

Sri Lanka crisis: Country's national carrier to be privatised; 10 nations including India show interest in selling petroleum products

COLOMBO(KCN): Sri Lanka on Monday said it will privatise the country's loss-making national carrier as the cash-strapped government "can no longer afford

essential as the government can no longer afford to inject money into running the airline," he said. "Annually the government has been provid-

(LKR 401 billion), he said. The airline, formed in 1979 as Air Lanka, was rebranded by Srilankan Airlines under the management control of

Silva as saying. "But if the investors are Sri Lankan nationals, we can go for more. There are many rich people in Sri Lanka, they can come together as a syndicate or with airlines and offer a bid," he said.

Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickremesinghe has called for much-needed reforms for the loss-making national carrier.

According to Colombo-based think tank Advocata, SriLankanAirlines has, on numerous occasions, required treasury-guaranteed loans to stay afloat, and has amassed over LKR 53.

6 billion in guarantees as of August 2021, the report said. Sri Lanka, a country of 22 million people, is under the grip of unprecedented economic turmoil, the worst in seven decades.

The crisis that has
CONTINUED ON: P-7



to inject money" into running the airline. The government is looking to sell a 49 per cent stake each of the SriLankan Airlines' catering and ground-handling units in efforts to restructure the state-run carrier, while 51 per cent will be retained under state hold, Aviation Minister Nimal Siripala de Silva told reporters here. "This restructuring is

ing the airline between USD 80 billion to USD 200 billion to run its operations," de Silva said. The minister said the revenue from the sale of the catering operation can be used to pay off debt amounting to USD 80 million that was obtained by mortgaging its shares, as well as some other loans. The airline's debt currently amounts to USD 1.226 billion

Emirates in 1998. In 2007, the government took back control of it from the Emirates. Srilankan Airlines is among over 190 state-owned enterprises that are making huge losses. Without retaining a 51 per cent stake in the airline, Sri Lanka might lose ownership of the companies to be sold, Economy Next news website quoted minister de

Industries Minister seeks suggestions for better industrialisation in Odisha

BHUBANESWAR(KCN): Industries, MSME and Energy Minister Pratap Keshari Deb on Sunday called upon young and promising entrepreneurs and industry bodies to come forward and suggest changes in the State's industrial policy for better results. Speaking at Propack Odisha 2022 and MSME

Odisha 2022, organised by Odisha Assembly of Small and Medium Enterprises (OASME), Deb said Odisha offers the best infrastructure to industries. Large and heavy industries are coming to Odisha, but what the State requires the most is MSMEs, which will generate more jobs.

The younger generation must take risks and should not look for support from the government only, he said. Chief Secretary Suresh Chandra Mahapatra said the State government has planned to set up MSME parks in every district for which IDCO has been provided around Rs 450 crore to develop the re-

quired infrastructure.

"MSMEs will get all infrastructure support, including land, electricity, water and another provisioning in the parks to be set up in the districts. There have been around 30 per cent growth in finances to MSMEs. The Chief Minister has taken two rounds of meeting



with bankers to enhance credit support," he said.

Stressing lending support to small and medium enterprises, Principal Secretary of Finance department Vishal Kumar Dev said the government has been constantly pursuing it with PSU banks to ensure finance availability.

Floods hit 1.7 lakh hectare crop area, but rains came as a boon for Kharif crops

BHUBANESWAR(KCN): As flood-affected districts are busy compiling reports on crop damage to be submitted on or before August 30, a preliminary report received by the State Agriculture department has stated that around 1.7 lakh hectare crop fields were submerged by the swollen rivers and channels.

However, with excess rainfall in July and August, the area covered under Kharif crops this year has been 33,000 hectares more than last

year. The total area covered this year is 51.09 lakh hectares

The actual area covered by the end of August 20 was 51

considerably delayed agricultural operations. However, the back-



against 50.76 lakh hectares last year. The department had planned to cover 61.59 lakh hectares under Kharif crops.

lakh hectares, which is 83 per cent of the programme area. "The deficient rainfall in June and the first half of July con-

to-back low pressure induced rains in July and August not only made up the water deficit but expedited
CONTINUED ON: P-7

Local Self Governance Day puts Cuttack Municipal Corporation in a spot

CUTTACK(KCN): With the Local Self Government Day ap-

Closed office in Ward no 59 Chief Minister

However, the wardoffice, a key urban transformative

have not seen the opening of their ward office located at Gandhi Smruti Pitha in Telengapentha for long. Meanwhile, ward offices of Ward no 21 are functioning from the CMC office in pen and paper, residents of Ward no 56, 57 and 58 are unaware of the existence of their respective ward offices.

The civic body which claims to have established a ward office in all the 59 wards is said to have engaged 23 tax collectors, 19 sanitary inspectors, 2 community organisers, 3 junior assistants, 4 junior engineers, 7 assistant engineers and a work sarkar for the facilities. CMC deputy commissioner Ajaya Mohanty (Enforcement) said that every ward has its own office and they have been instructed to open for at least two hours a day.



proaching, the Cuttack Municipal Corporation(CMC) seems to have woken from its slumber to activate its ward offices lying dysfunctional for years. The realisation about their existence and functions dawned on the Corporation authorities only after instructions from the State government for the ward-level celebration of the day on August 31. All the 2,055 wards across the State will be commemorating the third anniversary of the ward office establishment initiative.

Naveen Patnaik launched the concept of establishment of ward office on August 31, 2019, during the observation of Local Self Governance Day as a part of a key urban transformative initiative under the 5T governance mantra of the State government. The ward offices were the first point of contact for residents' grievances and are expected to provide effective service delivery such as street lighting, drainage, road, public health, sanitation, and social security among many others.

initiative, had remained in a mess at CMC with most of them lying non-functional for the last three years. "The ward office established at Nuapada Market Complex has been lying shut for a long time. After being elected as corporator in March, the ward office was opened once in April that too with my interference to hold a meeting for the formation of ward committee," rued corporator of Ward no 50, Santosh Bhol. Similarly, residents of Ward no 59 have alleged that they

PM Modi mentions 'Nuakhai' in Mann Ki Baat



BHUBANESWAR(KCN): Prime Minister Narendra Modi mentioned about 'Nuakhai', the festival of the new harvest of paddy crops celebrated across the State mostly in western Odisha, in his Sunday edition of Mann Ki Baat. Addressing the 92nd episode of his monthly programme, the PM said along with the great festival of Independence Day, many more festivals are lined up in the coming days. Just a few days from now is the festival of Ganesh Chaturthi.

The festival of Onam is also there before Ganesh Chaturthi celebrated in Kerala with a sense of peace and prosperity. Hartalika Teej too is on August 30. "The festival of Nuakhai will also be celebrated in Odisha on September 1. Nuakhai simply means new food, that is, this too, like many other festivals, is a festival associated with our agricultural traditions," he said. "All these festivals of ours are synonymous with our cultural prosperity and vitality. I wish you all the best for these festivals," Modi said.

DTPA to organise programme on Direct Taxes with IIM, Shillong

Kolkata (KCN): Shishir Bajoria Chairman, Indian Institute of Management, Shillong accepted the suggestion of Direct Taxes Professionals Association, Kolkata to organise Refresher programme on Direct Taxes at IIM, Shillong. He was addressing DTPA's 40 years Celebration programme on Sunday evening and admired the role of DTPA in ensuring proper tax compliance. Advocate Narayan Jain elaborated on the role of DTPA and services being rendered in making appropriate representation to the Finance

compliance without much hassle. Shishir Bajoria also released 40 Years Celebration Newsletter and Lapel pins. Adv. KK Jain President welcomed all and Adv. RD Kakra conducted the programme very well. CA Indu Chatrath thanked Chief Guest Bajoria, past presidents as well as all participants. Renowned Singers Ganga Pachisia and Vijay Ojha presented old as well as new Songs and Ghazals while Swati Banerjee and her troupe presented fascinating amazing dances.



Minister and Central Board of Direct Taxes from time to time. Jain said that about 50 tax professionals are expected to participate the proposed 3 day extensive workshop and that they would also invite the Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman as well as Chief Minister of Meghalaya Karnad Sangama to inaugurate the residential workshop. The President KK Jain and Coordinator RD Kakra said that faculty members and participants will also discuss the desired modifications in the Income Tax Act so that taxpayers truly feel "Ease of doing business" and can make

On this occasion former Presidents SD Verma, MC Jagwayan, Nilima Joshi, PR Kothari, Sajjan Sultania, Sanjay Bajoria, Subash Agarwal, Agohar Dudhwewala, Ramesh Chokhani, Vikash Parakh, Narendra Goyal and others were present. Barkha Agarwal (Secretary), DS Agarwal, Rajesh Agarwal, Manjulata Shukla, Mahendra Agarwal, Ritesh Vimal, Mahadeo Agarwal, Madan Maroti, Sujit Sultania, Deepak Jain, Madhusudan Kakra and other members of the team actively helped in making the programme successful.

Miscreants attacked security guard and robbed from Rungta plant, arrested

Barbil, 29th August. (KCN). Two miscreants have attacked a security guard of Rungta plant at Karakhendra area of Barbil in Keonjhar district late on date 27th August, night. Reportedly, these miscreants were trying to enter in the plant in a intention to theft articles from the plant. While entering in to the plant security guard present there tried to prohibit these miscreants. These miscreants attacked

the security guard the act the guard get



with a battle axe on seriously injured. On

getting complain of Annada Sahu, General Manager HR of the plant, Barbil police investigated the matter and arrested Tarun Patra of PHed area and Jamuna Munda from Karakhendra Village under Barbil police station. 12 no's bush made up of copper gun metal worth Rs one lakh fifty thousand approx. and the battle axe weapon recovered from their possession. Both the accused forwarded to court said Sushant Dash, IIC, Barbil

Modi Govt's Wrong Economic Policies Responsible for Price Rise & Unemployment in India

Bhubaneswar (KCN): There was a time when PM Narendra Modi dangled a dream in front of the people of India: a future free from inflation and unemployment. Instead, he has delivered a nightmare of record price rise and the highest joblessness in 45 years. The Modi government's record over the last eight years speaks for itself:

	2014	2022	Increase
LPG	Rs 410 per cylinder	Rs 1,053-1,240 per cylinder	156%
Petrol	Rs 71 per litre	Rs 95-112 per litre	40%
Diesel	Rs 55 per litre	Rs 90-100 per litre	75%
Mustard oil	Rs 90 per kg	Rs 200 per kg	122%
Wheat flour	Rs 22 per kg	Rs 35-40 per kg	81%
Milk	Rs 35 per litre	Rs 60 per litre	71%

PM Modi has not just failed to control price rise since coming to power in 2014, his misguided policies and deceitfulness have in fact exacerbated the suffering of the people. The PM boasted to voters in 2019 how essential items like food grains, curd, lassi and buttermilk were GST-free but in 2022, he imposed GST on those very goods. He used the Ujjwala Yojana to win votes in 2019 elections but soon after, he cold-heartedly eliminated cooking gas subsidies. The price of LPG has more than doubled to over ₹1,053-1,240 per cylinder and lakhs of consumers can no longer afford to refill their empty gas

cylinders. These are just two of the many examples where PM deceived the people of India to win votes and then stabbed them in the back in line with his "Doob Maro" philosophy.

The Modi government's desperation to fill its coffers at all costs has led it to impose exorbitant fuel taxes that has further hurt Indian consumers' purchasing power. The global prices of petrol, diesel and LPG were much higher in 2013-14 than in 2021-22 but consumers pay much more today for a litre of fuel or an LPG cylinder than they did during rule of the UPA govt.

	Crude oil (\$/barrel)	Petrol price (Rs./litre)	Diesel price (Rs./litre)
May 2014	106	71	55
August 2022	95-112	90-100	
	LPG (\$/metric tonne)	LPG price (Rs./cylinder)	
2013-14	881	410	
August 2022	670	1,053-1,240	

International prices of Crude Oil and LPG are decreasing for past few months but the benefit has not been passed on to the consumers, whereas this government never forgot to increase the prices of Petrol, Diesel and LPG as and when the international prices got increased.

The Modi government's policy choices have resulted in drastic deterioration of the unemployment situation in the country. Demonetisation and hasty GST implementa-

UNESCO inscript "Durga puja in Kolkata" as Intangible heritage of the world



Kolkata (KCN): On the occasion, to celebrate the spirit of Durga puja, a mesmerizing dance ballet- Devi Rising was presented by the renowned Odissi dancer and Sangeet Natak Akademi awardee Smt. Sharmila Biswas and

her troupe from Kolkata. It enthralled the audience and the guests with the depiction of Devi Durga or the feminine shakti through aesthetically conceptualized choreography, music, costumes, and theme. Celebrating the inscription of 'Durga Puja in Kolkata' on the representative list of UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity cum Inauguration of 'Capacity Building Workshop' of M/o Culture, on Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) at National Museum in

MP Aparajita writes to Mayor, assures help over garbage crisis

BHUBANESWAR(KCN): As the State Capital continues to sink under piles of garbage because of a deadlock between BMC and Daruthenga villagers over the use of Bhuasuni dump yard, Bhubaneswar MP Aparajita Sarangi on Sunday wrote to Mayor Sulochana Das extending all help to resolve the crisis. Sarangi raised concern over the non-lifting of trash and poor sanitation activities in the city for over a fortnight. "There are heaps of garbage everywhere in the city. There is also tremendous discontentment among the residents of various localities over this issue," she wrote, while urging the Mayor to indicate as to how she, as the local MP, could extend help in solving the problem. Sarangi said she hopes that the issue will be sorted out by the BMC in the next three-four days. "In case the situation remains same or worsens, please allow me to meet you in your office on September 2 to work out a solution," she wrote. Sarangi's letter came a day after the Bhubaneswar

district unit of BJP gave 48 hours ultimatum to the civic body to clear all garbage. The unit has threatened that it will intensify its protest and stage road blockade if BMC fails to consider its demand. Sarangi, on the other hand, wrote that "At this juncture, we should not indulge in blame game and supplement each other's effort," and urged everyone to work hand in hand for a 'better Bhubaneswar'. Meanwhile, BMC officials said they are tracking the performance of the agencies roped in to work under the new sanitation packages worked out for the City this year and have also allowed continuation of old agencies till new agencies start their operations. As it is, the BMC has not been able to send the waste from temporary transit station near Sainik School to Bhuasuni dumpyard for over 15 days due to protest by Daruthenga villagers. Officials said the villagers have sought time till Monday to convey their final decision.

tion had already dealt a body blow to the economy. On top of this, the Modi govern-

to 24 who are still looking for jobs are unemployed, forcing even PhD holders and



ment is shutting down and privatising PSUs and handing over prized national assets to its cronies. The government's anti-youth policies have led to 10 lakh vacancies in central government, which is 24 percent of the total sanctioned posts.

The poorly conceived Agnipath scheme is a fresh threat to the job prospects of our youth as well as to national security. Young men and women who dreamed of serving their country by joining the Armed Forces are being asked to do contractual jobs for 4 years, with no guarantee of pension or of security. The consequences have been devastating. Lakhs of youth have turned despondent and dropped out of the job market. Despite this exodus, 42% of youth in the age group of 20

postgraduates to apply for positions requiring much lower qualification, such as peon and others. The Indian National Congress stands with the people in these difficult times. From 'Sansad to Sadak', we have raised our voice against the incompetence and the mis-

guided policies of Modi government that have exacerbated price rise and joblessness in India. Since June 2021, we have organised seven nationwide protests and mass awakening programmes (Annexure attached for your reference). Subsequent to our nationwide demonstration against price rise on 5th August, we will hold 'Mehangai Par Halla Bol' rally at the Ramlila Maidan in Delhi next Sunday ie 4th September. We demand that the government fulfil its promise to curb inflation and generate jobs at the earliest. And we urge all citizens to join us in our efforts to pressurise the government to change its course from the anti-people and anti-youth path.

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Rowel Star- The new shining Star of the Rajasthan Music Industry

Mumbai (KCN, Sanjay Sharma Raj): The Rajasthan music industry is going leaps and bounds, celebrating the new singing star Afjor Khan aka Rowel Star. This new generation of Rajasthan singers is making headlines for his outstanding singing style and making the world shake legs with his unique Rajasthan songs.

Afjor Khan, popularly known as Rowel Star on Social Media, has created a sensation in the Rajasthan music world with his mesmerizing voice and affective tone. "I am an ardent fan of Guru Randhawa and take his inspiration for my songs. I want to create some unique mix of folk songs with blending hip-hop and wanted to give something new to the music world, says Rowel Star." He recently gave his voice to two new songs, "Tera Shoot" & "Nahiyo Jeena", making the Rajasthan cultures a step ahead in this ever-evolving music world. The shoot of these songs has recently been completed in Dubai and will be out very soon to rock the floors! About his upcoming projects, Rowel Star will be seen sharing the floors with re-

nowned Rajasthan Singer Sumsa Supari.



They together have shot the song recently in Dubai in various amazing locations. The song will be out soon and published on the YouTube channel Sumsa Supari Films.

Rowel Star's songs, Maro Sajaniyo, Bannasa ke Mijaj, and Jai Jasol Maa album are the most popular and trending, creating a sensation on his YouTube channel and blessing him with millions of views and subscribers.

Born and raised in a small village in the Panawara district of Barmer, Rajasthan, Afjor has been fascinated by the music culture since he was five. He was sent to his maternal house at Sindhari for schooling. During his school days, he sang songs and attracted many ears listening to his soulful voice. His teacher once gave him a chance to sing a song on Republic Day, which grabbed praise from the entire school.

It was the year 2007 when Afjor Khan won the hearts of millions for singing the famous Rajasthan song of those days, "Maharana Pratap", which rolled out tears from listeners' eyes. His soulful voice created a huge impact on people's minds. Afjor won the gift price of Rs.1500/- for his singing. After the impressive response to his performance, there was no looking back for Afjor Khan, and his journey of becoming Rowel Star has kick-started!

Neeraj Bharadwaj is shooting for web series 'Saazish' in Bhopal



Mumbai (KCN, Sanjay Sharma Raj): Film and TV veteran and famous actor Neeraj Bharadwaj is

About which Neeraj Bharadwaj says, "I am playing the role of city's famous lawyer Abhay Pratap



shooting for the web series 'Saazish' in Kalua Khurd, Bhopal, which will soon be airing on Disney Hotstar. It is produced by Col. S S Pattnaik and the director is Hiralal Khatri.

Singh, who gets the brother of villain Shahbaz Khan punished. After that Shahbaz Khan commits a lot of oppression on my family and me. I am not able to do anything. After that conspiracy is

and just like before, I will definitely be able to make a place in the heart of the audience with my performance." By the way, Neeraj Bharadwaj will soon have a webseries named

Madgaon ...A Murder Case. Its shooting has been completed. The main cast of the web series 'Saazish' are Mugdha Godse, Shahbaz Khan, Raza Murad, Mustakh Khan and

Dev Manaria with Neeraj Bharadwaj. Its screenplay and dialogues are by Vinod Vats, Vikas Vashisht and Ajay. Its cameramen are Manish Vyas and Amar Vyas, music is by Manish Bhanushali. It is produced by Col.S S Pattnaik, co-producer Dev Manaria and executive producer is Anu Madrasi. It will be coming soon on Disney Hotstar. Its shooting is going on in Bhopal followed by Vadodara.

A Non-dynast at the helm, can the Congress reinvent

A non-dynast at the helm of the Congress! Have the Gandhis been seriously thinking of moving the party into the hands of an outsider? Can the Congress reinvent itself



with a non-dynast leading the party? This question seems to be genuinely relevant today as many of its loyalists began to feel the inefficiency of the

dynasty to lead the party in the direction of reconstructing its political significance. With more regional parties and an aspirational team-Kejriwal eating into the vote bank of the Congress; the party has no reason to bank on a family that has totally failed to give it electoral victories for almost a decade. The leadership at the helm had a humiliating response from the erstwhile Gandhi family loyalists Anand Sharma and Gulam Nabi Azad who rebelled against it once again. Their public rebellion is sure to make the remaining G-23 members more belligerently mutinous. The rebellious grouping had written a letter to Sonia Gandhi last year demanding an organisational revamp recommending elections for all the party posts which remained vacant. Their demand included the election of the Party President, who according to them should be a full time politician. The party's humiliating defeat in the Uttar Pradesh assembly elections with Priyanka Gandhi shot as its Brahmastra, a last resort, lost her chances to be nominated as the party President. This was the plan the Congress shelved as a future surprise in case Rahul Gandhi hesitated to take the reins. As the party is haunted by continuous poll debacle in state and central elections, the trio from the Gandhi family seems to have

realised the fading sheen of its names in the rank and file of Congress.

The biggest threat that the Congress needs to face is its experiment with a non-dynast for the top job of the party. Effect of the same would become visible with the course of time. The perception that is looming large is not only about the family's weakening support within the party but also a fear that its absence would further crush the prospects of Congress. Whatever, the Congress is all set to go for an overhauling, probably not seriously hammering on the possible takeover by anybody from the Gandhi family. The rebellion of the veterans has undoubtedly weakened the party and the family. Despite rumours doing the rounds on Ashok Gehlot's possible candidature as the next party president, his denial (if he does so) would stonewall his party's ambitions of revival and give it a jerk of horror and uncertainty of hope as to who would rescue the second largest national party from its predicament. In this perception battle, what seems to be sinking deeper is a realization that anybody, for that matter, being elected as the party chief would struggle to give the lost glory of the party back. Amid severe confusion and ambiguity, the party cadre has no choice but to look up to the trio of the Gandhi family and wait for its response. The bleak fortune of the Congress party is thickening on a daily basis in a Modi dominated political scenario. With its arrogance and blind opposition to Modi, the Congress and its leadership had lost all battles that it probably forgot to learn lessons from. Mostly the party leadership chooses to shoot irresponsible and insensible rants on a government that takes every serious attempt to woo the people of

M. R. LALU

the country. The Prime Minister is talented enough to emotionally grab the attention of the electorate. He knows how to capture minds and change the mood of the nation.

The lackadaisicalness of the Congress from venturing into a possible revamp of the party tearing off the tattered influence of the family is the main problem that the party is entangled in. Interestingly, the Congress could not override the image of being a corrupt party that the BJP and Modi could successfully march a narrative with. And the grand old party proved to be conceding to the narratives that the BJP intelligently set against it. The BJP and its smart leadership have been investing their time and intelligence to systematically highlight the Congress from the days of Nehru. Surprisingly, the Prime Minister voiced against corruption and nepotism from the ramparts of the Red Fort. The Congress could not even speculate Modi's adventure though it termed his demeanour as "shameless stoop by the Prime Minister". The BJP with Modi and Shah at the steering seat has managed to turn the tables against the Congress, engraving a narrative that the Congress is a minority supporter and anti-Hindu. This seems to have helped the BJP garner great support from the fence-sitters in electoral politics who abundantly chose to vote for the saffron party. The tag that the BJP tied on the reputation of the Congress as a Muslim party did stay with it for long and the gimmicks that its young dynast had to plunge into by proclaiming his Brahmin identity was a proof of its confusion. The temples that he knelt down and the vermilion on his forehead could not change the perception that the saffron brigade could successfully build against the Gandhi family

and its party. Can the Congress be easily written off from the saffron dominated political spectrum of India? I think the Congress would still remain relevant though it is out of power. Its legacy spanning from Gandhi to Nehru to Patel and the role it had in the freedom movement would be enough for the Indian voters to think twice before they decide to discard the party forever.

The Aam Aadmi Party, with its sanctified anti corruption movement is not blessed with a legacy of freedom movement that the Congress is. Modi's war on corruption seems to have widespread reverberation among the electorate and his pursuit in this direction has unquestionably crippled the means and methods of corruption to a large extent. The attention that he could vociferously grab in his Independence Day speech decreeing his uncompromising war against corruption was in the interest of the nation and to him corruption is an outcome of the Dynasty Raj in various parts of the country. Whereas, the Congress is all set to launch its 'Bharat Jodo Yatra' on September 7. The party's newborn aspiration to revamp its essence and presence through a yatra across the country is all set to be the kind of one that the BJP during the days of L.K. Advani launched. For Rahul Gandhi, in his own words the yatra is like a 'tapasya'. But the pertinent question most of its sympathisers are tired of asking is how long it will take for the Congress to once again make its presence felt. The yatra for 150 days covering a 3500 km long road route is destined to become the longest of such movements. Will it be a square one exercise for the Congress with the Gandhi family behind a proxy president?

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A best friend is someone who loves you when you forget to love yourself

26th August is celebrated as National Dog Day. It was first established in 2004 by pet & family lifestyle advocate Colleen Paige. The aim of promoting this day is to raise awareness about adopting these

animals who are currently in rescue centers. This Day has also been using

Letter to Editor

Welcome Move but needs more

The recent announcement by the finance minister that the University of Agricultural Science (UAS), Raichur, Karnataka, would receive Rs 25 crore from the NABARD's rural infrastructure development fund for the establishment of an incubation centre for processing and value addition for the promotion of millets is definitely a welcome move. Since Raichur is the nation's top millet producer, it should be also designated as a millet hub. Enough funding should also be provided to support in-depth research on millets and to encourage farmers to grow them through this hub. In order to increase domestic and international demand for millets and to give the populace nourishment food products, the centre has to hold millet conclaves at this hub every year.

Yours,
Vijaykumar H K, Raichur

its platform to encourage dog ownership of all

breeds, mixed and pure, and continuously pushes for all dogs to be allowed to live happy and abuse-free lives.

The increase in stray dog population dramatically and becoming a threat to humans in cities. To control street dog population it shall be incumbent for Municipal Corporation to sterilize and immunize street dog population with the participation of animal welfare organization / NGOs, and private individuals. The street dogs shall be sterilized and immunized by methods currently approved.

There are some people who seem to imagine that we have some sort of "right" to remove animals - take life, without any regard of our moral responsibilities towards creatures that share this planet with us. We are a nation that believes in ahimsa and shuns cruelty. One must remember that the earth is not for humans alone. People cannot find spitting and urinating in public spaces as a menace but they find it hard to live with these harmless species. Most stray dogs lead miserable lives, scavenging for rotten food. They starve and are affected by painful and debilitating diseases, some of which are communicable to humans. Many stray dogs chase and bark at the people and children sending jitters down the

Vinod Chandrashekhar Dixit

spine. Efforts should be made to ensure that the

animal birth control and rabies vaccination programmes are run properly. Municipal Corporation should clean up the streets to make them rubbish free. The Municipal authorities have successfully captured many stray dogs with the help of expert dog catchers, but were criticized for their cruel treatment and killing of the captive dogs by PETA and other animal rights activists. It is seen that the stray dog menace happens mostly in the areas where there are rubbish & wastages are thrown. To discard or litter the waste along the road sides should be penalized and the door to door collection of food wastes by the municipal authorities should be encouraged instead of the road side bins. Efforts should be made to ensure that the animal birth control and rabies vaccination programmes are run properly. Municipal authorities should clean up the streets to make them rubbish free. The stray dog menace is in fact a grave problem in the City and the authorities should act immediately to tackle this issue seriously and effectively.

According to the Supreme Court directive no stray dog should be culled and only sterilisation is permitted for controlling its population. If the laws were in favour of street dogs, the Government should take measures to

safeguard the public from the stray dogs. To control rabies, the municipalities in the affected areas have to get a clear picture about stray dogs in the area that must be vaccinated and leave the dogs in some far away areas. It is to be remembered that dogs as pets are wonderful but as strays, they are a threat to society.

Stray dogs are very much part of many communities and teach valuable lessons in friendship, co-operation, and loyalty to children and adults alike. They are our all weather best friend and they give us unconditional love which humans lack so we must learn to love and respect them. We need to understand that dogs are a part of our urban environment and have to be tackled with sense of humanity and compassion. Dogs' love us unconditionally and there are examples where they have gave up their lives for their caretakers. Other creatures are not there for our selfishness. Let us learn co-existence with other creatures in nature and give a fistful of rice to the stray dogs and they will never harm you. Dogs have lived with humans for eternity and try to warn the neighbourhood where they live about intruders. We must show the spirit of a loving nation by dealing with this problem in peaceful and humane manner. Dogs are man's best friends for ever, if we care for them.

B-15 Jyoti-Kalash Society, Jodhpur
Tekra, Satellite, Ahmedabad

Wrong Policy ignites Price Rise

Bhubaneswar: Senior Congress leader and Rajya Sabha MP Neeraj Dangi on Monday alleged that the Prime Minister Narendra Modi Government's wrong economic policies were responsible for price rise and unemployment in India.

Addressing a Press Conference here, Mr.Dangi said there was a time when PM Narendra Modi dangled a dream in front of the people of India: a future free from inflation and unemployment. Instead, he has delivered a nightmare of record price rise and the highest joblessness in 45 years.

PM Mr.Modi has not just failed to control price rise since coming to power in 2014, his misguided policies and deceitfulness have in fact exacerbated the suffering of the people. The PM boasted to voters in 2019 how essential items like food grains, curd, lassi and buttermilk were GST-free but in 2022, he imposed GST on those very goods.

The price of a LPG cylinder was Rs 410 in 2014. However, now the price of LPG increased by 156 per cent to Rs1,053-1,240 per cylinder. Similarly, the price of petrol and diesel has been increased by 40 per cent and 75 per cent during the Modi Government, he stated.

Mr.Modi used the Ujjwala Yojana to win votes in 2019 elections but soon after, he cold-heartedly eliminated cooking gas subsidies. The price of LPG has more than doubled to over Rs 1,053-1,240 per cylinder and lakhs of consumers can no longer afford to refill their empty gas cylinders, said the Congress leader.

These are just two of the many examples where the PM deceived the people of India to win votes and then stabbed them in the back in line with his "Doob Maro" philosophy, he said.

The Congress MP further said Modi Government's desperation to fill its coffers at all costs has led it to impose exorbitant fuel taxes that have further hurt Indian consumers' purchasing power. The global prices of

petrol, diesel and LPG were much higher in 2013-14 than in 2021-22 but consumers pay much more today for a litre of fuel or an LPG cylinder than they did during the rule of the UPA government, he added.

Mr.Dangi said International prices of Crude Oil and LPG



are decreasing for the past few months but the benefit has not been passed on to the consumers, whereas this government never forgot to increase the prices of Petrol, Diesel and LPG as and when the international prices got increased. The Modi Government's policy choices have resulted in drastic deterioration of the unemployment situation in the country. Demonetization and hasty GST implementation had already dealt a body blow to the economy, he alleged.

On top of this, the Modi Government is shutting down and privatizing PSUs and handing over prized national assets to its cronies. The Government's anti-youth policies have led to 10 lakh vacancies in central government, which is 24 percent of the total sanctioned posts, he alleged. The poorly conceived Agnipath scheme is a fresh threat to the job prospects of our youth as well as to national security. Young men and women who dreamed of serving their country by joining the Armed Forces are being asked to do contractual jobs for 4 years, with no guarantee of pension or of security.

The consequences have been devastating, he said, adding,

lakhs of youth have turned despondent and dropped out of the job market. Despite this exodus, 42 per cent of youth in the age group of 20 to 24 who are still looking for jobs are unemployed, forcing even PhD holders and postgraduates to apply for positions requiring

much lower qualification, such as peon and others. Stating the Indian National Congress stands with the people in these difficult times, the Rajya Sabha MP said, "From 'Sansad to Sadak', we have raised our voice against the incompetence and the misguided policies of Modi Government that have exacerbated

Woman's killing: Jharkhand government provides compensation; NCW seeks report

RANCHI/DUMKA: The Jharkhand government on Monday handed over a compensation of Rs 9 lakh to the next of kin of a teenager, who was set on fire by a man in Jharkhand's Dumka district recently, an official said. The Class 12 student succumbed to her burn injuries at a government hospital here on Sunday. The National Commission for Women during the day sought an action taken report from the police within seven days.

Chief Minister Hemant Soren directed the Dumka district administration to extend an immediate relief of Rs 10 lakh to the bereaved family. Dumka deputy commissioner (DC) Ravi Shankar Shukla told PTI, "On the direction of the CM, the relief money has been provided to the family of the deceased. The family was given a cheque of Rs 9 lakh on Monday". An amount of Rs 1 lakh had already been provided to the family when the woman was being shifted from Dumka to Rajendra Institute of Medical Science, he said.

Governor Ramesh Bais announced an immediate grant of Rs 2 lakh to the family of the victim from his discretionary grant, an official release said. Bais also directed the DGP to probe the role of the local police in the incident and said the trial of the accused should be held in a fast track court, the release said. The chief minister said the case will be taken up by a fast-track court for speedy disposal. "The Director General of Police has been directed to submit an early report on the progress of the investigation, which should be conducted by ADG rank officer," the CM said in a Twitter post. The NCW on Monday said it has written to the Jharkhand Police chief, calling for a fair investigation into the death of a woman who was set

ablaze by a man for not reciprocating his overtures.

Another person, who allegedly had supplied petrol to the main accused, has also been arrested, Dumka Superintendent of Police Amber Lakra told PTI. The second accused has been identified as Chotu Khan alias Naeem, he said.



Speaking to media persons at the state secretariat, Soren termed the Dumka incident as "heart-wrenching". "Our efforts will be to ensure stringent punishment for the culprit at the earliest. The provision of punishment for such cases should be made stricter," the CM said. Congress legislator and Health minister Banna Gupta said, "It is a very sensitive issue. There should not be politics over this. Speedy trial of the case will be ensured." The ruling Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) accused the BJP leaders of trying to do "communal politics" over the incident and said the state government also wants stringent punishment for the culprit. JMM spokesperson Supriyo Bhattacharya said, "Dumka incident is condemnable. The BJP should refrain from doing communal politics over it. The government also wants trial of the accused in a fast track court." Saffron party leaders, including former Jharkhand chief ministers Raghubar Das and

Window Clears 2K CR investments

Bhubaneswar: Ahead of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik's mega roadshow in New Delhi, the State Government on Monday approved 10 investment proposals worth Rs 2,005.89 crores.

Hemant Sharma, Principal Secretary Industries said that the State Level Single Window Clearance Authority (SLSWCA) headed by Chief Secretary has approved the investment proposals that would generate employment opportunities for over 3,545 people in the State.

The SLSWCA gave a nod to Summa Real Media Private Limited to set up a pharmaceutical manufacturing & research unit comprising pharmaceutical formulation manufacturing, active pharmaceutical ingredients (API) manufacturing and pharmaceutical research & development centre of annual capacity 1.6 billion units at Gothapatna, Bhubaneswar against an investment of Rs 200 crore. This project will generate employment opportunities for over 1280 people.

The Committee has also approved the proposals of Sanvira Industries Limited to set up a Carbon Electrode Paste manufacturing plant (capacity 100,000 MT) in Danagadi, Jajpur district with an investment of Rs 205.44 crore. This project will create employment for 260 persons.

The proposal to set up a manufacturing unit of Chemicals (Sulphuric Acid, Surfactant) and Fine Fabric/ HDPE/ PPWoven Sacks of annual capacity 144000 MT & 24000 MT by Sai Bulk Bags Private Limited in Paradeep, Jagatsinghpur district against an investment of Rs 135.95 crore also approved by the State Government. This will generate employment opportunities for 301 persons.

In addition to the above approvals, the panel gave nod to set up 0.11 MTPA Ferro Alloys plant (2x24 MVA) in Badchana, Jajpur district, by United Ferrocast Private Limited worth Rs 261.1 crores with employment opportunities for 376 people.

Similarly, Balento Enterprises Private Lim-

ited got the approval of SLSWCA for a 5 MTPA Iron Ore Beneficiation plant and 3 MTPA Pellet plant in Jhumpura, Keonjhar district at an investment of Rs 775 crore, which will generate employment opportunities for over 314 people.

Further, the panel gave approval to Oriclean Private Limited for setting up of Manufacturing unit for Sauces, Jams, Jellies and Marmalades with cumulative capacity of 60,000 MT per annum against an investment of Rs



88 crore with employment opportunities for 160 people at Tangi-Choudwar, Cuttack district.

Approval was also given to DN Sea Shells Pvt. Ltd. for setting up a Shrimp processing unit in Seafood Park, Deras, Khordha district against an investment of Rs 50.40 crore, which will generate employment for over 409 people.

The CS-led Committee approved the proposal of Runaya Aluminium Private Limited (RAPL) for setting up a 5000 MT Aluminium Powder & Pigments Plant in Jharsuguda district with an investment of Rs 80 crore generating employment opportunities for 125 persons. Mayfair Hotels & Resorts Ltd got the approval for expansion of their existing facility, Mayfair Palm Beach Resort creating employment potential for 120 persons against an investment of Rs 85 crore at Gopalpur-on-Sea, in the district of Ganjam. Before the conclusion of the meeting, the Committee approved the proposal for setting up of a Warehousing cum Logistic Park by Naresh Kumar and Co Pvt Ltd at Baghuapal, in Jajpur district. The company has proposed to invest Rs 125 crore and provide employment for 200 personnel.

Babulal Marandi, demanded that the accused be tried in a fast track court and a compensation of Rs 1 crore and a job should be extended to the next of kin of the woman.

The incident happened in Dumka town on August 23 when the accused, identified as Shahrukh, allegedly poured petrol on the woman from outside the window of her room when she was sleeping and set her on fire, the police said. The deceased had been first admitted to Phulo Jhano Medical College and Hospital in Dumka in critical condition with 90 per cent burns and later referred to RIMS.

The accused in the case has already been arrested.

The woman's body was cremated amid tight security in Dumka on the banks of the Mayurakshi river on Monday, police said.

The Dumka deputy commissioner, superintendent of police Ambar Lakra and BJP Dumka MP Sunil Soren were present at the funeral.

In protest against the incident, Viswa Hindu Parishad (VHP) and Bajrang Dal had given a call for a bandh in Dumka on Monday.

All shops, business establishments, schools, and colleges remained closed and the movement of long-distance buses was also affected.

Protests erupted against the incident with right-wing organisations staging demonstrations in Ranchi and Dumka.

In Ranchi, the activists gathered at Albert Ekka Chowk and raised slogans against the state government.

The protestors were seen holding placards seeking justice for the woman.

Heavy security has been deployed at all prominent places of Dumka town to avoid any untoward incident.

The administration had clamped prohibitory order in the Dumka sub-division on Sunday.

Jharkhand's director general of police has sent additional director general of police (headquarter) Murari Lal Meena and inspector general of Crime Investigation Department (CID) Asim Virant Minz to Dumka for review of the investigation, a police statement said.

Meanwhile, the father of the victim has demanded capital punishment for the culprit.

SLSWA Clears Summa Project Bharat Scouts & Guides meet

Bhubaneswar: Looking at the bright prospects of drugs and pharmaceutical products in Odisha, a Major Conglomerate,

gust. While Odisha is heavily dependent on the pharmaceutical industries operating in other states for

1.6 billion Units at Gothapatna, Khurda. SRMPL promoted by Professor (DR.) Manojranjan Nayak, who is the founder President of the one of the most reputed and promising University of the Country, Sikha 'O' Anusandhan (SOA) is engaged in Education, Research and Extension has the capability to set up such a mega complex, officials say. SRMPL will come up with a Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Complex at Gothapatna in Khurda for large scale manufacturing of various drug formulations, nutraceuticals, ayurceuticals and cosmeceuticals in dosage forms of tablets, capsules, ointments, creams, gels, injectables and oral

liquids, said sources. The Project also aims at manufacturing the Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (API) in a large scale to cater to the growing requirement of the State, officials say.

Moreover, SRMPL plans to establish a State-Of-The-Art Pharmaceutical Research & Development (R&D) Center with advanced equipment facility for higher research and development in the Pharmaceutical Sector. The project will come up at Gothapatana Industrial Estate, which will generate nearly 1300 job opportunities both direct and indirect and promoters are planning to complete the project within 24 months, said sources.

Bhubaneswar: The Bharat Scouts & Guides held its State Council Meeting here on 28 August at the State

Commerce & Transport Tukuni Sahu, Lawmaker Anant Narayan Jena, Lawmaker, Susanta Kumar Rout at-

Publisher of The Samaja, State Chief Commissioner Kali Prasad Mishra, State Commissioner Ashok Kumar Rath

missioner Dr.Mishra reeled out details of the programs organized by State Level Organization and he briefed the House



Summa Real Media Private Limited has ventured to set up a pharmaceutical manufacturing and research complex with an investment of Rs.200 Crore. Odisha State Level Single Window Clearance Authority has cleared the proposal here on 29 Au-

gust. While Odisha is heavily dependent on the pharmaceutical industries operating in other states for

1.6 billion Units at Gothapatna, Khurda. SRMPL promoted by Professor (DR.) Manojranjan Nayak, who is the founder President of the one of the most reputed and promising University of the Country, Sikha 'O' Anusandhan (SOA) is engaged in Education, Research and Extension has the capability to set up such a mega complex, officials say. SRMPL will come up with a Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Complex at Gothapatna in Khurda for large scale manufacturing of various drug formulations, nutraceuticals, ayurceuticals and cosmeceuticals in dosage forms of tablets, capsules, ointments, creams, gels, injectables and oral

liquids, said sources. The Project also aims at manufacturing the Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (API) in a large scale to cater to the growing requirement of the State, officials say.



Headquarters. Minister Food, Supply & Consumer Welfare and Cooperation, Atanu Sabyasachi Nayak, who is also the President of Odisha State Bharat Scouts & Guides chaired the State Council Meet.

tended the meet. T Prasad Rao Dora, International Vice Chairperson of International Fish Cooperative Organization and Vice President of Odisha State Bharat Scouts & Guides graced the occasion.

and other office bearers attended the meet. State Joint Secretary Mihir Ranjan Patnaik made obituary reference on departed souls of Scouts and Guides Organization. One Minute silence was observed for these eminent personalities.

about the national and International achievements of the Institution. State Council approved the Annual Budget and Programs were chalked out for the entire year. State Secretary Sarat Chandra Paikaray presented Vote Of Thanks in the meeting.

State Mulls Striking Fire Force

Bhubaneswar: The State Government will soon form Striking Fire Force for quick response during fire mishaps and natural calamities.

As per the decision taken at a meeting, there will be three range headquarters of the Striking Fire Force in Cuttack, Sambalpur and Berhampur zones of

ers, Station Officers, Assistant Station Officers, Havildar Major, Driver Havildar, Havildar Mechanic, Leading firemen, Fireman Driver and Firemen.

ing extended by the Fire Service during natural calamities outside the state. Therefore, the need for a special force equipped with modern skills and gadgets



Naveen Patnaik on Monday approved a proposal in this regard after a thorough deliberation with senior officials.

the state. For each range headquarters, 48 posts will be created and the force will have a total of 144 officers and personnel.

The striking fire force will also play a crucial role in relief and rescue operations. During natural calamities, man-made disasters and accidents, the Odisha Fire Service organisation has been acting as a 'First Responder' to provide quick and efficient service to the people. Significant assistance is also be-

to effectively tackle any calamity was highlighted at the meeting.

The meeting was moderated by Secretary to the Chief Minister (5T) VK Pandian, while Director General of Police, Fire Services, Santosh Upadhyay gave a detailed account of the proposal for the new force.

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Amid row over Azad's exit, Rahul to walk 'all the way' in Congress' biggest mass contact programme 'Bharat Jodo Yatra'

NEW DELHI: The Congress on Monday said the 150-day Bharat Jodo Yatra from September 7 covering 3,500 kms will be the party's biggest ever 'Jan Sampark' programme and Rahul Gandhi will walk "all the way" from Kanyakumari to Kashmir. The BJP is "rattled" by the enthusiasm and response to the Yatra and it will indulge in "diversionary tactics" to distract people, claimed Congress leaders Jairam Ramesh, K C Venugopal and Digvijaya Singh at a joint press conference after a meeting of all state unit chiefs and office bearers to finalise the Yatra plans. Singh said the Bharat Jodo Yatra will start on September 7 with a massive rally in Kanyakumari at 5 pm.

"The march will start on September 8 morning with the participants walking around 6 to 7 hours every day and holding mass contact with people across the country," he said, adding they will organise marches from 7 am to 10 am in each assembly constituency across India to coincide with the yatra. Asked if Rahul Gandhi will walk throughout the Yatra, Singh said, "Exactly. He will walk all the way."

He added that the former Congress chief may campaign in Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh in between. The yatra will try to connect with the people at the grassroots and highlight the issues of unemploy-

ment, price rise and economic situation while helping unite the country's social fabric which is "strained under the BJP", Singh said He said at Monday's meeting, the Congress' state unit chiefs and coordinators discussed the detailed arrangements of the programme.

Four more Congress leaders, 12 Apni Party workers resign in J&K in support of Azad It has been decided that the Yatra is going to pass through only 10 states.

Wherever the Yatra is not passing through, state-level Bharat Jodo Yatras should be held, Singh said. All state unit presidents and Congress Legislative Party leaders would hold the Bharat Jodo Yatra in their respective states, he added.

Venugopal said on September 7 at 5 pm when Bharat Jodo Yatra begins from Kanyakumari, "our party workers will hold rallies in all assembly constituencies". "The entire country is now waiting for this march. All Congress workers are enthusiastic about it. This yatra is going to be historic and massive and that is why the BJP is very much worried about it. They will do all diversionary politics on this yatra," he said. Ramesh said the Yatra will be undertaken in five months starting September and will try to connect with as many people and listen to their grievances and concerns.

Mystery shrouds Lord Jagannath's 'Ratna Bhandar'

BHUBANESHWAR: The mystery over Lord Jagannath's 'Ratna Bhandar' has deepened as the Odisha government has "no plan" to reopen the inner chamber of the treasury of the 12th-century shrine in Puri and refused to share information about the temple's asset to an RTI activist, devotees claimed on Monday. Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA) under the state law department, did not respond to the queries of Bolangir-based RTI activist Hemant Panda. The State Information Commission has recently imposed a fine on the SJTA's officer S K Chatterjee for not sharing information in the public interest.

the state government has "never made any attempt to open the inner chamber of the treasury even though it has gold, diamond jewellery, precious stones and other ornaments. It remained closed for 44 years even as the Sri Jagannath Temple Act, 1955 has a provision of undertaking inspection of the 'Ratna Bhandar' every three years, the BJP leader said. The ruling BJD leaders remain tight-lipped over the issue. Law Minister Jagannath Saraka had told the Assembly on July 16 that if any proposal is received to open the 'Ratna Bhandar', the state government will take necessary steps after examining different aspects.

due to climate impact on the structure. It must be repaired immediately," a senior ASI official said. The temple has at least two chambers of its treasury. The 'Bahar Bhandar' (outer chamber) stores ornaments used by the deities on a daily basis, while many pieces of jewellery are kept in the inner chamber of the treasury, according to temple sources. An attempt was made to open the inner chamber of 'Ratna Bhandar' in April 2018 following a directive of the Orissa High Court, but it was not successful as keys were not found at that time. A team, comprising ASI officials, priests and others, then car-

mystique". Former temple administrator Rabindra Narayan Mishra, who was part of the team that inspected the inner chamber of the treasury in 1978, said, "The Ratna Bhandar is divided into two parts. While the outer chamber stores the ornaments and valuables for regular use of the deities, most precious jewellery items are kept in the inner chamber. I had seen huge quantities of gold, diamond and ornaments wrapped in clothes and kept in wooden boxes." Earlier, the 'Ratna Bhandar' was opened in 1803 and 1926, Mishra said. All the precious items have been listed and weighed properly during the last inspection, he said, adding that the valuation of the asset could not be ascertained as goldsmiths from Tamil Nadu and Gujarat were not able to calculate the actual value of the ornaments at that time.



Asserting that the SJTA cannot decide to open the inner chamber of the 'Ratna Bhandar', temple administrator (development) Ajay Kumar Jena said the issue will be placed before the Sri Jagannath Temple Managing Committee in its next meeting. "The SJTA will inform the managing committee's decision to the government and then only the treasury can be opened," he said. It seemed that water seeps through cracks in the wall of the store, temple's Ratna Bhandar in-charge and servitor Niranjan Mekap said, adding that the treasury "must be opened immediately and repaired". Leader of Opposition in the state assembly Jaynarayan Mishra alleged that

Congress and BJP legislators in the House had demanded an "immediate inventory of items stored in the treasury." Gajapati Maharaja Dibyasingha Deb, the titular king of Puri, who is also the chairman of the Temple Managing Committee, has sought to open the treasury to clear doubts of devotees over the presence of assets. The Archaeological Survey of India, which looks after the maintenance of Odisha's most popular religious site, had recently urged the state government to open the 'Ratna Bhandar' for the physical inspection of the structure. "The Ratna Bhandar is located in the basement of the temple, which should be inspected physically. The walls of the treasury may be damaged

ried out an inspection from outside. In the wake of a statewide hue and cry, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik had constituted a judicial commission headed by retired Justice Raghubir Das to probe into the missing key issue. "Though the commission has submitted its report to the state government, we are unable to understand why the findings of the panel were not tabled in the assembly so far," senior Congress legislator Santosh Singh Saluja said. The commission had in November 2018 submitted its 324-page report to the Odisha government. The opposition MLA said the "missing of the 'Ratna Bhandar' keys, and not revealing the judicial panel report by the government becomes a

placing online grocery orders using WhatsApp and making payments. Ambani, 65, has three children, twins Akash and Isha and youngest son Anant. Isha is married to Anand Piramal, son of Piramal Group's Ajay and Swati

Sri Lanka crisis: Country's national carrier to be privatised; 10 nations including India show interest in selling petroleum products

Continued from page-1

left millions struggling to buy food, medicine, fuel and other essentials. The island nation is currently scrambling to chalk out a staff-level agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for a bailout programme, which could be the antidote for the country's current economic travails. The country, with an acute foreign currency crisis that resulted in foreign debt default, had announced in April that it is suspending nearly USD 7 billion foreign debt repayment due for this year out of about USD 25 billion due through 2026. Sri Lanka's Ministry of Power and Energy has said that 24 companies from 10 countries, including India have evinced interest in selling petroleum products in the crisis-hit country's petroleum sector, according to media reports. Sri Lanka is in the midst of its worst economic crisis in decades, which is triggered by a severe paucity of foreign exchange reserves.

Sri Lanka's Minister of Power and Energy Kanchana Wijesekera said that 24 companies from the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, the United States, China, India, Russia, the UK, Malaysia, Norway and the Philippines have submitted proposals for the Expressions of Interest (EOI) to engage in the country's petroleum sector, news portal Colombo Page reported on Sunday. In July, the Ministry of Power and Energy had called for EOI from established companies in petroleum-producing countries to use their funds for the distribution and selling of petroleum products in Sri Lanka on a long-term basis.

A ministry-appointed panel will now evaluate these proposals, issue Requests for Proposals and finalise the process in six weeks, the report said. Last month, the Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) said it would expand operations in Sri Lanka by opening 50 fuelling stations and investing in storage tanks and other equipment. The LIOC, the Sri Lankan arm of the Indian fuel retailer, was the sole entity in the country supplying fuel between late June and mid-July, when the bankrupt country faced extensive protests, forcing the then President Gotabaya Rajapaksa to flee the country as demonstrators stormed the Presidential palace.

The state-owned entity Ceylon Petroleum Corporation ran out of supplies in mid-June, restricting their supplies, and triggering essential services shortages across the debt-ridden country. Sri Lanka President Ranil Wickremesinghe and a visiting IMF team on Friday held the second round of crucial talks to finalise a bailout package for the cash-strapped country. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) had made a request for additional information pertaining to electricity tariff revisions and Excise Act and it was decided at Friday's meeting to provide the requested information by next Monday, the President's Office said in a statement. The first round of talks were held on Wednesday. It is the second such visit from the IMF in three months. The visit comes at a time when Sri Lanka is scrambling to chalk out a staff-level agreement with the Washington-based global lender for a USD 5 billion programme, which could be the antidote for the country's cur-

rent economic travails. In mid-April, Sri Lanka declared its international debt default due to the forex crisis. The country owes USD 51 billion in foreign debt, of which USD 28 billion must be paid by 2027. Prime Minister Dinesh Gunawardena has requested the visiting IMF team to focus on protecting economically vulnerable groups in the debt-ridden island nation which is going through the worst economic crisis. Sri Lanka, a country of 22 million people, is under the grip of unprecedented economic turmoil, the worst in seven decades. The crisis that has left millions struggling to buy food, medicine, fuel and other essentials. The island nation is currently scrambling to chalk out a staff-level agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for a bailout programme, which could be the antidote for the country's current economic travails. Prime Minister Gunawardena has requested the IMF to focus on protecting economically vulnerable groups in the country, Colombo Page news portal reported on Sunday. Prime Minister Gunawardena made this request when the visiting IMF team met him and held discussions at the Prime Minister's Office. The Prime Minister apprised the IMF team of the economic challenges in the country and the measures taken by the government to reduce the difficulties faced by low-income earners. The country, with an acute foreign currency crisis that resulted in foreign debt default, had announced in April that it is suspending nearly USD 7 billion foreign debt repayment due for this year out of about USD 25 billion due through 2026. He explained the measures taken by the government to reduce non-essential imports and increase export products and the measures taken by the government to increase welfare for the poorest sections of the society. Peter Breuer, Head of the IMF's Negotiation Panel said that his team will discuss with the government, the opposition and other parties and report the facts to the headquarters in Washington. The IMF representatives also explained the facts about taking protective measures for vulnerable groups in preparing plans for debt restructuring and economic revival. Dr Masahiro Nozaki, Head of Mission of the IMF, has agreed that taking protective measures for economically vulnerable groups is an essential requirement when preparing plans for debt restructuring and economic revival, as pointed out by the Prime Minister. An IMF team met Sri Lanka's President Ranil Wickremesinghe on Wednesday for talks on a bailout package. Debt restructuring is a prerequisite for the IMF facility.

to-chemical or O2C business is a functional division of Reliance. The new energy business is also with the parent firm. Anant, 26, may get to helm the O2C and new energy business of the conglomerate.

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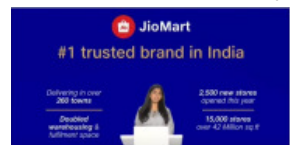
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Ambani introduces daughter Isha as leader of retail business

MUMBAI: Billionaire Mukesh Ambani on Monday introduced daughter Isha as leader of his conglomerate's retail business as he details succession planning at India's most valuable firm. Ambani had previously named son

Akash as chairman of the group's telecom arm, Reliance Jio. At Reliance Industries Ltd's 45th annual shareholders meeting, Ambani introduced Isha as leader of retail business as he invited her to speak on integrating

WhatsApp with the retail business. Reliance Jio to launch 5G in key metros by Diwali; to invest Rs 2 lakh crore Isha, 30, gave a presentation on



Will Virat Kohli continue playing shortest format for India post T20 World Cup?

NEW DELHI: Who will blink first? Will it be BCCI or will it be Virat Kohli? Kohli the T20 batter is playing from his memory but it is now quite evident that his methods are not working quite well enough for him in this short-duration-high impact game. Nor is it allowing the Indian team to make optimal use of its resources.

The 20's or 35's are coming but not at a strike-rate of 150 (it was 102 plus against Pakistan on Sunday).

So can Kohli be dropped from the T20 World Cup squad? Not even in your wildest of imagination even if he isn't scoring runs at a break-neck pace.



But can Kohli continue playing for India in this format post the T20 World Cup in Australia? Well, even if the people, who are in decision-making positions know the answer, they won't spell it out.

That is a question that has been doing rounds of the corridors of Indian cricket since the 'Desert Debauch' last year when India made a pre-mature exit from the T20 World Cup. That was Kohli's last tournament as India's T20 captain and he had then relinquished captaincy of one format thinking that it would help him ease his workload and free him from burdens of leading the side across all formats. ALSO READ | Kohli serves a timely reminder on how mental health is viewed in Indian cricket

One year down the line, even if Kohli doesn't have any regrets, the move didn't work out as he would have envisaged and subsequently was removed from ODI leadership and the intelligent man read the signs and surrendered his 'virtual arm-band' in a format where his numbers were phenomenal.

While Kohli recently opened up about his recent struggles with mental health issues in a refreshingly candid interview with 'Star Sports', a case of burn-out can't be ruled out.

Barcelona striker Aubameyang victim of armed home robbery

Barcelona striker Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang was the victim of a violent armed robbery at his home in the early hours of Monday, the Spanish club said.



"He is ok now, scared but ok," a Barcelona source told AFP, confirming press reports. At least four men broke into his home in Castelldefels near Barcelona through the garden and threatened him and his wife with guns and iron bars, and hit him, daily El Pais reported.

The thieves fled by car after forcing the Gabon international to open a safe and making off with jewels that were inside, the newspaper reported.

A spokeswoman for Catalan police, the Mossos d'Esquadra, confirmed they were investigating a violent robbery in Castelldefels

464 international matches by the age of 33 is huge and add 15 seasons of high-pressure Indian Premier League seasons, where he has not only been his franchise's (IPL) batting mainstay but also its biggest brand.

He only has that much bandwidth and he only admitted that there was a phase when he wasn't enjoying the game. In five T20Is in 2022, his scores are 17, 52, 1, 11 and 35. If we leave aside the scores low scores, his 17 came off 13 balls, he took 41 deliveries for his 52 and 34 for his 35.

What India requires is not half-centuries in every game but may be the 35 off 20-22 balls or even a 20 off 10 balls, which is high on impact quotient even if not in terms volume of runs.

Between overs 6 to 14 when slow bowlers are in operation, he is barely managing to keep a strike-rate of even 100 and these are cold hard statistical facts.

The discussion about Kohli's position as No.3 batter in T20 cricket is the proverbial elephant in the room but it is understood that BCCI may not address the issue till the end of the T20 World Cup.

'We're all proud of you': De Villiers congratulates Virat Kohli on playing 100th T20I Perhaps, the easiest route will be if Kohli decides to take an indefinite break from the T20s while concentrating on the 50-over format where India have a World Cup to play at home and the 38 Tests earmarked in the next FTP cycle. However, if nothing comes from Kohli's end, possibly Chetan Sharma and his team of national selectors (provided they get the likely extension at the AGM) will then have to prepare a road map along with head coach Rahul Dravid and NCA head VVS Laxman to start the phasing out process.

It happened with Sachin Tendulkar (in ODIs), Sourav Ganguly (across formats), Rahul Dravid (white ball before a final hurrah in 2011), Zaheer Khan, Harbhajan Singh and Virender Sehwag.

There is no reason why it can't happen with Kohli. But perhaps either BCCI top brass or selectors are likely to have a frank discussion with him on his shortest format future before or after the T20 World Cup.

but refused to identify the victim, citing privacy rules.

"The investigation remains open and we are gathering information," she told AFP.

The incident comes as Aubameyang is linked with a return to the Premier League after interest from Chelsea.

He joined Barcelona in February from Arsenal after reportedly having fallen out with Gunners manager Mikel Arteta due to disciplinary breaches.

Several high-profile footballers in Spain have been subject to robberies though most of these break-ins occur while the stars are playing.

In June police arrested six people in connection with the three-million-euro burglary at the house belonging to former Brazil forward Ronaldo. Paris Saint-Germain player Marco Verratti was staying at Ronaldo's house in Ibiza but was not home when the burglars struck, taking jewellery and money.

And earlier this month police recovered Barcelona striker Robert Lewandowski's watch, which was stolen as the player signed autographs before a training session.

Iga Swiatek on unfair 'ball' game in US Open

"Why the US Open is still the only Grand Slam where the men and women use a different type of balls?" The ques-

ally hard playing, they are getting more and more light," Swiatek said. "At the end, you can't even serve at

Swiatek can find her game in New York and make her first deep run this summer, Tennis World USA reports.

perceived double standard between men's and women's tennis. A public debate had been coming. In January, Ash Barty's coach, Craig Tyzzer, said she would never win the US Open with these balls. In the same breath, he referenced the tournament's recent surprise results four months after Emma Raducanu's shock title run. "There's no surprise when the ball is like it is," he said.

Jessica Pegula, the US No 1, believes they yield more errors: "I feel like the first couple weeks there are a lot of double faults, because the balls are just kind of flying a bit more," she said.

Pegula, however, according to The Guardian, has no issues with the men's balls: "I played with them when I'm at home or when I can't find any balls," she said, shrugging. "They just don't fly as much."



tion is posed by Polish Tennis star Iga Swiatek during a press conference at the Western and Southern Open in Cincinnati, say reports. The Reigning world No. 1 described the balls the women use during the North American hard court swing as "horrible" and "pretty bad."

"I think those balls are horrible, especially after like three games of re-

170km/h because it's going to fly like crazy.

I think they are pretty bad." After suffering a surprise defeat to Madison Keys in the Cincinnati last-16, Swiatek blamed the balls for the loss. Swiatek hasn't been playing well this summer on hard courts as she picked up back-to-back round-of-16 exits in Toronto and Cincinnati. It remains to be seen if

According to The Guardian, as she departed the press conference room, Swiatek turned to her audience and smiled sheepishly: "You've just started a war."

ALSO READ | If No. 1 Iga Swiatek keeps improving, look out

Her parting words were prescient as this has become one of the dominant subjects in the build up to this year's US Open, underlining a

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