

Manoj Ahuja working chairman of SJTMC

Bhubaneswar: In a major development, Chief Secretary Manoj Ahuja has been appointed as working chairman of the Shree Jagannath Temple Managing Committee (SJTMC) Tuesday. "This will be in addition to his own duties as the state's Chief Secretary," a notification issued by the Law department said. Notably, Gajapati Dibyasingha Deb is the Chairman of the SJTMC.

Bhang now 'intoxicant'

Bhubaneswar: The state government Tuesday labeled Bhang (hemp) as an 'intoxicant'. "In exercise of the powers conferred by Clause (t) of Section 2 of Odisha Excise Act, 2008 (Odisha Act 10 of 2013), the state government do hereby declare 'Bhang' which means a preparation from the leaves, or small stalks, chewed, eaten, or infused and drunk, has the potential of producing symptoms of grandiosity, excitement, hostility, disorientation, hallucinations and thought disorder, as an intoxicant," the notification issued by the Excise department read.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Doc turns predator

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, August 13: A senior resident doctor at SCB Medical College and Hospital's Cardiology department was arrested Tuesday on charges of sexually assaulting two patients on the hospital premises Sunday.

Cuttack DCP Prakash R said Thakur Dilbag Singh, a native of MP Nagar in Bhopal, was arrested after his discharge from ICU, where he was admitted following a scuffle reportedly with the relatives of the victims soon after the crime Sunday.

Singh has been booked (Case no-201/24) by the Mangalabag police under Section 64(2)(e) of BNS, the DCP added.

According to a release by the Commissionerate Police, the complainant in the case consulted with the accused doctor for necessary echocardiogram test on his mother, 51, and aunt, 44, suffering from cardiac issues August 9. The doctor fixed the appointment for Sunday.

At around 10am Sunday, the complainant turned up with the patients at the Cardiology department. Police said the accused doctor asked the complainant and female attendant/staff not to remain present during the tests. "He conducted tests one by one taking 30 minutes for each patient. Taking advantage of the situation, the doctor carried out penetrative sexual assault on both the victims," police said.

When the victims complained of acute pain in their private parts, the complainant took them



to the O&G department for treatment, they said.

Following the development, police recorded the victims' statements and their medico-legal examination was also conducted. Their statements were also recorded before a court here, they added.

Meanwhile, the Health and Family Welfare (H&FW) department has set up a three-member committee to probe into the allegations against the resident doctor.

The panel shall undertake a detailed inquiry and recommend appropriate action to the government, a notification issued by the H&FW department said.

SCB superintendent Sudhanshu Sekhar Mishra was unavailable for comments.

The incident came at a time when doctors across the country are bunking work, demanding protection and security at workplace following the horrific rape and murder of a doctor in a Kolkata hospital last week.

CBI takes over Kolkata doc rape-murder probe

New Delhi/Kolkata: Hours after the Kolkata High Court's direction, the CBI Tuesday took over the investigation in the alleged rape and murder of a woman doctor at a state-run medical college in the West Bengal capital. The agency swiftly completed all formalities following the High Court order asking the state police to hand over the case documents to the Central probe agency, officials said. A team of CBI officials from Delhi along with forensic scientists and medical experts will visit Kolkata Wednesday, they said.

Nod for 4 new NH projects

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, August 13: The Centre has approved four new NH projects worth around ₹14,000 crore for Odisha, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi said after a meeting with Union Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari in New Delhi, Tuesday.

These projects include 6-laning of the 60 km Bhubaneswar-Puri NH with two-lane service road worth ₹1,800 crore, 200km Chandikhole-Barbil 8-lane worth ₹10,000 crore, 54km Khurda-Nayagarh (NH-57) 4-lane worth ₹1,100 crore and 46km Kesinga-Junagarh (NH-26) 4-lane worth ₹1,000 crore, Majhi said.

Majhi told reporters that the state government is working in close coordination with the Centre for the development of national highways in Odisha.

"Detailed discussion was held for several important NH projects in the state and the Centre agreed to speed up steps for im-



plementation of four major projects," Majhi said.

Gadkari said that DPR for the four NH projects as proposed by the state government will be prepared soon, the CM said.

Law Minister Prithviraj Harichandan, Chief Secretary Manoj Ahuja and senior officials were present during the CM's meeting with Gadkari.

Majhi said widening of the NH between Bhubaneswar and Puri along with service road will play a significant role in boosting tourism by attracting pilgrims and other visitors from different parts of the country.

Gadkari reviewed the progress of 51 ongoing NH projects in Odisha during the meeting.

Bhagat suspended, to miss Paralympics

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 13: Tokyo gold medallist para shuttler Pramod Bhagat will not be able to defend his title at the Paris Paralympics after he was handed a 18-month suspension for breaching Badminton World Federation's (BWF) anti-doping whereabouts clause, leaving the Indian heartbroken.

"The BWF can confirm India's Tokyo 2020 Paralympic champion Pramod Bhagat has been suspended for a period of 18 months and will miss the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games," the governing body said in a statement Tuesday.



"In 1 March 2024, the Court of Arbitration of Sport (CAS) Anti-Doping Division found Bhagat in breach of the BWF anti-doping regulations for committing three whereabouts failures within 12 months." The 36-year-old, an SL3 athlete, said he is saddened by the decision and it was a result of a technical glitch.

"It is an extremely hard decision for me. I respect WADA, I understand they are drawing a line for all players, but to ban someone for technical reasons is not right," Bhagat told PTI.

SC relief for Ramdev, Patanjali

AGENCIES

New Delhi, August 13: In a relief to yoga guru Ramdev, his aide Balkrishna and Patanjali Ayurved Limited, the Supreme Court Tuesday closed the contempt proceedings initiated against them for "violation" of the undertakings given before the court in the misleading advertisements case.

While the apex court accepted their apology and closed the matter, it cautioned them to strictly abide by the terms of their undertakings.

"Any future intransigence on their part, whether by act, deed or speech that could tantamount to violating the orders of the court or dishonouring the terms of the undertakings, shall be viewed strictly and the ensuing consequences could indeed be grave," a bench of Justices Hima Kohli and Ahsanuddin Amanullah said.

"In that eventuality, the sword of contempt that has now been returned to rest in its sheath, shall be flourished as swiftly as these proceedings were originally initiated," the bench said in its 41-page verdict.



KALINGA INSTITUTE OF INDUSTRIAL TECHNOLOGY

Deemed to be University (Declared U/S 3 of UGC Act, 1956), Bhubaneswar, Odisha, India



KIIT Believes in Reality and Quality

SLOW AND STEADY WINS THE RACE

RANK OVER THE YEARS

KIIT has steadily improved its position in the NIRF Universities Rankings conducted annually by the Ministry of Education, Govt. of India.



KIIT Jumps to **15th** Position in Universities Rankings 2024



Young University Rankings 2024
World Rank: **168** India Rank: **10**



Impact Rankings 2024
SDG#10-Reduced Inequalities
World Rank: **6** India Rank: **1**

This is a significant achievement, especially considering that KIIT, as an institute, is only 27 years old and 20 years as a university. What makes this even more remarkable is that **Medical and Law Schools** of KIIT, which were established in 2007, have been ranked **25th** and **11th**, respectively.

• KIIT is only 27 years old as an institute (1997 – 2024) and 20 years old as a university.

• KIIT does not have any institute/university in the name of "Kalinga" anywhere else in the country and globe.

KIIT (Deemed to be University) has only one permanent campus in Bhubaneswar, Odisha. It has no other campus / off campus anywhere else in the country and globe.

leisure



LISA: NOT GOOD AT EXPRESSING MYSELF

BLACKPINK star Lisa feels she's become more confident in recent times. However, The 27-year-old singer - who is a member of the South Korean girl group - has admitted that she struggles to express herself.

RIHANNA LINED UP TO HEADLINE GLASTONBURY

The organisers of Glastonbury want Rihanna to headline the festival, according to a source. The 36-year-old singer has focused her attention on her family life and her other business ventures in recent years - but Rihanna is planning to make her long-awaited return to the music scene in 2025.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181

ARIES
You are very sensitive, and some people will disturb your peace of mind today. However, getting irritated will only make matters worse. Reflect in isolation what may be at the root of the problem. Ganesh says it is closer to you than you think.

TAURUS
This day you are going to be particularly conscious of your beliefs and principles. You will be very proud and sensitive, and are not likely to brook any adverse comment or criticism. Anyone who dares to question or deride them will get a fitting response from you.

GEMINI
You will be filled with concern and sensitivity towards others, and will bestow your blessings upon many. However, being too emotional is not advisable. Your emotions could get in the way of your progress at the work-front. You need to listen to your head over your heart when it comes to professional matters, says Ganesh.

CANCER
Ganesh says that it will be a day of challenge. You will be tempted to plunge into a new venture. But there is no need for haste or anxiety in this regard. Pending work will be completed. Business deals and transactions will end on happy note. Translocation due to business or domestic reasons is possible.

LEO
You will be busy on the work front today. It is a good day for those who are self-employed. Housewives will remain extremely busy with household matters. You will be able to work according to your desire though, says Ganesh.

VIRGO
Close members of your family and friends will take up most of your time today. Students will have to pay more attention to studies as exams are upcoming, and they will have to learn to balance study and free time. Ganesh says today is a good time to buy property. All in all, it is a day when you can afford to relax and let your mind pursue its interests.

LIBRA
Ganesh says today will be a wonderful day and bring forth a breakthrough for you. You shall get to know and learn a lot from top most officials and elderly people. The higher ups in your office will give you good support today. Ganesh warns you to stay away from judicial proceedings or pleadings, as today is not a good day for fighting court battles.

SCORPIO
"It's a dream come true," you may utter these words in surprise today, feels Ganesh. Your palatial home is ready or you may just get the keys of your much desired vehicle. You may have an extended celebration by receiving or giving gifts to your closed ones.

SAGITTARIUS
No wonder, if you feel like you are stuck in a rut. Your energy level and enthusiasm has gone for a toss due to mundane routine. Unfortunately, your stars too seem to be lazy today, and there's nothing on the cards that can cheer you up. Ganesh advises to let the day pass calmly and wait for a better tomorrow.

CAPRICORN
At times you are very direct in your approach and often end up hurting your near ones badly. Today, you'll bandage some old wounds and make efforts to restore old relationships, says Ganesh. But, your struggle to improve rapport may not be as successful as you want it to be. Stay away from those neighbours who just want to add fuel to the fire in your family conflicts, advises Ganesh.

AQUARIUS
The cupid may strike you today! The singles may feel the energy and excitement of budding romance. Equally blissful day for the married couples, too, as they will spend quality time with each other.

PISCES
Unexpected expenses are likely to crop up today. There are strong indications that you will set out upon a journey or a picnic to some nearby place, without too much prior planning. However, the journey will be comfortable and your travel plans will go off without a hitch.

Mrunal turning cultivator!

Mumbai: Actress Mrunal Thakur, who has earlier expressed her desire to do farming, has now shared a sneak peek into her training of becoming a 'future farmer'.

Taking to Instagram Stories, Mrunal, who has 13.3 million followers on the photo sharing application, has shared a series of videos from an unknown location, trying her hands at the clay pot art.

In the video, she can be seen wearing an all black outfit, with no makeup and her hair tied in a loose ponytail.

She is learning the art of clay pot creation.

Another snippet shows Mrunal visiting a farm of starfruit. She can be heard saying, "Oh my God...ham log ye school ke andar khathe the...wow yummy."

She captioned the post as: '#futurefarmer'. For the unversed, earlier in an interview with a news portal, Mrunal had shared how she would like to invest her money in food, plants, and a land where she can do farming.

On the work front, Mrunal began her acting career in 2012 with the television show *Mujhse Kuchh Kehi... Yeh Khamosh-hiyaan*.

She has featured in shows like *Arjun*, *Kumkum Bhagya*. She has also participated in *Nach Baliye 7*.

AGENCIES



Khushi's house turns into 'zoo'

Mumbai: Actress Khushi Kapoor has shared some heart-warming pictures of her residence 'officially becoming a zoo', with cute glimpses of her furry friends.

The 23-year-old Gen Z actress took to her Instagram Stories, where she has 1.4 million followers, and dropped some snaps of her house.

The picture shows six pet dogs of the Kapoor family taking a dip in the swimming pool. She wrote: "My house has officially become a zoo", followed by a white heart emoji.

Another photo also shows the furry friends enjoying their time splashing in the cold water, beating the summer heat.

Khushi is the daughter of late actress Sridevi and producer Boney Kapoor. She is the younger sister of actress Janhvi Kapoor, and niece of actors Anil Kapoor and Sanjay Kapoor. Her cousins are Sonam Kapoor, and Rhea Kapoor.

Actor Arjun Kapoor is her half brother. She made her student acting debut in 2016 with the YouTube short film *Bhram Ho: Pyaar Ka Takraar*, in which she essayed the role of Pinki Kashyap. In 2020 she made her official debut, with the student short film *Speak Up*, playing Naina.

AGENCIES



LOVE: KRITI'S DEFINITION

Mumbai: Amid speculations that she is dating UK-based entrepreneur Kabir Bahia, National Award-winning actor Kriti Sanon recently discussed what the ideal relationship could provide to her life.

In an interview with a famous family magazine, Kriti said that she is a great romantic at heart and truly believe in love. "It's something that grounds you and makes you feel whole," she said. When asked about her definition for love, she said, "Love is about feeling something for someone unconditionally. It's accepting them as they are, without trying to mould them into your ideal image."

She added, "Love should inspire growth and personal evolution, encouraging you to become the best version of yourself. It should add to your happiness rather than solely being responsible for it, you should already have happiness within yourself. Maintaining your individuality while feeling like the best version of yourself defines what love means to me."

On the work front, Kriti is currently preparing for the release of *Do Patti*, also stars Kajol in her first appearance as a cop.

AGENCIES



Bebo takes a jab at six-pack obsession

Mumbai: Kareena Kapoor Khan, known for her candid opinions, recently took a dig at film industry's growing trend of flaunting six-pack abs. In an interview with *Film Companion*, Kareena expressed her thoughts on the importance of talent over physique in achieving stardom.

She remarked, "If you are great, talented, and people have liked you, connected with you, stardom will follow."

It is not like, "Oh, he has got six-pack abs, he is looking so hot, he is a big star." Arre please yaar! Sometimes, I feel like telling those actors, "Please wear your T-shirt first. I can't even look at you right now."

Despite her critique, Kareena had nothing but praise for actors like Bobby Deol and her cousin Ranbir Kapoor. She noted that Bobby Deol has earned his place in the industry through his versatile roles over the years, and emphasized that true success in Bollywood stems from being a great actor, not just having a chiseled physique.

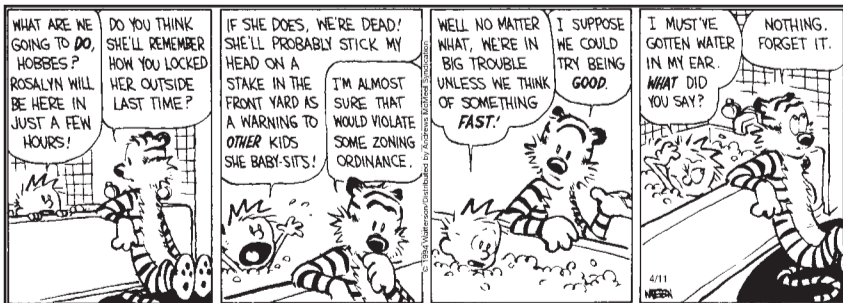
Kareena went on to laud Ranbir Kapoor as a 'phenomenal actor' who has consistently proven his talent in without relying on six-pack.

AGENCIES

PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

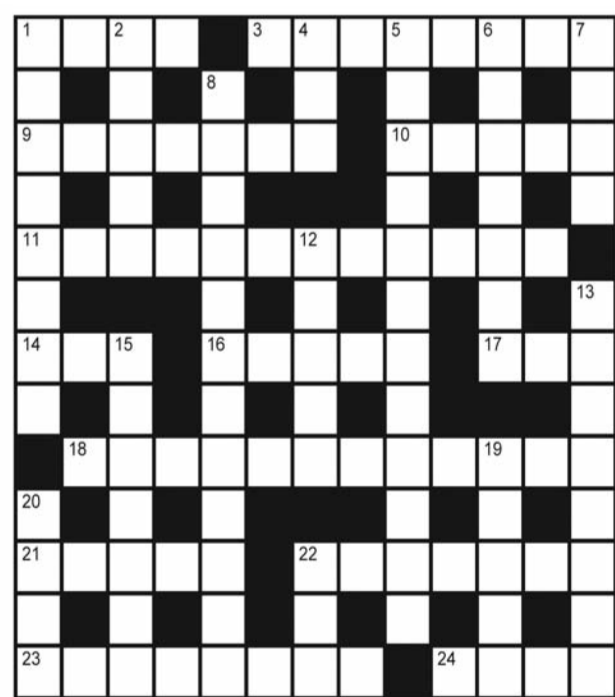


BREVITY



FUN post

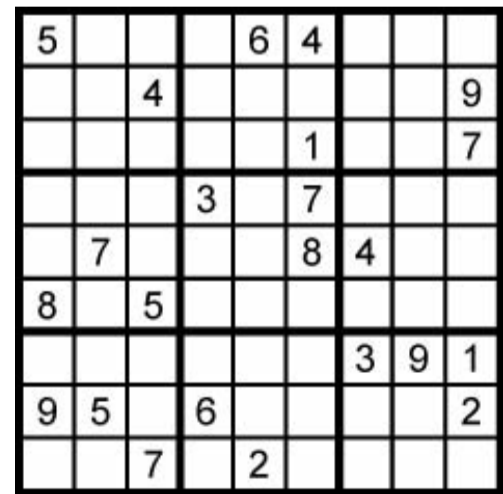
CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 Obi, e.g.
 - 3 Type of son, maybe
 - 9 Chinese medicinal herb
 - 10 Open land, UK style
 - 11 Fireworks
 - 14 Congeal
 - 16 Unrefined
 - 17 Thumbs-up vote
 - 18 Carabao (5,7)
 - 21 Honshu port
 - 22 One-eyed giant
 - 23 Foul weather gear
 - 24 Water source
 - 5 Chain reaction (6,6)
 - 6 Ill-tempered
 - 7 Glasgow gal
 - 8 Former cash in Hamelin (8,4)
 - 12 Leftover park ride
 - 13 Amusement
 - 15 Struggle
 - 19 Hacienda brick
 - 20 Small salmon
 - 22 Film container
- Down**
- 1 Pointer on the road
 - 2 Whale finder
 - 4 Horse-drawn vehicle

SUDOKU

To solve the Sudoku puzzle, fill in the boxes in such a manner that every row, column and 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9, without repeating any.



SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD



SUDOKU



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown

MONSOON WOES

Rainwater enters a house in Chintamaniswar area of Bhubaneswar, Tuesday



Amend Odisha Universities Act, Pradhan tells CM



had taken steps to curtail the autonomy of state's educational institutions.

Pradhan urged the Chief Minister to amend the Act, as per the legal and regulatory framework.

This amendment is important to restore confidence among educationists, safeguard the autonomy of educational institutions and ensure that Odisha maintains the highest standards of education, he said.

The previous BJD government had enacted the Odisha University (Amendment) Act bringing many extensive amendments to the original Act of 1989.

The provisions contained in the prevailing Act regarding selection of chancellors, and recruitment of teaching staff in universities are not only inconsistent with these regulations of UGC but also ignore judicial directives laid down by the Supreme Court, he further stated.

Therefore, the efforts made by the previous government to undermine the credibility of the educationists and educational institutions of the state should be reconsidered immediately, he added.

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, August 13: Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan has written a letter to Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi seeking rectification of the discrepancies in the Odisha Universities (Amendment) Act, 2020 brought by the previous BJD government.

The Naveen Patnaik government had earlier amended the original Act, which not only created conflict in the provisions of the UGC Act but also diluted the interest of educational institutions and their autonomy, Pradhan alleged.

The Union minister claimed that the previous government



I-DAY PREP: Full dress rehearsal at Lower PMG in Bhubaneswar, Tuesday, ahead of Independence Day

PIC: MANORANJAN MISHRA

Stay on minor mineral mining

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar/Baripada, August 13: The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has ordered a stay on mining of minor minerals in Mayurbhanj district, official sources said, Tuesday.

The move by the Eastern Zone Bench of the NGT comprising judicial member B Amit Sthalekar and expert member Arun Kumar Verma came August 8 while hearing a plea filed by environmentalist Bibekananda Pattnaik.

The petitioner had informed the environment watchdog that the authorities have published a notification for auction of Belonapura, Madhunananda, Demphouda of Budhabalang Sandbed-I under Betanati tehsil in Mayurbhanj district June 20 this year for a period of five year.

“Though the notification claimed that the mining quarry is below 5 hectare, the interim



District Survey Report mentions it as 5.01 hectare,” the petitioner said in his complaint.

Taking cognisance, the environment watchdog asked the Mayurbhanj Collector to submit a report in this regard within four weeks.

The district Collector later submitted a revised District Survey Report. However, the State Level Environmental

Impact Assessment Authority (SEIAA) did not approve it.

Highlighting that a proper District Survey Report is a prerequisite for auction of minor mineral quarries, the petitioner claimed that the June 20, 2024 auction notification is in violation of norms.

Taking note, the NGT ordered a stay on mining of minor minerals in the district till further

orders.

“...we direct that no mining activity shall be carried out in the district (Mayurbhanj) under the interim District Survey Report until further orders of the court,” the Eastern Zone Bench said.

The environment watchdog will hear the issue October 3, 2024, it said.

According to sources, there are 203 minor mineral quarries under 26 tehsils of the district. “While 161 quarries— 77 sand, 83 stone and one morrum—are under the Mines department, remaining 42 quarries are entangled in many NGT cases,” they said.

According to state government statistics, 70 quarries— 40 sand, 29 stone and one morrum— have been leased out.

Senior lawyer Sankar Prasad Panj presented the case on behalf of the petitioner.

ECoR adopts ballastless track technology in new projects

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, August 13: In what would revolutionise the safety, efficiency and sustainability of rail transport, the East Coast Railway (ECoR) has been adopting advanced ballastless track technology in railway tunnels while constructing new projects in its jurisdiction, official sources said Tuesday.

ECoR initially started ballastless track in tunnel with Rheda 2000 Block System for Tunnel No.1 (600 metre) between Baliguda and Kakiriguma stations in connection with Koraput-Singapur Road doubling project.

This ballastless track system will also be implemented at all the under-construction tunnels of various ongoing projects under ECoR, they said.

Plans are on to replace exist-



ing tracks in tunnels with ballastless tracks. “Tunnel works are on in Kothavalasa-Kirandul and Koraput-Rayagada doubling projects, and Khurda Road-Bolangir and Talcher-Bimlagarh new line projects,” they said.

Ballastless train tracks, particularly in tunnels, offer several significant advantages that are ideal for various key merits.

“Ballastless tracks are more robust and require less maintenance compared to traditional tracks. The absence of ballast eliminates issues like ballast degradation and shifting, which can cause track misalignment,”

they pointed out.

The materials used in ballastless tracks, such as concrete and steel, provide a longer service life, making them a more sustainable option for tunnels.

Without ballast, the track structure is more rigid, ensuring consistent alignment and reducing the risk of derailment. This stability is especially crucial in tunnel environments where space is confined.

Ballastless tracks can handle higher loads, making them suitable for high-speed rail or heavy freight traffic that may pass through tunnels. The robust design and construction of ballastless tracks mean that they require less frequent maintenance. This is particularly beneficial in tunnels, where access for maintenance work is often more challenging and costly.

India successfully flight tests GAURAV

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Balasure, August 13: India Tuesday successfully test-fired a Long Range Glide Bomb (LRGB), GAURAV, from the Su-30 MK-I platform of the Indian Air Force off the Odisha coast.

The test was organised by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).

GAURAV is an air-launched 1,000 kg class glide bomb capable of hitting targets at long distances. After being launched, the glide bomb steers towards the target using a highly accurate hybrid navigation scheme with a combination of INS and GPS data. GAURAV has been designed and developed indigenously by the Research Centre Imarat (RCD), Hyderabad, defence sources said.

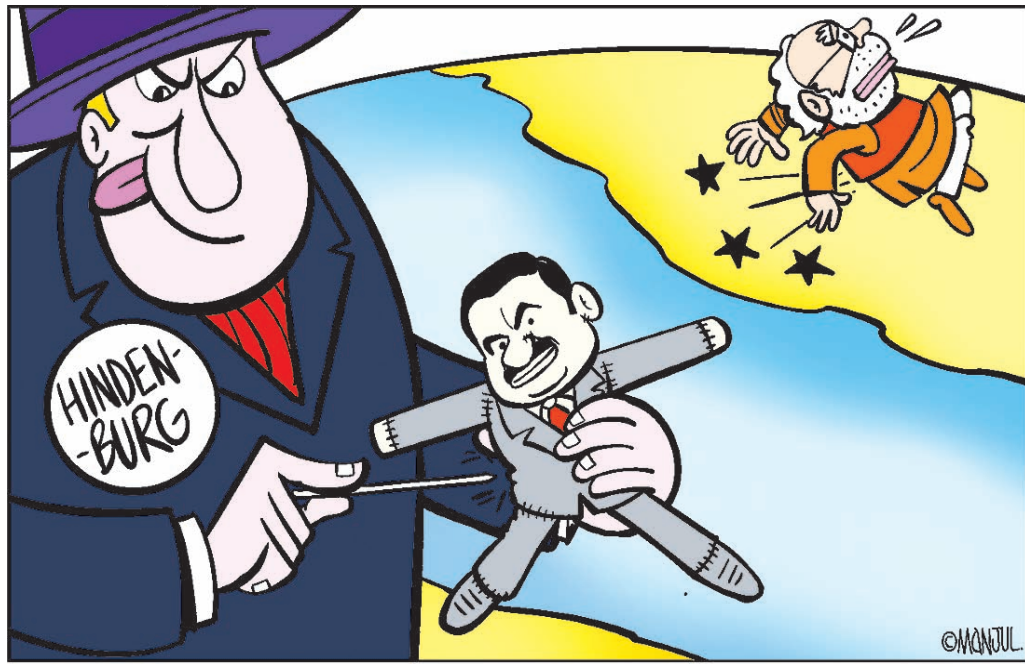
During the flight test, the glide bomb hit the target erected at Long Wheeler's island with pinpoint accuracy, they said adding that complete flight data during the test launch was captured by Telemetry and Electro optical tracking systems deployed by Integrated Test Range along the coastline.

The flight was monitored by senior DRDO scientists. Adani Defence and Bharat Forge, the Development cum Production Partners also participated during the flight trial, they said.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh complimented DRDO, IAF and industry for the successful flight test.

He termed it as a major milestone in the country's effort in developing indigenous defence technologies for further strengthening the capability of the Armed Forces.

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



All Indian salt, sugar brands have microplastics: Study

All Indian salt and sugar brands, whether big or small, packaged or unpackaged, contain microplastics, according to a study published Tuesday.

The study 'Microplastics in Salt and Sugar', conducted by the environmental research organisation Toxics Link, tested 10 types of salt - including table salt, rock salt, sea salt and local raw salt - and five types of sugar purchased from both online and local markets.

The study revealed the presence of microplastics in all salt and sugar samples, in various forms, including fibre, pellets, films and fragments. The size

of these microplastics ranged from 0.1mm to 5mm.

The highest levels of microplastics were found in iodised salt in the form of multi-coloured thin fibre and films.

Toxics Link founder-director Ravi Agarwal said, “The objective of our study was to contribute to the existing scientific database on microplastics so that the global plastic treaty can address this issue in a concrete and focused manner.”

“We also aim to trigger policy action and attract researchers' attention to potential technological interventions that could reduce exposure risks to microplastics.”

IN A NUTSHELL



PREVIOUS STUDIES FOUND THAT THE AVERAGE INDIAN CONSUMES 10.98 GRAM OF SALT AND AROUND 10 SPOONS OF SUGAR EVERY DAY - MUCH HIGHER THAN THE WHO'S RECOMMENDED LIMITS

Toxics Link associate director Satish Sinha added, “Our study's

iodised salt had the highest concentration of microplastics (89.15 pieces/kg) while organic rock salt had the lowest (6.70 pieces/kg), Toxics Link study found

In sugar samples, the concentration of microplastics ranged from 11.85 to 68.25 pieces/kg with the highest concentration being found in non-organic sugar, it said

finding of substantial amounts of microplastics in all salt and

2-day orientation camp for new MLAs

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, August 13: The Assembly will organise a two-day orientation programme for first-time MLAs Saturday and Sunday, officials said. The programme will be held on the Assembly premises to acquaint the MLAs with the rules and procedures relating to the proceedings of the House, functioning of various committees, the budgetary process, privileges and conduct of members, an Assembly official said.

Parliamentary Affairs Minister Mukesh Mahaling told reporters that Union Health Minister JP Nadda, Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan and Tribal Affairs Minister Jwal Oram are scheduled to address the MLAs during the event. In the 147-member House, 82 are first-time legislators, the official said.

Ex-engineer arrested for DA

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 13: Vigilance sleuths Tuesday arrested Tara Prasad Mishra, a retired engineer of Works department, a day after unearthing disproportionate assets (DA) worth crores of rupees from his possession.

Mishra was found in possession of DA, including 10 high-value flats in Bhubaneswar and Jharsuguda, seven costly plots, 2.55 kg of gold, and 370 gram of diamond.

During simultaneous raids conducted at nine locations in Bhubaneswar, Cuttack, and Jharsuguda Monday, Vigilance sleuths also detected deposits over ₹2.70 crore, ₹6 lakh in cash, two luxurious cars, from his possession.

The investigation also uncovered Mishra's visits to for-



eign countries like the USA, Thailand, Vietnam, UAE, Canada, Malaysia, and Singapore.

When asked about the source of income, Mishra could not explain satisfactorily, they said.

A corruption case was registered against the retired engineer in the Bhubaneswar Vigilance police station following which he was arrested, the officials said.

est concentration found in non-organic sugar.

Microplastics are a growing global concern because they can harm both health and the environment. These tiny plastic particles can enter the human body through food, water and air.

Recent research has found microplastics in human organs such as the lungs, heart, and even in breast milk and unborn babies.

Previous studies found that the average Indian consumes 10.98 gram of salt and around 10 spoons of sugar every day - much higher than the World Health Organisation's recommended limits.

HASSLE-FREE ELECTRICITY BILL PAYMENTS

GCMS portal & mobile app launched at GP level



Bhubaneswar, August 13: In a bid to facilitate easy payment of electricity bills at the Gram Panchayat (GP) level, the state government, in collaboration with Tata Power Limited, Tuesday launched a portal named Government Consumer Management System (GCMS) and mobile application.

In an event, Deputy Chief Minister KV Singh Deo along with Rural Development Minister Rabi Narayan Naik inaugurated the website and the app. Singh Deo expressed his gratitude to the Panchayati Raj and

Drinking Water department, National Informatics Centre (NIC), and Tata Power Limited for their collective efforts.

On the occasion, Naik directed the officials to implement the system properly in the concerned areas.

The portal was jointly developed by the Energy Department, Panchayati Raj and Drinking Water department, NIC and Tata Power Limited, the officials said.

According to them, the initiative aims to provide uninterrupted road lighting and drinking water supply facilities to rural areas, with a focus on transparency and accountability.

"Integrated with the e-Gram Swaraj online platform, the portal enables Panchayats to easily access, approve, and pay electricity bills within a day, using a secure OTP system," they said.

"The system will be used for the management of grants provided by the Central and State Finance Commissions," they added.

The government spends about ₹250 crore annually on electricity bills for street lights and drinking water supply, among others, across the panchayats but delayed payments and lack of a streamlined monitoring system have led to arrears, officials said.

The streamlined process is expected to significantly reduce arrears and improve overall efficiency in bill payments, they said.

The application has already been successfully tested in three village panchayats - Dhauli, Andharua and Mendhasala - of Bhubaneswar block in Khurda district, receiving positive feedback from stakeholders.



FESTIVAL PREP: An artisan busy preparing decorative items for swings ahead of Jhulana Yatra in Puri, Tuesday

OP PHOTO

OMBADC's initiative for better crop cultivation

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sundargarh/Bhubaneswar, August 13: In order to ensure good crop yields throughout the year, Odisha Mineral Bearing Areas Development Corporation (OMBADC) is financially supporting Sundargarh district to construct farm ponds to provide irrigation facility to farmlands.

According to OMBADC, a total of 262 farm ponds have been excavated in the district, out of which 238 projects are being implemented by the Directorate of Horticulture, while the remaining 24 projects are carried out by the Directorate of Soil Conservation and Watershed Development.

Notably, the tribal majority district is surrounded by hills and forests which support the agricultural community that cultivates various seasonal crops alongside paddy.

"We were not able to grow crops due to water problem. But the situation has improved now



on account of farm pond construction. Now, I grow diverse crops including vegetables and sell them earning a profit of around ₹1 lakh annually," said Sanjukta Patel, a beneficiary from Mangaspur village,

Tangarpali block.

"After identification of the beneficiaries, necessary support is provided to the farmers for excavation of farm ponds. The initiative has not only ensured sustainable livelihood for the

According to OMBADC, a total of 262 farm ponds have been excavated in the district

farmers but also brought notable improvement to their living standard," an official said.

The construction of farm ponds has prevented the farmland from remaining under-productive. With water stored in the ponds throughout the year, farmers are able to cultivate a variety of crops and earn decent income by selling them.

Experts said, "Climate change is disrupting monsoon patterns, leading to erratic rainfall in various regions. Whatever rainfall occurs, most of the water flows into the rivers and sea."

Meanwhile, various projects including water harvesting, check dams and solar-powered deep borewells are underway in the district.

Patnaik urges all to maintain peace

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, August 13: BJD president and Leader of Opposition in Assembly Naveen Patnaik, Tuesday appealed to all the citizens to maintain peace and harmony in the state where allegations of atrocities surfaced against a section of the people.

In an X post, the former chief minister said Odisha is a state where communal harmony and peace existed for ages.

"Many groups and aggrieved citizens have met me and expressed their concerns. It is sad that they are being victims of attacks and discrimination," Patnaik said in the post.

"But it is a matter of concern that now there are reports of social unrest in different parts of the state," he said.

While appealing to all the communities to protect the image and dignity of Odisha,



Patnaik suggested that everyone work towards maintaining law and order, the security of people's property and life, as a peaceful state.

The former five-time chief minister also urged the government and all government officials to take all possible steps to protect the people from all walks of life.

Notably, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee Sunday requested her Odisha counterpart Mohan Charan Majhi to look into alleged incidents of assault on labourers from the state there.

Woman claims to be conman's legal wife

DEBADURLAV HARICHANDAN, OP

Bhubaneswar, August 13: In yet another dramatic twist to the ongoing saga of a conman arrested for duping over 50 women in the pretext of marriage, a woman claimed to be the legal wife of accused before Capital Police Monday night.

DCP Bhubaneswar Prateek Singh said the alleged woman has registered a case against the accused, Satyajit Samal. The woman's name meanwhile is also mentioned in Samal's passports as his wife.

In a bid to substantiate her claims, the woman has alleged that she has the credentials of bank accounts and UPI accounts owned by Samal, Singh said.

Singh said that the cops have traced over ₹50 lakh duped by Samal from victims by impersonating as a cop. He even made advance payments for booking two-SUVs in a local showroom. A special team of Capital police is quizzing the showroom staff to uncover more details, he added.

CLASSIFIED

AFFIDAVIT

In the court of Executive Magistrate, Bhadrak I, Bharat Chandra Padhi, aged 42 years, Son of Late Jadunath Padhi, At - Taragana, Po: Ganjeibadi, District. - Bhadrak declare That BHARAT CHANDRA PADHI & in Aadhaar Bharat Chandra Pradhan is the same and one person.

BEFORE THE NOTARY PUBLIC, MALKANGIRI, I, Bijaya Panda, age 47 Yrs. Son of Baikuntha Panda, resident High-tech Colony, Malkangiri, P.O./P.S./Dist. - Malkangiri do hereby solemnly affirm and state on oath as follows.

That my actual name is Bijaya Panda but I changed it from BIJAYA PANDA to BIJAYA KUMAR PANDA. That Bijaya Panda and Bijaya Kumar Panda is one and same person. And Bijaya Kumar Panda is regularise in all purposes. That I swear this affidavit in order to publicity my name as Bijaya Kumar Panda in local daily newspaper.

India faces a severe organ wastage crisis, say experts

Lack of awareness, deep-rooted superstitions, and myths are behind India's severe organ wastage crisis that leads to the loss of vital organs annually, said experts Tuesday on World Organ Donation Day.

World Organ Donation Day is observed every year August 13 to raise awareness about the importance of organ donation and to dispel myths surrounding it.

India's cadaver organ donation rate has been abysmally low and stands at less than one per million people in the country. In stark contrast, Western countries have 70-80 per cent deceased organ donation.

"India faces a severe organ wastage crisis, losing approximately 2 lakh kidneys and other vital organs annually due to a lack of awareness, deep-rooted superstitions, and myths surrounding brain death," Tanima Das Bhattacharya, Consultant - Nephrologist and Kidney Transplant, Narayana Health, Kolkata, told IANS.

Bhattacharya added that the "loss is compounded by the failure to properly identify and certify brain deaths in hospitals, significantly reducing the country's organ donation rates despite the availability of potential donors."

The experts noted that even with recent directives from the Union Health Ministry to improve documentation of brain stem deaths, the cadaver organ



donation rate remains alarmingly low - less than one donor per million population per year.

"In a country as populous as India, it is a tragic irony that thousands of life-saving organs go to waste each year. The gap between the number of available organs and the patients in need is vast, and the wastage of viable organs due to logistical and systemic challenges is a critical issue that demands immediate attention," Rajesh Aggarwal, Director, Nephrology and Kidney Transplant, Sri Balaji Action Medical Institute, Delhi, told IANS.

Suganthi Iyer, Director-Legal and Medical, PD Hinduja Hospital and Medical Research Centre added that organ wastage

in India can be significantly reduced by addressing the lack of awareness among healthcare professionals and the public, particularly in rural areas, about organ donation post-brain stem death.

"Additionally, increasing the number of hospitals registered as Non-Transplant Organ Retrieval Centers (NTORC) is crucial. Focused training for healthcare workers and community outreach can further help curb wastage," she told IANS.

Citing the example of Spain, Bhattacharya suggested shifting India's focus from Donors after Brain Death (DBD) to Donors after Circulatory Death (DCD). This has huge potential to curb organ wastage, he noted.

Free eye check-up at RSC

Bhubaneswar: Regional Science Centre (RSC), in association with Dr Agarwal's Eye Hospital and SUM Ultimate Medicare (SUMUM) observed the World Organ Donation Day (WODD) at RSC campus here, Tuesday. On the occasion, a free eye check-up camp for the general public and interactive sessions spreading awareness about organ donation was organised. SUMUM organ transplant coordinator Anindita Sabath hosted an interactive session and highlighted the importance of organ donation in saving and transforming the life of the recipient. In another session, squint and cataract surgeon Chandra Shekhar Sahoo interacted with the participating students to make them aware about how the donated eyes can be used to restore vision in people suffering from corneal blindness. RSC project coordinator Kapil Jain stressed on the significance of the day, themed 'Be the Reason for Someone's Smile Today'. Around 200 students from different institutes participated in the programme.



Suraj Award for 10 organ donors

Bhubaneswar: Health and Family Welfare (H&FW) department hosted an event to honour organ donors and their families at Lok Seva Bhawan here, Tuesday. The event was organised in memory of late Suraj Behera, who saved six lives by donating his organs in 2019. Every year on the occasion of World Organ Donation Day, state level 'Suraj Award' is given to the donors. Health Minister Mukesh Mahaling, while attending the event, said, "Families of all the deceased who have decided to donate organs of their loved ones are a source of inspiration for us. The Suraj award will definitely encourage the people of the state to donate organs." "Suraj Award" and cash prize of ₹5 lakh was given to the families of ten organ donors including Late Krishna Panda of Berhampur, Late Damayanti Mohanta of Keonjhar, Late Ajit Kumar Chowdhury and Late Pratyush Panigrahi of Balasore, Late Om Sibul of Kendrapada, Late Subojit Sahu and Late Krishna Chandra Mahabhoi of Bhubaneswar, Late Sanjukta Patra of Keonjhar, Late Kahnun Nayak of Khurda and Late Birendra Prasad Swain of Jagatsinghpur.



MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VALUE	VARIATION
SENSEX	78,956.03	↓ 692.89
NIFTY	24,139.00	↓ 208.00
DOLLAR	83.9975	↑ ₹0.25
EURO	91.7800	↓ ₹0.02
GOLD	₹70,787	↑ ₹49
SILVER	₹81,000	↓ ₹624

WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
TEMP. MAX	35.4°C	34.2°C
TEMP. MIN	27.5°C	26.0°C
Humidity	81%	85%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil

Forecast: Partly cloudy sky with one/two spells of rain

FOR CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS CONTACT OUR BOOKING STATIONS

Acharya Vihar-Dayal Agency-9437135727, A.P. Tours and Travel, Maitri Vihar, C.S. Pur- 9861301598, Aurobindo Market-Sai Audio & Electronics-9438304668, Airport Road-Sai Baba Variety Store-9090071530, Anish Infotech- Tankapani Road-9861341488, Bapuji Nagar- Dreamland Studio- 9777517314, Baramunda Rental Colony-Maa Ramchandi Communication-9658821469, Baramunda Housing Board Colony-Pappu Variety Store-9040500106, Cuttack Road-Alishan Snacks-8984236754, District Center (Chandrasekharpur)-Sai Google Mart-9776056507, Forest Park-DTDC Couriers & Services (HB Services)-7381024156, IRC Village-Bapi Xerox-9090090404, Gift Hut(Antriksh Gifts & Decors Pvt. Ltd.)-9954781084, Pruthvi Medicine-9853314816, Janpath-Krupajal Book Store-7978646669, Jaydev Vihar-AK Enterprises-7978116618, Subam Sai Books Store-8895550649, Swain Graphics- 9337121249, Jagannath Mobile Point- Janpath Road, Ram Mandir- 9938475415, Kanan Vihar-Auro Electronics-8260697560, Khandagiri- Swosti Mobile Centre- 7992914045, World Solution- 9938317559, KIIT Road-Jugad Jn-9338545031, Laxmi Sagar-Aditya Mobile-9438191836, Lewis Road-Spider Web-7809186415, Metro Satellite City-Arogya Mitra Medicine Store-9853621640, Madhusudan Nagar-Mohapatra Communication-9124446664, Maa Santoshi travels- Gajapati Nagar- 9777675867, Nayapalli- The Cake Room- 7873660137, Near Mayfair Lagoon-Cookiemann-9439491273, Nigamananda-Omm Sai Travels-9668284823, Nr Cosmopolis Main Gate- Shreeram Medical Store- 8763711714, Net Square- Niladri Vihar (C.S. Pur)- 7205634821, Priyadarshini Market-Astro Point-9938134346, R.N. General Store-Nilakantha Nagar-9438642501, Sahid Nagar- Maa Communication- 9437353424, Sahini General Store- Near Patia Railway Station, Mahavir Vihar- 9937586626, Satya Nagar-Baishnavi Mixture & Sweets-7894821764, Samantapur- Download Point-7504557743, Sailashree Vihar-Harsha Book Store-8093449515, Saheed Nagar-Jagannath Graphics-7978652670, Photo World-7978468191, Sainath Photo Studio-8984436129, Shanti & Co-9937071063, Siripur-Omm Maa Sarala Communication-9777682449, Sushree fashion- Jagmara-9938714347, Shree Vision- Sailashree Vihar-9861476678, Unit-3-LIC of India Premium Point-9337787080, Unit-7- LIC Premium Point- 9338227422, VSS Nagar-Friends Cake & Bake-8658200930, Jeet Infoworld-7205195782, XIMB Square-LD Books-9658061373.

2 years RI for two wildlife criminals

PNN & AGENCIES

Sonepur, August 13: Sonepur Sub-Divisional Judicial Magistrate convicted Tuesday two wildlife criminals under Section 51 of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, and sentenced them to two years of rigorous imprisonment (RI) and slapped a penalty of ₹10,000 on each of them.



According to the prosecution, STF personnel apprehended the two persons on the road near

Rajakothi (Mahanadi bridge) in Subarnapur district while they were proceeding towards Birmaharajpur. While conducting a search on their belongings, the STF recovered one live pangolin and pangolin scales.

During the investigation, the seized pangolin was handed over to the Forest department, and the pangolin scales were sent to the Wild Life Institute of India, Dehradun, for biological and chemical examination. The charge sheet was submitted against the two accused under Section 379/411/120-B IPC r/w. 51 of the Wild Life Protection Act, 1972.

Officials of the STF said that this is the seventh case where the accused persons have been convicted under the Wildlife Protection Act, and this is the first case where the accused persons were convicted for possessing a live pangolin. Efforts are on to name more such criminals, the STF said.

Misappropriation of DMF funds alleged

Over ₹700 crore spent without inviting tenders or approval of the trust board

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, August 13: Funds of over ₹700 crore belonging to the District Mineral Foundation (DMF) in this district have been misappropriated or spent by various departments without the approval of the trust board, sources alleged Tuesday.

After he received the information, Nayak subsequently lodged a complaint with Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, Chief Secretary Manoj Ahuja and various other departments. In the copies he pointed out that in many cases funds have been spent without inviting tenders and observing DMF guidelines. He stated that large amounts have been sanctioned for departments that do not have the right to use DMF funds.



receipt of the complaint. Ahuja has asked the collector of this district to conduct a probe and submit a report.

Sources said funds worth ₹250.41 crore has been sanctioned from DMF, Keonjhar to the district education officer, ₹18.61 crore to OREDA, Bhubaneswar, ₹48.20 crore to chief development officer, Zilla Parishad, Keonjhar, ₹5 crore to district welfare office, ₹14.55 crore to the district employment exchange, ₹31.10 crore to the district fishery office, ₹31.79 crore to the chief district veterinary officer

(CDVO), ₹28.68 crore to the Sericulture department, ₹88.55 crore to the office of the district Horticulture department, ₹8.38 crore to the executive engineer of Odisha Lift Irrigation Corporation, ₹3.5 crore to the office of the chief agriculture officer and ₹59.81 crore to the district Social Welfare department. However, the highest amount of ₹102.89 crore has been sanctioned to the office of the district project coordinator. Similarly ₹42.50 lakh have been sanctioned to district manager, OFDC. Nayak in his application has

sought information on how these funds have been spent. He stated that the concerned departments have not provided any information about the utilization of money. He has demanded stringent action against officials if they are found guilty of misappropriation.

Officials meanwhile informed, that these funds have been spent to provide scholarship to meritorious students, purchase of study and allied materials for schools, solar light systems, smart projectors for panchayat libraries, street lights, fish cultivation, establishment of mega poultry farms, afforestation programmes, agriculture, crèche and towards expenditure for millet mission. Sources alleged that funds are usually sanctioned at meetings of the DMF trust board. They pointed out that trust board does not have meetings on a regular basis. So it is all the more surprising as to how funds for various departments have been sanctioned. They added that funds are being misused as some temporary officials are in charge of the DMF.

Ex-'Kansa Maharaja' Gopal Sahu no more

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bargarh, August 13: Gopal Sahu, the actor who played the character of 'Kansa Maharaja' at the famous 'Bargarh Dhanu Yatra', passed away Tuesday. He was 70.



Sahu, who had been suffering from diabetes, was undergoing treatment at a hospital here, family members said. Following his demise, a large number of people gathered at his residence in Barpali to pay their last respects.

Born in Bolangir district, Sahu gained widespread recognition for portraying the character of 'Kansa Maharaja' at the 'Bargarh Dhanu Yatra'. He performed the iconic role for 25 years. His performance attracted huge crowds, and his presence, along with his sharp wit, left an indelible mark on the audience. Sahu played the iconic character 23 times in two phases from 1984 to 2008.

Youth held for selling parrots of rare species

POST NEWS NETWORK

Joda, August 13: Acting on a tip-off, Forest department officials here nabbed a youth from Jharkhand and rescued eight parrots of an endangered species from his possession. The youth was selling the birds near the main bus stand in this town of Keonjhar district. As selling of birds of any endangered species is illegal, Forest department officials arrested him. The accused was identified as Raja Alam, a resident of Ranchi. A case was registered in this connection and the accused was produced in court.



a raid and nab the accused. Joda forester Trinath Jena said that the seized parrots belong to the 'Rose-Ringed Parakeet' species which is on the verge of extinction. Raja was living at a rented house here and was illeg

ally trading in various wildlife and birds for which his activities were under scanner for a long time. Further investigation will be conducted to ascertain the reach and extent of this illegal trade, the official added.

20 students hurt in lightning strike

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhanjanagar, August 13: Twenty students belonging to Galeri High School under this block in Ganjam district suffered injuries after being struck by lightning Tuesday afternoon. The condition of one student is critical, officials said.

Eye-witnesses said that the students of Galeri High School were studying inside the classroom when they were struck by lightning. They lost their senses and collapsed.

They were rushed by the school authorities to the Galeri hospital for treatment. After getting preliminary treatment all the injured students discharged from hospital while one girl student whose condition is critical still undergoing treatment at the hospital, officials at the hospital said.

Mutilated body of woman found

POST NEWS NETWORK

Pattamundai, August 13: The mutilated body of a woman who was dragged away by a crocodile in the Brahmani river Monday afternoon was recovered Tuesday morning. The body was found approximately six kilometres away from where she was attacked by the crocodile. The deceased has been identified as Manjulata Bhanja from Alapuadia village under this tehsil in Kendrapara district.

According to reports, Manjulata had gone to the Brahmani river to wash utensils after lunch Monday afternoon. While she was washing the utensils by the riverbank, a crocodile suddenly attacked her and dragged her into the river. When she did not return home for a long time, her family members became worried and started searching for her along the river-

bank. They found her utensils and slippers lying near the riverbank, which led them to suspect that she might have been attacked by a crocodile.

Despite extensive searches using a boat, Manjulata's family members were unable to find her and informed the local administration and police. The local administration, police, and fire brigade personnel launched a search operation in the river, but due to the darkness, they couldn't locate Manjulata.

Tuesday morning, Manjulata's mutilated body was found caught in a fishing net in the river near Kulhasahi Ashram School in Penthapala. Her family was immediately informed. Upon receiving the news, her family

members, along with police and fire brigade personnel reached the spot and recovered her body.

EAST COAST RAILWAY Tender No. 25-KUR-TRD-OT-2024-25... Advertisement for replacement of girders of major bridges.

Mobile game addiction leads to youth's suicide

PNN & AGENCIES

Jajpur, August 13: A 22-year-old man allegedly died by suicide after failing to repay loans he had taken from people after suffering losses to the tune of lakhs of rupees in mobile games, police stated here Monday. The deceased, identified as Srinivasa Nayak alias Lincoln, was the only son of Brajabandhu Nayak. He used to work for a private mining company.

The incident happened Sunday night in Kadubani village under the jurisdiction of Kaliapani police station, a police officer said. He added that the deceased used to play online games on his mobile phone and in the process suffered huge financial losses. Lincoln had dinner with his family before going to his bedroom Sunday night. When he did not wake up next morning, the concerned family members knocked on his door. After not get-

ting any response they broke open the door of Lincoln's room and found his body hanging from the ceiling.

To mitigate the losses he incurred due to online gaming, Lincoln had taken loans from various self-help groups in his village through his mother. Facing relentless pressure from moneylenders to repay the debts, Lincoln took the drastic step to end his life, police said.

The police later recovered the body and sent it for post-mortem. After registering a case of unnatural death, police have initiated an investigation to ascertain the circumstances leading to Lincoln's suicide.

"We are investigating the case to ascertain the circumstances leading to the suicide of the youth. We are also examining his bank records, which may shed further light on the reasons behind his tragic decision," said a senior police officer.

Women to manage electrical sub-division in Rourkela



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Rourkela, August 13: Tata Power Western Odisha Distribution Limited (TPWODL), a joint venture between the Odisha government and Tata Power, has dedicated its Udit Nagar electrical sub-division exclusively to women employees to promote gender equality within the organisation.

To celebrate this initiative, a launch event was

recently held at TPWODL's Udit Nagar electrical sub-division. By transforming this sub-division into a women-only workspace, the Discom is reinforcing its commitment to fostering an inclusive culture and providing equal opportunities for all employees, officials said.

Since the sub-divisional officer, junior engineer, commercial officer, and staff across all four section offices are women em-

ployees, it has been named 'Team Tejaswini'.

Pallavi Nayak, Joint Commissioner of the Rourkela Municipal Corporation (RMC), extended her best wishes to 'Team Tejaswini', expressing hope that the team would establish a unique identity in electricity distribution not only in Rourkela but throughout western Odisha.

TPWODL CEO Praveen Kumar Verma highlighted that this milestone represents a significant advancement in the company's commitment to gender diversity and inclusivity.

"By dedicating the electrical sub-division exclusively to women, we are not only promoting a more balanced workplace but also empowering our women employees to lead and innovate," he said.

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पावरग्रिड POWERGRID NOTICE 1. Approval under regulation-86 of CERC (Conduct of Business) Regulations'1999 and CERC (Terms and Conditions of Tariff) Regulations'2019 for determination of Transmission Tariff from DDOCs to 31-03-2024 for Assets (09 nos) under Strengthening of OPGW network within ER Grid and Connectivity with Other regions in Eastern Region.

FOCUS SOUTH ASIA

DEEPENING TURMOIL



India must minimise the spillover effects of political and economic instability in its neighbourhood, even as it continues to seek economic and strategic partnerships far beyond its troubled region

in 2012, when Islamist radicals forced the country's democratically elected president to resign at gunpoint - has enabled China to gain a foothold in India's maritime backyard. This year, China signed a military pact with the Maldives and docked a giant marine research ship in a Maldivian port. Meanwhile, Islamist radicals are expanding their grassroots base, establishing ISIS and al-Qaeda cells on the archipelago.

Mounting economic pressures compound the security risks. Pakistan has repeatedly sought International Monetary Fund bailouts in recent years. And Hasina's overthrow could usher in hard times for the once-booming Bangladeshi economy, as the country's foreign reserves dwindle rapidly. None of this is conducive to regional prosperity. As long as South Asian countries remain plagued by political instability, strong and sustainable economic growth will remain elusive.

The difficulty of maintaining political stability and advancing democratisation can also be seen in Nepal - a country with which India has close cultural and historical ties. Last month, the country swore in its 14th government in just 16 years, led by four-time prime minister, KP Sharma Oli, of the pro-China Marxist-Leninist Party. Oli, who spent years in jail in the 1970s and 1980s for waging war against the state, is Nepal's fifth head of government in five years, having replaced another former communist guerrilla, Pushpa Kamal Dahal.

All of this puts India, the world's largest democracy and South Asia's geographical hub, in a difficult situation. It must minimise the spillover effects of political and economic instability in its neighbourhood, even as it continues to seek economic and strategic partnerships far beyond its troubled region.

The writer is Professor Emeritus of Strategic Studies at the New Delhi-based Center for Policy Research and Fellow at the Robert Bosch Academy in Berlin. @PROJECT SYNDICATE

Violent student-led, Islamist-backed protests in Bangladesh have toppled Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's government, and mob attacks targeting those viewed as supporters of her secular Awami League party - in particular, the country's dwindling Hindu minority - are proliferating. At a time when neighbouring Myanmar is engulfed in violence and the Pakistan-Afghanistan belt remains fertile ground for cross-border terrorism, political upheaval in Bangladesh, two years after the overthrow of Sri Lanka's government, is the last thing India, the regional power, needs.



Brahma Chellaney

ACHIEVING LASTING POLITICAL STABILITY IN SOUTH ASIA WOULD REQUIRE ENTRENCHING DEMOCRACY. BUT THIS IS NO EASY FEAT

Achieving lasting political stability in South Asia would require entrenching democracy. But this is no easy feat. India notwithstanding, the region remains in thrall to longstanding autocratic traditions and centralisation of power. Hasina, for example, had become autocratic during her more than 15 years in office. In this context, popular demands for democracy are far more likely to lead to violence and political chaos than to smooth political transitions.

As Hasina has shown, autocratic leaders do not necessarily survive popular challenges to their rule. Consider the chaos that engulfed Sri Lanka in 2022, when a severe economic crisis triggered mass protests against the Rajapaksa brothers' dynastic, un-democratic regime. Though President Gotabaya Rajapaksa, like Hasina, initially unleashed a violent crackdown, his opponents proved too powerful. Like Hasina, he gave up and fled the country, without even formally resigning. Sri Lankan protesters then occupied the presidential palace, much as Bangladeshi mobs have ransacked Hasina's sprawling official residence.

But when an autocrat is toppled, it is often the military - not a democratic government - that takes over, even if behind a civilian facade. Bangladesh is no exception. The military has attempted at least two dozen coups since the country's violent birth

in 1971, and ruled for a number of extended periods since its 1975 assassination of Bangladesh's charismatic founding leader, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Hasina, who is Rahman's daughter, stood out for her success at keeping the military (and Islamists) in check, at least until last week, when the army chief refused to continue supporting her crackdown on rampaging protesters. The military then facilitated her escape to India and established an interim government of civilian "advisers" who have little experience with national issues.

To be sure, some South Asian countries have made some progress toward democracy. In particular, Bhutan's democratic transition is proceeding apace, thanks to a benevolent king who has supported the transition from a traditional monarchy to a parliamentary system. Earlier this year, the country's fourth national election brought an opposition party to power.

But elections alone - even if competitive - do not guarantee popular empowerment or adherence to constitutional rules, especially when the military holds decisive power. Consider Pakistan, which held elections earlier this year. The military's preferred candidate, Shehbaz Sharif, returned as prime minister, but his government will survive only at the pleasure of the country's effective ruler, the army chief. Until the rule of law

is firmly entrenched and those wielding extra-constitutional power are unequivocally reined in, democratic progress will remain limited and reversible.

Myanmar learned this the hard way. Though the military had called the shots in the country since independence in 1948, it began ceding power to a nascent civilian government in 2015, filling the country with hope for a democratic future. But in February 2021 - barely six years later - it staged a coup. This time, however, resistance has proved intense, and heavily armed insurgent groups - some receiving "non-lethal aid" from the United States - are managing to expand their territorial control. In response, the military junta has stepped up punitive air strikes and artillery barrages.

The violence and deepening humanitarian crisis are fueling instability beyond Myanmar's borders. Already, more than 32,000 ethnic Chin have sought refuge in India's Mizoram state, and thousands more have fled to the state of Manipur, where their arrival has stoked violent ethnic conflict. And it is not just the Chin: India is also home to millions of illegal immigrants from Bangladesh, whose ranks are set to grow as desperate Hindus flee Islamist attacks against them.

When it comes to security risks, immigration is just the beginning. Political turbulence in the Maldives - which began

Musk's Trump Card

The world's richest and possibly, in near future, it's most powerful man featured in a rare interview that had not only a pan-American, but also global audience recently. Tech titan Elon Musk let the US presidential candidate Donald Trump use his X platform and add a new dimension to his electoral campaign, spinning conspiracy theories and launching anti-immigration campaign. It was an attempt to win sympathy from American voters and at the same time project himself as a rough and tough person fit to lead the country. Musk helped Trump's image-building task by lauding him for his "courage" in the face of the recent attempt on his life. This was the much needed shot in the arm for Trump who was taken off guard by President Joe Biden's late decision to withdraw from the contest and let his deputy, Kamala Harris, take his place. This robbed Trump's campaign team much of the fire power reserved for Biden. The interview by Musk is thus being seen as an attempt to slow the rise of Democratic nominee Harris.

In fact, the mega show marked an extraordinary chapter in a presidential campaign which is likely to turn the contest into a bitterly fought one with the promise of a nail-biting finish. The former president has been struggling to take on Harris who has been getting record donations. At one stage Trump repeated his charge against Harris that "she is a believer in being radical left." The interview revealed that Trump is jittery as he said without a shred of evidence that Biden had been illegally ousted to make way for Harris. He even went to the length of accusing Harris of engineering a "coup of the President of the United States."

Musk has been a critic of Trump, but of late he seems to have made up his differences with him. He at once agreed with Trump that Kamala Harris was a radical leftist and sought to massage his ego by implying that he was strong and the US needs such a leader as its President.

The high profile interview itself is a media coup of sorts in that no media campaign can match it. Musk turned into a Trump apologist and left no one in doubt that he wants to see him win a second term. "You are the path to prosperity. And I think Kamala is the opposite," he told Trump. It was a rank partisan interview that gives a broad hint that Musk's business interests merge with Trump's political interests.

In fact, Trump told Musk during the interview that once he wins the election he could use his service in the government. It appeared Musk is keen on securing favourable treatment from the next administration for advancing his huge business interests. For this he willingly provided the Republican nominee an audience of at least 1.3 million concurrent listeners at the worst moment of his campaign so far. And he predicted at least 100 million people would consume the content in the coming days. Musk's companies, including SpaceX, a key player in the US space programme, and Tesla, which makes electric vehicles, can be hit if a victorious Trump makes policies not favourable to Musk's interests. In fact, Trump had reservations about Musk's electric car productions, but he has softened his stand on it.

The entire conversation runs the risk of being a clash of potential conflicts of interest. It is to be seen how Team Harris offers a counter challenge.

WISDOM CORNER

"Nations, like stars, are entitled to eclipse. All is well, provided the light returns and the eclipse does not become endless night. Dawn and resurrection are synonymous. The reappearance of the light is the same as the survival of the soul."

VICTOR HUGO

"Remember not only to say the right thing in the right place, but far more difficult still, to leave unsaid the wrong thing at the tempting moment."

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

"I do not think that there is any other quality so essential to success of any kind as the quality of perseverance. It overcomes almost everything, even nature."

JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

- **1457:** The first book printed in Europe with a colophon bearing the name of the printer was completed in Mainz, Germany.
- **1900:** An international force seized Beijing to crush the Boxer Rebellion. Boxer Rebellion, officially supported peasant uprising of 1900 that attempted to drive all foreigners from China. "Boxers" was a name that foreigners gave to a Chinese secret society known as the Yihequan ("Righteous and Harmonious Fists"). The group practiced certain boxing and calisthenic rituals in the belief that this made them invulnerable.
- **1904:** Battle of Ulsan begins. Also known as the Battle of the Japanese Sea, the conflict took place between Russia and Japan during the Russo-Japanese War.
- **1941:** British Prime Minister Winston Churchill and U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued the Atlantic Charter, a joint declaration that stated, among other points, that they desired no territorial changes without the free assent of the peoples concerned.
- **1971:** Stanford prison experiments begin. The controversial Stanford prison experiments to study the effects of authority in a prison setting began. The experiment had to be shut down by the 6th day because of the adverse effect on the subjects.
- **1994:** Venezuelan militant Carlos the Jackal, who orchestrated some of the highest-profile terrorist attacks of the 1970s and '80s, was captured by French agents in Sudan; he was later sentenced to life in prison for his crimes.

LOL

Where is the goat?



There were these two guys out hiking when they came upon an old, abandoned mine shaft. Curious about its depth they threw in a pebble and waited for the sound of it striking the bottom, but they heard nothing. They went and got a bigger rock, threw it in and waited. Still nothing. They searched the area for something larger and came upon a railroad tie. With great difficulty, the two men carried it to the opening and threw it in. While waiting for it to hit bottom, a goat suddenly darted between them and leapt into the hole!

The guys were still standing there with astonished looks upon their faces from the actions of the goat when a man walked up to them. He asked them if they had seen a goat anywhere in the area and they said that one had just jumped into the mine shaft in front of them! The man replied, "Oh no. That couldn't be my goat, mine was tied to a railroad tie."

IN JEST THIS

Discrimination is everywhere

Here's a newsflash: there's a whole lot of discrimination in the world. Job seekers often face discrimination and so do people looking for housing. It's not just landlords who discriminate - it's also tenants looking for roommates.



Melvin Durai

IF YOU LIVE WITH SOMEONE WHO'S DIFFERENT FROM YOU, AT LEAST YOU'LL LEARN SOMETHING ABOUT THEIR BACKGROUND OR CULTURE

If you're a female looking to share your apartment with another female, that's perfectly okay. But if you're limiting yourself to roommates of a particular race or religion, please allow me to point out the error of your ways.

Speaking from personal experience, the race or religion of your roommate doesn't matter, because as you spend time with your roommate over a period of months, living in close quarters and sharing everything from cooking utensils to appliances, you will only grow to hate them.

If your roommate is a mirror image of you, you are even more likely to hate them, because they will have all the disgusting habits you do. Even if you don't think your habits are disgusting, just wait till you see another person doing them.

Okay, perhaps you will not

hate all your roommates. Perhaps you will even love one or two. But living together in close quarters does not lend itself to mutual affection. Trust me, many a marriage could have been saved if the couples did not live together.

I've had roommates who were white, black and brown, and it didn't take me long to realise that the only race that really matters is the race to the bathroom in the morning. The person who gets there first doesn't have to worry about the hot water running out. The person who gets there second has to worry about running out of four-letter words.

Even if you're lucky enough to have your own bedroom and bathroom, there's a good chance you'll have to share the kitchen and living room. There's plenty of opportunity for conflict, especially if one of you is like Russia and inclined to take things that don't belong to you.

If you live with someone who's different from you, at least you'll learn something about their background or culture. You might be exposed to new cuisine, new music and new ways of getting

under a roommate's skin.

Even landlords can learn something from their tenants, but many of them think they're better off renting to people of their own race, ethnicity or religion. This is legal in India, but not in all countries. I've come across several posts on Reddit in which prospective tenants in Canada have complained about discriminatory ads placed by people of Indian origin.

Here, for example, is the actual wording from an ad shared on Reddit for an \$800 room in Calgary: "Room for rent for 1 person, pricing includes utilities. Laundry allowed 2 times a week and no cooking allowed. ... Bus stop 5 min away. Parking space available if required. Preferably looking for Sikh boy."

I showed this ad to an Indian friend and he was absolutely shocked. "I can't believe the landlord is doing this," he said. "How can they prevent people from cooking?"

"Didn't you notice the blatant discrimination?"

"Yes, they are discriminating against people who eat."

"No, I'm talking about the last

line."

"It is not discrimination. It is just stating a preference. The landlord is not saying Christians, Muslims and Hindus should not respond. The landlord is just saying that if Christians, Muslims and Hindus do not respond, it would be preferable."

"But isn't it illegal to have preferences like this?"

"Everyone has preferences. At least this landlord is open about it."

"You are giving them credit for openly stating their preference?"

"Yes, it is better to know people's preferences ahead of time. That way, you can avoid landlords like this."

"But there is a shortage of housing. People need places to stay. They can't keep avoiding landlords."

"I have avoided landlords all my life."

"How have you done that?"

"By remaining in my parents' house."

"But don't they prefer that you move to your own place?"

"Perhaps they do. But thankfully they don't state their preferences."

Heinous crime

Sir, This refers to "Doctor's demand noose," Orissa Post, August 13. The heinous rape and murder of a postgraduate trainee doctor in Kolkata's government-run Medical College and Hospital, which has outraged the medical fraternity nationwide, is a chilling affirmation of how unsafe women are in India, particularly those in professions that involve them working late in the night. Among the demands of the protesting medicos are better facilities and enhanced security. It is shameful that most government hospitals in India lack basic amenities for the staff on duty such as proper washrooms and resting areas for those on night shift. Security is lax in most such establishments and often undesirable elements enter the hospital premises unchecked as was the case in the Kolkata Hospital. Junior doctors are often stretched to the limit, particularly in crowded government hospitals. They bear the brunt of relatives' anger when a patient's medical outcome is not what they desire. These doctors face adverse circumstances such as the case of a young lady resident in Kerala who was stabbed to death with surgical scissors by a mentally unstable prisoner undergoing treatment. The striking doctors' demands in West Bengal which include more security and better facilities are completely justified.

N Sadhasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

Great gestures

Sir, In a heartwarming display of sportsmanship transcending borders, the mothers of Indian star Neeraj Chopra and Pakistan's Arshad Nadeem have expressed mutual admiration for each other's sons' triumphs in the javelin throw in the Paris Olympics. Their reaction suggests that their gestures could serve as a model for how we view international relations, particularly between India and Pakistan. In the triumph of these two great athletes, a simple truth was revealed: a javelin, cast with skill and honour, accomplished what no leader of India and Pakistan could - it brought two nations closer; if only for a moment, in the spirit of the game. The words of the two mothers, acknowledging the achievements of "their sons" as one would a member of one's own family, carry special significance given the fraught history between India and Pakistan.

Ranganathan Sivakumar, CHENNAI

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

Readers of Orissa POST are most welcome to contribute letters (200 words), articles and columns (between 750-1250 words). Contributors are requested to send their contact numbers and full postal address/email ID. They may also send in their valuable comments, opinion and suggestions, preferably by email, to: edit@orissapost.com

Orissa POST

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BHALSWA DAIRY PROTESTS

MCD demolition drive deferred



A team of civic body reached northwest Delhi's Bhalswa Dairy colony with bulldozers and heavy deployment of police personnel Tuesday, prompting locals to stage protest against authorities

colony with bulldozers and heavy deployment of police personnel Tuesday, prompting locals to stage protest against authorities. "The demolition drive was stopped as a large crowd of protesters assembled at the site raising slogans against the MCD. Since the MCD informed the Delhi High Court that today it will not demolish drive till August 16, we have postponed it till further order," a senior MCD official said.

The counsel representing residents of the dairy colony approached the court later Tuesday apprising it that MCD bulldozers with heavy police force had reached the area for demolition.

A bench of Acting Chief Justice Manmohan and Justice Tushar Rao Gedela said it will take up the matter August 16, when it will also hear a petition regarding the state of dairies

in the city. The MCD informed the Delhi High Court that it would put the demolition drive on hold in the Bhalswa Dairy colony till August 16.

Meanwhile, Rajesh Kumar, deputy commissioner, MCD Civil Lines Zone, said the demolition drive was stalled due to less police force deployment at the site. The civic body has demanded more force to carry out the demolition in the coming days.

"A large crowd of protesters had gathered at the dairy making it difficult to carry out the drive. We have asked for 500-600 police personnel to conduct the demolition later," Kumar told PTI.

The MCD has identified 800 illegal structures in the Bhalswa Dairy colony area that have misused land allotted for dairy farming for residential and commercial purposes.

In a public notice last week, the civic body gave a three-day ultimatum to defaulters to vacate the encroached premises. It had said that enforcement action will be taken against all illegal and unauthorised constructions after the expiry of the deadline and a demolition drive will be carried out.

In July, the court had directed the authorities to ensure that unauthorised construction in all dairy colonies in the national capital is removed and asked them to take immediate steps for shifting dairies from Bhalswa to Ghogha dairy colony within four weeks.

The court directed the agency to carry out a survey of the Bhalswa Dairy colony to identify misuse of dairy plots that have been converted into dwelling units and shops and are being misused for industrial purposes.

The court was earlier informed by the court commissioner that the condition of all nine designated dairy colonies in Delhi - Kakrola Dairy, Goela Dairy, Nangli Shakrawati Dairy, Jharoda Dairy, Bhalswa Dairy, Ghazipur Dairy, Shahbad Daultapur Dairy, Madanpur Khadar Dairy, and Masoodpur Dairy - was "bad".

Perusing the photographs of the dairies, the court had noted that there were large-scale constructions and urbanisation in some of the dairy colonies, including salons, showrooms, gymnasiums, and internet cafes.

It had said the character of the colonies had ceased to be that of dairy colonies as commercial showrooms were operating there and superstructures as high as four storeyed had come up for residential and commercial purposes.

Over 11 acres class II land in Marathwada to be freehold

THE DEMAND TO CONVERT THE LAND TO FREEHOLD IS NEARLY 60 YEARS OLD

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, August 13: The Maharashtra cabinet Tuesday cleared a proposal to convert more than one lakh acres of class II land in Marathwada region of the state into freehold, making the occupants complete owners.

Nearly 1.4 lakh acres of land in Marathwada, comprising eight districts, was classified as class II, a government official said.

The class II status was a hurdle for occupants wishing to develop these areas, he said.

Class II occupancy is a conditional holding in which land is given to individuals for various reasons, including as rewards and to religious structures for their maintenance. The demand to convert the land to freehold is nearly 60 years old, he said.

The cabinet's resolution to convert this land into freehold will have a positive impact on the current occupants, the official said, adding that the occupants will have to remit a certain amount to the state government to effect the transition.

The eight districts of Marathwada have 42,710.31 hectares of land identified as 'Khidmatmash' (given for maintenance of religious places) and 13,803.13 hectares of 'Madatmash' land (given as award).

At the time of Maharashtra's formation in 1960, when the



The cabinet's resolution to convert this land into freehold will have a positive impact on the current occupants, adding that the occupants will have to remit a certain amount to the state government to effect the transition

Marathwada region became part of the state, detaching from the erstwhile princely state of Hyderabad, these awards were abolished. The state took control of these lands.

The government put a restriction on the occupant of the land over its transfer as well as utilisation. The issue remained unaddressed for nearly 60 years, an official said.

The Maharashtra government said in a statement that the Hyderabad Atiyat Inquiries Act, 1952 and the Hyderabad Abolition of Inams and Cash Grants Act, 1954 would be amended to convert the cur-

rently class-II classified land into freehold. The state government has decided to charge only five per cent of the actual valuation of the land as per the ready reckoner rates.

The decision is based on a committee report headed by senior IAS officer Avinash Pathak, the statement said.

The cabinet has also approved a revised budget of Rs 36,964 crore for the construction of 6,000 km of concrete roads. Earlier, approvals for tar roads were estimated to be Rs 28,500 crore, but after the revision, the state government's contribution will go up by Rs 2,589 crore.

It has also extended the deadline for power looms to apply for concessions in power tariffs to March 2025. The power looms utilising more than 27 HP but less than 201 HP machines get 75 paise per unit rates. However, registration of such power looms is mandatory, which is now relaxed.

Similarly, power looms with less than 27 HP machines get electricity at Rs 1 per unit, which will also benefit from this relaxation, the statement said.

INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATION

Ajit Pawar-led NCP to hold preamble campaign

The campaign will feature 'Sanvidhan Sabhas' (Constitutional Assemblies) to be organised in every NCP office



Key party leaders, including ministers, MPs, MLAs, and district and block unit presidents, will lead these Assemblies, engaging in discussions centred around the principles and values of the Constitution. NCP offices across the state will prominently display large planks of the Preamble in Marathi, Tatkar said.

"This campaign is a tribute to the Preamble of the Constitution, reaffirming the NCP's dedication to its principles and values," Tatkar added. NCP national president and

Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar will address the Sanvidhan Sabha in Pune, and national working president Praful Patel will speak at events in Gondia and Bhandara districts. Tatkar will lead the Sabha in Mumbai.

NCP's Guardian Ministers are set to address sabhas at their respective district headquarters, and all MPs and MLAs of the party will participate in their constituencies. District and Block Unit chiefs will also hold Sanvidhan Sabhas at their offices.

"This campaign is a testament to our unwavering commitment to constitutional values and social justice," Tatkar added.

The NCP is part of the ruling Mahayuti alliance. Other allies include the Shiv Sena led by Chief Minister Eknath Shinde and the BJP.



Delhi LG VK Saxena with Transport Minister Kailash Gahlot during foundation stone laying of multi-level electric bus depot, in New Delhi, Tuesday

Maha govt to set up breeding centres for otters, vultures

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, August 13: In an effort to conserve rare species of wildlife, the Maharashtra government has approved breeding centres for otters, vultures, and wild buffaloes in the state, an official said Tuesday.

During a meeting of the state wildlife board Monday, Chief Minister Eknath Shinde emphasised the importance of prioritising the protection and conservation of rare species in the state.

As per a statement issued by the chief minister's office, Shinde also directed the effective implementation of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 'Ek Paid Maa Ke Naam' (a tree in mother's name) campaign across all municipal corporations, municipalities, schools, and colleges in the state.

Shinde approved a proposal to set up breeding centres for otters in Pench Tiger Reserve (Maharashtra), vultures in Nashik, and wild buffaloes in Gadchiroli, it stated.



The chief minister expressed confidence that these centres will play a crucial role in protecting and conserving rare wildlife species.

Shinde has directed the initiation of a 'clinic on wheels' programme to extend the benefits of the Gopinath Munde Shetkari Apaghat Vima, an accident insurance scheme for farmers, to farm labourers who die of snakebites, and ensure timely treatment for snakebite victims.

President Murmu to open Amrit Udyan in Rashtrapati Bhavan

SHE SAYS THERE ARE 'STONE ABACUS', 'SOUND PIPE' AND 'MUSIC WALL' IN THE GARDEN, WHICH WILL BE SPECIAL ATTRACTIONS FOR CHILDREN

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 13: A stone abacus, sound pipe and music wall are among the key attractions in the famed Amrit Udyan inside the Rashtrapati Bhavan, which will open for public viewing from Friday.

Visitors to Amrit Udyan will also be given "seed papers" - a unique and eco-friendly memento - infused with seeds of Tulsi plant, a senior official said Tuesday.

President Murmu will inaugurate Amrit Udyan Wednesday and the garden will remain open for public viewing from Friday till September 15th, from 10 am to 6 pm. The last entry will be at 5.15 pm.

"As a symbol of new life and growth, seed papers encourage visitors to cultivate their own green spaces at home. By sowing these papers, individuals can actively participate in nurturing the planet and witness the wonder of



nature transform a simple piece of paper into a thriving plant," said Navika Gupta, Deputy Press Secretary to the President.

She said there are "stone abacus", "sound pipe" and "music wall" in the garden, which will be special attractions for children. Crafted from natural materials, the stone abacus is an in-

teractive learning tool that invites children to explore the world of numbers in a hands-on and engaging way.

"Designed to blend seamlessly with the park's natural surroundings, the stone abacus offers a tactile experience, encouraging children to learn through play," Gupta told reporters during a media preview

of the garden. She said a sound pipe will allow children to experience firsthand the fascinating world of acoustics.

The music wall will be adorned with a variety of instruments made from recycled materials, inviting young minds to experiment with sound and rhythm, Gupta said.

Efforts have also been made to make visit to the Udyan by differently-abled people as memorable.

"Fragrance of rose at Long Garden, and sounds of wind chimes and water fountain make the Amrit Udyan a sensory garden too, making visit by visu-

ally impaired persons a memorable one. This has been done after an accessibility audit of Rashtrapati Bhavan and Amrit Udyan was done," said Mukesh Kumar, Director, President Secretariat.

Amrit Udyan is spread over a vast expanse of 15 acres in the Rashtrapati Bhavan - the office and residence of the President of India.

There are 'vertical gardens' - cascading waves of greenery, punctuated by bursts of colourful blossoms in a vertically arranged tapestry which serves as a focal photo point - and 'Bal Vatika' - specially curated garden for children with features like 'Story of a 225-year-old sheesham tree' and treehouse among others.

During Udyan Utsav in the year 2023 and 2024, 23 lakh people, including seven lakh school children, visited the Amrit Udyan.

A free shuttle bus service from Central Secretariat Metro Station

to gate no. 35 (the entry gate for Amrit Udyan) will also be available for the convenience of the visitors, she said.

A wide variety of Summer Annuals, Bonsai Garden, landscape of rare and exotic flowers at the Central Lawn, Elongated Rose Garden at Long Garden, Majestic Banyans, Bal Vatika with tree house and many features to entertain children will be attraction during the Summer Annuals, Gupta said.

The Amrit Udyan will remain closed all Mondays for maintenance.

Entry for the public will be from gate no. 35 of the Rashtrapati Bhavan, near the North Avenue Road.

Booking of slots and entry to the Udyan is free. Bookings can be made online on the Rashtrapati Bhavan website (<https://visit.rashtrapatibhavan.gov.in/>) as well as through self service kiosks placed outside gate no. 35 for the "walk-in visitors".

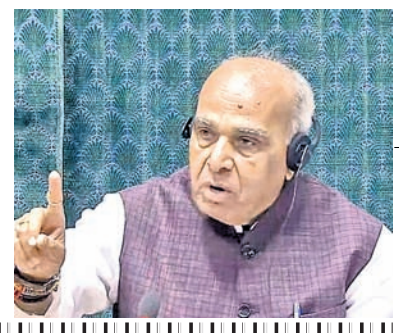
national



The BJP wants to weaken democracy. There is a need to be vigilant and cautious against these conspiracies of the BJP. The intentions of the BJP are not right
AKHILESH YADAV | SAMAJWADI PARTY CHIEF

JAGDAMBIKA PAL TO HEAD JOINT PANEL ON WAQF BILL

Senior BJP Lok Sabha member Jagdambika Pal was Tuesday named chairperson of the joint committee of Parliament, which will examine the contentious Waqf (Amendment) Bill. A Lok Sabha notification said Speaker Om Birla appointed Pal as the head of the 31-member committee



of the day quote

The Har Ghar Tiranga campaign launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi two years ago has become not just an expression of patriotism, but also a symbol of our pledge to make India a great and developed nation by 2047
AMIT SHAH | UNION HOME MINISTER

I can confidently say that the MVA will form the government by winning two-thirds majority in the coming Assembly elections in Maharashtra. Our government will address the issues faced by people
RAMESH CHENNITHALA | CONGRESS LEADER

The Congress is fully prepared. It was a good result in Haryana in the Lok Sabha polls. We are ready, they can declare the elections whenever they want. People have made up their minds and a Congress government will be formed after the polls
BHUPINDER SINGH HOODA | FORMER HARYANA CM

NMC issues advisory for all medical institutions

New Delhi, August 13: The National Medical Commission (NMC) has issued an advisory for all medical colleges and institutions, urging them to develop a policy for a safe work environment within the college and hospital campuses for all the staff members, including faculty, students and resident doctors. The advisory comes in the wake of an alleged rape and killing of a trainee doctor at a

government hospital in Kolkata and resident doctors in several hospitals across the country going on strike in protest against the incident. Incidents of violence against doctors in medical colleges have been reported in the recent past, the advisory said. "All medical colleges are requested to develop a policy for a safe work environment within the college and hospital campus for all the staff members including faculty, medical students

All hospitals should be declared safe zones so that doctors can work without fear, IMA chief Dr R V Asokan said after meeting Union Health Minister JP Nadda

and resident doctors," the NMC said in the advisory. The policy should ensure adequate safety measures at OPD,

wards, casualty, hostels and other open areas in the campuses and residential quarters, it added. The campuses, including the corridors, should be well lit in the evening for the staff to walk safely from one place to other and all sensitive areas should be covered by CCTV for monitoring, the advisory said. Security measures, including posting adequate security staff (male and female), should be made available at the OPD, wards, casualty, labour rooms, hostels,

residential quarters and other open areas in the medical college and hospital campuses, it added. The advisory said any incident of violence against medical students should be promptly investigated by the college management and an FIR should be lodged with police. "A detailed action-taken report on any incident of violence should invariably be sent to the National Medical Commission within 48 hours of the incident," the advisory said.

WAYANAD LANDSLIDES

5-member team begins inspection

Wayanad(Kerala), August 13: A five-member expert team Tuesday began inspecting the landslides-hit areas of Wayanad district including the epicentre of the disaster and collected rock and soil samples for testing. The team was led by senior scientist John Matthai of the National Center for Geosciences, which has been tasked by the State Disaster Management Authority to inspect the landslide-hit areas in Wayanad's Meppadi panchayat. It halted its inspection by noon today due to adverse weather conditions in the disaster area, the district administration said in a statement. The inspections will continue till August 15, it added. "The team carried out a detailed inspection of the epicentre of the landslide -- PUNCHIRIMATTOM -- and the adjoining areas, and collected soil and rock samples from there," it said. The team will assess the possible dangers in different parts of the disaster-stricken area and nearby sites. It will also assess how the disaster happened and what phenomena occurred in the landslides, the statement added. After the inspection, the expert team will submit its report to the government and also recommend suitable land use for the area. The team will function under the Disaster Management Authority Act of 2005. Principal Scientist and Head of the Centre of Excellence in Water Related Disaster Management Dr TK Drishya, Surathkal NIT Associate Professor Dr Srivalsa Kolathayar, District Soil Conservation Officer Tara Manoharan and Kerala Disaster Management Authority Hazard and Risk Analyst P Pradeep are the other members of the expert team.

Bail is rule, jail an exception even in serious cases: SC



A bench of Justices Abhay S Oka and Augustine George Masih said that once a case is made for granting bail, the court cannot deny the relief

New Delhi, August 13: The "bail is the rule and jail is an exception" legal principle is applicable even to offences under special statutes like the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, the Supreme Court ruled Tuesday while granting bail to a man accused of harbouring suspected terrorists. "When a case is made out for a grant of bail, the Courts should not have any hesitation in granting bail. The allegations of the prosecution may be very serious. But, the duty of the Courts is to consider the case for grant of bail in accordance with the law. 'Bail is the rule and jail is an exception' is a settled law," the bench said.

who was booked under the stringent provisions of the anti-terror law and those of the now defunct Indian Penal Code for renting out the upper floor of his house to alleged members of the banned Popular Front of India (PFI). According to the National Investigation Agency (NIA), the probe revealed that a criminal conspiracy was hatched with an intention to carry out acts of terror and violence, leading to an atmosphere of terror and endangering the unity and integrity of the nation. In furtherance of the alleged conspiracy, the accused arranged rented accommodation in Ahmad Palace in Phulwarisharif (Patna) and used its premises for imparting training in acts of violence. The NIA claimed that the Bihar Police had received information about their plan to cause disturbance during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit in 2022. On a tip off, a raid was conducted by the Phulwarisharif Police July 11, 2022 at the house of Khan. The apex court said there is nothing in the charge sheet to show that Khan took part in or committed unlawful activities as defined in the UAPA. The SC said even assuming that the co-accused were indulging in terrorist acts or were planning to commit such acts, there was absolutely no material on record to show that Khan was a party to the conspiracy. "There is no material produced on record to show that the appellant advocated, abetted, advised, or incited the commission of terrorist acts or any preparatory activity," it said. The apex court noted it was Khan's son who negotiated with the other accused for renting out the first floor of their house.

The top court said even in cases like the present one where stringent conditions have been laid down for the grant of bail, the same rule holds good with the only modification being that bail can be granted if the conditions in the statute are satisfied. "The rule also means that once a case is made out for the grant of bail, the court cannot decline to grant bail. If the Courts start denying bail in deserving cases, it will be a violation of the rights guaranteed under Article 21 (right to life and personal liberty) of our Constitution," the bench said. The verdict came while ordering the release of a retired police constable Jalaluddin Khan,

who was booked under the stringent provisions of the anti-terror law and those of the now defunct Indian Penal Code for renting out the upper floor of his house to alleged members of the banned Popular Front of India (PFI). According to the National Investigation Agency (NIA), the probe revealed that a criminal conspiracy was hatched with an intention to carry out acts of terror and violence, leading to an atmosphere of terror and endangering the unity and integrity of the nation. In furtherance of the alleged conspiracy, the accused arranged rented accommodation in Ahmad Palace in Phulwarisharif (Patna) and used its premises for imparting training in acts of violence. The NIA claimed that the Bihar Police had received information about their plan to cause disturbance during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit in 2022. On a tip off, a raid was conducted by the Phulwarisharif Police July 11, 2022 at the house of Khan. The apex court said there is nothing in the charge sheet to show that Khan took part in or committed unlawful activities as defined in the UAPA. The SC said even assuming that the co-accused were indulging in terrorist acts or were planning to commit such acts, there was absolutely no material on record to show that Khan was a party to the conspiracy. "There is no material produced on record to show that the appellant advocated, abetted, advised, or incited the commission of terrorist acts or any preparatory activity," it said. The apex court noted it was Khan's son who negotiated with the other accused for renting out the first floor of their house.

ASSEMBLY POLLS

EC to meet home secy to review J&K security situation

New Delhi, August 13: The Election Commission will hold a meeting with Union Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla Wednesday to review the security situation in Jammu and Kashmir where it plans to hold Assembly polls, sources said.

The EC had reviewed the poll preparedness in Jammu and Kashmir last week. Addressing a press conference in Jammu, Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar had emphasised that the poll authority is committed to holding assembly elections in the Union Territory at the earliest. No outside or internal forces can derail the electoral process, Kumar had asserted. After record turnout in the Lok Sabha elections in Jammu and Kashmir, Kumar had said, "This active participation is a huge positive for assembly elections to be held soon so that the democratic process continues to thrive in the Union Territory." The electoral exercise in Jammu and Kashmir is usually spread over a month.

Delhi LG nominates Gahlot to hoist flag

Earlier in the day, a row brewed over the issue with Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) lashing out at Saxena after the general administration department refused to implement Minister Gopal Rai's direction to let Atishi hoist the tricolour in place of Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, saying it was legally "invalid"

New Delhi, August 13: Lt. Governor VK Saxena Tuesday nominated Delhi Home Minister Kailash Gahlot to hoist the national flag at the state-level Independence Day event, bypassing the AAP government's request to allow Education Minister Atishi to do so.

The ruling Aam Aadmi Party, however, welcomed the LG's decision, saying it honoured the principle of democracy by "choosing an elected representative over an appointed one". Kejriwal, currently in Tihar Jail in the Delhi excise police case, wrote to LG August 6, seeking the flag hoisting by Atishi, considered close to him, in his absence at the Delhi government's annual event August 15.



His letter, however, was held back by jail authorities on the ground that the Chief Minister's communication was not "permissible". The LG nominated Gahlot for hoisting of the national flag after the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) Tuesday authorised him to nominate any minister of the Delhi government for the same. The LG Secretariat Friday sought MHA's clarification over the impasse due to the "peculiar circumstances of absence of the Chief Minister". Ashish Kundra, principal secretary to LG, in a note to Chief Secretary Naresh Kumar, said: "Lieutenant Governor is pleased to nominate Minister (Home), GNCTD, Kailash Gahlot to unfurl the National Flag at the State level Independence day celebrations at Chhatrasal Stadium. Necessary arrangements may be made accordingly."

SHORT TAKES

Seven killed in 3 road accidents

Muzaffarnagar: Seven people, including a police constable and his wife, were killed in separate road accidents on the Delhi-Dehradun national highway here in the last 24 hours, police said Tuesday. Constable Sudhir Kumar (28) and his wife Sonia (26) were killed when their motorcycle was hit by a truck Tuesday. Due to the collision, a portion of the truck caught fire and the couple were trapped under the vehicle, they said. In the second incident, Ishwar Dayal (25) and Sandeep Verma (28) were killed when their motorcycle was hit by a speeding unidentified vehicle near a Mahindra showroom under the Mansurpur police station area Tuesday, police said. In the third incident, three men -- Sorabh Pal (26), Daksh Saini (25) and Krishan (23) -- died after their motorcycle was hit by a speeding truck near Mansurpur distillery late Monday night.

Jaffer's brother arrested by ED

Chennai: Brother of expelled DMK functionary Jaffer Sadiq, Mohammed Saleem, has been arrested by the ED in a money laundering case, the agency said Tuesday. He was remanded to judicial custody by a local court here. He was arrested Monday evening, Enforcement Directorate (ED) officials said.

K'taka: Security guard stabs his supervisor

Udupi (Karnataka): A security guard working at an electronics showroom allegedly stabbed his supervisor after an altercation with him over work-related issues, police said Tuesday. In the incident that occurred August 10, the supervisor, Ronson Everest D'Souza, sustained minor stab injuries on his neck and leg, they said.

Pakistani intruder shot dead by BSF

Jalandhar (Punjab): A suspected Pakistani intruder trying to infiltrate into India from the Punjab border was shot dead by the BSF amid an ongoing "high alert" ahead of Independence Day. A Border Security Force spokesperson said the man was spotted "surreptitiously" crossing the international boundary in the Dal village of Tarn Taran district around 8:30 pm Monday and approaching the border fence.



A military helicopter showers flower petals during full dress rehearsal for the 78th Independence Day celebrations at Red Fort in New Delhi

Teacher held for raping student

Palghar: Police have arrested a school teacher for allegedly raping a 14-year-old student on several occasions at his private tuition in Nalasarpa of Maharashtra's Palghar district, an official said Tuesday. Angry parents and relatives of the girl along with several others held a protest this morning outside the school, where the accused is employed as a teacher, and blamed its management for "shielding" him. The minor studies in the same school. The accused, identified as Amit Dubey (30), was arrested Monday, he said. Talking to reporters, the victim's brother claimed that the accused sexually abused several other students and teachers.

Poll prep: Delhi Cong to launch mobile app

New Delhi: Delhi Congress will launch a mobile application to monitor the real time working of its office bearers ahead of the assembly polls to draw a winning strategy to return to power in the city, party sources said Tuesday. The application aims to keep a check on party functionaries from the booth to the state level and their activities on the ground, they said. Delhi Assembly elections are scheduled for early next year. According to the sources, the application will have all the required information about the schedule and assignments given by the higher authorities in the party to the state functionaries, including district presidents and block presidents.

ELEPHANT CENSUS DELAYED IN NORTHEAST

The northeast region of India is home to 10,139 elephants, while the east-central region has 3,128, the northwest has 2,085, and the southern region has 11,960. Karnataka leads with 6,049 elephants

forested, hilly tracts across four regions of India: the foothills of the Himalayas in the north, the northeastern states, east-central India, and the Western and Eastern Ghats in the southern parts of the country. A source told PTI that data collection and analysis from the northeast have not yet been completed. The primary reasons for the delay in the region are "heavy monsoon rains, floods and the limited capacity" of the forest staff, the sources added. The entire process involves creating shapefiles, capacity building, data collection, and data processing. As a result, the numbers from the latest elephant estimation exercise will only be available by June next year, they said. An official from the Wildlife Institute



of India (WII) said satellite data for elephant population estimation had to be collected during the first phase of the tiger population estimation since the two exercises have been converged now. "But that could not happen in

According to government data presented in Parliament in the Monsoon Session, India lost 528 elephants in the past five years due to unnatural causes, including poaching, poisoning, electrocution, and train accidents. Human-elephant conflict resulted in 2,853 human deaths in India during this period, with the number of fatalities reaching a five-year high of 628 in 2023.

phants, along with forest areas. In 2021, the Union environment ministry announced a new methodology for conducting the census collecting and analysing DNA samples from elephant dung, supplemented by camera trap results. According to officials, previous elephant censuses primarily involved a head count of the animals across the country. The new scientific approach will enhance understanding of the species and the challenges they face. For example, DNA profiling of elephants will help curb the illegal smuggling of their body parts, strengthening prosecution efforts. India is home to more than 60 percent of the world's wild Asian elephants. The country has been conducting five-year elephant censuses since 2022.

Warden of Meghalaya, told PTI that the elephant population estimation using the new methodology is taking some time. Sandeep Kumar, Chief Wildlife Warden of Assam, said in addition to the difficult terrain, monsoonal rains, and floods, the exercise took longer because the department also included revenue areas frequented by ele-

national

of the day quote

I love all my sisters. One shouldn't allow politics to enter homes. I made a mistake in fielding Sunetra against my sister. This shouldn't have happened. But the parliamentary board (of NCP) made a decision. Now I feel it was wrong

AJIT PAWAR | MAHARASHTRA DEPUTY CM

The 'MITRA' think tank is doing commendable work, particularly in addressing supplementary issues in Mumbai and the metropolitan region, as well as focusing on climate change, innovative agricultural practices, and promoting organic farming

EKNATH SHINDE | MAHA CHIEF MINISTER

Mamata Banerjee should be ashamed of the incident which was more ghastly than even the infamous Nirbhaya gang rape that took place in Delhi years ago

GIRIRAJ SINGH | UNION MINISTER

X POST OF THE DAY

This is not Delhi. -Therefore nobody will be held Accountable. -This is Ganga Ma, whom Narendra Modi called his

Second mother. -He promised to clean it within 3yrs in 2014. +20,000 Cr has been spent, But look at the pathetic situation after 11yrs.

@mshahi0024

SHORT TAKES

Judicial custody of Kejriwal extended

New Delhi: A court here Tuesday extended till September 2 the judicial custody of Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, BRS leader K Kavitha and others in a money-laundering case related to the alleged excise scam. Special Judge Kaveri Baweja extended the custody of the accused after they were produced before the court through a video-conference on the expiry of the period of their judicial custody granted earlier.

India, Oz to boost ties

New Delhi: India and Australia have emphasised the need for strengthening global cooperation to combat terrorism and condemned the use of "terrorist proxies" for cross-border terrorism. Ways to further expand bilateral cooperation in dealing with terrorism figured prominently at the 14th meeting of the India-Australia joint working group on counter-terrorism that was held in Delhi Monday.

India, US ink 'landmark' MoU

New Delhi: India and the US Tuesday signed a "landmark" agreement that provides a framework for both sides to explore cooperation in the micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME) sector. External Affairs Ministry Spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) would enable MSMEs of the two countries to foster trade. "Today, India-US signed a landmark MoU that enables MSMEs of the two countries to participate in global markets, drive innovation, foster trade, and support women entrepreneurs," he said on X.



This is a very important national issue related to the safety and respect of women working in government, non-government or any other field of life, about which everyone needs to be aware and cautious, so that such very sad and shameful incidents like the one of the female doctor of Bengal do not happen

MAYAWATI | BAHUJAN SAMAJ PARTY CHIEF

TDP-LED NDA NOT TO CONTEST MLC BY-POLLS

The TDP-led NDA in Andhra Pradesh Tuesday decided not to contest the MLC by-election for the Visakhapatnam Local Authorities constituency. The decision was taken by the TDP President and Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu, who conveyed the same to the party and alliance leaders during a teleconference



DOCTOR MURDER

CBI TAKES OVER PROBE

OPD services in government hospitals of several states across the country remained affected as the resident doctors' strike over the alleged rape and murder of a postgraduate trainee entered its second day

AGENCIES

Kolkata, August 13: Hours after the Kolkata High Court's direction, the CBI Tuesday took over the investigation in the alleged rape and murder of a woman doctor at a state-run medical college in the West Bengal capital.

The agency swiftly completed all formalities following the High Court order asking the state police to hand over the case documents to the central probe agency, officials said.

A team of CBI officials from Delhi along with forensic scientists and medical experts will visit Kolkata Wednesday, they said.

Earlier in the day, the High Court ordered the state police to hand over the case diary to the CBI by 10 AM Wednesday, amid allegations of a botched probe and cover-up as well as protests and strikes by doctors over the incident.

The body of the postgraduate trainee, who was allegedly raped and murdered inside a seminar hall of the state-run RG Kar hospital, was found Friday morning. A civic volunteer was arrested in this connection Saturday.

The victim's parents had moved the High Court seeking a court-monitored investigation in the case. Several other PILs were also filed seeking a CBI probe. The preliminary autopsy report suggested that the doctor was sexually abused and murdered. It stated that the victim was bleeding from her eyes, mouth and private parts. There were also injuries on her left leg, neck, right hand, ring finger



Activists from different organisations holding placards participate in a rally

Maha resident docs begin indefinite strike

MUMBAI: Resident doctors in Maharashtra began an indefinite strike Tuesday in support of the nationwide protests by their colleagues against the rape and murder of a postgraduate trainee at a medical college in Kolkata. While all elective services in hospitals across the state have been halted, emergency services will continue uninterrupted, Maharashtra State Association of Residential Doctors (Central-MARD) president Dr Pratik Debaje told PTI. "From 9 am, we stopped work at all OPDs (out-patient departments), and elective services have been stopped. Now, only emergency services are operational across the state," Dr Debaje said.

and lips. The Kolkata Police had arrested a 33-year-old person who joined the Kolkata Police as a civic volunteer in 2019. The police had alleged that he was married at least four times and was a known "womaniser".

The accused, who is a trained boxer, got close to a few senior police officers over the years, following which he was moved to the Kolkata Police Welfare Board and posted at the police outpost at the state-run RG Kar Medical College and Hospital where the incident occurred.

"He had access to all departments owing to his proximity with some senior police officers and the hospital authorities. Nobody had the guts to stop his

unhindered movements in and around the hospital," a state police official had said.

His mother Malati Roy, however, rubbished the allegations, claiming that her son was "innocent". Hearing the petitions in the matter, the bench of Chief Justice T S Sivagnanam and Justice Hiranmay Bhattacharyya also observed that "something is missing" in the probe by the state police, and asked whether the statement of the then principal of the medical college, Sandip Ghosh, was recorded, to which the state lawyer answered in the negative.

Questioning how the principal, who submitted his resignation, was reinstated as principal

of Calcutta National Medical College and Hospital within hours, the bench asked his counsel to produce both the resignation letter and the subsequent appointment letter.

The high court told Ghosh's lawyer to ask him to go on a long leave by 3 pm, failing which it will pass appropriate orders.

The sensational case snowballed into a major issue across the country with junior doctors and interns across West Bengal resorting to cease work, protesting against the incident and demanding adequate protection to hospital staff. In solidarity, the Delhi AIIMS' Resident Doctors' Association (RDA) Monday went on an indefinite strike, suspending all elective and non-essential services including OPDs and wards to protest the alleged rape and murder of the trainee doctor in Kolkata.

AIIMS warns resident docs against protest

NEW DELHI: The AIIMS Delhi has warned its protesting resident doctors against holding any demonstration on or around the hospital campus stating it was in violation of High Court directions and amounts to contempt of court. The Delhi AIIMS' Resident Doctors' Association (RDA) Monday went on an indefinite strike, suspending all elective and non-essential services including OPDs and wards to protest the alleged rape and murder of a trainee doctor at a government hospital in Kolkata. The administration asked all Heads of Department and centre chiefs to send the attendance of the resident doctors everyday by 3 pm.

ADANI ISSUE, CASTE CENSUS

Cong to organise public mobilisation campaigns

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 13: The Congress announced Tuesday that it will organise public mobilisation campaigns over its demands for a Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) probe into the Adani issue, a caste census and adherence to the Constitution in letter and spirit, as it held a key meeting on its preparedness for the upcoming Assembly polls.

Amid a raging row over Hindenburg's allegations, the Opposition party also said it will hold a nationwide agitation August 22 demanding SEBI chief Madhabi Puri Buch's resignation and a Joint Parliamentary Committee probe into the Adani issue.

The assertions came after Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge held a meeting with all party general secretaries, state unit chiefs and AICC state in-charges here to discuss organisational matters and various issues of national importance for election preparedness. Elections are due in Haryana, Maharashtra and Jharkhand later this year. Polls could also be held in Jammu and Kashmir this year.

Former Congress president Rahul Gandhi, general secretaries Jairam Ramesh and K C Venugopal, among others, were part of the meeting at the AICC headquarters here.

A resolution passed at the meeting said the Congress demands a JPC probe into the Adani "mega scam in which the Prime Minister is fully involved and in which the financial market regulator has now been found to have been severely compromised". The demand for a nationwide caste census to be conducted by the Centre was also stressed at the meeting. The Congress also called for full and genuine respect to the Constitution in letter and spirit, particularly its provisions on economic, social and political justice. Over the next few weeks, the party will organise public mobilisation campaigns on these three issues across the country, the resolution said.

The meeting expressed its deepest distress at the devastating landslide tragedy in Kerala's Wayanad and expressed its condolence. It re-emphasised the demand made by Gandhi for declaring the landslides a national disaster, the resolution said.

In a post on X after the meeting, Kharge said, "The shocking revelations of nexus between SEBI and Adani need a thorough investigation. The money of small investors in the stock market can't be jeopardised." "Modi government must immediately seek the resignation of SEBI chairperson and constitute a JPC in this regard," he said.

SNIPPETS

Raja Kandola sentenced to 9 yrs in jail

Jalandhar (Punjab): A special PMLA court here convicted Tuesday Punjab-based drug dealer Ranjit Singh Kandola and his wife on money-laundering charges in a narcotics case, officials said. Kandola, also known as Raja Kandola, has been sentenced to nine years in prison while his wife Rajwant Kaur was ordered to undergo three years in jail under provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), they said. The court also imposed a fine of ₹ 1 lakh each on the two convicts, the officials said.

Biker drags, molests airhostess; nabbed

New Delhi: An airhostess was allegedly dragged and molested by an e-bike taxi rider on the way to her home from east Delhi, police said Tuesday. The incident took place on the Simon Bolivar Marg near Buddha Jayanti Park Wednesday night, when the woman was returning home on the taxi bike she had hired in east Delhi. Deputy Commissioner of Police (New Delhi) Devesh Kumar Mahla said on the basis of the woman's complaint, police nabbed Jaiveer, 35, from Uttar Pradesh's Auraiya. Mahla said he was booked under sections 74/76/109(1)/115(2) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita at Chanakypuri Police Station. According to police sources, the accused was suspected to be involved in previous criminal cases.

Govt bus ploughs into multiple vehicles

Bangalore: At least one person was injured after an out-of-control state-owned Bangalore Metropolitan Transport Corporation bus ploughed into multiple vehicles on a flyover here, police said Tuesday. The accident caught on CCTV camera installed inside the bus showed the driver crashing into multiple bikes and cars moving ahead, apparently after losing control of the vehicle, they said. This even as the conductor of the bus was seen asking him to apply the brake. On stopping the bus, the conductor and the driver can be seen rushing out to assist a person writhing in pain after being hit by the bus. The incident occurred on the Hebbal flyover at around 9:30 am Monday, police said.



Farm workers dry and clean jute at a village in Nagaon district, Assam

I-DAY CELEBRATIONS

Women panchayat leaders to be special guests

According to officials from the rural development ministry, around 45 "Lakhpati Didis" and around 30 "Drone Didis" have also been invited as special guests to attend the Independence Day celebrations

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 13: Around 400 women representatives from Panchayati Raj Institutions have been invited as special guests to the 78th Independence Day celebrations at the Red Fort, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj said in a statement Tuesday.

According to officials from the rural development ministry, around 45 "Lakhpati Didis" and around 30 "Drone Didis" have also been invited as special guests to attend the Independence Day

celebrations. They will be felicitated by Rural Development Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan Wednesday.

The Namu Drone Didi and Lakhpati Didi schemes are among the important initiatives of the government for fostering economic empowerment and financial autonomy among women in rural areas.

Under the Namu Drone Didi scheme, subsidies are provided to women self-help groups (SHGs) on the purchase of drones. A "Lakhpati Didi" is an SHG mem-



at the grassroots level.

ber whose annual income is ₹1 lakh or more.

The women Panchayati Raj representatives will be facilitated by Minister of Panchayati Raj Rajiv Ranjan Singh "Lalan" Wednesday.

A national workshop will also be organised for them Wednesday.

It will be addressed by Kiran Bedi, former lieutenant governor of Pondicherry and founder, Navjyoti India Foundation, and senior ministry officials.

The workshop will explore the evolving role of women representatives as well as address the practice of "Sarpanch Pati"



Saket Gokhale faces criminal charges in money laundering case

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 13: A special PMLA court in Ahmedabad framed criminal charges under the anti-money laundering law against TMC's Rajya Sabha MP Saket Gokhale Tuesday, the Enforcement Directorate said.

The money laundering case against Gokhale stems from a Gujarat Police FIR filed in connection with alleged misuse of money he had collected through crowd-funding. "The Ld. Principal District and Sessions Judge, Ahmedabad (Rural) and designated Special Court PMLA, Ahmedabad today framed criminal charges against Saket Gokhale, MP Rajya Sabha and national spokesperson of All India Trinamool Congress under the provisions of Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002..." the ED said in a statement.

It said a charge sheet was filed against the 31-year-old MP under the anti-money laundering law last year. The ED had arrested him in January, 2023. "Charges against him for the scheduled offence in the police case (Gujarat Police) had also been framed," it said.

international



“We are watching with great pain and anxiety the humanitarian catastrophe that has unfolded in Palestine”
VLADIMIR PUTIN | PRESIDENT, RUSSIA

MPOX OUTBREAK IN AFRICA

Africa's top public health body declared what it termed a "public health emergency of continental security" Tuesday over an outbreak of mpox, spread from the Democratic Republic of Congo to neighbouring countries



of the day quote

Recent global geopolitical events have clearly shown that the UN Security Council is unable to deliver on its primary responsibilities to safeguard international peace and security when the world needs it the most

R RAVINDRA | DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF INDIA TO THE UN AMBASSADOR

It is especially troubling that so many people are being detained, accused or charged either with incitement to hatred or under counterterrorism legislation in Venezuela

VOLKER TÜRK | UN HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

We look forward to continuing to expand our critical and critically important partnership (with India) and how it's going to benefit the American people

KARINE JEAN-PIERRE | WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY, US

SHORT TAKES

Pak, Taliban clash: 3 civilians dead

Islamabad: Pakistani and Afghan Taliban forces traded cross-border fire near a key northwestern crossing, killing a woman and two children on the Afghan side of the border, officials said Tuesday. There was no immediate word on casualties on the Pakistani side of the Torkham border which was shut, disrupting trade and movement of people between the two countries, local Pakistani official Zahid Khan said. Torkham, a key border crossing, is located in Pakistan's northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province.

Yemen's Houthis seize UN office

Cairo: Yemen's Houthi rebels stormed the headquarters of the United Nations' Human Rights Office in the capital, Sanaa, seizing documents, furniture and vehicles, a senior UN official said Tuesday. The seizure was the latest move in a crackdown by the Houthis on people working with the UN, aid agencies and foreign embassies. The crackdown comes as the Iranian-backed rebels have been targeting shipping throughout the Red Sea corridor over the Israel-Hamas war in the Gaza Strip.

Poland buys 96 Apache from US

Warsaw: Poland Tuesday signed a contract with the US to buy 96 AH-64E Apache attack helicopters as it bolsters its armed forces following Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Under the deal with the US government announced by Defence Minister Wladyslaw Kosiniak-Kamysz, the helicopters will provide new combat capabilities in terms of target engagement and reconnaissance, and will replace Poland's post-Soviet Mi-24 helicopters. The deal provides a logistics package, including equipment for helicopter maintenance, airport and hangar equipment and technical support, a training package, and ammunition and spare parts.

Militant attack in Pakistan

Quetta: Suspected militants riding on a motorcycle hurled a hand grenade at a store selling Pakistani national flags in the restive southwestern Baluchistan province Tuesday, killing at least one person and wounding six others ahead of Pakistan's 77th Independence day. No one has claimed responsibility for the attack.

Gaza truce must for peace: Iran

A senior Iranian security official, said Iran, along with allies such as Hezbollah, would launch a direct attack if the Gaza talks fail

REUTERS

Dubai, August 13: Only a ceasefire deal in Gaza stemming from hoped-for talks this week would hold Iran back from direct retaliation against Israel for the assassination of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh on its soil, three senior Iranian officials said.

Iran has vowed a severe response to Haniyeh's killing, which took place as he visited Tehran late last month and which it blamed on Israel. Israel has neither confirmed or denied its involvement. The US Navy has deployed warships and a submarine to the Middle East to bolster Israeli defenses.

One of the sources, a senior Iranian security official, said Iran, along with allies such as Hezbollah, would launch a direct attack if the Gaza talks fail or it perceives Israel is dragging out negotiations. The sources did not say how long Iran would allow for talks to progress before responding.

With an increased risk of a broader Middle East war after the



Gaza ceasefire talks may not go ahead this week

Iran prepared to attack if no progress on talks

Intense diplomatic efforts to prevent wider Middle East war

“Something could happen as soon as this week by Iran and its proxies. That is a US assessment as well as an Israel assessment”

JOHN KIRBY | WHITE HOUSE SPOKESPERSON, US

killings of Haniyeh and Hezbollah commander Fuad Shukur, Iran has been involved in intense dialogue with Western countries and the United States in recent days on ways to calibrate retaliation, said the sources, who all spoke on condition of anonymity due to the sensitivity of the matter.

In comments published Tuesday, the US ambassador to Turkey confirmed Washington was asking allies to help convince Iran to de-escalate tensions. Three regional government sources described

conversations with Tehran to avoid escalation ahead of the Gaza ceasefire talks, due to begin Thursday in either Egypt or Qatar.

“We hope our response will be timed and executed in a way that does not harm a potential ceasefire,” Iran's mission to the UN said Friday in a statement. Iran's foreign ministry Tuesday said calls to exercise restraint “contradict principles of international law.”

Iran's foreign ministry and its Revolutionary Guards Corps did not immediately respond to

questions for this story. The Israeli Prime Minister's Office and the US State Department did not respond to questions. “Something could happen as

Hamas demands implementation of ceasefire plan

Jerusalem: The US said that it expected Gaza ceasefire talks slated for Thursday to go ahead as planned, and that an agreement was still possible. Axios reported that US Secretary of State Antony Blinken planned to set off Tuesday for discussions in Qatar, Egypt and Israel. The Israeli government said it would send a delegation to Thursday's talks to finalise the details of the agreement proposal. But Hamas is demanding a workable plan to implement the proposal, presented by US President Joe Biden in May, rather than more talks. A Hamas official told Reuters that a CNN report saying the group planned to attend Thursday was wrong. “Our statement the other day was clear, what is needed is the implementation, not more negotiation,” said the official, who declined to be named owing to the sensitivity of the issue. Hamas fired two rockets at Israel's commercial hub Tel Aviv Tuesday for the first time in months and Israeli airstrikes killed at least 19 Palestinians in Gaza, as mediators aimed to resume ceasefire talks later in the week. There were no reports of casualties in Israel. Two rockets had been fired from Gaza, the Israeli military said, one of which fell in the sea and the other had not reached Israeli territory.

UK riot arrests cross 1k

The National Police Chiefs' Council says in its latest update that 1,024 had been arrested and 575 charged across the UK

REUTERS

London, August 13: British authorities have now arrested more than 1,000 people following days of rioting involving violence, arson and looting as well as racist attacks targeting Muslims and migrants, a national policing body said Tuesday.

The riots, which followed the killings of three young girls in the northern English town of Southport, began after the July 29 attack was wrongly blamed on an Islamist migrant based on online misinformation. Violence broke out in cities across England and also in Northern Ireland, but there have been fewer instances of unrest since last week after efforts to identify those involved were ramped up.

Many have been swiftly jailed, with some receiving

long sentences

The National Police Chiefs' Council said in its latest update that 1,024 had been arrested and 575 charged across the UK.

Those arrested include a 69-year-old accused of vandalism in Liverpool and a 11-year-old boy in Belfast.

A 13-year-old girl pleaded guilty to violent disorder at Basingstoke Magistrates' Court, prosecutors said, having been seen July 31 punching and kicking the entrance to a hotel for asylum seekers.

“This alarming incident will have caused genuine fear amongst people who were being targeted by these thugs, and it is particularly distressing to learn that such a young girl participated in this violent disorder,” prosecutor Thomas Power said.

The last time Britain witnessed widespread rioting was in 2011, when the fatal shooting of a Black man by police triggered several days of street violence.

Fast and tough judicial action was viewed as helping quell the unrest in 2011, when around 4,000 people were arrested over several weeks.



Bangladesh's Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus interacts with Hindu community members at the famous Dhakeshwari Temple in Dhaka, Tuesday

Russia strikes back at Ukrainian forces

REUTERS

Moscow, August 13: Russian forces Tuesday struck back at Ukrainian troops with missiles, drones and airstrikes in actions that one senior commander said had halted Ukraine's advance after the biggest attack on sovereign Russian territory since the war began.

Ukrainian soldiers smashed through the Russian border a week ago in a surprise attack that Russian President Vladimir Putin said was aimed at improving Kyiv's negotiating position ahead of possible talks and slowing the advance of



Russian forces along the front. Ukraine carved out a slice of Russian territory, illustrating the weakness of Russia's border defences and prompting Moscow to evacuate at least 200,000 people while it rushed in reserves and imposed a security lockdown.

der defences and prompting Moscow to evacuate at least 200,000 people while it rushed in reserves and imposed a security lockdown.

Russian war bloggers reported intense battles across the Kursk front as Ukrainian forces tried to expand their control, though they said Russia was bringing in soldiers and heavy weaponry and had repelled many of the Ukrainian attacks. Russia's defence ministry published footage of Sukhoi Su-34 bombers striking at what it said were Ukrainian troops in the Kursk border region and of infantry storming Ukrainian positions.

United Auto Workers files federal labor charges against Trump, Musk

The United Auto Workers filed federal labor charges against former president Donald Trump and businessman Elon Musk after a high-profile conversation Monday evening on Musk's social media platform X, the union said Tuesday.

The charges of unfair labor practices that the autoworkers union filed with the National Labor Relations Board allege that, during their conversation, Trump and Musk illegally threatened and intimidated workers who engage in protected labor activity, such as strikes.

“I mean, I look at what you do,” Trump told Musk during the rambling interview. “You

walk in, you say, ‘You want to quit?’ They go on strike. I won't mention the name of the company, but they go on strike, and you say, ‘That's okay. You're all gone. You're all gone. So, every one of you is gone.’”

The charges were filed against Musk as a representative of Tesla, the electric vehicle company where he is the chief executive and largest shareholder. The union has been trying to organize workers there. The UAW recently endorsed Vice President Kamala Harris, and its members met with her last week in Michigan.

More than 1 million X users tuned in to Trump and Musk's conversation.



Vice President Kamala Harris and Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz applaud Thursday as United Auto Workers President Shawn Fain speaks during a campaign rally at the union's Local 900 in Wayne, Mich. (Jeff Kowalsky/AFP/Getty Images)

“When we say Trump stands against everything our union stands for, this is what we mean,” UAW President Shawn Fain said in a statement. “Both Trump and Musk want working class people to sit down and shut up, and they laugh about it openly. It's disgusting, illegal, and totally predictable from these two clowns.”

Musk posted on X in response to the UAW's charges Tuesday, “the last two UAW presidents went to prison for bribery & corruption and, based on recent news, it looks like this guy will join them!”

The two UAW presidents who preceded Fain did not go to prison, but two earlier UAW chiefs who led the union

Hasina faces murder charges

REUTERS

Dhaka, August 13: A Bangladesh court ordered an investigation Tuesday into former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's role in the death of a grocery shop owner in the capital Dhaka during last month's deadly student-led protests, the complainant's lawyer said.

The case filed by Amir Hamza against Hasina and six others was accepted by Dhaka's chief metropolitan magistrate's court after a hearing, Hamza's lawyer Anwarul Islam said. Magistrate Rajesh Chowdhury ordered police to investigate the case, Islam added. It was the first case filed against Hasina following a violent uprising that killed about 300 people, many of them college and university students. She fled to India August 5 and has been sheltering in New Delhi.

The other accused in the case included Obaidul Quader, the general secretary of Hasina's Awami League party, former Interior Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal and other senior police officials.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh's interim government Tuesday cancelled a national holiday August 15, marking the assassination of the country's founder and deposed Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's father Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Suspected attack by Houthi rebels targets ship in southern Red Sea

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dubai, August 13: A suspected attack by Yemen's Houthi rebels targeted a ship in the southern reaches of the Red Sea early Tuesday, officials said.

Already, the Houthi assaults have disrupted the \$1 trillion of goods that flow annually through the maritime route crucial to trade between Asia, Europe and the Middle East, while also sparking the most intense combat the US Navy has seen since World War II.

The attack happened around 115 kilometres south of the Houthi-held port city of Hodeida, the British military's United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations centre said. The attack saw an explosive detonate near the ship, though “the vessel and crew are reported safe,” the UKMTO said.

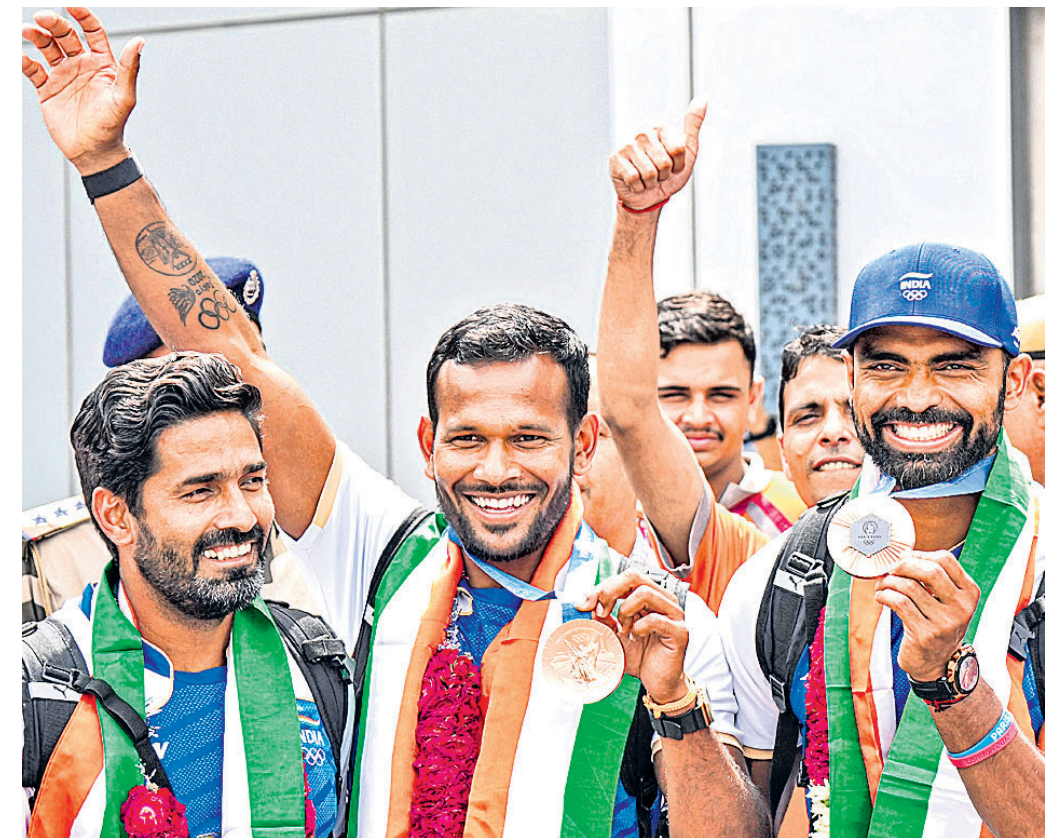
The private security firm Ambery similarly reported the attack, saying the ship saw “two close-proximity” explosions.

Though the Houthis didn't immediately claim the attack, it sometimes can take hours or even days to acknowledge their assaults. They've also claimed others that apparently haven't happened. The UKMTO later Tuesday morning reported another attack off Hodeida, without offering further details.

The rebels maintain that they have targeted ships linked to Israel, the United States or the UK to force an end to Israel's war against Hamas in Gaza.

Meeting to plan for hockey gold

Sports minister to meet players before Sept 10 to discuss ways to win gold medal at the LA Olympics in 2028



ROUSING WELCOME: Amit Rohidas (middle) and PR Sreejesh (right) proudly show their bronze medals upon their arrival in New Delhi, Tuesday
PTI PHOTO

NEW DELHI, August 13: Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya informed Tuesday that he will hold a meeting with the bronze medal-winning Indian men's hockey team before September 10 to chalk out future plans in their endeavour to clinch the gold medal in 2028 Los Angeles Games.

Mandaviya felicitated star custodian PR Sreejesh, defender Sanjay, Amit Rohidas and striker Abhishek after their return from Paris here.

"It's been a wonderful performance from you guys, we did-

Harmanpreet Singh's leadership was crucial to the team's success, and he has undoubtedly cemented his place as one of the all-time greats in Indian hockey

MIKE HORN

churn out future course of action so that we should return with nothing less than gold from Los Angeles. I will seek your opinion how to go about it and try to provide you all possible support from the government," the minister added.

Mandaviya also said he was satisfied with the performance of the Indian contingent even though they couldn't match last edition's result of seven medals. In Paris, India managed to win only six medals. The Indians, however, missed out on seven medals, finishing fourth in each of the events, a fact which

Mandaviya rued.

"In Tokyo, we won seven medals but in Paris we won six. But the fact is we missed out on seven more medals by finishing fourth, which is a worthy performance," he said.

Mandaviya had earlier felicitated the others members of the hockey who had returned last week.

Meanwhile world renowned explorer Mike Horn who acted as the motivational coach for the Indian hockey team and conducted an intense three-day mental toughness boot camp ahead of the Paris Olympics has said that the squad have it in them to go for a gold in four years' time in Los Angeles.

"The bronze they won is a reflection of their dedication, and I believe they have set a strong foundation for future successes, including the possibility of going for gold in the next Olympics," Horn told this agency.

"While they didn't secure the gold, the fact that they were so close is a testament to their hard work and determination. It's important to recognise that winning a medal, especially at the Olympics, is an immense achievement," added Horn.

The biggest win for India in the group stage came when they defeated Australia for the first time in 52 years. Their true mental fortitude and team bonding came to fore when they defeated Great Britain in a shootout, despite being reduced to 10 players early in the second quarter.

"I followed their journey at Paris 2024 very closely, and I was genuinely impressed by their resilience and how they handled the pressure. They have so much to be proud of, and it was an honour to be a small part of their journey," said the 58-year-old Horn.

Bhaker sets sight on more Olympic medals



Manu Bhaker with her coach Jaspal Rana and others in Paris
PTI PHOTO

NEW DELHI, August 13: Ace Indian pistol shooter Manu Bhaker has set her sights on winning multiple medals at the Olympics in future following her historic feat at the Paris Games. The 22-year-old scripted history to become the first Indian athlete in post-Independence era to win two Olympic medals in a single edition of the Games.

Bhaker won a bronze each in the women's 10m air pistol and

10m air pistol mixed team event - where she had paired with Sarabjot Singh.

"I think we all work hard to win medals. But if that happens (winning more than 2 individual medals at Olympics), then that would be great. The aim is to work hard and better this performance in the future," Bhaker stated Tuesday.

"(I am) aiming to win many more Olympic medals for India," added Bhaker, who returned to the country after participating in the Olympics closing cere-

Manu may skip World Cup: Rana

New Delhi: Paris Olympic double medallist Manu Bhaker may skip October's World Cup here as she has decided to take a three-month break, her coach Jaspal Rana said Tuesday. "I am not sure whether she will be at the shooting World Cup in October because she is taking a three-month break. It's a normal break, she has been training for a long time," Rana stated. The shooting World Cup is scheduled to take place here October 13 to 18. Rana added that Bhaker's next aim would be to win gold at the Asian Games and Commonwealth Games in 2026.

mony. She had the honour of being India's flag-bearer alongside veteran hockey goalkeeper PR Sreejesh.

"Being the flag-bearer was the opportunity of a lifetime, I am grateful that I got this opportunity and will cherish this for my entire life," Bhaker said.

"I have a very friendly bond with Sreejesh bhैया. I have known him since I was a young kid. He is always very friendly, helpful and kind. He made it a lot easier for me in the closing ceremony," the shooter added.

Bhaker had returned to India last week but had flown back to Paris for the closing ceremony. She was accompanied at the Indra Gandhi International Airport by her coach Jaspal Rana and mother Sumedha.

"I am happy for her (Bhaker). I am happy for the players. When I went to Paris, I met the hockey team, wrestler Aman Sehrawat, Neeraj Chopra. I just hope all these athletes keep winning medals and all the mothers of this nation will be happy," said Bhaker's mom.

SHORT TAKES

Nadeem honoured with cash, new car

Lahore: Olympic javelin throw champion Arshad Nadeem was Tuesday rewarded with 10 million rupees and a brand new car by the Punjab government for his historic gold medal-winning feat in the just-concluded Paris Games. Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz handed Nadeem the cash prize and the car keys when she visited his village in Mian Chhunu to meet him and his family. "Arshad deserves everything he gets because he has brought so much joy and pride to the nation," Nawaz said. The car presented to the athlete has a special number plate -- 92.97 which is the distance he threw to set a new Olympic record while winning gold.

CAS decision deferred

Paris: The ad-hoc division of the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) has once again deferred its decision on Vinesh Phogat's appeal against her disqualification from the Olympic finals, this time till August 16, prolonging the Indian wrestler's wait for a resolution. The 29-year-old was disqualified from the women's 50kg freestyle final for being 100gm overweight. "The CAS ad hoc division president has allowed Hon. Dr Annabelle Bennett, Sole Arbitrator in the Vinesh Phogat vs United World Wrestling (UWW) and the International Olympic Committee (IOC) matter, an extension until 6.00 pm (Paris time) on Friday, August 16, 2024," a release from the IOA said.

India eyeing over 25 medals at Paralympics

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jaipur, August 13: India is hoping to win more than 25 medals from their largest-ever contingent of 84 athletes at the upcoming Paris Paralympic Games beginning August 28, the country's governing body chief Devendra Jhajharia said here Tuesday.

Jhajharia, himself a double gold medallist at the Paralympics, said the Indian contingent would look to carry the momentum of record-breaking performances in the 2021 Tokyo Paralympics and 2023 Hangzhou Asian Para Games. India had won 19 medals at the Tokyo Paralympics and a historic 111 medals at the Para Asian Games.

"This is the biggest para contingent India has ever sent to the Paralympics. We are sure to win more than 25 medals"

DEVENDRA JHAJHARIA | PCI CHIEF

ticularly in athletics, badminton, archery, and shooting. "They are ready to make India proud," the PCI president informed.

The Indian team boast of a mix of experienced and young athletes. Many of them are participating in their second or third Paralympics.

Amit Kumar Saroha, a seasoned athlete competing in his fourth Paralympics, will represent India in the F51 category discus throw. The 39-year-old Asian Para Games medallist is the oldest member of the contingent.

On the other end of the spectrum, the youngest athlete is 17-year-old archer Sheetal Devi, who shoots with her legs instead of her hands due to a medical condition that has afflicted her since birth. She recently made headlines by winning gold medals in individual compound and mixed team events in archery at the 2023 Asian Para Games.

Meanwhile, '100 Sports Management Private Limited' has been awarded the exclusive broadcasting and digital media right for Paris Paralympics in India, according to a release.

Ashwini shocked by SAI disclosure

Shuttler says that she never got the amount as detailed by the sports body

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 13: India's doubles specialist in badminton Ashwini Ponnappa said Tuesday she received little to no individual financial assistance from the Sports Ministry in the build up to Paris Olympics and even her request for a coach was turned down.

The Sports Authority of India (SAI) had earlier come out with a document, detailing the financial support provided to the Paris-bound Indian athletes.

It mentions that Ashwini was provided ₹4,50,000 under TOPS and ₹1,48,04,080 under annual calendar for Training and Competition (ACTC), which included the procurement of Game Ready recovery equipment, international competitions and sparring partner in the Paris cycle.



Ashwini Ponnappa (playing a shot) and Tanisha Castro during a match at the Paris Games
(FILE PHOTO)

Olympics," Ashwini added.

Ashwini, 34, has been one of the top Indian doubles players, having won a gold, a silver and a bronze in the Commonwealth Games in 2010, 2014 and 2018 respectively.

Detailing the ₹1.48 crore spending, a SAI source said: "The ₹1.48 crore has been spent on her travel, stay, food, competition fee, daily allowance in all the competitions that she participated in as part of the Indian team in the Paris cycle. This money is given to Badminton Association of India as part of ACTC."

Ashwini, who had paired with N Sikki Reddy till August, 2022, joined hands with Tanisha Crasto in December that year and started playing in international

tournaments from January 2023. A series of good performances helped them seal their Paris berth, after which the duo was included in the TOPS scheme in May this year.

"The Sports Ministry has always supported me. I've been part of the team for years and I'm grateful for the support. The last year I haven't been supported and it's okay. But you can't say I've been given ₹1.5 crore," Ashwini pointed out.

Playing her third Olympics, Ashwini was left in tears after she and Tanisha couldn't win a single match. "I haven't played well, I take responsibility for that. But you can't say I'm getting this big amount when I haven't even received it," she asserted.

BFI seeks new foreign coach

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 13: After a disappointing campaign at the Paris Olympics where the country's pugilists returned empty-handed, the Boxing Federation of India (BFI) invited applications Tuesday for a new foreign coach.

Indian boxers fell short of expectations at the Paris Games with all six pugilists, including reigning World Champions Nikhat Zareen and Lovlina Borgohain, returning without any medal. India had won a bronze medal in Tokyo through Borgohain.

"The Boxing Federation of India is looking for a foreign boxing coach for their elite national team in the upcoming four years of period," the BFI advertisement stated. "The main goal in India is to achieve a top result in the upcoming Olympic Games, Asian Games, Commonwealth and other major competitions. The coach should be physically fit to demonstrate techniques to the athletes," the advertisement further stated.

However, the current foreign coach Dmitry Dmitruk, who was appointed last February, will stay on till the end of his two-year contract. "We have not even discussed about Dmitry. He will serve his contract," a BFI source said.

"Generally all coaches are contracted for an Olympic cycle hence we have taken out the ad. We wanted some applications. The term of the new foreign coach will be for a period of four years," he added.

Titles for DPS Kalinga, DAV SCB

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, August 13: DPS Kalinga and DAV SCB Public School won the junior boys' and girls' team titles at the Vth State Inter-School Table Tennis Championships here Tuesday.

In the junior boys' final DPS Kalinga defeated New Stewart School, Cuttack 3-2 in a thrilling encounter. Jayastu Dasgupta, Hitesh Agarwal and Naitik Bhalla represented the winning team.

In the junior girls' team final, DAV SCB Public School trounced Kendriya Vidyalaya No 1, Bhubaneswar 3-1. DAV SCB Public School was represented by Itishree Sahoo and Aurosmitta Sahoo.

In the senior boys' team final



Winning members of DAV SCB Public School (left) and DPS Kalinga
OP PHOTO

final, Guru Nanak Public School, Cuttack scraped past Raghunath Jew Higher Secondary School, Cuttack 3-2 to win the title. Urja Verma and Sweta Verma played for Guru Nanak Public School.

'Thought bronze medal bout as state match'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 13: Not getting bogged by the enormity of the occasion was foremost on wrestler Aman Sehrawat's mind when he took the mat for the Olympic bronze medal play-off bout. He treated it as another state level competition.

India's youngest individual medal winner at the Paris Olympics, the 21-year-old from the iconic Chhatrasal akhadaya (wrestling academy), gave a sneak peek into his mindset before the biggest bout of his nascent career.

"First I thought, I am in the semifinal and I lost six points. Then it hit me that I've lost six points in an Olympic bout what should I do now? And before I realised, I lost the match. Then



Aman Sehrawat was accorded a huge welcome on his arrival in New Delhi, Tuesday
PTI PHOTO

here Tuesday.

"So, I didn't think of the bout as an Olympic bronze medal match. Just thought of it as any state level game to get my mind off the occasion," the star wrestler said.

Aman was asked how he managed to cut down weight before his bouts. "It was not a major issue, we already had plans to cut weight and had some 3.5 kg was increased. So I cut the weight overnight and then I went for the weigh in," said the 57kg division grappler, who was found to weigh exactly 100 gram less than the cut-off mark, the same quantity that famed Vinesh Phogat had exceeded.

Aman was candid enough to state that he is very happy at becoming the youngest Indian to win

an Olympic medal. "Feels great. Now the aim is to change the colour of the medal at the next Olympics (in Los Angeles in 2028). I will work hard for it," he said.

The bronze winner also acknowledged the contribution of Tokyo Olympics silver medallist Ravi Dahiya, who was his mentor. "Ravi Dahiya has played a huge role in my journey. We followed his footsteps in training and got inspired by him," Aman stated. He also thanked his brother for taking care of him after he lost both his parents at a tender age.

"My journey was indeed difficult but my brother Sagar took care of me. Not for once did he let me feel the parental void. He took good care of me," Aman informed.