



FORMULA FOR SUCCESS

Actor Shriya Saran believes that one must stay authentic in portraying native content in India to blur regional lines

LEISURE P2



AUKUS DEAL

The US, UK and Australia unveil details of their plan to create a new fleet of nuclear-powered submarines

INTERNATIONAL P10



PRANNOY SAILS THROUGH

HS Prannoy advances to second round of All England Championships beating Chinese Taipei's Tzu Wei Wang

SPORTS P12



NATURE'S FURY: Floodwaters submerge homes and vehicles in the community of Pajaro in Monterey, California, Tuesday

Mahanadi, Brahmani polluted: Amat

Bhubaneswar, March 14: The water of Mahanadi and Brahmani rivers is polluted due to discharge of waste into the rivers in urban areas, Forest, Environment and Climate Change Minister Pradip Kumar Amat told the Assembly Tuesday.

Board (SPCB) during January to December 2022 found that the Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD) and TC level were above the prescribed parameter in 22 places of Mahanadi and Brahmani rivers.

At present, five STPs at Bhubaneswar, three in Cuttack, two in Puri and one each at Talcher and Sambalpur have been set up.

Uproar in House over HSCE absenteeism

POST NEWS NETWORK

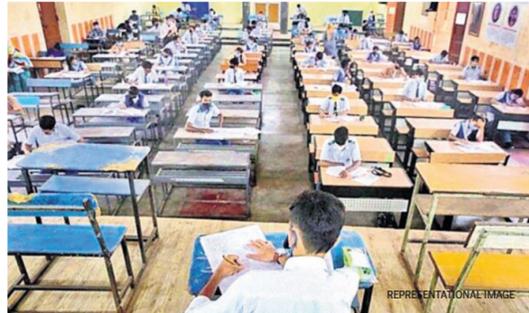
Bhubaneswar, March 14: Opposition BJP and Congress Tuesday created uproar in the Assembly claiming that the education system in the state has 'crumbled' after a large-scale absence of examinees in the ongoing High School Certificate Examination (HSCE) or matriculation examination.

Raising the issue in the House during Zero Hour, Leader of Opposition (LoP) Jayanarayan Mishra said, "Over 15,000 students did not appear for the ongoing matriculation examination which is highly deplorable."

Ridiculing School and Mass Education (S&ME) Minister Samir Ranjan Dash for taking photographs with students inside an examination centre, Mishra trained guns at the 5T initiative of the state government.

The LoP was also supported by Congress Legislature Party (CLP) leader Narasingha Mishra, who came down heavily on the state government on the issue.

"It is a matter of great concern. It only shows that the entire education system is crumbling in the



state," the Congress leader said.

After concerns were expressed in the House, the S&ME Minister said due to door-to-door campaigning conducted by his department, the matric exam dropout rate has come down to 2.7 per cent this year from 7.7 per cent reported last year.

In the academic year 2021-22, out of 5,71,909 students who filled up forms for the Summative Assessment-II, 45,091 remained absent. However, this year, 13,058 out of 5,32,603 registered students remained absent in the first two language tests conducted so far, he said.

The Minister told reporters outside the Assembly that the exact reason behind the large absence of examinees could be known after a detailed inquiry is conducted after the end of the examination.

The department will take up the matter seriously and ascertain the causes behind the absence of examinees, he said.

One of the reasons behind the large-scale absence of examinees could be due to the waiving of examination fees by the state government in wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Minister said.

Contd...P4

SHORT TAKES

DRIVERS' INDEFINITE STIR STARTS TODAY

BHUBANESWAR: Thousands of members of Odisha Driver Ekata Mahamancha will go on an indefinite strike beginning Wednesday to press for fulfilment of their six-point charter of demands, said a member Tuesday. According to Rajesh Das, the association's Khurda head, they had staged demonstrations and rallies in the Capital city in 2022 for fulfilment of their demands. However, a precious little has been done so far. "As the government was not paying heed to our demands, we will stage an indefinite strike from Wednesday," Das added. Private Bus Owners' Association secretary, however, said they have written to the state government expressing willingness to operate buses. Meanwhile, the Commissionerate Police warned of stern action against anyone found disrupting smooth movement of public vehicles Wednesday.

META SLASHES 10K MORE JOBS

NEW YORK: Facebook parent Meta is slashing another 10,000 jobs and will not fill 5,000 open positions as the social media pioneer cuts costs. The company said Tuesday it will reduce the size of its recruiting team and make further cuts in its tech groups in late April, and then its business groups in late May. "This will be tough and there's no way around that," said CEO Mark Zuckerberg. The company announced 11,000 job cuts in November.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Digital India & low data prices are doing wonders, sir. Now one can ask for bribes on video call

SC slams Centre on Bhopal gas tragedy

AGENCIES

New Delhi, March 14: The Supreme Court Tuesday dismissed the Centre's curative plea seeking an additional ₹7,844 crore from the Union Carbide Corporation's (UCC) successor firms to extend higher compensation to the victims of the 1984 Bhopal gas tragedy that left over 3,000 people dead and caused environmental damage.

The top court also slammed the Centre for not framing an insurance policy for the victims in terms of its undertaking given to the court earlier and termed it as 'gross negligence'.

"The responsibility was placed on the Union of India being a welfare state to make up for the deficiency and to take out relevant insurance policies. Surprisingly, we are informed that no such insurance policy was being taken out. This is gross negligence on the part of the Union of India and in breach of the directions issued by this court in review judgement. The Union cannot be negligent on this aspect and then seek a prayer to fix the responsibility on the UCC," the apex court said.

A five-judge constitution bench headed by Justice Sanjay Kishan Kaul said there was no rationale by the Centre to rake up the issue two decades after the settlement.

The top court said that a sum of ₹50 crore lying with the RBI for the victims shall be utilised by the Union of India to satisfy pending claims of victims.

The bench said the Union of India's claim

for a top up has no foundation of legal principle.

"Either a settlement is valid or it is to be set aside in cases of fraud. No such fraud has been pleaded by the Centre and their only contention relates to a number of injuries and costs that were not contemplated at the time of the settlement.

"It was known that medical facilities would have to be extended to rehabilitate people and there was bound to be environmental degradation. In fact, it is UCC's allegation that the Union of India and the state did not proactively detoxify the site. In any case, this cannot be a ground to seek annulment of the compromise," it said.

"We are equally dissatisfied with the Union of India for being unable to furnish any rationale for raking up the issue more than two decades after the incident. Even assuming that figures of the affected victims turned out to be larger than expected, an excess amount of funds remain available to satisfy such claims. ...We are of the view that curative petitions cannot be entertained," the bench said.

The bench also comprising Justices Sanjiv Khanna, Abhay S Oka, Vikram Nath and J K Maheshwar had on January 12 reserved its verdict on the Centre's curative plea.

The Centre wanted another ₹7,844 crore from the UCC's successor firms over and above the USD 470 million (₹715 crore) it got from the American company as part of the settlement in 1989.

MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VAIATION
SENSEX	57900.19 ↓ 337.66
NIFTY	17043.30 ↓ 111.00
DOLLAR	82.49 ↑ ₹0.36
EURO	88.24 ↑ ₹0.01
GOLD	₹ 57,520 ↓ ₹122
SILVER	₹ 66,929 ↑ ₹277

WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
TEMP	35.2°C	35.0°C
MIN	21.6°C	23.0°C
Humidity	39%	45%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil
Forecast	Light rain likely	

784 jumbos, 925 people killed in 10 yrs

Attacks by pachyderms caused permanent disability to 212 people in state between 2012 and 2022

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 14: Man-elephant conflict has claimed the lives of 784 elephants and 925 persons in the state in a span of 10 years—between 2012 and 2022. Forest, Environment and Climate Change Minister Pradip Kumar Amat told the Assembly Tuesday.

While responding to a question of BJP member Lalitendu Bidyadhar Mohapatra, Amat said accidents, disease, poisoning by poachers and electrocution were some of the



80 people died in man-elephant encounters in 2012-13, it increased to 105 in 2017-18, 139 in 2020-21 and 112 in 2021-22

reasons for the elephant deaths in the state. Pointing out that the state government has demarcated 14 elephant corridors for the safe movement of jumbos, the minister said action plans have been made to stop poaching of elephants

and their deaths due to train accidents and electrocution. "Since 2022, 11 elephants have been killed by miscreants in the forests of the state", the minister said.

Attacks by pachyderms have also caused permanent disability in 212 people in the state between 2012 and 2022.

Mentioning that the state has 1,976 elephants as per 2017 census, the minister said while 80 people died in man-elephant encounters in 2012-13, it increased to 105 in 2017-18, 139 in 2020-21 and 112 in 2021-22.

Contd...P4

OrissaPOST

BUSINESS EMINENCE AWARDS

18th March, 2023

Bhubaneswar

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GOMEZ FLAUNTS HER 'VIOLET CHEMISTRY' WITH CYRUS

Actress-singer Selena Gomez appears to be a fan of Miley Cyrus' new album. The *Only Murders in the Building* star, 30, tagged the fellow Disney alum, 30, in an Instagram post recently, sharing two makeup-free selfies alongside the caption 'Violet chemistry.'

MALALA ASKS FOR 'KINDNESS' AFTER JIMMY KIMMEL IS TROLLED

Nobel Peace Prize winner Malala Yusufzai was quizzed by Jimmy Kimmel about the Harry Styles and Chris Pine 'spit-gate' incident last year, and online trolls showed no hesitation in accusing him of disrespecting the activist. The Pakistani education activist has now called for the abuse to stop, reports *femalefirst.co.uk*.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES

Since you want to examine things and carry out some research, you will get all the required equipment ready today. You will also be very irritable, and anyone posing a hurdle will face your wrath. Ganesha advises you to be more caring and considerate about the needs of your near and dear ones.

TAURUS

You will be particularly warm and intimate to your friends and family members. Ganesha says that you will miss no opportunity to show them how much they mean to you. Your superiors and, back at home, your elders are likely to be unusually benign and well disposed towards you.

GEMINI

It is possible that your emotional nature is the cause of many of the problems currently plaguing you. Therefore you need to curb your emotions when reacting to any situation. You will concentrate on family matters today, and spend time with your family. It is a progressive day overall, says Ganesha.

CANCER

The stars look fiery today, says Ganesha. Now what does that imply? There is a definite possibility of conflicts and an outburst of anger at your workplace. Try to steer clear of arguments and sticky situations as far as possible. You may also need to get your blood pressure checked, for you may feel too restless.

LEO

A beneficial day awaits those who are self-employed. You will find new and interesting projects. People working in the creative fields will also be able to make much progress. You will be filled with energy, enthusiasm and hope today, and will make efforts to achieve success, says Ganesha.

VIRGO

Today will be an unusually lucky day full of unexpected things, but you will manage to tackle them all with great maturity. If someone takes you for granted, they will later regret their lack of good judgement as you don't like being pushed around.

LIBRA

Ganesha says that today you should think before spending your money because you know and understand the importance of money. You will not hesitate to spend money on family members and on entertainment. You will be able to meet like-minded people with whom you will be able to share your experiences and knowledge.

SCORPIO

Today, you may think with your brain and not with your heart. As a result, your decisions are likely to be practical and reasonable. Be careful while conversing with your seniors, as there are chances of you being misunderstood. When it comes to relationships, communication is the base of it. Ganesha advises you to express your feelings freely to your beloved.

SAGITTARIUS

After a long long time, the day has finally come when you can your beloved on a date. Professionally, you are on a winning spree. However, keep less expectations from yourself and others and there will not be any occasion of disappointment.

CAPRICORN

You are in for an exciting ride, today. Happiness and contentment will fall in your lap and you'll be delighted with this positive energy, feels Ganesha. Job requirements will keep you occupied as you need to find answers to some complicated questions at the earliest.

AQUARIUS

Mark this day on the calendar as it is going to turn out to be an important day in your life. You will experience some cash inflow and get the adequate finances for your education or business.

PISCES

You are blessed with exceptional grasping power today, and will be able to easily imbibe whatever you see or hear today. You will also be able to speed through your routine tasks. You will be able to concentrate on the tasks you have taken up. Your enhanced sensitivity today could see that special someone's words enter straight into your heart and cause you to fall head-over-heels in love with them, says Ganesha.

'Stay authentic to native content'

Bangalore: Shriya Saran, who has worked in film industries across the South, is excited about her role as Princess Madhumathi in much-awaited *Kabzaa*.

The movie, ready to hit theatres on Puneet Rajkumar's birth anniversary (March 17), is set against a 1940s backdrop. It marks multinational actor Shriya's return to the Kannada film industry after a long hiatus.

Asked about the reason, the actress reveals, "There is no specific reason to stay away from Kannada films for such a long time. I got busy with my other acting stints, but when *Kabzaa* was offered by R Chandru, I was blown away by the character's presentation, and making style."

The *Drishyam* actress plays the role of a princess in this one, and reveals that she was excited about the effort that has gone into creating this character for the big screen.

While Pan India films are welcome, Shriya believes that one must stay authentic in portraying native content. "It is the unique nature of India, which ensures cinema crosses borders - which I can proudly vouch for as I have worked in different languages," she concludes.

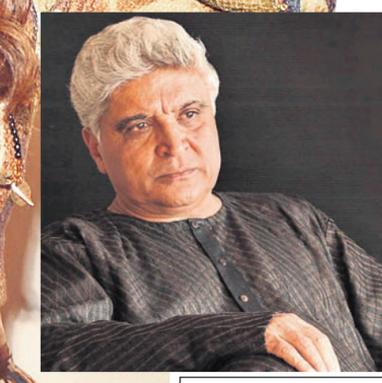


Samantha going gaga over *Shaakuntalam*

Hyderabad: After her impressive performance in *Yashoda*, Samantha Ruth Prabhu is all set for *Shaakuntalam*. The actress just watched her upcoming film and had a lot to say about it.

Sharing a picture of herself standing along with the movie team, she writes: "And I finally watched the movie today! Gunasekhar garu ... you have my heart. What a beautiful film! One of our greatest epics brought to life so endearingly! "I can't wait for our family audiences to be swept away by the powerful emotions! And all you kids out there ... you're going to love our magical world! Dil Raju garu and Neelima ... thank you for this wonderful journey. #Shaakuntalam will forever be close to me!"

Multiple award-winning Telugu director and screenwriter Gunasekhar has helmed *Shaakuntalam* and Neelima is his wife and the film's producer. Apart from the mythological drama scheduled to release April 14, Samantha is gearing up for the highly anticipated Indian version of *Citadel*. The actress is working hard for the action sequences and recently shot in Nanital for the series. She has also resumed shooting for her upcoming film *Kushi* opposite Vijay Deverakonda.



Urdu is our own language: Javed

Mumbai: Well-known lyricist Javed Akhtar emphasised the importance of the Urdu language and the role Punjab played in its past growth and prominence while launching an Urdu poetry album titled *Shayarama-Sartaj*. He also added that Urdu doesn't belong to Pakistan (solely) or Egypt; it belongs to 'Hindustan'.

At the event, Javed stated, "Urdu hasn't come from any other place. It is our own language. It isn't spoken outside Hindustan. Pakistan also came into existence after partition from India; earlier, it was a part of India only. So, the language isn't spoken outside of Hindustan."

He added, "Punjab has a big contribution to Urdu, and it is the language of India! Urdu is a Hindustani language, and it remains (so). Nowadays, the new generation of youths in our country speaks less Urdu and Hindi. Today, more focus is on English."

The writer also believed that language is not based on religions but on regions. Giving the example of Europe, he shared that if language was based on religion, then it would only have one language.

FOUR-DAY STATE LEVEL DRAMA FEST: DAY 2

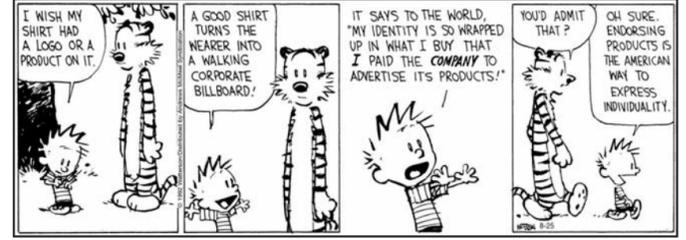
Artists of Uttar Purush, a troupe formed in the early 1970s in Bhubaneswar, presented Odia play *Shesha Adhyay* on the second evening of four-day theatre festival being organised by Panchamveda at Rabindra Mandap. Written by Sanjay Praharaaj, the play was directed by Uttar Purush president Prasanna Mishra. For a true disciple, age and duration of training are not barriers. S/he can learn from a Guru at any moment of his/her life, directly or indirectly, the play said. Laxminarayan, Amit, Raja, Mithun and Pabitra Kar played key roles in the play while the music was scored by Pratap Rout.



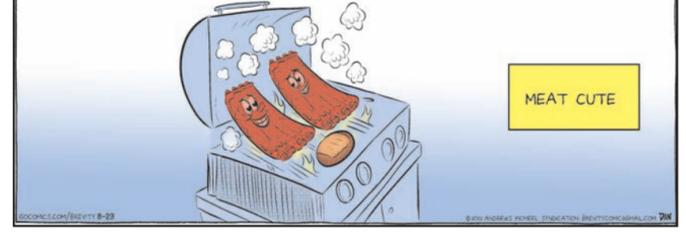
PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

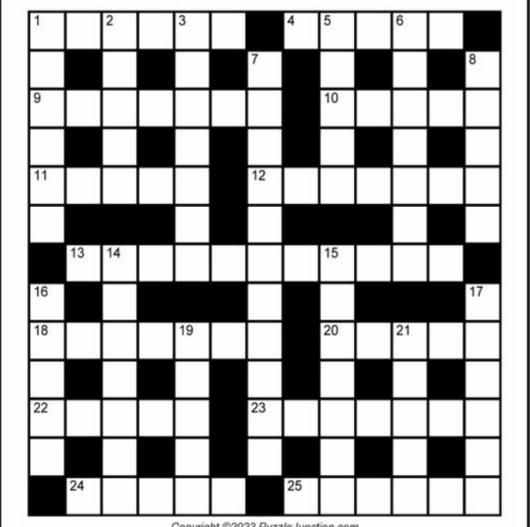


BREVITY



FUN post

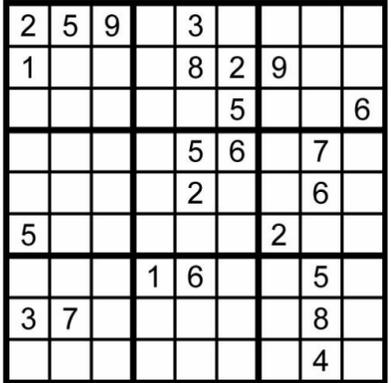
CROSSWORD



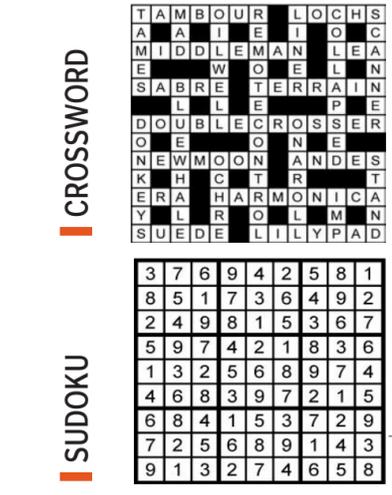
- Across**
- 1 Fruit-flavoured jellied candy
 - 4 Scimitar
 - 9 Drain the cup (5,2)
 - 10 Stimulate, as curiosity
 - 11 Minor actor
 - 12 Opposing forces
 - 13 Blushing after a faux pas
 - 18 Inactivity
 - 20 Hydrosphere
 - 22 Hungarian wine
 - 23 Intense
 - 24 Warhorse
 - 25 Inhumane
 - 7 Time-saving bookworm? (5-6)
 - 8 Banquet
 - 14 South African four-toed viverrine
 - 15 Two-wheeled vehicle
 - 16 Gaiety
 - 17 Bring out in the open
 - 19 Common seasoning
 - 21 Expel
- Down**
- 1 Court figures
 - 2 Roof support
 - 3 Middle Eastern pastry
 - 5 The ___ of his eye
 - 6 Demand

SUDOKU

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



SOLUTIONS



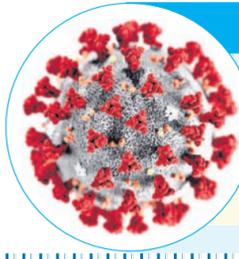
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown



ELEGANT THREADS

Industries and MSME Minister Pratap Keshari Deb browsing garments at Odisha Khadi Mela 2023 organised by Odisha Khadi and Village Industries Board in Bhubaneswar, Tuesday



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	68,15,91,554	65,45,50,333	68,12,126
India	4,46,90,936	4,41,56,345	5,30,782
Odisha	13,36,304	13,26,915	9,204



BOOK LOVERS' DELIGHT: (From left) Grantha Mandira publisher Kalyani Mishra, noted author Amarendra Khatua, Cuttack MP Bhartruhari Mahtab, Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, novelist Pratibha Ray and author Bijay Nayak during the release of 'Kalpanara Bastabata', a compilation of essays, penned by Nayak at Press Club of India in New Delhi, Tuesday

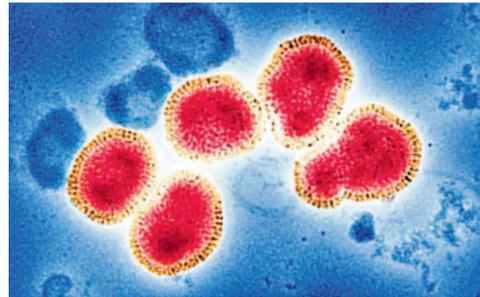
Akasa Air flights to Pune, Bangalore from April 17

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 14: Akasa Air is going to launch its daily direct flight services from Bhubaneswar to Pune and Bangalore from April 17, 2023. "Akasa Air, India's newest airline, announced the addition of Bhubaneswar as its 16th destination to its fast-growing network. The airline will operate flights between Pune-Bhubaneswar and Bangalore-Bhubaneswar from 17 April 2023 with a total of 14 weekly flights," said the airline sources. Commenting on the launch, co-founder and chief commercial officer of Akasa Air Praveen Iyer said, "As the fastest growing airline in the country, we are delighted to add Bhubaneswar to our ever-expanding network, marking our arrival in Orissa. Bhubaneswar is a scenic green and clean city with a strong cultural heritage rooted in ancient temples and rich architecture."

H3N2: State steps up surveillance

No death due to H3N2 was reported till now and not a single case has been found to be severe, says a Health dept official



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 14: The state government has intensified its influenza-like illness (ILI) and severe acute respiratory infections (SARI) surveillance system following detection of 59 H3N2 cases, a Health department official said Tuesday. "The H3N2 has similar symptoms of cold, cough and fever like Covid-19 and other adenovirus. In view of the prevailing situation, we have strengthened our surveillance system through district-level disease surveillance units to identify H3N2 cases," said Health Services director Bijay Mohapatra. "The state has sufficient kits to test Covid-19 virus. If someone is found Covid-19 positive

and still having symptoms like cold, cough, fever and sore throat, a sample of such a person will be sent for H3N2 test," he said.

Regional Medical Research Centre (RMRC)-Bhubaneswar has tested 225 suspected flu samples from different parts of Odisha for H3N2 during January and February 2023, of which, 59 samples were found positive for H3N2. However, no death was reported and not a single case has been found to be severe, Mohapatra said. As per state's preparedness

is concerned, the director said, "We have isolation units at secondary and tertiary level health-care institutions. We have adequate oxygen beds, ICU beds and required medicine to meet any emergency, if it arises." Asked about whether children are more vulnerable to become serious due to the disease, he said, "We are following the advice of National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC), which is yet to give any guideline in this direction."

Mohapatra advised people not to take unnecessary medicines without the advice of a doctor, if they develop symptoms. The symptomatic person should isolate himself and get tested, the official said.

The only precaution for the disease is to follow Covid-appropriate behaviour, he added.

Earlier, state Health secretary Shalini Pandit had asked all public health labs in 30 districts to continuously monitor the trend of ILI and SARI cases besides H1N1 and H3N2 surveillance.

The district-level disease surveillance units have been asked to remain in readiness and constantly monitoring the situation. Labs have been kept ready to handle the surge, if the situation arises, sources said.

Jayanarayan: Govt painting schools in Pakistani colours

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, March 14: Leader of Opposition Jayanarayan Mishra of BJP Tuesday said that many schools in Odisha do not have adequate teachers and the students cannot even identify Odia alphabets but the government was busy painting the school buildings in "Pakistani colours" as part of its transformation programme.

Mishra's comments in the Assembly during Zero Hour sparked a furore with the ruling BJD pointing out that the national flag of India also has green in it, and so do trees and vegetables.

Many schools across the state do not have adequate teachers, and students of Class VI cannot even recognise Odia alphabets, Mishra claimed.

All fires on satellite imagery aren't wildfires: Min

All fires detected in Odisha through satellite imagery were not forest fires, Forest and Environment Minister PK Amat said in the Assembly Tuesday amid concerns of the Opposition. He said stubbles being burnt by the farmers to clear their fields after harvesting were also caught by the satellites. "Data received from satellite is not only about forest fires. In many cases, farmers are setting fires to paddy fields after harvesting to clear the land. That's why more fire was seen in the satellite imagery," Amat said. "Forest officials were working to douse the blaze in 98 per cent of the area where forest fires have been reported," he added. Women SHGs and forest protection committees have been asked for help to douse the blaze, the minister said. Congress MLA Suresh Routray and BJP MLA Kusum Tete expressed deep concern over the incidents of fire across the forests in the state.

"Adding a fresh coat of the Pakistani colour to the school building won't yield results. Is this the vision of the government's 5T initiative?" he asked. BJD MLA Arun Sahoo immediately pulled out his mobile phone, and pointed to a photo of India's national flag, stating that Mishra should take note of the colours in it. Speaker BK Arukha, however, asked him not to use mobile phone in the House.

Vegetables, trees, plants and forests are also green in color, Sahu said, adding, "Would you call them Pakistani as well?"

The schools being developed under the '5T' programme - transparency,

technology, teamwork, time and transformation - were being painted in green, akin to the colour of BJD's party flag. As a part of the programme, the schools are getting smart classrooms, e-library and laboratories, among others.

Soon after the barbs between the two leaders, BJD MLA SR Patnaik stood up and said, "I will not speak on green or saffron, but on red. I want to draw the attention of the House on the poor state of affairs of the persons engaged in organising blood donation camps."

He demanded recognition of the persons engaged in blood donation camps as government employees.



IN THE HOUSE

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



Sleep masks can boost brain function: Study

WEARING AN EYE MASK CAN POTENTIALLY ENHANCE COGNITIVE FUNCTIONS OF THE BRAIN AS IT BLOCKS AMBIENT LIGHT WHILE WE SLEEP, SUGGESTS A STUDY

Wearing an eye mask can potentially enhance cognitive functions of the brain as it blocks ambient light while we sleep, suggests a study.

Sleep is crucial for alertness and for preparing the human brain to encode new information. However, ambient light, like an outdoor street light shining through your window, can influence sleep structure and timing.

The study, published in the journal Sleep, showed that wearing an eye mask blocks light during night sleep and improves memory and alertness.

"Our findings suggest that wearing an eye mask during overnight sleep can improve episodic encoding and alertness the next day," wrote Viviana Greco, from School of Psychology at University of Cardiff, along with other researchers in the paper.

The team conducted two experiments to understand how sleep masks help. In the first experiment, 94 people in



Ambient light, like an outdoor street light shining through your window, can influence sleep structure and timing

the age group of 18-35 wore an eye mask while they slept every night for a week

and underwent a control condition in which light was not blocked for another week. Five habituation nights were followed by a cognitive battery on the sixth and seventh day.

This revealed superior episodic encoding and an improvement on alertness when using the mask, the researchers said. In the second experiment, 35 people of the same age group used a wearable device to monitor sleep with and without the mask.

This replicated the encoding benefit and showed that it was predicted by time spent in slow-wave sleep.

Furthermore, the benefit to memory was predicted by the time spent in slow-wave sleep while wearing the mask.

This suggests wearing an eye mask during sleep is an effective, economical, and noninvasive behaviour that could benefit cognitive function and lead to measurable impacts on everyday life, the researchers said.



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One more nabbed in online betting scam



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 14: The Economic Offences Wing (EOW) has arrested another accused involved in the multi-crore betting app and ponzi scheme fraud case. The accused, Naveen Poriwar who hails from Udaipur area in Rajasthan is the director of one Shell company named Edudaddy Institute Of Advanced Studies Private Limited.

The accused was Sunday arrested from Udaipur and later EOW team produced him before a local court seeking permission to bring him Odisha on transit remand.

"This company (Edudaddy Institute Of Advanced Studies Private Limited) was utilized to channelize the ill-gotten money of this scam. Around ₹11.74 crore were routed using this company," reveals EOW sources.

The EOW also found that Naveen

The EOW informed that the fraud by 18football.com is suspected to be more than ₹1000 crore, out of which transaction of around ₹446 crore has been traced

is director in several other Shell companies which may also be used to launder the crime proceeds of some other cyber crimes.

There are more than 100 Shell companies located in different parts of the country involved in laundering of money looted from victims through online betting app "18football.com".

EOW launched a probe after registering a case on the basis of the

petition filed by more than 844 investors from Ganjam district. The accused fraudsters reportedly duped the victims from Ganjam of more than ₹65 lakhs.

This huge international scam is being operated online from a website which has been registered in Hongkong (China) and also operated from Dubai. Earlier in this case, look-out circular was issued against Md Saif, Dubai based operator/ promoter of the scam.

The victims were lured by the promises of lucrative benefits like 3 per cent daily compound return on investment, recharge bonus, referral bonus, extra bonus on the earning of the down line members, salary bonus and daily withdrawal option by joining the betting app through online and off line link shared by other victims or advertisements posted on social media platforms.

They were later asked to bet money in some football matches as prescribed in website/ APP. The investors were also provided help and guidance about the process to bet on football matches and investment by promoters through help centres on popular messaging service, Telegram.

"The fraud by 18football.com has got all India ramifications, and the fraud amount involved is suspected to be more than ₹1000 crore, out of which EOW has been able to trace transaction of approximately ₹446 crore till now," informed EOW.



ANTI-ENCROACHMENT DRIVE: An excavator engaged by CMC removing unauthorised structures in Alisha Bazar and Shaikh Bazar areas of Cuttack, Tuesday

Man held for raping minor girl in City

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 14: Commissionerate Police Tuesday arrested a 39-year-old man for raping a nine-year-old minor girl at a slum in Mancheswar area here late Sunday night. The accused was identified as Judhistira Soren alias Takel of Patana area in Keonjhar district.

The accused, a daily wageer, has been residing in the slum area under Mancheswar police limits.

The victim minor girl along with her three sisters was playing near their residence when Soren reached at the spot. He talked to the siblings and later offered biscuits to the sisters of the victim. The sisters later went inside the house while accused took the minor girl with him on the pretext of giving her puffed rice (Mudhi).

He forcefully raped the minor at an isolated place. Upon hearing her screams, the locals present near the crime scene rushed to the spot and rescued the girl.

NAVEEN URGES RECRUITS TO STREAMLINE SERVICE DELIVERY

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 14: Addressing new recruits joining the State Cooperation department at an orientation programme Tuesday, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik conveyed his hope that the officers will bring efficiency, caliber and commitment to the cooperative societies, infusing new energy to the sector.

As many as 184 officers joined various cooperative societies and the State Warehousing Corporation Tuesday.

While 114 of them joined as inspectors in cooperative societies, 55 joined as auditors. Similarly, 15 officers joined the Warehousing Corporation as assistant managers, superintendents and assistant superintendents.

Joining an orientation programme organised at the Convention Centre in Lok Seva Bhawan virtually, the CM called upon the new recruits to follow



Corporation will ensure better functioning and scientific management of warehouses.

The CM said that the cooperative model of economy has gained recognition for its outstanding contribution to the development of the state.

Joining the programme, Cooperation minister Atanu Sabyasachi said that the Cooperation department is functioning like a bridge between two significant departments, namely Food Supplies and Consumer Welfare and Agriculture departments, playing a major role in transformation of the state from a food deficit to a food surplus state.

Chief Secretary PK Jena said that this is a different Odisha which is striving for transformation in every sector under the vision of the Chief Minister, adding that the cooperative banks and PACS are doing wonderful work in many unbanked areas by providing necessary credit to the farmers.

BJD seeks info on PMAY irregularities

New Delhi: Biju Janata Dal (BJD) Bhartruhari Mahtab Tuesday asked the Union government whether it is aware of any irregularity reported under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana in Odisha and has the Centre conducted any inquiry into such irregularity. The senior BJD MP posed the question to the Ministry of Rural Development in the Lok Sabha. In response to Mahtab's question, Union minister of state for Rural Development Sadhvi Niranjani Jyoti said that a joint representation of nine MPs on the alleged irregularities in implementation of PMAY-G in Odisha was received in February 2020.

III partners with CIFA for fish vaccine devt



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 14: Indian Immunologicals Limited (IIL), a vaccine manufacturer, has announced partnership with Central Institute of Freshwater Aquaculture (CIFA), Bhubaneswar, an Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) Institute for the commercial development of vaccine against Hemorrhagic Septicemia, also called Aeromonas Septicemia, Ulcer disease or Red-Sore disease in freshwater fish.

IIL ventured into aqua business in October 2022 by launching products for aquaculture health market dealing with pond management and fish or shrimp gut management and subsequently announced

commercial development of fish vaccines with ICAR-CIFA.

Speaking on the occasion, K Anand Kumar, Managing Director, Indian Immunologicals Limited said, "IIL is the first in India to get to fish vaccines. We are aware of the challenges associated with being the first, having been in similar situations for many other livestock vaccines."

Priyabrata Pattnaik, Deputy Managing Director, Indian Immunologicals Limited added "IIL is committed to developing vaccines for fisheries sector with a long-term strategic objective of reducing use of antibiotics there by antimicrobial resistance in environment, as part of 'One Health' initiative."

BMC uses RRR hype to push waste recycling

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 14: The Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) took inspiration from RRR, the global sensation from India that made history by winning academy award for 'Best Original Song,' to spread awareness about waste recycling among City people Tuesday.

The civic body through its social media accounts shared a poster with title of RRR using it as an abbreviation for 'Reduce, Reuse & Recycle' with a message that "As RRR is everywhere now, let's make a habit of Reduce, Reuse & Recycle waste in our day-to-day life."



Earlier BMC, in its bid to stem

the problems of rising air pollution and temperature in the City, had decided to clamp down on burning of garbage and other wastes in the open. BMC commissioner Vijay Amruta Kulange informed that ₹10,000 fine will be imposed against those found burning waste or garbage instead of handing it over to the collection workers.

Not only creative awareness drives and strong enforcement, the civic body is regularly sweeping the roads, doing door-to-door segregated waste collection, garbage lifting and bush cutting to keep the City clean. Night cleanliness drive is also being undertaken by

BMC, including collection of segregated waste from the commercial areas at night, said BMC official.

In February this year, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik launched 'SAFA App'. Developed by BMC, with help from Bhubaneswar Smart City Limited (BSCL), the app provides sanitation services to people under one platform to promote cleanliness in City.

To keep the City clean, the civic body recently started using Jatayu Machine in the cleaning process. With 1.5 ton capacity and 9-diameter suction pipe, these machines can suck garbage and hard materials from roadsides.

Continued from P1 Uproar in House...

As the students did not pay fees, they were not compelled to appear for the examination and therefore remained absent, he said.

"We will reach out to the absent students and their guardians, and appeal to them to appear in the upcoming supplementary examination," Dash said.

This academic year, the department is going to open vocational training courses and Class-XI in more than 100 schools. So, it will help the students to choose their favourite course after matric, he added.

The matriculation examination in Odisha began on March 10 and will continue till March 17.

784 elephants, 925...

The highest of 139 people were killed in elephant attacks in 2020-21, the minister said adding that as many as 51 people have become permanently disabled in 2021-22 in jumbo attacks across Odisha.

Mentioning the death of 784 elephants in the last 10 years, the minister said, while 82 jumbos died in 2012-13, the number rose to 86 in 2015-16, 93 in 2018-19 and 86 in 2021-22.

The state government conducted investigation into 39 elephant deaths and filed charge sheets against 50 people during the period. However, not even a single accused has been convicted in these cases so far, the minister said.

Replying to another question, the minister said that the state government has made a provision of ₹ 4 lakh as compensation to family members of people getting killed by jumbos.

Hydrogen fuel could prolong methane problem

Hydrogen's potency as a clean fuel could be limited by a chemical reaction, potentially leading to accumulation of methane in the lower atmosphere, according to a new research.

This is because hydrogen gas easily reacts in the atmosphere with the same molecule primarily responsible for breaking down methane, a potent greenhouse gas.

If hydrogen emissions exceed a certain threshold that shared reaction will likely lead to methane accumulating in the atmosphere with decades-long climate consequences, the research from Princeton University, US, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association said.

"Hydrogen is theoretically the fuel of the future," said Matteo Bertagni, first author of the study, Princeton University.

"In practice, though, it poses many environmental and technological concerns that still need to

be addressed," said Bertagni. The researchers modelled the effect of hydrogen emissions on atmospheric methane, outlining their findings in the journal Nature Communications.

They found that despite replacing fossil fuel usage, above a certain threshold, a leaky hydrogen economy could cause near-term environmental harm by increasing the amount of methane in the atmosphere.

The risk for harm is compounded for hydrogen production methods using methane as an input, highlighting the critical need to manage and minimize emissions from hydrogen production, the study said.

"We have a lot to learn about the consequences of using hydrogen, so the switch to hydrogen, a seemingly clean fuel, doesn't create new environmental challenges," said Amirle Corporato, principal investigator and professor, Princeton University.

The problem, the study said, boils down to one small, difficult-to-measure molecule known as the hydroxyl radical (OH).

Often dubbed "the detergent of the troposphere," OH plays a critical role in eliminating greenhouse gases such as methane and ozone from the atmosphere.

The hydroxyl radical also reacts with hydrogen gas in the atmosphere and, since, a limited amount of OH is generated each day, any spike in hydrogen emissions means that more OH would be used to break down hydrogen, leaving less OH available to break down methane.

CIPET organises 27th RAC meet



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 14: The 27th Regional Advisory Committee (RAC) Meet of Central Institute of Petrochemicals Engineering & Technology (CIPET) Odisha was organised at CIPET: Institute of Petrochemicals Technology (IPT), Patia, Bhubaneswar Tuesday. The meeting was chaired by Skill Development & Technical Education Department Principal Secretary Usha Padhee.

Various agenda pointing were discussed in the meeting. RAC members from state government and industries were present on the occasion. PK Sahoo, Principal Director & Head, CIPET Odisha along with BP Patra, Director, Smita Mohanty, Director & Head, KK Mohapatra, Director, PC Padhi, Principal were present in the meeting. The meeting concluded with vote of thanks by BP Patra, Director and Head, CSTS, Bhubaneswar.

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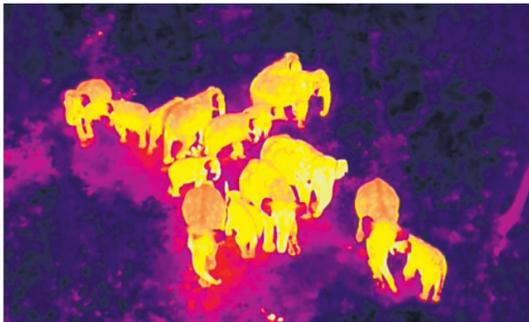
DRAMA FEST: Artistes enacting a scene from a play titled 'Bhika' at the 17th annual function and 5th drama festival of cultural outfit 'Bharati Kalaniketan' at Umerkote in Nabarangpur district, Tuesday

Thermal drones to prevent man-animal tiff

THE CAMERAS WILL HELP KEONJHAR FOREST OFFICIALS KEEP TRACK OF ELEPHANT MOVEMENTS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, March 14: Due to the increase in man-animal conflict in Keonjhar district, the Forest department has decided to use thermal drone cameras to prevent such incidents. The drone cameras will keep track of movement of animals, including elephants, at night officials said. It should be stated here that Keonjhar district has seven forest ranges that are prone to elephant menace. Similarly, the cameras will help Forest officials track the movement of poachers in jungles, in conducting elephant census and track their movements in remote and inaccessible regions. Thermal drones were first deployed in the Champua forest range, December 3, 2022, to track movement of elephants at night. It was a sure shot way of minimising human beings-elephants conflicts and ensuring the safety of both. Since it was a successful



venture, officials have now decided to use similar types of drones in Patana and Ghatagon forest ranges of the district. The Forest department and animal lovers are concerned with the rising number of elephant deaths that have been reported from various parts of the district. Keonjhar district is witnessing an increase in man-animal conflicts

in the recent past. While the pachyderms are destroying crops and properties and even killing people, they are also falling prey to poachers and dying due to electrocution. Speaking to mediapersons, Keonjhar DFO, Dhanraj HD said Tuesday that monitoring the movement of the pachyderms has always been a challenge for the

Forest department amid various hazards like railway tracks, electrical wires, open wells and also use of pesticides on farmlands. He said it is not easy to get real time data on elephant movements despite introduction of early warning and voice message systems, patrolling on bikes and on foot. Dhanraj said the thermal drones have been put in use, since Thursday, last. The drone detects live objects through their body temperatures and the picture of the animal gets flashed on the computer screen. This help officials differentiate between elephants and other animals. The drones also help in ascertaining the numbers in an elephant herd, the adult members and calves in it. The detection of body temperature enables officials to identify whether an elephant inside the herd is ill or not. The DFO said that the drones are being used to drive the herds away from a potential danger zones.

Woman drowns in Koraput river

THE TRAGEDY OCCURRED WHEN THE VICTIM WAS GUARDING THE CROPS ON HER FARMLAND

POST NEWS NETWORK

Dasamantapur, March 14: A woman drowned Tuesday after she accidentally slipped into a river close to her farmland at Marichguda village under this block in Koraput district. The deceased was identified as Lakshmi Jani, 55, wife of late Abhi Jani in the village. The tragedy occurred when she was guarding the crops on her farmland about 1.5km from her house like she did daily. While checking the crops she accidentally fell into the river and could not come out. The matter came to the fore after her elder son Sabu searched for her and found the body of Lakshmi floating in the river. He informed the villagers and police. Police sent the body for post-mortem and launched an investigation.

Doubts over revival of Bijayananda sugar mill

POST NEWS NETWORK

Deogaon, March 14: The Odisha government has recently announced that it will invest ₹92.60 crore for the revival of the Bijayananda Cooperative sugar mill at Sagarpali under Gaibahal panchayat of this block in Bolangir district. During the announcement, the government said that the mill will be made operational through the PPP mode. However, as the announcement came with the state Assembly elections less than a year away, it has been taken with a pinch of salt. Many including politicians have expressed their doubts over the revival of the sugar mill on various social media platforms. The district cooperative sugar mill committee however, had earlier submitted a proposal to the state government stating that a fund of ₹120 crore is required to keep the mill operational for three years. The state government had then asked senior officials of the Cooperative de-

partment and a high level technical committee to submit a report on revival of the sugar mill. However, it was not done. Opposition leaders pointed out that the Odisha government remembers about the sugar mill when elections come knocking. They said that before the 2019 Assembly elections, the government had announced revival of the sugar mill if the BJD candidate emerged victorious. However, once the results were declared, revival plans took a backseat. Sugarcane farmers have once again expressed their apprehensions about the latest revival announcement. Bolangir MLA Narasingha Mishra, said that he had raised the issue in the Odisha Assembly a number of times. Mishra termed the recent announcement as hoax. Mishra pointed out that the Odisha government had thrice floated tenders for the revival of the sugar mill. However, as there were no bidders, the government backed out on its plans. He asserted that the government is not keen to re-

vive the mill. Dayananda Khamari, chairperson, panchayat samiti, Deogaon block, said that if the mill is made operational it will greatly help sugarcane farmers and local residents as it is the only agro-based factory in the region. Subal Charan Rana, advisor, Employees Association of Deogaon said that the closure of the mill has rendered over 300 persons jobless. The reopening of the sugar mill will help many in earning their livelihood again," Rana added.

आईआरईएल (इंडिया) लिमिटेड / IREL (India) Limited
Formerly Indian Rare Earths Limited.
(A Government of India Undertaking)

संदर्भ - विज्ञापन क्र. 22-02/2023 / Ref: ADVT.NO.22-23/21 TENDER NOTICE DATE: 22.02.2023
IREL, Chavara invites Bid for the following items/job descriptions

क्रमांक / Event No.	कार्य / Job Description
GEM/2023/B/3259822	Excavation, collection, heaping, loading and transportation of mineral sand from Thazhethuruthu mining site of Neendakara village to HUP mineral sand yard on zero moisture basis.
GEM/2023/B/325013	Supply of LPG in Sumo Cylinder on staggered delivery basis.
GEM/2023/B/3250207	Supply of HSD Oil on staggered delivery basis.
GEM/2023/B/3252660	Supply of Furnace Oil on staggered delivery basis.

निविदा निविदा नाम http://irel.co.in, http://gem.gov.in or CPPP वेबसाइट में उपलब्ध कराया जा सकेगा।
निविदा में कोई शुल्क / बिना वेबसाइट में ही जमा कराया जा सकेगा।
Bidder may download tender document from http://irel.co.in, http://gem.gov.in or CPPP website.
Any corrigendum / Extension to above tenders shall be hosted in above websites only.
CBC 48129/12/0096/2223

'Quality material, PR our focus'

Everyone dreams of building a beautiful house with attractive interiors. Currently plywood has become an integral part of any house irrespective of its size. A good interior with exotic-shaped furniture made of plywood adorns the house and gives it the best possible look. 'Bharat Plywoods' keeps all this in mind as it caters to the need of the customers. "Our aim is to provide quality material and products to our customers and maintain a cordial relationship with them to keep them satisfied and happy," says Managing Director of Bharat Plywoods, Brajendra Kumar Ray. Excerpts of his conversation with Orissa POST...



- **How did you spend your childhood?**
I grew up at Radhadarshanpur in Athagarh locality of Cuttack district. I did my schooling from Khuntakata High School and my higher education in Commerce from Khurda College. Life was beautiful those days in the rural ambience which was peaceful and tranquil.
- **Why did you decide to become a businessman and not choose any other profession?**
My father Mahabeer Ray is a prominent businessman in Athagarh area. We were dealing in wholesale kerosene and groceries. I have learned the intricacies of doing business from my father right from my early days. So it was quite natural for me to become a businessman as I have seen the process from close proximity.
- **Why did you enter the plywood business and not something your family was involved in?**
I decided to start my own business in 1978 and initially I was keen to enter the agri-based products business. However, there was a dearth of plywood stores in Cuttack. I thought plywood could be the perfect substitute for wood to construct buildings and houses. Also plywood is made from agro-based wood which is eco-friendly. As it is affordable, all segments of customers can use it for interior designing and making other household products. I had all these factors in mind when I started the plywood business.
- **How is the demand for plywood at present?**
Plywood has become an essential ingredient in interior designing and home building. It is also widely used for making furniture. Apart from residential purposes, there is demand for plywood from business houses for their offices and showrooms. One can safely say that plywood has replaced the traditional and costlier wood. Besides, we also deal in aluminium, glass, UPVC and WPVC products because they are in demand.
- **What is your future roadmap?**
We have to bring in many products from states like Haryana, Gujarat, West Bengal, Telangana and Karnataka as they are not available in Odisha. We would like to embark on the step of 'Make in Odisha' and set up a manufacturing unit in the state. In that manner we can contribute to the state's economic progress and create avenues for direct and indirect employment.
- **What do you do in your leisure time?**
In my free time I indulge in social work. I am connected with many educational institutes, community puja committees and cultural bodies. I am also interested in agriculture and gardening. Most importantly, I am involved in development of the neglected people in society.
- **What will be your advice for new entrants in the industry?**
A businessman should always prioritise customer satisfaction. With good service, one can gain customer's trust, which is very important. One must be patient and should run the business honestly. To achieve goals, one has to work with a single-minded devotion.



EAST COAST RAILWAY
E-AUCTION OF CATERING UNIT

No. G.129/Catg/E-auction/2/2023

01. ASSET DESCRIPTION : CATERING STALL ON MIDDLE OF PLATFORM NO-01 AT PATIA HALT RESERVED FOR OTHER BACKWARD CLASS, SIZE : (10FT X 6FT)

02. ASSET DESCRIPTION : CATERING STALL ON MIDDLE OF PLATFORM NO-01 AT KANDARPUR RAILWAY STATION RESERVED FOR SCHEDULED CASTE, SIZE : (10FT X 6FT)

03. ASSET DESCRIPTION : CATERING STALL AT MIDDLE OF PLATFORM NO-01 AT RETANG RAILWAY STATION RESERVED FOR OTHER BACKWARD CLASS (OBC) WITHIN MAIN CATEGORY, SIZE : (10FT X 6FT)

04. ASSET DESCRIPTION : CATERING STALL AT PLATFORM NO-04/05 BETWEEN POLE NO. 18/19 (BHUANESWAR END) OF CUTTACK RAILWAY STATION OVER KHURDA ROAD DIVISION RESERVED FOR SCHEDULED CASTE (W), SIZE : (8FT X 6FT)

05. ASSET DESCRIPTION : CATERING STALL ON MIDDLE OF PLATFORM NO-01 AT SHAMA CHARANPUR (SCPR) PASSENGER HALT RESERVED FOR SCHEDULED TRIBE WITHIN MAIN CATEGORY, SIZE : (10FT X 6FT)

LOT Start Date & Time : 22.03.2023, 1100 Hrs. (for all), Left End Date : 22.03.2023 (for all) & Time : 1130 Hrs. (for Sl. No. 01), 1140 Hrs. (for Sl. No. 02), 1150 Hrs. (for Sl. No. 03), 1200 Hrs. (for Sl. No. 04), 1210 Hrs. (for Sl. No. 05).

Complete information of the above e-Auction Notice is available in website : <https://www.irps.gov.in>
Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager / PR-1073/N/22-23 / Khurda Road

Bank of India
Zonal Office : Star House, 1/1D, Jayadev Vihar, Nayapalli, Bhubaneswar-751015

POSSESSION NOTICE
(Rule-8(1)) of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules-2002

Whereas, the undersigned being the **Authorised Officer of the Bank of India, Bhubaneswar Branch** under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued Demand Notices calling upon the Borrower/Guarantors in the loan account given below to repay the amount mentioned in the Notice plus interest & expenses thereon within **60 days** from the date of receipt of the said Notice. The Borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrower/Guarantors and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the properties described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules. The Borrower/Guarantors in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the properties and any dealings with the properties will be subject to the charge of the **Bank of India, Bhubaneswar Branch** for an amount mentioned below with interest & expenses thereon. **The Borrower's attention is invited to provisions of Sub-Section (8) of Section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available to redeem the secured assets.**

BHUBANESWAR BRANCH / Name & Address of Borrower/Guarantors	Liabilities due as per Notice	Date of Demand Notice/ Date of Possession	Description of the Immovable Properties
Borrower: M/s. Shree Loknath Stone Crusher, Prop.: Mrs. Puspaxmi Mohanty, W/o: Subhendra Mohanty, At: Lokeswarpur, Pallahat, Khurda-752056	₹ 96,73,778.43 + interest & expenses thereon	15.04.2021 / 10.03.2023	All that part and parcel of the property of Land and Structures/Installations situated over Khata No.: 400, Plot No.: 1475, Area: Ac.0.930Dec., KISSAM: Gharabari, PIN-752060, Standing in the name of Mrs. Puspaxmi Mohanty, W/o: Subhendra Mohanty, Bounded (As per Sale Deed) by North: Karunakar Mohanty, South: Shree Jagannath Mahaprabhu, East: Gopal Chandra Narendra & others, West: Maina Biswal & others, Bounded (As per Physical) by North: Plot No.: 1474 (Karunakar Mohanty), South: Road on Lord Jagannath Land, East: Girish Chandra Behera, West: Basant Kumar Panda(Pond)
Borrower: M/s. Meera Creation, Prop.: Mr. Jiban Jyoti Barik / Guarantors: 1) Sumitra Barik, W/o.: Late Chitta Ranjan Barik, 2) Suchitra Barik, D/o.: Late Chitta Ranjan Barik, All are At: Plot No.: 267/B, Chitta Nivas, Nuapada, Balisahi, Madhupatna, Cuttack - 753010	₹ 3,11,98,798.62 + interest & expenses thereon	26.10.2022 / 13.03.2023	All that part and parcel of the property of Land situated at Mouza: Adalia, Thana: Cuttack Sadar, Tahasil: Cuttack, Dist.: Cuttack Pertaining to 1) Khata No.: 686/392, Plot No.: 1290, Area: Ac.0.070 Dec., Plot No.: 1972, Area: Ac.0.010 Dec. and Plot No.: 1287, Late Chitta Ranjan Barik, All are At: Plot No.: 267/B, Chitta Nivas, Nuapada, Standing in the name of Mrs. Sumitra Barik, Mr. Jiban Jyoti Barik & Mrs. Suchitra Barik, Balisahi, Madhupatna, Cuttack - 753010 2) Khata No.: 686/934, Plot No.: 1291, Area: Ac.0.010 Dec., KISSAM: Gharabari, Standing in the name of Mr. Jiban Jyoti Barik, Total Plots (Four), Total Land Area: Ac.0.160 Dec. , Bounded by North: Prahalad Prusty & Govt. Land, South: R K Das, East: Sanatan Prusty & Ratnakar Sahoo, West: 20ft wide earthen Road, 3) All that part and parcel of Land and Building situated over Plot No.: 1088/2628, Khata No.: 614/39, Mouza: Nuapada, Balisahi, PS.: Cuttack Sadar (55), Dist.: Cuttack, Land Area: Ac.0.120 Dec. i.e. 5227 Sq.ft., KISSAM: Gharabari, Standing in the name of Mrs. Sumitra Barik , Bounded by North: Geetanjali Nayak, South: Kailash Choudhury, East: Gunanidhi Pasayat, West: Road

Place: Bhubaneswar, Date: 15.03.2023 **Authorised Officer, Bank of India**

Koraput kids stun all with 40km marathon

THE 3 SIBLINGS TOOK PART IN THE EVENT TO CELEBRATE THEIR BROTHER'S BIRTHDAY

POST NEWS NETWORK

Koraput, March 14: Where these is a will there is a way. This saying was proved true by three minors who defied age to run 40 kilometres in searing heat as part of a marathon event, recently. The three kids ran from this town to Damanjodi in approximately three hours and their efforts were applauded by all and sundry. Siblings Yamuna Bahadur (11), Tapasya Bahadur(7) and Hari Bahadur (10) completed the distance by the dint of sheer willpower and perseverance. The two daughters and son of Jeetendra Bahadur, a resident of this city, have always been fascinated by long distance running. The trio began the marathon Sunday from the district SP office under the supervision of coach Ramachandra Jena. Koraput Municipality chairman Lalat Ranjan Sethi provided words of encouragement to the kids ahead of the start of the event.



During the run which started on the Koraput-Vishakhapatnam national highway (NH-26), the kids passed through Dumuriput chowk, Ghataguda chowk and Sunabeda chowk. There were a large number of spectators on both sides of the

road encouraging the three kids. The trio and their coach were later felicitated by the president and members of the municipality gymnasium after they returned here. They were presented with trophies and certificates. Notably, the same three kids were in the limelight last year, when they ran a distance of 22 kilometres from Jeypore to Borriguma to promote the FIH Men's Hockey World Cup tournament which was hosted by Odisha. Officials of the district administration had then also lauded the efforts of Yamuna, Tapasya and Hari. The kids were initially trained by dad Jitendra who recognised their talent in distance running. Coach Jena then took it upon himself voluntarily to train the three. Yamuna stated that running is her passion and she does so as she believes that 'to keep the body fit, we need to run'. Locals pointed out Tuesday that the trio decided to run 40 kilometres to celebrate Hari's birthday, Sunday.

FOCUS WORLD CONSUMER RIGHTS DAY

STUDENTS AS CONSUMERS



The high course fee is a manifestation of unfair practices against students in general and economically poor students, in particular. But there is no forum for students to question such unfair practices

tions lying vacant. No faculty recruitments for years. I miss the central canteen: where we used to spend hours reflecting on different topics: from politics to films. I am also told that the top management of the university nowadays spends more time in the secretariat rather than with the professors discussing their teaching and research. Can I, as an alumnus, use the Consumer Protection Act and knock the doors of court to get answers from the university about the appalling standards of the university? No clarity as of now.

With such a situation prevailing in the universities there is no justifiable basis for not bringing clarity on the issue of treating the student as a consumer under the Consumer Protection Act-1991. The Act recognises a person's right to be heard. In that pursuit, the Act provides for establishment of dispute resolution agencies at different levels. It may not be a bad idea to create an exclusive body in the form of Student Disputes Redressal Agency to address the concerns of students. Such a body may help in creating an environment where students can openly talk about high fees, poor quality of education, inadequate teachers, poor infrastructure, reduction in academic freedom, and increasing control of universities by bureaucrats and politicians.

The speech of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee delivered during the golden jubilee celebrations of the University Grants Commission in the year 2002 is still relevant today. He reminded all that education, especially higher education, is that endeavour which will catapult India into a higher orbit of development. But we should remember that higher education needs students with freedom to think, question, and operate. So, on this important day, let us rededicate ourselves for creating an environment of democratic learning and enable students to operate as empowered consumers.

The writer is a professor; XIMB. Views are personal.

Every year 15 March is celebrated as the World Consumer Rights Day. The day was inspired by President John F Kennedy's message to the US Congress, sent on the same date five decades ago. He stressed the importance of the rights of consumers. Today most countries have in place the relevant laws protecting the consumers. The day is globally recognised and accredited by the United Nations.

In India, the protection of the rights of consumers is administered by the Consumer Protection Act, 2019. The Act contains various provisions for the protection of consumers and for promoting their rights. Several classes of consumers and almost all types of services are covered under this Act. The term protection in the Act itself shows that the consumer is vulnerable and can be subject to harassment by the seller or the provider of services. The Act assumes that the seller has the power to indulge in unfair practices and mislead the consumer. So, the sole objective of the Act is to safeguard the consumer against the possible unfair practices by the service provider.

Despite having several deliberations on the consumer protection for decades, one bone of contention that still continues is the lack of clarity regarding inclusion of students as consumers under the Act. Is education a service? Is the student a consumer? Can we sue a college or a university for indulging in unfair practices? Several such questions have not been fully resolved yet.

Various courts, including the Supreme Court of India, have sent confusing signals in different cases. Only recently in the year 2020, has the Supreme Court agreed to examine the question as to whether an educational institution or university can be sued under the consumer protection law for deficiency in services. We are still waiting for the court to provide final clarity. Until then ambiguity will prevail.

Ambiguity in law creates an opportunity for exploitation by

the powerful. This is also true in the cut throat competitive world of education, where academic capitalists rule. The new players in the academic ecosystem think and act like corporate entities, where profits drive the organisations. In the pursuit of improving profit margins, these new academic entities spend crores of rupees on advertisements, infrastructure, and technology to woo students. Such investments are recovered through high fees charged from the students. The high course fee is a manifestation of unfair practices against students in general and economically poor students, in particular. But there is no forum for students to question such unfair practices.

In both public and private universities, the students are the victims. In public universities, the indifference of the teachers, and the incompetence of the administration dissuades students from using their freedom of expression. In private universities, on the other hand, the proactive management and the silent self-in-

dulgent academic fraternity persuade the students to sacrifice their right to complain by promising plum corporate jobs. The fear of not getting jobs and the burden of huge loans further act as deterrents for freedom of expression.

No wonder that Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud and his predecessors had strong words to say about public and private universities, which speak volumes about the condition of students. In February 2023, Justice Chandrachud, in a convocation address, said that the lack of empathy in educational institutions, especially in the premier ones like the IITs, the IIMs and the national law institutes, had an adverse effect on students. Similarly, former Chief Justice of India NV Ramana in 2022, talked about the mushrooming of factories of education which are leading to devaluation of degrees and human resources.

I feel sad when I walk into the campus of my alma mater: Utkal University. I miss professors: more than 50 per cent of teaching posi-



DV Ramana

AMBIGUITY IN LAW CREATES AN OPPORTUNITY FOR EXPLOITATION BY THE POWERFUL

Same-Sex Marriage

The three-judge Bench of the Supreme Court, headed by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud, March 13 referred petitions seeking legal validity of same-sex marriages to a five-judge Constitution Bench. Although the verdict is a long way off yet this is in sharp contrast to the firmness shown by the judiciary in several countries in dealing with the same matter. The apex courts of other countries peremptorily directed the legislatures of respective countries to either frame laws to validate same-sex marriages or the existing ban stood withdrawn. The Indian Supreme Court Bench was expected to have shown more firmness in pronouncing a clear-cut verdict instead of letting a larger Bench take a call. The impression gained is that the order has unnecessarily given a veneer of logic to the Centre's regressive stand on the issue. The observation of the Bench that the matter raises questions of "seminal importance" and submissions on the issue involve the interplay between constitutional rights and specific legislative enactments, besides the rights of transgender couples, appears to be an exercise in word-play and legalese. The reluctance to take the government's regressive arguments head-on comes out in the ruling: "Having due regard to the broader context of the petitions and the interrelationship between the statutory regime and constitutional rights, we are of the considered view that it will be appropriate if the issues raised are resolved by a Constitution Bench of five judges of this court having due regard to the provisions of Article 145(3) of the Constitution."

Under Article 145(3), a minimum of five judges should hear cases that involve "a substantial question of law as to the interpretation" of the Constitution.

This is more so when one considers the fact that already 30 countries in the world have allowed same-sex marriages. The highest courts in some of them even set deadlines for their respective legislatures to enact a law validating such marriages or else the ban that had been in force would be null and void. The legislators in some cases preferred not to act at all despite the apex court's ruling and the law recognising same-sex marriages automatically came into force after the deadline expired.

The matter becomes clear in the light of some of the recent cases. On May 17, 2019, Taiwan became the first Asian country to legalise same-sex marriages. The country's parliament passed a Bill to this effect. The vote in Taiwan's Legislative Yuan (the official name of Taiwan's unicameral parliament) was prompted by a 2017 decision by the country's highest court, which struck down a law defining marriage as being between a man and woman. The court gave the nation's legislature until May 24, 2019, to change Taiwan's marriage laws to accommodate same-sex couples.

On 1 January 2019, Austria joined the vast majority of Western European countries in legally validating same-sex marriage. The country had granted gay and lesbian couples the right to enter into a civil partnership in 2010. But in 2017, Austria's highest court ruled that these partnerships were inherently discriminatory. It also ruled that unless the country's legislature passed a law to the contrary, gays and lesbians should be allowed to wed by January 1, 2019. Austria's legislature did not act to counter the ruling, leading to the first same-sex weddings at the beginning of 2019.

In fact, same-sex marriage in India should be a logical corollary to the decriminalisation of Section 377 (homosexuality) made by the apex court in 2018. The argument put forward by the Centre pleading that same-sex marriage is repugnant to India's ethos and tradition shows it is captive in the hands of the ruling party's bigoted ideas about Hindooism.

Hindooism is no prisoner of the past. It is dynamic and known for accommodating all shades of opinions and schools of thought evolving over time. Denying the desires and aspirations of individuals to tie the nuptial knot with same-sex partners is to deny their existence as fellow human-beings.

While opposing the petitions, the government urged the Supreme Court to leave the issue to be decided by Parliament. It has told the top court that a "legislative understanding of marriage in the Indian statutory and personal law regime" refers only to marriage between biological men and women and that any interference "would cause complete havoc." Any recognised deviation can "occur only before the competent legislature," the government submitted.

The judiciary in several countries, which have validated same-sex marriages, did not let the legislatures look at the issue with coloured glasses or settle it with a brute majority. It set a timeframe to either bring suitable legislation granting the right or same-sex marriages would become legally valid. In some cases religious inhibitions against such marriages were not entertained.

The Indian government appears to be a stranger to the universal truth that "the old order changeth yielding place to new."

WISDOM CORNER

- The greatest happiness is to know the source of unhappiness. **FYODOR DOSTOEVSKY**
- The doctor sees all the weakness of mankind; the lawyer all the wickedness, the theologian all the stupidity. **ARTHUR SCHOPENHAUER**
- Everyone thinks of changing the world, but no one thinks of changing himself. **LEO TOLSTOY**

WORDSWORTH

Gobo

This word is common in theatre, film, and television but appears here because it looks so odd and unEnglish. It is most often used by lighting technicians to refer to a metal plate with a pattern of holes in it, which is placed in the gate of a spotlight to produce an image or outline on the set. More sophisticated gobos rotate to create moving patterns; some are of glass with complex coloured patterns on them. The word can also be used for a fabric or wood shape placed in front of a light to cast a shadow (in some circles in the US this is called a cookie or a flag instead). But it can also have other senses that relate to some sort of mask: perhaps a shield used to shelter a microphone from extraneous noise or to acoustically separate groups of instruments in an orchestra, or a screen used to shield a lens from light. It has nothing to do with the Japanese vegetable of the same name – its origin is somewhat obscure, but it's most probably just a condensed version of go between. Another name for certain types is cucoloris. This is the usual name for a large perforated gobo placed in front of a lamp to project a diffused shadow pattern.

Gobsmacked

Gobsmacked combines the northern English and Scottish slang term gob, mouth, with the verb smack. It suggests the speaker is utterly astonished or astounded. It's much stronger than just being surprised; it's used for something that leaves you speechless, or otherwise stops you dead in your tracks. It suggests that something is as surprising as being suddenly hit in the face. Gobsmacked, like gob itself, comes from northern English and southern Scottish dialects. One reason why it starts to appear in print in the 1980s is that it was used by the writers of gritty television series set in northern cities, such as Alan Bleasdale's Boys from the Blackstuff, about five Liverpool tarmac layers, and Coronation Street, set in a fictional suburb of Manchester (Jeffrey Miller included it in his glossary Shortly Talk – The Language of Coronation Street in 1986). It was taken up shortly afterwards by broadsheet newspapers such as The Times, the Sunday Times and the Independent as well as the Guardian and by politicians who used it to display their demotic credentials. It has since travelled widely.

IN JEST THIS

Even vermin need protection from COVID



Melvin Durai

MOST RATS ARE PRO-MASK, BUT ANTI-VAX

Just when you thought we were ready to leave the COVID pandemic behind us, scientists have brought us some discouraging news: they took samples from 79 residents of New York City and found that 13 of them (16.5 per cent) were carrying the virus that causes COVID-19. These were not just any residents, but some of the most active and enterprising inhabitants of the city, part of a thriving community known as rats.

To be precise, the rats belong to the species known as Norway rat (Rattus norvegicus), which has also been called the brown rat, common rat, street rat, sewer rat, and fast-food rat.

The scientists, who published their findings in mBio, an open-access journal of the American Society for Microbiology, determined that the rats were exposed to SARS-CoV-2, a strain of coronavirus that causes COVID-19.

As worrisome as this news is, you'll be relieved to know that the health authorities in New York City are doing something about this. They have hired a company to manufacture millions of tiny masks for the rats. Each rat will be required to wear a mask to prevent transmission of the virus. Getting rats to wear masks will



An estimated eight million rats live in New York City, according to a press release from the American Society of Microbiology. It's believed that the rats came to the city centuries ago on ships from Britain

not be an easy task, of course, but scientists have determined that the average rat is more willing to wear a mask than to get vaccinated. Most rats are pro-mask, but anti-vax.

In a unique experiment, scientists showed rats various pictures to measure their reaction. Rats remained calm when shown a picture of a mask. Their heart rate increased by 40 per cent when they were shown a picture of a syringe, it increased by 60 per cent when shown a picture of a cat, and it increased by a whopping 100 per cent when shown a picture of a cat holding a syringe.

Scientists also tested whether the rats would be willing to be vaccinated by other rats. Their heart rate increased by 30 per cent when they were shown a picture of a

house rat (Rattus rattus) holding a syringe, it increased by only 20 per cent when shown a picture of a fellow Norway rat (Rattus norvegicus) holding a syringe, and it didn't increase at all when shown a picture of Vladimir Putin holding a syringe.

Unfortunately, Putin isn't available to vaccinate rats, at least not outside his country. But even if he volunteered to do so, it would be a gargantuan task, as New York City has almost as many rats as in-vested bankers.

Actually, an estimated eight million rats live in New York City, according to a press release from the American Society of Microbiology. It's believed that the rats came to the city centuries ago on ships from Britain. The mayor of New

York City, Eric Adams, is normally immigrant-friendly but not if the immigrants have tails.

"There's nothing I hate more than rats," he said, apparently finding rats more distasteful than even drug dealers.

It's not surprising, then, that the city recently sought applicants for a new position called director of rodent mitigation (DRM). Also known as the "rat czar," this individual was expected to report to Meera Joshi, the deputy mayor of operations, and possess qualifications that included a bachelor's degree and proficiency in Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint. (All I know is Word, so I had to set aside my childhood dreams of mitigating rats.)

I'm not sure who has been hired as DRM, but they've probably met several times with Joshi.

Joshi: "Have the rats been mitigated yet?"

DRM: "Not yet. We are first conducting a survey."

Joshi: "A survey?"

DRM: "Yes, we're surveying the rats to find out which British city they would like to return to."

Joshi: "Can't we just send them to any British city?"

DRM: "No, that would be inhumane. What if they can't stand London?"

Protect consumer rights

Sir, Over the years, consumer rights have gained importance in safeguarding the interests of consumers from the clutches of business monopolies and trade malpractices. The protection of consumer rights has become a global agenda. Consumer rights are considered basic human rights under the Constitution, as they are an essential component of the right to life. Currently, it is evident that many consumers are being cheated in various ways while purchasing products or receiving services. Regrettably, in India, a significant portion of consumers are not aware of their rights due to factors such as illiteracy, compromising attitudes, a lack of voice, and illegal practices. World Consumer Rights Day is celebrated March 15 every year. The day provides an opportunity to call for the recognition and protection of all consumers' rights and to protest against market abuses and social injustices that threaten those rights. Stringent laws and enforcement, along with an informed citizenry, are essential to ensure that consumer rights are respected and protected. The government must safeguard the interests of consumers and improve the services provided to them. Strict action needs to be taken against erring traders. Organisations associated with consumer protection should work throughout the year to reach out to more and more people, making them aware of their rights. Everyone is a consumer, and World Consumer Rights Day provides a platform for all to voice any difficulties they face. It ensures that their rights are respected and protected against any injustices done in the market.

Krishna Kumar Vepakomma, HYDERABAD

Is judiciary next?

Sir, After a full control over the legislature and the media – is the executive planning a takeover of judiciary? It may not be obvious but a battle is already on over who controls the last standing pillar of India's democracy that ensures that the system of check and balance still exists. Why the government wants to scrap the collegium system and implement the NJAC (National Judicial Appointment Commission)? Is it a plan to capture the judiciary? If so, then what next for Indian democracy? Judiciary is an important part of democracy. The ruling class needs laws which serve their interest, so that they can take decisions without hesitation. In fact, this kind of thinking is not only an attack on democracy but also an infiltration of fascism into democracy.

Asit Mohanty, JAJPUR

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

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

national

of the day quote

We are nothing against probe by investigative agencies. But in the last nine years, all ED cases that you have started what is the conviction rate in those cases? 0.5 per cent? If you are saying that you are catching only those that have broken laws, then why aren't convictions happening? This only proves that ED and CBI are being used to harass opposition leaders, to disorient them and to ensure that their unity breaks down. This agenda is very clear

SITARAM YECHURY | CPI-M GENERAL SECRETARY

Rahul Gandhi should stop his Cambridge cries and London lies of democracy on decline and face the electorate in India, instead of seeking help from his foreign friends

ANURAG THAKUR | INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING MINISTER

The younger generation should use technology for their growth and must not become its slaves. Crimes, involving use of technology for duping people are more. Some political forces utilise it for spreading rumours and spoil law and order

M K STALIN | TAMIL NADU CM

SHORT TAKES

Man ends life

Chhatrapur: A 50-year-old man committed suicide after he was allegedly tied to a tree and beaten up by villagers, as his son eloped with a woman in Madhya Pradesh's Chhatrapur district, police said Tuesday. The incident, which took place between March 2 and March 4, was reported to the police on Sunday, an official said. A case was registered against six persons under sections 306 (abetment of suicide) and 341 (wrongful restraint) of the Indian Penal Code at Bachhon police post of Chandia police station, Superintendent of Police Sachin Sharma said. No arrests have been made in the case so far, he said.

Man thrashed

New Delhi: A man was allegedly thrashed by Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) councillor Nikhil Chhaprana and others in south Delhi's Jaitpur area, a police official said Tuesday, adding that a case has been registered. The victim was identified as Dheeraj Kumar, 24, a resident of Jaitpur. In his complaint, Kumar claimed that he was assaulted after he live streamed a video about a sick cow and alleged that Chhaprana, of the AAP, is not taking any action.

HC relief for Uddhav

Mumbai: The Bombay High court Tuesday dismissed a public interest litigation seeking a disproportionate assets case against former Maharashtra chief minister Uddhav Thackeray and his family, observing that the petitioner was seeking a "roving enquiry". The PIL, filed by city resident Gauri Bhide who claims to be a behaviour and soft skill consultant, sought the court's direction to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and Enforcement Directorate (ED) to conduct a "thorough and impartial" investigation against the ex-CM and his family.

Terrorist held

Srinagar: Security forces in Jammu and Kashmir's Sopore have arrested an active terrorist, an official said on Tuesday, adding arms and ammunition were also recovered from his possession. The terrorist has been identified as Owais Ahmad Mir.



The government and the Judiciary are working as a team but some actors in the society are trying to portray that there is a misunderstanding or conflict between the two

KIREN RIJU | CABINET MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE

UNIQUE WEDDING

A woman tied the knot with Lord Krishna in Auraiya district in Uttar Pradesh. Raksha, daughter of Ranjit Singh Solanki, a retired teacher, has completed her post-graduate and is pursuing LL.B



House adjourned again amid ruckus

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 14: The proceedings in Parliament were paralysed for the second consecutive day on Tuesday as the BJP stepped up its offensive against Congress leader Rahul Gandhi for his remarks in the UK, accusing him of insulting the country's constitutional institutions and reiterating its demand for an apology. Both Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha were adjourned for the day amid a ruckus with BJP members raising slogans and seeking an apology from Gandhi, while the Congress-led opposition waved placards with quotes from speeches of Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his visits abroad.

"Rahul Gandhi maafi mango (Rahul Gandhi apologise)," BJP members shouted repeatedly from their seats while opposition members raised slogans from the aisles and avoided trooping into the well of the house.

"BRICS ka T ludak raha hai (The T in BRICS is tottering)," read one placard referring to the grouping of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa. "Pata nahi pehle janam main kya paap kiya tha, Hindustan main paida hua (Don't know what sin I had committed



Rajya Sabha witnessed noisy scenes when Leader of the House and Union Minister Piyush Goyal, without naming Rahul Gandhi, alleged that he had insulted the Parliament and constitutional institutions and said he should tender an apology

Congress member Shaktisinh Gohil and his party colleagues demonstrated in the Well, demanding a discussion on the Adani issue even as other members stood along the aisle and shouted slogans

that I was born in India)," read another placard waved by a Congress member quoting the prime minister's speech in Seoul in May 2015.

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla tried to take up the Question Hour and appealed to the members to uphold the dignity of the house. He asked the Congress members to maintain the decorum of the House and not show placards. However, Congress members continued their protest, resulting in the adjournment for the day.

Rajya Sabha too witnessed noisy scenes when Leader of the House and Union Minister Piyush Goyal, without naming Rahul Gandhi, alleged that he had insulted the Parliament and constitutional institutions and said he should tender an apology. Rahul Gandhi, during a recent UK visit, had alleged that the structures of Indian democracy were under "brutal attack" and there was a "full-scale assault"

Over 1,900 Omicron sub-variants detected, says Govt

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 14: Omicron and its sub-lineages are the dominant SARS-CoV-2 variants in India, the government informed Rajya Sabha Tuesday.

During the last four months, more than 1,900 Omicron sub-variants have been detected among the samples analysed by the Indian SARS-CoV-2 Genomics Consortium (INSACOG) across the country, Minister of State for Health Bharati Pravin Pawar said in a written reply. Given the emergence of variants of COVID-19 virus with variable transmissibility and their possible health implications, INSACOG network laboratories conducts whole genome sequencing of samples for detection of mutant variants of the virus.

In light of increasing trajectory of COVID-19 cases noted in China, Singapore, Hong Kong, Korea, Thailand and Japan, an additional requirement of pre-departure test-



ing and uploading of negative COVID-19 RT-PCR test reports and self-health declaration form on Air Suvidha portal was made mandatory in the past for travellers coming from or transiting via these countries, Pawar said.

However, based on declining COVID-19 trajectory in these countries, an updated guideline was issued on February 10, wherein the additional requirements were dropped. Two per cent of the total passengers in all incoming international flights are required to undergo post arrival COVID-19 testing, irrespective of port of departure to monitor positive cases and their variants, the minister said.



ABVP activists being detained by police personnel during their protest over the fire at Brahmapuram Waste Treatment Plant in Kochi

39 of world's 50 most polluted cities in India: Report

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, March 14: The Swiss firm IQAir in its 'World Air Quality Report' released Tuesday ranked India the world's eighth most polluted country in 2022, dropping from fifth place the previous year. In the list of most polluted cities in the world, out of the 50 cities, 39 are in India.

Chad, Iraq, Pakistan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Kuwait, India, Egypt and Tajikistan were the top 10 most polluted countries while Australia, Estonia, Finland, Grenada, Iceland, and New Zealand met the World Health Organization (WHO) PM2.5 guideline (annual average of 5 Aug/m3 or less).

The data from 131 countries was taken from over 30,000 ground-based monitors, either government or non-government operated. As per the report, in India, the transportation sector causes 20-35 per cent of the PM2.5 pollution while other sources of pollution are industrial units, coal-fired power plants and biomass burning.

After the two top most-polluted cities, Lahore in Pakistan and Hotan in China, Rajasthan's Bhiwadi is in third place and Delhi ranked fourth. Delhi's PM2.5 level is almost 20 times the safe limit, the report stated.

Delhi has so far been the most polluted capital in the world and the report made a distinction between 'greater' Delhi and New Delhi the capital. Both are in the top 10 and the infamous distinction of being the world's most polluted capital goes to Chad's NDjamena.

National Capital's peripherals - Noida, Ghaziabad, Gurugram and Faridabad have seen a decline in pollution levels. The report said that there is a 34 per cent decline in Gurugram to 21 per cent in Faridabad if compared to the average PM2.5 levels reported in previous years.

Delhi has seen a decline of eight per cent. The report said that worldwide, poor air quality accounts for 93 billion days lived with illness and over six million deaths each year. "The total economic cost equates



to over \$8 trillion dollars, surpassing 6.1 per cent of the global annual GDP. Exposure to air pollution causes and aggravates several health conditions which include, but are not limited to, asthma, cancer, lung illnesses, heart disease, and premature mortality," the report said. According to the report, 31 cities including 10 cities in Uttar Pradesh and seven in Haryana, have seen a steep percentage decline in pol-

Hotter summer likely in 2023: IMD



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 14: A hotter than normal summer is expected in 2023 with temperatures likely to reach 2-3 degree Celsius above normal in some parts of Indo-Gangetic plains and eastern India during the last week of March, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) told a high level meeting on Tuesday.

At the review meeting, chaired by Cabinet Secretary Rajiv Gauba here, the IMD said above normal maximum temperatures are likely over most parts of northeast, east and central India and some parts of northwest India.

Temperatures could be 2-3 degree Celsius above normal in some parts of Indo-Gangetic plains and eastern India during last week of March, the IMD informed the meeting convened to review preparedness for the ensuing summer and mitigation measures.

The cabinet secretary noted that since a hotter than normal summer is expected, states and union territories need to be adequately prepared to meet the associated challenges, according to an official release. The IMD made a presentation on the global weather phenomena and the temperature outlook for the period from March to May. Forecast for the second fortnight of March was also provided.

Minimum temperatures are more likely to be above normal over most parts of the country ex-

cept south peninsular India, where normal to below normal temperatures are likely. The IMD further informed that no significant heat waves are expected during the remainder of March.

Secretary in the Department of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare informed that Rabi crop condition is normal as on date and the production of wheat is expected to be about 112.18 MT, the highest ever.

Secretary in the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare informed that the National Action Plan on Heat Related Illness (NAP-HRI) released by the ministry in July 2021 outlines the challenges posed by heat wave, heat-related illnesses and their management from primary to tertiary level.

He advised the states to review health facility preparedness in terms of essential medicines, intravenous fluids, ice packs, ORS and drinking water. Director General (Forests) in the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change outlined the action plan and preparedness for forest fire management.

The Union home secretary outlined the efforts made by the Ministry of Home Affairs and the National Disaster Management Authority and informed that the National Guidelines for Preparation of Action Plan for Prevention and Management of Heat Waves was issued in 2016 and revised in 2017 and 2019.

Boy who fell into borewell dies

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Pune, March 14: A rescue operation of at least nine hours to save a five-year-old boy who fell into a borewell in a village in Maharashtra's Ahmednagar district proved futile as he was pulled out dead in the wee hours of Tuesday.

The deceased, Sagar Barela, was the son of a sugarcane worker who hailed from Burhanpur in Madhya Pradesh.

The child fell into the borewell in Kopardi village under Karjat tehsil, around 125 km from Pune city, at around 5 PM on Monday, shortly after he got down from a bullock cart, a police official said.

Personnel of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), along with local police and district administration personnel, launched an operation to rescue him.

"The boy was pulled out dead from the borewell at around 2 AM on Tuesday," a police official said.

BAR-HEADED GEESE SPOTTED IN TN AFTER TWO DECADES

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chennai, March 14: Bird-watchers of Tamil Nadu are elated on seeing the bar-headed geese in several water bodies of the state after two decades.

The bar-headed geese were spotted recently in Pulicat water bodies and in water bodies near Chennai late last year. Bird watcher and zoology student R. Amolraj said: "The bar-headed geese were spotted at Pulicat recently and our team had spotted it in Chennai in December. Interestingly, the bar-headed geese were elusive for the past two decades and its presence



has given us bird watchers enthusiasm to study more on its presence and whether any climatic condition has led to this."

THE BIRD SPECIES BREED IN CENTRAL ASIA NEAR MOUNTAIN LAKES AND MIGRATE TO SOUTH ASIA AS FAR AS TO SOUTH INDIA FROM KAZAKHSTAN, MONGOLIA, RUSSIA, AND TIBET BEFORE CROSSING THE HIMALAYAS

WITH THE BAR-HEADED GEESE BEING SPOTTED IN TAMIL NADU WATER BODIES, THE PRESENCE OF ORNITHOLOGISTS FROM MANY PARTS OF SOUTH INDIA HAS INCREASED IN PULICAT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THE BIRD AND ITS MIGRATORY PATTERNS

The bird species breed in Central Asia near mountain lakes and mi-

grate to South Asia as far as to south India from Kazakhstan, Mongolia, Russia, and Tibet before crossing the Himalayas.

These species of geese fly at high altitudes and studies revealed that they have been heard flying across Mount Makkalu, which is the fifth-highest mountain on earth and had apparently been seen over Mount Everest too.

Environmentalists are also keen to study the recent spotting of bar-headed geese in Tamil Nadu water bodies. Environmental scientist and researcher with Madurai-based Action Centre for Environmental Protection, Sujith Chandran said

that "there seems to be some climatic formation that has led to the presence of bar-headed geese after nearly two decades in water bodies of Tamil Nadu".

"We are closely monitoring this along with a few ornithologists and amateur bird watchers including Sikander, the boatman of Pulicat who had spotted the Bar-headed goose a few days ago."

With the bar-headed geese being spotted in Tamil Nadu water bodies, the presence of ornithologists from many parts of South India has increased in Pulicat to know more about the bird and its migratory patterns.

Delhi Police signs MoU with Truecaller

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, March 14: Delhi Police Tuesday signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Truecaller, an ID calling app, to curb cyber frauds in the national Capital, said an official.

The ceremony was presided over by the Special Commissioner of Police, Sanjay Singh and Pragya Misra from Truecaller India at Police Headquarters. The MoU was signed and exchanged among the Deputy Commissioner of Police, Suman Nalwa and Misra.

As per the MoU, the Truecaller will display official numbers of Delhi Police representatives on their Delhi Police Directory Services and all verified numbers will have a green badge and a blue tick mark, with a government services tag highlighting it. "The partnership with Truecaller will help the public in identifying verified numbers and protect them from cyber fraud and impersonation scams in the



name of government officials," said Nalwa.

"Delhi Police shall also be regularly sharing a list of phone numbers against which they have received complaints about harassment, scam or issues registered against them with Truecaller to mark them as spam or fraud on the platform to protect citizens and alert them in case these numbers continue to remain active. To thwart cyber threats, Truecaller, in association with Delhi Police, will generate cyber safety awareness by training citizens in Delhi," said Nalwa.

During the function, the Special CP, Singh recalled how the quick response by Delhi Police helped in curbing increasing cyber crimes.

Demonstrations, dharnas at Jantar Mantar see 23% increase

According to official data accessed by PTI, 661 demonstrations and 189 dharnas were held last year at Jantar Mantar with police permission as compared to 560 demonstrations and 129 dharnas in 2021

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 14: The year 2022 saw an increase of more than 23 per cent in demonstrations and dharnas at Jantar Mantar here over the previous year mainly due to lifting of Covid curbs, police said Tuesday.

In 2021, the second wave of COVID-19 had hit the national capital between April and May during which the Delhi government imposed restrictions on any type of gatherings, including protests.

An analysis of the data shows that there was 23.36 per cent increase in demonstrations and dharnas at Jantar Mantar last year as compared to 2021.

Some of the biggest protests

that took place at Jantar Mantar in 2022 included the protest demanding establishing of an Ahir regiment in the Indian Army and farmer protest against the Centre over minimum support price.

According to police, both dharnas and demonstrations are forms of public protest. Explaining the difference between a demonstration and a dharna, a senior police officer said that a demonstration is a public gathering to raise awareness about an issue, while a dharna is a form of sit-in protest at a public place to demand action or seek atten-

tion over a certain issue. "Dharnas are mostly peaceful in nature while demonstrations can turn aggressive," he said.

The officer said that before organising any dharna or

demonstration, a body is supposed to take permission from the district police concerned which later grants approval based on the issue, organisers and type of gathering.

"But if a group of people gather without permission, in such a scenario, the protesters are allowed considering the nature of the protest and if it is not against an immediate issue or the government or is not affecting

public at large," he said.

Speaking about the challenges faced by the police while handling protesters, the officer said it is their responsibility to ensure the protesters do not enter any important installations including Parliament, PMO, and residences of the President, home minister or any other important dignitary.

According to police officials, they also need to ensure that no protester harms himself like self-immolation or climbing a tree.

Recalling one such incident, he cited the arrests made by Delhi Police for allegedly raising anti-Muslim slogans during a protest near Jantar Mantar in August, 2021 in which former BJP spokesperson Ashwini Upadhyay was also held.



REPRESENTATIONAL IMAGE



PARADISE ON EARTH: Tourists take a 'shikara' ride across the Dal Lake in Srinagar

PTI PHOTO

J&K admin undertakes mega project to renew local wetlands

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar, March 14: Authorities in Kashmir have undertaken a mega project to rejuvenate Hokersar Wetlands - one of the eight Ramsar sites in the valley - which act as water purifiers, flood basins, and home to migratory birds during winter.

Officials of the Department of Wildlife Protection said a comprehensive plan has been formed for the rejuvenating of these wetlands as well as to exploit the ecotourism potential there.

"These wetlands will be conserved and protected because they are of immense ecological value. They form a flood absorption mechanism because they are located in Jhelum river basin," Rashid Naqash, the Chief Wildlife Warden, Jammu & Kashmir, told PTI. Naqash said the wetlands are bio-



Representational image

diversity-rich areas that attract millions of birds during the winters. Naqash admitted that the wetlands have witnessed considerable damage in the past 3-4 decades. "In the last 30 to 40 years, we have seen a lot of denudation of these wetlands. They have been neglected to a large extent."

Now the Department of Environment and Remote Sensing has prepared an inventory of over

3,000 wetlands across Kashmir for protection and rejuvenation.

"This is basically an integrated project involving not just the Wildlife Department, but we have been assisted by the irrigation and flood control department and mechanical department also. Installation work on two fully automatic 80-metre high gates at entry and exit points of the wetlands is right now in progress at the cost of ₹28.54 crore," he said.

Naqash said once the work is complete, it will ensure a water level of minimum one metre in the Hokersar throughout the year.

Sajid Farooq, an official at the Hokersar Wetlands, said the wetlands do not merely act as water retention basins but they clean the air pollution as well. Farooq said that the 2014 floods brought in a lot of silt which is accumulated in the wetlands.

Villagers lock down govt school after teacher found drunk

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhaderwah/Jammu, March 14: The residents of a village in Jammu and Kashmir's Doda locked down a government primary school after a teacher was found in an inebriated condition during working hours.

A video of the incident that happened in Chanti village Saturday surfaced on social media, prompting authorities to initiate an inquiry against the accused.

According to the villagers, the accused teacher Bikram Singh had asked some students to get a glass for him to have alcohol inside the school. Singh, in an inebriated condition, created a ruckus on being confronted by the villagers, village head Gajoth Panchayat Devinder Kotwal said.

A few more bottles of alcohol were recovered from the teacher, he said in a statement.

Hospitals witnessing spike in H3N2 cases: Doctors

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 14: Delhi hospitals are witnessing a spike in cases of H3N2 virus that triggers symptoms like fever, cold and body aches, but in certain cases, leaves behind persistent cough making patients extremely weak, doctors said.

There has been a nearly 150 per cent rise in patients coming to OPDs with such complaints, they said. Elaborating about the possible reasons behind the surge, Dr Viny Kantroo, Consultant, Respiratory, Critical Care and Sleep Medicine Consultant, Indraprastha Apollo Hospitals, said the outbreak could have been triggered due to seasonal change, mutation of virus and the economy being fully open.

"Children are going to school and they are transmitting it to the elderly. A lot of cross-country travel is happening. In the last two years, Covid was the dominant virus and there were restrictions but with relaxation of norms and return of normalcy, these outbreaks are being observed," she opined.

Delhi government's LNJP Hospital has set up a 20-bed isolation ward in the emergency block for such patients. In accordance with the ICMR guidelines, we have done so and also stocked up medicines. A 15-doctor team has been constituted to monitor the patients, said a senior doctor. Dr Rajiva Gupta, Senior Consultant - Internal medicine at the CK Birla Hospital, Gurugram and Delhi, said the ILI (Influenza like illness) cases have seen a spike in the last few days.

"For instance, if we were seeing two to three patients in OPDs last month, this month there is one-and-a-half times rise. The symptoms are fever, discomfort, cold, body aches. In some cases, patients also experience abdominal discomfort, diarrhoea, and even fullness in ears," he added.

The senior doctor said the treatment approach changes lightly



Representational image

Delhi is witnessing a rise in the number of H3N2 influenza cases with doctors claiming a 150% spike in OPD patients coming with complaints related to symptoms of the influenza virus

The doctors are citing various reasons for the jump in the number of patients and the hospitals have also started stocking up on vaccines for any eventuality

Delhi government's LNJP Hospital has set up a 20-bed isolation ward in the emergency block for such patients

lar to other flu viruses such as cough, fever, cold, sore throat, fatigue, muscle pain, and respiratory complications, especially in children under two years, the elderly, and those with other medical conditions," he said.

Both the doctors said in some cases, it has been observed that patients have persistent cough even after the fever subsides. "One of my patients said he was having persistent cough and could not attend meetings because of it. Patients also develop extreme weakness due to it," said Gupta.

Deswal cautioned against letting down guard at this time and said since viruses mutate over time, so it is important to take precautions.

"Antibiotics are not effective in treating viral infections such as H3N2 and can be harmful, so people should avoid taking them, especially if they have H3N2."

"The virus spreads through droplets and direct contact, so it is recommended to follow precautions such as avoid touching surfaces, wash hands, follow Covid-appropriate behaviour, practice social distancing, wear masks, and avoid going out if experiencing viral symptoms. Additionally, it is important for people to get vaccinated against influenza every year," he said.

Traffic mayhem on Delhi-Gurgaon Road

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 14: The Delhi-Gurgaon Road witnessed traffic snarls Tuesday after the authorities closed one carriageway and created a diversion for construction on the Dwarka Expressway.

Delhi Police said it received several calls on its helpline about heavy traffic in the area. The police on Monday issued a traffic advisory on diversions in connection with the 90-day closure of a section of the Delhi-Jaipur Highway (NH-48) between Rangpuri and Rajokari.

According to the advisory, the National Highways Authority of India is constructing the Dwarka Expressway under the Bharat Mala Project from Dwarka Link Road near Shiv Murti on the National Highway (NH)-48.



What causes night smog during winters?

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 14: Scientists have determined why smog forms at night during winters in the national capital, contrary to all the rules of atmospheric chemistry.

A team of researchers from the Paul Scherrer Institute (PSI) in Switzerland along with scientist from the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kanpur and colleagues investigated the origin of these extremely high particulate levels in nighttime New Delhi in winter. "The chemical processes that take place in the air at night are unique to the Indian capital and have not been observed anywhere else in the world," said Imad El-Haddad, an atmospheric chemist at PSI and one of the corresponding authors of the study.

The study, published in the journal Nature Geoscience, found that the trigger for the high levels of particulate matter is the fumes emitted when wood is burnt.

Wood burning is common practice for around 400 million people living in the Indo-Gangetic Plain, who use wood for cooking and heat-



Representational image

ing. In the absence of strict regulations, materials other than wood are also burnt, sometimes including plastic and other waste materials, the researchers said.

Such fires produce a mixture of gases containing countless chemical compounds, such as cresol, which our noses associate with the typical smell of fire, as well as sugar-like molecules from the burnt cellulose in the wood, they said. These molecules, the team noted, cannot be seen in the air with the naked eye, even in high concentrations.

However, as night falls the temperature in New Delhi drops so rapidly that some of the gas molecules condense and within a few hours clump together to form particles up to 200 nanometres across, which can be seen as a gray haze, they said.

This process, the researchers said, is very different from that in other places. Beijing, for example, is probably the best-studied megacity in the world in terms of its air pollution. However, in the atmosphere of the Chinese capital, par-

FOR THE PAST THREE YEARS, NEW DELHI HAS BEEN RANKED THE WORLD'S MOST POLLUTED CAPITAL. ITS HIGH LEVELS OF AIR POLLUTION HAVE BEEN LINKED WITH A LARGE NUMBER OF PREMATURE DEATHS

IN WINTER, THE PARTICULATE MATTER LEVELS EXCEED 500 MICROGRAMS PER CUBIC METER OF AIR

tle formation follow different chemical pathways, according to the researchers.

In China, the gases from emissions such as traffic and wood burning react in the atmosphere during the day when they are exposed to light resulting in the formation of less volatile fumes capable of forming particles during the haze, they said. Such a pathway was also expected in New Delhi, however the opposite happens. Haze formation from the condensation of directly emitted fumes occurs at night, without photooxidation, driven by increased emissions together with a sharp decrease in temperatures.

Oil industry in J&K to witness major change

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jammu, March 14: Jammu and Kashmir's oil industry will witness a significant transformation, with the implementation of multifarious initiatives under the Holistic Agriculture Development Program (HADP) by the Agriculture Production Department, a senior government official said.

The recent release of a final report by an Apex Committee headed by Mangla Rai, former DG ICAR, has charted out the roadmap for the implementation of 29 projects under HADP.

Significantly, among the approved projects, the promotion of oilseed cultivation has been given due consideration. The oil seed project included several interventions aimed at increasing production and productivity, with an estimated annual output worth ₹1,290 crore, Additional Chief Secretary, Agriculture Production Department, Atal Dulloo said.



Representational image

He said the department will be implementing a multifaceted initiative aimed at promoting oilseed cultivation in the region with a project outlay of ₹31.00 crore.

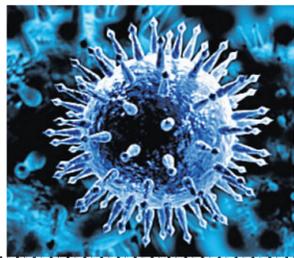
Besides, 70,000 Ha of additional areas shall be covered in potential oilseed districts like Kathua, Samba, Jammu, Udhampur, Rajouri, Reasi, Anantnag, Kulgam, Pulwama, Budgam, and Ganderbal and districts like Shopian, Bandipora, Ramban, and Doda, by utilising fallow lands, culturable wastelands and leveraging increased cropping intensity apart from promoting intercropping systems, he said.



A total of 63 police stations don't have any vehicle, 628 don't have any telephone connection and 285 don't have a wireless set or mobile phone

HARYANA STEPS UP VIGIL

After a lung cancer patient, who had contracted H3N2 influenza A virus died in Haryana last week, the state has stepped up vigil to prevent the further spread of the highly infectious disease, officials said Tuesday



of the day quote

The Nandigram movement was not a movement of any particular party but of the locals. It is a heroic tale of resilience and struggle of the poor people of Nandigram, who fought against the then mighty Left Front. But unfortunately one political party derived benefits from this people's movement

Our party registered its presence in Nagaland and in the coming days, our party will strengthen further. We will also mark our presence in several other states

The Haryana government will set up six veterinary polyclinics to care for and protect cattle in 'gaushalas'

Indirectly supervising Lakhimpur trial: SC



New Delhi, March 14: The Supreme Court Tuesday said the trial in the 2021 Lakhimpur Kheri violence case, in which Union minister Ajay Kumar Mishra's son Ashish is among those facing prosecution, is not 'slow paced' and directed the concerned sessions judge to keep apprising it about the future developments of the trial.

The top court observed though it is not monitoring the trial but it is having an "indirect supervision" on it. A bench of Justices Surya Kant and J K Maheshwari said the interim direction contained in its January 25 order, by which it had granted eight-week interim bail to Ashish Mishra in the case, shall continue to operate.

Advocate Prashant Bhushan, representing the victim families, told the bench that about 200 prosecution witnesses have to be examined and he is concerned about the "slow pace of the trial". "The trial is not slow paced. We have received three letters from the trial judge," the bench observed, adding it had gone through the contents of the letters received from the First Additional District and Sessions Judge, Lakhimpur Kheri.

The top court said as per the letters, examination of three witnesses is over while cross-examination of one of them is going on. "We are not using the word mon-

The top court said as per the letters, examination of three witnesses is over while cross-examination of one of them is going on

The top court observed though it is not monitoring the trial but it is having an 'indirect supervision' on it

On January 25, the apex court granted eight-week interim bail to Ashish Mishra and directed him to leave Uttar Pradesh within one week of his release from jail

itoring but we are having indirect supervision on the trial and we will do that," it said, adding, "Let us continue with the same status for some more time."

On January 25, the apex court granted eight-week interim bail to Ashish Mishra and directed him to leave Uttar Pradesh within one week of his release from jail. On October 3, 2021, eight people were killed in Lakhimpur Kheri district's Tikunia after violence erupted when farmers were protesting against the then Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya's visit to the area. According to the Uttar Pradesh Police FIR, four farmers were mowed down by an SUV in which Ashish Mishra was seated. Following the incident, the driver of the SUV and two BJP workers were allegedly lynched by angry farmers.

Woman's body dumped in drum

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bangalore, March 14: The Karnataka Police is on high alert following the recovery of the body of a woman in a plastic drum near the Byappanahalli railway station here. Police sources said that they are strongly suspecting the hand of a serial killer gang behind the murder.

The police had recovered the body of a 30-year-old unidentified woman on March 13. This is the third incident since December 2022. In the second week of December 2022, the body of an unidentified woman was found in a yellow sack in an unreserved coach of Bangarpet-Sri M. Visvesvaraya Terminal MEMU Special train.

A 20-year-old young woman's body dumped in a drum was recovered from the Yeshwantpur Railway Station. The drum was dumped at platform number one.



However, the breakthrough has been achieved with the latest case. The CCTV camera has caught the visual of three men coming and dumping the drum near the main gate of the Byappanahalli railway station main gate. After the authorities cut open the plastic drum they recovered a decomposed body.

The police suspect it to be a psycho killer gang. The special teams have been formed and the earlier cases are being examined again. The efforts are on to detect the identity of the deceased women.

The police have intensified the checks on CCTVs in the surrounding areas of the Yeshwantpur Railway station. The series of incidents of killing women and dumping the bodies in drums or sacks have raised concern among the public. The police sources said that they are confident of tracking down the gang.



College students welcome G20 delegates who arrived to attend the G20 meeting in Amritsar

PTI PHOTO

MONEY LAUNDERING CASE ED summons Ekka

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ranchi/New Delhi, March 14: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has summoned Rajiv Arun Ekka, the former principal secretary to Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren Wednesday in connection with the money laundering case linked to suspended IAS officer Pooja Singhal, official sources said on Tuesday.

Ekka, now secretary in the pan-chayati raj department, is likely to be questioned on the alleged irregularities in MGNREGA scheme linked to the case, the sources said. Ekka, who is embroiled in the controversy for allegedly signing official documents at a private place, was removed from the post following BJP's allegation of his conniving with middlemen.

The ED is probing Singhal's role in alleged irregularities in the mining sector of the state too as part of a second case filed under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) along with the alleged MNREGA scam.

STRAY DOGS KILL ANOTHER CHILD

Banoth Bharath, who was bitten by stray dogs a few days ago, had developed symptoms of rabies and he succumbed while being brought to Hyderabad for treatment



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad, March 14: The menace of stray dogs claimed the life of another child in Telangana with a five-year-old succumbing to rabies in Khammam district.

Banoth Bharath, who was bitten by stray dogs a few days ago, had developed symptoms of rabies and he succumbed while being brought to Hyderabad for treatment. According to the child's parents, B. Ravinder and Sandhya, he was injured when a pack of stray dogs attacked him while he was playing near his house in Putani thanda in Raghunadhapalem mandal.

The boy fell sick on Sunday and his parents took him to a private hospital in Khammam. After examining the boy, doctors suspected it to be a case of rabies and advised parents to take him to Hyderabad. Ravinder and Sandhya along with their son left for Hyderabad by a TSRTC bus. However, the child's condition deteriorated enroute and he succumbed near Suryapet on Monday.

Officials of the medical and health department said they were examining the medical reports of Bharath. This is the second death due to stray dog menace in the state in less than a month.

A four-year-old boy was mauled to death by a pack of stray dogs in Hyderabad last month. The heart-

wrenching incident occurred on February 19 in a car servicing centre where the boy's father was working as a watchman. Meanwhile, two children were injured and seven goats were killed by stray dogs in two separate incidents in Khammam and Vikarabad districts on Monday.

Dornala Vivek, 5, was bitten by dogs when he was playing in front of his house at Jilugumadu village under Madhira municipality limits in Khammam district. His father came to his rescue and shooed the dogs away. The boy suffered injuries on his hands and has been shifted to a nearby hospital for treatment.

A 12-year-old boy was injured when stray dogs attacked him in Vikarabad district. Shivkumar Reddy was returning home from the fields on Monday evening when a pack of stray dogs mauled him. He sustained grievous injuries on his face. He was initially taken to a government hospital near the town and was later shifted to Mahabubnagar.

Series of incidents in different parts of the state during the last one month have frightened people. Following the incident in Hyderabad last month, the municipal authorities had announced several measures to check the menace of stray dogs but citizens say the measures are yet to be implemented on the ground.

SHORT TAKES

Ambulance catches fire

Amravati: An ambulance carrying a patient caught fire injuring a person and destroying tobacco worth Rs 40 lakh. The incident occurred in Andhra Pradesh's Prakasam district late on Monday. The 108 ambulance was carrying a patient for dialysis from Rajasahebpetta village to a hospital. After covering some distance, driver Tirupati Rao noticed smoke in his cabin. He immediately stopped the ambulance and alerted his colleague Madhusudhan Reddy. The latter helped the patient and his mother accompanying him to get down.

50-yr-old man dies

Meerut: A 50-year-old man was found dead due to an alleged liquor overdose in his car on NH-58, under the Kankarkheda police station in Uttar Pradesh's Meerut, police said. The deceased has been identified as Ram Kumar Sharma, a resident of Alwar in Rajasthan. The police found his car nearly five kilometre from the college where he worked as an assistant professor. His car had a strong smell of liquor and a bottle was also found. The body has been sent for post-mortem but the police said that prima facie, it appears that Sharma died due to a liquor overdose.

2 criminals held

New Delhi: The Outer Delhi Police have arrested two wanted criminals, who were involved in around three dozen criminal cases. The accused were also among the top ten criminals identified in the outer district. Deputy Commissioner of Police of outer Delhi, Harender Singh said that the accused are brothers and identified them as Pradeep alias Vicky and Ajeet alias Sunny. Last year Vicky was caught by the police after shooting him in the leg. After coming out of bail he again started committing crimes.

Rag picker killed

New Delhi: A 34-year-old rag picker was killed by two vagabonds following a quarrel between them in Central Delhi, an official said Tuesday. The deceased was identified as Sunil, a native of Kathgodam, Uttarakhand. According to police, a police control room call was received on Monday, about a person lying in a pool of blood on the pavement opposite DCM mall. The injured person was shifted to Bara Hindu Rao Hospital where he was declared as brought dead.

Off-duty TTE held for peeing on woman

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Lucknow/New Delhi, March 14: An off-duty railway ticket checker allegedly urinated on a passenger on Kolkata-Amritsar Akal Takht Express, prompting the Indian Railways to sack him and declaring it has "zero tolerance" for such behaviour.

Munna Kumar, said to be under the influence of alcohol, was arrested after the incident past midnight on March 13 following a complaint by the passenger's husband at Charbagh station, a GRP official said. "Zero tolerance. Removal from service with immediate effect," Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw tweeted.

The incident has come close on the heels of similar incidents reported on board airlines in recent months. A resident of Begusarai



in Bihar, Kumar was posted as a travel ticket examiner (TTE) in Saharanpur. The woman and her husband were travelling from Kiul in Bihar to Amritsar in Punjab, GRP inspector Navratna Gautam told PTI in Lucknow.

Gautam said a probe will be conducted to ascertain if Kumar was drunk at the time of the incident. In a notice to Kumar, the Northern Railway said, "Your above con-

Munna Kumar, said to be under the influence of alcohol, was arrested after the incident past midnight on March 13 following a complaint by the passenger's husband at Charbagh station, a GRP official said

duct showing disrespect to women construes a serious misconduct, in the process bringing disrepute not only to your own self but entire railways as an organisation. It is also seen that you are in judicial custody. "Taking cognisance of this grave matter, I consider it to be a fit case to adopt the provision of Rule 14(ii). Thus, I hereby deem it fit to impose the punishment of 'removal from

NASA-LED STUDY REVELATION

Warming makes droughts, wet events more frequent, intense

DROUGHTS AND FLOODS WILL BECOME MORE FREQUENT AND SEVERE AS OUR PLANET WARMS AND CLIMATE CHANGES, SCIENTISTS HAVE PREDICTED, BUT DETECTING THIS ON REGIONAL AND CONTINENTAL SCALES HAS PROVEN DIFFICULT, THE STUDY SAID

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 14: Major droughts and pluvials - periods of excessive precipitation and water storage on land - have indeed been occurring more often, confirmed a new National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)-led study.

Droughts and floods will become more frequent and severe as our planet warms and climate changes, scientists have predicted, but detecting this on regional and continental scales has proven difficult, the study said.

Two NASA, US, scientists examined 20 years of data from the NASA/German GRACE and GRACE-FO satellites to identify extreme wet and dry events, the study published in the journal Nature Water said. Floods and

droughts account for more than 20 per cent of the economic losses caused by extreme weather events in the US each year. The economic impacts are similar around the world, though the human toll tends to be most devastating in poor neighbourhoods and developing nations.

The scientists also found that the worldwide intensity of these extreme wet and dry events - a metric that combines extent, duration, and severity - is closely linked to global warming. From 2015-2021 - seven of the nine warmest years in the modern record - the frequency of extreme wet and dry events was four per year, compared with three per year in the previous 13 years.

This makes sense, said the authors, because warmer air causes more moisture to evaporate from Earth's surface during dry events;



warm air can also hold more moisture to fuel severe snowfall and rainfall events.

"The idea of climate change can be abstract. A couple of degrees

warmer doesn't sound like much, but water cycle impacts are tangible," said Matt Rodell, study co-author at NASA. "Global warming is going to cause more intense

droughts and wet periods, which affects people, the economy, and agriculture around the world. Monitoring hydrological extremes is important for preparing for future events, mitigating their impacts, and adapting," said Rodell.

Rodell and study co-author Bailing Li studied 1,056 extreme wet and dry events from 2002 to 2021, as observed by the Gravity Recovery and Climate Experiment (GRACE) and GRACE-Follow-On (GRACE-FO) satellites.

The satellites use precise measurements of Earth's gravity field to detect water storage anomalies - specifically, how the amount of water stored in soils, aquifers, lakes, rivers, snow cover, and ice compares to normal, the study said. "It's like watching the level of the water in your bathtub. You can see how much it rises and falls

without knowing the total amount of water in the tub," said Rodell.

Because GRACE and GRACE-FO provide a new map of water storage anomalies around the world every month, they provide a comprehensive view of the severity of hydrological events and how they evolve over time, the study said.

In their study, Rodell and Li applied an "intensity" metric that accounts for the severity, duration, and spatial extent of droughts and extreme wet events.

They found the global total intensity of extreme events increased from 2002 to 2021, mirroring Earth's rising temperatures over the same period.

According to the study, by far the most intense event identified in the study was a pluvial that began in 2019 in central Africa and is still ongoing.

international



Cambodia can be one of the countries that do not pollute the environment
HUN SEN | CAMBODIAN PM

CHINA TO RELIEVE VISA, ENTRY POLICIES

Foreigners with valid visas issued before March 28, 2020 will be allowed to enter China, as the country is adjusting its visa and entry policies to facilitate travel across the border, the National Immigration Administration announced. Visa-free policies will be resumed for entry to the southern island province of Hainan and cruise tour groups at Shanghai ports



of the day quote

In the past few years is when more Americans have come to live in Mexico. So, what's happening? Why the paranoia?

ANDRES MANUEL LOPEZ OBRADOR | MEXICAN PRESIDENT

There are a lot of questions here related to the problem of non-proliferation. Here we need special transparency, and we need to answer the questions that arise

DMITRY PESKOV | KREMLIN SPOKESMAN

The AUKUS partnership, and the submarines we are building in British shipyards, are a tangible demonstration of our commitment to global security

RISHI SUNAK | UK PRIME MINISTER



Merapi volcano spews hot ash as seen from Turi, Sleman, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

REUTERS

Russian jet collides with US drone over Black Sea

REUTERS

Hong Kong, March 14: A Russian Su-27 fighter jet intercepted and struck the propeller of a US military MQ-9 "Reaper" surveillance drone Tuesday, causing it to crash into the Black Sea in an incident condemned as "unsafe" by the US military.

Two Russian Su-27 jets carried out the intercept of the American spy drone, and one of them collided with it at 7:03 a.m. (0603 GMT). Several times before the collision, the Russian fighter jets dumped fuel on the MQ-9 and flew in front of it in unsafe maneuvers, the US military said in a statement.

"Our MQ-9 aircraft was conducting routine operations in international airspace when it was intercepted and hit by a Russian aircraft, resulting in a crash and complete loss of the MQ-9," US Air Force General James Hecker, who oversees the US Air Force in the region, said in a statement.

"In fact, this unsafe and unprofessional act by the Russians nearly caused both aircraft to crash." There was no immediate comment from Moscow.



"Our MQ-9 aircraft was conducting routine operations in international airspace when it was intercepted and hit by a Russian aircraft," US said

The US military said the incident followed a pattern of dangerous behavior by Russian pilots operating near aircraft flown by the US and its allies, including over the Black Sea. The Black Sea lies between Europe and Asia and is bordered by Russia and Ukraine among other countries.

SHORT TAKES

Russian missile hits Ukrainian building

Kyiv: A Russian missile struck an apartment building in the centre of Kramatorsk Tuesday, killing at least one person and wounding seven others in one of Ukraine's major city strongholds in its eastern Donetsk region as it fights against Moscow's invasion, officials said. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy posted a video showing gaping holes in the facade of the low-rise building that bore the brunt of the strike.

EU assesses new electricity plan

Brussels: The European Union is working on a thorough reform of its electricity market to shield citizens from sudden price spikes, speed up the use of renewable energy sources and make the bloc more independent in an increasingly unstable world. Tuesday's plan from the EU's executive Commission will seek to phase out the use of gas in electricity production after volatile prices caused by Russia's invasion of Ukraine pushed millions of people in the 27-nation bloc into or to the brink of poverty.

Driver faces murder charges

Toronto: A 38-year-old Canadian man is facing murder charges after allegedly ramming a pickup truck through pedestrians in an eastern Canada town, killing two men and injuring nine people who were walking alongside a road. Police declined to comment on a possible motive for the attack Monday afternoon in the Quebec province town of Amqui, about 350 kilometres (220 miles) northeast of Quebec City.

10 killed in Al-Qaeda attack in Yemen

Aden (Yemen): At least 10 people were killed Tuesday in an attack by Al-Qaeda terrorists on members of government forces in Yemen's Shabwa province, the media reported, citing officials.

Vietnam on alert

Hanoi: Vietnam's Health Ministry has urged medical facilities to be vigilant for suspected cases of streptococcus suis, a bacteria that comes from pigs, after a number of human cases were found over the past few months, local media reported Tuesday. Since the beginning of the year, a number of streptococcus infections have been recorded across the nation and the majority of cases have involved people eating pork products such as blood pudding, or those who slaughter pigs, Xinhua news agency quoted the local media as saying.

AUKUS DEAL

US, UK & Australia agree on nuclear submarine project

Under the Aukus ambitious agreement, Australia will first receive at least three nuclear-powered submarines from the US



AGENCIES

Washington/Beijing, March 14: The US, UK and Australia have unveiled details of their plan to create a new fleet of nuclear-powered attack submarines, aimed at countering China's growing assertiveness in the strategic Indo-Pacific and ensuring that the region remains "free and open."

Under the Aukus ambitious agreement, Australia will first receive at least three nuclear-powered submarines from the US. The announcement was made after US President Joe Biden, UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese attended a summit meeting in San Diego Monday and asserted that the move is to keep the Indo-Pacific region "free and open."

"With the support and approval of the Congress, beginning in the early 2030s, the United States will sell three Virginia-class submarines to Australia with the potential to sell up to two more if needed, jumpstarting their undersea capability a decade earlier than many predicted," Biden said in the presence of Albanese and Sunak. As part of the announce-

ment, the US has also pledged a total of USD 4.6 billion over the next few years to build its submarine construction capacity and to improve the maintenance of its Virginia-class submarines.

"This state-of-the-art conventionally armed nuclear-powered submarine will work -- that will combine the UK submarine technology and design with the American technology," he said. The Indo-Pacific is a biogeographic region, comprising the Indian Ocean and the western and central Pacific Ocean, including the South China Sea.

The US, India and several other world powers have been talking about the need to ensure a free, open and thriving Indo-Pacific in the backdrop of China's rising military manoeuvring in the region, vital to global trade.

China claims nearly all of the disputed South China Sea, though Taiwan, the Philippines, Brunei, Malaysia and Vietnam all claim parts of it. Beijing has built artificial islands and military installations in the South China Sea.

For Australia, it is a major upgrade to the US ally's military capabilities.

Protests break out in major Pak cities

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Lahore, March 14: Protests broke out in major Pakistani cities Tuesday at the call of PTI Chairman Imran Khan as police and party workers continued to clash outside his Zaman Park residence in Lahore, the media reported.

Protests broke out in Islamabad, Peshawar and Karachi after Imran called on his supporters to "come out" following police's use of tear gas and a water cannon on supporters outside Zaman Park, the Dawn reported.

Videos shared by the PTI's Karachi chapter showed workers gathered at Qayyumabad Chowrangi, I.I. Chundrigar, Hassan Square and Sohrab Goth.

In Peshawar, a large number of PTI supporters demonstrated outside the press club. After demonstrating at the press club, PTI workers blocked Sher Shah Suri road and started marching towards the Governor House, Dawn reported.

PTI Chairman Imran Khan



Police personnel deployed near the residence of Pakistan's ousted Prime Minister Imran Khan in Lahore

Imran asked his supporters to stand up for their rights and continue the struggle even if he is killed or arrested

Tuesday called on his supporters to "come out" as party workers and police officials clashed outside his Zaman Park residence in Lahore, Dawn reported. In a video message on Twitter, Imran said police had arrived to arrest him. "They think that after I am arrested, the nation will fall asleep. You have to prove them wrong." "If something happens to me and I am sent to

jail or if I am killed, you have to prove that you will struggle without Imran Khan and not accept the slavery of these thieves and of the one person who has been making decisions for the country," he said, Dawn reported.

PTI's Fawad Chaudhry also asked the party supporters to gather in the streets in a peaceful protest in a show of solidarity with Imran.

Cyclone Freddy kills 190 in Malawi

REUTERS

Blantyre, March 14: Cyclone Freddy, one of the most powerful storms ever recorded in the southern hemisphere, has killed 190 people in Malawi after ripping through southern Africa for the second time in a month, Malawi's government said Tuesday.

The district around the commercial hub of Blantyre was among the hardest-hit. Severe flooding and rain damaged roads and bridges, hampering relief operations.

Freddy has also left a trail of destruction in Mozambique, where it made landfall over the weekend. More than 22,000 people there were seeking shelter away from their homes.

The latest death toll in Malawi is a jump from 99 reported on Monday, the Department of Disaster



Management Affairs said.

As heavy rains continued to pummel the country, 584 people have been injured and 37 are still missing, it said in a statement. Grief-stricken families were seen waiting to collect the dead bodies of relatives from the Queen Elizabeth Central Hospital mortuary in Blantyre.

Mudslides triggered by heavy rain have made it difficult to get re-

Freddy has also left a trail of destruction in Mozambique, where it made landfall over the weekend

More than 22,000 people there were seeking shelter away from their homes

lief to those affected, aid agencies said. "It's a challenging operation in the sense that there's been incidents of mudslides and so people are getting stuck in those mud accumulations," said Estere Tsoka, emergency specialist at UN children's agency UNICEF in Malawi. "People are trying to find a place to hang in there for some time."

Freddy pummelled central Mozambique on Saturday, ripping roofs off buildings and causing widespread flooding around the port of Quelimane before moving inland towards Malawi.

EPA to limit toxic 'forever chemicals' in drinking water

The chemicals had been used since the 1940s in consumer products and industry, including in nonstick pans, food packaging and firefighting foam. Their use is now mostly phased out in the US, but some still remain

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Washington, March 14: The Environmental Protection Agency Tuesday proposed limiting the amount of harmful "forever chemicals" in drinking water to the lowest level that tests can detect, a long-awaited protection the agency said will save thousands of lives and prevent serious illnesses, including cancer.

The plan marks the first time the EPA has proposed regulating a toxic group of compounds that are widespread, dangerous and ex-

pensive to remove from water.

PFAS, or per- and polyfluorinated substances, don't degrade in the environment and are linked to a broad range of health issues, including low birthweight babies and kidney cancer. The agency says drinking water is a significant source of PFAS exposure for people.

"The science is clear that long-term exposure to PFAS is linked to significant health risks," Radhika Fox, assistant EPA administrator for water, said in an interview. Fox called the federal proposal a "trans-



formational change" for improving the safety of drinking water in the United States. The agency estimates the rule could reduce PFAS exposure for nearly 100 million Americans, decreasing rates of cancer, heart attacks and birth

complications. The chemicals had been used since the 1940s in consumer products and industry, including in nonstick pans, food packaging and firefighting foam. Their use is now mostly phased out in the US, but some still remain.

The proposal would set strict limits of 4 parts per trillion, the lowest level that can be reliably measured, for two common types of PFAS compounds called PFOA and PFOS. In addition, the EPA wants to regulate the combined amount of four other types of PFAS. Water providers will have to monitor for PFAS.

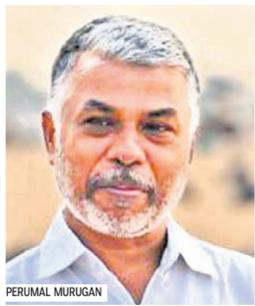
The public will have a chance to comment, and the agency can make changes before issuing a final rule, which is expected by the end of the year. Water providers will have time to adjust. Environmental and

public health advocates have called for federal regulation of PFAS chemicals for years. Over the last decade, the EPA has repeatedly strengthened its protective, voluntary health thresholds for the chemicals but has not imposed mandatory limits on water providers.

Public concern has increased in recent years as testing reveals PFAS chemicals in a growing list of communities that are often near manufacturing plants or Air Force bases. Until now, only a handful of states have issued PFAS regulations, and none has set limits as strict as what the EPA is proposing.

By regulating PFOA and PFOS at the minimum amounts that tests can detect, the EPA is proposing the tightest possible standards that are technically feasible, experts said.

Perumal Murugan's novel 'Pyre' longlisted for Booker Prize 2023



PERUMAL MURUGAN

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London/Delhi, March 14: Tamil author Perumal Murugan's novel 'Pyre' is among 13 books from across Asia, Africa, Europe and Latin America to make it to the longlist of the International Booker Prize 2023, announced by the Booker Prize Foundation here Tuesday.

Murugan, 56, makes it to the prestigious list with his 2016 book 'Pyre', translated from Tamil by Aniruddhan Vasudevan, becoming the first Tamil writer to make it to the longlist of 13 works. "Pyre", tells the tale of an inter-caste couple who elope, setting in motion a story of terrifying foreboding.

The coveted literary prize, won last year by Geetanjali Shree and translator Daisy Rockwell for the first-ever Hindi novel 'Tomb of Sand', is awarded annually for a work of fiction written originally in any language, translated into English and published in the UK or Ireland.

The GBP 50,000 prize money is shared between the writer and translator of the winning work, which will be declared this year May 23. Murugan, based in Salem in Tamil Nadu, described 'Pyre' as a very important book of his.



What has become possible with advent of digital infrastructure is absolutely amplified and showcased here in India
SUNIL MITTAL | BHARTI ENTERPRISES CHAIRMAN

INDIA'S WHEAT EXPORTS

The country has exported wheat worth ₹11,728.36 crore during the April-January period of this fiscal year, the government said Tuesday. In May, 2022, the government had banned exports of wheat to boost domestic availability and control prices



of the day quote

Tube Investments of India's foray into CDMO, a business with high growth potential, augurs well with its plan to diversify its business portfolio and reduce dependency on traditional revenue streams
MAM ARUNACHALAM | THI EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN

Given the network of post offices, probably we fit the bill in terms of being the institution which can reach every nook and corner. If we get a full-fledged banking licence, especially for financial inclusion, that will help us serve larger goals
J VENKATRAMU | INDIA POST PAYMENTS BANK MD & CEO

Our foray into the dermatology segment strengthens Lilly's promise of bringing innovative medicines to India
VINEET GUPTA | MD, ELI LILLY AND COMPANY - INDIA

SVB's demise disrupts disruptors in tech

Entrepreneurs who had deposited all their startups' money in Silicon Valley Bank are now realising it makes more sense to spread their funds across several institutions

ASSOCIATED PRESS

San Francisco, March 14: Silicon Valley Bank's collapse rattled the technology industry that had been the bank's backbone, leaving shell-shocked entrepreneurs thankful for the government reprieve that saved their money while they mourned the loss of a place that served as a chummy club of innovation.

"They were the gold standard, it almost seemed weird if you were in tech and didn't have a Silicon Valley Bank account," said Stefan Kalb, CEO of Seattle startup Shelf Engine, during a Monday interview as he started the process of transferring millions of dollars to other banks.

The Biden administration's move guaranteeing all Silicon Valley Bank's deposits above the insured limit of \$250,000 per account resulted in a "palpable sigh of relief" in Israel, where its booming tech sector is "connected with an umbilical cord to Silicon Valley," said Jon Medved, founder of the Israeli venture capital crowdfunding platform OurCrowd.

But the gratitude for the deposit guarantees that will allow thousands of tech startups to continue to pay their workers and other bills was mixed with moments of reflection among of entrepreneurs



and venture capital partners rattled by Silicon Valley Bank's downfall.

The crisis "has forced every company to reassess their banking arrangements and the companies that they work with," said Rajeeb Dey, CEO of London-based startup Learnerly, a platform for workplace learning.

Entrepreneurs who had deposited all their startups' money in Silicon Valley Bank are now realising it makes more sense to spread their funds across several institutions, with the biggest banks considered safer harbours. Kalb started off Monday by opening an account at the largest bank in the US, JP Morgan Chase, which has about \$2.4 trillion in deposits. That's 13 times

more than the deposits at Silicon Valley Bank, the 16th largest in the US.

Bank of America is getting some of the money that Electric Era had deposited at Silicon Valley Bank and the Seattle startup's CEO Quincy Lee expects having no difficulty finding other candidates to keep the rest of his company's money as part of its diversification plan.

"Any bank is happy to take a startup's money," Lee said. Even so, there are fears it will be more difficult to finance the inherently risky ideas underlying tech startups that became a speciality of Silicon Valley Bank since its founding over a poker game in 1983, just as the advent of the personal com-

Wholesale inflation eases to 2-year low



THE DECLINE IN THE RATE OF PRICE RISE WAS MAINLY DUE TO A FAVOURABLE BASE EFFECT

AGENCIES

New Delhi, March 14: The wholesale price-based inflation declined to over two-year low of 3.85 per cent in February on easing prices of manufactured items, fuel and power, even though food articles remained expensive.

This is the ninth straight month of decline in the rate of wholesale price-index (WPI) based inflation. The WPI inflation was 4.73 per cent in January and 13.43 per cent in February, last year.

"Decline in the rate of inflation in February 2023 is primarily contributed by fall in prices of crude petroleum & natural gas, non-food articles, food products, minerals,

computer, electronic & optical products, chemicals & chemical products, electrical equipment and motor vehicles, trailers & semi-trailers," the commerce and industry ministry said Tuesday.

The 3.85 per cent WPI inflation is the lowest since January 2021, when the rate of price rise on wholesale basis was 2.51 per cent.

The decline in the rate of price rise was mainly due to a favourable base effect, economists said, adding that going forward, softening commodity prices would help ease WPI inflation further.

However, the future course of food inflation would depend on weather related conditions and timely monsoon.

Although inflation in manufactured items softened, in the case of food articles it rose to 3.81 per cent in February, from 2.38 per cent in January.

Inflation in pulses was 2.59 per cent, while in vegetables was (-) 21.53 per cent.

SHORT TAKES

CCI clears Reliance's acquisition of Metro

New Delhi: The Competition Commission of India (CCI) Tuesday said it has approved Reliance Retail Venture's acquisition of German firm Metro AG's wholesale operations in India. Reliance Retail Ventures Ltd (RRVL) is a subsidiary of Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL) while Metro Cash & Carry India is engaged in the wholesale operations in India. In December last year, it was announced that RRVL had signed definitive agreements to acquire a 100 per cent equity stake in the company for a total cash consideration of ₹2,850 crore.

NTPC mulls 5.4 MT coal import in H1

New Delhi: State-run power giant NTPC is planning to import around 5.4 million tonnes of coal to meet the supply shortage during the first half 2023-24 fiscal, Parliament was informed Tuesday. "NTPC is planning to import around 5.4 million tonnes of coal for its group stations to meet domestic coal supply shortage during the first half of Financial Year 2023-24," Power Minister RK Singh said in a written reply to the Rajya Sabha Tuesday. The price of imported coal is not comparable with the price of domestic coal as it has a higher calorific value. The pricing of imported coal is linked with International Indices for imported coal, source of origin and factors like ocean freight, insurance etc. Which vary with the international demand-supply scenario.

All Adani group stocks end lower

New Delhi: Stocks of all the ten listed Adani group firms ended lower Tuesday, with flagship firm Adani Enterprises tanking over 7 per cent amid a weak trend in the equity markets. The shares of Adani Enterprises Ltd (AEL) plunged 7.25 per cent to close at ₹1,737.75 apiece on the BSE. The company also hit its lower price band of ₹1,686.25 on the BSE. Its market capitalisation stood at ₹1.98 lakh crore. Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone (APSEZ) declined 3.93 per cent to settle at ₹654.20. The firm's market valuation dropped to ₹1.41 lakh crore. At the close, Adani Power, Adani Transmission, Adani Total Gas and NDTV slumped 5 per cent each and also hit their lower price bands on the exchange.

Sensex, Nifty fall for 4th day on trot

IT AND FINANCIAL STOCKS WILTED AMID CONCERNS OVER INTEREST RATE HIKES AND THE FALLOUT OF FAILURE OF TWO US-BASED BANKS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, March 14: Benchmark BSE Sensex declined nearly 338 points to close below the 58,000 level Tuesday, marking its fourth straight day of losses as auto, IT and financial stocks wilted amid concerns over interest rate hikes and the fallout of failure of two US-based banks.

The 30-share BSE Sensex fell 337.66 points or 0.58 per cent to settle at a new five month low of 57,900.19. During the session, it touched a high of 58,490.98 and a low of 57,721.16.

The broader NSE Nifty declined 111 points or 0.65 per cent to end at a five-month low of 17,043.30, with 38 of its scrips ending in the red.

Sensex tumbled 2,447 points or 4.1 per cent while Nifty tanked 711

points or 4.6 per cent in the four days to Tuesday.

Analysts said relentless foreign capital outflows, investors junking riskier assets ahead of the US Fed policy decision and fears of interest rate hikes to stifle global economic recovery have hit the market sentiment.

Mahindra & Mahindra was the biggest loser in the Sensex pack, declining nearly 3 per cent, followed by TCS, Bajaj Finance, Wipro, Kotak Bank, Tech Mahindra, HCL Tech and Tata Motors.

In contrast, Titan, Bharti Airtel, ICICI Bank and L&T were among the gainers, rising up to 0.93 per cent.

The broader NSE Nifty declined 111 points or 0.65 per cent to end at a five-month low of 17,043.30, with 38 of its scrips ending in the red. Sensex tumbled 2,447 points or 4.1 per cent while Nifty tanked 711

bankex by 0.42 per cent.

Only capital goods index closed marginally up 0.12 per cent.

Asia-Pacific markets tumbled and European markets were mixed Tuesday after sharp losses seen overnight on Wall Street as investors grappled with the fallout of failed banks in the US and an uncertain path forward for monetary policy, said Deepak Jasani, Head of Retail Research, HDFC Securities.

After the initial decline, Nifty tried to recoup losses in the middle but selling pressure in index majors from IT, banking and energy pack pushed the index below the psychological mark of 17,000 levels for a brief intra-day.

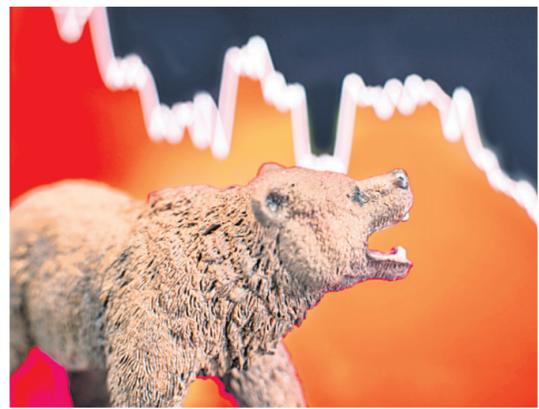
March 12, US regulators closed Signature Bank, just two days after shutting Silicon Valley Bank, following mass withdrawals of customer deposits from these regional banks. Moody's Tuesday said that most Asia Pacific financial institutions are not exposed to the failed US banks and are not as susceptible to large losses from debt security holdings as Silicon Valley Bank was.

In Asian markets, Shanghai, Tokyo, Hong Kong and Seoul ended with significant losses.

Meanwhile, the rupee declined 26 paise to close at 82.49 against the US dollar Tuesday.

International oil benchmark Brent crude declined 1.56 per cent to USD 79.51 per barrel.

Foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) offloaded shares worth ₹1,546.86 crore Monday, according to exchange data.



BIZ BUZZ



Central Honda, Bhubaneswar, Tuesday unveiled the new Honda City in the presence of Central Honda Director Seenu Dhawan, SBI DGM Sanjay Jha, SBI RM Srikant Dash, SBI AGM Sourav Dash and Central Honda AGM Parthasarathy Routray.

MCL smashes coal production records in 2022-23

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sambalpur, March 14: Continuing with its record-breaking spree, Mahanadi Coalfields Limited (MCL) has surpassed its coal production target of 176 million tonnes for financial year 2022-23, registering a growth of over 15 per cent.

OP Singh, Chairman-cum-Managing Director, MCL, Monday congratulated Area General Managers, Heads of Departments and their teams for putting in untiring efforts to scale the steep target of 176 MT coal production and dispatch for 2022-23.

Addressing the General Managers' Coordination Meeting for the month of March 2023, the



CMD appreciated the team effort for achieving the target 27 days ahead of schedule.

Meanwhile, the functional directors of MCL, including Keshav Rao, Director (Personnel), Jugal

Kumar Borah, Director (Technical) and Ajit Kumar Behura, Director (Finance) also congratulated the Team MCL for concerted efforts and achieving all the assigned goals well before schedule.

HOW TO CHOOSE YOUR INSURANCE COMPANY?

Insurance is one of the most effective tools that cushions us against eventualities and helps us mitigate risks. Everyone should have a few basic insurance plans like health, motor, cyber, and PA policy as a part of their financial planning. But what are the key points that one should keep in mind while buying an insurance plan, is it price or coverage? Or there is something more one should keep in consideration? While looking for insurance covers, it is only natural for a customer to evaluate various options available in the market before narrowing down on the insurer; but this is often not enough. Obviously, it is a good starting point to check the top insurers who offer the products that you want to purchase. Now that you have the list of the top 3 or 4 insurers, what is the next step? A very common approach that many customers take is to do a cost and

coverage analysis while choosing a policy; however, there are a few more parameters on which one should evaluate the prospective insurer before making the final decision.

The capability of the insurer to pay the claim: Claims are the moment of truth in insurance, and it is the duty of the insurer to honour an admissible claim. The Claims Settlement Ratio (CSR) of the insurer is a clear indication of their claim paying capability which is expressed in percentage and is calculated measuring the total number of claims settled against the total claims received. For example, if a company received 100 claims and has settled 95 claims, their claims settlement ratio will be 95%. The higher the CSR, the better. Apart from the claim settlement ratio, it is advised to do a bit of research to know how quickly the company is settling the claims. Gone are the

days when claims settlement was a long-drawn process; today insurers are heavily adopting new-age technologies and tools to settle claims within a few hours, or even within minutes!

Solvency Ratio: Solvency Ratio reflects the cash inflow of an insurer against their liabilities; it indicates a company's ability to fulfill their liabilities. Simply put it indicates the financial health of the insurer. The insurance regulator, IRDAI mandates all companies to maintain a solvency ratio of 150% or 1.5. A company with a higher solvency ratio is likely to have a better claim paying ability.

Cashless network of the insurer: Every insurer has a list of network hospitals and garages spread across different cities where the insured gets to avail the facility of cashless claim settlement in these empaneled hospitals and garages. The biggest advantage of network

hospitals and garages is that the insured gets hassle-free, fast, and quality service without spending anything, unlike the non-network hospital and garages where the insured has to make the initial payment that is later reimbursed by the insurer. The wider the network of the insurer, the better as it makes the entire process much smoother and stress-free for the insured.

Apart from the aforementioned points, it is important to know about the reputation of the insurer; their customer service, and their support before finalising the insurer. We have many insurers, offering different products, and many times these products are surprisingly low-cost. As a buyer, you must exercise due diligence, and do research about your potential insurer. At times, the low pricing is just used to woo a customer, however, at the time of claim, these companies may not be

forthcoming and supportive. On the contrary, the companies with better services might have slightly expensive products but they are also likely to have better claim paying capability, faster services, and a wider network. You should give more weightage to the 'value,' which the insurer brings to you rather than just focusing on the 'price.' Always, go with an insurer of repute, someone who is known for their customer support and their overall servicing capabilities. Your insurer should be a company that firmly stands by you during the time of need and settles the claims, swiftly and gracefully.

TA Ramalingam, Chief Technical Officer, Bajaj Allianz General Insurance



Virat opens up on low times MI eves seal playoff berth

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ahmedabad, March 14: India's star batter Virat Kohli has admitted that not being able to make any substantial contribution to team India's cause for a long time was "eating him up" and he let the expectations overwhelm him a bit because he was desperate to score a big Test hundred.

In a conversation with head coach Rahul Dravid, the 34-year-old Kohli revealed that the weight of expectations became a bit tough to handle for him.

"Honestly, I've let the complications grow on me a bit because of my shortcomings," Kohli told Dravid in the chat, the video of which was posted by the BCCI on its website.

"The desperation to get to the three-figure mark is something that can grow on you as a batsman. I let that happen to me to a certain extent. But a flip side to it is, I'm not a guy who is happy with 40-45. I take a lot of pride in performing for the team. It's not like when Virat Kohli should stand out. When I'm batting on 40, I know I can get a 150. That was eating me up a lot.

"Why am I not able to get that big score for the team? Because I took pride in the fact that when the team needed me, I stood up, scoring in difficult conditions. The fact that I wasn't able to do that, was bothering me," he added.

Asked by Dravid how tough it was, Kohli said, "If I've to be brutally honest, it does become a little difficult as the moment you step out of the hotel room, right from the guy outside, to the guy in the lift, the bus driver everyone is saying 'we want a hundred'.

"So, it does play on your mind all the time but that's also the beauty of playing for so long to have these complications come up and overcome these challenges," Kohli said.

Dravid said he was also desperate to see former skipper score that big hundred but it was worth in the end since Kohli delivered a



SIMPLY MAGNIFICENT: Virat Kohli plays a shot on the leg-side during his knock in the fourth Test against Australia as Alex Carey looks on

master class.

"I've seen him as a player, seen a lot of hundreds of him on TV and after I took over the coach about 15-16 months ago, was a bit desperate to see him score a Test hundred and really enjoy it from the comfort of the dressing room

"To be able to enjoy and relax a Test hundred. It was a beauty. You made me wait a long time but it was an absolute privilege to watch an innings and the way you constructed it," said Dravid.

Before this match, Kohli's last Test century had come in India's

maiden Day/Night Test against Bangladesh in November 2019. Kohli insisted that he never thought "about the milestones".

"A lot of people ask me, 'how do you keep scoring those hundreds'. And I always say a hundred is something that happens along the way within my goal, which is to bat as long as possible for my team."

Kohli credited his fitness to be able to bat in different ways which help him excel in all formats. "I can bat four sessions, I can bat five sessions, that's where the fitness and physical preparation comes into

play for me.

"I go into the field relaxed because I know I can bat in many ways. I am not desperate if I play three sessions and feel like I am breaking down and I need to get fast runs otherwise I won't be able to stay out there for long," he said.

"I am pretty happy scoring 30 runs in a session and not hitting a boundary and absolutely not be desperate because I know that boundaries will come and even if I have to play like this I can bat six sessions and get a 150. I have no issue doing that."

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, March 14: Mumbai Indians' juggernaut continued in the Women's Premier League here on Tuesday as the Harmanpreet Kaur-led team stormed to their fifth win in a row, crushing Gujarat Giants by 55 runs. MI thus clinched a playoff berth with three matches still remaining.

After making a thumping start to the inaugural WPL against Gujarat Giants with a massive 143-run win at the DY Patil Stadium, Mumbai Indians once again got the better of their opponents with a comprehensive all-round show at the Brabourne Stadium.

Gujarat Giants, who stuttered to a fourth loss in five matches and remained on the penultimate spot in the five-team points table, made 107/9 in 20 overs chasing 163 on a pitch that had something for all parties. In their previous meeting, Gujarat were bundled out for 64 in 15.1 overs in a chase of 208.

Hayley Matthews made up for her failure with the bat to return with 3/23 while leg-spinner Amelia Kerr bagged 2/18 to fuel Mumbai's yet another impressive win in front of a partisan crowd.

Also producing an all-round show for Mumbai was Nat Sciver-Brunt (36; 3/21). While each of Mumbai's overseas bowlers were among wickets, India's uncapped Saika Ishaque (0/20) remained wicketless.

Mumbai Indians looked steady but not sure of a strong total at the halfway mark in their innings after being asked to bat first, having scored 64/1 in 10 overs.

However, captain Harmanpreet Kaur smashed a 30-ball 51 (7x4, 2x6), her blitz powering Mumbai Indians to a challenging 162/8. Yastika Bhatia (44) and Sciver-Brunt did well to consolidate, adding 74 for the second wicket.

After a sedate first half, Mumbai Indians went the aggressive route to add 98 runs in the last 10 overs. In the second half, Mumbai Indians made a terrific start with Sciver-Brunt striking on the first ball,



EXPRESSION SAYS IT ALL: Harmanpreet Kaur and Amelia Kerr smile after the latter dismisses a Gujarat Giants batter, Tuesday

trapping the in-form Sophie Dunkley, who had struck 65 in her last outing at this venue.

Sabbhineni Meghana showed initial promise with some cracking boundaries, but perished for 16 off Hayley Matthews in the sixth over after a brief 21-run stand with Harleen Deol.

Matthews struck again three balls later, removing Annabel Sutherland for a four-ball duck to leave Gujarat tottering at 34/3 at the end of the powerplay.

With that, Matthews (9) moved up to the second spot in the list of bowlers with the most wickets, surpassing Delhi Capitals' Shikha Pandey (8) and Sophie Ecclestone

(8) of the UP Warriorz.

Gujarat Giants not only struggled to get off the blocks but also lost wickets in heaps. After Isabelle Wong trapped Harleen Deol (22) leg-before before the first strategic break, Ashleigh Gardner (8) was dismissed right after resumption by Kerr, who also accounted for Dayalan Hemlatha (6).

BRIEF SCORES: Mumbai Indians Women 162/8 (Harmanpreet Kaur 51, Yastika Bhatia 44, Nat Sciver-Brunt 36; Ashleigh Gardner 3/34, Sneha Rana 1/17) beat Gujarat Giants Women 107/9 (Harleen Deol 22, Sneha Rana 20; Nat Sciver-Brunt 3/21, Hayley Matthews 3/23, Amelia Kerr 2/18) by 55 runs.

Fritz, Wawrinka win; Murray, Badosa out



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Indian Wells (US), March 14: Defending champion Taylor Fritz routed Sebastian Baez 6-1, 6-2 in the third round of the BNP Paribas Open.

The fourth-seeded Fritz served four aces and won 88 per cent of his first-serve points against the 30th-seeded Baez from Argentina Monday. Andy Murray's run ended in a 7-6(8-6), 6-2 loss to 21-year-old Jack Draper. Murray has not won three consecutive matches at a Masters 1000 event since he won the title in Paris in 2016.

Also advancing was Stan Wawrinka, who defeated No.7 seed Holger Rune, 2-6, 7-6(7-5), 7-5. American Tommy Paul beat ninth-seeded Hubert Hurkacz, 4-6, 6-2, 6-4.

Rune saved a match point and rallied from 2-5 down to win the second-set tiebreaker. But Wawrinka recovered in the third to send his 19-year-old opponent packing.

Wawrinka reached the fourth round in the Southern California

desert for the first time since 2017, when he lost in the final. He turns 38 next month. No.8 Felix Auger-Aliassime avoided the upset bug and beat Francisco Cerundolo, 7-5, 6-4.

In women's action, top-ranked Iga Swiatek beat 2019 champion Bianca Andreescu, 6-3, 7-6(7-1). No.4 Ons Jabeur lost to Marketa Vondrousova, 7-6(7-5), 6-4 and No.5 Caroline Garcia outlasted Leylah Fernandez, 6-4, 6-7(5-7), 6-1. No.10 Elena Rybakina beat defending champion and doubles partner Paula Badosa, 6-3, 7-5.

Emma Raducanu, the 2021 US Open champion, beat No.13 Beatriz Haddad Maia, 6-1, 2-6, 6-4. The final set lasted over an hour, with Raducanu breaking Haddad Maia's serve to go up 4-3.

Raducanu held the rest of the way and closed it out on her fourth match point. It was her biggest win over an opponent since her breakthrough run at the US Open. Next up for Raducanu is a fourth-round match against Swiatek.

Winning starts for Sen, Prannoy

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Birmingham, March 14: Lakshya Sen and HS Prannoy produced superlative performances to progress to the second round of the All England Championships with hard-fought straight-game wins in the men's singles competition here Tuesday.

In a high intensity match, Sen moved with speed and mounted a pinpoint attack on the lines to outwit fifth seeded Chou Tien Chen of Chinese Taipei 21-18, 21-19 in 48 minutes. The 21-year-old from Almora, who had reached the final in the last edition, thus claimed his first win over the World No.5 after losing twice in three meetings.

Earlier, World No.9 Prannoy survived some anxious moments before prevailing 21-19, 22-20 against Tzu Wei Wang in his 49-minute opening round clash to take his overall tally to 5-3 over the Taiwanese.

Sen, who slipped to World No.19, will square off against either Anders Antonsen or Rasmus Gemke in the second round, while

Prannoy will meet third seeded Indonesian Anthony Sinisuka Ginting next.

The match between Chou and Sen expectedly turned out to be high pace contest. Chou took a 3-1 lead but Sen clawed back to lead 7-6 after playing some short rallies. The Indian led 11-8 at the mid-game interval.

The fast-paced rallies continued as Sen kept a firm grip to move to 15-9 but Chou won eight of the next 10 points to level at 17-17, only to give it all away with two errors. A good judgement at the baseline took Sen to 19-17 before eventually sealing the set for the Indian.

The second set was evenly poised as Sen managed to eke out a one-point advantage at the break. Looking for perfection, Chou erred as Sen moved to 15-12. Sen next wriggled out of a tricky situation with an immaculate shot and followed it with a powerful smash to lead 16-13.

The Indian inched closer to win with another on-the-line return and then produced a flurry of smash to move to 19-17. Chou made it 18-19, but Sen kept his composure

and sealed the match.

Earlier, Prannoy looked in good touch as he reeled off five points on the trot to zoom to a comfortable 11-4 lead before his errors allowed Wang to cut down the deficit to three points at 11-14.

Prannoy managed to pull away to 18-12 with four straight points before Wang broke the run of points with an aggressive return after a fast-paced rally. Wang then levelled the scores at 19-19. Prannoy then unleashed a cross court smash to move to game point and then sent down another straight smash to close the game.

The second game was a tightly fought battle from the word go as Wang opened up a 7-2 lead. Prannoy levelled the scores before eventually eking out a one point lead at the break.

The two engaged in a slugfest next, moving neck and neck till 16-16 and then 19-19. The Taiwanese went long next to hand over a match point to the Indian, who wasted it. However, a determined Prannoy ensured there was no last-minute hiccup as he rejoiced once Wang went to net.



HS PRANNOY



LAKSHYA SEN

HC refuses to interfere with non-selection of boxers

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 14: The Delhi High Court Tuesday refused to interfere with the non-selection of three national champions Manju Rani, Shiksha Narwal and Poonam Poonia for the upcoming Women's World Boxing Championships.

Justice Prathiba M Singh said in view of the medal tally and evaluation forms of the players, no case for interference with the list of boxers selected to represent the country in the sporting event was made out and the petitioners shall continue to remain in the reserve list for the championship.

"The court notices that scope of

interference in a writ petition is limited. The evaluation form has been perused by the court as also the medal tally. The present is not a case for interference under Article 226. The team which has been selected is permitted to go ahead and represent India," the judge said.

The championship is set to take place from March 15 to 31 in Delhi. Earlier, the counsel for the petitioners had said during 2018 to 2022, the performance of the petitioners was better than the selected players who hardly owned any medals.

Tuesday, the counsel for Boxing Federation of India (BFI) said the petitioners' assertion was misleading as the selected players represented

the country in recent events and won medals, including a gold medal Nitu Ghangas clinched in the Commonwealth Games last year.

The court perused the medal tally prepared by the BFI and refused to grant any interim relief to the petitioners. "I have seen the chart. They (selected players) are equally competent," the court stated.

The petitioners also contended that the one of the coaches who evaluated the players in the selection process was not even present during the camp for certain durations.

The court granted time to the BFI to file a response to the petition which has prayed for constitution of a committee for fair selection of players.

The petitioners had approached the HC earlier this month over their non-inclusion and asserted the selection ought to happen on the basis of meritorious performances in the past. The petitioners had told the court they had defeated all those who have been selected at the nationals held in December 2022.

The BFI earlier submitted that winning a gold medal was only one of the qualifying criteria and the players were evaluated at the national camp on the basis of selection criteria for national camps and Worlds. According to the BFI, the new selection policy for the men's and women's Worlds and the Asian Games was followed to pick the national

team and Manju (48 kg), Shiksha (54 kg) and Poonam (60 kg) could not make it to the 12-member side.

According to the new policy, drafted in consultation with High Performance Director (HPD) Bernard Dunne, the boxers underwent an evaluation process for three weeks where they were judged on various parameters. Nine of the 12 national champions were ranked one and qualified for the marquee event.

CWG champion Nitu Ghangas (634), Preeti (623) and CWG bronze medalist Jaismine Lamboria (612), finished ahead of the petitioners - Manju (564), Shiksha (573) and Poonam (567) in the evaluation test and were ranked one.

Real Madrid wary of Liverpool comeback



Luka Modric tries to steal the ball from Karim Benzema during Real Madrid's training session ahead of their match against Liverpool, Wednesday night

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Madrid, March 14: Real Madrid got used to pulling off dramatic comebacks in the Champions League last season. Now they need to avoid one to keep their title defense going.

It will be Liverpool needing to do something magical at the Santiago Bernabeu Stadium Wednesday to reverse a 5-2 loss from the first leg in the round of 16.

It definitely won't be easy — no away team has ever erased a three-goal loss from the first leg in the Champions League. Only five times the team that lost at home rallied in the second leg, with Manchester United the only one to overcome a two-goal deficit in a round-of-16 matchup against Paris Saint-Germain in 2019.

Liverpool did manage a huge comeback at home in the 2019 semifinals, rallying against another Spanish club, Barcelona. They had lost 3-0 at the Camp Nou before pulling off a 4-0 win in the second leg at home to keep alive a run that eventually ended with the team winning the trophy. Only three other teams overcame a deficit of three or more goals — Barcelona, Roma and Deportivo La Coruña.

Madrid, who beat Liverpool in last season's final for a record-extending 14th European title, pulled off thrilling comebacks on

its way to that final, rallying from behind against PSG in the round of 16, Chelsea in the quarterfinals and Manchester City in the semifinals.

Madrid also rallied against Liverpool in the first leg this season after going down 2-0 in the first half in England, eventually building their comfortable three-goal advantage with two goals each by Vinicius Junior and Karim Benzema. Eder Militao also scored for Madrid at Anfield.

The only time Madrid failed to advance in the Champions League after winning the first leg on the road was in 2019 when they were eliminated by Ajax in the round of 16. Madrid have won six of their last seven matches against Liverpool in the Champions League, drawing the other one.

The team coached by Carlo Ancelotti ended a three-match winless run with a 3-1 victory over Espanyol at the Bernabeu in the Spanish league Saturday. The coach is expected to have Ferland Mendy and Benzema available after recovering from injuries.

Liverpool took another hit to their confidence with a 0-1 loss at relegation-threatened Bournemouth over the weekend, hurting their chances of moving closer to the top four in the Premier League. Mohamed Salah missed a penalty in that game.