



No to animal cruelty

Actor Jacqueline Fernandez during an event shares her personal journey towards adopting a meatless lifestyle

LEISURE | P2



Afghan refugee crisis

UN refugee agency's head meets Pakistan PM to discuss the situation of millions of Afghan refugees in Pakistan

INTERNATIONAL | P10



Record inflows

Investors pumped in a record ₹40,608 crore into equity mutual funds in June, 17 per cent higher than in May 2024, industry body Amfi says

BUSINESS | P11



Anderson's last hurrah

Legendary England fast bowler James Anderson takes the field Wednesday for his 188th and last Test against the West Indies

SPORTS | P12

Minor domestic help found hanging in City

Bhubaneswar: The body of a minor girl working as a domestic help was found hanging inside a house near Sriramnagar area under Mancheswar police station limits, here, Monday night. Investigation Officer (IO) Jitendra Senapati of Mancheswar police station Tuesday identified the deceased as Kasis Rao, 15, a native of Uttar Pradesh. She had lost both of her parents several years back. Later, she got in touch with a family acquaintance here in the City who employed her as a maid in a household two months back, Senapati said.

Gambhir appointed India head coach

New Delhi: Former opener Gautam Gambhir has been appointed as the head coach of the Indian cricket team, BCCI secretary Jay Shah said Tuesday in a post on 'X'. Gambhir replaces Rahul Dravid whose tenure ended with India's successful campaign in the T20 World Cup where the 'Men in Blue' emerged champions without losing a single game. Gambhir was widely tipped to take over from Dravid after his success as mentor with Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) in IPL-2024.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



No looking for gold. Just checking whether the road will cave in when I step on it

MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VARIATION
SENSEX	80351.64 ↑ 391.26
NIFTY	24433.20 ↑ 112.65
DOLLAR	83.54 ↓ ₹0.05
EURO	90.46 ↓ ₹0.07
GOLD	₹72,247 ↓ ₹85
SILVER	₹92,652 ↑ ₹100

WEATHER

	BBSR	CTC
Max Temp	33.4°C	32.8°C
Min Temp	27.0°C	25.5°C
Humidity	81%	79%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil

FORECAST
Generally cloudy sky with one or two spells of rain

BALABHADRA FALLS



PNN & AGENCIES



Puri, July 9: At least nine Srimandir servitors were injured Tuesday when the idol of Lord Balabhadra fell on them while it was being taken out from the chariot to the Gundicha temple as part of the Rath Yatra rituals here, an official said. An

incident like this has no precedence in recorded history, experts said.

Of the nine injured, five were admitted to the District Headquarters Hospital (DHH), while four others suffered minor injuries, district Collector Siddharth Shankar Swain said. Sources meanwhile, said two of

the injured servitors have suffered fractures to their fingers.

According to sources, the Adapa Pahandi ritual of the deities began after completion of Mangalarpan by Mudirasta (representative of the Gajapati) on the three stationary chariots in the evening. The Mahajan servitors first carried the idols of

Ramakrishna and Sri Madanmohan to the Adapa Mandap. It was followed by the Pahandi of Lord Sudarshan. The Pahandi ritual of Lord Balabhadra began after culmination of a few rituals by Pati Mahapatra servitor.

The mishap occurred shortly after 9pm when those

carrying the idol lost control of it, leading to the Lord falling on the Charamala. Immediately, other servitors pulled the idol back to its position using ropes.

An injured servitor said that the mishap happened due to some problem with the rope-like material tied to the idol.

The ritual of the sibling deities - Lord Jagannath, Devi Subhadra and Lord Balabhadra - resumed soon after the mishap and all the idols were taken inside the Gundicha temple.

They will remain in the Gundicha temple till 'Bahuda Yatra' or the return car festival July 15.

The incident nevertheless, has caused shock and resentment among devotees.

Meanwhile, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi expressed concern over the incident and wished for speedy recovery of the injured servitors.

He directed Law Minister Prithviraj Harichandan to visit the Holy city immediately and take appropriate steps.

The Srimandir is under the administrative control of the state government's Law department.

Deputy Chief Minister Pravatiparida also went to Puri and, along with Harichandan, visited the hospital and spoke to the injured servitors.

"With the blessings of Lord Jagannath, all injured persons are doing fine and the rituals are also going on," Harichandan told reporters.

"We will report to the chief minister for further action," Parida said.

SC asks Odisha on Dara's release

PNN & AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 9: The Supreme Court Tuesday sought the Odisha government's response on a plea for premature release of a "repenting" Ravindra Pal alias Dara Singh, who is serving life sentence for the ghastly killing of Australian missionary Graham Stuart Staines and his two minor sons in Keonjhar district in 1999.

A bench of Justices Hrishikesh Roy and SVN Bhatti issued notice to the Odisha government and sought its response within six weeks.

In the plea, Dara Singh's advocate Vishnu Shankar Jain said, "The petitioner, having spent over 24 years being incarcerated in the prison, has well understood and is repenting the consequences of his action taken in the fit of his youthful rage and at present seeks the mercy of this court so that he can give back to the society through his service-oriented actions."

He sought a direction to the state government to consider his case for premature release in accordance with the guidelines for premature release of life convicts issued in 2022 in the three cases in which he was convicted. "The petitioner herein who



happens to be about 61 years of age has already undergone more than the qualified period i.e. 14 years of sentence as stipulated in policy dated April 19, 2022 whereas the petitioner has served more than 24 years of actual imprisonment (without remission). "It is noteworthy that the petitioner has never been released on parole and even when his

mother passed away, he could not perform her last rites as he was not allowed to be released on parole," he submitted.

Singh said the appropriate authorities are under legal obligation to consider his case for premature release under the 'Guideline for Premature Release 2022' passed by the Odisha government. He claimed they have failed to act in accordance with the related rules due to which his right to liberty, as enshrined in Article 21 of the Constitution, was jeopardised.

In his petition, Singh referred to the 2022 decision in former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's assassination case in which convict AG Perarivalan, serving life

TIMELINE

- A mob led by Dara Singh attacked Staines and his two sons - 11-year-old Philip and 8-year-old Timothy - while they slept in their station wagon and set the vehicle on fire in Manoharpur village of Keonjhar district on the intervening night of January 22-23, 1999
- Singh was convicted and sentenced to death by a CBI court in 2003
- The Orissa HC commuted his death sentence to life imprisonment in 2005 and it was upheld by the SC in 2011
- Singh's aide Mehendra Hembram is also serving life imprisonment, while 11 others were acquitted by the HC due to lack of evidence
- Gladys, who was awarded the Padmashree in 2005, had said she had forgiven the killers of her husband and sons and that she holds no bitterness against them

sentence, was ordered to be released by the apex court.

It's worth mentioning that Staines and his wife Gladys worked with Mayurbhanj Evangelical Missionary Organisation and cared for leprosy patients.

Committee suggests Ratna Bhandar reopening July 14

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, July 9: The high-level committee, set up to supervise the listing of jewellery and other valuable items stored in 'Ratna Bhandar' (treasury) of Puri Jagannath temple, Tuesday recommended the reopening of the inner chamber of the treasury July 14, panel chairman Justice Biswanath Rath said.

The recommendation will be sent to the temple managing committee, which will forward it to the Odisha government for approval, he said.

The temple treasury was last opened 46 years ago in 1978 and the reopening of it was a major political issue in the state during the recently concluded elections. "We have unanimously decided that the committee would request the government to reopen the inner chamber of the 'Ratna Bhandar' July 14," Rath said after a committee meeting in Puri Tuesday.

The chief administrator of Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA), who is the member convener of the panel, was asked to produce the duplicate key of the 'Ratna Bhandar' before the committee during the

meeting, Rath said. "However, the SJTA administration could not produce the duplicate key as the temple authority was busy conducting Rath Yatra. The chief administrator is now asked to submit the key before the panel July 14," Rath said.

It was also decided that the treasury would be opened by breaking the lock if the duplicate key fails to unlock it, he said.

A detailed discussion was held on several standard operating procedures (SOPs) needed for making an inventory of ornaments and repairing the 'Ratna Bhandar'. "As per the rules, the minutes of the meeting will be sent to the temple managing committee, which will send it to the government for approval. After that, the 'Ratna Bhandar' can be opened," Rath said.

The BJP had promised to reopen the 'Ratna Bhandar' for necessary repair work and make an inventory after it came to power in Odisha. "A consensus was reached that the ornaments and other valuable items of Lord Jagannath will be shifted to a designated place on the temple premises during the repair work of the treasury," he said.

Modi meets Russian Prez; Zelenskyy takes dig at hug

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Moscow, July 9: Delivering an unambiguous message, Prime Minister Narendra Modi Tuesday told Russian President Vladimir Putin that a solution to the Ukraine conflict is not possible on the battlefield and peace talks do not succeed amidst bombs, guns and bullets, even as Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy took objection to the Indian leader hugging Putin.

In his televised opening remarks at summit talks with Putin in the Kremlin, Modi - who was conferred the 'Order of St Andrew the Apostle' award for his contribution to fostering bilateral ties between the two countries - in an apparent reference to the bombing of a children's hospital in Ukraine, said the death of innocent children is heart-wrench-



ing and very painful. Russia has broadly heeded to India's call to end the recruitment of Indians as support staff to the Russian military and ensure the return of those still operating in the force.

Meanwhile, taking objection to Modi hugging Putin, Zelenskyy said on X: "A Russian missile struck the largest children's hospital in Ukraine, targeting young cancer patients. Many were buried under the rubble. It is a huge disappointment and a devastating blow to peace efforts to see the leader of the world's largest democracy hug the world's most bloody criminal in Moscow on such a day"

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Washington, July 9: Is it a miracle? The result of a secret rendezvous? Probably not. Females of species have the ability to reproduce asexually without sperm from a male. The process is called parthenogenesis, from the Greek words for "virgin" and "birth."

Some plants and insects can do it, as well as some amphibians, reptiles, birds and fish. A stingray named Charlotte that was thought to have become pregnant by this method died this week at an aquarium in North Carolina, though she never delivered and it is unclear if she was ever pregnant.

Some wasps, crustaceans and lizards reproduce only through parthenogenesis. But in other

species it's rare and usually observed in captivity.

It tends to occur in situations where females are separated from males, said Demian Chapman, who directs the Sharks & Rays Conservation Research Program at the Mote Marine Laboratory & Aquarium in Sarasota, Florida.

The boa in the UK, a 6-foot, 13-year-old Brazilian Rainbow Boa named Ronaldo, gave birth last week after having no contact with other snakes for at least nine years, according to the City of Portsmouth College, which kept the snake.

One way parthenogenesis can occur is when a female's egg fuses with another cell, often a cell leftover from a process that allows the female to create the



egg. That cell, known as a polar body, gives the egg the genetic information it would normally get from sperm. The cell starts di-

viding and that leads to the creation of an embryo.

It's unclear how prevalent parthenogenesis is in the wild,

Chapman said. But it has happened outside captivity among smalltooth sawfish, an endangered species in Florida's coastal waters.

"We think the females reproduce like that on some occasions because they haven't found a male because there are so few of them," Chapman said.

Offspring from parthenogenesis have less genetic variation, Chapman said, which can lead to developmental problems.

"A litter produced by sexual reproduction is usually much larger than one produced via parthenogenesis if it's an animal that gives birth to litters," Chapman said. "And you will often see individuals in that litter produced by parthenogenesis that don't develop correctly in some way."

leisure



NICOLAS CAGE ON HAVING 3 KIDS WITH 3 WOMEN

Hollywood actor Nicolas Cage has spoken about his relationship with his three children. The star told *The New Yorker*: "They're all different experiences. Each one has a different mother. It's not what I had originally thought would happen when I fell in love or got married -- that I would have three different children with three different moms."

JULIA FOX APPEARS TO COME OUT AS LESBIAN

Actress Julia Fox, who earlier dated rapper Kanye West, has seemingly come out of the closet. She made the revelation following a viral TikTok by comedian Gracin. The *Uncut Gems* actress commented: "Hey, that was me. I was that lesbian. So sorry, boys. Um, won't happen again."



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES

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

TAURUS

This day you will be prone to be stubborn and uncompromising in your business and professional dealings and thereby inviting unnecessary problems. Ganesh urges you to guard against this tendency and conduct yourself cordially and amiably with your colleagues and clients. The day will turn out well for executives and administrators.

GEMINI

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

CANCER

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

LEO

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

VIRGO

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

LIBRA

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

SCORPIO

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

SAGITTARIUS

Keeping all the work aside, you may be painting the town red today. Falling in love is exciting, isn't it? However, for all those who are already in a relationship, Ganesh shows a red signal. Avoid arguments with your loved one, He suggests.

CAPRICORN

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

AQUARIUS

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

PISCES

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

Jacqueline's meatless lifestyle

Mumbai: Jacqueline Fernandez recently attended a conference as a panelist on the topic of *Achieving Fitness Goals Without Meat*. She spoke about her personal journey towards adopting a meatless lifestyle.

Jacqueline's exploration of a meatless diet stemmed from her desire to lead a more holistic lifestyle with mental clarity and less on aesthetics and conforming to beauty standards.

Speaking about how her journey began, Jacqueline said "I started reading about Paramahansa Yogananda Baba Ji, and I started following his teachings about how we need to be one with nature and we need to have a lot of mental clarity if we want to live a good life."

She continued about her experience and said, "About three years ago, I went to his ashram in Madh Island, it was a tumultuous time for me as my mother suffered from a stroke around the same time and I couldn't be with her in Bahrain. So, I decided that I really wanted to utilise this time and be at one with my-



self and send her a lot of energy. And then 1st Jan 2022, I decided that I'm never ever going to touch meat again."

Her meatless lifestyle has shifted her focus. Jacqueline's journey not only sheds light on the personal motivations behind such a significant lifestyle change, but also serves as a powerful inspiration for others.

AGENCIES

Sharvari on her surreal feeling

Mumbai: Sharvari Wagh is being hailed as the rising star of showbiz after delivering two back to back hits and garnering heaps of praise for her acting in *Munhya* and *Maharaj*.

In *Munhya*, Sharvari showcased her dancing skills with the hit song *Taras* and played the lead heroine Bela as well as the ghost *Munhya* in the film. *Munhya* has become the Rs. 100 crore blockbuster this year.

In *Maharaj*, now a global hit film on Netflix, Sharvari received rave reviews from critics and audiences for her performance opposite Junaid Khan.

Sharvari said, "To have two back-to-back hits under my belt is a surreal feeling! First, *Munhya* becoming a theatrical blockbuster for me by getting into the 100 crore club and now *Maharaj*, a global hit on the world's biggest streaming platform, Netflix! The love is pouring in from all directions and I couldn't be happier."

She added, "This is a dream come true run for me, something I had never imagined. So, it feels overwhelming at times. I just want this momentum to continue into my next theatrical release *Vedaa*."

Sharvari further continued, "With *Munhya* and *Maharaj*, I have

been able to showcase variety as an actor. I'm drawn to challenges and I hope I have been able to reach out to all the disruptive film-makers with my performance on screen."

On the work front, Sharvari will be next seen in Nikkhil Advani's directorial *Vedaa* and Aditya Chopra's *Alpha*, a YRF Spy Universe action spectacle.



Fighting fatigue: Shreya's way

Mumbai: For Shreya Chaudhury, it is travelling that helps her overcome stress and fatigue. In fact, it is this activity that totally works as therapy for her.

Recently, the *Bandish Bandits* actress who was in Mexico attending her family wedding told us, "I personally love travelling. It does work emotionally and mentally for me. I feel it always rejuvenates me."

I get a fresh perspective to questions I felt stuck with. I realised that every time I travelled it helped me comeback rejuvenated for my work and routine life in Mumbai.

She further continues saying, "For me, speaking to locals, trying local things and living the life like locals do breaks the mundane cycle of routine life and excites me. Just sitting on one of those beaches, all by myself and reading a book, listening to music feels so good and soothing. This kind of break makes you feel excited to get back to work. Traveling helps me get fresh perspective."

Talking about her Mexican trip, where she attended a big fat Indian wedding of her cousin, Shreya said, "It was really lovely to see a lot of tourists there and local people seeing an Indian wedding for the first time. They were surprised seeing how celebratory we are with our outfits, music, food, baraat and how we bring two people together."

AGENCIES



Slumdog Millionaire damaged India's reputation: Kailash Kher

Mumbai: Singer Kailash Kher recently talked about Indian cinema's stint at the Oscars.

Talking to a leading newspaper, Kailash blasted *Slumdog Millionaire* (2009) as he believed that it showed India in a negative light.

Though he didn't name the Danny Boyle directorial, it's clear which film he was referring to. He also applauded SS Rajamouli's *RRR* and *Baahubali* for glorifying India's culture.

The singer said, "I believe that the energy of the places, where the bigger Indian temples are situ-

ation. But, films like *RRR*, which also make a reference to Lord Ram, are the ones that shone on international turf."

Kailash further added that his upbringing in an ashram in Rishikesh, in the company of saints, helped him to stand out.

"I was never exposed to film music. So, when I entered the industry with the idea of showcasing my music, I introduced a fresh take to Bollywood music. Our successive five albums were hits," he shared.

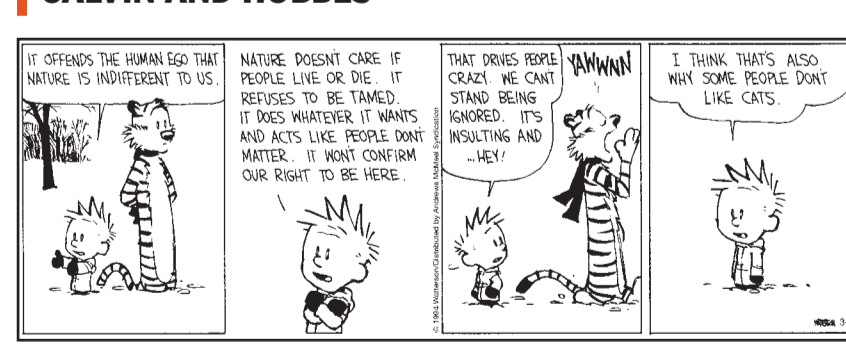
He continued, "Even though I have created both film and non-film music, I am known in my concerts for the latter. The reason I received the Padma Shri title in the short tenure of 12 years is because I could bring spiritual music to the mainstream, and change the course of the creation of romantic music."

AGENCIES

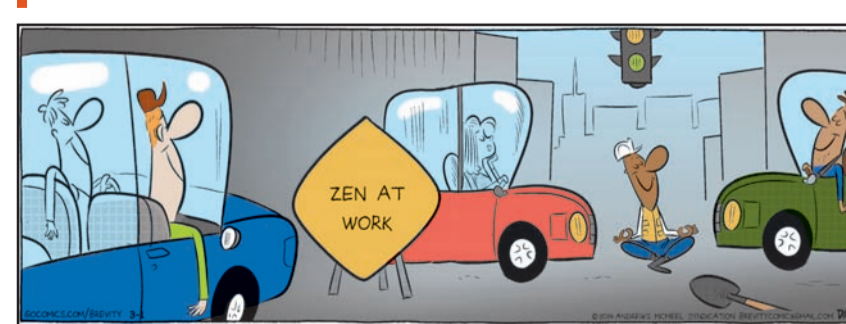
PEANUTS



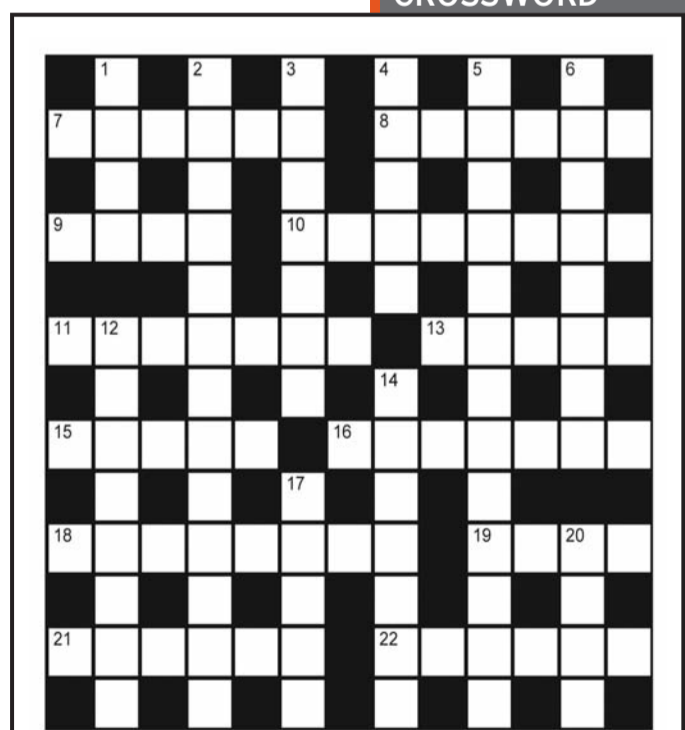
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



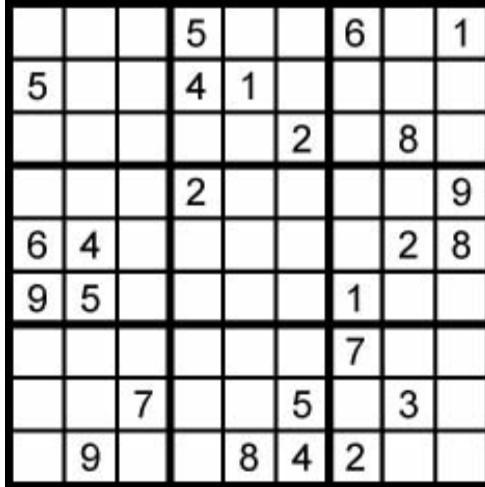
FUN post CROSSWORD



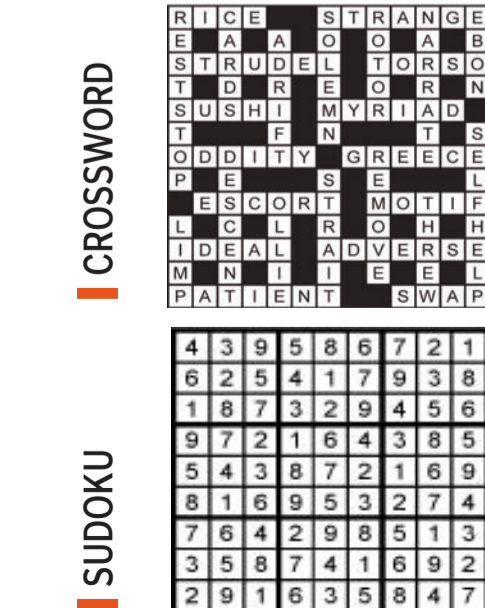
- Copyright ©2024 PuzzleJunction.com
- Across**
- 7 Scarlett Johansson movie, *The Black ___*
 - 8 Mistake fixer
 - 9 Radar image
 - 10 Longshoreman
 - 11 Proceeds
 - 13 Cat-like mammal
 - 15 Vascular growth
 - 16 Heathrow, i.e. (4,4)
 - 18 The one and only
 - 19 Physical structure
 - 21 Chin feature, at times
 - 22 Furtive
- Down**
- 1 Stake driver
 - 2 Caught in a lie, for instance (8,5)
 - 3 Policeman's command (5,2)
 - 4 Salmon pink
 - 5 ATM (4,9)
 - 6 Greenland caribou
 - 12 Type of upturn or downturn
 - 14 Permit
 - 17 Hotel employee
 - 20 Bakery buy

SUDOKU

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



SOLUTIONS



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



Artistes perform Odissi during a cultural programme organised near Chandni Chowk Gundicha Temple in Cuttack, Tuesday

downtown

Non-functional SAAs irk SC 800 schools in state to be developed under PM SHRI

New Delhi, July 9: The Supreme Court Tuesday took strong note of the failure to set up Specialised Adoption Agencies (SAAs), meant to streamline the adoption process of abandoned and surrendered children, in 370 out of 760 districts across the country, and ordered the Chief Secretaries of 29 states and Union territories (UTs) to either comply with the order or face contempt proceedings.

Top court warns Chief Secretaries of 29 states and UTs of contempt proceedings, if they fail to submit compliance reports on or before August 30



Out of 34 states and UTs, Chandigarh, Goa, Karnataka, Kerala and Rajasthan have fully complied with the direction

“coercive” measures. Out of 34 states and UTs, Chandigarh, Goa, Karnataka, Kerala and Rajasthan have fully complied with the direction, the law officer said.

Twenty-nine states and UTs have not complied with the direction, with Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Nagaland, Punjab, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand being the major defaulters. The law officer said in UP, 61 out of 75 districts, and in Uttarakhand, 10 out of 13 districts lacked functional SAAs. “We are compelled to take coercive proceedings against the state governments and the Union territories (UTs) since despite repeated efforts and repeated opportunities, the SAAs have not been set up in all districts.”

“They (affidavits) shall also indicate the reasons why the timelines as stipulated in the regulations are not being complied with,” it said. At the outset, the bench was apprised by the law officer that in 2023-24, over 4,000 children have been adopted and 13,000 registrations have been made by prospective persons seeking to adopt children. The law officer, however, raised the issue of non-functional SAAs in districts as a detriment in the successful completion of the adoption process. The bench, during the hearing, said that there were difficulties for the court to lay down guidelines for adoptions and their registrations under the Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act (HAMA). “Once the statute is very clear

about the conditions, it may not be appropriate for the court to prescribe guidelines now...” the bench said. The matter will now be taken up September 2. Earlier also, the bench had voiced displeasure over the failure to set up SAAs in 370 districts across the country and warned states and union territories of “coercive steps” for non-compliance with its directions. The court had also expressed displeasure over the “stark tale” told by the annual adoption figures in the country. “Between 2013 and 2023, the annual figure of total adoptions, both in-country and inter-country, ranges between 3,158 on the lower end of the spectrum (2022-2023) to 4,362 (2014-2015)...” it had said. Earlier, the bench had noted the “mismatch” between the number of children legally available for adoption and registered prospective adoptive parents. It had directed all states and UTs to carry out a drive every two months to identify the children in abandoned and surrendered (OAS) category in childcare institutions. It had said the first of such an exercise should be carried out by December 7. The bench had also directed all states and UTs to compile and submit to the Director, CARA (Central Adoption Resource Authority) data on adoptions under the HAMA by January 31, 2024.

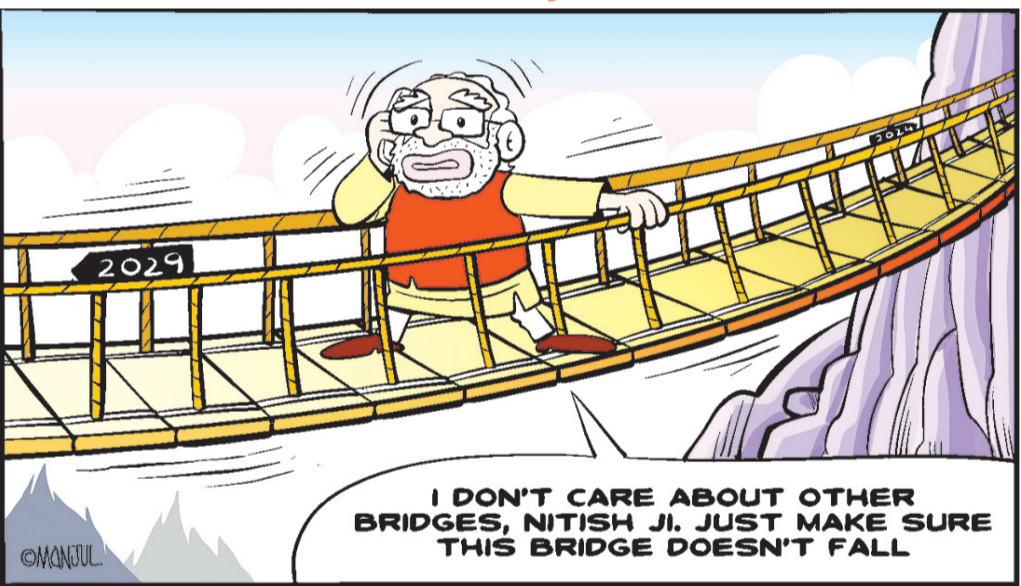
The apex court was hearing a PIL by ‘The Temple of Healing’ which sought simplification of the legal process for child adoption in India. The initiative aims to improve the infrastructure and quality of schools under the Central government, state and Union Territory governments, local bodies,

Bhubaneswar, July 9: Around 800 schools in the state will be developed under PM Schools for Rising India (PM SHRI) and exhibit all the basic elements, official sources said Tuesday. An MoU was signed between the Department of School Education and Literacy, Ministry of Education and the state government at an event organised in New Delhi Tuesday for the implementation of PM SHRI yojana in Odisha. The MoU was signed in the presence of the Minister of State for Education Jayant Chaudhuri and the Education Secretary of Odisha Aswathy S. So far, 31 states and Union Territories along with Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (KVS) and Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti (NVS) have signed MoUs with the Ministry of Education to upgrade their schools under the PM SHRI yojana. Official sources said two schools in every block and urban area of the state will be developed under PM SHRI.



The initiative aims to improve the infrastructure and quality of schools under the Central government, state and Union Territory governments, local bodies, care of all the students and provide a lot of experience based education with good infrastructure and adequate resources for their studies. The school will provide education in a modern and comprehensive manner. Emphasis will be placed on innovation-based, new technology, smart classrooms and sports and other aspects. This initiative will benefit lakhs of students of Odisha. The teaching and learning in these schools will be technology based and there will be provision of ICT, digital lab, digital library and digital learning tools.

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



Woman obstructs CM's carcade

Bhubaneswar, July 9: High drama unfolded at Rasulgarh Square here, Tuesday evening, when a woman waylaid Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi's carcade. A senior police official at Mancheswar police station said, “CM Majhi was returning to his residence after attending an event at VSS Nagar around 5:15pm. Meanwhile, when his carcade was passing Rasulgarh Square, traffic came to a standstill. During this, the woman came forward and asked the cops as to why the traffic had been stopped

for 10-15 minutes.” The cops tried to placate her saying that it was a regular security arrangement adhered to during any CM's itinerary. However, the woman refused to calm down and was seen obstructing a police van for several minutes. Later, a lady cop forcefully escorted the woman to roadside, he added. “Prima facie, it is not clear whether the woman had any medical emergency or she is associated with a political party,” the cop added. Meanwhile, Mancheswar police have launched an investigation into the incident.

Shaadi, Utsav ya Tyohar... Lijjat Papad Ho Harbar...
Karram Kurram...
Lijjat PAPAD
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CJI: Every SC judge is very experienced

New Delhi, July 9: “Every judge of the Supreme Court is very experienced,” Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud told a lawyer Tuesday while admonishing him for complaining about another apex court judge. Advocate Ashok Pandey, who got an unfavourable order from a bench headed by Justice BR Gavai, had rushed to the CJI's courtroom claiming he was threatened with cancellation of his advocate's licence. Visibly unimpressed with the allegation, the CJI said, “This court has no intra-court appeal. If you are aggrieved by an order of this court, you have a remedy of review petition. Every judge of this court is very experienced and they have decades of experience as lawyers as well.” Pandey said he appeared as a petitioner in-person in his PILs and was slapped with fines by earlier orders. “I was only asking for the recall of the order imposing fine but instead the judge asked me to go out of the courtroom and even threatened that my licence will be cancelled,” he told the bench which also comprised Justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra. Exasperated by his remonstrations, Chandrachud told Pandey, “I have been hearing you for a while and now I am beginning to lose my patience. I can understand what would happen in other courts. You please seek remedy as per the law.”

Identify dengue hotspots, DMs told

Bhubaneswar, July 9: Amid a spurt in dengue cases, the state government has directed all District Magistrates (DMs) and five municipal commissioners to remain vigilant, identify hotspots and review availability of frontline workers, logistics and drugs for prevention and control of the vector-borne diseases. In her letter, Health and Family Welfare (H&FW) department Commissioner-cum-Secretary Shalini Pandit said Odisha may witness an uptick in cases of vector-borne diseases like dengue and malaria during and after the monsoon. “However, timely implementation of adequate measures can significantly reduce morbidity and mortality,” she said. The Collectors were asked to convene district or municipal level meetings

of all stakeholders to review the joint action plan. They were directed to map vulnerable pockets by analysing the epidemiological trend of the last five years and undertake intensified surveillance in these pockets. Pandit also asked the Collectors and municipal commissioners to ensure adequate tests, treatment and timely referral to higher health facilities, whenever required. “District and block Rapid Response Teams (RRTs) to be kept in readiness to manage adverse situations, and anti-larval and anti-adult (for vector) measures should be undertaken in addition to massive source reduction activities,” she mentioned. “Ensure availability of adequate drugs and diagnostics and dedicated wards with mosquito proofing in health institutions,” the H&FW Commissioner-cum-Secretary further stated

in the letter. The Collectors and municipal commissioners were also asked to ensure observation of weekly dry day and strengthening IEC-BCC activities on inter-personal communication so as to disseminate messages for prevention and control of dengue as per local need. According to sources, the state has so far reported at least 200 dengue cases, with Khurda district that registered 30 incidents being the worst affected. The Capital City accounts for almost 50 per cent to the cases in Khurda. Bhubaneswar Mayor Sulochana Das said the civic body has been undertaking a host of measures to curb vector-borne diseases. “We are leaving no stone unturned towards curbing stagnation of water in residential areas. Soon, we'll be hosting roadshows, especially in slums, to create awareness among the people. Fogging has been intensified,” added Das.

4 held for firing in air



Bhubaneswar, July 9: Two days after a few unidentified miscreants fired gunshots in the air near Gadhikhala Sahi, the Commissionerate Police Tuesday arrested four persons in this connection. Two billhooks, one cricket stump, one scooter and an empty cartridge have been seized from the possession of the accused, said a senior official at Badagada police station. Twin city Police Commissioner Sanjib Panda said Sagar Jena, 25, T Biju, 27, Sumanta Pradhan, 20 and Gunu Kanhar, 20 - all locals - have been arrested, while two other miscreants are still at large. Panda said the hoodlums, who were under the influence of alcohol, were loitering near the area and troubling commuters around 9:30 pm. When complainant Balaram Behera opposed them, the anti-socials started verbally abusing him and threatened him with sharp weapons. Subsequently, when some locals joined Balaram and took objection to their nuisance in the public, the miscreants began firing gunshots in the air and vandalised the vehicles parked nearby. “During the entire incident, the hoodlums had fired a total of three rounds from their firearms”, added Panda. Badagada police booked the four men under Sections 324 (4), 351 (3), 296 and 3 (5) of BNS, along with Sections 25 and 27 of Arms Act. They were produced before a local court Tuesday. Notably, the arrested men were previously arrested by Badagada police for similar crimes.

Water level in key reservoirs rise for first time since Sept 2023

New Delhi, July 9: Amid heavy rains across India, the water level of the country's main reservoirs has risen for the first time since September last year, the Central Water Commission (CWC) said. Despite the marginal rise of 2 per cent from the previous week, this marks a departure from the consistent week-on-week decline reported since the bulletin issued on September 29, 2023, when the storage capacity stood at 73

per cent, according to the analysis of the data. This improvement comes amid widespread rainfall across the country. The CWC, which monitors the live storage status of 150 reservoirs across India, released its latest bulletin detailing these developments on July 4. The CWC issues a weekly bulletin every Thursday, providing updates on the status of these reservoirs. According to the bulletin, out of the 150 reservoirs, 20 are ded-

icated to hydroelectric projects, with a total live storage capacity of 35.30 billion cubic meters (BCM). The CWC bulletin July 4 said the live storage available in these reservoirs was 39.729 BCM, which is 22 per cent of their total live storage capacity. In comparison, the live storage available during the corresponding period last year was 50.422 BCM, with a normal storage level of 44.06 BCM. This indicates that the current live storage is 79 per cent of

last year's corresponding period and 90 per cent of the normal storage level, the CWC said. The northern region, comprising Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, and Rajasthan, has 10 reservoirs with a total live storage capacity of 19.663 BCM. The current storage is 5.39 BCM (27 per cent), compared to 45 per cent during the same period last year and a normal storage level of 31 per cent. The eastern region, including Assam, Jharkhand, Odisha, West Bengal, Tripura, Nagaland, and Bihar, has 23 reservoirs with a total live storage capacity of 20.430 BCM. The current storage stands at 3.979 BCM (19 per cent), down from 20 per cent last year and a normal level of 23 per cent. The western region, which includes Gujarat and Maharashtra, has 49 reservoirs with a total live storage capacity of 37.130 BCM. The storage is now at 7.949 BCM (21 per cent), compared to 27 per cent last year and a normal storage level of 22 per cent.

The central region, comprising Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Madhya Pradesh, and Chhattisgarh, has 26 reservoirs with a total live storage capacity of 48.227 BCM. The current storage is 12.26 BCM (25 per cent), compared to 35 per cent last year and a normal storage level of 26 per cent. The southern region, including Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Karnataka, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu, has 42 reservoirs with a total live storage capacity of 53.334 BCM.

Technologies creating new challenges: Prez



PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, July 9: New technological developments are providing capabilities to society, but at the same time, they are also creating new challenges for humanity, President Droupadi Murmu said Tuesday.

Murmu was addressing the 13th graduation ceremony of the National Institute of Science Education and Research (NISER), here.

"Today, very rapid changes are taking place in the field of science and technology. Along with the boon of science, there is always the danger of its curse. Similarly, new technological developments are providing capabilities to human society, but at the same time, they are also creating new challenges for humanity," she said.

Citing an example of CRISPR-

Due to the advances in the field of generative AI, the problem of deep fake and many regulatory challenges are coming to the fore, said the President

is merciless science. That is, promoting science without sensitivity towards humanity is like committing a sin," she said, advising students to remember this message.

"Experiments and research in the field of fundamental science often take a lot of time to get the results. Many a times breakthroughs have been achieved after facing disappointment for many years," she added.

The President told the students that they may go through such a phase at times when their patience is tested but they should never be discouraged.

Murmu advised the students to always remember that developments in fundamental research prove to be extremely beneficial in other areas as well.

The President Tuesday left the state following the programme at NISER, concluding her four-day visit to Odisha. Governor Raghubar Das and Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi accompanied her to the Biju Patnaik International Airport here.



RAISING VOICE: Members of Communist Party of India protest against hike in prices of vegetables and essential commodities at Rajmahal Square in Bhubaneswar, Tuesday

Deposit fine or face contempt: SC raps lawyer

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 9: Supreme Court Tuesday rapped an advocate for not depositing a cost of ₹50,000 imposed on him for filing a 'meritless' plea, and directed him to submit the amount within two weeks.

A bench of Justices Abhay S Oka and Augustine George Masih rejected the submission of the lawyer Ashok Pandey seeking more time to deposit the amount.

"You are a practising lawyer and despite your assurance to the court to pay ₹50,000 cost, you did not pay the money and there-after went abroad. Now you can-



not say that you can't pay cost. You pay the cost or we will issue contempt notice against you," the bench said.

The lawyer submitted that he did not get any case since 2023 and his trip abroad was sponsored by his children.

The bench refused to accept his submission and directed him to submit the amount.

The top court had January 2, 2023 dismissed with a cost of ₹50,000 his plea seeking a direction to not consider advocates practising in the apex court for judgeship in the high courts, saying it is 'meritless' and a 'complete wastage of judicial time'.

It had observed there is nothing in the Constitution which prohibits lawyers practising in

the top court to be appointed as a judge of the high courts.

Pandey had told the bench that as per his interpretation of Article 217 of the Constitution, a person who may have been enrolled with a state bar council and subsequently shifted practice to the apex court is ineligible to be appointed as a judge of that court.

Later, another bench of Justices BR Gavai and KV Viswanathan slammed Pandey for not depositing an amount of ₹1 lakh imposed on him when he had challenged reinstatement of Lok Sabha membership of NCP MP Mohammed Faizal.

IMD predicts heavy rain for five days

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 9: Heavy rainfall, accompanied with thunderstorm and lightning, will continue in several parts of the state for next five days, said the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) regional centre head Manorama Mohanty here, Tuesday.

According to the weather office, thunderstorm along with lightning is likely to occur at one or two places in Balasore, Bhadrak, Jajpur, Kendrapara, Cuttack, Jagatsinghpur, Puri, Khurda, Nayagarh, Ganjam, Gajapati, Mayurbhanj and Keonjhar districts.

Southwest monsoon's cumulative rainfall from June 1 to July 9 stood at 216.3 mm against its normal value of 295.0 mm.

During this period, 13 districts have recorded normal rainfall while 16 districts received deficient rainfall. Likewise, one district has experienced large deficient rainfall.



EVENING MELODY: Artists perform at Shradhdhanjali, a classical music programme dedicated to late Suramani Bauri Bandhu Sethi at Rama Devi Women's University in Bhubaneswar, Tuesday

Work as a team to bolster education system: Pradhan

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 9: Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan Tuesday called upon states to work with the Centre as a team to strengthen the education ecosystem and replicate and amplify the best practices across all states and Union Territories (UTs).

The minister made the comments at a review meeting of the Ministry of Education's Department of School Education and Literacy with states and (UTs). The meeting focused on implementation of the new National Education Policy (NEP) and alignment of the ministry's flagship schemes such as the Samagra Shiksha, PM SHRI, PM Poshan and ULLAS with the policy.

"Both states and the Centre have to work as a team to



strengthen the education ecosystem as well as to replicate and amplify the best practices across all states and UTs. All stakeholders should work cohesively for strengthening capacities, building a collaborative education system and leveraging education as the key pillar of Viksit Bharat," Pradhan said.

"In almost four years of the National Education Policy, the education ecosystem in the country has made tremendous progress. Implementation of the

NEP was the key to transform Bharat into a knowledge superpower and enabling equitable and inclusive access to quality education," he added.

Speaking about education in Indian languages, Pradhan said NEP 2020 stresses upon the importance of education in the mother tongue and all Indian languages.

"India is a young country and our challenge is to make global citizens for the 21st century world which is rapidly changing and being driven by technology. Ensuring an education system which is both rooted and futuristic is our collective responsibility," he said.

The minister also stressed on the importance of building technology readiness in schools with a holistic approach and ensuring critical thinking among students.

Vedangi's world cycling tour begins from INS Chilka

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 9: Vedangi Kulkarni, an endurance athlete who holds a Guinness World Record for becoming the fastest woman to cycle from Manali to Leh, has started her historic cycling journey around the globe July 8, 2024, according to a release issued by INS Chilka, Tuesday.

The release said Vedangi, who visited INS Chilka July 7, is all set to create history by cycling around the globe twice. During an interactive session, she shared her incredible journey, emphasising the importance of discipline and courage that resonates with the Agniveers. Her stories of resilience and perseverance were met with admiration and enthusiasm from the audience.

Comrade NP Pradeep, Commanding Officer of INS Chilka, flagged off Vedangi's cy-



cling journey, Monday. This momentous event marks the beginning of the epic adventure that will see her cycling through 19 countries. Vedangi, who started her journey from INS Chilka, will be completing the feat at picturesque Chilika Lake in November this year - an inspiring story for all to push their boundaries and pursue their dreams, the release added.

Stool samples can help diagnose autism

THE RESEARCHERS ANALYSED THE STOOL SAMPLES FROM NEARLY 1,630 CHILDREN AGED BETWEEN ONE AND 13 IN CHINA, ALONG WITH DATA OF THEIR DIETS AND MEDICATIONS

A range of gut bugs may be contributing to the development of autism in children, a recent study published in the Nature Microbiology journal has found.

Stool samples can, therefore, help diagnose the neurodevelopmental condition in which one displays repetitive behaviour and affected social behaviour, researchers said.

"Usually it takes three to four years to make a confirmed diagnosis for suspected autism, with most children diagnosed at six years old," the study's first author, Qi Su of The Chinese University of Hong Kong, told The Guardian.

"Our microbiome biomarker panel has a high performance in children under the age of four, which may help facilitate an early diagnosis," Su said.

Over the past decade, studies have shown that gut bugs play a role in a child developing autism. Children with autism differ with regard to the microbes in their guts and also show delayed development in the diversity of gut bugs, according to previous studies.

However, the researchers said that these studies had largely looked at bacteria in these children's guts.

In this study, the authors looked at other microbes - fungi,



and viruses, among others -- along with their functions in the guts of children diagnosed with autism.

The researchers analysed the stool samples from nearly 1,630 children aged between one and 13 in China, along with data of their diets and medications. Around 900 children had autism.

For their analysis, the team used metagenomic sequencing, which helps study genetic material recovered from clinical samples (such as stool).

The authors found differences in more than 50 types of bacteria, seven fungi and 18 viruses in the gut microbiomes of the children with autism.

Further, 12 metabolic functions were found to be different in these children.

The researchers also developed an artificial intelligence-based model to see if the results -- the presence of 31 different bugs or functions -- could be used to predict if a child had autism.

They found that the model showed 'higher diagnostic accuracy' than just looking at one bug, such as bacteria, alone.

"While genetic factors play a substantial role in autism, the microbiome could act as a contributing factor by modulating immune responses, neurotransmitter production, and metabolic pathways," The Guardian quoted Su as saying.

"This does not necessarily imply causation but suggests that the microbiome might influence the severity or expression of autism spectrum symptoms," she said.

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We are always surrounded by the things of which we think.

THE MOTHER



Putin-Modi Hug

The two-day visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Russia coincides with the NATO summit gathering in Washington beginning 9 July. This gives an opportunity to both Russian President Vladimir Putin and India's Prime Minister Modi to further their mutual geopolitical interests. Putin is desperate to project to the world that he is not as isolated as the US-led West would like the world to believe. Modi should also be anxious that Moscow is increasingly being pushed towards China seeking military and material aid from it. Tilted Putin a little is the least India can expect, given its increasingly hostile relations with China and its farcical policy of denial of Chinese aggression and occupation of Indian territories.

Putin welcomed Modi to Moscow by offering him tea, berries and sweets and took him on a tour of the grounds of his Dacha in the suburbs of Moscow in a motorised cart. Modi in turn posted photos of his arrival in Moscow on X, in both Russian and English, saying he was "looking forward to further deepening the Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership between our nations."

The optics may seem to be to India's advantage. However, Putin's very recent visit to North Korea and his obvious bonhomie with Kim has not gone unnoticed by those observing the international arena in the present day world. Right from the start of the Russia-Ukraine war, India has been playing the role of seeming neutrality. It neither condemns the Russian invasion nor defends it, but harps on the theme of diplomatic and not military solution to the problem. Accepting that there is no problem except a very simple Russian invasion that has been constantly killing civilians has resulted in distancing India from the public in the West. Governments may play friendly for short periods of time, keeping benefits in mind. It should however never be forgotten that public opinion eventually overrides all such diplomatic niceties. Such a stand of neither here nor there has, so far, proved beneficial to interests of a few Indian business houses dealing with petroleum imports that have not benefitted Indians but are diverted to Europe. This also helped Russia to sell its oil and circumvent the severe sanctions it is facing from the West. India has definitely not been the beneficiary in this whole affair.

With all this, the US seems not happy with India's relationship with Russia and at the time Modi was meeting Putin 8 July, the State Department said Washington had raised concerns with India's closeness to Russia amid Moscow's invasion of Ukraine. The picture of Modi embracing Putin also came under fire from Ukraine President Zelenskyy who termed it as a "huge disappointment and a devastating blow to peace efforts to see the leader of the world's largest democracy hug the world's most bloody criminal in Moscow on such a day," while posting photos of children killed and buildings destroyed by Russian rockets on X. All this destruction of Ukraine's cities and killing of at least 37 people took place a few hours before Modi arrived in Moscow.

In a no-nonsense manner the US made it clear to India that any resolution of the conflict in Ukraine needs to be one that respects the UN Charter, Ukraine's territorial integrity and Ukraine's sovereignty.

Russia and India may have had strong ties that date back to the height of the Cold War. Undoubtedly the present world has completely changed and those heading India's foreign policy need to understand that our democracy, economy and history make a unique combination in Asia, if not in the whole world. However there is serious doubt if anyone in the establishment is capable of understanding these finer details, much less creating a bipartisan strategy and implementing it. India will most likely muddle along, happy being in the middle and simply getting photographed at the G20. Sandwiched between cyber crooks in Cambodia, construction labour in Israel and support soldiers on the Ukraine front as well as attempted immigration all over the world, we might be frittering away our demographic dividend and trying to flaunt the Indian diaspora that consists of people who deserted this country when it needed them the most.



Ajit Ranade

SINCE INCOME GROWTH WILL BE ENERGY INTENSIVE, IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT RENEWABLE ENERGY GROWTH IS FASTER BY A FACTOR OF TWO OR THREE

AGENDA FOR 'MIG'-47

FOCUS NATION

MIG in the Indian context usually refers to fighter aircraft from Russia that have been a cornerstone of Indo-Russian defence relations. This column is about a different 'MIG', a new and more ambitious project that gives the acronym 'MIG'-47, which is short for "Make India Great by 2047." This may sound like 'Make America Great Again' (MAGA) campaign of former US President Trump! Or it is in the same spirit of 'Viksit Bharat 2047' announced by our PM, which aims to see India a developed country by 2047 when we celebrate hundred years as an independent nation.

'MIG'-47 is about working for the glory of our nation. Before we proceed, we need to ask a basic question. Is nationalism going out of fashion, or is there a resurgence? Is it waning or waxing? The concept of nations bounded by geography is perhaps only three centuries old, hence the nation state is a relatively new concept. And the factors leading to its waning influence are globalisation, technology and existence of supranational entities like the European Union, customs unions, military alliances, trade blocs and so on. Nationalist sentiments can be diluted by exposure to international and multi-cultural influences. Member states in entities such as the European Union happily surrender their sovereignty at least partially. For instance, the member nations do not control monetary policy, and have to abide by free trade rules applicable across two dozen nations. The recent electoral outcome in the UK might be a vote to roll back BREXIT.

Movement of refugees and presence of large diaspora also somewhat dilute nationalist sentiments. Conversely, there is evidence of resurgence of aggressive nationalism too, especially manifesting in anti-refugee and anti-immigrant movements. We see some of this in Hungary, Poland or in sub-national independence movements in Catalonia and Scotland. There is anxiety about unemployment, blamed on outsiders i.e. people from other nations (e.g. Bangladeshi intruders).



Our country has been blessed with unimaginable diversity in every conceivable facet, and yet we also are the world's showcase for harmony and unity in diversity. The key message of India to the world is 'samanvay,' not tolerance but acceptance, not just co-existence but co-flourishing and blooming

Remember Obama campaigned about how jobs were being stolen from Buffalo to Bangalore? Or by China? Nationalist feelings are also stirred by geopolitics, border conflicts, threat to national security and sabre-rattling rhetoric. And to add to all this is muscular and sometimes ugly manifestation on social media. The jury is out whether nationalism is going out of fashion, or will become even more entrenched.

Hence let's talk about 'MIG'-47. This has economic dimensions, of raising India's per-capita income in the high middle-income bracket (say 20,000 dollars per person, in present terms). For that to happen the national income must go up ten-fold in the next twenty-five years. This means a growth rate of 9.6 per cent per year in dollar terms. Since the rupee as a currency may remain stable, or if inflation is in control, then can even become stronger; this growth rate is quite feasible, not impossible. It has to be sustained for more than two

decades. 'MIG'-47 also has ease of living dimension. That refers to safe and abundant drinking water availability, housing made from environmentally sustainable resources, extensive public transportation availability in cities, and air quality which is much less toxic. Since income growth will be energy intensive, it is imperative that renewable energy growth is faster by a factor of two or three. India is the global leader of solar alliance. The night storage of solar energy should be planned in distributed and diffused manner, sitting in millions of small automotive rechargeable batteries. That is, we invert the role of car and scooter batteries. They drain at night, running household electricity, and get recharged by solar in the day. Each one of us, like the proverbial squirrels who along with monkeys helped build the stone bridge to Lanka for Lord Ram, act as solar energy storage devices.

Air quality will improve greatly with a focus on sus-

tainable strategies in the automotive and housing sectors. The latter consumes cement, which is made from calcium carbonate, a major source of carbon dioxide. Hence construction sector has to be radically reoriented to reduce its carbon footprint. The third dimension of 'MIG'-47 is building of human capital, through education, skilling, training and enhancing productivity and innovation capabilities. This is the toughest ask. It calls for herculean effort and reforms on multiple fronts. Education (along with agriculture) continues to be unreformed and shackled, although the National Education Policy 2020 is a step in the right direction. Here is a small tweak. How about if we mandate that senior civil servants must educate their child till class 5 in the panchayat or municipal schools where they have their posting? That will align incentives magically. How about that parent teacher associations will assess the performance of teachers in every government school, annually? That is to say that parents will have a say in the school governance.

The fourth dimension of 'MIG'-47 is aggressive, relentless and continuous decentralisation of power, to the lowest i.e. the third tier of government. This is the closest to the people but is least empowered in terms of decision autonomy, funding and functioning. The more power gets centralised, the more we get deeper into the rut or quicksand of politics of power. The only long-term way is massive effort of decentralisation of governance and power. The fifth dimension of 'MIG'-47 is cultural, social, religious and spiritual. Our country has been blessed with unimaginable diversity in every conceivable facet, and yet we also are the world's showcase for harmony and unity in diversity. The key message of India to the world is "samanvay", not tolerance but acceptance, not just co-existence but co-flourishing and blooming.

The writer is a noted Pune-based economist.
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WISDOM CORNER

We have to abandon the idea that schooling is something restricted to youth. How can it be, in a world where half the things a man knows at 20 are no longer true at 40 - and half the things he knows at 40 hadn't been discovered when he was 20? **ARTHUR C. CLARKE**

Life is not a series of gig lamps symmetrically arranged; life is a luminous halo, a semi-transparent envelope surrounding us from the beginning of consciousness to the end. **VIRGINIA WOOLF**

The only freedom which deserves the name is that of pursuing our own good, in our own way, so long as we do not attempt to deprive others of theirs, or impede their efforts to obtain it. **JOHN STUART MILL**

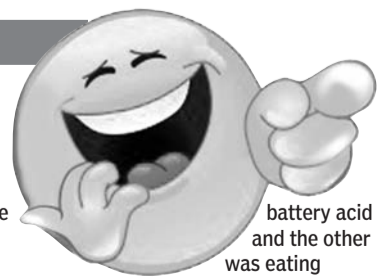
THIS DAY IN HISTORY

- 1940: Battle of Britain. The German air force or Luftwaffe launched an air campaign against England. It was one of the first battles during the Second World War fought entirely between air forces and it ended a few months later with a British victory.
- 1952: The constitution of Eritrea, prepared by the United Nations in consultation with Emperor Haile Selassie I of Ethiopia, was adopted.
- 1962: Telstar, the world's first communication satellite is launched in space. The satellite, made by a collaboration between organizations in the U.S., the U.K., and France, transmitted the first live television images in the world.
- 1962: Swedish engineer Nils Bohlin was issued a U.S. patent for a three-point seatbelt for cars; a major safety innovation, it featured a strap that extended across the upper body in addition to a standard lap restraint.
- 1965: British rock band the Rolling Stones topped U.S. charts for the first time with the single (I Can't Get No) Satisfaction.
- 1967: New Zealand adopts new currency. The New Zealand pound was replaced by the New Zealand dollar. The denominations of the new currency followed a decimal system.
- 1985: The Greenpeace ship Rainbow Warrior was sunk by two bomb explosions while berthed in Auckland Harbour, New Zealand; it was later revealed that French intelligence agents had planted the explosives.

LOL

Dealing with criminals

A local policeman had just finished his shift one cold November evening and was at home with his wife. "You just won't believe what happened this evening, in all my years on the force I've never seen anything like it." "Oh yes dear, what happened?" "I came across two guys down by the canal, one of them was drinking



battery acid and the other was eating fireworks."

"Drinking battery acid and eating fireworks!! What did you do with them?"

"Oh that was easy, I charged one and let the other off."

IN JEST THIS

Even a 'zero' can make you feel like hero



Melvin Durai

WHEN I BREAK A PLATE OR OTHER OBJECT AT HOME, I SAY TO MYSELF, 'ONE LESS THING FOR THE KIDS TO SELL AT THE ESTATE SALE'

I consider myself an optimist. The glass is always half-full to me, not half-empty. If every cloud has a silver lining, I try to find it. When I break a plate or other object at home, I say to myself, "One less thing for the kids to sell at the estate sale." When I accidentally cut off another driver on the highway and he puts down his window to yell obscenities and show me the middle finger, I say to myself, "Well, at least I didn't cut off a gentleman." When my wife complains that she woke up with a headache, I say to myself, "Well, at least she isn't calling me something worse."

If I were running for public office and lost the election in a landslide, 1,000 votes to 1, I'd say to myself, "Well, at least they counted my vote." If I managed to get two votes, I'd say to myself, "Well, at least my wife voted for

her headache." If I managed to get five votes, I'd say to myself, "Well, at least my kids remembered to vote."

But I really don't know how I'd feel if I got zero votes. Would I be able to find a silver lining?

Félix-Antoine Hamel, a 45-year-old musician from Montreal, Canada, certainly seems to have done so.

Hamel recently made history when he became the first federal candidate to get zero votes in a contested Canadian election. Yes, ZERO, as in "the number of 'likes' Justin Trudeau has received on social media from Narendra Modi this year."

Despite finishing below 83 other candidates, Hamel managed to find a silver lining. As he told CBC News, "When I saw the result, I was like, 'Well, I am the true unity candidate. Everyone agrees not to vote for me.'"

Hamel was a candidate to represent Toronto-St. Paul's, an electoral district in Toronto, in the House of Commons in Ottawa (not to be confused with Patty's Pub, the House of Commons). Most of the 84 candidates, like Hamel, were independents who added their names to the ballot as part of a coordinated protest against Canada's winner-take-all plurality voting system.

The winner was Don Stewart of the Conservative Party, who gained 15,565 votes, nipping Leslie Church of the Liberal Party (14,932). Danny Légaré of the Marijuana Party managed to get 30 votes - and only 15 candidates finished higher, though that's debatable.

Out of the 84 candidates, 48 received fewer than 10 votes each, but Hamel was the only one to get zero votes, partly because he doesn't live in Toronto-St. Paul's

and couldn't vote for himself. He also didn't put any effort into campaigning, didn't even release a Tik-Tok video playing a saxophone beside a sign that says, "More Sax in Ottawa." As a result, he made Canadian history and got lots of publicity - another silver lining.

"I'm one of the last people that would be expected to make Canadian history in any way," he said.

Hamel told the CBC that he was glad to make a statement about election reform and to participate in a fair democratic process. He's concerned about declining democracy in other parts of the world.

"As long as I have the right and the privilege to get zero votes in an election, then we are truly in a democracy," he said.

And there's another silver lining!

Fatal pollution

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

OrissaPOST
B-15, Russagarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

Krishna Kumar Vepakomma, HYDERABAD

Sir, The State of Global Air 2024 report published by the Health Effects Institute (HEI) and UNICEF highlights air pollution as a critical global health concern and the second leading cause of child deaths worldwide, surpassing poor sanitation and inadequate clean water. In 2021, air pollution was responsible for 8.1 million deaths globally, including nearly 464 daily deaths of children under five in India, primarily due to heart disease, stroke, diabetes, lung cancer, and COPD exacerbated by pollutants such as ozone and PM2.5. The report also links deteriorating air quality to severe climate events like droughts, wildfires, and dust storms, which release persistent particles harmful to global health. Beyond health, air pollution strains healthcare systems, economies, and exacerbates inequalities, particularly affecting vulnerable groups.

Thumping victory

Sir, This refers to "New Hope." A strong anti-incumbency sentiment brought the conservative party's tumultuous 14-year rule to an end as the Labour Party recorded a thumping victory in the British parliamentary elections. In the end, PM Rishi Sunak seemed more like a captain trying to bring ashore a sinking ship with a mutiny on board. On the other hand, Keir Starmer quietly rebuilt Labour Party. The UK was once known for its political stability within Europe, but the past 14 years of Tory rule have seen the country lurching from one crisis to another, especially after the disastrous 2016 vote to leave the EU. Years of austerity and pressure on stretched public services were compounded by the shock of the COVID-19 pandemic and a cost-of-living crisis. But, Keir Starmer and his Labour Party have little time to celebrate their landslide triumph. The nation's tax burden is set to touch its highest since just after World War II, while the net debt is almost equivalent to the annual economic output. With so many problems at home, the new UK government may struggle to maintain continuity in foreign policy, such as offering unequivocal support to Ukraine in the war against Russia. With 28 Indian-origin candidates winning, the real point of interest for India is the Free Trade Agreement, which has been in the works for quite some time.

N Sathasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

Rahul visits Raebareli, meets Kirti Chakra awardee's family

IN THE RECENTLY CONCLUDED LOK SABHA ELECTIONS, GANDHI WON FROM THE RAEbareli LOK SABHA SEAT BY A MARGIN OF MORE THAN 3.90 LAKH VOTES

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Raebareli (UP), July 9: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi Tuesday met here the family members of Kirti Chakra recipient late Captain Anshuman Singh, whose mother later spoke out against the Agniveer scheme. Gandhi, the Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha, also visited AIIMS-Raebareli and met party workers and local residents of his constituency during his short visit before leaving for Lucknow.

"I request the government not to divide the Army into two categories," the late captain's mother Manju Singh told reporters after Gandhi met her at a guest house here.

Speaking further about the about the Army scheme launched in 2022 for short-term recruitment of jawans, Singh said the four-year job role is not appropriate as Agniveers who are let go would struggle to find another suitable career.

"They (Agniveers) will be mentally and physically weak after four years after which they would be unable to pursue their studies... this is not good," she added.

Her son was posthumously conferred the Kirti Chakra, India's second-highest peacetime gallantry award, by President Droupadi Murmu July 5 during an investiture ceremony.

Capt Singh died while rescuing people from a major fire in July last year.

Gandhi had called the martyr's family, which resides in Lucknow, to meet them at the guest house.



Congress MP and Lok Sabha LoP Rahul Gandhi interacts with a young patient during his visit at All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), in Raebareli, Tuesday. PTI PHOTO

"I request the government not to divide the Army into two categories. They (Agniveers) will be mentally and physically weak after four years after which they would be unable to pursue their studies... this is not good"

MANJU SINGH | LATE CAPTAIN ANSHUMAN SINGH'S MOTHER

After meeting the Congress leader, the late officer's mother told reporters that Gandhi assured all possible support to their family.

Gandhi said that he requested the government to end the Agniveer scheme as it is not appropriate for the Army, she said.

Earlier on the way to Raebareli after landing in Lucknow, Gandhi prayed at a Hanuman temple in Churwa.

After landing at the Chaudhary

Charan Singh Airport in Lucknow, Gandhi left by road for Raebareli, which is about 80 km from the state capital.

On the way to Raebareli, he stopped at Churwa temple near Bachchawan and paid obeisance to Lord Hanuman.

Rahul Gandhi worshipped at the Churwa Hanuman temple and prayed to Lord Hanuman for the happiness, peace and prosperity of the country, the Congress party said on X.

Gandhi reached the Bhuemau guest house, where he met party workers, delegations including that of Indian Industries Association (IIA) and locals, a local party leader said.

Gandhi also visited the martyrs' memorial in Lalganj and laid a wreath there and planted a sapling.

In the recently concluded Lok Sabha elections, Gandhi won from the Raebareli Lok Sabha seat by a margin of more than 3.90 lakh votes.

KATHUA AMBUSH Mountain road speaks of stiff resistance

It was the fifth terror attack within a month in Jammu region, which has been shaken by a series of recent ambushes and attacks, particularly in the border districts of Poonch, Rajouri, Doda, and Reasi

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Machedi (J&K), July 9: Bloodstains on the road and helmets, bullet shells, vehicles with shattered windscreens and flattened tyres... A day after terrorists ambushed an Army patrol, a wooded mountain road Tuesday told the story of fierce resistance by troops and a gunbattle that carried on for several hours.

Five Army personnel were killed and five injured Monday when heavily armed terrorists hurled a grenade and opened indiscriminate fire on two army vehicles around 3.30pm on the Machedi-Kindli-Malhar mountainous road near Badnota village, about 150 km from the district headquarters Kathua.

It was the fifth terror attack in Jammu in a month, an escalation in the relatively peaceful region compared to Kashmir Valley officials attributed to attempts by Pakistani handlers to reignite terrorism.

Recapping what had happened, officials said the soldiers displayed courage and resilience despite facing casualties and engaged them for several hours.

The terrorists, believed to be a group of three, are likely to have taken cover of the thick foliage on a hill to surprise the troops who retaliated immediately, responding with gunfire and fighting back till the terrorists disappeared into the dense woods, they said.

The search for the terrorists, which was suspended late Monday because of heavy rain, resumed Tuesday with joint search parties of the Army, police and CRPF launched from various directions, including Kathua, Udhampur and Doda.

The Army's elite para-com-



mandos and sniffer dogs joined the search operation while drones and helicopters were also pressed into service for surveillance, officials said.

Amid the telltale signs of the violence, were the two vehicles, parked about 300 metres away from each other. Given the state of the road, officials said they were probably not going at too much speed and came under fire while they were taking a turn.

Villagers also played a crucial role in the operation, joining rescue efforts to evacuate the casualties. There were anti-Pakistan protests in several areas as agitated villagers took to the streets to condemn the terror attack.

"A civil bus passed the road about 10 minutes before the attack. We heard a loud explosion and initially took it as a tyre burst but the subsequent heavy

firing made us realise that an encounter has started," Puran Chand Sharma, a villager who runs a shop just a few metres from the scene, told PTI.

The heavy firing continued till 5pm, followed by intermittent firing for another one hour.

"About 12 villagers were at my shop. We hid ourselves inside to avoid getting caught in the crossfire. After the firing stopped, we rushed to help evacuate the casualties," he said.

Vijay Kumar, another local, said this is the first terror incident in the village since cross-border terrorism broke out in Jammu and Kashmir over three decades ago.

"We have not noticed any movement of terrorists in our area having over 100 families," he said. In his view, the terrorists might have reached in the bus that had passed by a short while

before bullet fire rang out.

Kathua Senior Superintendent of Police Anayat Ali Choudhary, who reached the spot hours of the incident, is camping at Lawang-Machedi along with other officers to supervise the anti-terrorist operation.

"Efforts are on to track down and neutralise the terrorists. The joint search parties have fanned out from all sides and it is a matter of investigation how the terrorists reached the area," a police official said.

Director General of Police RR Swain is personally overseeing the anti-terrorist operation in the dense forest area, connected to Basantgarh in Udhampur district where several encounters have occurred in the past.

A village defence guard was killed April 28 in an encounter with terrorists in Panara village of Basantgarh.

According to officials, this route could be used by terrorists to reach the hinterland after they managed to sneak in from across the border.

The Jammu region has been shaken by a series of recent ambushes and terror attacks, particularly in the border districts of Poonch, Rajouri, Doda, and Reasi.

For instance, terrorists attacked a bus carrying pilgrims from the Shiv Khori temple in Reasi district June 9, claiming the lives of nine persons and injuring 41 others.

Earlier in May, terrorists ambushed an Indian Air Force (IAF) convoy in Poonch district, killing a soldier and injuring several others.

Kashmir Tigers, a shadow outfit of the banned Pakistan-based Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM), has claimed responsibility for the attack.



BURNING IRE: People stage a protest following a terrorist attack on an Army convoy in J&K's Kathua, in Jammu, Tuesday. PTI PHOTO

UP govt waives off road tax on hybrid cars

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Lucknow, July 9: In a key step to boost green transportation and adoption of eco-friendly vehicles, the Uttar Pradesh government has announced a waiver of road tax on hybrid cars.

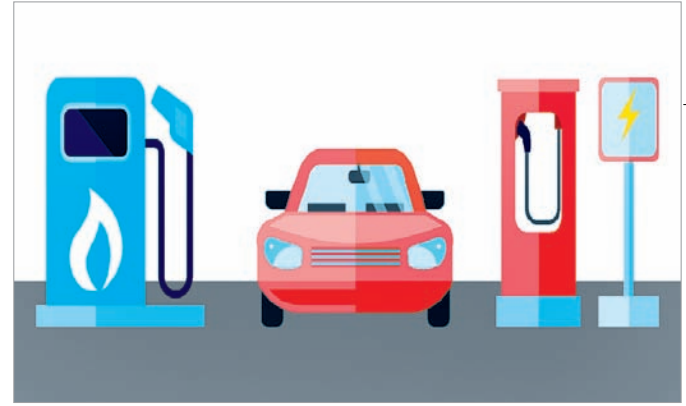
The state, through a directive, is reportedly offering a "100 per cent waiver on registration fees for strong hybrid electric vehicles and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles".

The move is set to benefit hybrid cars being offered by automakers like Maruti, Toyota and Honda.

Maruti Suzuki has a popular hybrid model like Grand Vitara and Toyota offers Innova Hycross and Urban Cruiser Hyryder.

The average registration cost for the hybrid trims of Grand Vitara and Urban Cruiser Hyryder is about Rs 1.80 lakh in UP. The road tax waiver will significantly bring down the cost of these cars.

The Innova Hycross and Invicto buyers are likely to benefit up to Rs 3 lakh in on-road prices, depending on the variant.



Since this is an amendment to the existing EV policy, the relaxation in registration costs will be valid till October 2025.

According to the Federation of Automobile Dealers Associations (FADA), this policy will boost strong hybrid vehicle sales in UP, even though the market is currently small.

"Most buyers of such vehicles are not first-time owners. This move by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath is set to aid the auto sector," according to FADA. Kunal Behl, Vice President,

Marketing & Sales, Honda Cars India, said, "Waving off 100 per cent road tax on strong hybrid vehicles is a milestone decision by the Uttar Pradesh government which will encourage adoption of these environment-friendly vehicles."

"This is also aligned with our global commitment to sustainable mobility and our global vision of achieving zero carbon emissions by 2050," said Behl. This progressive step marks a significant milestone in Uttar Pradesh's journey towards a greener future.

Ban imposed on display of arms during Kanwar Yatra

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Lucknow, July 9: The Uttar Pradesh government has issued an advisory forbidding the display of weapons during Kanwar Yatras.

DJs and religious songs will be played within permissible limits during the month-long Kanwar Yatra which will commence from July 22 and conclude August 19.

The DGP Prashant Kumar said that changes have been made in the traffic system in view of the Yatra. The entry of heavy vehicles will be banned on the routes from which the Yatra starts. Additionally, heavy vehicles will be banned from midnight of July 21 on the Delhi Expressway, Dehradun Expressway and Chaudhary Charan Singh Kanwar Marg.

He further said that kanwariyas are advised not to carry spears, tridents, or any kind of

weapon. He said there would be no ban on playing DJs on the Kanwar Yatra route, but the sound must be within the permissible limit as per the Supreme Court directives.

He said liquor and meat shops along the Yatra routes would be closed as well and the local authorities have been asked to ensure that stray animals like pigs should not be found straying onto the routes of the Yatra.

Kanwar Yatra will be monitored through CCTVs and drones. He said normal traffic on Ayodhya-Basti Road would be restricted as a huge number of devotees use it. Only ambulances and other emergency vehicles would be allowed on it, he stated.

Another official said that police officials were coordinating with registered organisations and devotees who set up roadside camps to offer food, water and lodging to Kanwariyas.

Over 2 lakh devotees perform Amaranth Yatra in 10 days

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Jammu, July 9: More than two lakh devotees had 'darshan' inside the holy Amarnath cave shrine during the last 10 days as another batch of 5,433 Yatis left for the Valley Tuesday, officials said.

Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board officials said that more than two lakh Yatis have performed the ongoing Yatra during the last 10 days since it started June 29.

"Another batch of 5,433 Yatis left Bhagwati Nagar Yatri Niwas in the morning Tuesday in two escorted convoys for the Valley. The first escorted convoy carrying 1,971 Yatis in 89 vehicles left at 3:13am Tuesday for north Kashmir's Baltal base camp. A second escorted convoy carrying 3,462 Yatis in 124 vehicles left at 4:03am Tuesday for south Kashmir's Nunwan (Pahalgam) base camp," officials added.

The Meteorological Department has forecast par-



tially cloudy weather on both Yatra routes, with the possibility of light rain during the day.

Yatis take either the 48-km-long traditional Pahalgam cave shrine route or the shorter 14-km-long Baltal cave shrine route to perform the Yatra.

Those using the Pahalgam route take four days to reach the cave shrine, while those tak-

ing the Baltal route reach back to the base camp the same day after having 'darshan' inside the cave shrine.

The cave shrine, situated 3,888 metres above sea level, houses an ice stalagmite structure that waxes and waxes with the phases of the moon.

Devotees believe that the ice stalagmite structure symbolises

the mythical powers of Lord Shiva. Extensive security arrangements have been made this year all along the nearly 300-km-long Jammu-Srinagar highway, at the twin Yatra routes, the two base camps, and the cave shrine to ensure a smooth and incident-free Yatra.

of the day quote

They (Congress) are like parasites. They have a poor strike rate on their own. They won only two of the 60-plus seats where they were competing directly against the BJP

J P NADDA | BJP PRESIDENT

I have asked officials to prepare projects for development and will place them before the prime minister for his consideration. There is no dearth of funds for development during the Modi era

MANIK SAHA | TRIPURA CM

In Satara, we had problems during the Lok Sabha election over these symbols...Now, this issue is before the court, a hearing is scheduled for the next week

SHARAD PAWAR | NCP (SP) PRESIDENT

SHORT TAKES

Justice Nagu sworn-in as CJ

Chandigarh: Justice Sheel Nagu was sworn in as the Chief Justice of the Punjab and Haryana High Court by Punjab Governor Banwarilal Purohit here Tuesday. Justice Nagu was earlier serving as the acting chief justice of the Madhya Pradesh High Court. The oath-taking ceremony at the Raj Bhavan was also attended by Haryana Governor Bandaru Dattatreya, Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann and Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini.

Delhi HC junks plea against Dalai Lama

New Delhi: The Delhi High Court Tuesday dismissed a public interest litigation over the alleged molestation of a boy by the Dalai Lama, as claimed to have been shown in a video clip that went viral last year, saying the religious leader was "being playful" and has already apologised for the incident. In the clip, the Dalai Lama was seen kissing the boy on the lips and asking him to "suck his tongue", which sparked a row on social media.

34 roads shut in Himachal

Shimla: Moderate rainfall continued in parts of Himachal Pradesh, causing the closure of 34 roads, officials said Tuesday. The State Emergency Operation Centre said 18 roads in Shimla, 10 in Mandi, three in Kangra, two in Kullu and one in Kinnaur district were closed till the evening.

Kidney transplant racket busted

New Delhi: At least seven people, including a 50-year-old Delhi-based woman doctor, have been arrested in connection with an alleged kidney transplant racket running across Bangladesh and the Delhi-NCR region, police officials said Tuesday. Acting on a tip-off, the Delhi Police Crime Branch has been working on the case for two months.

UP: Six killed in separate mishaps

Hardoi/Sultanpur (UP): Six persons were killed Tuesday in separate incidents in Uttar Pradesh's Hardoi and Sultanpur districts, police said. In Hardoi, four persons were killed and six others injured in the Madhoganj area when a bus lost control and overturned on a hut, they said.



We have introduced power sector reforms 1.0 and 2.0, now we need reforms 3.0 to transform the sector for empowering the society

N CHANDRABABU NAIDU | ANDHRA CHIEF MINISTER

LIZARD FOUND IN BREAKFAST

A lizard was allegedly found in the breakfast served to students of a girls' hostel attached to a government school in Medak district of Telangana Tuesday, an official said. As many as 17 students who had eaten the breakfast were taken to a primary health centre



HATHRAS STAMPEDE

Overcrowding main reason: Probe team submits report

The stampede at the 'satsang' of self-styled godman Surajpal alias Narayan Sakar Hari alias Bhole Baba claimed 121 lives

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Lucknow, July 9: The Uttar Pradesh government Tuesday suspended the local SDM, a circle officer and four others based on the SIT report on the Hathras stampede that did not rule out a "big conspiracy" behind the incident.

The SIT report also flagged lapses on the part of the local administration that led to the incident that claimed 121 lives July 2. The report held the organisers responsible for the stampede, claiming they did not make arrangements to manage the crowd and also fixed the responsibility of administration, according to official sources.

It said the local police and administration did not take the event seriously and failed to provide proper information to senior officers.

The stampede at the 'satsang' of self-styled godman Surajpal alias Narayan Sakar Hari alias Bhole Baba claimed 121 lives.

In its preliminary investigation, the SIT has held the event organisers primarily responsible for the stampede on the basis of eyewitnesses and other evidence. The SIT did not rule out any big conspiracy behind the incident and has stated the need for a thorough investigation, officials said. The lawyer of the

'godman' July 6 claimed "some poisonous substance" sprayed by "some unidentified men" triggered the stampede.

The investigation committee also found the event organisers and the tehsil-level police and administration guilty. It said the local SDM, circle officer, tehsildar (revenue official), inspector, and outpost in charge were guilty of negligence in discharging their duties.

"The Sub-District Magistrate of Sikandrara granted permission for the event without inspecting the venue and did not even inform the senior officials," the report said, adding the official did not take the event seriously. The SIT recommended action against the concerned officials posted in Sikandrara, including the SDM, circle officer, SHO Sikandrara police station, tehsildar, and police outpost in charge of Kachora and Pora.

"The organisers took permission to organise the programme by hiding facts. The conditions applicable for permission were not followed. The organisers did not make adequate and smooth arrangements by inviting an unexpected crowd. Nor were the conditions of permission given by the local administration for the program followed," the SIT report said. People associated with the organising committee have been found guilty of creating chaos, it said, adding that they engaged volunteers without proper police verification. The Satsangarta or preacher (bhole baba) was allowed to meet the crowd without any security arrangements, it said.



Bikers fall off a bike on a road after rains, at ITO in New Delhi

ED CHARGESHEET IN EXCISE POLICY CASE

AAP claims 'big conspiracy' to finish it off

OVER THE LAST TWO YEARS OF THIS INVESTIGATION, THE ED AND THE CBI HAVE FRAMED A FALSE CASE IN THE COURTS WHILE THE BJP HAS RUN A FALSE NARRATIVE IN PUBLIC AGAINST AAP AND ITS LEADERS, THE PARTY ALLEGED

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 9: The BJP-led Centre is hatching a "big conspiracy" against AAP, its national secretary Pankaj Gupta alleged Tuesday over a supplementary ED charge sheet naming the party in the alleged excise policy scam.

Gupta also accused the BJP of wanting to finish off AAP, which governs Punjab and Delhi, at any cost. AAP in a statement alleged that the Enforcement Directorate (ED) was functioning as a "political wing" of the BJP and claimed there was no money trail in the case.

"The ED's intention from the very beginning of this fake investigation was to frame AAP, arrest all its top leaders and crush the party. The BJP sees AAP as the biggest threat and has deployed the ED and the CBI (Central Bureau of Investigation) to ensure AAP is finished," the party charged.

The party said it suspected the intention of the ED's "mission" was to "cripple AAP and stop its functioning" and claimed it would now proceed to "seize" all properties and bank accounts of Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and AAP, causing "huge harassment and injustice" to a national party. Over the last two years of this investigation, the ED and the CBI have framed a



Court issues production warrant for Kejriwal

New Delhi: A court here Tuesday issued a production warrant for jailed Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal to ensure his appearance in the alleged Delhi excise policy scam case July 12. Special Judge Kaveri Baweja issued direction for physical production of Kejriwal, lodged in Tihar jail, after taking cognisance of the seventh supplementary chargesheet filed by Enforcement Directorate (ED). The federal probe agency has named Kejriwal and his Aam Aadmi Party as accused in the supplementary chargesheet that was filed May 17 this year.

false case in the courts while the BJP has run a false narrative in public against AAP and its leaders, the party alleged.

The BJP's Delhi president Virendra Sachdeva hit back at AAP over its allegations and said Kejriwal should have shown moral courage after his party was named in the "liquor scam".

With the court taking cognisance of the ED charge sheet, he has lost all authority to continue as Delhi Chief Minister, the BJP leader said. "This charge sheet itself says that Arvind Kejriwal is the main beneficiary and conspirator of the liquor scam and the court summoning Kejriwal clearly establishes that prima facie the court has found some evidence to believe in the allegations of the ED on the Delhi chief minister," he said.

A city court Tuesday took cognisance of the seventh supplementary charge sheet filed by the ED in the money-laundering case linked to the alleged excise policy "scam". The federal probe agency has named Kejriwal

and AAP in the supplementary charge sheet.

The anti-money laundering agency arrested Kejriwal, also the national convenor of AAP, from his official residence in Delhi March 21. He is currently lodged in Tihar jail under judicial custody. It has alleged that Kejriwal was the "kingpin and key conspirator" of the excise "scam" and was "vicariously responsible" for it. The AAP said the ED, despite probing into the case for two years, conducting 500 raids and submitting charge sheets, could not show recovery of even one rupee from any party leader.

Statements of the co-accused cannot be a starting point for ascertainment of guilt of an accused, said the party.

"The entire case of the ED is built on statements of accused turned approvers, which suffer from grave defects. First, most of these approvers have strong links to the BJP. Second, these persons have made statements contradicting their earlier statements," it claimed.

Stopped sale of 14 products: Patanjali

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 9: Patanjali Ayurved Ltd Tuesday informed the Supreme Court that it has stopped the sale of the 14 products whose manufacturing licences were suspended by the Uttarakhnd State Licensing Authority

The company told a bench of Justices Hima Kohli and Sandeep Mehta that it has issued instructions to 5,606 franchise stores to withdraw these products.

It said media platforms have also been instructed to withdraw advertisements of these 14 products in any form. The bench directed Patanjali Ayurved Ltd to file an affidavit within two weeks stating whether the

request made to social media intermediaries for the removal of advertisements has been acceded to and whether advertisements of these 14 products have been withdrawn.

The bench posted the matter for further hearing July 30. The top court is hearing a plea in April.

Indian Medical Association (IMA) alleging a smear campaign by Patanjali against the Covid vaccination drive and modern systems of medicine.

The Uttarakhnd State Licensing Authority had earlier told the apex court that manufacturing licences of 14 products of Patanjali Ayurved Ltd and Divya Pharmacy have been "suspended with immediate effect".



Bikers fall off a bike on a road after rains, at ITO in New Delhi

PTI PHOTO

KATHUA TERROR ATTACK

Darkness descends on homes of martyrs in U'khand

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Tehri/Pauri (U'khand), July 9: Rifleman Adarsh Negi spoke to his father over the phone Sunday. The next day, Dalbir Singh Negi got another call, informing him about his son's death in the terror attack in Jammu and Kashmir's Kathua.

The phone call Monday evening left the family in Thati Dagar village of Uttarakhand's Tehri district in a state of shock. He was among the five soldiers from Uttarakhand killed in a terror attack on an Army convoy in Jammu and Kashmir's Kathua Monday. It was the fifth terror attack in the Jammu region within a month. In Pauri, Rifleman Anuj Negi's mother and wife fell

unconscious upon receiving the news of his death. The scene was similar at Havildar Kamal Singh's home who has left behind his mother, wife and two daughters aged eight and four years.

The 32-year-old Singh, who had just completed 10 years in service, had come home in Papadi Naudanu village two-and-a-half months ago to get his youngest daughter admitted to school, a local told PTI. His father Kesar Singh died a few years ago.

Adarsh Negi (25), a farmer's son, was the youngest of the three siblings. He had left his college studies midway to fulfil his dream of serving the country by being in the army. Dalbir Singh Negi said his son studied



up to class 12 at Government Inter College in Piplidhar and then joined Garhwal University to do BSc. He left his studies to

join the Garhwal Rifles, he said. "I spoke to him last July 7 over the phone. He had come home in February and returned

March 26 to join duty," Dalbir Singh Negi said, fighting back his tears. In Pauri's Dobariya village, friends and relatives flocked to Anuj Negi's home to console his mother and wife, but in vain.

The only son of his parents, Anuj Negi (26) got married in December last year. He rejoined duty four months after tying the knot, said Subhash Chandra Jakhmola, the gram pradhan of the nearby Jamri village. After doing his intermediate, Anuj Negi joined the Garhwal Rifles about five years ago and his mother had distributed sweets in the village, Jakhmola said.

Uttarakhand Assembly Speaker and Kotdwar MLA Ritu Khanduri expressed grief over the death of the soldiers and

said the country stands with their families. Khanduri said she is the daughter of an army man and can the pain of the bereaved families. "The armed forces will give a fitting reply to the terror attack," she said.

Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhama, Cabinet ministers Premchand Aggarwal and Ganesh Joshi placed a wreath on the coffins of the five martyrs as their mortal remains were brought to the Jolly Grant airport here. Terrorists, who are the enemies of humanity and guilty of this cowardly attack, will not be spared at any cost, he said, adding the people who sheltered them will also have to face the consequences. He said the entire state stands with their families in this hour of grief.

national

of the day quote

Flood and erosion response need a long-term solution and significant financial investment ... Unfortunately, very little has been done over the last eight years by the 'double-engine' BJP government at the state and central levels

GAURAV GOGOI | CONGRESS LEADER

Those suffering from Nehrurphobia - like our non-biological PM and, especially since 2019, our erudite and dapper External Affairs Minister - will also do well to recall it

JAIRAM RAMESH | CONGRESS LEADER

Chaired the all-important Power Minister's Conference (North-Eastern Region) in Guwahati today

MANOHAR LAL KHATTAR | UNION POWER MINISTER

POST OF THE DAY

Out of 100 Unicorn founders in India: 30 people are from IIT Delhi, 18 from IIT Bombay and 16 from IIT Kanpur.

A good formal education from an elite institute helps provides a strong network, funding opportunities & an ecosystem of highly intelligent peers. With the freelancing world picking up. And, many kids wanting to become YouTubers, more and more people question the need of formal college education. They are partially correct. Average/bad colleges are dying a fast death. However, education from an exceptional college still holds value. Who knows what would happen in the future. But, the compounding benefits of a strong pedigree is still massive.

@AKshat_World

SHORT TAKES

BMW hit-and-run: Main accused held

Mumbai: Mihir Shah, the absconding accused in the BMW hit-and-run case and son of a Shiv Sena politician, was arrested Tuesday by Mumbai Police, two days after he allegedly rammed his luxury car into a two-wheeler, killing a woman and injuring her husband. Mihir, 24, who managed to evade the police since Sunday morning, was arrested from Virar near Mumbai, a senior police official said.

Seven dead in Assam flood

Guwahati: The Assam flood situation remained grim Tuesday when seven more people died, though the number of the affected people declined to 17.70 lakh with the water level of major rivers and their tributaries showing a receding trend, according to an official bulletin. Two persons died in Cachar while one death each was reported in Dhubri, Dhemaji, South Salmara, Nagaon and Sivasagar districts.

Pardeep Chhabra passes away at 65

Chandigarh: AAP senior leader and former Chandigarh mayor Pardeep Chhabra passed away here Tuesday, his nephew Puneet Chhabra said. He was 65. Chhabra is survived by his wife and two daughters. Puneet Chhabra said his uncle had been undergoing treatment for jaundice and complained of ill health in the morning. "We called an ambulance to take him to PGIMER but he passed away," he said. Chhabra was AAP's Chandigarh co-in-charge.



RBI says jobs grew 6 per cent in 2024. India's data credibility is plunging to greater depths. Modi propaganda and spin destroying the truth!

SITARAM YECHURY | CPI(M) GENERAL SECRETARY

DISABILITY ACT: SC SLAMS CENTRE

The Supreme Court has ordered appointment of a 100 per cent visually impaired candidate, who cleared the Civil Services Examination (CSE) in 2009, within three months while slamming the Centre for failing to implement provisions of the Persons with Disabilities Act and fill backlog vacancies



India races to build power plants in Arunachal

CENTRE SAYS ARUNACHAL PRADESH IS AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE COUNTRY, BUT CHINA CLAIMS IT IS A PART OF SOUTHERN TIBET, AND HAS OBJECTED TO OTHER INDIAN INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS THERE

REUTERS

New Delhi, July 9: India plans to spend \$1 billion to expedite the construction of 12 hydropower stations in the northeastern Himalayan state of Arunachal Pradesh, two government sources said, a move that could raise tensions with China that lays claims to the region.

The federal finance ministry under Nirmala Sitharaman recently approved up to 7.5 billion rupees (\$89.85 million) in financial assistance to each hydropower project in the northeastern region, the sources said. Under the scheme, about 90 billion rupees will likely be allotted for the 12 hydropower projects in Arunachal Pradesh, said the sources, who have direct



knowledge of the matter.

The scheme is likely to support northeastern states and help them finance equity holdings in the projects they host. Having state governments on board generally helps in expediting regulatory clearances, locals reha-

bilitation and negotiations on sharing electricity with the host state.

The plans for the hydropower stations are expected to be announced in the 2024/2025 federal budget that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government

India has built less than 115-gigawatt hydropower plants in the last 20 years, while installations of new coal and other renewable sources of energy were nearly 10 times of the new hydropower projects

India and China share a 2,500 km (1,553.43 mile) largely un-demarcated border, over which they fought a war in 1962

will unveil July 23, the sources said, declining to be named as the information remained confidential.

Last August, the government awarded contracts to state-run firms NHPC, SJVNL and NEEPCO for the construction of the 11.5-gigawatt-capacity plants entailing an estimated investment of \$11

billion, as part of a broader project to develop infrastructure in the border region.

None of the companies responded to a request for comments.

These power plants were earlier enlisted with private sector firms, but remained non-starters due to various reasons.

The Indian government is pushing projects in the eastern region following reports that Beijing could construct dams on a section of the Brahmaputra river, known as the Yarlung Tsangpo in China, that flows from Tibet through Arunachal Pradesh.

India is concerned that Chinese projects in the region could trigger flash floods or create water scarcity.

Govt extends ban on SFJ for 5 years

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 9: The ban on pro-Khalistan group Sikhs For Justice (SFJ), founded by US-based lawyer Gurpatwant Singh Pannun, has been extended by the Centre for five years for its relentless anti-India activities.

In a notification issued Tuesday, the Union Home Ministry said the SFJ was declared a banned organisation five years ago under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act for its anti-national activities.

The notification said the Central government is of the opinion that the SFJ continues to indulge in the activities which are prejudicial to the integrity and security of the country and is involved in anti-national and subversive activities in Punjab and elsewhere, intended to disrupt the sovereignty and territorial integrity of India.

SAME-SEX MARRIAGE VERDICT

SC refuses open court hearing of review pleas

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 9: The Supreme Court Tuesday refused to allow open court hearing of pleas seeking review of its last year's judgement declining legal recognition to same-sex marriage.

In a setback to gay rights activists, a five-judge constitution bench headed by Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud had October 17 last year refused to accord legal backing to same-sex marriage, saying there was "no unqualified right" to marriage with the exception of those that are recognised by law.

The apex court, however, had made a strong pitch for the rights of queer people so they don't face discrimination in accessing goods and services that are available to others, safe houses known as 'Garima Greh' in all districts to provide shelter to members of the community facing harassment and violence and dedicated hotline numbers which they could use in case of trouble.

A five-judge bench comprising the CJI and Justices Sanjiv Khanna, Hima Kohli, B V Nagarathna and P S Narasimha are scheduled to consider in chambers the pleas seeking review of the judgement July 10.

Senior advocates Abhishek Singhvi and NK Kaul mentioned the matter and urged the CJI to hear the review petitions in an open court Tuesday.

"I say that if these petitions can be heard in the open court..." Kaul asked the court.

These are the constitution bench review matters which are listed in chambers, the CJI told him. As per the practice, the review pleas are considered in chambers by judges.



Students of Saraswati Shishu Mandir being escorted to a safer place by teachers and police personnel during a mock drill of NSG commandos at RSS' Hedgewar Smriti Bhawan in Nagpur

ASSEMBLY BYPOLLS

Polling in 13 seats today

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 9: Bypolls to 13 Assembly constituencies in seven states will be held Wednesday. The electoral exercise, the first since the Lok Sabha elections, will decide the fate of many veterans and some debutants including Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu's wife Kamlesh Thakur.

The Assembly seats going to polls are Raiganj, Ranaghat Dakshin, Bagda and Maniktala (West Bengal); Badrinath and Manglaur (Uttarakhand); Jalandhar West (Punjab); Dehra, Hamirpur and Nalagarh (Himachal Pradesh); Rupauli (Bihar); Vikravandi (Tamil Nadu) and Amarwara (Madhya Pradesh).

The bypolls are to be held against vacancies created either due to deaths or resignation of incumbent members.

In West Bengal, the stakes are high for both the ruling TMC,



which is looking to capitalise on its improved performance in the Lok Sabha polls, and the BJP, which is seeking to leverage the significant leads it made in the four constituencies in the parliamentary polls.

The TMC won Maniktala seat in the 2021 West Bengal elections while the BJP won Raiganj, Ranaghat Dakshin and Bagda. Later, the BJP MLAs switched to the TMC. The Maniktala bypoll was necessitated by the death of sitting TMC MLA Sadhan Pandey in February 2022.

The TMC has fielded Pandey's wife Supti from the seat. The ruling party has fielded Krishna

Kalyani from Raiganj and Mukut Mani Adhikari from Ranaghat Dakshin.

In Badgah, a Matua-majority constituency, the TMC has fielded Madhuparna Thakur, a member of the Matua Thakurbari and daughter of party Raja Sabha MP Mamatabala Thakur. Kalyani, Adhikari and Biswajit Das had unsuccessfully contested the Lok Sabha polls on TMC tickets after resigning from the BJP. The BJP has fielded All India Football Federation president Kalyan Chaubey from Maniktala. Manoj Kumar Biswas from Ranaghat Dakshin, Binay Kumar Biswas from Bagdah and Manas Kumar Ghosh from Raiganj. Buoyed by its Lok Sabha poll performance, the TMC hopes to win all four Assembly seats.

The BJP has fielded the three former Independent MLAs from their respective seats after they joined the party. A total of 13 candidates are contesting the bypolls in the three segments with 2,59,340 voters.

Govt to launch survey to assess vulnerability of glacial lakes

Research worldwide has consistently shown unprecedented rates of glacier retreat and thinning due to human-caused climate change, leading to the formation of new lakes and the enlargement of existing ones in the Himalayan region

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 9: Four states and a Union territory in the Himalayas will commence ground surveys to determine the vulnerability of glacial lakes after the monsoon season, officials said Tuesday.

A glacial lake outburst flood (GLOF) in Sikkim in October 2023 has prompted this initia-

tive, they said. Monitoring systems will also be established to provide crucial information about GLOFs, the officials said. "Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh and the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir are setting up survey teams and identifying routes to the glacial lakes. The teams will include officials and experts from agencies, such as the National Remote Sensing Centre, the Indian Army and the Geological Survey of India," an official from the National Disaster Management Authority told PTI.

The survey, set to launch after the monsoon season, will target select glacial lakes based on their risk profiles. "It is humanly not possible to cover all the glacial lakes," the official said.

Most of these lakes are situated at altitudes of 5,000 metres or higher.

The survey teams will comprise experts in hydrology, to-



pography and other relevant fields who are equipped to endure harsh weather and difficult terrain. The glacial lake outburst in Sikkim resulted in at least

60 fatalities and extensive damage in the Mangan, Gangtok, Pakyong and Namchi districts. It also destroyed the Chunghang dam (Teesta III

10 hectares in the Himalayas have notably expanded since 1984. Of these, 130 lakes are in India, with 65, 7, and 58 located in the Indus, Ganga and Brahmaputra river basins, respectively.

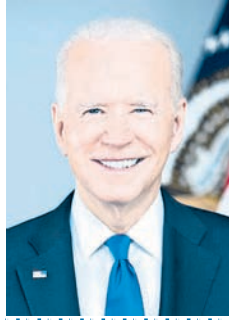
The report noted that 601 lakes have more than doubled in size, 10 have grown between 1.5 to 2 times, and 65 lakes have expanded by 1.5 times.

An elevation-based analysis reveals that 314 lakes are located between 4,000 and 5,000 metres, and 296 lakes are above 5,000 metres in elevation.

The Ghepang Ghat glacial lake in the Indus River Basin, situated at an elevation of 4,068 metres in Himachal Pradesh, has seen a 178 per cent increase in size from 36.49 to 101.30 hectares between 1989 and 2022.

The Himalayas, often referred to as the Third Pole due to their extensive glaciers and snow cover, are highly sensitive to climate change.

international



I have one job and that is to beat Donald Trump. I am absolutely certain I am the best person to be able to do that. So we are done talking about the debate, it is time to put Trump in a bulls eye
JOE BIDEN | PRESIDENT, US

MOUNTAINEER FOUND MUMMIFIED

The preserved body of an American mountaineer, who disappeared 22 years ago, has been found after being exposed by climate change-induced ice melt, police said



of the day quote

The securities of the Euro-Atlantic and the Indo-Pacific are inseparable, and Russia's aggression against Ukraine and its deepened military cooperation with North Korea are strong reminders of that

FUMIO KISHIDA | PM, JAPAN

In history, there are many cases where the few win out over the many, and there are countless ways to win over old-fashioned enemies with new thinking

LAI CHING-TE | PRESIDENT, TAIWAN

Dear progressive liberal media and opposition, I apologise for having survived but I'm back

ROBERT FICO | PM, SLOVAKIA

Russia heeds to India's call

An announcement on Russia's decision to discharge all Indians working as support staff to Russian Army is expected

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Moscow, July 9: Russia has broadly heeded to India's call to end the recruitment of Indians as support staff to the Russian military and ensure repatriation of those still working in the force, top sources said Tuesday.

It is learnt that Moscow agreed to release the Indians after the issue was brought up by Prime Minister Narendra Modi during an informal meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin Monday night.

Modi Monday began a two-day high-profile visit to Russia for the 22nd India-Russia annual summit with President Putin, his first trip since the start of Moscow's invasion of Ukraine.

Last month, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said the issue of Indian nationals serving with the Russian Army remains a matter of "utmost concern" and demanded action from Moscow over it.

An announcement on Russia's decision to discharge all the Indians working as support staff to the Russian Army is expected to be made after summit talks between Modi and Putin Tuesday. Russia has broadly agreed to



our request on the issue, the sources said.

On June 11, India said two Indian nationals, who were recruited by the Russian Army, had been killed in the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict, which took the number of such deaths to four.

Following the deaths of two Indians, the MEA demanded a "verified stop" to further recruitment of Indian nationals by the Russian Army.

In a strongly-worded statement, it said India demanded that there be a "verified stop to any further recruitment of

Indian nationals by the Russian Army" and that such activities would not be in "consonance with our partnership."

Earlier in March, 30-year-old Hyderabad resident Mohammed Asfan succumbed to injuries sustained while serving with the Russian troops on the frontlines with Ukraine.

In February, Hemal Ashwinbhai Mangua, a 23-year-old resident of Surat, died in a Ukrainian air strike while serving as a "security helper" in the Donetsk region.

The Russian President hosted a private dinner for the Indian

Peace talk fails amidst violence: PM Modi

Delivering an unambiguous message, Prime Minister Narendra Modi Tuesday told Russian President Vladimir Putin that a solution to the Ukraine conflict is not possible on the battlefield and peace talks do not succeed amidst bombs, guns and bullets. In his televised opening remarks at summit talks with Putin in the Kremlin, Modi, in an apparent reference to the bombing of a children's hospital in Ukraine, said the death of innocent children is heart-wrenching and very painful. The Indian Prime Minister assured the world community that India is on the side of peace and the conflict must be resolved through talks. "For a bright future of the new generation, peace is most essential. A solution is not possible on the battlefield. Peace talks do not succeed amidst bombs, guns and bullets," he said. "For restoration of peace, India is ready to cooperate in all possible ways," Modi said.

Prime Minister at the former's residence in Novo-Ogaryovo on the outskirts of Moscow late Monday evening.

Pakistan PM highlights Afghan refugee crisis

SHEHBAZ SHARIF URGES INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY TO RECOGNISE 'BURDEN OF AFGHAN REFUGEES' IN MEETING WITH UNHCR CHIEF

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Islamabad, July 9: The head of the UN refugee agency Filippo Grandi Tuesday met with Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to discuss the situation of millions of Afghan refugees living in uncertainty since Islamabad announced a repatriation plan of what it called undocumented aliens last year.

During his meeting with Grandi, Commissioner of the UNHCR, Sharif urged the international community to recognise the "burden of Afghan refugees" being shouldered by Pakistan and demonstrate "collective responsibility" to deal with the issue, the Dawn newspaper reported.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) arrived in Pakistan

Sunday on a three-day visit.

"The Prime Minister stressed that the international community must recognise the burden being shouldered by Pakistan while hosting such a large refugee population, and demonstrate collective responsibility," a statement from the PM's Office said.

The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader added that despite numerous challenges, the country had hosted Afghan refugees with exemplary respect and dignity.

Sharif sought UNHCR's support in mobilising adequate resources to supplement Pakistan's efforts in this regard, urging the global refugee agency to play its role in coming up with durable solutions to address the situation of Afghan refugees.

Flooding in B'desh displaces 40,000

REUTERS

Dhaka, July 9: Flooding in Bangladesh has swept away homes and shut schools, displacing tens of thousands of people, the disaster and relief ministry said Tuesday, and a forecast for more heavy rain over the next few days is expected to worsen the situation.

Some 40,000 people are taking refuge at government shelters and more than 600 medical teams have been formed to treat flood victims, the ministry said.

Television footage showed inundated roads, broken bridges and dams, as well as villagers wading through knee-deep water. Farmers also had to rescue cattle from the gushing waters.

"Bangladeshis are used to flooding, but the water is coming up so high and so quickly in low-lying areas that people are being forced to shelter on anything, even rafts made of banana trees," said Liakath Ali, head of climate change programme at development agency BRAC.

The local meteorological office has forecast more rain for the central and southern regions, but the swollen Brahmaputra river is expected to recede in the next few days.

"Heavy rains in the Indian upstream region mean that the suffering is far from over. We have taken measures to cope with the situation," said Rezwanul Rahman, the head of Bangladesh's disaster management department.

Seasonal monsoon rains, which start at the end of May, have triggered widespread flooding in India and neighbouring Bangladesh in recent years.

Cuba foils plot to sneak arms onto island from US



REUTERS

Havana, July 9: Cuba has foiled a plot to sneak arms and ammunition onto the Caribbean island from the United States, detaining nearly three dozen people in a broader scheme authorities say sought to destabilize its government, a Cuba Interior Ministry official said Monday.

Cuba first unveiled details of the plot last December, when authorities said a Cuban man residing in the United States arrived on the island by jetski, armed with guns, ammunition and military gear, to recruit others and commit acts of violence.

A subsequent seven-month investigation, said Victor Alvarez, a lead criminal investigator with Cuba's Interior Ministry, unveiled a broader plan that includes participation by 32 Cuban residents and a US-based group called La Nueva Nacion Cubana, which Cuban authorities say continues to plot attacks on Cuba from US soil.

Cuba said it had notified the US government agencies of the results of the investigation, but said the individuals continue to act with impunity.

"These individuals continue to act with impunity in North American territory, organizing, financing and supporting activities of a violent nature in order to subvert the inter-

nal order of our country," Alvarez said.

The US State Department said it was aware of the most recent allegations.

"US law enforcement prosecutes individuals based on US law and does not take direction from foreign governments," a state department official told Reuters Monday via email.

Cuban authorities provided Reuters with what they said was a videotaped confession from Ardenys Garcia, who allegedly entered Cuba by jetski in November before proceeding to recruit others to join him.

Officials said Garcia, who is now detained in Cuba, also faces human trafficking charges in the United States.

Cuba has for decades alleged the United States turns a blind eye to plots hatched by Cuban nationals residing in the United States to foment unrest on the island and upend its government.

Cuba in December published a list of foreign nationals and entities, including La Nueva Nacion Cubana - that it accuses of involvement with terrorism, including many long-time dissidents who reside in the United States.

The list includes dozens of people Cuba says have been implicated in hotel bombings, plots to foment unrest, and assassination attempts against Fidel Castro, many of which date back decades.

The Cuban list appears to be the island's response to a US decision to keep Cuba on its own list of state sponsors of terrorism, a designation that subjects Cuba to harsh sanctions and considerable economic hardship.



Tropical Storm Beryl brought howling winds and torrential rain to southeast Texas, flooding highways, closing oil ports, canceling more than 1,300 flights and knocking out power to more than 2.7 million homes and businesses

REUTERS

Israeli assault may threaten ceasefire bid: Hamas

REUTERS

Cairo, July 9: Gaza City residents fled under Israeli fire as tanks thrusted deeper into the heart of the city Tuesday, the second day of a stepped-up military offensive that Palestinian militant group Hamas said could jeopardise ceasefire talks.

Qatari and Egyptian mediators, backed by the United States, have accelerated their efforts this week to seal a ceasefire deal aimed at ending the Gaza war and releasing Israeli hostages in the enclave in return for Palestinian prisoners jailed in Israel.

On Tuesday, Israeli tanks deepened their incursion into some Gaza City districts including Shejaia, Sabra and Tel Al-Hawa, where residents reported the previous day some of the most

GAZANS FLEE



fierce fighting since the start of the war between Israel and the Islamist Hamas.

Footage circulated on social media Tuesday showed families packed onto donkey carts and in the backs of trucks piled with mattresses and other belongings racing through the city's streets to flee areas under Israeli evacuation orders.

"Gaza City is being wiped out, this is what is happening. Israel is forcing us to leave homes under

fire," Um Tamer, a mother of seven, told Reuters via a chat app.

She said it was the seventh time her family had fled their house in Gaza City, in the north of the enclave and one of Israel's first targets at the start of the war in October.

"We can't take it anymore, enough of death and humiliation. End the war now," she said.

The Palestinian Red Crescent said all of its medical clinics were out of service in Gaza City due to the evacuation orders.

The assault has unfolded as senior US officials were in the region pushing for a ceasefire after Hamas made concessions last week. But the renewed campaign "could bring the negotiation process back to square one," Hamas quoted leader Ismail Haniyeh as saying Monday.

France poll results: Call for French Jews to flee to Israel

AGENCIES

Tel Aviv, July 9: Former Israeli minister Avigdor Liberman urged French Jews to immigrate to Israel following the results of the French elections Sunday.

He made the call during a party meeting Monday, after the New Popular Front (NFP) bloc, which leans towards the broad-left, received the most votes. "I call on the French Jews to leave France and immigrate to the State of Israel. No time," Liberman declared.

The bloc is headed by the far-left strong anti-Israel figure Jean-Luc Mélenchon, who Liberman, along with various other figures, including the president of the Representative Council of Jewish Institutions of France (CRIF) has accused of anti-

semitism.

"His party represents pure antisemitism and expresses a significant increase in hatred of Israel and antisemitism," Liberman said at the party meeting.

The elections saw no clear winner, but the NFP emerged with the largest vote share, giving them the best chance to form a coalition. The bloc is made up of five major parties and numerous smaller ones, spanning from center-left to far-left, resulting in dozens of member parties in total. The far-left faction is championed by Mélenchon's France Unbowed (La France Insoumise), the Greens are backed by the Ecologists, and the center-left is supported by the Socialist Party. Additionally, there are other parties and factions within



the broad bloc, including the French Communist Party and various separatist and regionalist groups. The bloc also receives

support from major trade unions and left-wing NGOs. On the other hand, the right formed a smaller bloc consisting of the traditional

conservative party of France, Les Républicains, and the far-right National Rally.

In the center lies the ailing Ensemble party of President Macron, which took heavy losses to both the left and the right, losing 77 seats in the election.

French Jews were effectively disenfranchised by the current political climate, which saw them unwilling to vote for Macron's party due to the rising anti-Semitic violence experienced by French Jews, unable to vote for the left due to their alliance with far-left anti-Semites and strong anti-Israel stances, with some even justifying October 7, and regretting being forced to look to the far-right as ironically the only party willing to tackle anti-Semitism in France. Liberman's call for a mass

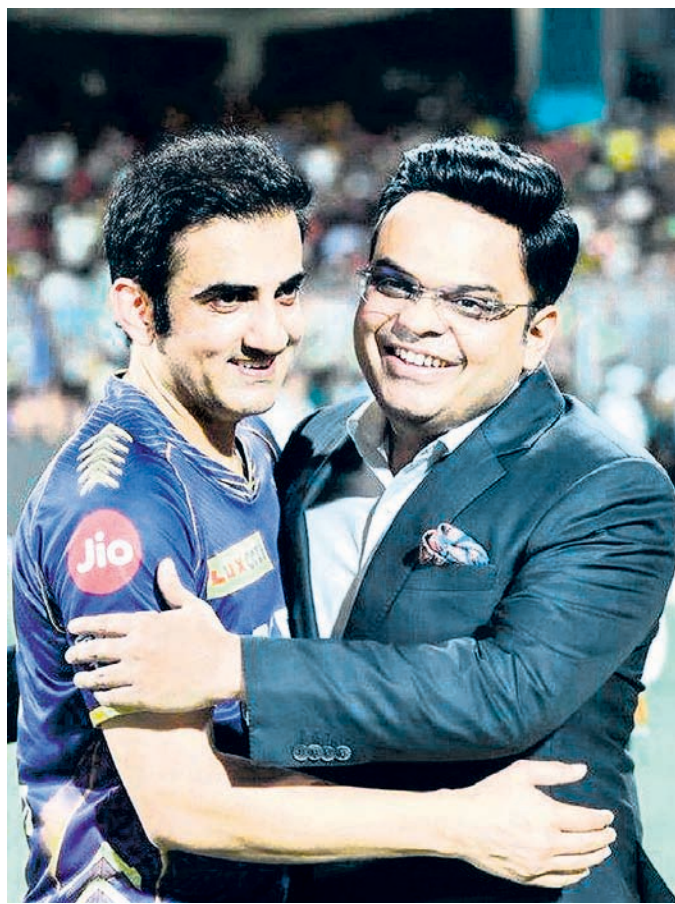
French Aliyah is not the first call for such a move, with the Rabbi of Paris Grand Synagogue Moshe Sebbag telling 'The Post' "There is no future for Jews in France."

Immigration and Absorption Minister Ofir Sofer responded to criticism that the government had not done enough to help Jews from Western countries make aliyah, saying, "The State of Israel is the home of the Jewish people, and the State of Israel invites you to return home, and we will welcome the Jews of France."

He added that they were working to speed up procedures for French Jews, and a minister in the Immigration Ministry said they were planning for a "significant wave of aliyah" from Western countries.

GAMBHIR ERA BEGINS Another feather in Bumrah's hat

KKR MENTOR REPLACES RAHUL DRAVID WHOSE TENURE ENDED WITH THE T20 WORLD CUP



New Delhi, July 9: World Cup-winning former opener Gautam Gambhir was Tuesday named head coach of the Indian cricket team by the BCCI, which hoped that he would bring 'tenacity and leadership' to the position which was held with 'remarkable success' by Rahul Dravid until recently.

The 42-year-old was the front-runner to replace Dravid whose tenure ended with the country's title win in the T20 World Cup in Barbados last month.

"It is an absolute honour to serve my Tricolour, my people, my country," said Gambhir in a BCCI statement. "I am honoured and excited to take on the role of head coach for Team India. I have always taken pride while donning the Indian jersey during my playing days and it is going to be no different when I take up this new role," the new head coach added.

Gambhir said he looks forward to working closely with the BCCI, Head of Cricket VVS Laxman, the support staff, and, 'most importantly, the players, as we work towards achieving success in the upcoming tournaments'.

Gambhir's first assignment as India coach will be the of tour Sri Lanka for three T20Is and as many ODIs starting July 27.

"Team India now embark on a journey under a new coach - Gautam Gambhir," said BCCI president Roger Binny in an elaborate statement.

"His (Gambhir's) experience, dedication, and vision for the game make him the ideal candidate to guide our team forward. We are confident that under his leadership, Team India will continue to excel and make the nation proud," Binny added.

The sentiment was echoed by BCCI secretary Jay Shah. "Gambhir has been a fierce competitor and a brilliant strategist. We believe he will bring the

KKR want Dravid as new mentor

Kolkata: With mentor Gautam Gambhir being appointed head coach of Team India, the Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR), are looking for a suitable replacement for him. Sources informed here Tuesday that KKR officials have already approached Rahul Dravid for the role. Dravid is not too keen to do a long duration job and the role offered by KKR which basically will be for two-three months, may just be the opportunity he wants. If sources are to be believed, then KKR have offered ₹12 crore to Dravid as salary.

same tenacity and leadership to his role as head coach. His transition to the role of head coach is a natural progression, and I believe he will bring out the best in our players," Shah stated.

Shah said he expects Gambhir, who played key roles in India's 2007 T20 World Cup and 2011 ODI World Cup triumphs, to inspire and lead the team to new heights. "His vision for the future of Indian cricket aligns perfectly with our goals," Shah added.

As a player, Gambhir led Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) to IPL titles in 2012 and 2014. He then proved his coaching credentials as the mentor of the KKR team that won the IPL title in 2024.



JASPRIT BUMRAH



SMRITI MANDHANA

Double delight for India as Smriti Mandhana named women's 'Player of the Month' for June

Dubai, July 9: Hero of India's victorious T20 World Cup campaign, Jasprit Bumrah added another feather to his hat when he was Tuesday named the 'ICC Men's Player of the Month' for June.

It was double delight for India as women's team vice-captain Smriti Mandhana was also named the 'Women's Player of the Month' by the global body. Mandhana won her first ICC 'Women's Player of the Month' after playing a starring role in India's sweep over South Africa in the ODI series last month.

Bumrah came out on top in the men's vote from compatriot Rohit Sharma and Rahmanullah Gurbaz of Afghanistan, while

Mandhana won the women's award by pipping England's Maia Bouchier and Sri Lanka's Vishmi Gunaratne.

Bumrah, bagged 15 wickets to be adjudged the 'Player of the Tournament' in the T20 global showpiece last month.

"I am delighted to be named the ICC 'Men's Player of the Month' for June," Bumrah said in the ICC statement. "It's a special honour for me following a memorable few weeks spent in the USA and West Indies. We have had a lot to celebrate as a team, and I'm delighted to be able to add this personal accolade to the list," he added.

The 30-year-old was at his dependable best in the USA and Caribbean and bowled at an average of 8.26 and an astonishing economy rate of 4.17. "To perform as well as we did at the tournament and lift the trophy at the end is incredibly special, and I will carry those memories with me forever," Bumrah said.

"I wish to congratulate my captain Rohit Sharma and Rahmanullah Gurbaz for their excellent performances in the same period, and I am humbled

to have been chosen as the winner," the fast bowler added.

In the women's game, Mandhana set the tone with a commanding 117 in the first ODI in Bangalore. She went one better in the second match, hitting her second successive century and top scoring in a game that saw 646 runs in total. The opener blitzed the South African bowling attack, smashing 136 in 120 balls. She came close to sealing a hat-trick of hundreds in the final outing, falling agonizingly on 90 in a stylish effort that ensured India recorded a comfortable victory to close out the series.

During the period, Mandhana recorded 343 runs at an average of 114.33, with a strike rate of over 100, earning her the 'Player of the Series' award.

"I'm really glad to have won the ICC 'Women's Player of the Month' for June. I'm really happy with the way the team have performed and I'm happy to have contributed. For us, we won the ODI and the Test series and hopefully we can continue our form and I can further contribute to win more matches for India," Mandhana said.

SHORT TAKES

Free hand for Gillespie, Kirsten

Lahore: In the wake of Pakistan's dismal showing in the T20 World Cup, the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chairman, Mohsin Naqvi have given head coaches Gary Kirsten and Jason Gillespie a free hand to turn the fortunes of the team, sources said here Tuesday. Naqvi met the white ball and red ball coaches, where Kirsten and Gillespie shared their plans for the national team. According to the PCB, Naqvi told both the coaches that he had full confidence in them and they would get full backing from the cricket board. "Kirsten was blunt in laying down his concerns about the white ball team based on the World Cup," said a PCB source.

Nagal advances

Braunschweig (Germany): India's top ranked tennis player Sumit Nagal moved to the second round with a facile win over Brazil's Felipe Meligeni Alves in the Braunschweig ATP challenger tennis tournament here Tuesday. The Olympic-bound Nagal, seeded second, cruised to a 6-1, 6-4 win over Alves in the clay event. The World No. 73 will next take on Argentina's Pedro Cachin in the round of 16 Wednesday. The tournament will serve as preparation for the Paris Olympics for Nagal, which begins later this month at the Roland Garros Stadium. Last week, Nagal had made a first round exit from Wimbledon, losing to higher-ranked Miomir Kecmanovic of Serbia. However, the year has been successful so far for Nagal.

England look to end goal drought



Bukayo Saka has been the go-to man for England in Euro 2024

Dortmund, July 9: England manager Gareth Southgate has led his country to a third semi-final in four major tournaments but ahead of Wednesday's last-four showdown against the Netherlands at Euro 2024, critics of the Three Lions' boring football are mounting. Should England end a 58-year wait to win a major trophy in Berlin, Sunday, supporters would not take umbrage with the team's style, or lack thereof, but the inability of such an array of attacking stars to excite has stunned viewers across the continent.

Southgate's team produced just five shots on target in 240 minutes of action against Switzerland and Slovakia in the prior two rounds, needing penalties and extra-time respectively to progress. Told his team were 'not easy on the eye' by a German reporter, Southgate produced an assortment of reasons. "I'm sorry for that, but our intention is always to play well with the ball - in football you have an opponent that's trying to stop you," he said.

"These are not normal football matches, these are national events with huge pressures, with really young men in the middle of it. Our team have been under enormous pressure from the start. They are doing so well," asserted the coach.

Southgate pointed to England's opponents using defensive formations and also blamed the grass in Germany for hampering his players. "We're not able to score a load of goals at the moment, but we've played three teams that play a back five, well-organised defences," Southgate stated.

"Pitches are a little bit bobbly, so sometimes you need the extra touch and then the space is gone," the coach added.

BATTING REJIG ON CARDS FOR INDIA

Harare, July 9: India will find it tough to choose between Yashasvi Jaiswal's seemingly effortless flamboyance and Abhishek Sharma's uber-cool aggression at the top when they rejig their combination to accommodate for World Cup-winning squad members in the third T20 International against Zimbabwe here Wednesday.

The arrival of Jaiswal, Sanju Samson and Shivam Dube gives the Indian team a formidable look in the most important game of the series as visitors look to press home the advantage after the booster shot of a series-levelling 100-run victory in the second match.

Abhishek did enough to live up to his pre-series hype with a 46-ball century in only his second game. However, Jaiswal, with a handsome strike rate of 161-plus in 17 T20I matches does have the first claim to be skipper Shubman Gill's opening partner by virtue of being the reserve opener of the first-choice T20 team.

So, it could well be a case of one of the two southpaws batting at one drop. Sanju Samson, who normally bats at No. 3 for Rajasthan Royals, might come in at No. 5, while Rituraj Gaikwad, who batted at No. 3, will probably drop down a place to No. 4.

As far as the changes in the playing XI are concerned, Jaiswal will replace B Sai Sudharsan, Samson will come in place of Dhruv Jurel and Dube will replace Riyan Parag.

As far as Zimbabwe are concerned, their batting has left a lot to be desired with scores of 115 while batting first and 134 in the second essay chasing 235. On the Harare Sports Club track where there is a bit of extra bounce available for the spinners, Ravi Bishnoi (6/24 from 8 overs) and Washington Sundar (3/39 in 8 overs) have proved to be unplayable at times in the two games.

Medvedev ousts Sinner

London, July 9: Top-seeded Jannik Sinner was treated by a trainer and left the court during the third set, seemingly surged in the fourth and then faltered again in the fifth, eventually losing to Daniil Medvedev 7-6 (9-7), 4-6 6-7 (4-7), 6-2, 3-6 in the Wimbledon quarterfinals here Tuesday. Medvedev will now play Carlos Alcaraz in the semifinals. The Spaniard defeated Tommy Paul of the US, 5-7, 6-4, 6-2, 6-2. After losing the first set, Alcaraz raised his game a couple of notches more to run away with the match.

It was not immediately clear what was wrong with Sinner, who had his heart



CARLOS ALCARAZ

medical attention and leaned back in his chair at Centre Court. He rested his head in a hand at one point while speaking with the trainer before they headed toward the locker room.

During a later changeover, Sinner draped a towel over his head. While he did regain his usual verve, particularly on his booming forehand, and pushed the match to a fifth set - the 36th this fortnight and the most at any Grand Slam tournament in the Open era, which dates to 1968 - Sinner could not get over the line.

Sinner was broken by Medvedev in the eighth game of the fifth set after which the latter had no difficulty in closing out the match.

Anderson ready to walk into sunset

188 TESTS, 700 WICKETS, CRICKET'S MOST PROLIFIC FAST BOWLER READY FOR LAST HURRAH



London, July 9: Cricket will never be the same again, July 14 onwards or even before that. The game is all set to lose one of its legends as fast bowler James Anderson takes the field Wednesday one last time at the Lord's Test between England and the West Indies. He will bow out as the most prolific fast bowler in Test history with 700 wickets or maybe more, a feat which has not been achieved by any other pacer.

Anderson has recently been quoted as saying by *espnricinfo.com* that he is 'at peace' with his impending retirement from Test cricket, despite admitting that he didn't have much say in the decision and feeling that he is 'still bowling as well as I ever have'. The Test against the West Indies will be his 188th, a feat no other fast bowler has achieved. His England career will come to end at the same ground where he took a five-wicket haul on Test debut 21 years ago, and

of England's decision-making. "It is impossible to say," Anderson stated. "It's always difficult to answer that sort of question. You never know what's going to happen. Throughout my whole career, I've never really focused on too far ahead. I've always tried to take it series by series and focus on little goals," the fast bowler informed.

Anderson did not hold any grudge when the management told him that the Lord's game would be his last. "I can completely understand the decision and the way the team and management want to go. As I've said, the last couple of months I've made peace with that and I'm excited to see what the future holds," he stated.

"Obviously I feel like I'm still bowling as well as I ever have. I knew it had to end at some point, whether it's now or a year or two years. The fact that it's now is just something that I've got to deal with and accept," Anderson said with a smile.

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