



PROGRESSIVE THOUGHT

Actor Kiara Advani says she wishes every single woman is able to be financially independent

LEISURE P2



N KOREA NABS US SOLDIER

N Korea has reportedly detained a US soldier who crossed the border from S Korea without permission

INTERNATIONAL P10



SATWIK-CHIRAG ADVANCES

Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty pair reaches second round in Korea Open Super 500 tournament

SPORTS P12

SHORT TAKES

Ex-Kerala CM Oommen Chandy passes away

Bangalore: Senior Congress leader Oommen Chandy, who served as the chief minister of Kerala twice, died here Tuesday, his family said. He was 79. The Kerala government has announced two days' mourning as a mark of respect to the late former CM.

Top court to hear Rahul plea July 21

New Delhi: The Supreme Court Tuesday agreed to hear July 21 a plea of Congress leader Rahul Gandhi challenging the Gujarat High Court's verdict which dismissed his plea seeking a stay on his conviction in a defamation case over his 'Modi surname' remark.

Portal for Sahara depositors' aid

New Delhi: New Delhi: The Centre Tuesday launched CRCS-Sahara Refund Portal that will facilitate the process of refunding the money that around 10 lakh depositors put in four firms of Sahara Group. P9

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Leaders of 26 parties have reached. Unity will also arrive soon

Bridge on NH-16 caves in



Portion of a bridge near Rasulpur block office in Jajpur district on National Highway-16 connecting Chennai and Kolkata caves in, Tuesday

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jajpur, July 18: Movement of vehicular traffic was affected after a portion of a bridge near Rasulpur block office in Jajpur on National Highway-16 connecting Chennai and Kolkata caved in, Tuesday morning. Luckily, no untoward incident was reported as no vehicle was

passing on the bridge when the mishap took place.

National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) project director JP Verma said the bridge constructed around 2008 is suspected to have collapsed due to structural failure.

Verma, however, said the exact reason for the collapse of the structure would be known

only after assessment by an expert team.

After the incident, only one side of the bridge was opened to traffic leading to massive snarl.

Jajpur MP Sarmistha Sethi visited the bridge and said she would convene a meeting of NHAI officials to find out how the bridge could collapse in 15 years.

INDIA vs NDA

26 OPPN PARTIES FORM ALLIANCE FOR 2024 LOK SABHA POLLS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, July 18: Setting the tone for their 2024 Lok Sabha campaign, 26 Opposition parties Tuesday formed a coalition - Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance (INDIA) - to unitedly take on the ruling NDA with Congress leader Rahul Gandhi asserting that the fight will be 'between INDIA and Prime Minister Narendra Modi'.

Announcing the name of the Opposition bloc here after a meeting of the 26 parties, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said, "We'll fight the 2024 Lok Sabha elections unitedly and we'll come out with great success."

He said a committee of 11 members will be set up for co-ordination, and a convenor will be selected at the next meeting in Mumbai. A secretariat will be set up in Delhi for campaign management of the alliance and specific committees will be formed for separate issues. The dates for the Mumbai meeting will be announced soon, he said.

PM blasts Oppn

New Delhi: On a day when Opposition parties formed their 'INDIA' coalition to take on the NDA, PM Narendra Modi said an alliance formed for the compulsion of power, based on dynastic politics and keeping in mind casteism and regionalism is very harmful to the country. Addressing leaders of 38 parties who are part of NDA at a meeting here, Modi said, "When an alliance is formed due to compulsion of power, when an alliance is with the intention of corruption, when an alliance is based on dynastic politics, when an alliance is formed keeping in mind casteism and regionalism, then that alliance is very harmful to the country," he said. MORE P9

Constitution, democracy, secularism and social justice," he said. Congress president Rahul Gandhi said, "The fight is against the ideology of the BJP and their thinking, they are attacking the country, unemployment is rampant, and the country's wealth is being taken away from millions and handed over to a few of the friends of the BJP and the PM." "We are defending the Constitution, the voice of Indians and the idea of India. You know what happens to anyone who

wants to fight the idea of India... This is a fight between INDIA and the BJP, it is a fight between INDIA and Narendra Modi," Gandhi said. "Our alliance will be called Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance (INDIA)," Kharge said. Sources said the name of the Opposition front was suggested by TMC supremo Mamata Banerjee. Later, Congress spokesperson Supriya Shrinete said, "It was a collective effort. I don't think, we are taking any credit for this but yes, the idea came from Rahul Gandhi..."

Kharge launched a scathing attack on the PM, saying he is now trying to bring together parties that had splintered and this shows that 'he is afraid of Opposition parties'. The 26 Opposition parties are -the Congress, TMC, DMK, AAP, JD(U), RJD, JMM, NCP (Sharad Pawar), Shiv Sena (UBT), SP, NC, PDP, CPI(M), CPI, RLD, MDMK, Kongunadu Makkal Desia Katchi, VCK, RSP, CPI-ML (Liberation), Forward Bloc, IUML, Kerala Congress (Joseph), Kerala Congress (Mani), Apna Dal (Kamerawadi), and the Manithaneya Makkal Katchi. They also released a joint resolution after the meeting.

Shot in the arm for state's sports infra

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, July 18: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik inaugurated two new facilities - the Gymnastics High Performance Centre and the Hockey High Performance Centre - at Kalinga Stadium here, Tuesday.

The Gymnastics High Performance Centre is a joint initiative with ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel (AM/NS) India, while the Hockey High Performance Centre is set up in partnership with Tata Steel and Tata Trusts.

On the occasion, the Chief Minister presented a cheque of Rs 10 lakh each to Odia gymnasts Rakesh Patra and Tapan Mohanty for qualifying for the upcoming Asian Games 2023. "Odisha follows a partnership model for sporting excellence. With the inauguration of the new Hockey High Performance Centre and the Gymnastics High Performance Centre, Odisha's sporting ecosystem has become even more robust, enhancing athletes' abilities to compete and shine in both national and international com-

petitions," Patnaik said. He said that these new centres will play a pivotal role in discovering untapped talents and nurturing potential medal-winning athletes.

Patnaik thanked ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel India and the Tatas for partnering with the state government in developing the facilities. "These will help nurture talent and contribute to producing elite players for the national teams," he said.

The Odisha AM/NS India Gymnastics High Performance Centre, equipped with advanced equipment and facilities, has been set up to promote gymnastics in India and transform Odisha into a national centre for gymnastics excellence, an official said.

The inaugurated complex of the Odisha Naval Tata Hockey High Performance Centre is a residential facility for boy and girl cadets with classroom, gymnasium, kitchen and dining, physiotherapy room and other multipurpose room, all housed under one roof with a practice pitch alongside.

The Gymnastics High Performance Centre is a joint initiative with AM/NS India, while the Hockey High Performance Centre is in partnership with Tata Steel & Tata Trusts

MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VAIATION
SENSEX	66795.14 ↑ 205.21
NIFTY	19749.30 ↑ 37.80
DOLLAR	82.06 ↓ ₹0.03
EURO	92.32 ↑ ₹0.12
GOLD	₹59,822 ↑ ₹687
SILVER	₹76,356 ↑ ₹789

WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
TEMP MAX	33.5°C	32.8°C
TEMP MIN	25.2°C	25.5°C
Humidity	82%	87%
Rainfall	0.6mm	Nil

Forecast: Light to moderate rain

Tourists throng Death Valley to feel record heat

AGENCIES

California, July 18: Tourists have been flocking to the Death Valley National Park in eastern California to experience some of the hottest temperatures ever recorded. Several people thronged a part of the national park known as Furnace Creek and were seen taking selfies and pictures with the digital thermometer, a person in know of the development said, Tuesday.

Temperatures in Furnace Creek in Death Valley reached 128 degrees Fahrenheit (53 degrees Celsius) Sunday, according to the National Weather Service (NWS). Along with the digital thermometer,



there were also signs warning people not to walk in the area after 10:00am, but tourists remain undeterred to experience the heat, the NDTV reported.

Death Valley runs along Central California's border with Nevada and has long been known for its record-breaking heat. Furnace Creek previously recorded the hottest-ever temperature on Earth at 134 degrees in July 1913, the USA Today

reported. A few visitors to the park said that they were able to feel the heat in their bones and the hot air drying out their eyes.

"We thought this would be a great opportunity to witness history, and when history is within driving distance you don't pass on it," a visitor said while standing in the heat at Death Valley's Furnace Creek Visitor Centre.

- Temperatures in Death Valley, which runs along part of central California's border with Nevada, reached 128 degrees F (53.3 degrees C) Sunday at the aptly named Furnace Creek
- The hottest temperature ever recorded on Earth was 134 degrees F (56.7 degrees C) in July 1913 at Furnace Creek
- Temperatures at or above 130 degrees F (54.4 degrees C) have only been recorded on Earth a handful of times, mostly in Death Valley

More than 100 million people were under heat alerts in the US Monday as forecasters warned that the severe heatwave will continue throughout the southwest. Residents were advised to turn on air conditioning, hydrate and not leave children or pets locked in cars. The NWS warned that temperatures will reach dangerous levels and are potentially deadly for anyone without effective cooling and/or adequate hydration.

Let's Get Quizzing!

OrissaPOST PRESENTS

METTLE MEET 2023

A Quiz Extravaganza

05-06 AUGUST @ BHUBANESWAR

Who will Grab the CROWN?

Reviving Quizzing

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leisure



LINDSAY WELCOMES HER FIRST BABY WITH HUBBY BADER

American Actress Lindsay Lohan, who is known for her roles in films such as *Mean Girls* and *Herbie: Fully Reloaded*, has now gained a new addition to her family, as she and her husband, Bader Shammas have welcomed their very first child, a baby boy called Luai into their family.

ARIANA HEADING FOR DIVORCE AFTER TWO YEARS OF MARRIAGE

Singer Ariana Grande and her husband Dalton Gomez, after two years of marital bliss, are heading for a divorce. Sources close to the singer and the luxury real estate agent say that they have been separated since January - but have remained incredibly amicable.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181*

ARIES
You have to take care of your health, and at last you realise the importance of diet and exercise. However, today you may wish to eat something new, or try some different cuisine. Ganesh says go out with some old friends whom you have been neglecting of late.

TAURUS
Things will tend to get very difficult and complicated, says Ganesh. Be prepared for setbacks and challenges today. No matter how big the issue, your competence, your resourcefulness will see you through. Try to remain focused and alert. Be cautious and circumspect.

GEMINI
You will be lost in the memories of the past today. You will be in a nostalgic frame of mind. Intellectual pursuits will attract you. Do not let your past lay a shadow upon your present and your future, says Ganesh.

CANCER
You can improve your finances with your mental capabilities. Ganesh says that you will get success in both private life and career. You will be entrusted many tasks and responsibilities. Yet by evening, you will spend time in your pursuits.

LEO
A lot of people will sing your praises, however you will not be satisfied with whatever is occurring. The answers to some questions that have been bothering you will remain elusive. You may become emotional owing to feelings of personal loss.

VIRGO
Ganesh foretells that your writing abilities will help you give vent to your emotions without hurting others. You will finish all your incomplete tasks successfully. Ganesh says that you will experience success in everything that you choose to do today.

LIBRA
Ganesh says today is a good day to renovate your home. You will be able to decorate your home artistically because of your designing skills. The atmosphere at your home will be a happy one with the arrival of guests. You will make plans to go for a picnic with close friends or relatives. Ganesh wishes you all the very best for your future.

SCORPIO
It's time to influence people and win their hearts whether it's your crush, love or your boss. You may be eager to express your feelings for them. At work, you are likely to work actively and kick start the projects in the pipeline.

SAGITTARIUS
For you, appreciation and recognition for the efforts you put in may be delayed, but it's not denied. There's no point losing heart and getting disappointed. This may only affect your work, instead, wait for a better tomorrow, Ganesh says giving you hope.

CAPRICORN
Your accomplishments may take you on cloud nine today. Success may come easily to you, but don't try your luck too much, advises Ganesh. Make the most of today as tomorrow may not be the same as today. You will be popular today, especially in your social circle as you'll impress everyone with your wit and humour.

AQUARIUS
You will be able to strike a balance between the emotional and rational side of your personality. You will find pleasure in your work and may successfully mix your personal life into your professional life. Financially, there are no major issues, but negligible matters may keep your mind occupied, feels Ganesh.

PISCES
Just as melting ice caps on faraway mountains can swell the oceans, concerted efforts you make now will have far-reaching beneficial consequences, says Ganesh. Do not be disheartened in the face of obstacles and keep soldiering on.

When Priyanka revealed three unknown facts about herself

Los Angeles: Actress Priyanka Chopra continues to make headlines for her Hollywood films as well as her glamorous appearances around the world. The actress who turned 41 Tuesday had once revealed some unknown facts of her life.
In a 2004 interview with a magazine, the *Fashion* actress was asked to share "three unknown facts" about herself. She had then said, "One: I'm completely homebody. I'm the happiest with my family around me. When I was in Manali for a 40-day schedule, my entire khandan (family) from Ambala and Chandigarh visited me. We rented out a bungalow and had a gala family reunion."
She continued, "Two: I hate partying. I'm from a conservative background, and people may not accept that because of what I do in my movies. But movies are a job and I'm very different from public perception that people have of me. I'm not the Priyanka which people saw in *Andaaz*, *Kismet* (2004) and in any of my other movies...
Three: I love poetry. Both English and Urdu. My favourite poets are Emily Dickinson, Faiz Sahab and Ghalib."
Priyanka was last seen in *Love Again* and *Citadel* and will be seen next in *Heads of State*.



'We need to be in charge as women'

Mumbai: Actress Kiara Advani who was praised for her performance in the recent Kartik Aaryan-starrer *Satyaprem Ki Katha* talks about being financially independent.
Speaking about the importance of the issue, she said, "Firstly, I must say financial freedom is a luxury and I wish every single woman is able to be financially independent. I thank my father that he ensured both his kids are financially independent and have their own identities. My dad nudged and pushed me when I decided I want to get my own home before I get married. My parents are living in that home now and I did it for them. It is a great sense of achievement, especially in Mumbai. That was my first feeling of accomplishment and being able to do this on my own and I thank my dad for it all."
The *Shershaah* actress went to add, "As women, we need to be in charge, can't leave it all to the men."
Kiara will be next seen in director Shankar's *Game Changer* opposite Ram Charan. She is also rumoured to have signed the second installment of Hrithik Roshan and Tiger Shroff's action film, *War*.

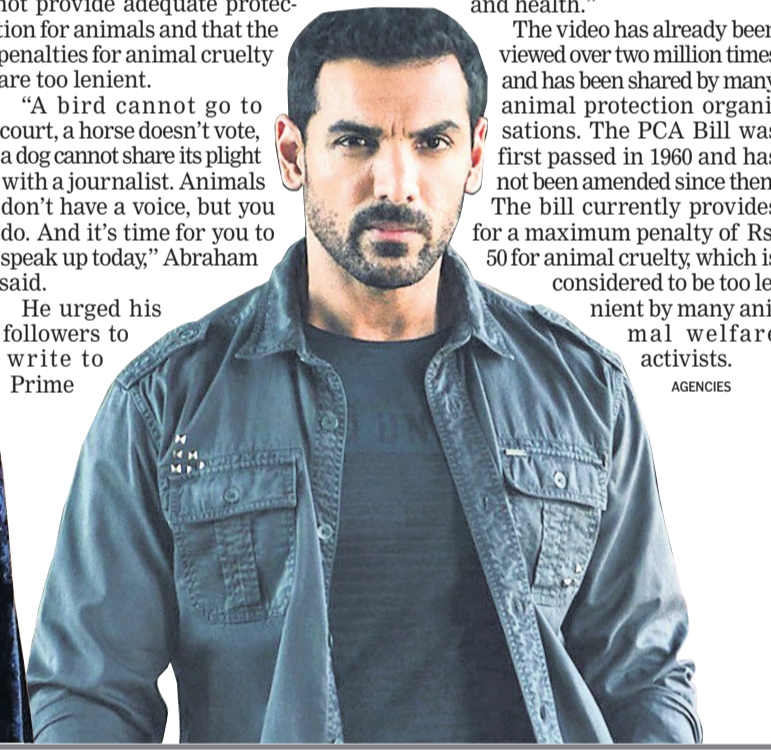


Taapsee's witty reply to her marriage plans

Mumbai: Actress Taapsee Pannu, who took a break from social media, recently held an *Ask Me Anything* session on Instagram and wittily replied about marriage plans to fans.
A fan asked Taapsee, "Shaadi kab karoge (when will you get married)." The actor promptly replied, "So when I am getting married? I am not pregnant as yet. So not anytime soon. I will let you all know." She then broke into a fit of laughter.
Few years ago, Taapsee had said that she would like to get married only for kids.
"I will get married only when I want to have babies. I want to have kids out of wedlock. I don't want an elaborate wedding either. It will be one long day with close friends and family. This multiple day thing is too tiring. It will be like a compact one-day thing," she had told in a 2020 interview.
On the work front, Taapsee will be seen next with Shah Rukh Khan for Rajkumar Hirani's *Dunki* and also has *Woh Ladki Hai Kahaan*, *Phir Aayi Haseen Dillruba* and *Jana Gana Mana* in the pipeline.

John bats for amendment of 1960 animal protection laws

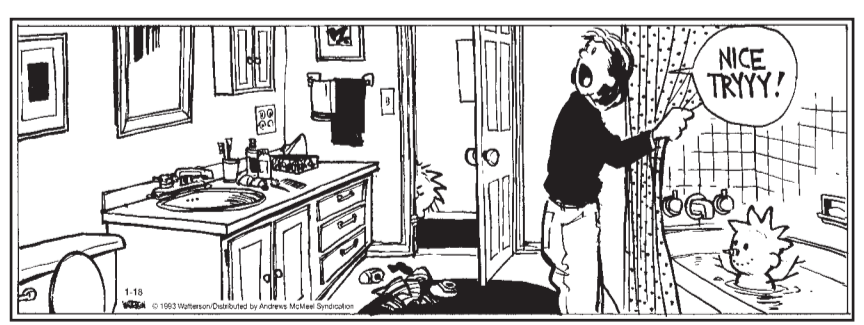
Mumbai: Actor John Abraham has appealed to Indian parliamentarians to amend the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (PCA) Bill. In a video posted on his Instagram account, the *Pathaan* actor said that the current law does not provide adequate protection for animals and that the penalties for animal cruelty are too lenient.
"A bird cannot go to court, a horse doesn't vote, a dog cannot share its plight with a journalist. Animals don't have a voice, but you do. And it's time for you to speak up today," Abraham said.
He urged his followers to write to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Minister for Animal Husbandry, Parshottam Rupala, to request that the PCA Bill be amended. He also pointed out that "violence towards animals is closely linked with violence in society, public safety and health."
The video has already been viewed over two million times and has been shared by many animal protection organisations. The PCA Bill was first passed in 1960 and has not been amended since then. The bill currently provides for a maximum penalty of Rs. 50 for animal cruelty, which is considered to be too lenient by many animal welfare activists.



PEANUTS



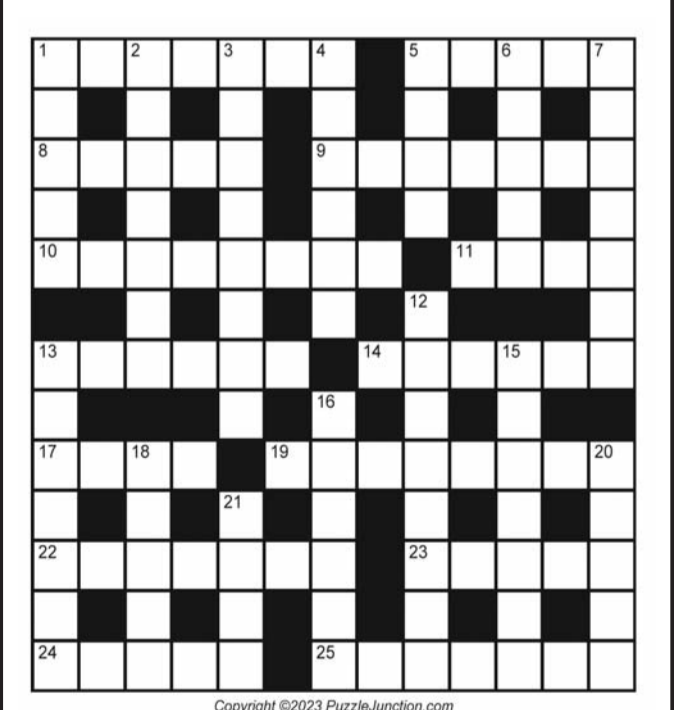
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



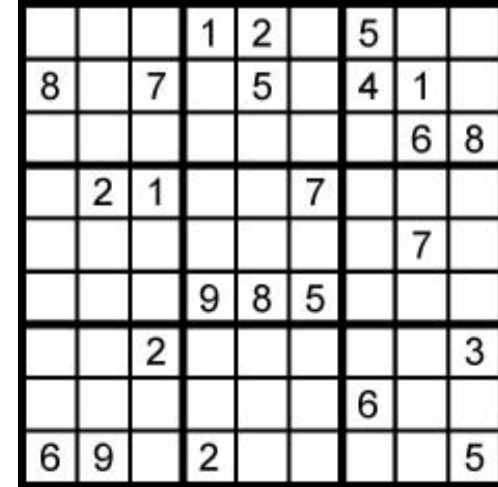
FUN post CROSSWORD



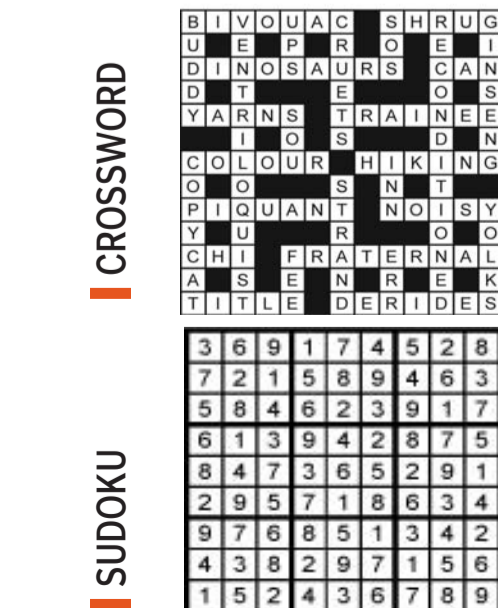
- Across**
- 1 Arabian Nights name
 - 5 Beguile
 - 8 Dutch export
 - 9 Fall back
 - 10 Coherent
 - 11 Ridicule
 - 13 Pretense
 - 14 Loving cup
 - 17 Silent assents
 - 19 Wins over, as a
 - 22 Knuckle under
 - 23 Double birdie
 - 24 Aswan High Dam locale
 - 25 Loathes
- Down**
- 1 Strong emotion
 - 2 Like some plants
 - 3 Precious stones
 - 4 Trondheim locale
 - 5 Zoo feature
 - 6 Sharp narrow ridge
 - 7 Like Scrooge
 - 12 On a regular basis
 - 13 Polish
 - 15 Vows
 - 16 Ghoulish
 - 18 Duck hunter's tool
 - 20 Dance manoeuvres
 - 21 Equitable

SUDOKU

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



SOLUTIONS



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

School students participate in a 'rangoli competition' organised by Kasturba Nari Mahal to celebrate Kumar Utsav in Bhubaneswar, Tuesday



downtown

Govt acts tough on misuse of EV loans

FINANCE DEPARTMENT INTRODUCES ADDITIONAL REGULATIONS AFTER RECEIVING COMPLAINTS REGARDING MISUTILISATION OF INTEREST-FREE LOANS FOR PURCHASE OF EVs BY SOME GOVT EMPLOYEES



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 18: Expressing concern over misuse of interest-free loans for purchase of electric vehicles (EVs) by some of its employees, the state government introduced additional regulations to bring transparency in releasing sops under Electric Vehicle Policy 2021.

The state government has launched the Electric Vehicle Policy 2021 in order to encourage adoption of EVs to reduce pollution caused by use of fossil fuels.

One of the incentives extended to state government employees is interest-free advances for purchase of EVs which was notified by Finance department in April 2022.

The Finance department has imposed the additional regulations after receiving complaints regarding misutilisation of interest-free loans for purchase of EVs by some employees which defeats the very purpose of the EV Policy.

As per the letter, government

Govt employees availing the advance for EVs have to furnish the copy of registration certificate, insurance and retail invoice of the vehicle to the sanctioning authority within three months from the date of release of the advance

The entire advance amount along with simple interest of 12.5% per annum will be recovered from the employee who fails to do so

All the departments have been asked to initiate disciplinary proceedings as per rules against the defaulting employees immediately

employees availing the advance have to furnish the copy of registration certificate (RC), insurance and retail invoice of the vehicles to the sanctioning authority within three months from the date of release of the advance failing which the entire advance amount along with simple interest of 12.5 per cent per annum will be recovered from the employee concerned from the date of release of the

advance. The departments have been asked to initiate disciplinary proceedings as per rules against the defaulting employees immediately and also take necessary steps for recovery of the entire advance amount along with interest forthwith from the government employees concerned latest by July 31, 2023.

In case of refund, the principal amount of the advance will be deposited in the concerned head of accounts, it said.

The government had brought the policy with a targeted adoption of 20 per cent EVs by the end of 2025 as a measure to reduce vehicular pollution.

However, it was found that only 4.48 per cent of EVs have been registered by the end of 2022 which is not satisfactory as compared to the policy objective. Therefore, the government had enhanced the subsidy amount in April this year.

Now, the government is providing a subsidy of Rs 5,000 per kilo Watt hour (kWh) for registration of EVs in Odisha. The maximum subsidy of Rs 20,000 is being provided on purchase of battery-powered two-wheelers.

Similarly, a subsidy of Rs 30,000 is being provided for three-wheelers. This apart, the government is also providing a subsidy of Rs 10,000 per kWh for four-wheelers with a ceiling of Rs 1.5 lakh.

The vehicles purchased on or after September 1, 2021 are eligible for the subsidy. As per the policy, the provision of subsidy would continue till December 2025.

President confers Bhoomi Samman on 19 Odisha dists

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, July 18: President Droupadi Murmu Tuesday conferred the Bhoomi Samman 2023 on 19 districts of Odisha at a function held here for achieving saturation of the core components of Digital India Land Records Modernisation Programme (DILRMP).

The President felicitated 68 districts across the country with the Bhoomi Samman 2023. The awards were received by the state secretaries and district Collectors along with their teams. Out of 68 districts awarded,



Odisha has the highest number of 19 districts.

Murmu said that acceleration of rural development is essential for overall development of the country. "For the development of rural areas, modernisation of land records is a basic requirement as livelihood of most of the rural population is dependent on land resources. A comprehensive integrated land management system is of utmost importance for the overall development of rural areas," the President said.

She also said that modernisation and digitisation of land records would have a great impact on the development of the country. Digitisation of land records and its linkage with various government departments would help in proper implementation of welfare schemes, she said, adding that it would also help in case of loss of documents due to calamities like flood and fire.

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



Direct your actions towards farmer empowerment: CM

Of the 406 new recruits, 261 will be joining as Assistant Agriculture Officers, while 102 will join as Assistant Agriculture Engineers, and 43 will work under Odisha State Seeds Corporation

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, July 18: Speaking at a 'Nijukti Parba' organized here Tuesday to celebrate 406 newly-recruited officers joining the state government under Agriculture and Farmers Empowerment department, Chief Minister Naveen Pattnaik said this large appointment-in-one-go will provide a big boost to the department.

Welcoming the recruits, he said that they will make significant contributions to farm sector in next three decades as they have requisite skill and expertise. He advised them to follow 5T Principles and contribute to the transformation of the farm sector. "All your actions should be directed at the empowerment of



farmers," he exhorted the officers. Of the 406 officers, 261 will be joining as Assistant Agriculture Officers (AAOs), while 102 will join as Assistant Agriculture Engineers (AAEs), and 43 will work under the Odisha State Seeds Corporation (OSSC).

The CM said that agriculture and allied sector is one of the top priorities of his government and it has been striving to continuously enhance the income of farmers and empower them. "We have come a long way from

being a food deficit state to become a net supplier of food by contributing to nation's public distribution system. Production of various crops has grown multiple times," he said.

"The OSSC has a critical role in providing quality seeds to farmers. The department should ensure that farmers get quality seeds at the right time," he advised.

Agriculture and Farmers' Empowerment Minister Ranendra Pratap Swain outlined the key initiatives and achievements of the department while advising the officers to ensure benefits of the schemes directly reach the farmers. Chief Secretary PK Jena said that continuous focus on agriculture has helped reduce rural poverty in the state in a significant way.

SHORT TAKES

Odisha Sahitya Akademi secy passes away

Bhubaneswar: Odisha Sahitya Akademi secretary Prabodh Kumar Rout breathed his last at a private hospital in Cuttack, Tuesday. He was 53. A critically injured Prabodh was admitted to the hospital following a road mishap at Biju Patnaik Square. A pall of gloom descended on several spheres of life due to his untimely demise. Odia Language, Literature and Culture Minister Aswini Kumar Patra, director Dillip Kumar Routray and Odisha Sahitya Akademi president Hrushikesh Mallick, vice-president Sangram Jena and other eminent personalities mourned his death.

Health insurance for scribes hiked to ₹5L

Bhubaneswar: Chief Minister Naveen Pattnaik Tuesday announced that the amount of insurance coverage for journalists has been hiked from ₹2 lakh to ₹5 lakh per annum. This will benefit 8,717 working journalists and their families of the state covered under Gopabandhu Sambadika Swasthya Bima Yojana. Now, the beneficiaries of Gopabandhu Sambadika Swasthya Bima Yojana can avail medical benefits up to ₹5 lakh per annum in the empanelled hospitals.

STA feted for road safety initiatives

New Delhi: The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) Tuesday conferred the Special Jury award on Odisha State Transport Authority (STA) for its initiatives 'Operation Rakshak' & 'National Road Safety Short Film Festival' taken by it to prevent road accidents. The STA was awarded on the sidelines of a conference on the "Role of Corporates in Road Safety 2023" in association with the Odisha government.



HAND CRAFTED: Woman artisans busy weaving household items from bamboo strips near Ranihat Canal Road in Cuttack, Tuesday

OP PHOTO

'HAPPY HOURS' TRICK

Restro-bars tinker with menu, dupe customers

SMRUTI REKHA BARIK, OP

Bhubaneswar, July 18: In an attempt to lure more customers, a few restaurants here have latched on to the idea of 'Happy Hours' (HH), a recent marketing strategy during which a restaurant or bar offers services at reduced prices. However, a few resto-bars are duping customers taking advantage of the rush.

According to sources, items like appetisers are also often served during HH at discounted prices. This is a method adopted by bars and restaurants to boost sales before or after peak business hours.

However, some unscrupulous businessmen have been deceiving customers. "I had been to such a resto-bar in Patia today (Tuesday) and I noticed the way they deceived me with different menu cards which had contrasting prices. The price of the veg peri-peri pizza that I ordered from the older menu was ₹70 less than what was mentioned in



the bill. Upon asking the waiter to bring the menu, he gave me different menu that looked similar but the arrangement of the pages in the menu book was different which was distinguishable. The waiter was reluctant to admit throughout," said Mandeera, (name changed) a concerned customer.

Mandeera also confided about another disagreement of a waiter in the same place with a lawyer, the heated argument was about hefty service charges which were applied during billing. The lawyer confronted them saying that he will file a case regarding the misinformation. After a few minutes of discussion with the waiter, the lawyer wanted to meet the manager. The matter was resolved later.

ANTI-CANCER PROPERTIES OF MANNANOSE FOUND

A sugar that is crucial to many physiological processes in humans, but lethal to honeybees, can help inhibit the growth of cancer cells, according to a study.

The findings, published in the journal eLife, suggest that mannose, a natural sugar that occurs in microbes, plants and animals, could be a helpful secondary treatment for cancer.

Mannose is a sugar that the body adds to proteins to stabilise their structure and help them interact with other molecules.

This process, called glycosylation, is essential for life; and malfunctions in glycosylation are associated with rare, but often life-threatening, human diseases.

Free mannose is also found in small amounts in many fruits such as oranges, apples and peaches and in mammalian plasma at 50-100 micrometre.

"This sugar could give cancer an extra punch alongside other treatments. And because mannose is found throughout the body naturally, it could improve cancer treatment without any undesirable side effects," said Hudson Freeze, director of the Human Genetics Programme at Sanford Burnham Prebys in the US.

"Until now, the most promising therapeutic use for mannose was to treat congenital disorders of glycosylation, diseases that can cause a wide range of severe symptoms throughout the body. But we believe that there



may be ways to leverage mannose against cancer and other diseases as well," Freeze said. Mannose has already been

shown to inhibit the growth of several types of cancer in the lab, but scientists do not fully understand why this happens.

To learn more, the research team turned their attention to an unusual property of mannose observed in an unlikely subject - honeybees.

"It's been known for more than a century that mannose is lethal to honeybees because they can't process it like humans do - it's known as 'honeybee syndrome,'" Freeze said.

"We wanted to see if there is any relationship between honeybee syndrome and the anti-cancer properties of mannose, which could lead to an entirely new approach to combat cancer."

Using genetically engineered human cancer cells from fibrosarcoma - a rare cancer that affects connective tissue - the research team re-created honeybee syndrome and discovered

that without the enzyme needed to metabolise mannose, cells replicate slowly and are significantly more vulnerable to chemotherapy.

"We found that triggering honeybee syndrome in these cancer cells made them unable to synthesise the building blocks of DNA and replicate normally," Freeze said.

"This helps explain the anti-cancer effects of mannose that we've observed in the lab."

While leveraging honeybee syndrome could be a promising supplemental cancer treatment, the researchers caution that because the effect is dependent on vital metabolic processes, more research is needed to determine which types of cancer would be most vulnerable to mannose.

'Chadi and Baniyan' gang busted; 11 held



PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, July 18: The Commissionerate Police Tuesday arrested 11 members of the dreaded interstate 'Chadi and Baniyan' robbers' gang and recovered from them various stolen items like gold ornaments, idols and weapons used for robbery and house breaking.

The police said that the gang was involved in a series of house burglary cases in different areas of Bhubaneswar city. The gang was also involved in many cases in Khurda, Puri, Bhadrak and other districts, the police informed.

Last night, during patrolling, Dhauli police station staff nabbed the group near Tarakeswar Temple, near Daya River when they were on their way to commit crime in a group, said Bhubaneswar DCP Prateek Singh.

The gang members are speaking Hindi and speaking in their local dialect dressed in half pant/Chadi (Kachha) and

areas where they commit crime. They went out of their place of stay in a group prepared with housebreaking instruments /sharp cutting weapons wearing full clad dresses and, on the way, change their dress & wear only Chadi and Ganji, tied their dress on waistline, without foot wear, covered their face by spare cloth from a short distance of place of crime, he added.

According to the police, they target colonies close to roads, newly developed, less lighted areas and choose footpaths to reach their target houses. They use big size screw drivers, sly wrenches, specially designed house breaking instruments made of iron for breaking of door locks, window grills and effect their entry into the residential houses in the late hour of the night after 1am.

The gang usually breaks the cupboards, almirahs, boxes and robs gold ornaments, cash and other valuables. They also keep the inmates of the house sleeping in the rooms confined by locking/bolting the doors from outside.

After crime they decamp by changing their dress and availing vehicles plying on the road and pretending to be labourers. Deliberately they never bring mobile phones to the place of crime to avoid leaving a digital footprint, the police said.

They dispose of stolen articles to different persons, shopkeepers, and jewelry shops for their gain. The arrested persons are native of Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand.



EVICION DRIVE: An excavator deployed by BDA razing down unauthorised constructions in Kalinga Studio Square area of Bhubaneswar, Tuesday

Ensure no power outage, officials told

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, July 18: Ahead of President Droupadi Murmu's three-day Odisha visit beginning from July 25, the state government issued special instructions to authorities to ensure that there is no power disruption of any kind during the programmes to be attended by the country's first citizen.

The instruction was issued by Chief Secretary PK Jena while reviewing a preparatory meeting held here Monday. He asked officials to make full-proof arrangements like power supply, drinking water and other facilities for the President's programmes.

The state government's instruction was significant in the wake of the May 6 incident at Maharaja Sriram Chandra

PREZ VISIT



Bhanjadeso University, Baripada programme where the president delivered her speech for nine minutes in the absence of power. The state earned criticism from different quarters for not being able to ensure proper power supply at the president's programme. Jena directed that experienced electrical executive engineers to be deployed at all programmes to ensure that there is no such power crisis in the president's programme. He also instructed

to make alternative power arrangements in case there is disruption in power supply from the feeder line.

Informing the preparatory meeting, the Home department said that the president would arrive in Bhubaneswar July 25 afternoon and meet representatives of PVTG (particularly vulnerable tribal groups) at the Raj Bhavan here.

Next Day July 26, the president is scheduled to visit Cuttack

and Cuttack Chandi temple besides going to the residence of Utkal Gourav Madhusudan Das. His residence now houses the Sailabala Autonomous College. She will also visit the birthplace of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, which has also been converted into a museum. The president will attend the 75th Foundation Day ceremony of Orissa High Court and the convocation of the National Law University. She will also attend the annual day function of SCB Medical College Hospital in Cuttack.

July 27, the president will lay the foundation stone of a Light House of Brahmakumari Centre at Tomado in Bhubaneswar. She will later attend the Diamond Jubilee celebration of Bhadrak Autonomous College at Bhadrak and return to Delhi on the same day.

Bagchi interacts with OTs

Bhubaneswar: An event, "Ask Subroto Bagchi", was jointly organised by Gopabandhu Academy of Administration (GAA) and Revenue Officers Training Institute (ROTI) Tuesday. Former chairman of Odisha Skill Development Authority Subroto Bagchi interacted with IAS, OAS and ORS officer trainees (OTs) and advised them to make their serving places better than before.

CLASSIFIED AFFIDAVIT

By virtue of an affidavit sworn before the Executive Magistrate, Bhubaneswar on 03.12.2020, I, Shri Abhijet Chakraborti of 260/1393, Cuttack Road, Bhubaneswar - 6, declare that, I have changed my name spelling to Abhijet Chakraaborti for all purpose.

Before Notary Public Berhampur, I Pratap Chandra Panda (60)year, S/o Raghunath Panda 201, Binayak Residency Hillpatna MainRoad, P.O.-Berhampur, P.S.-Gosaninuagam, Ganjam, my actual name as per my Pan Card AQOPP5387K and Aadhaar Card xxxxxxxx2507 as Pratap Chandra Panda but in my Passport vide No.-K4989980 wrongly mentioned as Protap Chandra Panda. I swear this affidavit before Regional Passport Office Bhubaneswar for providing correction of my name as Pratap Chandra Panda for issuance of New Passport in my Favour.

Plans afoot to tag radio collar on jumbos

THE MOVEMENT OF PACHYDERMS CAN BE DETECTED FROM THE SIGNALS OF THE RADIO COLLARS THUS HELPING FOREST OFFICIALS TO PREVENT THEIR ENTRY INTO HUMAN HABITATION

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, July 18: With incidences of man-elephant conflict on the rise, the state government plans to adopt a multi-pronged strategy including tagging radio collars on elephants. This was revealed by Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Wildlife) SK Popli here. He said the radio collars will be fitted in elephants under the state's 'Gajabandhu' programme.

Noting that the state's forest department has signed an agreement with the Asian Nature Conservation Foundation of Bengaluru-based Institute of Physics for radio collar scheme, he said three elephants will be

'GAJABANDHU' INITIATIVE



tagged with radio collar on a pilot basis. He said the radio collar scheme is already implemented in some states like Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. The movement of elephants can be detected from the signals of the radio collar fitted in the jumbos.

"It will help the forest officials to take immediate steps to prevent the elephant herd from straying into human habitation. If the pilot project is successful, it will be extended to the entire state," Popli said.

He said an early warning system will also be in place to caution people about the movement of elephants in their areas. There will be red light and siren to in-

form people about the presence of elephants in the human habitation area, he said.

Under the Gajabandhu programme, five people from each village will be appointed as volunteers who will inform the forest department about the elephant movements. So far 1,200 villages have been brought under the Gajabandhu programme and another 2,000 villages will be added to the list soon, he said.

The state government has also decided to set up solar power fences in Bantal of Angul district which has been identified as most prone to man-elephant conflict. Already 43 villages have been identified for the purpose, Popli said.

Understanding time key to race against climate change

Politicians and environmental organisations have invested millions trying to influence people's behaviour and tackle the climate crisis. But it's not working. No G20 country is on track to meet their climate goals.

So instead, researchers are turning their attention to the link between people's perception of time and the action they take on climate change. One of the main areas researchers are exploring is how people interpret the vast time scales needed to comprehend climate change.

People represent their life experiences on a mental timeline of past, present and future. But that timeline is not as straight as you might think. The nature of an event can influence how close or far into the past or future someone perceives it to be. Traumatic past events can

seem nearer in time, or more present, than neutral events. However, people seem to take the threat of negative events they anticipate in the distant future less seriously and perceive them as less risky compared to events closer to the present.

It's happening in your backyard

People who have suffered directly from climate change through floods, fires and extreme heat, often perceive the climate crisis as part of their present. However, people whose lives are just beginning to be touched by climate change perceive the time distance to be large. The crisis is still in their future.

This doesn't mean people won't act unless their homes are devastated by extreme weather. But now-focused communication strategies that are highly localised may encourage more



People who have suffered directly from climate change through floods, fires and extreme heat, often perceive the climate crisis as part of their present

people to act. We should be tailoring adverts to show how climate change is affecting people in their city, their local beauty spots, and how this is happening right now.

Warping our sense of time Clocks and calendars are systems to measure, record and manage time, which makes time seem like an objective concept.

But research shows our experience of time is subjective, like our mental timeline.

It typically passes quickly when we are busy, happy and engaged, and slowly when we are sad, bored and isolated. This means we may be more perceptive to climate messaging depending on our mood and what's going on in our lives.

Researchers are trying to understand whether apocalyptic talk sparks action or nihilism. It's worth considering whether people would be more engaged in climate action if we framed the present as the bottom of a cycle that, with the right intervention, can set humanity on a new upward swing, rather than a march toward Armageddon.

Context is everything Culture also influences how people perceive time. Close your eyes and imagine a mental timeline of past, present and future. Is the past on the left or the right?

If you grew up in a left-right reading and writing household, chances are the past is on the left and the future is on the right. If you grew up in a right-left reading and writing household the past will be on the right and the future on the left.

Metaphors for time, such as "keep moving forwards", are

not universal, which means you can't create a global public messaging system.

Time feels different depending on who you are, where you come from and what you happen to be doing. While many people are motivated to engage in environmentally friendly behaviour, we need to frame time in a more informed and nuanced way if we want more people to change.

Time is precious Time is scarce. Digital technology is speeding up the pace of life for many people and "hustle-culture" means some groups view busyness as an indicator of success. The solution may be a societal change. This may mean a switch from productivity driven models of time, in which "time is money" and free time is rare, to a softer relationship with time to open up space in our schedules.

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No information on resumption of Jharsuguda-Bangalore flights

Services which started in Sept 2018 have remained suspended since Aug 2022



POST NEWS NETWORK

Sambalpur, July 18: Regular flight services from Jharsuguda to Bangalore have been suspended for some time now with no announcement as to when resumption will take place. This development has turned into a huge hardship for the fliers. Flight services from the Veer Surendra Sai Airport here to Bangalore had started September 22, 2018. However, services were indefinitely suspended August 20, 2022. Since then there has not been any indication when services will resume again.

There was some hope for regular fliers when authorities announced that flights to Bangalore will resume July 10 and SpiceJet will also soon launch services to Chennai. However, nothing has materialised so far. A couple of days back, the authorities had again said that flights to Bangalore will resume July 19. However, the indications are that it will not happen so. This

Tickets for the Jharsuguda-Bangalore flights are not available on any website. Travel agencies are also in the dark about resumption of flights to Bangalore

is because tickets for the Jharsuguda-Bangalore flights are not available on any website. Travel agencies are also in the dark about resumption of flights to Bangalore and hence are not accepting any bookings. The only good news however, is that flights from the airport here to Delhi is still operating. Similarly, a flight from Kolkata to Bhubaneswar via Jharsuguda continues to function.

The suspension of flight services to Bangalore is causing immense hardships to both professionals and students residing in western Odisha. A large number of people are working in

Bangalore which is known as the IT hub of the country. Similarly, there are a number of students who regularly travel to Bangalore to pursue their academic goals. For them now, the options are either to travel by train to Bhubaneswar and then fly to their destination.

Some of the youths working as software engineers in various private firms in Bangalore said that the people want the flight services to resume. They said that airline companies should start flights to other parts of India from this city. "Now there are only flights to Delhi, Hyderabad and Kolkata. If flights to other parts of India are introduced, there will not be any shortage of passengers," said a professional who works in Bangalore.

Director of Veer Surendra Sai Airport, Sandip Kumar Tiwari meanwhile informed that Spicejet will soon connect Jharsuguda to Vishakhapatnam, Bangalore and Chennai. Four days in a week a flight will operate on the Kolkata-Jharsuguda-Vishakhapatnam-Bangalore route and on the three other days the flight will terminate in Chennai.

However, Tiwari could not ascertain the exact date on which the resumption of the flights will take place. He added that bookings will start only after higher authorities give the go ahead.

Till then the fliers will have to remain in the dark.



SCINTILLATING PERFORMANCE: Dancers performed Odissi at the VI Chakradhari Nritya Utsav organised by Krishnam Nrityanusthan at Meher Bhawan in Rourkela

TPSODL working for gender equality

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Berhampur, July 18: TP Southern Odisha Distribution Limited (TPSODL) has set up a state-of-the-art all-women meter testing laboratory here to encourage women to opt for a career in STEM. Incidentally STEM is an umbrella term used to group together the distinct but related technical disciplines of

science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

The laboratory was inaugurated Monday by Sanjay Banga, president (transmission and distribution), Tata Power, and Amit Garg, CEO TPSODL. The facility will be managed by Swarnaprabha Patra, Mishali Satpathy, and others.

The laboratory here has been established to cater to the cali-

bration and testing needs of meters according to Indian standard specifications.

Equipped with cutting-edge technology, the laboratory has three automatic test benches capable of testing single-phase, three-phase smart, and other types of meters.

"We believe in the immense potential of our local women technicians working across our dis-

tributions in Odisha. This all-women meter testing laboratory in Berhampur will not just ensure error-free meters for our customers in southern Odisha, but is in line with our larger commitment to gender equality and technological advancement in the power distribution sector, will encourage young girls and women to opt for a career in STEM," Banga said.

Paucity of teachers hurt students in 5T school

POST NEWS NETWORK

Balasore, July 18: Much has been said about the 5T initiative in the field of education in the state. However, the Kasipada Panchayat High School in this district, which was included under the 5T initiative for the 2022-23 academic session, is functioning without a single permanent teacher, a source said Monday. They added that the school, established in 1980, currently functions with two teachers and an identical number of peons.

The source further informed that from 2017 to June 2023, eight teachers (3 in arts, two in science and one each in Sanskrit, Hindi and PE) retired. The headmaster of the school Parshuram Behera retired June 30 this year. However, during the same period not a single permanent teacher was appointed.



The school management committee, student council and the previous headmaster had informed higher authorities, district administration, and DEO (District Education Officer) about the paucity of teachers. A written complaint was submitted at the District Collector's office also.

Following the complaint, the Collector, through a letter, directed the DEO to appoint teachers for the school. Accordingly four teachers were appointed in Kasipada Panchayat HS as a stop-gap arrangement. However, two of them did not join.

Sources said that among the two others appointed, one teacher comes to the school only thrice a week while the other is present on six days. As a result the 228 students at the school suffer. Parents of the students have warned of agitation unless teachers are appointed immediately, the source said.

Major accident averted at Balasore rly station

MEMU TRAIN WRONGLY DIRECTED TO LOOP LINE INSTEAD OF MAIN TRACK

POST NEWS NETWORK

Balasore, July 18: Another major train accident Tuesday was averted when a memu train entered the loop line instead of the main tracks near the Nilgiri Road station close to the Barun Singh Chowk in this district, said a source. Little more than a month has elapsed since the Bahanagar Bazaar train crash which took place June 2, leading to the death of 293 persons and injuries to over 1,200 passengers. Coming on the back of that disaster, the signaling system once more went awry for which the memu train came on to the loop line, the source informed.

However, the loco pilot was alert to the situation. He applied the brakes and stopped the train after it entered the loop line. Had the train continued on its journey, a major disaster could have occurred, the source added.

The source stated that the



train was on its way to Kharagpur from Bhadrak. After it came on to the loop line the loco pilot suspected something amiss on the track and stopped the train by applying its brakes. He got down from the train and found the track had ended there

The driver had to reverse the train for more than 200 metres and informed the control room. The passengers were left panicked when the train was going on reverse direction. Then it was again guided back on to the main track and reached the track

no-4 at Balasore railway station after two hour delay.

The passengers got down from the train after its arrival in Balasore railway station and felicitated the loco pilot with flower bouquets for saving their lives

The loco pilot informed that he managed to stop the train as it had just attained a speed of 7-8 kilometres per hour. Had the train been moving faster, it would have been extremely difficult to stop the train, he added. He could manage to reverse the train as the main track was also empty, the source said.

This month, seven railway employees, including the three arrested by the CBI, have been suspended on charges of dereliction of duty following the triple train crash close to the Bahanaga Bazaar station. Investigations are still on as to what led to the horrific crash, but preliminary findings have revealed that errors in signaling led to the disaster.

Bovine menace in Steel City

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, July 18: Roads in this city have turned into a deathtrap due to the presence of bovines. A student met with an accident Monday evening here after a cow rammed his two-wheeler. Luckily the boy escaped with minor injuries. A few days back, a woman, also on a two-wheeler panicked and fell as a herd of buffaloes surrounded her.

These are not just isolated incidents. Many such accidents are happening on a daily basis

in this city. However, they go unnoticed. "Such accidents are taking place simply because of the lackadaisical attitude of the local administration," the woman who found herself in the midst of a buffalo herd said.

The municipal corporation had been on a clean-up drive during the men's Hockey World Cup. All four-legged animals including cows, bulls and stray dogs were removed from the city. The RMC also levied a fine of Rs 2,000 on all cow owners, if the animals were found straying



on the roads. This prompted the owners to keep the cows on leash. However, once the World Cup ended, all rules and norms went for a toss. Also a letter from MP

Maneka Gandhi allegedly prevented the RMC officials from continuing with the strict enforcement of rules.

However, this was denied by Deputy Commissioner of RMC Sundhansu Bhoi. "We did not enforce any action against the cow owners. Only the stray dogs were removed from the streets," Bhoi said. The RMC has its 'Kanija House' to keep the cows. As there was space shortage it developed a bigger place in Sector-14 of this city on a plot provided by RSP which is in a bad shape.

Gynaecologist performs over 33k female sterilisations in 27 years

THE DOCTOR IS ALSO AN AVID NUMISMATIST AND HAS AMAZING COLLECTION OF COINS AND CURRENCY NOTES

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhawanipatna, July 18: Dr Sadananda Panigrahi, a physician in Kalahandi district has carved a niche for himself by performing over 33,000 family planning surgeries as part of the female sterilisation programme in his 27 years of service, sources said Tuesday. Dr Panigrahi is posted as an obstetrician and gynaecologist at Dharmagarh sub-divisional hospital in Kalahandi district. Recently, he has been appointed the superintendent (in-charge) of the same hospital.

Dr Panigrahi, for his feat has been felicitated at the national level once and by the Odisha gov-

ernment eight times and by the district administration on seven occasions. He has been featured twice in the Limca Book of Records. The eight times Dr Panigrahi was felicitated by the Odisha government were in 2012, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2018, 2021, 2022 and 2023. He also received the 'Lifetime Achievement' award from the state government in 2022. He was also awarded with the 'Bharat Jyoti Samman' by the Indian International Friendship Society at New Delhi in 2018 for his notable contribution in the field of family planning.

Dr Panigrahi began his career as an obstetrician and gynaecologist at the Kalahandi district



headquarters hospital here in 1996. After working there for a year, he was transferred to the Junagarh community health cen-

tre where he served from 1997 to 2004. Then he was transferred to his present working place the same year.

During his service period, Dr Panigrahi has devoted 100 days annually in conducting family planning surgeries in camps organised by the respective hospitals under Dharmagarh sub-division. Most of his surgeries have been carried out in the blocks of Bhawanipatna, Kesinga and Thuamul Rampur in Kalahandi district.

Apart from being doctor, Dr Panigrahi has another interesting facet in his life. He is an avid numismatist and loves collecting currency and notes of various

countries. His collection drew wide appreciation during an exhibition he organised in a hotel at Junagarh in October 2022. He displayed 2,326 currency notes and coins belonging to most of the 195 countries of the world.

Dr Panigrahi pointed out that women in rural areas usually give birth to babies more than their counterparts in urban localities. However, in most cases, women of rural areas and the newborn suffer from acute malnutrition. In many cases both the mother and the baby die due to this reason. He said that this can be prevented through sterilisation of the woman after she has given birth once or twice.

EAST COAST RAILWAY
E-AUCTION OF PARKING STANDS
Auction Catalogue No.: Prkg-KUR-23-41
Station & Location : (1) Sompeta-Mix (2) Wheeler-cum-4 Wheeler (Station Building side), (2) Jajpur Keonjhar Road-Mix (2) Wheeler-cum-4 Wheeler (Near Platform-1).
Auction Start Date & Time : 31.07.2023 at 1100 hrs. (for both SI Nos.)
Auction End Date & Time : 31.07.2023 at 1130 hrs. (for sl. no. 1), at 1140 hrs. (for sl. no. 2).
E-AUCTION OF PAY AND USE CLOAK ROOM
Auction Catalogue No.: PU-CR-KUR-23-10
Station & Location : Brahmapur-Cloak Room (Behind reserved lounge Platform-1).
Auction Start Date & Time : 31.07.2023 at 1400 hrs.
Auction End Date & Time : 31.07.2023 at 1430 hrs.
Note: Prospective bidders are advised to visit the <https://www.ireps.gov.in> and check the upcoming e-auctions leasing tab to get all required information regarding this e-auction.
Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager/ PR-353/O/23-24 Khurda Road

EAST COAST RAILWAY
File No. DRM/Engg/KUR/23-24/E-Tender/49, Dt. 14.07.2023
Tender No. e-Tender-NorthKUR-144-2023, Dtd.: 06.07.2023
DESCRIPTION : PROVISION OF NEW RAILWAY TRACK (60KG BG) TO VIS III BUILDING FROM EXISTING RAIL TRACK AT DR. APJ ABDUL KALAM ISLAND, DHAMRA UNDER DEPOSIT SCHEME BY KHURDA ROAD DIVISION OF EAST COAST RAILWAY.
Approx. Cost of the Work : ₹ 204.32 Lakhs, EMD : ₹ 2.52,200/-, Completion Period : 10 (Ten) Months.
Tender Closing Date and Time : At 1500 Hrs. of 28.07.2023.
No manual offers sent by Post / Courier/ Fax or in person shall be accepted against such e-tenders even if these are submitted on firm's letter head and received in time. All such manual offers shall be considered invalid and shall be rejected summarily without any consideration.
Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-Tender is available in website : <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-353/O/23-24 Khurda Road

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"e" Procurement Notice
Bid Identification No. S.E. R&B Divn. No. I-Bam-13/2023-24
Lr. No. 7258 Dtd.: 13.07.2023
Name of Work : Building Work
No. of Works : 1 (One) No.
Estimated Cost : Approximately Rs. 17.00 lakh
Period of Completion : Two Calendar Months
Date and time of availability of bid document in the portal : From 10.00 hours of 20.07.2023 to 16.00 hours of 26.07.2023
Last date/time for receipt of bids in the portal : Upto 16.00 hours of 26.07.2023
Name & address of the Officer Inviting Bid : Superintending Engineer, Ganjam (R&B) Division No. I, Berhampur
Further details can be seen from the e-Procurement portal <https://tendersodisha.gov.in>.
Sd./- Superintending Engineer
OIPR-34109/11/0015/2324 Ganjam (R&B) Division No.I, Berhampur



Genius discovers a system; average talent stereotypes it till it is shattered by fresh genius.

SRI AUROBINDO



NATO Letdown

The great political irony of the war between Ukraine and Russia is that Ukraine's hope for getting membership of NATO, which ostensibly caused the Russian invasion, has turned out to be illusory, a mirage. The cruellest part of Ukraine's desperate attempt to be brought under the security umbrella of NATO is that Finland has got the membership and Sweden is all set to be inducted into the military alliance. All this happened when NATO is doing much better now thanks to the "electroshock" administered by the invasion of Ukraine as famously put by French President Emmanuel Macron. Four years ago, Macron had declared NATO "brain dead."

This perhaps explains the picture of a sombre-faced Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy taken at the recent summit of NATO in Vilnius, Lithuania. It went viral as his facial expression was interpreted as a reflection of his frustration over not getting the membership for which his country has already been forced to pay too heavy a price in the form of loss of lives, land, displacement of thousands of people and destruction of homes and infrastructure by the Russian war machine.

Ukraine's cause is in a way betrayed by NATO as the latter has now grown from 30 to 31 members and one more is to be added soon. Finland's membership has now been activated and Sweden's membership is on track following a last-minute U-turn by Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. The inclusion of the two new members means NATO will be enriched with strong defence forces as the geographical location of the two countries will enable it to reign over the Baltic Sea.

Erdogan is astute enough to withdraw his objection which had resulted in blocking the delivery of American F-16s which Turkey desperately needs. He also wants to curry favour with the West for investment to revive his ailing economy. He has perhaps been emboldened by the revolt of Prigozhin against his mentor, Putin, to brush aside Russian objections to his decision on the new NATO members.

But, Ukraine is in a pitiable position even as the prospect of fixing a concrete timetable for membership afterwards looks bleak. The US, which calls the shots in NATO by paying two-thirds of its expenditure, has made it clear it regards membership for Ukraine as a distant possibility. The US, it seems, is in no mood to incur the wrath of Russia by giving its nod for granting NATO membership to Ukraine which would mean direct confrontation with the Russian President Vladimir Putin.

The utterances of British defence secretary, Ben Wallace and the US national security adviser, Jake Sullivan are by no means flattering for Ukraine. They reminded the latter of the need for "gratitude" for all that the West has done so far for it, providing it with weapons and aid to frustrate Russia's design to occupy the country. That was the unkindest cut of all as it is Ukraine which is paying the heavy human cost of war every day.

Kyiv finds itself in a trap. It calculated the possibility that it would be inducted into NATO which would forestall attempts by Russia to forcibly occupy the country. But, Putin used it as an alibi for the invasion. To the woes of Ukraine, NATO leadership has virtually ruled out its inclusion into the alliance in the near future. It now has no option but to wait for the day when the allies agree and when the conditions are right.

Zelenskyy is left in the lurch. He has to defend his country against Russia's might with whatever help he gets in the form of weaponry from the West and nothing more. By denying Ukraine NATO membership a historic opportunity seems to have been missed.

India too has a lesson to learn from the Ukraine experience. The manner in which the West promoted Ukraine and initially tried to build Zelenskyy as a global hero should draw attention from the Indian Establishment. The style in which Prime Minister Modi was feted in Western capitals such as Washington DC and Paris recently had similarities to Zelenskyy in early 2022. This should be of special interest to Indians. Undoubtedly, the lingering war in Ukraine has destroyed most of its infrastructure and killed hundreds of thousands of people while it has successfully weakened the Russian military edifice. The way international politics and economy are moving, indications are that China will be the next target of the West. The world knows that countries like South Korea, Taiwan, Japan, Philippines and a few others would be no match against China. The requirement of foot soldiers in Europe was met by Ukraine. Similarly, the requirement of manpower in a land battle against China in Asia can only be fulfilled by India. The West would prefer a long term India-China conflict where the US and countries like the UK and France can sell their military hardware and yet not get into any direct armed conflict with the Red Dragon. Once India takes on the brunt of the Chinese war machine, allies of the US such as Taiwan and South Korea could remain neutral and passive and thereby saved from destruction. Sometimes, more often than not, extreme bravado and conceit of a leader may result in the country getting decimated.

WISDOM CORNER

The world is the great gymnasium where we come to make ourselves strong. **SWAMI VIVEKANANDA**

Love and compassion are necessities, not luxuries. Without them, humanity cannot survive. **DALAI LAMA**

Every breath we take, every step we make, can be filled with peace, joy and serenity. **THICH NHAT HANH**

WORDSWORTH

Maieutic

The maieutic method is Socratic: a person is engaged in a dialogue by a questioner until frustration caused by challenges to his ideas leads him to dissatisfaction with his settled convictions and makes him refine his views. The idea behind the method is that the truth is already latent in every human being but that it has to be teased out and brought to the conscious mind. In practice, the questioner knows the answers already and leads the dialogue by supplying clues to allow the other person to work them out. The word is from Greek maieuesthai, to act as a midwife, from maia, a midwife. Socrates compared himself to a philosophical midwife, who through his questioning could induce the delivery of superior understanding in the other person, because the knowledge was already present in that person's mind. Though the word is first recorded in the seventeenth century, it has become more common in modern times, especially in discussions of philosophy, education and psychotherapy. However, it's not widely known outside such specialist fields. The challenger then exercises a Socratic or maieutic function, drawing out an argument from the proponent as she recognizes that his case presented so far needs further development to constitute a cogent argument or the strongest argument possible (Argument Structure: Representation and Theory, by James B Freeman, 2011).

LOL

TOUGH RATS

Three rats are sitting at the bar talking bragging about their bravery and toughness. The first says, "I'm so tough, once I ate a whole bagful of rat poison!"



The second says, "Well I'm so tough, once I was caught in a rat trap and I bit it apart!" Then the third rat gets up and says, "Later guys, I'm off home to harass the cat."

FOCUS GEOPOLITICS

XI'S RUSSIAN ALBATROSS

Wagner Group leader Yevgeny Prigozhin may have played his assigned role by reportedly meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin in the Kremlin on June 29. But notwithstanding the contrived show of unity, it will not have been lost on Chinese President Xi Jinping that Prigozhin's highly public mutiny last month has profoundly weakened the Russian leadership. With Ukraine on a counteroffensive and Russia's battlefield losses mounting, Xi's "no limits" partnership with Putin is quickly morphing into a military liability for China.



Kent Harrington

IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN WHETHER THE QUESTIONABLE INTEGRITY OF RUSSIA'S CHAIN OF COMMAND WILL FUNDAMENTALLY CHANGE XI'S STRATEGIC CALCULUS OR GLOBAL DESIGNS

Of course, China insists that the Wagner Group's abortive putsch did not threaten its own cooperation with the Kremlin. Just hours after Prigozhin halted his march on Moscow, the Communist Party of China issued a statement dismissing the revolt as an internal matter. Inside China, news of Prigozhin's uprising has been sparse, because censors have sanitised Chinese social media of any hint that Putin may have been taken down a peg. State media have duly reiterated the regime's support for Russia, portrayed the Western reaction as overblown, and declared Putin's position to be secure.

It is understandable that Xi would maintain this façade, given how often he has waxed rhapsodic about China's ties with Russia and his personal relationship with Putin. The two men have met some 40 times over the past decade, repeatedly avowing a shared worldview. Putin launched his invasion of Ukraine shortly after Xi had announced their "no limits" partnership, and handshake photos during Xi's visit to Moscow in March – three days after the International Criminal Court indicted Putin for war crimes and issued a warrant for his arrest – conveyed that their bond remained strong.

In the multipolar world that China touts, Russia remains key to constraining the United States and its allies. The "comprehensive strategic partnership" that Xi and Putin announced in March encompasses



The factors behind Putin's failures should trouble Xi personally. China's military brass will be wondering what to expect in any East Asian conflict that calls for joint operations with Russia

everything from cooperation on "de-dollarization" to pursuing parallel policies in Iran, Syria, and Africa – where China's investments and rising profile complement Russia's growing military and political presence. Notwithstanding the consequences of Russian aggression in Ukraine, Xi has emphasised that China's strategy vis-à-vis Russia "will not be changed by any turn of events ... no matter how the international landscape may change."

Xi also is ever mindful of maintaining stability at home. The last thing China's economy – already facing intensifying headwinds – needs is rocky relations with Russia. Faltering industrial output, weak consumer demand, and flagging exports are all hampering China's post-COVID recovery. Although Russia accounts for only 3% of China's total trade, bilateral trade grew 30% in 2022, and has already grown another 41% as of May. China is buying Russian oil and gas at a deep discount, and its exports are helping Russia sustain the war and keep its economy afloat.

Moreover, Xi is deeply invested in Sino-Russian military cooperation. On his watch, defence relations accelerated following Russia's 2014 annexation of Crimea and incursions into eastern Ukraine, despite the sanctions that followed. While bilateral defence cooperation may have plateaued since 2020, China is still benefiting from access to Russian

advanced weapons, military exchanges, joint exercises, and high-tech air, naval, and early-warning systems.

But as important as such tangible returns may be, China cannot ignore the growing intangible liabilities associated with its ties to Russia. After 16 months of battlefield failures, the Russian armed forces have lost 50% of their combat effectiveness, Britain's military commander estimates, with the United States putting the number of Russian casualties at more than 100,000 just since December. It is safe to assume that China's own generals are both stunned and disappointed by these results. The last war China fought was almost a half-century ago, against Vietnam. Any hope that it had of drawing fresh insights from a winning Russian playbook in Ukraine has now been dashed.

The factors behind Putin's failures should trouble Xi personally. Consider Russia's competing chains of command and constant reshuffling of generals in Ukraine. China's military brass will be wondering what to expect in any East Asian conflict that calls for joint operations with Russia.

Even without the Kremlin's incompetence and confusion, the US government-funded Center for Naval Analyses concludes that Russia and China have a long way to go in creating an effective military partnership. As matters stand, "The episodic establishment of joint

operation centers and the occasional use of each other's military facilities remain the only cases of advanced military cooperation."

Even more important for Xi, Russia's muddled decision-making is not confined to the battlefield. As Carnegie Endowment's Mikhail Komin suggests, the military's tepid response to Prigozhin's putsch raises basic questions about its loyalties. Xi is already familiar with this problem. As part of his sweeping anti-corruption campaign in the 2010s, he oversaw a highly publicised purge of the Chinese military to root out competitors and critics. One wonders what was going through his mind as the Wagner Group marched on Moscow while Russia's armed forces did nothing.

China doubtless has its own view about Prigozhin and the specific Russian military leaders whom he sought to challenge – namely Minister of Defence Sergei Shoigu and General Staff Chief Valery Gerasimov. But these are only a few of the many players in the Kremlin's internecine struggle for position and privilege.

Others include Shoigu and Gerasimov's respective predecessors, Anatoly Serdyukov and Nikolai Makarov. A decade ago, Komin reminds us, they led a reform programme to revamp the military, ultimately discharging some 80% of the Russian Army's colonels and 70% of its majors. That house cleaning opened the doors for new officers who are not beholden to today's incumbents.

Likewise, it remains to be seen whether the questionable integrity of Russia's chain of command will fundamentally change Xi's strategic calculus or global designs. The fact that Russian security services reportedly have detained at least 13 senior military officers and suspended or fired 15 others following Prigozhin's revolt can only be troubling for Beijing. For now, however, it would appear that Xi cannot do without even a weakened and humiliated Putin.

The writer is a former senior CIA analyst.
@PROJECT SYNDICATE

IN JEST THIS

Moon race may bring lasting benefits

A newspaper headline last week grabbed my attention. "India Launches Lunar Mission With a Shot at Winning This Year's Moon Race," said the headline in the New York Times.



Melvin Durai

This year's moon race? I did not realise that a moon race was taking place this year.

According to the article, Russia, Japan and the United States are all potentially sending robotic missions to the moon this year. That means, of course, that if India's mission, Chandrayaan-3, reaches the moon first, it would be crowned 2023 Moon Race Champion. Just picture Chandrayaan-3 standing on the podium with a gold medal around its neck, as Jana Gana Mana plays and the tricolour is raised. It would be such a proud moment. The term "moon race" makes me think of other races that will eventually take place on the surface of the moon. Jamaica's Usain Bolt is considered the fastest person on earth, but who will be the fastest person on the moon? Many runners would love to have that title, even if they have to travel 384,400 km to get it. If India is able to send an astronaut to the moon during a future mission, I hope the astronaut completes the 100-meter dash across the surface of the moon. Because the force of gravity is much lower on the moon, the 100-meter dash would probably be called the 100-meter bounce-and-hop. Nevertheless, the title of "fastest person on the moon" would still be valid.

If I went to the moon, I would not only make sure I was crowned fastest person on the moon, I would set thousands of Guinness Moon Records.

Here are just some of the records I would set on the moon:

- Records involving moon rocks: most moon rocks collected, most moon rocks thrown, most moon rocks sat on.
- Athletic records: longest javelin throw (eat your heart out, Neeraj), highest jump, fastest dash to the bathroom.
- Non-athletic records: most

samosas eaten, longest fingernails, thickest mustache.

It has been more than 50 years since a human walked on the moon, but at least the Chandrayaan-3 mission plans to have a dog walking on the moon. Oh wait, perhaps this is a different kind of Rover.

According to the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), one of the objectives of the Chandrayaan-3 mission is to "demonstrate Rover roving on the moon." I know many Rovers who like to rove, but apparently ISRO's Rover does not have a tail or a loud bark. The Chandrayaan-3 mission has three objectives. The first objective is to demonstrate a "safe and soft landing" on lunar surface. Chandrayaan-2, as you may recall, was unable to achieve this objective in 2019, but hopefully Chandrayaan-3 will land on the moon and allow the rover to do its roving, which is the second objective.

The third objective is to "conduct in-situ scientific experiments." This means that the ex-

periments will be conducted on-site, but it is more impressive to use the Latin phrase "in-situ." After I finish writing this column in-situ, I plan to take a nap in-situ.

The experiments will provide scientists with valuable information about the moon's atmosphere and surface. This information will help us determine if the moon is habitable. Once that happens, there will be a mad dash to buy land on the moon.

ISRO Chairman S. Somanath, speaking at the recent Human Space Flight Expo in Bangalore, explained why it is important to find out whether humans can live in space. "There is no guarantee that life on the earth won't go extinct in the future," he said. "As human beings, we are not ready to go extinct."

If humans ever settle on the moon, the "moon race" may eventually have a different meaning. But hopefully all of us will be welcome on the moon, no matter what race we are.

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

OrissaPOST
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Vector control

Sir, Several states are currently experiencing an upsurge in dengue cases due to intermittent rain-fall and the onset of the monsoon season. This period is known for an increased prevalence of diseases such as dengue, typhoid, malaria, and jaundice, with dengue occasionally reaching epidemic proportions. The breeding of mosquitoes in stagnant water pools contributes to the rise in dengue cases. Dengue has become a year-round threat due to factors like climate change, unplanned urbanisation, high population density, and unsanitary environments in cities. Dengue fever is a viral disease transmitted by infected Aedes mosquitoes. Common symptoms include headache, high fever, exhaustion, severe muscle and joint pain, swollen glands, vomiting, and rash. Individuals who have had dengue previously are at a higher risk of severe dengue, which can lead to more serious symptoms. Symptomatic treatment is recommended as there is no specific cure or vaccine available for dengue. Immediate blood tests should be conducted when dengue symptoms arise. Government facilities provide free testing and treatment for dengue. Prevention plays a crucial role in combating dengue. Aedes mosquitoes are active during the day, so wearing full-sleeved clothes and using mosquito repellents are advised even during daytime activities. Using mosquito nets, repellents, and keeping doors and windows closed can also help prevent mosquito bites. To effectively combat this disease, a comprehensive approach is necessary throughout the year. The government needs to establish an integrated vector management system that involves continuous monitoring of Aedes mosquitoes and sentinel surveillance. Collaboration between the government, city corporations, health authorities, and citizens is crucial in the fight against dengue.

Krishna Kumar Vepakomma, HYDERABAD

Baffling move

Sir, The Ajit Pawar-led faction of the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) meeting party patriarch Sharad Pawar in Mumbai has baffled political observers. This marks their first formal interaction since the nephew and eight MLAs joined the Shiv Sena-BJP government. The NCP leaders were unsuccessful in seeking Pawar senior's blessings or changing his mind about joining the BJP-Shiv Sena government. The writing is on the wall!

NJ Ravi Chander, BANGALORE



DELHI WOES

Flood victims stare at battle to stay afloat



affected areas are being kept. At one of the relief camps, Sunita says the food they are being provided is not sufficient for her kids and there are no regular water facilities either. Parts of the city have been grappling with waterlogging and flooding issues for a week now. Initially, a downpour caused intense waterlogging July 8 and 9, with the city receiving 125 per cent of its monthly rainfall quota in just two days.

Subsequently, heavy rains in the upper catchment areas, including Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, and Haryana, led to the Yamuna swelling to record levels.

The river reached 208.66 metres Thursday, surpassing the previous all-time record of 207.49 metres set in September 1978 by a significant margin.

The river breached embankments and penetrated deeper into the city than it has in over four decades.

Friday marked a turning point as the raging Yamuna and the resulting backflow of foul-smelling water from drains spilled into prominent locations such as the Supreme Court, Raj Ghat, and the bustling intersection at ITO.

Prior to the misery on Friday, the river water had already reached the rear ramparts of the Red Fort and inundated one of the city's major bus terminals at Kashmere Gate.

The Ring Road, constructed partially over floodplains, remained closed for three consecutive days near Kashmere Gate last week.

The water level of the Yamuna in Delhi followed a downward trend Tuesday morning after a slight increase Monday due to rains in catchment areas upstream of the national capital.

However, it is still flowing over the danger mark of 205.33 metres.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE FLOODS HAVE BEEN DEVASTATING WITH OVER 26,000 PEOPLE BEING EVACUATED FROM THEIR HOMES. THE WATERS INUNDATED KEY LANDMARKS, ROADS, MONUMENTS AND RESIDENTIAL AREAS. THE ESTIMATED LOSS OF PROPERTY, BUSINESSES AND EARNINGS MAY RUN INTO CRORES

who worked in agriculture fields. "The flood washed away their books and other essentials. When I went back to get them, the police did not let me. I do not know what I shall do."

The government has set up multiple relief camps in the city where those rescued from the



Vehicles moves slow as bikers take shelter under a metro track on Delhi-Meerut Expressway near Mayur Vihar in heavy monsoon rains, New Delhi PTI PHOTO

Raj passes Bill to regularise temporary university teachers

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jaipur, July 18: The state assembly Monday passed three bills including the Rajasthan Universities' Teachers (Absorption of Temporary Teachers) (Amendment) Bill, 2023 to allow the regularisation of temporary teachers through a screening process.

Replying to the discussion on the Bill, Minister of State for Higher Education Rajendra Singh Yadav said eligible temporary teachers would be regularised by screening under the provisions of the bill. Responding to the discussion on the Bill, Yadav said the Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Governance and Social Sciences will create a better learning environment through high-quality education, research, training, capacity building and innovation.

Merit list confers no right of appointment: Delhi HC

The Delhi High Court has held that a merit list does not give candidates the right to be appointed, and it cannot remain valid indefinitely for enforcement

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 18: A merit list does not confer on candidates a right to be appointed and it cannot stay alive for an indefinite period of time for enforcement, the Delhi High Court has said.

The court's observation came while dismissing a petition by a woman seeking appointment as Trained Graduate Teacher (TGT) of mathematics in a school here on the ground that being the 3rd rank holder in the merit list published in 2017, she should be



DELHI HIGH COURT

given the post after the first rank holder was disqualified and the second candidate showed no interest in the job. "Although there exists no explicit rule or law which prescribes a fixed period or duration for which the merit list remains valid, the merit list cannot be kept alive for consideration for such a significantly long time period," said Justice Chandra Dhari Singh in a recent order. "This Court ... is of the view that a merit list only enlists the selected candidates but does not confer any right for appointment upon the selected candidates and the merit list cannot

stay alive for an indefinite period of time for enforcement," the court said.

The petitioner, who had approached the court in 2018, submitted that one post of TGT (Maths) was vacant at the school and she has the right to be appointed.

The court said a candidate does not have a vested right to the post merely on the ground that her name is reflected in the merit list and therefore, it would not create a legal duty upon the authority to appoint such candidate.

Considering that the merit list was published for the post of TGT (Maths) more than 5 years ago, it said, "It will be highly improper for this court to review the said merit list" at such a "belated stage".

It said there has to be certain reasonable duration during which the merit list can be considered by the court to grant relief.

SURGE IN SNAKE SIGHTINGS

New Delhi: With a surge in snake sightings across Delhi as floodwaters recede, the city government Tuesday decided to establish a rapid response team to effectively handle the situation. According to an official, this is the first time such a team has been assembled, reflecting the severity of the recent flooding as the swollen Yamuna River reached farther into the city than it has in over four decades. Environment Minister Gopal Rai said the rapid response team will be operational in all flood-affected districts of Delhi, ensuring comprehensive coverage in addressing the snake-related concerns.

Delhi govt lifts curbs on entry of heavy vehicles

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 18: With the receding Yamuna levels, the Delhi government has decided to partially lift restrictions on the entry of heavy goods vehicles in the national capital.

The government had banned the entry of heavy goods vehicles, barring those carrying essentials, in the city from four borders, including Singhu, as a precautionary measure in view of the rising Yamuna levels, Transport Minister Kailash Gahlot said July 13.

"... It has been decided that restrictions for entry of Heavy Goods Vehicles to be removed



partially, in view of receding water level of Yamuna River and improvement in flood situation in some parts of Delhi. Inter-state buses from Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Chandigarh, Jammu and Kashmir, and Uttarakhand terminating at ISBT Kashmere Gate will terminate at Singhu border.

HC pulls up Raj govt over inmates' physical appearance

AGENCIES

Jaipur, July 18: The Rajasthan High Court has expressed strong displeasure over physical appearance of prisoners in courts.

Referring to the recent Bharatpur shoot-out case, a division bench of Chief Justice A.G. Masih made a verbal remark that when the court has said that physical examination of prisoners should be done only in special circumstances, then why was the prisoner being taken by bus to Bharatpur for examination?

Hauling up the government, the court said, "The prisoner was murdered on the bus. During this, not only was the safety of the common people threatened, but along with the loss of time of the jail guards, the roadways



were also damaged."

It sought to know the names of the jails which lack the video conferencing facility and the reasons for it.

Further, the court has also asked the government to present the compliance report on 45 given points. The court gave the instructions while hearing the case of suo motu cognizance related to the arrangements in the jail.

Over 3,500 constables to be recruited

Jaipur: To strengthen the law and order in the state, 3,578 police constables will be recruited in the Rajasthan Police Subordinate Service, an official statement issued Tuesday said. Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot has given consent to the proposal to this effect. In another decision, the government has approved the proposal to start 45 new subjects in 36 schools of the state and to create necessary posts for teaching these subjects, the statement said. Among them, one subject each will be started in 27 out of 36 schools of the state and two subjects each will be started in nine schools. In these, one post of school lecturer per subject will be created for the introduction of new subjects. In this way a total of 45 posts will be created, it added.



Rajasthan Assembly passes Bill to deal with organised crime

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jaipur, July 18: Rajasthan Tuesday became the fourth state to pass a law against organised crime, with the government saying there is an urgent need for stringent measures to effectively tackle such activities.

The state Assembly also passed the Rajasthan Prisons Bill, 2023, by voice vote and introduced another Bill that seeks life sentences for those involved in recruitment exam paper leaks. Replying to a debate on the Rajasthan Control of Organised Crime Bill, 2023, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Shanti Dhariwal said a study of crime trends during the last decade has revealed a shift in their patterns in the state. Earlier, heinous crimes such as murder, dacoity, robbery, kidnapping

and extortion were committed by individuals acting alone or in concert, but the last decade witnessed a rise in organised crime in Rajasthan, he added.

"Rajasthan will be the fourth state in the country to enact such a law. In the past, such laws have been implemented in Maharashtra, Karnataka

and Gujarat," he said, adding there is a rising consensus among policymakers and internal security experts that such criminal activities require stringent law for effective tackling. The Bill was passed by a voice vote. Dhariwal said under Section 28 of the Bill, the high court will have powers to make rules regarding special courts and under Section 29, the state government will be able to make rules to implement the purposes of the Act.



Rajasthan Assembly

WHERE WILL PILOT LAND, DELHI OR JAIPUR?

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Jaipur, July 18: Where shall our Pilot land? This question seems to be doing the rounds in the party ever since a report of former deputy chief minister Sachin Pilot joining the team of Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge has come in.

In fact, Pilot has been in Jaipur since the last few days and has been actively participating in the party's meetings and protests which he had been avoiding for the last few months.

He was recently seen at a protest against the disqualification of Rahul Gandhi as MP.

Also, he was seen at the PCC recently where he addressed block presidents and asked them to sweat in the fields.

A party leader speaking with IANS said, "now, you look at his body language, doesn't he look confident?"

It seems he has been given some assurance about his future role, otherwise why will he

be so polite after fighting for his demands for the last four and a half years, he questioned.

Ever since his meeting with the party high command in Delhi, Pilot seems to be a changed man. While he is openly praising Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot, he has also assured the party that he will accept anything being offered to him by the party.

Recently, he had good words for Gehlot saying, "Gehlot is trying to take everyone along," after his meeting with senior leaders in Delhi.

Surprisingly, in 2020, he had rebelled against the state leadership but it was abortive.

Meanwhile, Pilot has yet another reason to smile. He is happy that his demands have been accepted by the party leadership and the state government has announced bringing a stringent law against paper leaks.

CM Ashok Gehlot has announced to bring in a law proposing life term for those accused of paper leaks. Pilot has



taken out a march from Ajmer to Jaipur to raise his demands and one amongst these was strict action against paper leak accused.

Now questions are being asked

IF SOURCES IN ONE SECTION OF THE CONGRESS ARE TO BE BELIEVED PILOT WILL BE JOINING AS GENERAL SECRETARY IN THE CONGRESS WORKING COMMITTEE SOON AND HENCE WILL LEAD THE APEX TEAM OF THE CONGRESS

THE OTHER SECTION IS CONFIDENT THAT HE WILL BE GIVEN A DECENT ROLE AND HIS POSITION IN RAJASTHAN WILL BE ELEVATED

why Pilot has accepted the final suggestion of the central leadership and announced that he is ready to accept whatever role is offered to him.

Sources confirmed that Pilot also met state in charge Sukhjinder Singh Randhawa and three observers who went to his house on Friday.

Why have these seniors visited his place; something is cooking it seems, said party workers.

A few followers of Pilot have been dropped from the Congress Working Committee announced recently and there are chances that they will be inducted back,

said party leaders.

Meanwhile, the activeness of senior leader Sonia Gandhi is also being discussed. All eyes are now on what role Pilot gets. This is because earlier, he was given the position of deputy CM with other portfolios. However, he openly rebelled against the state leadership. Even after the rebellion, he was offered a position in Delhi in the central team, but as per sources, he rejected all those posts and insisted on staying in Rajasthan.

The Gehlot camp is least interested in giving him any role. However, the fight is for the eastern Rajasthan seats where Gujjars are quite dominant. The BJP central leadership is focusing on these seats and all senior party leaders be it Prime Minister Narendra Modi, JP Nadda and others have already been touring these areas.

The fight is on, let's wait and watch how the Congress plays on these seats, said political experts.



Navy officials at the induction of the MCA barge LSAM 7 (YARD 75), at INS Tunir, in Mumbai



Pakistan Muslim Women League members chant slogans during a rally to denounce burning of 'Quran' that recently took place in Sweden



India's Defence Minister Rajnath Singh with his Argentinian counterpart Jorge Taiana after the latter was accorded a Guard of Honour, in New Delhi



A woman and a child wade through a waterlogged road, in Morigaon district of Assam



US Special Presidential Envoy for Climate John Kerry, left, and Chinese top diplomat Wang Yi shake hands before a meeting at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing



Yamuna flows above the danger mark in Agra



Security personnel stand guard and use a drone during a search operation, in Poonch district. At least four terrorists have been killed in the encounter



Congress Sevadal workers carry the coffin of former Kerala CM Oommen Chandy to an ambulance outside the airport after his body was brought to Thiruvananthapuram from Bangalore in a special aircraft, in Thiruvananthapuram

national

of the day quote

The Himachal Pradesh government is developing an automated online system to scrutinize building plans and grant construction permission
SUKHVINDER SINGH SUKHU | HIMACHAL CM

India is using steel slag, the waste generated during steel production, to build stronger and more durable roads along the India-China border in Arunachal Pradesh
JITENDRA SINGH | SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY MINISTER

What has the YSRCP achieved despite having 31 MPs?
N CHANDRABABU NAIDU | ANDHRA OPPOSITION LEADER

SHORT TAKES

Men stage nude protest in Raipur

Raipur: A group of men staged a nude protest in Chhattisgarh's capital Raipur Tuesday demanding action against people who allegedly got government jobs using fake caste certificates. The police arrested 29 protesters as they marched towards the state legislative assembly. The four-day monsoon session of the assembly began Tuesday. The protesters, most of them youngsters, belonged to the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. They carried placards demanding action against government employees who used fake caste certificates to get jobs.

Emergency landing

Bhopal: An aircraft with Congress leaders Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi on board made an emergency landing at Bhopal airport Tuesday evening, a police officer said. The plane made an emergency landing at the Bhopal airport, Bhopal police commissioner Harinarayan Chari Mishra said. However, details like the reason behind the emergency landing of the aircraft and destination are not available. Mishra said the aircraft is likely to take off for onward journey at around 9:30 pm.

Toddler dies

Vidisha (MP): A baby girl, who was pulled out of a borewell in a village in Madhya Pradesh's Vidisha district, was declared dead in hospital Tuesday evening, a senior official said. After being rescued from the borewell, the girl, aged between 24 and 30 months, was rushed to a hospital in Sironj town where doctors declared her dead after examination, sub-divisional magistrate (SDM) Harshal Choudhary said. The incident occurred at Kajari Barkheda village, some 90km from the district headquarters.

Sampla resigns

New Delhi: National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC) chairperson Vijay Sampla is believed to have resigned from his post as he is likely to be given organisational responsibility in the BJP in the upcoming elections, sources said Tuesday. Sampla has been holding the charge of NCSC chairperson since 2021.

Three killed

Balodabazar: Three workers were killed when an oxygen cylinder exploded at a cement factory in Chhattisgarh's Balodabazar district Tuesday, police said. The incident took place at UltraTech Cement's plant in Hirni area, a senior police official said. Lakhesh Kumar Gayakwad, Shatruhan Lal Verma and Umesh Kumar Verma were killed in the explosion, he said.



The government will take a firm decision on the anti-farmer agricultural laws implemented by the previous BJP government in the state
SIDDARAMAIAH | KARNATAKA CM

BALAJI, WIFE MOVE SC

Tamil Nadu Minister V Senthil Balaji and his wife Megala have filed two separate petitions in the Supreme Court challenging the July 14 order of the Madras High Court by which it upheld his arrest by the ED in a money laundering case



Portal launched to help 10 cr Sahara depositors get refund

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 18: The Centre Tuesday started the process to refund Rs 5,000 crore of depositors whose funds are stuck in four cooperative societies of Sahara Group, a move that is likely to help crores of small investors awaiting return of their hard-earned savings.

On March 29, the government had said money will be returned to 10 crore investors of the four cooperative societies within 9 months. The announcement followed a Supreme Court order directing transfer of Rs 5,000 crore from Sahara-Sebi refund account to the Central Registrar of Cooperative Societies (CRCS).

Launching a 'CRCS-Sahara Refund Portal' to facilitate the refund, Cooperation Minister Amit Shah said: "The process of returning the amount of Rs 5,000 crore to the investors is starting today in a transparent manner on a trial basis. This is beginning of refund of monies to the depositors (of Sahara Group)".

He further said after the completion of Rs 5,000 crore payment, another appeal will be made in the Supreme Court to return the amount to the remain-



ing investors. "The portal will initially benefit about one crore depositors," he said.

Stressing that spate of scams in past had shaken the confidence of small investors in the credit cooperative societies, Shah said the start of the refund process will help in renewing the confidence of small investors.

The portal has been developed for submission of claims by genuine depositors of Cooperative Societies of Sahara Group - Sahara Credit Cooperative Society Limited, Saharayan Universal Multipurpose Society Limited, Hamara India Credit Cooperative Society Limited and Stars Multipurpose Cooperative Society Limited.

Elaborating on the process to be followed by the depositors, Shah said first payment up to Rs 10,000 will be made to one crore investors who had deposited Rs 10,000 or more.



Devotees take part in a procession of Shri Ram Janaki in the month of 'Sawan', at Kashi Vishwanath temple in Varanasi

PTI PHOTO

NDA unites, Oppn divides: PM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 18: On a day when opposition parties formed their INDIA coalition to take on the NDA, Prime Minister Narendra Modi Tuesday said an alliance formed for the compulsion of power, based on dynastic politics and keeping in mind casteism and regionalism is very harmful to the country.

Addressing the leaders of constituents of the BJP-led coalition at a crucial meeting here, Modi said the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) unites the people of the country while the opposition divides them. He said the NDA recently completed 25 years - a period of giving speed to the country's progress and fulfilling regional aspirations.

"NDA is a beautiful rainbow of regional aspirations... So nation's development through the development of states... At a time when we are working for a developed India, NDA is taking the lead in showing the spirit of 'sabka prayas'," he said.

Modi said there has been a long tradition of political alliances in the country but whichever alliance was formed on the basis of negativity, it never succeeded. "In the 1990s, the Congress in order to bring instability in the country used alliances. They formed governments and pulled down governments. The NDA was formed in this period in 1998... It was not formed against anybody or to remove anyone from power, but it was formed to bring stability to the country," the prime minister said.



He asserted that when there is a stable government, decisions that change the direction of the nation are taken. "We saw it during Atal (Bihari Vajpayee) ji's tenure and we are seeing this in the last nine years. Due to a stable government, the confidence of the world in India has increased," he said.

"When we were in opposition also, we did constructive politics and did not indulge in negative politics. We opposed the government and brought

to the fore their scams but we never disrespected the mandate. To oppose governments, we never sought foreign help," Modi said.

He said that even when it was in the opposition, the NDA never posed roadblocks in the development of the country.

Modi said many opposition governments do not allow central schemes to be implemented in their states, and if implemented, they are not allowed to gather pace.

Delhi court grants bail to Brij Bhushan

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 18: A Delhi court Tuesday granted two-day interim bail to embattled Wrestling Federation of India chief and BJP MP Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh in the sexual harassment case lodged by women wrestlers, noting that he was not arrested during the investigation and appeared before it "without any coercive process".

Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Harjeet Singh Jaspal, who also granted interim bail to Vinod Tomar, the suspended WFI assistant secretary, granted relief to both of them on a personal bond of Rs 25,000 each.

The court passed the order after the public prosecutor representing Delhi police submitted even though the charge sheet has been filed without arrest he was still opposed to the bail applications. "In the matter at hand, the charge sheet has been filed without arrest. As per the police report, the accused persons have cooperated with investigation, the accused persons have put in appearance today upon court summons, that is to say, without any coercive process," the magistrate noted.



He also noted that the alleged offences were punishable with imprisonment of not more than seven years. "Accused persons undertake to remain present before this court whenever called for and are further ready and willing to furnish bail and are ready to comply with every condition on bail. In these circumstances, this court is bound to follow the mandate of the Apex Court," he said.

The Supreme Court had ruled in 2022 that where the offences were punishable with imprisonment of seven years or less and the charge sheet has been filed without arrest and the accused has cooperated throughout in the investigation, including appearing before investigating officer whenever called, the bail applications may be decided without the accused being taken into physical custody or by granting them interim bail till the bail application is decided.

Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Harjeet Singh Jaspal, who also granted interim bail to Vinod Tomar, the suspended WFI assistant secretary, granted relief to both of them on a personal bond of ₹25,000 each

MUMBAI COPS GET SECOND THREAT CALL

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, July 18: Mumbai police Tuesday received a threat call, a second in two days, about a bomb planted in the city, officials said. A similar call received on Monday had been found to be a hoax.

A First Information Report (FIR) has also been registered against unidentified persons regarding a message received last week, warning of a terror attack in the city if Pakistani woman Seema Haider did not return to her country.

On Tuesday afternoon, the main control room of Mumbai police received a call about a bomb planted in the city, an official said, without disclosing more details. The crime branch was probing the case. On Monday, police had received a similar call from a number which was traced to suburban Ghatkopar. The man who allegedly made the call was found to be mentally unstable, officials said.

Earlier, the city traffic control room had received threatening messages on the traffic helpline WhatsApp number. There were seven messages in Urdu, warning Mumbai police of an incident in the city like the November 26, 2008 ('26/11) terror attack if Pakistani national Seema Haider was not sent back to her country. The messages came from an international number.

SOCIAL MEDIA POST TRIGGERS CLASH, 10 HELD

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Patan, July 18: Ten people have been arrested so far after a communal clash erupted over a social media post leaving eight persons injured in Gujarat's Patan district, the police said Tuesday.

While the police have not disclosed the content of the social media post that triggered the clash at Balisana town on the night of July 16, sources said it was about the Bollywood movie 'The Kerala Story'.

"We have so far arrested ten persons belonging to both sides. Of them, eight from one side were arrested on Monday while two from the opposite side, including one Krish Patel, were arrested on Tuesday," said inspector J S Chaudhary of Balisana police station. Cases have been registered against the ten accused under various charges, including rioting, assault and attempt to murder, said Chaudhary. As part of the investigation on Monday, the police took some of the arrested accused to the Masjid Chowk area in Balisana where the incident took place.

DELUGE-BATTERED HIMACHAL

Helpless in face of nature's fury, but warriors at heart

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Shimla, July 18: They are helpless in the face of nature's fury, but true warriors to save the life of others.

Scores of government functionaries are on toes and risking their lives for over a week now to bring back the deluge-battered Himachal Pradesh to normalcy. The frontline departments comprise the police, the state disaster response force, the electricity, the irrigation and public health and the public works.

One of the toughest operations was carried out at the Chandertal lake, located at an altitude of over 14,000 feet, in the snow-mooned Spiti Valley, by the police in coordination with the Indian Air Force (IAF) and the Border Roads Organisation (BRO).

A total of 290 tourists had been



stranded in the Chandertal since July 8 owing to torrential rains that triggered landslides and snapped most of the road links in the Lahaul-Spiti district, state's cold desert where a sudden drop in the temperature, even in summer, can trigger winter-like conditions. The police team risked their lives to ensure that critical

patients were airlifted on time.

Finally, all tourists, including foreigners and local shepherds, were evacuated on July 13 by road after clearing dumps of snow from a mountain pass. A video shared by the state police on Monday showed a clipping of evacuation of seven tourists, who were in need of medical

emergency, from the Chandertal in Barashingri Glacier at elevation of 4.3 km by IAF's Mi-17 V5, considered to be one of the world's most modern transport helicopters. According to the IAF, the evacuation was carried out at 17:30 hrs on July 11. The pickup zone was in a glacier with no landing place and loose snow. The operation was daring owing to sloping terrain, and to ensure wheels don't sink.

The rescue was carried out with one wheel touching on snow and the other two wheels in the air. Due to treacherous terrain, no communication with ground, no wind indication and no place to land, the pickup zone was extremely challenging for any kind of landing or winching operations, says the IAF.

Because of this being a mercy mission and to save civilian lives,

a one-time operation was successfully undertaken, it says. The evacuation of the remaining tourists in vehicles began on July 13 after the snow-clearing operation on a 30-km stretch between Losar and the Kunzum Pass, the gateway to the lake, was over.

Heavy rains lashed Himachal Pradesh from July 7-11, causing extensive damage to all infrastructure, including road network. The BRO said they received information about 300 people stranded at the Chandertal because of multiple blockages on the road towards Manali on one side and snowfall in Kunzum Pass, located at an altitude of 4,550m on the road towards Kaza on the other side. A joint team of BRO personnel and the civil administration was formed to rescue the tourists.

international



Don't be seduced by Russian propaganda. Russia is not a victim -- it is the aggressor
GITANAS NAUSADA | LITHUANIAN PRESIDENT

SPACE DEBRIS OR SEA JUNK?

A dome-shaped mysterious object has washed up on a remote Australian beach, amid speculation that it could be from a 20-year-old Indian rocket that was used for launching a satellite. The canister was discovered near the beach in Green Head in Western Australia about 250 kilometres north of the city of Perth Saturday



of the day quote

The UN-led project to prevent a massive oil spill from the decaying FSO Safer ... took a major step forward over the weekend when the replacement vessel Nautica sailed from Djibouti en route to the Safer site

STEPHANE DUJARRIC | CHIEF SPOKESMAN FOR UN SECRETARY-GENERAL

Even without the Russian Federation, everything must be done so that we can use this Black Sea corridor

VOLODYMYR ZELENSKYY | UKRAINIAN PRESIDENT

The Black Sea agreements are no longer in effect. The deadline, as the Russian President said earlier, is July 17. Unfortunately, the part of the Black Sea agreement that concerns Russia has not yet been fulfilled. As a result, it has been terminated

DMITRY PESKOV | KREMLIN SPOKESMAN



Algerian President Abdelmajid Tebboune, right, walks with Chinese President Xi Jinping during a welcome ceremony at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing

China rolls over \$600mn loan to Pak

AGENCIES

Islamabad, July 18: Cash-strapped Pakistan has received a rollover of an additional \$600 million loan from its all-weather ally China to help shore up the country's foreign exchange reserves on the back of an IMF deal, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said Tuesday.

It is in addition to the over \$5 billion in loans that Beijing has rolled over for Pakistan in the last three months, helping the debt-ridden nation avert a default as negotiations to secure the IMF bailout dragged on, the Dawn newspaper reported.

Pakistan secured a last-gasp \$3 billion bailout from the International Monetary Fund June 30, which later disbursed an initial upfront instalment of about \$1.2 billion.

Sharif said the Exim Bank of China has provided the country's foreign exchange reserves by \$ 600 million.

"Our foreign exchange reserves are increasing but we

Pak to dissolve Parliament Aug 8

Islamabad: Pakistan's major ruling coalition partners have agreed to dissolve the National Assembly August 8, a few days before the completion of its five-year term, to get extra time for general elections, according to a media report Tuesday. The five-year constitutional term of the incumbent National Assembly expires August 12 at midnight — four days after the date on which both parties have reportedly agreed to dissolve the legislature.

want to do it not through loans but generating our income," he said at an event here.

Apart from the IMF bailout and the Chinese loan, a \$2 billion of financial support from Saudi Arabia and \$1 billion from the UAE after the IMF pact has helped steady Pakistan's economy, the report said, quoting Finance Minister Ishaq Dar.

SHORT TAKES

SL Prez to visit India from July 20-21

Colombo: Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickremesinghe will travel to India on an official visit from July 20-21 for talks with the country's top leadership to further advance and consolidate the long-standing bilateral relations between the two neighbours, the foreign ministry announced Tuesday. The visit takes place as both countries celebrate the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations this year.

Israeli protesters block highways

Tel Aviv: Israeli protesters blocked highways and gathered outside Tel Aviv's stock exchange and military headquarters Tuesday in the latest countrywide demonstration against Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's planned judicial overhaul. The latest "day of disruption" came as longtime allies of the prime minister pushed a contentious piece of legislation through a parliamentary committee ahead of a vote expected next week.

SK searches for missing people

Seoul: Rescuers searched Tuesday for about 10 people still missing in landslides and other incidents caused by more than a week of torrential rains in South Korea, as the country's military dispatched more than 10,000 troops to support rescue works. The downpours pounding South Korea since July 9 have left 41 people dead, nine missing and 35 others injured.

Belarus arrests prominent scribe

Tallinn (Estonia): Authorities in Belarus have arrested a prominent journalist working with the US-funded Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, the latest step in a yearslong crackdown on opposition figures, independent journalists and human rights activists. The Belarusian Association of Journalists said Ihar Karnei, 55, was arrested in the Belarusian capital, Minsk, Monday.

Spain fines Apple, Amazon \$218mn

Madrid: Amazon and Apple were fined a total of 194 million euros (USD 218 million) Tuesday for colluding to box out competitors by favouring sales of Apple products directly from the online retail giant, Spain's antitrust watchdog said.

US soldier held by NK after crossing border

AGENCIES

Seoul, July 18: An American soldier crossed the heavily armed border from South Korea into North Korea "willfully and without authorisation," US officials said Tuesday, becoming the first American detained in the North in nearly five years amid heightened tensions over its nuclear programme.

The American-led UN Command overseeing the area tweeted earlier Tuesday that the detained US citizen was on a tour of the Korean border village of Panmunjom. The US military in South Korea said in a statement that he "willfully and without authorisation" crossed the military demarcation line into North Korea.

Cases of Americans or South Koreans defecting to North Korea are rare, though more than 30,000 North Koreans have fled to South Korea to avoid political oppression and economic difficulties since the end of the 1950-53 Korean War.

Panmunjom, located inside the 248-kilometre-long Demilitarised Zone, has been jointly overseen by the UN Command and North Korea since its creation at the close of the Korean War.

Bloodshed and gunfire have occasionally occurred there, but it has also been a venue for numerous talks and is a popular tourist spot.

Known for its blue huts straddling concrete slabs that form the demarcation line, Panmunjom draws visitors from both sides who want to see the Cold War's



There were no immediate details about why or how the soldier crossed the border or whether the soldier was on duty

The four US officials spoke on the condition of anonymity to discuss the matter ahead of a public announcement

The United States, South Korea and others have accused North Korea of using foreign detainees to wrest diplomatic concessions

Some foreigners have said after their release that their declarations of guilt were coerced while in North Korean custody

last frontier. No civilians live at Panmunjom. In the past, North and South Korean soldiers faced off within metres of each other.

Tours to the southern side of the village reportedly drew around 100,000 visitors a year before the pandemic, when South Korea restricted gatherings to slow the spread of Covid-19. The tours resumed fully last year.

During a short-lived period of inter-Korean engagement in 2018, Panmunjom was one of

US deploys N-armed submarine to S Korea

Seoul: The United States deployed a nuclear-armed submarine for the first time in four decades, as the allies warned North Korea that any use of the North's nuclear weapons in combat would result in the end of its regime. Periodic visits by US nuclear ballistic missile-capable submarines to South Korea were one of several agreements reached by the two countries' presidents in April in response to North Korea's expanding nuclear threat. They also agreed to establish a bilateral Nuclear Consultative Group and expand military exercises.

the border sites that underwent mine-clearing operations by North and South Korean army engineers as the Koreans vowed to turn the village into a "peace zone" where tourists from both sides could move around with more freedom.

Russia strikes Ukraine grain port

REUTERS

Kyiv, July 18: Russia struck Ukrainian ports Tuesday, a day after pulling out of a UN-backed deal to let Kyiv export grain, and Moscow claimed gains on the ground in an area where Ukrainian officials said Russian forces were going back on the offensive.

Russia said it hit fuel storage in Odesa and a plant making seaborne drones there, as part of "mass revenge strikes" in retaliation for attacks by Ukraine that knocked out its road bridge to the occupied Crimean Peninsula.

Shortly after the bridge was hit Monday, Moscow withdrew from a year-old UN-brokered grain export deal, a move the United Nations said risked creating hunger around the world.

Falling debris and blast waves damaged several homes and unspecified port infrastructure in one of Ukraine's main ports, Odesa, according to Ukraine's southern operational military command. Local authorities in Mykolaiv, another port, described a serious fire there.

The Russian attacks on ports provide "further proof that the country-terrorist wants to endanger the lives of 400 million people in various countries that depend on Ukrainian food exports", said Andriy Yermak, the head of Ukraine's presidential staff. Ukraine's air force said six Kalibr missiles and 31 out of 36 drones were shot down. Moscow, for its part, said it had foiled a Ukrainian drone strike on Crimea, with no major damage on the ground, and reopened a single lane of road traffic on the Crimea bridge.

Six weeks since Ukraine launched a counteroffensive in the east and south, Russia is mounting a ground offensive of its own in the northeast.

Trump says he is target of criminal probe into '20 poll

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Washington, July 18: Former President Donald Trump said Tuesday that he has received a letter informing him that he is a target of the Justice Department's investigation into efforts to undo the results of the 2020 presidential election, an indication that he could soon be indicted by federal prosecutors.

Trump made the claim in a post on his Truth Social platform, saying he received the target letter while with his family Sunday night. Such a letter can precede an indictment and is used to advise individuals that prosecutors have evidence linking them to a crime; Trump received one ahead of being charged last month in a separate investigation into the mishandling of classified documents.

A spokesman for special counsel Jack Smith, whose office is leading the investigation, declined to comment.

Smith's team has cast a broad net in its investigation into attempts by Trump and his allies to block the legitimate transfer of power to Democrat Joe Biden in the days leading up to the January 6 riot at the US Capitol, when Trump loyalists stormed the building in a bid to disrupt the certification of electoral votes in Congress.

More than 1,000 people accused of participating in the riot have been charged. Smith's probe has centred on a broad range of schemes from Trump



Trump was charged last month with unlawfully retaining national defense documents after he left office in 2021 and conspiring to obstruct government efforts to retrieve them

and allies to keep him in power, including the use of slates of so-called fake electors in battleground states won by Biden and disputed by Trump. Trump, who is currently the dominant early frontrunner for the Republican nomination, is scheduled to travel to Iowa Tuesday, where he is taping a town hall with Fox News host Sean Hannity.

One purpose of the target letter is to advise a potential defendant that he or she has a right to appear before the grand jury.

Trump said in his post that he has been given "a very short 4 days to report to the Grand Jury, which almost always means an Arrest and indictment," but aides did not immediately respond to questions seeking clarity.

DEADLY HEAT HITS EUROPE

Tourists, residents warned to stay inside

Scientists have long warned that climate change, caused by greenhouse gas emissions mainly from burning fossil fuels, will make heatwaves more frequent, severe and deadly



A wildfire burns near the village of Pournari, Greece

Heatwave in northern hemisphere to intensify in coming days
US hopes climate cooperation with China could redefine ties
WMO warns of increased risk of deaths from heatwaves

As concerns grew the extreme heat would cause a spike in deaths, civil protection volunteers distributed reusable water bottles at 28 popular spots in Rome.

In Cyprus, health authorities confirmed that a 90-year-old man died over the weekend and six other older adults were hospitalized after all seven suffered heatstroke at home last week as temperatures surpassed 43 degrees Celsius (110 degrees Fahrenheit). Temperatures above 40 C (104 F) were forecast to per-

sist not only in the Mediterranean, but across North America, Asia and North Africa. Spain and Portugal had their temperature records shattered in 2018 when a mass of hot air moved up from Africa, igniting forest fires in the Iberian Peninsula.

France, the most-affected country, had around 15,000 heat-related deaths, many of them of older people left in city apartments and retirement homes without air conditioning. The deaths prompted the country to introduce a warning system and reassess how it dealt with extreme temperatures.

In Greece, authorities last week introduced changes in working hours and ordered afternoon closures of the Acropolis and other ancient sites to allow workers to cope with the high heat.

Pak-Afghan ties on crossroads over terror accusations

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Islamabad, July 18: Ties between Pakistan and Afghanistan are soon approaching the crossroads as Islamabad's accusations of cross-border terrorism and the presence of TTP militants in the war-torn nation are being responded aggressively by the Taliban regime in Kabul.

After Afghanistan rejected Pakistan's claim that TTP militants are present inside Afghanistan, top Pakistani military commanders have rejected the Taliban's claims that the banned TTP outfit was not operating from their soil.

The Taliban says that the TTP not only had sanctuaries across the border but also access to latest weapons.

of the day quote

We continue to achieve key milestones in our progress. We have engaged with more than 100 global suppliers and ancillary industries who will form a key part of the semiconductor and display ecosystem

AKARSH K HEBBAR | GLOBAL MD OF VEDANTA SEMICONDUCTORS AND DISPLAY

Everyone is looking at India with a very positive lens. India is growing at a phenomenal pace with demographics, policies, markets... Just see how the consumer market is booming... India is poised to grow and the world knows you can't ignore India today. We are a force to reckon with

AMAN GUPTA | BOAT'S CO-FOUNDER

The huge potential of India's marine sector can play a significant and pivotal role in elevating the economic cycle towards an Aatmanirbhar Bharat by 2047

SARBANANDA SONOWAL | UNION MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Jewellery exports may fall 10-15%

New Delhi: India's gems and jewellery exports are likely to decline by 10 to 15 per cent in the current financial year on account of slowing demand in key markets like the US and China, GJEPC Chairman Vipul Shah said. The gems and jewellery exports grew 2.48 per cent year-on-year to Rs 3,00,462.52 crore (over USD 36 billion) in FY23, according to the Gems and Jewellery Export Promotion Council (GJEPC). Addressing the media, on the sidelines of an event here on Monday evening, the GJEPC Chairman informed that the Commerce Ministry has given a target of USD 42 billion for the gems and jewellery segment exports in 2023-24. "For gems and jewellery, the major contributing market is the US and China, the demand is slowing there," Shah said.

IndusInd Bank Q1 profit up 30%

New Delhi: Private sector lender IndusInd Bank Tuesday reported a 30 per cent rise in net profit at Rs 2,124 crore for the June quarter, helped by a decline in bad loans. The private sector lender had posted a net profit of Rs 1,631 crore in the year-ago period. Total income in the first quarter of the current fiscal rose to Rs 12,939 crore from Rs 10,113 crore in the same period a year ago, IndusInd Bank said in a regulatory filing. Interest earned by the bank grew to Rs 10,730 crore over Rs 8,182 crore in June 2022. The bank's asset quality showed improvement as gross Non-Performing Assets (NPAs) declined to 1.94 per cent of gross advances at the end of the June quarter from 2.35 per cent a year ago. Similarly, net NPAs or bad loans, eased to 0.58 per cent against 0.67 per cent in the year-ago period.

SoftBank arm offloads 2% stake in Paytm

New Delhi: SoftBank arm SVF India Holdings has offloaded 2.01 per cent shares in fintech unicorn Paytm, reducing the Japanese investment firm's stake in the company to 9.15 per cent. SoftBank has sold 12,771,434 equity shares in the fintech major's parent company One97 Communications via open market operations between May 9, 2023 and July 13, 2023. One97 Communications said in a regulatory filing on Tuesday. SVF India Holdings had sold 4.5 per cent in November 2022 and another 2.07 per cent in the first half of 2023.

Withdrawal of ₹2,000 notes pushes deposits to 6-yr high

THE NEAR TOTAL RETURN OF THE CURRENCY TO THE SYSTEM HAS BUOYED DEPOSIT ACCRETION TO RS 191.6 LAKH CRORE IN JUNE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, July 18: Withdrawal of Rs 2,000 notes by Reserve Bank May 19 and the subsequent near total return of the currency to the system has buoyed deposit accretion to a six-year high of Rs 191.6 lakh crore in June, according to a report.

Earlier this month, the RBI said more than three-fourths of the total 3.62 lakh crore of Rs 2,000 bank notes have come back to the system by way of deposits (over 85 per cent) and the rest as note exchanges.

According to Sanjay Agarwal, a senior director with Care Ratings, deposits witnessed a healthy on-year growth of 13 per cent to Rs 191.6 lakh crore, which is the highest in the past six years (since March 2017) in the fortnight ending June 30, partly supported by the withdrawal of the Rs 2,000 currency notes and higher interest rates on deposits.

Deposits rose 13 per cent in the reporting fortnight and sequentially, it expanded by 3.2 per cent to Rs 191.6 lakh crore and in absolute terms, deposits rose by Rs 22 lakh crore in the trailing 12-month period when it had stood at Rs 185.7 lakh crore.

As a result, the spread between credit and deposits growth dropped to 326 basis points in the reporting fortnight as against 875 bps in November 2022, which was the largest. This can be attributed to a rise in deposits in



the last two to three fortnights.

This has had the short-term weighted average call rate (WACR) rising to 5.94 per cent as of June 30 from 4.3 per cent as of July 31, 2022, primarily due to the elevated policy rates. The WACR had peaked at 6.69 per cent as of May 4, 2023.

Meanwhile, credit offtake continued to remain elevated at 16.2 per cent on-year to reach Rs 143.9 lakh crore for the reporting fortnight ending June 30 driven by personal loans, NBFCs and agriculture & allied activities. In the same period last year, credit pickup was 14.5 per cent.

The outlook for credit demand continues to be positive due to rise in capital expenditure on the back of the production linked incentive scheme, and retail credit push. However, it is still expected to moderate from 15 per cent in FY23 to 13-13.5 per cent in FY24.

The credit/deposit ratio has

Over the last two years, we have had record exports. Unfortunately, the world seems to be moving towards a recession. Developed economies of Europe and America are under stress, very often overstocked, seen softening of commodities and commodity pricing and demand

PIYUSH GOYAL | COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY MINISTER

Infosys signs 5-yr AI deal with \$2 bln target spend

REUTERS

Bangalore, July 18: India's second-largest software services exporter Infosys said Monday it has signed a deal with an existing client to provide artificial intelligence (AI) and automation services that will span over five years, with a target spend estimated at \$2 billion. AI and automation-related development, modernization and maintenance services are included in the agreement, the

company said in an exchange filing. The company did not disclose the client's name. As Microsoft-backed OpenAI's generative chatbot ChatGPT took the world by storm in late 2022, companies around the world have doubled down on investing in AI.

Infosys' move comes after rival Tata Consultancy Services said it planned to train 25,000 engineers to get them certified on Microsoft's Azure Open AI. Other rival Wipro has plans to invest \$1 billion into artificial intelligence (AI) over the next three years.

Bangalore-based Infosys launched a platform called Infosys Topaz for generative artificial intelligence (AI) in late May. The company is expected to report its first quarter results July 20.

Sensex breaches 67K in intra-day trade



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, July 18: Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty continued their record-breaking rally for the fourth day Tuesday, reaching new all-time high closing levels, amid fresh foreign fund inflows and a positive trend in the US and European markets.

Robust buying in IT major Infosys also contributed to the domestic benchmark indices optimism. The 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 205.21 points or 0.31 per cent to settle at its new all-time closing high of 66,795.14. During the day, it jumped 417.09 points or 0.62 per cent to reach its record intra-day peak of 67,007.02. The benchmark breached the 67,000 mark for the first time ever in intra-day trade.

The NSE Nifty gained 37.80 points or 0.19 per cent to end at its all-time closing high of 19,749.25. During the day, the benchmark rallied 108 points or 0.54 per cent to hit its lifetime peak of 19,819.45.

From the Sensex pack, Infosys jumped the most by 3.67 per cent. Asian Paints, HCL Technologies, Reliance Industries, ICICI Bank,

Wipro, NTPC, Tech Mahindra, Bajaj Finserv and Larsen & Toubro were among the other major gainers.

State Bank of India, Bajaj Finance, Titan, Tata Steel, Tata Motors and UltraTech Cement were among the laggards.

In the broader market, the BSE smallcap gauge declined 0.47 per cent and midcap index dipped 0.18 per cent.

Among the indices, IT jumped 1.15 per cent, teck rallied by 1.13 per cent, power (0.57 per cent), industrials (0.27 per cent) and utilities (0.19 per cent).

However, metal declined by 0.92 per cent, realty fell by 0.85 per cent, telecommunication dipped 0.67 per cent, commodities went lower by 0.64 per cent and consumer durables slipped 0.56 per cent.

In Asian markets, Tokyo settled in the green, while Seoul and Shanghai ended lower.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude climbed 0.31 per cent to USD 78.74 a barrel.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) continued their buying activity as they bought equities worth Rs 2,115.84 crore Tuesday, according to exchange data.

'Energy transition to become a \$23trn market by 2030'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 18: The global energy transition -- the shift from fossil-based fuels such as oil and coal to renewable sources like wind and solar -- is estimated to become a USD 23-trillion market by 2030, US Energy Secretary Jennifer Granholm said Tuesday as American companies seek closer ties with Indian firms to tap this opportunity.

Speaking at the ministerial meeting of the US-India Strategic Clean Energy Partnership (SCEP) here, she said the US will have to add 2,000 gigawatts of clean energy to its electric grid by 2035 to meet the goal of using 100 per cent electricity from clean sources.

"So that means we have to do everything, everywhere, all at once. And so in order to do that, we have to partner and we've got to learn from those who are doing it well and can scale (up) really well," she said.

India has announced aims to reach net zero emissions by 2070 and to meet 50 per cent of its electricity requirements from renewable energy sources by 2030. It is targeting installing 500 gigawatts (GW) of renew-

able energy capacity, reducing the emissions intensity of its economy by 45 per cent, and cutting a billion tonnes of CO2.

These common goals provide scope for cooperation, which led to the setting up of the SCEP.

"We say, in the United States, this transformation, this transition, this explosion of clean energy is private sector-led government enabled," she said. "And so it is very important that we hear from you who are doing it."

A "USD 23 trillion global market awaits us in terms by 2030. So there is a huge economic opportunity. And obviously, we cannot walk outside without realizing that we all share a home and our shared home requires us to help from all."

Speaking at the meeting, Oil Minister Hardeep Singh Puri said New Delhi greatly values this bilateral clean energy strategic green energy partnership.

India-US energy trade in 2023 would be USD 20 billion, he said. "The United States is a very major partner in our energy co-operation today, even in the traditional areas, the amounts of gas we are buying and the potential this strategic clean energy partnership has an altogether new."

EU's foreign subsidies regulation may hit India's exports: Report

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 18: The Foreign Subsidies Regulation (FSR) of the European Union (EU) is likely to hit India's exports from sectors such as smartphones and information technology-related services to that region, a report by think tank GTRI said Tuesday.

The EU has introduced this regulation which came into effect on July 12.

The Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI) report said that the FSR covers financial contributions from non-EU governments to companies operating in/exporting to the EU market. These contributions include direct grants, interest-free or low-interest loans, tax incentives, state-funded research and development, provision of goods or services at below-market prices, and provision of land or buildings at below-market prices.

However, the FSR does not apply to financial contributions provided by international organisations like World Bank and the IMF.



"India may be one of the first countries to be hit by FSR. India is currently negotiating a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with the EU. Indian negotiators must ensure not to agree to any FTA text that prohibits India from taking action against FSR," the report said. India exported goods worth over USD 74.8 billion to EU countries in 2022-23.

Key export products include diesel (USD 8.4 billion), aviation turbine fuel (USD 6.6 billion), apparel (USD 5.6 billion), smartphones (USD 4 billion), cut and polished diamonds (USD 2.6 billion), aluminium ingots (USD 1.5 billion), and medicines (USD 1 billion).

GTRI co-founder Ajay Srivastava said that because of this regulation, the EU

Commission can now investigate these products if they have received any incentives like PLI (production linked incentive scheme), FAME (Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Electric Vehicles) or export benefits in India. "Most vulnerable are smartphones and other IT-related export of goods and services to the EU. Given India's involvement in exporting services and participating in small ways in public procurement in the EU, the FSR may also impact these areas," he added.

Srivastava said that the EU Commission is already investigating the PLI scheme, and a decision is expected soon.

"If the Commission finds the PLI scheme violates WTO (World Trade Organisation) rules, it could impose sanctions/fines," he said.

Further, the report stated that Indian businesses must identify any subsidies they receive from governments, state-owned enterprises, and other public bodies and notify the EU. It suggested that the government prepare for retaliation and long-drawn battle at the WTO.

Adani invokes 'matrabhumi', slams Hindenburg

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 18: Billionaire Gautam Adani Tuesday invoked growth prospects of 'matrabhumi' India and the potential it offers for his business empire as he again slammed US short-seller Hindenburg for a 'malicious' attempt to damage the reputation of his conglomerate.

At the annual shareholders meeting of his ports-to-energy conglomerate, Adani said the group's assets and operating cash-flows have got stronger and healthier and it will continue to consolidate what it has built while looking at expanding its horizons. He used the same language as he had used in the annual reports of his group's listed firms last month, to hit back at Hindenburg Research's 'malicious' allegations and 'false narratives' that 'various vested interests tried to exploit'. He reiterated that his conglomerate



remains confident in its governance and disclosure standards.

Hindenburg January 24 accused Adani of "brazen stock manipulation and accounting fraud" as well as using a "labyrinthian network" of shell companies for surreptitious money movements, allegations that the conglomerate has strongly denied, calling the report "a calculated attack on India". The report lopped off close to USD 150 billion in the market value of the group's listed companies at the lowest point and led to Adani losing the richest Indian tag.

"The report was a combination of targeted misinformation and discredited allegations, the majority of them dating from 2004 to 2015. They were all settled by the appropriate authorities at that time," Adani said.

Indian startups faced 70% funding drop in FY23

As funding plummets, startups are hunkering down, reducing burn rate and expediting their path to profitability

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, July 18: While the Indian startup ecosystem experienced a sharp funding peak during FY22 reaching \$50 billion, a gradual onset of the funding winter over the subsequent quarters led to a 70 per cent drop in FY23 to around \$15 billion, a report showed Tuesday.

As funding plummets, startups are hunkering down, reducing

burn rate and expediting their path to profitability, according to the report by market research firm Redseer.

"The increasing cost of capital and interest rates, recession in developed markets, a decline in the value of tech stocks, and the slowdown in consumer internet growth have all been challenges for sustained funding," said Mohit Rana, partner at Redseer.

There are about 100 unicorns and less than 400 public companies with a market cap of more than \$1 billion in the country.

Ownership of founders in startups is also limited (0-20 per cent) in 59 per cent of private companies as compared to public companies (over 50 per cent) in 65 per cent of public companies.



As startups sail through rough waters, boards need to ensure future alignment and take more responsibility to guide and support founders during challenging times, Rana added.

"Listed tech companies have

made significant improvement over the last five quarters. Paytm launched new products, expanded into new business segments, and upsold/cross-sold to existing customers to increase revenue per customer and re-

SATWIK-CHIRAG DUO THROUGH



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Yeosu, July 18: Star Indian men's doubles pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty stormed into the second round with a straight-game win over Thailand's Supak Jomkoh and Kittinupong Kedren in the Korea Open Super 500 tournament here Tuesday.
The World No.3 pair beat Jomkoh and Kedren 21-16, 21-14 in the round of 32 to set up a clash with China's He Ji Ting and Zhou Hao Dong in the next round.
World No.27 MR Arjun and Dhruv Kapila, however, couldn't complete the match after the former suffered from a back issue and retired midway in the opening game while lagging 5-6 against eighth seeded Chinese Liu Yu Chen and Ou Xuan Yi in their opening round.
"I felt a pain in my back during the rallies. I applied spray for pain relief but I wasn't feeling comfortable, so we decided to pull out. The physio said it looks like a back spasm and should be fine within a few days. I will be travelling to Japan. So let's see. Hopefully I will be okay," Arjun told PTI.
India's Harshit Aggarwal also couldn't reach the main draw after losing to Korea's Choi Pyeong Gang 15-21, 21-10, 10-21 in his second qualification match. He had beaten Tan Jia Jie of Malaysia in his opening match.
Another Indian, Shashwat Dalal also went down in his first round, losing 14-21, 17-21 to Jeong Min Seon of Korea, while Meiraba Maisnam withdrew from the qualifiers.
Playing their first tournament since winning the Indonesia Open Super 1000 last month, Satwik and Chirag dished out a compact game as they opened up a 4-1 lead and kept moving ahead to grab a 11-6 lead at the interval. The Indian duo didn't give much chance to its opponent and from 18-15, took the remaining points to grab a 1-0 lead.
After the change of sides, the Thai players gave a good account of themselves as they managed to lead 9-4. However, Satwik and Chirag soon scripted a fightback to jump to 15-11 and held their fort as the Thai combination crumbled.

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SATWIK 'SMASHES' GUINNESS WR

Soka (Japan): Star India shuttler Satwiksairaj Rankireddy has set the Guinness world record for the fastest hit by a male player in badminton, recording a mindboggling 565 km/h with his smash. Satwik, who along with his partner Chirag Shetty won the Indonesia Open Super 1000 recently, thus broke a decade-long record set in May, 2013 by Malaysian Tan Boon Heong, who had produced a speed of 493 km/h (306.34 mph) with his smash. Satwik's smash was faster than the top speed of 372.6 km/h achieved by a F1 car. Malaysia's Tan Pearly set the Guinness world record for the fastest female badminton hits with a remarkable speed of 438 km/h (about 272 mph). "Yonex is proud to announce that Yonex badminton athletes, Satwiksairaj Rankireddy (IND) and Tan Pearly (MAS), have set new Guinness world records title for the fastest male and female badminton hits," the Japanese sports equipment manufacturing company said in a release. The world record attempts were achieved April 14, 2023, and were verified by official judges from the Guinness world records based on the speed measurement results from that day. Satwik's smash was conducted in a controlled environment at the Yonex factory gymnasium in Soka, Saitama, Japan.

SINDHU SLIPS TO 17TH

New Delhi: Battling an inconsistent form, double Olympic medalist PV Sindhu Tuesday slipped five places to world number 17 in the latest BWF world rankings. Ever since returning from a five-month long injury layoff, Sindhu has struggled to string together a series of wins in a week, resulting in a title-less streak this season. This is her lowest ranking in over a decade. The last time she was ranked 17th was in January, 2013. She has been inside the top 10 since 2016, having reached a career-best World No.2 in April, 2016. HS Prannoy also slipped a place to World No.10, while Lakshya Sen and Kidambi Srikanth were static at 12th and 20th spots respectively. Saina Nehwal slumped five places to 36th. Men's doubles pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty remain India's best-placed shuttlers at World No.3. Among others, Treasa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand also lost a spot to be at the 19th position in women's doubles, while there was no Indian in the top 25 in mixed doubles.

Eves face upsetting series loss vs Bangla

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mirpur, July 18: Struggling Indian batters will need to find a way to play on a slow surface as they face Bangladesh in the second women's ODI in a bid to avoid an embarrassing series defeat here Wednesday.
Spinners, especially leg-break bowlers, have troubled Indian batters through the Bangladesh tour and on Sunday they also found pacer Marufa Akter hard to negotiate as the fancied team suffered their first-ever loss to Bangladesh in ODIs.
Following that memorable victory and a win in the preceding final T20, Bangladesh now have the momentum and belief to script a famous series win over India.
India have a World Cup to play in Bangladesh next year and they need to learn how to accumulate runs on pitches where the ball doesn't come on to the bat. It has been a collective failure so far on the tour though India somehow managed to seal the T20 series.
Star batter Smriti Mandhana's showing has been a big disappointment and Priya Punia, who replaced Shafali Verma for the ODI series opener, too struggled in her comeback.
Both Yastika Bhatia and Jemimah Rodrigues have struggled to rotate strike and that has put them under extra pressure. In the absence of Richa Ghosh, no one has stepped up for the finisher's role with the team struggling to find boundaries.
Amanjot Kaur, who bowled well on Sunday, has a good opportunity to make an impact with the bat as well and give India a much needed finishing option.
Bowling coach Rajib Datta said there is no need to press the panic button. "There is no need to be disappointed. The team did not execute its plans the way it wanted to. It is a team in transition phase and looking at combinations for the World Cup (next year)," he said.
India bowled 19 wides in the series opener and that should be a big area of concern. "Extras are an issue. The girls are playing after four months. It is not a big issue, we will rectify," added Datta.



THE SQUADS
India: Harmanpreet Kaur (C), Smriti Mandhana, Deepti Sharma, Shafali Verma, Jemimah Rodrigues, Yastika Bhatia (wk), Harleen Deol, Devika Vaidya, Uma Chetry (wk), Amanjot Kaur, Priya Punia, Pooja Vastrakar, Meghna Singh, Anjali Sarvani, Monica Patel, Rashi Kanojija, Anusha Baredy, Sneha Rana.

Match Schedule
India Women vs Bangladesh Women
Time: 9 am
Live Streaming
Official YouTube channel & Facebook page of Bangladesh Cricket Board

Agarkar to meet Dravid, Rohit for CWC roadmap

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 17: Chairman of senior selection committee Ajit Agarkar is all set to travel to West Indies to meet head coach Rahul Dravid and skipper Rohit Sharma to discuss the road map for ICC Cricket World Cup (CWC) starting October 5 in Ahmedabad.
India will play Australia in Chennai October 8 and marquee clash against Pakistan is slated for October 15 in Ahmedabad.
"Currently Salil Ankola is in the West Indies but he will be back after the Test series gets over. Ajit will be joining the team before start of the white ball leg," a BCCI source in know of things told PTI on conditions of anonymity.
It is understood that Agarkar after being appointed the chairman of selection committee has n't had a chance to meet the team management in person and this will be an opportunity to sit a draw an elaborate blueprint on what will be India's strategy going forward in 50 over World Cup.
The team management and selection committee needs to be in sync about the core 20 players that they are looking ahead for the World Cup apart from dealing with fitness issues and workload management. Both chairman of



selectors as well team management will also discuss the transition plan. It is understood that there will be elaborate discussions on Jasprit Bumrah's fitness status and whether he will be able to go to Ireland for three match T20 series or not.
It can be confirmed that National Cricket Academy's Sport Science and Medical Unit is yet to issue an RTP (Return to Play) certificate to the Ahmedabad based speedster.
Meanwhile, VVS Laxman will once again take the second string team to Ireland as it has been the norm for short tours where Dravid is rested as the turnaround between West Indies and Ireland tour is short.
There aren't any rules but convention in BCCI is that for second string tours or A series, NCA head doubles up as coach. Dravid used to do that earlier and now Laxman does it.

WFI AD-HOC PANEL'S CALL RAISES EYEBROWS

Direct Asiad passes to Bajrang, Vinesh

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 18: The WFI ad-hoc panel Tuesday handed Olympic medalist Bajrang Punia and World Championship medalist Vinesh Phogat direct entries into the Asian Games, a decision which was taken without the consent of the national chief coaches and is set to be challenged by other wrestlers and their coaches.
The IOA ad-hoc panel said in a circular that it has already selected wrestlers in men's freestyle 65kg and women's 53kg but trials will be held in all six weight categories in each of the three styles.
The ad-hoc panel did not name Bajrang and Vinesh in the circular but panel member Ashok Garg confirmed to PTI that the two wrestlers have been exempted from the trials. "Yes, Bajrang and Vinesh have been exempted from trials," Garg said.
These two wrestlers have done well in 65kg and 53kg categories but due to their protest against WFI chief Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh, they have not competed in any international tournament this year.
The panel did not favour four other protesting wrestlers - Sakshi Malik, her husband Satyawart Kadiyan, Jitender



Kinsha and Bajrang's wife Sangeeta Phogat. The Indian Olympic Association's ad-hoc committee took the decision just four days before the trials to select the wrestling squad for the Asian Games, scheduled to begin September 23 in the Chinese city of Hangzhou.
The Greco-Roman (60kg, 67kg, 77kg, 87kg, 97kg, 130kg) and Women's (50kg, 53kg, 57kg, 62kg, 68kg, 76kg) trials are scheduled for July 22, while the men's freestyle (57kg, 65kg, 74kg, 86kg, 97kg, 125kg) trials will be held July 23 at IG Stadium in New Delhi.
Bajrang, who was one of the six protesting wrestlers at Jantar

however, the Selection Committee will have the discretion to select the iconic players like medalists of Olympic/World Championship without trials provided recommendation by Chief Coach/Foreign Expert.
Both Bajrang and Vinesh fit in that criteria but in this case men's free-style national coach Jagminder Singh and women's national coach Virender Dahiya were kept in the dark.
"I am not even aware that such a decision has been taken. The ad-hoc panel had stopped calling us for meetings. We have not made any such recommendation, we favoured trials in all categories," Jagminder told PTI.
Dahiya said, "We don't know in what shape Bajrang and Vinesh are in. They have not competed in the last eight months. You get to know about speed, strength, weight, only during the competitions. And they have not competed after CWG and World Championship last year, so we do not know how good they are at this moment."
"And in both 53kg and 65kg categories, there are solid youngsters who can compete well. Their strength is good. The ad-hoc panel has overruled us in making this decision," he alleged.

Indian women go down 1-4 to hosts Germany

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Wiesbaden (Germany), July 18: The Indian women's hockey team suffered a 1-4 thrashing to Germany in the first of the two matches here Tuesday.
Youngster Vaishnavi Vittal Phalke (29th minute) was the lone goal-scorer for India, while Nike Lorenz (sixth, 59th) and Jette Fleschutz (14th, 43rd) scored a brace each in Germany's win.
The hosts scored back-to-back goals in the first quarter mounting pressure on India's defence. Germany's first goal came off Nike Lorenz' well-executed penalty corner while the team's second goal came off a penalty stroke via Jette.
In the second quarter, the Indian team emerged from the early setback with a well-structured game. They converted a PC in the 29th minute through Vaishnavi.
After the halftime break, an infringement by Indian defence while halting the German attack in the circle saw them concede a PC. Jette converted the PC extending her team's lead to 3-1.
Though India found a few chances in the final quarter to score, the German defence was too strong to breach. Meanwhile, Nike scored the fourth goal for Germany in the dying minutes of the game, taking the final score to 4-1.

White House lawn turns to playground for kids

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Washington, July 18: Kidz Bop rang out on the stereo as groups of sweaty children beamed with joy at the chance to kick around footballs with major league professionals at the White House Monday.
Children donning jerseys of their favourite Major League Soccer teams joined first lady Jill Biden and players from FC Cincinnati, DC United, Chicago Fire and other teams for a youth soccer clinic on White House South Lawn on a sweltering afternoon.
They played pickup games of football until the early evening. White House staff eagerly passed

out water to the kids and their parents. The White House billed the event as part of Biden's continued effort to "highlight how sports unites us, and supports and empowers young people."
"Sport is the international language, from the thrill of the goal to the joy of the win," Biden said during the event, standing at a podium next to MLS Commissioner Don Garber and 16-year-old Nevaeh Burroughs, a DC Parks and Recreation representative.
Before introducing the first lady, Burroughs said football taught her the importance of "dedication, hard work and commitment."



"When we work as one to score that point, or cheer on our team, sports unite us across backgrounds and borders. There are no strangers in the stands or on the field," Biden said. MLS all-stars, including Christian Benteke, Lucho Acosta and Kei Kamara joined the event and kicked around balls with kids as they answered their questions.
President Joe Biden came out late in the event to chat with the pros. MLS is holding its All-Star Game Wednesday at Washington's Audi Field. The White House focus on football comes just in time for the Women's World Cup, which begins this week in Australia and New Zealand.

AUSTRALIA RECALL HAZLEWOOD, RETAIN WARNER FOR 4TH TEST

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Manchester, July 18: Australia fast bowler Josh Hazlewood will return to try and help them secure the Ashes series against England at Old Trafford this week with a match to spare. Scott Boland will make way for Hazlewood.
Captain Pat Cummins also said Tuesday the top five batters will remain but they were considering not playing rookie spinner Todd Murphy. That could mean a recall of all-rounder Cameron Green, who was fit after missing the third Test with a hamstring issue. Mitch Marsh filled in for Green and hit a brilliant cent-

tury. Australia will confirm their side at the toss Wednesday. Even after losing at Headingley by three wickets, Australia still leads the series 2-1.
Retaining the top five means David Warner will continue opening. Warner is averaging 23.5 in six innings but has contributed to opening stands of 61, 73 and 63 with Usman Khawaja.
Australia has not gone into a Test without a frontline slow bowler since January 2012 but with Nathan Lyon injured and Murphy considered more dispensable, it was considering a significant change to the balance of the side.