



SARA'S CONFIDENCE

Sara Ali Khan says she has become wiser with every film and got matured after playing each character

LEISURE P2



EXPANDING TIES

Pakistan and China sign six major documents to expand cooperation under the CPEC project

INTERNATIONAL P10



FOCUS ON SINDHU

PV Sindhu will look for a turnaround in fortunes when she kicks off her campaign at the Australia Open badminton

SPORTS P12



KNEE-DEEP: Commuters negotiating a waterlogged road Monday evening after incessant rains battered the Capital city

NO CASE: SC

Supreme Court nixes plea seeking probe into CM Naveen's alleged involvement in chit fund scams

KULDEEP SINGH, OP

New Delhi, July 31: The Supreme Court Monday dismissed a petition seeking directions to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) to investigate alleged involvement of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik in chit fund scams.

A three-judge bench headed by Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud refused to entertain the petition seeking investigation against Patnaik and his close associate over their alleged involvement in the chit fund scams.

The bench also comprising Justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Mishra further turned down

the petitioner's request to pass observation in the matter.

"We don't want to give you a handle here. We will not observe anything on this matter because this is a very sensitive matter. Dismissed as withdrawn," the bench said.

Significantly, the petition was filed by Pinak Pani Mohanty seeking directions to the CBI to investigate the Odisha Chief Minister and his close associate Saroj Sahoo. He had also pleaded for CBI probe into the involvement of the

Chief Minister and other BJD MPs and MLAs in various mining scams. The petitioner had alleged allotment of land which exclusively belonged to Lord Jagannath to Vedanta University which is enriched with Bauxite Mines and sought probe into that.

"Petitioner Sri Pinak Pani Mohanty is a social activist who has submitted an audio CD on 28.03.2015 to the CBI SP MK Sinha that reveals names of 47 BJD MLAs, MPs, Ministers and one Saroj Sahoo who is a close associate of the Chief Minister of Odisha who took ₹550 crore from Seashore Chit Fund Company," the petition reads.



RPF constable shoots dead senior, 3 others on board moving train

AGENCIES

Mumbai, July 31: A Railway Protection Force constable Monday shot dead his senior colleague and three passengers in two bogies and a pantry car on board the moving Jaipur-Mumbai Central Express near Palghar railway station in Maharashtra, officials said.

He was nabbed later while trying to flee after pulling the chain of the train which stopped between Mira Road and Dahisar stations (on Mumbai suburban network). Palghar is around 100 km from Mumbai.

Constable Chetan Singh (34) shot dead RPF assistant sub-inspector Tika Ram Meena and another passenger in B5 coach with his automatic weapon. He shot dead another passenger in B6 coach, and one more in the pantry car located between B5 and B6 coaches, a railway official said.

The deceased passengers were identified as Abdul Qadirbhai Mohammed Hussain Bhanpurwala (48), Akhtar Abbas Ali (48), and Sadar Mohammed Hussain. A senior police official said the accused RPF constable was very short-tempered. According to GRP, Singh fired 12 rounds from his automatic weapon. Singh hails from Hathras in Uttar Pradesh, he said.

SUDEV PRUSTY TOPS OCS-2021

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 31: The Odisha Public Service Commission (OPSC) Monday announced the much-awaited Odisha Civil Services Examination (OCS)-2021 results.

As per the official OPSC notification, Sudev Kumar Prusty has topped the list of successful candidates. Notably, there are five women among the top ten candidates including Suchismita Panigrahy at second position. Pranab Ranjan Sahu, Baisakhee Lenka and Swetaleena Mahana are in third, fourth and fifth rank respectively.

As many as nine female candidates have found place in the top 20 list.

OPSC has recommended a total of 432 candidates including 164 female candidates in order of merit for appointment to posts/services under OCS (Group A & B)-2021.

OCS (Main), 2021 written examination was conducted from February 21 to March 18, 2023 and 4,430 candidates including 1,539 women appeared in the main examination.

The results were published in a record time of nine and half months from the date of Preliminary examination October 16, 2022.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Do you have good quality ear plugs? I'm planning to raise women safety issues with the minister

SHORT TAKES

Ex-MLA, 12 others get life term for killing cop

Berhampur: A court in Ganjam district Monday sentenced 13 people, including CPI leader and former MLA N Narayan Reddy, to life imprisonment for killing a policeman 25 years ago during an anti-land acquisition movement. Binobha Meher, an inspector of the reserve police, died June 18 in 1998 when the accused hurled bombs at a police team in Sindhigaon. P5

At least 7 killed in lightning strikes

Bhubaneswar: At least seven people were killed after being struck by lightning in different parts of the state, Monday. Two women died while planting paddy saplings in Balasore and Bhadrak. Lightning strike also killed a minor girl in Sundargarh and two farmers in Keonjhar and Cuttack. A father-son duo died in a lightning strike incident at Chilika lake earlier in the day.

4 KIDS AMONG 5 DEAD

Under-construction culvert roof caves in



POST NEWS NETWORK

Rayagada, July 31: In a tragic mishap, five persons including four children were killed after the ceiling of an under-construction culvert suddenly caved in at Uparsaja village under Kalyansinghpur block in Rayagada district, Monday.

The deceased were identified as Lachendra Miniaka (50), his son Prince Miniaka (4), two siblings Charan Miniaka (8) and Suman Miniaka (5), and another child Manok Kulesika (5) of the area.

Sources said Charan and Suman had recently lost their father. Heartbroken, their mother tried to commit suicide by consuming poison. She was rescued and admitted to the Kalyansinghpur CHC where she is undergoing treatment.

The incident occurred when the persons were bathing in the nearby nullah and accidentally went near the culvert, which is being constructed by the Rural Development department, sources said. The ceiling

of the culvert suddenly caved in killing the five. Three others bathing on the opposite side had a close shave. After getting information, local police and Fire Services personnel rushed to the spot and worked to clear the debris.

State Law Minister Jagannath Saraka, Rayagada MLA Makaranda Muduli and Rayagada SP Vivekanand Sharma and Kalyansinghpur BDO Sunil Khara also visited the spot and took stock of the situation.

Terming it as an unfortunate incident, the MLA said necessary action needs to be taken against the persons responsible for the mishap.

Expressing deep grief over the loss of lives in the incident, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik announced ₹4 lakh ex-gratia for family members of each deceased. Patnaik has also ordered to take strong action against officials responsible for the mishap. A pall of gloom descended on the village as the parents were seen wailing holding the bodies of their children.

Don't ask JEE(A) ranks: IIT Bombay

THE IIT ALSO TALKS OF 'SEVERE PUNISHMENT' IN CASE OF VIOLATION OF THE GUIDELINES

AGENCIES

Mumbai, July 31: The Indian Institute of Technology Bombay (IITB) has issued guidelines urging students to desist from asking fellow students for details that might reveal their caste and instead encouraged them to bond over commonalities like sports, music and movies.

The anti-discrimination guidelines come months after allegations of caste discrimination at the premiere institute surfaced following the death of Darshan Solanki,



a first-year B'Tech (Chemical) student.

Apart from circulating the guidelines among students, authorities have also pasted them at different locations on the institute's Powai campus.

According to the guidelines, it is inappropriate to ask fellow students about their birth, admis-

sion, and the category they belong to as it could lead to conscious or subconscious bias.

It is also inappropriate to ask other students about their JEE Advanced rank or GATE score or any other information that may reveal caste or other related aspects, the guidelines say. Asking the rank could

appear like an attempt to find the caste and may set the stage for discrimination, state the guidelines made public by the institute July 29. The guidelines encourage students to bond over commonalities like departments, sports, music, movies, schools, college, and hobbies.

They also prohibit students from sharing messages, including jokes that are abusive, hateful, casteist, sexist or exhibit bigotry based on religion or sexual orientation, which can be construed as harassment or bullying.

DSPL - 169

World Breast Feeding Week
1st - 7th August 2023

“Breast Feeding ensures healthy baby & healthy mother.”

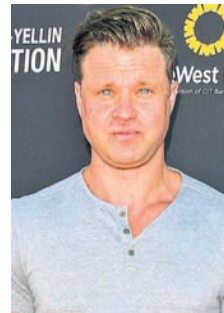
Chief Minister, Odisha

- Breast feeding contributes to good health, immunity and mental development of the baby.
- Exclusive breast feeding for the first 6 months of life protects health of both baby and mother.
- No supplementary food (cow's milk, artificial milk, honey water, sugar solution etc.) should be given to the baby during this period.
- After 6 months, supplementary food (Khechudi, boiled & mashed vegetable, soft fruits, Dal water etc.) should be added, with continuation of breast feeding upto 2 years and beyond.

Healthy Odisha, Happy Odisha

OIPR-10003/13/0086/2324
Health & Family Welfare Department, Odisha

leisure



ZACHERY ARRESTED FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FOR SECOND TIME

Actor Zachery Ty Bryan, best known for his role as eldest son Brad Taylor on Tim Allen's Home Improvement, reportedly has been arrested for domestic violence for the second time. The actor was arrested Friday by the police for felony assault in violation of the Abuse Prevention Act, reports *deadline.com*.

JUSTIN, WIFE HAILEY REPORTEDLY EXPECTING FIRST CHILD TOGETHER

Singer Justin Bieber and his supermodel wife Hailey Bieber are reportedly expecting their first child together after nearly five years of marriage. Hailey was consulting with fertility doctors last year and is now pregnant, reports *aceshowbiz.com*.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
At times it is a good thing to be under pressure, because it brings out your potential to the fullest. You will outsmart all your colleagues in the work you do. However, results may not match your expectations. Ganesh advises patience as results don't come overnight.

TAURUS
This is a great day for expressions your ideas and feelings. Ganesh urges you to open up and share hopes and concerns, dreams and aspirations with your others. Romance is in the air. You could be flying deliciously high on the wings of love, in the company of your sweetheart.

GEMINI
You will spend your time figuring out other people and their motivations today. You will probably spend time discussing issues of security and finance with your family members today. You will gain love and appreciation from people owing to your caring nature, says Ganesh.

CANCER
You will display a special attention towards beloved ones. This is an apt time for a frank chat on vital issues with your life partner, says Ganesh. You never allow heart to dictate terms to mind, yet today will be sentimental with your wife.

LEO
Your day will be one of mixed results. On one hand you will be dissatisfied with your spouse or business partner, on the other hand you will make fantastic returns on your speculations. You will be able to maintain a balance owing to the advise of some friend, says Ganesh.

VIRGO
You will take your destiny in your own hands today. You possess the vision to penetrate the masks that people wear to hide their true selves. You will carefully select the friends to spend your time with, and you will also make plans for success. You need to brush up your presentation abilities, and may have to put in some extra efforts to get your ideas approved, says Ganesh.

LIBRA
Ganesh says today is a good day for government related work. Those of you who are government employees will be able to get good results for their work. Your work will be rewarded and your performance and efficiency will be praised. You will be able to have a heart to heart talk with your loved one.

SCORPIO
Free your mind from negative thoughts. You need to be in high spirits to work with your team and delegate equal responsibilities to your team mates. Know their calibre and designate accordingly. Trust them with their work and the rest would fall in place.

SAGITTARIUS
The morning seems to begin on a lazy note today, as your energy level is equal to zero. Thus, you may try to decentralise your activities and divide it between your co-workers. But make sure the responsibilities are delegated in the right hands or you may have to regret your decision.

CAPRICORN
You will want to expand the horizon of your business. But, you will be confused about the path to take for the expansion. You want to reach to the sky, but such a dilemma will keep you in a double mind. Listen to what your heart says, as it will guide you to the right direction, feels Ganesh.

AQUARIUS
The monotony of your routine will get little bit of colour with the help of your wit and humour. Your jovial nature will lighten the burden of work from the shoulders of one all, says Ganesh. People love to be in your company and that is the reason why you are on the top of every guest list.

PISCES
You will experience mixed feelings today. On one hand tension and stress about how to set a deteriorating situation right will keep you worried, and on the other hand you will be in a mood to accept things for what they are.

Nora's shocking disclosure

Mumbai: Actor Shah Rukh Khan is known as the 'King of Bollywood' and rules millions of hearts, has been one of the highest paid actors of the world, and has a global recognition, was heartbroken when he was told that he would never become an actor.

In an interaction with Priety Zinta in one of her shows, the Don actor recalled, "Mehmood sahab, wo hamare bahut close the, Bangalore mein rehte the wo to hum unke neighbours the. To unke ladke the Macky. Unlog ke paas pehli baar video camera tha to unhone mujhe shoot kiya aur mera dil tod diya. Main theatre karta tha. To meri photo unhone li aur phir meri mummy ko kaha ki bahut accha acting karta hai ye aur naachta bhi accha hai. Sab kuch theek hai iska lekin dikhta bahut kharab hai to ye Hindi filmo mein kabhi hero nahi banega."

He further narrated, "My mother who thought I was the most beautiful child in the world, was heartbroken. Aur wo Hyderabad thi, unhone kaha arre, mitti par uspe, ko farak nahi padta. Tum bahut khoobsoorat ho. Bilkul fikar nahi karo. Tum bahut accha actor banega. And then unfortunately my mom and dad both are not alive to see me become a film actor. I think my parents have make sure ki main zindagi mein jahan bhi jaaun, jidhar bhi jaaun, log khush hote hain mujhko milkar, aur mujhe bahut khushi milti hai."



Mumbai: Nora Fatehi, who has very successfully created a niche for herself in the film industry with her gorgeous looks and impeccable dance moves, recently opened up about the things she was asked to do in the industry in order to become popular or be in the news.

She revealed that she was constantly told to date specific people or actors for PR. However, she never listened to any of those things. According to her, she is glad that she didn't because today, she is the one making the rules and she works on her own terms.

Nora also added that it has ensured that her success is not because of another guy next to her or a hero that she is hanging on to. It is on her own.

Nora also spoke about how she has played cameos in several films and they have all gone viral and has made her who she is today. However, in the next phase of her career she is working towards playing the lead roles.

Meanwhile, on the work front, Nora Fatehi is currently shooting for the dance series Hip Hop India alongside choreographer Remo D'Souza.



Have become wiser with every film: Sara

Mumbai: This year, Sara Ali Khan will complete five years of her acting career in the film industry. In her short career span, the actress has seen major heights in terms of blockbusters and has also witnessed the low.

In a recent interview with an entertainment portal, the *Atrangi Re* actress got candid about her future plans and how she changed her choices regarding her stories.

On the biggest change in her during these years, she says, "I have become wiser with every film. I have grown with the experiences I got from playing each character. Now, I have learn something different something new. Hopefully, I'll be able to do it in the future too."

Talking about her future plans, she adds, "I want to work with all my directors again. There is also a desire to work with foreign directors."

On if she has plans in place to work in Hollywood, Sara said, "Yes, I want to do films in every language. I would never want to limit my dreams so that I can keep trying."



'I don't believe in setting conditions'

Mumbai: It's been a decade since the 2013 film *Hawa Bodo!* was released and now the trio - Jeet, Tanuka, and Raj played respectively by Parambrata Chattopadhyay, Raima Sen and Rudranil Ghosh, - are reuniting yet again for another fun-filled adventure.

During its Mahurat, when asked about the changes over the years, Raima expressed that while she can't speak for Parambrata and Rudranil, she remains unchanged

even after a decade. She is excited to reprise her role as Tanuka, who is now a mother to a 17-year-old boy named Kabir.

Unlike some actresses who may be apprehensive about playing mother roles, Raima says, "I don't believe in setting conditions for my choice of characters. I believe in taking up characters with depth, regardless of whether they are mothers on screen."

Raima also expressed her dissatisfaction with the current trend of glamorous portrayals by other actresses. For her, the focus

should be on showcasing talent rather than emphasizing glamour. She prefers to be comfortable and true to herself, concentrating on the essence of her performances.

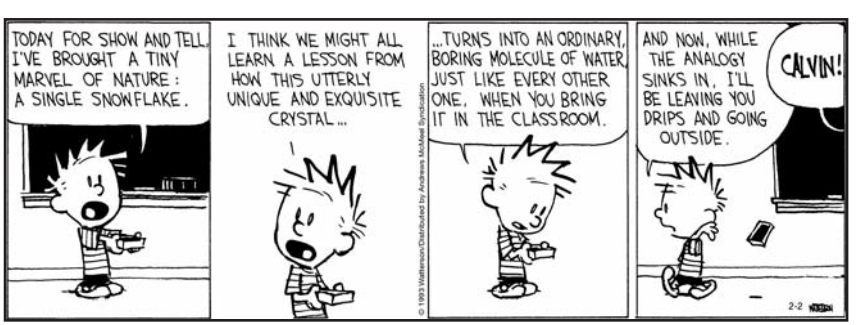
Meanwhile, Raima is also playing a key role in Vivek Agnihotri's *The Vaccine War*.



PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

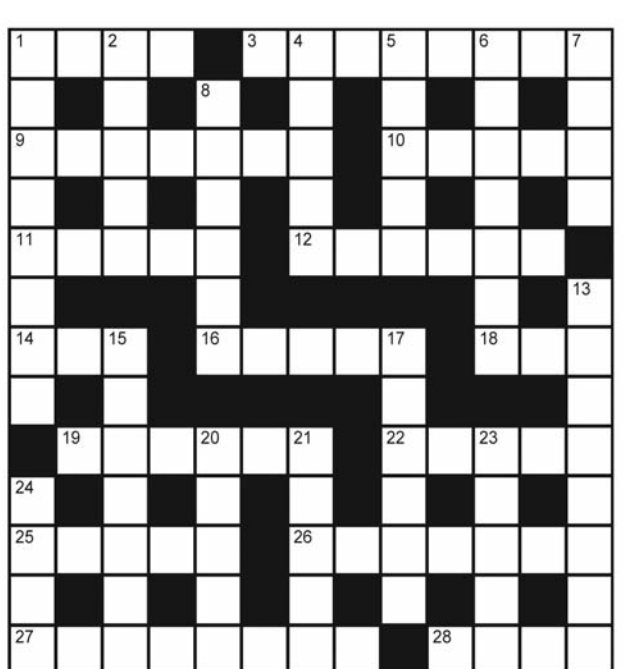


BREVITY



FUN post

CROSSWORD



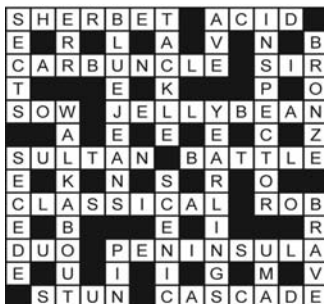
- Across**
- 1 Aquatic plant
 - 3 Topic of conversation with your banker
 - 9 Not clear
 - 10 Perfect
 - 11 Skirt
 - 12 Sound quality
 - 14 Shaver
 - 16 Fat cat
 - 18 Lab eggs
 - 19 Ego
 - 22 Small canoe
 - 25 Cake topper
 - 26 Twister
 - 27 First light
 - 28 Patella's place
 - Down**
 - 1 Like all babies
 - 2 Oomph
 - 4 All thumbs
 - 5 Words to live by
 - 6 Farewell, in London
 - 7 Seafood selection
 - 8 Millstone
 - 13 Gumption
 - 15 Kismet
 - 17 Napoleon locale
 - 20 Humidor item
 - 21 Uncredited actor
 - 23 Pine
 - 24 Temperate weather forecast

SUDOKU

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



SOLUTIONS



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

Monsoon mayhem leaves 1 dead, 3 hurt

IMD records 258 mm rainfall in Capital City till 8:30 pm Monday



A resident of Laxmisagar area in Bhubaneswar wades through waist-deep water as rain lashes the City, Monday

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, July 31: The Capital city of Odisha went under water following the first major burst of torrential rains during the current monsoon Monday, throwing normal life completely out of gear and bringing untold miseries to citizens.

As per reports, one person died after coming under an uprooted tree at Chadrasekharpur. The deceased was identified as Tutu Maharana. The tree reportedly gave way when Maharana was seeking refuge under it to save himself from the rains. Police said he was native of Ganjam district and lived in Shikharchandi area of the City.

In another incident, a boundary wall collapsed at AIIMS Bhubaneswar, injuring three. The injured include two administrative officers at AIIMS while the third person is a shop-owner. An ambulance got stranded in front of RCM due to heavy traffic jam

while many houses were inundated in low-lying areas. IMD Bhubaneswar recorded 258 mm rainfall till 8:30 pm Monday.

Commuters, office goers, schoolchildren and average citizens had a harrowing time after they were stranded or had to wade their way through waist-deep waters in the City's arterial roads to reach their destinations as vehicles faced breakdowns, causing instant traffic snarls.

At many places, bikes and auto-rickshaws were seen submerged in pools of water that spoke volumes about civic apathy, corruption and mindless urbanisation in the name of development. Denizens, peeved at the sorry state of affairs, took to micro-blogging platforms to air their concern. Some said blocking natural waterways and handing over to builders/promoters for paltry personal benefit by BDA/BMC has to be blamed for the unprecedented flooding of the state Capital.

Flooding was acute in

places like ISKCON, Nayapalli, Acharya Vihar, Bomikhal, Laxmi Sagar and Old Town as poor drainage, aggravated by road digging and repair works, caused water logging.

Meanwhile, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) has issued an Orange warning for heavy to very heavy rainfall at one or two places in 10 districts of Odisha during next four days due to the prevalent monsoon trough and a low-pressure area formed over the Bay of Bengal.

Orange alert has been issued for Jagatsinghpur, Puri, Kendrapara, Angul, Bargarh, Sambalpur, Bolangir, Kalahandi, Jajpur, and Bhadrak for August 1 and 2. These regions are likely to receive 70 mm to 200 mm of rain during the period. IMD Bhubaneswar has forecast heavy rainfall and thunderstorm in Bhubaneswar and requested all to stay indoors during lightning and thunderstorms.

BMC also informed to call 1929 for any assistance.

₹31,113 CRORE SPENT ON RURAL ROADS, BRIDGES

CENTRAL SCHEME

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 31: Odisha government has so far spent ₹31,113.68 crore on construction of roads and bridges in rural areas under Central schemes – Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) and Road Connectivity Project for Left Wing Extremism Affected Areas (RCLWEEA), according to Union Minister of State for Rural Development Sadhvi Niranjan Jyoti.

In a recent reply to a question of Kalahandi MP Basanta Kumar Panda, Jyoti said highest of ₹2,372.66 crore was spent in Mayurbhanj under the scheme. While ₹2,230.09 crore was utilised in Koraput district, ₹2,060.46 crore was spent for construction of roads and bridges in Sundargarh district under the Central schemes.

Similarly, ₹1,616.05 crore was spent under the PMGSY in Kalahandi district, ₹1,521 crore in Keonjhar, ₹1,517.31 crore in Rayagada, ₹1,459.37 crore in Ganjam, ₹1,312.63 crore in Balasore, ₹1,192.65 crore in Puri, ₹1,142.89 crore in Malkangiri, ₹1,137.92 crore in Bolangir, ₹1,036.74 crore in Gajapati and ₹1,034.10 crore in Cuttack.

Lowest expenditure of ₹204.78 crore was made in Jharsuguda district whereas only ₹246.85 crore was spent in Boudh, ₹343.86 crore in Deogarh and ₹493.75 crore in Jagatsinghpur, the minister said.

A total of 17,900 road projects having a total length of 74,538 km and 704

₹23,120cr DMF funds collected till June 30

Bhubaneswar: Odisha has collected ₹23,120 crore under District Mineral Foundation (DMF) till June 30 this year, Union Minister of Coal, Mines and Parliamentary Affairs Pralhad Joshi told the Rajya Sabha, Monday.

Out of the collection of ₹23,120 crore under DMF till June 30 this year, ₹17,755.20 crore has been received from major minerals other than coal and lignite, ₹5,237.58 crore from coal and lignite and ₹127.21 crore from minor minerals, the Union coal minister said. While the cumulative allocation under DMF is 97 per cent (Rs 22,480.09 crore) of the cumulative collection, 58 per cent (Rs 13,478.00 crore) of the collection has so far been spent on 'high priority' and 'other priority activities', Joshi said. As per the Odisha State DMF rules, at least 60 per cent of the funds are to be spent on 'high priority activities' and up to 40 per cent on 'other priority activities'. Sharing details of sector-wise expenditure (Rs 13,478.00 crore) under the

Pradhan Mantri Khanij Kshetra Kalyan Yojana (PMKKKY), the Union minister said ₹10,085.77 crore has been spent on 'high priority activities' – ₹3,165.41 crore on drinking water supply, ₹2,751.65 crore on education, ₹1,586.85 crore on healthcare, ₹1,036 crore on road connectivity, ₹546.25 crore on livelihood programmes, ₹487.06 crore on welfare of the women, children, elderly and differently-abled, ₹205.63 crore on skill development, ₹152.75 crore on environment preservation and pollution control, ₹141.19 crore on sanitation and ₹12.76 crore on housing. He said ₹3,265.92 crore has been spent on 'other priority activities' – ₹2,070.96 crore on physical infrastructure, ₹819.91 crore on irrigation, ₹200.84 crore on energy and watershed, ₹76.64 crore on Afforestation and ₹97.57 crore on 'others' – and ₹126.31 crore on administration till June 30 this year.

bridges have been sanctioned under PMGSY-I, II and III and RCLWEEA in the state. Of these, 17,069 road projects and 559 bridges have been completed, while 831 road projects and 145 bridges are under progress, the minister pointed out. Under PMGSY-I, a total of 15,808 road and 523 bridge projects were sanctioned, of which only 21 roads and 14 bridges are yet to be completed.

Similarly, out of 636 road and 30 bridge projects sanctioned under PMGSY-II, 634 roads and 29 bridges have been completed.

A total of 1,404 roads and 149 bridges were sanctioned under PMGSY-III, of which, 617 road projects and 21 bridges have been completed so far.

Out of 52 road and two bridge projects taken up under RCLWEEA, 31 roads have been completed, the minister further said.

Biggest quiz fest 'Mettle Meet' is back

After the pandemic and ensuing disruptions, Odisha's most awaited and popular mega quiz event is back.

The biggest quiz fiesta in Eastern India, 'Mettle Meet' is all set to resume its fifth edition August 5 and 6.

As part of the 12th anniversary celebrations of Orissa POST, the only home grown English daily, a string of reputable educational institutions - both schools and colleges - of the state will lock horns for the top honours at the annual grand quiz fest at Bhubaneswar August 5 & 6 (Saturday & Sunday).

The Preliminaries and Finals will take place at Hotel Swosti Premium, Bhubaneswar. Around 72 teams (Junior and Senior) are participating in the grand quiz competition.

Like in previous years, this year too, the participating schools and colleges will be categorized in two segments. Students till Class XII (Junior) comprise the first category, while the second category will be for students in Plus-III and other streams, including Engineering, Medical and Management (Senior).

Continuing the tradition, a Quiz Master of national repute will be conducting the Preliminaries and Finals.

The top eight teams from each of the two segments (Junior & Senior) will qualify for the summit clash round (Finals).

Mettle Meet started in 2016 with a view to revive the art of quizzing



in Odisha. College of Engineering and Technology (CET) Bhubaneswar won the inaugural edition wherein 18 teams participated. The overwhelming response compelled Orissa POST to organise the event every year.

Since then, the participation increased, in fact, more than doubled in 2017 when 45 teams from across the state took part and made the event a phenomenal success. SAI International School clinched the trophy in Junior category and NIT Rourkela bagged the top honours

in the Senior category.

The 2018 edition saw educational institutions from across all districts of Odisha converging in Bhubaneswar to take part in the quiz. The number of participating institutions grew to 68. Like in 2017, the competition was conducted in two categories – Junior and Senior segments. Keen competition was witnessed in the Preliminary rounds with the top eight teams qualifying for the Grand Finale.

In the Junior Finals, Mother's Public School emerged champions.

DAV (CDA) and DAV Pokhariput finished first and second runners-up, respectively.

The Senior Finals was a thrilling affair with CET and KIIT locking horns in a see-saw battle. Quizmaster Venkatesh Srinivasan had to implement tie-breaker questions three successive times before the deadlock was finally broken and, CET emerged triumphant for the second time in three years. KIIT University again had to be contended with the first runners-up spot, while Silicon University of Technology finished second runners-up.

The 2019 edition of Odisha's biggest quiz fest – Mettle Meet – saw participation of as many as 88 teams from reputable educational institutions across the coastal state.

Mother's Public School emerged champion in the Junior category defeating its closest rival DAV Public School, Unit-VIII, Bhubaneswar by a good margin. DAV Public School, CDA, Cuttack was the second runners up in the category.

In the Senior category, Indira Gandhi Institute of Technology (IGIT), Sarang bagged the top award by answering nail-biting questions posed by quizmaster Ajay Poonia. While National Institute of Technology (NIT), Rourkela was the first runners up, All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Bhubaneswar was the second runners up in the category.

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For more details

Please refer to the Notification No. 10/2023-Central Tax dated 10.05.2023 read with Principal Notification No. 13/2020-Central Tax dated 21.03.2020

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Bike lifters' gang busted; 4 nabbed



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 31: Commissionerate Police Monday busted a bike lifters' gang that had been active in the Capital City and adjoining areas. The cops have also arrested four members of the gang including the receiver of the booty.

The arrested were identified as Krishan Das, 36, of Itamati area, Pravat Kumar Nayak, 40, of Khandapada and Ramesh Prusty, 31, of Laxmi Prasad village in Nayagarh and Chikunta Nayak, 35, of Raikia in Kandhamal district.

Speaking to media, Bhubaneswar DCP Prateek Singh

said a joint team of Capital police station and officials of special quad of Commissionerate Police busted an organised bike lifters' gang which used to steal motorcycles from various areas, especially infocity and Khandagiri areas.

"Accused Krishan is a professional bike lifter having a series of cases pending against him. Previously, he was also arrested by city police in connection with some other matters. He was later released on bail. He has formed a well-oiled gang with Pravat, Chikunta, and Ramesh. Mastermind Krishan and his aide Pravat used to steal motorcycles from the City.

Krishan in connivance with Ramesh, who has a number plate and sticker shop at Nayagarh, used to prepare fake high security registration plates (HSRPs), and fake documents of the stolen M/Cs," revealed the city police.

The stolen vehicles were later disposed of through Chikunta in remote areas by claiming as second hand bikes. They also prepare the fake documents and number plates at MAA Arts located at Behera Sahi Chhaka here. Police have launched a manhunt to arrest the owner of MAA Arts.

Police claimed that the gang is involved in theft of more than 100 motorcycles while 15 cases are pending at Capital, Infocity, Khandagiri and Kharvel Nagar police stations.

The cops have so far recovered 35 motorcycles, 40 duplicate number plates, seven fake RC smart cards, seven fake RC papers and five duplicate keys from the possession of the accused, who were Monday produced before the court that sent them to judicial custody.



SEEKING JOB SECURITY: Members of Odisha Government Outsourcing Employees Federation demonstrate near PMG Square demanding regularisation of their jobs in Bhubaneswar, Monday

Panda bats for W Odisha HC bench

New Delhi: Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MP Basanta Panda Monday urged the Union government to take steps for setting up a bench of Orissa High Court in Western Odisha. The BJP MP from Kalahandi raised the issue under rule 377 in Lok Sabha. The parliamentarian stated that the litigants have to spend around Rs 500 to visit Cuttack to file cases in the High Court. He stated that approaching the High Court has become an arduous task for many people due to the long distance and travelling cost. "Due to this, most of the people in Western Odisha, especially from backward areas do not file litigations in the High Court," Panda said.

3 KISS students clear OCS Exams



ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, July 31: Three students from Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS) here successfully cleared the Odisha Civil Services Examination, the results of which were announced by the Odisha Public Service Commission (OPSC) Monday. The students are Biswanath Ranjan Kisan of Sundargarh, Ranguni Shabar of Nuapada, and Sanatan Majhi of Kalahandi.

Notably, Sanatan, a native of Thuamul Rampur in Kalahandi, belongs to the Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG).

Similarly, 10 students from KISS have qualified in the UGC-NET examination conducted by the University Grants Commission (UGC). Among them, Golak Kahar and Balaram Champia have been selected for Junior Research Fellowship

(JRF). The other students who cleared NET include Jayanthi Majhi, Kuntala Jani, Bharti Kujur, Revathi Singh, Keshav Majhi, Debahuti Puta, Santharam Majhi, and Jayanthi Bhoi.

Congratulating the students, KIIT & KISS founder Achyuta Samanta expressed his satisfaction with their success. He highlighted that KISS provides special training to its students enabling them to perform well in various competitive examinations at both national and state levels. He hoped that many more students from the institute will achieve success in these exams in the future. With OCS results, OPSC has recommended 432 candidates in order of merit for appointment to posts under Odisha Civil Services (Group A & B) 2021. Of the total 432 candidates, 164 are women.

OSM wants special Gram Sabha on agri

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 31: Although the state government's commitment to enhancing agricultural production and empowering farmers has received accolades for successfully implementing Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) and other schemes, some pressing issues concerning farmers need to be sorted out, said Odisha Shramajeebee Mancha (OSM) Monday.

While the government's initiatives have been a boon for farmers adopting the second crop, certain issues still adversely impact their livelihoods, said OSM convener Anjan Pradhan in a letter to the state government. Challenges such as inad-



equated irrigation facilities, delayed seed distribution and the issue of unregistered farmers on Krushak Portal need prompt attention and collective action, he said.

In light of these challenges and the vision for sustainable agricultural practices, the importance of the forthcoming special gram sabha cannot be overstated. Scheduled to take place August 15, the gram sabha offers an inclusive platform for local stakeholders and community members to actively participate in planning and implementing development projects at village level.

"We firmly believe that the special gram sabha on agriculture will help engage stakeholders in deliberations on pressing matters concerning our farmers. It will be a crucial opportunity to address their critical challenges and cultivate innovative solutions through collective efforts," said Pradhan in his letter to Panchayati Raj minister and the principal secretary, urging them for consideration of the demands.

NGT seeks reports on Balasore DSR

GYAN RANJAN MOHAPATRA, OP

Bhubaneswar, July 31: Questioning veracity of the District Service Report (DSR) for earmarking of areas eligible for mining of sand, stone, morrum and brick earth in Balasore for the period 2023-2028, the National Green Tribunal (NGT) has sought reports from the state government and the district administration. While hearing a petition filed by Haripada Manna, the green panel has directed the authorities to submit their replies within four weeks.

The DSR, usually prepared by a committee under the district collectorate, is approved by the State Expert Appraisal Committee and State Environment Impact Assessment Authority (SEIAA).

"We have challenged the approval given by the SEIAA as the DSR prepared at the district level has many lapses. On February 8 last year, the NGT had ordered that the district administration can't auction plots for mining of minor minerals on the basis of the said DSR report which was an interim one," said advocate Sankar Prasad Pani.

The NGT had instructed the Collector to prepare a fresh and comprehensive DSR following the guidelines mentioned in the judgments of the Supreme Court, NGT and a notification issued by the government in July 2018. As per the guidelines, the district level committee should have prepared a DSR following physical inspection of the spots. However, they made this interim DSR without any field visits, added the advocate.

The SEIAA gave approval for the DSR despite it being clear that the interim DSR was not prepared scientifically as no surveys were conducted and it didn't contain any information on people who prepared the report and their expertise in technical matters.

MARKET WATCH	
INDEX	VARIATION
SENSEX	66527.67 ↑ 367.47
NIFTY	19753.80 ↑ 107.75
DOLLAR	82.08 ↑ ₹0.10
EURO	90.64 ↑ ₹0.25
GOLD	₹59,534 ↑ ₹107
SILVER	₹75,337 ↑ ₹1,278

WEATHER		
	BHUB	CTK
TEMP. MAX	32.8°C	33.5°C
TEMP. MIN	26.0°C	26.4°C
Humidity	100%	83%
Rainfall	186	30.2
Forecast	Rain with thunder-shower	

Gop ex-ASI gets 2-yr jail term for bribery

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, July 31: The Vigilance court here Monday sentenced a retired police assistant sub-inspector (ASI) to two-year rigorous imprisonment (RI) after convicting him for bribery.

The court also slapped a penalty of Rs 10,000 on the convict, BK Mahapatra. According to the prosecution, Mahapatra was posted as an ASI at Gop police station in 2004 when he was caught by the anti-corruption wing sleuths taking Rs 10,000 bribe from an individual to speed up action on his complaint. He was subsequently chargesheeted under multiple Sections of the Prevention of Corruption (PC) Act to face trial in the Vigilance court.

In another section of the case, the court awarded one-year RI and Rs 10,000 fine. Both the sentences will run concurrently, the judge ordered. The Vigilance department will approach the competent authority to stop the pension of Mahapatra following his conviction, Vigilance sources said.

GAIL, Centurion University sign MoU for healthcare

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 31: Taking an initiative to make healthcare more accessible, Centurion University has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with GAIL India to set up telehealth kiosks in all 7 rural campuses of the university across Odisha and Andhra Pradesh.

"Rural poor people deprived of health care services will benefit a lot from these kiosks. They can consult doctors, do diagnostic testing, get medicines and opt for a second opinion through these kiosks at a very nominal cost," informed a university official.

On the occasion, N Nandhagopal, independent director of GAIL said, "We believe telehealth solution can help by realigning resource priorities and it holds the potential to spread primary diagnostic assessment more evenly across



the state. We are very excited by the opportunity to work with such a team in providing solutions to these issues. We aim to deliver an affordable commercial healthcare solution."

Nandhagopal was present at the signing ceremony along with Anoop Gupta and Nigamananda Mishra of GAIL. Debasish Panda, comptroller of finance, and Supriya Pattanayak, vice-chancellor of Centurion University represented the university at the ceremony.

Chit fund scam: SC seeks status report on 25 depositors' claims

KULDEEP SINGH, OP

New Delhi, July 31: The Supreme Court Monday asked the Odisha government to file a status report within four weeks in connection with the claims of 25 depositors duped by various chit fund companies in the coastal state.

A two-judge Bench of Justices Surya Kant and Dipankar Datta asked the state government to look into the specific cases of 25 depositors at first and then the SC will enlarge the scope to see what can be done about the other depositors.

The SC asked the petitioners to share details of the amount deposited by them along with the names of chit fund companies with the state government within

two weeks.

The counsel appearing for Odisha submitted that the state will make sincere efforts to find out the details of such deposit and will also take steps to recover and refund the amount under the Odisha Protection of Interest of Depositors Act, 2011.

During the hearing, amicus curiae Gaurav Agrawal informed the SC about the steps taken by the Centre in compliance with the directions passed by the apex court in March. He submitted that an online portal has been launched for the claim filing of depositors duped by the four Sahara group cooperative societies. He also submitted that he would file a latest status report in the matter in two weeks.

KLF sheds light on Cuttack as cultural hub

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, July 31: The inaugural edition of Kalinga Literary Festival (KLF) organised here witnessed a confluence of eminent writers, poets, speakers, journalists, politicians and literature enthusiasts.

During the inaugural ceremony, KLF coordinator Soumyaranjan Sahoo shed light on the importance of the language, culture & history and diversity of Odisha as well as the significance of Cuttack as the cultural hub of the state. He also emphasised the efforts of KLF in promoting Odisha's contribution.

The inaugural session, titled 'Ekabinsaha Satabdi ra Odisha re Sahitya, Sanskruti au Ayitha ra Sahara Cuttack' was moderated by Dipak Samantarai. Cuttack Mayor Subhash Chandra Singh, Barabati-Cuttack MLA Mohammed Moquim, Jatindra Nayak, Poet Amaresh Pattnaik, Odisha Film Development Corporation (OFDC) chairman Satyabrata Tripathy and Soumyaranjan Sahoo graced the occasion. KLF delved into the legacy, history, culture, and folk traditions of the Silver City.

The next session, 'Reimagining Cuttack' saw Kharavela Mohanti and Dipak Samantarai discussing the city's history, anthropology



and antiquity. They touched upon the spirit of brotherhood among the city's inhabitants, which has been a hallmark of Cuttack for centuries. Mohanti proposed a light and sound show at the iconic Barabati Fort, bringing the city's history to life and

advocated for establishment of separate authorities for the River Bed Project. He emphasised the role of literature as a primary source of understanding the essence of Cuttack.

Another highlight of the event, organised in association with Cuttack Heritage Walks, was the session with authors & journalists Sandeep Sahu and Kasturi Ray who discussed their books - 'Madam President, Droupadi Murmu' and 'Droupadi Murmu, from Tribal Hinterlands to Raisina Hills' - respectively. The conversation moderated by Jatindra Nayak shed light on the extraordinary journey of India's second woman President.

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JAJPUR DISTRICT

RATE OF DROPOUTS REFUSES TO DECLINE

IT IS NOT UNCOMMON TO SEE CHILDREN BELOW SIX YEARS OF AGE PLAYING NEAR THE RAIL LINES INSTEAD OF GOING TO THE NEIGHBOURHOOD ANGANWADI CENTRES IN THE INDUSTRIALLY RICH REGION



January 24. However, six months have passed since but no measures have been taken so far.

It is alleged that school dropouts in an industrially rich district like Jajpur are migrating to other states for work. The state government has floated various schemes to attract children to schools. It has also established AWCs to impart pre-school training by providing host of benefits for the development for children below six years of age.

However, these schemes are not being properly implemented due to the apathetic attitude of the department authorities. Most of the students study up to Class-IV or Class-V and drop out of school. The dropout students are later engaged in domestic work or as child labourers to earn a living to support their families.

The state government's initiative of midday meal programme has also failed to yield any result.

A senior lawyer Chandra Sekhar Panda said the success of various schemes of the state government can be gauged from the fact that minor children instead of going to schools could be seen playing near the railway tracks.

When contacted, ADEO (Schemes) Sashidhar Singh said that all BEOs and headmasters have been asked to identify the dropout students and steps are being taken to reduce their numbers.

failed to identify the dropout students. This has hit their plan to assimilate 100 per cent dropout children in the mainstream. This has also made them to cut a sorry figure while responding to their higher ups in the education department. He directed all the BEOs to identify the dropout students and take necessary steps in this regard.

Moreover, the sight of children below six years of age playing near the railway tracks instead of visiting the local Anganwadi Centres is not uncommon in the district.

The matter has acquired prominence after a social activist Mantu Das identified 654 dropouts in industrially rich Kalinganagar area and in adjoining Danagadi block and filed a writ petition (1729/2023) in Orissa High Court.

The court heard the matter and directed the Odisha Child Rights Protection Commission to conduct a probe on the allegations and take steps for the rehabilitation of the dropouts,

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jajpur, July 31: Though this district is known as very advanced in the field of education, the rate of dropouts and unschooled children refuses to decline.

A reply to a query in the state Assembly has revealed that a total of 3,262 students from scheduled caste and scheduled tribe communities dropped out of schools during 2018-19 academic session.

However, dropout students being found in the district again four years after the Assembly report has caught many by surprise.

The district education authorities were on their toes after a regional Odia daily published a report on the rehabilitation of the dropout students, July 11. In a letter, the district education officer (DEO) pulled up all the block education officers (BEOs) over their inability in identifying the dropout students.

The DEO said that despite frequent correspondence, they have



EVICTON DRIVE: An earthmover demolishing an illegal construction to clear encroachments from Lengu Mishra Square till New Jeera bridge road in Bargarh, Monday

COP KILLED 25 YEARS AGO

Ex-MLA among 13 gets life term

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Berhampur, July 31: A court in Ganjam district Monday sentenced 13 people, including CPI leader and former MLA N Narayan Reddy, to life imprisonment for killing a policeman 25 years ago during an anti-land acquisition movement.

Binobha Meher, an inspector of the reserve police, died June 18, 1998 when the accused hurled bombs at a police team in Sindhigaon during the protest against the land acquisition for the construction of a steel plant in the area.

As many as 22 people, including the former legislator,



were implicated in the case. Of them, 13 appeared before the court and three persons could not come due to their ill health, while six died earlier, public prosecutor Niranjana Padhy said.

Raj Kumar Das, the judge of ADJ-3 court, pronounced the verdict of the 25-year-old case after recording the statement of 65 witnesses, added Padhy.

The 68-year-old former MLA who led the anti-land acquisition movement, in his reaction, said, "We are very much disappointed over the judgment. We will approach the higher court to get justice."

Reddy was elected to the state Assembly in 2004 from the Chhatrapur segment when he was in jail. There were several cases linked to the anti-displacement movement against him, including the murder of the policeman.

The Left leader was arrested under the National Security Act when he contested the election. Most of the other accused claimed that they were 'erroneously implicated' in the case as they were not on the spot when the incident occurred.

A clash between the police and agitators broke out during a meeting in Sindhigaon over the land acquisition for the steel plant.

Security guards of the then collector and the superintendent of police of Ganjam sustained injuries when agitators pelted their vehicles with stones.

The police had fired to disperse the mob in the village.

DFO pedals 550 km for environmental causes



POST NEWS NETWORK

Sambalpur, July 31: Local Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) Viswanath Neelannavar has covered a tedious journey of 550 km from Leh to Umling La to create awareness on forests, wildlife and the environment and to inculcate the habit of cycling among youths in the country.

After his recent return from the Himalayan range, Viswanath, sharing his daring experience, said, "The journey started on July 15 and ended after seven days. The route was very tough. Forty percent of the route was off road. There was heavy headwind, a storm and drizzle on the route. The weather was unpredictable in

the mountains, with a lot of variations. And oxygen was the major factor."

Initially, the team stayed in Leh for two days to acclimatise with the weather and situation in the new environment. Then it began the journey, he added. "Our destination was at 19024 feet altitude and we reached it facing all challenges with a lot of patience," he said further.

The programme was taken up in association with Youth Hostel Association of India and was completed successfully.

While 45 people took part in the expedition from the entire country, 30 could reach the destination. The rest of the 15 couldn't for different reasons including health issues, Viswanath concludes.

Displaced women stop NTPC mining

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, July 31: Mining activities at NTPC's Dulunga mines, under Hemgiri block, have come to a standstill as displaced agitating women barged in and stop all excavation works. Police tried to stop them but in vain as the women outnumbered the men in uniform and also they were in no mood to listen to anyone.

"It would have created a very tough and unpleasant situation had the police resorted to any ac-



tion because of their number," said an officer. A large contingent of police has been deployed near the site to prevent an unpleasant situation.

These women have been agitating against some 'faulty' Rehabilitation & Resettlement (R&R) policies of NTPC. They alleged that the authorities had hardly ever cared to heed their demands. Sometimes back they had stopped the agitation for a while when the NTPC had promised to listen to their demands. However, they resumed the agitation and entered the mining areas when their demands were not met.

RSP units set nat'l record



POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, July 31: SAIL, Rourkela Steel Plant (RSP) has created records in torpedo ladle life and steel ladle life, both being the best in their segment amongst all steel plants in India.

RSP clocked the highest torpedo ladle life of 2669 heats July 25 surpassing the previous best of 2651 heats achieved in January, 2023. Similarly, a new record in lining life of 125 heats in continuous casting machine (CCM-I) steel ladle # 9 was set July 26.

SR Suryawanshi, ED (Works), visited the site and congratulated the collective for this stupendous achievement. He presented a certificate of appreciation to the team.

In order to maintain torpedo ladle availability for improving

plant productivity, refractory (Engineering) services, RSP has focused on expanding the service life of torpedo ladles. To effectively increase the ladle life, various innovative work practices have been brought to use. These include new lining patterns and maintenance systems like metal heals practice, window repair concept, modifications in the heating cycle, online inspection and thermography. Besides, regular ladle inspections and studies on thermal profiles helped in identifying the schedule for general and localised repairs. Thermal scanning was carried out after every heat to ascertain potential threat areas, while hot maintenance was done whenever necessary to prolong the life of the torpedo.

Similarly, at CCM#1 of steel melting shop#1 (SMS#1), steel ladle #9 registered a record lining life of 125 heats surpassing the earlier record of 120 heats achieved in April 2023. SMS-I being a very old unit, this is a major milestone and one of the key components on which productivity depends.

Suspected sacrifice: Woman priest, 3 sons held

Bhubaneswar: A traditional healer and her three sons were arrested Monday for allegedly killing a 14-year-old boy of Angul district, police said. The arrested are Ritanjali Bagh and her three sons - Dibyanjan, Soumyaranjan and Jyotirajan. Sanchit Biswal of Subarnapur village under Kiakata police station in the district was allegedly sacrificed about a week ago. According to locals, Sanchit was not keeping well and her mother Basanti took him to Mangala Kothi, a special worship place for Goddess Mangala which was run by Ritanjali, to seek blessings July 22. Sanchit and his mother were made to sleep in separate rooms in the Kothi that night. The next morning, the boy was found missing. The family members launched a frantic search for him and Basanti lodged a missing complaint at Kiakata police station and a case was registered July 24. Sanchit's mutilated body was found hanging from a tree in Baruni forest area, July 28. The incident sparked off tension in the region.

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER,
RURAL WORKS DIVISION, PATNAGARH
E-mail: eerw_ptng@yahoo.in; Phone No. - 06658-222121
Office Order No. 2585 Date: 28.07.23
1st Corrigendum to this office BID IDENTIFICATION NO. EEPNG-online-02/2023-24 Invited Vide this office Letter No.2511 Dtd. 20.07.2023
No. O-511:- In pursuance to this office BID IDENTIFICATION NO. EEPNG-online-02/2023-24 published vide this office e-procurement notice No. 2511 Dtd. 20.07.2023, the following changes have been made in NIT.

Sl. No.	Items	As per Original TCN	As per 1st corrigendum
1	Availability of tender online for bidding	27.07.2023 11.00 AM to 11.08.2023 upto 5.00 PM	04.08.2023 11.00 AM to 19.08.2023 upto 5.00 PM
2	Last date of seeking clarification	10.07.2023 upto 1.00 PM	18.08.2023 upto 5.00 PM
3	Date and Time of opening of tender in office of the R.W. Division, Patnagarh	14.08.2023 at 11.00 AM	21.08.2023 at 11.00 AM

All other terms and condition remain unaltered.
Sd./- Executive Engineer, R.W. Division, Patnagarh
OIPR-25154/11/0004/2324

WORKS DEPARTMENT No. B-570
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER,
ROURKELA (R&B) DIVISION
UDITNAGAR, ROURKELA
E-Mail Id - eepwdrk@gmail.com
Government of Orissa "e" Procurement Notice
Bid Identification No.: 32/2023-2024 Dated: 27.07.2023

- Number of works: 01 (One) number of Work.
- Estimated cost: Rs.33.72 Lakhs
- Period of completion: 2 (Two) calendar months
- Date & Time of availability of bid document in the portal: Dt. 03.08.2023 at 11.00 A.M.
- Last date/ Time for receipt of bids in the portal: Dt 11.08.2023 up to 05.00 P.M.
- Date of opening of Bid: Dt.12.08.2023 at 11.00 A.M.
- Name and Address of the Officer Inviting Bid: Superintending Engineer, (R & B) Division, Rourkela, Uditnagar.

Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal <http://tendersorissa.gov.in>

Sd./- Superintending Engineer, Rourkela (R&B) Division, Rourkela
OIPR-34068/11/0011/2324

Stunning response to RFD's free sapling distribution project

According to Rourkela DFO Jasobant Sethi, the division has six vans that are travelling through all the villages within the six ranges and delivering saplings to the locals

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, July 31: The free distribution of saplings by the Rourkela Forest Division (RFD) here in all its ranges under its jurisdiction has turned out to be a huge success. There has been a stupendous response from different sections of the society.

The RFD has opened a total number of eight free distribution cen-

tres, known as Asthaya Chara Bitaran Kendra. In the Steel City, it has opened two such centres near the busy Bisra Crossing and another near DAV Crossing. Besides, six others have been opened in six other ranges those RFD has under it.

Speaking about the initiative DFO Rourkela Jasobant Sethi said, "We also have six vehicles moving around all the villages under all the six ranges distributing saplings to the villagers." The saplings are the wild varieties of custard apple, guava, blackberry and other fruit bearing trees. "These trees will aid them economically in the long run once they start fruiting. We are also distributing trees like teak, karanja, saal, baula, raktachandan, krushnachuda, sirisa, khaira and other



such huge trees," informed the DFO.

This year the afforestation drive

or plantation drive is in full swing at this moment. When asked about implementing the Miyawaki style of afforestation, Sethi said, "We do have ideas about that. But, that is very costly, at least ten times higher than the traditional Indian style of growing trees and creating a manmade wild."

At the two city centres daily more than 500 saplings are leaving the shelf as individuals show great interest in this. "We distribute more than 500 saplings every day and these are being taken by individuals," said Budhu who was managing the centre at Bisra Crossing.

"I have taken fifteen saplings using three cards of my family and will plant those in and around my house at Civil Township," said a local at Bisra Centre.

बँक ऑफ महाराष्ट्र
Bank of Maharashtra
पुणे महाराष्ट्र का राज्य बँक परिवार एक बँक

BANK OF MAHARASHTRA
ZONAL OFFICE : BHUBANESWAR
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Near Ruppali Square, Bhubaneswar-751022
E-mail: dzmbbsr@mahabank.co.in

POSSESSION NOTICE
[Rule-8(1)]

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of the Bank of Maharashtra under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (54 of 2002) and in exercise of the powers conferred under sub-section (12) of section 13 read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a Demand Notice calling upon the Borrower/Guarantor to repay the amount mentioned in the notice plus interest and expenses thereon within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. The Borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to Borrower/Guarantor and the public in general that the undersigned has taken Symbolic Possession of the property described herein below in exercise of the powers conferred on him under Sub-section (4) of section 13 of Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules. The Borrower/Guarantor in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the Bank of Maharashtra for an amount stated below with interest & expenses thereon. **The Borrower's attention is invited to provisions of Sub-section (8) of Section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.**

PARADIP BRANCH / Name & Address of the Borrower(s) / Co-ApPLICANT(s) / Guarantor(s)	Description of the Security Interest taken over possession	Liabilities due on the specified date as per Notice	Date of Demand Notice / Date of Possession
Borrower(s)/Co-ApPLICANT(s)/Guarantor(s): 1) M/s. S.K. Graphics, Through Its Prop.: Mr. Kailas Chandra Pani, 2) Mr. Kailas Chandra Pani, 3) Mrs. Suprava Samantaray, Address of all At: Karathutha, PO: Borikhi, Kujanga, Jagatsinghpur, PIN-754141.	All those pieces and parcels of property consisting of Land & Building situated At: Karathutha, PO: Borikhi, in the registration Dist.: Jagatsinghpur, admeasuring 5227.2 sqft. and bearing CTS/Survey No./Khata No.: 106, Plot No.: 338 & 340, Bounded by: East: Jogendra Pani, West: Anabadi, North: Building of Jhari Pani, South: Rest Part of Plot No. 337.	₹ 26,76,425.02 as on 04.02.2023 + interest & other charges thereon	04.02.2023 / 27.07.2023

Date: 01.08.2023, Place: Bhubaneswar **Authorized Officer, Bank of Maharashtra**

Let nothing short of Perfection be your ideal in work and you are sure to become a true instrument of the Divine.



THE MOTHER

Green Oceans

The colour of the oceans is changing to green from blue. In fact, over half of the world's oceans – 56 per cent to be precise – have changed their colour in the past 20 years. The phenomenon is sending alarming signals to the scientific community as it is believed to have been driven by climate change, according to a study published in the journal, Nature. The study has analysed data collected from satellites during the past two decades and come to the conclusion that the area of the affected oceans is larger than the total land area on Earth. Researchers have not been able yet to identify an overall pattern, but they have found tropical ocean regions near the equator have become steadily greener over time.

Heat is thought to be causing the change in colour of the oceans due to increased plankton, an organism filled with chlorophyll. The situation is said to be particularly concerning because the oceans have been estimated to absorb 90 per cent of the heat trapped by greenhouse gases.

Warmer seas pose specific dangers to both human and marine life. Already, due to climate change and greenhouse effects glaciers are melting and sea level is rising. This has caused bleaching of corals and lowering of oxygen levels causing fish to die. The Earth's capacity to stabilise the amounts of energy entering and leaving the planet's system is reaching its limits for current patterns of existence.

The response of various governments across the globe to the emergency shows there is no consistency in fighting the menace. For decades now pledges have been made by countries under the auspices of the UN's climate process that global emissions would be controlled. The irony is, despite such assurances, emissions are now at an all-time high.

It is becoming abundantly clear that the countries and businesses that are heavily reliant on fossil-fuel profits will not easily forego their profiteering. Last weekend the G20 bloc of nations that accounts for 75% of global greenhouse gas emissions – were unable to reach an agreement on phasing down fossil fuels. This November's round of UN talks, COP28, will be held in the United Arab Emirates. Sultan Al Jaber, who also heads his country's national oil company, will head the deliberations. It is doubtful whether truly corrective measures can or will be taken as forests burn and the seas turn green while business interests of fossil fuel companies head the green action groups.

The Earth's weather systems are undergoing severe changes. Daily occurrences all around are constantly throwing obvious warning at us. For example, this year's summer has been witness to extreme heat not only in Orissa or India but also in Europe and North America. It did not stop there. The bizarre rains this year, stopping for long breaks and suddenly the sky opening up with copious rain coming down can be observed all across India as also the world. As a consequence of the high amount of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases being emitted, the atmosphere is going haywire.

Now, added to this list is rising sea temperatures which have attracted the attention of scientists lately. They have warned humanity is moving into unknown territories and the consequences could be really bad.

It is not clear exactly how marine ecosystems are changing to result in this difference in colour. It could be caused by changes in plankton communities that are critical to the marine food chain. Besides, the shift could also affect how much carbon dioxide the ocean takes up, since different types of plankton have different abilities to absorb it, researchers point out.

Another interesting drama is playing out globally. It must be noted how the governments and businesses worldwide are responding to this huge crisis. Those who should be criminally liable as high polluters, since they are financially capable and are buying up 'Carbon Credit' points from environment positive activities, are getting away scot free because they buy up those points. This buying of Carbon Credit is nothing but serious mischief by the rich and the powerful. Until such hide and seek games stop, the seriousness of tackling this impending monumental catastrophe will definitely befall humanity and all other living creatures.

That could, most likely, be sooner than later.

WISDOM CORNER

- Freedom is the right to tell people what they do not want to hear. **GEORGE ORWELL**
- None are more hopelessly enslaved than those who falsely believe they are free. **JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE**
- It does not take a majority to prevail... but rather an irate, tireless minority, keen on setting brushfires of freedom in the minds of men. **SAMUEL ADAMS**

WORDSWORTH

■ Mattoid

The definition given this word by its inventor, the nineteenth-century Italian criminologist Cesare Lombroso was "semi-insane". He believed that criminality was inherited and that a criminal was born with physical defects identifying him as a degenerate human being, an atavism. He created mattoid from the Italian matto, insane, plus the ending -oid for some likeness or resemblance (from Greek eidos, form). He used it for what psychiatrists call "borderline dwellers", those who exist on the margins between reason and madness – in everyday speech we might call them cranks, eccentrics, or misfits. The word came into English in 1891 through a translation of his work Man of Genius and became popular for a while. H G Wells used it in several of his books, most notably in Mankind in the Making of 1903, in which he derides the theories of Lombroso and the Victorian phrenologists: "Among such theorists none at present are in quite such urgent need of polemical suppression as those who would persuade the heedless general reader that every social failure is necessarily a 'degenerate', and who claim boldly that they can trace a distinctly evil and mischievous strain in that unfortunate miscellany which constitutes 'the criminal class'... These mattoid scientists make a direct and disastrous attack upon the latent self-respect of criminals."

■ Megilp

How to make an art conservator shudder: mention megilp. It was a painting medium popular in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. You made it by mixing a mastic resin (which comes from a Mediterranean tree that's related to the pistachio) with linseed oil that had been boiled with a lead compound. This produced a jelly-like substance. Painters of the time loved it because it made paint easier to work and quicker to dry and gave a rich, "buttery" quality to colours it was mixed with. An eighteenth-century writer said that it "produces that warmth and serenity which characterizes the peculiar merit of Claude Lorrain". The problem is that in time it turns the paint yellow or brown and makes it so brittle that it cracks. If you've wondered why some paintings by J M W Turner no longer have the luminous quality they reportedly had when first painted, blame megilp. For these very good reasons, nobody uses it any more. Where the name comes from is not known; the term appears about 1760 with no clue to its origins. It's also a rather rare surname, and some say that it may have been named after its inventor. This seems unlikely, because it has been written in many ways, including majellup and McGilp.

FOCUS SUSTAINABILITY

SCRAP FUEL SUBSIDIES



Jordan Kyle & Kwaw Andam

MANY OIL-PRODUCING COUNTRIES INTRODUCED FUEL SUBSIDIES IN 1970s AS A WAY TO SHARE THE BENEFITS OF NATURAL RESOURCE WEALTH

In his inauguration speech in May, Nigerian President Bola Tinubu announced the end of the country's decades-old fuel subsidy. This is not the first time that Nigeria has attempted to abandon the policy, which has had disastrous consequences for the economy and the climate. What is new is the quiescence of ordinary citizens. After declaring plans for a nationwide strike, the Nigeria Labour Congress backed down, and no other large protests have erupted.

It was an unusual response, to say the least, given that steep fuel-price increases often lead to riots. When then-President Goodluck Jonathan attempted to scrap Nigeria's fuel subsidy in 2012, widespread demonstrations and a nationwide strike forced him to reverse course. Likewise, violent protests compelled former Ecuadorean President Lenin Moreno to reinstate fuel subsidies shortly after he repealed them in 2019. According to the BBC, people in more than 90 countries took to the streets over the cost or availability of fuel between January and September 2022.

To avoid civil unrest, the IMF advocates a gradual phase-out of fuel subsidies coupled with targeted measures to protect the most vulnerable. But when governments lack experience with implementing social safety-net programmes, citizens often will lack faith in the transition and show greater resistance to reform.

Given that trust in government in Nigeria ranks among the lowest in Africa, one would expect stronger popular opposition to the abrupt repeal of the fuel subsidy. Instead, Tinubu's decision to take a "cold turkey" approach, and the negligible pushback he has received, signals a shift in thinking: frustrations with the fuel subsidy may now outweigh concerns about the government's ability to implement sound public policy.

Many oil-producing countries



In countries where trust in government remains low, direct experience of the subsidies' negative effects could go a long way toward bringing citizens on board

introduced fuel subsidies in 1970s as a way to share the benefits of natural-resource wealth. Domestic demand could easily be met by domestic production, the thinking went, with plenty of oil remaining for export. But as market prices rose, governments failed to raise domestic prices and kicked the can down the road, for fear that reforms would fuel a political backlash. Meanwhile, domestic fuel consumption in oil-producing countries, driven by artificially low prices, steadily increased. Major oil producers like Nigeria now must import petroleum products at market prices to meet domestic demand. Over time, fuel subsidies ballooned from modest outlays to behemoth commitments that consume a large share of government expenditures.

Low fuel prices are an important symbol for citizens in oil-producing countries, representing one of the few tangible advantages of crude reserves. Repealing fuel subsidies thus implies reneging on the promised benefits of resource wealth. And yet, as the cost of subsi-

dies has risen, governments have had less fiscal space to invest in health, education, infrastructure, and other public goods.

In Nigeria, citizens may finally favour reform for three reasons. For starters, they are increasingly suffering from fuel scarcity, which has led to long queues at gas stations and soaring operating costs for businesses. The war in Ukraine precipitated a spike in global gasoline and diesel prices, and the cost of transporting fuel around the country has also increased substantially. Rather than operate at a loss, some retailers have raised pump prices beyond the government-set price, while black-market fuels are exorbitantly expensive.

Moreover, the idea that scarcity would eventually ease with an increase in domestic refining capacity has become less credible over time.

Second, Nigeria's fuel subsidy has encouraged smuggling into neighbouring countries, where low-cost gasoline and diesel can be sold for at least twice the price. The scale of the

trafficking is so large that protests erupted in Cameroon after Tinubu's announcement caused the price of gasoline there to double. As Tinubu put it: "Why should we ... feed the smugglers and be the Santa Claus of neighboring countries?" Nigerians appear ready to stop the outflow of their own resources to other countries, even without a guarantee that the government will channel the fiscal savings into investments that help the poor.

Lastly, the Nigerian government had provided ample warning that the fuel subsidy would be repealed this year. Outgoing President Muhammadu Buhari did not budget for it beyond mid-2023, and the Petroleum Industry Bill of 2021 mandated the phase-out of the Petroleum Equalization Fund, the entity that finances the subsidy. The silence of rival political parties underscores the inevitability of reform, unlike in 2012, when Tinubu himself protested against the proposed cuts.

Nigeria's experience suggests that scrapping subsidies while avoiding a public outcry requires exposing their many flaws, including links to fuel shortages and black-market profiteering. As fuel subsidies continue to wreak economic and environmental havoc, policymakers in other countries could attempt to replicate Tinubu's strategy. The public will likely be skeptical about whether governments can cushion the impact by expanding social protections. But, especially in countries where trust in government remains low, direct experience of the subsidies' negative effects could go a long way toward bringing citizens on board.

Jordan Kyle is research fellow at the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI). Kwaw Andam is senior research fellow at IFPRI.

PROJECT SYNDICATE

SPECTRUM NATION

Development is not about tall claims

The International Institute of Population Sciences (IIPS) is a prestigious deemed Indian university and a pioneering 67-year-old institution that is known for, among other work, its highly-regarded and oft-quoted National Family Health Survey (NFHS) series and attendant reports. The reports analyse mounds of data under NFHS rounds that for the last three decades have provided an independent grassroots view of India's demographic and health-related information to tell us if the policy directions are translating to change on the ground.

Last week, the director of this institution, Prof KS James, a noted demographer, researcher and former Jawaharlal Nehru University faculty member, was suspended and asked not to leave his headquarters region, which is Mumbai city, pending an inquiry. IIPS faculty and alumni are said to be in shock. The Opposition has criticised the move. Scientists and other faculty members are alarmed. Not much is known about what triggered the suspension but those in the know of matters say that the suspension order follows

other attempts to oust the director. He was apparently asked to resign some months back. Prof. James reportedly refused, saying he had done nothing wrong and wouldn't leave for no reason.

It is true that this is a suspension pending an inquiry, not punishment already. It is true that the government has a right to investigate on the basis of complaints or information it may have received. But if inside reports are to be believed, it is equally true that the government wanted the director out. If it is a matter of irregularities, then how and why would the director be asked to leave, and an inquiry be launched only when he refused to go quietly?

The questions take on a larger significance when one looks at the work of the IIPS and its role in putting out data relating to demographics and (under NFHS series) key parameters like reproductive and child health, socio-economic indicators, fertility, maternal and child mortality.

It is the latest release of this NFHS report that has told the nation that 19% of households defecate in the open (NFHS-5, for

2019-2021), an improvement from 39% in NFHS-4, for 2015-16. For rural India, NFHS-5 said 26% households still had no access to toilets, and so practised open defecation. This is an improvement in numbers over the years but still punctures the Prime Minister's sweeping claim that rural India is open defecation free already.

The contradiction between political claims and on-ground numbers reinforces the significance of a strong IIPS running an independent NFHS and reporting the numbers freely rather than varnished numbers for authorities to look at and be pleased with themselves. Though the IIPS is a part of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, it is an autonomous institution and has never faced questions on its surveys and findings.

NFHS-5 has other statistics that tell us that India is not really doing well. Anaemia, for example, has risen. As many as 67% of children aged six months to five years during had anaemia, which is higher than NFHS-4 estimate of 59%. NFHS-5 reported that 36% of children under age five are stunted, only marginally changed from 38% seen in

NFHS-4. Similarly, 19% of children under age five are wasted, only slightly down from 21% seen in NFHS-4. And 32% of children are underweight, down from 36% during NFHS-4.

These numbers in one way point to challenges before a government that is in a rush to claim success and talk victory in all battles, schemes and missions it seeks to highlight. There is nothing wrong in accepting the truth, fine-tuning policy and prioritising spends to reach desired targets. The government can not build a narrative of an India that is a global giant and a robust economy with children who are anaemic, wasted, stunted and undernourished. Instead, the government can rightfully claim full marks for trying. And keeping us honest will be independent reports of the kind the IIPS produces. Disturbing such work by suspending the director may therefore not be the best way to proceed with an agenda of development for the people of India.

The writer is a journalist and faculty member at SPJIMR. Views are personal.

THE BILLION PRESS

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

OrissaPOST
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Threat to democracy

Sir, This refers to the editorial "Democracy in Danger," OrissaPOST, July 31. Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has pushed through a controversial bill that puts the actions of the executive beyond judicial supervision. Under its provisions, Israeli courts are barred from using the 'reasonableness' doctrine to review decisions made by the Israeli cabinet, government ministers, and other elected officials. It can be argued that a court's intervention in the domain of the executive could result in a subversion of the mandate of an elected government. But judicial supervision is meant for situations in which a government's policies, actions or intentions may be undemocratic or unethical. Weeks after Netanyahu made a deal with extreme right-wing parties to return to power last December, the court struck down his decision to appoint to his cabinet the leader of a religious party who had been convicted of tax offences, giving him two portfolios in an apparent quid pro quo for his party's support. Netanyahu himself is facing serious corruption charges and needs a judiciary he can control. Parallels may be drawn with a similar executive vs judiciary battle in our country. However, what is extraordinary about Israel is the response of the people who have been protesting on the streets. Their spontaneous impulse to stand up for democratic norms and rights is an inspiration across borders.

N Sadhasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

Act now

Sir, This refers to "PM shows 'brazen indifference': INDIA" (OrissaPOST, July 31). There is no lack of sincerity among Opposition MPs who want by hook or by crook to restore peace and harmony in violence-hit Manipur. They have rightly brought the indifferent attitude of both the Prime Minister and the Chief Minister to the notice of the Governor and also demanded urgent rehabilitation of the affected people. The Governor has constitutional obligations to write to the CM asking him to discharge his duties, and in the event the latter fails to act upon his request he can request the President of India to invoke Article 356 as prolonged ethnic conflict may create security problems for the country.

Arun Gupta, KOLKATA

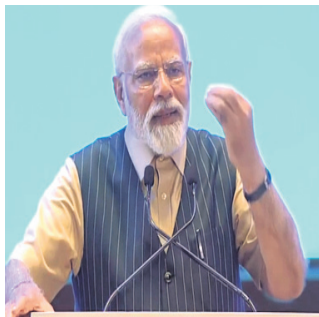
PM Modi may contest from Kanyakumari or Coimbatore

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chennai, July 31: With the BJP ground report not favouring Prime Minister Narendra Modi's candidature from Ramanathapuram, the party is exploring the possibilities of fielding him from either Kanyakumari or Coimbatore.

BJP leaders Pon Radhakrishnan and CP Radhakrishnan had won from these seats respectively. Since Coimbatore and Kanyakumari are strongholds for the BJP at the grassroots level, there is a likelihood of Modi being considered for either of the two seats.

Sources in the BJP told IANS that the saffron party was pitching for the Prime Minister to contest from Ramanathapuram Lok Sabha seat. In the meeting of BJP state presidents, organising secretaries and party senior leaders from South India held in Hyderabad July 9, several leaders had put forth the idea of Prime Minister Modi contesting from Ramanathapuram constituency which has a sizeable Muslim population. The seat is presently held by Navaskani of IUML. However, BJP conducted a detailed study into the seat, which revealed that the party does not have a proper ground support in the constituency as



2024 LS POLLS

well as booth committees. The party will have to piggy ride on the support extended by the AIADMK which is presently its ally in Tamil Nadu. Kanyakumari and Coimbatore have a sizable grassroots support.

Sources in the BJP told IANS that the RSS is also receptive to the idea of the Prime Minister contesting from either of the two seats. It is to be noted that BJP has been organising several programmes in Tamil Nadu with party senior leaders campaigning extensively in the state.

Prime Minister Modi is also proactively speaking on the Tamil language, Tamil culture and has recently got the Sengol from Tamil Nadu installed at the new Parliament. Political observers are of the opinion that the BJP is planning a major headway into Tamil Nadu by using the popularity of Modi. In both --

Kanyakumari and Coimbatore -- the party has around eighty per cent booth representations.

It may be recalled that Congress leaders Indira Gandhi, Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi had contested from Chickmangalur, Bellary and in Wayanad constituencies respectively. This is also considered as a reason for the BJP mulling the idea of Prime Minister Modi to be fielded in either Kanyakumari or Coimbatore seats.

BJP has big plans for South India and after the defeat of the party in the recent Karnataka elections, the saffron party is trying to get a major leverage through Tamil Nadu and Telangana. As per the party's detailed studies, Kerala is a hard state compared to Tamil Nadu and Telangana and with Prime Minister Modi's candidature, the effect will percolate into all the South Indian states.

C. Rajeev, Director, Centre for Policy and Development Studies, a think tank based out of Chennai said, "PM Modi contesting from either Kanyakumari or Coimbatore can be a decision which can have far reaching positive consequences for BJP and Sangh Parivar. The BJP has been active in Tamil Nadu for the past few years and party candidates have won from Coimbatore and Kanyakumari seats. This plan will help the BJP make inroads into all the other South states."

Himachal farmers dump apples in rivulets

MORE THAN 90 PER CENT OF THE STATE'S APPLE PRODUCE GOES TO THE DOMESTIC MARKET

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Shimla, July 31: Unusually heavy monsoon rains that triggered massive landslides and blocked roads, largely in interior areas, have hampered the transportation of apples from Himachal Pradesh, forcing growers to dump the crop in rivulets.

"Hundreds of trucks carrying apples have been stranded in various stretches in the upper Shimla region, especially in Jubbal, Rohru, Kotkhai, Chopal areas due to landslides for nearly a fortnight," a prominent fruit grower said.

"The condition of roads is so bad that truckers are refusing to ply their vehicles," he added.

Others say the inclement weather and transportation problems have led to rotting of apples.

"Apples are being dumped in rivulets as they have started perishing," said Deepak Manta, a grower from Rohru.

Public Works Department (PWD) Minister Vikramaditya Singh said heavy rain has damaged roads and bridges. Last week, National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) Regional Officer, Abdul Basit, called on Governor Shiv Pratap Shukla here and presented the Flood Damage Report to him.

A maximum portion of national highways have been damaged in the recent floods triggered by unprecedented rains. He said the Kiratpur-Manali and Kalka-Shimla National Highways suffered a huge loss and the maintenance and repair work



Picture used for representation.

was undertaken on war footing to restore them.

Vikramaditya Singh, July 20, met Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari in Delhi and apprised him about the devastation caused by incessant rains and cloudbursts to the national highways across the state. He urged allocation of funds for estimates of damaged roads and bridges submitted to the NHAI.

As per the state Emergency Operations Centre, the PWD suffered a loss of Rs 1,909 crore across the state. A total of 72 landslide incidents and 52 flash floods were reported in the state

from June 24 to July 29.

Besides Shimla, the condition is reported to be poor in other apple-growing areas in Mandi, Kullu, and Chamba districts.

More than 90 per cent of the state's apple produce goes to the domestic market. But farmers are skeptical about the overall production of the apple crop this year. They say the decline in the crop this time could be as high as 70 per cent compared to the yield of recent years.

Himachal Pradesh, the country's fruit bowl ranking second in apple and almond production, may witness a 30-35 per cent decline in the apple crop

besides flavour deterioration this year owing to freak weather conditions, say horticulture experts. Growers say the loss could be 50 to 60 per cent. As per farmers, the snowless winter and wet weather with the onset of spring for several weeks are the reasons for the crop loss. The impact is seen more on lower and mid belts. Harvest will pick in July and last till October-end. As per the Economic Survey 2022-23, the state produced 674,000 tons of apples till December 2022.

In the past 13 years, the leanest crop of 275,000 tonnes was in 2011-12 while the optimum of 892,000 tons was in 2010-11.

TN revenue dept for regular inspections in firecracker units

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chennai, July 31: In the wake of recent explosions at two districts of the state, the Tamil Nadu revenue department has decided to conduct regular inspections at firecracker factories and godowns.

The move follows recent explosions at Virudhunagar and Krishnagiri districts of the state. In an explosion at a firecracker factory in Sivakasi, Virudhunagar district, two women had died. A couple of days later, a major explosion in a firecracker godown led to the death of nine people in Krishnagiri district.

Ten people were injured in the explosion, following which the Chief Minister had ordered for a regular inspection of the firecracker factories and godowns. The inspection will be carried out to ensure that they are adhering to safety measures



and rules.

It may be recalled that several people have lost their lives in fires at firecracker industries in the state and many maimed or killed.

Tamil Nadu is one of the major producers of firecrackers in the country.

Sivakasi, the fireworks capital of South India, has an annual turnover of Rs 6000 crore and employs around 8 lakh people directly or indirectly.

Houses in Shimla at risk of sinking

THE DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION PLANS TO ROPE IN GEOLOGICAL EXPERTS TO ASCERTAIN THE REASON BEHIND THE SINKING LAND

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Shimla/Rampur, July 31: Several houses in Nankhari and Kotgarh areas of Shimla district are at risk of sinking due to incessant rains in the area, officials said.

The district administration plans to rope in geological experts to ascertain the reason behind the sinking land in six panchayats in these areas, they said.

Continuous rains over the past few days have led to the sinking of land in a few villages in six panchayats with several families evacuated to safer places,



Deputy Commissioner Shimla Aditya Negi told PTI.

"We will ask geological experts to conduct a survey to find the reason behind the sinking of land," he said.

Heavy rain lashed the Rampur area in Shimla Friday night, triggering landslides and blocking the Shimla-Kinnaur highway (National Highway 5) at Jeori. The road was opened at the Borni nullah after almost 40 hours.

Water and power supply was cut off at many places and some houses developed cracks after the rain.

"Continuous rain over the past three weeks has made the situation grim. Relief and restoration work is going on in full swing. Heavy machinery has been deployed to open the roads and people living in unsafe houses are being shifted to safer places," Nand Lal, a local MLA from Rampur, said.

Rattan Chand Gautam, a resident from one of the affected areas, said people are afraid of more rain.

"The land is sinking and houses have developed cracks, and water and power supply has been snapped," he said.

Authorities have advised people against venturing into landslide-prone areas till the roads are opened.

Restoration works are being carried out on a war footing and the roads are likely to be opened soon, officials said.

Lukewarm response from AIADMK to ally BJP's padayatra

AIADMK, which is in a political alliance with the BJP in Tamil Nadu, is staring at losing the Muslim vote bank which had once dedicatedly voted for it during the period of MGR and Jayalalithaa



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chennai, July 31: It appears that the AIADMK leadership in Tamil Nadu is not very keen on the padayatra of BJP state president, K. Annamalai in the wake of severe anti-saffron sentiment among the party cadres.

AIADMK general secretary and former Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, Edappadi K. Palaniswami (EPS) Saturday skipped the inaugural function of the BJP president's padayatra and instead deputated party leader and MLA Udhayakumar.

Notably, the padayatra, 'En Mann, En Makkal' (my land, my people) was flagged off by BJP leader and Union Home minister Amit Shah in the temple town of Rameswaram.

Sources in the AIADMK told IANS that EPS had given a strong message to Annamalai that the latter was not equal to the former Chief Minister and hence a lower level party functionary was being deputated.

However, a senior leader of the AIADMK on condition of anonymity, said it's not about the equality between Annamalai and EPS, the party general secretary preferred to stay away from the yatra to convey a message to the cadres that he respects their feelings.

AIADMK, which is in a political alliance with the BJP in

AIADMK leadership believes that the padayatra of Annamalai was not going to make any difference in the political landscape of Tamil Nadu

Tamil Nadu, is staring at losing the Muslim vote bank which had once dedicatedly voted for it during the period of MGR and J. Jayalalithaa.

Senior party leaders point out that EPS was under compulsion to have a political alliance with the BJP and that politically, it was a major loss for the Dravidian majority which had ruled Tamil Nadu for the maximum number of years.

AIADMK leadership, in private, told IANS that the yatra of Annamalai was not going to make any difference in the political landscape of Tamil Nadu. It was just for self-publicity to the young IPS officer-turned-politician.

However, party leader and former minister D. Jayakumar rubbished the theory of a hidden agenda on the part of the AIADMK general secretary saying since it was BJP's political campaign, as an alliance partner EPS had sent a representative.

Large logs floating in flooded rivers pose a threat

ENVIRONMENT ACTIVISTS POINT FINGERS AT THE ILLEGAL FELLING OF TREES IN HIMACHAL PRADESH

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Shimla, July 31: The northern state of Himachal Pradesh has been witnessing torrential monsoon rainfall, accompanying frequent cloudbursts and high-magnitude flash floods, for nearly a month now, causing massive landslides and mudslides in the hilly terrain.

An unusual phenomenon this time is the presence of large numbers of big logs, trees and roots floating in the rivers that aggravate the consequences of flood events with a high risk for engineered structures, warn experts. Local environment activists point fingers at the illegal felling of trees. Often, they blame the irreparable damage to the ecology on the construction of several tunnels for roads and hydropower projects. They say their voices have been blatantly ignored.

The gushing water is sweeping away bridges, village homes, and cars, and is causing widespread damage to the forests too. There are scary visuals of a deluge after a cloudburst sending tree logs crashing into villages and damage to shops and houses. A video shows a mudslide carrying logs rushing down from the hills due to a cloudburst in Thunag in Mandi district. Also, the colliding logs cause severe damage to bridges and other in-



frastructure. Similar visuals surfaced from industrial town Parwanoo located on the Chandigarh-Shimla national highway and close to Haryana's Kalka town.

Boulders and large pieces of wood led to the jamming of the floodgates of the 100-MW Malana II hydropower facility, located on the Malana, a tributary of the Beas river. For nearly a week, the water has been overflowing the dam. Rescuers told IANS that wood and boulders' accumulation at the floodgates exerts additional force on the dam structure, a portion of which



got damaged. Currently, a team of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) has been deployed to open the floodgates to prevent the dam collapsing and inundating the nearby areas. According to the dam authorities, the gantry crane, which is used to open and close the gates, has developed snags. Engineers say the dam gates have been closed due to silt, muck and boulders. Efforts are being made to reduce the water level by breaking the corners of the dam. Visuals from the dam show a huge accumulation of logs along the dam. 14 NDRF Commandant

Baljinder Singh is monitoring the operation to open the gates.

"The monsoon is indeed heavy this season, but humans have made the situation much worse," remarked Ram Thakur, a resident of Manali. He said huge wooden debris, though a natural part of most rivers systems, but alarmingly high this season especially in tributaries of the Beas river is an indicator to restore and preserve the fluvial systems for prevention of wood-related hazards. A total of 184 people have died and 33 are missing since June 24, the day the monsoon hit the hill state. A total of 71 land-


slide and 51 flash flood incidents were reported till July 28. The total monetary loss is Rs 5,536.15 crore. The maximum deaths of 32 people were reported in Kullu district, followed by 30 in Shimla district.

Seeing the 'free flow' of logs in the rivers, by risking their lives villagers, with a belief of 'one man's loss is another man's gain', have been fishing timber logs by using hook and line. "The wood we are collecting can be used for repairing our houses that have been damaged in heavy rains," remarked villager Zile Ram, who was trying to trap logs in the Parvati river in Kullu. While pointing towards the wooden debris collected on the river bank, his wife Durga Devi said, "It seems these seasoned logs belonged to a wooden house that was washed away in a flash flood. But some of these logs can be used by the panchayat for constructing the footbridge that got damaged in the flood," she added.


The villagers are using cable barriers to trap the large wooden logs carried downstream. However, collection of wood is a punishable offence in the state. It is the property of the government. Last week, Pong dam authorities in Kangra district collected more than 1,100 logs of various tree species from the reservoir.

INCESSANT RAINS BROUGHT INSTANT MISERY TO PEOPLE IN COASTAL ODISHA, MONDAY. MANY AREAS IN THE CAPITAL CITY OF BHUBANESWAR AND THE ADJOINING CUTTACK WERE FLOODED, CAUSING INCONVENIENCES TO CITIZENS. SOUTHERN DISTRICTS TOO RECEIVED SUBSTANTIAL RAINFALL, DISRUPTING NORMAL LIFE


RAIN FURY




A motorist struggling to navigate his car in a waterlogged road at Jharpada in Bhubaneswar




A school bus making its way through a flooded road in the Capital city




A school boy wading through knee-deep water on the Ratha Road in Old Town area of Bhubaneswar




A flooded Sayeed Seminary Square in Cuttack




A resident pulling her scooter in a submerged road near Chintamaneswar in Bhubaneswar




The Grand Road in Puri flooded after a burst of torrential rains



The road in front of ISKCON temple in Bhubaneswar turns into a pool after the heavy downpour



Floodwater enters the basement of an apartment at Jharpada in Bhubaneswar



Flash flood in Malkangiri after heavy rains

national

of the day quote

It is difficult for us to engage with the present state government. But some solution will come out. If we three (MVA constituents) decide, there can be a change

Leaders of their party (BJP) are destroying the Constitution of India, he (Pawar) should not go there

BRS, Congress and MIM parties work for their respective families. BRS works for the Kalvakuntla family while the Congress party works for Sonia Gandhi's family. Both these parties are corrupt

SHORT TAKES

DKS gets relief from top court

New Delhi: In a relief to Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar, the Supreme Court Monday refused to interfere with the high court order putting a stay on the CBI probe against him in a corruption case.

Two gangraped for 18 months

Jaipur: Two teenage sisters, who were allegedly raped by two co-workers of their father at a brick kiln in Rajasthan's Alwar district for 18 months, are pregnant, said police officials Monday.

HC asks Choksi to deposit ₹2L

New Delhi: The Delhi High Court has directed PNB scam accused Mehul Choksi to deposit ₹2 lakh with it before proceeding further with his appeal challenging the dismissal of his plea to pre-screen the 'Bad Boy Billionaires' docuseries on online video streaming platform Netflix.

Nora Fatehi records statement in court

New Delhi: Actress-dancer Nora Fatehi Monday recorded her statement at a Delhi court on a criminal complaint she has filed against actress Jacqueline Fernandez alleging that the latter made defamatory allegations against her for "malicious reasons" and to destroy her career in ₹200 crore extortion case involving conman Sukesh Chandrashekar as the prime accused.



The weekend tourist hub is seen in some states but it is new in Tripura. I hope that the first-ever weekend tourist hub will be a success in the days to come

MANIK SAHA | TRIPURA CHIEF MINISTER

ED ATTACHES ₹6-CRORE ASSETS OF LALU'S FAMILY

The Enforcement Directorate Monday said it has attached assets worth more than ₹6 crore belonging to RJD supremo Lalu Prasad's family -- his wife Rabri Devi, daughter Misa Bharti and linked companies -- as part of its money laundering investigation against them in an alleged land-for-railway jobs scam



Huge protest after schoolboys fill girl's bottle with urine in Raj

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jaipur, July 31: Members of two communities clashed here after a 13-year-old girl in a government school in Mandal police station area of Rajasthan's Bhilwara accused three boys from the school of harassment, police said Monday.

The 8th class student said that "urine-like odour" was coming from her water bottle and that she found a note with "I love you" written on it. Police said during their visit to the school over the case, some villagers created a ruckus there.

The villagers also entered the locality, where a majority of people belong to the community of the accused boys, and pelted stones, a senior police officer said.

There was stone-pelting from the other side also, he said. Leader of Opposition Rajendra Rathore condemned the incident and said it revealed the "appeasement politics" of the Congress government.

Additional Superintendent of Police Ghanshyam Sharma said that a class 8th girl student lodged a complaint last Friday that she found that "urine-like odour"

was coming from her water bottle and when she checked her bag, she found a slip with "I love you" written on it.

Sharma said the police visited the school to speak to the principal about the case Monday. "During this, the villagers created a ruckus. They locked the school door." "The villagers also started raising slogans and barged into the locality of the particular community and pelted stones. Some stones were also thrown from the other side," the officer said. He said the police used "mild force" to maintain law and order. "Nine people have been detained in this regard. At present, there is peace in the area," he said.

Mandal SHO Mukesh Verma said that a case has been registered against the accused boys. Stone pelting had occurred in the village but the situation is under control now, he added.

Police have registered a case under IPC sections 354 (outraging modesty of a woman), 270 (malignant act likely to spread infection of disease dangerous to life) and sections of Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act and has started the investigation.



STRICT VIGIL: Border Security Force (BSF) personnel during a search operation after foiling an infiltration attempt along the International Border, in Arnia sector on the outskirts of Jammu. A Pakistani intruder was shot dead in the operation

Violence against women in Manipur unprecedented: SC

The court said the incidents of crime committed against women in Manipur cannot be equated with similar incidents reported from other parts of the country

AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 31: The Supreme Court Monday described the violence perpetrated against women in strife-torn Manipur as of "unprecedented magnitude" and refused to consider a plea on similar alleged incidents in opposition-ruled states, such as West Bengal, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh and Kerala.

The top court, which was hearing a batch of pleas related to the ethnic violence in Manipur, was told by lawyer and ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader Bansuri Swaraj that incidents of violence against women in West Bengal also need to be considered and the mechanism sought to be evolved should be made applicable to the other states as well.

"All daughters of India request.... The daughters of India need to be protected," Swaraj said. "Are you (Swaraj) for a moment saying that do something for all the daughters of India or don't do anything for anybody at all?" the bench headed by Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud asked her.

"Ms Swaraj, crimes against women take place all over the country. This is part of our social reality. Presently, we are dealing with something which is of unprecedented magnitude, namely crimes and perpetuation of violence against women in a situation of communal or



sectarian strife of a nature which is taking place in Manipur. So there is no gainsaying in the fact that there are crimes which are taking place against women in West Bengal as well," the bench said. It added that one cannot make an excuse, saying what is happening in Manipur is also taking place in other parts of the country. "The question is, how do we

Assaulted women approach apex court

New Delhi: The two tribal women, who were paraded naked and sexually assaulted by a mob in Manipur, have approached the Supreme Court. A bench led by Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud is scheduled to hear Monday the plea filed by the two survivors along with the clutch of pleas related to inter-ethnic clashes in Manipur, including the suo moto case where Centre and Manipur governments were directed to take immediate steps on the viral video of the two young women being paraded naked. On July 20, the Supreme Court took suo moto cognizance of the disturbing viral videos.

deal with Manipur? What suggestions do you have for Manipur? If you have something to assist us on that or if you have something in terms of laying down a framework for investigation, please tell us. What sort of investigation framework should be laid down, please tell us that," the court told Swaraj.

"In the case of West Bengal, it is equally grave because violence against women is ultimately used to punish the electorate. Indira Jaising says there are 5,995 FIRs in Manipur and 9,304 in West Bengal, only 3 per cent (of the accused) are incarcerated and 97 per cent perpetrators are roaming free," Swaraj said.

Tribal forum demands withdrawal of state police

Imphal: The Indigenous Tribal Leaders Forum (ITLF) Monday threatened to launch an agitation in all the tribal districts of Manipur if the state government failed to withdraw state police personnel from Moreh immediately. This comes hours after over 1,000 women in Churachandpur staged a stir demanding removal of police forces from the town bordering Myanmar. On July 28, thousands of Kuki-Zo women in Tengnoupal district had blocked the road to Moreh to stop police forces from entering the town.

Oppn MPs brief INDIA bloc parties on Manipur visit

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 31: A delegation of MPs that visited Manipur to assess the situation in the strife-torn state Monday briefed leaders of the opposition INDIA grouping here.

Both Houses of Parliament were adjourned as the opposition parties stuck to their demand that Prime Minister Narendra Modi should speak on the issue before any discussion is taken up.

The opposition MPs met at the Parliament House complex and highlighted the ground realities before the alliance members. Among those present were Congress Parliamentary Party leader Sonia Gandhi, Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge and leaders of various INDIA bloc parties.

Congress leader Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury, who was part of the 21-member delegation, described the situation in Manipur as "grave". The opposition MPs went to Manipur over the weekend, visiting the relief camps and meeting the people affected by the violence.

During the meeting, Congress MPs Gaurav Gogoi and Adhir Chowdhury and TMC's Sushmita Dev spoke in detail on the issue.

The delegation also relayed stories of hope where members of various communities helped each other out during the ethnic unrest. Gogoi spoke on the sensitivity of the situation in Manipur and said that it was important that the bloc be mindful of the language they use so as to not hurt the sentiments of either community.

COMMUNAL CLASHES IN NUH

Two home guards killed, many hurt

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Gurugram/Chandigarh, July 31: Two home guards were killed and at least 15 others, including several policemen, were injured Monday as a mob in Haryana's Nuh district tried to stop a Vishva Hindu Parishad procession, pelting stones and setting cars on fire, officials said.

The Union Home Ministry said it is dispatching 15 additional companies of central forces to Haryana, as violence also erupted in Sohna in neighbouring Gurugram district, adjacent to Delhi. As news of the violence in Muslim-dominated Nuh spread, mobs in Sohna set ablaze four vehicles and a shop, apparently belonging to people from that community. Protesters there blocked a road for hours.

About 2,500 men, women and children who had taken shelter at a Shiv temple in Nuh were evacuated by police, Haryana Home Minister Anil Vij said.

Educational institutes were ordered closed Tuesday in Faridabad and Palwal districts as a precautionary measure.

Eight of the injured police personnel were taken to Gurugram's Medanta Hospital, he said. Among the injured Haryana Deputy Superintendent of Police Sajjan Singh was shot in the head and an inspector in the stomach. Police said the vehicles set ablaze were part of the procession, or belonged to them. A video clip showed at least four



A vehicle set on fire by miscreants after clashes broke out

cars on fire. Another purported video showed two damaged police cars. The clip contained sound of gunfire.

Police lobbed teargas shells in an attempt to disperse the mobs. Suspending mobile internet services in Nuh, the Haryana government said there was "intense communal tension" in the area. According to police, VHP's 'Brij Mandal Jalabhishek Yatra' was stopped by a group of young men near Nuh's Khedla Mod and stones pelted at the procession. Cars were then set ablaze. People in the procession also hurled stones back at the youths who had stopped them, reports said. Later, many took refuge in a temple as police tried to evacuate them to safety. The yatra was flagged off from Gurugram's Civil Lines by BJP district president Gargi Kakkar. A police contingent was deployed with the procession. According to some claims, the trigger for the clash was an objectionable video posted on social media by a Bajrang Dal activist in Ballabgarh.

WALKING LONDON, TALKING TOKYO!

Noise numbs, silence is deafening but deeds speak louder than words! The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 initiated by the Narendra Modi-led BJP government initiated large scale restructuring of higher education and granting greater institutional autonomy.

The government in his home state, Gujarat is introducing a Common Universities Act to ensure virtual complete control over its public universities. And the crowning irony is that the NEP is being cited as the reason for the redundancy of the existing system. Published reports confirm that the preliminary exercise has been completed and the Bill will be tabled in the ensuing session of the Gujarat State Assembly.

This is not the first time that the government seeks to tighten its hold over the universities to the detriment of the elected representation process. The Modi government in the state had sought to do so many times but faced determined opposition from the ac-

ademic fraternity. With the opposition reduced to mere symbolic levels in the Vidhan Sabha and little visible signs of resistance from the fraternity, the government seems set to have its way.

The Senate-Syndicate system put into place a fairly autonomous system of governance helmed by the vice-chancellor and the registrar under the distant but looming presence of the chancellor. The government figured only in policy prerogatives and financial prudence. It was a miniature model of a representative structure where members were elected from amongst students, teachers, principals, non-teaching staff and college managements.

The erosion actually began in 2009 during the tenure of the then Chief Minister Narendra Modi. All the universities set up thereafter replaced the Senate-Syndicate system with board of governance to which appointments were made by the government. For now of the 16 government universities in Gujarat only eight of



them including the older ones have the representative system. In the new order these shall stand replaced by state government appointed representatives.

In effect it will mark the tightening of government control over public owned universities to which numerous affiliated colleges owe allegiance. The change will also mark an enhanced five year term for vice-chancellors from the previous three though it does away with the provision of re-appointment.

The draft Bill put in the public domain to invite suggestions designates employees including administrative staff as well as teachers of universities and colleges as "public servants". The draft Bill has been made avail-

able on the website of the Knowledge Consortium of Gujarat with August 12 as the deadline for submitting suggestions.

The political philosophy of the ruling BJP which has been in power in Gujarat for about a quarter century is clearly articulated in the government reasoning stating that "more focus should be on studies, instead of politics and elections".

A published report articulating the state education department's position enhances the argument that by doing away with the elected bodies, universities will be able to solve issues without any influences thus ensuring greater focus on institutional activities.

The draft Bill points out that while all academic, administrative and financial autonomy will be provided to the university and its affiliated educational institutions as per University Grants Commission (UGC) norms, the state government shall have the powers to issue such directions from time to time, as may be necessary for the com-

pliance of any provision.

Similar acts have already been implemented in Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra.

"It is a clear attempt at choking all democratic processes and autonomy of government universities into a single regulatory authority totally controlled by the government", points out the Gujarat Congress spokesperson. The party is at pains pointing out that 66 per cent of the universities and 78 per cent of the colleges in Gujarat are operating without accreditation of the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC).

Quoting the data tabled by the government in Parliament, in quantitative terms it would mean that 55 of the 83 universities and 1767 colleges are functioning in Gujarat without this accreditation which is mandated by the UGC. Strange are the ways of political governance where you divide in the name of uniting and usurp in the guise of autonomy!

international



Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz supremo Nawaz Sharif will be the next premier of the country if the party returns to power in the next general election
SHEHBAZ SHARIF | PAKISTAN PM

FRENCH DAREDEVIL DIES

Remi Lucidi, a 30-year-old French daredevil known for climbing various towers around the world, has died after falling 721-ft from the top of a 68-storey Hong Kong skyscraper that he had been scaling, according to a media report



of the day quote

Iran and Iraq have seen good, strong and constructive bilateral relations, which contribute to the region's sustainable development, stability and security

HOSSEIN AMIR-ABDOLLAHIAN | IRANIAN FOREIGN MINISTER

The country does not tolerate any violation of its rights regarding the exploitation of the Arash gas field, which it jointly shares with Kuwait and Saudi Arabia

JAVAD OWJI | IRAN'S OIL MINISTER

Every dollar spent attacking me by Republicans is a dollar given straight to the Biden campaign

DONALD TRUMP | FORMER US PRESIDENT

SHORT TAKES

UK toughens citizenship rules

London: UK Home Secretary Suella Braverman has said that British citizenship will be blocked to "serious criminals" regardless of when or where the crime took place under the country's tightened norms effective from Monday. The Indian-origin minister said she is cracking down on the misuse of Britain's nationality system by raising the bar for those applying for citizenship. The changes override previous rules under which some criminals could be granted British citizenship after a prescribed number of years of around 15 years had passed since the end of their sentence - regardless of the type of crime or where it was committed.

Imran moves SC against IHC

Islamabad: Pakistan's former Prime Minister Imran Khan approached the Supreme Court Monday against the Islamabad High Court's (IHC) decision to reject his plea seeking a halt on the criminal proceedings against him in the Toshakhana corruption trial. Despite approaching the Islamabad High Court (IHC) twice, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chief Khan could not get relief in the case pertaining to the concealment of details regarding state gifts.

Clashes continue, toll climbs to nine

Sidon (Lebanon): The death toll rose to nine Monday in three days of clashes between Palestinian factions at a refugee camp in Lebanon that have pitted members of Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas' Fatah party against Islamist groups. A Lebanese lawmaker announced a cease-fire agreement late Monday but some gunfire continued afterward, and earlier efforts to broker a cease-fire had failed to stop the shooting and shelling through the narrow streets of the Ein el-Hilweh camp in southern Lebanon.

Whale carcass sparks anger

Hong Kong: The discovery of a whale carcass in Hong Kong waters on Monday has sparked an outpouring of grief on social media, with many comments blaming the mammal's death on sightseers. Many residents thought the dead mammal was the whale that has attracted groups of sightseers since it was first spotted in the city's waters in mid-July. Compass Chan, scientific officer of Ocean Park Conservation Foundation Hong Kong, didn't confirm whether it was the same whale.

WARNING ISSUED

West Africa threatens force on Niger coup leaders

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Niamey (Niger), July 31: West African nations have given Niger's coup leaders one week to reinstate the country's democratically elected president and have threatened to use force if the demands aren't met.

The announcement came at the end of an emergency meeting of West African countries Sunday in Nigeria, where the regional bloc, known as ECOWAS, convened to respond to last week's military takeover. President Mohamed Bazoum remains under house arrest and has yet to resign.

"In the event the authority's demands are not met within one week, (the bloc will) take all measures necessary to restore constitutional order in the Republic of Niger. Such measures may include the use of force," said the statement.

The bloc also imposed strict sanctions, including suspending all commercial and financial transactions between ECOWAS member states and Niger and freezing of assets in regional central banks. Economic sanctions could have a deep impact on Nigeriens, who live in the third-poorest country in the world, according to the latest U.N. Data. The country relies on imports from Nigeria for up to 90% of its power, according to the International Renewable Energy Agency.

The sanctions could be disastrous and Niger needs to find a solution to avoid them, the country's Prime Minister



The announcement came at the end of an emergency meeting of West African countries Sunday in Nigeria, where the regional bloc, known as ECOWAS, convened to respond to last week's military takeover

The bloc imposed strict sanctions, including suspending all commercial and financial transactions between ECOWAS member states and Niger and freezing of assets in regional central banks

Ouhoumoudou Mahamadou told French media outlet Radio France Internationale on Sunday "When people say there's an embargo, land borders are closed, air borders are closed, it's extremely difficult for people ... Niger is a country that relies heavily on the international community," he said.

The 15-nation ECOWAS bloc has unsuccessfully tried to restore democracies in nations where the military took power in recent years. Four nations are run by military governments

in West and Central Africa, where there have been nine successful or attempted coups since 2020.

In the 1990s, ECOWAS intervened in Liberia during its civil war. In 2017, it intervened in Gambia to prevent the new president's predecessor, Yahya Jammeh, from disrupting the handover of power. Around 7,000 troops from Ghana, Nigeria, and Senegal entered, according to the Global Observatory, which provides analysis on peace and security issues.

If the regional bloc uses force, it could trigger violence not only between Niger and ECOWAS forces but also civilians supporting the coup and those against it, Niger analysts say.

"While this remains to be a threat and unlikely action, the consequences on civilians of such an approach if putschists chose confrontation would be catastrophic," said Rida Lyammouri, senior fellow at the Policy Center for the New South, a Morocco-based think tank.

Philippines, EU set to resume free trade talks



ASSOCIATED PRESS

President Ursula von der Leyen spoke at a joint news conference with Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. after holding talks in Manila that aimed to bolster trade, economic and security relations.

The leaders announced the 27-nation bloc would resume negotiations with the Philippines on a free trade agreement that stalled in 2017 under Marcos's predecessor, Rodrigo Duterte.

Von der Leyen also stressed the need for security cooperation, saying Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine showed how authoritarian leaders "are willing to act on their threats."

"Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine shakes the foundation of the international order. It is in violation of the UN charter and the fundamental principles of international law, such as territorial integrity and sovereignty," she said.

Manila, July 31: The leader of the European Union's executive commission cited Russia's invasion of Ukraine to warn against China's increasingly assertive actions in disputed Indo-Pacific waters and against Taiwan and said Monday that the EU would not tolerate aggression in either region.

European Commission

WORRIES MOUNT

CHINA IS THE BIGGEST IMPORTER OF JAPANESE SEAFOOD. SHORTLY AFTER THE 2011 TSUNAMI AND EARTHQUAKE DAMAGED THE FUKUSHIMA PLANT, IT BANNED THE IMPORT OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS FROM FIVE JAPANESE PREFECTURES

REUTERS

Beijing, July 31: It's been just over three weeks since China increased checks on Japanese food imports over radiation concerns, but Kazuyuki Tanioka is already fearful for the future of his upscale Beijing sushi restaurant.

Like most restaurants in China, Tanioka's eight-year-old Toya has struggled with years of COVID-19 restrictions, which only began to ease late last year. Now it is facing a shortage of both customers and seafood ahead of Japan's plans to empty into the sea treated radioactive water from its disaster-stricken Fukushima nuclear plant.

"I'm very worried about whether we can continue," said the 49-year-old chef-restaurateur from Kumamoto, southern Japan. "The inability to import

food ingredients is truly a life or death situation for us."

China is the biggest importer of Japanese seafood. Shortly after the 2011 tsunami and earthquake damaged the Fukushima plant, it banned the import of food and agricultural products from five Japanese prefectures. China later widened its ban, which now covers 10 out of Japan's total of 47. It has remained Japan's biggest seafood export market.

The latest import restrictions were imposed this month after the United Nation's nuclear watchdog approved Japan's plans to discharge the treated water. China has sharply criticised the move, which has also faced opposition at home, saying the discharge endangers marine life and human health.

Imports have since all but ground to a halt, with some



Villagers look at a collapsed road damaged by floodwaters in the Mentougou district as continuous rainfall triggers alerts in Beijing

PTI PHOTO

Japanese eateries in China fear ruin



Japanese officials fearing the worst is yet to come. The more stringent Chinese checks have led to massive delays at customs, and the strident warnings have kept customers away: posts and hashtags saying

Pak blast death toll rises to 54

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Peshawar, July 31: The death toll from the powerful suicide bombing at a political convention of a hardline Islamist party in Pakistan's restive Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province sharply rose to 54 Monday, police said as they intensified efforts to hunt down those behind the massive attack.

Police also said that an initial probe has suggested that the banned terrorist group ISIS is behind the suicide attack that injured over 100 people in Khar, the capital of Bajaur tribal district. The local branch of ISIS has previously targeted JUI-F party leaders as they consider them apostates.

The attack took place on Sunday when more than 400 members of the conservative Jamiat Ulema Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) party, known for its links to hardline political Islam, had gathered for a meeting under a large tent in the town of Khar, which borders Afghanistan.

The JUI-F is a party that is part of the coalition government led by Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N). The major terror attack occurred as Pakistani political parties are beginning campaign preparations ahead of elections in the coming months.

Pakistan President Arif Alvi prayed for eternal peace for the departed souls.

He also wished speedy recovery for the injured and emphasised timely medical assistance to them. In a statement issued on Sunday, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa caretaker Chief Minister Azam Khan sought a detailed report on the blast from police.

He also visited the Combined Military Hospital in Peshawar, where he met and inquired about the health of injured persons.

EXPANDING TIES Pakistan, China ink six agreements



Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif (second left), walks with Chinese Vice Premier He Lifeng (second right) at the Prime Minister's house in Islamabad

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Islamabad, July 31: Pakistan and China Monday signed six important documents to expand and expedite cooperation under the ambitious multi-billion dollar China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project, further cementing the all-weather strategic relations between the countries.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Chinese Vice Premier He Lifeng witnessed the signing ceremony held to mark 10 years of the CPEC, a collection of infrastructure and other projects under construction throughout Pakistan since 2013.

The CPEC, which connects Gwadar Port in Pakistan's Balochistan with China's Xinjiang province, is opposed by India as it is being laid through Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. Minister for Planning and Development Ahsan Iqbal and Vice Chairman of China's National Development and Reforms Commission Zhao Chenxin signed the document on the joint cooperation committee of CPEC as well as an

The CPEC, which connects Gwadar Port in Pakistan's Balochistan with China's Xinjiang province, is opposed by India as it is being laid through Pakistan-occupied Kashmir

The two sides signed the MOU on the Industrial Workers' Exchange Programme through diplomatic channels and agreed to promote the strategic ML-1 rail upgradation project

other agreement on the establishment of an expert exchange mechanism within the framework of the CPEC.

The third document was signed by the Secretary Ministry of National Food Security Zafar Hassan and the Chinese Charge D'Affaires Pang Chunxue to export dried chillies from Pakistan to China. Member Planning of National Highway Authority Asim Amin and Pang signed the fourth document on the realignment of the Karakoram Highway Phase II project feasibility study.

The two sides also signed the MOU on the Industrial Workers' Exchange Programme through diplomatic channels and agreed to promote the strategic ML-1 rail upgradation project.

6 killed, 75 hurt in Russian attack

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kyiv, July 31: Russian ballistic missiles slammed into an apartment complex and a university building in President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's hometown Monday, killing six people and wounding 75 others as the blasts trapped residents beneath rubble, Ukrainian officials said.

One of the two missiles that hit the central city of Kryvyi Rihon destroyed part of an apartment building between the fourth and ninth floors, Interior Minister Ihor Klymenko said. Video showed black smoke billowing from corner units and burned out or damaged cars on a tree-lined street.

The dead included a 10-year-old girl and her mother, according to Zelenskyy.

More than 350 people were involved in the rescue operation, he said in a Telegram post. The morning attack also destroyed part of a four-story university building.

The strike on Zelenskyy's hometown, which has been hit in the past, happened a day after the Ukrainian president warned that the fighting was drawing closer to Russian land. "Gradually, the war is returning to the territory of Russia - to its symbolic centers and military bases, and this is an inevitable, natural and absolutely fair process," Zelenskyy said Sunday in his nightly video address.

It was not clear whether the missile strikes were in retaliation for his comments. Meanwhile, a Ukrainian artillery strike on the partially occupied Donetsk province killed two people and wounded six others in the regional capital, according to Denis Pushilin, the Moscow-installed leader of the illegally annexed province.



cmk

business

of the day quote

I feel the financial sector players risk becoming more robotic, curbing the entrepreneurial flair since the fear of making a mistake overrides the joy of creation and development. While we need 'Arjuna's eye' on risk management, we must prevent bureaucratization of financial services

UDAY KOTAK | CEO, KOTAK MAHINDRA

I am confident that we can deliver on our target for this year. Our cost rationalisation measures in Europe and busy summer month have positively impacted our EBITDA in the first quarter.

RITESH AGARWAL | CEO, OYO

The global agrochemical industry has been going through a challenging phase over the last two quarters as distributors prioritized destocking and focused on tactical purchases amid high channel inventories

MIKE FRANK | CEO, UPL CORPORATION

RESULTS CORNER

MSI net surges 2X

New Delhi: Maruti Suzuki India (MSI) Monday said its consolidated net profit surged over two-fold to ₹2,525 crore for the first quarter ended June 30, 2023. The auto major had reported a net profit of ₹1,036 crore in the same period of 2022-23. Total revenue from operations increased to ₹32,338 crore in the April-June quarter from ₹26,512 crore in the year-ago period, according to an exchange filing by the company.

AGEL net rises 51%

New Delhi: Adani Green Energy Monday reported a nearly 51 per cent rise in consolidated net profit to ₹323 crore in the June 2023 quarter, mainly driven by higher revenues. The company had posted ₹214 crore consolidated net profit in the quarter ended June 2022, a BSE filing showed. Its total income rose to ₹2,404 cr in the quarter from ₹1,701 crore in the year-ago period. With an operational capacity of 8,316 MW, it continued to have the largest operating renewable energy portfolio in the country, the company said.

Essar profit shines

New Delhi: Essar Oil and Gas Exploration and Production Ltd (EOGEL) Monday reported a record net profit of ₹335 crore in the financial year ending March 31, helped by reduced operating costs and higher prices. Net profit of ₹335 crore in 2022-23 compared with ₹212 crore net profit in the previous fiscal, the company said in a statement. The unconventional hydrocarbon producer reported its highest fiscal revenue of ₹900 crore in FY23, a growth of about 1.8 times compared to the previous year.

GAIL profit dives

New Delhi: State-owned GAIL (India) Ltd Monday reported a 51.5 per cent drop in June quarter net profit on weak earnings in the petrochemicals business as well as in the marketing of natural gas. Standalone net profit of ₹1,412 crore, or ₹2.15 per share, in April-June (first quarter of current 2023-24 fiscal year) compared with ₹2,915.19 crore, or ₹4.38 a share, in the same period a year back, according to a company statement and stock exchange filing. Margin decline led to the firm booking a pre-tax loss of ₹301 crore in the petrochemical business while earnings from natural gas marketing halved to ₹1,013.63 crore.



Government has respectively received about ₹3,031 crore and ₹434 crore from National Investment and Infrastructure Fund Ltd (NIIFL) and ECGC as dividend tranches

TUHIN KANTA PANDEY | SECRETARY, DIPAM

GO FIRST TO RETURN ₹597CR

The National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) Monday issued notices to the Committee of Creditors of Go First and insolvency regulator IBBI over a plea to refund ₹597.54 crore to around 15.5 lakh passengers who booked tickets for travel on and after May 3



NEW UNICORNS DRY UP GLOBALLY

FUNDING WINTER BITES AS VC FIRMS ASK FOUNDERS TO CHASE PROFITABILITY INSTEAD OF REVENUE GROWTH

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, July 31: There has been a massive 80 per cent drop in freshly-minted unicorns (with valuation \$1 billion and above) globally from the peak in 2021, a new report has revealed, as funding winter continues to hit

startups. According to leading data provider PitchBook, the average monthly number of new unicorns fell to 7.3 companies in the first half of the year. It is down nearly 80 per cent from a peak of 50.5 companies recorded for all of 2021, reports Nikkei Asia, citing the PitchBook data. "In the US, venture capitalists have begun to shift focus to discovering and nurturing promising companies rather than finding investment opportunities for quick gains," it mentioned. Venture capitalists have rather shifted their focus to nurturing promising businesses than "chasing opportunities for quick re-



turns". **INDIA'S SAD STORY** The sad story continues in India as there was no new unicorn in the country in the first half of 2023 as startup funding plunged more than 70 per cent in the January-June period from a year ago. This is the longest gap in the

last seven years, according to data compiled by Tracxn. The first six months witnessed Indian startups raise just \$5.48 billion, from \$19.5 billion they raised during the same period last year, according to data by market intelligence firm Tracxn earlier shared with IANS. In the first half this year, the startup ecosystem saw 546 deal rounds, a significant drop from the total number of rounds at 1,570 in the same period last year. The funding volumes contracted due to the reduction in late-stage funding, which declined by 79 per cent in the first quarter (\$1.8 billion) compared to Q1 2022.

Record 6.50cr ITRs for 2022-23 filed

LAST YEAR, ABOUT 5.83CR INCOME TAX RETURNS WERE FILED TILL JULY 31

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 31: More than 6.5 crore income tax returns for 2022-23 fiscal have been filed so far, with 36.91 lakh ITRs being submitted Monday until 1800 hrs, which is the last day for filing of returns by individuals and entities that are not required to get their accounts audited. The e-filing portal has witnessed more than 1.78 crore successful logins till 6 pm, the I-T department said. "More than 6.50 crore ITRs have been filed so far (31st July), out of which about 36.91 lakh ITRs have been filed today till 6 pm!" the tweet said. The last date for ITR filing by salaried persons and entities which are not required to get their accounts audited ends Monday at midnight. To assist taxpayers with ITR filing, tax payment and other related services, our helpdesk is functioning on a 24x7 basis, and we are providing support through calls, live chats, WebEx sessions & social media, the department said. Tax experts said that the rise in ITR filing is a reflection of a broadening taxpayer base, improved compliance and the efforts taken by the revenue department to check tax evasion. The income tax department has been extensively using information technology and data analytics tools to identify high-



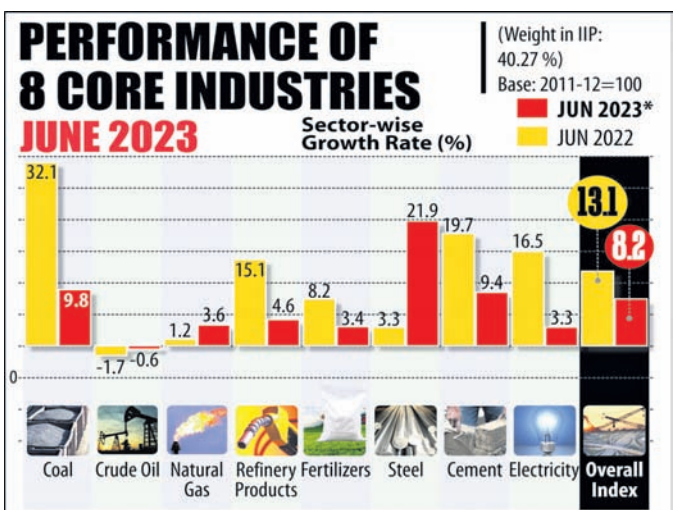
risk cases and initiate enforcement actions in appropriate cases. It also collects information on Specified Financial Transactions (SFT), above-notified thresholds, relating to cash deposits, credit card payments, purchase and sale of properties, purchase of shares and mutual funds etc. Such information is collected, collated and analysed for computer-aided scrutiny and risk profiling of taxpayers, identification of non-filers and stop filers etc, which in turn helps check evasion. The government is unlikely to extend the due date for filing of tax returns in non-audit cases. Revenue Secretary Sanjay Malhotra had earlier this month said that the government is not planning to extend the July 31 deadline. Corporates and individuals who are required to get their accounts audited have time till October 31 to file tax returns for income earned in 2022-23 fiscal. The gross direct tax collection for 2022-23 fiscal grew 20.33 per cent at Rs 19.68 lakh crore.

5-MONTH HIGH Infra growth expands

KEY INFRASTRUCTURE SECTOR GROWTH EXPANDS 8.2% IN JUNE

AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 31: Output of eight key infrastructure sectors expanded at a five-month rate of 8.2 per cent in June on healthy performance by sectors such as natural gas and steel, according to the official data released Monday. However, production growth was slower than 13.1 per cent recorded in June 2022. Core sector growth in June is the highest since January 2023 when the key sectors expanded at 9.7 per cent. In May 2023, the growth rate was 5 per cent. The output growth of the eight sectors slowed down to 5.8 per cent in April-June 2023-24 against 13.9 per cent in the year-ago period. In June, steel output jumped by 21.9 per cent as against 3.3 per cent in the same month last year. Natural gas production increased by 3.6 per cent during the month under review as compared to 1.2 per cent in June 2022. Coal output growth slowed down to 9.8 per cent in June 2023 as against 32.1 per cent in June 2022. The growth rate in the production of refinery products, fertiliser, cement and electric-



Growth has been broad-based thus reflecting buoyancy in the infrastructure sector this year

MADAN SABNAVIS | ECONOMIST, BANK OF BARODA

With the exception of the oil sector that fell 0.6% in June, the rest of the seven sectors posted year-on-year output growth

ity slowed down to 4.6 per cent, 3.4 per cent, 9.4 per cent and 3.3 per cent as against 15.1 per cent, 8.2 per cent, 19.7 per cent, and 16.5 per cent respectively. Crude oil production dipped by 0.6 per cent. Commenting on the numbers, ICRA Ltd Chief Economist Aditi Nayar said that the tardy onset of the monsoon contributed to improved per-

formance of electricity and coal. "With the boost seen in mining and electricity from a dryer-than-normal June, we expect the year-on-year IIP (index of industrial production) growth to print at 4-6 per cent in June 2023, in spite of the moderation in the year-on-year performance of several available high-frequency indicators," she said.

Fiscal deficit touches 25.3% of annual aim

Centre's fiscal deficit stands at ₹4,51,370cr as of end-June

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 31: The Centre's fiscal deficit at the end of the first quarter touched 25.3 per cent of the full-year target, government data showed Monday.

In absolute terms, the fiscal deficit -- the gap between expenditure and revenue -- was Rs 4,51,370 crore as of end-June, according to the data released by the Controller General of Accounts (CGA). The deficit stood at 21.2 per cent of the Budget Estimates (BE) in the corresponding period of the financial year 2022-23.



In the Union Budget, the government projected to bring down the fiscal deficit to 5.9 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP) in the current 2023-24 financial year. The deficit was 6.4 per cent of the GDP in 2022-23 against the earlier estimate of 6.71 per cent. Unveiling the revenue-expenditure data of the Union government for the first three months of 2023-24, CGA said the net tax revenue was Rs 4,33,620 crore or 18.6 per cent of the BE

for the current fiscal. The net tax revenue collection was 26.1 per cent at end-June 2022.

The central government's total expenditure in the first quarter stood at Rs 10.5 lakh crore or 23.3 per cent of BE. The expenditure had touched 24 per cent of the BE in the year-ago period. Of the total expenditure, Rs 7.72 lakh crore was on the revenue account and Rs 2.78 lakh crore was towards the capital account. Of the total revenue expenditure, Rs 2,43,705 crore was on interest payments and Rs 87,035 crore on major subsidies.

Fiscal deficit is the difference between the total expenditure and revenue of the government. It is an indication of the total borrowings that are needed by the government.

BIZ BUZZ

OPPO Reno10 5G on sale

Bhubaneswar: OPPO, the leading global smart devices brand, has announced that its Reno10 sale has gone live from July 27 at Rs 32,999. The premium handset is available at OPPO E-Store, Flipkart, and mainline retail outlets. The Reno10 5G sports an ultra-slim body—available in Ice Blue and Silvery Grey—with a 3D curved design that is light and easy to hold. The Reno10 5G packs a powerful camera system, comprising a 64MP OV64B ultra-clear main camera, a 32MP IMX709 telephoto portrait camera, an 8MP IMX355 112° ultra-wide camera, and a 32MP OV32C ultra-clear selfie camera. With this setup, users can capture every detail in pictures with exceptional clarity, whether in low-light, while shooting portraits, or even wide-angle shots.



GST evasion worth ₹14,302cr detected

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 31: As many as 2,784 cases of GST evasion involving Rs 14,302 crore were detected in the first two months of the current fiscal, while Rs 5,716 crore was recovered during the period, Parliament was informed Monday.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in a written reply in the Lok Sabha gave details of Goods and Services Tax (GST) and income tax evasion, as well as detection of outright smuggling by the Customs department. As per the data, GST evasion of over Rs 2.68 lakh crore was detected in 43,516 cases between 2020-21 and 2023-24 (April-May). A recovery of Rs 76,333 crore was made during the period while 1,020 persons were arrested.

In the current fiscal (April-May), 2,784 cases of evasion of Rs 14,302 crore were detected. As many as 28 persons were arrested and Rs 5,716 crore recovered during the period. As per the statistics on surveys, searches and seizures carried out by the Income Tax Department in the last 5 years, searches were conducted on 3,946 groups while assets worth Rs 6,662 crore was seized. In 2022-23 fiscal alone, 741 groups were searched and Rs 1,765.56 crore assets were seized. In the last four years, 42,754 cases of outright smuggling detected by the Customs Department, involving value of about Rs 46,000 crore.

In April-May period of the current fiscal, 2,986 cases of outright smuggling involving goods valued at Rs 1,031 crore were detected by the Customs department.

Reliance Retail unveils new JioBook laptop at ₹16,499

THE MUKESH AMBANI-OWNED RETAILER LOOKS TO REPEAT THE SUCCESS OF ITS LOW-COST CELL PHONE

REUTERS

New Delhi, July 31: Reliance Retail has unveiled its all new JioBook, a lightweight and pocket-friendly 4G-LTE powered laptop designed to cater to all age groups. JioBook touted as 'India's First Learning Book' will be available at Rs 16,499 starting August 5, 2023, and customers can purchase JioBook from Reliance Digital's online and offline stores, as well as through Amazon.In.

The JioBook packs a punch with stylish design featuring matte finish, and ultra slim

built, and is light weight at 990 grams. It features 4G-LTE and dual-band WiFi capabilities, powerful octa-core chipset for smooth multitasking, 11.6-inch (29.46CM) anti-glare HD display, Infinity keyboard and large multi-gesture trackpad. With its advanced JioOS operating system, design and always-connected features, JioBook promises to redefine the learning experience for every individual. "We are dedicated to introduce innovative products that empower individuals in their learning journey. The all-new JioBook is our latest offering



catering to learners of all ages with its advanced features and seamless connectivity options," Reliance Retail spokesperson said. The JioBook will transform the way people learn, opening new opportunities for personal growth and skill development, the spokesperson added.

From attending online classes, to learning to code, or exploring new ventures such as starting a yoga studio or delving into online trading, JioBook aimed to provide an exceptional platform for all learning endeavours. Earlier this month, Jio had launched internet-enabled Jio

Bharat phones at Rs 999, packing-in cheaper monthly plan of Rs 123 for unlimited voice calls and 14 GB data. At Rs 999, Jio Bharat was positioned as "the lowest entry price for an internet-enabled phone". The new offering aimed to accelerate the '2G Mukht Bharat' vision, as India still has 250 million mobile subscribers in the 2G era with feature phones. Beta trial for first 1 million Jio Bharat phones started from July 7, 2023. Brokerages tracking the sector had said that the launch of internet-enabled Jio Bharat phones at an "attractive pricing" will enable Jio to gain market share at the lower end segment and signals a reduced probability of tariff hike in the near term.

SERIES IN LINE FOR INDIA



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Tarouba, July 31: India will be hoping the experiment of trying out Sanju Samson and Suryakumar Yadav in the middle-order works when they take on the West Indies in the ODI series decider here Tuesday.

India, who have not lost an ODI series to West Indies since 2006, face a rare series defeat after their move to rest skipper Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli backfired in the second game in Barbados.

As head coach Rahul Dravid pointed after the six-wicket loss on Saturday, India are looking at the bigger picture ahead of next month's Asia Cup and the upcoming World Cup will have another game to see the kind of impact the younger players can make in a must-win match.

"We will always look at the bigger picture. At this stage in the cycle, the Asia Cup and World Cup coming up we have to look at the bigger picture because of some of the injuries we have. We can't get worried about every

THE SQUADS

WEST INDIES: Shai Hope (C), Rovman Powell (vc), Alick Athanaze, Yannic Cariah, Keacy Carty, Dominic Drakes, Shimron Hetmyer, Alzarri Joseph, Brandon King, Kyle Mayers, Gudakesh Motie, Jayden Seales, Romario Shepherd, Kevin Sinclair, Oshane Thomas.

INDIA: Rohit Sharma (C), Shubman Gill, Ruturaj Gaikwad, Virat Kohli, Surya Kumar Yadav, Sanju Samson (wicket-keeper), Ishan Kishan (wicket-keeper), Hardik Pandya (vc), Shardul Thakur, Ravindra Jadeja, Axar Patel, Yuzvendra Chahal, Kuldeep Yadav, Jaydev Unadkat, Umran Malik, Mukesh Kumar.

single game, every single series, if we do that it will be a mistake," Dravid asserted Saturday.

Suryakumar, who is struggling to make his all-round game work in the 50-over format, will be looking to bat long and make a match-winning contribution.

For someone like Samson, who has made umpteen come-backs but has not been able to make it count, the series decider

presents a golden opportunity. He is likely to bat at number three like he did in the second ODI.

Opener Ishan Kishan has been impressive with the bat since the Test series but Shubman Gill is due for a big one after a quiet tour of West Indies thus far.

Hardik Pandya, who opened the bowling in the first two games, is gradually building up his workload. With the bat, he has been far from his best and would be looking to get some runs under his belt before the five-match T20 series against the West Indies.

In the bowling department, tearaway fast bowler Umran Malik has a point to prove after going wicketless so far in the series. His pace surely provides India the X factor but he needs to improve on the skill and accuracy front.

Chinaman Kuldeep Yadav has been India's stand out bowler, leaving no room in the side for his good friend Yuzvendra Chahal, who is likely to be seen in action only in the following T20 series.

West Indies have little to lose and a series win over India will be a much-needed shot in the arm after their failure to qualify for the ODI World Cup later this year.

Their bowlers have given Indian batters a hard time. Left-arm spinner Gudakesh Motie has got the ball to turn sharply and pacer Romario Shepherd has used the short ball to good effect.

"The guys are going to come hard again. We keep speaking about the attitude, and today we displayed that. We need to replicate that and need to be more consistent with the bat and ball," said skipper Shai Hope, who will be high on confidence after an unbeaten 63 in the second ODI.

MATCH SCHEDULE
India vs West Indies
 3rd ODI
 Time: 7 pm
 Telecast: DD Sports
 Stream: Jio Cinema & Fan Code
 Match starts at 7 PM IST

Broad signs off in style

REUTERS

London, July 31: England's Stuart Broad claimed the last two Australia wickets to secure a dramatic 49-run victory for his team in the final Ashes test at The Oval Monday and leave the series locked at 2-2 after five gripping matches.

Broad, playing his final Test, removed Todd Murphy and Alex Carey, both caught by wicketkeeper Jonny Bairstow, to dismiss Australia for 334 and deny them their first Ashes win in England since 2001.

Australia, who won the first two tests and had already retained the urn, moved on to 238/3 chasing 384 to win before a two-hour rain delay halted progress and England took the last seven wickets in just over two hours to earn a famous victory.

Chris Woakes was the pick of the England bowlers with figures of 4/50 and Moeen Ali took 3/76 before the 37-year-old Broad completed the job in a perfect swansong two days after announcing his retirement.

Resuming the final session of the series at 238/3 and with Steve Smith (54, 94b, 9x4) and Travis Head (43, 70b, 6x4) being set, it was looking like Australia could go for the win. However, Woakes and Ali changed the game completely before Broad put the final nails in the coffin.

Australia lost four wickets in 18 balls as Ali broke the 95-run fourth wicket stand dismissing Head, before Woakes got rid of in-form Smith. The pacer then sent Mitchell Starc packing to reduce the visitors to 275/7 after Ali accounted for Mitch Marsh.



Chris Woakes was ecstatic after dismissing Steve Smith on the final day of the fifth Ashes Test, Monday

Five overs later, Ali dismissed the visiting skipper Pat Cummins to dash Australian hopes of survival or a win. Carey and Murphy tried to delay the inevitable, but Broad added them to his list as the final two scalps.

Earlier, rain frustrated England and Australia in their hunt for a series-ending win. Australia went to lunch on 238/3, chasing 384 for the victory, but rain has prevented any more play so far at The Oval.

Australia resumed on 135/0 and England finally found some seam movement and swing with a new ball, accounting for David Warner (60), Usman Khawaja (72) and Marnus Labuschagne (13) in an 11-over spell in which the tourists hit just 34 runs.

BRIEF SCORES
 England 283 & 395 beat Australia 295 & 238/3 (Steve Smith 54, Travis Head 43; Chris Woakes 4/50, Moeen Ali 3/76, Stuart Broad 2/62) by 49 runs.

WORLD UNIVERSITY GAMES

Aishwary's hat-trick of gold powers India

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chengdu (China), July 31: Olympian Aishwary Prapat Singh Tomar led the show with a hat-trick of golds as shooters and archers powered India's best ever medal haul with 17 podium finishes in the World University Games here Monday.

On day four of the meet the Indian University athletes claimed four gold medals (two in shooting and two in archery), one silver (shooting) and one bronze (archery).

Overall, India won nine gold, three silver and five bronze to sit fourth in the medal standings behind China (17-5-4), Korea (10-10-4) and Japan (10-6-7).

India's previous best at the World University Games was in Gwangju, South Korea in 2015 when they ended up with five medals – one gold, one silver and three bronze.

Aishwary claimed a hat-trick of gold medals as the shooters took their overall tally to nine medals (6-2-1) to lead the team championship.

In the 10m air rifle men's team event, former world junior champion Aishwary won along with Divyansh Singh Panwar and Arjun Babuta, defeating hosts China with a world record score.

The trio shot 1894.7 points for the title, 7.3 points better than the previous world record set by Kazakhstan (1878.2).

Aishwary then won another gold (252.6), this time in an individual event, pipping teammate

Divyansh Singh Panwar (251.0). The bronze medal went to home favourite Song Wuhan, who shot 229.

Sangampreet Singh Bisla and Avneet Kaur emerged compound University champions as archers ended their campaign with their highest-ever tally of three gold, one silver and three bronze medals.

All the three gold came in the compound section – men's individual (Bisla), women's individual (Avneet) and mixed team (Saini and Pragati).

The solitary silver too came in the compound section in the women's team event (Avneet, Purvasha Shinde and Pragati). The compound archers also won two bronze medals – men's team (Rishabh Yadav, Saini and Bisla) and men's individual (Saini).

The recurve archers disappointed the most, bagging a solitary medal, that too a bronze by the women's team of Sangeeta, Tanisha Verma and Reeta Sawaiyan.

In table tennis, Kabir Hans from KIIT University advanced into round two of singles and mixed doubles events. In badminton, India won their third league rubber against Ukraine 5-0 with Swetaparna Panda winning the women's doubles partnering her sister Rutaparna. She also won the mixed doubles after pairing up with



Viraj Vilas Kuvale.

Sindhu, Srikanth hope for turnaround

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Sydney, July 31: Star Indian shuttlers PV Sindhu and Kidambi Srikanth will look to arrest their slump in form when they begin their campaign at the Australia Open badminton tournament here Tuesday.

The USD 420,000 event, which has been upgraded to a Super 500 tournament, will be the last chance for Sindhu and Srikanth to regain their touch ahead of the World Championships to be held in Copenhagen, Denmark.

The 2019 World Champion, Sindhu hasn't looked the part since her recovery from an injury as she has repeatedly made early exits in as many as seven of the 12 BWF World Tour events this year.

A lot has happened this year for Sindhu as she parted ways with Korea's Park Tae-Sang, worked with SAI coach Vidhi Chaudhary before zeroing on new coach Muhammad Hafiz Hashim, the 2003 All-England champion.

With back-to-back tournaments lined up, there is hardly any time but the two-time Olympic medallist will still hope to find her best self with the help of Hashim and try out some of her tricks when she takes on compatriot Ashmita Chaliha in the opening round here.



The only time the two faced off in international circuit was at the 2022 India Open and Sindhu had come up trumps but they had also played at the 2019 Senior Nationals Championships in Guwahati and though Ashmita had lost then too, she had given a scare to the star Indian.

Srikanth too has not been able to weave a series of wins in a week. He showed glimpses of his hay days when he thrashed Chinese Taipei's Chou Tien Chen with his trademark attacking game at Japan Open before losing to fellow Indian HS Prannoy. The former World No.1 will have to curb his errors when he takes the court against Japan's Kenta

Nishimoto. For India, Prannoy, Lakshya Sen and the World No.2 pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty have been the most consistent performers this season.

With four titles, Satwik and Chirag have been the talk of the town but the duo has decided to skip the event to prepare for the World Championships (August 21 to 27).

Prannoy and Sen, on the other hand, have been the only other Indians to win titles this season and they have also been consistent, especially the former.

At World No.10, Prannoy is currently the best placed Indian singles player and has made

three quarterfinals, besides claiming the Malaysia Masters super 500 title.

This week, Prannoy is pitted against Hong Kong's Lee Cheuk Yiu, while Sen, who has won the Canada Open, will have to tame China's Lu Guang Yu in their opening rounds.

Young Priyanshu Rajawat too has been impressive despite his losses as he gave a scare to his opponents – Indonesia's World No.2 Anthony Ginting, Japan's Kodai Naraoka and Sen in the last few tournaments since winning the Orleans Masters early this year. The 21-year-old will begin his campaign against local player Nathan Tang.

Bumrah to lead in Ireland T20Is, Prasad returns

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 31: Star pacer Jasprit Bumrah returned from a long injury lay off and will lead the Indian team in the three-match T20I series against Ireland in Dublin. The three-match series is scheduled to be held from August 18-23.

Bumrah, who underwent a surgery in New Zealand for a back injury, has been undergoing rehabilitation at the National Cricket Academy for a while now, and the pace spearhead had recently bowled his full quota of 10 overs against visiting Mumbai side here at the Alur grounds.

The selectors have also included Karnataka pacer Prasidh Krishna in the squad. The right-arm quick last played for India in an ODI match against Zimbabwe in August last year before undergoing a surgery for stress fracture.

THE SQUAD: Jasprit Bumrah (C), Ruturaj Gaikwad (vc), Yashasvi Jaiswal, Tilak Varma, Rinku Singh, Sanju Samson (wk), Jitesh Sharma (wk), Shivam Dube, Washington Sundar, Shahbaz Ahmed, Ravi Bishnoi, Prasidh Krishna, Arshdeep Singh, Mukesh Kumar, Avesh Khan.

Brij Bhushan camp files nominations amid fanfare

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 31: Four candidates, including outgoing Wrestling Federation of India chief Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh's close aide Sanjay Singh from UP, filed nominations for the post of president amid fanfare at the Olympic Bhawan here Monday.

Darshan Lal from the Chandigarh wrestling body filed his nomination for the post of general secretary, while SP Deswal from Uttarakhand filed his nomination for the post of treasurer from the Brij Bhushan camp.

The Brij Bhushan camp claims to have the support of 22 of the 25 state units and, after filing their nominations, expressed "confidence" of winning all 15 posts during the WFI elections August 12.

On a day of hectic activity at the Olympic Bhawan, a convoy of nominees and supporters from

the Brij Bhushan camp arrived with the "blessings" of the BJP leader, and after extensive paperwork, filed their nominations before former J&K High Court Chief Justice Mahesh Mittal Kumar, the Returning Officer appointed for the WFI elections. The last date for withdrawing nominations is August 7.

"There are four candidates for the post of president, three for senior vice-president, six for vice-president, three for the post of general secretary, two for treasurer, three for joint secretary and nine for executive members' post. Against 15 posts, 30 persons have applied," said Justice Kumar.

"Tomorrow, we will display the list of all the candidates whose nomination papers are found to be in order. It will be put up on the (WFI) website tomorrow. One lady is there (for the post of president)," he added.

The only lady candidate on



the WFI executive committee members' list is Anita Sheoran representing Odisha. Sheoran was one of the witnesses in the alleged sexual harassment case against Brij Bhushan.

The Brij Bhushan camp has

filed a total of 18 nominations for 15 WFI posts, while candidates from rival camps left without disclosing which posts they were filing their nominations for.

The Brij Bhushan camp nominees and supporters were the

first to arrive at the Olympic Bhawan past noon, after the BJP leader held another round of meeting at a five-star hotel before the convoy left to file nominations.

With less than 45 minutes left for the nominations to close – and after the Brij Bhushan camp had completed their formalities – a group that included Anita Sheoran, Railways Sports Promotion Board (RSPB) secretary Prem Chand Lochab (Gujarat representative), Dushyant Sharma (J&K unit) and a few others arrived and left after filing their nominations without speaking to the media.

Brij Bhushan's denial

In the morning, Brij Bhushan reiterated that no member of his family will contest the WFI polls. While his son Karan had already pulled out, his son-in-law Vishal too had said Sunday he would not be contesting for any post.