



TAMANNAAH'S DISCOMFORT

Actor Tamannaah Bhatia says she feels uncomfortable while watching intimate movie scenes with her family

LEISURE P2



QUELLING VIOLENCE

France government vows to restore order after 2 nights of urban violence triggered by the shooting of a 17-yr-old by police

INTERNATIONAL P10



ALL EYES ON NEERAJ

Neeraj Chopra seeks his 2nd straight podium finish of the season at the Lausanne leg of the Diamond League

SPORTS P12

SHORT TAKES

Bahanaga train toll rises to 293

Cuttack: The toll in the horrific train accident in Balasore district rose to 293 Thursday as one more victim succumbed to his injuries while undergoing treatment at the SCB Medical College & Hospital here. The deceased has been identified as Manish Kumar (24), a resident of Jamui in Bihar. The victim was admitted to the hospital June 3 and since then had been in the ICU. Currently 22 victims of the train crash are still undergoing treatment at the hospital out of which five are in the ICU.

Bagchi steps down as OSDA chairman

Bhubaneswar: After serving seven glorious years as chairman of Odisha Skill Development Authority (OSDA), Subroto Bagchi resigned Thursday from the position due to 'personal reasons'. He will be replaced by Alka Mishra who is at present serving as the CEO of World Skill Centre. "After seven glorious years as chairman, Odisha Skill Development Authority, stepping down due to personal reasons. Deeply grateful to Naveen Patnaik for his total confidence in me, thankful to officials of the State for unstinted support & people of Odisha for their love that binds forever," Bagchi tweeted.

Police seize vehicle used in Aazad attack

Saharanpur (UP): The vehicle used by the attackers of Dalit leader and Bhim Army chief Chandra Shekhar Aazad have been recovered from a village here, police said Thursday. The vehicle was seized late Wednesday night from Miragpur village. A bullet grazed Aazad's abdomen when unidentified assailants opened fire at his car in Saharanpur district's Deoband where he had gone to attend a ritual at a supporter's home Wednesday evening. Superintendent of Police (City), Abimanyu Manglik said the Bhim Army chief was undergoing treatment at the district hospital here and his condition is stable.

Net shutdowns cost India USD 1.9bn

Mumbai: Internet shutdowns by law enforcement agencies like the one in Manipur and Punjab cost USD 1.9 billion to the Indian economy in the first half of 2023, a report said Thursday. The shutdowns also led to a loss of nearly USD 118 million in foreign investment and triggered over 21,000 job losses, the global non-profit Internet Society said in its report 'Netloss'. "Governments often mistakenly believe that internet shutdowns will quell unrest, stop the spread of misinformation, or reduce harm from cybersecurity threats. However, shutdowns are extremely disruptive to economic activity," the report said. P11

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



I can assure you very good returns, but I can't promise that it will take care of rising vegetable prices

WEATHER		BHUB	CTK
TEMP	MAX	36.1°C	32.5°C
	MIN	28.0°C	26.0°C
Humidity		88%	80%
Rainfall		Nil	Nil
	Forecast	Light to moderate rain	



3rd crocodile attack death in Kendrapara

Third human fatality in 3 weeks in the district as blame game among Forest officials and locals continues

POST NEWS NETWORK

Kendrapara, June 29: Human-reptile conflicts continued unabated in this district with an elderly man being killed by a crocodile Thursday. The incident was reported from Ghagaradia village under Pattamundai police limits of this district. This is the third fatality in 16 days due to croc attacks. The deceased, identified as Gangadhar Tarai, a resident of Ghagaradia village, had gone for a bath in the Brahmani river when the crocodile attacked him and dragged him into deeper waters. Till the time of writing this copy, his body has not been found, even though Fire Services and police personnel launched a search operation after the mat-

100% ethanol-run cars from August

AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 29: Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways, Nitin Gadkari said Thursday that new vehicles running 100 per cent on ethanol will be launched in August. Gadkari informed that just like Toyota's 'Camry' car, which runs on 60 per cent petrol and 40 per cent electricity, the new vehicle to be launched will run on 60 per cent ethanol and 40 per cent electricity. "From August, vehicles running 100 per cent on ethanol will be launched. Various companies have already manufactured motorcycles running 100 per cent on ethanol. Now cars will follow," Gadkari was quoted as saying on a national news website. "Like Toyota's 'Camry' car which runs on 60 per cent petrol and 40 per cent electricity, we will also be launching vehicles which run 60 per cent on ethanol and 40 per cent on electricity," added the minister. Gadkari said that this initiative will be a revolution in the country. "This will be a revolutionary initiative because it will be import-substitute, cost-effective, pollution-free and indigenous. This is prepared by farmers because now ethanol is made from sugarcane juice," Gadkari said.

KILLER JAWS (LAST 10 YRS)	
Human casualties	51
Persons injured	234
Livestock killed	over 500

ter was reported. Earlier this month, a student of Class V from Nimpur village was killed (June 14) by a crocodile in front of his mother. The boy had also gone for a bath in the Brahmani river. Later his half-mutilated body was recovered by Fire Services personnel. Then June 21, a woman was killed by a crocodile when she had gone to attend nature's call close to a pond in Hatiagadi village. Allegations and counter-al-

Maoists gun down 2 villagers

POST NEWS NETWORK

Malkangiri, June 29: Maoists gunned down two persons suspecting them to be police informers at a 'Praja' court held at an undisclosed location in Sukma district of Chhattisgarh bordering this district, police said Thursday. The victims were identified as Madvi Ganga, a deputy

'Tortured' FB moderators seek damages

THE WORKERS ARE SEEKING COMPENSATION FOR THE MENTAL TRAUMA THEY HAD TO GO THROUGH WHILE EDITING CONTENT

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Nairobi, June 29: On the verge of tears, Nathan Nkunzimana recalled watching a video of a child being molested and another of a woman being tortured and killed. He is not the only one to face such experiences, this is the story of over 200 Facebook content moderators who had to face this 'torture' day in and day out. Eight hours a day, Nathan's job as a content moderator for a Facebook contractor required him to look at horrors so the world wouldn't have to. Some overwhelmed colleagues would scream or cry and regularly break down, he said.

After his shift, Nathan would go home exhausted and often locked himself in his bedroom to try to forget what he had seen. Even his wife had no idea what his job was like. He was getting a paltry USD 429 a month for what he was doing. He informed that even phones were not allowed in the workplace. Now, Nathan is among more than 200 former employees in Kenya who are suing Facebook and local contractor 'Sama' over working conditions that could have implications for social media moderators around the world. It is the first known court challenge outside the United

States, where Facebook settled with moderators in 2020. The moderators from several African countries are seeking a USD 1.6 billion compensation fund



Rahul takes chopper after cops stop convoy

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Imphal, June 29: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's convoy remained stuck at Bishnupur for hours after his convoy was stopped by the Manipur police, amid allegations by the party that the BJP-led government is trying to thwart the leader's visit to the ethnic strife-torn state. The BJP, on the other hand, claimed that Rahul was asked to take a chopper as his trip was opposed by various quarters but he was 'stubborn' to travel by road route. Later however, better sense prevailed as Rahul took a chopper to travel to Churachandpur to visit relief camps in the area. Police officials said the convoy was stopped fearing violence along the route. "There is a security threat. We cannot take the risk of allowing Rahul Gandhi to proceed," a senior police official said. The Congress, however, alleged that the BJP governments at the Centre and the state are



Rahul Gandhi sits inside a car after his convoy was stopped at Bishnupur in Manipur. PTI PHOTO

using 'autocratic methods' to stall the visit of Rahul. "The double-engine disastrous governments are using autocratic methods to stall a compassionate outreach by Shri Rahul Gandhi. This is totally unacceptable," Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge tweeted. After reaching Churachandpur, Rahul interacted with people in relief camps. "Manipur needs healing. Peace has to be our only priority," Rahul said. "I came to listen to my brothers and sisters in Manipur," he added. P9

Gruesome double murder in Ganjam

POST NEWS NETWORK

Berhampur, June 29: In a gruesome incident, two youths were beaten to death and later their bodies were set on fire to destroy evidence allegedly over past enmity at Mahuda village under Digapahandi police limits in Ganjam district, late Wednesday night. The victims were identified as Shibaram Goud, 34, alias Shiba living on rent at Lathi village and Bighnaraj Purohit, 38, alias Litu of Padhi Sahi locality in Lathi village under Sadar police limits. Preliminary investigations indicated that the murders took place following a fight between the two deceased with some youths of Mahuda village. The gruesome incident has spread shock and panic in the area. Police have so far detained 15 persons of Mahuda village for their alleged involvement in the double murder. Police said that the accused after killing Shibaram and Litu dragged them near a pond before pouring petrol on them to burn the bodies. Blood stains were found all over the road leading up to the pond. Shibaram's bike was also found near the crime scene. Police suspect that the miscreants may have taken petrol from the bike to set the two friends ablaze. Police have registered a case over a complaint filed by the deceased Shibaram's wife Lucky and launched an investigation. Berhampur SP M Saravana

15 persons have so far been detained for the murders

Miscreants burned the bodies to wipe out the evidence

Vivek visited the crime site along with Chikiti SDPO and Digapahandi IIC to probe into the killing of the two. A forensic team along with sniffer dogs also visited the crime spot. It should also be stated here that all male residents of Mahuda village have fled their houses fearing arrest.

Sources said that a few days back, some youths of Lathi village had unleashed a reign of terror in Mahuda village. The residents of Mahuda village had staged a road block protesting against the inaction of the police against the miscreants. Later police arrested one of the accused. It has been alleged that both Shibaram and Litu were part of the group that was terrorising the residents of Mahuda village. Shibaram was out on bail with two cases pending against him.

Police said that Shibaram and his friend Litu had gone to Mahuda village on some work, Wednesday evening. Shibaram's wife Lucky rang him up at around 9.30pm. Shibaram received the call and informed her that he will return home after finishing his work. His wife again called him up after an hour but found Shibaram's phone switched off.

leisure



HAYEK USING SAUNAS TO SWEAT OUT 'STRESS'

Salma Hayek has posted images of herself on her Instagram of her lounging on a wooden sauna bench completely naked under a white towel to say she wanted to honour World Wellbeing Week. She captioned the pair of steamy images: "Embracing the healing power of the sauna and sweating out the stress this #WorldWellbeingWeek."

MADONNA HOSPITALISED AFTER BEING UNRESPONSIVE

Singer Madonna was found unresponsive, and was rushed to a New York hospital after suffering from a bacterial infection leading to a multi-day hospital stay, as a result, her forthcoming Celebration Tour has been delayed, reports The Hollywood Reporter.



FORTUNE FORECAST

GaneshSpeaks.com
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FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181

ARIES
Romance will keep you occupied today. Monetary success will lead to peace and the other way round. You must be careful about expenses and buy only that stuff which you really need. Ganesh says this can save you from putting your money into some dubious schemes.

TAURUS
This day you could be in for some unexpected and unpleasant shocks, warns Ganesh. There is a strong likelihood of getting insulted or humiliated. You must therefore be alert and on your toes. You could that way, manage to avert situations that may threaten your standing and reputation.

GEMINI
It is the time to indulge in luxury and entertainment. You will pay more attention to household matters and tend to your children's needs. You will be concerned about your diet and other health matters in the evening, however, these worries are only of a temporary nature, says Ganesh.

CANCER
You will be ready to understand the meaning of life. You will get new responsibilities in your job or business, which means a promotion and pay hike. You may take an instinctive decision, which you may regret later. Take a calculated and thoughtful step, says Ganesh.

LEO
You will spend time with your friends. You will be helpful to your friends and colleagues. You will work hard according to your capability today. You will experience the satisfaction of a job well done at the end of the day, says Ganesh.

VIRGO
Luck will be in your favour as, Ganesh says, nothing will go wrong today, and you will succeed at anything you attempt to do. In certain cases, even without expecting anything, good results will be forthcoming. Bend your back if you must, as being adaptable and flexible will get you a lot of goodwill from others.

LIBRA
Ganesh says you will take up a task and complete it by hook or crook. The higher officials and colleagues in your office will be highly impressed by your working capacity and capability. This is reflect when you will be either given a promotion in the office or there may be a rise in your pay scale to the effect.

SCORPIO
Experience is the best teacher and today you should be thankful to your teacher as it is going to handle many new projects. You may even guide your peers and juniors in their work and enhance their imagination power.

SAGITTARIUS
You are on a creative high today. You may be painting or sketching during the first half of the day. You may even find time to go through your past possessions and treasure. And during the later half of the day, you may be busy in giving your cosy corner and home a new look, a makeover. A pleasant day in store for you, says Ganesh.

CAPRICORN
God helps those who help themselves. So, work hard, take care of your health, and keep believing in your dreams, says Ganesh. There are fair chances of you striking an important deal on the behalf of your company, and it will certainly boost the image of your bosses and you both. If you have a hobby or an interest for something, take some time out from your busy schedule for that, too.

AQUARIUS
The wanderer in you has suddenly come alive. You scan through travel magazines, surf internet and probably go on a tracking tour or just randomly go to distant places all by yourself.

PISCES
Your competitors will find it tough to maintain their footing against your onslaught today. You need not worry about their activities for you will come out with flying colors at the end of it all. You are not by nature ill-tempered, but you will have to encounter situations where you will be opposed needlessly and that could rouse your wrath.



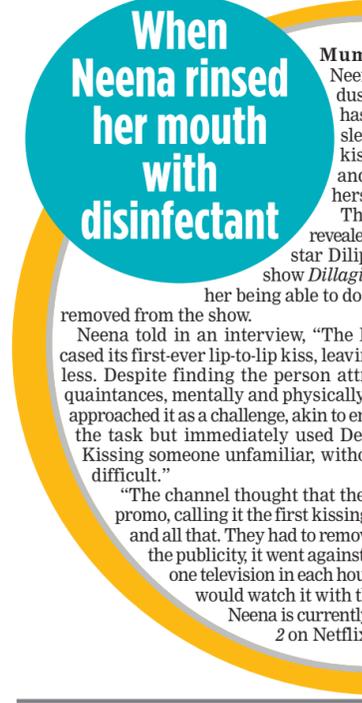
Tamannaah shares her discomfort over intimate scenes

Mumbai: Tamannaah Bhatia recently opened up about getting uncomfortable while watching sex scenes with her family. The actress is seen in anthology series *Lust Stories 2*. In an interview with a news portal, Tamannaah admitted she was once an audience who would get uncomfortable while watching sex scenes on the screen. The actress added that she would start looking around, she would start fidgeting or be uncomfortable. Tamannaah also went on to say that for a large part of her career, she didn't do any intimacy in her movies or in anything that she showcased. Elaborating further, Tamannaah added that she has pushed herself out of the comfort zone. According to her, she is now enjoying exploring herself as an artist and doing varied characters and work. *Lust Stories 2*, which starts streaming on an OTT platform from today, June 29, marks Vijay Varma and Tamannaah Bhatia's first project together. The couple sparked dating rumours after a video went viral claiming that the actors are kissing in the frame. Following the viral video, Tamannaah and Vijay made a few appearances together. However, while they both kept mum about the relationship for a long time, it was only earlier this month that Tamannaah confirmed that her relationship with Vijay took a romantic turn following *Lust Stories 2*.

Indian celebrities invited to become Academy members



Mumbai: The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences have announced its list of invitees and a total of 398 new members will be joining them this year. This list includes Indian celebs like Karan Johar, *RRR* actors Ram Charan and Jr NTR, Mani Ratnam and more. They will be joining international stars like Taylor Swift, Ke Huy Qwan, Austin Butler, Abel Makkonen Tesfaye "The Weeknd", Stephanie Hsu and others. The list also includes Siddharth Roy Kapur, director Chaitanya Tamhane, Oscar-winning composer MM Keeravani and lyricist Chandrabose, who won for the song *Naatu Naatu* from *RRR*. Filmmaker Shaunak Sen, whose documentary *All That Breathes* was nominated at this year's Academy Awards, and in the cinematographer category, KK Senthil Kumar, who worked on *RRR*, are also on the list. Academy CEO Bill Kramer and Academy President Janet Yang said, "The Academy is proud to welcome these artists and professionals into our membership. They represent extraordinary global talent across cinematic disciplines, and have made a vital impact on the arts and sciences of motion pictures and on movie fans worldwide." Now, The Academy has more than 10,000 members and only they get a chance to vote for Oscar winners. Next year's Oscars will be held March 10.



When Neena rinsed her mouth with disinfectant

Mumbai: Actress Neena Gupta is in the industry for over four decades has revealed how she was left sleepless the day before her kissing scene in a TV show and eventually convinced herself to do it but in vain. The *Badhaai Ho* actress revealed that she had to kiss co-star Dilip Dhawan in a Zee TV show *Dillagi* decades ago and despite her being able to do the scene somehow, it was removed from the show. Neena told in an interview, "The Indian TV program showcased its first-ever lip-to-lip kiss, leaving me intrigued and sleepless. Despite finding the person attractive, we were only acquaintances, mentally and physically unprepared. As an actor, I approached it as a challenge, akin to emotional scenes. I completed the task but immediately used Dettol to cleanse my mouth. Kissing someone unfamiliar, without love, proved immensely difficult." "The channel thought that they will boast about it in the promo, calling it the first kissing scene on Indian television and all that. They had to remove it because it went against the publicity, it went against them. There used to be just one television in each house and people said how they would watch it with their children," she said. Neena is currently seen in *Lust Stories 2* on Netflix.



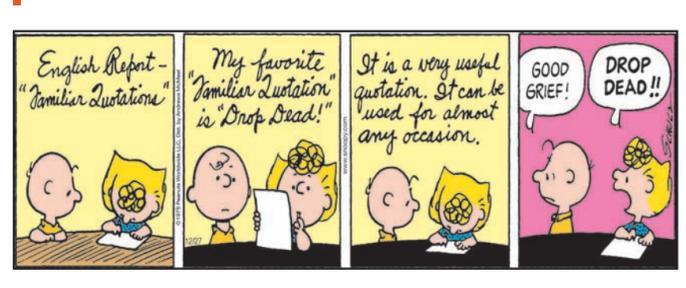
A few members from the cast and crew being felicitated at Jaydev Bhavan, Bhubaneswar, Thursday

Screening of first Odia telefilm Usha

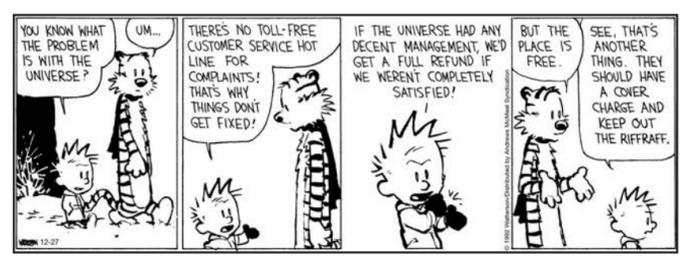


Bhubaneswar: *Usha*, the first ever Odia telefilm aired on Doordarshan in 1987, was screened here at Jaydev Bhavan, Thursday. Titled *Smrutichhaya-19*, the event was organised by the Film Journalists' Forum of Bhubaneswar in collaboration with Akshaya Mohanty Trust. Written and directed by legendary Odia filmmaker Nitai Palit, the 90-minute film is about the age old dowry system in Indian society and its eradication. Palit also wrote the screenplay. Akshaya Mohanty, another Odia legend, composed the songs and scored music of the film apart from playing a key role. Among others, Amaresh, Bina, Bhima Singh, Ananta Bharati, and Mahendra Mishra played other important roles in the film. Many celebrities including actors Partha Sarathi Ray, Anu Choudhury and Kuna Tripathy, singers Susmita Das and Sweta Mishra, litterateur Debi Prasanna Pattanayak, dramatist Anant Mohapatra, and film director Sabyasachi Mohapatra were present on the occasion. In a brief ceremony, personalities associated with the film were felicitated while a booklet featuring the film's details was unveiled. Speaking on the occasion, drama director Manoj Pattnaik, who gave voice in the film, said, "Real movies were made at that time. Films made these days are far from reality." Noted director Satyajit Ray directed India's first telefilm *Sadgati* in 1981.

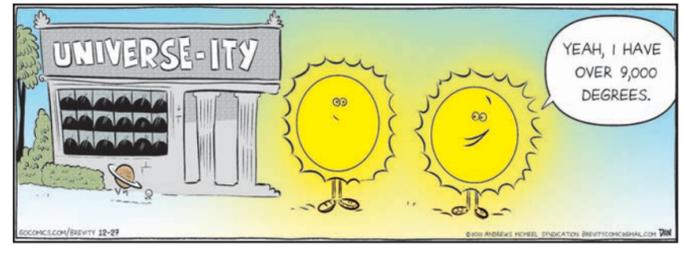
PEANUTS



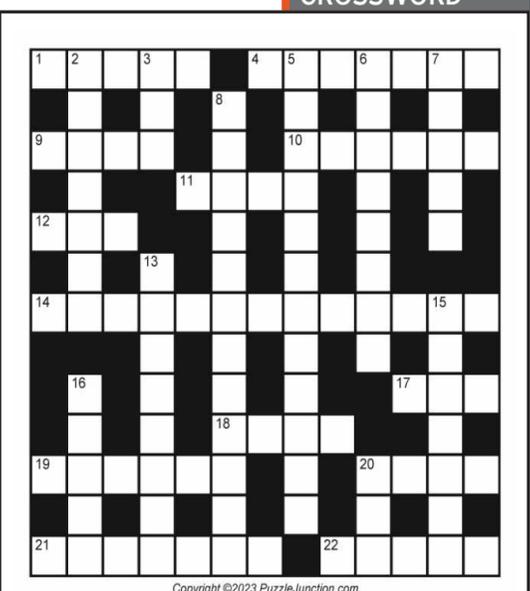
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



FUN post CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 English Channel isle
 - 4 Occurrence
 - 9 "Tristia" poet
 - 10 Trick-taking card game
 - 11 Sacred Egyptian wader
 - 12 Expression of disgust
 - 14 Screaming meemies (6-7)
 - 17 Suds source
 - 18 Kind of cheese
 - 19 Pampas cowhand
 - 20 Burlap fiber
 - 21 Blotches
 - 22 Nine-headed monster
 - 3 Mortar porter
 - 5 Politician's handout (5,7)
 - 6 Gives up the ghost
 - 7 Churchill
 - Down
 - 2 Fashionable (2,5)
 - 8 Incomprehensible jargon
 - 13 Roadblock
 - 15 Great circle
 - 16 Navigational aid
 - 20 Exultation

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.

	6	4						9
			3				2	
7					5	8	1	
	7							
9		6						3
	5		8				4	
	4							
8	3		9		5			6
					2	7		

SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

N	O	T	R	U	M	P	T	U	N	A	S
O	H	N	O	I	A	S					
S	K	I	M	P	S	E	L	F	I	S	H
E	N	R	S	L	V	E					
D	I	A	L	O	G	U	E	F	E	A	R
I	V	M	D								
B	A	R	R	E	D	C	M	E	D	L	E
I	N	B	C	I							
S	I	D	E	F	R	I	T	B	A	T	
Q	R	M	E	P	E						
U	N	I	F	O	R	M					
E	L	O	E	R	I	V	A				
P	L	O	T	N	I	R	V	A			

SUDOKU

6	2	3	5	9	8	7	1	4
8	4	9	7	2	1	6	3	5
5	7	1	3	6	4	9	8	2
1	6	8	2	4	9	5	7	3
9	5	7	8	1	3	2	4	6
2	3	4	6	5	7	8	9	1
7	9	2	4	3	6	1	5	8
3	1	5	9	8	2	4	6	7
4	8	6	1	7	5	3	2	9

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

DEITIES FLAUNT GOLDEN ATTIRE

AGENCIES

Puri, June 29: Lakhs of devotees Thursday thronged this seaside town of Odisha for a glimpse of Lord Jagannath and his divine siblings, Lord Balabhadra and Devi Subhadra's ceremonial 'Suna Beshha' or golden attire on chariots, a day after Bahuda Jatra or the return car festival.

According to the Hindu almanac, 'Suna Beshha' of the deities is conducted on the occasion of Asadha Shukla Ekadashi Tithi on chariots. This ritual is held every year a day after the deities return from Gundicha Temple, considered to be birthplace of Lord Jagannath.

The Trinity glittered on their chariots parked at the 'Singhadwar' of the 12th century shrine here. The deities were decorated with ornaments weighing around 208 kg of gold, said Bhaskar Mishra, a researcher in Jagannath culture.

Pundit Suryanarayan Rathsharma, a Sanskrit scholar,

'Open Ratna Bhandar'

Jagannath Swainmohapatra, the chief caretaker of Lord Jagannath's idol, demanded opening of the inner chamber of the Ratna Bhandar. He said the deities were being adorned with old ornaments while unused ornaments are stored in the inner chamber. "The deities could have over 10 sets of ornaments if the inner chamber gold is used," Swainmohapatra said.

said the ritual of 'Suna Beshha' began during the rule of King Kapilendra Deb in AD 1460 after he brought huge quantities of gold and other valuable ornaments by defeating certain states in southern India.

"I have seen some golden crowns of kings stored in the inner chamber of Ratna Bhandar, the treasury of the temple. This indicates that then king had brought crowns of different kings after defeating them in battles," said former administrator of the temple, Rabi Narayan Mishra.

Rathsharma said the then

king had brought 16 cartloads of gold to Puri and donated it to the temple, which were later designed in Utkal style ornaments.

Bhaskar Mishra said the priests required about one hour to decorate the deities with the golden attire.

Among the ornaments used were 'Sri Hasta' (gold hands), 'Sri Payara' (gold feet), 'Sri Mukuta' (gold crown) and 'Sri Chulapati' (head band), he said, adding that no diamond is used for security reasons as it is held outside the temple. Mishra said the gold ornaments used in 'Suna Beshha' are stored in the outer chamber of the Ratna Bhandar while more such precious gold, diamonds, stones and others are stored in the inner chamber of the treasury. The Puri deities undergo 'Suna Beshha' or 'Rajarajeswara Beshha' on three other occasions such as Dussehra, Kartik Purnima and Dola Purnima.

Later in the day, the temple administration allowed darshan of the deities till 12 in the mid-night.



OP PHOTOS

Centre writes to CM for STR protection

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 29: Following the killing of two forest officials by poachers in protected Similipal Tiger Reserve (STR), Union Forest, Environment and Climate Change Minister Bhupendra Yadav has written a letter to Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik suggesting measures for protection of the tiger reserve.

Stating that the killing of the one-duty forest officials is a matter of immense concern, Yadav said a high-level team led by the director general of forests visited the STR and submitted a detailed report highlighting issues requiring immediate attention for compliance.

"I would like to state that utmost efforts are required to be in place for stepping up intelligence network, patrolling, combing operation to contain any such attempt which could further escalate the situation in Similipal Tiger Reserve," suggested the Union minister.

He said STR is one of im-

portant tiger ranges, which is harbouring the unique melanistic tiger or black tiger.

To ensure protection of the tiger and well-being of the forest frontline force in tiger bearing landscapes, it is necessary to make concerted efforts to uphold tiger conservation initiatives, Yadav said.

He was confident that the Chief Minister's Office (CMO) would take note of the concern raised and issue directives to all authorities concerned in the state to ensure utmost vigil and compliance.

Yadav also assured co-operation and continued support from the Centre to the state for the cause of wildlife conservation and forest frontline brave-hearts.

Notably, Mathi Hansda, 45, a forester, was killed during an exchange of fire between poachers and forest officials June 16 late night. Earlier, Bimal Kumar Jena, a 35-year-old forest guard, was shot dead by a group of poachers at Similipal Tiger Reserve May 22 night.

Naveen speaks to Tripura CM over Bahuda mishap

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 29: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Thursday spoke to Tripura Chief Minister Manik Saha over telephone and expressed his deep grief over the tragic mishap that led to loss of lives during Bahuda Jatra in the north-eastern state.

The Chief Minister extended his heartfelt condolences to the family members of the victims. He said that he and the people of Odisha stand strongly with the people of Tripura during this hour of grief. Patnaik also wished for early recovery of the injured persons.

Patnaik offered the Tripura government all kinds of support required. He has also sent director of Odisha Mo Parivar Dilip

Kumar Routray to Tripura for necessary assistance.

He also expressed deep grief over the death of three people in Kendua village of Keonjhar district and one person in Kolab township of Koraput district during Bauda Jatra Wednesday and announced ex gratia of Rs 3 lakh for the next of kin of the deceased. The Chief Minister has ordered to provide free medical treatment to the injured and wished them speedy recovery.

Notably, seven people died and 16 others sustained injuries after being electrocuted during the Ulta Rath Jatra in Tripura's Unakoti district Wednesday afternoon. Seven people including two children died of electrocution as the chariot of Lord Jagannath grazed a high-tension wire.

Dharmendra unveils book on Fakirmohan

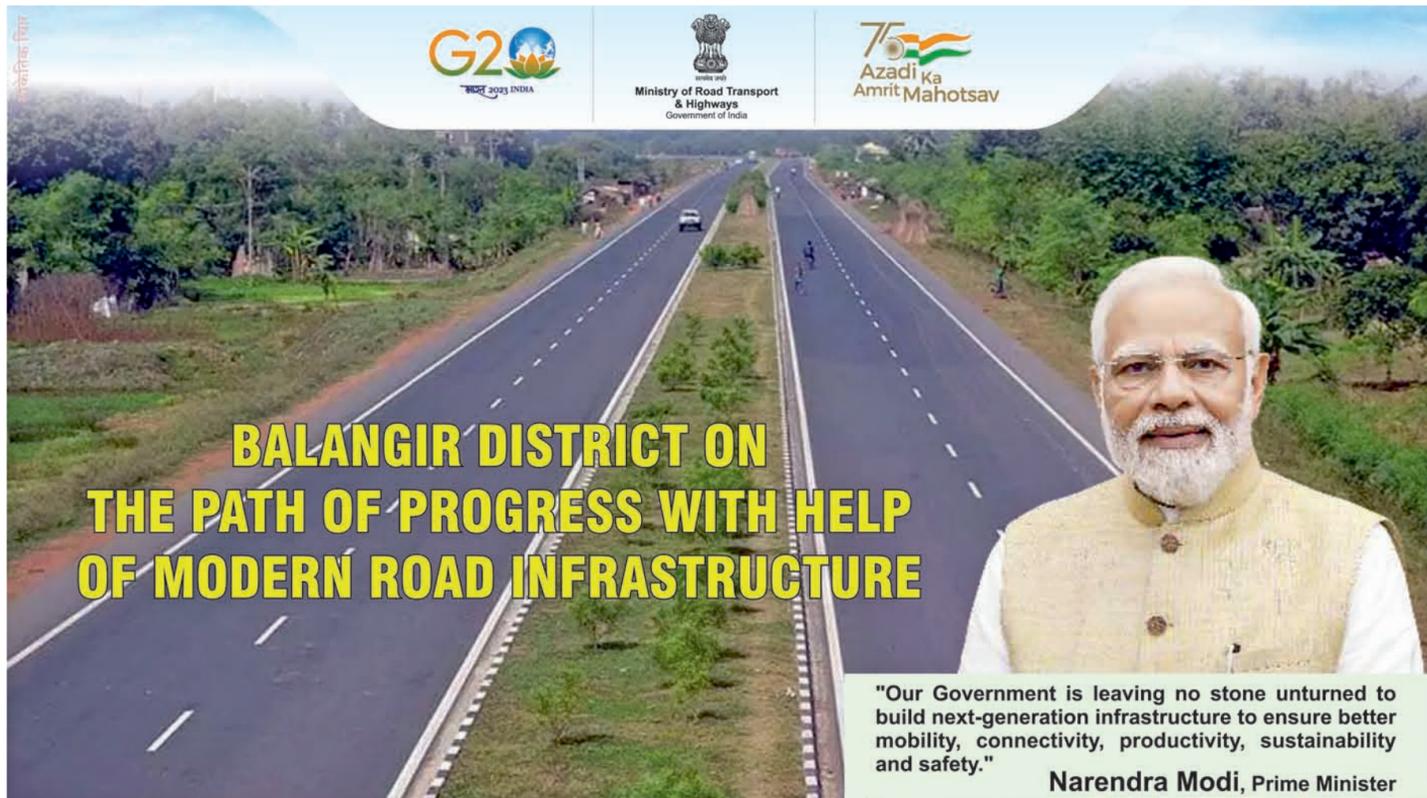
New Delhi: Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan unveiled a book titled 'Fakirmohan Senapati: The Making of an Author' at the Constitutional Club here, Thursday. The book, which details several aspects of the writer's life, is co-authored by Debendra Kumar Dash and Dipti Ranjan Pattanaik. Pradhan said Fakirmohan was a prominent social activist and writer of 19th century. Senapati's thoughts are very relevant in contemporary world and they should be spread among the masses. The occasion was graced by BJD MP Bhartruhari Mahtab and other Odia dignitaries.

Ex-min bats for OBC, SEBC quota

Bhubaneswar: Former Union minister Srikant Jena wrote a letter to the chairman of National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC), Hansraj Gangaram Ahir Thursday regarding the alleged negligence of Odisha government towards providing reservations to Other Backward Class (OBC) and SEBC communities in higher education and government jobs.









"Our Government is leaving no stone unturned to build next-generation infrastructure to ensure better mobility, connectivity, productivity, sustainability and safety."
Narendra Modi, Prime Minister

CONSTRUCTION OF BALANGIR TOWN BYPASS WITH INVESTMENT OF ₹ 430 CRORE

BENEFIT OF THE PROJECT

With construction of 12 km long bypass to Balangir town, congestion will be reduced and movement will be seamless

Better connectivity towards Kesinga and Bargarh from NH 57

3 RoBs, 2 flyovers and 7 under passes in the bypass will ensure uninterrupted & safe movement

Reduction in pollution and savings in time & fuel

Laying of Foundation Stone
by

NITIN GADKARI

Union Minister of Road Transport & Highways,
Government of India

(through video conferencing)

Friday, 30th June 2023 | 11:30 AM | Bijakhman, Balangir, Odisha

in august presence of

Prafulla Kumar Mallik
Minister Steel, Mines & Works, Odisha

Sangeeta Kumari Singh Deo
MP, Lok Sabha, Balangir

Niranjan Bishi
MP, Rajya Sabha

Narsingha Mishra
MLA, Balangir, Odisha

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• लगभग 10 लाख टन कार्बन डाई ऑक्साइड उत्सर्जन में कमी से पर्यावरण संरक्षण
इसलिए FASTag अपनाएं... और देशहित में अपना योगदान दें...

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5T Secy reviews devpt works in Jagatsinghpur



ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, June 29: As per the directions of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, 5T Secretary VK Pandian visited Jagatsinghpur district Thursday to review the progress of various developmental works in the district and redressal of public grievances.

He visited Siali sea beach in Ersama block and assured that measures for prevention of soil erosion under Siali sea beach conservation project would be considered on priority basis at a cost of ₹40 crore.

Pandian mentioned about the super cyclone that caused devastation in Ersama block and how the Chief Minister's determination led to strengthen state's disaster management system. He interacted with the public, heard their grievances and assured them of

Pandian offered puja at Kunjabihari temple of Gadakujanga and interacted with sebayats, temple committee members and local public regarding preparation of DPR for temple development and facilities for the pilgrims.

Then he visited BB High School, covered under 5T HST programme in 1st phase, interacted with the students and teachers regarding 5T high school transformation initiatives. He encouraged the students to keep working to fulfil their goals and aspirations.

At school ground, he interacted with local public and heard their grievances and assured them of timely redressal. Then he proceeded to Nabakrushna Choudhury stadium in Jagatsinghpur and interacted with WSHG Members, MBKs, Bank Mitras, CRPs and other local public and heard their grievances.

Pandian interacted with the students of the degree colleges, higher secondary schools and sanskrit colleges at SVM Autonomous College ground. He informed about the Chief Minister's approval of ₹32.50 crore for the development of 70 colleges and higher secondary schools including sanskrit colleges under 5T transformation.

timely redressal.

He visited Mission Shakti port side container sales and café in Paradeep and interacted with the operating groups. He appreciated the innovative Mission Shakti projects, encouraged the group members and assured them support from the government for further extension of marketing facility.

Pandian then proceeded to Biju convention centre and interacted with members of women self help group (WSHG) and urban local bodies (ULBs).

During his visit to ITI, he interacted with the students and emphasised upon skill-based practical learning and placement of students.

He also visited Jiban Jyoti terracotta producer group at Fatepur under Kujanga block and appreciated the various products being made for the consumers.



EVICTON DRIVE: Excavators deployed by BDA razing down unauthorised constructions near Baramunda Inter-State Bus Terminal area in Bhubaneswar, Thursday

PROMOTING MILLETS

OMM seeks cooperation of hotels & restaurants

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, June 29: To brainstorm and develop strategies to promote millets in diet, Odisha Millets Mission (OMM) Thursday organised a consultative meeting with the Hotel and Restaurant Association of Odisha (HRAO).

Representatives from several City hotels, along with others members of HRAO, joined the meeting, which also saw participation of FICCI members and representatives from the Tourism department.

Welcoming the participants, Agriculture and Farmers Empowerment principal secretary Arabinda Padhee said that by promoting millets, hotels can play a role in improving the livelihoods of small and marginal farmers and women from the self-help groups (SHGs).

Padhee urged HRAO members to take part in the international convention on millets that the state government is planning to organise on the occasion of Millet Day, November 10, 2023. In his address, the principal secretary repeatedly emphasised the crucial role of



HRAO members as stakeholders in the Odisha Millets Mission.

HRAO executive secretary KK Rao shared that several hotels have already started organising special millet buffets. "Things will improve once the demand increases among consumers," he said.

Making some suggestions to scale up millets' use, HRAO members said that a framework and standard operating protocols for preparation of millet recipes should be developed for the reference of hotels. "This will help hotels to standardise their products more effectively. A recipe bank for traditional and modern millet recipes should be prepared and shared widely. In addition,

massive awareness campaigns on health benefits of millets can be taken up by the government," said an HRAO member.

Agriculture & Food Production director Prem Chandra Chaudhury proposed that millet food festivals can be organised in collaboration with HRAO members. "Millet snacks can be placed in the hotel rooms. Information brochures on advantages of millets can be placed in the rooms of the guests. Video clips can also be played in hotels to create more awareness among the guests," he said.

OMM is also engaging doctors, dieticians and others to create more awareness about millets, he added.

ODM adjudged 'Best Edu Brand'

ARINDAM GANGULY

Bhubaneswar, June 29: ODM Public School was adjudged as the 'best education brand-2023' among various renowned educational institutions of India at a ceremony held in New Delhi.

Many reputed educational institutes participated in a conclave organised by one of the leading national newspapers, Tourism & Higher Education Minister of Nagaland Temjen Inna presented a trophy and citation to the ODM Educational Foundation chairman Satyabrata Minaketan.



Speaking on this occasion, Minaketan expressed his gratitude to the members of the school managing committee, teachers as well as the students for their contribution to the field of education. He said the school will continue to prove its excellence in the days to come.

BMC bolsters dengue preparedness

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, June 29: Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) has taken proactive measures to combat dengue as part of its robust preparedness strategy.

The BMC Commissioner Vijay Amruta Kulange presided over a dengue prevention awareness meeting held at the Ekamra hall of BMC headquarters. In the meeting, it was emphasised that a collective effort involving doctors, health officers, sanitary inspectors, ward officers, anganwadi workers, Asha workers and sanitation workers is crucial to ef-

fectively tackle dengue.

The focus is on raising awareness from school students to citizens, particularly at the grassroots level.

In order to monitor the situation closely, each ward will establish an observation committee.

This committee will oversee various areas within the ward, including citizen residences, roofs, and potential breeding grounds such as waterlogging areas, tire servicing shops, fallen garbage cans, flower pots on rooftops, wells, and water tanks, Kulange said.

The Commissioner underlined the importance of vigi-

lant monitoring and swift action by volunteers and workers affiliated with the health department, BMC, women and child development, residential associations, self-help groups (SHGs), and ward core committees.

If any mosquito breeding is observed in waterlogging areas, bushes, or heavily grassed areas, immediate attention and cleaning measures should be undertaken. The Commissioner emphasised that this matter should be taken seriously. The Commissioner has issued directives to implement five key measures in the fight against dengue.

Naveen pays tribute to PC Mahalanobis

Bhubaneswar: On National Statistics Day, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik reaffirmed his government's commitment to use reliable data and methods in governance processes, as he paid tribute to PC Mahalanobis, considered to be the 'father of statistics' in India, on his birth anniversary. Through his official social media account, the CM said, "Humble tributes to PC Mahalanobis on his birth anniversary, celebrated as National Statistics Day. He contributed immensely in the field of statistics and economic planning. Reiterate commitment to use transparent and trustworthy data for better planning and governance." National Sample Survey Office (field operations division) under the Central Statistics and Programme Implementation Ministry in City observed the "Statistics Day" as it does every year. Deputy director general Srinivas Uppala welcomed all guests and students from various colleges and universities of the City.

Sweetener in Diet Coke cancer-causing!

One of the world's most common artificial sweeteners is set to be declared a possible carcinogen next month by a leading global health body, according to two sources with knowledge of the process, pitting it against the food industry and regulators.

Aspartame, used in products from Coca-Cola diet sodas to Mars' Extra chewing gum and some Snapple drinks, will be listed in July as "possibly carcinogenic to humans" for the first time by the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), the World Health Organization's (WHO) cancer research arm, the sources said. The IARC ruling, finalised earlier this month after a meeting of the group's external experts, is intended to assess whether something is a potential hazard or not, based on all the published evidence.

It does not take into account how much of a product a person can safely consume. This advice for individuals comes from a separate WHO expert committee on food additives, known as JECFA (the Joint WHO and Food and Agriculture Organization's Expert Committee on Food Additives), alongside determinations from national regulators.

However, similar IARC rulings in the past for different substances have raised concerns among consumers about their use, led to lawsuits, and pressured manufacturers to recreate recipes and switch to alternatives. That has led to criticism



that the IARC's assessments can be confusing to the public.

JECFA, the WHO committee on additives, is also reviewing aspartame use this year. Its meeting began at the end of June and it is due to announce its findings on the same day that the IARC makes public its decision - July 14.

Since 1981, JECFA has said aspartame is safe to consume within accepted daily limits. For example, an adult weighing 60 kg (132 pounds) would have to drink between 12 and 36 cans of diet soda - depending on the amount of aspartame in the beverage - every day to be at risk. Its view has been widely shared by national regulators, including in the United States and Europe.

An IARC spokesperson said both the IARC and JECFA committees' findings were confidential until July, but added they were "complementary," with IARC's conclusion representing "the first fundamental step to understand carcinogenicity." The additives committee "conducts risk assessment, which

determines the probability of a specific type of harm (eg, cancer) to occur under certain conditions and levels of exposure."

However, industry and regulators fear that holding both processes at around the same time could be confusing, according to letters from U.S. and Japanese regulators seen by Reuters.

The IARC's rulings can have huge impact. In 2015, its committee concluded that glyphosate is "probably carcinogenic." Years later, even as other bodies like the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) contested this, companies were still feeling the effects of the decision. Germany's Bayer in 2021 lost its third appeal against US court verdicts that awarded damages to customers blaming their cancers on use of its glyphosate-based weedkillers.

The IARC's decisions have also faced criticism for sparking needless alarm over hard to avoid substances or situations. It has previously put working overnight and consuming red meat into its "probably cancer-

causing" class, and using mobile phones as "possibly cancer-causing," similar to aspartame.

"IARC is not a food safety body and their review of aspartame is not scientifically comprehensive and is based heavily on widely discredited research," Frances Hunt-Wood, the secretary general of the International Sweeteners Association (ISA), said.

Aspartame has been extensively studied for years. Last year, an observational study in France among 1, 00,000 adults showed that people who consumed larger amounts of artificial sweeteners - including aspartame - had a slightly higher cancer risk.

It followed a study from the Ramazzini Institute in Italy in the early 2000s, which reported that some cancers in mice and rats were linked to aspartame.

However, the first study could not prove that aspartame caused the increased cancer risk, and questions have been raised about the methodology of the second study, including by EFSA, which assessed it.

Aspartame is authorised for use globally by regulators who have reviewed all the available evidence, and major food and beverage makers have for decades defended their use of the ingredient. The IARC said it had assessed 1,300 studies in its June review.

Recent recipe tweaks by soft drinks giant Pepsico demonstrate the struggle the industry has when it comes to balancing taste preferences with health concerns. REUTERS

Lalchnd Jewellers' offer on 'Simply Beautiful' collection

POST NEWS NETWORK

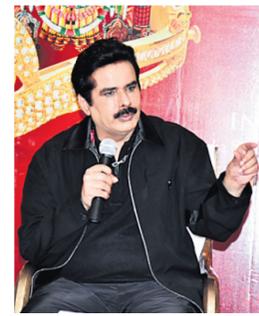
Bhubaneswar, June 29: As the monsoon season graces us with its breathtaking beauty, Odisha's leading and most trusted jewellery brand - Lalchnd Jewellers - has unveiled an exclusive collection of jewellery that perfectly captures the essence of this enchanting time.

In a press meet Thursday at a City hotel, Lalchnd Jewellers unveiled the most captivating jewellery range of the year - the 'Simply Beautiful' collection.

Speaking on this occasion, founder chairman of the Lalchnd Group Sunjoy Hans said, "For 35 years, Lalchnd has been the most trusted jewellery brand of Odisha. The quality of products and customer service, along with reasonable rates, low-making charges and market-beating discounts, continues to distinguish Lalchnd from other jewellers."

"Usually, the jewellery market makes the offers exciting to attract its customers. However, most of the time, it has hidden conditions and charges which are not known to the customers. Lalchnd, on the other hand, keeps all its offers clean and transparent and without any conditions. This is also one of the major factors that set us apart" he said.

Our brand value is the highest in our industry because we offer - without exception - HUID gold ornaments, certified diamond and the finest silver jewellery in all our



Sunjoy Hans

showrooms, he added. Lalchnd is offering some unbeatable deals on making charges of jewellery at all of its showrooms in Bhubaneswar, Cuttack and Berhampur.

The joy of adorning yourself with gold will be more than ever as Lalchnd is offering the lowest making charges - flat ₹699/gm - on all HUID certified gold ornaments. To thrills die-hard fans of diamond jewellery, Lalchnd Jewellers is giving a flat 25 per cent off on diamond value.

With a flat 15 per cent off on select international branded watches at all Lalchnd Jewellery showrooms, there is no better time than now to get one of classy timepieces that everyone aspires to.

Lovers of silver also have much to cheer about as Lalchnd Jewellers is offering a flat 15 per cent off on branded silver items and an incredible 50 per cent off on the making charges of silver ornaments.

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NO LET-UP IN INCURSION BIDS

POLITICKLE by MANJUL

After Kotia, Andhra eyes Nandapur block

POST NEWS NETWORK

Nandapur, June 29: There is no let-up in expansionism bid on Odisha territory by neighbouring Andhra Pradesh as it has now targeted Nandapur block in Koraput district after Kotia panchayat, a report said Thursday.

The matter came to the fore after Andhra officials were seen straying into Golor Raipahad village in Golor panchayat under Nandapur block on the fringe and going all out to woo the villagers through implementation of developmental works. Observers alleged that Andhra officials are infiltrating into Odisha territory due to laxity and neglect of the district administration in the villages situated on the borders.

The officials were also found helping villagers get their Aadhaar cards, ration cards, voter identity cards done as well as open bank accounts and get their passbooks.

Reportedly, they even wooed the villagers by arranging power connection and drinking water supply to the village and helped at least six families get houses under Centre-sponsored Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY).

The beneficiaries were identified as Mushuri Khara, Hantal Suresh, Pangi Raju, Raja Rao



Andhra officials stray into Golor Raipahad village under Nandapur block and make all-out effort to woo the villagers through implementation of developmental works

Out-of-turn assistance and facilities by Andhra officials have impressed the villagers as they were all praise for the latter

Hantal, Enkat Rao Khil and Khara Subhash in the village. The identified beneficiaries were given the work order and first installment of ₹40,000 for construction of their houses under PMAY scheme, it was learnt.

The out of turn help by Andhra officials has impressed the villagers as they were all praise for the latter. Reports said, the identified beneficiaries have also started building their houses after receiving the work order and first installment of ₹40,000.

Meanwhile, around 17 families residing in Raipahad village have alleged that officials of Nandapur block had collected necessary documents from them

after assuring to include their names under Awas Yojana. All the villagers are from the same category but the block officials have only enlisted the names of three persons to get houses under the scheme.

They alleged while Odisha government is neglecting them while the neighbouring Andhra government is inviting and including their names under the housing scheme. Moreover, they have received the first installment of ₹40,000 which is quite reassuring. This has helped them in starting construction of their houses.

Odisha officials take stock
Meanwhile, after publication

of report in a premier vernacular daily, a team from Nandapur block visited Raipahad village and took stock of the situation.

The team comprising BDO Sujit Mishra, tehsildar Narsingh Gadba, additional tehsildar Seemanchal Patra, assistant executive engineer Jhasaketa Behera, GPEO Vedant Majhi and RWSS engineer Rabindranath Marndi interacted with the villagers and assured them to apprise the district administration and state government about their problems.

The villagers also informed that the Andhra officials, engineers and public representatives are repeatedly coming to their village and luring them with various offerings and provisions.

The office of the Koraput Collector in a letter-397/2023, RESS, dated June 27 to district Collector of Aluri Sitharaman district in Andhra Pradesh asked him to put an end to such illegalities by constructing PMAY houses in the village.

The Koraput Collector also urged his counterpart to settle the border dispute by holding a meeting of the officials of two districts. He also informed that the local sub-collector and Nandapur block officials will represent Koraput district on the day when the borders will be demarcated.



Landslide at Laxmi Dunguri affects vehicle movement

PNN & AGENCIES

Sambalpur, June 29: Torrential rain during the last four days triggered a landslide again in Laxmi Dunguri at the entrance of Sambalpur city on NH-53 connecting Kolkata and Mumbai, Thursday.

The four-lane National Highway also connects other major cities like Raipur, Nagpur, Kharagpur via Sambalpur and hence got its national importance from a communication point of view.



But frequent landslides from the huge Laxmi Dunguri (hill) have affected the smooth movement of vehicles.

In order to get a permanent solution, the NHAI has prepared

For a permanent solution, the NHAI has prepared a DPR for a tunnel on NH-53 at Laxmi Dunguri

a DPR for a tunnel on NH-53 at Laxmi Dunguri.

The NHAI project director based at Sambalpur Nageswar Rao said they had prepared a fresh DPR and the work will be started and completed within six months once it is approved.



CIVIC WOES: A tractor driver negotiating a waterlogged road in front of the main gate of the district Collectorate, after a heavy downpour in Sambalpur, Thursday

2 youths critical in bear attacks

POST NEWS NETWORK

Nilgiri, June 29: Two youths sustained critical injuries in separate incidents of wild bear attack under this block in Balasore district, Thursday.

The injured youths were identified as Kartik Barik and Jagannath Dandapat of Karanjia village under Kansh panchayat in the block. The two were rescued and admitted to Nilgiri hospital for treatment.

As per reports, Barik was attacked by a wild bear moving outside after he opened the door and came out of his house early morning, Thursday. The animal left him injured and ran away when the family members raised an alarm. Barik sustained critical injuries on his face, head, chest and limbs in the attack.

In the second incident, Dandapata was going to the Some river when a bear attacked him. Left with no other option, he jumped into the river water following which the animal left him and fled.

Safety Park with safety 'mantra' inaugurated

Rourkela: Safety remains one of the most important 'mantras' of a successful industrial house. Keeping this in mind, Rourkela Steel Plant (RSP) went on to create a pioneering Safety Park which was inaugurated recently by PK Sahoo, ED (Projects) at the ongoing project site of Caster-IV in the Steel Melting Shop-II (SMS-II) department of SAIL, RSP. This park is a display area that innovatively showcases standard procedures, dos and don'ts, and various safety, fire, and life-saving equipment. It features demonstrations of fall protection arrangements, height rig structures, fire-fighting equipment, hand protection, eye protection, foot protection personal protective equipment (PPEs), and more. The primary objective of establishing the Safety Park is to raise awareness among employees about the proper usage of different PPE, safe operation of construction equipment, and effective utilisation of safety and life-saving devices for secure execution of construction activities. The Safety Park will primarily benefit contractual employees deployed at the project site. Following their induction training, workers will be taken to the Safety Park, where they will receive comprehensive explanations about the equipment and the appropriate use of relevant PPEs and life-saving devices.



STP project for Koel Nagar shelved

Initially designed to accommodate a population of over 15,000, Koel Nagar now has a burgeoning population of over 25,000. The existing sewage system is crumbling at this moment

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, June 29: The proposed sewage treatment plant (STP) at Koel Nagar has been scrapped. "If it has to be done, then everything has to begin from scratch," said a senior official of the civic body governing the Steel City.

The proposed plant was part of the Smart City project. Koel Nagar, one of the best planned residential projects, was developed by Rourkela Steel Plant (RSP) for its retiring employees and was among the first residential facilities in the state to have own underground sewage system. According to the original plan, over 2,500 houses were constructed. However, the number went up considerably when the owners added further floors. So, the sewage system, initially designed to accommodate a population of over 15,000, now has a burgeoning population of over 25,000. And this has put pressure on the initial underground system and eventually jamming of sewers and over flowing became rampant.

When the Smart City status was awarded to Rourkela, Koel Nagar was included in the project as a satellite area. And this STP was part of

Four STPs were part of the Smart City project. The main STP was constructed at Balughat area on the bank of Brahmani

this project. Four STPs were part of the Smart City project. The main STP was constructed at Balughat area on the bank of Brahmani. The Bondhamunda STP was shelved first. The Koel Nagar project was taken up simultaneously. The site for the plant was identified near the 'C' block, and this huge patch of land was part of the areas that were surrendered by RSP to the government. With passage of time, a large inhabitation, illegal, has come up on the said land. So, when administration started earmarking the exact area in 2016, it faced stiff resistance from the encroachers.

However, the STP project was not shelved then and was kept in abeyance for some time. Negotiations and other backdoor methods were used. Even influential tribal leaders were asked to intervene. But, the disputes did not resolve on this land.

When questioned in this regard, RMC deputy commissioner Sudhansu Bhoi said, "The project has been shelved. If anything has to be done, then it has to start from scratch."

The shelving was further confirmed by superintendent engineer of Rourkela Sewerage Board S Dakua. "Only the Balughat STP is operational and the rest, at Koel Nagar and Bondhamunda have been shelved."

Reacting to this, BJP state spokesperson Dhiren Senapaty said, "This shows the callous attitude of the administration and also the politicians. When Jagda, from where the BJD led during last election, could have its own water supply system despite stiff opposition from the local tribals, then why the same thing could not be repeated here. The reason is the party trailed to us in the last election."

The existing system is crumbling at this moment. "The municipality is only recasting the damaged manholes but the underground pipes are unable to discharge the amount of waste flowing through them. Besides, the pipes are getting jammed at many places for many reasons. "The situation is alarming and no one is really bothered about it," said an employee of RMC who did not want to be named.



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It is hereby informed to General Public that we are going to conduct public E-Auction through website <https://bankauctions.in/> & <https://cholamandalam.com/news/auction-notices>

Sl. No.	Account No. and Name of the Borrower / Co-borrower / Mortgagee	Date & Amount as per Demand Notice U/s. 13(2)	Description of the Secured Assets (Immovable Property)	a) Reserve Price (RP) b) Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) c) Bid Increment Amt.	a) E-Auction Date and Time b) EMD Submission Last Date c) Inspection Date d) Date of Possession (Status of Possession)
1.	Loan A/c. No. : X0HECU00003066709 Borrower / Co-borrower / Mortgagee : 1. Basant Kumar Ojha 2. Ranjeeta Ojha Both are at : Plot No. 778, Tala Sahi, Jagamura, Bhubaneswar, Pin - 751 030. 3. M/s. Sindoor Shoes Shop Plot No. 543, Jagamura, Bhubaneswar, Pin - 751 030.	09.07.2021 Rs. 31,32,458.26 as on 09.07.2021	All that piece and parcel of the property situated at District - Kurda, Tahasil - Bhubaneswar SRO-Khandagiri, P.S. - New Capital, P.S. No. 38, Mouza - Bhubaneswar Sahara Unit No. 20 Jagamura, Settlement Khata No. 514, Plot No. 778 area Ac. 0.036 Dec out of area Ac. 0.108 Dec with status-Sitiban, Kisan - Gharabari-2 (Homestead) Bounded by : North by - Sarath Chandra Ojha, South by - Road, East by - Sarath Chandra Ojha, West by - Plot Nos. 2662 and 2663.	a) Rs. 78,00,000.00 b) Rs. 7,80,000.00 c) Rs. 50,000.00	a) 03.08.2023 (11.00 A.M. to 1.00 P.M.) (with unlimited extension of 5 min) b) 02.08.2023 (up to 5.00 P.M.) c) 26.07.2023 & 27.07.2023 (10.00 A.M. to 1.00. P.M.) d) 09.03.2022 (Symbolic Possession)
2.	Loan A/c. Nos. : X0HEBU00002833640, X0HEBU00003034261 and HE02BH000000002269 Borrower / Co-borrower / Mortgagee : 1. Susil Kumar Mohanty Mukundaprasad, P. N. College, Khorda, Odisha, Khurda, Pin - 752 057. 2. M/s. Sarada Enterprises Plot No. 182.3577, Kh No. 526.1380, Mukundaprasad, P.N. College, Khurda, Pin - 752 057. 3. Sunil Kumar Mohanty Plot No. 182.3577, Kh No. 526.1380, Mukundaprasad, P.N. College, Khurda, Pin - 752 057. 4. Anil Kumar Mohanty Plot No. 182.3577, P. N. College, Mukundaprasad Bazar, Khorda, Khurda, Pin - 752 057. 5. Minarva Mohanty Mukundaprasad, P. N. College, Khorda, Odisha, Khurda, Pin - 752 057.	11.03.2022 Rs. 29,83,257.86 as on 10.03.2022	Dist - Khurda, Tahasil - Khurda, P.S. - Khurda No. 118, Mouza - Mukundaprasad, Khata No. 526/1320, Plot No. 182/3577 Area, Ac. 0.036 dcs, having Kissan - Gharabari and bounded by : On the North- Raghunath Sahu, On the South - Bauri Bandhu Behera, On the East - Road, On the West - Sakji Prasad Jena.	a) Rs. 45,00,000.00 b) Rs. 4,50,000.00 c) Rs. 25,000.00	a) 03.08.2023 (11.00 A.M. to 1.00 P.M.) (with unlimited extension of 5 min) b) 02.08.2023 (up to 5.00 P.M.) c) 26.07.2023 & 27.07.2023 (10.00 A.M. to 1.00. P.M.) d) 19.05.2022 (Symbolic Possession)

1. All interested participants / bidders are requested to visit the website <https://bankauctions.in/> & <https://cholamandalam.com/news/auction-notices>. For details, help, procedure and online training on E-auction prospective bidders may contact M/s. 4 Closure; Contact : Jaya Prakash Reddy, Contact No.: 81420 0064, Mr. Muhammed Rahees, Contact No. : 81240 00030, E-mail ID : info@bankauctions.in, Odisha Contact No. : 98365 22775, 98787 44193.

2. For further details on terms and conditions please visit <https://bankauctions.in/> & <https://cholamandalam.com/news/auction-notices> to take part in E-auction.

THIS IS ALSO A STATUTORY 30 DAYS SALE NOTICE UNDER RULE 8(6) OF SECURITY INTEREST (ENFORCEMENT RULES 2002)

Date : 30.06.2023
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Change yourself if you wish to change the world.
THE MOTHER



AI Socialism

Friedrich von Hayek is best known for his influential 1944 polemic *The Road to Serfdom*. But his most celebrated work in economics is "The Use of Knowledge in Society," a rather short article on how society uses and acquires dispersed information about economic fundamentals such as preferences, priorities, and productivity.

The article develops a powerful critique of central planning, arguing that no centralised authority can adequately collect and process "the dispersed bits of incomplete and frequently contradictory knowledge which all the separate individuals possess." Without knowing each individual's preferences among millions of products, let alone their ideas about where to use their talents most productively and creatively, central planners are bound to fail.

By contrast, market economies can process and aggregate such information both efficiently and effectively. Price signals seamlessly convey data about market participants' priorities and preferences. When tin becomes scarcer, its price rises, and Hayek explains, all that "users of tin need to know is that some of the tin they used to consume is now more profitably employed elsewhere and that, in consequence, they must economize tin."

Nor is this just about processing existing data. The market system, Hayek argues, is also better at discovering – or even producing – new, relevant signals: "the 'data' from which the economic calculus starts are never for the whole society 'given' to a single mind which could work out the implications and can never be so given."

Although Hayek is celebrated for offering a knowledge-based (or "computational") critique of central planning, his arguments are best understood as a call for decentralisation more broadly. He notes that, "If we can agree that the economic problem of society is mainly one of rapid adaptation to changes... the ultimate decisions must be left to the people who are familiar with these circumstances." Ultimately, Hayek concludes, "We must solve it by some form of decentralization" – namely, through the market economy and the price system.

For decades, Hayek's arguments provided the basis for rejecting all kinds of regulation. If any regulation of economic activity (such as measures governing the release of new products) or of prices (such as caps or controls) interferes with the functioning of the price system, they will hamper the decentralised process of adaptation to an ever-changing world.

But now, artificial intelligence – especially generative AI models that encode, process, and deploy (via hundreds of billions of parameters) massive amounts of pre-existing information – raises two challenges for Hayek's argument.

First, given AI's ability to absorb, organise, and interpret data on a massive scale, one might wonder if it could render central planning more efficient than today's market systems. Such is the hope behind "AI socialism" (or "fully automated luxury communism"): AI will give central planners the means to determine optimal and (supposedly) benevolent economic allocations.

But while AI socialism is an interesting thought experiment, it offers only a superficial critique of Hayek. Even if an AI could do all the computations and data collection that the market economy already does (a very big if), the concentration of power in the hands of a central authority would be a major cause for concern.

The famine that killed five million Ukrainians in the early 1930s was not the result of Stalin failing to compute the right allocations. On the contrary, he had sufficient information, and he used it to extract as much grain as possible from the region (owing to larger political motivations and possibly a desire to devastate Ukraine).

Moreover, Hayek's criticism of central planning goes beyond crunching the existing numbers. As we have seen, it is primarily focused on adaptation to change, and thus emphasises the creation of information as much as its use. "The sort of knowledge with which I have been concerned," Hayek writes, "is knowledge of the kind which by its nature cannot enter into statistics." The implication is that not even an all-powerful large language model (LLM) could deal with the true nature of dispersed information. But AI also poses a second, deeper challenge to Hayek's arguments. In the age of generative AIs like ChatGPT-4, should we even presume that markets will facilitate the decentralised use of information? The technology's development is being led by Alphabet (Google) and Microsoft, two massive corporations that are very much in the business of centralising information. Even if other companies can compete with this duopoly, LLMs, by their nature, may require high degrees of centralisation. It is all too easy to imagine a scenario in which a large share of humanity gets its information from the same model.

Of course, Google or Microsoft's control of information is not the same as that of the Communist Party of China. But, as Simon Johnson and I argue in our new book, *Power and Progress: Our Thousand-Year Struggle over Technology and Prosperity*, even seemingly benign forms of centralisation bring myriad economic and political costs, depending on who is ultimately in control. In the United States, these costs include rising monopolisation of the tech sector, because control of data creates entry barriers, and the development of business models based on constant online engagement and individualised digital ads, which breed emotional outrage, extremism, and echo chambers online, with damaging effects for democratic participation.

Decentralisation therefore is still desirable. But to foster it in the age of AI, we may need to turn Hayek's argument on its head – or at least on its side – by embracing regulation, rather than focusing solely on its potential costs.

The writer is Professor of Economics at MIT.
@PROJECT SYNDICATE



Daron Acemoglu

Given AI's ability to absorb, organise, and interpret data on a massive scale, one might wonder if it could render central planning more efficient than today's market systems



DV Ramana

IT SEEMS, IN THE NAME OF 'POWER SECTOR REFORMS' A PRIVATE MONOPOLY HAS BEEN CREATED BY DISMANTLING GOVERNMENT MONOPOLY

In the recent past the Chief Secretary of Odisha questioned the Tata Power Central Odisha Distribution Ltd for sluggish restoration of supply after nor'westers. Such a reaction from the senior-most bureaucrat of the state is praiseworthy. This gesture made him a hero in the eyes of ordinary citizens. But it has also exposed the helplessness of the government machinery in managing the power sector in general, and the powerful private player which controls the power distribution in the state, in particular.

Odisha had privatised the distribution business but not with much success. The early experiments, with AES and then Reliance, failed. The electricity regulator of the state demonstrated its courage and conviction in asking the private players to leave the state. People of Odisha thought a lesson has been learnt and the mistakes will not be repeated. But once again all four zonal distribution companies were transferred to another large private player: Tata Power Ltd.

The majority control of all four distribution companies of Odisha, serving more than one crore customers, having annual revenue of more than Rs 10,000 crore, and having assets more than Rs 15,000 crore, was transferred to Tata Power Limited for less than Rs 1,000 crore. The authority to manage such an important public asset was transferred to a private company with much opacity and no public debate as also without involving any stakeholders.

It is illuminating to delve into the pattern of ownership of the power distribution companies of Odisha. Tata Power holds 51% stake in all the four distribution companies of Odisha and the balance is with the Government of Odisha. 45% of Tata Power is owned by an unlisted company, Tata Sons Limited, and 50% of Tata Sons is owned by two trusts: Sir Dorabjee Trust and Sir Ratan

FOCUS POWER SECTOR

MUNICIPALISATION OF DISCOMS



There is no need to roll back reforms but the state can experiment with the rollback of privatisation. In that pursuit, citizens of Odisha could become the first to benefit from the state taking steps towards municipalisation of power distribution companies

Tata Trust. It seems, in the name of 'power sector reforms' a private monopoly has been created by dismantling government monopoly. In the process, this move has created a wide gap between owners and consumers. It is important for the government and other stakeholders to reflect on the ownership of power companies. It may not be a bad idea to initiate a public debate on the alternative forms of ownership and management structures of the power sector.

Odisha was the first state to usher-in reforms in power sector by unbundling the vertically integrated Orissa State Electricity Board (OSEB) into distribution, transmission, and generation companies. Odisha also takes the credit in the country for setting up the first state-level electricity regulator in the form of the Orissa Electricity Regulatory Commission (OERC). Unlike many other states, Odisha did not hesitate to privatise its distribution business. In retrospect, it looks and feels like the state has hurried with the transfer of ownership.

According to a survey by World Bank, 70% of countries have electricity distribution utilities that are majority-owned by the public sector, while the remaining 30% privately-owned distribution utilities are in mid-

dle and high-income economies. Many are at a loss to understand the reasons behind the privatisation of power distribution in Odisha despite not being a high-income economy.

Since the experience with privatisation has not been good, it is time for the state to explore other forms of organisations. If required, it may be wise to be bold and roll back privatisation. This leads to the next question: if privatisation is rolled back, who will manage the distribution of power? There can be several models, but stress could be on "municipalisation" as an alternative to privatisation.

Municipalisation is the legal process by which the local community assumes the control of generation and distribution business from an investor-owned company. It is the opposite of the "privatisation" process. Private-sector firms focus on profits for shareholders, whereas municipal utilities try to provide better-quality services and the profit, if any, goes to the municipal budget. It helps in maximisation of stakeholder benefits rather than just being driven by maximisation of shareholders' wealth.

Municipalisation helps in controlling the flight of capital which happens when companies are owned by large private players. Companies transfer

funds through dividends and several forms of related-party transactions. For example, during the last 10 years, Tata Power (a listed company) has distributed Rs 4000 crore as cash dividend to its shareholders. Of this amount more than Rs 1800 crore has gone to its promoter, Tata Sons. Municipalisation may stop such flight of capital to a large extent.

The idea of utility municipalisation is not a new concept. Several countries are actively pursuing municipalisation of formerly privatised assets. For instance, in France and Latin America, municipal involvement is particularly common in the water sector. In Germany and USA, municipalisation is popular in the energy sector. Even Japan is experimenting with municipalisation of energy utilities aggressively after the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster. The Los Angeles Department of Water and Power is one of oldest municipal utilities operating since 1917. At present it serves over 4 million residents and employs more than 10,000 people. The Board members, as well as the General Manager, are appointed by the mayor and confirmed by the city council. The operations are financed solely through the sale of water and electricity services. No tax support is received. Moreover, 8% of gross operating revenue is transferred to the City General Fund each year for local development. Similar examples are found in Europe too. In 2013, the citizens of Hamburg voted to take back the power grid from Danish giant Orsted.

There is no need to roll back reforms but the state can experiment with the rollback of privatisation. In that pursuit, citizens of Odisha could become the first to benefit from the state taking steps towards municipalisation of power distribution companies.

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

SPECTRUM CULTURE

Ikigai in the Indian context

Recently I came across a book titled "Ikigai: The Japanese Secret to a Long and Happy Life". The book co-authored by Francesc Miralles and Hector Garcia focuses on the Japanese concept 'ikigai' through stories gathered while travelling around Japan. The unique name 'Ikigai' attracted my attention to understand its meaning and find out the special position it occupies in Japan.

Okinawa island of Japan, home to one of the highest ratios of centenarians to population is considered as the source of ikigai. In Okinawa, residents suffer from low levels of heart disease, cancer and dementia. Their robust social life and strong sense of ikigai keeps them alive and healthy past the age of hundred.

Ikigai literally means a reason for being, a reason to get up in the morning, to enjoy one's passion and purpose. 'Ikigai' combines 'iki' meaning alive and 'gai' implying worth. 'Ikigai' offers a person a sense of purpose, a reason for living. Activities that generate ikigai are spontaneous, personal and never forced on an individual.

Now let's analyse the relevance of ikigai in the Indian context. Hinduism focuses on liberation and finding out inner self as the highest goals of life. Indian philosophy venerates the enlightened beings who have attained spiritual liberation. Buddhism calls liberated beings Buddhas (awakened ones). Miralles, the co-author of the book admits that people of Okinawa are more like Indians: open-minded, warm, composed and jokes loving.

According to the Japanese, everyone has an ikigai. Having a strong sense of ikigai implies that each day is infused with meaning. The ideology is closer to Buddhist philosophy i.e. being active, being in the moment and finding joy in the smallest occurrences of life.

People of Okinawa don't celebrate alone. A sense of belonging to a larger entity offers them trust, happiness and confidence. Ikigai suggests avoiding overeating. Buddhists and Hindus also follow small portion of meal and mindful eating. Both Hinduism and Buddhism promote non-harming, non-attachment and truthfulness. Also Indian society believes in togetherness, community celebration of festivals

and sharing of grief and happiness. Irrespective of religion, Indian philosophy as a whole is marked by a striking breadth of outlook directed towards an interminable devotion for the search of truth. Regardless of the vastness of the country and cultural diversity, Indian society is identified by a belief system loaded with inclination to respect the views of others.

Indian philosophy believes that individual ego is a delusion. The objects with which people identify themselves i.e. fortune, social position, family, body and mind are not their true selves. Indian philosophy carries an introspective approach to reality, concerning the inner self of man rather than being identified with the material world. Knowledge of the self, flexibility and tendency to synthesise are characteristics of Indian philosophy. Human beings though live in the material world, attain spiritual superiority and are not enslaved by worldly values. They embody the doctrines of karma and rebirth. Truth is not viewed as the possession of a few, but as something which exists eternally, in its entirety.

There is a commonly used proverb in Japan which means only staying active will make you want to live a hundred years. Perhaps belief in ikigai is the inspiring factor behind their long and happy lives. However, the principle is ever present in India which pulls the attention of Westerners to visit the land whenever they face crisis, whether spiritual or psychological. India being the ancient land of wisdom and spirituality, conceives remedies to soothe the modern and fragile world.

The Buddha's doctrine offers a way to avoid despair and ignorance. Indian philosophy as a whole offers remedies by limiting desires to put an end to sufferings. The concept of ikigai therefore, is present in India from time immemorial. All need to recognise the meaning of being and move forward towards the objective, they truly admire, for which they have got their lives.

The writer is Joint Commissioner of Commercial Taxes & GST, Commissionerate of CT & GST, Odisha. Views are personal.

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WISDOM CORNER

- The greatest of follies is to sacrifice health for any other kind of happiness. ARTHUR SCHOPENHAUER
- Nothing ever becomes real till it is experienced. JOHN KEATS
- Only those who will risk going too far can possibly find out how far one can go. TS ELIOT

WORDSWORTH

Leechcraft

Leeches have in earlier times been widely used in medicine as a way to remove "bad blood" from patients and to restore the balance of the humours or bodily fluids. After a century and a half in which they fell almost totally out of use, they are returning in some specialised areas, a practice called hirudotherapy, a term formed from hirudo, the Latin name for the little beasts. So it would be reasonable to assume that that's where leechcraft comes from. But this is a case where language trips us up. There have been two meanings for leech in English.

Important questions

Sir, This refers to the brilliant editorial "Obama needles" (Orissa POST, June 28, 2023). The White House reporter for the Wall Street Journal must be commended for asking a relevant question to the Indian Prime Minister, something in which the mainstream electronic media of India has failed miserably. The ministers of the National Democratic Alliance government are getting increasingly intolerant towards the key questions on the erosion of democracy, protection and rights of minorities and declining press freedom in India. A few days ago, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh lashed out at the former US President Barack Obama for his statements on the protection and importance of the minorities of India. Such an immediate overreaction from both the ministers is a manifestation of the fact that Obama unintentionally touched a raw nerve. Media is the fourth pillar of democracy and the media persons sincerely discharging their duties must be considered as the building blocks of this pillar. Therefore, such an attack as faced by the WSJ reporter Sabrina Siddiqui needs to be condemned harshly. The worrying trend also signifies that she is not the only victim of this.

Tushar Anand, PATNA

Fickle monsoon

Sir, The advancement of the southwest monsoon over almost ninety per cent of India is taken with a pinch of salt by experts and commoners alike. The high speed winds of the Arabian Sea plus the low pressure area in the Bay of Bengal resulted in a rare phenomenon of two metropolis – Mumbai and Delhi – welcoming monsoon at the same time, on June 25. After June 21, 1961, this was the first time that the monsoon arrived simultaneously in the two big cities. Other than this, earlier onset of monsoon, before the usual July 8, has provided massive relief to areas that literally boiled due to the scorching sun. Collective shortage of rainfall has eased up thereby providing further hope to farmers because it's good news for kharif crops like millets, pulses, groundnuts and others although rainfall over the next couple of months are equally important for them and other crops.

Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

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

IMA, KGMOA oppose medicos' request to wear long sleeves

THE IMA SAID A PATIENT IS THE MOST SIGNIFICANT PERSON IN HOSPITALS AND OPERATION THEATRES AND THE EXISTING GLOBALLY ACCEPTED PROTOCOL SHOULD BE FOLLOWED THERE WITHOUT FAIL TO ENSURE THEIR SAFETY

THE KERALA GOVERNMENT MEDICAL OFFICERS' ASSOCIATION (KGMOA) SAID GRANTING PERMISSION FOR SUCH A REQUEST IS NOT SCIENTIFICALLY OR ETHICALLY APPROPRIATE

In the letter, the students complained that they were not allowed to cover their heads inside the operation theatre.

"According to our religious belief, wearing hijab is mandatory for Muslim women under all circumstances," they said

long-sleeve scrub jackets and surgical hoods at the earliest.

A woman medico, belonging to the 2020 batch, wrote a letter to principal Dr Linnette J Morris on June 26, citing the matter. The request letter was also signed by six other female medical students from different batches of the college.

In the letter, the students complained that they were not allowed to cover their heads inside the operation theatre. "According to our religious belief, wearing hijab is mandatory for Muslim women under all circumstances," they said.

"Long-sleeve scrub jackets and surgical hoods are available, which allow us to maintain sterile precautions as well as our hijab," he said. They wanted the principal to look into the matter and grant them permission to wear the same in operation theatres at the earliest.

Confirming the receipt of the letter, Morris said she explained to the students the need to follow the prescribed precautionary practices inside the operation theatres and the necessity to adhere to the present globally accepted dress code there.

The principal said it is not practically possible to wear long-sleeve jackets, as they demand, inside the theatres as several rounds of scrub-up (washing up to the elbow in running water) are involved while doing a surgical procedure or assisting in it. To address the concerns of the students, Morris said she assured them she would form a committee of surgeons to look into the matter.

person in hospitals and operation theatres. Certain internationally accepted protocols are being followed everywhere to ensure the safety of the patients and to protect them from getting infected," he said.

The IMA wanted to maintain these practises and protocols without fail, Noohu added. Dr Suresh TN, president, KGMOA, said there is an infection control system in operation theatres and the scientific view is to maintain the protocols as such.

As part of the disinfection procedures, hands should be washed repeatedly and gloves should be worn inside the theatres. "In such a circumstance, long sleeve dress, as demanded by the students, cannot be permitted considering the safety of patients. This is not appropriate scientifically or ethically," he said.

A group of female Muslim MBBS students from the Government Medical College here recently expressed concern over not being allowed to wear hijab inside operation theatres and sought permission to don



Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya with Leader of Opposition and former Chief Minister Jairam Thakur and others being welcomed at the Atal Tunnel Rohtang, in Manali

Shimla introduces new system to prevent drowning

These incidents increase during monsoon as rivers are in spate and, therefore, we have introduced the river guard system in the district to save precious lives, Shimla Superintendent of Police (SP) Sanjeev Kumar Gandhi said

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Shimla, June 29: Shimla police Thursday introduced a River Guard System in this Himachal Pradesh district to prevent frequent drowning incidents, especially during the ongoing monsoon season.

As per the police data about 105 persons, including 21 women and nine children, have drowned in the district since 2018. Of these, 17 persons were reported dead this year. The maximum number of incidents, 22, were reported from Chirgaon in the Rohru subdivision followed by 19 each in Rampur, 13 in Kumarsain, nine in Theog, five each in Jhakri and Jubbal and four each in Sunni and Dhalli areas of the capital district.

A majority of those who



drowned were young. Such deaths bring a lot of pain to the families of the deceased and a series of operations are required to rescue the drowned or recover their bodies from water, police said.

These incidents increase during the monsoon season as rivers are in spate and, therefore, we have introduced the river guard system in the district to save precious lives, Shimla

Superintendent of Police (SP) Sanjeev Kumar Gandhi said.

"Police constables and homeguards along with motorcycles and mobile parties are being deployed on vulnerable points prone to drowning and all the SHOs have been directed to hold meetings with the local people to spread awareness," he said, adding that Panchayats and NGOs would also be roped in.

Drowning-prone stretches in rivers, rivulets and drains have been identified and the process of installing big and clear signages, indicating danger along the roadside and dangerous rivers beds with a history of people getting drowned is going on, he added.

The state revenue and disaster management authorities have also advised the residents and tourists to avoid venturing along the banks of the water bodies. Asking the people to take caution, Principal Secretary (Revenue) Onkar Chand Sharma on Tuesday quoted the tragic incident of June 2014 when about 24 engineering students from Hyderabad who were taking photographs drowned in Beas River near Thalot village in Mandi district.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Thiruvananthapuram, June 29: Various organisations of medical practitioners including the Indian Medical Association (IMA) Thursday strongly objected to the recent request of a group of female Muslim MBBS students here seeking permission to wear long-sleeve scrub jackets and surgical hoods in operation theatres.

The IMA said a patient is the most significant person in hospitals and operation theatres and the existing globally accepted protocol should be followed there without fail to ensure their safety. Sharing similar views, the Kerala Government Medical Officers' Association (KGMOA) said granting permission for such a request is not scientifically or ethically appropriate.

Dr Sulphi Noohu, IMA state president, said the association wanted to continue the existing practices and protocols. "Worldwide it is considered that a patient is the most significant

Governor praises IIT Mandi



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Mandi, June 29: Himachal Pradesh Governor Shiv Pratap Shukla Thursday highlighted IIT Mandi's technological contributions to the state and emphasized its potential in supporting the apple economy and local problem-solving.

He was speaking while presiding over the G-20/S-20 conclave on "Technology for Society" at IIT here organized by the institute.

Shukla said the conclave was part of the ongoing mega G20-S20 meeting at the institute and provided a platform for delegates from the public and private sectors to come together and explore potential knowledge sharing and discussion opportunities to address societal development with technological interventions.

With India assuming G-20 presidency, Shukla stressed the na-

tion's role in addressing global challenges and promoting shared values. He urged to showcase India's capabilities, philosophy, and intellectual power.

The Governor expressed satisfaction the researchers were working on making cooking stoves in an efficient manner, which would be exemplary in solving the problems of inaccessibility in the state.

Likewise, developing biofuel from dry pine leaves as energy for industry would also help the rural people, he added. The development of other bio-fuels and green fuels deserves to be pursued prominently. He also praised advancements in low-cost medical devices, robotics, and AI for healthcare which are helpful in addressing health crises in rural as well as in urban areas.

He also stressed the need to strengthen technologies to predict landslides and avalanches in the state. The Governor also highlighted the need for entrepreneurship support centres to boost the state's economy. He also visited the institute's labs and centers during the visit.

On the occasion, IIT Mandi Director Laxmidhar Behera shared the institute's focus on technology, skill development, and societal contributions.

Himachal High Court sets up panel on illegal felling of trees



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Shimla, June 29: The Himachal Pradesh High Court has set up a committee comprising the Mandi Deputy Commissioner and the Superintendent of Police, and the Secretary of the District Legal Services Authority to look into the allegations of illegal felling of trees in the Nachan forest division.

A Division Bench of Chief Justice M.S. Ramachandra Rao and Justice Ajay Mohan Goe passed this order on a petition taken up suo moto by the court as public interest litigation on a letter written to the Chief Justice by Raju, a resident of Chail Chowk in Mandi district.

The petitioner has alleged that at the behest of the Divisional Forest Officer (DFO), Nachan,

who is posted for more than five years, thousand of green trees have been axed in Nachan.

He said roads have been constructed illegally by cutting trees from extremely dense forest without clearance under the Forest Conservation Act.

The forest area has been destroyed despite having a sanctuary region of about 10 km radius of the Shikari Devi-Dehar road, he said, adding that at the behest of the DFO, a ground has been constructed at Chail Chowk by destroying 500 trees.

The petitioner has prayed for action against the DFO to stop the devastation and forest, environment and government money. The respondents have disputed the allegations leveled by the petitioner in the reply filed by them.

Therefore, the court has directed the committee to verify as to whether the claims made in the reply filed by the respondents are true or not. The committee has been further directed to file its report within three months. The matter will be listed for hearing on October 10.

Kerala to woo Arab tourists to boost tourism in monsoon



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Thiruvananthapuram, June 29: Offering up the prospect of summering in the cool green monsoon-kissed state to tourists from the scorching sultry deserts of Arab and other Western Asian nations, the Kerala government is readying an aggressive marketing campaign to woo them ahead of summer vacation in the Gulf region that starts next month.

Since Kerala has clocked a record arrival of domestic tourists, it will now aim to steeply raise the footfall of foreign tourists, State Tourism Minister P A Mohamed Riyas is quoted as saying in a release issued by his department.

The captivating landscape, the cool monsoon weather and Ayurvedic wellness are the USPs that the tourism department is hoping to cash in on with the foreign tourists from the Gulf. "This campaign aims to sustain the flow of tourists from the Middle East by providing them a unique experience," Riyas is quoted as having said.

"The aggressive marketing campaign is aimed at wooing travellers to 'God's Own Country' during July and August when the rainy season makes the state's weather pleasant in contrast to the scorching Middle East during the same period. As such,

West Asia is a "highly promising market" for promoting Kerala's monsoon tourism, the tourism department said.

"The campaign is expected to result in an influx of Arab tourists to the captivating landscape of Kerala, where the cool air makes the stay ideal for Ayurveda-based wellness as well," it said in the release. To make it happen, the government has sanctioned Rs 7 crore to carry out the marketing campaign, which would be primarily focused on airports at Dubai and Doha, it said.

Besides that, monsoon tourism would also be widely advertised across print, radio and visual media in the Gulf, it added. As a prelude to the campaign, Kerala Tourism had showcased a wide range of its products and themes in Dubai last month during the 30th edition of Arabian Travel Market. It had also conducted road shows in Riyadh, Dammam and Muscat and the early-May events helped to reinforce Kerala's global reputation as a major experiential tourism hub, the release said. "Kerala Tourism also plans to work out attractive packages for Arab tourists, who often turn up in large groups and spend their vacation in specific destinations. In 2019, around 1.5 lakh tourists from Middle East countries visited the state," the department release said.

KANNUR AIRPORT IN DOLDRUMS

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala boasts of being the only state in the country with four international airports, while a fifth one at Sabarimala is on the anvil, but the sad fact is the fourth international airport at Kannur is presently having a hand to mouth existence.

The Kannur airport revenues are rock bottom with just two airlines -- Air India Express and Indigo -- operating a handful of flights. The airport operations have been hit hard after Go First which operated over 200 flights a month temporarily stopped their services and before that when Air India also withdrew. Kannur airport opened amid



big fanfare in 2018 and in less than a year there were 50 daily flights, but five years later the airport is undergoing difficult times. Despite numerous representations to the Centre, foreign airlines continue to duck this air-

port on the grounds that Kannur airport is not in the metro category, and the 'point of call' does not become applicable, which is a criterion for foreign airlines to operate.

Former Leader of the oppo-

sition and veteran Congress legislator Ramesh Chennithala has alleged that the government was deliberately allowing the Kannur International Airport to be in the red so that it can be 'gifted' to Adani Group and wanted a

Kannur airport opened amid big fanfare in 2018 and in less than a year there were 50 daily flights, but five years later the airport is undergoing difficult times

The airport operations have been hit hard after Go First which operated over 200 flights a month temporarily stopped their services and before that when Air India also withdrew

Comptroller and Auditor General of India audit to be conducted at the airport.

"It was during our tenure 2011-16, that Kannur airport took wings, but the succeeding CPI(M) governments have done nothing to take it to the next level," said Chennithala.



Commuters help vehicles move through waterlogged Delhi-Gurugram Expressway service road after monsoon rains, near Narsinghpur in Gurugram, Haryana



A Muslim woman guides her daughter to offer 'namaz' on the occasion of the 'Eid al-Adha' festival, at the Don Bosco School ground in Chennai, Tamil Nadu



Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, is joined by Viratswarupdas Swami, left, and Gunsagardas Swami for a prayer before delivering remarks to community members at the BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir, a Hindu temple in Etobicoke



A man carries his grandparents on shoulder during Kanwar Yatra, in Muzaffarnagar, Uttar Pradesh



India's largest telescope, the upgraded Giant Metrewave Radio Telescope (uGMRT), near Narayangaon in Pune district



Devotees of Vitthal take part in Wari procession on the occasion of Ashadhi Ekadashi at Wadala in Mumbai, Maharashtra



Flames and smoke rise after multiple buses caught fire at Khadgarha bus stand in Ranchi, Jharkhand



Security personnel during a joint exercise after INS Sunayna entered. Navies of India and Mozambique will engage in professional exchanges, cross deck visits and sports fixtures and the ship will be conducting a medical camp as part of Indian Navy's community outreach programme



“The Union government should first introduce reservation for women in the Lok Sabha and state Legislative Assemblies before talking about the implementation of the Uniform Civil Code
SHARAD PAWAR | NCP CHIEF

BOOSTING TIES

India and Tanzania have finalised a five-year roadmap to expand overall bilateral defence cooperation including in areas of infrastructure building and collaboration in military equipment and technology



of the day quote

The people of Delhi are hardworking. They have beautified Delhi by their hard work. LG sir, you have come from outside and you do not understand Delhi and Delhiites. Don't insult the people of Delhi like this
ARVIND KEJRIWAL | DELHI CHIEF MINISTER

In 2024, people of Bihar will have to make a choice between Narendra Modi and Rahul, whom the Congress has tried to launch 20 times, without success
AMIT SHAH | UNION HOME MINISTER

I welcome the Amarnath yatra. I pray to Allah that it is successful and the yatis return with blessings
FAROOQ ABDULLAH | NATIONAL CONFERENCE PRESIDENT

SHORT TAKES

PM to chair meeting of Council of Ministers

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will chair a meeting of the Union Council of Ministers July 3, a development which comes against the backdrop of hectic meetings of the ruling BJP's top brass amid a buzz over a Cabinet reshuffle and organisational changes. The July 3 meeting is likely to be held at the newly built convention centre at Pragati Maidan here, which will host the G20 summit in September, officials said Thursday. The Monsoon Session is likely to begin in the third week of July.

Rath Jatra deaths: Police begins probe

Agartala: The Tripura police Thursday started a probe into the death of seven people when a chariot came in contact with a live wire in Unakoti district during the return Rath Jatra festival, an official said. Based on a complaint lodged by the family of one of the deceased people, the police also registered an FIR against the organisers of the Rath Jatra at Kumarghat. Seven people, including two children, died of electrocution and 16 others were injured as the chariot of Lord Jagannath came in contact with a high-tension wire during the return Rath Jatra festival Wednesday afternoon.

Doctor arrested for raping nurse

New Delhi: A doctor was arrested for allegedly raping a 34-year-old nurse at a clinic in northeast Delhi's Nandnagri area, police said Thursday. The arrest was made after the woman, who used to work as a nurse at the clinic in Sundar Nagri, reported that in August 2021, the accused doctor allegedly raped her and also made an obscene video, they said. The victim also accused the doctor of extorting ₹7 lakhs from her, police said.

3,500 SIM cards blocked in Bihar

Patna: In a bid to curb cyber crime, around 3,500 suspicious SIM cards were blocked by cellular operator companies following recommendation by the Economic Offence Unit (EOU) of Bihar Police, an official said. Nayer Hasnain Khan, the ADGP of Bihar Police said the department identified around 8,000 SIM cards used in fraudulent activities by cyber comen in and outside Bihar. The EOU of Bihar Police received complaints about cyber frauds. During investigation, it surfaced that the SIM cards were obtained with fake names and addresses.

SLUGFEST OVER OPPN CONCLAVE

Shah takes a dig at Nitish

As Amit Shah accused opposition leaders, who had attended the Patna meeting, of being involved in scams worth over ₹20 lakh crore, Sharad Pawar claimed that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has become "restless" after the conclave

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Munger (Bihar)/Mumbai, June 29: Union Home Minister Amit Shah Thursday took a dig at Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar calling him a "Paltu babu" who was "hoodwinking" RJD supremo Lalu Prasad amid an escalating political slugfest over the recent opposition conclave to stitch an anti-BJP front for the 2024 Lok Sabha polls.

Shah, who visited Bihar for the first time after the meeting of leaders of 16 opposition parties in Patna June 23, also said the Congress has been trying to launch Rahul Gandhi as a "mass leader" for the last 20 years but they have failed. "The electorate has full faith in Modi ji," said the senior BJP leader who last visited Bihar nearly three months ago.

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin, who is also the DMK President, while hitting out at Modi for pushing for implementing the Uniform Civil Code(UCC) alleged that the Patna meeting has "caused fear in the prime minister."

Taking on Chief Minister Kumar who hosted the Patna meeting, Shah said people of



Bihar will give a "befitting reply to corrupt leaders" in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls.

"Paltu babu Nitish Kumar was asking what BJP has done in the last nine years (of the NDA government at the Centre)...Prime Minister Narendra Modi ji has done a lot for the overall growth of the country... Nitish always changes his alliance partners and is simply misleading (RJD chief Lalu Prasad) Lalu ji. He is not trustworthy," he said addressing a mega rally at Lakhisarai in Munger organised by the BJP. The Munger Lok Sabha seat is

currently held by Rajiv Ranjan Singh alias 'Lalan', the national president of Kumar's JD(U).

In a reference to Kumar who dumped the BJP last year to form the 'Mahagathbandhan' government in Bihar, Shah said leaders who ditched the National Democratic Alliance(NDA) must be "punished". He also questioned the chief minister's track record and said, "Nitish babu must explain what he has done for Bihar".

"Bihar has always raised its voice against corruption. Opposition leaders who attended

Pawar said the next meeting of opposition leaders will be held at Bangalore July 13-14

India, Philippines to commence negotiations on bilateral trade pact

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 29: India and the Philippines Thursday agreed to commence negotiations on a bilateral preferential trade pact and vowed to step up defence cooperation, especially in the maritime security domain, amid China's increasing muscle-flexing in the South China Sea.

In the extensive talks between Secretary for Foreign Affairs of the Philippines Enrique A Manalo and External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, the two sides also underlined the need for implementing the South China Sea verdict that was pronounced by a UN arbitration court in 2016.

The defence and security ties between India and the Philippines are on an upswing. In January last year, the Philippines concluded a \$375 million deal with India for the procurement of three batteries of the BrahMos cruise missile.

A joint statement said both sides underlined that India and the Philippines have a shared interest in a free and open Indo-Pacific and emphasised the need for peaceful settlement of disputes and for adherence to international law, especially the UNCLOS (UN Convention on the Law of the Sea) and the arbitral award on the South China Sea.

The UN's Permanent Court of Arbitration, adjudicating the Philippines' case against China's territorial claims in the South China Sea, ruled in favour of Manila.

However, China refused to accept the verdict.

There have been growing global concerns over China's sweeping claims of sovereignty over all of the South China Sea, a huge source of hydrocarbons.

'India to negotiate with US for MQ-9B drones'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 29: The average estimated cost of MQ-9B long endurance drones offered by the US to India is 27 per cent lower than the price incurred by other countries, a senior government official said Thursday, asserting that Indian representatives will work to reduce it further during negotiations.

He also categorically underlined that so far negotiations on the pricing issue have not begun and expressed confidence that the final price will be competitive compared to the costs borne by other countries. The prices can be revised upwards only if India seeks additional features, he



said. The latest official development towards the proposed acquisition of 31 of these drones has been the "acceptance of necessity" accorded by the Defence Acquisition Council, which happened June 15. The pricing issue is not part of this, he added.

The indicative cost of the drones offered by the US government is \$3,072 million.

This works out to be \$99 million for each drone, he said, adding that it cost the UAE, one

of the few countries to have it, \$161 million a piece. Sixteen of these drones purchased by the UK cost it \$69 million each but it was only a "green aircraft" without sensors, weapons and certification. Features like sensors, weapons and payloads make up for 60-70 per cent of the total cost, he said, adding that even the US acquired five of them at \$119 million each.

Due to the size of India's deal and the fact that the manufacturer might have recovered a big part of its initial investment from earlier deals, the price for the country is working out to be less than others, he said, speaking on the condition of anonymity.

TN Governor keeps dismissal order of Balaji in abeyance



After his arrest, Balaji had complained of chest pain and was admitted to a government hospital. Later, he underwent a bypass surgery at a private hospital

On May 31, the Governor had sent a letter to the CM asking him to drop Senthil Balaji from the Cabinet, and the very next day Stalin had given a detailed reply

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, June 29: Tamil Nadu Governor R N Ravi has decided to keep the dismissal order of state minister V Senthil Balaji in abeyance for the time being and informed Chief Minister M K Stalin about it, sources said Thursday.

In a late evening communication to the Chief Minister, the governor said he would consult the attorney general and seek his legal opinion about the move. The order to dismiss Balaji from the Council of Ministers has been kept in abeyance by the governor until further communication, the sources said.

Earlier, the governor had dismissed Balaji from the Council of Ministers, days after his arrest by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in an alleged cash-for-jobs scam.

Stalin had said the state government would challenge the governor's decision legally.

In an official release, the Raj Bhavan in Chennai had said, "There are reasonable apprehensions that the continuation of V Senthil Balaji in the Council of Ministers will adversely im-

pact the due process of law, including fair investigation that may eventually lead to the breakdown of constitutional machinery in the state."

Balaji "is facing serious criminal proceedings in a number of cases of corruption, including taking cash for jobs and money laundering. Abusing his position as a minister, he has been influencing the investigation and obstructing the due process of law and justice," the release added.

Balaji is currently in judicial custody in a criminal case being investigated by the Enforcement Directorate.

A few other criminal cases against him under the Prevention of Corruption Act and IPC are being investigated by the state police.

After his arrest, Balaji had complained of chest pain and was admitted to a government hospital. Later, he underwent a bypass surgery at a private hospital.

On May 31, the Governor had sent a letter to the CM asking him to drop Senthil Balaji from the Cabinet, and the very next day Stalin had given a detailed reply.



Police detain Bheem Army activists who were on their way to stage a protest at Parivartan Chowk demanding proper security for their leader Chandra Shekhar Aazad in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh

Two 'rioters' killed in Kangpokpi firing

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Imphal, June 29: Two suspected rioters were killed and five injured in an exchange of fire with security personnel at Haraothel village in Kangpokpi district of Manipur Thursday morning, officials said.

They said armed rioters opened unprovoked firing at the village. The army said security forces personnel "responded in a calibrated manner" to tackle the situation. Two suspected armed rioters were killed and five were injured in the exchange of fire in the village, the officials said. Another rioter was also believed to have been killed, but the body is yet to be retrieved as the spot witnessed intermittent firing, they said.

Later in the day, members of the community to which the two rioters belonged collected their bodies and took out a procession to the Chief Minister's residence in Imphal, the officials said.

India removed from UN report on impact of armed conflict on kids

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

United Nations, June 29: UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has removed India from his annual report on the impact of armed conflict on children, citing measures taken by the Indian government to better protect them.

India was mentioned in the report of the Secretary-General on Children and armed conflict since 2010 along with other countries of Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Lake Chad basin, Nigeria, Pakistan, and the Philippines

for alleged recruitment and use of boys by armed groups in Jammu and Kashmir; detainment of boys by Indian security forces in J&K for their alleged association with armed groups, or on national security grounds.

Guterres said in his report last year, he had welcomed the engagement of the Indian government with his special representative and noted that it might lead to the removal of India as a situation of concern.

In his 2023 report on Children and Armed Conflict, the UN



Chief said, "In view of the measures taken by the government to better protect children, India has been removed from the report in 2023." Guterres high-

lighted the technical mission of the office of his special representative in July 2022 to identify areas of cooperation for child protection, and the workshop on strengthening child protection held in Jammu and Kashmir last November by the government, with the participation of the United Nations. In his latest report, he also called upon India to implement the remaining measures identified in consultation with his special representative and the United Nations. These include the train-

ing of armed and security forces on child protection, prohibition of the use of lethal and non-lethal force on children, including ending the use of pellet guns, ensuring that children are detained as a last resort and for the shortest appropriate period of time, Guterres said.

He also stressed the implementation of measures to prevent all forms of ill-treatment in detention and the full implementation of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act and the Protection of

Children from Sexual Offences Act. Briefing reporters on Tuesday, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict Virginia Gamba said that for the last two years, "we have been working very closely with India".

In last year's report, Guterres had said he was concerned by the "increased number of violations against children verified in Jammu and Kashmir", and had called upon the Indian government to strengthen child protection.

international

of the day quote

The central bank may have to tighten its oversight of the American financial system in the wake of the failure of three large US banks this spring

JEROME POWELL
CHAIR OF THE FEDERAL RESERVE OF THE US

Japan is fully prepared to deal with fluctuations in the Japanese yen, which has weakened sharply against the US dollar in the past year

SHUNICHI SUZUKI
JAPANESE FINANCE MINISTER

Sweden will increase its defence budget by 20 per cent next year, in order to meet the NATO target of 2 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product

PÅL JONSSON
MINISTER OF DEFENCE OF SWEDEN

SHORT TAKES

Professor, two others stabbed

Toronto: A professor and two students were stabbed Wednesday during a class on "gender issues" at a university in the Canadian city of Waterloo and a suspect has been taken into custody, police said. The wounds were non-life threatening, police said, adding that the motive for the attack at the University of Waterloo was not immediately clear. The suspect was being questioned by investigators.

Pashupatinath Temple reopens

Kathmandu: Nepal's Pashupatinath Temple, the fifth-century revered Hindu shrine here, which was closed by authorities for the reinstallation of more than 100 kilograms of gold ornaments around the Shiva Lingam in the premises was reopened after a special puja on Thursday morning. The temple was Wednesday afternoon closed after 3 pm to reinstall the gold ornaments called Jalahari, which was earlier removed for investigation after a controversy occurred over its weight.

17 dead amid heatwave in US

Houston: At least 17 people have died from heat-related illnesses as a severe heat wave continued in Texas while spreading into other parts of the southern US. In Webb County, southern Texas, medical examiner Corinne Stern said that 11 residents over the age of 60 have died due to the abnormal heat, reports Xinhua news agency.



A request to our country to temporarily host a US immigrant visa processing centre for thousands of Afghan nationals faces security and other concerns but is still being considered by the administration

FERDINAND MARCOS JR. | PHILIPPINE PRESIDENT

5-DAY BANK HOLIDAY IN LANKA

Sri Lanka began a 5-day bank holiday from Thursday to allow the crisis-hit nation to restructure \$42 billion in domestic debt, a media report said. The island nation is facing its worst economic crisis since it won independence from the British in 1948



40,000 officers to quell France violence

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Nanterre (France), June 29: France's government vowed to restore order Thursday after two nights of urban violence triggered by the deadly police shooting of a 17-year-old, announcing it would deploy tens of thousands more officers and crack down on neighbourhoods where buildings and vehicles were torched.

Ministers fanned out to areas scarred by the sudden flare-up of rioting, appealing for calm but also warning that the violence that injured scores of police and damaged nearly 100 public buildings wouldn't be allowed to continue.

After a morning crisis meeting, Interior Minister Gerald Darmanin said policing will be more than quadrupled — from 9,000 officers to 40,000. In the Paris region alone, the number of officers deployed will more than double to 5,000.

"The professionals of disorder must go home," Darmanin said. While there's no need yet to declare a state of emergency — a measure taken to quell weeks of rioting in 2005 — he added: "The state's response will be extremely firm."

The police officer who fired the fatal shot in the Paris suburb of Nanterre will be investigated for voluntary homicide after an initial investigation led local prosecutor Pascal Prache to conclude that "the conditions for the legal use of the weapon were not met."

The killing of the teen, identified only by his first name, Nahel, came during a traffic stop Tuesday. The incident captured



Police forces clash with youths in Nanterre, outside Paris, Thursday

Despite a beefed-up police presence Wednesday night, violence resumed after dusk with protesters shooting fireworks and hurling stones at police in Nanterre, who fired repeated volleys of tear gas

The police officer who fired the fatal shot in the Paris suburb of Nanterre will be investigated for voluntary homicide after an initial investigation led local prosecutor Pascal Prache to conclude that "the conditions for the legal use of the weapon were not met"

hurling stones at police in Nanterre, who fired repeated volleys of tear gas. As demonstrations spread to other towns, police and firefighters struggled to contain protesters and extinguish numerous blazes. Schools, police stations, town halls and other public buildings were damaged from Toulouse in the south to Lille in the north — with most of the damage in the Paris suburbs, according to a spokesperson for the national police.

Fire damaged the town hall in the Paris suburb of L'Ile-Saint-Denis, not far from the country's national stadium and the headquarters of the Paris 2024 Olympics. Darmanin said 170 officers had been injured in the unrest but none of the injuries was life-threatening. At least 90 public buildings were vandalised.

The number of civilians injured was not immediately re-

ported on video shocked the country and stirred up long-simmering tensions between police and young people in housing projects and other disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

Despite a beefed-up police presence Wednesday night, violence resumed after dusk with protesters shooting fireworks and

US SC strikes down affirmative action in college admissions

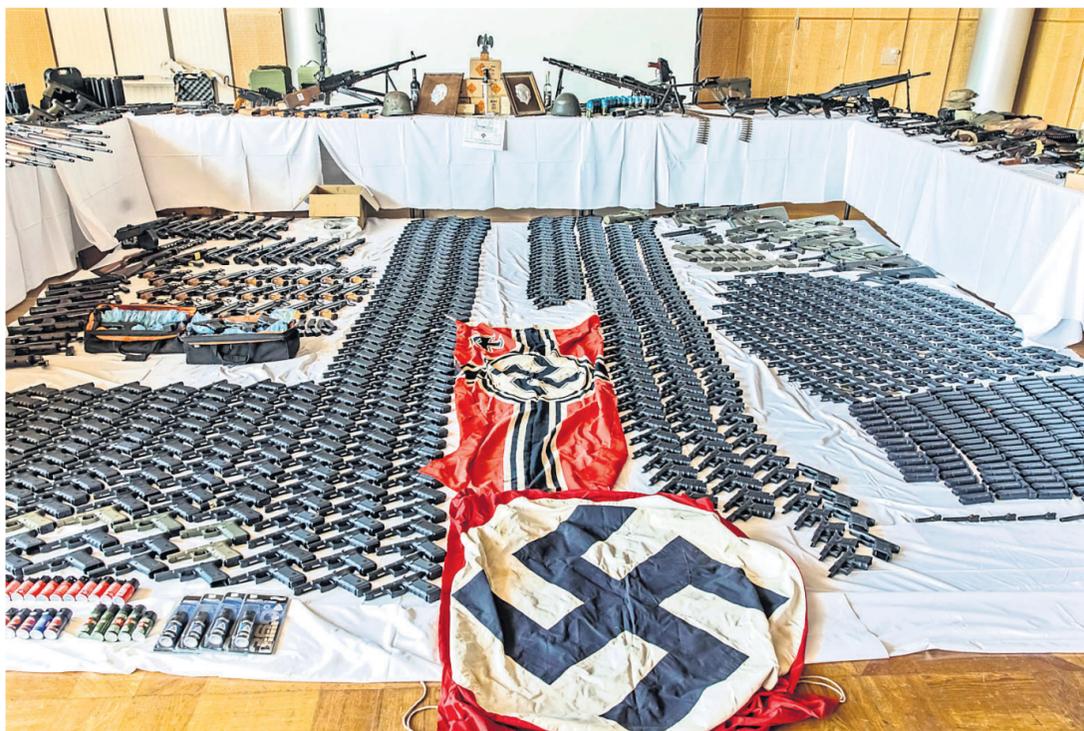
ASSOCIATED PRESS

Washington, June 29: The Supreme Court Thursday struck down affirmative action in college admissions, forcing institutions of higher education to look for new ways to achieve diverse student bodies.

The court's conservative majority overturned admissions plans at Harvard and the University of North Carolina, the nation's oldest private and public colleges, respectively.

Chief Justice John Roberts said that for too long universities have "concluded, wrongly, that the touchstone of an individual's identity is not challenges bested, skills built, or lessons learned but the colour of their skin. Our constitutional history does not tolerate that choice."

Justice Sonia Sotomayor wrote in dissent that the decision "rolls back decades of precedent and momentous progress." In a separate dissent, Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson — the court's first Black female justice — called the decision "truly a tragedy for us all."



This picture provided by the Austrian Interior Ministry on Thursday shows secured weapons, objects and ammunitions. Austrian authorities have seized large amounts of drugs and weapons in a raid on a far-right biker gang tied to organized crime. Public broadcaster ORF reported Thursday that police searched properties in Upper Austria and detained 10 people on suspicion of breaching firearms, narcotics and extremism laws

PTI PHOTO

Rwanda deportation plan unlawful: Court

The UK and Rwandan governments agreed more than a year ago that some migrants who arrive in the UK as stowaways or in small boats would be sent to Rwanda, where their asylum claims would be processed

ASSOCIATED PRESS

London, June 29: A British court ruled Thursday that a government plan to send asylum seekers on a one-way trip to Rwanda is unlawful, delivering a blow to the Conservative administration's pledge to stop migrants making risky journeys across the English Channel.

In a split two-to-one ruling, three Court of Appeal judges said Rwanda could not be considered a "safe third country" where migrants could be sent. But the judges said that a policy of deporting asylum seekers to another country was not in itself illegal, and the government said it would challenge the ruling at the UK Supreme Court. It has until July 6 to lodge an appeal.

Prime Minister Rishi Sunak said that "while I respect the court I fundamentally disagree with their conclusions." Sunak has pledged to "stop the boats" — a reference to the overcrowded dinghies and other small craft that make the journey from northern France carrying migrants who hope to live in the UK. More than 45,000 people arrived



in Britain across the Channel in 2022, and several died in the attempt.

The UK and Rwandan governments agreed more than a year ago that some migrants who arrive in the UK as stowaways or in small boats would be sent to Rwanda, where their asylum claims would be processed. Those granted asylum would stay in the East African country rather than return to Britain.

The UK government argues that the policy will smash the business model of criminal gangs that ferry migrants on hazardous journeys across one of the world's busiest shipping lanes. Human rights groups say it is immoral and inhumane to send people more than 4,000 miles (6,400 kilometres) to a country they don't want to live in, and argue that most Channel migrants are desperate people who have no authorised way to come to the UK. They also cite Rwanda's poor human rights record, including allegations of torture and killings of government opponents.

Britain has already paid Rwanda 140 million pounds under the deal, but no one has yet been deported there.

UK royal family expenses rise

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, June 29: The expenditure of the UK's royal household rose 5 per cent last year even as the taxpayer funding towards official royal expenses remained unchanged at GBP 86.3, according to the annual accounts for 2022-23 released by Buckingham Palace Thursday.

The palace said this year's accounts cover a period of "significant transition" as King Charles III acceded to the throne after the passing away of his mother, Queen Elizabeth II, in September. The royal household receives an annual taxpayer-funded Sovereign Grant, which has been calculated to be the equivalent of GBP 1.29 per person in the UK. It also includes a dedicated amount to fund a 10-year "reservicing" of Buckingham Palace, a major overhaul of essential building services.

"This year's statement covers a period of significant transition for the royal household, reflecting the Platinum Jubilee and State Funeral of Queen Elizabeth II, the accession of the King, the lead up to Their Majesties' Coronation, and the coming together of staff from two households," Buckingham Palace said. "The total Sovereign Grant for 2022-23, amounted to GBP 86.3 million, which is made up of a core grant of GBP 51.8 million which funds official travel, property maintenance and the operating costs of the Sovereign's household," it said.

Additionally, income earned through royal investments and property to supplement the Sovereign Grant was GBP 9.8 million last year, a decrease of 1 per cent from GBP 9.9 million in 2021-22. "Like other organisations, the Royal Household has not been immune to the impacts of the joint challenges of the pandemic and inflationary pressures, which have resulted in a flat Sovereign Grant. The figure for the year remained unchanged at GBP 86.3 million, with a significant proportion funding the re-servicing of Buckingham Palace, which is now in its seventh year.



SOUTH KOREANS RUSH TO BUY SALT

REUTERS

Seoul, June 29: South Korean shoppers are snapping up sea salt and other items as worry grows about their safety with Japan due to dump more than 1 million metric tons of treated radioactive water from a wrecked nuclear power plant into the sea.

The water was mainly used to cool damaged reactors at the Fukushima power plant north of Tokyo, after it was hit by an earthquake and tsunami in 2011. The release of the water from huge storage tanks into the Pacific is expected soon though no date has been set.

Japan has given repeated assurances that the water is safe, saying it has been filtered to remove most isotopes though it does contain traces of tritium, an isotope of hydrogen hard to separate from water. But fishermen and shoppers in Japan and across the region are afraid. "I recently bought 5 kilograms of salt," Lee Young-min, a 38-



year-old mother of two children, said as she made seaweed soup in her kitchen in Seongnam, just south of the South Korean capital, Seoul. She said she had never bought so much salt before but felt she had to do what she could to protect her family.

SOUTH KOREA HAS BANNED SEAFOOD FROM THE WATERS NEAR FUKUSHIMA, ON JAPAN'S EAST COAST

"As a mother raising two children, I can't just sit back and do nothing. I want to feed them safely." The rush to stock up contributed to a nearly 27% rise in the price of salt in South Korea in June from two months ago, though officials say the weather and lower production

were also to blame. In response, the government is releasing about 50 metric tons of salt a day from stocks, at a 20% discount from market prices, until July 11. Vice Fisheries Minister Song Sang-keun said Wednesday.

South Korean fisheries authorities say they will keep a close eye on salt farms for any rise in radioactivity. South Korea has banned seafood from the waters near Fukushima, on Japan's east coast. China has also criticised Japan's plan to release the water, accusing it of a lack of transparency and saying it poses a threat to the marine environment and the health of people around the world.

Japan says it has provided detailed and science-backed explanations of its plan to neighbours. Japanese Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirokazu Matsuno said last week Japan was seeing increasing understanding on the issue though that was not so apparent in Seoul shops this week.

'Human remains' recovered from wreckage of Titanic sub

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Washington, June 29: Experts have recovered presumed human remains from what is left of the Titan sub that imploded during a dive to the Titanic wreck, with the death of five people, the US Coast Guard said Wednesday.

"United States medical professionals will conduct a formal analysis of presumed human remains that have been carefully recovered," the agency said. On board were British explorer Hamish Harding, French submarine expert Paul-Henri Nargeolet, Pakistani-British tycoon Shahzada Dawood and his son Suleman, and Stockton Rush, CEO of the sub's operator OceanGate Expeditions.

They presumably died instantly when the Titan sub, about the size of an SUV car, imploded under the crushing pressure of the North Atlantic at a



depth of more than two miles. Mangled debris recovered from the small submersible was offloaded earlier in the day in eastern Canada, bringing to an end a difficult search-and-recovery operation.

That debris will now be taken aboard a US Coast Guard cutter to a US port for further analysis, the organization said.

"There is still a substantial amount of work to be done to understand the factors that led to the catastrophic loss of the Titan and help ensure a similar tragedy does not occur again," said the leader of the US probe into the tragedy, Captain Jason Neubauer.

business

of the day quote

We are crystallising a discussion paper to regulate financial influencers. The paper should be ready for public comments in the next couple of months

MADHABI PURI BUCH | CHAIRPERSON, SEBI

Coal India should continue to remain as a government entity in the future to maintain price stability of the dry fuel in the country

PRAMOD AGRAWAL | CHAIRMAN, COAL INDIA

The representation of women in corporate boardrooms needs to be far more, and it will involve a change of mindsets, determined action and focus

ARUNDHATI BHATTACHARYA | CEO, SALESFORCE

SHORT TAKES

BYJU'S close to profitability: CEO

New Delhi: Edtech major BYJU'S is growing slowly but sustainably and is close to achieving profitability at the group level, the company's CEO Byju Raveendran said Thursday. The company organised a town hall with Raveendran to allay apprehensions about the uncertainty around the company's growth and its future. According to sources, who attended the town hall, Raveendran said that issues with \$1.2 billion Term Loan B lenders are being resolved through discussion and hopeful of a positive outcome in the next few weeks without the court's intervention. "Byju shared that BYJU'S is close to achieving profitability at the group level, demonstrating the company's commitment to financial management and optimization of operations," a source said.

ATGL to invest ₹20,000 crore

New Delhi: Adani Total Gas Ltd (ATGL), the joint venture of billionaire Gautam Adani's group and French energy giant TotalEnergies, will invest Rs 18,000 crore to Rs 20,000 crore in the next 8 to 10 years to expand infrastructure for retailing CNG to automobiles and piping gas to households and industries, its CFO said. The company retails CNG to automobiles and pipes gas to household kitchens for cooking purposes in 52 licences that cover 124 districts of the country. It has 460 CNG stations in the country and about 7 lakh consumers of its piped cooking gas.

SEBI tightens disclosure norms for offshore funds

Mumbai, June 29: India's markets regulator Wednesday strengthened disclosure requirements for a set of "high-risk" offshore funds investing in local markets to prevent attempts to dodge regulations on mandatory public shareholding. The move is aimed at unraveling opaque structures through which some offshore funds invest in India-listed companies and follows an investigation of suspected violations by Adani Group, including its flagship Adani Enterprises. The investigation has drawn

The Board of SEBI has approved the proposal for reducing the time period for listing of shares for IPOs to 3 days instead of the existing 6 days, from the date of issue closure (T Day). The revised timeline of T+3 days will be made applicable in two phases. The new listing timeframe will be voluntary for all public issues opening on or after September 01, 2023, and mandatory for the issue which come on or after December 01, 2023.

SEBI cuts listing time

Apple on cusp of \$3trn mkt value

APPLE HAS JUMPED 46% IN 2023

California, June 29: Apple's stock climbed to a record high close Wednesday and was on the cusp of a \$3 trillion market capitalization. The iPhone maker's stock rose 0.6% to end the day at \$189.25, putting Apple's market value at \$2.98 trillion, according to Refinitiv data. It was the second straight record high close for Apple's shares.

Apple has yet to end a trading session with a stock market value above \$3 trillion. It briefly peaked above \$3 trillion in intra-day trading January 3, 2022 before closing the session just below that mark.

The latest gains in shares of the world's most valuable company follow strong rebounds

this year from several of Wall Street's technology-related heavyweights, fueled by bets that the Federal Reserve is nearing the end of its campaign of US interest rate hikes, and by optimism about the potential for artificial intelligence.

Apple has jumped 46% in 2023, while Nvidia has surged 185%, making it the first chipmaker with a stock market value over \$1 trillion. Tesla and Meta Platforms have more than doubled this year, and Microsoft has added 40%.

Govt halts import of cigarette lighters priced under ₹20

DESPIRE ROBUST COLLECTIONS IN SIX YEARS OF GST, ISSUES LIKE RATIONALISATION OF TAX RATES AND SLABS, LEVYING GST ON PETROL, DIESEL AND ATF, ARE STILL HANGING FIRE

New Delhi, June 29: The government Thursday prohibited imports of cigarette lighters if the price per unit is less than Rs 20, with a view to discourage in-bound shipments of the product. "The import policy of cigarette lighters...is revised from 'free' to 'prohibited'. However, import shall be free if CIF value is Rs 20 or above per lighter," the directorate general of foreign trade (DGFT) said in a notification.

CIF value (cost, insurance, and freight) is a trade term used in international commerce to determine the total value of goods being imported. The prohibition has been imposed on pocket lighters, gas fuelled, non-refillable or refillable. Imports of pocket lighters, gas fuelled, non-refillable stood at \$0.66 million in 2022-23. It was \$0.13 million in April this fiscal.

Similarly, the inbound shipments of pocket lighters, gas fuelled, and refillable, stood at \$8.87 million in 2022-23 against \$7 million in 2021-22. It was \$0.96 million in April of this fiscal. These are imported mainly from Spain, Turkey and the UAE.

Go First cancels flights till July 6

New Delhi: Cash-strapped Go First Thursday announced extending the cancellation of its scheduled flights till July 6. The airline, which is undergoing insolvency resolution process, stopped flying from May 3 and since then, it has extended cancellation of flights multiple times. "... Due to operational reasons, Go First flights scheduled till 6th July 2023 have been cancelled," the budget carrier said in a tweet. The company has filed an application for immediate resolution and revival of operations. "We will be able to resume bookings shortly," the airline said.

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SEBI cuts listing time



Prime Minister Modi and I agree there's huge potential here. We're making great progress together on the 2030 Roadmap and we want to strike a truly ambitious trade deal that benefits both our nations

RISHI SUNAK | PM, UK

INTERGLOBE AVIATION MCAP FLYING HIGH

The market valuation of InterGlobe Aviation, the parent of IndiGo, reached Rs 1 lakh crore mark Wednesday and became the first airline to achieve this milestone. On Wednesday, the stock rallied 3.55 per cent to settle at Rs 2,619.85 apiece on the BSE



Internet shutdowns cost India \$1.9bn in H1

The shutdowns also led to a loss of nearly \$118 million in foreign investment and triggered over 21,000 job losses

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, June 29: Internet shutdowns by law enforcement agencies like the one in Manipur and Punjab cost \$1.9 billion to the Indian economy in the first half of 2023, a report said Thursday.

The shutdowns also led to a loss of nearly \$118 million in foreign investment and triggered over 21,000 job losses, the global non-profit Internet Society said in its report 'Netloss'.



India's regular use of shutdowns as a tool to maintain public order gives India a shutdown risk of 16% so far this year, one of the highest in the world as of 2023

The non-profit arrived at the financial impact of the shutdowns going beyond the loss of output and included factors like change in the unemployment rate, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) lost, risks of future shutdowns, population in the working age etc.

"Governments often mistakenly believe that internet shutdowns will quell unrest, stop the spread of misinforma-

tion, or reduce harm from cybersecurity threats. But shutdowns are extremely disruptive to economic activity," the report said.

India's regular use of shutdowns as a tool to maintain public order gives India a shutdown risk of 16 per cent so far this year, one of the highest in the world as of 2023, it said.

Shutdowns halt e-commerce, generate losses in time-sensi-

tive transactions, increase unemployment, interrupt business-customer communications, and create financial and reputational risks for companies, it said.

The non-profit started in 1992 made it clear that it is opposed to shutdowns and urged governments to refrain from implementing them due to the damage they inflict on a nation's economy, civil society, and internet infrastructure.

"The global rise in internet shutdowns shows that governments continue to ignore the negative consequences of undermining the open, accessible, and secure nature of the global internet," Internet Society president and chief executive Andrew Sullivan said.

6 YEARS OF GST

₹1.5L-cr monthly tax mop-up 'new normal'

DESPIRE ROBUST COLLECTIONS IN SIX YEARS OF GST, ISSUES LIKE RATIONALISATION OF TAX RATES AND SLABS, LEVYING GST ON PETROL, DIESEL AND ATF, ARE STILL HANGING FIRE



TANUSHREE ROY | DIRECTOR (INDIRECT TAX), NANGIA ANDERSEN INDIA

New Delhi, June 29: Six years after the rollout of the biggest indirect tax reform in India, Goods and Services Tax (GST) revenue of Rs 1.5 lakh crore every month has become a new normal and tax officers are focusing on dealing with fraudsters who are adopting newer modus operandi to game the system, causing loss to the exchequer.

To apprehend black sheep, who operate as syndicates and create fake entities on the basis of forged documents to claim input tax credit (ITC), tax officers have started using data analytics, artificial intelligence and machine learning aiming to curb evasion, which was over Rs 3 lakh crore since inception of GST. It was over Rs 1 lakh crore in 2022-23.

Thinktank Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI) said the most critical pending GST reform is upgradation of GST Network to prevent fake supplies and fraudulent claims of Input Tax Credit (ITC).

Some of the areas on which industry expects more clarity from the GST Council and should be considered on priority pertain to levy/ applicability of GST on Winnings from online gaming; transactions involving cryptocurrency; EV charging infrastructure, and setting up of GST Appellate Tribunals

TANUSHREE ROY | DIRECTOR (INDIRECT TAX), NANGIA ANDERSEN INDIA

"Data analysis and physical checks alone cannot completely solve the problem. The GSTN should enable linking of invoice level information filed for claiming ITC by buyer (from GSTR 3B) with the information provided by input suppliers (GSTR 2A and GSTR 2B)," an official said.

Tax experts are of the opinion that the GST Council must pursue these reforms to make GST more inclusive. However, in an election year, it is unlikely that the Centre and states will go ahead with these reforms.

The GST Council which is chaired by Union Finance Minister, has met 49 times since it was set up in September 2016. The members of the Council, the apex decision-making body with regard to policy making and GST rate decision, include finance

ministers from all states and UTs, besides the Minister of State in the Union Finance Ministry.

A nationwide GST, which subsumed 17 local levies like excise duty, service tax and VAT and 13 cesses, was rolled out at the stroke of midnight July 1, 2017.

With monthly revenues seeing a steady increase, the GST officers are now focusing more on apprehending fraudsters and curbing tax evasion.

The Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) has launched a two-month-long special drive to weed out fake registration under GST and apprehend the mastermind behind all cases of tax evasion. GST Network has identified 60,000 entities which could be having fake registration. Of these, on 43,000 entities, physical verifications by way of visiting business premises have been completed by central and state tax officers.

Following this, 11,140 fake GST registration, involving GST evasion of over Rs 15,000 crore, have been detected by taxmen during the first month of the drive.

The total number of GST evasion cases too had gone up with about 14,000 cases detected in 2022-23, up from 12,574 cases in 2021-22 and 12,596 cases in 2020-21. Authorities arrested 1,402 persons for evading taxes between July 1, 2017, and February 2023.

SHARESWAP DEAL

ICICI Bank gets nod to delist broking arm



ICICI SECURITIES TO TURN 100% SUBSIDIARY OF ICICI BANK UPON DELISTING

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 29: ICICI Bank Thursday approved a proposal to delist ICICI Securities and become a wholly-owned subsidiary of the bank after delisting.

ICICI Securities, promoted by ICICI Bank, is the country's leading retail-led equity franchise, distributor of financial products and investment bank. The company began its operation in May 1995 and continues to grow its operation through expanding its client base and providing different types of services. The board of directors of ICICI Bank at its meeting held Thursday approved the draft scheme of arrangement for the delisting of equity shares of ICICI Securities by issuing equity shares of the bank to the public shareholders of the subsidiary company in lieu of cancellation of their equity shares, the bank said in a regulatory filing.

Following the delisting, ICICI Securities will become a wholly-owned subsidiary of the bank subject to receipt of requisite approvals, it added.

"Pursuant to the Scheme, public shareholders of ICICI Securities would be allotted 67 equity shares of ICICI Bank for every 100 equity shares of ICICI Securities," it said.

The acquisition is likely to be completed in the next 12-15 months after various regulatory approvals

ICICI Securities, which earned a net profit of Rs 1,118cr, had total assets of Rs 15,569cr March 31, 2023

As of March 31, 2023, ICICI Bank held 74.85 per cent of the equity shares of ICICI Securities and the balance 25.15 per cent equity shares were held by the public.

The scheme is subject to the receipt of requisite approvals from the shareholders and creditors of the bank and company, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), the National Company Law Tribunal, BSE Limited and the National Stock Exchange of India Limited and other statutory and regulatory authorities, under applicable law, it added.

"While there are business synergies between the bank and the company, a consolidation by way of the merger is not permissible on account of regulatory restrictions on the bank from undertaking securities broking business departmentally," ICICI Securities said in the filing.

Equity shares held by public shareholders of ICICI Securities will be cancelled, and the share capital of ICICI Securities shall consequently stand reduced to such extent.

Shares of ICICI Securities closed 1.48 per cent higher at Rs 614.30 apiece on BSE while that of the parent firm at Rs 937.45 per share, up 0.06 per cent Wednesday.

CCI flags antitrust concerns with AI, Vistara merger

The CCI note comes amid growing concerns within the industry about a duopoly, with a merged Air India-Vistara and IndiGo controlling more than 80% of the domestic market as smaller rivals such as SpiceJet and Go First struggle

REUTERS

New Delhi, June 29: India's antitrust body is scrutinising Air India's planned merger with Vistara and has asked the company why it should not be investigated further over competition concerns, potentially delaying the process, two sources with direct knowledge said.

It is a new challenge for former government-owned Air India, which Tata Group took over last year. The Indian airline has ambitious plans to modernise its fleet, operational systems and revenue management.

In a bid to streamline businesses, Tata in November said it was merging its two full-service carriers Air India and Vistara to create a bigger airline that will take on local rivals such as IndiGo and Middle Eastern carriers that dominate outbound



traffic from India. The Competition Commission of India (CCI) has flagged that on some routes and categories - such as business class travel - the merged entity could have a monopoly, said one of the two

sources, who declined to be named as the matter is confidential.

The CCI has issued a so-called "show cause" notice to Air India to explain its position, and they have 30 days to respond, the two

If the CCI isn't satisfied with Air India's response or the concessions offered, it could order a Phase II review that can take more than three months. That process requires a detailed investigation where the CCI seeks comments and objections from stakeholders, including the public, and could order changes to the merger

VAIBHAV CHOUKSE | HEAD OF COMPETITION LAW, J SAGAR ASSOCIATES

sources said.

Vistara is a joint venture between Tata and Singapore Airlines; neither of those companies responded to requests for comment.

To address the CCI's concerns, Air India could make

concessions such as giving up certain routes or reducing frequency, the second source said, adding that Air India remains confident the matter can be resolved by recommending certain changes.

Major airline mergers typically receive scrutiny from big markets in which they operate around the world. In November, Tata and Singapore Airlines said they expected the merger to be completed by March 2024.

Vistara and Air India both fly on international routes such as London and Dubai and would need antitrust clearances in other jurisdictions, the first source said.

Air India is expecting similar queries from foreign countries once it applies for clearance there, but is waiting for the India process to first close, the source added.

Duckett leads England fightback



BEN DUCKETT

REUTERS

London, June 29: Opener Ben Duckett hit 98 (134b, 9x4) as England raced to 278/4 in an another high octane 'Bazball' batting display to continue their Ashes fightback on day two of the second Lord's Test Thursday after bowling Australia out for 416 on a memorable day's action.

In the latest extraordinary display of modern-day Test cricket, England enjoyed their best Ashes opening stand for 11 years and rattled to their total at almost 5-an-over.

However, the counterpoint of their all-action approach meant they also gifted key wickets when well-set batsmen refused to back down in the face of Australia's

somewhat desperate short-pitched approach.

As the chaos mounted after tea, veteran Australian radio commentator Jim Maxwell described it as "the most bizarre hour's cricket I've ever seen - this is madness at the home of cricket," and few in the packed Lord's grandstands would disagree.

England, so flat Wednesday, began the day much more purposefully as Australia resumed on 339/5 with Steve Smith on 85, as Stuart Broad and Jimmy Anderson quickly removed Alex Carey and Mitchell Starc.

However, Smith, who Wednesday became the fourth Australian to pass 9,000 runs, pressed on to claim his 32nd Test century (110, 184b, 15x4) before

2ND ASHES TEST
Day 3's play
Time: 3:30 pm
Telecast: Sony Sports Network

finally departing for 110 via a superb catch by Duckett at second slip to give Josh Tongue (3/98) his third wicket.

Captain Pat Cummins, who batted superbly to bring Australia home in the first Test, again looked assured to end unbeaten on 22 and, though he will be delighted with his team's final tally, it represented something of a tail off from when they were seemingly cruising at 316/3 Wednesday afternoon.

England set about their reply at their now customary speed and Duckett and Zak Crawley's (48, 48b, 5x4) 91-run partnership

was their best opening stand in the Ashes since Andrew Strauss and Alastair Cook put on 98 in Sydney in 2011.

Crawley was stumped for a run a ball 48 after what looked a pre-meditated advance to Nathan Lyon (1/35). Ollie Pope (42, 63b, 4x4) came in and maintained the momentum as Australia's attack struggled for any sort of penetration.

Pope hooked a Cameron bouncer straight down the throat of Smith. Australia were celebrating even more loudly moments later when Joe Root, seemingly infected by the giddy excitement, was caught behind swinging wildly at the second ball he faced, only to be recalled after Green's delivery was deemed a no ball.

Despite that escape, England continued to engage as Australia continued with their short ball and stacked leg side approach. Duckett was the next to pay the price, caught off a top-edged hook two short of a place on the Lord's honours board.

Almost unbelievably Root followed soon after doing the same thing, well caught by Smith off Starc, while Harry Brook (45 batting, 51b, 4x4) was then dropped by Marnus Labuschagne at square leg, also swinging at a short ball.

It fell to captain Ben Stokes (17 batting), of all people, to introduce a note of calm to proceedings during the final hour as the captain reminded his teammates that it is within the laws of the game to leave a bouncer.

Australia suffered a setback during the final session when off spinner Lyon, playing his 100th consecutive Test, limped off in some distress with what looked like a calf injury which could leave Australia short of options in the fourth innings.

BRIEF SCORES: Australia 416 (Steve Smith 110; Josh Tongue 3/98, Ollie Robinson 3/100); England 278/4 (Ben Duckett 98, Zak Crawley 48, Harry Brook 45 batting, Ollie Pope 42; Nathan Lyon 1/35, Cameron Green 1/43). Match to continue.

Ganguly baffled by call to name Rahane vice-captain



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 29: Sourav Ganguly finds it extremely baffling that Ajinkya Rahane has been handed Test vice captaincy after spending nearly 18 months on the sidelines as the former India skipper demanded "consistency and continuity" in the selection process.

Rahane, 35, was out of favour for one-and-a-half years but was India's best batter in the World Test Championship final against Australia, with scores of 89 and 46 at the Oval, earlier this month.

Just one Test old after making a comeback, the national selection committee headed by interim chief Shiv Sunder Das re-appointed Rahane as Rohit Sharma's deputy for the West Indies Test series.

So was it not ideal to groom someone like Shubman Gill for the role? "Yeah I think so," Ganguly told PTI during an exclusive interaction from London.

While he didn't term Rahane's ascendancy as a step backward, he didn't term it as a pragmatic decision. "I won't say it's a step backward. You have been out for 18 months, then you play a Test and you become a vice-captain. I don't understand the thought process be-

hind it. There is Ravindra Jadeja, who has been there for a long time and a certainty in Test matches, he is a candidate."

"But to just come back and straightway become vice-captain after 18 months, I don't understand. My only thing is that selection shouldn't be hot and cold. There has to be continuity and consistency in selection," Ganguly, one of India's finest Test captains, said.

The Indian selectors have hit the transition button by excluding a batter of Chetshwar Pujara's stature and Ganguly wants that communication channel should be clear with a player, who has featured in more than 100 Tests for India.

"Selectors should have a clear idea about him (Pujara). Do they need him to play Test cricket anymore or do they want to continue with youngsters and communicate it to him. Somebody like Pujara can't be dropped, then picked, dropped again and then picked. Same with Ajinkya Rahane also," the straight-talking Ganguly said.

BACKING SARFARAZ

There has been an overgrowing feeling that even to get a nod in Test cricket, one needs to have a solid IPL like Rituraj Gaikwad had. Ganguly, though, disagrees



with that notion. He said a prolific batter like Sarfraz Khan, who could not do well in IPL, should get a chance to prove himself.

"I think Yashasvi Jaiswal has scored tons of runs in Ranji Trophy, Irani Trophy, Duleep Trophy. I think that's why he is in the squad. I feel for Sarfraz Khan. At some point he should get an opportunity for the amount of runs that he has scored in past three years."

"And same thing for Abhimanyu Easwaran for the tons of runs he has scored in last five to six years. I am surprised that both of them have been omitted but they should get a chance in future. But Yashasvi Jaiswal is a good selection."

He has seen Sarfraz from close quarters as Director of Cricket at Delhi Capitals and he isn't amused with the perception that he can't play fast bowling. "If you don't play him (Sarfraz) against fast bowling, how do you know?" he countered.

"If he had problems he wouldn't have scored so many runs all around (India). I personally feel he has no problems against fast bowling and he should be given an opportunity."

5 Indians out of Elorda Cup

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Astana (Kazakhstan), June 29: In a disappointing outing for Indian boxers, all five pugilists in action - Zoram Muana, Pukharam Kishan Singh, Shiksha, Ashish Kumar and Hemant Yadav - lost their respective quarterfinal bouts to exit the Elorda Cup here Thursday.

Against Saken Bibossinov, Zoram (51kg) was no match for the Kazakh. In the 54kg category, Pukharam also endured loss against Daulet Moldashev of Kazakhstan while in the 57kg category, Ashish Kumar was outpunched by Sukhth Sarawut of Thailand.

Hemant Yada went down to local boxer Talgat Shaikenov in 75kg category. Zhaina Shekerbekova of Kazakhstan, Shiksha (54kg) fought valiantly but ended on the losing side.

Sindhu, Harshit put NOZ in command

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, June 29: Nishant Sindhu (150, 245b, 18x4, 3x6) and Harshit Rana (122 n o, 86b, 12x4, 9x6) carved hundreds of different shades to power North Zone (NOZ) to a massive 540/8 in the first innings, constructing a foundation for their bowlers to solidify that superiority over North East Zone (NEZ) on the second day of the Duleep Trophy quarterfinal here. NEZ were 65/3, 475 runs in arrears, when bad light and rain forced an early closure to their first dig Thursday.

NOZ's travel to ascendancy began when Sindhu, overnight 76, moved on smoothly to his third first-class hundred with a single to mid-off to Dippu Sanfma.

Sindhu lost his partner Pulkit Narang in the first hour itself, but NEZ had little respite as Rana



Nishant Sindhu (R) gives Himanshu Rana a fist bump during their partnership, Thursday

came in carrying a destructive mood. Both Sindhu, 19, and Rana, 21, have been highly rated in the domestic circuit, evidenced from them getting IPL contracts with Chennai Super Kings and Kolkata Knight Riders respectively.

Sindhu opted for a rather traditional batting approach, se-

lecting the freebies to open his shoulders. But at the other end, Rana purred like a race car against the NEZ bowling attack.

CEZ in control
After a shabby batting effort, Central Zone (CEZ) came roaring back into the match bowling out East Zone (EAZ) for 122 in their first innings to enjoy a healthy lead of 124 runs in their quarterfinal Thursday.

Central closed the day at 64 for no loss in their second innings as openers Himanshu Mantri (25) and Vivek Singh (34) stayed till the close on second day to hand their team a definite edge. They were bundled out for 182 in their first innings Wednesday. Pacer Avesh Khan (3/34) and left-arm spinner Saurabh Kumar (3/46) shared six wickets equally among them to hasten the fall of EAZ.

They resumed from the overnight 32/2 and were in need of a solid partnership to cover the early losses. East's biggest hope of reaching a healthy total was experienced Anustup Majumdar and Riyan Parag. However, the duo failed to impress. Muralisingh played a cameo of 34-ball 30.

Neeraj returns to action after injury



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Lausanne, June 29: Returning to action after a one-month injury lay-off, Olympic champion javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra will seek his second straight podium finish of the season at the Lausanne leg of the Diamond League in a star-studded field Friday.

The 25-year-old Indian superstar had made a perfect start to the Diamond League season with a top podium finish in Doha, Qatar, May 5 with a fourth career-best throw of 88.67m but suffered a muscle strain while training later that month.

He issued a statement May 29 stating his injury and pulled out of the FBK Games June 4 at Hengelo (the Netherlands) and Paavo Nurmi Games in Turku, Finland June 13 as a precautionary measure.

But he did not miss any Diamond League competition as the subsequent legs in Rabat, Rome, Paris and Oslo did not have men's javelin events in the roster.

In action in Lausanne he will also be Tokyo Olympics silver medalist and season leader Jakub Vadlejch (SB: 89.51m, PB: 90.88m) of Czech Republic, world champion Anderson Peters of Grenada (SB: 85.88m, PB: 93.07m), Oliver Helander (SB: 87.32m, PB: 89.83m) of Finland, 2012 Olympic champion Keshorn Walcott (PB: 85.85m, SB: 90.16m) of Trinidad and Tobago and Germany's Julian Weber (SB: 88.37m, PB: 89.54m).

Having won the Doha Diamond League event, Chopra is cur-

rently leading the standings, with eight points, followed by Vadlejch with seven points, and Peters with six points.

The Indian superstar will be looking to further establish his ascendancy and dominance in the prestigious one-day event series, having won the Diamond League trophy last year.

Following the Lausanne event, men's javelin throw will also be a part of the competition in the Monaco and Zurich legs July 21 and August 31 before the Diamond League grand finale in Eugene, USA, September 16-17.

India's newest Diamond League podium finisher, long jumper Murali Sreeshankar will also be in action in his event here. He will be looking to register his second podium finish after taking the third spot in Paris earlier in June with a jump of 8.09m.

The 24-year-old Sreeshankar is coming into the Lausanne Diamond League after a personal best jump of 8.41m en route to winning gold at the National Inter-State Athletics Championships earlier this month, just 1cm shy of the national record of 8.42m which is in the name of Jeswin Aldrin.

A host of international top stars, led by Olympic champion Miltiadis Tentoglou of Greece, will be in action along with Sreeshankar. Switzerland's Simon Ehammer, who defeated Tentoglou in mid-June in Oslo with a jump of 8.32m, and young Italian revelation Mattia Furlani (8.24m) will also compete here.

ARSENAL LEAD RACE TO ROPE IN DECLAN RICE

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Manchester, June 29: In an off-season when Lionel Messi and Karim Benzema have already made moves, Declan Rice is turning into one of the biggest stories of the transfer window.

Arsenal appear to be closing in on a deal worth up to a reported 105 million pounds (USD 133 million) for the England international, who has been linked with many of Europe's biggest clubs.

Manchester City, which has also targeted the West Ham midfielder, is not prepared to match that figure, according to a person with knowledge of the Premier League champion's transfer plans.

The person spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to comment publicly. That looks to have left the path clear for Arsenal to make what could be one of the most pivotal signings in English football's top division.

After going head-to-head in last season's title race, City and Arsenal have been locked in a battle for Rice's signature since the transfer window opened. Arsenal



missed out on the title after leading the standings for most of

the season. It might have been a differ-

ent story if Rice had been in the heart of its midfield. That is likely what Arsenal manager Mikel Arteta is banking on after making him a leading target this year.

The 24-year-old Rice has established himself as a leader on the field, with the energy to drive his team forward and the combativeness to dominate matches. He is set to leave West Ham after leading it to success in the Europa Conference League, the club's first major trophy in more than 40 years.

Rice is the type of player with the potential to close the gap between Arsenal and City, which won a treble of trophies, including the Premier League title, Champions League and FA Cup.

The move for Rice points to City manager Pep Guardiola's desire to strengthen the midfield following the departure of Ilkay Gundogan to Barcelona. While midfielder Mateo Kovacic signed with City from Chelsea Tuesday for 25 million pounds (USD 31.6 million), doubts remain about the future of Bernardo Silva.

Havertz joins Gunners Kai Havertz completed a