

After 'Smoking Kaali', Row Over Protesters 'Shiva & Parvati' in Assam, Actor Held After Complaints

After a controversy over the 'unacceptable' depiction of Hindu Goddess Kaali by a Canada-based documentary filmmaker, a similar issue seems to have trudged up in Assam.

Guwahati, July 10: At around 8:30 am on Saturday morning, 'Lord Shiva' appeared on the streets of Nagaon town in Assam along with 'Goddess Parvati' on a Royal Enfield bullet. Everything seemed fine until the vehicle's fuel ran out, and his partner, who was personifying Parvati, acted 'peeved at it'. The turn of events led to an 'argument' between the duo which revolved around price rise and issues of the common man, especially related to



inflation.

While the duo has said that the 'creative protest' was

done to just attract eyeballs to the issue at hand, actor Brinicha Bora, who

personified Shiva, was later detained by the local police for interrogation. This was after some Hindu organisations threatened against such 'bad' depiction of the deities.

The actress portraying Parvati, Parismita Das, talked about why the duo had decided upon the act. "People normally do not heed to awareness rallies and to stage a protest you need lot of arrangement. We therefore decided to portray the issue in a more attractive

way which people would understand and take interest," she said.

And Bora, now under detainment, had said since people prayed to lord Shiva for their problems and concern, the duo believed that this enactment would attract people towards the issue they wanted to highlight.

However, not all took kindly to the 'creative protest'.

Hindu organisations like Vishwa Hindu Parishad, and Bajrang

Dal later filed cases against the actor accusing that the duo had portrayed the Hindu god and goddess in a 'bad light' and did not 'have the liberty to do so'.

"We shall not tolerate an act like this. We are liberal but that doesn't allow any one take advantage of it. We have nothing to say against the protest but why use our God and goddess' name or involve and demean them," claimed Pradip Sharma, Secretary, Bishwa Hindu Parishad, Nagaon.

CM Mann Marries Doctor, Arvind Kejriwal Attends With Family

Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) chief and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and Raghav Chaddha are among the guests at the low-key wedding.



New Delhi, July 7: Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann today married Gurpreet Kaur, a 32-year-old doctor, in a simple, private ceremony at his home in Chandigarh.

Bhagwant Mann and Gurpreet Kaur, dressed in red and gold, were seen at their "Anand Karaj" ceremony in visuals on TV and social media.

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) MP Raghav Chaddha were among the few guests at the low-key wedding that mostly featured family and relatives.

Raghav Chaddha shared many photos of the wedding, calling Bhagwant Mann his older brother.

"Mann sahab nu lakh lakh vadhaiyan (many congratulations of Mann Sahab)," Mr Chaddha

tweeted, sharing a photo in which he and Arvind Kejriwal were seen walking with the groom.

Bhagwant Mann, 48, has known Gurpreet Kaur for a few years through family ties. Gurpreet Kaur reportedly also helped him during his Punjab election campaign.

"Today is a day of immense happiness that my younger brother and Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann ji is getting married and is making a new beginning," Arvind Kejriwal told reporters at the airport.

"His mother's dream was for him to marry again and settle down. I congratulate him. God bless the couple," said Raghav Chaddha, who helped plan the wedding. Mr Mann, a former stand-up comic, was divorced six years ago and has two children

from his previous marriage. His children live with their mother in the US. They came for Mr Mann's oath ceremony on March 16.

The wedding menu was a blend of Indian and Italian cuisine; it included Karahi Paneer, Tandoori Kulche, Dal Makhani, Navratan Biryani, Mausami Subzian, Apricot Stuffed Kofta, Lasagna Siciliano and Burrani Raita. A fresh fruit trifle, moong dal halwa, shahi tukda, angoori rasmalai and dry fruit rabri were also part of the elaborate spread.

The bride, Gurpreet Kaur, completed her MBBS from a private university in Haryana four years ago.

She shared a photo on Twitter this morning and wrote, "Din Shagna Da Chadya (the day of my wedding has arrived)".

Dr Kaur's neighbours in Pehowa in Kurukshetra said they found out through the media that she was marrying the Chief Minister.

"We know the bride by the name of Gopi. It was only in the morning that we came to know she was getting married to the Punjab Chief Minister," said a neighbour quoted by ANI. Gurpreet Kaur is the youngest of three sisters.

PM Modi unveils national emblem on new Parliament building

Officials said the emblem is made up of bronze with a total weight of 9,500 kg and is 6.5 metre in height

New Delhi, July 11: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday unveiled the national emblem cast on the roof of the new Parliament building.

Officials said the emblem is made up of bronze with a total weight of 9,500 kg and is 6.5 metre in height. It has been cast at the top of the central foyer of the new Parliament building, and a supporting structure of steel weighing around 6,500 kg has been constructed to support the emblem, they said.

Modi also interacted with



workers involved in building the new Parliament.

The concept sketch and process of casting of the national emblem on the roof of the new

Parliament building has gone through eight different stages of preparation from clay modelling and computer graphics to bronze casting and polishing, they said.

Kaali poster row: Delhi court summons filmmaker Leena Manimekalai

The plea moved by Advocate Raj Gaurav, contended that the poster of the film depicts the goddess smoking cigarettes which not only hurts the religious sentiments of common Hindus but is also against the basics of morality and decency.

New Delhi, July 11: A district court here has issued summons to filmmaker Leena Manimekalai and others for August 6, in a suit seeking an interim injunction to restrain them from depicting Hindu goddess Kaali in their latest film poster, video, and tweet "in a very uncalled way". The plea moved by Advocate Raj Gaurav, contended that the poster of the film depicts the goddess smoking cigarettes which not only hurts

the religious sentiments of common Hindus but is also against the basics of morality and decency. Further, the alleged poster was tweeted by defendant (Leena) from her Twitter handle, the petitioner added. "The relief of interim injunction is discretionary relief. Further, as held by the Supreme Court in a number of cases the ex-parte ad-interim injunction has to be granted in exceptional circumstances and the

undersigned is of the opinion that the defendant needs to be heard before passing any order against them," Justice Abhishek Kumar of Tis Hazari Court said. "...therefore, issue summons of the suit and notice of the injunction application..." the court said in the recently passed order made available today. Apart from the filmmaker, notices and summons were also issued to her company, Touring Talkies Media Private Limited.

Super presidential poll margin fad, or agenda to set the future path



Prof. Shivaji Sarkar
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Never before since 1969, has the presidential election become so talked about though this time the result is almost no secret. The BJP's election management for a super margin and romp home with a margin higher than 2017 has made the politics unusually out of the ordinary.

The fad for a super number of votes is unparalleled in an election that has little relevance except for a majority. There may be much more to it than meets the eye maybe not until the 2024 elections but soon after that for a new order. Nobody spells that out but it can be for a variety of reasons. 1969 was different - the VV Giri election against Sanjeeva Reddy was an intra-Congress affair that finally led to the decimation of

the syndicate and Indira Gandhi as the new leader.

The opposition is also losing its credibility for not raising the issue of inflation and a lot more. Congress is busy with its first family and a pseudo-presidential battle. Together or individually none of them even bring out a protest rally.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is himself leading the party in creating a sort of record by having the maximum number for the ruling alliance's presidential nominee Droupadi Murmu. It is troubling the opposition parties the most and many leaders, including West Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee, are feeling cornered by an astute BJP leadership. Modi's love-hate relationship with opposition nominee

Yashwant Sinha is known. Having fallen out of his favor it's no wonder, the strategies are intended to give him the feel of biting the dust. In the process, the entire opposition is finding itself in an uncanny situation and uncertain future.

The sudden turn in Maharashtra politics with 55 Shiv Sena MLAs joining a government with BJP is planned to not only form a government and turn the state politics into a tizzy affair. The way now the Shinde group forced Shiv Sena chief Uddhav Thakre to vote for Murmu speaks volumes. Shiv Sena has a total vote value of 25893.

Wherever the opposition parties are not cohesive, it is getting shocked after shock and finds their ranks tilting towards Murmu. In UP, the Samajwadi party ranks appear mysteriously to favor Murmu. Pragatisheel Samajwadi Party (Lohia) Shivpal Singh Yadav announced he would vote for Murmu. Om Prakash Rajbhar attended the dinner of Murmu and chief minister Yogi Adityanath but the next morning he said he would vote for the candidate being supported by Akhilesh Yadav.

Mayawati's BSP is supporting Murmu.

UP may spring some surprises. Jansatta Dal Loktantrik founder Raghuraj Pratap Singh alias 'Raja Bhaiya' extended his support to Murmu, saying his two MLAs will vote for Murmu.

Murmu meets 31 YSR Congress Party MPs and 151 MLAs and later joins a tea hosted by Andhra chief minister Jagan Mohan Reddy assuring him all support. The opposition Telugu Desam Party with 4 MPs and 23 MLAs has announced to support the NDA nominee. The lone MLA of Jana Sena who is virtually now in YSRCP has also announced to back Murmu. In effect, all votes from Andhra Pradesh will go to Murmu.

Almost similar is the situation in Odisha. Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik's BJD and BJP are voting for her. There is little doubt about Bihar either despite some reservations of chief minister Nitish Kumar. Jharkhand CM Hemant Soren who had initially thrown his phalanx with Sinha almost overnight not only was won over by BJP but even told Sinha not to visit his home state for campaigning.

Rajasthan has seen cross-voting during the Rajya Sabha polls. Now BJP is trying to dent the Congress votes with an appeal to the scheduled caste and scheduled tribe MLAs to vote for tribal Murmu. The BJP-backed Subhash Chandra lost the RS poll.

Surprises remain in West Bengal. While Mamata Banerjee, worried about Santhal votes, blames BJP for not telling about Murmu's candidature, her missive to Yashwant Sinha not to visit the state for campaigning speaks volumes. She has not yet

said how she would vote. Indeed she led the opposition to fight the contest,

The opposition leaders want Sinha to visit Bengal for his canvassing. CPM leader Sitaram Yechury, NCP's Sharad Pawar, and Congress' Mallikarjun Kharge feel skipping Bengal would send a wrong message. Yechury told him that the Left will host him in Bengal. Meanwhile, Murmu, who meets 69 BJP MLAs, seeks a separate meeting with Mamata.

Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal still holds the AAP card close to his chest

Though Murmu is certainly getting the majority votes, BJP poll managers are targeting more than 75 percent votes of the Electoral College.

The total value of votes is 10,86, 431. This comprises 776 MPs - 5, 43,230 and 4033 MLAs - 5, 43,231. The BJP commands itself has 48 percent votes and with allies now have over seven lakh votes.


The BJP on its own has 392 MPs, excluding four nominated Rajya Sabha members who cannot vote, out of the current strength of 772 members from both Houses. The BJP is in power in Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Manipur and Goa, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Bihar, and Assam. The BJD, YSRCP, and the AIADMK leaders even filed nomination papers proposing Murmu. In

Telangana, the recent BJP executive meet targets a lot.

But BJP is not satisfied. It wants her victory margin over Sinha surpasses that Ram Nath Kovind had over Meira Kumar in 2017. Kovind had won with more than 65 percent votes. Party sources say that Modi wants the first tribal president to win with a record vote from across the political spectrum.

The move to split eight of the 11 MLAs of the Congress, including former chief minister Digambar Kamat, is a lethal move to decimate Congress.

But why is this non-exercise? It costs the party and its supporters in terms of money and the efforts of the leaders and other functionaries. The party has taken this as a test case for the 2024 elections to have similar numbers. It will show its might of emerging as the one-nation-one-party to carry on a number of its unfulfilled tasks.

Among its many tasks is to have a new preamble, Constitution, one language, one education, one culture, and many aspects that create that one nation across the country. One of its members KJ Alphons moved a bill to amend the preamble but abstained when it came for introduction in Rajya Sabha. It also feels unless it has full numbers, many of these tasks remain unfulfilled. The magic may be more than in the numbers. 

Rourkela's Vital Link New Brahmani Bridge Opened



On the pious day of Rathayatra (1st July), the second bridge over the Brahmani river opened for public use. People of Rourkela and around were relieved from the agony of facing long jams every day while coming or going out from Rourkela.

The 126 km long NH143 road from Birmittapur to Barkote is being widened in three phases.

Birmittapur- Rourkela 30 km (including Bahamani Bridge), Rourkela - Rajamunda 46 km, Rajamunda - Barkote 50 km. The total project cost is Rs. 2500 crore.

The road is the lifeline for the mining industry of the district whereas the Brahmani bridge is considered the most vital link for Rourkela. So the

people of Rourkela and around were anxiously waiting for the road and particularly the bridge to be completed at the earliest. Realizing the importance of the road and bridge, a decade ago the then UPA Government had visualized building a bridge and widening the road. In 2013 UPA Government awarded the project to Gammon Infrastructure without acquiring land, or mandatory forest and environment clearance. At that time the estimated cost of the project was Rs. 1250 crore. But Gammon shelved the project as the state government could not acquire land.

So when Prime Minister Narendra Modi, during his visit to Rourkela in April 2015

announced for up-gradation of National Highway -143 including the second Brahmani Bridge, people lustily cheered. But with bridge work not started immediately soon all cheers evaporated.

After long delay Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari laid the foundation stone on July 21, 2017, and asserted that the work would start within 15 days. But later on, as things unfolded, construction work failed to take up within promised time due to various reasons.

The NH 143 I expansion work from Birmittapur to Rourkela, including a six-lane second bridge over the river Brahmani, has been awarded to GKC, Hyderabad at an estimated cost of Rs. 382 crores.

As per norms, NHAH was unable to issue a mandatory 'Appointed Date' to the contractor due to the absence of stage I clearance from the forest department. Forest

clearance was received on 4th May 2018. After that 'Appointed Date' was issued on 24th May 2018 which paved the way to immediately start the construction work of the bridge.

The timeline for the project is to be completed in 30 months. So it was supposed to be completed by December 2020. But Covid 19 and subsequent lockdown put a brake on the construction work which forced authorities to shift the target date.

Mahesh Gami, project director of NHAH, informed us that project work was in the final stage. "One bridge over river Shankh has been completed. The work of the approach road to connect the bridge is under construction. Apart from it, the construction work of building a flyover at Vedavyas is underway at a rapid pace. We have planned to complete the whole work by October month" he added.

DIC, RSP inaugurates 'Ispat Aranya Vatika'

'Ispat Aranya Vatika', a new plantation site of SAIL, Rourkela Steel Plant (RSP) in Sector-20 area was inaugurated by Atanu Bhowmick, Director In-Charge (DIC), RSP on 6th July 2022 as a part of the Iconic Week celebrations being observed by the Ministry of Steel to mark Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav. The DIC planted an 'Ashoka' sapling in the Tree Plantation Programme that was organized by the Horticulture Department of RSP in association with the Forest Department,



Government of Odisha. In the Van Mahotsava program organized on the occasion, around 300 students from different schools of Steel City joined the drive and planted saplings at the site. 1125 plants of different varieties like Ashoka, Arjun, Jarul, Jack Fruit, Aonla, Jamun, Neem, Karanj, Chhatian, Bahada, etc were planted in the area spread over 1.5 acres of land. Notably, in the Iconic Week being observed from 4th to 10th July 2022 environment is one of the key focus areas. The essence of the observance of the week being 'Jan Bhagidari', RSP aims to engage people in its massive efforts to increase the canopy of green in the region. The Mobile Tableau flagged off as a part of the Iconic Week reached the venue which drew the attention of the students and the people at large.

Purusottam Sahoo, AGM (Horticulture) made a detailed presentation on the proposed plantation program for the year. The DIC reviewed this year's plantation plan of the Horticulture Unit. He reiterated RSP's commitment to a clean and green environment and emphasized creating awareness on the plantation. The program began with a soulful rendition of an invocation song 'Gacha tie Mu' based on the theme of promoting plantation.

It is worth mentioning here that, so far RSP has planted more than 51 lakh trees in and around Rourkela, thereby creating a girdle of green in this region. In the current year, the Steel Plant has plans to undertake plantation of 1.5 lakh saplings at different locations of the Steel Plant as well as the Steel Township to expand and intensify the canopy of green.

RSP Registers Best Ever Q1 performance

SAIL, Rourkela Steel Plant (RSP) has set new benchmarks of success by recording best-ever production in key areas during April-June (Q1) of 2022-23. In the first quarter of the current fiscal, the Steel Plant produced 1084034 tonnes of Hot Metal, 1001456 tonnes of Crude Steel, and 920582 tonnes of saleable steel thereby scripting its best performance in these three vital areas for any Q1. The Steel Plant clocked a growth of 11.1%, 11%, and 9.3% in these areas respectively over the CPLY (Corresponding Period Last Year) which also were the earlier best Q1 performances of the plant. The Steel Melting Shop-II contributed 887894 tonnes of Crude Steel in the above period with a year-on-year growth of 11.5%. The Sinter Plants also put up a brilliant performance by producing the best Q1 sinter production of 1777439 tonnes.

By dispatching 905971 tones of saleable steel, RSP clocked its best-ever Q1 despatch, thereby improving upon its earlier best performance of 834533 tonnes achieved in Q1 of 2021-22.

Notably, one of the major highlights of the first quarter was the rapid strides in the stabilization process made by the State-of-the-art Hot Strip Mill-2 soon after its commissioning towards the end of March 2022. The 3 Million Tonne ultramodern Mill rolled 273904 tonnes of slabs in Q1 with a record rolling of more than 1 lakh tonne slabs in May 2022. The Mill also has successfully carried out the trial rolling of SAILOR, MC40, API X70 and rolling of the coil with 2000 mm of width and up to 5 mm thickness and wider LPG coil with 1680 mm width. This has enriched the product basket RSP to a great extent and strengthened its entry into various niche market segments.

NITR Students Get Record Placements

NIT Rourkela has recorded its highest placement record this year by offering 1274 jobs in the 2021-22 session. NITR has broken all the previous placement records and 20 students have received the highest annual pay package of Rs.46.08 lakh in the current year.

This is one of the highest pay packages so far offered to students in NIT Rourkela.

Students also got internships via placements and a total of 403 internships were offered as per information received from NITR. The students who bagged the internship were offered an average stipend of Rs.40,000 and the highest offered was Rs.1.25 lakh per month.



More than 92 percent of students got placed in 11 departments of B.Tech and in the Mining Department which recorded a 100 percent placement.

325 companies have offered 1274 job offers to the students. Among them, 138 students have received an annual pay package of more than Rs.20 lakh.

"The placement statistics this year have been excellent. We managed not only to retain almost all past recruiters but

also boarded 100 new recruiters, including Apple, Google, and Visa. A significant number of major PSUs, including BPCL, GAIL, EIL, and BEL, visited this year. Overall, the placement season is very successful and we achieved the best records so far on almost all parameters" stated Professor Umesh. C. Pati, Head of Career Development Centre, NIT Rourkela.

NIT Rourkela had

major software companies participating this year like Microsoft, Google, Amazon, and Oracle who recruited the highest number of students. There were other major companies like Barclays, Disney+Hotsar, American Express, and Mathworks also recruiting many students.

NITR Director Prof. Umamaheshwar Rao expressing his happiness said, "The placement drive has proved the caliber of graduates of NITR. The successful placements can be attributed to the Institute's focus on quality education, our Professors' dedication, and student's preparedness for industrial skills."

Paradip refinery Felicitates 75 eminent people for outstanding social performances

Paradip, July 11: As a part of the celebration of Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav, Union Labour & Employment minister Rameswar Teli attended a program at Paradip Refinery on Wednesday, accompanying independent Director, IndianOil Sudipta Kumar Ray. On this occasion, minister Rameswar Teli felicitated 75 eminent personalities of Jagatsinghpur District, Odisha, for their outstanding contribution in the field of art, culture, sports, women empowerment, social service, environment, etc.

Minister Teli addressed the gathering and outlined the contribution of Paradip Refinery to the service of the nation and discussed several ongoing projects at Paradip.



he welcomed the new projects, which are in various stages of approval such as Needle Coker, Plastic Park, Bhadrak Textile Park & Dual-Feed Naphtha Cracker as a source of growth and employment in Odisha.

Minister Teli shared the

success story of PM Ujjwala Yojana and the new initiative on the city gas distribution project. he also flagged off Swachhta Rath and emphasized the importance of Swachh Bharat on the occasion of the ongoing Swachhta Pakhwada.

Independent Director, IndianOil Sudipta Ray said "Paradip Refinery is the Energy Gateway to Eastern India and assumes great importance. IndianOil is not only a business house; it has got a social face which it fulfills through various CSR programs."

JSW foundation goes on a philanthropy spree in project site villages

JAGATSINGHPUR, Jul 11: The JSW Foundation has launched some philanthropy works in Paradip and its adjacent areas linking to the proposed JSW project site Dhinkia, Gadakujanga, and Nuagaon villages before launching its planned project there. The charity works of JSW have been recognized as the renovation of schools and Anganwadi centers, supply of bench, desks, and books to students, drinking water, street lights installation, free health camp, and road connectivity to project site villages in the last two months.

According to a JSW press



release informed that recently benches and desks have been supplied to students reading in Ghanagalia high school on the Paradip outskirts and the kitchen and dining rooms of the school have been renovated from JSW CSR funds. Similar

works have been done at primary school at Sandhakuda inside Paradip port town. The press release said that as many as 664 students would benefit from this philanthropy work.

However, a high-rise water tank has been established at Bangalipada primary school premises to supply drinking water to students and residents.

Earlier JSW foundation had provided funds for the development and beautification of 15 Anganwadi centers in the proposed project site Dhinkia, Nuagaon, and Gadakujanga villages, arranging free health checkup camps, development of village roads, and street lights installation there.

BJD veteran Bishnu Das remembered on the 2nd death anniversary

JAGATSINGHPUR, July 11: The district BJD unit organized a remembrance meeting of late BJD veteran, former minister, and MLA Bishnu Das on his second death anniversary in the party office here. Jagatsinghpur MLA and government chief whip Prasanta Muduli chaired the meeting accompanying Zilla Parishad President Manoj Bhoi, block chairperson Kanakprava Lenka, BJD vice president Dipti Das, town BJD president Priyabrata Mohapatra, district BJD leaders as Dolagovinda Das, Madhusudan Sahoo, BJD youth wing president Soumyajit Mohapatra, and ZP

member Bibekananda Behera. Addressing the remembrance occasion government chief whip Muduli reiterated late Das's political carrier who had started politics since from his college days during the hateful Chhabirani gang-rape incident that occurred in Biridi block, associated with late Biju Patnaik became the first MLA in the year 1990 and 1995 as Janta Dal candidate from Jagatsinghpur assembly constituency, then elected three times BJD MLA from Jagatsinghpur seat, he was a legislator of Tirtol reserved assembly constituency till his death in year 2020.

He became popular among people and leaders cut party affiliations due to his effort new Jagatsinghpur district formed in the year 1993, an anti-Congress leader and champion of Dalit Bishnu Das had acknowledged his name in the state. As a former member of the BJD family we party supporters are paying tributes to the late leader on his death anniversary, Muduli said.

While sources said that the late Das death anniversary was celebrated at Biridi, Raghunathpur, and Tirtol block headquarters, his legislator son Bijaya Shankar Das participated in the celebration accompanying BJD supporters.

Bank seals debt-ridden Sarala Spinning mill at Tirtol, demand for its revival gathers momentum

JAGATSINGHPUR, July 11: As many as 15 industries are operational recognizing Paradip of Jagatsinghpur district an industrial hub not only in Odisha but in the country, Rupees thousands of crores have been invested setting of these industries thriving economy and commercial accomplishments of the vicinity providing employment directly or indirectly to many, but sadly to say for nonpayment of loan dues amounting Rs 4. crore and 75 lakh banker has sealed from the past Sarala Spinning mill at Tirtol.

Sources added that the property seized by the bank was about ten times more than its outstanding loan amount, the value of the defunct Sarala spinning to be tune of Rs 40 crore at present.

Demand for the revival of the Sarala spinning mill has gathered momentum from political and public quarters, meanwhile, the Congress party has decided to approach state chief minister Naveen Patnaik for intervention, fading any response from state government Congress party will go to the street, threatening Tirtol Congress leader and party spokesman Er Himansu Bhusan Mallick.

While BJP leaders have sought union government help for Sarala spinning mill restoration, last two decades Naveen Patnaik-led BJD government has failed to initiate steps for its refurbishment informed party's Tirtol assembly seat defeated candidate Raj Kishor Behera.

Responding banker's takeover bid former employees and workers of the dead spinning mill including locals from Tirtol area lambasted the state government, after post super cyclone 1999 the mill had damaged, and the state government could not take off any bold steps for its revival even launched VRS for employees, offered a paltry pension amount Rs 700 per month for each employee accepting VRS, many of employees have embraced the scheme but several workers yet to include in the scheme and pension, informed former spinning mill workers Gagan Kumar Nath, Baikuntha Dash and resident Nitya Nanda Nayak from Tirtol.

Established in the year 1985 by then Tirtol MLA and former minister late Basanta Kumar Biswal, the spinning mill was a source of livelihood for nearly 1600 persons, it was functioning under Odisha State Cooperative Spinning mills Federation Ltd [SPINFED], however, the mill incurred huge losses due to mismanagement, overstaffing, shortage of raw materials and marketing of mill products. In the 1999 super cyclone, the mill was badly damaged and subsequently declared closed

Meanwhile, the state government in the year 2000-01 had given Rs 50 Lakh for mill damage renovation under the cyclone restoration scheme; ironically the funds had been completely siphoned off and badly utilized by the executant contractor, sources informed.

Moreover, in the year 2014 Odisha government had come planned to revive the mill through private participation but the proposal could not emerge success while the government started offering VRS for employees, said BJD leader Debendra Mallick from Tirtol.

Following thousands of migrant workers returned villages during Covid 19 crisis, demands had gathered momentum reopening of the closed spinning mill, during the Tirtol by-election in the year 2020 spinning mill reopening was a major issue among people but no political party or anybody turned up for the matter, the mill yet to be revived, informed Mallick.

However, sources many spinning mills' former employees are living in miserable conditions due to paucity of funds and finding it difficult to eke out a living, the bank take over the mill property has shocked them hugely, and they have demanded the government should first clear the bank dues to make the mill debt-free, and take new plan proposal for reopening the spinning mill with modern and advanced technology for the larger interest of the people for which many local youths will be able to get jobs and maintain their livelihood pleasantly.

To make the Nilagiri green, a 50 year physically challenged goes on planting trees from 2016



Balasore, 5 July: Rajendra Jena(50) son of let Bhagaban Jena, a native of Nidhigard, Ward No-2 of Nilagiri NAC of Balasore district, a physically

challenged has a mission to make the Nilagiri green and healthy environment, he plants sapling on the roadsides, walls and front sides of offices.

He walks with the help of an artificial leg after his right leg was removed following an accident in 2014. Living with his bedridden mother Suryamani Jena (75), the practice of planting various saplings in different locations started in 2016. The drive has continued to make the Nilagiri green and for a healthy environment. "I have been walking with the help of an artificial leg since 2014 after a major accident. It shocked me. To eliminate tension and better the society, healthy environment, and vital points like the need for sufficient

oxygen to survive life, I have decided to plant trees in Nilagiri and its adjoining areas. Apart from it, he alleges a large scale of irregularity came into notice in the plantation program by the forest department. If the department planted a few saplings but they are later un-survived due to lack of their care that also brought me a shock. So I decided to plant saplings and will give priority to their survival. I started this drive in 2016," Rajendra Jena expressed that I am doing something for society and people remember me after I expire.

Despite attending to his bedridden mother, he did not fail in the mission. He said he had planted saplings in several varieties on both sides

of NH-19 but the widening of the road; a good number of trees had fallen. So he had decided to plant at least 50 saplings every year from mid-June to July and up to August and keep them proper treatment like setting fences and barricades around them.

By profession, he is an agent of an insurance company. He spends money on the plantation and takes proper care with proper protection on the roadsides of Laxmisagar, Gopabandhu residential high school, Ratnakar town high school, Baliguhiri, walls sides of Nilagiri CHC, Nilagiri SDJM Court, and Sub-collector office besides Oupada, Bahanaga, Balasore Sadar and Khantapada. Due his dedication, he claimed that as

a physically challenged, he sometimes took the help of laborer to set the fence and barricade around the saplings and often pays the laborer for their services.

When he had time, he went for the treatment of his planted trees. He said From Mid-June to August I plant trees and take care of them like during the spring and summer seasons. He also encouraged the people to plant trees and save the environment.

He also decorated his scooter with pictures of trees and requested people "plant a tree and save a tree".

Balasore MP Pratap Chandra Sarangi also expressed his heartiest thanks to Rajendra Jena for the initiative for a healthy society and for making the Nilagiri area green.

Where Sraddha Laddoos is special attraction

Baripada, July 12: Sraddha Laddoos or Guda Boondi Ladu as bhog, the chariots Devi Subhadra exclusively pull by the women devotees and above all the 13-days of grand event affairs are the unique feature of the Baripada Car festival considering the place is Dwitiya Srikhetra which was concluded on 11 July(Monday).

The women devotees exclusively pull the chariot of Devi Subhadra the unique tradition here has been celebrated since 1975 when Vivekananda Patnaik was the collector of Mayurbhanj, the proposal for pulling the chariot, particularly by women devotees had been given by Indumati Pati, Chandrika Mohapatra and Kalpana Sarangi to commemorate the International Women's Day that year. Since then the practice had been continued in the Dwitiya Srikhetra.

The Guda Boondi Laddoo considered Sharadha Laddoo is another special attraction in the grand religious event in Dwitiya Srikhetra. Besides offering the Laddoos



before the deities, the Laddoos are distributed among the devotees after the chariots of trinity reach Mausima temple and last day of Bahuda Yatra where the chariots of trinity reach their main abode. Such a bhog is not found in other places in the country.

The traditional affairs of eight days have been fixed for the car festival in Puri but in Baripada it has 13-day affairs. After the pahandi of the trinity, they stay on their chariots on that day and it takes two days to reach the chariots to Mausima temple. A similar tradition has followed during the Bahuda Yatra.

The Mayurbhanj history said that There goes a saying

that Maharaja Baidyanath Bhanj had been to Puri to have a Darshan of Lord Jagannath. Failing to offer the demanded gold coins, the king was denied to have a 'Darshan'. Another version of the legend goes like this- When the Maharaja went to Puri in royal splendor with the accompaniment of 'CHHATRO' and 'CHAMORO' the Gajapati of Puri refused permission as it was a display of higher status quo over the 'Thakur Raja of Puri'. The prevailing custom then was that the devotees to Puri will come as a common man without showing any supremacy over the Gajapati 'who is Chalanti Vishnu Designate'. The Maharaja went in penance near the Atharnala,

outsirt of Puri. In a dream, he was ordered by Lord Jagannath to construct a temple in Baripada so that he would come down to assuage his devotee. Showing deference to the wishes of Lord Jagannath he constructed the majestic temple at Baripada. Like Puri, all the rituals for Lord Jagannath, Lord Balabhadra, and Devi Suvadra are performed here at Baripada. The Bhanja Rulers, whose royal patronage in the field of architecture was at par excellence, would be remembered for their magnificent offering to Lord Jagannath in getting built the Jagannath temple prototype of Puri. The temple was built in 1575 and it is universally known as the Haribaldevjiu temple.

Tata Steel Celebrates World Population Day

200 SHG members felicitated for exceptional contributions to society

Joda, July 12, 2022: Tata Steel Foundation, the CSR arm of Tata Steel, celebrated the World Population Day at Joda West Auditorium on Monday. Along with guests and dignitaries, around 200 members of local Self-Help Groups (SHG) under Joda Municipality of Keonjhar district participated in the event.

Chairman, Joda Municipality, Jagdish Prasad Sahoo graced the occasion as the Chief Guest, Chief Medical Officer, Tata Steel Hospital, Joda, Suchismita Das, and Vice-Chairman, Joda Municipality; Sandhya Patra participated in the event as the guests of honor.

The program, based on this year's theme - "A world of 8 Billion: Towards a resilient future for all - Harnessing opportunities and ensuring rights and choices for all", was observed as an awareness session to share the effectiveness of the Human Development Index, Gender Equality, and Empowerment of Women.

Speaking on the occasion, Jagdish Prasad Sahoo, said: "The growth of a happy society is not only women's responsibility. Men should be equally responsible to drive it further. We should all work together to bring positivity in our community."

In her address, Suchismita Das stressed education as the key to inclusive growth. She said, "By educating one woman, we can educate the whole family and help us all live in an affable manner. Oflate it is observed that the number of women desiring to use family planning has increased markedly, and it should be encouraged to get the desired result."

A short video on 'World Population Day focussing on Maternal Health Care' was well appreciated. On the occasion, all women participants were felicitated for their exemplary contribution to bring about a change in the society. Sandhya Patra congratulated the SHG members and assured them of all support in their future endeavors.



Odisha to fill up 779 vacant posts in Plus 2 colleges, check district-wise vacancies

Khordha has the highest vacancy (71) followed by Ganjam (70), Mayurbhanj (64) and Jajpur (58)

Bhubaneswar, July 6: Odisha School and Mass Education Minister Samir Ranjan Dash on Wednesday said the government is taking steps to recruit eligible candidates and fill up the vacant posts in various Plus 2 colleges across the State.

During the Monsoon session of the Odisha

Assembly, the Minister said as many as 779 posts (in different grades) are lying vacant in +2 colleges.

"The State government is taking adequate steps for the recruitment of Post Graduate Teacher (PGT)," he informed the House.

While replying to a question posed by MLA



Ramesh Chandra Berhera on district-wise vacancy in the Plus 2 colleges, Dash said Khordha has the highest vacancy (71) followed by Ganjam (70), Mayurbhanj (64) and Jajpur (58).

Check district-wise vacancies below:

Vacancy in Plus 2 Colleges
Earlier, the State Higher

Education informed the House that there are 1036 vacancies in government colleges and measures are being taken to fill up vacancies in 10 different colleges including the Jajpur B.S. College.

He further said that collection of data (related to the vacancies in private universities) is underway.

Backlash against Odisha govt on the rise



With each growing day, angst continues to grow against Odisha government over the dilapidating condition of the Ratna Bhandar, the treasure house of Lord Jagannath in Puri and the administrative apathy towards its upkeep.

The politics over the row witnessed strong vocal winds following the recent statements by the Puri Gajapati, the foremost servitor of Lord Jagannath expressing serious over the physical condition of the Lord's ancient treasury.

Now not only servitors of the Lord himself, the Opposition political parties have also joined the chorus over the issue.

"We have informed the government that there is a leakage on the wall and it should be repaired immediately, said a servitor.

Biju Janata Dal (BJD) leader Soumya Pattanaik on Thursday openly came out in support of the Puri Maharaja Dibyasingha Deb and assured to back him if he manages to put pressure on Odisha government over the issue.

"Shouldn't we care if any part of our body gets damaged. If Gajapati knows the condition of the treasury is not good, it should be main issue which is required to be focused," media baron Soumya Pattanaik said.

The Khandapada MLA further added, "Once the King pressurises the ruling party in

Odisha, we will also support as representatives."

Meanwhile, Deputy Leader of Opposition (LoP) Bishnu Charan Sethi accused that the state government of not intentionally opening the Ratna Bhandar.

"I think there many rare and antique pieces of items inside Ratna Bhandar might be missing. The government should open the Ratna Bhandar and make everything transparent," said Deputy Leader of Opposition.

"We demand Odisha government should take immediate steps to perform an inventory and restore Ratna Bhandar to its former glory," said Congress MLA Santosh Singh Saluja.

Apart from that, the government should release the types of ornaments present inside the treasury," he added.

As per locals, the treasury or Ratna Bhandar is there since the temple was constructed in 12th century CE. There is three storehouse inside the Ratna Bhandar, but primarily only ornaments from 'Bahar Bhandar' is used for day to day activities of Lord Jagannath and siblings.

In 2018, when the issue of reopening of the Ratna Bhandara intensified, the government formed a 16-members team to inspect the treasury. But the inspection drive soon turned out to be a massive controversy after

Now not only servitors of the Lord himself, the Opposition political parties have also joined the chorus over the issue

the district collector Aravind Agrawal came to know that the keys of the Ratna Bhandara were missing since 1970.

Senior servitors and devotees alleged that the entire episode of the Ratna Bhandara fiasco was nothing but an eyewash, orchestrated to cheat crores of Jagannath devotees as well as the Orissa High Court.

"It the Ratna Bhandar is repaired and opened, it will clear all the doubts among the devotees," Dr Surendra Mishra, researcher, Jagannath culture.

Srimandir Ratna Bhandar in bad shape; immediate inventory, restoration measures needed: Puri King

The much-debated Ratna Bhandar of Srimandir which houses the treasury of Lord Jagannath is in a real bad shape and the Odisha government should take immediate steps to perform an inventory and restore it to its former glory, said Puri King Gajapati Dibyasingha Deb on Tuesday.

The much-debated Ratna Bhandar of Srimandir which houses the treasury of Lord Jagannath is in a real bad shape and the Odisha government should take immediate steps to perform an inventory and restore it to its former glory, said Puri King Gajapati Dibyasingha Deb on Tuesday.

The King said this in an exclusive interview with OTV News Editor Radhamadhab Mishra.

Asked about the Ratna Bhandar, the King said, "The Temple is under the State government. They will have to take the decision. The exact inventory of the Ratna Bhandar should be made by the State

government as soon as possible."

"I can't say if the government is trying to hide something by not performing the inventory, but they can't delay it for infinity. They will have to do it one day. So, why not today," said the King.

On the disputed Srimandir Parikrama Project, the King was of the opinion that the Project's purpose is to provide safety to the Temple and the devotees. So the work should not stop and it should be completed as soon as possible.

"There were multistory buildings adjacent to the Meghnad Boundary earlier and many slums were also there. If that did not endanger the Srimandir's structure, then why would constructions about 40 metres away pose threat to the temple now," he asked.

The King further criticised the ASI accusing it of neglecting the Srimandir. Speaking about the Central agency, the King said, "We do not see the eagerness from the ASI to work in the temple. Yes, they undertake restoration and conservation works but we do not get their cooperation all the time," he said.

The King then moved on to the position of Chief Administrator of the Sri Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA). According to him, "The SJTA needs a full-time administrator because Srimandir is the centre of all Hindu's religious beliefs across the world."

"The responsibility is huge at the Srimandir. Only a full-time administrator can perform his duties in a proper manner," he added.

Five pilgrims from Odisha stranded near Amarnath due to flash floods

The Rayagada administration on Sunday informed the stranded persons from the district are safe in Jammu and already on their way back



They had to trek through hostile terrain for nearly 18 km to Baltal.

BERHAMPUR, July 11: Five pilgrims from Odisha who survived the flash flood triggered by a cloudburst and were stranded near the holy shrine of Amarnath in Jammu and Kashmir for the last three days are on their way back home. The Rayagada administration on Sunday informed the stranded persons from the district are safe in Jammu and already on their way back. "District administration is in contact with them and their family," tweeted Collector Swadha Dev Singh from the official handle.

Earlier, the stranded pilgrims had appealed Rayagada administration to help them return. In a video message, the pilgrims, Basant Kumar Senapati, Soumya Ranjan Patra, Nihar Ranjan Patra, K Rabi Kumar and Tukuna Pradhan, requested arrangements for their safe return. The Rayagada natives had left on July 1 to have darshan at the Amarnath shrine on July 6.

But due to a large crowd, they got permission for darshan only on June 7. "We returned to the temporary camp on July 8 evening after visiting the shrine when the cloudburst took place at around 5.30 pm. As the flash flood triggered by the cloudburst swept away the tents, we narrowly survived and managed to escape to higher ground," said Basanta.

As per the instruction of CRPF personnel engaged in the rescue operation at the spot, they had to trek through hostile terrain for nearly 18 km to Baltal. They wanted to return to a hotel in Jammu where they kept their luggage because they lost their belongings in the flood. The five had to manage with a one-time meal.

Supreme Court; the guiding light of democracy



Sirish C. Mohanty

The Supreme Court of India as the apex and most powerful constitutional court in India takes up appeals primarily against verdicts of the High Courts of various states of the Union and other courts and tribunals. It is required to safeguard the fundamental rights of citizens and settles disputes between various government authorities as well as the central government vs. state governments or state governments versus another state government in the country. As an advisory court, it hears matters which may specifically be referred to it under the Constitution by the President of India.

The law declared by the Supreme Court becomes binding on all courts at all levels within India and also by all of the Union and State Governments. As per Article 142 of the Constitution, the President of India has to

enforce the decrees of the Supreme Court, and the court is conferred with the inherent jurisdiction to pass any order deemed necessary in the interest of justice. The Supreme Court has replaced the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council as the highest court of appeal since 28 January 1950.

However, over time, several decisions of the apex court have courted controversy and often the legislature tried to breach its limits by enacting a law to alter the ruling of the apex court. A recent observation on the Nupur Sharma case has created a swirl in the country. Many Retired Judges and Bureaucrats term the SC Observations 'Unfortunate, Unprecedented'. A group consisting of 15 retired judges of various high courts, 77 retired bureaucrats, and 25 retired armed forces officers have issued an open statement saying that 'unfortunate and

unprecedented comments' were made by a two-judge bench of the Supreme Court comprising Justices Surya Kant and Justice J.B. Pardiwala while hearing a petition by former BJP spokesperson Nupur Sharma, which has sent shockwaves in the country and outside.

The statement said the observations, simultaneously relayed by all news channels in high decibels, are not in sync with the judicial ethos and by no stretch, these observations, which are not part of the judicial order, can be sanctified on the plank of judicial propriety and fairness.

"Such outrageous transgressions are without parallel in the annals of the judiciary. Nupur Sharma sought access to the justice system before the highest court as that court alone could consider a grant of relief being sought. The observations that have no connect jurisprudentially with

the issue raised in the petition, transgressed in an unprecedented manner all canons of the dispensation of justice," said the statement.

It added that such observation; perceptually there is the virtual exoneration of the dastardliest beheading at Udaipur in broad daylight. "The observations also graduate to the most unjustifiable degree that this was only to fan an agenda... In the annals of the judiciary, the unfortunate comments have no parallel and are an indelible scar on the justice system of the largest democracy," said the three-page open statement.

The officers' said Sharma was de facto denied access to the judiciary and in the process; there was an outrage on the Preamble, spirit, and essence of the Constitution.

"The observations, judgmental in nature, on issues not before the court, are crucifixion of the essence and spirit of the Indian Constitution. Forcing a petitioner by such damning observations, pronouncing her guilty without trial, and denial of access to justice on the issue raised in the petition can never be a facet of a democratic society", added the statement. Sharma had moved the top court seeking clubbing of FIRs, registered in various parts of

the country, into one FIR at Delhi in the matter connected with her remarks against the Prophet Muhammed.

The statement said the allegations constitute only one offense for which separate prosecutions (FIRs) were launched whereas Article 20 (2) of the Constitution prohibits prosecution and punishment more than once for the same offense. "Article 20 falls under Part III of the Constitution and is a guaranteed fundamental right. The Supreme Court in many cases including Arnab Goswamy vs. Union of India (2020) and T.T. Anthony vs. the State of Kerala laid down the law that there can be no second FIR and consequently there can be no fresh investigation in respect to the second FIR on the same issue. Such action is violative of fundamental rights as guaranteed under Article 20(2) of the Constitution", it said.

"Such an approach of the Supreme Court deserves no applause and impacts the very sanctity and honor of the highest court of the land", it added. The coordinators are Justice P.N. Ravindran former judge of Kerala High Court, and Anand Bose, former chief secretary, Kerala.

Letter to the Editor

Dear Sir,

Your Editorial presents a threadbare analysis of anti-defection law. As rightly said, the anti-defection law has been proved ineffective & futile in Maharashtra.

Therefore, the law seems to be redundant & should be scrapped.

Your special story mainly focuses on bureaucracy-dominated governance where elected representatives have taken a back seat in the decision-making mechanism.

BJP has indeed sent a clear & loud message by nominating Droupadi Mumu as the first tribal presidential

candidate. As Murmu hails from Odisha, BJP is eyeing eastern non-BJP ruled states. It is a calculated move of the BJP to reap electoral benefits in Odisha, West Bengal & Jharkhand.

There is no denying the fact that the BJP is no more a Brahminical party or party of

the upper caste. It has already made inroads in SC/ ST vote bank.

At this juncture, Naveen led BJD headed to leave no stone unturned in harping Odisha Pride by giving rousing welcome like inviting Naveen Niwas for lunch.

Almost all regional parties

have taken a pragmatic stand to extend full support to Murmu not as the NDA nominee but as a tribal women candidate to retain their pro-tribal image.

Bharat Patra
Rtd Banker & Social
activist, Kendujhar

How Sri Lanka's economy collapsed, what's next?



Sirish C Mohanty

Sri Lanka's prime minister said late last month that the island nation's debt-laden economy had "collapsed" as it runs out of money to pay for food and fuel. Short of cash to pay for imports of such necessities and already defaulting on its debt, it is seeking help from neighbouring India and China and from the International Monetary Fund. Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe, who took office in May, was emphasising the monumental task he faced in turning around an economy he said was heading for "rock bottom".

On Saturday both the PM and President Gotabaya Rajapaksa agreed to resign amid mounting pressure from protesters who stormed both their residences and set fire to one of them.

Sri Lankans are skipping meals as they endure shortages and lining up for hours to try to buy scarce fuel. It's a harsh reality for a country whose economy had been growing quickly, with a growing and comfortable middle class, until the latest crisis deepened.

HOW SERIOUS IS SRI LANKA ECONOMIC CRISIS?

The government owes USD 51 billion and is unable to make interest payments on its loans, let alone put a dent in the amount borrowed. Tourism, an important engine of economic growth, has sputtered because of the pandemic and concerns about safety after the terror attacks in 2019. And its currency has collapsed by 80%, making imports more expensive and worsening inflation that is already out of control, with food costs rising 57%, according to official data.

The result is a country hurtling towards bankruptcy, with hardly any money to import gasoline, milk, cooking gas and toilet paper.

Political corruption is also a problem; not only did it play a role in the country squandering its wealth, but it also complicates any

financial rescue for Sri Lanka.

Anit Mukherjee, a policy fellow and economist at the Center for Global Development in Washington, said any assistance from the IMF or World Bank should come with strict conditions to make sure the aid isn't mismanaged.

Still, Mukherjee noted that Sri Lanka sits in one of the world's busiest shipping lanes, so letting a country of such strategic significance collapse is not an option.

HOW IS SRI LANKA CRISIS AFFECTING ITS CITIZENS?

Tropical Sri Lanka normally is not lacking in food, but people are going hungry. The UN World Food Program says nearly nine of 10 families are skipping meals or otherwise skimping to stretch out their food, while 3 million are receiving emergency humanitarian aid.

Doctors have resorted to social media to try to get critical supplies of equipment and medicine. Growing numbers of Sri Lankans are seeking passports to go overseas in search of work. Government workers have been given an extra day off for three months to allow them time to grow their own food.

In short, people are suffering and desperate for things to improve.

WHY IS SRI LANKAN ECONOMY IN SUCH DIRE



(Thousands of protestors storm President Gotabaya Rajapaksa's home)

STRAITS?

Economists say the crisis stems from domestic factors such as years of mismanagement and corruption. Much of the public's ire has focused on President Rajapaksa and his brother, former Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa. The latter resigned in May after weeks of anti-government protests that eventually turned violent.

Conditions have been deteriorating for the past several



Why did Sri Lanka's economy collapse, how is it affecting people and what's next?

years. In 2019, Easter suicide bombings at churches and hotels killed more than 260 people. That devastated tourism, a key source of foreign exchange.

The government needed to boost its revenues as foreign debt for big infrastructure projects soared, but instead, Rajapaksa pushed through the largest tax cuts in Sri Lankan history. The tax cuts were recently reversed, but only after creditors downgraded Sri Lanka's ratings, blocking it from borrowing more money as its foreign reserves sank. Then tourism flatlined again during the pandemic.

In April 2021, Rajapaksa suddenly banned imports of chemical fertilizers. The push for organic farming caught farmers by surprise and

remaining sittings for the week to save fuel, officials said on Thursday, with a disastrous economic crisis rapidly depleting the island nation's already scarce petrol supplies. Parliamentary officials said politicians decided not to hold sessions on Thursday and Friday to avoid unnecessary petrol use, days after authorities closed schools and some state offices for the same reason.

Wickremesinghe told parliament on Wednesday the nation's economy had "collapsed" and it faces "a far more serious situation" than the shortages alone as he warned of "a possible fall to rock bottom". "Our economy has completely collapsed," he said. "We are now facing a far more



(Sri Lanka crisis: Thousands of protestors storm President Gotabaya Rajapaksa's residence)

to top up their tanks.

Economists and other Sri Lankans said they were hoping the government would find ways to revive the economy.

"What the prime minister should do is not to make announcements. He has to come up with a plan to reactivate the system," said W A Wijewardena, an economist and former deputy governor of Sri Lanka's Central Bank.

The Finance Ministry said Sri Lanka had only USD 25 million in usable foreign reserves. That has left it without the wherewithal to pay for imports, let alone repay billions in debt.

Meanwhile, the Sri Lankan rupee has weakened in value to about 360 to the US dollar. That makes the costs of imports even more prohibitive. Sri Lanka has suspended repayment of about \$7 billion in foreign loans due this year out of USD 25 billion to be repaid by 2026.

WHAT IS GOVERNMENT DOING ABOUT SRI LANKA CRISIS?

So far Sri Lanka has been muddling through, mainly supported by USD 4 billion in credit lines from India. An Indian delegation came to the capital,

Colombo, in June for talks on more assistance, but Wickremesinghe warned against expecting India to keep Sri Lanka afloat for long.

"Sri Lanka pins last hopes on IMF," read a June headline in the Colombo Times. The government is in negotiations with the IMF on a bailout plan, and Wickremesinghe has said he expected to have a preliminary agreement later this summer.

Sri Lanka has also sought more help from China. Other governments like the US, Japan and Australia have provided a

few hundred million dollars in support.

Earlier in June, the United Nations launched a worldwide public appeal for assistance. So far, projected funding barely scratches the surface of the \$6 billion the country needs to stay afloat over the next six months.

India says 'ready to help Sri Lanka in quick economic recovery'

India's foreign secretary says New Delhi will support the crisis-hit island beyond the promised \$4bn in loans, swaps and aid. A top Indian official has held talks with Sri Lanka's president and prime minister as India signals its willingness to go beyond the \$4bn in loans, swaps and aid that it has already provided its cash-strapped neighbor.

Sri Lanka is facing its worst economic crisis in seven decades, with a severe foreign exchange shortage hampering the importation of essentials including food, fuel and medicines. The island nation off the tip of southeast India needs about \$5bn in the next six months to cover basic necessities for its 22 million people.

'Ashamed': Angry Assam CM pulls up Dibrugarh cop, apologises to businessman's family

A young businessman committed suicide in Assam's Dibrugarh after receiving threats from the mafia. Following which, chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said he had never felt so ashamed that such an incident could happen.

Dibrugarh, July 11: Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Saturday visited the family of a Dibrugarh man who allegedly died by suicide after receiving constant threats from the mafia and apologised for the failure of the local administration.

The chief minister told the victim's family that he was "really ashamed" that the mafia dared to come there despite the police presence. "I've never been



Assam CM Himanta Biswa Sarma interacts with the family of the deceased

more ashamed in my life that such an incident could happen when I am serving as the chief minister. It has hurt me a lot. I apologise to his parents and the people of the state," he said.

"It was a total failure of the Dibrugarh district administration," the Assam CM noted after visiting the house of Vineet Bagaria, a 32-year-old businessman, who died by suicide on Thursday after

receiving threats from three people.

Himanta Biswa Sarma further noted that the state government's repeated requests to the police to act as a friend of the public went unheard in this case.

"If police personnel in a place such as Dibrugarh cannot understand our appeal and act accordingly, how can we expect those posted in rural areas to even hear our words?" the Assam CM said.

Vineet Bagaria, before dying, had recorded a video before killing himself, claiming that he was threatened by three people, including the tenant of a shop owned by his family. The Bagaria family had even submitted written complaints to the Dibrugarh police station regarding the threats, but they allegedly did not get a response.

Two of those named in Bagaria's video have already been arrested.

Muslim mother cannot be a guardian of minor children, rules Kerala HC

The court observed this while hearing a petition filed by C. Abdul Aziz from Kozhikode and a dozen others over a partition deed in which a Muslim mother acted as a legal guardian of her son's property



Kochi, July 7: A division bench of the Kerala High Court has observed that it cannot hold a Muslim woman to be the guardian of her minor child's property since it is bound by the precedents of the Supreme Court.

The division bench of Justices P.B. Suresh Kumar and C.S. Sudha observed that even though the personal law which prevents Muslim women from being guardians can be argued to be violative of Articles 14 and 15 and hence void, they cannot go into the same since it is bound by the

precedents set by the apex court.

The court observed this while hearing a petition filed by C. Abdul Aziz from Kozhikode and a dozen others over a partition deed in which a Muslim mother acted as a legal guardian of her son's property.

Relying on the 'Shayara Bano's case, in which it was held that the practices of the Muslim personal law-Shariat cannot be required to satisfy the provisions contained in Part-III - Fundamental Rights of the

Constitution applicable to State actions, in terms of Article 13 of the Constitution.

"That being the position, as the Shariat Act has been held to be not a State legislation, it cannot be tested on the anvil of Articles 14 or Article 15 of the Constitution as argued on behalf of the appellants," the Court held in its judgment.

The court further pointed out that since there are numerous decisions from the apex court, which holds that a Muslim mother cannot be a guardian of her minor children, the High Court is bound to follow the law declared by the apex court as provided under Article 141 of the Constitution.

The court admitted that if succession and like matters of secular character has nothing to do with religion, the same would be the position with the case of guardianship also.

Actor-politician Raj Babbar gets 2-year jail term in 1996 assault case

A court in Uttar Pradesh awarded a two-year jail sentence to actor-turned politician Raj Babbar in a case involving the assault of a polling officer. The incident happened in 1996.

Lucknow, July 7: An MP/MLA court in Uttar Pradesh has awarded a two-year jail sentence to Bollywood actor and Congress leader Raj Babbar in a case involving the assault of a polling officer. The FIR was lodged in Wazirganj police station on May 2, 1996 by the polling officer. The court also imposed a fine of Rs 8,500 on Raj Babbar. The actor-turned-politician has been convicted of obstruction of government work and assault.

Raj Babbar was present in the court when the verdict was pronounced.

1996 ASSAULT CASE

At that time, Raj Babbar was in the Samajwadi Party and was contesting the elections from Lucknow. During the time of the elections, a verbal spat had broken out between the two which led to the assault. He was found guilty of roughing up a government officer during the 1996 Lok Sabha elections but got bail that time. A police



complaint was filed against Raj Babbar and Arvind Yadav against sections 143, 332, 353, 323, 504, 188 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC). Apart from the Representation of the People Act, the charge sheet was filed in court under the Criminal Law Amendment Act.

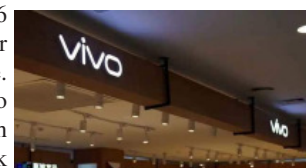
ED raids on Vivo: Chinese smartphone maker remitted 50% of turnover to China

The ED said that the Indian arm of Chinese smartphone maker Vivo "remitted" almost 50 per cent of its turnover, which is Rs 62,476 crore

New Delhi, July 7: The ED on Thursday said the Indian arm of Chinese smartphone maker Vivo "remitted" almost 50 per cent of its turnover, which is Rs 62,476 crore, mainly to China in order to avoid paying taxes here. The federal probe agency also said it has seized funds worth Rs 465 crore kept in 119 bank accounts by various entities, Rs 73 lakh cash and 2 kg gold bars after its pan-India raids that were launched early this week on July 5 against

Vivo Mobile India Pvt. Ltd. And its 23 associated companies.

It said an ex-director of Vivo, Bin Lou, left India in 2018 after incorporating a number of companies that are now under its scanner. It alleged that "employees of Vivo India, including some Chinese nationals, did not cooperate with the search proceedings and tried to abscond, remove and hide digital devices which were retrieved by the search teams."



Illegal mining: NGT slams Odisha State Pollution Control Board, seeks better report

The petition alleged that illegal laterite stone mining was ongoing at 40 different sites in Khurda district to an extent of 500 acre encompassing several villages.



CUTTACK, July 9: The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has expressed dissatisfaction over the report submitted by Odisha State Pollution Control Board (OSPCB) on illegal laterite and black stone mining on Puri Jagannath temple land in Khurda district.

The NGT's East Zone bench in Kolkata expressed its disappointment on Thursday as there were anomalies in the report filed by OSPCB on behalf of the Joint Committee which had inquired into the allegations of illegal laterite and black stone mining.

Accordingly, the bench of B Amit Sthalekar (Judicial Member) and Saibal Dasgupta (Expert Member) said, "Odisha State Pollution Control Board is, therefore, directed to file a better affidavit explaining all the anomalies noted by us within three weeks."

A perusal of OSPCB's report, according to the Tribunal, showed that 26 laterite stone quarries have been identified and notified for auction. Out of four laterite stone quarries which have been auctioned, operator of only one quarry has obtained Environmental Clearance from the SEIAA, (MoEF&CC), and Consent to establish and Consent to operate from the OSPCB.

"What is the status of other three auctioned quarries has not been mentioned? It is also not clear whether these three quarries have started operations in absence of Environmental Clearance, Consent to Establish

and Consent to Operate, and if so, what action has been taken by the Board against them," the bench observed.

The NGT had constituted the Joint Committee on a petition filed by Bidu Bhusan Harichandan. The petition alleged that illegal laterite stone mining was ongoing at 40 different sites in Khurda district to an extent of 500 acre encompassing several villages including Tapanga, Anda and Jhinkijhari under Nijigarh Tapang panchayat.

The report further stated that to stop the illegal mining from Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA) land, about 40 black stone quarries and two laterite stone quarries have been auctioned and the lessee have obtained Environmental Clearance and Consent to Establish and Consent to Operate from OSPCB.

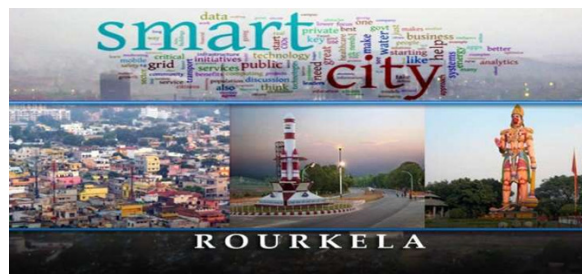
The bench also observed, "It is not clear whether these 40 black stone quarries are different from the 26 laterite stone quarries or they are the same." The report mentioned a list of 59 quarries comprising cumulative area of 15.50 hectare where the illegal excavation was going on as provided by the SJTA. "These figures do not tally with the figures mentioned in the report of 40 + 26 = 66 stone quarries. This affidavit does not even show as to what action has been taken against the 59 quarries where the illegal excavation has been made as disclosed by the SJTA itself," the bench further observed.

BEL set to deliver mix of global & local for Rourkela Smart City

Rourkela, July 9: An Integrated Solution comprising multiple smart technologies including Surveillance System, Traffic Analytics, e-Governance, Solid Waste Management will be deployed in phases across the city of Rourkela by the Rourkela Smart City Limited (RSCL) at a cost of around of INR 110 Crores.

In April 2022, the Rourkela Smart City Limited invited bids for the Selection of Master System Integrator (MSI) for the Implementation of Smart Solutions in Rourkela. Multiple Master System Integrators showed interest and finally after a thorough tendering process, the bid from Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL), a Navratna PSU under the Ministry of Defence, Government of India has been found to be lowest and technically qualified. According to RSCL, the project is soon going to commence and progress will be soon visible to the citizens.

Bharat Electronics Limited in their bid has proposed solutions from leading globally reputed manufacturers including Honeywell for Cameras, Video Wall from Barco, Network Switching and Servers from Dell and storage solution from Hitachi. More than 500 cameras will be installed across the traffic



junctions of the growing city along with intelligent Traffic Lights using Adaptive Traffic Control System (ATCS) technology to ensure safer roads. Few select locations will also have Emergency Call Boxes to facilitate direct communication by citizens for any help during emergency situations. The city wide Optical Fiber Network will connect all field locations to the Command and Control Center, secured using wireless fire alarm and access control system, will form the nerve centre. Mr. Kundan Chandra, Regional Head at Honeywell Security which is a global leader in the video surveillance industry said that the proposed high resolution cameras with wide angle lens will ensure better functioning of the Traffic analytics and AI based Video Analytics to ensure safer roads for both motorists and pedestrians.

According to Mr. Debanuj

De, Vice President at Trisim Global Solutions, a design and engineering firm in field of Smart Cities and who had been working closely with some of the OEMs considered for the project, the RFP floated by Rourkela Smart City Limited was well-drafted and had optimized the solution requirement from last time when the tender had been floated few years back.

Mr. De also shared that the solution from BEL is appreciable as it has a fair mix of globally reputed manufacturers as well as Indian technology companies with proven credentials. He shared that Threat Point Intelligence Solution from CrowdStrike, a global cyber security leader headquartered in Texas, USA, which has been deployed by Bangalore city recently has been proposed by BEL for Rourkela. Motadata based out of Ahmedabad with multiple deployments across

smart cities in India, has been proposed for Enterprise and Network Management. Similarly, Integrated Command and Control Platform software will be deployed in Rourkela from Trinity which is an Indian company and recognized as a leader in the space with multiple smart city control rooms across the country running the software.

Mr. Snigdhodev Bhattacharya, Head Govt and Defence Business at CrowdStrike which has its India headquarter and R&D centre in Pune, highlighted that RSCL has given due attention to cyber security while drafting the RFP. Getting the right level of intelligence ensures prompt security decisions. Cyber threat intelligence (CTI) is recognized by Cyber Security Experts as an essential component for any large and complex network like smart cities and it will be deployed in Rourkela to offer security teams substantial advantages, not only during an incident but also before an attack even starts. CrowdStrike, in partnership with Trisim who is helping in stitching the tool with other OEM solutions in the project, is set to ensure that CTI provides high uptime for the solutions deployed at Rourkela Smart City.

India provides 44,000 tn of urea to Sri Lanka: Mandaviya

India has time and again proved to be a true friend of Sri Lankan people in their need, the minister said.

New Delhi, July 10: India has provided 44,000 tonnes of urea to Sri Lanka for meeting the domestic requirements in the current and next sowing seasons, Union Chemicals and Fertilisers Minister Mansukh Mandaviya said on Sunday.

The minister tweeted that 44,000 tonnes of urea fertilizer provided by India under the Line of Credit reached Colombo and handed over to the Sri Lanka government.

"It will help to meet farming requirements in current & next cropping seasons," Mandaviya said.

India has time and again

proved to be a true friend of Sri Lankan people in their need, the minister said.

As the economic crisis worsened, Sri Lanka witnessed massive street protests in the past months and the public anger led almost all the cabinet ministers to quit the government.

Thousands of angry protesters on Saturday stormed embattled President Gotabaya Rajapaksa's official residence and set Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe's private house on fire, in the culmination of months of agitation over the ongoing



economic crisis.

Union External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Sunday said the Indian government has always been supportive of Sri Lanka and it was "trying to help" the neighbouring country through its present economic crisis and made it clear that

there was "no refugee crisis right now".

The External Affairs Ministry said India stands with the Sri Lankan people in their aspirations for prosperity and progress through democratic means, established institutions and a constitutional framework.

P Chidambaram's dig at Centre after IAF gets 7.5L applications under 'Agnipath'

P Chidambaram said the unemployment situation is so extreme that desperate youth are willing to take any job.



Senior Congress leader and former Union minister P Chidambaram

New Delhi, July 7: Days after the Indian Air Force (IAF) said it has received 7.5 lakh applications under the "Agnipath" recruitment scheme, senior Congress leader and former Union minister P Chidambaram claimed the "extreme" "unemployment situation" in the country was the reason

behind such a large number of applications.

"Fact: 7, 50,000 applicants for 3000 posts in IAF under the Agniveer scheme. Wrong conclusion: the Agniveer scheme is popular among the youth. Right conclusion: the unemployment situation is so extreme that desperate

youth are willing to take any job," Chidambaram tweeted. Fact: 7, 50,000 applicants for 3000 posts in IAF under the Agniveer scheme. Wrong conclusion: the Agniveer scheme is popular among the youth. Right conclusion: the unemployment situation is so extreme that desperate youth are willing to take any job.

Earlier, Chidambaram had said anyone who wishes to become a soldier should not apply for the government's ambitious scheme.

On Twitter, Chidambaram noted that if anyone wishes to be trained as a driver, washerman, barber or chowkidaar (guard), they should become

an Agniveer. "If you wish to be trained as a driver, washerman or barber, become an Agniveer. If you wish to be trained as a chowkidar, become an Agniveer," he wrote on the micro-blogging platform.

"If you wish to learn to fry pakoras, become an Agniveer. If you wish to become a soldier, do not apply," he added.

The registration process under the scheme began on June 24 and ended on Tuesday.

After the scheme was unveiled on June 14, violent protests against it rocked several states for nearly a week and various opposition parties demanded its rollback.

"The online registration process conducted by IAF towards Agnipath Recruitment Scheme has been completed," the IAF said on Twitter.

"Compared to 6,31,528 applications in the past, which was the highest in any recruitment cycle, this time 7,49,899 applications have been received," it added.

What is Agnipath scheme?

Under the Agnipath scheme, those aged between 17-and-a-half and 21 years would be inducted into the armed forces for a four-year tenure and 25 per cent of them will be inducted for regular service subsequently.

The government had, on June 16, increased the upper-

age limit for recruitment under the scheme to 23 years from 21 for the year 2022 and subsequently, announced a slew of placatory steps such as a preference for "Agniveers" in central paramilitary forces and defence public sector undertakings on their retirement.

Many BJP-ruled states also declared that "Agniveers" - soldiers inducted into the armed forces under the Agnipath scheme - will be accorded priority for recruitment in the state police forces.

The armed forces have said those who have indulged in violent protests and arson against the new recruitment scheme will not be inducted.

Dalai Lama to visit Leh on July 15 after four-year gap

China has always objected to the Tibetan spiritual leader's visits to the region, including during his last visit in 2018.

New Delhi, July 8: The Dalai Lama will be in Leh on July 15 - his first visit in around four years that comes amid a deterioration of ties between India and China over the standoff in eastern Ladakh.

China has always objected to the Tibetan spiritual leader's visits to the region, including during his last visit in 2018.

This trip is also the Dalai Lama's first major one since Covid-19 struck in 2020.

It is unclear how long he will stay in Leh. A source in his private office in Dharamshala, Himachal Pradesh, told that the spiritual leader will stay for about a month at Choglamsar village on the bank of the Indus River. He will impart teachings (known as summer teachings in Leh) to Buddhists as well as people from other communities.

On Wednesday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said he called up the Dalai Lama to



Tibetan spiritual leader Dalai Lama.

wish him on his 87th birthday. Modi's public articulation of his call for the second year in a row has diplomatic significance - Beijing calls the Dalai Lama a "splittist". Stanzin Konchok, Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council councillor from Chushul, eastern Ladakh, told The Indian Express: "His Holiness the Dalai Lama accepted the request of invitation made by the Ladakh Buddhist Association. The entire arrangement is being made by the Ladakh Buddhist

Association and the local government."

"He is expected to give three-day teachings. His Holiness is expected to stay here for about a month, if the weather and his health allows," Konchok added.

According to sources, former MP Thupten Tsewang and other prominent Buddhist personalities such as Ladakh Buddhist Association president Thupstan Chewang and Thiksay Monastery's Thiksay Rinpoche had requested the Dalai Lama to visit Leh.

BJP gears up to become no 1, BJD MLA reacts

BJP organised the two-day meeting to plan its southern expansion with a focus on the states with regional party-ruled governments.

Bhubaneswar, July 11: The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is gearing up to become Odisha's top political party from the second position as the 2024 general election is inching closer.

The BJP has intensified its efforts to improve its performance in the State.

workers. The party organised the two-day meeting to plan its southern expansion with a focus on the states with regional party-ruled governments.

Meanwhile, Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan said, "We need to give more efforts

level up the party's position in the state, the Biju Janata Dal's MLA Soumya Ranjan Patnaik said, "Every political party aims to reach the top position. I don't think any competitor will get satisfied by remaining in third or fourth position. Whoever is in the third position will give efforts



Recently, the saffron party had organised its national executive committee meeting in Hyderabad in which the senior party leaders have chalked out a roadmap to add enthusiasm among the party

and strengthen the party. The way we came to second position, we will become the top party in the same way. Everyone needs to wait."

While the BJP's senior leader exuded confidence to

to become second and whoever is in second will try to reach the pinnacle. On the other hand, whoever is in the top will do everything to maintain its position. This is a common thing."

Odisha bans entry of journalists to schools, Pradhan says 'inappropriate'

BJP MP Aparajta Sarangi, who is well known for her work as the state's school and mass education secretary, said she was surprised with the directive



BHUBANESHWAR, July 11: The Odisha government has banned the entry of journalists to schools in some areas after news channels showed how students were poor in mathematics, triggering a political row.

Hitting out at the state government over its decision, Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan said the press, which is the fourth pillar of democracy, cannot be

stopped from entering a public institution.

The Dhenkanal District Education Officer (DEO) on Saturday directed Block Education Officers and school headmasters not to allow unauthorised entry of journalists into schools and classrooms, and to report such matters to the police.

A similar directive was also issued in the Kendrapara district. The government's

move came after some news channels showed how students were in mathematics -- with class 5 pupils unable to recollect simple tables, official sources said.

"It is inappropriate to impose restrictions on media's entry into school campuses. In a democratic setup, a school is a public institution. Media should not create disturbance in the process of learning, but the fourth pillar of democracy cannot be denied entry into campuses for the purpose of collecting news," Pradhan said.

BJP MP Aparajta Sarangi, who is well known for her work as the state's school and mass education secretary, said she was surprised with the directive.

"It is unfortunate and the order should be withdrawn

immediately," she said. Senior Congress MLA Suresh Routray said it was not the first time that such restrictions were imposed on journalists.

"They are yet to get entry into the assembly in the name of COVID-19. Journalists have been denied entry to the state secretariat for two years and also the SCB Medical College and Hospital in Cuttack," he said.

Defending the government, School and Mass Education Minister SR Dash said the press has the right to highlight wrongs, but reporters of some web portals were entering campuses without permission and disturbing the atmosphere of the schools. Different journalist associations in the state also opposed the move, demanding its roll back.

Villagers Carry Pregnant Woman On 'Cycle Ambulance', As 102 Service Fails To Reach

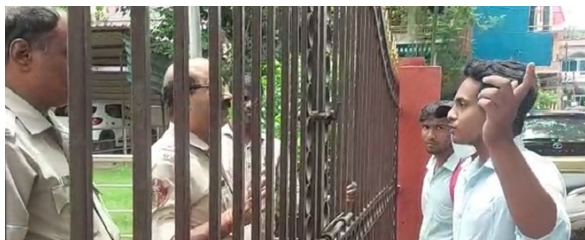


Nabarangpur, July 11: A pregnant woman of Diuduguda hamlet of Belajhari village under Jharigaon block of Nabarangpur district had to be carried on a jugaad type 'cycle ambulance' for nearly one and half km as the ambulance under 102 Ambulance service could not reach her house because of the muddy road.

According to reports, Raila Santa, wife of Chaitanya Santa of Diuduguda hamlet developed labour pain at around 4 AM today. Her family members informed the local ASHA worker who called up 102 ambulance services.

An ambulance of the 102 Ambulance Service which arrived at around 10 AM could not reach Raila's house as the road was muddy. Left with little option, the villagers in the true sense of Indian 'jugaad' style developed a cycle ambulance-(a cot tied to two bicycles with a polythene sheet to provide cover against rain) and carried the woman in labour to reach the ambulance which was waiting at a distance of around one and a half km. The pregnant woman was shifted to the Community Health Centre (CHC) at Jharigaon.

Ruchika Death Case: BJB College students gherao Badagada Police Station



Bhubaneswar, July 11: Commissionerate Police forcibly picked up the mother of the deceased BJB College Plus Three-student Ruchika Mohanty staging protest in front of the college.

Reportedly several others have also been picked up by the police those who were staging dharna in front of the BJB College. Ruchika's mother had warned to observe her 10th-day death rituals at the spot today, added reports.

Notably, Ruchika's family has been staging protests in front of BJB college. However, no developments have been reported about the three accused seniors yet. More than 40 students of +3 first year were questioned by the police

and counsellors.

The Additional DCP informed that the 3 accused seniors have not yet been identified. Ruchika's parents have been taken to the designated dharna place near the Lower PMG area, he added.

Meanwhile, Students gheraoed the Badagada police station, alleging that the educational environment was being destroyed. They have demanded the punishment of the accused culprits mentioning that the issue should not be resolved politically.

The students have also demanded the arrest of those who have been politically defaming the college amid this sensitive death case.

Solo Art Exhibition At Utkal Alumina

RAYAGADA, July 6: (Jogeswar Das) A solo art exhibition was organized at Oshapada Township of Utkal Alumina International Limited, a subsidiary of Hindalco Industries Limited of Aditya Birla Group on the 2nd, 3rd, and 4th July 2022.

Mrs. Hina Beig, President of Ujjwal Utkal Ladies Club joyfully amalgamated her canvases, brushes, and colors together to create something meaningful and displayed around 35 inspiring paintings which are dedicated to nature, and human lives, values, culture, history, and traditional art form of our incredible India.

At Utkal where Mrs. Beig was the torch bearer in promoting art and culture in this tribal hinterland and dedicated her artworks to the employees, families, service partners, and community to spread a message about the importance of art in our day-to-day life. She spread a message that how painting



has a direct impact on our day-to-day life, emotions, memories, etc. Through this, she also circulated a message that investing time in painting not only gives eternal peace to an individual but also touches the soul of others.

Mrs. Beig is a passionate women leader who has taken the Ladies Club activities to greater heights and has always been an inspiration to women at Utkal Family through her relentless effort

to promote talent in art and culture in and around Utkal Alumina.

"I dream my painting and I paint my dream." The world is full of confusion and contradiction yet there is compassion in its midst. We cannot expect to do anything right. We can only measure rightness by the truth within ourselves. And our truth will never be quite the same as somebody else's. Communication via simple touch can transmit so much

of us in just one minute. Like a painting or a piece of music, I want to touch you, your soul. I only wish I could be sure it was the right thing to do, as expressed by Mrs. Hina Beig at the outset.

All the paintings displayed are very expressive and meaningful and would certainly inspire our children towards art as narrated by the spectators. The three-day exhibition was witnessed by over 500 viewers.

Connect education with modern ideas: Modi

Speaking at the inaugural session of the three-day Akhil Bhartiya Shiksha Samagam here, he said that the fundamental objective of the national education Policy (NEP) was to bring education out of the narrow thought process and integrate it with the thoughts and ideas of the future.

Varanasi, July 7: Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on Thursday, underlined the need for connecting education with the modern ideas of the 21st century. Speaking at the inaugural session of the three-day Akhil Bhartiya Shiksha Samagam here, he said that the fundamental objective of the national education Policy (NEP) was to bring education out of the narrow thought process and integrate it with the thoughts and ideas of the future.

The Prime Minister said that we should not only prepare the degree holders but also develop human resources in a way that the nation prepares for the future challenges.



"I am sure that soon India will emerge as a global hub for

education. To this end, we are creating world class institutes that will help in creating opportunities for the youth.

We are making sure that NEP is not just another document in the files, but a roadmap that guides our education system," he said.

He further said that today, sectors and opportunities that were earlier sclerotic are now being opened up for all. Many marginalised groups are now enjoying unprecedented opportunities.

Through the National Educational Policy (NEP), we aim to create employers, he added.

The Prime Minister said that the education system and the youth have the responsibility of fulfilling the dreams of Amrut Mahotsav.

He said that not only did India recover rapidly from the

Covid pandemic, but it also became one of the fastest-growing large economies in the world. "We are the world's third-largest startup ecosystem now," he added.

Earlier, welcoming the guests, the Prime Minister said, "I am the MP of Varanasi and in that sense, I am your host and you are my guests. I am sure that you will not be having any inconvenience during your stay."

The Prime Minister also inaugurated an Akshaya Patra midday meal kitchen that is designed to provide hygienically prepared meals to one lakh children at one go. He also inaugurated several developmental projects in his constituency.

'Saddened beyond words': Assassination of Japan's Shinzo Abe stuns world leaders

Former Japan PM Shinzo Abe Shot News Live: The 67-year-old Japanese leader was shot twice and collapsed on a street in Nara city as several security guards ran towards him, showed television footage



A 41-year-old man Tetsuya Yamagami, believed to be a resident of Nara City, has been arrested on suspicion of attempted murder for shooting at Abe, reported Japanese media house NHK quoting police sources. He is reportedly a former member of the maritime self-defence force and appears to have shot at the ex-Prime Minister from behind with a homemade gun. The reason for the attack is yet to be confirmed.

PM Modi had earlier said he was deeply distressed by the attack on Abe. In footage aired on TV, Abe is seen collapsing on the street, with several security guards running toward him. The 67-year-old world leader is then seen holding his chest through his blood-smeared shirt as he collapsed.

India lost a close friend
Abe immensely contributed to Indian Bullet train program.

Woman charred to death as house catches fire in Cuttack

Cuttack, Jul 12: In a tragic incident, a woman has been charred to death as a major fire broke out in Cuttack late on Monday night.

Reportedly, the incident took place in a two-storey

house in Sutahat area of Cuttack.

On getting the information the local firefighters and police arrived at the spot. The firefighters took control of the blaze, however, a woman was

found burnt to death on the top floor of the house. The charred body of the woman was sent for a post-mortem procedure. It has been learnt that the deceased was a mentally challenged woman

and the fire took place in the absence of her parents.

The cause behind the fire mishap and the identity of the deceased has not yet been ascertained. An investigation has been initiated by the cops.

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India Likely...

the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, said that the global population is projected to reach eight billion on November 15, 2022.

The global population is growing at its slowest rate since 1950, having fallen under one percent in 2020. The latest projections by the United Nations suggest that the world's population could grow to around 8.5 billion in 2030 and 9.7 billion in 2050. It is projected to reach a peak of around 10.4 billion people during the 2080s and to remain at that level until 2100.

"This year's World Population Day (July 11) falls during a milestone year when we anticipate the birth of the Earth's eight billionth inhabitant. This is an occasion to celebrate our diversity, recognize our common humanity, and marvel at advancements in health that have extended lifespans and dramatically reduced maternal and child mortality rates," UN Secretary-General António Guterres said.

"At the same time, it is a reminder of our shared responsibility to care for our planet and a moment to reflect on where we still fall short of our commitments to one another," he added.

The report said that "India is projected to surpass China as the world's most populous country during 2023." The world's two most populous regions in 2022 were Eastern and South-Eastern Asia, with 2.3 billion people, representing 29 percent of the global population, and Central and Southern Asia, with 2.1 billion, representing 26 percent of the total world population.

China and India accounted for the largest populations in

these regions, with more than 1.4 billion each in 2022. More than half of the projected increase in global population up to 2050 will be concentrated in just eight countries of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, India, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Philippines, and Tanzania.

According to the report, India's population stands at 1.412 billion in 2022, compared to China's 1.426 billion. India, which will surpass China as the world's most populous nation by 2023, is projected to have a population of 1.668 billion in 2050, way ahead of China's 1.317 billion people by the middle of the century.

The report added that it is estimated that ten countries experienced a net outflow of more than 1 million migrants between 2010 and 2021.

In many of these countries, these outflows were due to temporary labor movements, such as Pakistan (net outflow of -16.5 million during 2010-2021), India (-3.5 million), Bangladesh (-2.9 million), Nepal (-1.6 million), and Sri Lanka (-1 million).

In other countries, including the Syrian Arab Republic (-4.6 million), Venezuela (the Bolivarian Republic) (-4.8 million), and Myanmar (-1 million), insecurity and conflicts have driven the net outflow of migrants over the decade.

Global life expectancy at birth reached 72.8 years in 2019, an improvement of almost 9 years since 1990. Further reductions in mortality are projected to result in average global longevity of around 77.2 years in 2050. Yet in 2021, life expectancy for the least developed countries lagged 7 years behind the global average.

In its recent projections, IHME projected that the global population will reach 8.8 billion in 2100 with a range of 6.8 billion to 11.8 billion.

PM Modi pitches for natural farming, says it's like serving Mother Earth

The PM said adopting natural farming is also like serving Mother Earth, by protecting the quality of soil and its productivity.



New Delhi, July 10: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said the mass movement for natural farming will be widely successful in the coming years, and the sooner farmers join this change, the more they will reap its benefits.

Addressing a conclave on natural farming organised in Gujarat's Surat city via video conference, Modi also mentioned about the "extraordinary success" of the Digital India Mission, and said it is the country's answer to those who used to say that bringing about a change in villages is not easy.

He said adopting natural farming is akin to serving Mother Earth, by protecting the quality of soil and its productivity, and is also the "basis for economic success."

Lauding the efforts made

in this direction in Surat, he said the natural farming model emerging from Surat can become a model for the entire country.

"This mass movement regarding natural farming will also be widely successful in the coming years. The sooner farmers join the change, the more successful they will be in reaping its benefits," he said.

The PM said if people of the country get determined to achieve a target, then no hurdle will come in the way. People's participation ensures the success of even a big task, he said.

"The extraordinary success of the Digital India Mission is the country's answer to those who used to say that bringing a change in villages is not easy. Our villages have shown that they

can not only bring about a change, but can also lead the change," he said.

Modi said natural farming gives India an opportunity to lead the world in the direction of sustainable development and pure food, by sharing its benefits through thousands of years and knowledge and experience which the country has.

"This is one area where India has led the world for centuries. Therefore, now is the time when we move forward on the path of natural farming and take full advantage of the emerging global opportunities," he said.

Natural farming is also the basis for economic success, Modi said.

Natural farming in Surat

"As our farmers progress and prosper, as our agriculture progresses, so will our country progress...When you adopt natural farming, you serve Mother Earth; protect the quality of soil, and its productivity. When you do natural farming, you are serving the nature and environment. When you join natural farming, you also get the privilege of serving Gaumata (holy cow)," he

said.

In the wake of 75 years of India's independence, the country has started working on many such goals, which will become the basis of major changes in the times to come, he said. "In 'Amrit kaal', the basis of progress of the country is the spirit of everyone's effort, which is leading our development



journey," he added.

The PM said countrymen and village panchayats have been asked to lead the works being done for the uplift of villages, the poor and farmers. Further enumerating the benefits of natural farming, he said it also saves a person from deadly diseases caused by the use of chemicals.

The PM also spoke about

measures taken by the government for promoting natural farming through schemes like the 'Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Scheme'. He said 30,000 clusters have been created across the country under the scheme for the benefit of lakhs of farmers.

Natural farming has also been linked with the Namami

"Our farmers are exporting such produce at a good rate in the world market," he said.

"We must bring the benefits to the maximum number of farmers. Along with the government's efforts, we would also look at our ancient knowledge in this direction," he said, mentioning about various old texts that carry such knowledge. He appealed to NGOs and experts to focus on natural farming, conduct new experiments to find out how to make farmers strong, improving farming and save Mother Earth.

Modi also hailed the efforts made by people in Surat to promote natural farming.

In Surat, committees and teams have been formed at the village levels, and nodal officers have been given the responsibility at the taluka level, he said, adding that training programmes and workshops are being organised.

"Today, in such a short time, over 40,000 farmers from across 550 village panchayats have joined natural farming. The natural farming model emerging from Surat can become a model for the entire country," he said.

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Over-reliance...

the national team in 33 matches, while his teammate Liston Colaco is yet to make the scoresheet in 11 appearances for India. Ashique Kuruniyan, another contender to replace Chhetri, has scored once in 25 international appearances. It is essential that India find a goal-getter to replace Chhetri, as the nation scored just six goals in eight games in the 2022 FIFA World Cup qualifiers - with Chhetri scoring three times.

While India has shown improvement of late, the lack of goals will always hamper the nation's chances against bigger nations. This will be exacerbated by the fact that there is not yet a replacement for Sunil Chhetri and the nation is reliant on his goals. Nevertheless, the three victories in the 2023 AFC Asian Cup qualification will give further encouragement that India is progressing. If the nation performs well at the AFC Asian Cup next year and Štimac is able to guide India to a world ranking below 100, it would certainly be seen as a success and possibly a springboard to greater achievements.

FIFA World Cup begins in Qatar from November 21 to December 18. Indian team although failed to secure a place, but the football enthusiast of the country have a special interest in the festival of soccer the WC 22. Here are some predicted possibilities of the WC 22.

Who are the favorites to win World Cup 2022?

Brazil may not have savored World Cup glory since 2002, but they are five-time winners and currently boast the strength in depth - with the likes of Neymar, Vinicius Junior, and Alisson at their disposal - to make them 9/2 (5.50) favorites in Qatar.

Holders France is another of those that are well fancied to mount a serious challenge for the ultimate prize, with a star-studded squad that includes Kylian Mbappe and Paul Pogba knowing what it takes to emerge victorious, and Didier Deschamps' side is available at 11/2 (6.50).

England made their way to the semi-finals in 2018, before reaching a final on home soil at Euro 2020, and the Three Lions are also 11/2 (6.50) to bring a

56-year wait for international success to a close.

Just behind them at 8/1 (9.00) are 2010 winners Spain, who have an exciting young squad at their disposal, while Argentina - who are hoping to see Lionel Messi land the one major honor that has so far eluded him in a remarkable career - is priced at 9/1 (10.00) just ahead of perennial challengers Germany at 11/1 (12.00).

Who are the contenders to win World Cup 2022?

Belgium, who have slipped from the top of the FIFA world rankings, may feel that 2022 presents their golden generation - with the likes of Kevin De Bruyne and Eden Hazard still going strong - with the last shot



External Affairs Minister Jaishankar visits FIFA venue in Qatar

at international honors, but they are priced at 12/1 (13.00).

Cristiano Ronaldo's Portugal - who came through the play-offs - is another of those available at 12/1 (13.00), alongside a Netherlands team that is bursting with potential.

Denmark, who have welcomed Christian Eriksen back into their ranks following his cardiac arrest at Euro 2020, are considered to be 28/1 (29.00) shots for what would be a stunning and very emotional triumph.

The India Nationwide Soccer Workforce Goals to Study from World Cup Disappointment

The India national football team has made up for the disappointment of failing to qualify for the World Cup in Qatar by securing a place at the 2023 AFC Asian Cup. However, it is the failure to qualify for the 2022 World Cup that will disappoint football fans in India. The nation finished in third place in the World Cup qualifying group, but after recording just one win in six games, the nation was nine points behind second-placed Oman.

Nevertheless, it was the highest position the country has achieved since the 2002 World Cup qualification campaign. Many people question whether this is sufficient for a country with a growing football league and a huge population. India is currently ranked 104th on the FIFA table of international football teams.

A struggle to compete with cricket

One issue hampering the attempts at football success is that it has to compete with cricket, the nation's favorite sport. Cricket legends such as Sunil Gavaskar, Sachin Tendulkar, and Rahul Dravid are known all over the world, so it is no surprise that most aspiring sportspeople in India grow up wanting to play cricket rather than football. In the Men's Test Team Rankings, the Indian national cricket team



is currently in second place behind Australia and the nation won the Cricket World Cup in 2019. The eyes of the world will be on India next year as the nation hosts the Cricket World Cup.

Nevertheless, India has made progress in world football in recent years and it is important to remember that the Indian Super League was formed just eight years ago. One benefit of the league with its big-spending franchises has been the signing of ageing but influential world stars, which have included World Cup winner Alessandro Del Piero, Australian Tim Cahill and ex-Manchester United striker Dimitar Berbatov. The opportunity to play and compete with such players has helped raise the level of Indian football.



Who are the outsiders to win World Cup 2022?

Croatia reached the final in 2018, as Luka Modric closed in on Ballon d'Or glory, but are 50/1 (51.00) to go one better four years on.

Uruguay - who still have the vast experience and considerable goal threat of Edinson Cavani and Luis Suarez in their ranks - are also available at 50/1 (51.00), with Switzerland and reigning Africa Cup of Nations champions Senegal priced at 80/1 (81.00).

The United States, with youthful exuberance on their side, are not expected to figure in the final shake-up as they sit at 100/1 (101.00), with a Poland squad led by prolific Bayern Munich striker Robert Lewandowski priced at 125/1 (126.00).

There are several teams at 150/1 (151.00), including Mexico and Canada, while hosts Qatar have drifted out to 350/1 (351.00) as they become serious long shots on home soil.

Signs of improvement

Furthermore, the All India Football Federation signaled its intent in 2019 by appointing Igor Štimac, the former trainer of the Croatian national side, as head coach. The popularity of football in India was demonstrated by the crowd of 53,286, which attended the World

(but not limited to) AFC nations like Australia, will wager on FIFA World Cup betting sites such as Bet365. The Asian Football Confederation will be represented by the hosts Qatar, who topped India's World Cup qualifying group and are priced at 14/1 to win



World Cup qualifier against Bangladesh

Cup qualifier against Bangladesh at the Salt Lake Football Stadium in Kolkata in 2019.

In addition, India recently celebrated success in the third round of the 2023 AFC Asian Cup qualification, as the nation topped its group with a record of three wins from three games, finishing ahead of Hong Kong, Afghanistan, and Cambodia.

Although India has not qualified for this year's World Cup, there will still be global interest and involvement in the competition, as people from

Group A, which includes the Netherlands, Ecuador and Senegal. Other AFC nations are Australia and Japan, who are both priced at 250/1 to become World Champions.

India certainly has the opportunity to improve further with Štimac at the helm. He has emphasized the importance of working together with stakeholders in the domestic competitions to arrange sufficient preparation time for the national team along with at least four friendly matches. He views this as being a key factor in order to achieve positive results.

Over-reliance on star striker

The extent of the task facing Štimac is illustrated by the case of Sunil Chhetri, who has scored 84 goals in 129 games for India and is the nation's most capped player and all-time top scorer. Chhetri is 37 years old and will eventually have to be replaced, despite continuing to turn back the clock with his performances in the recent Asian Cup



Star striker Sunil Chhetri

qualifying campaign. In June 2022, he scored four of India's eight goals in the three games as part of the third round of the 2023 AFC Asian Cup qualification.

In contrast, Manvir Singh, who plays for ATK Mohun Bagan, has scored just six goals for (Page-15)

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