



## RADHIKA'S DISCOMFORT

Actor Radhika Apte reveals how a leaked intimate video impacted her personal and professional life

LEISURE P2



## RUSSIA BOMBS PORTS

Russia jolts world grain markets with an escalation in the Black Sea, mounting a third straight night of air strikes on Ukrainian ports

INTERNATIONAL P10



## PROTEST CONTINUES

Junior wrestlers, their parents and coaches reach IOA headquarters, protesting Asiad trial exemption for Vinesh and Punia

SPORTS P12

### SHORT TAKES

#### Sambalpur bans religious rallies

**Sambalpur:** Sambalpur district administration Thursday decided to not allow any large religious processions, including on Muharram July 29, for a period of one year, a senior official said. However, smaller Muharram processions will be allowed but those processions converging into a larger one will not be allowed this year, Sambalpur Collector Ananya Das said.

#### Car ploughs into crowd; 9 killed

**Ahmedabad:** At least nine persons, including a constable, were killed and around 10 others injured when a speeding high-end car being driven by a college student ploughed into a crowd gathered at an accident site on a bridge in Ahmedabad city Thursday, police said.

MORE P9

#### IRREGULAR by MANJUL



US, UK, Russia, scamsters, the corrupt, murderers...all know we are coming back to power...they are with us

### MARKET WATCH

| INDEX  | VALUE    | CHANGE   | PERCENTAGE |
|--------|----------|----------|------------|
| SENSEX | 67571.90 | ↑ 474.46 | 0.71%      |
| NIFTY  | 19979.15 | ↑ 146.00 | 0.73%      |
| DOLLAR | 82.07    | ↓ ₹0.06  | -0.07%     |
| EURO   | 91.38    | ↓ ₹0.52  | -0.57%     |
| GOLD   | ₹59,551  | ↓ ₹239   | -0.40%     |
| SILVER | ₹75,628  | ↓ ₹781   | -1.03%     |

### WEATHER

|           | BHUB                   | CTK    |
|-----------|------------------------|--------|
| TEMP. MAX | 30.2°C                 | 31.0°C |
| TEMP. MIN | 26.3°C                 | 26.0°C |
| Humidity  | 98%                    | 92%    |
| Rainfall  | 4.3mm                  | 11.2mm |
| Forecast  | Light to moderate rain |        |

### MANIPUR SHAME

# YOU ACT OR WE WILL: SC



ON WARPATH: Members of Indigenous Tribal Leaders' Forum stage an agitation at Churachandpur in Manipur Thursday to protest against the harrowing incident that occurred May 4

PTI PHOTO

*Taking cognisance of the viral video of two women being paraded naked, a bench headed by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud said it is the grossest of Constitutional and human rights violation*

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

#### New Delhi/Imphal, July 20:

The Supreme Court Thursday said it was "very deeply disturbed" by the video of two women being paraded naked in Manipur, terming it "simply unacceptable in a constitutional democracy" while warning the Centre that it will be forced to step in if the perpetrators of the horrific crime were not brought to justice within a timeframe.

Taking cognisance of the video, a bench headed by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud asked the Centre and Manipur government to take immediate action.

It observed that using women as an instrument to perpetrate violence in a charged atmosphere is simply unacceptable and that the visuals indicated

gross constitutional violation and infraction of human rights.

"We are very deeply disturbed by the videos which have emerged yesterday about the wife those two women were paraded in Manipur," said the bench, also comprising Justices PS Narasimha and Manoj Misra.

"I think it is time that the government really steps in and takes action because this is simply unacceptable," the CJ said, adding, "We will give a little time to the government to act, otherwise we will take action if nothing is happening on the ground."

"It is grossest of Constitutional and human rights violation," he said, adding that the court is conscious of the fact that the video, which appeared Wednesday, was of May 4 but

that makes no difference." As soon as the bench assembled to hear mentioning of matters, the CJ said the apex court had requested Attorney General R Venkataramani and Solicitor General Tushar Mehta to come to the court.

"What action has been taken since May to bring the perpetrators to book and second, what action is the government taking to ensure that this is not repeated because who knows, it may have been isolated, it may be a pattern," the CJ told both the law officers.

He said in history and across the world, use of women as an instrument to perpetrate violence in these situations happens but in a "constitutional democracy this is unacceptable."

Sharing the deep concern expressed by the CJ, Mehta said such incidents are simply "unacceptable". In its order, the bench said the court is "deeply disturbed" by the visuals which have appeared in the media about the perpetration of sexual as-

#### Parliament adjourned

Manipur violence rocked both Houses of Parliament on the first day of Monsoon Session Thursday, with the opposition demanding a statement from PM Narendra Modi and a discussion on the situation. With the opposition MPs shouting slogans such as "Manipur Manipur" and "Manipur is burning", Parliament witnessed frequent adjournments.

#### NCW for prompt action

National Commission for Women has taken suo motu cognisance of the alleged incident of women being paraded naked in Manipur and asked the state police chief to take prompt action in the matter. "NCW condemns the Manipur incident. Taking suo motu cognisance, the DGP Manipur has been asked to promptly take appropriate action," the NCW tweeted.

sault and violence on women in Manipur. "We are of the view that the court must be apprised of the steps which have been taken by the government to hold the perpetrators accountable and also to ensure that such incidents are not repeated in the strife in Manipur," it said.

The bench has posted the matter for hearing to July 28.

**4 ARRESTED** Meanwhile, a man who was part of the mob that paraded naked two tribal women in Kangpokpi district and was seen dragging one of them was among four persons arrested Thursday.

Chief Minister N Biren Singh briefed reporters that two persons have been arrested. Hours later, official sources said two more arrests have been made. Police said the first arrested person - Huirem Heradash Singh - was seen prominently directing the mob at B Phainom village of Kangpokpi district in the 26-second video that surfaced Wednesday.

The identity of the other three arrested persons was not immediately known. The two women are alleged to have been sexually assaulted before being set free by the mob comprising the majority community. P9

## ₹126cr river basin project approved

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 20:** Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Thursday approved the Khadag river basin project at an estimated cost of ₹126 crore.

This project will benefit 20,000 people of Boudh, Bolangir and Kandhamal districts in the state. The project will be undertaken near Ladgaon village of Baliguda block. Earlier, the Technical Advisory Committee had approved the project. It would be constructed without any displacement of people, official sources said.

Besides conservation of water, the project will also meet the drinking water requirement of the people and will help in pisciculture and increase the level of groundwater.

When Secretary to Chief Minister (5T) VK Pandian visited Boudh district July 5, local people had submitted a letter demanding the construction of a barrage on the Khadag river. The 5T Secretary discussed the issue with the Chief Minister and the project was approved Thursday, said sources.

**THE PROJECT WILL BENEFIT 20K PEOPLE OF BOUDH, BOLANGIR AND KANDHAMAL DISTRICTS IN THE STATE**

## AMU student held for ISIS link

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 20:** A 19-year-old student of Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) has been arrested by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) for allegedly being a member of global terrorist group ISIS after searches at his house in Jharkhand and rented accommodation in Uttar Pradesh, an official said Thursday.

The arrest of Faizan Ansari alias 'Faiz' followed an ongoing crackdown against ISIS modules operating in the country after registration of a case to thwart any terror attack, a spokesperson of the NIA said.

The official said several electronic devices and incriminating material and documents were seized during searches at Ansari's house in Jharkhand and rented room in Aligarh, UP July 16 and 17.

## Maha landslide toll mounts to 16

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Raigad, July 20:** Working non-stop for nearly 20 hours, rescue teams have recovered 16 bodies and saved 22 injured persons, who were crushed when a portion of a 550 mt hillock crashed on a large part of the Irshalwadi tribal village near Khalapur in Raigad district late on Wednesday night, officials said here on Thursday.

The 1,500-strong rescue teams comprising fire brigades, sniffer dog squads, SDRF, NDRF and even mountaineering experts have been working since 1am to dig out at least another 80 still feared trapped under the sludge and debris.

Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde and several of his ministers rushed to the spot located around 100 km from Mumbai to monitor the situation, while Deputy CM Ajit Pawar was stationed at the State Disaster Management Centre.

The Shiv Sena (UBT)'s Leader of Opposition Ambadas Danve, Aditya Thackeray, state Congress President Nana Patole and other leaders have also visited the spot and offered all cooperation to the government and the locals.

According to state government officials, the disaster oc-



curring at around 11:45pm Wednesday when the region was lashed by torrential rains.

A portion of the 550 mt tall hillock - nestled within the tribal hamlet - suddenly crashed on Irshalwadi, crushing an estimated 30-40 hutmments and trapping the residents living in them. According to Pawar, the Irshalwadi village population was 228 of which more than 100 people have been affected by the tragedy.

On learning of the disaster, Raigad district administration and the police rushed to the spot and launched a massive rescue operation at around 1am even as rains continued to batter the region.

The hilly terrain with huge boulders and stones hampered the rescue teams who could work only with hammers, spades and taslas (ghamelas) to dig out the people, as the clock ticked away.

On Thursday morning, Shinde reviewed the situation and in view of the difficulties encountered in the hazardous terrain as cranes, JCBs and other equipment could not be taken there, said that two helicopters will be deployed for the rescue mission.

However, though one IAF chopper was kept ready for the mission, it could not be deployed as it would have been unable to land or take-off in the treacherous terrain due to the stormy weather conditions.

## Teacher nabbed for sexual harassment

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 20:** Commissionerate Police Thursday arrested the teacher of a private school on charges of sexually harassing a minor student of the same educational institution in Bharatpur area here.

The 28-year-old accused was identified as Kali Charan Badajena alias Kalu, a resident of Bolagad area in Khurda.

The accused works as a geography teacher of the private school while the girl is a Class X student of the school, said sources. "Badajena was reportedly misbehaving with the girl for the last one month. The accused has recently shared question papers with the victim through WhatsApp asking for sexual favours in return. On July 18, he wrote some objectionable words on the bench. He also touched her inappropriately following which the victim informed the family members," a senior police official told Orissa POST.

A team of Bharatpur police reached the spot and arrested Badajena. A case (311/23) was later registered under Sections 341, 354 (a), 354 (d) and 8 of IPC and POCSO Act. Badajena was later produced in the court.

## World's cheapest pizza in inflation-hit India

- Inflation in India sparks cheaper offers from global giant
- Domino's and Pizza Hut tout world's cheapest pizza
- India is key growth market for global restaurant chains
- Popularity of street food and local chains a big challenge



REUTERS

**Chennai/New Delhi, July 20:** The ₹49 pizza in India, Domino's No.1 market outside America, is the tip of the spear in its fight against rampant inflation that's squeezing profits and pricing out many customers, according to the chief executive officer (CEO) of its franchisee there.

The company wants to "own that price point", said Sameer Khetarpal, confirming the stripped-down, seven-inch cheese pizza with a "sprinkle" of basil and parsley is Domino's cheapest anywhere.

"You are coming to the store or open the app, because there is a 49-rupee callout," he said,

adding that Domino's global team supported the plans. "Customers are going to eat out less because prices are higher everywhere - our existing consumers should not go out to some competition," he added.

In Shanghai, by comparison, Domino's (DPZ.N) cheapest savoury pizza is priced about \$3.80, and in San Francisco about \$12, online menu prices show. Domino's global HQ referred queries about India to its local franchisee.

Reuters interviews with six executives and 12 store managers revealed how Domino's and other global fast-food giants like Pizza Hut and Burger King

are being forced to change tactics to weather rampant inflation in the market of 1.4 billion people.

Companies are striving to hold onto market share gained over three decades of rapid growth in a nation critical to their futures - and one where it's tough to compete with a street-food culture and a sizzling samosa for as little as 10 rupees.

Khetarpal, whose Jubilant FoodWorks (JUBI.NS) runs Domino's 1,816 outlets in the country, says he holds a staff meeting first thing every Monday to brainstorm new ways to manage costs and fight the "historic high inflation" that contributed to its profits sliding 70 per cent in the first three months of 2023.

He gave new details of Domino's India pivot and its financial gains; his company has removed lids from all boxes of pizzas sold at stores starting December, saving 0.6 cents each time. He said that amounts to a significant saving in packaging costs because 37 per cent of Domino's Indian business is dine-in.



# leisure



## I WASN'T MUCH OF A BARBIE GIRL: ROBBIE

Actress Margot Robbie plays the fictional character in the new *Barbie* movie - but the 33-year-old admits she hasn't always been a huge fan of the fashion doll. The blonde beauty told *PEOPLE*: "I didn't personally have any [Barbie dolls] that I can recall."

## SALMA DIDN'T GET BOTOX TO KEEP HER FACE WRINKLE-FREE

Hollywood star Salma Hayek says she has never had botox and revealed methods she used to steer clear of the cosmetic procedure while maintaining a wrinkle-free face at the age of 56.



### FORTUNE FORECAST

GaneshSpeaks.com  
accuracy • reliability • trust  
FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181

**ARIES**  
Your ability to let go things will reflect in your personal as well as your professional life. Today could be a significant day for you, and Ganesh advises you not to forget your special abilities. Make good use of them so that others too can benefit.

**TAURUS**  
This day you will be prone to be stubborn and uncompromising in your business and professional dealings and thereby inviting unnecessary problems. Ganesh urges you to guard against this tendency and conduct yourself cordially and amiably with your colleagues and clients.

**GEMINI**  
You need to break free from the shackles of your daily routine. Trying to finish all your tasks as per your schedule will give rise to unnecessary worry. To manage your time creatively is the best way to beat the stress. Talking to your elders is a good way to calm your shot nerves, says Ganesh.

**CANCER**  
Your social prestige will go up. People will praise your personality traits and try to emulate you. You will be a role model, too. Ganesh feels that this will be highly profitable day for you.

**LEO**  
You will try to take up new projects to the best of your abilities today. You will be able to successfully tackle all your tasks today. You will face a little instability in your personal relationships, but will be able to solve all issues successfully, says Ganesh.

**VIRGO**  
Today you will feel monetarily much stronger than you have ever felt, says Ganesh. You will realise the need to make monetary arrangements for some unforeseen financial instability that may occur in the future. Your leadership qualities will be appreciated by people around you.

**LIBRA**  
Ganesh says today you will use your mental competency to complete all your work on time. You may not give complete attention to your family as you will be spending time in the office or at work. Your extraordinary intelligence will be showcased at work today. Ganesh says do not forget your family which has played a huge role in your success.

**SCORPIO**  
Be vigilant; keep your eyes and ears open for all the events happening around you, says Ganesh. Your intuition is trying to tell you something, trust it. Think and act positively, the rest would fall in place.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
Keeping all the work aside, you may be painting the town red today. Falling in love is exciting, isn't it? However, for all those who are already in a relationship, Ganesh shows a red signal. Avoid arguments with your loved one. He suggests. Impress 'the special one' with a bouquet of red roses and make up for all the petty fights during the day.

**CAPRICORN**  
Opportunities don't knock on the door twice. Today, you'll answer the door and utilise the opportunity to the most, predicts Ganesh. Positive results will be visible and you'll stand a chance to overtake your competitors. Even if the competition is fierce and opponents try everything to pull you down, you'll not let them win the battle. Socially, you will be very popular today.

**AQUARIUS**  
You have changed your approach towards life from materialism to mysticism. Your friends and family members are pleasantly surprised to see this change. Later on the day, you may plan to visit a temple or other religious places, foresees Ganesh.

**PISCES**  
You are striving hard to influence your destiny. You are not going to kneel down without a fight against heavy odds. With persistent efforts you will succeed in achieving your goals. While victory is a given, hard work will be necessary.

# MANIPUR HORROR B-town seeks justice



**Mumbai:** The recently surfaced video of two women belonging to the Kuki-Zomi community being paraded naked and being assaulted by a mob of men, has sent shockwaves across India including the top celebs of Hindi film industry.  
Here's how they reacted to the video.

**Akshay Kumar:** Shaken, disgusted to see the video of violence against women in Manipur. I hope the culprits get such a harsh punishment that no one ever thinks of doing a horrifying thing like this again.

**Kiara Advani:** The video of violence against women in Manipur is horrifying and has shaken me to the core. I pray the women get justice at the earliest.

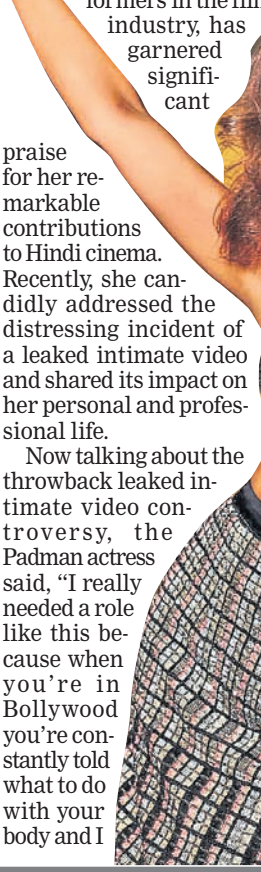
**Riteish Deshmukh:** Deeply disturbed with the visuals of the atrocities against the women in Manipur... I am seething with anger... no man should go unpunished for such crime. Though the said incident took place on May 4 as per the police, the video emerged on July 19 sparking massive outrage across the country.

**Sanjay Dutt:** The video portraying violence against women in Manipur was shocking and sickening. My utmost hope is for the culprits to be punished with the utmost severity.

## Radhika on leaked video controversy

**Mumbai:** Actress Radhika Apte, who is widely recognised as one of the most acclaimed performers in the film industry, has garnered significant praise for her remarkable contributions to Hindi cinema. Recently, she candidly addressed the distressing incident of a leaked intimate video and shared its impact on her personal and professional life.  
Now talking about the throwback leaked intimate video controversy, the Padman actress said, "I really needed a role like this because when you're in Bollywood you're constantly told what to do with your body and I

always maintained that I would never do anything to my body or face." The actress added, "When a n\*de clip of mine leaked, while I was filming *Clean Shaven*, I was trolled badly, and it did affect me. I couldn't step out of the house for four days, not because of what the media was saying but because my driver, watchman, and my stylist's driver recognised me from the images." Radhika Apte concluded, "The controversial photographs were bare-skinned selfies, and anyone with a sane eye would have guessed it wasn't me. I don't think there is anything one can do, or one should do, but ignore it. Anything else is a waste of your time." AGENCIES



## Sara undertakes Amarnath Yatra

**Mumbai:** A day after Sara Ali Khan shared glimpses of her Sonamarg vacation, the actor was seen during Amarnath Yatra in Jammu and Kashmir. Thursday, videos and photos of Sara from Amarnath, one of the most sacred Hindu pilgrimage sites in the country, surfaced online. She was surrounded by other pilgrims as she made her way to the shrine.  
Sharing a video of Sara from Amarnath, news agency ANI tweeted, "Watch: Actor Sara Ali Khan undertakes Amarnath Yatra in Jammu and Kashmir."  
In the clip, the actor was surrounded by her team and security personnel, as she made her way down after visiting the shrine. She wore a turquoise jacket with matching pants and had a red chunni (scarf) around her neck (photo inset). She also sported red tika (vermillion) on her forehead.  
Sharing a glimpse of her travels, the *Atrangi Re* actress wrote: "When the soul is content and the hamstrings are sore, bakri se phir bacchon se ki dosti (be-friended goat and children), and then we had the chai (tea) I adore."  
The actor posted a series of pictures from her mountain adventures, and one picture had her chilling in a cosy tent, sipping tea, with a cute little goat snuggled up in her lap. AGENCIES

### PEANUTS



### CALVIN AND HOBBS



### BREVITY



### FSB'S CHILDREN'S FILM FEST KICKS OFF

## Ray's Pather Panchali spellbinds audience

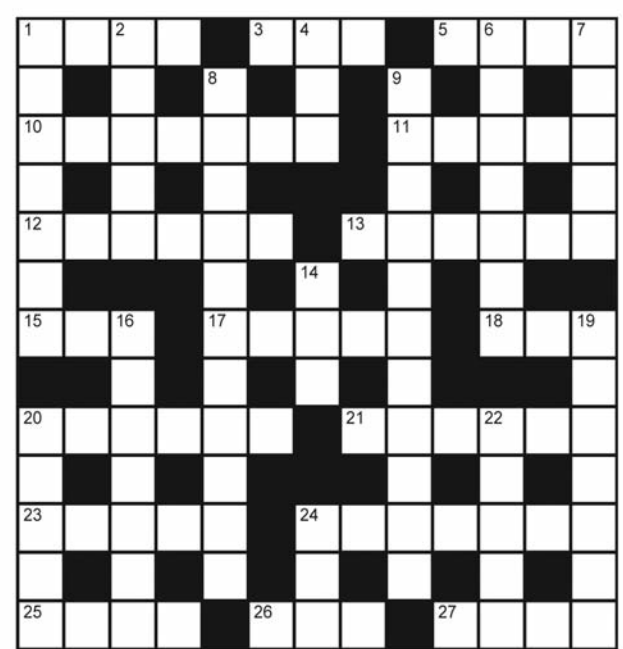


**Bhubanewar:** The much-awaited Children's Film Festival, organised by the Film Society of Bhubaneswar (FSB), got underway here at the Odissi Research Centre, Thursday.  
On the first day, many students of Loyola School (both the English and Odia medium schools) and the KIIT International School (both from Bhubaneswar) were present to watch the screening of Satyajit Ray's iconic Bangla film *Pathar Panchali* (1955). Needless to say, the classic left the young audience spellbound and they interacted with the guests to get their questions answered.  
An engaging workshop on making a Zoetrope was also organised during the day.  
The event is a celebration of creativity, imagination, and cultural diversity through the medium of film. With a carefully curated selection of captivating films from around the world, alongside engaging workshops about pre-film an-

imation devices, and stop-motion animation filmmaking with clay models, the festival aims to engage young minds, encourage storytelling, and foster an appreciation for different perspectives on the film form, claimed the organisers.  
"Our objective is to provide a platform where children can explore the magic of cinema, encounter diverse stories, work together to create stories, and be inspired by the power of film. This festival promises to be an enchanting experience that will stay with them for a lifetime," said Festival Director Subrat Beura. PNN

### FUN post

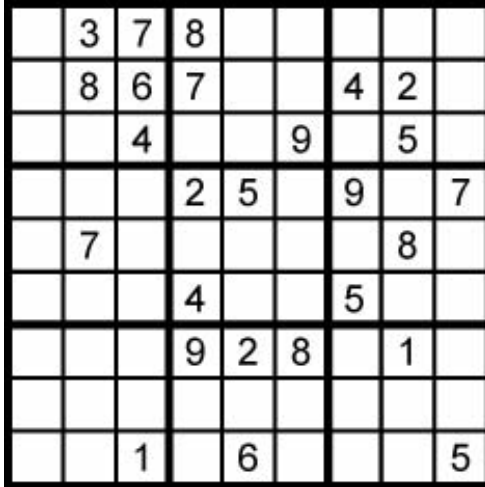
### CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 Final resting place
  - 3 Shrew
  - 5 Disease cause
  - 10 Shoreline problem
  - 11 Confute
  - 12 Fashions
  - 13 Meagre
  - 15 Subside
  - 17 Olfactory perception
  - 18 Sculler's need
  - 20 Sudden
  - 21 Horror movie sound
  - 23 Cathedral topper
  - 24 Reception room
  - 25 Figurehead's place
  - 26 Picnic crasher
  - 27 Clarified butter
- Down**
- 1 Railroad support
  - 2 Antlered animal
  - 4 Barley bristle
  - 6 Trade barrier
  - 7 Photo finish
  - 8 Hawk and owl, e.g. (5,2,4)
  - 9 Sum of recognised accomplishments (5,6)
  - 14 Large snake
  - 16 Mexican dish
  - 19 Guilty conscience
  - 20 Man of morals
  - 22 Notable period
  - 24 Wordplay

### SUDOKU

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



### SOLUTIONS



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



# downtown

## SAFETY FIRST

Transport officials inspect an auto-rickshaw carrying schoolchildren over allegation of overloading in Puri, Thursday



## FRESH LOW-PRESSURE AREA FORMS OVER BAY OF BENGAL

# MORE RAIN IN STORE TILL JULY 24

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 20:** A fresh low-pressure area has formed over the Bay of Bengal off the Odisha coast, triggering rain in many parts of the state, including the flash flood-hit Malkangiri district, while another low-pressure area is likely to take shape around July 24, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said, Thursday.

The weather office said that light to moderate widespread rainfall with isolated heavy to very heavy rainfall is likely across the state till July 24.

The IMD has issued both Orange and Yellow warnings till 8.30am July 21. Orange Warning of heavy to very heavy rainfall (7 to 20cm) is very likely to occur at isolated places over the districts of Malkangiri, Koraput, Nabarangpur, Nuapada, Kalahandi and Kandhamal.



Issuing a Yellow Warning, the IMD said heavy rainfall very likely to occur at one or two places over the districts of Puri, Khurda, Nayagarh, Ganjam, Gajapati, Rayagada, Cuttack, Boudh, Sonepur, Bolangir and Bargarh between Thursday and Friday morning.

Over 50mm of rainfall was recorded in the districts of Malkangiri, Ganjam and Bolangir districts during the last 24 hours.

The IMD also said that squally weather with gusty surface wind speed reaching 40 to 50kmph is very likely along and off Odisha coast, from July 20 to 22.

The weather office advised fishermen not to venture into the sea during this period. Meanwhile, Special Relief Commissioner (SRC) Satyabrata Sahu alerted the Collectors of Malkangiri, Koraput and Kalahandi to be prepared to meet any eventuality in view of the low

pressure. "Senior or field officials of all departments in the three districts have been asked to remain present in the headquarters. They will have to visit the field and take necessary measures in the wake of the low pressure which may cause heavy rainfall," the SRC said.

Senior officers of the Water Resources department have been directed to visit the field and inspect weak and vulnerable pockets. Men and material should be ready to meet any eventuality, added Sahu.

The Health and Family Welfare department has been advised to keep sufficient anti-snake venom (ASV) to meet the situation.

On the other hand, Hirakud dam authorities have decided to release the first floodwater through the sluice gates Sunday in view of the steady rise in water level in the dam.

## POLITICKLE by MANJUL



## SHORT TAKES

### Sulata Deo in RS panel

**New Delhi:** Rajya Sabha chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar Thursday nominated Biju Janata Dal (BJD) MP Sulata Deo to the panel of vice-chairpersons. The panel reconstituted before the Monsoon Session contains a list of eight names, of which half are women. All the women members nominated to the panel are first term parliamentarians, Dhankhar said.

### Dhenkanal NH projects to complete by March

**Bhubaneswar:** Four National Highway (NH) projects passing through Dhenkanal are targeted to be completed by March 2024, said Union Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari Thursday. While replying to a question raised by Dhenkanal MP Mahesh Sahoo in the Lok Sabha, Gadkari said the four NH projects were delayed mostly for issues related to land acquisition, forest clearance and slow performance of contractors. "As per the revised schedule, the target of completion of these projects is March, 2024," added the Union minister.

### Child marriage bid foiled in Cuttack

**Bhubaneswar:** Childline officials, along with the police, prevented a 16-year-old girl in Cuttack from marrying a man from Madhya Pradesh, an official said Thursday. On getting information, police reached the temple and foiled the marriage attempt.

# NHRC seeks report on open drain deaths in twin cities

GYAN RANJAN MOHAPATRA, OP

**Bhubaneswar, July 20:** The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has sought action taken reports (ATRs) from government authorities, including the District Magistrates (DMs) of Cuttack and Khurda, in connection with death and injury of people after falling into manholes and open drains in the twin cities of Cuttack and Bhubaneswar.

While hearing a plea filed by rights activist Radhakanta

Tripathy, the commission has asked the DMs of Cuttack and Khurda, Commissioners of Cuttack Municipal Corporation (CMC) and Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC), twin city Police Commissioner and Cuttack Superintendent of Police (SP) to submit the reports within four weeks.

In his petition, Tripathy cited instances of deaths and injury of people after falling into manholes and open drains in Cuttack and Bhubaneswar. The petitioner blamed the negligence of public



authorities and lack of coordination between the twin city municipal corporations and other departments for these mishaps. "Manholes and open drains

have time and again claimed many precious lives in Cuttack and Bhubaneswar. However, the civic authorities have done a precious little to avoid recurrence of such incidents. Jyoti Prakash Behera, a 15-year-old schoolboy, died after being swept away by stormwater into an open drain in Bhubaneswar in September 2021. Behera is among the seven who lost their lives after falling into open drains or manholes in the Capital city in the last seven years. In the Silver City of Cuttack, a 21-year-old

youth died after falling into an open drain at Jhola Sahi July 15 this year," the petitioner said. Seeking Rs 10 lakh ex gratia to the next of kin of the 21-year-old youth who died in Cuttack, Tripathy urged the commission to direct the state government for ensuring measures so as to prevent recurrence of such mishaps. "The agencies responsible for maintaining the roads and drains should be liable to pay compensation. In fact individuals responsible for the neglect should be identified and made to pay a

part of the compensation, say 25 per cent. This will have a deterrent effect and make officials take their job seriously," he said. Tripathy requested the commission to investigate the cases of Cuttack and Bhubaneswar in detail, take legal action against the errant officials and ensure timely completion of drain works in Cuttack by the executing agencies. Meanwhile, P Narasingha, a sanitary worker, died after falling into an open drain in Barapathar area of Cuttack's Buxi Bazar Wednesday.

# Real estate firm addl dir nabbed for fraud

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 20:** The Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of the state Crime Branch (CB) Thursday claimed to have arrested an additional director of a real estate firm here on charges of cheating investors on the promise of providing flats.

"M/s Mishra Creations Private Limited additional director Santosh Kumar Rath has been taken into custody Thursday on the basis of a case registered against him under Sections 406, 420, 467, 468, 471 and 120-B of the Indian Penal Code and 6 of OPID Act, 2011," said an official of the EOW.

Swadesh Ray Chaudhury, a resident of the city, approached the EOW alleging that the real estate firm had duped many investors of crores of rupees on the promise of providing flats at its project - UTOPIA—at Chandaka, said the official.

"Swadesh booked a flat in the project in 2016 and paid an advance of Rs 16 lakh to the real estate company.

As per the agreement, the flat was to be handed over to him within 30 months. However, till date, neither the flat was handed over to him nor the real estate company did refund the invested amount," said the official, quoting Swadesh's complaint.

Following probe, it was found that Rath, along with the firm's managing director Jyoti Ranjan Mishra, has collected more than Rs 15 crore from over 130 buyers to provide them with flats in the project. After taking almost 95 per cent of the total cost of the flats, the real estate company did not hand over any single unit to the investors, said the official.

Earlier, the accused Jyoti Ranjan Mishra, was arrested in this case and he is still in judicial custody, the official pointed out.

# 2 DAYS OF INTENSE EXERCISE SAME AS REGULAR WORKOUT

People who engage in intense physical activity for 1-2 days reduce their risk of heart attack and stroke as much as those who do moderate physical activity for several days, a study suggests.

Current guidelines from the World Health Organization and American Heart Association recommend at least 150 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity (MVPA) per week for overall health benefits.

However, the impact of concentrated versus evenly distributed activity has remained unclear.

The study, published in the journal JAMA, investigate the associations of cardiovascular event risk between a "weekend warrior" pattern of physical activity, where the majority of MVPA is achieved over 1-2 days, and a pattern of more evenly distributed MVPA across multiple days.

The researchers analysed data from the UK Biobank cohort study, focusing on participants who provided a full week of accelerometer-based physical activity data between June 8, 2013, and December 30, 2015.

With this data, the researchers compared 3 MVPA patterns. In the active weekend warrior group, partic-



ipants achieved at least 150 minutes of MVPA with 50 per cent of the total activity completed in 1-2 days.

Participants in the active regular group achieved at least 150 minutes of MVPA but did not meet active WW criteria. In the inactive group, participants completed less than 150 minutes of MVPA.

They also assessed the same patterns using a median threshold of 230.4 minutes or more of MVPA per week. Associations between these activity patterns and incident atrial fibrillation, myocardial infarction, heart failure, and stroke were analysed. The analysis included 89,573 individuals with a mean age of 62 years, of whom 56 per cent were women, who underwent accelerometry.

Results showed that both concentrated and evenly distributed activity patterns were associated with similarly lower risks of all four car-

diovascular events, the researchers said. The study found that interventions targeting cardiovascular health through physical activity may be effective even if concentrated within 1-2 days per week, they said.

This finding is particularly relevant for individuals with time constraints, as it suggests shorter timeframes for physical activity may still yield positive results, according to the researchers.

"Within nearly 90,000 individuals providing wrist-based activity quantification, physical activity concentrated within 1 to 2 days was associated with similarly lower risk of cardiovascular outcomes to more regular activity," the authors noted.

"These observations thereby extend prior work reporting improved cardiovascular outcomes with increasing moderate and vigorous activity, as well as reports suggesting that concentrated physical activity is associated with similar reductions in mortality to more regular activity," they said. These findings suggest that engagement in physical activity, regardless of pattern, may optimise risk across a broad spectrum of cardiovascular diseases, the researchers added.

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# 5T Secy visits Nayagarh, reviews devpt projects



ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

**Bhubaneswar, July 20:** Following the instructions of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, 5T Secretary VK Pandian reached Nayagarh district Thursday on a two-day visit. He met with the officials concerned and reviewed the progress of the various developmental projects. At the core of his visit were the ongoing Mega Piped Water Supply projects which are implemented at an estimated cost of Rs 1,577 crore, and will be operationalised in phases starting from this year end.

Pandian visited the Tala Maning Temple and Shri Jagannath Temple in Ranpur, Mahavir Temple in Daspalla and interacted with Sebayats and temples' officials. He discussed with them ways to develop the temples holistically including better facilities for the devotees. He then directed the district administration officials to prepare a master plan for transformation of the temples.

He then proceeded to the Community Health Centre (CHC) at Ranpur to review the progress of the AMA hospital and the new 30-bedded hospital building. He spared time with the doctors, staff, patients and attendants at the centre.

He also visited Mission Shakti Cafe at Daspalla and interacted with Mission Shakti members on the functioning of the cafe and other livelihood activities.

Pandian reviewed the progress of AMA hospital and the new 100-

bedded hospital building in DHH, Nayagarh where he visited different wards, OPDs, MCH, Niramaya and interacted with doctors, staff, patients and attendants.

In Machhipada, he interacted with Krishna Chhenapada Producer Group Members and assured them of government support for expansion of their work along with marketing.

Pandian later interacted with the locals in Ranpur, Daspalla, Bhapur and Khandapada and heard their grievances. He conveyed them that the Chief Minister lays emphasis on grievance redressal as a priority for the administration and assured them of early grievance redressal.

**Pandian visited Mission Shakti Cafe at Daspalla and interacted with Mission Shakti members on the functioning of the cafe and other livelihood activities**



**FOR A GREENER CITY:** Members of Janamangal Parisad planting saplings under mass plantation programme at Lower PMG in Bhubaneswar, Thursday

## Citizen-centric services through eSeva portal

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Cuttack, July 20:** Cuttack Municipal Corporation (CMC) launched its new eSeva portal and online Holding Tax, Trade License application, a one-stop platform Wednesday.

"We are excited to launch the above portal, which marks a significant step forward in our efforts to provide citizen-centric services," said CMC Mayor Subash Singh.

"This portal will revolutionize the way citizens interact with the municipal services by offering a convenient and efficient solution for their needs. By con-



solidating multiple services into a single platform, we aim to simplify the process and save valuable time for the residents of Cuttack," he added.

This initiative aims to sim-

plify the process of accessing essential municipal services through a user-friendly online platform. The eSeva portal, accessible at <https://eseva.cmc-cuttack.in>, provides residents

with a host of services conveniently consolidated in one place. Citizens can now avail themselves of various services such as payment of Holding Tax, Submitting tax related grievance and obtaining Trade License among others.

The introduction of this integrated system eliminates the need for multiple visits to different offices or online platforms, saving valuable time and effort for the residents of Cuttack.

The web applications are accessible at <https://holding-tax.cmc-cuttack.odisha.gov.in> and <https://holding-tax.cmc-cuttack.in>, provides residents

## Police bulldoze criminals' houses

GYAN RANJAN MOHAPATRA, OP

**Bhubaneswar, July 20:** The Commissionerate Police Thursday demolished the houses of dreaded criminals located in different slums under capital police station.

The criminals whose houses were razed include Sujit Nayak and his aides Ajit Nayak, Vishal Nayak and Tikili Nayak in GED Colony Basti of Unit-I area and Dilip Bisoye, Suresh Nayak of Kesahari Nagar Basti and Kahna Pradhan of Radhakrishnan Upara Basti in Unit-VI area.



The accused, Sujit, Ajit Nayak, Vishal, and Tikili are involved in the murder of 34-year-old Sushant Nayak alias Kalina at GED Colony Basti in Unit-I May 24. Sujit surrendered before a local court while others were arrested by the City police from their hideouts in Daringibadi of Kandhamal district.

The City police, with the help of joint enforcement team of BMC and BDA, razed the houses of the accused built on the encroached land.

According to a senior cop, "Accused Vishal had constructed the house by encroaching government land in the slum. He was using this house as a den for anti social activities."

Similarly, the joint team demolished the house of accused Suresh at Unit-VI and the houses of Kahna and Dilip in Unit-V area. Suresh, Kahna and Dilip are involved in the burglary of valuables worth several lakh at the residence of one Assistant Section Officer.

All the accused are currently lodged in the special jail at Jharapda.

## CM3leon holds future of visual transformation

SMRUTI REKHA BARIK, OP

**Bhubaneswar, July 20:** Meta AI plans to draw the users' attention and allow them an exclusive experience of its first text-to-image generation by launching CM3leon earlier this week. CM3leon, which stands for causal masked mixed-modal (CM3) model, will utilise five times less computing power than earlier transformer-based techniques.

Previous models which were either text-to-image or only image-to-text will now have an increased expansion in the functionality because of this development of META AI.

"Since this is image and art based development, I feel it will be of great help to the architects who can use CM3leon to develop designs. CM3leon will aim at completing large scale multi tasking projects with improved performance on tasks such as image caption generation, visual question answering, text-



based editing, and conditional image generation. This great creation should be properly tested before being launched, as there might be downsides later," said Parth, an engineering student from Bhubaneswar.

Yasashwi, a tech-savvy who does coding, said, "The model can not only generate high-quality images from text descriptions, but also write coherent captions for existing

images. This lays the groundwork for more advanced image understanding models in the future. But it's not yet available for testing or commercial use."

"The AI model bridges the gap between text and images with its capabilities in text-guided image generation and editing. The model has the potential to revolutionize the approach in which current users interact with and manipulate vi-

sual content", said Neetisha Mohanty, a BBA LLB student based in Bhubaneswar.

"Well CM3Leon is not yet available for commercial use and Meta has been silent on when and whether they plan to release the model to the audience. Currently, there is a divide between AI image generators and AI text generators, like OpenAI's ChatGPT. Even so, being a student, I would easily answer that I would prefer ChatGPT any day because ChatGPT has more uses in academics than CM3Leon", remarked Neetisha.

"According to me, CM3Leon will be more useful in creative fields by enhancing creative ideas. I would like to say AI can never replace humans. It is the human brain that has given existence to AI in the first place and I think there will always be people who won't be able to put their complete faith on technology for doing something," she added.

## OSBCL donates ₹5cr to CMRF



**Bhubaneswar:** Odisha State Beverages Corporation Limited (OSBCL) Thursday donated Rs 5 crore to the Chief Minister's Relief Fund (CMRF). Chief Secretary Pradeep Kumar Jena received this amount in form of cheque towards CMRF from Panchayati Raj & Drinking Water Principal Secretary and OSBCL Chairman Sushil Kumar Lohani in presence of Tourism department's Additional Chief Secretary Surendra Kumar at Lok Seva Bhawan. OSBCL Managing Director Prasanna Kumar Sarangi and CIM Manas Ranjan Swain were also present on this occasion.

## OMC pays ₹1,420cr dividend to Govt

**Bhubaneswar:** State-run Odisha Mining Corporation (OMC) paid a dividend of 1,420 crore Wednesday to the state government for the Financial Year 2022-23. Steel, Mines & Works Minister Prafulla Kumar Mallik handed over a cheque of 1,420 crore to Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik. OMC, one of the largest iron ore producers in the country, recorded a turnover of Rs.14,450 crore in the Financial Year 2022-23. Having total 18 operational mines, the state-owned corporation registered a total ore production of 33.76 million tonnes in the Financial Year 2022-23 with 29.68 MT iron ore, 3 MT bauxite and 1.08 MT of chrome ore - registering 14.9 per cent growth over the previous financial year.

## Stunning discovery: Metals can self-heal to beat fatigue cracks

**C**racks in metal arising from wear and tear "healed" by themselves without any human intervention, scientists report in the journal Nature.

Pieces of metal cracked and then were witnessed to fuse back together by themselves, overturning fundamental scientific theories in the process, the researchers from Sandia National Laboratories and Texas A&M University, US, said.

The crack seen to disappear was of the order of nanometres. "This was absolutely stunning to watch first-hand," said Sandia materials scientist Brad Boyce.

"What we have confirmed is that metals have their own intrinsic, natural ability to heal themselves, at least in the case of fatigue damage at the

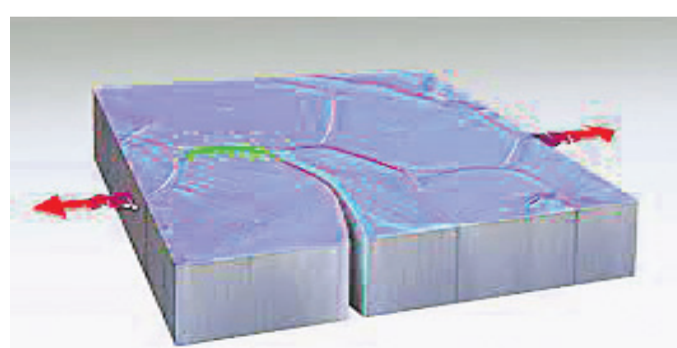
nanoscale," Boyce said.

If harnessed, the discovery could usher in an age of self-healing engines, bridges and airplanes capable of reversing wear-and-tear (fatigue) damage, making them safer and durable.

Although scientists have created some self-healing materials, mostly plastics, the notion of a self-healing metal has largely been the domain of science fiction.

"Cracks in metals were only ever expected to get bigger, not smaller. Even some of the basic equations we use to describe crack growth preclude the possibility of such healing processes," Boyce said.

The self-healing crack was observed during an experiment at a US Department of Energy facility when researchers meant to evaluate how cracks formed



and spread through a nanoscale piece of platinum. They were using a specialised electron microscope technique they had developed to repeatedly pull on the ends of the metal 200 times per second.

About forty minutes into the experiment, one end of the crack fused back together as if re-

tracing its steps, leaving no trace of the former injury and thereby reversing the course of damage. Over time, the crack regrew along a different direction.

It was called an "unprecedented insight".

Boyce shared these findings with Michael Demkowicz, who

pieces of metal cracked and then were witnessed to fuse back together by themselves, overturning fundamental scientific theories in the process

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in 2013, had published a new theory from computer simulation findings that under certain conditions, metal should be able to weld shut wear-and-tear cracks. Demkowicz was then a materials science and engineering assistant professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, US.

"I was very glad to hear it, of course," said Demkowicz, now

a professor at Texas A&M. He then recreated the experiment on a computer model, substantiating the phenomenon witnessed at Sandia to be the same one he had theorised years earlier.

While a lot remains unknown about the self-healing process, including its practical applications in manufacturing, the discovery is a leap forward in the field of materials science, the researchers said.

"The extent to which these findings are generalisable will likely become a subject of extensive research," Boyce said.

"My hope is this finding encourages materials researchers to consider that, under the right circumstances, materials can do things we never expected," Demkowicz said.

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# MCL oustees' stir enters 19th day

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Sundargarh, July 20:** An agitation by MCL displaced over employment, compensation, rehabilitation and resettlement entered into nineteenth day Thursday, as extraction and transportation of coal from MCL-owned mines remained seriously hit.

The agitating villagers are currently staging a sit-in outside the project office of MCL-owned Kulda mines. Earlier, the displaced families from 14 villages had taken out a rally Sunday chiding Mahanadi Coalfields Ltd (MCL) for not living up to its promise and neglecting their demands.

Notably, the Supreme Court has repeatedly ruled in favour of the families displaced making way for establishment of the mines by MCL.

Meanwhile, to break the impasse, Sundargarh sub-collector Dasarathi Sarabu invited the protesting villagers for a meeting, Thursday. However, the agitating villagers asked the sub-collector to schedule it to Friday evening as the Supreme Court is likely to pronounce an order, Friday.

However, the MCL continues to neglect the demands of the displaced under various pretexts. Fed up, the displaced villagers launched their stir and closed down all the four mines, offices and railway sidings of MCL. As a result, coal production and transportation from the MCL-owned mines came to a standstill.

Later, they allowed road sale of coal from only Kulda and



## Daily coal despatch of 45,000 tonne hit

As many as 15 railway rakes are lying stranded at two railway sidings of state-owned MCL due to villagers' protests, affecting a daily despatch of 45,000 tonnes coal to power plants, a source said. MCL is the top coal producing subsidiary of Coal India Ltd (CIL). MCL contributed 193 MT to CIL's 703 million tonne coal production in FY23. Coal mining and despatch operations at projects of MCL in the district remained affected owing to protests launched by 14 project-affected villages July 2, 2023, to press for higher compensation and rehabilitation and resettlement (R&R) benefits beyond rules in vogue, said a source. There has been no despatch of coal through rail mode on 19th consecutive day Thursday, which restricted movement of more than 6 lakh tonne coal to distant consumers, the source said. From July 2-9, production and despatch operations were totally shut at all the four mines of MCL namely Basundhara West, Kulda, and Garjanbahal OCPs -- of Basundhara area and Sirarmal project of Mahalakshmi area. On an average, MCL produces and despatches about 1.1 lakh tonnes of coal daily from these projects.

Garjanbahal mines of MCL from July 10 following a plea by the joint truck owners' association. Currently, all the railway sidings, offices as well as Siarmal and Vasundhara coal mines remains shut owing to this agitation.

Sources said a displaced villager Mathias Oram and others filed a petition in the Orissa High Court alleging they are facing difficulties to sell off their land during any health or other problems and while trying to get ed-

ucational and other loans as the MCL has denied them employment, compensation, rehabilitation and resettlement by obtaining a stay order on Coal Bearing Act from 1987. This has forced them to take the extreme step of committing suicide. The High Court had ruled in their favour in 2006.

However, the MCL went against the order and filed a petition in the Supreme Court in 2007. The Supreme Court heard the matter

but ruled in favour of the displaced villagers in 2010 directing the MCL to settle the issue with Gopalpur village within four months and with the rest 14 villages within six months.

The Supreme Court also formed a Claims Commission to oversee the disposal of claims under the chairmanship of a retired High Court judge. A secretary level officer of Union government and a senior officer nominated by the Coal India Chairperson became the members of the commission.

However, work of the commission got delayed and prolonged as MCL went on filing review petitions in the apex court citing various problems.

The apex court in 2007 again directed to provide rehabilitation and resettlement facilities to all villages within a period of nine months. Informing the court, the district Collector in his report said that out of 3,034 displaced families in 10 affected villages, the rehabilitation and resettlement facilities of 1,420 families have been approved while 1,177 families have been provided with the benefits leaving only 1,614 families that are yet to get the benefits. The report also admitted that not a single affected village has been fully rehabilitated.

As benefits got delayed, residents of Jhupurunga, Tumulia and Ratanara villages applied in court to provide them compensation and employment within a year under new Land Acquisition Act-2013. They launched the strike alleging that the coal firm is dilly-dallying in giving them the benefits and not obeying the Supreme Court order.



**FIRST AID:** Participants performed a mock drill on rescue operation at a first-aid training camp organised by the District Red-Cross Society at Kalyan Mandap in Daleipada of Sambalpur, Thursday

## Giant crocodile rescued, released

PNN & AGENCIES

**Rajnagar, July 20:** The forest personnel Wednesday rescued a 13.3 feet long male salt-water or estuarine crocodile from Mahulia nullah on the fringes of Bhitarkanika National Park here.

According to sources, the locals came across a giant crocodile hiding in the shrub near the water body and informed the DFO of Rajnagar Mangrove Forest and Wildlife Division.

DFO Sudarshan Gopinath Yadav later directed the rangers of Rajnagar and Kanika forest ranges to rush to the spot with the team and capture the giant crocodile.

Around 35 forest personnel arrived to net the giant crocodile in the presence of frightened people at Mahulia village in Rajnagar police sta-



tion area. The forest officials swung into action and netted the reptile from the water body after a gruelling six-hour long search operation clearing the weeds and common water hyacinth.

The local residents were frightened after the giant crocodile managed to sneak into the nullah during the high tide from Baunsagada rivulet by crossing the village road. The captured crocodile was

later released in Baunsagada rivulet within Bhitarkanika National Park. "It was quite difficult to catch the huge crocodile. It was later released into the wild. Thankfully, neither did the reptile harm anyone nor was it hurt," DFO Sudarshan Gopinath Yadav said.

The villagers alleged that the crocodile had killed a 45-year-old woman June 21 while she was cleaning her utensils near a pond located at the backyard of her house. The crocodile had dragged her into the nearby Charadia nullah and killed the woman.

Soon after the incident, the forest personnel launched a search operation to capture the reptile but failed in their move to catch it.

The saltwater crocodile population in Bhitarkanika has increased manifold from 96 in 1975 to 1,793 at present.

## WOMAN DIES IN FREAK MISHAP

**Keonjhar:** A woman died after a dead branch fell on her from a tree at Kuladera village under Khuntapada panchayat in Telkoi block of Keonjhar district, Wednesday. The deceased was identified as Rudhina Naik, 60, of the village. She was on her way home from the farmland when a dead tree branch fell on her. She was rushed in a critical condition to Telkoi community health centre first and later shifted to Keonjhar headquarters hospital after her condition deteriorated. She, however, succumbed during treatment. Telkoi police registered a case of unnatural death and handed over the body to her family members after a post-mortem.

## Landslide cuts off 20 villages in Malkangiri



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Malkangiri, July 20:** As many as 20 villages of Nakamamudi panchayat under Korukonda block in Malkangiri district were cut off from the mainland following a landslide at Bayapada ghat road due to incessant rainfall over last three days.

The farmlands have been submerged and a flood like situation has arisen as the rivers are in spate following the rainfall.

Large chunks of soil along with stones and rocks came crashing on the road on Bayapada ghat following heavy rainfall, Thursday disrupting vehicular movement.

The road has been covered in knee deep mud due to the heavy rain and landslide. As a result, around 20 villages in Nakamamudi panchayat have been cut off from the mainland. Some of the villages were identified as Bayapada, Suripada, Damodarbeda, Naringijhola, Amalibeda, Badakhigada, Tikarpada, Angurguda, Ghisingbeda and Jalaguda.

The landslide has affected over 3,000 people residing on top

of the Bayapada ghat as they are dependent on the ghat road for movement to and from the mainland. They also take the road to visit the bank, LAMPS, hospital, educational institutions and other private and government establishments. The landslide also prevented the villagers from visiting Kudumulugumma weekly haat which had its sitting Thursday.

Notably, the road was constructed two years ago by cutting the hill. The incessant rainfall in the region worsened the situation as it has made the restoration and clearance work highly challenging for the administration. On the other hand, water level in several rivers of the district has increased owing to the heavy downpour, posing chances of a flood situation.

With a steady rise in water levels, submersion of Gurupriya Bridge, which connects Swabhim Anchal, a former Maoist bastion, with the rest of the state, cannot be ruled out.

The Collector has directed for evacuation of residents of the low-lying areas to safer places in the case of flood.

## Sundargarh youth kills girlfriend over dispute

AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, July 20:** In a shocking incident, a youth was arrested Wednesday in Sundargarh district on the charges of killing his girlfriend over a dispute in their relationship.

The victim was a branch postmaster in Telendihi village in the district. The accused, identified as Nayan Seth, murdered his girlfriend over suspicion that she was having affairs with other youth, the police said. Whenever they used to meet, the accused used to frequently check her mobile phone.

One day, he came to know that she was chatting with another youth and had taken some money from him. Since then, there was a dispute between them, said Himanshu Bhusan Behera, Sub-Divisional Police Officer (SDPO), Sundargarh.

Nayan had asked her to stop talking to the youth. However, she continued it after which the accused hatched a conspiracy for the murder, Behera said.

On Monday (July 17), the duo met and had an argument following which Nayan stabbed her multiple times and then stoned her to death before disposing of her body in a field near Kurumpeda-Belsariapada forest area within Lephrupara police limits, Behera said.

After committing the act, Nayan used her phone to message her mother on Whatsapp and shared a screenshot of the location of the body. To mislead the police, Nayan used another youth's name and informed victim's mother that her daughter and Nayan were murdered and their bodies were disposed of in the forest and a nearby dam.

After interrogating the youth, who has been named in the Whatsapp message, the police were able to nab Nayan. He was arrested, and forwarded to the court Wednesday, informed the SDPO.

## 4-yr-old drowns, another critical

**Thakurmunda:** A four-year-old kid of an Anganwadi centre accidentally drowned in a pond while another was rendered critical trying to save the former at Mituani near Khediaposhi Sahi under Keshdihia panchayat in this block of Keonjhar district, Thursday. The deceased was identified as Subham Naik, son of Jivan Naik. A five-year-old girl Bhumika Paida, daughter of Tikina Paida, was rendered critical in the mishap. She was admitted to Ghasipura sub-divisional hospital and undergoing treatment. The mishap occurred after an Anganwadi assistant dropped the children at their homes after classes. Finding their family members away working in the farmland, they went near the pond to play. However, Subham slipped into the pond and drowned while Bhumika was rendered critical while trying to rescue the former. Locals rushed them to the Thakurmunda CHC where doctors pronounced Subham dead.

## Initiative to spread interest in reading

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Rourkela, July 20:** Napoleon Bonaparte once said, "Show me a family of readers, and I will show you the people who move the world." And the DAV school here has started taking a baby step in this direction of creating readers and people to move the world.

As a new initiative beginning this July, the school has initiated one 'reading day' in the school. So, the last period of every Saturday has been kept aside for this wonderful enterprise.

"Actually this is happening across all DAV schools but has not come to anyone's notice," said the

principal of the school Lokanath Pradhan. With an added sense of pride, he said, "All our teachers and students participate in mass reading. And it is gaining popularity gradually as early signs are there." It is being done across classes, beginning from Class I to XII.

Explaining this growing phenomenon, he was of the opinion that much could be achieved if there was an initiation with the right intent. Elaborating it further, he said, "Only three Saturdays have passed, we are getting good response from the students. Now, the students are coming with their own books or magazines to the class to read as

they are allowed to do so." For the students of lower classes between IV and VII, reading bonus point system has been issued. "A maximum of four marks will be added to the total marks obtained in the examination as an incentive to the students. And now I am getting regular inputs from the students who are also writing along with reading. One of my Class VI students Pujita is regularly contributing to newspapers," informed the principal.

This activity is being done apart from the library periods. "Teachers are taking books to the classes and distributing those to the students. At Jharsuguda

students are bringing their own books and this has led to an increase in book sales," informed Pradhan.

Remembering Emilie Buchwald's famous quote - "Children are made readers on the laps of their parents," he said, "From my interaction with students, I learned that unfortunately parents are not subscribing newspapers. And if some households do, parents don't encourage their child to read. That is very dangerous."

However, he was hopeful that through such initiatives, the dying art of reading can be revived but gradually. "But we require parents' intervention also," he added.

**EAST COAST RAILWAY**  
**'E' PROCUREMENT SYSTEMS**  
 Tender Notice No. Sr.DMM/KUR/EP/2023-24/06, Dtd : 18.07.2023  
 The following tenders have been uploaded on website www.irops.gov.in

**SL. NO. 01 TENDER NO. 81235443A, BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF MATERIALS : 200 VA TRANSFORMER, QUANTITY : 3184 NOS.**

**SL. NO. 02 TENDER NO. 81235656E, BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF MATERIALS : RADIATOR ASSEMBLY, QUANTITY : 7 NOS.**

**SL. NO. 03 TENDER NO. 81235661F, BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF MATERIALS : COPPER DROPPER WIRE, QUANTITY : 2910 KGS.**

**SL. NO. 04 TENDER NO. 81235639B, BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF MATERIALS : AUTOMATIC SMOKE/FIRE DETECTION SYSTEM, QUANTITY : 48 NOS.**

Tender Closing Date & Time : At 1500 hrs. of 28.08.2023 (For Sl. No. 1), 1500 hrs. of 09.08.2023 (For Sl. No. 2), 1500 hrs. of 16.08.2023 (For Sl. No. 3) and 1500 hrs. of 08.08.2023 (For Sl. No. 4).

Sr. Divisional Materials Manager / Khurda Road

**OFFICE OF THE NOTIFIED AREA COUNCIL, GUDARI**  
 No. 1129/23 Dt.18.07.2023  
**QUOTATION CALL NOTICE**

No. C-849: Gudari NAC invites online tender from experienced, competent and eligible Bidders in two envelope system for Conducting Drone Survey with DGPS for "Rejuvenation of Water Bodies" under Jurisdiction of Gudari NAC. The details regarding the eligibility criteria, terms & conditions for submission of tender are mentioned in the tender documents which only be downloaded from the website: [www.gudarinac.in](http://www.gudarinac.in). The quotations should reach to the undersigned on or before 5.00 P.M. on 31.07.2023 By Regd. Post/Speed Post/Courier/By hand addressing to Executive Officer, GUDARI NAC, Gudari, PIN - 765026 superscribed as "Quotation for Drone Survey with DGPS on Rejuvenation of Water Bodies" and which shall be opened on 11 A.M. Dtd.01.08.2023 in presence of the quotationer or their authorised represent at that time. The authority reserves the right to cancel the quotation call notice without assigning any reason thereof.

Sd./- Executive Officer, Gudari NAC  
 OIPR-13184/11/0004/2324

**OBSERVATION HOME & SPECIAL HOME ROURKELA, SUNDARGARH (CHILD CARE INSTITUTION)**  
 ପର୍ଯ୍ୟବେକ୍ଷଣ ଆବାସ ଓ ସ୍ୱତନ୍ତ୍ର ଆବାସ, ରାଉରକେଲା, ସୁନ୍ଦରଗଡ଼

At:Pradhanpali, Quarry Sidding near TISCO, Rourkela, Dist-Sundargarh, Pin-769015  
 Mobile no-8249505827,Email:observationhomerourkela@gmail.com

**Letter no-741 date-14.7.23**  
 Applications are invited as per the Letter no.384/dpcu/sng/2023, dated-17.5.23 from the Eligible interested candidates to be engaged on purely contractual consolidated remuneration basis for the different posts lying vacant in observation home and special home,Rourkela.

**IMPORTANT DATE**

|  |               |
|--|---------------|
| Date of notifications of website   | 19.7.2023     |
| Commencement of submission of application from through online and offline mode | Dt.19.07.2023 |
| Last date of submission of the application                                     | 02.08.2023    |
| 15 days from the date of notification  |               |

The interested candidate shall submit the offline application from , duly filed by the candidate alongwith self attested photocopies of the certificates and marksheet of academic background and experiences and recent passport size photograph(self-attested) to The Superintendent, Observation Home and Special Home (boys), At-Pradhanpali,PO-Chhend,Rourkela-14,Pin-769015, Via Speedpost and online application and submission google link only sharply before 5 PM within 15 days. The candidates must fill the online form through the link <https://forms.gle/2GsrGohmX1MnQDY7>.

**Age limit : Lower age 21 years & upper age 45 years.**  
**Contact number; -9861143039/8260028493**  
**Email:observationhomerourkela.com**

Sd./- Superintendent, OH&SH, RKL

**UCO BANK** Zonal Office, UCO Bank Building, 2nd Floor, C-2, Ashok Nagar, Bhubaneswar-751009, Tel: 0674-2620423

**POSSESSION NOTICE For Immovable Property**

(Under Section 13(4) of the Securitization & Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act., 2002 read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002 for Immovable Property)

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of UCO Bank, Chandrasekharpur Branch under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (No. 54 of 2002) and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13 (12) read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a Demand Notice under section 13(2) of the said Act calling upon the Borrower/Guarantors to repay the amount with interest at the contractual rate together with incidental expenses and costs within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said Notice. The Borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrower/Guarantors and the public in general that the undersigned has taken **POSSESSION** of the property described here-in below in exercise of powers conferred on him / her under section 13 (4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said Rules. The Borrower/Guarantors in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the UCO Bank, Chandrasekharpur Branch for an amount plus interest & expenses thereon.

| Name and Address of the Borrower/Guarantors  | Amount Outstanding as on Specified Date   | Date of Demand / Possession Notice | Description of the Immovable Property  |
|--|---|------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Borrower: M/s. Swaraj Medicine, Prop.: Mrs. Kanyashree Sarangi, At: Plot No.: C/16, BDA Duplex, Baramunda, Bhubaneswar-751003 / Guarantors: 1) Mrs. Sulochana Biswal, C/o.: Mr. Santosh Biswal, At: Badagorada, PO.: Kesharpur, P.S.: Sarankul, Baramunda, Bhubaneswar-751003</b> | <b>₹ 57,78,227.27 as on 27.12.2022 + further interest &amp; other charges thereon</b> | <b>14.02.2023 / 14.07.2023</b>     | All that part and parcel of the property consisting of Plot No.: 245/3270 (Identified as Sub Plot No.: 4/A), Mouza: Malipada, Khata No.: 365/2153, Thana: Chandaka, Tahasil: Bhubaneswar, A.D.S.R: Khandagiri and Dist.: Khordha, Vacant Land Area: Ac.0.055.5 Dec. Standing in the name |
| <b>2) Mr. Manoj Kumar Sarangi, At: Plot No.: 314, Jagannath Vihar, Near Baradevi Mandir, Baramunda, Bhubaneswar-751003</b>   |   |                                    | of Mrs. Sulochana Biswal, Bounded by North: Revenue Plot No.: 253 and 254, South: Sub Plot No.: 4/B and Road Left by Vendor i.e. Sub Plot No.: 4/C and Sub Plot No.: 5, East: Revenue  |

Plot No.: 254 and 255, West: Revenue Plot No.: 250  
**Place : Bhubaneswar, Date: 20.07.2023**

Authorised Officer, UCO Bank



Death is but changing of our robes to wait in wedding garments at the Eternal's gate.

SRI AUROBINDO



## Tightrope Walk

Ukraine's failure to secure an invitation to join NATO during the alliance's annual summit in Vilnius, Lithuania, has disappointed many, including Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. But although the summit's concluding statement did not offer a definitive timetable for Ukrainian accession, it did demonstrate a degree of unity and strategic foresight that would have been impossible had Donald Trump still been president of the United States.

To be sure, NATO leaders' promise to extend an official invitation to Ukraine "when Allies agree and conditions are met" was somewhat nebulous, and Zelenskyy, angered by the ambiguity, criticised the Western position as "unprecedented and absurd." But US President Joe Biden was right to suggest that the war must end before Ukraine is allowed to join.

The fact is that NATO is a defence alliance. By definition, if one member is at war, all members are. Given the risks of a NATO-Russia war, not least the threat of nuclear escalation, Biden and NATO's cautious approach is reassuring.

Even so, the ongoing conflict underscores the need to reassess the West's Ukraine strategy. The 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis (which I have written about elsewhere) showed that strategic planning is just as crucial as firepower during wartime. Then-US President John F. Kennedy's success in navigating the crisis was the result of intense strategising involving some of America's brightest minds, including economist Thomas Schelling, who won the Nobel Prize in 2005 for his work on game theory.

Unfortunately, the debate about the Ukraine war often fails to capture the conflict's strategic complexities. While the Ukrainians might win a conventional war, as some Western commentators have predicted, the risk that Russian President Vladimir Putin would put his massive nuclear arsenal to use is often downplayed.

Of course, launching a nuclear strike would provoke a war with NATO. But if Putin feels cornered, he might decide that that is preferable to the disastrous personal consequences that would likely follow a military defeat in Ukraine. To the extent that defeat poses an existential threat to Putin, it becomes evident that Ukraine's victory in a conventional war may not be a feasible endgame. Before that were to happen, Putin would exercise the one option that he has – the nuclear one. Therefore, the key to defeating Putin lies not on the battlefield but in empowering Russians to overthrow him. But to do that, media outlets in democratic countries must first distinguish between the Russian populace and the Kremlin.

According to a recent report by the United Kingdom's Royal United Services Institute, the disastrous invasion of Ukraine was the brainchild of prominent members of Putin's inner circle, including Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu and Valery Gerasimov, the Chief of the General Staff. As Amy Knight notes, citing an independent poll by the Russian news site Meduza, most Russians want the war to end. Western diplomats should emphasise that the Russian public is not to blame for the war, and media outlets should consider ways to help Russians understand that Putin's downfall does not necessarily spell their own.

Because autocrats stifle dissent, they typically appear more popular than they are. Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie is a case in point. During his four-decade rule, Selassie was surrounded by loyalists and was seemingly immensely popular. But as the Polish journalist Ryszard Kapuscinski brilliantly documented in his 1978 book about Selassie's downfall, his courtiers' loyalty quickly shifted after a famine and runaway inflation sparked a wave of public protests that weakened his regime. The "emperor of emperors" was finally removed in a military coup in 1974.

Similarly, the Russian people could rise up against the small group of elites who have oppressed them, dragged them into an unwanted war, and destroyed their economy. A political movement of this sort would undoubtedly require strategic planning, but only Putin's downfall can liberate Ukraine and Russia from the shackles of authoritarianism without risking a nuclear war.

To be sure, Putin's rule appears relatively stable, given that even Wagner Group leader Yevgeny Prigozhin's rebellion – the biggest challenge to his regime thus far – allegedly did not seek to oust him. But an old Soviet-era joke illustrates the reality-distorting effect of authoritarianism. Joseph Stalin visits a Moscow school and asks a student, "Who killed Caesar?" The boy immediately bursts into tears and exclaims, "I swear, I did not do it." Stalin storms out of the classroom and demands an explanation from the teacher. The trembling educator defends the student, telling the Soviet dictator, "I have known him for a long time, and I can assure you, he did not kill Caesar."

Incensed, Stalin summons the school principal, who promises to investigate the matter and comes back the following day, confirming the boy's innocence. Stalin then calls the head of the NKVD and expresses his fury over the incident, demanding a full investigation. The secret-police chief assures him that he will get to the bottom of it and, indeed, reports back to him within two days. "The matter has been resolved," he assures Stalin. "The boy has confessed."

The writer, a former Chief Economist of the World Bank and Chief Economic Adviser to the Government of India, is Professor of Economics at Cornell University.

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Kaushik Basu

The fact is that NATO is a defence alliance. By definition, if one member is at war, all members are. Given the risks of a NATO-Russia war, not least the threat of nuclear escalation, Biden and NATO's cautious approach is reassuring.



SN Tripathy

MIGRANT LABOURERS ENDURE MULTIPLE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, POLITICAL, LEGAL, AND CULTURAL DEPRIVATIONS

Odisha is home to 62 culturally vibrant tribes, including 13 primitive tribal groups. As per the 2011 census, out of the total population, tribes constitute 8.6% in India and 23% in Odisha. They face multiple crises due to the worsening cycle of poverty, unemployment, and diminishing common resources. To temporarily escape this dire situation, these vulnerable tribes often migrate to other states for work and sustenance. However, this migration risks them, especially tribal girls and women. They become susceptible to trafficking, harassment, denial of justice, and various forms of exploitation – physical, moral, economic, and sexual. Multiple newspaper reports have shed light on the plight of tribal women, exposing their vulnerability to sexual exploitation and the urgent need for their voices to be heard.

Trafficking in women and young girls represents a severe violation of numerous human rights. Women trafficking takes various forms, such as domestic servitude, sweatshop labour, construction work, agricultural labour, and exploitation in service industries like restaurants and hotels. Traffickers target women due to their vulnerability stemming from poverty and discrimination, which limit their access to employment and education. The displacement caused by land acquisition processes has stripped them of their ability to make decisions about their own lives and livelihoods. The extensive environmental degradation has had a devastating impact on their well-being. Rehabilitation efforts have uprooted them from familiar and healthier environments, forcing them into challenging and unfamiliar surroundings, leading to cultural and psychological problems. The breakdown of community structures, family units, and

### FOCUS MIGRATION

# INVISIBLE CHAINS



While immediate causes vary, trafficking is predominantly driven by demand, which is exploited by highly profitable and low-risk traffickers who prey upon vulnerable people

livelihood opportunities has made tribal women especially susceptible to sexual exploitation. Diminishing rural livelihood opportunities can drive migration to construction sites, brick kilns, and other industries. However, these "labour contract migrants" face numerous exclusions and exploitative practices, often falling victim to exorbitant interest rates and false work promises in distant lands.

Consequently, migrant labourers endure multiple economic, social, political, legal, and cultural deprivations. Urgent attention and action are required to address the plight of these marginalised individuals and ensure their human rights are protected. Tribal women and children frequently find themselves employed in precarious conditions, susceptible particularly in the lowest-paid 3D jobs (dirty, dangerous, and degrading). They are commonly trafficked to destinations like brick kilns in Andhra Pradesh, coastal districts in Odisha, and major cities across the country, where they can engage in construction, manufacturing, transportation, and service sectors. Trafficking is a multifaceted issue deeply embedded in the

socio-economic, political, and cultural realities of its occurrence. While immediate causes vary, trafficking is predominantly driven by demand, which is exploited by highly profitable and low-risk traffickers who prey upon vulnerable populations. Vulnerability arises from a combination of economic, social, political, and familial factors, such as poverty, lack of sustainable livelihoods, and structural inequalities. These factors create the supply that traffickers require to meet the demand. Trafficking often emerges from a convergence of multiple risk factors, and the absence of adequate regulations allows organised traffickers to engage in these unlawful activities with limited information about them. In the case of migrant tribal women, migration itself goes against traditional gender roles, leading to their exploitation.

The government possesses a range of laws, regulations, and enforcement mechanisms aimed at protecting the rights and entitlements of migrant labourers. However, the Inter-State Migrant Workmen Act of 1979, intended to safeguard the concerns of migrant labour, has failed to ensure their well-being, living

conditions, and overall interests, which are paramount responsibilities of the government at both the source and destination locations. While a few labour unions and civil society organisations work with migrant labourers to raise awareness, organise them, and advocate for their rights, their efforts remain limited.

Tackling the issue of trafficking requires comprehensive approaches. Efforts must focus on empowering vulnerable populations, providing sustainable livelihood options, strengthening legal frameworks, and promoting awareness and advocacy to protect the rights and well-being of migrant labourers. To combat the high incidence of trafficking affecting tribal women, it is imperative to establish alternative sources of income for them. Offering training programmes focused on the creation of sustainable utility products can play a significant role in enhancing their economic resilience. Additionally, embracing inclusivity by actively engaging individuals from diverse backgrounds in Gram Sabha meetings and planning processes can foster a holistic approach to promoting progress and advancement. Equally important is the need to sensitise front-line service providers and equip them with appropriate training to ensure fair treatment for all individuals.

This distressing situation demands decisive action, utilising existing legal provisions to prosecute traffickers, clients, and all other perpetrators. Moreover, proper arrangements must be made to ensure the survivors of trafficking receive adequate care and protection while safeguarding their rights from further violation.

The writer is former Professor of Economics, Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics, Pune.

### SPECTRUM ECONOMY

# Camouflaging the rise in poverty

On July 11, 2023, the 2023 Global Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) report titled "Unstacking global poverty: Data for high-impact action" was released by UNDP and Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative. This report presents a compact update on the state of multidimensional poverty in the world. It compiles data from 110 developing countries covering 610 crore people, accounting for 92% of population in developing countries.

The report shows that 25 countries, including India, successfully halved their global MPI values within 15 years, which shows that rapid progress is possible. In its report, the UN applauds India's remarkable reduction in poverty, as 41.5 crore people exited multidimensional poverty in India in 15 years from 2005-06 to 2019-21. The incidence of poverty fell from 55.1% in 2005-06 to 16.4% in 2019-21. In 2005-06, about 64.5 crore people were in multidimensional poverty in India, declining to about 37 crore in 2015-16 and 23 crore in 2019-21. However, despite the reduction, India continues to have the largest number of poor people worldwide (22.89 crore), and the ongoing task of eradicating poverty remains daunting.

But the question creeps into mind that the findings of the 2022 MPI Report "Unpacking deprivation bundles to reduce multidimensional poverty" released on October 17, 2022, were repeated in the new report and why the new report did not take into account the increase of poverty during the pandemic. Is it not a ploy to camouflage the rising poverty in the world and in India?

The report titled "Poverty and Shared Prosperity" (2022) by the World Bank has suggested that by the end of 2020, 7.1 crore people plunged into extreme poverty, resulting in a global total of over 70 crore impoverished people due to the pandemic. And, out of these, nearly 79% were from India. According to another UN report published on July 12, 2023, some 330 crore people, nearly half of humanity, live in countries that spend more on paying interest on debt than on education and health. The pandemic, the cost-of-living crisis, and the Ukraine war have pushed 16.5 crore people into poverty. All international poverty lines are measured in terms of purchasing power parity, not the exchange rate.

The Multidimensional Poverty Measure seeks to understand

poverty beyond monetary deprivations by including access to education and basic infrastructure along with the monetary headcount ratio at the \$2.15 international poverty line.

As on September 14, 2022, as a result of the adoption of the 2017 PPP, the global poverty lines have been revised to \$2.15 from \$1.90. But the UNDP includes monetary poverty at \$1.90 which is the average poverty line of the 15 poorest countries in 2011 PPP. The Poverty and Shared Prosperity 2022 report (World Bank, 2022) shows that almost 4 out of 10 multi-dimensionally poor individuals (39%) are not captured by monetary poverty as they are deprived in nonmonetary dimensions alone. Under a broader definition of poverty, many more people will come into view as poor in India as well as in the world. Poverty lines for other sets of countries have also been revised upwards. The poverty line for lower-middle-income countries has moved to \$3.65 from \$3.20, while the poverty line for upper-middle-income countries has moved to \$6.85 from \$5.50. It means if India uses the poverty line of upper-middle-income countries, the poverty ratio will be tripled. Poverty is a humiliation, as the

poor are being forced to accept insolence, abuse, and indifference when seeking help. World Bank President Ajay Banga has said the definition of eradicating poverty is inadequate without including challenges like climate change, pandemics, fragility, and food insecurity which are all intertwined. Hence, emphasis should be on well-being. There is a difference between well-being and poverty, as economist and philosopher Amartya Sen persuasively explains. Poverty is a shortage of resources, and a shortage of resources usually triggers low well-being. Well-being may include health, life satisfaction, food security, and access to decent healthcare, for example, or a neighbourhood with minimal pollution.

When reduction of poverty ratio – the starvation line – is celebrated one should question why absolute poverty exists despite enormous wealth being created. Why distribution of wealth is skewed and unequal. The rich lead a cosy life while the majority of people have to struggle and remain content with what little they have.

The writer is an Odisha-based economist and columnist.



Santosh Kumar Mohapatra

ALL INTERNATIONAL POVERTY LINES ARE MEASURED IN TERMS OF PURCHASING POWER PARITY, NOT THE EXCHANGE RATE

### WISDOM CORNER

The older you get, the lesser you are bothered by what others think. RUSKIN BOND

We cannot be more sensitive to pleasure without being more sensitive to pain. ALAN WATTS

Great things are done by a series of small things brought together. VINCENT VAN GOGH

### WORDSWORTH

#### Malacia

We borrowed malacia in the seventeenth century from the Latin version of the Greek word. The OED says that in Latin this meant a disorder of the stomach, especially the sickness and nausea that was suffered by pregnant women, but early writers in English took it to mean a craving for unnatural or unusual foods, a different symptom of pregnancy. Your second sense grew up only in the late nineteenth century and it would seem that in this case medical writers took the word directly from Greek, creating terms such as osteomalacia and gastromalacia. Incidentally, the combining form malaco- is also derived from the first of your meanings: it appears in malacoderm, used in zoology for an animal having a soft outer protective layer, as well as in a few other technical terms.

#### Wrong-side driving

Sir, The phenomenon of wrong-side driving is proving to be a big cause of road accidents on highways including expressways. Drivers' disdain for rules, weak rule enforcement by the police, inability to spot the correct service roads to towns, and improper exit through the other side, desire to avoid toll plazas, are all proving hazardous to commuters. Also, the presence of popular restaurants and petrol pumps on the other side of the road and the necessity to take a detour to reach that side, compel drivers to go astray. It is also true that scarce signages have added to the problem. A misplaced notion that traversing a few kilometres on the wrong lane should not matter is the major contributor to the accidents. Police should act swiftly and decisively to root the problem out by confiscating vehicles found on the wrong side; driving licences must be revoked. Since two wheelers eat a big chunk of space they should not be allowed on either of the carriageways.

Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA

#### Joint roadmap

Sir, India and France have taken a significant step in their bilateral relationship by adopting a joint roadmap for the Indo-Pacific region. This roadmap aims to safeguard their economic and security interests, promote adherence to international law, and collaborate with other nations to establish a stable and equitable order in the region. This agreement could potentially serve as a model for future coordinated efforts in the Indo-Pacific. France has been a key ally for India in countering terrorism and developing civil nuclear technology. The roadmap outlines plans for enhanced cooperation in these areas, including the joint development of small and modular nuclear reactors. Additionally, the roadmap encompasses a total of 63 outcomes, including new areas such as exploration of Artificial Intelligence and addressing emerging cyber threats. Prime Minister Modi's participation in the Bastille Day Parade and the ambitious targets set by the roadmap highlight France's commitment to maintaining its role as a prominent strategic partner for India. France has long been India's closest friend on the continent, and the deepening of ties resulting from this visit should be seen as equally significant as the advancements made during India's engagement with Washington.

Bishal Kumar Saha, MURSHIDABAD

## Letters

### TO THE EDITOR

Readers of Orissa POST are most welcome to contribute letters (200 words), articles and columns (between 750-1250 words). Contributors are requested to send their contact numbers and full postal address/email ID. They may also send in their valuable comments, opinion and suggestions, preferably by email, to: [edit@orissapost.com](mailto:edit@orissapost.com)

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





## IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE

# Delhi may suffer losses of ₹2.75 trillion by 2050

The plan, which is pending approval, highlights "heatwaves/higher temperature and heavy precipitation events over fewer number of days" as major challenges that the city will confront in the upcoming years



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 20:** Delhi is projected to suffer losses of Rs 2.75 trillion by 2050 due to the impacts of climate change, with changes in precipitation and temperature patterns posing significant threats to the lives of the most vulnerable populations. The warning comes from the city government's draft action plan on climate change.

The plan, which is pending approval, highlights "heat waves/higher temperature and heavy precipitation events over fewer number of days" as major challenges that the city will confront in the upcoming years.

India introduced its National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) in 2008, following which state governments were instructed to create their own action plans. The State Action Plan on Climate Change (SAPCC) must be aligned with the strategies laid out in the NAPCC. In January 2018, the central government directed the states to revise and strengthen their SAPCCs, taking into account the evolving national and international climate action, science and policy landscape.

Delhi's previous climate action plan was finalised in 2019 - after a lengthy seven-year consultation with stakeholders - rendering it obsolete. "At an aggregate level, the total cost of climate change for Delhi by mid century is expected to be Rs 2.75 trillion," the draft action plan states.

It estimates the losses from the agriculture and allied sectors at Rs 80 billion, manufacturing at Rs 330 billion and services at Rs 2.34 trillion. During the formulation of the new action plan, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Sixth Assessment Report (IPCC AR6) was examined, analysing the impacts of different climate scenarios on annual maximum and minimum temperatures and precipitation, an expert who contributed to the plan said.

The projections show a rise in maximum temperatures in Delhi by 1.5 degrees Celsius based on the RCP 4.5 scenario, and a 2.1-degree Celsius increase based on the RCP 8.5 scenario by mid-century. Four Representative Concentration Pathways (RCPs) span a range of future global warming scenarios. RCPs quantify future greenhouse gas con-

centrations and the radiative forcing - the difference between the incoming and outgoing radiation at the top of the atmosphere - due to increases in climate change pollution.

Due to the different future concentrations of greenhouse gases, RCP2.6 will result in the least global warming and only limited climate change. RCP 8.5 will result in more rapid warming and climate change. At the Paris climate talks in 2015, countries agreed to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius compared to pre-industrial levels to avoid the extreme, destructive and likely irreversible effects of climate change.

The Earth's global surface temperature has risen by around 1.15 degrees Celsius from pre-industrial levels and the CO2 spewed into the atmosphere since the start of the industrial revolution is closely tied to it. In the business-as-usual scenario, the world is heading for a temperature rise of around 3 degrees Celsius by the end of the century.

Excerpts of the draft action plan also indicate a decrease in cold days and nights, an anticipated reduction of 8.4 dry days, an increase of 1.4 consecutive wet days, and a rise of 0.9 heavy precipitation days compared to the baseline period of pre-industrial levels.

A detailed district specific vulnerability assessment has also been carried out as part of the plan's revision process. A detailed district-specific vulnerability assessment was conducted as part of the process. The vulnerability rankings for all districts of the state will help policymakers prioritise adaptation strategies based on the extent and type of vulnerability, with south Delhi being identified as the most vulnerable and New Delhi the least.



Delhi Health Minister Saurabh Bharadwaj distributes food to flood-affected people at a makeshift camp, at Vikas Marg in New Delhi

PTI PHOTO

# TN urges Centre to save Kuruwai crop

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Chennai, July 20:** Karnataka has not released Tamil Nadu's due share of Cauvery water and the standing Kuruwai crop can be saved only if the former lets out water immediately, the state government apprised the Centre Thursday and sought its immediate intervention on the matter.

Writing to Union Jal Shakti Minister, Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, Chief Minister M K Stalin said the short-term Kuruwai is a crucial crop for the farmers of Tamil Nadu's Cauvery delta region.

He said the quantum of water received at Billigundulu on the inter-state border, from June 1 to July 17 was 3.78 tmc (thousand million cubic feet) only, as against the prescribed level of 26.32 tmc for this period.

This leaves a huge shortfall of 22.54 tmc and even this meager flow of 3.78 tmc realised at



Writing to Union Jal Shakti Minister, Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, Chief Minister M K Stalin said the short-term Kuruwai is a crucial crop for the farmers of Tamil Nadu's Cauvery delta region

To facilitate the cultivation of Kuruwai crop on time, the Mettur reservoir in Tamil Nadu was opened this year on June 12

Billigundulu was from the 'uncontrolled intermediate catchment areas' below the KRS and Kabini reservoirs up to Billigundulu.

To facilitate the cultivation of Kuruwai crop on time, the Mettur reservoir in Tamil Nadu was opened this year on June 12.

This was done considering the carryover storage and the flows to be realised at Billigundulu, as per the monthly schedule fixed based on the judgment of the Supreme Court dated 16 February 2018, he said.

Though the onset of South

West monsoon was delayed, it has picked up pace in July. However, Karnataka has not released water to Tamil Nadu from the two scheduled reservoirs. As a result, the storage in Mettur reservoir, in Salem district, was dwindling fast and the current storage can sustain irrigation only for about 20 days, Stalin informed.

"In this critical scenario, the standing Kuruwai crop can be saved only if Karnataka releases water immediately, I, therefore, urge your personal and immediate intervention on this issue and request you to direct the

CWMA (Cauvery Water Management Authority) to issue directions to Karnataka to abide by the monthly schedule prescribed by the Supreme Court and also make good the shortfall," he added.

The CM's letter dated July 19 was handed over in person by Tamil Nadu Water Resources Minister Duraimurugan to the Union Minister in Delhi on Thursday.

An official release said the Union Minister assured Duraimurugan the CWMA would be advised to implement the necessary mechanism - which includes aspects like water sharing during distress/shortfall periods - for release of water by Karnataka.

In his letter, Stalin said that since south west monsoon rainfall in Tamil Nadu is less, the Kuruwai crop depends only on flows from Mettur reservoir, which in turn depends on release from Karnataka.

# 'Don't sell painkillers without prescription'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 20:** The Delhi government's Department of Drugs Control has asked all chemical associations in the city to not sell drugs like Aspirin and Ibuprofen without a doctor's prescription, amid rising incidence of vector-borne diseases.

The department also advised chemist shop owners to keep a record of painkiller drugs. The incidence of vector-borne diseases like dengue and chikungunya is on the rise during the rainy season, the department said in its advisory issued on July 19.

"There is a likelihood that the number of cases may increase in the pre and post-monsoon season which is to be monitored very strictly," it said.

It is desired in public interest that during the season of dengue, Ibuprofen and Diclofenac group of medicines (which further cause destruction of platelets in human blood) "may be restricted to be sold on a prescription of a Registered Medical Practitioner only", it added. "Retail chemists are therefore advised not to indulge in the over-the-counter sale of NSAIDs (Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs) like Aspirin, Ibuprofen and Diclofenac group of medicines with immediate effect till further directions. They are also advised to keep records of stocks of painkiller drugs falling under this category," it said.

The department warned of stringent action against those "found flouting the advice".

Dr Anurag Saxena, Head of Department of Internal Medicine at Primus Super Speciality Hospital, said, "These drugs, while commonly used to manage pain and inflammation, have been found to cause platelet destruction in human blood."

# Balaji given 'A' class prisoner status

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Chennai, July 20:** Tamil Nadu minister without portfolio, Senthil Balaji, who was arrested last month, and lodged in Puzhal central prison on Monday has been given 'A' class prisoner status.

Sources in the prison said that the health of the minister was being monitored by prison doctors. The food given to the minister was also monitored by the officials.

It may be noted that immediately after the Enforcement Directorate detained Senthil Balaji on June 14, he said that he



was having pain in his chest and

wanted a consultation by a doctor. Doctors at the Omandurar government hospital conducted an angiogram on the minister and diagnosed that the minister had three blocks in his Coronary artery and suggested angioplasty to the minister.

Senthil Balaji prayed to the Madras High Court for the surgery to be conducted at Kauveri Hospital which the court allowed.

Angioplasty was conducted on the minister on June 21. Balaji's blocks were removed and he was in police custody at the private hospital. However on July 17, the Madras High Court refused to grant the minister relief as sought in a habeas corpus petition filed by his wife Meghala, Balaji and was lodged in the Puzhal central prison.

Sources in the prison said that the health of the minister was being monitored by prison doctors. The food given to the minister was also monitored by the officials

# YAMUNA WATER LEVEL BELOW DANGER MARK

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 20:** The water level of the Yamuna in Delhi dropped below the danger mark of 205.33 metres Thursday morning and is expected to recede further, albeit slowly as heavy rainfall is likely at isolated places in the upper catchment areas in Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand.

The Central Water Commission's (CWC) data showed the water level reached 205.25 metres at 10 am. There have been marginal fluctuations in the water level over the last two-three days.

The Yamuna had been receding gradually after reaching an all-time high of 208.66 metres last Thursday. The water level dropped below the danger mark of 205.33 metres by 8 pm on Tuesday, after flowing above the threshold for eight days. It receded to 205.22 metres at 5 am on Wednesday, before it started rising again and breached the dan-

ger mark.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has warned of heavy to very heavy rain at isolated places in Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh till July 22.

In case of heavy rains upstream of Delhi, the increase in the water level could slow down the pace of rehabilitation of the affected families in the inundated low-lying areas of the capital and they may have to stay in relief camps for a longer period.

It could also impact the water supply, which became normal only on Tuesday after being affected for four to five days due to the inundation of a pump house at Wazirabad. The pump house supplies raw water to the Wazirabad, Chandrawal and Okhla water treatment plants, which together account for around 25 per cent of the city's supply.

The Okhla plant began operating on Friday, Chandrawal on Sunday and Wazirabad on Tuesday. On Tuesday evening, a



Delhi Jal Board (DJB) official said, "There is a shortage of only 10-12 million gallons of water per day (MGD) due to inundation of some tube wells in the river floodplain at Palla."

The DJB extracts around 30 MGD from the tube wells installed in the Palla floodplain. Parts of Delhi have been grappling with waterlogging and flooding issues for more than a week now. Initially, a downpour

caused intense waterlogging on July 8 and 9, with the city receiving 125 per cent of its monthly rainfall quota in just two days.

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

The river reached 208.66 metres last Thursday surpassing the previous record of 207.49 metres set in September 1978 by a significant margin. It breached embankments and penetrated deeper into the city than it has in more than four decades.

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

Prior to the misery on Friday, the river water had already reached the rear ramparts of the Red Fort and inundated one

of the city's major bus terminals at Kashmere Gate. The Ring Road, constructed partially over the river's floodplain, remained closed for three consecutive days near Kashmere Gate last week.

The consequences of the floods have been devastating, with more than 27,000 people evacuated from their homes. The losses incurred in terms of property, businesses and earnings have run up to crores. Experts attribute the unprecedented flooding in Delhi to encroachment on the river floodplain, extreme rainfall within a short span of time and silt accumulation that has raised the riverbed.

Renowned water conservationist Rajendra Singh on Wednesday said the floods in Delhi are a human-made disaster, not merely a result of climate change or natural events. "The flooding in Delhi is the result of misguided development and the obstruction of the Yamuna river's natural flow," he said.

THE CENTRAL WATER COMMISSION'S (CWC) DATA SHOWED THE WATER LEVEL REACHED 205.25 METRES AT 10 AM. THERE HAVE BEEN MARGINAL FLUCTUATIONS IN THE WATER LEVEL OVER THE LAST TWO-THREE DAYS. IN CASE OF HEAVY RAINS UPSTREAM OF DELHI, THE INCREASE IN THE WATER LEVEL COULD SLOW DOWN THE PACE OF REHABILITATION OF THE AFFECTED FAMILIES IN THE INUNDATED LOW-LYING AREAS OF THE CAPITAL AND THEY MAY HAVE TO STAY IN RELIEF CAMPS FOR A LONGER PERIOD.





Members of Tri-Services Nari Shashaktikaran Women Motorcycle bike rally arrive in Jammu



West Bengal Chief Minister and TMC Supremo Mamata Banerjee interacts with a musical group of young people during inspection of preparations for the party's Martyrs' Day event on its eve in Kolkata. TMC observes Martyrs' Day July 21 every year to commemorate the killing of 13 people in police firing in the Youth Congress rally against the then Left Front government in 1993



Police detains job aspirants, who had applied for various posts in the Fire and Emergency Services, during their protest march towards Raj Bhavan in Srinagar. The demonstration was held demanding that authorities make public a report of a committee probing alleged irregularities in the recruitment process



Bearing signs with the photos of the victims of political violence, demonstrators march through downtown Lima, Peru. The protesters are demanding that Peruvian President Dina Boluarte call for immediate presidential elections as well as justice for those who were killed during protests after the ouster of her predecessor Pedro Castillo



Senior BJP leader Kummanam Rajasekharan offers Ayurveda medicine to an elephant at the Sree Padmanabhaswamy Temple as part of the month-long monsoon rejuvenation therapy for elephants, in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala



INS Tarkash and USS Stethem, an Arleigh Burke class Destroyer, during a maritime partnership exercise to hone operational skills and improve interoperability



Farmers lay jute stalks in a pond for decomposition in the process of making fibre in Nadia, West Bengal





Heartbroken and outraged to witness the horrific video from Manipur showing the brutal treatment of two women by a frenzied mob. No words can express the pain and anguish of witnessing the violence inflicted on marginalised women

MISSION GAGANYAAN

The Indian Space Research Organisation has successfully tested the Gaganyaan Service Module Propulsion System (SMPS) at ISRO Propulsion Complex (IPRC) at Mahendragiri in Tamil Nadu. The test involved five liquid apogee motor (LAM) engines with a thrust of 440 N (Newton) and 16 reaction control system (RCS) thrusters with a thrust of 100 N



of the day quote

The video that went viral has shaken the conscience of nation. It is with extreme sadness that I have to say that Manipur (government) and Centre are responsible for this

ARVIND KEJRIWAL | DELHI CHIEF MINISTER

Retired Justice of Honorable High Court Rajendra Kumar Verma has been appointed to probe into the Group-2, Sub Group-4 and patwari recruitment examination conducted by the Staff Selection Board

SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN | MADHYA PRADESH CM

In my life, I have supported many people only to be ditched by them. One of them I got installed as chief minister in my place. Another was an IAS officer whom I helped reach great heights. And look where they are today

NITISH KUMAR | BIHAR CM

Top court concerned over rising cheetah deaths

Under the Project Cheetah, a total of 20 radio-collared animals were imported from Namibia and South Africa to the KNP and later four cubs were born from Namibian cheetah 'Jwala'. Out of these 24 feline, eight including three cubs have died



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 20: The death of eight cheetah in the Kuno National Park (KNP) in less than one year doesn't present a "good picture", the Supreme Court said Thursday, and asked the Centre to not make it a prestige issue and explore the possibility of shifting the animals to different sanctuaries.

of whatever state or government is instead of putting them at one place," the bench told Additional Solicitor General Aishwarya Bhati, who was representing the Centre.

Bhati said the Centre was about to file an affidavit explaining the reasons for the death of the animals and sought an opportunity to submit a detailed affidavit describing the circumstances surrounding each cheetah death.

The government law officer also said the authorities are exploring all possibilities including transferring them to other sanctuaries. "These eight deaths of cheetah are unfortunate but expected. There were several reasons behind these deaths," the lawyer told the court.

She said it was a prestigious project for the country and authorities are taking all necessary steps to prevent more deaths.

On March 28, a day after the first death of cheetah at Kuno, the top court had sought details of experts in the Cheetah Task Force such as their qualification and experience. The top court had May 18 expressed serious concern over the cheetah deaths at KNP and asked the Centre to rise above politics and consider shifting them to Rajasthan.

Investigations underway: MEA on Seema Haider case

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 20: The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) Thursday said investigations are underway on the matter relating to Pakistani national Seema Haider, who crossed over to India over two months ago.



Thirty-year-old Haider, who hails from Sindh province in Pakistan, entered India illegally along with her four children in a bus via Nepal May 13.

"We are aware of this matter as she has appeared in court. She has been granted bail. She is free on bail. The matter is being investigated," MEA spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said.

"We will let you know more when there are developments. It is a judicial matter and investigations are underway and I would not like to say anything more," he said.

Bagchi was responding to media queries on the case at his weekly press briefing. Haider says she had come to live with his Indian lover Sachin Meena who stays in Rabupura area of Greater Noida.

While Seema was arrested July 4 for illegally entering India without a visa via Nepal with her four children, all aged below seven years, Sachin was put behind bars for sheltering the illegal immigrants.

NATIONWIDE OUTRAGE OVER MANIPUR HORROR

AGENCIES

Imphal, July 20: The grinding violence that has roiled Manipur for more than two months burst onto the national centrestage Thursday as Prime Minister Narendra Modi and CJI D Y Chandrachud expressed deep anguish over a graphic video of two disrobed women being brutalised by a mob, calling the incident "shameful" and "unacceptable".

Hours after Prime Minister Modi in his first public comments on the Manipur violence vowed that no guilty will be spared and law will act with its "full might and firmness," Manipur Chief Minister N Biren Singh said the police have arrested two men. CJI Chandrachud also warned that the apex court will take action if nothing is happening on the ground.

Senior BJP leader and former law minister Ravi Shankar Prasad said the party "condemns" the incident but said the surfacing of its footage on social media just a day ahead of Parliament's Monsoon Session is "surrounded by lot of mystery".

Outside Parliament, opposition parties, including the Congress, Shiv Sena and DMK,



Members of Aam Aadmi Party raise slogans during a protest in Bangalore

took up the issue in a big way. Congress leader Rahul Gandhi said the issue is not that it's a

shame for the country but the "immense pain and trauma" inflicted on the women of the state.

'No gangrape in May 4 incident'

The Coordinating Committee on Manipur Integrity (COCOMI), a pro-Meitei body, claimed quoting media reports Thursday that one of the two victims has said there was no rape, and the mob just took off their clothes and touched their bodies. "Due to the irresponsible and unethical reporting by Indian media houses, particularly those TV Channels which reported very partial and exaggerated facts, they have now lost their credibility to COCOMI and the entire Meitei society, particularly the Manipuri women," the statement read.

Hitting out at the government, Congress general secretary

Jairam Ramesh said the prime minister had broken his silence on Manipur but it was "too little too late".

Accusing the Centre of turning democracy into a "mobocracy", Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said "humanity has died in Manipur" and asked Modi to speak about the violence in Parliament and tell the nation what happened.

More than 160 people have lost their lives, and several ethnic violence broke out in the state May 3 when a 'Tribal Solidarity March' was organised in the hill districts to protest against the Meitei community's demand for Scheduled Tribe (ST) status.



WATER, WATER EVERYWHERE: Locals on a waterlogged road during heavy rains at Nalasopara in Palghar district, Maharashtra

SC TO APPOINT DERC CHAIRMAN ON AD HOC BASIS

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, July 20: The Supreme Court Thursday said that it will appoint an ad hoc chairman of the DERC after it was told that the Delhi Lt Governor and Chief Minister failed to reach consensus on who should head the electricity tariff regulatory body.

A bench, headed by CJI DY Chandrachud and comprising Justices PS Narasimha and Manoj Misra, expressed its concern over the "headless" institution. The top court indicated that it will temporarily appoint someone on pro tem basis to facilitate functioning of Delhi Electricity Regulatory Commission (DERC) till disposal of the case. "We went there (to Lt Governor) with three names...and two additional names but we could not agree," submitted senior advocate Abhishek Manu Singhvi, who represented Delhi government.

On the other hand, senior advocate Harish Salve, appearing

for Lt Governor, said any candidate fit in court's wisdom may be appointed to chair the DERC. The court posted the matter for further consideration August 4.

On July 4, the Supreme Court had directed the Lt Governor to not administer oath of office to the newly appointed DERC Chairman Justice Umesh Kumar (retired). It had directed that the administering of oath to the former judge of the Allahabad High Court will stand deferred till July 11.

The top court was hearing the petition moved by the AAP-led Delhi government's plea claiming that appointment of the DERC Chairman was 'illegal and unconstitutional'. It claimed that the appointment was made by 'overlooking' the aid and advice of the elected government. The Delhi government has challenged Section 45-A of the GNCTD Act introduced through the recent ordinance giving overriding powers to the Lt Governor over the elected government in the matter of appointments.

Ahmedabad court rejects Setalvad's discharge plea

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ahmedabad, July 20: A sessions court here Thursday rejected activist Teesta Setalvad's application seeking discharge in a case related to alleged fabrication of evidence related to the 2002 Gujarat riots. While rejecting the plea, additional sessions judge A R Patel also asked the prosecution and defense to "open the case" (start trial proceedings) from July 24.



The Gujarat government had opposed Setalvad's application, arguing that she abused the trust of riots victims and implicated innocent persons. On Wednesday, the Supreme Court had granted bail to her in the same case after the Gujarat High Court denied her relief. Setalvad and two others — former state Director General of Police RB Sreekumar and former Indian Police Service officer Sanjiv Bhatt — were arrested by the city crime branch in June 2022 on charges of forgery and fabricating false evidence with the intent to implicate Gujarat government functionaries in the 2002 riots cases. Judge A R Patel had earlier rejected Sreekumar's discharge plea. Bhatt has not sought similar relief yet.

In its written reply opposing Setalvad's discharge plea, the state government had alleged that she drafted affidavits in the names of riots victims to implicate innocent persons including then Chief Minister Narendra Modi, senior officers and state ministers. The state government relied on the statements of witnesses Rais Khan Pathan who once worked at Setalvad's NGO Citizen for Peace, Narendra Brahmabhatt who had claimed that late Congress leader Ahmed Patel had paid the activist ₹30 lakh, and riots victim Qutubuddin Ansari.

9 killed as car crashes into crowd

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA



Ahmedabad, July 20: At least nine persons, including a constable, were killed and around 10 others injured when a speeding high-end car being driven by a college student ploughed into a crowd gathered at an accident site on a bridge in Ahmedabad city Thursday, police said.

Hours after the post-midnight tragedy on ISKCON Bridge, 20-year-old Tathya Patel, the car driver who was also injured, was arrested after he was discharged from a hospital, said a senior police official. Angry bystanders thrashed the car driver, the son of a real estate developer, and a video of it was recorded by a person standing below the bridge. Since his father, Pragnesh Patel (44), had allegedly threatened people after reaching the accident spot,

moving at a very high speed ploughed into the crowd gathered there, the police said.

The deceased included a constable and a Home Guard jawan. Nearly 10 persons who received injuries were admitted to different hospitals. Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel expressed grief over the incident and announced a compensation of ₹4 lakh each for the kin of the deceased and ₹50,000 for the injured.

Preliminary probe revealed Tathya Patel is a second-year college student, while his father Pragnesh Patel is a builder by profession and had faced various criminal cases in the past, the police said.

Later in the day, Gujarat Minister of State for Home Harsh Sanghavi announced that the case will be tried in a fast-track court for speedy justice to the victims.

Chandrayaan-3: ISRO performs manoeuvre

Bangalore: ISRO scientists Thursday successfully performed the fourth orbit-raising manoeuvre of the Chandrayaan-3 spacecraft from here. They performed the manoeuvre from the ISRO Telemetry, Tracking and Command Network (ISTRAC). The next firing is planned for July 25 between 2 pm and 3 pm, the national space agency headquartered here said. India celebrates the International Moon Day 2023 by propelling Chandrayaan-3 a step closer to the Moon, it added.



# international



We have enormous challenges – the climate crisis, nature is not in good shape. But also a war on the borders of Europe  
FRANS TIMMERMANS | EUROPEAN UNION CLIMATE CHIEF

## WICKREMESINGHE LEAVES FOR INDIA

Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickremesinghe embarked on a two-day official visit to India Thursday for talks with the country's top leadership, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi, to further advance and consolidate the bilateral relations



### of the day quote

Imran Khan might be arrested if the former prime minister fails to cooperate with the investigation into the leaking of national secrets in what has widely come to be known as the 'cipher case'

RANA SANAUULLAH | PAKISTAN'S INTERIOR MINISTER

The US considers building strong economic and security ties with Vietnam a priority

JANET YELLEN | US TREASURY SECRETARY

The US is working with India on proposals to co-produce extended-range artillery and infantry vehicles to meet its operational requirements along its border with China and address its coercion and harassment

ELY RATNER | ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENCE FOR INDO-PACIFIC SECURITY AFFAIRS

## Iraq expels Swedish ambassador

REUTERS

Baghdad/Stockholm, July 20: Iraq expelled the Swedish ambassador Thursday in protest at a planned burning of the Quran in Stockholm that had prompted hundreds of protesters to storm and set alight the Swedish embassy in Baghdad.

An Iraqi government statement said Baghdad had also recalled its charge d'affaires in Sweden, and Iraq's state news agency reported that Iraq had suspended the working permit of Sweden's Ericsson on Iraqi soil.

Anti-Islam protesters, one of whom is an Iraqi immigrant to Sweden that burned the Quran outside a Stockholm mosque in June, had applied for and received permission from Swedish police to burn the Quran outside the Iraqi embassy on Thursday.

In the event, the protesters kicked and partially destroyed a book they said was the Quran but left the area after one hour without setting it alight. The Quran, the central religious text of Islam, is believed by Muslims to be a revelation from God.

Iraqis storm, set alight Swedish embassy  
Protesters partially destroy book they said was Quran  
But left without setting it on fire



Protesters clash with security forces members as they gather near the Swedish embassy in Baghdad hours after the embassy was stormed and set on fire ahead of an expected Quran burning in Stockholm, in Baghdad, Iraq

Swedish Foreign Minister Tobias Billstrom said embassy staff were safe but Iraqi authorities had failed in their responsibility to protect the embassy. The Iraqi government strongly condemned the burning of the Swedish embassy, according to a statement from the office of Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed Shia Al-Sudani which declared it a security breach and vowed to protect

diplomatic missions. But Baghdad had also "informed the Swedish government ... that any recurrence of the incident involving the burning of the Holy Qur'an on Swedish soil would necessitate severing diplomatic relations", the statement said. The decision to recall the charge d'affaires to Sweden came while the protest in Stockholm had started but before the pro-

## RUSSIA BOMBARDS UKRAINE PORTS



REUTERS

Mykolaiv/Near Kupiansk, Ukraine, July 20: Russia jolted world grain markets with an escalation in the Black Sea, mounting a third straight night of air strikes on Ukrainian ports and issuing a threat against Ukraine-bound vessels to which Kyiv responded in kind.

At least 27 civilians were reported hurt in the air strikes on the ports, which set buildings ablaze and damaged China's consulate in Odesa. The United States said Russia's warning to ships indicated Moscow might attack vessels at sea following Moscow's withdrawal this week from a U.N.-brokered deal to let Ukraine export grain. The signals that Russia was willing to use force to reimpose its blockade of one of the world's biggest food exporters set global prices soaring.

Moscow says it will not participate in the year-old grain deal without better terms for its own food and fertiliser sales. The United Nations says Russia's decision threatens food security for the world's poorest people.

Kyiv is hoping to resume exports without Russia's participation. But no ships have sailed from its ports since Moscow pulled out of the deal on Monday, and insurers have had doubts about whether to underwrite policies for trade in a war zone. Since quitting the deal, Moscow has rained missiles down nightly on Ukraine's two biggest port

cities, Odesa and Mykolaiv. Thursday's strikes appeared to be the worst yet.

Odesa regional governor Oleh Kiper posted an image online of China's consulate building with broken windows. It is located in Odesa's city centre just across railway tracks from the port. "The aggressor is deliberately hitting the port infrastructure - administrative and residential buildings nearby were damaged, also the consulate of the People's Republic of China. It shows the enemy does not pay attention to anything," Kiper said on Telegram.

In Mykolaiv, firefighters battled a huge blaze at a pink stucco residential building, blasted into a ruin. Several other residential buildings there were also damaged. Moscow has described the port attacks as revenge for a Ukrainian strike on Russia's bridge to Crimea on Monday. It said on Thursday its retaliatory strikes were continuing and it had hit all its targets in Odesa and Mykolaiv.

In its most explicit threat yet, Russia's military announced it would deem all ships heading for Ukrainian waters from Thursday morning to be potentially carrying weapons, and their flag countries as parties to the war on the Ukrainian side. It said it was declaring parts of the Black Sea to be unsafe.

Kyiv responded on Thursday by announcing similar measures, saying it would consider vessels bound for Russia or Russian-occupied Ukrainian territory also to be carrying arms.

### SHORT TAKES

#### Pak court acquits Shehbaz, his family

Lahore: An accountability court in Pakistan acquitted Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and his family members Thursday in a multi-million-dollar money laundering case after the anti-corruption agency failed to provide any solid evidence against them. "An Accountability Court acquitted Prime Minister Shehbaz, his wife Nusrat, his son Hamza and daughter Javaria in the PKR 7 billion money laundering case filed by the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) in 2020," a court official said.

#### 4 policemen killed

Peshawar: Four policemen were killed and several others injured when two suicide bombers from the banned Pakistani Taliban attacked a tehsil building compound in a restive tribal district of northwest Pakistan Thursday, police said. The militants triggered two blasts when the police were checking people entering the Bara Tehsil building in the Khyber tribal district bordering Peshawar, the capital city of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province of Pakistan.

#### Blaze contained

Athens: Greece's Fire Service intensified water drops west of Athens where a huge blaze was contained overnight, as authorities braced Thursday for a new round of extreme weather. Seven firefighting planes and nine helicopters were operating in the area, including four planes sent from Italy and France as part of a European Union support mechanism. Searing heat across Europe's Mediterranean south has maintained a high or very high risk of fires in Spain, Italy and Greece.

## Shooter kills two ahead of Women's Soccer World Cup

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Auckland, July 20: A gunman killed two people at a construction site in Auckland, New Zealand, Thursday as the nation prepared to host games in the FIFA Women's World Cup tournament. The shooter was also dead, and authorities said a police officer and four civil-



ians were injured. The shooting happened near hotels where Team Norway and other soccer teams have been staying. Police said the male officer was taken to a hospital in critical condition and had stabilized. The others had injuries ranging from moderate to critical, but it wasn't immediately clear how they were injured.

New Zealand Prime Minister Chris Hipkins said the tournament would go ahead as planned. "Clearly with the FIFA World Cup kicking off this evening, there are a lot of eyes on Auckland," Hipkins said. "The government has spoken to FIFA organizers this morning and the tournament will proceed as planned."

"I want to reiterate that there is no wider national security threat. This appears to be the action of one individual," Hipkins said the shooter was armed with a pump-action shotgun. Police arrived one minute after the first emergency call and ran into harm's way to save lives, he said.

"These kinds of situations move fast and the actions of those who risk their lives to save others are nothing short of heroic," Hipkins said.

## No word from NK on US soldier

REUTERS

Seoul/Washington, July 20: North Korea remained silent Thursday about a US soldier who split from a tour group and made a dash across the heavily fortified border two days earlier, landing Washington in a new diplomatic quandary amid an already tense military standoff.

U.S. officials said Pyongyang has not responded to communication from the American military about the soldier, Private Travis T. King. North Korea's state media, which in the past reported on the detention of U.S. nationals, have also not commented on the incident so far.

Speaking in Japan, U.S. special envoy for North Korea Sung Kim said the United States was "working very hard" to determine King's status and well-being and



is actively engaged in ensuring his safety and return. Kim did not provide any details.

Earlier, State Department spokesperson Matthew Miller told a briefing the Pentagon had "reached out" to counterparts in North Korea's Korean People's Army about King. "My understanding is that those communications have not yet been answered," he added.

The incident comes at a time of heightened tension on the Korean peninsula. The North has been pressing on with ballistic missile tests, the latest timed for the arrival in the South



Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim, left, and Vietnamese Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh wave to children during a welcoming ceremony at the Presidential Palace in Hanoi, Vietnam

## Xi meets Kissinger

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Beijing, July 20: President Xi Jinping Thursday told Henry Kissinger that China is ready to discuss the "correct way" to halt the slide of its relations with the US and sought the help of veteran American diplomat to fix the ties as he did 50 years ago by establishing diplomatic ties between the two countries.

Kissinger, the former US Secretary of State, who turned 100 in May this year remained the most influential figure in Beijing since his successful ping-pong diplomacy in 1971 pitting Communist China against its ideological mentor the then Soviet Union tilting the Cold War balance of power at that time.

Successive Chinese Communist Party leaders turned to him for guidance on the trajectory of China's ties with the US which helped Beijing to expand its economic and diplomatic clout in the world, until in the last 10 years when the American leaders began identifying China as a major threat as it emerged as the world's second-largest economy and major military power next only to the US.

The ties hit rock bottom with tough anti-China policies perused by both Donald Trump and the current Joe Biden Presidencies with a host of trade and tech bans besides the formation of influential strategic groupings like Quad, consisting of the US, India, Japan, Australia, and AUKUS comprising Australia, US and UK, which China says are aimed at containing its rise.

Kissinger's current visit to Beijing comes after the trips by US Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen this month besides Washington's top climate envoy John Kerry's tour to recalibrate the stalled relations.

## Lioness escapes in Berlin; cops comb streets, woodlands

The warning was extended to neighbouring southern areas of Berlin and an alert was sent on an official warning app that the animal was suspected to be a lioness

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Berlin, July 20: German police searched Thursday with helicopters, drones and infrared cameras as well as a vet and hunters for a potentially dangerous animal, suspected to be a lioness, that was sighted overnight on the south-

ern edge of Berlin.

Police were alerted to the animal in Kleinmachnow, just outside Berlin's city limits, around midnight by people reporting that they had seen what appeared to be a big cat chasing a wild boar. The informants also provided a video. Based on that and a subsequent sighting of their own, the police concluded that the animal was apparently a lioness.

Helicopters and 30 police cars participated in the search, which was still ongoing Thursday afternoon. A vet and two hunters were also involved, and a search with two drones and infrared cameras was underway in an area where the animal was seen. People in Kleinmachnow, a



town of about 20,000 in a flat, wooded area on the boundary between Berlin and the surrounding state of Brandenburg, were advised to stay indoors if possible — and in any case to refrain from walks and jogs in the woods, and to take dogs at most

for short walks on a leash.

Local authorities left child daycare centres open, though they were asked not to let children outside, and scaled back the town's weekly market. The warning was extended to neighbouring southern areas of Berlin and an alert was sent on an official warning app that the animal was suspected to be a lioness.

On Thursday afternoon, police in the capital tweeted that there had been a "possible sighting" of the animal just inside the city limits. "The primary aim, if at all possible, is to capture the animal, if necessary with an anesthetic," Kleinmachnow Mayor Michael Grubert said.

"Other measures will only be taken on a case-by-case basis by police officers on the ground if their own lives or those of others are endangered." Police said they had sought information about where the animal came from during the night, but none of the zoos, animal shelters, circuses or other facilities they checked was missing a lioness.

Grubert said there was no information on one being privately owned in the area, and added that he didn't know whether owning such an animal privately is even permitted. He said authorities consider it unlikely that the animal has gone very far from where it was first sighted.



## of the day quote

From regulatory and compliance perspectives we are eligible for an upgrade to a small finance bank, having completed the mandatory five years of operations

**RISHI GUPTA** | MD, FINO PAYMENTS BANK

India and Germany want to further strengthen bilateral cooperation and increase investments and collaboration among companies

**ROBERT HABECK** | VICE CHANCELLOR AND MINISTER OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS, GERMANY

India's home-grown climate solutions offer immense potential to address climate change without leaving anyone behind

**SHLOKA NATH** | CHIEF EXECUTIVE, ICC

## SHORT TAKES

### Infosys net profit surges 11% in Q1

**Bangalore:** IT services firm Infosys Thursday reported an 11 per cent rise in consolidated net profit in June quarter at ₹5,945 crore, but lowered full year growth outlook to 1-3.5 per cent amid macro uncertainties. The net profit (before minority interest) during the same period previous year stood at ₹5,362 crore. The company posted a revenue growth of 10 per cent to ₹37,933 crore, up from ₹34,470 crore in the year ago period. The country's second largest IT services company has lowered its revenue guidance for the full year to 1 to 3.5 per cent in constant currency, down from 4 to 7 per cent projected earlier.

### Tesla logs \$2.7bn in net income

**San Francisco:** Elon Musk-run Tesla has reported revenue of \$25 billion with a net income of \$2.7 billion (up 20 per cent YoY) in the second quarter (Q2) this year. The revenue was also 50 per cent higher than year-ago sales of \$16.9 billion, and mostly came from automotive sales which were \$21.3 billion in the April-June period. In the second quarter, Tesla produced nearly 480,000 vehicles and delivered over 466,000 vehicles, the company said in a statement late Wednesday.

### HUL Q1 net profit up 6.9%

**New Delhi:** Hindustan Unilever Ltd Thursday reported a 6.9 per cent rise in consolidated profit after tax at ₹2,556 crore in the first quarter ended June 30, 2023, riding on a gradual recovery in the FMCG industry despite operating in challenging environment. The company had posted a consolidated net profit of ₹2,391 crore in the same quarter last fiscal, Hindustan Unilever Ltd said. Consolidated total income in the first quarter stood at ₹15,679 crore as against ₹14,757 crore in the corresponding period last fiscal.

### Microsoft cuts 1,000 jobs

**San Francisco:** Microsoft has reportedly reduced its workforce further by 1,000 over the past week, mostly in sales and customer services teams. According to a report in Insider, citing sources, the new layoffs are beyond the 10,000 jobs that the tech giant planned to eliminate earlier this year. It's, however, a regular exercise for Microsoft to make changes at the start of a new fiscal year, which began July 1, the report noted.



I judge that India should be able to sustain growth of GDP per head at 5 per cent a year, or so, up to 2050. With better policies, growth might even be a bit higher, though it could also be lower

**MARTIN WOLF** | CHIEF ECONOMICS COMMENTATOR, FINANCIAL TIMES

## STREET VENDORS MAY BE REGULATED

The government is looking at ways to regulate street vendors so that some quality standards are imposed on street food, Secretary in the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) Rajesh Kumar Singh said Thursday. He said that though it is a "tough" call to take, but it needs to be looked at



# Now, Apple enters AI race with 'Apple GPT'

The company has launched a chatbot 'Ajax' similar to Bard, ChatGPT and Bing AI

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**San Francisco, July 20:** Apple has reportedly entered the generative artificial intelligence (AI) race with creating what is being referred to as 'Apple GPT' internally to take on OpenAI, Microsoft, Google and Meta. The iPhone maker has cre-

ated its own AI framework, codenamed "Ajax," to create large language models, reports Bloomberg's Mark Gurman.

Ajax reportedly runs on Google Cloud and was built with Google JAX, the search giant's machine learning framework.

Apple is leveraging Ajax to create large language models and serve as the foundation for the internal ChatGPT-style tool.

According to the report, Apple employees are using the chatbot to help with product prototyping. It is similar to Bard, ChatGPT and Bing AI.



Apple recently doubled down on hirings for generative AI talent. The company is looking for engineers with a "robust un-

derstanding of large language models and generative AI."

Apple CEO Tim Cook recently said that the company would use AI on a "thoughtful basis."

The news came as Meta also joined the AI race, with launching the release of Llama 2, an open-source large language model, with Microsoft.

Llama 2 is available through a variety of providers and free for commercial use and research.

"We're opening access to Llama 2 with the support of a broad set of companies and people across tech, academia, and

policy who also believe in an open innovation approach to today's AI technologies," said Meta. Recent breakthroughs in AI, and generative AI in particular, have captured the public's imagination and demonstrated what those developing these technologies have long known - they have the potential to help people do incredible things, create a new era of economic and social opportunities, and give individuals, creators, and businesses new ways to express themselves and connect with people, according to Meta.

## Japan inks chip pact with India

WITH AROUND 100 SEMICONDUCTOR MANUFACTURING PLANTS, JAPAN IS AMONG THE TOP FIVE COUNTRIES TO HAVE A SEMICONDUCTOR ECOSYSTEM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 20:** Japan has become the second Quad partner after the United States to sign an agreement with India for the joint development of the semiconductor ecosystem and maintain the resilience of its global supply chain.

The agreement was signed between Union Minister for Electronics and IT Ashwini Vaishnaw and Japan's Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry Yasutoshi Nishimura in the national capital Thursday.

"Japan and India have signed a memorandum for semiconductor design, manufacturing, equipment research, talent development and to bring resilience in the semiconductor supply chain," Vaishnaw said.

"The nations will create an 'implementation organisation' that will work on government-to-government and industry-to-industry cooperation, Vaishnaw added.

"Everybody wants a resilient semiconductor supply chain and in this India and Japan are very important partners. This is in furtherance with our Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi Ji's very successful state visit to US where many agreements were signed and that is reflecting in cooperation with other



countries today," Vaishnaw said. The minister said that Japan houses companies that are global leaders in raw form of semiconductor wafers, chemical and gases, lenses that are used in chip manufacturing equipment, display technologies etc.

"If we can bring this base to India, it will be a big milestone," Vaishnaw said. The minister said that the government has started discussion with Japan's state backed semiconductor industry body Rapidus for collaboration in the segment.

When asked about the impact of China restricting export of critical semiconductor elements gallium and germanium, the minister said that the move has very small impact as there are many more sources of these critical elements in the world.

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## PRODUCTION SHORTFALL

# Non-basmati white rice exports banned

INDIA, TOP RICE EXPORTER, BANS NON-BASMATI WHITE RICE SHIPMENTS AS MONSOON HITS CROPS' OUTPUT

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, July 20:** India has prohibited the export of non-basmati white rice with immediate effect, according to a government notice Thursday, after a late start to seasonal monsoon rains hurt the crop and raised fears of a production shortfall.

The late arrival of the monsoon led to a large rain deficit up to mid-June. And while heavy rains since the last week of June have erased the shortfall, they have caused significant damage to crops.

"In order to ensure adequate availability of non-basmati white rice in the Indian market and to allay the rise in prices in the domestic market, the government of India has amended the export policy of above variety," a government statement said.

Non-basmati white rice constitutes about 25 per cent of total rice exported from the country.

"Export policy of non-basmati white rice (semi-milled or wholly milled rice, whether or not polished or glazed)...is amended from free to prohibited," the directorate general of foreign trade (DGFT) said in a notification.

"Export policy of Non Basmati White Rice amended to ensure adequate domestic availability at reasonable prices," the ministry said, adding, the move is aimed to ensure lower prices and adequate availability in the upcoming festival season.

In order to ensure adequate



India would disrupt the global rice market with far greater velocity than Ukraine did in the wheat market with Russia's invasion

**BV KRISHNA RAO** | PRESIDENT, RICE EXPORTERS ASSOCIATION

INDIA ACCOUNTS FOR 40% OF GLOBAL RICES EXPORTS  
GOVT CITES 11.5% YOY DOMESTIC PRICE INCREASE  
GLOBAL PRICES HOVERING AT THEIR HIGHEST LEVEL IN 11 YEARS  
RICE A STAPLE FOR 3 BILLION PEOPLE WORLDWIDE

availability of non-basmati white rice in the domestic market and to allay the rise in local prices, the government has amended the export policy from 'Free with export duty of 20%' to 'Prohibited' with immediate effect.

Retail rice prices have risen 11.5% over the past year and 3% over the past month, it added.

India accounts for more than 40% of world rice exports but low inventories mean any cut in shipments will fuel food prices driven up by Russia's invasion of Ukraine last year and erratic weather.

Export duty of 20 per cent on

non-basmati white rice was imposed on September 8, 2022 to lower the price as well as ensure availability in the domestic market.

However, the export of this variety increased to 42.12 lakh tonne in September-March period of the 2022-23 from 33.66 lakh tonne during September-March period of the previous fiscal.

In the first quarter of the current fiscal, about 15.54 lakh tonne of white rice was exported against only 11.55 lakh tonne in the year-ago period, which means an increase by 35 per cent.

"This sharp increase in exports can be ascribed to high international prices due to geopolitical scenario, El Nino sentiments and extreme climatic conditions in other rice producing countries, etc," the statement said.

Rice is a staple for more than 3 billion people, and nearly 90% of the water-intensive crop is produced in Asia, where the El Nino weather pattern usually brings lower rainfall.

## Equities at new highs; 6th day of rally

MARKETS SETTLE AT FRESH LIFETIME HIGHS; NIFTY JUST SHY OF 20K



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, July 20:** Extending winning momentum to the sixth day, equity benchmarks Sensex and Nifty scaled fresh record high levels Thursday, driven by unabated foreign capital inflows and intense buying in banking and FMCG stocks.

A recovery in the rupee added to the momentum, forex traders said. The 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 474.46 points or 0.71 per cent to settle at its fresh all-time closing high of 67,571.90.

The benchmark recovered all its early lost ground during the afternoon trade. During the day, it rallied 521.73 points or 0.77 per cent to hit its lifetime intra-

day peak of 67,619.17. The NSE Nifty is on the verge of breaching the psychologically crucial 20,000 mark and closed a few points shy of the level.

Rising for the sixth straight session, the NSE flagship climbed 146 points or 0.74 per cent to end at its record closing high of 19,979.15. During the session, it soared 158.7 points or 0.80 per cent to reach its fresh record high of

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## HDFC BANK BECOMES 2ND MOST VALUABLE CO

**New Delhi:** HDFC Bank Thursday became the second most valuable company by market capitalisation, overtaking IT behemoth Tata Consultancy Services. At the close of trade, HDFC Bank, which recently completed the merger of its mortgage financier parent HDFC into itself, commanded a market capitalisation (mcap) of ₹12,72,718.60 crore, which was ₹5,826.95 crore more than TCS' ₹12,66,891.65 crore valuation on the BSE. Shares of HDFC Bank ended at ₹1,688.50 apiece, up 0.22 per cent on the BSE. During the day, it climbed 0.36 per cent to ₹1,690.95. However, shares of TCS dipped 0.25 per cent to end at ₹3,462.35 each. During the day, it fell 1 per cent to ₹3,436. HDFC, the parent of HDFC Bank, merged into the lender July 1. The \$40 billion merger, the largest such deal in the Indian corporate history, was driven by a changing regulatory landscape, which limited the advantages for HDFC continuing as a non-bank lending entity. Reliance Industries is the country's most valued firm with a market valuation of ₹17,72,455.70 crore, followed by HDFC Bank, TCS, ICICI Bank (₹ 6,96,538.85 crore) and Hindustan Unilever (₹6,34,941.79 crore) in the top five order. HDFC Bank is also the country's most valuable bank by mcap followed by ICICI Bank, which commanded a market valuation of ₹6,96,538.85 crore, and State Bank of India (₹5,44,356.70 crore).

19,991.85. In the last six sessions, the BSE benchmark has jumped 2,178 points or 3.33 per cent, and the Nifty rallied 594.85 points or 3.06 per cent.

ITC was the biggest gainer in the Sensex pack, rising nearly 3 per cent, followed by Kotak Mahindra Bank, ICICI Bank, Maruti, Bharti Airtel, State Bank of India, Sun Pharmaceutical Industries, Axis Bank, Reliance Industries, Hindustan Unilever and JSW Steel.

On the other hand, Infosys, UltraTech Cement, HCL Technologies, Bajaj Finserv, Larsen & Toubro, Titan, Tata Consultancy Services and Wipro were the laggards.

A total of 1,748 stocks advanced while 1,632 declined and 132 remained unchanged on BSE. The rupee gained 15 paise to close at 81.93 against the US dollar Thursday.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) were net buyers in the capital markets Thursday as they purchased shares worth Rs 3,370.90 crore.

## PE/VC investments nosedive 23% in H1



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, July 20:** Private equity and venture capital (PE/VC) funds' investments into Indian entities declined by nearly a fourth to \$27.5 billion in January-June 2023 against the year-ago period, a report said Thursday.

However, in value terms, investments were up 33 per cent against July-December 2022, the report by industry lobby Indian Venture and Alternate Capital Association (IVCA) and consultancy firm EY said.

The first half (H1) of 2022 saw \$35.9 billion in investments, while the second half saw values declining to \$20.6 billion. The number of deals declined 44 per cent compared to the year-ago period and 16 per cent sequentially to 427, the report said.

EY partner Vivek Soni said there has been a dip in invest-

ments into startups but the overall trend for PE/VC investments remains positive.

The PE/VC funds raised over \$10.2 billion in H1, which augurs well for the investment activity going forward, the report said.

The monthly report said at \$3.1 billion, June witnessed a 42 per cent decline in investments, while the figure was 9 per cent lower than May.

The top deal in June was BPEA EQT and Chryscapital's \$1.1 billion buyout of HDFC Credila Financial Services and the \$297 million majority stake acquisition of Watertec India by Warburg Pincus, the report said.

The month recorded 38 exits worth \$2.1 billion compared to \$2 billion in 18 deals in the year-ago period. A total of \$3.8 billion was raised by PE/VC funds during the month, the report added.



# INDIA IN CONTROL

SKIPPER ROHIT, YOUNG YASHASVI GUIDE INDIA INTO LUNCH UNSCATHED AS THE HOSTS SCORE 121 IN 26 OVERS IN THE FIRST SESSION OF THE 2ND TEST DAY 1



At the time of going to press, India were 167/3 with Virat Kohli (8 batting) and Ajinkya Rahane (4 batting) at the crease. Yashasvi Jaiswal (57), Shubman Gill (10) and skipper Rohit Sharma (80) were the wickets to fall so far.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Port of Spain, July 20:** Indian openers Rohit Sharma and Yashasvi Jaiswal maintained their sublime form in the Caribbean to take their team to 121 for no loss at lunch on day one of the second Test against West Indies here Thursday.

Young Jaiswal (52 batting, 56b, 8x4, 1x6) and skipper Rohit (63 batting, 102b, 6x4, 2x6), who both scored hundreds in India's dominant win in the opening Test, looked set for another epic partnership. The visitors scored at a run rate of 4.65 in 26 overs. Jaiswal was dropped at first slip by Alick Athanaze off Jason Holder on the penultimate ball of the session.

The game also marks the 100th Test between the two teams and

captains of both India and West Indies were handed a special memento by legend Brian Lara to commemorate the occasion before the start of the game.

The turning pitch in Dominica suited India really well and a more lively track was expected at Queen's Park Oval but the curator decided not to leave any grass on the surface.

The West Indies pacers could not create enough chances after their captain Kraigg Brathwaite put the opposition in to bat with an intent to make use of the early morning moisture in the pitch. The ball was doing a bit but both Kemar Roach and Alzarri Joseph struggled to consistently bowl in the fourth stump channel.

They chose to use the short ball against the Indian openers but the move backfired. Rohit first

unleashed his trademark pull off Roach for the first six of the game before Jaiswal pulled Joseph away for another maximum.

Jaiswal provided a half chance in the sixth over but it was put down at gully. Rohit got the bulk of the strike in the first hour and he made full use of it.

The India skipper played a gorgeous cover drive off Shannon Gabriel before the pacer bowled one short and the seasoned batter was happy to pull it away for another boundary. India were placed comfortably at 57 for no loss after the first hour of play.

Rohit brought his half century with a six off Roach in the 19th over. It was a pull shot again from the captain that went all the way. Jaiswal at the other end was quick to slash anything wide and picked up the pace towards

the end of the session. He brought his fifty with an on the up drive off Joseph.

Left-arm spinner Jemal Warican bowled five overs in the session but did not get much assistance from the pitch. India won the first Test by an innings and 141 runs. Jaiswal made 171 on debut.

**BRIEF SCORES:** India 121 for no loss at lunch (Rohit Sharma 63 batting, Yashasvi Jaiswal 52 batting) vs West Indies. Match to continue.

**MATCH SCHEDULE**

**2nd Test, Day 2**  
Time: 7:30 pm  
Telecast: DD Sports  
Streaming: Jio Cinema

# Crawley ton lifts England



ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Manchester, July 20:** A remarkable century from Zac Crawley helped England reach 384/4 against Australia on the second day of the fourth Ashes Test here, Thursday. The hosts were 67 runs ahead of the visitors' first innings total of 317.

With the weekend weather forecast promising rain, the home team know they are in a race against time to get the win to level the series and they produced a blistering display of aggressive shotmaking that was too hot for a shellshocked Australia.

Crawley was looking well-set for a double century before Cameron Green was lucky enough to get rid of the opener. Crawley tried to play an outside off ball before an inside edge led the ball into his stumps. He added 206 for the third wicket with Joe Root (84, 95b, 8x4, 1x6), who also missed out on a century after being bowled by Josh Hazlewood.

Earlier, England launched into Australia's bowling post-lunch and rocketed to 239/2 at tea.

Crawley led a partnership of 121 from 152 balls with Moeen Ali (54, 82b, 7x4), then 109 from 86 with Root, who was on 44 (35b, 6x4, 1x6) at tea. Crawley scored 106 on his own in the middle session.

After bowling Australia out for 317 in the morning, England added an entertaining 178 runs after lunch from 25 overs at more than seven per over. The Australians were befuddled, especially expensive captain Pat Cummins. Starc has taken the only two wickets. England's first 100 took 22.1 overs. The second 100 took 13.2 overs.

Crawley beat Ali to a fifty after lunch, his second of the series. Ali followed off 74 balls, to a rousing ovation from the crowd.

Ali came out of test retirement for the series as emergency spin cover, then volunteered to bat at No.3 when Ollie Pope was injured out of the series. Ali made it his job to give Joe Root and Harry Brook distance from the new ball and excelled at Old Trafford with his first Test fifty in four-and-a-half years.

He was dropped on 53 but out for 54 at 130/2 when he hit Mitchell Starc in front of square

and gave Usman Khawaja a two-hand diving catch. That brought in Root, who smacked the first ball he faced from Starc to the boundary.

Crawley reached a streaky century with lots of edged shots from 93 balls, the second fastest by an England opener in Test history. The only quicker one was his own off 86 balls last year in Pakistan.

He and Root were so comfortable on a slow pitch against an aging ball that they hit sixes close to the interval. Root reverse-ramped Mitch Marsh over deep third and Crawley slog-swept Travis Head over cow corner.

**BRIEF SCORES:** Australia 317 (Mitchell Starc 36 n o; Chris Woakes 5/62); England 384/4 (Zac Crawley 106, Joe Root 84, Moeen Ali 54; Mitchell Starc 2/74). Match to continue.

**MATCH SCHEDULE**

**4th Ashes Test, Day 3**  
Time: 3:30 pm  
Telecast: Sony Sports Network  
Streaming: Sony LIV

# Behera inaugurates pro chess academy

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 20:** On the occasion of International Chess Day, Sports Minister Tusharkanti Behera inaugurated the Professional Chess Training Academy 'PRO-CHESS-TA' here Thursday and dedicated it to the chess enthusiasts of the state.

It is a notable initiative considering it is the first chess academy that has been set up in the state to promote the sport. Sports and Youth Services Department, All India Chess Federation and Odisha Chess Association are working very closely towards it.

On this occasion, Behera also felicitated IM and WGM Padmini Rout, the reigning national women chess champion, with a cash award of Rs 60,000 for her exceptional performance in the 49th National Women's Chess Championship.

Padmini's remarkable talent and dedication to the game have earned her the prestigious titles of International Master (IM) and Woman Grandmaster, making her a beacon of inspiration for aspiring chess players across the nation and 'PRO-CHESS-TA' aims to nurture many more chess players like her.

The academy will serve as a milestone facility for Odisha's commitment towards providing budding chess players an environment to learn, grow and excel. The institution will be led by Fide Trainer and International Master Satyapragyan, who will

mentor the students in developing their talent to a completely new level.

Speaking at the inauguration about the government's vision for sports development, Behera reiterated the commitment to establishing more such sports academies across various disciplines.

Padmini Rout too shared her opinion. "This is a great development for the sport in Odisha. Those who are passionate about chess will have a support system to guide them while they strive to pursue excellence. I am grateful to the Government of Odisha for felicitating me today and forever supporting me in my journey and also giving aspiring chess players this opportunity," said Padmini.

Joint Secretary of the AICF, Ranjan Mohanty, expressed his appreciation to the Government of Odisha for their remarkable support and establishment of the academy.

IM Satyapragyan Swayangsu too is optimistic and elated with the initiative. "I am grateful to the Government of Odisha's vision to make the state the biggest chess literate city in this country. In my entire professional career never have I come across a state of art academy having all the latest technology as well as a dedicated library for students. I want to thank the government of Odisha for confiding in me such a massive and important responsibility for supporting Odisha talent and making them masters of chess."



Padmini Rout and Tusharkanti Behera involve in a friendly game - a few moves only - during the inauguration ceremony, Thursday

# ASIAN GAMES TRIALS EXEMPTION FOR BAJRANG, VINESH PROTEST REACHES IOA DOORS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 20:** Many junior wrestlers, their parents and coaches reached the IOA headquarters here Thursday, demanding the withdrawal of exemption granted to Vinesh Phogat and Bajrang Punia from the Asian Games trials, a day after their protest in Haryana's Hisar.

Around 150 people, including family members of the wrestlers, are seeking a meeting with Indian Olympic Association (IOA) President PT Usha and ad-hoc panel chief Bhupender Singh Bajwa.

"All we want is a meeting with IOA top brass. We will not accept any biased decision. This is wrong. We are here to request the panel to withdraw exemption granted to Bajrang and Vinesh," Vikas Bhardwaj, the coach of promising Antim Panghal, told this agency.

Panghal and Sujee Kalkal had slammed the ad-hoc committee's decision as unjust and unfair and asserted that they are capable of beating Bajrang and Vinesh if they are pitted against them in the trials.



The duo were, however, not present at the IOA Bhawan. The IOA ad-hoc panel, led by Bajwa, had Tuesday announced the criteria, saying trials will be held in all categories but they have already selected the wrestlers in men's free style 65kg and women's 53kg weight class.

Panghal and Sujee have also filed a petition at the Delhi High Court, demanding that a directive be issued to the IOA ad-hoc committee to quash the exemption.

In a tweet, World Championships and Commonwealth Games silver medalist Anshu Malik, who was part of the wrestlers' protest at Jantar Mantar in January, expressed her support for the junior grapplers.

"An athlete's biggest dream is to win medals at events such as the Olympics and Asian Games and make all the countrymen proud but what if the rights of

those players are snatched," Anshu, who competes in the women's 57kg category, tweeted.

"The demand for trials by junior players is correct and it is their right. I support the demand by the junior players," she wrote in another tweet.

IOA ad-hoc committee panel members Ashok Garg and Gian Singh favoured a two-stage trial to pick the squad and did not recommend exemption to any wrestler, it has come to light.

An undated suggestion circular, signed by both Singh and Garg, stated that they favoured a two-stage trial instead of giving direct entries to the six protesting wrestlers, including Bajrang and Vinesh.

"The circular was submitted to ad-hoc panel head Bhupender Singh Bajwa," said an ad-hoc panel source. The circular mentions that "trials should be held in the first week of August and if not possible then as soon as possible". It further read that, "If trials are held earlier, then top 3 finishers in six weight categories should be pitted against the six (protesting) wrestlers, who are training abroad."

# Asgreen upsets sprint specialists to win Stage 18

REUTERS

**Bourg en Bresse (France), July 20:** Kasper Asgreen upset the sprint specialists to win the 18th stage of the Tour de France Thursday at the end of a long breakaway, giving his Soudal Quick-Step team their first victory in this year's race.

Denmark's Asgreen perfectly timed his final effort, with the peloton breathing down the neck of the four breakaway riders on the 185-km ride from Moutiers. He beat Pascal Eenkhoorn and Jonas Abrahamson, who were second and third, respectively.

Defending champion Jonas Vingegaard of Denmark retained the overall leader's yellow jersey. Overall, Vingegaard still leads Tadej Pogacar by seven minutes and 35 seconds with Adam Yates in third place, 10:45 off the pace.

# Hardik, Gill could be rested for Ireland T20s

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 20:** India's T20 captain Hardik Pandya could be given a break from the three-match series against Ireland starting August 18 as part of workload management in a busy year including the Asia Cup and the big-ticket ODI World Cup at home, BCCI sources said.

Even Shubman Gill, who is now an automatic pick across three formats, could be rested keeping the global event in mind. The 29-year-old Pandya is one of the key members of India's ODI team and his all-round prowess adds necessary balance to the side and hence the team management and the national selection panel is expected to deal with him cautiously.

"Nothing is finalised yet and it will also depend on how Hardik is feeling after the one-dayers and T20s in the West Indies. There is travelling involved and



only a short turnaround of three days before one flies from Florida to Dublin.

"With World Cup being of primary importance, one has to factor in his workload. Let's not for-

# Blue Tigers enter top 100 in FIFA rankings

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 20:** The Indian men's football team Thursday achieved sub-100 FIFA ranking for the first time since 2018 as they moved up one spot to 99th after their SAFF Championship triumph. India had beaten strong teams Lebanon and Kuwait on penalty shootout in the semi-final and final respectively in the SAFF Championships in Bangladesh earlier this month.

Lebanon also gained two places to be just below India at 100th spot while Kuwait moved up four places to be at 137th in the latest FIFA chart issued Thursday. West Asian countries Lebanon and Kuwait were invited in the SAFF Championships to ensure strong competition in the tournament. India now have 1208.69 points.

India's best FIFA ranking was 94th, attained in 1996. The country had also reached 99th spot in 1993 and 96th in 2017 and 2018. It was placed at 100th last month.

Overall, World Champions Argentina continued to be at the top, followed by France, Brazil, England and Belgium. In Asia, Japan led the chart at 20th spot, followed by Iran (22), Australia (27), Korea (28) and Saudi Arabia (54) in top five.