

Defining integrity

Actor Alia Bhatt says integrity is doing the right thing all the time, even when it may work to one's disadvantage

LEISURE | P2

War crimes in Gaza

A UN inquiry finds that both Israel and Hamas have committed war crimes in the early stages of the war in Gaza

INTERNATIONAL | P10

IIP at 3-month low

India's industrial production growth slipped to 3-month low of 5 per cent in April 2024, mainly due to poor show by the manufacturing sector

BUSINESS | P11

India in Super Eight

India qualify for the Super Eight stage defeating co-hosts USA by seven wickets in the T20 World Cup

SPORTS | P12

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BHUBANESWAR | THURSDAY JUNE 13, 2024

12 PAGES | ₹5.00

First BJP govt takes charge

42 Indians killed in Kuwait blaze

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 12: More than 40 Indians were killed and more than 50 others injured after a devastating fire broke out at dawn in a building housing around 195 migrant workers in southern Kuwait's Mangaf area, officials said Wednesday.

The total number of people killed in the Al-Mangaf building was 49 and 42 of them are learnt to be Indians; the remaining ones are Pakistani, Filipino, Egyptian and Nepali nationals, they said.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who described the fire incident as 'saddening', reviewed the situation arising out of it at a meeting with External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, NSA Ajit Doval, Foreign Secretary Vinay Kwatra and Principal Secretary to the PM PK Mishra among others.

An official statement said Modi expressed deep sorrow at the 'unfortunate incident' and extended condolences to the families of the deceased. He also announced an ex gratia relief of ₹2 lakh to each of the families of the deceased Indian nationals from the Prime Minister's Relief Fund.

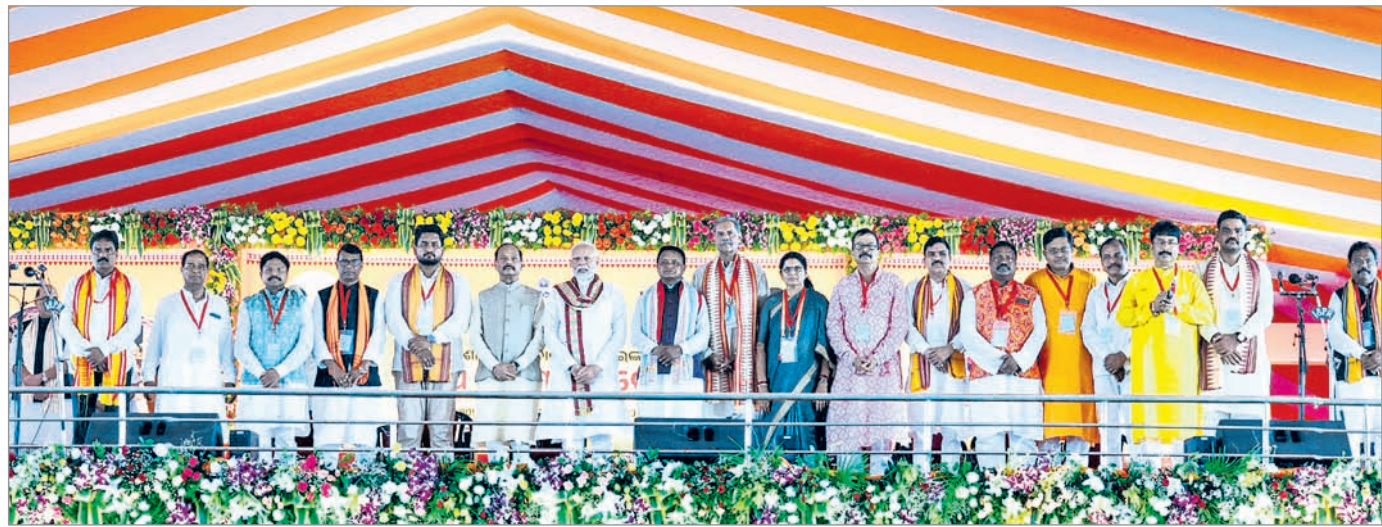
Minister of State for External Affairs Kirti Vardhan Singh is urgently travelling to Kuwait following a direction from the PM primarily to oversee assistance to Indians injured in the fire and to ensure early repatriation of mortal remains of those killed.

"The fire mishap in Kuwait City is saddening. My thoughts are with all those who have lost their near and dear ones. I pray that the injured recover at the earliest. The Indian Embassy in Kuwait is closely monitoring the situation and working with the authorities there to assist the affected," Modi said on X.

The fire in Al-Mangaf building was reported to authorities in Al-Ahmadli governorate at 4:30am and most of the deaths were due to smoke inhalation, said sources.

MAJHI CABINET

 <p>K V Singh Deo Deputy Chief Minister</p>	 <p>Mohan Charan Majhi Chief Minister</p>	
 <p>Pravati Parida Deputy Chief Minister</p>		
 <p>Suresh Pujari Cabinet Minister</p>	 <p>Rabi Narayan Naik Cabinet Minister</p>	 <p>Nityananda Gond Cabinet Minister</p>
 <p>Krishna Chandra Patra Cabinet Minister</p>	 <p>Prithviraj Harichandan Cabinet Minister</p>	 <p>Dr. Mukesh Mahaling Cabinet Minister</p>
 <p>Bibhuti Bhushan Jena Cabinet Minister</p>	 <p>KC Mahapatra Cabinet Minister</p>	 <p>Ganesh R Sing Khuntia MoS (Ind Charge)</p>
 <p>Suryabanshi Suraj MoS (Ind Charge)</p>	 <p>Pradeep Bala Samanta MoS (Ind Charge)</p>	 <p>Gokulananda Mallik MoS (Ind Charge)</p>
 <p>Sampad Chandra Swain MoS (Ind Charge)</p>	<p>It's a historic day in Odisha! With the blessings of my sisters and brothers of Odisha, BJP is forming its first-ever government in the state. With the blessings of Mahaprabhu Jagannath, I am confident this team will usher in record development in Odisha and improve the lives of countless people</p> <p>NARENDRA MODI PRIME MINISTER</p>	
	<p>My best wishes to the new Chief Minister of the state Mohan Charan Majhi, Deputy Chief Ministers Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo and Pravati Parida and all the members of the Cabinet. Wishing everyone a successful tenure for the welfare of the people of Odisha</p> <p>NAVEEN PATNAIK FORMER CM OF ODISHA</p>	



DOUBLE ENGINE GOVT: Dignitaries including PM Narendra Modi, Governor Raghuraj Das, 15th Chief Minister of Odisha Mohan Charan Majhi and his Council of Ministers during the swearing-in ceremony at Janata Maidan in Bhubaneswar, Wednesday

PHOTO: I&PR DEPT

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, June 12: In what marked the first step towards government formation for the BJP, which got a clear mandate in the recently-concluded Assembly elections ending the 24-year-old BJD rule in Odisha, four-time MLA and tribal leader Mohan Charan Majhi, along with his Council of Ministers, was sworn in as the maiden BJP Chief Minister of the state at a well-decked-up ceremony here attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, several Union ministers and CMs of seven BJP-ruled states, Wednesday. While Patnagarh MLA KV Singh Deo and first-time Nimapara MLA Pravati Parida were sworn in as Deputy Chief Ministers, eight MLAs took oath as Cabinet Ministers and five as Ministers of State.

Governor Raghuraj Das administered the oath of secrecy and office to 52-year-old Majhi, who hails from Santhal community, and other members of his council of ministers at Janata Maidan here.

This is the first time that a BJP government has been formed in the eastern state after defeating the 24-year-old Biju Janata Dal (BJD) government headed by Naveen Patnaik.

In a post on X, Modi said, "It's a historic day in Odisha! With the blessings of my sisters and brothers of Odisha, @BJP4Odisha

CABINET DECISIONS

4 Srimandir gates to reopen today

BHUBANESWAR: The BJP government, in its first Cabinet meeting, approved a proposal to reopen all four gates of the Srimandir in Puri early Thursday morning. This was stated by Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi after chairing a meeting with his ministers at Lok Seva Bhawan. The previous BJD administration continued to keep the four gates of the temple closed since Covid-19 pandemic. The Cabinet decided to constitute a corpus fund of ₹500 crore to look after the issues of the 12th-century shrine. Majhi said the state government will also take steps to raise the minimum support price (MSP) of paddy to ₹3,100 per quintal. "A committee will be formed very soon for implementation of the proposal to increase the MSP for paddy," he added. This apart, a special policy 'Samruddha Krushak Niti Yojana' will be framed to deal with the problems of farmers. "This will be done within a span of first 100 days of the government," the CM maintained. Stating that efforts of the previous BJD regime for women empowerment and child welfare have failed, Majhi said the new government will implement 'Subhadra Yojana' within 100 days under which the women of the state will get a ₹50,000 cash voucher each. "The departments have been told to prepare guidelines and roadmaps for the implementation of the scheme," the CM said.

is forming its first-ever government in the state. I attended the swearing-in ceremony in Bhubaneswar."

"Congratulations to Shri Mohan Charan Majhi on taking oath as CM and to Shri Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo as well as Smt. Pravati Parida on taking oath as Deputy CMs. Congratulations also to the others who took oath as Ministers. With the blessings of Mahaprabhu Jagannath, I am confident this team will usher in record development in Odisha and improve the lives of countless people," he added.

Apart from Modi, BJP chief JP Nadda, Union Ministers Amit Shah, Rajnath Singh, Bhupender Yadav, Dharmendra Pradhan, Jai Oram, Ashwini Vaishnaw and others attended the ceremony.

Several chief ministers of BJP-ruled states including Uttar Pradesh, Goa, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Assam, Gujarat, Chhattisgarh, Haryana and Uttarakhand were also present. Odisha's former chief minister and BJD president Naveen Patnaik

also attended the ceremony.

The 16-member Council of Ministers led by Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi includes a diverse group with four tribals, including Majhi himself, two Dalits, and one woman.

Majhi's Council of Ministers includes two Deputy Chief Ministers, eight Cabinet ministers, and five Ministers of State (Independent Charge).

Suresh Pujari, Rabinarayan Naik, Nityananda Gond, Krushna Chandra Patra, Prithviraj Harichandan, Mukesh Mahaling, Bibhuti Bhushan Jena and Krushna Chandra Mohapatra took oath as Cabinet ministers.

Ganesh Ram Singh Khuntia, Suryabanshi Suraj, Pradeep Bal Samanta, Gokulananda Mallik and Sampad Kumar Swain were sworn in as MoS (Independent).

Among the 78 BJP members elected to the Assembly, only five are women. Sources indicated that Surama Padhy, who was elected from Ranpur in Nayagarh district, is expected to become the Speaker of the 17th Odisha Legislative Assembly. The ministers hail from various regions across the state - four are from the western region, three, including the CM, are from the northern region, four from the coastal belt, three from the southern region, and one from central Odisha.

NAIDU SWORN IN AS ANDHRA CM

Amaravati: Telugu Desam Party supremo N Chandrababu Naidu was sworn in as the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh for the fourth term Wednesday at a ceremony that was attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, senior BJP leaders and Union ministers. Janasena chief and actor Pawan Kalyan, Nara Lokesh, son of Naidu, among others, took oath as ministers. Andhra Pradesh Governor S Abdul Nazeer administered the oath to Naidu and others. Union Ministers Amit Shah, Nitin Gadkari and J P Nadda, Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde were present.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Be a patriot! We are Vishwabandhu now. Go and fight for Israel, Russia,...

SHORT TAKES

PARL SESSION FROM JUNE 24 TO JULY 3

New Delhi: The first session of the 18th Lok Sabha will begin June 24 for oath or affirmation of the newly-elected members, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju said Wednesday. The first three days of the session will see the newly-elected leaders taking oath or making affirmation of their membership of the Lok Sabha and electing the Speaker of the House. The session will conclude July 3. P3

TWO YOUTHS DROWN IN HADAGARH DAM

Hatadihi: In a tragic incident, two youths drowned while taking bath in Hadagarh dam on Salandi river under Soso police limits in Keonjhar district, Wednesday. The deceased were identified as Ishwar Das, 23, son of late Madan Das of Barapada Panchugochhia village and Samahit Nayak, 22, son of Babu Nayak of Tihidi village in Bhadrak district. Both were BCA students of a prominent private university. Police began a probe into the incident.

Jet missing since 1971 found in US lake

AGENCIES

Vermont, June 12: Fifty-three years after a private plane carrying five men disappeared on a snowy Vermont night, experts believe they have found the wreckage of the long lost jet in Lake Champlain of North America. The corporate jet had disappeared shortly after departing the Burlington airport for Providence, Rhode Island, January 27, 1971.

According to reports, those onboard included two crew members and three employees of a Georgia development company Cousin's Properties, who were working on a development project in Burlington.

Initial searches for the 10-seat Jet Commander turned up no wreckage and the lake froze over four days after the plane was lost. At least 17 other searches happened, until underwater searcher Garry Kozak and a team using a remotely operated vehicle last month found wreckage of a jet with the same cus-



tom paint scheme in the lake close to where the radio control tower had last tracked the plane before it disappeared. Sonar images were taken of the wreck found in 200 feet (60 meters) of water near Juniper Island.

"With all those pieces of evidence, we're 99% absolutely sure," Kozak said Monday.

The discovery of the wreckage gives the families of the victims "some closure and answers a lot of the questions they had," he

with that now."

Frank Wilder's father, also Frank Wilder, was a passenger on the plane.

"Spending 53 years not knowing if the plane was in the lake or maybe on a mountainside around there somewhere was distressing," said Wilder, who lives outside of Philadelphia. "And again, I'm feeling relieved that I know where the plane is now but unfortunately it's opening other questions and we have to work on those now."

When the ice melted in the spring of 1971, debris from the plane was found on Shelburne Point, according to Kozak. An underwater search in May of 1971 was unable to find the wreckage.

At least 17 other searches happened, including in 2014, according to Kozak. At that time, authorities were spurred by curiosity after the Malaysia Airlines plane disappearance that year with the hope that new technology would find the wreck but it did not.

India slips two places on Global Gender Gap index

AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 12: India has slipped two places on the World Economic Forum's (WEF) Global Gender Gap index to 129th place, while Iceland retained its top position in the rankings published, Wednesday.

Within South Asia, India was ranked fifth after Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Bhutan, while Pakistan was ranked last. Globally, Sudan was ranked last on the index of 146 countries, while Pakistan slipped three places to 145th.

India figured among the economies with the lowest levels of economic parity, alongside Bangladesh, Sudan, Iran, Pakistan, and Morocco. All of them registered less than 30 per cent gender parity in estimated earned income.

However, India showed the best gender parity in terms of enrolment in secondary education, while it scored well on political

empowerment of women at 65th rank globally. With regard to parity in the number of years with female/male heads of state for the last 50 years, India was ranked 10th.

With a population of over 140 crore, India has closed 64.1 per cent of its gender gap in 2024 and the decline of two places from 127th last year, mainly happened due to small declines in 'Educational Attainment' and 'Political Empowerment' parameters, while 'Economic Participation' and 'Opportunity' scores slightly improved.

Iceland was followed by Finland, Norway, New Zealand and Sweden in the top five. The UK was ranked 14th, while the USA was at 43rd place.

The WEF said India's economic parity score has trended upwards for the past four years. In the Political Empowerment subindex, India scored within the top-10 on the head-of-state indicator.

leisure



KEVIN DIAGNOSED WITH SKIN CANCER

Singer-songwriter Kevin Jonas, known for his work with the Jonas Brothers, reveals being diagnosed with skin cancer. The singer took to his social media to reveal that he had surgery to remove skin cancer, reports *People magazine*.

RIHANNA FLAUNTS NECKPIECES BY Sabyasachi, Manish

Singer-songwriter Rihanna wore neckpieces designed by Indian designers Sabyasachi Mukherjee and Manish Malhotra at a fashion event for her brand Fenty Hair in Los Angeles.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
Your attractive personality is always at the disposal of others, and today you could benefit immensely through it. However, there is room for improvement and you could be drawn towards charity work. Ganesh says you will surely feel satisfied by helping the needy.

TAURUS
This day you will tend to be too bossy, too harsh on your subordinates or employees and end up making them miserable as well as hostile. Their insubordination could corrode the respect you get and, in addition, make things unworkable. This acrimony and ill will is sure to spread and foul up your larger professional connections and interests.

GEMINI
You will want some change in your daily routine today. You are likely to be fed up of the rut of daily life and are looking for a refreshing change. You need to apply your inherent creativity to your work to get more satisfaction out of it and to ease the boredom of your daily schedule, says Ganesh.

CANCER
Don't meddle in others' affairs today, suggests Ganesh. For they will not take it kindly. Adopt the middle path. Ganesh feels that you must keep your bravado and boldness in check.

LEO
Your pride and self-confidence will help you to excel in whatever task it is that you take up today. Other people will also praise you. You will buy new clothes and other possessions that you have been desiring since a long time, says Ganesh.

VIRGO
Today will be a pleasant day full of surprises and unforeseen changes. You may go for a long drive with your beloved. The trip will be very interesting and will calm your frayed nerves. All in all, Ganesh says, it is an optimistic and happy day, so go ahead and get the best out of it.

LIBRA
Ganesh says you will have a good time with your family members and will have fun with them. You will also be able to organize a picnic or a party for your family members and enjoy the day with them. Ganesh says you will go out for a trip to a religious place or temple, which will enhance your mind and ideas.

SCORPIO
Your sixth sense would work wonders today, as per what Ganesh has to say. Trust your instincts and work accordingly. Work enthusiastically and dedicatedly. When the pressure of work mounts on you, take a break and unwind with the help of soft music.

SAGITTARIUS
It's time for some entertainment. Movies, picnics and dining out is on your mind. Invite your beloved and enjoy quality time with each other. Also, you will spend time with your family and friends, and attend a music concert together.

CAPRICORN
Actions speak louder than words. Your sincere efforts and honest intentions will motivate others also to put in their best, feels Ganesh. You'll be like a friend, philosopher and guide to them. People will follow you, but it has a darker side to as many will even over take you.

AQUARIUS
You will take the road to spirituality today and give a miss to materialism. You will visit temples, other religious places, and spiritual leaders to find answers for some of your questions. It will, however, take a while for you to distinguish between mysticism and materialism, and understand that you can have the best of both worlds.

PISCES
You will not take matters to heart needlessly today, and will instead calmly evaluate the bitter words of others to see if there is a grain of truth in them somewhere. This is a good practice and one that should be continued. While you won't be in the mood to tolerate any injustice, you will be able to forgive those who have wronged you and will thus be able to refrain from stoking further, the fires of enmity, says Ganesh.

Alia's note on integrity

Mumbai: Actress Alia Bhatt, who was last seen in *Rocky Aur Rani Kii Prem Kahaani*, shared a heartfelt note on integrity and the importance of doing the right thing.

Taking to her Instagram stories, she wrote, "Integrity is what you do when no one is watching; it's doing the right thing all the time, even when it may work to your disadvantage. Integrity is keeping your word. It's an internal compass, a rudder that directs you where you know you should go when everything around you is pulling you in a different direction. Some people think reputation is the same as integrity, but they are two different things. Your reputation is the public's perception of your integrity. Because it's other people's opinions of you, it may or may not be accurate. Others determine your reputation, but only you determine your integrity."

Earlier, the actress condemned the devastating terrorist attack in Raesi and said, "This is heartbreaking. My heart goes out to the victims and their families. Violence against the innocent shakes the very core of our hu-

manity." On the work front, Alia will be seen next in *Jigra* and *Love and War*.

AGENCIES

Sona speaks up on wedding rumours

Mumbai: Actress Sonakshi Sinha opened up about wedding rumours with Zaheer Iqbal after her father, Shatrughan Sinha, said that he and his wife Poonam are still waiting to be informed about their daughter Sinha's wedding.

The actress, who is buzzed to reportedly get married to Zaheer, June 23, said in a recent interview that she finds it very funny when people ask her about her wedding plans.

In a conversation with an entertainment portal, the *Heeramandi* actress said, "Firstly, it's nobody's business. Secondly, it is my choice, so I don't know why people are so concerned about it. People ask me about my marriage more than my parents, so I find that very funny. Now, I am just used to it. It doesn't bother me. People are curious; what can we do about it?"

Before Sonakshi, her brother Luv too had reacted to rumours about his sister's wedding. Talking to a media agency, he said, "I

won't be commenting. It's better if you reach out to Sonakshi or the other person. All I can say is that I have nothing to say on this matter."

While Sonakshi and Zaheer have appeared on each other's social media accounts often, posting love-soaked posts about each other and cheering each other on, the two of them have been tight-lipped about their relationship. However, Sonakshi once candidly confessed that she was looking forward to becoming a bride soon.

AGENCIES



Mumbai: Actor-singer Diljit Dosanjh, after his remarkable performance at Lollapalooza, is set to debut on *The Tonight Show with Jimmy Fallon*.

Elated Diljit took to Instagram to share the exciting news with his fans. He posted a screenshot of the upcoming guest line-up for the talk show, along with a caption brimming with excitement: "PANJABI AAGYE OYEE

This Week's Guest @jimmyfallon @fallon-tonight @nbc BHANGRA HUN MAINSTREAM PENA PROPER HOLLYWOOD"

Diljit's announcement quickly garnered a wave of enthusiasm from his fans, who flooded the comments section with expressions of pride and anticipation. One fan aptly captured the sentiment by commenting, "Panjab X Hollywood," while another humorously speculated about Fallon attempting to speak Punjabi, saying, "Can't wait to see Jimmy Fallon speaking in Punjabi."

Making an appearance on *The Tonight Show with Jimmy Fallon* is a significant milestone for Diljit. The show, renowned for its influential platform and global reach, has featured numerous international stars and has been a launching pad for many artists into the American mainstream. Diljit's presence on such a prestigious stage underscores his growing influence and appeal.

Meanwhile, on the work front, Diljit will be seen next in *Jatt & Juliet 3*.

AGENCIES



Kriti shares her unheard story

Mumbai: Kriti Kharbanda, who is known for *Shaadi Mein Zaroor Aana*, *Housefull 4*, and others, has completed 15 years in cinema. The actress took to her Instagram and penned a long note, recalling an interesting anecdote that she never shared.

The actress wrote, "For the past 15 years, acting has consumed the majority of my life. What began as a means to support myself gradually evolved into a profound passion. Today, commemorating my 15-year journey as an actor, I feel compelled to share a tale. During my teenage years, I co-ran a boutique with my mother, immersing ourselves in shopping, designing, and selecting fabrics. Shortly after the release of

my Kannada film, *Googly*, we found ourselves at a mall."

"I glanced up to see a crowd gathered around, chanting 'doctree doctree' repeatedly. Overwhelmed, I clung to my father, urging him to leave. That was the day I realised the power of cinema and our industry. I went from being a teenager on an actor and eventually into a star, all so quickly that I was afraid to blink. Soon after this, life changed," she continued.

"Today, I express gratitude to my past self, acknowledging her resilience and determination amidst challenges. I owe my present success to her unwavering perseverance. I am grateful for the support of family, friends, and fans who believed in me. I am thankful for the opportunities to entertain and the love that propels me forward. Thank you for watching my movies, and thank you for believing in me. Lots of love #kritikharbanda #15yearsofkritikharbanda," she concluded.

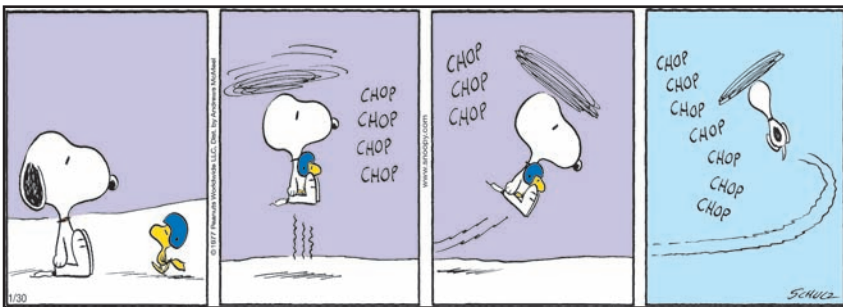
IANS



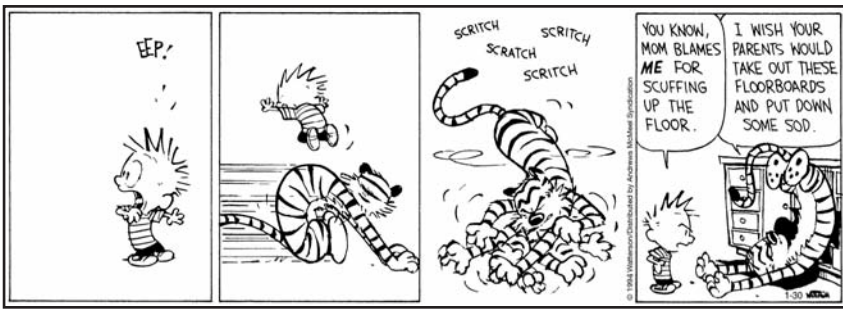
Diljit to debut on The Tonight Show

FUN post

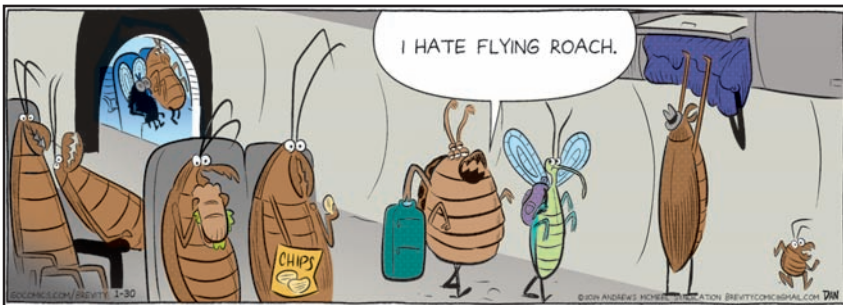
PEANUTS



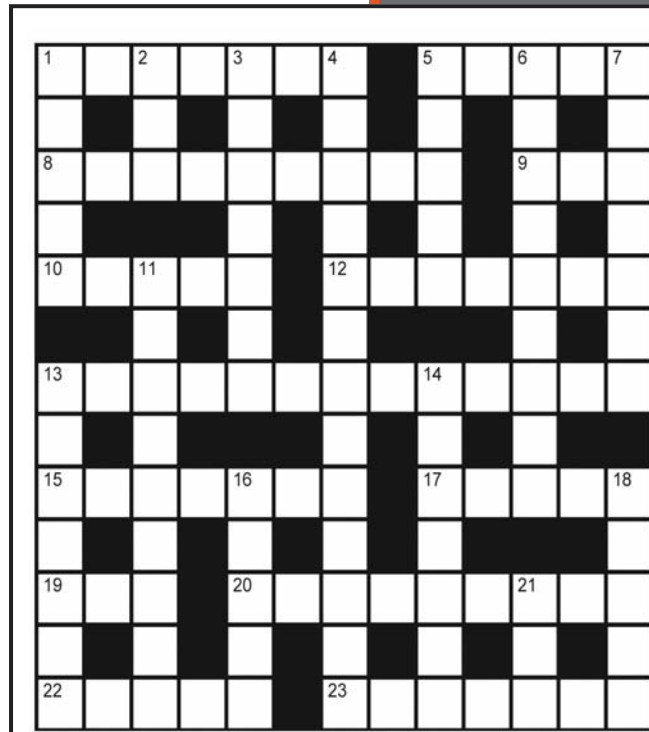
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



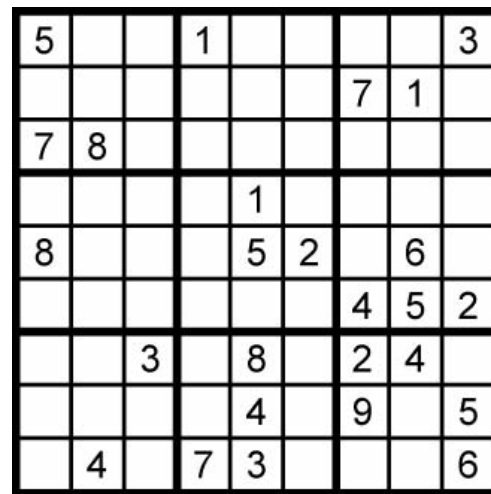
CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 Bird watcher?
 - 5 Pickle barrels
 - 8 Type of canoe
 - 9 Wayside stop
 - 10 Highly skilled
 - 12 Havana filler
 - 13 Mediterranean soup or stew
 - 15 Biting
 - 17 Milquetoast
 - 19 Anaconda
 - 20 Plutocrat's ride
 - 22 Diving bird
 - 23 Tablet
- Down**
- 1 Bouquet
 - 2 Morse E
 - 3 UK home of the Floating Harbour
 - 4 Security guard type (5,8)
 - 5 Chocolate substitute
 - 6 Travelling bags
 - 7 Capital of Costa Rica (3,4)
 - 11 List
 - 13 Type of chair
 - 14 Bombard
 - 16 Vessel section
 - 18 Submit
 - 21 Babysitter's handful

SUDOKU

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



SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD



SUDOKU



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown

DISASTER MGMT
District Collector Arindam Dakua presides over a meeting on disaster management in Cuttack, Wednesday



1st session of 18th LS starts June 24

BUDGET LIKELY IN LATE JULY



AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 12: The first session of the 18th Lok Sabha will begin June 24 during which new members of the Lower House will take oath and the Speaker will be elected, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju said Wednesday.

President Droupadi Murmu will address a joint sitting of the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha

June 27 and is likely to outline the new government's roadmap for the next five years. The session will conclude July 3.

The first three days of the first session will see the newly-elected leaders taking oath and electing the Speaker of the House.

Both Houses of Parliament are expected to reconvene in the third week of July for the presentation of the Union Budget. Nirmala Sitharaman is set to

become the first Finance minister to present seven consecutive Union Budgets, surpassing the record of Morarji Desai, who had presented six Budgets in a row.

"First session of 18th Lok Sabha is being summoned from 24/6/24 to 3/7/24 for oath/affirmation of newly-elected members, election of Speaker, President's address and discussion thereon," Rijiju said in a post on X.

He said the 264th Session of Rajya Sabha will also commence June 27 and conclude July 3. Prime Minister Modi is expected to introduce his Council of Ministers to Parliament after the President's address June 27.

The debate on the Motion of Thanks on the President's address is expected to see an aggressive opposition, whose strength has increased in the 543-member House, trying to corner the NDA government on various issues.

The Prime Minister will respond to the debate on the Motion of Thanks on the President's address in both the Houses of Parliament.



UNIQUE GESTURE: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi meets his predecessor and BJD president Naveen Patnaik at Naveen Niwas in Bhubaneswar, Wednesday

Monsoon may cover state in 3-4 days: IMD



AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 12: Monsoon could cover Odisha, coastal Andhra Pradesh and north-west Bay of Bengal during the next three to four days, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said, Wednesday.

A sluggish southwest monsoon covered large parts of Maharashtra, awaiting a fresh pulse to march across central and northern India, which continued to reel under intense heat conditions, it said.

"The Bay of Bengal arm of the monsoon is weak and is awaiting a fresh pulse to take it forward," an official said.

Heatwave conditions were observed Wednesday in most parts of Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand; in many parts of north Rajasthan; in some parts of Himachal Pradesh, south Bihar, north Odisha and in isolated pockets of Gangetic West Bengal.

Severe heatwave conditions were also observed in isolated pockets of Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Jharkhand and Gangetic West Bengal.

The maximum temperatures were in the range of 45-47 degrees Celsius over some parts of west Jharkhand, south Uttar Pradesh, Haryana-Chandigarh-Delhi, Punjab, north Rajasthan.

The highest maximum temperature of 47.5 degrees was reported at Kanpur IAF in eastern Uttar Pradesh.

Monsoon watchers said the low-level warm winds from the northwest were dominating the weak monsoon pulse over the Bay of Bengal and prolonging the hot weather conditions in parts of central and northern India.

Former Earth Sciences secretary Madhavan Rajeevan said after a normal progress, monsoon is going into a hiatus mode.

"Not much progress is expected in the next 8-10 days, thus delaying onset over north India. This causes extreme temperatures & heat waves over north India, including Delhi, UP and Bihar," Rajeevan said on X.

According to the weather office, the monsoon is expected to reach Bihar and Jharkhand by June 16-18, Uttar Pradesh from June 20-30, and Delhi around June 27, which is the normal onset date for the national capital.

CM AMONG 15 FIRST-TIME MINISTERS

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, June 12: Barring Deputy Chief Minister Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo, none of the 15 Council of Ministers including Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, who were sworn in Wednesday, have any experience as ministers in the state.

Out of 16 ministers, only five including the Chief Minister were the members of the last Assembly while the remaining 11 were the first-timers who included even Deputy Chief Minister Pravatī Parida who was elected to the Assembly from Nimapara Assembly seat.

The new Council of Ministers of the BJP government is represented from 13 of the 30 districts, and four of them belonged

to ST, two from SC and the remaining ten belonged to the general caste.

Region-wise, four ministers were from western Odisha including Deputy Chief Minister KV Singh Deo, three from south Odisha, and as many from the north Odisha including Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi.

Highest of six Council of Ministers were from coastal Odisha who included Deputy Chief Minister Pravatī Parida.

Out of eight Cabinet ministers, only two - Mukesh Mahaling and Nityananda Gond - were the members of the last Assembly while the rest six were the new entrants.

Similarly, of the five Ministers of State with independent charge who were sworn in Wednesday,

two were members of the last Assembly while the rest three were debutants.

Two Deputy Chief Ministers were sworn in the state almost after a gap of 29 years.

In 1995, during the Congress government headed by JB Patnaik, two Deputy Chief Ministers - Basant Kumar Biswal and Hemananda Biswal - were appointed for a brief period after JB Patnaik was asked by the Congress high command to step down from the post.

While Basant Biswal remained as the Deputy Chief Minister from March 15, 1995 to February 17, 1999, Hemananda Biswal served from March 15, 1995 to May 9, 1998.

The new Cabinet was represented from 13 districts of the

state with two each from Ganjam and Mayurbhanj district while one each from Keonjhar, Jajpur, Jagatsinghpur, Jharsuguda, Sambalpur, Nabarangpur, Dhenkanal, Khurda, Bolangir, Bhadrak and Puri.

Majhi offers tribute to brave sons of soil

Earlier in the day, Majhi accompanied by two deputies KV Singh Deo and Pravatī Parida went around the Capital City here to offer floral tributes to the brave sons of the soil before taking their oaths of office.

Majhi and the others garlanded the statues of Fakir Mohan Senapati at Vani Vihar Square, Dharanidhar Bhuyan at Mayfair Square, Gangadhar Meher at Nalco Square and Birsā Munda at Maitri Vihar and offered trib-

utes. All three were given a warm welcome by the Santhali tribal women at Maitri Vihar by washing their feet.

Majhi interacted with the people gathered at the venue and enquired about their wellbeing.

He later went to Naveen Niwas and invited Biju Janata Dal president and former Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik to attend the swearing-in ceremony.

Majhi told the media he requested Patnaik to bless the new BJP government in the state and the latter assured to attend the swearing-in ceremony.

Earlier a five-member BJP delegation, led by Odisha unit president Manmohan Samal, Tuesday also visited Naveen Niwas to invite Patnaik.



Snarl near AG Square in Bhubaneswar, Wednesday

Traffic comes to a standstill

DEBADURLLAV HARICHANDAN, OP

Bhubaneswar, June 12: Despite prior announcement of restrictions on vehicular movement for the swearing-in ceremony of the new government in the state, traffic on major thoroughfares across the City came to a grinding halt here, Wednesday.

The situation exacerbated, especially in the route connecting Nalco Square and Acharya Vihar Square, with many commuters being stuck for more than an hour.

In a bid to ensure smooth movement of vehicles during the high-profile event, the Commissionerate Police restricted vehicular movement on the stretch from Jayadev Vihar to Nalco Square from 2pm to 7pm.

It created a compulsion among the commuters to opt for the Acharya Vihar route, particularly those travelling to Chandrasekharpur area of

the City. As seen, it turned out even worse with vehicles of BJP supporters being parked in the middle of the road and no cop around to break the logjam.

Snarls were reported near Doordarshan Kendra, Nalco Square, Press Chhak, Omfed Chhak and Acharya Vihar Square. Major traffic jams were witnessed even in the narrow lanes near Sainik School and Gadakana, among others.

Janmajay Mohaptra, who commutes daily from Infocity area to Rasulgarh, said, "The traffic from Nalco Square towards Jayadev Vihar was diverted. Despite assessing the huge volume of rush from Kalinga Hospital to Acharya Vihar, the Commissionerate Police did not undertake any pre-emptive measures. It was chock-a-block situation, making several stranded for long period."

Minor domestic help assaulted, rescued

Bhubaneswar: An 11-year-old girl, who was working as a domestic help at a house in Press Chhak area and was being assaulted by her employers, was rescued by the Maitri Vihar police with assistance of a local NGO here, Wednesday. According to sources, Balabhadra Barik and Kiranbala Barik have employed the minor girl of Salia Sahi as a domestic help a few months now. "The girl used to stay with the Bariks. The couple inflicted burn injuries on the minor's hands and stomach whenever they find inconsistency in her work. On many occasions, they even beat the girl mercilessly when she complained of too much work," said an official. Unable to bear the torture, the girl fled to a neighbour's house and requested them for help. The neighbours informed the police, which swung into action and rescued the minor.

Nitrous oxide emissions grew 40% in last 4 decades: Study

INDIA SECOND LARGEST CONTRIBUTOR AFTER CHINA, CLAIMS RESEARCH BY GLOBAL CARBON PROJECT

Planet-warming nitrous oxide (N₂O) emissions grew by 40 per cent between 1980 and 2020, with China being the largest emitter, followed by India and the US, according to a new report.

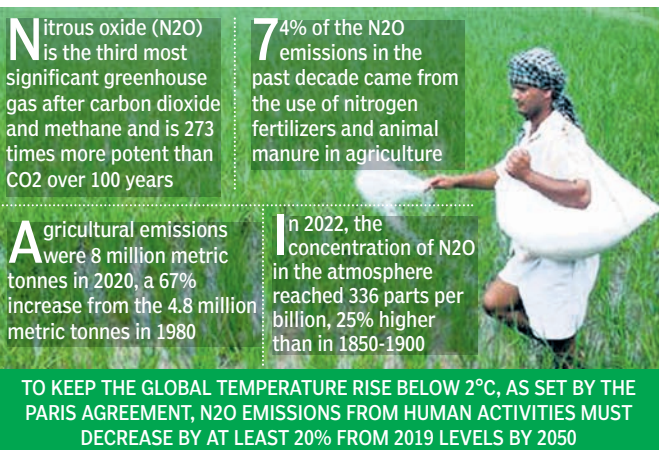
The study by the Global Carbon Project, a network of climate scientists, also said that 74 per cent of the nitrous oxide emissions in the past decade came from the use of nitrogen fertilizers and animal manure in agriculture.

The top 10 emitters are China, India, the US, Brazil, Russia, Pakistan, Australia, Indonesia, Turkey, and Canada, it said. Nitrous oxide is the third most

significant greenhouse gas after carbon dioxide and methane and is 273 times more potent than CO₂ over 100 years.

The increase in greenhouse gases has already raised the Earth's average surface temperature by 1.15 degrees Celsius compared to the 1850-1900 average. Anthropogenic nitrous oxide emissions contribute to about 0.1 degrees of this warming.

In 2022, the concentration of nitrous oxide in the atmosphere reached 336 parts per billion, 25 per cent higher than in 1850-1900, significantly surpassing the predictions of the Intergovernmental Panel on



Climate Change. Agricultural emissions were 8 million metric tonnes in 2020, a 67 per cent increase from the

4.8 million metric tonnes in 1980, according to a study published in the journal Earth System Science Data.

Scientists suggest that to keep the global temperature rise below 2 degrees Celsius, as set by the Paris Agreement, nitrous oxide emissions from human activities must decrease by at least 20 per cent from 2019 levels by 2050.

"Nitrous oxide emissions from human activities must decline to limit global temperature rise to 2 degrees Celsius," said the report's lead author, Hanqin Tian, the Schiller Institute Professor of Global Sustainability at Boston College. "Reducing nitrous oxide emis-

sions is the only solution since there are currently no technologies to remove it from the atmosphere," he said.

In 1980, farmers used 60 million metric tonnes of commercial nitrogen fertilizers. By 2020, the usage had increased to 107 million metric tonnes. Animal manure contributed 101 million metric tonnes in 2020, making the total usage 208 million metric tonnes.

The scientists also pointed out that the continuous rise in a greenhouse gas with a global warming potential about 300 times greater than carbon dioxide poses serious threats to the planet.

Centre reducing Odisha's Central funding: Congress

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 12: The Congress Wednesday accused the Centre of steadily reducing Odisha's Central funding in recent years and asked whether Prime Minister Narendra Modi will continue to deprive the state of its fair share.

Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh posed questions to the PM ahead of the swearing-in ceremony of Mohan Charan Majhi as the CM.

"The previous government of the 'one-third' Pradhan Mantri had steadily reduced Odisha's Central funding in recent years. According to CAG reports, central transfers as percentage of revenue receipts have been consistently decreasing from 57 per cent in 2017-18 to 38 per cent in 2021-22," Ramesh said in a post on X.

Similarly, the CAG noted that the state's share of Union taxes, as a percentage of revenue receipts of the state, has been continuously decreasing from 2018-19 to 2021-22, he said.

Ramesh also pointed out that grants under recommendation of the Fifteenth Finance Commission have also decreased recently.

"Will the 'one-third' Pradhan Mantri continue to deprive Odisha of its fair share?" the Congress general secretary asked.



He said the Sitalapalli rail wagon factory has been in cold storage ever since it was sanctioned by the UPA government in 2013.

The previous government undertook zero work on this project and then finally dropped it in 2018, he alleged.

"When the current Railway Minister, a Rajya Sabha Member from Odisha, took office, he promised to take the project up again. In September 2021, an official of the East Coast Railway said that the project would be implemented on a PPP model. Till date, however, there has been no progress in this much-awaited project," Ramesh said.

The Congress leader further said that two other projects, the Gopalpur-Rayagada Railway Line and the Rairakhole-Gopalpur Railway Line, have also suffered the same fate.

Will these projects see the light of day before the current government collapses, he asked.

Noting that 293 people were killed and over a 1,000 injured in the horrific collision of three trains in Balasore last year, Ramesh said that while three railway officials were eventually held responsible, one can hardly absolve the Central government of their role in this mishap.

"In the last ten years, the railways have struggled with high staff vacancies across the country. In November 2022, the Railway Workers' Union had even organised a sit-in demanding new recruitment so that staff would not be forced to work overtime and would receive the rest they required," he said.

The Railway Ministry itself admitted in a RTI that there were 2.74 lakh vacancies, including 1.7 lakh vacancies in the safety category, he said.

"This hasn't changed despite a track record of accidents: a similar accident had occurred in May 2022 due to improper wiring and a cable fault, but the Railway Ministry did not implement any corrective measures. The government clearly has blood on their hands," Ramesh alleged.

However, even after such disasters, staff vacancies continue to remain rampant and the Railway Minister was re-appointed to his position, he said.

Are Odia lives so cheap and disposable to the PM, Ramesh asked.

Event on green energy by MNRE, IREDA

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 12: Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE), in collaboration with the Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency Limited (IREDA), organised a pre-event conference for Global Wind Day here, Wednesday.

The speech of MNRE joint secretary Lalit Bohra was read out by IREDA director (Finance) BK Mohanty as he was unable to attend the conference in person. Bohra emphasised the rapid development of renewable energy across the coun-



try and highlighted the measures taken by both state and central government. According to the National Institute of Wind Energy (NIWE), India's onshore wind potential is estimated at 1,164 GW at 150 meters above ground level, with Odisha's potential of 12 GW.

'Scope for innovations in ISM immense'

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, June 12: There is immense scope for innovation in Indian systems of medicine (ISM) like Ayurveda, Unani, Siddha, and Sowa-Rigpa. AYUSH Secretary Vaidya Rajesh Kotecha said Wednesday.

He was speaking at a two-day national conference, PRANA (Protecting Rights and Novelities in ASUS), organised by the National Commission for Indian System of Medicine (NCISM).

The event "involved a significant number of innovations that have the potential to be patented, can be commercialised or could be fit for technology transfer of those patented items. These could become suitable for startups," the AYUSH Ministry said in a statement.

Challenges galore for CM Majhi

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, June 12: A tribal leader from the Santali community, Mohan Charan Majhi, has had a remarkable political journey from being the sarpanch of a gram panchayat in the tribal-dominated Keonjhar district to becoming the first BJP Chief Minister of Odisha.

However, he faces numerous challenges, including strong opposition from both the Biju Janata Dal and Congress, as he takes the helm of the state's administration.

A law graduate and an RSS member during his student days, Majhi started his political career as a sarpanch, serving a full term from 1992 to 1997.

Later, he worked as a teacher at Saraswati Sishu Vidya Mandir in Jhumpura until 2000, when he was picked by the BJP as its candidate from the Keonjhar (ST) seat. The party was in alliance with the BJD during that election.

Since then, he has not looked back, retaining the seat in the 2004 elections. Although he was defeated in the subsequent elections in 2009 and 2014, he continued to nurture his constituency, which helped him return to the state Assembly in both the 2019 and 2024 elections.

Majhi served as the Opposition Deputy Chief Whip in the Assembly from 2005 to 2009 and became the Opposition Chief

In his keynote address, IREDA CMD Pradip Kumar Das highlighted the state's significant green energy potential and the promising opportunities within the state. He pointed out Odisha's potential to lead in green hydrogen projects, stressing the state's critical role in advancing sustainable energy initiatives.

Till March, 2024, IREDA has disbursed cumulative loans totalling ₹1,25,917 crores in renewable energy, with ₹26,913 crores disbursed to wind power projects nationwide. Specifically, ₹1,637 crores loan

has been disbursed by IREDA towards renewable energy projects in the state. Das also underlined Odisha's Renewable Energy Policy 2022, which aims to drive investments in clean energy, with a special focus on RE manufacturing and emerging technologies such as green hydrogen, green ammonia, and floating solar. He reaffirmed the vital importance of harnessing renewable energy for sustainable national development and encouraged renewable energy developers to seize the expanding opportunities in Odisha and other states.



FEST PREP: CMC Mayor Subash Singh attends meeting with Council members on preparations for upcoming Eid al-Adha festival in Cuttack, Wednesday

People expect new CM to bring holistic change

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, June 12: BJP's four-time MLA Mohan Charan Majhi took oath as the 15th chief minister at Janata Maidan here, Wednesday.

On this occasion, ORISSA POST talked to a cross-section of people about their expectations from the new chief minister.

According to Narayan Prusty, a social activist, the new CM must take action against rising crimes like chain-snatching and drug-peddling. The law enforcement must be strengthened.

Rupesh Kumar Deep, an unemployed youth, said Majhi must focus on employment generation.



He said according to annual Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS), state's unemployment rate remains higher than the average in India.

Namrata Chadha, a noted woman social activist stressed on banning liquor as it creates domestic violence and crime against women. Expecting the new CM to improve the quality of education, Srusti Misra, a university stu-

dent sought increase in literacy rate especially among women. She also wanted the new government to focus on expanding healthcare facilities.

Being a tribal himself, Majhi should work towards strengthening the indigenous forest conservation efforts, climate activist Ranjan Panda. Social activist Sudarshan Chhotoray said as a tribal, the CM must try to imple-

ment PESA (Provisions of the Panchayats Act) 1996 which is still not implemented in Odisha.

PESA is meant to recognise, empower and promote the social, economic, cultural and political way of life of the Scheduled Tribes (adivasis). He also must look after the tribal people development more than industrial development, he added.

City-based environmentalist JK Panigrahi said Odisha is a nature-blessed state with rich minerals, forests and water resources that need to be used adopting sustainable mechanisms. The new chief minister is expected to give adequate justice to the environmental component.

NHRC issues advisory for welfare of widows

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has issued an advisory to Central and state governments' authorities and Union Territory administrations to ensure the welfare of widows and underlined the need to create a centralised database of all government-run homes for them.

The widows who desire to remarry or find partners should be linked to appropriate agencies or NGOs, the NHRC advisory said.

The NHRC said it felt the need to issue the advisory as it observed that widows face numerous challenges like emotional distress due to loss of spouse, social exclusion, loss of income and even loss of residence, it said.

It recommended the authorities create a centralised database of all government-run

homes for widows on the websites of the Ministry of Women and Child Development (WCD) and all state departments concerned.

The WCD Ministry may deploy a team at the district level to visit these homes quarterly to monitor their living conditions including health, recreational and skill development facilities, it said.

The collector and district magistrate or deputy commissioner should be made accountable for the implementation of various welfare schemes regarding food, shelter, dignity and the protection of property, the advisory stated.

According to the advisory, a widow should have the option of returning to a shelter home without undergoing fresh formalities in case of a failed marriage or relationship or the death of

spouse or partner.

It has also recommended constituting a dedicated widows cell in each district and ensuring that all shelter homes are registered with it and are not overcrowded.

Aadhaar cards of all widows should be made and proper identity cards should be provided to them to enable them to access the benefits of social welfare schemes and ensure that they are not denied these for want of marriage registration certificates, it stated.

"Ensure proper implementation of their legal right to succession of the property by providing legal aid and creating awareness among them about this right," the NHRC said.

Efforts should be made to enrol them in education programmes like the New India Literacy Programme (NILP) to give them

at least foundational literacy, including financial literacy. Shelter homes and ashrams may partner with local NGOs for this, it said.

Creation of self-help groups (SHGs) by widows for self-employment and entrepreneurial activities should be encouraged and agencies should ensure that all widows have a personal bank account under the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana, the commission said.

For widows in need of mental health support and care, specialised care should be arranged and recovery should be enabled, it said.

Utilisation of knowledge and experiences of widows in Anganwadis, orphanages, and primary schools should be encouraged to give them a sense of purpose and enhance children's life skills, it added.

WORLD DAY AGAINST CHILD LABOUR

'Compulsory education key to eliminate child labour'



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 12: Compulsory education is key to eliminating child labour, emphasised People's Cultural Centre (PECC) secretary Ranjan Kumar Mohanty while addressing the gathering at a state-level convention organised by PECC on World Day Against Child Labour here, Wednesday.

Around two hundred students from various institutions, youth, women's group, ASHA workers, AWW and CSOs took part in the event.

The participants deliberated on this year's theme: "Let's act on our commitments: End Child Labour" set by the International Labour Organisation (ILO).

"Despite significant progress in reducing child labour over the years, recent trends have shown a reversal, making it crucial to accelerate efforts to end child labour in all its forms," they noted.

Joining the event, former Labour Commissioner Aswini Kumar Das highlighted the necessity of creating awareness at different levels to achieve a child labour free society.

Among notable speakers were former chairperson of Odisha

State Commission For Protection Of Child Rights Sandhyabati Pradhan, programme manager of Odisha State Child Protection Society Pritikanta Panda, Khurda District Labour Officer (DLO) Pravakar Biswal, Sugata Ray from UNICEF, member of Real Estate Regulatory Authority Pradeep Kumar Biswal, Khurda District Child Protection Officer Banishree Pattnaik and president of Progressive Women Forum Mamata Samantaray.

The attendees stressed the importance of coordination, convergence, and cooperation between all departments and CSOs to help locate and identify child labourers working in private homes and unorganised sectors.

A book titled 'Education for Change: Untold Stories,' a compilation of the groundbreaking work and experiences of PECUC in rescuing and rehabilitating child labourers, was released on the occasion.

Some of the rescued children, named Chandra Majhi, Mamta Bhoi, Ajit Bhoi, and Sonalika Bhoi, shared their individual stories of being transformed into mainstream and avail school education through PECUC's efforts. The convention was chaired by PECUC chairman Minakshi Panda.

MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VAIATION
SENSEX	76606.57 ↑ 149.98
NIFTY	23322.95 ↑ 58.10
DOLLAR	83.6025 ₹ 0.25
EURO	89.9050 ₹ 0.35
GOLD	₹71,883 ↑ ₹537
SILVER	₹90,934 ↑ ₹2,271

WEATHER

	BBSR	CTC
Max Temp	38.0°C	37.5°C
Min Temp	28.7°C	27.5°C
Humidity	65%	71%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil



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LOST

LOST OF SALEDEED : I Sri Hemanta Behera, S/o Harekrushna Behera, At-Kundei, PO-Kothapada, PS-Basta, Dist.-Balasore, Odisha declare that on Dt. 02/05/2024 while I was coming Gandhichhak for My Home from my native Kundei by bike at my Bank related. I lost the sale deed bearing RSD No-10081102547 dt. 08/11/2011, Tahasil - Basta, PS-Basta, Mouza-Baharda, Mob - 9124424402.

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SITAL SASTHI: A VISUAL EXTRAVAGANZA



Idols of Lord Balunkeshwar Baba and Goddess Parvati of Nandapada in Sambalpur during the Nagar Parikrama after the completion of marriage rituals of the deities for the Sital Sasthi festival, Wednesday



A dancer performs Ardhnanarishwar dance



Dancers dressed up as tribals perform traditional Sabar dance



Idols of Lord Jageshwar Baba and Goddess Parvati of Modipara in Sambalpur



Artists perform peacock dance during Sasthi procession in Sambalpur

GOVERNMENT APATHY

Higher education goes haywire in Jharsuguda

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jharsuguda, June 12: Higher education has gone haywire in the industrially rich Jharsuguda district due to alleged apathy of the state government in establishment of government colleges.

The district needs robust institutions for spread of higher education; however the state government has not established a government college in the district yet. Furthermore, it is yet to accord government status to any existing college in the district.

This has led to students being deprived of higher education. While well-off guardians are able to send their wards to Sambalpur, Bhubaneswar or elsewhere and admit them in major colleges for study, students belonging to the marginalised communities and lower middle class households are unable to get such scope of study.

Sources said the district has the oldest railway junction in the state and also contributes immensely to the state and Central exchequers. Moreover, the mineral rich has no paucity of funds with crores of rupees lying unused with the District Mineral Foundation (DMF). Several seasoned politicians have also represented the district in the state government from time to time.

The district is a major business hub visited by entrepreneurs from across the country and outside. It is also well



FILE PHOTO

connected with various parts of the country after the establishment of the state's second airport five years back. However, the government's neglect highlights its apathetic attitude towards the district.

Reports said Jharsuguda was carved out as a separate district from undivided Sambalpur in 1994 when late Biju Patnaik was the Chief Minister of Odisha. The former CM had then assured to establish a government college in the district but the promise has remained unfulfilled.

The district has three main colleges -- Lakshmi Narayan College, Women's College and Brajarajnar College which provide Plus II and Plus III courses. A long time has passed since the establishment of the separate Jharsuguda district but until recently, there was not a single college which provides post graduation (PG) courses.

After a student movement, PG courses were launched in five subjects at Lakshmi Narayan College recently. It was first started in the engineering school premises in the presence of former Chief Minister Rajendra Narayan

Singdeo, the then Jharsuguda MLA Murali Prasad Mishra, former Chief Minister Hemananda Biswal and thousands of people in 1969. However, it is yet to receive government status.

The Women's College established in 1982 is also yet to get government recognition. The Brajarajnar College is situated about 10 km from this district headquarters town. Established in 1978, it is now a fully-aided college but still lacks government status. Similarly, the lone government engineering school in the district, established in 1955, is yet to be upgraded into a government engineering college.

There are Plus II and Plus III colleges in four blocks of the district. Bhatalaia College, Basumati Science College at Samasingha, Jharianna College at Talamunda, Saheltikra College, Saligram Sakunia College at Talapatia, Indira Gandhi Women's College at Brajarajnar and Dwarika Prasad Agarwal College at Bagmara only provide Plus II courses and lack good infrastructure. There are only two vocational colleges in the district. One of them is Kolabira Panchayat Samiti College and the other is Kirmira Sobhan Memorial College. There are three other private Plus II colleges. However, five blocks of the district are yet to witness any significant development in terms of college education.

RSP bags prestigious environment award

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, June 12: SAIL Rourkela Steel Plant (RSP) has bagged the prestigious Kalinga Environment Excellence Award 2023 in the 'Five Star' category. Lebohang Valentine Mochaba, High Commissioner of the Kingdom of Lesotho presented the award in a ceremony held at Bhubaneswar June 8. This award was presented by the Institute of Quality and Environment Management Service, for RSP's



outstanding achievements in environmental management throughout the year 2023.

In a function held at Manthan Conference Hall June 11, Atanu Bhowmick, Director In-Charge, RSP received the Kalinga

Environment Excellence Award 2023 and certificate from MNVS Prabhakar, Chief General Manager (Services) and his team in presence of almost all the senior officers of the plant.

The award was received on behalf of RSP by PC Dash, General Manager I/c Environmental Engineering department, Himanshu Mishra, Manager, Environmental Management department, and Judhistrira Maharana, Deputy Manager (SMS-II).

BSF busts Maoist dump in Malkangiri



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, June 12: The Border Security Force (BSF) discovered explosives, including

Improvised Explosive Device (IED), and a few more items in a Maoist hideout in the jungles of Malkangiri district.

The haul was seized Tuesday by

the troops of the 2nd battalion of the force from under a rock cavity formed along the foothills of the Tulsi Songri reserve forest. An IED weighing about 1.5 kg and packed in a steel tiffin box, explosive powder weighing about 300 gm, a solar plate and wire, iron-cutter and some other items

were recovered by the troops during a patrol, official sources said. The troops destroyed the IED and a potential threat to security forces and locals was neutralised, they said. The BSF is deployed for anti-Naxal operations in the state and along its borders with Chhattisgarh.

Abandoned stone quarry turns into tribals' nightmare



POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, June 12: An unused stone quarry located close to Harichandanpur-Brahmanipal road near Bhalujodi village in Sagadapata panchayat of Harichandanpur block about 60 km from the district headquarters here has spread panic among the local tribals.

About 10 years ago, a private firm excavated a 60-foot high hill and extracted stones for the construction of the Naranpur-Brahmanipal-Duburi road. After completing the road work, the firm left without filling the huge pit which is in complete violation of norms. The firm should have filled the pit and planted trees on it as per rules. Visiting the place has become a risky proposition now.

The pit, now filled with rain water, has acquired the proportion of a lake. This manmade lake is over 60-foot deep and the turquoise water is attracting hundreds of locals and visitors from outside.

A stretch of the pool is used by the locals for fish farming and its water is used for irrigation. However, the possibility of accidents has grown manifold due to

lack of safety measures in and around this manmade lake.

The spot witnesses frequent movement of animals as it is a forested area under the Anandapur wildlife division. It is alleged that many wild animals have drowned while drinking water from the lake.

Neither a fence nor any warning sign has been installed around it by the administration for which many residents often visit the lake to bathe in it. The local children also dive into the lake for swimming.

The tribals here are particularly worried because they are left to fend for themselves in a dangerous situation. If the administration takes legal action against the concerned firm and decides to fill the pit, residents would be benefited. However, nothing is done to alleviate the fear among them.

Locals said a big hill with lush green cover was present in the area. The livestock of the local villagers used to graze on the hill. However, the mining firm took the hill on lease and excavated it for stone mining.

Villagers are worried because many of their livestock have fallen

into the pit and died. Similarly, wild animals also move around in this area and there is every possibility of those falling into the pit leading to death, a local resident Madhab Murmu said.

Locals alleged many of the villagers had their farm lands near the hill and the mining firm usurped their farmlands during mining.

While the administration is yet to pay them any compensation, the firm has warned of severe consequences if they ever dare to protest or demand for damages, another villager Malay Murmu alleged.

Several forests and hills have been destroyed due to stone mining, the villagers alleged. They allowed stone mining on the hill with a hope of getting jobs. However, they have been left disappointed as their farmlands have been destroyed. The company raked in profits from mining but has pushed their life into danger, another villager Rabi Membram said.

When contacted, Anandapur DFO Abhay Kumar Dalei said that he will take necessary steps after reviewing the situation and getting information from the local forest staff.

EAST COAST RAILWAY
EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI)
FOR ADVERTISEMENT ON PREMIUM COACHING TRAINS

No. Sr.DCM/55/Com.Pub/NFR/Train Advt.24 Dated: 07.06.2024

East Coast Railway, Khurda Road Division seeks Expression of Interest (EOI) from Government Departments/Government Agencies/PSUs/Constitutional Bodies/Statutory Bodies for advertisement of their brands/products or services on Premium Coaching Trains (Exterior).

(A) Mail/Express/Passenger Trains: Advertisement will be permitted for Vinyl wrapping on exterior of coaches (Below the window portion/full Vinyl wrapping of the side walls) in the following Premium trains:

- 20841/42 BHUBANESWAR-VISAKHAPATNAM-BHUBANESWAR VANDE BHARAT EXPRESS
- 20835/36 PURI-ROURKELA-PURI VANDE BHARAT EXPRESS
- 20817/18, 22823/24 & 22811/12 BHUBANESWAR-NEW DELHI-BHUBANESWAR TEJAS RAJDHANI EXPRESS (03 RAKES)
- 12277/78 PURI-HOWRAH-PURI SHATABDI EXPRESS

Detailed proposal along with the Expression of Interest should reach on or before 1700 hrs. of 30.06.2024 to the office of the Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager, East Coast Railway, Khurda Road, Jatni. Please visit East Coast Railway's website: www.eastcoastrail.indianrailways.gov.in for further details. For further query, if any, regarding this EOI, please contact Shri Jitendra Mohanty, AI/East Coast Railway/Khurda Road, Mob:8455889771.

PR-201/P/24-25 Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager, Khurda Road

GOVT. OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER
MAHANADI BARRAGE DIVISION, CUTTACK
No.A-36 Phone No. 0671-2440118
Email- eembarragedivnctc@gmail.com
'e' PROCUREMENT NOTICE No.-02/(MBD 17-23) / 2024-25

1	Name of work	"Improvement, Repair & Maintenance of Canal works to Replacement of Cable works"
2	Total No. of works	07 (Seven) Nos. of works
3	Tender cost	3.2 lakhs to 23.4 lakhs
4	Mode of payment of EMD (Bid Security) & Bid cost	The bidder shall transfer the required amount of EMD (Bid Security) and cost of bid by online through electronic payment as per Govt. of Odisha WDOM No.17254/W dtd. 05.12.2017 as mentioned in DTCN.
5	Period of completion	15 to 60 Days
6	Other details as follows	
(i)	Procurement Officer	Superintending Engineer, Mahanadi Barrage Division, Cuttack
(ii)	Availability of tender online for bidding	13.06.2024 from 10.00 A.M. to 24.06.2024 upto 5.00 P.M.
(iii)	Date, time & venue of opening of bid through online	Dtd.25.06.2024 - 10.00 A.M. for Technical Bid, in the Office of the Superintending Engineer, Mahanadi Barrage Division, Cuttack.
(iv)	Date of transparent lottery to be conducted (if required)	On 29.06.2024 at 11.30 P.M. in the Office Chamber of the Superintending Engineer, Mahanadi Barrage Division, Gandarpur, Cuttack.

(Bidder shall furnish their present e-mail id, address and Telephone No. for further correspondence)
Further details can be seen from the Govt. website www.tendersodisha.gov.in.

Sd/- Superintending Engineer, Mahanadi Barrage Division, Cuttack
OIPR-32477/11/0003/2425

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP) Annexure - I
No. F-9: District Mineral Foundation, Jajpur invites RFP in the prescribed format for "Selection of Agency for Establishment and Running of Programme Management Unit (PMU) for District Mineral Foundation (DMF), Jajpur". The detail of the RFP is available on the district web portal i.e. <https://jajpur.odisha.gov.in>.
Sd/- Collector & Managing Trustee DMF, Jajpur
OIPR-30025/11/0001/2425

REGIONAL OFFICE: 108 - B, Unit-VII, Surya Nagar, Gopabandhu Square, Bhubaneswar-751003, Ph. No.: 0674-2397551, 2397199

INVITATION OF BIDS/OFFERS FOR PREMISES ON LEASE

Central Bank of India requires premises admeasuring 74.32 to 92.90 sq.m (800-1000 Sq.ft) carpet area in ready possession / ready for possession within 3 months at Padhansahi preferably on the ground floor with adequate parking space for their Padhansahi Branch. There should be a provision for an on site ATM with an area of 5.94 to 9.29 Sq.m. (64 to 100 Sq.ft.). No brokers or intermediaries please. Priority will be accorded to Government / Semi Govt. bodies or public sector undertakings.

Kindly download the formats/terms and conditions from the website <http://www.centralbankofindia.co.in> or collect the same from Central Bank of India, Padhansahi Branch, P.O: Panchagaon, Dist.: Khurda, PIN-752050 / Regional Office at 108-B, 1st Floor, Unit - VII, Surya Nagar, Gopabandhu Square, Bhubaneswar - 751003 during office hours. The last date for submission of offers is 28.06.2024 upto 4.00p.m. The authority reserves the right to accept or reject any or all the proposals without assigning any reason thereof.

Date: 12.06.2024 Sd/- Chief Manager

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA No. A-25
DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER
RENGALI LEFT BANK CANAL DIVISION
At/P.O.: Kamakhyaganar, Dist.: Dhenkanal, Odisha, PIN - 759018
Ph.: 06769-270771 Email ID: eerlbcdivision@gmail.com
e-PROCUREMENT NOTICE No. RLBCD-P_01/2024-25

1	Category of Work	"Civil Construction Works"
2	Total No. of Works	11 (Eleven) Nos.
3	Estimated Cost	Varies from Rs.43.35 Lakhs to Rs.9.34 Lakhs
4	Period of Completion	60 Days to 30 Days
5	Class of Contractor	"D" & "C" and "C" & "B" or equivalent grade/class
6	Cost of Bid Document/Mode of Payment	Rs.6,000/- to Rs.4,000/- (Non-refundable)/ Online through Electronic Payment Mode (Internet Banking/NEFT/RTGS of Designated Banks and their Aggregator Banks)
7	EMD/Bid Security Amount/Mode of Payment	Varies from Rs.43,350/- to Rs.9,340/-/ Online through Electronic Payment Mode (Internet Banking/NEFT/RTGS of Designated Banks and their Aggregator Banks)
8	Other Details:	
(i)	Procurement Officer	Superintending Engineer, Rengali Left Bank Canal Division, Kamakhyaganar
(ii)	Availability of Bid Documents for Online Bidding	13.06.2024 from 10.00 hours to 27.06.2024 upto 17.00 hours
(iii)	Date, Time & Venue of Bid Opening (Online)	On 28.06.2024 at 11.00 hours in the O/o. the Superintending Engineer, Rengali Left Bank Canal Division, Kamakhyaganar (through online).
(iv)	Date, Time & Venue of transparent lottery for finalization of bids, if required	On 02.07.2024 at 11.00 hours in the O/o. the Superintending Engineer, Rengali Left Bank Canal Division, Kamakhyaganar.

*Further details can be seen from the Government of Odisha website <https://tendersodisha.gov.in>.
Sd/- Superintending Engineer
OIPR-32298/11/0001/2425 R.L.B. Canal Division, Kamakhyaganar

Care not for time and success. Act out thy part, whether it be to fail or to prosper

SRI AUROBINDO



The Way Forward

The future of developing countries is in services. This may sound odd in view of the fact that industrialisation has been the traditional road to growth and eventual prosperity, one travelled by all of today's rich economies and by more recent successes such as South Korea, Taiwan, and China. Manufacturing seems even more essential given that industrial policies to revive it are back in fashion in the US and Europe.

But today's manufacturing is different. Innovation in manufacturing has taken a predominantly skill-biased form, reducing demand for workers with relatively low levels of education. New technologies such as automation, robots, and 3D printing directly substitute physical capital for labour. While firms in developing countries have an incentive to use more labour-intensive techniques, competing in the global marketplace requires employing production techniques that cannot differ significantly from those used in the frontier economies, because the productivity penalty otherwise would be too high. The need to produce according to the exacting quality standards set by global value chains restricts how much unskilled labour can substitute for physical capital and skilled labour.

Thus, the rising skill- and capital-intensity of manufacturing in turn means that globally competitive, formal segments of manufacturing in developing countries have lost the ability to absorb significant amounts of labour. They have effectively become "enclave" sectors, not too different from mining, with limited growth potential and few positive effects on the supply side of the rest of the economy.

This means that enhancing productivity in labour-absorbing services has become an essential priority, for reasons of both growth and equity. Since the bulk of jobs will be in services, these jobs need to be productive enough to support income growth. The conundrum is that we do not know much about how to raise productivity in labour-absorbing services.

While some services, such as banking, IT, and business-process outsourcing (BPO) are both productively dynamic and tradable, they will not be labour-absorbing for the same reason that manufacturing is not. Even under the best circumstances, these relatively skill-intensive services will not provide the answer to the challenge of productive job creation. The challenge is to increase productivity in labour-absorbing services such as retail, care, and personal and public services, where we have had limited success, in part because such services have never been an explicit target of productive development policies.

In a new paper, we describe four strategies for expanding productive employment in services that create the most jobs in developing countries. The first focuses on established, large, and relatively productive incumbent firms, and entails incentivising them to expand their employment, either directly or through their local supply chains. These firms could be large retailers, platforms such as ride-sharing services, or even manufacturing exporters (with potential to generate upstream linkages with service providers).

The second strategy focuses on small enterprises (which constitute the bulk of firms in developing countries) and aims to enhance their productive capabilities through the provision of specific public inputs. These inputs could be management training, loans or grants, customised worker skills, specific infrastructure, or technology assistance. Given the heterogeneity of such firms, ranging from micro-enterprises and self-proprietorships to mid-size companies, policies in this domain require a differentiated approach that respond to their distinct needs. Moreover, given the numbers involved, policies often also require a mechanism for selecting among the most promising firms, since most are unlikely to become dynamic and successful.

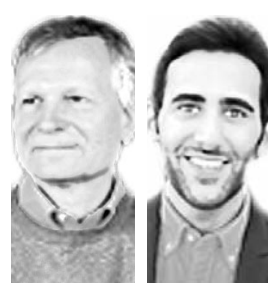
The third strategy focuses on the provision, to workers directly or to firms, of digital tools or other forms of new technologies that explicitly complement low-skill labour. The objective here is to enable less educated workers to do (some of) the jobs traditionally reserved for more skilled professionals and to increase the range of tasks they can perform.

The fourth strategy also focuses on less-educated workers and combines vocational training with "wrap-around" services, a range of additional assistance programmes for job seekers to enhance their employability, retention, and eventual promotion. Modeled after Project Quest, a US-based initiative, and other similar sectoral workforce development schemes, these training programmes typically work closely with employers, both to understand their needs and to reshape their human-resource practices to maximise employment potential.

There are examples of these kinds of initiatives around the world, many of which have been rigorously evaluated and which we summarise in our paper. There is already a foundation of practice on what might be called "industrial policies for services" on which future efforts can build.

Regardless of the success of individual programmes, it is important to bear in mind the scale of the challenge a services-oriented development strategy faces. A randomised policy intervention that increased earnings of low-income workers by, say, 20 per cent would normally be judged a great success (assuming reasonable programme costs). But even if it were successfully scaled up to the economy at large, this gain would not make up even 1 per cent of the income gap that currently exists between a country like Ethiopia and the US. Real success will require greater ambition, continuous experimentation, and implementation of a very wide range of programmes.

Dani Rodrik, Professor of International Political Economy at Harvard Kennedy School, is President of the International Economic Association. Rohan Sandhu is Co-Founder and Co-Director of the Reimagining the Economy initiative at the Harvard Kennedy School. @PROJECTSYNDICATE



Dani Rodrik & Rohan Sandhu

The need to produce according to the exacting quality standards set by global value chains restricts how much unskilled labour can substitute for physical capital and skilled labour



GN Bajpai

ELECTED MPs AND LEGISLATORS OWE IT TO THEIR VOTERS TO IMPROVE THE ECONOMIC CONDITION OF THE ORDINARY CITIZEN

SPECTRUM NDA 3.0



Dhurjati Mukherjee

THE 5 KG OF FREE RATIONS TO 80 CRORE INDIANS HAS OUTLIVED ITS UTILITY WITH THE PEOPLE DEMANDING JOBS INSTEAD

The results of the Parliamentary elections, 2024 have unfolded quite a surprise. The economic pain, deficiency of employment opportunities and threat to the democratic order, with the narrative of amending the Constitution inter alia seem to have influenced the results significantly, particularly in rural areas. The Indian voters do care about democracy in addition to economic wellbeing. This is a positive development. The new government, now a coalition, under the leadership of Narendra Modi has been sworn in. The agenda of the new government is being watched carefully.

I recall my pilgrimage to the national memorial of the three-storeyed Cellular Jail in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, the site of inhumane atrocities heaped on India's freedom fighters by the British. One inscription of the inmates written to his fellow villagers as he awaited execution, reads: "... I have done my part and now it is your turn." It is our duty to work together to emancipate India from economic deprivation and misery, and usher in an era of prosperity.

The new five-year-term of Modi 3.0, as this tenure has come to be called, should not lose sight of key messages like seeing India as a fully developed society and in fighting corruption at all levels. The message of the freedom fighters would ring true only if India's development reaches the last mile, the weakest and the poorest. This is possible in material terms only with a minimum annual average real GDP growth rate of 7% plus for the next two decades, a task easier said than done. In traditional literature, GDP growth is predominantly influenced by the availability and productivity of three factors of production - land, labour, and capital. The current geopolitical backdrop and broader global economic environs necessitate co-ordinated mobilisation, sagacious deployment and optimal sweating of all three factors.

How do we achieve that? Wide ranging reforms are called for in all three areas.

Whereas the capital efficiency of India compares favourably with most countries, the productivity of labour lags considerably. The International Labour



In a vibrant multiparty democracy, building political consensus on emotive issues is a prolonged battle that requires inexhaustible patience and accommodation of a rainbow of interests and ideas

Organisation (ILO) in the matter of labour efficiency, ranked India at 126 in 2022, based on 2017 Purchasing Power Parity.

The acquisition of land post the related legislation (The Land Acquisition Act, 2013) passed during the Manmohan Singh government requires compulsory approval of 80% of the community for use by private companies and Public Private Partnerships. Along with the right to fair compensation, purchase of land has become impassable and uneconomic. The availability of land has thus become a serious impediment to infrastructure building and industrialisation. Yet, land acquisition has often been negative, as witnessed in the manner in which parts of or whole shops and houses were reportedly demolished in Ayodhya. This is believed to have contributed to the BJP losing the Faizabad seat in this election. We will need a more humane way of acquiring land, with greater governance in terms of standards, fairness, rights of people and a commitment to return the value to the local area.

Agriculture efficiency is another drag in stepping up the GDP growth rate. If the agriculture sector had contributed in tandem with other sectors like manufacturing and construction, the 2024 GDP growth rate would have exceeded 10%. The rural masses depend on agricultural income, in the absence of which economic gains bypass them even in the high GDP growth era.

Needless to say, land, labour

and agriculture are emotive issues. In a vibrant multiparty democracy of India, building political consensus, on emotive issues is a prolonged battle that requires inexhaustible patience and accommodation of a rainbow of interests and ideas. It is understood that when the Nagaland government under the leadership of RS Pandey, then Chief Secretary with full blessings of the Chief Minister, introduced 'communitisation' of health, education and power, it waded through an arduous seven steps of architecting concurrence amongst various stakeholders ranging from leaders of communities, political parties, media to authorities in the institutional framework. The endeavour was recognised even by the UN.

In 2017, the government tried to build (which several governments in the past could not) national consensus on the implementation of the 'Unified Tax Regime'-GST through a prolonged, rigorous exercise. The then Finance Secretary had in a business dinner revealed to a group of six at his table how the game of understanding and patience was played by the national leadership. Yet, we must recognise that GST was and remains a bone of contention.

In the matter of ease of doing business, the real thorn is the enforcement of the contract. It takes an average of 1,445 days to enforce a contract and costs over 31.3% of the claim value leaving people tired of judicial inefficacies. The institution of the judiciary calls for wide rang-

ing reforms. Further delay will culminate in a loss of faith in the system itself. Here too consensus for transformation must be built amongst various stakeholders viz. judges, lawyers, politicians and civil society.

There is growing concern about rising economic inequality. In India, inequality is of two kinds: (a) between rich & poor and (b) between states. As per the 'Income & Wealth Inequality Report in India 2024' authored by Nitin Kumar Bharti, Lucas Chancel, Thomas Piketty and Anmol Somanchi, inequality declined post-Independence till the early 1980s but has skyrocketed since 2000. Apparently, high GDP growth rates did not bring cheer to the poor. The economic disparities emanate from a lack of 'equal opportunity'. The Constitution in its Preamble guarantees inter alia 'equality of status and of opportunities'. The civic administration charged with the responsibility of execution of policies operates at a minimum efficiency level, which spells frustration especially amongst the deprived.

Further, there is a sharp gap in per capita NSDP (Net State Domestic Product) among states. In 2022-23, NSDP per capita of Goa on nominal prices was Rs 5,32,854 and that of Bihar Rs 54,111. UP and Odisha were Rs 83,664 and Rs 1,45,202 respectively. This disparity, which is the consequence of lopsided economic development, must be remedied. The allocation of additional resources, building trust amongst investors and modelling execution capabilities should be in sharp focus.

Without these reforms, the laudable objective of "India-Developed Nation by 2047" may remain a distant dream. The people of India are waiting for the moves of the new government. Disappointment may transform the pain of casting votes in the scorching heat into uncontrollable anguish. Elected MPs and legislators owe it to their voters to improve the economic condition of the ordinary citizen.

The writer is a former Chairman of SEBI & LIC, and is the author of the book 'A Game Changer's Memoir'.

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A bumpy road ahead

With the economy showing some resilience, the challenges before the new government are indeed quite widespread. There is also talk whether the coalition partners of the BJP can ensure stability in the long run. The dependence on the TDP and JD(U) and other smaller parties and fulfilling their aspirations and demands would not be quite easy. Moreover, the Opposition pressure created by the combined INDIA bloc would have to be borne by the government.

Political analysts are questioning whether the dependence on regional allies could well result in regional inequality gaining more attention than it was earlier. The new government would have to depend on support from Naidu and Nitish, both of whom represent states that have long-standing demands from the Centre. Andhra Pradesh had been promised a substantial grant when the original state was divided, and Bihar has been clamouring for a special grant as also conducting a caste census

throughout the country.

On the economic front, the biggest problem that needs to be tackled is the spectre of rising youth unemployment, which threatens to negate the demographic dividend that India is enjoying with one of the youngest populations globally. The causes for this dismal state of affairs are many though one principal reason has been the slowly worsening situation of the small and medium scale enterprises in India, which employ nearly 111 million people. Their decline has meant fewer jobs are being created.

At the same time lack of skill training for our youth which would make them employable and replacement of workers with increasing automation and robotics in most large sectors of industry has meant crowding of workers in farming, the informal sector and construction, where the quality of jobs is suspect and under-employment rampant.

Apart from unemployment and underemployment and price rise, which has been hurting the

common man, an appalling trend has been wealth and income inequalities. Also, Modi's patronising some select corporate houses has been criticised. These have been recorded in various surveys but did not lead to remedial measures by the government. The 5 kg of free rations to 80 crore Indians has outlived its utility with the people demanding jobs instead. All this led to a decline in BJP's vote share as it got 36.6% of the semi-urban votes and 35% of rural votes.

Additionally, it may be mentioned that Agniphath scheme has exemplified the unemployment challenge and both the major coalition partners, the TDP and JD(U), have already voiced the need for scrapping it. They seek something long-term or permanent in its place and the government would need to seriously think about bringing in some other the scheme.

Infrastructure development in core areas such as power, railways, manufacturing is expected to continue to receive priority and

adequate funding in the coming years. But while government funding has been quite massive, the private sector is not coming up with adequate support.

On the agricultural front, the distress situation has affected many parts of the country. The rural scenario has not been at all favourable to the BJP for which the party has to think of a change in strategy.

Finally, stability is what the people want from this coalition government apart from specific welfare measures that reach down to the bottom levels of society. But there has to be a judicious approach to development and transparency in all decisions taken by the new government. With a strong Opposition, the government will be forced to maintain a balance in allocation of resources even though coalition compulsions may force it to favour Andhra and Bihar. Only jargons and promises may not help achieve a decent livelihood for the distressed and backward sections of society. INFPA

WISDOM CORNER

In dwelling, live close to the ground. In thinking, keep to the simple. In conflict, be fair and generous. In governing, don't try to control. In work, do what you enjoy. In family life, be completely present

LAO TZU

Human greatness does not lie in wealth or power, but in character and goodness. People are just people, and all people have faults and shortcomings, but all of us are born with a basic goodness

ANNE FRANK

It is easy to hate and it is difficult to love. This is how the whole scheme of things works. All good things are difficult to achieve; and bad things are very easy to get

CONFUCIUS

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, Rasulgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

Focus on challenges

Sir, This refers to "Sarpanch to CM" (OrissaPOST, June 12). As the newly appointed Chief Minister of Odisha, Mohan Charan Majhi's priorities are expected to focus on addressing the state's major challenges and promoting development in several key areas. Given his background and the significance of tribal communities in Odisha, Majhi is likely to prioritise policies that promote the welfare and development of tribal areas. This focus is crucial as it aligns with the broader goals of ensuring social equity and inclusion for historically marginalised groups. Majhi may emphasise initiatives that drive economic growth, including infrastructure development and investment in key sectors. Diversifying the state's industrial base beyond mining and raising awareness among investors about business opportunities and available industrial infrastructure are essential steps. By aligning his strategies with the broader goals of the BJP and reflecting his commitment to addressing the needs of Odisha's diverse population, Majhi can pave the way for a prosperous and equitable future for the state.

Amarjeet Kumar, HAZARIBAGH

Humanitarian concerns

Sir, This refers to "Glimmer of hope," (OrissaPOST, June 12). The US has requested the UN Security Council to support its proposed Gaza peace deal, signalling a concerted effort to end the ongoing hostilities. President Biden's plan outlines a process that begins with Hamas returning all remaining Israeli hostages, followed by Israel's eventual withdrawal from Gaza. This plan, however, faces a web of diplomatic challenges. Neither Israel nor Hamas has fully endorsed the proposal, reflecting the deep-rooted mistrust and conflicting objectives that have prolonged the conflict. The Biden administration's consideration of a separate deal with Hamas, bypassing Israel, underscores the complexity of the situation. This approach, while controversial, highlights a pragmatic shift towards diplomacy over military action, as the US no longer views Hamas as a military threat to Israel. Add to this, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken's regional tour aims to garner support for the peace deal and address humanitarian concerns, such as reopening the Rafah border crossing to aid Gaza. Blinken's mission reflects the broader strategic objective of securing regional stability and alleviating the humanitarian crisis.

N Sadhasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

Will Modi visit Manipur after Bhagwat's remarks: Uddhav

RSS chief Bhagwat Monday expressed concern over peace eluding Manipur even after one year and said the situation in the strife-torn north eastern state must be considered with priority



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, June 12: Shiv Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray Wednesday asked whether Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit Manipur after RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat's remarks on the situation in the north-eastern state.

Addressing a press conference here, the former Maharashtra chief minister also sought to know what the difference was on the ground after the abrogation of Article 370, which provided special status to Jammu and Kashmir.

Manipur plunged into violence between the Meitei and Kuki communities in May last year. Since then, nearly 200 persons have been killed, while thousands have been displaced following large scale arson that has gutted homes and government buildings.

Fresh violence has been reported from Jiribam in Manipur over the past few days.

Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) chief Bhagwat Monday expressed concern over peace eluding Manipur even after one year and said the situation in the strife-torn north eastern state must be considered with priority.

"Mohan Bhagwat has said that Manipur is burning. He has at least said this after a year. Will the Prime Minister and Home Minister not go there?" Thackeray asked.

Referring to the situation in Manipur and Jammu and Kashmir, he said if Modi can't handle it, then he has no right to be the Prime Minister for the

third term.

Thackeray claimed Jammu and Kashmir is on the boil.

"Lives are being lost. Who is responsible for the terror attacks in Jammu and Kashmir?" the Shiv Sena (UBT) leader asked.

"I am concerned about the future of the country and not about the future of the NDA government," he said.

Officials Wednesday said a CRPF jawan was killed and six security personnel were injured in two overnight encounters with terrorists in Kathua and Doda districts of Jammu and Kashmir.

Earlier, nine persons were killed and 33 injured as terrorists struck a bus carrying pilgrims from Uttar Pradesh in Jammu and Kashmir's Reasi district Sunday evening, opening fire on the vehicle which fell into a gorge.

Thackeray also said there were no differences in the Opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi, comprising the Shiv Sena (UBT), Congress and the NCP (SP) led by Sharad Pawar, over candidates for the upcoming state legislative council polls to four con-

stituencies. "There is no difference," he asserted.

It is a fact there was a "loose connection" in the dialogue (among the MVA partners), Thackeray said, adding that he was not here after the Lok Sabha polls.

During this time, all parties declared their candidates and nominations had to be filed within the stipulated time, he said.

The deadline for filing nominations was June 7. Voting will be held June 26 and results will be declared July 1. Wednesday was the last date of withdrawal of applications.

The biennial elections to four legislative council seats - Mumbai Graduates, Konkarn Graduates, Mumbai Teachers and Nashik Teachers - became necessary as terms of the sitting members are expiring in July.

The Congress Tuesday expressed displeasure over Thackeray "unilaterally" announcing Shiv Sena (UBT) candidates for the legislative council polls in the Konkarn Graduates and Nashik Teachers' constituencies, demanding their withdrawal from the race.

MLC polls: Shiv Sena (UBT) to contest 3 seats, Cong 1

A day after the Congress accused Uddhav Thackeray of unilaterally announcing his party's candidates for the upcoming Maharashtra Legislative Council polls, the two parties finalised the deal Wednesday with the Shiv Sena (UBT) deciding to contest three out of four seats, while the grand old party will fight one. As per the seat-sharing deal finalised by the two Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) constituents, the Shiv Sena (UBT) will contest Mumbai Graduates' constituency, Mumbai Teachers' constituency and Nashik Teachers' constituency, while the Congress will fight the Konkarn Graduates' constituency.

Shiv temple base discovered in Maha village



Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar: In a significant archaeological discovery, the base of a Lord Shiv temple has been uncovered during conservation work at Hottal village in Nanded district, an official said. Hottal, known for its temples from the Chalukyan era, has yielded three stone inscriptions mentioning the contributions of donors who helped construct these temples around 1070 AD, the official added. This area, once the capital of the Kalyani Chalukyas, is famous for its temple complex adorned with intricate sculptures. As part of the ongoing conservation work on some of these historic temples, a team of archaeology department officials discovered the temple base while clearing debris near a temple under restoration. Four trenches were dug to ascertain the structure and uncovered the base of a Lord Shiv temple, complete with a Shivaling. Additionally, we found a substantial number of bricks, indicating that bricks were used in the temple construction here, Amol Gote, the in-charge of the Nanded division of the state Archaeology Department, told.

CURBING CHILD MARRIAGE

Assam to give monthly stipend to girl students

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Guwahati, June 12: Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma Wednesday announced that his government would provide monthly stipends to all girl students from Class XI to post-graduation over the next five years, aiming to prevent child marriages.

Addressing a press conference, Sarma said the scheme, 'Nijut Moina', was approved by the cabinet, which estimated that ₹1,500 crore would be required in five years to give the incentives to around 10 lakh girls.

A married girl will not get the benefit. The only exception will be those married girls who are enrolled in PG courses, they will also benefit, he said.

The sole aim of this scheme is to delay the marriage of a girl so that she can be finan-



cially independent and start earning for herself and her family, Sarma said.

The scheme will increase the gross enrollment ratio of girls substantially, he asserted.

All girls studying in Classes XI and XII will get ₹1,000 every month, it will be ₹1,250 for degree

students and ₹2,500 for girls doing post-graduation, Sarma said.

Except for daughters of ministers, MLAs and MPs, and those students studying in private colleges, all girls irrespective of their financial background will be included in the scheme. In June and July, during summer vacation, no money will be given. The stipend will be deposited to the bank accounts of the students for 10 months in a year, he said.

Another condition to avail the incentive is the student has to opt out from the benefit of the scooty scheme, under which all girls obtaining 60 per cent in class 12 board examination are offered a two-wheeler.

"A girl can avail only one of the two schemes and it is completely up to them. Usually, around 50,000 girls receive the scooty," Sarma said.

38 more Myanmarese immigrants deported

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Imphal, June 12: With the deportation of 38 more immigrants from Manipur to Myanmar Tuesday, a total of 115 illegal Myanmarese migrants, including women and children, have been deported to their country since March 8, officials said.

Manipur Chief Minister N Biren Singh said in a post on X, "In continuation of the deportation process of immigrants, the Government of Manipur has deported 38 Myanmar nationals to their home country through the Integrated Check Post (ICP), Moreh, today."

"They have been handed over safely to Myanmar authorities by the immigration officers posted at ICP, Moreh. The state government is continuing the identification of illegal immigrants and remains steadfast in its resolve to deport them. Let's keep our borders and country secure," he added.

669 candidates file nominations for historic civic body polls in Nagaland

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kohima, June 12: A total of 669 candidates filed their nominations for the elections to the Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) in Nagaland that will be held June 26.

According to the State Election Commission, 669 candidates, including 238 women, filed their nomination papers for the three municipal councils and 36 town councils. Tuesday was the last day for filing of nominations while scrutiny of documents will be taken up Thursday with June 18 being the last date for withdrawal of candidature.

It is after 20 years that the elections to ULBs are going to take place in the state. It is also historic as this would be the first-ever municipal elections in the state to be held with 33 per cent reservation for women.

■ ELECTIONS TO ULBS ARE GOING TO TAKE PLACE AFTER A GAP OF 20 YEARS IN THE STATE

■ IN A HISTORIC FIRST, THIS WOULD BE THE FIRST-EVER MUNICIPAL ELECTION WITH 33 PC QUOTA FOR WOMEN

The government had announced elections to ULBs several times in the past but objections from tribal bodies and civil society organisations against reservation for women, and tax on land and properties had held back the polls.

The tribal bodies were asserting that these two provisions infringe on the special rights for Nagaland guaranteed by Article 371(A) of the Constitution.

In 2017, the government had withheld the decision to conduct the election after clashes left

two persons dead and several others injured on the eve of the day of voting.

The clashes also led to the setting ablaze of the Kohima Municipal Council office and government offices in the state capital and elsewhere.

Meanwhile, defying the call of the Eastern Nagaland Peoples' Organisation (ENPO) for abstention from the elections, several candidates of the ruling NDPP and BJP have filed nominations, officials said.

ENPO, the apex body of seven Naga tribes living in six eastern districts of the state, has been demanding a 'Frontier Nagaland Territory', claiming that the region has been neglected for years.

The ENPO had also asked people to refrain from participating in the Lok Sabha polls for the lone seat in the state.

African Swine Fever affects pork biz

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Aizawl, June 12: The African Swine Fever (ASF) remained unabated with around 1900 pigs so far killed in Mizoram since the outbreak of the contagious disease in April while the authorities culled 3415 pigs to prevent the spread of the virus, officials said Wednesday.

Officials and traders said that the ASF badly affected the pork business in the bordering state.

Officials in the Animal Husbandry and Veterinary (AHV) Department said that the department declared six districts -- Aizawl, Champhai, Lunglei, Saitual, Khawzawl and Serchhip -- as ASF-infested districts while the remaining five districts of the state are still considered more or less safe from the recurrence of the infectious disease.

However, the Kolasib district is also suspicious in view of the fast spreading of the contagious



disease, a senior AHV Department official said.

The official said that under the Prevention and Control of Infectious and Contagious Disease in Animals Act, 2009, the department has declared various villages and localities in these six districts as infected areas following the outbreak of ASF in April.

With the fast spreading of the ASF, the department already barred the supply of pigs, piglets and pork from the infected areas.

Between 2021 and 2023, over 47,270 pigs and piglets died in Mizoram due to the ASF outbreak, while at least 25,182 pigs were culled during that period.

The government has so far provided compensation to 3,000 families for the loss of pigs due to the disease and the state government has approached the Centre for payment of compensation to additional families.

According to experts, the outbreak of ASF may have been caused by pigs or pork brought from neighbouring Myanmar, Bangladesh, and the adjoining states of the northeast.

Pork is one of the most common and popular meats consumed by both the tribals and non-tribals in the northeastern region. With heavy demand for pork in the northeastern region, its annual business in the region is worth around ₹8,000-Rs 10,000 crore, with Assam being the largest supplier.

Drought spells doom for 11 lakh sweet lemon trees

CHHATRAPATI SAMBHAJINAGAR AND JALNA ARE THE TOP SWEET LEMON PRODUCING DISTRICTS, MAKING MAHARASHTRA THE BIGGEST PRODUCER OF THE FRUIT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar, June 12: Prevailing drought situation and lack of water have taken a toll on more than 11 lakh sweet lemon trees in the orchards of Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar and neighbouring Jalna district

of Maharashtra, officials said Wednesday.

The drought has caused sweet lemon trees on over 4,062 hectares of land in these districts to dry up, a state agriculture department official told PTI.

Maharashtra tops the country in terms of sweet lemon production. In the state, Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar and Jalna are known to be among the top sweet lemon producing districts. Sweet lemon trees are grown over 35,850 hectares of land in these two districts, the official said.

As per the norm, 277 sweet lemon trees are cultivated in one hectare of land. By that count, 11,25,174 sweet lemon trees have dried up due to water scarcity caused by scanty rainfall last year, he added.

The sweet lemon trees on 4,062



hectares of land in Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar and Jalna districts were affected by the drought. Of the two districts, Jalna has suffered more loss as trees on 3,600 hectares have dried up.

In Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar, the losses have occurred in four tehsils. As many as 1,30,744 trees spread over 472 hectares of land have died up and cut down by farmers there, the officials said.

District superintendent agriculture officer Prakash Deshmukh said, "Like sugarcane, sweet lemon is a crop that guarantees good returns if water is available round the year. But the region loses these trees in a similar manner after every five years."

Once a sweet lemon tree goes dry, it has to be cut down. The dried tree can range from three years to 15 years. Generally, 277 sweet lemon saplings are planted in a hectare of land. Some farmers plant 300 such trees in a hectare, Deshmukh said.

So far, 3,590 sweet lemon trees have dried up. Some farmers have cut down the trees, while others are yet to do that, a Jalna agriculture department official told PTI.

SKM's Sherpa new speaker of Sikkim



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Gangtok, June 12: SKM MLA Mingma Norbu Sherpa was unanimously elected the speaker of the Sikkim Assembly Wednesday.

Raj Kumari Thapa was unanimously elected the deputy speaker of the House.

Pro-tem speaker Sanjeet Kharel put forward the proposal for voting by the members who unanimously elected Sharma as the speaker of the House.

A two-term MLA from

Daramdin, Sharma was a minister in the last Prem Singh Tamang government.

After taking charge, the new speaker read out a proposal about Raj Kumari Thapa's candidature for the post of deputy speaker. Thapa, 44, was also elected unanimously by the House. She is a two-term MLA from Rangang-Yangang.

Earlier, pro-tem speaker Kharel administered oath to all 31 members of the House, beginning with Chief Minister Prem Singh Tamang.

national



Mohan Bhagwat ji, you reap what you sow. The fault is not of the soil, the fault is of the gardener
PAWAN KHERA | MEDIA AND PUBLICITY HEAD, CONGRESS

HOAX BOMB SCARE

Several museums, including the National Museum and Rail Museum, and two mental health institutes -- IHBAS (Institute of Human Behaviour and Allied Sciences) and VIMHANS (Vidyasagar Institute of Mental Health, Neuro and Allied Sciences) -- have received bomb threat e-mails, officials said Wednesday. The officials said that nothing suspicious was found in the searches and later the calls were declared hoax



of the day quote

People and INDIA coalition partners made the saffron party sweat in Varanasi
AJAY RAI | CONGRESS PRESIDENT, UP

The election in Ladakh this time was different ... So far, elections used to be on religious or regional lines. This time, people voted only on issues
MOHAMMAD HANEFA JAN | MP, LADAKH

In light of some pressing medical reasons, I will be taking a short hiatus from the organisation. This time off will be an opportunity for me to humbly explore and understand the needs of our people and community
ABHISHEK BANERJEE | NATIONAL GENERAL SECRETARY, TMC

WATER SHORTAGE SC RAPS DELHI GOVT

PEOPLE ARE SUFFERING, WHAT ACTION HAVE YOU TAKEN AGAINST TANKER MAFIA, ASKS TOP COURT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 12: People in Delhi are suffering due to water scarcity, the Supreme Court observed Wednesday, slamming the AAP government over water wastage and tanker mafia and sought to know what steps it has taken to ease the recurring problem.

A vacation bench of Justices Prashant Kumar Mishra and Prasanna B Varale told the Delhi government it will ask the city police to take action against the tanker mafia if it can't deal with them. If the same water can be transported using tankers, why can't it be supplied through the pipeline, a disquieted court said.

The apex court said if there can be stringent laws to control theft of electricity, why can't there be laws to check water wastage.

"If water is coming from Himachal Pradesh, where is it going in Delhi? There is so much pilferage, transportation loss, and tanker mafia working. Have you taken any action against these? If you are not taking any action, then we will hand it over to Delhi police. People are suffering. The same water is coming through tankers but there is no water in the pipeline."

POCSO CASE CID issues notice to Yediyurappa

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, June 12: The Criminal Investigation Department (CID) has issued a notice to senior BJP leader and former Karnataka Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa to appear before its probe team for an inquiry in connection with a POCSO case registered against him, police sources said Wednesday.

Yediyurappa is presently in Delhi, and he is likely to join the probe after he returns, sources close to him said. According to police, Yediyurappa has been booked under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offence (POCSO) Act and Section 354 A (Sexual harassment) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) based on a complaint by the mother of a 17-year-old girl who alleged that he sexually assaulted her daughter during a meeting on February two this year.



On March 14, hours after the Sadashivanagar police registered the case, the Karnataka Director General of Police Alok Mohan issued an order transferring it to the CID for further investigation with immediate effect.

The 54-year-old woman, who had leveled the charge against Yediyurappa, died at a private hospital here last month due to lung cancer.

The 81-year-old Yediyurappa has denied the charge and said he would fight the case legally. "The CID had sent a notice yesterday asking him to appear today. However, since he is presently in Delhi, he has sought time. He will appear before the police after three days," a party source said.

The CID has already recorded the statement of the victim and her mother under Section 164 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC), police added.



Atishi writes to LG, alleges collusion by senior officers with tanker mafia

Delhi Water Minister Atishi Wednesday wrote to Lieutenant Governor VK Saxena demanding an inquiry into alleged collusion by senior officers with the tanker mafia, as the capital grapples with a water crisis in this heat. She also requested the LG to deploy an ACP-level police officer to patrol the stretch of Munak Canal in Delhi to ensure that no illegal water filling activity happens there. "There is a need for an enquiry into potentially collusion by senior officers in the Delhi government with the tanker mafia because it seems that there has been deliberate and substantial reduction of the tankers deployed by the Delhi Jal Board in the last one year," she claimed.

observed orally.

Advocate Shadan Farsat, appearing for the Delhi government, sought to assuage the court's concern, saying action has been taken to prevent water wastage, including disconnection of supply to places where there is no pressing need for it. He said water tankers are being provided by the Delhi Jal Board.

"In so far as police is concerned, we will be more than happy to have the police take action in this (to check water mafia)," he said. Senior advocate Abhishek

Wayanad or Rae Bareilly: Rahul faces dilemma

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Wayanad, June 12: Rahul Gandhi, who won from Wayanad and Rae Bareilly in the 2024 general elections, kept people guessing Wednesday about which seat he will retain, even as KPCC chief K Sudhakaran hinted that the Congress leader would relinquish the constituency in Kerala.

According to the Representation of People Act, a candidate can contest from two Lok Sabha constituencies, but can hold only one seat at a time. Therefore, the Congress leader has to give up one of the two seats he has won.

Addressing a public meeting at Edavanna in Malappuram earlier in the day, Gandhi said he was in a dilemma as to which constituency he should relinquish.

He said that whatever decision he takes, both constituencies will be happy with it.

Meanwhile, at a public meeting at Kalpetta in Wayanad district of the state where Gandhi was present, Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC) chief K Sudhakaran hinted that the



Congress leader might relinquish the Wayanad Lok Sabha seat.

"We should not be saddened as Rahul Gandhi who is supposed to lead the nation cannot be expected to remain in Wayanad. Therefore, we should not be sad. Everyone should understand that and give all their wishes and support to him," Sudhakaran said.

Later, during his speech, Gandhi said many were speculating whether he would relinquish the Rae Bareilly or the Wayanad LS seat. "Everybody knows the answer to this, except for myself," he said.

Earlier in the day, at Edavanna, Gandhi said he was in a dilemma over it. "I have a

dilemma before me, whether I should be the MP of Wayanad or of Rae Bareilly. What I will commit to you is that both Wayanad and Rae Bareilly will be happy with my decision," the Congress leader said.

He reiterated it while speaking at Kalpetta.

In 2019, Gandhi had contested from Amethi and Wayanad, but lost the north Indian constituency to BJP's Smriti Irani, and won from Wayanad by a huge margin.

In 2024, the Congress leader contested from Rae Bareilly and Wayanad and won both seats with a huge margin of over three lakh votes.

In Wayanad, however, the victory margin was smaller than what it was in 2019.

The public meeting at Edavanna was his first appearance in the state after winning the Wayanad LS seat for the second consecutive time.

In a dig at Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Gandhi, while speaking of his dilemma over choosing between his two LS seats, said that unlike the PM he does not receive any directions from God on what has to be done.

NEET-UG ROW

63 cases of use of unfair means, but no paper leak: NTA

AS MANY AS 67 STUDENTS SCORED A PERFECT 720, UNPRECEDENTED IN NTA'S HISTORY



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 12: Sixty-three cases of students using unfair means were reported in NEET-UG out of whom 23 have been debarred for varying periods, NTA officials said Wednesday, but reiterated the sanctity of the medical entrance exam hasn't been compromised and there has been no paper leak.

The result of the remaining 40 candidates who were found using unfair means have been withheld, NTA DG Subodh Kumar Singh told PTI.

"A committee was constituted consisting of three eminent experts in field of examination and academics to put forward different types of cases reported such as impersonation, cheating and tampering with OMR sheet," NTA DG Subodh Kumar Singh told PTI.

"On recommendations of the panel, 12 candidates were debarred from taking the exam for three years, nine candidates debarred for two years and two candidate for one year each. The result of remaining candidates has been withheld. The panel had given recommendations for each case," Singh added.

The total number of cases of usage of unfair means was 63, he said. The agency is under criticism amid allegations of irregularities and inflation of marks in the crucial medical

entrance exam.

The matter has also reached the top court which said Tuesday the sanctity of the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test-Undergraduate (NEET-UG), 2024 has been affected and sought responses from the Centre and the National Testing Agency (NTA) on another plea seeking holding of the examination afresh on grounds of alleged question paper leak and other malpractices.

Amid fire from protesting students and opposition parties, the Education Ministry had last week set up a four-member panel to review the grace marks awarded to 1,563 students to compensate them for loss of time due to delay in starting examination at certain centres.

"The panel is yet to submit its report. Depending upon the panel's recommendations, either a retest will be conducted for nearly 1,600 students or an alternate mechanism may be devised to ensure no candidate faces any disadvantage," he said.

Asked about allegations of marks inflation due to which 67 candidates have bagged top rank, Singh said, out of 67 candidates who got 720 out of 720 marks, 44 candidates received marks on account of revision of answer key of physics and 6 on account of loss of time.

"Only two candidates who got grace marks have received 718 and 719 marks," he clarified.

SC to hear pleas challenging results today

The Supreme Court is scheduled to hear Thursday as many as three petitions, including the one filed by chief executive of EdTech firm 'Physics Wallah', pertaining to the controversy-ridden NEET-UG, 2024 for admission to MBBS, BDS and others courses. As per the apex court's updated list of business, a vacation bench comprising Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta will take up the petitions raising grievances related to the conduct of the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test-Undergraduate (NEET-UG), 2024. Alakh Pandey, the chief executive of the EdTech firm, has moved the top court against alleged random award of grace marks by the National Testing Agency (NTA) to over 1,500 candidates. The top court has also listed for hearing the two pleas filed by Abdullah Mohammed Faiz and Jaripiti Kartheek separately. Pandey has urged the top court to set up an expert panel under its supervision to "enquire into the examination process and results of NEET (UG) 2024."

REUTERS



This is the first time that insurance payouts and a direct cash assistance program have been combined to supplement the income of women when it's dangerously hot
KATHY BAUGHMAN MCLEOD | CEO, CLIMATE RESILIENCE FOR ALL

additional payout when insurance tied to the local conditions and duration of the extreme heat was triggered, with some receiving up to \$19.80 each. Insurance is increasingly seen by policymakers as a tool to help vulnerable communities receive

financial support quickly after extreme weather events occur. Total payments across the programme totalled \$341,553. The insurance was underwritten by reinsurer Swiss Re and provided locally by ICICI Lombard.

SHORT TAKES

MLAs take oath in HP

Shimla: Six newly elected legislators Wednesday took oath as members of the Himachal Pradesh Assembly. Former minister and BJP MLA from Dharamshala, Sudhir Sharma was the first to take oath followed by Congress MLA Anuradha Rana from Lahaul and Spiti. The others who took oath are Congress MLA from Sujanpur, Captain Ranjit Singh, BJP MLA from Barsar, Inder Dutt Lakhanpal, Congress MLA from Gagret, Rakesh Kalra and Congress MLA from Kulehar, Vivek Sharma. Congratulating the new MLAs, Speaker Kuldeep Singh Pathania expressed hope that they would raise issues related to the state and public welfare in the assembly.

Stones pelted at train

Phagwara: Stones were pelted at a New Delhi-bound Vande Bharat Express train between Phagwara and Goraya rail section Wednesday, causing damage to a glass window, officials said here. They said no one was injured in the incident. The matter was brought to notice by two Gurugram-based passengers who heard a thud caused by an object striking the outer part of the coach near their seat when the train departed Phagwara. "First we could not figure out what happened but soon, we saw some cracks on the window pane of the coach," one of them said. Phagwara Superintendent of Police (SP) Rupinder Kaur Bhatti said the stones could have been thrown by children.

Bus falls into gorge

Uttarkashi: Three women died while 24 were injured when a bus driver lost control over the vehicle and it fell into a gorge near Gangnani on the Gangotri National Highway in Uttarakhand, police said Wednesday. According to them, the incident occurred 50 km from Gangnani Tuesday night. The bus went out of the driver's control, broke the crash barrier, fell into the gorge and got stuck on a tree before it could hit the bottom, police officials said. The bus was going towards Uttarkashi from Gangotri with 27 pilgrims, a police officer said, adding rescue and relief work began promptly and the injured were sent to Uttarkashi District Hospital and Bhatwadi Health Centre.

Heavy rains kill 14

Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar: Rain-related incidents have claimed the lives of 14 persons in the Marathwada region of Maharashtra since June 1, with 11 of these deaths caused by lightning strikes, officials said Wednesday.

VIRAL ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Video shows rats roaming in MP govt hosp

Gwalior: A video has surfaced on social media showing rats roaming purportedly in a ward of a government-run hospital in Madhya Pradesh's Gwalior city, prompting the authorities to order an effective pest control at the medical facility. The opposition Congress in Madhya Pradesh Tuesday shared the video on its X handle, claiming there were "more rats than patients" at the Kamla Raja Hospital in Gwalior, and criticised the government over the condition of health facilities in the state. Some social media users have shared the video showing rats roaming around, claiming it to be a ward of the Kamla Raja Hospital, a women and children's medical facility under the government's Gajra Raja Medical College in Gwalior. The Congress while sharing the video on X said, "Look at the condition of Madhya Pradesh's health system. There are more rats roaming than patients in Gwalior's Kamla Raja Hospital, strict vigil has to be maintained to protect patients and newborns from rats. Madhya Pradesh is at the mercy of God. Parchiwale chief minister is registering attendance in durbar."

Posters in Jaipur telling people not to sell property to 'non-Hindus'

Jaipur: Posters appeared in a locality of Jaipur Wednesday saying houses should not be sold to "non-Hindus". The poster, appearing in the Shivaji Nagar in Bhatta Basti area, also appeals to the "Sanatani" people to stop the "migration" of Hindus. Some locals told a TV channel that they have pasted the posters willingly on their own homes to appeal to people in their locality to not sell their houses to non-Hindus. The posters in the name of 'Sarv Hindu Samaj' read in Hindi, "Sanataniyon se appeal, palayan ko roken. Sabhi Sanatan bhaiyon behnon se nivedan hai ki apna makaan gair-Hinduon ko na bechen (An appeal to Sanatanis to stop migration. A request to all Sanatani brothers and sisters to not sell their house to non-Hindus)." The local residents alleged that some people buying houses in the area were creating problems for others.

of the day quote

Elections are over and a government has been formed (at the Centre). Last 10 years, the government was one person, but now it has been freed from it (that system). This time, the government has been formed with the help of others

SHARAD PAWAR | CHIEF, NCP (SP)

Speed up the process of construction of 2 lakh houses under the first phase. Action will be taken against officers who commit irregularities and negligence in this scheme

CHAMPALAI SOREN | CM, JHARKHAND

Please remember that the BJP, the central government needs our support to pass bills in Rajya Sabha. There should be no doubt. We are as strong as the TDP even though we have lost power in the state

V VIJAYASRI REDDY | LEADER, YSR CONGRESS

POST OF THE DAY

There are rumors circulating that AAP in Punjab is going to reshuffle their ministers in response to recent loss in the general elections. We'd like to clarify that this information is false & is not coming from an official source

@HARCHANDSARSAT

SHORT TAKES

Nitish appoints Cab

Patna: Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar Wednesday appointed all his Cabinet colleagues as 'ministers in-charge' of various districts. According to a government order, Deputy Chief Ministers - Samrat Choudhary and Vijay Kumar Sinha - have been made ministers-in-charge of Patna and Muzaffarpur districts respectively. Sinha will also be in-charge of Bhojpur district. Vijay Kumar Choudhary has been made in-charge of Purnea and Nalanda districts, Bijendra Prasad Yadav will be minister in-charge of Vaishali district. The order further states that Prem Kumar will oversee Nawada, Shrawan Kumar (Samastipur and Madhepura), Santosh Kumar Suman (Aurangabad), Sumit Kumar Singh (Saran), and Renu Devi will oversee Siwan.

Bibhav moves HC

New Delhi: Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's aide Bibhav Kumar has approached the Delhi High Court seeking regular bail in the case of alleged assault on AAP Rajya Sabha MP Swati Maliwal. The bail plea is likely to be listed for hearing before a vacation bench of the high court June 14. Kumar, who was sent to 14 days judicial custody May 31, has been accused of assaulting Maliwal May 13 at the chief minister's official residence. A trial court in Tis Hazari had June 7 refused to grant him bail, saying he was facing "grave and serious" charges and that there was an apprehension that he could influence witnesses. In his plea before the high court, Kumar said the trial court failed to consider the fact that his further custody was not required as all evidence has been collected by the investigating officer and statements of witnesses have also been recorded.



The truth is, what we have today is a crippled government (at the Centre). It has been beaten so badly by the INDIA bloc that it cannot walk straight. It is certainly not a government which is capable of leading the country

RAHUL GANDHI | CONGRESS LEADER

PM TO LEAVE FOR G7 SUMMIT TODAY

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will travel to Italy Thursday to attend the annual summit of G7 advanced economies. Foreign Secretary Vinay Kwatra said Wednesday that PM Modi's participation in the G7 summit would provide an opportunity to follow up on outcomes of the G20 summit held under India's presidency last year



SKM protests Chouhan's appointment as Agri Min

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 12: The Samyukt Kisan Morcha (SKM) Wednesday protested against the NDA government's decision to allocate the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare to Shivraj Singh Chouhan and held him responsible for the killing of six farmers in Madhya Pradesh's Mandsaur in June 2017.

In a statement, the SKM said the farmers were "murdered" while participating in the massive struggle for MSP at the C2 plus 50 per cent formula given by the Swaminathan Commission, comprehensive loan waiver and against the growing trend of farmers' suicide.

The SKM also announced that a meeting of its general body will be held in Delhi July 10 which will be attended by the leaders of the constituent farmer organisations from all over India.

"The decision symbolizes arrogance and insensitivity exhibited by the former regimes of 2014 and 2019 with an absolute majority to the BJP. It has aroused wrath among the farmers and the rural people across the country," the SKM said.

Six farmers were killed in June 2017 in Madhya Pradesh's Mandsaur after a group of farmers was fired at by the policemen and the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) jawans.

The SKM, which led the protests against the now scrapped farm laws, said the NDA government did not take any decision to address the acute agrarian crisis and the farmers' suicide in the first Cabinet meeting or on the long pending demands on MSP among other things.

"The hype being created in the name of releasing Rs 20,000 crore of arrear in the PM Kisan Samman Nidhi, which is an existing scheme with grossly inadequate sum of average Rs 500 per month per farmers' household will not satisfy farmers since it camouflage the unwillingness of the state to provide remunerative MSP and the policies of corporate takeover of agricultural sector," the SKM said.

"There is no illusion among the farmers of a change in the corporate policies on agriculture. Farmers have to prepare for another stint of vibrant and massive struggles by joining hands with workers, small traders and petty producers and extending across India," they said, adding the SKM is determined to build greater unity of the people and put pressure on the NDA government to replace its "corporate driven policies" with farmer and worker centric policies for the development of people.

Commenting on the incident of actor and BJP MP Kangana Ranaut being slapped by a CISF personnel, they said, "SKM while not justifying slapping of Kangana Ranaut MP by a woman security personal flays her arrogant and malicious utterances against the historic farmers' struggle."

Reign of terror rocks Valley

TWO TERRORISTS, CRPF JAWAN KILLED IN KATHUA; 6 SECURITY PERSONNEL INJURED IN DODA ENCOUNTER

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jammu, June 12: A terrorist holed up in a border village in Jammu and Kashmir's Kathua district was killed by security forces Wednesday in a more than 15-hour operation during which his partner was also shot dead and a CRPF jawan lost his life, officials said.

According to them, two senior officers escaped unhurt even as their vehicles were hit by bullets during the operation that began Tuesday night after two terrorists were spotted in Saida Sukhal village.

In Doda district, five troopers of Rashtriya Rifles and a special police officer (SPO) were injured when terrorists attacked a joint checkpoint in the upper reaches of Chattergalla on the Baderwah-Pathankot road late Tuesday night. Traffic on the highway has been suspended as an operation is underway to track down the terrorists.

The two incidents come just days after terrorists attacked a bus carrying pilgrims from the Shiv Khori temple to Katra, causing it to veer off the road and fall into a deep gorge. Nine people died and 41 were injured in the Sunday evening attack.

Police have announced a Rs 20 lakh reward for information on the whereabouts of the terrorists involved in the attack on the bus and have also released the sketch of one of the terrorists.

Authorities have claimed that attempts by Pakistan to disturb the peaceful atmosphere in Jammu and Kashmir were the reason for the spurt in terror activities in the Jammu region.

In Kathua's Saida Sukhal village near the International Border - around 60 kms from here - the second holed-up ter-



Cong questions Modi's silence

The Congress Wednesday said the BJP's chest-thumping and "hollow" claims of return of peace and normalcy in Jammu and Kashmir have been thoroughly exposed by the three terror attacks in the region in the past three days. Congress leader Rahul Gandhi said the country is demanding answers as to why those plotting against the country are not being caught under the BJP rule. "Narendra Modi is busy responding to congratulatory messages and cannot even hear the cries of the families of the devotees who were brutally killed in Jammu and Kashmir," he said in a post in Hindi on X. There have been three separate terror incidents in the last three days in Reasi, Kathua and Doda in Jammu and Kashmir, "but the prime minister is still busy celebrating," he said.

rorist was killed Wednesday noon in an intense gunfight after being cornered by the joint security parties of the police, Army and CRPF, officials said.

The terrorist tried to break the cordon by firing indiscriminately at the security forces

around 3 am. Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) jawan Kabir Dass, a resident of Madhya Pradesh, was critically injured in the firing and later succumbed to injuries in a hospital, they said.

Talking to reporters after the encounter ended, Additional Director General of Police (Jammu zone) Anand Jain, who supervised the operation, said both the terrorists have been killed and a large quantity of weapons, improvised explosive devices and grenades recovered from them.

"A search is still on as there is a possibility of some more terrorists hiding in the area. The terrorists had freshly infiltrated (from across the border) and a joint operation was launched immediately after getting information about their presence in the village," he said.

He lauded the bravery of the slain CRPF jawan and said, "We salute his sacrifice."

Earlier, the ADGP said, "Two

WAR OF WORDS

I have always said that terrorism is not going to end unless there is an understanding between the two nations (India and Pakistan). Terrorism will continue and we will have to face it. The tragedy is that innocent people are getting killed... and that is unfortunate. We are the ones facing tragedies

FAROOQ ABDULLAH | FORMER CM, J&K

Abdullah should stop advocating for Pakistan which had bled Jammu and Kashmir and brought destruction to the region by training, arming and pushing terrorists into this side to kill innocent citizens. Instead of condemning Pakistan, showing it the mirror and exposing its black face to the world, he is advocating dialogue which is highly regrettable

RAVINDER RAINA | BJP PRESIDENT, J&K

terrorists entered the village around 8 pm on Tuesday and asked for water from a household. The people got frightened and as soon as they informed us, a police team rushed to the village. One of the terrorists tried to hurl a grenade at the police team and was killed in the exchange of fire."

Officials said both the slain terrorists are believed to be Pakistanis. An M4 carbine, an AK assault rifle and over Rs 1 lakh in cash besides Pakistan-made food items and medicines were seized from the encounter site, they said, adding the identity and group affiliation of the terrorists were being ascertained.

In Doda, terrorists fired on a joint checkpoint of the 4 Rashtriya Rifles and police at Chattergalla area late Tuesday night, leading to a fierce gunfight which continued for several hours, officials said.

They said five Rashtriya Rifles personnel and an SPO were injured and they were taken to hospital. Additional security personnel have been rushed to the area to intensify the operation against the terrorists, they said.

According to the officials, traffic movement has been completely suspended on the busy Baderwah-Pathankot interstate highway in view of the on-going search and cordon operation in Chattergalla, Guldandi, Sarthal, Shankh Pader and Kailash mountain range.

Meanwhile, a search and cordon operation has been launched in the Kalal area of the Nowshera sector in Rajouri district following suspicious movement of two persons.

Security forces have been put on high alert following intelligence reports about possible attempts by terrorists to carry out an attack, especially in Poonch and Rajouri districts which has been seeing a spurt in terror activities over the past two years, officials said.

The hostile neighbour is always making attempts to disturb peace in the Jammu region

ANAND JAIN | ADGP, JAMMU ZONE

Murmu rejects mercy plea of Pak terrorist

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 12: The mercy petition of Pakistani terrorist Mohammed Arif alias Ashfaq convicted in the nearly 24-year-old Red Fort attack case has been rejected by President Droupadi Murmu, officials said Wednesday.

This is the second mercy plea rejected by the President after assuming office July 25, 2022.

The Supreme Court had dismissed a review petition by Arif November 3, 2022, affirming the death penalty awarded to him in the case.

However, a death row convict can still knock on the doors of the top court seeking commutation of his sentence on the ground of prolonged delay under Article 32 of the Constitution, feel experts.

The mercy petition from Arif, received May 15, was turned



Red Fort attack case

down May 27, the officials said, quoting the President's secretariat order of May 29.

The Supreme Court, while upholding the death sentence, noted that there were no mitigating circumstances in Arif's favour and emphasised that the attack on the Red Fort posed a direct threat to country's unity, integrity, and sovereignty.

The attack, which took place December 22, 2000, saw intruders opening fire at the 7 Rajputana Rifles unit stationed within the Red Fort premises, resulting in the deaths of three Army personnel.

Arif, a Pakistani national and a member of banned Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), was arrested by Delhi Police four days after the attack. "Appellant-accused Mohd Arif alias Ashfaq was a Pakistani national and had entered the Indian territory illegally," the top court's order of 2022 had said. Arif was found guilty of conspiring with other militants to carry out the attack, with the trial court sentencing him to death in October 2005.

The Delhi High Court and the Supreme Court upheld the decision in subsequent appeals.

IAF played vital role in 2024 LS polls

THE INDIAN AIR FORCE FLEW OVER 1,000 HOURS IN OVER 1,750 SORTIES

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 12: From extending the reach of the Election Commission into remote corners of the country to airlifting EVMs, the IAF played a vital role in the recently-held general elections, with its aircraft flying more than 1,000 hours in over 1,750 sorties.

The Indian Air Force Wednesday shared details about the helping hand it lent to the electoral machinery in the conduct of the Lok Sabha polls.

"During the general elections 2024, the substantial flying effort has taken place over the last few months by medium-lift helicopters (Mi-17 variants), light utility helicopters (Chetak) and the indigenously manufactured advanced light helicopters (ALH Dhruv)," the IAF said in a statement.

The force has been actively



involved with the task of airlifting electronic voting machines (EVMs) and deploying Election Commission of India (ECI) personnel on election duties, as has been carried out during previous general or assembly elections, officials said.

During the general elections 2024, the IAF played a "pivotal role" in extending the reach of the ECI into remote corners of the country, and to places where movement by road was a security concern, they said.

The task was time-bound as

polling officers had to be positioned at each remote polling station within two days prior to the election date and de-inducted on the day of polling.

"The IAF played a vital role in five of the seven phases of the general elections, flying over 1,000 hours in over 1,750 sorties," it said.

The seven-phase elections were held from April 19 to June 1 while votes were counted June 4. The ECI had declared results for 542 of the 543 Lok Sabha constituencies, with the

BJP winning 240 seats and the Congress 99.

From Jammu and Kashmir to Tamil Nadu and Nagaland to Gujarat, the ECI team spanned the lengths and breadths of the country to literally reach out to every voter in the country.

"This herculean task was achieved through close coordination with the ECI and CEOs of various states through nodal officers in order to optimise utilisation of assets factoring security, weather and road connectivity," the IAF said.

Helicopter assets of the Indian Army and the BSF were also dovetailed into the overall plan towards the smooth conduct of the elections, it said.

The transport and helicopter fleets of the IAF undertake varied war and peacetime tasks. In addition to the peacetime role of sustaining troops by air maintenance, and airlift of combat troops during domestic and international exercises, a number of tasks towards nation-building are also undertaken, the IAF said.

It has particularly been on the forefront in aid to civil power, officials said.

LF partners to deliberate on alliance issue with Congress

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, June 12: Following the Lok Sabha poll debacle, a section of the Left Front constituents in West Bengal Wednesday questioned the decision of CPI(M) to have an alliance with the Congress in the state.

The All India Forward Bloc, a partner of the Left Front, said Left supporters are "wary about Congress", keeping in mind the "attacks and atrocities" by the grand old party during its reign in West Bengal before 1977, the year the Left parties came to power in the state.

It also said the arrests of Left leaders and the tale of the sufferings of Left supporters in that time cannot be obliterated.

Another Left Front constituent RSP said the party is holding discussions on various issues, including the reservation of a section of Left Front partners over the alliance with the Congress.

Amid demand to re-evaluate the decision to have ties with the Congress in the state, the CPI(M) said no such move has

been contemplated yet. In the 2024 Lok Sabha polls, the Left parties could not open their account in West Bengal while the Congress got the Malda Dakshin seat.

LS POLL DEBACLE IN BENGAL

"It is difficult to explain to the party rank and file and the large support base of the Left Front the rationale and compulsion to have an electoral alliance with the Congress which was responsible for the deaths of hundreds of Left workers in the 70s, the burning of houses and the indiscriminate arrest of our leaders and activists when the Congress was in power in the 60s and 70s. The major Left Front partner CPI(M) could not explain the rationale for sharing a stage with a party during election campaigning, which had gagged democracy in the days of emergency," former MLA and Forward Bloc general secretary Naren Chatterjee told PTI.

international



Thanks to the significant meeting between us at the Vostochny Spaceport in September last year, (North Korea)-Russia friendly and cooperative relations developed into an unbreakable relationship of comrades-in-arms
KIM JONG UN | LEADER, NORTH KOREA

HAJJ PILGRIMAGE

More than 1.5 million foreign pilgrims have arrived in the country by Tuesday, the vast majority by air, from across the world, Saudi officials say. Hundreds of thousands of Saudis and others living in Saudi Arabia will also join them



of the day quote

Jill and I will always be there for Hunter and the rest of our family with our love and support. Nothing will ever change that
JOE BIDEN | PRESIDENT, US

I want men and women of goodwill who were able to say no to extremes to join together to be able to build a joint project for the country
EMMANUEL MACRON | PRESIDENT, FRANCE

For decades Maldives has been spending beyond its means. Sharp spending rise and subsidies have widened the deficit, leading to a vulnerable fiscal situation and unsustainable debt
FARIS H HADAD-ZERVOS | COUNTRY DIRECTOR FOR THE MALDIVES, WORLD BANK

War crimes by Israel, Hamas in Gaza: UN

Lebanon's Hezbollah militia, backed by Iran, fired barrages of rockets at Israel Wednesday in retaliation for an Israeli strike that killed a senior Hezbollah field commander



Hamas' political bureau, said its formal response to a US ceasefire proposal outlined by US President Joe Biden May 31 was "responsible, serious and positive" and "opens up a wide pathway" for an accord.

in an air strike on Gaza City in the north, and one man had been killed by a tank shell in Rafah.

UN FINDINGS ON WAR CRIMES

The UN reports released in Geneva, which cover the conflict through to end-December, found that both sides had committed war crimes including torture; murder or wilful killing; outrages upon personal dignity; and inhuman or cruel treatment.

The investigators also found Israel committed additional war crimes including starvation as a method of warfare, not only failing to provide essential supplies such as food, water, shelter and medicine to Gazans but also acting "to prevent the supply of those necessities by anyone else".

Some of the war crimes, such as murder; also constitute crimes against humanity by Israel, the commission said in a statement.

Geneva, June 12: A UN inquiry found Wednesday that both Israel and Hamas had committed war crimes in the early stages of the war in Gaza, and that Israel's actions also constituted crimes against humanity because of the immense civilian losses.

The findings were from two parallel reports by the UN Commission of Inquiry (COI), one focusing on the October 7 attacks and another on Israel's response.

Israel, which did not cooperate with the commission, dismissed the findings as the result of anti-Israeli bias. Hamas did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The war began October 7 when militants led by Hamas, the Islamist group ruling Gaza, killed 1,200 Israelis and took more than 250 hostages, according to Israeli tallies.

Israel's military retaliation has caused the deaths of more than 37,000 Palestinians, according to Gaza's health ministry, displaced most of Gaza's population of 2.3 million, caused widespread hunger, and devastated housing and infrastructure.

Izzat al-Rishq, a member of

ASSAULT CONTINUES

As diplomats sought a ceasefire deal, Israel continued assaults in central and southern Gaza that are among the bloodiest of the war.

Residents said Israeli forces had pounded areas across Gaza Wednesday as tanks advanced towards the northern part of the city of Rafah, on the Egyptian border.

Palestinian health officials said six people had been killed

Rift grips Pak's ruling coalition

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Islamabad, June 12: The fissures within Pakistan's ruling coalition government have surfaced with the PPP, a key ally, accusing the ruling PML-N of sidelining its inputs in the preparation of the annual budget and questioning if the Shehbaz Sharif-led government still values its support.

The Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) expressed its reservations in its parliamentary committee meeting presided over by the party chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari Tuesday, ahead of the presentation of the budget for the financial year 2024-25 in Parliament, the Dawn newspaper reported Wednesday.

The PPP blamed the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) government for not taking any inputs from the party while preparing the annual budget and wondered if it still wanted the ally's support, the report said.

Member of the National Assembly and PPP Information Secretary Shazia Marri, briefing journalists after the parliamentary body meeting, said the lawmakers apprised the leadership of problems in their constituencies and expressed reservations over development schemes.

"The attitude adopted by the federal government towards our lawmakers is causing problems to our members as they are accountable to the people," she said, expressing PPP's annoyance over the PML-N-led government's behaviour.

"No input from our party was taken in preparing the budget.



Open for talks: Imran

Pakistan's jailed former Prime Minister Imran Khan in an apparent U-turn has given a green signal for talks with the government to ease the ongoing political tension, days after refusing to have a dialogue with the toothless ruling coalition. The change of heart came after the Supreme Court during a hearing of a case on changes to the country's graft laws observed that Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party should initiate talks with the government and resolve its issues in parliament through dialogue.

Even in the federal PSDP (Public Sector Development Programme), our opinion was not taken. We had tried to prevent such a situation and senior party members approached the government, but it did not yield any result. We did not expect that our voices would not be heard," she said.

Presided over by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, a National Economic Council (NEC) meeting Monday approved a more than 47 per cent increase in the federal PSDP to ₹1.4 trillion compared to the current year's ₹950 billion.

After the controversial February 8 general elections marred with massive rigging allegations, the PML-N and PPP formed a coalition government after intense negotiations following a fractured poll verdict.

SA sees first mpox death after five cases confirmed

REUTERS

Johannesburg, June 12: A 37-year-old man has become South Africa's first recorded death from mpox after five laboratory-confirmed cases of the viral infection were recorded in the past month, the health minister said Wednesday.

The man died in Tembisa Hospital Monday, Health Minister Joe Phaahla told a news conference.

Mpox spreads through close contact, causing flu-like symptoms and pus-filled lesions. Most cases are mild but it can kill.

Phaahla said all of South Africa's mpox cases were in men aged between 30 and 39 years old without travel history to countries currently experiencing an outbreak, which suggests local transmission of the infectious disease.

"All five cases were classified (as) severe cases ... requiring hospitalisation. The cases have co-morbidities and have been identified as key populations, men who have sex with men," he told reporters.

One patient has been discharged, one discharged for home isolation and two remain in hospital.

Sequencing of three of the cases found the strain mpox clade 1b, which began to spread globally in 2022.

The Republic of the Congo declared an epidemic of mpox in April after recording 19 cases of the virus. Mpox was first detected in humans in neighbouring Democratic Republic of Congo in 1970, according to the World Health Organization.

SHORT TAKES

Malawi declares state funeral

Blantyre: The Malawi government said Wednesday that Vice President Saulos Chilima will be honored with a state funeral after he died in a plane crash along with eight other people. President Lazarus Chakwera had already announced 21 days of national mourning Tuesday, when the wreckage of the small military plane carrying Chilima and a former first lady was discovered in a mountainous area in the country's north. Flags will fly at half-staff across the southern African nation during the period of mourning.

80 killed in boat mishap in Congo

Beni: More than 80 people have been killed in a boat accident on the River Kwa in the Democratic Republic of Congo's Mai-Ndombe province, the country's presidency said Wednesday. "The President of the Republic is calling for an investigation into the true causes of this unfortunate incident, to prevent such a disaster from happening again in the future," the presidency said on X. The incident was caused by night sailing, Rita Bola Dula, Mai-Ndombe province governor, told Reuters, adding that the investigations continued.

8 with possible IS ties held in US

Washington: Eight people from Tajikistan with suspected ties to the Islamic State group have been arrested in the United States in recent days, according to multiple people familiar with the matter. The arrests took place in New York, Philadelphia and Los Angeles and the individuals, who entered the US through the southern border, are being held on immigration violations, said the people, who were not authorised to discuss the ongoing investigation by name and spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity.

B'desh court indicts Nobel laureate

Dhaka: A special judge's court in Bangladesh indicted Wednesday Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus and 13 others on charges in an over \$2 million embezzlement case. Yunus, 83, who was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2006 for pioneering microcredit to help impoverished people, especially women, pleaded not guilty and is out on bail for now. He told reporters that authorities were "harassing" him and other colleagues and denied being involved in any corruption.

SNIPPETS

Asylum policy case: Rwanda accuses UNHCR of lying

KIGALI: Rwanda said the UN refugee agency had lied when the organisation told a British court this week that asylum seekers sent to the East African country could be moved on again to states where they risked torture or death. Lawyers representing the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) told the court Monday that Rwanda's asylum system was inadequate, as part of a challenge to the British government's policy to deport asylum seekers there. The lawyers said removing asylum seekers to Rwanda put them at risk of being transferred again in a banned process known as refoulement, building on past evidence which formed an important part of the UK Supreme Court's reasoning when it ruled last year that the British plan was unlawful. "UNHCR is lying," Rwanda's government spokesperson said in a statement late Tuesday.

HK uses new security law against 6 exiled activists

HONG KONG: Hong Kong's Security Bureau said Wednesday it would use powers in a new national security law against six self-exiled activists residing in Britain, including cancelling their passports, after they fled the China-ruled city. The six are Nathan Law, Christopher Mung Siu-tat, Finn Lau, Simon Cheng, Johnny Fok Kachi and Tony Choi Ming-da. City authorities put them on a wanted list last year. "These lawless wanted criminals are hiding in the United Kingdom and continue to blatantly engage in activities that endanger national security," the bureau said in a statement. The new measures for the six in Britain prohibits providing them with funds and cancels their business dealings in Hong Kong.

EU set to hit Chinese EVs with extra tariffs

REUTERS

Brussels, June 12: The European Commission told automakers Wednesday it would impose extra duties of up to 38.1% on imported Chinese electric cars from July, in a move that China called protectionist but its car industry dismissed as one without a major impact.

Less than a month after Washington quadrupled duties for Chinese EVs to 100%, Brussels said it would set additional tariffs of 17.4% for BYD, 20% for Geely and 38.1% for SAIC, on top of the existing 10%, over what it said were excessive subsidies.

That equates to billions of euros of extra costs for the car-makers at a time they are struggling with slowing demand and falling prices at home, according to Reuters calculations based on 2023 EU trade data.

"This anti-subsidy investigation is a typical case of protectionism," said Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Lin Jian, adding the tariffs would damage China-EU economic and trade cooperation and the stability of the global automobile production and supply chain.

Syrian refugees' fate stuck in limbo

SOME SYRIAN REFUGEES RISK RETURNING TO OPPOSITION-HELD AREAS AS HOSTILITY IN HOST LEBANON GROWS

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Idlib, June 12: For more than a decade, a steady flow of Syrians have crossed the border from their war-torn country into Lebanon. But anti-refugee sentiment is rising there, and in the past two months, hundreds of Syrian refugees have gone the other way.

They're taking a smugglers' route home across remote mountainous terrain, on motorcycle or on foot, then traveling by car on a risky drive through government-held territory into opposition-held northwestern Syria, avoiding checkpoints or bribing their way through.

Until this year, the numbers returning from Lebanon were so low that the local government in Idlib run by the insurgent group Hayat Tahrir al Sham had not formally tracked them. Now it has recorded 1,041 people arriving from Lebanon in May, up from 446 the month before. A Turkish-backed local administration overseeing other parts of northwest Syria said arrivals from Lebanon



US Secretary of State Antony Blinken meets families and supporters of Israeli hostages held by Hamas in Gaza as they hold banners and flags during a protest calling for their return in Tel Aviv, Israel



have increased there, too.

Tiny, crisis-wracked Lebanon is the host of the highest per capita population of refugees in the world and has long felt the strain. About 780,000 Syrian refugees are registered with the UN refugee agency there and hundreds of thousands more are unregistered.

For years, and particularly since the country sank into an unprecedented economic crisis in 2019, Lebanese officials have called for the refugees to be returned to Syria or resettled else-

where. Tensions flared in April when an official with the Christian nationalist Lebanese Forces party, Pascal Suleiman, was killed in what military officials said was a botched car-jacking by a Syrian gang.

That prompted outbreaks of anti-Syrian violence by vigilante groups. Lebanese security agencies cracked down on refugees, raiding and closing down businesses employing undocumented Syrian workers.

In hundreds of cases, authorities have deported refugees.

Crisis-wracked Lebanon is the host of the highest per capita population of refugees in the world. About 780,000 Syrian refugees are registered with the UN refugee agency there and hundreds of thousands more are unregistered

The Lebanese government has also organized "voluntary return" trips for those willing to return to government-held areas, but few have signed up, fearing retaliation from Syria's government and security forces.

As precarious as the situation is in Lebanon, most refugees still prefer it to northwest Syria, which is controlled by a patchwork of armed groups under regular bombing by Syrian government forces. It also suffers from aid cuts by international or-

ganizations that say resources are going to newer crises elsewhere in the world.

Mohammad Hassan, director of the Access Center for Human Rights, a nongovernmental organization tracking the conditions of Syrian refugees in Lebanon, said an "orchestrated wave of hate speech and violence against refugees, justified by political leaders" is pushing some to leave out of fear that otherwise they will be forcibly deported.

While Lebanese officials have warned against vigilante attacks on refugees, they also regularly blame Syrians for rising crime rates and called for more restrictions on them.

Hassan said the route from Lebanon to Idlib is "controlled by Lebanese and Syrian smuggling gangs linked with local and cross-border militias" and is not safe.

The route is particularly risky for those who are wanted for arrest in Syria's government-controlled areas for dodging army service or for real or suspected affiliation with the opposition.

of the day quote

The national action plan for toys and other initiatives has had a good impact, but we need to do much more



RAJESH KUMAR SINGH | OPIT SECRETARY

Prioritising job creation and productivity improvement is crucial for the new government to ensure inclusive growth



SANJEEV KRISHAN | PWC IN INDIA CHAIRPERSON

Today, what we have is a set of companies that we feel are very strong, very well positioned in the market and each of them can be a scale company. For us now it is about delivering scale



ANISH SHAH | MAHINDRA GROUP MANAGING DIRECTOR AND CEO

SHORT TAKES

4.5% royalty to Nestle India parent

New Delhi: FMCG major Nestle India Wednesday said it will continue to pay royalty to its parent firm at the existing rate of 4.5 per cent of net sales after its proposal to hike it was rejected by shareholders. The company's board at its meeting approved continuation of payment of general licence fees (royalty) at the existing rate of 4.5 per cent to Societe des Produits Nestle S.A. (licensor) and recommended to the members of the company for their approval. Nestle India said in a statement. In April this year, Nestle India's board had approved increasing royalty payment to its parent firm by 0.15 per cent per year for the next five years, thereby enhancing it to 5.25 per cent of net sales. However, the shareholders rejected the proposal last month with 57.18 per cent of the total votes against the ordinary resolution and 42.82 per cent of the votes in favour.

NBCC gets ₹100cr order from Oil India

New Delhi: State-owned NBCC (India) Limited has bagged a Rs 100 crore contract from Oil India to construct a centralised core repository with advanced laboratory facilities at Guwahati in Assam. In a statement Wednesday, NBCC said it has inked a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Oil India for the construction of a centralised core repository with advanced laboratory facilities at Guwahati in Assam. "This work is valued at Rs 100 crore approximately," it added. The MoU was signed by Saloma Yomdo, ED (E&D), Oil and Pradeep Sharma, ED (Engg.), NBCC in the presence of Ranjit Rath, CMD, OIL, K P Mahadevaswamy, CMD, NBCC, Saleem Ahmad, Director (Projects), NBCC and other senior-level officials from both the organisation.

Olympus, HCLTech deepen partnership

New Delhi: HCL Technologies and global medtech company Olympus Corporation Wednesday said they have expanded their strategic partnership to enable advanced and affordable healthcare for patients through engineering technologies. According to a release, HCLTech will establish a dedicated product innovation centre in Hyderabad to serve Olympus' operations across the US, Europe, the Middle East and Africa. The centre is expected to commence operations by July 2024 and boost Olympus' business expansion plans and drive advancements in medical technology.



We are hoping that in the third quarter starting from October, perhaps there would be some possibility of inflation trajectory moving towards 4 per cent, and that will be the right time when we can expect some interest cut (from RBI)

DINESH KUMAR KHARA | SBI CHAIRMAN

RE INVESTMENT OF \$190-215BN NEEDED

Investments of \$190-215 billion will be needed to achieve the target of 500 gigawatt of renewable energy capacity by 2030 in India, Moody's Ratings said Wednesday. India's infrastructure companies will be spending on energy transition to meet demand resulting from the country's relatively strong economic growth



IIP slips to 3-month low

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 12: India's industrial production growth slipped to 3-month low of 5 per cent in April 2024, mainly due to poor show by the manufacturing sector, though mining and power segments performed well, according to official data released Wednesday.

Factory output growth, measured in terms of the Index of Industrial Production (IIP), was 5.4 per cent in March and 5.6 per cent in February 2024.

The previous low of IIP was recorded at 4.2 per cent in January, 2024.

For the fiscal 2023-24, IIP growth was 5.9 per cent against 5.2 per cent in the preceding financial year.

India's Index of Industrial Production grew by 4.6 per cent in April 2023, according to a statement by the Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation.

As per the latest data, the mining output growth accelerated to 6.7 per cent in April against a 5.1 per cent expansion in the year-ago month.

The manufacturing sector's growth decelerated to 3.9 per cent in April compared to 5.5 per cent a year ago.

The power generation increased by 10.2 per cent in April against a contraction of 1.1 per



cent in the same month of the last year.

As per use-base classification, the capital goods segment growth

fell to 3.1 per cent in April 2024 from 4.4 per cent in the year-ago period.

In April this year, consumer

durables output expanded 9.8 per cent. It had contracted by 2.3 per cent in April 2023.

Consumer non-durable goods production contracted by 2.4 per cent during the reporting month as against a growth of 11.4 per cent in April 2023.

According to the data, infrastructure/construction goods reported a growth of 8 per cent in April 2024 against a 13.4 per cent expansion in the year-ago period.

The data also showed that the output of primary goods logged a 7 per cent growth in April this year, up from 1.9 per cent a year earlier. The expansion in the intermediate goods segment was 3.2 per cent in the month under review, higher than the 1.7 per cent recorded in the same period a year ago.

Retail inflation eases marginally to 4.75%

New Delhi: Retail inflation eased to a one-year low of 4.75 per cent in May as prices of some kitchen items declined marginally, according to government data released Wednesday. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) based retail inflation was 4.83 per cent in April 2024 and 4.31 per cent in May 2023 (previous low). Inflation in the food basket was

8.69 per cent in May, marginally down from 8.70 per cent in April, according to the data released by the National Statistical Office (NSO). Headline inflation has seen sequential moderation since February 2024, albeit in a narrow range from 5.1 per cent in February to 4.8 per cent in April 2024. The government has tasked the Reserve Bank to en-

sure the CPI inflation remains at 4 per cent with a margin of 2 per cent on either side. Earlier this month, the RBI projected the CPI inflation for 2024-25 at 4.5 per cent, with Q1 at 4.9 per cent, Q2 at 3.8 per cent, Q3 at 4.6 per cent, and Q4 at 4.5 per cent. The central bank mainly factors in the retail inflation while arriving at its bi-monthly monetary policy.

Apple overtakes Microsoft to return as most valuable co

The tech giant has trailed rivals such as Microsoft and Google-owner Alphabet in the red-hot field of AI, a reason why its shares underperformed this year compared to its peers

REUTERS

San Francisco, June 12: Apple once again became the world's most valuable company Wednesday, dethroning Microsoft from the top spot, as the iPhone maker pushed ahead in a race to dominate artificial intelligence technology.

Its shares rose more than 2% to \$211.75, giving it a market valuation of \$3.25 trillion. Microsoft's market capitalization stood at \$3.24 trillion, falling behind Apple for the first time in five months.

Apple shares had surged to an all-time high in the previous session, a day after it unveiled a range of AI-enabled features and software enhancements for its devices, a move that several analysts said would power iPhone sales.

At Apple's annual developer conference on Monday, executives, including CEO Tim Cook, touted how voice assistant Siri would be able to interact with messages, emails, calendar as well as third-party apps.

The tech giant has trailed rivals such as Microsoft and Google-owner Alphabet in the red-hot field of AI, a reason why



its shares underperformed this year compared to its peers.

Apple's shares are up about 10% so far in 2024, while Microsoft has added about 16% and Alphabet nearly 28%.

Some of the concerns over its weak share performance eased after Apple beat market expectations for quarterly results and forecast in May, and unveiled a record \$110 billion buyback plan.

AI chip leader Nvidia, which briefly overtook Apple's market value last week, is up a whopping 144% this year. Nvidia last had a market value of \$3.06 trillion.

Tesla is the only other 'Magnificent Seven' stock that has fared worse than Apple this year, with a more than 30% slide.

Mcap of BSE-listed cos hits ₹429.32L-cr

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 12: The market capitalisation of BSE-listed companies hit a record high of Rs 429.32 lakh crore Wednesday as the BSE benchmark Sensex ended higher amid a largely positive trend in global equities.

The market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms stood at Rs 429,32,991.65 crore (USD 5.14 trillion) -- its lifetime high. The Sensex was on the back foot for the past two trading sessions.

"Markets failed to capitalise on its firm start but eked out modest gains on select buying support, as cautioned prevailed amongst investors ahead of US policy rate meeting later in the day," Prashanth Tapse, Senior VP (Research) at Mehta Equities Ltd, said.

The BSE benchmark Sensex declined 33.49 points or 0.04 per cent to settle at 76,456.59 on Tuesday. In a volatile trade, the Nifty ended marginally up by 5.65 points or 0.02 per cent at 23,264.85.

"For the third consecutive day, markets remained within a narrow range and ended with slight gains... After three days of consolidation, markets are expected to react to the outcome of the US Fed meeting in early trade Thursday, which could set the tone for the day," said Ajit Mishra- SVP, Research, Religare Broking Ltd.

Nifty hits fresh all-time high

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, June 12: Benchmark equity indices ended higher Wednesday, with the Nifty hitting its fresh record closing level, mainly due to buying in power, capital goods and industrial stocks amid a largely positive trend in global equities.

Besides, a heavy rush on select index-heavyweight counters like HDFC Bank and Reliance Industries boosted investors' sentiment, traders said.

In a highly volatile trade, the 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 149.98 points or 0.20 per cent to settle at 76,606.57. During the day, it jumped 593.94 points or 0.77 per cent to 77,050.53. The BSE benchmark is just 28.51 points away from breaching its previous lifetime peak of 77,079.04.

The NSE Nifty went up by 177.1 points or 0.76 per cent to hit its new all-time intra-day high of 23,441.95. It ended at a new closing peak of 23,322.95, up 58.10 points or 0.25 per cent.

"After opening on a positive note, the market continued to move up for the better part of the session. Intraday weakness in between has been used as a buying opportunity," Nagaraj Shetti, Senior Technical Research Analyst at HDFC Securities, said.

Power Grid was the biggest gainer on the Sensex chart, ris-



ing 2.54 per cent, followed by Tech Mahindra, Bajaj Finance, NTPC, UltraTech Cement, Larsen & Toubro, Tata Steel, Bharti Airtel, Bajaj Finserv and HCL Technologies.

In contrast, Mahindra & Mahindra, Hindustan Unilever, Infosys and Titan were among the laggards.

In the broader market, the BSE midcap gauge jumped 1.07 per cent and smallcap index climbed 1.06 per cent.

Among the sectoral indices, industrials, power, capital goods, energy, commodities, healthcare, and metal were among the biggest gainers.

On the other hand, realty and FMCG were the laggards.

"Ahead of US inflation data and FOMC meeting, global mar-

kets largely remained positive. The consensus indicates expectations of stable US inflation, but the trajectory of potential rate cuts holds significant importance for future direction, as rate cut expectations have tempered to 2 from 3 earlier. The domestic market is trading at new high on expectations of the final budget with a focus on growth, which was amplified by the RBI's upgrade in GDP growth forecast," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services, said.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude climbed 1.16 per cent to \$82.87 a barrel.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 111.04 crore Tuesday, according to exchange data.

India to lead world in fuel demand growth: IEA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 12: India, the world's third biggest oil importer and consumer, will in the second half of the decade become the driver of global oil demand, the International Energy Agency (IEA) said Wednesday, forecasting rise in consumption by a massive 1.3 million barrels between 2023 and 2030.

In its Oil 2024 Report, the Paris-based energy watchdog said India's oil demand is forecast to grow more than any country's other than China between 2023 and 2030.

India's oil demand is projected to rise from 5.4 million barrels per day (bpd) in 2023 to 6.7 million bpd by 2030, a growth of 3.2 per cent or 1.3 million bpd.

"Unusually, in a global context, an increase of more than 1.3 million bpd will be dominated by rising demand for road transport fuels, with a comparatively small role for petrochemical feedstocks and underlying growth comfortably outpacing deployment of clean energy technologies. In the second half of

this decade, India will become by far the most important contributor to overall growth," it said.

India's oil demand rising by 900,000 bpd between 2025 and 2030 will be well ahead of China's 570,000 bpd and three-quarters of net global gains, it said.

For the world, IEA forecast oil demand peaking by 2029 and beginning to contract the next year.

The oil demand growth in India is primarily driven by its fast expanding economy. India is set to be the world's fastest growing major economy for the third year running in 2024.

Manufacturing and industrial activity has been especially strong and a massive domestic consumer market, labour force and supportive demographics should see this continue.

The nation's population, which recently overtook China's to become the world's largest, is projected to increase by 6 per cent between 2023 and 2030, and higher average incomes will further support mobility demand.

"Road diesel, the most used product in India and closely



linked to industry and commerce, will account for 520,000 barrels per day of 2023-2030 growth (38 per cent of the total). Similarly, gasoline (petrol) will register a rise of 270,000 barrels per day (20 per cent of the total) as car ownership becomes more widespread," IEA said.

This demand is far more than in any other country.

Compared with 2000, there was an eightfold increase in the number of cars on the road by 2023. Nevertheless, the fact that last year China had almost seven times as many cars as India high-

lights the potential for further growth.

IEA said its projections assume a roughly 40 per cent increase in the size of the car fleet by 2030.

Two and three-wheelers, which make up about three-quarters of the total vehicle count in India today, will remain very important, especially in urban transportation and last-mile delivery of goods over the forecast period.

With lower growth potential compared with passenger cars and a comparatively high po-

tential for electrification, this segment will act as a slight drag on gasoline growth, it said.

Owing to relatively limited construction of new facilities, Indians will see a lower share of growth come from petrochemicals. Feedstock requirements are set to climb by around 140,000 barrels per day between 2023 and 2030, with an emphasis on naphtha use (over 100,000 barrels per day). LPG and ethane use in petrochemical production will rise by a more limited 40,000 bpd.

IEA saw India's refining capacity rising from 5.8 million bpd in 2023 to 6.8 million bpd in 2030.

Crude oil pumped out from below ground and seabed are turned into fuels like petrol and diesel in refineries. And India is more than 85 per cent dependent on imports to meet its crude oil needs.

IEA said India's import needs will grow by nearly 1 million bpd, from 4.6 million bpd to 5.6 million bpd, driven by aggressive refinery expansion programmes that add 1 million bpd in crude processing capacity.

PLI scheme to attract ₹3-4L-cr investments: Icra

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 12: The PLI scheme is expected to attract investments of Rs 3-4 lakh crore in the next four years and generate 2 lakh jobs as large projects in sectors, including semiconductor, solar module and pharmaceutical intermediaries, are expected to take off, a top Icra executive said Wednesday. Icra Executive Vice President and Chief Ratings Officer K Ravichandran said that going ahead private sector capex is expected to pick up in oil and gas, metals and mining, hospitals, healthcare and cement sectors.

However, taking the private sector capex to record high levels would require the government to give some tax breaks so that people have more disposable income in their hands.

"Under the PLI scheme, we are expecting Rs 3-4 lakh crore of additional investments in the next 3-4 years," Ravichandran told PTI in an interview.

Men in Blue seal spot in Super Eight with 7-wicket win over co-hosts

SURYA, ARSHDEEP DASH US DREAMS



AGENCIES

New York, June 12: Arshdeep Singh's (4/9) career-best T20 bowling figures and a restrained half century by Suryakumar Yadav (50 n o, 49b, 2x4, 2x6) helped India win their third match of the T20 World Cup against co-hosts USA by seven wickets at the Nassau County Stadium here Wednesday.

On a double-paced slow pitch, India at one point of time were looking down the barrel chasing a target of 111. They had lost Virat Kohli (0), Rohit Sharma (3) and Rishabh Pant (18). At the half-way stage of their innings, India were 47 for three and the

batters were struggling to come to terms with the pitch as well as the bowlers of the opposition.

However, Suryakumar and Shivam Dube (31 n o, 35b, 1x4, 1x6) saved India the blushes with a 67-run partnership for the fourth wicket. Yes, they did found the initial going tough, but stuck to their gains to take India over the line. With the win, India also sealed their spot in the Super Eight, but not before giving their fans some tense moments.

Earlier Arshdeep helped India restrict United States America to 110 for eight. After a couple of gallant batting performances in their back-to-back victories, the USA batters found the Indian

pace attack a few notches above in terms of class and quality.

However, after scoring 42 in the first 10 overs, USA with useful contributions from Nitish Kumar (27, 23b, 2x4, 1x6), Steven Taylor (24) and former New Zealand international Corey Anderson (15) added another 68 runs in the back-10.

Once Arshdeep got a couple of breakthroughs in the opening over including a first-ball wicket of Shayan Jahangir, there was no looking back for the Indians. The left-arm pacer was fantastic both at the start and at the death bowling an incredible 17 dot balls. Arshdeep picked up wickets in

with the first and last deliveries of his first over. He got one to dart back and catch Jahangir (0) plumb in front. The last delivery of the same over accounted for Andries Gous (2), who was late on a pull-shot off a delivery that was dug in short.

The power play overs yielded only 18 runs and skipper on the day Aaron Jones (11) could hit one six off Mohammed Siraj. However, Hardik Pandya (2/14) ended his misery with a short delivery which he top-edged to Siraj at deep fine leg. Opener Taylor, who survived the power play, hit a big six off Axar Patel only to drag the next one back to the stumps.

BRIEF SCORES

USA 110 for 8 (Nitish Kumar 27, Arshdeep Singh 4/9) lost to **India 111 for 3** (Suryakumar Yadav 50 n o, Shivam Dube 31 n o, Sourav Netravalkar 2/18) by seven wickets.

Renowned coach Chathunni no more

New Delhi: Former Kerala footballer TK Chathunni, who made a name for himself as a renowned coach, died Wednesday at the age of 75 in Kochi following a brief illness, the AIFF said in a release. He was a top defender during the 1960s and 1970s and also played for India in the Merdeka Cup in 1973 at Kuala Lumpur. As a coach, Chathunni unearthed talents like IM Vijayan, Bruno Coutinho and Jo Paul Anchery among others. He also helped Mohun Bagan win their maiden national league title, then NFL, during the 1997-98 season.

Titmus clinches win with world record

Brisbane: Ariarne Titmus set a world record in the women's 200 metres freestyle Wednesday at Australia's Olympic swimming trials. Titmus finished in 1 minute, 52.23 seconds in the final, taking almost two-thirds of a second off Mollie O'Callaghan's world mark of 1:52.85 set at last year's World Championships. O'Callaghan finished second in the race. Titmus, the reigning Olympic champion in the 200m and 400m freestyle events, now holds the world records in both events. "Honestly, the world record is a bonus," Titmus said. "I'm happy to finally put together a swim that I know I'm capable of," she added.

CR7 strikes form

Lisbon: Cristiano Ronaldo scored two goals to help Portugal beat Ireland 3-0 here Tuesday in a final warm-up before Roberto Martinez's team heads to the European Championships in Germany. The 39-year-old Ronaldo's second half brace followed Joao Felix's opener at the Aveiro Municipal Stadium. Portugal face the Czech Republic next Tuesday in Leipzig. They also will play Turkey and Georgia in Group F. Ronaldo sat out last week's friendlies against Finland and Croatia.

Dream team

Madrid: Rafael Nadal and Carlos Alcaraz will play doubles together for Spain at the Paris Olympics, the Spanish tennis federation said Wednesday here. The announcement comes three days after the 21-year-old Alcaraz won the French Open for the first time – and his third Grand Slam trophy. The 38-year-old Nadal already owns Olympic gold medals in singles (2008) and doubles (2016 with Marc López), alongside his 22 Grand Slam titles. AGENCIES

Aussies annihilate Namibia

LEG-SPINNER ZAMPA FASHIONS VICTORY WITH 4-WICKET HAUL

ASSOCIATED PRESS

North Sound (Antigua), June 12: Leg-spinner Adam Zampa (4/12) starred again in the middle overs as Australia annihilated Namibia by nine wickets to qualify for the Super Eight stage of the T20 World Cup here Tuesday.

Australia put up a complete bowling performance to dismiss Namibia for a meagre 72 before gunning down the target in just 34 balls with Travis Head (34 n o, 17b, 5x4, 2x6) and skipper Mitchell Marsh (18 n o, 9b, 3x4, 1x6) completing the formalities. The only Australian batter to be dismissed was David Warner (20).

With three wins in a row, Australia thus stormed into the Super Eight from Group B with a match in hand. They take on Scotland at Gros Islet in their concluding group fixture Saturday.

Josh Hazlewood (2/18) removed the Namibian openers Michael Van Lingen and Niko Davin before Zampa got into the act to run through Namibia, who ended with their lowest total in T20 Internationals. Zampa reached a major landmark in the game as he became the first Australian bowler to take 100 wickets in T20 Internationals.

Opening the bowling alongside Hazlewood, Marcus Stoinis (2/9) also took a couple of wickets while Pat Cummins and



Balls light up as Namibia's Bernard Scholtz is clean bowled by Adam Zampa (not in pic) during the game played Tuesday. AP PHOTO

Nathan Ellis chipped in with a wicket each. Skipper Gerhard Erasmus top-scored for Namibia with 36.

"I thought it was a great performance from the bowling team. Swing was around and all-round a professional performance. It's really important and great to qualify for the Super Eight," said Marsh after the thumping win.

Marsh lauded the bowling of Zampa, who has tallied eight wickets in three games. "If you look at his career over the last 4-5 years, he is probably our

most important player. He loves the pressure and he is bowling well at the moment and we are lucky to have him," Marsh stated.

Australian opening duo of Warner and Head were in a hurry to get the job done, giving the team a flying start. Both collected boundaries on either side of the wicket before Warner was caught at mid-off in the second over.

BRIEF SCORES

Namibia 72 in 17.1 overs (Adam Zampa 4/12) lost to **Australia 74 for 1** in 5.4 overs (Travis Head 34 n o).

Swimmers bag 5 medals

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 12: Odisha bagged five medals on the third day of the 2nd Odisha National Swimming Ranking Championships at the Swimming Complex inside the Kalinga Stadium here Wednesday. Shristi Upadhaya won gold in the 50 metres butterfly event for women while Mannata Mishra bagged the yellow metal in the 200 metres breast stroke for girls. It was 1-2 for Odisha in the event as Divyanka Pradhan bagged the silver medal.

In 100 metres backstroke, Pratyasa Roy finished with a silver medal. She also got a bronze medal in the women's 400 metres freestyle. Abhinav Singh bagged a bronze in 400 metres freestyle for men. Overall it was satisfying day for the host state



as most of the swimmers performed creditably.

Swimmers from Karnataka dominated the show in most of the events. However, they were given a stiff competition by their counterparts from Maharashtra, Telengana and Tamil Nadu. Most of the medals were bagged by swimmers from these three states. Karnataka finished with seven gold medals on the day while Tamil Nadu and Telengana bagged two yellow metals each. Karnataka swimmers finished second in a number of races also.

BOWLERS SHINE IN U-19 GAMES

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 12: Jajpur, Malkangiri and Bolangir carved out facile victories in matches of the U-19 Inter-District cricket tournament played Wednesday at various venues in Cuttack. Jajpur defeated Gajapati by 10 wickets, Malkangiri beat Kalahandi by 47 runs while Bolangir scraped past Ganjam by 15 runs.

Overall it was a day dominated by bowlers. Bibhuti Bhuyan of Jajpur and Adhibas Pattnaik with four wickets each were the star performers of the day. Others who got three wickets were Anurag Pradhan of Bolangir, Sibun Nanda of Ganjam and Bhakta Rana of Kalahandi.

Blue Tigers knocked out of World Cup Qualifiers after controversial defeat

AIFF asks FIFA to address 'injustice' in Qatar match

AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 12: The All India Football Federation (AIFF) has sought an investigation into the controversial goal awarded to Qatar in their crucial World Cup qualifying match in Doha, president Kalyan Chaubey said Wednesday. He urged the concerned authorities to 'address the injustice'. India lost to Qatar 1-2, even though the Blue Tigers led till the 71st minute.

The AIFF chief said India have asked for a thorough investigation into the goal which was allowed by South Korean referee Kim Woo-Sung despite the ball clearly going out of play during the must-win match Tuesday at the Jassim Bin Hamad Stadium in Doha.

"Victory and defeat are part and parcel of the game, we have learned to accept gracefully, although one of the two goals scored against India yesterday (Tuesday) night left a few ques-

tions unanswered," Chaubey said in a statement.

"We have written to FIFA Head of Qualifiers, AFC Head of Referees and the match commissioner regarding the grave supervision error that practically cost us a place in the FIFA World Cup Qualifiers Round 3. Given the severity, we call upon concerned officials for a thorough investigation. We have urged them to explore the possibilities of sporting compensation to address the injustice and we trust that FIFA and AFC will take necessary steps," added Chaubey.

Iran's Hamed Momeni was the match commissioner for the game. The role requires him to supervise the organisation of the match and ensure that FIFA regulations are adhered to during the game.

In the 73rd minute, Abdullah Alahrak's free-kick saw Yousef Ayem attempt a header, which was saved by India skipper and goalkeeper Gurpreet Singh

Sandhu. But as the custodian lay on the ground seeing the ball roll over the line, Hashmi Hussein kicked it into play with Ayem slotting it into the net.

Since the ball had visibly rolled out of play, the game should have stopped and then resumed with a corner-kick in this case as Sandhu was the last player to come in contact with the ball before it went out.

But, to the frustration of the Indian players, the referee awarded the goal to Qatar and despite the visiting team protesting vehemently, the on-field official upheld his decision.

After the goal was granted, a visibly dejected Indian team conceded the second goal which was scored by Ahmed Al-Rawi in the 85th minute. India had taken the lead through Lallianzuala Chhangte in the 37th minute.

India coach Igor Stimac later expressed his dismay by stating that the 'irregular' goal killed his team's dream.



Qatar players trying to get the ball back into play despite it going over the line in the game against India, Tuesday

STIMAC REFUSES TO TALK ABOUT FUTURE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Doha, June 12: Under-pressure India football coach Igor Stimac was non-committal about his future after the team crashed out of the 2026 World Cup qualification race following a controversial 1-2 loss to Asian champions Qatar here. A few weeks ago, Stimac had promised to leave if he failed in his 'mission' to take India into the third round. A crestfallen Stimac said after the game that he was not so sure about his future and said he would need a few more days to figure things out.

"That's something we need to discuss internally in the next few weeks where our futures stand. There is nothing I can tell you now," the 56-year-old, who took over in 2019, said.

"What I can tell you is that it was obvious tonight (Tuesday) that India have a good future in football. Many people will say that Qatar played with a reserve team, but our team is not that older than the Qatari team," added the Croatian.

Last October, Stimac and his support staff got an extension which keeps them in charge of



the senior and the under-23 men's football teams till June 2026. If the senior team had made the third round of the World Cup Qualifiers, Stimac's contract would have been automatically renewed till 2028.

Stimac said the team can easily make it to the World Cup if players of Indian-origin competing in European leagues are allowed into the national fold. "If we were allowed to use them, then India would qualify for the World Cup regularly. We have 1.5 billion people, but we have a league with only 13 clubs with no relegation so competitiveness is missing there," Stimac pointed out. "In half the season, you have five or six clubs who don't fight for anything anymore," he added.

For players to come to a certain level of competitiveness, they need to play under pressure and maintain intensity

IGOR STIMAC

Man U may retain Ten Hag

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Manchester, June 12: Erik ten Hag will stay on as Manchester United manager and is in negotiations to extend his contract, a person familiar with the situation told this agency Tuesday. The person spoke on the condition of anonymity because the decision had not been publicly announced.

The decision ends months of uncertainty over Ten Hag's future after he oversaw United's worst league campaign in 34 years, but ended the season by winning the FA Cup with a victory over Manchester City.

Man U carried out an end-of-year review after last month's Cup final and decided to stick with Ten Hag, who has won two trophies in as many seasons since joining the club from Ajax in 2022.

The FA Cup followed the English League Cup, which the Dutchman won in his first year at Old Trafford. But his second season in charge saw the 20-time champions suffer their lowest Premier League finish – eighth – losing 19 times in all competitions.

Ten Hag keeps his job in the face of a major overhaul of United's soccer operations by new co-owner Jim Ratcliffe. British billionaire Ratcliffe bought a 27.7% stake in the club in February and has hired a new CEO and technical director, with a sporting director on the way.

Ten Hag, who won three Dutch titles with Ajax, was Ratcliffe's last major call. He survived despite failing to meet Ratcliffe's challenge of securing Champions League qualification for next season.

Shardul undergoes successful surgery

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, June 12: Team India all-rounder Shardul Thakur has undergone a successful foot surgery here Wednesday and is expected to be out of competitive cricket for minimum three months. The 32-year-old shared a post-surgery photo on his Instagram page captioned: "Operated successfully". It happens to be his second foot surgery after he had undergone the same five years back in 2019.

The injury recurred during the South Africa tour earlier this year. Although he managed to make a bold return in the Ranji Trophy last season, helping Mumbai win their 42nd title, he had requested the BCCI for longer breaks between matches to ensure adequate recovery and preparation time for the players. In the IPL this season, playing for Chennai Super Kings, he managed only five wickets in nine outings at an economy of 9.75.

Since Thakur is a Grade C annual contract holder of the BCCI, the expenses for his treatment were paid by the board. As far as his comeback is concerned, while there is no official word, sources in the know of things feels that it will take around three months to get back to training. Therefore, chances are he could be back before or right on time for the upcoming domestic season.

SRABANI IN INDIAN TEAM FOR BRICS MEET

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 12: Odia sprinter Srabani Nanda, who is currently studying at the KIIT University here, has been selected to the Indian athletics contingent that will be participating in the 'BRICS Sports Games'. The event which started June 10 will end June 26 at Kazan in Russia. Srabani along with 22 other Indian athletes has been invited by the BRICS Sports Council to participate in the meet.

POOR SHOW

The Indian women's Rugby 7s team have finished ninth at the FISU World University Rugby 7s Championship which was held June 10 to 12 in Aix-en-Provence, France. They defeated Mexico 22-17.