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## ARTISTIC SATISFACTION

Actor Tamannaah Bhatia says stardom was not the reason why she got into the world of glamour

LEISURE P6



## G7 MEET ON AFGHANISTAN

G7 leaders will discuss Afghanistan crisis Tuesday at a virtual summit, Britain's Prime Minister Boris Johnson said Sunday

INTERNATIONAL P8



## 'CORPORATE CLASSES'

In a first for cricket, coaching aspirants had to attend 'corporate classes' in the NCA

SPORTS BACK PAGE

## TN LS seats cut after population control

**CHENNAI:** Tamil Nadu has faced "unfair" political representation in the Lok Sabha since 1962 after the state managed to successfully bring down its population, the Madras High Court said recently. In its order passed August 17, the court asked the Centre to see if the Lok Sabha representation of Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh - the other state that has seen a drop in representation in the Parliament - be restored, or to see if the two can be compensated monetarily. The court pegged the monetary compensation to Tamil Nadu at ₹5,600 crore.



## FM to launch NM Pipeline today

**NEW DELHI:** Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman Monday will launch the National Monetisation pipeline (NMP), which will list out the government's infrastructure assets to be sold over the next four years, according to the Finance Ministry. "The NMP comprises a four-year pipeline of the Central government's brownfield infrastructure assets. Besides providing visibility to investors, NMP will also serve as a medium-term roadmap for the asset monetisation initiative of the government," the Finance Ministry said in a statement Sunday.

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**HOME COMING:** This combo picture shows a woman carrying a child with black *tilak* put on face for safety, after her arrival from crisis-hit Afghanistan by a special repatriation flight of IAF, at the Hindon Air Force Station, in Ghaziabad, Sunday

## Srimandir to reopen doors for public today

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Puri, August 22:** After remaining out of bounds for over four months for devotees, the Srimandir is all set to reopen for the public Monday.

Considering people's safety as its top priority amid the pandemic, the Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA) has carried out thorough sanitisation in and around the temple.

In a tweet Sunday, SJTA wrote about the steps taken ahead of welcoming devotees.

"In view of reopening of Sreemandira for the public tomorrow and prioritising safety during the COVID-19 pandemic, as per the protocol, necessary arrangements are made by SJTA, Puri, for

complete sanitisation of Sreemandira (sic)," read the tweet. Notably, in view of rising Covid-19 cases during the second wave, the temple was closed from April 24. It reopened August 12, but all devotees were not allowed inside.

Like last year, family members of the servitors had darshan of the deities following Covid-19 guidelines. They visited the temple August 12 and 13 from *Mangal Alati* till *Rati Pahuda*.

After the weekend shutdown, Puri town residents visited the temple from August 16 to 20. On August 21 and 22, the temple was closed due to weekend shutdown. During these two days, the SJTA carried out necessary steps to sanitise the temple premises.

**IRREGULAR by MANJUL**

I can't promise protection to you. I well know the capability of my govt!

## State farmers stare at drought-like situation

With monsoon playing truant, Odisha government prepares contingency plan to save Kharif crops

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, August 22:** Farmers in 20 of the 30 districts of the state are staring at a drought-like situation and they are yet to commence agricultural activities owing to scant rainfall this monsoon.

Till August 14, the state has received an average rainfall of 51 mm compared to the normal 150 mm - the deficit being 66 per cent. What may aggravate the situation is that the metrological office has predicted rainfall in the range of only 30 mm to 40 mm till August 30. As a result, the soil moisture is likely to dip up to (-) 4 cm.

According to a senior official of the state Agriculture Extension Service department, who spoke on the condition of anonymity, "Good rainfall is crucial in August as it facilitates sowing activities. The crops reach the flowering stage in mid-September. Any rise in aridity during this period will be detrimental for the crops. Moreover, if the aridity extends up to mid-September, farmers will stare at crop loss."

In fact, no district in the state comes under the wet category. As per the estimation of the Standardised



Precipitation Index (SPI), Keonjhar, Jajpur and Bhadrak are extremely dry districts, while Sambalpur, Balangir, Angul and Gajapati are known to be severely dry. On the other hand, Ganjam, Kandhamal, Nabarangpur, Kalahandi and Subarnapur districts fall under the moderately dry districts. The remaining districts come under the mildly dry category.

A report of the Pune-based Indian Metrological Department (IMD) said all the districts in Odisha recorded negative SPI values during the period from June 1 to August 21. This reveals a dip in soil moisture, in addition to very scanty rainfall. So it is not surprising that transplanting as well as broadcasting of paddy in rain-deficit areas have been held up due to water scarcity. At the same time, the crop condition is getting worse due to growth of weed. "If the condition persists for a few more days, it would be difficult to save the crops," said a senior officer of the state Agriculture and Farmer Welfare department.

As the state is witnessing a drought-like situation, the government last Tuesday directed the Agriculture department to prepare a contingency plan to save the Kharif crops from the nature's wrath.

Agriculture Minister Arun Kumar Sahoo and Cooperation Minister Ranendra Pratap Swain reviewed the crop situation in the state at a high-level meeting. The Water Resources department has been asked to release water from all reservoirs. The Lift Irrigation Corporation has been directed to operationalise all lift points in areas facing acute shortage of water. The district Collectors too have been directed to take stock of the situation and prepare advance plans for Rabi crops, especially in areas where it may be difficult to save the Kharif crops. **(More P3)**

## '7 killed in chaos near Kabul airport'

The British army says the seven were killed as thousands of Afghans trying to flee the Taliban takeover had gathered at the airport

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Kabul, August 22:** A panicked rush of people trying to enter Kabul's international airport killed seven Afghan civilians in the crowds, the British military said Sunday, showing the danger still posed to those trying to flee the Taliban's takeover of the country.

The deaths come as a new, perceived threat from the Islamic State group affiliate in Afghanistan has seen US military planes do rapid, diving combat landings at the airport surrounded by Taliban fighters. Other aircraft have shot off flares on takeoff, an effort to confuse possible heat-seeking missiles targeting the planes.

The changes come as the US Embassy issued a new security warning Saturday telling citizens not to travel to the Kabul airport without individual instruction from a US government representative. Officials declined to provide more specifics about the IS threat but described it as significant. They said there have been no confirmed attacks as yet by the militants, who have battled the Taliban in the past.

On Sunday, the British military acknowledged the seven deaths of civilians in the crowds in Kabul.

There have been stampedes and crushing injuries in the crowds, especially as Taliban fighters fired into the air to drive away those desperate to get on any flight out of the country.

"Conditions on the ground remain extremely challenging but we are doing everything we can to manage the situation as safely and securely as possible," the Defence Ministry said in a statement.

On Saturday, British and Western troops in full combat gear tried to control the crowds pressing in. They carried away some who were sweating and pale. With temperatures reaching 34°C (93°F), the soldiers sprayed water from a hose on those gathered or gave them bottled water to pour over their heads.

"Listen sir, you need to calm down," one soldier told a man lying in the dirt, as another gave him an orange liquid. "Calm down."

It wasn't immediately clear whether those killed had been physically crushed, suffocated or suffered a fatal heart attack in the crowds. Soldiers covered several corpses in white clothes to hide them from view.

Meanwhile, Amir Khan Motaqi, chief of the Taliban's guidance council, criticised America over the situation at the airport in an audio clip posted online Sunday.

He described the US' actions as "tyranny" - even as it is Taliban fighters who have beaten and shot at those trying to access the airport over the last week.

"All Afghanistan is secure, but the airport which is managed by the Americans has anarchy," he said.

## PETROL, DIESEL RATES CUT BY 20 PAISE EACH

The oil marketing companies have finally cut petrol price after 35 days

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, August 22:** The oil marketing companies (OMC) reduced petrol prices across the key metros Sunday after keeping them unchanged for 35 days.

In Delhi, petrol price was cut to ₹101.64 per litre from ₹101.84 a litre. Similarly, in Mumbai and Kolkata, the fuel was sold for ₹107.66 and ₹101.93 per litre, against the previous levels of ₹107.83 and ₹102.08 per litre respectively.

**CITY FUEL PRICES**

**Petrol: ₹102.52 (-0.20)**

**Diesel: ₹97.14 (-0.19)**

In Chennai, petrol price was cut to ₹99.32, down from ₹99.47 a litre. In the Tamil Nadu capital, petrol prices fell by almost ₹3 per litre August 14 after the state government cut VAT on the fuel.

Diesel prices also declined across the four metros Sunday. Price of the fuel in Delhi was lowered by 20 paise to ₹89.07 per litre from the previous level.

Similarly, diesel prices in Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata were cut to ₹96.64, ₹93.66 and ₹92.13 per litre, respectively.

This cut in fuel prices comes amid declining global crude oil prices. The October contract of Brent crude oil on the Intercontinental Exchange (ICE) was trading at \$65.18.

The pump prices of auto fuels were static since July 18.

The long price pause for auto fuels came after fuel prices increased for 41 days in the current financial year. The 41 increases took up petrol prices by ₹11.44 per litre in Delhi.

## Drinking water management in Odisha dismal: Niti Aayog

Despite tall claims of providing 24x7 tap water in Puri, the state's performance in groundwater management & drinking water supply are deplorable

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, August 22:** Notwithstanding the tall claims made by the Odisha government providing round-the-clock tap water to residents of Puri city, the ground realities in the state and its track record on restoration of ground-

water to drinking water supply has come under scrutiny.

In its last Water Composite Management Index, the NITI Aayog, the Central government's think tank, had mentioned about the poor management of the water in the state and termed it a "worst performer" among the 17 non-Himalayan states.

The index was developed by the Aayog involving multiple stakeholders, both national and state, as well as a data validation process that took into account the Central and state government data on the performance of the state on water issues.

The Aayog attributed Odisha's

TAP WATER CONDITION IN ODISHA (RURAL)	
Total households	85,66,513
Households with tap water connections (till 22.8.2021)	28,85,869 (33.69%)
Total villages	47,412
Villages with 100% household tap water connection	4,265

SOURCE: JAL JEEVAN MISSION

dismal performance to its failure in implementing and operating the irrigation projects, while missing its canal lining targets. It also blamed the state for limited improvement in the quality of rural water supply.

Besides the poor indicators highlighted by the Aayog, several oth-

ers related to groundwater contamination, drinking water facilities and others hinted towards the state's failure in providing equitable water justice.

According to the data made available by the Ministry of Jal Shakti till July 26, 2021, which was tabled in the Lok Sabha recently, Odisha

## CENTRAL FUNDS TO ODISHA UNDER JAL JEEVAN MISSION

YEARS	FUNDS ALLOCATED
2019-20	₹364.74 crore
2020-21	₹812.15 crore
2021-22	₹3,323.42 crore

SOURCE: LOK SABHA

is home to 3,465 habitations where the drinking water sources are affected by chemical contaminants like fluoride, arsenic, iron, salinity, nitrate and heavy metals. It also revealed that after Assam, Bihar and

Rajasthan, Odisha is the fourth state in India with the level of contaminated drinking water.

This comes after several crores were allocated to the state by the Union government to ensure safe drinking water to the people under several schemes. In 2021-22 the state was allocated ₹3,323.42 crore under the Jal Jeevan Mission alone.

In addition, the urban-rural divide vis-à-vis tap water supply is also evident in the state, as in rural Odisha 68.40 per cent of the population do not receive tap water supply. Moreover, none of the 30 districts in the state has achieved tap water connection in 100 per cent household.



TREE AS SAVIOUR



Girls tie rakhis on a tree in Tulasipur area of Cuttack on the occasion of Raksha Bandhan, Sunday

OP PHOTO

Govt to rope in more SHGs in health sector

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 22: The state government is now planning to rope in more number of Self Help Groups (SHGs) in different sectors to boost their participation by increasing their remunerations. A meeting in this regard was recently held under the chairmanship of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik. More SHGs are to be deployed in health related works like hospital diet management at local government healthcare centres like primary health centre and the community health centre. Currently there are 23 SHGs involved in hospital diet management. The state has planned to outsource housekeeping, hygiene, cleanliness and other activities through SHGs.

Daily positivity rate at 1.26%

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, August 22: Odisha's Covid-19 caseload Sunday rose to 10,00,937 as 853 more people, including 100 children, tested positive for the infection, a Health department official said.

Sixty-nine fresh fatalities raised the coronavirus death toll to 7,358, said the official.

At least 100 children are among the new patients, and the infection rate among people below 18 years of age remained around 12 per cent, the official pointed out.

The new cases were detected from 67,834 sample tests conducted Saturday, and the daily positivity rate was at 1.26 per cent.

Of the fresh cases, 496 were reported from quarantine centres and 357 detected during contact tracing.

Khurda district, which comprises the state Capital Bhubaneswar, recorded the highest number of fresh cases at 286, followed by Cuttack at 140.

Boudh, Nabarangpur and Nuapada did not report any fresh Covid-19 case Saturday, while the new patients were detected in the remaining 27 districts of the state.

Of the fresh fatalities, 13 each were reported from Cuttack and Jagatsinghpur, 11 from Dhenkanal,

FIGURES SAY IT ALL



ODISHA LOGS 853 FRESH COVID-19 CASES AND 69 MORE FATALITIES

At least 100 children are among the new patients, and the infection rate among people below 18 years of age remained around 12 per cent

The recovery rate among coronavirus patients in the coastal state stands at 98.33 per cent

The state has so far conducted over 1.74 crore sample tests for Covid-19, including 67,834 in the last 24 hours, and the overall positivity ratio stands at 5.72 per cent

2 bars sealed for flouting Covid norms

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 22: The officials of Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) along with the police personnel Sunday sealed two bars in the Cuttack Road area of the city here for violating Covid guidelines.

Laxmisagar police had conducted raids on the two bars on a tip-off

Saturday evening. The two bars were running their business during the weekend shutdown, BMC sources said.

The police arrested 13 persons, including three women, from Pentagon Bar at Laxmisagar for their involvement in gambling activities. They had also seized Rs 2, 56,000 in cash and other incriminating items from the gam-

bling den. Police sources revealed that the woman employees of the bar used to serve liquor and card tokens to the gamblers.

Similarly, the police carried out a raid on another bar in the locality for serving liquor to customers during the weekend shutdown.

A senior police official informed the media that the bars were sealed for violating the Covid guidelines

and hosting illegal activities like gambling.

According to sources, the Commissionerate Police and the civic authorities had sealed four bars in the city for violating the Covid guidelines in December last year.

They had also collected Rs 28,000 as fine from 72 revellers present in the bars.

Heavy rains likely from Aug 25

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 22: The India Meteorological Department (IMD) Sunday issued warning for heavy rains in state from August 25.

The IMD predicted light to moderate rains in different parts of the state till August 24.

As per the prediction, heavy rains could be seen in five districts of the state from August 25.

"Heavy rainfall is likely to occur at one or two places over the districts of Mayurbhanj, Keonjhar, Balasore, Bhadrak and Jajpur," said the IMD.

"Thunderstorm with lightning may occur at one or two places over the districts of Balasore, Bhadrak, Jajpur, Kendrapara, Cuttack, Jagatsinghpur, Puri, Khurda, Nayagarh, Ganjam, Gajapati, Mayurbhanj, Keonjhar and Dhenkanal August 25," added the MeT department.

The department also said that heavy rainfall could also be seen in nine districts August 26.

"Heavy rainfall may occur at one or two places over the districts of Mayurbhanj, Balasore, Bhadrak, Keonjhar, Jajpur, Dhenkanal, Kendrapara, Cuttack and Jagatsinghpur," the department said.

The department also said that partly cloudy sky and moderate rains could be seen in the state capital August 23 while the maximum temperature in the city could go up to 36 degree C.

The department, meanwhile, said that Daringbadi recorded the highest rainfall of 20mm in the last 24 hours.

On the other hand, Chandbali and Talcher recorded the highest temperature of 36 degree C Sunday. The lowest temperature was recorded at Phulbani (18 degree C).

Alumni to reinforce high school development with ₹25L donation

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 22: The alumni association of Balikuda High School is set to donate Rs 25 Lakh in the first phase for development of the school under 'Mo School' initiative of the state government. It was resolved in a meeting held Sunday at Bhubaneswar under the Chairmanship of Bijaya Kumar Swain, old student of the school and ex-principal of Maharshi College of Natural Law, Bhubaneswar.

Water Resources, Information & Public Relations Minister and an alumnus of the institution, Raghunandan Das appealed the members of the association to contribute voluntarily, in order to develop the infrastructure and at-



mosphere of the school. He also urged everyone to work together towards preserving the heritage of the said institution. It has been decided that the development of the school will be done without affecting the E-shaped structure of the building.

The association will collect donations to the tune of Rs 50 Lakh and in the first phase, Rs.25 Lakh will be generated from among the members present in the meet-

ing. In the meeting, members of the association praised Jagatsinghpur Collector for his active involvement in the school's development.

All alumni of the school have been requested to send the money to the Mo School account of Headmaster of Balikuda High School i.e UCO Bank Account No-07720110211991 (IFSC Code-U.C.B.A. 0000772) which will be utilized under Mo school programme.

Naveen Jindal lauds state's industry-friendly policies

JSPJ plans to expand the Angul steel plant's capacity from 6 MTPA to 25.2 MTPA by 2030, which will be the largest plant in the world at a single location

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 22: Chairman of Jindal Steel & Power Ltd (JSPJ), Naveen Jindal thanked the Odisha government for approving JSPJ's Angul steel plant expansion proposal to 25.2 million tonnes per annum (MTPA).

Jindal met state Chief Secretary Suresh Chandra Mahapatra and expressed his gratitude for the approval as the State High-Level Clearance Authority recently approved the proposed expansion plan. He also interacted with Odisha Steel & Mines Secretary Deoranjana Kumar Singh.

JSPJ plans to expand the Angul steel plant's capacity from 6 MTPA to 25.2 MTPA by 2030, which will be the largest plant in the world in a single location, as per present capacities.

Speaking to media, Jindal expressed his confidence on the Odisha government for its industry friendly policies intended to protect the interests of the state based value addition creator industries, and appreciated the existing pre-emption policy of the state government for ensuring raw materials to the state-based steel industries.

Jindal also lauded the efforts by the state government in conduct-



ing the auction of iron ore blocks in a transparent and expeditious manner.

When asked about company's participation in the upcoming auction, JSPJ's Managing Director VR Sharma said, "JSPJ will participate in the forthcoming auction of the iron ore mines in Odisha. Irrespective of the auction's outcome, we are confident that the state government would make all efforts to protect the raw material security for industrial units in Odisha and promote the value addition of the raw material within the state under its pre-emption scheme."

Ex-students seek Central varsity tag to Utkal University

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 22: Members of Vanivihar Old Students' Society 92 (VOSS-92) have urged Union Education and Skill Development & Entrepreneurship Minister Dharmendra Pradhan to accord Central University status to Utkal University.

In a letter to Pradhan, the alumni association said that Utkal University is the heart of Odisha's education system and former students of the varsity have occupied numerous key academic positions in internationally-repute institutions, contributing immensely to science and humanities.

"Many scholars from Odisha are currently holding important positions in institutes like IITs and NITs. We are assured that under your able leadership, the Ministry of Education will take appropriate steps to elevate Utkal University into a Central University, a long-cherished dream of the alumni association," the VOSS-92 members said.

The resources under the Central University scheme along with the peaceful environment of the Utkal University will contribute immensely to the growth of eastern India's education and research capability especially that of Odisha, they added.

"We are confident that the quality of education will grow exponentially and a benchmark will be set for the future generation of Odisha during your tenure," they said.

Vice Chancellors meet Pradhan



Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan with Utkal University VC Sabita Acharya

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 22: Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan met Utkal University Vice Chancellor (VC) Sabita Acharya, Ravenshaw University VC Sanjay Kumar Nayak, Fakir Mohan University VC Santosh Tripathy and Maharaja Sriram Chandra Bhanja Deo University VC Kishore Kumar Basa and discussed the implementation of the National Education Policy (NEP).

During the meeting, Pradhan and Sabita discussed RUSA funding, strengthening of alumni association, National Education Policy (NEP) and focus on interdisciplinary research in Utkal University. Sabita said that the Minister assured that the remaining funds to the university under Rashtriya Uchchar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA) will be given very soon. He instructed the university to write a letter to the government re-

BEd teachers seek Union Min's help

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 22: Odisha Elementary B.Ed Teachers Federation met Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, Sunday, demanding implementation of the National Education Policy (NEP), 2021 and similar type of recruitment rules and policies for teachers.

Saroj Panda, working president of the federation, said, "Despite giving the OTET exam and being recruited as B.Ed teachers, the state government is giving us salary in the scale of Matric CT teachers which is objectionable. For the last six years, the government has us stuck with the low salary of Rs 6,512. Also, there is hardly any room for promotion." Panda sought Pradhan's interference in the situation.

Earlier, in a meeting with the eastern regional committee of National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE), Pradhan had informed that the council has restored the recognition order for B.Ed courses in favour of eight colleges in Odisha and students may be enrolled from this session onwards.

Pradhan announced Saturday that around 50,000 government-run schools in state will soon have drinking water, electricity, internet, toilets and ancillary facilities within the next two years as part of the implementation of National Education Policy (NEP)-2020.

Pradhan also discussed strengthening alumni structure and creation of corpus fund for development of the university

garding this immediately.

She also said, "We discussed about doing more interdisciplinary research study in the university as it will allow synthesis of ideas and characteristics from many disciplines. At the same time, it will address students' individual differences and help develop important, transferable skills."

Pradhan also discussed strengthening alumni structure and creation of corpus fund for development of the university. Earlier, being a former student, Pradhan had donated his one year's salary towards the development of the university.

MAN HELD FOR SELLING HOOCH

POST NEWS NETWORK

Puri, August 22: Excise sleuths Sunday claimed to have arrested a 22-year-old man on charges of selling hooch at Penthakata here.

The accused was identified as K Simhadri of Penthakata under Beach police limits in the city. The sleuths have recovered around 25 litre of illicit liquor and a scooter from the accused.

FIGHT AGAINST VIRUS



Police personnel enforcing Covid norms at Raj Mahal Square in Bhubaneswar, Sunday

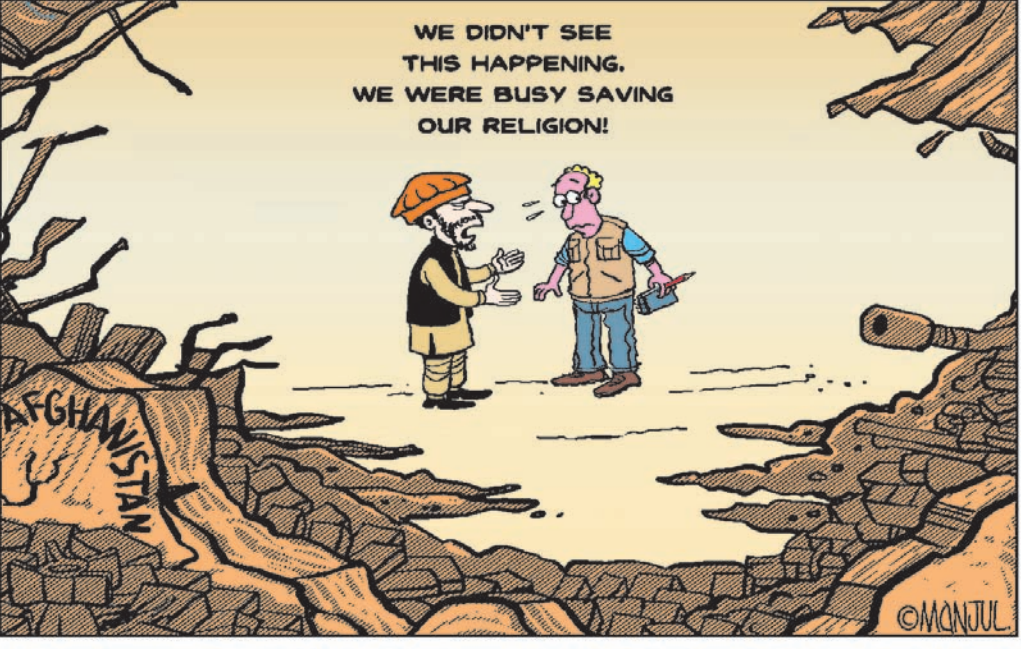
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POLITICKLE BY MANJUL



3 dead, 2 critical in road mishap

**Malkangiri, August 22:** Three persons died and two others were injured critically when a tractor had a head-on collision with a truck near MV-16 village under Model police station in Malkangiri, Sunday. According to reports, a tractor loaded with stone chips was on its way from Kalimela to Malkangiri last night. On the way, one of its tyres got flattened. Hence, the tractor was parked on roadside. A truck coming from Andhra Pradesh hit the tractor. There were five labourers sitting on it. One of them died on the spot while four were critically injured. The injured were immediately rushed to the DHH. As their conditions worsened, two were shifted to Koraput. However, on the way, another died while the third labourer died on reaching the hospital.

'People with low immunity prone to invasive fungal infections'

**Dr Vinaykumar Hallur**, a mycologist from the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Bhubaneswar, along with his team, is credited to have discovered a new species of fungus, *Cunninghamella arunalokei*, responsible for mucormycosis in a healthy human being. In an interview with Manish Kumar of Orissa POST, Dr Hallur speaks on his latest discovery. Excerpts:

- Why is your discovery a rare phenomenon? It could be termed as rare because usually invasive fungal diseases like mucormycosis mainly infect people with low immunity like those patients with uncontrolled diabetes, those who recently underwent organ transplant, and cancer patients taking anti-cancer drugs. But we found a rare case where a healthy human being was infected with *Cunninghamella* (a variety of fungus). Minute microscopic studies revealed that it was an entirely new species. Moreover, there were only three cases where *Cunninghamella* was found in healthy persons, and ours was the fourth such case.
- Many people often describe mucormycosis as black fungus. There were also talks of white fungus, yellow fungus. Does medical science agree with this classification? This is not acceptable to the scientific community and medical science. It was used by the media just for the sake of simplification which is far from reality. Usage of such terms leads to unnecessary confusion as another group of fungi unrelated to mucormycosis was called black fungus before the Covid-19 pandemic. Mucormycosis should be called by its name and not by any misleading terms.
- The number was very less. At AIIMS-Bhubaneswar, we had seen only five such cases before the Covid-19 pandemic. But we have seen around 70 mucormycosis cases during the second wave of the pandemic since May this year. One prime reason for the low detection of such cases earlier was the lack of awareness of the disease even among the medical fraternity.
- What are the survival chances of mucormycosis patients? Mucormycosis is a medical emergency. It spreads very fast within hours and lack of timely treatment increases the chances of fatality manifold. Studies have claimed that the survival chances are around 40 to 60 per cent if the patient is provided with the best medical attention and the disease is confined to sinuses. If the infection goes into the brain, the chances of death are 80 per cent even with the best medical attention.
- What are the major challenges in India on fungal research? Globally, there are very few researchers who work on fungal infection whereas the health issues arising from this are quite high in numbers. There are now an increasing number of recurrent ringworm infections among Indians, drug resistance among few species of fungi and many other cases that need more research and attention. Due to a lack of awareness among policymakers, there is also less funding in areas of fungal infections, leading to a vicious cycle of neglect with regard to fungal diseases.

KHARASROTA DRINKING WATER PROJECT

False cases against agitators alleged

**Aul, August 22:** Reports on registration of false cases against protesters of the mega drinking water project on the Kharasrota river has sparked sharp resentment among the residents and in various quarters, a report said. The residents under the banner of 'Kharasrota Nadi Banchao Sangram Samiti' have been opposing the construction of the mega drinking water project at Barunadiha on the river. At the behest of the ruling party, Rajkanika police is implicating the office bearers of the outfit and other protesters in false cases which is the most agonising way of police harassment. Police have produced the arrested persons in court by obtaining false medical report from the doctors without conducting actual medical examinations. This was stated by Debendra Sharma, a former MLA and advisor of the outfit while addressing a press conference here, Sunday. He demanded the Chief Minister and the DGP to intervene and take action on the unlawful activities of Rajkanika police. Sharma alleged that this is being



done to instill fear in the minds of the protesters when they were carrying out an agitation, which was by and large peaceful. Speaking to mediapersons, he said that thousands of men and women were participating in a peaceful road blockade opposing the project August 12, when police suddenly misbehaved with the women and lathi charged them. This angered the protesters. Subsequently, they broke the prohibitory order under Section-144 and marched towards the project site. Meanwhile, some anti-socials owing allegiance to the ruling party ransacked the project site to heap the blame on the protesters. Sharma alleged that the whole scene was unfolding in the presence of police but the latter deliberately acted late and did not take any action against the persons involved in the violence. Later, police implicated the innocent protesters in false cases. One of the cases (204/21) was registered over a complaint by the Rajkanika police IIC while another case (285/21) was registered over a complaint lodged by the consultancy agency involved in construction of the project. The names of the accused are mostly same in both the cases while the two cases are contrasting in nature. In the case lodged by Rajkanika police IIC, it has been alleged that the protesters destroyed the prop-

erties of the consultancy agency by violating the prohibitory order and breaking the barricade at 12.15noon. In the second case lodged by the consultancy agency, it was alleged that the agitators accompanied by their leaders destroyed its properties at 12.05noon. Sharma alleged that the timing is different in both the cases. He questioned if the agitators had been participating in road blockade till 12.15noon, then how they could have destroyed the properties of the consultancy agency at 12.05noon. He alleged that the complaint had been pre-conceived and prepared in advance to implicate the agitators in false cases. He alleged that even people who were bedridden at home after having heart surgery had been arrested. He himself and former MLA Dolagobind Nayak and other office bearers of their outfit have been implicated in false cases. Among others, Rajkanika block Congress president Manguli Behera, former president Baburam Jena, Aul block Congress president Rabi Narayan Behera, Kendrapara district Youth Congress president Satyapriya Samal and a host of other Congress leaders attended the press conference.

Vaishnaw stresses expediting rail projects

**Bhawanipatna/Jeyppore, August 22:** Union Railway minister Ashwini Vaishnaw reviewed the status of railway projects during his visit to Koraput and Jeyppore, a report said. Railway officials briefed him about the progress of Jeyppore

Malkangiri, Jeyppore-Nabarangpur and Therubali-Gunupur railway line project, Saturday. During the review, the minister stressed upon expediting the projects. Vaishnaw highlighted the importance of these projects and said that these lines will provide better connectivity to the economically and

socially backward areas of the state. These projects will positively impact the overall development of the region and create more employment opportunities and usher in new prospects for the residents. Vaishnaw assured the locals about expediting the railway projects in Kalahandi Parliamentary

constituency while addressing a function at Junagarh. During his visit to Koraput, Jeyppore and Junagarh, Vaishnaw participated in various public functions. He also met a number of beneficiaries of various Central government welfare schemes and interacted with them.

Drought looming large over Padmapur farmers



**Bargarh, August 22:** Farmers in most parts of this district have completed paddy transplantation and other related works, but farmlands are now dry owing to scanty rainfall in July and August. Farmers say, the post-transplantation activities in the farmlands have been affected by the dry spell. Given such conditions, the farmers of Padmapur subdivision fear possible footfall of drought in their region. Their hopes of harvest have been spoilt this kharif season. According to reports, the amount of

rainfall in June was 205.6mm. But farming activities in June could not progress due to some problems, it was said. However, the amount of rainfall sharply came down in July. In August, rainfall was miserably low, leading to possibility of drought. Farmers in these areas expressed concern over the scanty rainfall that has badly affected farming activities. "We apprehend a probable drought with the monsoon almost doing a vanishing act. Telltale signs of drought are found at several places. Farmlands have been left dry for want of rain," farmers said. "Paddy saplings have started wilting in the dry farmlands. The situation is worse in unirrigated areas. Here, paddy cultivation solely depends on rains," some farmers lamented. Deficit rainfall has badly affected paddy cultivation. In the current scenario, saving the paddy plants is too difficult, they rued. District agriculture officer Santosh Kumar Moharana said that rainfall has reduced a lot and the situation in Padmapur is not encouraging.

Illegal sawmill raided; logs, machinery seized

**Sajanagad, August 22:** Amid allegations about illegal timber smuggling in various parts of Balasore, many illegal sawmills are working in some parts of the district. The number of illegal sawmills has increased. Operation of such sawmills has taken a toll on forests in the area with timber smugglers working overdrive.

Following a directive from the Balasore DFO, a team of forest officials raided a sawmill in Remuna area Sunday. The team has seized logs and machinery worth over ₹3 lakh in the presence of police and a magistrate. It was learnt that this sawmill had been operating for a long time. It may be noted here that many sawmills in the district have already been closed following a High Court order.



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Thy goal, the road thou chooseth  
are thy fate.

SRI AUROBINDO



## Policing Marriage

The Gujarat High Court's interim order staying certain sections of the controversial Gujarat Freedom of Religion (Amendment) Act, 2021, dubbed the 'love jihad law', is expected to calm passions being worked up in several other BJP-ruled states.

Legal experts opine that for the state to interfere with a citizen's personal freedom to choose one's life partner through inter-faith marriage is draconian and undemocratic. This interim order puts a question mark on the constitutionality of not just the Gujarat law but also similar legislation in Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Himachal Pradesh.

The amendment to the original law enacted in 2003 to prevent forcible conversion has seemingly insidious intentions as it has incorporated inter-faith marriage as a means of forcible conversion.

Quite pertinently has the Bench of Chief Justice Vikram Nath and Justice Biren Vaishnav ruled the law "interferes with the intricacies of marriage including the right to choice of an individual." The court stayed some sections of the Act and said these provisions will not be applicable to inter-faith marriages till there is something to show there is force, allurement or fraud involved. The Bench's most crucial observation is that the law puts consenting parties entering validly into inter-faith marriage "in great jeopardy." The ambit of the amended law is such that individuals choosing their life-partners, professing different religions, through marriage on their own volition, can be targeted by too many persons who have no business to decide on the conjugal life of two adults who take a solemn vow to live together.

Section 6A of the 2003 Act places the burden of proof on the parties entering into an inter-faith marriage to prove that the marriage was not solemnised on account of any fraud, allurement or coercion. The court questioned concerns about how a common man may determine every instance of inter-faith marriage as prohibited. The Amending Act of 2021, which was brought into force through a notification June 6, presupposes a marriage itself to be a tool for unlawful conversion being effected by way of allurement, force or other fraudulent means. A plain reading of Section 3 indicates that any conversion on account of marriage is to be banned. This is considered a gross infringement of Article 21 of the Constitution of India.

The HC's ruling that pending further hearing the rigors of Sections 3, 4, 4A to 4C, 5, 6 and 6A shall not operate merely because a marriage is solemnised by a person of one religion with a person of another religion without force or by allurement or by fraudulent means. This is in consonance with the freedom granted by the Constitution to live one's personal life according to one's own choice.

Moreover, the amended law seeks to circumvent the legal challenge to the charge of conversion through marriage from the consenting individuals by making them irrelevant in framing a case. It has added more categories to the list of persons who can complain about instances of "forced conversion" under Section 3A. The "aggrieved person" as per the Section could be parents, brother, sister, or any other person related by blood, marriage, adoption. Any one of them is accorded the right to file FIR with the police making a mockery of the personal freedom of two consenting individuals tying the nuptial knot. This, in effect, legitimises mob interference in an individual's private life. By shifting the burden of proof on the individual accused of forcibly converting another person, the law gives sanctity to communal prejudice and paranoia backed by state power. This may be considered as harassment as has already been seen in UP where some such individuals had to flee their homes in order to avoid arrest. In the case of a couple in Pune, their parents, who readily accepted their marriage, were so much intimidated by one community that they had to cancel the reception in a hotel for which invitations had been sent to friends and relatives. It was only after a state minister threw his weight behind the two families that the celebration could later take place.

Intriguingly, the added sections slap a jail term for three to five years and fine of up to ₹2 lakh. They enjoin on individuals to seek permission from the district administration for the marriage. There are penal provisions also for institutions and priests effecting the marriage.

The opinion of legal experts could seem acceptable that this legislative exercise is a comprehensive and well organised attempt by the state to bring religious intolerance into play in the personal affairs of individuals. Also that this goes against the fabric and ethos of the country's secular and democratic structure. The Gujarat HC order, even though interim, should make the state give fresh thoughts to this ill-conceived design.

It is more important to make a new beginning and allow citizens to live happily and peacefully if the economic growth dreams of every Indian are to be fulfilled.

### WISDOM CORNER

Never apologize for showing feeling. When you do so, you apologize for the truth.  
BENJAMIN DISRAELI

It is amazing how complete is the delusion that beauty is goodness.  
LEO TOLSTOY

I'd rather have roses on my table than diamonds on my neck.  
EMMA GOLDMAN

### WORDSWORTH

#### Pagan

In his parish newsletter, the Reverend David Leaver, curate at the parish church at Wilmslow in Cheshire, accused local people of being more interested in worldly goods and status than in the care of their souls. He said Wilmslow people were "as pagan as any group of people I have ever met." In every sense, pagan is a fighting word. To search out its origins we have to delve into Roman military slang. In Latin, one meaning of the word pagus was that of a country district or a rural area. From this came paganus, a country dweller or villager, the opposite of urbanus, someone who lived in a town. Then as now, many townspeople felt themselves superior to those from the countryside, which is why the latter has spawned urbane but why pagus has given us peasant, by way of the French pays and paisant. For the urban Roman, paganus had much the same undertones as peasant has for us now. Roman soldiers, who called themselves miles, used paganus as a belittling slangy term for somebody not in the army, a civilian. The early Christians in Rome thought of themselves as soldiers of Christ, taking seriously St Paul's instruction to put on the whole armour of God. They adopted the same vocabulary as Roman soldiers — miles for one of their number and paganus for a person who wasn't a Christian. Pagan isn't just a fighting word, it's also a slippery one, at least to judge from the attempts of various dictionaries to get across what it means. Oxford dictionaries have variations on "a person not subscribing to any of the main religions of the world", which leaves open the question of what is a main religion, who decides what is or isn't one, and whether those not subscribing to any of them have a say in the matter. Chambers Dictionary defines the word as referring to someone who has pre-Christian beliefs, especially ones involving worship of more than one god. This neatly reinterprets the word for our modern and sensitive, PC generation, albeit ignoring about a millennium of usage. Others attempt multiple definitions that often include something like "a heathen; a barbarous or unenlightened person". Heathen is a Germanic word that means exactly the same as pagan, since it originally referred to a person who lived on a heath, an upcountry and wild bit of land, and so was uncultured or savage. It took on its religious sense in imitation of pagan. Using it to define pagan is a circularity that inquiring minds can do without. Other dictionaries try meanings for pagan such as "a person who has no religion or disregards Christian beliefs", or "someone who has little or no religion and who delights in sensual pleasures and material goods; an irreligious or hedonistic person". This is where we arrive at Mr Leaver's sense of the word, for he can hardly regard his parishioners as non-Christians, however much they backslide.



Saeed Naqvi

**KABUL UNDER THE COMMUNISTS PAVED THE WAY FOR THE SOVIETS INTO THE COUNTRY**

Imperialism, which finally died in Afghanistan last week, had actually begun to hiccup in the mid 70s. Of this hiccuping, Vietnam was the most serious convulsion. In the wake of decolonisation such eruptions had become commonplace, in Africa for instance, where the withdrawal of Portugal led to the direct ascent to power by Communist parties in Angola and Mozambique. Then Mengistu appeared in Ethiopia; a little later Daniel Ortega in Nicaragua. Such an outcome had to be forestalled in Iran, South Asia region.

Ironically the Saur revolution, or the April coup of 1978 brought Afghan Communists, Khalq and Parcham, to power. This epoch-making event was a consequence of a botched-up adventure instigated by US intelligence. The Shah of Iran's notorious Savak took the operational lead. I was in Kabul for the first press conference by Nour Mohammad Taraki, the Communist Prime Minister.

Jimmy Carter's National Security Adviser, Zbigniew Brzezinski, was embarked on securing a global order in which 'regional influentials' would play a key role. The Shah, arch regional power in Brzezinski's book, allowed Savak to clean up the stables in nearby Kabul where Mohammad Daud, a Marxist 'numa' (look-alike) was leaning excessively on Moscow.

Diehard Communists around Daud had to be eliminated. As happens in many intelligence operations, the plot hatched by Savak was leaked. Mir Akbar Khyber, a Communist trade union leader, was inadvertently killed, alerting the Communists across the country of the Savak plan.

In a pre-emptive move, military officers Aslam Watanjar and Abdul Qadir Dagarwal mobilised armoured carriers, drove into the Presidential Palace, killed Daud and his relatives. Communist took power.

Kabul under the Communists paved the way for the Soviets into the country. Once again, Brzezinski was in action. Peering into Afghanistan from the automatic 'frontline state', Pakistan, he began to think tactically towards a strategic end.

### FOCUS GEOPOLITICS

# DEATH OF IMPERIALISM



**In 1996, the Taliban, a progeny of the Mujahideen, fired by the kind of Islam instilled into them in the madrassas, were once again boosted by the Americans. Others, including the section of South Block which had joined the US camp after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, acquiesced in the Taliban's surge**

The US, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan got into a huddle for their own purposes. The US would provide military training and hardware to drive the Soviets out of Afghanistan. Saudis and the Pak establishment wanted this outcome too, but the two had key agendas of their own. Saudis would spend billions in the project to manufacture a kind of Arabized Islam to undermine the Shia Ayatollahs in Iran who had come to power just the previous year. It suited President Zia ul Haq of Pakistan.

He was able to embark on his Nizam-e-Mustafa, or government based on Islamic laws. This would Arabise the country's Islam and wrench it away from the 'mumbo-jumbo' of secularism and composite culture being promoted in India. Had he lived, the social evolution of India would have pleased him.

Hundreds of madrassas or seminaries came up on the Pakistan side of the border, hatcheries to breed the Mujahideen who eventually helped drive the Soviets out in 1989. True, a year later the Soviet Union fell but the departing Americans left behind unemployed Islamic militants who farmed out

for work in Kashmir, Egypt, Algeria. The spiritual heirs in the diaspora of this brand of militancy were utilised most recently in the Syrian carnage.

All of this, in every detail, was lucidly exposed at a Congressional hearing by Hillary Clinton. Her statement is still available on YouTube. Some years ago, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Morgulov Igor Vladimirovich told a high powered Raisina Dialogue that Islamic militants from Syria were being airlifted to Northern Afghanistan. The following week, Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Khamenei repeated the allegation at a sermon following Friday prayers in Tehran. Is it true? Or has the narrative changed in the last few years?

In 1996, the Taliban, a progeny of the Mujahideen, fired by the kind of Islam instilled into them in the madrassas, were once again boosted by the Americans. Others, including the section of South Block which had joined the US camp after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, acquiesced in the Taliban's surge. The lemon sold to everybody was: Taliban will control Afghanistan and the US will control the Taliban. This

co-ordination will facilitate UNOCAL's TAPI (Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India) gas pipeline. After UNOCAL was sold to Chevron in 2005, the US found other reasons to stay on: Pakistan next door was too nuclear to be ignored; Uyghurs in Xinjiang and Muslim populations in the Caucasus looked like low hanging fruit, accessible from Afghan real estate. Priceless poppy in Helmand?

Founder of Al Qaeda, Osama bin Laden had made Afghanistan his headquarters since 1980 with a singular mission: to help the Taliban see the backs of the Soviets. Their occupation of a Muslim country was an insult to Islam. Once the Soviets had been driven out, bin Laden set his sights on foreign soldiers and oil companies in his homeland. He raised his banner of revolt against Riyadh, soon after Juhayman al-Otaybi and his al-Ikhwan group (an extremist cousin of Muslim Brotherhood) shook the Kingdom by occupying the mosque of Mecca for 20 days. The Saudi Royal family's strong links with the Bush family was the backdrop for the clash of civilisations as soon as George W Bush entered the White House in January 2001. Eight months later 9/11 happened. Egged on by the neo-cons, the US occupied Afghanistan.

It is being made out that this is the first time that soldiers trained by the Americans waged no battle against the Taliban. What happened in Vietnam? Google C-Span and see Gen. Lloyd Austin, now Defence Secretary, being grilled by the Senate Armed Services Select Committee on a \$500 million project to train Syrian militants.

"How many of our trainees are fighting?"  
Huge pause. Austin: "Four or five."

Media neo-cons will not give up. In a satirical piece Thomas Friedman of the New York Times expects the Taliban "the morning after the morning after" to turn up at the White House, turbans in hand. Please sir, take over our country once again.

*The writer is a senior commentator on political and diplomatic issues.*  
IANS

### SPECTRUM DEMOCRACY

# State's promise: An undeniable right to citizen

Mrs Alansi belonged to a 'home-seeker' category in the London Borough of Newham, a place with an acute shortage of housing. She made an application for housing to the Permanent Council Accommodation. Meanwhile, due to a long waiting list, the government implemented another programme known as the 'Bond Scheme.' She decided to avail of the Bond Scheme after a promise from the authorities that she would "still retain the right to bid for Permanent Council Accommodation." Her priority on the waiting list was reduced. It was this promise by the authorities that was the cause of the dispute before the England Court in the case of Queen (on the application of Alansi) v. London Borough of Newham. The Court ruled that it has to check whether a 'legitimate expectation' is created in favour of the individual based on her understanding and background knowledge of the matter. It said that the authorities' withdrawal from their commitment was unreasonable and demanded justification. However, after hearing the explanations, the Court finally concluded that the new policy was a fair so-

lution to the social problem.

The above case law provides us with a few points on the doctrine of 'legitimate expectation.' They are (i) citizens have a high level of faith in promises made by officials and the latter are bound by the promises; (ii) the legitimate expectation of the citizens and their background knowledge of the promise are to be considered in adjudication; (iii) an over-riding public interest would be an exception to the above doctrine; (iv) the exception has to be clearly established in the court; (v) a lot of discretion is allowed to judges to decide on the facts of the case.

The above doctrine is also applied in India with some added characteristics. They are (i) the doctrine helps in promoting honesty and good faith in governance; (ii) it helps in maintaining the uniform fiscal policy and insulates policies from a change in government.

It is in this context that the judgement of Najma v. Govt. of NCT Delhi has to be considered. The facts of the case were that Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal attended a press conference 29 March 2020. In his address, the CM directed that (i) landlords should not collect rent from tenants for two to three

months if the latter are unable to pay it and to postpone the same; (ii) if any tenant is unable to pay rent, the government would pay on his behalf. The above promises were made during the peak of the pandemic to stop the exodus of migrants from Delhi and assure them that the government will give them a helping hand. A few landlords and tenants decided to enforce these promises in the Delhi High Court.

The Court observed that in a democratic system, elected officials, particularly leaders of government, and others in positions of responsibility, are required to offer responsible assurances to their constituents, particularly during times of crisis. Proper governance necessitates that the government acts on the guarantee provided by the CM. Further, the public has a legitimate expectation that an assurance given by the CM himself will be carried out. A statement made at a carefully staged press conference, against the backdrop of the pandemic-induced lockdown and the enormous departure of migrant labourers, cannot be dismissed. Hence, the Court directed the government of Delhi to decide on the implementation of the

scheme within six weeks.

This judgement empowers the common man against the mighty State. It prevents the State and its authorities to give false promises. Accountability is attached to the rulers so that schemes do not remain merely on paper. Citizens test the rulers routinely and prevent the State from turning into a dormant symbolic democracy. Importantly, it reiterates the basic idea of democracy - a government of the people, by the people, and for the people. Hence, leaders are bound by their promises and citizens can enforce them in a court of law.

However, the Court made an interesting observation. It said that "the said assurance is not a political promise, as is sought to be canvassed before this Court. It was also not made as a part of an election rally." It is an inadvertent acceptance by the Court that words spoken in an election rally are outright 'jumla'. In the quest for a Ram-Rajya, let the government preach and practice, "power jaye par vachan na jaye."

*The writer is B.A. L.L.B., Hidayatullah National Law University. Views are personal.*

## 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](mailto:edit@orissapost.com)

**OrissaPOST**

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### Harsh decision

Sir, The Union government has announced to remove old vehicles from roads - 20-year period for private vehicles and 15-year for commercial vehicles. Previously vehicles were registered for 15 years and after that they were re-registered with a fitness certificate from the RTO. In whose interest has the new rule come up? Will this really reduce pollution? As per the government policies every vehicle has to be issued a pollution certificate every six months. So for what purpose has the government decided to remove old vehicles from the road? It is an unfortunate decision to hit poor drivers who buy an old car/auto at a cost of ₹1 to 2 lakh and manage their families. Also poor mechanics of roadside garages will be greatly affected. To encourage people to buy new cars in exchange for old ones, the government has announced a five per cent discount on new cars and free registration. This decision will help industrialists as their vehicle sale will increase, while the government will get tax revenue. The dealer will get more profit. But for the common man it will be a day dream to become the owner of a vehicle. Government should reconsider the order and allow plying of old vehicles that are in good condition.

Bishnu Prasad Das, CUTTACK

### Retirement age

Sir, In our Constitution, it is clearly written about the entry age of MLAs, MPs, the President, the Vice-President, the Governor and the Chief Minister. But, nowhere is the retirement age of our elected representatives mentioned. Chief Justice of India retires at 75. Judges of High Court retire at 62. The Comptroller And Auditor General of India retires at 65. All the members of Commissions retire at 62. All government employees retire at 60 barring doctors in some states. Army personnel also have a fixed retirement age. Taking advantage of the loopholes in our Constitution, power hungry politicians are blocking the advent of young and dynamic leaders in politics. India craves for new blood, new faces, young leaders and charismatic young politicians who can bring qualitative change in our lives. Old politicians should take voluntary retirement on moral grounds and pave the way for young, vibrant, passionate and dedicated youths for making a glorious career in politics. The Election Commission of India should rise to the occasion about fixing retirement age for our politicians and elected representatives. A Constitutional amendment is imperative.

Prabhudutt Dash, BHUBANESWAR



## TOTAL PROHIBITION



Youths and women demanding liquor free Odisha taking out a rally in Singhpur under Binjharpur block in Jajpur district, Sunday

OP PHOTO

# Deceased ACF's father raises new questions

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Khaira, August 22:** Abhiram Mohapatra, father of deceased Paralakhemundi ACF Soumya Ranjan Mohapatra has said that his son was trained to douse forest fires. So he knew how to save himself from fires. It should be stated here that Soumya died after suffering serious burn injuries on the night of July 12. "Soumya was taught to douse forest fires during training. My son had also acquired skills to protect himself during a forest fire. I fail to understand how such a person could suffer 95 per cent burns. He was well-trained to tackle any situation arising out of fire," Abhiram told mediapersons here Sunday. Abhiram also disagreed with the version of Sangram Keshari Behera that the Gajapati DFO did not know Soumya's wife Bidyabharati.



"The DFO has been changing his statement frequently. If he is not involved in Soumya's death, why did he visit the Gajapati district headquarters hospital (DHH)? What he was doing when Soumya was groaning in pain due to burn injuries," Abhiram asked.

The father of the deceased ACF alleged that Behera was had dis-

cussed something secret with doctors at the health facility. The DFO was present even when Soumya's dying statement was being recorded. Abhiram's reaction comes close on the heels of the DFO being quizzed earlier Saturday by a three-member team of Odisha Crime Branch officials led by its DSP Gyana Ranjan Mishra.

## 3 held for looting ₹24 lakh from cash van in Silk City

₹20.90 lakh, four mobile phones seized from the possession of accused

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Berhampur, August 22:** Police claimed Sunday that they cracked the case in which ₹24 lakh was looted from a cash-carrying van on the crowded Aska Road under Bada Bazaar police limits here. They said three persons including the mastermind have been arrested.

The van driver identified as Ashis Kumar Diga is the mastermind of this robbery while Manyabar Naik, 43, and Kartik Naik, 35, of Katringia village under Sarangagada police limits in Kandhamal district are his two accomplices.

The accused were produced in court and remanded to judicial custody after their bail pleas were rejected. This was stated here by Berhampur SP Pinak Mishra at a press conference held at the district police headquarters here, Sunday.

Mishra said that the mastermind and his accomplices looted the money and tried to give a different picture regarding the crime. However, during interrogation, the driver admitted to be the main person behind the planning and execution of the loot. On the basis of his admission, a team of police officials led by Berhampur Town SDPO and Bada Bazaar IIC Prasant

Bhupati raided the Katringia village and recovered ₹20,90,000 buried in a secluded place. A Honda bike and four mobile phones have also been seized from the possession of the three accused.

The SP said that Diga was working as the driver of 'AGS Secure', a private agency engaged in transporting cash to various ATMs in the town.

The incident occurred when four officials of agency carrying ₹26 lakh cash left for various ATMs in the town, August 18. First they replenished cash at the ATM located in Rajasahi and later stopped at an Axis Bank ATM counter on Aska Road.

The two gunmen and two officials went inside the ATM leaving cash in the van with the driver. They returned after some time but found the van and the driver missing.

They informed their location manager Padmanabha Panda who with the help of GPS tracked the van to Girisola on the Andhra Pradesh border. They informed the Golanthara police who traced the van at Girisola-Sorala Road and found the driver lying unconscious inside the vehicle.

Police quizzed the driver after the agency lodged a complaint. Diga admitted he committed the crime with the help of two accomplices.

## Maoists oppose dam project

Left wing ultras blocked the Jharigaon-Chandahandi road by felling trees. Communication on the route came to a standstill for hours until the administration cleared the mess

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Nabarangpur/Jharigaon, August 22:** Opposing the construction of a dam on Tel River, the Maoists blocked Sunday the Jharigaon-Chandahandi road in Nabarangpur district. Locals found the road blocked with trees felled by the Maoists at Singadi ghat near the Chandahandi ghat.

They also found posters and banners put up by the Red Rebels stating that they are against the construction of the dam on the Tel River. The banner has been put by Communist Party of India (Maoist) of Mainpur-Nuapada divisional committee.

The proposed project Bileilati hydro-electricity project will be constructed on Tel river which will displace over 10,000 families in Jharigaon, Umerkote and Raighar blocks in the district. In the banner written in Odia and Hindi dialect, the ultras have urged people not to remove the banner.

They immediately informed the police about the development. Chandahandi IIC Paramananda Sunani accompanied by police force reached the spot, seized the posters and banners and cleared the road for traffic. The cops said they are keeping a close tab on the situation.

However, the local people are full of fear and apprehension. They apprehend that they will be facing a backlash from Maoists over the construction of the dam.



### UNEASY CALM

The proposed project Bileilati hydro-electricity project will be constructed on Tel river which will displace over 10,000 families in Jharigaon, Umerkote and Raighar blocks in the district. In the banner written in Odia and Hindi dialect, the ultras have urged people not to remove the banner.

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Later, a team of CRPF jawans led by deputy commandant Kailash Gondwane, SDPO Dinesh Chandra Nayak and Jharigaon IIC Natabar Nanda reached the spot and launched a search operation. Later, they recovered an empty tiffin box without the bombs and some elec-

tric wires from the spot.

Notably, Tel River is a tributary of Mahanadi. On completion, the Tel Integrated project near Chandahandi - to be built at a cost of ₹1,146 crore - will supply water to 10,000 acres of agricultural land and produce 20 MW power.

## 'Gamha Dian' ritual slowly losing its sheen in Ganjam

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Berhampur, August 22:** Several traditions and rituals once closely associated and celebrated in Odisha have taken a backseat. Those are not celebrated with the same fervour and gaiety as was the case even a few years back. The net has played a role in the decreasing of importance of such rituals and in the last couple of years the Covid-19 pandemic has proved to be the last nail in the coffin.

One such tradition is 'Gamha Dian'. It is a type of game organised in southern districts of Odisha on the occasion of Rakhi Purnima. Since, this festival is also called 'Gamha Purnima' in Odisha, the game got its name as 'Gamha Dian'. 'Dian' means jump. The event used to be observed in almost all villages in the southern districts to add festive spirit on the occasion of Raksha Bandhan. There was a time when youngsters would collect donations from the villagers they stayed in to celebrate 'Gamha Dian'. On the day of 'Raksha Bandhan', they would build a raised platform with stones, bricks, earth and straw. In front of it they would



erect two bamboo poles on the two sides of the platform. They would then tie a rope between the two poles and hang lucrative gifts on it. Many took part in the event and there would always be hundreds of spectators watching it.

The rules of the game were simple. A participant would have to announce the gift he was aiming for. He would then have to run from a distance, jump on the platform and leap into the air trying to touch the gift of his favoured choice. If he managed to get his fingertips on the object of his choice, it would

be given to the participant. Excitement would run high with the spectators cheering on the participant.

However, this tradition of 'Gamha Dian' is virtually non-existent now. These days most youngsters are glued to their mobile phones and they do not show the urge to organise 'Gamha Dian'. Barring a handful of villages, the festival is not observed at all.

The situation has come to such a pass that there are many young adults who hardly have any knowledge about 'Gamha Dian'.

## Girl drowns minutes before tying rakhi on borther's hand

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Rairangpur, August 22:** The dream of a three-and-half-year old Saunri Tudu to tie rakhi on her brother's hand remained unfulfilled as she got drowned Sunday minutes before she was to tie the sacred thread. The kid was a resident of Kudunda village under Bisoipolice limits in Mayurbhanj

district. Saunri, daughter of Mayabati and Pranabandhu Tudu was all excited about the occasion, but fate had decided otherwise.

Police registered a case and sent the body for post-mortem. A pall of gloom descended in the village after news of her death spread. She had gone to take a bath with her mom and elder

brother Chittaranjan in Khadakhai river when tragedy struck.

While bathing she slipped deep into the river and got drowned. Her mother and brother tried to save her but in vain. When locals finally brought out her body from the river and rushed her to the hospital she was pronounced dead on arrival.

## Eight-year-wait proves fruitful

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Amarpalli, August 22:** Eight years after some landless people received pattas for homestead land, the administration has finally identified the location of those in Bahalpadar panchayat under Birmaharajpur block in Subarnapur district.

According to reports, 39 landless people of Bhaludunguri village had received notification for land pattas. The administration had provided land patta of 100 decimal to each in 2012. However, the land could not be identified for a long time even though the beneficiaries applied for demarcation.

The Forest department had carried out plantation in the area. This led to a tug of war between the beneficiaries and the Forest department.

### LAND DEMARCATION



The department claimed that the tehsil office had handed over the land to it for carrying out plantation.

Villagers had later uprooted the fencing around the plantation site.

Officials of the tehsil and the Forest department conducted the demarcation exercise in the presence of beneficiaries. Lands of 17 beneficiaries were identified and handed over.

## Bari: Sacrifice of 4 martyrs recalled

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bari, August 22:** About 80 years ago, four freedom fighters of Bari locality in Jajpur district had laid down their lives while taking part in the 'Quit India' movement against the British rulers. The fateful day was 'Gamha Pune' (August 26, 1942). People of this locality still fondly recollect the supreme sacrifice made by the four as 'Gamha Pune' is celebrated.

Influenced by the 'Quit India' movement called by Mahatma Gandhi in 1942, over 100 youths from Bari area had plunged into the freedom movement and were imprisoned by the British. Incidentally this is the locality which was once the workplace of Sarvodaya leaders Gopabandhu Choudhury and Rama Devi.

On a rain-swept Rakhi Purnima day/Gamha Pune (August 26, 1942) the British police launched a manhunt in Kalamatia and Kaipada villages to arrest some freedom fighters who had set the Kaipada post office on fire. As the message spread in the area about the raid, people gheraoed the armed po-

licemen and fought a pitched battle.

Sauntali Mallik of Srirampur, Sananda Swain and Hadibandhu Panda of Krushna Nagar and Mayadhar Bhuyan of Hatasahi under Bari block valiantly fought against the policemen. However, all of them died when police opened fire to disperse the protesters. Ten others were also wounded near a pond at Kalamatia.

It should be stated here that 19 inhabitants of Krushna Nagar locality were also handed prison sentences for taking part in the freedom movement. Since then Krushna Nagar has turned famous and is also referred to as 'Sangrami Village'. To remember the sacrifice of four martyrs, some villagers had erected in 1975 a Sahid Stambha (martyr tower) at the spot where the four were shot dead. Bari MLA Sunanda Das and Kalamatia sarpanch Samir Mallick said they are proud of having taken birth on the soil tinged with blood of four freedom fighters. Locals have formed Saheed Memorial Trust for development of the place, known as 'Rakta Tirtha'.



## Woman held for killing father-in-law

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Jajpur, August 22:** Police arrested Sunday the woman who had allegedly hacked her father-in-law to death August 16 at Ranapal village under Panikoli police limits in Jajpur district August 16 night. Since then the accused woman identified as Rupa Hati had been absconding.

Notably, Rupa, her husband and her father-in-law were working on a farmland August 16. The couple had a quarrel over some issues. She also had a

heated argument with her father-in-law Pabana Hati.

In the evening on the same day, Rupa asked her husband to drop her at her parents' house. However, when he refused the two had a bitter argument.

Oblivious to the latest development, Pabana was playing the 'mrindanga' sitting on the balcony of their house. Rupa vented her anger on her father-in-law. She came with an axe and attacked him multiple times on his neck, leading to his death. After committing the crime, she fled from the village to evade arrest.

## REMINISCING THE LEGEND



Guests paying tributes to Swabhaba Kabi Gangadhar Meher after garlanding his statue on the occasion of his birth anniversary on GM University premises, Sunday

OP PHOTO



# leisure



## IDINA FOUND BECOMING A PARENT 'LIBERATING'

Actress Idina Menzel has said that becoming a mother has taught her about 'priorities and perspective'. "It was really liberating when I became a mom. And when you had these beautiful, little humans that you have to worry about, it teaches you priorities and perspective," she said.

## 'DON'T THINK I'LL EVER QUIT MAKING MUSIC'

Singer Selena Gomez says she has no plans to stop working on her own music. "I don't think I'll ever quit making music. I'm not saying I want a Grammy. I just feel like I'm doing the best I can, and it's all about me," said Gomez.



### FORTUNE FORECAST

GaneshSpeaks.com  
accuracy • reliability • trust  
FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181

**ARIES**  
Are you a science and technology geek? Well, today you may have a chance to use your knowledge and zoom ahead of everyone! Ganesh says even students will excel in their studies. Housewives, try your own new recipe, the oven will not blast!

**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**  
You are likely to make a list of your daily chores that take most of your time. Then you will find a way to outsource these activities or eliminate them from your routine altogether. You will also devote a lot of your time to meditation. Health of a family member may give you some anxious moments, feels Ganesh.

**CANCER**  
You think you are smart, you will be most certainly savouring the positive aspects of your life. Sometimes, it is quite possible that you find yourself at the end of your wits. You had better sit together with your spouse and thrash out personality clashes and private quarrels, suggests Ganesh.

**LEO**  
A moment once lost is not going to come back. So, it's about time you realised the value of time, says Ganesh, because time is money. On this day, set everything to a schedule and figure out your tasks right down to the brass tacks. Personal organisers are a good bet, but if you are old school, then maybe you would rather prefer a diary and a calendar.

**VIRGO**  
Communication is your best handgun and creativity your best bullet. Ganesh feels you are full of energy, enthusiasm and exuberance. Creativity, though, will be at its best in an atmosphere free of pressure and strain, cautions Ganesh.

**LIBRA**  
When you aim big, it is the small things that somehow manage to irritate you the most. Ganesh foresees you being troubled immensely by minute things today. But do not let this dampen your spirit, because today is also a day when you shall be receptive to new ideas.

**SCORPIO**  
You may face the music from bosses today, forecasts Ganesh. Your colleagues too may not warm up to you and offer half-hearted support. Novices knocking on the doors of career may look forward to belated success in interviews and final selection.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
Friendship with a few like-minded people is likely to develop today. You shall spend a large share of your time discussing issues like attitude, beliefs and values. Those with you will enjoy sharing their ideas and opinions, and casting them in a new mould.

**CAPRICORN**  
Lack of confidence may leave you glum in the first half of the day, and to add to it, you will be loaded with work that you may have taken up from company other than the one employing you full time, says Ganesh. The sullen mood will turn jovial by evening, and you can expect to have a good time socialising with friends and relatives.

**AQUARIUS**  
You may feel constrained by future plans. Ganesh says that plans are okay, but you must live in the present to avail the cosmic energy that ultimately manifests your dreams. At work, your generous spirit adds to the goodwill you have already accrued.

**PISCES**  
You would do well to make a to-do list today, if only to gain a realistic perspective of how much you want done and how much you can achieve in the time you have available. Making unreasonable demands from yourself will only lead to further delays, says Ganesh.

## Four unmissable anthologies streaming on OTT platforms

These compilations offer opportunities to the directors to collaborate and approach one common theme through the lens of multiple perspectives

Collaborative anthologies are the new flavour of the season on OTT platforms. For audiences, they offer dramatic stories narrated in short-film formats, so watching them is like seeing an episode of a web series

Here's a list of four anthologies, released in the recent past, that you cannot afford to miss.

**Kaali Peeli Tales**  
Kaali Peeli Tales is an anthology of six entertaining short stories capturing the essence of love and relationships and the complexities of life in Mumbai.

One of the most enduring, and visible, symbols of Mumbai, the iconic black and yellow taxi that somehow stays unaffected by the passage of time, is the thread that binds the six stories - *Single Jhumka*, *Love in Tadoba*, *Marriage 2.0*, *Fish Fry and Coffee*, *Harra Bharra* and *Loose Ends*. The cast of the stories includes Vinay Pathak, Gauahar Khan, Sayani Gupta, Maanvi Gargroo and Soni Razdan.

**Ajeeb Daastaans**  
This anthology consists of four short film segments directed by Shashank Khaitan, Raj Mehta, Neeraj Ghaywan and Kayoze Irani. It captures the complexities of troubled human relationships. The actors bringing the stories to life competently on the screen are Konkona Sen Sharma, Aditi Rao Hydari, Fatima Sana Shaikh, Jaideep Ahlawat, Nushratt Bharucha and Abhishek Banerjee.

**Unpaused**  
It is set during the coronavirus pandemic and presents a moving picture of how different classes of society tackled it. The anthology features a stellar cast of Gulshan Devaiah, Saiyami Kher, Komal

Chhabria, Richa Chadha, Ishwak Singh, Sumeet Vyas, Lillete Dubey, Rinku Rajguru, Abhishek Banerjee, Geetika Vidya Ohlyan, Palash Prajapati, Ratna Pathak Shah and Shardul Bhardwaj.

**Ray**  
Ray is a four-episode mini web series created by Sayantan Mukherjee highlighting an unusual side of the late maestro, Satyajit Ray -- that of a writer of short stories with unusual plots, which, surprisingly, he never turned into films. Some of the best actors of today appear in the series, including Manoj Bajpayee, Ali Fazal, Shweta Basu Prasad, Gajraj Rao, Kay Kay Menon, Harsh Vardhan Kapoor and Radhika Madan, and they deliver without fail powerful performances. The short films have been directed by Srijit Mukherji, Vasan Bala and Abhishek Chaubey.

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## 'Stardom not the reason to enter glamour world'

New Delhi: Actress Tamannaah Bhatia started her career in acting at the tender age of 15. However, she says stardom was not the reason she got into the world of glitz and glamour.

As of today, the 31-year-old actress is one of the most prominent names down south as she has worked in blockbusters such as the *Baahubali* franchise, *K.G.F: Chapter 1* and *Sye Raa Narasimha Reddy* among many others.

Has losing stardom ever been a fear for Tamannaah?

Tamannaah in an interview said: "When I started working at 15, honestly stardom was really not the reason I got into movies.

I just wanted to be in front of the camera and what ever would bring me that path. It is more of something I do because it gives me a sense of fulfillment on a daily basis so being on the sets is what excites me"

The actress has a whopping fan following of 14.3 million on Instagram and 5.1 million on Twitter.

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## Acting helps in living so many lives: VAANI

New Delhi: She started her journey in Hindi cinema in 2013 with *Shuddh Desi Romance* where she played a girl-next-door. Two years later, Vaani Kapoor was seen playing a confident woman in *Befikre* and the fearless Naina in *War*. The actress says the profession helps in living many lives.

It's been an eight-year journey for Vaani, who feels 'happy blessed and grateful' as she has got a chance to work with fine filmmakers and actors such as Ranveer Singh, Hrithik Roshan, and Akshay Kumar in her latest release *Bell Bottom*.

Vaani said: "The kind of filmmakers and the co-actors they have been all wonderful and credible as actors. I have learnt a lot from their choices of films and stories and the kind of work they have done in the past."

"Even if it is not a conscious learning, there at a subliminal level there's a lot that one incorporates and observes and tends to pick from one's surrounding," she added.

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## Meera loves being girl next door

Mumbai: Actress Meera Deosthale of *Udaan* fame likes to experiment with different looks in front of the camera. One look that she finds relatable is that of a girl next door.

"Before a photoshoot, I always ask my friends and family whether I should look cute or hot. And then I try to combine both the looks. I have been told that I can look like a girl next door as well as a diva. Well, personally I love being a girl next door. That's more relatable," shares the *Vidya* actress.

Meera, who made her telly debut with *Sasural Simar Ka* in 2014, has learnt certain things about showbiz over a period of time. "Firstly, it is very important to be visible. Secondly, people can't see the same pictures over the years. We are artists, but at the same time people are interested in seeing our different looks and how we carry ourselves," she adds.

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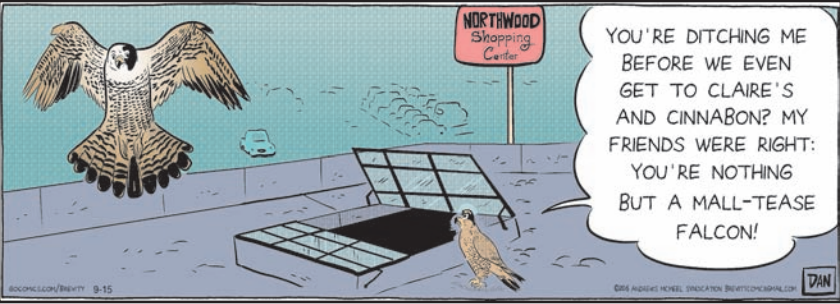
### PEANUTS



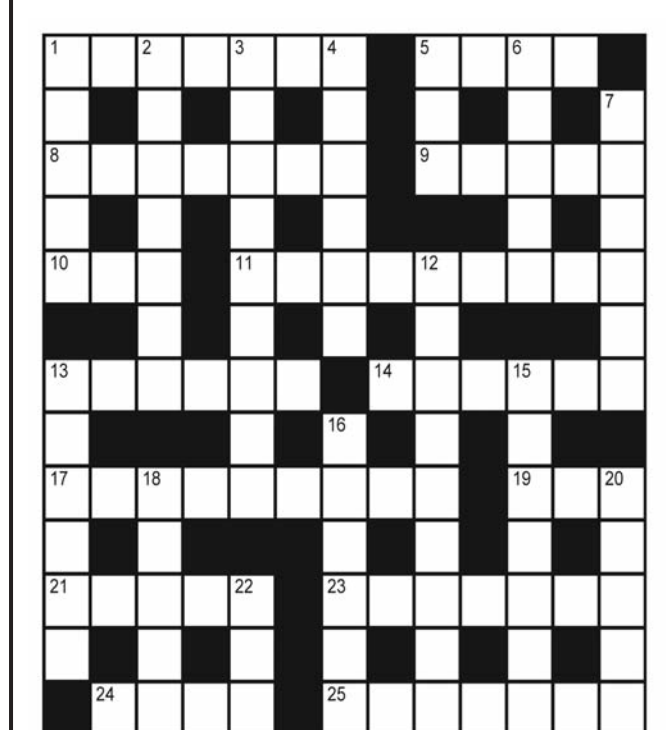
### CALVIN AND HOBBS



### BREVITY



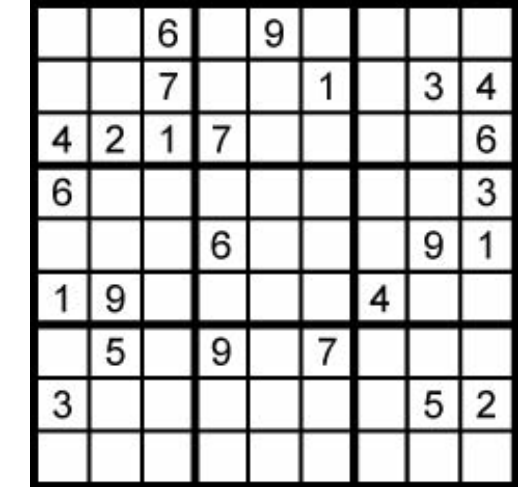
### FUN post CROSSWORD



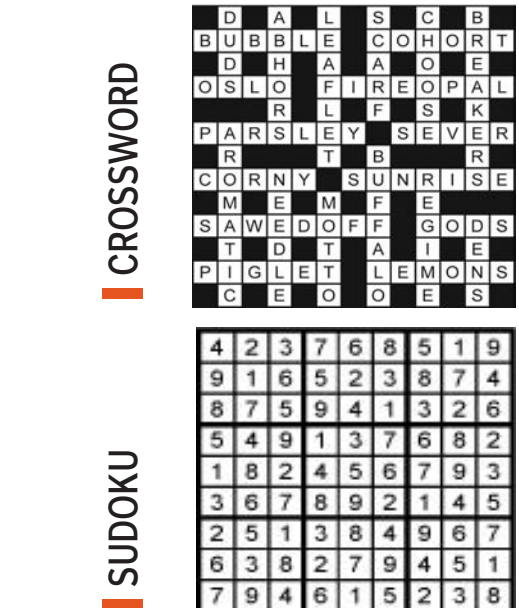
- Copyright ©2021 PuzzleJunction.com
- Across**
- 1 Steak choice
  - 5 Flat floater
  - 8 Speech defect
  - 9 Breakfast bread
  - 10 Chapel vow
  - 11 Like some twins
  - 13 Skin problems
  - 14 Kind of test
  - 17 Contented
  - 19 Caustic chemical
  - 21 Early warning system
  - 23 Understand
  - 24 Wildcat
  - 25 Theatre gear
  - 4 Jitters
  - 5 Decay
  - 6 Swiss capital
  - 7 Coral reefs
  - 12 Inferior (5-4)
  - 13 Vacation spot
  - 15 Listlessness
  - 16 Yarn starters
  - 18 Hot drink
  - 20 Hostile force
  - 22 Roman title
- Down**
- 1 Raw fish dish
  - 2 Strident
  - 3 Aliens

### 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



## of the day quote

My greetings on #WorldSanskritDay today. Sanskrit an ancient & classical language of India is the source of many other languages. On this day let us resolve to popularise & revive this beautiful language.

**M VENKAIAH NAIDU** | VICE PRESIDENT

The union government has taken steps to bring back all those Indians who want to come back

It was this pandemic that enabled us to 'right' the 'wrong' and revamp the health sector in the last one and half years that we couldn't do in decades

**PEMA KHANDU** | ARUNACHAL PRADESH CHIEF MINISTER

## SHORT TAKES

### 3 dacoits shot dead

**Guwahati/Kokrajhar:** Three suspected dacoits were shot dead as they tried to rob a bank in Assam's Kokrajhar district in the early hours of Sunday, police said. The police had intelligence input that a gang of dacoits would attempt to rob an Allahabad Bank branch at Bhotgaon near Kokrajhar town, a senior police officer of the district said. A previous attempt of robbing the same branch was foiled three months back, he said. The gang was intercepted at Chengmari near Bhotgaon around 2.30 am, the officer said.

### Two-day state mourning in Raj

**Jaipur:** The Rajasthan government Sunday announced a two-day mourning on the demise of former state governor Kalyan Singh. Kalyan Singh, also a former Uttar Pradesh chief minister, had died at a Lucknow hospital after prolonged illness Saturday. He was 89. He held the position of the state governor from September 4, 2014 to September 8, 2019. The Rajasthan council of ministers paid homage to Singh at a meeting here by observing a two-minute silence and declared a two-day mourning August 22 and 23.

### Pro-Pak slogans: Ten held in Ujjain

**Ujjain:** Police on Sunday invoked the stringent National Security Act (NSA) against four persons out of ten arrested so far for allegedly raising pro-Pakistan slogans during a Muharram event in Ujjain of Madhya Pradesh, a senior police officer said. The development comes a day after some right-wing organisations and religious leaders clad in saffron staged demonstrations, torched effigies of Pakistan, and demanded tough action by the police against those people who had raised pro-Pakistan slogans in the Geeta Colony area on the night of August 19.

### Lion run over by train in Guj

**Amreli:** An Asiatic lion was killed after being run over by a goods train in Gir forest area of Gujarat's Amreli district, an official said Sunday. The incident took place around 9.30 pm on Saturday near Khadkala village in Gir (East) forest division under Savarkunda forest range, Chief Conservator of Forests (Junagadh wildlife circle) Dushyant Vasavada said.



The fact, which every Punjabi and in fact every Indian knows, is that Pakistan's threat to us is real. Every day they are pushing weapons and drugs into Punjab via drones in a brazen attempt to destabilise our state, and our nation

**AMARINDER SINGH** | PUNJAB CHIEF MINISTER

### RAINFALL OVER NW LIKELY TO REDUCE FROM TODAY

Current rainfall activity over plains of northwest India is likely to reduce from Monday even as fairly widespread to widespread rainfall is very likely over Uttarakhand and east Uttar Pradesh till August 26, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said Sunday



# EVERYTHING IS FINISHED: EVACUEES

## AFGHANISTAN CRISIS



AGENCIES

**New Delhi, August 22:** "Everything is finished", don't know what the future holds for us" - these were the words of an Afghan lawmaker and a mother of an infant who burst into tears as soon as they arrived at the Hindon airbase along with over 160 other evacuees from Taliban-besieged Afghanistan Sunday morning.

The group included Afghan lawmakers Anarkali Honaryar and Narendar Singh Khalsa and their families, people familiar with the evacuation mission said. "I feel like crying. Everything is finished. It is a very difficult and painful decision to leave the country. We have not seen such a situation. Everything has been snatched away. It's all over," Sikh Lawmaker Khalsa told reporters. Terming India his "second home", Khalsa narrated his horror story which unfolded as their vehicle was separated from a convoy of those being taken to the Kabul airport for rescue. Explaining the ground situation in Afghanistan

AT 27 PER CENT, AFGHANS WERE THE SECOND-LARGEST COMMUNITY AMONGST THEM

MOST OF THE AFGHAN REFUGEES LIVING IN INDIA ARE CONCENTRATED IN NEW DELHI

ACCORDING TO THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES, THERE WERE APPROXIMATELY 40,000 REFUGEES AND ASYLUM-SEEKERS REGISTERED IN INDIA IN 2019

travelled to India without a passport. Honaryar, a member of the Upper House of Afghan Parliament, in a video message, said "I thank the Government of India, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Ministry of External Affairs and the Indian Air Force for lifting us from Kabul and saving my life."

All the evacuees arriving at Hindon and Delhi's IGI airport underwent RP-PCR tests, officials said. Alladad Qureshi, an Afghan national whose wife hails from Kashmir, expressed a sense of relief as he interacted with media-persons at Hindon.

Manik Mandal, a young jeweller who had gone to Afghanistan six months ago in search of livelihood, smiled as he said, "We faced a lot of problems in Kabul, but our government saved us."

India carried out the evacuation missions in coordination with the US and several other friendly countries. Two days after the Taliban seized control of Kabul, India evacuated 200 people, including the Indian envoy and other staffers of its embassy in Kabul

# Malabar wargame to begin Thursday



The Malabar exercise is taking place in the midst of growing convergence of interests in the maritime domain as well as military cooperation among the four Quad countries in the face of China's increasing assertiveness

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, August 22:** The Quad countries - India, the US, Australia and Japan - will carry out the next edition of the high-voltage Malabar naval exercise from August 26 to 29 off the coast of Guam amid mounting global concerns over China's growing military muscle-flexing in the Indo-Pacific region.

Indian stealth frigate INS Shivalik and anti-submarine warfare corvette INS Kadmat arrived in Guam, an island territory of the US in the Western Pacific, Saturday to take part in the exercise that will feature an array of complex drills, Indian Navy officials said Sunday.

"The Malabar-21 would witness high-tempo exercises among destroyers, frigates, corvettes, submarines, helicopters and long-range maritime patrol aircraft of the participating navies," Indian Navy spokesperson Commander Vivek Madhwal said. "Complex surface, sub-surface and air operations including live weapon firing drills, anti-surface, anti-air and anti-submarine warfare drills, and joint manoeuvres and tactical exercises will be conducted during the exercise," he said. Though the exercise is not part of the framework of cooperation under Quad, it is increasingly seen as a reflection of increasing partnership among the four countries.

Later this year, US President Joe Biden is expected to hold an in-person summit of the leaders of the Quad countries in Washington to explore ways to further expand cooperation among its member countries.

Senior officials of India and the other member nations of the Quad August 12 held extensive talks on advancing practical cooperation in areas of infrastructure, maritime security, counter-terrorism and cybersecurity to achieve the goal of a free and open Indo-Pacific.

# Both factions of Hurriyat likely to be banned under UAPA

SO FAR, THE CENTRE HAS BANNED THE JAMAAT-E-ISLAMI AND THE JKLF UNDER THE UAPA. THE BAN WAS IMPOSED IN 2019

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Srinagar, August 22:** A ban under the stringent Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act may be imposed on both factions of the secessionist conglomerate Hurriyat Conference which has been spearheading the separatist movement in Jammu and Kashmir for over two decades, officials said.

They said a recent probe into the granting of MBBS seats to Kashmiri students by institutions in Pakistan indicates that the money collected from aspirants by some organisations which were

part of the Hurriyat Conference conglomerate was being used for funding terror organisations in the union territory.

The officials said both the factions of the Hurriyat are likely to be banned under Section 3(1) of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, or the UAPA, under which "if the Central Government is of opinion that any association is, or has become, an unlawful association, it may, by notification in the Official Gazette, declare such association to be unlawful."

The Hurriyat Conference came into existence in 1993 with 26 groups, including some pro-Pakistan and banned outfits such as the Jamaat-e-Islami, JKLF and the Dukhtar-e-Millat. It also included the People's Conference and the Awami Action Committee headed by Mirwaiz Umer Farooq.

The separatist conglomerate broke into two factions in 2005 with the moderate group being led by

the Mirwaiz and the hard-line headed by Syed Ali Shah Geelani. The officials said a probe into funding of terror groups indicated alleged involvement of secessionist and separatist leaders, including the members and cadres of the Hurriyat Conference who have been acting in connivance with active militants of proscribed terrorist organisations Hizb-ul-Mujahideen (HM), Dukhtar-e-Millat (DeM) and Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT).

The cadres raised funds in the country and from abroad through various illegal channels, including hawala, for funding separatist and terrorist activities in Jammu and Kashmir, they said.

The funds collected were used for causing disruption in the Kashmir Valley by way of pelting stones on security forces, systematically burning schools, damaging public property and waging war against India as part of a criminal conspiracy, they claimed.

## BOND OF LOVE



A sister ties Rakhi on her brother's wrist on the occasion of Raksha Bandhan in Agra

PTI PHOTO

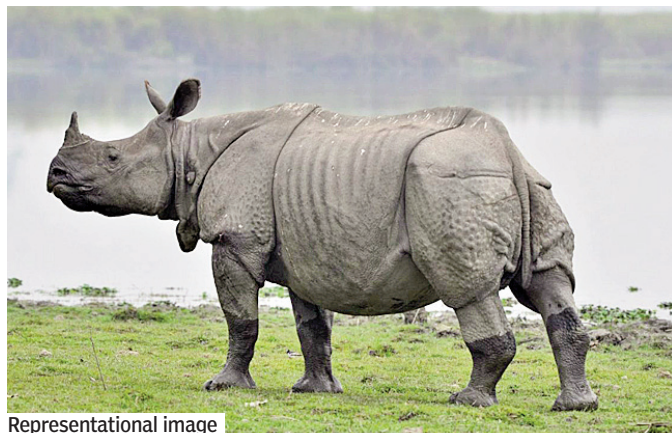
# Rescue centre becomes home for orphaned rhinos

THE CENTRE WAS ESTABLISHED BY GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM, WILDLIFE TRUST OF INDIA (WTI) AND INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR ANIMAL WELFARE (IFAW), WITH THE SUPPORT OF GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, IN 2002

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Guwahati, August 22:** A four-month-old Ganga had lost her mother to surging waters of the Brahmaputra nearly two decades back, but she has now found her home on the banks of another river and is a healthy mother of four young ones.

Orphaned by the floods in



Representational image

Assam's famed Kaziranga National Park, Ganga had found a refuge on the periphery of the Park where she was raised before setting out to live on her own in her natural habitat.

Ganga was the second rhino to be rescued by the Centre for Wildlife Rehabilitation and Conservation (CWRC) in Kaziranga in 2003, along with another rhino calf, Rathin Barman of Wildlife Trust of India (WTI) told PTI.

Hand-raised by the staff of the CWRC, the pair was translocated to Manas National Park (MNP), about 300 km away from their birthplace, four years later where they have thrived over the years.

Named Ganga-Jamuna for their bonding by the frontline staff of MNP, they were the second lot of rhinos sent to the Park with the first being Mainou (Lakshmi in local Bodo language) preceding them by a year to Manas, also from the

CWRC. While Ganga gave birth to her fourth calf in the last week of July this year, Jamuna has three calves of her own and Mainou had also become mother to three calves over the years before dying of natural causes a couple of years back, Barman said.

It is located at the periphery of the Kaziranga National Park and attends to wildlife displacements originating mainly from the Park and adjoining Dibru-Saikhowa National Park.

The Centre has been engaging in rescue of wildlife that stray out of their natural habitats and rhinos of KNP have been among such animals that have found a new lease of life in its premise. It has handled 101 rhino cases since its inception.

There are close to 3,000 rhinos in Assam, with the major numbers present in Kaziranga National Park. "The CWRC annually rescues two to four rhino calves during floods in the KNP. In 2016, we rescued as many as nine rhino calves," he said. The rescued rhino calves from KNP have been mostly translocated to the MNP, while two

were 'experimentally' released in KNP itself and two sent to the state zoo's breeding facility at Guwahati, Barman said.

The CWRC has four rhino calves rescued during the 2019 floods at its establishment at Kaziranga currently, Dr Bhaskar Choudhury, veterinarian at the Centre said.

He said the calves are kept at the Centre till they are about one-and-a-half to two years of age, after which they are released back in the wild. The rhinos are generally not released back into KNP due to high tiger concentration which leads to high predation and high rhino density in the Park, he added. "We bring the rhinos to the Centre only if they are too young or ailing. Else, along with the Forest personnel, we try to send them back into their original habitat," Choudhury said.

Since the inception of CWRC and its satellite facilities, altogether 7,532 numbers of wildlife cases, belonging to 258 species of mammals, birds and reptiles, have been attended to by the Centre in the state till July 2021.

# Indian fishermen attacked by SL Navy

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Rameswaram (TN), August 22:** Around 60 Indian fishing boats from here were damaged in stone pelting, allegedly by the Sri Lankan navy, a Fisheries department official said on Sunday.

The Lankan naval personnel also damaged fishing nets in 25 boats, while they were involved in fishing near Katchatheevu late last night, he said. Quoting fishermen, the official said the naval personnel came in about five vessels and pelted stones on the Indian boats, causing damage to about 60 of them. However, no fisherman was injured in the incident. Fishermen's association representative S Emerit said about 556 boats had put out to sea on Saturday night and alleged that some of them were targeted by the Sri Lankan navy.

Expressing concern over such 'recurring' incidents, he sought the intervention of the Central and state governments to work out a solution to the issue and ensure their livelihood.



# international



The abandonment of Afghanistan and its people is tragic, dangerous, unnecessary. We didn't need to do it. We chose to do it. The decision to withdraw from Afghanistan in this way was driven not by a grand strategy but by politics

TONY BLAIR | FORMER PM, UK

## HARRIS BEGINS ASIA TRIP

Vice President Kamala Harris began a trip to Asia Sunday where she will offer reassurances of Washington's commitment to the region after the chaotic US pullout from Afghanistan and Taliban takeover



### of the day quote

I understand that the political turmoil that has besieged the country have distressed the public. Therefore, it is imperative that political stability is swiftly achieved through togetherness

ISMAIL SABRI YAAKOB | PM, MALAYSIA

The possibility of liberating ourselves from the clutches of Covid-19 is now in our hands. We can now open up more economic activities, religious, cultural and sporting activities with fans in stadiums as a possibility - we have seen that happening in Europe

JOE PHAAHLA | HEALTH MINISTER, S. AFRICA

The point is that we need to suppress the virus as best as we can in phase A of the national plan. At 70% vaccination rates and 80% vaccination rates, then Australia is able to move out of what is really an unsustainable situation

SCOTT MORRISON | PM, AUSTRALIA

## G7 meet on Af crisis Tuesday

The Western allies have faced mounting criticism over their handling of the crisis in Afghanistan

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

London, August 22: G7 leaders will discuss the crisis in Afghanistan Tuesday in a virtual summit, Britain's Prime Minister Boris Johnson announced Sunday, a week after the Taliban retook power.

"It is vital that the international community works together to ensure safe evacuations, prevent a humanitarian crisis and support the Afghan people to secure the gains of the last 20 years," Johnson tweeted.

The United Kingdom currently occupies the chair of the grouping of wealthy nations comprising Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and the United States, and Johnson has been pushing for a meeting for the past week.

The Western allies have faced mounting criticism over their handling of the crisis in Afghanistan amid chaotic scenes as thousands of Afghans and foreigners try to



flee Kabul following the Taliban's return to power.

Following a virtual meeting Thursday G7 foreign ministers urged the Taliban to provide safe passage for those trying to flee the capital, the bloc's first formal statement on the crisis.

The US, which has sent thousands of troops temporarily to try

to secure the airport and help evacuate its nationals and Afghans who helped them, has set a deadline to complete the airlifts by August 31.

However, allies including the UK have suggested they would support extending the deadline, an issue likely to feature prominently at Tuesday's discussion.

## NRF ready for conflict but prefers negotiations

AGENCIES

Kabul: Former Afghan government forces forming a resistance movement in a fortified valley are preparing for "long-term conflict", but are also seeking to negotiate with the Taliban, their spokesman told AFP in an interview.

Since the Taliban took control of the country following a lightning charge into the capital Kabul, thousands of people have made their way to Panjshir to both join the fight and find a safe haven to continue their lives, Ali Maisam Nazary said.

There, Ahmad Massoud, the son of legendary Mujahideen commander Ahmad Shah Massoud who was assassinated by Al-Qaeda two days before the September 11, 2001 attacks, has assembled a fighting force of around 9,000 people, Nazary added.

Pictures taken by AFP during training exercises show dozens of recruits performing fitness routines, and a handful of armoured humvees driving across the valley northeast of Kabul.

"The conditions for a peace deal with the Taliban is decentralisation - a system that ensures social justice, equality, rights, and freedom for all," said Nazary, the NRF's head of foreign relations, adding if the Taliban do not agree there will be "long-term conflict". "The Taliban are overstretched. They cannot be everywhere at the same time. Their resources are limited. They do not have support amongst the majority."

He said, however, that Masood had different views to Amrullah

**NATIONAL RESISTANCE FRONT**  
Ahmad Massoud leads the resistance with 9K people  
The aim is to press for a new government  
Local militias in some districts have already begun resisting Taliban's headline rule

Saleh, latterly the country's Vice President who is also holed out in the valley and last week vowed to lead an uprising.

"We are seeing Panjshir become a safe zone for all those groups who feel threatened in other provinces."

He added the province has seen an influx of intellectuals, women's and human rights activists, and politicians "who feel threatened by the Taliban".

Nazary says Massoud's resistance, and others across Afghanistan, are vital in making this change happen.

"Panjshir has always been a beacon of hope."

## Taliban mocks America with iconic WWII photo

THIS IS JOE BIDEN'S LEGACY FOR ALL THE WORLD TO SEE, CONGRESSWOMAN ELISE STEFANIK SAID



AGENCIES

New Delhi, August 22: The Taliban has released a photo in which a number of the group's forces, under the guise of US troops, are mocking a famous image of US troops in World War II during the battle of Iwo Jima in 1945.

An elite unit of Taliban fighters, wearing US-made tactical gear they apparently captured from retreating Afghan forces, has posed for a propaganda photo, which many outraged Americans found to be the ultimate insult, Russia

Today reported.

In a photo that ruffled many feathers, mostly among American conservatives, members of the Taliban's commando unit Badri 313 are seen donning full camouflage and tactical gear, including night-vision goggles - seemingly recreating an iconic WWII photo of American troops raising the US flag atop Mount Suribachi during the Battle of Iwo Jima in 1945.

Much of the outrage and indignation was directed personally at the US Commander-in-Chief, President Joe Biden, who has faced

mounting criticism over the past week for the chaotic withdrawal that put American and allies' lives in danger.

Biden must resign or be impeached and removed, said television commentator John Cardillo, who was recently a host on Newsmax TV. This just keeps getting worse and worse! added podcast host and a former Navy SEAL, Jonathan Gilliam.

We're a laughing stock of the world, said conservative columnist and former TV host Meghan McCain, daughter of the late Republican senator John McCain.

According to some estimates, the Taliban may now be in possession of more than 2,000 US Humvees and other armoured vehicles, and as many as 40 aircraft - including Black Hawks, scout attack helicopters, and military drones. It may also take advantage of the vast arsenal of 600,000 M16 assault rifles and other infantry weapons, some 162,000 pieces of communications equipment and 16,000 night-vision goggles, gifted by the Pentagon to Afghan forces since 2003.

## Israel strikes Gaza after stir along border

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jerusalem, August 22: Israel's military bombed Palestinian militant weapons sites in the Gaza Strip early Sunday in response to a violent demonstration on the perimeter fence that left an Israeli police officer critically injured, the army said.

Saturday's violence erupted after hundreds of Palestinians took part in a demonstration organised by Gaza's Hamas rulers to draw attention to the Israeli-Egyptian blockade of the territory.

The demonstration grew violent after dozens of people ap-

proached the fortified border fence and threw rocks and explosives toward Israeli soldiers from behind a black smoke screen billowing from burning tires.

The army said in a statement that in response to the violent demonstrations, fighter planes hit "four weapons and storage manufacturing sites" belonging to Gaza's

At least 24 Palestinians, including a 13-year-old, were injured by Israeli gunfire, according to the Gaza health ministry

Hamis rulers, and that the military deployed additional troops to the region near the border with the Palestinian enclave. There were no immediate reports of injuries in the airstrikes.

Israel and Hamas are bitter enemies that have fought four wars and countless skirmishes since the Islamic militant group seized control of Gaza in a 2007 coup, a year after winning a Palestinian election.

May's most recent round of fighting, an 11-day war fought to an inconclusive cease-fire, killed at least 254 people in Gaza, including 67 children and 39 women, according to the Gaza health ministry.

## Strict rules issued for jumbo caretakers in Lanka

THE NEW MEASURES ARE AIMED AT PROTECTING THE ANIMALS' WELFARE AND INCLUDE STRICT REGULATIONS AROUND WORKING ELEPHANTS

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Colombo, August 22: Sri Lanka will issue captive elephants with their own biometric identity cards and ban their riders from drinking on the job under a wide-ranging new animal protection law.

Many rich Sri Lankans including Buddhist monks keep elephants as pets to show off their wealth, but complaints of ill treatment and cruelty are widespread.

The new measures are aimed at protecting the animals' welfare and include strict regulations

around working elephants, as well as mandating a daily two-and-a-half-hour bath for each creature.

Official records show there are about 200 domesticated elephants in the South Asian nation, with the population in the wild estimated at about 7,500.

The new law will require all owners to ensure that animals under their care have new photo identity cards with a DNA stamp.

Baby elephants can no longer be used for work even cultural pageants and cannot be separated from their mothers.



Logging elephants cannot be worked for more than four hours a day and night work is prohib-

ited. There are new restrictions on the tourism industry too from now on, no more than four people

can ride an elephant at once, and they must sit on a well-padded saddle. Their use in films is banned, except for government productions under strict veterinary supervision, as is allowing their riders to drink while working.

"The person who owns or has the custody of such elephants shall ensure that the mahout (rider) is not consuming any liquor or any harmful drug while employed," Wildlife Protection minister Wimalaweera Dissanayaka said in a gazette notification dated Thursday.

Owners must send their animals for a medical check-up every six months.

Those who violate the new law will have their elephant taken into state care and could face a three-year prison sentence.

Capturing wild elephants in Sri Lanka is a criminal offence punishable by death, but prosecutions are rare.

Animal rights activists as well as elephant experts have alleged that over the last 15 years, more than 40 baby elephants have been stolen from national wildlife parks.

## Pak allows fully-vaccinated Sikh pilgrims to visit Kartarpur Sahib

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Islamabad, August 22: Pakistan has decided to allow fully-vaccinated Sikh pilgrims to visit Gurdwara Darbar Sahib, Kartarpur from next month with strict Covid-19 protocols, ahead of the 482nd death anniversary of Sikhism founder Guru Nanak Dev September 22, media reports said Sunday.

On this occasion, three-day rituals will be held at the shrine from September 20. Guru Nanak died in Kartarpur September 22, 1539.

Pilgrimage to the Kartarpur Sahib gurdwara was suspended in March 2020 because of the Covid-19 outbreak.

The decision to open the Kartarpur shrine was taken by the National Command and Operation Centre (NCO) Saturday due to the approaching death anniversary of Sikhism founder Baba Guru Nanak Dev September 22.



Dawn newspaper reported that the NCO meeting unanimously decided to allow Sikh pilgrims to visit Kartarpur next month under strict Covid-19 protocols.

Due to the Delta variant, India was in category C in Pakistan from May 22 till August 12, and a special approval was required for people coming from the country, including Sikh pilgrims.

However, fully-vaccinated persons with certificates will be allowed to enter Pakistan provided they show Real-Time Polymerase Chain Reaction (RT-PCR) test re-

ports which should not be more than 72 hours old.

Apart from this, a Rapid Antigen Test (RAT) will also be conducted at airports and in case of a positive result, the individual will not be allowed to enter Pakistan.

Besides, as per Non-Pharmaceutical Interventions (NPIs), a maximum of 300 people will be permitted to assemble at a time at the darbar.

According to an official of the Ministry of National Health Services (NHS), Pakistan had introduced three categories to deal with the Coronavirus spread.

"Countries in category A are exempted from the mandatory COVID-19 test, travellers from areas falling in category B are required to present a negative PCR test that must be taken within 72 hours of the travel date, while visitors from nations in category C are restricted and can travel only under specific NCO guidelines," the official said.



# business

## of the day quote

We achieved a record year-on-year growth of 24 per cent in our total assets and similar impressive growth in loan portfolio



GR CHINTALA | CHAIRMAN, NABARD

I do not believe we are seeing any big tariff movement in the short run. There may be marginal fixes, some operators may drop their lowest end plan. But I don't think it will lead to significant shifts in the blended ARPUs of operators



PEEYUSH VAISH | TELECOM SECTOR LEADER, DELOITTE INDIA

We are very encouraged by the response we are getting from consumers. We hope now with the direct presence of AIWA India, we will be able to resolve any issue and will be able to achieve the desired dream of a billion-dollar topline



AJAY MEHTA | AIWA INDIA MANAGING DIRECTOR

## SHORT TAKES

### 3 insurance firms to raise ₹10,000cr

**Mumbai:** Adding more fire to the already-frenzied IPO market, three insurance sector companies are entering the primary market with initial public offerings in coming months to mop up over ₹10,000 crore. These companies are — PB Fintech, which runs the insurance brokerage Policybazaar; standalone health insurer Star Health & Allied Insurance Company; and third-party administrator Medi Assis Healthcare Service. They have already filed their draft prospectus with markets regulator Sebi. Already over 40 companies have hit the IPO market so far this year, raising close to ₹70,000 crore. August alone saw four listings, and the fifth one (Nuvoco Vistas Corp, which raised ₹5,000 crore) is slated for Monday and as many as 24 more have filed their IPO papers so far this month, seeking to mop up over ₹4,000 crore.

### MG Motor to invest ₹2,500cr by 2022-end

**New Delhi:** MG Motor India is investing ₹2,500 crore by the end of next year to increase the production capacity at its Halol plant in Gujarat, as it gears up to launch its mid-size SUV Astor, according to a top company official. Despite the worsening semiconductor shortage situation, which is likely to continue for at least another six months, the company expects its sales this year to grow by up to 100 per cent over last year. "We have done an investment of ₹3,000 crore already, and by the end of next year, we will do another ₹2,500 crore. We will reach a total of ₹5,500 crore," MG Motor India President and Managing Director Rajeev Chhabra told PTI. The investment will be for adding further capacity as the company prepares to meet demand of new models, including the mid-size SUV Astor, which is expected to hit the market around Diwali.

### Kia India aims to sell 2 lakh units

**New Delhi:** Undeterred by COVID-led disruptions, Kia India aims to sell around 2 lakh units in the domestic market this fiscal, as it expects demand to remain strong with consumers opting for personal mobility options amid the coronavirus pandemic, according to a senior company official. The South Korean automaker, which sells models like Seltos and Sonet in domestic market, also aims to ship about 50,000 units to global markets during current financial year.

# GAIL scouts for acquisition to foray into hydrogen

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, August 22:** India's top gas company GAIL will foray into hydrogen generation and take the acquisition route to scale up its renewable energy portfolio as it pivots business beyond natural gas to align with energy transition being witnessed across the globe.

As part of a push to embrace cleaner forms of energy, GAIL will be laying pipeline infrastructure to connect consumption centres to gas sources while also augmenting its renewable energy portfolio, GAIL Chairman and Managing Director Manoj Jain said.

"The global energy sector is witnessing a paradigm shift in recent years as the world is transitioning to a sustainable energy future," he said in the company's latest annual report.

To accomplish a cleaner primary energy mix for India, the government is emphasizing the expansion of the natural gas sector so as to achieve a gas-based economy along with growth in renewables. GAIL as a leading integrated energy major has aligned with this vision, he said.

The firm is laying around 6,000-kilometres of pipeline, including a west coast to east coast pipeline from Mumbai to Jharsuduga in Odisha via Nagpur, he said. It currently has around 13,700-km of natural gas pipeline network.

GAIL "will be selectively investing in the renewable energy domain given the future growth potential," he said. The company



**The global energy sector is witnessing a paradigm shift in recent years as the world is transitioning to a sustainable energy future**

MANOJ JAIN | GAIL CHAIRMAN AND MANAGING DIRECTOR

"has been scouting for opportunities to scale up the RE portfolio from the current 130 MW through bidding and other inorganic routes such as mergers and acquisitions."

"In addition, the company is also foraying into ethanol and hydrogen generation," he said without giving details.

Hydrogen is a clean fuel that, when consumed in a fuel cell, produces only water. Many countries are venturing into hydrogen production from a variety of domestic resources, such as natural gas,

nuclear power, biomass, and renewable power like solar and wind.

In India, companies ranging from Reliance Industries to Indian Oil Corporation and NTPC have announced ambitious plans for generating hydrogen. GAIL too joins that list now.

GAIL, Jain said, has the largest and most diverse LNG portfolio in India that can offer both stable prices and reliable supply to consumers.

The company "shall be pushing for higher gas usage in the industrial segment, transport segment using CNG and LNG, Trigeration, cold storage, etc," he said, adding the firm was looking for avenues to supply gas in the new segments like LNG trucking (LNG for long-haul transportation).

He said GAIL is also looking to expand its presence in petrochemicals and also diversifying into high-margin downstream businesses.

# Realme introduces GT 5G series, laptop

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, August 22:** Realme introduced its GT 5G series— Realme GT 5G and Realme GT Master Edition 5G, and also launched its first-ever laptop, the Realme Book (Slim).

Realme GT 5G is powered by Qualcomm Snapdragon 888 5G processor; 120Hz Super AMOLED display, 65W SuperDart Charge, 4500mAh massive battery, and Sony 64MP Triple Camera. The GT 5G model is available in 8GB+128GB storage variant and 12GB+256GB storage variant, and priced at ₹37,999 and ₹41,999 respectively. The first sale is scheduled for August 25, 12:00 noon onwards.

Realme GT Master Edition 5G is

powered by the latest Qualcomm Snapdragon 778G 5G Processor, 120Hz Super AMOLED display, 65W Super Dart Charge, 4300mAh battery, and 64MP primary camera. It will be available in three storage variants such as 6GB+128GB, 8GB+128GB and 8+256GB and priced at ₹25,999, ₹27,999 and ₹29,999 respectively. The first sale is scheduled for August 26, 12:00 noon onwards.

Realme Book (Slim) will be available in two versions -- 11th Generation Intel Core i3 Processor with 8GB+256GB and 11th Generation Intel Core i5 Processor with 8GB+512GB and priced at ₹44,999 and ₹56,999 respectively. It will go for sale August 30, 12:00 noon onwards.



# IBA moves RBI seeking licence to set up ₹6,000-crore NARCL

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, August 22:** The Indian Banks' Association (IBA) has moved an application to the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) seeking licence to set up a ₹6,000-crore National Asset Reconstruction Company Ltd (NARCL) or bad bank, according to sources. NARCL was incorporated last month in Mumbai following the registration with Registrar of Companies (RoC).

According to sources, the company after mobilising an initial capital of ₹100 crore and fulfilling other legal formalities has approached the RBI seeking licence to undertake asset reconstruction business. The RBI in 2017 raised the capital requirement to ₹100 crore from the earlier level of ₹2 crore, keeping in mind the higher amount of cash required to buy bad loans. RBI has its process and procedure for granting licence for such business, sources said, adding, it could take next few weeks to obtain licence from the regulator.

RBI's approval could come either in September or October, sources added. Legal consultant AZB & Partners has been engaged to seek various regulatory approvals and fulfilling other legal formalities.

IBA, entrusted with the task of setting up a bad bank, has put a preliminary board for NARCL in place. The company has hired P M Nair, a stressed assets expert from

## GM TO EXPAND RECALL OF CHEVY BOLT EVs

American automaker General Motors said it will expand the recall of Chevy Bolt electric vehicles equipped with South Korean supplier LG's batteries over fire risks, which is expected to additionally cost about \$1 billion. The latest recall covers 73,000 Bolt EVs.



## FPIs pump in ₹7,245cr in Aug so far

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, August 22:** Foreign portfolio investors (FPI) have pumped in a net ₹7,245 crore into the Indian capital markets in August so far amid positive sentiments due to an improving macroeconomic environment.

The gradual increase in the amount of net inflows indicates that investors are slowly dropping their cautious stance and gaining higher conviction on the Indian markets, said Himanshu Srivastava, associate director - manager research, Morningstar India.

As per depositories' data, ₹5,001 crore was invested in equities and ₹2,244 crore in the debt segment by overseas investors between August 2-20. This took the total net investment to ₹7,245 crore.



Regarding other emerging markets, Shrikant Chouhan, executive vice president, equity technical research at Kotak Securities, noted that flows in South Korea, Taiwan and Thailand continue to be negative to the tune of USD 5,269 million, USD 855 million and USD 341 million, respectively.

# FinMin summons Infosys CEO over I-T portal glitches

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, August 22:** As the new I-T portal continues to remain unavailable for two consecutive days, the Finance Ministry has "summoned" Infosys MD & CEO Salil Parekh Monday to explain to Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman the reasons for continued glitches even after over two months of launch.

The new income tax e-filing portal www.Incometax.Gov.In, developed by Infosys, had a bumpy start from the day of its launch June 7, as it continued to face tech glitches with users complaining that certain functionalities were either unavailable or working slow.

Consequently, the I-T department had to allow manual filing of remittance forms and also extend due dates for electronic filing of forms related to intimation by pension funds and sovereign wealth funds.

"Ministry of Finance has summoned Sh Salil Parekh, MD & CEO @Infosys on 23/08/2021 to explain to hon'ble FM as to why even after 2.5 months since launch of new e-filing portal, glitches in the portal have not been resolved. In fact, since 21/08/2021 the portal itself is not available," the Income Tax department tweeted.

As users complained of various glitches after a fortnight of launch, Sitharaman June 22, called a meeting with key officials of Infosys to review the issues on the portal.



The Minister had then asked Infosys to address all issues without further loss of time, improve their services, and redress grievances as priority as it was impacting taxpayers adversely.

Infosys CEO Salil Parekh, and COO Pravin Rao, along with other company officials, took note of the issues highlighted by the stakeholders. They also acknowledged the technical issues in the functioning of the portal and shared the status of the resolution with respect to the issues highlighted by the stakeholders, an official statement issued after the meeting had said.

In 2019, Infosys was awarded a contract to develop the next-generation income tax filing system to reduce processing time for returns from 63 days to one day and expedite refunds. Till June 2021, the government has paid ₹164.5 crore to Infosys for developing the portal.

## 483 infra projects show cost overruns of ₹4.43 lakh cr

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, August 22:** As many as 483 infrastructure projects, each worth ₹150 crore or more, have been hit by cost overruns totalling more than ₹4.43 lakh crore, according to a report.

The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation monitors infrastructure projects worth ₹150 crore and above.

Of the 1,781 such projects, 483 reported cost overruns and 504 were delayed. "Total original cost of implementation of the 1781 projects was ₹22,82,160.40 crore and their anticipated completion cost is likely to be ₹27,25,408.00 crore, which reflects overall cost overruns of ₹4,43,247.60 crore (19.42% of original cost)," the ministry's latest report for July 2021 said.

According to the report, the expenditure incurred on these projects till July 2021 was ₹13,22,515.87 crore, or 48.53 per cent of their anticipated cost. However, the report said the number of delayed projects decreases to 369 if delay is calculated on the basis of the latest schedule of completion.

Further, for 1,001 projects neither the year of commissioning nor the tentative gestation period has been reported. Out of the 504 delayed projects, 92 have overall delay in the range of 1-12 months, 118 have been delayed for 13-24 months, 178 for 25-60 months and 116 projects have delays of 61 months and above.

# Indian startups raised \$6.5bn in funding in Q2 2021

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, August 22:** Indian startups received about USD 6.5 billion in funding in the April-June 2021 quarter, while 11 of them entered the coveted unicorn club, a report by Nasscom-PGA Labs said.

During the second quarter, 160 funding deals were closed - up 2 per cent from the January-March period.

"Q2 2021 has been impeccable for the start-up growth story. From being the most funded quarter, it has also added the most number of unicorns. Standing tall during the pandemic second wave headwinds, Indian start-up ecosystem has shown a strong resilience in this quarter," the report said.

Funding raised in June quarter was at USD 6.5 billion, up by 71 per cent quarter-on-quarter.

The biggest deal during the quarter was the USD 800 million fund raise by food delivery platform Swiggy, followed by ShareChat (USD 502 million), Byju's (USD 340 million), PharmEasy (USD 323 million) and Meesho (USD 300 million), the report said.

Pine Labs raised USD 285 million, Delhivery USD 277 million, Zeta USD 250 million, Cred USD 215 million and Urban Company USD 188 million in the June 2021 quarter, as per the report.

"The Indian startup ecosystem that generated 53 unicorns till June 2021 has made great strides in the April-June quarter. From recording most funding deals to adding the most number of unicorns in a quarter, investors' confidence in



good-quality digital businesses has strengthened like never before," PGA Labs Director, Competitive Intelligence Abhishek Maiti told PTI.

He added that the deal flow looks promising for the latter half too as

India opens after series of lockdowns and sectors such as fintech, foodtech and healthtech continue to benefit from pandemic-induced adoption.

Fintech was the most funded sector, accounting for 27 per cent

of the total deal value in the reported quarter.

This was followed by foodtech (13 per cent), enterprise tech (11 per cent), edtech (10 per cent), and media and entertainment (8 per cent). Growth stage funding accounted for 61 per cent of the total deal value, it added.

About 100 startups received funding in the early stage, accounting for 9 per cent of the total funding raised.

The June 2021 quarter also saw the rise of 11 unicorns (companies with USD 1 billion valuation) - Urban Company, Cred, Meesho, Groww, ShareChat, PharmEasy, Zeta, BrowserStack, Moglix, Gupshup and Chargebee.

This has taken the total number of unicorns in the country to 53 as of June 2021.

About 27 per cent of the unicorns added in the second quarter of 2021 were fintech startups, while 18 per cent each belong to SaaS (software as a service) and social commerce, the report said.

Interestingly, Tiger Global invested in 64 per cent of the unicorns during the second quarter of 2021. The report noted that B2B startups raised over USD 1.9 billion across 85 deals, with an average deal size of USD 22 million.

The top three B2B funded startups were Zeta, Razorpay and Atria. B2C startups raised over USD 4.2 billion across 75 deals, with an average deal size of USD 56 million.

Top three B2C funded startups were Swiggy, ShareChat and Byju's, the report added.

DeepTech startups raised USD 450 million across 29 deals.



# Women lead India's charge

PADDLERS, LIFTERS TO THE FORE AS THE PARALYMPIC GAMES BEGIN AUGUST 24

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, August 22:** The Gujarat duo of Bhavina Patel and Sonalben Patel will lead India's charge in table tennis at the Tokyo Paralympic Games beginning August 24. While Bhavina will participate in wheelchair class 4 category, Sonalben will compete in wheelchair class 3 segment in women's singles. They will also pair up for the women's doubles event.

Bhavina and Sonalben will be in action on the opening day as they start their qualification rounds, which are scheduled to be held August 25, 26 and 27. The semifinals and final are slated for August 28 and 29. With the number of Covid-19 cases once more surging in Tokyo, the Games will certainly be under a cloud again.

Bhavina is currently World No 8 while Sonalben is ranked 19th. The duo, both medalists at the Asian Games, has been training under coach Lalan Doshi at the Blind People's Association in Ahmedabad.

In para-taekwondo, India will be solely represented by the 21-year-old Aruna Tanwar. The Haryana-based athlete, who will participate in the women's under 49kg K44 category, will be in action September 2. Aruna, currently ranked 30th in the world, is a silver medalist at the Asian Para Taekwondo



Paddlers Sonalben Patel (left) and Bhavina Patel will be medal contenders for India at the Tokyo Paralympics

Championships in Vietnam in 2018 as well as a bronze medalist at the World Para Taekwondo Championships in Turkey in 2019.

In powerlifting, India have selected Jai Deep and Sakina Khatun. While Sakina, born in West Bengal, has been training at the SAI National

Centre of Excellence in Bangalore, Haryana-based Jai Deep has been training at the Rajiv Gandhi Stadium in Rohtak.

Sakina, who will participate in the women's up to 50kg category, had become the only Indian woman Paralympian to ever win a

Commonwealth Games medal when she claimed a bronze in 2014 in Glasgow. She is also a 2018 Para Asian Games silver medalist. Sakina, who contracted polio as a kid, started powerlifting training in 2010 with financial support from Dilip Majumdar and her current

## 11 selected for opening ceremony

**TOKYO:** Only six officials from the Indian contingent will be allowed to take part in the opening ceremony of the Tokyo Paralympics here Tuesday, Chef De Mission Gursharan Singh said Sunday. India will thus have 11 members participating in the function, the remaining five being athletes. There is no cap on the number of athletes for the opening ceremony but only seven Indian participants have reached here so far. Japanese Emperor Naruhito will declare the Paralympics open. The five athletes expected to take part in the opening ceremony are flag-bearer Mariyappan Thangavelu, discus thrower Vinod Kumar, javelin thrower Tek Chand and powerlifters Jai Deep and Sakina Khatun.

coach, Farman Basha.

Jai Deep, who is participating at the men's up to 65kg category, is an assistant coach in SAI. The duo will be in action in Tokyo in their respective final rounds August 27.

All these athletes are part of TOPS and have received financial assistance from the government.

# Olympian Hakim breathes his last

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, August 22:** Former India footballer Syed Shahid Hakim died Sunday at a hospital in Gulbarga, Karnataka, family sources said. He was 82. Hakim was a member of the team that played in the 1960 Rome Olympics. He had recently suffered a stroke, after which he was admitted to a hospital. "He passed away at 8:30am today (Sunday)," his wife Sadia Syeda stated.

In his more than five-decade association with Indian football, the Dronacharya awardee has also been an assistant coach to the late PK Banerjee during the 1982 Asian Games, and also independently has been in charge of the national team during a tournament.

At the domestic level, his finest hour as coach came when he guided the erstwhile Mahindra & Mahindra to the Durand Cup title in 1998, beating a formidable East Bengal team. He has also coached Salgaocar and Hindustan FC. His last serious coaching assignment was with Bengal Mumbai FC in 2004-05.

Hakim was also a FIFA badge holder international referee having officiated in the 1988 AFC Asian Cup and was also conferred with the prestigious 'Dhyan Chand' award.

A former squadron leader of the Indian Air Force, Hakim was also a regional director of SAI and his last assignment was as project di-



## Devgn mourns player's death

**Mumbai:** Actor Ajay Devgn mourned Sunday the death of Syed Shahid Hakim. In his upcoming sports drama *Maidaan*, Devgn plays the role of Hakim's father, Syed Abdul Rahim, who served as a coach and manager of the Indian football team from 1950 until his death in 1963. The 52-year-old actor took to Twitter and paid tributes to Hakim. "RIP SS Hakim Saab. I learnt a lot about you while researching for my role as your father, football coaching legend SA Rahim in *Maidaan*. Today Indian football loses an important leg," tweeted Devgn.

rector in charge of scouting before the 2017 U-17 FIFA World Cup.

Hakim was a central midfielder but would always rue the fact that he didn't get any playing time during the Rome Olympics.

## SHORT TAKES

### 4 medals assured

**New Delhi:** Bishwamitra Chongtham (51kg) sailed into the semifinals Sunday along with three of his compatriots, assuring themselves of at least a bronze medal at the ASBC Youth and Junior Boxing Championships in Dubai. Bishwamitra powered his way past Kenzhe Muratol of Kazakhstan 5-0. The others who assured themselves of a medal were Abhimanyu Loura (92kg), Deepak (75kg) and Preeti (57kg). Deepak defeated Iraq's Dhurgham Karim while Abhimanyu overcame Kyrgyzstan's Tenbekov Sanjar. In the women's segment, Preeti advanced with an easy win over Mongolia's Tugsjargal Nomin.

### Pacquiao beaten

**Las Vegas:** Although Manny Pacquiao hasn't decided what his future holds, the eight-division World Champion may realise his 26-year professional boxing career might have ended Saturday night with a disheartening loss here to Yordenis Ugas by unanimous decision. "He's (Pacquiao) a great competitor, but I came in here to show I am the champion of the WBA," Ugas said. "A lot of respect for him, but I won this fight." The Cuban veteran was slightly better than Pacquiao throughout one of the most frustrating fights in the 42-year-old Filipino senator's career.

### Zverev in final

**Cincinnati:** Germany's Alexander Zverev produced a superb comeback against Stefanos Tsitsipas of Greece to extend his winning streak to 10 matches and charge into the final of the Western & Southern Open tennis tournament here Sunday (IST). The German won 6-4, 3-6, 7-6 (7-4) despite being a double break down in the third and final set. Zverev will now meet World No. 7, Russia's Andrey Rublev, who recorded his first victory over countryman Daniil Medvedev in his fifth attempt. Rublev won 2-6, 6-3, 6-3.

### Brilliant sprinting

**Eugene (USA):** Two-time Olympic 100m champion Elaine Thompson-Herah of Jamaica ran Sunday a stupendous 100m race, clocking 10.54 seconds at the Wanda Diamond League meeting in Eugene, Oregon. That was the second fastest time ever in the history of 100m racing - just short of the 10.49 clocked by American Florence Griffith-Joyner in 1988. Elaine's previous best was 10.61 seconds which she achieved while retaining her 100m title in Tokyo. AGENCIES

## CRUCIAL AFC CUP ENCOUNTER

# ATKMB overcome Maziya challenge

AGENCIES

**Male (Maldives), August 22:** ATK Mohun Bagan (ATKMB) pumped in three second half goals in a brilliant comeback to beat Maziya Sports & Recreation Club of the Maldives 3-1 in their Group D match and move within a point of reaching the AFC Cup knockout stage here. They will just need a draw in their last encounter against Bashundhara Kings of Bangladesh to advance to the knockout stage.

The Kolkata-based ISL team were trailing 0-1 at half time after Ibrahim Aisham had scored for the home side in the 25th minute. But ATK Mohun Bagan struck in the 48th, 63rd and 77th minutes through Liston Colaco, Roy Krishna and Manvir Singh to emerge victorious in a game played late Saturday night.

Head coach Antonio Habas expressed satisfaction at the way the team played. "We had some difficulties with the opponent because they scored first. After a change of system, we became consistent and I'm very proud of my players,"

Habas was quoted as saying by afc.com Sunday.

"We have six points, and no other team have that. In this match, we had the possibility to draw, but we didn't have to think that way, only the possibility for us was to try to win, and this will be our idea [again] for the next match," the Spaniard added.

The home side opened their account when Cornelius Stewart led a quick counter-attack, embarking on a solo run down the right before crossing for Ibrahim who swept home Maziya's opener. Five minutes later Maziya could have double the lead but Hamzath Mohamed shot over.

ATKMB however, dominated the second session completely. Krishna's overall performance, besides the second goal, saw him being named the 'player of the match'.

The Fiji international said the team never doubted themselves despite Maziya taking the lead. "We knew that we had the quality with the best players in our team and we trusted in the way we played. We came good when it mattered the most," said Krishna.

# Zaheer lauds Bumrah effort

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi, August 22:** Former India pacer Zaheer Khan lavished praise on seamer Jasprit Bumrah for his all-round show in India's win over England in the Lord's Test. Zaheer also said that the heated exchange with James Anderson acted as a motivation for Bumrah in the match.

"If by getting angry, he (Bumrah) can carry himself and perform like this, I believe he should at times need the opposition. See, in the first innings, he had gone wicketless and being the class bowler that

## Karthik's choice

**Dubai:** Indian wicketkeeper-batsman Dinesh Karthik has named India and West Indies as his finalists for the men's T20 World Cup in UAE and Oman in October and November. He also said that after India, the West Indies are his second favourite team for the exciting cricket they play. "I'm not going to go all the way to who is going to win but I'll tell you this, I'd love to see India versus West Indies final. My second favourite team after India would definitely be West Indies, only for the flair of cricket that they play. As of now both India and the West Indies are the favourites to play the final," Karthik said.



Jasprit Bumrah

he is, I am sure it must have bothered him," Zaheer was quoted as saying by a cricket-specific website.

"After that, the whole Anderson episode that unfolded, the bouncers he bowled to him and then while batting, the manner in which the England pacers went after him all those things motivated him, and he channelled that anger in the right way. England must be thinking 'we should have let Bumrah bowl bouncers' and not mess with him. The intensity with which he bowled, was worth praising," added the former India left-arm pacer.

The Bumrah-Anderson fight in the Lord's Test happened on day three when India pacers looked to bowl out the England in their first

innings. Bumrah bowled a 10-ball over to Anderson, in which he overstepped the line four times. When the players were walking back to the dressing room, everyone witnessed Anderson having a war of words with Bumrah, as the latter kept smiling back.

Zaheer was also all praise at the way Bumrah dismissed Ollie Robinson in England's second innings. "Bowling a slower ball is challenging, but to bowl it from round the wicket, from that angle to get a batsman out LBW, you need (to) bowl from close to the wicket, which is never easy. Bumrah did a very tough job. The thought process was excellent and Bumrah was fabulous," Zaheer stated.

## NCA INTRODUCES NEW MODULE FOR TRAINERS UNDER DRAVID'S LEADERSHIP

# 'Corporate classes' for aspiring coaches

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, August 22:** Under Rahul Dravid's stewardship, the National Cricket Academy (NCA) has revamped the coaching manual, which now comprises 'corporate classes' for aspiring coaches tackling off-field issues, including selection pressure from various quarters.

Recently, a batch of distinguished former first-class cricketers attended the BCCI's Level-2 coaching course and also appeared for the theory and practical examinations.

The module has been tweaked to make it more appealing for modern coaches. However, what came as a pleasant surprise was the introduction of a 'corporate problem solving class'. In it the incumbents were asked to find methods of trouble-shooting while dealing with multiple off-the-field stakeholders.

"The course has been devised by former Mumbai seamer Kshemal (Waingankar), who is an MBA and has a corporate background. I have never attended a class like this but it was very unique and helped me broaden my horizon," a distinguished first-class cricketer, who attended the course, told this agency on the condition of anonymity.

So what is this corporate class all about? "Well, it was about mak-



Rahul Dravid



**We were taught the difference between bargaining and negotiation. We were asked to identify an issue and solve it before it turns into a problem**

COACHING ASPIRANT

have to again prepare a video of changes we have done. Then only our Level-2 course will be complete," said another player.

What has amazed a lot of these players is the fact that NCA head Dravid did not take classes. However, he always made it a point to sit with the batches and attend the lectures, given by the likes of Sujith Somasundar, Apurv Desai, Rajib Datta and Waingankar.

"In fact when we were shown videos of players and asked to offer solutions, even Rahul bhai would join us and try to figure out the problem. He would tell us that he still feels like a student and the day he stops learning, that will be the end of it," another first-class player, who has played against Dravid, said.

ing us understand the difference between 'bargaining' and 'negotiation'. We were told that we don't need to solve a problem but it needs to be checked what are the trouble-shooting methods that we deploy (approach) in a critical situation," the person said.

While the Level-2 course is complete, all the aspirants now go back to their respective cities and, in

the next three months, will have to at least work with one player and prepare a project report.

"All of us will have to pick a player and make a complete video analysis of his bowling or batting depending upon our area of expertise. Then we prepare a project report on what specifics we are working on. After we have worked on corrective measures, we will

# Man United held, Alli goal lifts Spurs

AGENCIES

**London, August 22:** It turned out to be frustrating Sunday afternoon for Manchester United as they were held to a 1-1 draw at Southampton in their Premier League encounter. On the other hand, Tottenham Hotspur scraped past Wolves 1-0 riding on an early Dele Alli penalty conversion. The game also saw Harry Kane come off the bench as a substitute even as speculation continues about his possible move to Manchester City.

The draw meant that Manchester United dropped their first points of the new PL season having won their opener 5-1.

Man U fell behind due to a Fred own goal as he deflected a shot by Che Adams into his own net. The Red Devils managed to salvage a point thanks to Mason Greenwood's effort in the 55th minute after he was set up by Paul Pogba's through ball. However, this was a game that Manchester United should have won as points will matter in what may later turn out to be a fiercely fought battle for the top position.

Pogba himself had three chances in the game. Two of his headers off free-kicks went over the bar while another shot was blocked by the

Southampton goalkeeper. However, it must be said that the Southampton were livelier among the two sides. They could have taken the lead in the first minute itself, but David De Gea managed a fingertip save to keep out James Ward-Prowse's powerful free-kick.

Scoreline	
Southampton 1	Man United 1
Tottenham 1	Wolves 0

Spurs on the other hand got their second successive win thanks to the Alli goal. Livewire Alli was brought down by a clumsy Jose Sa challenge. He got up and calmly slotted home the ball to give his side the lead. Then Spurs defended ably in the second half in front of some sustained pressure applied by the Wolves.

However, more than the victory the hot topic of discussion was Kane. There were huge cheers when he came on the field. However, Kane appeared a bit rusty and it seemed that he had not been training in a proper manner. His only notable effort during his approximately 30-minute stint in the match was a long-range shot that skimmed the bar and went over.