



### Waning popularity

Actor Fatima Sana Shaikh highlights the diminishing urgency to watch films in theatres due to quick OTT releases

LEISURE | P2



### Iran Prez run-off

A moderate lawmaker will face Iran supreme leader's protegee in a run-off to presidential election July 5 after no candidate secured enough votes in the first round of voting

INTERNATIONAL | P10



### Rising steel imports

Steel and trade ministries in talks over rising imports, particularly cheap Chinese goods, amid persistent calls for higher tariffs

BUSINESS | P11



### Milestone moment

India posts the biggest ever total in the history of women's Test cricket by scoring a mammoth 603 for six against South Africa

SPORTS | P12

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## INDIA CLINCH T20 WORLD CUP AFTER 17 YEARS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bridgetown, June 29:** On an emotion-filled day, India ended their 11-year wait for a global trophy, overcoming South Africa, who chucked at the business end of the match by seven runs to emerge champions in the T20 World Cup here.

It was India's second T20 World Cup victory after they had won it in 2007 under the legendary MS Dhoni in South Africa, and first since winning the Champions Trophy in 2013.

Star batter Virat Kohli, who was an upcoming cricketer 17 years ago, made his first fifty of this tournament in the final -- a classy 76 off 59 balls with six fours and two sixes that carried India to a competitive 176 for seven.

Then the Indian bowlers, led by Arshdeep Singh (2/20) and Jasprit Bumrah (2/18), worked their magic as they did throughout this tournament, limiting South Africa to 169 for eight to propel India to their second T20 World Cup.

There were pockets of fight from the Proteas, who were playing in their maiden World Cup final.

Heinrich Klaasen threatened India with a 52 off 27 balls (2x4, 5x6) but Hardik Pandya (3/20) snatched the crucial wicket to bring the game decisively in favour of India.

### Virat quits T20!

**Bridgetown:** Virat Kohli, one of the greatest cricketers to play the game, quit T20 Internationals Saturday shortly after helping his team beat South Africa in the World Cup final. "This was my last T20 game playing for India," player-of-the-match Kohli said following India's seven-run victory at Kensington Oval. "Time for the next generation to take the T20 game forward," added the big match player.

But a large chunk of the credit should go to Kohli for anchoring the innings and pushing India to a fighting total.

He completed his fifty in 48 balls, but the knock was what precisely India needed the early dismissals of skipper Rohit Sharma (9), Rishabh Pant (0) and Suryakumar Yadav (3), which had reduced India to a worrying 34 for three.

However, Kohli had an able partner in Axar Patel (47, 31 balls, 1x4, 6x4) during the fourth wicket alliance that produced precious 72 runs to ease the early nerves.

After the run-out of Axar, who took on SA bowlers bravely, another left-hander Shivam Dube (27 off 16 balls, 3x4 1x6) gave some late steam to Indian innings.

MORE P12



**WORLD BEATERS:** Indian skipper Rohit Sharma lifting the winner's trophy while his teammates celebrate at Barbados, Saturday

PHOTO ESPN

### ED attaches land, bank a/cs of CPI(M)

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi/Kochi, June 29:** The Enforcement Directorate alleged Saturday that the CPI(M) in Kerala was holding proceeds of money laundering, as it attached a land parcel and bank deposits worth ₹73 lakh of the political party in a probe linked to the Karuvannur Service Cooperative Bank 'scam'.

Assets worth ₹28.65 crore of various individuals and entities linked to the case have also been attached by the federal agency after a provisional order under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) was issued.

Official sources said the party may be named as an accused in the next supplementary chargesheet to be filed in this case. If so, it will be the second political party to be arraigned as accused in a money laundering investigation after the Aam Aadmi Party. AAP has recently been named by the ED in the Delhi excise policy case.

The CPI(M) vehemently denied the charges of wrongdoing and money laundering.

The attached assets include 18 immovable properties, valued at ₹28.65 crore, consisting of lands and buildings in Kerala of the beneficiaries of the 'scam', including an immovable property worth ₹10 lakh registered in the name of a district secretary of the party.

### 5 JAWANS MEET WATERY GRAVE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi/Leh, June 29:** Five soldiers, including a junior commissioned officer (JCO), were killed during an exercise early Saturday as their tank was swept away following flash floods in the Shyok river near the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh, officials said.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said he was deeply saddened by the unfortunate accident that occurred in the river.

Two T-72 tanks were trying to cross Shyok around 1 am and one of them got stuck in high currents in the river, the officials said. The Army deployed rescue teams but the mission didn't succeed in view of the raging waters in the river.

The deceased personnel are MRK Reddy, Subhan Khan, Bhupendra Negi, E Teibam and Sadarbhonia Nagaraju. "Deeply saddened at the loss of lives of five of our brave Indian Army soldiers in an unfortunate accident while getting the tank across a river in Ladakh," Singh said on X.

### IRREGULAR by MANJUL



He's inaugurated far too many infra projects recently, and the MET Dept predicts a good monsoon this year

WEATHER	
BBSR	CTC
Max Temp	32.9°C / 32.0°C
Min Temp	26.6°C / 25.5°C
Humidity	84% / 77%
Rainfall	Nil / 24mm
FORECAST	
GENERALLY CLOUDY SKY	

## LaccMI turns Mukhyamantri

*In a bid to make governance citizen centric, the state government took a few crucial policy decisions, Saturday. Among the key changes, it has decided to rechristen LAccMI bus service as Mukhyamantri Bus Seva. The other administrative moves included reactivation of the Chief Minister's Grievance Cell from July 1 to receive public complaints and a change in the uniform of high school students*

AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, June 29:** The state government Saturday made several changes at administrative level overturning the decisions taken by the previous government.

Renaming of LAccMI bus service, resuming of Chief Minister's Grievance Cell, and changing of school uniform are among the major moves made by the new government.

According to official sources, the government has decided to rename much-publicised Location Accessible Multi-modal Initiative (LAccMI). It will now be known 'Mukhyamantri Bus Seva', informed Transport, Mines and Steel Minister Bibhuti



Bhusan Jena.

Several passengers across the state have been expressing their resentment over the poor execution of the scheme, according to a report.

"Discussion in this regard has already been held and the service will be made available in the state soon," said Jena, adding, no party symbol would be used in the service.

"You will not find any party symbols in all our schemes. All the schemes will be meant for the welfare of people," he further

said. "Most importantly, buses will run from every block of the state on the occasion of Lord Jagannath's Rath Yatra," shared Jena.

Though the BJD government initiated LAccMI, aimed at establishing a seamless public transport network from panchayats to the state capital, it completely failed to serve its purpose, alleged many.

With many LAccMI buses worth crores gathering dust and getting damaged at various places across the state due to a lack of

proper maintenance, questions were being raised over the continuity of the scheme.

On the other hand, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi will regularly hear the public grievances at the designated cell here from July 1.

The hearing of public grievances will begin at 11.00 am in the CM's Grievance Cell in Unit-5 area. Registration for the hearing will be done between 9.00 am and 12 noon on the same day.

Previously, the CM was meeting people and addressing their issues at the State Guest House here for nearly three weeks after he took oath of office.

This apart, the Bhubaneswar Development Authority will resume hearing grievances from the same date which will be held every Monday between 11.00 am and 1.30 pm.

In yet another crucial decision, the government is planning to change the uniform of high school students.

"The previous government had changed the colour of the uniform of high school students in the state. We are now holding consultations in this regard. We will take a decision on the issue soon," the minister said.

### NEET-UG ROW

## Small fish being caught, crocs out, says Congress

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, June 29:** Congress leader Shaktisinh Gohil Saturday claimed the government was not allowing a debate on the NEET paper leak issue in Parliament as people linked to the ruling party have ruined the future of lakhs of students and "there is so much evidence".

Addressing a press conference at the Congress headquarters here, Gohil, the party's Gujarat unit chief, referred to the investigation going on in Godhra in connection with the NEET-UG case and sought to know how can the government claim that paper leak has not happened.

"The government does not want to allow anyone in the Lok Sabha or Rajya Sabha to discuss NEET because people linked to them have ruined the future of lakhs of students and there is so much evidence... So I do not believe that there is any door left through which the government can save its skin," Gohil said.

He said that during the investigation in Gujarat, "Only small fish are being caught. Why

### New date for NEET-PG in 2 days: Pradhan

**New Delhi:** The new schedule for NEET-PG will be announced by the National Board of Examinations (NBE) within the next two days, Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan said Saturday. "The date of National Eligibility cum Entrance Test, Post Graduate will be announced by the NBE in one or two days," Pradhan told reporters in Panchkula on the sidelines of Haryana BJP's extended state executive meeting.

are big crocodiles being released?"

"Because Jay Jalaram school's chairman is standing with Modi ji," Gohil alleged, adding the school's principal and a teacher are "main accused one and two".

"Is it possible for my employees to commit such fraud in my centre, in my organization without my knowledge?" he asked.

## Stolen in 1987, Roosevelt's watch back at home

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**New York, June 29:** The silver pocket watch was a prized possession of 26th American President Theodore Roosevelt, a keepsake given to him by his sister and her husband in 1898 before he took charge that would travel with him around the world and end up at Sagamore Hill — his home on Long Island, New York, and now a national historic site.

But in 1987, it went from museum piece to pilfered prize when someone stole it from an unlocked case at the Theodore Roosevelt Inaugural National Historic Site in Buffalo, New York, where it was on loan.

It was mystery that endured 36 years until it turned up at a Florida auction house last year

and was seized by federal agents. Thursday, it was returned to public display at Sagamore Hill as the National Park Service and the FBI triumphantly announced it was back home during a ceremony featuring Roosevelt's great-grandson, Tweed Roosevelt.

"This was feel-good news," Tweed, 82, said Friday in a phone interview. "For me, it kind of felt like almost as if a piece of TR's spirit being returned to Sagamore Hill, like a little bit of him was coming back. And so I felt that was really cool," he added.

Growing up, he said he didn't know about the watch and only learned about it vaguely after it was stolen. He called it "unremarkable" in appearance, but priceless to his great grandfather.



"As it turns out, this isn't just any old pocket watch," he said. "It was a watch that TR placed great sentimental value on."

The mystery of the watch's disappearance, however, is not



fully solved. It is still not clear who stole it and how. The Park Service and FBI only released details of its reappearance this week after an investigation. The agencies did not return mes-

sages seeking comment Friday.

Roosevelt, who was president from 1901 to 1909, apparently had the watch with him at the Battle of San Juan Hill in Cuba during the Spanish-American War and during future exploits, including wild game hunting in Africa and exploring the Amazon in South America, according to the Park Service.

The watch, made by the now-defunct Waltham Watch Co. in Massachusetts, appears like many pocket watches of its day, with a plain silver exterior and no etchings. But the inside reveals its significance, with engraving that says "THEODORE ROOSEVELT" and "FROM D.R. & C.R.R.," referring to Roosevelt's brother-in-law and sister, Douglas Robinson Jr. and Corinne Roosevelt Robinson.

### Angul boy killed by crocodile

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, June 29:** An eight-year boy was killed by a crocodile in Angul district Saturday, police said.

According to police, the boy went to the Mahanadi river at Tikarpada to clean himself after using the toilet. As soon as he entered the river, the crocodile attacked him and dragged him away. Locals and fire brigade personnel started a search for the boy. Later, his body was fished out from another location on the bank of Mahanadi.

Expressing grief over the incident, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi announced a ₹6 lakh compensation for the family members of the deceased, an official statement said.

# leisure



## WILL SMITH DROPS NEW SONG WITH REFERENCE TO SLAPGATE INCIDENT

Actor-rapper Will Smith, after a long hiatus since his 2017 track *Get Lit*, has released a new song, *You Can Make It*, featuring Friday and the Sunday Service Choir, with a reference to the infamous 2022 Oscar slap incident with Chris Rock.

## COURTNEY FINE WITH TURNING 60

Actress Courtney Cox, who turned 60 in June, is not upset about getting older and doesn't think time has changed her one bit. "I'm fine with it. I love my life, and I love that I'm still working after all this time," she told Britain's HELLO! Magazine.



### FORTUNE FORECAST

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**ARIES**  
You are currently high on life. Today is a good day to complete all those tasks you put on the back burner. It's also a great day to do the things you hate doing (read: cleaning up your closet). If you were looking to bring in a new business strategy, Ganesh gives the thumbs up!

**TAURUS**  
In all probability, you will challenge all conventions and traditions with innovation in a successful manner, predicts Ganesh. In the afternoon, you may manage to step on the toes of your boss, so beware. The evening promises an ambiance that will change your weaknesses into your strengths.

**GEMINI**  
It is highly probable that you will channel your energy constructively, instead of worrying about minor issues, predicts Ganesh. In the evening, you are likely to go on a shopping spree with your sweetheart. Don't fret, the expenditure promises handsome returns.

**CANCER**  
You will decide to expose certain unreasonable conventions and traditions, and you will be able to do so successfully, predicts Ganesh. In the afternoon, you may incur the displeasure of your bosses. In the evening, you will be able to draw pleasure from whatever you do.

**LEO**  
Shooting off the charts is an understatement when it comes to your liveliness today, says Ganesh. Guess there is just something about today that puts a spring in your step and a smile on your face. But whatever it is, it's good for you. At work, you shall be able to bring about new and successful business strategies.

**VIRGO**  
It is quite probable that today will be an action-packed day for you, feels Ganesh. It is going to be a progressive day for your business. Later in the day, you may retreat into your shell, and refuse company.

**LIBRA**  
It's now or never for you, as today, you may finally take out time to do some sound thinking for your future goals and success. Things seem to go your way, and all your plans are beautifully executed towards the afternoon. Also, find time in the evening to be with the ones dear to you. A movie and dinner sounds like a good idea to Ganesh.

**SCORPIO**  
Armed with a good sense of judgement, you will make a number of encouraging changes in your behaviour today, foretells Ganesh. Habits die hard, but all the effort that you put in to refine your routine will pay off brilliantly by the end of the day.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
If games and sports are your choices, you may emerge a winner today, predicts Ganesh. You may come across few obstacles during the latter part of the day. However, it does not bother you much. You're lucky enough to get cooperative colleagues as they may lend you a helping hand in times of crisis.

**CAPRICORN**  
On the priority list, you put your work ahead of your family life. As a result, your life partner may have complains about you not giving enough attention to him/her. Today, for once, you'll not let him/her get disappointed, as you'll plan a romantic getaway with your sweetheart.

**AQUARIUS**  
You will finally make an effort to get in touch with old friends. At work, you find your public relation skills suddenly enhanced and even your rivals salute you! Naturally, the happiest is your beloved, who appreciates all the things you say. Enjoy it while it lasts, says Ganesh.

**PISCES**  
You are extremely tense and worried about both your personal and professional life. You might run into someone sharing the same concerns today. This could lead to some interesting conversation and some fruitful ideas to solve your problems, says Ganesh.

## Manisha's tips for newcomers

Mumbai: Actress Manisha Koirala, who was last seen in Sanjay Leela Bhansali's *Heeramandi*, shared that one should not pursue acting with the sole intention of becoming wealthy and famous.

Koirala, known for her performances in films such as *Bombay, 1942: A Love Story, Dil Se*, and many more, said, "Don't go for the fluff. If you really passionately love acting, cinema, or any technical aspect of it, just go for it. Then, whatever hurdles you're facing, you will sail through them. You will put in the hard work and hours, and you will still be joyful because this is what you love to do."

"If you are going for the fluff, that means your focus is not on what you're doing. You're always focused on the glamour and the money. You're going in for the wrong reason. That will become a byproduct of the passion and love that you have for your profession. So, choose wisely," she added.

The actor recalled that the filmmaker, who had earlier worked with her for his directorial debut, *Khamoshi* (1996), approached her to be a part of the show at a time when she was looking for a project that would demand commitment from her. "For me, it was really timely because I've reached a stage where I feel if the project really drives something, then I'll be part of it. I was happily gardening in Nepal in my small garden when this *Heeramandi* came," she concluded.



## Fatima calls for longer theatre exclusivity

Mumbai: It's still uncertain times in the Hindi film industry, as films are not doing well at the box office. Filmmakers and exhibitors are doing their best to attract footfalls in theatres, be it by dropping ticket prices or coming up with exciting food offers. One of the things that should be looked into by the industry, which actress Fatima Sana Shaikh, in an interview, shared on the gap between a film's theatrical release and its OTT release.

She expressed her views and said, "Pehle kya hota tha ki... film release hoti thi, and then it would play in theatres and go off. Toh hamare mind mein ye set hota tha ki if the film goes off theatres, then woh miss ho jayegi, and so there was an urge to catch it in theatres. However, now we know ki agar film theatre se chali gayi toh phir bhi miss nahi hogi because in two months it will come on OTT. So, there is no need or compulsion for you to watch movies in theatres today."

Talking about the solution, the *Ludo* actress said, "I think the industry should come up with a set-up where once the film releases in theatres, for an entire year, or at least six months, it won't come on OTT or any channel. That is how you will create a desire for people to go and watch new releases in theatres. The pattern has changed in the COVID era, and we need to change this pattern again. This is a call that the industry needs to take. It has to be a joint effort."

On the work front, Fatima was last seen in *Dhak Dhak*.



## Triptii on being tagged 'national crush'

Mumbai: Actress Triptii Dimri, who is gearing up for the release of her upcoming film *Bad Newz*, received immense love and appreciation from the audience for her role and performance in Sandeep Reddy Vanga's *Animal*. The diva soon went out to become a national crush, replacing her co-star Rashmika Mandanna. At the trailer launch of *Bad Newz*, Triptii was asked for her opinion on being labelled as the national crush of India after giving an impressive performance in the film *Animal*.

The actress expressed her happiness with the appreciation and love of the audience. She mentioned that, in her experience, she has been fortunate to receive audience for the films she has done throughout her career, both older and recent. She

added that people have liked her work and have spoken positively about it. Triptii added that when she initially entered the industry, she always wanted people to focus on her work and nothing else. She felt fortunate that when her films were released, people indeed talked about her work. She believes that such recognition motivates actors to improve and continue working on their craft, and she considers herself very fortunate in this regard.

Meanwhile, the film also stars Vicky Kaushal and Ammy Virk in lead roles. *Bad Newz* is scheduled to be released in cinemas, July 19.



## DP launches platform for mental health conversations

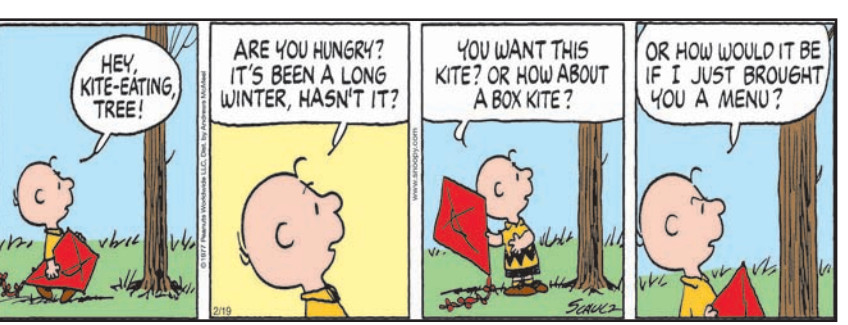
Mumbai: Actress Deepika Padukone's LiveLoveLaugh (LLL) foundation has announced a new platform for mental health conversations with the launch of Lecture Series Unplugged.

This quarterly event aims to build awareness and sustain open discussions about mental health. Deepika, Founder of LiveLoveLaugh, said: "Over the last decade, LLL has managed to successfully create a safe space for crucial mental health conversations. With Lecture Series Unplugged, LLL aims to reach a broader audience by offering relatable stories that can further strengthen our impact on individuals, communities, and society at large."

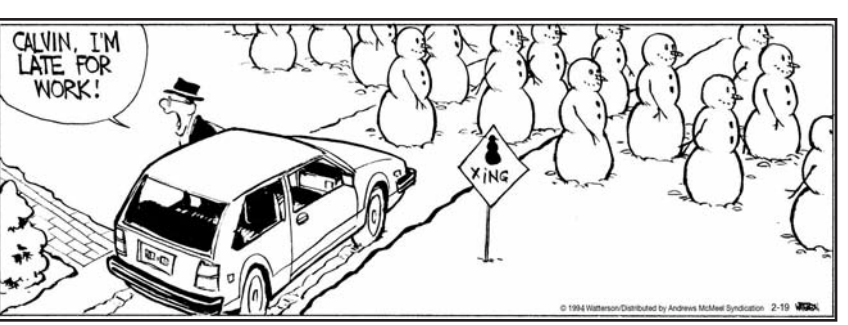
"By featuring personal stories, we'd like to foster a sense of connection and hope and an understanding that mental health challenges are a common part of the human experience," said Shyam Bhat, psychiatrist and chairperson of LiveLoveLaugh. Lecture Series Unplugged is co-hosted by Deepika's sister Anisha Padukone, CEO of LiveLoveLaugh, and Shyam Bhat, who provides expert insights. The episodes will be available on the foundation's website and social media handles.



### PEANUTS



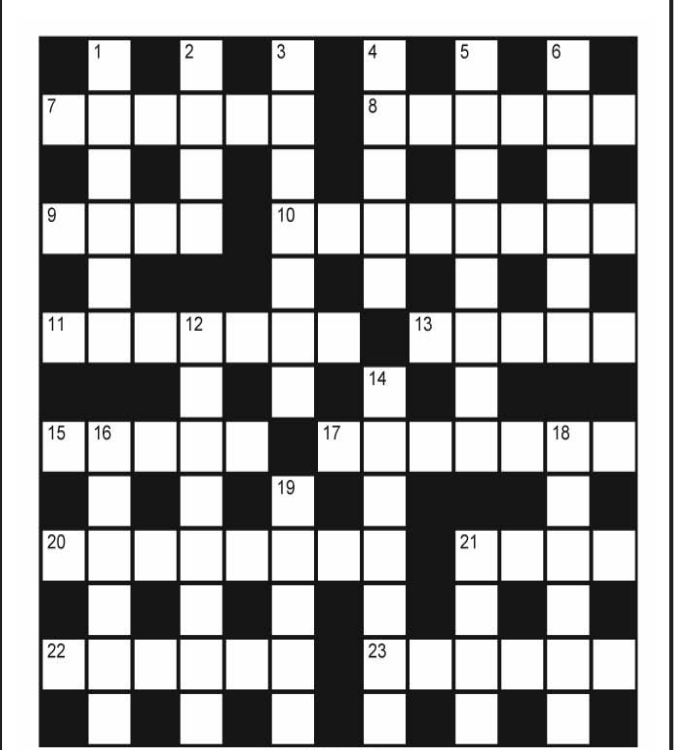
### CALVIN AND HOBBS



### BREVITY



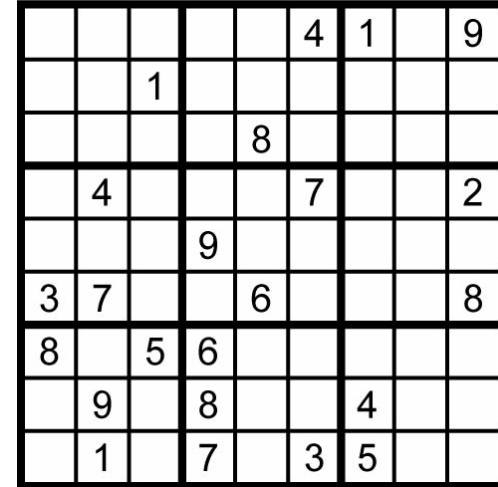
### FUN post CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 7 Wine and dine
  - 8 Shred (4,2)
  - 9 Catcall
  - 10 Stunt doubles (5-3)
  - 11 Serious infection
  - 13 Mesh fabric
  - 15 Suffering
  - 17 Affirm
  - 20 Alluvial deposit
  - 21 Garret
  - 22 Anxious
  - 23 Acquire
- Down**
- 1 Strain
  - 2 Savoir faire
  - 3 Diver's apparel (3,4)
  - 4 Rein, e.g.
  - 5 Scalp condition
  - 6 Rabbit warren
  - 12 Type of horse race
  - 14 Speech
  - 16 Leafy vegetables
  - 18 Under the eave
  - 19 Aquamarine
  - 21 Former

### SUDOKU

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



### SOLUTIONS

**CROSSWORD**

T	S	P	C	G	I
G	R	A	N	D	I
R	E	P	O	R	T
R	E	P	O	R	T
R	E	P	O	R	T
R	E	P	O	R	T
R	E	P	O	R	T
R	E	P	O	R	T
R	E	P	O	R	T

**SUDOKU**

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

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

# downtown

## BUDDING TALENTS

Children perform during an event organised by Baba Akhandalamani Nabaprativa Sangeeta Sikhya Kendra in Puri, Saturday



# Oram for detailed mapping of schools for tribal communities



PNN & AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, June 29:** Union Tribal Affairs Minister Jual Oram Saturday suggested for a detailed mapping of schools across the state for disadvantaged groups and communities. Oram, who discussed with the officials of the ST and SC Development, Minorities and Backward Classes Welfare department, said there should be equitable availability of educational institutions for the disadvantaged groups and communities. The Union Minister emphasised implementing more pro-people programmes across the

state by the department. He asked the officials to focus on vocational courses to ensure livelihood opportunities and to preserve the unique tribal linguistic identity. He also suggested upgrading senior secondary schools into degree colleges with Plus III courses that would help enable tribal students avail opportunities and compete with other students in career-oriented examinations. Asking officials to ensure coaching facilities for different job openings, Oram stressed on inclusion of more vocational courses to enable students to opt for them after Class X or

Plus II. "It would help them grow independently as earning members of their families," the Union Minister said. "Let Odisha start such a skill-related initiative as a pilot project in India so that we can implement it on a pan-Indian scale," he said. The Union Minister also asked the department officials to regularly monitor the execution of various infrastructure development works in the state. Regarding the saturation of amenities for various tribal and PVTG communities, Oram directed the officials to expedite the mapping and identify gaps. While reviewing the work of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Research and Training Institute and the Academy of Tribal Languages and Culture, the Union Minister emphasised the preservation, documentation, and publication of multilingual books so that more people from the original tribal communities could benefit. Department Commissioner-cum-Secretary Roopa Roshan Sahoo and all senior officials were present at the meeting.



**IN LORD'S SERVICE:** A Chitrakar servitor gives finishing touches to a figurine on one of the chariots at Rath Yard in Puri, Saturday

# Retired govt official gets 4-yr RI over graft

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, June 29:** A Vigilance court in Sundargarh Saturday sentenced a retired soil conservation overseer of Lahunipada of the district to four years rigorous imprisonment (RI) after holding him guilty of bribery. The court also slapped a penalty of ₹20,000 on Rabi Ratna Kariali, who was the project implementing authority, under Section 13(2) r/w 13(1)(d) of the PC Act, 1988. Failure to pay the penalty amount would entail an additional year of RI, Special Public Prosecutor (Vigilance) Shyam Sundar Mishra said. The Vigilance court also additionally sentenced Kariali to three-year RI for offence under Section 7 of the PC Act, 1988, and slapped a penalty of ₹20,000. "In case of default, the convict would undergo additional one year of RI. Both the sentences

## TEHSIL SECTION OFFICER HELD

Vigilance sleuths arrested a section officer at Pattamundai tehsil office in Kendrapara on charges of bribery, Saturday. John William Barala was rounded up while receiving ₹10,000 from the complainant to expedite issuance of a certified copy of case record relating to partition of land. About the case, Vigilance sources said the victim approached the agency with his grievance and a trap was laid accordingly.



"Barala was caught receiving the bribe money at his office chamber. The entire bribe money was recovered from his possession in presence of wit-

nesses. Wash of both hands and pant pocket Barala gave positive chemical reaction, confirming acceptance and handling of bribe money by him," said an official. Following the trap, simultaneous searches were launched at the residential house of Barala at Tinikonja Bagicha in Cuttack and his office room. A case (15/24) in this regard has been registered at Cuttack Vigilance PS under Section 7 of the Prevention of Corruption (Amendment) Act, 2018.

would run concurrently," Mishra pointed out. According to the prosecution, Kariali was caught red handed by the Vigilance sleuths while receiving ₹30,000 from a man for preparing the final bill

for release of payment towards different watershed project works in Lahunipada. A case was registered by the Sambalpur Vigilance police against Kariali under Sections 13(2) r/w 13(1)(d)/7 the PC

Act, 1988 for demanding and accepting bribe. The accused was charge-sheeted afterwards. The Vigilance Directorate will approach the competent authority for stoppage of pension of Kariali, the PP said.

# CM urges Jaishankar for UAE consulate in state

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, June 29:** Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Saturday urged External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar for a UAE consulate in the state. Majhi raised the demand while meeting Jaishankar at his residence in New Delhi. The meeting was also attended by Deputy CMs Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo and Pravati Parida, according to a statement issued by the Chief Minister's Office (CMO). Since many people from Odisha are working in Dubai, a UAE consulate will be very helpful, Majhi said. He also drew the attention of Jaishankar to the eight people from Odisha stranded in Dubai and sought his support for their safe return.

Jaishankar promised the CM that he would take urgent steps in this regard, the statement said. Majhi also discussed measures to attract foreign tourists to the state, including the setting up of an international tourism centre. Later, the CM met Union Health Minister JP Nadda, whom he urged for setting up medical colleges in those districts of the state that don't have one. Expansion of AIIMS-Bhubaneswar and the proposal to set up another AIIMS in Sambalpur were also discussed, the statement said. "The meeting also discussed the early implementation of the Ayushman Bharat Yojana in Odisha. It will be beneficial for the poor and elderly people of the state," Majhi said.

# Police return truck, gold chains to people

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, June 29:** As many as 143 mobile phones, 30 gold chains and a truck were among the stolen items the twin city Commissionerate Police returned to their rightful owners during an event here, Saturday. Police commissioner Sanjeeb Panda said, "143 mobile phones, 30 gold chains, a truck, two motorcycles, a scooter and a laptop recovered by the organised crime in property offences (OPCO) team and officials of 18 police stations during crackdowns on thieves have been given back to their rightful owners following due verification." Panda said Saheed Nagar police topped the chart of recoveries with 20 items, while Chandrasekharpur police stood last with only two recoveries. "In terms of vehicles, Bharatpur police recovered a truck and two motorcycles, while Kharavel Nagar police managed recovering a scooter," Panda said.

# MAJHI: MAXIMISE TECH USE FOR RELIABLE STATS

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, June 29:** Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi has called for maximising the use of technology for reliable statistics for the welfare of people. The CM said this in a video message to officers and staff of the Directorate of Economics and Statistics (DE&S), Planning and Convergence department during the celebrations of the 18th National Statistics Day at the Convention

Centre of Lok Seva Bhawan here. The CM also announced the launching of the World Bank assisted programme OSCRGPP on the occasion. The day is celebrated to commemorate the birthday of eminent statistician Prof. PC Mohalanobis. The theme of the current year's Statistics Day is 'Use of Data for Decision Making'. Anu Garg, Development Commissioner-cum-Additional Chief Secretary, graced the occasion as the chief guest.

**18th National Statistics Day**



**TAKING STOCK:** Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnav reviews arrangements for convenience and benefit of pilgrims and devotees at Puri railway station ahead of the Rath Yatra, Saturday. Senior ECoR officials and Puri MP Sambit Patra are also seen

# NDRF rescuers to get 40 pc risk allowance

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, June 29:** The Union government has approved a 40 per cent hardship and risk allowance for NDRF rescuers, keeping in mind the tough operations undertaken by them, Union Home Minister Amit Shah announced, Saturday. He said this while welcoming a 35-member expedition team of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) that recently scaled the 21,625-foot-high Mt Manirang in Himachal Pradesh. "The government has approved a 40 per cent risk and hardship allowance for NDRF personnel only yesterday. This has been a long pending demand... All the 16,000 personnel of the force will benefit from this," Shah said after welcoming the expedition named 'Vijay'. Officials said this allowance would be granted over and above salaries. Special forces like the National Security Guard (NSG) and the Special Protection Group (SPG) get a 25 per cent hardship allowance owing to the special character of their duties. This is the second mountaineering expedition undertaken by the federal contingency force. The team was flagged off June 1

from here. Mt Manirang is located along the border of Kinnaur and Spiti districts of Himachal Pradesh. Shah said the government has also decided to make sports a "culture" for the various Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) and special organisations like the NDRF. It has been decided that at least one team from these forces will mandatorily participate in international and national tournaments, he added. "A committee under the chairmanship of the director of the Intelligence Bureau (IB) has been constituted and a roadmap has been prepared. We will soon present a new model," the minister said. Shah also underlined that forces like the NDRF should ensure that the policy of "zero casualty" during disasters is followed and no lives are lost during calamities. "We have come a long way... the government under Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been working on the concept of zero casualties during disasters for the last 10 years," he said. Shah said government has allocated higher funds for capacity building and training of NDRF and state disaster response forces.

# Scientists conduct autopsy on 44,000-yr-old wolf

It was a very active predator, one of the larger ones. Slightly smaller than cave lions and bears, but a very active, mobile predator, and it was also a scavenger, say scientists. Yakutsk, Russia, June 28: In Russia's far northeastern Yakutia region, local scientists are performing an autopsy on a wolf frozen in permafrost for around 44,000 years, a find they said was the first of its kind. Found by chance by locals in Yakutia's Abyyskiy district in 2021, the wolf's body is only now being properly examined by scientists. "This is the world's first discovery of a late Pleistocene predator," said Albert Protopopov, head of the department for the



Scientists perform an autopsy of an ancient wolf, frozen in permafrost for more than 44,000 years and found by locals in Yakutia, at the laboratory of the North-Eastern Federal University in Yakutsk, Russia June 18, 2024.

study of mammoth fauna at the Yakutia Academy of Sciences.

"Its age is about 44,000 years, and there have never been such

finds before," he said. Sandwiched between the Arctic Ocean and in Russia's Arctic far east, Yakutia is a vast region of swamps and forests around the size of Texas, around 95% of which is covered in permafrost. Winter temperatures in the region have been known to drop to as low as minus 64 degrees Celsius (-83.2°F). "Usually, it's the herbivorous animals that die, get stuck in swamps, freeze and reach us as a whole. This is the first time when a large carnivore has been found," said Protopopov. While it's not unusual to find millenia-old animal carcasses buried deep in permafrost,

which is slowly melting due to climate change, the wolf is special, Protopopov said. "It was a very active predator, one of the larger ones. Slightly smaller than cave lions and bears, but a very active, mobile predator, and it was also a scavenger," he added. For Artyom Nedoluzhko, development director of the paleogenetics laboratory at the European University of St Petersburg, the wolf's remains offer a rare insight into the Yakutia of 44,000 years ago. "The main goal is to understand what this wolf fed on, who it was, and how it relates to those ancient wolves that inhabited the northeastern part of Eurasia," he said.

# Min Patra applauds budding astronomers

The selected students will tour SAC labs, interact with its director, and engage with leading space scientists. They will also visit Science City to delve deeper into astronomy and space science

**Bhubaneswar, June 29:** Science and Technology Minister Krushna Chandra Patra Saturday congratulated the winners of Tata Steel's Young Astronomer Talent Search (YATS) 2023 who are on their way to the Space Applications Centre (SAC) of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) in Ahmedabad. Twenty students were selected from over 300 schools across 30 districts to visit SAC and the Science City in Ahmedabad. Speaking at a programme organised by Tata Steel, in collaboration with Pathani Samanta Planetarium here, Patra said, "India is excelling in space science and research globally. I am confident these children will contribute significantly to this field. Congratulations to all the winners, and best wishes for their visit to ISRO where they will gain valuable insights." Science and Technology department Principal Secretary

Chithra Arumugam also congratulated the students selected from among 80,000 participants to explore the space application centre of ISRO in Ahmedabad. "YATS has been a pioneering initiative encouraging students to expand their scientific curiosity beyond conventional academic boundaries. We are thrilled to provide these young achievers the opportunity to explore ISRO's facilities and nurture their astronomical dreams," said Debashis Jena, chief resident executive of Tata Steel, Bhubaneswar. The selected students will tour SAC labs, interact with its director, and engage with leading space scientists. They will also visit Science City to delve deeper into astronomy and space science. Over its 17-year history, YATS has inspired over 3,50,000 young science enthusiasts in the state, with 200 students, including this year's cohort, having the privilege of visiting various ISRO facilities.

## BDA grievance hearing to resume from July 1

**Bhubaneswar, June 29:** The Bhubaneswar Development Authority (BDA) will resume grievance hearing from July 1. The grievance hearing exercise will be carried out every Monday between 11am and 1:30pm. Public can file their complaints and grievances during the hearing. Due to model code of conduct imposed by the Election Commission of India for Assembly and Lok Sabha elections in the state, the grievance hearing had been halted.



**RAISING VOICE:** Members of Students Federation of India stage protest demanding scrapping of National Testing Agency over alleged irregularities in NEET-UG examination in front of Raj Bhavan in Bhubaneswar, Saturday

# CUO faculties participate in NEP conf at Guwahati



**Bhubaneswar, June 29:** A representation of faculty members from Central University of Odisha (CUO), Koraput participated in Eastern and North Eastern India Vice Chancellors' Conference, held recently at Guwahati, Assam. The conference was organised by University Grants Commission (UGC) and Pragjyotishpur University, Assam. Nagaland University coordinated the conference. The team interacted with UGC chairman M Jagadesh Kumar on implementation of the National Education Policy (NEP). Sourav Gupta from department of Journalism and Mass Communication, Nupur Pattanaik from department of Sociology and Gagana Bihari Suar from department of

Education represented CUO at the event. CUO VC Chakradhar Tripathi mentored the team and CUO NEP coordinator Bharat Panda coordinated the visit. The CUO team prepared a set of recommendations and strategies for implementation under NEP, such as interdisciplinary and holistic education, digital empowerment, online education, skill development and employability. This was presented before the chairman in a brainstorming session. The team participated in an interactive session with the chairman and described the efforts undertaken by the university towards implementation of NEP, including publication of primers in Kui and Desia languages, film making courses, Hindi and Japanese short term courses, Gopabandhu Studies, MOOCs and Digital Library courses.

## Heavy rain likely over 9 dists



**Bhubaneswar, June 29:** Heavy to very heavy rain is likely to lash several parts of Odisha, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said Saturday. The state may continue to experience heavy downpour till Monday under the influence of the low-pressure area over the Bay of Bengal (BoB). The Meteorological Centre in Bhubaneswar has issued yellow warning of heavy rain in at least nine districts of the state during the next 24 hours. The Met office has advised the people to keep a watch on the weather and accordingly move to safer places to protect themselves from lightning strike. In its evening bulletin, the IMD forecast that heavy rainfall is very likely at one or two places in the districts of Jharsuguda, Sundargarh, Sambalpur, Deogarh, Bargarh, Angul, Dhenkanal, Balasore, Bhadrak, Kendrapara and Jagatsinghpur by 8:30am Sunday. It also said heavy to very heavy rainfall is very likely to occur at one or two places in Mayurbhanj and Keonjhar districts during the period. The IMD has warned of squally weather with gusty surface wind speed reaching 40 to 50kmph over northwest BoB off Odisha coast till Monday. Fishermen have been advised not to venture into sea off Odisha coast and northwest BoB during this period. While there are no further weather warnings, light to moderate rain may occur at several places in the state till July 4, it added.

## Kapilendra Dev's 589th coronation day observed

**Cuttack, June 29:** The 589th Coronation day of the Gajapati Kapilendra Dev was observed by various cultural groups here at a temple, Saturday. The event was organised, jointly by Rediscover Lost Heritage, Aithya Ra Ante', Silver City Cuttack Public Charitable Trust and Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH), Bhubaneswar Chapter. Speaking on the occasion, heritage researcher and RLH founder Deepak Kumar Nayak said 'Birashree Gajapati Gaudeswara Navakoti Karnata Kalabargewara Kapilendra Dev Rautaray' was undoubtedly the greatest Odia emperor after 'Mahameghabahana Aira Kharavela'. "Kapilendra Dev had a powerful army of elephants, horses and men. Fighting numerous wars, Kapilendra Dev's empire eventually included many parts in Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Karnataka," he said. Retired administrator and senior member of INTACH Sanjib Chandra Hota attended said, "Odisha history text books need a revamp in showcasing Odia pride. History curriculum should give more focus on highlighting the success and contributions of Gajapati kings like Narasingha Dev, Kapilendra Dev, Mukunda Dev and Ramachandra Dev."

## DRIEMS varsity nat'l hackathon champion

**Bhubaneswar, June 29:** DRIEMS University students won the national championship by winning the first prize in Hackathon competition organised recently by the DPurpose Foundation at Anna University, Chennai. The first-year students of university's ENTC department of the School of Engineering and Technology included Chittaranjan Behera (team leader), Sagarika Swain, Rashmikiran Sahu, and Sajjan Kumar. They were guided by department's Bajra Panja Mishra and Shubhranshu Kumar Singh. The team received ₹1 lakh cheque and certificates as prize. A total of 8,500 contestants from country's major technical educational institutions took part in the competition where 100 contestants were selected for the final round.



While three teams from DRIEMS University participated in the competition, one team bagged the first place. The remaining two teams also performed well receiving praised from the jury. University's founder chairman Pramod Chandra Rath, VC Prakash Kumar Hota and Director Administration Balam Kar hailed the students for their outstanding performance. Senior director Pradeepta Chandra Rath, Pro Chairman Durga Prasad Rath, Director Chinmayee Rath, Dean NayanRanjana Samal and HoD, ENTC Jibananda Mehena also congratulated the team.

## Capacity building for community leaders

**Bhubaneswar, June 29:** A Capacity building programme for community leaders on social welfare schemes, rights and social protection was held at Red Cross Bhawan here, Saturday. The programme was organised under the banner of ActionAid Association in collaboration with Centre for Child and Women Development (CCWD). Trade Union leader Mahendra Kumar Parida attended as the resource person and focused on rights of workers in informal sectors, availing the beneficiary of the schemes.

## SAI celebrates Mother's Day

**Bhubaneswar, June 29:** SAIONEERS from Playgroup to Class III weaved heartfelt memories by participating in the Mother's Day celebration held at the Indraprastha Auditorium here, Saturday. The event, following the theme "Mata sarva sukha pradam," saw an overwhelming participation of students and their mothers, embracing the spirit of gratitude and appreciation. The celebration began with a warm welcome and a series of heartwarming presentations. Students expressed their love for their mothers through poem recitations, song dedications, and lively dance performances, filling the auditorium with emotions and joy. The highlight of the event was the engaging activity 'Mom's Fabric Revival,' where mothers and children collaborated to design dresses by upcycling old garments. This creative endeavour not only fostered a sense of community but also promoted sustainable fashion practices, aligning with SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production) and SDG 13 (Climate Action). The sight of mothers and children working together, sharing laughs, and creating beautiful designs was truly heartwarming. The retro attire added a glamorous touch to the celebration, enhancing the overall festive spirit. SAI International chairperson Silpi Sahoo said, "Mother's Day at SAI Angan is a heartfelt tribute to the love and sacrifices of mothers, fostering a spirit of gratitude and strengthening our Parental Connect initiatives to ensure a nurturing environment for every SAIONEER." "Mother's Day is more than just a celebration; it is an opportunity to instill gratitude, empathy, and thoughtfulness in the students," she said.



# Protecting 1.2% of Earth would prevent most extinctions

Setting aside an additional 1.2 per cent of the world's land as nature preserves would prevent the majority of predicted plant and animal extinctions and cost about \$263 billion, according to a study published on Tuesday. The world is racing to meet a goal to protect 30 per cent of the world by 2030 to protect wildlife that is being decimated by climate change, pollution and habitat destruction. Global policymakers will meet at a United Nations summit in Colombia in October to discuss plans for reaching that goal. The study in the journal Frontiers in Science aimed to identify the highest value areas in hope that they be included in those protection plans, said Carlos Peres, a study co-author and conservation ecology expert at the University of East Anglia in the United Kingdom. "Most countries do not actually have a strategy," Peres said. "The 30-by-30 targets still lack a lot of details because it doesn't actually say what 30 percent should be protected." The study's proposed protections would cover an additional 1.6 million square km (633,000 square miles) - an area about a fifth the size of the United States - across 16,825 sites globally that are home to rare and threatened species. That's on top of the nearly 16 per cent of the world that already have some level of protection. The study estimated the \$263 billion bill is how much it would cost to acquire the new areas, many of which include private property, at current value over the next five years. "Time is not on our side because it will become increasingly more expensive and more difficult to set aside additional protected areas," Peres said. Land acquisition makes up most of the cost of creating protected areas, and the study did not consider the upkeep costs for policing the reserves. About three-quarters of the sites are tropical forests, as those are the world's most biodiverse ecosystems. The Philippines, Brazil and Indonesia are home to more than half of the high-value sites. Russia is the single country with the most high-valued area ripe for conservation with 138,436 square km identified in the study, an area the size of Greece. Several African countries also topped the list with Madagascar having the fourth-highest number of sites overall while the Democratic Republic of Congo had the largest area targeted for conservation on the continent. The United States is the only developed nation among the top 30 countries in the analysis, with 0.6 per cent of the sites or an area twice the size of Delaware. The researchers only considered land and freshwater ecosystems but not oceans or marine protected areas. Researchers did not include invertebrates in the study, as the geographical distributions insects and other such animals are not well mapped.



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# Man awarded 20-year RI for raping minor girl

**Kendrapara, June 29:** Kendrapara Ad-hoc Additional Sessions Judge (Fast Track Special Court) Tribikram Keshari Chinnara has sentenced a rape convict to 20 years of Rigorous Imprisonment (RI) for raping a minor girl and slapped a fine of ₹52,000 on him.

According to the prosecution, accused Chandan Mallik forcibly took the minor girl to his house under Aul police limits September 15, 2020 and raped her.

Special Public Prosecutor of Special Judge, (POCSO) Court of Kendrapara Manoj Kumar Sahoo said the minor girl had gone near a tube well located near the house to draw water with her mother when Chandan took the minor girl forcibly to his house and raped her.

The victim minor managed to flee from the spot and narrated the ordeal before her grandmother and mother who lodged an FIR at Aul police station September 16, 2020 against Chandan and seven others.

Aul police registered a case

under Sections 376 AB, 341, 323, 294, 506, 34 of IPC and Section 4 of the POCSO Act and later arrested the accused.

While adjudicating the case the judge convicted Chandan June 27 and sentenced him to 20 years of RI along with a fine of ₹52,000.

The judge further ordered that the convict would undergo one more year jail term if he failed to provide the fine amount.

Seven others who were arrested along with Chandan in the case were acquitted by the court due to lack of evidence, the Special Public Prosecutor said.

The judge directed that the fine amount when realised shall be paid in full to the victim as compensation.

The court also recommended that the government provide a compensation of ₹5 lakh to the victim for her proper rehabilitation.

The secretary of District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), Kendrapara was directed to take steps for sanctioning the compensation amount to the victim, the Special Public Prosecutor said.

# Daringbadi's famed coffee garden on the wane

*While the coffee garden was spread over 70 hectare of land earlier, it has shrunk to only 48 hectare due to theft and destruction of coffee plants by miscreants in frequent intervals*

**Daringbadi, June 29:** The coffee garden, a major tourist attraction of Daringbadi in Kandhamal district which has helped place the hill station in the tourist map of the country, is on the wane as severe irregularities plague the plantation amid lack of proper upkeep and development.

Hundreds of tourists visit Daringbadi daily to enjoy the scenic locales including the coffee garden. It produces coffee seeds as well as black pepper, one of the widely used spices in the country.

However, the plantation is



fast losing its sheen due to lack of proper maintenance. The authorities have failed to keep a proper account of hundreds of quintals of coffee seeds cultivated in the garden. Much of the produce gets

destroyed after falling on the ground in the absence of timely collection. The rest is smuggled outside for a premium. The wasteful management has made the middlemen richer due to smuggling.

Negligence and apathetic attitude of the Soil Conservation department, which is entrusted with the garden's management, have cost the coffee garden a lot depriving the state government of precious revenue.

State-owned Tribal Development Cooperative Corporation of Odisha Ltd (TDCCOL) collected around 18 tonne of coffee seeds for the first time in 2022-23 FY which amounted to roughly around ₹63 lakh.

However, it stopped collecting coffee seeds from the next year: Hundreds of quintals of coffee seeds got destroyed after falling on the ground.

Meanwhile, theft has become a frequent occurrence in the coffee garden after the barbed fence itself was stolen leaving the garden in a vulnerable condition.

While the coffee garden was spread over 70 hectare of land earlier, it has shrunk to only 48 hectare due to theft and destruction of coffee plants by miscreants in frequent intervals.

District Collector Ashish Ishwar Patil planted coffee

saplings on an additional five hectare land to steer up the cultivation. However, the fresh plantation was destroyed within a year as its barbed fence was stolen due to lack of proper upkeep. Though the state government earns revenue from sale of coffee seeds and tickets to visitors, it is not doing enough towards the garden's protection as no one is sincere towards its development.

Contacted, APD Ramakant Parida of Soil Conservation department, who was recently on a visit to the coffee garden, said the TDCCOL has been tasked with collection of coffee seeds under a contract.

When further asked how Daringbadi coffee is available in the market despite TDCCOL not selling it, he said it is not Daringbadi coffee but coffee produced elsewhere being marketed by miscreants with the brand name.

A roadside vendor selling coffee in front of the garden said he and other vendors purchase coffee seeds from the department at ₹600 per kg and sell it to interested customers at ₹1,000 per kg.

# BALASORE UNREST NIGHT CURFEW RELAXED FOR ANOTHER HOUR

**Balasore, June 29:** With gradual improvement in law and order situation, Balasore district administration has relaxed night curfew timings in the north Odisha town by another hour, an official order said Saturday.

Curfew was imposed in the town following a group clash June 17. Instead of 9pm to 5am, night curfew will now come into effect from 10pm in areas under the jurisdiction of the Town and Sahadevkhunta police stations, according to the order.

So far, 91 people have been arrested in connection with the clash, and 24 police cases have been registered, a senior police officer said.

The communal violence flared up June 17 after some people spotted blood-stained water in a drain and staged a road blockade. The situation escalated when the two groups resorted to intense stone-pelting, leaving 10 injured. Some police personnel also suffered injuries while controlling the mob.



**NOBLE INITIATIVE:** Girls students take free books being distributed at a book fair titled 'Sambalpur Bahi Haat' held on Gangadhar Meher University premises and organised jointly by Kalam Parivar and Ghanthi Sahitya Ghar of Chiplima in Sambalpur

# Wear helmets or lose pay, Mohana BEO tells teachers

**Shargarh, June 29:** Primary school teachers were caught off guard after the Block Education Officer (BEO) of Mohana block in Gajapati district warned of stopping one month's salary if they are caught riding their scooters and bikes to schools sans helmets.

The BEO in a letter 1208, dated June 27, 2024 directed all the primary school teachers to compulsorily wear helmets while

riding their two-wheelers to school adding that it will ensure their safety and set a good example for students.

Teachers risk their lives daily by riding bikes and scooters without helmets despite facing frequent accidents. This alarming trend has prompted the BEO to take strict measures to ensure their safety.

It is learnt that as many as 900 teachers are posted at different schools under the Mohana BEO in Gajapati district.

# Life imprisonment for killing wife

**Baripada:** A court in Mayurbhanj district Saturday sentenced a man to life imprisonment for killing his wife. Mayurbhanj District Additional Sessions Judge Satyanarayan Patra pronounced the verdict and also imposed a fine of Rs 50,000 on the convict SK Samrat (25). The judgement was pronounced after examining the statement of 22 witnesses and a medical report.

Additional Public Prosecutor Krushna Chandra Das said. During a quarrel, Samrat killed his wife Chumki Khatun (20) by strangulation at Kendukhal village June 4, 2021. Following the incident, police registered a case under section 302 IPC and arrested the accused.

# Wooden bridge on Baitarani unites people of two districts

**RESIDENTS OF MORE THAN FOUR PANCHAYATS OF CHAMPUA BLOCK -- KARANJIA, CHANDRASEKHARPUR, BADANAI AND SAREI -- USE THIS BRIDGE REGULARLY AS IT IS THE SHORTEST ROUTE THAT CONNECTS KEONJHAR AND MAYURBHANJ DISTRICTS**



**Keonjhar, June 29:** A makeshift bamboo bridge on the Baitarani river at Katulikana village under Karanjia panchayat of Champua block in this district has been serving as a link between Keonjhar and Mayurbhanj districts.

The bridge connects Katulikana village in Keonjhar side with Budamara Kesari panchayat of Mayurbhanj district. In the absence of a permanent bridge on the river, people risk their lives and perilously travel on the fair weather bridge to reach their destinations. The temporary bridge needs to be constructed every year because it gets washed away in flood water during the rainy season.

A tourist spot called 'Kesarikund' is situated here where lakhs of devotees take holy dip in Baitarani river every year during Makar

People on both the sides, though divided by the river, share a cultural tie."

Riparian villagers on both sides unite and celebrate Makar Sankranti festival with great enthusiasm. "If the government constructs a bridge, people of both sides would benefit," said Supriya Munda, sarpanch of Karanjia panchayat of Champua block. Jhunu Naik, sarpanch of Kesari panchayat of Mayurbhanj demanded a permanent bridge here for the convenience of the people of both districts.

Sources said people of more than four panchayats of Champua block -- Karanjia, Chandrasekharapur, Badanai and Sarei -- use this bridge regularly as it is the shortest route that connects both districts. Taking a detour to travel to the other side is time consuming.

By taking the detour, people have to cover around 20 to 22 km to reach the other side. Using the bridge reduces the distance to only half a kilometre. However, the narrow and wooden bridge has its own obvious limitations. The bridge is used only by two-wheelers and pedestrians. A small fee is charged for the maintenance of the bridge.

Farmers use this route to reach the market across the river to sell their products. The cultural harmony and traditional customs of Mayurbhanj and Keonjhar districts are displayed through the familial relationships between residents of both the districts. The 'bridge of relation' is the villagers' sole medium for cultural exchange through public as well as family functions.

Sankranti. Locals believe that in the Mahabharat era, Bhima came here and took bath, thereby giving the place its name.

"If a bridge is constructed here, it will be very convenient to go to Mayurbhanj district area," a local villager said adding, "Most people on this side have relatives who stay on the other side of the river."

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

Notice is hereby given to all concerned that, Suvendu Kumar Mahapatra, S/o. Satyanarayan Mahapatra, At: Kalamachhuin, Birabarpur, Dist.: Angul- 759103, has sworn an affidavit on dt.29.06.2024 and has reported to OIC, Gopalprasad, Angul on dt.29.06.2024 regarding loss of one original Prier-Patta/ROR No. 929/893, Mouza: Turanga, Tahasil: Banarpal, SRO/Dist: Angul and 2 Nos of Regd. Prier-Sale Deed No.2201, Dated: 27/10/1997 and Prier-Sale Deed No. 2200/1997/1 Dated: 27/10/1997 of Registering Officer, Angul in the Name of Pratap Chandra Patra And One No. of Prier-ROR No. 929/5703, Mouza: Turanga, Tahasil: Banarpal, SRO/Dist: Angul in the name of Laxmipriya Pal.

Suvendu Kumar Mahapatra, S/o. Satyanarayan Mahapatra has applied to the M/s. CHOLAMANDALAM INVESTMENT AND FINANCE COMPANY LIMITED (CIFCL), Angul to avail loan on the above property by mortgaging the said property documents. All concerned therefore, having any claim over the property purchased under the said document Regd Prier-Sale Deed No.2200/1997/1 dated: 27/10/1997 & 2201 dtd. 27.10.1997 of Registering Officer, Angul and Prier-ROR vide Khata No.929/893 of Mouza-Turanga Jungle in the name of Pratap Chandra Patra and Prier-ROR No. 929/5703 in the name of Laxmipriya Pal, Mouza: Turanga, Tahasil: Banarpal, SRO/Dist: Angul is required to file her claim with the undersigned within 15(Fifteen) days from the date of publication of this notice failing which it will be presumed that the property having link with the said document/s is/are free from encumbrances and any claim in respect thereof against the applicant as a mortgagor and the company as the mortgagee shall be void and ineffective after the lapse of 15(Fifteen) days of publication of this notice.

Sambalpur Dt.29.06.2024

(A.K.Debta), Advocate  
M/s. CHOLAMANDALAM INVESTMENT AND FINANCE COMPANY LIMITED (CIFCL)  
A/P.O.: Modipara, P.S.: Town, Dist.: Sambalpur  
Mobile No. 9437158519

**MCL MAHANADI COALFIELDS LIMITED**  
(A Subsidiary of Coal India Limited)  
JAGRUTI VIHAR, BURLA-768020, DIST.-SAMBALPUR, ODISHA  
Ph.(EPABX):0663-2542461 to 469, Website:www.mahanadicoal.in

**NOTICE**

All the tenders issued by CIL and its Subsidiaries for procurement of Goods, Works and Services are available on website of Coal India Ltd [www.coalindia.in](http://www.coalindia.in), respective subsidiary Company, (MCL, [www.mahanadicoal.in](http://www.mahanadicoal.in)), CIL e-procurement portal <https://coalindiatenders.nic.in> and Central Public Procurement Portal <https://eprocure.gov.in>. In addition, procurement is also done through GeM portal <https://gem.gov.in>"

R-5213

**GOVERNMENT AUTONOMOUS COLLEGE, ANGUL**  
ADVERTISEMENT FOR QUOTATION CALL NOTICE AND PROJECT ASSISTANT

No. CAD-393

1. Sealed quotations are invited from intending manufacturers/dealers/suppliers/firms having valid GST/MSME Certificate for supply of MATHEMATICA-14 (2 Users), Laptop and Printer on or before 20.07.2024 by 5.00 P.M.

2. Applications are invited from eligible candidates for temporary position of "Project Assistant (01)" under MRIP on or before 23.07.2024 by 5.00 P.M.

For details one may visit Government College, Angul website: (<http://www.gaca.nic.in/>). The undersigned reserves the right to cancel the quotation call and advertisement without assigning any reason thereof.

OIPR-11025/11/0003/2425 Sd./ Principal Investigator

**REGIONAL OFFICE : BHUBANESWAR**  
3/1 A CIVIC CENTRE, IRC VILLAGE, NAYAPALLI, BHUBANESWAR-751015,  
Email ID: [crld.robhbaneshwar@unionbankofindia.com](mailto:crld.robhbaneshwar@unionbankofindia.com)  
**BHUBANESWAR STATION SQUARE BRANCH**, Plot No.121 & 122, Kharvel Nagar, Station Square, Bhubaneswar- 751001, Phone: 0674-2534517, 2536959,  
Email: [ubin0903337@unionbankofindia.com](mailto:ubin0903337@unionbankofindia.com)

**RULE 6(2)/(8) OF SECURITY INTEREST (ENFORCEMENT) RULES 2002** Date: 21.06.2024

To,  
Borrower: M/s ODI PLAST, Prop.: Sri Sachidananda Das, Plot No.58/E, Bhagabanpur Industrial Area, Patrapada, Bhubaneswar- 751019 .  
Sir/Madam,  
Sub: Sale of property belonging to Sri Sachidananda Das for realization of amount due to Bank under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 .

Union Bank of India, Bhubaneswar Station Square Branch, Kharvel Nagar, Station Square, Bhubaneswar, Dist: Khordha, Odisha, Pin- 751001, the secured creditor, caused a demand notice dated 15.07.2022 under section 13(2) of the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002, calling upon you to pay the dues within the time stipulated therein . Since you failed to comply the said notice within the period stipulated, the Authorised Officer, has taken possession of the secured assets under Section 13(4) of the Act read with Rule 6/8 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 on 01.10.2022 .

Even after taking possession of the secured asset, you have not paid the amount due to bank . As such, it has become necessary to sell the below mentioned property by holding public e-auction after 30 days from the date of receipt of this notice through online mode . The date and time of e-auction along with the Reserve Price of the property and the details of the service provider, in which the e-auction to be conducted, shall be informed to you separately .

Therefore, if you pay the amount due to the bank along with subsequent interest, costs, charges and expenses incurred by bank before the date of publication of sale notice, no further action shall be taken for sale of the property and you can redeem your property as stipulated in sec. 13(8) of the Act .

**SCHEDULE OF PROPERTY**

Factory Land & Building alongwith all the plant and machineries at IDCO Plot No.58/E, Bhagabanpur Industrial Area, Mouza: Bhagabanpur, Tahasil: Bhubaneswar, P.S.: Tomando, Dist: Khurda, Odisha - 751019, Boundary: North- IDCO Road, South- Private Land, East- Private Land, West- IDCO Plot No.92 .

Place: Bhubaneswar  
Date: 29.06.2024

Chief Manager & Authorised Officer  
Union Bank of India

If you can always smile at life, life will always smile at you.  
THE MOTHER



## Accurate Accusations

On 28 June, India's foreign ministry put out a strong statement against a report from the United States State Department on religious freedom in India. Our statement said that "as in the past, the report is deeply biased, lacks understanding of India's social fabric and is visibly driven by vote bank considerations and a prescriptive outlook. We therefore reject it." Our statement further went on to attack the primary report on which the US State Department was basing its observations. We said that this primary report was "a mix of imputations, misrepresentations, selective usage of facts, reliance on biased sources and a one-sided projection of issues."

There are a couple of hundred words added to this which talk about our laws and our sovereignty, but sadly do not address the specific accusations that the US State Department has made. What were these?

The US foreign minister (Secretary of State Blinken) said these two things: "In India, for example, Christian communities reported that local police aided mobs that disrupted worship services over accusations of conversion activities or stood by while mobs attacked them and then arrested the victims on conversion charges." He added: "In India we see a concerning increase in anti-conversion laws, hate speech, demolitions of homes and places of worship for members of minority faith communities."

This is a fact. We cannot both be proud of the BJP's bulldozer culture and disown it. It would have been appropriate for us to have addressed these things specifically but we chose not to. Instead we ended our statement with the words that "in 2023, India has officially taken up numerous cases in the US of hate crimes, racial attacks on Indian nationals and other minorities, vandalism and targeting of places of worship, violence and mistreatment by law enforcement authorities." We will come to this later but first let us understand what this US report is that has upset India.



Aakar Patel

Even if we are to assume that the USCIRF is biased as Jaishankar and the foreign ministry claim, this is not relevant. What they say is relevant

It is an annual report put out by the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF). It claims to be an independent and bipartisan (meaning comprising both Democrat and Republican members) federal (meaning Central) US government entity. For the last five years, every year, it has been recommending sanctions against Indian leaders and institutions. Each year the US federal government, first under Trump and then under Biden, has been avoiding imposing sanctions. If readers remember the US visa ban on Modi 20 years ago, it was because he was put on the USCIRF sanctions list and the then president (Bush) had enforced the sanctions against Modi for the Gujarat pogrom.

Their 2020 report says "India took a sharp downward turn in 2019. The national government used its strengthened parliamentary majority to institute national-level policies violating religious freedom across India, especially for Muslims."

Our foreign minister Jaishankar's response was to say that USCIRF was "biased and its tendentious comments against India are not new." Last year, after India for the fourth year running made it to the list of nations persecuting minorities, our foreign ministry said the report was "biased and inaccurate" and reflected a "severe lack of understanding" of India and its

"constitutional framework, its plurality and its democratic ethos." This is inaccurate. I have engaged with the USCIRF and find them to be extremely knowledgeable about India.

See this note by one of the USCIRF commissioners, Johnnie Moore, in the 2021 report. He writes: "I love India. I have floated early in the morning down the Ganges in Varanasi, walked every alley in Old Delhi, stood in awe of the architecture in Agra, sipped tea next to the Dalai Lama's temple in Dharamsala, circled the shrine in Ajmer, and looked in awe at the Golden Temple. All along the way, I have met Christian brothers and sisters who serve the poor selflessly, often in difficult circumstances. Of all the countries in the world, India should not be a country of particular concern. It is the world's largest democracy and it is governed by a pristine constitution. It is diversity personified and its religious life has been its greatest historic blessing. Yet, India does seem to be at a crossroads. Its democracy—still young and freewheeling—is creating through the ballot box difficult challenges for itself. The answer, of course, is for India's institutions to draw upon their rich history to protect their values. India must always resist allowing political and intercommunal conflict to exacerbate by religious tensions. India's government and people have everything to gain and absolutely nothing to lose from preserving social harmony and protecting the rights of everyone. India can. India must."

These are the people whose views we are dismissing and calling biased. Even if we are to assume that the USCIRF is biased as Jaishankar and the foreign ministry claim, this is not relevant. What they say is relevant. Is it true that Indian minorities are being persecuted by law and policy under the BJP? The answer is obvious to anyone who opens a newspaper and switches on their television set.

Our response threatening to take up violations in the US against their minorities is welcome. As a democracy which says it respects human rights, it is our obligation to point out flaws in other nations, especially in our friends. However, this should be a deep exercise, such as the one the USCIRF conducts, and not as a throwaway statement in angry response to well-founded and accurate accusations against us.

### WISDOM CORNER

If a man does not keep pace with his companions, perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer. Let him step to the music which he hears, however measured or far away. HENRY DAVID THOREAU

The fight is won or lost far away from witnesses - behind the lines, in the gym, and out there on the road, long before I dance under those lights. MUHAMMAD ALI

Some people will never learn anything, for this reason, because they understand everything too soon. ALEXANDER POPE

### THIS DAY IN HISTORY

- 1893: The Excelsior diamond—which, weighing 995 carats, was the largest uncut diamond ever found to that time—was discovered in the De Beers mine at Jagersfontein, Orange Free State.
- 1905: Albert Einstein submits a paper outlining his theory of special relativity. The text "Zur Elektrodynamik bewegter Körper" comprises the currently accepted theory about the relationship between space and time. The theory of special relativity is the basis for his theory of general relativity, which he published in 1916.
- 1934: Night of the Long Knives. On this date in 1934 occurred the "Night of the Long Knives," in which German dictator Adolf Hitler had his elite SS guards summarily execute many leading officials of the SA, a Nazi paramilitary group.
- 1960: Zaire, formerly Belgian Congo and now the Democratic Republic of the Congo, declared its independence from Belgium.

# ASSANGE IS FREE, BUT ARE WE?

## FOCUS SOCIETY



Slavoj Žižek

PANDEMICS, WARS, AND WIDESPREAD ECOLOGICAL BREAKDOWN FORCE US TO ASK THE BIG QUESTION: IN WHAT SENSE ARE WE WHO BREATHE THE FRESH AIR OUTSIDE PRISONS STILL FREE?

I fought for years with and for Julian Assange. But upon hearing that he has regained his freedom, my first thought was that he is returning to a world that looks – and is – much worse than the one he left behind. Pandemics, wars, and widespread ecological breakdown force us to ask the big question: In what sense are we who breathe the fresh air outside prisons still free?

Even our fictional accounts are getting worse. The new children's movie Inside Out 2 follows a 13-year-old Riley at the start of puberty. Her personified emotions – Joy, Sadness, Fear, Anger, Disgust – have created a new section in her mind called the "Sense of Self." Then, four new emotions – Anxiety, Envy, Embarrassment, Ennui – arrive, and conflict ensues. Joy thinks Riley should focus on having fun at camp, while Anxiety wants Riley to win a spot on the team and make new friends. In the end, the first and second generations of emotions learn to work together to protect Riley's ever-changing Sense of Self, leaving viewers with an utterly fraudulent depiction of the human psyche.

In the real world, these internal psychic tensions often escalate to the point of madness. A much better movie would have portrayed the emotions of a Palestinian boy in the ruins of Gaza, not a girl from a wealthy Los Angeles suburb. Rather than working together to form a stable self, his conflicting emotions would push him toward psychic breakdown and suicidal acts of violence. Recall GK Chesterton's wonderful description:

"A soldier surrounded by enemies, if he is to cut his way out, needs to combine a strong desire for living with a strange carelessness about dying. He must not merely cling to life, for then he will be a coward, and will escape. He must not merely wait for death, for then he will be a suicide, and will



Assange did not choose to launch WikiLeaks and expose state secrets so that he could spice up his life. He did it because he could not have done otherwise

not escape. He must seek his life in a spirit of furious indifference to it; he must desire life like water and yet drink death like wine."

Oleh Sentsov's recent film, Real, renders this combination of opposites perfectly. After spending several years as a political prisoner in Russia, Sentsov went to fight for the Ukrainian army. The film consists of 90 minutes of GoPro footage taken when he didn't realise his camera was on. Presented unedited, it depicts the strange mix of terror and boredom that defines life on the front line.

Such dualities run through the entire film. The banal brutality of the real is punctuated by magical moments of what might best be described as meaningless meaning. Sentsov recalls a moment from just before the footage in Real begins: "There was a soldier with the call sign Johnny, a veteran of the Afghan war. He was going there to evacuate the wounded, but he was hit, and he managed to make one last radio transmission, in which he said: 'This is Johnny. I'm dead.'" It is a moment of authentic metaphysical absurdity. Many reviewers believe Real

shows war as it truly is. If that was Sentsov's message, his film would be yet another pacifist paean to the meaningless absurdity of war. But though Sentsov recognises the brutal meaninglessness of the situation, he ultimately believes that the fight for a just cause must go on. Having stripped away all the romanticism of battlefield heroism, Real shows what true courage means: to accept the misery of a military struggle, and not obfuscate it with pathetic fantasies.

This is the message we need right now. In the case of Ukraine, pacifism has been used to excuse Russia's military aggression. The message from those who oppose Western support for Ukraine is: "You must not resist the occupier, because then you will become the same as him." In the Holy Land, the message is similar, but the mainstream media's reporting of events is very different. There is a consistent effort to shape and manipulate our perception of what is going on, so as to limit the emotional impact. While Israelis are killed in a "massacre," Palestinians are merely "found dead." These forms of "soft

ensorship pervade public discourse.

Did you know that a large group of Israeli Jewish intellectuals recently called on all EU member states, the United Kingdom, and others to recognise the State of Palestine? This courageous act generated scarcely any coverage in Western media. Major events that might disturb the Western public's sensibilities either go unmentioned or are reported only with a small note at the bottom of the page.

How many people noticed that, on 20 June, 2024, Israel enacted what amounts to an annexation of the West Bank, with the Israeli Defense Force transferring powers there to "pro-settler civil servants"? The irony of this move will not be lost on Palestinians. While a military occupation implies some distance from Israel, this new dispensation means that they are being integrated into the Israeli civil order – albeit one dominated by chauvinists bent on excluding them.

These examples show why we need heroes like Assange. He did what needed to be done, and he paid a high price. The time has come for others to continue the work he started. By "work," I mean not just a job but a vocation: something that you are called to do. Assange did not choose to launch WikiLeaks and expose state secrets so that he could spice up his life. He did it because he could not have done otherwise. For that reason, I suspect he is a happy man, despite all the suffering he has endured.

Slavoj Žižek, Professor of Philosophy at the European Graduate School, is International Director of the Birkbeck Institute for the Humanities at the University of London and the author, most recently, of Christian Atheism: How to Be a Real Materialist (Bloomsbury Academic, 2024).

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## SPECTRUM ECONOMY

# The overestimation of GDP



Santosh Kumar Mohapatra

THE SHARP DIVERGENCE OF 1% BETWEEN REAL GDP AND REAL GVA GROWTH IN 2023-24 AS AGAINST 0.3% IN 2022-23 IS A MATTER OF SERIOUS CONCERN

The provisional estimates of the annual GDP for FY 2023-24 reveal the healthy growth performance of the economy. Real GDP has been estimated to grow by 8.2% in 2023-24 as compared to 7% in the previous fiscal. Real GVA has grown by 7.2% in 2023-24 over 6.7% in 2022-23. This is higher than the prediction made by various agencies.

However, it is not an occasion for celebration as GDP is just an indicator of economic activities and not well being of society. The GDP obscures grim realities of societies and sufferings of masses. Out of 140 crore people if 40 crore consume more, spend more, GDP can grow, but this will not reflect the sufferings of the other 100 crore of people. The benefits of growth are reaped by the few rich. We witness jobless growth and rampant inequality.

However, there have been contentions that India's GDP is always overestimated and not corroborated by ground realities including various indices such as human development, hunger, happiness, etc. India's GDP calculation methodology itself is flawed, though the government claims to have followed an international practice.

GDP is measured through production/output, expenditure and income methods. The expenditure approach measures the total amount of spending on goods and services that are produced within the domestic borders of the nation. GDP is the sum of private consumption, gross investment in economy, government spending and net foreign trade (the difference between exports and imports).

The income approach measures the total income that is earned by all households in a nation. It measures GDP from the side of payments made to primary factors of production in form of rent, wages, interest and profit for their productive services in an accounting year.

In all the three methods, GDP figures should be the same. Professor Ashoka Mody of Princeton School of Public and International Affairs has pointed out that India's GDP calculated through expenditure method is found less than what is calculated through product method. Under the production/output approach, officials compute the value added by the three major sectors - agriculture, industry and services. The sum of value

addition is called GVA. Further, they add product taxes and subtract product subsidies from GVA, to get GDP. Product taxes include GST (after 2017), excise duties, VAT, and import and export duties. Product subsidies include subsidies on food, petroleum and fertilizers. Thus, the difference between GDP and GVA is based on the growth rates in taxes and subsidies.

But the sharp divergence of 1% between real GDP and real GVA growth in 2023-24 as against 0.3% in 2022-23 is a matter of serious concern. Due to the higher amount of indirect taxes like GST, excise on petroleum products and reduction of subsidies, GDP is found to be higher than GVA. Both increase of indirect taxes and reduction of subsidies are regressive and adversely affect the poor more. This means when the poor suffer, the GDP grows.

The nominal GDP gives the market value of all final goods and services currently produced within a country during a given time period. The real GDP adjusts the nominal GDP for changes in prices (inflation) measured through implicit price deflator. The price deflator, also known as GDP deflator, addresses this by

showing the effect of price changes on GDP. It is a price index that shows how, on average, prices for all goods and services produced in an economy change over time.

Arvind Subramanian, former chief economic advisor, says the wholesale price index (WPI) is not the appropriate price deflator. We should be using the Producer Price Index, which is what the producers are getting. Because, the data that we are getting is coming from the production units. Hence, it is not possible to know how much are the producers getting for the act of production. The WPI is systematically underestimating inflation. Further, on many occasions, the WPI has been in the negative territory, resulting in overestimation of GDP.

When a country's progress is evaluated in terms of GDP, the qualitative aspects of life decline with education, social relations, social progress and scientific inventions getting spanked. The government should rethink its measurement of development through GDP.

The writer is an Odisha-based economist and columnist.

## Nightmare of Democrats

Sir, This refers to "Lying with confidence; faltering with facts," Orissa Post, Jun 29. US President Joe Biden's disastrous performance in the presidential debate has left the Democrats shaken. Donald Trump is now the clear frontrunner despite his record and rhetoric remaining deeply disturbing. By one account, he lied over two dozen times in the 90-minute debate on issues ranging from his economic and foreign policy record to abortion and immigration. Biden lost because of his wobbly walk to the stage to his meandering sentences, from his weak rebuttal of Trump to his inability to even leverage issues on which Democrats score high such as abortion. In Biden's case, this failure is a direct product of his age, which will lead to even swing voters growing sceptical of his ability to complete a second term. And if American citizens don't believe that a candidate is mentally sharp enough to exercise that judgment, that's a problem. Being the American president requires exercising judgment on the most difficult issues, all the time. If he truly believes that Trump's candidacy represents a threat to democracy, Biden must voluntarily step aside, free his delegates and, let the Democratic Party choose a candidate at the convention through an open electoral process. Otherwise, democrats can get ready for Trump's return to the White House.

N Sadhasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

## Defer Motion of Thanks

Sir, This refers to "Opposition forces repeated adjournments in Parl," Orissa Post, June 29. I would like to comment that if the Motion of Thanks get stalled, the survival of the government comes into question. The NEET scam is a biggest scam in India in recent years. How can Speaker Om Birla expect the Motion of Thanks to be passed in Parliament unanimously when the Damocles' sword heavily hangs on the shoulder of the ruling party, reflecting its abysmal performance. There is however no denying that no adjournment motion is allowed when the President's address is to be discussed, but Motion of Thanks can be deferred till the discussion on NEET scam is complete satisfying the Opposite parties.

Arun Gupta, KOLKATA

## Letters

### TO THE EDITOR

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

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



# national

**of the day quote**

The JD(U) has just passed a resolution reiterating demand for special category status and central assistance to Bihar. Will the CM summon the courage to have the state cabinet also pass such a resolution. Will the CM of Bihar walk the talk?



I wonder at times if the RSS wasn't there, what would India be like today. Who could have thought Article 370 would be abrogated? When Jammu and Kashmir was given the special status, somebody must have taken a pledge that we won't have two emblems, two Prime Ministers and two Constitutions in one country



Why has Bihar suddenly started witnessing incidents of bridge collapse? Why is it happening after the Lok Sabha polls? Why were such incidents not taking place a month before? I suspect some conspiracy behind it. Authorities concerned must look into this aspect



## Cong targets PM over report on Adani group



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, June 29:** Congress leader Jairam Ramesh Saturday slammed Prime Minister Narendra Modi over a news report that the Adani Group has "selected eight Chinese companies to help" its solar manufacturing project and called for a strategy "to wean India of its dependence on China".

He said it has to be ensured that the taxpayers' money does not benefit Chinese companies. In a post on 'X', Ramesh said, "The non-biological Prime Minister infamously told the nation June 19, 2020, after the Galwan clashes that 'Na koi hamari seema mein ghus aaya hai, na hi koi ghusa hua hai (Neither has anyone entered our borders, nor has anyone occupied territories)'."

"However, he shows no hesitation in liberally issuing visas to Chinese workers to help one of his 'tempowallah' buddies," he said in the post on 'X' while tagging with it a newspaper report about Adani Solar seeking Centre's nod to bring a few engineers from China.

Ramesh's "tempowallah buddies" jibe is in reference to PM Modi's attack on Rahul Gandhi at a Lok Sabha election rally asking why the former Congress chief stopped "abusing" Adani

**The Adani Group, a major recipient of taxpayer largesse via the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme, has reportedly selected eight Chinese companies to help its solar manufacturing project and has asked for special permission to issue visas for 30 Chinese workers**

### Poll results moral defeat for PM: Sonia

**New Delhi:** Former Congress president Sonia Gandhi Saturday said the Lok Sabha poll verdict has signalled a "personal, political and moral defeat" for Prime Minister Narendra Modi but "he is continuing as if nothing has changed". In a newspaper article, she claimed there is "not the slightest evidence that he (Modi) has come to terms with the electoral outcome or understand the verdict". She said that when the Prime Minister's "emissaries sought unanimity for the post of Speaker", the Opposition INDIA bloc agreed to support the government. "But in keeping with convention and tradition, it was only fair and to be expected that the post of deputy speaker would be given to a member from the ranks of the Opposition," Gandhi said.

and Ambani in his attacks and whether his party received "tempo loads of money" from them in return.

"The Adani Group, a major recipient of taxpayer largesse via the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme, has reportedly selected eight Chinese companies to help its solar manufacturing project and has asked for special permission to issue visas for 30 Chinese workers," Ramesh wrote on the social media platform.

"Having facilitated multiple Modani scams such as coal and power-equipment over-invoicing and the amassing of illegal stakes in Adani Group companies -- all executed by individuals like Chang Chung-Ling and Nasser Ali Shaban Ahli -- why would the non-biological PM not waive national security considerations in this instance to benefit his partner and close friend?"

Ramesh said it is "bad enough that these concessions are being made even as the Chinese continue to occupy 2,000 square kilometres of Indian territory in eastern Ladakh". He claimed that India's imports from China have shot up from \$70 billion in 2018-19 to \$101 billion in 2023-24.

"Even the PLI scheme is benefiting China in sectors like electronics, solar etc. where PLI beneficiaries are signing giant contracts with Chinese vendors even as they enjoy taxpayer subsidies. All this of course is in the name of Atmanirbharta (self-reliance)," Ramesh said. "It is time for a proper strategy to wean India off dependence on China, and to ensure that taxpayer funds do not benefit Chinese companies. Prioritising his friends over national interest may be second nature to the PM, but it cannot be allowed to become national policy," he added.

### SHORT TAKES

#### Prajwal sent to judicial custody

**Bangalore:** A court here Saturday remanded former JD(S) MP Prajwal Revanna, who is facing charges of rape and sexual abuse of several women, to judicial custody till July 8. He was produced before the 42nd Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate court judge after his four-day Special Investigation Team (SIT) custody ended today. Prajwal Revanna Monday was remanded to judicial custody till July 8. But, he was later sent to SIT custody till June 29 by the Magistrate court judge, after the police sought a body warrant through the Special Public Prosecutor (SPP).

#### Sanjay Singh fails to appear before court

**Sultanpur (UP):** AAP Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh did not appear before an MP-MLA court here Saturday in a 2021 COVID-19 norms violation case, citing his preoccupation with the ongoing Parliament session. The court will now hear the matter July 6. Sanjay Singh's advocate Madan Singh said his client could not appear before the special MP-MLA court due to the ongoing Parliament session. An application on his absence was filed in the court, which fixed July 6 as the next date of hearing.

#### Flood situation in Assam deteriorates

**Guwahati:** The flood situation in Assam, which had been improving over the past few days, has deteriorated again, with an increase in both the affected population and the number of impacted districts, according to an official bulletin released Saturday. The ASDMA said 133,945 people across seven districts have been affected.

#### Businessmen, hawkers clash

**Kolkata:** Businessmen and hawkers clashed in the city's New Market area Saturday, amid tensions over West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's directive to reduce hawkers' occupation of road space. According to a police official, trouble began when some hawkers objected to traders with permanent structures in the heritage New Market complex and surrounding open spaces parking their vehicles there.



**Our goal is huge, and our policy vast. So, our journey is also very long. We have a duty and responsibility to fulfill the people's aspirations**

M K STALIN | TAMIL NADU CHIEF MINISTER

### HARYANA GOVT, NFSU SIGN MoU

A memorandum of understanding between Haryana and the National Forensic Science University (NFSU) in Gandhinagar was signed Saturday in the presence of Union Home Minister Amit Shah, paving the way for a scientific base to the criminal justice system



Vehicles washed away in the River Ganga after heavy rainfall, in Kotwali city area in Haridwar, Uttarakhand (PTI PHOTO)

## JD(U) demands special category status for Bihar



AGENCIES

**New Delhi, June 29:** The Janata Dal (United) Saturday appointed Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Kumar Jha as its working president and urged the Centre to consider either special category status or special package for Bihar, underlining the party's important role in the formation of the Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led government.

The party's national executive meeting chaired by its president and Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar flagged price rise and unemployment as "burning issues", as its political resolution expressed confidence that the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government would take more effective steps to handle them.

The resolution called for extensive probe into paper leak cases to ensure stringent action against the guilty so as to maintain the credibility of central competitive exams.

There is also a need for Parliament to enact a strong law against leaks of examination papers, it added. Kumar's decision to appoint his confidant as the party's working president, a position not held by anyone, suggests his efforts to maintain better coordination with the BJP and draw a helpful bargain as Jha enjoys good ties with the national party's leadership.

A former minister in Bihar, Jha was originally in the BJP and served as its link with Kumar before crossing over to the JD(U). Seen as competent, likeable and low-key, the Mithilanchal leader has long been a trusted aide of his ageing mentor who has burnt his fingers in the past due to

shifting loyalties of his ostensibly reliable colleagues, including former JD(U) president RCP Singh, now in the BJP.

Party sources said Kumar would expect Jha to maintain smooth relations with the BJP while working to get a positive response to his party's demands, including aid to Bihar. The JD(U)'s decision to include a special package as an alternative to its historical push for special category status for Bihar marked a pragmatic climbdown as the Modi government had cited the 14th Finance Commission's report to rule out special category status for any more states.

Following his appointment, Jha said his party's purpose was to get central assistance for Bihar to build on the foundation laid by the Kumar-led government since 2005, except for a short period when Jitan Ram Manjhi was chief minister.

"It does not matter in what name such a help is given. We will pursue it with the central government and are hopeful for a positive outcome," he said.

Asserting that everything would remain cordial between the BJP and the JD(U), he said the two parties were natural allies. The NDA will win more than 200 seats in the 2025 Assembly polls, he said, noting that the alliance had leads in 177 of the 243 Assembly segments in the recent Lok Sabha elections.

## Navy participates in RIMPAC naval exercise

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, June 29:** The Indian Navy has joined the world's largest naval military wargame Rim of the Pacific Exercise (RIMPAC) in Hawaii.

Twenty-nine nations, 40 surface ships, three submarines, over 150 aircraft and more than 25,000 personnel are going to train and operate in and around the Hawaiian Islands during the exercise, according to the US Navy. The Indian Navy has deployed frontline warship INS Shivalik for the RIMPAC.

"Indian multi-role stealth frigate INS Shivalik, mission Commander Vivek Madhwal said Saturday. The harbour phase of the exercise is taking place from June 27 to July 7.

The sea phase of RIMPAC is divided into three sub-phases which will witness ships undertaking various exercises. The exercise will witness the participation of an aircraft carrier battle group, submarines, maritime reconnaissance aircraft, unmanned aerial vehicles, remotely piloted surface ships and also an amphibious force landing operations, Commander Madhwal said. The RIMPAC exercise will run till August 1.

"The Rim of the Pacific exercise has grown over the years to be the world's largest and premier joint combined maritime training opportunity," said Vice Admiral John Wade, commander, the US 3rd Fleet.

Delhi reports six rain-related deaths

**New Delhi, June 29:** The national capital Saturday reported six rain-related deaths, taking to 11 the toll in the first two days since Monsoon hit the city, even as authorities said they have taken strong measures to prevent waterlogging in the coming days when heavy rains have been forecast.

Two boys drowned in a waterlogged underpass in northwest Delhi's Badli Saturday, police said, adding the stretch was flooded following heavy rains the previous day.

In Okhla, a 60-year-old man died after he got stuck with his scooter in a waterlogged underpass. Digvijay Kumar Chaudhary is a resident of Delhi's Jaitpur.

The bodies of three labourers were pulled out from the rubble of a wall Saturday morning that collapsed at a construction site in the Vasant Vihar area here amid heavy rain the day before, officials said.

With six deaths reported Saturday, the number of people killed in rain-related incidents in Delhi has climbed to 11 in the past two days.

Monsoon arrived in Delhi Friday morning. The national capital recorded 228.1 mm of rainfall on day one, the highest since 1936 for the month of June.

### SNIPPETS

#### Over 13,000 pilgrims visit Amarnath shrine

**Srinagar/Jammu:** More than 13,000 pilgrims visited the holy cave shrine of Amarnath Saturday, the first day of the annual pilgrimage in the south Kashmir Himalayas that is being conducted amid tight security. The first batch of pilgrims had left the twin base camps in Baltal and Nunwan to start their journey to the cave shrine located at an altitude of 3,880 metres. Prime Minister Narendra Modi greeted pilgrims at the start of the Amarnath Yatra, saying the 'darshan' of Lord Shiva is known to infuse immense energy in his followers. "My heartfelt best wishes to all pilgrims on the commencement of the holy Amarnath Yatra. This Yatra associated with the darshan of Baba Barfani infuses immense energy in the devotees of Lord Shiva. May all devotees prosper with his blessings. Jai Baba Barfani," the Prime Minister said in a post on X in Hindi.

#### Rahul defamation case: Hearing adjourned

**Thane:** The hearing of a defamation case filed against Congress leader Rahul Gandhi in the district over his alleged statement linking the RSS with Mahatma Gandhi's assassination was deferred to August 3, his lawyer said here. The hearing was scheduled for Saturday but the magistrate at the Bhiwandi court was on leave, said Gandhi's lawyer advocate Narayan Iyer. The criminal defamation case was filed by local Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) member Rajesh Kunte over the Congress leader's alleged statement at an election rally near Bhiwandi March 6, 2014, that "the RSS people killed (Mahatma) Gandhi." He defamed the RSS by making this false claim, the complainant said. In a related development, the Bombay High Court two days ago reserved its order on a petition filed by Rahul Gandhi against the admission of certain evidence by the Bhiwandi court, his lawyer said.

#### Ravi Agrawal appointed CDBT chief

**New Delhi:** Ravi Agrawal, a 1988-batch IRS officer, has been appointed as the new chairman of the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT), the administrative body for the Income Tax Department. He takes over from Nitin Gupta, a 1986-batch Indian Revenue Service officer, whose extended tenure as the chairman ends Sunday, June 30. Gupta was appointed as the CDBT chief in June, 2022. He was scheduled to retire in September last year but was given a nine-month extension till June. The new CDBT chief is currently working as member (administration) in the board. An order issued by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) said Agrawal will head the CDBT till June, 2025. Agrawal is scheduled to retire in September but his appointment order said he will continue on "reappointment on contract basis" till June 30 next year, in usual terms and conditions applicable to re-employed central government officers, in relaxation of the recruitment rules.

## After Delhi, part of canopy collapses at Rajkot airport

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Rajkot, June 29:** A portion of a fabric canopy erected at the pick-up and drop area of the Rajkot International Airport collapsed Saturday after heavy rains, officials said. Nobody was injured in the incident, they said.

The accident, which comes days after similar incidents in Delhi and Jabalpur, gave the opposition Congress an opportunity to target the ruling BJP.

In a post on X, the Rajkot airport authorities said that water accumulation was observed on the city side of the canopy at the terminal building at 11.40 am due to heavy rains. "As we came to know about it we gave the information to the civil works department and the area beneath was cordoned off,"



said Rajkot International Airport in the post.

The international airport is located at Hirasar, about 30 km from Rajkot city. "Around 11.55 am, more water accumulated on the canopy amid heavy rains, due to which the canopy fabric got torn and fell. No casualties were reported in the incident. The airport civil team is removing the (damaged) canopy,"

**The accident, which comes days after similar incidents in Delhi and Jabalpur, gave the Opposition Congress an opportunity to target the ruling BJP**

time (of accident), no one was underneath the canopy. Had someone died, then who would be responsible," he asked.

A cab driver waiting for some passengers at Terminal 1 of the Indira Gandhi International Airport in Delhi died when a portion of a canopy covering the departure area collapsed on parked cars amid heavy rains Friday.

Six people were also injured in the incident. "I urge BJP and Prime Minister Narendra Modi to take cognisance of such matters when he is speaking about a corruption-free administration," Gohil said.

A part of a fabric canopy at Jabalpur airport collapsed Thursday due to water accumulation after showers and crushed a car parked below. No one was injured in the incident.



# national

## of the day quote

Under the guidance of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, the double-engine NDA government comprising 6 parties, has sent bright wishes of Mangalraj to the people of the state on the collapse of the 5 bridges in 11 days

TEJASHWI YADAV | LEADER OF OPPOSITION IN THE BIHAR ASSEMBLY

We are replacing three pillars of our criminal justice system—the Indian Penal Code, the Criminal Procedure Code, and the Evidence Act—with new laws effective from July 1

Time has come to put the last nail in BJP's coffin. In coming days, the BJP will be wiped out from Jharkhand

HEMANT SOREN | FORMER JHARKHAND CM

## X POST OF THE DAY



Malayalis are WASTING their time at school learning Hindi as a compulsory language. There is a need to bring a policy where Hindi should be an OPTIONAL language at schools in Kerala rather than a compulsory language. The two language policy of (Malayalam+English) is SUFFICIENT.

## SHORT TAKES

### D Srinivas dies at 76

Hyderabad: Former Andhra Pradesh (undivided) Congress president D Srinivas died here Saturday, his son and Nizamabad MP D Arvind said. He was 76. Srinivas had been unwell for the past few days, family sources said. He was the PCC president during the 2004 and 2009 Assembly and general elections. He was also a minister in former Chief Minister YS Rajasekhara Reddy's Cabinet. He left Congress and became a BRS Rajya Sabha member from 2016 to 2022 and later rejoined the grand old party. Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy, Union Minister G Kishan Reddy, Telangana ministers, and senior leaders of the Congress party expressed condolences over his demise.

### EAM to visit Qatar

New Delhi: External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar will travel to Qatar Sunday to hold talks with Prime Minister Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al Thani with a focus on exploring ways to expand bilateral cooperation in areas of trade, investment and energy. Jaishankar's visit comes four-and-a-half months after Qatar released eight former Indian Navy personnel, who were sentenced to death after being arrested in August 2022.

### NDPP sweeps civic polls in Nagaland

Kohima: The ruling NDPP swept the civic body polls in Nagaland Saturday, winning all three municipal councils and most of the town councils, officials said. The polling for the 24 urban local bodies -- three municipal councils and 21 town councils -- spread across 10 districts was held Wednesday. Nearly 82 per cent of the over 2.23 lakh voters exercised their franchise in the elections, they said. The counting began at 8 am in 16 centres, and has been slow since the elections were held on ballot papers, they added.



My only plea is that the judicial system of the country should be totally unbiased, pure and honest. Secrecy should be maintained

MAMATA BANERJEE | WEST BENGAL CHIEF MINISTER

### ANOTHER BRIDGE COLLAPSES

The girder of an under-construction bridge collapsed in Bihar's Madhubani district Friday, making it the fifth such incident in the past 10 days after Araria, Siwan, East Champaran, and Kishanganj. The construction of the bridge was underway on the Bhutahi Balan River under the Madhepur block



# EXCISE SCAM Delhi court sends Kejriwal to judicial custody

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 29: A court here Saturday sent Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal to judicial custody till July 12 in a corruption case related to the alleged excise scam, saying his name has surfaced as one of the "main conspirators" and as the investigation is still in progress, his further custodial interrogation may be required.

Kejriwal was produced in the court by the CBI after the end of his three-day custodial interrogation, following which the central agency sought 14-day judicial custody while claiming that the AAP chief did not cooperate with the investigation and deliberately gave evasive replies.

The agency, in its remand plea, also expressed apprehension that he may influence witnesses and evidence already exposed before him during the custodial interrogation and also the potential witnesses who are yet to be examined. Kejriwal, 55, was arrested by the CBI June 26 from Tihar Jail, where he was in judicial custody in a connected money laundering case filed by the Enforcement Directorate.

"Considering the fact that the conspiracy alleged against the accused (Kejriwal) involves a large number of persons who were involved in the formulation and implementation of excise policy and also the persons who acted as facilitators in the use of ill-gotten money, I find that there exist sufficient grounds for remanding the accused to judicial custody," Special Judge Sunena Sharma said.

"...The investigation is still in progress and may require custodial interrogation of the accused to confront him with more material likely to be collected during the course of the investigation. Accordingly, accused Arvind Kejriwal is remanded to judicial custody till July 12," the judge added.

Noting the evidence before it, the court said that the investigation revealed that accused Vijay Nair, a close associate of Kejriwal, was the media-in-charge of the Aam Admi Party and he had contacted various liquor manufacturers and traders



Kejriwal was arrested March 21 by the ED. He was granted bail June 20 in the case by a trial court that was stayed by the Delhi High Court

for demanding undue gratification for incorporation of provisions favourable to them in the excise policy for 2021-22.

It also noted that Kejriwal's name surfaced as one of the "main conspirators of the criminal conspiracy" for various offences under provisions of the Prevention of Corruption Act and Indian Penal Code. "Four chargesheets in the case have already been filed against 17 accused persons including the persons of South group," the court noted.

It said that the investigating officer (IO) had pointed out in the case diary that Kejriwal was not cooperative during his custodial interrogation, nor was he truthful in disclosing facts on many material aspects. "The IO has pointed out certain incriminatory material collected during the investigation for showing that the ill-gotten money was used during the Goa assembly election for making payments towards the expenses of air tickets and hotel booking during the visits of the accused to Goa from June 2021 to February 2022," the court said.

It said that the IO also showed some incriminatory material showing Kejriwal's chats with certain persons "involved in the transfer of ill-gotten money to Goa through hawala".

According to the IO, as Kejriwal provided an "evasive reply" regarding his connection with these persons, his further custodial may be required to un-

earth the "larger conspiracy" regarding the formulation and implementation of the excise policy and use of the "ill-gotten money" by Kejriwal and "other top leaders of Aam Admi Party," the court noted. It observed that while the court can scrutinise the case diary, the material collected by the IO could not be shared with the accused till the agency filed its final report.

In its remand application, the CBI said during the custodial interrogation, Kejriwal did not cooperate with the investigation and deliberately gave evasive replies contrary to the evidence on record. "On being confronted with the evidence, he did not give a proper and truthful explanation regarding the enhancement of the profit margin for wholesalers from 5 per cent to 12 per cent under the new excise policy of Delhi 2021-22, without any study or justification," it said.

The application said Kejriwal evaded the questions regarding the meetings of his associate Vijay Nair with various stakeholders of the liquor business in Delhi and he was unable to give a proper explanation about his meeting with Magunta Sreenivasulu Reddy, accused Arjun Pandey and accused Mootha Gautham. As some crucial witnesses were yet to be examined and documents or digital evidence were yet to be collected, the plea sought Kejriwal's judicial custody for two weeks "in the interest of the investigation and justice".

## Equating judges with God dangerous: CJJ

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, June 29: The Chief Justice of India (CJI) DY Chandrachud has observed that the trend of equating judges with God is dangerous since the task of judges is to serve public interest.

"Too very often, we are addressed as Honour or as Lordship or as Ladyship. There is a very grave danger when people say that the court is a temple of justice. There is a grave danger that we perceive ourselves as the deities in those temples," CJI Chandrachud said while addressing the Regional Conference of National Judicial Academy in Kolkata.

The CJI said that he feels reticent when he is told that the court is the temple of justice be-

cause the temple postulates that the judges are in the position of a deity. "I would rather recast the role of the judge as a server of the people," the CJI said.

He said that even while sentencing anyone in a criminal case, the judges do that with a sense of compassion, since at the end, a human being is being sentenced. "So these concepts of constitutional morality, which I think, are the key, not just for the judges of the Supreme Court or the High Court but also for the district judiciary itself, because the engagement of the common citizens begins first and foremost with the district judiciary," CJI Chandrachud said.

Speaking on the occasion, he strongly stressed on the relevance of technology in the functioning of the judiciary.

## Heavy rain likely in northwest, northeast India

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 29: The India Meteorological Department (IMD) Saturday predicted heavy to very heavy rainfall in northwest and northeast India over the next four to five days.

A low-pressure area is currently situated over the northwest Bay of Bengal, adjoining the north Odisha-Gangetic West Bengal coasts, the weather office said.

Cyclonic circulations have formed over northeast Rajasthan, east Uttar Pradesh bordering Bihar, and northwest Uttar Pradesh at lower tropospheric levels, it added.

An east-west trough extends from northwest Uttar Pradesh to the low-pressure area. Due to these weather systems, isolated



An AAP party worker being detained during a protest against the arrest of party convenor and Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal in New Delhi

# Days after hooch tragedy, TN amends Prohibition Act



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, June 29: Days after the Kallakurichi hooch tragedy in the state that claimed over 60 lives, the Tamil Nadu government amended a Prohibition Act to substantially enhance the punishment, which included life imprisonment for bootleggers in case of fatalities following consumption of spurious liquor.

The state government amended the Tamil Nadu Prohibition Act, 1937 to enhance the punishment term and quantum of fine for offences like manufacture, possession and selling of illicit liquor that endangers lives

The Tamil Nadu Prohibition (Amendment) Act, 2024, which shall come into force on such date as notified by the government, aims to completely eradicate the menace of illicit liquor from the state

The amendment substantially enhances the term of imprisonment and quantum of fine for various offences under sections 4,5,6,7 and 11 of the Act. Accordingly, a maximum punishment of 10 years rigorous imprisonment (RI) and a penalty of up to ₹5 lakh has been proposed in the amendment.

In case of death due to consumption of illicit liquor, then the punishment for bootleggers

will be RI for life with a fine not less than ₹ 10 lakh, it said.

The Kallakurichi hooch tragedy that happened about a fortnight ago, had left about 63 people dead, including women and a transgender. The ruling DMK faced flak over the issue from its rival and main opposition party, the AIADMK and the BJP, which have been demanding a CBI probe into the spurious liquor issue in the state's northern district.

The AIADMK members, earlier this week, were suspended from the rest of the session of the Assembly that concluded today, for allegedly trying to create ruckus over the issue in the House. Congress Legislature party leader K Selvaperunthagai supporting the government bill Saturday suggested having a check and balance in the system, especially constituting a select committee instead of vesting all powers with the police.

PMK's G K Mani sought the government to fix the onus on the police or particular official for hooch tragedy and take steps to introduce complete prohibition in the state. The Bill introduced by Prohibition Minister S Muthusamy was later passed by the House.

## CBI raids Passport Seva Kendra centres

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 29: The CBI conducted a search operation Saturday covering 33 locations in Maharashtra after registering multiple FIRs against 14 officials of two Passport Seva Kendra (PSK) centres in Mumbai for large-scale "collusive corruption", officials said.

The agency has unearthed a corruption racket involving middlemen and officials of the centres in Lower Parel and Malad, they said. The CBI has also booked 18 agents and middlemen in its 12 FIRs.

"These officers were in regular contact with passport facilitation agents and conspired



with them to obtain undue advantage in lieu of issuance of passports based on inadequate or incomplete documents or by manipulating the personal particulars of passport applicants," an agency official said.

The alleged corruption was detected during a joint surprise check with the vigilance department of the External Affairs Ministry at the PSKs June 26, the officials said.

An analysis of mobile phones, social media chats and UPI payments showed some suspicious transactions worth several lakhs, they said.

# BMI could be explained by genes: Study

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 29: One's Body Mass Index (BMI) could be explained genetically, researchers have said after they found a 77 per cent chance of children developing obesity at the age of 17 if their parents had the condition at the same age.

A team of researchers, including those at Tel Aviv University, used data of more than 13 lakh people recorded between 1986 and 2018 during screening before their compulsory military service in Israel. BMIs of children aged 17 were compared with those of both their parents when they were

the same age. Data was available for 24 per cent of over 4.45 lakh trios included in the analysis.

"Among trios in which both parents had a healthy BMI, the prevalence of (being) overweight or obesity in the offspring was 15.4 per cent, this proportion increased to 76.6 per cent when both parents had obesity," the authors wrote in the study published in The Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) Network Open.

The researchers also found a correlation between the average of the father's and mother's BMI with that of their child and estimated that BMI was 39 per



cent heritable. The correlation between father-son BMI was found to be 0.273, indicating that a son's BMI could be influenced by the father's by up to 27 per cent.

Further, the authors found a

stronger correlation between BMIs of mothers and daughters, compared with those of mothers and sons. Mothers with obesity have been previously linked with higher chances of daughters developing the con-

dition, compared with fathers having obesity. The result, therefore, underscores gender-specific influences on the heritability of BMI, along with genetic and environmental factors, the authors said.

BMIs of children aged 17 were compared with those of both their parents when they were the same age

Data was available for 24 per cent of over 4.45 lakh trios included in the analysis



## of the day quote

With the UK, irrespective of the election results we hope to make progress after the new government comes in



**PIYUSH GOYAL** | COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY MINISTER

We are in very early stages of our experimentation on solid state batteries



**BHAVISH AGGARWAL** | OLA CEO

Today in India, we do 130 billion fast payment transactions in a year and the success story of India's digital payments has been scripted under PM @narendramodi's leadership



**AMITABH KANT** | G20 SHERPA

## SHORT TAKES

### NTPC to raise ₹12,000cr via NCDs

**New Delhi:** Government-owned power giant NTPC said Saturday that its board has cleared a proposal to raise up to ₹12,000 crore through the issuance of bonds and non-convertible debentures (NCDs). NTPC said in a regulatory filing, "The Board of Directors of the company has, in its meeting held on Saturday, June 29, subject to approval of shareholders, approved the issue of secured/unsecured, redeemable, taxable/tax-free, cumulative/non-cumulative, non-convertible debentures ('Bonds/NCDs') up to ₹12,000 crore in one or more tranches/series not exceeding 12, through private placement in the domestic market during the period commencing from the date of passing of special resolution till completion of one year thereof or the date of next Annual General Meeting in the financial year 2025-26, whichever is earlier."

### IFFCO withdraws plea from NCLT

**New Delhi:** Fertiliser cooperative IFFCO has withdrawn its plea filed in NCLT that restrained Triumph Offshore from issuing any share or securities to lenders for paying loans. The move came after IFFCO (Indian Farmer Fertiliser Cooperative) exited from Triumph Offshore by selling its entire 49 per cent stake to its joint venture partner Swan Energy Ltd (SEL) for ₹440 crore. IFFCO had approached the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) in March seeking to restrain Triumph Offshore and SEL from issuing any share/securities to lenders for paying loans and passing any such resolution without its approval. In its petition, IFFCO had argued that it was pre-paying the debt and it may result in dilution of its shareholding in Triumph Offshore.

### Fidelity offloads HCL Tech shares

**New Delhi:** Fidelity Investments Friday sold shares of HCL Technologies for ₹1,788 crore through open market transactions. US-based Fidelity Investments, through its eight affiliates, sold shares of IT firm HCL Technologies through separate block deals on the NSE. As per the data available with the NSE, Fidelity Investment sold a total of 1,24,14,228 shares or 0.46 per cent stake in HCL Technologies. The shares were offloaded at an average price of ₹1,440.50, taking the deal size to ₹1,788.27 crore. ICICI Prudential Mutual Fund, Kotak Mahindra MF, SBI MF, Societe Generale, Morgan Stanley, Blackstone, Citigroup Global Markets Mauritius, Cophall Mauritius Investment, Ghisallo Master Fund LP, and Goldman Sachs were among the buyers of HCL Technologies' shares.

# Govt in huddle over rising steel imports from China

India turned net steel importer in the fiscal year that ended in March and the trend continues with its finished steel imports scaling a five-year high in April and May



REUTERS

**New Delhi, June 29:** India's steel and trade ministries are in talks over rising imports, particularly cheap Chinese goods, a government source with direct knowledge of the matter said Saturday, amid persistent calls for higher tariffs from top producers. India turned net steel importer in the fiscal year that ended in March and the trend continues with its finished steel imports scaling a five-year high in April and May, according to provisional government data. India imported 1.1 million metric tons of finished steel between April and May, up 19.8% from a year earlier.

"The steel ministry has apprised the commerce ministry on rising imports and industry has sought a probe," the source said, declining to be identified as discussions are not public. India is monitoring cheap Chinese imports, the source said, as China continues to be top exporter of steel to the Asia's third-largest economy in recent months. Major Indian steel producers such as Tata Steel have flagged Chinese imports as a "growing concern." India's steel mills, alarmed by a sharp rise in imports, have repeatedly called for govern-

ment interventions and higher import taxes. However, the federal Ministry of Steel has resisted such calls, citing strong local demand. Earlier Saturday, a senior executive at ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel India said the government should consider raising the basic customs duty on steel to 12.5% from 7.5% due to surging imports. "Immediately, we should go back to 12.5% duty regime, which was there earlier," said Ranjan Dhar, director and vice president, sales and marketing, ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel India.

The women workforce should be provided with flexible work schedules and locations



**ARUNDHATI BHATTACHARYA** | FORMER SBI CHAIRPERSON

# Setty to become new SBI chairman

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, June 29:** Government appointment selection panel FSIB Saturday selected senior-most managing director Challa Sreenivasulu Setty for the position of Chairman of country's largest lender State Bank of India (SBI).

Setty, who was appointed managing director in January 2020, currently looks after International Banking, Global Markets and Technology verticals. He will succeed Dinesh Kumar Khara, who will be superannuating August 28, when he turns 63, the upper age limit for the position of SBI Chairman.

Financial Services Institutions Bureau (FSIB), the headhunter for directors of state-owned banks and financial institutions, interviewed three candidates June 29, 2024 for the position. "Keeping in view their performance in the interface, their overall experience and the extant parameters, the Bureau recommends Challa Sreenivasulu Setty for the position of Chairman in SBI," FSIB said in a statement.

As per the convention, the chairman is appointed from a pool of serving managing directors of SBI. Usually, senior-most managing director becomes chairman of the bank. The final decision on FSIB rec-



ommendation would be taken by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Setty, who also headed various task forces/committees formed by the Government of India, had earlier looked after the retail and digital banking portfolio of the bank. A Bachelor of Science in Agriculture and also, a Certified Associate of Indian Institute of Bankers, he started his career with SBI in 1988 as Probationary Officer. Across a career spanning over three decades, he has rich experience in corporate credit, retail, digital and international banking and banking in developed markets. Setty has held key assignments in SBI, including Deputy Managing Director - Stressed Assets Resolution Group, Chief General Manager and General Manager in Corporate Accounts Group, Deputy General Manager in Commercial Branch, Indore and VP & Head (Syndications) in SBI, New York Branch.

# Political stability forces FPIs to turn net buyers

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Mumbai, June 29:** Political stability and sharp rebound in markets aided by aggressive retail buying have forced the foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) to turn buyers in India, market watchers said Saturday.

FPIs have invested ₹26,565 crore in equity in June which marks a reversal of their strategy of selling in the two preceding months.

According to market experts, FPIs have realised that selling in the most-performing market would be a wrong strategy. "FPI buying can sustain provided there is no sharp up move in US bond yields," they added.

First fortnight data in June from the National Securities Depository Limited (NSDL) shows FPIs buying in realty, telecom and financials.



FPIs were sellers in IT, metals and oil and gas and are likely to continue the buying trend in financials. According to VK Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Financial Services, India's inclusion in the JP Morgan Bond Index is certainly positive.

"The debt inflows for 2024 so far stand at ₹68,674 crore. In the long term, this will reduce the cost of borrowing for the government and reduce the cost of capital for corporates. This is positive for the economy and therefore for the equity market," he noted.

## BIZ BUZZ

### FarrmB launches Mix Chhatua

**BHUBANESWAR:** Bisweswar Foods Pvt Ltd, a renowned agro-based product company, recently launched its latest offering, Mix Chhatua, at a hotel in Bhubaneswar. The event was attended by the company's Managing Director Rashmi Sahoo, Senior Manager of Accounts and Marketing Srikant Mohapatra, Senior Manager of Production Silpa Das, and PA to Director Adyasha Patnaik, who provided valuable insights into this new product.

Mix Chhatua is a high-nutrition product packed with protein, fibre, calcium, iron, manganese, and magnesium. This unique blend is formulated to help regulate body temperature and prevent overheating.

Additionally, this product is designed to increase energy levels, aid in digestion and gut health, support weight management, enhance hair and skin health, maintain healthy glucose levels, lower cholesterol, replenish lost nutrients, and improve appetite.

The company offers a wide range of breakfast cereals beyond Mix Chhatua, including oats, masala oats, muesli, choco-bites, cornflakes, ragi flour, and chapati flour. Moreover, the company develops healthy sweeteners in the form of jaggery powder for consumers and a selection of instant mix products such as Punjabi Tadka, Dev Bhog Khichdi, and Biryani, all falling under the brand's portfolio.



# Tech boom leads global markets through first half of 2024

REUTERS

**London/ New York, June 29:** The unstoppable march of the mega caps, sloth-like central bank pivots, political palpitations aplenty and M&A is back - the first half of 2024 has been another whirlwind in world markets.

Forecasts for a global interest-rate-cutting frenzy may not have materialized, but Nvidia and the rest of the Magnificent 7 soared another \$3.6 trillion in market value.

MSCI's 47-country world stocks index has clocked up a punchy 11% since January. Good yes, but nowhere near the 30% leap of team tech, or the frankly eye-popping 150% gain of chip champ Nvidia.

"Thirty percent of the S&P's returns this year have come from Nvidia alone," the chief investment officer of IBOSS Asset Management Chris Metcalfe said, pointing out it was now the most expensive stock on the most expensive

market in the world.

It is not just equity markets where milestones have been set. Japan's yen has bowed to a 38-year low against the dollar in currency markets. Cocoa had one of its best-ever runs while French bond risk has exploded to its highest level since the euro crisis after French President Emmanuel Macron's drubbing by the far right in EU elections this month drove him to call a snap parliamentary election Sunday.

Government bonds had been having a tough time anyway. Predictions of a gush of rate cuts have turned out to be just a dribble in a few parts of Europe and emerging markets and certainly not in the United States yet.

As a result, anyone owning a basket of benchmark bonds has lost around 1.5% of their money. "At the end of last year, the markets expected seven (U.S.) rate cuts and now they are expecting just one or two," Nadege Dufosse, the head of multi-asset

# Sebi for mandatory disclosure of 'risk-adjusted return' by MFs

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**New Delhi, June 29:** Capital markets regulator Sebi has proposed mandatory disclosure of 'risk-adjusted return' along with the return of a mutual fund scheme to help investors make informed investment decisions.

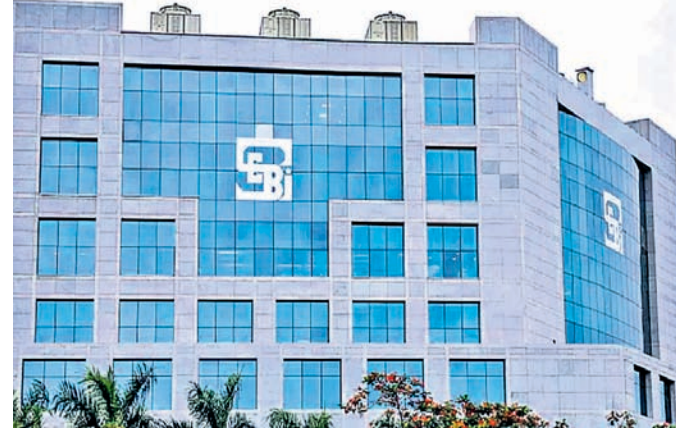
Risk-adjusted return (RAR) of a scheme portfolio represents a more holistic measure of the scheme's performance because it quantifies the amount of return generated by a mutual fund scheme for each unit of risk taken to achieve that return.

The current regulatory framework does not mandate the disclosure of RAR along with the returns of an MF scheme.

Further, there is no uniform practice followed by asset management companies (AMCs) regarding disclosure of RAR of their scheme.

The return on investment is a major factor attracting investors to invest in any MF scheme and is highlighted by the AMCs while marketing respective schemes.

Considering the significance of volatility of performance in determining the suitability of MF schemes, it is desirable that the RAR of the scheme is dis-



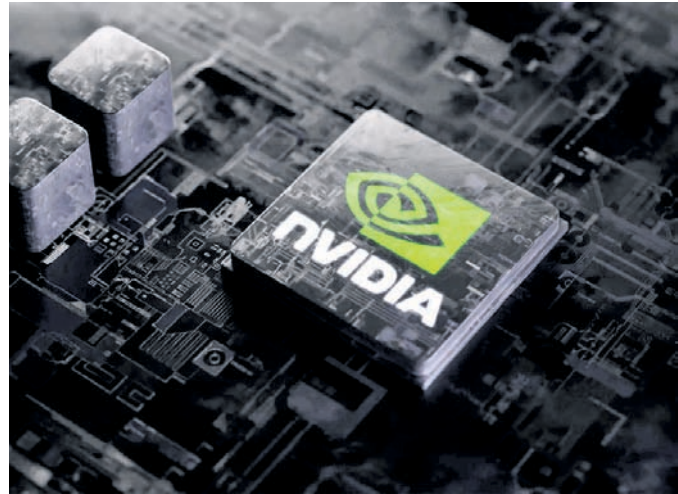
To bring uniformity across different MFs, Sebi has also proposed a methodology for the calculation of Information Ratio for different categories of mutual fund schemes

closed along with disclosure of its scheme performance. Sebi said in its consultation paper. "Information Ratio (IR) is an established financial ratio to measure the RAR of the scheme

portfolio. It is often used as a measure of a portfolio manager's level of skill and ability to generate excess returns relative to a benchmark, and it also attempts to identify the consistency of the performance by incorporating a tracking error or standard deviation component into the calculation," it added.

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The Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) has sought comments from the public till July 19 on the proposals.



at Candriam said. "That has been the big driver and explains the (poor) performance."

A shaky performance from U.S. President Joe Biden in his latest TV debate against Donald Trump has just ratcheted November's U.S. election uncertainty up substantially.

There's also a general elec-

tion in Britain on July 4 although there aren't expected to be many market fireworks despite it being almost certainly the first change of government in 14 years.

Polar Capital fund manager Georgina Hamilton explained that was because unlike in France and the U.S., the two

main candidates to lead the UK are fairly centrist.

### GOLD SHINES

The big story in commodities has been cocoa sky-rocketing almost 85% due to shortages which is already its second-biggest annual leap of all time, although certainly is not good news for chocoholics.

Gold hit a record high of just shy of \$2,450 an ounce last month. Oil is up a respectable 12% while bitcoin broke though \$70,000 and set a flurry of new highs after U.S. watchdogs gave bitcoin exchange-traded funds the green light.

The value of global M&A activity is up 5% compared to last year.

That's mainly down to a brace of \$35-billion deals that saw credit-card firm Capital One take over Discover Financial and chip designer Synopsys buy out rival Ansys, although it could have been much more though if BHP's gripping \$49-billion pursuit of Anglo

American had succeeded.

### DISTRESSED TO IMPRESS

Off the beaten track, Ecuador's bonds have made 46% despite lingering debt concerns and Argentina's new chainsaw-wielding President Javier Milei has helped its bonds jump 32%.

Emerging-market veteran Kevin Daly at Aberdeen said there has been a "distressed to impress" move, with the bonds of crashed countries like Zambia, Ghana and Sri Lanka all rallying between 16%-23% as their years-long debt restructurings have neared an end.

As always though, there has still been plenty of downs in emerging markets.

Chinese property stocks have fallen for the ninth quarter in a row. Devaluations have shoved Nigeria's and Egypt's currencies down 42% and 36% respectively, while Mexico's peso is down nearly 8% this month after a resounding presidential election result fed worries about its future path.

