



UNFAZED SARA

Sara Ali Khan asserts that she doesn't care about others commenting on her personal matters including religious beliefs

LEISURE P2



FRESH START

Pakistan Cabinet approves the signing of a new security pact with the US, a move that indicates a fresh start in defence cooperation

INTERNATIONAL P10



SINDHU SAILS THROUGH

PV Sindhu eases past compatriot Aakarshi Kashyap 21-14, 21-10 in a second round women's singles match at Australian Open

SPORTS P12

Import restrictions on laptops, computers

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi August 3: The government Thursday imposed import restrictions on laptops, tablets, and certain types of computers with immediate effect for security reasons and the need to promote domestic manufacturing. The move will also curtail inbound shipments of these goods from countries like China and Korea. Importers of these items would now have to seek permission or license from the government for their inbound shipments. A senior government official said that there are a variety of reasons for imposing these restrictions but the primary is "to ensure that the security of our citizens is fully safeguarded". **MORE P11**

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



FLOOD SCARE

Medium flood in Mahanadi river system, alert in four districts

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 3: Heavy incessant downpour across the state during the last three days has caused 'medium range' flood like situation in the Mahanadi river system.

Under the impact of the deep depression over Bay of Bengal, many districts of the state recorded very heavy rainfall in the past three days, causing water-level in a few rivers, including Brahmani, Baitarani and Mahanadi to swell.

Engineer-in-Chief, Water Resources department, Bhakta Ranjan Mohanty said though water is flowing above danger mark in Baitarani river at Akhuapada (19.51 metres), no reports of any damages caused due to flooding has been received so far. Brahmani was flowing at 22.2 metres at 12 pm at Jenapur against the danger level of 23 metres.

In the Mahanadi Basin, the discharge of water at Khairmal is 4.72 lakh cusec, at Barmul 7.86 lakh cusec and at Mundali 9.18 lakh cusec. It is observed that the discharge at Khairmal and



People helping a motorist in a flooded road near Mundali, Thursday

Barmul is receding. Due to rise in water level in Mahanadi at Naraj, flood like situation is likely to occur in low lying areas of Cuttack, Khordha, Puri, Kendrapara and Jagatsinghpur districts. The administrations in these districts are closely monitoring the situation, said an official at the SRC office. Water in Jalaka river at Mathani, Balasore is flowing above danger level in a falling trend, he said. Preliminary reports suggest

that 1.20 lakh people in 762 villages of 90 blocks in 15 districts and 66 wards of 17 ULBs have been affected by heavy rain and flood like situation. As many as 6,834 persons have been evacuated and sheltered in safe buildings. They have been provided with dry food and a free kitchen along with drinking water. Special Relief Commissioner Satyabrata Sahu said district collectors have been asked to submit damage assessment reports after the water receded.

Meanwhile, leave of all government officials in Puri district has been cancelled in view of a possible flood situation. The SRC said administration is ready to counter the flood situation. Officials are instructed to ensure 24x7 patrolling of weak river embankments and evacuate people from low lying areas to safer places. As many as 8 NDRF, 13 ODRAF and 85 Fire and Emergency teams have been deployed in vulnerable districts to help the administrations in 16 districts.

1.20 lakh people affected
6,834 people evacuated from low lying areas
Cuttack, Khurda, Puri, Kendrapara, Jagatsinghpur districts put on alert

Nod to Gyanvapi survey

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Prayagraj (UP), August 3: The Allahabad High Court Thursday dismissed a petition filed by the Gyanvapi committee challenging a district court order directing the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) to conduct a survey to determine if the mosque was built upon a temple. It said the district court order is 'just and proper', and 'no interference from this court is warranted'.

The Varanasi district court had July 21 directed the ASI to conduct a 'detailed scientific survey' - including excavations, wherever necessary - to determine if the Gyanvapi mosque located next to the Kashi Vishwanath temple is built upon a temple.

The Anjuman Intezamia Masjid committee, which manages the mosque, had moved the High Court July 25, a day after the Supreme Court halted the ASI survey till 5 pm July 26, allowing time for the committee to appeal against the lower court's order.

Allahabad High Court Chief Justice Prinkler Diwaker had reserved the order on the mosque committee's petition July 27 after hearing arguments from both sides.

Dismissing the petition Thursday, the High Court said there is no reason to not believe the ASI's assurance that the survey will not cause any damage

MOSQUE COMMITTEE MOVES SC

Hours after the HC judgement, the Anjuman Intezamia Masjid committee (Gyanvapi mosque committee) moved the Supreme Court against the order. Advocate Nizam Pasha mentioned the matter before Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud, who was heading a five-judge constitution bench hearing arguments on challenge to the abrogation of Article 370 and was rising for the day, seeking an urgent hearing. "I will look at the email (sent by Pasha) right away," the CJ responded.

to the structure. It asserted that no digging should be done at the mosque as part of the survey.

Advocate Vishnu Shankar Jain, who represented the Hindu side, told reporters that the High Court said the district court's order on the ASI survey will become effective immediately.

"This is a very important decision by the High Court. The argument by the Anjuman Intezamia that the survey will affect the structure (of the mosque) has been rejected by the court, which has dismissed its petition," he said. The mosque committee had earlier argued that it did not get a chance to approach the High Court, Jain said.

Therefore, the High Court heard all its arguments before arriving at the decision that the district court order will be implemented with immediate effect, he said.

China limits kids' smartphone time

Children between the ages of 16 and 18 would only be able to use the internet for two hours a day

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Beijing, August 3: China's internet watchdog has laid out regulations to curb the amount of time children spend on their smartphones, in the latest blow to firms such as Tencent and ByteDance which run social media platforms and online games.

The Cyberspace Administration of China Wednesday published the draft guidelines on its site, stating that minors would not be allowed to use most internet services on mobile devices from 10 pm To 6 am, and that children between the ages of 16 and 18 would only be able to use the internet for two hours a day. Children between the ages of 8 and 15 would be allowed only an hour a day, while those under 8 would only be allowed 40 minutes. Only certain services, such as apps or



platforms that are deemed suitable to the physical and mental development of minors, will be exempted. The CAC did not specify which internet services would be allowed exemptions. The restrictions are Beijing's latest efforts to attempt to limit internet addiction, a problem it views as widespread among its youth. In 2019, Beijing limited children's daily online game time to 90 minutes a day and tightened those restrictions in 2021, allowing children only an hour a day of online game play on Fridays, weekends

and public holidays. Short-video and online video platforms like Douyin, Bilibili and Kuaishou have offered youth modes that restrict the type of content shown to minors and the length of time they can use the service. Children are also pushed educational content, such as science experiments.

The latest restrictions would impact firms like Tencent, China's largest online game company, and ByteDance, which runs popular short-video platform Douyin. Firms in China are often responsible for enforcing regulations. "To effectively strengthen the online protection of minors, the CAC has in recent years pushed for the establishment of a youth mode on internet platforms, expanding its coverage, optimising its functions and enriching it with age-appropriate content," the CAC said.

Reviving Quizzing

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SHORT TAKES

Newborn sold for ₹10,000

Bhogra: A couple allegedly sold off their two-day old newborn girl child to an unknown person for ₹10,000 with the help of a hospital attendant, a report said Thursday. The couple was identified as Manoj Das, a daily wager and his wife at Taladi village under this block in Balasore district. **P5**

Club system for Class X

Bhubaneswar: The state government has introduced an aspirational curriculum for Class X students the components of which include book review, project work, information technology (IT) skills and co-curricular activities. In order to strengthen the student participation in these aspirational areas, a student-led club system is being established in all secondary schools across the state. Student clubs are small learning communities equipping the students to learn, adapt and enhance various skills and behaviours. **P4**

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ROBBIE WILLIAMS UNDRASSES TO SHOW OFF GIANT TATTOOS

Grammy nominated singer-songwriter Robbie Williams posed naked on social media to show off his mammoth tattoo collection in a cheeky snap. The singer left little to the imagination as he flashed his bottom to his Instagram followers, reports Mirror.co.uk.

GWYNETH PALTROW ON A SOCIAL MEDIA HIATUS

Actress Gwyneth Paltrow has announced a break from social media to work on being present. The actress, announced on her Instagram page, "Taking this full moon energy with me as I go into a social media break. Going to work on being present. Happy summer."



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES

You probably have a big circle of friends, and though most of them may be casual friends, they may sometimes prove to be favourable. They may help you overcome some dejections. It will also help you figure out the importance of the role friends can play.

TAURUS

This day, you need to watch out against your selfish and possessive tendencies. Ganesh advises you not to be too determined or demanding. Try to not to be self centred. Do not impose your need and wishes on anyone. You should act generously towards one and all; particularly towards your spouse.

GEMINI

You will be busy organising some religious function today or in visiting a place of religious significance. You will encounter expenses in religious and charitable work. However, you should guard against ignoring your daily work in pursuit of all these matters, says Ganesh.

CANCER

You will labour more to finish pending tasks. You will give priority to career compared to personal chores. So you will be caught up in your career and business riddles.

LEO

You will be able to meet all challenges and obstacles successfully. Your ultimate goal is to come out victorious from any situations. There is a possibility that you will have to face severe competition in business or trade. Personal life will proceed without any hiccups though, says Ganesh.

VIRGO

Your renewed enthusiasm for life will bring about a radical change in you. Ganesh says today is a good time to let others see how important and how brilliant you can be. Your intelligence will become very evident as you demonstrate how things should be done.

LIBRA

Ganesh says you will try to gain knowledge in new topics today. You will feel enthusiasm and a feeling of positivity today. You will show more interest when talking with friends and this will make you come closer to them. There will be benefits to you from your life partner. You will be happy to be in the company of a close relative today.

SCORPIO

The ground beneath you seems a bit shaky; watch your steps. A time would come when your confidence would be shattered, however, don't let set-backs and failures affect you. Adapt the attitude of 'this too shall pass' and the rest would fall in place, says Ganesh.

SAGITTARIUS

A cheerful you, your energy level is on an all time high. Ganesh foresees that you will enrol you name for a correspondence or a part-time course. This will boost your confidence and brush up your memory as well. People who are in legal profession will have a rocking day ahead.

CAPRICORN

You are a die-hard romantic and with every plan to please your sweetheart, you are taking him/her closer to the cloud nine. But, don't live in fantasy world, warns Ganesh, as problems are going to follow you everywhere. If you are a businessman, your rivals may give you a hard time. Take proper care of your health, advises Ganesh.

AQUARIUS

You will remember this day for the rest of life as today you will make some important decisions and give a new direction to your life. You are in for a windfall and cherry on the cake will be all the recognition and rewards you get for your sincerity and hard work, predicts Ganesh.

PISCES

You will finally realize the worth of your resources today. You will take a decision to increase your savings and clamp down on unnecessary expenses. Your expenses are likely to increase temporarily.

Sara ignores criticism of her religious beliefs

Mumbai: Actress Sara Ali Khan recently asserted that although she appreciates criticism regarding work, she doesn't care about others commenting on her personal matters.

Talking to a magazine, the Kedarnath actress said, "I learned that my sense of validation should not come from anything external, including the way I look. So I grew up with qualities that were very innate, very inherent, very internal. And because they're rooted in such a secure place inside me, I'm not fazed by other people's opinions of me. I think having a strong sense of self and not defining myself by what people think of me is the only way to keep going."

She went on to add, "I definitely appreciate any kind of criticism when it comes to my work. I work for the audience and if they don't like my work, it behoves me to see what I can do better. But if they have an opinion on anything personal, whether it's my religious beliefs or my sense of dressing, I don't care."

Sara who is often questioned by a section of social media for visiting religious places.

On the work front, Sara has *Ae Watan Mere Watan*, *Metro In Dino* and *Murder Mubarak* in the pipeline.



Tattoo helps Faria land a lead role

NILA MADHAB PANDA'S WEB SERIES THE JENGABURU CURSE IS SAID TO BE THE FIRST CLI-FI THRILLER OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar: Actress Faria Abdullah who has predominantly worked in the south-film industry bagged her first Hindi OTT show, *The Jengaburu Curse*, because of her tattoo. She will be seen playing the lead of

Priyambada Das in India's first Cli-Fi thriller which is set to stream from August 9 on Sony LIV.

Talking about her character, Faria said, "During the show narration, when Nila Madhab Panda sir described the character of Priyambada, he mentioned a specific tattoo design on the character's leg. To everyone's surprise, I had the same tattoo, creating an incredible coincidence and connection between me and the character. Nila sir's reaction -he had finally found Priyambada- added to the feeling that this role was destined for me."

Sharing her excitement, she added, "What's fascinating is that I felt an instant connection with the role, almost as if the character found me instead of me actively seeking out the role."

Produced by Studio Next, the show is directed by Nila



Madhab Panda. Written by Mayank Tewari, Paulo Perez serves as the DoP on the series while Alokandana Dasgupta scores the music. Durga Prasad Mohapatra is the production designer.

The series also features Nasser, Makarand Deshpande, Sudev Nair, Deepak Sampat, and Hitesh Dave in pivotal roles.



Helen never tried to disrupt us: Arbaaz

Mumbai: Actor Arbaaz Khan has spoken about his bond with stepmother Helen and how her entry into dad Salim Khan's life first affected the family.

"My father never imposed Helen aunty on us. He knew that for these kids, their mother was important. I have another woman in my life but she has her own space. She too, also never tried to separate us or whatever it is. She was just happy that there was someone in her life who is just going to be there for her and she knew he had his own family, a wife and kids and she won't disrupt that," he said in an interview.

"It's difficult for my mom at the time but she dealt with it. Whatever their reasons were to keep things going, whether it was children or circumstances, (she thought) ok fine, this has happened but still I need to be around this man or he felt that he still needs to be around this woman. They've had their own struggles that we have seen as kids but they've gone through that. And today, all of them are inseparable," he said.

Sunny talks about her infamous interview

Mumbai: Actress Sunny Leone has opened up about the crest and trough of her career. The actress said that the infamous interview in 2016 was the lowest point for her.

In 2016, Sunny's interview became a hot topic after a journalist repeatedly raised questions about her past. Many termed the questions as

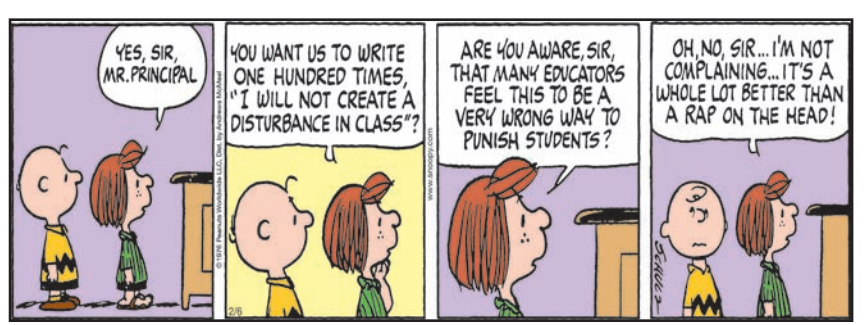
misogynistic, sexist and highly offensive.

"I think the low points were definitely that one interview that I did that did not go so well and it was the whole journey of that entire experience that made it a low. When a film doesn't do well it doesn't feel great, some highs will be *Laila* and *Babydoll* and of course the recently released *Kennedy*," the Jackpot actress said.

The mother of three continued: "There has been a fair amount of struggles and literally had to fight situations. I basically had to claw my way through so many different situations and fight and show people that I am here to do certain things."

"And its definitely has not been easy to fight through all that. Daniel's been through everything with me and we had a lot of amazing people to work with and we have done amazing projects and along the way we have dealt with a lot of crazy," she added.

PEANUTS



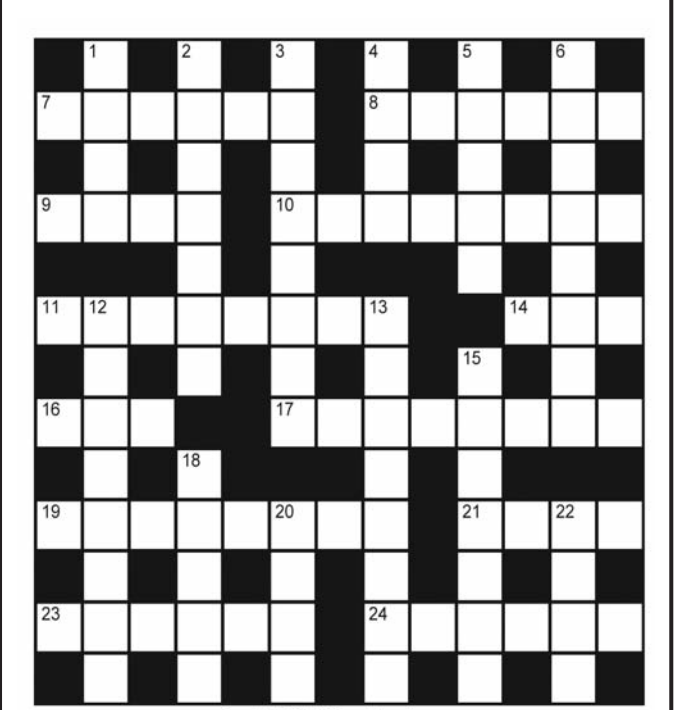
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



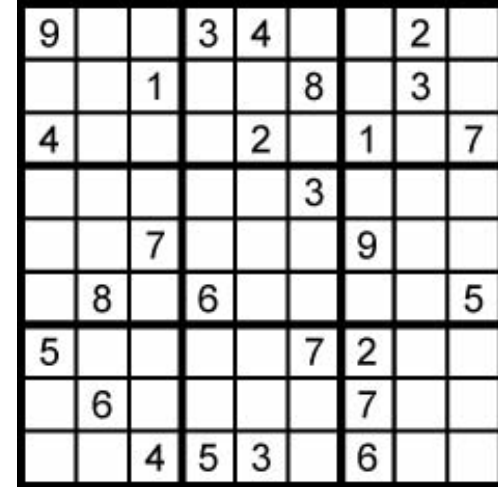
FUN post CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 7 Heavenly
 - 8 Latin dance (3-3)
 - 9 Datum
 - 10 Anthill scrounger
 - 11 Liver infection symptom
 - 14 Frigid
 - 16 Query
 - 17 Single great stone
 - 19 Table linen (5,3)
 - 21 Wheelbarrow
 - 23 Coral reefs
 - 24 Spain and Portugal
 - 4 Stigma
 - 5 Purple shade
 - 6 Map find
 - 12 Complete
 - 13 Father of modern physics
 - 15 Trite remarks
 - 18 Reprimand
 - 20 Perfume additive
 - 22 Surprise attack
- Down**
- 1 Slave girl of opera
 - 2 Cold weather wear
 - 3 Showy flower

SUDOKU

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



SOLUTIONS



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown

NEW JOURNEY

Class XI students and parents during the orientation programme at Christ College in Cuttack, Thursday



State hikes food cost for indoor patients

The move will cost ₹64 crore more to the state exchequer per annum and benefit nearly 42 lakh patients

ment hospitals by 30 per cent. Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Thursday approved a proposal of the Health and Family Welfare department in this regard.

According to official sources, the move will cost ₹64 crore more to the state exchequer per annum and benefit nearly 42 lakh patients.

As per the decision, general food given per bed per day has been increased from ₹85 to ₹110, for children from ₹75 to ₹95, for highly nutritious food from ₹95 to ₹120, for dry food from ₹75 to ₹95 and for liquid food from ₹85 to ₹110.

Food will be supplied to patients in all the 618 government-run hospitals at this increased price, the sources said.



IN SPATE: Floodwaters at Naraj dam in Cuttack, Thursday

PHOTO: RAKISHORE MOHANTY

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 3: In view of escalating prices of essential commodities and vegetables, the state government has enhanced the cost of food given to indoor patients at all govern-

Appoint OHRC member within two months: HC

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, August 3: The Orissa High Court Thursday ordered the state government to fill a vacant member post in Odisha Human Rights Commission (OHRC) within two months.

Hearing a public interest litigation (PIL) on the vacancy, the High Court had May 5 ordered the state government to ensure filling up of the post by August 3.

During the Thursday hearing, the state government informed the High Court that the process to fill the vacancy is in the last leg and that it will be ensured at the earliest.

According to Law department under secretary Rajkishore Rout's July 31 letter to government lawyer Debakanta Mohanty, the Odisha government was leaving no stone un-



The state govt informed the HC that the process to fill the vacancy is in the last leg and that it will be ensured at the earliest

turned to fill the vacancy in the rights panel. Sources said Justice Raghuraj Das stepped down from the post February 9. However, no appointment has been made to the post so far.

Senior lawyer Prabir Das, through the PIL, approached the High Court May 15 seeking a directive to the state government for appointment of a member to the OHRC at the earliest.

State's Chief Secretary, Law department's principal secretary and OHRC secretary have been made parties to the case.

Shah on 2-day visit to Odisha

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, August 3: Union Home Minister Amit Shah is scheduled to pay a two-day visit to Odisha from Friday during which he is scheduled to attend officials meetings, Home department officials said Thursday.

Shah will reach Biju Patnaik International Airport here at 10:40pm Friday and launch a national highway project the next day.

He is also slated to attend a meeting on left wing extremism (LWE) and disaster management during the day. Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik is likely to attend the meeting, the officials said.

There is, however, no official confirmation about a possible meeting between Shah and Naveen.

But Shah is scheduled to attend a meeting at the airport lounge before leaving for the national capital Saturday evening, the officials said but did not specify who will be present in it.

'Quizzing fosters team spirit'

Renowned quizmaster **Ajay Poonia** will be conducting the **OrissaPOST Mettle Meet** for the second time. The young and exuberant Poonia often catches the contestants off guard with his sharp wit and humour. Precise, crisp and to-the-point questions are what endear Poonia to the hearts of viewers. His choice of words is enough to crack open the safe where the answer is hidden. Add to this unique talent, his presence of mind and elephantine memory has propelled him to the higher echelons of the quizzing fraternity in the country. In a candid conversation with **OrissaPOST**, Poonia opens his heart out on his journey and the art of quizzing. Excerpts...

- ▶ **How different is Mettle Meet from other quiz events?**
Well, firstly it has a unique structure. Hosting all top educational institutions of the state in four-member team format is difficult to manage, but it is accomplished very nicely. Also, the four-member team helps in showcasing the talent and smartness of a large number of students.
- ▶ **How would you rate the standard of quizzing in Odisha, or eastern India?**
Well, in the last edition, I had prepared easy questions. That was in the backdrop of what I perceived about the intensity and preparation of the participants. But I realized I was wrong. The standard is quite high here.
- ▶ **How do you prepare the questions?**
Framing the questions is an art. Because, it is very easy to prepare tough questions but what makes a quizmaster stand out is asking questions which are neither too easy nor too difficult. The questions must be prepared in such a manner that it hooks the participant.
- ▶ **What should be the correct method of preparation for a contestant?**
Paying attention to the question holds the key. If someone fails to understand the question initially, he/she can get the clue by



discussing with team members.

- ▶ **Are talent shows a threat to quiz competitions these days?**
It is unfortunate that one type of skill set like dancing and singing is getting more attention than other skills like quizzing. Like dancers and singers, quizzers too work hard and need consistency to excel.
- ▶ **Any tips for the participants of Mettle Meet 2023?**
I will suggest all the participants to read **OrissaPOST** for the clues because there are certain questions which I have picked from the newspaper. Importantly, just pay attention to all the questions.
- ▶ **How does quizzing help in the intellectual de-**

velopment of a child and foster team spirit?

- ▶ When you appear competitive exams, you need to improve your general knowledge skills, and quizzing helps in gaining that knowledge. Also, if you participate in quizzes it improves your general awareness level and makes you an interesting person. It helps in improving your skills and capabilities. Quizzing fosters the art of working together and team spirit in the sense that if someone does not know the answer the other members are always there to help.
- ▶ **Your take on OrissaPOST?**
OrissaPOST's style of reporting has been spoken about for a long time and I'm glad that the newspaper started 'Mettle Meet' in 2016 to revive the art of quizzing in the state.

60-yr old held for job fraud

Bhubaneswar: The Commissionerate Police Thursday arrested a man for duping his colleague of ₹2.65 lakh on the pretext of helping the latter's son get a job in IOCL Refinery at Paradip. The accused was identified as Dhruva Charan Sahoo, 60, of Banguari village under Pahala police limits on the outskirts of the Capital City. Sahoo and the victim, Sadashiv Panda, have been working at a private firm in the City, police said. "In 2020, Sahoo took ₹2.65 lakh from Panda on the pretext of helping the latter's son get a job with IOCL Refinery at Paradip. However, Sahoo didn't turn up," said an official. With no way out, Panda approached the police against Sahoo. The accused, however, urged Panda to withdraw the complaint promising return of money. Accordingly, Panda withdrew the complaint, but to a precious little. Panda again approached the Pahala police that registered a case (53/23) and arrested Sahoo. He was produced before a local court that sent him to judicial custody, Thursday.

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



Massive whale that lived 40mn yrs ago found in desert

The fossilised bones of an ancient creature that patrolled coastal waters 40 million years ago belong to a newly discovered species that is a contender for the heaviest animal ever to have existed on Earth, *The Guardian* reported.

Fossil hunters discovered remnants of the enormous and long-extinct whale in a rock formation in the Ica desert of southern Peru. Fully grown adults might have weighed hundreds of tonnes, researchers believe.

"It was very unlike anything I had seen before," said Alberto Collareta, a palaeontologist at the University of Pisa who worked on the fossils. "It is the heaviest skeleton as far as mammals are concerned, possibly the heaviest vertebrate ever," he said.

Until now, the blue whale was widely regarded to hold the

record for the animal with the largest body size. The giant skeleton of Hope, the blue whale that looms over visitors to the Natural History Museum in London, is more than 25 metres long and weighs 4.5 tonnes.

But the new species, named *Perucetus colossus* after the country of origin and its gigantic size, could have grown larger and heavier than the blue whale, the scientists said. Despite being a mere 20 metres long, the skeleton of *P. colossus* would have been two to three times heavier than that of a 25-metre blue whale because of its denser bones. Its body mass would have come in at 85 to 340 tonnes, they estimated.

The researchers reached the conclusion after comparing 13 vertebrae, four ribs and a single hip bone from *P. colossus* with bones from close whale relatives.



Paleontologist Mario Urbina poses for a photo next to the vertebrae of the newly found species during a presentation in Lima, Peru (AP)

Beyond its vast size, *P. colossus* appears to have had forelimbs for walking on the seabed and little, vestigial hind limbs.

"If we look at the most con-

servative estimate of 85 tonnes [for the newly discovered animal], we are definitely in the ballpark of the blue whale, which is the largest animal known to

date," said Eli Amson, a specialist in mammal fossils at the State Museum of Natural History in Stuttgart. "Maybe there is some single individuals of blue whales that were much larger, but maybe from this new species there are also much larger individuals."

Writing in the journal *Nature*, Collareta and colleagues described how the fossils were discovered 13 years ago but took many years to prepare for study. Unlike most whales, which have relatively light skeletons and can prey on fast-moving fish and other marine creatures, *P. colossus* had heavier bones and was more likely a slow-swimming scavenger.

Amson said the find offered important insights about gigantism in early cetaceans – animals that include dolphins, whales and porpoises – adding

that while blue whales and their ancestors are usually found in open-sea environments, the newly discovered animal evolved in shallow coastal waters.

Travis Park, a postdoctoral researcher and fellow at the Natural History Museum in London, who was not involved in the work, said the discovery suggested cetaceans achieved extreme body masses about 30m years earlier than previously thought. Other large basilosaurids, or ancient whales, that lived alongside *P. colossus* were probably more slender, serpentine, and flexible, making the animal very different from any cetacean previously known from the middle Eocene.

"It shows us that we still have lots to learn about what cetaceans were capable of doing prior to the evolution of the modern groups," Park said.

MARKET WATCH	
INDEX	VARIATION
SENSEX	65240.68 ↓ 542.10
NIFTY	19381.65 ↓ 144.90
DOLLAR	82.25 ↓ ₹0.04
EURO	90.69 ↑ ₹0.21
GOLD	₹59,185 ↑ ₹58
SILVER	₹72,620 ↓ ₹340

WEATHER		
	BHUB	CTK
TEMP	MAX 32.2°C	31.5°C
	MIN 24.1°C	24.2°C
Humidity	92%	100%
Rainfall	2.4	5.8
Forecast	Light to moderate rain	

Two City special schools welcome new students

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik inaugurated these schools July 3, reaffirming his government's commitment to inclusive and quality education



ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, August 3: Two freshly inaugurated schools in City, the Bhima Bhoi Government Vocational Higher Secondary School for the visually impaired and Bipin Bihari Chowdhury Government Vocational Higher Secondary School for the hearing impaired, saw new excited faces on the premises Thursday as classes began for 11th standard for the 2023-24 academic year.

Splendid welcome ceremonies ushered in the students of both the schools in presence of several dignitaries and officials, marking the commencement of a new educational journey for the young learners.

tion landscape, evoking a sense of joy among the parents," said a teacher present at the event.

In the students, the inspirational speeches by the guests ignited a sense of purpose, motivating them to pursue their aspirations with dedication.

Similar celebrations unfolded at the Bipin Bihari Chowdhury Government Vocational Higher Secondary School for hearing impaired, where acting chairman Pramod Kumar Mishra presided as the chief guest, in presence of Panda, Tarai, Jena, and Bipin Bihari Chowdhury's son Shiladitya Chowdhury.

Parents present at the event expressed delight over initiation of the academic programme. Among the 28 students enrolled in the school, the welcome event witnessed a significant turnout of 20 students.

Notably, this occasion follows the recent conversion of state's two of these special schools into higher secondary schools. The Chief Minister had inaugurated these schools July 3, reaffirming the government's commitment to inclusive and quality education.



BACK WITH BUZZ: Market Building in Unit II area of Bhubaneswar reopened Thursday days after remaining out of bounds owing to differences between make-shift shopkeepers and store owners

OP PHOTO

AIIMS faculty, students vow to donate organs

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, August 3: Several faculty members and students, along with members of the public, Thursday pledged to become organ donors, at the 13th Indian Organ Donation Day (IODD) celebrations here at AIIMS, Bhubaneswar.

To raise awareness about the life-saving potential of organ donation, a series of programmes were organized by the institution. The events featured an array of activities, including a mime show performed by students of the college of nursing on the theme of organ donation. Through thought-provoking performances, the students high-



lighted the importance of becoming an organ donor and dispelled myths and misconceptions surrounding the donation process.

AIIMS executive director Ashutosh Biswas conveyed appreciation for the enthusiastic participation of the faculty, staff,

and students, stressing the significance of promoting organ donation in the region.

He noted that AIIMS Bhubaneswar has already taken significant steps to support organ transplantation, like initiating a renal transplant programme, which has provided hope to pa-

tients suffering from end-stage kidney disease. "Moreover, the institute is all set to launch a cadaveric organ donation program and liver transplantation soon. The programme will provide impetus to the deceased donor programme to be initiated in near future," he added.

A team of doctors from different departments, comprising Sanjib Bhoi, Ashish Pattnaik, Sangeeta Sahoo, Bhagirathi Dwivedi, Prabhakar Ranjan Tripathy, explained the criteria for and importance of deceased donors, while Sandip Panda of nephrology and Manoj Das of urology shared their experiences about renal transplant at AIIMS.

NRDC team meets SOA researchers

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 3: A two-member team of the National Research Development Corporation (NRDC), New Delhi, which recently signed a technology licensing agreement with Siksha 'O' Anusandhan (SOA) deemed to be university, visited SOA August 1 and 2 to interact with the concerned researchers.

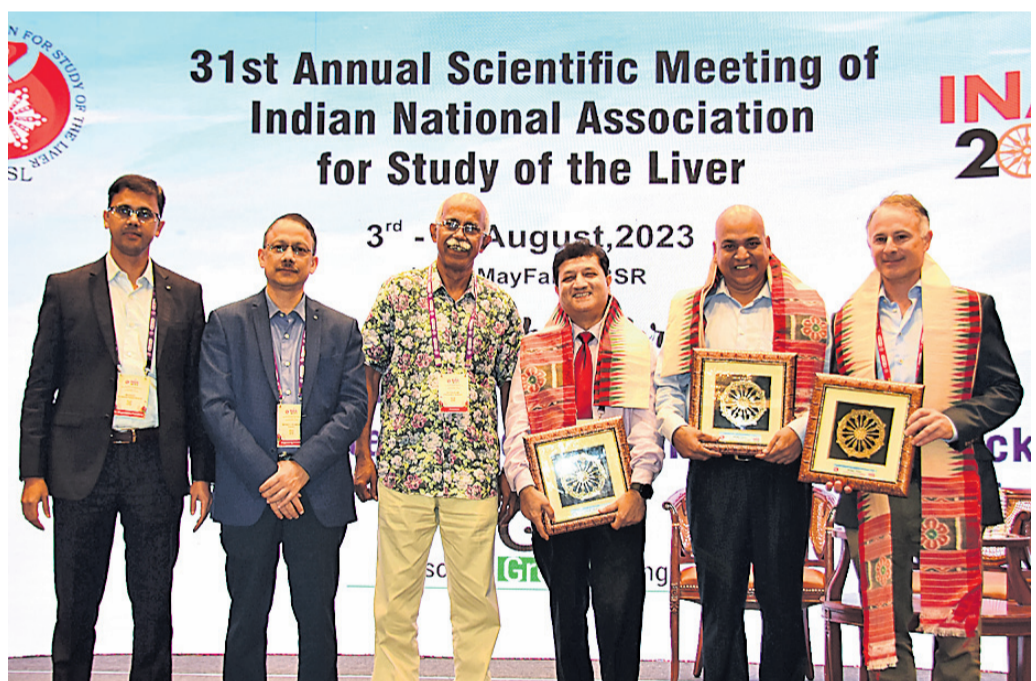
The simple, economical and innovative pharmaceutical formulations developed by SOA researchers are intended to treat various chronic medical conditions like dry eye, throat infections and to mitigate long-term adverse events associated with cancer treatment.

"The two member team comprising Amitabh Mishra, NRDC's chief and head of biotechnology and in-charge, legal royalty and regulatory affairs and Priyanka Aswal, technical assistant, visited different SOA centres to know about available research facilities and interact with researchers for possible outcomes in the form of novel technologies," said Goutam Rath, a professor at SOA's School of Pharmaceutical Sciences (SPS).

The NRDC, under the Union Science and Technology Ministry, is known to facilitate transferring the innovative technologies developed in Indian colleges, universities and industries to potential technology seekers for large scale production and marketing.

Centre transfers ₹704cr to Odisha, 5 other states

New Delhi: The Centre has transferred ₹704 crore upfront payment that it received from the sixth round of coal mine auctions to six states including Odisha, an official statement said Thursday. The amount has been transferred to coal-bearing states of Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha and West Bengal, the Ministry of Coal statement said. "The Ministry of Coal has transferred ₹704 crore upfront amount received from auction of coal mines to these six coal-bearing states. This financial transfer marks a substantial initiative to empower and support developmental growth of these states," it said. The allotted amount of ₹704 crore represents the first instalment of upfront amount for 18 coal mines that were successfully auctioned in the sixth round of auctions and second attempt of the fifth round of commercial coal mine auctions.



POLICING HEALTH: Dignitaries, including twin city Police Commissioner Soumendra Priyadarshi, gastroenterologist Manoj Kumar Sahu and INASL president SP Singh, attend first day of the 31st Annual Scientific Meeting of Indian National Association for Study of Liver organised at a hotel in Bhubaneswar, Thursday

'Rural Industrial Parks will help SHGs become SMEs'

Bhubaneswar: Rural Industrial Parks (RIPs) will provide sustainable sources of income to rural women producers, by helping self-help groups (SHGs) transform into small and medium enterprises (SMEs), said Mission Shakti department commissioner-cum-secretary Sujata R Karthikeyan joining a conference on RIPs organised here for chief development officers (CDOs) of Zilla Parishad and block development officers (BDOs). Karthikeyan further added, "To fulfil the motive and vision of RIPs, Mission Shakti will work in convergence with the PR & DW department and will provide all necessary financial support for capacity building and training of SHG women entrepreneurs to be self-sufficient. This rural park will be a catalyst in converting the SHGs into SME."

Club system for Class X students

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 3: The state government has introduced an aspirational curriculum for Class X students the components of which include book review, project work, information technology (IT) skills and co-curricular activities.

In order to strengthen the student participation in these aspirational areas, a student-led club system is being established in all secondary schools across the state. Student clubs are small learning communities equipping the students to learn, adapt and enhance various

skills and behaviours. Apart from attracting students with similar interests, clubs also encourage a spirit of building skills and healthy competition with collaboration, constantly motivating the students to find specialised areas of interest.

With an aim to nurture the students for future-ready skills, it has been decided to introduce four clubs in secondary schools: Jigyansa - science, nature & culture exploration club, Sahitya Srujan - literary & artistic club, Kaushali - computing (ICT) & social innovation club, and Kridangan - sports and life skill development club.



CLASSIFIED

LOST

Mr. Satya Narayan Dash, S/o. Late Devi Prasad Dash, At/Po/Ps: Bhanjanagar, Bhanjamarga Sahi, Dist-Ganjam, Odisha, Pin-761126, stated that on 15.07.2023, time 10.35 a.m. Morning, while I was marketing at Kullada Bazar. My original Reg. Sale Deed bearing No.2764/2006, dt.04.08.2006 misplaced some where, this document is executed by Smt. Sobhabati Dash in favour of Devi Prasad Dash, if anybody found the above document please contact with our Advocate Sri Arun Kumar Pradhi, Cell No.9437352374.

Swarming animals can help humans make better decisions

The word swarm often carries negative connotations - think biblical plagues of locusts or high streets full of last-minute shoppers during the Christmas rush.

However, swarming is essential for the survival of many animal collectives. And now research into swarming has the potential to change things for humans too.

Bees swarm to make their search for new colonies more effective. Flocks of starlings use dazzling murmurations to evade and confuse predators. These are just two examples from nature but swarming can be seen in almost every corner of the animal kingdom.

Research from mathematicians, biologists and social scientists is helping us understand swarming and harness its power. It's already being used for crowd

control, traffic management and to understand the spread of infectious diseases.

More recently, it's starting to shape how we use data for healthcare, operate drones in military conflicts and has been used to beat near-insurmountable betting odds in sporting events.

A swarm is a system that is greater than the sum of its parts. Just as many neurons form a brain capable of thought, memory and emotion, groups of animals can act in unison to form a "super brain", displaying highly complex behaviour not seen in individual animals.

Artificial life expert Craig Reynolds revolutionised the study of swarming in 1986 with the publication of the Boids model computer simulation. The Boids model breaks down swarming into a simple set of rules.

The Boids (bird-oids) in the



simulation, like avatars or characters in a video game, are instructed to move in the same direction as their neighbours, move towards the average position of their neighbours, and avoid collisions with other boids.

Boids simulations are strikingly accurate when compared with real swarms. The Boids model suggests that swarming does not need leaders to coordinate behaviour - like pedestrians in a town centre rather than a guided museum tour.

The complex behaviour we see in swarms arises from interactions between individuals following the same simple rules in parallel. In the language of physics, this phenomenon is known as emergence.

In 2016, US technology company Unanimous AI used the power of swarm intelligence to win the Kentucky Derby "superfecta" bet, successfully predicting the first, second, third and fourth-placed riders in the famous US horse race.

Industry experts and conventional machine learning algorithms made swathes of incorrect predictions. However, amateur racing enthusiasts recruited by Unanimous AI pooled their knowledge to beat the 541/1 odds. The volunteers' success lay in the way in which their predictions were generated. Instead of voting on riders and aggregating their choices, the volunteers used Unanimous AI's swarm intelligence platform to participate in a real-time digital tug of war, inspired by swarms of birds and bees.

Preliminary studies have shown in healthcare, decentralising data storage into a network of interacting nodes can give institutions the benefit of shared wisdom. This means there isn't a central hub coordinating the flow of information, and institutions can't access the

private patient data of each other. Centralised machine learning uses data uploaded to a shared hub where machine learning takes place using all available data. In decentralised systems, each institution separately stores its data in its own node.

Drone technology is increasingly used in front-line combat. However, as it stands, conventional drone technology requires one-to-one supervision. Current defence research aims to facilitate communication between drones, allowing one controller to operate swarms of drones.

As research delves deeper into swarming, we find a world where collective action creates complexity, adaptability, and efficiency. As technology evolves, the role of swarm intelligence is set to grow, intertwining our world with the fascinating dynamics of swarms.

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Couple sells off newborn for ₹10K

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhograi, August 3: A couple allegedly sold off their two-day old newborn girl child to an unknown person in exchange of ₹10,000 with the help of a hospital attendant, a report said Thursday.

The couple was identified as Manoj Das, a daily wagger and his wife at Taladi village under this block in Balasore district.

Villagers held the couple hostage and convened a meeting at the village after the news surfaced, Wednesday. As per the decision of the village committee, the newborn's grandfather lodged a complaint at the police station against his son and daughter-in-law holding them responsible for the child sale. The complainant demanded return of the newborn girl and sought stringent action against the persons involved in the child sale.

As per sources, Manoj earns his livelihood by working as a daily wagger and doing odd jobs. He and his wife are parents to a four-year-old daughter while his parents live in a decrepit house due to poverty. However, he is yet to get ration from the government or a house under Awas Yojana.

Meanwhile, his wife delivered the baby girl at Jaleswarpur CHC, Monday. Mindful of their poverty, the couple decided to sell off the newborn to an unknown person assisted by an attendant of the CHC. The villagers suspect that the couple has struck a deal of ₹2.5 lakh to sell off the baby. The attendant has gone incommunicado after reports surfaced.

Dr Kamalakant Jena, medical officer of Jaleswarpur CHC said that he is not aware of any child sale in the hospital while as the woman was discharged after delivery.



FLOOD FEAR: An embankment of Kharasrota river caved in after a sluice gate under it sank near Olei Chandanpur panchayat under Binjharpur block in Jajpur district, Thursday. This has sparked flood fear among the residents of riparian villages

No end to drinking water woes in Vyasaganagar area

Mega drinking water project pushed into uncertainty as implementing agency departs

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jajpur, August 3: Fate of a mega drinking water project being built at a cost of ₹70 crore at Vyasaganagar in this district has been pushed into uncertainty after the consultancy agency was removed from the project over delay in implementation and sub-standard work, a report said Thursday.

The project was implemented five years back under Urban Infrastructure Development for Small and Medium Town (UIDSMT) scheme. Residents alleged it has happened due to apathetic attitude of the WATCO authorities and irregularities committed by agency in connivance with some officials.

The project was implemented with aim to provide sufficient drinking water to residents of Vyasaganagar (Jajpur Road) town in the district.

Accordingly, the second mega drinking water project was launched from July 2021 with funds available from Odisha Mineral Bearing Areas Development Corporation (OMBADC).

The deadline for completion of the project was August, 2023 but the hope of the residents of getting clean tap drinking water by this time has been shattered.

The contract to implement the project was awarded to an Ahmedabad based consultancy agency Surgeon Infracon Private Ltd. However, the agency was removed and the tender awarding the contract was cancelled from implementing the project due to delay in implementation and sub-standard work.

The agency moved the court against its dismissal from the project but it failed in its bid, General Manager Debarabrat Mohanty of Water Corporation of Odisha (WATCO) said.

The WATCO has now floated a fresh tender and decided to divide the project works among



six consultancy agencies instead of awarding the contract to a single agency.

The state Housing and Urban Development department had initially prepared a plan outlay of ₹45.12 crore funds for which will be provided by OMBADC. Accordingly, the CEO of OMBADC was urged to sanction the funds in 2019.

Later, due to cost escalation the plan outlay was revised and increased to ₹70 crore. The above mentioned consultancy agency started construction of the second pump house and treatment plant. However, the project has failed to make any headway even four years after approval of the project.

Meanwhile, the agency out of the estimated 90 km has only laid pipelines for only 40 km. They have only done 14 per cent of the works for the project. Residents and observers have alleged large scale irregularities in the implementation of projects.

It is alleged that the agency has laid the pipelines by digging up small pits instead of big pits. The compound wall of the project near the old treatment plant has developed cracks only a year after its construction.

Moreover, the agency is alleged to have not dug up deep the pit as foundations to build the wall and done sub-standard works by using 10mm iron rods.

It is alleged that due to sub-standard works the wall may collapse any time soon while the water tank constructed for the treatment plant is also of sub-standard quality.

Observers claimed that with controversy plaguing the project the new agency which will take up the project will have tread a cautious path and make correction to the wrongdoings committed by the previous agency.

Notably, the management of drinking water supply was earlier vested with Public Health Engineering Organisation (PHEO) but was withdrawn from it and handed over to WATCO two years back.

The existing drinking water project has failed to meet the needs of the residents with very little water being supplied through the taps.

Huge funds sanctioned for maintenance of the project is not being properly used and allegedly siphoned off for which residents of

Kanheipur, Chandmaa, Kachahudisahi, Dahisahi, Rampas, Satakania, Sobara, Digisahi and Dhabalagiri areas under 26 wards of Vyasaganagar are suffering from water scarcity.

Efforts to contact manager HK Das of the sacked agency failed to yield any result and he did not pick up the call of this correspondent.

FRESH LANDSLIDE HITS JUDIA GHAT

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, August 3: Vehicular traffic was severely hit along Judia ghat on National Highway-49 in Keonjhar district after two large rocks rolled down the hill and blocked the highway Thursday following incessant rainfall over the last few days.

However, no casualty was reported as no vehicle was passing on the route during the period. Reports said that the rocks weighed at least 10 tonne each. After the landslide, plying of vehicles on the left lane of the ghat road was disrupted for a few hours. On being informed, officials rushed to the spot and removed the rocks to the roadside following which traffic resumed on the ghat road.

Locals alleged that landslides are a frequent occurrence during rainy season but the administration is yet to find a permanent solution to the lingering problem. Moreover, the administration is so indifferent that it



has not even put up an information plaque warning commuters to remain cautious of landslides while travelling by the route.

They claimed that thousands of vehicles moving on the highway climb the ghat road during their travel where the landslide has taken place.

The heavy vehicles adopt a uniform speed while climbing the highway. The ghat road on the

highway connecting Kolkata with Mumbai is daily taken by thousands of heavy vehicles such as cargo laden trucks, trailers and passenger buses, they said.

Locals apprehended severe loss of lives and properties as the possibility of a major mishap cannot be ruled out if landslide occurs at any point of time on the highway.

The administration has covered the bottom of the hill with

a barbed net to prevent landslide but these nets have failed to be of any use after they were destroyed within a few days of their installation.

Locals demanded to increase the height of the concrete guard wall and further strengthen it so that the rocks rolling down the hill will hit the wall and stop at the site. Notably, the hill was cut off to make way for the expansion of the highway.

SUNDARGARH GOVT COLLEGE WELCOMES FRESH STUDENTS

Rourkela: Welcoming the new students of Plus II streams a 'Know Your College' ceremony was held at the Sundargarh Government College, one of the leading colleges in the state, with over 4,000 students reading in different streams up to post-graduation. Principal Lalit Ranjan Sahu addressed the students urging them to adhere to the principles of a student's life. "Where you are today as a student is one of the most important crossroads of your life. From here you are going to take a decision regarding your future, especially your career. And in my opinion, at this stage, you cannot be negligent towards your studies. Your teachers are always there to guide you. Listen to them. Consult with them and you will definitely benefit," advised the principal to the new students. The students were informed about the new NEP-20. Along with that, they were also introduced to some of the practices, rules and regulations of the college, like the examination system, hostel, its facilities and disciplines.

BPUT, OTR sign MoU

Rourkela: The Biju Patnaik University of Technology (BPUT) here has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Odisha University of Technology and Research, Bhubaneswar for establishing an e-evaluation centre at OTR, Bhubaneswar. Both the Vice Chancellors, Amiya Kumar Rath of BPUT and BB Biswal of OTR, Bhubaneswar exchanged the MoU document in presence of senior officials and faculties of both the universities. BPUT, Rourkela is a state government affiliating technical university that is looking after the technical and professional education of Odisha. BPUT VC Rath explained the need for the e-evaluation centre. "In order to maintain the non-negotiable academic calendar and to publish the results of the students in time, this centre will be very useful and prove beneficial to all," said Rath. OTR VC BB Biswal extended all support and said, "This will be very helpful in providing quality service for technical education in Odisha. In the future, authorities of both varsities will remain committed to providing the best services to the people of Odisha under the ambit of SD&TE department, Government of Odisha."

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.2627, Date: 2.8.2023
2nd Corrigendum to this office BID IDENTIFICATION NO. EEPTNG-online-02/2023-24 Invited Vide this office Letter No.2511 Dtd. 20.07.2023

No.O-527:In pursuance to this office BID IDENTIFICATION NO. EEPTNG-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.
The name of the work in SI No. 2 may be read as "Repair & Renovation of R.I. Office, Ghasian" for the year 2023-24 instead of "Repair & Renovation of Tahasil Office, Ghasian" for the year 2023-24.
All other terms and condition remain unaltered.

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R.W.Division, Patnagarh

OIPR-25154/11/0005/2324

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(NO. CWC/RO-PAT/ENGG/23-24/13)

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Sl.	Name of Work	Estimated Cost (Rs. Lakh)	Last date of on-line submission
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Detailed Tender Notice along with Conditions of Contract and Notice Inviting E-Tender may be seen and downloaded from the CWC's website www.cewacor.nic.in or e-tender website www.cwcpocprocure.com or CPP Portal <http://eprocure.gov.in/epublish/app>.
Further Corrigendum/Addendum to this Tender, if any, will be published on above websites only. Press advertisement in Newspapers shall not be issued for the same.
Executive Engineer

Road Romeos rile freshers in Rourkela

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, August 3: The first day of college, for the girl students, at some of the leading colleges here has not been something to write home about. They were not complaining about ragging. It was rather the presence of the roadside Romeos in front of the colleges and their behaviour that irritated these girls.

The college has just opened for the Plus II students. And for the girls, the very first day was not really pleasant. "What are they doing in front of our college? It is not their area, because this is a women's college," said a girl student of a leading women's college here.

"What we faced while entering and coming out of the college was unbearable. It was even worse than ragging," said a girl fresher of a college in the sector area.



Another girl said, "For these boys, who come in fancy bikes and never look like they belong to any college, the best place to show off their biking stunts is in front of our college."

What really irked the girls is

eve-teasing. "Passing comments is an alien culture in Rourkela. We have never seen this in Rourkela. Even from our parents, we have heard that in Rourkela there is no place for eve-teasing. Although it is not rampant, still why will

they pass comment at us?" said the girls with their discomfort very much visible.

"The road Romeos are quite clever. They do not stand exactly in front of the college. They just stand some 200 metres away from the college and do their antics. They are scared of police. If they see the patrolling van coming, they will just disperse to come back again after a while," said a girl.

The two leading women's colleges of the city are the cases in this point. "A little more frequent police presence near the college and the bus stops will definitely help," said the girl.

When this was brought to the notice of the Rourkela SP Mitrabhanu Mohapatra, he said, "I have not received any complaint so far. But, definitely, I have taken note of this and will do the needful."

Nominated Authority
Ministry of Coal, Government of India
Room No.120, 'F' Wing, 1st Floor, Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi- 110001 (Ph.:23384106)
Email: nomauthority.moc@nic.in, Website: <http://www.coal.nic.in/welcome.html>
NOTICE FOR SUBMISSION OF CLAIMS IN RELATION TO SCHEDULE I COAL MINES

In accordance with the provisions of Section 9 of The Coal Mines (Special Provisions) Act, 2015 and Rule 15 of The Coal Mines (Special Provisions) Rules, 2014, claims are invited afresh from the Secured Creditors, Central Government, State Government and local authorities for dues from the prior allottee in relation to the Schedule I Coal Mines as on 01.04.2015 (in respect of Schedule-II coal mines) and 24.09.2014 (for remaining Schedule-I coal mines) and having become due and payable within twelve months immediately before that date.

Detailed notice regarding submission of claims can be downloaded from the website of Ministry of Coal (<http://www.coal.nic.in>).

Last date and time for submission of claims is 5.00 P.M. of 4.9.2023
Claims lodged by Secured Creditors, Central Government, State Government & Local Authorities against earlier advertisements in respect of Schedule I coal mines are also required to be lodged afresh. For any query/clarification kindly contact the Nominated Authority at contact details mentioned above in the Advertisement.

cbc 04107/12/0003/2324

FOCUS CLIMATE CHANGE

A WAKE-UP CALL



Over the last 10 years, more than 4,00,000 people have died from extreme climate and weather-related disasters

An extreme and prolonged heatwave is currently sweeping across the whole world starting from Japan in the east to the USA and Canada in the west encompassing Southern Europe, and North Africa breaking all previous temperature records. The heatwave has brought widespread temperatures above 100 degrees Fahrenheit (380C) in the Mediterranean region over the beginning three weeks of July promising to be the hottest summer on record. Temperatures soared up to 104 degrees Fahrenheit (400C) in parts of Spain, France, Italy, Greece and Bosnia. The hottest temperature ever recorded in Europe was 48.80C near the ancient city of Syracuse on the coast of Sicily in August 2021. The heat is forecast to intensify further, according to the World Meteorological Organisation.

In the far-east, authorities in Japan issued heatstroke alerts for tens of millions of people in 20 of its 47 prefectures. The US National Weather Service has warned that a widespread and oppressive heatwave from Southern and Western states encompassing Florida to California to Washington is expected to ravage as wildfires continue to rage in southern California. The Death Valley of Arizona desert (one of the hottest places on Earth) in the USA recorded a temperature as high as 540C a few days ago. China also recorded its highest-ever temperature with a remote township in its western Xinjiang boiling at 52.20C. The heatwave is also on a rampage in Spain with temperatures predicted to reach 440C in the Guadalquivir Valley near Seville. This has sparked wildfires in the country including in the Canary island where dozens of firefighters are battling to control the flame. There have been frequent power cuts in some in parts of Europe due to the surging demand for air conditioners. The foreign office of Britain has issued extreme weather advisories to its citizens traveling to Italy, Greece and Spain with advice to stay indoors during the daytime. The heatwave has triggered evacuations of nearly 20,000 people from several towns near large wildfires around Athens in southern Greece and the Spanish island of La Palma where wildfires have affected their homes and hotels. Several people have died in the recent heatwave including two air force pilots in Italy engaged in firefighting.

Over the last 10 years, more than 4,00,000 people have died from extreme climate and weather-related disasters, according to the International Federation of the Red Cross Crescent (IFRC) World Disaster Report. According to another report, the global average temperature for the first three weeks of July reached 16.950C which is more than the 2019 record for the same period of 16.630C. According to the World

Meteorological Organization, this year's July started with the hottest week on record. This is believed to be due to a combination of climate change and El Nino effects, an annual weather phenomenon that warms the waters of the tropical Pacific Ocean. But the latest highs have been made worse by the formation of two anticyclones (namely Cerberus and Charons) which are high-pressure systems held in place in the jet stream, a narrow rapidly moving flow of air in the upper atmosphere funneling heat up from the deserts of Africa and across the southern Europe.

However, there is no denying the fact that these extreme weather events are the direct consequences of a human-induced climate change process. If the present trend continues, it will be unlikely to restrict the global rise of temperature below the 1.50C limit by the end of the century as compared to the Industrial Revolution times in accordance with the Paris Agreement of 2015. If this ever happens, the entire Arctic ice would melt and flow as water into the world's seas submerg-

ing and inundating many of the coastal cities and islands. India having a long coastline of nearly 7000 km, major cities including Mumbai, Chennai and Vishakhapatnam are under threat of being submerged below 3ft deep water.

Amid this global turbulence of weather patterns, the US special presidential envoy for climate, John Kerry, met his Chinese counterpart, Xie Zhenhua, in Beijing recently to discuss some of the climate change mitigation measures especially to cut down China's growing methane emission (a potential greenhouse gas) and its ever spiraling consumption of coal. Both countries are by far the largest emitters of greenhouse gases accounting for nearly half of the world's carbon footprint. China is also the world's biggest producer and consumer of coal-generated electricity, a major source of emissions for global warming. The country has promised to hit its peak carbon emissions by 2030 and become carbon neutral by 2060. China is also the largest producer of renewable power from solar and wind sources, and Kerry praised Beijing's "incredible job" building up capacity in moving towards a carbon-free world.

The recent torrential rains and flooding in India, flash floods in South Korea and the prolonged dry and drought periods in Africa are tell-tale stories. Climate change has affected the lives and livelihoods of people all over the world and the recent events are a wake-up call for us to act. Under the circumstances, humanity has no alternative but to embrace a nature-friendly lifestyle for a green and sustainable future.

The writer is Education Officer, Regional Science Centre, Bhopal.



Nikunja Bihari Sahu

THERE IS NO DENYING THAT EXTREME WEATHER EVENTS ARE THE DIRECT CONSEQUENCES OF A HUMAN-INDUCED CLIMATE CHANGE PROCESS



Ian Buruma

We shall see whether enough people can be persuaded to vote for an often faltering 81-year-old to stave off the disaster of a candidate who longs to return to the White House to avoid going to jail

For the Love of Trump

It shouldn't make sense. Donald Trump has just been indicted on four criminal charges, including defrauding the United States and conspiring to deprive Americans of their voting rights. Trump also faces 40 charges, including violations of the Espionage Act, in a Florida federal court and 34 felony counts in New York related to hushing up a sex scandal. Despite it all, Trump's position as frontrunner to be the next Republican candidate for the presidency appears unassailable. According to one recent poll, he is 37 percentage points ahead of his closest rival, Ron DeSantis, the governor of Florida.

That the former president might end up in prison doesn't seem to bother his supporters at all. Zero per cent of his hardcore supporters think he has done anything wrong, which is odd. Odder still is that 43% of Republicans apparently think "very favourably" of him.

DeSantis, who admittedly seems so uncomfortable in his own skin that he makes other people feel uncomfortable watching him, is failing to outflank Trump on the right. But Chris Christie, a slightly more appealing politician (now polling at 2%), has had even less success by projecting a more moderate image.

What explains the tenacity of Trump's support? The force of his arguments is unlikely to be the key, because he makes few coherent arguments. It is rarely clear what he thinks, or whether his thoughts amount to anything much at all. He is indifferent to or even contemptuous of facts. But the more he lies, the more his supporters seem to like him, as though his avalanche of falsehoods has numbed their ability to perceive truth.

No doubt, the radical shifts in how people receive their information have something to do with this. Many people, not just Trump supporters, find a snug spot inside a bubble of internet-driven misinformation, boosted by hucksters posing as journalists on Fox News and other, even zanier outlets.

The Trumpist bubble is deeply mired in pessimism. Some 89% of the GOP think the US is in steep decline, even though the economy under President Joe Biden has been remarkably resilient. Members of Trump's base even talk of an impending national catastrophe, caused by sinister elites, malevolent immigrants, and a wicked international cabal of financiers pulling the world's strings. Trump has been a master at manipulating these conspiratorial anxieties, which can provoke vengeful violence as easily as ecstatic adulation of the self-professed savior. There are several reasons for popular anxiety. Many American industrial workers feel left behind in a global economy where cheaper labor is sought overseas. And an array of social and demographic changes - more non-white citizens, less religious authority, challenges to deep-seated gender norms and sexual and racial hierarchies - have left people bewildered, and in their own eyes, dispossessed. They worship the leader who promises to "give them their country back."

The most successful - and most alarming - of Trump's demagogic gambits is to present his own legal troubles as an attack on all his followers. His campaign compared the latest indictments to persecution in Stalin's Soviet Union and Nazi Germany. After his federal indictment in June, he told them: "In the end, they're not coming after me. They're coming after you - and I'm just standing in their way."

History never repeats itself exactly, and loose comparisons with other times and places are always dangerous. But some aspects of the past can still help us to understand the present better.

In her book *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, Hannah Arendt made a point that remains valid: deliberate lying is the first step towards tyranny. In her words: "Before they seize power and establish a world according to their doctrines, totalitarian movements conjure up a lying world of consistency ... in which, through sheer imagination, uprooted masses can feel at home and are spared the never-ending shocks which real life and real experiences deal to human beings and their expectations."

The German historian Joachim Fest said much the same about the "liturgical magic" of National Socialism. It was a magic, he argued, that returned to the people "their lost sense of belonging together and their feeling of collective camaraderie."

Even more to the point today is a remark made in 1932 by the liberal politician Theodor Heuss, when the Nazis were about to destroy German democracy. He spoke of the Nazis' "fantastic propagandistic achievement, that practiced interplay that embraces both the hero and the saint at once, alternating between the great victorious man at one moment, the martyr and his persecuted innocence in the next."

The US today is not Germany's doomed Weimar Republic. There have been disastrous wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, but there is no equivalent to the Versailles Treaty punishing the Germans after World War I. There is no economic depression remotely comparable to the 1930s.

What is perhaps most important is that Trump, despite his success in stacking the Supreme Court with religious radicals, has not captured most of the elites, as Hitler did. Some young white men now feel drawn to the far right, but Trump has nothing like the support of students that the Nazis had.

If the Republican Party nominates Trump as its presidential candidate, he will probably find it harder to beat the likely Democratic candidate, Biden, than swatting away his Republican rivals. But we shall see whether enough people can be persuaded to vote for an often faltering 81-year-old to stave off the disaster of a candidate who longs to return to the White House to avoid going to jail.

The writer is the author, most recently, of *The Collaborators: Three Stories of Deception and Survival in World War II*.

PROJECT SYNDICATE

WISDOM CORNER

- If we're growing, we're always going to be out of our comfort zone.** JOHN C. MAXWELL
- We are all here for some special reason. Stop being a prisoner of your past. Become the architect of your future.** ROBIN S. SHARMA
- The difference between a successful person and others is not a lack of strength, not a lack of knowledge, but rather a lack in will.** VINCE LOMBARDI

LOL

LOOKING FOR TROUBLE

Mr. and Mrs. Brown had two sons. One was named Mind Your Own Business & the other was named Trouble. One day the two boys decided to play hide and seek. Trouble hid while Mind Your Own Business counted to one hundred. Mind Your Own Business began looking for his

brother behind garbage cans and bushes. Then he started looking in and under cars until a police man approached him and asked, "What are you doing?" "Playing a game," the boy replied. "What is your name?" the officer questioned. "Mind Your Own Business." Furious the policeman inquired, "Are you looking for trouble??" The boy replied, "Why, yes."

SPECTRUM SOCIETY

Need to revisit our ethos

The decisive role violence played in the ordering of the Third World, including India, cannot be ignored or consigned to the past. Earlier there was need for a more systematic and determined attention to the connections between the devastation unleashed by colonialism, imperialism, and other forms of large-scale violence in post-Independence period. The nature of violence started changing and in the last few decades, it took the form of exploitation of one section against the other, for material benefits, for political, social or economic gains and the likes. Manipur crisis can be said to be a case in point.

There is a re-emergence of violence in different forms and in India alienation and impoverishment as also the wrong motivations of political leaders have aggravated it. There is evidence of the lower segments of society, especially lower castes, Dalits, tribals, women and minorities, being victimised due to social injustice, various forms of exploitation, resulting in the practice of violence in daily life.

Analysing the present tendencies leading to violence, it may be seen that greed and the desire to continually acquire more, takes over from being existential to one that is aspirational and violence becomes a natural tool. The increasing violence

justifies the fact that jealousy and hatred have been increasing and that governance has failed while spread of education and awareness hasn't had the desired effect. As reaffirmed by sociologists, violence can be linked to spread of materialism and adoption of different lifestyles by the privileged sections that are incompatible with traditional Indian ethos and culture while at the same time the ruling dispensation at the Centre and in states have failed to act independently and judiciously to counter such activities. Such violence, whether political, social, gender, ethnic or communal, is greatly injurious to society and affects the poorer and marginalised sections. In less educated countries like India, violence against women and girls continues. Analysts have attributed this to patriarchy, which the rightist forces believe in and want its continuance, amid the talk of women empowerment.

The perpetrators of violence reach out to their version of the past and actors from a bygone era to substantiate their position. In their case, the same incidents of past violence are inspirations or triggers for retribution in the present. Sadly institutions, procedures and agents that are supposed to protect citizens, such as tribunals, committees and courts, are compromised. All govern-

ments are arbitrary and such exercise of power must be kept in check in a democracy. When the capacity of civil society organisations to mount protest against violence is neutralised by state power, and when institutions and laws that possess the capacity to protect citizens are subordinated to problematic ideologies, the rights of citizens are violated with a degree of impunity, often by the police, by mobs dispensing vigilante justice. And the state remains a silent spectator.

Take the case of the recent violence persisting in Manipur. Over 550 citizens' groups, academics and lawyers attributed the violence to divisive politics by BJP, a party they accuse of exacerbating age-old ethnic tensions between communities for political gains. The top leadership is silent on this grave crisis as it considers violence to be a part of political system.

The control of the system is so fragile that even the house of a Union Minister couldn't be protected. This is because the political dispensation has allowed violence to rule society. Also, violence is countered with state violence; not through discourses about the relevance and need for peace for a healthy civil society. In fact, some sociologists question, and quite rightly - are we really in a civil society? Current trends are obviously

not in this direction.

Both Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr. showed that nonviolence could be the basis for collective response to achieve social or political goals. Both spoke extensively on the need to imbibe nonviolence at an individual level, in thought and in action. This is best achieved through early education within the family first, and then the school and finally society at large. This education must become the central objective in our society, as all subsequent behaviour or action by individuals would be influenced by it.

Awareness of the need to accept another opinion or action contrary to one's own is the foundation for nonviolent behaviour. Tolerance at an individual level is a virtue that encourages healthy thought and debate, while tolerance when practiced collectively results in a proactive society rather than one that is at conflict with itself. In such a scenario, violent behaviour becomes unnecessary. If India has to continue its transition into a healthy and prosperous new-age society, we need to revisit the basic concepts of tolerance, acceptance, introspection and deliverance, all of which have been at the core of our spiritual and ethical thought, as we progressed through time. Sooner the better.

INF A



Dhurjati Mukherjee

IF INDIA HAS TO CONTINUE ITS TRANSITION INTO A HEALTHY AND PROSPEROUS NEW-AGE SOCIETY, WE NEED TO REVISIT THE BASIC CONCEPTS OF TOLERANCE, ACCEPTANCE, INTROSPECTION AND DELIVERANCE

Sage advice

Sir, Indian batting legend Sunil Gavaskar has an opinion on everything related to Indian cricket. His views are held in high esteem though one feels he gets carried away, at times. Recently, Gavaskar lambasted the Indian selectors for their myopic approach towards the just concluded Test series against the West Indies. Heavy scores from the bats of the likes of Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli meant little for the Indian cricket, according to the 'little master'. A young, new-look Indian squad could have been sent to the Caribbean as this could have provided fresh talents a huge exposure. True, the West Indies team is a pale shadow of what it once was. But it has to be noted that India failed miserably in the WTC finals where its big guns flopped. Top batsmen badly needed runs under their belt to boost their confidence when the 50-over World Cup cricket is a few months away.

Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA

Viral infection

Sir, Most of the states in India are reporting a surge in conjunctivitis cases in both eye and children's hospitals. Although conjunctivitis affects all age groups, school-going children are at a higher risk due to potential transmission in classrooms and playgrounds. The prevailing weather conditions, characterised by heavy rainfall and high humidity, have created a favorable environment for the adenovirus responsible for viral conjunctivitis to multiply and spread rapidly. Unfortunately, misinformation about the mode of transmission has led to misconceptions. It is crucial to clarify that conjunctivitis is not transmitted by merely looking into the eye of an infected person. Instead, direct contact with the virus through contaminated hands or objects is the primary means of spread. To control the spread of this highly contagious viral infection, experts recommend following COVID-19 precautions such as social distancing, hand hygiene, and avoiding crowds. The adenovirus, responsible for viral conjunctivitis, thrives in the current rainy environment, making precautionary measures crucial. Conjunctivitis, characterised by eye redness, irritation, and blurred vision, spreads through contact with infected individuals or contaminated objects. Avoid sharing personal items like towels and eye drops, and refrain from using medication without an eye specialist's prescription.

Krishna Kumar Vepakomma, HYDERABAD

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

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CASTE SURVEY Petition filed in SC against Patna HC order



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 3: A petition has been filed in the Supreme Court challenging the Patna High Court order upholding the validity of a caste survey in Bihar, contending the notification issued by the state government for the exercise is against the constitutional mandate. The plea filed by Nalanda resident Akhilesh Kumar submitted that in terms of the constitutional mandate, only the Union government is empowered to conduct a census. "In the present case, the State of Bihar has sought to usurp the powers of Union of India, by merely publishing a notification in the official gazette. "It is submitted that the Notification dated June 6, 2022 is against the Constitutional mandate of distribution of powers between the State and the Union legislature as enshrined under Article 246 of the Constitution read with Schedule VIIth of the Constitution and ultravires the Census Act, 1948 read with Census Rules, 1990 and is therefore void ab initio (since beginning)," the plea, filed through advocate Barun Kumar Sinha, said. The plea submitted the entire exercise of conducting a "census"

THE PLEA FILED BY NALANDA RESIDENT AKHILESH KUMAR SUBMITTED THAT IN TERMS OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL MANDATE, ONLY THE UNION GOVERNMENT IS EMPOWERED TO CONDUCT A CENSUS

THE PLEA SUBMITTED THE ENTIRE EXERCISE OF CONDUCTING A "CENSUS" BY THE STATE OF BIHAR IS WITHOUT AUTHORITY AND LEGISLATIVE COMPETENCE AND RECKS OF MALAFIDE

by the State of Bihar is without authority and legislative competence, and reeks of malafide. "The short question of constitutional importance that arises in the present petition is whether the Notification dated June 6, 2022 published by the State of Bihar based on decision of Bihar Cabinet dated June 2nd, 2022, to conduct Caste based Survey from its own resources and the consequent appointment of District Magistrate to supervise the same, is within the Constitutional mandate of separation of power between the State and Union," the plea said. Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar has often insisted the state is not conducting a caste census but only collecting in-

formation related to people's economic status and their caste so specific steps could be taken by the government to serve them better. In a shot in the arm for the Nitish Kumar government, the Patna High Court had on Tuesday upheld the caste survey ordered by it as "perfectly valid" and "initiated with due competence". The high court passed the order rejecting a bunch of petitions challenging the survey, which was ordered last year and began earlier this year. The bench, which had reserved its judgement on July 7, said in its 101-page verdict, "We find the action of the state to be perfectly valid, initiated with due competence, with the legitimate aim of providing development with justice."

The judgement began with the note: "The action of the state in carrying out a caste survey... And the vigorous challenge raised to it on multiple grounds... Reveal that despite attempts to efface it from the social fabric, caste remains a reality, and refuses to be swept aside, wished away or brushed aside nor does it wither away or disperse into thin air."

A day after the Patna High Court held the caste survey in Bihar as "valid" and "legal", the state government on Wednesday swung into action and suspended all ongoing training programmes for teachers so they can be engaged for early completion of the exercise. The first phase of the exercise was completed on January 21. Around 15,000 officials, including enumerators and observers, had been assigned various responsibilities for the door-to-door survey. The state government will spend Rs 500 crore from its contingency fund for the exercise.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, August 3: West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee Thursday asserted that the opposition bloc INDIA will save the country from disaster, communal tension and unemployment after winning the 2024 Lok Sabha elections. Banerjee, the Trinamool Congress supremo, also alleged that there is evidence that the BJP is trying to hack the electronic voting machines (EVMs) in its attempt to win elections. "INDIA will win the 2024 election and form the government. It will save the country from disaster, communal tension and unemployment," she told reporters at the state secretariat here, while inaugurating a number of development projects. "They (BJP) have already



started planning (on how to win the general elections). They are trying to hack electronic voting machines, we have heard about it and have some evidence and are attempting to get more," Banerjee said.

She said the coalition formed to take on the BJP in the 2024 Parliamentary elections would hold a discussion on this in its next meeting. The BJP-led NDA has no value, while INDIA's existence is all

INDIA will win the 2024 election and form the government. It will save the country from disaster, communal tension and unemployment

MAMATA BANERJEE | WEST BENGAL CM

over the country, the TMC supremo claimed. Reacting to the allegations, senior BJP leader Rahul Sinha said, "The whole country has seen who hacks elections. They will always make such complaints. They (TMC) didn't complain about EVM hacking when they won in 2021." Among the projects inaugurated, Banerjee virtually opened a new bridge built over the Dwarka river at Rangam in Murshidabad district. The 2-lane 105 meters long bridge will link Berhampore with Kandi.

SriLankan Airlines may resume Kolkata flights

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, August 3: SriLankan Airlines which used to run direct flights between Kolkata and Colombo before the COVID-19 pandemic is likely to resume its operations in the city following the availability of aircraft, a company official said. The national carrier of Sri Lanka is currently concentrating on those passengers from this region who will travel to the island country's capital via other cities in India, its regional manager V Ravindran said. "Kolkata will be considered once there is availability of aircraft. As of now, we cannot give you a timeline on when the airline will resume operations from Kolkata," Ravindran said.

He also said that the demand for a direct connection will also be taken into consideration while deciding on resuming services from Kolkata, where the airline started its operations in 2017. The airline used to operate three flights a week between Kolkata and Colombo before the COVID pandemic.

Bengal to ban keeping of birds at home

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, August 3: The West Bengal Forest department will soon issue a notification to ban the keeping of birds of Indian species at homes, minister Jyotipriyo Mallick said. Mallick said that no Indian birds like parrots, cockatoo, munia, etc will be allowed to be kept in cages at home.

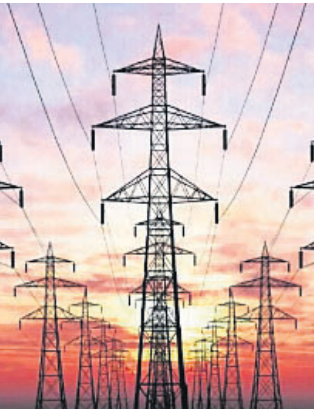
Birds of exotic species like Macaws can, however, be kept with a license from the forest department after getting necessary clearance judging all factors and on payment of Rs 15,000 as a license fee, the minister said. Exhibition of the exotic birds will not be allowed in public places, he added. "We have already framed a draft in this regard, but the necessary legislation will be effective by the end of this month," he said. To a question, about the sale of caged birds in weekly 'haats' in some parts of the state including Kolkata, Mallick said "The forest department will check whenever complaints are received and take



necessary action." To another question, Mallick said six African lions will be brought to the Mini Zoo at New Town, the eastern satellite township apart from six tigers to have a carnivore section of the sprawling zoo.

The Mini Zoo at New Town which is spread over 12.5 acres area will get another 2.4 acres, he said. The Forest minister said a snake enclosure will also be set up in the mini zoo which is having a harinayala (deer enclosure) at present.

Bihar govt mulls new scheme for discoms



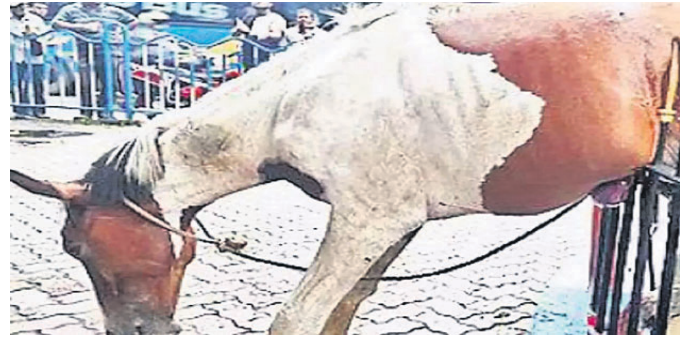
INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Patna, August 3: The Bihar government is preparing to end various charging slabs for power consumers in the state, sources have said. The idea is to bring one tariff for urban areas and one tariff for the rural areas. A bill is expected

to be filed before the Bihar Electricity Regulatory Commission (BERC) in November in this regard. After the approval of BERC, the Bihar government will ask the discoms to take charge under one tariff. The different slabs for the urban and rural areas will be ended. It is expected to be implemented from April 2024. At present, rural areas have Rs 60 per one unit charge under the slab of 0 to 50. After that the charge is Rs 3 per unit for 51 units onwards in the rural areas. In urban areas, Rs 4.36 per unit is the charge from 0 to 100 and if consumers use more electricity, they have to pay as per various slab rates.

Once the BERC approves the new bill, all the different slabs will be ended. In that case, the discoms will fix one charge per unit in rural and urban areas.

PETA INDIA LODGES FIR



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kolkata, August 3: The People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) India has registered an FIR on the incidence of a two-year-old horse becoming impaled on a fence at the Kolkata Maidan.

In the FIR, the animal rights organisation said the horse sustained a large wound on his stomach, which led to the intestines to spill out. "The FIR was filed according to Indian Penal Code sections

289 (for negligent conduct with an animal causing risk to human life, as the horse posed a risk to pedestrians and vehicular traffic) and 429 (for the maiming of an animal, in this case through neglect) and the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960," said PETA-India's deputy director of advocacy projects Harshil Maheshwari.

In the FIR, the group also alleged that although the matter of cruelty was brought to the notice of the state animal resource development department

and the latter's assistance was sought in getting the horse treated, no veterinarian came to treat the horse on site. Accordingly, the horse was loaded onto a truck and transported to a veterinary hospital, which is about 10 km away from the site of the incident, without being given any sedatives, worsening his condition and causing him to endure extreme suffering.

The PETA India official further claimed that the veterinary hospital had no surgical instruments, suture materials, anaesthetic or painkillers and was ill-equipped to handle the injured animal. "How many horses and commuters have to become injured or die before horse-drawn carriages are finally replaced by modern mechanical carriages? PETA India hears from kind locals and tourists alike who are upset by the poor condition of these horses," Maheshwari added.

2024 LOK SABHA POLLS

Nitish will fail if he contests from UP: BJP

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Patna, August 3: After JD(U) leaders from Uttar Pradesh suggested that Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar should contest 2024 Lok Sabha election from Phulpur constituency, the BJP Thursday said that he has failed in his home state and will not succeed in Uttar Pradesh also. Cabinet minister of Bihar government and JD(U)'s in-charge of Uttar Pradesh, Sharwan Kumar said that some party leaders from UP were wishing that Nitish Kumar contest Lok Sabha polls from Phulpur.

Besides Phulpur, the JD(U) leaders also suggested that Kumar should contest from Ambedkar Nagar, Pratapgarh or Fatehpur Lok Sabha constituencies as well. Sharwan Kumar, however, also said that Nitish Kumar himself has rebuffed this suggestion. "The news coming into public domain that Nitish Kumar may contest Lok Sabha poll from Uttar Pradesh is absolutely false. Party has not decided yet and there is no preparation for Nitish Kumar to contest election from Uttar Pradesh. Some JD(U) leaders of Uttar Pradesh demanded that Nitish Kumar contest election from Phulpur, Ambedkarnagar, Pratapgarh or Fatehpur," Sharwan Kumar said. Meanwhile, BJP leaders sharply reacted to this. Arvind Kumar Singh, the senior leader of JD(U) said: "Nitish Kumar can either contest from Bihar or any other part of Uttar Pradesh, in any case he will not win the election. I challenge him that he will not obtain even 11 votes from Phulpur. He is dreaming about going to Delhi through Uttar Pradesh and this will not work for him. He will fail miserably."

"Nitish Kumar Ji is sitting in the lap of Lalu Prasad Yadav in Bihar and if he contests the elec-



Cabinet minister of Bihar government and JD(U)'s in-charge of Uttar Pradesh, Sharwan Kumar said that some party leaders from UP were wishing that Nitish Kumar contest Lok Sabha polls from Phulpur

Besides Phulpur, the JD(U) leaders also suggested that Kumar should contest from Ambedkar Nagar, Pratapgarh or Fatehpur Lok Sabha constituencies as well

tion from Uttar Pradesh, he will sit in the lap of Akhilesh Yadav. In both the cases, BJP would not get affected. Nitish Kumar always does dependence politics. In Bihar, he is dependent on the RJD and he is trying to reach Delhi via UP with the help of Akhilesh Yadav," said Nikhil Anand, BJP national general secretary of OBC wing and state spokesperson. Phulpur seat has 19.75 lakh total voters and around 4 lakh voters belong to Kurmi caste. If Nitish Kumar wants to contest from Phulpur, the Kurmi voters may polarize in favour of him. Phulpur is a place where Jawaharlal Nehru, Lal Bahadur Shastri and V.P. Singh contested elections.

Durga Puja to be BJP's major PR medium this year

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kolkata, August 3: The Durga Puja festival in October is going to be a major public relations (PR) medium for the BJP's West Bengal unit, as the district leaderships of the party has been asked to organise at least one puja or be the principal organisers in a community at every district of the state. Till now, the ruling Trinamool Congress has virtually monopolised their supremacy as principal organisers of the community pujas in the state. Only on rare occasions, Congress leaders are seen as principal organisers.

For the BJP, except their councillor from Kolkata Sajal Ghosh, none of their leaders are seen as lead faces in such matters. The CPI(M), whose leaders stay away from being associated with annual religious events or com-



munity pujas, use the opportunity to push Marxist literature by setting up book stalls near popular pandals. However, in the backdrop of the 2024 Lok Sabha polls, the BJP state committee has decided

to make the participation of their leadership in community pujas in a major way. Instructions have already been sent from the state committee to different district presidents to start preparations.

This year, Durga Puja will be held from October 20 to 24. Until last year, just one puja was organised in the outskirts of Kolkata under the direct supervision of the BJP state committee. But this year, the saffron

camp wants to expand its gambit in the wake of the upcoming general elections, a state committee member said. He admitted that the ruling Trinamool Congress is definitely way ahead of the BJP on this count considering the long associations of their leaders with the big-budget community pujas. "They have an additional advantage of the administrative support considering hefty annual doles given from the state government to all community puja organisers," he said.

TILL NOW, THE RULING TRINAMOOLO CONGRESS HAS VIRTUALLY MONOPOLISED THEIR SUPREMACY AS PRINCIPAL ORGANISERS OF THE COMMUNITY PUJAS IN THE STATE. HOWEVER, IN THE BACKDROP OF THE 2024 LOK SABHA POLLS, THE BJP STATE COMMITTEE HAS DECIDED TO MAKE THE PARTICIPATION OF THEIR LEADERSHIP IN COMMUNITY PUJAS IN A MAJOR WAY



Army personnel perform during the opening ceremony of the Durand Cup 2023 football tournament, at Vivekananda Yuba Bharati Krirangan Stadium in Kolkata, West Bengal



A devotee blows a conch outside the Gyanvapi mosque in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh



Members of All India Adivasi Congress stage a protest against the central government over alleged injustice to tribals, at Jantar Mantar in New Delhi



A man with his livestock wades through a waterlogged road following rains, on the outskirts of Ajmer, Rajasthan



Locals at a deserted area after the imposition of section 144 following incidents of violence post Monday's attack on a VHP procession in Nuh district, Haryana



Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) workers stage a protest demanding information about missing girls and women in Jammu and Kashmir in Srinagar. According to Ministry of Home Affairs data 9765 women have gone missing in Jammu and Kashmir from 2019 to 2021



People read signs placed on the ground during a protest against a police raid that killed more than dozens in Guaruja, Sao Paulo state, Brazil. The death toll from the raid has climbed to at least 14, in a sprawling operation that has raised questions about the use of lethal force by police



Traditional kite-thread makers prepare glass coated 'Manja' ahead of the demand coinciding with India's Independence Day in Jammu

of the day quote

As we have filled up 51,000 posts in the Medical and Health Department, we should fill up existing vacancies in the universities also on a regular basis

Y S JAGAN MOHAN REDDY | ANDHRA PRADESH CM

New blocks for mining should be identified in the state to increase mineral production. Alternative resources and setting up brick kilns should be considered, instead of extracting soil from fertile land for brick production in the state

YOGI ADITYANATH | UTTAR PRADESH CM

Around Rs 3,37,000 crore has been spent so far for the Northeastern region in the last nine years

ANURAG THAKUR | UNION MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

UK MP stopped at Amritsar airport

Chandigarh: British Labour Party MP Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi was stopped and questioned by the Indian immigration authorities at the airport in Amritsar in Punjab for two hours Thursday. The Punjab-origin MP reached Amritsar on an Air India flight from Birmingham. It is learnt that Dhesi did not have an Overseas Citizen of India card.

Closely monitoring Niger situation: India

New Delhi: India Thursday said it is closely monitoring the developments in Niger and around 250 Indians residing in the West African country are safe. Niger has witnessed wide-spread protests following last week's coup. A number of European countries including France have started evacuating their citizens from Niger.

India summons German envoy

New Delhi: India summoned German Ambassador Philipp Ackermann this week and asked for the early return of an Indian baby girl, who has been living in a foster care in Berlin for over 20 months. Ariha Shah was placed in the custody of Germany's Youth Welfare Office (Jugendamt) on September 23, 2021 after the then seven-month-old baby suffered an accidental injury. She has been in foster care since then.

PM to attend BRICS Summit

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi Thursday accepted South African President Cyril Ramaphosa's invite for the BRICS Summit in Johannesburg later this month and said he looked forward to participate in the conclave. Modi spoke with Ramaphosa over the phone during which the two leaders positively assessed the progress in bilateral cooperation, including in the context of the 30th anniversary of establishment of bilateral diplomatic relations being celebrated in 2023, a statement issued by the Prime Minister's Office said. President Ramaphosa invited the PM for the BRICS Summit being hosted by South Africa August 22-24, 2023, and briefed him on the preparations for the same, the statement said.

Tremor in A and N

Port Blair: An earthquake of 4.3 magnitude rocked Andaman and Nicobar Islands in the early hours of Thursday. According to the National Center for Seismology (NCS), the tremors were felt around 4.17 am and the epicentre was located at a depth of 61 km in the sea in South Andaman District.



Who is responsible for the death of the ninth cheetah at the Kuno National Park? Where are all those now who were busy promoting the event (release of cheetahs into Kuno National Park) as a symbol of the power of the BJP government?

AKHILESH YADAV | SAMAJWADI PARTY CHIEF

MAN EATS WIFE'S FINGER

A shocking case of domestic violence has been reported from Karnataka's Bangalore. As reported by the news wire agency IANS, a man has been booked in a case of domestic violence in which the man is accused of biting off his wife's finger. As per the FIR, the man allegedly bit his wife's finger and swallowed it during a fight



LS clears Delhi services Bill

AGENCIES

New Delhi, August 3: The contentious Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (Amendment) Bill, 2023 to replace the ordinance on transfers and postings of senior officers in the Delhi government was passed by Lok Sabha Thursday amid a walkout by Opposition parties.

Amid high drama, the lone AAP MP Sushil Kumar Rinku was suspended from the remaining tenure of the Monsoon Session by Speaker Om Birla after he threw some papers on the chair while standing in the Well of the House. Home Minister Amit Shah, launching an all-out attack on the Opposition, while responding to the discussion on the Bill, said in Lok Sabha Thursday that it was only concerned about saving its opportunistic alliance and that is why had participated with full strength to oppose the Delhi services Bill, forgetting its concerns about Manipur in the process.

"It is good to see that today after so many days of disruptions, whatever may have been



As the Bill was being passed, members of several opposition parties walked out of the Lok Sabha as a mark of protest

AAP member Sushil Kumar Rinku, who tore a copy of the Bill and threw it towards the chair, was subsequently suspended by Speaker Om Birla for the remaining part of the Monsoon session for unruly behaviour

the compulsions, all opposition parties forgot about their protests on Manipur and demand for Prime Minister Narendra Modi's presence in the House, and came together to participate in the discussion on the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (Amendment) Bill," Shah said in his response to the discussion on the Bill.

Since it is a Bill whose passage will see the exit of AAP from their INDIA alliance, all the opposition parties came together

to save the alliance, he said, adding that prior to this Bill, the opposition did not allow the House to function and nine important Bills had to be passed in the din. Continuing his attack on the Opposition's INDIA alliance, Shah said that the nation is looking at how two-faced the alliance is. He said that Delhi was never a full fledged state and it was necessary to bring the bill "as rules were needed to be framed since rules were not being followed". The Centre, he added,

Data protection Bill tabled in Lok Sabha

The government Thursday tabled the Digital Personal Data Protection Bill 2023 in the Lok Sabha with an aim to protect the privacy of Indian citizens while proposing a penalty of up to Rs 250 crore on entities for misusing or failing to protect digital data of individuals. The Bill which comes after six years of the Supreme Court declaring "Right to Privacy" as fundamental right has provisions to curb misuse of individuals' data by online platforms. While moving the bill, IT Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw rejected suggestions that it was a money Bill. He said it was a "normal Bill". Various opposition members opposed the Bill at the introduction stage, questioning the measure.

Kejriwal accuses BJP of backstabbing

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal Thursday accused the BJP of backstabbing the people of the national capital after Lok Sabha passed a Bill to replace an ordinance promulgated for handling the transfers and postings of senior officers in the city government. Kejriwal lashed out at the BJP and Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and urged people not to believe anything the PM says. "BJP always promised to give full statehood to Delhi. In 2014, Modi himself said that on becoming the prime minister, he would give full statehood to Delhi. But today these people stabbed the people of Delhi in the back. Don't believe anything said by Modiji from now on," he said in a tweet in Hindi.

had the rights to frame rules for Delhi.

The Home Minister criticised the AAP government in Delhi, saying that it only wanted bureaucratic control over its officials as they were concerned about getting exposed and their misdeeds coming out in the

open. Congress MP Shashi Tharoor alleged that "blatant subversion of the constitutional separation of powers" was taking place through the bill and said while Modi talks about cooperative federalism, the country was witnessing "coercive federalism".

PAK'S TALK OFFER

Environment free of terror imperative for normal ties, says MEA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 3: India Thursday said an environment free of terror and hostilities is imperative for normal ties with Islamabad, days after Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif expressed his willingness to hold talks with New Delhi.

External Affairs Minister spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said India wants normal ties with all its neighbouring countries including Pakistan and the onus is on Islamabad to create an environment for such an engagement.

He was responding to queries relating to comments by Sharif. "We have seen reports regarding comments by the Pakistan prime minister on this issue. India's clear and consistent position on this is well known," Bagchi said. "We desire normal neighbourly relations with all our neighbours including Pakistan. For this an environment free of terror and hostility is imperative," he added. On Tuesday, Sharif offered to hold talks with India to address all serious and outstanding issues as he said that "war is not an option" for both countries.

RS passes Advocates (Amendment) Bill, '23

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 3: The Rajya Sabha Thursday passed the Advocates (Amendment) Bill, 2023, which aims to regulate the legal profession by a single Act and seeks to target "touts".

The amendment would help to regulate the legal profession through a single Act, the Advocates Act, 1961, according to statement of objects and reasons of the legislation.

Replying to a debate on the Bill in the Rajya Sabha, Union Law and Justice Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal said the legal profession is a noble profession and unlawful practices should be dealt with firmly. The Bill was passed by a voice vote, following which the House adjourned for the day. The Bill provides that every high court and district judge can frame and publish lists of touts (those who procure clients for legal practitioner in return for any payment).

As per the provisions, such persons named in the list of touts will be excluded from entering the court premises. Any violation of this provision will entail punishment with imprisonment up to three months and a fine. In keeping with the Centre's policy of repealing all obsolete laws or pre-independence Acts which have lost their utility, the government in consultation with the Bar Council of India has decided to repeal the Legal Practitioners Act, 1879, and to amend the Advocates Act, 1961, by incorporating the provisions of section 36 of the Legal Practitioners Act, 1879, in the Advocates Act, 1961.

This will reduce the number of superfluous enactments in the statute book.

HARYANA VIOLENCE MOSQUE SET ON FIRE IN NUH

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Gurugram, August 3: A mosque was set on fire and a short circuit apparently triggered a blaze in another in Haryana's Nuh district, while two brothers belonging to Muslim community were allegedly beaten up in Gurugram by a group of about 30 people, police said Thursday.

No one was injured in the mosque incidents that took place around 11:30 pm Wednesday, they said. While one of the mosques is located near Vijay Chowk, the other is near a police station. Both mosques suffered some damage. Superintendent of Police (Nuh) Varun Singla said, "Light arson has been done in one mosque while short circuit seems to be the reason for the fire in the other. The police took control of the situation and are conducting raids to nab the suspects."

Earlier, police had said that Molotov cocktails were hurled at the two mosques. In neighbouring Gurugram, two men identified as Nisar Ali and his brother Rustam Ali, were allegedly beaten up on Wednesday evening by a group of about 30 people, police said. The victims, natives of Malda district in West Bengal, are living in a slum

- Curfew was clamped in Nuh after communal violence erupted Monday following a mob tried to stop a Vishva Hindu Parishad procession
- Mobs killed a cleric, torched an eatery and vandalised shops as communal violence that began in Nuh spilled over into neighbouring Gurugram Tuesday
- Six people have died so far in the violence, 176 people have been arrested and 78 detained, according to the Haryana government

in Palda village here. According to a complaint by Nisar Ali, a group of about 25 to 30 youths came to the slum on Tuesday and told the dwellers to leave the city by Wednesday.

Following the complaint, an FIR was registered against unidentified youths under sections 147 (riots), 149 (unlawful assembly), 323 (causing hurt), 295A (deliberate and malicious acts, intended to outrage religious feelings of any class), 506 (criminal intimidation), and 188 (disobedience to order duly promulgated by public servant) of the IPC at Badshahpur police station Wednesday night.



Rapid Action Force (RAF) personnel deployed at Badshahpur



People from the Zo-Kuki community during a prayer meeting in remembrance of tribals killed in the ongoing ethnic violence in Manipur

PTI PHOTO

MANIPUR CRISIS

Protesters, security forces clash; 19 hurt

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Imphal, August 3: Altogether 19 people were injured in clashes as the Army and RAF personnel fired tear gas shells at Kangvai and Phougakchao area in Bishnupur district Thursday, officials said.

The district magistrates of Imphal East and Imphal West also withdrew curfew relaxations, imposing the restrictions during the day as a precautionary measure, on top of night curfew throughout the Imphal valley.

In the last 24 hours, 130 checkpoints were set up in different districts, both in the hill and the valley, and police detained 347



persons in connection with various violations, Manipur police tweeted. Hours before the clashes, a planned mass burial of Kuki-Zomi people killed in Manipur's ethnic violence was stalled after the state's High Court on Thursday morning ordered status quo to be maintained at the proposed burial site in Churachandpur district.

The ITLF, an apex tribal body,

also said it was postponing the burial of 35 people at the site in Haolai Khopi village of Churachandpur district, on the border with Bishnupur.

Tension has been brewing since morning in Bishnupur district as thousands of locals came out on the streets to block the movement of security forces.

Locals led by women tried to pass the barricade put up by the Army and RAF personnel, demanding that they be allowed to go to Tuibuong, the burial site.

The district magistrates of Imphal East and West issued separate orders reimposing the day curfew apprehending disturbance.

Govt launches study in India portal for int'l students

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 3: The government Wednesday launched the Study In India (SII) portal, a one stop platform to simplify the journey of international students in the country.

The portal was launched by Union External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan. "The launch of this portal is aimed at making India a hub of

global education by welcoming students from diverse backgrounds. It will also help us establish a strong international footprint of brand India in the education sphere. I note the integrated approach of the portal which enables user friendly application processes for international students from registration to visa approval. This simplifies... Their entire journey, facilitating the choice of desired courses and receiving offers from relevant institutions," Jaishankar said at the launch.



From an Indian perspective, there is no doubt that the presence of international students will be to the benefit of domestic students. It will connect the students more closely, to glob-

alising world and prepare them better for global workplace. Having students from other countries studying with you creates a better understanding of their cultures, habits, traditions

and even thinking, he said. "When such students go back to their societies of origin, they truly become ambassadors of goodwill for India, sometimes even more so," he added. The Education Minister said the vision for the portal is guided by the new National Education Policy (NEP).

"Guided by the NEP, the SII portal reflects our commitment to make India a preferred education destination as well as to blur academic boundaries for shaping a prosperous future. The portal is going to be a pivotal step in making India a preferred destination for higher education among students worldwide," he added.

The SII programme is a flagship project introduced by the

Ministry of Education (MoE) in 2018. The programme seeks to endorse India as a prime education hub for international students by inviting them to pursue their higher education in the country and explore valuable educational opportunities enabled by top Indian universities.

Study in India Portal is a dedicated website that will provide comprehensive information about the Indian Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). The website will illustrate academic programmes covering but not limited to undergraduate (UG), postgraduate (PG), doctoral level programmes as well as courses in Indian Knowledge System like Yoga, Ayurveda and classical arts.

international



Moscow will return to the Black Sea grain deal if its interests are secured

VLADIMIR PUTIN | RUSSIAN PRESIDENT

WIKIPEDIA, APPLE FINED

A Russian court Thursday imposed fines on Apple and the host of Wikipedia for failing to remove material deemed to be "false information" about Russia's military actions in Ukraine



of the day quote

Russia and Belarus are increasing the pressure on the borders, increasing the number of their provocations and we must be aware that the number of these provocations will grow

Students must take risks and reject the temptation to merely perpetuate the status quo — the "present global system of elitism and inequality" — with an attitude of self-preservation

The number of submissions to the International Court of Justice exceeded Palestinian expectations and came from every continent and included all five permanent members of the UN Security Council — the United States, Russia, China, Britain and France

Sunak's home cloaked in black



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, August 3: Four climate protesters from Greenpeace were arrested Thursday after they draped the home of British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak in northern England in black cloth, in protest against his recent backing for an expansion of North Sea oil and gas drilling.

The Greenpeace activists had climbed onto the roof of Sunak's sprawling constituency home in Richmond, North Yorkshire, to unfold 200 square metres of "oil-black fabric" to cover one side of the mansion.

The local North Yorkshire Police issued a statement to say that its officers had responded to the protest activity at the Prime Minister's home in Kirby Sigston. "Officers have contained the area and no one has entered the building. The PM and his family are not at home," the police said.

It confirmed the arrests on Thursday afternoon after the four protesters finally climbed down from the roof after around three hours and were seen being led away into the back of police vans. Sunak, along with wife Akshata Murty and daughters Krishna and Anoushka, is currently away on a week-long holiday in California.

Asked about the incident, deputy Prime Minister Oliver Dowden told the BBC he thought the British people were "sick of

The Greenpeace activists had climbed onto the roof of Sunak's sprawling constituency home in Richmond, North Yorkshire, to unfold 200 square metres of "oil-black fabric" to cover one side of the mansion

Sunak, along with wife Akshata Murty and daughters Krishna and Anoushka, is currently away on a week-long holiday in California

these stupid stunts". Two other Greenpeace activists unfurled a banner emblazoned with the words "Rishi Sunak — Oil Profits or Our Future?" on the grass in front of the home.

"Just as wildfires and floods wreck homes and lives around the world, Sunak is committing to a massive expansion of oil and gas drilling," said Philip Evans, Greenpeace UK's climate campaigner. "The experts are clear — we can't afford any new oil and gas, and the fossil fuel industry certainly doesn't need another helping hand in destroying the climate. What we need is a clean, affordable energy system fit for the 21st century. It's time for Sunak to choose between Big Oil's profits or our future on a habitable planet," he said.

Earlier this week, Sunak had unveiled government plans to grant hundreds of new oil and gas licences as part of a drive to make Britain more energy independent.

Hundreds rally in Niger

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Niamey (Niger), August 3: Hundreds of people rallied in support of Niger's ruling junta in the capital on Thursday, denouncing France and others who have criticised a recent coup — as the country's military leaders sought to shore up their takeover.

As numbers began to swell at a demonstration organised by the junta and civil society groups on Niger's Independence Day, protesters in Niamey pumped their fists in the air and chanted out support for neighbouring countries that have also seen military takeovers in recent years.

Some waved Russian flags, and one man brandished a Russian and Nigerian flag sewn together: Last week's coup toppled President Mohamed Bazoum — whose ascendancy marked Niger's first peaceful, democratic transfer of power since independence from France in 1960.

It has been accompanied by strident anti-French sentiment and raised questions about the future of the fight against extremism in Africa's Sahel region, where Russia and Western countries have vied for influence.

The coup has been strongly condemned by Western countries and the West African regional bloc known as ECOWAS, which has threatened to use force to remove the junta if they don't hand back power to Bazoum.

As tensions have grown in the capital and the region, many European countries have moved to evacuate their citizens. At Thursday's protest, many expressed support for the coup leaders and denounced interference from others.

"For more than 13 years, the Nigerien people have suffered injustices," said protester Moctar Abdou Issa. The junta "will get us out of this, God willing ... they will free the Nigerian people. "We're sick of the French," he added.

Pak okays security pact with US

The development comes days after Pakistan and the US agreed to further enhance their bilateral relations, including in the defence field, at a meeting between US Central Command (Centcom) chief General Michael Erik Kurilla and Pakistan's Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Asim Munir

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Islamabad, August 3: Pakistan's Cabinet has quietly approved the signing of a new security pact with the US, a move that indicates a fresh start in defence cooperation after years of distrust between the two nations and may open avenues for Islamabad to get military hardware from Washington, a media report said Thursday.

Through a circulation summary, the Cabinet gave its seal of approval to sign the Communication Interoperability and Security Memorandum of Agreement, known as the CIS-MOA, between Pakistan and the US, The Express Tribune newspaper reported.

However, there was no official announcement from either side about the signing of the agreement. According to the report, Federal Minister for Information Marriyum Aurangzeb was approached but did not respond.

The development comes days after Pakistan and the US agreed to further enhance their bilateral



relations, including in the defence field, at a meeting between US Central Command (Centcom) chief General Michael Erik Kurilla and Pakistan's Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Asim Munir.

CIS-MOA is a foundational agreement that the US signs with its allies and countries with which it wants to maintain close military and defence ties. It also provides legal cover to the US Department of Defence for ensuring the sale of military equipment and hardware to other countries.

The signing of the CIS-MOA means that the two countries are keen to maintain the institutional mechanism. The agreement, first signed between the Joint Staff Headquarters of Pakistan and the US Department of Defence in October 2005 for 15 years, expired in 2020. The two sides

have now renewed that arrangement which covers joint exercises, operations, training, basing and equipment.

The signing of the CIS-MOA indicates that the US might sell some military hardware to Pakistan in coming years, a source in Washington was quoted as saying in the report. However, a retired senior Army officer who previously dealt with the US played down the development and said it was not easy for Pakistan to buy military hardware from the US despite this agreement.

Referring to the growing strategic ties between the US and India, the officer said Washington's long-term interests are not aligned with Islamabad. Nevertheless, the US needs Pakistan in some critical regions, and hence this agreement serves the purpose of both, he said.

SHORT TAKES

Bridge collapses in northern China

Taipei: A highway bridge in northern China collapsed due to flash floods triggered by heavy rains, and two cars fell into the river, state media reported Thursday, as parts of China are experiencing the worst floods in decades. There were no known casualties as of Thursday afternoon after a bridge across Mayi River collapsed along the Harbin-Mudanjiang Highway in Heilongjiang province, according to Beijing News. Images published by local media showed two badly damaged cars floating in the water. The bridge collapsed around 8.50 am (0050 GMT) Thursday, road authorities said.

Indian national jailed in Singapore

Singapore: A 68-year-old Indian national in Singapore has been jailed for seven months after he admitted to cheating another company for almost seven years into paying inflated prices amounting to over 2.5 crore to his freight-forwarding services firm in the city-state. Eldo Thottungal Mathai, director of Indus Global Line (IGL) and a permanent resident of Singapore pleaded guilty to three counts of cheating on Tuesday. Three similar counts were considered during sentencing, reported The Straits Times.

Boat capsizes

Manila: A boat with about 70 people on board capsized off Quezon province in the Philippines, local media reported Thursday. The Philippine Coast Guard confirmed the accident without providing further details, adding a search and rescue operation is ongoing, reports Xinhua news agency. Ferry accidents are common in the archipelago country mainly due to frequent storms, ill-maintained boats, overcrowding and weak enforcement of safety regulations.

7 killed, 17 injured

El Marques (Mexico): A train smashed into a small commuter bus at a grade crossing, killing seven people and injuring 17 early Wednesday, authorities in central Mexico said. Alejandro Vázquez Mellado, head of civil defence for the township of El Marques, said several of the 17 injured were in critical condition. Queretaro state interior secretary Guadalupe Munguía later said the death toll had risen to seven. The town is in Queretaro state north of Mexico City.



Stricken cargo ship Fremantle Highway, that caught fire while transporting thousands of cars, including nearly 500 electric vehicles, from Germany to Singapore, is towed into the port of Eemshaven, the Netherlands, on Thursday. The ship that burned for almost a week close to busy North Sea shipping lanes and a world renowned migratory bird habitat will be salvaged at the northern Dutch port

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kyiv, August 3: Russian shelling Thursday damaged a landmark church in the city of Kherson that once held the remains of the renowned 18th-century commander who exerted Russian control through the southeast parts of modern Ukraine and annexed the Crimean Peninsula.

Ukraine's emergency service said four of its workers were wounded in a second round of shelling as they fought the fire at St. Catherine's Cathedral. Four other people were wounded in the first shelling attack, which also hit a trolleybus, the prosecutor general's office said.

The shelling followed the severe damage sustained by a beloved Orthodox cathedral in a missile strike last week in Odesa and underlined the war's risk to the country's cultural monuments. Fighting has intensified in multiple regions as Ukraine's military steps up a counteroffensive to reclaim Russian-occupied territory.

The Kherson church, dating from 1781, is one of the city's most notable buildings. It once was the burial spot for Prince

Grigory Potemkin, a favourite of Russian Empress Catherine the Great. His remains were removed last year while the city was still under Russian occupation. Russian forces withdrew from Kherson last November in the face of a Ukrainian counteroffensive.

Potemkin engineered the 1784 annexation of Crimea from the Crimean Khanate. His name entered popular speech because of stories, now widely doubted, that he erected fake settlements called "Potemkin villages" to impress Catherine during her long journey through Crimea and the southern territories.

The Ukrainian president's office said two people were killed over the past day in Russian attacks — one in eastern Ukraine's Donetsk province and one in Zaporizhzhia province. The Ukrainian air force said Russia launched a wave of 15 Shahed drones against the Kyiv region but all were shot down. The governor of the capital region, Ruslan Kravchenko, said there were no injuries or damage.

Ukraine's military also continued to launch attack drones deep into Russia.

One dead, 12 hurt in S Korea

REUTERS

Seoul, August 3: A man in a South Korean commuter town rammed his car into passers-by Thursday then got out and stabbed some, killing one person and injuring another 12, police and media said.

The unexplained attack in the commuter town of Seongnam near the capital Seoul came days after another rare stabbing attack which killed one person and wounded three others.



Police said Thursday's assailant was arrested after apparently hitting people randomly. Media reports described him as a man in his 20s with a delivery job and suffering from some mental health issues.

The attack occurred near Seohyeon station, an area about 20 km (12 miles) from Seoul that has a large department store and other shops and where many commuters live. Police said 12 people were in hospital — nine stabbed and four hit by the car.

Pak probe agency using Israel's intrusive cyber tech since 2012

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jerusalem, August 3: Israeli cyber tech firm, Cellebrite, has sold Pakistan's Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) and various police units products that are highly intrusive and can lead to gross human rights violations despite the two countries not having diplomatic ties and Israeli norms prohibiting such deals, a local media report said Thursday. The Israeli firm's products have been in use by Pakistani

agencies since 2012, Ha'aretz newspaper reported in an investigative report. Cellebrite's flagship product, UFED, is traded in Nasdaq and enables law enforcement agencies to engage in digital forensic work by hacking into password-protected cell phones and can copy information stored on the device, including pictures, documents, text messages, call logs and contacts. Unlike Israeli company NSO,



whose sale of Pegasus cyber tech grabbed worldwide attention, and other manufacturers of offensive-cyber products,

Cellebrite operates in a grey area between security exports and civilian ones. In 2020, the export of forensic

equipment such as that produced by Cellebrite came under the Defence Ministry's oversight, since it was included in the Wassenaar Arrangement on Export Controls for Conventional Arms and Dual-Use Goods and Technologies, which defines which dual-use (security use and civilian use) products require oversight, the report noted.

However, International shipment records show that until at least 2019, Cellebrite Asia-Pacific Pte (its Singapore subsidiary) sold products directly to companies in Pakistan and to its Federal Investigation Agency, the Israeli daily reported. This happened despite Cellebrite's end-user license agreement forbidding sales to Pakistan.

In other proofs presented in the report, the investigative piece

notes that in 2012 it was reported in Pakistan that the Sind Province police had acquired UFED Touch Ultimate devices made by Cellebrite, and their use has been expanding since.

The Express Tribune newspaper had also published pictures that clearly show Cellebrite's product, the Israeli daily said. "Operating manuals, documents and official invitations for bids show that police units and the FIA regularly use these systems," Ha'aretz claimed.

"FIA officials, past and present who were tasked with enforcing the draconian cyber-crime law, even state in their LinkedIn profiles that they have been trained and certified to use these systems and that they use them on a regular basis", it noted.

of the day quote

We intend to follow with an inter-ministerial working group which will look at other provisions where further simplification, rationalisation or decriminalisation is possible and we are intending to do the same exercise at the state level by providing guidance to the states as well

RAJESH KUMAR SINGH | SECRETARY, DPIIT

Globally known for their strong governance, Temasek's investment is a step forward, as we execute our strategy towards future leadership in electric SUVs

ANISH SHAH | MD & CEO, M&M

With the country's (Bangladesh) healthcare market expected to reach \$14 billion by the end of 2023, we are committed to the growth of healthcare in Bangladesh. Over the next two years, we'll invest Rs 100 crore to establish a robust healthcare infrastructure

HARSIMARIB SINGH
| CO-FOUNDER, PRISTYN CARE

RESULTS CORNER

Zomato sees 1st quarterly profit

Bangalore: Online food delivery firm Zomato Ltd Thursday reported its first-ever consolidated profit after tax of Rs 2 crore in the April-June quarter of 2023-24, driven by strong revenue growth. The company had posted a net loss of Rs 186 crore in the same quarter last fiscal, Zomato said in a regulatory filing. Consolidated revenue from operations in the first quarter of the current fiscal was at Rs 2,416 crore as against Rs 1,414 crore in the year-ago period, it added. Total expenses were higher at Rs 2,612 crore as compared to Rs 1,768 crore in the same quarter a year ago.

Airtel profit flat

New Delhi: Telecom operator Bharti Airtel Thursday posted a net profit of Rs 1,612 crore for the first quarter ended June 2023, which is nearly flat over earnings in the same period of the previous year. The revenue for the just-ended quarter was 14 per cent higher at Rs 37,440 crore compared to the year-ago period "backed by strong and consistent performance delivery across the portfolio", the company said. Mobile services India revenues were up 12.4 per cent year on year led by continued strong 4G customer additions and an increase in Average Revenue Per User (ARPU).

Adani Ent PAT up

New Delhi: Adani Enterprises Thursday posted 44.41 per cent jump in consolidated profit after tax (PAT) at Rs 676.93 crore for June quarter 2023-24 on account of reduced expenses. It had reported Rs 468.74 crore PAT for the same period a year ago, the company said. Total income however fell to Rs 25,809.94 crore from Rs 41,066.43 crore in the year-ago quarter. Expenses also reduced to Rs 24,731.42 crore from Rs 40,433.96 crore a year ago.

Dabur net grows

New Delhi: FMCG major Dabur India Thursday said its consolidated net profit increased 5 per cent to Rs 464 crore in the June quarter on the back of robust sales. The company had reported a net profit of Rs 440 crore in the April-June period of the last fiscal. The company's total income rose to Rs 3,240 crore in the first quarter of the current fiscal from Rs 2,923 crore in the year-ago period, Dabur India said in a regulatory filing Thursday.



The Indian economy, in real terms, needs to grow annually at 7-7.5 per cent until 2030. The share of manufacturing in total gross value added has to increase from 16 per cent at present to at least 25 per cent of GDP at the expense of agriculture and low value added services

V ANANTHA NAGESWARAN | CHIEF ECONOMIC ADVISOR

McDONALD'S OPENS MAIDEN AIRPORT DRIVE-THRU OUTLET

Fast food chain McDonald's Thursday opened an outlet in Mumbai's international airport that it claimed is the country's first airport drive-thru restaurant. This will also be the first McDonald's outlet in the city operating 24x7, the company said



BLOW TO FOREIGN PC MAKERS

IN A BID TO BOOST DOMESTIC MANUFACTURING, CENTRE IMPOSES IMPORT CURBS ON LAPTOPS, TABLETS, COMPUTERS LIKELY TO HURT THE BIGGIES FROM THE INDUSTRY LIKE APPLE, DELL, SAMSUNG

New Delhi, August 3: India Thursday said it will impose a licensing requirement for imports of laptops, tablets and personal computers with immediate effect, a move that could hit hard the likes of Apple, Dell and Samsung and force them to boost local manufacturing.

Current regulations in India allow companies to import laptops freely, but the new rule mandates a special licence for these products similar to restrictions India imposed in 2020 for in-bound TV shipments.



The move's spirit is to push manufacturing to India. It's not a nudge, it's a push

ALI AKHTAR JAFRI
| FORMER DIRECTOR GENERAL, MAIT

Industry executives said a licensing regime would mean prolonged wait times for each new model they launch, and would come just ahead of a festive season in India when sales typically surge.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government has been promoting local manufacturing and discouraging imports under his 'Make in India' plan.

A government official said that "safety is the top most priority" of the government and the move is in compliance with the rules of the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

The intent seems to be "sub-

stitution of certain goods that are imported heavily", said Emkay Global economist Madhavi Arora.

Apple, Dell and Samsung did not immediately respond to requests for comment. They, along with Acer, LG Electronics, Lenovo and HP Inc. are some of the key sellers of laptops in the Indian market.

GOVT CONCERNED ABOUT SECURITY FROM THE IMPORTED DEVICES

TO ALLOW HARDWARE ONLY FROM 'TRUSTED PARTNERS'

THE MOVE IS IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE RULES OF THE WTO

EXPERTS FLAG RISK TO PRICE RISE OF THESE INSTRUMENTS

A government source, who did not want to be named, told reporters shipments that have been ordered will be allowed without licences until August 31.

The move is expected to benefit contract manufacturers like Dixon Technologies, whose

shares rose more than 7% on the news.

India has extended a deadline for companies to apply for a \$2 billion incentive scheme to attract investments in IT hardware manufacturing.

against \$2.08 million in 2021-22.

Research firm Counterpoint estimates India's laptop and personal computer market to be worth \$8 billion annually, with two third of those imported.

According to a report by think-tank Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI), India's 65 per cent imports from China are limited to just three product groups - electronics, machinery and organic chemicals.

It has stated that India is critically dependent on China for day-to-day use and industrial products like mobile phones, laptops, components, solar cell modules, and ICs.

SECURITY CONCERNS

Besides boosting local manufacturing, the government move is aimed at curbing supplies from China, as it has security concerns from such products, a second government source said.

The restriction will help India to import such hardware only from "trusted partners", another government source added.

Half of India's restricted items are shipped from China, with whom Delhi's relationship has soured since border clashes in 2020, leading to several anti-China steps to curb investment and trade from India's neighbour.

Jio 5G ready for testing: Reliance tells government

New Delhi, August 3: After months of 5G network rollout across the country, India's largest telco Reliance Jio has informed the government that it has achieved 5G rollout obligations in all circles, and is ready to be tested as per stipulated parameters.

Mukesh Ambani-led Reliance Jio has sent out a communication to the Telecom Department (DoT) term cell informing them about rollouts achieved in all circles, according to sources who said that in the next step, the term cells will pick 10 per cent sites for testing.

Once the test results meet the required parameters, the certificate about completion of rollout obligation is issued, they explained.

Moreover, the telco - which competes in the Indian telecom market with players like Bharti Airtel - has successfully tested 5G services on bands of 26 GHz and 3300 MHz spectrum in Gujarat circle.

"Gujarat LSA conducted Phase I of 5G roll out testing in 26 GHz and 3300 MHz spectrum allocated to Reliance Jio Infocomm Ltd," DoT's Gujarat wing said in a post on Twitter, now rebranded X.

Ambuja boosts cement heft



Ambuja Cements buys majority stake in Sanghi Industries at enterprise value of ₹5,000cr

New Delhi, August 3: Gautam Adani-owned Ambuja Cements Ltd Thursday announced the acquisition of a majority stake in Sanghi Industries at an enterprise value of Rs 5,000 crore, in a first major deal since Adani Group was rocked by allegations of financial misconduct by Hindenburg Research.

Ambuja Cements, a part of Adani Cement Ltd (ACL), will buy a 56.74 per cent stake in Sanghi Industries Ltd (SIL) from its existing promoter group - Ravi Sanghi & family.

The acquisition will be fully funded through internal accruals, said a statement from Ambuja Cements. Besides, it would make an offer to acquire another 26 per cent or 6.71 crore equity shares from SIL's public shareholders.

"The open offer would be at a consideration of up to Rs 114.22 per share," it said. Adani Group will spend Rs 767.15 crore for acquiring 26 per cent share from open market.

The company expects the ac-

quisition to be completed within 3-4 months, however, it will be "subject to approval" from the Competition Commission of India.

If the open offer is fully subscribed, Ambuja Cements will own 82.74 per cent in SIL, the cement maker which also owns a captive port capacity at Sanghipuram in Kutch district of Gujarat.

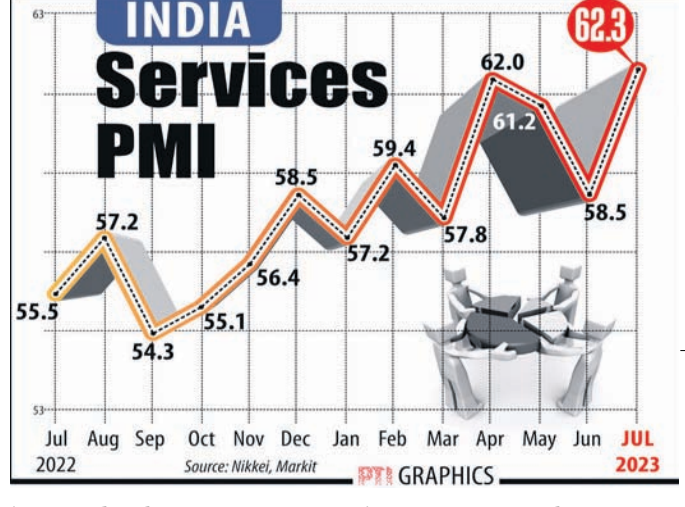
The deal would help ACL, the second biggest cement manufacturer after UltraTech, to expand its capacity to 73.6 MTPA (million tonne per annum) in the segment, in which it had entered last September, after the acquisition of majority stakes in Ambuja Cements and its subsidiary ACC Ltd.

Commenting on the development, Adani Group Chairman Gautam Adani said: "This landmark acquisition is a significant step forward in Ambuja Cements' accelerating growth journey. With this acquisition, Adani Group is well on course to achieve its target of 140 MTPA of cement manufacturing capacity by 2028 ahead of time," he said.

13-YEAR HIGH

Services growth climbs

For the 24th straight month, the headline figure was above the neutral 50 threshold



New Delhi, August 3: India's services sector growth touched a 13-year high in July as a substantial improvement in demand conditions and pick-up in international sales induced the strongest increase in new business and output, a monthly survey said Thursday.

The seasonally adjusted S&P Global India Services PMI Business Activity Index rose from 58.5 in June to 62.3 in July, signalling the sharpest increase in output since June 2010.

For the 24th straight month, the headline figure was above the neutral 50 threshold. In Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) parlance, a print above 50 means expansion while a score below 50 denotes contraction.

"The resilience of the service sector underscores its vital role in fuelling India's economy, with the PMI results for July so far pointing to a notable contribution from the sector to overall GDP for the second fiscal quarter," Pollyanna De Lima, Economics Associate Director at S&P Global Market Intelligence, said.

According to survey members, the upturn was largely attributed to demand strength and new business gains.

Demand for Indian services

improved to the greatest extent in over 13 years during July, with around 29 per cent of survey participants reporting higher intakes of new business.

"The broad increases in sales across the domestic and international markets are particularly welcoming news, especially in light of the challenging global economic scenario. Firms noted a widespread upturn in services exports to several nations including Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka and the UAE," Lima said.

On the inflation front, cost pressures intensified and monitored companies signalled greater food, labour and transportation costs. Despite the rise

in cost pressures, charges were raised to a weaker extent as firms were cautious about their pricing strategies.

On the job front, companies continued to add to their workforces by hiring a combination of part-time, full-time, permanent and temporary staff. Service sector employment expanded at a slight pace that was broadly similar to those seen in the prior two months.

On the year-ahead outlook for business activity, service providers on average were optimistic. Growth expectations stemmed from forecasts of demand strength and marketing initiatives.

Sensex, Nifty tank for 3rd day in a row

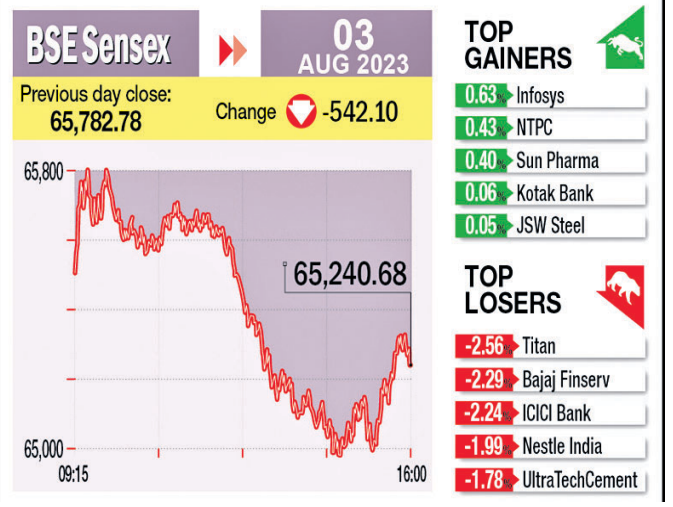
In three days of losses, Sensex plunged by around 1,287 points or 2.16% while Nifty has tanked 372 points or 2.42%

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, August 3: Benchmark Sensex tanked 542 points to settle at a four-week low while Nifty closed below the 19,400 mark, extending their losses for a third straight day Thursday in tandem with a bearish trend in global markets following the US rating downgrade.

The 30-share BSE Sensex fell by 542.10 points or 0.82 per cent to settle at a four-week low of 65,240.68. During the day, it slumped 119.7 points or 1.24 per cent to 64,963.08.

The NSE Nifty declined below the 19,300 mark in intraday trade before paring some of the losses to close at 19,381.65, still down by 144.90 points or 0.74 per cent. It moved in a range of 19,537.65 to 19,296.45 in day trade.



"Global markets are still grappling with the impact of the US rating downgrade, with spiking bond yield and strengthening dollar index," Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services said.

Fitch Ratings lowered the US government credit rating by one level, citing rising debt and a steady deterioration in stan-

dards of governance. The downgrade triggered a sell-off in US stock markets.

From the Sensex pack, Titan fell the most by 2.56 per cent after the company reported a 4.3 per cent drop in consolidated net profit at Rs 756 crore for the June quarter.

Bajaj Finserv, ICICI Bank, HDFC Bank, Reliance Industries,

Nestle, UltraTech Cement, Bajaj Finance, Maruti, Tata Consultancy Services, IndusInd Bank and State Bank of India were the major laggards.

Infosys emerged as the biggest gainer rising by 0.63 per cent. JSW Steel, NTPC and Power Grid were also among the gainers. In total, 23 Sensex stock dropped while seven advanced.

In the broader market, the BSE smallcap gauge climbed 0.23 per cent and midcap index gained 0.14 per cent. Among indices, realty fell by 1.85 per cent, metal declined by 1.15 per cent, bankex (1.06 per cent), financial services (0.94 per cent), oil & gas (0.92 per cent) and consumer durables (0.84 per cent). Healthcare, utilities and power were the gainers.

The rupee fell by 7 paise to settle at 82.74 against the US dollar. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) were net sellers in the capital markets Thursday as they offloaded shares worth Rs 317.46 crore. Global oil benchmark Brent crude dipped 0.46 per cent to \$82.82 a barrel.

TOP PICK AMONG EMS

Morgan Stanley upgrades India to 'overweight'

REUTERS

Bangalore, August 3: Morgan Stanley has upgraded its view on Indian markets to "overweight" from "equal weight", citing easing valuations as compared to October 2022, when the global brokerage identified the onset of a new bull market in Asian and emerging market equities.

India is now the top ranked, most-preferred market among emerging markets (EMs), rising from the sixth spot, due to supportive foreign inflows, macro stability and positive earnings outlook, the brokerage said in a note late Wednesday.

"We see a secular trend towards sustained superior earnings per share (EPS) growth versus EM over the cycle," Morgan Stanley analysts said, adding that a young demographic profile is supporting equity inflows. Sectorally, the brokerage re-



mains overweight on financials, consumer discretionary and industrial segments in India, and has an "add" rating on Larsen & Toubro and Maruti Suzuki India in its Asia Pacific focus and Global Emerging Markets lists.

The situation in Indian markets is in stark contrast to that in China, with the country at the start of a long-wave boom at the same time as China may be ending one, it said.

"We think returning India to an 'overweight' rating and downgrading China to 'equal weight' is warranted," analysts said, referring to the Indian markets' out-performance over China as a sign of a structural breakout in favour of India.

WINDIES PIP INDIA

India Maul China at ACT



put the West Indies top order under pressure. Hardik introduced spin in the fourth over and Brandon King (28) made his intentions clear with an inside out six over cover off Axar Patel. Yuzvendra Chahal (2/24) was brought into the attack in the following over and a struggling Kyle Myers (1) missed a slog sweep off the leggie's googly only to be adjudged lbw. The replays showed the ball was missing the stumps but Myers chose not to review.

Two balls later, King missed a straight ball off Chahal to be trapped in front. It was the first game of the tour for the Indian leggie.

Pooran, fresh from his sensational hundred in the Major League Cricket final, looked in devastating touch from ball one. He dispatched Axar for a six and four in the cow corner region, leaving the West Indies at 54 for two in six overs.

Powell then got into the act. However, the West Indies were never able to get the final flourish, adding 42 runs off the last 30 balls with the loss of two wickets.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Tarouba, August 3: Tilak Varma (39, 22b, 2x4, 3x6) looked very much at home on his international debut before India made a mess of a modest run-chase to lose the opening T20I against the West Indies by four runs here Thursday.

Rovman Powell (48, 32b, 3x4, 3x6) played a captain's knock to take West Indies to 149/6 after the hosts opted to bat at the Brian Lara Stadium.

With 37 needed off the last 30 balls and six wickets in hand, India self-destructed to end at 145/9 in 20 overs. Jason Holder (2/19) brought the West Indies back into the game by producing a maiden in the 16th over, when he found the stumps of India skipper Hardik Pandya (19) before Sanju Samson (12) got run out.

Tail-ender Arshdeep Singh (12) made the game more interesting with a couple of fours in the penultimate over, making use of an extra fielder in the circle due to the home team's

slow over rate. Eventually, Romario Shepherd (2/33) was able to defend 10 runs off the final over.

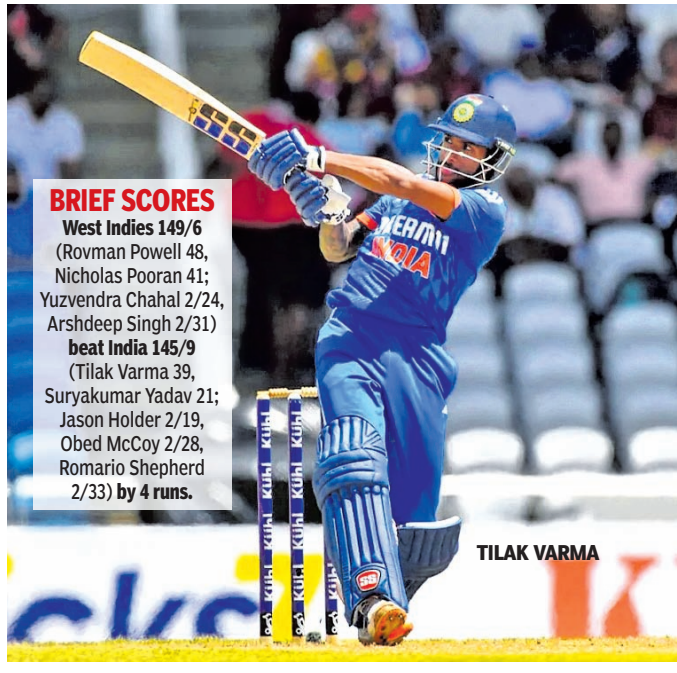
The sole bright spot of the chase was Varma's fearless knock on his maiden outing for India. The 20-year-old southpaw dispatched West Indies' quickest bowler, Alzarri Joseph for back to back sixes over deep square leg to announce his arrival in international cricket. His third and final six came off an aerial drive of pacer Shepherd.

It was not the easiest of pitches to bat on and most of the Indian batters found stroke making tough. The opening duo of Ishan Kishan and Shubman Gill perished cheaply before Suryakumar Yadav (21) and Varma got together. Surya was caught brilliantly by Shimron Hetmyer at extra cover.

Earlier, Powell and the in-form Nicholas Pooran (41, 34b, 2x4, 2x6) took the hosts to a respectable total. Besides Varma, pacer Mukesh Kumar, who made his Test and ODI debut earlier on the tour, was also handed his

maiden T20I cap.

With the new ball not doing much in the powerplay the Indian pace duo of Mukesh and Arshdeep (2/31) was not able to



BRIEF SCORES
West Indies 149/6 (Rovman Powell 48, Nicholas Pooran 41; Yuzvendra Chahal 2/24, Arshdeep Singh 2/31)
India 145/9 (Tilak Varma 39, Suryakumar Yadav 21; Jason Holder 2/19, Obed McCoy 2/28, Romario Shepherd 2/33) by 4 runs.



TILAK VARMA



PERSONAL LANDMARK: Mandeep Singh (C), accompanied by Harmanpreet Singh (L) and Manpreet Singh, celebrates his 100th international goal, Thursday

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, August 3: Skipper Harmanpreet Singh and Varun Kumar scored two goals each as India thrashed China 7-2 to begin their Asian Champions Trophy (ACT) hockey campaign on a winning note at the Mayor Radhakrishnan Hockey Stadium here Thursday. India will play Japan Friday.

Harmanpreet (5th, 8th minutes) and Varun (19th, 30th) converted two penalty corners each for India, while Sukhjeet Singh (15th), Akashdeep Singh (16th) and Mandeep Singh (40th) were the other goal scorers. China's two goals came from the sticks of Wenhui E (18th) and Jiessheng Gao (25th).

The Men in Blue were off to a resounding start in the opening quarter, as it took them just five minutes into the contest to earn a penalty corner, and skipper Harmanpreet made no mistake in successfully converting it. It did not too long for India to double the lead.

Three minutes later, it was another penalty corner and it yielded the same result through the same man, Harmanpreet. Down by a couple of goals early

The match against China was a memorable one for defender Amit Rohidas as the veteran defender from Sundargarh earned his 150th international Cap for India

into the tie, the Chinese players struggled to penetrate the Indian defence, as most of the action was taking place in the Chinese half.

At the stroke of the first quarter stoppage, India received another penalty corner. Varun's initial flick was saved by the Chinese defence but Sukhjeet scored from the rebound.

With a 3-0 lead, India started the second quarter on a confident note. Just two minutes into the quarter, Akashdeep scored from an assist from Manpreet Singh as India went 4-0 up.

However, just a minute later, China broke free, with Varun failing to tackle an ariel ball, as Wenhui sent it past Indian goalkeeper Krishan Bahadur Pathak. But the Chinese goal hardly had any impact as a minute later, Varun found the back of the net from a set piece.

Malaysia beat Pak

CHENNAI: Firhan Ashari struck twice as Malaysia defeated Pakistan 3-1 in the second game of the Asian Champions Trophy Hockey at the Mayor Radhakrishnan Hockey Stadium here Thursday. For Malaysia, Ashari scored in the 28th and 29th minutes, while Shello Silverius found the net in the 44th minute. Pakistan's lone goal was scored by Abdul Rehman in the 55th minute.

S Korea pip Japan

CHENNAI: Defending champions South Korea started their Asian Champions Trophy title defence on a winning note, beating Japan 2-1 in a close contest at the Mayor Radhakrishnan Hockey Stadium here Thursday. It all began in the sixth minute when Ryoma Oooka netted the opening goal of the tournament before Cheoleon Park equalised in the 26th, as both the teams went into halftime break locked at 1-1. Just five minutes into the third quarter, JungHo Kim found the back of the net to put the Koreans in front.

MATCH SCHEDULE

S Korea vs Pakistan (4 pm)
Malaysia vs China (6:15 pm)
India vs Japan (8:30 pm)
Telecast: Star Sports channels
Stream: Fan Code

Delhi court summons wrestler Bajrang Punia

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 3: A Delhi court Thursday summoned wrestler Bajrang Punia September 6 in a criminal defamation complaint filed against him by wrestling coach Naresh Dahiya.

Metropolitan Magistrate Yashdeep Chahal directed Punia to appear before the court on that day, holding he is of the "prima facie" view that all the ingredients of defamation were made out.

He said at the stage of summoning it was fairly settled that the court was not required to go into a comparative analysis of the possible defence that may be taken by the accused.

"On a consideration of the complaint, supporting documents and pre-summoning evidence, I am of the prima facie view that all the ingredients of defamation are made out. It appears that the statement made in the press conference was a result of malicious intent and was not made in good faith.

"In view of the same, let accused, namely, Bajrang Punia be summoned for the commission of offence punishable under Section 499 read with Section 500 (both dealing with criminal



defamation) of the IPC," the judge said.

The complaint claimed that Punia, along with other wrestlers/persons, made defamatory remarks against Dahiya in a press conference held May 10 at Jantar Mantar during a protest against alleged sexual harassment of certain women wrestlers by the outgoing Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) chief and BJP MP Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh.

Top guns advance in Australian Open

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Sydney, August 3: Top Indian shuttlers PV Sindhu, Kidambi Srikanth and HS Prannoy moved into the quarterfinals of the Australian Open badminton BWF Super 500 tournament with contrasting victories, here Thursday.

The fifth seed Sindhu, who had lost in the first round at seven different tour events this season and is playing under a new personal coach in Malaysia's Muhammad Hafiz Hashim, easily overcame compatriot Aakarshi Kashyap 21-14, 21-10 in a second round women's singles match. The double Olympic medallist Sindhu will face fourth seed Beiyen Zhang of USA in the quarterfinal.

In men's singles, Srikanth stormed past Li Yang Su of Chinese Taipei 21-10, 21-17, while sixth seed Prannoy had to fight for one hour and 14 minutes to get past Chinese Taipei's Yu Jen Chi 19-21, 21-19 21-13.

Rising Indian shuttler Priyanshu Rajawat also continued with his impressive run, reaching the quarterfinals by beating Chinese Taipei's Tzu Wei Wang 21-8, 13-21, 21-19 in a tough contest that lasted for 59 minutes.

However, it was curtains for two other Indian men's singles shuttlers Mithun Manjunath



and Kiran George. Manjunath, who had stunned fourth seed and World No.7 Kean Yew Loh of Singapore in the opening round, lost 13-21, 21-12, 19-21 against Malaysia's Zii Jia Lee.

George was no match for top seed Anthony Sinisuka Ginting of Indonesia, losing the contest in straight games 15-21, 18-21. While Prannoy has a tough op-

ponent in Ginting to deal with in the quarterfinals, it will be a contest between two Indians among the seasoned Srikanth and young Rajawat. In women's doubles, the Indian pair of Treasa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand Pullula also crashed out in the second round, losing to fourth seeds Mayu Matsumoto and Wakana Nagahara of Japan 10-21, 20-22.

The tournament is the last event before the World Championships in Copenhagen, Denmark. The BWF World Tour is divided into six levels, namely World Tour Finals, four Super 1000, six Super 750, seven Super 500, and 11 Super 300. One other category of the tournament, the BWF Tour Super 100 level, also offers ranking points.

DURAND CUP: MBSG BLANK BANGLADESH ARMY FT 5-0

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, August 3: The reigning Indian Super League (ISL) champions Mohun Bagan Super Giant (MBSG) kicked off the season with an emphatic 5-0 win over Bangladesh Army FT, in the Durand Cup opener here Thursday.

The 132nd edition of the tournament marked the start of the Indian football season and the Mariners were in the groove straightaway, pumping in three goals to virtually seal the match.

India duo of Liston Colaco (14h) and Manvir Singh (29th) set the ball rolling, before Suhail Ahmad Bhat (39th), Lalrinliana Hnamte (59th) and Kiyan Nassiri (89th) completed the domination. Taison Singh passed the ball from the midfield for Ravi Rana

to capitalise on it and then Colaco tapped the ball in. Manvir then doubled the lead from a 29th-minute spot-kick.

The 18-year-old Suhail lobbed the ball over the Bangladesh Army goalkeeper with a superb 39th minute finish to give the home favourites a commanding lead. The visiting team received a setback when Mohammad Minazur Rahman was sent off.

Having showed his 360-degree turn to deliver an accurate cross to Suhail for the third goal, Colaco was in thick of action again for the fourth. The India centre-forward delivered a low cross inside the BAFT box from a free-kick for Hnamte, to make it 4-0 in the 58th minute. The rising 22-year-old Nassiri then completed the rout.

Messi brace leads Inter Miami into last 16

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Fort Lauderdale (Florida), August 3: Lionel Messi scored in his third straight game and had his second consecutive multi-goal performance for Inter Miami after the start of the Leagues Cup contest against Orlando City Wednesday night was delayed 95 minutes because of thunderstorms.

Messi scored seven minutes into the match then added a second strike in the 72nd minute. On Messi's first goal, he stopped a pass from Robert Taylor on his chest, dribbled a couple of yards near the edge of the 6-yard box and converted a shot that landed under the crossbar.

The goal gave Inter Miami a 1-0 lead in the Round of 32 match.



Orlando tied it 11 minutes later. Messi struck again when he received a centering pass from Josef Martinez and converted a right-footed shot that landed inside the left post and put Inter Miami ahead 3-1.

Inter Miami also had a scare early in the second half when

Orlando's Mauricio Pereyra collided with Messi. Messi remained on the ground, favouring his jaw for a couple of minutes before reaching his feet.

Messi received his first yellow card with Inter Miami, when he was cited for a hard foul in the 21st minute. Messi's former

Barcelona teammate Jordi Alba made his Inter Miami debut.

The game was scheduled to start at 8 pm, but didn't begin on time because of the storms. Messi and his Inter Miami teammates appeared on the DRV PNK Stadium field for warm-ups 45 minutes before the scheduled start. The heavy rains began approximately 20 minutes later.

After stadium crew drained water puddles around mid-field, Messi and his teammates re-appeared for a second round of pre-game warm-ups.

Messi has not dealt with inclement weather in his first two Leagues Cup matches since joining the MLS club. He scored the game-winning goal against Cruz Azul and added two goals in a victory over Atlanta United.

South Zone triumph

PUDUCHERRY: South Zone's juggernaut continued as they clinched the Deodhar Trophy title for the ninth time with a commanding 45-run win over East Zone in the final, here Thursday. After opener Rohan Kunnummal smacked a sensational century (107, 75b, 11x4, 4x6) to set the ball rolling for his side, there was no stopping the South Zone who piled up 328/8 in the summit clash batting first. Kunnummal was ably supported by skipper Mayank Agarwal (63, 83b, 4x4) and Narayan Jagadeesan (54, 60b, 2x4, 1x6). In response, East Zone were bowled out for 283 in 46.1 overs. Riyan Parag (95, 65b, 8x4, 5x6) missed out on a century, while Kumar Kushagra (68, 58b, 6x4, 3x6) made a useful contribution. Washington Sundar (3/60) was the pick of the South Zone bowlers.