



BHUMI'S OBLIGATION

Actor Bhumi Pednekar credits her directors for making her the artiste that she has become today

LEISURE P2



DUTCH KING APOLOGISES

Dutch King Willem-Alexander apologises for his country's role in slavery on the 150th anniversary of the abolition of slavery

INTERNATIONAL P10



INDIA ENTER FINAL

India reach SAFF Championship final after beating Lebanon 4-2 in a tense penalty shootout

SPORTS P12

SHORT TAKES

ODI World Cup sans WI for first time

Harare: The West Indies (WI) will not be part of the ODI World Cup for the first time in the history of the tournament after being eliminated from the Qualifiers - a result that plunged country's cricket to an unimaginable low Saturday. Coming into the do-or-die Super Six contest, West Indies, packed with some bona-fide T20 superstars, suffered an embarrassing seven-wicket defeat against Scotland after managing a modest 181 in 43.5 overs. It was an impressive show by the Scots, especially by all-rounder Brandon McMullen, who first took three wickets, and then scored a patient 69 off 106 balls to steer his side to a famous victory. P12

2,400 arrested in France for rioting

Paris: As the number of arrests continued to mount, the government suggested the violence was beginning to lessen thanks to tougher security measures. Since the unrest began Tuesday night, police have made a total of 2,400 arrests - more than half of those in the fourth night of violence, triggered by the deadly shooting of a 17-year-old by police. The government deployed 45,000 police around the country to try to quell violence. Overnight young protesters clashed with police, set some 2,500 fires and ransacked stores. P10

Suspected ultras torch 9 machines

Bhubaneswar: Suspected Maoists ransacked properties and set afire nine machines in a crusher unit in Rayagada district, police said Saturday. The incident took place near Deokupali under the jurisdiction of Muniguda police station late Friday night. According to the police, 10 Maoists including some women cadres barged into the crusher unit and set fire to two porcelain machines, five Hywars and two loaders. The Red rebels also left behind posters in which they claimed that they destroyed the machines as the crusher unit was causing pollution in the area.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



No cab. Fuel prices have gone so high that even the PM is travelling in Metro

WEATHER		BHUB	CTK
TEMP	MAX	37.4°C	37.2°C
	MIN	27.9°C	27.0°C
Humidity		74%	73%
Rainfall		Nil	Nil
	Forecast	PARTLY CLOUDY SKY	



RACE TO WIN: Participants rush with their oxen to the state-level bullock cart race at Ramanahalli near Chikmagalur in Karnataka, Saturday

PTI PHOTO

Post merger, HDFC world's fourth most valuable bank

AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 1: In what is being called the biggest transaction in the history of India Inc, HDFC Bank has taken over its parent, housing finance major HDFC, Saturday. Following the reverse merger, the country's first home finance company, would cease to exist.

Post-merger, HDFC Bank will become the fourth most valued lender in the world, and narrow the gap by asset size with state-owned SBI to be the second largest Indian bank, said sources.

HDFC Bank started rebranding offices of erstwhile HDFC Ltd with its colours Saturday, on the first day of operations as a merged entity. Branding at all over the 500 offices and branches of the home loan major started getting the HDFC Bank look from Saturday morning onwards, officials said.

The entire exercise of changing the look at HDFC Ltd's offices and branches is slated to take about 24 hours, they said.

"HDFC Ltd, the parent of the country's largest private sector lender, merged into HDFC Bank Saturday, with boards of both the entities clearing the plan first presented April 4 last year," said sources. P11

Dengue stings 175; Capital worst hit

State government issues standard operating procedure for all the districts in view of rising number of the vector-borne cases

Bhubaneswar, July 1: As the monsoon sets in, the state is witnessing an alarming rise in dengue cases with the Capital City of Bhubaneswar recording 92 out of the state total of 175.

While Smart City Bhubaneswar has reported 92 cases of the vector-borne disease, Jajpur registered 12 cases, Balasore and Cuttack 10 each, Puri eight, Jagatsinghpur and Bhadrak seven each, Nayagarh six, Rayagada five, Koraput four and Mayurbhanj, Kalahandi, Jharsuguda, Dhenkanal and Kendrapara saw two cases each. Mineral-rich Keonjhar district has so far reported only one case of the vector-borne disease.

The state government has issued a standard operating pro-



cedure (SOP) for the districts in view of rising dengue cases, Director of Public Health Niranjan Mishra said.

"Malaria and dengue usually raise ugly heads during July and August. We conducted 5,400 tests during this period last year. This year, 10,781 tests have already been done. There were almost 300 dengue cases around this time last year. However, now there are only 175 cases so far despite an increase in the tests," Mishra added.

As per the directive of the Centre, state government has intensified free testing in all districts, he said, adding dedicated beds, medicines, blood and platelets have been arranged.

"Fever and headache are symptoms of dengue. Hence, those with these symptoms should go for enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay (ELISA) test," Mishra pointed out. Dengue is a viral dis-

ease. In 90 per cent cases, it gets cured by itself.

As Khurda has been reporting the maximum cases, free testing has been ensured at Khurda district headquarters hospital, AIIMS-Bhubaneswar, Capital Hospital and RMRC.

Capital Hospital director Laxmidhar Sahoo said dengue situation in state is under control.

"Around 47 dengue patients have so far visited Capital Hospital. And 45 of them have been discharged. We have been testing at least 35 to 40 samples every day while 4-5 of them are turning out positive. As Bhubaneswar has been recording the maximum cases in Odisha, we have arranged 10 dedicated dengue beds at Capital Hospital," Sahoo said, adding that more beds will be provided if the situation so warrants.

According to BMC city health officer Deepak Bisoi, maximum cases were being reported from IRC Village area. "Last year, maximum cases were reported from Chandrasekharpur and Niladri Vihar areas. This year, however, around 22 cases have so far been reported from IRC Village area," Bisoi said.

OTP SHARING SCAM STF nabs man for links with Pak intelligence

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 1: The Special Task Force (STF) of Odisha Police has arrested a software company employee identified as Abhijeet Sanjay Jambure for his alleged involvement in an OTP selling and sharing scam. Jambure was in regular touch with two Pakistani intelligence officials for a long time, said an official Saturday.

Abhijeet Sanjay Jambure was arrested from Pune June 29 and was produced before a local court in the city and then brought to Bhubaneswar after getting a three-day transit remand.

Jambure did his post graduate in statistics from Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel University, Ananda, Gujarat, and was working in a software company in Pune.

STF officials said Abhijeet was in regular touch with two Pakistani intelligence officials for a long time.

In 2018, he met one Syed Danish Ali Naqvi of Khanki, Faisalabad, Pakistan through Facebook messenger, who identified himself as a freelancer at Chegg (an American education technology company).

Abhijeet had shared his user id and password of Chegg to Danish.

25 charred to death in Maha bus tragedy

CM Eknath Shinde orders probe into the accident and announces ex gratia of ₹5 lakh for the families of each deceased

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Nagpur, July 1: At least 25 passengers were charred to death when the private bus they were travelling in caught fire after hitting a pole and a divider on Nagpur-Mumbai 'Samruddhi Expressway' in eastern Maharashtra's Buldhana district in the early hours of Saturday, police said.

Eight persons, including the driver and cleaner, survived. A case for negligent driving was registered against the driver with police believing, prima facie, that he dozed off and lost control over the vehicle.

The private sleeper coach bus was on its way to Pune from Nagpur when it met with the accident around 1:30am at Pimpalkhuta village near Sindkhedraja, 130 km from Nagpur.

"After hitting the pole and divider, the bus overturned and fell on its right side with its



entry/exit door facing the sky. Within minutes, the vehicle caught fire. Some of the passengers were able to come out through broken windows from the rear side," a senior police official from Buldhana said. As most victims' bodies were charred beyond recognition, the authorities have decided to conduct DNA testing to identify them. Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde ordered a probe into the accident and announced an ex gratia of ₹5 lakh for the families of each deceased.

President Droupadi Murmu, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah and other leaders expressed grief over the loss of life. A case was registered against the driver after questioning, said Buldhana Superintendent of Police Sunil Kadasne.

Monsoon Session of Parl from July 20

KULDEEP SINGH, OP

New Delhi, July 1: The Monsoon session of the Parliament will commence from July 20 and continue till August 11, Union Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi said Saturday.

The Union government could introduce a Bill on the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) during the Monsoon session.

The session will have 17 sittings, Joshi said, and appealed all the parties to contribute towards productive discussions on legislative business.

"Monsoon Session, 2023 of Parliament will commence July 20 and continue till August 11. Urge all parties to contribute to-

wards productive discussions on Legislative Business and other items during the Monsoon Session," Pralhad Joshi said.

The Monsoon session will be a stormy one with the opposition parties all set to corner the government on several issues including the ethnic clashes in Manipur.

According to reports, the Union government could introduce a Bill to implement the UCC during the session.

The Rajya Sabha Secretariat has also issued a public notice stating that a Parliamentary panel will hear views of the Department of Legal Affairs, the Legislative department and the Law Commission on UCC July 3. P3

World's lowest car with no doors, tyres stuns netizens

THE PECULIAR CAR FASCINATES MANY ON SOCIAL MEDIA AND THE CREATIVITY BEHIND THE AMAZING DESIGN IN AN INDUSTRY WHERE AUTOMOBILES ARE CONSTANTLY CHANGING TO ACCOMMODATE DIFFERENT BUDGETS IS BEING APPRECIATED

AGENCIES

Rome, July 1: A video featuring a car claiming to be the "world's lowest" has gone viral on social media platforms. The vehicle in question appears to have no tyres or doors for entry, leading to curiosity about how it can be driven.

The remarkable car has fascinated many on social media and they are praising the creativity behind the amazing design in an industry where automobiles are constantly changing to accommodate different budgets.



The video was shared by one Massimo on Twitter. The now-viral video shows a cyan-coloured car moving on the road. When one looks at it, it is hard to accept that it is actually a vehicle since

it has no doors or tyres. People watching the car are in for a surprise as the front bonnet flap glides smoothly along the road with windows on all sides. The video was originally

shared by the YouTube channel Caramagheddon. They document the transformation of a broken car into what is now recognised as the lowest car in the world. A robot is installed, carefully positioned on a robust wooden board and a GoPro camera is added to the front of the car, assuring a clean path free of obstructions.

The original source of the video is the YouTube channel called Caramagheddon, which is managed by a group of Italian automobile enthusiasts. Their speciality lies in transforming damaged or ordinary cars into

unique and extraordinary creations. The 'world's lowest car' featured in the viral video is one such remarkable creation.

"The lowest car in the world," reads the caption of the post. Since being shared on the microblogging platform, the post has amassed 38 million views and 11.4 lakh likes.

"I wonder what will happen when it encounters a speed bump," said a user.

"This looks like a GTA glitch," added a person. A third person said, "If it's car then it's richest man in the world."

leisure

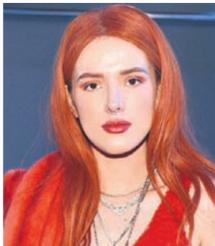


AMANDA BYNES CHECKS OUT OF PSYCHIATRIC FACILITY

American actress Amanda Bynes has left the mental health facility almost two weeks after she was admitted, according to a report. The actress was previously placed on a psychiatric hold in March after she was seen walking around naked in Los Angeles.

BELLA THORNE WEARS SEXUAL ABUSE 'LIKE A DIRTY COLOGNE'

Actress Bella Thorne has compared the lasting effects of sexual abuse to 'wearing a dirty cologne' and revealed a scene in her directorial debut *Paint Her Red*, which premiered at the Taormina Film Festival in Italy this week, was inspired by her own experience.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
You will be very short-tempered today. Your temper is ready to burst at the drop of a hat. But, Ganesha says, it will be of no avail. It would be better to exhaust all that energy in some vigorous swimming or any sort of physical activity. Ganesha suggests that you actually run your way back to home.

TAURUS
You will find it difficult to keep up appearances. Be prepared, says Ganesha. Situations are likely to bring out your inner feelings, your true nature. If someone crosses or confronts you will neither take it lying down, nor be inclined to forget and forgive. Maintain your composure and don't allow anyone to hassle or provoke you.

GEMINI
You will be in an extremely sensitive and emotional frame of mind today. While it is alright when it comes to family matters, you need to put your head over your heart when making decisions at the workplace. It is a good day to sign new contracts and to take up new projects, says Ganesha.

CANCER
A chance of misunderstanding likely with anyone, says Ganesha. Not the time to take a decision, whereby you repent later. Transfer to a new place, or auspicious function at home are indicated. Ganesha sends his blessings.

LEO
You will pay attention only to your work and will not be distracted by other issues today, says Ganesha. People involved in Research and Development related fields will find that their knowledge will come in handy for them today. Steps taken in the right direction will make your task very easy today.

VIRGO
From a tedious, weary morning, the day will gradually turn out to be very thrilling in the evening, says Ganesha. In the afternoon, though, you may hit a roadblock, and you will feel stressed out. However, all that stress will melt away in the evening in the company of your near and dear ones.

LIBRA
Ganesha says you will try to maintain a place of pride and your status quo in society. You will be able to impress people with your speech and your wit. You will gain popularity amongst people because of your personality and your external appearance. Ganesha assures you that you will have a successful day today.

SCORPIO
Your career graph is gradually shooting up because of your incredible work. Your will power will help you achieve difficult targets. The confidence through which you handle all the unforeseen situations is worth appreciating, feels Ganesha.

SAGITTARIUS
Celebrations galore, foresees Ganesha. Two different individuals may have different opinions, but that should not result into ugly arguments. Watch out for any mishap, warns Ganesha. Your near and dear ones become a priority in the evening. Also, you will look forward to a candle-lit dinner with your sweetheart in the evening.

CAPRICORN
Love is in the air for you, today. You will take your sweetheart out for a romantic dinner, shopping or anything of that sort and pamper him/her to the hilt. But, don't spend like a sailor as you have limited sources of income, advises Ganesha. Busy in social gatherings and parties, you will make a mark on everyone's mind with your wit and humour.

AQUARIUS
Be appreciative of the achievements of others as it will inspire them to continue and put their best foot forward. Your amicable approach at work will create friendly environment and motivate your colleagues to perform better.

PISCES
It is a great day to be social and catch up with friends and make travel plans with near and dear ones. You find peace, comfort and pleasure in any travel that you undertake today. There might be some reasons that might result in mild mental stress but if you are cautious and prepared than nothing will be able to usher you in harm's way.

I'm a constant learner: Bhumi

Mumbai: Actress Bhumi Pednekar credits her directors for making her the artiste that she has become today. "The directors that I have been fortunate to work with, have shaped my career and my craft and I couldn't be more grateful to them," says the *Badhaai Do* actress. Bhumi feels she has been able to make a mark constantly because the directors believed in her talent and honed her to better her acting skills with every film.

She says, "The directors I have worked with have been so forward-thinking, they have rooted for equality and they have made the girl an agent of change and action. My core values have matched with the filmmakers that I have worked with. I will continue doing the same all throughout my career because I'm a constant learner."

She adds, "I feel I have something new to learn and become better as an actor every single day. I'm always going to be this person. Every day I'm working hard to achieve that goal."

On the work front, Bhumi will be seen in films like Ajay Bahl's *The Ladykiller*, Gauri Khan produced *Bhakhshak* and Mudassar Aziz's *Mere Husband Ki Biwi*



Let people keep guessing who I'm dating: Ananya

Mumbai: In the recent months, speculations about a budding romance between actor Ananya Panday and Aditya Roy Kapur have been making headlines. The duo intensified these rumours when they posed together at designer Manish Malhotra's Diwali party last year, captivating everyone's attention. However, Panday chooses to keep her relationship status under wraps.

Without giving any clarification about her relationship status, she says, "It's good to be curious, people should keep guessing who I'm dating."

While the buzz around her personal life continues, the actress has faced some setbacks on the work front. Both her films - *Liger*, *Gehraaiyan* (both of 2022) - failed to gather a significant positive response. Reflecting on these challenges, Ananya reveals that she has learnt valuable lessons from these past projects that didn't meet expectations of many.

"No matter how cliché it sounds, it's about the journey and not about the destination. My lessons are, not giving up and not thinking too much about the outcome but living in that moment and giving it your all," she adds.

AGENCIES

Suniel not for censorship of streaming platforms

Mumbai: For the past few months, there have been calls to bring in a censorship system into the OTT space to crack down abusive language and obscenities in shows and movies. But actor Suniel Shetty is not in favour of the idea.

"I don't believe that good doesn't sell and only evil sells. That is where we are going wrong, and it is because of social media. That being said, censorship is a very difficult process today. What do you censor? What don't? So, you have to be morally responsible," says the *Dhadkan* actor.

"In today's world, there is a very thin line in everything. For instance, if you are taking advantage of no censorship in the space to sell junk, then it's not fair. Restrictions, when it comes to age and content, should very much be there," adds Suniel.

Explaining his thoughts, the 61-year-old further says, "If it is extreme, and if it is harming someone, an individual, a religion or anything or causing an overall disturbance in the ecosystem, then it's not fair. You have to be morally responsible. I would not show or be part of such content because I feel there's an audience for it."

AGENCIES

Ameesha's spoiler irks fans of *Gadar* franchise

Mumbai: Little must have Ameesha Patel imagined that her tweet would enrage thousands of fans of the *Gadar* franchise when all she intended was to ease the concerns of admirers of her character Sakina. The teaser of the highly anticipated sequel *Gadar 2* left several fans disappointed when they saw Tara Singh (Sunny Deol) grieving at a grave, which was assumed to be of his beloved wife Sakina.

An excited Ameesha immediately took to Twitter and assured fans that Sakina is not dead. "Hey all my lovely fans!! Too many of u have been concerned n worried with this shot from GADAR 2 thinking it's SAKINA who is dead !! Well it's not !! Who it is I can't say but it's not

SAKINA !! So pls don't WORRY !! love u all," she tweeted.

However, Ameesha giving away such a spoiler has left the fans disappointed. "In every tweet plz keep updating us about every 5 min of film scenes. We are worried about all the characters," a fan sarcastically remarked. "Haan Poori Story bolde behen kuch b suspense math rakh," commented another.

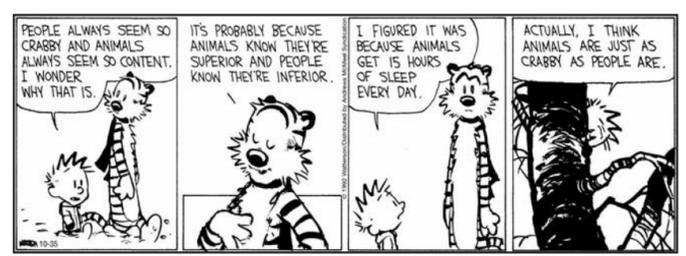
Helmed by Anil Sharma and produced by Zee Studios, *Gadar 2* is slated to release in cinemas August 11, 2023.

AGENCIES

PEANUTS



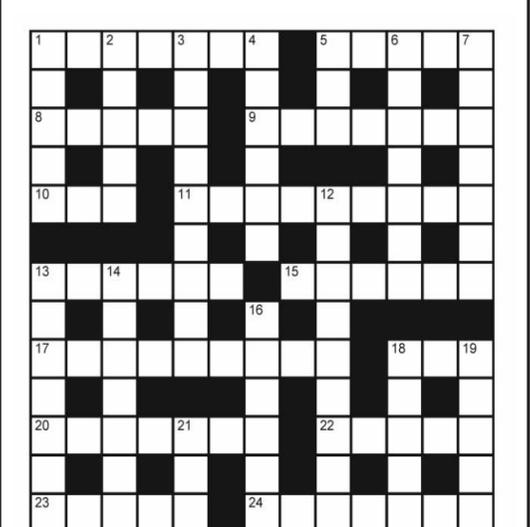
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



FUN post CROSSWORD



- Copyright ©2023 PuzzleJunction.com
- Across**
- 1 David Niven and Ronald Colman each played him
 - 5 Like some bodies on a beach
 - 8 "Peer Gynt" dramatist
 - 9 Plea reply, at times
 - 10 Personals, e.g.
 - 11 Playground structure (6,3)
 - 13 Latin dance (3-3)
 - 15 African antelope
 - 17 Listen in, on the Q.T.
 - 18 Unruly crowd
 - 20 In plain sight
 - 22 Brief brawl (3-2)
 - 23 Horse-drawn wagon
 - 24 Grassy knoll
 - 2 Dukes (4,5)
 - 4 Tranquil
 - 5 Buffoon
 - 6 Trattoria order
 - 7 Catch-22
 - 12 City street features
 - 13 Old World herb
 - 14 Personal guru
 - 16 Pressing
 - 18 Slogan
 - 19 Ice unit
 - 21 True laurel
- Down**
- 1 Side dish

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.

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

SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

C	O	N	C	O	R	D	L	E	A	K	
A	O	R	O	A	N	G					
C	A	R	D	I	A	C	T	O	T	A	L
A	M	O	I	E	I	A					
O	U	S	E	L	O	X	G	I	N		
			E	E		U	C				
H	O	A	R	S	E	S	C	R	A	P	E
U	L					T	A				
M	A	C	P	O	I	M	O	U	N	T	
B	O	A	M	P	T	U					
U	S	H	E	R	B	R	I	S	T	O	L
G	O	T	R	N	E	R					
P	L	O	Y			E	N	G	A	R	D

SUDOKU

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

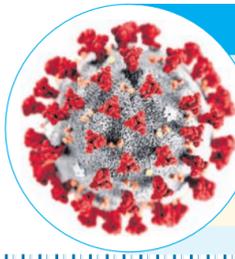
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown



QUESTION HOURS

Candidates gather outside an examination centre for Odisha Teacher Eligibility Test (OTET) in Tulasipur area of Cuttack, Saturday



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	69,00,68,151	66,24,96,191	68,89,432
India	4,49,92,293	4,44,57,720	5,31,886
Odisha	13,36,304	13,26,915	9,204

STATE GST MOP-UP RISES 10% IN JUNE



Bhubaneswar, July 1: Odisha has recorded a 10.46 per cent growth in gross Goods and Services Tax (GST) collection – from ₹3,965.28 crore in June 2022 to ₹4,379.97 crore in June 2023, an official said Saturday.

Notably, the state had recorded gross GST collection of ₹4,397.73 crore in May this year as against ₹3,955.75 crore collected during the corresponding period of last year, registering 11.17 per cent growth.

The progressive gross GST collection up to June 2023 stands at ₹13,813.44 crore as against a collection of ₹12,831.26 crore up to June 2022, recording a growth rate of 7.65 per cent.

The state has collected Odisha Goods and Services Tax (OGST) and Integrated Goods and Services Tax (IGST) settlement

crore as against ₹4,350.88 crore collected till June 2022, registering a growth of 30.13 per cent.

The collection under all Acts monitored by the Commissionerate of CT & GST, Odisha, including GST, VAT, Entry Tax and Profession Tax, stands at ₹2,865.01 crore during June 2023 as against a collection of ₹2,516.81 crore during June 2022, registering a growth rate of 13.84 per cent.

During June 2023, as many as 18.79 lakh waybills have been generated vis-à-vis 15.33 lakh waybills generated during June 2022, recording a growth of 22.56 per cent.

Meanwhile, the Finance Ministry said that the GST collections rose 12 per cent to over ₹1.61 lakh crore in June.

The all-India gross GST revenue collected in the month of June, 2023 is ₹1,61,497 crore of which CGST is ₹31,013 crore, SGST is ₹38,292 crore, IGST is ₹80,292 crore (including ₹39,035 crore collected on import of goods) and cess is ₹11,900 crore (including 1,028 crore collected on import of goods).

At national level, the government has settled ₹36,224 crore to CGST and ₹30269 crore to SGST from IGST. The total revenue of Centre and the states in the month of June 2023 after regular settlement is ₹67,237 crore for CGST and ₹68,561 crore for the SGST.

Odisha has collected OGST and IGST settlement to the tune of ₹1,732.49 crore in June this year as against ₹1,384.59 crore collected during the corresponding period of last year, recording a growth of 25.13 per cent

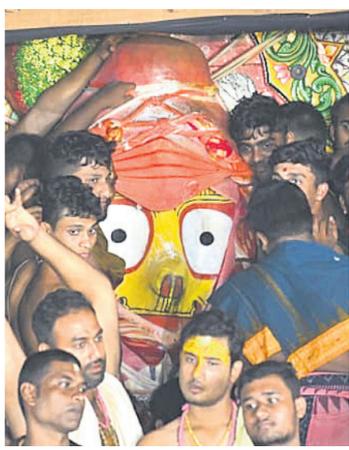
There has been a 13.84 per cent rise in collection under all Acts monitored by the Commissionerate of CT & GST, Odisha – from ₹2,516.81 crore during June 2022 to ₹2,865.01 crore during June 2023

to the tune of ₹1,732.49 crore in June this year as against ₹1,384.59 crore collected during the corresponding period of last year, recording a growth of 25.13 per cent.

The progressive collection to be retained by the state (OGST+IGST settlement) till June 2023 stands at ₹5,661.97



NILADRI BIJE: Lord Jagannath and His siblings -- Devi Subhadra and Lord Balabhadra – being taken to Srimandir from chariots in Puri, Saturday



'RASAGOLA DIBASA'

PURI: 'Rasagola Dibasa' was celebrated in the state Saturday as the ceremony of 'Niladri Bije' was observed at Srimandir in Puri, concluding the festivities

surrounding Ratha Jatra.

In 2015, Odisha started celebrating this day as 'Rasagola Dibasa'. It is believed that Lord Jagannath offered Goddess

Laxmi 'rasagola' (sweet) to pacify her as he went on Ratha Jatra without her. To mark the occasion, people across the state offer rasagola (sweet) to differ-

ent gods and goddesses. Different programmes, including cooking competitions, were held in the state to celebrate the occasion.

UCC Bill likely in Monsoon Session

KULDEEP SINGH, OP

New Delhi, July 1: The Union government could introduce a Bill on Uniform Civil Code (UCC) during the Monsoon Session of the Parliament set to begin July 20 and continue till August 11.

The session is expected to be a stormy one as the Opposition parties are closing ranks to put up a united front against the Narendra Modi-led BJP government in view of the Lok Sabha elections next year.

Also, the Parliament is meeting at a time when the Prime Minister has made a strong pitch for a Uniform Civil Code (UCC) and moves have been made to step up consultations on the issue.

As per sources, the Monsoon Session is expected to be held in the old Parliament building and will later move to the new building, which was inaugurated by the Prime Minister May 28.

"Monsoon session, 2023, of Parliament will commence

from July 20 and continue till August 11. Urge all parties to contribute towards productive discussions on legislative business and other items during the session," tweeted Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi Saturday.

The session will be spread across 23 days and will have 17 sittings, he said in another tweet.

During the session, the government is likely to bring a bill to replace the Government of National Capital Territory of

Delhi (Amendment) Ordinance. The Ordinance effectively nullified the Supreme Court judgement that gave the Delhi government greater legislative and administrative control over "services" matter.

The National Research Foundation Bill, cleared by the Union Cabinet, is also likely to be introduced. The proposed foundation will be a new funding agency to bolster the country's research competence in areas of science and technology.

Four held for cyber fraud

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, July 1: Four cyber fraudsters have been arrested for duping people of ₹14 lakh by sending malicious links to mobile phones, said twin city Commissionerate Police Saturday.

The arrested scammers were identified as Anil Hembram of Balasore, who is the mastermind of the group, Deepak Patel and Kamlesh Patel of Sambalpur and Rajesh Behera of Rourkela.

While addressing media, additional DCP Prakash Chandra Pal said, "In this connection, we had previously arrested four persons. The total number of arrests has now gone up to eight. There are some other accused as well. We will arrest them soon."

Prime accused Anil Hembram's modus operandi was to involve youths through a networking scheme and with the help of them, he was running his racket. They were luring people by sending links to their mobile phones, informed police.

The cyber police seized 18 mobile phones, 36 SIM cards, one virtual SIM, 12 cheques and 13 Debit Cards from the arrested persons. The police also froze ₹6,32,800 in the accounts of the fraudsters.

More hurdles for Odisha's sharecroppers

For this Kharif season, all farmers willing to sell their paddy have to register afresh. No renewal will be allowed and farmers have to provide all details, personal, field and bank related information again



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 1: Adding to the woes of sharecroppers, who are already deprived of many government facilities, the state government has made land owner's consent mandatory for them to sell their paddy from this Kharif season.

Food Supplies and Consumer Welfare Principal Secretary Vir Vikram Yadav has issued detailed guidelines to all district Collectors in this regard, Saturday. As per the guideline, a sharecropper (bhaga chasi) is required to obtain a consent letter from the landholder and deposit it along with the registration form to be able to sell the produce.

Along with the letter, the sharecropper is also required to submit a mobile number and a copy of the Aadhaar card of his landowner. "There will be no

other way for a sharecropper to apply for registration except by way of the landowner's consent," said Yadav in his letter to the Collectors.

Collectors were directed to take timely steps to find out, on the basis of inquiry by verifying officers/teams, the actual extent of area cultivated by registered farmers irrespective of their claims.

The district administrations have been asked to verify the veracity of claims with regard to the total cultivated area and where inflated claims are found to have been made, the concerned farmers will be debarred to sell paddy to the government.

The officials who facilitate the entry of inflated claims will also be held accountable for lapses, the Principal Secretary warned.

He asked the Collectors to start an online farmers' registration process from July 15 to complete all activities well in time.

For this Kharif, all farmers willing to sell their paddy have to register afresh. No renewal will be allowed and farmers have to provide all details, personal, field/bank related information again, Yadav said.

Like past years, Odisha State Civil Supplies Corporation (OSCC) will procure the surplus paddy through cooperative societies, women SHGs and Pani Panchayats by way of payment of Minimum Support Price (MSP).

Actual procurement of paddy will start from the first week of November and close March 31, 2024. All 30 districts will conduct farmer registration for pro-

urement of Kharif crop within the deadline and will schedule their procurement activities within the fixed timelines.

Registration forms with invalid Aadhaar numbers will not be considered for inclusion in the list of eligible farmers, Yadav pointed out.

He warned the Collectors not to enter non-cultivable land, highlands in the system. "If a high land is taken into consideration, such cases must be enquired by a joint team," he said.

All data provided by the farmers will be digitized and linked with Bhulekh application to check the land details. Wherever lands are claimed to be irrigated by borewell points, the farmer has to quote the electricity consumer number for the same in the specified field in the application form if electrified.

Further, this Kharif season, the government has decided that all plots registered in the Farmer Registration Module will be verified through satellite imagery for all 30 districts of the state.

The satellite survey data on the suspected plots will be shared with the deputy/assistant registrar of cooperative societies for further validation at their level through ORSAC land survey mobile application and portal.

CONG SEEKS RAIL MINISTER'S SCALP

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, July 1: Odisha Congress Saturday demanded resignation of Railways Minister Ashiwini Vaishnaw, holding him responsible for the June 2 Bahanaga train tragedy.

As many as 293 people died and over 1,000 were injured in the horrific railway accident near Bahanaga Bazar station in Balasore involving three trains.

Congress spokesperson Sudarshan Das said that in its report submitted to the government, the Commissioner of Railway Safety (CRS), inquiring into the accident, has stated that the accident occurred due to mechanical/technical and system failure and not due to any conspiracy.

The Congress leader said that though the Commission has submitted the report June 28, the report has not yet been made public.

Demanding the government to make the report public, the Railways Minister, Das alleged, is trying to suppress the report to evade accountability.

The Congress leader said to present the railway infrastruc-

Over 2.70L posts in the Railways are lying vacant and railway tracks are not being maintained. There is a huge shortage of station masters, signal employees and security staff, as per Congress spokesperson Sudarshan Das

ture is in a very poor condition. Over 2.70 lakh posts in the Railways are lying vacant and railway tracks are not being maintained. There is a huge shortage of station masters, signal employees and security staff.

Railway accidents, Das said, are occurring as the staffs are forced to work longer hours under stress.

The Congress leader pointed out that four more accidents have occurred in the last one month after the Bahanaga tragedy, which implies that the Railways Minister is himself responsible for the accidents and he should step down.

TICKS CAN USE STATIC TRICK TO LAND ON YOU

Hungry ticks have some slick tricks. They can zoom through the air using static electricity to latch onto people, pets and other animals, new research shows.

Humans and animals naturally pick up static charges as they go about their days. And those charges are enough to give ticks a boost to their next blood meal, according to a study published Friday in the journal Current Biology.

While the distance is tiny, "it's the equivalent of us jumping three or four flights of stairs in one go," said study author Sam England, an ecologist now at Berlin's Natural History Museum.

Ticks are "ambush predators," explained Stephen Rich, a public health entomologist at the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

They can't jump or fly onto their hosts, he said. Instead, they hang out on a branch or a blade of grass with their legs out-



stretched — a behaviour known as "questing" — and wait for people or animals to pass by so they can grab on and bite.

“Ticks are ambush predators. They can't jump or fly onto their hosts. Instead, they hang out on a branch or a blade of grass with their legs outstretched — a behaviour known as questing — and wait for people or animals to pass by so they can grab on and bite”

STEPHEN RICH | PUBLIC HEALTH ENTOMOLOGIST AT UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST

It seemed that ticks were limited to how far they could stretch on their "tippy toes," England said. But now, scientists are learning that static charges may help expand their reach.

"They can now actually end up latching onto hosts that don't make direct contact with them," he said.

The researchers looked at a species of tick called the castor bean tick, which is common

across Europe. This bloodsucker and its cousins are major culprits in spreading diseases to animals and humans, including Lyme disease, and are most active in warm months.

Researchers found that when they charged up electrodes and placed them near young ticks, the creatures would whiz through the air to land on those electrodes.

A normal level of static — the charge that fur, feathers, scales or clothes pick up with movement — could pull the critters across gaps of a fraction of an inch (a few millimetres or centimetres), according to the study. While those distances may seem small to us, for a tiny tick, they represent a big leap, England said.

In the future, there might be ways developed to reduce that static, experts said. But for now, Rich said people should keep using classic tick prevention measures, including repellents, to keep themselves safe from bites.

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NOTICE FOR Appointment of One SERVO STOCKIST RESELLER (SSR)

NIT No./Name of the Appointment	Application Period		
NIT No. : OSO/LRS/A/23-24/03	Application document published and download starts on 2nd July 2023, 16:00 hrs. onwards		
Appointment of Servo Stockist – Reseller (SSR) in the following location:	Last Date of physical application form submission: 24th July 2023, 16:00 hrs.		
Location of Godown	Revenue District	State	Area of Operation (Territory)
Angul (Within the 5 kms Radius of Angul Municipal Limit)	Angul	Odisha	Angul

Contact Person: Lube Sales Executive (LSE)

SSR	Revenue District	State	Name of LSE	Mobile No.	email
Angul	Angul	Odisha	Mr. Subhrankash Panda	9800235610	Pandas1@indianoil.in

Interested applicants can download the application form and guidelines from <https://spandan.indianoil.co.in/BPSP/HomePage.jsp>. Filled application form with all necessary documents as mentioned in the NIT/ application form must be submitted at the address as mentioned in the NIT on or before the closing date and time. Corrigendum, if any, shall also be published in the same website.

TRIPLE TRAIN ACCIDENT

13 bodies handed over; 52 yet to be identified

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, July 1: At least 13 more bodies of the June 2 Balasore train accident kept at AIIMS Bhubaneswar were handed over to their family members Saturday, official sources said. Of the 29 bodies identified using DNA sampling, six were handed over to their families Friday and 13 Saturday, a railway official said.

"On the basis of DNA test results and with coordination with City AIIMS, Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) and GRP, 13 bodies of the Bahanaga train accident victims have been handed over to the kin of the deceased on Saturday," the railway official said.



Of the 13 bodies, four have been sent to Bihar, eight to West Bengal and one to Jharkhand, he said.

The process of handing over the bodies will continue till claimants come, the official said.

An ex gratia amount of Rs 10 lakh each have been paid to the kin of the family members as announced by the railways, the official said.

Stating that the process of handing over of the bodies will continue till claimants come, the official said as many as 52 bodies still remain unidentified and preserved in the containers in AIIMS Bhubaneswar.

Saturday, one month passed to the tragic triple train accident June 2 evening at Bahanaga Bazar station in Balasore district that killed at least 293 people and left 1000 injured.

Of the 293 persons killed in the accident involving Shalimar-Chennai-bound Coromandel Express, Bengaluru-Howrah Superfast Express and a stationary goods train, 287 had died on the spot or brought dead to hospital while six succumbed to injuries in hospitals.



IN ACTION: Members of Banani Kalasangam, a theatre troupe from Phulbani, enacted a scene from drama 'Suryodaya Purbe' at Bhanja Kala Mandap in Bhubaneswar, Saturday. The play was part of Natyadhara, a three-day monthly theatre festival jointly organised by Department of Culture, Odisha Sangeet Natak Akademi and Odisha Natya Sangh

Sewage on road irks locals of Raghunathpur

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 1: Locals of Raghunathpur area, on the outskirts of the Capital City here, have been facing a tough time while commuting due to the apathy of the authorities of an apartment which releases untreated sewage to the road.

Sources said though the waste and sewage have been accumulating on the stretch for a long time, no preventive measures are being taken by the apartment authorities.



According to sources, more than 3,000 people have been residing in the apartment whose sewage treatment plant (STP) has been defunct for the last many days.

"Instead of repairing the STP, the authorities are releasing the sewage to the PWD drain which in turn spills onto the road. We have drawn the attention of the apartment authorities several times, but to no avail," said a local on condition of anonymity.

As the untreated sewage gets accumulated near a renowned jewellery showroom, most of the people are reluctant to visit the store.

Locals expressed their resentment and demanded speedy resolution of the issue.

State notifies apartment ownership ordinance

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 1: As the Assembly is not in session, the state government has brought the much-awaited Odisha Apartment (Ownership & Management) Bill, 2023, through ordinance route.

The Law department has notified the Odisha Apartment (Ownership & Management) Ordinance, 2023, which strives to consolidate the law relating to ownership of an apartment in a building with an undivided interest in the common areas and facilities.

Under the ordinance, which will replace Orissa Apartment

Ownership Act 1982, common areas such as corridors, staircases, lifts, play areas and entire land of apartments will be registered in the name of the buyers' associations.

The provisions of the ordinance will be applicable to all apartments and buildings converted to apartments and projects on both free-hold and leasehold lands will come under its purview.

The ordinance also makes it mandatory for the promoter as well as allottees of a real estate/apartment project to form 'association of allottees' - a body that will administer the affairs

of the apartment project or property including the common areas and facilities in accordance with the provision of the proposed act. The association will be formed immediately after booking of seven apartments or 50 per cent of the apartments of a project, whichever is lower, and its forming will be a joint responsibility of the promoter and the allottees/owners.

The promoter has to submit a declaration to the competent authority in respect of the building, whether constructed before or after the commencement of this ordinance, within 30 days of issue of occupancy certificate, in

such form and manner as may be prescribed.

The promoter will have to rectify any structural defect or other defect in workmanship, quality or provision of services or any other obligations without further charge, within a period of five years from handing over of possession to the allottee.

As per the ordinance, the promoter will maintain the common area and facilities till the association of allottees is formed in accordance with the condition laid down and shall be entitled to levy proportionate maintenance charge as specified in the declaration.

Today, industry-academia collaboration a must: Chand



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 1: Principal Adviser to CM Upendra Tripathy Saturday inaugurated a one-day 'Industry Academia Conclave' in presence of OUAT vice-chancellor Pravat Kumar Roul, industry professionals like Tapan Chand, president of Vedanta and Former CMD of NALCO, faculty members, scholars and students.

The conclave is being organised with funding support from Institutional Development Plan-National Agricultural Higher Education Project (IDP-NAHEP) project operating at the Odisha University of Agriculture and Technology (OUAT).

In recent years, OUAT has strengthened its collaborations with industries with initiatives like Farm Machinery Testing Centre (FMTC), Central Instrumentation Facility (CIF), Technology Management Cell (TMC), and Agricultural Consultancy Support Service Cell (SCSSC).

In his address, Tripathy stressed on increasing collaboration between industry and academia, saying, "This conclave

is only a step forward. Many more such interaction are required." Then he complemented the vice chancellor for taking initiative in organising the industry academia collaboration.

Chand said that industry academia collaboration is no longer an option, it has become a compulsion. "If we have to provide meaningful engagement to the ever increasing working population which is going to be 64 per cent by the turn of this decade, there is need for close collaboration between industry and academia," he opined.

He pointed out that the National Education Policy (NEP-2020) has given an excellent framework for academia to take initiatives in areas of research and development, internship and apprenticeship, skill and entrepreneurship development, development of curriculum and governing and decision making.

Roul informed about steps taken by the university to increase collaboration between industry and academia. He told that an alumni network has been created and an alumni fund has been constituted.

'Connect to nature' launched

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 1: The team of Mahan knowledge and charitable foundation (MKCF), Cuttack, met Governor Ganeshi Lal Saturday, gifting him his portrait.

On the occasion, 'Connect to Nature', a flagship programme of the foundation was flagged off. Given the current intensity of climate change and frequency of weather events like heat waves, floods and storms, to cope with them the project will facilitate different interventions like generating employment for rural unemployed youths, strengthening women's self help groups (WSHG), development of nutrition through plantation, achieving agricultural advancement with help of organic



farming, food processing and environmental securities.

"The project will focus on establishing 'agri community service centres' with the help of village level entrepreneurs. Later, it will provide real-time and localised advice on critical inputs to farmers for their crops and agricultural news on markets, state government schemes and policies," informed a member of the foundation.

There will also be capacity building of farmers, youths and entrepreneurs through work-

shops, seminars and training camps, he adding, saying, "Further planning is there to run the project on pilot mode in costal districts like Cuttack, Kendrapara, Jajpur and Jagatsingpur."

Speaking on the occasion, Subrat Prusty, ITS, and Anil Mishra, AIASA, shared that the project is expected to provide a significant increase in income of the rural farming household and create new rural employment opportunities for the youths.

Facial recognition tech comes handy for police

Puri: Armed with facial recognition software and trained in analysing crowd behaviour during the annual Ratha Jatra this year, a specialised team formed by the Puri Police arrested over 90 snatchers during the festivities in this pilgrim town, a senior officer said. The law enforcers also returned 60 stolen mobile phones to the owners, the police officer said. In recent years, facial recognition and artificial intelligence are becoming key law enforcement tools for monitoring large gatherings by the police.

"Four facial recognition cameras were installed at strategic locations on pilot basis for the first time in the state, and we had sent data of 300 anti-social elements to SCRB (State Crime records Bureau) for uploading," Puri Superintendent of Police, Kanwar Vishal Singh, said.

NATIONAL DOCTOR'S DAY

'Coping with constantly evolving field challenging'

SMRUTI REKHA BARIK, OP

Doctors all over the world are given the stature next to God. It happens so mostly because they are life-savers who work tirelessly for mankind. They keep sacrificing their lives while trying to save many others and spreading smiles around.

On National Doctor's Day, which is observed to mark the birth and death anniversary of the visionary doctor Bidhan Chandra Roy, Orissa POST spoke to a few doctors to what they feel about their profession and how they are coping with the challenges of the ever evolving field.

Amitabh Prusty, Senior Consultant Surgeon in Capital Hospital, Bhubaneswar, who has been actively involved in treating a wide range of surgical conditions said, "I ensure that my patients receive comprehensive



care and compassionate treatment." The challenge that all the healthcare professionals face every day is the field of medicine constantly evolving with new research, technologies, and treatment options emerging regularly. Medical professionals must stay updated with the latest advancements to provide the best care for the patients", he added.

Pratyush Mishra who works at Tata Medical Center, Kolkata, said, "The most challenging aspect of practicing medicine is that it takes a lot of time to get established as a good doctor. Few doctors just do MBBS

and don't study further. And some doctors like me want to update my knowledge on a regular basis."

"Physicians these days are not paid at par with their skills. However, they are certain physician in the corporate sector who are paid well, albeit after practicing for years. People judge us, assuming we earn a lot and kill people for money. That is very much not the truth", he said.

Subarna Mohapatra who works as a senior resident in department of physiology in City AIIMS, said, "One of the major issues is the increasing complexity of healthcare systems. Another significant challenge

is the constant need to stay updated with the latest research and advancements in medical knowledge. Medicine is an ever-evolving field, and physicians need to continually educate themselves to provide the best care to their patients. The rapid pace of medical advancement and the need to incorporate new knowledge into clinical practice, keeping up with the latest research and guidelines can be demanding," he said.

Priyanka Mohanty, Medical officer, Puri, Odisha government, who is also known as the Pad girl of Odisha, said, "Practicing medicine itself has been the toughest and violence against doctors is making it worrisome. Crisis of essential medical stock

and drugs in order to give the basic treatment, before the patient is referred to higher centers, leads to multiple fatal cases. Hence it is important that the government stocks up with the required drugs and equipments in its bank for emergencies."

Biswajeet Samal MBBS, MD (Psychiatry) who works as a Consultant Psychiatrist in Mahanadi Coalfields Limited, batted for improvements in healthcare facilities. He said, "I would promote collaboration and teamwork among healthcare professionals to deliver comprehensive and coordinated care. This may involve working closely with nurses, pharmacists, therapists and embracing a multidisciplinary approach to patient care.

Speaking about the challenge, Samal said, "Physicians need to engage in lifelong learning, staying up-to-date with the latest evidence based practices, guidelines and advancements. This ongoing educational process can be challenging, particularly for those juggling clinical responsibilities alongside continuing education."

Samal conveyed best wishes to all healthcare professionals on Doctor's Day and said, "My advice is to give utmost priority to own physical and mental well being. You should eat healthy, have sufficient sleep, exercise regularly and engage in pleasurable activities."

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Cops nab accused who ran car over BJD youth leader

VEHICLE SEIZED FROM BERHAMPUR RAILWAY STATION

POST NEWS NETWORK

Berhampur, July 1: Police have successfully arrested the alleged killer of the slain BJD youth leader Lalit, who was run over by a car, from Brajarajnaragar railway station, Friday.

The accused was identified as Ramakrushna Mishra (40) of Khambarigaon village under K Nuagaon police limits in Ganjam district. "Ramakrushna was trying to escape out of the state in a train when the police arrested him at Brajarajnaragar railway station in Jharsuguda district," informed Ganjam SP Saravana Vivek M in a press conference organised at police headquarters.

After a preliminary investigation, police are suspecting that the verbal argument which broke out between Lalit and Ramakrushna was the reason behind the murder.

Police are investigating the matter in detail to get it resolved. They have taken a two-day transit remand of the accused after presenting him before Jharsuguda JMFC court.

The accused will be presented before the Digapahandi JMFC



The accused was identified as Ramakrushna Mishra (40) of Khambarigaon village under K Nuagaon police limits in Ganjam district.

court, the SP added. The car which was used in the killing of Lalit also seized from Berhampur railway station.

Notably, a heated brawl took place between Lalit, the youth BJD leader and Ramakrushna June 20 at Sankarkhali Square of Khambarigaon village. The spat between the two turned uglier as the two scuffled and showered blows on each other. The fight came to an end after some villagers intervened.

Later, when Lalit left for his village on his two-wheeler, Ramakrushna allegedly followed him in his car and hit Lalit's bike between Khambarigaon high school and the local panchayat office. As a result, Lalit lost his balance and

fell on the road after hitting a roadside coconut tree.

Notably, Ramakrushna rescued Lalit in a critical condition and rushed him to Digapahandi CHC, where the doctor declared him 'brought dead'. Ramakrushna then absconded in his car leaving the body of Lalit at hospital. After the incident K Nuagaon police registered a murder case (No-211/23) after getting complaint from the brother of the deceased Lalit.

After the incident Ramakrushna had switched off his mobile, making it difficult to trace him. Later, during investigation police recovered the car of Ramakrushna from Berhampur railway station, June 26. Then police started tracking the mobile of Ramakrushna. It was found that Ramakrushna had gone to Haridwar in Uttarakhand. He was returning in Haridwar-Puri Utkal Express, when a special team of Berhampur police captured him at Brajarajnaragar railway station Friday. He was then brought to Berhampur after arrest, said the SP.



TRIBAL FLARE UP: Protesting the hi-tech settlement survey by the state government, tribals take out a rally to the district Collectorate in Sundargarh, Saturday

2 DIE FROM SNAKEBITES

POST NEWS NETWORK

Polasara/Tihidi, July 1: A snake catcher died Friday after he was bitten by a snake while trying to catch the reptile. The tragedy took place at Patana Sahi locality of Ranipada village under Polasara NAC area in Ganjam district.

The deceased was identified as Sanjaya Barada alias Dugulu, 38 of the same village. He had gone to the backyard of his house for some work when he spotted the snake. As he tried to catch it, the venomous snake bit him.

Sanjaya's family members immediately took him to a local hospital here. As his condition deteriorated, he was later shifted to a hospital in Berhampur. However, he did not respond to treatment and breathed his last. A pall of gloom descended in Sanjaya's village as news of his death spread. Local political leaders also visited his house and offered their condolences.

In a separate incident, a woman died from snakebite at Nuasahi village under Jamajodi panchayat and Tihidi block in Bhadrak district, Friday.

The deceased was identified as Gouri Parida (43) of the village. As per information received, the woman was sleeping at her house when a poisonous snake bit her. As her condition turned critical she was immediately rushed to Tihidi hospital. As her condition deteriorated further, she was being taken to Bhadrak district headquarters hospital (DHH), but she died on the way. Pirhat police registered an unnatural death case and sent the body for post-mortem.



NO LET-UP IN ROAD MISHAPS

Two more trauma care centres soon in Ganjam

A FLY-OVER BRIDGE WILL ALSO BE CONSTRUCTED AT CHHATRAPUR IN THE DISTRICT TO FACILITATE SMOOTH PASSAGE OF TRAFFIC

POST NEWS NETWORK

Chhatrapur, July 1: There is no let-up in road mishaps in Ganjam district as two more trauma care centres will be established at Khallikote and Bhanjanagar in the southern district, apart from the existing one in Berhampur, a report said Saturday.

A fly-over bridge will also be constructed at Chhatrapur in the district to facilitate smooth passage of traffic on the highway and reduce mishaps in the district which has witnessed maximum road accidents in the state. The matter came to the fore at a meeting of the district committee on road safety held in virtual mode, Friday. Collector Diba Jyoti Parida presided over the meeting. Meanwhile, the contract for construction of a fly-over on the national highway has been awarded after floating of a tender and the works will start from October this year.

The Collector directed to finish the work within the deadline while also ordering installation of signages and street lights on Taptapani ghat road and Sanaghati road. The state government has sanctioned funds for construction of two new trauma care centres which will function side by side with the existing one at MKCG Medical College and Hospital in Berhampur.

In the meeting, the members decided to submit a proposal to the state government to increase the fleet of 108-ambulance service. The members also recommended strict enforcement of traffic rules in various areas of the district, and



vigil and action against helmetless riding, driving sans seatbelt and drunk driving.

The Collector directed to take measures to reduce road accidents as well as the deaths arising out of the mishaps as per the recommendations of the Supreme Court Committee on Road Safety. However, to everyone's disappointment, the recommendations made by the Collector or members of the road safety committee are not being implemented.

Reports said that Ganjam district has witnessed the maximum number of road accidents in the recent times. The related death toll has seen a spike for the last few years. The Supreme Court committee on road safety and the state committee on road safety have expressed serious concern over the development.

The members alleged that Haldiapadar area on the outskirts of Berhampur has turned into a death trap due to frequent road accidents. The Haldiapadar area has two roads including one by the National Highways

Authority of India (NHAD) and another of Public Works department (PWD). The faulty design of the national highway built by the NHAI is resulting in more road mishaps, it is alleged. The Supreme Court committee visited Ganjam in February and took stock of accident prone zones in the district and made suitable recommendations to reduce the road accidents. The committee will again visit the district in August. The Collector had directed the Ganjam and Berhampur SPs as well as Ganjam and Bhanjanagar RTOs to identify the black spots on the highway and submit a report to him following which two separate teams formed by the SPs took stock of the matter and submitted a report in the meeting.

Ganjam SP Jagmohan Meena, his Berhampur counterpart Saravana Vivek M, Ganjam RTO Manas Ranjan Sahu, his Bhanjanagar counterpart Subhendu Ray, Ganjam MVI Rabindranath Jena and project director NHAI attended the meeting.

Cattle-laden van seized; 11 calves rescued in Tihidi

POST NEWS NETWORK

Tihidi, July 1: A cattle-laden van was seized and 11 calves were rescued at Pirhat Bazaar on Bhadrak-Chandbali road in Bhadrak district, late Friday night.

As per the report, Bajrang Dal activists got information about cattle smuggling in the vehicle bearing registration number (OR-22-0979).

The cattle-laden vehicle was going to Bhadrak. Getting information about the cattle smuggling from unknown sources, some Bajrang Dal activists waylaid the vehicle at Pirhat Bazaar and handed over the vehicle to Pirhat police.

Acting on the complaint by an activist of Bajrang Dal, police registered a case (No-122/23) and started an investigation in this regard. The rescued calves were shifted to a cow-shelter nearby. The driver of the vehicle fled the spot.

Red camps busted, explosives seized

POST NEWS NETWORK

Malkangiri/Nuapada, July 1: Security forces busted two Maoist camps and unearthed huge caches of fire arms, Maoists articles and explosives in separate raids near Andhra border in Chittrakonda block of Malkangiri district and near Odisha-Chhattisgarh border in Nuapada district, Saturday.

In the first incident, the district police and BSF personnel found a huge cache of Maoist articles including firearms, explosives and daily use items from Dabuguda and Aringpada rural forests under Jodamba police limits in Chittrakonda block of Malkangiri district during a combing operation, Malkangiri SP Nitish Wadhvani said, Saturday.

The 62 seized articles include two country-made guns, 12-bore ammunition, one SLR ammunition, three IED, 55 gelatin sticks, electric wires, mobile chargers, hairpins of women, rubber band, comb, pen and pen-



cil. Preliminary inquiries suggested that explosives and ammunitions had been hidden in the area by the Andhra-Odisha border zonal committee targeting the local residents and police personnel, the SP said.

In the second incident, a camp of CPI Maoist was busted from Patadarha reserve forest near Jholapada village near Odisha-Chhattisgarh border, Nuapada SP GR Raghavendra said, Saturday. Several articles including a hand grenade and medicines have been recovered from the hideout, the SP added. Preliminary inquiries indicated that the camp was established for imparting training to the rebels which was busted during a joint combing operation, the SP added.

2 kids drown in pond

POST NEWS NETWORK

Koraput, July 1: In a tragic incident, two children drowned in a pond while playing near the water body at Kanchana village of Lamtaput block in Koraput district, Saturday.

The deceased were identified as Amir Kirshani, 8, son of Shanti and Arjun Kirshani and Kapindra Kirshani, 6, son of Chandrama and Laba Kirshani in the village.

Reports said, the kids' mothers were working on their farmlands while the two kids who had followed them were playing close to a pond nearby.

The two women after searching for their children in vain,



returned home expecting the kids might have gone back. After they failed to find their sons at their residences, they again returned to the pond slippers of the children were found lying nearby.

Apprehending that the kids might have drowned, they cried inconsolably. Villagers rushed to the spot and fished out the bodies after a search operation. Police registered a case and handed over the bodies to the family members after post-mortem.

UK-based firm to set up chip unit in Ganjam

The company has aimed to establish the unit within two years and to provide direct employment to 5,000 people

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Berhampur, July 1: A UK-based company is planning to set up a semiconductor fabrication unit in Ganjam district with an investment of ₹30,000 crore in the first phase, officials said.

The SRAM & MRAM Technologies and Projects India Pvt Limited, the Indian unit of UK-based SRAM & MRAM Group, had signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the state government March 26 to set up the semiconductor unit in the state.

After visiting some sites near Chhatrapur in the district, its Indian company officials headed

by its chairman Guruji Kumaran Swami held a meeting with the district administration at Chhatrapur Thursday. Ganjam Collector Diba Jyoti Parida has assured the investors all facilities for setting up the unit.

"We have visited some sites, including the industrial park of Tata and some private lands for the establishment of the proposed semiconductor unit. A technical team of the company will visit the district to finalise the site," said Debaddut Singhdeo, project director of the firm.

The company requires around 500 to 800 acres of land to establish the unit.



Though the company officials visited some other districts as well, they preferred the site near Chhatrapur due to its proximity to Gopalpur port, a dedicated industrial corridor, an airstrip and a national highway, besides availability of clean water and energy – the basic requirement of the fabrication unit, sources said.

The company has aimed to establish the unit within two years and to provide direct employment to 5,000 people. It has also planned to expand the unit in subsequent

phases by investing around ₹2 lakh crore by 2027, said Singhdeo.

The semiconductor unit will produce memory chips, used in mobile phones, television sets, laptops, air conditioners and ATMs. Since the country is not self-reliant on the manufacture of semiconductors, it imports around ₹3 lakh crore semiconductors annually from different countries.

"The project will boost industrialisation in the district," said Berhampur MP Chandra Sekhar Sahu. He said that due to an attractive industrial policy, several companies are interested to invest in Odisha.

The proposed unit will help generate employment as well as address the semiconductors requirement in the country, Sahu said.

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA No. B-405
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER,
GANJAM [R&B] DIVISION NO.1, BERHAMPUR
Phone/Fax: (0680) 2233683, e-mail: sermb1.ganjam@yahoo.com

"e" PROCUREMENT NOTICE
Bid Identification No. EE R&B Divn. No.1 Bam. 11/2022-23
Lr. No. 6803 dtd. 27.06.2023

Name of work : Electrical Works
No. of works : 1 (One) No.
Estimated Cost : Approximately Rs.12.00 lakh
Period of completion of agreement : One Calendar months
Date and time of Availability : From 11.00 hours of 04.07.2023 to 16.00 hours of 11.07.2023
Last date/time for receipt of bids in portal : Upto 16.00 hours of 11.07.2023

Name & address of the Officer inviting Bid : Superintending Engineer, Ganjam (R&B) Division No.1, Berhampur

Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal https://tendersodisha.gov.in

Sd./- Superintending Engineer, Ganjam (R&B) Division No.1, Berhampur
OIPR-34109/11/0013/2324

EAST COAST RAILWAY

File No. DRM/Engg/KUR/23-24/
E-Tender/40, Dt. 26.06.2023

(1) Tender No. : e-Tender-North-KUR-116-2023, Dtd. 19.06.2023

Description : CONSTRUCTION OF BOUNDARY WALL NEAR STATIONS & ITS APPROACHES AS MEASURE TO SAFEGUARD TRACK AND ESTABLISHMENTS AVOIDING ENCROACHMENTS UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF DIVISIONAL ENGINEER (NORTH) IN KHURDA ROAD DIVISION.

Approx. cost of the work : ₹ 823.67 Lakh, EMD: ₹ 5,61,800/-

(2) Tender No. : e-Tender-South-KUR-117-2023, Dtd. 19.06.2023

Description : PROPOSED ANNUAL MAINTENANCE CONTRACT OF 1 MLD WATER TREATMENT PLANT FOR POTABLE WATER AT RAILWAY COLONY, TALCHER OF KHURDA ROAD DIVISION FOR THREE (03) YEARS.

Approx. cost of the work : ₹ 123.27 Lakh, EMD: ₹ 2,11,600/-

(3) Tender No. : e-Tender-CENT-KUR-119-2023, Dtd. 21.06.2023

Description : MANUAL DEEP SCREENING OF TRACK, POINTS & CROSSINGS AND OTHER ENABLING WORKS UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF SR. SECTION ENGINEER (PWAY)/DHENKANAL OF KHURDA ROAD DIVISION.

Approx. cost of the work : ₹ 129.16 Lakh, EMD: ₹ 2,14,600/-

Completion period : 12 (Twelve) Months (for sl. no. 1, 2 & 4) and 36 (Thirty Six) Months (for sl. no. 3).

Tender closing Date & Time : At 1500 hrs. of 12.07.2023 (for all tenders).

No manual offers sent by post/courier/Fax in person shall be accepted against such e-tenders.

Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-tender is available in website : <http://www.treps.gov.in>

Note : The prospective tenders are advised to revisit the website 10 (Ten) days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes/corrigendum issued for this tender.

Divisional Railway Manager (Engg.)
PR-303/023-24 Khurda Road

FOCUS NATION

UCC, DEMOCRACY, SECULARISM



UCC has nothing to do with any religion. However, it does not accept any religious practice, custom or tradition which contradicts the core values of our Constitution

right to perpetual maintenance and for adoption make the position of Muslim women not only unequal, but also debasing, miserable and torturous. We feel proud that we are the largest democracy in the world and ours is the best form of secularism. But we don't feel sorry or ashamed when millions of Indian Muslim women have been suffering such disgrace, ignominy, torture and cruelty in various stages of their lives even after 73 years of our adoption of democracy and secularism.

Advanced democracies like the United States and many European countries have Uniform Civil Codes. They don't have different personal laws for different religions. Even in India Goa and Puducherry have been practicing UCC for quite a long time. So it is high time we followed the infallible notion of "one nation, one law," and enacted and implemented UCC for the whole nation.

The following are some of the concrete suggestions which may be included in the forthcoming UCC - (i) marriageable age of the bride should be fixed at 21 years, (ii) all marriages including live-in relations are to be officially registered, (iii) grounds of divorce and maintenance should be equal for both husband and wife, (iv) ban on all socio-religious evils including polygamy, child-marriage, halala and muta, (v) equal right to both married man and woman to adopt a child, (vi) equal inheritance right to both son and daughter, (vii) equal right of custody and guardianship of a child, (viii) fixing maximum number of children of a couple as a measure towards controlling population explosion.

The writer is a senior advocate and columnist. Views are personal.

The old flame of Uniform Civil Code (UCC) has been lit once again as the 22nd Law Commission of India has invited suggestions on it from all sections of people of India. There is animated national debate over this seemingly immortal issue. Probably, the Modi government is heading towards enacting UCC to fulfil its third major promise made in its election manifestoes for decades, the first two being - abrogation of Article 370 and construction of Ram temple. Hinting this, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has expressed that a nation is just like a family, and there can't be different sets of rules for different members.

Quite naturally religious clerics and politicians have strongly opposed this move by branding it as a communal agenda to harass Muslims. Ironically however, the political parties which claim to be liberal and secular are also opposing this move for a UCC! They are painting this step as a pre-electoral political stunt by the BJP just before the 2024 general elections to impress the voters, and allege that that UCC will destroy the beautiful diversity of our country.

Politics on this issue will go on, but our purpose in this article is to bring out the actual legality, constitutionality and essentiality of UCC for our country. Our Constitution under Article 14 and 15 guarantees to all Indian citizens the fundamental right to equality and ensures that none shall be discriminated on the ground of religion and gender. The Supreme Court in the Maneka Gandhi case (1981), has held that right to life as guaranteed under Article 21 is not confined to mere physical existence, but a life with dignity. Matters relating to marriage, divorce,

and personal law in a civilized society...It is a matter of regret that Article 44 has not given effect to.

Therefore, Article 25 and Article 44 are never contradictory to each other. Those who are challenging UCC as unconstitutional are only challenging the Constitution itself, the wisdom and good intention of the fathers of our Constitution as well as the judges of our constitutional courts.

UCC has nothing to do with any religion. However, it does not accept any religious practice, custom or tradition which contradicts the core values of our Constitution. Hindu coded laws of 1955 and 1956 have thus abolished polygamy, child marriage, and given right of property to daughters and divorce to both spouses, even though they are contrary to Hindu religious practices.

Some provisions of Muslim personal law or Sharia law like polygamy of men, halala, muta, women's lesser right to ancestral property, women's lack of

and personal law in a civilized society...It is a matter of regret that Article 44 has not given effect to.

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Jayakrishna Sahu

RIGHT TO RELIGION MEANS RIGHT TO PRACTISE RELIGIOUS RITUALS AS PER ONE'S RELIGION, NOT TO PRACTISE PERSONAL LAWS AS PER RELIGION



Aakar Patel

It is when one looks away from the immediate song and dance and at the granular detail of what has been going on since 2014 that one realises what the quality and competence of thinking and execution is in this project we call New India

New India's Security

National security has been described as the "ability of a state to cater for the protection and defence of its citizenry" and of a "country's ability to protect itself from the threat of violence or attack." To understand New India's national security doctrine, one has to look at what is called the Doval Doctrine. This is not a written text and has never been articulated in a book. Its contents I will briefly describe at the end, but it has been expressed in a video. In a video because India doesn't have an intellectual national security advisor of the Henry Kissinger school, who thinks but a man of action and the field. Ajit Doval did not waste his time on thesis and dissertation; he got down to it.

In a profile which lampooned him, AG Noorani wrote, "Doval does not hesitate to roll up his sleeves and get into action. He went to Iraq on a rescue mission for Indians taken hostage by the Islamic State; organised the Indian Army's 'hot pursuit' into Myanmar and then went over to smoothen ruffled feathers; phoned Pakistan's High Commissioner in New Delhi and instructed

his counterpart in Islamabad to berate Pakistan for the firings on the LOC; supervised, astonishingly, the arrangements for crowd control at the funeral of Yakub Memon in Mumbai; questioned the Delhi Police on the Uber cab rape case; and much else. This is a real man of action, the kind of whom we have never seen before."

The piece was published in November 2015. In the seven years since then, Doval has been on other adventures including personally evacuating the Tablighi Jamaat in Nizamuddin, which was shamefully and wrongly accused by the government of being the culprit for COVID in India. He also chose to be photographed having biryani on the streets of Kashmir to signal normalcy. Like others in his dispensation he likes to be seen in media as being effective. He has not been to Manipur yet, though one is not sure if that is the case because he famously also claims to be a master of disguise. The broad point is this: When the boss takes all the credit, why should the minion rush to take the blame when a disaster unfolds? If this is not "catering for the protection and defence of citizenry" then nothing is.

Another aspect to this is: Where all decisions are taken in centralised fashion and then announced as unprecedented and historic occasions, why should their fall-out accrue to juniors? That is likely why the great spy of our time has no contribution to one of the most serious threats as it plays out.

Recent reports of his activities include the headline "Days after Wagner mutiny, Russian Security Council Secretary calls National Security Adviser Ajit Doval" from 29 June and "NSA Ajit Doval meets top leadership of Oman, discusses way to boost security ties" from 26 June. On 17 June at a meeting he revealed his vast knowledge as a historian to proclaim, as a headline put it, that "India would not have been partitioned if Netaji Subhas Bose was there: NSA Ajit Doval."

Happily for him there are no headlines about his absence from more pressing matters as there is no accountability for failure in our parts and especially in this administration. He can carry on as if Manipur were not part of his responsibility to deliver, as the corporates put it, key result areas. This dereliction of duty may be seen elsewhere. In 2018, the NSA was put in charge of the Defence Planning Committee. This was to be chaired by Doval and include the foreign secretary, defence secretary, chief of defence staff, three service chiefs and secretaries of the Ministry of Finance. It had the enormous tasks of looking after "national defence and security priorities, foreign policy imperatives, operational directives and associated requirements, relevant strategic and security-related doctrines, defence acquisition and infrastructure development plans, national security strategy, strategic defence review and doctrines, international defence engagement strategy," and so on.

It met once, on 3 May 2018, and does not appear to have met after that and it has now been five years. The lack of interest may have been intensified after Ladakh, because it is Pakistan and Muslims that is the primary obsession of Doval. If there is a thread of continuity to his actions as Noorani described them, it can be understood through this prism. The Doval Doctrine says that terrorism is the national security threat and Pakistan is the primary enemy. The government accepted this to be untrue after the events of 2020. Before Galwan, of the Army's 38 divisions, 12 faced China, while 25 divisions were deployed on the India-Pakistan border with one division in reserve. After the reassignment, 16 divisions face China. What is the reason for the previous position and what was the reason for the change? We do not know, though we might if Doval were to write the new doctrine up. Or talk about it.

It is when one looks away from the immediate song and dance and at the granular detail of what has been going on since 2014 that one realises what the quality and competence of thinking and execution is in this project we call New India.

WISDOM CORNER

We should consider every day lost on which we have not danced at least once. And we should call every truth false which was not accompanied by at least one laugh.

FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE

The world breaks everyone, and afterward, some are strong at the broken places.

ERNEST HEMINGWAY

Indifference and neglect often do much more damage than outright dislike.

JK ROWLING

WORDSWORTH

Leucipottomy

This is a word that falls firmly into the category of invention for invention's sake, since it refers to the craft of cutting white horses on hillsides. The count of carved figures of any kind is quite small, the number of horses even fewer, and their rate of creation is as near zero as makes no difference. The oldest example of the genre in the UK is probably the white horse at Uffington in Berkshire, which has been dated, cautiously, to the late Bronze Age. Apart from one in Aberdeenshire and another in Yorkshire, most hillside horse carvings are on the chalk of southern England, with the biggest concentration on the Wiltshire downs. Leucipottomy had an airing in 1999 because the citizens of Devizes in that county decided that they wanted a white horse of their own as a millennium project, which they created with 10 days of carving. The word would seem to have been coined by Morris Marples in his book *White Horses and other Hill Figures* of 1949. It is clear that he was no Greek scholar. It looks as though it is formed from the Greek roots leuci-, white, hippo, horse, and the suffix -tomy.

SPECTRUM SUSTAINABILITY

Saudi Arabia's great transformation



Rabah Arezki & Tarik M. Yousef

IN A REGION WHERE CONCERN ABOUT CORRUPTION AND DISTRUST IN GOVERNMENT ARE WIDESPREAD, UNITING BEHIND A COMMON POLICY GOAL IS UNUSUAL

An unprecedented experiment in economic and social transformation is playing out in Saudi Arabia, and the outcome could have profound implications for the entire Arab world. The main goal of the kingdom's Vision 2030 plan is to shift the economy away from fossil fuels. It is a timely pivot, given that greenhouse-gas emissions must be reduced by 45% by 2030 and reach net zero by 2050 to achieve the Paris climate agreement's goal of limiting global warming to 1.5° Celsius.

At the same time, the challenge is difficult to overstate. Most of Saudi Arabia's wealth is derived from its vast petroleum reserves, and the risk of these assets becoming stranded is existential.

Saudi Arabia is not the first petrostate in the Middle East to attempt a move away from hydrocarbons. For several decades, other Arab economies have pursued similar diversification efforts with little success. A notable exception is Dubai, which reinvented itself as a logistics center, tourist destination, and offshore finance hub to offset declining oil reserves. But the city-state model that has succeeded elsewhere may not be scalable, which is why policymakers in the region and beyond will closely watch the ambitious development program in Saudi Arabia, a country with nearly 37 million inhabitants.

Matching Dubai's success is a formidable challenge, but Saudi Arabia's leader, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman (MBS), wants nothing less and is deploying immense resources to accelerate the kingdom's socioeconomic transformation.

Efforts are underway to make the country a powerhouse in green energy (including hydrogen), mining, logistics and infrastructure, sports, music, tourism, digital services, finance, and entrepreneurship. The government has also sought to increase the female labour-force participation rate by allowing women to drive, limiting the morality police's powers, and imposing fees on private firms employing foreign labour.

At the same time, MBS has made it clear that political reforms are off the table. The assassination of Jamal Khashoggi in 2018 shocked the world, and the security forces' clampdown on dissent has silenced the regime's critics. Still, Saudi Arabia's ambitious economic experiment must be taken seriously. Saudi Aramco, the state-controlled oil giant, reported a record profit of \$161.1 billion for 2022, and revenues have been invested domestically and globally through

the kingdom's sovereign wealth fund, known as the Public Investment Fund. At home, petrodollars are funding a long list of mega-projects to improve transport, revolutionise urban development, diversify the energy sector, and boost tourism. Neom, a futuristic carbon-free city being built on the Red Sea, embodies the audacity of these efforts.

In a region where concern about corruption and distrust in government are widespread, uniting behind a common policy goal is unusual. In many Arab states, governments have not galvanised their populations around a shared aim since the early post-independence era over 60 years ago. Indeed, popular support for Vision 2030 recalls the heyday of Arab nationalism and state-led development policies, spearheaded by leaders like Egypt's Gamal Abdel Nasser.

But there is a fundamental difference between the Saudi experiment and the post-independence era: Vision 2030 is geared toward liberalisation and attracting foreign investment, rather than widespread nationalisation and redistribution. Here, the initial public offering of Saudi Aramco in 2019 is emblematic.

The Saudi experiment is not without risks. There are some things money can't buy, like in-

stitutional capacity and the ability to plan strategically. Moreover, Saudi Arabia's extensive use of consulting firms, despite its large pool of local talent, may prove problematic when the money runs out. Likewise, a mega-project could become an albatross, or efficiency-enhancing reforms may not have the intended effects.

Saudi Arabia's location in a geopolitical hotspot could also threaten its transformation. Its recent agreement to restore diplomatic ties with Iran, efforts to secure a ceasefire in Sudan, and welcoming of Syria back into the Arab League represent a U-turn from the more aggressive foreign policy in the mid-2010s, demonstrating MBS's awareness that domestic success requires stability in the Middle East and Northeast Africa.

It remains to be seen whether the kingdom, with its vast resources, renewed confidence, and commitment to an accelerated timeline, can translate its vision into reality. The region would surely be better off if it succeeds.

Rabah Arezki is a senior fellow at Harvard Kennedy School. Tarik M. Yousef is Director of the Middle East Council on Global Affairs.

PROJECT SYNDICATE

Why the hype & hoopla?

Sir, The fixture of Men's Cricket World Cup 2023 to be conducted in India is out and cricket lovers from across the world have started the countdown. As soon as the schedule got published some people turned their full attention on the date and venue of the India-Pakistan match sidelining the other clashes. In the past too there was too much hullabaloo before India-Pakistan cricket matches in the media, some even going to the extreme of calling it "the ultimate war on cricket pitch," "mother of battles" and "war of titans." Why this hype and hoopla? In many of the world cups, except a few, the Pakistani team was just a shadow of itself and had lost many times to India. More than matches against Pakistan, clashes with the very powerful Aussies, the English and the Kiwis are the ones to look forward to. Indian batters, fielders and bowlers are world class and at par with cricketers of the top three teams in ODI rank list and if they come out with their best there is a chance for them to kiss the cup on November 19.

Unburden schoolchildren

Sir, Heavy school bags are sources of big headache for children. Unwanted stuff, including unnecessary books make the bags heavy. Besides textbooks and notebooks, nowadays there are numerous add-ons that load the bag. An ideal school bag is said to be one that weighs no more than 15 to 20 per cent of a child's body weight. Shoulder and back pain, tiredness and lesser attention span are invariable consequences of heavy bags being carried over fragile frames over a period of time. A few schools have lockers for children so that they need not carry all books on a daily basis. They should limit the number of subjects taught to allow children carry lesser books. Proper selection of bags that have two wide shoulder padded straps and appropriate arrangement of books that ensures heavier ones at the back of the bag could help. Schools across India can implement one "no bag" day per week for children that can go some way in unburdening them.

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, Rasulgari Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

M Pradyu, KANNUR

Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA

'Robust, dynamic security grid for Amarnath Yatra'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar, July 1: A robust and dynamic security grid complete with the deployment of snipers, anti-drone systems, bomb disposal and dog squads has been put in place to ensure a safe and secure Amarnath Yatra, the army said here on Saturday.

The yatra began from the twin routes of Baltal and Pahalgam. Baltal is in central Kashmir's Ganderbal district and Pahalgam in Anantnag district in south.

"The Indian Army has traditionally been involved in ensuring safe and secure yatra for the pilgrims. This year too, the army has worked with all other stakeholders to put in place a robust and dynamic security grid for the Shri Amarnathji Yatra," the army's 3 Sector Rashtriya Rifles commander Brigadier Atul Rajput told reporters here.

He said the army has ensured multi-tier security arrangements that include domination of the mountains, sanitisation of the yatra route and round-the-clock domination of the area using the latest night vision devices.

The army's Special Forces are keeping a watch over the yatra route from vantage locations, he said. "We have also deployed snipers, anti-drone systems, bomb disposal and dog squads to ensure safe and secure Yatra," the commander said.

The army has augmented a number of yatri camps with adequate tentage facilities to provide additional habitat during, Brigadier Rajput said.

"We have also made available helipads at multiple locations for medical emergencies and to cater to other airlift requirements for the yatra," he added.

A whole-of-the-nation approach has been followed to synergise efforts, and the army has offered its expertise in mountain rescue to civil agencies and trained Mountain Rescue and Avalanche Rescue teams of various agencies, he said.

"In addition, we have conducted joint exercises and mock drills to ensure seamless and successful rescue operations, if and when required," the army officer said.

He said based on the experiences of the cloudburst during the yatra last year, rescue teams and earth-movers are being placed at the Holy Cave and multiple locations enroute for any emergencies.

Modern equipment are also available for effective response and meet any contingencies, he added.

"We assure you that till the time last yatri is back from his pious visit to Shri Amarnath, we, the Indian Army, is here to ensure your security, safety and well being always and every time," Brigadier Rajput said.



Pilgrims on their way to the holy cave shrine of Amarnath at Baltal in Ganderbal district of central Kashmir, Saturday. The 62-day-long pilgrimage began Saturday from the twin tracks - the traditional track of Pahalgam in Anantnag district and the shorter track of Baltal in Ganderbal district. PTI PHOTO

Shimla turning hiker-friendly with walkways, subways

THE CAPITAL OF HIMACHAL PRADESH, RIMMED WITH HILLTOPS, HAS RECENTLY BEEN GRACED WITH A NETWORK OF OVER 20 KM-LONG PEDESTRIAN PATHWAYS



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Shimla, July 1: Shimla, one of the most popular hill stations of the country, is transforming into a pedestrian-friendly tourist destination with widening of its roads and construction of several walkways under the 'Smart Cities Mission.'

The capital of Himachal Pradesh, rimmed with hilltops, has recently been graced with a network of over 20 km-long pedestrian pathways mainly along the Circular Road in the city.

There is also focus on development of parking facilities in the city to help the locals and

tourists, officials of the Shimla Smart City Limited (SSCL) said.

"Shimla is fast transforming with a civic infra boost under various Smart Cities Mission initiatives, focusing development of pedestrian pathways and parking facilities to ease congestion and facilitate locals as well as tourists," said Rajiv Jain, the official spokesperson of Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.

The CPWD has come up with a 1.8 km-long pathway from Hotel Holiday Home to Bemloe Chowk on the Circular Road with a cost of Rs 2.19 crore and has incurred an additional expenditure of Rs 1.31 crore on road widening and

construction of a retaining wall, SSCL officials said.

A 2 km-long pathway connecting the famous St Bede's College in Navbahar to Sanjauli Chowk is most scenic one.

"It's a wonderful experience to walk amid so much natural beauty in a safe passage like this without the fear of being hit by any vehicle," said Ramesh Narayan, a tourist, from Jaipur.

The SSCL said the 'Smart Cities Mission' also involves widening of a 3 km-long road from Navbahar to the famed Jakhu temple, and another pathway connecting Sanjauli Chowk to Indira Gandhi Medical College.

The 1,500 metre-long covered pathway is used by around 20,000 people, most of whom patients and their attendants, who visit the College hospital all round the year, even during snowfall in winters, SSCL officials said.

The urban body has also on cards a combination of a 600 metre-long skywalk, foot overbridges, and three lifts for commute between Vikas Nagar and Secretariat.

A six-storied multilevel parking with 150 vehicle capacity is also under construction in Vikas Nagar.

"Once the work is finished on lifts, foot overbridges and the

skywalk, the distance between Vikas Nagar and Secretariat will be covered in just 15 minutes, which now by car takes around half-an-hour. The parking facility will also help reduce traffic in the Secretariat area," said an SSCL official.

SSCL General manager Ajit Bhardwaj said that in all 209 Smart City projects with a cost of Rs 709 crore are underway in Shimla.

"Shimla is considered as a city of pedestrians but space for them is shrinking due to the growing number of vehicles. A major focus of Smart City initiative is to provide proper pathways to the locals and tourists through widening of roads and developing sidewalks," Bhardwaj said.

So far, around 20 km of pathways have been developed, he said.

Parking, a big issue in the city, is also being eased with the construction of nearly 40 large and small parking lots, he said.

"We have created capacity for around 5,000 vehicles through large and small parkings. With space being a limiting factor we develop parking lots for even 8-10 vehicles while looking for multi-level parkings near places like hospitals and offices where land is available," he said.

Mehbooba requests CJI for early hearing on Article 370

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jammu, July 1: PDP president Mehbooba Mufti Saturday requested Chief Justice of India (CJI) DY Chandrachud for an early hearing of a batch of petitions challenging the revocation of Article 370 in August 2019.

CJI Chandrachud is currently on a tour of Jammu and Kashmir and delivered the inaugural address on the second day of the 19th All India Legal Services Authorities meeting in Srinagar Friday, besides attending the foundation laying function of the new high court complex in Jammu a day earlier.

"We welcome CJI to Jammu and Kashmir and want to remind him of Article 370 and the commitment of the people of the country to maintain the special status (of J&K under the constitutional provision) when the Muslim majority region joined hands with India without any compulsion," Mehbooba told reporters here.

The PDP leader requested the CJI to ensure an early hearing of the petitions on Article 370.

"We want to invite the attention of the CJI to the petitions



"We want to invite the attention of the CJI to the petitions which are pending in the Supreme Court for the last four years and also towards the plight of ... People, especially the youth who are in jails within and outside J-K without any trial"

MEHBOOBA MUFTI | PDP PRESIDENT

the Supreme Court in the cases filed by Sampat Prakash (1968), Vijayalaxmi Jha (2018) and Prem Nath Kaul (1959), reiterating that the Article will not be touched unless J&K constitutional assembly recommends for the same," Mehbooba claimed.

Earlier in a tweet, Mehbooba said Article 370 is a constitutional commitment of this nation to the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

"...J&K acceded to India out of choice & not compulsion. Then why is it being deprived of basic fundamental rights & guarantees given by the Constitution itself? I earnestly hope your presence throws light upon these pressing issues," she said.

which are pending in the Supreme Court for the last four years and also towards the plight of ... People, especially the youth who are in jails within and outside J-K without any trial," Mehbooba said.

The People's Democratic Party (PDP), National Conference (NC) and other parties in Jammu and Kashmir have opposed the scrapping of Article 370 which gave special status to J-K.

"The BJP revoked Article 370 unconstitutionally and illegally despite several past rulings by

Himachal to develop artificial lakes as tourist destinations

The hill state is endowed with bountiful lakes and reservoirs, mainly with glaciers as their source

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Shimla, July 1: The Himachal Pradesh government is contemplating to develop artificial reservoirs as vibrant tourist destinations offering a range of adventure activities like water sports, angling, bird watching and eco-tourism, Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu said Saturday.

In a statement issued here, he said rules are being formulated to govern the operations of these activities with an objective to prolong the stay of tourists besides offering them a variety of memorable experiences.

The hill state is endowed with bountiful lakes and reservoirs, mainly with glaciers as their source. The state government



has plans to explore the possibility of giving a fillip to lake tourism to empower local community by promoting home stays, street food corners, restaurants, resorts and hotels in close proximity to these artificial water bodies, he said.

The chief minister said the state also intends to promote water based attractions such as house boats, cruises, yachts as well as water sports in its reservoirs.

The main focus is to start such activities at Pong Dam in Kangra, Kol dam, Bhakra reservoir in

Bilaspur, Larji reservoir in Kullu, Tattapani near Shimla and Chamera dam in Chamba, he added.

Meanwhile, the Kangra administration has been directed to identify suitable sites to create an artificial lake, spanning one to two kilometers along a perennial river route.

"Additionally, 5.75 hectares of land has been identified in Nagrota for setting up a wellness centre and an artificial lake with world-class fountains. The government has allocated Rs 70 crore for promoting adventure tourism activities in Pong Dam in Kangra district which will attract adventure sports lovers to the state," Sukhu noted.

The state intends to increase the influx of tourists, that is, to attract 5 crore tourists in the coming four to five years which will significantly contribute to employment and self-employment avenues for the youth besides strengthening the economy of the state, he added.

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Shimla, July 1: The two-week long Shrikhand Mahadev pilgrimage, considered tougher than the journey to the Amarnath cave shrine in Kashmir, will begin in Himachal Pradesh July 7 with a portion of the trek still marooned in snow, officials said.

The first batch of devotees will leave from Jaon village, the base camp some 150 km from state capital Shimla, July 7 and will last till July 20, Sub-divisional Magistrate (SDM) Manmohan Singh, who is in-charge of the pilgrimage, told IANS.

This time the pilgrimage is going to start almost a week in advance keeping in mind the monsoon rains.

The 32-km one-way journey, mostly vertical, on foot starts is treacherous.

This time a minimum of 5 km trek is still laden with snow after the region witnessed the snowfall in the first week of this

A pilgrimage tougher than Amarnath

AFTER PASSING THROUGH RUGGED, COLD AND INHOSPITABLE TERRAIN, THE PILGRIMAGE CONCLUDES AT SHRIKHAND MAHADEV PEAK



month. Earlier 1-2 km of the man-made trek made from rocks and boulders piled under snow.

The SDM said a team of the Shrikhand Mahadev yatra trust has carried out the survey of the entire trek and the government would now carry out the necessary repairs for the convenience of the pilgrimages.

Trust founder member B.C. Thakur said the entire trek is being repaired, while a snow-covered path is also being made for the pedestrians.

"All works relating to relaying of the trek and places to hold langars (community kitchens) and to position rescue and medical teams would be completed before the start of the yatra," he added.

After passing through rugged, cold and inhospitable terrain, the pilgrimage concludes at Shrikhand Mahadev peak, where the devotees pay obeisance to 72-foot tall lingam.

It is believed that Lord Shiva meditated at Shrikhand and the Pandvas also used the trek to reach the peak during Mahabharata.



INS Rana during a Maritime Partnership Exercise with French Navy ship FS Surcouf in the Bay of Bengal



Students offering flowers to their teacher on the occasion of Guru Purnima in Surat



Villagers at erosion site of the river Brahmaputra, in Barpeta district of Assam. Water level of the Brahmaputra is continuously rising due to heavy rainfall



Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen releases a pigeon during his party's election campaign in Phnom Penh, Cambodia



Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and Spain's Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez shake hands as they leave a joint news conference following their talks in Kyiv, Ukraine



People visit the Taj Mahal in Agra



Goats near a pile of damaged tomatoes in Karad, Maharashtra. Tomato prices are soaring across the nation



A portion of a road caved in after heavy rain in Ahmedabad

of the day quote

There is a serious question of law and order in Maharashtra. Attacks on women, gangs with koytas (sharp edged weapon) are serious issues. The state government is incapable of maintaining law and order

SHARAD PAWAR | NCP CHIEF

Despite having only 2 per cent of the country's population, Haryana contributes 6 per cent to the central revenue in the tax structure

DUSHYANT CHAULTALA | HARYANA DEPUTY CM

These are NOT 'opposition parties', Mr Prime Minister! It is YOU who is leading the largest 'opposition party'. Your party is opposed to giving young people jobs. Opposed to nurturing democracy. Opposed to preserving federalism. Opposed to controlling prices

DEREK O'BRIEN | TMC RAJYA SABHA MEMBER

SHORT TAKES

Four arrested

Chandigarh: Four people were arrested from Haryana's Ambala district Saturday for their alleged involvement in the attack on Bhim Army chief Chandra Shekhar Aazad, a police official said. They were apprehended in a joint operation by the Haryana and Uttar Pradesh police, Haryana Special Task Force Deputy Superintendent of Police Aman Kumar said. The Dalit leader was injured when unidentified assailants opened fire on his car in Deoband in Uttar Pradesh on June 28. The four were arrested from the Shahzadpur area in Ambala, Kumar said and added that the accused were identified as Vikas of Haryana and Vikas, Prashant and Lovish of Uttar Pradesh.

Man kills father

Mumbai: A 53-year-old man, working as a driver for an actor, was allegedly killed by his 24-year-old son in Mumbai who bore a grudge against the deceased for scolding him, police said Saturday. Police has arrested the son of the deceased and registered a case under section 302 (Punishment for murder) of the Indian Penal Code.

Cop found dead

Morigaon (Assam): A police constable was found hanging from the ceiling of his official quarters in Assam's Morigaon district, an officer said Saturday. The deceased was identified as 22-year-old Sony Nath, who was posted at Nellie police station. A home guard from the same police station came looking for Nath when he did not report for duty in the morning and found the body hanging in the verandah of the quarters, the officer said.

ED summons Saayoni again

Kolkata: A day after quizzing Trinamool Chhatra Parishad (TMCP) state president Saayoni Ghosh for more than 11 hours in connection with the West Bengal school jobs scam, the Enforcement Directorate (ED) Saturday again asked her to appear before them on July 5, an officer said. The student leader has been asked to arrive at the ED office on Wednesday with a few documents, he added. "There are several questions that she still needs to answer. We have issued a summons to Ghosh to appear before our officers here on Wednesday morning," the officer added. Ghosh said she will cooperate with the ED in their investigation and go to the agency's city office.



The people have lost faith in BJP and the chief minister has no work to show in his 18-year tenure. To cover up the deficiencies, he is making baseless allegations against me

KAMAL NATH | MADHYA PRADESH CONGRESS PRESIDENT

RAJ MOVE

The Preamble and Fundamental Duties of the Constitution will now be recited at every school in Rajasthan. This move is aimed at further strengthening the faith and pride of the young generation of the state in the country's great constitution, democracy and nationalism



SC PROTECTS TEESTA FROM ARREST

PNN/ AGENCIES

New Delhi/Mumbai, July 1: The Supreme Court late Saturday night protected social activist Teesta Setalvad from arrest and stayed for a week the Gujarat High Court order rejecting her plea for regular bail and asking her to surrender immediately in a case of alleged fabrication of evidence to frame innocent people in 2002 post-Godhra riot cases.

In a special late-night hearing, a rarity on holidays and during vacations, a bench of Justices B R Gavai, A S Bopanna and Dipankar Datta questioned the denial of time to Setalvad to appeal against the HC order, saying even an ordinary criminal is entitled to some form of interim relief.

"In ordinary circumstances, we would not have considered such a request. However, it is to be noted that after FIR was registered on June 25, 2022, and the petitioner was arrested, this court considered the prayer for grant of interim bail and granted the same on certain conditions on September 2, 2022. One of the factors which weighed with this court was that the petitioner is a woman and entitled to special protection



The apex court said the registry shall obtain orders from the CJI for listing Setalvad's bail plea before an appropriate bench

Earlier in the day, Justice Nirzar Desai of the Gujarat High Court directed her to surrender immediately as she was out of jail after having secured interim bail from the apex court in September last year

under section 437 of CrPC.

"We find that taking into consideration this fact, the learned single judge ought to have granted some protection so that the petitioner has sufficient time

to challenge the order passed by the single judge. In that view of the matter without going into the merits, finding that learned single judge was not correct in granting even some protection,

we stay the impugned order for a period of 1 week," the bench said after a 37-minute hearing.

The apex court said the registry shall obtain orders from the CJI for listing Setalvad's bail plea before an appropriate bench. As the hearing commenced before the three-judge bench, senior advocate C U Singh, appearing for Setalvad, submitted that the top court had on September 2, 2022 granted interim protection

to the activist till the high court decided her bail application.

Singh stated it is nobody's case that she has violated any condition of the interim bail granted to her. "The Gujarat high court refused to stay the operation of the order for 30 days, but no reasons were given to explain the rejection in its order and immediate surrender was ordered," he said.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Gujarat government, urged the court to mete out the same treatment to Setalvad as to any ordinary citizen. "I would expect your lordships to do the same thing which will be done in the case of a common man who has been rejected bail since she is a common criminal," the law officer said.

At this juncture, the bench observed, "A person is on bail for the last 10 months under the orders of this court. What is the urgency that a person should not be granted even 7 days to challenge the order? Are the skies to fall? We fail to understand the approach of the high court. What is the alarming urgency?"

Mehta said here is an individual who thinks she is not supposed to be treated like an ordinary criminal. "She is an ordinary criminal," he said.



People take part in a protest organised by Aam Aadmi Party to raise concern on the current violence in Manipur, at Santacruz in Mumbai

No guarantee of Oppn unity: PM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Shahdol (MP), July 1: Prime Minister Narendra Modi Saturday said Congress and other "family-centric" parties are giving "false" guarantees to people and old squabbles among them indicate there is no guarantee of Opposition unity, the remark coming against the backdrop of a bid to form an anti-BJP bloc.

He also said dynastic parties work only for the welfare of their families. Those people facing graft charges and out on bail are together with those who are sentenced for scams, Modi added.

The PM targeted the Opposition after launching the National Sickle Cell Anemia Eradication Mission 2047 by unveiling a portal and releasing a guideline for the management of the disease and different modules at Shahdol in Madhya Pradesh.

He also started the distribution of over 3 crore digital Ayushman cards in the country and 1 crore PVC Ayushman Bharat cards in MP. Reaching out to tribals in MP, where polls are due later this year, Modi said Rani Durgavati's 500th birth anniversary will be celebrated across India and a postal stamp will be released. "Beware of false (poll) guarantees being given by family-centric parties. Such people have brought schemes of guarantees though they don't have their own (political) guarantee," the Prime Minister said.

Patna rocked by protests

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Patna, July 1: The Bihar capital was Saturday rocked by protests against the state government's controversial decision to allow those from other provinces to compete for teachers' jobs.

A massive demonstration was staged by young men and women at the Dak Bungalow crossing in the heart of Patna, creating traffic snarls, even as police took recourse to use of force for dispersal and rounded up quite a few who they found most unruly.

"The demonstration is being staged without any permission from the administration. We are trying to explain to the protesters that what they are doing is illegal. Use of force has been a last resort," Deputy Superintendent of Police, Law and Order, Patna, Nurul Haq, told reporters.



Asked about the number of people, both men and women, who have been taken into custody, the Deputy SP said, "At present, we are not in a position to give the figures. We will work it out and let details be known once we are through with maintaining order in the affected area".

However, the protesters, who claimed to have cleared eligibil-

ity tests like CTET and BTET, alleged that the police action was reflective of the government's apathy. "Do these people not have any shame? We are educated people and holding a peaceful demonstration over our legitimate concerns. Yet they are using force and arresting us as if we were criminals", said Pujya Singh, a job aspirant who had come from Begusarai district.

HC asks Centre to reduce women's consent age to 16

The court's request came June 27 through an order quashing a First Information Report against a man who was accused of repeatedly raping a minor girl and impregnating her in 2020



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Gwalior, July 1: The Gwalior bench of Madhya Pradesh High Court has requested the Centre to reduce the consent age of females to 16, observing that the present age of 18 has disturbed the fabric of society as injustice is going on with adolescent boys.

The court's request came on June 27 through an order quashing a First Information Report (FIR) against a man who was accused of repeatedly raping a minor girl and impregnating her in 2020. Nowadays, every male or female near the age of 14 years, due to social media awareness and easily accessible internet connectivity, is getting puberty at an early age, the judge said.

The court said boys and girls get attracted to each other owing to early puberty, which is ultimately "resulting in consensual physical relationships", read the order. "I request the Government of India to think over the matter for reducing the age of prosecutrix (female complainant) from 18 to 16 years

as earlier before (IPC) amendments (were made) so that injustice should be redressed," read the order by Justice Deepak Kumar Agarwal.

The court said the age of consent for females at 18 has "disturbed the fabric of society". As per the prosecution, the complainant was a minor in 2020 and would take coaching classes from the petitioner. She alleged that the petitioner once gave her a spiked drink, raped her and made a video of the sexual assault. He then allegedly raped her many times blackmailing her with the clip.

Later, the minor had also physical relations with a distant relative, the court noted. "This Court, looking into the physical and mental development of an adolescent of that age group, would consider it logical that such a person is capable of making a conscious decision as regard his or her well-being," the court said.

"Generally, girls and boys of adolescence develop friendship and thereafter, due to attraction make physical relationship," it said. In these cases, male persons are not at all criminal, the court order said.

El Nino, positive IOD to impact weather patterns: IMD

El Nino is a weather phenomenon that involves an abnormal warming up of water surface temperatures in the eastern and central Pacific Ocean, and tends to suppress monsoon rainfall in India

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, July 1: The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has said that there are high probabilities for the development of El Nino conditions over the equatorial Pacific Ocean and positive Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) conditions over the Indian Ocean during July to September 2023.

El Nino is a weather phenomenon that involves an abnormal warming up of water

surface temperatures in the eastern and central Pacific Ocean, and tends to suppress monsoon rainfall in India.

A senior IMD official said that as Sea Surface Temperature (SST) conditions over the Pacific and the Indian Oceans are known to have strong influence on Indian monsoon and the weather department is carefully monitoring the evolution of sea surface conditions over these Ocean basins.

The IMD said that currently,



warm El Nino-Southern Oscillation (ENSO) neutral conditions are prevailing over the equatorial Pacific and the sea surface temperatures (SSTs)

across most of the equatorial Pacific Ocean are warmer than normal and near El Nino threshold value.

"The latest forecasts from

Monsoon Mission Climate Forecasting System (MMCFs) and other global models indicate high probabilities for the El Niño conditions to develop during the middle of the monsoon season and continue till the first quarter of 2024," said the weather forecast agency.

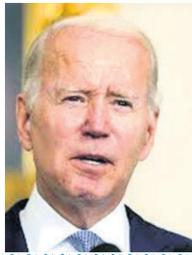
"In addition to ENSO conditions over Pacific, other factors such as the Indian Ocean Sea Surface Temperatures (SSTs) have also some influence on Indian monsoon. Currently, neutral Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) conditions are prevailing over Indian Ocean. The latest forecasts from MMCFs and other global models indicate positive IOD conditions likely

to develop during the remaining period of the monsoon season," it said.

Meanwhile, the weather department also predicted that during July, normal to above normal maximum temperatures are likely over most parts of the country except some areas of northwest and peninsular India where below normal maximum temperatures are likely.

The IMD also predicted that the monthly rainfall over the country as a whole during July 2023 is most likely to be normal, ranging from 94 to 106 per cent of the Long Period Average (LPA), with a higher probability towards the positive side of the normal range.

international



I believe the court's decision to strike down my student debt relief program was a mistake, was wrong
JOE BIDEN | PRESIDENT, US

UN ENDS MALI MISSION

The United Nations Security Council unanimously voted to end a decade-long peacekeeping mission in Mali after the West African country's military junta abruptly asked the 13,000-strong force to leave - a move the United States said was engineered by Russia's Wagner mercenary group



of the day quote

The war in Ukraine will be one of the great priorities of our presidency, with the focus being on guaranteeing the unity (on the issue) among all member states
PEDRO SÁNCHEZ | PM, SPAIN

I am confident that my compatriots who have already seen the progress of Cambodia in full peace, independence, unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity will now continue to vote for the Cambodian People's Party and me to continue to lead the country for the seventh legislature
HUN SEN | PM, CAMBODIA

A lot of people including myself, my group, The Black Archives, and the Black Manifesto say that (an) apology is not enough. An apology should be tied to a form of repair and reparatory justice or reparations
MITCHELL ESAJAS | DIRECTOR, BLACK ARCHIVES

308 Indian prisoners in jails of Pakistan

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Islamabad, July 1: Pakistan Saturday handed over a list of 308 Indian prisoners, including 42 civil and 266 fishermen, lodged in its jails to the High Commission of India here as part of a bilateral agreement.

The step was taken in consistency with the provisions of the 2008 Agreement on Consular Access between the two countries, the Foreign Office (FO) said in a statement.

The FO said that "the Government of Pakistan today handed over a list of 308 Indian prisoners in Pakistan (42 civilian prisoners and 266 fishermen) to the High Commission of India in Islamabad."

It further said that the Government of India handed over the list of Pakistani prisoners in Indian jails to the Pakistan High Commission, New Delhi.

According to the list, there are a total of 417 Pakistanis in Indian jails, 343 of whom are civilian prisoners and 74 fishermen.

Islamabad urged New Delhi to release and repatriate all those Pakistani civilian prisoners and fishermen, who have completed their respective sentences and their national status stands confirmed.

Pakistan and India regularly arrest fishermen for violating the maritime boundary, which is poorly marked at some points.

India also requested Pakistan to ensure the safety, security and welfare of all Indians and those believed to be Indian civilian prisoners and fishermen, pending their release and repatriation, the Ministry of External Affairs said in a statement in New Delhi.

France riots mirror war-zone scenes

France has been rocked by a wave of protests after a 17-year-old youth was shot by police near Paris Tuesday, sparking a ban on demonstrations in some cities, travel warnings and reigniting a debate on over-policing in marginalized communities

REUTERS

Paris, July 1: More than 1,300 people were arrested in France during a fourth night of rioting as family and friends of Nahel M, whose shooting by police sparked the unrest, gathered Saturday for the teenager's funeral in the Paris suburb where he died.

The government deployed 45,000 police and several armoured vehicles overnight to tackle the worst crisis of President Emmanuel Macron's leadership since the "Yellow Vest" protests which brought much of France to a standstill in late 2018.

The interior ministry said on Twitter that 1,311 people had been arrested, compared with 875 the previous night, although the violence was "lower in intensity".

Several hundred people lined up to enter Nanterre's grand mosque, which was guarded by volunteers in yellow vests, while a few dozen bystanders watched from across the street.

The shooting of the teenager, caught on video, has reignited longstanding complaints by poor and racially mixed urban communities of police violence and racism. Macron had denied there is systemic racism in French law enforcement agencies.

The policeman whom prosecutors say acknowledged firing a lethal shot at Nahel is in preventive custody under formal investigation for voluntary homicide, equivalent to being charged under Anglo-Saxon jurisdictions. The accused officer, how-



- 45,000 police, armoured vehicles deployed to quell unrest
- Arrests total more than 2,000, over 200 police injured
- Fourth night of fiery unrest hits major French cities

ever, claims that he fired the fatal shot out of fear that the boy would run someone over with the car.

SHOPS RANSACKED

Looters have ransacked dozens of shops and torched 2,000 vehicles since the start of the riots, which have spread to cities such as Marseille, Lyon, Toulouse, Strasbourg and Lille.

More than 200 police officers have been injured, Interior Minister Gerald Darmanin said, adding that the average age of those arrested was 17.

Friday night's arrests included 80 people in Marseille, home to many people of North African

These are things that happen when you're French but with foreign roots. We're not considered French, and they only look at the color of our skin, where we come from, even if we were born in France. Racism within the police kills, and way too many of them embrace far-right ideas so. This has to stop
TRACY LABJI | ACTIVIST, SOS RACISME



WHO WAS NAHEL?

The 17-year-old teen, Nahel, was shot dead Tuesday morning during a traffic stop in the Paris suburb of Nanterre. The incident has revived longstanding grievances about policing and racial profiling in France's low-income and multi-ethnic suburbs. Videos of Nahel's encounter with police have amplified protests after eyewitnesses and security camera video contradicted the official narrative. The teen's family has not released his surname. Nahel worked as a takeaway delivery driver. Nahel was the only child raised by his mother Mounia. She alleged that her son was killed because he had an "Arab face." "The officer saw an Arab face, a little kid, and wanted to take his life," she told media.

wounded Saturday.

In Lyon, France's third-largest city, police deployed armoured personnel carriers and a helicopter, while in Paris, they cleared protesters from the Place de la Concorde. Lyon Mayor Gregory Doucet has also called for reinforcements.

The unrest has revived memories of nationwide riots in 2005 that forced then President Jacques Chirac to declare a state of emergency, after the death of two young men electrocuted in a power substation as they hid

from police.

Players from the national soccer team issued a rare statement calling for calm. "Violence must stop to leave way for mourning, dialogue and reconstruction," they said on star Kylian Mbappe's Instagram account.

Events including two concerts at the Stade de France on the outskirts of Paris were cancelled, while Tour de France organisers said they were ready to adapt to any situation when the cycle race enters the country Monday from Spain.

SHORT TAKES

Bolsonaro barred

Brasilia: Former Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro's political career was in tatters Friday as Brazil's federal electoral court barred the far-right nationalist from public office until 2030 for his conduct during last year's fraught election. Five out of seven justices voted to convict the 68-year-old Bolsonaro for abuse of power and misuse of the media over his actions in July 2022, ahead of the election, when he summoned ambassadors to vent unfounded claims about Brazil's electronic voting system. Their decision marks a stunning reversal for Bolsonaro, a fiery populist who narrowly lost the October vote to leftist rival Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva.

Harry seeks \$558K

London: Prince Harry's lawyer has put a price tag on the prince's lawsuit accusing the publisher of the Daily Mirror of hacking his phone and using other unlawful means to dig up dirt on the early years of his royal life: 440,000 pounds (\$558,000). The Duke of Sussex's lawyer submitted the proposed legal award at the conclusion of courtroom proceedings in the first of Harry's cases against the British tabloid press to go to trial. If he managed to win the entire sum, it would be a massive award in the broader phone hacking scandal that has plagued several tabloid publishers.

Chance for Suu Kyi

Bangkok: Myanmar's Supreme Court scheduled hearings for this month to consider appeals from ousted leader Aung San Suu Kyi against her conviction in cases that saw her receive a total of 33 years in prison, legal officials said Saturday. The cases against her are mostly brought by the military that seized power from her elected government in February 2021. The 78-year-old Suu Kyi was arrested following the military takeover and tried on a variety of charges that supporters and rights groups say were concocted to legitimize the usurpation and discredit her so she could not resume an active role in politics.

Accident kills 51

Nairobi: A truck rammed into several other vehicles and market traders in western Kenya killing at least 51 people, police said. The accident occurred at a location known for vehicle crashes near the Rift Valley town of Londiani, which is about 200 kilometres northwest of the capital, Nairobi.



LIFT OFF: A SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket, with the European Space Agency Euclid space telescope, lifts off from pad 40 at the Cape Canaveral Space Force Station in Cape Canaveral, Saturday. The Euclid mission is designed to explore the evolution of the dark universe
PTI/PHOTO

Ukraine counteroffensive creeps

Russia, which began its full-scale invasion of its neighbor in February 2022 has not acknowledged the Ukrainian gains and has said Ukraine's forces are suffering heavy casualties

REUTERS

Kyiv, July 1: Ukraine has been publicly cautious in counting gains in a counteroffensive it launched this month to reclaim territory occupied by Russian forces, and its president and a US general acknowledged that progress is measured in blood.

The top US military officer, Army General Mark Milley, told an audience at the National Press Club in Washington that the counteroffensive was "advancing steadily, deliberately working its way through very difficult



minefields ... 500 meters a day, 1,000 meters a day, 2,000 meters a day, that kind of thing."

He said he was unsurprised progress was slower than some people and computers might have predicted.

"War on paper and real war are different. In real war, real people die. Real people are on those front lines and real peo-

ple are in those vehicles. Real bodies are being shredded by high explosives."

Last week, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said the counteroffensive was "slower than desired", without getting too specific. Ukraine says it has recaptured a cluster of villages in operations that liberated 130 square km (50 square

What I had said was this (counteroffensive) is going to take six, eight, 10 weeks, it's going to be very difficult. It's going to be very long, and it's going to be very, very bloody. And no one should have any illusions about any of that
MARK MILLEY | TOP MILITARY OFFICER, US

miles) in the south, but this is a small percentage of the total territory held by Russia.

Zelenskyy acknowledged plans for the counteroffensive had slowed in recent months. "We stopped because we could not advance," he said. "Advancing meant losing people and we had no artillery."

Prigozhin's Wagner Group could set up a new base at a vacant military base near the town of Asipovichy, about 90 km from the Belarusian capital, Minsk, Russian media reported.

150TH ANNIV OF ABOLITION

King apologises for Dutch's role in slavery

Slavery was abolished in Suriname and the Dutch colonies in the Caribbean July 1, 1863, but most of the enslaved labourers were forced to continue working on plantations for a further 10 years

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Amsterdam, July 1: Dutch King Willem-Alexander apologised Saturday for his country's role in slavery and asked for forgiveness in a historic speech greeted by cheers and whoops at an event to commemorate the anniversary of the abolition of slavery.

The king's speech followed Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte's apology late last year for the country's role in the slave trade and slavery. It is part of a wider reckoning with colonial histories in the West that have been spurred in recent years by the Black Lives Matter move-



ment. In an emotional speech, Willem-Alexander referred back to that apology as he told a crowd of invited guests and onlookers: "Today I stand before you. Today, as your King and as a member of the government, I make this apology myself. And I feel the weight of the words in my heart and my soul." The king said he has com-

missioned a study into the exact role of the royal House of Orange-Nassau in slavery in the Netherlands. Willem-Alexander's voice appeared to break with emotion as he completed his speech before laying a wreath at the country's national slavery monument in an Amsterdam park. The commemoration and

On this day of remembrance, I ask forgiveness for the clear failure to act in the face of this crime against humanity
WILLEM-ALEXANDER | KING, DUTCH

In a world's first, Oz okays ecstasy, magic mushrooms

The country has allowed the use of MDMA, better known as ecstasy, and magic mushrooms for medical treatment, in a bid to tackle certain mental health conditions

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Sydney, July 1: Australia has become the world's first country to legalise the clinical prescribing of psychedelics for certain mental health disorders.

From July 1, authorised psychiatrists will be able to prescribe the drugs, also known as ecstasy and psilocybin, for the treatment of post-traumatic stress disorder and some types of depression.

Authorities in Canada and the United States allow the medical use of one or both of the drugs, but only in clinical trials or with special permits.

In February, Australia reclassified the drug entirely, after the country's Therapeutic Goods Administration said trials had



found the substances to be "relatively safe" when used in a "medically-controlled environment".

Supporters of the move hope the drugs can provide breakthroughs for mental health patients, when other treatments have failed.

Mike Musker, a mental health and suicide prevention researcher at the University of South Australia, told AFP that MDMA would be useful for treating post-traumatic stress, while psilocybin can help with depression.

He explained that MDMA "gives people a feeling of connectedness and it makes it easier for people to connect with a therapist and also talk about some bad personal experiences".

Musker doubts the drugs will be in widespread use among patients until 2024, and said the process would not be a case of "take a pill and go away".

of the day quote

The GST tax system should be made stable and more simplified by removing the current existing anomalies

PRAVEEN KHANDELWAL | SECRETARY GENERAL, CAIT

This (surface and coating) industry today is estimated to be over Rs 12,000 crore. Globally, this industry is expected to grow to \$30 billion 2030 from the current \$20 billion

U KAMACHI MUDALI | VC, HOMI BHABHA NATIONAL INSTITUTE

The agreement (with Apple) reflects the strength of Nokia's patent portfolio, decades-long investments in Rand D, and contributions to cellular standards and other technologies

JENNI LUKANDER | PRESIDENT, NOKIA TECHNOLOGIES

SHORT TAKES

Gasoil, gasoline sales flat in June

New Delhi: Indian state fuel retailers' gasoil and gasoline sales in June were little changed from the previous month, preliminary data showed, as people avoided travel as a heat wave in May gave way to monsoon rains. Daily sales of gasoil rose marginally by 0.4% to 7.12 million metric tonne in June compared with May, the data showed. Fuel demand in India, the world's third biggest oil importer and consumer, typically falls during the four-month monsoon season beginning in June as parts of the country are hit by heavy floods.

NTPC production nearly doubles

New Delhi: The production from captive coal mines of NTPC almost doubled to 8.48 million metric tonnes (MMT) in the first quarter of FY24, a statement said Saturday. NTPC produced 4.27 MMT coal from its captive mines in Q1 FY23, the company said in the statement. The despatch of coal from its mines more than doubled to 8.82 MMT in Q1 FY24 from 4.17 in April-June FY23, it added. "This outstanding performance reflects NTPC's relentless commitment to enhancing coal production from its captive mines and ensuring efficient supply to meet the nation's energy needs," it said.

Hero MotoCorp to increase prices

Bangalore: Indian two-wheeler maker Hero MotoCorp Friday said it would increase prices of specific models of motorcycles and scooters by around 1.5% from July 3, as it combats price positioning, input costs and business imperatives. The exact quantum of increase will vary by specific models and markets, the company said in an exchange filing. Hero previously hiked prices on its select models of motorcycles and scooters by 2% in March, as it grappled with increased costs to meet new emission norms, which came into effect in the following month.

Byju's renews talks to restructure debt

New Delhi: Embattled Indian edtech startup Byju's and some of its lenders have restarted negotiations to restructure its \$1.2 billion term loan, reports said. The lenders have delivered a detailed amendment proposal to the company calling for a debt pay down, coupon boost and investor protections on the loan, it said.



CIL will work on priority to meet the 780 MT production target for FY24,
PM PRASAD | CHAIRMAN, COAL INDIA

HDFC MEGA MERGER 'Aim to double every 4 yrs'

HDFC leaps to 4th in world's most valuable banks list and has become the first Indian company to rank among the world's most valuable banks, marking a new challenger to the largest American and Chinese lenders occupying the coveted top spots

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, July 1: Having successfully executed the merger with parent HDFC, HDFC Bank's managing director and chief executive Sashidhar Jagdishan Saturday said the country's largest lender aims to double every four years.

In a letter to the over 4,000 employees from HDFC who joined the bank's rolls Saturday, Jagdishan said the future is bright, and the work on realising the potential of the merger starts now.

"The runway for financial services and mortgage, which are so underserved and underpenetrated, is going to be very large. HDFC Bank - the combined entity - with a large and growing distribution and customer franchise, more than adequate capital, healthy asset quality and profitability, will be best positioned to capture growth. The pace at which we aim to grow - we could be creating a new HDFC Bank every 4 years," he said.

HDFC Bank began the day one after the merger with a re-branding exercise, wherein it is putting up its colours at all the over 500 branches and offices of HDFC Ltd.

The erstwhile HDFC's corporate headquarters at Ramon House already sports the HDFC Bank branding, and officials estimated that the entire exercise



- HDFC Bank takes over its parent, in a \$40-billion all-stock deal, creating a financial services titan with a combined asset of over Rs 18L-cr
- The new HDFC Bank entity will have around 120mn customers
- The total business of the merged entity stood at Rs 41L-cr at the end of March 2023
- With the merger, the net worth of the entity would be over Rs 4.14L-cr
- The combined profit of both entities was to the tune of about Rs 60,000cr at the end of March 2023

The penetration levels of the home loan product in its (HDFC Bank's) customer base and the extent the distribution has been leveraged, is quite low. This is an opportunity! The runway for growth is going to be large and for a long time to come

SASHIDHAR JAGDISHAN | MD AND CEO, HDFC BANK

will be over in the next 24 hours.

It can be noted that dedicated teams have been put in place to make the merger as seamless as possible, right since its announcement April 4 last year. As part of the \$40 billion all-share deal, the biggest in Indian corporate history, HDFC Bank had committed to absorb all the over 4,000 employees of its parent.

"Our work starts from today, in realising the potential of what this merger holds for us," Jagdishan wrote.

HDFC Ltd, the parent of the country's largest private sector lender, merged into HDFC Bank Saturday, with boards of both entities clearing the plan first pre-

sented April 4 last year. HDFC Ltd, the largest pure-play home financier, ceases to exist 44 years after it was founded.

The \$40-billion merger, the largest such deal in Indian corporate history, is driven by a changing regulatory landscape, which limited the advantages for HDFC continuing as a non-bank lending entity.

Post-merger, HDFC Bank will become the fourth most valued lender in the world, and narrow the gap by asset size with state-owned SBI to be the second largest Indian bank.

The total business of the merged entity stood at Rs 41 lakh crore at the end of March 2023. With the merger, the networth of the entity would be over Rs 4.14 lakh crore. The combined profit of both entities was to the tune of about Rs 60,000 crore at the end of March 2023.

With the deal getting effective, HDFC Bank will be 100 per cent owned by public shareholders, and existing shareholders of HDFC will own 41 per cent of the bank. Every HDFC shareholder will get 42 shares of HDFC Bank for every 25 shares they hold.

PSBs' profit tripled to ₹1.04L in 9 yrs: FM

FROM ₹36,270CR IN FY2014, THE PSBs' PROFIT HAS RISEN TO ₹1.04L-CR IN FY23

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 1: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman Saturday said the public sector banks' profit in the last nine years has tripled to Rs 1.04 lakh crore due to initiatives taken by the government and underlined the need for continuing the momentum to fuel economy.

The net profit of public sector banks (PSBs) has almost tripled to Rs 1.04 lakh crore in FY23 from Rs 36,270 crore in FY2014.

Inaugurating the corporate office of Punjab and Sind Bank here, the minister said that banks need to "build on laurels" by following the best corporate gov-



ernance principles.

The finance minister said that there was a time when the Indian economy faced the problem of twin balance sheets - stress on the balance sheets of banks and corporate at the same time.

"Banks should not sit back and revel in success. They should follow best corporate governance practices, adhere to regulatory norms, ensure prudent liquidity management and continue to focus on having robust asset-liability and risk management," she said, stressing that the Indian economy has moved away from the 'twin balance sheet prob-

lem' to 'twin balance sheet advantage'.

Before the Modi government came to power in 2014, difficulty in the Indian banking system actually started because of irrational 'Phone Banking', which happened during the tenure of the UPA government, she said.

Observing that combined profits of the public sector banks tripled to Rs 1.04 lakh crore in 2022-23 against Rs 36,270 crore in FY14, Sitharaman said the banks "need to build on laurels".

"At this stage, it is our duty towards the people of India to ensure that the banks can build on the strength and not lose this momentum that we have achieved," the minister noted.

Sitharaman further said the banks should endeavour to adopt a proactive approach in reaching out to people to achieve optimum utilisation of financial inclusion schemes.

DREAM11 TO SPONSOR INDIA TEAM

Fantasy gaming company Dream11 will be the lead sponsor of India's national cricket team for three years, the country's cricket board announced Saturday. Financial details of the deal were not released. Dream11 replaces Byju's as lead sponsor, after the BCCI's contract with the education technology firm ended in March



June GST mop-up rises 12% to over ₹1.61 lakh crore

The gross GST collection has crossed Rs 1.60 lakh crore mark for the fourth time since the roll-out of the indirect tax regime six years ago July 1, 2017

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 1: GST collections rose 12 per cent to over Rs 1.61 lakh crore in June, the Finance Ministry said Saturday.

The gross GST collection has crossed Rs 1.60 lakh crore mark for the fourth time since the roll-out of the indirect tax regime six years ago July 1, 2017.

As the Goods and Services Tax (GST) completed 6 years of implementation, the government recounted the benefits that the indirect tax regime brought about to the economy, including lower tax rates for goods and services and removed discretion.

The average gross GST collection for the first (April-June) quarter of the 2021-22, 2022-23 and 2023-24 stood at Rs 1.10 lakh crore, Rs 1.51 lakh crore and Rs 1.69 lakh crore, respectively, the Finance Ministry said in a statement.

Speaking on the GST Day 2023 event, Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) chairman Vivek Johri said the benefits of GST both to the macro-economy and taxpayers are well documented.

"Greater revenue efficiency, and we have seen some of that today with revenue collection for June exceeding Rs 1.60 lakh crore, better compliance, market integration," Johri said.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman complimented tax officers for their "dedication and commitment and grit",



which helped in making monthly GST revenues of Rs 1.60 lakh crore a "new normal".

"Whether it is common consumer, whether it is the state government, a matter of tax buoyancy, whether it is making it digital and simpler, GST stands out as an exemplar," Sitharaman said.

In June, the gross GST revenue collected was Rs 1,61,497 crore of which Central GST is Rs 31,013 crore, State GST is Rs 38,292 crore, Integrated GST is Rs 80,292 crore (including Rs 39,035 crore collected on import of goods) and cess is Rs 11,900 crore (including Rs 1,028 crore collected on import of goods).

The revenues for June 2023 are 12 per cent higher than the GST revenues in the same month last year. During the month, the revenues from domestic transactions (including import of services) are 18 per cent higher than the revenues from these sources during the same month last year.

The revenues had touched a record high of Rs 1.87 lakh crore in April. In May, it was Rs 1.57 lakh crore.

EY LLP Tax Partner Saurabh Agarwal said the GST collection continues to follow an up-trend, and states, including Jammu and Kashmir, Lakshadweep, Nagaland, Mizoram and Manipur, saw remarkable growth in the collection in June.

ATF price up 1.6% on global cues

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 1: Jet fuel or ATF price Saturday was hiked by 1.65 per cent - the first increase in rate after fourth months of reduction warranted by softening oil prices.

Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF) price was increased by Rs 1,476.79 per kilolitre, or 1.65 per cent, in the national capital to Rs 90,779.88 per kl, according to a notification of state-owned fuel retailers.

Rates, which vary from state to state depending on incidence of local sales tax or VAT, have been increased on firming up of global rates that followed four months of decline.

Jet fuel prices had been cut on previous four monthly revisions that happen on the first of every month. ATF prices were last reduced by Rs 6,632.25 per kl June 1.

Prices of commercial LPG, used in establishments such as hotels and restaurants, remained unchanged in Delhi but were marginally increased in Mumbai, Kolkata and Chennai.

While the price of a 19-kg commercial LPG cylinder was unchanged at Rs 1,773 in the national capital, the rate went up by Rs 8.50 per cylinder to Rs 1,783.50 in Mumbai.

Commercial LPG rates were cut on three previous monthly revisions. In three cuts, prices had gone down by Rs 346.5 per 19-kg cylinder. The price of domestic LPG - used in the kitchen for cooking purposes - remained unchanged at Rs 1,103 per 14.2-kg cylinder in the national capital.

Domestic LPG rates were last changed March 1, when they were hiked by Rs 50 per cylinder. State-owned Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd (HPCL) revise cooking gas and ATF prices on the 1st of every month based on the average international price in the previous month.

Petrol and diesel prices continued to remain on freeze for a record 15th month in a row. Petrol costs Rs 96.72 per litre in New Delhi and diesel for Rs 89.62.

BIZ BUZZ

ASSOCHAM felicitates MCL with top honour for mining excellence

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sambalpur, July 1: Leading industry body ASSOCHAM felicitated Mahanadi Coalfields Limited (MCL) with an award for "Excellence in Coal Mining - Outstanding contribution to the Coal Mining Industry" Friday. On behalf of MCL, Shambhu Jha, General Manager (Mining) & Technical Secretary to the Chairman-cum-Managing Director (CMD), MCL received the award from Anurag Srivastava, Department of Mines and Minerals, Govt of West Bengal, at the Indian Mining and Minerals Conclave 2023 held in Kolkata. Congratulating each member of the Team MCL on winning the coveted business excellence award, OP Singh, CMD, MCL said, "the award is a great motivator and we will continue to strive towards ensuring that country gets steady supply of coal to run the wheel of the economy." "This award is in recognition of the immense contribution that we are making to the mining sector. It is individuals like miners of MCL that make country proud," the ASSOCHAM said in statement. A subsidiary of Coal India Limited, MCL is the leading coal producing company having mining operations spread over in Angul, Sundergarh and Jharsuguda districts of Odisha.



RACING ON FAST LANE

Automobile despatches cross record 20L units in H1

THE DOMESTIC PASSENGER VEHICLE SEGMENT HAS CROSSED 20 LAKH SALES-MARK IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE YEAR, A 10% GROWTH OVER 18.31 LAKH UNITS DISPATCHED IN THE JANUARY-JUNE PERIOD OF 2022

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 1: Maruti Suzuki India (MSI) and Hyundai posted single-digit growth in domestic sales in June, even as the overall passenger vehicle segment crossed the 20 lakh units sales mark for the first time ever in the first half this year.

Toyota Kirloskar Motor reported a double-digit growth in despatches to dealers, while Kia saw a dip in wholesales last month. MG Motor India also reported a double-digit increase

in retail sales in June 2023 compared to the same month last year.

Maruti Suzuki India, the country's largest carmaker, said its domestic passenger vehicle sales rose 8 per cent to 1,33,027 units in June against 1,22,685 units in the year-ago period. Sales of mini cars, comprising Alto and S-Presso, fell marginally to 14,054 units compared to 14,442 units a year ago.

MSI Senior Executive Officer (Marketing and Sales) Shashank Srivastava said the automaker



grew faster than the industry in June, enabling it to scale up its overall market share by 2.4 per cent to 41 per cent.

The overall passenger vehicle industry despatches grew by 1.9 per cent to 3,27,700 lakh

units from 3,21,600 lakh units in the year-ago period, he said.

Rival Hyundai Motor India reported a 2 per cent rise in its domestic sales at 50,001 units last month from 49,001 units in June 2022.

Tata Motors Saturday reported a 1 per cent rise in total domestic sales at 80,383 units in June 2023 as against 79,606 units in the year-ago month.

Domestic passenger vehicle sales, including electric vehicles, were at 47,235 units as compared to 45,197 units in the same month a year ago, a growth of 5 per cent, Tata Motors said in a statement.

Toyota Kirloskar Motor also said its total wholesales increased 19 per cent to 19,608 units in June compared to 16,512 units in the year-ago period. Its domestic despatches stood at 18,237 units while overseas shipments were at 1,371 units.

Another carmaker, Honda Cars India said its domestic wholesales declined by 35 per cent to 5,080 units in June.

The automaker sold 7,834 units in the domestic market in June 2022. Exports declined to 2,112 units last month from 2,502 units in June last year.

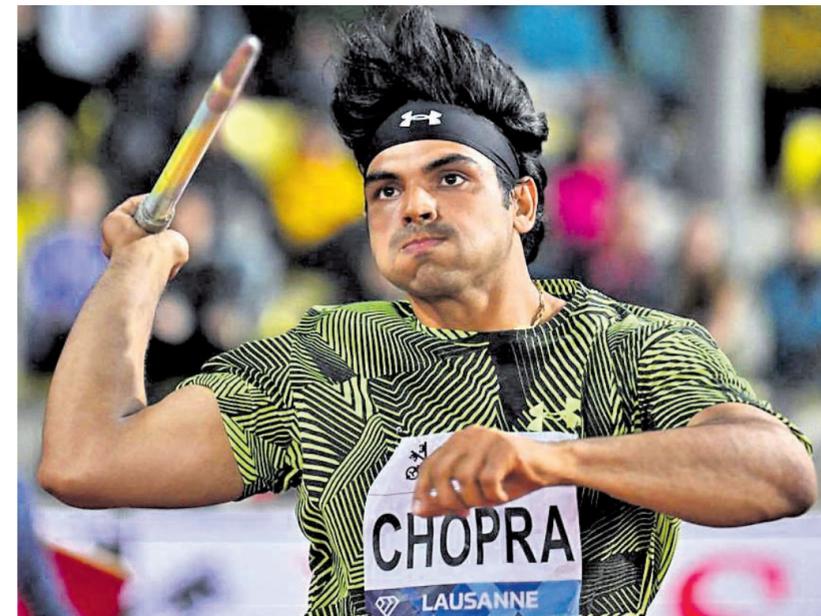
On the other hand, Kia India said its domestic wholesales declined 19 per cent to 19,391 units in June. The company dispatched 24,024 units to dealers in June 2022.

Another automaker, MG Motor India reported a 14 per cent increase in retail sales at 5,125 units in June 2023 against 4,504 units in the same month last year.

"Supplies were disrupted in the wake of cyclone Biparjoi though customer demand should now gain momentum following the monsoon as India gears up for a long festive season," the company said.

Neeraj reigns supreme

Olympic champion javelin thrower clinches second consecutive Lausanne Diamond League title



the first Indian Diamond League champion after winning the 2022 grand finale in Zurich.

The Indian superstar, who has a personal best of 89.94m, cemented his top spot in the Diamond League standings with 16 points, followed by Vadlejš (13 points) and Weber (12 points).

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

May 29, Chopra had issued a statement, informing about his injury. He pulled out of the FBK Games June 4 at Hengelo (the Netherlands), Paavo Nurmi Games in Turku, Finland June 13 and Ostrava Golden Spike meet in Czech Republic June 27. All the three meets were World Athletics Continental Tour gold events.

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 on the roster.

In the men's long jump, India's Murali Sreeshankar finished fifth with a below-par jump of 7.88m which he achieved in the third round. The 24-year-old Sreeshankar, who had clinched the third spot in the Paris leg June 9 for his maiden Diamond League podium finish, had produced a career-best 8.41m during the National Inter-State Championships in Bhubaneswar earlier this month.

LaQuan Nairn of Bahamas, who beat Sreeshankar for the gold in the 2022 Birmingham Commonwealth Games, took the top spot with a third round jump of 8.11m. Olympic champion Miltiadis Tentoglou of Greece was second with 8.07m effort while Yuki Hashioka of Japan was third with a jump of 7.98m.

I was feeling a bit nervous coming back from an injury. It was a bit cold here tonight. I am still far from my best, but I feel it is getting better. I am relieved it is coming together well for me. A win is a win and I will take that happily

NEERAJ CHOPRA

Chopra, who usually produces his best in early rounds, had to wait till his fifth attempt to lead the field. He was at the second spot till the end of the fourth round.

It was a cloudy day with the temperature during the men's javelin throw event recording 17 degree celsius and humidity at 78 percent.

Chopra began with a foul and then had 83.52m and 85.04m throws. He had another foul in the fourth round before coming up with his title-winning throw of 87.66m next. His sixth and

last throw was 84.15m.

Germany's Julian Weber was second with a best throw of 87.03m, while Tokyo Olympics silver medallist and season-leader Jakub Vadlejš (SB: 89.51m) of the Czech Republic was third with an 86.13m effort.

Reigning World Champion Anderson Peters of Grenada, who has been struggling for form, was fifth with a best throw of 82.23m.

Chopra had won the Lausanne leg in August last year also for his maiden Diamond League title. A month later, he became

India enter SAFF C'ship final



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, July 1: Defending champions India held their nerves to beat Lebanon 4-2 in a tense penalty shootout after a goalless 120 minutes of play to enter the final of the SAFF Championship football here Saturday.

The home side face Kuwait, a 1-0 winner over Bangladesh in the other semifinal of the day, in the summit clash July 4.

India will be playing in the final of the regional tournament for the 13th time and ninth on the trot. They have won eight times in the earlier 13 editions. The only time India did not make it to the top two was in 2003.

In the penalty shootout, skipper Sunil Chhetri, Anwar Ali, Mahesh Singh and Udanta Singh found the back of the net for India. Lebanon could only score twice through Walid Shour and Mohammad Sadek. India goal-

keeper Gurpreet Sandhu saved the kick from Hassan Maatouk while Khalil Bader's sailed above the crossbar.

It was also India's second successive win over Lebanon after defeating them 2-0 in the recent Intercontinental Cup in Odisha.

Before the late drama unfolded, the first half began with Lebanon dominating the proceedings. India were not even in the picture for the first 10 minutes.

Lebanon had a brilliant chance to go ahead in the second minute. But Nader Matar was a bit too eager to execute a volley, failing to impart direction as it sailed over the bar. India found their bearings soon and got their first crack at the opposition goal in the 16th minute.

For once, Chhetri played the role of an orchestrator and pushed forward Jeakson Singh with a well-directed pass. Jeakson found Sahal Abdul Samad inside the box with a cross.

However, Sahal's shot was parried away at the goal line by Ali Dhaini.

Lebanon were the better side in the first half and they got another chance to take lead in the 42nd minute. However, captain Hassan Maatouk could not evade the stretched hands of Indian goalkeeper Gurpreet Sandhu.

Action continued to be at a furious pace in the second half as well. But both India and Lebanon could not break the deadlock. Both sides also defended well.

Despite the midfield of both the teams showing a competitive streak, they failed to come up with a creative moment as the match meandered into the extra time.

Chhetri could have scored twice in the 93rd and 95th minutes, but on both the occasions the Indian captain uncharacteristically could not find the target.

Pakistan to inspect World Cup venues



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Karachi, July 1: Pakistan is set to send a security delegation to India for inspecting the venues before giving clearance for the national team's travel to the neighbouring country for this year's ICC ODI World Cup.

An official source in the Inter-Provincial Coordination (Sports) Ministry said that the government, including the foreign and interior ministry would decide when to send the security delegation to India once the new chairman of the Pakistan Cricket Board was elected after the Eid holidays.

"The security delegation will go with representation from the PCB to inspect the venues where Pakistan will play and also the security and other arrangements made for them in the World Cup," he said.

He said the delegation would visit Chennai, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Kolkata and Ahmedabad, the venue for the marquee India-Pakistan match October 15.

"Before any tour to India it is standard practice for the cricket board to seek permission from the government which normally sends a delegation to India," the official said.

"The delegation will interact with the officials there and discuss and inspect with them the security and other arrangements for our players, officials, fans and media, who will go for the tournament," he said.

He said if the delegation feels it would be better for Pakistan to play at some other venue instead of a designated one, it will mention that in its report. "The PCB will share the report with the ICC and BCCI if the delegation has any concerns," he added. A source in the PCB confirmed that when last time Pakistan went to India for the T20 World Cup, the government had sent a joint delegation to the inspect venues.

"It was on the recommendation of the delegation that Pakistan's match at Dharamsala against India was moved to Kolkata."

The source maintained that Pakistan's final confirmation of participation in the World Cup would only be announced when the government gives clearance to the PCB.

"This is not unusual and it is standard procedure for all tours to India. Even in other sports the respective national federations have to get clearance from the government to send their teams to India for any competition."

Pakistan Hockey Federation is awaiting clearance to send its team for the Asian Champions Trophy in Chennai in August, while recently the national football team played in the SAFF Championship in Bangalore only after getting last minute NOC from the government bodies.

The ODI World Cup will be played across 10 Indian cities from October 5 to November 19.

Australia inch closer to take 2-0 lead

AGENCIES

London, July 1: Australia are six wickets away from taking a 2-0 lead in the five-match Ashes series as England were struggling at 114/4 at stumps on Day 4 of the second Test chasing 371 at the Lord's here, Saturday.

After dismissing the visitors for 279 in their second essay, England batters were expected to have a solid start. Instead, Mitchell Starc (2/40) and skipper Pat Cummins (2/20) pegged back the hosts reducing them to 45/4.

Starc dismissed Zak Crawley (3) and Ollie Pope (3) before Cummins got rid of Joe Root (18) and Harry Brook (4) in the same over to leave England in dismay. However, opener Ben Duckett (50 batting, 67b, 6x4) and skipper Ben Stokes (29 batting) held their nerves ensuring their side of no



further hiccups on the day.

The duo has already added 69 runs for the fifth wicket at stumps taking the team total past 100. However, with 257 runs still required to level the series, the hosts have a mountain to climb on the final day.

Earlier, Australia were all out for 279 as England fought back

on an attritional fourth day of relentless short-pitched bowling.

England took eight wickets for 149 to leave themselves a victory target of 371 to square the series. If achieved, it would be the highest successful fourth innings run chase ever in a Lord's Test, beating the 342 West Indies hunted down to beat England in 1984.

Australia began the day in command on 130/2 having a lead of nearly 100. Usman Khawaja (77, 187b, 12x4) and Steve Smith (34) looked set as they moved the lead towards 300 in the morning session but they were dismissed playing rash shots.

Travis Head was out cheaply to leave Australia on 222/5 at lunch. One by one, Australia's batsmen lost patience with wickets falling regularly. Australia's innings ended in farcical fashion with injured spinner Nathan Lyon coming out to bat despite being unable to run after injuring his calf.

BRIEF SCORES: Australia 416 & 279 (Usman Khawaja 77, Steve Smith 34; Stuart Broad 4/65); England 325 & 114/4 (Ben Duckett 50 batting, Ben Stokes 29 batting; Pat Cummins 2/20, Mitchell Starc 2/40). Match to continue.

YATES WINS TOUR DE FRANCE STAGE 1

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Bilbao (Spain), July 1: Adam Yates pulled away from his twin brother Simon Yates to win the first stage of the Tour de France Saturday with race favorites Tadej Pogacar and Jonas Vingegaard finishing not far behind.

The Yates brothers escaped to the front with about seven kilometers (four miles) to go and Adam had the strongest finish to take the initial yellow jersey in the three-week race that began in Basque Country territory in northern Spain.

Pogacar, the two-time Tour de France champion who is teammates with Adam Yates with UAE Team Emirates, finished third after leading a group of chasers that also included Vingegaard, the defending champion of team Jumbo-Visma.

ODI WORLD CUP TO BE PLAYED WITHOUT THE CARIBBEANS FOR THE FIRST TIME

'Final nail in the coffin' for West Indies!

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Harare, July 1: The West Indies will not be part of the ODI World Cup for the first time in the history of the tournament after being eliminated from the Qualifiers - a result that plunged country's cricket to an unimaginable low, Saturday.

Coming into the do-or-die Super Six contest, West Indies, packed with some bona-fide T20 superstars, suffered an embarrassing seven-wicket defeat against Scotland after managing a modest 181 in 43.5 overs.

It was an impressive show by the Scots, especially by all-rounder Brandon McMullen, who first took three wickets, and then scored a patient 69 off 106 balls to steer his side to a famous victory. Such was the West Indies' plight that the top score was a painstaking 45 off 79 balls by Jason Holder.

Scotland chased down the target in just 43.3 overs, ensuring that West Indies won't compete in the ODI World Cup for the first time since the inception of the tournament in 1975.

The World Cup is set begin in India October 5 across 10 venues. This was also Scotland's first victory over the West Indies. Clive Lloyd's team had won the



first two editions in 1975 and 1979 and played the 1983 final, where they were beaten by India.

Matthew Cross (74 not out off 107 balls) anchored the chase perfectly and it always seemed one team would win and that certainly wasn't the West Indies.

With two more matches left, even if West Indies win, they can reach up to four points while Sri Lanka and Zimbabwe already have six points in their three games. Scotland with this win are on four points and would reckon that an upset can help them sneak into the tournament-proper.

It appears to be the final nail in the coffin for a cricket team that has been on a terminal decline for the past two decades.

While they won two T20 World Cup titles in 2012 and 2016, the performance in two traditional formats - Tests and ODIs have spiralled southwards.

Ironically, West Indies were forced to play the qualifier before the 2019 World Cup also but eventually managed to finish in top two along with Afghanistan to save themselves from embarrassment.

But a team that had Nicholas Pooran, Jason Holder, Kyle Mayers, Alzarri Joseph, Romario Shepherd, Akeal Hossein, all who were part of this edition's IPL, in their ranks, this is certainly the lowest ebb.

Perhaps the performance is symptomatic of times which is very different from the 1970s

when some of the world class cricketers from Jamaica, Barbados, Guyana, Antigua, Trinidad & Tobago came together and were the flag-bearers of 'Black Caribbean Community' which had been under oppression for the longest time.

The brilliant documentary 'Fire in Babylon' showed what West Indies cricket meant, it wasn't just flair, fun and frolic but also a responsibility towards community.

It showed how the team came together after England captain Tony Greig commented before the 1976 series that he would make them 'grovel', a derogatory term used for 'Black Community' referring to slavery.

Michael Holding spit fire at the Oval and Viv Richards scored a near triple hundred. Their brand of cricket helped them become world beaters in limited overs cricket, first 60 overs and then 50 overs as most of their top players played in county or league cricket in England.

But call it a sign of times, the fire has extinguished and in last decade has seen the emergence of highly-skilled T20 mercenaries or Gun for Hire as one can refer to them, who haven't exactly been bothered about the national cricket team's benefit. Perhaps the concept of multiple nations, playing under one flag is flawed in today's day and age.

What has also adversely contributed is the riches that accompanies T20 cricket caravan wherever it sets its base. The leagues have made it virtually impossible to have a quality West Indies team that is proud of wearing the iconic maroon jersey.

The Richards, the Lloyds, the Holdings, the Roberts, the Garners, their legacy lay in tatters, scattered across the lush green turf of Harare Sports Club ground July 1.

Saturday, Scotland just removed the 'patient' from ventilator. West Indies cricket is dead. Long Live West Indies cricket.