



ALWAYS A LEARNER

Actor Janhvi Kapoor says she likes learning different methods while working with different directors

LEISURE P2



FOOD CRISIS LINGERS

UN has been forced to cut food, cash payments and assistance to millions of people because of "a crippling funding crisis"

INTERNATIONAL P10



LALREMSIAMI SHINES

Lalremsiami's hat-trick hands India win over England in the 100th Anniversary Spanish Hockey Federation - International Tournament

SPORTS P12

SHORT TAKES

TWO YOUTHS DIE OF ASPHYXIATION

Bhubaneswar: In a tragic incident, two workers died of asphyxiation in a septic tank at Raghunath Nagar in Sisupalgarh area under Dhauli police limits here, Saturday afternoon. The deceased identified as Suman, 23, and Safique, 27, were residents of West Bengal. The deceased were working at the house of one Priyabrata Dalei who has engaged a contractor from West Bengal. Safique and Suman had gone down inside the tank to remove the centering sheets and other materials Saturday at around 10am. However, they failed to breathe inside the small tank closed for more than 21 days following completion of centering work and choked to death, informed Chittaranjan Rout, the IIC of Dhauli police station.

Ex-AMU VC made BJP vice president

New Delhi: BJP president JP Nadra rejigged the list of the party's central office-bearers Saturday, bringing in a Pasmanda Muslim from Uttar Pradesh as one of its vice presidents and former Telangana unit chief Bandi Sanjay Kumar as a national general secretary. The BJP has dropped CT Ravi, a leader from Karnataka, Dilip Saikia, a Lok Sabha MP from Assam, as its general secretaries, and Vinod Sonkar, Harish Dwivedi, both Lok Sabha MPs from Uttar Pradesh, and Sunil Deodhar as secretaries. The new secretaries are Anil Antony, son of veteran Congress leader AK Antony, and Surendra Singh Nagar and Kamakhya Prasad Tasa, Rajya Sabha MP from UP and Assam respectively. There are 13 vice presidents, nine general secretaries and 13 secretaries on the list.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



I'll speak only to your director. Everybody knows he is the only competent officer you have

| WEATHER | | BHUB | CTK |
|-----------|--------|--------|---------------------------------|
| TEMP. MAX | 32.0°C | 32.0°C | |
| TEMP. MIN | 27.2°C | 27.5°C | |
| Humidity | 97% | 94% | Forecast Light to moderate rain |
| Rainfall | 0.2mm | 1.2mm | |



RESCUE OP: INS Khanjar tows three fishing vessels with 36 fishermen onboard in Bay of Bengal. They had been stranded at sea for over two days in rough weather conditions, without fuel, provisions due to engine breakdown

STUDENTS TO PAY MORE FOR HOSTELS

AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 29: Students will have to shell out more for hostel accommodation as a 12 per cent GST would be applicable on the rent paid, the Authority of Advance Ruling said in two separate cases.

The Bangalore bench of the Authority of Advance Ruling (AAR) said hostels are not akin to

residential dwelling units and hence are not exempt from Goods and Services Tax (GST). In an advance Ruling sought by Srisai Luxurious Stay LLP, the AAR said GST exemption was applicable on the accommodation services, of charges up to ₹1,000 per day, provided by hotels, clubs, campsites etc. till July 17, 2022.

PG/hostel rents paid by inhabitants do not qualify for GST

exemption... as the services provided by applicant are not akin to renting of residential dwelling for use as residence, the Bangalore bench said.

GST on reverse charge will be applicable on the rental to be paid to the landowners by the applicant as the services of the applicant are leviable to GST and thus the applicant has to obtain GST registration, it added.

Manipur conflict sullyng India's image: Chowdhury

AGENCIES

Imphal, July 29: As a delegation of 21 MPs from the opposition bloc Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance (INDIA) reached Manipur's capital Saturday to assess the ground situation in the ethnic strife-torn state, Congress leader Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury said the conflict in the northeastern state was sullyng India's image, and all parties must try and find a peaceful solution to end it.

The BJP was quick to react to the visit by MPs of the opposition bloc with Union Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Thakur alleging that it was a "mere show-off".

The senior BJP leader alleged that when Manipur used to burn under previous governments, those visiting the northeastern state now did not utter a single word in Parliament then.

Meanwhile, on the first day of their two-day whirlwind tour, the MPs visited several relief camps in Imphal, Moirang in Bishnupur district and Churachandpur and met victims of ethnic clashes.

"We have come here to meet victims of ethnic clashes and understand the problem. We want the end of violence and the restoration of peace at the earliest...The entire world is watching what is going on in Manipur," Chowdhury told PTI.

He also said, "The ethnic clashes have

Publisher arrested for comments on judiciary

CHENNAI: Chennai-based publisher and blogger Badri Seshadri was arrested Saturday for his alleged comments on judiciary while discussing Manipur violence in an interview to a YouTube channel. The arrest was made early Saturday morning by the Perambalur district police following a complaint from a lawyer Kaviarasu, a resident of Kunnam, who claimed that he was disturbed by Seshadri's views on the judiciary, during an interview to a YouTube channel July 22. The police booked cases under IPC sections 153 (provocation with intent to cause riot), 153 A (1) (a) (promote enmity between groups through words), 505 (1) (b) (causing fear and alarm in public) against him.

damaged the image of Manipur, the northeast region and India as a whole. We all have to try for a peaceful solution. We are here not to do any politics."

The MPs reached Imphal by a commercial flight from Delhi.

After their arrival here, the delegation went to Churachandpur, where fresh violence has taken place, to meet victims from the Kuki community in the relief camps there.

From Imphal, they took a chopper to Churachandpur due to security issues. As only one helicopter is available, the members of the delegation were divided into two teams, and the chopper made two trips to ferry them, an official told PTI.

You find a girl for him, says Sonia

Now, women farmers want Rahul to marry

AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 29: Get Rahul married is what some women farmers from Haryana told Congress leader Sonia Gandhi during their interaction with her and she in turn asked them to find a girl for her son, with Rahul Gandhi saying "it will happen".

The concern by the group of women was expressed when they met the Gandhi family at a luncheon hosted by Sonia Gandhi for them at her residence, a promise made by Rahul Gandhi during his recent visit to their fields.

Fulfilling his promise, the former Congress chief



invited some women farmers from Haryana's Sonapat district to his mother's home and shared food with them.

During the conversation at her 10, Janpath residence, a woman asks Sonia Gandhi, "Get Rahul married" to which Sonia Gandhi tells her, "You find a girl for him". At this, Rahul Gandhi said, "It will happen..." He is also seen being fed by one of the women.

Priyanka Gandhi Vadra tells the women that Rahul was naughtier than her, but she got the scolding instead.

On July 8, Rahul Gandhi made an impromptu stop at Madina village in Sonapat. He interacted with people and spent time with farmers working in agricultural lands. He also took part in paddy sowing, drove a tractor and ate food brought by women labourers working in the

fields, party leaders from the state said. Rahul Gandhi had then promised them to invite them over to Delhi for a 'Delhi Darshan' as they said they had never visited the national capital despite living so close.

During his visit, Rahul Gandhi had made the farm women talk to his sister Priyanka Gandhi and they had expressed the desire that she invites them over for food to her residence.

"A day to remember for Maa, Priyanka and me with some very special guests. Delhi darshan of Sonapat's farmer sisters, lunch with them at home and lots of talk. Got priceless gifts - desi ghee, sweet lassi, homemade pickles and lots of love," Rahul Gandhi said in a tweet in Hindi Saturday

■ OSSC JE PAPER LEAK CASE

Candidates in soup

OSSC issues show-cause notices to 55 candidates

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar/Balasure, July 29: In a first in recent history, 55 candidates who are alleged to have obtained leaked question papers from the accused arrested in connection with the sensational Odisha Staff Selection Commission (OSSC) JE (Civil) Main Exam question paper leak case, have been issued show-cause notices to explain as to why they should not be barred from appearing in the exam in future.

The unprecedented decision of the Commission came in response to a written request made by the Superintendent of Police (SP), Balasure Sagarika Nath following the rounding up of eight accused, including the mastermind from Bihar, Friday.

"In pursuance of a report from SP, Balasure, OSSC has yesterday (July 28) issued show cause notices to 55 candidates as to why they shall not be barred lifetime from recruitment of OSSC," the Commission said in a press statement Saturday.

A top police source, privy to the investigation, told **Orissa POST** Saturday that in the letter addressed to the OSSC Director,

Nath had put forward a request to initiate 'calibrated action' against the erring candidates who were found to be in cahoots with the scammers. Sources said, names of as many as 92 candidates have surfaced so far who indulged in the wrongdoing.

Police claimed to have recovered samples of question papers from them which have matched with the ones which were tabled during the examination. Moreover, the students on the radar of investigation, and the accused have allegedly confessed to have entered into a deal to pay up 50 per cent of the demanded amount in advance and the balance 50 per cent after the results.

Sources said the OSSC is likely to send similar notices to the remaining 37 candidates soon.

"The Commission is committed to taking exemplary action against all candidates who are involved in unfair practices including question leak," OSSC chairperson Abhay said.

The OSSC had conducted the main written examination for recruitment of 1,008 JE (Civil) Group-B posts in different offices of the government of Odisha, July 16, 2023.

However, during an investigation into a fake job racket case, the Balasure district police came to know that the JE (Civil) Main Examination question paper was leaked prior to the test. Following this, the OSSC July 23 has cancelled the main written test conducted for the post and decided to conduct a fresh exam September 3, 2023.

The Balasure Police at a press conference said that the question paper was leaked from the printing press located outside the state which the OSSC had entrusted for printing of the same.

So far, the police have arrested 17 persons including the mastermind Vishal Kumar Chaurasia, a Bihar government employee, and a printing press staff, who leaked the question paper in this case. The arrested persons hailed from Bihar, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh and Odisha. Two of the accused persons arrested in the question paper leak case were teachers serving under the Odisha government.

The Balasure SP has also recommended action against the two Odisha teachers for their alleged involvement in the question paper racket.

Reviving Quizzing

HERE . NOW

OrissaPOST PRESENTS

METTLE MEET 2023

A Quiz Extravaganza

BHUBANESWAR

Prelims 5 August

Grand Finale 6 August

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VAJIRAO IAS ACADEMY

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यज्ञिज्ञा धान्त्रि

TEAM

leisure



NEELAM SAYS SHE ISN'T DICAPRIO'S NEW FLAME

Indian British fashion model Neelam Gill has set the record straight on dating rumours between her and Hollywood star Leonardo DiCaprio. Taking to Instagram Story, the model insisted that she's not the *Titanic* actor's 'new flame' despite having been spotted on several occasions, reports *aceshowbiz.com*.

EMILY BLUNT STRUGGLES TO GRAPPLE WITH PROSPECTS OF MOTHERHOOD

British actress Emily Blunt who has made a big name for herself in Hollywood with films such as *A Quiet Place*, *Edge of Tomorrow* and most recently *Oppenheimer* is now grappling with the prospect of motherhood, saying that she had no idea just how much her world would change once she had children.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181

ARIES

Today, you feel free and liberated! And in that spirit, you want to travel or do things you loved doing as a child. A good time for a family outing, says Ganesh. Keeping in mind your mood, you may even make plans for the future for your near and dear.

TAURUS

You are likely to stick to basics instead of letting your imagination run wild today, says Ganesh. At work, you may feel some pressure from your peers to do things differently. Think things out and be certain before you take any decision, advises Ganesh.

GEMINI

You have a certain degree of equanimity when it comes to reacting to praise and criticism. Today, however, you will be emotional, and it won't be too bad. You will get appreciated at work and your liberal show of emotions will only make others like you more.

CANCER

Today, Cupid will send its arrow right through your heart. You will be trembling with pain – the sweet pain of lust and love. But the overzealous Cupid may not stop at just that. Just to be completely sure, it will virtually do shooting practice at you. You can do nothing but tell your love interest how badly you have been hit.

LEO

It is good to be impulsive sometimes; but if one were to ask you today, you would be all for a meticulously planned approach to life. So much so that from now on, planning will become almost a part and parcel of your life, predicts Ganesh. So, it is expected that you plan everything to perfection today, although the execution of your plans may be a different story.

VIRGO

You will start the day by scribbling down things to do. But don't just jot them down; instead, set realistic goals and prioritise them. Items you mark highest will demand quick actions, cautions Ganesh.

LIBRA

It's a spiritual and harmonious mood that grips you today, feels Ganesh. You may want to focus on meditation, as you essentially seek peace. This may have something to do with the fact that at work, your subordinates may attempt to throw around their weight to force you to make drastic changes. But do not let it bother you too much.

SCORPIO

It is more than likely that you will find yourself in a tricky situation today, says Ganesh. You may start the day feeling lonely and empty but yet, at the same time, you will have some responsibility that will prevent you from showing it. Try to keep your mind off negative thoughts.

SAGITTARIUS

Stay stern, says Ganesh, as it might be necessary to exercise your grit to get the desired results today. Your presence may be dominating at the workplace, but your subordinates will find your manner pleasing as you hold them in awe of you. Do not get carried away by your success or the tables may turn, suggests Ganesh.

CAPRICORN

You will prioritise your needs, and the most critical would be the need to manage finances to save for the future. Also, the company you choose to keep will reflect the kind of person you are. So, beware of who you befriend, warns Ganesh.

AQUARIUS

Today, you will have a lot of fun with your siblings! Though generally well-organised and methodical, you will enjoy going with the flow of what your siblings and friends plan for you. Sometimes, spontaneity is a good thing, says Ganesh.

PISCES

There are indications you will be in hot pursuit of leisure today, says Ganesh. This will probably be in the form of a short trip to recharge your batteries, and is probably fuelled by your satisfaction in the realisation that the role you play within your organisation is consequential, satisfying as well as rewarding.

'Enjoy the process to get good results'



Mumbai: As she worked with Nitesh Tiwari in her latest film *Bawaal*, Janhvi Kapoor mentioned that she learnt to be relaxed while working on a film, on a set. She says that she likes learning different methods while working with different directors. As Janhvi teamed up with the *Chhichhore* director for the first time, she said, "The kind of an actor that I am and I want to be... I like the thrill of following my director's lead for each film. So, the director can be demanding or can expect my emotional and physical investment... I will just go with him/her on that journey." She further adds, "I like to follow my director and learn more about myself in the process and also the craft. As an artiste you can pick up different things in different processes and it in a way, I think, makes each performance more different." Earlier, talking about working on her latest flick, Janhvi had said, "One doesn't have to struggle and take pressure to guarantee results. Sometimes you can just enjoy the process, believe in what you are doing and follow your director's lead and the results can be equally special."

Humiliated on set, Shabana wanted to quit Hindi films



Mumbai: Veteran actor Shabana Azmi recently talked about the time when she felt miserable in her career, so much so that she wanted to give up doing films altogether. It happened so on the sets of *Parvarish* when she couldn't dance and choreographer Kamal left her humiliated in front of junior artistes. Shabana re-

called, "I have two left feet, so, I asked choreographer Kamal Master, the steps were very complicated and can we change it a little bit. There were a lot of junior artists on the sets. He said 'Okay, lights off. Now Shabana Ji is now going to teach Kamal dance master what steps to do'. It was so humiliating and bad that I just ran off the set. I was in these ghastly clothes. I went (out) to find my car was not there. In those clothes I started walking barefoot to my house in Juhu, crying away and saying 'I am not going to work in any film anymore. I just don't want this humiliation.'"

The senior actor said that it was the Parvarish director Manmohan Desai who later came and hugged her while being sorry about it. It was Sulakshana Pandit who told Shabana that she being the leading lady is much more needed in the film, instead of the choreographer. Shabana was recently seen in Karan Johar's *Rocky Aur Rani Kii Prem Kahaani*.

CAPTIVATING SHOW



Guru Kelucharan Mohapatra Odissi Research Centre (GKCMORC) in collaboration with Indian Council for Cultural Relations (Eastern Zone) (ICCR) organised an Odissi Dance Recital as part of the Horizon series programme at Utkal Rangamancha, Bhubaneswar, Saturday. The event saw four dance performances of Guru Gaurishankar Dash and his students of the Devanshi Dance Academy. GKCMORC Chief Executive Subodh Chandra Acharya, ICCR Regional Director Minakshi Mishra, and Guru Smt Sikata Das, HoD-Dance, GKCMORC were among the luminaries present on the occasion.

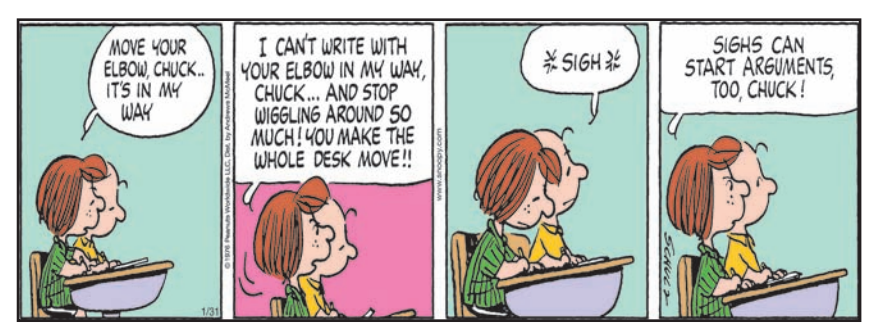
Dahaan to redefine horror genre in Odia cinema

Bhubaneswar: After helming projects like *Gangs of Puri* and *Pratikhya*, director Anupam Patnaik is set to redefine horror genre in Odia cinema by presenting his next *Dahaan*. A fan of the genre, Anupam, announcing the movie, claimed that the movie to be released in October this year will give a spine-chilling cinematic experience to the viewers. The movie introduces Aurosikha Mishra, Sijan Mahapatra, and Nishant Majithia on the big screen. Choudhury Jay Prakash Das,



Partha Sarathi Ray, Barsha Patnaik and Pranab Rath play other key roles in the movie. Music composer Ashis Pradhan and his team have created a haunting atmospheric soundscape to grip the audience while Shakti Swaroop Dwibedy is taking care of the sound design with sync sound by Tukna Chandra Sekhar Sharma. Rashmi Ranjan Dash is the editor of the film while the cinematography is being taken care of by Deepak Kumar.

PEANUTS



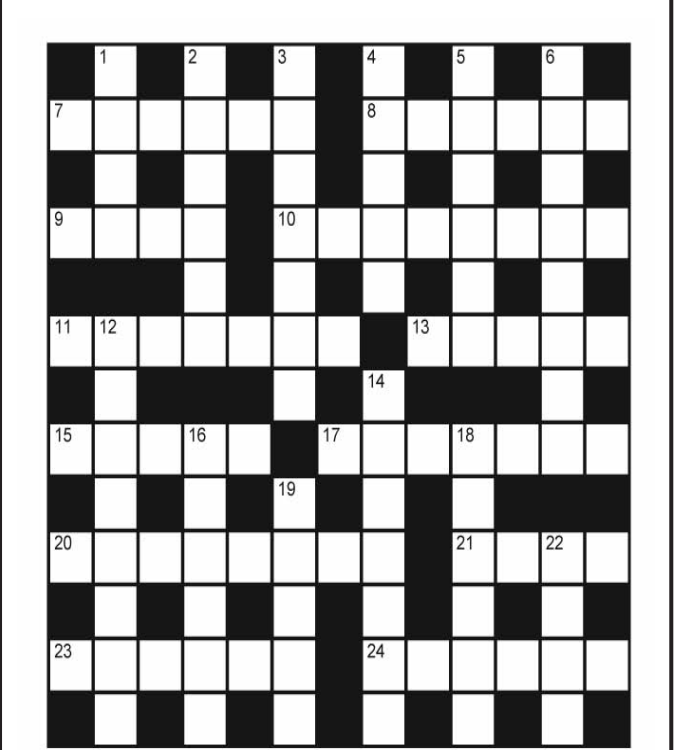
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



FUN post CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 7 Small talk
 - 8 Magellan, e.g.
 - 9 Mouselike animal
 - 10 Exchequer
 - 11 Drawing tool
 - 13 Major artery
 - 15 Penniless
 - 17 Desert sights, usually
 - 20 Brief literary description
 - 21 Beige
 - 23 Tower name
 - 24 Desk item
 - 3 Russian orbiter
 - 4 Strong point
 - 5 Magician's word
 - 6 Plume on a hat
 - 12 Wonderful
 - 14 Inebriated (3-4)
 - 16 Martial art (4,2)
 - 18 Sports venues
 - 19 Castaway's site
 - 22 Poseidon's mother
- Down**
- 1 Musical performance
 - 2 Rearward, at sea

SUDOKU

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

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2 | | | 3 | 9 | 4 | | | |
| | | | 2 | | | | | |
| 6 | 5 | | | 1 | 7 | | | |
| 3 | 7 | | | 9 | | | | |
| 9 | 4 | | | | | | | 6 |
| | | | | | | | 1 | |
| | | | 5 | | | | | |
| 5 | 3 | | | | | 2 | | |
| | 9 | | | 1 | | | 7 | 5 |

SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| H | A | N | G | A | R | S | E | L | D | O | M |
| U | M | E | R | T | T | R | E | A | N | | |
| M | E | D | I | T | E | R | R | A | N | | |
| O | G | T | I | O | S | | | | | | |
| U | T | E | N | S | I | L | S | E | D | D | A |
| R | T | L | | | | | | | | | |
| H | A | R | S | H | | S | C | O | N | E | |
| W | B | | | | | | C | A | | H | |
| O | U | S | T | | | S | O | M | B | R | E |
| M | T | | | | | | U | A | P | A | |
| B | E | A | U | T | | | P | A | R | L | O |
| A | I | O | E | S | T | E | D | S | | | |
| T | A | N | K | E | R | | | | | | |

SUDOKU

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

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

Long queues of devotees on Grand Road to have a darshan of Srimandir deities on Shayani Ekadashi in Puri, Saturday



downtown



DEFT HANDS: An artisan shapes clay idols of Goddess Khudurukuni at Kumbhar Sahi in Cuttack, Saturday

PHOTO: RAJKISHORE MOHANTY

TIGER COUNT DOUBLES IN SIMILIPAL RESERVE

State registers 55% reduction in big cat population between 2006 & 2022

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, July 29: The number of tigers in the Simlipal Tiger Reserve (STR) has doubled from eight to 16 between 2018 and 2022, though the state registered a drop in the population of the big cat from 28 to 20 during the period.

The figures were revealed in the Tiger Estimation Report, which was released by the central government on the occasion of Global Tiger Day, Saturday.

The 2022 tiger census report said that all the 20 tigers found in the state are confined to the Simlipal area - 16 in the tiger reserve and four in the buffer zone of Simlipal National Park. There are none in Satkosia Tiger Reserve.

"We are happy that the 2022 tiger estimation report showed a rise in the tiger population in STR. The increase is because there is plenty of prey base for tigers in the area," its field director Prakash Chandra Gogineni told PTI.

He, however, claimed that the recent camera trap estimation done in the Simlipal Tiger Reserve revealed that the number of tigers stood at 23. "This number will be officially declared later," he said.

The tiger count in Odisha stood at 28 as per the census conducted jointly by the National Tiger Conservation Authority



ODISHA TO START TIGER CENSUS

Unsatisfied with the camera trap method used by the NTCA, the Odisha government has been planning to undertake its own tiger census from October this year

The census will be done in two phases in a period spread over one-and-half months and will be conducted through transect analysis—counting on the basis of footprints and scratch marks—and camera traps

We are happy that the 2022 tiger estimation report showed a rise in the tiger population in STR. The increase is because there is plenty of prey base for tigers in the area

Prakash Chand Gogineni | STR Field Director

(NTCA) and Wildlife Institute of India in 2014 and in 2018 as well. In 2006 the figure was 45 in 2006 and 32 in 2010, showing a downward curve in the tiger population in the state. "There has been a 55 per cent reduction in the tiger population in Odisha

between 2006 and 2022," a Forest department official said.

Meanwhile, the Odisha government not satisfied with the camera trap method used by the NTCA is planning to undertake its own tiger census from October this year. The counting will be done in two phases in a period spread over one-and-half months and will be conducted through transect analysis and camera traps. In transect analysis, the tigers will be counted on the basis of footprints and scratch marks, an official said.

The movement of the tigers will be captured through CCTV camera traps.

Ex-banker held for ₹1.09cr loan fraud

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 29: The Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of state Crime Branch (CB) Saturday arrested a former manager with the Central Bank of India's Pallaspalli branch here in connection with ₹1.09 crore fraud.

"Swayam Prakash Parida has been taken into custody from Cuttack Friday on the basis of a case registered against him under Sections 420, 467, 468, 471 and 120B of the IPC following a complaint by Central Bank of India's Pallaspalli branch manager Ajaya Kumar Khuntia," an

EOW official said, adding that Parida was on the run for long and that he has already been dismissed from service.

During his tenure as the manager of Central Bank of India's Pallaspalli branch between May 2015 and November 2017, Parida allegedly sanctioned 24 vehicle loans and one cash credit (CC)

loan amounting to ₹1.09 crore in the names of different persons or agencies based on forged KYC and loan documents, the EOW official said quoting Khuntia's complaint.

Following arrest, Parida was produced in a court Saturday which remanded him to judicial custody.

NHRC seeks reports on snakebite deaths

GYAN RANJAN MOHAPATRA, OP

Bhubaneswar, July 29: The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has asked the Centre and the state government to file reports in connection with the death of three students in Keonjhar due to snakebite, an official said Saturday.

While hearing a plea filed by rights activist Radhakanta Tripathy, the commission asked the Secretaries of Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (H&FW) as well as Odisha's H&FW department, and district Collectors of Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj, Bolangir, Khurda, Boudh and Bhadrak to submit their reports within six weeks on Keonjhar's triple snakebite deaths.

In his petition, Tripathy informed the NHRC that snakebites claim nearly 58,000 lives in the country every year. "Three students—Raja, 12, Shehshree, 10, and Ellina, 7, -- died, while another student was rendered critical after a venomous snake bit them at a private coaching centre in Keonjhar district July 22, 2023," the rights activist said.

He said snakebite fatalities account for over 40 per cent of total disaster deaths in Odisha. "Snakebite deaths in Odisha have increased to 1,159 in 2021 from 522 in 2015 due to shortage of anti-venoms in government-run-health facilities including



Snakebites claim nearly 58,000 lives in the country every year

SCB Medical College and Hospital in Cuttack.

Bihar, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Rajasthan and Gujarat contribute to 70 per cent of snakebite deaths in India. Tripathy urged the NHRC to ensure release of compensation and benefits under social welfare schemes to the next of kin of the deceased and action against officials who failed to ensure safety and security of the students.

The petitioner also urged the Rights body to direct the authorities to make available adequate anti-venom in hospitals, maintain a comprehensive national data of snakebite cases and designate snakebite as a 'Notifiable Disease' within the 'Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme' to get a permanent solution to the problem.

Engineer dismissed for false testimony

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, July 29: The state government has dismissed an assistant engineer for tendering false testimony during trial to help a corrupt official in a Vigilance case.

The action was taken against Upendra Bhanja Naik, assistant engineer of the RWSS section at Bijepur in Bargarh district based on the recommendation of Odisha Vigilance. He was dismissed from the job by the Housing and Urban Development department, it was learnt.

An official statement issued by the Vigilance department said that Naik while serving as the junior engineer of RWSS Section at Sohela in Bargarh had been requisitioned as an official witness against accused Anand Saraf, the then senior clerk posted at the Office of Executive Engineer, West Electrical Division, Bargarh in a Vigilance case.

Though Naik was the key witness in the alleged transaction of bribe, he resiled from his earlier statements and deposed false evidence to help the accused leading to acquittal in the case, the Vigilance said.

The Vigilance department said that it has started taking action against official witnesses who are turning hostile during trial in corruption cases. As per the strategy, steps are being taken to initiate criminal action for perjury under the IPC against such officials.

The anti-corruption wing said that so far, as many as 45 perjury cases have been initiated by Odisha Vigilance against complainants and witnesses turning hostile during the trial in last two years. All acquitted Vigilance cases are being analysed threadbare and corrective actions are initiated, a release from Odisha Vigilance stated. In 2022, the overall conviction rate in Vigilance cases was around 50 per cent and the conviction rate in DA cases was significantly higher 77 per cent, ranking Odisha Vigilance among top performing states with regard to conviction in DA cases.

Napping in infants linked to vocabulary

Infants who nap a lot may have smaller vocabularies and poorer cognitive skills, new research has found.

Some children consolidate information during sleep more efficiently and thus, nap less frequently, the research from the University of East Anglia, UK, said.

Others, usually with fewer words and poorer cognitive skills, need to nap more often, the researchers said, adding that reducing their naps would not improve brain development.

"There is a lot of parental anxiety around sleep. Parents worry that their kids don't nap as much as expected for their age – or nap too frequently and for too long.



"Young children will naturally nap for as long as they need and they should be allowed to do just that," said Teodora Gliga, lead researcher of the study published in the Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry (JCPP) Advances.

The researchers studied 463 infants aged between eight months and

three years during lockdown in 2020.

Parents were surveyed about their children's sleep patterns, their ability to focus on a task, to retain information, and the number of words they understood and could say. They were also asked about their socio-economic status and education, the neighbourhood they lived in, and the amount of screen time and outdoors activities their child engaged in.

None of the children they studied went to daycare during lockdown, which meant fewer disturbances to the children's natural sleep patterns, the researchers said. "What we found is that the structure of daytime sleep is an indicator of cognitive development," said Gliga.

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- An interactive session for local Buyers & Sellers with GeM officials
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Aqua Chaupal for fish farming issues

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Khurda, July 29: Aqua Chaupal, developed by ICAR-Central Institute of Freshwater Aquaculture (CIFA), for promoting farmer to farmer learning, was inaugurated Friday by Padma Shri Batakrushna Sahoo at Sarakana in Khurda.

A farmer-scientist interface session was organised to address the problems faced by fish farmers in practicing composite carp culture. Around 125 farmers and farm women attended the programme. Principal Scientists of ICAR-CIFA GS Saha, HK De and SK Sahoo addressed production related queries and responded to questions.

Aqua Chaupal is a place where fish farmers can sit together and discuss fishery related issues to improve decision making ability and develop interpersonal skills among them.



The Chaupal located close to the Sarakana fish farm will serve as a platform and would attract potential fish farmers to gather and discuss the issues faced by them in fish farming practices.

The Institute has conceptualized Aquaculture Field School, where a lead farmer trains and educates a group of 25 fellow farmers. It had established the first Field School at Sarakana at the farm of Sahoo, a CIFA trained fish farmer cum entrepreneur.

Aquaculture Field School network has grown to 19 and has spread to Arunachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Assam, West Bengal and Tamil Nadu. The Chaupal developed under Farmer FIRST project, being operated by the institute, would go a long way in strengthening extension and advisory services.

Oppheem 2.0 opens for twin city folks



POST NEWS NETWORK

Phulnakhara, July 29: Oppheem 2.0, a restaurant managed by Black Grapes India, was inaugurated here recently on National Highway 16, connecting the twin cities of Cuttack and Bhubaneswar. On the occasion, BMC Corporator from Ward no 4 Sukumar Sahoo joined as the chief guest to inaugurate the restaurant while more than 70 visually impaired kids were served food free of cost.

The restaurant, built and furnished with an eye to modern aesthetics, will be managed by Black Grapes India and will serve customers Indian, continental and Chinese cuisine. "Excellent customer service is our primary goal and the restaurant has the necessary staff to ensure good services to all our visiting customers," said Roshan Pradhan and Narendra Agarwal, present at the event on behalf of Black Grapes India to motivate the children and the staff.

As the children enjoyed the food, the employees of the restaurant and the staff in charge of management encouraged them and wished them a bright future.

Heavy rainfall likely for next 5 days: IMD

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 29: India Meteorological Department (IMD) has predicted very heavy rainfall at one or two places in four districts during the next 24 hours due to the prevalent monsoon trough and a low pressure area. The Met regional centre Saturday issued orange warning in some districts for the next five days.

In its mid-day bulletin, the IMD regional centre said, "Under the influence of the cyclonic circulation over Gangetic West Bengal and adjoining north Odisha, a Low Pressure Area has formed over north Odisha and adjoining West Bengal coasts. Associated cyclonic circulation extends up to 5.8 Km above mean sea level tilting south-westwards with height. The Monsoon Trough at mean sea level now passes through Sri Ganganagar, Rohtak, Lucknow, Gaya, Ranchi, center of Low Pressure Area over north Odisha and adjoining West Bengal Coasts and thence south-eastwards to east central Bay of Bengal."

The Monsoon Trough at mean sea level now passes through Sri Ganganagar, Rohtak, Lucknow, Gaya, Ranchi, center of Low Pressure Area over north Odisha and adjoining West Bengal Coasts and thence south-eastwards to east central Bay of Bengal.

Under the influence of the system, the IMD has forecast light to moderate rain or thundershower is very likely to occur at most places over the districts of Odisha during the next five days and has warned of isolated heavy to very heavy rainfall at places. The IMD has issued a 'yellow' alert for places where heavy rainfall is indicated and an 'orange' alert for places where heavy to very heavy rainfall is indicated. Light to moderate rain or thundershower is very likely to occur at most places in Odisha districts.

The highest maximum (day) temperature of 35.20C was recorded at Chandbali and the lowest minimum (night) temperature of 22.50C was recorded at Phulbani in the plains of Odisha.



'Bhub, the premiere edu hub of India'

Bhubaneswar, July 29: Regional College of Management (RCM), Bhubaneswar, the first management college of Odisha, was established in 1982. It is the first management institute in Eastern India conferred Autonomous Status by the University Grants Commission in 2009.

During an interview with Orissa POST, Director RCM, Pritam Pal reveals that the institute has plans to open more units of RCM in other states, while appreciating the overall education environment in Bhubaneswar. Excerpts...

Tell us something about RCM?

The institute since its inception, developed immensely in focused areas of Management and Computer Applications education. At RCM, we groom leaders and inculcate moral and ethical values, corporate culture, business ethics, entrepreneurial mindset and more to help develop every student into a complete enterprise leadership product. We are a triple accredited in-



stitution approved by 2 national and one international accrediting body. The MBA & MCA programs are accredited by AICTE and affiliated to BPUT. The institution is approved internationally by the Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP).

What about the learning and infrastructure facilities?

We use the latest technology and products for quick response time and advanced learning. At RCM, we have advanced collaborative open style classrooms which provide the most attractive at-

mosphere for collaborative, interactive and focused learning. RCM campus is equipped with a library that houses more than 1,00,000 books, international journals, periodicals, national journals etc. The high-tech labs are influential in providing practical experience to our students, where they can experiment with the theories and evolve as better, smarter and concept rich products of RCM.

RCM has started and introduced India's first +Plus program in which we make our Masters and graduate students ready with skills required for not today's but the enterprises of tomorrow.

How do you streamline things post-Covid?

In fact, Covid has changed the ecosystem of the education and RCM as a pioneer also changed with time. We have progressively rebuilt our infra as per today's requirements for delivering quality education and environment for the social revolution to incubate. We bring industry subject and vertical specialists from

different companies to interact and share their wisdom with students for our RCM Might's to be actively applying their education in trend setting breakthroughs in business models and technologies.

What are the objectives of RCM?

RCM's main goals have always been to build leadership qualities and entrepreneurial mindset among its students. We have now also built a startup incubation center to give a winning chance to our students for building startups and support them with the right resources to build a possible successful enterprise from day 1.

How do you rate Bhubaneswar in the education map of India?

Bhubaneswar is the 'Education Hub' of India. Odisha is the most politically and socially stable state which makes it the best place to study. Many of our students are from places like J&K, North East, UP, Bihar, Bengal and other states and loving Bhubaneswar more than their home towns.

107 youths provided jobs under MCL drive

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 29: Mahanadi Coal Fields Limited (MCL) Sambalpur collaborated with CIPET: CSTS Bhubaneswar to provide employment to 107 youths in various leading companies of India. The youths were provided job opportunities after technical skill development training at CIPET.

Under the project 'Nipun,' MCL signed an MoU with CIPET: CSTS, to impart placement-oriented skill training to one thousand needy unemployed youth of the state for their sustainable livelihood. The training programme were completed for three batches at Bhubaneswar, Balasore and Paradeep with placement at various industries



like Motherson, Bangalore, Fine Tools, Bangalore, SSF, Hyderabad among others.

At the valedictory function held Friday, Director and Head of CIPET BP Patro briefed about the objective of the programme. MCL, Sambalpur, General Manager GS Jolly joined the programme as the chief guest. Jolly thanked CIPET for empowering the youth with sustainable livelihood while interacting with the trainees wished them a bright future. The students were awarded with NSQF approved certificate and given offer letter.

Realistic outlook vital during 'infertility'

Infertility is a complex and emotionally challenging journey that affects millions of individuals and couples across the globe. As per WHO's recent report, around 17.5 per cent of the adult population - roughly 1 in 6 worldwide - experience 'infertility'. Within a societal framework that places significant value on child-bearing and parenthood as crucial aspects of adulthood, experiencing infertility can deal a severe blow to an individual's self-esteem. Furthermore, the accompanying social stigma discourages couples from openly discussing their struggles with friends and family, creating a path toward finding a resolution that is exceedingly isolating.

While both men and women can suffer from infertility, in a lot of these cases, the societal stereotypes and conditioning, burden the female sex with the pre-



dominant onus of it, aggravating their agony even more. The inability to conceive a child naturally can lead to significant psychological distress, affecting mental health and overall well-being. While the physical aspects of infertility are well-recognised, the impact on mental health often remains overlooked.

Infertility can evoke a myriad of emotions like grief, guilt, shame, anger, and frustration. Each unsuccessful attempt at conceiving or receiving a negative pregnancy test can exacerbate these emotions, leading to increased stress, anxiety, and depression. Infertility

treatment itself can further intensify the emotional challenges. The process of assisted reproductive technologies (ART), such as In vitro fertilisation (IVF), involves numerous medical interventions, injections, and invasive procedures. The financial burden of treatment, coupled with the uncertainty of success, can add to the emotional strain experienced by individuals undergoing these procedures.

IVF is often viewed as a beacon of hope, a pathway to happiness for couples struggling with infertility. When a couple embarks on this journey, they carry a profound sense of belief, that this shall be the answer to their dreams of parenthood. Couples may experience excitement and optimism during the initial stages, buoyed by the possibility of success. However, as they encounter setbacks, such as failed cycles,

unsuccessful embryo transfers, or pregnancy losses, feelings of despair and self-doubt can take hold. As time passes, the longing for closure intensifies, as each disappointment chips away at their hope in a positive outcome and happiness appears elusive.

Infertility treatment can strain even the strongest relationships. Open and honest communication with your partner is vital to navigating this journey together. Discussing fears, concerns, and expectations can strengthen your bond and provide mutual support. By gaining a comprehensive understanding of the treatment process, maintaining a realistic outlook on the potential outcomes, and establishing achievable expectations, individuals can effectively mitigate the emotional repercussions that may arise from potential setbacks.

TO NEW BEGINNINGS: Higher Education Minister Atanu Sabyasachi Nayak, SAI International Education Group Chairperson Silpi Sahoo released the 'SAIMUM Tribune' on the second and last day of the SAI Model United Nations (SAIMUN) 2023 in Bhubaneswar, Saturday

Odisha Tourism holds roadshow in Vietnam

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, July 29: Odisha Tourism conducted its third leg of international tourism promotional campaign with a roadshow in Hanoi. The objective of the event is to attract tourists from the Southeast Asian country to Odisha.

Organised in association with the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce (FICCD), the Friday event witnessed the participation of over 130 tour and travel operators from Vietnam networking with stakeholders of tourism industry in Odisha.

Engaging B2B and B2G sessions were held between the stakeholders of Vietnam and

Odisha, following which the inaugural session began.

Director, Tourism, Sachin Ramchandra Jadhav gave a presentation on Odisha Tourism's initiatives towards sustainable tourism projects that has been attracting tourists from across the globe. He also threw light on various tourism products Odisha has to offer in order to attract tourists from Vietnam, especially the Buddhist circuit.

Chairman, Indian Business Chamber at Vietnam (INCHAM, Hanoi) Indronil Sengupta applauded Odisha Government for its proactive steps taken to promote tourism.

Phan Lan Tu, Chairperson Hanoi Vietnam India Friendship Association and Rachna



Srivastav, First Secretary (Consular), Embassy of India, Vietnam addressed the gathering which set the tone for a panel discussion among industry leaders from India and Vietnam.

J.K. Mohanty, CMD, Swosti Group led the special panel discussion on the theme 'Tourism Potential in Odisha' which boasted of panelists from various domains representing MICE,

Luxury Cruises and Houseboats, Heritage Palaces and Hospitality and Destination Management Companies.

Director Belgadia Palace Akshita Manjari Bhanj Deo, managing director (MD) Vikash Eco Resorts Srinivas Valluri, secretary Odisha Tour Operators Association, Yugabrata Kar, president Mayfair Hotels and Resorts Manoj Gouda and head PMU Odisha Tourism Lokesh Kumar were the other members in the panel.

Highlighting the enthusiasm showcased by the tourism industry stakeholders of Vietnam and Odisha in making the roadshow successful, OSD Tourism Ansuman Rath proposed the vote of thanks.

Hirakud rly station to be redeveloped

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, July 29: During his visit to Sambalpur Saturday, East Coast Railway General Manager Manoj Sharma reviewed the ongoing projects along with officers of the Sambalpur Railway Division. While taking stock of infrastructure at the Hirakud railway station, he informed that soon the station would be redeveloped.

Sharma inspected the freight train maintenance facility with routine over-hauling (ROH) for freight wagons at the Sarla Road Station and advised the concerned officials to focus on speedy completion of various projects. He also advised the officials to coordinate with other stakeholders including state government officials for early completion.

Notably, freight train maintenance facility with routine over-hauling (ROH) for freight



wagons was sanctioned in 2017-18 with a cost estimation of ₹149.37 crore. It was initially proposed to be established at the Maneswar station, but later the project was shifted to Sarla road keeping feasibility in view. 65 per cent construction work of the project has been completed and work is being done on a war footing, informed an official.

Sambalpur divisional railway manager Vineet Singh, branch officers and officials from RITES were also present during the review meeting.

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BSF jawan held for attacking wife, cops

POST NEWS NETWORK

Anandapur, July 29: Police here arrested a BSF jawan for allegedly attacking his wife and a police team at Fakirpur near here in Keonjhar district Friday night. The accused was identified as Sharat Chandra Muduli of Fakirpur village.

As per sources, a quarrel between Sharat and his wife Snehalata Barik took an ugly turn when the former assaulted the latter Friday night.

Snehalata dialed 112 following which the PCR van reached the spot. Meanwhile, the jawan and his family members attacked the police team. When a team of Anandapur police reached the spot for their rescue, they were also beaten up and their uniforms torn by the jawan and his kin. Sharat was arrested and produced before the court Saturday. He has been sent to judicial custody after his bail application was rejected.

George Tirkey eyeing political comeback



RAJESH MOHANTY, OP

Rourkela, July 29: Lambasting the BJP government at the Centre over Manipur violence, former Biramitrapur MLA George Tirkey recently tried to re-launch his outfit 'George Sena'. Demonstrating against Manipur violence and two women being paraded naked by a mob, the video of which had gone viral, George with a crowd of over 300 supporters attempted to show his strength at Bisra Chowk, the busiest thoroughfare of the Steel City.

George, once a powerful leader of the tribals in the district and a former employee of State Bank of India, once had a big say in

Sundargarh politics. Speaking to Orissa POST, George said, "We are protesting against the atrocities against the tribals in Manipur. And we will continue to protest against the BJP-led NDA at all places and will expose their nefarious tactics."

Asked about his political future, he said, "I am ready to join BJD but so far I have not received any communication from the party side. I am waiting for that." When asked about George Sena, the banner under which he was once elected as an MLA, George said, "It is my old banner and I was elected under this. And for the last three to four months I have been doing all my activities under this banner. If I join BJD, George Sena would merge with the party," he made it clear. Regarding his future course of action, if he is not invited into BJD, he said, "I will contest from Biramitrapur Assembly segment."



GRIDLOCKED: Illegal parking of trucks and mineral-laden vehicles on National Highway-49 under Sadar police limits of Keonjhar district resulted in disruption of traffic on the route and smooth passage of pachyderms through the elephant corridor, Saturday

Gopalpur to see intense battle

BJD eyes to win the segment for fourth time while Pradeep Sena may upset its applecart

POST NEWS NETWORK

Berhampur, July 29: The ruling BJD is laying its focus on Gopalpur Assembly seat in Ganjam district and leaving no stone unturned to retain the seat for the fourth time, a report said.

The battle to win Gopalpur Assembly segment has become more intense due to presence of MLA Pradeep Panigrahy, who has been expelled from the party. The party is trying to win this seat for the fourth time which it had won thrice in three elections held between 2009 and 2019.

According to sources, the Assembly segment was earlier known as Dura and later renamed as Gopalpur Assembly segment. The segment was a Congress citadel for long. Congress candidate won this seat in 2004 even after formation of BJD. Later, BJD snatched the seat from Congress and it tasted victory thrice from 2009 to 2019.

In 2019 polls, Panigrahy had to face a tough contest from his nearest BJP rival Bibhuti Jena. Panigrahy defeated Jena by only 2,600 votes.

This time, the opposition BJP has strengthened its organisation in the Assembly segment. Union ministers and party leaders are visiting the constituency at regular intervals and propagating the benefits of Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana and women



empowerment programmes. Panigrahy, on the other hand, is also attending various programmes in the constituency and strengthening his organisational with an eye to contest the election as an independent candidate.

So, whosoever BJD picks as the candidate from Gopalpur will have to face a tough fight, political analysts said. Similarly, the BJP and Congress are yet to open their cards regarding candidate selection.

Notably, Panigrahy was expelled from the ruling party two and five years back for his anti-party activities, said sources.

Meanwhile, his supporters have floated an outfit called 'Pradeep Sena' and are drumming up support for him. Political analysts said if Panigrahy gets a ticket from some other party or stands as an independent candidate, it might spell trouble for the ruling dispensation.

However, it is still not clear as to who will be the BJD can-

didate in 2024 elections. The party leaders are regularly conducting meetings of the party workers to galvanise them and make them prepared for the elections. The party workers are being strongly urged to support whosoever the party supremo and Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik will select as the candidate for the Assembly segment.

Since Telugu voters hold the key in the Assembly seat, efforts are on to please them and win their trust. The ruling party has been attaching more importance to women self-help groups (SHGs) under Mission Shakti. SHG members are being provided with various facilities and benefits at various places in the constituency.

Recently, Mission Shakti advisor Lopamudra Buxipatra visited the constituency to organise the SHG women. Chief Minister's political secretary Gopabandhu Das has been entrusted with the task of strength-

In 2019 polls, Panigrahy had to face a tough contest from his nearest BJP rival Bibhuti Jena. Panigrahy defeated Jena by only 2,600 votes

ening the party organization at grassroots level. Every month, he is spending around a fortnight to supervise the party works in Rangeilunda block, Gopalpur urban area and six wards of Berhampur city. He is also touring five panchayats of Kukudakhandi block and overseeing the party works.

Rajya Sabha member and BJD's state general secretary Manas Mangaraj has been appointed as the observer of Berhampur Lok Sabha segment. During his visit, he is laying more stress on Gopalpur Assembly segment. He is organising meetings of party workers and has announced to spend half of his MPLAD fund for the development of the Assembly segment.

Berhampur Lok Sabha MP Chandra Sekhar Sahu, MLA Bikram Panda and Mayor Sanghamitra Dalei have also attended the workers meet in Gopalpur and exhorted the party workers to work wholeheartedly for the party.

AP admits Raipahad infiltration

POST NEWS NETWORK

Nandapur, July 29: Andhra Pradesh officials reportedly admitted to their infiltration in Raipahad village under Nandapur block in Koraput district as they submitted the list of beneficiaries enrolled under various welfare schemes of their state during a meeting with Odisha officials over border issues, a report said Saturday.

The AP officials also expressed their inability to stop implementation of developmental works in the village when asked by their Odisha counterparts at the meeting held at Chatua guest house two days back.

In his reply, Dumuriguda tehsildar CH Nagma, who was leading the Andhra delegation, said

halting developmental works is beyond their capacity. AP officials were found to have come to the meeting without any supportive documents or maps to substantiate their claims over Raipahad village for which the meeting failed to yield any positive result. They sought more time to bring the papers and documents.

Reports said that AP officials have distributed ration cards, job cards, voter identity cards, forest land pattas, education and healthcare facilities to 18 families in the village. The officials were also learnt to have given away houses under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana to 18 families in the village as well as power connection and drinking water facilities. They were also learnt

to have had included all the families in the village under MGN-REGS. The revelation has baffled the officials and other members representing the Odisha government as it is construed as an open challenge to the state government.

Sources said Odisha officials had asked their AP counterparts to come prepare with all relevant documents and maps to the meeting held which was held for the second time on the border issues at Chatua guest house. However, they brought no documents to substantiate their claims. They could only submit the list of works they had undertaken in the village and the assistance provided to the beneficiaries for which the meeting remained inconclusive.

9 firearms seized from Similipal STR



POST NEWS NETWORK

Baripada, July 29: Acting on a tip-off, Khunta police raided two villages on the foothills of Similipal and seized nine country-made firearms stashed in jungles, police said Saturday.

The raid took place as part of the 'Clean Similipal' drive undertaken by district police to free Similipal Wildlife Sanctuary of poachers and illegal arms following the murder of two forest officials and unabated poaching of elephants and other wild animals. This was stated here by Mayurbhanj SP B Gangadhar at a press meet held at the district police headquarters,

Saturday.

The breakthrough came when a police team led by Khunta IIC Lopamudra Nayak raided Tunuki and Baniabasa villages situated on the foothills of the sanctuary. The police team found eight country-made guns and a country-made pistol from an abandoned place inside the jungle.

However, no one has been arrested. Police registered a case under Arms Act and further investigations are on.

Police have issued a warning to the locals to surrender their guns or gun making materials at the nearest police station and get rewarded for it July 30 and 31. Any violation will be dealt with strictly as per law, the SP said.

Meanwhile, a person under Baripada Sadar police limits has surrendered his gun while 32 guns were seized and 20 persons arrested in 10 cases till now. The search operation will be intensified August 1, he added. Udala sub-divisional police officer (SDPO) Sarthak Ray and Khunta inspector in-charge Lopamudra Nayak attended the press meet.

MAN REUNITES WITH FAMILY AFTER 2 YRS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bheden, July 29: Police Saturday rescued a mentally-deranged man, who was missing for the last two years, from near a garbage dump at Pradhanpalli village under this police station in Bargarh district, and handed him over to his parents.

The man was identified as Suryakanta, 32, son of Hadibandhu Nayak of Lokipur in Gobindpur panchayat under Begunia police limits of Khurda district.

Police said Suryakanta had gone missing while herding sheep two years ago. His family could not find him despite intense search. A missing case was registered at the local police station. However, Suryakanta had taken shelter near a garbage dump at Pradhanpalli alongside the Godabhaga-Sonepur State Highway-54. He had to spend days and nights under open sky, and depend on food provided by some compassionate people.

During night patrolling a few days ago, Rushuda outpost police stopped their vehicle after seeing Suryakanta. Outpost in-charge Pramod Sahu enquired about the residential details from him which the latter provided but could not speak anything about how he reached Pradhanpalli. However, he expressed his willingness to go back to his native place in Khurda. Police then contacted his family through Begunia police following which his family received Suryakanta in the presence of villagers, police and local sarpanch.

4 nabbed for robbing courier van driver



POST NEWS NETWORK

Ganja, July 29: Police here Saturday arrested and forwarded to court four dacoits for looting cash from a courier van driver.

The arrested were identified as Amiya Moharana, 26, Babuni

Barik, 27, Pramod Kumar Sahu, 28, and Rakesh Kumar Parida, 25, all from Madhyakhanda village under Daspalla police limits in Nayagarh district.

Ganja police said five dacoits followed a courier van coming from Daspalla to Ganja in suspect of Ganja being transported

in the van in their Hyundai Verna car. They broke the windshield of the courier van and made away with ₹2,000 from the van driver near Gholahandi village. A police team led by IIC, Ganja PS Binay Ranjan Parida conducted a raid at Madhyakhanda village Saturday and arrested these four accused.

Police also seized the Hyundai Verna car, a TATA Indigo car, four mobile phones, ₹4,700 in cash, a billhook, two iron and steel rods from their possession. Police said all the accused are history-sheets and the other accused will be nabbed soon.

HIRA - THE HONEYBEE MAN

POST NEWS NETWORK

Aul, July 29: Just as the sight of a honeybee makes one scared of being stung, in case of a swarm of bees, everybody runs for cover. However, a betel shop at Aul in coastal Kendrapara is a rare sight. Swarms of honeybees come to the shop of Ganesh Chandra Roy alias Hira who feeds them with sweet pan masala every day. More often than not, one can find the betel shop owner covered with hundreds of bees. Strangely, the bees neither sting the owner nor the customers.

Hira, a resident of Lokapada village under Aul police station, was once a professional artiste in opera and had won accolades. He, however, now ekes out his living from this betel shop-cum-variety store at Aul market.

His shop shot to fame during the last Raja festival, as the many lo-



calcs thronged it to see swarms of bees flitting around the shop. According to Hira, during Raja festival, he used to sell special sweet betels. This year, the fragrance of sweet pan masala, cherry and fried coconut attracted the honeybees to his shop.

When a swarm of bees first came to his shop, panic struck him as well as the customers.

But to the surprise of Hira, the swarm of bees came and sat on the cherry and other fra-

Man held for rape

Berhampur: Nimakhandi police Friday evening arrested a man for allegedly raping a woman. The accused was identified as Gopal Pradhan, 50. Medical test of both the accused and the victim were conducted Saturday. A case (245/23) was registered and Gopal was forwarded to court that sent him to judicial custody. As per sources, a woman was sitting in front of her house July 26 afternoon when Gopal came in a motorcycle and took the lady with him on the pretext of some work. However, he took her to a secluded place near Jagannath temple on the outskirts of the village and outraged her modesty. The rape survivor lodged a complaint with Nimakhandi police who arrested Gopal.

Hira's betel shop shot to fame during the last Raja festival when many locals thronged it to see honeybees flitting around the shop

₹150 to feed thousands of bees hovering around his betel shop. "I do not know where the honeybees are coming from. I think they are local. As I developed an emotional attachment with the bees, I feel great to work in my betel shop amid swarms of honey bees," Hira said. Earlier, customers were afraid to come to the shop, but when they learnt that the bees are not biting, they started coming without fear, said Hira. The bee-loving shopkeeper said he likes to spend time with bees as he gets immense pleasure from it.

| EAST COAST RAILWAY | |
|--|----------------|
| File No. DR/Engg/KUR/23-24/E-Tender/56 | Dt. 27.07.2023 |
| (1) Tender No. e-tender-HQKUR-157-2023, Dtd. 19.07.2023 | |
| DESCRIPTION : EXECUTION OF 15.00 KM THROUGH SLEEPER RENEWAL WORK BY PQRS FROM KM 450.20 TO 455.20 ON UP, DOWN AND MID LINE IN BETWEEN RETANG - KHURDA ROAD SECTION OF KHURDA ROAD DIVISION. | |
| Approx Cost of the Work (₹) : 203.77 Lakhs, EMD (₹) : 2,51,900.00, Completion Period : 10 (Ten) Months. | |
| (2) Tender No. e-tender-SOUTHKUR-158-2023, Dtd. 21.07.2023 | |
| DESCRIPTION : BALANCE WORK OF "PROPOSED CONVERSION AND REBUILDING OF 37 NOS STONE SLAB BRIDGES INTO RCC BOX BRIDGES BETWEEN KUHURI TO GANJAM STATION OF KHURDA ROAD DIVISION". | |
| Approx Cost of the Work (₹) : 820.66 Lakhs, EMD (₹) : 5,60,300.00, Completion Period : 12 (Twelve) Months. | |
| (3) Tender No. e-tender-EastKUR-164-2023, Dtd. 21.07.2023 | |
| DESCRIPTION : PROVISION OF 1ST FOB AT MATTAGAJPUR (MTND) PH & NIMKANA (NIN) PH UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF ASSISTANT DIVISIONAL ENGINEER / II / CUTTACK OF KHURDA ROAD DIVISION. | |
| Approx Cost of the Work (₹) : 207.04 Lakhs, EMD (₹) : 2,53,500.00, Completion Period : 10 (Ten) Months. | |
| Tender Closing Date and Time : At 1500 Hrs. of 11.08.2023 (For all the Tenders.) | |
| No manual offers sent by Post / Courier/ Fax or in person shall be accepted against such e-tenders even if these are submitted on firm's letter head and received in time. All such manual offers shall be considered invalid and shall be rejected summarily without any consideration. | |
| Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-Tender is available in website: https://www.reps.gov.in | |
| Note : The prospective tenderers are advised to revisit the website 10 (Ten) days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes / Corrigendum issued for this tender. | |
| Divisional Railway Manager (Engg), PR-403/O/23-24 | Khurda Road |

FOCUS GANDHI AT PIETERMARITZBURG

HEALING WITHOUT HURTING



In the tumultuous era of globalisation, where borders blur, economies intertwine, and identities meld together, the city of Pietermaritzburg gives a message as profound as any revered pilgrimage site would

of watertight segmentation, there were evidently few 'hearts' among the antagonists, that promised the hope of justice for the oppressed and redemption for the oppressor. The station master, fellow passengers, and the countless Europeans in SA whose souls gravitated towards Gandhi, such as the Duke family, the West family, the Pollacks, the Kallenbachs, Sonja Schlessien, and sympathisers like journalist Cartwright, bureaucrat Chimney, police officer's wife Sarah Alexander, et al., embodied that hope and redemption. When the world saw only the watertight compartments, Gandhi could see the presence of a wicket gate amidst repression, which made him build on the path of nonviolent struggle. He said, 'humans are essentially good, susceptible to error and amenable to truth.'

We witness similar dynamic in Madiba's struggle, too. The likes of Denis Goldberg, Advocate George Bizos, and writer Alan Paton symbolised that gate of hope. White ministers like Orloff Miller, Clark Olsen, and James Reeb who risked their life by standing on the side of Martin Luther King Jr and his civil rights campaign, exemplify that gate to redemption. The historic event at Pietermaritzburg railway station symbolises both a seemingly impenetrable wall of suppression and a hope for redemption. In an increasingly complex yet interconnected world, Pietermaritzburg's message reminds us of the dialectical probability in every adversity and the possibility of overcoming it in a manner of winning without defeating and healing without hurting. In a world ridden with violence, it opens a wicket gate for justice, reconciliation, and a sustainable future for all.

The writer is Dean FIDS, MGM University, Aurangabad.

our own brothers and sisters.

While differences and discord are inherent in human communities, the emerging trend of global living compels us to treat every challenge as an internal matter. Standing at the cusp of an imminent global village defined by pluralism, Gandhi found prophetic resonance in the message of Christ: 'Love thy enemy.' For, in this new paradigm, the adversary is no longer an 'other'; increasingly they are fellow citizens and stakeholders. This realisation drove Gandhi to construct the method of satyagraha, an inclusive post-modern approach to addressing human challenges.

The first message Pietermaritzburg imparts therefore is, akin to that of a surgeon distinguishing between the disease and the patient. We may learn to wash society of the wrong while seeking to redeem the antagonist from their errors, fostering a harmonious coexistence between both parties.

The other message from this City of Choice is a precursor to the first one. It revolves around how we interpret history and what we choose to take from it. In the tapestry of the

Pietermaritzburg incident, we witness prominently those who cast Gandhi off the train and the one who bullied him the following day. However, for those with discerning eyes, the same canvas reveals the benevolent side of these 'antagonists' that is unfortunately often overlooked. The station master, in the morning after Gandhi's expulsion, offered words of comfort and provided him with another first-class ticket. Fellow passengers on subsequent train and coach rides pleaded with the conductor to spare Gandhi. These compassionate souls, all whites, were part of the very 'antagonists' who tormented him.

In a righteous struggle, these few virtuous individuals from opposing quarters form the trump card. Throughout history, the tried and tested strategy for triumph in warfare has been to identify the adversary's weakness and strike at its core. In a righteous struggle too this strategy works; the presence of the 'heart' in the opponent's camp serves as a weakness to them and a strength to the cause of satyagraha.

If we scan the historic occurrences through this premise, we see that even in the era

As we approach the 76th year of Independence here are some thoughts on the man who made freedom possible and the day that changed his life. The day he was thrown out of the train compartment on a cold winter night in Pietermaritzburg railway station. An American missionary Dr. John Mott once asked Gandhi what had been the most creative experience of his life. Gandhi recounted his inner struggle on that winter night when he had sat and shivered in the dark waiting room at Pietermaritzburg railway station as he was thrown out of the first-class compartment by a white policeman saying 'coolies' had a place only in the van (luggage) compartment. And he told Dr. Mott, "My active nonviolence began from that day."

In the tumultuous era of globalisation, where borders blur, economies intertwine, and identities meld together, the city of Pietermaritzburg gives a message as profound as any revered pilgrimage site would. It is a message that inspired three remarkable individuals: Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Lr King Jr, and Madiba Nelson Mandela, who, through their extraordinary lives, propelled civilisation towards greater humanity.

Pietermaritzburg's message has two parts: First, every architect of wrong carries within oneself the potential for undoing that wrong and offering hope for a better future. Every wall of oppression has a wicket gate within itself. And, second, it teaches us that 'the wrong and the wrongdoer are not one.' We cannot discard the entirety for the transgressions of a few. The second one first. Madiba, King, and Gandhi concurred with the notion that their fight was against the wrong, not the wrongdoer. They directed their efforts against evil, not the evildoer, recognising that the wrongdoer, evildoer and sinner were



D John Chelladurai

THE HISTORIC EVENT AT MARITZBURG RAILWAY STATION SYMBOLISES BOTH A SEEMINGLY IMPENETRABLE WALL OF SUPPRESSION AND A HOPE FOR REDEMPTION

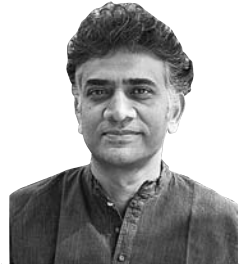


THE MOTHER

Playing With Fire

The Union government is passing legislation to make Aadhaar compulsory for births and deaths. If the bill should become law, it will feed into the National Population Register. This in turn will revive the National Register of Citizens. The last time the government attempted this, it was pushed back by the CAA protests in 2019-20. In April 2020, the government was to begin the NPR exercise manually. This would have needed the enumerators, meaning government workers, teachers and clerical staff and so on, to go door-to-door and question people in 25 crore households. This attempt was given up after the protests did not end. They did not end because the Prime Minister gave no assurance that the NRC would not be implemented. He said merely that it had not been discussed yet. This was insufficient to satisfy people who believe that what happened in Assam would happen nationwide. Meaning that people would be marked as doubtful citizens, lose their voting rights and begin a process that goes through a National Register of Citizens list, a Foreigner Tribunal and ends in a detention centre. Other than the protests what stopped the previous NPR/NRC exercise was opposition from non-BJP parties.

Some states have said that they will not implement the NPR. Kerala informed the Centre it feared law and order problems. The state has also challenged the Citizenship Amendment Act in the Supreme Court. Madhya Pradesh when it was under the Congress said it would not implement it either. Other states like West Bengal encouraged their citizens to actively resist the enumerator and not show them any documents. Yet other states said they would implement the NPR only partially (Odisha and Bihar), leaving out questions. Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot said that he would not allow Rajasthanis to be jailed on this issue and instead would go to jail himself first. At the federal level, then, it became clear that the incoming data would be incomplete and fragmented. That would be a third reason for the Modi government to have stalled the NPR/NRC process in 2020.



Aakar Patel

The linking of Aadhaar to births and deaths will revive the debate around citizenship

But certainly it appears that the main reason was the issue of physically getting the data. The polarisation produced by the citizenship laws resulted in some extreme actions by the state and these actions were publicised. In Hyderabad in February 2020, officials overseeing Aadhaar exceeded their brief and summoned over 100 people to their office to prove their citizenship. Presumably, all of these were Muslim individuals. After this was reported, the Aadhaar authority clarified and backtracked a little. But the damage was done. Elsewhere, a court in Assam waved away 15 different documents, including voter ID cards and land revenue records from the 1960s, to dismiss a Muslim woman's claim to Indian citizenship. Again, this was heavily publicised. In Bidar, children were interrogated over a school play on the citizenship laws, parents charged with sedition and women jailed, producing global outrage.

As a result of all this and more, in large parts of India there was information on and popular mobilisation against the NPR and the CAA. Tamil Nadu alone saw mass protests in Chennai, Tirunelveli, Vellore, Coimbatore, Thoothukudi, Tiruchi, Madurai, Salem and Krishnagiri on a single day. These were protests that in many cities required the deployment of the entire police force to manage. This is unsustainable in a country the size of India.

The National Sample Survey (NSS) which was to collect material on the census and consumption was also affected by the CAA protests. For this reason the census and the quinquennial (five yearly) surveys have both been postponed indefinitely.

The former Chief Statistician of India Pronab Sen had said then that this was a new sort of problem. He said "attacks on field investigators of the NSS is not new. It has happened before, essentially when they asked questions on either household incomes or household assets... so, this has happened earlier, but not too often, because over time people got fairly comfortable knowing that NSS surveys happen." This has now changed.

He said that in fact we "may well have a situation where you are unable to do the Census properly and if the Census is not done properly, then for the next 10 years, no household survey would be reliable because all household surveys rely on the Census as the frame. If this (Census) runs into problems, and there's a danger that it might, then for the next 11 years, you are in trouble."

The linking of Aadhaar to births and deaths will revive the debate around citizenship. This is unfortunate. We have not considered the fact that powerful voices around the world, including the United Nations Secretary General, elements within the European Union and the United States Congress, were concerned and vocal about what was happening in India in 2020.

It doesn't make sense for the government to push through with the NPR exercise in these circumstances, through whatever method. One hopes that all this has been taken into consideration as we again march ourselves towards a controversy over citizenship.

SPECTRUM SUSTAINABILITY

Defaulting to plant-based foods

The catastrophic effects of climate change are here: blistering and deadly heat waves are scorching Europe, and the poles are melting, with sea-ice growth in Antarctica reaching unprecedented lows. Is there anything individuals can do about it? The answer is a resounding yes. What we eat, in particular, matters a great deal. The claim that "cows are the new coal" may seem hyperbolic, but it is essentially accurate. Roughly a third of all demand-side greenhouse-gas (GHG) emissions are from food systems, and beef alone accounts for a quarter of emissions produced by raising and growing food.

Moreover, the real price of animal-based meals does not reflect their carbon footprint and the resulting cost of mitigation efforts. Research shows that a shift toward plant-based diets, or to less environmentally harmful meats such as fish and chicken, would be better for people and the planet. Recently, a global consortium of the FAO of the UN, the WHO, UNICEF, and others concluded that to achieve sustainable and healthy dietary patterns, food systems will need to be transformed – and fast.

Behavioural research has identified ways to influence deci-

sion-makers of all types – including farmers deliberating what to grow, retailers seeking to sell more climate-friendly foods, and consumers ordering in a restaurant. Presenting sustainable meals as easy and attractive, including changing the order and scale of plant-based options in buffets, has been shown to influence food choices. This approach is also relatively palatable, whereas bans and rules are typically viewed as overly paternalistic, and taxes on specific products like meat or sugar negatively affect the poor.

Given this, default policies in restaurants, cafes, and canteens could be a game changer. As powerful yet freedom-preserving "nudges," they change the context of choice while still allowing individuals to decide. Defaults should not act as a stand-alone policy; rather, they should be part of a large-scale curation of those parts of the food system to which consumers are exposed, with industry and retail playing a large role. Wherever people decide, behaviourally informed policy tools could be applied. Politicians may prefer supporting climate pledges, implementing food-waste laws, or calling for corporate sustainability practices, with some in-

cluding that "people should make their own decisions around the food they eat." But they can nudge food retailers to enlist their sophisticated marketing arsenal to make sustainable and healthy options more attractive, affordable, available, and socially acceptable. This would go a long way toward reducing GHG emissions worldwide.

Most criticism of nudges – particularly that they are ineffective and crowd out more useful policy tools – does not hold water. Policymakers strive for "good governance of nudging," and cities like New York and Copenhagen and regions worldwide are employing choice architecture to help transform food systems. By harnessing the power of suggestion, people's inertia, and their quest for convenience, defaults are one of the most important tools to change people's behaviour.

When the plant-based option is the default, and the non-vegetarian option becomes the "other" choice, meat consumption declines. A systematic review of 15 independent intervention studies published between 2012 and 2020, conducted in different settings in six European countries and the US, concluded that vegetarian default interventions did

substantially decrease consumers' choice of meat dishes, with 53-87% fewer meat options selected.

A study conducted in Denmark showed over 84% of 300 participants approved of changing the default lunch option to a vegetarian buffet. Further evidence strongly suggests that such defaults are a promising tool to test in different food choice settings.

Given these outcomes, it is possible to imagine "default vegetarianism" in restaurants, grocery stores, schools, and offices. "Meatless Mondays" gained traction worldwide and became a successful movement supported by many people and organisations. There is no denying that consumers will need to switch to a more plant-based diet to reduce food systems' GHG emissions. Together with other behaviourally informed policies that employ nudges, plant-based defaults promise to bring about a large drop in meat consumption while maintaining freedom of choice. They could lead us all to play a more active role in conserving the planet's resources and mitigating climate change.

The writer is Director of the El-Erian Institute of Behavioral Economics and Policy.

WISDOM CORNER

- One of the first conditions of happiness is that the link between Man and Nature shall not be broken. **LEO TOLSTOY**
- The greatest happiness is to know the source of unhappiness. **FYODOR DOSTOEVSKY**
- Happiness is when what you think, what you say, and what you do are in harmony. **MAHATMA GANDHI**

WORDSWORTH

Maritorious

This means being fond of one's husband, the partner to uxorious, of a man who is fond of his wife to the point of dotting excess. Maritorious is much less well known, to the extent that there is no success in finding a modern example of its use outside the books on words that cite it. A Google search turned up what looked at first sight like several examples, such as the surprising statement that "Medals and prizes are given to maritorious students". It took a moment to realise that should have been meritorious. As it happens, that's oddly relevant, since the only example of the word on record is in Bussy D'Ambois, a tragedy by George Chapman of 1607, in which he coins the word to make a bad pun: "Dames maritorious ne're were meritorious". John Keats' poem, On First Looking into Chapman's Homer, refers to the same man, who made a famous translation of the Greek work. Dryden thought little of Chapman's play, finding in it "a dwarfish thought dressed up in gigantic words, repetition in abundance, looseness of expression, and gross hyperboles; the sense of one line expanded prodigiously into ten; and, to sum up all, incorrect English, and a hideous mingle of false poetry and true nonsense". However, the Oxford English Dictionary has 116 citations from it, and it has provided modern writers on words, such as myself, some small subject matter, so it hasn't proved entirely valueless. The word is from Latin maritus, husband.



Lucia Reisch

THERE IS NO DENYING THAT CONSUMERS WILL NEED TO SWITCH TO A MORE PLANT-BASED DIET TO REDUCE FOOD SYSTEMS' GHG EMISSIONS

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

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B-15, Rasulgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

In denial mode

Sir, Malik Muhammad Ahmad Khan, Special Assistant on Defence to Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, has admitted during a TV interview that drones are being used to smuggle drugs across the border into India. Khan, who represents Kasur city in the Provincial Assembly, let the cat out of the bag while seeking a special package for the rehabilitation of flood victims of his constituency Kasur city located close to the Line of Control. This admission by the PM's adviser leaves no room for doubt that drone-based drug trafficking is taking place right under the nose of the Sharif government, which is doing little or nothing to deter the smugglers. Despite irrefutable evidence, Pakistan has for long been in the denial mode about its role in aiding and abetting cross-border terrorism in any form. In recent years, drones have emerged as an effective means to send drugs and weapons into Indian territory, particularly the border state of Punjab. Against this backdrop, a robust, airtight policy is a must to counter the drone menace. At the same time, Khan's revelation has given India a golden opportunity to corner Pakistan on this pressing issue. The Union government, which is spearheading the nation's war on drugs, should leave no stone unturned to expose the neighbour on international platforms.

N Sadhasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

Exceptional kids

Sir, Spelling Bees, who take part in the prestigious annual Scripps National Spelling Bee competition in the US, have become synonymous with the height of this intellectual contest, which has transmogrified over the years. Significantly, for years the competition, which is loaded with plenty of excitement and nail-biting moments, has been dominated by children of Indian origin, who comprise just about 1% of the total US population. If the 14-year-old Harini Logan from Texas was crowned champion in 2022, this year it was the turn of Dev Shah from Florida. In a research, exploring the amazing success rate of Indian-American students at the Spelling Bee, it has been revealed that exceptional quality of memorisation and networks give these students an edge over others. It is completely a normal scenario in an Indian-American household to see kids knowing not one, but multiple dictionaries by heart, astoundingly by the age of 12!

Ranganathan Sivakumar, CHENNAI

'War will continue from Meitei side' Manipur's tribals reach out to INDIA

THE BITTER FIGHTING BETWEEN THE MEITEI COMMUNITY AND THE KUKI TRIBALS HAS LASTED FOR ALMOST THREE MONTHS IN A DEEP EMBARRASSMENT FOR MODI AS HE PREPARES TO HOST A SUMMIT OF G20 LEADERS IN SEPTEMBER

REUTERS

Kangvai, July 29: A one-mile stretch of a highway in the lush green foothills of Manipur has become the symbol of a vicious sectarian conflict that has killed over 160 people since May and severely dented the strongman image of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The bitter fighting between the Meitei community and the Kuki tribals is in the remote northeast of the country but it has lasted for almost three months, a deep embarrassment for Modi as he prepares to host a summit of G20 leaders in September and contest a general election next year.

There have been past tensions between the two groups, but violence erupted in early May after the state high court ordered the government to consider extending economic benefits reserved for the Kuki tribals to the Meiteis.

Street protests spiralled into armed conflict and now, rival gunmen have dug into bunkers and outposts along the highway and in other places in Manipur, and regularly fire at each other with assault weapons, sniper rifles and pistols.

Tens of thousands of people have fled their homes because of the fighting, villages have been set on fire and many women sexually assaulted, residents and media reports say. The Meitei-dominated state police are seen as partisan while army troops have been ordered to keep the peace but not to disarm fighters.

There is no sign of any early resolution.

Historian and author Ramachandra Guha described the situation as "a mixture of anarchy and civil war and a complete breakdown of the state administration."

"It is a failure of the prime minister at a time of grave national crisis," Guha added, speaking in a television interview. "Narendra Modi lives in a bubble of his own, he doesn't like to be associated with bad news and somehow hopes he will ride it out." The prime minister's office and a state government spokesman did not respond to requests for comment.

The Kukis, who are a third of the Meitei population, have borne a disproportionate brunt of the violence and make up two-thirds of the victims, according to new government data reviewed by Reuters this week. They have mostly fled to the hills, leaving the capital Imphal and the surrounding valley, areas dominated by the majority Meiteis.

Much of the violence and killings have taken place in buffer zones near Manipur's foothills where intense gun battles erupt regularly, security officials said.

The stretch of the national highway where the Meitei-dominated Bishnupur district meets Kuki-controlled Churachandpur is one of the buffer zones that has seen some of the worst fighting.

This week, when a Reuters team visited the Kuki village of Kangvai, just off the highway, volleys of gunshots could be heard from both sides.



Armed Kuki men guard a checkpoint at Torbung village in Churachandpur district, Manipur.

Jangminlun Touthang, 32, a Kuki fighter carrying a hunting rifle, was manning a post directly opposite the Meitei lines.

He said he was there to protect his village from the Meiteis "who are going to attack us, who are going to burn our houses."

"When they attack, we fire," he said.

Manipur, which borders Myanmar, is one of India's smallest states with a population of 3.2 million. While Kukis are just 16% of the state's population, Meiteis make up 53% of the people. "Resources available to both sides are not the same. It is not

a fight among equals," a federal security official based in Manipur told Reuters. According to government estimates, 2,780 weapons stolen from the state armoury, including assault rifles, sniper guns and pistols, remain with the Meiteis, while the Kukis have 156.

Kae Haopu Gangte, general secretary of Kuki Inpi Manipur, an umbrella Kuki civil society group, blamed the conflict on what he said was the desire of the Meiteis to dominate Kuki land.

The Kukis now want a separate state within India, he said.

"Until and unless we achieve

statehood we will not stop," Gangte said. "We are fighting not only Meiteis, we are fighting the government." Pramot Singh, founder of Meitei Leepun, a prominent Meitei organisation that has members on the frontlines, said all Meiteis supported the conflict.

Seated outside his home near Imphal, with a pistol in a holster, he said his group will fight the Kukis until they stop demanding a separate state be carved out of Manipur.

"The war will continue from the Meitei side. This is just the beginning," he said.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Imphal, July 29: The Indigenous Tribal Leaders' Forum (ITLF), an umbrella group of tribals in Manipur, Saturday wrote a letter to opposition alliance INDIA, seeking its support for their demand of a separate administration and implementation of President's rule in the violence-hit state.

"We fervently appeal to the Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance (INDIA) to take up our cause and apprise the nation about our plight. We implore you to help us survive this onslaught by supporting our demand for a separate administration from Manipur and to urge the central government to introduce President rule immediately in Manipur to end the violence," the ITLF said in its two-page letter to the opposition parties.

The letter, signed by ITLF chairman Pagan Haokip and secretary Muan Tombing, said almost three months into the sectarian conflict, peace remains a distant dream in the northeast state.

"While all sides have suffered, the minority Kuki-Zo tribals have borne the brunt of the violence, making up over two-thirds of the deaths in the conflict," it claimed.

The ITLF alleged that thousands of weapons looted from state armouries in capital Imphal are being used in the "ethnic cleansing campaign".

"To add to our plight, state police commandos with sophisticated guns and mortars have been openly joining armed Meitei



gunmen in raiding tribal villages and attacking the frontlines... Gaps in military buffer zones are being constantly exploited, and the army and other security forces are handicapped because President's rule has still not been implemented," it said.

It said blockade of the only national highway leading to the hills of Churachandpur, the state's largest district, also means that lakhs of tribals are facing shortage of essential commodities and medicine.

"Those that are available are ferried from Mizoram through mountainous roads, leading to a huge increase in the prices of goods," the ITLF said.

"Tribals and Meiteis are now separated physically. After so much blood and trauma, there is no possibility of them living together again. We refuse to entertain the thought of going back to living under the communal Manipur government controlled by the Meitei community," the letter read.

It said "the next logical step is to separate us politically. For the Kuki-Zo tribals to survive in our own land we are asking the central government to give us the right to govern ourselves under the Indian constitution."

Apni Party seeks reservation for Sikhs in J&K Assembly

AGENCIES

Jammu, July 29: Activists of Apni Party Saturday held a peaceful protest demonstration here, seeking reservation of two legislative assembly seats for the Sikh community in Jammu and Kashmir.

Apni Party provincial president (women wing) Pavneet Kaur led a protest as the central government on July 26 introduced a bill in the Lok Sabha proposing nomination of two members from Kashmiri migrant community and a Pakistan-occupied J&K refugees to the legislative assembly in the Union Territory.

"The community has remained neglected in terms of their political representation in governments and the legislative assembly while priority was given to other communities," Kaur said.

She said the Sikhs form a large chunk of population who have contributed to the society as well as J&K and the nation "incomparably in defence, police, administration, social works, and education system but the community was not given preference by the governments".

District president Rural-B Harpreet Singh expressed concern over "discriminatory approach" towards the Sikh community and also demanded reorganization of Punjabi language as one of the official languages in the Union Territory.

The Punjabi speaking people's work, and their heritage must be recognized by the government, he said, adding "we are not against anyone being given anything, but Sikhs should be given political reservation. Thus, two Legislative Assembly seats must be reserved for them."

Welcoming the bill to nominate two members, including a woman, from Kashmiri migrants and one from the displaced persons of PoJK, J&K BJP Minority Morcha president Ranjodh Singh Nalwa demanded nomination of Sikhs too to the assembly.

"The Sikh community has from time to time raised from different platforms the demand of nomination of a community member to the legislative assembly," he said.

Stop proxy rule from Delhi: J&K leaders

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jammu, July 29: Leaders of various political parties Saturday targeted the BJP-led central government over the delay in holding assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir and said the Union territory cannot be run through a 'remote control from Delhi'.

Speaking at a round-table discussion here, the leaders underlined the importance of dialogue to reach a consensus to pull Jammu and Kashmir out of the present 'quagmire'.

CPI-M's MY Tarigami, National Conference (NC) Jammu provincial president Rattan Lal Gupta, National Panthers Party (NPP) president Harsh Dev Singh, Shiv Sena-BST's Manish Saini, Peoples Democratic Party's (PDP) Varinder Singh Sonu and Awami National Conference senior vice president Muzaffar Shah were among those who took part in the discussion - 'Jammu and Kashmir - The Way Forward'.

No Congress representative took part in the discussion, which was organised by the Centre for Peace and Progress.

Tarigami said when the assembly polls are announced, the BJP will face the restless people

of Jammu and Kashmir.

He said the people have high hopes from the Supreme Court and believe that it will uphold the Constitution by providing them justice.

"Dialogue is the key to reaching a consensus and working together to end political uncertainty and misgovernance so that people can get relief. The

Jammu and Kashmir assembly was dissolved in

(November) 2018 and fresh polls are not being conducted,"

Tarigami said. Several petitions challenging the Centre's decision have been filed in the Supreme

Court. A five-judge constitution bench headed by Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud will conduct day-to-day hearings on the petitions from August 2.

NPP's Harsh Dev Singh said, "We are witness to a proxy rule for the last five years which needs to be put to an end. Jammu and Kashmir cannot be run through a remote control from Delhi."

NC leader Rattan Lal Gupta claimed the people of Jammu and Kashmir are suffering immensely due to lack of accountability, basic facilities, inflation and growing unemployment.

Rally against 'separate admin' demand of Kukis

TENS OF THOUSANDS OF DEMONSTRATORS FROM ACROSS FIVE VALLEY DISTRICTS PARTICIPATED IN THE RALLY, DEMANDING THE TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF THE NORTHEASTERN STATE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Imphal, July 29: A massive rally was taken out here Saturday to protest against the demand for a 'separate administration' for areas inhabited by the Kuki community.

Tens of thousands of demonstrators from across five valley districts of the state participated in the rally, demanding the territorial integrity of the northeastern state where race riots began in early May.

The protest march, organised by Coordinating Committee on Manipur Integrity (COCOMI), began at Thangmeiband in Imphal West district and culminated at Hapta Kangieibunand in Imphal East, covering a distance of 5 km.

Holding aloft placards, demonstrators raised slogans against those who demanded separate administration, and against "illegal immigrants from Myanmar."

The demonstration was held on a day when a delegation of 21 MPs from the Opposition alliance INDIA arrived here to assess the ground situation.

Notably, ten MLAs from the Kuki community in Manipur had, in May, demanded a separate administration, stating that the administration had "miserably failed to protect" the Chin-Kuki-Zomi tribals.

Kukis, who have demanded a

separate administration, have however not made clear the definition of a separate administration as also the areas for which they are claiming such a dispensation.

The committee that organised the rally was also against the ongoing talks, reportedly being held in Delhi, between a home ministry team and former Kuki militants.

Sarat, a protester who came from the Bishnupur district, said, "After almost three months of arson, killings and torching of our houses, how can we give up our land."

K Gandhi from the Uripok area, who participated in the rally, said, "We want the army to take action against militants."

The demonstrators held a meeting at Hapta Kangieibunand and demanded the implementation of the National Register of Citizens and convening of a special Assembly session before August 5 to discuss ethnic violence in

the state. More than 160 people lost their lives and many were injured since ethnic clashes broke out in Manipur on May 3, after a 'Tribal Solidarity March' was organised in the hill districts to protest against the Meitei community's demand for Scheduled Tribe (ST) status.

Meiteis account for about 53 per cent of Manipur's population and live mostly in the Imphal Valley Tribals - Nagas and Kukis -- constitute another 40 per cent of the population and reside in the hill districts.



Meitei people participate in a rally organised by Coordinating Committee on Manipur Integrity amid ongoing ethnic violence in Manipur, in Imphal, Saturday.

Melting of Ladakh glacier could form 3 glacial lakes

FASTER GLACIAL RETREAT, ALONG WITH SURFACE MORPHOLOGICAL CHANGES, HAVE BEEN KNOWN TO RESULT IN THE FORMING OF NEW GLACIAL LAKES AND EXPANSION OF EXISTING ONES, A POTENTIAL SOURCE OF GLACIAL LAKE OUTBURST FLOODS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 29: Accelerated melting of the Himalayan Parkachik Glacier in Ladakh could give rise to three glacial lakes with an average depth ranging between 34 and 84 metres, scientists have found.

These lakes could be a potential source of glacial lake outburst floods in the Himalayas, the scientists from the Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology, Dehradun, said.

Parkachik Glacier is one of

the largest glacier in the Suru River valley, which is a part of the Southern Zaskar Ranges, western Himalaya. The Zaskar Range, part of the Himalayas, lies in the union territory of Ladakh.

The glacier's yearly melting rate was 6 times faster between 1999 and 2021 (22 years) than that calculated from 1971 to 1999 (28 years), the scientists found using satellite data to determine its glacial retreat from 1971-2021. The findings are published in the journal Annals of Glaciology.

The study attributed the ac-



celerated glacial retreat to ongoing climate warming, which also causes surface morphological or geological changes to glaciers. Faster glacial retreat, along with surface morphological changes, have been known to result in the forming of new glacial lakes and expansion of existing ones, a potential source of glacial lake outburst floods.

Glacial lakes are formed when a glacier erodes the land and then melts, filling the depression created by the glacier.

In this study, the scientists

have identified three potential overdeepening sites for lake formation on the glacier at different elevations. The lake area of each of these lakes could range from 43 to 270 hectares.

They said, however, that the expansion and reduction of these lakes depended on the dynamics of the glacier.

The study's surface ice velocity estimation suggested a slowing down, resulting in an increase of debris cover on the glacier surface, or the ablation zone, it said.



Khanjar, a ship of the Indian Navy arrives at Trincomalee, Sri Lanka for an operational turnaround. The ship was accorded a customary welcome by the Sri Lankan Navy



Children visit the 27th edition of the Delhi Book Fair organised by the India Trade Promotion Organisation at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi



Prime Minister Narendra Modi visits an exhibition at the inauguration of Akhil Bhartiya Shiksha Samagam, at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi



Medical students stage a protest over ongoing violence in Manipur in Churachandpur district



Young Muslim devotees during a procession on the tenth day of the mourning period of Muharram in Bangalore



Maharashtra Governor Ramesh Bais with newly-appointed Chief Justice of the Bombay High Court Justice Devendra Kumar Upadhyay during the latter's swearing-in ceremony at Raj Bhavan in Mumbai



Vehicles move through the waterlogged Sikar Road following heavy rains in Jaipur

of the day quote

Ever since Prime Minister's public clean chit to China on June 19th, 2020, the Modi government has been acting as if it is being tough on China, and that there have been no compromises or meaningful conversations between PM Modi and President Xi Jinping while Chinese troops remain in violation of previous LAC agreements

JAIRAM RAMESH | CONGRESS LEADER

The country's economy may or may not reach the top position, but saving the honour of mothers and sisters should be a priority

AKHILESH YADAV | SP CHIEF

Purvanchal and Bundelkhand have immense possibilities and funds for their development should be utilised after considering the multi-dimensional and long-term plans for the regions

YOGI ADITYANATH | UP CM

SHORT TAKES

Six pilgrims dead

Buldhana (Maharashtra): At least six pilgrims returning from the Amarnath Yatra were killed and another 21 injured when two private luxury buses collided near Malkapur in Maharashtra's Buldhana on Saturday, officials said. The accident occurred when the pilgrims were returning home to Hingoli and other places when their buses rammed into an Akola-bound bus. The six victims died on the spot and of the 21 injured, two were said to be in serious condition. The other 32 passengers have been shifted to a gurdwara in Malkapur for temporary lodging and boarding till arrangements are made to enable them go home.

Four electrocuted

Bokaro: Four people were killed and 10 others injured Saturday after they came in contact with a high-tension wire while preparing for a Muharram procession in Jharkhand's Bokaro district, police said. The incident occurred at Khetko village around 80 km from the state capital Ranchi, when the top portion of Tazia, a miniature replica of the tomb of Imam Hussain, came in contact with a live wire, Bokaro Superintendent of Police Priyadarshi Alok said.

Student killed

Bhopal: A Class 12 student of a government-run school was allegedly stabbed to death by one of his juniors – a minor in Madhya Pradesh's Indore. The victim, who was admitted to a hospital with multiple stab injuries inflicted with knife on Friday, succumbed to his injuries during treatment at night, police said. The incident occurred at Tukoganj area and both students were known to each other as they were students of Swami Vivekanand school.

Sambhaji booked

Amravati: The police in Maharashtra's Amravati district Saturday registered a case against Sambhaji Bhide for his alleged derogatory remarks on Mahatma Gandhi, with state Congress chief Nana Patole insisting the right-wing activist must be arrested. Patole said his party would agitate across the state after the end of the Monsoon session of the Assembly on August 4 if Bhide is not put behind bars. Bhide, the founder of Shri Shiv Pratishtan Hindustan outfit, is accused of making offensive remarks about the Father of the Nation in his speech during a programme at Bharat Mangal Hall in Badnera Road area in Amravati district on Thursday.



The BJP's double-engine governments have failed in states like Karnataka, Himachal Pradesh and Manipur

SACHIN PILOT | CONGRESS LEADER

WELCOME MOVE

The Punjab Cabinet led by Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann gave nod Saturday to introduce model fair price shops under the National Food Security Act to deliver wheat to beneficiaries at doorstep



BJP rejigs team in run up to LS polls

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 29: BJP president J P Nadda rejigged the list of the party's central office-bearers Saturday, bringing in a Pasmanda Muslim from Uttar Pradesh as one of its vice presidents and former Telangana unit chief Bandi Sanjay Kumar as a national general secretary. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has dropped C T Ravi, a leader from Karnataka, Dilip Saikia, a Lok Sabha MP from Assam, as its general secretaries, and Vinod Sonkar, Harish Dwivedi, both Lok Sabha MPs from Uttar Pradesh, and Sunil Deodhar as secretaries. Saroj Pandey, a Rajya Sabha MP from Chhattisgarh, has been made a vice president, while Dilip Ghosh, a Lok Sabha MP from West Bengal, has been dropped. Lata Usendi, a tribal leader from Chhattisgarh, has also been elevated to the post of vice president, underscoring the party's focus on the poll-bound state where the Congress is in power. Radha Mohan Agrawal, a Rajya Sabha MP from Uttar Pradesh, is one of the two new faces on the



list which have nine general secretaries, seven of whom retain their position. The new secretaries are Anil Antony, son of veteran Congress leader A K Antony, and Surendra Singh Nagar and Kamakhya Prasad Tasa, Rajya Sabha MP from UP and Assam respectively. Kerala leader Abdulla Kutty is another member from the minority community on the list. The appointment of former Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) vice-chancellor Mansoor, now a BJP MLC in Uttar Pradesh, is being seen to be part of the party's overtures to Pasmanda

(backward) Muslims. Ravi's omission from the list of general secretaries, who spearhead the party's policies and agenda nationally and state-wise, unlike the vice presidents who are mostly figureheads, is being seen by some as a fallout of the BJP's big defeat in the recent assembly polls in Karnataka. The four-term MLA had lost his seat in a close fight in the recently held assembly polls in Karnataka. However, a party leader said not much should be read into the dropping of several office-bearers, as many of them, including Ravi, may contest the 2024 Lok Sabha polls and will be focussing on their likely constituencies.

MP minor gangrape: Houses of accused razed



The accused, Ravindra Kumar and Atul Bhadoliya, allegedly raped the girl, bit her and inserted a hard object in her private parts Thursday, police sources said, but a senior official said this can be confirmed only after her medical examination report is received

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Satna, July 29: The local administration on Saturday demolished the houses of two men accused of raping and brutalising a 12-year-old girl in the temple town of Maihar in Madhya Pradesh's Satna district, an official said. The accused, Ravindra Kumar and Atul Bhadoliya, allegedly raped the girl, bit her and inserted a hard object in her private parts Thursday, police sources stated, but a senior official said this can be confirmed only after her medical examination report is received. Following the incident, the chief municipal officer of Maihar Municipal Council Friday issued notices to the families of the two men seeking documents related to their land and buildings, sub-divisional officer of police (SDOP) Lokesh Dabar said. A probe revealed that the houses of both the accused were illegal, he said, adding that Bhadoliya's house was constructed on 'nazool' land (government land used for non-agricultural purposes), while Kumar's house was built without permission. "Both the houses were demolished this morning," Dabar said. According to eye-witnesses,

when the demolition squad reached Bhadoliya's house, his family members requested officials to take any step only after the probe is completed. But they went ahead with the demolition. The duo, who worked for the trust managing a famous temple in Maihar town, allegedly lured the girl and took her to an isolated place, where they raped and brutalised her, the police said. The profusely bleeding girl, who also bore bite marks on her body, was admitted to a hospital at the divisional headquarters Rewa for advanced medical care, they said. Earlier, Superintendent of Police (SP) Ashutosh Gupta said, "I am not denying that a stick or some other object was inserted into the 12-year-old's private parts by accused Ravindra Kumar Ravi and Atul Bhadoliya. But this is something that can only be confirmed only in a medical report." He said the survivor is undergoing treatment at Sanjay Gandhi Hospital in Rewa and senior officials had visited the facility to inquire about her health. A team of doctors is monitoring her health and if required, she can also be shifted to Bhopal or Delhi for further treatment, he said on Saturday. The accused, both aged 30, were produced in a local court on Friday and were remanded to 14-day judicial custody, Gupta said. The duo was booked under the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, police said. After the incident, Maa Sharda Devi Mandir Management Committee, Maihar in a press statement said it had sacked Kumar and Bhadoliya, employed with them, forthwith after a criminal case was registered against them.



Search and rescue team personnel recover mangled remains of a vehicle from a stream at Gadsa valley, in Kullu district of Himachal Pradesh

CBI arrests 4 in bribery case

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 29: The CBI has arrested four people, including two joint director-ranked officers posted in the Ministry of Corporate Affairs and an associate of Alok Industries, in connection with alleged bribery of Rs 3 lakh, officials said Saturday. Those arrested were Joint Directors Manjit Singh and Puneet Duggal, Senior Technical Assistant Ruhi Arora, all officials of the Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Reshabh Raizada, an associate of Alok Industries, which was acquired by Reliance Industries Ltd in 2019, the officials said. "Searches were conducted in Delhi, Gurugram and Chennai in the premises of the accused which led to the recovery of cash of Rs 59.80 lakh (approximately), several incriminating documents and digital evidences," the CBI said in a statement. Singh and Arora are posted in the office of the Director General of Corporate Affairs, while Duggal is posted as official liquidator in Chennai.



The agency initiated the operation after getting information that Raizada, an associate of Alok Industries, is in regular contact with Duggal and pursuing for favourable settlement of a matter of his company pending with the Ministry of Corporate Affairs in lieu of undue advantage. Raizada allegedly persuaded Duggal to conclude the matter favourably and dispatch it for further clearance to the Director General's office.

India has 3,682 tigers, reveals govt data

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi/Ramnagar (U'khand), July 29: The number of tigers in India has increased from 2,967 in 2018 to 3,682 in 2022, an annual rise of 6 per cent, according to the latest government data released on the International Tiger Day on Saturday. With this, India has become home to approximately 75 per cent of the world's tiger population, Union Minister of State for Forest, Environment and Climate Change Ashwini Kumar Choubey said in Ramnagar while releasing the data for 2022. When Prime Minister Narendra Modi released the "Status of Tigers 2022" to mark the completion of 50 years of



"Project Tiger" in April, the government had said there are at least 3167 tigers in India. Tiger census is held every four years in the country. "There are a maximum of 3925 tigers in the country. The average number is 3,682," a senior official from the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) said. With a 50 per cent increase

"India's exemplary efforts in tiger conservation and the increase in tiger numbers is not just a statistic but a testament to the determination and commitment of the nation. "Under the ambit of tiger conservation, India has not only successfully safeguarded its tiger population, but also has secured the future of all life forms, truly in line with our philosophy of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam.'" He also took to Twitter to congratulate Madhya Pradesh for the achievement. "With 785 tigers as per the latest tiger estimation exercise, MP is the Leading Tiger State of India! This reflects MP's commitment to conserving tigers through intensive protection and monitoring by involving local communities," he said.

8 killed in TN blast

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Krishnagiri (TN), July 29: Eight people, including three women, were killed in an explosion at a firecracker unit in Tamil Nadu's Krishnagiri district Saturday, according to police. Prime Minister Narendra Modi condoled the loss of lives in the accident and announced an ex-gratia of Rs 2 lakh each to the kin of the deceased from the Prime Minister's National Relief Fund. "Deeply saddened by the tragic mishap at a cracker factory in Krishnagiri, Tamil Nadu, resulting in the loss of precious lives. My thoughts and prayers are with the families of the victims during this extremely difficult time," the PMO said in a tweet. "May the injured recover soon. An ex-gratia of Rs 2 lakh from PMNRF would be given to the next of kin of each deceased. The injured would be given Rs 50,000: PM @narendramodi," the tweet said. Union Home Minister Amit Shah, who is on a visit to Tamil Nadu, too, condoled the death of eight persons. Tamil Nadu Governor R N Ravi said he was deeply saddened by the loss of valuable lives in the mishap. "My prayers and thoughts are with the bereaved families. Wishing a speedy recovery to those injured," the Governor said on Twitter. Condoled the loss of lives in the incident, Chief Minister M K Stalin announced solatium to the kin of the deceased and the injured. "I am deeply saddened over the news of the death of eight people in an unexpected explosion at a private fireworks factory in Pazhayapetta, Boganapalli village. I have deputed Food Minister R Chakrapani to oversee and expedite the rescue and relief activities," the Chief Minister said.

Andhra's tomato farmer earns ₹4cr in 45 days

THE 48-YEAR-OLD SOLD HIS PRODUCE NOT ONLY IN THE TOMATO MARKET IN MADANAPALLE BUT ALSO TRANSPORTED TO NEIGHBOURING KARNATAKA AS IT FETCHED A HIGHER PRICE THERE

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chittoor (Andhra Pradesh), July 29: A tomato farmer in Andhra Pradesh's Chittoor district has literally hit the jackpot by earning a whopping Rs 4 crore in 45 days. With the prices of tomatoes skyrocketing, Murali's fortunes took a dramatic turn. The 48-year-old sold his produce not only in the tomato market in Madanapalle but also transported to neighbouring Karnataka as it fetched a higher price there. Murali and his wife cultivated tomatoes on 22-acre land in Karakamandla village in April.



During last 45 days, they sold 40,000 boxes of tomatoes. The farmer said the huge earning helped them clear debts of Rs 1.5 crore, which they had incurred while cultivating the same vegetable in the past. According to Murali, this time the yield was good due to improvement in power supply. However, the steep hike in prices of tomatoes came as the biggest turnaround. "I had never imagined that tomatoes will yield such a huge income," said a beaming Murali. He plans to invest a part of the profit to expand horticulture activities. Murali is the second farmer to reap such a huge income. A farmer in Telangana's Medak district had whopping Rs 2 crore by selling tomatoes during the last one month while another crop worth Rs 1 crore is ready for harvest.

Bansuvada Mahipal Reddy of Mohammed Nagar in Kaudipalli mandal of Medak district became a millionaire overnight due to the skyrocketing price of tomatoes. With the price of tomatoes soaring to Rs 150 per kg in the market and lack of adequate supply from Andhra Pradesh and other places, Mahipal Reddy catered to the demand in Hyderabad market. He sold the produce for Rs 100 per kg in the wholesale market. During the last one month, he sold about 8,000 boxes of tomatoes, each over 25 kg. The 40-year-old farmer, a school dropout, has emerged as a role model for all.



This war must end. And it can only end on the basis of justice and reason
MOUSSA FAKI MAHAMAT | CHAIRMAN, AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION

OVER 1K WILDFIRES IN CANADA

Over 1,000 wildfires are still burning more than 100,000 square km of land in Canada, more than 600 of them out of control and growing rapidly, according to the Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Center (CIFFC). The burnt area is equivalent to the size of Iceland or South Korea



of the day quote

It is hoped that France will stabilise the tone of friendly cooperation between China and the EU



HE LIFENG | VICE-PREMIER, CHINA

Sri Lanka and France are two nations in the Indian Ocean sharing the same goal: an open, inclusive and prosperous Indo-Pacific. In Colombo, we confirmed it: strong as in our 75 years of diplomatic relations, we would open a new era to our partnership



EMMANUEL MACRON | PRESIDENT, FRANCE

Our economic and security partnership with Niger — which is significant, hundreds of millions of dollars — depends on the continuation of the democratic governance and constitutional order that has been disrupted by the actions in the last few days



ANTHONY BLINKEN | SECRETARY OF STATE, US

SHORT TAKES

3rd Indian-American enters US Prez race

Washington: Aerospace engineer Hrish Vardhan Singh has become the third Indian-American vying for the Republican nomination for the 2024 US presidential race. Prior to Singh, former South Carolina Governor Haley, 51, and millionaire entrepreneur Ramaswamy, 37, announced their candidacy from the Republican Party for the top US post earlier this year. Singh, 38, introduced himself as a lifelong Republican and an "America First constitutional carry and pro-life conservative who helped restore the conservative wing of New Jersey's Republican Party starting in 2017" in a video message posted on Twitter Thursday. They will contest against former US president Donald Trump, who is leading in the race for the Republican Party's nomination for 2024.

Thai blast kills 9; scores wounded

Bangkok: A large explosion at a fireworks warehouse in southern Thailand Saturday killed at least nine people and wounded scores, officials said. The governor of the province of Narathiwat, Sanan Pongakorn, told public broadcaster Thai PBS that at least 115 people were hurt, and that many were in serious condition. He said about 500 to 800 people who live nearby may have to be moved to a temporary shelter. Videos posted on social media from the site show a huge plume of smoke over the area and many damaged structures and streets covered with debris.

DESTABILISED REGION

The Sahel, the vast arid expanse south of the Sahara Desert, faces growing violence from Islamic extremists, which in turn has caused people to turn against elected governments

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Abuja, July 29: Mutinous soldiers in Niger this week overthrew the democratically elected government of President Mohamed Bazoum, adding to a growing list of military regimes in West Africa's Sahel region and raising fears of regional destabilization. The military takeovers have followed a similar pattern: The coup leaders accuse the government of failing to meet the people's expectations for delivering dividends of democracy.

FUNDING CRISIS

UN cuts food aid to millions

Conflict, insecurity remain the primary drivers of acute hunger around the world, along with climate change, unrelenting disasters, persistent food price inflation and mounting debt stress — all during a slowdown in global economy

ASSOCIATED PRESS

United Nations, July 29: The United Nations has been forced to cut food, cash payments and assistance to millions of people in many countries because of "a crippling funding crisis" that has seen its donations plummet by about half as acute hunger is hitting record levels, a top official said Friday.

Carl Skau, deputy executive director of the World Food Programme, told a news conference that at least 38 of the 86 countries where WFP operates have already seen cuts or plan to cut assistance soon — including Afghanistan, Syria, Yemen and West Africa.

He said WFP's operating requirement is \$20 billion to deliver aid to everyone in need, but it was aiming for between \$10 billion and \$14 billion, which was what the agency had received in the past few years.

"We're still aiming at that, but we have only so far this year gotten to about half of that, around \$5 billion," Skau said.

He said humanitarian needs were "going through the roof" in 2021 and 2022 because of the Covid-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine and its global implications. "Those needs continue to grow, those drivers are still there," he said, "but the funding is drying up. So we're



looking at 2024 (being) even more dire."

WFP is looking to diversify its funding base, but he also urged the agency's traditional donors to "step up and support us through this very difficult time."

Asked why funding was drying up, Skau said to ask the donors. "But it's clear that aid budgets, humanitarian budgets, both in Europe and the United States, (are) not where they were in 2021-2022," he said.

Skau said that in March, WFP was forced to cut rations from 75 per cent to 50 per cent for communities in Afghanistan facing emergency levels of

hunger, and in May it was forced to cut food for 8 million people — 66 per cent of the people it was assisting.

Now, it is helping just 5 million people, he said. In Syria, 5.5 million people who relied on WFP for food were already on 50 per cent rations, Skau said, and in July the agency cut all rations to 2.5 million of them.

In the Palestinian territories, WFP cut its cash assistance by 20 per cent in May and in June, and cut its caseload by 60 per cent, or 200,000 people, he said. And in Yemen, he said, a huge funding gap will force WFP to cut aid to 7 million people as early as August.

38 of the 86 nations where WFP operates suffer WFP requires \$20bn to help everyone in need

The largest food and nutrition crisis in history today persists. This year, 345 million people continue to be acutely food insecure while hundreds of millions of people are at risk of worsening hunger

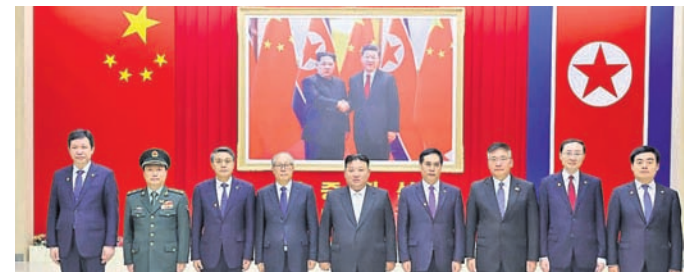
CARL SKAU | DEPUTY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME

In West Africa, where acute hunger is on the rise, Skau said, most countries are facing extensive ration cuts, particularly WFP's seven largest crisis operations: Burkina Faso, Mali, Chad, Central African Republic, Nigeria, Niger and Cameroon.

He said cutting aid to people who are only at the hunger level of crisis to help save those literally starving or in the category of catastrophic hunger means that those dropped will rapidly fall into the emergency and catastrophe categories, "and so we will have an additional humanitarian emergency on our hands down the road."

"Ration cuts are clearly not the way to go forward," Skau said. He urged world leaders to prioritise humanitarian funding and invest in long-term solutions to conflicts, poverty, development and other root causes of the current crisis.

Kim vows to boost relations with China



In a bid to deter US involvement in the region, the two countries are cementing their stand

REUTERS

Seoul, July 29: North Korean leader Kim Jong Un met the Chinese delegation which visited Pyongyang to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the end of the Korean War and vowed to develop the two countries' relations to a "new high", the North's state media said Saturday.

Kim hosted a reception for the Chinese officials led by Communist Party Politburo member Li Hongzhong Friday, the North's KCNA news agency said. The Chinese delegation was the first to visit the reclusive state since the Covid-19 pandemic.

"Reaffirmed at the talk was the stand of the parties and governments of the two countries to cope with the complicated international situation on their own initiative and steadily develop the friendship and comradeship and cooperation onto a new high stage," KCNA said. "No matter how the interna-

tional storm changes, safeguarding, consolidating and developing relations between China and North Korea will always be a firm policy direction of the Chinese Communist Party and the government," Chinese state news agency Xinhua quoted Xi.

The meeting took place after Chinese and Russian officials stood shoulder to shoulder with Kim Thursday as they reviewed his newest nuclear-capable missiles and attack drones at a military parade in the capital Pyongyang.

Russia and China have opposed US-led efforts to impose more sanctions on North Korea over its pursuit of ballistic missiles in recent years, blaming US exercises in the region for raising tensions.

The US and South Korean navies held joint anti-submarine exercise in waters off South Korea's southern island of Jeju Saturday, the latest in a series of military drills by the allies in response to what they call North Korean provocations.

The exercise, involving a US nuclear-powered submarine USS Annapolis which had arrived in South Korea this week, was held to better counter North Korea's evolving missile threats.

US unveils Taiwan arms package worth \$345mn

Beijing has repeatedly demanded US, Taiwan's most important arms supplier, to halt the sale of weapons to the island



REUTERS

Washington, July 29: The United States unveiled a Taiwan weapons aid package worth up to \$345 million Friday, a move likely to anger China even as the Biden administration declined to publicly provide details on the arms in the package.

Congress authorized up to \$1 billion worth of Presidential Drawdown Authority weapons aid for Taiwan, which strongly rejects Chinese sovereignty claims, in the 2023 budget.

In recent weeks, four sources told Reuters the package was expected to include four unarmed MQ-9A reconnaissance drones, but noted their inclusion could fall through as officials work through details on removing some of the advanced equipment from the drones that

only the US Air Force is allowed access to.

The formal announcement did not include a list of weapon systems being provided. Taiwan's defence ministry thanked the US for its "firm security commitment," adding in a statement it will not comment on the package details due to the "tacit agreement" between the two sides.

Among the issues that could confound the inclusion of the drones was who would pay for their alterations, one of the people briefed on the matter said previously. Reuters could not determine if the drones were still part of the package.

Taiwan had previously agreed to purchase four, more advanced, MQ-9B SeaGuardian drones, made by General Atomics, which are slated for delivery in 2025.



Shiites participate in the Ashoura procession on the 9th day of Muharram in Karbala, Iraq. During Muharram, Islam's second holiest month, Shiites mark the death of Hussein, the grandson of the Prophet Muhammad, at the Battle of Karbala in present-day Iraq in the 7th century

PTI/PHOTO

Hezbollah orders Muslims to 'punish' Quran desecrators

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Baghdad, July 29: The leader of Lebanon's Shiite militant group Hezbollah said Saturday that if governments of Muslim-majority nations do not act against countries that allow the desecration of the Quran, Muslims should "punish" those who facilitate attacks on Islam's holy book.

The comments by Hassan Nasrallah came in a video address to tens of thousands gathered in Beirut's southern suburbs to mark Ashoura, a Shiite holy day commemorating the 7th century martyrdom of the Prophet Muhammad's grandson Hussein.

Nasrallah often uses religious occasions to send political messages to followers, and Saturday slammed recent incidents in which the Quran was burned or otherwise desecrated at authorised demonstrations in Sweden and Denmark.

He said Muslims should watch for the outcome of an emergency meeting of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, scheduled to take place in Baghdad Monday to discuss the organisation's response to the Quran burnings.

The organisation and its member states should "send a firm, decisive and unequivocal message to these governments that any repeat of the attacks will be met with a boycott," Nasrallah said. If they do not, he said, Muslim youth should "punish the desecrators."

Members of the crowd, who carried banners with religious slogans alongside the flags of Hezbollah, Lebanon and Palestine, chanted, "Oh, Quran, we are at your service; Oh, Hussein, we are at your service."

Shiites represent over 10 per cent of the world's 1.8 billion Muslims and view Hussein as the rightful successor to the Prophet Muhammad. Hussein's death in battle at the hands of Sunnis at Karbala, south of Baghdad, ingrained a deep rift in Islam and continues to this day to play a key role in shaping Shiite identity.

Millions of Shiite Muslims in Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan and around the world Friday commemorated Ashoura, while Saturday marked the culmination of the observances in countries such as Lebanon, Iraq and Syria.

Niger joins list of nations in Sahel run by army

They say they will usher in a new democratic government to address those shortcomings, but the process gets delayed.

Karim Manuel, west and central Africa analyst for the Economist Intelligence Unit, says the military governments threaten to unwind democratic gains made not just in the Sahel region but in the broader West Africa region.

The Sahel region comprises Senegal, Gambia, Mauritania, Guinea, Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, Chad, Cameroon and Nigeria.

Here are countries in the Sahel with military regimes:

MALI: The Sahel's latest wave of coups kicked off in Mali in August 2020 when the democratically elected President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita was overthrown by soldiers led by Colonel Assimi Goita.

The military was supposed to hand power back to civilian rule within 18 months. However, seven months into the transition



process, the military removed the interim president and prime minister they had appointed and swore in Goita as president of the transitional government.

Last month, Malian voters cast ballots on a new draft constitution in a referendum that the regime says will pave the way for new elections in 2024.

BURKINA FASO: Burkina Faso experienced its second coup in 2022 with soldiers ousting Lt. Col. Paul Henri Sandaogo Damiba

after eight months after he helped overthrow the democratically elected President Roch Marc Kaboré early in the year.

Captain Ibrahim Traore was named as the transitional president while a national assembly that included army officers, civil society organizations, and traditional and religious leaders approved a new charter for the West African country.

The junta has set a goal to conduct elections to return the

country to democratic rule by July 2024.

SUDAN: Sudan slipped under military rule in October 2021 when soldiers dissolved the transitional government of Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok as well as the

This increases political instability going forward and makes the situation on the ground much more volatile and unpredictable. Regional stability is undermined as a result of these coups

KARIM MANUEL | WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA ANALYST, ECONOMIST INTELLIGENCE UNIT

Sovereign Council, a power-sharing body of military officers and civilians.

That took place weeks before the military was to hand the leadership of the council to civilians and nearly two years after

soldiers overthrew the longtime autocrat Omar al-Bashir amid deadly protests.

Eighteen months after the coup and amid the hopes for a transition to democracy fighting broke out between the Sudanese army and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF). The conflict has resulted in the deaths of hundreds with no end in sight.

CHAD: Chad has been under military rule since April 2021 when President Idriss Deby, who ruled Chad for more than 30 years, was killed while battling against rebels in the hard-hit northern region.

His son, General Mahamat Idriss Deby, took power contrary to constitutional provisions and was named the interim head of state with an 18-month transitional process set in place for the country's return to democracy. By the end of the 18 months period, the government extended Deby's by two more years, triggering protests that the military suppressed.

of the day quote

This year will serve as a tipping point for Samsung to make foldable phones a mainstream product



ROH TAE-MOON
PRESIDENT AND HEAD (MOBILE BUSINESS), SAMSUNG ELECTRONICS

Rise.AI will introduce a fair, transparent and completely digitised appraisal system, with clearly defined job descriptions and specific performance goals so that all our staff know what is expected of them and what they must deliver on



CAMPBELL WILSON | CEO AND MD, AIR INDIA

The next phase of growth is not just going to come from strengthening our portfolio in urban India but also in semi-urban and rural India. We are seeing growth not just in mega towns and metros but also in Tier 1-6 towns



SURESH NARAYANAN | CHAIRMAN AND MD, NESTLE

SHORT TAKES

Power Grid okays raising ₹5,700cr

New Delhi: Power Grid Corporation's board has approved a proposal to raise up to Rs 5,700 crore through issuance of bonds on private placement basis in multiple tranches in 2023-24. The fund raised will be used to part finance its capex requirement, for providing inter corporate loans to wholly-owned subsidiaries/JVs and for general corporate purposes. This will be done by securitization of cashflows of 4 operational SPVs (special purpose vehicles) viz. POWERGRID Bhuj Transmission, POWERGRID Khetri Transmission System, POWERGRID Medinipur Jeerat Transmission System and POWERGRID Varanasi Transmission System up to March, 2034. The company is raising Rs 500 crore in the first tranche with a green shoe option of (additional) Rs 1,400 crore.

Akasa Air sees operating loss

Mumbai: India's newest airline Akasa Air posted an operating loss of Rs 602 crore. While the airline earned Rs 777.8 crore, its operational expenditure stood at Rs 1,866 crore, according to a data furnished by minister of state for civil aviation VK Singh in Lok Sabha. The airline started operations last August and results are up till March 31, 2023. However, sources said the expense was mainly due to pre-operating costs and cost of setting up stations and new routes. IndiGo in its first year 2006-07 registered losses of Rs 174.1 crore and had six aircraft. It turned profitable raking in Rs 82 crore in its third year of operation.

Ubl Q1 net dips

New Delhi: Beer maker United Breweries Ltd has reported a 16.09 per cent decline in consolidated net profit at Rs 136.34 crore for the first quarter ended June 2023, as volumes were impacted by supply challenges, lower interstate sales and persisting inflation. The company, controlled by Dutch multinational brewing company Heineken NV, had posted a net profit of Rs 162.50 crore in the April-June quarter a year ago, United Breweries Ltd (UBL) said in a late-night regulatory filing on Friday. UBL's revenue from operations was almost flat to Rs 5,243.01 crore during the quarter under review. It stood at Rs 5,196.08 crore in the corresponding period of FY24.

FM on making India a developed nation

FOCUS ON INFRA, INVESTMENT, INNOVATION, INCLUSIVENESS TO MAKE INDIA DEVELOPED NATION BY 2047, SAYS FM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 29: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman Saturday said the focus of the government is on four Is - infrastructure, investment, innovation and inclusiveness - to make India a developed nation by 2047.

She said India has the necessary wherewithal to meet the goal set by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Besides several investor-friendly reforms undertaken by the government, she said, India has a very vibrant young population and the emphasis on skilling them to suit the requirement of the economy would yield dividend.

With the aim to build India a developed country by 2047, she said "the emphasis has been on four different issues (Is). We are looking at infrastructure (first I) in a very big way. In the last 3 to 5 years, consistently, the public expenditure for infrastructure building has been ramped up significantly and it will reach Rs 10 lakh crore in 2023-24."

With infrastructure comes investment (second I), the minister said, adding that emphasis on investment will promote greater participation of both the public and private sectors.

So, she said, infrastructure is not just going to be physical such as bridges, roads, ports or airports, but also creation of digital infrastructure is given importance.

Pointing out that innovation is the third I, she said, "the government has opened up several areas inclusive of the space, nuclear energy, looking at getting out of fossil fuels. We have enough reasons to believe the youth today are giving us solutions, which are very good for the frontier technologies that we're talking about, as much as for the legacy issues which persist in India for which we need solutions."

On the fourth I, inclusiveness, she said, "as we aim to reach target of the developed nation in 25 years by focussing on inclu-



So far, seven chip design startups have been approved for funding and assistance in developing their

RAVEEV CHANDRASEKHAR | MINISTER OF STATE FOR ELECTRONICS AND IT



We are looking for both public investment and private investment and creating necessary environment, the ecosystem as we often refer to for attracting private investment. And the global discussions which are going on blended finance is also something which we're looking at

NIRMALA SITHARAMAN | FINANCE MINISTER

siveness, making sure that every section of India, the common man, is benefitted by everything that we do (whether) investment or reforms are trying to take schemes to the people."

Talking about India's contribution to the G20 during its presidency, the finance minister said the grouping is working on contemporary issues like dealing with post-pandemic challenges and revival plan.

First agenda is how could multilateral development banks (MDBs) become nimble and address 21st century challenges and their capacity to generate and bring in more resources including from market and private sector to address current challenges expeditiously, she said.

The other issues under India's presidency are debt and debt-related distress that many countries are facing, she said, adding countries are waiting for debt resolution even 3-4 years after submitting application.

In this regard, a speedier and comprehensive approach is required whether it comes under common framework or outside, she said.

Citing example of Sri Lanka's distress, she said it required a quick redressal although out-

side of framework because it's a middle income country.

The third is looking at cryptocurrencies or crypto assets which are outside the central bank domain, she said, adding a collective solution or some kind of mechanism through which they can be regulated is required.

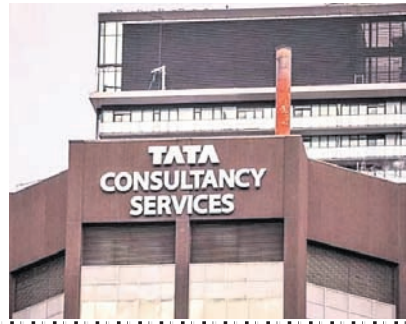
"At the moment countries tried some ways. India did not rush into coming up with regulation but we are looking at it because it's so technology driven. We think it is possible only when all countries can take a common approach. Each one can legislate upon them the way they want later within their country. There has to be a common approach in it getting some regulatory framework in place," the minister said.

The fourth agenda is Digital Public Infrastructure, and India in this regard has proven scale and also continuously bringing in newer building blocks. So, she said, India stack is not just growing vertically but also now spreading into health, education, climate management and so on.

These are the four agenda points for G20 and there are lot of receptivity among the G7 on these issues.

TCS UNDERGOES REJIG

In an organisational rejig, TCS Saturday announced that it will now have business groups based on industry sectors and geographies under the new chief executive and managing director K Krithivasan. It also elevated Harrick Vin as the new chief technology officer and Abhinav Kumar as the interim head for marketing



Hopeful of finalising certain FTAs in next few months: Goyal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 29: Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal Saturday said he is hopeful of India finalising certain free trade agreements (FTAs) in the next few months, which would help promote exports.

India is in the final stages of concluding FTA negotiations with the UK. The country is also negotiating similar pacts with Canada and European Union (EU).

"We can leverage the free trade agreements with the UAE and Australia and we are hopeful that in the next few months, we will finalise many more free trade agreements to help you grow your business with zero duty on finished leather products and footwear available for you to exploit bigger and better markets," Goyal said while addressing footwear industry representatives here.

The minister also asked the industry to focus on quality and sustainable manufacturing processes to tap business opportunities in the developed world.

The Indian footwear and leather industry is not only a major foreign exchange earner but being a labour-intensive sector, it also provides employment to approximately 4.5 million people, 40 per cent of whom are women.

He said that India has the capacity to become the world's largest and best-quality footwear manufacturer.

India is the second largest exporter of leather garments, third-largest exporter of saddlery and harnesses and fourth-largest exporter of leather goods in the world.

More than 95 per cent of the production units in this sector are micro, small & medium en-



terprises (MSME) units. Further Goyal said that Indian size of footwear will be launched soon to help distinguish Indian footwear around the globe and reduce dependence on foreign sizing trends.

He suggested industrialists explore FTAs for technological collaborations, joint ventures of non-leather footwear, thus increasing the export of the country and enhancing the domestic market with Indian products.

Goyal highlighted the beauty of Kolhapuri footwear of Maharashtra and Mojari footwear of Rajasthan, stating that it should be an area of attraction for international buyers as well.

Talking about quality, he said the government has issued quality control norms for the sector and the government is ready to set up testing facilities for certifications.

Goyal urged the stakeholders to expand the business while keeping the focus on quality and sustainability, eco-friendly process, waste management, and exploring renewable sources for electricity.

Not only do we need to enhance our design capabilities to move up the value chain, but also bring in more investments and technology to scale up the production and produce innovative products, he added.

I IPO-BOUND Ola Electric logs operating loss of \$136mn in FY23

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, July 29: IPO-bound Ola Electric has reportedly recorded an operating loss of \$136 million (roughly Rs 1,116 crore) and revenue of \$335 million (roughly Rs 2,750 crore), missing its revenue goal disclosed publicly.

The company reported sales of over 1,50,000 electric scooters for FY23, media reports said, citing sources.

In the first two months of FY23, Ola Electric claimed to have surpassed Rs 500 crore in revenue and was on track to surpass \$1 billion by year's end.

Ola has not commented on this development yet.

In May, US-based investment management company Vanguard slashed Ola's valuation by 35 per cent amid global macroeconomic conditions, reducing its



worth to about \$4.8 billion. According to a report in TechCrunch, Vanguard cut the valuation of Ani Technologies, Ola's holding firm, by 35 per cent and disclosed this in its report to investors.

"It reduced the holding of its Ola shares to \$33.8 million from the \$51.7 million purchase price, according to an analysis of its filings," the report noted.

Ola was valued at \$7.3 billion at the close of 2021 and at \$5.7 billion in a private funding round in January 2019.

In January, Ola laid off 200 employees from its Ola Cabs, Ola Electric, and Ola Financial Services verticals as part of the "restructuring" exercise.

Increase in investments will fast-track growth, says Bhatia

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 29: A special programme to raise awareness among the people on the topic of securities market was organised in Bhubaneswar Saturday.

Attending the programme, Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) Whole Time Member Ashwani Bhatia stressed on increasing investment from the public into the Indian securities market.

Organised by Abhyuthana Foundation Charitable Trust (AFCT) Investor Association Saturday at Geeta Govind Sadan in Bhubaneswar, the program deliberated on the topic Securities Market: Challenges and Opportunities - Way Forward.

"Indian economy is doing well. With increase in access to bank linkage, people's businesses are prospering. Hence, it is important to think of both savings and investment. People can make long term investments in the Securities Market, Mutual Funds and Gold etc. Various steps are taken from time to time to ensure how individuals can benefit from these modes of investment", said Ashwani Bhatia, Wholetime



Member SEBI, while speaking on the occasion.

Executive Director SEBI GP Garg participating in the program as Chief Speaker said, "Save first, then invest. Increasing investments will lead to overall development of the country. It will also lead to more upcoming ventures thus creating newer employment opportunity in the days ahead."

CGM SBI Bhubaneswar Chandra Shekhar Sharma joined the event as Guest of Honour. He informed that with an increase in digital literacy, there has been an increase in the banking & financial operations. He further said that bank authorities and the police are on alert to check cases of cyber fraud.

Prof DV Ramana from XIM University Bhubaneswar attended the program as Special

Invitee. He focused on the importance of safe investment and advised people to go through all details before investing hard earned money.

A special souvenir titled 'Select Essays on the securities Market' was released on the occasion.

AFCT Investor Association Chairman cum Managing Trustee and former GM RBI, Dasarathi Mishra introduced the guests on the dais during the start of the program. Vice-Chairman AFCT, S Choudhury delivered the welcome speech. The vote of thanks was proposed by former GM Bank of India Suresh Sarangi.

Students of various management institutions, officials from the banking and investment sector, senior citizens and the media were present during the event.

BIZ BUZZ



Yamaha Motor organises 'mileage challenge' at Symphony Mall, Bhubaneswar Saturday

15mn impressions, 500 followers to earn money on X

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, July 29: As Elon Musk rolled out its ads revenue programme for creators globally including in India, one needs to be subscribed to X Blue (earlier Twitter Blue), have at least 15 million impressions on cumulative posts within the last three months and at least 500 followers.

For eligible creators who set up their payout details, you will

receive a payment the week of July 31 if you meet the criteria and your payout amount exceeds the minimum threshold of \$50, the company said in an update.

"We want the process to be as simple as possible, so all eligible X Blue and Verified Organisations subscribers are entitled to revenue share so long as they meet the eligibility criteria and join," said the rebranded Twitter.

"You'll get payouts as long as



X determines that you've generated more than \$50. The support document about the programme doesn't specify how the company determines the value of its payouts," it added.

Creators will be able to set up Ads Revenue Sharing and Creator Subscriptions independently. What a user needs once eligible is a Stripe account for payouts. While all eligible users may choose to participate, "if you are found to breach the

Ads Revenue Share Terms, which include, for example, Creator Monetization Standards and the X Rules, you may be excluded from the programme," warned the Musk company.

X said that it may modify or cancel the programme at any time, including for business, financial, or legal reasons. Earlier this month, Twitter launched its ads revenue sharing programme for creators, and started paying some of them.

INDIA BOWLED OUT FOR 181

Root, Bairstow prop England

press trust of india
Bridgetown, July 29: Indian team management's decision to rest skipper Rohit Sharma and premier batter Virat Kohli badly backfired as none of the World Cup hopefuls could cope with pace, bounce and turn against the West Indies, managing a dismal 181 in 40.5 overs in the rain-hit second ODI here, Saturday.

Losing five wickets for 23 runs in just 7.2 overs after opening stand of 90 between Ishan Kishan (55, 55b, 6x4, 1x6) and Shubman Gill (34, 49b, 5x4) became India's undoing after the West Indies skipper Shai Hope opted to bowl.

The loss of momentum hurt India dearly but more than that, the rationale behind Rohit and Kohli's forced break with only 10 months left before the big event, didn't make much sense. Not to forget that the failures left more questions than answers.

There were two rain-delays but West Indies bowlers never let their intensity drop in an impressive display.

While Kishan, who will not open during World Cup, consolidated his case for selection as second wicket-keeper (provided KL Rahul gets fit for World Cup) with a second successive half century, the same couldn't be said about Sanju Samson (9 off 19 balls) and Axar Patel (1 off 8 balls).

Promoted as No.3 and 4 to keep the left-right combination going, both players struggled not only against short-ball tactic employed by Jayden Seales (1/28 in 6 overs), Alzarri Joseph (2/35 from 7 overs) and Romario Shepherd (3/37 in 8 overs) but also the grip, turn and bounce that spinners Gudakesh Motie (3/36 in 9.3 overs) and Yannic Cariah (1/25 in 5 overs) generated.

Just like the first game, the Kensington Oval pitch had a lot of spice and West Indies bowlers were steady save a brief period when Kishan and Gill did score



runs at a brisk pace.

Kishan gave Motie the charge and got a six while Gill's on-drive was a treat for the eyes even though he never looked completely in rhythm. Once Motie gave the ball more air, a desperate Gill tried to loft him but was holed at long-off boundary.

Kishan, who had by then completed his 50 tried to square cut Shepherd when the ball bounced a tad more and the width wasn't big enough but Alick Athanaze took a fine diving catch at point.

Skipper on the day Hardik Pandya (7 off 14 balls) was peppered with short balls and finally his patience gave off as he tried to pull Seales and Brandon King had an easy catch at mid-

wicket. Seals and Joseph had pried on the stand-in skipper's patience for a fair duration.

Axar Patel (1), who is now more of a batter in white ball cricket than a bowler, was sent in at No. 4, a slot which India haven't yet got a hang since they are waiting for Shreyas Iyer to get fit. He got an unplayable one from Shepherd and it brushed his gloves before landing safely into Shai Hope's gloves.

Samson has never read leg-spinners well in his career (case in point Wamindu Hasaranga in Sri Lanka in 2021) and never looked comfortable against Cariah's leg-breaks. When he got out, it was a leg-break and extra bounce and Samson couldn't remove his bat

from the line of the ball.

As far as Suryakumar Yadav (24 of 25 balls) is concerned, his die-hard fans will tear their hair in frustration after three boundaries, including a crunchy pull-shot, raised hopes of revival.

The dismissal was a meek one when Motie bowled one wide off off-stump and it had turn and bounce enticing him to play the cut which landed into fielder's hands at backward point. With Surya's departure, India's hopes of crossing 200 evaporated.

BRIEF SCORES: India 181 (Ishan Kishan 55, Shubman Gill 34; Gudakesh Motie 3/36, Romario Shepherd 3/37 vs West Indies. Match to continue.



REUTERS

London, July 29: England batted with positive intent to take control of the final Ashes Test at The Oval Saturday, moving on to 389/9 at the close on the third day with a 377-run lead over Australia.

Joe Root (91, 106b, 11x4, 1x6), Jonny Bairstow (78, 103b, 11x4) and Zak Crawley (73, 76b, 9x4) were the major contributors for the hosts who trail 2-1 in the series and are battling to stop Australia winning the Ashes in England for the first time since 2001.

Crawley set the tone by driving the first ball of the day from Mitchell Starc (4/94) to the cover boundary before he and Ben Duckett shared a fluent opening partnership of 79.

Duckett fell for 42 (55b, 7x4) when he edged Starc to wicket-keeper Alex Carey and the Australians successfully reviewed the umpire's decision of not out but that was the touring side's only success of the morning as they struggled to

CANDID GESTURE

LONDON: The fifth day of the final Ashes Test Saturday began with a humane touch to it as England cricketers wore jerseys with wrong names printed on it, supporting people affected by dementia. Veteran pacer James Anderson wore a jersey carrying the name of Stuart Broad, Jonny Bairstow wore one with the name of Ben Stokes on it and Moeen Ali donned the flannel with the name of Chris Woakes, and so on. The move was symbolic of the confusion often experienced by people suffering from dementia, the disease that causes loss of memory. England assistant coach Marcus Trescothick explained the decision, a joint call of ECB and Alzheimer's Society.

restrict the flow of runs.

Crawley, who struck nine fours, was out straight after lunch flashing at a wide ball from Pat Cummins (1/79) and edging a catch to Steve Smith in the slips.

Root joined Ben Stokes and they added 63 for the third wicket

MATCH SCHEDULE

5th Ashes Test (Day 4)
Time: 3:30 pm
Telecast: Sony Sports Network

before Stokes (42, 67b, 3x4, 1x6) tried to loft spinner Todd Murphy (3/110) over long on and gave Cummins a simple catch.

Root looked in excellent touch, hitting 11 fours and one six as he passed fifty for the 90th time in Tests. Harry Brook was dismissed by Josh Hazlewood (1/67).

Root looked certain to make a century but fell nine runs short off a Murphy delivery. Bairstow played a lazy cut at Starc and giving Carey another simple catch. Chris Woakes and Mark Wood were out cheaply but Stuart Broad and James Anderson survived the last few overs.

BRIEF SCORES: England 283 & 389/9 (Joe Root 91, Jonny Bairstow 78, Zak Crawley 73; Mitchell Starc 4/94, Todd Murphy 3/110); Australia 295. Match to continue.

Lalremsiami treble helps India win 3-0

Lakshya goes down fighting in semis

Verstappen wins Belgian GP sprint race, Piastri 2nd



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Barcelona, July 29: Striker Lalremsiami slammed a hat-trick to hand the Indian women's team a comfortable 3-0 win over England in the ongoing 100th Anniversary Spanish Hockey Federation - International Tournament here Saturday.

Lalremsiami starred for India, scoring thrice in the 13th, 17th and 56th minutes of the match. This was India's first win of the tour after ending their previous two matches in a stalemate against England (1-1) and Spain (2-2). India will take on Spain Sunday. Having remained unbeaten so far, the Indian women led by Savita will march into Sunday's last match of the tournament as table toppers.

In the first quarter, the proceedings began with England getting off the mark in a dominant fashion with speedy attack, while the Indian team worked calmly to stitch together an effective structure that would yield results.

First, it was Neha Goyal who worked a brilliant attempt on goal but was well-defended by the English defence. However in India's next attempt a few minutes later, a long pass by ex-

perienced Deep Grace Ekka from the deep midfield was swiftly deflected into the goal by Lalremsiami in the 13th minute.

This early goal gave India the right momentum going into the second quarter. They were able to extend the lead to 2-0 in the 17th minute, when a good circle penetration saw Lalremsiami score her second goal.

She showcased good footwork as she picked up the ball well and guided it past England's goalie Sabbie Heesh. The 2-0 lead put India in a formidable position, giving them the cushion to work different combinations that would fetch results in the circle.

The third quarter remained goalless after England squandered a few chances to score. India held on to the lead with some solid defending that kept them in control of the match.

With England desperately trying to find ways to bounce back, the last quarter was entertaining with both teams displaying quick-fire hockey.

Though England could not beat India's defence, the Indian strikers worked in tandem to extend the team's lead. It was eventually Lalremsiami who struck again in the 56th minute to help India seal the match.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Tokyo, July 29: Star Indian shuttler Lakshya Sen fought gallantly before going down in three games to World No.9 and Asian Games champion Jonatan Christie in the semifinals of the Japan Open Super 750 badminton tournament here Saturday.

The 21-year-old from Almora bounced back from an opening game reversal to keep his rival under pressure but in the end couldn't get across the fifth-seeded Christie, who rode on his solid defence and quality of shots to eke out a 21-15, 13-21, 21-16 win.

The duo had a 1-1 head-to-head count before the match and it turned out to be another pulsating contest with Sen and Christie involved in some exquisite rallies during the 68-minute contest.

Sen is known to be faster and to negotiate his speed, Christie needed to produce high-quality shots. However, the Indonesian wasn't consistent and made too many unforced errors initially to allow the Indian take a 7-4 lead early on. However, a superb net shot coupled with Sen's errors on the sidelines helped Christie claw back with three points.

Sen unleashed two booming smashes to keep himself ahead and went to the interval with a two-point advantage after Christie went long and wide.



Christie levelled the scores after the resumption, playing some superb blocks and drop shots. He went up to 15-12 after winning a 32-shot rally.

The Indonesian started constructing his rallies by mixing his shots and also finished well to move to 19-13 after Sen went wide. A quick exchange ended with Sen missing a shot as Christie had a five game points and he sealed it with a backhand flick near the net.

Pegged back, Sen needed to change his strategy and he found his groove after an initial duel in the second game. The Indian varied the pace of the rallies and produced some quality shots

to make his opponent work hard. He also mixed his services to disrupt Christie's strategy.

Sen played some sensational smashes and drops while Christie sprayed into the net twice. The result was Sen entered the interval with an 11-5 advantage after another cross-court return.

Sen won a flat exchange and followed it with a straight smash. Another miscued net shot gave Sen seven game points and he converted it when Christie went long.

The decider was another roller-coaster ride as leads exchanged hands frequently. Sen needed to keep a calm head as he looked to outwit his rival in the rallies

but it was Christie who managed to keep things in his grip to move to 9-6.

The Indonesian grabbed a decisive four-point cushion at the final interval after producing two precise returns. After resumption, Sen did everything in his hand but couldn't break Christie's solid defence with the Indonesian led 15-11.

Another cross-court jump smash saw Sen make it 13-17 but he smashed wide next. Christie moved to 19-15 with an accurate smash and grabbed five match points when Sen went marginally wide. Sen saved one with a smash on the backline before pushing one to the net.

ICC inspects venues ahead of WC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, July 29: Ahead of the ODI World Cup, an inspection team from the International Cricket Council is checking the readiness of venues that will host the quadrennial extravaganza in October-November this year.

The ICC team, which is currently at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad, has paid a visit to three venues in South - Bangalore, Chennai and Thiruvananthapuram, where practice matches will be held - and the Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai.

The reconnaissance unit dropped in at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium here July 28, and expressed their satisfaction over the facilities.

"They were here Friday, and



were satisfied by our preparations. We have been hosting matches from the Duleep Trophy at the venue, and we are ready for the (World Cup) games," a KSCA official told PTI.

Bangalore is scheduled to host five matches, including India's

fixture against Netherlands and two games of Pakistan against Australia and New Zealand.

India are set to begin their World Cup campaign October 8 against five-time champions Australia at the MA Chidambaram Stadium in Chennai. The Chepauk will also host two other high-profile matches of Pakistan against South Africa and Afghanistan. The ICC team inspected the facilities at the stadium July 26.

The Greenfield Stadium will not host any main draw matches, but the Kerala capital will see a few preparation games ahead of the World Cup. The Greenfield Stadium had hosted India's ODIs against Sri Lanka earlier this year and a T20I match against South Africa in September last year.

LEDECKY SURPASSES PHELPS' WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP FEAT



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Fukuoka, July 29: Katie Ledecky added to her legacy as the greatest female swimmer in history when she won the 800-meter freestyle Saturday at the World Aquatics Championships, establishing two more notable records with the triumph.

The victory by the 26-year-old Ledecky made her the first swimmer ever to win the same event six times at the World Championships and also marked her 16th individual world title, breaking a tie

with Michael Phelps for the most individual golds ever at the worlds.

Ledecky, who had the 30 top times ever in the 800 entering the race, led all the way, dominating her competitors and winning in a time of eight minutes, 8.87 seconds.

The gold in the 800 was Ledecky's second individual gold of these championships following her win in the 1,500 free Tuesday. She also took silver in the 400 free here.

Kaylee McKeown of Australia made some history of her own with her gold in the women's 200 backstroke. McKeown's victory gave her a sweep of all three backstroke events here, after her earlier wins in the 50 and 100. She became the first swimmer ever to sweep all three backstrokes at the worlds.