

Pari's philosophy
 Actor Parineeti Chopra says every moment should be a personal choice and that one should cease to live for others

LEISURE | P2

Harris meets Netanyahu
 US VP Kamala Harris urges Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu to quickly conclude a ceasefire deal with Hamas

INTERNATIONAL | P9

Markets rebound
 Benchmark Sensex rebounds by 1,293 points while Nifty shoots up to a record high Friday, cutting short the five-day losing streak

BUSINESS | P10

Eves in final
 India wallops Bangladesh by 10 wickets to march into their ninth women's Asia Cup final

SPORTS | P12

Odisha tops deaths in elephant attacks

Press Trust of India

New Delhi, July 26: Odisha recorded 624 human deaths in human-elephant conflicts in the last five years, the highest in the country, according to government data.

Nationwide, human-elephant conflicts resulted in 2,853 human deaths during the past five years, with the number of fatalities reaching a five-year high of 628 in 2023. Responding to a question in the Rajya Sabha, Union Minister of State for Environment Kirti Vardhan Singh said 'elephants caused' 587 human deaths in 2019, 471 in 2020, 557 in 2021, 610 in 2022 and 628 in 2023.

Odisha was followed by Jharkhand with 474 deaths, West Bengal with 436, Assam with 383, Chhattisgarh with 303, Tamil Nadu with 256, Karnataka with 160 and Kerala with 124. P5

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Is it because of rains or the Kanwariyas?

SABOTEURS TARGET GAMES

AGENCIES

Paris, July 26: The Olympic Games began here, Friday with a colourful opening ceremony, despite saboteurs targeting France's high-speed rail network with widespread and 'criminal' acts of vandalism including arson attacks, only hours before the event.

The ceremony began with the 'Parade of the Nations' in which athletes from 205 countries sailed down the iconic Seine river on boats, marking a dreamy break from tradition despite rain threatening to play spoilsport. The six kilometre parade began from Austerlitz bridge and 85 boats carried more than 6800 athletes from 205 nations and one Refugee Olympic team, with a good number of them skipping the incredible show due to their competitions Saturday.

Earlier in the day, French officials condemned the attacks as 'criminal actions,' and prosecutors in Paris opened a national investigation, saying the crimes could carry sentences of 15 to 20 years.

"It's a hell of a way to start the Olympics," said Sarah Moseley, a 42-year-old traveller waiting at the Gare du Nord station in Paris as she learned that her train to London was delayed by the rail chaos.

As Paris authorities geared up for a spectacular parade on and along the Seine River, three fires were reported near the



GALA CEREMONY: The Indian contingent led by flag-bearers PV Sindhu and Sharath Kamal at the opening ceremony of the 2024 Olympic Games in Paris, Friday

tracks on the high-speed lines of Atlantique, Nord and Est, causing disruptions that affected hundreds of thousands of travellers.

Among them were two German athletes in showjumping who were on a train to Paris to take part in the opening ceremony but had to turn back in

Belgium because of the closures, and will now miss the ceremony, German news agency dpa reported.

Attal wrote on the social media platform X that France's intelligence services have been mobilised to find the perpetrators. Attal characterised them as

BOMB ALERT

BRUSSELS: The Franco-Swiss airport of Basel-Mulhouse was evacuated and closed for a short while Friday due to a bomb alert, hours before the Olympics opening ceremony in Paris was due to start, airport authorities said. "For safety reasons, the terminal had to be evacuated," the airport said on its website at the time. Around midday, the airport said it was reopening and that flight operations would gradually resume. An air traffic controller at the airport told Reuters it was the seventh alert since last October. An Air France flight to Paris could not take off due to the bomb alert, an Air France representative told Reuters.

'acts of sabotage,' which were 'prepared and coordinated.' There were no known reports of injuries.

Transport Minister Patrice Vergriete described people fleeing from the scene of fires and the discovery of incendiary devices. "Everything indicates that these are criminal fires," he said.

It was 'a premeditated, calculated, coordinated attack' that indicates 'a desire to seriously harm' the French people, the CEO of the national railway company SNCF, Jean-Pierre Farandou, said.

MORE P11 & 12

10% quota for Agniveers in uniformed services: CM

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 26: Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Friday announced a 10 per cent reservation for Agniveers of Odisha who are not absorbed in the defence services.

Speaking to mediapersons at Lok Seva Bhawan before leaving for New Delhi to attend the NITI Aayog Governing Council meeting, the Chief Minister said that "our soldiers are our pride."

"The Agniveers, who are trained by our defence forces, are qualified to serve the nation in various security related sectors."

The Chief Minister further said that the Agniveer scheme is a historic initiative launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. "This initiative has made our youth able and fearless, so that they can face various challenges in life," he added. That is why, the Chief Minister said, the Odisha government has decided to recruit Agniveers in the state's uniformed services.



He announced that the state government will provide up to 10 per cent reservation in its uniformed services for those Agniveers from the state who are not absorbed in the defence forces. There will also be five years of age relaxation for them, the CM said.

On the same day, the Chief Ministers of Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh also announced reservations for Agniveers in their respective states, while backing the scheme. Earlier, Haryana had announced reservation for Agniveers in the state.

Potato shortage hits state

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, July 26: With potato prices touching ₹50 a kg due to 'inadequate' supply from neighbouring West Bengal, the Odisha government Friday said it was contemplating to procure the tuber from Uttar Pradesh.

This was stated by Food Supplies and Consumer Welfare Minister Krishna Chandra Patra after reviewing the situation in the market. The minister visited a potato stockyard at Aiginia in Bhubaneswar and said that the state has enough potato stock to meet the requirement for seven days. However, the minister admitted that there was an unusual price rise in the market and he has asked the officials to initiate stern action against hoarders and those selling potatoes at higher prices.

"There is sufficient stock of potatoes in the state which could cater to the needs for seven or eight days. Strict action will be taken against those responsible for creating artificial scarcity and price hike of potatoes in Odisha market," the minister

Minister Krishna Chandra Patra admitted that there was an unusual price rise in the market and he has asked the officials to initiate stern action against hoarders and those selling potatoes at higher prices

said. He said that the dealers are purchasing a kilo of potato at the rate of ₹26 and the people should get the tuber at the rate of ₹35 per kilo. However, the price of potato remained at about ₹50 a kg in the open market, Patra said.

Patra said the state government was contemplating to procure potatoes from Uttar Pradesh. The minister said that the price rise of potatoes is due to 'half' in supply from West Bengal. The supply from the neighbouring state remained suspended due to the strike by cold storage owners in West Bengal. The issue was also raised in the Assembly during Zero Hour. Balasore MLA Manas Dutta expressed concern over the non-supply of potatoes from West Bengal.

"If the West Bengal government continues to stop supply, we will be forced to stop vehicles carrying essential items to Bengal," Dutta said while drawing the attention of the state government.

Meanwhile, Leader of Opposition Naveen Patnaik wrote to West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, seeking her intervention to ensure a smooth supply of potatoes to his state where prices have sky-rocketed. "I understand from the media that long queues of trucks (more than 50) loaded with potatoes are waiting at the West Bengal-Odisha border. On earlier similar occasions, your noble gesture has earned the love and affection of our people," he said. "People of Odisha and West Bengal have strong cultural bonds and we are all devotees of Mahaprabhu Sri Jagannath. I request you to kindly intervene in the matter and ensure smooth supply of potatoes to Odisha. Looking forward to your support in the interest of the people of Odisha," he added.

Mosques 'covered' for kanwar



AGENCIES

Haridwar, July 26: Facades of two mosques and a mazar along the kanwar yatra route in Uttarakhand's Haridwar city were Friday covered with large sheets of white cloth to 'prevent trouble' but were removed by the evening after objections from several quarters.

The sheets were hung on bamboo scaffoldings in front of two mosques and a mazar, all in the Jwalapur area. The mosque's maulana and the mazar's caretakers said they were not aware of any administrative order in this regard

and claimed this was for the first time that such a step had been taken during the yatra.

Though the Haridwar senior superintendent of police and district magistrate were not available for comment, Cabinet Minister Satpal Maharaj told reporters that it was done to maintain peace. "Any such thing is done only to prevent trouble," he said.

"It is not such a big thing. We also cover buildings when they are under construction," he said. The sheets of cloth were removed by the district administration by the evening following objections, including by locals and politicians.

MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VALUE	VARIATION
SENSEX	81332.72	↑ 1292.92
NIFTY	24834.85	↑ 428.75
DOLLAR	83.73	↓ ₹0.01
EURO	90.80	↓ ₹0.03
GOLD	₹68,174	↑ ₹712
SILVER	₹81,342	↑ ₹11

WEATHER

	BBSR	CTC
Max Temp	29.7°C	29.0°C
Min Temp	25.7°C	24.5°C
Humidity	88%	91%
Rainfall	0.3mm	5mm

FORECAST
 GENERALLY CLOUDY SKY WITH HEAVY RAIN

World Heritage tag for mound-burial system of Ahoms

AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 26: The mound-burial system of the Ahom dynasty in Assam - 'Moidams' - was Friday included in the UNESCO World Heritage List, making it the first cultural property from the Northeast to get the coveted tag.

The decision was taken during the ongoing 46th session of the World Heritage Committee (WHC) being held in India.

'Moidams' was submitted as India's nomination for inclusion in the UNESCO World Heritage List for the year 2023-24.

In a post on X, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said it was a matter of 'immense joy and pride' for India that 'Moidams' had made it to the WHC list. "The Moidams at Charaideo showcase the glorious Ahom



culture, which places utmost reverence to ancestors. I hope more people learn about the great Ahom rule and culture. Glad that the Moidams join the

#WorldHeritage List," he said. The unique burial mounds, represented by pyramid-like structures known as 'Moidams', were used by the Tai-Ahom dy-

nasty that ruled Assam for around 600 years. 'Moidams' are vaulted chambers (chow-chali), often double-storied, that have an arched pas-

sage for entry. Atop the hemispherical mud mounds, layers of bricks and earth are laid. The base of the mound is reinforced by a polygonal toe-wall and an arched gateway on the west, according to the UNESCO website.

"Eventually, the mound would be covered by a layer of vegetation, reminiscent of a group of hillocks, transforming the area into an undulating landscape," the description of 'Moidams' said.

Excavation shows each vaulted chamber has a centrally-raised platform where the body was laid. Several objects used by the deceased during his life, like royal insignia, objects made of wood, ivory or iron, gold pendants, ceramic ware, weapons, clothes to the extent of human beings (only from the Luk-khahun clan) were buried with

their king, according to the website.

The session of the WHC being held at the Bharat Mandapam here from July 21 to July 31, will examine 27 nominations from across the world, including 19 cultural sites, four natural sites and two mixed sites. India is hosting the key event of UNESCO for the first time.

Ahead of the start of the session, Janhwi Sharma, additional director general of the Archaeological Survey of India, told reporters that ICOMOS, an advisory body to UNESCO, had recommended favourably for the inscription of the 'Moidams' which meant that it 'fulfils all those parameters'.

The Paris-based International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) is one of the key advisory bodies to UNESCO and its experts visit the nominated sites.

leisure

FORTUNE FORECAST

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FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181*

ARIES

Today is a bright day with favourable circumstances; all you need to do is focus in the correct place. Ganesh says if you have been waiting for a chance to cement a relationship, today is the proper time to propose. Be cautious when driving and profound while making suggestions.

TAURUS

Today, you will probably achieve your short term goals, says Ganesh. There will be no dip in the amount of work pressure you will be facing but you will find yourself ready for every challenge. It is time to shift gears and set your eyes on your long-term goals now.

GEMINI

You will keep others under the spell of your magnetic personality, predicts Ganesh. Your long-term goals will start taking shape by the end of the day. You may also expect some good news, generally related to a wedding. You will succeed in all your romantic endeavours.

CANCER

Today, you will accomplish most of your short-term goals and may shift your focus to long-term plans, foretells Ganesh. Now that you have achieved some of your goals, you may spare some time for leisure activities. Family will get its due place in your scheme of things in the evening.

LEO

Being by oneself is perhaps the best company one can ever keep. So, indulge in your own companionship today, says Ganesh. After all, you know yourself the best. Take forward this introspective experience into the evening, and sit back and listen to your inner voice. Silence speaks volumes if only one would listen.

VIRGO

Your gallantry will serve to impress the gallery; but chances are certain things could well spoil the show, says Ganesh. On reflecting within, find a great deal of improvement in your inner self. Children will broaden that smile with their antics.

LIBRA

All achievements are scripted. So, share the blueprint of your success with others today. Ganesh expects you to be obedient and cooperative at work in the afternoon; as a result, your social connections will grow miraculously in the evening. The key is in splitting time perfectly between the two.

SCORPIO

Today, Ganesh anticipates you to be a media mogul in your own unique way. Your flock will laud your skills and talents. But you may shell out an extra buck to get what you want today. Ganesh sees an extraordinary bond solidifying you and your spouse closer than before.

SAGITTARIUS

Today, you will probably emerge as the victorious gladiator in the arena of sports and games, says Ganesh. But later in the day, some hurdles may come across your path. At your desk, your bosses might just lend you a helping hand to assist you to finish off pending jobs.

CAPRICORN

Your spouse would have complained innumerable times, accusing you of being unconcerned and giving priority to work. Today, he/she will be all smiles, for Ganesh says there are chances you will take your sweetheart out on a pleasure trip. At work, you will be a winner, outdoing your competitors and bagging plaques from your boss, but don't let this sudden success get to your head. You still have a long way to go.

AQUARIUS

Your family will dote on you today and God knows you deserve it. Just go along with their plans for once, and you'll be surprised by how blessed and cheerful you feel. In business dealings, your forthrightness and charm will win people over, says Ganesh.

PISCES

While a day filled with a lot of stress awaits you at the workplace, you will still be able to come out ahead of the competition on account of your sheer brilliance and your powers of persuasion. You will receive many accolades for the way you tackle your projects today, says Ganesh.



KIM ENDED A RELATIONSHIP AS IT AFFECTED HER CAREER

Kim Kardashian ended a relationship when it got in the way of her career plans. Speaking during the season finale of *The Kardashians*, the 43-year-old reality superstar, however, did not name the ex-boyfriend in question.

BRYAN ADAMS TO BRING HIS WORLD TOUR TO INDIA IN DEC

The Canadian singer-songwriter, and musician, Bryan Adams is all set to bring his full-fledged electrifying musical journey *So Happy It Hurts* world tour to India in December, this year. The tour will kick start December 10 in Shillong and will visit cities like Gurugram, Mumbai, and Bangalore, finally wrapping up in Hyderabad.



Pari's mantra for happy life

Mumbai: Actress Parineeti Chopra, who was recently seen in the streaming biopic *Amar Singh Chamkila*, feels the mindset of a person shapes their perspective towards life. The actress took to her Instagram Thursday and shared a video of herself enjoying a serene boat ride. She

wrote in the caption, "This month, I took some time to pause and reflect on life and it has reiterated my belief... Mindset is everything. Don't give importance to unimportant things (or people). Don't waste a single second. Life is a ticking clock."

The actress also shared a mantra for a happy life, saying every moment should be a personal choice and that one should cease to live for others and start living for themselves.

"Find your tribe and be unafraid of throwing toxic people out of your

life. Stop caring about what the world will think. Change the way you react to situations. Life is finite. It is happening now. Live it the way YOU want to live it," she added.

On the personal front, the actress has been enjoying marital bliss with her politician husband Raghav Chadha with whom she recently attended a Wimbledon tennis match.

IANS

Mumbai: All set to attend the Olympic Games Paris 2024, actress Taapsee Pannu calls it a "once-in-a-lifetime opportunity". For the unversed, Pannu is going there to cheer for husband Mathias Boe, who has been coaching Indian badminton players Chirag Shetty and Satwiksairaj Rankireddy since 2021.

"I don't think I can go there in the capacity of an athlete," she quips, and reveals, "I first met Mathias when he had already come back from the Olympics after winning his medal (in 2012). And the next Olympics he took part in as an athlete, I didn't want to attend because I get really stressed watching him play."

Pannu, who got married to the Danish Olympic silver medallist in March this year, adds that this is the perfect year for her to witness the Olympic Games.

"Now that he is a coach for our country's team, and Satvik and Chirag are probably one of the best contenders to bring an Olympic medal, I feel more motivated and excited to attend this one and cheer for them. Also, it falls around my birthday (August 1), so I guess these are enough and more reasons for me to be at the Olympics," shares the 36-year-old.

Taapsee to root for hubby in Paris



AYESHA FUMES AS DHOTI-CLAD FARMER DENIED ENTRY TO MALL

Mumbai: Actress Ayesha Takia lashed out Friday against the discrimination faced by a farmer in Bengaluru, who was denied entry to a mall for wearing a dhoti, calling the incident 'upsetting and shameful.'

Ayesha, who has 1.7 million followers on Instagram, shared a viral video showing an elderly farmer, Fakirappa, being denied entry to GT World Mall on Magadi Road in Bangalore because of his traditional attire.

Fakirappa was wearing a dhoti.

In the caption, the actress wrote: "This is so upsetting... Does western attire have more respect and value? Do we blatantly disrespect and shun our own people for wearing clothing that belongs to us, to our very own people? In a diverse, cultural nation, deeply rooted in wonderful traditions, we discriminate

against our very own... Shameful." After the incident, which happened July 16, the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike sealed the mall over non-payment of tax arrears and issued a notice seeking clarification about the farmer's incident.

The mall management was asked to submit a statement regarding the incident within 24 hours.

For the unversed, Fakirappa, who was accompanied by his son Nagaraj and wife Mallamma, was denied entry to the mall when they went to watch a Kannada movie, citing his attire.

The incident sparked outrage among netizens as the video went viral on social media. IANS



FSB's Children's Film Festival concludes on cinematic high

Bhubaneswar, July 26: The 2nd edition of Film Society of Bhubaneswar (FSB)'s Children's Film Festival concluded here Friday, leaving an indelible mark on the young minds.

The three-day cinematic extravaganza was organised at GKCM Odissi Research Centre, where over 150 students from several schools, including Loyola and KIIT International School, were immersed in a world of wonder and imagination through a carefully curated selection of films, workshops, and interactive activities.

The concluding day started off with Vishal Bhardwaj's debut movie, *Makdee*, a masterpiece of fantasy and adventure.

The post-lunch session featured screenings of the films made by students during the sand animation workshop the previous day. A



collaborative effort involving 10 different groups, guided by FSB volunteers, the workshop transformed the raw imagination of young students into cinematic storytelling.

The festival concluded with the screening of the timeless French classic, *The Red Balloon*.

FSB president Subrat Beura said, "This festival is our attempt to address this gap by providing a platform where children can experience the magic of cinema collectively. It's about fostering a love for films, encouraging creativity, and building a sense of community." PWN

PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

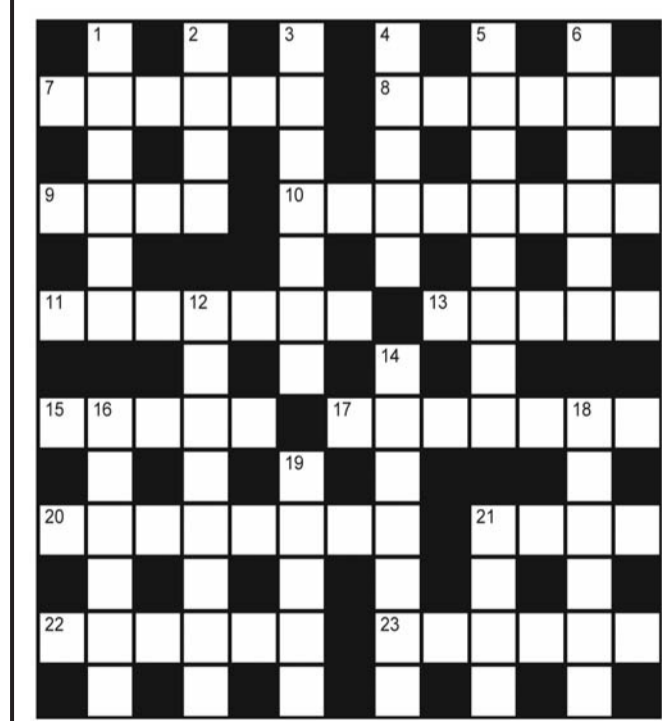


BREVITY



FUN post

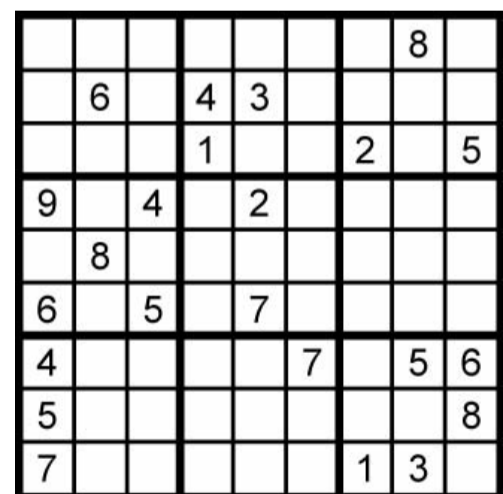
CROSSWORD



- Across
- 7 Vietnam river
 - 8 Arrival
 - 9 Menial
 - 10 Pale purple colour
 - 11 Hairdresser
 - 13 Oyster's prize
 - 15 British biscuit
 - 17 Protest
 - 20 Rationalised
 - 21 Fishing item
- Down
- 1 Forlorn
 - 2 Succotash ingredient
 - 3 Eternal
 - 4 Soothing ointment
 - 5 Uma Thurman flick, with *The*
 - 6 Ingratiate
 - 12 Wanting company
 - 14 Like some roads
 - 16 Strong-arm or escape
 - 18 Type of victory
 - 19 Blacksmith's block
 - 21 Delicate decorative fabric

SUDOKU

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



SOLUTIONS



CROSSWORD

SUDOKU



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown

**ESI HOSPS TO
COME UP IN
KEONJHAR,
SONEPUR**

BHUBANESWAR: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Friday approved a proposal to set up two new employees' state insurance (ESI) hospitals in the state. The hospitals will come up in Keonjhar and Sonepur towns, and largely benefit workers and their family members, Majhi said in a statement. At present, four ESI hospitals and 41 dispensaries are functioning in different parts of Odisha under ESI scheme. The scheme is a multipurpose health insurance and social security programme for industrial workers and their family members.

OPPOSITION TARGETS GOVT FOR RATH YATRA MISMANAGEMENT

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, July 26: Opposition Biju Janata Dal (BJD) and Congress Friday criticised the BJP government in the state alleging severe mismanagement of the Rath Yatra of Lord Jagannath held in Puri this month.

Initiating a debate on an adjournment motion in the Assembly, Congress Legislative Party (CLP) leader Rama Chandra Kadam claimed that the BJP, which came to power in the name of Lord Jagannath, tried to cover up an incident during the 'pahandi' (ceremonial procession) ritual of Lord Balabhadra.

He highlighted that the idol of Lord Balabhadra fell while being moved from the chariot to the Adapa Mandap of the Gundicha temple July 9.

BJD MLA Byomkesh Ray also

criticised the BJP government, accusing it of treating the Rath Yatra as a party event.

He noted that Lord Balabhadra fell during the 'pahandi' ritual and pointed out the absence of both the Law Minister and the chief administrator of the Jagannath temple.

Ray alleged that a devotee died and several others were injured due to mismanagement. He also claimed that some non-servitors and relatives of the Law Minister climbed onto the chariots without any action being taken against them.

In response, Law Minister Prithiviraj Harichandan defended the government, stating that this year's Rath Yatra was unique as

it included three major rituals—'Nabajouban Darshan,' 'Netra Utsav,' and the Rath Yatra—on a single day, July 7.

He emphasised that with the co-operation of all servitors and the blessings of Lord Jagannath, the Rath Yatra was conducted smoothly and witnessed by the entire world.

Harichandan refuted the Opposition's claims about the death of a devotee, clarifying that it was due to cardiac arrest, and not stampede. The minister also criticised the previous BJD government for disrupting daily rituals of Lord Jagannath for the visits of influential people.

Displeased with the Minister's response, both the BJD and Congress staged a walkout from the House.



IN THE HOUSE

NGT panel to check cold storage norm violation

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, July 26: The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has formed a three-member committee to look into allegations of the cold storage unit at Palbani of Baripada in Mayurbhanj district operating in violation of norms, endangering lives.

The committee will have Mayurbhanj District Magistrate (DM) or his representative, a senior scientist of Odisha State Pollution Control Board (OSPCB), and a representative of Directorate of Factories and Boilers as its members.

"The committee shall visit the site in question and submit its factual and action taken report (ATR) with regard to the allegations made. The Mayurbhanj DM shall be the nodal officer for all logistic purposes, and shall file the inspection report of the committee on affidavit," NGT Eastern Zone Bench's judicial member Justice B Amit Shalekar and expert member Arun Kumar Verma



ordered Thursday.

The committee has been asked to submit its reports within four weeks, it is learnt.

The NGT move came during the hearing of a plea filed by Sapan Kumar Ghosh, a resident of Palbani under Baripada Town Police limits in Mayurbhanj district, July 8, 2024.

Senior lawyer Sankar Prasad Pani, who represented Ghosh, informed the environment watchdog that a public complaint was lodged with the Directorate of Factories and Boilers April 17, 2023 alleging that ammonia gas

was leaking from a cold storage unit at Palbani, endangering lives in the locality.

Taking cognisance, the Assistant Director of Factories and Boilers of Keonjhar zone inspected the unit operated by a private individual May 5, 2023, Pani said.

The inspection found multiple lapses and violations at the unit.

"While the ammonia receiver along with the connected pipelines was found not tested by a competent person duly approved by Chief Inspector of Factories, neither portable sensors nor online sensors were provided near the receiver and connected pipelines," Pani said quoting the inspection report.

"Workers engaged for handling highly toxic ammonia gas didn't have adequate technical qualification or training. Outlet of the safety valve wasn't put inside water source to restrict adverse effect of ammonia gas on people," he added.

Soon after, the petitioner filed an application under RTI the re-

sponse of which was received May 8, 2024.

"The RTI response revealed that the unit was operating without the mandatory consent to operate (CTO)," Pani said, adding that the OSPCB provides CTO to cold storages.

Backed with the RTI revelations and the inspection report of the Directorate of Factories and Boilers, the petitioner moved the NGT seeking immediate closure of the cold storage unit till obtaining CTO from the OSPCB. The petitioner also urged the NGT to direct the OSPCB to calculate the environment compensation for the defaulting period and impose the same on the unit's owner.

Besides forming a committee, the environment watchdog also asked the parties to the plea, including Forest, Environment and Climate Change department Additional Chief Secretary, OSPCB Member Secretary and the cold storage unit owner, to file their counter affidavits within four weeks.



DERAILMENT IN CITY: Two wagons of a goods train derailed near the Bhubaneswar railway station Friday morning, delaying scores of passenger trains on the route for a few hours. The Angul-bound train had left Vizag port a day ago. HS Bajwa, divisional railway manager (DRM) of ECoR, said the exact cause of the derailment is being probed. There has been no major damage, he added.

Naveen wants Mamata to step in

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, July 26: Leader of Opposition (LoP) Naveen Patnaik wrote to West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee Friday, seeking her intervention to ensure a smooth supply of potatoes to the state as prices have sky-rocketed.

In the letter, Patnaik said that due to rains, there has been a short supply of potatoes in Odisha, resulting in an "artificial price hike" adding to the sufferings of the people.

"I understand from the media that long queues of trucks (more than 50) loaded with potatoes are waiting at the West Bengal-Odisha border. On earlier similar occasions, your noble gesture has earned the love and affection of our people," he said.

"People of Odisha and West Bengal have strong cultural bonds and we are all devotees of Mahaprabhu Sri Jagannath. I request you to kindly intervene

POTATO CRISIS

in the matter and ensure smooth supply of potatoes to Odisha. Looking forward to your support in the interest of the people of Odisha," he added.

The West Bengal government regulated the supply of potatoes to other states to control prices in the local market. Protesting it, potato traders in West Bengal went on a strike July 21, which further added to the spike in prices. The strike was called off Wednesday following which supply started to normalise in the local market. Meanwhile, the state government said it was contemplating to procure potatoes from Uttar Pradesh to meet the demand.

After visiting a stockyard at Aiginia in Bhubaneswar, Food Supplies and Consumer Welfare Minister Krushna Chandra Patra said the state has potato stock to meet requirements for a week.

He also asked officials concerned to initiate stern action

against hoarders and those selling potatoes at higher prices.

"There is sufficient stock of potatoes in the state, which could cater to our needs for seven-eight days. Strict action will be taken against those responsible for creating artificial scarcity and price hikes," he said.

Patra said dealers were buying potatoes at ₹26 per kg, and people should get it at ₹35 per kg. However, potato was retailing at ₹50 a kg, he said.

Patra said the state government was contemplating to procure potatoes from Uttar Pradesh.

"The previous government could not operate required cold storage in the state. This apart, the state government's potato mission has also completely failed," he said.

The issue was also raised in the Assembly during Zero Hour.

Balasore MLA Manas Dutta expressed concern over the lack of supply of potatoes from West Bengal.

257% DA: Chief construction engineer held

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, July 26: Vigilance sleuths Friday arrested the chief construction engineer of Bolangir's Lower Suktel project after finding him in possession of assets 257 per cent more than his declared income.

"A case has been filed against Sunil Kumar Rout under Section 13(2) r/w 13(1)(b)/12 of the Prevention of Corruption (Amendment) Act, 2018," officials said.

According to the Vigilance Directorate, Rout's property included two multi-storey buildings



in the Capital city, two flats in Puri, 34 plots (five in Bhubaneswar, three in Puri, 19 in Cuttack and seven in Dhenkanal) and land near Vrindavan Chandrodayo Mandir in Mathura.

Rout also owned around 1 kilogram of gold, ₹2,34,120 in cash, ₹98 lakh in bank deposits, two trucks, two 'benami' four-wheelers, four two-wheelers.

"After thorough search, inventory and further inquiry, the income, expenditure and assets of Sunil Kumar Rout, chief construction engineer, Lower Suktel Project, Bolangir were calculated and he was found in possession of disproportionate assets (DA) which were 257 per cent in excess of his known sources of income. Investigation of the case is in progress," the statement said.

628 tigers died in India in past 5 yrs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 26: A total of 628 tigers died in India during the past five years due to natural causes and other reasons, including poaching, according to government data.

Meanwhile, 349 people were killed in tiger attacks during this period, with Maharashtra alone recording 200 deaths.

According to the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA), 96 tigers died in 2019, 106 in 2020, 127 in 2021, 121 in 2022, and 178 in 2023. The number of tiger deaths



in 2023 is also the highest since 2012, the data revealed.

Responding to a question in the Rajya Sabha, Union Minister of State for Environment Kirti Vardhan Singh said Thursday

that 49 people each were killed in tiger attacks in 2019 and 2020, 59 in 2021, 110 in 2022, and 82 in 2023.

Uttar Pradesh recorded 59 human deaths in tiger attacks

while Madhya Pradesh reported 27.

The number of tigers in India stood at 3,682 -- around 75 per cent of the global wild tiger population -- in 2022, according to the latest government data.

India launched Project Tiger April 1, 1973, to promote tiger conservation. Initially, it covered nine tiger reserves spanning 18,278 square kilometres.

Currently, India has 55 tiger reserves covering more than 78,735 square kilometres -- nearly 2.4 per cent of the country's geographical area -- of tiger habitat.

MNCs benefitting from state should allocate more CSR funds: Industry Min

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 26: Multinational Companies (MNCs), especially those profiting significantly from Odisha, should allocate more corporate social responsibility (CSR) funds for the development of the state, Industry Minister Sampad Charan Swain said.



Speaking at the Odisha CSR and Sustainability Excellence Awards function organised by the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM) here Friday, Swain said the CSR spending by companies should not be limited to mere compliance. "It should focus on women empowerment, education, and healthcare in the region," he added. He said the government is committed to the industrial development of the state. Corporate

Social Responsibility (CSR) is vital for the betterment of society. "It is the responsibility of companies to develop the peripheral areas," the minister said.

Speaking on the occasion, AT Mishra, Deputy Director General of Forests (C), Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India, said serious efforts should be made to connect people with the planet. "CSR should go beyond constructing school buildings or hospitals; we need to focus on outcomes and strive for continuous improvement, he said while laying stress on more plantations and sustainable initiatives to mitigate the impact of industry on the planet.

In his welcome address, ASSOCHAM Odisha Chairman Pankaj Lochan Mohanty said the industries' body believes sustainability, empowerment, entrepreneurship, and digitization as the four key pillars of growth. "These are the foundations of a future-ready economy. We are working closely with the government, community, and industry to balance economic development and social responsibility," he said.

Is the champagne nestled in a 19th century shipwreck still fit for a toast

Is the 19th century Champagne on the bottom of the Baltic Sea still fit for a toast?

A team of Polish divers has discovered the wreckage of an old sailing ship loaded "to the brim" with luxury goods including porcelain items and about 100 bottles of Champagne and mineral water about 58 metres (190 feet) deep off the Swedish coast.

They believe the precious goods could have been on the way to the royal table in Stockholm or the Russian tsar's residence in St. Petersburg when the ship sank sometime in the second half of the 19th century, according to the leader

of the team, Tomasz Stachura.

The private Baltictech group of divers which searches for shipwrecks on the Baltic seabed made the discovery July 11 while checking spots of interest about 37 kilometers (20 nautical miles) south of the isle of Öland.

They were ready to call it a day, but two divers, Marek Cacak and Pawel Truszynski, decided to make a quick dive and emerged two hours later with the news of the wreckage and its valuable cargo.

"I have been diving for 40 years, and it often happens that we find a bottle or two in a wreck, but to

discover so much cargo, it's a first for me," Stachura told The Associated Press this week.

The brand of mineral water, Selters, believed at the time to have medical properties, was imprinted on the stoneware bottles. The Champagne brand is still to be determined, but the letter R could be seen on one cork, Stachura said.

He said he believes the contents are still in good condition. "At this depth the wreckage is perfectly preserved, the temperature is constant, there are no currents and it's dark," Stachura said. "That preserves the wreckage in a wonderful way."

He said Champagne and Selters experts have already contacted Baltictech and are interested in doing laboratory tests on the contents of the bottles. But it is Swedish authorities who will decide the next steps in exploring the wreck, Stachura said.

Divers from Baltictech previously discovered the wreck of the SS Karlsruhe, the last ship to leave Koenigsberg in 1945 as part of the evacuation of German civilians in World War II. AP



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4	Project Development Manager (Business)	2
5	Relationship Manager	273
6	VP-Wealth	643
7	Relationship Manager - Team Lead	32
8	Regional Head	6
9	Investment Specialist	30
10	Investment Officer	49

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DATE FOR FILING ONLINE APPLICATION & PAYMENT OF FEES: FROM 19.07.2024 TO 08.08.2024.

Place: Mumbai
Date: 19.07.2024

General Manager (RP & PM)

Journalists meet CM, seek pension

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 26: A team of senior journalists met Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi in Assembly Friday and urged him to take necessary measures to provide pension to scribes in the state.

The journalists informed the CM that there is no provision for journalists in the Budget presented in the Assembly recently.

Through the memorandum, the journalists demanded health insurance cover for their parents along with a hike in insurance amount from ₹5 lakh at present to ₹10 lakh. They urged the CM to introduce a post-retirement pension scheme for journalists in line with Madhya Pradesh and some other states.

They also requested Majhi to functionalise the journalists' accreditation council and make provisions for an annual pass system to enter the state Secretariat for news coverage.

"We also requested the CM to enhance the health insurance sum, and include dependent parents of scribes in it," senior journalist Prasanna Mohanty said.



RAY REMEMBERED: Orissa High Court Chief Justice Chakradhari Sharan Singh garlands the statue of the first Chief Justice of the HC, Justice Bira Kishore Ray, on the latter's death anniversary on the court premises Friday. The day also marks the foundation of the court in Cuttack

OP PHOTO

Aakash announces nat'l talent hunt test

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 26: Marking 15 years of its flagship scholarship examination Aakash National Talent Hunt Exam (ANTHE), Aakash Educational Services Limited (AESL) announced the launch of Aakash National Talent Hunt Exam (ANTHE) 2024.

The popular and most-sought after exam offers students from Class VII-XII the chance to earn up to 100 per cent scholarship along with significant cash awards, helping them achieve their dreams of a successful career in medicine or engineering.

This year, an exciting addition includes a five-day all-expenses-paid trip to Kennedy Space Centre at Florida in US for five outstanding students.

ANTHE scholarship recipients will benefit from Aakash's extensive coaching programmes,



which prepare students for exams like NEET, JEE, State CETs and scholarships like NTSE and Olympiads.

CEO and MD of AESL Deepak Mehrotra said, "ANTHE has played a crucial role in bridging the gap between the aspirations and abilities of countless students. Celebrating these 15 years of ANTHE, we have worked to make our courses accessible to deserving students across the nation, regardless of their location. ANTHE enables students

to prepare for NEET and IIT-JEE exams at their own pace."

ANTHE 2024 will take place from October 19 to 27 in both online and offline mode. In addition to scholarships of up to 100 per cent, top scorers will also receive cash awards.

The last date for submitting the enrolment form is three days before the commencement of the online exam and seven days before the offline exam. The exam fee is ₹200 for both offline and online mode.

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AFFIDAVIT

By virtue of an Affidavit made before The Executive Magistrate, Bhadrak, I, Indrani Bindhani, Aged 35yrs, W/o- Susanta Kumar Bindhani of At/P.O./P.S.- Bonth, Dist.- Bhadrak, Pin - 756114 do solemnly affirm that previously my name was Indrani Sutar in all educational document and at present after my marriage my surname was changed from Sutar to Bindhani and it was mentioned in my Aadhaar Card bearing No- XXXX8381. Now I had known as Indrani Bindhani. In this affidavit I swear that Indrani Bindhani and Indrani Sutar is one and same person. Sd./- Indrani Bindhani.

LOST

I, Rina Kumari Biswal, W/o- Prasanta Kumar Biswal, D/o- Nakul Chandra Biswal resident of Plot No.195, Bayababa Math Road, Unit- IX (Flat), near Radhakrishna Mandir, P.O.- Bhoi Nagar, P.S.- Sahid Nagar, Bhubaneswar-751022, Dist.- Khurda, Odisha state that, my original sale deed bearing ID No. 1822301868 & Doc- No.11822301807, dtd. 19.04.2023 duly registered in the S.R. Office- Baliana, Sub-Registrar Office- Baliana, Khata No. 704/1693, Plot No. 1082/ 2807, KISAM-GHARABARI, Area- Ac. 0.027.5 dec. i.e. 1200 Sqft. has been misplaced somewhere else on 20.06.2024 while I was travelling. Instead of my best efforts, I could not able to traced it out. Sd./- Rina Kumari Biswal.

Guv inaugurates 12th SAIMUN



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 26: SAI International School here organised the 12th edition of the annual SAI Model United Nations conference (SAIMUN) the opening ceremony of which was graced by Governor Raghubar Das as the chief guest Friday.

SAIMUN is an attempt to create awareness among the young minds on various pressing issues that affect mankind, resources, as well as our planet. Around 720 national and international delegates from 21 schools from across the countries participated in the event. The event will conclude Saturday.

In his address, Das stated, "As I declare SAIMUN 2024 open, I am inspired by the remarkable convergence of young, brilliant minds from around the world. This forum exemplifies how unity and collaboration can address our most pressing challenges with innovative solutions. SAI's dedication to nurturing young leaders stands as a beacon of global dialogue and diplomacy."

Furthermore, Das lauded the participation of delegates in

this flagship conference which represents a profound commitment to shaping a better future. "I urge you to seize this opportunity to engage in meaningful dialogue and collaboration, as it is through your collective efforts that we shall address the pressing global challenges of our era and advance towards a more united and harmonious world," Das said.

In the opening ceremony, SAI International Education Group chairperson Silpi Sahoo said, "The theme of SAIMUN is 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' - one world one family, which inspires the participants to work collaboratively and come out with innovative solutions to the various challenges outlined in the agenda."

"SAIMUN reflects our school's ongoing commitment to educational excellence and international engagement. This event is a transformative learning experience for all of us, not just the students. Witnessing their growth, passion, and enthusiasm throughout this journey reaffirms our commitment to nurturing the leaders of tomorrow," Sahoo added.

Mangrove plantation in 3 dists

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, July 26: People in three coastal districts Friday planted mangroves to regenerate denuded coastal forest cover.

On the occasion of International Day for Conservation of Mangrove Ecosystem, efforts involving mangrove plantations in cyclone-vulnerable areas of Odisha are being stepped up and awareness campaigns, especially for youths and schoolchildren, have been organised by Reliance Foundation and its partnering organisations. Mangrove ecosystem provides not just livelihood security to coastal communities, but also ecological security along the coastline, officials said.

Around 55,000 mangrove plants were planted with Reliance Foundation's support in vul-



nerable areas in Balasore, Jagatsinghpur and Ganjam districts in the last one year, a statement by the foundation said.

More than 50 residents of Kharasahapur village in Balasore district were involved in planting mangroves across a 1-km stretch of the coastline.

The foundation has facilitated knowledge transfer from scientific experts, sourcing mangrove plant material and guiding the community in management of

plantation, it said.

"The 1999 Super Cyclone severely affected my village as the landfall was in our gram panchayat. Villages that had mangrove cover were then less affected. We are regenerating our mangrove cover with Reliance Foundation to mitigate cyclone impact," said Sukhanto Kumar, a resident of Padmapur village in Jagatsinghpur district, who is a part of the mangrove efforts in his village.

CII hosts logistics colloquium

Stakeholders, industry leaders and government officials discussed the critical role of logistics in the development and economic prosperity

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 26: A two-day conference themed "Transforming Logistics in Eastern India: Bridging Gaps and Building Futures" was organised by Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) here Friday.

The conference provided a platform to several stakeholders, industry leaders and government officials to discuss the



critical role of logistics in the development and economic prosperity of the region. The delegates examined the current state of logistics, identified underlying opportunities and challenges that need to be addressed to unlock the region's potential.

CII Odisha State Council chairman Pradipta Mohanty said,

"Efficient logistics are crucial for reducing costs, making products and services more accessible, both domestically and globally."

Mohanty further highlighted the importance of collaboration between the government, private sectors and other stakeholders to bridge the gaps in the logistics ecosystem.

HEAVY RAIN FORECAST

SRC asks Collectors to review preparedness

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, July 26: In view of a low pressure area (Lopar) formed over North Bay of Bengal and adjoining Coastal areas of Bangladesh and Gangetic West Bengal, Special Relief Commissioner (SRC) Satyabrata Sahu Friday instructed the Collectors of 13 districts to review the preparedness measures.

Under the impact of Lopar, heavy to very heavy rainfall is likely to occur at isolated areas in Bhadrak, Kendrapara, Jagatsinghpur, Cuttack, Dhenkanal, Angul, Keonjhar, Sambalpur, Deogarh, Bargarh, Balasore, Mayurbhanj, Sundargarh, Jajpur, Jharsuguda, Puri, Khurda, Nayagarh, Boudh, Subarnapur, Bolangir, Nuapada, Nabarangpur and Malkangiri districts before 8:30am Saturday, IMD's Bhubaneswar regional centre director Manorama Mohanty said.

Additionally, heavy rainfall is expected in parts of Kandhamal, Cuttack, Subarnapur, Bargarh, Bolangir, Kalahandi, Nuapada, Nabarangpur, Koraput and Nayagarh districts, he added.

She said these conditions are likely to continue across many districts until July 31. Given the anticipated rough conditions, the weather office has advised fishermen to avoid venturing into the sea along and off the Odisha coast until July 27.

In response to the IMD's prediction, Special Relief Commissioner (SRC) Satyabrata Sahu has put Collectors of 13 districts on high alert as flood-like conditions may arise in



Several places are likely to experience heavy rainfall during next four days as a Lopar has formed over North Bay of Bengal

northern Odisha.

In a letter to the Collectors of Mayurbhanj, Balasore, Keonjhar, Sundargarh, Bhadrak, Kendrapara, Cuttack, Jagatsinghpur, Puri, Khurda, Jagatsinghpur, Puri, Khurda, Sundargarh, Nayagarh, Boudh, Subarnapur, Bolangir, Nuapada, Malkangiri, Koraput, Nabarangpur, Balasore, Jajpur and Jharsuguda districts, they said.

Bhubaneswar is also likely to experience cloudy sky with heavy rain, the sources added.

Gangetic West Bengal associated cyclonic circulation extending upto 7.6 km above mean sea level. It is likely to move west-northwest wards across Gangetic Bengal and Jharkhand during next two days.

The IMD has issued yellow warning for heavy to very heavy rainfall at one or two places in Kendrapara, Jagatsinghpur, Cuttack, Dhenkanal, Bhadrak, Angul, Sambalpur, Bargarh, Deogarh and Keonjhar. Heavy rainfall may also occur at one or two places in Mayurbhanj, Puri, Khurda, Sundargarh, Nayagarh, Boudh, Subarnapur, Bolangir, Nuapada, Malkangiri, Koraput, Nabarangpur, Balasore, Jajpur and Jharsuguda districts, they said.

Bhubaneswar is also likely to experience cloudy sky with heavy rain, the sources added.

CREDAI thanks govt for stalling ORERA provision

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 26: The Confederation of Real Estate Developers' Associations of India (CREDAI) Odisha has expressed its gratitude to the state government for keeping a contentious provision that



entailed filing late fees for delay in project registration applications in abeyance.

On July 23, the government, after careful and judicious consideration stayed the 2021 amended regulation - 13 of the Odisha Real Estate Regulatory Authority (ORERA) by issuing a notification to this effect.

President, CREDAI Odisha, Swadesh Routray, while thanking the Housing and Urban Development Minister and ORERA authorities for the move, urged the government to altogether revoke the amended provision. Earlier, CREDAI Odisha had submitted a memorandum to the government and ORERA authorities demanding withdrawal of the 'inordinate' provision in the regulations.

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SPORTING SPIRIT: A match in progress on the second day of District Badminton Championship at the indoor stadium of Prithviraj High School in Bolangir district, Friday

Elephant attacks: Odisha tops in human casualties

INDIA SEES A FIVE-YEAR HIGH OF 628 HUMAN FATALITIES IN 2023

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 26: Odisha recorded 624 human deaths in human-elephant conflicts in the last five years, the highest in the country, according to government data.

Nationwide, human-elephant conflicts resulted in 2,853 human deaths during the past five years, with the number of fatalities reaching a five-year high of 628 in 2023.

Responding to a question in the Rajya Sabha, Union Minister of State for Environment Kirti Vardhan Singh said 'elephants caused' 587 human deaths in 2019, 471 in 2020, 557 in 2021, 610

in 2022 and 628 in 2023. Odisha was followed by Jharkhand with 474 deaths, West Bengal with 436, Assam with 383, Chhattisgarh with 303, Tamil Nadu with 256, Karnataka with 160 and Kerala with 124.

The minister said the management of wildlife habitats was primarily the responsibility of state governments and Union Territory administrations and that the Central government provided financial and technical support under the centrally sponsored Project Tiger & Elephant scheme for the protection of animals, their habitats and corridors, addressing human-animal conflict, and for the welfare of captive elephants.

In February 2021, the ministry issued an advisory on deal-

ing with human-wildlife conflict, recommending coordinated inter-departmental action, identification of conflict hotspots, adherence to standard operating procedures, and establishment of rapid response teams.

In June the following year, the environment ministry issued guidelines to states and Union Territories on managing human-wildlife conflicts, including damage to crops.

The guidelines promote the cultivation of crops in forest fringe areas that are unpalatable to wild animals, and the use of agroforestry models incorporating cash crops such as chillies, lemongrass, and khush grass, mixed with tree and shrub species.

Vaishnav allocates ₹70cr for Rayagada Railway Division

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 26: The Railway Ministry has allocated ₹70 crore for the Rayagada Railway Division under the East Coast Railway Zone, officials said Friday.

The establishment of the Rayagada Railway Division is poised to bring significant benefits to the region, enhancing connectivity and fostering economic growth, they said.

The allocation to the state was informed to Nabarangpur MP Balabhadra Majhi, who met Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnav in New Delhi.



"I thank the railway minister for addressing the much-awaited and public-centric Rayagada Railway Division issue. We have had thorough discussions with the minister and I am pleased to announce that most of the formalities for the formation of the Rayagada Division are going to be completed. The work will be started soon once the tenders are in place," Majhi said in a statement. The ECoR zone presently has three divisions at Khurda Road, Sambalpur and Waltair. The new Rayagada division will be created by bifurcating Waltair

MAHANADI-CHITROPALA ISLAND IRRIGATION PROJECT

No water 2 yrs after inauguration



POST NEWS NETWORK

Kendrapara, July 26: Even as two years have passed since commissioning of the much-awaited Mahanadi-Chitropala Island Irrigation Project (MCIP), water is yet to be seen in the canals. Farmers in the area, who had taken a sigh of relief then hoping that their days of hardships will come to an end, are back to square one. Two years down the road, they have rain as their sole source of irrigation for their farmlands.

The ambitious project was dedicated to the public May 18 in 2022 during a ceremony held at Kalaboda under Garadpur block of Kendrapara district in the presence of then minister of Water Resources Raghunandan Das and former Patkura MLA Savitri Agarwal. The minister had then promised to the local cultivators that the canal will help them irrigate their farm-

The ambitious project was dedicated to the public May 18 in 2022 during a ceremony held at Kalaboda under Garadpur block of Kendrapara district

lands in kharif season, garnering much appreciation.

In this regard, farmer leader Bidhu Bhushan Mohapatra, local intelligentsia Ganesh Chandra Samal, farmers Ranjan Rout, Subash Rout, Ambika Kanungo, and Sushil Sahu said water has been released in all the canals of the coastal district starting July 15 this year for kharif farming. However, no water has been supplied through this canal for last two years. This has forced the local farmers to be at the mercy

of rain.

Out of total 15,342 hectare agricultural land to be benefited by this project, 8,937 hectare in Nischintakoili block of Cuttack district and Tirtol block of Jagatsinghpur district has been irrigated through canals by 2004, they said. However, for the rest 6,404 hectare agricultural land in the area, rain is the only hope.

A detailed project report (DPR) had been prepared to dig up 45 minor and sub-minor canals measuring about 50 km from this canal on the right side of 12-km-long Chitropala river and 10-km-long Paika river. It was estimated that the remaining 6,404 hectare farmland in Garadpur and Marshaghai blocks of Kendrapara district could be irrigated from the kharif season two years back. Even as canal digging was half-way through, the minister's hasty inauguration and the declaration of immediate kharif water supply during the ceremony had created

a buzz in the locality then. With irrigation yet to begin through the canals, people are wondering what could have been the reason behind the minister's hasty opening of the project.

Notably, with an ambitious goal of irrigating 19,542 hectare agricultural land in the Mahanadi-Chitropala delta region, the state government had started the Mahanadi-Chitropala Island Irrigation Project 23 years ago for the benefit of farmers in more than 300 villages under Garadpur, Marshaghai and Mahakalapara blocks of Kendrapara and Tirtol block of Jagatsinghpur district.

The estimated cost of the project was only ₹39.94 crore in 1989. The project was taken up in 1995 with World Bank funding to provide irrigation potential to 15,342 hectare agricultural land in Kendrapara, Cuttack and Jagatsinghpur districts. However, it increased to ₹395.46 crore in 2012.

As per the popular demand, the construction work of the project resumed again in 2016-17 FY with the help of Asian Development Bank (ADB). However, digging of the main canal to Yadupur on the left side of Paika river has stopped near Batira. Similarly, work of the main canal on the right side of the Chitropala river, which is supposed to go up to Garjanga, has been halted near Naindipur before the inauguration.

When asked in this regard, Umesh Kumar Sethi, inspector of Water Resources department, said the process to release water in all the canals of the district is underway.

Tension, blockade over woman's death in Keonjhar road accident



POST NEWS NETWORK

Barbil, July 26: In a tragic incident, a woman was killed after being run over by speeding truck on NH-520 at Kendudihi Chowk under Rugudi police limits in Keonjhar district, Thursday night. The deceased woman was identified as Phulabati Rana, 48.

According to sources, the incident took place at around 9:30pm Thursday when the driver of a speeding truck lost control of the vehicle and ran over Phulabati.

Another truck plying behind the accident-causing vehicle also ran over Phulabati leading to her death on the spot. Tension ensued following the incident as angry locals kept the body of the deceased and staged a road blockade on NH-520 demanding compensation for the next of the kin of the deceased and government job for one member of the bereaved family. Irate locals also called for immediate removal of illegally parked heavy vehicles from the highway.

On being informed, Rugudi police reached the spot and tried to pacify the protesters. However, they failed to con-

vince them to remove the blockade.

Later Barbil tehsildar DSS Joshi reached the spot to placate the angry locals but to no avail. The road blockade continued for 16 hours from Thursday 9:30pm till 3:30pm, Friday.

Finally, after a lot of effort by the district administration, two mining companies assured special parking space for trucks and also agreed to provide job to one family member of the deceased woman. Due to the road blockade, transport of mineral was completely halted and road communication was severely affected.

ED raids in Sundargarh over money laundering through online gaming

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sundargarh, July 26: A team of Enforcement Directorate (ED) officials conducted raids at several houses in Bonai area of Sundargarh district Friday in connection with alleged money laundering through an online gaming app.

As per preliminary information, raids were conducted on at least six houses

Raids were conducted on at least six houses at Bada Gogua, Jangala and Ruguda villages in Bonai amid reports that some people have received huge amounts of money after participating in online gaming activities

at Bada Gogua, Jangala and Ruguda villages in Bonai amid reports that some people have received huge amounts of money after participating in online gaming activities. A team of around 40 officials of the Central investigating agency from Kolkata and Bhubaneswar have been engaged in the special operation along with Central forces to ascertain the alleged flow of huge amounts of money.

Sources said the ED sleuths are thoroughly examining a number of documents, including bank account details, of several people during the raids. Declining to share details of the searches, the ED officials said that the operation is still in progress and a clear picture will emerge after thorough investigation.

EAST COAST RAILWAY 'E' PROCUREMENT SYSTEM

The E-Tender have been already uploaded in website : <http://www.ireps.gov.in>

No. MCS/Stores/E-Procure/Tender Notice/5711/209, Dt. 20.07.2024

Tender No.: 92245711

DESCRIPTION : AAR 'H' TYPE TIGHT LOCK CBC COUPLER WITH TRANSITION SCREW COUPLING & BALANCED DRAFT GEAR, AS PER RDSO SPEC. NO. RDSO/2009/CG-22 Rev. 01 OR LATEST.

Quantity : 10 Sets.

Tender Closing Date and Time : At 1500 Hrs. of 12.08.2024

Dy. Chief Materials Manager, CRW / Manchewar, PR-351/P/24-25

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA No. MM-106

FOREST, ENVIRONMENT & CLIMATE CHANGE DEPARTMENT

OFFICE OF THE DIVISIONAL FOREST OFFICER, SUBARNAPUR FOREST DIVISION-767017

Tel.: 06654-295076

e-mail: dfo.subarnapur@odisha.gov.in, dfo.subarnapur@gmail.com

Bid Identification No. DFO, SNP 02/2024-25 dated: 26.07.2024

Letter No. 2976/1F, Dated 26th July-2024

SHORT TENDER NOTICE

Sl. No.	Name of the Work	Procurement of Tree Guard/G.I. Chain Link Fencing for Planting Season - 2024-25
1	Estimated Cost	Depending upon funds availability
3	Period & time of Completion	10 days from the date of issue of orders
4	Date & time of availability of the bid document in the portal	26.07.2024 to 08.08.2024
5	Last date/Time for receipt of bids in the portal	Up to 5.00 PM of 08.08.2024
6	Date & Time of bid opening	11.30 hours on Dated 09.08.2024
7	Name & Address of the officer inviting Bid	Divisional Forest Officer, Subarnapur Forest Division, Pin- 767017

Others can see the details from Notice inviting Tenders, available in website www.subarnapur.nic.in. Corrigendum if any, shall only be published in the above website.

Sd./- Divisional Forest Officer, Subarnapur Forest Division
OIPR-08014/11/0002/2425

BUREAU OF INDIAN STANDARDS

(Department of Consumer Affairs)

Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution, Govt. of India

Manak Bhawan, 9 Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg, New Delhi-110002

INDICATIVE ADVERTISEMENT NO. 02/2024/ESTT (DEPUTATION)

Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS), the statutory body under the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution (Department of Consumer Affairs), Govt. of India and responsible for activities in the field of Standardization, Product and System Certificate, Hallmarking of Gold / Silver Jewellery, Laboratory Testing, etc. in the Country, INVITES application from the ELIGIBLE serving employees of Central Govt. / State Govt. / Union Territory Govt. / Statutory / Autonomous Body, for filling up vacancies in the post of Section Officer on Deputation Basis as details given below:

Name of Post & level in Pay Matrix	No of vacancies	Place of posting and vacancies
Section Officer Level-7(Rs.44900-142400)	17	Kolkata-03, Chennai-02, Mumbai-02, Patna-01, Jamshedpur-01, Kochi-01, Guwahati-01, Rajkot-01, Bhubaneswar-1, Raipur-1, Coimbatore-01, Bangalore-01, Hubli-01

How to Apply:

- The last date of receipt of application is 45 days from the date of release of Advertisement in the Employment News / Rozgar Samachar.
- Please refer the detailed advertisement available under the tab " Career Opportunities " at home page of the BIS website: www.bis.gov.in

Date: 27 July, 2024
CBC 08103/12/0005/2425

Sd./- (Shoab Akhter)
Director (Establishment)
Bureau of Indian Standards

FOCUS INDO-JAPAN TIES

PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE



India has not fully tapped the goodwill and investment potential of Japan. Countries in South-East Asia and East Asia including South Korea and China have benefitted greatly from Japanese investment

to relax some of the existing restrictions on exports of defence technologies.

Second, in the trade and economic sector, thankfully, Japan has established a visible presence in India in manufacturing of electrical and automatic parts. Such collaborative projects in India, need to be expanded to meet India's domestic needs as well as for exports to other countries.

The third recommendation made by Panda is quite promising. He says India and Japan should consider setting up a joint India-Japan Friendship University by co-designing courses and co-funding them. This is in line with the South Asia University catering to students of SAARC countries. India-Japan University should cover students only from both countries. It could start with teaching languages – Japanese and two or more Indian languages which will enable easier movement of people from either country. Thereafter, studies in engineering, which is a significant Japanese intellectual asset, and in medium skills like plumbing, carpentry, electrical which Indians are good at, could be introduced. Former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh wanted to make India the skill capital of the world.

To conclude, when, New Delhi, in its journey towards a world power, looks around for support in terms of technology and investment, Japan stands out as the most cherished partner. It has no baggage like the European countries, nor like the wavering commitment of the US as a partner. Both the countries have the necessary political will. What is needed is to nudge the leadership in both countries to this promising possibility of a new axis in world politics.

The author is Secretary General, Association for Democratic Socialism

INFA

Something Amiss

Spirituality is indeed the master key of the Indian mind; the sense of the infinitive is native to it

SRI AUROBINDO



The buzz about UPSC Chairman Dr Manoj Soni stepping down popped up after a scandal involving an IAS probationer's fake certificate. But the word on the street and in babu corridors is that Soni handed in his resignation about a month ago.

If true, it means his exit wasn't directly related to the fake certificate mess with Puja Khedkar and others. So, what gives? After all, Soni is from Gujarat and has been regarded as very close to the Prime Minister and Home Minister all this while. Something is surely amiss.

Some folks in the know say that Soni, who's big on spirituality, wants to dive into social work and spiritual activities. Sure, he has his own beliefs, like anyone else, but he's also seen as a guy with real substance. Insiders mention that he often sticks to his guns, even when it means going against the powers that be.

Still, it's strange that this major news took so long to come out. Maybe it's because the administration keeps a tight lid on things. Or maybe the media was too busy with the government formation and the Parliament session. There's also the chance that the timing isn't just a coincidence—his resignation coincides with the Budget session, where Rahul Gandhi was expected to bring this up.

Whatever the reason behind his stepping down, this whole episode is already showing all signs of a full-blown scandal. More cases are coming to light of Soni's resignation, which might just be the push needed for some serious cleaning up in the system.

A timely move

Vinay Mohan Kwatra, fresh off his stint as India's Foreign Secretary, has just landed a new role as the Indian Ambassador to the United States. This post had been vacant since January when Taranjit Sandhu retired, so Kwatra's appointment is a timely move to keep the Indo-US relations on a steady track.

Kwatra's deep knowledge of international relations and his impressive diplomatic resume make him the perfect fit for this position, say observers. He's seen a lot, having served in China, the US, France, and even in Modi's office. His background equips him well to handle the complexities of global politics and strengthen the bond between the two democracies.

With the US elections around the corner, Kwatra's role becomes even more critical. His goal will be to provide stability and certainty in the India-US relationship, regardless of any shifts in the US administration. His immediate priority will be to connect with key officials who could shape India-related policies in the next administration. Rumi once said, "In silence there is eloquence." It's a fitting quote for Kwatra, one of India's most quietly influential diplomats. His presence in Washington, DC, is set to mark a significant chapter in the ongoing Indo-US relationship.



BABUDOM BYTES

Dilip Cherian



DK Giri

INDIA NEEDS TO PROVIDE A ROBUST AND VIBRANT INVESTMENT ENVIRONMENT FOR FOREIGN COMPANIES, PARTICULARLY FROM JAPAN, WHO REQUIRE HIGH STANDARDS

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar is flying to Japan this weekend to participate in the next meeting of the Quad Foreign Ministers in Tokyo on July 29. The meeting will deliberate on the affairs of Quad which was initiated by the former Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. But it is time to look at India-Japan relations which is critical for India's growth, in particular meeting its aspiration of being the third largest economy in the world.

Let us recall that Shinzo Abe was to visit India in December 2019, mainly to the state of Assam for a summit talk with Prime Minister Narendra Modi. A major investment was in the offing. But the visit was cancelled amid tensions in the state in the wake of the implementation of the Citizens Amendment Act. Japan has been deeply engaged in the entire North-East region and had stepped up infrastructure development work in Assam in recent years. The cancellation of the visit divested India of at least 10% increase in Japanese investment in India. This was confirmed to me by an MEA official during discussion on a book release on India-Japan relations.

The recent developments in world politics have brought India and Japan closer. The US hegemony seems to be declining as China is ominously rising putting the world at the edge. In this new strategic scenario, middle powers like Japan, India and South Korea would like to play an active role in the India-Pacific region. Here, India-Japan partnership should constitute the pillar of any alliance in the India-Pacific region.

In bilateral terms, India-Japan partnership should be the defining moment for a new world order. Japan is an advanced country in terms of technology and investment capacity, whereas India is the biggest democracy perceived to be an alternative to China,

both as a political system as well as a manufacturing hub. Shinzo Abe nicely captured the critical importance of this partnership and Prime Minister Modi warmly reciprocated with his own brand of diplomacy. Remember, Modi had named the Japan-America-India trilateral partnership as JAI (victory).

Sadly, Shinzo Abe is no more. But hopefully Japan has not changed its strategy vis-à-vis India-Pacific. Moreover, Japan is likely to press the US administration for a robust American presence in the India-Pacific. That should strengthen India-Japan axis in the region. India and Japan are members of the Quad along with the US and Australia. Both the US and Japan are India's 2+2 Dialogue partners. All the three countries collaborate in other multilateral forums.

Coming back to India-Japan relations, both the countries have to innovate and improvise while countering China and ensuring peace and stability in the region. India needs to shift its focus from politics to economy. While elections are important for all political parties in India and they happen round the year, the entire country and

the Union Cabinet need not be involved in the electioneering process. They should focus on building the economy.

India needs to provide a robust and vibrant investment environment for the foreign companies, particularly from Japan who require high standards. At the same time, Japan needs to expand its presence in popular perception across India. Japanese language, cuisine, politics and business culture needs to be communicated to Indians here. Japanese agencies like Japan Foundation should do more to promote people-to-people contact.

Dr. Rajaram Panda, an expert in Indo-Japan relations, has authored a book titled India-Japan: Past, Present and Future. In a longish introduction, he traces the evolution of relationship between India and Japan.

Dr. Panda offers the following recommendations for the policy makers to ponder over. First, in view of the existing robust strategic partnership, the defence dimension has to be deepened. In China, both countries have a common security challenge. Therefore, expanding the defence sector in the relationship is a necessary step to take. To do this, Japan needs

SPECTRUM REAL ESTATE

Budget: An insight into key tax changes

In an economy, where the fiscal policies wield considerable influence over market dynamics, the declaration of Union Budget is often met with heightened anticipation. Like every year, the changes proposed in tax system in the Budget have sparked interest and debates among the citizens. The increased rates of capital gain taxes and security transaction tax have come as a significant blow to the capital market participants. Here's a look at the key tax amendments outlined in the Budget and their anticipated impact on property sales and investments.

Investments in real estate properties are primarily made with the objective of long-term gain in our country. Real estate investments are typically estimated to yield a nominal return ranging from 10% to 12% annually based on the growth recorded in last decade. The gain from sale of any property is considered as long term capital gain (LTCG) if such property is held for a period exceeding 24 months, whereas such gain is classified as short term capital gain (STCG), in case the period of holding is

less than 24 months. Prior to this Budget, property sales in long-term were subject to 20% LTCG tax with indexation benefit. But with the new proposals in place, it will now attract 12.5% LTCG tax without the indexation benefit. The rationalization of tax rate bringing it down to 12.5% from 20% is a significant move in the direction of encouraging real estate investments. However, the complete removal of indexation benefit has surprised the stakeholders. So before we assess its impact, let us understand what this indexation benefit was.

Indexation basically adjusts the purchase price of the asset for inflation, and hence it considerably reduces the taxable capital gain. The indexation is done based on the cost inflation index (CII) notified by the Government each year which measures the price relative to the base year 2001-2002. It simply means that to calculate the current value of an older property, its worth is estimated as on April 1, 2001, and this base value is then adjusted for inflation using the index to arrive at "fair market value" for the year

of sale. For example, if value of investment is ₹100 in financial year 2019-20, its fair market value for financial year 2024-25 shall be ₹126, calculated based on the indexation factor 1.26. This indexation factor 1.26 is simply arrived at by dividing CII of year of sale by CII of year of purchase. In the above example it is 363 for year of sale 2024-25 and 289 for year of purchase 2019-20. So by dividing 363 by 289, we get the indexation factor 1.26 and by multiplying it to 100, we get 126.

The removal of indexation benefit may likely result into increased tax burden on people selling their properties. Let us understand from a practical example. Mr. A purchased a house at ₹50 lakh in F.Y. 2018-19 (CII 280) and decided to sell it in F.Y. 2024-25 (CII 363) for ₹70 lakh. Now referring to the earlier example, the fair market value is calculated to be ₹64,82,142. So long-term capital gain is ₹5,17,858 (70,00,000 minus 5,17,858), and tax liability will be 20% of it as per the earlier rule i.e. ₹1,03,572.

Now after implementation of the new proposals, there will be no indexation effect. So the LTCG

will be ₹20,00,000 (70 lakh minus 50 lakh) and tax liability will be 12.5% i.e. ₹2,50,000. As we can see, the new proposals would yield Mr. A with increased tax liability of ₹1,46,428.

It will simply mean that now investors will have to pay more for selling their properties. However they will stand to gain substantially reaping the benefit of decreased tax rate in scenarios of exceptionally high returns. Even though institutional investments in real estate have declined by 55% in Q1 of 2024-25 and mutual funds investment is getting popular among long-term investors, posing a major challenge to real estate, the sector is projected to reach \$1.3 trillion i.e. 13.8% of the projected GDP by FY 2034 as per the CREDAI with 7 crore additional housing demand. However as investors adapt to these new tax norms, the true impact of the Budget on real estate landscape will unfold over time.

The writer is Assistant Professor of Commerce, JKKB Government College, Cuttack



Swastik Suman Satapathy

THE REMOVAL OF INDEXATION BENEFIT MAY LIKELY RESULT INTO INCREASED TAX BURDEN ON PEOPLE SELLING THEIR PROPERTIES

WISDOM CORNER

- Every child comes with the message that God is not yet discouraged of man **RABINDRANATH TAGORE**
- A minority may be right, and a majority is always wrong **HENRIK IBSEN**
- There is nothing either good or bad but thinking makes it so **WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE**

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

- 1214:** At the Battle of Bouvines, French King Philip II defeated an international coalition led by the Holy Roman emperor Otto IV.
- 1794:** Antoine-Christophe Merlin and other conspirators initiated the Thermidorian Reaction, a revolt that ultimately resulted in the fall of Maximilien de Robespierre and the end of the Reign of Terror during the French Revolution.
- 1919:** The Chicago Race Riot of 1919 was ignited after a young Black man was stoned and drowned in Lake Michigan for swimming in an area reserved for whites.
- 1996:** A pipe bomb exploded in Olympic Centennial Park in Atlanta, Georgia, killing 1 person and injuring 111 in the first terrorist attack at the Olympics since the 1972 Games in Munich, West Germany.

LOL

A desperate marriage

A man really loved a woman, but he was just too shy to propose to her. Now he was up in his years and neither of them had ever been married. Of course, they dated about once a week for the past six years, but he was so timid he just never got around to suggesting marriage. But



one day, he became determined to ask her the question. So he calls her on the phone, "June."
"Yes, this is June."
"Will you marry me?"
"Of course I will! Who's this?"

FM's mood swings

Sir, It was a pleasure listening to our former Finance Minister P Chidambaram, when he was discussing the Budget blues in the Rajya Sabha. As a financial wizard, he went on to dissect the budget thoroughly with his inborn wisdom and pointed out the flaws and shortcomings in the budget pungently but without losing his cool anytime during his long sermon, which made the incumbent Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman stay put in her seat, visibly stunned and bewildered. Chidambaram even received accolades from the Treasury benches. Contrary to the suave manners and calm and quiet attitude exhibited by Chidambaram while presenting his views, of course, very effectively and convincingly, when our present Finance Minister, Nirmala Sitharaman, rose to counter the arguments put forth by opposition leaders like Kharge, we found her exhibiting undiluted ferocity not only in the statements made by her but also in her body language. This is not the first time we have witnessed Sitharaman's bad mood swings, but, invariably, every time she rises to speak in either of the houses of Parliament or even in public, we have witnessed her with the same kind of body language and utterances that do not behave the coveted position she holds. Even though it is an art to say 'no' without offending the receiver, Sitharaman should learn this from Chidambaram, who is a master in this art.

Tharcus S. Fernando, CHENNAI

International cooperation

Sir, Nature is an infinite sphere where the centre is everywhere, and the circumference is nowhere. Its importance to mankind's health and prosperity cannot be overstressed because nature is one thing every individual on earth has to share with others. Maintaining a fine balance between usage and wastage is crucial. A study has shown that the pressure exerted on the planet has doubled in the last fifty years, while the rich natural resources have declined by more than thirty per cent. Conservation of nature is vital because many scientists have warned of mass extinctions. The consequence of industrialisation is air pollution and its crippling effects. Wetland preservation is too vital to be ignored. This year's Nature Conservation Day on July 28th will focus on international cooperation and policy reforms to enhance environmental protection.

Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

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

national



The Samajwadi Party has taken a humble decision to celebrate 'Reservation Day' as the 'Foundation Day' of 'Constitution Manastambh' because, on this day, Shrimant Maharaj Rajarshi Chhatrapati Shahuji Maharaj of Kolhapur started reservation by implementing the 'reservation' envisioned by Mahatma Jyotiba Phule in his Kolhapur state

AKHILESH YADAV | SAMAJWADI PARTY CHIEF

4.71 CR SCREENED FOR CERVICAL CANCER

A total of 4.71 crore women have been screened for cervical cancer in the country, according to the National Non-Communicable Disease (NCD) portal. This was stated by Minister of State for Health Prataprap Jadhav in Lok Sabha in a written response to a question



of the day quote

During the Congress rule, the defence minister used to question the need for building border roads. But, under the leadership of Narendra Modi, more than 6,800 km of roads have been built for the armed forces

We have decided to rename Ramanagara district as Bengaluru South...It is being done keeping in mind 'Brand Bengaluru' and based on the demand of the people there. The Revenue Department will start the process

After the setting up of a semiconductor unit in the state, we are keen that it becomes a defence production hub and Singh has responded positively to the proposal

SHORT TAKES

BJP leader Prabhat Jha passes away

Bhopal/New Delhi: Former Rajya Sabha member and senior BJP leader Prabhat Jha passed away Friday in a hospital in Gurugram after a prolonged illness, party leaders said. He was 67. Jha is survived by his wife and two sons, they said. He was elected as a Rajya Sabha member from Madhya Pradesh in 2008 and remained in the Upper House of Parliament till 2020, serving two terms. Jha was the BJP's national vice president in 2015. His last rites will be performed in his ancestral village in Bihar Saturday, BJP leaders said. Prime Minister Narendra Modi said he saw his working style from close quarters and his active role in strengthening the party's organisation. "Besides public service, he also made valuable contributions in the fields of journalism and writing," the prime minister said, offering condolences to his family and admirers.

4 die after inhaling toxic gas in well

Katni (MP): Four persons, including a man and his nephew, died due to suspected inhalation of a poisonous gas in a well in Madhya Pradesh's Katni, an official said Friday. The incident occurred in Jhulajhuli village Thursday evening, the official said. One of the victims, Ram Bhaiya Dube (36), entered the well to fit a water pump and suddenly fell unconscious, following which his nephew also entered the water body, he said.

KANWAR YATRA

SC extends interim stay on directives on eateries



Defending order, UP government tells SC that even a small confusion on the kind of food pilgrims are served, has potential to hurt religious sentiments and cause flare ups

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 26: The Supreme Court Friday extended till further orders its interim direction staying the directives of BJP-ruled Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, and Madhya Pradesh which effectively ensured that 'Kanwar Yatra' goes on without displaying the names of owners, staff and other details of eateries along the route.

The Kanwar Yatra began July 22 and ends August 6. A large number of devotees travel from various places with 'kanwars' carrying holy water from the Ganga to perform 'jal-abhishek' of Shivalings during the Hindu calendar month of 'Shravan'. Many believers shun

He urged the court to take up the matter next Monday otherwise the issue will become infructuous. There is huge rush of devotees at Shiva temples Mondays, especially during the month of Shravan. The bench said if there is any law governing eateries and shops, the state should enforce it across areas under its jurisdiction. Senior advocate Abhishek Singhvi, appearing for Trinamool Congress (TMC) leader Mahua Moitra, said if this law mandating display of names and other details has not been put into force for the past 60 years, the issue can be taken up in due course of time and let the yatra continue without enforcing it. He submitted the UP's reply was supplied at 10:30 pm yesterday and he needed time to respond. Deputy Advocate General for Uttarakhand Jatinder Kumar Sethi said the state has not issued any specific order with respect to Kanwar Yatra and the government was only enforcing laws that mandated disclosure of the names of eateries during all festivals. Sethi urged the bench to allow the state to take action to implement two laws under which it was mandatory for shops and business establishments to display their registration certificates and identity cards. He said the apex court's interim order was coming in the way of enforcing those laws. The two laws he referred to are: Food Safety and Standards (Registration and Licensing) Regulations, 2011 (a central law) and Uttarakhand Panchayati Raj Bylaws (a state legislation).

consuming meat during the month they consider holy. Many don't even consume meals containing onions and garlic. A bench of Justices Hrishikesh Roy and SVN Bhatti said it won't issue any clarification the July 22 order as "we have said what needed to be said in our July 22 order. Can't force anyone to disclose names." "List the matter August 5, 2024. In the meantime, interim order passed by this court July 22, 2024 shall continue," the bench said in its order.

The bench asked the Madhya Pradesh and Uttarakhand governments to file their response to the pleas challenging their directives. It also allowed the petitioners to file their responses to the replies of the state governments.

Apart from the Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand governments, the BJP-controlled civic body of Ujjain in Madhya Pradesh had allegedly issued a similar directive. Ujjain is home to the famous "Mahakaa" temple to Lord Shiva. Senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi, appearing for UP, said their stand is that the directive is the requirement under law.



Congress MPs from Haryana protest at Parliament House complex during the Monsoon session, in New Delhi, Friday

ALIBAG COAST Coast Guard airlifts all 14 crew members

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, July 26: The Indian Coast Guard on Friday airlifted 14 crew members of JSW Raigad, a long bulk carrier vessel that drifted off the Alibag coast in Maharashtra's Raigad district after its engine stopped functioning.

A chopper of the Coast Guard was engaged in the operation, which started around 9 am, and all the 14 crew members of the tugboat were safely evacuated, said Somnath Gharge, Raigad Superintendent of Police. The Coast Guard chopper picked up the crew from the tugboat and safely dropped them at Alibag beach, he said.

"At the early hours of July 26, despite adverse conditions limiting air operations, ICG launched a daring operation to evacuate the crew from the stranded vessel.

India, US sign cultural property agreement

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 26: India and the United States Friday their first agreement to prevent illegal trafficking of cultural property and return of antiquarian objects to their place of origin, the Ministry of Culture said.

The US-India Cultural Property Agreement was signed by Union Culture Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat on the sidelines of the ongoing 46th session of the World Heritage Committee at Bharat Mandapam here. Interacting with the press later, Shekhawat said it is a general agreement that will allow "smooth repatriation" of historic artefact from the US to India. He added that there are "297 items" that are "lying in the US,

ready to be repatriated." India has repatriated 358 antiquities since 1976, out of these 345 have been retrieved since 2014, the minister said. "The agreement aims to prevent illegal trafficking of cultural property and retrieval of antiquarian objects to their place of origin," the Culture Ministry said in a statement. The US Embassy in a statement said that with this agreement, India joins the ranks of 29 existing US bilateral cultural property agreement partners. The US-India Cultural Property Agreement was negotiated by the State Department under the US law implementing the 1970 UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, the statement said.

AGNIPATH REMARKS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 26: The Opposition parties slammed Prime Minister Narendra Modi Friday over his claims concerning the Agnipath scheme while paying tribute to martyrs on Kargil Vijay Diwas. Modi said the Agnipath recruitment scheme was an example of necessary reforms undertaken by the Army and accused the opposition of playing politics over the recruitment process aimed at keeping the average age in the armed forces low.

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and other party leaders accused the prime minister of indulging in "petty politics" over the Agnipath issue and said the prime

Oppn slams Modi

minister's remarks that his government implemented the scheme at the behest of the Army was a "blatant lie". "It is very unfortunate and deplorable that Prime Minister Narendra Modi ji is doing petty politics even on occasions like paying tribute to martyrs on Kargil Vijay Diwas. No Prime Minister has ever done this before," Kharge said.

"Modi ji is saying that his government implemented the Agnipath scheme at the behest of the Army. This is a blatant lie and an unforgivable insult to our valiant armed forces. Modi ji, it is you who is spreading lies!" he said in a post on X. Asserting that many retired officers had strongly criticised the scheme, the Congress chief said the

Agnipath scheme was endangering national security and the aspirations of the rural youth. All this is on record, he said and demanded that the scheme be completely scrapped. Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh accused Modi of "lying" even on Kargil Vijay Diwas. Congress MP Vivek Tankha claimed the scheme was brought with very little consultation. Those consulted did not have to courage to suggest changes, he alleged. Congress leader Karti Chidambaram termed Agnipath an "ill-conceived scheme". Congress MP Ranjit Ranjan asserted that when his party comes to power, the scheme will be scrapped.

25th Kargil Vijay Diwas celebrated

THE INDIAN ARMY ANNOUNCED THE SUCCESSFUL CULMINATION OF OPERATION VIJAY JULY 26, 1999, DECLARING VICTORY OVER PAKISTAN

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dras/New Delhi, July 26: India Friday hailed the valour of its soldiers in the Kargil conflict 25 years ago with Prime Minister Narendra Modi issuing a stern message to Pakistan, saying it has been trying to stay relevant by using terrorism and proxy wars but all such terror attempts will be crushed with full force. Various events were organised in states and at the Kargil War Memorial in Dras in Ladakh to mark the 25th Kargil Vijay Diwas. In Parliament, members paid their homage to the fallen soldiers. As a mark of respect to the over 500 soldiers who laid their lives in the war, both Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha members stood in silence for a brief



while. President Droupadi Murmu said the Kargil Vijay Diwas is an occasion to pay tributes to the fallen soldiers. "I pay tribute to each soldier who made the supreme sacrifice while protecting

Namgyal is believed to have reported the intrusion by Pakistani soldiers into Kargil May 2, 1999. The Indian Army launched a fierce counter-assault, Operation Vijay, to push back the Pakistani forces that had stealthily occupied important heights in Ladakh. The war went on for nearly three months on the icy heights. The Army announced the successful culmination of Operation Vijay July 26, 1999, declaring victory over Pakistan. Addressing a ceremony at the Kargil memorial in Dras, Modi said, "falsehood and terror" were brought down to their knees by truth in the 1999 war. He also noted that Pakistan has not learnt anything from its past.

Union Bank of India advertisement for property sale. Includes details for Jajpur Road Branch-2, listing property details, borrower information, and auction terms.

national



Modi ji is saying that his government implemented the Agnipath scheme at the behest of the Army, this is a blatant lie and an unforgivable insult to our valiant Armed Forces. Modi ji, it is you who are spreading lies!

MALLIKARJUN KHARGE | CONGRESS PRESIDENT

NBW ISSUED AGAINST BISHNOI'S BROTHER

A special court Friday issued a non-bailable warrant (NBW) against jailed gangster Lawrence Bishnoi's brother, Anmol Bishnoi, in the case related to the firing outside Bollywood actor Salman Khan's Bandra residence. A warrant was also issued against Rohit Godera, an alleged member of the Bishnoi gang



of the day quote

MUDA gave us (alternate sites) as given to others, after accepting their mistake. What is illegality in this?

SIDDARAMAIAH | KARNATAKA CM

As per the wishes of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the MP government has decided to give reservation to Agniveers in police and armed forces

MOHAN YADAV | MP CM

People will support my government as they will judge performance of the Maha Vikas Aghadi and the Mahayuti regimes. People vote for those who work and not those who sit at home

EKNATH SHINDE | MAHA CM

X POST OF THE DAY

It is no longer enough to speak up for the civilians, mothers, fathers, doctors, nurses, aid workers, journalists, teachers, writers, poets, senior citizens and the thousands of innocent children who are being wiped out day after day by the horrific genocide taking place in Gaza. It is the moral responsibility of every right thinking individual including all those Israeli citizens who do not believe in hatred and violence, and every government in the world to condemn the Israeli government's genocidal actions and force them to stop. Their actions are unacceptable in a world that professes civility and morality. Instead we are subjected to the image of the Israeli Prime Minister being given a standing ovation in the US congress. He calls it "a clash between barbarism and civilization." He is absolutely correct, except that it is him and his government that are barbaric and their barbarism is being given the unstinted support of most of the western world. It is truly a shame to watch.

@priyankagandhi

SHORT TAKES

RS adjourned for an hour

New Delhi: Rajya Sabha proceedings were adjourned for an hour Friday after treasury and Opposition members caused an uproar in the House over the issue of reservation. The ruckus began after Congress MP Neeraj Dangi said that in 1993, the Congress government under then Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao made a provision for 27 per cent reservation for the socially and educationally backward through an office memorandum that was later challenged in the Supreme Court.

Mamata meets Kejriwal's wife

New Delhi: West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee Friday met Sunita Kejriwal, the wife of Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal who is in jail in connection with the corruption case related to the alleged excise policy scam. Banerjee is in Delhi to attend the NITI Aayog meeting even as most INDIA bloc chief ministers have decided to give it a miss.

Rahul appears in UP court

Sultanpur (UP): Congress leader Rahul Gandhi appeared before an MP-MLA court here Friday in a defamation case against him and said it was filed to gain "cheap publicity". According to Gandhi's lawyer Kashi Prasad Shukla, the Congress MP, who appeared before Special Judge Shubham Verma, said he never made a statement against anyone that could lead to a case of defamation.

SC notice to Centre, Guvs on pending Bills



THE TOP COURT ISSUED NOTICES TO THE UNION MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS AND THE SECRETARIES OF KERALA GOVERNOR AND HIS WEST BENGAL COUNTERPART AND SOUGHT THEIR REPLIES WITHIN THREE WEEKS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 26: In a significant development, the Supreme Court Friday agreed to consider the separate pleas of Opposition-ruled Kerala and West Bengal, alleging the denial of assent to Bills passed by the respective Legislative Assemblies.

Kerala also alleged that Governor Arif Mohammed Khan referred certain Bills to President Droupadi Murmu and those were yet to be cleared. Taking note of the pleas, the top court issued notices to the Union Ministry of Home Affairs

and the secretaries of Kerala Governor Khan and his West Bengal counterpart CV Ananda Bose and sought their replies within three weeks.

The bench of Chief Justice DY Chandrachud, Justice JB Pardiwala and Justice Manoj Misra also directed the Trinamool Congress-led West Bengal government to make the Home Ministry a party to the petition.

The CPI(M)-led Left Democratic Front government of Kerala moved the top court in March, alleging that certain Bills cleared by the Legislative Assembly were referred to the President by the Governor and these were still pending assent. West Bengal, in its plea, alleged the Governor was withholding assent on eight Bills.

Senior advocate KK Venugopal, appearing for Kerala government, said, "This is the most unfortunate situation." The bench said, "We are issuing notices to the secretary to the governors and the Union in both cases." Senior advocate Abhishek Singhvi, appearing for West Bengal, said he would make the Centre a party and file a written

note to assist the court in deciding the plea.

He referred to instances of other states, including Tamil Nadu, and said the moment the top court fixed the cases for hearing, certain Bills were either cleared or referred to the President.

Kerala said its plea pertained to the acts of the Governor in reserving seven Bills, which he was required to deal with himself, to the President.

Not one of the seven Bills had anything to do with Centre-state relations, it said.

It added these Bills were pending with the Governor for as long as about two years and his action 'subverted' the functioning of the state legislature, rendering its very existence 'ineffective and otiose'.

The Constitution is silent on how much time the President can take in granting assent to a Bill passed by a state legislature and referred to the Rashtrapati Bhavan for presidential consideration or for denying consent.

Article 361 of the Constitution says the President, or the Governor of a state, shall not be answerable to any court for the exercise and performance of the powers and duties of his office or for any act done or purporting to be done by him in the exercise and performance of those powers and duties.

In Delhi to attend a NITI Aayog meeting July 27, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee Friday said the public policy think-tank brought by the Modi government should be scrapped and the Planning Commission restored.



Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi interacts with a cobbler during his visit to Sultanpur

24-year-old stabbed to death in B'lore PG

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, July 26: Two days after a woman from Bihar was found murdered with her throat slit in a paying guest accommodation at Koramangala here July 23, CCTV footage of the said incident emerged Friday purportedly showing gruesome details of the crime.

According to police, the assailant sneaked and killed 24-year-old Kriti Kumari July 23 night. The murderer has not been arrested yet. Police sources said the victim was staying with another woman.

A few days ago, Kriti Kumari's roommate had moved out of the paying guest accommodation. It is suspected that she had gone to stay with her boyfriend.

The woman returned to the PG July 23 to stay with Kriti Kumari. Sources suspect that the assailant had doubts that Kriti Kumari could be instrumental behind the change of her roommate's mind.

The footage shared by the police shows that the man walked into the corridor of the paying guest holding a polythene bag.

He then knocked on the door and dragged the woman out. The victim resisted the attack but was soon overpowered by the murderer, who slit her throat and ran away.

Hearing the loud noise, other women among the paying guests came running, but they could not save her. "Kriti Kumari hailed from Bihar. She was working in a private company in the city. The incident might have happened July 23 at about 11 pm," a police officer said.

NTA declares final results of NEET-UG

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 26: The National Testing Agency (NTA) Friday declared the final results of controversy-ridden NEET-UG entrance exam, declaring that 17 candidates have shared the top rank, down from 61 in the revised results, while thousands of others have seen their marks and rankings change significantly.

The number of qualifying candidates and the cut-off has also seen a marginal dip.

The "re-revised" results have been released three days after the Supreme Court rejected multiple petitions demanding a NEET-UG 2024 retest because of alleged paper leaks and other malpractices.

The top court had, however, asked the NTA to revise the merit list in light of a controversial physics question which had two possible answers and the correct option was suggested by a three-member expert panel set up by the SC.

It led to a complete reworking of NEET ranks and scores for all 2.3 million students. The scores of at least 4,20,000 students, including 44 of the 61 who achieved

perfect 720, decreased by five points with the court invalidating the disputed marks they got for the Physics question.

However, the exact impact on their rankings is not immediately clear. The exams were held May 5 and the results were announced June 4. Doubts about the sanctity of the exam arose when a total of 67 students scored a perfect 720, unprecedented in the NTA's history.

The number of candidates sharing the top rank came down to 61 after the NTA announced the revised results July 1 after withdrawing grace marks awarded to six candidates to make up for loss of time some centres. On Friday, the NTA declared the "re-revised result". Along with a decrease in the number of toppers, the qualifying cutoffs and number of qualified candidates have also decreased in the "re-revised" results of the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test-Undergraduate (NEET-UG). Seventeen candidates have retained the perfect 720 marks and were declared the toppers, followed by six who scored 716, and 77 with 715 marks, which forms the cohort of top 100 candidates.



PORSCHÉ CRASH CASE

Pune police files over 900-page chargesheet

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Pune, July 26: Police have filed a chargesheet against seven accused in the Porsche car accident case, including the parents of a minor boy who was allegedly behind the wheel, in a Pune court, more than two months after the fatal crash, an official said Friday.

The 900-page chargesheet, submitted Thursday, has excluded the 17-year-old boy, whose case is being handled separately by the Juvenile Justice Board (JJB).

The high-end car allegedly driven by the minor under the influence of alcohol knocked down two motorbike-borne IT professionals, one of them a woman, in Pune's Kalyani Nagar area in the wee hours of May 19, killing them.



The boy's father is a prominent builder. "We have filed a 900-page chargesheet against seven accused, including the parents of the minor, two doctors and a staffer from Sassoon General Hospital and two middlemen, in a Pune court Thursday," said Shalesh Balkawade, Additional Commissioner of Police (Crime).

SNIPPETS

633 Indian students died abroad in last 5 yrs: Govt

New Delhi: Six-hundred and thirty-three incidents of death of Indian students abroad were reported in the last five years due to various reasons including natural causes with Canada topping the list with 172 cases, the government said in Lok Sabha Friday. Separately, a total 19 Indian students died abroad due to attacks in the period with the highest of nine deaths reported from Canada followed by six in the US, according to details provided by Minister of State for External Affairs Kirti Vardhan Singh. Out of the 633 incidents of deaths, 108 were reported in the US, 58 in the UK, 57 in Australia and 37 were in Russia, the data showed. Eighteen incidents were reported in Ukraine, 24 in Germany, 12 each in Georgia, Kyrgyzstan and Cyprus and eight such cases were reported in China.

Karnataka govt decides to rename Ramanagara district

Bangalore: The Karnataka Cabinet Friday decided to rename neighbouring Ramanagara district as 'Bengaluru South'. The proposal to rename the district consisting of Ramanagara, Magadi, Kanakapura, Channarayana and Harohalli taluks had gained steam recently with a Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar-led delegation meeting the Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and submitting him a memorandum to raise the pitch. "We have decided to rename Ramanagara district as Bengaluru South...It is being done keeping in mind 'Brand Bengaluru' and based on the demand of the people there. The Revenue Department will start the process," Law and Parliamentary Affairs Minister H K Patil said.

CBI busts cyber crime network; 43 arrested

New Delhi: The CBI has arrested 43 people during a crackdown on a Gurugram-based call centre, nabbing the suspected cyber criminals live in the act of defrauding foreign nationals by promising to address issues with their computers, officials said Friday. The CBI has booked a company, Innocent Technology (OPC) Pvt Ltd which runs from Gurugram's DLF Cyber City, and raided its premises as part of the agency's ongoing Operation CHAKRA-III aimed at dismantling sophisticated cyber-enabled financial crime network operating across multiple countries since 2022. A total of seven locations in Delhi and its posh suburbs of Noida and Gurugram were searched. During the operation, a task force comprising cybercrime domain experts swiftly descended on the call centre, capturing several employees engaged in live cyber crime activities, resulting in the interception of substantial incriminating evidence.

Concerns over surging liver disease among youths

According to the experts, conditions such as alcohol-related liver disease, fatty liver, hepatitis, and cirrhosis are increasingly affecting this age group, leading to higher mortality and morbidity rates. Early screening and management are crucial to improving outcomes for these individuals

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

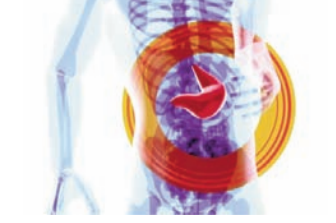
New Delhi, July 26: Liver diseases are significantly rising among young adults aged 23-35, said health experts Friday ahead of World Hepatitis Day.

World Hepatitis Day is observed every year July 28 to raise global awareness of hepatitis -- an inflammation of the liver -- and related diseases.

"Severe liver conditions such as acute viral hepatitis, cir-

rhosis, alcoholic hepatitis, fatty liver, and NASH (non-alcoholic fatty liver disease) are on the rise among young adults. This surge is linked to unhealthy lifestyle practices and excessive alcohol use, now seen as a social norm. The prevalence is nearly twice as high among men compared to women," said Dr. Uday Sanglodkar, Senior Consultant Hepatologist at Gleneagles Hospitals, Pune.

He also highlighted common symptoms such as jaundice, weight loss, nausea, weakness, and ascites, noting an increase



in young patients in recent years.

"The rise in liver disease among young adults is also due to poor dietary choices, drug abuse, and unprotected sexual activity," said Dr. Prakash Kurane, General and HPB

Surgeon at Apollo Spectra Mumbai.

He urged awareness and early intervention to prevent severe complications, including the necessity of liver transplants.

The liver plays a vital role in detoxification, nutrient processing, hormone regulation, immune system function, and storing essential nutrients. However, there has been a significant rise in liver-related issues due to factors like alcohol consumption, smoking, inadequate water intake, excessive sodium consumption, viral in-

fections, and prolonged use of certain medications.

Additionally, health conditions like Type 2 diabetes, obesity, and high cholesterol levels increase the risk of liver problems. Cirrhosis and NASH can cause severe liver damage, leading to permanent scarring and fat accumulation.

Hepatitis, caused by various factors including viruses and toxins, remains a significant concern. "Vaccines against Hepatitis A and B are essential for high-risk individuals," Dr. Sanglodkar said.

international

of the day quote

Confronted with powers such as Russia and China, and a United States whose pivot to Asia seems inevitable, no matter who wins the next election, we Europeans need to do more to ensure our own security

JOSEF BORRELL | FOREIGN POLICY CHIEF, EUROPEAN UNION

If there is one thing that unites our divided world, it's that we're all increasingly feeling the heat. Earth is becoming hotter and more dangerous for everyone, everywhere

ANTONIO GUTERRES | UNITED NATIONS SECRETARY-GENERAL

The current political, economic and security cooperation with ASEAN is of the utmost priority so is the people-to-people linkages, that we are constantly seeking to expand

S JAISHANKAR | EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER, INDIA

SHORT TAKES

Mexican drug lord pleads not guilty

Mexico City: Alleged Mexican kingpin Ismael "El Mayo" Zambada has pleaded not guilty to US drug trafficking charges, court records showed Friday, after he and a son of another drug lord were arrested Thursday in El Paso, Texas. Court records showed that Zambada Friday waived his right to appear personally in court and directed that a not guilty plea be entered on his behalf. Zambada and Guzman Lopez were detained after landing in a private plane in the El Paso area.

Belarus to expand ties with NKorea

Seoul: Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko has promised to expand cooperation with Pyongyang in a message to North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, North Korea's foreign ministry said on its website Friday. "I affirm that I will work to further expand cooperation with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to make it full of new content, and common programmes of giving mutual benefits to the improved well-being of the peoples of our countries," the ministry quoted Lukashenko as saying in a statement.

95 Libyans held in South Africa

Johannesburg: South African police said Friday they have arrested 95 Libyan nationals on suspicion of receiving training at a secret military camp in the north of the country. Police raided the camp at a farm in White River in the Mpumalanga province. National police spokesperson Athlenda Mathe said in a post on the social media site X that the Libyans stated they were entering the country on study visas to train as security guards but police investigations suggest they have received military training.

Train crash in Spain kills 79

Madrid: A Spanish train driver and a former traffic safety chief at national rail infrastructure operator ADIF were sentenced Friday to two-and-a-half years in prison over a train disaster that killed 79 people 11 years ago. In Spain's worst rail accident in decades, an eight-carriage, high-speed Alvia 04155 train veered off the track on a sharp bend near the northwestern city of Santiago de Compostela, slammed into a concrete wall and burst into flames.



If you want to sign a deal with the devil, who will then drag you to hell, well, go for it. This is what Russia is

VOLODYMYR ZELENSKY | PRESIDENT, UKRAINE

POLIO VACCINATION IN GAZA

The World Health Organization is sending more than one million polio vaccines to Gaza to be administered over the coming weeks to prevent children being infected



IN THE MIDDLE OF WAR

Ancient site in Palestine gets UNESCO tag

The UNESCO in a statement said that 'this decision recognises both the site's value and the need to protect it from danger'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 26: Amid the ongoing conflict in Gaza, the ancient heritage site of Saint Hilarion Monastery/Tell Umm Amer in Palestine Friday received the UNESCO tag and was simultaneously put on the List of World Heritage in Danger after an "emergency nomination".

The announcement was made during the ongoing 46th session of the World Heritage Committee (WHC) in Delhi. India is hosting the key UNESCO event for the first time.

Saint Hilarion Monastery/Tell Umm Amer in Palestine has been inscribed on the World Heritage List and List of World Heritage in Danger, it was announced in the plenary meeting of the session.

Israel has been carrying out a massive military offensive in



Gaza following the unprecedented and multi-pronged attacks on Israeli cities by Hamas militants October 7.

India in November had urged both the sides to eschew violence, de-escalate the situation and create conditions for an early resumption of direct peace negotiations towards a two-state

solution to the Palestine issue.

Friday's inscription has raised hopes about protection of such heritage sites.

The UNESCO in a statement later said that "this decision recognises both the site's value and the need to protect it from danger".

"In view of the threats to

Trump touts warm ties to Netanyahu

Palm Beach: Former US President Donald Trump said his relationship with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had always been warm as the two leaders met Friday, and the Israeli leader said he hoped progress was being made in talks on a Gaza ceasefire. Netanyahu traveled to Mar-a-Lago, Trump's Florida resort, to meet Trump, the Republican nominee in the 2024 US presidential race, after meeting Democratic President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris, who is running against Trump in the November 5 US election. Trump greeted Netanyahu and his wife Sara and criticized Harris who had voiced concern in public comments after meeting the Israeli leader about the toll on Palestinian civilians from Israel's 9-month-old campaign in Gaza. "I think her remarks were disrespectful," Trump said. Netanyahu said he hoped his US trip would lead to a quicker ceasefire deal. "I hope so. But I think time will tell," he told reporters. He said he thought there had been movement in efforts to forge a ceasefire because of Israeli military pressure and said he would dispatch a team to talks in Rome. Trump dismissed any suggestion of tensions with Netanyahu. "We have a very good relationship," he said, noting policy changes during his presidency including moving the US embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem and pulling the United States out of the international nuclear deal with Iran.

this heritage site posed by the ongoing conflict in the Gaza Strip, the World Heritage Committee used the emergency inscription procedure provided for in the World Heritage Convention," it said.

In accordance with the terms

of the Convention, "its 195 States Parties are committed to avoid taking any deliberate measures likely to cause direct or indirect damage to this site, which is now inscribed on the World Heritage List, and to assist in its protection", the world body said.

Harris urges Netanyahu to end war

US VP STRESSED THE NEED FOR A PATH TO A TWO-STATE SOLUTION, WHILE CALLING ON AMERICANS TO BE AWARE OF THE NUANCE ON THE CONFLICT



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Washington, July 26: US Vice President Kamala Harris has urged Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to quickly conclude a ceasefire deal with Hamas and reach a durable end to the devastating war in Gaza, amidst mounting civilian casualties and the humanitarian crisis in the Palestinian enclave.

"Israel has a right to defend itself and how it does so matters. What has happened in Gaza over the past nine months is devastating," Harris, the presumptive Democratic presidential nominee, told reporters after her meeting with Netanyahu at the White House Thursday.

"The images of dead children and desperate hungry people fleeing for safety, sometimes displaced for the second, third or fourth time. We cannot look away in the face of these tragedies. We cannot allow ourselves to become numb to the suffering and I will not be silent," she said.

Harris also stressed the need

for a path to a two-state solution, while calling on Americans to be aware of the nuance on the conflict.

Earlier Thursday, Netanyahu met President Joe Biden, who stepped down from his re-election campaign Sunday. Netanyahu's meetings at the White House came a day after he gave a fiery speech to Congress, vowing "total victory" against Hamas, as thousands of pro-Palestinian protesters demonstrated outside.

The Israeli Prime Minister faces pressure both at home and abroad to bring an end to the Israel-Gaza war, now in its ninth month.

"I've said it many times, but it bears repeating. Israel has a right to defend itself, and how it does so matters. Hamas is a brutal terrorist organisation. On October 7, Hamas triggered this war when it massacred 1,200 innocent people, including 44 Americans," Harris said.

"Hamas has committed horrific acts of sexual violence and took 250 hostages. There are American citizens who remain

UK drops plans to challenge ICC warrant against Israel PM

London: British Prime Minister Keir Starmer's office said Friday that the UK will not interfere with the International Criminal Court's request for an arrest warrant against Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. The decision puts distance between Starmer's Labour government and the plans of former Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, a Conservative who had planned to challenge the warrant. "This was a proposal by the previous government which was not submitted before the election, and which I can confirm the government will not be pursuing in line with our long-standing position that this is a matter for the court to decide," a Starmer spokesperson said.

captive in Gaza," Harris said. During her meeting with Netanyahu, Harris said that she voiced her serious concern to Netanyahu about the scale of human suffering in Gaza, including the death of far too many innocent civilians.

"I made clear my serious concern about the dire humanitarian situation there. With over two million people facing high levels of food insecurity, and half a million people facing catastrophic levels of acute food insecurity. What has happened in Gaza over the past nine months is devastating," she said.

Harris said there is a US-proposed deal on the table for a ceasefire and a hostage deal. The first phase of the deal would bring about a full ceasefire, including a withdrawal of the Israeli military from population centers in Gaza. In the second phase, the Israeli military would withdraw from Gaza entirely and it would lead to a permanent end to the hostilities.

PUBLIC OUTCRY

CHINA TO RAISE RETIREMENT AGE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Beijing, July 26: The ruling Chinese Communist Party's plan to raise the retirement age of the working population to cope with the rapidly ageing population has created ripples of resentment among the public.

According to the present structure, the retirement age for male workers in urban areas is 60 years while that for female workers is 50 or 55 depending on their occupation.

The recently concluded third plenum of the Communist Party of China (CPC) has unveiled comprehensive reforms to advance the modernisation of the economy, plagued by a deepening demographic crisis, sluggish growth and mounting local government debt. The powerful body also discussed plans to raise the country's retirement age in a "voluntary and flexible" manner.

The World Population Prospects 2024 report released July 11 said that China's population, currently 1.41 billion in 2024, will fall to 1.21 billion in 2054 and further decline to 633 million by 2100. "It is anticipated that China, the country currently with the world's second-largest population, will likely



experience the largest absolute population loss between 2024 and 2054 (204 million)," the report said, adding, "Longer-range population projections are more uncertain for China."

The official document approved by the plenum, held here last week, listed over 300 policy measures as part of the wide-ranging reforms to be completed by 2029. However, the CPC has not officially announced any schedule to implement the plan to increase the retirement age.

The plan, which has been in the works for several years, has generated a backlash in Chinese social media with people expressing their dissatisfaction over the prospect of delayed access to their pensions while younger employees averring that the rise of the retirement age will leave them with fewer jobs if the older workers stay.

Sri Lanka to elect new President September 21

Colombo: Sri Lanka will hold presidential elections September 21, a government notice said Friday, setting the date for a crucial vote expected to determine the future of reforms in the South Asian nation weathering its worst financial crisis in decades. Nominations for the election have to be submitted August 15, with incumbent President Ranil Wickremesinghe becoming the first candidate to do so by paying a non-refundable deposit to the election commission, his office said. Wickremesinghe, 75, took office in July 2022 after widespread protests caused by the debilitating financial crisis forced his predecessor Gotabaya Rajapaksa to flee the country and later resign.

Venezuela concludes presidential campaign

Caracas: Venezuela's government and opposition closed the official presidential campaign season Thursday with demonstrations that drew thousands of people to the streets of the capital. The events three days before the highly anticipated election Sunday encapsulated the massive disparities between the top contenders, including their resources. However, Venezuelan migrants in South America and Europe say they have struggled to register to vote in their country's presidential election Sunday, with only a small fraction able to overcome a range of bureaucratic hurdles.

Cambridge Dictionary adds over 3000 words and phrases

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, July 26: Informal words used as slang, such as 'boop' and 'the ick', are among more than 3,200 new words and phrases added to the 'Cambridge Dictionary' in its latest update this week.

Boop, which is defined as "a gentle hit or touch on a person's or animal's nose or head, showing that you like them or as a joke", and 'the ick', which refers to "a sudden feeling that you dislike someone or something or are no longer attracted to someone because of something they do", are among the slangs to make it to the online edition for 2024 so far.

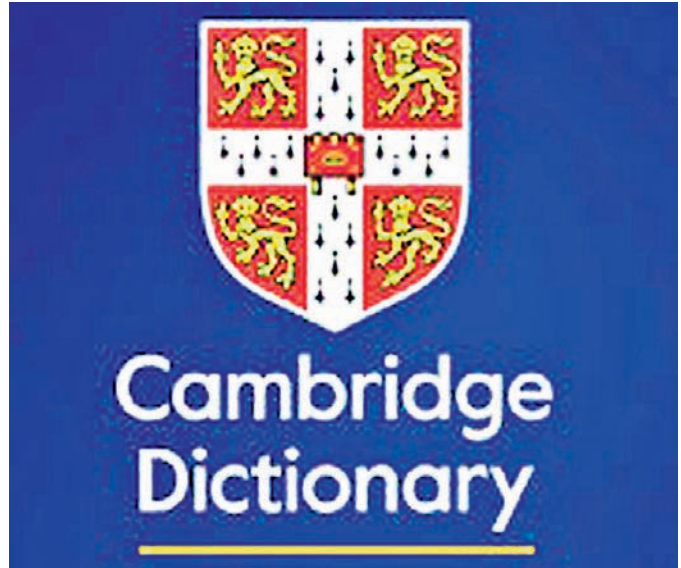
'Chef's kiss', or a movement in which you put your fingers and thumb together, kiss them, then pull your hand away from your lips as a way of showing that you think that something

or someone is perfect or excellent, is another such informal phrase that has been recognised formally.

"Language is always changing, and this means that the 'Cambridge Dictionary' team stays busy researching new words and meanings that enter the English language," the dictionary said in a statement Thursday.

"Many new additions come from the fields of science and technology, including 'sci-comm', the activity of explaining scientific work and information to people who are not scientists, or articles, talks, etc. that do this, and deep-sky, existing in or relating to the part of space outside the solar system," it said.

A few other quirky additions include IYKYK, which is the written abbreviation for "if you know you know". It is used



mostly on social media and in text messages to imply a shared joke or shared knowledge with the reader that other people

might not understand. The noun "face journey" has been added to refer to "a series of expressions that appear on

someone's face showing different emotions that they are experiencing as a reaction to something".

'Cambridge Dictionary' said its team records how English is actually used by real people and uses the Cambridge English Corpus, a huge collection of written and spoken English, to gather evidence for how a new word is used by different people and in a variety of situations.

"We also collect evidence of new words that have only appeared in English very recently. We feature three of these on our weekly About Words blog, where readers can vote on which words they think should be added to the dictionary," it explained, with reference the process behind adding on new terms.

Online gaming also inspired several new entries, such as 'backread', to read through a

series of messages or internet posts that you did not see when they were first created, often starting with the most recent, in order to learn what happened or was discussed earlier, 'speedrun', to complete a computer game, or part of a computer game, as quickly as possible, especially by taking advantage of any glitches and 'side quest', a part of a computer game that has its own aim and story but is not part of the main game.

New additions from the world of music include 'soca' or a type of music that is a mixture of soul and calypso, originally from the Caribbean, and 'jug band' which refers to a small group of performers who play jazz, blues, or folk music on very simple musical instruments, especially using objects such as empty jugs as instruments.

business

of the day quote

The changes in capital gains tax is a simplification measure and not a revenue augmentation measure. Yes, there is a revenue increase, but that is very, very marginal. It is a simplification exercise which all of you (industry) asked for

SANJAY MALHOTRA | REVENUE SECRETARY

This is truly India's moment in history. Mega opportunities are today emerging from the diversification in global supply chains, the all-pervasive digital revolution, and the urgent need for a green transition

SANJIV PURI | CHAIRMAN AND MD, ITC

Global steel demand remains weak, leading to rising imports into India and affecting domestic steelmakers' margins. This is mainly because of elevated Chinese production and exports, pressuring global steel markets

SAJJAN JINDAL | CHAIRMAN, JSW STEEL

Q1 RESULTS

IndiGo profit drops

New Delhi: InterGlobe Aviation Friday reported a nearly 12 per cent fall in profit after tax at ₹2,728.8 crore for the three months ended June. The parent of the country's largest airline had a profit after tax of ₹3,090.6 crore in the year-ago period. According to a release, the total income in the first quarter of the current fiscal rose 18.09 per cent to ₹20,248.9 crore. In the same period a year ago, it stood at ₹17,160.9 crore.

Cipla profit surges

New Delhi: Pharma major Cipla Ltd Friday reported a 17.77 per cent rise in consolidated net profit at ₹1,175.46 crore in the first quarter ended June 30, 2024. The company had posted a consolidated net profit of ₹998.07 crore in the first quarter of the last fiscal, Cipla Ltd said. Consolidated total revenue from operations during the quarter under review stood at ₹6,693.94 crore as against ₹6,328.89 crore in the year-ago period, it added.

IndusInd net rises

New Delhi: Private sector IndusInd Bank Friday posted a marginal 2 per cent rise in net profit at ₹2,171 crore for the first quarter ended June 30. The lender had earned a net profit of ₹2,124 crore in the year-ago period. During the quarter, the bank's total income increased to ₹14,988 crore, as against ₹12,939 crore a year ago, IndusInd Bank said.

Bandhan Bank net up

New Delhi: Private sector Bandhan Bank Friday posted a 47 per cent jump in its net profit to ₹1,063 crore for the June 2024 quarter due to a decline in bad loans. The lender had earned a net profit of ₹721 crore in the year-ago period. During the quarter, the bank's total income increased to ₹6,063 crore against ₹4,908 crore a year ago, Bandhan Bank said.

PSB net profit jumps

New Delhi: State-owned Punjab & Sind Bank (PSB) Friday reported a 19 per cent rise in net profit to ₹182 crore in the June 2024 quarter, helped by a decline in bad loans. The Delhi-based lender had earned a net profit of ₹153 crore in the year-ago period. During the quarter, the bank's total income increased to ₹2,846 crore against ₹2,494 crore a year ago, Punjab & Sind Bank said.



India has the highest trade deficit with China in goods but the gap expanded at a slower pace during 2014-15 to 2023-24 as compared to the previous 10 years

PIYUSH GOYAL | COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY MINISTER

IDBI STAKE SALE IN FOCUS

The government will press ahead with the delayed sale of a majority stake in IDBI Bank after central bank clearance, opening bids for the lender before the end of the financial year, a top finance ministry official said. The RBI has indicated completion of its fit and proper vetting of potential bidders of IDBI Bank, said Tuhin Kanta Pandey, the country's secretary responsible for the stake sale



STRONG COMEBACK

Indices bounce back

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, July 26: Benchmark Sensex rebounded by 1,293 points while Nifty shot up to a record high Friday, cutting short the five-day losing streak on heavy value buying at lower levels and a rally in blue-chips like Infosys, Airtel and Reliance Industries.

The 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 1,292.92 points or 1.62 per cent to settle at 81,332.72. During the day, it soared 1,387.38 points or 1.73 per cent to 81,427.18. The NSE Nifty surged 428.75 points or 1.76 per cent to settle at an all-time closing high of 24,834.85. As many as 47 of Nifty constituents closed in green while three ended lower.

Sensex and Nifty had been on a decline since Friday last. Sensex tumbled 1,303.66 points or 1.60 per cent, while the Nifty declined 394.75 points or 1.59 per cent in five straight days of losses to Thursday.

All the Sensex shares except for Nestle closed in green Friday. Bharti Airtel was the biggest gainer, rising by over 4.51 per cent. Adani Ports, Sun Pharma, Tata Steel, HCL Technologies, Infosys, JSW Steel and Mahindra & Mahindra were the other big gainers.

Nestle was the only loser, clos-



Investors are adopting buy-on-dip strategy, refocusing on quarterly earnings and stock-specific trends. Notably, gains were observed across sectors, with Metals and IT leading, and midcaps outperforming

VINOD NAIR | HEAD OF RESEARCH, GEJIT FINANCIAL SERVICES

On the weekly front, the BSE benchmark rose by 728.07 points or 0.90% and the Nifty climbed 303.95 points or 1.23%

After five straight days of losses, Sensex rebounds 1,293 pts, Nifty races to record high on value buying in blue chips

ing lower by 0.07 per cent. In the broader market, the BSE midcap gauge soared 2.12 per cent and smallcap index rallied 1 per cent.

All the indices ended higher, with telecommunication jumping 3.36 per cent, metal (3.19 per cent), teck (2.76 per cent), auto (2.35 per cent), commodities (2.26 per cent) and healthcare (2.10 per cent).

As many as 2,652 stocks advanced while 1,286 declined and 102 remained unchanged on the BSE.

"This surge was fueled by improved sentiment following robust performances in IT and Metal stocks, as well as signifi-

cant rollovers to the August series. Broader indices also reflected this strength, showing substantial gains," Ajit Mishra -SVP, Research, Religare Broking Ltd said.

In Asian markets, Seoul, Shanghai and Hong Kong settled higher while Tokyo ended lower. European markets were also trading in positive territory. The US markets ended mostly lower Thursday.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude declined 0.40 per cent to \$82.04 a barrel.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth ₹2,605.49 crore Thursday, according to exchange data.

BUDGET AFTERMATH

Gold plunge brings cheers to retail investors

Analysts said customs duty cut has made gold imports cheaper. The move will help curb the rampant issue of gold smuggling, leading to growth in the organised jewellery sector

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 26: Gold prices have corrected sharply by 7 per cent or ₹5,000 per 10 grams in the local markets after the government slashed basic custom duty on gold, and the lower costs will encourage more people to invest in the yellow metal, both as a commodity and as a finan-



cial asset, experts say.

"The cut in basic custom duty on gold prices makes the yellow metal cheaper. While this can lead to weaker market sentiments due to the sudden change, retail investors stand to benefit from the new, more attractive pricing for gold," Jateen Trivedi, VP Research Analyst of Commodity and Currency at LKP Securities told PTI.

Echoing similar sentiments,

Krishnan R-Director & CEO of Unimoni Financial Services said lower costs will encourage more people to invest in gold, both as a commodity and as a financial asset, which is often seen as a hedge against inflation and currency devaluation.

Following the Budget announcement by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman that the government has slashed basic customs duties on gold and silver from 15 per cent to 6 per cent, gold prices crashed by ₹3,350 to ₹72,300 per 10 grams in the national capital Tuesday.

The precious metal prices continued the downtrend and plunged by ₹650 Wednesday. The yellow metal rates saw another steep fall Thursday, nose-diving by

iPhone prices slashed

Apple Inc Friday cut prices of the iPhone by up to ₹5,900 across the board, passing on the benefit of announcements in India's annual Budget which included a 5 per cent reduction in the basic customs duty (BCD) on imported mobile phones. The duty was earlier pegged at 22 per cent. That apart the Budget reduced BCD on chargers and PCBAs, a key element in assembling smartphones in India, to 15 per cent from 20 per cent. The company's sharpest price cut was in the entry-level iPhone SE, which is assembled in the country. The price was reduced from ₹49,900 to ₹47,600, a 4.6 per cent cut that would help Apple expand its presence in the domestic market. Apple also announced price cuts for iPhone 15 Pro and Pro Max, which are imported to India. While iPhone 15 Pro would be cheaper by ₹5,100, iPhone 15 Pro Max is down by ₹5,900. iPhone Pro is now pegged at ₹129,800 - a price reduction of 3.7 per cent and iPhone Pro Max at ₹154,000, a drop of 3.7 per cent.

₹1,000 to settle at ₹70,650 per 10 grams, as per the All India Sarafa Association. After the duty cut, the yellow metal has declined

₹5,000 per 10 grams or 7.1 per cent in the past three sessions, since July 23 when it had fallen ₹3,350 to end at ₹72,300 per kg.

BIZ BUZZ

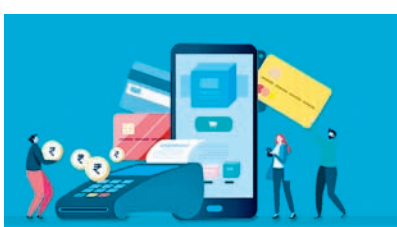
Union Bank holds plantation programme



Cuttack: Under the drive 'Plantation for Mother' launched by Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change of India, Union Bank of India, Regional Office, Cuttack organised plantation activity in the campus of OSAP, 6th Battalion, OMP, Cuttack which was inaugurated by the Commandant, SN Mallick. Saplings were planted by Mallick, Deputy Commandant Anil Kumar Pradhan and by other officials. Total 500 saplings were planted in the drive. Union Bank of India, RO Cuttack also conducted plantation activities at various other places like schools, villages in Cuttack and Dhenkanal districts. Saroj Kumar Rout, Regional Head, Bishnu Charan Behera, Deputy Regional Head, Chinmaya Behera, Chief Manager and other officials from the bank were present and also planted saplings.

Digital payments rise 12.6% at March-end

Mumbai: Digital payments across the country registered a 12.6 per cent on-year rise as March 31, 2024, according to RBI's index that measures the adoption of online transactions. RBI's Digital Payments Index (RBI-DPI) stood at 445.5 at the end of March 2024 compared to 418.77 in September 2023 and 395.57 in March 2023. "The RBI-DPI index has increased across all parameters driven by significant growth in payment performance and payment infrastructure across the country over the period," Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said in a statement Friday. The central bank had announced the construction of a composite RBI-DPI in March 2018 as a base to capture the extent of digitisation of payments across the country.



MANUFACTURING BOOST

India to get 12 new industrial cities

DPIT to approach Cabinet

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 26: The country will have 12 new industrial cities in different states like the ones developed in Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh and Dholera in Gujarat to further boost domestic manufacturing, a top government official said.

Out of this, two are coming up in Andhra Pradesh and one in Bihar.

The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh said that eight such cities are already under different stages of implementation.

Trunk infrastructure has been created in four cities - Dholera (Gujarat), Auric (Maharashtra), Vikram Udyogpuri (Madhya Pradesh) and Krishnapatnam (Andhra Pradesh) and allotment of land plots is underway for the industry.

Similarly in the other four, the government's special purpose vehicle is in the process of construction of the basic infra-



structure like road connectivity, water and power supply.

With eight already under the development stage and the announcement of 12 new in the Budget, the total count of these cities in the country to 20, Singh told PTI.

"These are industrial smart cities. These 12 new cities will make the count to 20. We built the trunk infrastructure and then gave the plots. We take environmental clearance for the entire city, so the company gets

This innovative reform, in collaboration with states and the private sector, can significantly boost industrial growth and city planning

ASHOO GUPTA | PARTNER, SHARDUL AMARCHAND MANGALDAS & CO

the 'plug and play' kind of things," he said, adding the department will approach the Union cabinet for the new ones. The plans are ready and the

Forex kitty jumps to new high of \$670.8bn

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, July 26: Surpassing the all-time high level achieved the previous week, India's forex reserves jumped by another \$4 billion to \$670.857 billion for the seven days ended July 19, the Reserve Bank said Friday.

The overall reserves had jumped by \$9,699 billion to an all-time high of \$666.854 billion in the week ended July 12.

For the week ended July 19, foreign currency assets, a major component of the reserves, increased by \$2,578 billion to \$588.048 billion, the data released Friday showed.

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



Gold reserves increased by \$1,329 billion to \$59,992 billion during the week, the RBI said.

The Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) were up by \$95 million to \$18,207 billion, the apex bank said.

India's reserve position with the IMF were unchanged at \$4,610 billion in the reporting week, the apex bank data showed.

RBI penalises Visa for unauthorised payment method

REUTERS

Bangalore, July 26: The Reserve Bank of India imposed a penalty of ₹24.1 million (nearly \$288,000) on Visa in relation to its usage of an unauthorised payment transfer method, the central bank said Friday.

"It was observed that the entity (Visa) had implemented a payment authentication solution without regulatory clearance from RBI," the central bank said in a statement, without providing details on the transgression.

In February, the RBI had ordered the credit card company to stop using an unauthorised route to make some commercial payments, per a Reuters report.

The central bank has aimed to tighten scrutiny of the processes followed by financial technology, or fintech, companies.

DOUBLES DUO HAS BEEN IN PRIME FORM LEADING UP TO THE OLYMPICS

HOPES PINNED ON SATWIK, CHIRAG



Chirag Shetty (left) and Satwiksairaj Rankireddy will be the Indian doubles pair to watch out for

Paris, July 26: Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty will hope to deliver the country's first-ever badminton gold in the Olympics, while PV Sindhu would look to solidify her status as one of the greatest athletes with an unprecedented third successive Olympic medal. The Indian shuttlers begin their campaign Saturday. Sindhu will need to summon her big-game temperament to add another medal to the silver and bronze she won in the last two editions. Satwik and Chirag on the other hand, will aim to con-

tinue their love affair at the French capital, having won the men's doubles Super 750 crown here this year. Then there are the other two first-timers - HS Prannoy and Lakshya Sen, who will be equally keen to return with a medal. The catch is that only one of them can achieve that feat, given that they are set to collide in the pre-quarterfinals if they cross the group stage. However, the greatest expectation is on Satwik and Chirag. They have won two titles and reached finals of other tournaments on four occasions this year. Last year they won bronze

at the World Championships and gold at the Commonwealth Games. They also won gold at the Asian Games and Asian Championships and achieved the World No.1 ranking in doubles for a substantial period of time. Satwik-Chirag, seeded third, are placed in Group C with World No.6 and reigning All England champions Fajar Alfian and Muhammad Rian Ardianto of Indonesia, World No.31 German pair of Mark Lamsfuss and Marvin Seidel and World No. 46 French shuttlers Lucas Corvee and Ronan Labar. The Indians have defeated

Alfian and Ardianto in their last three meetings, while they have a 1-0 record against the German pair and 2-0 against the Frenchmen. Definitely Satwik and Chirag will look to finish at the top to get in the dominating mindset ahead of the knockouts. However, at this juncture, their immediate target is to win the first match and get into a rhythm. "We just want to settle down and get into our groove," Satwik stated Thursday after the training session. "In any tournament, the first match is important for us as we look to build momentum," he added. Sindhu, on the other hand, has been patchy in the run-up to the Games. A left ankle injury in 2022 took six months to heal and she struggled in 2023. After a few months, she suffered a knee injury in October last year. She returned in February but results were tough to come by with the highlight being a runner-up finish at Malaysia Masters. Sindhu will meet World No. 75 Kristin Kuuba of Estonia and No. 111 Fatimah Razzaq of Maldives in the group stage. However, she is likely to face two Chinese - He Bingjiao and Olympic champion Chen Yu Fei in the knockout stage. She has never lost to Chinese in the World championships or Olympics and she will need to keep that record intact to salvage any hope of a medal. "I have trained hard for the event and having Prakash Sir (Padukone) as mentor has been of great help. I am confident and I definitely feel I can win a medal," Sindhu had stated a few days back.

Shooters look to end 12-year medal drought

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chateauroux (France), July 26: A squad full of debutants free from past baggage will aim to ace the ultimate test of their lives when the shooting competition of the Paris Olympics begins in this sleepy French town Friday. India have won four Olympic medals in shooting out of their overall tally of 35 but none in the last two editions of the Summer Games, putting the additional pressure of expectations on the record 21-member Indian contingent based in central France. The NRAI chose current form over pedigree to pick the squad for the mega event and it will be hoping they hit the bull's eye at the National Shooting Centre here. The shooters have been training away from the hustle and bustle of Paris and that could work in

their favour come competition day. Barring Manu Bhaker, Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar, Anjum Moudgil and Elavenil Valarivan, all will experience the biggest sporting stage for the first time. India will have representation in all 15 shooting categories. It is not just peak performance on the day that matters in the Olympics; luck too plays a major part. The 22-year-old Bhaker, who has won a bagful of medals in world events, had a stroke of bad luck at the Tokyo Games where her weapon malfunctioned in 10m air pistol qualification and she could not recover from that setback. She will be taking part in three disciplines - 10m air pistol, 25m pistol and 10m pistol mixed team. India's main challenge will come from China who are also fielding 21 shooters across disciplines. Another women shooter to watch out for will be Sift Kaur Samra, who won

the 50m rifle three positions gold at the Asian Games. Moudgil, one of the seasoned pros in the squad, is making a comeback and will line up alongside Sift in the women's 50m rifle three positions. Twenty-year-old Rhythm Sangwan will be participating in two events, women's 10m air pistol alongside Bhaker and the 10m air pistol mixed team. "The preparation has been going good. The range is beautiful. I was a little upset staying away from the main village in Paris. It is not as I expected but I am here for the competition and win and not pass any comments on the Games Village. Olympics is the biggest stage out here," said Sangwan. Among the male participants, only Tomar has been part of the Olympics before. Tomar, member of the gold winning team at the 2023 World Championships, will be seen in the men's 50m rifle three positions alongside Swapnil Kusale. "We have trained hard for this and now is the time to deliver," Tomar stated.



Setting her sights: Elavenil Valarivan trains at the National Shooting Centre in Chateauroux

ARCHERS FOCUS ON BONDING

Paris, July 24: The focus was on 'team bonding' for the Indian men's archery team Friday following their inspiring show in the qualification round of the Paris Games that has raised hopes of a maiden Olympic medal after a 36-year wait. The men's team will face the winner of the match between sixth seed Turkey and 11th seed Colombia. "Turkey are a strong side as they have reigning Olympic and World Champion Mete Gazoz. But our strength has been team bonding and we are just focused on the process and how to shoot well," Indian men's team coach Sonam Tshering Bhutia said Friday. "The best thing (for the men's team) is our team bonding. All three are from the Army Sports Institute, Pune. They have been together, be it while eating, staying or training since 2021," he added.



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

AFGHAN GIRL WHO FLED THE TALIBAN, NOW IN IOC REFUGEE TEAM

Break-dancing her way into Olympics

the Taliban and is now all set to perform gravity-defying moves when break-dancing makes its Olympic debut in Paris. The 21-year-old Talash crossed the border into Pakistan after Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan in 2021 before settling in Spain as a refugee the following year. Despite the existential crisis that was brought upon her and her family, Talash did not give up on break-dancing, an art form she

stumbled upon while scrolling through a social media post as a teenager in Kabul. She has been in love with it ever since. However, not even in her wildest imagination, she thought that the hobby she picked up in her troubled homeland will make way to the biggest sporting spectacle on earth. The International Olympics Committee (IOC) changed Talash's life forever by including her in its 'Refugee' squad for the Paris Games. Break-dancing has been added

to the Olympic programme to attract more youths and there are not many better than Talash to promote the new entrant. "I am living my dream. I never imagined that it could be so beautiful," Talash, who originally belongs to Wardak in Central Afghanistan, told this agency. The sport will offer medals in two categories, B-boys and B-girls. However, it is not all about the medal for Talash, who wants to inspire more women from Afghanistan to follow their dreams. "It was after Taliban that I left Afghanistan to follow my dreams. All the refugees found it very hard way to go to another country and same was for me. I am grateful that I am here but I don't consider myself a role model for women in Afghanistan. The girls who are in Afghanistan they are role models for me," she said in a translated interview as she only speaks Dari and Spanish.

NBA stars ready to explode into action

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Paris, July 25: Continuing with its tradition of putting up a 'Dream Team' comprising many stars from the National Basketball Association (NBA), the US have included megastars LeBron James, Kevin Durant and Steph Curry in the team for to Paris. Ahead of the opening ceremony Friday, which officially marks the beginning of the Games, US head coach Steve Kerr stated that it was time for his side to 'lock in'. "(It's) just effort and energy, play after play after play. This is different. This is not an 82-game season (like the NBA). They're not going to play 125 games total with pre-season and play-offs and all that. It's literally six games. And watching the tape, we're jogging through some possessions, not hitting bodies on box-outs. And so it's time to lock in on that. And as I said, that's for all of us - coaches and players - to get to that point and gun for gold," Kerr said in a press conference. Durant and Curry, former teammates for the Golden State Warriors, claimed that the level of competition on the international stage has risen and that the opponents they will face are much more challenging than what the Dream Team had to face in the 1992 Olympics. "You see that thing where they said the 'Dream Team' played against nine NBA players, and..." Curry trailed off before Durant completed his sentence by saying, "We're playing against 64 or 65 NBA players now."

They're all the best of the best in the world now." The tradition of the 'Dream Team' started in 1992 in Barcelona when the NBA allowed its stars to appear for the United States and expanded when current NBA professionals were allowed to play in 1996. The USA will be defending the title they won in Tokyo, maintaining their dominance of the sport at the Olympics. Durant, Team USA's all-time leading men's scorer in Olympic competition, was asked if he thinks France are a contender for the gold medal. "Everybody is a contender," Durant said. "Everyone is here for a reason," he added.



LeBron James will certainly be the cynosure of all eyes

AN EVENING IN PARIS



Indian flag-bearers PV Sindhu and Sharath Kamal get ready to board the boat for the march past



Team Greece were the first team to take part in the march past on boats



Lady Gaga performs during the Opening Ceremony of the Paris Olympics



Kids carry the Olympic flame on a boat

India eye winning start

Hockey team begin campaign against Black Sticks today



AGENCIES

Paris, July 26: Placed in a 'pool of death', the India men's hockey team will have to punch above their weight to better the colour of the bronze medal from the previous edition when they open their Olympics campaign against New Zealand here Saturday. The expectations are high from the Indians after they managed to break a 41-year-old medal jinx at the Tokyo Olympics by bagging a historic bronze. The Indians are clubbed alongside reigning Olympic champions Belgium, mighty Australia, Argentina, New Zealand and Ireland in a tough Pool B, while Pool A consists of Netherlands, Germany, Great Britain, Spain, South Africa and hosts France. Four teams from each pool will progress to the quarterfinals. The first three pool matches of India against New Zealand, Argentina (July 29) and Ireland (July 30) are very crucial as they would look for maximum points from these games before taking on Belgium (August 1) and Australia (August 2). This will be the last competition for goalkeeper PR Sreejesh, who will retire after the Olympics. The ongoing Games are expected to be the last for

We have learnt to deal with pressures of an event like the Olympics and we are here on a mission to change the colour of our medal

HARMANPREET SINGH

Manpreet Singh also. It should be stated here that India had lost to the Black Sticks at the 2023 World Cup in Bhubaneswar and were knocked out of the tournament. Hence the Indians are not taking the Kiwis lightly. India's chief coach Craig Fulton very well understands the significance of the first three games and is focused on taking one match at a time. "It is the best pool we can get. In Olympics no match is easy. We are looking at the first three games to set the tempo before we take on Belgium and Australia. We are taking one match at a time," Fulton stated Friday. Harmanpreet stated that he understands the expectations from the countrymen. "After very long, the Indian hockey team is travelling to the Olympics as reigning medallists. I know there are a lot of expectations

from us back home, and we are ready to deliver on our promises," he said. The Indian captain said that they are not underestimating New Zealand. "We have always seen New Zealand as a strong opponent and have discussed this team in detail during our team briefs. It is good to be reminded of the World Cup match against them, so we know we can't drop the momentum at any point in the game," said Harmanpreet. Having arrived in Europe a little over two weeks ago, the Indian side has gone through a three-day mental conditioning camp in Switzerland, played high-octane practice matches against Malaysia, the Netherlands, Germany and Great Britain in the days leading up to their first match here. "We had some really good practice matches before we arrived in Paris and the experience as a unit in Switzerland was something unique. We are in a good place mentally and physically to begin our campaign," Harmanpreet stated.

MATCH TIMING
9PM (IST)
TELECAST : ON JO SPORTS

A CHANCE TO BE PART OF

METTLE MEET 2024

OrissaPOST

QUIZ Extravaganza

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.

- 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

As a reader of Orissa POST, this is a great chance for you to be part of the exciting Grand Finale if you can predict the correct answer. There will be one question on each day for you to answer till July 31, 2024. Every day there will be two winners. If there are more than two correct entries, then the winners will be decided by draw of lots. All the winners will be invited for the Grand Finale which will be conducted by nationally acclaimed quizmaster Ajay Poonia. There will be prizes for the daily winners too. So buckle up your seatbelts and get set for some brainstorming.

TODAY'S QUESTION

On 21 December 1913, the Sunday edition of the New York World was published. Arthur Wynne, a violinist-turned-journalist, created something for the paper's "Fun" section. Though it was diamond-shaped, lacked black squares and had the portmanteau named inversely, it is called the first ever... what?

ANSWER TO FRIDAY'S QUESTION

Mule

THE TWO LUCKY WINNERS

MITALI JENA **PURBASHA FALGUNI**

Others who answered correctly are
Jaba Dasgupta, Arghyashree Jena, Prithviraj Padhy, Shoumik Jena, Alok Ranjan Sahoo, Debadatta Tripathy, Omm Swarup Das, Asit Kumar Satpathy, KV Ramana, Abinash Prusty, Parameswar Dalai, Parsuram Swain, Mayank Mondal, Chandra Sekhar Pattnaik, Sunil Kumar Nayak, Santanu Kumar Nanda, Sasmita Hembram, Bhumiika Subhalaxmi, Harish Chandra Tudu, Ananya Behera and Tanishka Bisoi.

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SHORT TAKES

Fixture announced

Kolkata: Defending champions Mohun Bagan Super Giant (MBSG) will face Downton Heroes of Srinagar in the opening match of the Durand Cup football tournament at the Vivekananda Yuba Bharti Krirangan (VYBK) here Saturday. Downton Heroes FC, a club now in its fourth year, brings a fresh air to the competition with its focus on nurturing young homegrown talent. Despite a relatively brief history, the club made its Durand Cup debut last season and participated in the 2022-23 I-League Division 2. Mohun Bagan enter the tournament as reigning champions, buoyant after clinching the ISL Shield last season. Under the guidance of head coach Jose Francisco Molina, they aim to build on their success with a strengthened squad that includes notable international signings like Jamie Maclaren, Greg Stewart, Alberto Rodriguez, and Tom Aldred.

Punjab FC sign Filip

Mohali: Indian Super League club Punjab FC Friday announced roping in Croatian midfielder Filip Mrzljak ahead of the upcoming season. The 31-year-old Mrzljak played for Croatian club HNK Gorica last season in the Croatian Football League and will make his first appearance in India. Having begun his youth career with Dinamo Zagreb in 2008, Mrzljak made his senior professional debut with the club in 2011. Mrzljak has scored 13 goals in 237 competitive fixtures, whereas his best came in the 2020-21 season with Ufa when he netted four goals in 16 matches. He has also represented Croatia across age groups but with no goals, besides making 16 appearances with the U-19 side and representing the team in the 2012 UEFA U-19 Championships and the 2013 FIFA U-20 World Cup.

Eves thrash Bangla; in final

SMRITI, RENUKA SHINE AS INDIA WALLOP BANGLADESH BY 10 WICKETS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dambulla, July 26: Pacer Renuka Singh gave the initial surge with a three-wicket haul while Smriti Mandhana made brisk fifty as India walloped Bangladesh by 10 wickets to march into their ninth women's Asia Cup final here Friday. Defending champions India will face the winner of the second semifinal between Pakistan and Sri Lanka, in the title clash Sunday. Shafali (26 not out, 28b, 2x4) and Mandhana (55 not out, 39b, 9x4, 1x6) were on song from the word go, as India overhauled the target of 81 without breaking a sweat. India ended up at 83 for no loss in 11 overs. Mandhana and Shafali's knocks were filled with trademark shots around the ground as India motored to 46 for no loss in the Power Play. Shafali, who was dropped on 21 off Rabeya Khan, played those powerful heaves across the line to find the fence.



Mandhana, at the other end, unfurled those exquisite drives on the off-side, such as the one the left-hander played through the covers against pacer Marufa Akter. Mandhana also displayed her power while pulling pacer Jahanara Alam for a six over deep square leg as India trotted to a victory that was a long-forgone conclusion once Bangladesh were limited 80 for eight. Renuka (3/10) upfront and left-

arm spinner Radha Yadav in the middle overs (3/14) rattled Bangladesh with excellent spells. In fact, Bangladesh hardly recovered from the deep wounds inflicted by Renuka in the first six overs. Meanwhile, Skipper Chamari Athapaththu's diligent fifty propelled Sri Lanka to a thrilling three-wicket win over Pakistan in the second semifinal of the women's Asia Cup, setting up the title clash against India.

SKY, GAMBHIR ERA BEGINS

INDIA-SRI LANKA THREE-MATCH T20 SERIES STARTS SATURDAY

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Pallekele, July 26: India's newly-forged coach-captain combination of Gautam Gambhir and Suryakumar Yadav will look to make instant impact against a Sri Lankan team in disarray when the familiar South Asian rivals face off in a limited-over series, starting with three T20s, here Saturday.

Two-time World Cup winner Gambhir is now at the helm of the ship as India's head coach while the T20I reigns have been handed over to one of the best batters in the format, Suryakumar. Gambhir, who has built his coaching reputation in the corridors of IPL with three title wins for Kolkata Knight Riders – twice as captain and once as mentor – succeeds the immensely popular Rahul Dravid. The new coach has his task cut out given that the team under his predecessor reached the final in each of the ICC events in their respective last editions. Gambhir's tenacity as well as



his intense approach will make him a different coach to work along for the players, who will also have to learn the ways of the new T20I skipper Suryakumar. Suryakumar's elevation came as a slight surprise given he leapfrogged Hardik Pandya for

Pickleball goes global

Stakeholders announce launch of world rankings, \$15mn world tour

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dubai, July 26: Stakeholders of the rapidly-growing racquet sport pickleball have announced the launch of its world rankings, a World Series next year and a \$15 million World Tour based on global standings. Pickleball, widely regarded as the world's fastest growing racquet sport, is a racket or paddle sport in which two players (singles) or four players (doubles) use a smooth-faced paddle to hit a perforated, hollow plastic ball over a 34-inch-high (0.86 m) net until one side is unable to return the ball or commits a rule infraction. It is played both indoors and outdoors. The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) was named as the region that will host the first PWR World Series in March next year. The PWR World Series is being backed by the Pickleball League Asia Private Limited in part-



It is my hope that existing stars and the champions of the future from the United States and all around the world can rise through the rankings and reach their full potential

PRANAV KOHLI | CEO & FOUNDER, PWR

nership with The Times Group. PWR will bring together regional bodies under one unified structure to enhance sports governance and longevity. The announcement was made jointly by Pickleball World Rankings (PWR), The Times Group, colleagues from international Pickleball bodies and some of the world's top players, including women's world number 1 on APP Tour, Megan Fudge DeHeart, here recently.

World champions look to maintain dominance

the reset button on the T20I side. The next T20 World Cup, to be hosted by India and Sri Lanka in 2026, gives the selectors plenty of time to rebuild the side which has also suffered a severe talent drain. The overhaul follows the World Cup triumph last month and T20I retirements of seasoned campaigners Rohit Sharma, Virat Kohli and Ravindra Jadeja. With the side in transition, young batting gun and vice-captain in the white-ball formats, Shubman Gill sees this as an opportunity to cement his place and others like Yashasvi Jaiswal, Rinku Singh and even Riyan Parag will look to do the same.

While the like-for-like replacement Axar Patel fits in perfectly for Jadeja in the eleven, India also have riches in the all-round department given Pandya, Shivam Dube and an in-form Washington Sundar are also available. Jasprit Bumrah has been deservingly rested from this tour which gives the pair of Arshdeep Singh and Mohammed Siraj to make the most of favourable conditions at the Pallekele International Stadium, where the surface tends to assist pace and bounce. The 2014 T20 WC winners, Sri Lanka are wading through turbulent times following their first-round exit from the last edition.

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