



REBELLIOUS APPROACH

Actor Shruti Hassan says she has trouble fitting into society with all its rules and norms

LEISURE P2



TALIBAN BAN SALONS

Dozens of Afghan women protested a beauty salon ban Wednesday after the Taliban ordered their closure nationwide

INTERNATIONAL P10



FIXTURES RELEASED

India will open their Asia Cup campaign against Pakistan in Kandy Sept 2 as Asian Cricket Council releases full schedule

SPORTS P12

MONSOON SESSION

Opposition ammo ready to corner govt

AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 19: The situation in Manipur and the Delhi services ordinance are set to dominate the Monsoon session of Parliament beginning Thursday with the Opposition gearing up to raise these issues to corner the government.

The session begins close on the heels of 26 opposition parties forming the Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance (INDIA) to take on the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls.

The Opposition has been raking up the issue of Manipur violence. The northeastern state is witnessing ethnic violence since May 3 that has claimed over 160 lives.

The other key issue which is likely to trigger a face-off between the government and the opposition is the Delhi services ordinance which will come up as a bill in the session. Arvind Kejriwal's Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) is opposing the ordinance on the transfer and posting of bureaucrats in Delhi brought by the Centre in May virtually negating a Supreme Court verdict giving the elected government in Delhi the control over services matter.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Time to take a bold step, sir! Let's change the name of the country

MARKET WATCH	
INDEX	VARIATION
SENSEX	67097.44 ↑ 302.30
NIFTY	19833.15 ↑ 83.90
DOLLAR	82.08 ↓ ₹0.05
EURO	91.87 ↓ ₹0.28
GOLD	₹59,808 ↑ ₹45
SILVER	₹76,358 ↑ ₹255

WEATHER		
	BHUB	CTK
TEMP MAX	32.8°C	32.5°C
TEMP MIN	25.9°C	25.6°C
Humidity	98%	87%
Rainfall	3.0mm	2.2mm

Forecast: Light to moderate rain



NAIROBI UNREST: Riot policemen walk past a burning barricade during clashes with protesters in Kibera area of Nairobi, Kenya Wednesday. Kenyans were back protesting on the streets of the Capital Wednesday against newly-imposed taxes and the increased cost of living

2 Manipur women paraded naked

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Imphal, July 19: Tension mounted in the hills of Manipur after a May 4 video surfaced Wednesday showing two women from one of the warring communities being paraded naked by a few men from the other side, officials said here Wednesday.

The video was doing the rounds on the eve of a planned protest march announced by the Indigenous Tribal Leaders' Forum (ITLF) Thursday to highlight their plight.

According to a spokesperson of ITLF, the "despicable scene, which happened on May 4 in Kangpokpi district, shows men constantly molesting the helpless women, who cry and plead with their captors. The horrifying ordeal suffered by these innocent women is amplified by the perpetrators' decision to share the video, which shows the identity of the victims, on social media."

The police are looking into the matter.

While condemning the "sickening act", the spokesperson in a statement demanded that the central and state governments, National Commission for Women and National Commission for Scheduled Tribes take cognizance of the offence and bring the culprits before the law.

Death traps

A 27-year-old sanitation worker dies falling into an open drain in Buxi Bazar area of the Millennium City – the second such casualty in just four days



Wife and daughter of deceased Narasingha crying inconsolably

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, July 19: It appears that the civic authorities have learnt no lesson from the past as open drains in the Millennium City here continue to claim precious lives. And, this time a sanitation worker died after falling into an open drain in Barapathar area of Buxi Bazar under Dargahbazar police limits here, barely four days after another youth died falling into a drain in Jhola Sahi area.

The deceased was identified as P Narasingha, 27.

According to sources, some senior employees of a private agency had called Narasingha

and his brother for some work, assuring payment of ₹1,000 per day. Sources said that Narasingha fell into the open drain following which his brother alerted the locals, who managed to pull him out and rush the 27-year old to SCB Medical College and Hospital here in a critical condition. But he was declared 'dead on arrival' by the doctors.

“We will ensure adequate compensation to the next of the deceased kin. The agencies undertaking civic projects in the city will be asked to ensure safety of workers”

SUBHASH CHANDRA SINGH | CUTTACK MAYOR

Locals, meanwhile, blamed the Cuttack Municipal Corporation (CMC) for the mishap and blocked the main road at Buxi Bazar seeking adequate compensation to the deceased sanitation worker's family. They also burnt tyres when police intervened.

This is the second death involving open drain here in the past four days.

A 21-year-old youth had lost his life after falling into an open drain at Jhola Sahi here July 15. The deceased has been identified as Rahul, who hailed from Rajasthan.

As per reports, Rahul had come to Cuttack to meet his relatives but died after falling into the drain. He was on his way to a teashop when the unfortunate incident occurred. Several low-lying parts of Cuttack were waterlogged following heavy rainfall on that day.

The incident had spread shockwaves in the area as this is the third such death to be reported in the past couple of months in the Silver City.

Cuttack Mayor Subhash Chandra Singh condoled Narasingha's death.

BLOT ON KHAKI: 2 COPS IN VIG NET

The saga of men in khaki receiving bribe from people continues unabated as two more policemen were caught receiving illegal gratification in Balasore district

POST NEWS NETWORK

Balasore, July 19: Vigilance sleuths Wednesday nabbed the Chandipur police station inspector-in-charge (IIC) Ganeswar Pradhan and assistant sub-inspector (ASI) Pradip Kumar Mohanty in Balasore district on charges of receiving illegal gratification of ₹50,000 from a licensed IMFL off shop owner.

The anti-corruption sleuths registered a case and arrested the duo, Balasore Vigilance superintendent of police (SP) Narahari Nayak said.

The accused were threatening to frame the licensed IMFL shop owner having shops at Balaramgadi under Chandipur Marine police station and at Patrapada in Balasore town if he does not pay them monthly bribe (extortion) of ₹50,000.

The shop owner was earlier paying them ₹10,000 but was irked after the cops escalated the monthly amount to ₹50,000. He contacted the Vigilance offi-

cial, who laid a trap to nab the two police officers.

The IMFL shop proprietor reached the police station at 3pm and handed over the bribe amount of ₹50,000 to ASI Mohanty in the presence of the IIC

The Vigilance sleuths who were hiding nearby pounced on them and caught the two red-handed. The entire bribe money has been recovered from Mohanty, said a Vigilance official.

Following their arrest, simultaneous searches were undertaken at various locations of Pradhan, who is also holding the additional charge of Marine Police station IIC in Balasore district, and Mohanty in connection with disproportionate assets (DA).

Balasore Vigilance police registered a case (18/2023) under various Sections of Prevention of Corruption (Amendment) Act, 2018 and Section-7 of IPC. Further investigations are on, the Vigilance SP added.

SHORT TAKES

15 electrocuted in Uttarakhand

Chamoli: Fifteen people were electrocuted and several injured in an accident at a power transformer at a Namami Gange project site on the banks of the Alaknanda river in Chamoli district of Uttarakhand, an official said Wednesday. The dead included three police inspectors and three home guards, the official said. The injured were admitted at the district hospital.

5 Indian students bag Global Student Prize

London: Five students studying in India have made it to the top 50 shortlist for the USD 100,000 Chegg.Org Global Student Prize 2023, selected from 3,851 applications from across 122 countries. The annual award goes to one exceptional student who has made a real impact on learning, the lives of their peers and on society beyond. In the running from India this year will be: Namya Joshi, a student at Sat Paul Mittal School, Ludhiana, Punjab; Vinisha Umashankar, a student at SKP Vanitha International School, Tiruvannamalai, Tamil Nadu; Gladson Vaghela, a medical student at Gujarat Medical Education and Research Society Medical College, Gandhinagar, Gujarat; Padmaksh Khandelwal, a computer science student at Sir Padampat Singhania School, Kota, Rajasthan; and Ravinder Bishnoi, a information technology student at Chandigarh Engineering College, Landran, Mohali, Punjab.

POST-GODHRA RIOTS CASE

Regular SC bail for Teesta Setalvad

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 19: The Supreme Court (SC) Wednesday granted regular bail to activist Teesta Setalvad in a case of alleged fabrication of evidence to frame innocent people in the 2002 post-Godhra riots cases.

A three-judge bench of Justices BR Gavai, AS Bopanna and Dipankar Datta set aside the order of the Gujarat High Court rejecting her plea for regular bail.

The top court said a chargesheet has been filed in the case against Setalvad and her custodial interrogation is not necessary.

"The passport of the appellant already surrendered will be in custody of session court.

The appellant shall not make any attempt to influence witnesses and shall stay away from them," the bench said.

The bench also granted the Gujarat Police liberty to directly move the apex court if attempt is made to influence witnesses in the case.

Setalvad was taken into custody June 25 last year along with former Gujarat Director General of Police RB Sreekumar and ex-IPS officer Sanjiv Bhatt in a case registered by the Ahmedabad Crime Branch police for allegedly fabricating evidence to frame innocent people in the post-Godhra riots cases.

An Ahmedabad sessions court had July 30, 2022 rejected the bail applications of Setalvad and Sreekumar.

Singapore passport world's most powerful

THE LATEST HENLEY PASSPORT INDEX RANKS INDIA'S PASSPORT AT 80TH SPOT, MOVING IT UP FIVE PLACES FROM ITS POSITION IN 2022

AGENCIES

London, July 19: Singapore has topped a ranking of the world's most powerful passports, topping Japan from the top spot, says a report by AI Jazeera.

Singaporeans enjoy visa-free entry to 192 destinations, more than travellers of any other country, according to the latest Henley Passport Index.

The Southeast Asian city-state last held the top spot in 2021, before losing its position to Japan the following year, the report said.

Germany, Italy and Spain were tied in second place, with their passport holders enjoying access to 190 destinations.



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Japan, which ranked first in 4 out of the last five years, took the number three spot with 189 destinations, tied with France, Austria, Finland, Sweden, Luxembourg, and S Korea

The United States, which ranked first in 2014, dropped to eighth, its lowest position yet

Japan, which ranked first in four out of the last five years, took the number three spot with 189 destinations, tied with France, Austria, Finland, Sweden, Luxembourg, and South Korea.

The United States, which ranked first in 2014, dropped to

eighth, its lowest position yet.

Greg Lindsay, Urban Tech Fellow at Cornell Tech, said the US's continual decline in the ranking over the last decade could be due to the country's lack of visa reciprocity.

"The reason for the US's slump

is both easy to explain and confounding: it isn't trying," Lindsay said in an analysis accompanying the index.

"Of the 34 countries ranked between 1 and 10, the US boasts the smallest increase in the Henley Passport Index scores between 2013 and 2023, with additional access to only 12 countries. Singapore, by contrast, has seen an increase of 25 additional countries during the same period, propelling it upward by five places to the number 1 rank."

The ranking puts India's passport at the 80th spot, moving it up five places from its position in 2022. Indians can now travel to 57 destinations without a visa.

India's current rank ties it with countries like Togo and Senegal.

While Indian passport holders have visa-free access and visa-on-arrival access to countries such as Indonesia, Thailand, Rwanda, Jamaica, and Sri Lanka, they still need a visa to enter 177 destinations across the world.

Afghanistan was ranked as the country with the least powerful passport with visa-free access to just 27 destinations, followed by Yemen, Pakistan, Syria and Iraq.

Henley & Partners, a London-based immigration consultancy, compiles the annual ranking using data from the International Air Transport Association (IATA).

leisure



DYLAN SPROUSE, BARBARA PALVIN MARRY IN HUNGARY

Actor Dylan Sprouse and model Barbara Palvin and longtime girlfriend, tied the knot in Hungary - Barbara's home country - July 15 after dating for 5 years and getting engaged in 2022.

CHRISTOPHER NOLAN CRITICISES QUENTIN TARANTINO'S DECISION

Director Christopher Nolan has criticised veteran filmmaker Quentin Tarantino's decision to retire from directing, saying that the decision is a very purist one and it is the point of view of a cinephile who prizes movie history, reports *Variety*.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
You are a literary person and today your power of expression will come in very handy. If you are trying to woo your beloved, an intimate conversation will prove beneficial. However, make sure not to avoid office duties, and complete your pending work before your superiors come checking.

TAURUS
Ganesh sees you getting very impatient and restless this day. Thank the stars; in spite of that you will remain adequately steady and focussed on your work, and perform suitably and commendably as expected. During the latter part of the day, your colleagues and superiors are likely to be more helpful and responsive.

GEMINI
A fruitful day loaded with opportunities awaits you. You will be able to complete all your tasks easily at the work-front. However, you will need to put in extra effort to satisfy others. You will be engaged in discussions with your family members and neighbours later on, says Ganesh.

CANCER
Your intellectual prowess in the office will bring you happy tidings. You may give a new look to work culture in office. Ganesh advises you to think twice before embarking on new deals in the afternoon.

LEO
You will feel tired and lazy in the morning at work today, however later on you will feel a surge of energy. Your self-confidence and motivation too will increase. Schedule all your important tasks and meetings in the afternoon, when you will be at your peak, says Ganesh.

VIRGO
Today you will be much more generous than most people realise that you can be, says Ganesh. Later on you will reap the benefits of the work you had carried out in partnership with some friends. The evening holds a promise of a mixture of work and pleasure.

LIBRA
Ganesh says that today you will pay more attention to your family and family matters, keeping aside all other things. You will want to change the décor of your home and for that you may buy antique artifacts or new furniture to decorate in your home.

SCORPIO
The faucet of creativity will run wild today, especially when you try sorting things out with your siblings. Today, you shall bypass all incoming troubles with much ease. Your ingenuity will help you bag a job later, perhaps. In the evening, you will be the Good Samaritan and bring peace to someone, predicts Ganesh.

SAGITTARIUS
Ganesh sees you being friendly and jovial throughout the day. Planning a getaway with family will be on top of your to-do list. Honours will be showered on you at your workplace. Be ready to receive much adulation, says Ganesh.

CAPRICORN
Scepticism and lack of faith in others may have prevented you from entering into a partnership, but you are likely to do so today, in keeping with the interest of your enterprise. For those engaged in jobs, truckloads of appreciation will come your way for your exceptional performance. Students will make well-informed decisions concerning their career, says Ganesh.

AQUARIUS
You have worked hard, and now you want to party hard-er. You catch up with some old friends, hang out with them and relax your mind. You are in a mood to celebrate and as a result, you will go out of your way to please your loved ones, foresees Ganesh.

PISCES
You may find yourself unable to take critical decisions on a split-second basis today, and will probably keep second-guessing yourself. Your family will be in focus today. Romance is in the air, and the evening should probably see you spend time with your soul mate, says Ganesh.

SRK wanted to retire after 30

Mumbai: Actor Shah Rukh Khan once said he wanted to retire after 30 like Aamir Khan who is a better actor than him.

Both Khans are undeniably the leading lights of the film industry at present. The mere announcement of their upcoming movies elicits frenzy among fans. They entered the film industry within a span of four years and have since maintained a complex relationship that has captured the attention of fans and media.

In the early years of their careers, Shah Rukh Khan acknowledged Aamir's talent, stating, "If there's a superb actor in the country today, it's Aamir. I can't call him competition; he is a far better actor than me. I've heard that he wants to retire after 30 and turn director. I plan to quit at 30 too."

In the interview, he further stated, "My talent. Some actors get on by their looks and their physique, some bank on their voice; my asset is my spontaneity, my ability to do a variety of roles."

When it comes to the work front, Aamir Khan is taking a break from the limelight, while Shah Rukh Khan eagerly anticipates the release of *Jawan* in theatres in September.

AGENCIES



Shruti says she is a proud 'weirdo'

Mumbai: Shruti Hassan, sporting a rebellious attitude, has said that she has trouble fitting into society with all its rules and norms, with her many challenges making it difficult for her to adjust.

But taking pride in her unique self, which many term as 'weird', she shared a rhyme where she said that now she knows what to really care about, and even though she has been misunderstood, the difference in herself brings her much joy.

The last couple of lines of the poetic rhyme reads, "I'm a proud weirdo, And I can't wait to show you."

Shruti is also known for her singing talents as she is also a member of an alternative rock band The Extramentals. She regularly posts clips showcasing her daily life, new attire, music and

fashion sense that has gained her a massive amount of followers. She made her Hindi film debut in 2009 with the film *Luck*. She was later seen in movies like *Dil Toh Baccha Hai Ji*, *Ramayya Vasthavayya* and *Gabbar is Back*.

For her singing she has received much praise, garnering various awards and nominations. She has also sung songs in Hindi films such as *Aazma* for *Luck* and *Abida* for *D-Da*.

AGENCIES



When Nargis lost control during a kissing scene

Mumbai: Emraan Hashmi is one of the actors who is known for his kissing styles and scenes in his movies, apart from his acting skills. His onscreen hot scenes are the ones that have created a massive buzz about his films.

However, on an occasion, actress Nargis Fakhri couldn't stop kissing Emraan on the sets of *Azhar*?

In an old BTS video from the shooting floors of *Azhar*, Nargis could be seen immersed in the kissing scene that even after the director said cut, the actress couldn't let go of Emraan. While the actor looked a bit stiff, Nargis seemed super excited.

As she couldn't stop herself from kissing Emraan Hashmi for a few more seconds in the BTS video, she left the netizens in a frenzy. One wrote, "And we thought it is Emraan who is lustful."

Another one commented, "There is no shame in losing control when Emraan is the co-actor."

One of the comments can be read, "Emraan looks very uncomfortable."

Another netizen penned slamming Nargis, "This is the actress who accused Emraan during Me Too movement."

AGENCIES



Want to be an ambassador for romantic movies: Kiara

Mumbai: Actress Kiara Advani, who is currently basking in the success of her recently released film, *Satyaprem Ki Katha*, has expressed her desire to be the brand ambassador of romantic films.

During an interaction with media, a fan asked Kiara which was her favourite genre and which genre she was planning to do next in the future.

Sharing a light smile, the *Shershaah* actress said, "As an actor, I said ambition has come in there's a drive I want to do much more. I've never done an action movie so I feel like I'm ready for it. I want to push myself to do an action film."

Kiara further added, "There are

a lot of genres that I have yet to work in. Earlier, the romance genre happens to be my go-to and most favourite to watch as an audience."

Speaking about her favourite genre, the actress expressed her desire to be the brand ambassador of romantic films as she said, "I'd happily be the brand ambassador for a romantic film because it's just my most favourite genre, like an intense soulful romantic movie." She also said that the romantic genre is her go-to and "most favourite" to watch as an audience.

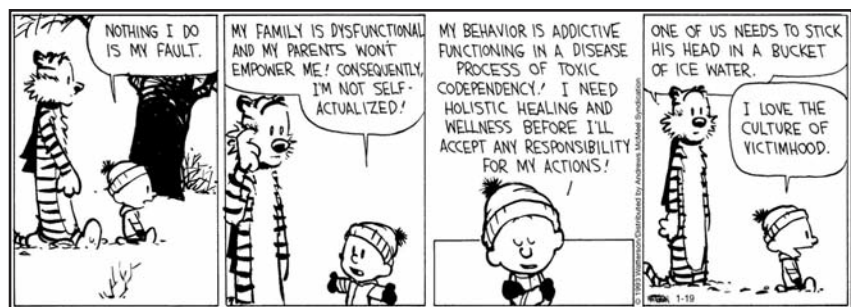
Kiara is set to feature in *Game Changer* with Ram Charan.

AGENCIES

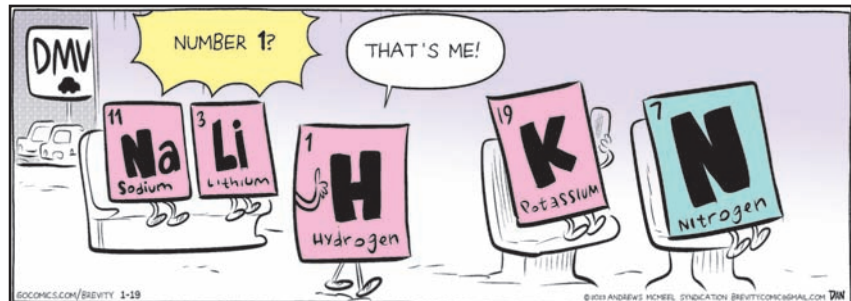
PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

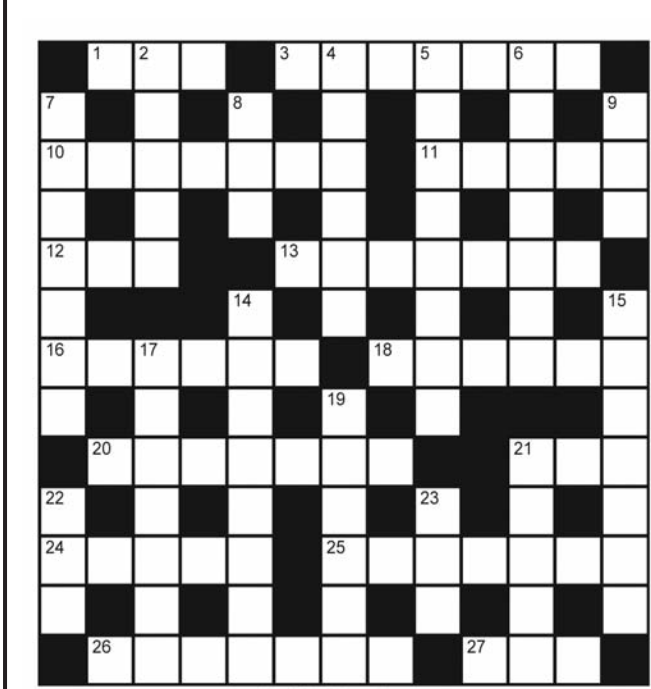


BREVITY



FUN post

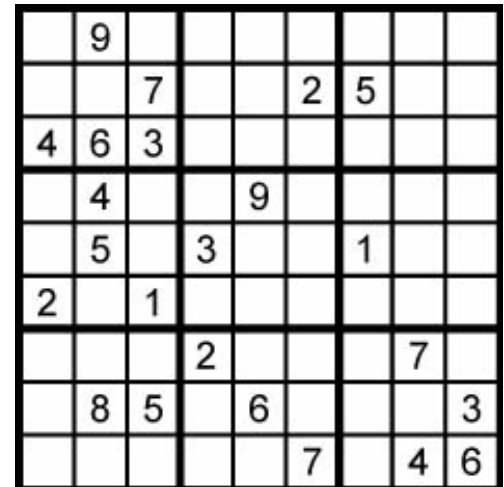
CROSSWORD



- Copyright ©2023 PuzzleJunction.com
- Across**
- 1 Frequently, in verse
 - 3 New Zealand flightless bird
 - 10 Military school
 - 11 Factions
 - 12 Director's cry
 - 13 Dry red Italian wine
 - 16 Aura
 - 18 Bait, at times
 - 20 Cancel (4,3)
 - 21 Rummy starter
 - 24 Moving picture
 - 25 Examine
 - 26 Sidekicks
 - 27 Wild ox of Tibet
- Down**
- 2 Big spread
 - 4 Subconscious mind
 - 5 In seventh heaven
 - 6 Mexican peninsula
 - 7 Mezzanine
 - 8 Quagmire
 - 9 Cigar residue
 - 14 Night light (4,4)
 - 15 Lessen
 - 17 Wander aimlessly
 - 19 Lacking vitality
 - 21 Tropical fruit
 - 22 Common climbing vine
 - 23 Service charge

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

CROSSWORD



SUDOKU



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown

MEET ON CIVIC ISSUES

CMC commissioner Nikhil Pavan Kalyan preside over a meeting of the civic body in Cuttack, Wednesday



Naveen announces ₹56cr aid for kendu leaf workers

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 19: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Wednesday announced financial assistance of Rs 56.23 crore for over eight lakh kendu leaf beneficiaries in the third phase for 2022 crop year.

The Chief Minister's Office (CMO) said the beneficiaries would get the bonus and incentives in the current month, July. "While 7.75 lakh kendu leaf pluckers would be given 25 per cent bonus, 40,000 kendu leaf binders and casual workers would be given five per cent incentives in the third phase for the 2022 crop year.

In the first phase of 2022 crop year, Rs 83.34 crore was given as assistance to the kendu leaf beneficiaries. While Rs 1,000 was given to each kendu leaf plucker,

each binder and seasonal worker received Rs 1,500.

Similarly, in the second phase of the 2022 crop year, Rs 1,360 financial assistance was given to each kendu leaf plucker and Rs 1,500 to binder and seasonal workers. A total of Rs 111.21 crore distributed to the beneficiaries in the second phase.

The state government has so far facilitated an all-time record Rs 250.78 crore assistance to kendu leaf beneficiaries in 2022 crop year. A sum of Rs 118.83 crore was distributed in 2021 crop year.

The kendu leaf beneficiaries were given 111 per cent more assistance for the crop year 2022 in comparison to the assistance given in 2021, CMO sources here said.



YEAR'S FIRST: First floodwaters reach Jobra in Cuttack, Wednesday

OP PHOTO

NHRC for ₹5L ex gratia in Ganjam electrocution case

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 19: The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has asked the Chief Secretary to pay Rs 5 lakh ex gratia to the next of kin of a 42-year-old man who was electrocuted to death due to 'negligence of the authorities' in October last year.

While hearing a plea filed by rights activist Rabintra Kumar Mishra, the commission asked the Chief Secretary to pay the monetary relief and submit a compliance report along with the proof of ex gratia payment with the NHRC within six weeks.

In his plea, Mishra had informed the commission that Murali Parida of G Nuagoan village under Belguntha police limits in Ganjam district died after coming in contact with a live electricity wire October 20, 2022. The petitioner had blamed the negligence of the electricity authorities for Parida's death.



Murali Parida of G Nuagoan village under Belguntha police limits in Ganjam district died after coming in contact with a live electricity wire October 20, 2022

Taking cognisance, the NHRC served notices on the authorities in connection with the incident.

After considering the reports of the Ganjam SP and Energy department, the commission observed that 'the mishap took place due to the negligence of the electricity authorities'.

"The commission has proposed to recommend a monetary relief of Rs 5 lakh in case of death of Murali Parida. A clear case of violation of human rights of the deceased Murali Parida has been made out. Therefore, the state is

vicariously liable for the negligent act of its servant. In view of the above observations, the commission recommends a monetary relief of Rs 5 lakhs to the NOK of the deceased Murali Parida. Therefore, the Government of Odisha through its Chief Secretary is directed to pay the monetary relief of Rs 5 lakh to the NOK of the deceased Murali Parida and to submit a compliance report along with proof of payment in the commission within six weeks positively," the commission said.

NGT notice on state over Deomali

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, July 19: The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has served notice on the state government over construction of cottages atop Deomali, the highest mountain peak in Odisha.

Hearing a plea filed by the Wildlife Society of Odisha (WSO), a Cuttack-based environmental pressure group, the NGT's Eastern Zone Bench in Kolkata also has asked Koraput administration and State Biodiversity Board to respond to the notice in four weeks. The next hearing is scheduled for August 23.

The Forest department has been constructing 10 cottages, using all-weather cement fibre boards, on the Deomali hilltop to provide night stay facilities to tourists at Pottangi.

The petitioner alleged that the project spread over 10.4 hectares of forestland required prior approval under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 and the construction was in violation of the Act. The WSO also pointed out that the state government had violated Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change's policy for ecotourism in forest and wildlife areas by not involving



local community or indigenous knowledge of making the house and household articles.

Apart from the 10 cottages, parking area, pathway with nature trail leading to Deomali peak, grand entrance gate with security cabin and ticket counter, opening of dining with kitchen, store and pantry, driver's and staff dormitory, laundry and wash and reception, office with lounge and toilet are also proposed, it added.

"Full-fledged construction is on and the area is being converted into a township. Such uncontrolled development will have an adverse impact on the biodiversity since Deomali is home to endemic species of flora and fauna. The department is also planting about 1,000 tropical pine saplings brought from Assam for beautification of the landscape. We are also objecting to introduction of this foreign species there," said lawyer

■ Hearing a plea filed by the Wildlife Society of Odisha (WSO), a Cuttack-based environmental pressure group, the NGT's Eastern Zone Bench in Kolkata also has asked Koraput administration and State Biodiversity Board to respond to the notice in four weeks

■ The Forest department has been constructing 10 cottages, using all-weather cement fibre boards, on the Deomali hilltop to provide night stay facilities to tourists at Pottangi

■ The petitioner alleged that the project spread over 10.4 hectares of forestland required prior approval under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 and the construction was in violation of the Act

Sankar Pani, adding that it is reserve forest.

Notably, the Deomali project is included under the Centre's Swadesh Darshan Scheme for the development of infrastructure to boost inflow of tourists. It is in addition to Rs 16 crore sanctioned by the Tourism department for integrated development of the hill.

VLTD installation deadline extended

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 19: The state government has extended the deadline for installation of vehicle location tracking device (VLTD) in specific vehicles due to lack of adequate infrastructure and enlistment of device suppliers.

In a bid to enhance security of women and children while travelling in buses and other public transport vehicles, the state government has made installation of VLTD mandatory for specified vehicles used in public transport.

The deadline to comply with the requirement of the fitment of VLTD and panic buttons for the new vehicles registered was May 31, 2023 and for other vehicles, it was August 31, 2023.

After reviewing the available infrastructure and device suppliers, the Transport department has extended the deadline. Now, the specified vehicles registered on or after October 1, 2023 will have to comply with the requirement at the time of registration while the previously registered vehicles will have to fix the device by December 2023.

Except auto rickshaws and e-rickshaws, all passenger transport vehicles, including both government and private buses, school and college buses and cabs/taxis will be equipped with VLT panic buttons for the safety of women and children.

All goods vehicles operating under the strength of National Permit and all goods vehicles transporting explosive and hazardous materials have to install VLT devices.



DISMANTLING ACT: Bhoi servitors dismantle Nandighosha chariot of Lord Jagannath on Grand Road in Puri, Wednesday

OP PHOTO

Ex-IIC gets 4-yr RI for bribery

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, July 19: Special Judge, Vigilance, Dhenkanal Wednesday convicted Chittaranjan Behera, a former IIC, Nihalprasad police station in Dhenkanal district for demanding and accepting bribe and sentenced him to undergo rigorous imprisonment (RI) for a period of four years.

The court also directed him to pay fine of Rs 20,000 and in default of payment of fine, to undergo RI for a period of six months more for the offence U/s 7 Prevention of Corruption Amendment Act, 2018.

The Special Judge also convicted his driver Prakash Mahalik and personal assistant

Laxman Sethi and sentenced them to undergo RI for a period of four years and to pay fine of Rs 5,000 each and in default of payment of fine, to undergo RI for a period of three months for offence U/s 7/12 Prevention of Corruption Amendment Act, 2018. All the three were chargesheeted by Vigilance U/s 7 Prevention of Corruption Amendment Act, 2018 for demanding and accepting bribe of Rs 6,000 from a complainant for not arresting the complainant, his son and spouse in a dowry torture case, were convicted to four years RI and fine, and sent to jail.

Vigilance will now move the competent authority for dismissal of Chittaranjan Behera, following his conviction.

Bipolar disorder ups early death risk by sixfold

People having bipolar disorder are six times more likely to die prematurely from external causes such as accidents, violence, and suicide than those not having the condition, according to new research published in BMJ Mental Health.

They are also twice as likely to die from physical illnesses such as heart and/or respiratory diseases, or cancer, with alcohol contributing majorly towards it, the Finnish population-based study found.

People with bipolar disorder are known to face a heightened risk of premature death. However, the drivers behind this, especially the role of physical illnesses, were unclear, which this study aimed to understand, researchers from Niuvianniemi Hospital, Finland, and other in-

stitutes from Sweden and the UK said.

They tracked 47,018 people with bipolar disorder, with an average age of 38 years at the start of the monitoring period (2004-2018). Their data was picked from nationwide medical and social insurance registers. More than half of those identified (57 per cent) were women.

Overall, 3,300 (7 per cent) died over the monitoring period compared with 141,536 deaths in the general population excluding people having the condition, the researchers found and calculated the heightened risk of death to be 6 times due to external causes and 2 times from physical illnesses. Average age at death was 50 years and nearly two-thirds of the deaths were in men. Around 61 per cent of the 3,300



THE RESEARCHERS FOUND AND CALCULATED THE HEIGHTENED RISK OF DEATH TO BE SIX TIMES DUE TO EXTERNAL CAUSES AND TWO TIMES FROM PHYSICAL ILLNESSES

STUDY FINDINGS

■ Researchers from Niuvianniemi Hospital in Finland and other institutes from Sweden and the UK tracked 47,018 people, including 57 per cent women, with bipolar disorder during 2004-2018

■ Overall, 3,300 (7%) died over the monitoring period compared with 141,536 deaths in the general population excluding people having the condition.

deaths (2027) were physically caused and 39 per cent (1273) were externally caused.

Of the physically caused deaths, alcohol was found to cause the most at 29 per cent,

or 595 deaths. Of these, liver disease accounted for nearly half, followed by accidental alcohol poisoning and alcohol dependence.

Remaining physically caused deaths were found to be caused

by heart disease and stroke (27 per cent), cancer (22 per cent), respiratory disease (4 per cent), diabetes (2 per cent) and other causes (15-16 per cent).

Of the externally caused

deaths, suicide caused the most (58 per cent). Of these, nearly half were caused by overdose of prescribed mental health medications, including those used for treating bipolar disorder.

"A balanced consideration between therapeutic response, potential serious long term somatic (physical) side effects of different medicines, and risk of cause-specific premature mortality is needed, especially in younger persons," the authors wrote in their paper.

"Targeting preventive interventions for substance abuse will likely reduce the mortality gap both due to external causes and somatic causes. Suicide prevention remains a priority, and better awareness of the risk of overdose and other poisonings is warranted," they said.

BMC unites for effective solutions to waterlogging



ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, July 19: A significant meeting was held Tuesday at the BMC's headquarters to discuss the issue of short-term waterlogging within the BMC area. Chaired by the Mayor Sulochana Das, the meeting was attended by Deputy Mayor Manjulata Kanhara, Chairman of Standing Committee Biranchi Narayana Mahasupakara, Corporator, BMC Commissioner Vijay Amruta Kulange, additional Commissioner Laxmikanta Sethi, representatives from R&B, IDCO, WATCO, Prachi division and officials from the Fire department.

During the meeting, the Mayor emphasised the importance of addressing waterlogging areas and swiftly resolving the issue to prevent inconvenience to citizens as the rainy season has commenced.

served in drains under the management of NHAI, R&B, and WATCO to senior officials. It is essential to monitor the situation closely and take necessary actions in collaboration with the respective departments to address and mitigate any potential risks or issues that may arise.

The Meteorological Centre in Bhubaneswar has issued a notice forecasting an increase in rainfall in the coming days. In response, the Commissioner urged officials from BMC, R&B, IDCO, NHAI, and WATCO to remain vigilant. For those without a control room, nodal officers must be assigned to the control room of BMC to ensure an immediate response to grievances.

Das gave clear instructions to the officials from Prachi Division to prioritize the issue of inadequate cleaning of the Daya West Canal. She emphasized the importance of conducting thorough desilting activities and ensuring the proper disposal of the removed silt, strictly prohibiting any deposition on the canal or road sides.

With these concerted efforts and proactive measures, the BMC aims to effectively manage and mitigate the impact of waterlogging, ensuring the safety and well-being of the citizens.



SEEKING ACTION: Workers of trade unions including AITUC and CITU staging a protest in front of Labour Commissioner's office in Bhubaneswar, Wednesday, seeking fulfilment of their various demands

CM LAUNCHES INITIATIVE TO PLANT 10 LAKH TREES

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 19: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik launched the Sri Sathya Sai Prema Tharu Programme, an initiative to plant at least 10 lakh trees in Odisha by 2025 at the Kalinga Stadium Tuesday.

Expressing his happiness at the initiative, the Chief Minister said that trees play an important role in the preservation of human life. Being at the forefront of environmental preservation in India, Odisha will further promote the environment and the well-being of the people by planting one million trees.



Addressing the gathering, Sri

Jagannatha Service Foundation President Abhinav Krishna Jasthi said that considering the need to safeguard the environment from the perils of climate change, the Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust has taken an initiative to plant one crore trees across India by November 2025.

As part of the initiative, the Sri Sathya Sai Trust, Odisha has come forward to plant and maintain 10 lakh trees in Odisha by 2025, he said.

Jasthi mentioned that the state government is supporting the

initiative in the form of sapling supply and making vacant lands available in government schools, colleges and hospitals for plantation.

He further stated that each tree planted under this program will be considered an act of devotion to the divine creator and a sacred responsibility towards preserving Mother Nature.

The trees planted will be geo-tagged and uploaded on the website of Sri Sathya Sai Seva Organizations, along with their photographs.

Webinar by Thinkers' Club

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, July 19: The Thinkers' Club of the Twin City organised its 77th webinar over the 'Zoom Platform' recently in the City. Gitanjali Bastia, the advisor to the Mission Shakti program joined the meeting as the chief Guest. Suvadra Das, Vice President of District Council, Cuttack was there as the Chief Speaker. Barada Prasanna Das, the President of the Club coordinated the different aspects of the meet.

The objective of Mission Shakti scheme is to empower women through Self Help Groups (SHG). A SHG is an informal group of women, ideally 10 to 15 members. They need not be registered under any Act. The scheme covers both rural and urban areas of the state. A woman between the age group of 18 to 65 can be a member of a SHG, if not disqualified otherwise.

Swadesh Pattanaik from New Jersey, USA, Binode Mohanty from Oman, Dr Rajat Satpathy from Madhya Pradesh, Bishop D.B. Hridaya, Professor Umasankar Misra, Engineer Dr Nanda Nandan Das, Engineer Sirish Sahoo from Bangalore, participated in the discussion. Purnima Singh, Engineer Sudhakar Patri, ipayan Pattanayak, Natyachariya Chita Ranjan Satapathy from Delhi, Arpita Das, Sanjukta Mohanty, Sarat Behera, Kritik Bhanja, and many more participated in the web meet.

ILS pays tribute to Parida

Bhubaneswar: Institute of Life Sciences (ILS) family paid tributes to its former Director Ajay Parida on his 1st death anniversary Wednesday. A memorial lecture was held at ILS Bhubaneswar to honour the memory of Parida. The memorial lecture was organised to remember his contributions to science and to reminisce about his life with those close to him. Parida was a well-established and internationally recognised leader, researcher and research administrator in the area of agriculture, food and nutrition security, plant molecular biology and advanced biotechnology. The event was attended by the scientific institute heads from all over the state.

WORLD CHESS DAY

A game of enhancing cognitive skills

SMRUTI REKHA BARIK, OP

Bhubaneswar, July 19: Following the path of grandmasters, the younger generation of India has begun opting chess over outdoor games and digital engagements. Chess, which is one of the most ancient, intellectual and cultural games is an affordable and inclusive activity, can be exercised anywhere and played by all, across the barriers of language, age, gender, physical ability or social status, said Pooja, a mother whose two sons are passionate about learning chess.

"Chess is a global game which promotes fairness, inclusion and mutual respect, and nothing in this regard can contribute to an atmosphere of intolerance and misunderstanding among people and nations", said Satya Ranjan Pattnaik, International chess coach and founder-secretary of SR Chess centre, Odisha. "Padmini Rout, Debasish Das and many others developed the grassroots learning from here,"

he added.



Pooja said, "Both my sons Surya and Omish are more focused in chess and exploring their limits than in academics. My elder son Surya has been learning chess since he was 2 and has already played inter-school state tournaments. He has attended more than 50 tournaments. My younger son Omish has bagged under 6 prizes in every tournament that he has attended. Satya Ranjan Pattnaik earns the credit of being the instructor and guide to the young

lads", she said. "A major observation that I could notice in my sons is that their personality developed a lot. They have been more focused, filled with patience and skillful in their everyday life. It is my suggestion to all the parents to let their kids to develop an interest towards chess rather than unnecessary digital engagement", she added.

"I started my chess journey in our sports-loving state Odisha and it has been my honour and



pleasure to win medals for my state and country. We are seeing a lot of progress in all the sports in our state. There has also been a lot of interest in chess and I am sure we will see more development in coming future", said grandmaster Padmini Rout.

She further said, "Chess, as we all know, is not just a game; it's a field of intellectual combat that enhances your cognitive skills, strategic thinking and problem solving abilities. It teaches us that every move we make has consequences and it's our responsibility to anticipate and work through them."

"Incorporating chess into the school curriculum is an initiative that can bear fruitful results in the cognitive development of students. I urge schools to establish chess clubs and conduct regular tournaments and incorporate chess lessons into their curricula. This will help kids learn strategy, foresight and patience and develop leadership skills," Padmini added.

'Kasturi' necessary for Srimandir rituals a rarity now

Researcher Anil Dhir suggested that steps should be taken for captive breeding of deer and explore technology for scientific extraction of musk pods without killing the deer for carrying out worship of trinity in Sri Jagannath temple in Puri.

Kasturi, a substance collected from the navel of the musk deer, is used for the various shingars of the Trinity.

It is used in the mukha shringar of the three deities during the Nabjauban Darshan and Hera Panchami. As a necessary shingar aid of the divinities, kasturi comes in handy at the time of gupta seva (secret service) during the Ansar rituals when the deities are taken sick ahead of the car festival.

In earlier years, after the ceremonies, the temple air used to be thick with the sweet spicy

scent of musk. So intense was the smell, that even days after it had been applied, the scent pervaded the air inside the sanctum sanctorum of the temple.

Kasturi is supposed to be applied to the deities for mukha shringar every Wednesday, but over the years, due to its scarcity, it has become a monthly ritual.

According to the shingaris, who have the honour of applying the paste on the deities, approximately five grams of the kasturi powder is mixed along with camphor, asafoetida and other different herbs.

The paste is then applied to the faces and bodies of the three gods, as these help keep the wooden images insect-free. These rituals also have a scientific base apart from having religious significance.

For the last few years, there has been an acute shortage of the



rare and invaluable 'kasturi' at the shrine, giving sleepless nights to the temple servitors and authorities. The present shingaris have protested that since the last few years, just powder with artificial additive is being used instead of kasturi.

Tradition has it that Nepal's royal family, who enjoy special privileges at the Jagannath temple, arranged to have the much needed kasturi sent to Puri for the Lord. Since the fall of the monarchy in the Himalayan kingdom, Nepal's new rulers

have been unresponsive to the temple's request for the regular supply of this rare aromatic.

The once abundant stock of musk in the Jagannath temple depleted with each passing year as the supply from Nepal stopped completely.

Temple sources said the last official supply of musk from the Royals of Nepal was in 1999. In the 80's, King Birendra and Queen Aishwarya had visited the shrine with a huge stock of musk, which lasted for years.

In 2006, the temple authorities were surprised when a visiting mendicant gave a few pods to the Lord.

In 2013, just prior to the Rath Yatra, the Sankaracharya of Gobardhan Peeth, Swami Nischalananda Saraswati, had written a letter to the centre, requesting the government to intervene and press officials in

Nepal to provide the Kasturi needed for the Lord's worship.

Musk deer or the kasturi mrigya, the only source of musk, is found in the Himalayan region, including Nepal. It is an endangered animal and figures in the Red Data List of the International Union of Conservation of Nature.

The musk deer is a Schedule 1 animal and is protected under wildlife laws both in India and Nepal.

Musk is the name originally given to a substance with a penetrating odour obtained from a gland of the male musk deer.

To obtain the musk, the deer is killed and its gland, also called the "musk pod", is removed. The substance has been used as a popular perfume fixative since ancient times and is one of the most expensive animal products in the world.

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MEMU TRAIN ESCAPES MAJOR ACCIDENT

Railways suspends SM, pointsman



Balasure, July 19: A station manager and a pointsman of the South Eastern Railways were suspended Wednesday after an MEMU train narrowly escaped accident near Nilgiri Road station, a railway official said. The two - Nilgiri Road station manager Subas Sethy and pointsman Sheikh Mohammad Khalip - were suspended by the South

This incident was reported just around 15 km away from the Bahanaga Bazar station, where a triple train tragedy occurred June 2 evening leaving at least 293 people dead

was underway. The loco pilot averted disaster when he detected an error in the track's endpoint and swiftly applied emergency brake. He then reversed the train towards Balasure. "The train was travelling at a speed of 7-8 km per hour and the track had been set in the opposite direction due to the ongoing construction work," the loco pilot said. After stopping at the site for nearly one hour, the train resumed its journey towards Balasure.

Eastern Railway's Kharagpur division on charges of negligence and dereliction of duty, the official said. The MEMU train narrowly escaped disaster near Nilgiri Road railway station in Balasure district Tuesday due to the alertness of the loco pilot of Bhadrak-Balasure MEMU train. The Bhadrak-Balasure MEMU train had entered a loop line track, where maintenance work



INUNDATED: The Poteru bridge over NH-326 connecting Kalimela with the Malkangiri district headquarters was closed for traffic after over 2-feet rainwater overflowed on the bridge following incessant rainfall in Malkangiri district, Wednesday

Millet hype not helping Rayagada farmers

Middlemen and agents are calling the shots in mandis and procuring millet from the farmers at Rs 25-30 per kg instead of the government-approved price of Rs 40

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rayagada, July 19: The Government of India has been promoting millet as a safe bet to enhance farmers' income and as a reliable grain to ensure India's nutritional and food security. Its cultivation takes place in between June to August as high quality millet is produced during the kharif season. Seeds are sown like paddy crop and later the saplings are replanted in row cultivation methods.



procuring millet from the farmers at Rs 25-30 per kg instead of the government-approved price of Rs 40. The Agriculture department claims that 11-12 quintal of millet is harvested per hectare of land, which has been rejected by Indu Chandra Majhi, a millet farmer from this district. Majhi claims that actually 8 to 10 quintal of millet is harvested per hectare of land. Farmers claimed they earn around Rs 10,000 to Rs 12,000 if the farmland is fertile but they have to spend around Rs 15,000 to Rs 18,000 if the soil is non-fertile and fertiliser is used. They do not get the right price as middlemen and agents call the shots in mandis and do the price fixation. They demanded the state government's intervention in order to solve their problem.

The bumper production of the crop helps the country to export it to foreign countries like USA, United Arab Emirates, Nepal and other countries. Sources from Odisha Millet Mission said that 12,654 farmers had cultivated millet last year. Reports from Agriculture department say that out of 11 blocks in Rayagada, millet was cultivated on maximum 7,355 hectare of land in Kashipur block and the lowest on 230 hectare in Ramnaguda. Accordingly, millet cultivation was carried out on 1,913 ha in Bissam Cuttack, 3,546 ha in Muniguda, 1,272 ha in Chandrapur, 567 ha in Gudari, 230 ha in Ramnaguda, 1,805 in Rayagada, 1,020 ha in Kolnara, 1,550 ha in Kalyansinghpur, 837 ha in Gunupur and 250 ha in

Padmapur blocks. A close analysis of the millet cultivation undertaken in the last five years reveals that the state government had targeted cultivation on 12,600 hectare of land in 2019 but it was done on 12,789 ha land. The total production was 11,465 metric tonne from this cultivation. Similarly, millet cultivation was planned on 11,145 ha in 2020 but it was done on 11,340 ha. The total production was 11,465 metric tonne. In 2021, millet cultivation on 20,232 ha produced 22,599 metric tonne and in 2022, it was taken up on 20,245 ha and the production was 22,310 metric tonne. When contacted, Manoj Kumar, district project manager (DPM) of Odisha Millet Mission said that the state government is providing incentives to the registered millet farmers. Out of the total incentive of Rs 26,500 per hectare in five years, farmers have been provided with Rs 10,000 in the first year, Rs 7,500 in the second year, Rs 5,000 in the third year and Rs 2,000 each in the fourth and fifth years, he said. This is the only incentive available to the farmers through Odisha Millet Mission. Farmers alleged that the government has also made arrangements for farm producers' group for preparation of various food items and snacks from millets but they are yet to get the benefits.

COPS NAB 2 ENGAGED IN ILLEGAL IVORY TRADE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Baripada, July 19: Odisha police Wednesday arrested two ivory smugglers during a drive against poachers in Similipal National Park, Mayurbhanj SP B Gangadhar said. Speaking to reporters, the SP said police have seized two country-made guns, three air guns and Rs 2.95 lakh cash from them. "The two accused have cases involving ivory trade. They might be using these arms to kill elephants to extract the tusks," he said. The arrested were identified as Santanu Sahu (52) and Aswini Kumar Dey (50) of Sainkula village under Khunta police station.



Three platoons (1 platoon comprise 30 personnel) of policemen were deployed in Similipal Tiger Reserve after two forest officials were gunned down, he said. Earlier, police have seized 11 country-made guns during search operations in Similipal National Park, the SP said.

Rourkela man dies due to snakebite

Rourkela: A man died due to snakebite at a slum area located close to the National Institute of Technology (NIT) here late Monday night. The deceased has been identified as Sanjay Behuria, 48, a resident of NIT, Rourkela slum in the city. Sanjay was sleeping outside his home Monday night after dinner when he was bitten by a poisonous snake. When his condition deteriorated his family members rushed him to the Rourkela Government Hospital (RGH) where doctors pronounced him brought dead on arrival.

EAST COAST RAILWAY

Tender Notice No. 23/ET/SBP/ENGG/2023-24, Dated : 15.07.2023
e-Tender No. 17-ET-SDENC-SBP-23
NAME OF WORK : PROVISION OF 16 UNITS TYPE-II STAFF QUARTERS NEAR HOLIDAY HOME AT HIRAKUD AND EXECUTION OF LEFT OVER CIVIL ENGINEERING WORKS FOR 06 UNITS OF TYPE-II AND 05 UNITS OF TYPE-III QUARTERS HANDED OVER FROM CONSTRUCTION ORGANIZATION RUNNING ROOM IN SAMBALPUR IN SAMBALPUR DIVISION.
Approximate Cost of the Work : ₹ 4.76,94,307.72, Bid Security : ₹ 3,88,500/-, Completion Period for the Work : 12 (Twelve) Months
Tender Closing Date and Time : 07.08.2023 at 1500 Hrs.
No manual offers sent by Post / Courier / Fax or in person accepted against such e-tenders even if these are submitted on firm's letter head and received in time. All such manual offers shall be considered invalid and shall be rejected summarily without any consideration.
Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-tender is available in website : http://www.ireps.gov.in
Note : The prospective tenderers are advised to revisit the website 15 (Fifteen) 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.
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Ex-accounts officer held twice within 4 weeks for graft

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, July 19: A former accounts officer in Reamal block of Deogarh district was arrested by the Vigilance wing Tuesday for possessing disproportionate assets worth Rs 8.04 crore. Rajendra Dash was arrested for the second time within just four weeks.

70-YR-OLD CONVICTED FOR MINOR GIRL'S RAPE

AGENCIES

Kendrapada, July 19: The Additional District & Sessions Judge-cum-Special Judge (POCSO) Kendrapada, Pranati Pattanaik, has convicted a septuagenarian and sentenced him to 20 years of Rigorous Imprisonment (RI) for raping a 16-year-old girl. Adjudicating the case Tuesday, the court also asked the convict Rajib Malik alias Chotta (70) of Govindapur village under Aul police to pay a fine of Rs 25,000. The court directed that if the convict failed to provide the fine then he would have to undergo prison for one more year. Sources said Rajib Malik in 2022 had

raped the minor daughter of his friend several times and impregnated her. The family members August 25, 2022 lodged an FIR at Aul police station after medical report revealed that the girl was seven months pregnant. Aul police registered a case u/s 376(2)(n), 376(3), 506 of IPC; Section 6 of POCSO Act and arrested the accused septuagenarian person. The court gave the judgement after verifying the evidence and cross examining the evidence along with the DNA report of the child of the victim minor girl to ascertain the biological parent, said Manoj Kumar Sahu, the special Public Prosecutor of the POCSO Court.

Duo held on charge of gang rape

PNN & AGENCIES

Kendrapara, July 19: Kendrapada Town police station Wednesday arrested two youths on the charge of gangraping a Class-IX girl student after blackmailing her with her nude photos and videos. Police identified the two accused as Happy of Badahat area and Samrat of Jajpur. Kendrapada Town police station IIC Saroj Sahu said a case U/S 376(D)(A), 506 of IPC, 6 POCSO Act has been registered and police have sent the victim for medical examination. Inquiry is going on. The accused youths were produced before the SDJM court and they were remanded in judicial custody after their bail petitions were rejected by court. Meanwhile, a raid is on to nab the third accused Babina alias Sudhanshu

Behera of Thakurhaat area. The arrest was made on the basis of the FIR lodged by the mother of the victim girl. The mother of the girl in her complainant alleged that she along with her family members had gone to her native village in Dhenkanal leaving her daughter alone at their rented house. Finding her daughter alone, Happy and his friend Samrat July 10 forcibly entered her house, raped her daughter and took her nude photographs. Later, Happy and Samrat came with their another friend Babina July 11, and raped her again by blackmailing her with the nude photos and videos of her daughter. They also threatened to make the photographs public in social media, kill her and her family members if she disclosed the matter to anybody.

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The Bank has granted following various credit facilities to the under mentioned Borrower/Directors/Guarantors & the amount outstanding dues mentioned below has not been paid in time. Therefore Demand Notice under Sec. 13 (2) of Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 was issued by the Authorized Officer against the following Borrower/Directors/Guarantors/Legal Heirs of the Bank of India, Bhubaneswar Branch but the same could not be served on the below mentioned parties. Therefore, the contents of the same including the amount outstanding, Loan amount and details of the secured assets are herein furnished below.
BHUBANESWAR BRANCH / Name and Address of Borrower/Directors/Guarantors/Legal Heirs Nature / Limit Date of NPA / Date of Demand Notice Amount as per Notice under SARFAESI Act Details of the mortgaged properties
Borrower: M/s. Sea Gold Overseas Pvt. Ltd. / Directors: 1) Mr. Sandeep Anand, 2) Mr. Gorachand Mohanty / Guarantors: 1) Late Govind Chandra Mohanty, 2) Mr. Gorachand Mohanty / All Legal Heirs of Late Govind Chandra Mohanty are : 1) Mr. Gorachand Mohanty, S/o: Late Govind Chandra Mohanty, 2) Purnaprabha Mohanty, W/o: Late Govind Chandra Mohanty, 3) Mrs. Pranati Mohanty, D/o: Late Govind Chandra Mohanty, All are at D-242, Manorama Estate, Rasulgarh, Bhubaneswar-751010 EPC against stock / ₹4,50,00,000/- WCTL-GECL / ₹90,00,000/- WCTL-GECL ext 1.0 / ₹45,00,000/- CD a/c (TOD) Total: ₹ 5,85,00,000/- 28.11.2022 / 23.06.2023 ₹5,59,26,286.40 + Interest & expenses thereon 1) Hypothecation of Stocks processed goods like shrimps and other sea foods, Receivables & NICL Claim Amount and Receivables, 2) EQM of Land & Residential Building at Revenue Plot No.: 724 (Sabak), Revenue Khata No.: 2/61, GA Plot No.: 563, Area: Ac.0.071 Dec. (equal to 3092.76 sq.ft or thereabout), Sahid Nagar, Bhubaneswar standing in the name of Late Govind Chandra Mohanty, KISSAM: Gharabari corresponding to settlement Khata No.: 190, Plot No.: 724, Area: Ac.0.071 Dec. (equal to 3092.76 sq.ft or thereabout) which further corresponding to GA Plot No.: 563 as per G.A. drawing No.: C-3204, Area: 75' x 86'. Bounded by North: Road, South: Road, East: Plot No.: 564, West: Road, 3) EQM (Extension) of Land & Building in the name of Mr. Gorachand Mohanty at Manorama Complex, Sub Plot No.: 242, Cuttack Road, Bhubaneswar, Mouza: Bomikhal Unit No.: 12 (Kissam: Gharabari), Khata No.: 407/492, Plot No.: 382/1478, Area: Ac. 0.039Dec., Plot No.: 381/998/1491, Area: Ac.0.020Dec., Total Area: Ac.0.059Dec. Corresponding to Khata No.: 407/399, Plot No.: 382/1478, Area: Ac.0.039 Dec. corresponding to Khata No.: 407/332, Plot No.: 382, Area: Ac.0.039 Dec. out of Ac.0.195 Dec. which further corresponds to settlement Khata No.: 120 (Sub Plot / Duplex No.: 242) and Corresponding to Khata No.: 407/410, Plot No.: 381/998/1491, Area: Ac.0.020Dec. out of Ac.0.059Dec. which further corresponds to Khata No.: 25, Plot No.: 381/998, Area: Ac.0.020Dec. out of Ac.0.059 Dec., Bounded (as per Sale Deed) by North: Road, South: Sub Plot No.: 224, East: Sub Plot No.: 243, West: Sub Plot No.: 206, 4) Equitable Mortgage of Land over Khata No.: 703/1805, Plot No.: 793/1805 corresponding to Mutation Khata No.: 703/246, Plot No.: 793/1984 further corresponds to consolidation Khata No.: 29, Plot No.: 793(P), Area: Ac.0.100 Dec. i.e. 4356 sqft out of Ac.0.300 Dec. under Mouza: Patrapada, Bhubaneswar, standing in the name of Mr. Gorachand Mohanty, Bounded by North: Road, South: Plot No.: 793/C, East: Road & Govt. Land, West: Plot No.: 793/A.
As the above mentioned Borrower/Directors/Guarantors/Legal Heirs of the Bhubaneswar Branch have defaulted in repayment of the principal loan/ facility in installments/interest/ both, the account has been classified as NPA, in accordance with the directions or guidelines issued by the RBI. In spite of our repeated demands you (borrower) have not paid any amount towards the amount outstanding in your account, you have not discharged your liabilities. Hence, we are now constrained to make this publication of Demand Notice, required u/s 13(2) of the said Act and Rule 3 of the security interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002. You are here by called upon to pay the aforesaid amount alongwith further interest, cost, Incidental Expenses, Charges etc. within a period of 60 days from the date of Notice, failing which we will take necessary action under the provisions of sec 13(4) of the said Act. against all or any one or more of the secured assets including taking possession of your secured assets and sale them. If the dues are not fully recovered in the course of these actions against secured assets, then the Bank reserves the right to take action by filing recovery action against you before DRT/Court for recovery of the same. It may be noted that under the provisions of Section 13(8) of the SARFAESI Act, right of redemption is available to you, by paying the dues of the Bank together with all cost, charges and expenses incurred by the Bank at any time, till the date of publication of notice for public auction or inviting quotations or tender from public or private treaty for transfer by way of lease, assignment or sale of the secured assets. Please take note that as per sub section (13) of the aforesaid Act, after receipt of this notice, you are restrained from transferring or creating any encumbrances on the aforesaid secured assets whether by way of sale, lease, license, gift, mortgage or otherwise. This notice is issued without prejudice to the rights of the Bank available under any other law.
Place : Bhubaneswar, Date: 20.07.2023 Chief Manager & Authorized Officer, Bank of India

Let us keep flaming in our heart the fire of progress.

THE MOTHER



Wake-up Call

Climate change is no longer a future problem. It is here, and the effects are all around. Worse, today's extreme weather events are just a preview of the pain that awaits humanity in the coming decades, almost regardless of how fast we manage to decarbonise the economy this year or next.

Such sobering observations tend to provoke arguments about the importance of "climate optimism." Pessimism, after all, demotivates. Martin Luther King, Jr. had a dream, not a nightmare, for the future his children would inhabit.

I typically join these calls for optimism. The accelerating pace of the clean-energy race is heartening, as is the emergence of positive socioeconomic feedback loops to match all the negative ones associated with climatic tipping points. Still, while the pace of clean-energy deployment is faster than it has ever been, the world overall is racing in the wrong direction: global greenhouse-gas emissions are still rising.

So, how should we talk about this challenge, with these two dynamics tugging in opposite directions?

One answer is to embrace the language of risks and uncertainties. Not too long ago, those resisting climate action were the ones playing up the issue of uncertainty. The "merchants of doubt" - marginal scientists and other commentators in hock to the fossil-fuel industry - focused on our lack of complete knowledge to challenge the strengthening consensus around anthropogenic climate change. Uncertainty was their friend. But for the rest of us, it is public enemy number one. The unknowns and unknowables are what make climate change such an urgent problem.

Over the past few decades, advances in climate science and economics have helped to quantify more climate-related uncertainties. This progress has been both helpful and alarming, because it has further underscored just how dangerous those uncertainties truly are. Above all, it shows that we need climate action not only to keep relatively slow-moving averages from increasing further, but - even more importantly - to keep uncertainties in check. The floods, droughts, wildfires, and other extreme climate-driven phenomena are what make the problem so costly. Conversely, climate policymaking that cuts off the tail end of the extreme-weather distribution should be regarded as a major success.

Sometimes, this will literally mean taking out insurance against the worst phenomena. Insurance mandates, for example, would compel homeowners to account for the cost of floods and wildfires when deciding where to live. As the price of homeowner's insurance rises in disaster-prone areas, mandates could become one of the most effective ways to encourage climate-change adaptation.

Similarly, investments in low-carbon energy sources are often best viewed as investments in resilience - and thus in decreased uncertainty. Lowering one's average carbon footprint ought to be valued and appropriately rewarded. But whether you are installing solar panels on your roof, using a battery pack as backup storage, or switching to a heat pump and induction stove, the biggest payoff comes in extreme circumstances, or the lack thereof.

The solar panels and battery packs will ensure that your lights stay on even if the grid goes down because of extreme weather. Similarly, a heat pump and induction stove will allow you to cut off your gas line and declare independence from future gas supply shocks that directly affect your heating bill. (The indirect effect via the electric bill points immediately back to solar panels and battery packs, and it further reinforces the urgency to decarbonise the overall electric grid.)

The cost of solar and all-electric appliances will only decline over time, whereas natural gas and oil markets will continue to fluctuate, owing to the vagaries of geopolitics and the global economy. A sure-fire way to prevent fossilisation is to get off fossil fuels altogether.

What is true for homeowners also is true for whole economies. Less dependence on fossil fuels means less uncertainty. True, the clean-energy transition also relies on potentially volatile commodities like copper, lithium, and other critical minerals. But there are crucial differences between these and fossil fuels. For one, the millions of tonnes of material going into clean technologies are orders of magnitude smaller than the billions of tonnes of fossil fuels being burned every year. And still better technologies with ever-lower costs are likely to emerge as we rapidly climb the learning curve on clean-energy solutions.

The trend lines support a cautiously optimistic outlook on the clean-energy future. But there are plenty of hurdles still to overcome, many of them erected and propped up by fossil-fuel incumbents trying to delay the inevitable. There is also plenty of climate-driven pain and destruction still in store. Things will get worse before they get better.

But even if we can no longer prevent climate change, we can still mitigate it by minimising the accompanying uncertainties. We must embrace these uncertainties for what they are: a wake-up call to prevent the worst. Climate risk is financial risk, and climate action is an insurance policy - for the world as much as for individual companies and for us as individuals.

The writer is a Climate Economist at Columbia Business School.

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WISDOM CORNER

- Almost everybody is born a genius and buried an idiot. **CHARLES BUKOWSKI**
- Follow your bliss and the universe will open doors where there were only walls. **JOSEPH CAMPBELL**
- We could never learn to be brave and patient, if there were only joy in the world. **HELEN KELLER**

WORDSWORTH

Makebate

You've almost certainly met makebates - though you probably don't know them by that name - people whose chief aim or pleasure is to spread discord and disharmony. Sir Walter Scott was a great user of this word: *Elsewhere he may be an useful and profitable member of the commonweal - here he is but a makebate, and a stumbling-block of offence (The Abbot, by Sir Walter Scott, 1820).* Somebody who is a makebate is clearly making a bate. The second half survives today in abate and debate; it's from Latin *battere*, to beat or fight (the first sense of debate in English in medieval times was to quarrel or battle). As a noun, bate described discord that was severe enough to result in a fight. British readers might think they recognise in this another form of bate, a fit of rage or bad temper, an example of which appeared in the Daily Mail in January 2004: "Shrieking with simulated frustration, Clarkson flew into a bate, picked up a hammer and smashed his desktop to smithereens." But the evidence suggests that this derives from a nineteenth-century respelling of the verb *bait*, to persecute a person with persistent attacks, so that a person was said to be in a bate as a result of being baited. Among the other senses of bate, one in particular is known to falconers. A hawk that beats its wings in agitation and flutters off the perch is said to bate. This is ultimately also from Latin *battere*.



Dhurjati Mukherjee

CLIMATE CHANGE IS MAKING THE INDIAN MONSOON SEASON MORE CHAOTIC AND UNPREDICTABLE



Gernot Wagner

Climate risk is financial risk, and climate action is an insurance policy - for the world as much as for individual companies and for us as individuals

SPECTRUM DEVELOPMENT

Why institutions matter



Arijit Dash

THE BEST DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES OPERATING UNDER THE CLIMATE OF POOR INSTITUTIONS WILL INEVITABLY FAIL TO GENERATE OPTIMAL RETURNS

In trying to diagnose whether development strategies are delivering, social science researchers have been increasingly resorting to analysing the role of institutions in shaping outcomes of development interventions and subsequent economic development. Much of the debate today that is centred around policymaking revolves around examining the association of institutional quality or more specifically the quality of government with the efficacy of public investment which is a common form of development strategy. From devising context specific regional and local development strategies to facilitating deliberations and negotiations among local actors to infusing efficiency in the process of generating, pooling and alignment of resources, institutions - both formal and informal in nature - have assumed a central role in the "new paradigm" of regional development policy.

The importance of institutions is further encapsulated in the fifth cohesion report of the European Union, wherein it was stated that "poor institutions can act as a major roadblock in ensuring the effectiveness of regional development strategies" across nations.

While envisaging regional economic development as a bicycle, Rodriguez-Pose (2013) asserts that in an ideal situation of a "well designed and well-functioning development strategy,"

the regional development bicycle is equipped with two well-rounded wheels. The front wheel represents a tailor made development strategy with the back wheel representing efficient formal and informal institutions. Such a situation would facilitate a region to steer forward in terms of development and in the process minimise frictions between development strategies and institutions. Potential frictions between the two wheels would translate into three worse off scenarios.

Firstly, most regional economic development strategies rest upon a grand strategy that is reflected in the front wheel while undermining the institutional back wheel which takes a tiny shape. This leads to regional economic development operating in a "penny farthing" equilibrium. Secondly, a form of mismatch between institutional setting and development strategy can also lead to a "square wheels situation" resulting from the implementation of poor development strategies under weak institutional settings. Thirdly, poor institutions and an absence of a real development strategy results in the worst possible scenario of no development akin to a "bicycle frame." This provides crucial insights into the relevance of ensuring that development strategies are designed that best fit into the potential of place specific institutions thereby enhancing returns from devel-

opment interventions.

Development strategies thus need to be specifically tailored to the potential of place-bounded institutions in order to make the most of intervention in human capital, infrastructure or innovation. This implies that regional development intervention should be mainly concerned not with the institutional environment that shapes the unique character of any territory, but with the institutional arrangements which represent barriers for the efficiency of other factors influencing economic development. Specifically, development intervention will be more successful when it is concerned with the type and quality of institutions needed for any other type of development intervention to take hold. When local institutional arrangements hamper, for example, equal access to education, training and skills; when excessive social polarisation undermines the potential for entrepreneurship; when impacted information or principal-agent problems affect the smooth development of economic activity; when rent-seeking, insider-outsider problems and clientelism damage the economic development of a locality, dealing with the specific institutional bottlenecks which limit the potential of a territory is bound to be much more effective than concerns with the culture or the nature of a locality or region. As a consequence, regional insti-

tutional intervention needs to adopt the form of principles or guidelines that can be moulded into a large diversity of place-based development policies.

Hence, development strategies will need to be specifically tailored to the conditions of different regional institutional arrangements which shape the generation, reception, and absorption of high-quality human capital and innovation thus requiring an in-depth understanding of local conditions and an assessment of the feasibility of different types of interventions under current institutional circumstances. Theoretical literature in this domain argues for a strong case in favour of the fact that the best development strategies operating under the climate of poor institutions will inevitably fail to generate optimal returns. In a scenario of prevalence of weak institutions, just enhancing the degree or the quantum of investments especially in regions drawing greater levels of investment is akin to a "strategy of waste." Therefore, devising development strategies warrants a detailed understanding of local conditions while also assessing the viability of different forms of development interventions through the lens of existing place-based institutional conditions.

The writer is a PhD Scholar in London School of Economics.

FOCUS SUSTAINABILITY

RAINING MISERY



India cannot afford to push the lower echelons of society into further misery with floods occurring every year and disrupting their lives and livelihoods

Northwest India is normally the driest of the country's four regions. But this season it is the region that has received the maximum rainfall with a surplus of 65%. However, for the entire country since June rainfall has been deficient by 40%. Delving deep into the matter, one has to agree that global warming-led changes in monsoon patterns have made a difference. There has been a constant rise in both land and sea temperatures, which has increased the capacity of air to hold moisture for a longer time.

Firstly, El Nino has taken shape, which is amplifying global temperatures. Secondly, wildfires have been in three times larger areas, releasing three times more carbon into the atmosphere. Thirdly, the North Atlantic is in a warmer phase while the Arabian Sea has warmed unexceptionally since January, infusing more moisture over north-northwest India. And lastly, the upper-level circulation pattern is also unusual, which forces local surface circulations, bringing rains like the one we are witnessing across north and central India. Several reports and researches have already established the impact of climate change on Indian mon-

soon patterns. However, "it has also been tampering with atmospheric as well as oceanic phenomena, which has further multiplied the implications of global warming," according to a paper compiled by Climate Trends. One may mention here that a study by Germany's Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research had pointed out: "For every degree Celsius of warming, monsoon rains will likely increase by about 5%. Global warming is increasing the monsoon rainfall in India even more than previously thought." In fact, climate change is making the Indian monsoon season more chaotic and unpredictable.

"What is really on the line is the socio-economic well-being of the Indian subcontinent. A more chaotic monsoon season poses a threat to agriculture and economy in the region and should be a wake-up call for policymakers to drastically cut greenhouse gas emissions worldwide," the study warned.

While such extreme events

continue to occur, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in its fifth Assessment Report (AR5) cycle concluded that human influence on the climate system is "clear." Since AR5, there has also been an increased focus on regional impacts, with scientists improving their models and understanding of what global climate change impacts will look like on a regional scale.

With various studies predicting more extremely wet years, the threat looms large over people's well-being, economy, agriculture, and food system. These extreme weather events are not only confined to India but also found in parts of Europe and China as well. "It is no longer a developing country's problem alone, but it is now hitting the industrialised nations such as Germany, Belgium, and the Netherlands," lead author of the AR6 of IPCC, Dr Anjal Prakash observed.

The Indian subcontinent's monsoon system has drasti-

cally changed due to global warming as is manifest in this year's flooding. The obvious answer lies in adopting more stringent measures to curb global warming, the most important being curbing deforestation, more emphasis on renewable energy and stopping expansion of thermal power projects, lesser use of air-conditioners as also plastics.

Along with this, people who reside in areas which are prone to flooding almost every year, especially in mountainous terrain and near seas and rivers should be shifted. Himachal and Uttarakhand are prone to floods and construction activity in these states needs to stop. The repercussions of building roads to facilitate people visiting tourist spots or for pilgrimage are harsh.

The strategy of development has to be reoriented and the rural sector should be a great priority. The urban bias in Indian planning has to give way to a rural-centric approach with the concept of neighbourhood building being given proper emphasis. This would necessitate less water-resistant technologies, whether in power plants or in agriculture as a water crisis is imminent in coming years.

It goes without saying that natural disasters have to be prevented, whatever the cost. India cannot afford to push the lower echelons of society into further misery with floods occurring every year and disrupting their lives and livelihoods. More resources need to be earmarked to counter such emergencies.

The writer is Sr. Consultant & Guest Faculty at Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Kolkata.

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Taj in danger

Sir, The water-level in Yamuna this year reached a new high when it touched the walls of Taj Mahal, Tuesday after 45 years. According to officials, the river's rising level has surged to a height of 497.9 ft, surpassing the 'low-flood level' of 495 feet. Heavy and continuous rainfall caused the river's alarming rise, leading to the flooding of the nearby Dussehra Ghat. The floodwaters also found their way into the outer sections of Itimad-ud-Daula's tomb. Concerns have been raised about the potential risks to other historical monuments like Rambagh, Mehtab Bagh, Zohra Bagh, Kala Gumbad, and Chini ka Rauza. However, officials from the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) have assured that these monuments have not suffered any damage thus far. They further stated that the floodwaters had not penetrated the basement of the Taj Mahal. The ASI officials explained that the architectural design of the Taj Mahal prevents water from entering the main mausoleum even during high floods. Prince Vajpayee, a conservation assistant at the ASI, elaborated: "The Taj Mahal was built in a manner that safeguards the main mausoleum from water intrusion, even during severe floods. The last time the Yamuna River touched the rear wall of the Taj Mahal was during the floods of 1978." This in fact is due to climate change. If humans do not solve this problem in time, then the day is not far when everything will be destroyed in water.

Asit Mohanty, JAJPUR

Battle lines drawn

Sir, "INDIA vs NDA" (Orissa POST, July 19) made an interesting reading. It's not "26 vs 38." It's not "INDIA vs NDA." It's also not "BJP-mukt" or "Congress-mukt Bharat." It seems to be a "khyamata-yukt" for the parties. Rather it should be "corruption-mukt," "unemployment-mukt" and "development-yukt Bharat." To retain or attain power, at any cost, is the only motto of our politicians. As parliamentary elections fast approach, it's good to see that the Opposition parties have come together to form an alliance. Come summer 2024, the "alliance of 26" taking on the "mighty 38" will be interesting to watch.

Pratap Nayak, BHUBANESWAR

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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EC begins 3-day public hearing on draft delimitation in Assam

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Guwahati, July 19: The full bench of the Election Commission of India (ECI) reached here Wednesday to hold a series of public hearings on draft delimitation proposals for Assembly and Parliament constituencies of Assam.

Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar and Election Commissioners Anup Chandra Pandey and Arun Goel along with senior officials of the ECI reached Guwahati this morning and started the three-day hearing at Srimanta Sankardeva Kalakshetra complex here.

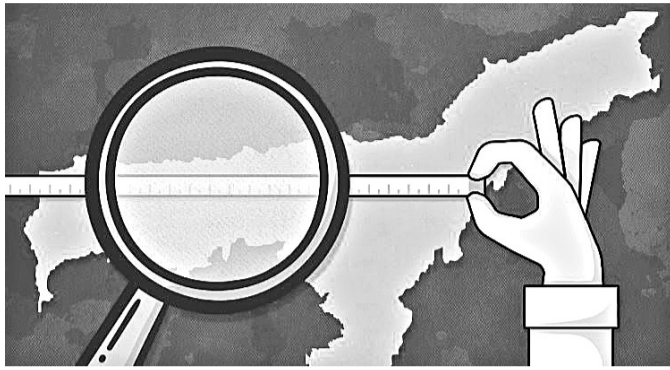
An official of the election department told PTI that simultaneous hearings are taking place in three different halls. Kumar, Pandey and Goel are present in one hall each to hear the public suggestions.

During this public hearing, the ECI will meet and hold discussions with various stakeholders, including political parties and civil society, over the draft proposals on the delimitation exercise.

On the first day, suggestions for Kamrup Metropolitan, West Karbi Anglong, Chirang, Baksa, Dima Hasao, Kamrup, Udalguri, Karbi Anglong and Kokrajhar districts will be accepted.

Feedback on the draft for Goalpara, Bongaigaon, Barpeta, Nalbari, Sonitpur, Karimganj, Darrang, Hailakandi, Cachar, South Salmara, Nagaon, Morigaon and Dhubri will be heard Thursday.

On the last day, ECI will listen to the prayers regarding Tinsukia, Dhemaji, Lakhimpur,



■ The draft delimitation document retains the number of Assembly seats in Assam at 126 and the Lok Sabha constituencies at 14

■ The poll panel has also planned to alter the geographical boundaries of most of the constituencies, both Assembly and Lok Sabha, while eliminating some seats and creating a few new ones

Sivasagar, Jorhat, Dibrugarh, Charaideo, Golaghat and Majuli districts.

The Chief Electoral Officer of Assam had Tuesday requested all public organisations to limit the number of representatives for each group to a maximum of five persons.

Following publication of the draft proposals, opposition parties and several social organisations slammed the ECI and alleged that the central poll body acted as a puppet of the ruling BJP.

However, the ECI has not reacted to the allegations yet.

Many political parties have also knocked on the doors of the Supreme Court against the entire delimitation exercise.

The ECI had June 20 notified the draft delimitation document by retaining the number of Assembly seats in Assam at 126 and the Lok Sabha constituencies at 14. The state has seven Rajya Sabha seats.

As per the draft, the Assembly seats reserved for Scheduled Castes have been increased to nine from eight and for Scheduled Tribes to 19 from 16. For the Parliamentary constituencies, two have been proposed under the ST category and one for the SC community.

The poll panel has also planned to alter the geographical boundaries of most of the constituencies, both Assembly and Lok Sabha, while eliminating some seats and creating a few new ones. An ECI team had earlier visited Assam March 26-28 and held interactions with political parties, public representatives, civil society members, social organisations, members of the public and officers regarding the delimitation exercise.

In total, representations from 11 political parties and 71 other organisations were received and considered during that visit of the ECI.

KAZIRANGA NATIONAL PARK

Flood fury raises need of elevated corridors

THE ONGOING FIRST SPELL OF MONSOON FLOODS IN THE STATE HAS ALREADY INUNDATED AT LEAST HALF OF THE AREA OF THE NATIONAL PARK

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Guwahati, July 19: Monsoon floods are an annual phenomenon in Assam's Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve (KNPTR), where the wild animals almost always face a lot of trouble during the rainy season.

A large portion of the park gets submerged under the floodwaters, leaving shrunken spaces for the animals to take shelter amid the deluge.

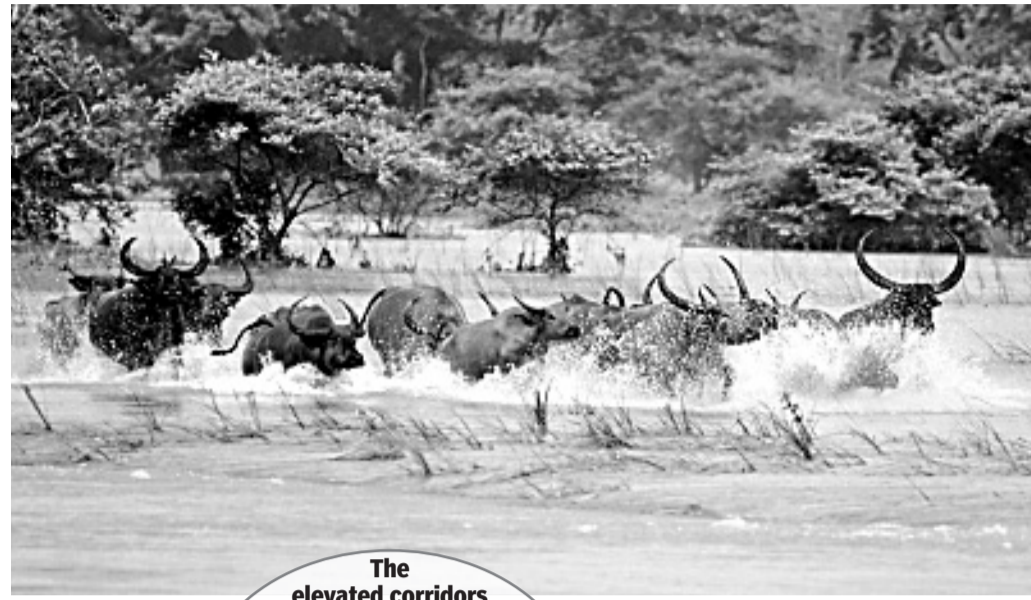
Due to this, innumerable animal deaths have occurred over the last few years.

When a portion of the park gets flooded, animals cross the national highway and move towards the Karbi Anglong Hills in search of shelter.

There are nine designated animal corridors where a number of restrictions on vehicular movement are imposed for the safe passage of animals, Sivakumar Periyasamy, Chief Conservator of Forests and former Director of the KNPTR, said.

For overspeeding, there is a provision for a fine for the vehicle as high as Rs 5,000. Despite this, animals are often hit by speeding vehicles on the highway.

The state government has planned to build an elevated corridor on the national highway for uninterrupted animal move-



The elevated corridors will ensure the safety of wild animals to a great extent as there are to-and-fro movements of them between Karbi hills and the national park as summer begins here

ARUN VIGNESH | DFO, EASTERN ASSAM WILDLIFE DIVISION

ment while they move towards the Karbi Hills.

The elevated corridors will ensure the safety of wild animals to a great extent as there are to-and-fro movements of them between Karbi hills and the national park as summer begins here, said Arun Vignesh, the Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) of Eastern Assam Wildlife Division.

After the elevated corridor comes up in the entire stretch of Kaziranga National Park, the animals can freely move through the underpass.

"It is a very good idea; however, this is a huge project and will take time to finish. Meanwhile, as of now, we are focusing on maintaining the restrictions on the animal corridors," Vignesh added.

The ongoing first spell of monsoon floods in the state has al-

ready inundated at least half of the area of the national park. As many as 49 forest camps have been submerged due to flood water.

"Although half of the park's area has already gone under the floodwater, we must still say that the effect of the flood is less this year. But the in and out movements of animals between Karbi Hills and Kaziranga have begun, and if the floodwaters increase their level, then the animals may stay for a longer time on the hills," Vignesh told IANS.

Kaziranga has a metapopulation of animals. It has a good number of one-horned rhinos, along with tigers.

Though the total area of the KNPTR is about 1,300 sq km,

earlier the authority had possession of only 400 sq km.

"We had control only over the core area. But, over the last few years, we have gotten back a lot of land. In 2020, we recovered a major portion," Sivakumar said.

Kaziranga now has 10 ranges, compared to its earlier four. At present, it has three divisions.

Sivakumar mentioned, "With this remarkable increase, we could bring a lot of change to the animal habitat, which included watershed management and others."

Following the acquisition of most of the encroached land, a major expansion of Kaziranga has occurred in the last couple of years.

However, the augmentation of the area has also raised the need for elevated corridors, as the authority claimed that the number of animals, including tigers, has increased in the park due to the freeing of encroached land.

UP govt to use AI for safety of women, kids

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Lucknow, July 19: The Uttar Pradesh government is launching a new initiative under which it will use Artificial Intelligence (AI) to make cities safer and ensure the holistic development of women, children, senior citizens and the physically challenged.

The integration of AI-based technology aims to achieve 100 per cent security for women, identify criminals, combat criminal activities, and provide prompt assistance to women and children during emergencies.

Additionally, the initiative seeks to prevent suicides.

The helpline number, 112, will play a crucial role in this, connecting both government and private CCTVs.

AI-enabled surveillance system will issue a warning immediately after sensing suspicious gestures such as someone holding a bottle or glass containing acid, according to the government spokesman.

When a similar warning is



received at the emergency helpline (dial 112), nearby police response vehicles (PRVs) would be directed to the scene to assist those needing help, and the local police station would be alerted too.

AI-based technology is also helpful in tracking stalkers, identifying drug peddlers near educational institutions, and monitoring as well as recording the

activities of criminals accused of sexual exploitation who are on parole or bail.

The facial data of such individuals will be registered in the National Database, bolstering efforts to monitor their activities.

Besides, AI-based technology will be used to identify groups engaged in activities like smoking, traffic violations, and public drinking in areas frequented

by women.

The technology is also useful in identifying those performing stunts on roads and locating missing persons through relevant databases. AI-enabled systems will also facilitate the analysis of road accidents, and identify the trend of suicide attempts on bridges, flyovers, and railway tracks, according to the handout.

AIMPLB sets up panel on UCC, seeks time to meet CM Yogi

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Lucknow, July 19: The All-India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB) has constituted a state-level seven-member committee to take forward the board's initiatives against the government's move to introduce Uniform Civil Code (UCC).

The committee has already met national presidents of various political parties and have now sought an appointment with Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath.

Maulana Mohammad Suleman of Kanpur, who is a member of the board's executive committee and a part of the seven-member team, said, "We are in touch with the chief minister's office for a response on the delegation's request for the meeting."

Maulana Suleman claimed that over 100 Muslim organisations and other outfits opposing UCC will gather at Jantar



Mantar in New Delhi July 26 and 27 to publicly denounce Centre's move to bring in UCC.

Maulana Suleman further said that the board's UP committee members, including Maulana Khalid Rashid Firangi Mahali, Maulana Atiq Ahmed Bastavi, Aamna Rizwan had met SP chief and former Chief Minister Akhilesh Yadav and discussed with him the issue of UCC.

The SP chief is satisfied by the

state committee formed by the board and has agreed to oppose Uniform Civil Code along with the board at every level, he claimed. He said, "Why is it necessary for the country to have a Uniform Civil Code? The committee has been meeting organisations and political parties at the state level and having discussions on UCC.

AIMPLB executive committee members, meanwhile, said the board has also deputed different delegations to hand over memorandums to political and social outfits across the country.

Memorandums have been handed over to Bihar CM Nitish Kumar, Telangana CM K. Chandrashekar Rao, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, Union minister Ramdas Athawale, Sharad Pawar and Uddhav Thackeray, to name a few, AIMPLB member Maulana Khalid Rasheed Firangi Mahali said.

Yogi govt to beautify 948 heritage trees in UP

As many as 28 species of trees that are more than 100 years old have been designated as heritage trees

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Lucknow, July 19: As part of its commitment to preserve the state's cultural heritage, the Yogi Adityanath government in Uttar Pradesh will beautify 948 heritage trees of the state under the Heritage Tree Adoption Scheme.

As many as 28 species of trees that are more than 100 years old have been designated as heritage trees.

These trees are spread over all the 75 districts of the state. There are a maximum of 99 heritage trees in Varanasi, 53 in Prayagraj, 37 in Hardoi, 35 in Ghazipur, and 34 in Unnao.

The Yogi Adityanath government is raising awareness among the general public by conserving the endangered tree species and trees connected to mythological or historical events, special people, monuments, religious traditions, and beliefs.

Guidelines have been given for the selection and documentation of heritage trees by department of environment, forest, and climate change.



More than 100 year-old trees, belonging to 28 species, and situated in non-forest areas (community land) have been designated as heritage trees by the Uttar Pradesh State Biodiversity Board.

These include Arju, Arjuna, Mango, Tamarind, Kaim, Karil, Kusum, Khirni, Shami, Gamhar, Gular; Chitwan, Chhibil, Jamun, Neem, Adansonia, Pakad, Peepal, Peelu, Banyan, Mahua, Mahogany, Mysore Banyan, Sheesham, Sal, Semal, Haldu

and Tumul trees.

There are 363 trees of Banyan species and 422 trees of Peepal species.

In the heritage tree category, trees related to the spiritual and freedom movement have also been included.

In Gorakhpur, the hometown of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, 19 trees have been designated as heritage trees.

On the other hand, mother trees of Dussehri and Langra mangoes in Lucknow and

Varanasi, Bachan Imli in Fatehpur, Imli tree in Imlitala temple complex in Mathura, Karil tree in Pratapgarh, Adansonia tree located in Barabanki, Pakad tree located in Hapur and Sant Kabir Nagar, Bodhi tree of Sarnath, Peepal tree of Ambedkar Nagar, famous as Baba Jharkhand and Peepal tree associated with freedom movement at Ordinance Cloth Factory Shahjahanpur are included as heritage trees.

Apart from this, the banyan tree located in NBRI Lucknow and Mahamaya Devi Temple Complex, Ghaziabad, associated with the first freedom struggle, are included in the list.

Special heritage trees like the Adansonia tree of Jhansi (Prayagraj) mentioned by the Chinese traveller Hsien Tsang, the Peelu tree located in the Ter Kadamba temple complex, and Nidhi Van of Mathura, Akshayavat in the Prayagraj fort, Banyan tree located at Valmiki Ashram in Unnao district, places popular as Luv Kush Birthplace and Janki Kund are also included.



An idol of Lord Vishnu partially submerged in waters of the Brahmaputra river following monsoon rains, near Chakreshwar temple in Guwahati, Wednesday



Flood affected women and children receive food at a makeshift camp at Mayur Vihar area in New Delhi



Army personnel stand guard after a suspicious bag was found lying on the Jammu-Pathankot national highway outside an Army camp in Samba district, Jammu and Kashmir



Members of Bangiyo Sankhyalaghu Buddhijibi Mancha (BSBM) participate in a rally to protest against the central government over various issues in Kolkata, West Bengal



Visitors watch the North Korea side from the Unification Observation Post in Paju, South Korea, near the border with North Korea, Wednesday. North Korea was silent about the highly unusual entry of an American soldier across the Korea's heavily fortified border although it test-fired short-range missiles Wednesday in its latest weapons display



Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan being welcomed by supporters upon his arrival at Suktara helipad in Seoni district



Men bag grain to sell at Dawanau International Market in Kano Nigeria. Nigeria introduced programs before and during Russia's war in Ukraine to make Africa's largest economy self-reliant in wheat production. But climate fallout and insecurity in the northern part of the country where grains are largely grown has hindered the effort



Ponies carry pilgrims at Sangam on their way to the holy cave shrine during Amarnath Yatra 2023 in Amarnath, Jammu and Kashmir. Ponies, porters and palanquins play an important role in making the 'Yatra' smooth and comfortable for pilgrims, specially for elder people
PTI/AP PHOTOS

national

of the day quote

We are working to unify all non-BJP parties ahead of the 2024 Lok Sabha polls. The Patna opposition meet was attended by 16 parties and there were 26 parties in Bangalore. Our numbers are increasing and the unity of the opposition parties is getting strengthened

NITISH KUMAR | BIHAR CM

I have memories of Chandy. When I went to Kerala, he was very kind to me. He took me around and I saw a lot of places in Kerala because of him. I saw the work he did. The man has done so much work, he will never be forgotten

FAROOQ ABDULLAH | NATIONAL CONFERENCE PRESIDENT

With the receding water levels in the Yamuna, many of those evacuated have started going back to their residences. Now the most important priority is prevention of waterborne and vector borne diseases

ATISHI MARLENA | DELHI REVENUE MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Army officer killed in fire in Siachen

Siachen: An Army officer was killed while three soldiers were injured in a fire incident in the Siachen glacier in the early hours of Wednesday, officials said. The incident took place at the Siachen glacier at around 3 am Wednesday, the officials said. They said four Army personnel suffered injuries in the incident.

Mothers' protest ends peacefully

Imphal: Protests by women groups across Imphal valley passed off peacefully amid full-day curfew Wednesday. Responding to "Mothers' Protest" call by Khwairamband Ima Keithel Joint Coordinating Committee for Peace, women in large numbers hit the streets across the valley demanding implementation of NRC, immediate convening of the Assembly session, maintaining territorial integrity of the state and objection to a separate administration.

AP: Six arrested for urinating on tribal

Amaravati: Andhra Pradesh police have arrested six people including three juveniles for the shameful incident in which they humiliated a tribal youth by urinating on his face after brutally assaulting him. The incident that occurred in Ongole town of Prakasam district June 19 has come to light a month later with shocking visuals of at least three accused urinating on the badly injured youth circulating on social media.

2 infiltrators killed

Srinagar: Two terrorists were killed at the LoC's Macchal sector in Jammu and Kashmir's Kupwara district early on Wednesday as the Army, Jammu and Kashmir Police, and the BSF, in a joint operation, foiled an infiltration attempt. The Border Security Force (BSF), in a statement, said Wednesday that a successful joint counter infiltration operation, code named Op Khaki, was conducted by it, the army, and police in Macchal sector, based on specific and credible intelligence developed by its Intelligence Wing. During the operation, multiple ambushes along the likely routes of infiltration were laid by the joint teams since July 17.



The BJP's only job is to create unrest, violence, and divide people on the basis of religion. They will get a decisive reply. The people will seek revenge by voting against them (BJP). INDIA will face the battle

MAMATA BANERJEE | BENGAL CM

TOMATO PRICES SLASHED BY ₹10

The Union government has reduced prices of subsidised tomatoes to ₹70 per kilogramme from Thursday from ₹80 per kg now to provide relief to common man from high retail prices



10 BJP MLAs suspended

Bangalore, July 19: The Karnataka Legislative Assembly Wednesday witnessed chaotic and unruly scenes as angry BJP legislators tore copies of bills and the agenda, and threw them at the Deputy Speaker, who was presiding, following which Speaker U T Khader suspended 10 of them for the remainder of the session.

Karnataka Assembly witnesses chaotic scenes

In turn, MLAs of the opposition BJP and JD(S) gave notice of no confidence against Speaker Khader to the Assembly Secretary. The turn of events unfolded following both the opposition parties staging a protest in the assembly against the Congress government for allegedly "misusing" IAS officers to work for the meeting of leaders of 26 opposition parties, which was held in Bengaluru in the past two days. The 10 BJP legislators who have been sus-

pending for the remainder of the session for their "indecent and disrespectful conduct" in the House are -- C N Ashwath Narayan, V Sunil Kumar, R Ashoka, Araga Jnanendra (all former ministers), D Vedavyasa Kamath, Yashpal Suvarna, Dheeraj Muniraj, A Umanath Kotian, Arvind Bellad and Y Bharath Shetty. They were suspended after the House

adopted a motion to this effect. The assembly session began on July 3 and is slated to end on July 21. A few of the suspended BJP MLAs were forcibly taken out of the assembly chambers by marshals. BJP legislators staged a protest against the Speaker's decision to suspend the 10 party MLAs, first outside his office and then at the Vidhana Soudha west gate. They were shortly joined by JD(S) leader and former Chief Minister H D Kumaraswamy.



Mortal remains of former Kerala Chief Minister Oommen Chandy being taken to Kottayam from Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala

LS polls: INDIA alliance parties look at resolving differences in states

AGENCIES

Bangalore, July 19: As 26 opposition parties cleared their first hurdle of coming under a common banner, they brace for a bumpy road ahead of the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, from ironing out differences among constituents in states to seat sharing and choosing a leader for their INDIA alliance.

The alliance - Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance (INDIA) - has resolved to save the character of the republic "being severely assaulted in a systematic manner by the BJP" and safeguard the idea of India as enshrined in the Constitution.

With challenges galore, sources said the leaders of these parties are looking forward at resolving them amicably as they all face the threat of turning irrelevant in case they fail to overcome them. Though Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge has admitted to differences within the alliance, he has urged all parties to set aside their conflicts for the sake of the country and its people, and move forward unitedly to take on their bigger common enemy, the BJP.

The Congress and the Left are rivals in Kerala, the Left and the TMC in West Bengal, the AAP and the Congress in Punjab and Delhi, the Samajwadi Party and the Congress in Uttar Pradesh, and the PDP and the National Conference in Jammu and Kashmir.

Many contentious issues remain unresolved but the first challenge before opposition alliance INDIA is that of resolving the leadership issue, sources said and added that the grouping may not announce their prime ministerial face ahead of the elections to avoid conflict among constituents.

OPPOSITION PARTIES MEET UNITED WE STAND!



One doesn't change by changing name: BJP

New Delhi: With opposition parties naming their alliance INDIA, the BJP on Wednesday dismissed the move as "old wine in new bottle", saying a change in name does not change someone. BJP leaders also took a swipe at opposition parties over Samajwadi Party MLA Abu Azmi comments on 'Vande Mataram', with Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan saying the opposition continues to behave in the same old way. The BJP's reaction came after Azmi, while raising the Sambhajanagar district riot issue in the Maharashtra assembly, said chanting 'Vande Mataram' was unacceptable to him.

They said it seems, opposition parties want to replicate the 2004 model when they had ousted the BJP government led by Atal Bihari Vajpayee and announced their prime ministerial candidate later. On the convenor issue, sources said that JD(U) leader and Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and ally RJD supremo Lalu Prasad were keen that a convenor should be named at the meeting itself and were reportedly miffed after it was not done. They said that Prasad is keen on Kumar becoming the

convenor of the alliance as it would clear the way for Tejashwi Yadav to succeed the JD(U) leader in Bihar.

The alliance is also aiming at fielding common candidates in most Lok Sabha seats to put up a united fight against the BJP and ensure votes do not get divided, sources said and added that the crucial issue of selecting candidates is an uphill task, but it can be done.

Most opposition leaders are seasoned politicians and have immense experience, and they need to avoid one upmanship and clash of egos, another leader said.

TMC supremo and West Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee and Congress leader Rahul Gandhi suggested and agreed on the name INDIA for the alliance and most leaders concurred, they said.

Sources said CPI-M leader Sitaram Yechury suggested "We for India" while Bihar Chief Minister Kumar proposed "India's Main Front".

4 members of family killed; relative held

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jodhpur, Jul 19: Four members of a family were allegedly killed Wednesday by a relative who hacked his victims with an axe and then set the bodies on fire in this district of Rajasthan, police said. Among them, a six-month child was hurled alive into the fire.

The incident took place early in the morning at Cheria village in the Osian area of the district, they said.

The assailant, identified as Pappuram (19), a nephew of the head of the victim family, has been arrested, Superintendent of Police (Jodhpur Rural) Dharemndra Singh Yadav said. According to the police, Pappuram entered the victims' house on a farm at around 4 am and killed head of family Poonaram (60), his wife Bhanwari (55) and their daughter-in-law Dahpu (23).

The accused did not attack the child, Dahpu's six-month-old daughter Manisha, but threw her alive in the fire, he added. Investigation revealed that there was a land dispute between Poonaram and his brother (Pappuram's father). Besides, Pappuram's brother had died under suspicious circumstances in Surat, Gujarat, sometime back and he suspected Poonaram of being involved in his death, the police officer said. Poonaram had two sons - while one was out for night shift at a stone cutter, the other lived with his family in Chamu, he said. The accused knew about this and thought he would not face any resistance and would comfortably execute the murders, Yadav said.

Earlier, Inspector General of Police, Jodhpur, Jainarayan Sher told PTI that a relative of the family was taken into custody and was being questioned. In Jaipur, Rajasthan Assembly Speaker CP Joshi informed the House during Zero Hour that the state government will give a statement on the incident.

15 ELECTROCUTED IN UTTARAKHAND



An injured being airlifted to AIIMS Rishikesh

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Gopeshwar/Dehradun, July 19: Fifteen people were electrocuted and seven injured Wednesday at a sewage treatment plant of the Namami Gange project on the banks of the Alaknanda river in Uttarakhand's Chamoli district, police said.

Superintendent of Police (Chamoli) Pramendra Dobhal said the police went to the spot to prepare a report on the electrocution late Tuesday of a person working on the project site. Around 11.30 am, a surge of electricity passed through a metal railing installed on the plant premises, killing 15 and injuring seven. It is still being ascertained how it happened, he added. Dobhal said police sub-inspector Pradeep Rawat and three home guard personnel were among the 15 people killed.

Several of the victims died on the spot. Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami, who has left for the site to take stock of the situation and meet the victims' families, expressed grief. He has announced a magisterial inquiry and a compensation of Rs 5 lakh to the kin of each victim and Rs 1 lakh each to the injured.

Ordering the inquiry, Dhami said strict action will be taken against those found guilty. Following the chief minister's instructions, District Magistrate Himanshu Khurana nominated Additional District Magistrate Dr Abhishek Tripathi as the inquiry officer and directed him to file a detailed investigation report within a week. Khurana has also asked Tripathi to include in his investigation the causes and the measures that can be taken to prevent such accidents in the future. Chamoli's Chief Development Officer Dr Lalit Narayan Mishra said the injured were sent to AIIMS-Rishikesh by helicopter. Union Home Minister Amit Shah also enquired about the incident from Dhami over phone. Director-General of Police Ashok Kumar prayed for peace for the dead and strength to the bereaved families.

5 terror suspects, radicalised by LeT operative; held

Bangalore: Five people radicalised to carry out terror attacks have been arrested with firearms and ammunition here, police said Wednesday. Seven pistols, 45 live cartridges, a bunch of walkie-talkies, some daggers and 12 mobile phones were seized by the Central Crime Branch from them. Provisions of the stringent Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act were invoked against them. The suspects were identified as Syed Sohail Khan, Mohammed Umar, Jahid Tabrez, Syed Mudassir Pasha and Mohammed Faisal. The five suspects were arrested near a place of worship in Kankanagar area of Sultanpalya locality in the city Tuesday while planning a major conspiracy, according to police sources.

One of pleas has been filed in relation to the Delhi High Court's split verdict of May 11, 2022 on the issue. This appeal has been filed by a woman, one of the petitioners before the Delhi High Court. The concept of intelligible differentia distinguishes people or things grouped together from those that are left out. Another plea has been filed by a man against the Karnataka High Court verdict which paved way for his prosecution for allegedly raping his wife. The Karnataka High Court had March 23 last year said exempting a husband from the allegations of rape and unnatural sex with his wife runs against Article 14 (equality before law) of the Constitution.

MARITAL RAPE

SC to examine if husbands enjoy immunity from prosecution

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 19: Does a husband enjoy immunity from prosecution for the offence of rape if he forces his wife, who is not a minor, to have sex?

A three-judge bench of the Supreme Court will examine this after constitution benches conclude hearing some listed pleas, said Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud when senior lawyer Indira Jaising mentioned the matter for urgent listing. The constitutional validity of an exception clause of Section 375 (rape) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) is under challenge as it exempts a husband from being prosecuted for rape for having non-consensual sexual

intercourse with the spouse if she happens to be an adult.

"We have to resolve the matters concerning marital rape," said the bench, which also comprised justices P S Narasimha and Manoj Misra. "My case deals with the child sexual abuse," Jaising said told the court.

The CJI said these matters are to be heard by a three-judge bench and will be listed for hearing after the five-judge constitution benches conclude hearing some listed cases.

A five-judge constitution bench headed by the CJI is currently hearing petitions related to regimes on grant of driving licence for different kind of vehicles under the Motor Vehicle Act.

The petitions on abrogation of



Article 370 of the Constitution, which had provided special status to the erstwhile Jammu and Kashmir state, are also scheduled

for hearing. The top court had January 16 sought the Centre's response to the petitions pertaining to crim-

inalisation of marital rape and the IPC provision which provides protection to a husband against prosecution for forcible sexual intercourse if the wife is an adult. The Centre, represented by Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, had said the issue has legal as well as social implications, and the government would like to file its response to the petitions.

Under the exception given in Section 375 of the IPC, sexual intercourse or sexual acts by a man with his wife, the wife not being minor, is not rape

