'Synergy 2023'. There was an atmosphere of gaiety and the exhibition was inaugurated by Principal Fr. Victor F Misquith.

The creative minds from Class I to XII showcased their creations and exhibited them with great enthusiasm on various themes like Green Energy, Indian Mythology, rubber hand illusion, startups, entertainment with inventions and special feature on Satyajit Ray birth centenary. Synergy 2023 left behind an air of satisfaction and cheer-



ful smiles on the faces of the children. The contented faces of the students, teachers and parents was reminder that such occasions are as important in a student's life as academics since these help them to learn life lessons.

# 'Golden hour treatment important for snakebite cases'

SMRUTI REKHA BARIK, OP

**Bhubaneswar, July 15:** World Snake Day is observed globally July 16 to raise awareness about snakes. The day aims to change the negative perception surrounding snakes and promote the love for all living beings, even the ones we fear. It is also a fact that many people in the state die every year due to snakebite.

Odisha recorded 1019 cases in 2019 which is second highest after Madhya Pradesh, it included 756 males and 263 females, reports National Crime Records Bureau. A study estimated 1.2 million snakebite deaths from 2000-2019 which is 58,000 per year on an average.

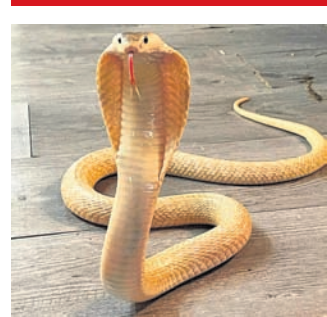
Niranjan Padhy, Medicine Specialist of Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation Hospital

said unawareness leads to death. "Snakebite victims are always advised to visit the nearest medical centres without delay. People die because they believe in the taboos over preventive care and anti-venom. People should know about proper first-aid after snakebite and the importance of golden hour treatment".

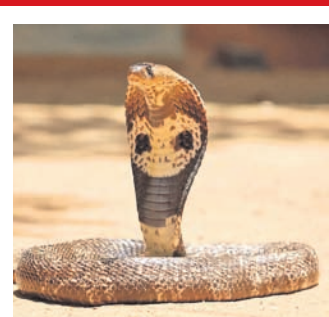
In this context, the role of the snake-rescuers becomes significant, because they rescue snakes from the human settlements and relocate them far from humans. Had the rescuers not been in operation, the death tally surely would have been higher.

"It is equally a home for the snakes as it is for humans. We should all ensure amongst the public to follow the rules while encountering a snake. Beating them to death should never be an option," said renowned snake

## WORLD SNAKE DAY



Monocled-Cobra



Spectacled cobra

rescuer Subhendu Mallik. "Spectacled cobra, monocled cobra, common krait, russell's viper, saw-scaled viper, banded-krait, king cobra and bamboo-pit viper are the most venomous snakes found in Odisha. There are many other non venomous

snakes found in the terrestrial areas. Rescue operations are often carried out in university campuses, airport and shopping complexes. Pythons are these days spotted in airports and college campuses of Bhubaneswar", said Subhendu.

"The state needs to manage its snakebite burden which has increased over the years. Most snakebite victims are either unable to reach the healthcare facility in time or prefer to visit the traditional practitioners for immediate relief," Subhendu concluded.

Wildlife tour leader and photographer for the last 15 years, Durgesh Singh said the state government should make measures to facilitate accessible emergency response in case of snakebite and provide access to latest anti-venoms.

"Superstitions and social taboos need to be addressed by regular awareness campaigns from forest and health department of the state. NGOs and other voluntary organisations should be encouraged by state government to take up aware-

ness programs," Singh added. "Not all snakes are venomous. People also need to be made aware of that. Proper identification and taking good precautions while in the outdoors will reduce the encounters to a great deal. A state level dedicated snakebite helpline number will be a great way to start with," Singh concluded.

Anisha, an engineering student who is working on a snake-related application said, "This application will come in use after an encounter with snake. People usually kill the snake on encounters out of fear. With the help of this application, we can know the details of the snake whether it is venomous or not. This application will also send a notification to the snake rescuer team if opted," she added.

## FOR CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS CONTACT OUR BOOKING STATIONS

Acharya Vihar-Dayal Agency-9437135727, A.P. Tours and Travel, Maitri Vihar, C.S. Pur- 9861301598, Aurobindo Market-Sai Audio & Electronics-9438304668, Airport Road-Sai Baba Variety Store-9090071530, Anish Infotech-Tankapani Road-9861341488, Bapuji Nagar- Dreamland Studio- 9777517314, Baramunda Rental Colony-Maa Ramchandi Communication-9658821469, Baramunda Housing Board Colony-Pappu Variety Store-9040500106, Cuttack Road-Alishan Snacks-8984236754, District Center (Chandrasekharpur)-Sai Google Mart-9776056507, Forest Park-DTDC Couriers & Services (HB Services)-7381024156, IRC Village-Bapi Xerox-9090090404, Gift Hut(Antriksh Gifts & Decors Pvt. Ltd.)-9954781084, Pruthvi Medicine-9853314816, Janpath-Krupajal Book Store-7978646669, Jaydev Vihar-AK Enterprises-7978116618, Subam Sai Books Store-8895550649, Swain Graphics- 9337121249, Jagannath Mobile Point- Janpath Road, Ram Mandir- 9938475415, Kanan Vihar-Auro Electronics-8260697560, Khandagiri- Swosti Mobile Centre- 7992914045, World Solution- 9938317559, KIIT Road-Jugad Jn-9338545031, Laxmi Sagar-Aditya Mobile-9438191836, Lewis Road-Spider Web-7809186415, Metro Satellite City-Arogya Mitra Medicine Store-9853621640, Madhusudan Nagar-Mohapatra Communication-9124446664, Maa Santoshi travels- Gajapati Nagar- 9777675867, Nayapalli- The Cake Room- 7873660137, Near Mayfair Lagoon-Cookiemann-9439491273, Nigamananda-Omm Sai Travels-9668284823, Nr Cosmopolis Main Gate- Shreeram Medical Store- 8763711714, Net Square- Niladri Vihar (C.S. Pur)- 7205634821, Priyadarshini Market-Astro Point-9938134346, R.N. General Store-Nilakantha Nagar-9438642501, Sahid Nagar- Maa Communication- 9437353424, Sahini General Store- Near Patia Railway Station, Mahavir Vihar- 9937586626, Satya Nagar-Baishnavi Mixture & Sweets-7894821764, Samantapur- Download Point-7504557743, Sailashree Vihar-Harsha Book Store-8093449515, Saheed Nagar-Jagannath Graphics-7978652670, Photo World-7978468191, Sainath Photo Studio-8984436129, Shanti & Co-9937071063, Siripur-Omm Maa Sarala Communication-9777682449, Sushree fashion- Jagmara-9938714347, Shree Vision- Sailashree Vihar-9861476678, Unit-3-LIC of India Premium Point-9337787080, Unit-7- LIC Premium Point- 9338227422, VSS Nagar-Friends Cake & Bake-8658200930, Jeet Infoworld-7205195782, XIMB Square-LD Books-9658061373.

## Duo killed in road accident

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Soro, July 15:** Two persons were killed after a speeding truck on NH-16 hit their motorcycle near Talanagar area under Soro police limits in Balasore district, late Friday night.

While one of the deceased hails from Manatri village under Soro police limits, the identity of the other deceased person is yet to be ascertained as his face was disfigured after the truck ran over his head making identification difficult.

As per reports, the duo was returning after work to their village from Bhadrak. At around 2am, a truck coming from the opposite direction collided head-on with the bike killing the duo on the spot.

Locals then informed the police. Police seized the bodies after reaching the spot and sent them for post-mortem to Soro Hospital. The driver along with the truck is absconding after the incident.

# Locals vent anger over dumping of fly ash into pond



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Sambalpur, July 15:** The state government is actively digging ponds for rain water conservation and groundwater recharge apart from the primary purpose of daily usage of residents. Recently, the state government also announced special sanction of funds for digging ponds. However, large ponds which have formed after extraction of stones in Sambalpur district are facing extinction threat as authorities instead of putting these ponds into use are reportedly trying to fill those up with fly ash produced by various industrial plants in the district. This has sparked resentment among the local residents.

The matter came to the fore after the Jujumura tehsildar issued a notice to Niranjan Panda, the sarpanch of Jhankarpali panchayat, seeking his opinion on filling up a pond by dumping of fly ash.

It is learnt that a private fly ash transporter is trying to get the contract awarded in its favour to dump fly ash in the artificial pond created at Hatibari mouza under the panchayat and tehsil to bury the pond.

The tehsildar has also given a time frame of a fortnight to the residents of Jhankarpali panchayat to file their objections regarding filling up the pond with fly ash and bury it. Their objections, if any, will not be entertained after expiry of the deadline, the notice said.

The local RI has informed the local sarpanch about the development and sought his response and that of the residents in this regard. Locals alleged that tehsil officials are trying to pollute the area by dumping fly ash in the pond without conducting a public hearing.

Reports said that a large pond has been created on five acre land on plot no-2481 and khata no-168 following stone mining in the area. Creation of the artificial pond has proven to be beneficial for the farmers. They have been irrigating their farmlands by drawing water from the pond using motorised pumps.

Moreover, locals have been using the pond for their daily needs and other works. Wild animals also quench their thirst by drinking water from the pond. However, efforts by the Jujumura tehsil authorities to fill up the pond with fly ash and bury it have drawn flak from various quarters.

The villagers alleged that the authorities are trying to bury the pond without conducting any gram sabha or pallingi sabha. "We demanded to conduct public hearing but the tehsil authorities are trying to evade us," alleged residents of Hatibari and Jamtal villages.

The villagers have lodged complaints in this regard with the tehsildar and their local sarpanch but their pleas are yet to be addressed.

Village committee president Meghanath Kathar, villagers Ajay Behera, Akash Swain, Girigobardhan Patra and Okil Jhankar have submitted a written complaint to the tehsildar demanding to stop filling the pond.

When contacted, tehsildar Abhishek Sahu said his office had sought a feasibility report from the panchayat after the private firm applied to fill up the pond with fly ash. He has sent the report to his higher-ups after receiving the report from the panchayat. This much has been done in the first phase and it is yet to be finalised, he added.



TRIBAL BALLET: Artistes performed a tribal dance welcoming 5T Secretary VK Pandian at Mandalia ground in Sambalpur, Saturday

OP PHOTO

## Youth kills minor girlfriend for 'avoiding' him

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Bhubaneswar, July 15:** In a shocking incident, a youth killed his minor girlfriend as she started avoiding him in Bolangir town, police said Saturday.

The incident occurred late Thursday when the 15-year-old victim's parents were out of home for their work.

Prime accused Milan was in a relationship with the girl for the last four years. However, the girl was not interested in the relationship anymore.

As the girl started avoiding

### CRIMES OF PASSION ROCK BOLANGIR



the accused, he along with two others went to the girl's home. An altercation ensued between the

two after which the accused attacked her with a sharp-edged weapon, said Tophan Bag, Sub-

Divisional Police Officer (SDPO), Bolangir.

The arrested have been identified as prime accused Milan Rana and his associate Jitu Rana while another accused is still at large, Bag said. Milan Rana was arrested from Vijayanagar in Andhra Pradesh when he was trying to flee while Jitu Rana was arrested from Sambalpur. A manhunt has been launched to arrest him, Bag informed.

The weapon and motorcycle used in the crime along with the deceased's mobile phone have been seized, he added.

## Youth held for minor's rape

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Berhampur, July 15:** Badabazar police here arrested a youth for kidnapping and raping a minor girl and forwarded him to court Saturday after rescuing the minor girl.

The accused was identified as G Durga Rao aka Nani (23) of Prem Nagar lane-3 in Berhampur. Police Friday conducted the medical check-up of both the accused and the victim and the statement of the minor girl was recorded under section-164 before the court.



As per the statement of the girl, the accused was forwarded to court in rape case and sent to judicial custody, Saturday.

According to the police, a complaint regarding kidnapping of a 17-year-old minor girl was lodged at Badabazar police station, last February.

Police then registered a case (No-40/23) and started investigation. After kidnapping the minor, the accused took her out of the state. There he raped her repeatedly, said the victim.

As per the recorded statement of the victim under section-161 before the police, the accused even married her there.

## Irate villagers detain teachers over vacancies in high school

PNN & AGENCIES

**Kendrapara, July 15:** Agitated villagers and guardians Saturday detained as many as 16 teachers and non-teaching staff, including the headmaster of a high school protesting against non-filling of vacant teacher posts in Karilopatna village under Marshaghai block in this district.

The teachers and non-teachers were locked inside the headmaster's office for about 3 hours by the villagers to protest the callous attitude of the Block Education Officer (BEO) of Marshaghai block in filling up the vacant teacher posts at Karilopatna-based Jairam Government High School.

The local villagers alleged that the shortage of teachers has badly affected the study of students in

the high school established in 1946.

The guardians have in the past several times brought the matter before the notice of the BEO of Marshaghai, DEO of Kendrapara and also the District Collector but in vain.

As many as 13 teacher posts, besides a clerk post, have been lying vacant in the school despite persistent demands by the locals.

The BEO of Marshaghai earlier assured to fill up the vacant posts but failed to keep his promise.

After more than three hours, the Kandanagari police team reached at the spot and managed to rescue the teachers and others.

The BEO of Marshaghai assured the agitators to take steps to look into the demands of filling up vacant teacher posts within a week.

## 2-day science workshop for teachers concludes

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Rourkela, July 15:** A science workshop, which lasted for two days, was held at Municipal High School at Uditnagar here. The objective of the workshop was to prepare teachers of science to create interest in the mind of students through the use of modern technology whenever necessary.

This two-day workshop concentrated mostly on the emerging sides of science and how to bring the students closer to new developments along with the existing topics. District Education Officer (DEO) Amiya Pradhan said, "The aim is to prepare the teachers of the subject because they are the catalyst. Unless and until they are ready how come they will be able to impart the knowledge and create interest in the mind of the students."

To develop the core competency, the two-day workshop gave importance to group learning. "The way the teachers have been trained will certainly benefit the students," said the DEO.

The training programme was conducted by Respayar Group.

## WOMAN, SON ELECTROCUTED

AGENCIES

**Balasore, July 15:** A 55-year-old woman and her son died of electrocution at Bhograi village in Balasore district, police said Saturday.

According to police, Kartik Sethi, 35, of Bhograi village while cutting an iron rod with an electric cutter machine was electrocuted. His mother tried to rescue him by pulling him, but she too was electrocuted Friday.

Both of them were immediately taken to a nearby hospital by villagers but doctors declared both of them brought dead.

A case of unnatural death has been registered, police said.

## Welcome ceremony by IIM, Sambalpur

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Sambalpur, July 15:** IIM, Sambalpur welcomed its 3rd batch of executive MBA (2023-25), Saturday. The session was graced by distinguished luminaries including chief guest Dr Richard Rekhy, board member, KPMG, Dubai and former CEO, KPMG India; guest of honour and keynote speaker Kailash Pandey, president and cluster head, Hindalco Industries Limited.

The induction program also witnessed a welcome address on 'Core Values of



IIM, Sambalpur' by Prof Mahadeo Jaiswal, director of IIM, Sambalpur.

The programme started with the welcome address by Prof Shikha Bhardwaj, chairperson of executive MBA. She shared the course structure and composition of the batch.

Class of 2023-25 at IIM, Sambalpur is a diverse and talented group of 41 students with varied ed-

ucational backgrounds. With a wide range of work experience and geographical diversity, the cohort represents multiple industries.

This diversity of experience and background will provide the students with a unique learning experience and help them to network with professionals from different backgrounds. It will also foster community among the students and expose them to different cultures and perspectives. The event was concluded with a vote of thanks by Prof Diptiranjana Mahapatra.

### EAST COAST RAILWAY

File No. DRM/Engg/KUR/23-24/  
E-Tender/47, Dt. 12.07.2023

(1) Tender No. e-Tender-HQ-KUR-136-2023, Dtd.: 03.07.2023

DESCRIPTION: PROPOSED UPGRADATION OF BOLAGARPH TO BOLAGAR STATION OF KHURDA ROAD DIVISION.

Approx. Cost of the Work: ₹ 290.73 Lakhs, EMD: ₹ 2,95,400/-

(2) Tender No. e-Tender-HQ-KUR-140-2023, Dtd.: 05.07.2023

DESCRIPTION: MISCELLANEOUS REPAIRS TO THE STAFF QUARTERS AT RETANG COLONY, KHURDA ROAD UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF SENIOR DIVISIONAL ENGINEER/HQ/ KHURDA ROAD.

Approx. Cost of the Work: ₹ 108.98 Lakhs, EMD: ₹ 2,04,500/-

(3) Tender No. e-Tender-HQ-KUR-141-2023, Dtd.: 05.07.2023

DESCRIPTION: PROVISION OF ONE BASKETBALL COURT AND ONE TENNIS COURT AROUND RAILWAY STADIUM COMPLEX AT KHURDA ROAD.

Approx. Cost of the Work: ₹ 32.03 Lakhs, EMD: ₹ 64,100/-

(4) Tender No. e-Tender-HQ-KUR-142-2023, Dtd.: 05.07.2023

DESCRIPTION: CONSTRUCTION OF APPROACH ROAD, PATHWAYS AND TOILETS FOR STAFF FOR IMPROVEMENT OF INFRASTRUCTURAL FACILITIES NEEDED FOR C&W SICK LINE AT KHURDA ROAD.

Approx. Cost of the Work: ₹ 41.81 Lakhs, EMD: ₹ 83,600/-

Completion Period: 06 (Six) Months (for SI. No. 1), 08 (Eight) Months (for SI. No. 2) and 04 (Four) Months (for SI. No. 3 & 4).

Tender Closing Date and Time: At 1500 Hrs. of 26.07.2023 (for all the Tenders).

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: <https://www.ireps.gov.in>

Note: The prospective tenderers are advised to revisit the website 10 (Ten) days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes / corrigenda issued for this tender. The tenderers/bidders must have Class-III Digital Signature Certificate and must be registered on IREPS Portal. Only registered tenderer/ bidder can participate on e-tendering.

Divisional Railway Manager (Engg) / PR-346/O/23-24 Khurda Road

<b>Bank of India</b> Zonal Office : Star House, 1/1D, Jayadev Vihar, Nayapalli, Bhubaneswar-751015		<b>POSSESSION NOTICE</b> [Rule-8(1)] of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules-2002	
Whereas, the undersigned being the <b>Authorised Officer of the Bank of India, Kalinga Vihar Branch</b> under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a Demand Notice calling upon the Borrowers in the loan account given below to repay the amount mentioned in the Notice plus interest & expenses thereon within <b>60 days</b> from the date of receipt of the said Notice. The Borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrowers and the public in general that the undersigned has taken <b>Possession</b> of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules. The Borrowers in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the <b>Bank of India, Kalinga Vihar Branch</b> for an amount mentioned below with interest & expenses thereon. <b>The Borrower's attention is invited to provisions of Sub-Section (8) of Section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available to redeem the secured assets.</b>			
<b>KALINGA VIHAR BRANCH / Name &amp; Address of Borrowers</b>	<b>Liabilities due as per Notice</b>	<b>Date of Demand Notice/ Date of Possession</b>	<b>Description of the Immoveable Property</b>
Borrowers: 1) Mrs. Santilata Sahu, 2) Mr. Gopal Krishna Sahu, Both are At: LIG-282, K-4, Kalinga Nagar, Bhubaneswar-751019	₹ 27,21,940.84 + interest & expenses thereon	02.05.2023 / 14.07.2023	All that part and parcel of the property consisting of Plot No.: K-4/282 (Area: 1250 Sqft), Mouza: Subudhipur, P.S.: Khandagiri, Dist.: Khurda under Kalinga Nagar plotted development scheme, bounded by North: Plot No.: 283, South: Road, East: Road, West: Plot No.: 281
Place: Bhubaneswar, Date: 16.07.2023			
Authorised Officer, Bank of India			

<b>Bank of India</b> Zonal Office : Star House, 1/1D, Jayadev Vihar, Nayapalli, Bhubaneswar-751015		<b>DEMAND NOTICE</b>	
<b>Notice under Section 13 (2) of SARFAESI Act, 2002 for Enforcement of Security Interest</b>			
The Bank has granted following various credit facilities to the under mentioned Borrower/Partners & the amount outstanding dues mentioned below has not been paid in time. Therefore Demand Notice under Sec. 13 (2) of Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 was issued by the Authorized Officer against the following Borrower/Partners of the <b>Bank of India, Bhubaneswar Branch</b> but the same could not be served on the below mentioned parties. Therefore, the contents of the same including the amount outstanding, Loan amount and details of the secured assets are herein furnished below.			
<b>BHUBANESWAR BRANCH / Name &amp; Address of Borrower/Partners</b>	<b>Nature / Limit</b>	<b>Date of NPA / Date of Demand Notice</b>	<b>Amount as per Notice under SARFAESI Act</b>
Borrower: M/s. Tapaswini Food Products, Address-1: At: Gilinasi, PO.: Siala, Krushnaprasad, Dist.: Puri, Odisha, Address-2: At: Plot No.: 1890, Sriram Nagar, Old Town, Bhubaneswar, Odisha / Partners: 1) Mr. Lalit Mohan Pradhan, 2) Mrs. Tapaswini Parida, Both are at Plot No.: 1890, Sriram Nagar, Old Town, Bhubaneswar, Odisha	TERM LOAN-I / ₹1,18,00,000/- WCTL - I / ₹3,83,000/- WCTL-GECL / ₹42,00,000/- FITL-I / ₹5,10,000/-, FITL-II / ₹25,31,000/-, Cash Credit (CC) / ₹50,00,000/- Total: ₹ 2,44,24,000/-	28.06.2023 / 30.06.2023	₹2,50,18,991.05 + interest & expenses thereon
Plot No.: 10/956, Sarada-3/2, Area: Ac.0.410 Dec, Plot No.: 10, Sarada-3/2, Area: Ac.0.410 Dec, situated at Mouza: Gilinasi, Tahasil: Krushnaprasad, Thana: Krushnaprasad, Dist.: Puri, Odisha, standing in the name of <b>M/s. Tapaswini Food Products</b>			
As the above mentioned Borrower/Partners of the <b>Bhubaneswar Branch</b> have defaulted in repayment of the principal loan/ facility in instalments/interest/ both, the account has been classified as <b>NPA</b> , in accordance with the directions or guidelines issued by the RBI. In spite of our repeated demands you (borrower) have not paid any amount towards the amount outstanding in your account, you have not discharged your liabilities. Hence, we are now constrained to make this publication of Demand Notice, required u/s 13(2) of the said Act and Rule 3 of the security interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002. You are hereby called upon to pay the aforesaid amount alongwith further interest, cost, incidental Expenses, Charges etc. within a period of <b>60 days</b> from the date of Notice, failing which we will take necessary action under the provisions of sec 13(4) of the said Act, against all or any one or more of the secured assets including taking possession of your secured assets and sale them. If the dues are not fully recovered in the course of these actions against secured assets, then the Bank reserves the right to take action by filing recovery action against you before DRT/Court for recovery of the same. It may be noted that under the provisions of Section 13(8) of the SARFAESI Act, right of redemption is available to you, by paying the dues of the Bank together with all cost, charges and expenses incurred by the Bank at any time, till the date of publication of notice for public auction or inviting quotations or tender from public or private treaty for transfer by way of lease, assignment or sale of the secured assets. Please take note that as per sub section (13) of the aforesaid Act, after receipt of this notice, you are restrained from transferring or creating any encumbrances on the aforesaid secured assets whether by way of sale, lease, license, gift, mortgage or otherwise. <b>This notice is issued without prejudice to the rights of the Bank available under any other law.</b>			
Place : Bhubaneswar, Date: 16.07.2023			
Chief Manager & Authorized Officer, Bank of India			

“Whatsoever has courage can give courage to others just as the flame of the candle can light up another.”

THE MOTHER



## New Space Race

In the dozen years between 1957 and 1969, the Americans and the Russians went on a series of space races. The Russians won almost everything at first. They were first to send a satellite into orbit (Sputnik in 1957), the first to send a living thing into space, the dog Laika in the same year, the first to send a person into orbit (Yuri Gagarin in 1961). The first person to 'walk' in space, meaning exit the spacecraft while in orbit was Aleksey Leonov in 1965. After this the US registered its first win in 1969 when it was able to land humans on the moon. The US remains the only nation to be able to do this and last did it in 1972. The Soviets tried and failed to develop a large rocket and so the space race ended in the early 1970s. For 50 years there has been no interest in moon landings with humans because the cost is very high and the American public lost interest.

The Space Shuttle programme was seen as a lower-cost, reusable way for America to send its astronauts into orbit and to the International Space Station. However, two disasters, one in the 1980s and another in the early 2000s (in which Kalpana Chawla was killed) and unexpectedly high costs ended the programme over a decade ago. After that America did not even have the capacity to send humans into orbit, something that changed only in 2020 when a private firm was able to begin its service.

Russians still fly rockets based on the same technology that was used in the 1960s, with some modifications and much of the technology in the space race came from Nazi Germany's military rocket programme of 90 years ago. The captured scientists on the two fronts were pressed into service by the Americans and the Russians.

One reason why space innovation was stagnant for so many decades is that it was funded by governments which were spending large amounts on nationalistic projects. Even today the budget for NASA, the US space agency, is \$25 billion. ISRO's budget is about \$1.5 billion, which makes its achievements over the decades quite remarkable.

This changed about 15 years ago, when it became clear that satellite communications, GPS and the internet were going to be very big drivers in the economy. Private firms began to take an interest first in developing the technology that would go into satellites and then to build rockets. This second shift happened after the US government funded space start-ups and allowed them under conditions to develop rocket technology. Because rockets are no different from missiles, their development and manufacturing is tightly controlled. Only US citizens, for instance, can work at these firms. This limits the amount of talent they can absorb but is one way that the government can ensure the technology does not reach what it considers to be the wrong hands.

Even with these restrictions, the private sector has breathed new life into the space sector. Another, much smaller, space race began after the US government's funding between two firms to launch the first human to orbit on a private rocket. Boeing, the giant company, lost out to the younger SpaceX, though it had received more funding than the start-up. Today, the rockets are reusable to a large extent and at least two firms are building giant rockets of the size that existed 50 years ago. The target is two-fold, the first is to lower the cost of space and reduce the cost per kilogram of putting things into orbit. The second is human spaceflight and attempt to colonise Mars. Imagine what a difference it will make to the world if there is an outpost humans create on another planet. Of course this will be difficult: Even today in 2023, the number of entities that have sent humans into orbit around the earth is limited to Russia/USSR, America, China and the company SpaceX.

The winners in the race this time stand to make large amounts of money (SpaceX, which is privately held, is valued at over \$100 billion) and also own technology that will help them monopolise space. Efficient rocket engines, new fuels, highly complex aspects of reusability and fuel transfers make this the domain of a very few entities. The cost of launching a satellite runs into hundreds of crores of rupees. The monopoly over space will mean that particularly on the commercial side, that is to say satellite launches will be controlled by companies or nations that others will have no option but to go to. Even the UK and Germany today have no launch capacity and are dependent on either private entities of their ally, the US, to launch.

France's Ariane programme is currently dormant after it eased out its older rocket and is developing a new one. All of this makes this an exciting time for space around the world. This is the background in which India is attempting to soft-land a rover on the moon and will attempt, at some point next year hopefully, sending humans into orbit.

By the end of this decade, we will have a good idea of which nations and which companies are winning this new space race, and what that means for the future not just of science and technology but of humans as a whole.

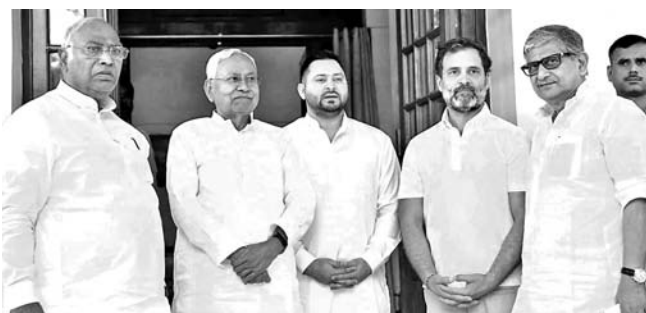


Aakar Patel

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### FOCUS OPPOSITION

## NEED FOR UNITY



Most Opposition parties are unable to speak in one voice even on important issues like Uniform Civil Code, Article 370, secularism, Hindutva

With Opposition parties being targeted one after the other by the Modi government, the latest being in Maharashtra, where Sharad Pawar's nephew Ajit Pawar along with senior leaders like Praful Patel and Chhagan Bhujuwal were lured by BJP, the Opposition has finally realised that there is no option but to unite to save their own parties. Far from dampening their spirits, the tactics of ED and CBI raids applied by the ruling dispensation have added to a sense of urgency among Opposition parties to work out a strategy where they can, in most constituencies, put up a single candidate against BJP.



Anita Saluja

GIVEN THE QUESTION OF THEIR SURVIVAL, THE OPPOSITION PARTIES HAVE NOW STARTED TO THINK BIG

Though the idea, initially floated by poll strategist Prashant Kishore, of fielding a single Opposition candidate against BJP in all the 543 parliamentary constituencies may sound optimistic, the question that arises is whether it is feasible? After the success of the first Opposition Meet on June 23 in Patna chaired by Bihar CM Nitish Kumar, comes the next conference in Bangalore on July 17-18 where UPA chairperson Sonia Gandhi will also be present.

Such is the angst against PM Modi that temporarily all the regional parties which don't see eye-to-eye have shrunk their differences for the larger cause. We will, therefore, see Sonia, Mamata Banerjee, Lalu Yadav, Nitish, Sharad, all in one frame. Those who still have reservations include SP leader Akhilesh Yadav and BSP leader Mayawati. Others like BJD, BRS, TDP and YSRCP may not join hands with them.

After the victory in Himachal and Karnataka, the Opposition is finally convinced that "Modi ko harana, Mumkin hai." If Congress can defeat BJP single-handedly in these two states, why can't they succeed in other states, as well? Given the question of their survival, the Opposition has now started to

think big. The Opposition moves are based on the assumption that the BJP has come to power in 2019 with 37% vote. Theoretically, the argument goes, if the remaining 63% vote is consolidated behind the Opposition then automatically the saffron party can be defeated. Nitish has predicted that if Opposition is united, then the BJP tally in 2024 would be brought down to below 100 seats. Now, this is not something that is easy to achieve on the ground. While Opposition unity is the need of the hour, parties like SP and BSP in UP (80 seats), BRS in Telangana (17 seats), TDP and YSRCP in Andhra (25 seats) and BJD in Odisha (21 seats), accounting for 143 Lok Sabha seats could make things difficult as these parties may not come on board. AAP in Delhi (7 seats) and in Punjab (13), accounting for an additional 20 seats, could also prove to be problematic as both Delhi PCC and Punjab PCC are divided on getting AAP into the Opposition front. Effectively, 163 seats may witness multi-cornered contests. Moreover, even parties that agree to forge Opposition unity, like TMC, JD(U) and NCP, may demand a larger share of seats from Congress. Opposition unity, therefore, may sound achievable, but is indeed a challenging task even though political satraps from major states

will be brainstorming for two days in Bangalore to electorally defeat the Modi-Shah duo.

Even if the issue of fielding a single candidate against BJP is resolved, it will be a Herculean task to prepare a Common Minimum Programme. Most Opposition parties are unable to speak in one voice even on important issues like Uniform Civil Code, Article 370, secularism, Hindutva. Parties like AAP, Shiv Sena (Uddhav) and NCP are ambivalent. An anti-Modi sentiment seems to be the only glue keeping them together, which may not be enough. So far, the Opposition has failed to come up with an alternative economic programme and an imaginative political strategy like organising joint action programmes which can capture the people's imagination.

The paramount issue, of course, is the naming of the PM face of Opposition which is a major stumbling block. Everyone, right from Mamata, Nitish and Sharad, is aspiring to become the PM, with the single agenda of not letting Rahul Gandhi or any other Congress leader become the PM. Possibly, the leadership issue may be put off till after elections, but the public, at large, would prefer to know the name of the leader who will confront Modi. The Congress is in no mood to concede the Prime Ministership to

anyone else.

Mindful of how tricky the situation could be, the Congress appears to be adopting a two-pronged strategy. On the one hand, focus is on improving its own tally in 2024. At the same time, it is keeping all channels open for dialogue with Opposition parties, trying to convince them of the historic need for unity.

While there are states where regional parties dominate, there are quite a few states where there is a straight contest between Congress and BJP. For instance, Gujarat (26), Rajasthan (25), MP (29), Chhattisgarh (11), Haryana (10), Himachal (4), Uttarakhand (5), Goa (2), Lakshadweep (1), Karnataka (28) and the North-East, excluding Sikkim (24), add up to 165 seats where Congress is in direct contest with BJP. Strike rate of Congress has to be particularly high if it has to emerge as the single-largest party in Lok Sabha. In Maharashtra, Bihar, Jharkhand and TN, the Congress is in alliance, while in UP and Bengal, it is nowhere in reckoning.

First and foremost, Congress has to revive and revitalise itself in order to lead an effective Opposition against BJP at national level. A weak Congress cannot become the fulcrum for a credible Opposition alliance to take on BJP. The Congress has to rebuild its organisation and make it strong. The first, credible step in the direction would be for Congress to wrest power from BJP in MP, besides retaining power in Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh where elections are due later this year. This would inspire confidence in people that Congress can be an effective alternative to BJP. Opposition unity sans a powerful and energetic Congress will serve no purpose.

The writer is a Delhi-based senior journalist and political commentator. Views are personal.

### SPECTRUM SOCIETY

## Winning the fight for women's land rights

Women have cultivated and nurtured life on our planet for centuries. Yet while the world enjoys the fruits of their labour, they often have no say or control over the land they work. To add insult to injury, the twin threats of drought and desertification - intensified by climate change - have reduced the amount of usable land, jeopardising livelihoods as well as food production. Moreover, unsustainable farming is eroding soil 100 times faster than natural processes can restore it. The UN has classified up to 40% of the world's land as degraded.

Land degradation is a huge challenge, but the solution lies in the people most concerned about protecting this valuable resource: women. When given the chance, women are responsible stewards who use their extensive knowledge and skills to protect and restore the land in their possession. They have also proven capable of building resilience to droughts, which are becoming more severe and more common as temperatures rise.

As matters stand, women are rarely offered such opportunities. Discriminatory practices such as inadequate land-tenure systems, limited access to credit, unequal

pay, low levels of decision-making autonomy, and sexual- and gender-based violence prevent their active participation in land management.

In Chad, the government excludes many women and girls from land allocations, leaving them with insecure tenure. Gender norms that devalue the contributions of women further reinforce their precarious position. The common expression "Mara sakit," meaning "She's just a woman," exemplifies this sexist dynamic.

The problem extends far beyond one country. Despite comprising nearly half of the world's agricultural workforce and producing up to 80% of food in developing economies, women own less than one-fifth of land worldwide. More than 100 governments continue to deny women the right to inherit their husband's property.

This imbalance, coupled with the worsening climate crisis, leads to female agricultural workers bearing the brunt of land degradation. They suffer from food and water scarcity and are often forced to migrate, which is a contributing factor to gender inequality and its expression through violence and discrimination against women and girls.

Indigenous women and girls, people with disabilities, and women human-rights defenders are particularly vulnerable in such conditions.

Frustrated by their lack of agency in decision-making, women in some countries have started to fight for their land rights. Sierra Leone, for example, recently passed a new law that grants women the right to own, lease, or buy land in the country. In Tanzania, women who have been given stronger land rights are earning up to 3.8 times more income and are also more likely to have individual savings. This highlights an important byproduct of equal land rights: economic security for women and girls. Giving women a greater say in land management can have cascading knock-on effects on household income, food security, and investment in children's education and health.

Equal land rights could also boost food security, as women invest more in agricultural technology and use their indigenous traditional knowledge, that results in higher yields. In fact, if women farmers had access to the same level of resources as men, the number of undernourished people in the world could be reduced by as much as

100-150 million people.

To make this a reality, governments must remove the barriers that prevent women and girls from owning and inheriting land. More broadly, policymakers should involve women in decisions about land management, conservation, and restoration. Yet the most important work, including raising awareness and campaigning for change, falls to local communities.

The UN Convention to Combat Desertification has placed gender equality at the core of its mandate - and for good reason. As the convention acknowledges in its Gender Action Plan, women play a crucial role in sustainable land management. Consequently, securing women's land rights is not only the right thing to do; it will boost land-restoration efforts, develop long-term resilience to droughts, and create more equitable economies. Our planet, and the health of our societies, depends on it.

Tarja Halonen is a former president of Finland. Hindou Oumarou Ibrahim is President of the Association for Indigenous Women and Peoples of Chad.

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### WISDOM CORNER

- To love another person is to see the face of God. - VICTOR HUGO
- To be able to say how much love, is love but little. - PETRARCH
- He is not a lover who does not love forever. - EURIPIDES

### WORDSWORTH

#### Macaronic

If this sounds as though it is connected with Italian pasta, you're right. It was coined in the sixteenth century by the Italian poet Teofilo Folengo, in reference to a sort of burlesque verse he invented in which Italian words were mixed in with Latin ones for comic effect. He said that he linked the crude hotch-potch of language in the verse with the homely foodstuff called macaroni, a dish which he described (in Latin, of course) as "pulmentum farina, caseo, botiro compaginatum, grossum, rude, et rusticatum" ("a savoury dish bound together with flour, cheese [and] butter, [a dish] which is fat, coarse, and rustic"). The word first appeared in English a century later and expanded its scope to refer to any form of verse in which two or more languages were mixed together. A once-famous American example was the mixed German-English verses of Hans Breitmann's Ballads by Charles Leland, in which a German immigrant is overwhelmed by mid-nineteenth-century America and speaks in a mixture of German and heavily accented English. Macaronic verse has a link to the eighteenth-century London dandies who were called macaronis because they liked foreign food, Italian in particular, as a result of experiencing it on the Grand Tour. A certain famous old song also contains the word: "Yankee Doodle went to town, / Riding on a pony, / Stuck a feather in his hat, / And called it macaroni", but that is linked to the dandy sense, not the verse one.

## 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

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

#### Proud moment

Sir, This refers to "Moment of glory," Orissa POST, July 15. Two decades after then Prime Minister, Atal Bihari Vajpayee announced the Chandrayaan programme, India has launched its third lunar mission. Considering the massive pre-launch buzz, the smooth takeoff of Chandrayaan-3 - which piggybacked ISRO's heavy lift launch vehicle 'Fat Boy' LVMS-M4 - has made the entire nation heave a sigh of relief. It's expected to be a challenging month-long journey for the moon-bound space vehicle. The soft landing of the payload is, of course, the most crucial phase of the mission. If all goes well, India would emulate the US, the erstwhile USSR and China - the nations which have conducted a controlled lunar landing. The all-important question is: will Chandrayaan-3 avert the fate of its predecessor? The Chandrayaan-2 mission of 2019 was a classic case of "so near and yet so far." Things had looked good as the lander 'Vikram' - named after the father of India's space programme, Vikram Sarabhai - had successfully got separated from the orbiter in preparation for a landing on the moon. However, at an altitude of merely 2.1 km from the lunar surface, the ground stations had lost communication with 'Vikram', which was destroyed in a crash near the site where Chandrayaan-3 will attempt a touchdown.

N Sathasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

#### Ode to cycling

Sir, "For a fairer mobility" (Orissa POST, July 14) is a befitting tribute to cycling and its myriad benefits. Over the years, the bike has acquired a fan following from eminent personalities as well as the masses. The exhilarating feel of spinning the pedals conjures up a vast mix of emotions. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's paean to the art of bicycling is worth recollecting: "When the spirits are low, when the day appears dark, when work becomes monotonous, when hope hardly seems worth having, just mount a bicycle and go out for a spin down the road without thought on anything but the ride you are taking." There is no denying the fact that besides being a perfect de-stresser, cycling drives the blues away and uplifts your sullen mood. Mark Twain, the noted humorist and author had this insightful philosophical take on the bicycle: "Learn to ride a bicycle. You will not regret it if you live." Amit Banerjee, NEW DELHI

# Himachal suffered losses of ₹8,000cr due to rain: CM

ABOUT 70,000 TOURISTS HAVE BEEN EVACUATED FROM THE STATE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Shimla, July 15:** Himachal Pradesh has suffered losses of about ₹8,000 crore as heavy rains wreaked havoc in the hill state, triggering landslides and flash floods and damaging roads and other infrastructure, Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu said Saturday.

According to the state emergency response centre, the losses amounted to about ₹4,000 crore till Friday night and Sukhu had sought an interim relief of ₹2,000 crore from the Union home ministry.

About 70,000 tourists have been evacuated from the state and 15,000 vehicles sent out, while around 500 tourists have voluntarily decided to stay back, Sukhu said in a statement issued here.

Some tourists stuck at Kasol, Manikaran and other adjoining areas in Kullu district refused to move out without their vehicles and have decided to stay back for a few more days till the situation normalises and all roads are opened.

Due to a heavy landslide near Dunkhara on the Kasol-Bhuntar road, the vehicles could not be moved and the tourists had to trek to reach the other side. However the state government



said these tourists are being taken care of.

Electricity, water and mobile phone services have been temporarily restored in 80 per cent of the disaster-affected areas and efforts are being made to restore essential services in the remaining areas at the earliest, the statement said.

The bus service of the Himachal Road Transport Corporation (HRTC) is suspended on 899 routes and 256 buses are held en route. The HRTC has suffered losses of ₹5.56 crore, officials said.

Meanwhile, the local MeT office has issued an "orange" warning for heavy to very heavy rain at isolated places in 10 of the 12 districts of the state, bar-

ring Lahaul and Spiti and Kinnaur, from July 15 to 17 and warned of the possibility of landslides, flash floods, mudslides and increased runoff in rivers and nullahs.

It has also issued a "yellow" warning for heavy rain July 18 and forecast a wet spell in the state till July 21.

The state has received 284.1 mm rain so far in July, against the normal rainfall of 110.4 mm, an excess of 157 per cent.

Light to heavy rain continued to lash parts of the state, with Dharamshala receiving 131 mm rain, followed by Palampur (51 mm), Sundernagar and Nahan (45 mm each), Kangra (27 mm), Mandi and Narkanda (16 mm each).

# Cheetahs to remain in Kuno: Union minister

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhopal, July 15:** Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change Bhupender Yadav Saturday said the cheetahs will continue to remain in the Kuno National Park in Madhya Pradesh and asserted that the project will be successful.

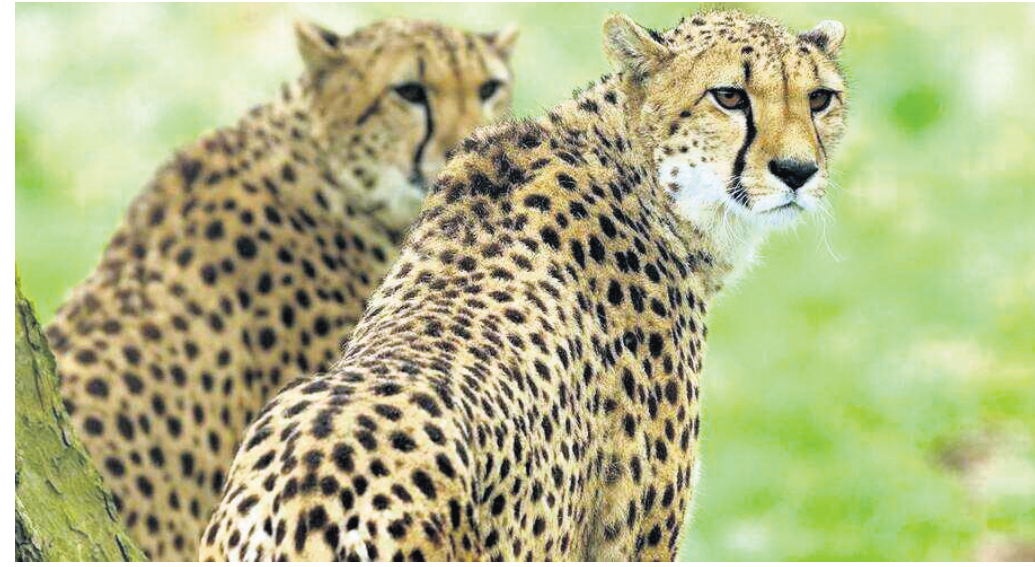
"We are in touch with experts, including international experts. Our team will visit there. The cheetahs will not be relocated and will remain in Kuno only," the minister said.

Yadav's comments came amid concern expressed by some experts on the cheetah project and that some recent deaths could possibly be due to infection caused by radio collars though that is highly unusual and collars have been used in wildlife conservation in India for over two decades.

Other experts, however, said only the post-mortem report will determine the exact cause.

Rajesh Gopal, the head of the cheetah monitoring committee set up by the NTCA, said the reason for the cheetahs' death could be septicemia from radio collar. "It is highly unusual. I have also seen it for the first time. It's a cause for concern and we have directed (MP forest staff) to check all the cheetahs," he said.

He said it is possible that aberrations, humid weather can lead to infection from radio collar use. "We have been using collars in wildlife conservation for around 25 years in India. I have never come across such an incident. We have good, smart collars available these days. Still



if such an incident is happening, we will have to bring it to the notice of manufacturers."

Gopal added. A South African expert also suggested that septicemia caused by radio collars could be a possible reason behind the death of two male cheetahs in MP this week.

Male cheetah Suraj, translocated from South Africa, died at KNP Friday, while another translocated male cheetah Tejas

died Tuesday. Vincent van der Merwe, the South African cheetah metapopulation expert, said extreme wet conditions are causing the radio collars to create infection and possibly that was the reason behind the cheetahs' death.

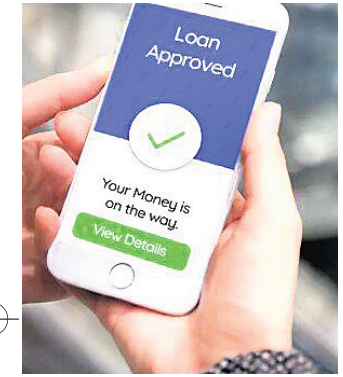
The death of two cheetahs has pushed the fatality count to eight, including three cubs, in less than four months. Asked about the fate of the cheetah project in India, Merwe sounded optimistic.

"We still have 75 per cent of the founder population alive and well in India. So all is still on track with observed mortality well within normal parameters for wild cheetah reintroduction," he added.

KNP director Uttam Sharma said they have sent the post-mortem reports of the two cheetahs to the senior authorities in Bhopal. Friday, MP Forest Minister Vijay Shah said the exact cause of Suraj's death will be known from the post-mortem report. When asked about the fatalities, he pointed out that the three cubs that died were malnourished from birth itself, while other deaths were from fights during mating or eating, which is common among animals.

*Bhupender Yadav's comments came amid concern expressed by some experts on the cheetah project and that some recent deaths could possibly be due to infection caused by radio collars though that is highly unusual*

# After mass suicides, MP gov't seeks ban on online loan apps



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Bhopal, July 15:** A day after a family of four committed mass suicide due to heavy debt, Madhya Pradesh Home Minister Narottam Mishra Friday said a Special Investigation Team (SIT) would probe the matter and urged the Centre to ban the online loan offering apps.

Bhupendra Vishwakarma had taken a loan from an online money app and later he was threatened and his morphed (nude photographs) were shared with his relatives. His mobile was hacked. "I have asked the police to prepare a list to identify apps offering loans. I would also request the Centre to ban all such applications and tools," Mishra added.

Police said that Bhupendra was operating a small business and had taken loans from an online app. "It was found that he has borrowed ₹17 lakh from an online app, but, the suicide note suggested that amount could be more. The couple first administered poison to their two minor sons and then hanged themselves," a senior Sub-Inspector posted at Bhopal's Ratibad police station told IANS.

Bodies of Bhupendra Vishwakarma (38), his wife Ritu (35) and their two minor sons - Rituraj (3) and Rishiraj (9) were taken to their home district Rewa this morning.

Police said, in his suicide note (WhatsApp message), Dhirendra has mentioned that he was under 'debt trap', which forced him to take the extreme step.

He also mentioned that because of the 'debt trap', his family was made to suffer a lot and he wasn't able to handle the pressure.

"All the family members were in trouble because of one mistake and I would apologise to all of them. I was doing a job for an online firm, which offered money, but later, I realised that I was in debt trap. I would apologise to my family and parents, please forgive me," the suicide note read.

# IIT Indore makes hydrogen from plastic waste

*Polyethylene terephthalate, or PET, is the most abundantly used polymer in the world. The bulk of PET plastic is used for single-use packaging materials like disposable bottles, consumer items and packaging*

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Indore, July 15:** The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Indore has developed an easy and effective way to make pure hydrogen from PET plastic waste.

Polyethylene terephthalate, or PET, is the most abundantly used polymer in the world. The bulk of PET plastic is used for single-use packaging materials like disposable bottles, consumer items and packaging.

According to the IIT Indore management, the development



is the outcome of a three-year-long research. It can not only solve the global problem of disposal of plastic waste but also open up new avenues of "earning from waste", said the institute.

India produced nearly 34.7 lakh tonnes of plastic waste during 2019-20, the government had

told the Lok Sabha last year.

"We add tiny pieces of PET plastics, catalysts and other substances to water and heat it at 160 degrees Celsius. The 100 per cent pure hydrogen released from this chemical process is then collected," Sanjay K Singh, a professor from the Department of Chemistry at

IIT Indore, told PTI.

Through this method, Singh said, 33 kg of PET plastic waste can be used to make one kilogram of pure hydrogen. This green fuel is believed to be enough to run a hydrogen-powered car for 100 kilometres.

The Centre earlier this year gave the green signal to the National Green Hydrogen Campaign with a provision of ₹19,744 crore to make India a global hub for production of the clean fuel.

Under this ambitious campaign, India plans to develop an annual capacity of producing at least 50 lakh tonnes of green hydrogen by 2030.

An official from IIT Indore said that the institute's research on making green hydrogen from PET plastic waste can go a long way in helping India achieve this goal.

India has set its sight on becoming energy independent by 2047 and achieving Net Zero by 2070.

# VAT on diesel increased by ₹3/litre in Himachal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Shimla, July 15:** In a bid to enhance revenue, the Himachal Pradesh government Saturday increased the value added tax (VAT) on diesel by ₹3 per litre to ₹10.40 per litre.

VAT on diesel has been increased from 9.90 per cent to 13.9 per cent, an increase of ₹3 per litre from ₹7.40 to ₹10.40 per litre, as per the notification issued by the State Excise and Taxation department.

Justifying the increase, chief minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu Saturday said the previous BJP government had reduced the VAT by seven per cent on the eve of the last assembly polls held in November 2022 and the increase was imperative for mobilising resources along with other measures.

He said the state has suffered huge losses due to heavy rains and resources have to be mobi-



lized in this hour. The roads, water supply schemes and electricity have been restored temporarily and it would take almost a year to restore the damaged infrastructure.

In spite of an increase in VAT, diesel is cheaper in the state as compared to the neighbouring states of Uttarakhand, Punjab and Haryana, he asserted.

Reacting sharply to the decision of the government to increase VAT on diesel, former chief minister and leader of the opposition, Jai Ram Thakur said the increase in rate of diesel at a time when people are reeling under the impact of unprecedented rains and flood.

# Mandi's Panchvaktra temple withstands worst calamity

WHILE THE SWOLLEN BEAS HAS SWALLOWED SCORES OF MODERN CONCRETE STRUCTURES BETWEEN MANALI AND MANDI, THE 16TH CENTURY TEMPLE BUILT ON HEAVY ROCKS HAS EMERGED AS THE WATER LEVEL RECEDED

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Mandi, July 15:** Call it a miracle or an architectural marvel, the Panchvaktra temple, dedicated to Lord Shiva and known for stone carvings, in Himachal Pradesh's historical town, known as Chhoti Kashi, standing tall after flash floods triggered by heavy monsoon rain.

After remaining firm amidst the swollen Beas that saw several flash floods in its catchment, which swallowed scores of modern concrete structures between Manali and Mandi towns, the 16th century temple built on heavy rocks has emerged as the water level receded.

The temple is situated at the confluence of the Suketi and Beas rivers.

Believers say this reminds them of the Kedarnath temple that stood tall amidst the 2013 floods in Uttarakhand.

Geological experts told IANS that heavy floods could not damage the foundation of the Panchvaktra temple, an Archeological Survey of India (ASI) protected monument.

The temple is built in the typical Shikhar architecture style.

According to legend, the Panchvaktra temple was restored by one of the erstwhile rulers of



Mandi, Sidh Sen, who succeeded Gur Sen in 1678 AD, as it was damaged by floods. The main porch of the temple is supported by four carved pillars.

Inside the temple, there is a huge statue of Lord Shiva. The statue has five faces, which depict different characters of Lord

Shiva - Aghora (destructive nature), Ishana (omnipresent and omnipotent), Tat Purusha (ego), Vamadeva (female facet) and Rudra (his creative and destructive aspect).

Temple priest told IANS that after the water level receded, the temple had an accumulation

of 12-13 feet of sand. "There was no damage to the statue of Lord Shiva. In fact, the entire statue of Nandi was blanketed by a 12-foot tall mound of sand. There was some damage to the outer boundary walls of the temple."

Two days back the doors of the temple were reopened for

the devotees and the prayers resumed.

Former Chief Minister Jairam Thakur visited the spot when the temple was submerged in the water. "In the past 60 years, as people are telling me, they have never seen the temple submerge in the Beas waters. Even

local legislator Anil Sharma is saying that in his entire life he has never heard that the temple is submerged." Leader of Opposition Thakur told the media July 10.

He was accompanying several legislators, including local lawmaker Sharma.

Deputy Chief Minister Mukesh Agnihotri Thursday paid obeisance at the temple along with his wife.

Expressing happiness, he said despite the deluge in the Beas river Mandi's Panchvaktra temple is fully safe. "And Lord Mahadev is seated."

Addressing the crowd in Mandi in the local dialect, Mandiyali, while launching BJP's election campaign in September last year, Prime Minister Modi expressed happiness at being in Chhoti Kashi after visiting Kashi Vishwanath the same month.

In his visits to Mandi, he never missed to mention his visits to the town's Bhootnath temple and Panchvaktra temple.

Mandi is popularly known for the week-long congregation of 200 deities from hundreds of temples for the festivities of Mahashivratri. The celebrations date back to 1526 when this town was founded during the rule of Ajar Sen (1499-1534).



Lord Shiva devotees gather at Har ki Pauri to collect holy water of the Ganga river during 'Kanwar Yatra' in the holy month of 'Shravan' on the occasion of 'Sawan Shivratri', in Haridwar



A commuter on a waterlogged road as the swollen Yamuna river inundates nearby areas, at ITO in New Delhi



Chief of Army Staff General Manoj Pande during his visit to the forward areas along the Line of Control to review the operational preparedness



NDRF personnel and locals rescue a cow from a flooded area in New Delhi



Priyanka Chopra Jonas and her husband Nick Jonas sit in the Royal Box ahead of the final of the women's singles between the Czech Republic's Marketa Vondrousova and Tunisia's Ons Jabeur on day thirteen of the Wimbledon tennis championships in London



PDP workers shout slogans during a protest against the central government on various issues, in Jammu



Farm workers pluck tomatoes, in Karad, Maharashtra. Tomato prices are soaring across the nation



Activists assemble to mark the 50th anniversary of the Nepalese government's ban on marijuana, advocating for its decriminalization and to pardon victims of drug war, near the American Embassy in Kathmandu, Nepal



# national

## of the day quote

The enemies of peace are trying everything to hurt the peace and prosperity in Jammu and Kashmir with their nefarious designs by carrying out attacks on the migrant workers. I pray for the early recovery of the injured

GHULAM NABI AZAD | CHAIRMAN OF DEMOCRATIC PROGRESSIVE AZAD PARTY

Ajit Pawar could become the CM in future. It is certain that the CM (Eknath Shinde) will be replaced

SANJAY RAUT | SHIV SENA (UBT) LEADER

Prime Minister Narendra Modi would certainly win the 2024 general election as the opposition has failed to decide on a leader

EKNATH SHINDE | MAHARASHTRA CM

## SHORT TAKES

### Lightning kills 17

**Patna:** At least 17 people were killed in lightning strikes in 11 districts of Bihar in the last 24 hours, an official statement said Saturday. According to the statement issued by the chief minister's office (CMO), Rohtas district reported five deaths, followed by two each in Aurangabad and Buxar districts. Besides, Arwal, Kishanganj, Kaimur, Vaishali, Siwan, Patna, Araria and Saran districts recorded one death each. Chief Minister Nitish Kumar expressed condolences over the deaths and announced an ex-gratia amount of Rs 4 lakh each for the next of kin of the deceased. Kumar appealed to the people of the state to remain vigilant and stay indoors during thunderstorms.

### Woman gangraped

**Datia (MP):** A 19-year-old woman was allegedly abducted and raped by four persons in Datia district of Madhya Pradesh, after which the victim tried to end her life, police said Saturday. The incident occurred Friday afternoon in an area located under the Unav police station limits, and the police have so far detained three out of four accused, they said. A complaint was lodged by the woman's younger sister. "The complainant said she and her elder sister were abducted by four persons. The accused took them to a house, where they raped her elder sister," Superintendent of Police (SP) Pradeep Sharma said. Following the incident, the victim and her younger sister returned home, where the victim tried to commit suicide, he said.

### Cop ends life

**Shivpuri (MP):** An assistant sub inspector (ASI) of police allegedly shot himself dead using his service revolver in Shivpuri district of Madhya Pradesh, an official said Saturday. The incident occurred at his residence located on a police station premises in Khaniyadhana town, some 95 km from the district headquarters, during the intervening night of Friday and Saturday, he said.

### Leopard sighting triggers panic

**Palghar:** Frequent sighting of a leopard has triggered panic at a village in Maharashtra's Palghar district with the local authorities asking the residents, especially children and elderly people, not to step out of houses after sunset, officials said Saturday. A Zilla Parishad-run school at Bavda village in Dahanu taluka, where the big cat was seen in the past few days, was also shut as a precautionary measure to avoid any untoward incident, they said.



The cheetahs, for which the BJP government had made great ostentation, were not taken care of after the show of political power  
AKHILESH YADAV | SP CHIEF

## AZAM CONVICTED

A court in Uttar Pradesh's Rampur district convicted SP leader Mohd Azam Khan in a hate speech case. The MP/MLA court sentenced Khan to a two-year jail term for remarks he made against Yogi Adityanath



# Rahul moves SC for relief in Modi surname case

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 15:** Congress leader Rahul Gandhi moved the Supreme Court Saturday challenging the Gujarat High Court's July 7 order which dismissed his plea seeking a stay on his conviction in a defamation case over his "Modi surname" remark.

The appeal has been filed by Rahul Gandhi through advocate on-record Prasanna S. Rahul Gandhi was disqualified as a Member of Parliament on March 24, 2023 after a Gujarat court convicted him and sentenced him to a two-year imprisonment on charges of criminal defamation for comments he made about the Modi surname.

In a setback to the 53-year-old Rahul Gandhi, the high court dismissed his petition for a stay on conviction on July 7, observing that "purity in politics" is the need of the hour.

A stay on Rahul Gandhi's conviction could have paved the way for his reinstatement as a Lok Sabha MP but he failed to get any relief from either the sessions court or the Gujarat High Court.

In his verdict, Justice Hemant Prachchhak noted public representatives should be "men of clear antecedent" and that a stay on conviction is not a rule but an exception exercised only in rare cases. There was no reasonable ground to stay the conviction, he added.



Delivering a 125-page verdict, Justice Prachchhak had also said Gandhi, a former Congress president, was already facing 10 criminal cases across several states, adding the lower order awarding him a two-year jail term for his remarks was "just, proper and legal". The judge maintained it was not an "individual-centric defamation case", but something which affected a "large section of the society".

The court also noted Gandhi took Prime Minister Narendra Modi's name in his speech to "add sensation" and with an intention to "affect the result" of the 2019 Lok Sabha elections.

On July 7 itself, BJP MLA Purnesh Modi, the complainant in the defamation case against Gandhi, filed a caveat in the top court seeking that he be heard if the Congress leader moves a plea challenging the high court

## RAHUL TARGETS PM

**New Delhi:** Rahul Gandhi Saturday took a swipe at Prime Minister Narendra Modi alleging that the Rafale deal got him a "ticket to the Bastille Day Parade" while the BJP, hitting back at the Congress leader, dubbed him a "frustrated dynast" and accused him of sullying the ambitious 'Make in India' drive. Union minister Smriti Irani reacted furiously to the Congress leader's barb at the prime minister over the Rafale purchase and the tense situation in Manipur. Rahul Gandhi tweeted, "Manipur burns. EU Parliament discusses India's internal matter. PM hasn't said a word on either! Meanwhile, Rafale gets him a ticket to the Bastille Day Parade."

verdict refusing to stay his conviction in the case.

A caveat is filed in an appellate court by a litigant seeking an opportunity of being heard before any order is passed on the appeal of an opponent challenging the order or judgement of the court below.

Purnesh Modi, a former minister in the Gujarat government, had filed a criminal defamation case in 2019 against Gandhi over his "How come all thieves have Modi as the common surname?" remark made during an election rally at Kolar in Karnataka on April 13, 2019.

# Mamata to skip Opposition dinner

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 15:** West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee will not be attending an Opposition dinner on July 17 as she has to follow post-surgery protocols, but will be part of the daylong meeting of the parties on July 18, sources in her Trinamool Congress (TMC) said on Saturday.

Banerjee underwent a micro-surgery on her left knee at the state-run SSKM hospital in Kolkata on Thursday. The TMC chief suffered a ligation injury on her left knee during the emergency landing of her helicopter at the Sevoke Airbase in north Bengal on June 27.

"While her doctors have given her the permission to fly and attend the opposition summit, she has been advised rest. So she will skip the dinner, but will attend the daylong meeting on July 18," a source in the TMC said.

A dinner for the opposition parties has been planned by Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah in Bangalore on July 17. TMC's national general secretary Abhishek Banerjee and Rajya Sabha MP Derek O'Brien will be accompanying the West Bengal Chief Minister to the summit and are likely to attend the dinner as her representatives, the sources said.



West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee will not be attending an Opposition dinner on July 17 as she has to follow post-surgery protocols, but will be part of the daylong meeting of the parties on July 18, sources in her Trinamool Congress (TMC) said on Saturday.

In line with her doctor's advice, Banerjee will return to Kolkata soon after the summit. This will be the first time that the top leadership of the TMC, Congress and Left parties will meet after a violence-marred rural poll battle in West Bengal.

Congress leaders Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi will participate in the second meeting of opposition parties in Bangalore on July 18 (Monday). Twenty-four opposition parties, including the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), have been invited for the meet. The first opposition meeting, which was attended by around 15 parties, took place in Patna and was hosted by Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar.



A labourer collects lotus at Vellayani lake in Thiruvananthapuram

PTI PHOTO

# Nadda invites Chirag for NDA meet

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 15:** Several new allies and some former ones, including Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas) leader Chirag Paswan, may attend the BJP-led NDA meeting on July 18 in a show of strength by the ruling alliance amid hectic efforts by the opposition to unite against the Modi government.

Union minister Nityanand Rai met with Paswan on Friday

night for the second time in a week, and the LJP(R) also shared a letter written by BJP president J P Nadda to the young leader, inviting him to attend the NDA meeting.

Nadda described the regional party as a key constituent of the NDA and a key partner in the Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led government's push for the development and welfare of the poor. Sources said the BJP president has written similar letters

to leaders of various parties, including those the ruling party has reached out to ahead of the 2024 Lok Sabha polls.

Former Bihar chief minister Jitan Ram Manjhi of the Hindustani Awam Morcha is one of them, and his son Santosh Kumar Suman said that he will attend the July 18 meeting. He has also received an invite from Nadda, he added.

A number of new BJP allies, including the Shiv Sena headed

by Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, the NCP faction headed by Ajit Pawar, several smaller parties from Bihar and Uttar Pradesh and regional parties from the northeastern states, are among those expected to attend the NDA meeting.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will also be present at the meeting. This is for the first time during the second term of the Modi government that an NDA meeting of this scale is



taking place after a number of old and key BJP allies, including Uddhav Thackeray's Shiv Sena, Shiromani Akali Dal and the Janata Dal (United), severed ties with the party over a host of issues.

# Sex ratio imbalance: Centre, states to work on mission mode

India's Sex Ratio at Birth has improved from 904 females per thousand males in 2017-2019 to 907 in 2019-2020. It was recorded at 898 in 2014-2016, according to Sample Registration System data

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Dehradun, July 15:** The Centre and states will work on a mission mode to address the issue of sex ratio imbalance, Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya said Saturday and stressed on ensuring "comprehensive and saturation coverage" of all health schemes.

He said that concerns over sex ratio imbalance across the country were discussed at the

Swasthya Chintan Shivir here. It has been decided that the Centre and states will work on a mission mode to address the issue, the minister said on the last day of the two-day conclave in the Uttarakhand capital.

The Centre will also seek suggestions from states for amending the Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (PCPNDT) Act, 1994, for its effective implementation at the ground level



to address sex ratio imbalance, according to official sources. India's Sex Ratio at Birth has improved from 904 females per thousand males in 2017-2019 to 907 in 2019-2020. It was

recorded at 898 in 2014-2016, according to Sample Registration System (SRS) data. During the shivir, states were also asked to focus on 100 per cent coverage under the

Ayushman Bharat PM-JAY by launching a mega enrolment drive as well as promote organ donation. Mandaviya asked states and union territories to strive for universal health coverage by roping in healthcare workers at the grassroots.

Stressing on the need for ensuring "comprehensive and saturation coverage" of all health schemes, he said no eligible beneficiary should be left behind. Mandaviya hoped that the Swasthya Chintan Shivir - the 15th Conference of the Central Council of Health and Family Welfare -- would provide suggestions on how to shore up existing healthcare facilities as

well as on new interventions required across the country.

"The Swasthya Chintan Shivir should help bring us closer to the idea of last mile connectivity in health. In the last two days, we have seen a detailed overview of the health sector in India today, and the direction that we should take going forward to ensure universal health coverage," Mandaviya said.

"Lok bhagidari" (people's participation) in the Pradhan Mantri TB Mukta Bharat programme can go a long way to make India TB free, Mandaviya said as he exhorted states to encourage people to come forward to become "Ni-Kshay Mitras".

# international

## of the day quote

I will make a comeback and you will have to answer for all our actions



IMRAN KHAN | EX-PAK PM

At its supreme leader's orders, Iran has in recent years waged a worldwide terror campaign of unprecedented scale, focused on Israelis and Jews ... We are talking about more than 50 attempted attacks



YOAV GALLANT | ISRAELI DEFENCE MINISTER

The war in Ukraine will be one of the great priorities of our presidency, with the focus being on guaranteeing the unity (on the issue) among all member states



PEDRO SÁNCHEZ | SPAIN PM

## SHORT TAKES

### Rain havoc kills 21 in South Korea

Seoul: Heavy rains have killed 21 people and caused thousands to evacuate their homes across South Korea, authorities said Saturday. Officials said 10 people remained missing and nine others were injured. Most fatalities were reported from the southeastern province of North Gyeongsang, where 16 people died largely due to landslides and housing collapses.

### Hundreds of flights cancelled in Italy

Rome: Hundreds of flights across Italy were cancelled Saturday, forcing travellers at the peak of tourist season to make alternate plans, after air transport unions went ahead with a planned work stoppage two days following a train strike that paralysed rail service. Summertime in Italy is often the peak season for transport strikes, stranding commuters and tourists alike as unions press demands for better work contracts and conditions. This year, the strikes are taking their toll amid a tourism boom following two years of pandemic losses.

### 3 cops shot in US state

Washington: Three police officers were shot in the US state of North Dakota during an exchange of gunfire, officials said. The incident occurred Friday in the city of Fargo, the state-based Valley Live News reported. Witnesses told Valley News Live that the gunfire exchange took place after a traffic collision on 25th Street South near 9th Avenue South.

### UN considers Syrian offer

United Nations: The UN is considering an offer from the Damascus government for the world body to use the Bab al-Hawa border crossing to deliver aid into northwest Syria through Turkey, a spokesman said. Stephane Dujarric, chief spokesman for Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, confirmed that the world body has received a letter from Syria's Permanent Mission to the UN, granting permission to use the Bab al-Hawa border crossing, reports Xinhua news agency.

### 500 evacuated

Barcelona: Spanish authorities have preemptively evacuated some 500 people to avoid a wildfire that has broken out on the Canary island of La Palma. The regional president of the Canary Islands, Fernando Clavijo, said Saturday that, in addition to forcing the removal of the residents, the blaze has destroyed at least 11 homes within the relatively small burned zone of 140 hectares (345 acres).



In an attempt to find safety, reunite with families, and seek a more hopeful future, too many children are boarding boats on the shores of the Mediterranean and end up losing their lives or going missing

CATHERINE RUSSELL | UNICEF'S EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

## PEACE RALLY

Scores of Indian Americans held a peace rally in front of the Indian Consulate here to express solidarity with India following a recent attempted arson at the diplomatic facility by Khalistan supporters



# S Korea to expand support for Ukraine

During a joint news conference with Zelenskyy, Yoon announced plans to expand support shipments to Ukraine but didn't touch upon weapons supplies



AGENCIES

Kyiv, July 15: South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol made a surprise visit to Ukraine Saturday, offering support for the invaded country in its war with Russia while demonstrating his own nation's cooperation with NATO.

Yoon's office said he travelled to Ukraine with his wife, Kim Keon Hee, following trips to Lithuania for a NATO summit and to Poland. It's his first visit since Russia invaded Ukraine in February 2022.

Yoon toured Bucha and Irpin, two small cities near Kyiv where bodies of civilians were found in the streets and mass graves after Russian troops retreated from the capital region last year. He laid flowers at a monument to the country's war dead, before he sat down for a summit with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy.

South Korea, a key US ally in Asia, joined international sanctions against Russia and has provided Ukraine with humanitarian and financial support to Ukraine

South Korea, a key US ally in Asia, joined international sanctions against Russia and has provided Ukraine with humanitarian and financial support to Ukraine

Since Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, South Korea has reached billions of dollars worth of deals to provide tanks, howitzers, fighter jets and other weapons systems to NATO member Poland

provided Ukraine with humanitarian and financial support to Ukraine. But the Asian nation, a growing arms exporter, hasn't provided weapons to Ukraine in line with its long-standing policy of not supplying arms to countries actively engaged in conflict.

During a joint news conference with Zelenskyy later on Saturday, Yoon announced plans to expand support shipments to Ukraine but didn't touch upon

## Zelenskyy warns of Russian efforts to halt Kyiv's troops

President Volodymyr Zelenskyy warned Ukrainians that Russia was throwing all its resources into a campaign to stop Kyiv's troops from pressing their counter offensive and a top general reported new progress on the southern front. But Ukrainian military analysts suggested that things were not easy for Ukrainian forces in their bid to advance southward. Ukraine has launched a counter offensive to take back swathes of land in eastern and southern Ukraine captured by Russian forces in their invasion launched in February 2022. It has focused on capturing villages in the southeast in a drive towards the Sea of Azov and areas near the eastern city of Bakhmut, taken by Russian forces in May after months of battles. Russian accounts said its forces had repelled Ukrainian attacks in eastern Donetsk region, including around Bakhmut.

weapons supplies.

Yoon began his statement with a mention of the UN forces' support of South Korea during the 1950-53 Korean War that helped repel a North Korean invasion.

"The current situation facing Ukraine reminds us of the past situation of the Republic of Korea," Yoon said.

Zelenskyy thanked Seoul for its "firm support of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity" and the "significant political, security, economic and humanitarian aid" it has supplied since the start of Russia's invasion.

## Netanyahu rushed to hospital: Report

REUTERS

Jerusalem, July 15: Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was undergoing medical assessments in an Israeli hospital Saturday but was in good condition, his office said, with local media seeing no grounds for a handover of power.

Netanyahu, 73, was fully conscious en route to Sheba Hospital in Tel Hashomer, and walked into the emergency room, Israel's Channel 12 TV said, quoting the premier's doctor. He was not undergoing sedation and no procedures were under way to declare him incapacitated, Channel 12 said. Tel Hashomer is close to coastal Caesarea, where Benjamin Netanyahu has a private residence. Israeli media said he was there when he reported feeling unwell. Netanyahu took ill during the Jewish fast of Yom Kippur in early October and was briefly hospitalised. Israel has been in the grip of a weekend heatwave.



The veteran conservative leader is also in the eye of a political storm over his plan to overhaul the judiciary, which has set off unprecedented protests by Israelis worried for the future independence of the courts.

That has compounded tensions with the US administration over his religious-nationalist coalition government's hardline tack on the Palestinians. In parallel, Netanyahu has been on trial in three corruption case in which he denies wrongdoing.

## Wagner troops in Belarus



Images have emerged purportedly showing Wagner fighters training Belarusian soldiers at a base south-east of Minsk

REUTERS

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Minsk (Belarus), July 15: A large convoy carrying fighters from the Wagner private army was spotted entering Belarus from Russia early Saturday, a monitoring group reported after the country's Defence Ministry said it planned for the mercenaries and Minsk's own armed forces to conduct joint military drills.

The independent monitoring group Belaruski Hajun, which tracks the movements of armed forces in Belarus, said at least 60 trucks, buses and other large vehicles crossed into the eastern European country accompanied by Belarusian police.

The convoy headed toward a military base outside Osipovichi, a town 230 kilometers (142 miles) north of the Ukrainian border. Satellite images analyzed by The Associated Press this month showed rows of tent-like structures that appeared to have been built at the base between June 15 and June 30.

The authoritarian president of Belarus, Alexander Lukashenko, said at the time that Minsk could use Wagner's experience and expertise, and that he had offered the fighters an "abandoned military unit" to set up camp. That same week, a leader of an anti-Lukashenko guerrilla group

told the AP that construction of a site for the mercenaries was underway near Osipovichi.

While Belaruski Hajun's claim about the convoy heading into Belarus could not immediately be verified, a spokesperson for Ukraine's State Border Guard Service said Saturday that the force also had observed "some groups" of Wagner fighters crossing from Russia into Belarus. The spokesperson, Andriy Demchenko, made the remarks in an interview with the Ukrainska Pravda newspaper.

Earlier Friday, the Defense Ministry said that Wagner fighters had begun training Belarusian soldiers. A TV channel affiliated with the ministry showed footage of fighters in black masks instructing soldiers on how to shoot and provide first aid.

On June 23, the Wagner group's founder and leader, Yevgeny Prigozhin, ordered his fighters to leave their camps in Ukraine and head toward Moscow to demand the removal of Russia's defense minister and General Staff chief. In the revolt that lasted less than 24 hours, Wagner fighters swept through the southern Russian city of Rostov-on-Don and captured the military headquarters there, before driving to within about 200 kilometers (125 miles) of the Russian capital.

## COP-28 PRESIDENCY

# Modi assures India's full support for UAE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Abu Dhabi, July 15: Prime Minister Narendra Modi assured India's full support for UAE's COP28 presidency as he held productive talks with the UN climate conference's President-designate Sultan Al Jaber on ways to further sustainable development here Saturday.

Modi arrived here in the capital of the UAE following his successful two-day visit to Paris where he joined French President Emmanuel Macron for the Bastille Day parade as the Guest of Honour and signed several agreements to strengthen bilateral ties.

"Had a very productive meeting with Dr. Sultan Al Jaber, the President-designate of @COP28\_UAE. Our discussions focused on ways to further sus-

The COP28 summit will be the first formal assessment of countries' progress towards the Paris Agreement's target to limit climate change to 1.5 Celsius of warming

The assessment at COP28 - known as the Global Stocktake - will increase pressure on major emitters to update their actions to cut greenhouse gas emissions

tainable development. Highlighted India's contribution in this direction, in particular our emphasis on Mission LiFE," he tweeted.

"Dr. Jaber briefed PM on the forthcoming COP-28. PM assured India's full support for UAE's COP-28 presidency. PM also highlighted India's efforts and initiatives to address climate change." External Affairs Ministry Spokesperson Arindam Bagchi tweeted.



Bullfighter Ruben Pinar is pushed by Miura's bull during the last bullfight of the San Fermin Festival in Pamplona, northern Spain. Revellers from around the world flock to Pamplona every year for nine days of uninterrupted partying in Pamplona's famed running of the bulls festival

AP/PTI PHOTO

# Hollywood strike intensifies as contract talks collapse

SEVERAL HUNDRED ACTORS SWELLED THE RANKS OF PICKETING TELEVISION AND MOVIE WRITERS, WHO HAVE BEEN POUNDING THE PALM TREE-LINED SIDEWALKS OUTSIDE NETFLIX, WARNER, PARAMOUNT AND MORE FOR WELL OVER TWO MONTHS ALREADY

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Los Angeles, July 15: Honking horns, simmering heat, a smattering of stars, and a lot of anger at Disney boss Bob Iger.

The Hollywood actors' strike kicked off on a sweltering Friday morning in Los Angeles, just over 24 hours after contract talks collapsed with studios.

Several hundred actors swelled the ranks of picketing television and movie writers, who have been pounding the palm tree-lined sidewalks outside Netflix, Warner, Paramount and more for well over two months already. "No contracts? No actors! No wages? No pages!" went the chants, as organisers from both unions begged strikers to keep hydrated and stay off the roads,

where passing cars and trucks blared their horns in support. "It's a wonderful celebration of workers. This is more than an entertainment industry labor strike - it's all of labor, all over the country and the world," said "Titanic" star Frances Fisher, 71. "Everybody's standing up," she told AFP, yards away from the historic arched entryway to Paramount Picture studio.

Chanting writers welcomed the new influx of noticeably louder voices from the Screen Actors Guild (SAG-AFTRA), and expressed hope that the arrival of globally recognizable faces should bring renewed attention to the movements.

Stars including Allison Janney ("The West Wing"), Mandy Moore ("This is Us"), and Ben Schwartz



("Sonic the Hedgehog") joined rank-and-file actors on the picket lines, while Jason Sudeikis and Susan Sarandon showed up across the country at protests in New York. "It feels historic,"

said Zev Frank, 36, a writer on Amazon Prime series "Patriot." "To see them show up like this, in huge numbers, it feels different today. It feels electric." "We're part of an industry

that has so many people that are front-facing, so that extra PR is gonna be helpful," said Tien Tran, 36, star of sitcom "How I Met Your Father."

Among other demands, SAG-AFTRA is asking studios for pay rises to keep pace with inflation, a greater share in the profit of hit shows or films.

Those proposals were dismissed by Disney CEO Bob Iger this week as "unrealistic" - comments that invoked fury among several strikers interviewed by AFP. "He's refurbishing his house right now for \$5 million, and these people don't even have health insurance... it's disrespectful and disgusting," said Shawn Richardz, an actress who has appeared in "Treme" and

"Nip/Tuck." "This guy is saying we're asking for unrealistic things? Are you kidding me?"

"That was a really prime example of the mindset of the people on top," agreed actor E.J. Arriola 42. "As artists, we've been around for so long, and there doesn't seem to be any sort of respect."

Many heaped praise on SAG-AFTRA president Fran Drescher, whose similar language in a press conference announcing the strike Thursday went viral.

Elsewhere, among the hundreds of SAG-AFTRA and Writers Guild of America signs, placards from other Hollywood unions representing behind-the-scenes crew and transport workers were visible among the marchers.



**“This (G20 meet) is a really important opportunity to make sure that we get the multinational tax arrangements right so that companies pay the tax where they make their profits”**  
JIM CHALMERS | AUSTRALIAN TREASURER

## RECORD BOOKINGS FOR NEW KIA SELTOS

Kia India Saturday said it has received record 13,424 bookings for the updated version of Seltos on the first day of commencing the bookings. Out of these, 1,973 bookings were done using the K-Code which was a special programme to expand the Seltos community by giving existing Seltos owners special access to unlock high-priority delivery for the new potential buyers



## of the day quote

The valuations in China at a PE of 9 is hugely attractive now compared to valuations in India with a PE of around 20 and, therefore, the 'Sell China, Buy India' policy of FPIs cannot continue for long

VK VIJAYAKUMAR | CHIEF INVESTMENT STRATEGIST, GEJOIT FINANCIAL SERVICES

Over the past year, we have witnessed a slowdown in general trade dragged by consumption stress in rural India and the lower and middle-income strata in urban areas

SAUGATA GUPTA | CEO AND MD, MARICO

We aim to spend \$39.5 billion in research and development, facility and strategic investment. We look to reach \$79 billion in sales by 2030, up from \$51.4 billion last year

WILLIAM CHO | CEO, LG ELECTRONICS

## SHORT TAKES

### SBI ups lending rate by 5bps

**New Delhi:** State Bank of India (SBI), country's largest lender, has raised its marginal cost of funds based lending rate (MCLR) by 5 basis points (bps) across all tenures, a move that will lead to an increase in EMIs for borrowers. With the increase, EMIs will go up for those borrowers who have availed loans on MCLR, not for those, whose loans are linked to other benchmarks. The revised MCLR rate is effective from July 15, as per the information posted on SBI website. With the revision, one-year MCLR has increased to 8.55 per cent, from the earlier 8.50 per cent. Most of the loans are linked to the one-year MCLR rate. An overnight, one-month and three-month MCLR rose by 5 bps to 8 per cent and 8.15 per cent, respectively, whereas a six-month MCLR increased to 8.45 per cent.

### 2nd phase of PLI for IT hardware

**New Delhi:** The government Friday extended the timelines till July 31, 2023 for receiving applications under PLI Scheme 2.0 for IT hardware. The ambitious scheme aims to broaden and deepen the IT hardware manufacturing ecosystem in the country. In May, the Union Cabinet had approved a ₹17,000 crore-incentive to boost local manufacturing of IT hardware like tablets and laptops, and the scheme is projected to generate an incremental production worth ₹3.35 lakh crore over a period of six years. "The application window for receiving applications under PLI Scheme 2.0 for IT Hardware has been extended till July 31, 2023," an official release said Friday. The Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme 2.0 for IT hardware covers laptops, tablets, all-in-one PCs, servers and ultra-small form factor devices.

### Bitcoin crashes

**San Francisco:** Bitcoin prices nosedived Saturday after leading cryptocurrency exchange Binance reportedly laid off roughly 1,000 workers, and the layoffs could continue. Bitcoin slipped back nearly \$30,000 per token after the news emerged late Friday, which was first reported by the Wall Street Journal. Bitcoin value suffered more than 2.7 per cent loss after the Binance layoff news. As per the WSJ's report, Binance could let go of up to one-third of its workforce, which was nearly 8,000 prior to the start of layoffs. The US Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) is separately suing Binance and Coinbase.

## INTERNATIONALISATION OF ₹

# India, UAE to trade in local currencies

THE MOVE WILL BOOST INDIA'S EFFORTS TO CUT TRANSACTION COSTS BY ELIMINATING DOLLAR CONVERSIONS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, July 15:** Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and Central Bank of UAE (CBUAE) Saturday signed two agreements in Abu Dhabi to establish a framework for cross-border transactions in local currencies and interlinking of payment and messaging systems.

The agreements were exchanged between the two governors, in the presence of the Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi and Sheikh Mohamed Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the UAE, the Reserve Bank said in a statement.

The memorandum of agreements (MoUs) are for 'establishing a framework to promote the use of local currencies viz. The Indian rupee (INR) and the UAE dirham (AED) for cross-border transactions' and 'cooperation for interlinking their payment and messaging systems'.

"The manner in which ties between our countries have expanded, you have made a big contribution to that. Every person in India views you as a true friend," Modi told the UAE President.

India has been promoting cross-border transactions in local currencies to reduce dependence on the US dollar.

"The two MoUs are aimed at facilitating seamless cross-border transactions and payments and foster greater economic cooperation between the two countries," the RBI said.

The MoU on establishing a framework for the use of local currencies for transactions between India and UAE aims to put in place a Local Currency Settlement System (LCSS) to promote the use of INR and AED bilaterally.

The central bank said the MoU covers all current account transactions and permitted capital account transactions.



■ RBI, CBUAE SIGN PACTS TO PROMOTE USE OF RUPEE, UAE DIRHAM FOR CROSS-BORDER TRANSACTIONS

■ THE TWO CENTRAL BANKS AGREED TO LINK INDIA'S UPI AND UAE'S IPP TO FACILITATE EASIER TRANSFERS

■ SUCH ARRANGEMENTS, WHICH ARE A GROWING TREND IN ASIA, TYPICALLY LOWER THE COST OF PAYMENTS

"Creation of the LCSS would enable exporters and importers to invoice and pay in their respective domestic currencies, which in turn would enable the development of an INR-AED foreign exchange market. This arrangement would also promote investments and remittances between the two countries," it added.

Use of local currencies would optimise transaction costs and settlement time for transactions, including for remittances from Indians residing in UAE.

Regarding the undertaking on 'Payments and Messaging Systems', the RBI said the two central banks agreed to cooperate on linking their Fast Payment Systems (FPSs) – Unified Payments Interface (UPI)

of India with Instant Payment Platform (IPP) of UAE; and linking the respective Card Switches (RuPay switch and

UAESWITCH); and exploring the linking of payments messaging systems – Structured Financial Messaging System (SFMS) of India with the messaging system in the UAE.

"The UPI-IPP linkage will enable the users in either country to make fast, convenient, safe, and cost-effective cross-border funds transfers," the RBI said.

Further, the linking of Card Switches will facilitate mutual acceptance of domestic cards and processing of card transactions.

The linkage of messaging systems is aimed to facilitate bilateral financial messaging between the two countries.

India, the world's third biggest oil importer and consumer and whose central bank last year announced a framework for settling global trade in rupees, currently pays for UAE oil in dollars.

Bilateral trade between the two countries was \$84.5 billion in the year from April 2022 to March 2023

## SEBI's norms on disclosure kick in

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, July 15:** The compliance burden on listed companies is set to increase from Saturday as capital markets regulator SEBI has put in place a stricter timeline for disclosure of material events or information by them.

Under this, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has given 12 to 24 hours for disclosures.

The regulator has asked companies to disclose agreements entered into by shareholders, promoters, related parties, directors, key managerial personnel, and employees of the listed entity or of its subsidiary, which can impact the management and control of such firms to stock exchanges.

Such agreements need to be disclosed within 12 hours in case a listed entity is a party and within 24 hours where the listed entity is not a party.

Disclosure of family settlement agreements was already required under the existing Para A of Schedule III under the LODR (Listing of Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations.

Further, for material events or information that emanate from the listed entity, including those related to acquisitions, Scheme of Arrangement, consolidation of shares, and buyback of securities, the timeline for disclosure by the entity has been set at 12 hours, according to a SEBI circular.

Besides, timelines have been fixed at 24 hours from the occurrence of the event in case the information is not emanating from within the listed entity. This included a revision in rating, fraud, or defaults by a listed entity, its promoter, or directors; restructuring about loans from banks, one-time settlement with a bank, and winding-up petition filed by any party/creditor.

The outcome of meetings of the board of directors needs to be made within 30 minutes from the closure of such meetings.

Earlier, the regulator amended LODR rules after the SEBI board approved a proposal in this regard.

## SKILL GAMING VS GAMBLING

# Reverse 28% GST: 127 gaming leaders write letter to govt

The GST Council announced to impose a 28% tax on online gaming at the full-face value, shocking the industry and leaving them in significant distress

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 15:** Around 127 online gaming companies and organisations have written an open letter to the government, urging it to reverse the 28 per cent GST on the full deposit value and segregate skill gaming from betting and gambling which has left the industry in significant distress.

The letter, which has participants like Baazi Games, Dangal Games, Gamekraft Technologies, Nazara Technologies and WinZO Games Private

Limited, said this move would potentially have devastating implications (including shut down of businesses) for MSMEs and startups that may not have the capital reserves to withstand such a sharp tax increase.

"Further, this decision will encourage illegal offshore gambling operators, drive Indian users to them and ultimately lead to neither optimal tax collection nor the growth of the legitimate industry," the letter read.

Currently, the industry is paying 18 per cent GST on GGR/Platform Fee. The letter highlights that, "an increase of GST to 28 per cent on GGR/Platform fee will result in a 55 per cent increase in GST quantum."

However, for the sector to survive, this tax should be levied on the platform fee/Gross Gaming Revenue that is earned by the industry. This is similar to any other technology service platform, where only the revenue that platforms earn are considered for the purpose of levy of GST." "The industry currently sup-



Online skill gaming, with \$20bn enterprise valuation, \$2.5bn in revenue, and \$1bn in annual taxes, is set to grow by 30% CAGR to reach \$5bn in revenue by 2025

The total number of Indian online gamers grew from 360mn in 2020 to over 420mn in 2023	India's gaming industry attracted FDI of about \$500 million between 2014 and 2020, and over \$1.5 billion between January 2021 - June 2022
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ports lakhs of direct and indirect jobs, and these numbers will grow substantially in the next few years," said the letter.

The Goods and Services Tax (GST) Council this week announced that bets placed in online gaming, horse racing, and casinos will now levy a 28 per cent tax at full value.

The letter mentioned eight core points that underscore the adverse impact of such taxation like hampering the Digital India Initiative; implications for startups and MSMEs; impact on jobs and livelihoods; impact on consumer affordability; offshore gambling sites to be the unintended beneficiaries; stifling foreign investment and global competitiveness; losing opportunity to become a global gaming leader and impact on exports and long-term net revenue loss for the chequer.

"For the sector to survive, this tax should be levied on the platform fee/gross gaming revenue that is earned by the industry. This is similar to any other technology service platform, where only the revenue that platforms earn are considered for the purpose of levy of GST," according to the letter.

## BIZ BUZZ

### TPWODL's Power System Control Centre unveiled

**BURLA:** Nikunja Bihari Dhal, IAS, Additional Chief Secretary to Government, Energy Department along with Trilochan Panda, Managing Director, GRIDCO visited Burla and inaugurated the Power System Control Centre established by TP Western Odisha Distribution Limited (TPWODL) based out of Burla at Sambalpur Friday. The centre was inaugurated in presence of Gajanan Kale, Chief Executive Officer, TPWODL and all senior leaders. After the inauguration, the Additional Chief Secretary and Managing Director GRIDCO conducted a detailed review of all infrastructure development projects undertaken by TPWODL. Dhal advised the TPWODL team to complete all government funded projects within the settled time. Apart from this Dhal and Panda also visited the TPWODL Call Centre at Sambalpur and the training & practice yard set up at Goshala to train the employees.



# 'Magnificent 7' mcap nears \$11tn, half of US GDP

THE TOP SEVEN STOCKS GET TOO CONCENTRATED ON ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE BUZZ

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New York, July 15:** Seven stocks, making up close to \$ 11 trillion in market capitalisation today, contributed 73 per cent of returns of the S&P 500 in the first half of 2023, a crescendo to FANG, FAANMG and tech leadership, BofA Global Research said in a report.

These top seven stocks, Amazon, Apple, Alphabet, Meta Platforms, Microsoft, Nvidia and Tesla, are called as the 'Magnificent Seven'.

The Top 7 stocks drove 73 per cent of S&P 500 gains in H1, each up 90 per cent on average in H1. These have a market capitalisation of roughly equivalent to half

of US GDP. They gained \$4tn+ YTD, more than GDP growth of Japan (3rd largest economy).

Apple's market capitalisation exceeds that of the entire Russell 2000 index. Tech, Media, and Telecom (TMT) companies have contributed 30 per cent of S&P 500's earnings growth since 2010. TMT represents 8 per cent of US GDP, 17 per cent of S&P EPS and 40 per cent of S&P mkt cap, it said.

On the reasons for market concentration, the report said ultra-low rates and a lackluster economy in the 2010s created the perfect petri dish for idiosyncratic, secular growth and disruptive themes to flourish.

This coupled with market-cap



italisation weighted index inflows favoring larger companies, global Tech Wars driving big spend, fiscal support and lighter regulation, a pandemic hastening more tech adoption, e-commerce, cloud, today's nascency-to-maturity theme: AI, and Tech IPOs incubating longer and debuting

as hypergrowth mega caps.

"Irrational exuberance, top-heavy markets and speculative bubbles of one sort or another trace back to the 1700s' tulips. In our career, the Nifty 50 of the mid-90s morphed into the Internet Bubble of the late '90s, the Housing Bubble of the 2000s, cryptocurrency of the 2010s," the report said.

Bubbles fueled by excessive leverage, democratisation of markets and rampant speculation tend to end badly. But real disruptors can do well. The 2000 Tech Bubble saw consolidation and relative losses for about a decade but 1 in 5 IPOs of the late 1990s survived and are today's blue chips.

## JOB MARKET RELEVANCE

# Young professionals embracing AI upskilling

THE GROWING PROMINENCE OF DIGITAL MARKETING AS A SOUGHT-AFTER DOMAIN HIGHLIGHTS ITS IMPORTANCE IN TODAY'S JOB MARKET

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, July 15:** A significant percentage of young professionals are keen to embrace artificial intelligence (AI) upskilling, recognising its crucial role in staying relevant in the job market, according to a report released Saturday.

Around 80 per cent respondents believed that acquiring AI skills can give them a competitive advantage and will open doors to exciting job opportunities, according to the report by jobs and professional networking platform apna.Co.

The report is based on an online survey by apna.Co with more than 5,000 young professionals between 18-35 years and

was conducted in June.

The report further revealed that a significant (65 per cent) of young professionals showed interest in acquiring skills in the digital marketing space.

The growing prominence of digital marketing as a sought-after domain highlights its importance in today's job market and respondents recognised its value in driving business growth and reaching target audiences in this era, the report added.

The report revealed that 7 out of 10 respondents have taken proactive steps by enrolling in upskilling initiatives, demonstrating their commitment to personal and professional growth.

This proactive approach re-

The report mirrors the efforts of the Indian youth, who are increasingly recognising the importance of upskilling themselves with the emerging technologies in the transformed work ecosystem

NIRMIT PARIKH | FOUNDER AND CEO, APNA.CO

fects the awareness among young professionals that upskilling is essential for staying competitive and securing rewarding career opportunities, it said.

Family and personal commitments, along with financial constraints, were cited as common barriers that hinder some individuals from participating



in upskilling programmes, it added.

However, the report found that a growing concern among 7 out of 10 respondents, is their lack of confidence in their current skill-set to keep up with

the job market.

Around 60 per cent of the respondents said they have established a separate personal learning and development budget post-Covid, signalling a commitment to self-improvement, it said.

This budget allocation indicated a strong determination among young professionals to address their skill gaps and enhance their marketability, it added.

80% RESPONDENTS BELIEVED THAT ACQUIRING AI SKILLS CAN GIVE THEM A COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

65% OF YOUNG PROFESSIONALS SHOWED INTEREST IN ACQUIRING SKILLS IN DIGITAL MARKETING SPACE

7 OUT OF 10 RESPONDENTS HAVE TAKEN PROACTIVE STEPS BY ENROLLING IN UPSKILLING INITIATIVES

# DOMINATION IN DOMINICA

## Journey has been long, but it's just start: Jaiswal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Roseau (Dominica), July 15:** Young India opener Yashasvi Jaiswal said the journey so far has been long and arduous for him and the 'Player of the Match' award in his debut Test was "just the start" of many more future success stories.

Jaiswal showed in the first Test against the West Indies here that he belongs to the highest level, with the southpaw scoring 171 runs on debut and sharing a 229-run partnership with skipper Rohit Sharma.

Jaiswal became only the third Indian to score 150 on debut and his big break came after sensational performances in IPL and domestic cricket.

The BCCI posted a short video on social media Saturday, which showed 21-year-old Jaiswal walking back to his hotel room after collecting his 'Player of the Match' award.

"It felt very nice getting the Player of the Match award on debut. It's been a long journey, feeling very happy and good about it," said Jaiswal as he climbed the stairs on way to his hotel room.

"Let's see what the future holds for me, this is just the start (of my international career). Pray to God that I continue playing like this, keep making (such) efforts and keep contributing for the team," he added.

The young cricketer then placed the trophy on a table in his room and thanked everyone for the success. "Thank you so much in the end. This will be a memorable moment for me. Thank you God, thank you guys for your love and support," he added.

Earlier, Jaiswal while receiving the trophy, had said that playing a Test for the country was an "emotional moment for him" and thanked chief coach Rahul Dravid for his advice.

"We prepared pretty well. Spoke a lot to Rahul Dravid sir and learned from him. Would like to thank all the selectors and Rohit (Sharma) sir for having faith in me. It's really nice, I have been working on this.

"Playing Test cricket for India is very special and emotional.

This is just the start, I need to keep my focus and keep working on my cricket. Lots of people helped me through my journey and I want to thank each and every one of them," he said.

Rohit lauds Jaiswal  
Jaiswal always had the talent and now he has shown that he belongs at the highest level, India skipper Rohit Sharma said following the southpaw's 171 on debut in the first Test against West Indies.

"He has the talent, he has shown us in the past that he is ready. Came and batted sensibly. The temperament was also tested, at no stage he was panicking. The chats we had were to remind him that 'you belong here. You have done the hard yards, enjoy your time here'," said Rohit after the win.

Ravichandran Ashwin and Ravindra Jadeja drew praise from the skipper. "The results speak for themselves, they have been doing it for a while. There isn't much to tell them, it is about giving them the freedom to express. The experience these guys have on pitches like this is always a luxury. Both Ash and Jadeja were superb, specially Ashwin for coming out and bowling this way was class."

with 76 off 182 but it was not among his fluent knocks as he had to work extremely hard for his runs and was even dropped twice along the way. The second and final Test starts in Port of Spain, Trinidad, from July 20. India, who have not lost a Test to West Indies since 2002, will be expected to complete a clean sweep and pick up crucial points in the World Test Championship (WTC).

The writing was on the wall when the West Indies were reduced to 32/4 in their second innings. With the conditions resembling the slow and dry tracks of India, Rohit Sharma introduced spin as early as the fifth over.

West Indies slipped to 27/2 in 19 overs at tea with Ashwin and Jadeja removing Kraigg Brathwaite (7) and Tagenarine Chanderpaul (7) respectively.

The only West Indies batter who looked assured in the middle was debutant Alick Athanaze (28, 44b), who was not afraid to sweep Ashwin before unleashing a square cut and a pull off Mohammed Siraj. The talented southpaw was eventually caught at short leg by Jaiswal off Ashwin in the 37th over.

India declared an hour after lunch and it seemed they were waiting for debutant Ishan

## Ashwin spins web around West Indies batters as the offie bags 12-wicket haul to help India win the first Test by an innings and 141 runs inside three days

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Roseau (Dominica), July 15:** The world's top-ranked bowler Ravichandran Ashwin was too good for an ill-equipped West Indies batting line-up as his second five-wicket haul of the game set up India's innings and 141-run victory in the opening Test here Friday.

After India declared their first innings at 421/5 midway into the afternoon session, an improved batting show was expected from the Caribbean batters but they were simply not up to the task and collapsed to 130 all out in 50 overs to ensure a three-day finish.

Ashwin followed his 33rd five-wicket haul in the first innings with envious figures of 7/71 in 21.3 overs, his best in an overseas Test. The result was a foregone



conclusion after the West Indies were bundled out for 150 on the opening day.

India's big win was also set up by Yashasvi Jaiswal who made a sublime 171 on debut. Virat Kohli contributed

with 76 off 182 but it was not among his fluent knocks as he had to work extremely hard for his runs and was even dropped

twice along the way. The second and final Test starts in Port of Spain, Trinidad, from July 20. India, who have not lost a Test to West Indies since 2002, will be expected to complete a clean sweep and pick up crucial points in the World Test Championship (WTC).

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India declared an hour after lunch and it seemed they were waiting for debutant Ishan

Kishan to get his first run which took 20 balls. The visitors batted for as many as 152.2 overs in their first innings, scoring at a run rate of 2.76 for a massive 271-run lead.

Kohli was the lone India batter to be dismissed after lunch. After being dropped in the first over post the break, Kohli did not last long as he fell into the trap laid by offie Rakheem Cornwall. The burly spinner got one to bounce from middle stump and Kohli ended up flicking to the waiting leg slip fielder.

In the morning, Jaiswal became only the third Indian to score 150 on debut while Kohli had to toil for a half-century as the visitors reached 400/4 at lunch.

Resuming the day at 312/2, India managed 88 runs in 29 overs in the morning session for the loss of Jaiswal and Ajinkya Rahane (3). The Indian batters had to work for their runs on a slow pitch offering a lot of turn and a heavy outfield.

Kohli celebrating after hitting a rare boundary was proof of that.

Left-arm spinner Jemal Warrican opened the bowling alongside Holder and instantly created issues for Kohli. The former India skipper got a life when he was dropped on 40 by West Indies captain Brathwaite. Kohli went for a drive off Warrican and Brathwaite ended up grassing an easy chance at cover.

At the other end, Jaiswal stepped out to Warrican and dispatched him for a straight six. He became the third Indian to reach 150 on debut with a single, matching the feats of Shikhar Dhawan (187) and Rohit (177).

A double hundred was in the offing for Jaiswal but it wasn't to be as he edged one that angled away from Alzarri Joseph.

**BRIEF SCORES**  
West Indies 150 & 130 (Alick Athanaze 28, Jason Holder 20 n o; Ravichandran Ashwin 7/71, Ravindra Jadeja 2/38, Mohammed Siraj 1/16) lost to India 421/5d by an innings and 141 runs.

## Rodriguez triumphs crash-marred stage 14 of Tour de France

REUTERS

**Morzine (France), July 15:** Carlos Rodriguez of Spain, Saturday, won the Tour de France stage 14, which witnessed Tadej Pogacar and Jonas Vingegaard crossing swords again in their vintage duel as the defending champion gained just one second over the two-time winner at the end of an epic, incident-marred stage.

Slovenian Pogacar beat Vingegaard in the sprint for the second place but now trails the Dane, who picked up an extra bonus second, by a mere 10 seconds.

Pogacar, who briefly dropped his wiry opponent with a brutal attack in the breathtaking ascent to the Col de Joux Plane (11.6km at 8.5 per cent), almost bumped into a race motorbike as he launched a fierce sprint for bonus seconds at the top before being caught off guard by Vingegaard 300 metres further up.

The Jumbo Visma leader, whose team had set a devilish pace on the Col de la Ramaz (13.9km at 7.1%), took eight bonus seconds and Pogacar five. The UAE Emirates rider then got a six-second bonus for second place on the stage while Vingegaard took four.

Pogacar put pressure on Vingegaard in the tricky descent into Morzine, but the Danish rider took all the risks to stay in his slipstream as Rodriguez pulled away for his first Tour stage win and to take third place overall, albeit a massive 4:43 off the pace. Australian Jai Hindley dropped to fourth, one second behind Ineos-Grenadiers rider Rodriguez.

The stage was stopped for almost half an hour shortly after the start because of a massive pile-up that forced five riders to abandon before another two, including Frenchman and former Tour podium finisher Romain Bardet, also crashed out.

## Czech-mate for Venus Rosewater Dish

### UNSEEDED VONDROUSOVA STUNS JABEUR FOR THE WOMEN'S WIMBLEDON CROWN

REUTERS

**London, July 15:** Czech Marketa Vondrousova stunned Tunisia's Ons Jabeur 6-4, 6-4 Saturday to become the first unseeded player in the professional era to win the Wimbledon women's singles title and lift the Venus Rosewater Dish.

The 24-year-old left-hander, who a year ago needed wrist surgery, proved too steady the error-strewn Jabeur who ended up as runner-up for the second successive year.

With the Centre Court roof shut because of the threat of rain showers, crowd-favourite Jabeur initially looked comfortable as she won the opening two games of the final.

But World No.42 Vondrousova, playing a canny game full of slow slices and clever angles, settled down and began to draw errors from her opponent.

Jabeur responded again to lead 4-2 but then seemed consumed by nerves as mistakes flowed from her racket and she dropped five successive games to lose the opening set. Vondrousova, sporting tattoos on her arms,



led 1-0 and 40-0 in the second set and appeared to be marching to victory but Jabeur suddenly loosened her shoulders and found her range. It looked as though Jabeur was getting on top as she

won three games in a row, but Vondrousova never panicked. Showing great court craft and subtle changes of pace she got back to 3-3 and as Jabeur's errors returned she broke serve at 4-4

Vondrousova became the first unseeded player in the professional era to win the Wimbledon women's singles title. She became the fourth Czech-born player to win the title in the professional era after Martina Navratilova, Jana Novotna and Petra Kvitova. She was also the first unseeded player to reach two Grand Slam finals having played in the 2019 French Open final.

to stand one game away from the title. Reaching 40, she squandered her first match point with a double fault but put away a volley to claim the title at the second time of asking, appearing in disbelief.

**MATCH SCHEDULE**  
**MEN'S FINAL**  
Novak Djokovic vs Carlos Alcaraz  
Time: 7:30 pm  
Telecast: Star Sports channels

## SREESHANKAR QUALIFIES FOR 2024 PARIS GAMES

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bangkok, July 15:** Star Indian long jumper Murali Sreeshankar Saturday qualified for the 2024 Paris Olympics after winning a silver medal in the Asian Athletics Championships with a second career-best effort of 8.37m here.

The 24-year-old Sreeshankar achieved the Olympic qualification with his final round jump of 8.37m. The Paris Games mark is 8.27m and the qualification period began July 1.

Yu Tang Lin of Chinese Taipei won the gold with a fourth round jump of 8.40m, which is the third best effort in the world this season.

Sreeshankar has already qualified for the Budapest World Championships in August with his career-best and world second-ranked jump of 8.41m during the qualification round of the National Inter-State Championships last month.

Earlier, Santhosh Kumar won bronze medal in men's 400m hurdles with a personal best time of 49.09 seconds on the fourth and



penultimate day of competitions.

Santhosh clocked the fastest time by an Indian in men's 400m hurdles this year when he finished behind gold medal winner Mohammed Hemeida Bassem (48.64 seconds) of Qatar and Yusaku Kodama (48.96) of Japan. The 25-year-old's previous best was 49.49 which he had clocked last year.

No Indian has ever won a men's 400m hurdles gold in Asian Championships. Joseph Abraham's silver in 2009 edition was the best performance by an Indian while he also won a bronze in 2007. MP Jabir won a bronze each in the last two editions.

## KURASH PLAYER ALLEGEDLY ATTACKED BY COMPETITOR AT OLYMPIC BHAWAN

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 15:** Dramatic scenes were witnessed at the Olympic Bhawan Saturday when two rival factions of the Kurash Association of India (KAI) came with different sets of names for the Asian Games and a leading player, Neha Thakur, alleged that she was attacked by her competitor in the 52kg category.

Neha alleged that she was attacked with an intent to "kill" by her competitor when she went to submit the documents to prove

that she was eligible to be included in the squad for the Hangzhou Asian Games.

The KAI factions came with different sets of names to be submitted to the IOA ahead of the July 15 deadline set by the Asian Games Organising Committee for sending entries.

Neha alleged that while her name was in the list given by one faction of the KAI, it was missing in the other list. Interestingly, both the factions have veteran Congress leader Jagdish Tytler as their patron

and also have the same registration number under the Societies Act but they have two different sets of office-bearers.

Neha's name figures in the list of KAI led by Rajan Varghese with Vikrant Kumar as its general secretary, while the other faction has Dharmendra Malhotra as its president.

"I appeared for the first trials conducted by Dharmendra Malhotra faction, which calls itself the original faction, at the Thyagaraj Stadium here June 25. I kept waiting on the mat for

the competitors to come for the bout but all of them declined to fight me.

"International rules say if a competitor backs out, the bout should be treated as a walkover. As per rules, I emerged as the No.1 player in the category.

"Another trial was organised yesterday (Friday) at Rohtak by the Rajan Varghese and Vikrant Kumar faction, where I emerged second-best behind Bharti. My name was included in the list sent by them to the IOA. But, I'm sure my name won't figure

in the squad for the Asian Games," Neha alleged.

Although she was assured of a berth, but said the other faction had "taken money from the players to send them to the Asian Games". Neha claimed that she was attacked for the second time.

"This is the second attack on me by the same girl in my weight category who tried to assault me in the trials held June 25. I had sent a mail to the IOA informing them that there had been a 'criminal attempt' on me

June 25 where I had to run for my life.

"She (her competitor) came to know about it. How? I don't know. She tried to beat me today. If somebody looks at the video footage of the Olympic Bhawan you will see she tried to kill me," alleged Neha.

Repeated attempts to reach out to IOA officials, including its joint secretary Kalyan Chaubey, by phone and messages met with no response. Neha added that she will file an FIR at Malviya Nagar Police Station.