



Shraddha opens up

Actor Shraddha Kapoor shares a story about her childhood crush and how the person rejected her leaving her heart-broken

LEISURE | P2



Ukraine strikes again

Russian officials say strikes by Ukraine during a massive assault has resulted in the destruction of a third bridge in Kursk region

INTERNATIONAL | P10



Food prices ease

A broad-based moderation takes place in prices of cereals, pulses and edible oil in August, according to the latest RBI Bulletin

BUSINESS | P11



Setting new targets

Tokyo Paralympics gold medallist javelin thrower Sumit Antil wants to improve upon his world record while defending his title at Paris

SPORTS | P12

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SHORT TAKES

Israel ready for ceasefire: Blinken

Tel Aviv: US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said Monday that Israel has accepted a proposal to bridge differences holding up a ceasefire and hostage release in Gaza, and he called on Hamas to do the same, without saying whether it had addressed concerns cited by the militant group. Blinken spoke after holding a meeting with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu earlier in the day. The US, Egypt and Qatar have spent months trying to broker an agreement, with the talks repeatedly stalling. "In a very constructive meeting with Prime Minister Netanyahu today, he confirmed to me that Israel supports the bridging proposal," Blinken told reporters. "The next important step is for Hamas to say 'yes'."

Two dead in bike mishap

Baripada: Two youths were killed after their motorcycle hit a roadside tree in Mayurbhanj district, police said Monday. The deceased were identified as Shyam Marandi (20) and Sundar Marandi (24) of Ulidih village under Moroda police station area. It is suspected that the mishap occurred in the wee hours of Monday due to heavy rains, police said. Villagers found the motorcycle and the bodies in a paddy field on the Chitrada-Dantiama road in the morning. After hitting the tree, the duo fell into the water-filled farmland and subsequently died, police added.

CBI gets court nod for Roy's polygraph test

Kolkata: A local court here Monday granted CBI permission to conduct a polygraph test on Sanjay Roy, accused in the rape-murder of a woman doctor at RG Kar Medical College and Hospital, an official said. The CBI is yet to schedule a date for the test, he added. Rule requires that the accused be brought before a magistrate, who will ask if he agrees to the polygraph test, the official said. "The court has granted us permission to conduct the polygraph test on Roy, he said. Meanwhile the CBI grilled former principal of RG Kar Sandip Ghosh for the fourth consecutive day Monday."

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



I've never labelled them as Andolanjevis. I actually support people when they protest against other parties

MARKET WATCH

INDEX	SENSEX	80424.68	12.16
	NIFTY	24572.65	31.50
CURRENCY	DOLLAR	83.84	₹0.03
	EURO	92.80	₹0.32
BULLION	GOLD	₹71,560	₹185
	SILVER	₹84,610	₹1,397

WEATHER

	BBSR	CTC
Max Temp	34.7°C	33.6°C
Min Temp	26.1°C	24.5°C
Humidity	85%	89%
Rainfall	0.3mm	Nil

Partly cloudy sky with possibility of moderate rain



CELEBRATING BROTHERHOOD: School students pose with Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi as one of them ties a rakhi on the occasion of Raksha Bandhan at the State Guest House in Bhubaneswar, Monday

Govt to rescue Odia workers from B'desh

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, August 19: Migrant workers from Odisha who are working in Bangladesh and have since been stranded in the country, will soon be brought back to the state, Labour and Employees State Insurance Minister Ganesh Ram Singh Khuntia informed here Monday.

According to rough estimates more than 5,000 Odias are currently stranded in the violence-hit neighbouring country. Atrocities against minority communities, especially Hindus have been on the rise since the fall of the Sheikh Hasina-led Awami League government and Odisha is concerned about its natives stranded there, the minister informed.

"The Odisha government is concerned about the situation in Bangladesh," Singh Khuntia told reporters. "The chief minister has called a meeting to discuss this issue and it will be held soon. We will plan a roadmap to bring back the stranded workers," the minister added.

Singh Khuntia informed that district labour officials have been

asked to prepare a list of Odias currently working in Bangladesh. "Once the database is prepared we will start the process of bringing them back as per the instructions of the CM," Singh Khuntia stated.

The minister also stated that there may be cases where Odia workers may have migrated to Bangladesh without informing the district officials. In that case, discussions will be held with Bangladesh authorities so that they can also be brought back, the minister added.

Singh Khuntia stated that since most of the Odia labourers are Hindus, it is imperative that they be brought back for their safety. "We have come to know that many of them are interested in coming back to Odisha and do not want to continue with their jobs in Bangladesh," the minister stated. He added the repatriation process is expected to start within the next 15-20 days.

It should be stated that many temples were ransacked and Hindus were attacked after the fall of the Hasina government. Even though the violence has subsided, there is still cause for worry.

Rape horror continues

13 minors raped at fake NCC camp in Tamil Nadu

Despite country-wide protests and demand for laws to protect women after the rape and murder of a doctor in Kolkata, sexual abuse and assaults continue unabated in India. Some horrific incidents of rape and sexual assaults surfaced from various parts of India Monday and in most cases the victims were minors

AGENCIES

Chennai, August 19: A minor girl was raped and sexually assaulted and at least a dozen others were sexually abused at what turned out to be a fake National Cadet Corps (NCC) camp in Tamil Nadu's Krishnagiri, police said here Monday. Eleven people, including the organiser of the camp, the school's principal and two teachers have been arrested for their alleged involvement in the case.

Investigations have revealed that the private school did not have a NCC unit and a group approached the school management with the claim that hosting such a camp would qualify them for one, police said. The school failed to conduct back-



ground checks before hiring the group for the camp.

A total of 41 students all minors, including 17 girls, participated in the three-day camp held earlier this month. The girls were accommodated in the school auditorium on the first floor, while the boys stayed on the ground floor. However, not a single teacher was assigned to supervise the camp. After the end of the camp, a number of girls alleged that they have been sexually assaulted after being lured out of the auditorium. Medical tests confirmed the allegations of rape and sexual assault.

"The school authorities were aware of the sexual offences but chose to suppress the matter in-

₹60K boost for PMAY

Beneficiaries to get ₹1,80,000 instead of the existing ₹1,20,000

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 19: The financial assistance under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) will be increased by ₹60,000 to ₹1,80,000 from the existing ₹1,20,000, Odisha Panchayati Raj and Drinking Water department Minister Rabi Narayan Naik stated here Monday. The minister added that a guideline in this regard will be issued soon.

"A financial assistance of ₹1.2 lakh was provided to the beneficiaries under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana. This will be increased to ₹1.8 lakh. A notification in this regard will be released soon. If MGNREGA is included, the beneficiaries will get around ₹2 lakh," Naik stated.

"Similarly, beneficiaries were earlier being provided with ₹12,000 for construction of toilets. Now, that amount will be increased to ₹20,000. "Our goal is that every residence in the state including those in remote rural areas will be a model house with a proper toilet and clean drinking water facility," Naik added.

The minister informed that the state government will soon launch the 'Odisha Antyodaya Gruha Yojana'. Under this scheme houses which suffer damages due to fire accidents, elephant attacks and other natural disasters will be provided



financial assistance for repair work, Naik informed.

Naik was asked to comment on the 'Mo Ghara' scheme launched by the previous BJD government. "The housing scheme of the previous BJD government was a political stunt and no one has benefitted from the scheme. People have no interest in the scheme," Naik stated.

"We on the other really want the living conditions to improve in Odisha. It is one of the main reasons why the PMAY fund has been hiked," the minister added.

The minister also shared details about the roadmap prepared for the development of 500 tribal villages in Odisha. "We will try to safeguard our traditions and ensure proper road connectivity. There will also be provisions for providing clean drinking water and including the youth of the tribal communities to the mainstream by providing them with necessary training to earn money," Naik informed.

3rd elephant death in state in 24 hours

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 19: 'Ramu' the well-known tusker residing inside the Chandaka-Dampara Bharatpur sanctuary on the outskirts of this city, breathed his last Monday. There are conflicting reports as to how Ramu died. Some stated that the tusker was electrocuted after coming in contact with a live wire while others said that the animal had swallowed a crude bomb which exploded leading to its death.

This is the third elephant death in the state in the last 24 hours. Two elephants had died Monday in Sambalpur and Sundargarh districts. While one elephant died after coming in contact with a live wire, an elephant calf was run over by a goods train.

A team of Forest department and Ouat officials reached the spot where Ramu breathed his last and sent the body for post-mortem. They said only after the report comes, the real cause behind Ramu's death can be ascertained.

Brother kills sister on Raksha Bandhan

POST NEWS NETWORK

Berhampur, August 19: On day when siblings were celebrating Raksha Bandhan across the country, a boy stabbed his minor sister to death in this town. The accused was identified as Ashutosh Panigrahi (23) while his cousin Prajukta Panigrahi was just 13 years old. The tragic incident happened at a place under Bada Bazar police limits in this city.

According to sources, the deceased along with her family members had gone to her relative's house. There in a fit of rage, Ashutosh picked up a knife and attacked Prajukta and her brother Ayushman, (14) stabbing them repeatedly.

Immediately after the gruesome stabbing, Ashutosh fled to the Hinjilicut bus stand and tried to jump before a Bandhabahad bus from Jharsuguda to die by suicide. He sustained critical injuries and has been admitted to a hospital here.

Pune food joint wins battle of 'Burger Kings'

US CORPORATION HAD FILED A SUIT IN AN EFFORT TO PREVENT THE PUNE-BASED RESTAURANT FROM USING ITS NAME

AGENCIES

Pune, August 19: After over a decade of litigation, a Pune court recently dismissed a trademark infringement suit filed by United States' (US) fast-food giant 'Burger King Corporation' against a Pune-based burger joint from using the iconic name 'Burger King' as per a report in Bar and Bench, Monday.

The controversy started after 'Burger King Corporation', which manages a global network of 13,000 fast-food restaurants, filed a suit against Anahita and Shapoor Irani, the owners of Pune's 'Burger King' joints in Camp area and Koregaon Park. The US Corporation, founded

in 1954, had just entered the Indian market in 2014. After learning that a restaurant with the same name had been serving locals since 2008 with the trademark application No. 1209146, it filed a suit claiming that the use of their name by the Pune restaurants was causing irreparable harm to its brand reputation.

The US Corporation sought permanent injunction from the court to restrain the Pune-based restaurant from using the 'Burger King' moniker. They claimed trademark infringement and sought damages and a permanent injunction. Judge Sunil

Vedpathak decided in favour of the Pune restaurant. He noted that the city's 'Burger King' had been using the name and brand since 1992, long before the US Corporation registered its trademark in India.

The court empha-

sised that while the international conglomerate had not operated under the name in India for almost 30 years, the Pune restaurant had regularly supplied its customers under the 'Burger King' brand, making its use of the name legitimate and authentic.

"With respect to relief of perpetual injunction is concerned, admittedly the plaintiff has started to provide services through restaurant under its trademark 'Burger King' in India particularly in the year 2014 whereas since 1991-92 the defendants are using the trademark

'Burger King' to provide restaurant services. Even the plaintiff has not placed on record the registration certificate about registration of its trademark in India under class 42 prior to 1991-92. So, considering the fact that defendants are prior user of trademark in question, I am of the opinion that the plaintiff has no cause of action to seek relief of perpetual injunction," the court observed.

The court was of the view that the Pune establishment has been conducting their business for long with the said name without interruption. Therefore, they are the honest and prior user of the name and not the US Corporation, it added.



leisure



MUSIC INDUSTRY IS FULL OF HATERS: IGGY AZALEA

Rap star Iggy Azalea sees some strong similarities between the cryptocurrency market and the music industry. Iggy wrote on the micro-blogging platform: "The market is male dominated, haters everywhere, hyper competitive and expensive..Sounds just like the music industry."

HALLE BERRY REQUESTS SOLE CUSTODY OF SON

Hollywood actress Halle Berry has reportedly filed court papers asking to be granted sole custody of her 10-year-old son amid a bitter dispute with her ex-husband Olivier Martinez.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181

ARIES
Today, you need to access every bit of your mental agility. Quick and spontaneous decisions are the need of the hour. But a word of caution from Ganesh: take advice, as these decisions could have long-term implications, especially if they involve money.

TAURUS
Nostalgia will paint your workplace a bright energetic red today, says Ganesh. All the problems that life throws at you will be deflected by your tough exterior and efficient capabilities. Medals and trophies beckon as you taste success and emerge a winner.

GEMINI
Emotions, not acidity, will be the cause of your uneasiness. Something important is going on in your life and you are nervous. It can be related to a matter concerning law, ethics, prejudice, education, or social customs. You are, however, likely to win admiration from all quarters for your fine taste in arts, says Ganesh.

CANCER
Ganesh predicts an excellent and exceptional day for you at work. You are likely to need all your business acumen while negotiating deals. Your leadership skills are likely to come to the fore during the final stage of a deadline, be it about completing an order or launching new products and marketing them, says Ganesh.

LEO
Today may not be the best time to mess with you, considering the aura of invincibility that you possess. Be it a game, a competition, or an argument, you will have the edge over others in every sphere, says Ganesh. Also, you may come across people with whom you will have personal differences, and those who will try to change your fortunes.

VIRGO
Ganesh feels that today may be an important turning point in your life. You will look to secure the money much required for your bright future. Relationship matters will top your priorities during the afternoon today. You may also feel the need for spirituality, so try your hand at meditation and yoga.

LIBRA
Today is an important day for you, and you will learn a lot from your life partner. Even on the work front, business partners will extend their best possible cooperation to you. Your chances of winning in cut-throat competitions are very bright today, predicts Ganesh.

SCORPIO
There is nothing more enchanting and alluring to you than some passionate time with your love interest. The only problem that Ganesh sees here is that there may be too many love interests. Your chosen partner, though, may get to see a different side of you in the evening.

SAGITTARIUS
Unnecessary expenditure might clog your bill today, feels Ganesh. Organising and detailing will be a time-sink as you will spend hapless hours trying to discipline things. The vibrant evening will be a contrast to your hectic day as you kick back and relax while socialising.

CAPRICORN
Your grand orchestration may not come to fruition, and even your best-laid plans may go awry, says Ganesh. Squabbles with people over petty issues will add to your growing vexation; keep calm and you'll handle all of it just fine.

AQUARIUS
Finally, you've decided to clean up the mess! And you will do a fine job, whether it's your workspace, your bills, your finances, or even your closet. And now that you're inspired, you might as well sort out your mental clutter too, chuckles Ganesh.

PISCES
Financially, you have bright prospects awaiting you today. You will be able to deal with the mind-numbing financial jugglery required to take stock of your monetary matters with precision. You might be dealing with people who secretly have an axe to grind against you, cautions Ganesh.

Kriti calls out salary gap

Mumbai: Kriti Sanon recently found success with *Crew*, in which she shared screen space with Kareena Kapoor and Tabu. The film went on to earn over Rs 75 crore at the domestic box office. Riding high after Rajesh A Krishnan's heist comedy, *Crew*, Kriti Sanon spoke out against pay disparity in a recent interview with *Film Companion*. Here's what Kriti shared: "The difference in payment between male and female actors is currently huge for no valid reason. Sometimes, for no reason at all. Sometimes, you feel like it's not as if that person has had a hit in 10 years, so why is he getting paid 10 times more?" Kriti questioned. She explained how producers justified the gap. "A lot of the time, producers say it's about recovery. The recovery happens with digital and satellite rights, which are often secured before a film is released, before word-of-mouth can take off. To get that kind of budget from digital and satellite rights—because on these platforms, male-centric films tend to perform much better compared to a film centered around a woman. I think that's where the difference lies," she added. The actress revealed that some of her male co-stars earned 10 times more than her, despite not delivering hits for years.

Sharvari Wagh eyes comic roles

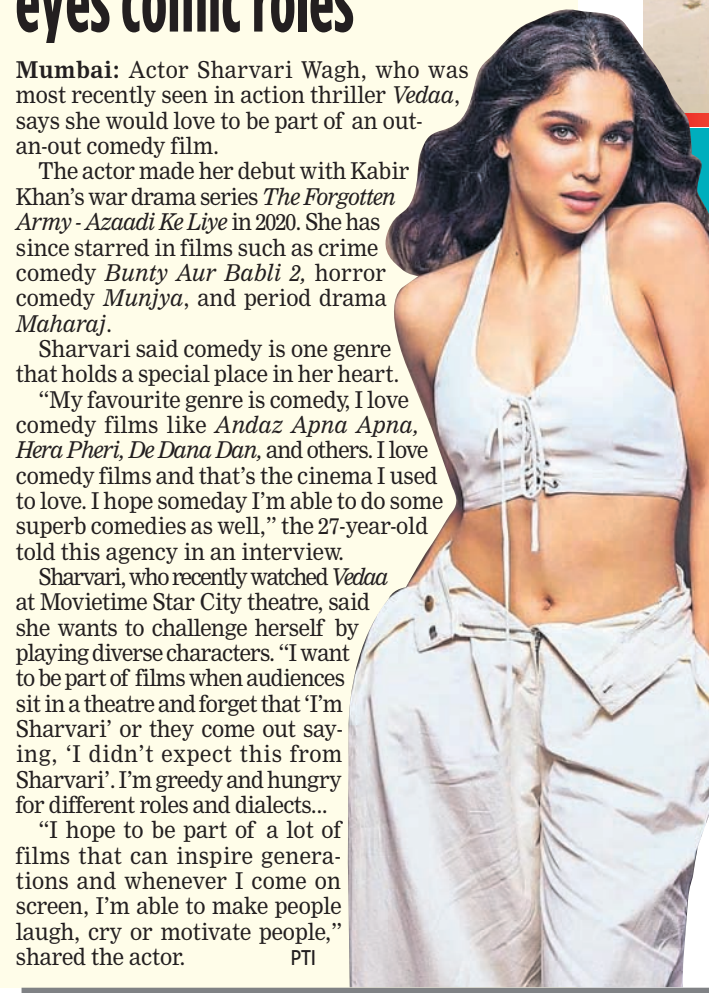
Mumbai: Actor Sharvari Wagh, who was most recently seen in action thriller *Vedaa*, says she would love to be part of an out-an-out comedy film. The actor made her debut with Kabir Khan's war drama series *The Forgotten Army - Azaadi Ke Liye* in 2020. She has since starred in films such as crime comedy *Bunty Aur Babli 2*, horror comedy *Munjya*, and period drama *Maharaj*. Sharvari said comedy is one genre that holds a special place in her heart. "My favourite genre is comedy, I love comedy films like *Andaz Apna Apna*, *Hera Pheri*, *De Dana Dan*, and others. I love comedy films and that's the cinema I used to love. I hope someday I'm able to do some superb comedies as well," the 27-year-old told this agency in an interview. Sharvari, who recently watched *Vedaa* at Movietime Star City theatre, said she wants to challenge herself by playing diverse characters. "I want to be part of films when audiences sit in a theatre and forget that 'I'm Sharvari' or they come out saying, 'I didn't expect this from Sharvari'. I'm greedy and hungry for different roles and dialects..." "I hope to be part of a lot of films that can inspire generations and whenever I come on screen, I'm able to make people laugh, cry or motivate people," shared the actor.

Pari looks for greener pastures

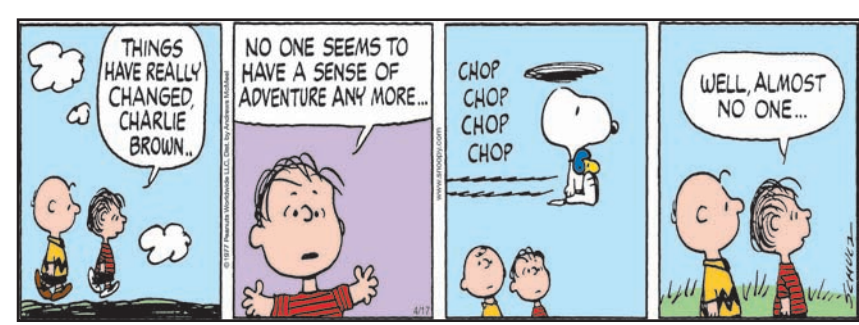
Mumbai: Parineeti Chopra has established herself as one of Hindi film industry's most prominent actresses. She has been in a number of films over the years. Meanwhile, the actress, who is presently on holiday in the United Kingdom, has shown an interest in seeking employment in the European country. During a recent interview with Eastern Eye, the *Unchai* actress was asked if, given her versatility, she had ever contemplated working in the West outside of Indian cinema. The actress was ecstatic by the statement and quickly revealed that she is open to new job prospects. She said, "Oh, thank you so much. Why not? Actually, I really want to work in the UK and look for opportunities. This is something I would be very interested in, maybe not so west as in Hollywood. Something creative in the UK itself." In addition, Pari revealed her ambitions to go forward. She admits to being in the stage of her career where she values quality over quantity. According to her, even if excellence means making only one more film, it is fine because a project must stimulate her from within, as *Amar Singh Chamkila* did. Parineeti had spent her holiday in London, United Kingdom. She has frequently revealed snippets of her enjoyable stays in the British city.

Shraddha on her childhood crush

Mumbai: Shraddha Kapoor recently shared a humorous story about her childhood crush Varun Dhawan. He recently made a cameo in her film *Street 2*. Varun recently made an extended cameo in Shraddha-starrer *Street 2*. Recently, during a podcast with Shubankar Mishra for his YouTube channel, Shraddha recalled the time when she proposed to Varun as an eight-year-old. Shraddha went on share, "It's an old story that a lot of people already know about. Varun rejected my proposal. It's funny to think about. We had joined our dad during one of their shoots. As a kid, I had a small crush on Varun. While we were playing, we reached the top of a mountain. I said, 'Varun, I will say something in a reverse way and you'll have to figure it out.' So I said, 'You love I.' He replied, 'I don't like girls.' Then he ran away." Shraddha and Varun have starred in *ABCD 2* and *Street Dancer 3D*, both directed by Remo D'Souza. Since then, they have shared screen space in *Street 2*. Their chemistry in the promotional romantic track *Khoobsurat* from the horror-comedy film is also being praised.



PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

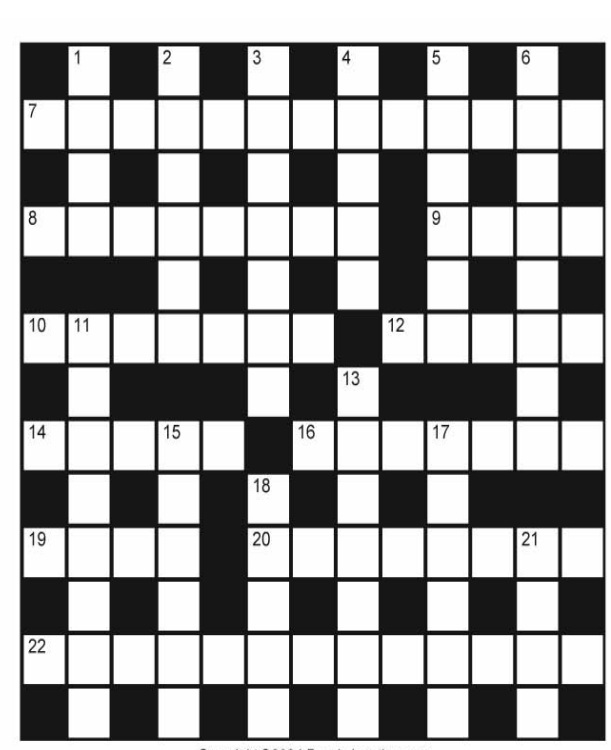


BREVITY



FUN post

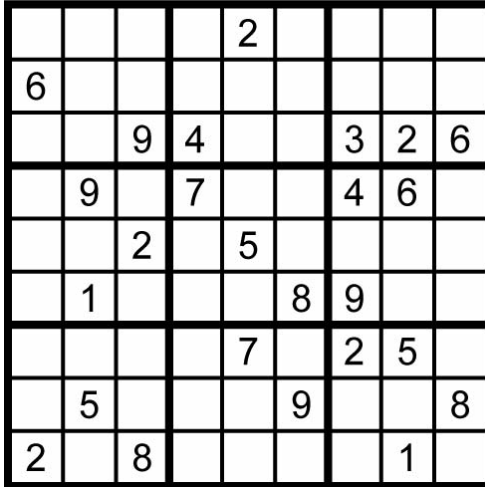
CROSSWORD



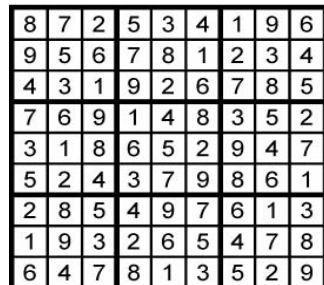
- Across**
- 7 Technology type (5,2,3,3)
 - 8 Arrange
 - 9 Roman wrap
 - 10 Butterfly attractors
 - 12 Bulwark
 - 14 Muscat native
 - 16 Mandrills
 - 19 Gator's cousin
 - 20 Photographer's setting
 - 22 Vinaigrette, e.g. (5,8)
- Down**
- 1 Hollywood headliner
 - 2 Reach
 - 3 Venezuelan statesman
 - 4 War horse
 - 5 Core
 - 6 Terrify
 - 11 Christopher Lambert played one
 - 13 Troglodytes
 - 15 Ambrosia
 - 17 Dense
 - 18 Belated
 - 21 Litter member

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



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

New Delhi: Union Tribal Affairs Minister Jual Oram was admitted to AIIMS, Delhi, Monday, official sources said. He was admitted around 9 pm in the new private ward under Dr Anant Mohan, head of the Department of Pulmonary Medicine and Sleep Disorders. "He is stable," an official source said. Oram's wife Jhingia Oram (58) died of dengue Saturday while undergoing treatment at a private hospital in Bhubaneswar. He was also undergoing treatment at the same hospital after being diagnosed with dengue.



Man held for assaulting duo

DEBADURLAV HARICHANDAN, OP

Bhubaneswar, August 19: The Airfield Police Monday arrested a 28-year-old man for allegedly assaulting two persons and issuing them death threats over trivial reasons.

IIC Sashikanta Rout identified the accused as Suraj Mohapatra, a resident of Danda Sahi under Lingaraj police station limits. Earlier, Suraj had been booked six times by the City cops for similar offences.

Rout said the complainant, Sunil Raj, alleged that he was returning home along with his friend on a bike after a picnic late May 17 when Suraj stopped them. The accused allegedly questioned the duo over returning home late night. When they asked Suraj to disclose his identity, he allegedly threatened to finish them off.

"Suraj suddenly picked up a glass bottle which was lying on the ground and smashed it on Sunil's head," Rout said as quoting the FIR. Sunil told the police that he lost consciousness and bled from the wound on the head following the attack. Suraj fled from the spot in the melee, he said.

Later he lodged a complaint with the Airfield police. Acting on the complaint, the cops searched Suraj for over three months before finally nabbing him Monday.

Guv, Majhi & Naveen greet people as state celebrates Raksha Bandhan



AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, August 19: Raksha Bandhan was celebrated across Odisha Monday amid a festive fervour.

Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi celebrated the festival in Bhubaneswar where Deputy CM Pravati Parida tied a rakhi on his hand. She was joined by women of different ages in tying

rakhis on the hand of the CM at a function at the State Guest House.

They also tied rakhis on the hand of School & Mass Education Minister Nityananda Gond.

"May the Rakhi, a symbol of love, devoutness and protection, make everyone's life better and strengthen the sacred bond of brother and sister," Majhi said.



Governor Raghubar Das also greeted the people of the state on the occasion.

"Heartiest greetings and congratulations to all on the occasion of the holy Ghama or Rakhi Purnima. May Lord Jagannath bless the unbroken love and devotional relationship of brother-sister with peace and friendship," he said.

The festival was also being

celebrated at the Baladev Jew temple in Kendrapara and Jagannath temple in Puri.

Leader of opposition Naveen Patnaik also wished the people.

"Greetings and congratulations to Savi on the occasion of Holy Raksha Purnima. May this bond of love and respect be even closer and stronger," Patnaik said on X.



No DJ music during Ganesh Puja festivities



PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, August 19: The Commissionerate Police has banned the use of disc jockeys (DJ) during Ganesh Puja celebrations in the twin cities of Bhubaneswar and Cuttack.

The Ganesh puja will be celebrated September 7.

Police Commissioner Sanjeeb Panda said this after holding a meeting with the puja organisers in the Silver City. Similarly, Bhubaneswar deputy commissioner of police (DCP) Prateek Singh held another such meeting here Sunday.

In both meetings, the organisers have been asked not to use DJ music during the puja, including idol immersion processions.

The idol immersion ceremony in Cuttack is scheduled for September 15, 22 and 29. The puja committees have been asked

to seek permission from the local police station seven days before, he said.

Similarly, the puja committees in Bhubaneswar will hold the immersion processions September 8, 11 and 15, said DCP Singh.

Ganesh Puja committees have been asked not to play DJ music and install CCTVs in their pandals, he said, adding, "We have directed them to use traditional musical instruments instead of DJs during the procession."

Strict action will be taken for forcible collection of donations from the people, he warned.

The police will deploy adequate number of security personnel in the Capital city to regulate traffic during the puja.

DJ owners, however, opposed the move and said the ban order will affect their livelihood in the upcoming festival season.

Campus polls back from next year: Min

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 19: Almost after eight years, the Students' Union election will be held in Odisha next year, informed State Law Minister Prithviraj Harichandan on Monday.

The announcement from the Law Minister came during a programme in Jajpur.

Speaking to media, Harichandan said, "The elections are usually held in the first week of September every year. After the BJP formed the government, we did not get enough time to look into it this year. Colleges will be prepared for the polls this year and elections will be held next year."

"A decision in this regard has already been made and the students' union election will be held from next year," he added.

"Conducting peaceful polls in the college is the responsibility of the government. However, the previous BJD government failed miserably. Lyngdoh Commission can work smoothly



The students' union election was put off due to Cyclone Titli in 2018 while the state government once again called it off in 2019

if there is no interference by any political parties," Patnaik added.

It is worthwhile to mention here that students' union elections have not taken place in Odisha since 2018 to maintain peace on campuses. The students' union election was put off due to Cyclone Titli in 2018 while the state government once again called it off in 2019.

Welcoming the announcement Arijit Patnaik, ABVP secretary said, "We have been demanding students' union election for long. Even we have moved the court."

WORLD PHOTOGRAPHY DAY

Govt to promote professional photographers: Suryabanshi

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 19: The Minister for Language, Literature, Culture, Higher Education, and Sports and Youth Affairs, Suryabanshi Suraj Monday said that plans are afoot to promote professional photographers in the state.

"A photo can stir minds and has the power to create a worldwide sensation. Professional photography is an art that deserves recognition and support," Suraj said while inaugurating the third state-level photo exhibition at Jayadeva Bhavan, to mark the World Photography Day celebrations in the state Capital. The event is organised by the Nutan Bhabisyata Nirman (NBN) Sutradhar Trust.

Emphasising the importance of professional photography, the minister said, "Photos speak for themselves. The approach of a professional photographer is

unique and not everyone can capture the essence of a moment."

Renowned sand artist Padma Shri Sudarsan Pattnaik also spoke at the event, highlighting the power of photography.

The exhibition features over 70 contestants from across the state, showcasing their artistic talents.

Ten persons including Sudhi Ranjan Mishra, Rakendra Jena, and Pratap Pradhan were honored on the occasion for their exceptional contributions to photography.

The exhibition is open to the public till August 22, from 9 am to 8 pm.

Historian and researcher, Anil Dhir, professor and history researcher, Sanjay Acharya; Director of Utkal Chamber Of Commerce and Industry Tarini Prasad Mohanty and other distinguished guests were among others present at the event.



Rapid rise in students cycling to school in rural India

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 19: There has been a rapid rise in the number of students cycling to school in rural areas and the "silent revolution" is being led by girls, especially in Bihar and West Bengal, new research has found.

The scholars at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Delhi and the Narsee Monji Institute of Management Studies (NMIMS) also found strong evidence that bicycle distribution schemes (BDS) have helped increase cycling in states where these were implemented and the biggest beneficiaries were rural girls.

According to Srishti Agrawal, a PhD scholar at IIT-Delhi's Transportation Research and Injury Prevention Centre, gender norms, affordability of bicycles, distance to school, and safety on roads are likely the major determinants of cycling to school in India.

"Nationally, cycling to school levels increased from 6.6 per cent to 11.2 per cent over the decade (2007 to 2017). These levels nearly doubled in rural India

(6.3 per cent to 12.3 per cent) while remaining stable (7.8 per cent to 8.3 per cent) in urban areas. Among the four population sub-groups, the largest increase in cycling was among girls in rural areas," Agrawal said.

The research published in the prestigious "Journal of Transport Geography" found that in a large majority of states, cycling share increased for both genders, with a greater increase among girls.

"The greatest increase in cycling among girls occurred in rural Bihar where levels increased eight-fold. In West Bengal, cycling among girls increased three-fold making it the state with the highest cycling levels among rural girls across the country.

"The cycling levels among girls almost doubled in the rural regions of the following: Assam, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh. The cycling levels declined significantly in rural areas of Manipur for both genders," the report noted.



Aditi Seth from NMIMS, Mumbai said the phenomenal rise in cycling levels across a large part of the country, is a "silent revolution".

"We use the term silent to not only indicate the absence of traffic noise, cycling is associated with, but also to highlight a complete lack of attention on this trend and its underlying reasons within the community of transport researchers, policymakers, or practitioners.

"For instance, we did not find a single research paper pub-

lished in a transportation journal that studied the travel behaviour impact of bicycle distribution schemes, which we found are the drivers for the growth and widespread use of cycling in many states.

"We call it a revolution because cycling levels increased among girls in a country which has high levels of gender inequality in terms of female mobility outside the home, in general, and for cycling, in particular," Seth said.

In urban areas, cycling levels

Researchers at IIT-Delhi and NMIMS, Mumbai found that girls are leading the 'silent revolution'. According to their study, Odisha is among seven Indian states where cycling levels among girls almost doubled rural areas

either declined or remained constant in more than half of the states among both genders. In a few states, where cycling levels increased, there have been significant jumps.

For girls, cycling levels increased 10 times in Tripura and quadrupled in the states of Arunachal Pradesh and Bihar and tripled in West Bengal.

For boys, cycling levels increased from no cycling to 5.8 per cent in Arunachal Pradesh, more than tripled in Delhi and doubled in the states of

Chhattisgarh and West Bengal. In urban areas of the states (Haryana, Maharashtra, and Punjab) where cycling share declined for both genders, the decline was greater for boys compared to girls.

"We found strong evidence of the positive impact of bicycle distribution schemes on cycling levels. Overall, cycling levels increased by an average of 3.6 percentage points in states with BDS and by 0.8 percentage points without BDS. States with the largest growth in cycling levels were often the ones where BDS was implemented, particularly in rural areas," said Rahul Goel, Assistant Professor, IIT-Delhi.

"Also, the effects of BDS were more prominent in rural areas, because a large proportion of students (more than 70 per cent) are enrolled in government schools, which are the type of schools that are eligible for BDS.

"In comparison, the majority of the students in urban areas are enrolled in private schools where BDS is not applicable and hence its impact is small," he added.

Puri man critical in murderous attack

POST NEWS NETWORK

Puri, August 19: A differently-abled man sustained critical injuries after being attacked by miscreants reportedly over past enmity at Radha-Gobinda Lane of Hadagodia Sahi under Town police limits here, Monday.

The victim was identified as Harihar Sahoo of the locality. According to City DSP Prasanta Kumar Sahoo, Harihar has sustained multiple injuries to his head. "He was initially admitted to the district headquarters hospital here and later shifted to SCBMCH in Cuttack where he is stated to be critical," the DSP said, adding that the incident took place around 7:30pm.

Sources said Dinesh Kumar Khuntia of the locality had been murdered by a group of miscreants over sale of dry prasad a few days ago. Following probe, four persons, including Harihar's son, were arrested for their involvement in the murder. Dinesh's family also claimed Harihar's involvement in the murder. Monday's attack is suspected to have been carried out to avenge Dinesh's murder, they alleged.

SIM BOX CASE: SPECIAL TEAM TO VISIT RANCHI



SIM BOXES ARE USED TO HIDE ORIGINAL PHONE NUMBERS AND ARE OFTEN EMPLOYED FOR CYBERCRIME, HATE SPEECH, TERRORIST ACTS, EXTORTION, AND OTHER ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES, POSING CHALLENGES FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

special squad, along with cyber experts, conducted a raid on a house in Madhupatna area of Cuttack Sunday and seized five SIM boxes, 236 active SIMs, 310 reserved SIMs, routers, a broadband connection, and other materials.

Panda said that Mandal had rented the house in the City here in December 2023, under the pretence of running a cloth business. He paid the rent of Rs 8,000 per month through PhonePe, police said.

Asadur Zaman, a 30-year-old from Feni, Bangladesh, had arrived in Cuttack in December to set up the SIM box operation, with Mandal responsible for maintenance. Asadur had an Indian visa valid until October 24, 2024, and had entered India via Integrated Check Post (ICP) Agartala October 21, 2023 before departing for Bangladesh December 24, 2023, through ICP Haridaspur (WB), police added.

Mandal was also known to visit Bangladesh by bus via Basirhat border and occasionally visited Bongaon for small-time business.

It was there he met Asadur and the two planned to establish a SIM box operation in India. Mandal would travel from North 24 Parganas weekly to maintain the SIM boxes, including overseeing internet and electricity services, police said.

Police have traced three bank accounts — two in Mandal's name and one in his wife's name — and are awaiting further details.



RICH TRIBUTES: People from various walks of life pay homage to Swabhaba Kabi Gangadhar Meher on his birth anniversary near Nalco Square in Bhubaneswar, Monday

SOA, VSI pact for innovation

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, August 19: Siksha 'O' Anusandhan (SOA) Deemed to be University has inked a pact with Bangalore's Very Large Scale Integration Society of India (VSI) for developing innovation, research, startups, talent, and employment opportunities in areas of VLSI Design and semiconductors, official sources said, Monday.

VSI has more than 5000 semiconductor professionals and volunteers across the world representing the full semiconductor supply chain.

"As per the agreement, VSI will collaborate with SOA in harnessing research and innovation talent for building and enhancing a strong startup ecosystem and provide industry collaboration in terms of techno-commercial mentorship, market opportunities, industry connects, and angel and seed funding at SOA," they said.

VSI and SOA will jointly organise workshops and training programs for students and faculty members of SOA. VSI will also support through its industry volunteer network in arranging expert lectures, projects, internship opportunities, and mentoring of SOA students at undergraduate, postgraduate, and doctorate levels.

"The two organisations will also work together in developing and enhancing the VLSI Design and semiconductor curriculum at undergraduate, postgraduate, and doctorate levels and make these programs relevant to current and future industry needs for SOA and other institutions," they pointed out.

₹200cr shot in the arm for ECoR Sambalpur division

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, August 19: The East Coast Railway (ECoR) has successfully commissioned a Freight Train Examination and Routine Overhauling (ROH) facility at Sarla station under Sambalpur division to meet the growing industrial demands of western and southern Odisha, official sources said, Monday.

The project, executed by RITES Limited in collaboration with the Gati Shakti Unit (GSU) of the Sambalpur division, involves an investment of around ₹200 crore and was completed in June this year.

The Sambalpur division, one of the fastest-growing divisions in Indian Railways, plays a crucial role in serving the key industries of the region, including steel, aluminium and coal sectors.

The development of the freight depot at Sarla station was essential to improve operational performance and support the industrial growth in the region. Prior to this development, the absence of a nearby freight train examination facility forced rakes to be examined at distant locations, affecting the efficiency of operations.

The ROH shed, a new G+1 station building, an electric substation, offices, a trainee hostel, and two examination lines have been developed at a cost of ₹160 crore by RITES Limited. These facilities were commissioned in June 2024.

The GSU has developed one ad-



ditional loop line and two freight examination lines at an approximate cost of ₹40 crore. Full electrification of these lines was completed in August 2024.

"The Sarla yard was remodeled with 64 new turnouts and 10.4 TKM of new tracks, along with the conversion of PI to distributed EI of Kyosan make, with 195 routes commissioned," ECoR sources said.

The new Sarla yard was successfully commissioned June 14 last, and freight train examinations commenced June 25 while the first ROH turnout was achieved August 13 last, they said.

The yard has a monthly capacity to handle 90-100 train examinations and ROH of 100 wagons, significantly boosting loading performance while improving safety and reducing the Turnaround Time (TAT) of BTAP (aluminium-carrying wagons) by 30 per cent.

In a first for Indian Railways,

the ROH and sick line work are being operated on a complete outsourcing model, with skeletal staff ensuring efficient operation of the freight depot.

The development of the freight depot at Sarla station is expected to stimulate economic growth in the Sambalpur region by attracting industrial and commercial activity, while also creating jobs, they pointed out.

The proximity of the facility to major industrial hubs such as Jharsuguda and nearby sidings enhances the operational efficiency of freight operations in the region.

"With the commissioning of the new Sarla yard, the ECoR is now well-positioned to support the expanding industrial landscape of Odisha, contributing to the region's economic prosperity and ensuring smoother, more efficient freight operations across the Indian Railways network," they added.

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 19: Odisha Police, which recently busted a major SIM box racket in the state, will send a special squad to Ranchi to seize another SIM box there with Jharkhand Police's help, a senior officer said, Monday.

The racket was busted August 16 when police arrested West Bengal resident Raju Mandal in the City.

During the operation, authorities seized five active SIM boxes, two reserve SIM boxes, and over 750 SIM cards, along with routers and other equipment from Mahadev Nagar area under Laxmisagar police station limits here.

According to police, the racket was being operated by a

Bangladeshi national who used the setup in the Capital city here to reroute international calls from Pakistan, China, and West Asia to India.

Notably, SIM boxes are used to hide original phone numbers and are often employed for cybercrime, hate speech, terrorist acts, extortion, and other illegal activities, posing challenges for law enforcement agencies.

Twin city police commissioner Sanjeeb Panda said, "According to our investigation, there is another SIM box in Ranchi. Our police team will go there to conduct a search and seizure operation with the help of local police."

During questioning, Mandal said he had been operating SIM boxes from multiple locations, including Cuttack and Ranchi.

Following this information, a

Blood donation camp in Cuttack

Cuttack: A mega blood donation camp was organised by Gopabandhu Vihar Committee in the Silver City here. Over 111 people participated in the camp and donated blood in the presence of office bearers of the committee and the officials of Central Red Cross Blood Bank.

Justice (ret) Manoranjan Mohanty, Bighnaraj Mishra, Pravin Baral, Sujit Nayak, Shankar Dayal Panda, Harihar Sen and Prangya Paramita Mohanty were among those who attended the camp and encouraged the blood donors for the noble act.

Bakul's Twin Tree campaign

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 19: Bakul Foundation, which is celebrating 15 years of 'My Tree' campaign, launched its most ambitious part - the 'Twin Tree' campaign - at Capital Hospital Monday.

Elaborating the moot behind the Twin Tree campaign, Sasmita Behuria, HoD, Gynecology, said it is essentially a move by Bakul Foundation to gift plants to the parents of children born every day at the hospital. "The parents are expected to take care of both their children and the trees," he added.

Founder of Bakul, Sujit Mahapatra, said that the Twin Tree campaign is launched on Rakhi Purnima as it is the most befitting occasion to establish sibling relationship between a child and a tree.

Twenty-five mothers and their attendants were given away plants on the occasion by doctors



at the hospital, led by Director, Sujata Mishra and Dedi Loku, the green superhero (Tree Man in the Kui language) who has been supporting the My Tree campaign of Bakul Foundation. The target of the campaign is to give away 10,000 twin trees for the 10,000 children who are born at the hospital annually.

Dedi Loku said that when individuals are connected to trees, as it was ages ago, nature will be protected. "It will in turn protect us," he said.

"Bakul volunteers will follow up after 10 days, after 100 days and after a year to check on the health of the child and the tree," he added.

Scrolling through online videos increases feelings of boredom

Browsing videos on TikTok or YouTube can be a hit-and-miss affair, with gems lurking amid mediocre efforts. But researchers have found that switching to another video, or skipping forwards and backwards in the same one, actually makes people more bored.

Dr Katy Tam at the University of Toronto Scarborough, the lead author of the research, said boredom was closely linked to attention.

"We feel bored when there's a gap between how engaged we are and how engaged we want to be," she said. "When people keep switching through videos, they become less engaged with the videos and they are looking for something more interesting. This can lead to increased feelings of boredom."

The results appear to chime with other studies: as the team notes, previous research has suggested that while boredom relief is a driver for people to use social media or smartphones, the use of such technology ap-

pears to make the feeling worse.

Writing in the Journal of Experimental Psychology: General, Tam and colleagues report how they carried out seven experiments involving a total of more than 1,200 participants.

The first, involving 140 participants, revealed that people tended to switch between videos more when they rated the content more boring, while the second - an online survey involving 231 participants - suggested people thought having the option to skip through a video or switch to another would make viewing a video less boring.

However, the team's subsequent experiments suggest this is not the case.

Data from a group of 166 undergraduates suggests participants felt more bored when allowed to skip about within a video than when they were not able to, while results from 159 undergraduates revealed they reported higher levels of boredom when given a collection of five-minute videos they could switch



"We feel bored when there's a gap between how engaged we are and how engaged we want to be. When people keep switching through videos, they become less engaged with the videos and they are looking for something more interesting. This can lead to increased feelings of boredom"

DR KATY TAM | UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO SCARBOROUGH

between, compared with a single 10-minute video.

The researchers found similar results when the latter experiment was repeated with 174 undergraduates who were allowed to pick their own videos from YouTube - although the size of the effect was smaller.

However, when they looked at the results from 175 participants of a broader age range, they found no difference in reported boredom when the participants were given five-minute videos they could switch between, or a single 10-minute video to watch. What's

more, unlike in the earlier experiments, the order in which participants undertook the viewing tasks had an influence on their levels of reported boredom.

Tam said one explanation for the differences could be demographics, noting the later ex-

periments involved participants with a broader age range and an older mean age than the earlier experiments.

"We speculated that people of different ages may have different habits when it comes to watching videos and switching," she said. "How people consume videos and how this affects boredom may vary based on age and digital media habits, but further research is needed to explore this."

Ultimately, said Tam, it could be worth taking your time before hitting the fast-forward or skip buttons, and find ways to stay focused while watching videos.

"Our research shows that while people fast-forward or skip videos to avoid boredom, this behaviour can actually make them feel more bored," she said. "Just as we pay for an immersive experience in a movie theatre, enjoyment often comes from immersing ourselves in videos rather than swiping through them."

THE GUARDIAN

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Women send eco-friendly rakhis to jawans deployed in anti-Maoist ops



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Berhampur, August 19: A group of women in Ganjam district have made eco-friendly rakhis and sent those to security personnel deployed in anti-Maoist operations in the state to wear on Raksha Bandhan day, Monday. Around 25 members of the women's wing of Kalinga Vysya Sangha at Mundamarai area near Aska have crafted around 550 innovative rakhis of different designs. The rakhis were made by using an array of food grains and spices like paddy, mung, black

grain, ragi, mustard, sago, etc and other biodegradable materials. "We have already sent around 500 rakhis for jawans, while another 50 rakhis were tied to some other local employees, like police, healthcare officials, fire fighters, who are working for the safety of the people on the day of Raksha Bandhan Monday, said Roja Subudhi, president of the women wing of the association. "Our aim is to make something different than the rakhis available in the market, which are eco-friendly and truly sustainable. Besides strengthening the bonds between the jawans

and others, these rakhis also strengthen our connection to nature," she said. With this, the women conveyed the message that while celebrating relationships with tying rakhis, they were also sowing seeds of environmental awareness, said Roja. The members of the association collected all materials used in the rakhis from their homes. After drawing a design, they used food grains to craft the rakhis. They only used paper, paste and other natural colours for the purpose, while avoiding plastic materials, said Bhagyashree Patra, secretary of the association. "Our aim is not to sell, but to distribute among our saviours like jawan, police, doctors, fire service officials etc," said Sasmita Subudhi, cashier of the association. They have been making such types of rakhis for the last three years and sending them to the jawans. This year, however, they made a bulk quantity of rakhis, she added.



TRADITIONAL GAME: A participant leaps into the air to touch the gift of his favoured choice at a Gamha Dian competition held at Mardarajpur village under Khandapara block of Nayagarh district on the occasion of Raksha Bandhan festival, Monday

Hota conferred Padmashree Satya Narayan Rajaguru Smruti Samman



POST NEWS NETWORK

Paralakhemundi, August 19: Chandra Shekhar Hota, an eminent essayist, critic, and columnist, was honored with the prestigious Padmashree Satya Narayan Rajaguru Smruti Samman in an event held Monday at the Utkal Hiteeshini Samaj here. The award was conferred by the Padmashree Satya Narayan Rajaguru Smruti Samsad in recognition of Hota's significant contribution to literature and his influential role in contemporary criticism and journalism. The award ceremony was graced by the presence of notable dignitaries, including Purnachandra Mishra and Purnachandra Mohapatra, who lauded Hota's relentless pursuit of literary excellence and his profound impact on the intellectual and cultural landscape. Hota, a celebrated figure in literary circles, has been widely acknowledged for his insight-

ful essays, critical analyses, and thought-provoking columns. His work has not only enriched the literary heritage of India but has also inspired a new generation of writers and thinkers. In his acceptance speech, Hota expressed deep gratitude for the honour and dedicated the award to all those who have supported and encouraged him throughout his literary journey. He emphasised the importance of preserving and promoting the rich cultural and literary traditions of India. The Padmashree Satya Narayan Rajaguru Smruti Samman is awarded annually to individuals who have made exemplary contributions to literature, culture, and social service. The event concluded with a vote of thanks, leaving the audience inspired by the achievements of Hota and the continued efforts of the Padmashree Satya Narayan Rajaguru Smruti Samsad in promoting literary and cultural excellence.

Errant officials in quarry quandary

Row over 14 black stone quarries operating in proposed reserve forest areas

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jajpur, August 19: Leasing out any portion of a reserve forest (RF) or proposed reserve forest (PRF) land for mining is illegal as per law. However, a forested area under Dharmasala tehsil and Cuttack forest division in Jajpur district has allegedly been destroyed by leasing out 14 black stone quarries on the PRF land. After an inter-departmental inquiry uncovered the wrongdoing, errant officials are now in a quandary. Extraction of black stones from the PRF land has not only led to depletion of green cover but also affected the bio-diversity in the area. Earlier, wild animals like leopards, bears, elephants, barking deer and porcupines used to be seen in the forest. However, the destruction of forest cover; illegal stone extraction in quarries, blasting of explosives and lack of water sources have led to an exodus of wild animals from the forest. Moreover, the PRFs at Asia Charinangal, Balarampur, Madhupur, Bandhapali,

Kantigadia, Maulabhanja and Bajragiri areas are on the verge of extinction for similar reasons. Reports said that the state Mining and Revenue departments have leased out 14 black stone quarries on a PRF land. The extraction of minerals has severely affected the bio-diversity in the forest area. The matter came to light after the DFO of Cuttack forest division wrote a letter (August 2) to the Jajpur Collector asking him to cancel the lease of one quarry inside the PRF area. Later, acting on the direction of the Collector, a joint team of Minor Minerals, Forest and Revenue departments conducted a probe and found 14 black stone quarries operating inside the proposed reserve forest area, Friday. This has established that the lure of easy money through black stone mining has resulted in illegality and wrongdoing among the government officials. The disclosure has caught the errant government officials on the wrong foot as they are now trying to come clean on the issue by



shifting the blame on others. Sources said the Forest department had declared 15 forest blocks under Cuttack forest division in Jajpur district as PRFs under Odisha Forest Act-1972 and Section 4(1) of Indian Forest Act-1927. These declarations were made in between 1970 and 1980. The move was necessitated to protect the rich bio-diversity in these forest blocks and to safeguard the interest of the people. Subsequently, the Cuttack DFO wrote a letter (7170, dated-September 13, 2019) to the Jajpur Collector apprising him about the declaration of PRFs. Later, in another letter (7283, dated-August

2, 2024) to the Jajpur Collector he asked him for cancellation of quarry permit in respect of Anjira BSQ-7 in Maulabhanja PRF. However, the district administration, instead of taking any action, chose to remain silent which led to the destruction of forest cover. Sources said 14 black stone quarries spread over 114.12 hectare land in Maulabhanja PRF in Dharmasala tehsil have been given on lease. The extraction of black stones still continues unabated from quarry no-1, 4, 7, 10, and 17 in Anjira hill. The DFO in his letter has asked the district Collector to cancel the lease of Anjira quarry

no-7 which he claims to be on PRF area, August 2. Acting on the direction of the district Collector, the joint team which started its probe from Friday has found that not only Anjira quarry no-7 but 14 quarries are operational inside the PRF area. Similarly, the miners are also looting black stones from two more PRF areas in Balarampur and Kolha areas in the district. Leasing out quarries for black stone mining in PRF areas is illegal but the government officials have dared to give these quarries on lease. Environmentalists are waiting to see what action the state government plans to take against these unscrupulous officials. When contacted, deputy director Jay Prakash Nayak of Minor Minerals department said that the PRFs have not been demarcated nor there is any mention about it in the district survey report (DSR). The cluster mining plans have been sanctioned earlier on the basis of which the black stone quarries were given on lease, he added.

RSP organises 'Samanwaya'

Rourkela: "As partners in progress we have to work in harmony and create a win-win system," said Atanu Bhowmick, Director In-Charge, Rourkela Steel Plant (RSP) to the contractual service providers of the plant in the 'Samanwaya' programme organised at the Indo German Club August 16. Tarun Misra, ED (HR) with additional charge of ED (Projects), Alok Verma, ED (Mines), AK Behuria, ED (F&A), and other senior officers, office bearers and members of Rourkela Contractors Association were present on the occasion. The DIC emphasised on making the steel plant a place of zero harm with strict adherence to safety procedures.

Nature lover turns large pit into forest

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, August 19: Praises are pouring on Trilochan Sahoo, a nature lover, who has transformed a large pit adjacent to the Baitarni river bank into a small forest in this district. Sahoo with the help of his friends has planted around 150 various fruit bearing and flowering trees apart from other perennial plants in the erstwhile abandoned place near Jayadurga Primary School at Fakirpur under Ward No 11. The efforts of Trilochan and his friends have drawn appreciation from various quarters as they have become



an example for others to emulate. At a time when the whole world is suffering from global warming due to massive deforestation, this small effort of Trilochan and his friends could go a long way in providing a healing touch to the landscape and life of the locals, environmentalists said. Sources said that the abandoned pit used to store rainwater of four-five feet depth for around five to six months every year. This prompted Trilochan to plant trees and usher in greenery in the area. Pouring his heart and soul for the purpose, he has been continuously working hard to create a small forest on this abandoned

place since last few months. He has also put up fences around the trees to protect them from cattle and other animals. Recently, Sahoo also planted trees on various spots in Anandpur sub-division and set an example for others by carrying out various programmes in the field of wildlife conservation. Trilochan's friends and volunteers Ranjit Naik, Rajkishore Barik, Prasanna Nahak, Manoj Kumar Sahoo, Dekhanand Dehury, Narayan Dehury and others are always by his side and assist him in the initiative. This has helped him spread awareness on plantation in the district.

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WOMAN DIES OF SNAKEBITE

Bant: In a tragic incident, a 48-year-old woman died after she was bitten by a poisonous snake at Begana village under Nilok panchayat and this police limits in Bhadrak district, Monday. The deceased was identified as Purnima Nayak, wife of Jaladhar Nayak of the same village. According to sources, Purnima had gone to bring cow dung cakes from the backyard of her house when she was bitten by a poisonous snake. The family members immediately rushed her to the Bhadrak District Headquarters Hospital where she died while undergoing treatment. On being informed, Bant police reached the hospital. After post-mortem the body was handed over to her family members. A case (5/24) of unnatural death was registered in this regard at Bant police station.

Secret meeting place of freedom fighters lies in neglect

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rayagada, August 19: A secret meeting place of freedom fighters and the Samagra Vikash Prayog Kendra (SVPK) at Gopalbadi village under Kolnara block in this district are lying in a state of neglect and in dilapidated condition due to lack of proper upkeep and maintenance. Even though the country celebrated its 78th Independence Day, Thursday, nothing much is being done for the upkeep of the SVPK and the meeting place of the freedom fighters by the district administration. The celebration of Independence Day reminds us of the sacrifice by freedom fighters for the country to free it from the British rule. The SVPK was established with an aim to bring in all round development of tribals in the area through education, agriculture, health and livelihood initiatives and make them self-reliant.



However, now it lies in ruins. Local intelligentsia has alleged that these two places are not even decorated on special occasions like Republic Day and Independence Day. They blamed the officials of various departments of the district administration for the dilapidated condition the two places are currently facing. Locals also blamed officials

of the Utkal Khadi Mandal (UKM) for the rot that has set in. The Utkal Khadi Mandal was established in 1920 to promote the use of Khadi which was a symbol of self reliance and a way to boycott British goods. Incidentally SVPK is a subsidiary of Utkal Khadi Mandal which has its office in Bhubaneswar. However, officials of UKM rarely have time for

SVPK. No funds are allotted for the development and upkeep of SVPK. The secret meeting place of freedom fighters was on a 27-acre land surrounded by hills at Gopalbadi village under Kolnara block. As the place is not easily accessible, the freedom fighters used it as their secret rendezvous. Eminent freedom fighters like

Gopabandhu Das, Nabakrushna Choudhury, Jay Prakash Narayan, Rama Devi, Nana Saheb and Malati Devi used to frequent the place regularly. They used to hold meetings to inspire the young freedom fighters. At that time, the freedom fighters used the SVPK to make people in the area self-reliant through poultry farming, agriculture, livestock farming and weaving clothes. Freedom fighters like Mukteshwar Beuria, Annapurana Moharana and Biswanath Pattnaik contributed a lot in developing the area. 'Bhoodan' leader Vinoba Bhave also visited this district in 1951. After India became independent in 1947, people in the area took up livestock farming and used to sell cow milk. However, due to lack of maintenance the centre now remains locked. Roofs and walls of many of the rooms are in dilapidated conditions while wild shrubs

have grown all over the verandah and in adjoining gardens. The historical importance of the place has faded into oblivion. Headmaster Bijay Kumar Nayak of Utkal Khadi Mandal Madhyamika Vidyapitha said that the centre was built with a noble purpose. Hence it should be renovated immediately to keep the memories of the freedom fighters alive. Locals have asked the district administration to again launch programmes like livestock farming which will help in empowering the people financially. Prabhas Chandra Sethi, assistant secretary of Utkal Khadi Mandal in Bhubaneswar said plans for establishment of a school and hospital in the area are underway. They are likely to be set up in the next couple of years, Sethi said. He added that measures will be taken to preserve the land where freedom fighters met during the struggle for independence.

EAST COAST RAILWAY	
(1) Tender No. eT-M-LM-GR11-PUI-25-2024	
Name of the Work: MECHANIZED WASHING OF BEDROLL LINENS FOR TRAIN NO. 20819/20820, 20861/20862, 22827/22828, 22866/22865, 22890/22889, 12843/12844, 12881/12882, 18419/18420, 22883/22884, 22836/22835 (WEEKLY SERVICE) OF PURI GROUP II OF PURI COACHING DEPOT FOR A PERIOD OF TWO YEARS.	
Advertised Value:	₹ 8,40,69,052.78, EMD: ₹ 5,70,400/-, Cost of Tender Document: ₹ 11,800/-
(2) Tender No. eT-M-LM-GR11-PUI-26-2024	
Name of the Work: MECHANIZED WASHING OF BEDROLL LINENS FOR TRAIN NO. 18451/18452, 18449/18450, 12887/12888, 12895/12896, 20823/20824, 20857/20858, 22859/22860, & 18410/18409 (PURI GROUP III) OF PURI COACHING DEPOT FOR A PERIOD OF TWO YEARS.	
Advertised Value:	₹ 8,31,48,856.37, EMD: ₹ 5,65,800/-, Cost of Tender Document: ₹ 11,800/-
Completion Period: 24 Months (for both Tenders).	
Bidding Start Date: 20.08.2024 (for both Tenders), Date & Time of Tender Closing: 03.09.2024, 1300 hrs. (for both Tenders).	
Manual offers are not allowed against this tender, and any such manual offer received shall be ignored.	
Complete information including e-Tender documents of the above e-Tenders is available in website http://www.ireps.gov.in	
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FOCUS SOCIETY

WOMEN & WORKPLACE SAFETY



The issue of rising sexual violence against women is not just a matter of ensuring more safety and getting justice. It also adversely affects India's economy

ily care that she drops out, but it could also be due to workplace safety issue.

After the Nirbhaya case, the laws were tightened against sexual violence. We also have stringent laws against child abuse. Yet the laws have not stopped reported sexual crimes from growing as the NCRB data shows. The issue of rising sexual violence against women is not just a matter of ensuring more safety and getting justice. It also adversely affects India's economy. India's low female labour force participation rate is coupled with a gender wage gap. This makes it a double whammy. If both these issues are addressed there will be a big jump in employment, earning and output. It is as if India is ignoring the immense growth potential of half its human capital. The policy solutions to increasing women in formal employment are manifold. For instance in Japan Prime Minister Shinzo Abe championed "womensomics" of which one major component was starting half a million State funded high quality creches. In India too there will be legal, fiscal and social policies to encourage more women to join the workforce. This could also take the form of reservation of certain jobs only for women, or providing them free public transport, or exempting them from income tax. Culturally too the attitudes and language have to reflect granting women more autonomy for their decisions, and acknowledging their identity independent of just being a dear "sister", "mother", "wife" or "daughter", i.e. only defined in relation to males. But most of all let us not forget that workplace safety will remain a prime concern. If women have to constantly worry about the threat of sexual violence at work or in public places, that will always be a negative factor in increasing their participation in the workforce.

The writer is a noted Pune-based economist. ©THE BILLION PRESS

Tragedy in Sudan

It has to be seen to be believed how the poorest of the poor in a third country are used as pawns in a power game played by richer and more powerful nations. These powerful governments, who stand to only profit, commit almost a war against humanity by pretending to resolve bloody conflicts, while in reality adding fuel to fire.

The ongoing conflict in Sudan is a case in point. It has already taken a heavy toll of lives - 150,000 people - while on an average 10,000 children are getting displaced each day. Girls as young as eight are being raped by fighters, according to a report by Unicef. Worse still is the fact that babies born of sexual violence are being abandoned.

Nature too seems to be conspiring against the Sudanese population. Famine is intensifying and 25 million people are experiencing acute hunger, as the warring groups block aid deliveries. US special envoy to Sudan, Tom Perriello, has warned that starving women and children are being used by the army and paramilitary fighting against each other as their arsenal. The destruction in the country's agriculture heartland shows darker days are ahead.

The International Organization for Migration has also expressed concern that the situation has reached breaking point. Heavy rains and flooding have exacerbated the humanitarian crisis.

The root cause of this human tragedy, far worse than any of the ongoing war, is the conflict that began more than a year ago, when the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) under Gen Abdel Fattah al-Burhan and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) under Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, known as Hemedti were locked in deadly war to gain control over the whole country.

Efforts to clinch a ceasefire deal last week ended in a fiasco after the Sudanese military did not turn up for talks in Geneva. Only the RSF attended the meeting. The latter was organically the creation of the army and the two had collaborated to overthrow the civilian democratic government in 2021 in a coup d'état. They wiped out the gains of the popular uprising that toppled the Islamist dictatorship of Omar Al-Bashir in 2019. However, RSF leaders can hardly claim to be peacemakers while continuing the terror campaign.

The opening failure of ceasefire talks in Geneva recently has, once again, brought back the civil war under international spotlight. The talks aimed at creating conditions for a truce in the conflict that has already forced 11 million people from their homes and 2.3 million others to flee to neighboring countries. With the warring groups blocking access to food aid, 25 million people in Sudan - more than half the population - are suffering from severe hunger.

The involvement of third parties is compounding matters further as the warring groups are getting a steady supply of arms from at least three countries. While Egypt and Saudi Arabia support the official army, the RSF receives backing from the United Arab Emirates and Russia. It is such a vicious circle that numerous armed groups and, willingly or unwillingly, tens of thousands of civilians have been sucked into the vortex of the conflict. In this climate weapons are available in far greater quantities than staple foods.

An Amnesty International report states weapons manufactured in China, Russia, Serbia, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen are being delivered to Sudan, particularly in Darfur, despite the UN embargo that has applied to this western region of the country since 2004.

Everyone says third party interference must end if any viable ceasefire is to be enforced through political negotiations involving the Sudanese civil society. However, no one knows how and currently it seems only strong international pressure can bring about a change. The world at large cannot feign ignorance as millions suffer in a country three times as big as France.



What you are not able to do today, you will achieve tomorrow. Persevere and you shall conquer. THE MOTHER



Ajit Ranade

FEMALE DOCTORS AND NURSES STILL FEAR FOR THEIR SAFETY EVEN INSIDE A HOSPITAL

A 25-year-old nurse Aruna Shanbaug was sexually assaulted by a male sweeper in Mumbai's renowned King Edward Memorial Hospital. He choked her with a dog chain and raped her and left her for dead. The assault resulted in brain damage, paralysis, cortical blindness and cervical cord injury. She was found the next morning, but not dead. This was in 1973. For the next forty-one years she remained in a vegetative state, cared for by the staff of the hospital. They refused to vacate her bed despite pressure from the Municipal Corporation to move her out of the hospital. She eventually died in the hospital. Many people had campaigned for euthanasia for her which was refused by the highest court. Her case led to a landmark legal judgment permitting passive euthanasia in India. But her ordeal will always remain a blot on society and a matter of shame. Even after fifty-one years, as the recent brutal rape and murder of a trainee doctor in a Kolkata hospital tells us, not much has changed. Female doctors and nurses still fear for their safety even inside a hospital. It also strongly highlights the issue of workplace safety for women.

This is one of the contributory factors affecting women's participation in the workforce. As such India has had one of the lowest workforce participation rates for females among all G20 countries. It declined from around 30% in 2004 to 20% by 2017. It has improved in the past few years after COVID. The sharp decline is attributed to a variety of supply and demand factors. On the demand side is the reluctance of employers to hire women, either in blue collar manufacturing or in white collar services sector. Work opportunities are not expanding fast enough. Another strange demand side reason is a law which was meant to be women friendly. The national law for compulsory maternity leave

perversely led to less not more recruitment for women.

On the supply side are factors such as social and cultural norms which prevent women from taking up jobs outside home. Or the priority given to household work and care giving to children and the elderly. Women do nearly 90% of household work, which is unpaid work. This ratio is most adverse against women, when seen as male to female sharing of housework across different societies in the world. In Africa and many Western countries, the share tends to be more equal, but not so in South Asia. Additionally, women workers are much more active in agriculture, where too their work remains hidden and unpaid.

But another important factor is workplace safety. The National Crime Records Bureau reveals that there is a 20% increase in reported gender crimes in the past four years. This is an underestimation because a large number of crimes go unreported. For fear of reprisal, the stigma attached to the victim and no confidence in police investigation. The case of the 2001 Kolkata rape from the same hospital proves how investigation was botched and the perpetrator was not punished. There are the additional factors of the

victim blaming syndrome and misogynistic attitudes which deter women from lodging formal complaints. There was an advisory from Assam's Silchar Medical College Hospital urging female students and doctors not to venture out at odd hours. This is not an isolated example of societal attitudes whose message is, women be careful, there are rapists out there.

In a 2021 research paper by Tanika Chakraborty and Nafisa Lohawala, the authors estimate the impact of fear of violence on female participation rate in workforce. They report that "For every additional crime per 1,000 women in a district, roughly 32 women are deterred from joining the workforce." So it is not just the prevalence of crime but the threat of sexual violence that can deter women from taking up formal sector jobs. This results in a sort of self-censorship. The irony is that female enrolment in colleges and higher education is rising, and they often outperform their male colleagues in academics. In most medical schools the incoming female enrolment is more than 50%, but the proportion of practicing female doctors is still less than 15%. This is a national loss, if a woman doctor is lost to society. It is not just for child and fam-

WISDOM CORNER

- The only difference between the saint and the sinner is that every saint has a past, and every sinner has a future. OSCAR WILDE
- It is better to have your head in the clouds, and know where you are... than to breathe the clearer atmosphere below them, and think that you are in paradise. HENRY DAVID THOREAU
- Whoever fights monsters should see to it that in the process he does not become a monster. And if you gaze long enough into an abyss, the abyss will gaze back into you. FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

- 1619:** It is believed that enslaved people were first brought to the English colony of Jamestown, Virginia.
- 1741:** Danish explorer Vitus Bering, who was working for Russia, encountered Alaska.
- 1865:** Austria and Prussia signed the Convention of Gastein, an agreement that temporarily postponed the final struggle between them for hegemony over Germany.
- 1914:** The German army captured Brussels during the initial German invasion of World War I.
- 1968:** The Warsaw Pact nations (except Romania and Albania), led by the Soviet Union, invaded Czechoslovakia to put an end to the Prague Spring.
- 1975:** Viking 1 launched. The robotic U.S. spacecraft Viking 1, built to explore the surface of Mars, was launched this day in 1975 and nearly one year later landed on Chryse Planitia, a flat lowland region in the northern hemisphere of the planet.
- 1993:** Oslo accords negotiations conclude. The negotiations for the Oslo Accords were concluded at the Fafo Institute in Oslo. The agreement was between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization. The accords, that were eventually signed in Washington D.C. set up the Palestinian Authority and gave it governing powers over the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

LOL

The golf ball

A golfer, playing a round by himself, is about to tee off, and a greasy little salesman runs up to him, and yells, "Wait! Before you tee off, I have something really amazing to show you!" The golfer, annoyed, says, "What is it?" "It's a special golf ball," says the salesman. "You can never lose it!" "Whattaya mean," scoffs the golfer, "you can never lose it? What if you hit it into the water?" "No problem," says the salesman. "It floats, and it detects where the shore



is, and spins towards it." "Well, what if you hit it into the woods?" "Easy," says the salesman. "It emits a beeping sound, and you can find it with your eyes closed." "Okay," says the golfer, impressed. "But what if your round goes late and it gets dark?" "No problem, sir, this golf ball glows in the dark! I'm telling you, you can never lose this golf ball!" The golfer buys it at once. "Just one question," he says to the salesman. "Where did you get it?" "I found it."

SPECTRUM ECONOMY

When growth obscures grim realities



Santosh Kumar Mohapatra

IT IS IMMATERIAL WHETHER INDIA WILL BECOME A DEVELOPED COUNTRY OR NOT BUT PEOPLE SHOULD HAVE A DECENT AND MEANINGFUL LIFE WHICH IS MISSING BY A BIG MARGIN

PM Modi's 78th Independence Day speech outlined a series of ambitious goals designed to drive India's future growth and global standing. Hailing Independence Day 2024's theme of 'Viksit Bharat at 2047', he echoed his aspiration to transform the country into a developed economy by 2047 or achieve high-income status within a generation. Drawing inspiration from the nation's freedom struggle, PM Modi emphasised the power of collective determination, stating, "If 40 crore people can break the shackles of slavery to gain freedom, just imagine what can be achieved by the resolve of 140 crore people."

However, during pre-Independence period, people were inspired by the sacrifice of leaders and joined the freedom struggle to liberate the country from imperial shackles. But today, dominance of hedonism, consumerism, greed and corruption are demotivating others to sacrifice. Politicians are found more entwined with corruption and criminal activities today. The dream of Viksit Bharat by 2047 is devoid of reality and Indians are made to believe the hype that

we have arrived. But it would be a grievous blunder for India to succumb to such publicity stunts. There are major structural problems that need to be fixed in the country to meet its potential.

Further, the 2047 deadline is far away. Nobody has seen tomorrow and everybody is dead in the long run. Talking about 2047 is just a ploy to make people forget their present problems of poverty, hunger, price rise, unemployment and inequality.

Currently, the Indian economy stands at \$3.6 trillion, making it the fifth-largest economy in the world after the US, China, Japan, and Germany. India continues to be the third largest economy in terms of purchasing power parity since 2011 which reflects the real size of the economy. No change in the last 13 years.

According to a report by India Ratings and Research, India should grow more than 9.7% consistently to reach \$30 trillion by 2046-47, which may not be easy. To maintain almost the same rate of growth with a higher base for the next 25 years needs something special. It depends upon real GDP growth, inflation (GDP deflator) and INR/USD ex-

change rate.

The World Bank's latest report titled "World Development Report 2024" warns that India could be one of the 100 countries that are likely to fall into the middle-income trap if it does not play its cards well. The World Bank said that India will take 75 years to reach a quarter of the US' GDP and income per capita at the current rate.

For the current fiscal, low-income economies are defined as those with a GNI per capita, calculated using the World Bank Atlas method, of \$1,145 or less in 2023; lower middle-income economies are those with a GNI per capita between \$1,146 and \$4,515; upper middle-income economies are those with a GNI per capita between \$4,516 and \$14,005; high-income economies are those with more than a GNI per capita of \$14,005. Until 2006, the World Bank classified India as a low-income country. In 2007, India moved to the lower-middle income country and since then it has remained there. India has to move to a high upper middle-income and then high-income economy, which is a distant dream.

For countries that are diffi-

cult to categorise according to per capita income, economists turn to the standard of living for measurement. The United Nations' HDI ranks countries on three parameters: life expectancy, education, and per capita income. The countries are scored between 0 and 1 based on these three parameters. A country with an HDI index over 0.8 is generally considered developed. India attained an HDI score of 0.644 in 2022, positioning it at 134 out of 193 countries in the UN's 2023-24 report.

GDP is not an indicator of the well-being of society. It is an indicator of economic activities which is spurred when richer sections of society produce and consume more. High growth obscures the grim realities of inequality, inflation, social discrimination and detrimental impact of privatisation. It is immaterial whether India will become a developed country or not but people should have a decent and meaningful life which is missing by a big margin.

The writer is an Odisha-based economist and columnist. Views are personal.

Lateral entrants

Sir, The Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) has advertised for 10 joint secretaries and 35 directors/deputy secretaries from the private sector to fill the posts that are usually held by Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officers. Home, Finance, Electronics, IT, Agriculture, Law and Justice and Information & Broadcasting are some of the ministries proposed to be filled by the domain specialists. When the Centre first appointed the "lateral entrants" in September 2019, care was taken to pick them primarily for non-sensitive ministries and, after some drop outs, there are at present 57 of them serving the government in different capacities. All this said, the bureaucracy has not been allowed any leeway by the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government at the Centre. According to reports, the performance of the existing lateral entrants has been reasonable. It is hoped that the subject-matter experts will bring in the much needed innovation and liveliness to the departments without trampling upon the authority of career bureaucrats.

Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA

Smell the coffee

Sir, "Old habits die hard," the saying goes. Coffee is one such habit that we cannot give up so easily. It has been a part of the human diet for more than a thousand years, and has been the most widely consumed beverage worldwide. The morning brew is a source of inspiration and upliftment that awakens our body and minds to the possibilities of every day. For those who may not know, the world's first coffee house was opened in Constantinople in 1475, now known as Istanbul. Smell the wonderful aroma of the fresh filter coffee early in the morning, take in the soothing mocha colour and relish the rich flavour of it - you will feel that you live in the moment, and find happiness in life's simple pleasures. There is a nice saying on coffee: "Coffee is a morning hug in a mug." Perhaps, coffee lovers worldwide should eulogize it by saying, "You are brewtiful."

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

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J&K polls no cakewalk for any single party

Total collapse of civic infra this monsoon, says Delhi LG

Chief Secy told to submit monthly report on inspections



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 19: Delhi Lieutenant Governor VK Saxena has directed Chief Secretary Naresh Kumar to submit a monthly report on the inspections conducted by senior officers in the aftermath of deaths due to complete collapse of civic infrastructure this monsoon, officials said Monday.

In a written communication to the Chief Secretary, Ashish Kundra, the Principal Secretary to Saxena, said the LG has advised that an institutionalised mechanism be put in place for scheduled inspections by senior officers of facilities under their charge.

It would help them obtain a first-hand feel of the core problems being faced by citizens and take corrective policy or regulatory measures. The Chief Secretary shall circulate a uniform format of inspection report to all departments and submit a monthly report on number of inspections done by each officer, read the letter.

Kundra also pointed out that even the Delhi High Court has taken a serious note in the matter of desilting of drains in the national capital and has made stinging observations.

The LG has observed that this monsoon has seen the complete collapse of civic infrastructure, leading to unfortunate and avoidable deaths of citizens. The underlying problems are symptomatic of endemic neglect, he said in the letter.

Drains have not been desilted for years, sewer lines are choked leading to flooding even in planned colonies, he added.

According to LG Saxena, all of this points to a complete absence of senior management oversight in the city, Kundra's letter said.

Sharing the LG's directions on the issue, Kundra said all head of departments (HOD), secretaries, principal secretaries, or additional chief secretaries need to draw up a schedule of field inspections and ensure that all assets or areas are inspected thoroughly.

The inspection note of the principal secretary or secretary

of the department shall be submitted to the chief secretary with a copy endorsed to the LG Secretariat and the minister-in-charge, he said.

According to Saxena's directions, the inspection note should summarise the core problem observed with the corrective measures invoked. The report should be annexed with geo-tagged pictures of before and after the intervention.

The communication to Kumar also fixed the frequency of inspections to be conducted by secretaries of the department concerned on a fortnightly basis while the HODs have to do them on a weekly basis.

The principal secretaries have also been advised to conduct inspections every fortnight.

The officers have also been directed to review the institutional mechanisms prescribed under various central and state acts and ensure that these are fully functional, the letter read.

Formulation of any rules, authorities, boards under these laws should be taken up within three weeks, it added.

The LG also insisted that there should be a robust mechanism of field level inspections at district level under the district magistrates (DM).

The inspection notes need to be submitted to the divisional commissioner who shall then send a consolidated note to the chief secretary, Kundra said.

District magistrates, SDMs and ADMS shall undertake inspection twice a week in areas of public delivery services, focusing on road infrastructure, drains, sewage management, education, transport, etc. The executive engineer, deputy directors, and other related officers shall invariably accompany the district magistrate during the inspections. The inspections should cover all kind of settlements such as rural, urban, planned areas, JJ colonies, unauthorised colonies, etc, the letter read.

The DMs have also been asked to interact with the resident welfare associations in their jurisdictions once a month to find out the issues faced by local people and resolve them.

IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE ANNOUNCEMENT WAS MADE BY THE CHIEF ELECTION COMMISSIONER IN NEW DELHI, A CHURNING OF SORTS IS TAKING PLACE IN THE POLITICAL PARTIES

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Srinagar, August 19: With the Election Commission of India (ECI) announcing the 3-phased Assembly polls in J&K, it seems that a hornet's nest has been stirred up among the political parties in the Union Territory.

Immediately after the announcement was made by the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) in New Delhi, a churning of sorts is taking place in the political parties and the most affected by this development are the newly formed parties like the Democratic Progressive Azad Party (DPAP) headed by former chief minister Ghulam Nabi Azad, the J&K Apni Party headed by Syed Altaf Bukhari and the People's Conference (PC) headed by Sajad Gani Lone.

A senior leader and a close confidante of Azad, Taj Mohiuddin said Saturday that he would rejoin the Congress after announcing that he was leaving the DPAP.

Taj left Congress immediately after Azad left it. Now it is going to be a 'homecoming' for the senior leader. Azad did not field any candidate in the Lok Sabha elections in Kashmir. However, his candidate, GM Saroori from Jammu's Kathua-Udhampur constituency lost the Lok Sabha election to Jitendra Singh of the BJP.

As was expected, Azad's parting ways with Congress after almost a lifetime association of over 50 years has finally cost him heavily. Reports now suggest



that Ghulam Nabi Azad is most likely going to rejoin the Congress party.

J&K Apni Party fielded its candidates Mohammad Ashraf Mir in Srinagar and Zafar Iqbal Manhas in Anantnag-Rajouri Lok Sabha seats and both candidates lost badly.

The two candidates lost their security deposit during the Lok Sabha elections. Worse than that, the J&K Apni Party did not get majority votes in any Assembly segment of these two Lok Sabha constituencies. Sajad Gani Lone of the PC fought the Baramulla Lok Sabha seat. Both Sajad and former chief minister and vice president of the National

Conference (NC), Omar Abdullah were defeated by the incarcerated Awami Ittehad Party founder, Engineer Abdul Rashid Sheikh.

Sajad Gani Lone and Omar Abdullah, however, polled respectable number of votes and both saved their security deposit. A senior leader and former minister, Choudhary Zulfikar Ali of the J&K Apni Party met Union Home Minister Amit Shah Saturday and is likely to join the BJP soon.

The BJP is well entrenched in the Jammu division, but it is still trying to find its base in the Kashmir Valley.

The Congress has some presence in Kashmir, but its main

electoral battle during the Assembly elections is going to be with the BJP in the Jammu division.

Farooq Abdullah's NC has a strong presence in the Valley (Kashmir) and also an appreciable political base in the Muslim-dominated Assembly segments of the Jammu division. This is the apparent position, but this might not be the end of the story.

Engineer Rashid has already emerged as a potential challenge to the NC in Kupwara, Bandipora and Baramulla districts.

Sources close to Engineer Rashid told IANS that the incarcerated leader is likely to field candidates of his party in these three districts. In Baramulla, Kupwara and Bandipora districts, Engineer Rashid can upset the otherwise well-entrenched NC.

It is also likely that after they got disgruntled with Pakistan, the separatists especially those belonging to the banned Jamaat-e-Islami could field proxy candidates in the south Kashmir districts of Shopian, Kulgam, Anantnag and Pulwama.

Believing that the Jamaat-e-Islami proxies cannot win Assembly seats would be behaving like the proverbial ostrich hiding one's head in the sand.

Youth of Jamaati families who joined militancy have either been killed or detained to prevent them from disturbing the law and order situation.

If the Jamaati youth choose to

fight Assembly elections on their own without declaring any affiliation with the Jamaat, it is constitutionally and legally impossible to prevent them from joining the democratic space.

Expecting that since these youth belong to Jamaati families and thus they would not win public support could be wrong as per past history.

In 1987, all anti-NC political parties fought the Assembly election and nothing short of blatant rigging by the then NC government kept the conglomerate, Muslim United Front (MUF) from winning a good number of seats. What the anti-NC forces could not achieve in 1987, can be done in 2024 given the assurance of completely free, fair and fearless elections by the ECI.

The PDP headed by former chief minister, Mehbooba Mufti may be down, but not out. It can still win some seats to make its presence felt.

J&K Assembly has 90 seats out of which 74 constituencies are for the general category, nine for Scheduled Tribes and seven for Scheduled Castes.

Given the above scenario, it will be politically naive if the NC or any other party believes that getting the simple majority of 45 seats is a cakewalk.

The destiny of all political parties lies in the hands of the voters and believing that the voters would stand in one queue for any single political party would be expecting the impossible.

J&K POLLS

Article 370, statehood restoration among NC manifesto's guarantees

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar, August 19: Restoration of Article 370 and Jammu and Kashmir's statehood as well as implementation of the autonomy resolution passed by the erstwhile Assembly in 2000 are among the National Conference's 12 guarantees announced in its manifesto for the upcoming polls.

In June 2000, the NC government under Farooq Abdullah passed a resolution in the Assembly seeking to restore the pre-1953 constitutional position in the state. It was, however, rejected by the Union Cabinet headed by then Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

The Narendra Modi government abrogated Article 370, which gave special status to Jammu and Kashmir, in 2019 and bifurcated the erstwhile state into two Union Territories -- Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh.

Releasing the manifesto at a press conference here, NC Vice President Omar Abdullah said the party is making only those promises it can deliver. He described the manifesto as the NC's vision document and a roadmap for governance.

The manifesto makes 12 broad promises, including striving for the full implementation of the Autonomy Resolution passed by the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly in 2000.

“We only have to go as far as to remind the Supreme Court that the government of India has promised the SC that statehood will be restored to J-K. In the unlikely event that the GoI is not willing to do it on its own will, we will go to the SC and we will get justice from there”

OMAR ABDULLAH | VICE-PRESIDENT, NC

We strive to restore (Articles) 370-35A, and statehood as prior to August 5, 2019, the NC poll document said.

In the interim period, we will endeavour to redraw the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019, and the Transaction of Business of the Government of Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir Rules, 2019, it said.

The manifesto promises that the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly, in its first list of business after elections, will pass a resolution against the Centre's decision to strip the region of its statehood and special status.

Assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir will be held in three phases September 18, September 25 and October 1. The results will be announced October 4.

Last December, the Supreme Court directed the poll panel to hold Assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir by September 30.



52 days & over 5 lakh pilgrims

Amarnath Yatra concludes

AGENCIES

Srinagar, August 19: After it continued smoothly and peacefully during the last 52 days with nearly five lakh Yatris having 'darshan' inside the cave shrine, the annual Amarnath Yatra concluded Monday.

'Chhari Mubarak' (Silver robbed Lord Shiva's Mace), carried by Mahant Swami Deependra Giri started the last leg of its journey from Panchtarni to the holy cave this morning.

The Yatra started this year June 29 and ended Monday after 52 days amid high-security arrangements.

The ubiquitous presence of police and the CAPFs all along the Yatra route from Jammu to the two base camps of Baltal and Nun (Pahalgam), highly professionally and technologically equipped security at the transit camps and above all, the total cooperation of the local people made the incident-free conduct of the Yatra possible this year.

Accompanied by Sadhus and devotees chanting 'Bum Bum



Bhole' and Vedic hymns in praise of Lord Shiva, the final journey of Chhari Mubarak started from Panchtarni, the last halting camp, towards the cave shrine situated 3,888 metres above the sea-level in Kashmir Himalayas.

The cave shrine houses an ice stalagmite structure that wanes and waxes with the phases of the moon. Devotees believe the stalagmite structure represents the mythical powers of Lord Shiva.

Yatra will conclude on the occasion of 'Shravan Purnima' coinciding with the Raksha Bandhan festival.

Amid traditional 'puja' and rituals, daylong prayers will be offered for world peace and prosperity of mankind after which the Chhari Mubarak will return

to Panchtarni on the way to Pahalgam.

Chhari Mubarak left its seat at Dashnami Akhara temple in Srinagar August 14. After paying obeisance at various temples en route, it stayed at Pahalgam for two nights before starting its onward journey to the cave shrine August 16.

Swami Deependra Giri, the custodial of Chhari Mubarak, expressed satisfaction over the improved arrangements made by the Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board (SASB) headed by Lt Governor Manoj Sinha and the union territory administration for the pilgrims.

Swami Giri said with the increased facilities, including the widening of the track to the cave shrine the influx of pilgrims has increased.

He said the Chhari Mubarak would make special prayers for the peace and prosperity of the mankind at cave shrine. Prayers will also be specially offered for peace and prosperity of the country, including J&K, considered to be the abode of Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati.

Yesterday once more

Dilli 6's Mughal-era sweet shop 'Ghantewala' reopens

The 'Sohan halwa', a ghee dripping gram flour biscuit of Persian origin, has been a trademark delicacy of the shop since the beginning

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 19: Combining the old with the new, Ghantewala, the Mughal-era outlet in Old Delhi's bustling Chandni Chowk, reopened its doors after almost a decade this week with its famed ghee soaked 'sohan halwa' and 'Karachi halwa' sharing space with healthier alternatives such as ragi laddus.

Established in 1790 by Lala Sukh Lal Jain, Ghantewala, one of the popular landmarks of 'Dilli 6' was forced to pull down its shutters in 2015 due to dwindling sales.

However, come 2024, the Mughal-era shop witnessing popular demand for its products on

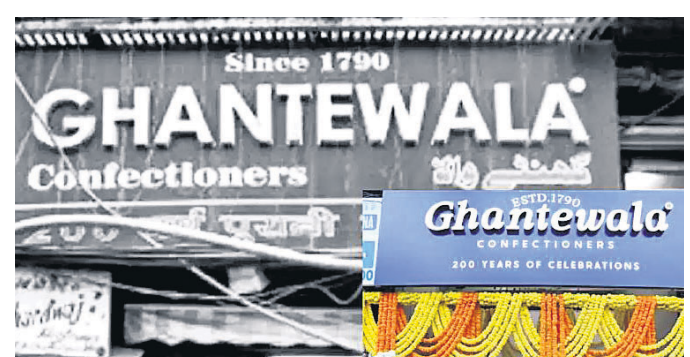
line is now back to its old address, this time in a new swanky avatar, attracting its patrons with the same old wafting aroma of desi ghee and the sweet mix of khoya, coconut and rich nuts.

"My whole family was extremely sad when we had to close the store in 2015. Many customers would come and complain to us, 'Where would we eat good quality sweets now, especially our favourite 'Sohan Halwa'." Ghantawala owner Sushant Jain told PTI.

"Finally, two-three years ago we started selling our legacy sweets online, and the kind of response we got from customers pan-India was too overwhelming. That is when we decided that we should start our physical outlet again," Jain said.

The 'Sohan halwa', a ghee dripping gram flour biscuit of Persian origin, has been a trademark delicacy of the shop since the beginning.

Giving a sneak peek into the rich history of the shop, and even food inflation over the



years, is the picture of its 1954 menu featured in the renovated outlet's 'wall of fame' where 'Sohan Halwa' is priced at almost ₹6 per kg.

The current price for Sohan Halwa at the shop is ₹1,100 per kg - an astronomical increase of over 18,000 per cent since 1954.

The wall of fame also displays pictures and testimonies of its eminent clients, including the likes of former prime ministers Jawaharlal Nehru, Indira Gandhi, Rajiv Gandhi, and Morarji Desai, and even acclaimed painter MF Hussain.

pared in desi ghee.

"I am not selling just some sweets and 'chaat' here, what I am mainly selling here is the legacy which I have inherited from my great great grandfathers," said Aryan, who recently pursued a degree in Hotel Management to add more expertise to the family business.

Be it the old customers making a beeline for the shop after hearing the news about its reopening or the new ones paying a visit to know the reason behind all the hype, the reviews by walk-ins have been music to the ears of the Jain family.

"We came to Chandni Chowk for my wedding shopping. In between we had some time for breakfast, so I asked people which would be a good place to go, everyone said, 'Ghantewala'. The food is really good," said Umesh Kumar Singh, a customer hailing from Gurgaon.

"This place actually gives you the typical 'Dilli 6' taste. I guess we would be coming here more often now," he said.

national

of the day quote

Under the Jharkhand Mukhyamantri Mainiya Samman Yojana (JIMSY), more than 48 lakh sisters of the state will get financial assistance of ₹12,000 every year

HEMANT SOREN | CM, JHARKHAND

My political life is an open book. I have committed no wrong, will not commit any wrong. Using Raj Bhavan, BJP and JD(S) have hatched a conspiracy, to tarnish my image

SIDDARAMAIAH | CM, KARNATAKA

There is no coordination between the constituent parties of the Mahayuti, no mutual respect, and no genuine concern for the welfare of the people of Maharashtra

MAHESH TAPASE | NCP (SP) CHIEF SPOKESPERSON

SHORT TAKES

4 die after eating adulterated food

Amaravati: Four orphan children who ate adulterated food two days ago succumbed to health complications in Anakapalli district and Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu expressed deep sorrow over the incident Monday. The incident occurred at Kailasa village in Anakapalli district's Kotauratla mandal. "Joshua, Bhavani, Shradha and Nitya were among those who succumbed to ill-health while undergoing treatment for consuming adulterated food two days ago (Saturday)," said an official release.

Three picnickers drown in river

Allbag: Two brothers and their relative drowned in a river during a picnic in Maharashtra's Raigad district, police said Monday. The incident occurred in Savitri river in Mahad Sunday afternoon, an official said. The trio entered the river for a swim but couldn't gauge the depth of the water and drowned, he said. The local police carried out a search and rescue operation, and the bodies were fished out in the evening, the official said.

Minor boy found dead in drain

New Delhi: The body of a boy was recovered from a drain outside his residence in northwest Delhi's Ashok Vihar area, police said Monday. Prince was playing near his house Sunday afternoon when he went missing, they said. While the search was on, someone informed the police that Prince was seen playing near a drain which was not covered. The body was recovered from the drain the same evening, Meena said, the body has been handed over to his family after the post-mortem examination and further probe is underway.

Tanker accident kills five in Maharashtra

Thane: A case was registered against the deceased driver of the milk tanker that fell into a gorge in Kasara Ghat section, killing five persons, a Thane rural police official said Monday. The incident took place at 3pm Sunday after the speeding tanker rrammed into an iron barrier and fell into the 200 feet deep gorge, the official said. The persons who lost their lives and the four injured had taken a lift in the tanker to reach Mumbai, the official said.



We are disappointed that the allocation of funds for the Southern Railways under certain Heads of Accounts in the Regular Budget for Indian Railways for the financial year 2024-2025, are much lesser when compared to the allocations in the Interim Budget of the same year

MK STALIN | CM, TAMIL NADU

MPOX SCARE: CENTRE TELLS INT'L AIRPORTS TO BE VIGILANT

The Union Health Ministry has asked all airports as well as authorities at land ports on borders with Bangladesh and Pakistan to remain alert about incoming international passengers reporting Mpx symptoms, official sources said Sunday



Modi to visit Ukraine

This trip comes about a month after he met Russian President in Moscow

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 19: As Prime Minister Narendra Modi embarks on a nearly seven-hour visit to Kyiv this week, India Monday said it is willing to provide all possible support required to help find a peaceful solution to the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), announcing Modi's August 23 trip, said it would be a "landmark and historic" visit, the first by an Indian prime minister to Ukraine since diplomatic ties were established between the two countries over 30 years back.

The prime minister will travel to Kyiv from Poland in a train that will take around 10 hours. The return trip will also be of the same duration, people familiar with the matter said.

A number of world leaders including US President Joe Biden also travelled to Kyiv by train from the Polish train station near the Ukrainian border.

Before travelling to Ukraine, Modi will pay a two-day visit to Poland August 21 and 22.

The prime minister's visit to Ukraine is taking place amid Kyiv's fresh military offensive into Russian territory.

Modi's visit to Kyiv comes weeks after his high-profile trip to Moscow that triggered criticism from the US and some of its Western allies.

"India has substantive and independent ties with both Russia and Ukraine and these partnerships stand on their own," Tanmaya Lal, Secretary (West) in the MEA said at a media briefing. The visit will build on continuing engagement between India and Ukraine, he said.

"I would like to say that this is not a zero-sum game. The prime



minister had also travelled to Russia. Many ideas were discussed," Lal said. "The prime minister also met President Zelenskyy on a couple of occasions in the last one year or so and they will now be meeting again in Ukraine," he said. "I would like to say that these are independent broad ties and of course the ongoing conflict will form part of the discussions," he added.

Asked about the conflict in Ukraine, Lal said: "India is willing to provide all possible support and contribution required to help find peaceful solutions to this complex issue." At the same time, he declined to anticipate or prejudice the outcome of the talks between Modi and Zelenskyy.

"India has maintained a very clear and consistent position that diplomacy and dialogue can resolve this conflict which can lead to enduring peace," Lal said.

"So dialogue is absolutely essential. Lasting peace can only be achieved through options that are acceptable to both parties and it can only be a negotiated settlement. India continues to engage with all stakeholders," he said. Lal also noted that India has consistently been advocating for diplomacy and dialogue to reach a negotiated settlement to the Ukraine conflict.

"Prime Minister Modi said this is not the time for war. Solutions cannot be found on the battlefield. This is a clear and consistent position that India has taken and we believe that a vast majority of countries share this view," Lal said.

On India's ties with Ukraine, he said the relationship is "continuous and long-standing".

"It is a landmark and historic visit since this will be the first time that an Indian prime minister will be visiting Ukraine in more than 30 years since the diplomatic relations were established between the two countries," Lal said.

Ukraine has pitched for New Delhi to help rebuild its war-ravaged economy, inviting investment from Indian companies at a January business summit in India

KOLKATA MURDER-RAPE CASE Docs give OPD services outside Nirman Bhawan

RESIDENT DOCTORS WILL BE AVAILABLE TO PROVIDE ELECTIVE OPD SERVICES IN AROUND 36 SPECIALTIES

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 19: Medics are offering elective outpatient services on the road outside Nirman Bhawan Monday, calling it a symbolic protest, as they continued their strike for the eighth consecutive day over the rape and murder of a trainee doctor in Kolkata.

Doctors sat with sheets of paper showing their names and specialisations - ortho OPD, neurology OPD, psychiatry OPD, PMR - on the road in front of the office of the Ministry of Health at Nirman Bhawan Monday.

A doctor sitting on the road to check patients said, "At the hospital, there is no safety or protection. At least here, we have police around us, so we can treat patients here. We have no option but to fight for ourselves, as nobody is doing anything besides offering us sympathy and empty assurances."

"The OPD we are operating here is a symbolic protest. We are both protesting and offering OPD services," Doctor Ansar said.

"We want the CBI to catch the culprits (of the Kolkata rape-murder incident) and for the court to impose the maximum punishment. We urge the government to ensure that no such incidents occur in the future." Around 300 to 400 people gath-



The doctors' strike in the national capital over the rape and murder of a medic at a state-run hospital in Kolkata completed a week Sunday and is now entering its second week, causing difficulties for patients

ered at Nirman Bhawan Monday, holding flags and placards and wearing white aprons stained with red and black colours.

"We doctors have been protesting here for eight days, and nothing has changed so far. We will not stop; the strike will continue until the Central Protection Act (CPA) is implemented," said one of the protesting doctors.

Doctor Prashasti said that female doctors are scared while working.

The doctors' strike in the national capital over the rape and murder of a medic at a state-run hospital in Kolkata completed a week Sunday and is now entering its second week, causing difficulties for patients.

CBI busts bribery ring at NCL in Madhya Pradesh

NCL is a 'Mini Ratna' company under the Coal Ministry

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 19: The CBI has arrested five people, including its own deputy superintendent of police and two officials of the Northern Coalfields Limited (NCL), in Madhya Pradesh's Singrauli in an alleged corruption and bribery case.

NCL is a 'Mini Ratna' company under the Coal Ministry. The federal probe agency conducted searches in connection with the case August 17 in Singrauli and Jabalpur as well as Noida in Uttar Pradesh.

The premises of various officials of the NCL, including that of Subedar Ojha, Private Secretary to CMD NCL and manager (secretariat), former NCL CMD Bhola Singh, its present chief vigilance officer (CVO) and some other senior officers were searched, official sources said.

Those who have been arrested are deputy superintendent of police (DSP) Joy Joseph Damle,



posted at CBI anti-corruption branch at Jabalpur; Subedar Ojha; Lt Col (retired) Basant Kumar Singh, chief manager administration at NCL, Singrauli; Ravi Shankar Singh, alleged middleman and director of Sangam Engineering in Singrauli and his associate Diwesh Singh.

The agency produced them before a special court in Jabalpur Monday that sent them to CBI custody till August 24, sources said.

A Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) spokesperson said Rs 3.85 crore in cash was recovered from Ojha's residence.

"This amount was allegedly amassed from several contractors and officials in lieu of favours for their operations in NCL, Singrauli," the spokesperson said.

WAQF BILL Jamiat meeting Oppn leaders

THE JAMIAT DELEGATIONS ARE MEETING CONCERNED MPS AND EMPHASISING THAT IF THE BILL IS PASSED IN ITS CURRENT FORM, ALL THE PROPERTIES OF WAQF WILL BECOME 'UNSAFE'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 19: The Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind is holding meetings with Opposition leaders as well as members of the Parliament's joint committee on the Waqf (Amendment) Bill to impress upon them that the proposed legislation is "unconstitutional" and an "interference" in the religious affairs of the community, the prominent Muslim body said Monday.

The Jamiat delegations are meeting concerned MPs and emphasizing that if the Bill is passed in its current form, all the properties of Waqf will become "unsafe".

The committee, chaired by



BJP member Jagdambika Pal, will meet representatives of the ministries of minority affairs, and law and justice August 22, according to a notice from the Lok Sabha secretariat.

The Jamiat said that on the instructions of Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind president Maulana Arshad Madani, representatives of the body are continuously meeting leaders of all Opposition parties and members of the joint committee on the Bill.

During these meetings, while the delegations are pointing to the wrong and harmful amendments of this Bill, efforts are also being made to detail the harmful effects it can have on Muslims in case the Bill is passed and how Muslims can be deprived of their Waqf proper-

ties, the Jamiat said in a statement.

These meetings are being held at both the national and state levels, it said. A delegation of Jamiat in Maharashtra recently met Mhatre Balya Mama (NCP Sharad Pawar) and Arvind Sawant (Shiv Sena UBT), who are members of the parliamentary panel, in Mumbai.

A joint delegation of All India Muslim Personal Law Board and Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind is also going to meet Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin August 20, the statement said.

In other states including Bihar, members are meeting leaders of political parties and the Parliament committee members and telling them about the flaws of the proposed

Bill and its "harmful sections", the statement said. The Jamiat representatives are meeting the leaders of the Parliament committee to draw their attention to the "dangerous" provisions of this "unconstitutional and unjust Bill", the statement said.

The concerned MPs are being told that if this Bill is passed in its current form, all the properties of Waqf will become "unsafe", the Jamiat said.

"Even the claim of Muslims on old mosques, mausoleums, Imam Baras and graveyards, which are Waqf, will be weakened because there is a conspiracy to abolish the Waqf Tribunal and give all the rights to the District Collector," the Jamiat said.

Rahul highlights gig workers' plight, posts video of his ride

IN THE OVER-11 MINUTE VIDEO, GANDHI IS SEEN TAKING A CAB RIDE AFTER BOOKING A TAXI THROUGH THE UBER APP

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 19: Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi Monday highlighted the plight of gig workers and asserted that the Congress governments in states would make concrete policies to solve their problems while the INDIA bloc would strive for ensuring their nationwide implementation.

Gandhi made the remarks on X, where he posted a video of a recent ride he took in a Uber



cab and the interaction he had with the driver.

"Low income and inflation ruining lives -- this is the plight of India's gig workers! In discussion with Sunil Upadhyay ji

during a Uber ride and then, after meeting his family, took stock of the problems faced by gig workers such as cab drivers and delivery agents in the country," the former Congress chief

said in Hindi on X.

"They are barely surviving on 'hand to mouth income' - no savings and no foundation for the family's future. To solve these, the state governments of the

Low income and inflation ruining lives - this is the plight of India's gig workers! In discussion with Sunil Upadhyay ji during a Uber ride and then, after meeting his family, took stock of the problems faced by gig workers such as cab drivers and delivery agents in the country

RAHUL GANDHI | LEADER OF OPPOSITION

Congress will do justice by making concrete policies," he said.

The INDIA 'janbandhan' will ensure their nationwide implementation with full force, Gandhi added. In the over-11 minute video, Gandhi is seen taking a cab ride after booking a taxi through the Uber app.

He interacts with the cab driver, who belongs to Etah in Uttar Pradesh, and asks him about his problems.

The cab driver tells Gandhi that he is surviving on bare minimum funds with poor rates for drivers and no social security.

He also talks about thoughts of returning to his native village, being unable to make ends meet in Delhi.

Gandhi ends the ride and hands over a gift for the children of the cab driver.

The day after the ride, Gandhi is seen having lunch with the family of the cab driver at an eatery in Delhi.

Gandhi assures them that Congress governments in various states were thinking about gig workers and he wanted to ensure social security for the drivers and their families.



No talk was held yet with Champai Soren. He is a seasoned politician and has been part of the separate Jharkhand movement. He will himself decide his own path

BABUL MARANDI | BJP CHIEF, JHARKHAND

MUDA LAND SCAM: HC DIRECTS NO ACTION AGAINST SIDDARAMAIAH

The Karnataka High Court Monday directed the special court for people's representatives, slated to hear complaints against Chief Minister Siddaramaiah in the alleged Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) site allotment 'scam', to defer its proceedings till the next date of hearing August 29



of the day quote

Our role as a government is to ensure maximum development for the people of Meghalaya. We have set clear goals for the next decade and we are working to achieve them

CONRAD K SANGMA | CM, MEGHALAYA

The state had been witnessing terrorist activities for the last 40 years. We have now reached a stage where such activities are almost nearing an end

GP SINGH | DIRECTOR GENERAL OF POLICE, ASSAM

Should CM Eknath Shinde assert that my presence poses a hindrance to reaching a decision concerning the Maratha quota, I shall tender my resignation and withdraw from politics

DEVENDRA FADNAVIS | DEPUTY CM, MAHARASHTRA

X POST OF THE DAY

This is the 1st time in the History more than 60,000 supporters of Mohun-Bagan & East Bengal football club came together & demanding justice for the doctor of #RGKarHospital. The police even Lathi Charge the supporters but failed. Lets fight for Justice

mamata must resign #KolkataDoctorDeathCase #justiceformoumitadebnath @JAKHARPARDDEEP

SHORT TAKES

VHP leader's murder: Arms supplier held

New Delhi: A key accused, who had supplied the illegal arms and ammunition used in the high-profile murder of VHP leader Vikas Prabhakar alias Vikas Bagga in Punjab, was arrested Sunday by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) in a coordinated operation with the Delhi Police Special Cell. The accused Dharminder Kumar alias Kunal (22), wanted in the case, was nabbed by the teams of the NIA and Delhi Police Special Cell, in Punjab's Ludhiana, an official statement said.

200 jawans fall sick due to 'food poisoning'

Supaul (Bihar): Around 200 jawans of the Bihar Special Armed Police (BSAP) fell ill from suspected food poisoning at Bihmnagar in Supaul district, police said Monday. However, all of them were discharged from hospital after their condition improved, according to a statement issued by the Bihar Police headquarters in Patna. "Immediately after taking lunch at the Bihmnagar training centre Sunday, some of the jawans complained of heartburn, stomach ache, vomiting and loose motion. They were rushed to the local government hospital, where senior officials of the district police also arrived," it said.

18 Bangladeshis arrested in Tripura

Agartala: Eighteen Bangladeshi nationals and five Indian facilitators were arrested from three locations in Tripura, police said Monday. Acting on specific information about the presence of a group of Bangladeshi citizens at Lamprapara in Gumati district, police conducted a raid and arrested eight of them Sunday. Assistant Inspector General (Law and Order) Ananta Das said in a statement.

'Lateral entry attack on Dalits, OBCs, adivasis'

Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi accused the BJP of seeking to snatch reservations from 'bahujans'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 19: Upping the ante over the lateral entry issue, the Congress Monday accused the BJP of "snatching reservation" and handing out posts meant for SCs, STs, OBCs, and EWS to people of the RSS.

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge claimed that while his party-led government had brought in lateral entry to appoint select specialists and experts in some sector-specific posts as per their utility, the Modi government has made provision for it to "snatch the rights" of Dalits, tribals and backward classes.

Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi alleged that the government's move of recruiting public servants through lateral entry was an attack on Dalits, OBCs and adivasis. He accused the BJP of seeking to snatch reservations from 'bahujans'.

The Congress has strongly criticised the government after the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) Saturday issued a notification for recruiting 45 joint secretaries, directors and deputy secretaries



Why is the provision of lateral entry by the Modi government an attack on the Constitution? Instead of filling jobs in government departments, the BJP has eliminated 5.1 lakh posts in the last 10 years by selling the share of Government of India in PSUs alone

MALLIKARJUN KHARGE | CONG PRESIDENT

through lateral entry - referred to as the appointment of specialists (including those from the private sector) in government departments.

"Lateral entry is an attack on Dalits, OBCs and adivasis," Gandhi said on X.

"The BJP's distorted version of Ram Rajya seeks to destroy the Constitution and snatch reservations from bahujans," the former Congress chief said.

In a post in Hindi on X, Kharge said, "Why is the provision of lateral entry by the Modi government an attack on the Constitution? Instead of filling jobs in government departments, the BJP has elim-

inated 5.1 lakh posts in the last 10 years by selling the share of Government of India in PSUs alone."

Casual and contractual recruitment has increased by 91 per cent, he claimed. Posts for SCs, STs, and OBCs decreased by 1.3 lakh by 2022-23, he alleged.

"We had brought lateral entry to appoint select specialists and experts in some sector-specific posts as per their utility. But the Modi government has made provision of lateral entry not to appoint experts in the government but to snatch the rights of Dalits, tribals and backward classes," Kharge said.

"SC, ST, OBC, EWS posts will now be given to people of the RSS. This is BJP's 'Chakravayuh' to change the Constitution by snatching reservation," the Congress president alleged.

Government sources have said the concept of lateral entry was first introduced under the Congress-led UPA regime and was strongly endorsed by the Second Administrative Reforms Commission established by it in 2005.

Centre approves 25% increase in security at all central govt hospitals

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 19: The Health Ministry has allowed enhancement of security deployment by 25 per cent at all union government hospitals, official said, amid protests by resident doctors demanding a central law following the alleged rape and murder of a trainee doctor at a Kolkata hospital.

Officials said that apart from the standard security protocol, the deployment of marshals would also be approved based on individual demands by government hospitals after they conduct their security assessment.

Official sources, however, said bringing a central law based on the RG Kar case "will not make any huge difference" as the alleged rape and murder of the junior doctor at the Kolkata facility was not a case of patient-doctor violence.

Crimes and rapes are already covered under existing laws, they said.

They further said that 26 states and Union Territories including West Bengal, Uttarakhand, Delhi, Haryana, Maharashtra, Assam, Karnataka and Kerala have passed legislations to protect healthcare personnel. In all these states these offences are cognisable and non-bailable.

"So, bringing in an ordinance or even a Central law, that too based on the RG Kar case which was not a patient-doctor violence incident, will not make any huge difference," an official source said.

They said they have held meetings with some Residents Doctors' Associations and have explained these aspects to them too.

KOLKATA RAPE-MURDER CASE

Top Court to hear plea August 20



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 19: The Supreme Court is scheduled to hear Tuesday a suo motu case, ahead of other matters, related to the rape and murder of a post-graduate medic at the RG Kar Medical College and Hospital in Kolkata amid the ongoing nationwide doctors' strike over it.

A bench headed by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud, which had taken cognisance of the incident, has kept the matter on top of the cause list for hearing at 10:30 am Tuesday.

The suo motu cognisance of the case, titled "In Re: Alleged rape and murder incident of a trainee doctor in RG Kar Medical College and Hospital, Kolkata and related issue", assumes significance in view of the fact that Calcutta High Court is already in action and has transferred the probe into the case to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).

The top court may widen the spectrum of judicial scrutiny, keeping in mind the ongoing nationwide protests, especially by the doctors and their concerns.

The doctors' strike over the rape and murder of the medic completed a week Sunday and is now entering its second week, causing difficulties for patients.

The protesting doctors want the CBI to catch the culprits and

1 held for sharing photo of RG Kar Hospital victim

Kolkata: A person was arrested in Kolkata for allegedly disclosing the identity on social media of the doctor who was raped and murdered at RG Kar Medical College and Hospital, and issuing threats to Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, police said Monday. The arrest was made after a complaint was lodged at the Taltala police station, they added.

Former students of RG Kar hospital join protest

Kolkata: Several former students of state-run RG Kar Medical College and Hospital here Monday joined the protest against the rape and murder of a woman doctor inside the premises of the hospital on August nine. Alongside their younger counterparts, the veteran doctors staged a sit-in protest holding placards and demanding speedy justice.

CBI gets court nod to conduct polygraph test

Kolkata: A local court here Monday granted CBI permission to conduct a polygraph test on Sanjay Roy, accused in the rape-murder of a woman doctor at RG Kar Medical College and Hospital, an official said. The CBI was yet to schedule a date for the test, he told PTL. Rule requires the accused be brought before a magistrate, who will ask if he agrees to the polygraph test, the official said.

for the court to impose the maximum punishment on them.

Security in NE a concern: Think tank

THE POLITICAL INSTABILITY IN BANGLADESH HAS DIRECT REPERCUSSIONS BOTH ON SECURITY AND DEVELOPMENTAL PROJECTS IN NORTH EAST INDIA, SAYS THINK TANK SHARE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Guwahati, August 19: Former foreign secretary Harshvardan Shringla has said that India needs to engage with those in power now in Bangladesh, as instability in the neighbouring country has a direct impact on the security scenario of the Northeastern region.

Shringla said this at a programme in which a report on policy options for India in dealing with the current Bangladesh situation was released.

The report, to be submitted to the Centre, was prepared by a think tank Society to Harmonise Aspirations for Responsible Engagement (SHARE).

The political instability in Bangladesh has direct repercussions both on security and developmental projects in North East India, security and defence experts, who are members of SHARE, said at the event.

"India has to engage with those in power or those behind the powers in Bangladesh as stability in the neighbourhood has a direct import to the security scenario of North East India."

"We have two core concerns, Bangladesh's territory not be used in any manner inimical to its (India's) interests and ensuring the safety of Hindus and other minorities in the neighbouring country," the former ambassador to Bangladesh said.

Shringla also said that the recommendations in this report are prefaced by three key facts, it remains uncertain who is currently responsible for policy making in Bangladesh, there is palpable anti-India sentiments in the neighbouring country, and finally, economic stability and employment generation there.

The report will be submitted to the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) and the National Security Advisor for implementation, former Eastern Command GOC-in-C Lt General R P Kalita (Retd) said at the event.

Ex-Ladakh Lt Governor R K Mathur said that care has been taken to ensure the recommendations are "implementable and acceptable to all sections and ideologies" as the neighbouring country goes through socio-political upheaval.

"The recommendations are divided into short, medium and long-term so as to ensure a staged approach to policymaking on India's part which is mutually acceptable," the former defence secretary said. Assam Chief Information Commissioner Bhaskar Jyoti Mahanta, highlighting the recommendations, said dialogue with all stakeholders is in India's core interests, especially with regard to tackling a possible refugee crisis in the Northeast which has a border of 1885 kms with Bangladesh.



Women tie 'rakhi' on wrists of a Border Security Force (BSF) personnel on the occasion of Rakshabandhan festival at the India-Pakistan Attari-Wagah Border post, about 35km from Amritsar, Monday

Environment, women's safety in focus

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 19: Raksha Bandhan festival Monday saw the celebration of the brother-sister bond with the tying of the sacred thread and vivid messaging on issues like environment conservation and social equity with an emphasis on women's safety.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi celebrated the festival at his residence with schoolchildren tying 'rakhis' on his wrist as he wished people prosperity and good fortune on the "auspicious" occasion.

Kolkata, the epicentre of a nationwide stir against the alleged rape and murder of a trainee woman doctor at a state-run medical college and hospital in the city, saw protesters tying rakhis bearing the message of "We want justice". Kolkata Police personnel were also seen tying rakhis to protesting junior doctors.

West Bengal Governor CV Ananda attended a Raksha Bandhan programme at Raj

RAKSHA BANDHAN



Bhavan, where several women doctors, representatives from the LGBTQ community, and others tied rakhis around his wrists. He pledged to support their efforts until the goal of a safer environment for women is achieved.

In a post on X, Raj Bhavan Media Cell said the delegation expressed their anguish over the gruesome incident at the RG Kar Medical College and Hospital.

"They insisted on taking the

investigations on the right track so as to ensure dignity, safety and security of women, the medical professionals in particular," it said.

Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, in a post on X, said, "Let no evil force break the sacred brother-sister bond. Let us all bind each other in this bond of protection, love, affection and respect."

Junior doctors in Uttar Pradesh's medical colleges and hospitals observed "Kala Raksha

Bandhan" as they continued with their protest against the rape and murder of a postgraduate trainee medic in Kolkata.

Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra posted on 'X' a collage of photos with her sibling Rahul Gandhi and said that brothers and sisters are partners in struggle and companions in creating memories.

In Madhya Pradesh, the management of the Pench Tiger Reserve (PTR) used the occasion to raise awareness about the protection and conservation of tigers. Women sporting tiger masks tied rakhis to men in villages and small towns surrounding the reserve.

In a post on X, the PTR said this is the third consecutive year it has celebrated Raksha Bandhan in 130 villages, and small towns adjoining the reserve.

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar tied a rakhi to a tree to create awareness among the people about the conservation of the environment. He also planted a sapling at the Rajdhani Vatika here.

international

of the day quote

As two ruling Communist parties in the world today, the two parties of China and Vietnam should continue their traditional friendship and jointly promote the development of the world's socialist cause

XI JINPING | PRESIDENT, CHINA

I am confident that we (Thailand-India) can build upon our existing ties and explore untapped potentials to create even greater opportunities for our two countries, peoples and beyond

PAETONGTARN SHINAWATRA | PM, THAILAND

The normalization of violence against aid workers and the lack of accountability are unacceptable, unconscionable and enormously harmful for aid operations everywhere

JOYCE MSUYA | ASSISTANT SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS, UN

SHORT TAKES

Kenya to revive scrapped tax

Nairobi: Kenya's government will have to bring back some tax measures that it scrapped after deadly protests in June, the finance minister said, raising the risk of further unrest. John Mbadi told Citizen TV in an interview broadcast Sunday night that some of the measures would be tweaked and not all would be revived, but they were needed to pay for expenditure including wages for teachers. Some people who were involved in the youth-led protest movement that rocked the East African nation said they were ready to go back onto the streets after the minister's announcement.

Landslide in Nepal claims seven lives

Kathmandu: Seven people from two families were killed in separate incidents of landslides triggered by incessant rains in western Nepal in the last 24 hours, police said Monday. Four members of a family were buried alive in the Bajhang district as a landslide swept away a house at the Bungal municipality-10 Sunday night, according to the police. Those killed included 50-year-old Kali Dhami, her daughter-in-law and grandchild aged six and three, said the police.

GAZA TRUCE ON THE CARDS

BLINKEN SAYS ISRAEL AGREES TO A US-BACKED PROPOSAL FOR A CEASE-FIRE AND CALLS ON HAMAS TO DO SAME

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Tel Aviv, August 19: US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said Monday that Israel has accepted a proposal to bridge differences holding up a cease-fire and hostage release in Gaza, and he called on Hamas to do the same, without saying whether it had addressed concerns cited by the militant group.

Blinken spoke after holding a 2 1/2 hour meeting with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu earlier in the day, and was expected to travel to Egypt Tuesday. The United States, Egypt and Qatar have spent months trying to broker an agreement, with the talks repeatedly stalling.

He did not say whether the so-called bridging proposal addressed Israel's demands for control over two strategic corridors inside Gaza, which Hamas has said is a nonstarter, or other issues that have long bedeviled the negotiations.

"In a very constructive meeting with Prime Minister Netanyahu today, he confirmed to me that Israel supports the bridging proposal," Blinken told reporters. "The next important step is for Hamas to say yes."

Blinken had earlier said the time is now to conclude a Gaza cease-fire agreement that would



return hostages held by Hamas and bring relief to Palestinian suffering after more than 10 months of devastating fighting in Gaza.

Blinken's ninth mission to the Middle East since the conflict began came days after mediators, including the United States, expressed renewed optimism that a deal was near. But Hamas has expressed deep dissatisfaction with the latest proposal, and Israel has said there were points on which it was unwilling to compromise.

The trip, days before new talks expected this week in Egypt, came amid fears that the conflict could widen into a deeper regional war following the targeted killing of two top militants in Lebanon and Iran that were attributed to Israel.

"This is a decisive moment, probably the best, maybe the last, opportunity to get the hostages home, to get a cease-fire and to put everyone on a better path to enduring peace and



We will hold a free, fair participatory election as soon as we can complete our mandate to carry out vital reforms in our election commission, judiciary, civil administration, security forces and media

MUHAMMAD YUNUS | HEAD OF INTERIM GOVERNMENT, BANGLADESH

DRIVERLESS METRO LINE IN SYDNEY

Sydney's new multi-billion-dollar driverless metro line officially opened to commuters Monday



Third bridge down: Russia

Russia says a third bridge has been struck and damaged on the Seym River that winds through the Kursk region bordering northeastern Ukraine



REUTERS

Kyiv, August 19: Moscow said Monday Ukraine had struck a third bridge in an assault on Russia's Kursk region which Kyiv says is aimed at carving out a buffer zone and wearing down Russia's war machine.

Ukraine says it has seized over 80 settlements in an area covering more than 1,150 square km of Kursk since its surprise strike on the Russian region August 6, the biggest invasion of Russia since World War Two. But Ukrainian forces are on the defensive elsewhere and face a battle to protect the strategic eastern city of Pokrovsk, where Russia has steadily advanced in recent weeks in heavy fighting more than two years since Russia's full-scale invasion.

"We are achieving our goals," Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy wrote of the two-week-old incursion into Kursk on the Telegram messaging app Monday, adding that more Russian soldiers had been taken

prisoner. Russia said a third bridge had been struck and damaged on the Seym River that winds through the Kursk region bordering northeastern Ukraine.

Ukraine has not yet commented on the strike, but Kyiv's air force chief has previously said his forces have destroyed two bridges to weaken enemy logistics.

Military analysts said the bridges were part of critical supply lines for Russian troops defending the area. Reuters could not independently confirm the damage to the bridges or the battlefield situation in Kursk.

Zelenskyy said Sunday his troops were unleashing what he described as "maximum counteroffensive actions" aimed at creating a buffer zone and hurting Moscow's military potential.

"Everything that inflicts losses on the Russian army, the Russian state, their military industrial complex and their economy, all this helps us to prevent the widening of the war," Zelenskyy said.

In a very constructive meeting with Prime Minister Netanyahu today, he confirmed to me that Israel supports the bridging proposal. The next important step is for Hamas to say yes

ANTHONY BLINKEN | SECRETARY OF STATE, US

security," Blinken said as he opened talks with Israeli

Hamas, Islamic Jihad claim responsibility

Jerusalem: The armed wings of Hamas and Islamic Jihad claimed responsibility Monday for a bomb blast near a synagogue in Tel Aviv that Israeli police and the Shin Bet intelligence agency described as a terrorist attack. A man who was carrying the bomb was killed and a passerby was injured in the incident late Sunday, according to police at the scene in Israel's commercial capital. Israeli government spokesperson David Mencer said the man was carrying a backpack loaded with explosives that detonated "before he managed to reach a more heavily populated area". In a joint statement, the two Palestinian militant groups said their "martyrdom operations" inside Israel would return to the forefront as long as the "occupation's massacres and assassination policy continue". This was an allusion to Israel's offensive in Gaza and the July 31 killing of Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran.



Philippines, China trade blame after vessels collide

REUTERS

Beijing, August 19: The Philippines and China accused each other Monday of ramming vessels and performing dangerous manoeuvres in the South China Sea, the latest flare-up after the two nations agreed last month to try to manage disagreements at sea.

China's Coast Guard said in a statement a Philippine vessel which had ignored its repeated warnings had "deliberately collided" with a Chinese vessel in an "unprofessional and dangerous" manner in the disputed waterway early Monday.

The Philippines disputed Beijing's account and accused it of "imposing its version of facts." It said two of its coast guard vessels "encountered unlawful and aggressive manoeuvres" from Chinese vessels near Sabina Shoal, while on their way to supply Filipino personnel stationed in two occupied islands.

IN DISPUTED WATERS



"These dangerous manoeuvres resulted in collisions, causing structural damage to both PCG (Philippine Coast Guard) vessels," said Jonathan Malaya, a spokesperson for the national Security Council and Manila's South China Sea task force.

At a regular news briefing, Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Mao Ning told reporters that China would continue to take lawful "resolute and forceful measures" to safeguard its territorial sovereignty and maritime rights and interests.

"We hope that the Philippines can keep its commitments (and

earnestly abide by the temporary arrangements reached with China," Mao said.

The United States condemned China's actions. Its ambassador to Manila, MaryKay Carlson, said on X the US "stands with the Philippines in condemning the China Coast Guard's dangerous manoeuvres", which endangered lives and caused damage to coast guard vessels.

Manila said coast guard vessels Cape Engano and Bagacay were on their way to resupply personnel stationed on Flat Island. Around 16 minutes later, a Chinese coast guard ship rammed Manila's Bagacay twice, damaging its auxiliary room, where a 3-foot wide hole was inflicted, according to Philippine officials and images shared by the PCG.

"This is the biggest structural damage that we have incurred as a result of the dangerous manoeuvres carried out by the Chinese Coast Guard," PCG Spokesperson Jay Tarriela said.

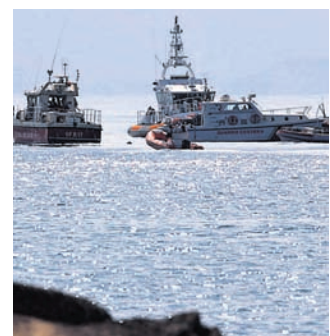
One dead, 6 missing after luxury yacht sinks off Sicily

REUTERS

Sicily, August 19: One man died and six people were missing after a luxury yacht was struck by an unexpectedly violent storm and sank off the Sicilian capital Palermo Monday, the Italian coast guard said.

Among those missing was British tech entrepreneur Mike Lynch, a person familiar with the rescue operation said.

The 56-metre-long sailboat was identified as the British-registered Bayesian and sank with 22 people on board shortly before sunrise, the coast guard said in a statement.



The missing people were of British, American and Canadian nationality, the coast guard said. The 15 people rescued included a one-year-old child.

"The wind was very strong. Bad weather was expected, but not of this magnitude," a coast guard official in Palermo told Reuters.

Storms and heavy rainfall have swept down Italy in recent days, with floods and landslides causing major damage in the north of the country, after weeks of scorching heat.

Eight of those rescued were transferred to local hospitals. All were in stable condition, local media reported.

The captain of a nearby boat told Reuters that when the storm hit he turned the engine on to keep control of the vessel and avoid a collision with the Bayesian.

"We managed to keep the ship in position and after the storm was over, we noticed that the ship behind us was gone," Karsten Borner told journalists.

The other boat "went flat on the water, and then down," he added.

Gen Z turning climate change anxiety into activism

UNLIKE PREVIOUS GENERATIONS, WHO HAD TIME TO GRADUALLY ADJUST TO THE REALITIES OF ENVIRONMENTAL TRANSFORMATIONS, GENERATION Z IS ACUTELY AWARE OF THE ECOLOGICAL CRISES UNFOLDING AROUND THEM, LEADING TO A DEEP SENSE OF ENVIRONMENTAL ANXIETY

AGENCIES

Australia, August 19: In June 2024, 13 young people in Hawaii took on their state government in court and won the right to have greater input in climate policy.

They sued the state for infringing on their right to "a clean and healthful environment", as promised under the State constitution.

In victory, the young people forced a number of concessions including a pledge to pursue net zero by 2040 and over \$40 million investment in electric vehicles over the next six years.

Young people are turning to activism as a way to process the emotional weight of a world in crisis.

From Greta Thunberg to Australia's Anjali Sharma, there are plenty of people in Gen Z who are taking action on climate.

Despite the United Nations also adding the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable envi-

ronment to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 2022 which further opens the possibility to take governments to the courts, it's not easy.

Gen Z is growing up in an era where the impacts of climate change are both immediate and undeniable and it's leaving them feeling powerless.

Generation Z, those born between 1995 and 2010, make up 30 per cent of the global population. In Australia's latest census, Gen Z accounted for 18.2 per cent (or 4.6 million) of the country's 25 million population.

Unlike previous generations, who had time to gradually adjust to the realities of environmental transformations, Generation Z is acutely aware of the ecological crises unfolding around them, leading to a deep sense of environmental anxiety.

Distress and fear

As a result, many digitally connected, globally aware Gen Zers experience intense climate anxiety, characterised by chronic



fear, distress and deep concern for the planet's future.

A survey of Australian Gen Z university students was conducted between September 2021 and April 2022 with 446 participants which revealed that climate change is their top environmental concern.

They often feel let down by older generations, governments and institutions, whose actions

seem inadequate in the face of the growing evidence about the environmental threats the world and Australia in particular face.

More than 80 per cent of the young people participating in the survey expressed significant worry and many experienced severe climate anxiety.

This anxiety manifests in various forms, including eco-anxiety, solastalgia (distress trig-

gered by environmental changes) and climate grief, reflecting the complex emotional landscape of a generation coming of age amid a global environmental emergency.

The situation Gen Z faces and their future prospects are further exacerbated by the complexity of other developments resulting in what is known as a poly-crisis, a "great disagreement, confusion, or suffering that is caused by many different problems happening at the same time so that they together have a very big effect."

Existential threat

Eco-anxiety, a chronic fear of an environmental catastrophe, arises from the perception that climate change poses an existential threat.

For many in Gen Z, the overwhelming nature of this threat leads to persistent worry and stress. This is also fuelled by the sense of urgency and responsibility they think they have to comply with.

of the day quote

The government is likely to release draft rules under the Digital Personal Data Protection Act within a month

ASHWINI VAISHNAW | UNION MINISTER

A periodical upward revision of the deposit insurance coverage limit, currently at Rs 5 lakh, may be warranted considering multiple factors like growth in the value of deposits, inflation, and increase in income level

M RAJESHWAR RAO | DEPUTY GOVERNOR, RBI

With rampant innovations in trusted AI tools and technologies and improved harmonization of human and machines interplay, barriers to AI adoption at scale will continue to diminish

ritu jvoti | GROUP VP AND GENERAL MANAGER (AI AND DATA RESEARCH), IDC

SHORT TAKES

Bank borrowings at highest levels

Mumbai: Banks' borrowing through market instruments has climbed to its highest levels, jumping past the ₹9 lakh crore mark, as a persistently faster pace of credit growth than deposit growth compels lenders to rely on other routes to raise funds - a phenomenon that has caught the regulator's eye. Data that the RBI releases on a fortnightly basis showed that as July 26, banks' borrowings were at ₹9.32 lakh crore, 20% higher than the borrowing figure as April 5.

Ola Electric shares continue to shine

New Delhi: Shares of Bhavish Aggarwal-led Ola Electric Mobility Ltd jumped 10 per cent to ₹146.03 - hitting its upper circuit limit -- on the BSE Monday. Shares of the electric two-wheeler company made their market debut August 9. From the issue price of ₹76, the stock is currently up 92.14 per cent. The company's market valuation rallied to ₹64,411.35 crore. Shares of Ola Electric Mobility Ltd had surged 20 per cent Friday to hit the upper circuit limit after the Ola Group announced its foray into the electric motorcycle segment with the launch of three models and two more in the pipeline.

Antfin Singapore to sell Zomato shares

Mumbai: Antfin Singapore will likely sell shares in Zomato worth \$408 million at floor price of ₹251.68 per share via block deal, ET Now reported quoting agencies. It currently holds 4.3% stake in the food delivery platform. At this price, the shares will be available for sale at a discount of 4.6% over Monday's closing price of ₹263.24 on the NSE. Zomato shares Monday ended down by ₹1.2 or 0.45% over Friday's closing price after hitting a lifetime high of ₹280.90.

Adani touts cash

New Delhi: Billionaire Gautam Adani's port-to-energy conglomerate Monday said it has enough cash to cover more than 30 months of debt payments and that its businesses are firing on all cylinders. Cash balance accounted for 24.8 per cent of gross debt of Rs 2.41 lakh crore as of the end of June, up from 17.7 per cent a year earlier, the group said. "24.77 per cent of gross debt is in form of cash balances providing liquidity cover 30 months of debt servicing," it added.



The overall headline numbers of India's economy are strong, reflecting a large amount of public investment which has been a critical factor driving growth

GITA GOPINATH | DEPUTY MD, IMF

LEATHER EXPORTERS EYE RUSSIA MARKET

A delegation of over 20 leather sector executives will be visiting Russia this month to seek investments and tap growing export opportunities. The three-day visit will start from August 26. Council for Leather Exports Executive Director R Selvam said that at present India is exporting leather goods in the range of \$60 million to \$80 million, but it is low as huge opportunities are there in Russia



Improve deposit growth: FM

Deposits have been growing 300-400 basis points lower than the credit growth in the last few months, creating an asset-liability mismatch for banks

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 19: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharman Monday held a performance review meeting with heads of public sector banks and asked them to make concerted efforts to garner deposits.

During deliberations on the deposit mobilisation, she said that while the credit growth has picked up, mobilisation of deposits could further be improved to fund the credit growth sustainably, and asked banks to make concerted efforts to garner deposits by conducting special drives.

Sitharman also advised public sector banks (PSBs) to have better relationships with their customers for efficient customer service delivery, an official statement said.

She asked banks to ensure that employees reach out to connect with their customers, especially in rural and semi-urban areas.

The minister also urged the PSBs to explore collaboration



19 August, 2024
Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi

to leverage their respective strengths by sharing best practices in emerging areas and equip themselves to keep pace with changes in the banking sector.

While acknowledging the efforts made by the banks to improve the asset quality, the minister suggested optimising the scope of resolution and recovery offered by the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) and National Asset Reconstruction Company Ltd (NARCL).

She further asked the banks to expeditiously implement the

Growth in lending is higher...I will be meeting banks for various reasons and in that process, I will be talking to them about the importance of deposit collection

NIRMALA SITHARMAN | FINANCE MINISTER

recent Budget announcements, including a new credit assessment model for MSMEs based on digital footprints and cash flows.

The minister advised the banks to ensure compliance

Banks tapping alternative sources: RBI

Banks are tapping alternative sources like commercial paper and certificates of deposit as deposit growth lags credit growth, RBI August Bulletin said Monday. In the primary market, certificates of deposit (CD) issuances amounted to Rs 3.49 lakh crore during 2024-25 (up to August 9), significantly higher than Rs 1.89 lakh crore in the corresponding period of the previous year. This increase amid deposit growth lagging credit expansion prompted banks to rely on alternative funding sources, as per the RBI article. Commercial paper (CP) issuances also increased to Rs 4.86 lakh crore during 2024-25 (up to July 31), surpassing Rs 4.72 lakh crore in the corresponding period of the previous year, driven by NBFCs' higher borrowings in the CP market, it added. While unveiling bi-monthly monetary policy, Reserve Bank Governor Shaktikanta Das expressed concern over household savings moving towards alternative investment avenues and asked banks to mobilise deposits through innovative products and services by leveraging their vast branch network. "Banks are taking greater recourse to short-term non-retail deposits and other instruments of liability to meet the incremental credit demand. This, as I emphasised elsewhere, may potentially expose the banking system to structural liquidity issues," he had said. About system liquidity, the bulletin said it remained in surplus during July and August so far on the back of an increase in government spending, the return of currency to the banking system and the Reserve Bank's forex operations. The average daily net absorption under the liquidity adjustment facility (LAF) increased to Rs 1.52 lakh crore from July 16 to August 15, 2024.

with the Reserve Bank of India's guidelines on the handover of security documents after the closure of the loans and directed that there should not be any delay in handing over the documents to the customer.

During the meeting, it was noted that during FY24, the PSBs performed well across all fi-

nancial parameters as evidenced by improved asset quality with net NPAs (NNPAs) declining to 0.76 per cent, capital adequacy at 15.55 per cent, net interest margin (NIM) at 3.22 per cent, and highest-ever net aggregate profit of Rs 1.45 lakh crore with the dividend of Rs 27,830 crore to the shareholders.

Moderation seen in food rates: RBI article

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, August 19: A broad-based moderation was observed in prices of cereals, pulses and edible oil in August, according to an article on 'State of the Economy' in the latest RBI Bulletin released Monday.

Headline inflation, measured by year-on-year changes in the all-India Consumer Price Index (CPI), moderated sharply to 3.5 per cent in July 2024 from 5.1 per cent in June 2024.

The 154 bps fall in inflation was on account of a favourable base effect of 2.9 per cent, which more than offset a positive momentum of 1.4 per cent, according to the article published in the Reserve Bank's August Bulletin. "High-frequency food price data for August so far (up to 12th) show that the price of cereals, pulses and edible oil recorded a broad-based moderation," the article, authored by a team led by Reserve Bank Deputy Governor Michael Debabrata Patra, said.

Among key vegetables, potato prices continued to edge up, while onion and tomato prices declined, it added.

Another article in the Bulletin on 'Are Food Prices Spilling Over?' noted that the core inflation had been declining since 2022-23, mainly driven by monetary policy actions and stance and the waning of cost-push shocks.

However, food price shocks have been imposing upside pressures on core inflation throughout these years, but this has been offset by disinflationary monetary policy.



Should this disinflationary force recede, upward pressures on core and headline inflation could get magnified and may run out of control, especially with aggregate demand picking up alongside cost-push risks looming in the wake of geo-political tensions, the article authored by Patra, Joice John and Asish Thomas George said.

Going forward, therefore, if food price pressures persist and continue to spill over, a cautious monetary policy approach is warranted, it noted.

"The conventional treatment of food price perturbations as transitory in the setting of monetary policy is increasingly becoming untenable. A large part of this increase in persistence is driven by the secular upward drift in food inflation expectations. Past high food inflation episodes 'intrinsic persistence' have a bearing in shaping these expectations," it said.

The inelasticity of the demand for food to price shocks makes food inflation persistence all the more worrying, it said, adding that with spillovers to costs, service charges and output prices, the danger of food inflation surfacing as a more generalised phenomenon has increased.

LACKLUSTRE TRADE

Sensex, Nifty settle almost flat

PARTICIPANTS BOOKED PROFITS IN SELECT BLUE-CHIP STOCKS AMID HIGH VALUATION CONCERNS, WHILE SELECTIVE BUYING IN METALS, OIL & GAS AND IT SHARES SUPPORTED THE INDICES

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, August 19: Benchmark equity indices Sensex and Nifty ended on a flat note in a lacklustre trade Monday, as investors preferred to remain on the sidelines awaiting further triggers.

In a range-bound trade, the 30-share BSE Sensex slipped 12.16 points or 0.02 per cent to settle at 80,424.68. During the day,



it hit a high of 80,724.40 and a low of 80,332.65. The NSE Nifty edged up 31.50 points or 0.13 per cent to 24,572.65.

"The Indian market failed to catch up with the initial gains as there is a degree of profit booking witnessed in auto stocks due to a slowdown in demand. However, oil stocks gained momentum with the reduction in windfall tax on crude oil. The recent healthy US economic data diminished the likelihood of a US recession while a slide in the dollar index supported the hypothesis of a rate cut in the

September FOMC meeting," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services.

Among the 30 Sensex firms, Mahindra & Mahindra, IndusInd Bank, Bharti Airtel, Axis Bank, Tata Motors, and ICICI Bank were the biggest laggards.

In contrast, Tata Steel, Tata Consultancy Services, NTPC, JSW Steel, Asian Paints and Reliance Industries were gainers.

"Markets moved in a narrow range due to thin participation from traders on account of Raksha Bandhan, while selective buying in metals, oil & gas, and IT shares helped indices end mixed," Prashanth Tapse, Senior VP (Research), Mehta Equities Ltd, said.

The BSE benchmark jumped 1,330.96 points or 1.68 per cent to settle at 80,436.84 Friday, marking its best single-day gains in more than two months. The NSE Nifty surged 397.40 points or 1.65 per cent to settle at a two-week high of 24,541.15.

Khimji wins big at Retail Jeweller Awards 2024



BHUBANESWAR: Khimji Jewellers, one of Odisha's most trusted jewellery brand, wins the coveted "TV campaign of the year" award at the recently held Retail Jeweller India Awards 2024. Known as the "oscar of the jewellery industry", this is the first time any jeweller in Odisha has won the award in the pan-India category. The award was received by the directors of Khimji Jewellers Mitesh Khimji and Sumeet Khimji. Speaking on the occasion Mitesh Khimji said, "The award was for 'No Compromise Campaign' which received great reviews and was well received by the people of Odisha." He articulates the brand's vision, stating, "Our heritage is steeped in generations of master craftsmen who have dedicated themselves to creating timeless jewellery for us." The advertisement garnered a record breaking 4 million views on Khimji Jewellers' YouTube channel emphasizing on the fact that how well it connected with the audience in Odisha. Khimji Jewellers is an 88-year-old jewellery brand headquartered in Bhubaneswar and has 9 stores in the state.

Festive season pushes airfares by 25 per cent

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 19: Airfares are heading northwards for the festive season, with the average one-way ticket price on key domestic routes being 10-15 per cent more for Diwali and 20-25 per cent higher for certain flights to Kerala cities for Onam, according to an analysis.

An analysis done by travel portal ixigo for PTI showed that the average one-way economy class fare for non-stop flight on Delhi-Chennai route during October 30-November 5 period is 25 per cent higher at Rs 7,618.

This is in comparison to the fare during November 10-16 period last year.

For the given comparison period, the ticket price is 21 per cent more at Rs 5,162 on Mumbai-Hyderabad route and 19 per cent higher at Rs 5,999 and at Rs 4,930 on Delhi-Goa and Delhi-



Ahmedabad routes, respectively. On certain other routes, fares are higher in the range of 1-16 per cent, as per the analysis.

Ixigo's Group Co-CEO Rajnish Kumar said travel demand for Diwali is on the rise with airfares higher than last year.

"Popular routes like Delhi-Chennai, Mumbai-Bangalore, and Delhi-Hyderabad are seeing average one-way fares ranging be-

tween Rs 4,000-5,000, marking a 10-15 per cent Y-o-Y increase as the festival approaches," he said.

On the other hand, fares have also dropped in the range of 1 per cent to 27 per cent on certain routes for the given comparison period. While the ticket price for Mumbai-Ahmedabad flight has declined 27 per cent to Rs 2,508, the fall is 25 per cent at Rs 4,890 for Mumbai-Udaipur flight.

In the case of Bangalore-Hyderabad flight, the fare has dropped by 23 per cent to Rs 3,383 and by 21 per cent to Rs 7,826 for Mumbai-Jammu flight, the analysis showed.

Also, an analysis of airfare trends on select routes for the upcoming festival in Kerala showed that prices have increased in the range of 1 per cent to 25 per cent on certain routes.

At the same time, ticket prices have fallen around 6-35 per cent on some routes.

The figures are average one-way fare for non-stop flights for departure during the September 6-15 period this year compared to August 20-29, 2023 period when Onam was celebrated.

A 30 per cent rise in fare to Rs 4,102 has been registered for Hyderabad-Thiruvananthapuram flight for the given comparison period. A similar quantum of increase is there for Mumbai-

Domestic air traffic rises 7.3% in July

Indian carriers flew more than 1.29 crore passengers in July, an increase of more than 7.3 per cent compared to the year-ago period, official data released Monday showed. However, the air traffic in July was lower compared to 1.32 crore people carried by the domestic airlines in June this year. IndiGo continued to dominate domestic air traffic with its market share rising to 62 per cent in July while that of Air India dropped to 14.3 per cent. Last month, the domestic market share of Vistara climbed to 10 per cent while that of AIX Connect and SpiceJet declined to 4.5 per cent and 3.1 per cent, respectively, as per the data released by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA). Also, Akasa Air and Alliance Air's share slipped to 4.7 per cent and 0.9 per cent, respectively. In July, domestic air traffic touched 129.87 lakh compared to 132.06 lakh in June this year and 121 lakh in July 2023.

Calicut flight to Rs 4,448.

"Travel demand for Onam festivities has surged this year, with flight bookings and searches for travel to Kerala in the second week of September doubling compared to last year. Average airfares to key cities like Cochin, Calicut, and Thiruvananthapuram have risen by 20-25 per cent year-on-year," Rajnish Kumar said.

Sebi categorises dues worth ₹76,293cr as 'difficult to recover'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 19: Capital markets regulator Sebi has segregated dues to the tune of Rs 76,293 crore under "difficult to recover" category at the end of March 2024, marking an increase of 4 per cent from the preceding year.

Of this, a huge chunk is on account of cases pending before court-appointed committees.

Difficult to recover (DTR) dues are those that could not be recovered even after exhausting all modes of recovery.

"Segregation of such DTR dues is purely an administrative act and this will not preclude the recovery officers from recovering the amount so segregated as DTR as and when there is a change in any of the DTR parameters," Sebi said in its annual report for 2023-24.

As of March 31, 2024, Sebi identified 807 cases as DTR, with a total outstanding of Rs 76,293 crore, up from 692 cases amounting to Rs 73,287 crore the previous year, according to the report.

Among these 807 cases, 36 are pending due to ongoing proceedings in State PID courts, National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT), National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) involving Rs 12,199 crore.

Additionally, 60 cases are before court-appointed committees, with Rs 59,970 crore at stake.

These two categories together account for 95 per cent of the total amount yet to be recovered. With regard to 140 DTR certificates falling under untraceable category, 131 relate to individuals and nine relate to companies amounting to Rs 13.3 crore and Rs 15.7 crore, respectively.

The Sebi has been disseminating data on the composition of difficult to recover cases from 2021-22 onwards through its annual report in order to enhance transparency of its enforcement proceedings.

The markets regulator said a total of 6,781 recovery certificates were generated till March 31, 2024, of which 3,871 recovery certificates were pending as March 31, 2024.

Overall, the markets watchdog has dues worth Rs 1.03 lakh crore that needs to be recovered from entities, including those that failed to pay the fine imposed on them, or were unable to pay the fees due to it and did not comply with its direction to refund investors' money.

Antil aims new world record

Advani clinches grand double

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 19: Tokyo Paralympics gold-medallist Indian javelin thrower Sumit Antil wants to improve upon his world record in his bid to defend his title in the Men's F64 category at the Paris Games.

Sumit, along with Bhagyashree Jadhav (shot put, F34 category), will be India's flag-bearer at the opening ceremony of the Paralympic Games to be held from August 28 to September 8, 2024.

PARIS PARALYMPICS

He had set a world record thrice in the Tokyo Paralympic Games and won gold with a best throw of 68.55 metres.

He bettered it with a world record throw of 70.83 metres at the 2023 Para World Championships and improved it further at the Hangzhou Para Asian Games (2023) to win gold with an effort of 73.29 metres.

F64 category is for athletes with problems in the lower limb(s), those competing with prosthesis or those affected by leg length difference.

"My long-term goal is to achieve a distance of 80m but at the Paris Paralympics, I will try to win gold with an effort of 75m," the 26-year-old told PTI-Bhasha in an exclusive interview.

The athlete, who lost one of his limbs in a road accident in 2015, won the gold medal at the Para World Championship in May this year with an effort of 69.50 metres.

"My throws during practice have been quite consistent. I have worked hard on increasing my strength without changing the technique. I will try to improve my previous record," said Sumit.



Asked about the pressure of being the defending champion and also India's flag-bearer, he said, "There is no pressure right now but things will be known after reaching Paris. Once you reach the Games Village or the competition venue, things become a little different. I will try to give my best without taking pressure."

"I want to enjoy this moment. For the first time, such a large and strong contingent from India

My long-term goal is to achieve a distance of 80m but at the Paris Paralympics, I will try to win gold with an effort of 75m

SUMIT ANTIL | JAVELIN THROWER

is going to the Paralympics and I feel proud to be the flag-bearer," he added.

The Indian contingent comprises 84 athletes across 12 disciplines.

"Being the flag-bearer is a different kind of emotion. This is the first time I will be a part of the opening ceremony at the Paralympics. At the time of the Tokyo Paralympics, there were a lot of restrictions due to the Covid-19 pandemic. I had reached late as per the schedule of my competition."

Sumit said that after the Tokyo Paralympics, he focused more

Modi wishes luck to Indian contingent

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi Monday extended his warm wishes to the Indian contingent for the upcoming Paris Paralympics and said the whole country will be rooting for the athletes as they strive for excellence in the sporting extravaganza. The Paralympics are slated to begin August 28 and conclude September 8, and a record 84 athletes will represent India in the French capital. During his virtual interaction, PM Modi spoke to first-timers as well as previous winners in the Paralympics. "Your journey is as important to the country as it is for you and your careers. Our country's pride will be related to what you all achieve there. An entire country is rooting for you. 140 crore Indians are sending their blessings to you. Vijay Bhava (May you be victorious). Like you did at the Asian Paralympics and the Tokyo Paralympics, I wish you all create new records in Paris," PM Modi said in his address to the Paralympians. He added, "You are all going to Paris as flag-bearers of India. This journey is going to be an extremely important journey of your life, your career."

on practicing instead of participating in different competitions.

"I have participated in very limited competitions. I have spent more time in practice. Competitions keep going on but my aim is to get a medal for India in the Paralympics and my entire focus has been on this for the last three years," he said.

"I prefer to practice in India rather than going abroad. I went to Finland in 2018 but I did not feel much improvement there. I practice at the Sports Authority of India's Sonipat centre, which is equipped with a track for javelin throw and has world-class facilities."



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, August 19: Ace cueist Pankaj Advani of ONGC extended his dominance on the green baize as he completed a grand double by winning the senior snooker title at the Western India Billiards and Snooker Championships 2024 here.

Advani, the proud owner of 27 world titles, showed steely resolve to shrug off a strong challenge from Railways' bespectacled cueist Kamal Chawla 6-4 in a long-drawn final that lasted close to seven hours at the Khar Gymkhana billiards hall Sunday night.

Advani sealed his win with the frame scores reading 11-72, 31-58, 95-40, 52-42, 69-43, 43-74, 22-59, 75-62, 84-58, and 58-10.

The Bangalore-based Advani, who had earlier in the day defeated S Shrikrishna in the three-hour session billiards final, has now won seven consecutive titles (4 snooker and 3 billiards) in Mumbai over the past two years.

The fare dished out by both champions was lacklustre and there was hardly much to cheer for the cue sports aficionados, who had made it to the venue with the hope of watching top-quality snooker.

Both players were over-cautious in their endeavour to out-smart each other. With both not showing the confidence to go for their shots, there were not too many substantial breaks and the frames took time to finish, which resulted in the match dragging on late into the evening.

Advani for all his good showing produced just two breaks of 69 (3rd frame) and 55 (8th frame). In contrast, Chawla had breaks on 51 and 38 in the opening two frames followed by efforts of 61 (6th frame) and 40 (8th frame).

In the semi-finals, Chawla defeated Shrikrishna (BPCL) 5-2 (119-18, 41-46, 51-60, 82-39, 73-0, 86-20, and 62-40). In the second semi-final, Advani eased past Faisal Khan (Railways) 5-1 (131-0, 85-43, 82-53, 58-41, 59-83, 70-35).

SHORT TAKES

Nagal bows out

Winston-Salem: India's top singles player Sumit Nagal bowed out of the Winston-Salem Open, an ATP 250 event, after a straight set defeat against Borna Coric in the first round, here. Nagal lost 4-6 2-6 to the Croatian player in one hour and 10 minutes. Nagal converted the only breakpoint he got in the contest while dropping his serve four times. In the doubles draw, former junior national champion Dhakshineswar Suresh will feature along with British partner Luca Pow. Dhakshineswar, who is in US College circuit, could not qualify for the singles main draw, falling in the second round of the qualifying event 3-6 4-6 to American fourth seed Learner Tien.

Durand Cup fixtures

Kolkata: Defending champions Mohun Bagan FC will take on Punjab FC as the quarter-finals for the ongoing edition of the Durand Cup were announced after a draw was held. As per an Indian Super League (ISL) press release, the draw was held virtually with representatives of the eight qualified teams present. After the FC Goa versus Shillong Lajong FC Group F game in Shillong concluded Saturday and it became clear who the eight qualified teams were, a video call was arranged where representatives of all qualified teams came on board. A decision to shift the second quarter-final from Kolkata to Shillong was also taken, taking into consideration the playing conditions.

Dahiya moves to semis

Amman: Ronak Dahiya was the lone Indian Greco Roman wrestler to make it to the semi-finals of the U17 World Championships while five others struggled to go deep in their respective draws on the opening day of the prestigious Cadets event, here Monday. Competing in the 110kg weight class, Ronak began with a 8-1 win over Artur Manvelian and followed that up with a commanding technical superiority victory over Daniil Maslakou. Ronak, who trains at Delhi's famous Chhatrasal Stadium, will next take on Hungary's Zoltan Czako.

ATHLETE RESPONSIBLE TO MAINTAIN WEIGHT: CAS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 19: The Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) while rejecting wrestler Vinesh Phogat's appeal against her disqualification reasoned that it is an athlete's responsibility to stay within the weight-limit and no relief can be provided on that count but termed as "draconian" the consequence of failing the weigh-in on the second day.

Vinesh was disqualified from the Paris Olympics after failing to make weight on the second day of the competition. Scheduled to compete in the gold medal bout in the women's 50kg category, Vinesh was found overweight by 100g August 8.

The UWW rules state that a wrestler has to clear the weigh-in on both days of the competition. While UWW allows a 2kg weight tolerance in many international competitions such as Ranking Series event, there is no such buffer at the Olympics.

Vinesh had become the first Indian woman wrestler to qualify for the Olympic final and her disqualification created a flutter in the wrestling world, especially after her stunning victory over the legendary Yui Susaki, who had not lost a single bout in her international career before bumping into Vinesh.

".....the Sole Arbitrator has concluded that the Applicant, of her own free will, entered into the 50 kg wrestling category and well knew that this required her



to maintain a weight for competition below 50 kg. Article 7 of the Rules provides, relevantly, that each contestant is deemed to be taking part of her own free will and is responsible for herself and is entitled to compete in only one weight category, the one corresponding to her weight at the time of the official weigh-in," the detailed CAS order, which was published Monday, stated.

"The Applicant is an experienced wrestler who had previously competed under the Rules. There is no evidence to the contrary, or any evidence by the Athlete that she did not understand the weight requirements. She voluntarily entered the 50 kg category and, from the evidence, undertook a regime to keep within that weight limit. Her evidence was that she did not have sufficient time to complete a weight loss program, not that she somehow found it interfered with her bodily rights."

An ad-hoc division of the CAS had August 14 rejected her appeal and the decision was given after three postponements.

BORDER-GAVASKAR TROPHY

Cummins leans on all-rounders

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Melbourne, August 19: Australia Test captain Pat Cummins expects greater workload with the ball for all-rounders Cameron Green and Mitchell Marsh against India in the Border-Gavaskar Trophy this summer.

Cummins wants both the all-rounders to share the workload with the team's frontline pace attack in the gruelling five-Test series starting November.

"It's been huge (having the all-rounders). In some ways we haven't had to use them as much as we thought we would. Which is a great thing. The last couple of summers have been pretty light (with) quick Test matches," Cummins said at the launch of Play Cricket week.

"I suspect this summer might be a bit different at time. We'll be drawing on Cam Green and Mitch Marsh a bit more. Even someone like Cam basically started in Shield cricket as a bowler but hasn't had to bowl heaps in Test matches. Now he is a few years older, I think we will be leaning on him a bit more," he added.

The 25-year-old Green has bagged 35 wickets at 35.31 in 28 Tests so far in his career.

"The first point is they (Green and Marsh) both absolutely make the top six on their batting alone which is a luxury," Cummins said.

"We're really lucky that



I suspect this summer might be a bit different at time. We'll be drawing on Cam Green and Mitch Marsh a bit more

PAT CUMMINS | AUSTRALIA TEST CAPTAIN

Nathan Lyon bowls plenty of overs, so you don't necessarily have to have an all-rounder, but it makes a big difference to have that fifth bowling option. And with someone like Cam and Mitch we have six bowling options. It's a really nice thing to

WCA panel to address 'broken, unsustainable' cricket schedule

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 19: The World Cricketers' Association (WCA) has formed a six-member panel to review the cramped international calendar which it believes is "broken and unsustainable".

Formerly known as FICA, the WCA hopes to get a "clear and coherent structure" in which international cricket and domestic leagues can co-exist, according to a report.

WCA has members from 16 different boards, except BCCI and PCB. The WCA chairperson Heath Mills said they had "given up hope" that the game's leaders could establish a coherent structure.

"One of those solutions, which WCA says 84% of the players they have spoken to are in favour of, is ring-fenced windows to ensure international cricket and domestic T20 leagues can co-exist," added the report.

The scheduling model, which it said was "broken and unsustainable" and "confusing and chaotic" which was forcing players to choose between "representing their country and optimising their careers."

The review will be conducted by a six-member team led by former head of the Australian Cricketers' Association Paul Marsh and he will be joined by former Pakistan captain Sana Mir, former FICA head Tony Irish, ex-ECB CEO Tom Harrison, and head of sports at Disney Star Sanjog Gupta.

'Iron Mike' to make a comeback

THE BOXING LEGEND FEELS GOOD AFTER A HEALTH SCARE AND READY FOR HIS RESCHEDULED BOUT WITH JAKE PAUL

REUTERS

New York, August 19: Mike Tyson said he was fit and ready for his November 15 fight against Jake Paul as the two boxers had a joint news conference in New York City Sunday.

The match was originally scheduled for July 20 but was postponed after former heavy-weight champion Tyson, 58, had an ulcer flare-up that forced some resting time.

"Iron Mike", who has a 50-6 record with 44 knockouts, was one of the most feared heavy-weights in history but has not fought a professional fight since 2005.

The boxer once considered the most dangerous man in the world could be putting himself in danger by putting the gloves on again.



When asked why he returned to the ring so long after retirement, Tyson's response was clear: "Because I can. Who else can do it but me? We have a

YouTuber fighting the greatest fighter ever to live."

"He may have been in the ring with people who have the same intentions, but the actuality, no

As soon as I catch this guy it's going to be totally over, he is going to run. He is gonna run like a thief."

Paul, who was booed and heckled by the crowd, claimed he would put Tyson to sleep.

"I am here to make 40 million dollars and knock out a legend," Paul said.

"I love Mike and I respect him but we are not friends anymore until November 15," he said.

When asked if he was afraid of being in the ring with Paul, Tyson replied sarcastically: "I am terrified."

YouTuber-turned-boxer Paul, 27, is 31 years his junior and has a 10-1 boxing record.

The fight will be streamed live globally on Netflix and will take place at the 80,000-seat AT&T Stadium in Arlington, Texas, home of the Dallas Cowboys.

Mbappé off-colour on La Liga debut

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Madrid, August 19: Defending champion Real Madrid couldn't manage more than a 1-1 draw at Mallorca in Kylian Mbappé's first Spanish league match.

In his second game with Madrid after debuting midweek, Mbappé failed to break through Sunday. The France great had scored in Madrid's 2-0 win against Atalanta in the UEFA Super Cup Wednesday.

Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti started with the same squad that beat Atalanta, with Rodrygo, Vinicius Junior and Mbappé in attack.

"They change position from time to time," Ancelotti said of Vinicius and Mbappé.

"Sometimes Mbappé plays more centrally and sometimes one of the two has to occupy this flank, without a particular plan. It depends on how they feel about it."



It was Rodrygo who put Madrid ahead against Mallorca 13 minutes into the match, but the hosts equalized with Vedat Muriqi's goal in the 53rd.

"We got off to a good start, taking the lead and then had a chance to get the second goal," Ancelotti said.