

## Govt cuts excise on fuel tweaks duty on raw materials

### Sitharaman urges states to follow suit; Kerala cuts taxes; duty on iron ore exports hiked to 50%



Sirish C Mohanty

New Delhi, May 22: With retail inflation surging to an eight-year high, the government Saturday announced a series of measures including reduction in excise duty on petrol by Rs 8 per litre and on diesel by Rs 6 per litre along with reduction in customs duty for raw materials of plastics and steel and an increase in export duty on iron ore and steel intermediates.

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said the cut in excise duty on fuel has



a revenue implication of Rs 1 lakh crore a year and urged state governments to follow suit. Hours later, Kerala announced a cut in tax on the prices of petrol and diesel by Rs 2.41 and Rs 1.36 per litre respectively.

A subsidy of Rs 200 per gas cylinder to the beneficiaries of Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana has

also been announced.

The duty cuts on auto fuels effective Sunday have brought Central taxes on petrol and diesel to pre-pandemic levels. The move, analysts said, could help reduce inflation by up to 20 basis points from June on.

Announcing the duty cuts, Sitharaman tweeted: "This will reduce the price of

petrol by Rs 9.5 per litre and of diesel by Rs 7 per litre...I wish to exhort all state governments, especially the states where reduction wasn't done during the last round (November 2021), to also implement a similar cut and give relief to the common man."

Rolling out a slew of measures to stem inflation,

Sitharaman said, "Keeping in line with @PMOIndia @narendramodi's commitment to help the poor & common man, TODAY, we are announcing more steps to help our people," she said.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi tweeted: "It is always

this will have a revenue implication of around Rs 6,100 crore a year.

She added that customs duty on raw materials and intermediaries for plastic products is being reduced where import dependence is high. "This will result in

### The Centre reduced the Central excise duty on petrol by Rs 8 per litre

people first for us! Today's decisions, especially the one relating to a significant drop in petrol and diesel prices will positively impact various sectors, provide relief to our citizens and further 'Ease of Living'."

Sitharaman said the government will give a subsidy of Rs 200 per gas cylinder (upto 12 cylinders) to over 9 crore Ujjwala beneficiaries -

reduction of cost of final products," she said.

"Similarly, we are calibrating customs duty on raw materials and intermediaries for iron and steel to reduce their prices. Import duty on some raw materials of steel will be reduced. Export duty on some steel products will be levied," she said, adding that these measures are being taken to (Page-14)

## Puri: Shree Jagannath temple survey sparks BJD-BJP war



Puri, May 23: The war of words between the Biju Janata Dal (BJD) and the BJP has intensified over the ongoing work for the development and beautification of the 12th century Shree Jagannath temple under the Puri Srimandir Heritage project.

**Both sides traded charges as the administration carried out the GPR survey and impact assessment study for the project near the 12th century shrine**

Both sides traded charges as the administration carried out the Ground Penetrating

Radar (GPR) survey and impact assessment study for the project on the intervening night of Saturday-Sunday near the 12th century shrine. While BJP's national spokesperson Sambit Patra raked up the issue and targeted the Odisha government, Biju Janata Dal spokesperson Sulata Deo countered the charges and

asked the BJP to refrain from politicising the issue. GPR is a geophysical (Page-15)

## Odisha CM Naveen Patnaik inaugurates 7 Power Projects

Bhubaneswar, May 21: Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik inaugurated six high-power grid substations worth around Rs 450 crores.

Patnaik inaugurated the power projects through video conferencing. The power projects have been inaugurated in Rayagada, Nabarangpur, Kalahandi, Sambalpur, Keonjhar and Khordha districts and Balangir-Kesinga 220 kV transmission line.

"Electricity is the lifeline of development... Like water, electricity is very essential for everyone today," said the Chief Minister while speaking on the occasion.

Rural Development



Minister Sushant Singh attended the function from Sambalpur while Public Enterprises Minister Ashok Panda from Khurda. Likewise, Energy Minister Dibyashankar Mishra also took part in the event from Kalahandi, Skills Development Minister Premananda Nayak from

Keonjhar and Gunupur MLA Raghunath Gamanga from Rayagada.

Secretary to the Chief Minister & ST V.K. Pandian coordinated the program while Chief Secretary Suresh Chandra Mohapatra and senior officials of the concerned departments were also present.



## Veteran communist leader Sivaji Patnaik passes away



BHUBANESWAR, May 23: Veteran communist leader and former Bhubaneswar MP Sivaji Patnaik passed away here at 2.10 pm on Monday. He was 92. He was one of the main founders of the Odisha unit of the Communist Party of India (Marxist).

The Left party leader is survived by his wife, three sons and a daughter. He was admitted to a hospital on Sunday after the potassium level in his blood dropped. His body will be brought to the party's state headquarters near Jaydev Vihar here at 10am on Tuesday for the last darshan.

"Comrade Sivaji Patnaik had a wish that his body will be donated to a hospital after his death. After consulting with our leader's family members, we have decided that we will donate his body to AIIMS Bhubaneswar on Tuesday afternoon," said CPI(M) state secretary Ali Kishore Patnaik.

Odisha governor Ganeshi Lal, chief minister Naveen Patnaik, Union education minister Dharmendra Pradhan, senior congress leader Niranjana Patnaik and other dignitaries condoled the death of the communist leader.

The veteran leader had won three times in CPI(M) tickets from Bhubaneswar Lok Sabha seat in 1977, 1989 and 1991 by defeating Congress candidates. He had defeated Bipin Dash of Congress in 1,45,346 votes in 1989. Bhubaneswar was a bastion of communist party, but it lost the grip over the constituency later.

CPI(M) State secretary said Sivaji Patnaik had received his party membership in 1947 from the undivided communist party. "He was a member of the CPI(M) since the beginning of the party. He has nurtured and trained many communist leaders including me. He has fought several people's movements to protect the rights of common people especially marginalised sections of the society during his lifetime. His death is the end of an era," he added.

He was the second state secretary of CPI (M) Odisha unit after Banamali Das. He remained in the post starting from 1972 to 1990. He was a member of the party's Central committee from 1978 to 1989. He was the first state president of Centre of Indian Trade Unions (CITU).

## Keonjhar jumbo deaths: Show-cause notice issued to DRM, ranger

Joda, May 20: A day after three elephants died after being hit by a goods train in Odisha's Keonjhar, the forest department has issued show-cause notices to Chakradharpur divisional railway manager (DRM) and Champua ranger on Saturday.

Three elephants, who were part of a herd, were hit by a train near Bansapani Behera hutting under the Joda police station while they were crossing the railway tracks. While a calf succumbed to the injuries on the same day, two more elephants including a calf and a female jumbo died on Friday.

Keonjhar divisional forest officer (DFO) on Saturday informed that the department has served the show-cause notices on the DRM of Chakradharpur division and the ranger of Champua.

"We will definitely take action as the location where



**"We will definitely take action as the location where the incident took place is beyond the forest limits and there is a road on the other side of the railway track. The location is not a passage for elephants and the road is at a higher altitude," said Shashi Paul, PCCF.**

the incident took place is beyond the forest limits and there is a road on the other side of the railway track. The location is not a passage for

elephants and the road is at a higher altitude," said Shashi Paul, PCCF. Pal added, "We are closing the paths with solar fencing excluding the

areas where the movement of elephants is frequently noticed. Even guards will be appointed at such openings."

## 16-yr-old girl kills self after molestation in Keonjhar, accused at large

Telkoi, May 24: An underage girl died by suicide after she was allegedly molested by a man at Sarei village under Telkoi police jurisdiction in Keonjhar district.

The 16-year-old girl allegedly consumed poison on Monday afternoon soon after she was subjected to molestation by the accused. As per reports, the minor girl along with her friend had gone to a nearby stream to take bath on Monday. On the way, one Saroj Pradhan (22) intercepted her and allegedly molested her. The alleged incident was

**Unable to bear the trauma and fearing social stigma, the girl consumed poison after returning home**

witnessed by some locals who were passing by the area at that time.

Unable to bear the trauma and fearing social stigma, the girl consumed poison after returning home. She was rushed to a nearby hospital in Khamar of Angul district by her parents. Later, after her condition deteriorated, she was transferred to district

headquarters hospital.

However, doctors at the DHH declared her dead. The father of the deceased lodged a complaint at the Telkoi police station. As per latest report, the body was at Angul DHH and will be handed over to the family after autopsy. According to sources, the accused is absconding and further investigation is underway.



## Coast guard helicopter makes emergency landing in Puri



**The helicopter landed at Talabania helipad in the afternoon due to technical snags**

Puri, May 21: A helicopter of the Indian coast guard made an emergency landing at a helipad in the pilgrim city of Puri on Saturday. The helicopter landed at Talabania helipad in the afternoon due to technical snags.

As per sources, technical snags were detected in the helicopter when the personnel of the Indian coast guards were patrolling over Puri Sea. Soon after, the helicopter made an emergency landing at the nearby Talabania helipad.

The coastguard personnel said, due to the emergency landing at the helipad which was in the proximity, a major mishap was averted.



# March to 2047 - BJP targets the poor

## Rides economic feat, living ease, growth



**Prof. Shivaji Sarkar**  
Former HOD in English journalism in IIMC, Delhi

In the 75th year of Independence, the BJP is setting the goals to work continuously till the centenary, 2047, riding on its strong eight years of reign 'ensuring ease of living for the poor and the middle class.

The goal is set by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at his address to party workers in Jaipur and the strategy was finalized for the "Sewa, Sushashan and Gareeb Kalyan" campaign. The party and the government carved out an intense blitzkrieg of publicity, one-to-one contact to capture all the states that are not in its fold. Too ambitious but with 744 central schemes and 72 sponsored programs and millions of cadre across the states it

finds the task tough but not difficult.

Even march to Dakshin - the South - is part of its yatra. Its senior dedicated leaders are carving out strategies in Chhattisgarh, Telangana, and Andhra. The Rs31,500 crore project stones laid by Modi in Chennai target Tamilnadu. But would TN chief minister MK Stalin let it happen! None knows politics accept strange bedfellows.

The massive campaign is to make all belief in its economic feat, improvements in living standards, digital economy inclusion of the poor, a caring government for a grand success by 2024 in Lok Sabha and at least 16 states that go to the polls in the next two years.

The thrust of the BJP in government or the party would be to focus on the wider benefits that the programs like DBT, PM Kisan and Swachha Bharat, universal vaccination, and various pension and employment schemes, including Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee.

The core would be nine-plus programs that have touched the neo-aspirant classes. They reach the households and are said to make a qualitative difference in the living conditions. It is not an aspiration but the basic needs like Har Ghar Jal (Jal Jeevan Mission), Har Ghar Shauchalay (Swach Bharat Mission), Har Ghar Bijli (Saubhagya Yojana), Har Ghar Gas Cylinder (Ujjwala Yojana), Har Ghar Ration (Gareeb Kalyan Yojana), Har Ghar Bank account (Jan Dhan Yojana), Har Ghar Swasthya (Ayushman Yojana), Har Ghar Teeka (Largest Vaccine Drive), Har Ghar Pakka Ghar (PM Awas Yojana).

The schemes are reaching grass root levels and stated to better the lives of the poor. Even separate meets with different caste and Dalit groups are planned. The BJP claims such strategies led to the shifting of the 8 percent extreme poor minority votes in UP elections. The Rashtriya Muslim Morcha is drawing crowds, and financial

support to the madrasahs, which the party hopes would help them catch young.

Is not GDP growth or inflation a problem? The party does not believe so. Growth has been around 8.2 percent, even 7.2 predicted by RBI this year is the world's highest. Apart from in real terms GDP has doubled despite the pandemic. People have accepted 7.79 percent inflation as normal. This is less than the US inflation now at an unprecedented high of 8.3 percent. Inflation during UPA was one reason for NDA coming to power. But its publicity management has blunted the criticism as also sweetened by the freed food dole.

The income of the common man has also almost doubled. It's not untrue but a recent PM's Economic Advisory Council report mentions that five to seven percent of the country's income comes from the top one percent, while 15 percent earn less than Rs 5000 a month. The top ten percent earn Rs 25000 a month, about 30 to 35 percent of the total income.

The report card says that MSP for wheat in 2014 was Rs 130 per quintal and rice Rs 1310 per quintal, in 2022 wheat is Rs 2015 and rice 1940; farmers' monthly income has risen to Rs 10428 from Rs 6426 in 2014. The employment rate was 42.8 core and now 39.98 crores; 3.4 percent were

unemployed and now it is 8.7 percent. According to Pew research, the middle class shrank by 35 million while the number of people who were pushed into poverty was 75 million because of Covid-19 pandemic-led recession.

It may be one of the longest canvassings and campaigning for a party that has to capture several states held by the opposition. Some like Telangana chief minister K Chandrashekar Rao heading TSR has posed visibly a challenge. Parties like AAP are eyeing Himachal and Gujarat, going to hustings in December this year. Ten states will form new governments in 2023 and four states that are to have an election by June 2024 may cast vote with the Lok Sabha elections.


An election is a tough game so the party is taking its blitz to booth level, according to BJP president JP Nadda. India's international standing, the prime minister's charisma in foreign lands, and the success at the Quad or the Pacific meet would all be told to the people. Possibility of wheat exports managing critical power situation and creation of jobs through Mudra, Skill India, Rs 15 lakh crore Jandhan, the latest National Family Health Survey figures about the amelioration of the people's living conditions. Subtly the Hindutva icing may cap it.

The BJP stress is more on man-to-man contact by

lakhs of party workers up to remotest villages to explain to the people what the party has done for them beyond the free food dole that is sustaining 80 crore people. Thousands of groups would carry on the re-education of the masses in all states.

How big is the splash is anybody's guess. The UPA government too had splurged Rs 2658 crore as per official statements on publicity. During the eight years, the BJP has also spent a substantial sum. To cite the extent it would suffice to say that an election to the last Delhi assembly had a splurge of Rs 170 crore by BJP and opposition together. The cost was Rs 5500 crore in the 2017 UP elections, according to the Centre for Media Studies (CMS). And this surpassed Rs 8000 crore in the 2021 UP elections, according to reports. In the West Bengal elections in 2021, the publicity expenses were estimated at around Rs 500 crore. The early start by the BJP will pressurise its opponents to match the splurge to remain relevant.

The central government spent Rs 1698 crore on publicity and advertisements between 2018 and 2021 for print and electronic media. The party has a different statewide budget.

The campaign for the next 25 years is ambitious, not easy, and aims at changing the gamut of Indian politics. 



## MoU to Benefit Contract Workers Signed



An MoU was signed between Rourkela Contractors' Association and five Major Trade Unions operating in SAIL, Rourkela Steel Plant on 6th May in the presence of B Kullu, GM Incharge (P&A), C G Ramalingam, GM (Personnel-CLC & Projects) and Dr. P K Sahu, GM (Personnel - IR & R, PIS, GA and MC).

Under the MoU, it has been agreed that contract

labour deployed in RSP by Contractors shall be covered under Group Personal Accident Insurance Scheme operated through Rourkela Contractors' Association with a coverage of Rs 10,00,000/- in case of death or permanent or partial disablement in case of accident.

P K Behera, General Secretary, RSS, Himanshu Sekhar Bal, President, RIKKS, Gopal Das, General

Secretary, GMM, Sasadhar Nayak, General Secretary, RMS, Basant Nayak, General Secretary, SETU, Biman Maity, General Secretary, RCWU and other union functionaries represented the five major trade unions operating in RSP. The Rourkela Contractors' Association was represented by Jaydeep Mishra, President, RCA, Sajal Banerjee, General Secretary,

RCA and other office bearers of RCA.

The signed MoU is considered as a benevolent step for both the contract labour as well as the Contractors. It would be beneficial for the contract labour at the time of need and industrial peace.

The representatives of all the five major Unions, Rourkela Contractors' Association applauded and appreciated the move to create an atmosphere of peace and stability. They said that initiative would provide support to the distressed families of contract labours who succumb to accidents. Further, they also urged all to take up a resolve for both the contractors and the contract labour to ensure accident free RSP with strict compliance to Safety standards.

## RCCI Elects New Committee

Rourkela Chamber of Commerce & Industry, the biggest organization of Industrialists and businessmen in Odisha, conducted its election, after a gap of two years, to elect new office bearers for the year 2022-23 on 1st May.

The following committee has been formed after the election. President-Subrata Kumar Pattnaik;

Vice President- Naresh Arya and Rajesh Agarwal  
General Secretary- Sunil Kayal  
Immediate Past President - Praveen Garg  
Secretary:

Finance- Santosh Agarwalla  
Admin & PR- Shubham Kapoor  
Railway Coordination- Rishi Arya

SAIL Coordination - Kailash Kumar Bansal  
Banking Taxation & Law- Manish Modi

Civic Amenities- Manoj Rateria  
General Industries- Sandeep Gautam

Iron, Steel & Coal-Vikash Kumar Mittal

Iron, Steel Manufacturing Industries - Anup Gupta  
Foundry, Fabrication & Engineering Industries - Sidharth Kochar

Cement, Refractory & Mineral Industries - Vishal Joshi  
Chemical, Resins & Allied Industries - Deepak Modi  
Agency & Distribution- Din Dayal Agarwal

Trade, Commerce & Grocery - Naresh Agarwal  
Textiles - Prabhakar Goyal  
Electrical & Hardware- Nikhil Rajgaria

Transport- Abdul Salim  
Automobiles, Cycles Stationary & Others- Abhay Agarwal

Information Technology & Allied Services- Pramod Kumar Natulya  
Rajgangpur Chapter - Kamal Agarwal

Executive Committee Members:

Arun Rateria, Pawan Kumar Bagaria, Gurinder Singh, Jaswinder Singh, Rajendra Bansal, and Milan Modi

## SAIL Achieves Best Ever Profitability

Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) has declared its financial results for the quarter and year ending 31st March 2022 (FY'22). During FY'22, the company has clocked its best-ever performance in production and sales while achieving an all-time high revenue from operation of Rs.1,03,473 Crore and EBITDA of Rs.22,364crore. This performance, backed by an uptick in steel demand and a positive business outlook, is an outcome of collaborative and concerted efforts for enhancing production and improving techno-economic parameters while seizing possible opportunities in the marketplace.

Sharing of Profit with shareholders, the company recommended Rs. 2.25 as the final dividend for FY'22. SAIL declared the highest ever dividend in FY'22 i.e. Rs. 8.75 per share including the already paid two interim dividends for FY'22

SAIL emerged as the topmost buyer on GeM amongst all CPSEs in FY'22

SAIL has supplied steel for various projects of National importance like Central Vista Delhi, Mumbai-Ahmedabad High-

Speed Rail, Delhi-Meerut RRTS, Polavaram Irrigation Project, Kalashwaram Irrigation Project, Purvanchal Expressway, several Metro Rail Projects across the Country, etc.

Supply of Liquid Medical Oxygen over 1.3 Lakh Tonne, majorly during the second wave of CoVID-19. SAIL Plants setup separate Jumbo CoVID Care facilities, which increased CoVID-19 dedicated beds

Implementation of wage revision for the employees

This record-breaking performance in FY'22 is a result of synergy across the Organization. However, the fourth quarter could not be fully insulated from the unprecedented rise in input costs, especially the price rise of imported coking coal on account for various reasons. Notwithstanding the challenges, the Company has taken several proactive steps to contain costs. Going forward, the Company has plans to meet the twin challenges of higher input costs and market price volatility by undertaking various measures for continual improvement in its processes and products basket.

## OMBADC Oversight Authority Praises People Friendly Projects of Sundargarh

Sundargarh: Former Supreme Court Judge and Oversight Authority of Odisha Mineral Bearing Areas Development Corporation (OMBADC) Justice Ananga Kumar Patnaik visited Sundargarh district for three days (18-20 May) has appreciated the performance of various public welfare projects currently underway in Sundargarh district with financial support from OMBADC. During the visit Justice Patnaik visited Lefripada, Tangarpali, Sadar, Badgaon, Rajgangpur, Kuanrmunda, Lahuniapada blocks. Justice Patnaik took first-hand stock of various projects covering sectors like livelihood, drinking water, healthcare, mother and child development, education & skill development, environment preservation, and tourism, banana cultivation at Thopaberna, and under-construction cold



storage, Smart school of Kumjharia, Eklavya Residential school at Kuanrmunda. He also interacted with the beneficiaries and stakeholders on the progress and benefits of various projects. He took special interest to know from the beneficiaries whether they were properly receiving water from the water plants through pipes. Under OMBADC, eleven Mega Piped Water Supply projects have been taken up across seventeen

blocks of the district to meet the water needs of the population.

He also reviewed the rainwater harvesting project at Lunga reserve forest in Daleisara village. He appraised the locals of the importance and benefits of rainwater conservation.

"People, especially in rural areas and the tribal population, have been immensely benefitted by the OMBADC-aided projects. It is strengthening the

livelihood of the masses. The projects have also enabled overwhelming participation of women, especially in a banana plantation and fish farming while empowering them financially," said Justice Patnaik following the completion of his three-day tour of the district.

Earlier on the first day, Justice Patnaik was given a detailed presentation of various projects and welfare schemes in the district during a review meeting by the Collector Nikhil Pavan Kalyan.

CEO OMBADC G Rajesh, OSDs Shaikh Naemuddin and Dwipayana Patnaik, General Manager OMBADC (Administration) Sudhakar Burgi, General Manager (Operation) Jayant Kumar Dash, Consultant Partha Mohanty and Team Leader Ambuj Prasad accompanied Justice AK Patnaik during the visit.

## SAIL supplies special steel to Navy for indigenous warships

Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) has supplied 4300 Tonnes of special steel for India's indigenous navy warships INS 'Udaygiri' and INS 'Surat'. The steel

supplied by SAIL comprises DMR 249A grade Plates and HR Sheets. The entire quantity of steel has been supplied from SAIL's Bokaro, Bhilai, and Rourkela Steel

Plants. This is in continuation of SAIL's sustained efforts to contribute substantially to India's 'AatmaNirbhar Bharat' mission and to strengthen the country's efforts towards

import substitution. Earlier, SAIL had supplied special quality steel for India's various defense projects including INS Vikrant, and INS Kamorta among others.



## Jagatsinghpur collector visits dairy, poultry, and fish farmhouses of the district



JAGATSINGHPUR, May 24: The Jagatsinghpur collector Parul Patwari visited a few operational dairy farms, poultry, and farmhouses under the Tirtol block in Jagatsinghpur district and discussed with the farm owners about their success and difficulty, and assured providing them necessary assistance for their ventures.

In her maiden visit collector, Mrs. Patwari stepped into the Tirtol dairy plant at Jaipur and inspected its infrastructures and production capacity with plant officials. As many as 520 milk cooperative societies adding 44565 members have been producing 80,000 liters of milk supplying to the Tirtol dairy plant per day. After knowing the huge milk collecting capacity of the plant collector planned for its modernization and instructed to increase the plant capacity to 1, 30,000 and she will take care of its developmental plan, the collector assured.

Later on, the collector visited a pig farm operating by a woman entrepreneur Rojalin Mohanty at Tarajanga Panchayat under Tirtol block, the businesswoman Rojalin has been awarded by the Odisha government for her entrepreneurship activities she narrated her success story to madam collector and informed that about 600 pigs under species of Large White Work

shire home in the farm, her farm has been supplying pigs to Northern states mainly Assam and West Bengal regularly, plan under process to enhance the farm capacity, Rojalin told to the collector.

In post noon trip collector visited Sweta Dairy farm at Tainra village under Tirtol block, the dairy farm has been erected with all equipped modern dairy principles and infrastructures as many as 120 cows under several varieties are residing in the farm producing about 800 to 900 liters milk, informed farm owner Sanjaya Khuntia to the collector who assured providing government-level assistance if he sought from her end.

A fish farm owned by Sourva Biswal functioning at Tulanga Panchayat has been catching fish about 500 to 700 Quintals per annum, the owner has been adopted the 'In Pond Race Way' technic producing and processing fish culturing in the farm pond, collector Patwari praised the fish farm owner Biswal for his efforts and enabling himself employed and providing jobs to others.

The collector visit was accompanied by CDVO Dr. Birakishor Parida, Cuttack milk union general manager Dr. Digambar Nayak, district fisheries officer Dipti Kumar Mohapatra, and civil officials from Tirtol block.

## Tirtol MLA Bijaya Shankar applies for Sub-registrar to marry

JAGATSINGHPUR, May 24: The Tirtol MLA Bijaya Shankar Das has applied before sub-registrar Jagatsinghpur to marry his beloved Somalika Dash. Legislator Das is the son of late BJD veteran former Jagatsinghpur MLA Bishnu Das and Somalika is the daughter of one Sangram Keshari Dash a resident of Deuli Grameswar village here.

The report said that MLA Das accompanying his lover Somalika presented before the

sub-registrar escorted by their lawyers, family members, and well-wishers filed an application intending to marry under Section 5 of the Special Marriage Act 1954. Considering the application the marriage officer sub-registrar entered the proposal in the marriage notice book and issued notices to the parties connected with the intending marriage seeking objection.

The special marriage Act mandates that the sub-registrar wait 30 days from the date on

which application and notices are issued gathering any objection with regards to the intending marriage, after the expiration of thirty days marriage officer to legalize the marriage.

The report said that Tirtol legislator and Sonalika had been continuing an affair for years but a few months back their relationship had sailed into trouble following Bijaya Shankar disagreeing to marry Somalika. Being aggrieved with Bijaya Shankar his lover



Somalika had posted a few photos on social media fortifying their affairs later she too had approached the Jagatsinghpur superintendent police informing their affair.

## Arcelor Mittal and Nippon steel launch skill development Centre at Paradip



JAGATSINGHPUR, May 24: For job opportunities and development of digital skills among youths residing in adjacent villages to Paradip port town, the Arcelor Mittal and Nippon steel India [AM/NS]

in association with Fun first Global Skillers Pvt Ltd [FGSPL] launched a skill development center at Paradeep. The center was inaugurated by Jagatsinghpur district employment officer

Tapan Ranjan Swain accompanied by executive director AM/NS Suresh G, Sarpanch Nuagarh Devendra Rout CEO and founder of fun first Dr. Vikas Yadvendu, senior officers from AM/NS, students, and Sarpanchs from a few local Gram Panchayats.

The skill course is designed under the guidance of the National Skill Development Corporation [NSDC] and its training partner [FGSPL] to offer two courses as domestic data entry operator and CRM domestic non-voice.

The candidates undergo basic screening and counseling

tests by a trainer [FGSPL] before enrolment. With about 440 hours of training including a field visit to the industry to add in the teaching, the successful candidates will be given placement opportunities.

Speaking at the inaugural event AM/NS executive director G Suresh emphasized the empowerment of digital training to job-seeking youths, as we are a responsible corporate house of country we give importance to making youths job-friendly, giving them skill development courses, the Executive director revealed.

## JSW donates beautification articles to Anganwadi centers

JAGATSINGHPUR, May 24: The JSW Utkal Steel Ltd is proposing to start a greenfield integrated steel plant in Dinkia Panchayat under Erasama block near Paradip, as part of its CSR activities donated a few articles and play materials to Anganwadi Centres functioning in project site areas.

As many as 15 Anganwadi centers in the proposed project site areas have availed the benefits, the centers have been painted and renovated, and a few play articles meant for children,



school bags, books, utensils, and swings have been provided.

Last two years these Anganwadi centers had been nonfunctional due to Covid 19

pandemic after the centers were reopened it could find that a series of damage had been noticed, and government agencies had paid no heed to repair and supply the

deficiency detected in centers.

JSW authority after knowing the striving condition of these Centers conducted a field visit and collected the feedback from the centers and decided to help the Anganwadi centers. JSW sources informed that about Rs 23 Lakh was spent for making the Centers' new facelift. The Anganwadi center workers, villagers, and proposed project site residents from pro and anti-outfits have expressed satisfaction and greeted JSW authority for their kind act.

## District disaster management committee meeting held in J'spur

JAGATSINGHPUR, May 24: The District Disaster Management Committee [DDMA] was held in the collector's office here, collector Parul Patwari chaired the meeting.

The DDMA acts as the district planning, coordinating, and implementing body for disaster management, so all measures likely to be taken for disaster management were discussed. The district disaster

management plan has decided to achieve the objective of disaster mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery. Officials connected with DDMA were instructed to implement the yearly

district disaster management plan to minimize human, property, and environmental loss.

The meeting was participated by Jagatsinghpur MP Dr. Rajashree Mallick,

District planning committee chairman MLA Prasanta Muduli, ZP president Manoj Kumar Bhoi, ADM Satchidananda Sahoo, Project director DRDA, BDOs from all eight blocks, municipality

chairpersons, block Panchayat Samiti Chairpersons, Tahasildars, deputy collectors, executive engineers from line departments, officials from the district health department, district emergency officer.



# While Aparajita demands the preservation of temple lands, BJP MLA Sanatan Bijuli goes the opposit: Servitors

Baripada, May 25:-The servitors of Haribaldevjeu temple urged against the Badasahi BJP MLA Sanatan Bijuli for his lure of support to some businessmen and residents who occupied lands of Haribaldevjeu in Mayurbhanj district.

The servitors said that while Bhubaneswar MP and BJP national spokesperson Aparajita Sarangi accused the State Government of failing to preserve the property of the Haribaldevjeu temple at Baripada, MLA of the same party goes the opposite way. She demanded immediate preservation of land over 44,221 acres in the name of the temple that wrongly recorded the names of individuals, and private and government institutions over some periods, the BJP leaders



in the Mayurbhanj district were not aware and allegedly supported them blindly over the issue. Thank the policy of BJP leaders in the district, the servitors urged that recently the district administration had served notices to more than 21 persons including a government office on 5 May

who were occupying the lands more than 717.77 decimals decades-long to shift their belongings and clear the land of the temple in Mahulia of Betnoti tehsil, Kamardiha, and Baunsatofa in Rasgobindpur tehsil in Mayurbhanj district and Bidyadharpur region in Basta tehsil of Balasore district.

However, the date of eviction was fixed by the district administration on 19 May to clear the lands of the temple but Badasahi BJP MLA Sanatan Bijuli had directed the district administration to wait for the eviction for seven days at least for the shifting of belongings of occupants of the lands, then the drive will be carried out that was trick that he had allegedly played either for his alleged benefits or given lure support to occupants, urged the servitors.

Kameswar Tripathy a servitor of Haribaldevjeu temple and president of Odisha Math Mandir Surakshya Samiti said that recently they met the collector to know about the stop of eviction. Collector Vineet Bhardwaj said that as some occupants were landless and

some were not shifted their belongings, so the eviction date had extended to a week as per the grievance of the occupants. Within seven days, the occupants knocked on the door of the High Court and got a stay order to stop the eviction of temple land.

The servitors claimed that the eviction drive would be smoothly carried out and the temple lands would be cleared if the Badasahi MLA Mr. Bijuli would not interfere in the matter.

However, the residents of the district asked the BJP leaders that when a senior leader cum MP of Bhubaneswar, as well as a national spokesperson, insisted on returning the lands of temple wrongly recorded to other names, in the meantime, why the Badasahi MLA

supported the occupants is raising a big question mark.

Contacted, Badasahi MLA Mr. Bijuli said that he had requested the Collector to stop the eviction drive for seven days in the Betnoti area.

The endowment department is reeling under an acute financial crisis. Sometimes the daily rituals of God and Goddess of Haribaldev Jew temple remained disrupted, even performances of the rituals having been delayed due to alleged crisis of money while 44,221 acres of land were in the name of the temple and later wrongly recorded to others. The servitors requested the authority of the endowment department seeking accessories needed for daily rituals of deities, which is a regular practice.

## 20 Injured As Drunk Driver Loses Control Of Mini-Truck

Dhenkanal: At least 20 persons were injured and five among them serious, following a major accident near Badajhara in Nuasahi today morning. The injured persons, all daily labourers,

treatment at SCB MCH in Cuttack.

The mishap occurred when the driver of the vehicle carrying the labourers lost control of the mini-truck after spotting a

thrown off on the road, and injured. According to reports, the driver of the vehicle was in an inebriated condition and driving very rash. The labourers were engaged in the railway



most of them non-Odias, have been shifted to Kamakhyanagar hospital. The seriously injured persons are undergoing

truck coming from the opposite side. Unable to manoeuvre the vehicle, the driver made it turn on one side. The passengers were

construction work on the Angul-Sukinda line. They were travelling from Muktapasi to Kamalanga, reports stated.

## Drones to help tackle forest fire in Similipal National Park

Drones will be used to help forest guards facing problems in the jungle. Besides, they will be used to drop ration and medicines in the interior parts of the forest inaccessible by road.

Baripada, May 10: The Similipal National Park authority successfully tested drone operation inside the forest for the first time.

As per reports, drones will be used to help forest guards facing problems in the jungle. Besides, they will be used to drop ration and medicines in the interior parts of the forest inaccessible by road.

Moreover, the primary objective of the flying objects would be to help detect fire incidents and help the forest guards douse them easily.

A training session was held for the forest officials on Tuesday to make them used to handling drones during emergencies.

Sources said, the



training session was a success and the drones transported water bottles and medicines effortlessly to the targeted areas.

Informing about the same, the Deputy Director of Similipal National Park, Samrat Goud said, "We did

a trial run of the drones and demonstrated the operation of the same to our officials."

He continued, "We are happy that the drones performed as expected and our staff are ready to handle them in emergencies."



# 6 Tourists Killed, 40 Injured As Bus Overturns

**Odisha Road Accident: Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has expressed grief over the accident and wished speedy recovery of the injured**

Berhampur, May 25: At least six tourists from West Bengal, four of them women, were killed and 40 were injured late on Tuesday night when the bus they were travelling in rolled down the road at Kalinga Ghat in the borders of Kandhamal and Ganjam districts of Odisha, police said.

The incident took place past midnight near Durgaprasad village in Ganjam and 15 people among the injured are in serious condition, the police said on Wednesday.

The bus carrying 77 people, about 65 of them tourists from West Bengal's Howrah and Hooghly districts, was moving towards Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh from Daringibandi in Kandhamal district when the mishap took place, Ganjam



Odisha Bus Accident: The seriously injured are admitted to MKCG Medical College in Berhampur

superintendent of police Brijesh Rai said.

Police and firefighters from nearby Bhanjanagar rushed to the spot and rescued the bus passengers, 40 of who

were injured. The others received minor wounds.

Police suspect that the bus rolled down the road while negotiating a curve in the hilly terrain after the driver lost

control over the vehicle.

The bodies of the six tourists who died in the mishap were retrieved after breaking the window panes of the bus, Bhanjanagar sub

divisional police officer SS Mishra said.

The dead are Supiya Denre (33), Sanjeet Patra (33), Rima Denre (22), her mother Mausumi Denre and Barnali Manna (34) from Sultanpur in Howrah district and Swapan Gushait (44), the cook from Gopalpur in Hooghly, police said.

The seriously injured were admitted to MKCG Medical College and Hospital in Berhampur and Bhanjanagar sub divisional hospital. The condition of at least ten persons who are being treated at the medical college hospital was stated by its doctors to be serious, police said.

Sources said the tourists had reached Daringbadi on Tuesday. After spending the entire day in the hill town they left for Visakhapatnam at

about 11.30 pm after dinner. The accident happened about an hour's journey from Daringbadi.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, and Odisha CM Naveen Patnaik expressed grief over the accident.

"I am deeply pained by the loss of lives due to a tragic accident in Odisha's Ganjam district. In this tragic hour, my thoughts are with the bereaved families. I pray that those injured recover at the very earliest: PM @narendramodi," tweeted Prime Minister's office.

Meanwhile, Odisha Transport Minister Padmanabha Behera has ordered a probe into the circumstances leading to the accident.

## Plant 50 trees for fining illiterate woman without hearing her case: Orissa HC to Tehsildar

Cuttack, May 21: Orissa High Court has directed a tehsildar to plant 50 trees as punishment for imposing a fine on an illiterate woman without hearing her case properly.

The court of Justice Biswanath Rath recently asked the tehsildar of Kakatpur in Puri district to plant the trees along

involvement of the tehsildar claiming bona fide action involved herein, to see no repetition of this nature of order by such authority in the state of Odisha, this court directs the tehsildar to plant at least 50 numbers of tree needed to be planted in roadside in any sector in the CDA area," the court order

**The court of Justice Biswanath Rath recently asked the tehsildar of Kakatpur in Puri district to plant the trees along the roads in any sector in Cuttack Development Authority (CDA) area**

the roads in any sector in Cuttack Development Authority (CDA) area.

Tehsildar Biranchi Narayan Behera had taken suo motu action against the woman, Mita Das, for allegedly squatting on a 0.08 acre 'gochar' (grazing) land in Balana village and building a kuccha house, and issued her an eviction order on September 15 last year besides imposing a penalty of Rs 1,000.

Hearing a petition filed by the woman's lawyer, Justice Rath observed that the tehsildar had passed a "bizarre" order without giving an opportunity for a hearing. Her friends had directed the woman to the lawyer.

"For the matter is heard

stated.

The tehsildar had taken action against the woman under the Orissa Prevention of Land Encroachment Act.

The woman's lawyer said that the petitioner being illiterate, was not aware of the law involved, and the tehsildar should have given an opportunity to her to file show-cause.

The tehsildar's counsel said that he had held the woman as encroacher after due assessment.

"When a proceeding is initiated under a statute, it has a definite purpose for more consideration, particularly, when the matter involves encroachment. The tehsildar should not have rushed to decide



the matter on that date itself.

"Looking at the nature of the case and for the involvement of eviction of a person from his residence, the tehsildar has a responsibility to find whether the encroacher is an educated and law knowing person or not. Further, the tehsildar has to see if the encroacher belongs to weaker section or is a person downtrodden in the society having not even sufficient income to take aid of counsel," Justice Rath said in the order.

The court said the tehsildar had no disclosure on particulars of land, no assigning of reason and conclusion before holding the person as an encroacher in the final order. While holding as encroacher no opportunity was provided to the person to have statutory appeal remedy.

It found that there has been mechanical disposal of the encroachment proceeding. It remitted the matter back to the tehsildar with a direction to the petitioner to appear before the tehsildar on May 27 or May 30 along with its show cause and the tehsildar to give opportunity of hearing by fixing a date for it and pass a reasoned order.

The court also ordered that a copy of the order be communicated to the principal secretary, Revenue and Disaster Management Department and principal secretary to Law Department for making an endeavour to ensure that such mistakes are not repeated by tehsildars across the state and restrict loading of such cases to the high court involving unnecessary litigation.

## Samiti member ostracised, fined Rs 4.5 lakh for 'not supporting BJD candidate in poll'

Rambha, May 21: A samiti member of Subalaya gram panchayat under Ganjam block is allegedly paying a heavy price for not supporting the candidature of a BJD nominee in the election to the post of block chairman.

Mami Das, the samiti member, has alleged that she has been ostracised from the village for not casting her vote in favour of a BJD candidate in block chairman election. A fine of Rs 4.5 has also been slapped on her, she added.

Mami was elected samiti member uncontested. In the block chairman election, she was pressurised to support a BJD candidate. She has been ostracised for not obeying them.

"I have met the SP. If I don't get justice, I would go to Naveen Niwas. If justice is not delivered to me there, I would commit suicide," she said. When contacted, Chhatrapur sub-divisional police officer (SDPO) Goutam Kisan said, "Mami Das, the samiti member, has alleged that she has been ostracised. But the veracity of her allegation is being verified. There has been a direction from the SP that any ostracise case should be taken seriously. Following the direction, a case has been registered at Rambha police station and the IIC of the police station is investigating into the case."

Meanwhile, Karuna Das, a local resident, termed the samiti member's allegation as baseless.



Samiti member ostracised, fined Rs 4.5 lakh for 'not supporting BJD candidate in poll'



# Gung-ho Template Politics



**Sirish C. Mohanty**

Odisha is the land of gods. The tradition of Shakti Puja in Odisha is old. In the villages of Odisha, worshipping of deities has been going on since time immemorial. Better late than never; Odisha CM Naveen Patnaik appears to realize the truth, but the critics perceive that it was a political need of the hour. However, unfazed by controversies over the vicinity development of the Jagannath Temple in Puri and the Lingaraj Temple in Bhubaneswar, the Naveen Patnaik government has continued to pump in massive funds for the facelift of Hindu religious places across Odisha, a move widely perceived as beating the BJP at its own game.

CM Patnaik inaugurated the newly developed Tara Tarini Temple on the bank of Rushikulya River in his home district of Ganjam on May 18, the fifth and concluding day of special pujas. On his return to the State capital, the Odisha CM did not waste time in approving the development of the Chandi Temple in Cuttack at an estimated expenditure of ₹70 crores.

The project is part of the 'Integrated development of heritage, monuments and tourist destinations' being taken up by the 5T (Transparency, technology, teamwork, time and

transformation) Department helmed by V. K. Pandian, the CM's trusted lieutenant. On April 27, Naveen Patnaik gave the go-ahead for the Rs.100-crore development of Nilamadhav Temple, Kantilo in the Cuttack district. The Nilamadhav temple, Rahasbihari Mandap, Raghunath Mutt and Batamangala Temple will also be developed.

A day before, on April 26, Mr. Pandian visited the Sarala Temple in Jagatsinghpur district and reviewed the scope of development around the temple. In all likelihood, the government may announce a temple development project running into crores of rupees.

At present, the State government has directed the expedition of the estimated ₹200-crore Samaleswari Temple development in the Sambalpur district. Simultaneous temple facelifts have been undertaken in Mayurbhanj, Puri, and Khordha districts. According to a senior Biju Janata Dal (BJD) leader, at least one temple in each district would be taken up for redevelopment.

**Setbacks to projects**

The BJD government-led by Mr. Patnaik, however, experienced setbacks to its flagship projects - the 12th-century Jagannath Temple, Puri, and the 11th-century

Lingaraj Temple.

The Rs.800-crore Shree Mandir Parikrama Project at Puri and the ₹700-crore peripheral redevelopment of Lingaraj Temple had run into controversies when the BJD government was criticized that it was trampling on archaeological treasures in its unyielding resolve to give facelifts to temples.

Workaround the Lingaraj Temple almost stopped after the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) stumbled upon ancient temple structures below the land identified for redevelopment around the 900-year-old temple.

When massive pillars were erected barely a few feet away from Jagannath Temple, Puri, experts, and political leaders expressed fears about its possible impact on the main temple. Multiple independent bodies like the lawyers association in Puri, locals, civil societies active in the holy town, and even the BJP, have raised concerns around the structural stability of the 12th-century monument as JCB machines are being used to dig up the area within the 75-meter radius of the shrine to set up public amenities. BJP MP from Bhubaneswar Aparajita Sarangi had also raised the issue in Parliament. Sarangi had alleged illegality in the implementation of the project

and claimed that the state government continued with its construction work in prohibited areas near Shree Jagannath Temple despite a letter to stop work issued by the Archaeological Survey of India.

After a public interest litigation plea was filed in the Orissa High Court, the ASI informed the court that the State government had not obtained the requisite permission for construction, which falls within 100 meters of the no-development zone of Puri temple.

In both cases, the ASI, the Central agency and custodian of monuments, was seen by BJD as a roadblock in the development. There was a growing suspicion within the rank and file of the regional party that the BJP was waging a shadow fight by bringing the ASI to the fore.

In the national political scenario, the BJP is perceived as the way ahead of other parties in competitive temple politics. The BJP-led NDA is now basking in glory for the ongoing construction of Ayodhya Temple and the completion of the Kashi-Viswanath Corridor project. The BJD grumbles that when such projects of massive scale did not face ASI hurdles, why the two projects in Odisha alone were entangled in restrictive monument laws.


However, the regional party is in no mood to give leverage to the saffron party. It is seen that the BJD has started hijacking the Hindutva model of the BJP. The BJP has found itself on a sticky wicket. The party doesn't want to be seen as blocking temple development projects and at the same time,

it cannot let the BJD runaway with credit for temple development, which has been its forte.

While the State unit of the BJP is maintaining a studied silence over the allegation of the Naveen Patnaik government steamrolling laws to redevelop temples, Bhubaneswar MP and national spokesperson Aparajita Sarangi and her colleague Sambit Patra are at the forefront of criticizing temple projects. Political observers said the BJP, through the two leaders, was testing the waters.

The Odisha BJP had only announced the 'Save Jagannath Temple' campaign on social media. Sri Mandira Surakshya Abhijan had said it would move the Supreme Court with a plea to stop construction in Puri.

Despite the Orissa High Court hearing a public interest litigation plea and the ASI submitting a damaging report, the controversial construction around Jagannath Temple is going on. The Naveen Patnaik government announced it would change its detailed project report to address ASI reservations, but it would not deviate from its redevelopment plan.

The BJD leadership has realized that its 'womb-to-tomb' welfare programs and woman empowerment drive would be difficult to be matched if the BJP could make inroads into the political space by whipping up religious issues. By undertaking massive temple development projects, the regional party has hopes to block the BJP of this possibility too. 



# World is a bridge, pass over it, but build no house



Sirish C Mohanty

in a daze for many years. A secular and democratic polity did handhold them as they limped back to normality. But, in a twinkling, they relapsed into the same narrative that had earlier also brought them grief. Identity continued to be their new shibboleth.

Since Indian Muslims, as Muslims, never had much power, it would be wrong to say that they lost any. The ruling class had a preponderance of foreigners. They were Turks, Persians, Afghans, and Arabs whose religion was Islam. In the transition from medieval to modern, and from feudalism to capitalism, most of them fell by the wayside. Still, in the new order, they could have had a proportionate share. But they went for the easier option of dividing the country. The remaining



independence. Soon after the independence, they are just trying to come to terms with what many in the community perceive to be their altered standing in India. They became too dependent on the politicians who transformed them into their vote bank. Again and again, the constitution was tinkered with, and new acts were passed to appease them. So for an Indian Muslim, morbid melancholia was stylized as a cultural trope, and victimhood became their favorite dope. Ideally, the Independence of India has stimulated them with new vigor as it did to every other Indian. But the self-inflicted injury of Partition kept them

Muslims, in the remaining part of India, sheltered by a democratic and secular Constitution, did have an opportunity to make their mark. If they haven't, some introspection is in order, they should ask themselves whether they, like their compatriots, undertook socio-religious reforms, and dotted the country with institutions of modern learning instead of the religious madrasa. If the answer is the negative, they have a lot of catching up to do.

The Indian Muslims have another perpetual problem. Not surprisingly, most of the Muslim upper castes are of foreign origin, and nearly all the Muslim lower castes are of Indian



origin. The upper caste Muslims in India claim that they are the torchbearers of Islam in India and the lower caste Muslims (converted) follow. They take the lead to play a victim card against any developmental program. They never allowed the common Muslims to join the mainstream of ordinary citizenry of India's democratic system by demonizing the majority of Hindus. Perhaps that is the reason the Muslim community in India opposes the CAA and NRC considered an essential part of a modern country. During the COVID days, the Muslims strangely went all-out against the free government-sponsored vaccination program. Even after many centuries of Mogul rule, this attitude is still visible in Muslims who take pride in their foreign lineage and remain disdainful of their indigenous co-religionists.

Even though Muslims are better off than earlier, what's the reason for their frustration about not remaining as powerful as they were in the mythical past? They haven't lost anything, and neither has

Islam. However, the theology of supremacies has been neutralized. Other people became equal to them, which theologians, steeped in the idea of supremacism, could not tolerate. The narrative of loss emanates from an outdated theology, which lacks the conceptual tools to make sense of a world beyond the binary of Darul Islam and Darul Harb - that is, the lands already conquered and the ones yet to be conquered have become things of the past. In this narrative, the profession of faith and observance of rituals do not suffice unless the believer has a monopoly over political power. Indeed, Islam is no longer the politically dominant religion. But neither is any other religion, including Hinduism, which, in theological terms, does not present itself as the maker and arbiter of India's politics. Hindutva is an ethnic-nationalist movement, which very avowedly anchors itself in nationalism, not in religion. Muslims, on the other hand, continue to think of politics in terms of religion because of the lack of reform. A

narrative is a story one weaves to inhabit as a character. Indian Muslims wove a false narrative and immured themselves in it. There could be another-India's rise. They would be indispensable to the plot if they could rewrite their story. The Indian Muslims should take a cue from their ancestor emperor Akbar who didn't hesitate to accept a Christian quotation, and probably that mindset of respecting other religions has enabled him to consolidate the Mogul dynasty in India:

Fatehpur Sikri is the ruined Mughal capital built by the emperor Akbar just outside Agra at the end of the 16th century. At its center lies the Buland Darwaza or Gate of Victory, one of the great masterpieces of Indian architecture and the most imposing monument in the city. A towering archway topped with lines of minars and chattri cupolas; it exudes the sort of refined arrogance that defines Muslim architecture at its most self-confident and imperial. It is about the last place on earth you would expect to find an overtly Christian inscription. But emblazoned around the arch

quotation itself was unfamiliar if you go down to Akbar's successors finally zeroing at Aurangzeb.

To realize the real meaning of "the world is a bridge" is easier said than done. Consequently, the successors of Akbar measurably failed because their arrogance and ego developed with the prolongation of the Mogul dynasty. The tendency to suppress or destroy other religions continued and took them miles away from Akbar's philosophy that the World is a bridge to pass it over; not to stay there for eternity which Akbar knew was an impossible proposition. During the rule of Aurangzeb, thousands of temples were destroyed or converted into Mosques. Behind the curtain, the history was in the making to script another chapter-the rising of the British Raj to replace the Mogul dynasty.

Therefore, Indian Muslims must rewrite their victim mindset to be indispensable to India's prosperity. They are better off than earlier, and they

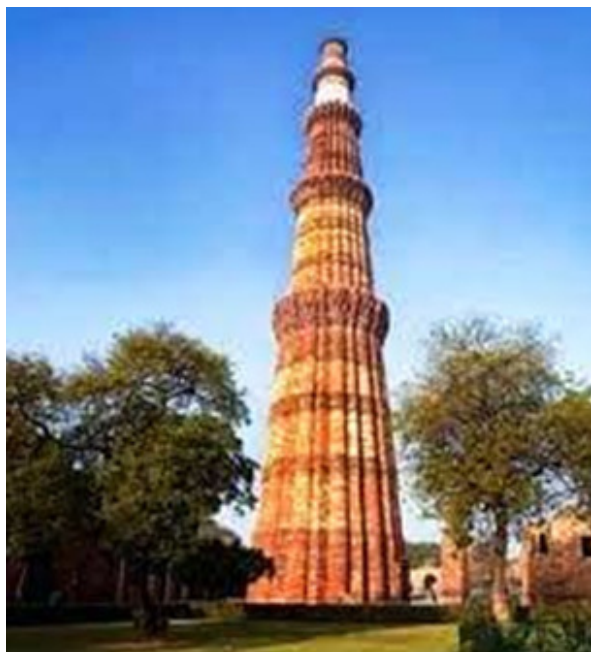


is a panel of Kufic script which reads: "The World is a Bridge, pass over it, but build no houses upon it. He, who hopes for a day, may hope for eternity; but the World endures but an hour. Spend it in prayer, for the rest is unseen." It was doubly surprising: not only did it seem odd to find a Christian quotation given center stage in a major Muslim monument, but the

have to live a contented life in the country with the majority of Hindus for all time to come as there is absolutely no scope for another partition. So there is nothing for them to get frustrated about in a country where all faiths enjoy equal rights to live a king's life. The only thing the Muslims should extricate themselves from their Aurangzeb-like mindset!



# Hindu sculptures exist, but worship against the law: ASI on Qutub



New Delhi, May 24: Opposing a plea seeking restoration of Hindu and Jain temples and deities at the Qutub Minar complex, the

Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) on Tuesday stated that though there was existence of Hindu sculptures inside the premises, worshipping inside

the centrally-protected monument would be contrary to existing laws.

Fundamental rights cannot be availed in violation of any status of the land, the

said. "It will be contrary to the provisions of the AMASR Act, 1958 (Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act) to agree to the

**The appellant alleged that around 27 Hindu and Jain temples were desecrated and damaged in 1198 under the rule of Slave Dynasty ruler Qutub-Din-Aibak raising the construction of the said mosque in place of those temples.**

archaeological body clarified in an affidavit.

"The basic principle of protection/conservation is not to allow starting of any new practice in a monument declared and notified as a protected one under the Act. Revival of worship is not allowed wherever it is not practiced at the time of protection of a monument," it

contention of the respondents or any other person claiming a fundamental right to worship in this centrally protected monument," it said in the affidavit. The submissions of the ASI came during the hearing the appeal challenging the rejection of a suit alleging that the Quwwat-ul-Islam Masjid situated within the Qutub Minar complex in

Mehrauli was built in place of a temple complex.

Earlier on February 22, allowing the appeal, Additional District Judge Pooja Talwar had sought the response of the Union of India through the Ministry of Culture, Director General of the Archaeological Survey of India, and Superintending Archaeologist, Delhi Circle, ASI in the matter.

"The Qutub Minar is not a place of worship and since the time of its protection from the Central government, the Qutub Minar or any part of the Qutub Minar was under worship by any community," the ASI said in its affidavit.

During the course of the hearing, ASI's counsel submitted that the apprehensions of the appellant were misplaced as the agency was not contemplating any removal or shifting of the idols as of now.

Shifting of the idols would involve various permissions from different agencies, and have national implications as it would amount to a policy decision, counsel clarified.

The appellant alleged that around 27 Hindu and Jain temples were desecrated and damaged in 1198 under the rule of Slave Dynasty ruler Qutub-Din-Aibak raising the construction of the said mosque in place of those temples.

The ASI, in the submission said that there is no denial of the fact about the deity's presence. It stated that the architectural materials and images of Hindu and Jain deities were reused in the construction of the Qutub Minar Complex.

"This is very clear from the inscription in the complex which is open for public viewing," it said.

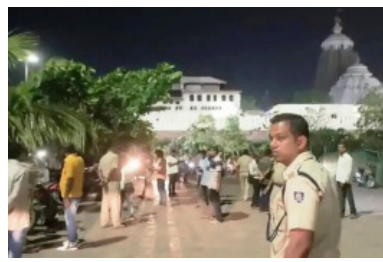
## One dead in firing near Emar Mutt Puri

Puri, May 24: One person was reportedly shot dead on the busy Kakudikhai square near the historic Emar Mutt in Puri on Tuesday. The deceased has been identified as Shivaram Patra from Harachandi Taluchha Sahi in the pilgrim town.

As per reports, two bike-borne miscreants opened fire two rounds of bullets killing Patra on the spot just 10 metres away from the Singha Dwara of the Puri Jagannath Temple. Eyewitnesses said,

**One person was reportedly killed in a shoot-out near busy Kakudikhai square near the historic Emar Mutt in Puri on Tuesday.**

Patra was riding his motorcycle towards Bada Danda through Kakudi khai road when he was fired upon near the Emar mutt. sHe is stated to have died on the spot itself. Singha Dwara



Police shifted the wounded Patra to Puri district headquarters hospital where he was declared dead. Puri SP also reached the spot to assess the situation.

A few days ago, senior

servitor of Puri Jagannath Temple, Krushna Chandra Pratihari was shot also dead over past rivalry in the town. Police acted strongly against the crime and arrested ten accused

involved in the dastardly act. Meanwhile, social activists have raised serious questions over the rise in cases of murders and other crimes especially due to poor gun controls.

## 7 Dead, 19 grievously Injured After Vehicle Carrying Soldiers Skids Off, fall into Gorge in Ladakh

Srinagar, May 27: A devastating accident in the Turtuk sector on Friday claimed the lives of seven soldiers and left 19 others grievously injured. It took place when a vehicle carrying 26 soldiers skidded off the road and rolled down into a gorge near Shyok river in Ladakh, officials said.

"A party of 26 soldiers was moving from the Transit Camp in Partapur to a forward location in Sub Sector Hanif when around 25km from Thoise, the vehicle skidded off the road and fell in the Shyok river causing injuries to all occupants," an official statement reads.

Following the incident, all 26 individuals were immediately evacuated to a field hospital in Partapur. "Seven individuals have been declared fatal so far. There are grievous injuries to others as well," it added.

The rescue operation was carried out swiftly, officials said. Later, all 19 injured soldiers were air lifted to Chandimandir Command Hospital in Chandigarh by C-17 Globemaster.

Reactions over the Incident President Ram Nath Kovind said he was saddened to know about the unfortunate road accident in Ladakh and expressed condolences to the families of the deceased. He also prayed for

the speedy recovery of the injured.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has expressed sadness over the bus accident in Ladakh and shared his thoughts with the bereaved families. "I hope those injured recover at the earliest. All possible assistance is being



given to the affected," he tweeted. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh spoke to Army chief General Manoj Pande following the tragic incident. General Pande apprised Singh of the situation and the steps taken by the Army to save the lives of the injured soldiers. "Deeply saddened by the loss of lives of our brave Indian Army personnel due to a bus tragedy in Ladakh". We will never forget their exemplary service to our nation. My condolences to the bereaved families and prayers for the speedy recovery of the injured," the defence minister wrote on Twitter.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah also expressed the sadness over the deaths of the soldiers.

## JSL inks pact to promote education in stainless steel tech

JAIPUR, May 24: : The State Council for Technical Education and Vocational Training (SCTEVT) signed an MoU with Jindal Stainless Ltd (JSL) on Monday to promote education in stainless steel and its various applications.

The agreement was signed by vice-chairman of SCTEVT Reghu G and JSL unit head Deepak Agrawal. Under the MoU, courses in stainless steel technology will be introduced in all the polytechnic colleges of Odisha from June 2022.

Chairman of SCTEVT and Industries Secretary Hemant Sharma said the collaboration will enhance the learning experience of both students and faculties. It will give them practical exposure to the stainless steel industry.

Resident director of JSL Sashi Bhusan Upadhyay said the MoU will pave way for equipping the country's upcoming workforce with focused practical understanding of stainless steel and its applications. There will be two modules

under the MoU - compulsory and elective. A course on stainless steel will be introduced as an additional compulsory module for Metallurgy and Mechanical

**Chairman of SCTEVT and Industries Secretary Hemant Sharma said the collaboration will enhance the learning experience of both students and faculties.**

engineering students in the 5th semester of every batch in all government polytechnic colleges.

The elective module will incorporate a 3-credit course

with about 40 lectures in the 6th semester for Mechanical and Metallurgy engineering students at government polytechnics in Jajpur and Kendrapara besides

Bhubanananda Orissa School of Engineering in Cuttack. Besides, JSL will conduct a 'Train the Trainers' programme for the faculty in these colleges.

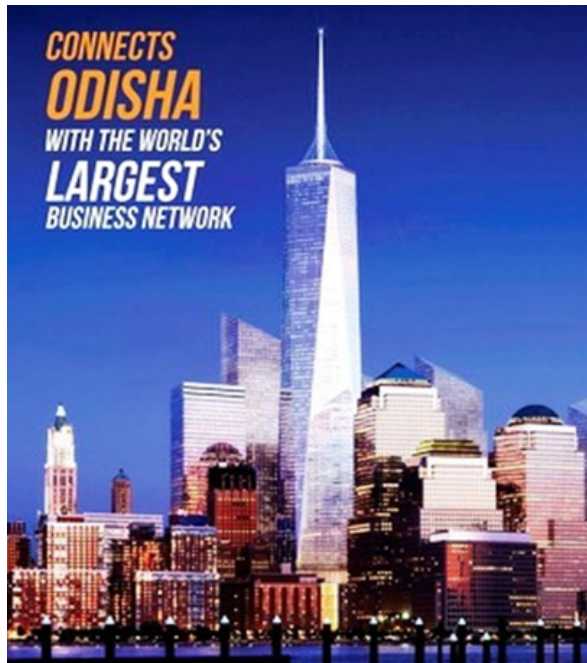


# 15 years on, WTC in Odisha yet to see the light of day

## IDCO has spent Rs 14 Cr towards consultancy fees and other expenses

BHUBANESWAR, May 25: Odisha government may have claimed to be going all out for industrialisation and facilitating entrepreneurs, but an International Convention Centre-cum-Trade Zone here that would have promoted global networking and brought foreign investment is yet to see the light of day even after 15 years of being proposed.

The Industrial Infrastructure Development Corporation (IDCO) has already spent Rs 14 crore towards consultancy fees and other related expenses. But the project has been inordinately delayed as a suitable site is yet to be finalised. The project was conceived in 2006 after the then vice chairman of World Trade Centre (WTC),



Model of WTC Bhubaneswar

Mumbai, had requested Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik for establishment of

WTC at Bhubaneswar to give international visibility to the industrial potential of

the State.

While inaugurating the WTC's branch office in Bhubaneswar in 2014, Naveen had announced that the construction of WTC would be completed in three years to facilitate interactions among global and local traders. Already seven years have passed since then, and there has been no tangible progress in the project.

Sources said the convention centre-cum-trade zone was proposed by the government at a cost of Rs 300 crore to cater to the demand of meetings, incentives, convention and exhibitions (MICE) segment of Bhubaneswar. Accordingly, IDCO had appointed the four agencies for providing different consulting services required for establishment of the convention centre-cum-trade

zone (CTZ) at Bhubaneswar.

Though IDCO has identified four locations - Janata Maidan, Info Valley, Satya Nagar and unused land of IMMT and OUAT for the proposed project, a suitable piece of land is yet to be selected. It was found that three land parcels were not centrally-located and lacked in hospitality sector, which is an essential factor for such an establishment.

Since the trade centre would house plenary hall of 2,500 capacity, meeting halls of 1,000 capacity and 500 capacity, small conference rooms/business centres, indoor exhibition hall of 40,000 square feet on the ground floor, outdoor exhibition / congregation space for 25,000 30,000 people and adequate car parking with support infrastructure of four-star

hotel facility, it needs to be centrally located.

Meanwhile, IDCO has discussed with chairman, OMC and Principal Secretary of Steel and Mines Department to obtain approval for 'Janata Maidan' land from the State government and finalise the funding pattern.

As the Janata Maidan land is with BDA, the GA department has been urged to go for a joint inspection and demarcation of the land in favour of IDCO. The government is also planning to allow OMC and IDCO to form SPV and jointly fund the project. Admitting that the project has been delayed due to land issues, IDCO Managing Director Bhupendra Singh Poonia said the discussion is on to finalise the location at the earliest.

## Odisha makes high security number plate mandatory for old vehicles

Bhubaneswar, May 27: The Odisha government has made affixation of high-security registration plates (HSRPs) mandatory for all classes of vehicles which were registered prior to April 1, 2019.

The HRPS has already been made mandatory for all

deadlines have been set for vehicles as per their registration number.

As per the order, August 31, 2022 is the deadline for the vehicles carrying an Odisha registration mark and registration number ending with 1 and 2, while September 31,

as soon as possible but not later than the above schedule.

If the vehicle owners fail to replace the existing number plates with HRPS before the deadlines, e-challans will be issued against the offending vehicle and it will attract a fine of Rs 5,000 or Rs 10,000 under Section 192 of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988, the transport commissioner warned.

The government order said legal action will be initiated against dealers or any other person found to be selling and supplying HSRPs in the state without being authorised by vehicle manufacturers.

All regional transport officers (RTOs) have been instructed to comply with the order to ensure that HSRPs are fitted on all motor vehicles registered prior to April 1, 2019, in a seamless manner.

The commissioner has directed the RTOs to convene meetings with the dealers functioning under their jurisdiction to sensitise them about the modalities for fitment of HSRP on old vehicles within the scheduled date.

October 31 and November 30 are the deadlines for the Odisha registration vehicles with numbers ending with 3 and 4, 5 and 6 and 7 and 8, respectively.

Similarly, vehicle owners with an Odisha registration mark and registration number ending with 9 and 0 will have to affix the HSRP by December 31, 2022.

To avoid a last minute rush, Bothra advised vehicle owners to affix HSRP on their vehicles

## Sambalpuri masks make a statement at Cannes Festival

This year, the Cannes has become more special for India because of a stupendous representation and even more so for Odisha thanks to the Sambalpuri fashion making a splash at the film festival.

World's most famous gathering of the cinema elite, the Cannes film festival not only brings together the greatest minds in the industry for once a year but equally attracts fashionistas from all over the world to the glamorous red carpet.

This year, the Cannes has become more special for India because of a stupendous representation and even more so for Odisha thanks to the Sambalpuri fashion making a splash at the film festival.

And the man who played a role in making this Sambalpuri statement at the Cannes, a moment of proud for entire Odisha was none other than Odia filmmaker Jitendra Mishra.

Jitendra, who was invited for screening of some of his movies at the film festival didn't let the



opportunity slip to popularise the Sambalpuri masks at the cine industry's biggest event. Thanks to his efforts, a good number of known faces of the film world at the festival were spotted wearing Sambalpuri masks on their faces.

"We are doing this (to make Sambalpuri masks popular) on our level independently. Next, we are scheduled to go to Czech Republic and Vienna. We will distribute Sambalpuri masks there as well," said Jitendra Mishra.

Two months ago when Mishra had placed an order for 500 masks with SPU Creation of Titlagarh, neither the organisation nor the weavers did know it that their face masks would fly

beyond seas to reach the French resort town and end up on the faces of the cine elite. As of now the owner of SPU Creation is cock-a-hoop.

"Sambalpuri clothes are an integral part of our culture and identity. By distributing Sambalpuri masks among the world's renowned filmmakers, he (Jitendra Mishra) has taken the popularity of the Sambalpuri clothes to the next level. I am really thankful to him," said Shreetam Bedbag, owner of SPU Creation.

Notably, Jitendra Mishra has been associated with so many critically acclaimed films including The Last Colour and Valley of Fire Files as co producer.

# HSRP

## HIGH SECURITY NUMBER PLATE

new vehicles registered on or after April 1, 2019, in the state. Odisha Transport Commissioner Arun Bothra has issued an order for this purpose in accordance with Rule 50 of the Central Motor Vehicles Rules, 1989.

Vehicle owners have been given three months' time to fix the HSRP on old vehicles before enforcement is undertaken by the transport department and police officials. Different



## Puri: Shree Jagannath temple survey sparks BJD-BJP war



Puri, May 23: The war of words between the Biju Janata Dal (BJD) and the BJP has intensified over the ongoing work for the development and beautification of the 12th century Shree Jagannath temple under the Puri Srimandir Heritage project.

Both sides traded charges as the administration carried out the Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) survey and impact assessment study for the project on the intervening night of Saturday-Sunday near the 12th century shrine. While BJP's national spokesperson Sambit

Patra has been exposed again on the issue of GPR. "Earlier, we had maintained that the deep excavation work was done without conducting the GPRS. But Misra tweeted stating that GPRS was duly done. Allegations about digging without doing GPR are baseless," Patra said.

Patra even maintained that the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) in its affidavit maintained that digging was done without the GPR. "We want to know why a team was found busy in conducting the GPR survey at the project site at midnight," Patra said.

### Both sides traded charges as the administration carried out the GPR survey and impact assessment study for the project near the 12th century shrine

Patra raked up the issue and targeted the Odisha government, Biju Janata Dal spokesperson Sulata Deo countered the charges and asked the BJP to refrain from politicising the issue.

GPR is a geophysical locating method that uses radio waves to capture images below the surface of the ground in a minimally invasive way. The huge advantage of GPR is that it allows crew to pinpoint the location of underground utilities without disturbing the ground. The BJD maintained that this was done at the time of excavation near the shrine; however, the BJP said the BJD was misleading people on the issue.

Patra accused BJD's Puri MP Pinaki Misra of misleading the people on the issue. The BJD countered and asked Patra to refrain from doing politics over the issue. "Stop playing electoral politics with Srimandir project, there are many other issues to do politics on," BJD's Sulata Deo tweeted.

Earlier, targeting the state government on the issue of GPR survey, Patra said, "The area near the temple was dug up using JCB machines without conducting the GPR. Now the survey is being carried out at night."

Targeting Misra in particular, Patra said Misra's lie

Earlier, Puri MP Misra had tweeted: "Documents will show GPRS was duly done and therefore allegations about digging without doing GPRS are baseless. The High Court affidavit will clarify all these aspects. All that's needed is a little more patience and a little less malice."

Deo on Sunday accused Patra of creating obstacles and obstructing the ongoing work by making false and misleading claims. In a series of tweets, Deo wrote: "You very well know that the GPRS study was done earlier and was submitted along with the detailed project report to the National Monument Authority (NMA). But still you are trying to mislead the people of Puri. NMA had permitted the reception centre at a lower height. It was shifted to the regulated zone since the government wanted to make it taller. Your false and misleading statements are hurting the sevayats and the Jagannath Premis (devotees of Jagannath) severely."

She also tweeted: "The sevayats of Puri who have donated their land and the Jagannath Premis will not forgive you for obstructing Puri project and regularly making false and misleading statements on it."

## Pakistani politicians fume after Yasin Malik gets life imprisonment

New Delhi, May 25: Pakistani politicians, who, over the last few days, have been expressing their solidarity with convicted Kashmiri separatist Yasin Malik, reacted with 'outrage' shortly after the Jammu & Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) chief was sentenced to life imprisonment by a Delhi court on Wednesday in connection with a 2017 terror funding case.

Shehbaz Sharif, who, last month, succeeded the ousted Imran Khan as the nuclear-armed state's prime minister, said the day was a 'black day' for India's democracy and justice system. "India can imprison Yasin Malik physically but it can never imprison the idea of freedom he symbolises. Life imprisonment for valiant freedom fighter will provide fresh impetus to Kashmiris' right to self-determination," the PML-N leader wrote on Twitter.

Pakistan foreign minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has written to UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet to urge India to acquit Kashmiri separatist leader Yasin Malik from all charges and ensure his immediate release from prison so that he can be

Pakistan PM Shehbaz Sharif described the day as a 'black day' for India's democracy. On the other hand, his foreign minister, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, vowed to provide 'all possible support' to 'our Kashmiri brothers and sisters.'



reunited with his family.

Pakistan's Foreign Office said in a statement that the foreign minister, as part of Pakistan's ongoing efforts to draw the attention of the international community to the situation in Kashmir, sent the letter to Bachelet on May 24.

"The letter apprises the High Commissioner, in particular, of the Indian government's ongoing attempts to persecute and repress the Kashmiris and their leadership and to implicate them in fictitious and motivated cases," according to the FO.

The Foreign Minister urged the high commissioner and the Human Rights Council to take immediate cognisance of India's targeting of indigenous Kashmiri leadership through motivated cases, particularly the treatment meted out by Malik.

He asked the high commissioner to urge India to acquit Malik from all baseless charges and ensure his immediate release from prison so that he can be reunited with his family, recuperate his health and return to normal life.

Separately, Foreign

Minister Bilawal has written a letter to the Secretary-General of the OIC, Hissein Brahim Taha, apprising him of the dire human rights and humanitarian situation in Kashmir.

New Delhi has also told Pakistan that it desires normal neighbourly relations with Islamabad in an environment free of terror, hostility and violence.

Their reactions came even as supporters of ex-premier Imran clashed with the Lahore Police as the former managed to push their way into Punjab in their bid to reach the Capital, Islamabad, where the Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) chairperson is scheduled to hold a massive rally against the 'imported' government of Shehbaz Sharif.

Meanwhile, clashes broke out in Jammu and Kashmir's Srinagar as well, with supporters of Yasin Malik clashing with the J&K Police. Security forces fired tear gas shells to disperse the agitators.

## Quad vows USD 50 billion investment in Indo-Pacific to counter China clout

The Quad leaders committed to working closely with partners and the region to drive public and private investment to bridge gaps. To achieve this, Quad will seek to extend more than USD 50 billion of infrastructure assistance and investment in the Indo-Pacific, over the next five years, the statement said.



New Delhi, May 24: The top leaders of India, the US, Australia and Japan on Tuesday vowed to extend more than USD 50 billion in infrastructure aid and investment in the Indo-Pacific over the next five years, amidst China's growing clout in the region.

A joint statement issued after the second in-person Quad summit attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, US President Joe Biden, Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida and his Australian counterpart Anthony Albanese, said that Quad partners bring decades of skills and

experience together to catalyse infrastructure delivery to the strategically vital region.

The Quad leaders committed to working closely with partners and the region to drive public and private investment to bridge gaps. To achieve this, Quad will seek to extend more than USD 50 billion of infrastructure assistance and investment in the Indo-Pacific, over the next five years, the statement said.

"We reaffirmed our shared commitment to deepen cooperation on infrastructure, which is critical to driving

productivity and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific region. We also share a commitment to addressing debt issues, which have been exacerbated by the pandemic in many countries," the statement added.

The Quad is widely seen as a counterweight to China's growing clout in the region. But members have emphasised that it is a group promoting what it calls "practical cooperation" in areas such as coronavirus vaccines, infrastructure, climate change and critical technologies.



# Pakistan on boil: Trees torched, tear gas fired during Imran Khan's march

**Violence was reported in Islamabad, Lahore, Rawalpindi, Karachi and parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa where supporters of Imran Khan's party Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf clashed with cops.**

Islamabad, May 26: Clashes erupted across several cities of Pakistan amid the Azadi March call by the ousted Prime Minister Imran Khan Niazi. After Rawalpindi, Karachi, Lahore and parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf supporters and workers resorted to violence in the federal capital Islamabad, where the party chief is set to hold the rally.

The Islamabad Police said the protesters during the march set fire to trees and vehicles in the Blue area of the capital, prompting the authorities to immediately call

fire tenders. The security in the Red Zone has been beefed up after the protesters set trees on fire on the Express Chowk too.

"No one is allowed to enter the red zone. If anyone tries to enter the red zone, it will be dealt with severely. In other places, officers are instructed not to use force. Protesters are urged to remain calm. Do not throw stones and damage property," the Islamabad police tweeted a statement by Inspector General Akbar Nasir Khan.

During a brief stopover just 50 kilometres away from Islamabad, Imran Khan said



**PTI workers set on fire a tree in Islamabad's Blue Area**

he and his supporters won't vacate the D-Chowk in the capital until a final election date was given by the Shehbaz Sharif government, Dawn reported.

"We have entered Punjab and insha'Allah we will move

towards Islamabad. No tactic of repression and fascism by this imported government can frighten us nor stop our march," Khan had tweeted moments ago.

Former Pakistan information and broadcasting

minister Chaudhary Fawad Hussain had tweeted that the PTI supporters had reached D-Chowk and Imran Khan would be anytime soon. Pakistan news website Dawn reported of intense shelling in the Blue area as television footage showed smoke rising from the ground.

Earlier in the day, clashes erupted in Punjab province after the PTI members in Lahore tried to remove the shipping containers which had blocked the routes to Islamabad. The police fired tear gas shells and arrested several protesters. The Punjab administration has

imposed Section 144 as it alleged the PTI wanted to disrupt peace.

However, the PTI in a tweet alleged that the Punjab Police in Lahore fired teargas shells on the protesters.

The situation was no less tense in Sindh's capital Karachi where the police and PTI workers clashed at the busy Numaish Chowrangi intersection, Express Tribune reported. The PTI workers even torched a police van and removed all hurdles set up by the law enforcement agencies. The cops resorted to firing in the air and teargas shells to disperse the protesters.

## Wife complains of backache, beggar gifts her modified TVS XL100 moped worth Rs 90,000

The extent to which people go to keep their loved ones happy and safe cannot be bound. Showing the same by setting an example, a beggar gifted his wife a moped worth about Rs 90,000. The aforementioned incident is of Amarwara Village in Chhindwara, Madhya Pradesh, where the beggar named Santosh Sahu bought the TVS XL 100 Heavy Duty for his wife, Munni. Moreover, though TVS XL 100 Heavy Duty costs Rs 45,561



(ex-showroom), the moped has been customised to adapt with the needs of specially-abled people with two-extra wheels to give it a better balance and hence costs more.

As per ANI's report, the couple earns roughly Rs 300 to 400 per day by begging at bus stops, temples, and mosques in and around the area where they dwell. The money for the moped had been obtained only through begging over the previous four years.

The man Santosh Sahu suffers from an ailment that prevents him from using his legs. The only mode of transportation for Sahu was his tricycle that his wife used to carry him in and pushed him around wherever he needed to go. The adversities for them didn't end there, things got worse during the bad weather and because of improper roads.

Because of constantly pushing Santosh around Munni started facing health issues, leading to sickness and back problems. Looking at all the problems his wife faced, Santosh felt helpless and eventually decided to save money to buy a new moped.

The TVS XL100 Heavy Duty moped that Santosh gave to his wife has been adapted to meet government standards for use by specially-abled people. Auxiliary wheels are added to the back of the moped to act as supporters when riding, reducing the risk of imbalance and falling. The rear auxiliary wheels have their own independent coil springs and fenders, which are bonded to the moped's chassis. TVS XL100 is one of the Heavy Duty vehicles and is one of the most affordable options for a vehicle in India. The vehicle is generally used for rugged work powered by a 99.7 cc engine.

## IAS couple, who walked their dog at Delhi stadium, transferred to Ladakh, Arunachal Pradesh

**The Union home ministry, which shunted them out, also sought and received a report from chief secretary, Delhi, on the 'factual position' after a news report alleged misuse of facilities at Thyagraj Stadium by Sanjeev Khirwar and his wife Rinku Dugga.**

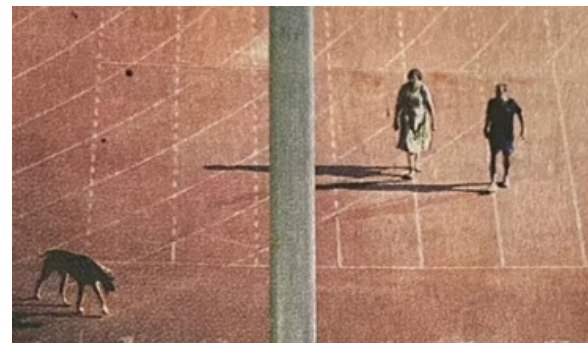
New Delhi, May 26: The Centre on Thursday shunted out IAS couple Sanjeev Khirwar and Rinku Dugga, both 1994 batch officers of the AGMUT cadre, outside Delhi, after it was claimed that athletes at the national capital's Thyagraj Stadium were being forced to finish their training early so that Khirwar could bring his dog to the facility for daily evening walk.

While Khirwar, who worked as principal secretary (revenue) with the Delhi government, was transferred to Ladakh, Dugga was sent to Arunachal Pradesh, a notification from the Union Ministry of home affairs (MHA) read. Their new

postings will come into effect immediately, and will be in force until further orders, it further stated.

Additionally, the MHA sought and received a report from chief secretary, Delhi, about the 'factual position' on the alleged misuse of facilities at Thyagraj Stadium by the couple.

Earlier today, The Indian Express reported, citing athletes who train at the Delhi government-run facility, that sportspersons who train there were being forced to finish training early so that Khirwar, who is from the city itself, could take a walk with his pet inside the ground. In a photo which went viral, the couple is



**The viral photo of the IAS couple and their dog.**

seen walking with their dog on what looks like an athletics track. Khirwar, on the other hand, told The Indian Express allegations against him were 'absolutely incorrect.'

Since Delhi is a Union

territory, bureaucrats here are appointed by the Union home ministry through its representative, the lieutenant governor of Delhi. Incidentally, the 22nd LG, Vinai Kumar Saxena, took oath today.

## Ramban tunnel collapse: All 10 bodies found, families informed, say officials

New Delhi, May 21: All ten bodies have been recovered from the debris of an under-construction tunnel that collapsed in Jammu and Kashmir's Ramban on Thursday. Ten labourers were trapped after a section of a tunnel on the Jammu-Srinagar national highway caved-in, triggering large-scale rescue ops by teams of police, the Army and state and national disaster response forces.

"All 10 bodies are recovered and families have

been informed. Five of 10 bodies are from West Bengal. This operation is complete. Bodies shifted to hospital," district official Mussarat Islam was quoted by news agency ANI.

"One more body was seen... machines have been (used) to remove the boulder... we are nearing the end of this rescue op," Ramban district police superintendent Mohita Sharma said, adding that those could be rescued would be saved and all bodies would be recovered.

**Ramban rescue work was suspended yesterday because of 'shooting stones - large and small rocks and debris that come hurtling down a hillside due to inclement weather conditions.'**

The first body - a labourer from Bengal - was found on Friday.

The audit tunnel of T3 on the highway near Khooni Nallah in Ramban district caved in at the start of work at 10.15 pm on Thursday.

Rescue work began immediately but was briefly suspended yesterday because of

'shooting stones - large and small rocks and debris that come hurtling down a hillside due to landslides or other inclement weather conditions.'

The debris was the result of a nearby landslide - part of a mountain in the Makerote area collapsed and forced a temporary break in rescue operations.



## Orissa HC restrains Anubhav & Varsha from posting anything on social media against each other

**Both Anubhav and Varsha have also been directed not to make any remarks against each other.**

Cuttack, May 27: Taking note of the recent developments in the Anubhav Mohanty and Varsha Priyadarshani marital discord case, the Orissa High Court on Friday issued stricture to the estranged couple.

had shared multiple videos on social media on their strained marital relationship. In the last video titled 'Untold truth part 3', Anubhav had criticised Varsha for bringing the family feud to the public and dared her to

sub-judice. She also alleged that the actor has been assassinating her character by uploading such videos and giving untasteful comments.

Later on May 25, Varsha filed a complaint with the Cyber



While hearing the petition of Varsha, the High Court today restrained both Anubhav and his wife Varsha from posting anything on social media against each other.

Both Anubhav and Varsha have also been directed not to make any remarks against each other.

It is pertinent to mention here that recently the BJD MP

undergo forensic, lie detection and medical tests.

Prior to this, Varsha on May 22 had lodged complaint against her husband Anubhav and his family at Purigat police station and cyber police in Cuttack.

In her seven-page FIR, Varsha had accused Anubhav of telling concocted story through two videos in order to tarnish her image when the matter is

police station alleging that some people are attempting to malign her image on social media.

In response to her FIR, the actor-turned-politician, in a social media post on May 25, accused the actress of owning the fan pages and posting whatever she wishes. And, also accused her of praising herself, and abusing, insulting and harassing whoever she wants to.

## Parents resort to begging to save son suffering from kidney ailment

Nirakar's parents, residents of Pathara village under Khallikote block in Ganjam district, is getting Rs 1,500 from Biju Swastya Card for dialysis which is not enough.



Khallikote, May 27: According to sources, Nirakar had gone to a neighbouring state to eke out a living. As he frequently fell ill, he came back to Odisha. After doctor's consultation, his parents came to know that Nirakar was suffering from kidney ailment. Though Nirakar's parents took him to several government and private hospitals for his treatment, but he is yet to be cured. They have spent Rs 13 lakh for their son's treatment, but he is yet to show any sign of improvement. They have already sold all their gold and silver jewellery apart from house for the sake of their son's treatment.

Currently, Nirakar undergoes dialysis three times a week. However, they are getting Rs 1,500 for the dialysis from Biju Swastya Card Yojana which is a meager amount for the treatment. Nirakar's father is a fisherman. Now doctors who are treating Nirakar have asked his parents to arrange funds so that Nirakar can undergo kidney transplantation. As kidney transplantation requires lakhs of rupees, his parents have resorted to begging to save their son's life.

"We have also sold our house. Nothing has left with us for our son's treatment. Finding no other go, we are begging to raise funds," said his mother.

"For last five months, I am not able to go to Chilika to catch fish due regular visit of hospital. We have spent Rs 13 lakh so far for Nirakar's treatment and need more funds for his kidney transplantation. I would be grateful if the state government extends a helping hand and provides required funds for Nirakar's treatment," said his father.

A helpless Nirakar has requested for a kidney donation to save his life.

"Both of my kidneys are not functioning. I request for a kidney donation from a Samaritan to save my life," he said.

## From Page-1

## Govt cuts excise ...

improve availability of cement and, through better logistics, reduce its cost.

The Reserve Bank of India, while reducing the repo rate by 40 bps in an out-of-turn monetary policy meet earlier this month, had flagged concerns over high food and fuel prices feeding into inflation.

The Wholesale Price Index-based inflation rate had surged to a record high of 15.1 per cent in April while Consumer Price Index-based retail inflation had also surged to an eight-year high of 7.79 per

cent in April.

In April, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had pointed out that Maharashtra, West Bengal, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, and Jharkhand have not reduced VAT, and urged "all states to work as a team in this time of global crisis following the spirit of cooperative federalism".

As fuel prices soared in November 2021, the Centre, for the first time in over three years, cut Central excise duties on petrol (by Rs 5 per litre) and diesel (by Rs 10 per litre).

Twenty-one states, including 17 ruled by the BJP, and some Union Territories then cut VAT in the range of Rs 1.80-10 per litre for petrol and Rs 2-7 per litre for diesel. The revenue loss to states due to this was estimated at 0.08% of GDP, as per the RBI's State Finances report for 2021-22.

The relief these moves had provided was outweighed by a series of 14 price hikes in 16 days, following the lifting of a 137-day freeze after state elections in March.

Experts said the excise

duty cut will help cool the inflation trajectory. "We project the May 2022 CPI inflation at between 6.5-7.0%. The fiscal cost, while material, can be absorbed by higher than budgeted revenues through other taxes," said ICRA Chief Economist Aditi Nayar.

"It will help reduce inflation by around 20 basis points - but in June. In May, its impact will be only for 10 days," said Devendra Kumar Pant, Chief Economist, and India Ratings said.

The Centre had hiked the excise duty on petrol

by Rs 13 per litre and on diesel and Rs 16 per litre through two rounds of hikes in March and May 2020 as the lockdown had severely reduced collections from other revenue sources.

It had then cut the excise duty on diesel by Rs 10 per litre and that on petrol by Rs 5 per litre in November. Rising international crude prices in the wake of the Russia-Ukraine conflict pushed the price of Brent crude by 44.7 per cent to \$112.55 per barrel from \$77.78 per barrel at the beginning of the year.

Customs duty on imported raw materials used by the steel industry including coking coal, coke, semi-coke and ferronickel has been reduced to zero in order to reduce the domestic cost of steel production. Also, to increase domestic availability, duty on exports of iron ore has been hiked to 50 per cent, for iron ore pellets to 45 per cent and for some steel intermediaries to 15 per cent. Import duty on naphtha, propylene oxide, and polymers of vinyl chloride has also been reduced.



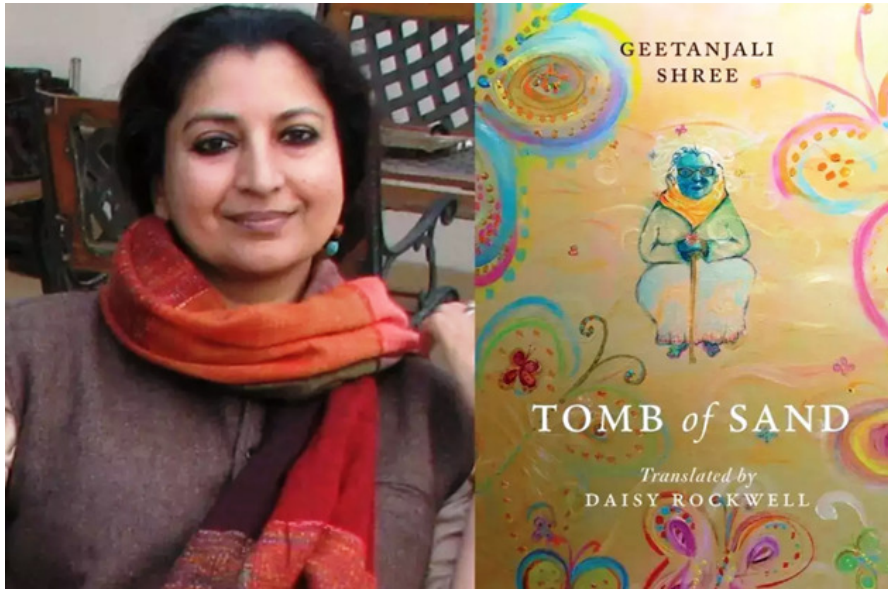
# Booker Prize To Hindi Novel For 1st Time: Geetanjali Shree's "Tomb Of Sand"

London, May 27: Author Geetanjali Shree's Hindi novel 'Tomb of Sand' has become the first book in any Indian language to win the prestigious International Booker Prize.

At a ceremony in London on Thursday, the New Delhi-based writer said she was "completely overwhelmed" with the "bolt from the blue" as she accepted her prize, worth GBP 50,000 and shared with the book's English translator, Daisy Rockwell.

'Tomb of Sand', originally 'Ret Samadhi', is set in northern India and follows an 80-year-old woman in a tale the Booker judges dubbed a "joyous cacophony" and an "irresistible novel".

"I never dreamt of the Booker, I never thought I could. What a huge recognition, I'm



Geetanjali Shree's 'Tomb of Sand' was originally published in Hindi in 2018.

to it. 'Ret Samadhi/Tomb of Sand' is an elegy for the world we inhabit, a lasting energy that

do the book no harm," she said. Reflecting upon becoming the first work of fiction in Hindi

book lies a rich and flourishing literary tradition in Hindi, and in other South Asian languages. World literature will be the richer for knowing some of the finest writers in these languages. The vocabulary of life will increase from such an interaction," she said.

Rockwell, a painter, writer and translator living in Vermont, US, joined her on stage to receive her award for translating the novel she described as a "love letter to the Hindi language".

"Ultimately, we were captivated by the power, the poignancy and the playfulness of 'Tomb of Sand', Geetanjali Shree's polyphonic novel of identity and belonging, in Daisy Rockwell's exuberant, coruscating translation," said Frank Wynne, chair of the judging panel.

"This is a luminous novel

**Geetanjali Shree Wins Booker Prize: 'Tomb of Sand', originally 'Ret Samadhi', is set in northern India and follows an 80-year-old woman in a tale the Booker judges dubbed a "joyous cacophony" and an "irresistible novel".**

of India and partition, but one whose spellbinding brio and fierce compassion weaves youth and age, male and female, family and nation into a kaleidoscopic whole," he said.

The book's 80-year-old protagonist, Ma, to her family's consternation, insists on travelling to Pakistan, simultaneously confronting the unresolved trauma of her teenage experiences of Partition, and re-evaluating what it means to be a mother, a daughter, a woman, a feminist.

The Booker jury were impressed that rather than respond to tragedy with seriousness, Ms Shree's playful tone and exuberant wordplay results in a book that is "engaging, funny, and utterly original", at the same time as being an urgent and timely protest against the destructive impact of borders and boundaries, whether between religions, countries, or genders.

The author of three novels and several story collections, Mainpuri-born Ms Shree has translated her works into English, French, German, Serbian, and Korean. Originally published in Hindi in 2018,

'Tomb of Sand' is the first of her books to be published in the UK in English by Tilted Axis Press in August 2021.

Ms Shree's novel was chosen from a shortlist of six books, the others being: 'Cursed Bunny' by Bora Chung, translated by Anton Hur from Korean; 'A New Name: Septology VI-VII' by Jon Fosse, translated by Damion Searls from Norwegian; 'Heaven' by Mieko Kawakami, translated by Samuel Bett and David Boyd from Japanese; 'Elena Knows' by Claudia Piñeiro, translated by Frances Riddle from Spanish; and 'The Books of Jacob' by Olga Tokarczuk, translated by Jennifer Croft from Polish.

This year the judges considered 135 books and for the first time in 2022, all shortlisted authors and translators will each receive GBP 2,500, increased from GBP 1,000 in previous years - bringing the total value of the prize to GBP 80,000.

Complementing the Booker Prize for Fiction, the international prize is awarded every year for a single book that is translated into English and published in the UK or Ireland.



amazed, delighted, honoured and humbled," said Ms Shree, in her acceptance speech.

"There is a melancholy satisfaction in the award going

retains hope in the face of impending doom. The Booker will surely take it to many more people than it would have reached otherwise, that should

to make the Booker cut, the 64-year-old author said it feels good to be the means of that happening.

"But behind me and this

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### Puri: Shree Jagannath...

locating method that uses radio waves to capture images below the surface of the ground in a minimally invasive way. The huge advantage of GPR is that it allows crew to pinpoint the location of underground utilities without disturbing the ground. The BJD maintained that this was done at the time of excavation near the shrine; however, the BJP said the BJD was misleading people on the issue.

Patra accused BJD's Puri MP Pinaki Misra of

misleading the people on the issue. The BJD countered and asked Patra to refrain from doing politics over the issue. "Stop playing electoral politics with Srimandir project, there are many other issues to do politics on," BJD's Sulata Deo tweeted.

Earlier, targeting the state government on the issue of GPR survey, Patra said, "The area near the temple was dug up using JCB machines without conducting the GPR. Now the survey is being carried out at

night."

Targeting Misra in particular, Patra said Misra's lie has been exposed again on the issue of GPR. "Earlier, we had maintained that the deep excavation work was done without conducting the GPRS. But Misra tweeted stating that GPRS was duly done. Allegations about digging without doing GPR are baseless," Patra said.

Patra even maintained that the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) in its affidavit

maintained that digging was done without the GPR. "We want to know why a team was found busy in conducting the GPR survey at the project site at midnight," Patra said.

Earlier, Puri MP Misra had tweeted: "Documents will show GPRS was duly done and therefore allegations about digging without doing GPRS are baseless. The High Court affidavit will clarify all these aspects. All that's needed is a little more patience and a little less malice."

Deo on Sunday accused Patra of creating obstacles and obstructing the ongoing work by making false and misleading claims.

In a series of tweets, Deo wrote: "You very well know that the GPRS study was done earlier and was submitted along with the detailed project report to the National Monument Authority (NMA). But still you are trying to mislead the people of Puri. NMA had permitted the reception centre at a lower

height. It was shifted to the regulated zone since the government wanted to make it taller. Your false and misleading statements are hurting the sevayats and the Jagannath Premis (devotees of Jagannath) severely."

She also tweeted: "The sevayats of Puri who have donated their land and the Jagannath Premis will not forgive you for obstructing Puri project and regularly making false and misleading statements on it."



# Over The Moon

**CAST:** Cathy Ang, Phillipa Soo, Ken Jeong, John Cho, Ruthie Ann Miles, Margaret Cho, Sandra Oh

**DIRECTION:** Glen Keane

**GENRE:** Animation, Fantasy

**Critic's Rating:** 3.0/5

**Love, loss, life...**



Over the Moon is directed by Glen Keane, who used to be with Disney before and has worked on such iconic films as The Little Mermaid, Aladdin and Beauty And The Beast. Hence, there's a distinct Disney influence in the film. It's reflected most in the hand-drawn scenes when Fei Fei's mother acquaints her with the doomed love story of the moon Goddess. The castle in the sky, the cuddly moon residents who glow from the inside, the visual palette, all smack of Disney. The film's screenplay, which deals with the theme of loss and growth, too resembles Disney's entertainment with a moral formula. The script has been written by the late Audrey

Wells. The film is dedicated to the writer who sadly succumbed to cancer two years before its release. Given that context, the central theme of the film becomes even more

poignant.

The film utilises the Chinese myth of the Moon Goddess to weave a tale about loss, grief, and the power of love. Animation has been a great tool for filmmakers to explore the theme of children coping with grief, especially when the loss of a parent is involved. Children internalise things differently and if certain wounds in their psyche aren't tended in time then they can fester for years. The Moon Goddess, despite being divine, is herself hasn't overcome her grief of losing her human lover and a chance meeting with the film's protagonist leads her towards resolution.

The film begins with Fei Fei (Cathy Ang) being told the legend of the Moon Goddess Chang'e (Phillipa Soo) by her mother (Ruthie Ann Miles). Chang'e has been exiled to the moon for allegedly stealing two immortality pills. She wanted to make her human lover Houyi immortal as well but didn't succeed. Fei Fei's father (John Cho) runs a cake shop and her mother's mooncakes are famous in their locality. During the annual Moon Festival, Fei Fei's mother falls ill of cancer and dies. Four years later, he's seen courting Mrs Zhong (Sandra Oh), a widow with a young son Chin (Robert G Chiu). While the rest of the family, who have gathered once more for the Moon Festival, have accepted

Mrs Zhong, Fei Fei has not. She's saddened by the fact that her father wants to move on. She sees it as a betrayal of her mother's love and wants to land on the moon, meet the Moon Goddess and bring proof of the 'eternal love' as told in fables. She invents her own moon rocket and with timely help from helpful lion dragons, does manage to land up on the moon. She finds that the Moon Goddess is more of a diva than a benevolent spirit, who's convinced that Fei Fei has brought her a gift which will provide her with a resurrection spell for her dead lover. She sets



on the lunar landscape. The world-building is truly amazing. And the Moon Goddess looks like a cross between Maleficent and Lady Gaga. Her various mood swings transform the landscape. Her tears are sentient beings and she's protected by an army of glowing mooncakes. There are biker chicks who actually are chickens riding some really awesome bikes, a jade rabbit who is a wizard and a wise creature named Gobi, who resembles an otter. One can see that again, poetic liberty has been taken and ideas from across different banners and films have been appropriated. Director Glen Keane's idea of China is that of an idyllic hamlet populated by kind souls who always help each other out. It's a place where spiritual harmony remains an ideal for everyone. Nothing wrong in imagining a utopia but we wonder whose agenda is being served by painting such a placid picture.

The film is part musical, part coming-of-age story and part pure fantasy. It falters in the execution of juggling all three parts. Disney, Pixar and Studio Ghibli have set high standards for others to follow. Over The Moon is a step in the right direction for its makers but they still have a lot of catching up to do...

off a Cannonball Run like competition, where all the cuddly denizens of the moon participate, looking for the lost gift. Chin has also towed himself along for the adventure. He always wanted a sister and thinks finding the gift would help win Fei Fei over. How Fei Fei's search leads both her and the Moon Goddess towards closure forms the crux of the story.

The film becomes a visual extravaganza once Fei Fei lands



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