

Oppn raises eatery, NEET rows

ALL-PARTY MEET

GOVT CALLS FOR SMOOTH RUNNING OF PARLIAMENT

GOVT'S U-TURN ON RENAMING AWARD

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Stormy session likely



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

tant section officer (ASO) at the Raj Bhavan in Puri and prevailing price rise of essential items, among other issues.

BJD chief whip Pramila Mallick said the BJP had promised many things, including free 300 units of electricity and paddy MSP before the polls. "We will see whether the new government fulfils those or not," she added.

Similarly, the Congress, which has been demanding action against Governor Raghuraj Das's son for his alleged involvement in physical assault on an ASO of Raj Bhavan, has also decided to raise the issue inside the House.

On the other hand, the BJP government said it is ready to listen to all issues raised by the opposition parties.

Before the commencement of the session, Speaker Surama Padhy Sunday held an all-party meeting for smooth functioning of businesses of the House. However, Congress and CPI (M) skipped it.

MORE P3

Bhubaneswar, July 21: Amid criticism from the Opposition BJD, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Sunday announced that the state government's Biju Patnaik Sports Award would not be renamed.

The Sports and Youth Services department Friday issued guidelines for this year's award, renaming it 'Rajya Krida Samman'. The Chief Minister said his government has not taken any formal decision to drop Biju Patnaik's name from the award.

"My government respects the sons of the soil and therefore, there will be no change in the title of the sports award named after Biju Patnaik," he said, noting that he came to know about the renaming from the press.

Majhi said Biju Patnaik's contribution towards the state and the country was memorable.

Biju Patnaik Sports Award will continue as it is, he added.



BJD reminds BJP of its manifesto

Asserting that it will play the role of a strong opposition in Parliament, the Biju Janata Dal (BJD) Sunday demanded special category status for Odisha in the all-party meeting ahead of Budget session. "We are not going to give any issue-based support. We will play the role of a strong Opposition. We are not here to make any compromise," BJD leader Sasmit Patra told reporters. The BJP in its manifesto for Odisha in the 2014 Assembly polls had promised the status for Odisha, Patra added. In a post on X, Congress leader Jairam Ramesh, who was present at the meeting said, "How the political climate has changed! In the all-party meeting of floor leaders, the BJD leader reminded the Defence Minister and BJP President JP Nadda that the BJP's manifesto for the 2014 Assembly elections in Odisha had promised special category status to the state."

MORE P3

responsibility. Chairing the meeting, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh spoke against disruptions in Parliament and said its sanctity must be maintained.

BJP allies as well as Opposition parties came together in seeking special category status for different states, presenting the government with a tricky issue to negotiate during the session.

Representatives from the

JD(U), a BJP ally, the BJD and the YSR Congress Party demanded the status for Bihar, Odisha and Andhra Pradesh, respectively. Opposition RJD and BJP ally LJP (Ram Vilas) echoed the demand for Bihar.

Congress leader K Suresh told reporters that his party was joined by other INDIA bloc members in seeking the Lok Sabha deputy speaker's position for the

Opposition according to convention. He said they also flagged the need for discussion in Parliament on a host of other issues, including the spate in terror attacks in Jammu and Kashmir; the Manipur situation, train accidents, unemployment and price rise.

Fifty-five leaders of 44 parties including some having only one MP attended the meeting, which lasted for over three hours.

New Delhi, July 21: Opposition parties drew the battle lines on the eve of Parliament's Budget session Sunday as they asked the government at an all-party meeting to allow discussion on a host of contentious issues such as the Uttar Pradesh government's order to eateries on the Kanwar Yatra route and exam paper leaks, including the NEET.

The government, which breaking from the recent practice invited a number of smaller parties for the meeting to signal its political outreach, conveyed its willingness to discuss all issues but Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju stressed that it should be in accordance with the rules.

He called for cooperation from all parties for running Parliament smoothly, saying it is a collective

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Your new order is a success. No one talks about your electoral defeat now. It's back to Hindu-Muslim debate

SHORT TAKES

Biden ends run for presidency

Washington: US President Joe Biden Sunday announced that he will end his candidacy for re-election, saying it is in the best interest of his party and the country. The 81-year-old president's decision comes four months before Americans go to the polls November 5. Biden's decision follows weeks of intense pressure from fellow Democrats after a disastrous presidential debate performance ahead of his Republican rival and former US president Donald Trump at the end of June. P10

OPCC dissolved; Kadam CLP leader

Bhubaneswar: Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge Sunday dissolved the Odisha Pradesh Congress Committee (OPCC), days after the party's poor showing in the Lok Sabha and Assembly polls in the state. Meanwhile, the Congress Sunday appointed its Pottangi MLA Rama Chandra Kadam as its legislature party leader in the Assembly. Similarly, Basudevpur MLA Ashok Das and Rajgangpur legislator CS Raazen Ekka have been appointed as deputy CLP leader and chief whip in the Assembly respectively.

India had its own prime meridian: NCERT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 21: India had a prime meridian of its own much ahead of the Greenwich meridian and it was called 'madhya rekha', which passed through the city of Ujjain in Madhya Pradesh, according to a new Class VI NCERT textbook for social science.

No mention of caste-based discrimination, tweaks in references to BR Ambedkar's experience about the discrimina-



tion, referring to the Harappan civilisation as Sindhu-Sarasvati are also among the changes in the textbook developed according to a new curriculum.

The Greenwich meridian is

not the first prime meridian. There were others in the past. In fact, many centuries before Europe, India had a prime meridian of its own! It was called 'madhya rekha' (or middle line) and passed through the city of Ujjain (today Ujjain), which was a reputed centre for astronomy over many centuries.

Varahamihira, a famous astronomer, lived and worked there some 1,500 years ago. Indian astronomers were aware of the concepts of latitude and longi-

tude, including the need for a zero or prime meridian. The Ujjaini meridian became a reference for calculations in all Indian astronomical texts, the textbook reads.

In a departure from the past, the textbook makes multiple references to the Sarasvati river in the chapter pertaining to the beginning of the Indian civilisation, where the Harappan civilisation is referred to as the Indus-Sarasvati or Sindhu-Sarasvati civilisation.

Congratulations to KIIT's Sports Achievers !



12 KIIT STUDENTS QUALIFY FOR PARIS OLYMPICS 2024



Mr. Amit Rohidas Hockey Men's Team

Mr. Kishore Kumar Jena Javelin Throw

Ms. Parul Chaudhary 3000m Steeplechase & 5000m Race

Ms. Priyanka 20Km Race Walk & Marathon Race Walk Mixed Relay

Ms. Annu Rani Javelin Throw

Ms. Jyothi Yarraji 100m Hurdles

Mr. Tajinderpal Singh Toor Shot Put

Ms. MR Poovamma Women's 4 X 400m Relay

From KIIT to the World Stage



Ms. Prachi 4x400m Relay Team

Ms. Ankita 5000m Race

Mr. Paramjeet Singh Bisht 20KM. Race Walk

Mr. Suraj Panwar Marathon Race Walk Mixed Relay Team

KIIT holds the unique distinction of sending the highest number of athletes to the Paris Olympics 2024 among all institutions in India.

Breeding Ground for Elite Athletes

- KIIT & KISS have over 5000 active sportspersons, with 60% being girls
- More than 250 students have represented India in international sports meets across 17 sports disciplines

- KIIT & KISS have produced 20 Olympians and 2 Paralympians, who represented India at 2016 Rio Olympics, 2020 Tokyo Olympics and will be representing India in 2024 Paris Olympics
- As many as 8 athletes from KIIT have received Arjuna Award, the second-highest sporting honour of India

RECOGNITIONS & AWARDS

KIIT's commitment to promoting sports and sports persons, and fostering a sporting culture on its campus and beyond, has been recognized on both national and international platforms. Some of the recent recognitions are:

"Rashtriya Khel Protsahan Puraskar 2022" in the category of Encouragement to Sports through Corporate Social Responsibility by Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports, Govt. of India.

"CII Sports Business Awards 2023" in the category of Best Sports Facility by Confederation of Indian Industry.

"FICCI India Sports Award 2022" by Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI).

"Sports Star Aces Award 2022" in the category of Best University for promotion of Sports in the Country by Hindu Group.

"Biju Patnaik Sports Award 2019" in the category of best Contribution for promotion of sports and games by Govt. of Odisha.

HOST TO HIGH-PROFILE SPORTS EVENTS

Due to its excellent sporting facilities in a single complex, KIIT & KISS have hosted hundreds of prestigious international and national sporting events in various sports disciplines. These include:

- First Khelo India University Games 2020
- First Janjatiya Khel Mahotsav 2023
- World Junior Chess Championship 2016

KIIT student, Dutee Chand won the first-ever Gold Medal for India in the World University Games, Italy in 2019



leisure



REYNOLDS TOOK MADONNA'S PERMISSION TO USE HER SONG

Actor Ryan Reynolds shared how they managed to get the license to use Madonna's 1989 hit *Like A Prayer* in their upcoming superhero movie *Deadpool & Wolverine*. He revealed that they visited Madonna, 65, to ask her for permission to license the song, reports *People magazine*.

ANNA FARIS SETS CONDITIONS FOR SCARY MOVIE RETURN

Actress Anna Faris has no problem reprising her role as Cindy Campbell in the *Scary Movie* franchise; however, she has put forth a few conditions. In an interview, Faris was asked what it would take for her to return to the franchise for a new installment. She emphatically replied, "Well, money."



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
Boy! Are you ambitious today or what! You plan meticulously and perform impeccably. However, you will progress at snail's pace. But don't lose heart, as Ganesh shows his blessings on you, dear one.

TAURUS
Planning your own milestones and celebrating the success of friends is the agenda for the day. Your thoughts will be progressive in business or at work, and any plans you make will make a rock-solid foundation for your future. Social gatherings and parties will beckon with bubbly and bruschetta.

GEMINI
You may come up with a precise understanding of others today, says Ganesh. You will please your sweetheart with both your presence and presents. You will browse through dozens of showrooms for that perfect, and expensive, gift for your beloved. You will also work towards achieving your long-term goals.

CANCER
Today, you and your soul mate will be rolling in the hay; there will be little time or inclination to do anything else. In fact, you will show such single-minded devotion to the act of rolling as if the future of the world lies in the haystack. Your mind can think of nothing more, and nothing less.

LEO
Try and put on some protective gear today - maybe a suit of armour should do fine, says Ganesh. For, you may find some need for it on this day of mixed fortunes as you miss out the expected and come face-to-face with the unexpected. Manage through the day somehow, since the day's distress will eventually give way to an evening of ecstasy and a night of pleasant surprises, portends Ganesh.

VIRGO
Today, you will aspire to be a master of your own destiny. You have the ability to see through the façade that people put up to shield their true self. You will choose your company wisely and plan for success.

LIBRA
Ganesh feels the day will be beneficial for you when it comes to transactions with the government. But you already expect that. It is more than likely that public servants will have encouraging and optimistic achievements lined up for their efforts.

SCORPIO
Ganesh feels that you may be confronted with vital decisions at work. You will need to trust the opinions of your close friends and peers so that you may take informed decisions. Keep your mind away from negative thoughts and delegate responsibilities accordingly.

SAGITTARIUS
The sage within you will take the lead today. You are likely to prescribe yourself to your own medication for peace of mind. Wise and content that you are today, you will spread the message of love around you. All in all, a peaceful day is in store for you today.

CAPRICORN
People may call you a busy bee, but that you admittedly will be, says Ganesh. Work will demand your undivided attention, but the good thing is you will quickly get done with pending work one by one. In fact, you will be left with plenty of time in the evening which you are likely to spend romancing with your sweetheart.

AQUARIUS
Expect the unexpected today! Success, money, love, whatever it is that you'd lost hope of will suddenly come your way! In the evening, you may catch up with reading, research, discussion or other such activity, says Ganesh.

PISCES
Today is a day of mixed fortunes. So, while you may not win a gazillion dollars in the daily lottery, you might just end up winning a return air ticket to Timbuktu. No one has really been there, but it is better than nothing. However, the distress of those lost dollars is likely to be eased by the ecstasy awaiting you in the evening.

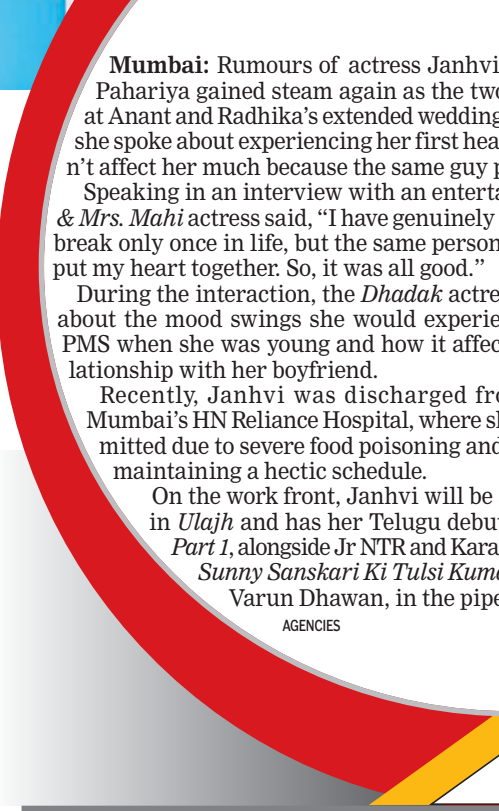
Saiee wants to break girl-next-door image



Mumbai: Actress Saiee Manjrekar is comfortable playing girl-next-door characters, as she said she will shed the image with time and by taking on diverse roles. "The whole girl-next-door thing comes purely on the basis that I'm too young, naive, and gullible, and probably it shows somewhere. As I experience things in life, it will automatically start showing, or people will see something different in me and cast me in different roles. So, till I can bank on the girl-next-door role, I would love to do that. When the time comes, I'll break out and do something else. I'm pretty open to things. I'm happy with the work I'm doing," the *Major* actress told PTI.

In an industry known for its unpredictability, Saiee, the daughter of noted actor and filmmaker Mahesh Manjrekar, said the journey of every actor is unique. "Roadblocks are there in everything one does today. I look at it as a race, though that is probably not the best way to look at it. Everyone is running towards the finish line. I feel the end goal for everyone is the same, but someone might be running downhill or uphill. Everyone has a different journey, but you have to live through them, experience things, and see where you want to be," she concluded.

Janhvi shares heartbreak experience



Mumbai: Rumours of actress Janhvi Kapoor dating Shikhar Pahariya gained steam again as the two were spotted together at Anant and Radhika's extended wedding celebrations. Recently, she spoke about experiencing her first heartbreak and how it didn't affect her much because the same guy patched up with her. Speaking in an interview with an entertainment portal, the *Mr. & Mrs. Mahi* actress said, "I have genuinely experienced heartbreak only once in life, but the same person came back and put my heart together. So, it was all good."

During the interaction, the *Dhadak* actress also spoke about the mood swings she would experience during PMS when she was young and how it affected her relationship with her boyfriend.

Recently, Janhvi was discharged from South Mumbai's HN Reliance Hospital, where she was admitted due to severe food poisoning and has been maintaining a hectic schedule.

On the work front, Janhvi will be seen next in *Ulajh* and has her Telugu debut, *Devara Part 1*, alongside Jr NTR and Karan Johar's *Sunny Sanskari Ki Tulsi Kumari*, with Varun Dhawan, in the pipeline.

Bebo's take on artistic integrity

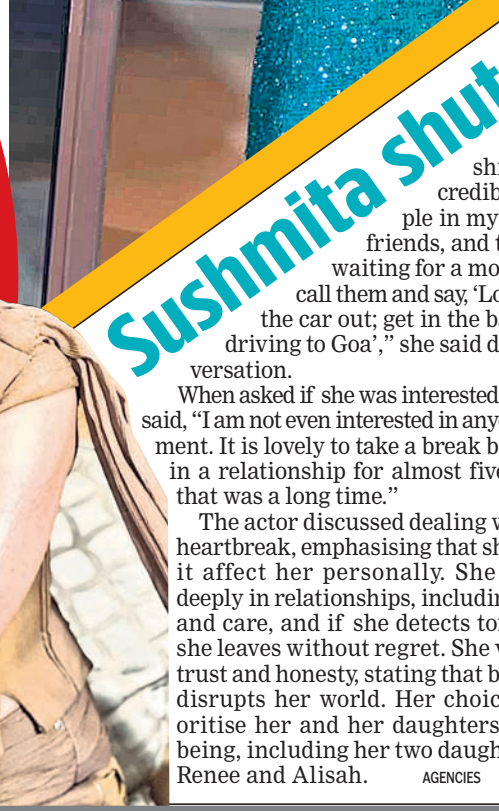


Mumbai: Kareena Kapoor is one of the biggest stars in the industry. The actress sat down for an interview with a magazine, where she talked about her two decades-long career in the film industry. When informed that she is among the actresses who earn handsomely in the industry, she expressed that her primary focus is always on the film and its offerings.

During the interview, when the actress was reminded that she is one of the few handful of female actors who are earning Rs 10-15 crores, the *Jab We Met* actress said, "I hope so! I want that! I think it is not about my acting; the films I choose are not about money. It has always been about the fact that if I like a role, I might do the film for less. It depends on my mood; it depends on the fact of what the film is and what the role is offering me. I am at that stage where I think that I can deliver. Of course, if it is a big-ticket commercial film, then maybe whatever you say is less! This is my husband's house! We are sitting and doing this interview in that way. I am just struggling!"

On the work front, Bebo was last seen in *Crew* and will next reprise her role in *Singham Again*.

Sushmita shuts dating rumours



Mumbai: Actress Sushmita Sen, who is often spotted with her former boyfriend Rohman Shawl, admitted that she is not looking to be in love at the moment. She talked about her personal life while appearing in the first episode of Rhea Chakraborty's podcast, 'Chapter 2'.

"I have no man in my life. I've been single for a while. It has been almost two years since I have been single—to be precise, since 2021. I am not in a relationship. I have some incredibly wonderful people in my life who are my friends, and they are all just waiting for a moment for me to call them and say, 'Look, I'm pulling the car out; get in the backseat. We're driving to Goa!'" she said during the conversation.

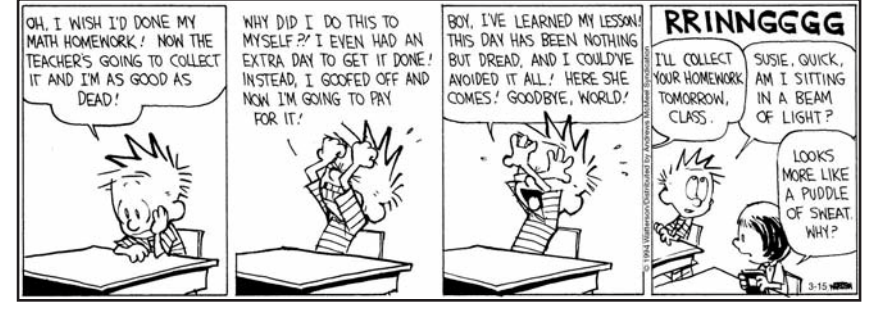
When asked if she was interested in anyone, she said, "I am not even interested in anyone at the moment. It is lovely to take a break because I was in a relationship for almost five years. And that was a long time."

The actor discussed dealing with breakup heartbreak, emphasising that she doesn't let it affect her personally. She invests deeply in relationships, including love and care, and if she detects toxicity, she leaves without regret. She values trust and honesty, stating that betrayal disrupts her world. Her choices prioritise her and her daughters' well-being, including her two daughters, Renee and Alisah.

PEANUTS



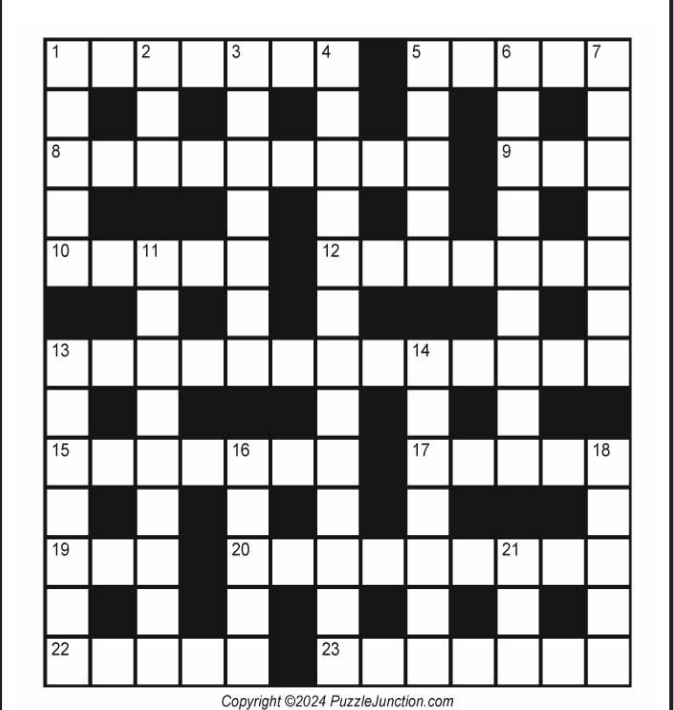
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY

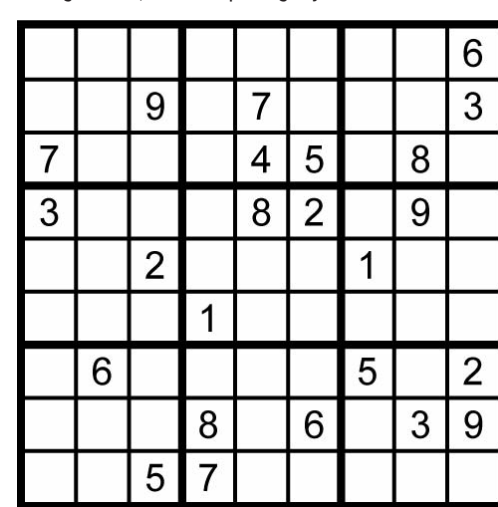


FUN post CROSSWORD

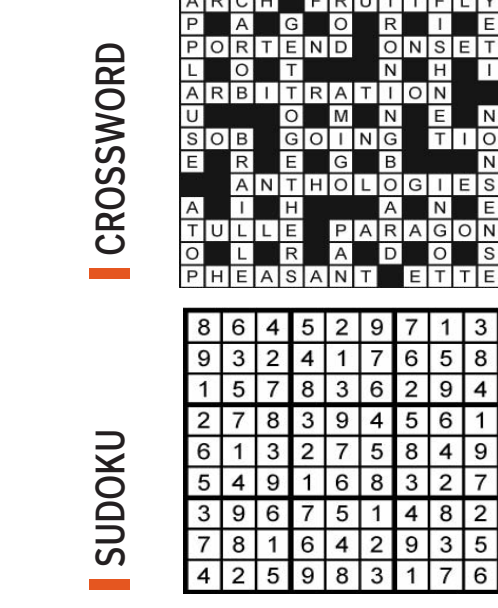


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- Across**
- 1 Give it your best shot
 - 5 Manacles
 - 8 Thumbs up travel plan?
 - 9 Regret
 - 10 Distributed
 - 12 Source of oil
 - 13 Thrifty shopper (7,6)
 - 15 Business wear
 - 17 Diamond unit
 - 19 Hubbub
 - 20 Buttercup, for one
 - 22 Waste maker
 - 23 Kings and queens, e.g.
- Down**
- 1 Plant louse
 - 2 Make lace
 - 3 Gandhi beginning
 - 4 Learning process, maybe (5-3-5)
 - 5 Fresh from the shower
 - 6 Brave circus performer (4-5)
 - 7 Litesome
 - 11 Dreadful
 - 13 At a lower place
 - 14 Weird
 - 16 Home of the brave
 - 18 Add up
 - 21 Off one's feed

SUDOKU



SOLUTIONS



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown

GURU PURNIMA FERVOUR

Shankaracharya of Govardhan Peeth Swami Nishchalananda Saraswati being worshipped by his disciples and followers on the occasion of Guru Purnima in Puri Sunday



NGT seeks report on tree felling in Khurda

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 21: The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has asked the state government to submit an action-taken report (ATR) within four weeks regarding illegal cutting of trees at Laxminarayanpur (Lakhapada) village in Khurda district.

The environment watchdog's Eastern Zone bench gave the direction July 15 while hearing a plea filed by advocate Sankar Prasad Pani assisted by Ashutosh Padhy, on behalf of Bishnupriya Mohanty, a resident of Laxminarayanpur village adjacent to Chimma where a large number of trees were allegedly felled.

The petitioner stated that even though complaints in this regard were lodged with the Khurda District Magistrate, Khurda DFO, Begunia tehsildar and Tangi forest range officer May 22, 2024, no action was taken against the accused.

It was alleged that about 100 fruit bearing trees and 30 full grown trees and other allied species have been illegally felled without permission from the DFO.

It was also alleged that trees of varieties of species like kasi, nimb, kochila, sal, jackfruit, mango and acacia standing on government land bearing Khata No-318, Plot No-254 and Khata No-319, Plot Nos-1071, 343 and 347 were cut down, in flagrant violation of norms.

The accused had also tampered with the evidence by uprooting the stumps of the felled trees.

The forest range officer had also inspected the site of tree felling.

The tribunal posted the next hearing to August 27, 2024.

BJD to play role of strong Oppn in RS, says Sasmit

REGIONAL PARTY REMINDS BJP OF ITS PROMISE TO ACCORD SPECIAL CATEGORY STATUS TO ODISHA IN 2014 POLL MANIFESTO

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 21: The Biju Janata Dal (BJD) Sunday asserted that it would play the role of a strong Opposition in Parliament and asked the Centre to revisit its stand on special category status for states, saying that BJP's allies have made a similar demand for their states.

BJD's Rajya Sabha leader Sasmit Patra indicated his party's resolve to firm up its opposition to the BJP after years of cooperation on key issues and also targeted the ruling party for lack of action against the son of Odisha Governor for his alleged assault on a Raj Bhavan staffer.

"We are not going to give any issue-based support. We will play the role of a strong opposition. We are not here to make any compromise," he said.

Patra told reporters that his party raised these issues in the all-party meeting Sunday and will follow suit in Parliament when the Budget Session begins Monday.

The Naveen Patnaik-led BJD was ousted from power in Odisha by BJP in the recent Assembly polls. The regional party from Odisha has no MP in Lok Sabha and nine members



in Rajya Sabha.

The BJD also sought special category status for Odisha, joining parties from Bihar and Andhra Pradesh which made a similar demand for their states.

The JD(U), LJP (Ram Vilas) and the RJD demanded the status for Bihar, and the YSR Congress for Andhra Pradesh, Patra noted.

The BJP in its manifesto for Odisha in the 2014 Assembly polls had promised the status for Odisha, he said.

The Centre has in the past cited the 14th Finance Commission recommendations to make it clear that no more states can be given the special category status, which allows them tax reliefs and more Central funding.

Asked about his party's political alignment, Patra said the BJD is neither with the

BJP nor the INDIA bloc and will continue to maintain its independence.

He noted that his party's MPs entered the Rajya Sabha's well for the first time in over 25 years and then walked out during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's address before the INDIA bloc as Odisha's interests were "neglected" by the government.

Patra flagged the "declining" share of states in the divisible pool and non-revision of coal royalties for Odisha for the past 10 years among a host of other issues.

He said he brought to the notice of BJP president JP Nadda, who was present in the all-party meeting, the lack of action against Odisha Governor Raghuraj Das' son Lalit Kumar, accused of assaulting a Raj Bhavan staffer.

Das, official sources have said, had met the victim and his wife, who raised the issue publicly, and assured them of action. Patra, however, said police have not even questioned Kumar who seems to be "above the law".

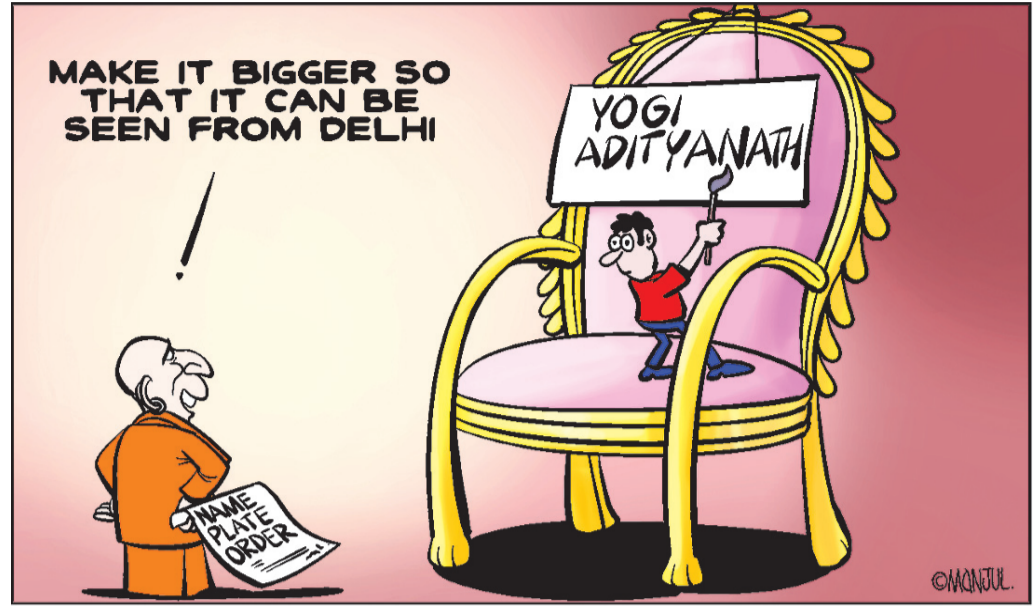
"We raised the issue in the all-party meeting and will take it up in Parliament too," he said.

Its support to the Modi government in its earlier terms, when the regional party was in power in Odisha, helped the BJP push through its legislative agenda in Parliament.

However, the BJD has taken a firmer stand against the BJP following its loss in Assembly polls recently.

Asked about his party's political alignment, Patra said the BJD is neither with the INDIA bloc and will continue to maintain its independence

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



Cong, CPI(M) skip all-party meet

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, July 21: Opposition Congress and CPI(M) in Odisha skipped the all-party meeting that was convened by Speaker Surama Padhy Sunday ahead of the Assembly session.

BJD was represented by its Chief Whip Pramila Mallik with Leader of Opposition Naveen Patnaik staying away from the meeting.

Senior Congress MLA Taraprasad Bahinipati said as the decision was not made on who would be the legislature party leader, the party did not attend the meeting.

Parliamentary Affairs Minister Mukesh Mahaling said, "We had a friendly discussion with the BJD chief whip and she has assured full cooperation for the smooth functioning of the House."

"The Congress is yet to name its leader in the Assembly. I spoke to state Congress president Sarat Pattanayak in the morning, and requested him to send an MLA to the meeting," he said.

The lone CPI(M) MLA also did not attend the meeting.

After the meeting, the Speaker said, "Suggestions of all the members were taken. The Assembly will start with the Governor's address tomorrow. All have assured proper cooperation."

According to a notification issued by the Assembly Secretariat, the session will commence Monday and continue till September 13.

As per the schedule, the session will have 27 business days, and the Budget for 2024-25 will be presented July 25.

Three-lawyer security arrangements have been made in and around the state assembly for

the session, which will continue till September 13.

Meanwhile, security has been tightened in and around the Assembly. Around 30 platoons of police force along with 300 police officers of various ranks under the supervision of DCP Bhubaneswar will look after the security during the session, Odisha DGP Arun Sarangi said here Sunday.

Armed police personnel will be deployed at every entry point of the Assembly building while nine quick reaction teams, including two mobile teams, will be placed at strategic locations near the Assembly to respond to any untoward incident, Sarangi said.

Besides, 100 intelligence officers, bomb detection and disposal team, anti-sabotage squad and two tactical units will also be deployed for the session, he added.

Man held for burgling neighbour's house

Bhubaneswar: Nayapalli police Sunday arrested a 28-year-old man for allegedly stealing cash and gold ornaments to the tune of ₹3 lakh from his neighbour's house. The accused has been identified as SK Muntezeer Ahmed, a native of Jagatsinghpur district. Police also seized four gold rings and as many gold earrings, one gold necklace and ₹84,000 cash from the accused. Nayapalli IIC Satyanarjan Pradhan said SK Marshid Ali and the accused have been close neighbours and are staying in Brit Colony for several years. According to the complaint registered by Marshid, he left the City to attend a relative's wedding between July 17 and 19. However, on his return July 20, he found his house rummaged, and ornaments and cash missing. "When the cops quizzed the locals, Muntezeer's answers were found to be inconsistent and false. Later, he confessed the truth," said IIC Pradhan.



BUDGET SESSION TODAY: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi and Deputy CM KV Singh Deo invite Leader of Opposition Naveen Patnaik to attend the Budget Session of the Assembly that would begin Monday

WATERLOGGING WOES

BMC passes the buck on R&B division

DEBADURLLAV HARICHANDAN, OP

Bhubaneswar, July 21: At a time when citizens of many areas here are grappling with severe waterlogging issues, the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC), whose monsoon readiness has been thoroughly exposed, has tried to shift the blame onto Roads and Buildings (R&B) division.

According to sources, severe waterlogging in areas like Bomikhal, Jayadev Vihar, Nayapalli, Nandan Vihar, CRP Square, Behera Sahi and Rasulgarh throws life out of gear, even after a brief spell of rain during monsoon.

This year, however, things reached a flashpoint in June when eight-year-old Abu Bakr Shah died after falling into an overflowing open drain in Masjid Colony of Unit 3 here. Following the incident, a blame game has ensued between BMC and R&B division over the responsibility to cover open drains.

A senior BMC official passed the buck on R&B division by saying that construction of high-rise buildings are allowed in the City every year without any adherence to standard drainage plans. This hampers the desilting of drains, he added.

Sources, however, said that a majority of the drains are managed by the civic body. Out of 1,123km internal drains in 67 wards, around 663km is managed by BMC, while 360km is taken care of by R&B division.



India's elderly population likely to double by 2050

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 21: India's elderly population is expected to double by 2050, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) India chief Andrea Wojnar said, stressing that more investment in healthcare, housing and pensions is needed, especially for older women who are "more likely to live alone and face poverty".

In an interview with PTI given days after the World Population Day July 11, Resident Representative for UNFPA India, Wojnar, outlined key population trends that India is prioritising to accelerate sustainable development.

These trends include youthful population, ageing population, urbanisation, migration and climate resilience, each presenting unique challenges and opportunities for the nation.

She said as the number of individuals, aged 60 and above, is projected to double to 346 million by 2050, there is a pressing need for increased investment in healthcare, housing and pension schemes.

"...especially for older women who are more likely to live alone and face poverty," she said. India boasts a substantial

youthful population, with 252 million people aged between 10 and 19 years, the UNFPA India head said.

She highlighted that investing in health, education, job training and job creation, alongside promoting gender equality, can unlock the potential of this demography, driving the nation toward sustainable progress.

"With India projected to be 50 per cent urban by 2050, building smart cities, strong infrastructure, and affordable housing are crucial to manage slum growth, air pollution and environmental issues," Wojnar said.

"Urban plans should also consider women's needs for safety and security, and access to healthcare, and education and jobs to promote gender equality and improve overall quality of life," she said.

She also noted that managing internal and external migration requires meticulous planning, skill development and economic opportunity distribution.

Addressing the specific challenges faced by women as migrants or spouses left behind is essential for balanced growth. Integrating climate resilience into development plans and investing in renewable energy is vital, she said.



"Climate change can affect reproductive health, making it harder to conceive, causing pregnancy complications, and limiting healthcare access during emergencies. Addressing these issues is key to gender equality and sustainable development," she said.

By focusing on these trends, India continues to strive for more sustainable and equitable growth, Wojnar added.

Noting that India, which is the first country to implement a national family planning programme, has made significant progress, she said "some challenges still remain".

Emphasising informed choices impact on public health, promoting healthier families and

communities, she said this focus also aligns with the international theme.

"Embracing the power of inclusive data towards a resilient and equitable future for all," she underscored the importance of data-driven policies to ensure universal access to resources and services.

On this year's theme of World Population Day, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) is highlighting "Healthy timing and spacing of pregnancies for the well-being of mother and child" as they are essential for maternal and child health, with experts recommending at least 24 months between giving birth and becoming pregnant again. This reduces health risks and strengthens

STA to enforce fire safety regulations in school buses



PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, July 21: The State Transport Authority (STA) has issued a directive to regional transport officers (RTO) to ensure enforcement of fire safety regulations in school buses, Sunday. Transport commissioner Amitabh Thakur, in a circular to all RTOs, said it is mandatory for all school buses to adhere to proper fire safety regulations, the state transport department said in a statement. Thakur said school buses must have a fire detection alarm system (FDAS), fire detection suppression system (FDSS), and fire

alarm protection system (EAPS). These systems are crucial for preventing and handling fire incidents, ensuring the safety of students traveling by bus. Compliance with these fire safety norms, as per provisions of the Central Motor Vehicle Act, 1989, is mandatory for all school buses, he said. "To ensure proper implementation, the STA has decided to increase the scope of these measures. Strict monitoring will be conducted on the fire safety arrangements of school buses," Thakur said. Zonal deputy transport commissioners and RTOs have been

asked to regularly inspect these buses. Any school bus found violating these regulations will face legal action," he said. Motor vehicle inspectors have also been instructed to ensure compliance within their respective regions and to cancel the fitness certificates of non-compliant buses," he said. "No negligence will be tolerated regarding the safety of young students. Thus, a zero-tolerance policy is being implemented," the transport commissioner said. It is to be mentioned that as per STA guidelines, the school buses shall be fitted with grills on both the front and the rear end. It has also been specified that the buses shall without fail be fitted with fire-fighting equipment and a first-aid kit. Further, all the windows of the busses should be reinforced with iron grills. A speed regulator needs to be fitted in the bus so that it cannot be driven at a speed higher than 50 kilometers per hour.



VENTING FIRE: Odisha Pradesh Youth Congress members stage a protest at Master Canteen Square in Bhubaneswar, Sunday, over demand for Re-NEET examination

LGBTQIA++ members hold Rainbow Pride Walk

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 21: The City painted itself with colours of rainbow, as hundreds of people belonging to the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex and Asexual (LGBTQIA++) community, along with their supporters, marched from Master Canteen Square to Shubham Market Complex near Satya Nagar chowk here Sunday. The 13th edition of 'Bhubaneswar Rainbow Pride Walk' was organised, in collaboration with several voluntary organisations, including the



Odisha Rainbow Collective, Trust, Tarit Foundation, and others. Waving rainbow flags, sport-

ing faces painted with rainbow-hued pride flags, and holding placards demanding equal rights in society, scores of members of the community walked with pride to celebrate diverse gender and sexualities. The pride march highlighted the need to respect every citizen, irrespective of gender, colour and sexual orientation, said the LGBTQIA++ activist Amit Bisoi. "We demand one per cent reservation in jobs for transgender persons. The new government should also create laws to penalise hate crimes against the community members," Bisoi added.

Meet on Santali education held



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 21: A meeting to discuss the recent developments of Santali education in the state and the success of Mission Olchiki-2025 was held at the Rotary Club here, Sunday. The event was jointly organised by Jumid Kherwal, Puri, Bharat Jakat Majhi Pargana Mahal, Odisha Branch, and Santali Saonhed Akhda, Bhubaneswar. The event underscored the collaborative efforts towards the advancement of Santali education and preservation and promotion of Santali language and culture

Balokram Baskey, the guest speaker, discussed current status of Santali education, including topics such as the Right to Education (RTE) and provision of Eighth Scheduled languages among others. Convener of Sahitya Akademi, Chaitnya Prasad Majhi, in his address, highlighted the development of Santali language and literature and spoke on the success of Mission Olchiki-2025. Representatives from different leading Santal organisations from the state were present on this occasion. Former MLA Kandra Soren discussed the government's role in implementing Santali education. The event underscored the collaborative efforts towards the advancement of Santali education and preservation and promotion of Santali language and culture. Adding to the significance of the occasion, a new Santali book titled Mission Olchiki written by Boyha Biswanath Tudu was unveiled by the guests. Earlier, the event began with lighting of ceremonial lamp and remembering Late Guru Gomke Pandit Raghunath Murmu. The welcome address was delivered by Tahasildar Hansdah, Dishom Godet, BJMPM, and R Ashwani Banjan Murmu coordinated the meeting.

BMC's SHINE team to keep vigil on habitual violators

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 21: Sanitation and Hygiene Inspection for Neat Environment (SHINE), a dedicated team, engaged by Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) will keep vigil on habitual sanitation violators in the City. As per BMC sources, as many as 10 enforcement teams have been taking measures to improve sanitation and stop sale of single-use plastic items in the City. The team has so far seized 2.6 tonne of plastic with temporary closure of 257 shops within BMC limits. The shops have been fined for maintaining inadequate sanitation practice and hindering public health. The enforcement team took action against offenders by imposing fine on them. A total ₹4.4 lakh was collected from more than 700 violators, informed BMC officials. "Not only limiting its vigilant work on single-use plastic, the team has also been useful for guiding and rectifying the unhygienic habits of agencies as well as citizens," officials said. "Some of the practices, which cause ill fare in certain pockets, have also been addressed by the team," officials said. Subsequent warnings have been issued to shopkeepers for

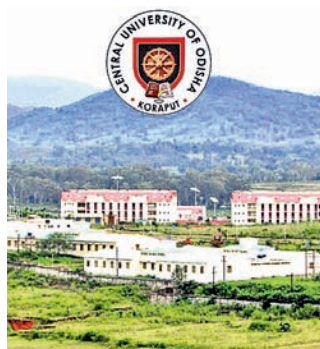


littering in public places and repeated violators were fined a total amount of ₹13.44 lakh, BMC officials said. As per officials, the enforcement team has also contributed towards hassle-free mobility of people in the City as debris generated during construction, renovation and demolition of buildings create hazardous situations. "The BMC team conducted sensitisation drive asking public to apply for approval before dumping any material on designated places. However, frequent violators were fined and a total of ₹12.97 lakh was collected in the drive," officials said. "The team has been trained to show polite behaviour towards citizens. They counsel the agencies and citizens not to repeat the practices that cause hindrances for public health and sanitation," said Commissioner Rajesh Prabhakar Patil. The team engaged with min-

CUO shines at GASE-2024

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 21: The Central University of Odisha (CUO) in Koraput bagged the first prize in 'Providing Excellent Higher Education' category at 'Government Achievements and Schemes Expo (GASE)-2024', organised by NNS Media Group at Pragati Maidan in New Delhi, Sunday. The CUO delegation included, department of Statistics associate professor and head, Gurjeet Singh Walia, department of Mathematics assistant professor Jyotiska Datta, department of Education assistant professor Ravita Pathak and department of Sociology assistant professor Elisa Mohanty. The team engaged with min-



isters, representatives from educational institutions including IITs and Central universities, media personnel, students, and the general public. In the event, CUO vice chancellor Chakradhar Tripathi highlighted the university's research efforts as well as enter-

prise to promote Indian Knowledge Systems through various initiatives like Paramparik Kreed Mahotsava and international seminar on 19th-century saint Bhima Bhoi. At the expo, the 'Sakhsarata Abhiyan' conducted by CUO at different villages in Koraput was considered as a major milestone. Additionally, the financial support scheme for hostel boarders, which offers fee waivers to students from lower socio-economic backgrounds, was well-received at the event. Tripathi appreciated and congratulated the delegation, university community and stakeholders for their outstanding contributions towards this achievement.

Campaign launched to plant 1cr trees in state by 2030

Bhubaneswar: Igniting Minds, in collaboration with Prerana International and Analytic Trust, launched a campaign 'Cool the Earth, Save Lives' here Sunday. The campaign aims to plant 1 crore trees in the state by 2030. Assembly Speaker Surama Padhy officially launched the campaign at an event held at Government High School, IRC Village. This initiative is part of the national Green India Challenge (GIC) campaign, which was launched in 2017 and is dedicated to the former President of India, APJ Abdul Kalam. The overarching goal of GIC is to plant 1 billion trees across the country by leveraging artificial intelligence and community participation to combat climate change and create resilience for millions of vulnerable populations.

Bigger animals do not always have the biggest brains

Scientists have long believed that, generally speaking, the bigger an animal is, the bigger its brain. But recent study challenges the nature of that linear view and reveals new insights about how brain size and body size have evolved together. There is astounding diversity in the shape, size and internal structure of the brain among different animals. While the size of the brain usually correlates with cognitive abilities, its variation is strongly linked to the size of the animal itself. As an animal gets larger, its brain size increases as well, though not in direct proportion - it is not a one-to-one relationship. This phenomenon is called allometric scaling. Body size in mammals ranges from tiny bumblebee bats weighing in at less than two grams right up to the largest animal that has ever lived, the several-tonne blue whale. Scientists needed to under-

stand how body size and brain size evolved together to say anything meaningful about how variation in brain size developed. They applied powerful computational analysis to a dataset spanning over 1,500 species of mammal and their brain sizes. The results revealed a surprisingly simple pattern of evolutionary change between brain and body size. Researchers found that the relationship between brain and body size is not linear, as previously assumed, but curved. It plateaus once body size reaches a certain threshold. The relationship between brain and body size is less strong among species of the same family (such as the ape family Hominidae, or the dog and wolf family Canidae) than it is among species of the same order (for example primates or carnivores). Researchers took another look at the data to investigate why



brain size diminishes in some big animals. They demonstrated that this constraint is not explained by the high energy cost of maintaining a large brain. Nor is it linked to neuron density, which may allow enhanced processing power without the need for a bigger brain. Though the findings remain a mystery the study allowed them to identify which mammal species are outliers to the brain-body size relationship.

They found that among these rapidly evolving lineages is the human species, Homo sapiens. They discovered that large human brains developed at a rate of evolution more than 20 times faster than the average rate of all other mammal species. The fact that humans are outliers to a mammal-wide pattern fits with the ability to use tools, build houses, make music and live in complex societies. But humans are not the only species

While the size of the brain usually correlates with cognitive abilities, its variation is strongly linked to the size of the animal itself. As an animal gets larger, its brain size increases as well, though not in direct proportion - it is not a one-to-one relationship. This phenomenon is called allometric scaling. Scientists found many species throughout the mammalian tree of life which have rapidly increased their brain size (relative to their body size), including several species noted for their keen intelligence such as rats, bears, dolphins and elephants. But also others like walabies, marmots and quolls. Conversely, they observed a massive acceleration in rate towards smaller brain sizes when bats first evolved. But brain size has evolved minimally and slowly over the following 50 million

years or so of their evolution. This could indicate some sort of constraint acting on brain size in bats, perhaps imposed by flight. Scientists found rapid bursts of change in the relative size of an animal's brain most frequently in carnivores, rodents and primates. In these three groups, these rapid changes almost always result in proportionally larger brains. This principle, known as the Marsh-Lartet rule, suggests that relative brain size tends to increase over time in mammal evolution. The three mammal groups where the trend does apply have profoundly diverse behaviour and ecology even among close relatives (for example pandas and grizzly bears, or porcupines and guinea pigs). They include some of the most social animals such as humans, mole-rats and meerkats.

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Rising prices of fodder hit cattle farmers hard



outside the state are calling the shots for fixation of cattle feed prices, and are responsible for the price hike. At the same time, there is a huge difference of quality between the OMFED fodder and those manufactured outside the state which we are buying at present," he said.

The cattle feed from outside of the state are of inferior to very low quality as compared to the OMFED fodder, Dhal added.

Meanwhile, social activist from Kendrapara, Manmath Kumar Rout said that the state boasts of a conducive atmosphere for manufacturing cattle feed as Odisha is primarily an agriculture intensive state. "Maize, groundnut wastes and husks are available in plenty here which are required for manufacturing cattle feed. Moreover, members of women self-help groups under Mission Shakti can be engaged in the preparation of cattle, poultry and fish feeds," he said.

Rout said the state government can establish at least one factory in every district under ORMAS and make best use of the resources for manufacturing of cattle, poultry and fish feeds. "If the state government comes up with a concrete plan in this direction, we would have plenty of cattle feed available for farmers at reasonable price and the high-handedness of outside traders will come to an end," Rout added.

Another social activist, Nihar Ranjan Pradhan, from Chhoti in Kendrapara said green grass is best for use as cattle feed and rural areas in the state have favourable atmosphere for its cultivation due to easy availability of labour and human resources.

"The state government should draw a special plan to encourage rural youths to take up green grass cultivation. Poverty alleviation schemes like MGNREGA can be also utilised to promote the plan. This will ensure livelihood for the youth, while livestock farming will get a boost," Pradhan added.

poultry feed locally. Because of that, fodder and poultry feed producing firms from outside the state are cashing in on the situation. Similarly, the promotion of green grass cultivation by the Horticulture department has remained only on papers and yet to take off.

Cattle farmer Krutibash Das of Gobindapur village under Derabish block said that the frequent increase in prices of fodder has become an impediment to cattle farming. He said it has been observed that a rise in prices of milk always triggers a sudden hike in the price of fodder.

However, the kind of hike in fodder price at present was beyond their anticipation. "Usually, the price of fodder goes up by ₹2 per kg following an increase in milk prices. But this time it has been ₹5-6 per kg," he said.

At present, a 50-kg fodder bag costs around ₹1,280, while a 50 kg packet of husk costs around ₹1,150. "This inflationary rise is burning holes in the pockets of milk farmers as it has surpassed the profit they got following the rise in milk prices," he said, adding that the benefits are rather going straight to the pockets of the traders.

Farmer leader Gayadhar Dhal said that the state-owned OMFED used to supply cattle feed to farmers in the past and the management of price was under the control of the state government.

However, the fodder manufacturing centre closed down 10 years ago due to mismanagement. "Since then, traders from



MATTER OF FAITH: A group of Kanwariyas marching with pitchers of water collected from Baitarani and Salandi rivers during the holy month of Shrawan, at Hatadihi in Keonjhar district, Sunday. The water will be poured at various shrines of Lord Shiva Monday. OP PHOTO

Heavy rain pounds Malkangiri; over 7,000 affected

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, July 21: Several districts of the state have been affected by heavy rain over the past three days due to the impact of a depression over the Bay of Bengal, an official statement said on Sunday.

More than 7,300 people of Malkangiri district have been most affected by heavy rainfall during that period, it said.

Under the impact of the depression over the Bay of Bengal, the districts of Nabarangpur, Koraput, Khorda, Nayagarh, and Malkangiri received heavy rainfall July 19.

Similarly, July 20, Malkangiri, Koraput, Rayagada, Gajapati, and Nabarangpur districts received heavy rain, while Nuapada, Sonepur, Boudh, Malkangiri, Bolangir and Angul received heavy rain July 21.

Due to the heavy rain, several roads and bridges in Malkangiri district were submerged, the office of the Special Relief Commissioner (SRC) said in its statement.

The SRC office said 1,045 vil-



lages under 111 panchayats in the district were also affected, and the local administration has so far evacuated 121 people from the low-lying areas to safe shelter homes.

Three relief camps have been opened in the districts to provide food and shelter to affected persons. The water is receding, and normalcy is being restored, it said.

The SRC has asked the Malkangiri Collector to prohibit the movement of vehicles on submerged roads and bridges till the water receded.

The police and local officials

have been instructed to be at those sites to regulate traffic.

Damage to public and private properties shall be enumerated immediately after receding of the water, the statement said.

The emergency operation centres at the state and district levels are functioning 24x7 in three shifts and monitoring the situation, it said.

Further, the SRC has instructed the Health department to store anti-snake venom in injections at the public hospitals, while the Energy department was asked to restore the power supply.

He also instructed the departments concerned to disinfect tubewells and restore affected roads and bridges in the rain-hit areas.

Since Saturday, Nuapada district has received an average rainfall of 96.1 mm, followed by Sonepur (73.6mm) and Boudh (66.5mm).

The highest rainfall of 154.4mm was recorded in the Athmallik block of Angul district.

Meanwhile, the depression weakened into a well-marked low-pressure area and lay over interior Odisha and adjoining Chhattisgarh at 8.30 am Sunday. It is likely to move towards Chhattisgarh and weaken gradually into a low-pressure area, the IMD said in a bulletin.

Under its impact, heavy rainfall (7-11cm) would occur at some places over the districts of Nuapada, Bolangir, Sonepur, Boudh, Bargarh, Sambalpur, Deogarh, Jharsuguda, Sundargarh, Nabarangpur, Kalahandi, Koraput, and Malkangiri Sunday, the bulletin added.

Man held for rape of Keonjhar tribal minor

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, July 21: The Keonjhar police Sunday arrested a man for allegedly abducting and raping a 14 years old tribal girl in Telkoi area of the district a week ago.

Sub-divisional police officer (SDPO) Mahendra Nath Murmu identified the accused as Sk Qurban, 46, who lives under Telkoi police station area in the district. The accused is alleged to have been involved in illegal cattle smuggling and other petty business in the area.

He was produced in a court following his arrest Sunday evening, Murmu said.

According to police, the incident took place when the survivor had gone to the weekly market at Barahadevata July 14. The accused abducted the survivor on his motorcycle and raped her in a desolate place. He then abandoned her on the National Highway-49 and fled.

Meanwhile, worried family members began a search for the girl after she did not return home till late in the night. They fi-



nally traced her to a place in Kanjipani Ghat road (NH 49) in the same night and rushed her to the Telkoi Community Health Center (CHC) for treatment. She narrated her ordeal before her mother after her condition improved following treatment.

Later, the family members lodged a complaint at Telkoi police station.

Murmu said Qurban went underground soon after the incident. The police's failure to nab the culprit had sparked resentment and anger among the residents of the area. Finally, a police team, led by sub-inspectors (SIs) Dilip Murmu and Abhay Kulu conducted raids at multiple locations, before managing to arrest him from Karanjia area in Mayurbhanj district, Sunday, Murmu added.

ECoR GM inspects progress of Khurda Road-Bolangir rly line

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 21: East Coast Railway (ECoR) General Manager Parmeshwar Funkwal has conducted a detailed inspection of the Jharmunda-Boudh section, part of the ongoing Khurda Road-Bolangir Rail Line project as well as the Sambalpur-Jarapada Railway Section.

Senior officials from ECoR headquarters, project construction teams, and representatives from the Sambalpur Railway Division accompanied Funkwal during the inspection Thursday, a release issued by the ECoR here Saturday said.

Funkwal assessed the ongoing infrastructure development and passenger amenities along these critical routes.

During the inspection, the ECoR GM reviewed the progress of the Khurda Road-Bolangir project and emphasised the importance of completing the construction within the targeted timeline.

This public-centric project,



which spans remote areas, is closely monitored by the Ministry of Railways, he said.

ECoR sources said out of the total 301 km of the Khurda Road-Bolangir project, 152.805 km have been commissioned.

The Railways has been constructing this line from both sides, ie from Khurda Road and Bolangir, to ensure the early completion of the project.

Till now, 105.8 km from Khurda Road to Daspalla and 47 km from Bolangir to Sonepur have been completed. The segment from Sonepur to Purunakatak, covering about 73 km, is expected to be completed within the next few months.

Funkwal also inspected the Sambalpur-Jarapada Railway Section, focusing on infrastructural and developmental work, as well as passenger amenities. He advised officials to take necessary steps for the early completion of these projects.

Additionally, Funkwal inspected the Keonjhar-Nayagarh Railway Section of the Jakhapura-Jaroli Rail Line, focusing on passenger amenities and traffic facilities in the Keonjhar area.

He emphasised the need for prompt action to improve facilities at Nayagarh and Keonjhar Stations for the comfort and convenience of passengers.

FMU signs MoU with e-commerce startup

POST NEWS NETWORK

Balasure, July 21: A significant development took place recently in Fakir Mohan University here as Bazarside Pvt Ltd, a user-friendly retail automation app company, joined forces with the FMU-TBI by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). This collaboration signifies a strong commitment to fostering a vibrant startup ecosystem within the state.

The MoU signing ceremony was a testament to this joint effort. Kukumina Das, Registrar of FM University, signed the MoU in the presence of Santosh Kumar Tripathy, the Vice Chancellor. Additionally, Pankaj Kumar Parhi, Coordinator of TBI, and Sunendu Nayak, Chief Operating Officer of FMU-TBI, witnessed the signing.

Notably, Kuldeep Pradhan, one of Bazarside's directors, represented the company during this momentous occasion. This MoU paves the way for valuable support for Bazarside, including mentorship, guidance, and resources from FMU-TBI, to help



them scale their operations and achieve their vision of empowering local retailers in tier 2, 3, and 4 cities across India.

Bazarside is a start-up company that pioneers to design of a user-friendly retail automation app and a comprehensive franchise-cum-partner programme. It has been designed to empower local, independent retailers, specifically targeting tier 2, 3 & 4 cities in India.

The ceremony was witnessed by COF, Karan Soren, COE Ranjan Kumar Ray, Development Officer Prof Pabitra Mohan Nayak, and other faculty members from various departments.

SEAWATER INGRESS CRIPPLES LIFE IN KENDRAPARA VILLAGE

POST NEWS NETWORK

Mahakalapara, July 21: Rise in tidal waves during inclement weather condition like low pressure or depression is playing havoc in the life of residents living near the coast of Bay of Bengal in Kendrapara district, a report said.

Seawater crosses the coast and ingress into seaside villages during rough weather conditions. This leads to erosion of the district's 48-km long coastline, stretching from Dhamra sea mouth in neighbouring Bhadrak district to Batighar panchayat here.

The flooding of Panikhia Santhalpada village under Nanjura panchayat of this block,



Saturday following a depression in the Bay of Bengal is another example of the phenomenon. The sudden rush of gallons of seawater not only caught the people unawares but threw life

out of gear in the village. Residents were seen scurrying for cover while desperately trying to salvage their valuables and essentials in the deluge by braving all odds,

amid heavy rains. Seawater was seen overflowing on the village road and entering houses. Locals said there was knee-deep water inside their houses. Farmers said they had

transplanted paddy saplings as part of cultivation for kharif season, but all their hard work has been wasted due to inundation of saline water in farmlands.

They fear the kharif crop might get completely destroyed if the administration did not take urgent measures to drain out the accumulated seawater in their farmlands.

Sources said at Panikhia Santhalpada village, home to 200 people mostly belonging to 50 families, over 2-feet high water is overflowing on the village road following ingress of seawater into the village.

The villagers have to wade through knee-deep water to go out for work, or for any other

purpose. Under these circumstances, the fear of snakes and other reptiles slithering into the village, and their homes, loom large.

Moreover, residents like Samai Tudu, Suna Tudu, Nugur Soren, Gajendra Marndi and Gurubha Hansda said they are fearful of attack by wild animals as the village is located on the peripheries of the Kantilo reserve forest.

Significantly, the village is not connected to a main road, while the residents live in pitiable conditions. They mostly do odd jobs or farming. They have urged the district administration to intervene and construct an embankment around their village to save them from frequent ingress of seawater.

4 sentenced to 20-yrs RI each for raping girl

Jajpur: A POCOS court in the district has sentenced four persons to 20 years of rigorous imprisonment each for raping a girl three years ago. The court of Jajpur POCOS judge Abhijit Palei also imposed a total fine of ₹4 lakh on the convicts. They will have to undergo imprisonment for an additional term of six months if they fail to remit the penalty amount, the POCOS court ordered Saturday. According to the prosecution, the incident took place when the survivor, who was 17 years old at that time, was returning home with a male friend on his motorcycle on the evening of March 7, 2021. They were passing through a forest area near Kalaring Hat in Kaliapani area when the four convicts intercepted them, overpowered the girl's male friend and took turns to rape her.

Never grumble. All sorts of forces enter you when you grumble and they pull you down.

THE MOTHER



The Winner Is...Puja

Indians, in general, are conspicuous in not sharing credit where it is due. In our mythology too, the credit for vanquishing Ravana goes to Lord Rama while Ravana's brother has been portrayed as a betrayer. It is this brother's actions which fulfilled the purpose of Rama travelling to Lanka. Coming to modern times, a small bunch of young scientists and avionics technocrats working for Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) set upon themselves the task of creating for India the first Light Combat Aircraft (LCA). It took them time and undoubtedly they were creating something that was globally available off-the-shelves for a price of course. Yet, the aircraft would have been a machine of joy for the Indian Air Force (IAF). In came a largely known gentleman that the whole country, till date, reveres as a great scientist. His scientific achievements are still unknown but he successfully delayed the launch of the LCA by more than half a decade, thereby rendering the technology obsolete. This he did just so that the credit for the creation of that fighter aircraft should go to him. And he did succeed in his effort.

Last week, the nation was initially somewhat disturbed by the revelations concerning an IAS trainee, Puja Khedkar. She had submitted a plethora of certificates ranging from physical disability to backwardness of her caste. All these were much later discovered to be fraudulent documents. It is interesting to note here while Puja's father is a retired Maharashtra state government official, her mother is a Sarpanch. Her father was suspended twice by the Maharashtra government on charges of bribery and corruption and her mother was recently arrested for brandishing a gun at farmers of her panchayat. The sordid saga of this upper caste applicant who submitted fake certificates and appeared a dozen times to clear UPSC examinations demonstrates how far Indian families push themselves in the quest for acquiring government power. Puja's case brought to the fore the system functioning in the selection of civil services candidates. While a general caste applicant has a limitation of six chances to appear for UPSC by the age of 32, an OBC candidate can appear nine times up to the age of 35 and persons with disabilities can appear nine times till the age of 42. Puja took all the wrong routes and managed to get into the IAS. Three months into training for the service, she demanded a government vehicle with red beacon, official accommodation and requisite staff. Her pressure on lower rung officers raised red flags. This and 21 traffic violations in her personal Audi car that bore a government number plate prompted investigations against her. Acceptably, these were Puja Khedkar's undoings.

Intermission. The second half of the movie shifts to Manoj Soni. With tremendous political clout in Gujarat, Soni became the youngest Vice Chancellor of MS University. With the Gujarat model metamorphosing into the India model, Manoj was also not left behind in Gujarat but his abilities in the trade were fetched to serve the Union government as the Chairman of Union Public Services Commission (UPSC). The credentials of Soni are also being questioned now. The nation does not know how qualified he was to be a Vice Chancellor or even the UPSC Chairman. Supersession of ineffective officers to make way for a more capable junior to rise and shine is not exclusive to Manoj Soni.

Interestingly, Puja Khedkar's case seems to have very negatively affected the phenomenal rise in Soni's career. His resignation from the post of chairmanship loosens a jar of filthy worms. As yet, allegations against Soni are unclear. But it was known that his term was to end in 2029, a full five years away from last week when he put in his papers. That he was very close to the top most politician of the country is now common knowledge. But what prompted him to exit so suddenly has intrigued many and set tongues wagging. Interested parties had been alleging about massive corruption in UPSC but no murmurs about Manoj Soni were heard till he himself fled from the scene. The skeletons in his cupboards will certainly spill out someday but may not be immediate as his higher ups, to save their own skins, will keep his actions under a thick cloak.

Yet, Manoj should not be treated as the subject of this write up. The subject from the beginning was very clearly about Indians not willing to give credit to people whom it is due. Here the credit goes solely and unambiguously to Puja Khedkar and her family who, in their utterly naked greed for power, exposed the stinking underbelly of the UPSC. This central government organization and the processes it follows offers the country its bureaucrats who decide on the quality and pace of development and future of this country in spheres ranging from education, health to law & order and extending to international relations. The benefits of all the credits, therefore, must definitely go to Puja Khedkar.



Ajit Ranade

THE FM IS AWARE THAT BELOW THE ROSY MACRO SCENARIO IS A WORRYING MICRO PICTURE

The world is in turmoil. The Russia-Ukraine conflict is well into its third year with no end in sight. Israel's pounding of Gaza is eight months old, with nearly 40,000 dead due bombing. The US Presidential favourite just survived an assassination attempt. The UK just had a massive electoral reversal, with the Conservative Party swept out of power after fifteen years, and the Labour Party gaining nearly two-third majority with just one third of the votes cast. And while these geopolitical upheavals are going on, we also had the world's biggest IT failure, of the ever-reliable Microsoft. The global outage caused hundreds of flights to be cancelled and disrupted government functioning. The country not affected by the Microsoft outage was China, and to a large extent India. There is perhaps some subtle geopolitical message in this quirky fact!

The global macroeconomic context is that big economies are still fighting inflation which refuses to come down to the target level of 2%. That is why monetary tightening continues even though industry keeps asking for an increase in money supply, and lower interest rates. Because of the still high interest rates industrial and housing investment is not rising as fast as it should to support employment. Unemployment worries are bringing out strong anti-immigrant sentiment, which has been tapped by the campaign of Trump, and far-right parties in Europe. It has also led to a protectionist sentiment. Trump has already promised further penal import duties on Chinese goods. China too has its own economic woes. There is a glut of production of electric vehicles which are being dumped on the world. The stock markets index however continues to zoom higher. We have to be careful about bubbles, because the index rise is fuelled

FOCUS UNION BUDGET

NAVIGATING IN CHOPPY WATERS



Consumer spending is sluggish, and so is private investment spending into new factories and expansions. The rural economy is struggling

by only a few tech stocks like Nvidia, Apple, Tesla, Microsoft and of course everything connected with AI. Out of the 500 stock prices in S&P 500, if you take out the seven biggest gainers, the rest of the index performance is modest. This stark intra-index variation in stock price rally is true of markets elsewhere too, including in India.

In this global scenario of turmoil India's macro economy is showing remarkable strength, resilience and stability. For the past four post-COVID years the average growth rate has been about 7.5%, inflation has hovered around 4 to 5%, exports are doing well, especially of services including software, foreign exchange stock of dollars is at healthy levels, and fiscal deficit ratio has been steadily coming down. The latter is a pointer to fiscal responsibility. Thus, these are indications of macro stability. Furthermore, the banking sector is doing exceptionally well with very low non-performing loan ratios and record profitability.

The upcoming Union Budget is important because it is the first one of Modi's third outing as PM. It will be Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman's seventh Budget presentation to Parliament. Note that not even a

single rupee of taxpayer money can be spent without the consent of Parliament. Extensive consultations have preceded the Tuesday presentation of the Budget proposal by the FM. The budget proposals need to be only passed in the lower house, i.e. the Lok Sabha, where the NDA has a majority, but not the single party BJP by itself. This implies that the Budget may see some shades of influence of push and pull of coalition politics, although it is not the same as complete tug of war between parties of opposite ideologies within a coalition. Besides the Budget now consists of a large portion of non-discretionary items such as interest payment (largest component), subsidies, salaries and pensions and other revenue expenditure items. The element of surprise has been largely taken out of budget announcements over the years. Nevertheless, given the political atmosphere, there is bound to be some nod to freebies and extra welfare spending.

Even though this budget will be for the next seven months, it will be an occasion to articulate economic strategy for the coming years and an economic vision too. It will be the first time that total spending of the Union government will cross 50 trillion ru-

pees. As a percentage of GDP, it will be about 15%. The fiscal deficit this year has benefited from a windfall bonanza of a large dividend of ₹2 trillion from RBI to the Union government. This large "profit" resulted from deft forex management and handling the debt management of the government. This cannot be counted upon next year. Income tax collection has risen faster than the GDP growth rate showing good buoyancy. Will the FM give some relief and at least bring personal income tax rates in line with the (lower) corporate tax rates? India's income tax has a peculiar anomaly. On one hand it grants complete exemption till ₹7 lakh income, but on the other it taxes income above ₹15 lakh at full rate, which with additional cess comes to a rate of 39%. A radical reform is needed wherein a small tax rate should become applicable at say 4 lakhs, and the top rate applies only about 50 or 75 lakhs.

The FM is aware that below the rosy macro scenario is a worrying micro picture. Consumer spending is sluggish, and so is private investment spending into new factories and expansions. The rural economy is struggling. The latest NSS shows household consumption data, which if we apply a slightly higher poverty line of 3 dollars per day, makes India's rural poverty shoot up to 25%. This means a lot of households are hovering just above the official poverty line. Their prosperity requires not just welfare spending, but creation of jobs. The single most important determinant of long-term prosperity is investment in human capital, i.e. health and education. India's education spending needs to more than double, to reach 6% of GDP. Hence look for these cues to support long term and inclusive growth in the FM's Budget speech.

The writer is a noted Pune-based economist.

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SPECTRUM ODISHA

The health sector priorities

Over the last two decades and more, Odisha has embarked upon its development journey, reduced poverty burden amply, and created adequate physical and human capital in different sectors. Considerable efforts have already been made to expand the state's capacity for inclusive growth and now it is an apt case to consolidate these efforts and accelerate the progress in specific sectors. According to the NITI Aayog, 15.68 per cent of the total population in Odisha is multi-dimensionally poor against 15 per cent at all-India level. This piece has identified some emerging areas in health sector that need the attention of the government.

In health sector, the state has made remarkable strides in reducing the gap in different indices. Currently, the infant mortality rate (IMR) of Odisha stands at 36 against 28 in India and the maternal mortality ratio (MMR) has reached 119 per one lakh live births compared to 97 at all-India level. Though the state has prevented infant deaths to some extent, neonatal deaths (within 28 days of birth) have been a concern caused largely due to low birth weight, respiratory difficulties and infections. Moreover, the progress witnessed in health indicators is not even across socio-economic groups and among re-

gions. The ST population constituting around 23% of state's population disproportionately bears the disease burden. For instance, the IMR of STs was 51.8 in 2015-16 compared to 31.5 for others. Apart from the current burden of malaria, tuberculosis and other communicable diseases, the tribal communities encounter rare diseases sickle cell anaemia, with nutritional deficiency glaringly found among women and children. The menace of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) is affecting adults, women and younger population and has been a major cause of death and disability in India. Around 63% of all deaths in India are due to NCDs. Tribal population is not an exception. This suggests planning innovative programmes as well as provisioning additional resources in the budget for uplifting health of this group. A distinct tribal health division is sought for designing programmes based upon disease dynamics, implement, monitor and evaluate the schemes at the district and sub-district levels.

The share of elderly population is rising in Odisha and they are living longer suggesting extra care and social protection for this sub population. On the contrary, the share of 0-14 population is declining due to low birth rate. This transition brings new challenges to the health system be-

cause of growing healthcare demands of the elderly population, moving beyond the current focus on maternal and child health. Another noticeable transition in our population is increasing share of working population, who are relatively young and the health system unequivocally ought to work towards maintaining the health and wellbeing of this population. Early identification of modifiable risk factors- consumption of tobacco and alcohol, developing habit of yoga and exercise, and recommending appropriate diets that are integral part of primary prevention will hugely improve the health of this group. This requires strengthening the ecosystem of primary care by large investments, allocating 70% of total government budget on it as mentioned in NHP 2017. The renewed focus on primary care started in 2018 by the union government with the introduction of health and wellness centre (HWC) under Ayushman Bharat programme needs stepping up.

Expanding the universal health coverage agenda further necessitates, among others, strengthening the secondary care especially, the community health centers by deploying adequate human resources of all hues and developing public health infrastructure to meet the aspirations of the people. The CHCs are the

missing link in the public health architecture today, which causes enormous economic losses to the people due to long distance travel forbidding wages for common ailments. Instantly, CHCs have to be transformed to provide essential secondary care package of services deploying at least two specialists in each CHC and creating hospital beds as per the IPHS norm. Without thinly spreading the public health budget, which is already low (1.39% of GSDP), the state government should prioritise resource allocation decisions to maximise health gains at the population level.

Climate change poses multiple threats to population health. Odisha is experiencing long spells of heat stress and the last summer was an exception leading to several deaths and illness because of elevated heat. This merits creating a center of excellence in climate change and health with dedicated resource allocation in the state budget.

Finally, developing an exclusive center for evidence generation, data production and scheme evaluation will improve the efficiency of health system and the health department may take note of this.

The writer is Professor of Health Economics at Indian Institute of Public Health Bhubaneswar, PPHI New Delhi.

WISDOM CORNER

Our goals can only be reached through a vehicle of a plan, in which we must fervently believe, and upon which we must vigorously act. There is no other route to success. PABLO PICASSO

It is a curious thought, but it is only when you see people looking ridiculous that you realize just how much you love them. AGATHA CHRISTIE

Never lose an opportunity of seeing anything beautiful, for beauty is God's handwriting. RALPH WALDO EMERSON

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

1456: Hungarian forces led by János Hunyadi, including an untrained army of peasants, won one of the most remarkable victories in the history of Turkish wars, resisting the Ottoman sultan Mehmed II's siege of Belgrade.

1894: World's first competitive motor race. The Paris-Rouen, Le Petit Journal Competition for Horseless Carriages was the world's first city to city motoring competition. Starting in Paris and ending in Rouen, the race was organized by the newspaper Le Petit Journal.

1933: American aviator Wiley Post becomes the first person to fly solo around the Earth. Post landed on Floyd Bennett Field in New York 7 days after he departed alone from the same airfield in a Lockheed Vega aircraft known as Winnie Mae.

1943: Led by U.S. General George S. Patton, Allied forces took Palermo, on the northwest corner of Sicily, giving them a strategic foothold from which to invade mainland Italy during World War II.

1946: A violent Jewish right-wing underground movement in Palestine, the Irgun Zvai Leumi, blew up a wing of the King David Hotel in Jerusalem, killing 91 soldiers and civilians.

1977: After falling from favour during the Cultural Revolution (1966-76), Deng Xiaoping returned to power on this day in 1977 after the Chinese Communist Party reinstated all his former high posts, including that of vice-premier.

1992: Colombian drug trafficker Pablo Escobar escaped from police custody as he faced transfer from La Catedral, a luxurious prison that he had built, to a more secure facility; he remained a fugitive until December 1993, when he was killed during a shootout with law enforcement.



Sarit Kumar Rout

THE PROGRESS WITNESSED IN HEALTH INDICATORS IS NOT EVEN ACROSS SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUPS AND AMONG REGIONS

Porous border

Sir, Three Indian states--West Bengal, Assam and Tripura--share the Indo-Bangladesh border. Of these, the Tripura border poses a grave danger to all because it has not been fully secured by fences. The state has a 856-km long border with Bangladesh and each of its four districts touches the border. Quite a few militant outfits have their camps across the border. Shortage of armed forces is another important factor for increased infiltration. The construction of the border fence has been reportedly woefully slow for the same reason. Another issue is the inadequate arming of the forces present to guard the border: the BSF, CRPF, Assam Rifles and State Rifles. Modern technology like AI, coordinated patrolling by BSF and Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB), and integrating border area villagers into mainstream society are crucial.

Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA

Economic ascent

Sir, In 2024, India is the world's fifth-largest economy with a GDP of \$3.57 trillion, projected to reach \$4.34 trillion by 2025 and \$6.44 trillion by 2029. Key sectors driving this growth include information technology, services, agriculture, and manufacturing. With a large domestic market, a young workforce, and a growing middle class, India benefits from strong digital market advancements and a robust start-up ecosystem. Union Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal emphasises making India a manufacturing hub and reaching a \$2 trillion export target. The government's efforts focus on sustainable development, aiming for comprehensive welfare, job creation, and improving basic services. Projections suggest India could become the world's second-largest economy by 2031 and the largest by 2060. S&P Global predicts it will be the third-largest by 2030 with a GDP of \$7.3 trillion. Infrastructure projects like Bharatmala and Sagarmala, alongside digital initiatives such as UPI, are transforming the economy. Despite challenges like youth unemployment and environmental sustainability, India's rapid growth, supported by climate initiatives like Mission LIFE and the green hydrogen push, positions it to shape the future global economy. Effective policies and international partnerships will be crucial for achieving its global ambitions and solidifying its status as a leading economic power.

Krishna Kumar Vepakomma, HYDERABAD

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

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

BANGLADESH UNREST Mamata opens door for helpless people

The Trinamool supremo also expressed her solidarity with the people who have remained at the receiving end of the ongoing violence in the neighbouring country

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, July 21: West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee Sunday said that in the wake of the escalating violence in Bangladesh, she would keep the doors of her state open for people in distress from the neighbouring country and offer them shelter.

Banerjee referred to the United Nations Resolution on refugees as justification for her stand over the possible humanitarian crisis that may emerge on account of the severe law and order breakdown that has gripped Bangladesh over the past few days.

"I should not be speaking on the affairs of Bangladesh since that is a sovereign nation and whatever needs to be said on the issue is a subject matter of the Centre. But I can tell you this, if helpless people come knocking

on the doors of Bengal, we will surely provide them shelter," Banerjee said at the 'Martyrs Day' rally in Kolkata.

"That's because there is a United Nations Resolution to accommodate refugees in regions adjacent to those under turmoil," the Bengal CM added while drawing an example from Assamese people who were allowed to live in Alipurdia area of north Bengal for a considerable period during the Bodo strife in the northeastern state.

Assuring all cooperation to Bengal residents whose relatives may have remained stuck on account of the escalating violence on the eastern side of the international border, she also extended assistance to Bangladeshis who came to Bengal but were facing difficulty in returning home.

Banerjee also appealed to the people of West Bengal to not get



I should not be speaking on the affairs of Bangladesh since that is a sovereign nation and whatever needs to be said on the issue is a subject matter of the Centre. But I can tell you this, if helpless people come knocking on the doors of Bengal, we will surely provide them shelter
MAMATA BANERJEE | CM, WB

Violence escalated in the Bangladesh capital Dhaka and elsewhere over student protests demanding reforms of the quota system for government jobs

The protesters are demanding an end to a quota system that reserves up to 30 per cent of government jobs for relatives of veterans who fought in Bangladesh's war of independence in 1971 against Pakistan

provoked over matters concerning the current situation in Bangladesh.

"We should exercise restraint and not walk into any provocation or excitement on the issue," she stated.

The Trinamool Congress supremo also expressed her solidarity with the people who have remained at the receiving end of the ongoing violence in the neighbouring country.

"We are sad to see blood getting spilt and my heart goes out to those students who were killed," she said.

President of the BJP's Bengal unit and junior union minister Sukanta Majumdar, however, opined that such matters, involving the country's foreign policies, should first be consulted with the Centre before any public statement is made.

"It's true that we are all concerned about the current situa-

tion in Bangladesh over which Delhi is keeping a close watch. Our chief minister should not be voicing her opinions on matters involving our country's foreign policies without first consulting the Centre," he said.

Violence escalated in the Bangladesh capital Dhaka and elsewhere over student protests demanding reforms of the quota system for government jobs.

The protesters are demanding an end to a quota system that reserves up to 30 per cent of government jobs for relatives of veterans who fought in Bangladesh's war of independence in 1971 against Pakistan.

The Supreme Court of Bangladesh scrapped most job quotas that caused the deadly unrest in the country Sunday, scaling down government jobs for veterans' descendants to five per cent and ruled that 93 per cent of jobs be allocated on merit.

Ujjain shop owners directed to display names, contact numbers

THIS ORDER IS AIMED AT ENSURING SAFETY AND TRANSPARENCY AND NOT INTENDED TO TARGET MUSLIM SHOP-KEEPERS, SAYS MAYOR

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhopal, July 21: The BJP-ruled Ujjain Municipal Corporation has directed shop owners to display their names and mobile numbers outside their establishments in the ancient city, a directive coming on the heels of a similar order by the BJP government in UP for eateries along the Kanwar Yatra route.

Violators will have to pay a Rs 2,000 fine for the first offence and Rs 5,000 if they defy this order for the second time, Ujjain Mayor Mukesh Tatwal said Saturday.

This order is aimed at ensuring safety and transparency and not intended to target Muslim shop-keepers, the mayor said.

Ujjain, the hometown of Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav, is known for its sacred Mahakal temple, attracting devotees from around the globe, especially during the Savaan month, which starts Monday.

Tatwal said the Mayor-in-Council of Ujjain had approved a proposal for shopkeepers to display their names September 26, 2002, followed by the Corporation House, and subsequently sent it to the state government for objections and formalities.

"All formalities have been already completed. The implementation was delayed as the nameplates were initially required to be of the same size and colour. Now, we have relaxed



these terms. Displaying the names and mobile numbers of shopkeepers will suffice," he told PTI over the phone.

He stressed that the measure is rooted in the MP Shop Establishment Act or Gumasta License, and it serves to enhance customer safety.

"Ujjain is a religious and holy city. People come here with religious aashta (faith). They have the right to know about the shopkeeper whose services they are availing. If a customer is dissatisfied or cheated, knowing the shopkeeper's details allows them

to seek redress," the mayor said. Ujjain is set to host the Simhastha (Kumbh) Mela in 2028, a significant religious fair held every 12 years.

This action mirrors the recent directive in Uttar Pradesh, where all eateries along the Kanwar Yatra route were asked to display owners' names.

The Uttar Pradesh government extended this order statewide Friday, while Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami said similar instructions are already in place his state.

MP attracts investment of ₹17,000 crore at RIC

DURING THE DAY-LONG EVENT, CHIEF MINISTER MOHAN YADAV LAID THE FOUNDATION STONE AND INAUGURATED 67 INDUSTRIES WITH AN INVESTMENT OF ₹1,500 CRORE WHICH WILL GENERATE 4,500 EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jabalpur, July 21: Investment proposals of Rs 17,000 crore were received at the Regional Industry Conclave (RIC) for setting up large-scale units in Madhya Pradesh, Chief Minister Mohan Yadav said Saturday.

He said an MoU has been signed for manufacturing tanks for the Army at defence production units in Jabalpur and announced setting up an ultra-modern skills development centre for promoting the textile and garment sector.

The chief minister said in the seven decades of independence, India left behind its former colonial rulers who had "looted" the country for more than two centuries, apparently referring to India replacing the United Kingdom in the pecking order of global economic powerhouses in the fifth spot after the US, China, Germany and Japan.

During the day-long event, Yadav laid the foundation stone and inaugurated 67 industries with an investment of Rs 1,500 crore which will generate 4,500 employment opportunities.

The state has received investment proposals of Rs 17,000 crore at the conclave, according to the Chief Minister.

"Madhya Pradesh is attracting everyone as under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the country has become the fifth largest economy in the world," Yadav said citing MP's "immense potential" for industry.

"Time is changing rapidly. Sixteen industrial areas have sprung up in the Mahakoshal region with 517 Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME)," said Yadav.

Yadav highlighted that products manufactured at 275 pharmaceutical firms in Madhya Pradesh are being exported to 160 countries, stating big pharma companies in the world are also operating in the state.

He said MP houses 70 units of branded food.

"My government will take steps to set up a diamond polishing industry in Madhya Pradesh given that diamonds mined in the state (in Panna district) are polished outside," Yadav added.

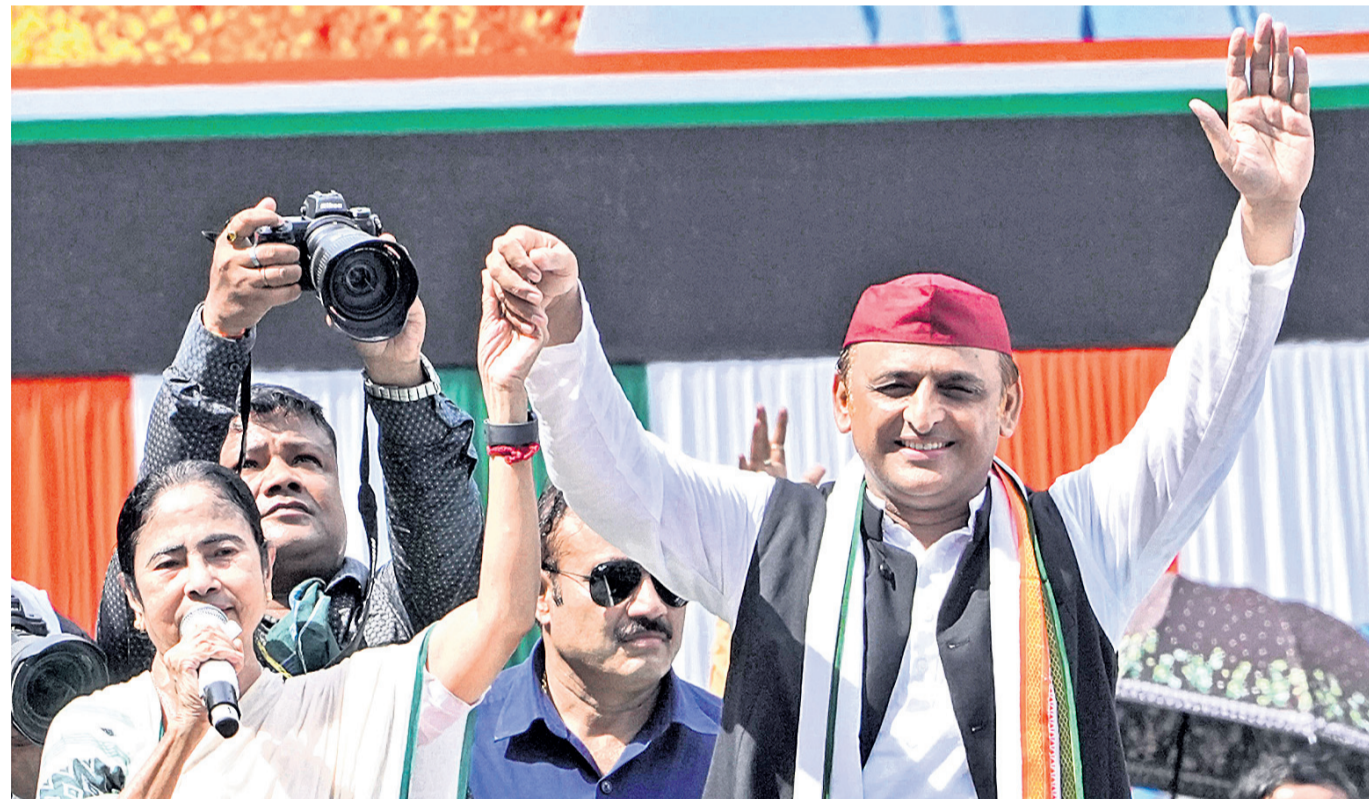
He said the proposed ultra-modern skill development centre will promote the textile and garment sector and also provide training to women. Additionally, immense employment opportunities will be generated.

Later speaking to reporters, the chief minister said the overall investment proposals include the ones received from 15 investors promising investment of Rs 5,000 crore.

"Letters of Intent were issued to 265 industrial units for the allotment of 340-acre land which will attract investment of Rs 1,800 crore and generate employment for more than 12,000 people," he added.

An MOU of Rs 600 crore was also inked between Ashok Leyland and Armed Vehicle Nigam Limited for manufacturing of defence equipment, Yadav said.

Among prominent investors, Heidelberg Cement will set up a plant in Damoh district with an investment of Rs 1,500 crore, Volvo-Eicher Commercial Vehicles will establish a unit in Bhopal with an investment of Rs 1,500 crore and SRF pharmaceuticals will invest Rs 2,500 crore by establishing a unit in the state, he added.



West Bengal Chief Minister and TMC chief Mamata Banerjee with Samajwadi Party (SP) National President Akhilesh Yadav during TMC 'Martyr's Day' rally, in Kolkata, Sunday

'BNS fails to ensure justice'

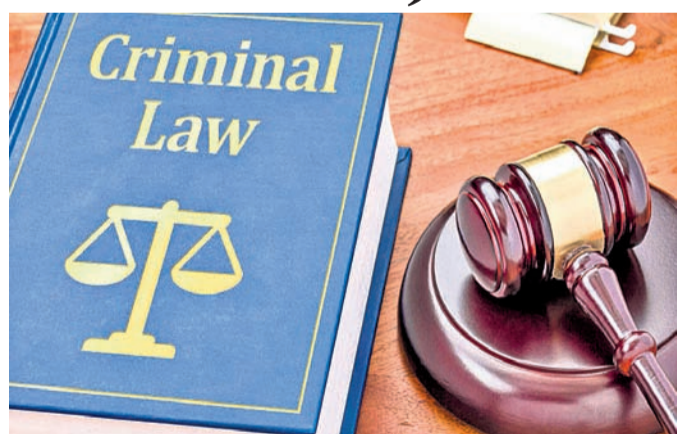
The Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, Bhartiya Nagrik Suraksha Sanhita and Bharatiya Sakshya Adhinyam have replaced the British-era Indian Penal Code, Code of Criminal Procedure and Indian Evidence Act, respectively

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, July 21: The Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), one of the three criminal laws that came into force nationwide July 1, is not being seen as establishing a justice-oriented system, according to a legal expert.

He, however, said the intent in replacing the British-era legislation was to ensure a shift from a punishment-centred system to a justice-oriented one.

The Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), Bhartiya Nagrik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) and Bharatiya Sakshya Adhinyam (BAS) have replaced the British-era Indian Penal Code, Code of Criminal Procedure and Indian



Evidence Act, respectively. West Bengal National University of Juridical Sciences (WBNUJS) Assistant Professor Faisal Fasih said, "The government has advertised that there is a transformation from punishment to justice... I beg to disagree."

"Extensive power is given to the state or the police. It is not in conformity with the advertisement for making the laws. One may wonder how can penal codes be justice-oriented, these are about penal provisions," Fasih said during a workshop here Saturday.

Around 90 per cent of the provisions of the IPC, Code of Criminal Procedure and the Indian Evidence Act have been

retained, he claimed.

"The idea was to do away with the colonial legacy as the earlier law was made during the British era. Definitely, change was required but the kind of change in Section 152 of the BNS (on sedition) has made it double draconian," Fasih said.

"The intent was to make a shift from a punishment-oriented system to a justice-oriented one, he said. "There is a contradiction between the intent and the changes introduced in the BNS. Except for the changes in headings or banners, the entire thing is almost the same. The 5-7 per cent substantive changes they have done are not justice-oriented," he added.

Congress turncoat Rawat gets Forest, Environment portfolio

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhopal, July 21: Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav Sunday allocated the Forest and Environment portfolio to the newly inducted cabinet minister Ramniwas Rawat.

Rawat, a former Congress MLA, was sworn in as a cabinet minister July 8.

A notification issued Sunday said Rawat has been allocated the Forest and Environment portfolio.

Until now, cabinet minister Nagar Singh Chouhan headed the Forest and Environment ministry along with the Tribal Welfare department.

The Madhya Pradesh cabinet was expanded July 8 with Rawat's induction.

Rawat, a six-time MLA from Vijaypur in Sheopur district, quit the Congress and joined the ruling BJP during the Lok Sabha poll campaign April 30.

ALLEGED SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

Probe panel quashes charges against Guv

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, July 21: An in-house preliminary inquiry report by a Raj Bhavan panel has dismissed molestation charges against West Bengal Governor CV Ananda Bose by a former woman staffer. The report, made public Saturday, claimed the complaints were "ill-motivated."

The report, prepared by the former district judge of the Pondicherry Judicial service, D Ramabathirani, stated that the alleged sexual misconduct against the Governor April 24 and May 2 was "ruled out as baseless."

"The timing of the alleged incident May 2, 2024, coinciding with the Prime Minister's visit to Raj Bhavan, creates a cloud of suspicion regarding the truthfulness and indicates a sinister motive behind the allegations," the report said. It added that the Special Protection Group (SPG) had already taken control of the premises before the alleged incident occurred.

The complainant had alleged she faced sexual misconduct,



including molestation, from the Governor April 24 and May 2 at Raj Bhavan. However, during the May 2 meeting, when a Raj Bhavan supervisor was present, she continued to sit in the chamber even after he left the room, according to the report.

Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee Friday filed an appeal before a division bench of the Calcutta High Court challenging a single bench order restraining her and three others from making any defamatory or incorrect statements against Bose.

The single bench had passed the interim order Tuesday in a defamation suit filed by the Governor. Banerjee's appeal challenges the order, which is in effect until August 14.



national

of the day quote

Even though we are allies in Lok Sabha and state assembly, Mahayuti members are free to contest local bodies polls independently

AJIT PAWAR | AJIT PAWAR

Instead of the contractor friends of the BJP and 'mindhe' regime (government led by CM Eknath Shinde), police are being made to fill potholes. Ever seen a contractor or contracting firm owner being made to fill such potholes by the regime?

AADITYA THACKERAY | SHIV SENA (UBT) LEADER

If they put me in jail, ensure all BJP candidates are defeated in the assembly polls. Darekar is acting on the behest of Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis. Because of people like Darekar, the BJP will face lot of losses

MANOJ JARANJE | MARATHA QUOTA ACTIVIST

SHORT TAKES

Guj: Booze, mobile phones seized in jail

Kutch: A surprise check by police at a jail in Gujarat led to the recovery of liquor, mobile phones and cash among other banned objects while six prisoners were found drunk, leading to the suspension of the jailer and four other personnel. Following the raid at Galpadar District Jail at Gandhidham, nine prisoners, including some dreaded criminals arrested in murder cases, were booked under various sections of the Prohibition Act and Prisoner Act, police said Sunday.

HC to hear Khalid's bail plea today

New Delhi: The Delhi High Court will Monday hear the bail plea of former JNU student Umar Khalid in a UAPA case related to the alleged larger conspiracy behind the riots here in February 2020. The plea, which assails a recent trial court order refusing to grant bail to Khalid, is scheduled to be heard by a bench of Justices Prathiba M Singh and Amit Sharma. Khalid, Sharjeel Imam, and several others have been booked under the anti-terror law Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) and provisions of the Indian Penal Code for allegedly being the "masterminds" of the February 2020 riots, which had left 53 people dead and over 700 injured.

Five boys drown

Tezpur/Jorhat: Five boys drowned in two ponds in Assam's Lakhimpur and Jorhat districts Sunday, police said. Three children from Chanimari village in Dhakuakhana area of Lakhimpur district had gone to take a bath in a pond to beat the scorching heat. In another incident in No-Pomuwa Baligaon village in Jorhat district, two teenagers who had gone to graze cattle fell into a pond and drowned, police said.

Balaji unwell

Chennai: Former Minister V Senthil Balaji who is lodged in a prison here in an Enforcement Directorate case was taken to hospital Sunday by jail authorities after he complained of chest pain, official sources said. After, Balaji complained of unease and chest pain and he was taken to Government Stanley Hospital here by the Puzhal Central Prison authorities. After evaluation by doctors, he was later shifted to the state-run Omandur multi-specialty hospital for further examination and observation.



The concept of 'gotra' transcends caste distinctions, as each gotra is associated with a specific Rishi who embodies a tradition free from caste discrimination. Followers of various castes adhere to the gotra of a single Rishi

YOGI ADITYANATH | UP CM

RAHUL GREETS KHARGE ON B'DAY

Several Congress leaders greeted and hailed party chief Mallikarjun Kharge as he turned 82 on Sunday, with Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi saying that his tireless service and dedication to the people's cause is an inspiration. Prime Minister Narendra Modi also greeted Kharge on his birthday and wished for his long and healthy life



Mamata slams NDA allies

Addressing the mega 'Martyrs' Day' rally of the TMC, Banerjee, without naming anyone, criticized the BJP's allies in the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government at the Centre for allegedly "sacrificing" ministerial positions for financial gain

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, July 21: West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee asserted Sunday that the BJP-led government at the Centre would not "last long and would collapse soon," claiming it was formed through "intimidation and threats."

Vowing to "oust the morally defeated BJP," Banerjee, ahead of the Lok Sabha Budget session, said, "We will see them (BJP) in Parliament." The TMC leader praised Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav, who was present at the event, for his party's performance in the Lok Sabha elections in Uttar Pradesh. "The government at the Centre won't last long. This is not a stable government and will collapse soon," she said.

Describing the NDA allies as "cowards and greedy individuals who yielded to financial inducements," Banerjee questioned, "Has anyone ever heard of money being offered instead of ministries? Has anyone heard that parties got sold for money? They are cowards, shameless, and greedy. They sacrificed their own identities."

While commending Akhilesh Yadav, Banerjee remarked, "The 'Khe!' (game) you played in UP should have forced the BJP government (in UP) to resign, but the shameless government continues in power by misusing agencies and other means. You cannot intimidate us by misusing



Govt at Centre won't last long: Akhilesh

Kolkata: Samajwadi Party (SP) chief Akhilesh Yadav said Sunday that the BJP-led NDA government at the Centre would not last long, asserting that "communal forces" may experience temporary success but would ultimately be defeated. "This government at the Centre won't last long and will fall soon. Such communal forces want to be in power at any cost, but those designs won't succeed," he said, without naming the BJP or the NDA. The Samajwadi Party leader asserted that the "communal forces at the Centre" are "hatching conspiracies and trying to destabilise the country." The Samajwadi Party had won 37 Lok Sabha seats from Uttar Pradesh, which sends eighty MPs to the Lower House of Parliament. The party's tally is up from five seats it had won in 2019.

agencies." The TMC supremo claimed that only Bengal can preserve the existence of India and there can be no India without Bengal.

"We will protect Bengal's identity, and Bengal will guard the country's identity. This is because the country cannot run

without Bengal," she said. Echoing Yadav's claim that the BJP-led NDA government would not endure, Banerjee predicted it would soon "collapse."

She asserted, "The BJP no longer holds a majority. Given how the current Central government came to power—by mis-

using central investigation agencies and the Election Commission of India—it won't be able to sustain itself for long.

"Despite the fear of central agencies, arrests of party leaders, and the ECI's bias, we fought and secured victory against BJP, Congress, and CPI(M). We thank the people of Bengal," she said, referring to the party winning 29 out of the 42 Lok Sabha seats in the state, up from 22 in 2019. Banerjee accused the BJP, Congress, and CPI(M) of having a "tacit understanding" in West Bengal, alleging that their sole aim is to obstruct development efforts in the state.

"I want TMC workers to be the people's friends. I want to tell municipality and panchayat representatives, MLAs, and MPs that they must ensure that no complaints are received against them. If we get any complaint, we will take appropriate action. The police will take action. Everyone knows that if there is any injustice, we do not even spare TMC members," she added.

Banerjee's remarks came in the context of public discontent in some areas of the state over the alleged involvement of TMC leaders in instances of mob violence and public flogging. In many of these cases, those arrested are associated with the TMC. Delivering a stern message to the party's elected representatives, Banerjee said non-performance would not be tolerated.

Teen dies, 63 cases 'high-risk'



AGENCIES

Kozhikode, July 21: The 14-year-old boy from Kerala's Malappuram, who was under treatment here for Nipah infection, died Sunday, state Health Minister Veena George said.

George said the boy from Pandikkad suffered a massive cardiac arrest at 10.50 am Sunday and efforts to revive him failed. "He was on a ventilator and was not conscious. The urine output had reduced this morning. After the massive cardiac arrest, the revival efforts failed and he passed away at 11.30 am," George said.

The Minister said the funeral will be held following international protocols. "Further matters on funeral will be decided only after the district Collector holds discussion with the parents and the family," George said.

The Minister said currently there are three people under isolation at Kozhikode medical college where the deceased boy was undergoing treatment. "At Manjeri Medical college, four high-risk category people are admitted out of which one person is in ICU," the minister said, adding that the results of their samples will be out today itself. The minister said the child went to school May 11 and till now there are not many cases of patients with symptoms.

Earlier in the day, the Minister had informed that there are a total of 246 people in the con-

tact list of the boy out of which 63 were under high-risk category.

"We will be testing all under the high-risk category but initially those with symptoms will be tested. We have labs in the state and a mobile lab from the Pune NIV is arriving in the state," George said.

The Health department has also decided to conduct fever surveillance in two panchayats including the epicentre Pandikkad and a total of around 33,000 houses will be covered under it.

The Minister also informed that the monoclonal antibody which was procured last time from Australia and stored at Pune NIV has reached the state. The Health department has also set up 30 isolation rooms and a six-bed ICU at the Manjeri Medical College and have isolated all those who have come into contact with the infected boy.

The state government had announced recently that a special action calendar was being prepared for the prevention of a Nipah outbreak, which has haunted the state on four occasions in the past.

Nipah outbreaks have been reported in Kozhikode district in 2018, 2021 and 2023 and in Ernakulam district in 2019, and the presence of Nipah virus antibodies had been detected in bats in Kozhikode, Wayanad, Idukki, Malappuram and Ernakulam districts.

Kanwar Yatra row: SC to hear plea against UP govt



AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 21: The Supreme Court is scheduled to hear Monday a plea against the Uttar Pradesh government's order that eateries along the Kanwar Yatra route must display the names of their owners.

A bench of justices Hrishikesh Roy and S V N Bhatti is likely to hear the plea filed by NGO Association of Protection of Civil Rights.

Days after the Muzaffarnagar Police asked all eateries along the Kanwar Yatra route to display their owners' names, the Uttar Pradesh government on Friday extended the controversial order across the state.

The order issued by the Muzaffarnagar police earlier this week has been slammed by Opposition parties and some

members of the ruling NDA at the Centre, who say it targets Muslim traders.

Days after the Muzaffarnagar Police asked all eateries along the Kanwar Yatra route to display their owners' names, the BJP government Friday extended the controversial order across Uttar Pradesh, drawing flak from many Muslim bodies, besides several parties.

The BJP rejected criticism, saying authorities were only implementing the 2006 rules made by the then Samajwadi Party government in the state.

Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami said similar instructions are already in place in his state as well.

In Muzaffarnagar, several dhaba owners and workers expressed apprehensions about losing business due to the directive.

BJP, JD(U) slam Jairam Ramesh

New Delhi: Congress leader Jairam Ramesh Sunday faced criticism from the BJP and its ally JD(U) for "live-tweeting" some of the issues raised by different parties at an all-party meeting, with Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijju calling for respecting parliamentary traditions. Ramesh, who attended the meeting, posted on X while the deliberations were on, "In today's all-party meeting of floor leaders chaired by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, the JD(U) leader demanded special category status for Bihar. The YSRCP leader demanded special category status for Andhra Pradesh. Strangely, the TDP leader kept quiet on the matter."



'Guru Purnima', symbolising the sacred tradition of Guru-disciple, was celebrated ceremoniously Sunday in the presence of Swami Ramdev, Founder President of Patanjali Yogpeeth in Haridwar, Uttarakhand, and General Secretary Acharya Balkrishna at Yog Bhawan Auditorium, Patanjali Wellness, Yogpeeth-2. On this occasion, service heads, monks, unit chiefs, department heads and in-charges and students of all the units affiliated to Patanjali Yogpeeth were present.

Bihar to conduct 'indoor air pollution' study

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Patna, July 21: The Bihar State Pollution Control Board (BSPCB) has decided to conduct an "indoor air pollution" study in Patna to identify types of pollutants inside people's homes and their effects, besides suggesting corrective measures.

The study will be first conducted in the capital city and later it will be held in Gaya, Muzaffarpur and a few other cities of the state.

Talking to PTI, Devendra Kumar Shukla, Chairman of the BSPCB, said, "We have initiated talks with the IIT-Tirupati for conducting indoor air pollution study in Patna to identify types of indoor air pollutants, their effects and also suggest correc-



The study will be first conducted in the capital city and later it will be held in Gaya, Muzaffarpur and a few other cities of the state

tive measures to reduce it. Our talks with IIT-Tirupati are expected to be finalised very soon." Bihar is probably the first state in India which has decided to conduct an indoor air pollution

study, he said. "People must know about the pollution levels inside their homes. The study will be conducted by dividing the city into various zones. A few houses will

be selected from each zone for the study using modern techniques," said the BSPCB head. Air pollution is mostly considered an outdoor concern, but studies suggest that indoor air can be polluted as well and might even be more so than the air outside, he said. People are now spending more time indoors than before with the advent of online learning, entertainment, and shopping, Shukla said.

Since Patna has recently emerged as one of the most polluted cities in the country, the study will begin from there, he added.

"The ill effects of indoor air pollution are becoming a serious matter globally. The most affected groups are women and younger children, as they spend

the maximum time at home. Indoor air pollutants can cause respiratory infections, chronic bronchitis and several other diseases, said Shukla.

Stating that the Indo-Gangetic plains are worst affected due to air pollution, mainly because of dust, he emphasised the need for long-term measures to curb air pollution.

"As for controlling vehicle emissions, there should be a proper traffic system in cities, including Patna, so that there are no bottlenecks that result in snarls which hike pollution," said the BSPCB Chairman.

The poor air quality, especially during winter, in various cities in Bihar has always remained a matter of concern for the authorities.

PM Modi inaugurates 46th Session of WHC at Bharat Mandapam

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 21: Heritage is not just history but a "shared consciousness" of humanity, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said Sunday while encouraging people to use the potential of heritage for the betterment of the world and to connect hearts.

In his address at the opening ceremony of the 46th session of the World Heritage Committee (WHC) at the Bharat Mandapam here, Modi also underlined the universality of heritage and said whenever one looks at historical sites, "our mind rises above current geopolitical factors".

India is hosting the key event of the UNESCO for the first time from July 21 to July 31. Modi was joined on the dais by Director General of UNESCO Audrey Azoulay, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and Union Culture Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, among others.



Prior to the inauguration, the prime minister visited an exhibition at the Bharat Mandapam that showcases some of the artefacts brought back to the country. Till date, more than 350 artefacts have been brought back to the country, the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) said in a statement Saturday. Wearing a saree, the director general of UNESCO was also present along with Modi during his visit to the exhibition.

In his address at the inaugural ceremony, the prime minister spoke of the exhibition and said the return of the ancient artefacts reflects global liberalism and a feeling of respect towards history.

national

of the day quote

If there is the biggest 'sargana' of corruption in Indian politics, it is Sharad Pawar. There is no confusion in my mind about this. I am saying it openly that Pawar has institutionalised corruption in the country

AMIT SHAH | UNION HOME MINISTER

Gurus play an important role in taking their disciples from darkness to light. Respect for gurus is an important part of Indian tradition and culture. The grand festival of Guru Purnima will be celebrated in all schools and colleges in the state every year

MOHAN YADAV | MADHYA PRADESH CM

The documents that the jail authorities have legally provided to Kejriwal's lawyer are enough to tell that any untoward incident can happen to him inside the jail any day

SANJAY SINGH | AAP RAJYA SABHA MP

X POST OF THE DAY

Exclusive One More Accident, Three wagons of Goods train Derailed in Alwar! Reel Minister Zindabad

@AshishSinghKJLI

SHORT TAKES

5 killed in two road accidents

Jammu: Five people, including a father-son duo and a mother-daughter duo, were killed and seven injured in two separate road accidents in Jammu and Kashmir's Rajouri and Reasi districts Sunday, officials said. A taxi carrying eight people and proceeding towards Lam from Thandikassi fell off a hilly road near Chalan village in Rajouri in the morning, they said. In another accident, a Mahindra Bolero car with four members of a family rolled 200 feet down into a gorge at Bidda village in Reasi district at around 3:30 pm, resulting in the death of Guddi Devi and her daughter Shobha on the spot.

Man sentenced to 5-year RI

Thane: A court in Maharashtra's Thane district sentenced a man to five years of rigorous imprisonment for sexually assaulting a three-year-old girl. Special judge D S Deshmukh Saturday convicted the accused, a resident of Diva, of charges under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO). The accused was sentenced to five years of rigorous imprisonment, and a fine of ₹10,000 was imposed on him.

3 killed in landslide

Rudraprayag: Three devotees died and eight others got injured in a landslide on the Kedarnath Dham trekking route in Uttarakhand's Rudraprayag district Sunday, officials said. Rudraprayag District Disaster Management Officer Nandan Singh Rajwar said the accident happened at around 7:30 am near Chirbasa area on the Gaarikund-Kedarnath trekking route when the devotees were hit heavy stones and debris falling down from the hill.



The SP won 111 seats in the 2022 Uttar Pradesh Assembly elections and if we get the support of 100 dissatisfied BJP MLAs, then we will easily form the government

AKHILESH YADAV | SP CHIEF

13 INDIANS LURED INTO CYBERCRIME RESCUED

Thirteen Indians, who were lured into certain cyber-scramming centres in Laos, have been rescued and sent back home, the Indian embassy in the Southeast Asian country said Sunday. "In our continued work to ensure safety & well-being of Indians as top priority, Embassy successfully rescues 13 Indians from cyberscamming centres in Laos & ensures their safe return to India," the mission posted on 'X'



'India staring at infertility crisis'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 21: Hormonal issues, increasing substance use, and changing lifestyle are leading to an increase in infertility in India, which may irreversibly alter India's population dynamics, potentially leading to an ageing crisis, Dr Ajay Murdia, the man behind India's one of the largest fertility chain, Indira IVF, has said.

Talking to PTI ahead of the World IVF Day July 25, Dr Murdia said that India stands at a critical crossroads, facing

an unprecedented infertility crisis that threatens not only millions of families but the country's future demographic balance.

"According to some estimates, about 27.5 million married couples are actively trying to conceive and are suffering from infertility. But only about 275,000 IVF cycles are performed every year," he said.

"This silent epidemic, affecting one in six couples, is rapidly evolving into a national emergency with far-reaching consequences for India's societal structure and economic



prospects," Murdia, Founder and Chairman of Indira IVF, said. According to a National Family Health Survey, the fertility rate is 1.6 in urban India and 2.1 in its rural areas. By 2050, India's total fertility rate

(TFR) is projected to dip to 1.29, far below the replacement rate of 2.1. This means a rapidly depleting working-age population. "This isn't just about individual families, it's a looming demographic catastrophe that threatens India's economic growth and social stability. "While India currently boasts a demographic dividend with a young population, the rising infertility rates coupled with an ageing population could lead to a scenario similar to other Asian countries struggling with inverted population pyramids," he stated.

U'khand gov't plans to provide reservation to Agniveers in govt depts

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dehradun, July 21: The Uttarakhand government is considering giving reservation to the Agniveers who return after completing four years in the Army to accommodate them in police and other government departments.

According to a government release issued here, a proposal to give reservation to Agniveers in police and other government departments is being finalised.

Apart from this, a skill development scheme is also being prepared to give employment-related training to Agniveers. The chief minister has directed the officials to prepare a proposal in this regard as soon as possible.



He said Uttarakhand is a state where youths enrol in the Army on a large scale, hence, the government will leave no stone unturned in employing Agniveers after they complete four years of service in the Army.

The chief minister said, "The government wants that even after completing four years in the Army, Agniveers should get ample job and employment opportunities in the state. Retired Agniveers will be utilised in the service of the state so that they can also participate in the state's development."

Earlier, during a programme in the day, Dhama said the Agniveers of the state who return after serving the country will be accommodated in various departments.

He had announced on 'X' that his government will accommodate the Agniveers in various departments of the state, including police, and will give them priority, he added.

He said that a provision for reservation will also be made for Agniveers. Dhama said that if required, a proposal to enact a law to accommodate Agniveers will also be brought in the Cabinet and placed in the Assembly.

NEET-UG row

Over 11K candidates score zero or negative

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 21: More than 11,000 NEET-UG candidates have scored zero or negative marks in the controversy-ridden medical entrance exam this year, according to the centre-wise results announced by the National Testing Agency.

The lowest marks scored by any candidate in the crucial exam is -180 at a centre in Bihar. According to an analysis of the city- and centre-wise results released Saturday by the NTA, over 2,250 candidates have scored zero marks, while over 9,400 candidates have scored marks in negative.

There are several candidates at the centre under scanner in Jharkhand's Hazaribagh who have scored less than zero marks. While there are multiple candidates from few centres who have scored zero marks, no clusters are seen as the number of such candidates from each centre is not very high. According to officials, zero marks in the exam doesn't necessarily mean the answer sheets were blank or no questions were attempted.

"It is possible that the candidate attempted some questions right and some questions wrong which led to negative mark-



According to officials, zero marks in the exam doesn't necessarily mean the answer sheets were blank or no questions were attempted

ing. In the NEET-UG, for every correct answer, four marks are awarded and for every incorrect answer, one mark is deducted. No marks are awarded or deducted for questions that are not attempted. The NTA Saturday released city- and centre-wise results of the medical entrance exam which is under the scanner over alleged irregularities, including paper leak.

An analysis of data indicated that while the candidates who allegedly benefitted from the paper leak and other irregularities have not done well, some cen-

tres have a high concentration of well-performing students.

More than 2,000 NEET-UG candidates from Sikar centres scored above 650 marks while over 4,000 have scored above 600 marks.

The voluminous result data of over 23 lakh candidates from 4,750 centres was not released in a cumulative format but in a drop-down menu for each centre. The data was released on the direction of the Supreme Court which is hearing several petitions over the alleged irregularities as lakhs of aspirants await a final verdict on fate of the exam. The Supreme Court is hearing several petitions about the alleged irregularities in the conduct of the test May 5 at 4,750 centres in 571 cities, including 14 cities abroad. The top court had ordered that the results be announced while masking the identities of aspirants. It had said it wanted to ascertain whether candidates appearing at allegedly tainted centres secured more marks than those writing the exam elsewhere.

The court will resume hearing the arguments in the matter July 22 on a batch of pleas seeking cancellation, re-test and a court-monitored probe into the allegations of malpractice in the prestigious exam.

Security stepped up in Nuh ahead of Braj Mandal Yatra



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chandigarh, July 21: The Haryana government Sunday beefed up security and ordered suspension of mobile internet and the bulk SMS services in Nuh district for 24 hours ahead of the Braj

Mandal Jalabhishek Yatra that was marred by violence last year.

However, Nuh Deputy Commissioner Dhirendra Khadgata said security has been stepped in the district to ensure that the event takes place peacefully.

"Situation is very peaceful, cordial ahead of the Yatra and both communities (Hindus and Muslims) are ready to welcome it," Khadgata told PTI over phone. Many welcome gates have been erected and food stalls set up for the members of the procession, he said.

"We also have 100 volunteers who will help police with the coordination of the movement along the yatra route," the DC said. Authorities said drones will be deployed on the route of the yatra, which will start from Nuh's Nalhar temple and end in

Singar going via Jhir temple.

The internet service in the district will remain suspended from 6 pm Sunday to 6 pm Monday, according to an order by Haryana Additional Chief Secretary (Home) Anurag Rastogi. "... there is an

apprehension of causing tension, annoyance, agitation, damage of public and private property and disturbance of public peace and tranquility in the district Nuh..." read the order that came at the feedback of Additional DGP-CID, Haryana and a Deputy Commissioner. The suspension came "to stop the spread of misinformation and rumours" through social media platforms, such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter, etc. At least six people, including a cleric who was attacked in a mosque in Gurugram, were killed and scores injured in the immediate aftermath of the interfaith clash. The BJP government in the state, then led by Manohar Khattar, had drawn sharp criticism from the Opposition parties over the violence.

2 partially buried in murrum during protest

Rewa (MP): One person was arrested after two women, protesting against road construction, were partially buried when murrum was tipped over from a truck in Madhya Pradesh's Rewa district, police said Sunday. A case was registered against three persons in connection with the incident, which happened at Hinota Jorot village under Mangawa police station Saturday. Police called it the fallout of a family dispute. A video of the incident that surfaced on social media showed two women sitting behind a truck laden with murrum, which it off-loads on them. Additional Superintendent of Police Vivek Lal said the women, Mamta Pandey and Asha Pandey, were protesting against the construction of a road and got partially buried under the reddish clayey material.

Maha sees 1,267 farmer suicides since Jan this yr

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, July 21: A total of 1,267 farmers have committed suicide in Maharashtra in the first six months of this year, with Amravati division in the state's Vidarbha region accounting for 557 deaths.

As per January to June data in a state government report, Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar division was second with 430 deaths, followed by 137 in Nashik division, 130 in Nagpur division and 13 in Pune division. According to the National Crime Records

Bureau, in 2022, Maharashtra led with 37.6 per cent of all farmer suicides in the country. The NCRB said 11,290 persons involved in the farming sector, comprising 5,207 farmers or cultivators and 6,083 agricultural labourers, ended their lives in 2022. This accounted for 6.6 per cent of all suicides in the country, which stood at 1,70,924. In 2021, 10,881 persons involved in farming, comprising 5,318 farmers and 5,563 agricultural labourers, committed suicide, with Maharashtra accounting for 37.3 per cent of these deaths.



RAIN WOES: A bus moves on a waterlogged road during monsoon rain at Parel in Mumbai, Maharashtra. Flight operations at Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport were suspended twice for a brief period due to inclement weather and low visibility

Home, restaurant kitchens feel pinch of vegetable price rise

With the staples selling for more than double the rates just last month, vegetable bags are returning home lighter and hearts heavier

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 21: Those who couldn't buy fresh vegetables would smash open an onion, sprinkle salt and eat it with a roti. But even those days are gone with the humble onion just too expensive, says vegetable vendor Imad Khan, recalling the staple image of the poor in India.

About 10 km from the Sahibabad Sabzi Mandi in Ghaziabad where Khan sets up shop, homemaker Poonam Singh in Delhi's Mayur Vihar has not put tomatoes in any dish for almost a month, taking away an essential ingredient from her cooking. Khan and Singh may be at different points on the socio-economic spectrum but sit on the same side of a graph that has put everyday vegetables out of the

reach of many in Delhi-NCR. While restaurateurs and home catering businesses are looking at how to absorb the extra costs and wondering whether they should hike their rates, home cooks are going for alternatives or just doing without. "How can one make almost anything without onions, tomatoes or potatoes? Not that other vegetables are any cheaper, but these are the essentials for middle class families," Singh told PTI.

According to the daily retail report by the Department of Consumer Affairs Friday, potatoes were selling at the national average of nearly ₹40 per kg going up to ₹93 per kg, onions at the maximum price of ₹80 per kg and an average of ₹44 per kg, and tomatoes at maximum rate of ₹120 per kg with an average



price of ₹73 per kg. Khan has been affected by the price rise from two sides - as a seller and consumer - and said the last few weeks have been difficult for business.

On Sunday, for instance, at a Mother Dairy retail store, beans were priced at ₹89 per kg, ridge

gourd or torai at ₹59, cauliflower at ₹139, capsicum at ₹119, apple gourd or tinda at ₹119, and eggplant at ₹59.

Media professional Mayank Sinha, who loves to cook at home, has switched to ginger-garlic paste and tomato puree for most of his dishes. The inflation has

Crop damage across states due to delayed rain is one reason for the skyrocketing prices of vegetables, including those in the gourd family, cauliflower and cabbage

also hit restaurants and catering services trying to absorb the price rise in their production cost for now.

Alok Aggarwal of Indian Republic Canteen in Connaught Place noted that there is a three to four per cent increase in the overall cost. But his is a new business and they cannot afford to "disrupt or change" their pricing structure.

The co-founder of the vegetarian restaurant added that they are not intending to switch ingredients or try alternatives.

Vegetable inflation has always been a sticky issue for food businesses, akin to walking a thin line between absorbing the increased cost or passing on the price increase to the customer, added Anup Agarwal of CaterNinja, an online catering brand.

Anup and Alok agree the price rise has some seasonal component to it, as it is usually this time of the year "when it pinches a little more than usual due to varying climatic conditions". But this year is tougher.

The CaterNinja co-founder has also decided to not pass the increased costs to the customers, but only if it "comes under control in the coming weeks".



We must do our best to let the whole country's people understand Taiwan's own history and culture, and establish a national identity that the 23 million people living in Taiwan are a community of destiny
LAI CHING-TE | PRESIDENT, TAIWAN

NETANYAHU SPEECH

Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu is to deliver a landmark speech to the US Congress this week as he fights off intense pressure to cut a Gaza war ceasefire deal with Hamas



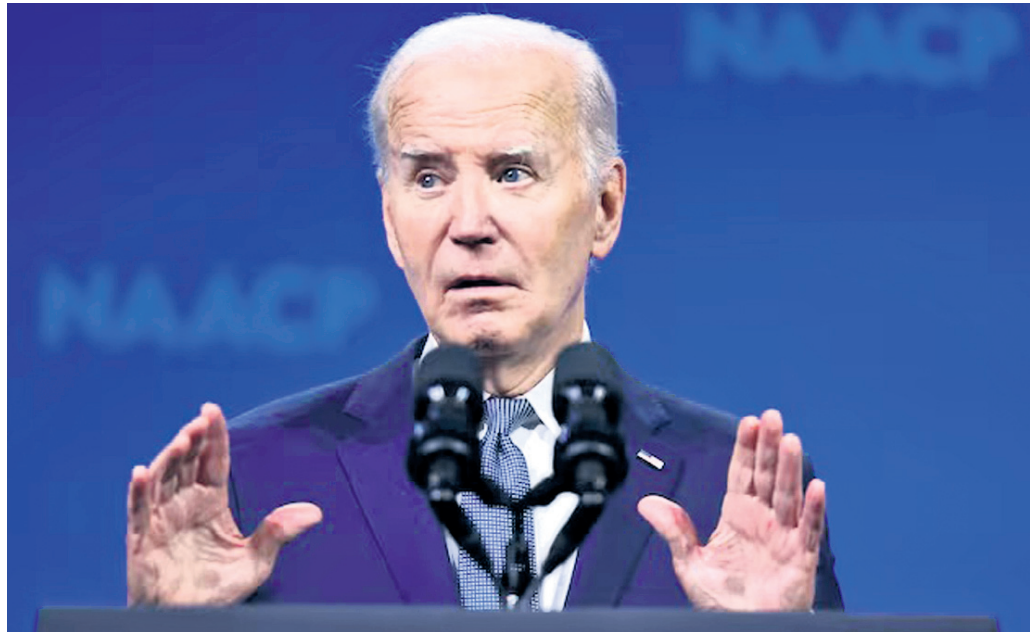
of the day quote

We think that the US elections will have a determining role in our defence industry. We will see separately what kinds of steps can be taken with the election results, but I think that the needle is turning in Turkey's favour
TAYYIP ERDOGAN | PRESIDENT, TURKEY

Our sufficient long-range capabilities should be a fair response to Russian terror. Everyone who supports us in this supports the defence against terror
VOLODYMYR ZELENSKY | PRESIDENT, UKRAINE

According to ancient tradition, may the Olympics be an opportunity to establish a truce in wars, demonstrating a sincere will for peace
POPE FRANCIS | HEAD OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Biden drops re-election bid



AGENCIES

Washington, July 21: US President Joe Biden ended his re-election campaign Sunday after fellow Democrats lost faith in his mental acuity and ability to beat Donald Trump, but did not immediately endorse Vice President Kamal Harris to replace him as candidate.

Biden, 81, in a post on X, said he will remain in his role as president and commander-in-chief until his term ends in

January 2025 and will address the nation this week.

"It has been the greatest honor of my life to serve as your President. And while it has been my intention to seek reelection, I believe it is in the best interest of my party and the country for me to stand down and to focus solely on fulfilling my duties as President for the remainder of my term," Biden wrote.

His move could clear the way for Harris to run at the top of the ticket, the first Black woman to

do so in the country's history. But Biden did not mention her in his announcement. It was unclear whether other senior Democrats would challenge Harris for the party's nomination, who was widely seen as the pick for many party officials - or whether the party itself would choose to open the field for nominations.

Biden's announcement follows a wave of public and private pressure from Democratic lawmakers and party officials to

quit the race after his shockingly poor performance in a June 27 televised debate against Republican rival Trump, 78.

Biden's failure at times to complete clear sentences took the public spotlight away from Trump's performance, in which he made a string of false statements, and trained it instead on questions surrounding Biden's fitness for another 4-year term.

Days later he raised fresh concerns in an interview, shrugging off Democrats' worries and a widening gap in opinion polls, and saying he would be fine losing to Trump if he knew he'd "gave it my all."

His gaffes at a NATO summit - invoking Russian President Vladimir Putin's name when he meant Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and calling Harris "Vice President Trump" - further stoked anxieties.

Only four days before Sunday's announcement, Biden was diagnosed with COVID-19 for a third time, forcing him to cut short a campaign trip to Las Vegas. More than one in 10 congressional Democrats had called publicly for him to quit the race.

Biden's historic move - the first sitting president to give up his party's nomination for re-election since President Lyndon Johnson in March 1968 - leaves his replacement with less than four months to wage a campaign.

MASSIVE SUCCESS

Oli wins trust vote



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kathmandu, July 21: Nepal Prime Minister K P Sharma Oli won a crucial floor test in Parliament Sunday with more than two-thirds of lawmakers voting in his favour, nearly a week after he was sworn in to lead a coalition government in the politically unstable Himalayan nation.

Oli secured 188 votes in favour of the Vote of Confidence motion tabled by him while 74 votes were cast against him. Out of a total of 263 members of the House of Representatives who were present, one member abstained. Oli, 72, required 138 votes to pass the floor test in the lower house of Parliament.

"I declare that the motion of the vote of confidence tabled by

Prime Minister Oli has been endorsed with a majority," announced Speaker Devraj Ghimire after the counting of votes.

Oli said that the agreement between the two major parties was part of the two largest parties' efforts to address the country's pressing issues. "We (the two parties) compete in our ideologies, but there are instances of collaboration between the Congress and the UML," he said.

"This is a continuation of that collaboration. We have agreed to work together to protect national interests, control corruption, improve governance, expedite development activities, and ensure political stability, in accordance with the public desire," Oli said.

Oli said his government will neither tolerate corruption nor let it happen. He said the government will confidently move forward for good governance.

Responding to issues raised by the HoR members Oli said, "I was not and will not get involved in corruption neither will tolerate if any one practices so."

Plea against Oli's appointment as PM

Kathmandu: Nepal's Supreme Court Sunday forwarded a petition challenging KP Sharma Oli's appointment as the country's Prime Minister to a constitutional bench, citing the need for a 'serious constitutional interpretation'. Within hours of the veteran Communist leader's swearing-in Monday, three advocates, Deepak Adhikari, Khagendra Prasad Chapagain and Shaileendra Kumar Gupta, filed the petition at the apex court.

SHORT TAKES

PIOs rescued from cybercrime scam

Phnom Penh: At least 14 Indian citizens trapped in a cybercrime scam in Cambodia were rescued, the Indian Embassy said in a statement Saturday and informed that they are working for their expeditious return home. The Indian Embassy in Cambodia in collaboration with the authorities got the 14 Indian citizens released and they are being looked after by the Cambodian side, the embassy said in a post on X. In an official press release, the embassy in Cambodia's capital here said it has facilitated the rescue and repatriation of over 650 Indian citizens.

Capsized Iranian destroyer salvaged

Tehran: The Iranian destroyer, dubbed Sahand, that had capsized off the coast of the southern port city of Bandar Abbas earlier this month has been salvaged, the semi-official Fars news agency reported. Sahand was pulled out of water Friday night with efforts by different technical and engineering units of the Iranian Navy and equipment. The destroyer, belonging to the Iranian Navy, was undergoing maintenance in the port city July 7 when it lost balance and capsized due to the infiltration of water into its ballast tanks, it added, Xinhua news agency reported.

SKorea responds to NK's trash balloons

Seoul: North Korea Sunday floated balloons carrying trash towards South Korea, South Korea's military said, declaring it would respond with "full-scale" loudspeaker broadcasts. The South Korean military said the North's actions raising tensions near the heavily armed border could have fatal consequences, adding the North Korean regime would be solely responsible.

Flash floods in China kill 20

Beijing: Flash floods in northern and southwest China have killed at least 20 people and left dozens missing, state media said Saturday, after a week of deadly downpours across the country. Several vehicles in northwestern Shaanxi province plunged into a swollen river late Friday after a bridge collapsed, with at least 12 people killed and over 30 missing, state news agency Xinhua reported.

BANGLADESH UNREST

Partial victory for protesters

REUTERS

Dhaka, July 21: Bangladesh's Supreme Court Sunday scrapped most of the quotas on government jobs that had sparked nationwide protests by students that have killed at least 114 people in recent days.

Dismissing a lower court order, the Supreme Court's Appellate Division directed that 93% of government jobs in the South Asian Country should be open to candidates on merit, Bangladesh Attorney General AM Amin Uddin told Reuters.

"Students have clearly said they are in no way part of the violence and arson that have taken place in Bangladesh since Monday," he said by phone. "I am hoping normalcy will return after today's ruling and people with ulterior motives will stop instigating people," Amin Uddin said. "I will ask the government to find out the culprits behind the violence and take strict action against them."

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's government had scrapped the quota system in 2018, but the lower court reinstated it last month, pegging total quotas at 56%, sparking the protests and an ensuing government crackdown.

Internet and text message services in Bangladesh have been suspended since Thursday, cutting off the nation of nearly 170 million people as security forces cracked down on protesters who defied a ban on public gatherings.

Police being granted shoot-on-sight order to quell student protests as death count mounts

Soldiers have been patrolling the streets of capital Dhaka, where army check points have been set up, after the government ordered a curfew late Friday.

Streets near the Supreme Court were quiet immediately after the decision, a Reuters witness said. A military tank was stationed outside the court's gate, television footage showed.

Local media had reported scattered clashes earlier in the day between protesters and security forces. Overseas telephone calls mostly failed to connect while websites of Bangladesh-based media organisations did not update and their social media accounts remained inactive.

OUTLOOK UNCERTAIN

The government extended the curfew as authorities braced for the Supreme Court hearing on the job quotas.

The curfew until 3 pm Sunday was to resume for an "uncertain time" after a two-hour break for people to gather supplies, local media reported.

Nationwide unrest broke out following student anger against quotas for government jobs that included reserving 30% of positions for the families of those who fought for independence from Pakistan.



Warships sail along the Neva River during a naval parade rehearsal in St. Petersburg, Russia, Sunday

Israel shoots down Yemen missile

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Jerusalem, July 21: The Israeli military said it intercepted a missile fired from Yemen early Sunday, hours after Israeli warplanes struck several Houthi targets in the Arabian Peninsula country.

The Israeli airstrikes, in response to a deadly Houthi drone strike on Tel Aviv, were the first time Israel is known to have responded to repeated Houthi attacks throughout its nine-month war against Hamas. The burst of violence between the distant enemies has threatened to open a new front as Israel battles a series of Iranian proxies across the region.

The Israeli army late Saturday confirmed the airstrikes in the western Yemeni port city of Hodeidah, a Houthi stronghold. It said the strikes, carried out by US-made F-15 and F-35 warplanes, were a response to hundreds of Houthi attacks.

The Health Ministry in Yemen said the Israeli strikes killed six people and wounded 83 others, many with severe burns. Another three people were missing, the ministry said in a statement shared by the Houthi-run al Masirah TV.

"All of this won't stop the Yemeni people or the Yemeni leadership, military and missile forces in targeting the Israeli entities," said Moatasem Abdel Salah, a Sanaa resident.

Israel, along with the US, the UK and other Western allies with forces in the region, have intercepted almost all of the Houthi missiles and drones.

'CAGED LIKE A TERRORIST'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Islamabad, July 21: Pakistan's jailed former premier Imran Khan has claimed that he is being caged like a "terrorist", and was denied basic prisoner and human rights in a "death cell" at a high-security jail.

The 71-year-old Pakistan-Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party founder made these claims in a rare interview from behind bars with British publication 'The Sunday Times', the Dawn news-



paper reported Sunday. "I am confined in a 7ft by 8ft death cell, typically reserved for terrorists to ensure they have no contact with anyone," he told the newspaper. "It is solitary confinement with barely any space to move. I am under constant surveillance by the agencies, being

recorded 24/7, and I am denied basic prisoner and human rights such as visitation," he said.

The interview was conducted via his lawyers, as, according to the article, he is not allowed a pencil and paper. Khan has been imprisoned at the high-security Adiala Jail in Rawalpindi for almost a year upon his conviction in three cases, the Toshakhana corruption case, the cipher case, and the un-Islamic marriage case, in which his wife, Bushra Bibi, is also jailed.

Small businesses grapple with global tech outages

MAJOR CUSTOMERS OF MICROSOFT AND CROWDSTRIKE ARE GETTING IT SUPPORT TO RESOLVE THE ISSUES, BUT MANY SMALLER BUSINESSES WHOSE WINDOWS PCS MAY HAVE RECEIVED THE PROBLEMATIC UPDATE ARE STILL STRUGGLING

ASSOCIATED PRESS

New York, July 21: An owner of a consumer insights research firm couldn't pay her employees, make Friday's deadline to sign a contract for a new business or send key research to a key client. A psychiatrist, who runs a virtual mental health practice in Maryland, saw his business hobbled as some of his virtual assistants and therapists couldn't either make phone calls or log on to their computers. And a restaur-

ant owner in New York City was worried about how he was going to pay his vendors and his workers.

Businesses from airlines to hospitals have been grappling with a faulty software update that caused technological havoc worldwide Friday, and its repercussions continued through the weekend. The breadth of the outages highlighted the fragility of a digitized world dependent on a few providers for key computing services.



But the problem appeared to divide those affected into haves and have-nots. Major customers of Microsoft and CrowdStrike are getting IT support to resolve the issues, but many smaller businesses whose Windows PCs may have received the problematic

update are still struggling. Take Tsvetta Kaleynska, owner and founder of the Manhattan-based consumer insights company RILA Global Consulting, which has Fortune 500 clients. As of Saturday, she resolved the payroll issue and she got an ex-

tension until Monday on the research project. But the prospective client will not move forward with the new contract, cutting her annual earnings by nearly 25%, she estimated. The problem, she couldn't sign the contract because CrowdStrike, which runs on Microsoft software affected by the faulty update, was down.

"If I were part of a big company, then I would be able to delegate and get support from computer science or security services," Kaleynska said. "But as a small business owner, I am depending only on myself. It's pretty devastating."

On top of Kaleynska's business issues, she had to bring her ill daughter to a local hospital Friday because the hospital's phone lines were down.

Kaleynska, an immigrant from Bulgaria who became a US cit-

izen in 2023, said she's learned a hard lesson. "Our lives are very fragile because they're based on technology, and we depend on technology."

CrowdStrike is one of the largest cybersecurity firms in the US and has a list of customers that includes more than half of the Fortune 500 companies as well as small and medium-sized businesses. Following the outage, the company provided an initial fix through a software update. But many computers are expected to need hands-on work that could take days, if not longer, to complete.

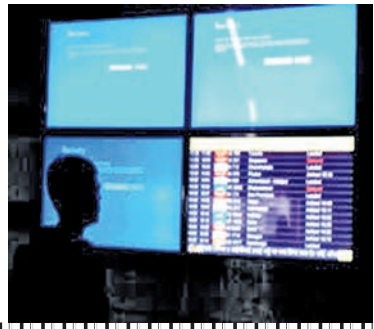
For many small businesses that are impacted, that could mean working around the clock this weekend to make sure their systems are up and running, said Wedbush tech analyst Dan Ives.



With India's economy on the rise, the energy needs of the country are growing exponentially
SHRIKANT MADHAV VAIDYA | CHAIRMAN, INDIAN OIL CORPORATION

MICROSOFT DEPLOYS EXPERTS

US software giant Microsoft has deployed hundreds of engineers and experts with its customers to restore their services after an outage caused by its cybersecurity partner CrowdStrike, the company said in a blog. According to Microsoft, 8.5 million devices across the world were impacted by the outage caused by an update from CrowdStrike July 18.



of the day quote

As we anticipate the first comprehensive budget of the year, I look forward to another growth-oriented budget, especially that boosts manufacturing and infrastructure, essential pillars for our nation's progress

ABHYUDAY JINDAL | MD, JINDAL STAINLESS LTD

We want to build leadership in EV, and in order to do that, we will be creating a very powerful EV product portfolio, augmenting the VIDA V1 Pro that we have today

NIRANJAN GUPTA | CEO, HERO MOTOCORP

We have to see how the raw material prices pan out. If it keeps going up, there will be an impact on demand

ARNAB BANERJEE | MD AND CEO, CEAT LTD

SHORT TAKES

Vedanta raises ₹8,500cr via QIP

New Delhi: Mining conglomerate Vedanta Limited raised ₹8,500 crore (over USD 1 billion) through Qualified Institutions Placement (QIP) of 19.31 crore equity shares at an issue price of ₹440 per share, according to a stock exchange filing by the company. The issue, which closed July 19, implied a discount of 4.61 per cent to the floor price of ₹461.26 per equity share. In a stock exchange filing, Vedanta said it sold 19.31 crore shares to raise ₹8,500 crore. Some of the marquee investors that have been allotted equity shares through the QIP include Abu Dhabi Investment Authority (ADIA), Goldman Sachs AMC, Nippon Mutual Fund, SBI Mutual Fund, UTI Mutual Fund, ICICI Mutual Fund, Aditya Birla Mutual Fund and Mirae Mutual Fund. Various funds run by Nippon Mutual Fund were allotted 9.11 per cent of the total issue size, while funds managed by Morgan Stanley and SBI Mutual Fund received 8.62 per cent and 7.88 per cent, respectively.

Land deals drop 57%: Anarock

New Delhi: Land acquisitions remained muted during April-June, and only 25 deals covering 325 acres were closed during this period, mainly due to high prices and general elections, according to Anarock. In contrast, there were 29 land deals closed in the year-ago period, comprising 721 acres. Real estate consultant Anarock pointed out that the general elections and the heated land prices seem to have dented the appetite for land acquisition for developers and other entities in the second quarter of 2024.

Mcap of most valued firms up

New Delhi: The combined market valuation of eight of the top-10 most valued firms jumped ₹2,10,330.26 crore in a holiday-shortened last week, with Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) and Life Insurance Corporation of India emerging as the biggest gainers. Last week, the BSE benchmark climbed 85.31 points or 0.10 per cent. The 30-share BSE Sensex hit its new all-time high of 81,587.76 Friday. Stock markets were closed Wednesday on account of Muharram. From the top-10 group, the valuation of TCS zoomed ₹42,639.16 crore to ₹15,56,772.61 crore. The market capitalisation (mcap) of Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) surged ₹36,748.23 crore to ₹7,01,695.24 crore.

Demand for AI/ML engineers surges since 2022: Report



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, July 21: Demand for artificial intelligence and machine learning (AI/ML) engineers has seen a significant increase since 2022, a report has said.

The demand for such roles surged 433 per cent, reflecting the growing reliance on artificial intelligence and machine learning technologies across various sectors, it said.

This is closely followed by Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) executives, which saw a 314 per cent increase in demand, underscoring the continued expansion of the outsourcing and customer service industries, the Indeed report stated.

These two roles, though vastly different in skill requirements,

are driving significant employment growth at both ends of the skill spectrum, said the report.

This report is based on demand data on various professions and industries on job platform Indeed from January 2022 to June 2024.

The report further said AI/ML engineers represent highly specialised, technical positions, while BPO executives are indicative of the robust demand for more generalised, customer-oriented roles.

Meanwhile, the report revealed that receptionists, travel consultants, and electricians also feature prominently on the list, showcasing a diverse range of in-demand roles.

Job postings for receptionists have increased 310 per cent, highlighting the need for effective

front-office management and customer interaction, while travel consultants have experienced a 285 per cent rise, suggesting a resurgence in the travel and tourism sector as people regain confidence in travelling post-pandemic, the report stated.

This trend could be driven by a combination of increased leisure travel and the resumption of business travel, reflecting a broader recovery in the tourism sector, it added.

On the sectoral front, the report found that the sanitation and construction industries are also experiencing the highest growth, with job postings increasing 160 per cent and 121 per cent, respectively.

Electricians are in high demand with a 258 per cent increase in job postings, indicating a surge in infrastructure projects and real estate developments requiring skilled trades people, it said. Other sectors showing significant job growth include education, and medical research, reflecting rising needs in healthcare and educational services, it added.

"These trends offer valuable insights for jobseekers and employers alike, illustrating how both high-tech and service-oriented roles are essential to the evolving job landscape," Indeed India Head of Sales Sashi Kumar said.

Budget, earnings, global trends to drive markets



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 21: The outcome of the Union Budget, quarterly earnings from corporates and global trends are the major factors to drive stock market sentiments this week, analysts said.

Besides, the trading activity of foreign investors, the rupee-dollar trend and the movement of global oil benchmark Brent crude are also crucial aspects to watch out for.

"The upcoming Union Budget July 23, 2024, has become the next focal point for the market, with high expectations for growth-oriented policies. Several factors will influence the market direction, including Q1 FY25 earnings, domestic and global economic data, and broader global market trends. Market sentiment will be closely monitored by observing foreign and domestic institutional investor activity (FI and DI) and crude oil prices," said Pravesh Gour, Senior Technical Analyst,

Swastika Investmart Ltd.

Among blue-chip firms Bajaj Finance, Hindustan Unilever, Axis Bank, Bajaj Finserv, Larsen & Toubro, DLF, Tech Mahindra and Nestle will announce their earnings during the week.

"The market direction will be determined by the upcoming Budget outcome," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services, said.

The Union Budget will provide the next set of directions to the market, Siddhartha Khemka, Head - Retail Research, Motilal Oswal Financial Services Ltd, said. "Earnings season will also pick up pace, which will result in stock-specific actions," he added.

HDFC Bank will remain in focus Monday after the company's consolidated net profit grew 33.17 per cent to ₹16,474.85 crore in the June 2024 quarter.

Last week, the BSE benchmark climbed 85.31 points or 0.10 per cent, and the Nifty went up marginally by 28.75 points or 0.11 per cent.

FPIs invest ₹30,772 crore in equities in July so far



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 21: Foreign investors injected ₹30,772 crore into Indian equities so far this month, driven by hopes of continued policy reforms, sustained economic growth and a better-than-expected earnings season.

Additionally, the anticipation of a reform-oriented budget has also lifted investor sentiment, Himanshu Srivastava, Associate Director - Manager Research at Morningstar Investment Research India, said.

Going forward, if the recent trend of weakness in dollar and bond yields persists, FPIs are likely to continue their buying in the market, VK Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Financial Services, said. Domestic and foreign investors

are keenly watching for possible tweaks in the long-term capital gains tax in the Budget to be presented on July 23, he added.

According to the data with the depositories, Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) have made a net inflow of ₹30,772 crore in equities this month (till July 19).

This came following an inflow of ₹26,565 crore in equities in the entire June driven by political stability and the sharp rebound in markets.

Before that, FPIs withdrew ₹25,586 crore in May on poll jitters and over ₹8,700 crore in April on concerns over a tweak in India's tax treaty with Mauritius and a sustained rise in US bond yields.

"The formation of the NDA government at the Centre for the third consecutive term has had a positive impact on investor sentiments. It has raised expectations for continued policy reforms and sustained economic growth," Srivastava said.

Additionally, the better-than-expected earnings season so far has also worked towards building investor confidence, he added.

Apart from equities, FPIs invested ₹13,573 crore in the debt market during the period under review. This has pushed the debt tally to ₹82,197 crore this year so far.

Airbus shortlists eight sites for H125 final assembly line in India



For Airbus, H125 is the most-sold helicopter in India as well as South Asia. Airbus has projected the demand for H125 in India and neighbouring countries at 500

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Marignane (France), July 21: European major Airbus has shortlisted eight sites in India for setting up its final assembly line for H125 helicopters and the groundbreaking ceremony for the facility is expected later this year.

The facility, which will be the fourth Final Assembly Line (FAL) for the single engine H125, will initially produce up to 10 helicopters annually and the capacity will be ramped up depending on the market demand,

Airbus officials said.

"India is the market of the future for helicopters... at present, the market is extremely embryonic, it is very small compared to what the potential could be," Olivier Michalon, Executive Vice President Global Business of Airbus Helicopters, said.

The ground breaking ceremony for the FAL is expected in October or November this year and the facility will be operational in 2026 and the delivery is anticipated to start towards the end of 2026.

"We have identified eight sites which we are currently assessing. We are still in the final assessment stage. We should be in a position to announce it shortly. We want to be attractive and in an ecosystem that is best suited for industrial activities, logistics, employees and of course, regulations," Michalon said at a briefing at Marignane earlier this week.

Marignane is the headquarters of Airbus Helicopters.

For Airbus, H125 is the most-sold helicopter in India as well as the South Asia region.

Airbus has projected the demand for H125 helicopters in India and neighbouring countries at 500 over the next 20 years.

"We are targeting 10 helicopters per year and as the demand picks up we can ramp up," Head of Airbus Helicopters in India and South Asia Sunny Guglani said at the briefing.

Michalon stressed that 10 might not sound like a lot and it could be 20, 30, or 50 in some years, depending on the market demand.

"We manufacture, sell and support helicopters. Also, we manufacture, sell and support solutions. This is what we can provide. Make In India solutions," he said.

Sitharman set to make history with 7th consecutive Budget

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 21: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman is set to create history when she presents her seventh straight Budget Tuesday for the fiscal 2024-25, surpassing the record of former Prime Minister Morarji Desai.

Sitharaman, who will turn 65 next month, was in 2019 appointed as India's first full-time woman finance minister when Prime Minister Narendra Modi won a decisive second term. Since then, she has presented six straight Budgets, including an interim one in February this year.

The full Budget for the 2024-25 fiscal (April 2024 to March 2025) will be her seventh straight. She will better Desai's record, who presented consecutive five full budgets and one interim Budget between 1959 to 1964.

This year will witness two Budgets - an interim one in February and a full one this month. This is because an incumbent government cannot present a full Budget just before general elections.

The presentation on July 23 will be the first Budget by the BJP-led NDA government since it was re-elected last month.

Here are some facts related to Budget presentation in Independent India:

FIRST BUDGET: The first-ever Union Budget of independent India was presented November 26, 1947, by the nation's first finance minister RK Shanmukham Chetty.

MOST NUMBER OF BUDGETS: Former Prime Minister Morarji Desai holds the record for presenting the most Budgets. He has presented a total of 10 Budgets during his tenure as finance minister under Prime



Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and later under Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri.

SECOND HIGHEST NUMBER OF BUDGETS: Former finance minister P Chidambaram presented the Budget on nine occasions. He

first presented the Budget March 19, 1996, during the United Front government led by Prime Minister HD Deve Gowda. He presented another budget under the same government next year and returned to the hot seat

when the Congress-led UPA came to power in 2014.

MANMOHAN SINGH: Former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh presented five straight Budgets between 1991 and 1995 when he was finance minister in the PV Narasimha Rao government.

LONGEST BUDGET SPEECH: Sitharaman holds the record for the longest Budget speech when her presentation February 1, 2020, lasted two hours and 40 minutes. At the time, she cut short her speech with two pages still remaining.

SHORTEST BUDGET SPEECH: Hirubhai Mulljibhai Patel's interim Budget speech in 1977 is so far the shortest at just 800 words.

TIMING: The Budget was traditionally presented on the last day of February at 5 pm. The timing followed a colonial era practice when the announcements could be made in London

Complex procedures, import restrictions hit garment exports: GTRI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 21: Issues like complex procedures of DGFT and customs, import restrictions and domestic vested interests are holding up the export growth of the Indian garment sector, think tank GTRI said Sunday.

At the root of the exporters' problem is difficulty in obtaining quality raw fabric, particularly synthetic fabric, the Global Trade Research Initiative said.

"Unlike in Bangladesh and Vietnam, where exporters easily access quality imported fabrics, Indian exporters struggle daily. High import duties on fabrics, coupled with DGFT (Directorate General of Foreign Trade) and Customs; intricate procedures, force exporters to meticulously account for every inch and type of fabric imported," GTRI founder Ajay Srivastava said.

He added that the imposition of mandatory quality norms on raw materials like polyester and viscose staple fibres is complicating imports as the BIS (Bureau of Indian Standards) slowly registers foreign suppliers, and this delay compels exporters to buy from domestic monopolies at higher prices.

A GTRI report alleged that the procedures of DGFT and customs are archaic, and it requires exporters to meticulously account for every square centimetre of fabric, buttons, and zippers used.

A complex maze discourages even the most enterprising exporters. So, there is an urgent need for a comprehensive overhaul, it said, adding that there is also a need to modify the production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme for the textiles sector.

On the procedures, it said that these issues create serious problems for industry players, and that needs to be resolved.

Citing examples, the report said the DGFT's import policy circular of 2001 requires that all imports of textiles must be accompanied by a Pre-shipment Inspection Certificate (PSIC) issued by a Textile Testing Laboratory accredited to the National Accreditation Agency of the supplier country.

This circular exempts imports for export purposes, yet Customs does not allow such imports without a PSIC and subjects all textile goods to mandatory compliance requirements for customs examination, causing tremendous stress on the clearance of shipments daily, it claimed, adding that all imports of textiles should be cleared based on self-declaration by the firms.

It also said firms obtain advance authorisations from DGFT for importing duty-free inputs for export production, and the directorate currently requires that unutilised authorisations surrendered to them must be accompanied by a non-utilisation letter/certificate from Customs.

India's textile industry, valued at USD 250 billion, provides jobs to 50 million people. The sector is divided into three broad categories - Textiles (fibre, yarn, and fabrics); Garments and; Made-ups (Bed sheets, curtains etc.). India is present across all parts of the value chain.

Eves cruise past UAE

India ride on half centuries by Kaur, Ghosh to win 2nd game of Women's Asia Cup



Richa Ghosh (left) and Harmanpreet Kaur played crucial knocks for India against the UAE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dambulla, July 21: Contrasting half centuries from skipper Harmanpreet Kaur (66, 47b, 7x4, 1x6) and Richa Ghosh (64 n o, 29b, 12x4, 1x6) were complemented nicely by the bowlers as India notched up a massive 78-run win over UAE in their second match of the ongoing women's Asia Cup T20 tournament here Sunday.

Invited to bat, Kaur played the anchor's role to perfection while Ghosh produced a late charge to power defending champions India to 201 for five, their first-ever 200-plus score in T20Is. The bowlers, led by Deepti Sharma (2/23), then produced a clinical show to limit UAE to 123 for seven as India put one foot in the semifinals. With two wins in as many games, India occupy the top spot in Group A with four points and have a net run rate of +3.298. India will play their third and final group game Tuesday against Nepal.

Chasing the daunting total, opener Sharda Rohit Oza (38, 36b, 5x4, 1x6) tried to offer some resistance. However, UAE never were in the chase as they kept losing wickets at regular intervals.

Pace duo of Renuka Singh (1/30) and Pooja Vastrakar (1/27) dismissed Theertha Satish (4) and Rinitha Rajith (7) as UAE slipped to 24 for two in 5.2

Tanuja replaces injured Shreyanka

Dambulla: Young India spinner Shreyanka Patil has been ruled out of the remainder of the on-going Women's Asia Cup T20 tournament after breaking the fourth finger of her left hand during the match against Pakistan. She has been replaced by Tanuja Kanwar in the squad, the Asian Cricket Council (ACC) said in a release. The 21-year-old Patil had played a vital role against Pakistan, bagging two wickets.

overs. Deepti then struck with her third delivery, removing Samaira Dharmidharka (5), but Oza and Kavisha Egodage (40 n o, 32b, 3x4, 1x6) played some entertaining shots and put on 40 runs for the fourth wicket.

Earlier, while the 35-year-old Harmanpreet blasted seven fours and a six during her innings, Ghosh slammed 12 boundaries and a maximum, including five consecutive hits to the fence in the final over of the innings bowled by Heena Hotchandani.

Kaur stitched two crucial partnerships, adding 54 off 39 balls with Jemmimah Rodrigues (14) and 75 off 45 balls with Ghosh to put India in a

commanding position.

Opener Smriti Mandhana (13) blasted a six and a four to give India a good start but an overambitious shot saw her holing out at mid-off off spinner Egodage in the third over. Shafali Verma then produced some sensational shots, carting the bowlers for five fours and a six en route to an 18-ball 37. But she committed the mistake of edging a short and wide ball from seamer Dharmidharka as the keeper did the rest.

After India were reduced to 52 for three, Kaur and Rodrigues joined hands to resurrect the innings. Once Rodrigues was dismissed by Egodage in the 12th over, Ghosh displayed her boundary-hitting prowess, using her cover drive to perfection to rack up 18 runs off Oza's over with four boundaries.

"We tried to avoid risky shots when I was batting with Jemmimah. We focused on running hard. The moment Richa came in she started striking the ball beautifully. My job was to rotate the strike and I did just that," Kaur said after game.

BRIEF SCORES

India 201 for 5 (Harmanpreet Kaur 66, Richa Ghosh 64 n o) beat UAE 123 for 7 (Kavisha Egodage 40 n o, Deepti Sharma 2/23) by 78 runs

A CHANCE TO BE PART OF
METTLE MEET 2024
OrissaPOST
HERE . NOW

It's time for **METTLE MEET** – an initiative by the state's only homegrown English daily to revive quizzing in Odisha. This year, the **Preliminaries** will take place **August 3** and the **Grand Finale August 4**. Like in previous years, most of the top educational institutions of Odisha – both schools and colleges will be competing for the **Grand Prize of ₹1,00,000** in the Junior and Senior segments.

A QUIZ Extravaganza

RULES & REGULATIONS

- Everyone will have to mail their answers to mettlemeet@orissapost.com
- Answers to the questions will follow the next day. The names of the winners will also be announced along with their pictures.
- Answers mailed between 8.00am to 6.00pm each day will be considered valid.
- **Orissa POST's** decision on all entries will be final. No complaints will be entertained.
- Participants must send their entries with a **passport size photograph, mobile numbers and residential address**. Otherwise the entries will be rejected.
- There can be only one winner from one family.
- Invitation cards to the winners will only be issued on presentation of **Valid ID proof – Voter Card, Aadhaar Card, Driving License, Passport, School ID card** (In case of students till Class XI)
- No employee of **Orissa POST** or their family members can be part of the competition

TODAY'S QUESTION

Started in 1919, after the demand for such products increased due to the end of the World War I, Otto Bock is a company which has done tremendous work in their field. Their famous products include Michelangelo Hand and C-Leg. Which sporting event have they been sponsoring since the 1980s?

Tiffin

ANSWER TO SUNDAY'S QUESTION

THE TWO LUCKY WINNERS



ANURAG SAMANTARY



JOSEPH JOHN

Others who answered correctly are Shivani Mishra, Jaba Dasgupta, Bhumika Subhalaxmi, Abhijit Raychaudhuri, Sarojini Garanayak, Debadatta Tripathy, Jignesh Kumar, Ayushi Pradhan and N Harapriya Reddy

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SHORT TAKES

Odisha juniors emerge champions

Kolkata: Hockey Association of Odisha and Hockey Jharkhand claimed the men's and women's titles respectively at the junior East Zone Championships here Sunday. Hockey Association of Odisha defeated Hockey Jharkhand 2-0 in the final. Aryan Xess (25th) and Deonath Nanwar (27th) were the scorers for Odisha. In the women's summit clash Hockey Jharkhand beat Hockey Bengal 4-3 in the shootout after the match ended 1-1 in the regulation time. Hockey Association of Odisha women finished third beating Manipur 4-0 in the third-fourth play-off match.

Yuki bags his 3rd doubles crown

Gstaad (Switzerland): India's Yuki Bhambri and his French partner Albano Olivetti clinched the men's doubles title at the Swiss Open ATP Tour tennis tournament with a hard-fought win over Ugo Humbert and Fabrice Martin in the final here Sunday. The pair of Bhambri and Olivetti, seeded third in the ATP 250 clay court tournament beat their French opponents 3-6, 6-3, 10-6 to win the title in a match that lasted 66 minutes. This was the third ATP doubles title for the 32-year-old Bhambri and second while partnering with Olivetti.

Title eludes Nadal at Nordea Open

Bastad (Sweden): Rafael Nadal's winning run at the clay court Nordea Open tennis tournament ended Sunday when the Spaniard was beaten by Nuno Borges 3-6, 2-6 in the final Sunday. The seventh-seeded Portuguese player broke Nadal's serve five times on his way to a first ATP tour victory. It was Nadal's first final since the 2022 French Open. Nadal was playing here for the first time since he won the title as a 19-year-old in 2005 as he prepares for the Olympics in Paris.

CHOPRA READY FOR PARIS: COACH

JAVELIN THROWER HAS OVERCOME ADDUCTOR NIGGLE, SAYS KLAUS BARTONIEZ

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 21: The adductor niggle that has troubled Neeraj Chopra in the past couple of months 'is fine' now and the reigning Olympic champion has entered the high intensity phase of his Paris preparations, his German coach Klaus Bartonietz told this agency Sunday, dismissing concerns surrounding the Indian star's fitness. The 26-year-old Chopra is once again the country's best bet for a top podium finish in the Paris Games beginning July 26.

"Everything is according to plan. At the moment, no issue with that (adductor niggle), it's fine, it looks good, hoping to remain like that till the Olympics," the coach, who has been with Chopra for close to five years, stated from Antalya, Turkey where they are currently based



for training. "It's just over two weeks left in the Olympics, so the intensity of training is high. He is having full throwing sessions," the coach added.

Chopra withdrew from Ostrava Golden Spike May 28 as a precautionary measure after he felt 'something' in his adductor (group of muscles located on inner

thighs). He made a strong comeback by winning gold at the Paavo Nurmi Games in Finland June 18 with a throw of 85.97m.

Chopra's competition day is just two weeks away with the qualification round scheduled August 6. Asked about the training routine of Chopra, Bartonietz said, "We have sessions of sprint-

Olympics is a high-stake and high-pressure situation and anything can happen. Guessing a medal on the basis of statistics is difficult

KLAUS BARTONIEZ-COACH

ing, jumping or throwing or weightlifting alternately for activation in the morning. Two sessions, one in morning and one in evening, two to two-and-a-half-hours long every session," Bartonietz said.

Chopra has maintained that he is focusing more on training than competitions this time. He is working on strengthening his blocking leg to mitigate pressure on his groin.

"Yes. Generally, javelin throw is all about it (having fast runway and blocking well). It's very hard to throw far with a poor runway," Bartonietz asserted.

Controversy engulfs archery contingent

'Tainted' physio included in team in place of chief coach

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Paris, July 21: A day after their Korean chief coach Baek Woong Ki was forced to leave following denial of Olympic accreditation, India's archery contingent found themselves at the centre of another controversy as it was alleged that a 'tainted' physio was accommodated at his expense.

The contingent will be without Woong Ki and Dronacharya award-winning high performance director Sanjeeva Singh as both of them could not find a place as support staff.

A top Archery Association of India (AAI) official revealed that instead, physio Arvind Yadav has been included despite the fact that he faced allegations of making an 'inappropriate ap-

The physio had allegedly made an inappropriate approach to a Canadian teenager at the Youth World Championships in Ireland

proach' to a Canadian teenager during the Youth World Championships in Limerick, Ireland in November last year.

"As per the complaint from the World Archery (WA) competition manager Thomas Aubert, he (Yadav) had made an inappropriate approach to a Canadian teenager on social media," the official told this agency.

Yadav, when reached out, rejected the charge altogether. "It's a conspiracy to malign me. Nothing of this sort has happened. Why didn't AAI take action against me then?" he asked.

Paes, Vijay in 'Hall of Fame'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Newport (USA), July 21: Legendary Indian tennis players, Leander Paes and Vijay Amritraj, the heroes of many a historic triumph transcending generations, became Sunday the first two exponents of the sport from Asia to be inducted into the 'International Hall of Fame'.

Paes, 51, whose list of achievements include the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games men's singles bronze, eight men's doubles and 10 mixed doubles Grand Slam crowns besides several famed Davis Cup victories, was given the rare honour in the 'Player Category'.

Amritraj, 70, reached the men's singles quarterfinals at



the Wimbledon and US Open twice each besides guiding India to the Davis Cup finals twice – in 1974 and 1987. At his peak, he was ranked No.18 in the world in singles and No 23 in doubles. He was inducted into the Hall

of Fame in the 'Contributor Category'.

"Paes was inducted in the Player Category, while Amritraj was recognised as a part of the Contributor Category; honouring visionary leaders, pioneers, or individuals who have made a consummate impact on the sport," said the 'International Tennis Hall of Fame' statement.

Paes spent 37 weeks at No. 1 in the world rankings in doubles, and won 54 doubles titles on tour. He is one of only three men in tennis history to capture a career Grand Slam in both disciplines. Paes, who hails from Kolkata, competed in seven straight Olympic Games between Barcelona, 1992 to Rio, 2016, the most in tennis history.

Jarman banking on mom's inspiration

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 21: Eight years back, when a dreamy eyed Jarmanpreet Singh was banned for failing a dope test, he didn't know what life had in store for him other than mother Kulwinder Kaur's staunch belief that her son will eventually come up trumps after battling the odds. So when Jarmanpreet dons the India jersey to make his 107th international appearance at the Yves-du-Manoir hockey stadium against New Zealand July 27th, his biggest support Kulwinder will be present in the stands with a prayer on her lips and cheer in her voice. This is the first Olympics for

28-year-old Jarmanpreet, who has been a part of marquee tournaments like the World Cup, Champions Trophy, Asian Games and he wants to heal the wounds of the past by performing well.

"I am trying to make travel plans for my mother. I want her to be in Paris when I make my Olympic debut. She should feel proud that her son is playing the biggest tournament," Jarmanpreet said before his departure for Paris.

"I talk to my mother before every match. She knows nothing about hockey but she tells me to play like this, play like that. She is my first coach but above all my greatest supporter," he added.

PCB to invite India for bilateral T20I series

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERIES

Islamabad, July 21: Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chairman Mohsin Naqvi is likely to invite India to a T20I bilateral series at a neutral venue in 2025. The invitation to India will be extended very soon at the ICC annual conference currently on in Colombo. Naqvi is likely to meet BCCI secretary Jay Shah Monday where he will formally invite BCCI for the series.

"The proposal will be discussed during the meeting of Mohsin Naqvi with Jay Shah (BCCI secretary), with matches potentially scheduled during the free days of both teams after the Champions Trophy," said the PCB source here Sunday.