

**NOTES**  
**Gang of robbers held**

**BHAWANIPATNA, JULY 12 /-** Twelve members of a gang, which targeted financial companies, were arrested in Odisha's Kalahandi district, police said today. The arrested persons, aged between 18 and 30 years, were involved in around 13 cases of looting during the last six months. Kalahandi Superintendent of Police Sambest Sampal said. He said two other members of the gang are at large and efforts are on to nab them. Police also seized seven motorcycles, cash, mobile phones, knives and masks, among other items from their possession. The gang kept a watch on the movement of employees of financial companies carrying cash, the SP added.

**Siblings drown**

**BARIPADA, JULY 12 /-** Two members of a family, including a minor, drowned today in Mayurbhanj district of Odisha, police said. The incident took place in Rairangpur area of the district, when Heena Mahali (24) and her brother Sagar (10) went to river Khakhali for a bath, they were the sister died while trying to save her brother from drowning, a police officer said. Fire brigade personnel fished out the bodies from the downstream of the river, said Ranjan Kumar Sethi, HC, Rairangpur Town police station. A case of unnatural death has been registered in this connection. (PTI)

**731 Haj pilgrims selected in Odisha**

**BHUBANESWAR, JULY 12 /-** As many as 731 pilgrims, including 298 women, have been selected by the Haj committee in Odisha, official sources said. After felicitating the Haj pilgrims here on Wednesday, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik told reporters "This year 731 pilgrims have been selected for Haj in Mecca and Medina. The state government has made elaborate arrangement for their safe journey. To mark after the pilgrims, the state government will send four officials to Mecca in Saudi Arabia this year, the officials said. The Haj pilgrims are slated to start their journey from today till July 24 and will spend 45 days in Saudi Arabia. They will return to the state in between September 2 and September 12. As there is no direct flight from Bhubaneswar, all 731 will travel to Kolkata for visiting Mecca. Patnaik said the state government has been building a Haj Bhavan in the state capital for Haj pilgrims. (PTI)

**Kolkata Police launches all-women patrolling team**

**KOLKATA, JULY 12 /-** Aiming to combat and prevent crimes like harassment, eve-teasing and make public places safer for women, the Kolkata Police on Wednesday launched a special all-women patrolling team called "The Winners". The primary job of these lady officers will be to assist their male counterparts in helping women having complaints of molestation or eve-teasing occurred on city streets, a senior officer of the Kolkata Police said. Movies are shown on their blue-white or pink-black scooters, they will also be of help in pulling up women accused of breaking traffic rules, he added. Over 20 police women were present today during their first official appearance at a programme held at the force's headquarter in Lalbazar. They underwent training for the purpose at the Police Training School in the city, the IPS officer added. (PTI)

**Nitish-Amit Shah bonhomie on display at meeting over breakfast**

**PATNA, JULY 12 /-** Notwithstanding the rumblings over seat-sharing, Bihar chief minister Nitish Kumar and BJP chief Amit Shah were in a picture of poise at a meeting over breakfast today, sending out the message that all was well in the National Democratic Alliance (NDA). The cameras caught the duo smiling and bonding well during their brief meeting here, during which the leaders are understood to have discussed the prevailing political situation in view of the Lok Sabha polls due next year. This is Shah's first visit to the state since the dramatic political realignment of last year when Kumar, the JD-U national president, walked out of the Grand Alliance which included the RJD and Congress, and returned to the NDA. The chief minister met the BJP chief, who is on a day-long tour of the city at the state guest house where the

two had breakfast together, along with a number of senior BJP leaders. They spent close to 45 minutes chatting about various issues which included, understandably, the next Lok Sabha polls which are less than a year away. Kumar arrived at the guest house within minutes of Shah having reached there from the airport. He was received warmly at the gate by BJP national general secretary in-charge for Bihar, Bhupendra Yadav who escorted Kumar to the room where Shah was putting up.

In the company of Shah, Bihar Deputy CM Susmit Kumar Modi and state BJP chief Nityanand Rai, the usually reserved Kumar posed smilingly for photographers eager to capture the politically crucial moments. As the breakfast meeting ended, Shah besides other party heavyweights—Union ministers Ravi Shankar Prasad, Radha

Mohan Singh and Ram Kripal Yadav—accompanied the chief minister to the porch to see him off. Though Kumar did not entertain any question from the curious media persons, he was seen coming out smiling from the state guest house to further affirm the bonhomie among the alliance partners. The BJP president and Kumar, who heads the Janata Dal (United), are scheduled to meet again over dinner hosted at the chief minister's residence. The display of bonhomie between the tall leaders is in stark contrast to cancellation of a dinner by Kumar for BJP leaders in 2010, an event that ultimately precipitated into the JD-U walking out of the coalition in July 2013, ending 17 years of association.

Kumar had cancelled the dinner that year after a photograph of him holding hands with then Gujarat chief minister Narendra Modi appeared in a number of local newspapers. Although Shah is scheduled to attend a number of meetings with leaders of various ranks belonging to his party during the day, his bonding with Kumar has been a topic of much speculation as the issue of seat-sharing among NDA constituents in Bihar hots up. Though the BJP-led coalition in the state also includes Union ministers Ram Vilas Paswan's LJP and Upendra Kushwaha's RLS, a seat-sharing arrangement acceptable to the JD-U has been turning out to be a tall order. Both Paswan and Kushwaha are out of the country and no representative from their parties was seen at the venue. After snapping over a decade-long tie with the BJP in 2013, Kumar returned to the NDA fold last year. The JD-U had performed dismally in the 2014 Lok Sabha polls, when it won only

two seats. However, in the assembly elections that were held the following year, it won 71 seats, more than the combined tally of all the other NDA constituents. Of late, a number of JD-U spokesmen have come up with statements like Kumar being the face of NDA in Bihar and the party being the 'elder brother' in the coalition, signalling that the party supreme may insist on having the lion's share in the next Lok Sabha polls. Speculations about the JD-U chief mooting an exit from the NDA had also arisen in the wake of his telephone call to arch rival RJD supremo Lalu Prasad, with whom he had a short-lived but electorally successful alliance after the debacle of 2014. The speculations were further intensified as the Congress, the RJD's ally in the state, hinted that the party could consider taking Kumar back into the Grand Alliance if he breaks away from the BJP. Kumar put paid to all such speculations earlier this week when he denied any rift between the JD-U and the BJP and clarified that he had called Prasad only to enquire about the RJD supremo's health who was at that time recuperating at a Mumbai hospital after a fistula surgery. This was also followed by clear instructions to all JD-U spokesmen that they avoid making statements on the issue of seat-sharing ahead of the much-awaited tour of Shah. Meanwhile, leader deputy CM and RJD ex-ecutive Pradyuman Kumar, who was at that time recuperating at a Mumbai hospital after a fistula surgery. This was also followed by clear instructions to all JD-U spokesmen that they avoid making statements on the issue of seat-sharing ahead of the much-awaited tour of Shah. Meanwhile, leader deputy CM and RJD ex-ecutive Pradyuman Kumar, wherein he sought to emphasise that the stature of the chief minister had diminished upon return to the BJP-led coalition. (PTI)



Minister for urban development and municipal affairs Firad Hakim delivering speech at the inaugural ceremony of Kolkata Garment Expo, 2018 held at Utrinya, Alipuri, Kolkata on Thursday. Arun Mitra Minister for finance, commerce and industry is also present on the occasion —Arjit Ganguly

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Minister for urban development and municipal affairs Firad Hakim delivering speech at the inaugural ceremony of Kolkata Garment Expo, 2018 held at Utrinya, Alipuri, Kolkata on Thursday. Arun Mitra Minister for finance, commerce and industry is also present on the occasion —Arjit Ganguly

**Politicians, sports persons hail Dipa for Turkey achievement**

**AGARTALA, JULY 12 /-** Accolades have been pouring in for Tripura's ace gymnast Dipa Karmakar, who recently clinched gold in Turkey, with state Sports Minister Manoj Kanti Deb today thanking the athlete for bringing laurels to the state. Karmakar is an inspiration, the youth should look up to her, Deb said. "I congratulate her on the remarkable achievement and wish her well for the future achievements. She is our youth icon. I would like to thank her for bringing laurel to the state and our country," he told PTI. After a lull of two years owing to a knee injury, Dipa Karmakar returned to the world stage with a bang. The 24-year-old gymnast won the yellow metal on Sunday at a women's vault event at FIG Artistic Gymnastics World Challenge Cup in Mersin, Turkey. Sunil Deodhar, Tripura BJP in-charge, said she expected Karmakar to bring more home more awards from the upcoming Asian Games. As a part of 'Sampark Se Samarthan' programme of the BJP, Deodhar met the gymnast on Wednesday at Indira Gandhi Stadium, Delhi.

"She's made a remarkable comeback after a gap of 2 years due to an injury. During the meeting yesterday, Karmakar thanked the people of Tripura for supporting her when she was down with the injury," a statement issued by Deodhar's office said here today. Mantu Deb Nath, an Arjuna awardee and first international gymnast from the state, also greeted Karmakar for her achievement in infrastructure. There is no foundation for a gymnasium, which is an important requirement for a gymnast. I wish her well for the coming Asian Games competition," he added. Earlier this week, the general secretary of the BJP's state unit, Pratima Bhownika, said the party would ask the state government to declare Karmakar as the "brand ambassador" of Tripura. (PTI)

**Nothing to say on reintroduction of JU entrance tests: Guv**

**KOLKATA, JULY 12 /-** West Bengal Governor K N Tripathi today said he has "nothing to say" about the decision of Jadavpur University (JU) to reintroduce entrance tests in the Arts faculty, and said the varsity's executive council was within its rights to lay down admission norms. "The admission committee has been formed by the EC, it has laid down certain norms to conduct admission tests to six humanities streams. The tests will now be conducted as per the stipulated norms... I have nothing to say in this matter," Tripathi, who is also the Chancellor of JU, said. Tripathi was asked to comment about the decision of the EC to reintroduce admission tests to the six humanities subjects in undergraduate courses—English, Comparative Literature, Bengali, History, Political Science and Philosophy. On JU Vice-Chancellor Suranjan Das's statement that he would ask Tripathi to relieve him and Pro-Vice-Pradip Ghosh of their responsibilities, the Governor said, "Let him (VC) come. I will take appropriate measure after talking to him and taking a view of the whole situation." Entrance tests to the six arts subjects will be held on different dates from July 21 to July 25. Students would be admitted based on the 50:50 formula—equal weightage on marks obtained in admission tests and in board examination, a decision which had originally been taken at the June 27 EC meeting and subsequently scrapped, before being reintroduced. JU registrar Chiranjib Bhattacharya has said no external experts will be involved in the admission process, which will be conducted by faculty members. (PTI)

**Retired Bihar judge disinherits daughter**

**KHAGARIA, JULY 12 /-** The district judge, now retired, who had allegedly confined his daughter for her decision to marry a Delhi-based lawyer against parents wishes, has come out with a statement saying he was disinheriting his only child for being adamant to "tarnish" reputation of him and the family. Subhash Chandra Chaurasia, who retired as the district and sessions judge of Khagaria on June 30, on Tuesday issued the statement wherein he accused his daughter, Yashaswini, of having been adamant upon tarnishing the reputation of himself and my family. As a father, I have always been concerned about the future of my daughter, who is my only child, Chaurasia said in the statement issued in Hindi and alleged that the girl was being ensnared and blackmailed by Siddharth Bansal a Delhi-based lawyer who she wanted to marry, against her parents' wishes. I am deeply anguished over the recent course of events and, therefore, decided to disinherit my daughter Yashaswini, the retired judge said in the statement, adding the matter may kindly be published as news in your respective publications. Notably, the girl and her parents had appeared on June 26 last before the Patna High Court which had ordered their appearance in person taking suo motu cognizance of a report published on a news portal wherein it was alleged that the girl had been kept in ill health. Chaurasia, 52, after the girl, 25 years old and a law graduate, told the court that she was not comfortable staying with her parents and wanted to stay separately, a Division Bench headed by Chief Justice Rajendra Menon ordered that the be lodged in the best interests of the girl. (Chennai Law University, Patna, which was her alma mater. (PTI)

**Maneka urges Kolkata Police to take action in 2-yr-old boy sexual assault case**

**NEW DELHI, JULY 12 /-** Women and Child Development (WCD) Minister Maneka Gandhi today urged Kolkata Police to immediately arrest the police responsible for allegedly sexually assaulting a 2-year-old boy at a play school under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act. Gandhi expressed her displeasure at the slow pace of police investigation in the case. "I have spoken to Kolkata Police about the case and expressed my displeasure that they have not been able to arrest the accused when a play school has very limited number of employees. I have requested them to ensure that immediate action is taken to arrest the accused," she said. A WCD official said only 7-8 people work at the play school. "The organisation has eight schools and play schools in the city. I hope they have put in place necessary protection systems in all their schools," Gandhi said. "It is shocking to know that the incident of sexual assault on the 2-year-old boy happened at Morning Blossoms play school, which is run by the well-known Mount Litera group of institutions," she said. (PTI)

**Blackbuck carcass found in Odisha**

**BERHAMPUR, JULY 12 /-** The carcass of an adult female blackbuck was found today in Odisha's Ganjam district, the only habitat of this endangered animal in the state, a forest official said. "The animal is believed to have died due to dogs in the same area on Monday. Forest officials said that with this at least five blackbucks have died in the district in the last three months. Last year around 25 animals had died due to various reasons. As many as 18 and 21 blackbucks had died in 2016-17 and 2015-16 respectively, forest officials added. The blackbuck is also known as the Indian antelope and hunting it is prohibited under Schedule I of the Wildlife Protection Act of 1972. Blackbucks, a diurnal antelope, move out in search of food and this was one of the causes for fighting between the herds, road mishaps and attack by predators, particularly stray dogs, a senior forest officer said. Speed-breakers and signboards have been put up for drivers to prevent rash driving in areas inhabited by blackbucks, said the range officer. A wildlife protection squad, consisting of 10 members will patrol the area, he added. (PTI)

**Cache of explosives seized in Manipur**

**IMPHAL, JULY 12 /-** The police have seized a huge cache of explosive materials from two persons suspected to be arms smugglers, in Manipur's Jiribam district, police said in a statement on Wednesday. A total of 69 gelatin sticks, 173 detonators, fuse wire and two mobiles were seized, Jiribam Superintendent of Police Mubi Singh said. The suspected arms smugglers were arrested on Tuesday. An investigation has been initiated, the SP said in the statement. In another development today, the Manipur police arrested two militants belonging to the proscribed outfit People's Revolutionary Party of Kangleipak Progressive from the Indo-Myanmar border town of Moreh in Tengnoupal district, police said. (PTI)

**ISKCON is going to celebrate 47th Kolkata Rathayatra with pomp & grandeur**

**Mridula Chattopadhyay**  
**KOLKATA, JULY 12 /-** International society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) in Kolkata is going to celebrate the 47th Kolkata Rathayatra at around 2.30 pm of coming Saturday. Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee will inaugurate the Rathayatra along with Bhagyasree and many Tollywood artist including Rituparno Sengupta, Soham Chakraborty, Subhashree, Sarabati, and others. The theme of this year Rathayatra is "The Hidden treasures of Kolkata". Rathayatra starting at 1pm from Hungerford Street (near Minto Park will first cover A.J.C Bose Road and then Sarat Bose Road. After that the procession will cover Hazra Road, S.P.M Road, A.T.M Road, Chowringhee Road, Exide Street, Park Street, J.L. Nehru Road and Outram Road. The

yatra will end at Brigade Parade ground. On July 22 Ultrathayatra will start at 12 noon from Outram Road near Park Street Metro and will take a left turn to reach at Dorina Crossing on J.L. Nehru Road. Then the yatra will reach at Moulali Crossing covering S N Banerjee Road. From Moulali Crossing the Ultrathayatra will reach at Park Circus 7-Point Crossing and will take the route of Shakespeare Sarani after that the yatra will enter into Hungerford Street and will finally reach at ISKCON Temple on 3C Albert Road. On the day of Rathayatra and Ultrathayatra, apart from the 3 chariots of Their Lordships Jagannath, Baladev and Subhadra Devi, there will be 3 trolleys, 4 mini vans where children's will depict different part of the Lord and Ramanuj Acharya. A



Co-Director of ISKCON, Kolkata, Anand Mohan Das painting the wheel of chariot on Thursday —Ashok Sarkar

Jagannath everyday prominent artists from India and abroad including Dina Ganguly, Padma Shri winner dancers will perform daily. Also at the cultural pandal dance programs, drama, kirtan, shadow dance, magic show, pravachan etc. will win the hearts of its audiences. Like the previous rathayatras this year also ISKCON will offer specially cooked Prasadam and to cook this prasadam ISKCON has assigned skilled cooks from Odisha.