



NO REMAKES PLEASE

Sara Ali Khan has decided not to say yes to remakes given the public response to her earlier ones

LEISURE P2



GROWING THREAT

NATO-calibre weapons are being transferred to ISIL-K by groups affiliated with Taliban and Al-Qaeda, such as Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan

INTERNATIONAL P10



MESSI LIFTS INTER MIAMI

Lionel Messi scores his eighth goal in 5 matches to lead Inter Miami into the Leagues Cup semis beating Charlotte

SPORTS P12

20 SCHOOLCHILDREN HURT IN LIGHTNING

POST NEWS NETWORK

Patkura (Kendrapara), August 12: At least 20 students sustained injuries after lightning struck Kudanagari High School building under this block in Kendrapara district, Saturday.

The injured were rushed to Patkura community health centre (CHC) for treatment and 18 of them were discharged after their health conditions improved. However, the condition of two girls - Amrita Panda and Adyasha Lakshmi Samal - deteriorated following which they were shifted to Kendrapara headquarters hospital.

Headmaster Satyananda Biswal said the injured students are of Garadpur Adarsha Vidyalaya. Over 150 students of the model school are studying in Kudanagari High School as the construction of their school building is in progress. He said that a transformer has been installed near the school from an 11-kv LT line which resulted in an increased intensity of the lightning. A short circuit was also reported, said Biswal.

KAKAR TO BE PAK'S CARETAKER PM

Islamabad: Senator Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar was Saturday picked as Pakistan's caretaker Prime Minister to govern the cash-strapped country and oversee general elections later this year. Outgoing Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and the Leader of Opposition Raja Riaz finalised his name after two rounds of deliberations. Kakar, a lawmaker belonging to Balochistan Awami Party (BAP), will lead a caretaker government until fresh election is held later this year. P10

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Will lying in the House be punishable under new criminal laws?

WEATHER	
	BHUB CTK
TEMP MAX	34.8°C 34.6°C
TEMP MIN	25.6°C 27.0°C
Humidity	78% 78%
Rainfall	25.2mm 2.2mm
Forecast	Light to moderate rain



RECORD FOURTH TITLE: India eked out a fighting 4-3 win over Malaysia in the final to clinch the Asian Champions Trophy hockey tournament for the fourth time in Chennai, Saturday. Akashdeep Singh scored the winner for India with a slap stick from top of the 'D' after receiving a pass from Mandeep Singh. PTI PHOTO

FIGHTING INDIA BEAT SPIRITED MALAYSIA 4-3

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, August 12: India fought back from two goals down to eke out a 4-3 win over a spirited Malaysia in a thrilling final to claim their fourth Asian Champions Trophy title at the Mayor Radhakrishnan Stadium here Saturday.

Jugraj Singh (9th minute), skipper Harmanpreet Singh (45th), Gurjant Singh (45th) and Akashdeep Singh (56th) were the goal scorers for India.

For Malaysia, Abu Kamal Azrai (14th), Razie Rahim (18th) and Muhamad Aminudin (28th) found the back of the net.

It is India's record fourth title, making it the most successful team in the event.

India had earlier thrashed Malaysia 5-0 in the round-robin league stage.

Malaysia were aggressive in the first half as the Indians found it difficult to restrict their opponents.

India converted their first penalty in the ninth minute with Jugraj scoring with a fierce flick to the right of the Malaysian goalie.

The Indians got into their groove as the match progressed and played full-pressure hockey after a sluggish start. MORE P12

Go generic or face music

NMC WARNS DOCTORS OF PUNITIVE ACTION IF THEY FAIL TO PRESCRIBE GENERIC DRUGS

AGENCIES

New Delhi, August 12: In what may boost the adoption of generic medicines by citizens, the National Medical Commission (NMC) in its fresh guidelines has asked doctors across the country to prescribe only generic drugs failing which they will be penalised and even may face suspension of their licence.

The NMC in its 'Regulations relating to Professional Conduct of Registered Medical Practitioners' also asked doctors to avoid prescribing branded generic drugs.

Even though doctors are currently required to prescribe generic drugs only, there are no penal provisions mentioned in the regulations issued in 2002 by the NMC.

The regulations notified August 2, stated that India's out-of-pocket spending on medications accounts for a major proportion of public spending on healthcare.

"Generic medicines are 30 to 80 per cent cheaper than branded drugs. Hence, prescribing generic medicines may overtly bring down healthcare costs and improve access to quality care," it said.

Under the generic medicine and prescription guidelines of the regulations, the NMC defined generic medicines as a "drug product that is comparable to brand/reference listed product in dosage form, strength, route of administration, quality and performance characteristics, and intended use".

On the other hand, a branded generic drug is one which has come off patent and is manufactured by drug companies and sold under different companies' brand names.

These drugs may be less costly than the branded patent version

but costlier than the bulk-manufactured generic version of the drug. There is less regulatory control over the prices of branded generic drugs.

"Every RMP (registered medical practitioner) should prescribe drugs using generic names written legibly and prescribe drugs rationally, avoiding unnecessary medications and irrational fixed-dose combination tablets," the regulation stated.

In case of violations, a doctor may be given a warning to be more careful about the regulations or instructed to attend a workshop or academic programme on ethics, personal and social relations and/or professional training.

On repeated violations, the doctor's licence to practice may be suspended for a particular

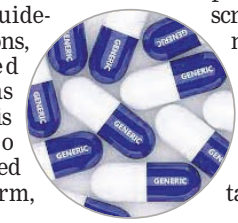
period, the regulations said.

The NMC said prescriptions should be legible and preferably written in all caps to avoid misinterpretation. As far as possible, prescriptions should be typed and printed to avoid errors, it said.

A template has also been provided by the NMC that may be used for writing prescriptions rationally.

Medical practitioners should prescribe only those generic medicines available in the market and accessible to patients. They should also advocate for hospitals and local pharmacies to stock generic drugs, the NMC regulation stated.

They should encourage patients to purchase drugs from Jan Aushadhi Kendras and other generic pharmacy outlets, educate medical students and the public about the equivalence of generic medicine with their branded counterparts and should actively participate in programs related to promotion and access to generic medicines, it added.



On repeated violations, the doctor's licence to practice may be suspended for a particular period, the regulations said

Job fraud: Scammers use bank accounts

GYAN RANJAN MOHAPATRA, OP

Bhubaneswar, August 12: The Commissionerate Police Saturday busted an interstate job fraud racket that was using bank accounts of gullible people by paying them some paltry amount, and duping scores of job aspirants.

The police arrested Rajesh Samantaray, 38, of New Rajeev Colony area in Haryana, Raj Sinha, 28, Ashok Nagar area in East Delhi and Sandeep Kumar Bai, 39, of Pattamundai area in Kendrapara in this connection.

Earlier, a case (68/23) was registered on a complaint lodged by victim Shiba Shankar Reddy.

According to police, Rajesh came in contact with the victims through one of his relatives residing in Khurda in November 2022. He told the victims that he is running an NGO in which poor people are working. Rajesh convinced them to give him their bank accounts that would be used for transferring wages to the workers.

He promised to pay ₹1,500 to each of the account holders. Lured by the offer, the victims gave their account details to the fraudsters who initially paid the promised amount.

"After some days, Shiba Shankar visited the bank branch and found that his account has been marked debit freeze by cyber police stations from various states as illegal transactions were made through his account online," said a senior police official.

Later, the fraudsters came to Bhubaneswar and opened a fake consultancy firm at Sundarpada and started cheating aspirants on the pretext of providing jobs in reputed companies.

"Sandeep was taking interview of job seekers, Rajesh was providing hired accounts & pre-activated SIMs from the locality for the purpose of receiving fraudulent money from the victims and Raj was sending job related fake advertisements to job seekers and finalized a deal of ₹40,000 from each candidate as advance," the cop added.

SC for security units on judicial complexes

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 12: Voicing concern over the recent incidents of firing in Delhi courts, the Supreme Court has underlined the need for a security plan, including stationing of permanent court security units (CSU), on each judicial complex across the country.

It said such incidents pose significant risks to the safety of not only judges but lawyers, court staff, litigants and the general public, and issued a raft of directions for strengthening security on court premises.

The apex court said Friday preserving the sanctity of a court as a space where justice is administered and the rule of law upheld is non-negotiable.

A bench of Justices S Ravindra Bhat and Dipankar Datta said it is critical that judicial institutions take comprehensive steps to safeguard the well-being of all stakeholders.

The SC said there ought to be in place a security plan prepared by the High Courts in consultation with the principal secretaries, the Home departments of each state government and the directors general of police of states/union territories or the commissioners of police.

The schematics of CCTV camera installation will have to be laid down on a district-wise basis where the respective state governments should provide the requisite funds for the execution of such a plan in a timely manner, the bench said.

AGENCIES

San Francisco, August 12: Researchers have found that people with a history of playing organised tackle football had a 61 per cent increased odds of having reported Parkinsonism or Parkinson's disease (PD) diagnosis, a new study has revealed.

Parkinson's disease is a progressive disorder that affects the nervous system and the parts of the body controlled by the nerves.

According to the study by the US-based Boston University School of Medicine, the risk of Parkinson's increases with more years of play, even in high school and college players.

In this study, the researchers



evaluated 1,875 sport participants - 729 men who played football, predominantly at the amateur level, and 1,146 men who played non-football sports who served as

the control group.

The researchers found a link between playing football and increased odds of having a Parkinsonism or PD diagnosis even after accounting for known

risk factors for PD.

Additionally, the data revealed that players with longer careers and higher levels of competi-

The researchers evaluated 1,875 sport participants - 729 men who played football, predominantly at the amateur level, and 1,146 men who played non-football sports who served as the control group

tion were more likely to have a reported diagnosis of Parkinsonism or PD.

Football players who played at the college or professional level were at 2.93 increased odds of having a PD diagnosis as com-

pared to those who just played at the youth or high school level, according to the study.

"Playing tackle football could be a contributing risk factor to PD, particularly among people already at risk due to other factors (e.g., family history). However, the reasons for this relationship are not clear and we also know that not everyone who plays tackle football will develop later-life neurological conditions, meaning many other risk factors are at play," said corresponding author Michael L Alosco, PhD, associate professor of neurology at Boston University.

The researchers acknowledge several limitations to their findings and caution that the work is still preliminary.

leisure

FORTUNE FORECAST

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

ARIES
Today you will have an eye for beautiful and outlandish things. There is a possibility that you may even contemplate starting a business related to these things. Ganesh feels, though, that you will not be able to reach any conclusion about it. But you will keep the option open.

TAURUS
Today, you are likely to be more reckless than ever in splurging your hard earned money. Ganesh strongly advises you to leave your credit card at home today. Using it for making purchases will only make matters worse. Money wise, be very careful in your business dealings, about the commitments you make.

GEMINI
You will feel physical and mental excitement and emotions today. You may take part in some competition and will seek to improve your self-esteem by performing physically in it. Your intellectual capacity will be on display in the work that you do, says Ganesh.

CANCER
Lack of support from family members will disable your efforts. Children also disappoint you. Discord or difference of opinion in family is indicated. Beware of neighbours. Yet, says Ganesh, face circumstances with a smile.

LEO
You want to make your personal relationships conflict free and hence will attempt to resolve the conflicts which are within you. You will need to adopt a compromising attitude in life. It is best to stay away from risky financial investments today.

VIRGO
Ganesh says today you will be highly motivated. Your creative talents and abilities set you apart as an excellent artist. Words will flow if you give vent to your creativity, and if you choose to sing or dance, you will be the focus of attention. Ganesh advises you to pursue the performing arts or writing as hobbies.

LIBRA
Ganesh says the inner artist in you will come to the surface today and you will showcase your imagination powers too. You will be able to focus on topics of interest today. Those of you in the field of interest will find themselves moving ahead. There may be signing of beneficial legal deals today for you.

SCORPIO
Your account balance may suffer suddenly as you decide to loosen your purse strings. You are all set to splurge on your loved ones today, according to Ganesh. However, it is important to remember that the value of money is precious, and once spent it never returns; spend wisely.

SAGITTARIUS
Suddenly, you discover that you are fully dedicated to your family. Kith and kins form the crux of your life, says Ganesh. Showing your love and affection to your kids will give you a feeling of satisfaction. Spend some quality time with your partner!

CAPRICORN
You can't bear the weight of the heavy work load any more. Very cleverly, you will complete your tasks and slowly but steadily you take the load off your shoulders, predicts Ganesh. Attentive and observant, you meticulously plan your actions and minimise the chances of errors. Today, your efforts will not be effectively channelised, but it will not be a bad day, also.

AQUARIUS
You are talented, hard working, confident and down to earth. These four characteristics are the pillars of success. Now, it is time build the building. Your curiosity and desire to achieve your goals will help you with it, feels Ganesh.

PISCES
A reckless attitude is the root cause of any downfall. Ensure responsible behavior and actions at every step at your workplace, today, suggests Ganesh. Be alert and focused and you will be able to dodge any incoming trouble.



HALLE BERRY: I'M SOLIDLY IN MY WOMANHOOD

Academy award winning actress Halle Berry asks women not to get bogged down after having children. Speaking to Women's Health at the Cannes Lions Festival of Creativity panel, Halle said: "I'm solidly in my womanhood. Here's what I tell women: Own wherever you are."

BRITNEY HAPPY WITH ALTERNATIVE TREATMENT

Pop singer Britney Spears has said that she is now done with using Botox, and is perfectly happy with alternative cosmetic facial treatments. In a new Instagram video, the 41-year-old told her followers that she has found an alternative treatment to support anti-aging.



'INDUSTRY NEEDS ACTORS, NOT BODYBUILDERS'

Mumbai: Sunny Deol is back with a bang as he returns as Tara Singh with *Gadar 2*, 22 years after the release of the first installment *Gadar: Ek Prem Katha*. In a recent interview with IMDB, Sunny was recently asked to share an advice for the new generation of actors. And the 65-year old said they should start acting rather than just dancing and bodybuilding. Sharing an advice for the younger lot, Sunny said, "Stop bodybuilding and dancing. Concentrate on acting. You have the talent, take it ahead because that's what we need. We are not bodybuilders. You should be fit, strong, and healthy. I know you all have seen my earlier films, and so many earlier actors, plus there are quite a few new ones who are doing great work. Let them be your heroes rather than people who are simply muscling around."

Gadar 2 also marks the return of Ameesha Patel as Sunny's Tara Singh's wife Sakeena and child actor Utkarsh Sharma as their grown up son, Charanjeet. While 2001 film was set in 1945 and went up till 1952, *Gadar 2* is set in 1971. "You feel it is a very old film, but that's the genre we have created because that's the period in which we are shooting the new film," he said. Despite clashing with Akshay Kumar's *OMG 2*, *Gadar 2* collected around Rs 40 crore on day one, the second highest collection on an opening day.



Prem gets nostalgic at his hometown

The actor from Bhubaneswar, who plays the lead in Hindi web series 'Commando', was in the City to promote the show. Directed and produced by eminent filmmaker Vipul Amrutlal Shah, the series was dropped Friday on popular streaming platform Disney + Hotstar

Bhubaneswar: A day after the release of the Hindi web series *Commando*, its lead actor debutant Prem Parrijaa visited the city, his hometown, Saturday to promote the high-octane action drama.

Speaking to the media, he said, "As part of the promotional event of the series, I am in Bhubaneswar today. It's a nostalgic feeling to be back in my hometown."

Prem, who has previously worked as an Assistant Director, revealed that he would be essaying the gruelling life of a commando who carries out operations in hostile environments.

"The character needs to be physically and mentally tough, and I think I have given my best," he added.

"Wherever I am going, I am getting a warm reception. I hope that will be replicated by my people in Odisha too," said the first Odia to have landed a lead on a streaming platform.

Earlier in the day, the actor visited

Srimandir in Puri to pay obeisance to the deities.

Directed and produced by Vipul Amrutlal Shah, the show, which was dropped on Disney+ Hotstar Friday also has Adah Sharma, Amit Sial, Tigmanshu Dhulia and Mukesh Chhabra playing key roles.

The *Commando* franchise was launched in 2013 with *Commando: A One Man Army*, starring Vidyut Jammwal in the titular role. Over the years, the franchise has become a favourite of enthusiasts of the action genre.



Suhana's generosity

Mumbai: Suhana Khan, daughter of actor Shah Rukh Khan and interior designer Gauri Khan, was seen giving money to a woman after attending an event in Mumbai. Taking to Instagram Friday, a paparazzo posted a video in this regard.

In the clip, Suhana is seen exiting the restaurant with her mother. A woman approaches her asking for money and Suhana quickly opens her handbag and gives her two currency notes of Rs 500 each. As Suhana hands out the money, the woman jumps with joy. Suhana is also seen laughing as she bids the paparazzi goodbye.

Reacting to the video, a person wrote, "Girl with a golden heart." A comment read, "I swear she is the sweetest." An Instagram user said, "Bless her God. Pure heart we can see." "I love her vibe in this one. The smile. The generosity. Giving the money again," commented another fan. "She's the most beautiful, kind, down-to-earth girl I look at her how humble she is @suhanakhan2," said another person.

For the occasion, Suhana wore a charcoal sleeveless bodycon dress and black heels. Gauri Khan was seen in a white top, yellow blazer, denims and white heels.



Sara says no to remakes

Mumbai: Sara Ali Khan made a very confident entry into the movies with *Kedarnath* and *Simmba* but post that none of her projects did wonders to her career with only *Atrangi Re* being the saving grace. The two films that she did in the interim were remakes - *Coolie No 1* with Varun

Dhawan and *Love Aaj Kal* with Kartik Aaryan.

And given the public response to those films, the actress has decided not to say yes to any more remakes.

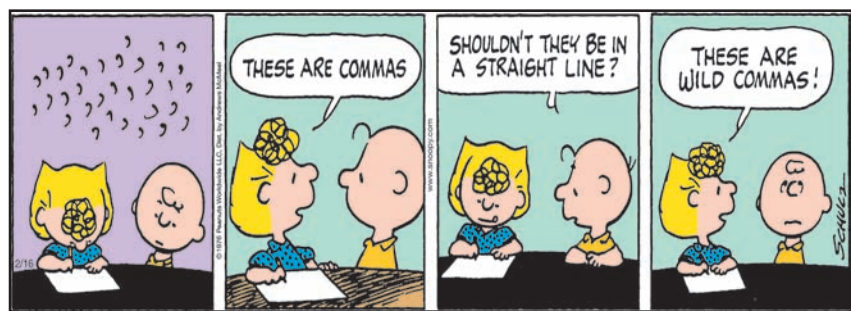
Talking about it in an interview with an entertainment portal, when Sara was asked if she'd like to remake any of her mom Amrita Singh's movies, she said that she has done two remakes till now and she's learnt that some films shouldn't be touched.

She added that she does look like her mother but if she doesn't act as well as her mother then the media will not let her get away with it and she doesn't want that.

The actress has found her mojo back with the success of *Zara Hatke Zara Bachke* with Vicky Kaushal and has an interesting slate of films lined up starting with *Murder Mubarak* with Karisma Kapoor and Sanjay Kapoor.



PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

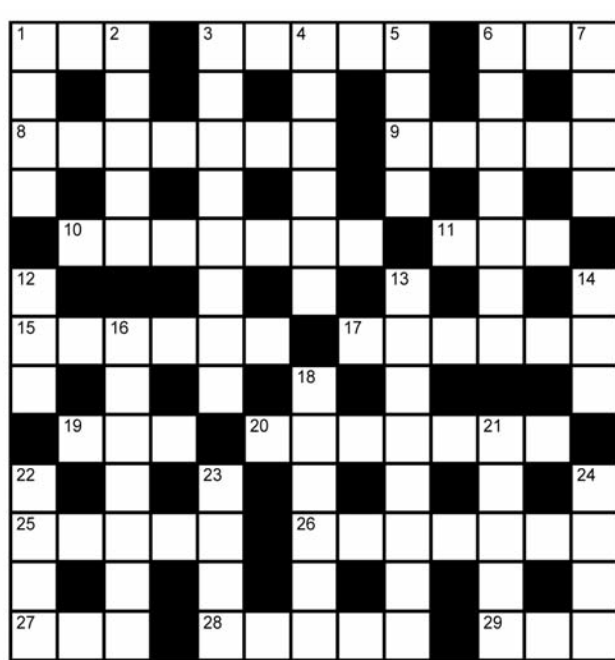


BREVITY



FUN post

CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 Disobedient
 - 3 Conjuring
 - 6 Thirsty
 - 8 Words of distress (3,2,2)
 - 9 Dangerous
 - 10 Sudden desire
 - 11 Spider's home
 - 15 Blue-violet colour
 - 17 Liquid holder
 - 19 Fire residue
 - 20 Cradle song
 - 25 Excuse
 - 26 Pill type
 - 27 Storm centre
 - 28 Farm animals
 - 29 Fixed charge
 - 6 Last course
 - 7 Child's toy (2-2)
 - 12 Vigour
 - 13 Sweet treat on a stick
 - 14 Take a spouse
 - 16 Abhor
 - 18 Custard and vegetable pie, at times
 - 21 Pretence
 - 22 Cottontail
 - 23 Snake sound
 - 24 Simple

SUDOKU

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



SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD



SUDOKU



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown

FOR A BRIGHT FUTURE

A participant explains his project to visitors at a science exhibition at Saraswati Sishu Bidya Mandir, Unit-3, in Bhubaneswar, Saturday



WORLD ELEPHANT DAY

Tech-based system likely to curb casualty on rail tracks



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 12: The Ministry of Railways is planning to introduce technology based intrusion detection system along the tracks to minimize instances of railway-related elephant collisions in Odisha, and other states in the country, Union Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change and Labour and Employment Bhupender Yadav said, Saturday.

Addressing a gathering on the occasion of World Elephant Day here, the minister said about 110 critical stretches across the railway network in the country that pass through elephant habitats have been identified. In these critical stretches, multi-pronged strategies are planned to minimize railway-related elephant collisions.

Yadav said in these locations, measures such as building underpasses, clearing vegetation along the tracks to increase visibility for the loco pilots to avoid collisions, provisioning ramps, and others will also be taken up. It is worth mentioning that

between 2017-17 and 2021-22, 17 jumbos had been killed on railway tracks in Odisha. The figures were the second highest among states in the country, with Assam recording the maximum of 27 pachyderm deaths due to train-hits during the period.

Yadav, who chaired the 19th Steering Committee meet of Project Elephant in Odisha, said India is the mainstay for long-term conservation of the species with the largest population of wild Asian elephants. He said active participation of local communities is the key in steering elephant conservation to new heights.

He also emphasised on the need to mitigate human-elephant conflicts, ensuring safe passage for elephants, creating more rescue and rehabilitation facilities for them and building capacity of field staff and veterinarian. The minister also highlighted the initiative to map genotype of all captive elephants in the country to prevent illegal trafficking of elephants.

Four elephant reserves across the four elephant bearing regions of the country have been

Elephant reserve network in the country has increased from 76,508 sqkm to 80,777 sqkm in last two years, says union environment and forest minister Bhupender Yadav

identified for piloting the process of management effectiveness evaluation for the elephant reserves. The minister said this will be a major step forward in standardizing and propagating best practices among the elephant reserves.

Moreover, elephant reserve network in the country has increased from 76,508 sq km to 80,777 sq km comprising 33 elephant reserves during the last two years, he said.

On the occasion, the minister conferred the prestigious Gaj Gaurav awards to five persons, including three from Odisha, for their exemplary contributions in the field of elephant conservation and management.

As part of the world elephant day celebrations, the minister released the report on 'Elephant Corridors of India' prepared by Project Elephant. The report comprises details pertaining to 150 elephant corridors across India with corresponding maps. He also released the second version of the Atlas of Elephant Reserves of India, which is intended to provide basic information on all the 33 Elephant Reserves of India.



INSPIRING YOUTHS: Dharitri and Orissa POST Chief Executive Adyasha Satpathy inaugurates a debate competition on the topic 'Media, Democracy, Youth' by lighting the ceremonial lamp at the Sri Sri University, as part of the 50th anniversary celebrations of leading Odia daily Dharitri, in presence of university Vice Chancellor BR Sharma, Swami Satya Chaitanya, Captain Chandra Sekhar Panda in Cuttack, Saturday

Chilika-Daya basin a bone of contention between Odisha and Chhattisgarh

KULDEEP SINGH, OP

New Delhi, August 12: The Chilika-Daya basin has turned into a matter of contention between Odisha and Chhattisgarh concerning delineation of the Mahanadi basin.

Before the Mahanadi Water Dispute Tribunal, Chhattisgarh government Saturday raised objection over Odisha's division of the Chilika-Daya basin into four basins.

Chhattisgarh submitted to the tribunal that while the assessors have delineated Mahanadi in 16 basins, wherein the Chilika-Daya basin is one, Odisha has divided Chilika-Daya basin into four basins. A

three-judge bench headed by retired Supreme Court judge Justice AM Khanwilkar, however, said that the tribunal will in principle take the report of assessors on record and if any of the states wants to include or exclude some information then they will have to provide evidence in support of their claims. The bench posted the matter for hearing September 16 and asked the states to study the delineation report prepared by the assessors.

The tribunal also granted four weeks time to both Odisha and Chhattisgarh for completing the common information format. Odisha is yet to submit at least 18 appendices while

Chhattisgarh is to submit 15. The bench observed that the states should not seek further time and on the next hearing it would start recording evidence, documents and witness statements of the concerned states. The tribunal also disposed of a batch of applications filed by Odisha and Chhattisgarh for obtaining documents from Central agencies for the common information format.

Earlier, the judges of the tribunal along with assessors and teams of Odisha and Chhattisgarh had visited Mahanadi basin in Chhattisgarh and Odisha in April and May to take stocks of the ground realities.

'BJP to fight next election alone'

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 12: Senior BJP leader and Union Forest Minister Bhupender Yadav Saturday said that the saffron party will fight alone in Odisha in the next Assembly election and form government.

Speaking to reporters here, Yadav said, "There is no alliance between BJD and BJP. We will fight alone in Odisha and will also form the government."

Yadav's statement assumes significance in the backdrop of speculations in state political circles that BJP and BJD may form an alliance for the upcoming elections. The theory gained ground following the crucial and secret meeting between Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik here last week, and the BJD's full hearted support to the Modi government in two important issues in the Parliament.

Joining Yadav, state BJP president Manmohan Samal said the party will fight alone in all the 147 Assembly and 21 Lok Sabha seats in the next election. Stating that his party is ready to fight election at any time, he said they have the support and voters.

On the other hand, senior BJD leader and minister Pramila Mallick said the BJP's wish is "like a daydream" and claimed that her party will win the next election with a thumping majority and form government for the sixth consecutive time.

Mallick also ruled out any proposal to form any alliance with the BJP for the upcoming poll. Meanwhile, confusion is growing within BJP and the ruling BJD as no one knows what was discussed in the close-door meeting between Shah and BJD Supremo. However, BJD MP Munna Khan said there is no confusion among party workers because BJD has extended support for some bills while it has been opposing some other bills.

STA CRYPTO-PONZI SCAM

Remand of accused duo extended by 5 more days

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 12: The Odisha Protection of Interests of Depositors (OPID) Court in Cuttack has extended the remand period of the accused involved in one of the biggest pan-India crypto fraud case by five more days for further investigation.

A senior Economic Offence Wing (EOW) official said Saturday that the agency had urged the court for an extension of the remand period of the arrested accused citing the need for thorough investigation into the case. This is in view of the involvement of various complex angles and transaction of huge amount of money defrauded by the accused duo - Gurtej Singh Sidhu, the head of STA Crypto Token and its state head Nirod Das.

The OPID court had earlier remanded the duo to EOW's remand for three days August 7.

The EOW has been trying to trace the trail of money illegally collected from the victims by the accused persons. The agency is also trying to find out if the accused had misappropriated the fraud money through benami transactions or money laundering.

The sleuths are also aiming to unearth the involvement of some NRIs based in Dubai and Canada and other countries in the multi-crore ponzi fraud syndicate. They are also trying to find out the other associates of the ac-

cused, including persons heading the operations in other states and their network and those in charge of finance, organizational, technical, event and celebrity management.

The accused have also been questioned about the money transaction with David Gez, a friend of Gurtej from Hungary, identity of other top associates/members of this scam, important Youtubers and administrators of Whatsapp groups related to this scam.

The EOW arrested Gurtej from Sri-Ganganagar, Rajasthan August 4, and its Odisha unit head Nirod Das August 5. Gurtej is a native of Faridkot, Punjab while Nirod belongs to Bhadrak district.

Acting on an intelligence input that a crypto currency-based ponzi scheme is in operation in Bhadrak, Balasore, Bhubaneswar, Mayurbhanj, Jajpur, Kendrapara and Keonjhar districts, the EOW started its inquiry.

During investigation, the EOW found that STA, through some up-line members, are very active in these districts and they have been using various propaganda tools to persuade people to join the scheme and earn huge returns in a very short period.

It is estimated that more than 10,000 people from Odisha have already been members of this scheme. The sham firm is not registered with the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to collect money from investors.

A minute after standing, his legs began to redden and became increasingly blue over time, with the veins becoming more prominent, the study from the University of Leeds, UK, said.

The colour was seen to become much more pronounced after 10 minutes of standing, with the patient describing a heavy, itchy sensation in his legs. However, his original colour was observed to return two min-



RAIN WOES: An inundated road in Acharya Vihar area, Bhubaneswar after a brief spell of monsoon shower, Saturday

OP PHOTO

Unusual case of 'blue legs' in long Covid patient

A MINUTE AFTER STANDING, HIS LEGS BEGAN TO REDDEN AND BECAME INCREASINGLY BLUE OVER TIME

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 12: An unusual case of a long Covid patient's legs turning blue after 10 minutes of standing has been reported in a study published in The Lancet journal.

The study described the case of a 33-year old man who developed a condition called acrocyanosis, which refers to blood pooling in the veins of the legs.

A minute after standing, his legs began to redden and became increasingly blue over time, with the veins becoming more prominent, the study from the University of Leeds, UK, said.

The colour was seen to become much more pronounced after 10 minutes of standing, with the patient describing a heavy, itchy sensation in his legs. However, his original colour was observed to return two min-

utes after he resumed a non-standing position.

The patient said he had started to experience the discolouration since his COVID-19 infection, the researchers said in the study.

"This was a striking case of acrocyanosis in a patient who had not experienced it before his COVID-19 infection," said Manoj Sivan, the study's author and associate clinical professor at the university's School of Medicine.

The patient was then diagnosed with postural orthostatic tachycardia syndrome (POTS), a condition causing an abnormal increase in heart rate upon standing.

Long Covid has been shown to affect multiple systems in the body, including the autonomic nervous system, which is responsible for regulating involuntary processes in the body such as heart rate, blood pressure,



PIC FOR REPRESENTATION

respiration, digestion, and sexual arousal.

Acrocyanosis has previously been observed in children with dysfunction of the autonomic nervous system (dysautonomia), a common symptom of post-viral syndromes.

"Patients experiencing this may not be aware that it can be a symptom of long Covid and

dysautonomia and may feel concerned about what they are seeing. Similarly, clinicians may not be aware of the link between acrocyanosis and long Covid," said Sivan.

Previous research by Sivan's team has shown that both dysautonomia and POTS frequently develop in people with long Covid.

Dysautonomia is also seen in a number of other long-term conditions such as Fibromyalgia and Myalgic Encephalomyelitis, also known as Chronic Fatigue Syndrome or ME, both of which affect muscles and cause pain.

The researchers said that the patient's case highlighted the need for greater awareness of this symptom among people experiencing this condition.

"We need to ensure that there is more awareness of dysautonomia in long Covid so that clinicians have the tools they need to manage patients appropriately," said Sivan.

Long Covid includes symptoms of fatigue, brain fog, depression and anxiety among others, heavily impacting the patients' ability to perform daily activities and their quality of life, which in some cases has been found to be worse than that of advanced cancer patients.



SOUVENIR RELEASE : Governor Ganeshi Lal, OASME Chairman Gauri Sankar Dash, Director of Industries, Odisha Md. Sadique Alam and guests releasing a souvenir during the 37th Annual State Level Convention of Odisha Assembly of Small and Medium Enterprises (OASME) at Soochana Bhawan in Bhubaneswar, Saturday

5T Secy reviews various devpt works in Mayurbhanj district

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, August 12: As per the direction of Chief Minister Naven Patnaik, 5T Secretary VK Pandian is on a two-day visit to Mayurbhanj district to review the progress of various developmental works and redressal of public grievances.

During the second day of his visit, the 5T Secretary reviewed the progress of ongoing mega piped water supply projects and multi village piped water projects in Bangriposi, Samakhunta, Kuliana, Suliapada, Morada, Rasgovindpur, Betnoti, Udala, Gopabandhu Nagar, Kaptipada, Tiring, Bahalda, Jamba, Rairangpur, Saraskana and Bisoil block. The project, to be completed at an estimated cost of Rs 2,127 crore, will be operationalised in phases from October 2023 this year. He directed the officials to ensure the completion of the projects within the timelines.

He reviewed the ongoing Subarnarekha Irrigation project works. Currently, 20,000 Ac in Betnoti block is covered, which will increase to 72,000 Ac in the coming years, while 11,000 Ac in Badasahi will be covered. He also reviewed the progress



of ongoing mega lift irrigation projects to be completed at an estimated cost of 179 crore. The facilities will irrigate 14,910 Ac in Kuliana, Betnoti and Saraskana blocks which are in tender stage. He directed the officials to ensure completion within the timelines.

Pandian also reviewed the progress of various road projects in Bangriposi, Moroda and Udala block. The projects will cost around 245 crore. He also reviewed the progress of Ama Hospitals in Bangriposi, Morada, Betnoti and Udala block.

During the day, he participated in the public grievance meetings at Bangriposi, Morada, Betnoti and Udala. He interacted

with the locals regarding their grievances. He conveyed the Chief Minister's priority towards addressing citizen grievances and assured them of early resolution of the petitions they submitted.

He interacted with Mission Shakti groups at Baripada and assured them support from the government for their activities. He visited the Mission Shakti Cafe in Baripada and appreciated their initiative.

Special Secretary to Chief Minister R Vineel Krishna, IG, Himansu Lal, Collector Vineet Bhardwaj, SP Batula Gangadhar and other district level officials accompanied the 5T Secretary during the visit.

55th doctorate to Samanta

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, August 12: The founder of KIIT and KISS Achyuta Samanta was recently conferred honorary doctorate degrees by two prominent universities in Guatemala. The degrees were conferred on him in recognition of his exceptional contributions to education and social welfare, particularly within the realm of tribal education.

The Rural University of Guatemala and the Maya Kaqchikel University bestowed the honours on Samanta during his two-day visit to the Central American nation, marking his 54th and 55th honorary doctorates.



The Rural University of Guatemala awarded Samanta the 54th doctorate at a special function. The degree was presented by the University's Rector and Founder Fidel Reislej.

Similarly, the 55th Honorary Doctorate was conferred upon him by the Maya Kaqchikel University, incorporating local tribal traditions. Given the tribal nature of this university, a distinctive ritual was performed. Before presenting the certificate to Samanta, their deity was worshipped, and permission was granted.

In a serene and natural setting, an elaborate four-hour tribal ceremony took place, meticulously adhering to the customs of Guatemala's indigenous community. A particularly noteworthy aspect of this event was the unconventional method used to bestow the honorary degree. The occasion saw the presence of various dignitaries, including the founder of the University, a Nobel Laureate representing the institution, the Indian Ambassador to Guatemala Manoj Mohapatra and the university's faculties.

Miscreants assault youth

Bhubaneswar: Miscreants armed with sharp weapons hacked a youth in broad daylight near bustling Master Canteen area of the city Saturday. The victim identified as Manoj Kumar Gaud, 28, hailed from Bhanjanagar area of Ganjam district. The victim, a daily wagger, has been residing at Harijan Basti under Kharavela Nagar police station here. Sources claimed that Gaud was going towards his home when the miscreants reached the spot and attacked him with sharp weapons allegedly over past enmity.

DAV Unit-VIII champs of Aditya Memorial Quiz

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, August 12: Giving a platform to students to hone their quizzing skills, Aditya Memorial Foundation in association with Loyola School, Bhubaneswar organised the 13th edition of 'Aditya Memorial Quiz' here Saturday.

After a series of highly competitive rounds, leaving behind all their fellow participants, DAV School, Unit-VIII, Bhubaneswar won the first prize with a cash reward of Rs 12,500, while Loyola School, Bhubaneswar, the hosts themselves finished second with a cash prize of Rs 7,500.

Blessed Sacrament School of Puri ended up as the 2nd runners up, winning a cash prize of Rs 5,000. There was also a special cash prize of Rs 1,000 for each semi-finalists and the finalist girl participants and the audience got a host of prizes participating enthusiastically in the event.

Notably, the inter-school quiz



completion was organized in the loving memory of Aditya, an avid quizzier and a Loyolean.

"The audience at the Xavier Institute of Management (XIM) University witnessed the battle of sharp and enthusiastic minds from 27 schools. A volley of brain racking questions was thrown for the participants by the quizmasters Anirudh Choudhury and Anurag Samantaray on a myriad of topics. The participants displayed awareness, assiduity and agility in facing those questions in the energy packed show," said a teacher of the school.

Debraj Pradhan, retired IFS and presently the director general international relations at KIIT University joined as the chief guest, while Mihir Sahu, founder partner of Anil Mihir, Jayshree Sahu, member of Aditya Memorial Foundation, Ajit Srivastav, director of Institute of Physics, Rector Fr Augustine Ezhakunnel SJ, Fr Arokia Das, chief finance officer and deputy registrar of XIM University, Nandita Pattanayak, vice-principal senior section and Esther Toppo, vice principal of junior section, joined the event with other guests.

SOA students excel in OCS exam



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 12: Three students of the Institute of Agricultural Sciences (IAS), faculty of agricultural sciences of SOA were felicitated by SOA founder president Manoranjan Nayak Saturday for excelling in Odisha Civil Service examination, results of which were published recently.

While Swetalina Sahu, a student of B.Sc. (Agriculture) of

2014-17 batch secured the 30th rank in the examination, Desalin Sethi (2015-18) and SD Kiran Kumar (2014-17 batch) were placed 67th and 229th respectively.

The students thanked the university and Dean of IAS SK Rout and other teachers for their guidance and encouragement which led to their success.

Pradipta Kumar Nanda, Vice-Chancellor of SOA and Bijay Kumar Sahu, Advisor of IAS also congratulated the students.



FOR A CAUSE: To spread awareness around importance of organ donation, Apollo Hospital staff took out a 'Walkathon' in Bhubaneswar on the eve of World Organ Donation Day, Saturday

Air pollution increases non-lung cancer risk in older adults

Chronic exposure to fine particulate air pollutants (PM2.5) and nitrogen dioxide (NO2) may increase non-lung cancer risk in older adults, a new research has warned.

The study of millions of Medicare beneficiaries by Harvard University's T.H. Chan School of Public Health and published in Environmental Epidemiology, found that exposures to PM2.5 and NO2 over a 10-year period increased the risk of developing colorectal and prostate cancers.

The researchers also discovered that even low levels of air pollution exposure may make people particularly susceptible

to developing these cancers, in addition to breast and endometrial cancers.

"Our findings uncover the biological plausibility of air pollution as a crucial risk factor in the development of specific cancers, bringing us one step closer to understanding the impact of air pollution on human health," said Yaguang Wei, research fellow in the Department of Environmental Health.

While air pollution has been established as a risk factor for lung cancer, and a link to breast cancer risk has been emerging, few studies have looked at its effects on prostate, colorectal, and endometrial cancer risk.



Researchers analysed data from national Medicare beneficiaries aged 65 or older. All subjects were cancer-free for at least the initial 10 years of the study period. Drawing from a variety

of air pollution data sources, the researchers developed a predictive map of PM2.5 and NO2 concentrations across the US.

Findings from the nationwide analysis showed that chronic

PM2.5 and NO2 exposures increased the risk of developing colorectal and prostate cancers but were not associated with endometrial cancer risk.

For breast cancer, NO2 exposure was associated with an increased risk, while the association for PM2.5 was inconclusive. The researchers suggested that the mixed associations may be due to variations in the chemical composition of PM2.5, which is a complex mixture of solid and liquid particles.

The researchers noted that even communities with seemingly clean air were not immune to cancer risk. They found substantial associations between

exposure to the two pollutants and the risks of all four cancers even at pollution levels below newly updated World Health Organisation guidelines.

The US Environmental Protection Agency recently proposed stricter standards for PM2.5, but their proposal doesn't go far enough in regulating this pollutant. "Current NO2 standards are also woefully inadequate. Unless all of these standards become much, much stricter, air pollution will continue to result in thousands of unnecessary cases of multiple cancers each year," said senior study author Joel Schwartz, professor of environmental epidemiology. IANS

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Coffee cultivation makes a comeback in Kalahandi

LIVELIHOOD INITIATIVE

The western Odisha district had shot to fame after the state government undertook coffee cultivation in tribal-dominated Thuamul-Rampur block in 1980

However, the initial euphoria was short-lived and coffee cultivation was soon pushed to extinction due to lack of awareness among the tribal

Over 20 coffee trees still stand tall on roadside at Thuamul-Rampur today and bear testimony to the erstwhile coffee cultivation in this district



testimony to the erstwhile coffee cultivation in this district.

Meanwhile, coffee produced in Koraput district has carved a niche for itself both inside the country as well as foreign countries. Koraput coffee is gaining appreciation among the coffee lovers for its unique flavor and aroma. The coffee produced in Koraput has been able to gain acceptance due to existence of proper marketing facilities ensured by the state government.

When contacted, project director Prasanna Pradhan of Watershed department said that the farmers are being provided with free saplings by the state government for the cash crop cultivation. The programme when successful will lead to financial development in the area and bring about a turnaround in the fortune of the local farmers and women of SHGs, he added.



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhawanipatna, August 12:

After a long hiatus, coffee cultivation has made a comeback in Kalahandi district, a report said Saturday. The matter came to the fore after the state government issued an order directing the district Collector to take necessary steps in this regard. After receiving the order, the watershed officials were called and directed to undertake coffee cultivation.

Notably, 300 acre of land has been taken up for the cultivation of the cash crop in the first phase. Coffee saplings are being produced on 200 acre of land for transplantation at a later stage.

The state government has restarted the coffee cultivation in Kalahandi district with an aim to provide social security to the residents of tribal dominated regions in the district. In a phased manner the cultivation will be taken up on more land and spread to other areas.

Coffee cultivation has started at Kanigumma, Badabafra in Gopinathpur panchayat, Upar Chabri and Mahulapatna in Mahulapatna panchayat of Thuamul Rampur block.

Farmers interested in coffee cultivation have been asked to form a producers' group which will then be engaged in cultivation by a soil conservation committee of Watershed department.

The cultivation will be implemented under rural job scheme Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) by district watershed mission and coffee board with funds available from the district mineral foundation (DMF).

Farming coffee will help the local tribal farmers earn their livelihood. It will also financially empower the local women self-help groups (SHGs) as they will be engaged to look after the maintenance of the coffee gardens.

Sources said the western Odisha district had shot to fame in and outside the state after the state government undertook coffee cultivation in tribal dominated Thuamul-Rampur block of the district in 1980. However, the initial euphoria was short-lived and coffee cultivation was soon pushed to extinction due to lack of awareness among the tribal people. Over 20 coffee trees still stand tall on roadside of Thuamul-Rampur today and bear



PATRIOTIC FEVER: People buy Tricolours sold by the Head Post Office in Sambalpur ahead of the Independence Day, Saturday

OP PHOTO

CRPF jawan's remains consigned to flames

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, August 12: The mortal remains of the late CRPF jawan, who was martyred during an encounter with Maoists in Jarkhand Friday, reached his village in Anandapur area of Keonjhar district, Saturday.

Teary eyed local residents paid rich tributes on arrival of late jawan Sushant Kumar Khuntia's body. A large number of people gathered along the village road to pay their last respect as the martyr's body was taken in a vehicle decorated

with flowers. Finally, his mortal remains were consigned to flames at the village crematorium ground with full state honours.

A pall of gloom has descended in the village after the news of Sushant's death spread. Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik and a host of other dignitaries Friday expressed deep grief over Sushant's martyrdom.

Sushant was killed during an encounter with Maoists in the forest under Tonto police limits of West Singhbhum district in Jharkhand Friday.

DECLARATION

This is to declare that Paltronics Allied Industries Private Limited, Regd. Office: Dinalipi Bhawan, A-54/1, A-55/1, Baramunda, Bhubaneswar - 751003 has been accorded Environmental Clearance vide EC Identification No. EC23B038OR110008 on dated 21.07.2023 from State Environment Impact Assessment Authority (SEIAA), Odisha, for construction of a Multi storied Residential Apartment & Club House Building at Plot No. 309/1694, Mouza: Patia, Bhubaneswar, Odisha

The copy of Environmental Clearance letter is available on State Environment Dept., Govt. of Odisha website: <https://environmentclearance.nic.in/>

Paltronics Allied Industries Private Limited

Regd. Office: Dinalipi Bhawan, A-54/1, A-55/1

Baramunda, Bhubaneswar - 751003

Man, son arrested in fake certificate case

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhawanipatna, August 12: Town police here in Kalahandi district Saturday arrested a teacher and his Dak Sevak son on charge of supplying fake certificates to the aspirants.

The accused were identified as Padmanabha Mahananda, a resident of Guepita village under Bhawanipatna Sadar police station and a retired teacher of Sapsilet Government Primary School in Bhawanipatna. His son Prabhat Mahananda is a Gramin Dak Sevak. The father-



son duo has been sent to jail following their arrest.

Police said that Padmanabha was providing fake certificates to job aspirants in exchange of huge sums of money. His son



Prabhat was allegedly appointed as a Gramin Dak Sevak by furnishing a fake certificate himself.

Padmanabha and his son came under scanner after a youth

Chhanik Bag of Kupati village under K Gaon police limits was nabbed in fake certificate case. Chhanik disclosed that Padmanabha had given him the fake certificate in exchange of ₹30,000. Police conducted further probe and arrested the man and his son.

Meanwhile, the assistant superintendent of Bhawanipatna Post Office had recommended the Board of Secondary Education (BSE) for verification of certificates of the newly appointed Gramin Dak Sevaks in Kalahandi district.

WOMAN DIES OF SNAKEBITE

Tihidi: A woman died of snakebite at Kamaria village under Mangalpur panchayat and Pirhat police limits Friday night. The deceased was identified as Phula Mahalik (58). Sources said, a poisonous snake bit her inside her house during her sleep. Subsequently she was rushed to Tihidi hospital in a critical condition. As her condition deteriorated she was then shifted to Bhadrak district headquarters hospital (DHH) where the doctors declared her dead on arrival. Police have registered a case of unnatural death and conducted post-mortem.

Dengue spreads its tentacles in Ganjam as 18 affected so far

POST NEWS NETWORK

Berhampur, August 12: Dengue is slowly spreading its tentacles in Ganjam district with as many as 18 people being inflicted with the disease till now as five fresh cases were identified Saturday.

Among the six patients diagnosed with the disease Friday, two were from Berhampur Municipal Corporation (BeMC) areas while one each from Kukudakhundi, Chikiti, Chhatrapur and Sanakhemundi areas, sources from the Health department said. Reports said eight out of the 18 positive cases have come from outside. Sources said that a 24-year-old youth from Siddharth Nagar in Berhampur town resides and works at Bhubaneswar. He was suffering from fever for the last few days. Later, he returned home and got a blood test done for dengue which came out positive.

The dengue test of a 16-year-old boy in Ashok Nagar has also come out positive while a 10-year-old boy from Kukudakhundi block also tested positive for the disease.

An elderly person in Chikiti block tested positive for dengue while a 22-year-old girl in Chamakhundi area of Chhatrapur block has been diagnosed with the disease.

The test report of a 19-year-old girl at Adapada under Sanakhemundi block has also come positive for dengue, the health officials said. The health conditions of the affected persons are stated to be stable and they are under medication at their respective homes on the advice of the doctors.

Sairat royalty defaults cost exchequer dearly



POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, August 12: A decision by the state government has brought to light a number of large-scale wrongdoings at the tehsil level resulting in huge revenue losses to the state exchequer. And Sundargarh district is no different in this regard.

Orissa POST's first investigation revealed two such tehsils - Lathikata and Kuanrunda - in Sundargarh. While Lathikata tehsil has been defaulted by ₹9 crore, Kuanrunda's amount was ₹5 crore. The said amounts were reportedly not collected from the leaseholders who have extracted minor minerals like sand, stones and morum (red stones) from quarries.

Recently, the government June 30 decided to shift the total responsibility of the management of minor minerals and minor mineral products to the department of Steel and Mines. There are over 2,000 such minor mineral mining activities going on at this moment in state under

different tehsils. This immediately brought a panic at the tehsil level.

Soon the department of Steel and Mines brought out a long list of SOPs. One major point became a headache for all those operating at the tehsil level. The department clearly declined to take charge of any defaulting mine as far as payment of royalties to the government is concerned. And this is nothing new that the list of defaulters is very long in tehsils across the state and Sundargarh district is not a case in isolation.

When this was brought to the notice of the Kuanrunda tehsildar Rajesh Sahu, he said as far as his slate was concerned it was clear. "I can tell you that we have collected all the pending royalties and deposited them with the government. Ever since I took charge, this was my priority and completing this remained my first target. Today I have my task completed," said the tehsildar, who has a good name as far as his role as revenue administrator is concerned.

However, all attempts to contact the Lathikata tehsildar Nandita Kujur failed as she could not be contacted over phone.

Under Sundargarh district there are over 60 such minor mineral extraction points known as 'sairats'. There are six sand extraction sites and three stone quarries under this tehsil. Soon OrissaPOST will continue to find out the status of the rest of the 16 tehsils.

Tension over control of transport rights subsidies

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, August 12: After remaining tense for a couple of days due to disputes over mining transportation rights between a new entrant and the old existing parties, Koira mining area has seen some normalcy Saturday.

"The situation is normal today. Mining operation and loading is going on peacefully. All the sides have agreed to work as per the work orders given to them. The workers' interest will be safeguarded at any cost," said Bonai SDPO Swaraj Debata adding that close watch is being kept.

Tension had been brewing for the last week ever since a new transporter was allowed transportation by the Odisha Mining Corporation (OMC). The new contractor was trying to enter with his vehicles but he was not allowed inside the siding area.

"The whole unrest is nothing but a fight for absolute control over a big transportation market," said a local trade union ac-



tivist, who did not want to be named. The entire operation was being managed by eight companies. But, it is reported that all the companies belonged to one single individual.

"Now, when another person gets in, the money will be shared and no one wants that, even if we believe that all the eight companies have different ownerships," he further added. And in this fight for "absolute control" the local tribals who earn their livelihood from the loading siding will get affected. "In fact, the tension has already affected them owing to arrival of less number of trucks," he said.

The Khandadhar mining area is witnessing palpable tension with the deployment of over 10 platoon police forces. Kurumita mining area is a part of the 651

acre of Khandadhar mining area and belongs to the OMC. Every year over 2.4 million tonne of iron ores are transported from here. For this purpose, eight companies are engaged in transportation of raw material, at least on pen and paper. The same person was allowed last year transportation by the OMC. However, he faced stiff opposition and could not operate. He has been allowed again this year for transportation and tension was witnessed following his entry into the area.

Last year an agreement was signed in the presence of Bonai MLA Laxman Munda, Rourkela MLA and Labour Minister Sarada Nayak, the transporters and local unions. It was decided that transportation would go on as usual and along with that peripheral development would also be looked after. Meanwhile, an attempt to speak to Munda failed and the minister's audio was very poor due to network issues. Police say the situation was under control and a tight vigil is being kept.

'MERI MATI MERA DESH' CAMPAIGN

CISF remembers martyred jawan

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, August 12: Taking forward the 'Meri Mati Mera Desh' campaign announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the CISF unit here Friday remembered one of their brothers who had martyred during an encounter with extremists on the line of duty. This campaign is being held as part of the Azaadi Ka Amrut Mahotsav with the tag line 'Mitti ko naman, veeron ka vandan'.

The CISF unit Friday visited the house of slain jawan Anil Topo at Kuanrunda under Biramitrapur PS. Anil was posted at the 2nd Reserve Battalion. At that time his battalion was stationed at Ranchi. There was a call for duty and he was taken to Tripura to guard the ONGC installations there from elements inimical to the interest of the country.

On November 25, 1996, his unit came in direct contact with the ultras of Tripura National



informed the DIG. "The entire locality was present there along with students from the local schools. Besides, the elected representatives were present along with the family members. We hoisted the Tricolour and also planted trees in his memory. His brave story was narrated to the students and all those present there. The moment was poignant as the family members were all in tears," said the officer. "However, the family declined to install any statue of Anil. So we put up a plaque explaining a little about him there," the officer added.

Notably, the 77th Independence Day of India will mark the final round of celebration of the 'Azaadi Ka Amrut Mahotsav' programme. Prime Minister Narendra Modi had July 30 announced that a 'Meri Mati Mera Desh' campaign will be launched in the run up to Independence Day to honour the martyred brave hearts of the country.

Bhograi new bus stand to be inaugurated soon

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhograi, August 12: The new bus stand of Odisha State Road Transport Corporation (OSRTC) has been built at Thana Chowk of Bhograi block in Balasore district. The state government has given a financial grant of more than 5 crore rupees for the construction of this new bus stand.

The Odisha Police Housing and Welfare Corporation (OPHC) had taken the responsibility of construction of the new bus stand. It is expected that when the bus stand starts functioning it will solve the problems of passengers lingering for many years here. 10 shops, driver rest shade, lavatory and an office building have been constructed inside the bus terminal. Construction of new bus stands at Bhograi, Baliapal, Basta and Simulia areas for the convenience of the passengers are under process, informed the OPHWC. As the new bus stand was announced to be inaugurated by the Chief Minister soon, construction work was seen to be going on a wartime footing.

FOCUS COMMODITIES

THE GRAIN SCARCITY MYTH



While global hunger has surged in recent years, the way to address the current food crisis is by focusing on its real causes: financial speculation and corporate profiteering

Netherlands, as well as China and Turkey. Low-income countries received 3% of Ukraine's grain exports and 9% of its wheat (most to Bangladesh). Given that food-importing African countries received only a fraction of these exports, the fears that the deal's breakdown would lead to mass starvation across the continent seem vastly exaggerated. The BSGI seems to be more about facilitating exports from Ukraine – a laudable goal in its own right – than about addressing world hunger. In addition to the Russian blockade of its maritime routes, Ukraine's overland routes have been compromised by the implicit import restrictions imposed by Central and Eastern European countries such as Poland, Bulgaria, Hungary, Slovakia, and Romania, which aim to shield struggling local farmers from competitively priced Ukrainian grain. But, as others have pointed out, the BSGI primarily serves the interests of the agribusiness giants trading in Ukrainian grain and the financiers backing them.

While global hunger has surged in recent years, it is not because of a shortage of grain. Instead, plummeting exports, dwindling foreign-exchange revenues, capital flight, and higher debt-servicing costs have diminished many countries' ability to import foodstuffs.

To address these challenges, we must shift our focus. Rather than distribute grain as charity, global policymakers must mitigate impoverished countries' foreign-exchange vulnerabilities and take measures to support increased domestic and regional production of essential food items. We can still win the fight against global hunger, but only if we recognise the real causes of our current predicament.

The writer is Professor of Economics at the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

PROJECT SYNDICATE

June 2022 – a period when wheat prices peaked – global production rose by five million tons while trade volumes increased by three million tons. Over the same period, stocks rose slightly (by three million tons).

Most notably, the total wheat supply (defined as production plus opening stocks) exceeded utilization by as much as 275 million tons. This surplus challenges the prevailing narrative of a global shortage. Similarly, global supply is estimated to have exceeded demand between July 2022 and June 2023, suggesting a consistent trend.

Second, governments and the media tend to emphasise specific regional shortages while overlooking increases in production and trade in other parts of the world. In reality, wheat is produced globally, which means that shortages in one region could be offset by increased production in another.

So, what caused the surge in wheat prices? To answer this question, we must follow the money. The global grain market operates as an oligopoly, with the four largest grain traders – Archer-Daniels-Midland, Bunge (which recently merged with Viterra), Cargill, and Louis Dreyfus – controlling more than 70% of the market and Glencore

accounting for another 10%. In the early stages of the Ukraine war, especially between March and June 2022, the Big Four grain traders reaped record profits and revenues. Cargill's annual revenues were up 23%, to \$165 billion, while Louis Dreyfus' profits soared by 80%. These gains reflected price hikes that were not aligned with real-world demand and supply dynamics.

Moreover, grain futures markets experienced a flurry of activity between April and June 2022. Financial investors, including pension funds, increased their share of long positions in the Paris wheat futures market from 23% in May 2018 to 72% in April 2022. Ten "momentum-driven" hedge funds reportedly earned \$1.9 billion by capitalising on the food-price surge triggered by Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Instead of preventing or containing such financial manoeuvres, regulators in the US and the EU allowed them to continue unabated.

Surprisingly, most of Ukraine's grain exports did not reach the world's poorest countries. Instead, 81% of the 32.9 million metric tons exported under the BSGI went to high-income and upper-middle-income countries, mostly European countries such as Spain, Italy, and the

In recent years, soaring food prices and the growing frequency and intensity of floods, droughts, and other extreme weather events have prompted warnings of a looming grain shortage, potentially spelling disaster for the world's poorest and most vulnerable populations. Although climate change poses the greatest medium to long-term threat to global food security, Russia's invasion of Ukraine is frequently cited as the immediate cause of the current hunger crisis. But this is a red herring.

To be sure, the war has disrupted wheat exports from both Russia and Ukraine, two of the world's leading producers, throwing critical trade relationships into disarray. Given that Ukraine and Russia previously accounted for more than a quarter of global wheat exports, policymakers and commentators attributed the surge in prices in early 2022 largely to supply shortages caused by the conflict.

But while the global wheat price index rose by around 23% in months following Russia's invasion, prices began to drop in June 2022. By December, they had returned to pre-war levels. Even when acknowledged, this trend was attributed to the success of Black Sea Grain Initiative, a UN-backed agreement that lifted Russian blockade of Ukraine's grain exports. Conversely, Russia's recent decision to pull out of the deal has raised concerns about its potential effects on the global grain trade. These concerns are misguided for two reasons. First, the global wheat supply (both total production and the traded amount) has remained steady since the onset of the Ukraine war. The Agricultural Market Information System, administered by Food and Agriculture Organisation of UN, incorporates data from the International Grains Council to provide estimates of supply, usage, and trade. Between July 2021 and

THE GLOBAL GRAIN MARKET OPERATES AS AN OLIGOPOLY, WITH THE FOUR LARGEST TRADERS CONTROLLING MORE THAN 70% OF THE MARKET



Jayati Ghosh

Higher always higher! Let us never be satisfied with what is accomplished.

THE MOTHER



Opponent of Liberty

A few weeks ago, I wrote a letter to Umar Khalid in jail. It read as follows: "Dear Umar, It is with admiration that one sees you, and the dignity with which you have conducted yourself in this period, and before it. Your persecution is an emblem of what is being called New India (not much of it is new, of course, other than the nakedness of what is being done and who it is being done to).

Emblematic in the sense that many feel strongly about you and think you personify, as few others do, what is happening around us. Calls for your release result in a large number of insulting, abusive and often fallacious comments. This is true. However there are always an equal and perhaps even a larger number of people who offer solidarity and understanding. This is anecdotal but has happened often enough and consistently enough for it to be considered data of some sort. While none of us can fully comprehend your position, one hopes that you can derive some warmth from this. There are many who were and remain with you. Along with your family, we have followed your case and its hearings and felt strong emotion for what has happened and how (LiveLaw and Bar & Bench ran detailed commentary). The quality of your defence team has been exceptional and Pais was magnificent. Perhaps this might also be something to take sustenance from. History tells us that movements and ideologies that are intense and fierce begin to come apart as their waves keep pounding the same space. Tides turn, as they say. It appears, and one is confident one is not being overly delusional in thinking this, that this is happening now. I have more than hope for how the next 10 months unfold for all of us, but particularly for political prisoners. My best wishes and my love, Aakar."

I have known him for some years now, and he has been good enough to come to some of the meetings held by Amnesty International India. It is hard to think of anyone who has been more demonised than he has, both by the government and its machinery and the media, which is also in New India part of the machinery. A few weeks ago, Amnesty India tweeted: "Umar Khalid has been in jail without a trial for 1000 days. He was arrested under India's draconian anti-terror law simply for peacefully expressing his opinions. He must be immediately and unconditionally released."

This so offended some people that a complaint was filed with Twitter asking that the tweet be taken down. It wasn't but the episode shows the acidity that exists against someone whom people know little about and what little they know is force-fed falsehoods. His friends and colleagues and those of us who know him have tried to speak of the real man, the person who is missing from the wild and fraudulent narratives on him. Writing in The Wire, Professor Nandini Sundar wrote of him that "when a Muslim like Umar Khalid crosses boundaries, there is a further panic attack. A young articulate Muslim man who does not wear a skull cap, who is an atheist, who did his Ph.D. from JNU in history on Adivasis in Singbhum is seen as an anomaly in the segregated world the RSS wants to create. The attempt is then to reduce him to just one aspect of his identity – so that whatever else he does or says or writes in the end he must be seen merely as a Muslim, and by extension, violent, anti-national, and a threat to the 'Indian mainstream'. So dangerous that he has been in jail for three years without bail. It is not surprising that so many of the young people who were arrested for the anti-CAA protests were Muslim students at India's leading universities."

Arrested in September 2019 by Delhi Police for making "provocative statements" when Donald Trump was on his visit to India, Umar has now spent three years in jail without being convicted of an offence. He is incarcerated because the government of Narendra Modi continues to oppose his bail. The case against him may be summarised by merely reproducing the headline of a piece written by Betwa Sharma on him for Article-14.com. It reads: "1000 Days Without Trial Or Bail For Umar Khalid, Denied Bail Despite False Allegations, Fabrications & Inconsistencies."

Over time, the BJP has fallen in love with laws that allow it to jail opponents, dissenters (especially Muslims). In 1954 the party said it would repeal the first amendment to the Constitution that curbed freedom of speech by imposing "reasonable restrictions." This amendment essentially took away freedom of expression because the list of what is seen as a reasonable restriction was far too wide and broad. The Jana Sangh sensed that it was not something that could be allowed to go unchallenged. However, after 1954, this demand that the first amendment be repealed and freedom of speech, association and assembly be restored to Indians disappeared from the Jana Sangh manifestos. Interestingly, the Jana Sangh said it would also repeal preventive detention laws which it said were absolutely in contradiction to individual liberty. This promise was made repeatedly in the 1950s. However by 1967 it began to qualify the demand and said that "care will be taken to ensure that fifth columnists and disruptionist elements are not allowed to exploit fundamental rights." In time, the Sangh and BJP became the most enthusiastic champions of preventive detention. When it was in the Opposition for decades, it opposed these same laws.

In 1954, as the Jana Sangh, it demanded that the first amendment be repealed and freedom of speech, association and assembly be restored to Indians. The party also said it would also repeal preventive detention laws (like UAPA is) which it said were absolutely in contradiction to individual liberty. However by 1967, it changed its position to where it is today: an opponent of liberty, particularly liberty to the sort of man Umar Khalid is.



Over time, the BJP has fallen in love with laws that allow it to jail opponents, dissenters (especially Muslims)

SPECTRUM AGRICULTURE

Efficacy of MSP intervention

A research report by the National Institute of Agriculture Marketing (2011) notes that in a typical town of Odisha, a number of scattered places act as market places with buying and selling taking place in a largely disorganised manner in the absence of any single regulatory or enforcement authority. What is the efficacy of the procurement policy in Odisha? Does procurement enables fair price realisations for the producers? This article attempts to briefly analyse the prevailing paddy procurement policy in the state and its implication on market prices, with a focus on paddy production and procurement.

Recent data from Odisha Agriculture statistics suggest that around 41% of the total production of paddy in the state is procured by agencies such as the Odisha State Civil Supplies Corporation Ltd., Odisha State Co-operative Marketing Federation Ltd., National Agriculture Cooperative Marketing Federation of India among others. The basic objective of procurement is to provide a cushion to farmers to market their produce in return for a fair price realisation. In Odisha, paddy is procured by these agencies at the MSP which

is pre decided before harvest season. The Regulated Market Committees (RMCs) with in which there are market yards, act as a place of buying and selling of the agriculture produce at prices decided by open auctions or open negotiations in case of crops like cotton while paddy is procured at MSP at RMCs. The revised Food and Procurement Policy as outlined by the Govt. of Odisha has been implemented with an objective of ensuring payment of MSP to farmers for paddy which are bought in for sale at the Paddy Purchase Centres (PPCs).

A district wise analysis of the PPCs (in operation as of now) and the farmers registered and mapped to PPCs provides crucial insights into the potential link between PPCs and the volume of paddy purchases. Data in the backdrop of 30 districts of Odisha (as of 2020-21, Kharif Marketing Season) indicates the operation of 3499 PPCs that are affiliated to 2628 Primary Agriculture Cooperative Societies (PACS), meaning that every PACS in a district has one or more PPCs. Furthermore, a stronger relationship or correlation between the number of farmers mapped to the PPCs and the volume of paddy purchase is observed.

However, the relationship seems to hold at lower levels of farmers being mapped to the PPCs primarily because on average, only 524 farmers in a district are mapped to a PPC in a PACS. The low registration of farmers in the Paddy Procurement Automation system has often been a cause of worry for the government wherein a drop of 75% in registration was observed during 2018-19 and 2019-20. Factors such as increased trading costs, high registration barriers and lack of MSP awareness could have potentially contributed to the dip in low farmer registration. Moreover, a situation survey of agriculture households (2013) observed that among the farmers in Odisha, around 46% surveyed were aware about MSP.

The efficacy of MSP is a much-debated issue and there exists abundant literature which has critically assessed the intervention. In the backdrop of the 30 districts in Odisha for a period of 2001-2018, the prevailing trend of the market prices and MSP can be observed by a measure of relative difference that is expressed as:

$$\frac{(\text{Market Price} - \text{MSP})}{\text{MSP}}$$

For MSP to be an efficient intervention, the relative differ-

ence should be close to zero. Data suggests that across the districts of Odisha for a time period of 2001-2018, around 70% of the prices realised in terms of the wholesale price is below the prevailing MSP. Substituting the wholesale price with the farm harvest price, it can be concluded that around 90% of the farm harvest price realised by farmers during the peak marketing season (4-8 weeks post-harvest) is below the MSP. In both the cases, it can be observed that the MSP has failed to generate the floor it intended to and the very purpose of MSP as a government intervention stands defeated. The numbers therefore point towards significant bottlenecks in the MSP enforcement process.

While we continue to engage in constructive debates on the present farm laws and whether freedom to trade can potentially transform functioning of the agriculture marketing structure, the floor in the form of MSP must be rebuilt and reset to ensure fair price realisations for farmers across the state and the nation.

The writer is PhD Scholar, London School of Economics. Views are personal.



Arijit Dash

THE BASIC OBJECTIVE OF PROCUREMENT IS TO PROVIDE A CUSHION TO FARMERS TO MARKET THEIR PRODUCE IN RETURN FOR A FAIR PRICE REALISATION

WISDOM CORNER

- One day, in retrospect, the years of struggle will strike you as the most beautiful. SIGMUND FREUD
- Though nobody can go back and make a new beginning... Anyone can start over and make a new ending. CHICO XAVIER
- Do not act as if you were going to live ten thousand years. Death hangs over you. While you live, while it is in your power, be good. MARCUS AURELIUS

WORDSWORTH

Milquetoast

The usual spelling is milquetoast, but said the same way as your spelling. And the usual sense is that of a person who is timid or meek, unassertive. Such people may appear apathetic or unmotivated, but that's not the reason for their being quiet. It's an eponym, named after a fictional cartoon character named Caspar Milquetoast, invented by the American illustrator Harold T Webster in 1924. The strip was called The Timid Soul and appeared every Sunday in the New York Herald Tribune up to his death in 1953. Mr Webster said that his character was "the man who speaks softly and gets hit with a big stick". The name is just a Frenchified respelling of the old American English term milk toast, an uninspiring, bland dish which was created from slices of buttered toast laid in a dish of milk, usually considered to be food for invalids. There's an even older foodstuff, milksop, which was untoasted bread soaked in milk, likewise something suitable only for infants or the sick.

Irregularities exposed

Sir, The CAG's performance audit report, tabled in the Lok Sabha on Monday, noted multiple cases of the Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY) providing treatment for patients who had already been declared dead, as well as for thousands of people using the same Aadhaar number or invalid mobile phone number. Highlighting irregularities in registration and validation of beneficiaries under the Ayushman Bharat PMJAY, CAG has revealed that nearly 7.5 lakh beneficiaries were linked with a single cellphone number – 9999999999. In its audit report on Performance Audit of Ayushman Bharat – PMJAY, tabled in Lok Sabha, the CAG said that overall, 7,49,820 beneficiaries were linked with a single mobile number in the Beneficiary Identification System (BIS) of the scheme. "Data analysis of the BIS database revealed that there were large numbers of beneficiaries registered against the same or invalid mobile number. Overall, 1,11,919 to 7,49,820 beneficiaries were linked with a single mobile number in the BIS database..." the report states. With the Centre's flagship health insurance taking fire over irregularities exposed by the CAG, the Health Ministry defended the scheme on Wednesday, saying that mobile numbers did not play any role in the verification of scheme beneficiaries. Asit Mohanty, JAJPUR

Righting a wrong

Sir, Recently the West Bengal Board of Secondary Education corrected the class 8 history textbook which has referred to freedom fighters Khudiram Bose and Prafulla Chaki as "revolutionary terrorists." The revised textbook now calls them "revolutionaries" and also includes a chapter on Khudiram Bose's life and achievements. This decision was taken after a public outcry and a petition filed by a lawyer in the Calcutta High Court. The difference between revolutionary terrorists and revolutionaries is the motive and the method of their actions. Revolutionary terrorists are those who use violence indiscriminately to create fear and chaos, and to overthrow an elected government. They often target innocent civilians. Revolutionaries, on the other hand, are those who use violence selectively and strategically to overthrow a foreign or colonial power. They are nationalists who often avoid harming non-combatants. They are also willing to sacrifice their lives for the cause of their motherland. Amarjeet Kumar, HAZARIBAGH

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

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

'Someone is complicit', says SC on Atiq killing

APEX COURT SEEKS STATUS REPORT FROM UP ON 183 'POLICE ENCOUNTERS' THAT HAVE TAKEN PLACE SINCE 2017

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 12: The Supreme Court has pulled up the Uttar Pradesh government over the killing of former Lok Sabha member Atiq Ahmad and his brother Ashraf in police custody in Prayagraj April 15, observing 'someone is complicit'.

It has also sought a status report from the state government on 183 'police encounters' that have taken place since 2017.

According to the state police, 183 people have been killed in numerous police encounters since the Yogi Adityanath government assumed office in March 2017. Yogi's detractors have often claimed many of them were staged. A bench of Justices S Ravindra Bhat and Aravind Kumar directed the UP government Friday to file an affidavit within six weeks giving the details of these encounters, the status of investigation, charge sheets filed and the status of trial.

"There were 5 to 10 people guarding him (Atiq)...How can someone just come and shoot? How does this happen? Someone is complicit," the bench observed.

It also issued notice to the UP government on a plea by Aisha Noori, sister of gangster-politician Ahmad, seeking a direction for a comprehensive probe into the killing of her brothers.

The top court, however, rejected the request of PIL petitioner Vishal Tiwari for institution of an independent judicial commission of enquiry to go into the police encounters and the role of the men in uniform in these, saying the state govern-



ment has already formed such a commission.

The apex court had earlier agreed to hear the pleas, including the one filed by Aisha Noori, seeking constitution of a commission of enquiry chaired by a retired apex court judge into the 'extra-judicial' killing of her brothers.

Ahmad (60) and Ashraf were shot dead at point-blank range by three men posing as journalists in the middle of a media interaction while police personnel were escorting them to a medical college for examination April 15. The entire shooting was captured live on national television.

In an affidavit filed in the top court, the Uttar Pradesh government said the state is "leaving no stone unturned in ensuring a thorough, impartial and timely investigation" into the deaths of Ahmad and Ashraf.

Exclusion of AIUDF from INDIA gives BJP an edge

The role of AIUDF is important in the political landscape of Assam where more than 30 per cent of the people belong to the Muslim community

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Guwahati, August 12: Much before the 26 opposition parties forged the INDIA alliance, the Congress in Assam was successful in bringing together 12 parties to form a unified opposition forum to take on the BJP's fierce election machinery in the state under the leadership of Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma.

The joint opposition forum included Sivasagar MLA Akhil Gogoi's Rajgor Dol, former All Assam Students Union (AASU) leader Lurinjyoti Gogoi's Asom Jatiya Parishad (AJP), and others.

But it lacks a prominent player in Assam politics - All India United Democratic Front (AIUDF).

Initially, the Trinamool Congress and the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) were also not given a place in the opposition forum.

But after the announcement of the INDIA bloc, the situation changed to a great extent and both Trinamool Congress and AAP are now constituents of the joint opposition forum.

But, Badruddin Ajmal's AIUDF is still yet to be included.

Assam has a good number of Muslim voters with more than 30 per cent of the people in the state belonging to the minority community.

The role of AIUDF is important in the political landscape of Assam.

Since its founding in 2005, the party has played a significant role in Assam politics. It won 18 seats in the 2011 Assembly election, making them the main opposition party in the state. The number of seats decreased to 13 in 2016, although the AIUDF managed to gain 16 seats in the 2021 Assembly elections.

Later, after leaving the party, one of its MLAs was re-elected



To oust the BJP from power in Assam, the Congress and AIUDF had formed a broad coalition ahead of the 2021 Assembly elections

on a BJP ticket.

In the 2014 Lok Sabha elections, the AIUDF took three of Assam's 14 MP seats. In the general elections of 2019, the vote tally dropped, and only Ajmal was able to capture the party stronghold of Dhubri.

To oust the BJP from power in Assam, the Congress and AIUDF had formed a broad coalition ahead of the 2021 Assembly elections. The combination secured more than 40 members in the 126-member Legislative Assembly, but it fell short of the required majority.

After a snag in Rajya Sabha elections over cross-voting in

favor of a BJP candidate, the relationship between the two parties further deteriorated, and Congress rejected the alliance.

Assam Congress president Bhupen Borah has been adamant in not taking the AIUDF along with them.

"We forged an alliance with Ajmal's party in the last Assembly polls. But what we could see was that AIUDF leaders were constantly delivering a series of provocative statements that, in turn, helped the BJP consolidate Hindu votes", Borah said.

"The saffron camp was trying their best to do polarisation, however, they had looked to be a failure in achieving their target. It was AIUDF leaders' statements that tremendously aided the BJP to swing the result in their favour."

Meanwhile, the AIUDF has claimed a number of times that the fight against the BJP would fail if they are not included in the alliance.

AIUDF general secretary

Aminul Islam said: "At present, Assam has nearly 40 per cent of the Muslim population. Congress has lost its base among many communities. So, they want to bank on the Muslim votes. But minority people have full faith in Badruddin Ajmal and they will vote for the AIUDF only."

Reacting to this, senior Congress MLA Debabrata Saikia said: "The AIUDF leaders are misleading the people. They cannot win any seats in the 2024 general elections."

Although Assam Congress has been trying to undermine Ajmal, the fact is that among the Muslim voters, AIUDF still holds a good grip.

Moreover, in half a dozen seats, Muslim votes would play an important role in determining the winner.

It is pretty evident that any division in the minority votes would help the BJP to increase their tally. Therefore, the exclusion of AIUDF from "INDIA" is undoubtedly an advantage to the saffron camp.

Bundelkhand Expressway to be solar-powered

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Lucknow, August 12: The Uttar Pradesh Expressways Industrial Development Authority (UPEIDA) has started the process of illuminating the Bundelkhand Expressway with solar power.

The UPEIDA has issued a letter of Expression of Interest, setting August 17 as the last date for submitting applications.

A state government spokesperson said that the project will be executed on public private partnership mode and UPEIDA has already prepared a detailed plan to set up solar panels.

"As per directions of the UPEIDA CEO, a detailed action plan has been prepared to develop the 296-km Bundelkhand Expressway as a solar powered expressway. We have invited applications from interested parties to develop this on PPP mode,"



the official said. He explained that out of the applications received, selected applicants will be called to give further presentations.

Once a company is finalised, the process of installation of solar panels will be started. The Bundelkhand Expressway is a four-lane route with a main carriageway and service lane.

Between these two, the area with a width of about 15 to 20 metres is currently vacant along the entire stretch of the expressway, which is used as a fence to separate it from agricultural land.

It is this land which will be used for installation of solar panels. The project is part of the government's commitment to accelerate industrial growth and enhance facilities as well as maintenance in industrial corridors and on highways.

Naga women demand peace, justice for disrobed women in Manipur



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kohima, August 12: A number of women tribal organisations in Nagaland Saturday held a protest rally here and demanded severe punishment of rapists and those who paraded disrobed women in the ongoing Manipur turmoil. Condemning the killing of people, burning of houses and religious places in Manipur, they called for immediate intervention by the Centre in restoring peace and normalcy

in that state.

They held banners and placards, some of which read 'We condemn parading of women and gang rape', 'Stand up for women rights', 'Stop the violence, start the healing', 'We want peace in Manipur', 'Rape is a punishable crime' and 'No mercy, Hang the rapists'.

The women organisations who convened at the PHQ junction here were from Angami, Ao, Chakhesang, Lotha, Pochury, Rengma, Sema and Zeliang tribes

of Nagaland and were supported by Central Nagaland Women Association (CNWA).

"A candlelight rally or punishment will not help to stop rapes. There should be a strict rule to punish rapists... They should be killed, hanged or burnt alive. They should be treated the way they are treating women. New and stricter rules have to be made to check the rape menace in the country in general," CNWA president Atoli Sema told reporters on the sidelines of the programme.

Speaking on the occasion, their leaders said the organisations stood together with the women of Manipur in their sufferings "in the brutal hands of unthinking savage criminals".

They said the groups were also with others who suffered and continue to endure abuse and violence in silence.

"We are ashamed that we were helpless when such heinous crimes are committed (against women). We are sorry that the society has failed you (the oppressed women of Manipur)," they said. A special prayer was held for the victims and their families and for restoration of peace in Manipur.

Meghalaya scraps thermal power plans



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Shillong, August 12: The Meghalaya cabinet has approved a proposal to scrap a 500 MW thermal power project after the North Eastern Electric Power Corporation Limited (NEEPCO) expressed its interest in green energy, Power Minister AT Mondal said Saturday.

The minister said that following the cabinet clearance, an MoU signed with the company will now stand scrapped, though the government will continue to pursue the project with other interested parties in the future to bridge the huge power deficit.

"The NEEPCO has written to us saying that they don't want to continue with this power project and they want to scrap it," Mondal told PTI.

The NEEPCO had told the Meghalaya government they will not invest in thermal projects and they projected themselves as a 'green' company, a senior power department official said.

Friday, Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma launched the Rs 500 crore CM Solar Mission aimed at minimising the power crisis in this northeastern hill state.

"The people-centric CM Solar Mission will be a flagship re-

"The people-centric CM Solar Mission will be a flagship renewable energy intervention committed to fostering green and clean energy transformation across the state"

CONRAD K SANGMA | CHIEF MINISTER

newable energy intervention committed to fostering green and clean energy transformation across the state," Sangma had said Friday.

According to the Chief Minister, the government's subsidy will range from 70 per cent for individual households to 50 per cent subsidy for schools, hospitals, hotels, and other commercial entities.

With an installed capacity of 378.38 MW, Meghalaya is dependent on hydel-based power projects and the current peak demand for electricity is over 500 MW and it is increasing every year by over 50 MW, a power department official told PTI.

Except for the Umiam Hydel Project, all are river power projects and when rainfall decreases, the generation of power also dips, he said.

In a first, UPSRTC gets 17 women bus drivers

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kanpur, August 12: In a first in Uttar Pradesh, a group of 17 women are all set to start work as bus drivers in UP State Road Transport Corporation (UPSRTC).

In 2021, on the occasion of International Women's Day March 8, the Yogi Adityanath government had launched the examination and training of women driving at the Model Driving Training and Research Institute in Kanpur's Vikas Nagar.

The first batch of 17 women drivers have completed their training at this institute and will soon handle the responsibility of bus driving with their



The first batch of 17 women drivers have completed their training at the Model Driving Training and Research Institute and will soon handle the responsibility of bus driving

male counterparts. Principal of Driver Training Centre SP Singh said that women have been given training under the schemes run by the government.

"It is the first batch of 17 women, who had undergone training at the institute, which is the first of its kind not only in the region but the country. We

will soon make provision for imparting training to more such women," he said.

"With this effort of the Uttar Pradesh government, a new dimension will emerge, wherein for the first time, women will be seen driving heavy vehicles on the road," Singh added.

He further said that the group of 17 women first underwent training at the Kanpur transport office in light motor vehicle driving level-3 and commercial vehicle driver level-4.

"The applicants have been trained at Automotive Skills Development Council (ASDC) in Delhi where they were tested, and later a group of 17 women drivers were short-listed," he added.



Navy personnel during the India-UAE bilateral Naval Maritime Partnership Exercise



Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal during a programme to send elders on free pilgrimage, in New Delhi



Rescue workers gather at the aftermath of a mudslide in Weiziping village of Luanzhen township on the outskirts of Chang'an district, Xi'an of northwestern China's Shaanxi province



Indian army soldiers patrol along the Line of Control between India and Pakistan border in Poonch district



People pay their last respects at a coffin of woman military medic Dariya Filipova, killed in a battle with Russian troops, during a farewell ceremony in Independence Square in Kyiv, Ukraine



Congress MP Rahul Gandhi during an interaction with members of the Toda tribal community in Muthunadu village near Ooty in Tamil Nadu



69th edition of the Nehru Trophy Boat Race held at Alappuzha punnamada backwaters in Kerala



It required a no-confidence motion to get the Prime Minister open his mouth on Manipur. In a speech that was 133 minutes long, he barely spoke on Manipur for even 4 minutes, and only after the INDIA (bloc) parties walked out
JAIRAM RAMESH | CONGRESS LEADER

CHADHA CHANGES BIO ON X

AAP Rajya Sabha MP Raghav Chadha Saturday changed his bio on X (formerly Twitter) to 'suspended MP.' He changed the bio of his X handle, a day after he was suspended from Rajya Sabha



of the day quote

Conspiracies are being hatched in the Union home ministry to topple the Rajasthan government
ASHOK GEHLOT | RAJASTHAN CM

A shopkeeper found a way to wake the government up (on tomato prices) by opening up a tomato shop. You not only jailed him, you also sent his father to jail. Is this democracy?
AKHILESH YADAV | SP LEADER

India stands at the cusp of a maritime revolution. Our strategic location, technological advancements and commitment to sustainable practices present unparalleled opportunities. Countries partnering with India in this sector will contribute to global growth and be part of a responsible and progressive maritime future
SARBANANDA SONOWAL | UNION MINISTER OF PORTS, SHIPPING AND WATERWAYS

Modi, Mamata trade barbs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata/Kolaghat (WB), August 12: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday lashed out at the opposition and more specifically at TMC's record of violent local body polls, prompting an equally fiery response from West Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee castigating the ruling party for lack of action on Manipur.

Speaking virtually at a function organised by his party, at Kolaghat, a fishing town 70 km from Kolkata, Modi accused opposition parties of "running away" from the Lok Sabha during a debate on the no-confidence motion and said his government has countered the "negativity being spread" by them across the country.

The Prime Minister also attacked the TMC which worsened his party in panchayat polls held recently, terming it a "Khooni Khela (bloody game)" where victory was secured by the use of "terror and threats" to intimidate the opposition.



"Recently, panchayat elections were held in Bengal. The entire country saw TMC's khooni khel (bloody game). Violence has been used as a means to threaten the opposition. The TMC looted votes. But despite this, the love of the people of Bengal has led to the victory of BJP candidates," he said.

PM Modi also claimed that those who act as "champions of democracy and question EVM" had "undermined" the democratic process in Bengal. "The TMC did everything to ensure that the BJP candidate can't file

nomination. They threatened not only BJP workers but also the voters," the PM alleged.

Reacting sharply to the PM's speech, TMC chief Mamata Banerjee in a recorded message to the media asked him to "behave" instead of maligning Bengal. "The Prime Minister and the BJP should not talk about West Bengal. He did not take action against his own corrupt party leaders and those involved in character assassination, atrocities on women, atrocities on wrestlers and atrocities in Manipur. "The BJP killed 15-16 people

during rural polls in Bengal. You must behave properly instead of giving indulgence to such people," the TMC supremo said. Party spokesperson Kunal Ghosh said it seems the Prime Minister is yet to accept his party's defeat in the 2021 assembly polls. "It seems the Prime Minister is yet to accept his party's defeat in the 2021 assembly. His remarks against West Bengal and TMC reflected BJP's deep-rooted hatred for the state's people," he claimed. The prime minister who addressed his party workers at BJP's Panchayati Raj Parishad in West Bengal also accused the opposition of "not being serious" about the discussion on Manipur as "it would have hurt them the most".

"Only two days back, we had defeated the opposition's no-confidence motion in Parliament. We had also defeated the negativity being spread by them. The whole country has seen the opposition running away from the House. Unfortunately, they betrayed the people of Manipur," he said.

BJP warns of action against Priyanka

While Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan said the opposition party was spreading lies on social media, state Congress chief Kamal Nath claimed there are "thousands" of corruption cases

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhopal, August 12: The ruling Bharatiya Janata Party in Madhya Pradesh has warned of legal action against Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra over her social media post, in which she accused the saffron party-led government in the state of indulging in corruption.

Terming her allegation false, MP Home Minister Narottam Mishra sought proof from the Congress leader to support her charge, warning that options were otherwise open before the state government and the BJP for legal action.

While Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan said the opposition party was spreading lies on social media, state Congress chief Kamal Nath claimed there are "thousands" of corruption cases. State BJP chief V D Sharma also warned of legal action against Priyanka Gandhi, accusing her of citing a fake letter in a social media post to level the allegation.

The state Congress, however, said it would prove that the BJP-led government is corrupt and also accused the ruling party of creating "political terror". On Friday, Priyanka Gandhi claimed on X, formerly known as Twitter, that a union of contractors from Madhya Pradesh has written a letter to the Chief Justice of the High Court, complaining that they receive payment only after paying 50 per cent commission.

"The corrupt BJP government in Karnataka used to collect 40% commission. In Madhya Pradesh, BJP has gone ahead by breaking its own record of corruption. People of Karnataka



ousted the 40% commission government, now the people of Madhya Pradesh will remove the 50% commission government from power," she alleged in the post.

Responding to her allegation, Mishra said that in Madhya Pradesh, the Congress was playing politics "with a disgusting mentality" without any issue. "State Congress leaders first got Rahul Gandhi to lie and now got Priyanka Gandhi to make a false tweet. Priyanka ji, give proof of your tweets, otherwise we have all options open for (legal) action," the minister warned.

He said that Priyanka Gandhi should reveal the name of the person or contractor who wrote the letter to the high court chief justice that she mentioned in her social media post. Talking to reporters, state BJP chief Sharma accused the Congress of being power-hungry and desperate to be at the helm by peddling lies.

"This is a conspiracy and BJP will take legal action for this tweet under cyber-crime... She will have to tell from where did she get this letter. You (Priyanka Gandhi) misled not only Madhya Pradesh but the country on the basis of a fake letter," he said.

Husband held for BJP leader's murder

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jabalpur, August 12: A resident of Jabalpur in Madhya Pradesh, who has been arrested on the charge of killing a Nagpur-based woman BJP member, has told the police that the victim was his wife and he murdered her over monetary and personal issues, an official here said Saturday.

The accused, identified as Amit Sahu alias Pappu (37), also told the investigators that he killed the victim, Sana Khan, by hitting her with a stick in his house and later dumped her body in a river in the district, he said.

Amit Sahu was arrested from Jabalpur's Gorabazar area on Friday on the charge of killing



A school being decorated ahead of Independence Day celebrations in Ahmedabad

PTI PHOTO

SHORT TAKES

7 new laws receive Presidential assent

New Delhi: Seven new laws, including the one related to the control of services matter in Delhi, passed by Parliament this week came into force on Saturday after they received the assent of President Droupadi Murmu. An official gazette notification was also issued by the government. The legislations that become operational are: The Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Act, 2023; The Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (Amendment) Act, 2023; The Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023; The Registration of Births and Deaths (Amendment) Act, 2023; The Indian Institutes of Management (Amendment) Act, 2023; The National Dental Commission Act, 2023 and The Offshore Areas Mineral (Development and Regulation) Amendment Act, 2023.

One killed in blast

Nagpur: A worker was killed and another injured in a fire at the factory of the Economic Explosives Limited (EEL) in Maharashtra's Nagpur Saturday, police said. The incident took place around 7.30 am at the company's plant in Siva Sawanga, where waste materials were being burned, an official from EEL said.

Jawan killed

Jaipur: A jawan was killed Saturday after a truck carrying BSF personnel overturned in Rajasthan's Jaisalmer district, police said. The incident took place in an area under Shahgarh police station area of the district, killing SK Dubey on the spot, they said.



Sana Khan, a resident of Nagpur. During the interrogation, he told the police that she was his wife and he killed her over monetary and personal issues, Additional Superintendent of Police Kamal Maurya said. "The accused said he killed his wife (Khan) by hitting her with a stick in his house and later threw her body into the Hiran river from a bridge near Meregaoon village under Belkheđa police station limits," he said.

A search operation is currently on to find the victim's body in the river and its nearby areas, Maurya said.

The accused also revealed the name of his accomplice who was present with him during the offence and a search for that man is going on, he said.

The accused runs a 'dhaba' (roadside eatery), he said.

SUDHA, SHANKAR IN NCERT PANEL

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 12: Infosys Foundation Chairman Sudha Murty, music maestro Shankar Mahadevan, economist Sanjeev Sanyal and 16 others are part of a new committee constituted by the NCERT to revise textbooks according to the new curriculum, officials said.

The 19-member National Syllabus and Teaching Learning Material Committee (NSTC) will be headed by National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA) chancellor MC Pant and develop textbooks for classes 3 to 12.

The committee is mandated to prepare the textbooks, and other teaching learning materials, which will, in turn, be published and used by the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), as per the terms of reference, a senior official said.

"The NSTC will be assisted



by Curricular Area Groups (CAGs) in the development of the teaching-learning material for each curricular area. These groups will include appropriate experts for the said subject, and will be formed by the chairperson and the co-Chairperson of NSTC, with the assistance of NCERT," the official said.

The committee will work to

align the curriculum with the National Curriculum Framework for School Education (NCF-SE) developed by the K Kasturirangan-led steering committee as a part of the implementation of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. While the final NCF-SE has already been submitted to the Union ministry of education, it

is yet to be released in the public domain. The draft of the framework was released in April.

The committee is co-chaired by Manjul Bhargava, a professor of mathematics at Princeton University. Its other members include mathematician Sujatha Ramdorai, badminton player U Vimal Kumar, chairperson of Centre for Policy Studies MD Srinivas, and chairperson of Bharatiya Bhasha Samiti Chamu Krishna Shastry.

The dropping of several topics and portions from NCERT textbooks in May triggered a controversy, with the opposition blaming the BJP-led Centre for "whitewashing with vengeance". At the heart of the controversy was the fact that while the changes made as part of a rationalisation exercise were notified, some of the controversial deletions were not mentioned. This led to allegations about a bid to delete these portions surreptitiously.

Court extends custody of Balaji

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, August 12: The Enforcement Directorate Saturday filed a nearly 3,000-page charge sheet against Tamil Nadu minister V Senthil Balaji as part of a continuing money laundering investigation against him and his aides, official sources said.

Principal Sessions Judge S Alli, before whom the 47-year-old DMK politician was produced, remanded him in judicial custody till August 25. The minister, who was arrested by the ED on June 14, will continue to be lodged at the Puzhal central jail in Chennai.



The central agency filed the prosecution complaint of about 3,000 pages that included more than 2,000 pages of annexures and 168-170 pages of operational documents, arraigning Balaji as an accused, the sources said.

The ED is understood to have brought on record various documents seized, purported cash receipts recovered and the statement of Balaji that was recorded by it over the last few days in the charge sheet.

The court is yet to take cognisance of the complaint (charge sheet) filed under various sections of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), they said.

Judge Alli had on August 7 permitted the ED to take custody of Senthil Balaji for five days for the purpose of interrogation in connection with the case. Since the custody came to an end on Saturday, the ED produced him before the judge.

Congress slams new uniform in Lakshadweep schools

LAKSHADWEEP CONGRESS LEADER AND EX-MP HAMDULLAH SAYEED ALLEGED THAT THE NEW DRESS CODE DIRECTIVE, WHICH IS SILENT ON HIJABS OR SCARVES FOR GIRL STUDENTS, AMOUNTED TO DESTROYING THE INTRINSIC CULTURE AND LIFESTYLE OF ISLANDERS IN THE MUSLIM-DOMINATED ARCHIPELAGO

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Thiruvananthapuram, August 12: The Congress Saturday strongly condemned the Lakshadweep administration's move to introduce a new pattern of uniform in schools in the union territory and warned them of intense protests, including mass class boycott by students against it.

Lakshadweep Congress leader and ex-MP Hamdullah Sayeed alleged that the new dress code directive, which is silent on hijabs or scarves for girl students, amounted to destroying the intrinsic culture and lifestyle of islanders in the Muslim-dominated archipelago.

The BJP-led government at the Centre and the Lakshadweep administration were continuously attempting to implement anti-people policies that were totally against the culture and ethos of the islands, he charged.

The latest on the list was the recent order issued by the Education Department introducing a new uniform code, which cannot be accepted in any way, Sayeed said. "We will not allow any such directive that will destroy the culture and existing lifestyle of Lakshadweep. Such impositions are part of attempts to create unwanted tensions and issues in a democratic system," the ex-MP said.

Making it clear that the Congress party would launch a series of democratic agitations against the move, he said school students would boycott their classes to register their protest against it. The leader also said the Congress would also intensify its protests against the Lakshadweep administration's move to permit liquor outlets in the archipelago.

The party recently organised a mass protest march on various islands against the controversial move. A draft on the proposed Excise Regulation Bill was published by the Lakshadweep administration on August 3 seeking suggestions from the public.



The Bill, which will permit the sale and consumption of liquor in the archipelago, has drawn widespread criticism from various corners. Meanwhile, Lakshadweep MP and NCP leader Mohammed Faizal also indicated an intensifying protest against the draft liquor policy and the new uniform pattern.

In a Facebook post, Faizal urged the people of the islands, especially the parents' community, to resist any move by the ad-

ministration to impose a hijab ban in schools. Terming the imposition of the new liquor policy and the uniform code as a violation of fundamental rights, he charged that the administration has pushed the islanders into an unprecedented crisis that they have never experienced before.

Each law is imposed in such a way that it roots out the customs, religious beliefs, eating habits, and dressing patterns that have been followed by the islanders for ages, he further said. Noting that it is important to protect the heritage and tradition of the archipelago, Faizal urged everyone to stand united in the fight to protect it.

international



China is a ticking time bomb in many cases. They've got some problems. That's not good because when bad folks have problems, they do bad things
JOE BIDEN | PRESIDENT, US

EFFEL TOWER EVACUATED

The Eiffel Tower in Paris, among the most visited tourist sites in the world, was closed to the public Saturday after being evacuated as a precautionary measure following a bomb threat



of the day quote

China has repeatedly expressed its willingness to resolve differences with the Philippines through bilateral dialogue, hoping that the Philippine side would abide by a consensus reached in the past
WANG YI | FOREIGN MINISTER, CHINA

There is only one option, accepting the regime or war. It is finished for Bazoum, you must forget about him. It is finished, it is a waste of time trying to restore him. It is not possible
INSA GARBA SAIDOU | ACTIVIST, NIGER

The strike (doctors) action served only to harm patients and put further pressure on their own colleagues
STEVE BARCLAY | HEALTH SECRETARY, UK

SHORT TAKES

Taiwan VP Lai leaves for US

Taoyuan: Taiwan Vice President William Lai left Saturday for a sensitive trip to the United States, which China has condemned and Taiwanese officials fear could prompt more Chinese military activity around the democratically governed island. Lai, the front-runner to become Taiwan's president in elections in January, is officially making only transit stops in the United States on his way to and from Paraguay for the swearing in of its president. Taipei and Washington say such stopovers are routine and no cause for China to take "provocative" actions, but Beijing has reacted with anger at what it sees as a further sign of US support for Taiwan, which it claims as sovereign Chinese territory.

Relief for Imran

Islamabad: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) Saturday directed the Attock Jail administration to provide former prime minister Imran Khan with "appropriate medical facilities" and allow him to meet his friends and family according to law. "He (the former prime minister) may also be provided with the prayer mat and English version of the Holy Quran," Dawn News quoted the court as saying. Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chief Khan was August 5 declared guilty by a trial court here of "corrupt practices" in the Toshakhana case for concealing details of state gifts. The 70-year-old leader was sentenced to three years in prison and was soon arrested and taken to the Attock Jail in Punjab province.

FTX founder jailed

New York: FTX founder Sam Bankman-Fried left a federal courtroom in handcuffs Friday after a judge revoked his bail after concluding that the fallen cryptocurrency wiz had repeatedly tried to influence witnesses against him. Bankman-Fried looked down at his hands as Judge Lewis A Kaplan explained at length why he believed the California man had repeatedly pushed the boundaries of his \$250 million bail package to a point that Kaplan could no longer ensure the protection of the community, including prosecutors' witnesses, unless the 31-year-old was behind bars.

Boat capsizes kills 6

London: Six people died and dozens were rescued when a boat carrying migrants capsized Saturday in the English Channel, according to French authorities. The Maritime Prefecture of the Channel and the North Sea reported about 50 people were rescued.

BONHOMIE OVER TERRORISM

NATO-CALIBRE WEAPONS BEING TRANSFERRED TO ISIL-K BY TALIBAN, AL-QAEDA-AFFILIATED GROUPS LIKE TTP, SAYS UN REPORT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

United Nations, August 12: NATO-calibre weapons were being transferred to ISIL-K (Islamic State - Khorasan Province) by groups affiliated with the Taliban and Al-Qaeda, such as Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan, according to a UN report, with member states expressing concern over the proliferation of military equipment within Afghanistan and into neighbouring countries following the 2021 Taliban takeover.

The 17th report of the Secretary-General on the threat posed by ISIL (Da'esh) to international peace and security said that UN member states remained concerned about the proliferation of weapons in Afghanistan, the Middle East and Africa, in particular the access by Da'esh and its regional affiliates to small arms and light weapons, as well as their increased use of unmanned aircraft systems and improvised explosive devices. "With the Taliban takeover in Afghanistan, member states expressed concern over the pro-

ISIL-K getting NATO-calibre arms



The report added that member states assessed ISIL-K as being the most serious terrorist threat in Afghanistan and the wider region

liferation of large quantities of weapons and other military equipment within Afghanistan and into neighbouring states," the report issued here this week said. Regional Member States reported that "North Atlantic Treaty Organisation-calibre weapons typically associated with the former Afghan National Defence and Security Forces were being transferred to ISIL-K by groups affiliated with the Taliban and Al-Qaeda, such as Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and the Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement," also known as the Turkistan Islamic Party (ETIM/TIP).

In the core conflict zone, Da'esh has reportedly transitioned to producing fewer, simpler and smaller improvised explosive devices and to now using suicide vests only as a last resort, to avoid the loss of operatives.

"There are reports that Da'esh has created a so-called Industry

Committee within its structures to explore new avenues for advancement in weaponry, such as improvised explosive devices and increased payloads for drones," the report said.

The group has reportedly increased its operational capabilities inside Afghanistan, with fighters and family members estimated at 4,000 to 6,000 individuals. Sanaullah Ghafari (alias Shahab al-Muhajir) is viewed by some member states as the most ambitious leader of ISIL-K. One Member State reported that Ghafari was killed in

Afghanistan in June.

"That remains to be confirmed," the report said, adding that Mawlawi Rajab is the leader of external operations for ISIL-K. It said ISIL-K is becoming "more sophisticated" in its attacks against both the Taliban and international targets. The group was reportedly focused on a strategy of carrying out high-profile attacks to undermine the Taliban's ability to provide security.

"Overall, ISIL-K attacks demonstrated strong operational capability involving reconnaissance, coordination, communication, planning and execution," the report said, adding that according to some Member States, attacks against high-profile Taliban figures in Balkh, Badakhshan and Baghlan Provinces raised ISIL-K morale and boosted recruitment.

"Some Member States reported that ETIM/TIP had developed links in Afghanistan with ISIL-K, with the two groups jointly publishing propaganda posters and some ETIM/TIP members joining ISIL-K operations. One member state assessed that some elements of Al-Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent were ready to either join or collaborate with ISIL-K," the report said.

The report was prepared by the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team pursuant to resolutions 1526 (2004) and 2253 (2015) concerning ISIL (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and the Taliban and associated individuals and en-

ties, the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate and the Office of Counter-Terrorism, in close collaboration with other United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact entities.

It noted that United Nations entities continued to support and cooperate with Member States in their efforts to prevent and counter terrorism, with a particular focus on conflict zones and neighbouring regions where the threat posed by Da'esh remained high during the reporting period.

On behalf of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1373 (2001) concerning counter-terrorism (Counter-Terrorism Committee), and on the basis of the recommendations contained in the Delhi Declaration on countering the use of new and emerging technologies for terrorist purposes, adopted by the Committee during its special meeting held in New Delhi in October 2022.

On October 28-29 last year, the Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC), chaired by India in 2022, organised the Special Meeting in New Delhi and Mumbai on the overarching theme of "Countering the use of new and emerging technologies for terrorist purposes".

As an outcome of the special meeting, the Committee adopted the "pioneer document" "Delhi Declaration" on countering the use of new and emerging technologies for terrorist purposes.

DEADLIEST DISASTER

Maui fires death count rises to 80



REUTERS

Maalaea, August 12: The death toll from the Maui wildfires rose to 80 Friday as search teams combed through the smoldering ruins of Lahaina, and Hawaiian officials sought to determine how the inferno spread so rapidly through the historic resort town with little warning.

The fires became the deadliest natural disaster in the state's history, surpassing that of a tsunami that killed 61 people on the Big Island of Hawaii in 1960, a year after Hawaii joined the United States.

Officials have warned that search teams with cadaver dogs could still find more dead from the fire that torched 1,000 buildings and left thousands homeless, likely requiring many years and billions of dollars to rebuild.

"Nobody has entered any of these structures that have burned down and that's where we unfortunately anticipate that the death toll will rise significantly," US Senator Brian Schatz of Hawaii told MSNBC.

Kakar to be Pak's caretaker PM

THE GENERAL ELECTIONS ARE EXPECTED TO BE HELD WITHIN 90 DAYS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Islamabad, August 12: Senator Anwarul Haq Kakar was Saturday appointed the caretaker prime minister of Pakistan to head a neutral political set-up to run the cash-strapped country until the next general elections.

Kakar's name was agreed upon during the final day of consultations between outgoing Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and the Leader of Opposition in the dissolved National Assembly, Raja Riaz Ahmad, according to a statement from the Prime Minister's Office.

"The prime minister and leader of the opposition jointly signed the advice (to appoint Kakar) and it was sent to the president," read the PMO statement.

Kakar, 52, is an ethnic Pushtun from Balochistan province and a part of the Balochistan Awami Party (BAP) - a party considered close to the powerful establishment of the country.

In his first reaction, Kakar tweeted: "Thank you to Allah



Almighty who gives me the opportunity to Serve the Nation as Caretaker PM of Pakistan. I.A (inshallah) will do the best which will be in favour of Pakistan."

Speaking to the media, Opposition leader Riaz said: "We decided that the interim prime minister would be from a smaller province."

He said that Kakar's name was suggested by him which was approved.

President Arif Alvi approved the appointment of Kakar as the caretaker prime minister under Article 224(1A) of the Constitution.

Sharif also thanked Riaz for his cooperation during the consultation process and for his ex-

PML-N nominates Nawaz as PM face

The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Saturday nominated former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif as its candidate for the premier's post, media reports said. During a press briefing at the Prime Minister's House, PML-N chief Shehbaz Sharif stated that the amendments to the Election Act have cleared Nawaz Sharif of any disqualification, removing any obstacles to his return, Express Tribune reported. "In my capacity as the party President, I have nominated Nawaz Sharif as PML-N's prime ministerial candidate," said Shehbaz Sharif, the younger brother of Nawaz Sharif.

cellent leadership of the opposition during the past 16 months. Former information minister Marriyum Aurangzeb also confirmed that Kakar emerged as a consensus candidate during a discussion between the prime minister and the opposition leader.



Members of civic groups shout slogans during a rally to oppose the Japanese government's plan to release treated radioactive water into the sea from the damaged Fukushima nuclear power plant, in Seoul, South Korea. Anxious about Japan impending release of treated nuclear wastewater from the tsunami-damaged Fukushima nuclear power plant, hundreds of South Koreans marched in their capital Saturday

PTPHOTO

Russia vows retaliation for Ukraine's 'terrorist attack'

REUTERS

Moscow, August 12: Ukrainian forces targeted the Crimean Bridge and a number of other unspecified targets on the Crimean peninsula Saturday in a flurry of rocket and drone attacks, but there were no casualties, Russia's Defence Ministry said.

Russia's Foreign Ministry vowed retaliation for what it called a "terrorist attack" on the bridge in Crimea, which Moscow forcibly annexed from Ukraine in 2014.

Russia's Defence Ministry said Ukraine had unsuccessfully tried to strike the bridge across the Kerch Strait with S-200 rockets, forcing its temporary closure to traffic. A fresh attack Saturday afternoon again shut down the bridge.

The 12-mile (19-km) bridge, which links Russian-annexed Crimea to Russia, has come under repeated attack from Ukrainian forces since Moscow launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine February 24, 2022.

'BARBARIC ACTIONS'

Ukraine almost never publicly claims responsibility for



such attacks but has said destroying Russia's military infrastructure is crucial for its counteroffensive.

Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova condemned the latest attacks on the bridge, saying they posed a danger to innocent lives and civilian infrastructure.

"There can be no justification for such barbaric actions and they will not go unanswered," she wrote on Telegram.

Separately, Russian forces destroyed 20 Ukrainian drones launched onto the Crimean Peninsula earlier Saturday, Russia's Defence Ministry said.

The Crimean Bridge was badly damaged last October in a powerful blast that Russian officials said was caused by a truck that blew up while crossing the bridge, killing three people.

Hunter may weigh on Biden's Prez run

A potential trial raises the possibility of an unprecedented spectacle in US history: The son of a sitting president facing criminal charges while his father campaigns for re-election, likely against Republican Donald Trump, who faces at least three upcoming criminal trials of his own

REUTERS

Washington, August 12: The appointment Friday of a special counsel to investigate Hunter Biden helped ensure that the criminal probe of the president's son will cast a long shadow over his father's reelection campaign.

Delaware US Attorney David Weiss' new role as special counsel, announced Friday, may force President Joe Biden to deal with unpleasant headlines and distract him and his campaign when he would prefer to talk about the economy or signature leg-



islation as he campaigns for the 2024 presidential election, according to senior Democrats.

"This will have a sizable impact on the re-elect. They run the risk of constantly getting knocked off message. Every time someone goes before a grand jury or is subpoenaed, the press will keep asking about it. Biden wants to talk economy, guns, national security and he'll be less able to," said a senior Democrat.

Democrats also fear that spe-

cial counsel investigations could grow in scope.

Hunter Biden in July pleaded not guilty to charges of failing to pay more than \$100,000 in taxes owed on over \$1.5 million in income in 2017 and 2018. He did not enter a plea in a separate case in which he is charged with unlawfully owning a firearm while using illegal drugs, which is a felony.

Top Democrats were hopeful a plea agreement between Hunter

Special counsels always find things they don't expect to find. (The probe of former President Bill) Clinton started as an investigation into a real estate deal he and Hillary did when he was governor and ended with Monica Lewinsky

SENIOR DEMOCRAT | US

Biden and Weiss would have allowed the president to move past his son's legal troubles and relegate the issue to Republican-led congressional investigations.

But a federal judge refused to accept a proposed plea deal and Weiss said in a court filing Friday that talks between the two sides have since broken down.

Republicans have accused the elder Biden of profiting from his son's business ventures in Ukraine and China, though they have yet to produce any evidence of wrongdoing. House of Representatives Speaker Kevin McCarthy said in July that the chamber might launch an impeachment inquiry in the autumn.

of the day quote

As you know, the risks of the merger is the funding part of it

SASHIDHAR JAGDISHAN
CHIEF, HDFC BANK

While we focus on the long-term structural challenges such as climate change, through supply of adequate and affordable financing for green transition, we must, however, be mindful of the potential financial stability implications of green transition

SHAKTIKANTA DAS | GOVERNOR, RBI

India is our closest neighbour. And we share a lot of commonalities between the two countries and people of Sri Lanka and India. Given the close proximity, India will be one of the closest countries to enhance investments in Sri Lanka

SHEHAN SEMASINGHE | FM, SRI LANKA

RESULTS CORNER

IREDA at new high

New Delhi: State-owned Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency (IREDA) has posted a profit after tax (PAT) of ₹295 crore for the June quarter on account healthy loan book. In a statement Saturday, IREDA said it has "reported loan disbursement of ₹3,173 crore with a growth of 272 per cent, all-time high quarterly PAT of ₹295 crore, up 30 per cent. Loan book surged 44 per cent to ₹47,207 crore as of June 30, 2023, showcasing a robust growth of 44 per cent." IREDA, under the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE), is a Non-Banking Financial Institution engaged in promoting, developing and extending financial assistance for setting up projects relating to new and renewable sources of energy and energy efficiency/conservation.

Patanjali Foods dips

New Delhi: Edible oils firm Patanjali Foods Ltd Friday reported a 64 per cent decline in its net profit to ₹87.75 crore in the first quarter of this fiscal year due to a fall in prices of cooking oils. Its net profit stood at ₹241.25 crore in the year-ago period. Total income rose to ₹7,810.50 crore in the April-June quarter of 2023-24 from ₹7,370.07 crore in the corresponding period of the previous year, according to a regulatory filing. The edible oil segment recorded sales of ₹5,890.73 crore.

ONGC profit drops

New Delhi: The net profit of Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) fell over 34 per cent in June quarter on decline in oil prices and lower output, the firm said. Net profit of ₹10,015 crore in April-June (first quarter of current 2023-24 fiscal year) compared to ₹15,206 crore earning in the same period last year, the company said in a statement. ONGC, India's top crude oil and natural gas producer, earned \$76.49 for every barrel of crude oil it produced and sold from nomination fields against a net realisation of \$108.55 per barrel last year.

PTC net rises 5.62%

New Delhi: Power trading solutions provider PTC India Saturday posted a 5.62 per cent year-on-year rise in its consolidated net profit at ₹142.70 crore for the April-June quarter of this fiscal, mainly on the back of higher revenues. The consolidated net profit of the company stood at ₹135.10 crore in the quarter ended June 30, 2022, the company said in a regulatory filing. Total income of the company rose to ₹4,863.46 crore in the quarter under review, from ₹4,310.74 crore YoY.



How do we do local currency lending for a country like India is also something we are trying to think of at a price which is advantageous to this country

ANSHULA KANT | MD & CFO, WORLD BANK

VI DECLARES OFFERS FOR I-DAY

Telecom service provider, Vi has announced a bouquet of attractive offers for its pre-paid customers to commemorate India's 77th Independence Day. According to the telco, between 12th to 18th August, Vi customers can explore a wide range of incredible deals and also stand a chance to win remarkable rewards on Vi app



Global oil demand soaring

IEA raises world oil demand forecast in 2023 towards all-time high

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Washington, August 12: The International Energy Agency said Friday it had revised upwards its forecast for global oil demand growth in 2023 as demand is "scaling record highs". World oil demand already hit a record 103 million barrels per day in June and August and "could see yet another peak", the Paris-based IEA said in its monthly report.

"For 2023 as a whole, global oil demand is set to expand by 2.2 million barrels per day to 102.2 million barrels per day," it said. China accounted for 70 per cent of growth, the IEA said, adding that demand in the Asian giant was "also stronger than expected, reaching fresh highs despite persistent concerns over the health of the economy".

"World oil demand is scaling record highs, boosted by strong summer air travel, increased oil use in power generation and surging Chinese petrochemical activity," the IEA said. The forecasted expansion in global demand in 2023 would mark its "highest ever annual level", according to the agency, which in February had already forecast an annual record for the year of 101.9 million barrels per day.

HIT BY OPEC+ OUTPUT CUTS
The increasing demand for oil comes amid tensions on world markets after significant output cuts by several members of



the OPEC+ alliance -- made up of 13 members of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) headed by Saudi Arabia and their 10 allies led by Russia -- to prop up prices.

As a result, global oil supply plunged by 910,000 barrels per day in July, to 100.9 mbd, the IEA said in its report.

A sharp reduction in production by Saudi Arabia last month saw output from the 23-nation OPEC+ alliance fall 1.2 million barrels per day, to 50.7 mbd "a near two-year low". Volumes by non-OPEC+ members rose to 50.2 mbd, the report added.

PRICE INCREASE ON HORIZON?
In April, several OPEC+ members decided to slash produc-

tion voluntarily by more than one million bpd -- a surprise move that briefly buttressed prices but failed to bring about lasting recovery.

Oil producers are grappling with falling prices and high market volatility, reflecting continued fallout from the Russian invasion of Ukraine and China's faltering economic recovery.

Saudi Arabia also announced last week that it was extending its voluntary oil production cut of one million barrels per day for another month to include September.

Moscow has pledged, too, to cut production by 500,000 bpd in August, and a further cut of 300,000 bpd for September.

"Market balances are set to tighten further into the autumn as Saudi Arabia and Russia ex-

World oil demand already hit record 103mn barrels per day in June

tend supply cuts at least through September," the IEA said.

If the bloc's current targets are maintained, oil inventories could fall in the second half of the year "with a risk of driving prices still higher".

2024 DEMAND TO SLOW SHARPLY

Looking ahead to 2024 as the world races to combat climate change and reduce the use of fossil fuels, the IEA said it anticipated demand growth to slow.

"With the post-pandemic rebound running out of steam, and as lacklustre economic conditions, tighter efficiency standards and new electric vehicles weigh on use, growth is forecast to slow to 1 mbd in 2024," it said.

The IEA's demand growth forecast is down by 150,000 bpd from last month and contrasts with that of OPEC, which Thursday maintained its forecast that oil demand will rise by a much stronger 2.25 million bpd in 2024.

"The global economic outlook remains challenging in the face of soaring interest rates and tighter bank credit, squeezing businesses that are already having to cope with sluggish manufacturing and trade," the IEA said.

Deloitte quits as auditor of Adani

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 12: Deloitte has resigned as auditor of the Adani group's port company, with the firm run by billionaire Gautam Adani saying the auditor wanted a wider remit over other firms in the conglomerate following the report of a US short seller.

In a statement, Adani Ports & Special Economic Zone (APSEZ) confirmed the resignation and appointment of MSKA & Associates as the new auditor.

Deloitte has been the auditor of APSEZ since 2017. In July 2022, it was given another five-year term. "In Deloitte's recent meeting with APSEZ management and its Audit Committee, Deloitte indicated a lack of a wider audit role as auditors of other listed Adani portfolio companies. The Audit Committee was of the view that the grounds advanced by Deloitte for resignation as Statutory Auditor were not convincing or sufficient to warrant such a move," it said.

APSEZ conveyed that it was not within the remit of the firm and its Board to recommend group-wide appointments as other listed Adani portfolio companies are completely independent, with separate boards, executive teams and minority shareholders.

"Following this, Deloitte was not willing to continue as APSEZ's statutory auditor and, therefore, it was agreed to amicably end the client-auditor contractual relationship between APSEZ and Deloitte," it said.



The resignation comes weeks after Deloitte raised concern over certain transactions flagged in the report of Hindenburg Research

Deloitte Haskins & Sells LLP in May flagged three transactions, including recoveries from a contractor identified in the Hindenburg report, in issuing a qualified opinion on the accounts of APSEZ.

In the auditors' report on the audit of the fourth quarter and 2022-23 financials, Deloitte highlighted transactions with three entities, which the company said were unrelated parties.

Deloitte however said it could not attest to the company's statement as no independent external examination has been done to prove the claims.

Following this, it wanted a wider conglomerate-wide audit which the Adani group firm refused. Hindenburg Research in its January 24 report that levelled allegations of fraud, stock manipulation, and money laundering against the Adani group, had also flagged inadequate disclosures of related party transactions.

BoM SLASHES CAR, HOME LOAN RATE BY UP TO 20 BPS



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 12: State-owned Bank of Maharashtra (BoM) Saturday slashed the interest rate on home and car loan by up to 20 basis points and also waived off the processing fee.

With the reduction, home loan would now be available at 8.50 per cent from existing 8.60 per cent, while car loan has been made cheaper by 20 basis points to 8.70 per cent.

The new rates are effective from August 14, BoM said in a statement.

This dual benefit of reduced interest rates and waiver of processing fees will help alleviate financial burden for its customers and support their financial journey, it said.

Earlier, the bank waived processing fees for its other retail schemes such as, education loan and gold loan under its UDAAN Campaign, it added.

Foxconn beefs up investment in Telangana

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Hyderabad, August 12: The Board of Directors FIT Hon Teng Ltd (Foxconn) approved the investment of \$400 million in Telangana, V Lee, Foxconn India representative said in a social media post.

Taiwan-based contract manufacturer Foxconn is Apple's biggest supplier.

"...FIT Singapore's proposal to make a capital injection of \$400,000,000 to Chang Yi Interconnect Technology (India) Private Limited, which is held by FIT Singapore as to 99.99 per cent of the capital stock," FIT Hon Teng informed the Hong Kong Stock Exchange Friday.



Apple's biggest supplier is likely to use its upcoming Kongara Kalan facility for the manufacture of AirPods and other digital accessories

Posting the company's disclosure on his social media handle, V Lee said "Moving so fast, Telangana! Another \$400M is coming."

Reacting to V Lee's post, Telangana Minister for IT and Industries KT Rama Rao tweeted Saturday saying the fresh in-

vestment proposal is in addition to the already committed \$150 million earlier.

"Our friendship with Foxconn Group remains steadfast, each of us delivering on mutual commitments. With total infusement of \$550m (adding previous \$150m), FIT is poised to

deliver on its promises in Telangana. This once again proves Telangana Speed," Rama Rao tweeted on X.

Electronics major Foxconn Interconnect Technology in May laid the foundation for a new electronics manufacturing facility in Telangana as part of

its investment in the state. The proposed electronics manufacturing facility at Kongara Kalan near here is a milestone for the Taiwanese firm's global expansion strategy -- diversifying its global manufacturing base, a press release had earlier said.

The proposed facility will serve as a hub for Foxconn Interconnect Technology's operations in Telangana allowing the firm to expand its production capacity, it said.

Earlier this year, Foxconn Technology Group chairman Young Liu along with his senior officials met Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao here.

BIZ BUZZ

Hunch Ventures partners Embassy of Israel in India

Bhubaneswar: Hunch Ventures, backed by Odisha-based entrepreneur Karanpal Singh, has partnered with Embassy of Israel in India to jointly launch programme to foster innovations that solve water-related challenges in the country. Together, they'll support early-stage startups and foster innovations that solve water-related problems in India. Hunch also owns The Circle.Work, a co-working innovation hub in Delhi NCR with its own accelerator program The Circle. Founders Club that helps growth-stage startups and scale-ups through focused mentoring, shared business services, funding support, key business connects and global market access. As a concept, more innovation hubs and co-working spaces like The Circle can support Odisha Startups too and give them the boost they need. Among other things, Hunch is also backing the restoration of the popular Rambha Palace into a boutique hotel, soon to be open to the public.

Forex reserves dip to \$601.45bn

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, August 11: India's forex reserves dropped for the third consecutive week, declining by \$2.417 billion to \$601.453 billion as of August 4, the Reserve Bank said Friday.

In the previous reporting week, the overall reserves had dropped by \$3.165 billion to \$603.87 billion.

For the week ended August 4, the foreign currency assets, a major component of the reserves, decreased by \$1.937 billion to \$533.40 billion, according to the Weekly Statistical Supplement released by the RBI.



Expressed in dollar terms, the foreign currency assets include the effect of appreciation or depreciation of non-US units like the euro, pound and yen held in the foreign exchange reserves.

Gold reserves were down by \$224 million to \$44.68 billion, the RBI said.

The Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) were down by \$171 million to \$18.274 billion, the apex bank said.

The country's reserve position with the IMF was down by \$86 million to \$5.099 billion in the reporting week, the apex bank data showed.

Bajaj Allianz brings comprehensive Pet Insurance Policy

Bajaj Allianz General Insurance, one of the leading private general insurers of India, announced 'Pet Insurance Policy', which is an insurance cover which will now provide insurance protection for pet cats in addition to pet dogs. The company was the first insurer in the country to introduce comprehensive pet insurance for dogs. The Pet Insurance Policy covers 35+ breeds of dogs and all breeds of cats. The cover is available on an individual as well as group basis and can be bought for annual, short term and long-term periods of up to 3 years. The revised policy brings you greater flexibility and helps you take better care

of your furry friends. The policy is designed in such a way that it allows customers to tailor the coverage according to their specific needs. The premium would vary depending on the age, size, cover, and the sum insured opted for. To simplify the policy structure and cater to different types of pets, the policy classifies dogs into four categories - small, medium, large, and giant. Similarly, cats are categorised into indigenous and exotic breeds. The policy also covers pets used for commercial purpose as well. This comprehensive policy includes a range of essential covers to protect your furry friend, which includes

coverage for surgery expenses and hospitalization costs to ensure that your pet receives quality medical care. Additionally, the policy offers mortality benefits, terminal disease coverage, long term care, OPD cover, and third-party liability protection. In the unfortunate event of theft or straying, the policy covers advertising costs for locating the insured dog or cat. Moreover, it rewards the individual who successfully helps trace the lost or stolen pet. The policy also covers vaccination failures, providing additional peace of mind for pet owners. To make the policy more affordable, various discount options are available

like pet owners can enjoy discounts for RFID tagging, submitting fitness/medical certificates, insuring multiple pets, and opting for long-term coverage. Furthermore, the policy offers a built-in cumulative bonus that increases with each claim-free year, rewarding responsible pet ownership. Commenting on the product announcement, Tapan Singhel, MD & CEO, Bajaj Allianz General Insurance said, "At Bajaj Allianz General Insurance, we understand the needs of our customers, and we constantly strive to address their worries. Pets are part of our family; we hold a deep emotional bond with them, and

our desire to provide them with the best care possible is natural. To help our customers take better care of their four-legged family members, we have launched an enhanced pet insurance policy, which now extends care and protection to their feline friends. The revised policy offers a wider cover helping our customers provide the best-in-class care and protection to their beloved furry friends." The relationship between owners and their pets is extremely special; Bajaj Allianz General Insurance recognizes the significance of this relationship, and their revised pet insurance policy provides all-around protection for pets.



INDIA REIGN SUPREME Jaiswal, Gill seal India win



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Lauderhill (US), August 12: Yashasvi Jaiswal (84 n o. 51b, 11x4, 3x6) and Shubman Gill (77, 47b, 3x4, 5x6) gave a glittering manifestation of their talent as India humbled West Indies by nine wickets in the fourth T20I here Saturday.

India hunted down 179 with full three overs to spare, and the victory helped them to level the five-match series 2-2. The deciding fifth T20I will be played here Sunday.

Coming into this match, India needed some runs from their openers and the two young men did precisely that. Gill and Jaiswal slipped into overdrive from ball one and they seldom downshifted either. They made 165 runs together and it was India's best stand for the opening wicket in this series so far.

There were apprehensions of pitch getting slowed down in the second half of the match, as it often happened in the past. But the centre square that was recently refurbished using the Mississippi soil stayed true for the whole course of the match.

Gill and Jaiswal used the wicket's friendly nature to the hilt as 66 runs cascaded in the powerplay segment. The eight fours and three sixes they smoked during that phase, underscored Indian batters' dominance.

Gill was the first to stroll past the fifty-run mark, cutting Rovman Powell past the point fielder for a couple. Jaiswal soon joined his partner on that landmark point, and it was achieved in an even more eye-popping fashion.

Powell tried to go wide of off-stump but the left-hander moved across and thumped the ball through wide square leg for a boundary, and celebrated his maiden T20I fifty with unmasked glee.



Yashasvi Jaiswal raises his bat after reaching his maiden T20I fifty as Shubman Gill looks on during the fourth match, Saturday

In the process of making 165, Gill and Jaiswal equalled the record for the second highest opening alliance for India in T20Is. They are now tied with Rohit Sharma and KL Rahul who made 165 against Sri Lanka at Indore in Sri Lanka in 2017. Perhaps, it was the first chapter in passing of the baton to the younger crop as far as the short-format is concerned.

Earlier, an outstanding effort by bowlers helped India pin

down West Indies to a total that was underwhelming considering a pitch that offered true bounce and little turn.

West Indies' decision to bat first was understandable as teams batting first often enjoyed a distinct advantage here, largely because of a pitch that tends to slow down as the match progresses.

However, the home batsmen, save Shimron Hetmyer (61, 39b, 3x4, 4x6) and Shai Hope (45, 29b, 3x4, 2x6), failed to capitalise on an excellent chance to put on board a bigger total. In fact, the hosts did not manage even a single fifty stand in their innings.

The West Indies essay revolved around two partnerships — a 49 for the fifth wicket between Hope and Hetmyer and then a 47 for the eighth wicket between Hetmyer and Odean Smith (15 n o). Indian bowlers led by Arshdeep Singh (3/38) and Kuldeep Yadav (2/26) kept the Windies batting unit on a tight leash.

BRIEF SCORES: West Indies 178/8 (Shimron Hetmyer 61, Shai Hope 45; Arshdeep Singh 3/38, Kuldeep Yadav 2/26) lost to India 179/1 (Yashasvi Jaiswal 84 n o, Shubman Gill 77) by 9 wickets.

REPORTS REFUTED

NEW DELHI: Virat Kohli Saturday refuted reports that he earns a mindboggling ₹11.4 crore for each sponsored post through Instagram. A report by Instagram scheduling tool Hopper HQ, tagged as Instagram Rich List 2023, placed Kohli's income from per post on the meta platform over ₹11 crore, which the former Indian captain termed "not true". "While I am grateful and indebted to all that I've received in life, the news that has been making rounds about my social media earnings is not true," Kohli wrote on his Twitter handle. Kohli is on the 14th place in the list.

MATCH SCHEDULE

India vs West Indies
5th T20 International
Time: 8 pm
Telecast: DD Sports
Stream: Jio Cinema & Fan Code

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, August 12: India fought back from two goals down to eke out a 4-3 win over a spirited Malaysia in a thrilling final to claim their fourth Asian Champions Trophy title at the Mayor Radhakrishnan Stadium here Saturday.

Jugraj Singh (ninth minute), skipper Harmanpreet Singh (45th), Gurjant Singh (45th) and Akashdeep Singh (56th) were the goal scorers for India. For Malaysia, Abu Kamal Azrai (14th), Razie Rahim (18th) and Muhammad Aminudin (28th) found the back of the net.

It is India's record fourth title, making it the most successful team in the event. India had earlier thrashed Malaysia 5-0 in the round-robin league stage.

Malaysia were aggressive in the first half as the Indians found it difficult to restrict their opponents. India converted their first penalty in the ninth minute with Jugraj scoring with a fierce flick to the right of the Malaysian

goalie.

The Indians got into their groove as the match progressed and played full-press hockey after a sluggish start.

But Malaysia didn't sit back and continued to test the Indian defence. Their efforts bore fruit in the 14th minute when Azari found the back of the net after being fed by Azuan Hasan from the right flank. Seconds from the first quarter, India secured back-to-back penalty corners but wasted both the chances.

Malaysia kept up the tempo in the second quarter and earned consecutive penalty corners in the 18th minute, the second of which was converted by Rahim as the ball went in after getting a deflection from rusher Amit

Rohidas' stick.

Malaysia secured a penalty corner for an unnecessary stick check by Jugraj in the 23rd minute but the effort went wide. Malaysia got another penalty corner in the 28th minute and this time Aminudin made no mistake to hand his side a 3-1 lead at half-time.

A couple of minutes after the change of ends, India earned a penalty corner but failed to utilise the opportunity. The home team asked for a referral for another set piece, which was turned down by the TV referee. India worked well to win another penalty corner in the 36th, but Jugraj shot wide.

Sensing urgency, India switched to possession-based play. But the Malaysian defend-

ers did well to intercept at the right time and keep the Indian attackers at bay. Malaysia earned another penalty corner in the 43rd minute but India defended stoutly.

The Indians turned the match on its head in a span of a minute, pumping in two goals to level the scores 3-3. While India skipper Harmanpreet scored from a penalty stroke in the 45th minute, seconds later Gurjant found the back of the net from field play to make the scoreline 3-3.

India secured a penalty corner six minutes from the final hooter, but Harmanpreet's flick was saved by the opposition goalkeeper. India kept up the pressure and earned another penalty corner soon, but Harmanpreet's effort went wide.

Akashdeep scored the winner for India with a slap stick from top of the 'D' after receiving a pass from Mandeep Singh. The Indians pressed hard in the final few minutes of the match, drawing two fine saves from the Malaysian goalkeeper.

Japan beat South Korea 5-3, bag bronze

CHENNAI: Japan finished on a high after trouncing defending champion South Korea 5-3 during the third-place playoff of the 2023 Asian Champions Trophy here Saturday. Goals from Ryoma Ooka (third minute), Ryosei Kato (ninth), Kentaro Fukuda (28th), Shota Yamada (53rd) and Ken Nagayoshi (58th) allowed the Japanese to finish on a high. Jonghyun Jang (15th and 33rd) and Cheoleon Park (26th) were the goal-scorers for the Koreans.

Messi on target again as Herons enter semis

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Fort Lauderdale (Florida), August 12: Lionel Messi's goalscoring streak lives on, as does Inter Miami's winning streak. Messi scored in the 86th minute, his eighth goal in five matches with his new club, and Inter Miami rolled past Charlotte 4-0 in a Leagues Cup quarter-final game Friday night.

Messi has scored in all five of his appearances with Miami. The seven-time Ballon d'Or winner who led Argentina to the World Cup crown last year has yet to lose a match with the Herons, walking off winners in all five matchups so far in the Leagues Cup, a 47-team event composed of clubs from MLS and Mexico's top league that now is whittled down to the final four.

Next up for Messi and his new club: A semifinal game Tuesday against either Mexican club Queretaro or Philadelphia Union. Charlotte almost found a way to keep him off the scoresheet. Almost. Josef Martinez and Robert Thomas also had goals for the Herons, an own goal set up by some serious Messi pressure late in

the second half resulted in another score, and then Messi provided the perfect clincher in the final moments.

The team appeared to have close to just about another sell-out at 22,000-seat DRV PNK Stadium, even on a night where the South Florida sports landscape was loaded. The Miami Dolphins were playing their pre-season opener at home, the Miami Marlins played host to the New York Yankees, and Miami Heat guard Tyler Herro was headlining a pro-am league championship game inside a packed high school gym.

But Messi-mania lived on, as would be expected. And the fans in those new pink No.10 jerseys left happy once again, a far cry from what life was like for Inter Miami backers before the Messi era started.

Before Messi, Inter Miami had won only five of their 22 MLS matches this season. With Messi, they have won all five of its Leagues Cup matches, and now is just two wins from a trophy. Martinez opened the scoring for the Herons on a penalty kick in the 12th minute, one that

came after Dixon Arroyo was taken down inside the box. It went to 2-0 in the 32nd minute, when Taylor took a pass from DeAndre Yedlin near the top of the box and sent a one-timer off the hand of a sprawling Kahlina. The own goal made it 3-0, and then Messi finished off the win.



Lionel Messi pulls out 'Spider-Man' celebration after his goal against Charlotte

Haaland back in business as City win

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Burnley, August 12: Erling Haaland has started his second season in English football just like his first — with two goals in a win to open Manchester City's title defense in the Premier League.

The Norway striker dispatched clinical finishes in the fourth and 36th minutes Friday as City eased to a 3-0 victory at Burnley, a promoted team managed by City great Vincent Kompany, in the first match of England's top division. Defensive midfielder Rodri scored the other goal.

Haaland enjoyed a spectacular first year at City, scoring 52 goals in all competitions — including 36 in the league — as Pep Guardiola's team won the Premier League-FA Cup-Champions League treble.

He opened last season with a double at West Ham in a signal of what was to come and he made another statement at Turf Moor, even if it didn't completely satisfy Guardiola. The City manager came onto the field at halftime and remonstrated with Haaland as they walked toward the tunnel, even flicking away a camera that was following the pair.

It wasn't the perfect evening for City, who are bidding to become the first team in English football history to win four straight top-flight league titles.

Kevin De Bruyne, starting for the first time since coming off early in the Champions League final with a hamstring problem, lasted 23 minutes before needing



JUST THE USUAL: Erling Haaland (L) reacts after scoring against Burnley to script Man City victory, Friday

to be substituted after pulling up.

Haaland gave City the lead with his first touch in the game when he latched onto Rodri's nod-down from De Bruyne's right-wing cross and sidefooted a finish into the bottom corner.

His second goal came after Julian Alvarez laid off a cross from Kyle Walker. With his back to goal, Haaland sent a first-time shot on the turn off the underside of the crossbar and into the top corner.

Rodri smashed home the third goal from close range in the 75th minute after Burnley failed to clear a free-kick into the area.

Burnley ended the game with 10 men when Morocco winger

MATCH SCHEDULE

Brentford vs Tottenham (6 pm)
Chelsea vs Liverpool (9 pm)
TELECAST
Star Sports Select channels
Stream: Disney+ Hotstar

Anass Zaroury was shown a straight red card for a dangerous tackle on Walker deep into second-half stoppage time. The referee initially gave a yellow card but upgraded it after viewing the pitchside monitor.

Winning start for Arsenal
Arsenal began their new Premier League campaign with a 2-1 home win over Nottingham

Forest Saturday thanks to first-half goals from Eddie Nketiah and Bukayo Saka. Kick-off was delayed by 30 minutes due to turnstile issues at Emirates Stadium which prevented fans from getting in on time.

Nketiah opened the scoring after being set up by a sublime turn and back-heel pass from Gabriel Martinelli before Saka doubled their advantage when he curled in a shot from range that easily beat his former teammate Matt Turner in Forest's goal. Taiwo Awoniyi gave Forest a lifeline with a late goal from a sweeping counter-attack but the north London side held on for all three points.

Rani not picked in probables list for Asian Games

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, August 12: Just a couple of days after Hockey India appointed her as the coach of Indian U-17 women's team, former captain Rani Rampal found herself out of the 34-strong probables list for the Asian Games in Hangzhou, starting September 23.

Rampal had Thursday lashed out at the head coach Janneke Schopman demanding an answer as to why she was being ignored despite her fair performances lately. While she accepted the HI offer to coach the junior side, she also was categorical about not retiring from competitive sport.

While the Asian Games start September 23 and the Indian women's campaign gets underway September 27.

The Probables: (Goalkeepers) Savita, Rajani Etimarpur, Bichu Devi Kharibam, Bansari Solanki; (Defenders) Deep Grace Ekka, Gurjit Kaur; Nikhil Pradhan, Udita, Ishika Chaudhary; Akshata Abaso Dhakale, Jyoti Chhatrui, Mahima Chaudhary; (Midfielders) Nisha, Salima Tete, Sushila Chanu Pukhrambam, Jyoti, Navjot Kaur; Monika, Mariana Kujur, Sonika, Neha, Baljeet Kaur, Reena Khokhar, Vaishnavi Vitthal Phalke, Ajmjina Kujur; (Forwards) Lalremsiami, Navneet Kaur, Vandana Katariya, Sharmila Devi, Deepika, Sangita Kumari, Mumtaz Khan, Sunelita Toppo, Beauty Dungdung.

EB win derby

KOLKATA: Seasoned Nandhakumar Sekar enjoyed the most defining day of his football career with a swerving left-footer that ended East Bengal's (EB) 1658-day derby jinx as the red-and-gold brigade beat arch-rivals Mohun Bagan 1-0 in a Durand Cup match here Saturday. The 60th minute goal also put Mohun Bagan's smooth entry into the quarterfinals on hold as East Bengal can pip them to a last eight spot if they win against Punjab FC in their last group league encounter.

PSG sign Dembele from Barcelona

BARCELONA: France forward Ousmane Dembele joined Paris Saint-Germain Saturday after Barcelona agreed to a transfer deal worth 50.4 million euros (USD 55.2 million) for the explosive winger. Dembele's arrival to PSG on a five-year contract comes amid speculation that Neymar could be on his way out. The French powerhouse also faces uncertainty over the future of Kylian Mbappe. The 26-year-old Dembele, born in Vernon outside Paris, came up through the Rennais youth academy. Dembele had joined Barcelona in 2017 on a then club-record transfer from Borussia Dortmund that with variables was set to reach 147 million euros (then USD173 million).



Kane leaves Tottenham for Bayern Munich

LONDON: England captain Harry Kane completed his move to Bayern Munich from Tottenham Saturday as the striker goes in search of the first major trophies in his career. The transfer fee for Kane could hit more than 100 million pounds (USD 110 million), which breaks the Bundesliga transfer record and is a huge sum for a player who would have been out of contract next year. Kane, has signed a four-year deal and is set to be presented to fans at the German Super Cup Saturday, when Bayern plays Leipzig. Kane leaves Tottenham after 19 years at the club, where he became the second highest-scoring player in Premier League history with 213 goals, 47 behind Alan Shearer.

Valencia beat Sevilla

SEVILLE: Valencia, who only survived relegation by two points in the last campaign, took the lead on the hour mark thanks to a header from Mouctar Diakhaby. Sevilla levelled nine minutes later when Youssef En-Nesyri headed in at the far post. However, Valencia stunned the home side in the 88th minute when Javi Guerra hit the winner. Sevilla played the last 10 minutes of the match with 10 men after Frenchman Loic Bade was red-carded for shirt pulling.

MATCH SCHEDULE
Getafe vs Barcelona (1 am, Monday)
TELECAST: Sports 18
STREAM: Jio Cinema