



## Sustainable practice

Actor Sonam says she used to borrow clothes from designers which was common internationally but not in India

LEISURE | P2



## Unrest rises

Thousands of students fight with armed police as the Bangladesh authorities race to quell anti-quota protests

INTERNATIONAL | P10



## Stocks sizzle

Stock markets shine with Sensex breaching the 81,000-mark for the first time and Nifty scaling the record 24,800 level

BUSINESS | P11



## Surya named skipper

BCCI announces Suryakumar Yadav will lead the Indian T20 squad for a three-game series against Sri Lanka beginning July 27

SPORTS | P12

## Needles found in girl's head; sorcerer held

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 18:** Kantabanji police Thursday arrested a sorcerer after a 19-year-old girl, on whom he had allegedly performed 'black magic' to cure her from some disease, was admitted to a hospital in a critical condition.

The sorcerer has been identified as Tejraj Rana while the victim is Reshma, daughter of Bishnu Behera of Sindhekela village in Bolangir district.

The girl was admitted to Kantabanji hospital Wednesday after her family found a needle stuck to her head. She was later shifted to the Bhima Bhoi MCH Thursday after a bunch of needles was found inside her skull during scanning. Doctors who managed to take out eight needles, shifted her to VIMSAR after 10 more needles were found during further scanning. Investigations revealed almost four years ago, Rana and his wife, who live in Jamutjhala village, had performed some treatment on the girl to cure her from an unknown disease after doctors allegedly failed to cure her.

## IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Should I put only my name on the cart, or include everyone who contributed to growing these fruits?

## MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VARIATION
SENSEX	81343.46 ↑ 626.91
NIFTY	24800.85 ↑ 187.85
DOLLAR	83.65 ↑ ₹0.04
EURO	91.47 ↑ ₹0.36
GOLD	₹74,389 ↑ ₹252
SILVER	₹92,044 ↑ ₹102

## WEATHER

	BBSR	CTC
Max Temp	34.1°C	32.6°C
Min Temp	26.9°C	25.5°C
Humidity	85%	83%
Rainfall	15.4mm	7.4mm

Partly cloudy sky with possibility of moderate rain



**ANOTHER TRAIN MISHAP:** Passengers and locals near the derailed coaches of the Dibrugarh Express after an accident, in Gonda district of Uttar Pradesh, Thursday. Two persons were killed and 34 injured after eight coaches of the train derailed

## ROOPA ROSHAN SAHOO RELIEVED FROM CHIEF MINISTER'S OFFICE

**Bhubaneswar:** A day after appointing Cuttack Collector Arindam Dakua as Private Secretary to the Chief Minister, the state government Thursday relieved senior IAS officer Roopa Roshan Sahoo from her role as Special Secretary in the CMO. However, Sahoo, a 2006-batch IAS officer, will continue to serve full-time as the Commissioner-cum-Secretary of the ST & SC Development, Minorities & Backward Classes Welfare department, according to a notification issued by the General Administration and Public Grievance department. "Roopa Roshan Sahoo, Special Secretary to Chief Minister, Odisha with additional charge of Commissioner-cum-Secretary, ST & SC Development, M & BCW department is appointed as Commissioner-cum-Secretary to Government, ST & SC Development, M & BCW department," the notification said.

## RAIDS ON MINES, STONE QUARRIES IN JAJPUR DIST

**Jajpur:** The state mines department Thursday conducted extensive raids on mines and black stone quarries in the district following allegations by newly elected MLA Himanshu Sekhar Sahoo of widespread irregularities during the previous BJD government. Led by joint director of mines Nirmalendu Narayan Singhdeo, the team included local MLA Sahoo, deputy director of mines TB Munda from Jajpur Road, mining officer Jay Prakash Nayak, and local police. The raids were carried out in areas such as Lunibar, Chadheidhara, and Dankari, resulting in the seizure of an illegal poclair excavator and the sealing of a stone crusher.

## Ratna Bhandar valuables shifted; list after repairs

AGENCIES

**Puri, July 18:** The process of shifting valuables from the inner chamber of Srimandir Ratna Bhandar in Puri was completed within seven hours Thursday, while the list of the valuables will be prepared after completion of repairs of the shrine vault by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), official sources said. "All valuables from the inner chamber of Ratna Bhandar have been successfully relocated to a temporary strongroom on the temple premises. The entire shifting process, which involved seven containers including wooden and steel almirahs and chests, took seven hours," SJTA chief Arabinda Padhee said. Padhee said both the inner chamber and the temporary strongroom have been locked and sealed as per the SOP guidelines. Former Orissa High Court judge Justice Biswanath Rath, chairman of the committee to supervise Ratna Bhandar re-opening, said all the valuables were carefully put in new containers and later shifted to the temporary strongroom. He added that the strongroom was sealed and keys were given to the Puri Collector. About the treasures, Justice Rath said, "The details of what we saw inside the inner chamber remain confidential. Just as one does not disclose valuables in

## ASI to unravel tunnel mystery

As the mystery surrounding the existence of a tunnel inside the inner chamber of Ratna Bhandar continues, Gajapati Dibyasingha Deb suggested that the ASI could employ modern technology to investigate. "The ASI could utilise advanced tools like laser scanning to evaluate the condition of the chamber. A survey using such technology could provide insights into any existing structures, such as tunnels," Deb said. However, Justice Biswanath Rath said, "Based on our inspection, we didn't find any evidence of such features like a tunnel."

their own home, it would be inappropriate to divulge the Lord's treasures publicly."

Earlier in the day, an 11-member team, including Justice Rath, ceremoniously opened the inner Ratna Bhandar at 9.51am in the presence of Gajapati Dibyasingha Deb. Deb said the outer chamber has been cleaned after shifting the valuables from there. The inner one requires repairs as it was being opened after 46 years. "The temporary strongroom will be sealed and repairs of the Ratna Bhandar will be taken up by the ASI. The list of ornaments and other valuables will be prepared only after the completion of repairs," added Deb.

## Switzerland to use portable suicide pods

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

**Zurich, July 18:** An assisted dying group expects a portable suicide pod to be used for the first time in Switzerland, potentially within months, providing death without medical supervision.

The space-age-looking Sarco capsule, first unveiled in 2019, replaces the oxygen inside it with nitrogen, causing death by hypoxia. It would cost \$20 to use. The Last Resort organisation said Wednesday it saw no legal obstacle to its use in Switzerland, where the law generally allows assisted suicide if the person commits the lethal act themselves. "Since we have people indeed queuing up, asking to use the Sarco, it's very likely that it will take place pretty soon," The Last Resort's chief executive Florian Willet told a press conference. "I cannot imagine a more beautiful way (to die), of breathing air without oxygen until falling into an eternal sleep," he added. The person wishing to die must first pass a psychiatric assessment of their mental capacity - a key legal requirement.



The person climbs into the purple capsule, closes the lid, and is asked automated questions such as who they are, where they are and if they know what happens when they press the button. "If you want to die," the voice says in the processor, "Press this button," said Sarco inventor Philip Nitschke, a leading global figure in right-to-die activism. He explained that once the button is pressed, the amount of oxygen in the air plummets from 21 per cent to 0.05 per cent in less than 30 seconds. "Within two breaths of air of that low level of oxygen, they will start to

feel disorientated, uncoordinated and slightly euphoric before losing consciousness," Nitschke said.

"They will then stay in that state of unconsciousness for... around about five minutes before death will take place," he added. The Sarco monitors the oxygen level in the capsule, the person's heart rate and the oxygen saturation of the blood. "We will be able to see quite quickly when that person has died," said Nitschke. As for someone changing their mind at the very last minute, Nitschke said, "Once you press that button, there's no way of going back." No decision has been made over the date and location of the first death, or who the first user might be. Such details would not be made public until after the event. "We really don't want a person's desire for a peaceful passing Switzerland to turn into a media circus," said lawyer Fiona Stewart, who is on The Last Resort's advisory board. She said it would be used "in a very secluded location, in the beauty of nature", though it had to be on private property.

## SC for centre, city-wise NEET-UG results July 20

Amid demands for scrapping the NEET-UG 2024 by a batch of pleas alleging large-scale irregularities in the conduct of the exam, the Supreme Court Thursday directed the NTA to submit by 12 noon July 20 the centre-wise and city-wise results of the May 5 test while masking identity of aspirants. A bench headed by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud, however, observed that prima facie it appeared that the question paper leak was limited to Patna and Hazaribagh while nothing of this sort can be said to have happened in Godhra in Gujarat. The bench made it clear that any order to scrap the test and conducting it afresh has to be backed by concrete conclusion that the sanctity of the entire process had been affected.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 18:** The Supreme Court Thursday directed the National Testing Agency (NTA) to declare by 12 noon of July 20 the centre and city-wise results of NEET-UG 2024 while masking the identities of aspirants. As it strove to address the allegations of malpractices in the conduct of the examination, a

## 4 AIIMS PATNA STUDENTS HELD

**New Delhi:** The CBI Thursday arrested four MBBS students of AIIMS Patna in connection with the NEET-UG paper leak case, officials said. Three students of MBBS third year -- Chandan Singh, Rahul Anant, and Kumar Shanu -- and one second year student -- Karan Jain -- were arrested after detailed questioning by a CBI team, they said. The students were taken away from their hostel rooms Wednesday in the presence of senior faculty members of AIIMS who were informed in advance that the students needed for the probe, the officials said.

bench headed by Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud said any order for conducting it afresh has to be on concrete conclusion that the sanctity of the entire process was affected. The top court will resume hearing the arguments July 22 on a batch of pleas seeking cancellation, re-test and a court-monitored probe into the allegations of large-scale malpractices in the prestigious test held May 5. During the day-long hearing, the bench asked the counsel for the aspirants to establish their claim about extensive irregularities in

holding the examination, including leak of question paper, warranting cancellation and a re-test.

The court said it prima facie appeared that the question paper leak was limited to Patna and Hazaribagh, and nothing of this sort can be said to have happened in Godhra in Gujarat.

In Patna and Hazaribagh, the question papers allegedly got leaked, while in Godhra there were claims that a person involved in holding the test took money for filling up the OMR sheets of certain candidates.

Questioning the claims about leak of question paper on social media platform "Telegram", the bench said, "You have to bear in mind that the idea of somebody doing this was not to make a national charade. People did it for money. So, it was not to bring disrepute to the exam and somebody was doing it to make money which is evident. Mass leakage requires contacts also at that level so that you connect to all such key contacts in different cities."

The bench, also comprising Justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra, which commenced the crucial hearing on a batch of petitions related to the controversy-ridden medical entrance exam, said it has "social ramifications".

OrissaPOST PRESENTS

# METTLE MEET 2024

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# leisure



## OZZY OSBOURNE FED UP WITH BRITNEY'S VIRAL DANCING VIDEOS

Black metal legend Ozzy Osbourne has issued a brutal swipe at the viral dancing videos of pop icon Britney Spears. He recently spoke about Britney's popular dance videos during a recent episode of The Osbournes Podcast, reports *People* magazine.

## KIM KARDASHIAN FEARS SHE'S BECOMING A 'FULL ROBOT'

Socialite Kim Kardashian worries she is 'turning into a full robot' after using 'calmness' as a 'superpower' in the wake of being robbed at gunpoint. The 43-year-old beauty was robbed in 2016 and the trauma has left her 'frozen' in knowing that staying cool saved her from being seriously hurt.



### FORTUNE FORECAST

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#### ARIES

Today, you will turn an attentive ear to your inner voice. As a result, you will be able to execute all your plans with precision. Besides being cheerful, you will even take disappointments with a pinch of salt. Why just today, says Ganesh, you can have this rare quality for keeps.

#### TAURUS

You will win the heart of your family members today, forecasts Ganesh. Try and delay auction bids or sealed tenders. Job aspirants may look forward to belated success in interviews. Ganesh advises you to take abundant precautions in all critical matters.

#### GEMINI

Interactions with member of the opposite sex may yield positive and pleasurable results today. Public servants will get the much-needed encouragement and moral support from bosses and family members. In academics, you will be able to solve whatever problem you set your mind to.

#### CANCER

Today, you are likely to remain open-minded while dealing with others. However, it doesn't mean that you will always be soft on others. Later in the day, your approach may be different and stubborn. In the evening, you will enjoy the company of family and friends.

#### LEO

Pack your bags, and don't forget the sunscreen and the shades. Look at the stars today – Ganesh foresees for you a strong prospect of going on a tour. If not an individual backpacking adventure, then an elaborate family holiday, but travel you shall. With Lady Luck smiling upon you all day long, getting work done to the satisfaction of all is not an issue.

#### VIRGO

Today, find yourself rummaging through the vast recesses of your inner self. You will make fabulous money to spend on your loved ones. Face up to work pressures by indulging in corporeal pleasures. You may warrant the company of someone special to think out loud all that is inside you, says Ganesh.

#### LIBRA

All things passionate seem to engulf you today. It is one of those moments when chance dictates every possibility of a new romantic love episode in your life. The last time a moment like this came by, Romeo met Juliet.

#### SCORPIO

You shall also work like a donkey and yet be smart as hell in what you do today. It is favourable if you engage in household activities – gardening, cooking, cleaning and the likes. Work pressure will be displaced by family pleasure, predicts Ganesh.

#### SAGITTARIUS

Amid chaos and confusion, don't forget the direction and destination, advises Ganesh. You may be running short of time today and may not find a single moment in peace. Taking a break at this point of time won't be a crime, go for it.

#### CAPRICORN

Money will flow in from various quarters today, but it will also find its way out of your pockets. Keep a tab on your income and more on your expenses, says Ganesh. Situation at work may get a little trying, but you will overcome all problems by means of your innate and acquired skills, and past experience.

#### AQUARIUS

Planning to buy a house or vehicle? Then today's the day to make the booking. However, don't buy anything in haste. Deliberate, says Ganesh, especially when it involves a huge sum of money.

#### PISCES

Well begun is half done. With this in mind, you will set out to actively seek the cooperation of your colleagues and the sanction of your seniors to tackle some important projects, says Ganesh. The evening should find you heading out to watch a movie or doing something creative, like painting.

# Sonam's sustainable practice

**Mumbai:** Actress and fashionista Sonam Kapoor shared that while she bought a lot of clothes when she was younger, borrowing them from designers proved to be more practical and sustainable, something which was common internationally but not in India.

Talking about her love for fashion and clothes, she said: "I just wanted to wear what I liked from the designers I knew. It was just me being myself, influenced by the education I got from my mom and my passion for fashion."

"I considered fashion designers, both international and Indian, as stars because I grew up admiring them through my mom. This wasn't about projecting an image; it was about my genuine love for fashion," she said.

The actress added: "I realised people didn't often borrow clothes, so I started borrowing them. It didn't make sense to buy everything all the time. I did buy a lot, but borrowing was more practical and sustainable. This practice was common internationally but not in India, so I just did what felt right at the time. I was a 20-year-old girl, just following my passion for fashion without any strategic intent."

"To represent India to the world is something I am very proud of. South Asians I've met abroad also love representing their culture and appreciate when people recognise and understand it. Whether it's through museums, red carpets, or any platform, I take every opportunity to showcase the beauty and richness of Indian culture," she concluded.

IAN S



## Seerat defines fitness

**Mumbai:** Actress Seerat Kapoor has opened up about her fitness regime, emphasising that her body will function well only if she is mentally and physically fit.

Seerat shared: "When I am shooting for 12 hours, it is quite difficult to manage a proper workout, so I try to at least do my morning yoga. It helps me concentrate on my work as well."

The actress added: "I know that only if I am physically fit and healthy can I do my work properly. That is my motivation and goal. In order to be efficient, I need to be mentally and physically fit."

However, Seerat focuses on a fit body rather than a toned one. "I have faced challenges in maintaining a healthy body and lifestyle during hectic schedules. I don't believe in having a chiselled body for show. My main focus is having a healthy and fit body that helps me do whatever I want," she said.

Seerat is currently seen as Mannat in the show *Rabb Se Hai Dua*, which stars Yesha Rughani as Ibaadat, Dheeraj Dhoopar as Subhaan, and Raymon Kakar. Produced by Prateek Sharma's Studio LSD, the show airs on Zee TV.

IAN S

## Influencer dies falling into gorge

**Mumbai:** A 27-year-old Mumbai influencer, Aanvi Kamdar, died after falling into a 300 ft gorge near the popular Kumbhe waterfall in Mangan in Maharashtra's Raigad district. The incident occurred on Tuesday while Kamdar was on a monsoon outing with seven friends, the police said.

Kamdar, who stayed in Mumbai, was on a trip to the waterfall with seven friends July 16. The outing turned tragic around 10.30 am when she slipped into a deep crevice while recording a video.

Known as @thelocaljournal on Instagram, Kamdar had 2,57,000 followers and shared content on travel, luxury discoveries, cafés, itineraries, tips, and personal experiences. Her bio indicated she was a chartered accountant and had previously worked at Deloitte.

According to a police official from Mangan police station, Kamdar had gone to the scenic waterfall with her friends during the rainy season, as reported by PTL. In the report, he explained that while filming the surroundings, she fell into the gorge. He added that after her friends raised an alarm, the police and local rescuers reached the spot and took her to the nearby Mangan Taluka Government Hospital. She passed away during treatment there.

Her final reel was posted just two days ago where she shared suggestions for the upcoming long weekend August 15. Upon hearing the news, social media users flooded her last reel with condolences.

AGENCIES



## Richa, Ali welcome daughter

**Mumbai:** B-town couple Richa Chadha and Ali Fazal have announced the arrival of their first child, a daughter. In a joint statement, Richa and Ali confirmed that they welcomed a healthy baby girl, July 16.

"We are tickled pink with joy to announce the arrival of a healthy baby girl on 16.07.24! Our families are overjoyed, and we thank our well-wishers for their love and blessings! Love, Richa Chadha and Ali Fazal," the couple shared in their statement.

In February, Richa and Ali announced on social media that they were expecting their first child. Their Instagram announcement read, "1+1=3," and was captioned, "A tiny heartbeat is the loudest sound in our world."

Richa and Ali first met on the sets of *Fukrey* in 2013 and decided to get married in 2020 during the pandemic.

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## Janhvi hospitalised

**Mumbai:** Actress Janhvi Kapoor, who was recently seen in the sports drama *Mr. & Mrs. Mahi*, has been hospitalised.

The actress has been feeling unwell for the last few days. As per a media report, the actress had cancelled all her appointments for Wednesday in order to rest and recuperate.

However, when her health deteriorated, Thursday, her family rushed her to the hospital. The media reports have stated that it's a case of severe food poisoning.

As Mumbai battling torrential rains, the city has witnessed a spike in infections and ill-health. The actress will be in the hospital for 1-2 days till her condition improves under the observation of doctors.

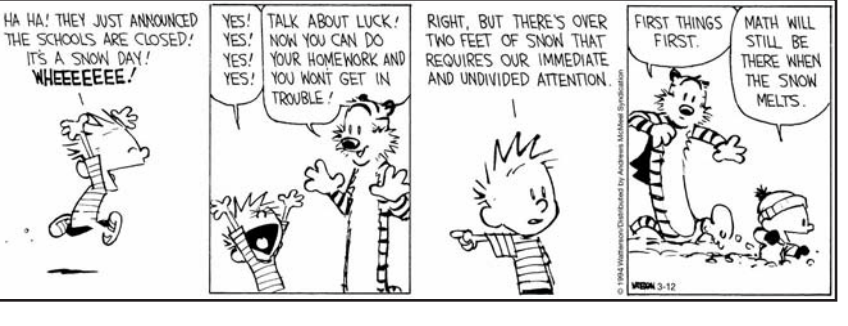
IAN S



### PEANUTS



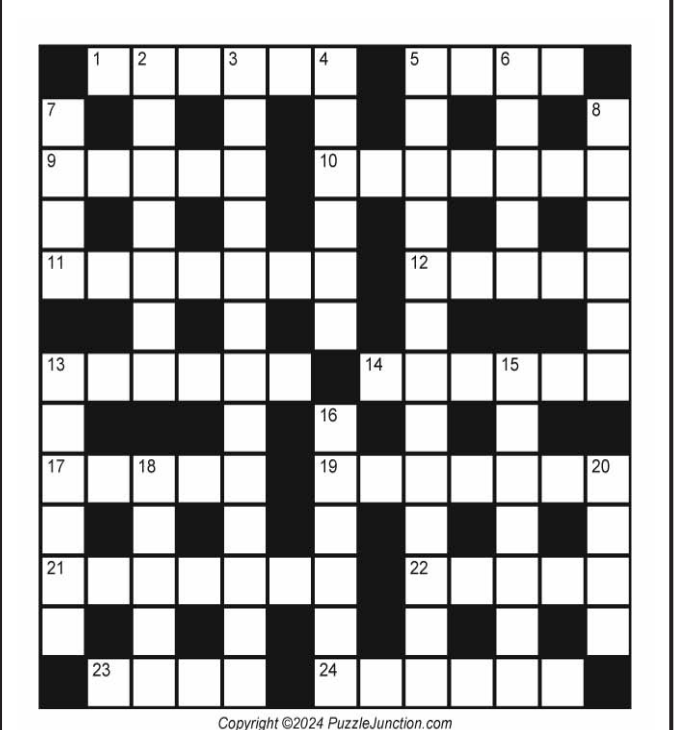
### CALVIN AND HOBBS



### BREVITY



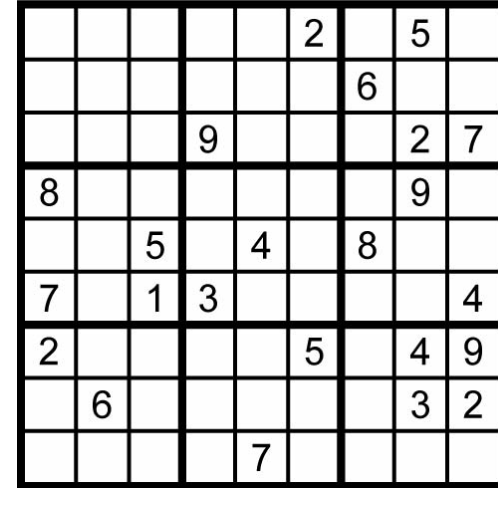
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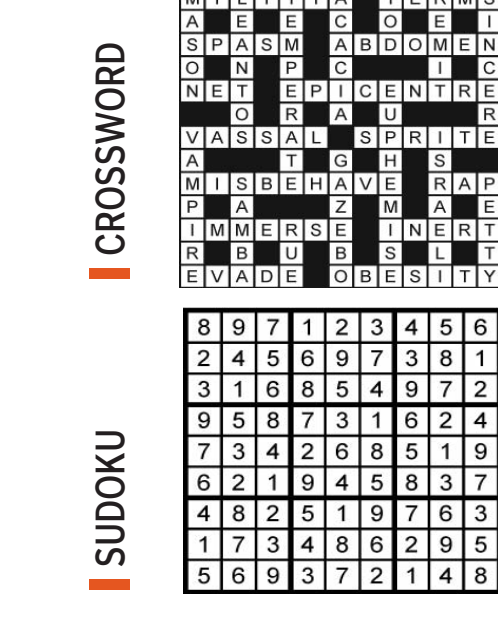
- Across**
- 1 Halvah ingredient
  - 5 Dutch treat
  - 9 Museum piece
  - 10 Dangerous storm
  - 11 Egyptian attraction
  - 12 Bedlam
  - 13 Wiggle room
  - 14 Coerced
  - 17 Bay of Naples isle
  - 19 Ben Hur's transport
  - 21 Freeze, in a way
  - 22 Wolflike wild dog of Australia
  - 23 Shock
  - 24 Shackles
  - 5 Reference book
  - 6 Something in the air
  - 7 Links hazard
  - 8 Razzed
  - 13 Short-horned grasshopper
  - 15 Hairstyle
  - 16 Sour to the taste
  - 18 Basil-based sauce
  - 20 "Iliad" city
- Down**
- 2 Blow up
  - 3 Singer's support
  - 4 Cape Verde cash

### SUDOKU

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



### SOLUTIONS



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



BJD leaders stage a demonstration outside Raj Bhavan in Bhubaneswar Thursday demanding action against alleged assault on ASO Baikuntha Pradhan by Governor's son

# downtown

## Double toll if FASTag not affixed on front windshield

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 18:** In a bid to deter highway users from deliberately not fixing FASTag on the windscreen of the vehicle, National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has issued guidelines to collect double user fee from such users entering the toll lane with non-affixed FASTag on the front windshield from the inside, an official release said Thursday.

NHAI said deliberate non-affixation of FASTag on the windscreen leads to unnecessary delays at the toll plazas causing inconvenience to fellow National Highway users.

"Detailed standard operating procedure (SOP) has been issued to all user fee collection agencies and concessionaires to charge double user fee in case of non-affixation of FASTag on the front windshield," it said.

According to the statement, the information will also be prominently displayed at all toll plazas, informing highway users about the penalties for non-compliance of entering a toll lane

without a fixed FASTag on front windshield.

In addition, the statement said CCTV footage with vehicle registration number (VRN) at the toll plaza shall be recorded of the non-affixed FASTag cases. This will help in maintaining proper record regarding the fee charged and presence of the vehicle in the toll lane.

In accordance with already established rules, the statement said NHAI aims to enforce the standard procedural guidelines for affixation of FASTag on the front windshield of the assigned vehicle from inside.

The statement said any FASTag that is not affixed on the assigned vehicle as per standard process is not entitled to carry out Electronic Toll Collection (ETC) transaction at a user fee plaza and will have to pay double toll fee as well as can be duly blacklisted.

Issuer banks have also been directed to ensure fixation of the FASTag to the assigned vehicle on the front windshield at the time of issuance from various point-of-sale (POS), it added.



'Adhara Pana' offered to deities on chariots in Puri, Thursday



OP PHOTOS

## Nod to 50 MBBS seats in Jajpur med college

AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, July 18:** Newly-established Jajati Keshari Medical College and Hospital (MCH) in Jajpur district will commence MBBS course from this academic session following approval for 50 seats from the Medical Assessment and Rating Board (MARB) of the NMC.

"Happy to share that 50 MBBS seats have been approved by National Medical Commission (NMC), MARB, New Delhi for the academic year 2024-25 for the new government MCH at Jajpur," Health and Family Welfare department posted on X Thursday.

The Letter of Permission (LoP) has been issued by the NMC, making it the 12th government MCH in the state and the first to start operations this year.

Sitaram Mahapatro, dean and principal of the MCH, said that the institute was ready to welcome the inaugural batch of MBBS students.

The state government has al-



**We initially applied for 100 MBBS seats, but the NMC has approved 50. We have requested the commission to consider increasing the seat allocation to 100 for this academic year**

SITARAM MAHAPATRO | DEAN & PRINCIPAL OF JAJATI KESHARI MCH

ready recruited 120 faculty members, including professors, associate professors, assistant professors, senior residents, and tutors for the medical college and hospital. Additional nursing and support staff are also in place, he said.

Out of the 50 MBBS seats, seven will be filled through the All India Quota, while the re-

maining seats will be filled via the Odisha Joint Entrance Examination (OJEE), according to the dean.

The medical college has begun functioning from its new campus, utilising the existing 420-bed district headquarters hospital (DHH) as a teaching facility. Construction of a new 500-bed hospital on the campus is near-

- The state government has already recruited 120 faculty members, including professors, associate professors, assistant professors, senior residents, and tutors for Jajati Keshari MCH
- Out of the 50 MBBS seats, seven will be filled through the All India Quota, while the remaining seats will be filled via the Odisha Joint Entrance Examination (OJEE)
- The medical college has begun functioning from its new campus, utilising the existing 420-bed DHH as a teaching facility, while construction of a new 500-bed hospital on the campus is nearing completion.

ing completion. "We initially applied for 100 MBBS seats, but the NMC has approved 50. We have requested the commission to consider increasing the seat allocation to 100 for this academic year," Mahapatro added. The medical college and hospital has been constructed at a cost of ₹526.21 crore on a 46-acre campus.

## ₹288.61 CRORE FOR RLY FLYOVER IN SAMBALPUR

PNN & AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, July 18:** The Ministry of Railways has sanctioned ₹288.61 crore towards the construction of a flyover in Sambalpur in a bid to enhance train operations and alleviate congestion in the region, official sources said, Thursday.

The flyover which will connect Sambalpur Station to Sambalpur City Station, covering a distance of 8.10 km, will enhance train operations and alleviate congestion at these critical junctions, East Coast Railway (ECOR) sources said.

"The flyover will help facilitate simultaneous train movements from all directions at Sambalpur, easing train traffic and ensuring hassle-free operations towards Titlagarh, Angul and Jharsuguda. It will also eliminate cross-traffic delays and operational inefficiencies, and boost the average speed and efficiency of trains in the region," added the



Easing traffic

Currently, cross-traffic from Jharsuguda, Titlagarh and Angul directions leads to delays and operational inefficiencies at Sambalpur Station and Sambalpur City Station

The flyover which will connect Sambalpur Station to Sambalpur City Station, covering a distance of 8.10 km, will enhance train operations and alleviate congestion at these critical junctions

The construction is part of the Energy Corridor of Indian Railways, showcasing a commitment to sustainable and efficient infrastructure development

ECOR sources.

"The construction is part of the Energy Corridor of Indian Railways, showcasing a commitment to sustainable and effi-

cient infrastructure development," they said.

With the construction of the flyover, the train traffic will no longer be detained at Sambalpur and Sambalpur City Stations and nearby stations, significantly reducing waiting periods for trains approaching this busy junction, ECOR sources said.

Currently, cross-traffic from Jharsuguda, Titlagarh and Angul directions leads to delays and operational inefficiencies at Sambalpur Station and Sambalpur City Station.

The project will facilitate smooth movement of passenger-carrying trains in Titlagarh, Jharsuguda, and Angul directions.

The new flyover at Sambalpur is a crucial step towards reducing congestion and enhancing the efficiency of train operations, ultimately improving the travel experience for passengers and boosting the operational capabilities of Indian Railways in this region, ECOR sources said.

## POLITICKLE by MANJUL

### PRESIDENTIAL RACE 2024



## Plaint filed against Naveen, 7 others

DEBADURLLAV HARICHANDAN, OP

**Bhubaneswar, July 18:** The All Odisha Contractors' Association (AOCA) Thursday lodged a complaint against Leader of Opposition (LoP) Naveen Patnaik and seven others at Mancheswar police station by leveling allegations of 'cheating' and 'criminal conspiracy' against them.

The six BJD leaders whose names have been mentioned in the FIR are: Niranjan Pujari, Prafulla Kumar Mallik, Pratap Jena, Sudam Marndi, Susanta Singh and Raghunandan Das. They have also named principal secretary of Works department Vir Vikram Yadav in the FIR.

The association alleged that although the then Naveen Patnaik government had committed to fulfil their 10-point charter of demands within a month during a demonstration they staged November 11, 2019, precious little was done. The association had urged the ruling BJD to handover public tenders to local construction companies. Besides, it had also requested the government to hike the wages of contractors and labourers. Later, Naveen had formed a committee and assured them of fulfilling their demands on the basis of which the association called off the stir November 27, 2019. However, nothing was done, said the outfit.

"Odisha has 55,000 registered contractors while 15,000 remain unregistered owing to loopholes in government procedures," AOCA president Pravat Dash said, adding that the BJD government prioritised non-Odia contractors and awarded them multi-crore projects.

## 4 of Tamil Nadu theft gang held

DEBADURLLAV HARICHANDAN, OP

**Bhubaneswar, July 18:** The Commissionerate Police Thursday claimed to have arrested four members of an interstate gang from Tamil Nadu that was involved in at least a dozen cases of theft here.

The police also seized four laptops, 25 mobile phones, iron balls, mud pellets and several incriminating materials from their possession.

Twin city police commissioner Sanjeeb Panda said the accused, identified as B Mohit, 48, Nanda Kumar, 47, S Dinesh, 47 and P Murthy, 42, used to break windcreens of cars with iron catapults before decamping with



valuables from these vehicles. Using the same trick, the gang members had made away with several articles and valuables from the car of Sarthak Sourav Mohapatra, an OAS officer, last week, said Panda, adding that they also target passengers in crowded Mo Buses.

Police found that the accused used to sell the booty at

Tiruchirappalli market at a premium. "The cops swung into action after a victim lodged a complaint at Saheed Nagar police station July 15 alleging his phone was snatched away by four bike-borne miscreants near Vani Vihar Mo Bus stand. July 27, the cops were tipped about some miscreants selling mobile phones at inflated rates near Science Park. Later, the cops rushed to the spot and rounded up the accused. They were arrested when they failed to produce valid documents of the mobile phones," said Panda.

The men were booked under various Sections of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) and produced in a local court.

**"MANUFACTURE PAPER THROUGH SOCIAL FARM FORESTRY THAT NOT ONLY ENABLES CREATING LIVELIHOOD FOR THOUSANDS OF MARGINAL FARMERS BUT ALSO ENRICHES THE GREEN COVER ON MOTHER EARTH".**

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KANWAR YATRA

Row as eateries asked to display employee names

LEADERS OF OPPOSITION GROUPS FEAR THE MOVE WILL CREATE A DEEPER COMMUNAL DIVIDE AND LEAD TO HINDUS AVOIDING EATERIES EMPLOYING MUSLIMS



Akhilesh, Mayawati slam order

Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav said Thursday the Muzaffarnagar police order asking eateries along the Kanwar Yatra route to display their owners' names is a "social crime", and appealed to courts to take suo motu cognisance of the matter.

Muzaffarnagar police chief Abhishek Singh Monday said, "About 240 km of Kanwar Yatra route falls in the district. All the eateries, including hotels, dhabas and carts, on the route, have been asked to display the names of their proprietors or those working on these shops."

Hundreds of thousands of devotees of Lord Shiva undertake a pilgrimage on foot to holy sites in the northern states of Uttarakhand, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh (UP) during the period to collect water from the river Ganga, which is then offered at local Shiva temples.

Assam abolishes Muslim marriages, divorce Act

Opposition parties had decried the decision, terming it 'discriminatory against the Muslims' brought in to polarise voters in an election year



This Act contained provisions allowing marriage registration even if the bride and groom had not reached the legal ages of 18 and 21, as required by law. This move marks another significant step towards prohibiting child marriages in Assam

HIMANTA BISWA SARMA | CHIEF MINISTER, ASSAM

Guwahati, July 18: The Assam Cabinet Thursday approved a Bill to abolish the Assam Muslim Marriages and Divorce Registration Act and Rules 1935 vide the Assam Repealing Bill 2024," he added.

"We have taken a significant step to ensure justice for our daughters and sisters by putting additional safeguards against child marriage," he posted on X, soon after chairing the meeting of Council of Ministers here.

#AssamCabinet today we have decided to repeal the Assam Muslim Marriages and Divorce Registration Act and Rules 1935 vide the Assam Repealing Bill 2024," he added.

"The State Cabinet has also been directed that a suitable legislation be brought for registration of Muslim marriages in Assam, to be considered by the next session of Assembly," the CM added.

"This Act contained provisions allowing marriage registration even if the bride and groom had not reached the legal ages of 18 and 21, as required by law. This move marks another significant step towards prohibiting child marriages in Assam," Sarma had posted on X then.

The Cabinet decided to reduce VAT on CNG from 14.5 per cent to 5 per cent, effective until March 31, 2027. Additionally, funds were allocated for the development of the Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) areas, and financial approval was given for key healthcare initiatives.

REUTERS

Lucknow, July 18: Police in northern India have asked owners of restaurants to list the names of their workers on display boards during a Hindu holy month that begins next week, sparking fears it is an attempt to identify Muslims and create a communal divide.

"This has been done to ensure that there should be no confusion among kanwariyas and no law and order situation arises. All are following this voluntarily," he had told reporters.

Devotees also follow dietary restrictions, such as no meat, during their journey - a practice that has been cited by police officers to justify the directions given earlier this week.

communicated orally, was given every year during the holy month and was nothing new. This time one saint requested us that it should be done in order to avoid eating anything which might corrupt their efforts during this holy month, Inspector Rakesh Kumar, Muzaffarnagar police's public relations officer, told Reuters.

Pawan Khara, spokesperson for the main Opposition Congress, asked in a post on X, whether the direction was a step towards economic boycott of Muslims. Located in Uttar Pradesh, India's most populous state which is ruled by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Muzaffarnagar witnessed communal clashes in 2013 that killed about 65 people, mostly Muslims, and displaced thousands.



Villagers repair a breach in embankment caused due to floods following rains in Baksa district of Assam, Thursday

PTI PHOTO

Over 300 entered Meghalaya from violence-hit Bangladesh

Of the 310 people, 202 are Indians, 101 are from Nepal and seven Bhutanese, adding that most of them are students



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Shillong/Guwahati, July 18: Over 300 Indians, Nepalese and Bhutanese, mostly students, who were stranded in neighbouring Bangladesh due to the ongoing violence there, have crossed over to Meghalaya, officials said Thursday.

Bangladesh have crossed over to India through the Dawki Integrated Check Post here, "a senior Home department official told PTI. Of the 310 people, 202 are Indians, 101 are from Nepal and seven Bhutanese, he said, adding that most of them are students.

NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL

Additional measures to curb offerings in Ganga, Yamuna

Routine monitoring should be undertaken to ensure that religious offerings are properly managed without hurting religious feelings and sentiments: NGT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 18: To prevent the throwing of religious offerings in rivers Ganga and Yamuna, the National Green Tribunal has suggested additional steps, including developing dedicated places for holding ceremonies, rituals and immersion of idols.



The bench also comprising judicial member Justice Arun Kumar Tyagi and expert member A Senthil Vel noted the DPCC's report dated June 26, according to which, by May 31 this year, the committee had issued 3,916 challans for dumping of construction waste and illegal parking on Yamuna floodplain and around ₹1.06 crore was recovered as fine.

It said the authorities concerned could identify suitable locations for developing a dedicated ghat for holding ceremonies, rituals and immersion of idols and offerings. "These ghats should have all arrangements for the said purposes. Routine monitoring should be undertaken to ensure that religious offerings are properly managed without hurting religious feelings and sentiments," the tribunal said.

KAZIRANGA NATIONAL PARK

Wild animals bear the brunt of floods

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Guwahati, July 18: The ongoing floods in Assam have claimed the lives of over 200 wild animals, including 10 rhinos at the Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve (KNPTR) despite the authorities taking multi-pronged measures to save the lives of animals.

BOTANIC BREAKTHROUGH

Scientists discover new plant species in Arunachal Pradesh

'Phlogacanthus Sudhansusekharii', the plant species recently discovered from Itanagar Wildlife Sanctuary in Papum Pare district

'Phlogacanthus Sudhansusekharii', the plant species recently discovered from Itanagar Wildlife Sanctuary in Papum Pare district, belongs to the family 'Acanthaceae' and the 'Phlogacanthus' genus, they said.



Goswami and Rohan Maity in the Indian Journal of Forestry. The genus 'Phlogacanthus'

Himalayan states, they said. "The newly described species is closely allied to Phlogacanthus Guttatus (Wall) Nees, but differ in various morphological characters, mainly in its shape and size of calyx, stamens and strikingly different corona colour," a BSI official said.

Chief Minister Pema Khandu has expressed delight over the development. "The biodiversity of Arunachal Pradesh is wide &

varied. In addition to the findings of new flora, researchers from @bsi\_moefcc have identified a new plant species, named Phlogacanthus sudhansusekharii, in the Itanagar Wildlife Sanctuary," Khandu said in a post in X.

The plant belongs to the family 'Acanthaceae' and the 'Phlogacanthus' genus. The genus 'Phlogacanthus' comprises 13 species in India and is spread over mainly the northeastern and eastern Himalayan states

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Itanagar, July 18: Researchers from the Botanical Survey of India (BSI) have discovered a new plant species from a wildlife sanctuary in Arunachal Pradesh, officials said.

The KNPNTR authorities over the years have been taking manifold measures to protect the wild animals from the recurring floods. These include the construction of scientifically designed highlands for housing animals during floods, and restrictions on vehicle movement along the national highways and highways passing through the national park.







Now the railways has given a notice to demolish the slums of Brar Square July 22, but the BJP MP from New Delhi Bansuri Swaraj has not gone there to meet the people  
DURGESH PATHAK | AAP LEADER, MLA

## HEAVY RAINS LASH KERALA

Heavy rains continued to lash several parts of Kerala, especially the hilly areas of its northern Malabar districts Thursday, disrupting the normal life there. Incidents of flooding, uprooting of trees, property damage and minor landslides were reported from many parts of the northern Kerala districts of Wayanad, Kannur and Kasaragod where the IMD issued a red alert for the day



## of the day quote

After achieving human qualities, man aspires to become superman with supernatural powers and then attain the status of 'Devta' and 'Bhagwan'. He then aspires for vishwaroop (the supreme power's all-pervading form). What is beyond that, no one is certain  
MOHAN BHAGWAT | RSS CHIEF

The government copied the Madhya Pradesh government's (Ladli Behna) scheme to provide women ₹1,500 per month, while under the Ladka Bhau scheme, men who are Class 12 pass will get ₹6,000 and unemployed graduates will get ₹10,000. So why should women get just ₹1,500. Will they be able to run their houses in this amount?  
SANJAY RAUT | SHIV SENA (UBT) LEADER

MLAs from the NCP (headed by Ajit Pawar) will also return. However, Sharad Pawar will decide who will be taken into NCP (SP)  
ANIL DESHMUKH | FORMER MAHA HM

## X POST OF THE DAY

A Temple Poojari Kricharam filed a police complaint blaming two Muslim boys Munna and Sonu for breaking Ganesh Idol inside a temple at SiddharthNagar District, UP. During the Police interrogation, it was found that the Poojari himself broke the Ganesh Idol and blamed it on Muslim boys.  
Via - @SachinGuptaUP @zoo\_bear

## SHORT TAKES

### 6 killed after car rams into truck

**Jaipur:** Six people, including two children, were killed after their car rear-ended a truck in Rajasthan's Bikaner district Thursday night, police said. Superintendent of Police (SP) Tejaswini Gautam said the car, with a Haryana registration number, rammed into the truck. "Two men and as many women and children died in the accident," she said.

### Two STF men killed, woman Naxal shot dead

**Dantewada:** Two Special Task Force (STF) personnel were killed after Maoists detonated an improvised explosive device (IED) in Chhattisgarh's Bijapur district, while a woman Naxalite was gunned down by security personnel in Dantewada district Thursday, police said. Four STF personnel were injured in the IED blast in Bijapur, while two jawans of the state police's DRG were wounded.

### Protest over power cuts turns violent

**Manikchak:** Several people were injured as a protest by locals over frequent power cuts in West Bengal's Malda district Thursday turned violent, leading to a clash with the police, officials said. Protesting frequent power cuts in the area, locals blocked the state highway at Enayatpur in Manikchak in the morning, causing a traffic snarl that stretched for kilometres, they said. When police went to clear the road for traffic, they refused to lift the blockade and started hurling stones at the personnel, SP Pradeep Kumar Yadav said.

## AAP to contest solo in Haryana

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Chandigarh, July 18:** The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) Thursday said it will contest all 90 assembly seats in Haryana, where people want "badlav" (change) and are looking at it with great hope. The AAP said it will announce party national convener Arvind Kejriwal's guarantees July 20.

The Haryana Assembly elections are due later this year. Addressing the media here, Sanjay Singh said the AAP will fight the Haryana Assembly polls strongly.

"The AAP will contest all 90 seats," said the Rajya Sabha MP, who was flanked by Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann, senior AAP leaders Sandeep Pathak and Anurag Dhanda, and party state unit president Sushil Gupta. Though the AAP has contested multiple elections in Haryana, it has yet to taste electoral success.

The AAP had contested the recent Lok Sabha elections in alliance with its INDIA bloc partner Congress. While the Congress won five of the nine Lok Sabha seats it contested, the AAP unsuccessfully contested the Kurukshetra seat.

Haryana Congress leaders, including Bhupinder Singh Hooda and Uday Bhan, have hinted that the party might go solo in the Assembly polls, with both saying that it is capable of contesting all 90 seats on its own.

Singh targeted the BJP government in Haryana over the issues of unemployment, law and order, and the Agnipath scheme. "Today, there is an industry of extortion in Haryana. We saw how farmers were crushed during their agitation. Unemployment is also a big problem in Haryana," he said.

## Telangana CM launches farm loan waiver scheme

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Hyderabad, July 18:** Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy Thursday launched the farm loan waiver scheme with ₹6,098 crore being credited, in the first phase, to the bank accounts of farmers, whose loans of up to ₹1 lakh would be waived.

Reddy handed over cheques to some farmers at an event held in the Secretariat here and also interacted with some ryots via video conferencing. The ₹6,098 crore released to banks would benefit approximately 11 lakh families. The rollout of the loan waiver scheme would be completed in two other phases.

While crop loans of up to ₹1.5 lakh would be waived by the end of July in the second phase, those up to ₹2 lakh would be dispensed with in August in the third phase. Speaking on the occasion, the CM said the loan waiver programme is being implemented in three phases with ₹31,000 crore which would conclude in August. He alleged that the previous BRS government did not properly implement its promise of farm loan waiver despite being in power for two terms.

The Congress government is paying an interest of about ₹7,000 crore every month on the ₹7 lakh crore debt made during the BRS regime, he claimed.

The CM also noted that ₹29,000 crore has been spent on welfare programmes in the last seven months since his party came to power in December last year.

# Cong attacks govt over train derailment in UP

The Railway Ministry said a high level inquiry has been ordered, apart from the probe by the Commission of Railway Safety



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 18:** In the wake of the Chandigarh-Dibrugarh Express derailment, the Congress Thursday demanded that Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw must take responsibility of the "massive lapses" and the Kavach anti-collision system should be installed expeditiously on all routes.

Two people were killed and 34 injured when eight coaches of the Chandigarh-Dibrugarh Express derailed near Gonda in Uttar Pradesh Thursday, officials said.

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said the derailment of Chandigarh-Dibrugarh Express in Uttar Pradesh is yet another instance of how the Modi government has "systematically jeopardised" rail safety.

"Our deepest condolences to the families of the bereaved and

PM Narendra Modi and his Railway Minister, who leaves no opportunity for self-publicity, must take direct responsibility of the massive lapses that have plagued the Indian Railways  
MALLIKARJUN KHARGE | CONGRESS PRESIDENT

our thoughts and prayers are with the injured. A month ago, 11 people lost their lives when a goods train collided with the Sealdah-Agartala Kanchanjunga Express," he said in a statement.

Kharge pointed out that the Commissioner of Railway Safety has stated that the accident was "waiting to happen". "Failure of automatic signal, lapses at multiple levels in managing operations and non-availability of critical safety equipment such as walkie-talkie with the loco pilot and train manager are some of

the reasons cited for collision in the probe report," Kharge said.

"PM Narendra Modi and his Railway Minister, who leaves no opportunity for self-publicity, must take direct responsibility of the massive lapses that have plagued the Indian Railways," he added.

The Congress president said his party's single demand was that the Kavach anti-collision system be "installed expeditiously" on all routes across India to ensure enhanced safety measures and prevent accidents.

Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra said the news of fatalities due to the derailment of Chandigarh-Dibrugarh Express in Gonda, Uttar Pradesh, is very saddening. "May the departed souls rest in peace. My deepest condolences to the bereaved families. I pray to God that the injured get well soon," she said in a post in Hindi on X.

"Hundreds of lives have been lost in the frequent major rail accidents. Lakhs of posts are lying vacant in the railways. Systems like Kavach are victims of government's lackadaisical attitude, but no responsibility is fixed by the government," Priyanka Gandhi said.

Why is the government silent on these important questions related to the safety of common people and why is no one being held responsible for railway accidents, she asked.



SEEKING SHELTER: People take cover under a large polythene sheet during rain in New Delhi

# Natural herb 'Chhoti Kateli' prevents tuberculosis effectively

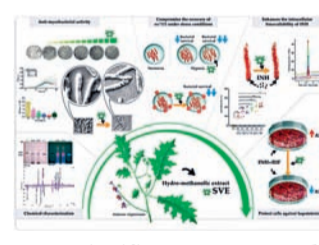
POST NEWS NETWORK

**Haridwar, July 18:** TB is caused by bacteria (Mycobacterium tuberculosis) and it most often affects the lungs. TB is spread through the air when people with lung TB cough, sneeze or spit. A person needs to inhale only a few germs to become infected.

According to WHO, over 1 crore people worldwide were affected in the year 2022 by this disease. Despite being a preventable and curable disease, many people die from TB each

year - making it one of the top infectious killers in the world.

On this occasion, Acharya Balkrishna said that the current treatment modalities include the limited bioavailability of anti-tubercular drugs and the propensity of the bacteria to develop single- or multi-drug resistant. Also, the long treatment period of anti-tubercular drugs induces drug-associated hepatotoxicity. All this makes it apparent that there is a desperate need for new TB drugs or adjunct therapy that make the existing line of treatment more effective.



In a significant move towards developing herbal medicines for tuberculosis (TB) treatment, a recent study at Patanjali has highlighted the potential of Solanum virginianum extract (SVE) or 'Chhoti Kateli' as anti-tubercular therapy. This research is part

of an initiative aimed at developing herbal therapies that can either stand alone or complement existing anti-TB drugs, with defined mechanisms of action and herb-drug synergism.

The current study tested the biological activity of SVE in Mycobacterium smegmatis, mc2155, a model system for the investigation of Mycobacterium tuberculosis (Mtb) showed that bacteria treated with SVE exhibited reduced growth and viability, indicating the extract's anti-tubercular effects.

The study further employed

a targeted metabolomics approach using UPLC/QToF-MS to detect and quantify intracellular isoniazid (INH) in a complex biological matrix of bacteria which showed that SVE increased the bioavailability of the modern TB drug isoniazid (INH), enhancing the bacteria's sensitivity to the drug and improving its efficacy.

Acharya Balkrishna said Patanjali is delighted to announce that this research has been published in the renowned peer-reviewed journal, 'Frontiers in Microbiology'.

# Irregular sleep can lead to increased diabetes risk: Study

ACCORDING TO THE STUDY PUBLISHED IN THE JOURNAL DIABETES CARE, THE LINK WAS "MORE PRONOUNCED" AMONG THOSE SLEEPING FOR LONGER DURATIONS AND HAVING A LOWER GENETIC RISK OF DIABETES

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 18:** Weeklong irregular sleep can increase the risk of type 2 diabetes in middle-aged and older people by 34 per cent, a new study has found.

Even as researchers acknowledged assessing sleep duration over seven days may not capture long-term sleep patterns,

they said changing this lifestyle factor can help lower the risk of developing type 2 diabetes.

According to the study published in the journal Diabetes Care, the link was "more pronounced" among those sleeping for longer durations and having a lower genetic risk of diabetes. "Our findings underscore the importance of con-



sistent sleep patterns as a strategy to reduce type 2 diabetes," Sina Kianersi, a research fellow at the Brigham and Women's

Hospital in the US and lead author of the study, said. The researchers followed more than 84,000 participants from the UK

Biobank dataset who were aged 62 years on average and did not have diabetes to begin with. Over seven years, they monitored the development of the metabolic disease through medical records.

The authors wanted to find out if irregular sleep lengths could promote diabetes by disrupting the body's biological clock. They also wanted to examine the effects of irregular sleep in people with a low genetic risk of the disease. The team found that the individuals with a sleep duration changing by more than 60 minutes had a 34 per cent higher diabetes risk, compared to those whose sleep

lengths changed by less than 60 minutes.

However, after adjusting for lifestyle, health conditions, environmental factors and body fat, the risk among these individuals was found to drop to 11 per cent.

The researchers said they were interested in exploring the biological reasons why sleep irregularity increases the risk of diabetes. They also plan to study participants from younger age groups and with diverse racial backgrounds.

"More research is needed to fully understand the mechanism and confirm the results in other populations," said Kianersi.



The fact that the West is exhibiting its displeasure to powers like China, like India, well, it shows the lack of erudition, the inability to partake in diplomacy, and also speaks to the failure of political analysts  
SERGEY LAVROV | FOREIGN MINISTER, RUSSIA

### SOCIAL MEDIA CURBS

After successfully blocking X for over six months, the Pakistan government has targeted more social media platforms, Facebook and Instagram, and restricted their access to the people, a step seen as a plan to impose a complete ban on social media



### of the day quote

It is the United States' main problem that of drug consumption, with the unfortunate death of 100,000 young people each year. Instead of blaming the migrants, why not review the internal crisis in the US  
ANDRÉS MANUEL LÓPEZ OBRADOR | PRESIDENT, MEXICO

It has been nine months since the Israel-Hamas conflict, and the continuing humanitarian crisis is deeply concerning. We have also condemned the loss of civilian lives in the ongoing Israel-Hamas conflict  
R RAVINDRA | DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF INDIA TO THE UN AMBASSADOR

Under my leadership, Britain will be a friend and a partner, ready to work with you, not part of the European Union, but very much part of Europe  
KEIR STARMER | PM, UK

### SHORT TAKES

#### Fire in department store kills 16

Beijing: At least 16 people were killed in a department store fire in Zigong City, southwest China's Sichuan Province, according to the local fire and rescue headquarters. China's Ministry of Emergency Management and National Fire and Rescue Administration said that a working team has been dispatched to southwest China's Sichuan Province following a fire at a department store, Xinhua news agency reported. The fire broke out around 6 pm Wednesday at a 14-story building in Zigong City.

#### Russia sentences US citizen to 13 yrs jail

Moscow: A Russian court Thursday sentenced US citizen Michael Travis Leake to 13 years in prison on drug smuggling charges, Moscow's court service said in a statement. Leake, a musician and former US paratrooper who was arrested in June 2023, was found guilty of selling drugs on a large scale, the court service said. It was not clear how he pleaded. Leake is one of about a dozen Americans currently held in Russian detention.

#### US cop fired over insensitive laughter

New York: A Seattle police officer, whose insensitive comments and laughter following the death of an Indian student had caused outrage, has been fired. Jaahnavi Kandula, 23, was struck by a police vehicle driven by Seattle Police Officer Kevin Dave as she was crossing a street January 23. Dave was driving 74 mph on the way to a report of a drug overdose call. Kandula was thrown 100 feet when she was struck by the speeding police patrol vehicle.

#### Spain swelters

Barcelona: Spain sweated under its first official heatwave of the year with temperatures expected to reach 40 degrees Celsius in a large swathe of the country Thursday, while Italy, Greece and other areas of southern Europe also struggled to stay cool. After a relatively bearable spring compared to record heat in 2023 and 2022, millions of Spaniards will be sweltering at least through Saturday before feeling any relief.

# BANGLADESH ON BOIL

Death toll rises to 16 in nationwide anti-quota protests

Dhaka, July 18: Thousands of students armed with sticks and rocks clashed with armed police in Dhaka Thursday as the Bangladesh authorities cut some mobile internet services to quell anti-quota protests that have killed at least 16 people this week.



- At least 10 dead in clashes Thursday, hundreds injured
- Riot police battle with protesters, fire tear gas
- Some mobile internet services shut down temporarily

The nationwide agitation, the biggest since Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina was re-elected for a fourth time, is fuelled by high unemployment among the youth, with nearly a fifth of the 170 million population out of work or education.

Protesters are demanding the state stop setting aside 30% of government jobs for families of those who fought in the 1971 war of independence from Pakistan.

Ten people died in clashes with police Thursday in Dhaka, the highest toll in a single day so far, including a bus driver whose body was brought to a hospital with a bullet wound to his chest, a rickshaw-puller and three students, officials told Reuters.

Hundreds more were injured as police fired tear gas and rubber bullets to break up protesters who torched vehicles, police posts and other establishments, witnesses said.

Law Minister Anisul Huq said the government was willing to hold talks with the protesters, but they refused, saying "discus-

### India issues travel advisory

Dhaka: India Thursday advised its citizens residing in Bangladesh to avoid travel and minimise their movement after ongoing protests demanding reforms in the quota system in government jobs turned violent and left at least six people dead across the country. The violence prompted the government to close all public and private universities alongside schools and colleges across Bangladesh for an indefinite period on late Tuesday asking residential students to leave dormitories. In view of the ongoing situation in Bangladesh, the Indian community members and members of the Indian students residing in Bangladesh are advised to avoid travel and minimise their movement outside their living premises, the Indian High Commission here said in a statement. The mission also provided multiple 24-hour Emergency numbers for any assistance.

sions and opening fire do not go hand in hand".

"We cannot trample over dead bodies to hold discussions. Discussions could have taken place earlier," protest co-ordi-

nator Nahid Islam told Reuters. Hasina, the daughter of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman who led Bangladesh to independence, has so far rejected the demands of the protesters.

# CCP drops former foreign, defence mins from top body

China Communist Party policy meeting endorses leader Xi's high-tech vision for economy



Beijing, July 18: China's Communist Party (CCP) removed its former foreign and defence ministers, Qin Gang and Li Shangfu, from its Central Committee Thursday during a meeting of its largest top decision-making body, state news agency Xinhua reported.

The two officials had been removed from their jobs last year.

The ruling Communist Party ended its long-delayed third plenum Thursday, a meeting of the 205-member Central Committee held roughly once every five years to map out the general direction of the country's long-term social and economic policies. Removals of Central Committee members would also be approved at such meetings.

The Central Committee said

in a communique released by Xinhua that it accepted Qin Gang's resignation from the body, and confirmed the expulsion of Li Shangfu, 66, as well as former PLA Rocket Force commander Li Yuchao, 61, from the Communist Party for "serious violations of discipline and law", a euphemism for corruption. Li Yuchao was also removed from his job last year.

The decision to expel Li Shangfu and Li Yuchao from the Communist Party and its Central Committee by extension suggests harsher political consequences for the pair, compared to Qin Gang's resignation. Qin remains a Communist Party member.

Chinese President Xi Jinping

has spearheaded a wide-ranging anti-corruption campaign since becoming leader of the Communist Party in 2012. In the first half of this year alone, the party's top graft watchdog has investigated 36 officials at the vice-ministerial level and above. Li Shangfu and his predecessor Wei Fenghe were both expelled from the Communist Party last month on bribery charges, as China's People's Liberation Army undergoes a sweeping anti-corruption purge which has implicated two former defence ministers and nine top generals.

Qin, 58, was abruptly removed as foreign minister in July last year after seven months in the job, and has not been seen in public since following rumours of an extramarital affair. He was removed from China's cabinet, the State Council, in October and "resigned" from the national legislative body in February.

He became one of the country's youngest foreign ministers when he was appointed in December 2022, enjoying a meteoric rise which analysts partly attributed to his closeness to President Xi.

### LANDMARK RULING

THERE IS NO LEGAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF LGBTQ PARTNERSHIPS IN SOUTH KOREA, FORCING COUPLES TO MOVE ABROAD IF THEY WANT TO GET MARRIED LEGALLY

# SK's top court grants state benefits to gay couples



Seoul, July 18: South Korea's Supreme Court Thursday upheld a ruling that a same-sex partner was eligible for spousal benefits from state health insurance, a move hailed as a win for LGBTQ rights in a country that has lagged others in the region.

The court confirmed a landmark decision by the Seoul High Court early last year that the National Health Insurance Service should provide equal spousal coverage to So Sung-

wook and Kim Yong-min, a gay couple who filed a suit in 2021 against the agency after it cancelled their spousal benefits.

"I couldn't believe when I heard the ruling. I was extremely happy and I started crying," Kim told Reuters outside the court. "It took four years to earn this dependent status," he said. "We need to fight harder to legalize same-sex marriage going forward."

Chief Justice Jo Hee-de said that denying the couple benefits, even though there are no

clauses in the National Health Insurance Act that specifically refer to same-sex unions, constituted discrimination based on sexual orientation.

"It is an act of discrimination that violates human dignity and value, the right to pursue happiness, freedom of privacy and the right to

equality before the law, and the degree of violation is serious," Judge Jo told a televised trial.

So Kim refer to themselves as a married couple, but their marriage is not legally recognised in South Korea.

Lawyers and advocates said the ruling marks the first legal recognition of same-sex unions. "With this ruling today, the legal status of same-sex couples will be recognised in the public system, so I think the existence of same-sex couples will become more visible,"

Chang Suh-yeon, one of the lawyers who represented the couple, told reporters. While campaigns to legalize same-sex marriage have succeeded in Taiwan and Thailand, there is no legal acknowledgement of LGBTQ partnerships in South Korea, forcing couples to move

abroad if they want to get married legally.

The Supreme Court's ruling is a "stepping stone for progress" towards marriage equality, said Horim Yi, an activist at the LGBTQ campaign group Marriage For All.

"It's going to be a very hopeful ruling for same-sex couples living in South Korea," Yi said. Last year, the couple told Reuters they were being open about their story to help "change people's opinions and help other LGBTQ people like us gather up the courage".

Conservative religious groups in South Korea have mounted fierce resistance to efforts to pass laws promoting LGBTQ rights, prompting many people to hide their identity in the workplace as they struggle for equal recognition and acceptance.

Ahead of the ruling, members of conservative Christian groups held a rally outside the court, waving a banner reading "Same-sex families are nonsense. Supreme Court, overturn the Seoul High Court's ruling!"

### SNIPPETS

#### Ursula re-elected as EU President

Strasbourg: Lawmakers at the European Parliament Thursday re-elected Ursula von der Leyen to a second 5-year term as president of the European Union's executive commission, giving her a comfortable majority and heading off a possible leadership vacuum. Von der Leyen raised both fists in victory as the Parliament President Roberta Metsola read out the result at the legislature. Von der Leyen gained 401 of the 707 votes cast. "I will never let the extreme polarisation of our societies become accepted. I will never accept that demagogues and extremists destroy our European way of life. And I stand here today ready to lead the fight with all the Democratic forces in this house," von der Leyen said.



#### SA's Prez to open Parl after historic election



Cape Town: South African President Cyril Ramaphosa will open a new parliamentary term Thursday to mark the official start of business for his 11-party coalition government, an uneasy union brought together by an historic election result. Ramaphosa's speech will likely outline the priorities for the new government, which were made clear after his once-dominant African National Congress party lost its parliamentary majority for the first time in the country's May 29 election. In the biggest shift in South African politics since the end of the apartheid system of white minority rule in 1994, the long-ruling ANC dropped to just 40 per cent of the vote and no party won a majority. That means Ramaphosa will also come face-to-face Thursday with a new opposition.

### Nepal, India, B'desh to sign tripartite power trading deal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kathmandu, July 18: Nepal will sign a tripartite power trading deal next week to export 40 MW of electricity to Bangladesh via India, a senior official said Thursday.

This will be the first time in history that the Himalayan nation will sell electricity to a third country other than India.

Ground has been cleared for the three countries to sign the agreement on exporting electricity to Bangladesh, said Chandan Kumar Ghosh, spokesperson at Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA), the government-owned electricity body.

The Power Sales Agreement will be signed by officials from the NEA, the Bangladesh Power Development Board (BPDB) and the NTPC Vidyut Vyapar Nigam Ltd (NTPC) of India at a function here July 28, Ghosh said.

Nepal's Minister for Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation, Dipak Khadka, India's Power Minister, Manohar Lal Khattar and Bangladesh's Power, Energy and Mineral Resources Minister, Nasrul Hamid, will witness the signing ceremony, he said.

Under the agreement, the NEA will export 40 MW of hydro-electricity to Bangladesh via India from June 15 to November 15 every year.

As per the agreement, Nepal will get a tariff of \$0.064 per unit for selling electricity to Bangladesh.

Nepal will transmit the energy to India through the 400kV Dhalkebar-Muzaffarpur cross-border transmission line. India will then transmit the equivalent to Bangladesh.

The delivery point will be a 400kV substation at Muzaffarpur in India, and Bangladesh will pay the transmission charge for using the Indian transmission infrastructure. According to an estimate by the NEA, Nepal will receive around Rs 330 million through the sale of electricity.

Last month, a meeting of the 'Cabinet Committee on Government Purchase' of Bangladesh approved a proposal to import 40 MW of electricity from Nepal.

In January, Nepal signed a long-term agreement for the export of 10,000 MW of power to India, and jointly inaugurated three cross-border transmission lines during the two-day visit of External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar to the Himalayan nation.



# Sindhu eyes 3rd Olympic medal

If she does manage to achieve her goal, she will be the only Indian to do so



- Sindhu is currently ranked No. 13 in the world
- Sindhu won silver in 2016 at Rio and bronze in 2021 at Tokyo
- Sindhu also has 5 BWF World Championship medals in her kitty
- Sindhu has 2 CWG gold medals, 2 silver and 1 bronze medal
- Sindhu has also won a silver at the 2018 Asian Games

ing about the colour of the medals," Sindhu stated.

Sindhu spoke at length about her preparation for the mega event, which will run from July 26 to August 11. "My preparations are focused on putting in the hard work while being smart and aggressive on that particular match day," she stated.

The former World Champion is aware of the fierce competition that awaits here and she respects the calibre of her opponents.

"The Olympics is extremely competitive, and all the athletes are at their peak. The top 10-15 players in the world are of the same standard, be it the likes of AN Se Young, Akane Yamaguchi, Carolina Marin or Tai Tzu Ying. There are no easy points at the Olympics. Anything can happen at the Olympics; one small mistake can change everything," Sindhu said.

Sindhu also shared her perspective on working with Indian badminton legend Prakash Padukone, terming it her good fortune to be associated with the 1980 All England champion.

"This time, we have a whole new team with Prakash (Padukone) sir as my mentor and Agus (Dwi Santoso) as the new coach. Our practice is focused at getting everything perfect and to the point. It is my fortune that Prakash sir is my mentor and a part of my journey, and I hope his support can help me win that third medal," Sindhu stated.

**I hope I can fulfil the hopes of the nation and get the third medal because getting three consecutive medals is not a joke**

PV SINDHU

sation on JioCinema's *The Dreamers*. "The journeys in 2016 and 2020 were wonderful, filled with immense effort and unforgettable moments. As I prepare for Paris 2024, it's a fresh start, and I have to give my 100 per cent no matter what," Sindhu added.

Ranked among the world's top players, Sindhu draws from her past experiences to fuel her quest for gold. "There are a lot of experiences from my previous outings at the Olympics that I will take into Paris 2024, but I don't want to get overconfident think-

## A CHANCE TO BE PART OF

# METTLE MEET 2024

# OrissaPOST

## HERE . NOW

# QUIZ Extravaganza

### RULES & REGULATIONS

- Everyone will have to mail their answers to [mettlemeet@orissapost.com](mailto:mettlemeet@orissapost.com)
- Answers to the questions will follow the next day. The names of the winners will also be announced along with their pictures.
- Answers mailed between 8.00am to 6.00pm each day will be considered valid.
- Orissa POST's decision on all entries will be final. No complaints will be entertained.
- Participants must send their entries with a passport size photograph, mobile numbers and residential address. Otherwise the entries will be rejected.
- There can be only one winner from one family.
- Invitation cards to the winners will only be issued on presentation of Valid ID proof - Voter Card, Aadhaar Card, Driving License, Passport, School ID card (In case of students till Class XI)
- No employee of Orissa POST or their family members can be part of the competition

### TODAY'S QUESTION

Originally named Namgyal Wangdi his name was changed to a new name that translates as "wealthy fortunate follower of religion." How do we better know this individual who served as the first Director of Field Training of the Himalayan Mountaineering Institute in Darjeeling?

### ANSWER TO Thursday's QUESTION

**Dinosaur game on Google chrome when offline**

### THE TWO LUCKY WINNERS

AYUSHI PRADHAN

AHAANA PAIKRAY

**Others who answered correctly are**  
Bhumika Subhalaxmi, Ashish Agarwalla, Jaba Dasgupta and TN Mishra

## SHORT TAKES

### Nagal bows out

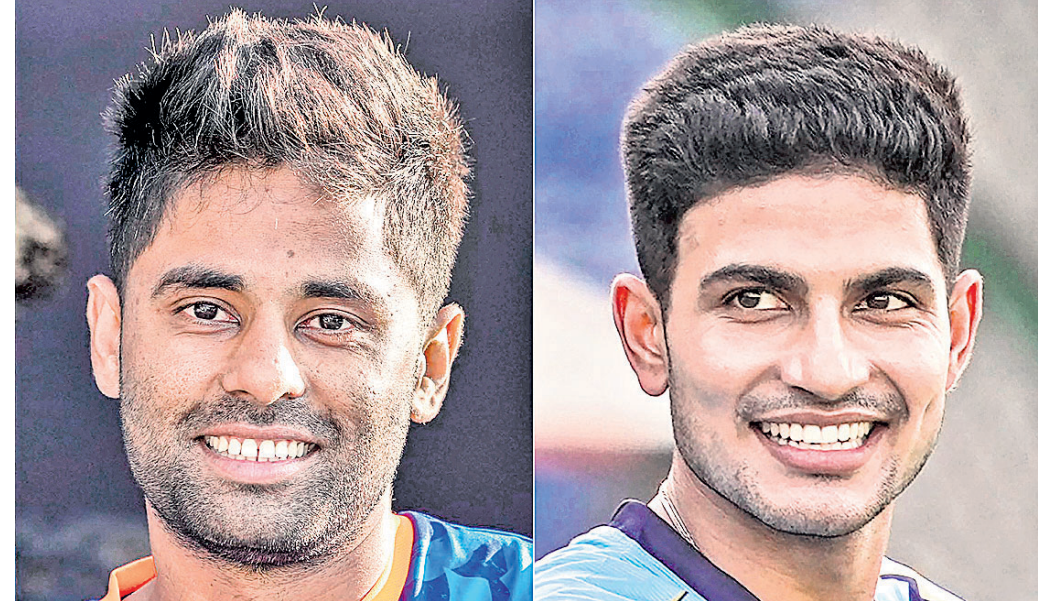
**Bastad (Sweden):** India's No.1 singles player Sumit Nagal lost his pre-quarterfinal match against fourth-seeded Argentine Mariano Navone in straight sets 4-6, 2-6 here Thursday. Had Nagal won this round, he could have had a possible face-off with Rafael Nadal in the quarterfinals but the world No. 36 was too good for the Indian. Nagal, a clay court specialist has qualified for the singles event at Paris Olympics and this was his last tournament before the quadrennial extravaganza which begins in Paris from July 26.

### No improvement

**New Delhi:** Success-starved India held on to the 124th position in the FIFA men's rankings released Thursday, even as reigning World Champions and Copa America winners Argentina strengthened their grip at the top of the pecking order. Since December last year, India have been sliding down. They had broken into the top 100 last year, with a best ranking of 99, but since then it has been a downward spiral. In Asia, India remained on 22nd position, behind the likes of Lebanon and Palestine Having successfully defended their Copa America crown, Argentina (first) tightened their grip at the top of the table. France were second while Spain rose five places to third after their Euro Championships victory.

# Surya named T20 team skipper

ROHIT, VIRAT AVAILABLE FOR ODI SERIES AGAINST SRI LANKA



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 18:** Big-hitting batter Suryakumar Yadav was named Thursday captain of the Indian T20 team for this month's three-match series against Sri Lanka. In a separate development ODI skipper Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli made themselves available for the 50 overs three-game series against the same team next month.

T20 games Odis	July 27, 28, 30 Aug 2, 4, 7	Pallekele International Stadium R Premadasa Stadium
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Shubman Gill has been named vice-captain for both the formats. The team will depart early next week for the tour, which will mark the beginning of new head coach Gautam Gambhir's three-year tenure.

Riyon Parag, who scored seven half centuries in the Vijay Hazare Trophy, and Delhi speedster Harshit

Rana are the two new faces in the ODI squad. However, seasoned all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja did not find a place in the ODI squad. As expected Jasprit Bumrah was rested on expected lines.

Suryakumar, 33, was chosen as skipper for the T20 series over Hardik Pandya, the designated vice-captain during India's title

run in the Americas. Pandya is three years younger to the Mumbai swashbuckler but was not the preferred choice of both chairman of selectors Ajit Agarkar and Gambhir. However, Pandya is in the T20 squad, but has opted out of the ODIs due to personal reasons.

Shreyas Iyer, despite losing his national contract for missing domestic cricket, made a comeback to the ODI squad alongside KL Rahul, who performed the dual role of keeper-batter during the 50-over World Cup last year at home.

**The squads:**  
**T20I:** Suryakumar Yadav (captain), Shubman Gill (vice-captain), Yashasvi Jaiswal, Rinku Singh, Riyan Parag, Rishabh Pant (wicket-keeper), Sanju Samson (wicket-keeper), Hardik Pandya, Shivam Dube, Axar Patel, Washington Sundar, Ravi Bishnoi, Arshdeep Singh, Khaleel Ahmed and Mohd. Siraj.  
**ODI:** Rohit Sharma (captain), Shubman Gill (vice-captain), Virat Kohli, KL Rahul (wicket-keeper), Rishabh Pant (wicket-keeper), Shreyas Iyer, Shivam Dube, Kuldeep Yadav, Mohd Siraj, Washington Sundar, Arshdeep Singh, Riyan Parag, Axar Patel, Khaleel Ahmed and Harshit Rana.

# MIXED DAY FOR ODISHA SQUADS



Two Hockey Odisha players (in red) try to stop a Bengal attacker OP PHOTO

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Kolkata, 18th July 2024:** It was a day of contrasting fortunes for the women's and men's teams of Hockey Odisha in the 2nd Hockey India Junior Men & Women East Zone Championships 2024 here Thursday. While the women's team went down to hosts Hockey Bengal 0-2, the men overcame Hockey Jharkhand by an identical margin. It was the fourth victory on the trot for the men's team while the eves suffered their first reverse in four outings.

Hosts Bengal were always the dominant side against the Odisha eves. They controlled the ball

and defended well. Shanti Horo (27th) broke the deadlock for Bengal close to the interval. Captain Subila Tirkey (33rd) then converted a penalty corner to put Bengal in control. A sublime field goal from Lalanchhungi (49th) put the issue beyond doubt for the hosts.

The men's segment game between Odisha and Jharkhand was a hard-fought affair. After a barren first half, Hockey Odisha took the lead in the 44th when Sunil Lakra converted a penalty corner. Odisha then doubled the lead four minutes later with Deepak Pradhan scoring a lovely field goal.

# KIIT awards ₹7 lakh to its Paris-bound athletes

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 18:** KIIT felicitated Thursday 11 students from the institution who are in the Indian contingent for the Paris Olympics starting July 26. Founder of KIIT and KISS Dr Achyuta Samanta announced Thursday an award of ₹7 lakh to each of the athletes, encouraging them to give their best on the field and bring glory to the country.

The sportspersons from KIIT and KISS who are in the Indian squad are Amit Rohidas (Hockey), Kishore Kumar Jena (Javelin), Parul Chaudhary (3000m steeplechase & 5000m),



Priyanka (20km walk), Annu Rani (Javelin), Jyothi Yarraji (100m hurdles), Tajinderpal Singh Toor (Shot Put), Prachi (4x400m relay), Ankita (5000m), Paramjeet Singh Bisht (20km walk) and Suraj Panwar (marathon walk mixed relay).

"Your hard work and dedication have brought you to this prestigious stage," Samanta said during a felicitation programme for the athletes here.

# Hardik, Natasa call it quits

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Jul 18:** India all-rounder Hardik Pandya, announced Thursday his separation with wife Natasa Stankovic after a relationship of four years. The couple disclosed the decision in a joint statement on their official Instagram accounts. Pandya and Stankovic got married May 31, 2020, and welcomed their first child, son Agastya July 30 of the same year.

"After 4 years Natasa and I have decided to mutually part ways. We believe this is in the best interest for both of us. We are blessed with Agastya, who will continue to be at the centre of both of our lives," they said.

# India start favourites against Pak

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Dambulla, July 18:** The Women's Asia Cup is set for a blockbuster start when defending champions India take on arch foes Pakistan in a prime-time clash here Friday, with the eight competing teams hoping to firm up their combinations ahead of the T20 World Cup in October.

Harmanpreet Kaur's India are the team to beat going into this edition of the Asia Cup, having won the competition three out of four times in the T20 version and each of the four times in 50 overs format. Additionally, India are also the most successful team in the Women's Asia Cup T20 with 17



Harmanpreet Kaur talks to the media Thursday PTI PHOTO

wins in 20 matches. They beat Bangladesh in the final of the last edition in 2022.

India's record against Pakistan has also been stellar in the short-

est format with 11 wins against three defeats in 14 matches so far and Kaur's team will lean on it in addition to the rich form shown in recent outings to clinch the Group A clash here.

While India are coming off a 1-1 draw against South Africa earlier this month with the second of the three T20Is being washed out, Pakistan will be short on game time as well as confidence since their last outing was in England in May when the hosts blanked them 3-0.

Smriti Mandhana's rich form with the bat will be India's greatest weapon at the top of the order but the biggest gain from recent all-format outings has been the way their bowling has shaped up,

with pacers and spinners putting on a combined show.

"This tournament is very important for all of us because we give equal respect to this tournament and want to improve at the Asian as well as at the world level," Harmanpreet said.

"Our focus remains same as we prepare for the T20 World Cup or any other tournament. Each and every game is important for us and we will try to give our best," Harmanpreet said at the captains' press conference. "The challenge will be to keep doing the right things which we have done in the past Asia Cups, keep playing the same type of cricket, and keep dominating other teams and enjoy our cricket," she added.