

'PM should address nation to spell out reasons for him not taking on China': Rahul

NEW DELHI(KCN): Questioning the "silence" of Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the eastern Ladakh military standoff, former Congress president Rahul Gandhi on Friday said he should address the nation and spell out the reasons for him not taking on China on the border issue.

In a Facebook post in Hindi, he asked why the prime minister was not keeping the interests of people supreme, remained silent on China and resorted to import of polyester for the national tricolour after ignoring the pride of India -- the khadi.

He also questioned why imports from China were rising at a time when Chinese infiltrations on the border were on the rise.

"How will the prime minister, who has struck a deal with China on the tricolour, see the infiltration of China! A true patriot is one who does not let any harm come to his country. A true patriot is one who fights to protect every inch of the country. A true servant of the nation is one who is dedicated to uphold the dignity and pride of his motherland," he said. "China has dared to occupy our country's borders. Before coming to power, the prime minister, who promised to show 'laal aankh' (red

'Colombo makes its own decisions': India rejects Beijing's 'insinuations' on Chinese ship's proposed visit to Sri Lanka

NEW DELHI(KCN): India on Friday rejected China's "insinuations" that New Delhi pressured Colombo against a planned visit by a Chinese research vessel to the Sri Lankan port of Hambantota but asserted that it will take

eye or stern response) to China, has bowed before China for the last eight years. The prime minister does not even utter the word 'China'," Gandhi said in the post.

He also asked what are the reasons for the prime minister, who is elected by people, not keeping the interests of people supreme and deciding to remain silent on the matter of China.

"The prime minister should address the country and spell out his reasons. Every citizen will support him for India's

honour but only when it is about Mother India," the Congress leader said.

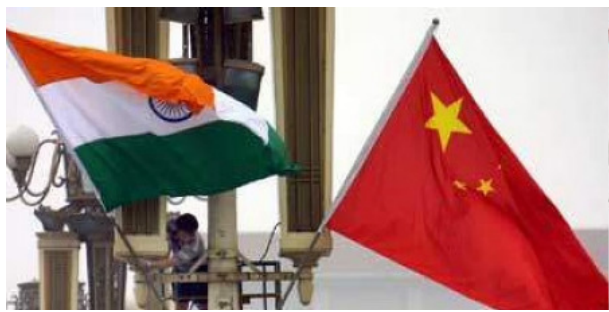
Gandhi and his Congress party has been attacking the prime minister on the issue of border dispute with China in eastern Ladakh. The eastern Ladakh border standoff erupted on May 5, 2020, following a violent clash in the Pangong lake areas.

Both sides gradually enhanced their deployment by rushing in tens of thousands of soldiers as well as heavy weaponry.

Each side currently has around 50,000 to 60,000 troops along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in the sensitive sector.

'Colombo makes its own decisions': India rejects Beijing's 'insinuations' on Chinese ship's proposed visit to Sri Lanka

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decisions based on External Affairs Min-

PM Modi to host CWG 2022 medal winners, Nikhat Zareen may get autograph on boxing gloves

NEW DELHI(KCN): Prime Minister Narendra Modi will host all the medal winners of the Commonwealth 2022 games at his official residence at 11 am on Saturday. From July 28 to August 8, nearly 200 Indian

athletes competed for medals across 16 different sports at the Commonwealth Games 2022 in Birmingham. India wrapped up its Commonwealth Games 2022 campaign at fourth position with 61 medals (22 gold, 16 silver and 23 bronze). Wrestling topped the medal chart with 12 medals including six gold while weightlifting accounted for 10 medals.



India has delivered its fifth-best performance of all time in their Commonwealth Games history, with their best being a total of 101 medals when the games were held at home in 2010. One of the major highlights of the mega event was the clinching of a gold medal by Nikhat Zareen.

After winning the medal in the final of the women's 50kg Light Flyweight category, Zareen said she is excited to meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi and added that she will take his autograph on her boxing gloves.

Indian star boxer and world champion Nikhat Zareen defeated Carly MC Naul of Northern Ireland in the final of women's 50kg (Light Flyweight) on Sunday.

Zareen lived up to her 'world champion' status as she dominated Carly across all three rounds. She won by 5-0 on basis of points scored. "I am very excited to meet Prime Minister Modi; I took a selfie with him last time and want a new one now. Last time, I took his autograph on my T-shirt, now I will take it on my boxing gloves," Nikhat Zareen had told ANI after winning the gold on August 07.

The Commonwealth Games 2022 came to an end with a stunning closing ceremony at the Alexander Stadium in Birmingham on Monday.

The Commonwealth Games flag was presented to the Governor of Victoria. The state of Victoria, Australia will be the next host of the Commonwealth Games in 2026.

Russian strikes near Ukraine nuclear plant kill 14

KYIV(KCN): Ukraine on Wednesday accused Russia of carrying out rocket strikes that killed 14 civilians in areas near a nuclear power plant, as the G7 warned that Russian control of the facility "endangers the region". Overnight strikes in the Dnipropetrovsk region in central Ukraine killed 13 people and injured 11, with five reported to be in serious condition, regional governor Valentin Reznichenko wrote on Telegram.

Most of the casualties were in the town of Marganets, just across the Dnipro River from the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant, Europe's biggest.

"It was a terrible night," Reznichenko said, urging residents to shelter when they hear air raid sirens. "I am asking and begging you... Don't let the Russians kill you," he wrote.

Another woman died after Russian missiles slammed into a village in the Zaporizhzhia region on Wednesday morning, local governor Oleksandr Starukh wrote on Telegram.

Regional council head Mykola Lukashuk said the strikes had hit a local power line, leaving thousands of people without electricity.

G7 call over nuclear plant Ukraine and Russia have accused each other of recent shelling around the Zaporizhzhia plant, which has six reactors.

Ukraine says Russia has stationed hundreds of troops and stored ammunition at the facility since taking it over on March 4, shortly after starting its invasion.

The tensions have revived memories of the

1986 Chernobyl nuclear disaster in Soviet Ukraine, which killed hundreds of people and spread radioactive contamination over much of Europe.

The Group of Seven industrialised nations condemned Russia's occupation and called on Moscow to immediately hand back full control of the plant.

Ukrainian staff operating the plant must be able to work "without threats or pressure" and



Russia's control of the plant "endangers the region", the G7 foreign ministers said in a statement.

ALSO READ: UN watchdog warns of 'grave' crisis amid violence near Ukraine nuclear plant

The UN Security Council will hold an emergency meeting Thursday to address the crisis at the nuclear plant, diplomatic sources said.

The UN nuclear safety watchdog, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), said in a statement that its Director General Rafael Grossi would brief the Security Council meeting "about the nuclear safety and security situation" at the plant as well as his "efforts to agree and lead an IAEA expert mission to the site as soon

Naveen to visit Mayurbhanj

Bhubaneswar(KCN): While Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is playing 'Tribal Card' Chief Minister and Governing BJD Supremo Naveen Patnaik is all set to visit the Tribal Zone, the home turf of President of India Shrimati Draupadi Murmu.

Mr.Patnaik's visit to Mayurbhanj is considered politically significant as the opposition BJP has already made 'Daughter of Odisha'

People of Mineral Rich Mayurbhanj have been demanding a steel plant in Mayurbhanj district for a long time.

Now Chief Minister has fulfilled the demand with the HLCA Clearance for RMPL Steel Complex.

Chief Minister is scheduled to inaugurate two major irrigation projects which will benefit farmers of Mayurbhanj, Keonjhar and



Balasore districts. He is likely to launch several other development projects too.

Chief Minister's Office is fine-tuning visit program in coordination with the Mayurbhanj District Administration.

The BJD also attempted to gain mileage out of the Presidential elections by putting up posters, banners and hoardings showing Shrimati Murmu tying Rakhi on the hands of the CM. Mr.Patnaik also campaigned for her before the election and urged all MLAs to vote for the NDA candidate.

Mr.Patnaik's visit to Mayurbhanj is also considered part of his party's election strategy. Of the nine Assembly segments in Mayurbhanj, BJP in 2019 won six seats and also the Mayurbhanj Lok Sabha seat.

The BJP has won the Lok Sabha elections in 2019 in Mayurbhanj and Sundergarh. On the other hand, BJD emerged victorious in Keonjhar which is adjacent to Sundergarh. All three districts are tribal-dominated.

Though BJD has regained the ground as it won 56 of the 59 Zilla Parishad seats in Mayurbhanj district in the panchayat elections held in February this year, party sources said, Shrimati Murmu's election as the President can tilt the balance again towards BJP.

Manganese-laden truck seized, rampant smuggling of ore gears up

Barbil, 12th August. (KCN). Bolani police and forest department seized in a joint raid when more than one hundred tons of manganese was being smuggled in three 16-wheeler trucks from Pacheri Arjunlodha mine under Bolani



police station of Keonjhar district at around 4 'o' clock in the morning. The Arjunlodha mine, which is now closed become the hideout of the mining mafia. . Despite unearthing of a huge mining scam and enforcement by district and state squads, mineral smuggling is going on in the area with impunity. As per the information, three 16 wheeler trucks with numbers OD 09 K 2645,

OD 09 Q 4922, OD 09 K 9899 had entered the Arjunlodha mine at Pacheri for manganese smuggling. .But while coming out of mines one truck get stuck in mud. After lots of effort the vehicle could not bring out of mud. They too have tried with the help of JCB machines to push the truck out of mud. Unfortunately, all three trucks got stuck in the forest. Finally, in the early hours of the morning, the drivers of the three trucks left the truck and ran away. On receiving the news, Bolani Police and Forest department reached Arjunlodha mine at Pacheri and seized three trucks with stolen manganese worth lakhs of rupees. Locals alleged that ore smuggling is frequent from the mines to Jharkhand and West Bengal with help of fake documents. They demanded a probe into the ore theft. The police have also said that they will soon arrest the accused after investigating the incident.

Har Ghar Tiranga campaign conducted at Saraswati Sishu Mandir, Barbil

Barbil(KCN): Students of Saraswati Sishu Mandir,Barbil conducted Har Ghar Tiranga campaign on Friday to encourage citizens to hoist national flag atop their houses as part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav (AKAM) to commemorate 75 years of Independence. The students conducted the campaign by creating



human chain carrying national flag. They raised slogans like Bharat Mata ki Jai and Jhanda Uncha Rahe Hamara.They observed the campaign will infuse patriotism, will event remind our national leaders and also will increase patriotic fervour among students. Nalini Kanta Mahant ,one senior

Eminent Social Worker Narayan Chandra Mohanty Felicited by RSS at his native place

Cuttack Sadar(KCN):Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh(RSS) 42 Mouza Cuttack Sadar Branch organised Guru Puja festival at leading Social organization Dayanidhi Pratibha Bikash Pratistan puja meeting hall at Patana,Bentakar.In this festival all volunteers participate in several types discussion with worship Gourika dhwaja puja & guru dakshina program etc.In this program Sangh volunteers Gandhiguru Das,Dipak Acharay,Asima Das,Anil Mohapatra,Arta Bhanjan Sahoo,Tapan Das,Sagar Behera,Farmer Leader Devi Prasad Pati, and others are present with felicitated to the villagers of Patana son of Late Brundaban Moahanty,Bengalata Mohanty eminent Social worker,karmaveer,best organiser Narayan Chandra Mohanty for his best quality.Moreover Senior Sangrahaka Narayan Chandra Biswal for his great achievement,dedication to society and Village,dedication for the betterment of arts,Odia Literature,tradition,pujya puja,award to talented students etc., he was awarded by The Muhana Sahitya Sansad Mumbai,Adarsh Yuva Sangha Cuttack branch,Saraswati Klaparisad Kandarpur,UVP cuttack sadar,Utkal Youth Trust Bangalore etc.

Acharya of Sishu Mandir said that the campaign is meant to remember our freedom fighters, known and unknown and pay tributes to them. Students too appealed to the people to hoist the national flag atop their houses, shops and industries between August 13 to 15 as a part of AKAM celebrations. Before



the campaign, the students conducted cultural activities in the school campus. All teachers including parents participated on the occasion. All volunteers of Seva group too have accompanied in the programme said Shankar Konar,a senior member of Seva group.

IMD alerts on Heavy Rains

Bhubaneswar (KCN): BhubaneswarAnother possible low-pressure system over the weekend will affect the State, the IMD Bhubaneswar informed on 11 August. While the state continues to grapple with the losses and difficulties caused by torrential rain over the past few days due to a depression. Heavy rain has battered several districts due to an intensified weather system, which crossed the state on Tuesday and now lay weakened over Madhya Pradesh. It led to flooding of many villages and low-lying areas, disrupting road connectivity as some bridges over swollen rivers collapsed. Four coastal districts recorded heavy to very heavy rain due to the monsoon trough and a cyclonic circulation in the western parts of Gangetic West Bengal, the Bhubaneswar Meteorological Centre said. While Jajpur received 150 mm rain over a 24-period till 8.30 am. Downpour pounded Mayurbhanj as Sukruli recorded 89 mm of rain and district headquarters Baripada received 69 mm, according to a bulletin. Report says Khaira in Balasore was battered by 79 mm of precipitation, followed by 78 mm at Ghasipura in Keonjhar. There was moderate rainfall in Bhubaneswar, Cuttack and several other districts. atleast 10 gates of Hirakud dam in Burla were opened to discharge excess water following incessant rain in the upper catchment areas of the Mahanadi river. The Major Dam authorities had closed the sluice gates on July 31 after releasing the first flood water of the year on 18 July. At 3 pm, the water level was 612.93 feet and the outflow of water from the dam was 1.92 lac cusecs, of which 1.51 lac cusecs was released through the 10 sluice gates. "All 66 gates of Kalma barrage in Chhattisgarh have also been opened now," DoWR Chief Engineer said. Hirakud, which has 98 gates, received 46.4 mm of rain between 8.30 am and 5.30 pm, the IMD office said. "We're closely monitoring the situation. A meeting will be convened and a decision will be taken on opening more gates," the CE said.



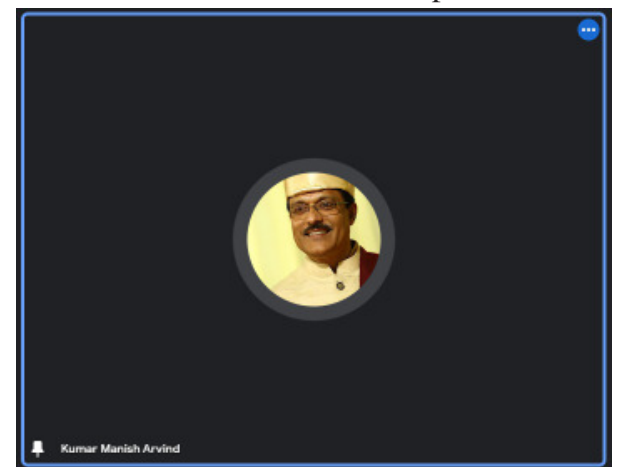
"Modiji's 'Har Ghar Tiranga' campaign is commendable." - Shradha Rani Sharma (Actress)

Clean Air School Championship launched by SwitchON Foundation

Kolkata (KCN): Leading schools from across eastern India took part in a major initiative in the form of a competitive challenge launched by SwitchON Foundation towards curbing air pollution and taking climate action. The initiative was launched at a webinar organized on the occasion. Leading principals and teachers from various schools joined the initiative. Also joined by esteemed individuals like; Dr. Dipanjana Maulik, Senior Environment Engineer, Department of Environment, Government of West Bengal; Kumar Manish Arvind, CCF-cum-Project Director, Department of Forest, Environment and Climate Change, Jharkhand, Ranchi; Dr. Deepanjan Majumder, Principal Scientist and Head CSIR NEERI and Smt. Karuna Singh, Country Director, Earth Day Network. Eminent Schools from West Bengal like Shri Shikshayatan School, Sri Academy, Birla High School Mukundapur from Kolkata, Eastern Railway High School,Durgapur, AB Model School Barrackpore and from Jharkhand

Schools like Firayalal Public School, Chiranjeevee Public School, Kairali School from Ranchi joined the launch. As part of the programme, winning schools will get awarded with solar rooftop power plants, rainwater harvesting kits etc. The Clean Air Youth Leaders Program initiative aims at making students aware of the clean air and environment related hazards we are facing and give them an idea of practical environment friendly activities that they can take up even at their own homes. The aim is also to make future generations aware of the urgent need for attention for both clean air and environment. Acknowledging that access to clean air has recently been recognized as a human right and following 29,000 children globally calling on the United Nations

Committee on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) to acknowledge their right to clean air, our Clean Air Youth Leaders Program supports children, school goers, college students and health professionals would motivate the younger generation to nurture environment-friendly habits." "Children are the most vulnerable to air pollution and are completely dependent on adults. At the same time they truly have the potential to become agents of change for cleaner air quality in the city," said, Dr. Deepanjan Majumder, Principal Scientist and Head, Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR) - NEERI. "Deteriorating air quality is a major problem. Demonstrating this is difficult as air pollution is often not easily visible. This initiative is carefully crafted to help our young citizens take on the mantle of awareness leading to action so that air which is vital for living becomes less polluted," said, Smt Karuna Singh, Country Director, Earth Day Network India. "Indian youth festival is a festival to create awareness among youth regarding nature and nature conservation. Our youth needs to be motivated to protect the green planet on which we are living," said, Mr. Niraj Kumar Sinha, Principal, Firayalal Public School.



to advocate for clean air. Speaking at the occasion Shri Vinay Jaju, MD, SwitchON Foundation said, "We are happy to launch the programme, through this children and young adults will be empowered to take positive action by sensitizing the citizens, mobilizing the media, policymakers & stakeholders. Additionally, they will deal with the problem by launching city-specific actions that focus on the problem of air pollution in their neighborhood. The mobilization of educational institutes will help them take up activities with their students, which

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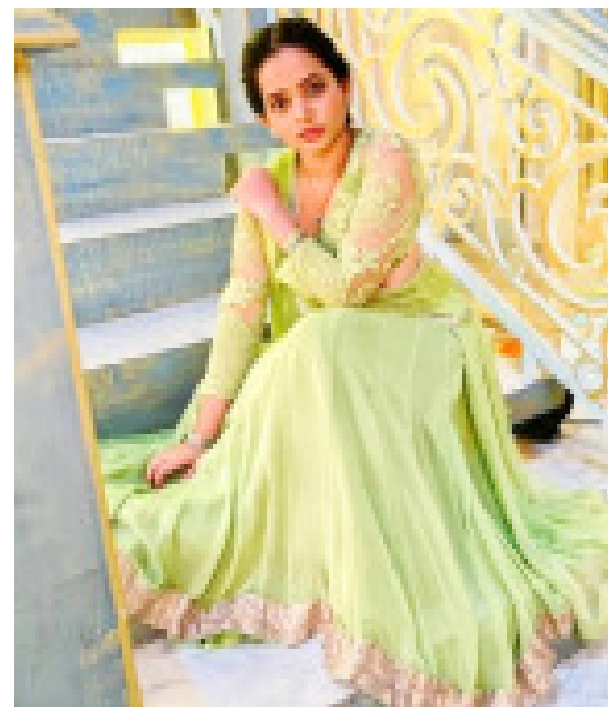
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Now a days the heroines have nothing much in the film, except to flaunt their glamour: Aarushi Sharma

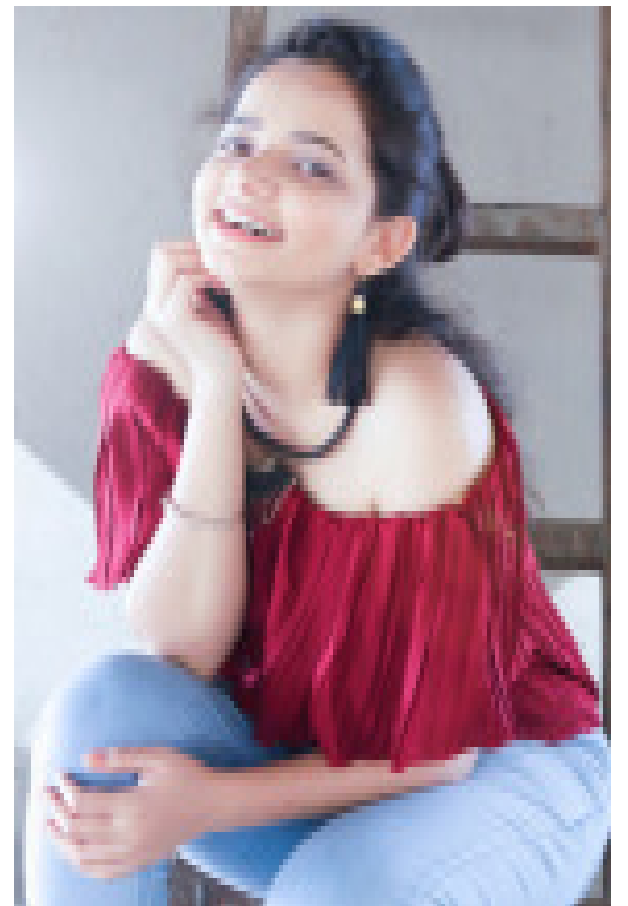
The multi-faceted talented actress “Jag Jaanani Maa Vaishnodevi” and Her performance is being widely appreciated and her role as Muskaan is being



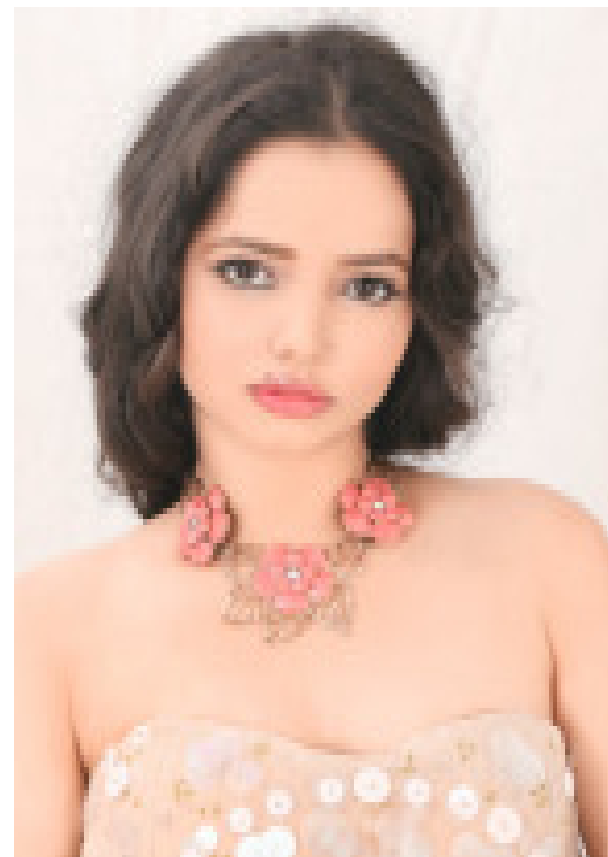
Aarushi Sharma “Muskaan” is now who has left an in-



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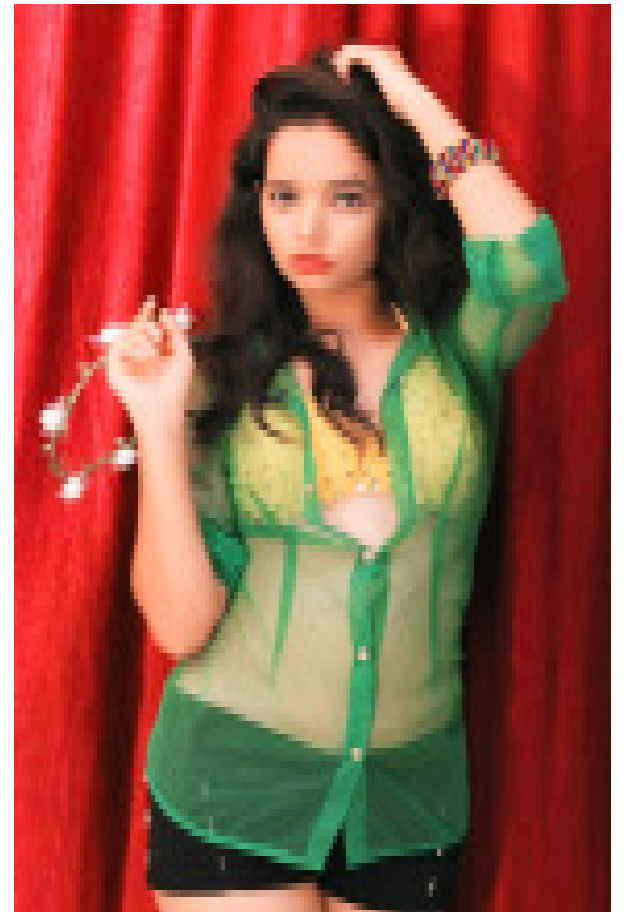
our mother and to corona pandemic. Now it may



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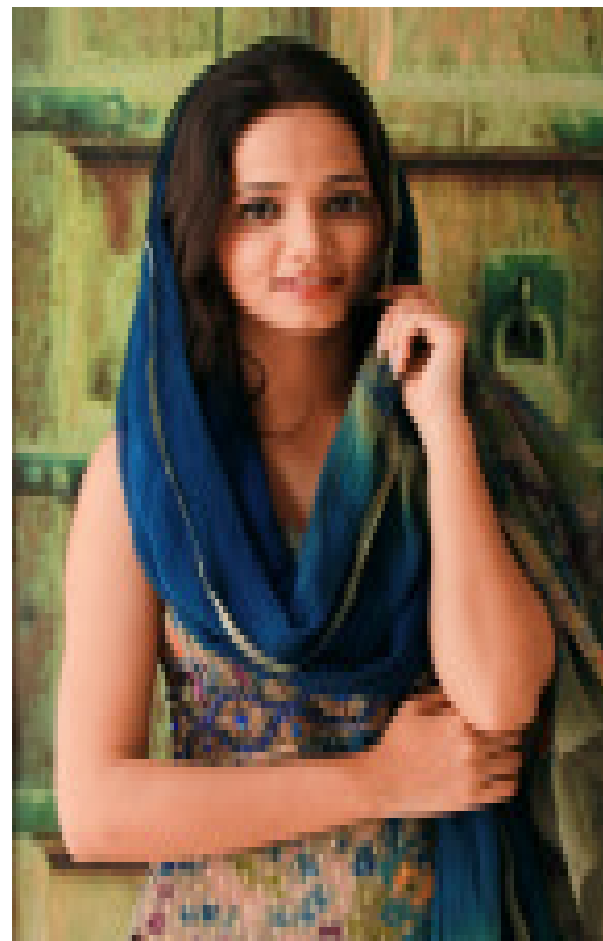
highly acclaimed by the viewers.



harasses our family. Till now my role was that of an innocent and bubbly girl. But henceforth my role will be different and the viewers will be taken aback by my new role. The viewers will certainly like the new twist in the story. About her film ventures Aarushi says “I had signed a film in the South. However the project could not start early due



viewers' mind with her TV serials like



About her role in “Ranju Ki

'Emmys So White': Netizens call out award show for 'fake diversity'

Los Angeles: The 73rd Primetime Emmy Awards concluded on a disappointing note on Monday.

While setting a record for diversity, with 49 black or indigenous people of colour (BIPOC) nominated across all categories, all major acting trophies went to white actors at the Emmys 2021.

According to Variety, actors that were seen

as solid contenders included Billy Porter and Mj Rodriguez and Kenan Thompson and Bowen Yang ('Saturday Night



('Pose'), the late Michael K. Williams ('Lovecraft Country') Live') -- but in the end, all ended up empty-handed.

The 2021 ceremony has undoubtedly failed to meet the expectations of people. Calling out the event, a netizen tweeted, "Not a single Black actor won tonight. Not a single Asian actor won tonight. Not a single Latino actor won tonight." Another one wrote, "#Emmys do this every year: Nominate a diverse selection of our faves, only to give them to the same

white actors and/or stories. Middle-aged white folks in conflict or British period pieces will win over nuanced, multi-dimensional plots involving characters of colour." #EmmysSoWhite has been trending all over Twitter since morning. "Black host, Black announcer hell even Black music. We doing everything but win. #Emm-ysSoWhite," a social media user wrote while condemning Emmys 2021. "Lovecraft country won nothing tonight and 98% of the winners were white despite the amount of black talent around #EmmysSoWhite," a netizen tweeted. This time Black performers had a strong showing at the event. But all efforts went in vain when nominees of colour failed to win most categories.

Nature's great masterpiece an elephant; the only harmless great thing

World Elephant Day has been created to bring the world together to help elephants. Elephants are among the most intelligent of the creatures with whom we share the planet, with complex consciousnesses that are capable of strong emotions. Across Africa they have inspired respect from the people that share the landscape with them, giving them a strong cultural significance. India is one of the seventeen megadiverse countries of the world. Elephants have enjoyed a special place in India's culture and tradition. They were used as a means of transport for the royalties and to fight battles, as has been captured by various frescoes. Most important, however, is the status of the elephant as a deity in the form of Lord Ganesha. For over 70% of the population, elephants hold religious importance. It is disappointing to learn that

today only about 27,000 wild elephants remain in India, as opposed to a million a decade ago as indicated by research. Human-elephant conflict is a major conservation concern in elephant range countries. A variety of management strategies have been developed and are practiced at different scales for preventing and mitigating human-elephant conflict. The elephant population has been declining for decades. This is due to several factors, such as habitat loss, human conflict, and hunting. Elephants are considered to be the most intelligent of all animals after humans. They are very social creatures that live in herds led by a 'matriarch'. The leading female of the herd is called the 'matriarch'. They help maintain the health of forests by distributing seeds by roaming over great distances. Elephants have been a part of human society for thousands of years. Humans have been both aiding and hurting elephants for

Vinod Chandrashekhar Dixit

centuries. In many stories, humans and elephants live in harmony as friends. Humans have always taken advantage of the incredible strength and endurance of elephants. Elephants are necessary for the survival of forest ecosystems, and indeed many creatures. Asian elephant numbers have dropped by at least 50% over the last three generations, and they're still in decline today. With only 40,000-50,000 left in the wild, the species is classified as endangered. An elephant is killed every 15 minutes and now some believe that in 12 years the elephant population will be extinct. Poachers kill about 20,000 elephants every single year for their tusks, which are then traded illegally in the international market to eventually end up as ivory trinkets. This trade is mostly driven by demand for ivory in parts of Asia. The poaching trade began in earnest in 1971, when a severe drought killed 9,000 elephants in a Kenyan game reserve. Neighbours of the

park moved in to collect ivory. In recent years, the number of elephant killings due to poaching has decreased, largely due to the worldwide ban (since 1990) on the trade of ivory. However, the illegal trade continues, and as long as it does, poachers will be a part of it. Today, witnessing a herd of elephants is becoming increasingly uncommon; as more and more elephants die prematurely every year. The illegal trade in ivory is one of the greatest threats to elephants today. Elephants are long-lived animals, and their survival depends upon regular migration over large distances to search for food, water, and social and reproductive partners. Too many elephants are getting killed in conflicts with humans! We simply cannot allow them to disappear from the face of this earth. Without the proper conservation of elephant survival we will see a drastic shift in the environment. Today as our physical world is changing fast, it is important to take a moment to reflect on and reinvent our relationship with elephants.

B-15 Jyoti-Kalash Society, Jodhpur
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15 tonnes of lifesaving COVID-19 supplies arrive in Samoa

A planeload of medical equipment and supplies touched down in Apia on Monday to bolster Samoa's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The goods were provided by the World Health Organization (WHO) for the Ministry of Health of Samoa and transported by the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) through its Pacific Humanitarian Air Service, with funding support from the European Union (EU).

"They say that it is in times of crisis that your true friends are revealed, and WHO, WFP and the EU have shown themselves to be true friends indeed to Samoa – not just in this latest delivery of supplies, but in their ongoing tremendous support for our COVID-19 preparedness and response," said Minister of Health, the Honourable Valasi Luapitofanua To'ogamaga Tafito Selesele. "This equipment and medical supplies will be used by Samoan health workers around the country as they continue to test and treat patients and to remain safe themselves as they save lives. Faafetai tele lava for your kind assistance."

Samoa detected its first community transmission of COVID-19 on 17 March 2022 after two years of being COVID-free. To date, the country has reported a total of 9,592 cases. However, with more than 92 percent of adults having received

at least two doses of COVID-19 vaccines, the death rate has been low. The 15-tonne delivery consists of 280,000 surgical masks, 248,300 gloves, 72,000 gowns, 30,000 N95 masks, 10,300 face shields, 3000 pulse

Suva/Apia



oximeters and 50 oxygen concentrators for Samoa from WHO's regional stockpile. Further items including oxygen concentrators and pulse oximeters also arrived on the plane to be sent by boat to neighbouring Tokelau.

"We knew we needed to get this equipment and supplies into health workers' hands here in Samoa, but getting it here was going to be a challenge, due to limited flights and inflated shipping costs. Thankfully, we spoke with our colleagues at WFP and, with support from the EU, they made this flight possible," said WHO Representative to Samoa, Dr Kim Eva Dickson.

The EU provides extensive support to WHO's COVID-19 response in the Pacific, both financially and as a partner in the Pacific COVID-19 Joint Incident Management Team.

"As COVID-19 begins to spread in Samoa, it is absolutely critical to bring these life-saving supplies to the frontlines of the crisis," said Alpha Bah, Director of WFP's Pacific Multi-Country Office. "WFP is pleased to join forces with WHO in support of the Ministry of

Health's efforts in containing the spread of the virus.

We thank the EU for its ongoing support to the Pacific Humanitarian Air Service. Generous funding has enabled WFP and our partners to send flights to 15 Pacific countries so far."

"The coronavirus pandemic is a global challenge which requires a global response. In the Pacific, the EU redirected EUR 20 million to WHO, WFP and the Pacific Community to help countries fight COVID-19 outbreaks on their shores. These resources continue to strengthen medical systems to respond to COVID-19. I am happy that the EU can now contribute to the assistance provided to Samoa, with the hope that the situation will improve soon," said the Ambassador of the European Union for the Pacific and to Samoa, H.E. Sujiro Seam.

WFP's Pacific Humanitarian Air Service is a part of the greater Pacific Humanitarian Team's COVID-19 Response Plan – a comprehensive regional response plan that seeks to consolidate efforts by UN agencies, governments, regional and multilateral organizations, NGOs, donors and development partners. It operates under the Pacific Humanitarian Pathway established by the Pacific Islands Forum and its member countries. With generous funding from the European Union, the Government of Australia and USAID, WFP has so far run

37 flights, transporting a total of 317 tonnes of critical medical cargo across the Pacific region.

Supplies being loaded onto the Pacific Humanitarian Air Service flight in Nadi, Fiji. Credit: Matthew Donoghue/WFP

About WFP: The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) is the world's largest humanitarian organization, saving lives in emergencies and using food assistance to build a pathway to peace, stability and prosperity for people recovering from conflict, disasters and the impact of climate change. In the Pacific, WFP works towards improving the capacity of Pacific Island Countries and Territories to reduce the risk of, prepare for and respond to disasters with a view of building a more resilient Pacific Community – while focusing on partnership and innovation utilizing the cluster approach.

About WHO: The World Health Organization (WHO) is the United Nation's specialized agency for international public health. In the Pacific, WHO's Division of Pacific Technical Support provides tailored, timely support to 21 Pacific Island countries and areas. Our main office is in Suva, Fiji, and the Division has six other offices across the region: The Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu.

Letter to Editor

Dear Editor
Our green planet is standing at a the cross road; on one hand our human population continues to grow bigger by the day. On the other hand, we are rapidly loosing our forests, biodiversity, sensitive ecosystems and wildlife due to various anthropogenic factors. Sustainability is the viable alternative for global human population to thrive and secure the planet for our future generations. However, sustainability has both its unique merits and demerits that needs unbiased introspection from a multiple perspective. Hence we need an open platform for academics, researchers, scholars, scientists, law makers, journalists, lawyers, educators and policy makers to look at sustainability from various angles and explore its strength and weakness by looking through the prism of logistics, law, politics, economy, ecology and environment. For long we have only substantiated our views based on the positive aspect of sustainability. It is also important to highlight upon the negative challenges of sustainability and discuss both its limitations and solutions under current global circumstances.

Thanking you
Sincerely yours
Saikat Kumar Basu

Apt 6-409, 43 Street South, Lethbridge
Alberta Canada T1J 4B3

Be Impartial While Judging Your Parents

We are living in a biased society. Here, we judge people according to their gender. We are constantly varying our perspectives based on their genders. We always accuse a person regarding their sexes. If a person is belonging to the male sex then their follies and mistakes amicably change because of their gender. We minutely judge a female because of her gender. As a kid, we are brought up in such a stereotypical society. We are drilled in the same biased setup on which a father and mother can be forgiven or convicted because of their sexes. A father is permitted to drink and even to adultery by their kids. They could hurt their wives even with sharp weapons and nobody can blame them. If the same thing is seen from a mother then the kids and even the dogs from the streets are allowed to produce a grave expression with a denial of the heinous activities.



Why are we prejudiced always for our parents? Why not try to treat them with equal

Dr Sudipta Mishra

eyes? Why is this racism continued from time immemorial?

This is sheer folly!!!
When will our mindset towards crime and offence be changed? A vice should always be dealt with equality. Adultery is always a sin for the partners. Kids should treat a drunkard with an equivalent treatment. Either parents who are involved in brutal acts should be dealt with equal treatment.

Kids are seasoned with a preconception to elevate the position of a father and they never judge them while they always accuse their mother of the same blunders.

There is a saying, 'Being a mother a woman has to always think about her kids first... Why is such a thing not appropriate for a father?' A widower has the right to remarry but a widow has no rights. What will people say? He can start a new life after the death of his spouse but a widow is not allowed to restart with her kids. What type of intolerance is this? Kids should be encouraged by their families and especially by the elderly people to understand their parents with a balanced vision to ensure equality in society.

Tailor murdered over 'insult to Islam'; curfew in Udaipur areas, prohibitory orders across Rajasthan

UDAIPUR: Two men with a cleaver murdered a tailor here, saying in a video post on social media that they are avenging an insult to Islam and triggering communal tension in the Rajasthan city, part of which was placed under curfew.

media by him. ALSO READ: Union Home Ministry dispatches team of anti-terror agency NIA to Udaipur. A BJP leader said the victim feared for his life and had sought police protection, but the authorities did not act on his ap-

removal of the corpse only after the murderers are arrested and compensation -- Rs 50 lakh and a government job -- given to the victim's family. On Twitter, CM Ashok Gehlot appealed for calm and asked people not to

Congress government in Rajasthan, saying that the murder was the result of its "appeasement policy". He said those seen in the video had threatened the victim on June 17. "The victim had asked for security but it was



peal. Within hours, prohibitory orders banning the assembly of people were imposed across the state for a month and mobile internet services suspended for the next 24 hours. At 8 pm, curfew was declared till further orders in seven police station areas of Udaipur city.

ALSO READ: Man beheaded in Rajasthan for supporting suspended BJP leader Nupur Sharma in social media post. The man who allegedly carried out the daylight murder posted three videos online admitting to the crime and were soon arrested.

In a video clip, one of the purported assailants declared that they had "beheaded" the man and went on to threaten Prime Minister Narendra Modi, saying their knife will get him as well.

Indirectly, the assailants also referred to Nupur Sharma, the BJP leader suspended from the party over a remark on Prophet Mohammad.

Kanhaiya Lal, the tailor, was recently arrested by the local police over some remarks made on social

peal. The assailants entered his shop in the city's Dhan Mandi area posing as customers.

As the tailor took the measurements of one of them -- who later identified himself as Riaz Akhtari -- attacked him with a cleaver, nearly severing his neck.

The other man shot the brutal murder with his mobile phone.

The two men fled from the scene and later uploaded this clip on social media. In another video, the alleged assailant said they "beheaded" the tailor and threatened the prime minister for lighting "this fire".

Yet another provocative video was recorded on June 17, in which Akhtari said he will post it the day he carries out the murder.

He asked other members of the community to continue with similar attacks.

As the videos circulated on social media, tension escalated.

Shopkeepers in local markets downed shutters.

Shopkeepers stopped police from taking away the body, saying they will allow the

share the videos.

"The guilty will not be spared. The entire police team is working on it with full alertness. I can imagine the anger which is there among people due to the murder. We are taking action accordingly," he told reporters in Jodhpur. Udaipur Superintendent of Police Manoj Kumar also promised strict action.

"A brutal murder has happened. Broadly, it seems to be a planned murder. We are discussing the demands put forth by the family members. Strict action will be taken against the criminals. I appeal to people to maintain peace," he said.

Gehlot said there is communal tension in the country and the prime minister should address the people.

He said both Hindus and Muslims are worried.

"It is more impactful if the prime minister speaks. I believe that the prime minister should address the country on this occasion and should make an appeal that we will not tolerate violence at any cost. What is the problem in saying so?" he said.

BJP state chief Satish Poonia targeted the

not given by the police," he claimed, adding that this indicated the apathy of the state's Congress government.

The state unit of the People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL) made the same claim.

"The situation in Rajasthan is such that Hindus are being attacked and murdered at many places. It is because of the politics of appeasement of CM Ashok Gehlot," Poonia claimed.

Leader of Opposition Gulab Chand Kataria also condemned the incident and said he was reaching Udaipur Tuesday night.

The prohibitory orders under section 144 of the CrPC, however, do not allow the gathering of more than three people. About 600 more policemen, including five companies of the Rajasthan Armed Constabulary, were sent to Udaipur, officials said.

Senior police officers were also rushed to the city.

Gehlot said the trial will be fast-tracked under the state's "case officer scheme".

G-7 leaders end summit pledging to hurt Russia economically

ELMAU: Leaders of the world's wealthiest democracies struck a united stance to support Ukraine for "as long as it takes" as Russia's invasion grinds on, and said they would explore far-reaching steps to cap Kremlin income from oil sales that are financing the war.

The final statement Tuesday from the Group of Seven summit in Ger-

the European Union or the UK and thus within reach of sanctions. To be effective, however, it would have to involve as many consuming countries as possible, in particular India, where refiners have been snapping up cheap Russian oil shunned by Western traders.

Details on how the proposal would be implemented were left for continuing talks in coming

Tuesday at the end of their three-day summit that "in these exceptional circumstances, publicly supported investment in the gas sector can be appropriate as a temporary response."

Before the summit's close, leaders joined in condemning what they called the "abominable" Russian attack on a shopping mall in the town of

come fatigued by the cost of a war that is contributing to soaring energy costs and price hikes on essential goods around the globe.

The G-7 has sought to assuage those concerns.

While the group's annual gathering has been dominated by Ukraine and by the war's knock-on effects, such as the challenge to food supplies in parts of the world caused by



many underlined their intent to impose "severe and immediate economic costs" on Russia.

It left out key details on how the fossil fuel price caps would work in practice, setting up more discussion in the weeks ahead to "explore" measures to bar imports of Russian oil above a certain level.

That would hit a key Russian source of income and, in theory, help relieve the energy price spikes and inflation afflicting the global economy as a result of the war.

"We remain steadfast in our commitment to our unprecedented coordination on sanctions for as long as necessary, acting in unison at every stage," the leaders said.

Leaders also agreed on a ban on imports of Russian gold and to step up aid to countries hit with food shortages by the blockade on Ukraine grain shipments through the Black Sea.

The price cap would in theory work by barring service providers such as shippers or insurers from dealing with oil priced above a fixed level. That could work because the service providers are mostly located in

weeks. The US has already blocked Russian oil imports, which were small in any case.

The European Union has decided to impose a ban on the 90% of Russian oil that comes by sea, but that does not take effect until the end of the year, meaning Europe continues to send money to Russia for energy even while condemning the war.

Meanwhile, higher global oil prices have softened the blow to Russia's income, even as Western traders shun Russian oil. Energy themes were front and centre at the summit throughout.

Europe is scrambling to find new sources of oil and fresh supplies of gas as Russia dials back gas supplies in what leaders say is a political move.

Meanwhile high energy prices are a headache for G-7 countries' consumers. The summit host, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz defended the G-7's decision to soften commitments to end public support for fossil fuel investments, saying the war in Ukraine means time-limited support for new natural gas extraction projects may be necessary. The G-7 nations said in a statement

Kremenchuk, calling it a war crime and vowing that President Vladimir Putin and others involved "will be held to account".

The leaders of the US, Germany, France, Italy, the UK, Canada and Japan on Monday pledged to support Ukraine "for as long as it takes" after conferring by video link with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy.

The summit host, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, said he "once again very emphatically set out the situation as Ukraine currently sees it." Zelenskyy's address came hours before Ukrainian officials reported a deadly Russian missile strike on a crowded shopping mall in the central city of Kremenchuk.

From the secluded Schloss Elmau hotel in the Bavarian Alps, the G-7 leaders will move to Madrid for a summit of NATO leaders, where fallout from Russia's invasion of Ukraine will again dominate the agenda. All G-7 members other than Japan are NATO members, and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida has been invited to Madrid. Zelenskyy has openly worried that the West has be-

the interruption of Ukrainian grain exports, Scholz has been keen to show that the G-7 also can move ahead on pre-war priorities. Members of the Group of Seven major economies pledged Tuesday to create a new climate club' for nations that want to take more ambitious action to tackle global warming.

The move, championed by Scholz, will see countries that join the club agree on tougher measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions with the aim of keeping global temperatures from rising more than 1.5

Celsius (2.7 Fahrenheit) this century compared with pre-industrial times.

Countries that are part of the club will try to harmonise their measures in such a way that they are comparable and avoid members imposing climate-related tariffs on each others' imports.

Speaking at the end of the three-day summit in Elmau, Germany, Scholz said the aim was to "ensure that protecting the climate is a competitive advantage, not a disadvantage". He said details of the planned climate club would be finalised this year.

Odisha govt to gift family planning kit to newly-weds

BHUBANESWAR: With the population bomb ticking, Odisha government is all set to introduce a new initiative under which newly married couples will be gifted a 'wedding kit' as part of population control measures.

The kit with a basket of choices for family planning will contain a booklet on methods and benefits of family planning, marriage registration form, condoms, oral contraceptive pills (OCPs) and emergency contraceptive pills (ECPs).

Most importantly, home pregnancy testing kit will also be part of the special gift pack along with a bride grooming kit comprising items like comb, bindi, nail cutter, mirror, handkerchief and towel among others. The 'wedding kit' is part of Nai Pahal Scheme under the National Health Mission

(NHM), aimed at raising awareness about the need of adopting temporary and permanent methods of family planning by young couples.

State Mission Director of NHM Shalini Pandit said Odisha is the first State to launch the initiative despite having a low total fertility rate (TFR). The TFR of a population is the average number of children that would be born to a woman over her lifetime. The TFR of Odisha is 1.8 against the national average of two. The Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHAs) have been entrusted with the task of distributing kits to the newly-wed couples. Director of Family Planning Dr Bijay Panigrahy said ASHAs have been trained for gifting kits to all newly-weds in a proper manner and encouraging them to adopt family planning methods.

Another jumbo carcass exhumed in Athagarh, fourth this month

BHUBANESWAR: Amid a Special Investigation Team (SIT) probe into incidents of elephant deaths covered up in Athagarh, another jumbo carcass was recovered by the forest

Gopapur section, in Baramba range, in presence of SIT members, who were on a spot visit to the area to investigate the recovery of three carcasses, two male and a female, by

RCCF M Yogajayanand, who is heading the SIT. The Angul RCCF assured a thorough probe by the SIT into this matter. Athagarh Divisional Forest Officer (DFO)

involved in the case. Meanwhile, recovery of another carcass has mounted pressure on the SIT that has been asked to submit its report to the State government within a month. While this is the fifth elephant carcass recovered from Athagarh area this year, a carcass exhumed from Jilinda range of Satkosia Wildlife Division, close to Narasinghpur area of the division, has raised more suspicion about functioning of a massive ivory-smuggling racket in the region. Moreover, the alleged involvement of forest staff and officials in this nexus, has made the issue more critical. Honorary Wildlife Warden of Khurda Subhendu Mallik said the issue needs to be dealt with seriously and all range officers and DFOs who have served in the division in last three years be brought under the purview of investigation.



officials from the division on Monday leaving the department red-faced. This is the fifth elephant carcass recovered from the division since February and fourth this month. A team of Athagarh forest division exhumed the carcass from Mandap reserve forest of Kusapal beat in

the Special Task Force of Crime Branch and Forest officials earlier this month. "We have not been able to determine the exact age and sex of the carcass which appears to have been buried at the spot two years back. The samples have been sent to OUAT lab for examination," said Angul

Sudarshan Gopinath Jadav said no tusks were found at the spot. He also said that age of the elephant is said to be around 40 years. "The exact age and sex of the elephant will be known after the lab report is received," Jadav said and added that investigation has been launched to find out the accused in-

Irrigation Projects inaugurated

Baripada: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on Friday visited Mayurbhanj district and inaugurated two mega irrigation projects, which will provide irrigation facilities to more than 27, 000 hectares of land, benefiting more than 2.5 lakh farmers.

been constructed on Deo river at Hatibari of Karanjia Block at a cost of Rs 823 crore. Highlighting his government's developmental programmes on agriculture, education and health, the Chief Minister said that all such programs have empowered the people and got



The Chief Minister has inaugurated Deo and Subarnarekha irrigation projects. Along with this, he has laid the foundation for many developmental works in the district.

Attending a program organized at Tikpada in Rasgovindpur block of the district, the CM launched these two projects and said that the state government's program for tribal brothers and sisters has started bearing fruit today.

The State Government's program to empower them through education and employment has gone a long way. The tribal children are getting fame all over the country due to their skills.

Out of the two projects launched today, the Subarnarekha project will provide irrigation facilities to agricultural land of 17,121 hectares in Mayurbhanj and Baleshwar districts. This will benefit 55,000 farmers of both the districts. A total of Rs 685 crores have been invested for this purpose.

It is worth noting that the Subarnarekha is a major irrigation project of the State Government. Target is to provide irrigation facilities to 70,000 hectares of land through the project. So far, more than 50,000 hectares of agricultural land have been provided with irrigation facilities.

Similarly, about 10,000 hectares of land in Mayurbhanj will be irrigated through the Deo Irrigation Project and it will benefit two lakh people of 100 villages of the tribal district. For this, a dam of 1280 meters length has

recognition from the people.

On transformation of schools, Patnaik said that it has increased confidence among the children. When a child of Mayurbhanj is getting proper education in a village school, it gives clear indication that not only that child or his village, but also the whole of Odisha is moving ahead.

Highly praising the art and culture of Mayurbhanj district, he said that Mayurbhanj has a unique identity for its art and culture throughout India. The Mayurbhanj tribe has a rich tradition and President Draupadi Murmu has further enhanced its glory. She has made all of us proud, he said.

Stating that Mayurbhanj is a big and important district of the State, Naveen said that Mayurbhanj has a special contribution to the development of the State. The Chief Minister called upon everyone to work hand in hand for the development of the district and the entire State.

Among others, Tourism Minister Ashwini Patra, Morada MLA Rajkishore Das, Bangriposhi MLA Sudam Marndi and President of Mayurbhanj District Council Bharti Hansda highlighted the importance of these two projects for the farmers of Mayurbhanj. Describing Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik as the most popular and the best Chief Minister of the country, they opined that the commitment of the Chief Minister for the people of Odisha has made him the favorite of all.

Digital learning improves but no district in top two categories in centre's rankings

NEW DELHI: Digital learning in schools is gradually improving with more than 60 districts showing improvements between 2018-2019 and 2019-20, according to the latest district-wise ranking of school education.

Among the southern states, digital learning grading is lowest in the districts of Andhra Pradesh and the highest in Kerala, according to the Performance Grading Index for Districts (PGI-D) for 2018-19 and 2019-20 released by the Department of School Education and Literacy, under the Ministry of Education.

The progress in digital learning is slow but steady,

said the survey, which for the first time rated districts on the standard of schools. The number of districts in the third-highest "Ati Uttam" category of the index doubled from four to eight in 2019-20. None of the districts could make it to the top two categories of "Daksh" and "Utkarsh".

The number of districts in the "Uttam" category in digital learning also went up from 27 to 41. According to the survey, 20 districts showed 20 percent improvements in their score while the performance of 43 districts went up by 10 percent. Districts scoring

more than 90 per cent are categorised as "Daksh". "Utkarsh" is the second-highest ranking scoring 81 to 90 per cent, followed by "Ati Uttam" (71 to 80 per cent), "Uttam" (61 to 70 per cent), Prachesta-1 (51 to 60 per cent), Prachesta-2 (41 to 50 per cent), Prachesta-3 (31 to 40 per cent), Akanshi-1 (21 to 30 per cent) and Akanshi-2 (11 to 20 per cent).

The survey released on Monday said that in many Andhra Pradesh districts like Srikakulam, Chittoor, Kurnool, Kadapa and Nellore, the digital learning scores were less than 10 out of the grading

of 50.

In comparison, most Kerala districts scored around 30. Even in Tamil Nadu, where two districts – Dharmapuri and Villuparam – were placed in the "Ati Uttam" category for their overall performance, the digital learning curve remains low. Most of the Tamil Nadu districts have scored less than 30, Chennai being the best with 27 and Thoothukkudi lowest with 14 in digital learning.

Most of the Karnataka districts have scored below 20 barring Bidar, Dakshin Kannada, Mandya, Bengaluru (South) and Bengaluru (North).



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Windfall tax on crude oil: Govt rakes in Rs 1.3 lakh crore; here's what brokerages say

NEW DELHI: The windfall taxes imposed by the government on domestic crude oil production and fuel exports will hit ONGC's earnings severely while shaving off up to USD 12 per barrel in refining margins for Reliance Industries Ltd.

The new levies will give the government up to Rs 1.3 lakh crore additional revenue, brokerages said.

In a surprise move, the government on July 1 increased import duties on gold (by 5 per cent), added export duties on petrol and ATF (Rs 6/litre; USD 12 per barrel) and diesel (Rs 13/litre; USD 26/bbl) and slapped a windfall tax on domestic crude production (Rs 23,250 per tonne; USD 40/bbl).

inflation, a higher tax on gold should decrease imports and help the external balance marginally.

"Yet, Friday's (July 1) measures will serve squarely to raise revenue for the government." Duties on crude oil should raise an additional USD 3-4 billion (net of lower royalties, income taxes and dividends) while the gold duty can raise USD 1.5-2 billion annualized.

Export taxes on diesel/petrol can raise close to USD 9 billion gross per annum, it said adding the revenue for current fiscal will be 75 per cent of these numbers.

"The government intent appears to be to maximise revenues from upstream producers by capping their upside from higher oil



This follows earlier duties imposed on steel (15 per cent) and iron ore (up 20-45 per cent).

While the export tax will be applicable on only-for-exports refinery of Reliance Industries (RIL), the restriction on product exports wherein at least 30-50 per cent is first supplied domestically will not apply to SEZ units. HSBC Global Research in a note said in May 2022, the government announced a cut in the excise duty of Rs 8 per litre on petrol and Rs 6 a litre on diesel, which is estimated to have reduced its revenues by Rs 1 lakh crore. "The additional excise duty just announced and effective from July 1, 2022 aims to fill this revenue gap. We estimate these taxes could generate Rs 1.2 lakh crore in government revenue and could also discourage the export of products which are being diverted away from the domestic market."

The windfall tax on crude production could generate revenue of Rs 65,600 crore and tax on export products another Rs 52,700 crore if they were to be continued for the full year. Kotak Institutional Equities said the taxes will result in additional tax revenues of Rs 1.3 lakh crore on an annualized basis and Rs 1 lakh crore for the rest of FY2023 assuming the government retains the taxes for the entire year.

UBS estimated that the government can raise Rs 1.38 lakh crore annually from additional taxes. "Based on diesel and gasoline export volumes in past year and estimate for FY23, we estimate additional revenues of Rs 68,000 crore on three transportation fuels. Similarly, windfall taxes on crude can raise Rs 70,000 crore in additional revenues."

Nomura said the windfall taxes could potentially impact RIL's GRM by USD 12 per barrel (Rs 47,000 crore on an annualised basis). Goldman Sachs said it saw limited earnings risk for RIL (despite wide scenarios of USD 1.5-12.7 risk to gross refining margins or GRMs from new taxes) as the spot implied GRM run rate is over USD 27 per barrel.

HSBC said while the new tax will lower ONGC earnings by Rs 30 per share, its impact on RIL would be Rs 36 a share.

"We continue to believe the loss on its domestic marketing margin is still greater than the export tax, and thus, we believe RIL is likely to continue to export significant amounts," HSBC said.

Indian crude oil basket hits 10-year high; petrol, diesel prices unchanged

JP Morgan said while the duties on steel/iron ore helped reduce domestic prices and curb

prices as well as disincentivising refined product exports by private refiners to ensure domestic fuel availability isn't compromised," Citi said in a note.

The USD 40 per barrel windfall tax is "a material negative for ONGC in particular where earnings are likely to be severely impacted," it said.

On the top of the new levy, ONGC will continue to pay oil 20 per cent (a fifth of the oil price) as OIBD cess and another 10-20 per cent royalty.

The net realisation for ONGC will be around 40 per cent of the oil price.

The gross refining margin (GRM) impact for RIL assuming two-thirds of its diesel, petrol and ATF were being exported, could be USD 9-10 per barrel, Citi said adding the firm must be currently earning USD 25 per barrel GRM. "The earnings impact for RIL is likely to be less material given offsets from marking-to-market for current GRM strength, which would likely preclude earnings upgrades rather than drive major downgrades."

Kotak said it does not "see much merit in the government's decision to impose export duties on exports from RIL's SEZ refinery. The government has cited increased exports of diesel and gasoline and lower availability of such products for the domestic market as a key reason to impose the exports tax. However, RIL's SEZ refinery was set up for exports and its products were not intended for sale in the domestic market."

It said demand-supply analysis of petroleum products shows that there is enough availability of diesel and petrol for the domestic market even excluding volumes from RIL's SEZ refinery.

Haitong said India's total diesel demand is 80-83 million tonnes while the total PSU diesel supply is 65-68 million tonnes.

"Therefore, the rest can be met by private players like RIL and Nayara Energy. Similarly, total consumption of petrol in India stands at 30-31 million tonnes while PSUs supply is 21-22 million tonnes. Therefore, one-third of India's consumption can be fulfilled through private players."

According to CLSA, RIL's GRMs may be hit by USD 5-6 per barrel due to the new tax. It said the new taxes would give the government extra annual revenue of Rs 1.1 lakh crore (\$14 billion), negating the Rs 97,000 crore revenue loss from the excise duty cut done about six weeks ago.

Credit Suisse said the impact on RIL from cess on the export of petroleum products is about USD 7-8 per barrel, translating to an annualized impact of USD 3.5-4.0 billion on EBITDA

Good days ahead? Market bounce may extend to 16000-plus levels

MUMBAI: The markets, which exhibited resilience on Friday, recovering from the day's low even as Reliance tanked 7%, could attempt to continue its upward bounce under-

recovered on domestic buying, even as index heavyweight Reliance cracked 7% on news of the export tax on refined products.

With Reliance accounting for almost 14%



way since last week. Weekly options' build-up suggest resistance at 15900, which if broken could witness Nifty testing 16000-16200 levels in the coming week.

Key support is at 15500. Levels for Sensex roughly translate into 53,400, 53760 and 54432 as resistances and 52080 as a key support in the coming week.

On Friday, Nifty made a low of 15511.05, but

weight on the index, Nifty and Sensex's recovery from intraday lows is being read by analysts that the market is not yet in a mood to relent to bearish pressure, for now.

"Friday's recovery despite RIL's sharp correction signals a continuation of the pullback rally that got underway last week toward 16200," said Siddharth Bhamre, research head, Religare Broking.

'Colombo makes its own decisions': India rejects Beijing's 'insinuations' on Chinese ship's proposed visit to Sri Lanka

Continued from page-1

ing situation in the region, especially in the border areas, seen as a veiled reference to the eastern Ladakh row.

Chinese ballistic missile and satellite tracking ship Yuan Wang 5 was scheduled to dock at Hambantota port from August 11 to 17, but reports from Sri Lanka said it has not berthed as planned.

"We reject the insinuations in the statement about India.

Sri Lanka is a sovereign country and makes its own independent decisions," Bagchi said when asked about the issue at a media briefing.

In a veiled reference to India, Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin on Monday said it was "senseless" to pressure Sri Lanka to prevent the ship's visit to Hambantota.

"With regard to our security concerns, this is the sovereign right of every country. We will make the best judgment in our own interest. This naturally takes into account the prevailing situation in our region, especially in the border areas," Bagchi said.

The Harbour Master of the Sri Lanka Ports Authority (SLPA) said that the ship did not arrive at the Hambantota port as planned.

There were apprehensions in New Delhi about the possibility of the vessel's tracking systems attempting to snoop on Indian installations on while being on its way to the Sri Lankan port.

"As regards India-China relations, we have consistently emphasized the necessity of mutual respect, mutual sensitivity and mutual interests as a basis for the development of ties," Bagchi said.

On India's ties with Sri Lanka, Bagchi said New Delhi is fully supportive of the island nation's democracy, stability and economic recovery.

"Insofar as India-Sri Lanka relations are concerned, you are aware of the centrality that Sri Lanka occupies in our Neighbourhood First policy," he said.

"India has extended this year itself unprecedented support of over USD 3.8 billion for ameliorating the serious economic situation in Sri Lanka. India also is fully supportive of its democracy, stability and economic recovery," Bagchi added.

The ties between India and Sri Lanka had come under strain after Colombo gave permission to a Chinese nuclear-powered submarine to dock in one of its ports in 2014.

It is understood that India apprised Sri Lanka about its concerns over the planned visit of the Chinese vessel to Hambantota port.

If rupee was a man, right now he's somewhat footloose and fancy-free

Bombay: The Indian currency, unmindful of its commitment to the economy, is touching new lows each day. Last week, it tore into 79 against the US dollar and now seems steadfast on cracking 80. The RBI, which has all the powers to lord over the exchange rate, is intervening prudently and is instead letting the rupee find a level of its liking. Perhaps, for now.

The one thing that's weakening INR is higher demand for dollars. High imports led by soaring crude oil prices and sharp capital outflows (India being one of the worst among emerging Asian peers) are together raising the demand for dollars, depreciating rupee. Since January, the domestic unit is down 5.6% against the greenback over last year, prompting the central bank to spare \$41 billion out of its over \$600-billion-odd forex reserves war chest it built in the past two years.

Russian strikes near Ukraine nuclear plant kill 14

Continued from page-1

as possible".

The strikes came a day after major blasts at the Saki airfield, a key military base on the Russian-annexed Crimea peninsula.

Moscow insisted that the explosions were caused by detonating ammunition rather than Ukrainian fire, and Ukraine has not claimed responsibility.

"There is a lot of shooting"

Fighting also ground on in eastern Ukraine, where Russian troops are gradually advancing.

Strikes on the city of Bakhmut killed at least six people and injured three others, regional governor Pavlo Kyrylenko said on Telegram, adding that 12 residential buildings were damaged.

The city of Soledar was under constant shelling, AFP reporters saw, as Russian troops attempted to drive out Ukrainian forces and seize a foothold towards Bakhmut.

ALSO READ: India expresses concern over reports of shelling near Ukraine's Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant

The echoes of cluster bombs and artillery bounced off apartment buildings with their windows shattered, while roads were cratered and shops boarded up or destroyed.

The city was shrouded with black and white smoke arising from artillery and air strikes. Some of those who remain now live underground in cellars ill-suited as bomb shelters. "Most have left. It's very scary. There is a lot of shooting," said 62-year-old Svitlana Klymenko. "I just want to leave to grow old in a normal way, die a normal death, not be killed by a missile."

EU ban on Russian coal

The war has severely hampered the grain supply from Ukraine, leading to an international food crisis as it is one of the world's biggest producers.

Some ships have been able to leave Ukrainian ports in recent days after a deal with Russia brokered by the United Nations and Turkey. The first exports of wheat should start next week under the agreement, top UN official Frederick Kenney said on Wednesday.

The first grain shipment to leave on the Sierra Leone-flagged vessel Razoni departed the Ukrainian port of Odessa on August 1 and had been expected to dock in the Lebanese port of Tripoli at the weekend.

But the Ukrainian embassy said a new buyer for the shipment was being sought after the original Lebanese buyer cancelled the order. Marine traffic sites showed the Razoni docked in Turkey's Mediterranean port of Mersin, following reports a new buyer had been found for its cargo.

Spain on Wednesday launched a pilot project to import Ukrainian grain by train to avoid blocked maritime routes, with a freight train leaving Madrid for the Polish town of Chelm late on Tuesday.

Western countries have meanwhile imposed increasingly stringent sanctions on Moscow, raising fears that Russia may cut off gas supplies.

EU countries have started putting into place different measures to save energy, with air conditioning curbs coming into force in Spain on Wednesday and Vienna dimming street lighting. A total EU ban on imports of Russian coal was due to come into force overnight.

Qatar World Cup to start a day earlier than planned: Sources



DOHA: The opening match for this year's World Cup, between hosts Qatar and Ecuador, will be brought forward by one day to November 20, World Cup sources told AFP on Wednesday. The move, which should be approved by the FIFA Council before the 100-day countdown starts this week, will retain the tradition of the first match featuring the host country.

Under the existing arrangement, Senegal and the Netherlands play the first game on November 21, followed by the official inauguration match between Qatar and Ecuador later that day. The World Cup sources said that confirmation of the change was expected soon. FIFA and the Qatari organising committee declined to comment.

"There were discussions and agreement between the two respective teams and there was a request from CONMEBOL - the South American confederation," one World Cup source told AFP, speaking on condition of anonymity as no official decision has been announced. "We wanted to follow the tradition that either the reigning champions or the host country be in-

involved in the opening match," the source added. For fans who have tickets for the November 21 game, "any disruption will be dealt with so impact is minimal", another tournament source told AFP. Under the change, Netherlands v Senegal would be moved from 1:00 pm (1000 GMT) on November 21 to a 7:00 pm start. "It is a better slot for both teams for television and other areas," said the World Cup source.

BCCI sets aside window in March 2023 for inaugural women's IPL

MUMBAI: Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has set aside a window in March 2023 for the first-ever edition of women's Indian Premier League (IPL) and the process to get the show on the road

has been organising the Women's T20 Challenge. What started as a one-off exhibition match between two teams in the first season is now a three-team competition. Many players from outside

which will be as big and grand a success as men's IPL." Owners of IPL franchise Rajasthan Royals and Barbados Royals, The Knight Riders Group have expressed their interest in getting involved in the tournament and owning a women's IPL team. The inaugural edition of the women's Caribbean Premier League (CPL), which is scheduled to happen alongside the men's tournament later this year will feature three teams, including Trinbago Knight Riders owned by Knight Riders Group. BCCI is expected to hold a discussion on matters related to women's IPL at its annual general meeting in September this year. Much of the planning around the tournament will be around sale of its media rights. Due to India's improving and great performances at major ICC events over the recent years, the enthusiasm for

women's cricket in India is at a never-seen-before high. The latest of these performances was the Women in Blue clinching a silver medal in the recently-concluded Commonwealth Games 2022 in Birmingham. Moreover, senior Indian players like Smriti Mandhana, Harmanpreet Kaur and former Indian skipper Mithali Raj have been supportive of the idea of women's IPL. Raj in fact expressed a desire to come out of retirement to participate in the tournament. "I am keeping that option open. I have not yet decided. There are a few more months to go before the Women's IPL happens. It would be lovely to be part of the first edition of the Women's IPL," she had said while speaking on ICC's 100% Cricket podcast earlier in July.



is underway, as per board president Sourav Ganguly. As per ESPNCricinfo, the board has made changes to its women's domestic cricket calendar to make way for women's IPL. The women's season that generally goes on from November to April has been advanced by a month, with the season set to begin on October 11 with T20 competition and end in February 2023 with an inter-zonal ODI competition. Since 2018, BCCI

India have also joined the competition. But despite this, the clamour to have a much bigger competition just like men's IPL is growing among players and fans for a while. Earlier in February this year, Ganguly had stated that the women's IPL would be held next year. "We are at the level of formulation to have a full-fledged WIPL. It is certainly going to happen. I strongly believe that next year i.e. 2023 will be a very good time to start a full-fledged women's IPL

Four-time Grand Slam champion Naomi Osaka exits match at Toronto Open with back injury

TORONTO: Naomi Osaka's recent struggles continued Tuesday with an early exit at the National Bank Open. The four-time Grand Slam champion retired from her first-round match with a back injury. She was trailing 7-6 (4), 3-0 against

Silicon Valley Classic. That was her first tournament since the French Open as she recovered from an Achilles injury. Prior to that run, she had her best tournament of the year making it to the final of the Miami Open in early April before losing to top-ranked Iga Swiatek.

Tomljanovic of Russia, Amanda Anisimova of the United States, and Zhang Shuai of China also advanced. Osaka struggled with unforced errors and had four of her five double faults in the first set. She won the first game with the help of three unforced errors from

past the baseline. Kanepi built on that momentum in the second set, taking advantage of Osaka's mishaps and firing sharp forehands past the Japanese star. After hitting her second ace of the match earlier in the final game, Kanepi closed out with



Estonia's Kaia Kanepi when she withdrew from the contest. "I felt my back from the start of the match, and despite trying to push through it, I just wasn't able to today," Osaka said. "I'd like to pay credit to Kaia for playing well and want to wish her all the best for the rest of the tournament." Entering the tournament, Osaka had been eliminated from her last three competitions in the first or second round, including a straight-sets loss to Coco Gauff at last week's Mubadala

The 31st-ranked Kanepi will next play No. 8 Garbine Muguruza of Spain. In other matches, 10th seeded Gauff beat fellow American Madison Brengle 6-1, 6-3; China's Zheng Qinwen got past Canada's Rebecca Marino, 3-6, 7-6 (5), 6-4; Italy's Camila Giorgi defeated ninth-seeded Emma Raducanu of England, 7-6 (0), 6-2; and Bianca Andreescu of Canada beat Daria Kasatkina of Russia, 7-6 (5), 6-4. Elise Mertens of Belgium, Sara Sorribes Tormo of Spain, Ajla

Kanepi, but the four-time Grand Slam champion lost her momentum after going up 2-1. Kanepi won four of the next seven games to go up 5-3. From there, Osaka had to fight her way out of two set-point opportunities from Kanepi. With a mix of a strong backhand and multiple errors from Kanepi, Osaka was able to tie it up and send the set to a tiebreaker. With the tiebreaker tied 3-3, Kanepi turned up her level of play taking four of the next five points as Osaka handed her set point on a shot

a strong serve that Osaka returned high and wide. Andreescu won this event in 2019 before taking the U.S. Open title in what was a breakout year for the 22-year-old. She hasn't won a tournament since, having battled through injuries and taking a "mental break" at one point in 2021. Andreescu's lone final appearance this year has been at the Bad Homburg Open where she fell to Caroline Garcia. Andreescu will play Alize Cornet of France in the second round.




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