



## COPING MECHANISM

Actor Swara Bhasker opens up on how she has developed a strategy to deal with online abuse

LEISURE P2



## UNREST IN IRAN

Demonstrations spread to most of Iran's 31 provinces and almost all urban centres

INTERNATIONAL P10



## JHULAN FEAT LAUDED

Past and present Indian cricketers laud the efforts of Jhulan Goswami for her contribution to the game

SPORTS P12

## SHORT TAKES

### CUET-PG results to be out today

**New Delhi:** The results of the Common University Entrance Test (CUET) for admission to postgraduate programmes will be announced Monday, according to UGC Chairman Jagadesh Kumar. National Testing Agency (NTA) will declare CUET-PG results 26 September (Monday) by 4pm, required for Post-graduate admissions in the participating universities. Best wishes to all the students, he tweeted. The University Grants Commission Sunday wrote to vice chancellors of universities opting for CUET to start the admission process.

### Gehlot camp MLAs threaten to resign

**Jaipur:** High drama unfolded in Rajasthan Sunday evening as a group of Congress MLAs loyal to Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot reached the Assembly speaker's residence to submit their resignation ahead of a legislature party meeting which was called to decide on his successor. The development suggested a worsening power struggle between the chief minister and Sachin Pilot who was tipped to be Gehlot's replacement after he declared his candidature for the Congress president's post. One of the Gehlot-loyalist MLAs claimed more than 80 legislators, including Independents, have reached Speaker C P Joshi's residence in buses and will submit their resignation. P9



**UNIQUE THEME:** A community Durga Puja pandal decorated on the theme '75 years of Independence' ahead of Durga Puja celebrations in Kolkata, Sunday

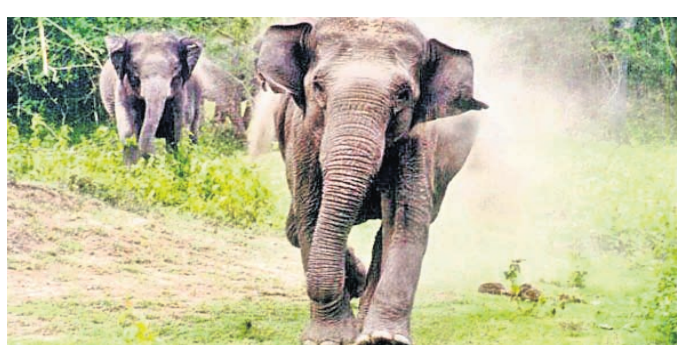
## 12-YR-OLD BOY SODOMISED; ROD SHOVED IN PRIVATE PART

**New Delhi, Sept 25:** A 12-year-old boy was allegedly thrashed and gang-raped by four persons in the Seelampur area of the national capital, Delhi Commission for Women (DCW) chairperson Swati Maliwal informed through the social media Sunday. "In Delhi, not even boys are safe. A 12-year-old boy was brutally raped by four people and left in a half-dead condition after being beaten with sticks," Maliwal wrote on Twitter. She further said the DCW team has registered an FIR in the matter. Of the four accused persons, Maliwal said that the police have arrested one person while three are still at large. In a notice issued to the Delhi Police, Maliwal said the complainant has submitted that their child was gangraped September 18 by four men who even "inserted a rod" in his private parts. "They also beat him brutally with sticks and rods. The child informed his parents about the horrific ordeal September 22," the DCW chief said. Maliwal said that the boy has been admitted to a hospital in very critical condition. The DCW chief demanded a detailed action report taken by the Delhi police along with the copy of FIR by September 28.

## MAN-ELEPHANT CONFLICT

# Odisha tops in deaths

**New Delhi, Sept 25:** With man-elephant conflict turning into a daily affair in Odisha, the state has reported country's highest number of human casualties in jumbo attacks during the past three years. "As many as 1,578 people died in elephant attacks in India between 2019-20 and 2021-22, of which the highest 322 such deaths were reported from Odisha," Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Bhupendra Yadav told in Parliament during its last session. While 117 persons were killed in elephant attacks in 2019-20, 93 such fatalities were reported during 2020-21 and another 112 deaths in 2021-22. On the other hand, the state has also logged most deaths of elephants due to various reasons including poaching, electrocution, train accidents and road mishaps. Official data showed that at least 245 elephants died in the state during the same period from 2019-20 to



2021-22. While 82 elephants died in 2019-20, the deaths of another 77 jumbos were reported in 2020-21. Moreover, the number of deaths increased to 86 in 2021-22. Out of the 245 jumbo deaths that occurred in the past three years, 35 deaths were reported in the Dhenkanal forest division, followed by mineral-rich Keonjhar division with 21 deaths and Angul with 12 deaths. During the last three years, Deogarh and Athmallik forest divisions have reported 11 elephant deaths each whereas 10 such deaths

have been reported from Balasore wildlife division, Kalahandi (south) and Khurda division. During the last one decade (2012-13 to 2021-22), Odisha has reported 784 elephant deaths, of which 36 jumbos died in accidents while 34 were killed by poachers and others due to various reasons. Out of 36 accidental deaths, 30 died in train accidents, six in road accidents. Apart from these deaths, in June and July the Odisha police found the bones and carcasses of five elephants including a tusker

**STAGGERING STATS**

As many as 322 human casualties and at least 245 elephant deaths were reported from Odisha during the period from 2019-20 to 2021-22

117 persons were killed in elephant attacks in 2019-20 whereas 93 such deaths were reported during 2020-21 and another 112 deaths in 2021-22

While 82 elephants died in 2019-20, 77 fatalities were reported in 2020-21. The number of jumbo deaths increased to 86 in 2021-22

from Athagarh forest range in Cuttack district. These figures show the gravity of the human-elephant conflict in the state. Apart from human casualties, elephants are also destroying the houses and crops of the people residing near elephant habitations. Contd...4

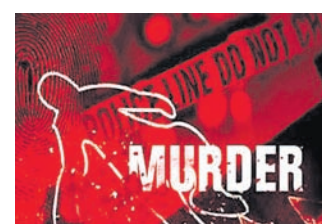
## Boat capsized in B'desh kills 24; several missing

**Dhaka, Sept 25:** At least 24 people, mostly children and women, were killed Sunday after a boat carrying Hindu devotees to a centuries-old temple capsized in a river in north-western Bangladesh, officials said. The death toll is expected to rise further as at least 25 others are missing after the incident in Bangladesh's Panchagarh district. The devotees were heading towards the Bodeshwari Temple on the occasion of Mahalaya, the auspicious start of the Durga Puja festival, when the boat capsized in the Korotoa River. "Around 24 people, including 8 children and 12 women have died in the incident so far. Some of them were declared dead after they were brought to a local hospital," Solaiman Ali, administrative chief of Panchagarh's Boda sub-district, told reporters. He said searches by firefighters and local divers were underway for the missing ones, adding the number of passengers was assumed to be between 70 and 80. Some survivors, who managed



## Bolangir woman sanitation worker found murdered

**Bolangir, Sept 25:** In a shocking incident, a woman sanitation worker of Bolangir Municipality was found dead near Bijakhaman waste treatment plant, police said Sunday. The deceased was identified as Astami Bakula (30). As per sources, her body had multiple injury marks. It was suspected that she might have been killed by miscreants with sharp edged weapons. The murder has left the western Odisha town in a state of shock. The deceased used to work as a driver of the waste management vehicle collecting garbage from households. Locals alleged that such attacks have been on the rise in the civic body area for the last several weeks



## IRREGULAR by MANJUL



He loves present govt. His children work in the US!

**WEATHER**

	BHUB	CTK
TEMP. MAX	31.6°C	31.6°C
TEMP. MIN	24.2°C	25.0°C
Humidity	94%	91%
Rainfall	0.2mm	7.4mm

Forecast: Light rain likely

## Daily wager builds 'Maa Robot' to feed disabled daughter

■ It feeds the girl, who cannot move and lift her hands, on a voice command specifying what she wants to eat, like vegetable, dal-rice mix or other items



Council has lauded Bipin Kadam for his innovation, which he has titled 'Maa Robot', and is providing him financial support to work on the machine further and explore its commercial viability. The food is kept on a plate which is part of the robot. It feeds the girl, who cannot move and lift her hands, on a voice command specifying what she wants to eat, like vegetable, dal-rice mix or other items. Kadam, who is in his 40s and a resident of Bethora village in Ponda taluka of south Goa, has been doing odd jobs as a daily wage worker. He told PTI that his 14-year-old daughter is differently-abled and cannot eat on her own.

She was entirely dependent on her mother to have her meals. "About two years back, my wife was bed-ridden. She used to feel sad and cry as she was not able to feed our daughter. I had to come from work to feed our daughter," he said. Kadam's wife insisted he should do something so that their daughter could have meals on time without being dependent on anyone. This led Kadam to start a search about a year back for a robot which could feed her. "There was no such robot available anywhere. So, I decided to design it myself," he said. Kadam looked for information online to learn the basics of a software. "I would work for 12 hours without a break and then spend the rest of my time in researching and learning how to make a robot. I researched continuously for four months and then designed this robot. I get energised when I come back from work and see my daughter smiling at me," he said. The 'Maa Robot' feeds the girl on her voice command, he added. "Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been promoting an Atmanirbhar Bharat. The same way, I wanted to make my child atmanirbhar (self-reliant) and not dependent on anyone," he said. Kadam said he wants to make similar robots for other children too. "I want to take this robot across the globe," he said.

According to police, Astami had gone missing soon after parking the vehicle at the waste management plant Saturday evening. Though the exact motive is unclear, it is suspected that the miscreants attacked her with an intention to loot valuables. Meanwhile, SDPO Tofan Bag and police personnel from Town police station started an investigation into the murder. This comes just a few days after two lecturers were brutally attacked by miscreants Friday night near Rajib Nagar which is a secluded area. Locals alleged that such cases have been on the rise in the civic body area for the last several weeks. They expressed concern over deterioration of law and order.





## JULIA ROBERTS GOT EQUAL PAY FOR EQUAL WORK ONLY IN 2000

Julia Roberts was able to break the glass ceiling for A-list female movie stars only in 2000 when she commanded \$20 million for the biographical legal drama *Erin Brockovich*. Until then, no woman actor had been getting as much pay as their male counterparts such as Tom Cruise or Tom Hanks.

## ALEC BALDWIN, 64, WELCOMES 7TH CHILD WITH WIFE HILARIA

As he battles on the legal front with regard to the *Rust* fatal shooting incident last year, Hollywood star Alec Baldwin welcomed a baby daughter with his wife Hilaria. This is their seventh child together, reports *Mirror.co.uk*.



### FORTUNE FORECAST

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FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181\*

**ARIES**  
You may feel empty, and completely down-and-out today. Ganesha says that this may make you feel a bit more inclined to spirituality. Meditation and prayer will engage more of your attention. You will also make considerable material progress.

**TAURUS**  
Your thinking is expected to be immensely clear and focused this day. So says Ganesha. This, therefore is a great day for holding important meetings with colleagues and partners, for resolving vital issues, for entering new tie business tie ups. Knowing what you want as well as how to get it will give you tremendous advantage.

**GEMINI**  
The day will be dedicated to spending quality time with children, predicts Ganesha. You will be overloaded with household responsibilities and will find it tough to deal with them. However, you will manage to do well and will be satisfied with the outcome.

**CANCER**  
Today, there is a strong possibility that you may face unexpected job changes. You are likely to spend lavishly to please family and friends. You may feel we make money to spend on loved ones.

**LEO**  
Even slender shoulders gain the strength when the time comes to handle responsibilities. And so shall you, says Ganesha, as today brings with it an increased amount of responsibility. You may find yourself drained of all your energy by the end of it.

**VIRGO**  
Ganesha advises you to quantify your worth in the spheres of emotions and sentiments. You will prepare yourself for everything, from games to peers to family. However, at the same time you will realise your shortcomings. Ganesha foretells that from today on the artist in you will begin to come to the fore.

**LIBRA**  
Ganesha says that today in your office you should be very careful in your work. It is likely that your superiors will not be happy about your work or your ability today. Those of you who are businessmen should try and delay sending off tenders today. Those who have given their job interviews may not get a favorable response to it. There may be a delay in getting your call letters. Ganesha advises to be very careful in each and every undertaking of yours today.

**SCORPIO**  
Do not get carried away by sentiments and act like an emotional fool, tips Ganesha. Today, you will be in a dilemma as you have to choose between two best things. But, as they say, right choices are always tough to make. Be practical and take the right decision.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
Hedge your bets carefully, says Ganesha. Solving problems will come naturally to you. But, beware, as you may face the music from certain disgruntled individuals. Worry not, and keep the spring in your step.

**CAPRICORN**  
Ganesha can hear the wedding bells. There is all the likelihood that you will find your perfect match today and will let him/her know about your feelings, says Ganesha. Your family means the world to you and you will be more expressive about this today than you have been in the past few years.

**AQUARIUS**  
Meditate, and tune in to your inner sanctum. As you do this, you will realise you don't need others' advice all the time. Your boss will cooperate with you, while your loved ones will encourage you. An exciting date should close the day on a lovely note, says Ganesha.

**PISCES**  
You will need broad shoulders to deal with the added responsibilities which will be heaped on your plate today. And while the work will be draining, the satisfaction of a job well done will more than ease your stress.

# Swara's mantra to deal with online abuse

**Mumbai:** Swara Bhasker is one of the divas who have been seen making headlines for online abuse more than once. In one of her recent media interactions, she opened up about online trolling and how she has developed a coping mechanism to deal with it.

She compared her Twitter wars with trolls to that of a domestic violence survivor. The actress confessed that inside she feels like a wreck but has learned to cope with it, which she believes is not a good thing.

She then gave an example, that how a woman who faces domestic violence builds up coping strategies because she knows she can't change her situation. She added that the woman knows that she will be hit, she is a victim and is in a very complicated space, but she learns how to cope with it, and that is exactly what happens to her mind when it comes to online abuse.

Swara also said that the kind of trolling she receives is very agenda-driven. It is people with a particular political ideology who target her. She further added that since she gets a lot of trolling, she tries not to read all the comments, and misses out on many messages because of that. Besides that, she said therapy is another option that helps.

AGENCIES



## Khushali recalls mom's struggles

**Mumbai:** Actress Khushali Kumar mentioned how her mom struggled throughout her life and had to take over the whole family business after the demise of her father, Gulshan Kumar.

Khushali was amazed looking at the performance by *DID Super Moms* contestant Versha on the track *Garmi* from the movie *Street Dancer 3D*.

She called her journey very inspiring and it reminded Khushali of her mother's contribution to the children's upbringing. She said: "Varsha, your journey has been truly inspirational and the way you started from YouTube videos and reached here, is truly commendable. I still remember, my mom was also a housewife, however, after my dad (Gulshan Kumar) passed away, she had to take on all the responsibilities of our business and the family."

The *Highway Star* actress credited her mother for her and her brother's (Bhushan Kumar) success in the entertainment industry.

"Today, wherever my brother (Bhushan Kumar) and I have reached, it is all because of her honesty. I still remember, she came from a Hindi medium school, and she used to always be stressed about attending meetings. However, she did it anyway and I truly believe that she is also a Super Mom," she added.

IANS



### ODISHA NATYA SANGHA'S 35TH FOUNDATION DAY

## Multilingual drama fest from today

**Bhubaneswar:** Odisha Natya Sangha (ONS), a confederation of more than 150 theatre troupes of Odisha, will organise a national-level theatre festival to commemorate its 35th foundation day.

The four-day event is set to begin from Monday here at Rabindra Mandap with Assamese drama *Ratnakar*. Written and directed by Gunakar Dev Goswami, the play will be presented by the Purbaranga troupe of Guwahati.

The day-2 will witness Odia play *Punascha Abolkara*. Presented by ONS, the play is written by Sitesh Tripathy and directed by Darpanarayan Sethy.

The plays to be staged for the next two days are - *Nakshi*

*Kanhar Math* (Bengali) by Naye Natua; Poet- Jasimuddin and Director- Goutam Haldar, *Agarbati* (Hindi) by Samagama Ranga Mandal; Playwright - Ashis Pathak and Director- by Swati Dubey

Another Odia devotional play *Bhakta Jhulia Kabir*, written and directed by Nabin Kumar Parida, will be performed under Sri Jagannathayan programme September 30.

ONS will release souvenir to celebrate the foundation day on the first day of the event while seminars, padyatras and discussion programmes will be held throughout the state on the occasion, informed president Haren Sahoo and secretary Subhakanta Padhi of the Sangh.

PNN

**"ODISHA NATYA SANGHA"**  
**National Theatre Festival - 2022**  
26 - 29 September, 2022 • Venue: Rabindra Mandap • Time: 7:00 PM

<b>1</b> Ratnakar	<b>2</b> Punascha Abolkara	<b>3</b> Nakshi Kanhar Math	<b>4</b> Agarbati	<b>30</b> Bhakta Jhulia Kabir
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To be Presented by:  
Ratnakar: Purbaranga, Guwahati  
Punascha Abolkara: Ganesha Natya Sangha, Bhubaneswar  
Nakshi Kanhar Math: Naye Natua, Bhubaneswar  
Agarbati: Samagama Ranga Mandal, Bhubaneswar  
Bhakta Jhulia Kabir: Sri Jagannathayan Programme, Bhubaneswar

## Netflix drops first look of Alia's Hollywood debut

**Los Angeles:** Streaming service Netflix has dropped the first look of Alia Bhatt from her Hollywood debut movie *Heart of Stone*.

Led by Gal Gadot, the spy thriller is directed by Tom Harper from a script penned by Greg Rucka and Allison Schroeder.

In the first footage from the film, which Netflix unveiled during its global fan event Tudum Saturday, Gadot and Bhatt are both seen performing some death-defying stunt sequences.

Bhatt, who essays the role of Keya, said the audiences will resonate with the movie's various characters.

It has these characters that you really connect with and feel for, the 29-year-old actor said.

*Heart of Stone* revolves around Rachel Stone (Gadot) an intelligence operative, the only woman who stands between her powerful, global, peace-keeping organisation and the loss of its most valuable and dangerous asset.

Gadot called *Heart of Stone* a super grounded, raw action thriller.

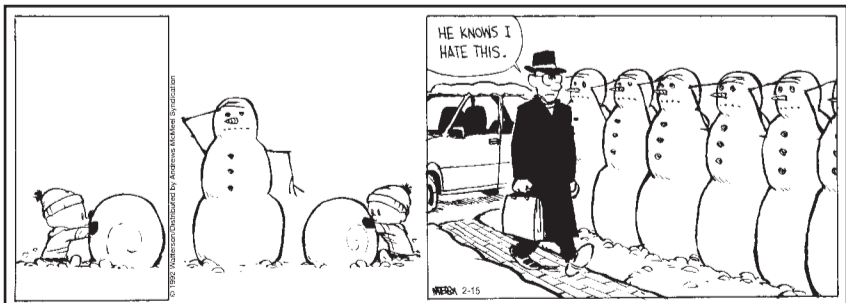
"The movie is gonna be extremely epic. It's a super grounded, raw action thriller. We really wanted to make sure we keep it realistic so people can feel the pain" the Red Notice star said.



### PEANUTS



### CALVIN AND HOBBS

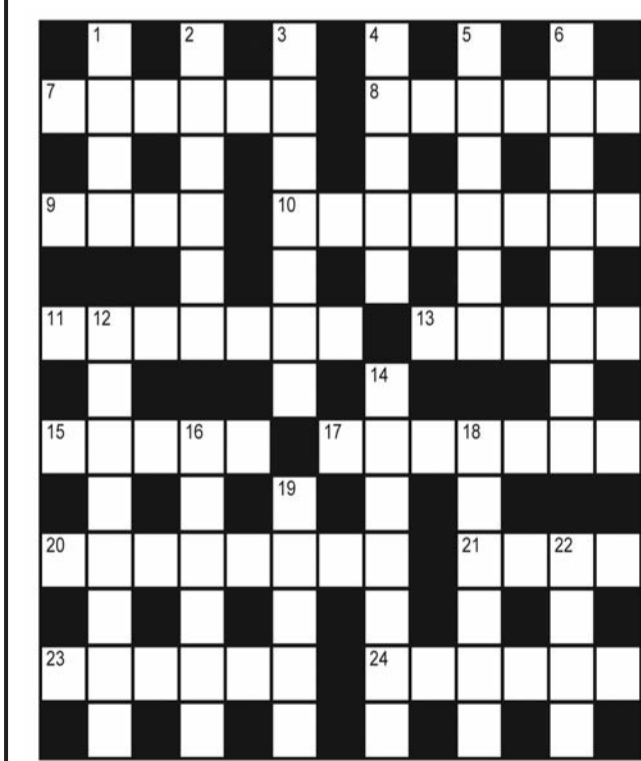


### BREVITY



### FUN post

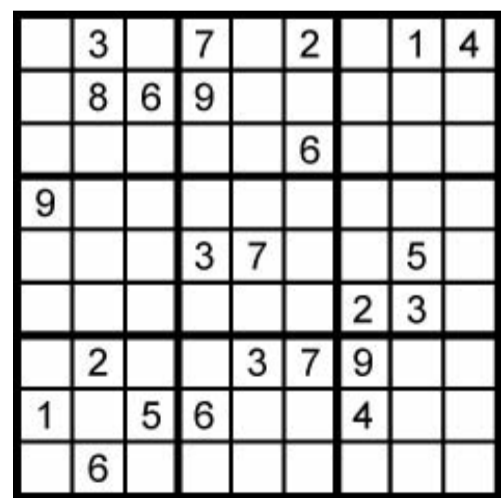
### CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 7 Angered
  - 8 Cited
  - 9 Wistful word
  - 10 Employs
  - 11 Villages
  - 13 Casual attire
  - 15 Bloodhound's clue
  - 17 Red salmon
  - 20 Risky venture
  - 21 Balance sheet item
  - 23 Chewy candy
  - 24 Medicinal syrup
  - 5 Wild ox
  - 6 Hardship
  - 12 Forebear
  - 14 Perfume ingredient (4,3)
  - 16 Close at hand
  - 18 Small anchors
  - 19 Yellowish brown
  - 22 Den denizen

### SUDOKU

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



### SOLUTIONS

#### CROSSWORD



#### SUDOKU



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

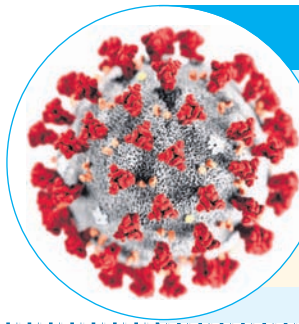


# downtown



## SAFETY FIRST

Police dog squad inspecting at Barabati Stadium in Cuttack, Sunday, ahead of the Legends League Cricket T20 match



## COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	62,01,54,009	60,01,93,720	65,40,178
India	4,45,65,526	4,39,95,610	5,28,510
Odisha	13,33,168	13,22,504	9,190

# Well-oiled syndicate behind fake drug trade: DCP

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Cuttack, Sept 25:** The twin city Commissionerate Police has brought two persons, who supplied spurious drugs to distributors in Cuttack, on transit remand after arresting them in Bihar, said deputy commissioner of police (DCP) Pinak Mishra, Sunday.

Briefing the media, the DCP said that Alok Mishra and Harish Kumar of Shastri Nagar in Bihar's Gaya have been supplying spurious drugs to distributors in Cuttack.

Upon reaching Gaya, the four-member team of the Commissionerate Police learnt that Alok and Harish were dealing in spurious drugs through bogus firms like Balaji Drugs and Balaji Drug Point, the DCP said.

He said Alok and Harish were not manufacturing the drugs. "They were procuring it from some other



agencies. A well-oiled syndicate is behind the spurious drug trade. We'll leave no stone unturned to track it down," the Cuttack DCP said, adding that they would check if some other drug agencies in Odisha have received spurious medicines from Alok and Harish.

Following raids by the Directorate of Drugs Control, the Purighat police had earlier this month seized spurious Telma AM and Telma 40 worth lakhs of rupees from VR Drug Agency at Manik Ghosh Bazar and Puja Enterprises at Jaunliapatti of the Silver City. Later, separate cases were filed

Following raids by the Directorate of Drugs Control, the Purighat police had earlier this month seized spurious Telma AM and Telma 40 worth lakhs of rupees from VR Drug Agency at Manik Ghosh Bazar and Puja Enterprises at Jaunliapatti of the Silver City

with a court and Purighat police against the two firms. Soon after that, the Purighat police arrested Rahul Kyal proprietor of VR Drug Agency and Sanjay Jalan proprietor of Puja Enterprises. The police also froze Rs 12 lakh in two bank accounts of the two medicine distributors.

After interrogating Kyal and Jalan, police learnt that these agencies had procured the fake drugs from Balaji Drugs in Bihar's Gaya.

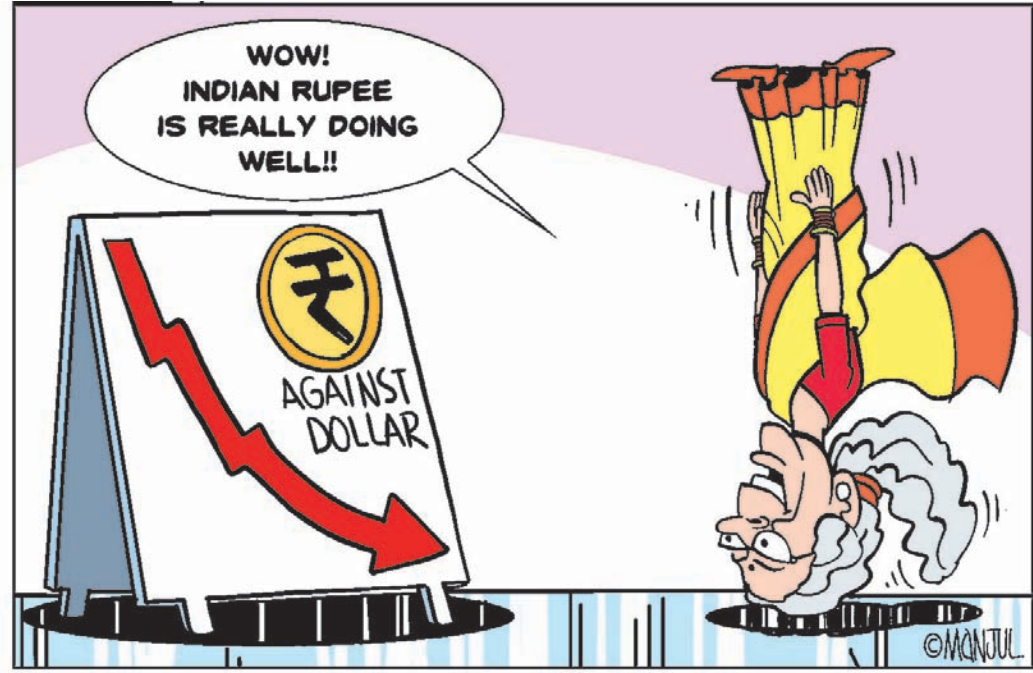
Accordingly a four-member team of the Commissionerate Police, led by the Purighat inspector in-charge, left Cuttack for Gaya to

trace the suppliers of the fake drugs September 21.

On the other hand, on the basis of information provided by Kyal and Jalan, the police have seized fake Telma 40 worth Rs 5 lakh from a transport agency at Mahtab Road here September 19. Later, spurious Telma 40 and Telma AM worth Rs 20 lakh was seized after raids on Kyal Agency at Nimchouri and Mahavir Agency at Nayasadak in Cuttack September 22.

The state government has sought support from its Bihar counterpart to pin down the manufacturers of fake Telma 40 and Telma AM. As the seized drugs were used to control blood pressure and chronic cardiovascular diseases, the state government requested its Bihar counterpart to treat it with urgency and ask its Drugs Controller to submit reply so that investigation can be expedited.

## POLITICKLE by MANJUL



# Heritage walk explores glorious past of Dhauli

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 25:** In order to inspire and activate people to learn about the historical importance of Dhauli and its vicinity, a heritage walk was organised by Bhubaneswar Walks under the aegis of Sarna Educational and Cultural Services, early morning Sunday.

Locals from nearby areas of Dhauli and heritage enthusiasts from the Capital city participated in the event and explored the magnificent story behind the rock-cut elephant and the Ashokan Edict near the foothills of Dhauli hill.

Explaining the participants, archaeologist-cum-author Jitu Mishra explained how Dhauli on

the banks of the historic Daya river had become the epicenter of the proliferation of Buddhism and transformation of the blood-thirsty Emperor Ashoka to Dharmasoka or Ashoka with a compassionate heart.

Narrating the Kalinga War and its effects on the great emperor and how he changed himself and through his rock edicts of Dhauli addressed the entire humanity as his children, Mishra observed that if today, we are talking about UN and its panglobal role, Ashoka through his rock edicts did it some 2500 or nearly 3,000 years ago.

"The essence of Dhauli lies in the rock-cut elephant and the Ashokan Edict and also the Daya riverbed and ancient temples nearby as the white



pagoda was built only during 1972," he said, adding Ashoka's one of

the younger siblings was also associated with a monastery here.

Purna Chandra Swain, a participant, who is a local, admitted that many new things were learnt today from the walk. Another visitor Jogendra Muduli also added that Buddha's story on influencing great rulers of the ancient India to spread humanity and love across the world is perhaps the greatest contribution of India to the world.

Among others, co-founder of Sarna Educational Trust, Rosalin Dash and writer and heritage lover Bibhuti Barik participated in the maiden walk.

Bhubaneswar Walks organises heritage walks presently in two circuits of Udayagiri - Khandagiri and Dhauli. It's planning to add more circuits to its itinerary very soon.

## WORLD RIVERS DAY

# Awareness among people in river basins need of the hour



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 25:** World Rivers Day was observed by Mahanadi Banchao Jivika Banchao Abiyan Sunday here at Buddha mandir. Issues such as river protection, conservation and rejuvenation were discussed in details at the event.

Speakers outlined the need for greater awareness among people living in river basins. They urged the government to ensure protection of livelihoods of people, especially farmers, fishermen and artisans threatened by shortage of water which have been diverted for industrial use.

On the occasion, organisers announced the launch of a nationwide campaign to save and conserve rivers, from October 2, Gandhi Jayanti to December 10, International Human Rights Day, from Raigarh to Cuttack and Paradip.

This year Mahanadi Banchao Jivika banchao Abiyan had observed a national World Rivers Day campaign fortnight from September 10 to 25 calling for actions in Rivers banks, river basins and adjoining villages by creating awareness among the villagers, river dependent communities, and people at large.

Former Chief Secretary Bijaya Kumar Patnaik, three former engineer-in-chiefs Ramesh Chandra

Tripathy, Bipin Dhal Samant, Sudhakar Patri, Baudev Sharma, Chairman Zilla Banchao Sangharsh Samiti Raigarh, Chhattisgarh and convenor Sudarshan Chhotoray were present on the occasion.

The concept of World Rivers Day originated in 2005 under the banner of United Nations' Water for Life Decade initiative. The aim of the campaign was to create awareness about how our water resources should be managed and nurtured.

Later it was established following a proposal from a renowned river advocate, Mark Angelo, who had previously established a similar regional observation. Since the inaugural World Rivers Day event, the observation has spread to over 100 countries with several million individuals participating in the events.

Some of the biggest cities in the world formed on river banks or around rivers, and many of the largest cities today continue to have rivers running through them. Today, nearly two billion individuals rely on rivers for water, transport, work and food.

But climate change and poor environmental controls have resulted in many rivers and waterfronts being damaged or highly polluted. In a survey done in 2018, the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) identified 351 polluted river stretches in India alone.

# THUNDERSTORM IN 19 DISTRICTS, PREDICTS IMD

AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 25:** The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has issued a yellow warning for 19 districts with a forecast of thunderstorm and lightning over the next 24 hours.

According to the IMD, thunderstorm with lightning very likely to occur at one or two places over - Balasore, Bhadrak, Jajpur, Kendrapara, Cuttack, Jagatsinghpur, Puri, Khurda, Nayagarh, Ganjam, Gajapati, Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj, Dhenkanal, Kandhamal, Rayagada, Kalahandi, Koraput, and Malkangiri.

Similarly, light to moderate rain/thundershower is very likely to occur at a few places over the districts of Coastal Odisha, Malkangiri, Koraput, Rayagada and at one or two places over the rest districts of Odisha.

Different parts of the state, especially coastal and central districts are likely to witness rainfall till September 28. Bhubaneswar will have a partly cloudy sky with possibility of moderate rain or thundershower.

The maximum and minimum temperature is very likely to be around 32 degrees and 26 degrees Celsius respectively.

# Why Instagram creators embracing the awkward, uncool

The 'explosion' in the volume of people deliberately posting self-humiliating content and amplifying their imperfections online has generated so much interest and curiosity that an Indian Institute of Management (IIM)-Udaipur team has commissioned a study into 'cringe content'

Did you recently notice a 'cringe' reel on your social media feed and were left surprised with the huge number of followers the content creator has?

The 'explosion' in the volume of people deliberately posting self-humiliating content and amplifying their imperfections online has generated so much interest and curiosity that an Indian Institute of Management (IIM)-Udaipur team has commissioned a study into 'cringe content'.

From a young man in twenties who works at a parking lot and makes stunt videos for passion to a housewife who reviews different beauty products for her social media page, the IIM team is studying what makes small town digital influencers embrace it.

The project titled "Digital Heartland of India" aims at understanding the space of content creation in tier 2 and 3 towns of the country, and exploring why the content creators aspire to be 'cringe legends' and if, in future, brands will shed their inhibitions of being associated with these influencers.

The study is being conducted at Mainpuri (Uttar Pradesh), Sangli (Maharashtra), Siliguri (West Bengal), Bhubaneswar (Odisha), Vishakhapatnam (Andhra Pradesh), Lakhimpur (Assam) and Udaipur (Rajasthan).

According to Tanvi Gupta, an Assistant Professor in Marketing and Co-Chair of Consumer Culture Lab at IIM Udaipur, content creation "is a fluid space which garners admiration as well as generates ridicule."

"Cringe content in the space of internet subculture has been variously defined as cheap comedy, or awkward posts that cause second-hand embarrassment," Gupta told PTI. "People deliberately post self-humiliating content, embracing their imperfections - bad singing, terrible dancing and so on. But, now that the cringe content has blown up explosively and has gone mainstream it is certainly tempting for brands to be associated with it, she said.

"According to few creators who are part of the study, cringe cannot be entirely dismissed as purpose-



less and is a source of inspiration to several budding content creators in smaller towns longing to express themselves unabashedly," she said.

Their motive, she said, is to somehow go viral with something controversial. "Creators are aware there would be extreme opinions and their work will be dissected and debated."



The creators say the genre 'cringe' creates an all inclusive safe space that does not conform to the sophisticated ideals of the urban content production process and encourages channelisation of raw energies and unrefined talent.

The study also explores how accepted these creators are in reality. "A female content creator told us about how she is often told in

her society that her marriage prospects will be affected because of the content she makes online. We found that for females, monetisation of the content legitimises the field for those belonging to the lower socioeconomic strata and is the only way of gaining their family's approval.

"They long for success. However, they fear the outcome. The metamorphosis of the 'dream' to 'reality' comes with the anxieties of being displaced from a familiar space of comfort," she said.

The team found that for men, the aspirational reality is more grounded and closely bound with instant fame and material success - to be recognised in a thronging crowd and acknowledged by their peers.

"While they display a gradually progressing modern avatar, the male Gen Z creators continue to uphold the traditional values of their parents' generation. Bold, authoritative and aggressive. The 'men will be men' embodies an adventurous and brazen spirit -- which often manifests in their content," she said.

The IIM team notes that earning success and fame is viewed as a fundamental and actionable step in encouraging budding creators from smaller towns, to view the space as a "legitimate profession". Therefore, the end goal transgresses beyond the initial hurdles with the larger aim of being 'remembered'.

Talking about the 'reel Vs real' paradox, Gupta said while their social media persona gives us a glimpse of their aspirational self, the boundaries between who they are vs how they want to be seen are also blurred in their current realities.

"It is seen during the fieldwork that the creators keep oscillating between their real and performative selves unconsciously," she said.

"While most acknowledged the difference between the world of social media and their current realities, there was a need to juxtapose the two. Understanding them as individuals as well as creators as an outsider in the field, exposing their real selves makes them more vulnerable," she said.



**Orange Cross organises healthcare meet**

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 25:** Orange Cross-Healthcare Home delivered, an Odisha based healthcare start-up organised a healthcare meet in Bhubaneswar Saturday on the completion of four years of service in the healthcare sector.

Orange Cross runs a training programme under Odisha Skill Development Authority (OSDA) in which certified ANM nurses are upskilled to handle post critical patients and life support equipment independently at home.

Selected nurses from all over the state are given specialized home nursing training and subsequently provided employment with a long-term career opportunity. Thus, it addresses the issues concerning youth employment and gender equality, said Subroto Bagchi chairman of OSDA.

Service provided by Orange Cross has been beneficial especially to senior citizens living alone in cities without family support and patients who need extended monitoring and nursing at its Rehab Centre at an affordable cost or post critical care at home, said Ajay Bhanja, CEO and founder Orange Cross.

In June 2018, Orange Cross was recognized as a start-up venture by the government of Odisha. It has also received Clinical Establishment Licenses for both Home Nursing and its Rehab Centre. With its proven business model, the organization aspires to expand its footprint in the rapidly evolving healthcare space across the country.

Ajay said "Orange Cross has embarked on a mission to make home health care a part of the mainstream health care eco-system while ensuring a prestige value to the career of home health care professionals". "We are ably supported by healthcare luminaries in our mission and would like to be known as a compassionate-empathetic-care provider to our patients".

**Continued from P1**

**Odisha tops in ...**

The human-elephant conflict is increasing in Odisha basically due to the increasing population, degradation of forests and human behaviour, said Jaya Krishna Panigrahi, secretary, Orissa Environmental Society, an Odisha-based voluntary organisation working for the conservation of wildlife and biodiversity.

"We have forests, but their quality has been degraded due to various reasons. There is a lack of food and water inside the forests also, which forces the jumbos to come out to human habitations," he said.

Besides, the links between the forest areas for the movement of wildlife animals have also been disconnected, Panigrahi said.

To remedy the situation, the environmentalist said, "We have to ensure that the elephants get all they need within the forests and the people near forest areas should be motivated to cultivate other crops and learn how to behave with the wild elephants as they also need to survive."

Informing about the various steps taken by the state government for the conservation and protection of wild elephants, state Forest Minister Pradip Kumar Amat, in a written reply in the Assembly July 19, said that 14 elephant corridors and three elephant conservation projects have been taken up to prevent the deaths of elephants. The state government has dug ponds to provide drinking water to the elephants. At least 402 ponds were dug and 426 were restored in the past three years.

As per the reply, 343 anti-poaching squads comprising 1,715 personnel have been deployed in strategic places to prevent the poaching of elephants. Drone and watch towers are being used to keep a strict vigil on the elephant habitats, their movements and on the movement of poachers. The state has set up a crime cell under the Special Task Force (STF) of the crime branch to investigate and take action in important cases.

For safe passage of the wild animals, it was proposed to construct an animal overpass or underpass on the railway line at 35 locations.

**State logs 211 new Cov cases, 2 deaths**

AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 25:** The state's Covid-19 tally rose to 13,33,168 Sunday as 211 more people, including 26 children, tested positive for the infection, a health bulletin said.

The state had recorded 222 infections Saturday.

The death toll rose to 9,190 as two more patients succumbed to the coronavirus infection, the bulletin said.

Besides, 53 other Covid-19 patients have died due to comorbidities so far, it said.

The state now has 1,421 active cases, while 13,22,504 people have recovered from the disease, including 205 in the last 24 hours.

The daily positivity rate was 1.53 per cent as the new infections were detected from 13,823 sample tests.

Meanwhile, the country Sunday reported 4,777 fresh Covid infection in the last 24 hours, against 4,912 Covid cases reported on previous day, said the Union Health Ministry.

In the same period, the country

has recorded 23 more Covid-related deaths, taking the national fatalities tally to 5,28,510 as per the report.

Meanwhile, the active caseload of the country presently stands at 43,994 cases, accounting for 0.10 per cent of the country's total positive cases.

The recovery of 5,196 patients in the last 24 hours took the cumulative tally to 4,39,95,610. Consequently, India's recovery rate stands at 98.72 per cent.

Meanwhile, India's Daily Positivity rate has been reported to be 1.58 per cent, while the Weekly Positivity Rate in the country currently also stands at 1.63 per cent.

Also in the same period, a total of 3,02,283 tests were conducted across the country, increasing the overall tally to over 89.36 crore.

As of Sunday morning, India's Covid-19 vaccination coverage exceeded 217.56 crore.

Over 4.09 crore adolescents have been administered with a first dose of Covid-19 jab since the beginning of vaccination drive for this age bracket.



**PAYING RESPECT:** Aska MP Pramila Bisoyi among others being worshipped during Naba Matruka Puja at Saheed Nagar Arya Samaj Mandir in Bhubaneswar, Sunday

**TPSODL to promote energy conservation**

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 25:** Stepping up its commitment to provide sustainable energy solutions, TP Southern Odisha Distribution Limited (TPSODL), is promoting energy conservation habits among school students and consumers through Club Enerji.

TPSODL started an awareness campaign in Podapadar, Haldiapadar and Narayanpur Gram Panchayats. Students and staffs of the schools were sensitised on energy & resource conservation, sustainability, safety and digital payments through an engaging session followed by a quiz competition.

Club Enerji is an energy and resource conservation club that fo-



cus on bringing about a first-hand realisation of the energy crisis and scarcity of natural resources in the country. The initiative propagates efficient usage of energy and educates the society on climate change issues.

TPSODLs Club Enerji programme is focused on creating awareness by educating children on the importance of energy and resource conservation. School students are trained to understand the moral and civic values, inter-

pretation of electricity bills, basic steps that helps curb wastage of power, optimized usage of fuel and water, waste management and plantation along with optimized usage of gadgets/electronic devices at home. Students are also encouraged to share the effective practices adopted.

"Club Enerji is our initiative towards guiding students through the four stages of sensitisation - Educate, Enhance, Engage, and Empower. We want the youth to speak the message of sustainability. I am confident that we will be able to drive change through these series of steps" said Arvind Singh, Chief Executive Officer, TP Southern Odisha Distribution Limited.



**REMEMBERING FOREFATHERS:** People gather at Bindusagar, a holy place, in Bhubaneswar during Mahalaya Shradha, Sunday

**Woman attempts suicide; rescued**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 25:** Demanding justice for the murder of her brother, a 33-year-old woman climbed a tree near Palaspalli in Bhubaneswar Sunday and tried to die by suicide by jumping off it, police said.

However, she was rescued by police and fire services personnel in an hour-long operation, and taken to the Airfield police station, the police said. Talking to reporters after her rescue, the woman - a resident of Basudevpur in Bhadrak district - said she tried to kill herself in protest against the denial of justice to her family over the murder of her brother 23 years ago.

"I have been denied justice for the last 23 years. I was a witness to the murder of my brother. Still, the police did not take any action against the culprits. This apart, my husband deserted me and is

*I have been denied justice for the last 23 years. I was a witness to the murder of my brother. Still, the police did not take any action against the culprits*

yet to provide alimony. The police have failed to give justice to me in both cases. I have lost faith in the police," she said.

Stating that she has been running from pillar to post, struggling to get justice for her brother, she alleged that instead of help, the police filed a false case against her.

"I was also jailed for some time because of the false case," she said. "I lodged several complaints at all levels but none of my pleas have been addressed," she claimed.

The police refused to comment on her allegations.

**New cutting-edge tech diagnoses heart failure in record time**

Scientists have developed an innovative technology that can halve the time taken to detect patients with heart failure, and may be useful for improving diagnosis and delivering more effective treatments to patients.

The technology developed by researchers at the University of East Anglia (UEA), UK, makes use of magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) to develop detailed four dimensional (4D) flow images of the heart.

However, unlike the conventional MRI which takes up to or more than 20 minutes, the new scanning technology takes just eight minutes, they said.

The results provide a precise image of the heart valves and blood flow inside the heart, helping doctors determine the best course of

treatment for patients.

"Heart failure is a dreadful condition resulting from rising pressures inside the heart. We have been researching one of the most cutting-edge methods of flow assessment inside the heart called 4D flow MRI," said lead researcher Pankaj Garg from UEA.

"In 4D flow MRI, we can look at the flow in three directions over time - the fourth dimension," Garg said in a statement.

According to the research, published in the journal European Radiology Experimental, the best method to diagnose heart failure is by invasive assessment, which is not preferred as it has risks.

An ultrasound scan of the heart called echocardiography is routinely used to measure the peak



velocity of blood flow through the mitral valve of the heart. However, this method can be unreliable, they said.

"This new technology is revo-

lutionising how patients with heart disease are diagnosed. However, it takes up to 20 minutes to carry out a 4D flow MRI and we know that patients do not like having long

**"T**his new technology is revolutionising how patients with heart disease are diagnosed. However, it takes up to 20 minutes to carry out a 4D flow MRI and we know that patients do not like having long MRI scans," said Hosamadin Assadi, a PhD student at UEA.

The research team investigated the reliability of a new technique that uses super-fast

methods to scan the flow in the heart, called Kat-ARC.

"We found that this halves the scanning time - and takes around eight minutes. We have also shown how this non-invasive imaging technique can measure the peak velocity of blood flow in the heart accurately and precisely," Assadi said.

The team tested the new technology with 50 patients at two hospitals in Sheffield, UK. Patients with suspected heart failure were assessed using the new Kat-ARC 4D heart flow MRI.

The team hopes their work could revolutionise the speed at which heart failure is diagnosed, benefiting hospitals and patients worldwide.

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# Illegal prawn gheries pose grave threat to Bhitarkanika



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Kendrapara, Sept 25:** Bhitarkanika National Park (BNP) in this district is in grave danger due to number of reasons including coastal erosion, illegal acquisition of forest land and fish traders setting up their business in the reserve area. The Gobari river bank near Kansapal under Baulakani panchayat of Mahakalapara block which is slowly turning into major hub of fish export is a case in this point. The fish traders have acquired large tracts of land in prohibited areas of the reserve forest to set up their prawn gheries and fish cultivation units. They are also poaching wild animals and birds and destroying the green cover. Mushrooming of prawn gheries and cultivation of piranha varieties of fish is posing a serious threat to the marine and wildlife in the sanctuary territorial limits.

the fish business due to lack of proper equipment and facilities including speed boats. Pratyush Kumar Nayak of Rajnagar, however, made a serious allegation that forest officials should be held more responsible for the destruction of environment at BNP than others. He said they are allegedly working hand in glove with the fish traders and encouraging illegal cultivation in the area. They are even investing in the business to earn a quick buck, alleged Nayak. Another resident, Ashok Kumar Samal said that the BNP is under serious threat. He pointed out that fish cultivation units discharge effluents like water mixed with chemicals which is destroying the flora and fauna in the forest. The discharge of chemical effluents is also damaging the adjoining Gahirmatha marine sanctuary which is the nursery of the rare Olive Ridley turtles. Social activist Mahesh Kumar Padhi said that the Orissa High Court has ordered for demolition of these gheries and fish cultivation units but very little has been done in this regard. Environmentalist Sunil Kumar Gantayat alleged some political leaders are encouraging such illegal activities. When contacted, ranger Manas Kumar Das said that illegal entry into Bhitarkanika has been banned. The illegal prawn gheries are being destroyed with the help of district administration. However, he added that he is not aware of cultivation of piranha varieties of fish.

Local resident Lakshmidhar Swain said that fish worth lakhs of rupees is being transported to Kolkata from the Kansapal river ghat for exporting. Trawlers from Kolkata, Balasore and other places are being used for transporting the fish. The constant movement of trawlers is also affecting wild life in general. Also it is harming the environment leading to frequent landslides on the Gobari river bank and is destroying saline forests in Jambu area, which is only five kilometres from the place. The Marine police station is only 5.5km away from the hub of fish trade but police personnel have failed to act tough on this illegal trade, Swain informed. Ramesh Sethi of Tantiapal village said after Kansapal ghat, the jetty at Jambu lock is also turning into a hub for fish business. However, despite movement of large trawlers, forest officials and marine police have failed to curb



**AWARENESS RALLY:** Students, members of women self-help group, Anganwadi workers and others took out a rally demanding total prohibition at Danga village in Bargarh district, Sunday

# Principal assaults students; girls refuse to go to school

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Patana, Sept 25:** Five girl students of an upper primary (UP) school under this block in Keonjhar district sustained injuries after they were allegedly beaten up and locked up inside a classroom by their headmistress, Friday, sources informed Sunday.



The incident has been reported from Government UP School at Chinamalipasi village under this block. Headmistress Nirupama Sahu even refused to allow the girls, all students of Class-VIII, to go to the toilet. Instead when the girls pleaded to be allowed to go to the toilet, she beat them up again with a stick while hurling casteist remarks. The matter came to the fore after the five girls refused to attend their classes, Saturday. The girls were identified as Lucy Mohanta, Lisa Mohanta and Puja Mohanta of Kumulabahalai village and Trishkati Naik and Mitali Naik of Chinamalipasi and Tandia Sahi villages respectively. On being informed, the guardians demanded stringent action against the accused teacher. They visited the school Saturday to lodge a formal com-

plaint, but the accused was absent. The development has caught the attention of the Education department as the state government has completely banned corporal punishment in all schools. The incident occurred when the Sahu locked up the girls inside a room till around 2.00pm, Friday. The assaulted girls initially kept mum about the incident when they reached their homes. However, when they refused to go to school Saturday their parents thought that something was amiss. When the girls were questioned persistently they narrated their ordeal. Some of the guardians alleged

Sunday that attempts are being made to suppress the matter. They have demanded district education officer (DEO) Purna Chandra Sethi and block education officer (BEO) Purna Chandra Amanat to take disciplinary action against the headmistress. When contacted, BEO Amanat said that the matter will be probed once a complaint is lodged. The accused headmistress however, has rejected the charges stating that she was on leave Saturday due to fever. She has assured that she will attend the school meeting Monday and the matter will be discussed in the presence of sarpanch.

# Fertilizer dealers raided; ten show caused

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Jaleswar, Sept 25:** Amid allegations of shortage of fertilizers, officials of the Agriculture department carried out raids at some shops selling fertilizers and pesticides in Jaleswar area of Balasore district, sources said Sunday.

The department has issued show cause notices to 10 fertilizer and pesticide dealers while raids are being carried out at other places by a team of officials comprising block agriculture officer Sanjay Rout and assistant block agriculture officer Rajlaxmi Mohanty. Fertilizers and pesticides are provided to farmers through 134 registered dealers and 18 cooperative societies. The officials said that these retail outlets are supposed to display lists of fertilizers and pesticides in stock and their prices for information to farmers. Farmers have been advised to take receipts from these traders after every purchase. They have been advised not to buy fertilizers and pesticides from traders of West Bengal. Dealers and registered traders have also been asked to always keep documents of sales and stocks ready.

# Cong alleges scam in computer purchase

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Nayagarh, Sept 25:** The district unit of Congress in Nayagarh has alleged that irregularities to the tune of ₹3.60 crore were committed in the school transformation programme under 5T Initiative of the Odisha government in the district. The party's district unit president Ranjit Das demanded an investigation into the alleged scam. In a press statement, Das claimed that the staffer of an outsourcing company raked in moolah by acting as a broker during the purchase of computers and printers from a particular shop for 5T schools. This person has also given



good amount of commission to some officials, the Congress leader added. "As many as 92 schools in the district were transformed under the 5T Initiative and 10 computer sets have been bought for each school. A total of ₹4 lakh has been sanctioned to each school for purchase

of computer sets. Altogether, ₹3.60 crore has been utilised in buying computer sets. The person in question has been forcing headmasters of all the schools to buy computers from the same shop. All the computers and printers purchased for schools are of old stock," the Congress leader alleged.

# Student's death: Viscera samples sent to SFSL

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Berhampur, Sept 25:** In the wake of mysterious death of a student at Khallikote Unitary University premises, police have sent his viscera samples to the state forensic science laboratory (SFSL) in Bhubaneswar to gather more details, officials informed Sunday. The deceased identified as Kunal Mallick, 20, was a native of Badhipanka village under Mohana police limits in Gajapati district. He was a student of Plus-III Arts stream and residing at room No 28 of RK hostel. Kunal's friends called him for lunch September 20, but he did not respond. They suspected something amiss and informed warden Deepak Kumar Mishra. He was rushed to MKCG Medical College and Hospital where doctors pronounced him dead.



**PROMOTING GANDHIAN VALUES:** Students and residents welcomed the Ahimsa Rath, promoting Gandhian philosophy of non-violence at Bhanjanagar, Sunday

# 'Smart' library remains a pipedream in Dhenkanal

ADMIN YET TO IDENTIFY LAND; ₹20 LAKH REMAINS UNUTILISED

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Dhenkanal, Sept 25:** Fund worth ₹20 lakh has been allocated long back for a state-of-art library in Dhenkanal district, but it has remained unutilised with the administration yet to identify land for the project, a report said.

It was decided to build the smart library which would be equipped with all modern facilities like computer sets, scanners, photo copiers, drinking water facilities, fire safety and upholstered furniture sets to ensure a positive atmosphere for students and avid readers. A blue print for the project has been finalised, but construction is yet to start, locals lamented. They alleged that there is lack of coordination between the Language, Literature and Culture departments and the Works department which is preventing the start of the project. The Language, Literature and Culture department November 8, 2018, had allocated ₹4.64 lakh to the existing district library to convert it into a smart one. Various equipment purchased at ₹3 lakh has been gathering dust. It was stated that ₹3.18 lakh was meant for purchasing desktop computers, laser printers, UPS, scanners, fire safety kits, furniture, photo copiers, water purifiers and invertors while the remaining ₹1.46 lakh was allocated for appoint-

ment of data entry operators, purchase of computers peripheral items, telephone installation, internet bill and digitisation of old books. M/s Hruday Enterprises of Cuttack bagged the tender for supply of all above mentioned instruments and items. A decision was taken to set up the modern library either near the divisional forest office or near the district tourism office. However, local intellectuals and readers were averse to the choice of the two sites for the library. Till date, no new site has been identified by the district administration. Many youths aspiring for various competitions said that a modern library is a must for them. Ashwini Kumar Sahu, Sipak Kumar Barik and Surendra Kumar Mallick observed that educated youths like them require a well-equipped library and a good ambience so that they can prepare themselves for competitive examinations. They demanded that the proposed library should be made functional as soon as possible. District culture officer Priyambada Behera said that the fund for the library has been given to the Works department. "The department is not making any effort to start library work. Instrument purchased is lying unused in the culture office. We have intimated the Collector about the issue," she added.

# Govindpur near Hirakud dam turns into 'Birds Village'



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Sambalpur, Sept 25:** Govindpur village in Odisha has been declared as a 'Birds Village' as the residents

are firm in their resolve to protect birds coming to Hirakud reservoir during their breeding and migration periods. Located near Hirakud dam in Bargarh district, residents

of the village under Laxhanpur wildlife range, have promised to keep the area pollution free for the winged visitors. The locals have taken the initiative under the guid-

ance of Hirakud wildlife division. A forest official said the involvement of the villagers will create a sense of ownership among them to protect the birds. Two other adjoining villages Tamdei and Ramkhol have also pledged, in a meeting, to work for the conservation of birds. All houses in these villages will have wall paintings of the colourful birds like Redcrested Pochard, Moorhen and Skimmer, the official informed. The local residents also will keep the landscape clean while the Hirakud Division has installed enough dustbins for the purpose. With the declaration of the Hirakud dam area as Ramsar site in 2022, the area is expected to attract tourists and photographers in large numbers. More than two lakh birds migrate to Hirakud reservoir every year for breeding and stay for six

months. The migratory birds of about 100 species come to the reservoir spread over 746 sq km, in October every year. Tourists from Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and districts of Odisha like Jharsuguda, Bolangir, Sonepur, Sambalpur and locals of Bargarh districts visit these three villages for picnic, boating and bird watching. Many photographers too come here for capturing images of temples submerged in Hirakud reservoir. They also try and capture the animals that come from the Debrigarh sanctuary to drink water, another forest official said. Work for setting up of paintings, signboards and dustbin has already started. Books and printed material on birds and the Hirakud reservoir will be distributed among the villagers by the division in the next six months, the official said.





FOCUS ECONOMY

# LET THE RUPEE FALL



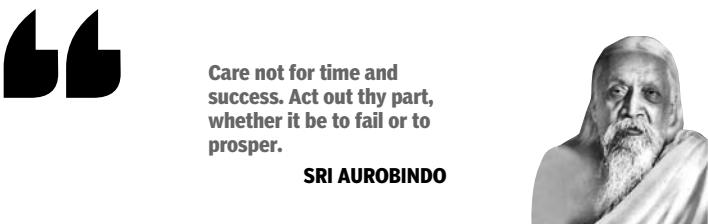
Let India not subscribe to the theory that the rupee-dollar parity decides our economy. The Indian economy has strengths beyond the obvious in its still partially surviving mixed economy

India as dollar rates are decided by international factors and American manipulations. In reality, each dollar intervention subsidises the US economy and not the domestic. Simply out, the US gains at India's cost. Let the rupee fall and create new avenues. When the fall of the rupee is orderly, normally the RBI allows the rupee to find its value. But when the fall is due to speculative activity, the RBI intervenes. The RBI also acts when the rupee crosses its comfort level, which for many months had been 80. Following the US Fed meeting raising rates by 75 bps, the fall in value of the rupee is unprecedented. The recent RBI intervention could not control this abnormal fall. The US was among the first countries to advocate movement away from gold standard in 1971, when President Richard Nixon closed the gold window then, in order to address the country's inflation problem and to discourage foreign governments from redeeming more and more dollars for gold. The US built military might and hegemony across the world.

Plus, it controlled the oil trade hedging it to dollars. Further, the consumer economy it created, forced most of the world to look at it and export to the US. Besides, most of the world resorted to dollar denominated trading as they all were receiving dollars for goods exported to the USA. This accorded the dollar a reserve status. And almost all central banks would park their surplus money with the US treasury. So today, even though the US has a very high debt compared to its GDP, the dollars flowing in strengthen it. China had been trying to challenge this status. It kept its currency artificially low. Russia and China are also trying to break the dollar stranglehold on oil trade post the war on Ukraine. The Japanese currency is also undervalued but its economy thrives. In case the rupee continues to fall with many global currencies, including euro and pound sterling the advantages would be for products such as metals, pharmaceuticals, IT, host of cosmetics and products that are not import dependent. The products for the domestic market could even, in the course of time, get insu-

lated from dollar-linked inflation. More so, as crude prices have come down to around \$80 a barrel, if taxes on petrol and gas are cut, the advantages would be more than the gains in GST collections. A depreciating rupee would make Indian exports more competitive though imports of essentials may be expensive. An exporter is to earn more in rupee terms. The advantage could be that larger forex would be earned and the outgo would be less. The kitty, not lost on stabilisation exercises, could be used to help incentivise and indigenise domestic products. There is a myth that foreign investors normally withdraw as the rupee falls. This is partially true of short-term foreign portfolio stock exchange investors, who come for quick profits. But it makes little difference to the long-term investors. They come with a different mindset and had been investing in many industries even before 1991. The strategy could also be a great booster for checking uncertain technology and EV imports that are bound to raise India's dependence on import of lithium-ion battery technology and coal, causing enormous environmental hazard. Yes, India can put off the emission norms to make its industry more competitive and remove checks on cheaper diesel use. Imports might cost a bit more. But if the trend in crude prices continues, major outgo would be checked. Industries that import components for their products could see a surge in cost. But chemicals and automobile prices may have discomfort with some rise in their costs. So higher export volumes spur economic activity and pricey imports lead consumers to opt for local alternatives. The EU has raised duty on Indian textile imports. The rupee depreciation may partially set off the adverse impact on Indian exports. The RBI is bound to increase interest rates to keep investment flow on while checking the rising inflation and boosting the growth path. Overall, a falling rupee is not a liability for India, as managed properly it would maintain domestic growth.

INFA



Care not for time and success. Act out thy part, whether it be to fail or to prosper.

SRI AUROBINDO

## Greenwashing

Walking down a Toronto street recently I saw an ad touting a fossil-fuel company's net-zero credentials. But to see such belief-straining claims, I would not even need to leave my house.

According to a study by the Guardian and InfluenceMap, such ads are all over Google. Ads for oil giant Shell, for example, appeared on 86 per cent of searches for "net zero," with many promoting the company's pledge to reach net-zero emissions by 2050. Are corporations finally waking up to the urgency of the climate crisis, or is this just more greenwashing?

One thing is certain: the climate crisis is escalating fast. California is enduring record-breaking heatwaves. A third of Pakistan is under water. China is suffering a withering drought, which may have global ramifications. And that is just what is happening right now. From cold snaps in Texas to wildfires in Europe, climate change has become impossible to ignore.

Climate action has come a long way since the Paris climate agreement was signed in 2015. Notably, net-zero has gone mainstream, with some 90 per cent of global GDP now covered by net-zero targets. And it is not just governments that have adopted them; many of the world's biggest companies have done so, too, motivated by a combination of business interest, investor expectations, and consumer pressure.

But if corporations – including even fossil-fuel companies – are now "climate leaders," fully and loudly committed to the net-zero cause, why are emissions still rising? A look at the history of climate action reveals the answer.

Over the last 20 years, a diverse array of climate initiatives has sought to persuade businesses and investors to accept the idea of setting climate-related targets, cutting emissions, and then setting even more ambitious targets. These initiatives have had one thing in common: all have been voluntary.

As anyone who has ever broken a New Year's resolution knows firsthand, a promise made is not always a promise kept. If someone says they will achieve net-zero, how can we be sure that they are taking the steps needed to deliver? Right now, we can't.

This has enabled "climate coasting," with companies marketing themselves as environmentally conscious while continuing with business as usual, or close to it. In fact, as it stands, only one in three corporate net-zero plans cover the company's full carbon footprint, including that of its supply chain. And not one of the world's biggest corporate polluters has fully explained how it plans to achieve net-zero emissions.

As United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres recently put it, "The world is in a race against time, and we cannot afford slow movers, fake movers, or any form of greenwashing." These are the problems the High-Level Expert Group on Net-Zero Emissions Commitments, which I chair, is meant to solve. We are an independent, diverse group of experts determined to provide science-based recommendations for achieving the goal so many governments and companies have embraced.

Our work is just beginning, but three things are already clear: First, a pledge without a plan is meaningless. Companies need to align their business strategies with their commitments, take ambitious action, and start delivering progress immediately. And this does not mean fudging the numbers with questionable offsets; the only credible way to achieve net-zero is to slash emissions.

To support this effort, the High-Level Expert Group will define what it will take to achieve net-zero emissions. This includes establishing clear criteria for credible net-zero plans that account for issues of equity and climate justice. Regional and sectoral standard-setters can then adopt our criteria, thereby ensuring consistency and comparability.

Second, voluntary schemes are not enough. We don't need New Year's resolutions; we need new business plans. Regulation will be essential here, both to ensure that voluntary climate roadmaps are replaced by mandatory strategies and to level the playing field. A central objective of the High-Level Expert Group is to map the needed regulations.

Finally, accountability is essential. When companies, banks, investors, cities, and regions make net-zero commitments, we must be able to trust them. Fair rules of engagement will help. But governments, corporations, and financiers must also embrace radical transparency. Progress will be easy to spot: investment in clean energy will supersede investment in fossil fuels, and emissions will fall.

Already, our expert group has engaged more than 800 groups, met with thousands of people, and received almost 300 submissions detailing how net-zero commitments can be improved – a clear indication of how keen stakeholders are to get this right. Success would not only give us a shot at stabilising the climate; it would bring vast economic opportunities. According to McKinsey, growing demand for net-zero offerings could generate more than \$12 trillion in sales annually by 2030.

Last year, I left politics to dedicate my time to the two things that mattered most to me: my kids and climate change. The two priorities are deeply interconnected. If we are to avoid a future where our children are buying "net-zero" bacon between floods and fires, we must close the gap between the promises we hear and the action we need.

The writer is Chair of the UN Secretary-General's High-Level Expert Group on the Net-Zero Emissions Commitments of Non-State Entities.

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### WISDOM CORNER

- Our greatest glory is not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall. CONFUCIUS
- Knowing your own darkness is the best method for dealing with the darknesses of other people. CARL JUNG
- He who has a why to live can bear almost any how. FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE

### WORDSWORTH

#### Brummagem

The British midlands city of Birmingham was at one time also called Brummagem, a local variant on its name that has given us the nickname for one of its inhabitants, Brummie. Although it has been a major industrial city since the Industrial Revolution – in 1862 George Borrow described it as "the great workshop of England" – its reputation was often for poor-quality goods. This all began in the seventeenth century when it was no more than a village. In 1691 Guy Miede noted in The New State of England that it was "particularly noted a few years ago for the counterfeit groats made here, and from hence dispersed all over the Kingdom" (a groat was a four-pence coin, of silver when genuine). In the nineteenth century, great quantities of cheap plated goods, such as trinkets and gilt jewellery, were being made in Birmingham. As a result, its bad reputation resurfaced, so much so that its old name came to be used figuratively for anything that was considered tawdry, not just items of Birmingham manufacture.



Shivaji Sarkar

IN THE PRESENT GLOBAL SCENARIO, THE DOLLAR WOULD APPRECIATE AND INDIA HAS TO CREATE THE STRENGTH OUT OF THE FALLING RUPEE

The surging dollar and falling rupee are most difficult aspects of the economy but should be considered as an opportunity rather than a crisis. India has to think and act differently. The rupee hitting 81 to a dollar has given many sleepless nights, as Sensex plunged 1021 points. And though the Reserve Bank of India opened its purses to stabilise the rupee, it still slipped to 80.99 after a brief rise to 80.87.

Let India not subscribe to the theory that the rupee-dollar parity decides our economy. The Indian economy has strengths beyond the obvious in its still partially surviving mixed economy. Despite Finance Minister Nirmla Sitharaman repeatedly harping on the resilience of the Indian economy, her ministry and the RBI remain panicky at the rupee's fall. Let the oddity be considered a favourable syndrome, for the fall can be more profitable.

The government must realise it is not at all at fault as it cannot reverse the dollar trend, even if the economy sprints to make a new record. In the present global scenario, the dollar would appreciate and India has to create the strength out of the falling rupee. It must get rid of the notion that the rupee has to maintain a high level of parity. Rather, lower the rupee the better it is for the economy. Trying to stabilise it means, as is being said by Reuters, the RBI preparing to lose \$100 billion and achieving precious little. It must not do so and should allow the rupee to sink. The Indian economy knows how to swim and do better. The domestic economy can thrive with the dollars saved, which could be used instead to bolster the economy than reinforcing the US economy.

Every fall of a currency helps it. Since last January, the US has gained by its manoeuvrings to snatch the best of the world economy for itself. India itself has deployed \$82.8 billion from its reserves. In September alone, it sold \$10 billion with RBI's intervention. The forex reserves have come down to \$550.8 billion compared with an all-time high of \$642.4 billion last year.

The intervention is not help-

### SPECTRUM SOCIETY

# Scientific culture: Need of the hour



Soumen Ghosh

FOR A NATION TO ACHIEVE ITS FULL POTENTIAL THE 'CULTURE OF SCIENCE' MUST BE ALIVE AMONG THE MASSES

The development of science as we know it today did not occur in 'eureka' moments but rather was a gradual process whose benefits we all enjoy today. The driving force behind all this was scientific culture among the human race that was always inquisitive about the world around him and constantly worked to innovate, invent and implement new progress being made by himself and others around him.

The International Day of Scientific Culture is celebrated since 2020 on 28 September by the institutions engaged in popularising science among the people. This day marks the first televised broadcast of the acclaimed science television series 'Cosmos' by legendary cosmologist Carl Edward Sagan who made complex scientific ideas both interesting and lucid and for millions around the world moved science from the lab to the living room.

But the relevant question is why we need science to enter our living rooms. Once Dr Vikram Sarabhai, the father of the Indian space programme, said: "The development of the nation is intimately linked

with the understanding and application of science and technology by its people." If we look at many of the success stories of India whether be it the Green Revolution, the White Revolution, or the eradication of polio we see that these massive problems would not have been solved on the basis of scientific progress alone. It is the people who accepted the new technology whether be it high-yielding varieties of seeds or vaccines and in the process showed how vital public acceptance and scientific culture is to the development of a nation.

Science also had a deep root in the minds of nation builders even during our freedom struggle. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, a Cambridge science graduate, emphasised the need to cultivate scientific thinking in order to approach life and its challenges even when the country had existing social problems like poverty, overt religiosity, superstition, and caste system. While imprisoned with other leaders agitating against the British rule, Nehru wrote the monograph 'The Discovery of India (1946)' where he stated "The applications of science are in-

evitable and unavoidable for all countries and peoples today. But something more than its application is necessary. It is the scientific approach, the adventurous and yet critical temper of science, the search for truth and new knowledge, the refusal to accept anything without testing and trial." It is important to stop here and reconsider the phrases "scientific approach and critical temper of science." This is the enduring legacy of Nehru and "scientific temper" is a phrase widely attributed to him. The inculcation of scientific temper was added to the Indian Constitution in 1976 as one of the ten Fundamental Duties of every citizen under Article 51 (A) (H) by the 42nd Constitutional Amendment: "to develop the scientific temper, humanism, and spirit of inquiry and reforms." India became the first country to include such a clause in its Constitution.

The importance of science in our society cannot be overstated. Science drives innovation, invention, technology, medicine, agriculture, engineering, education, and much more. Without science,

we would not have much of the things we take for granted today. And for a nation to achieve its full potential the 'culture of science' must be alive among the masses. To foster it as a gradual process depends not only upon the education system but also on the encouragement and support for the institutions and individuals engaged in scientific pursuits and informal science avenues like science museums and planetariums. These institutions and avenues provide a place for people to experience the various theories and phenomena outside classroom setting and foster a spirit of enquiry and innovation while at the same time enrich them with new knowledge which goes a long way towards educating and motivating them. If we all do our duty - the government and the citizenry - we would definitely be able to harness the immense scientific capital of our great nation to develop and transform it and make 21st century, India's century.

The writer is Project Coordinator, Regional Science Centre, Bhubaneswar. Views are personal.

### Promote tourism

Sir, That tourism is a key sector for boosting a country's economy would be an understatement. The international governments aim to infuse responsibility in travellers because responsible travellers, aware of their obligations towards maintaining the purity of a tourist destination, are godsend for tourism. Tourism has liberally contributed to India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), nearly six per cent, and the tourist places are the centres of attraction for travellers as well as the government. Tourism is also a large avenue for employment in India with as much as 25 million workers earning livelihood in this sector. In a country as diverse as India, it indeed is a laborious task for the government to keep tourist places spick and span which is why the role of citizens in overseeing the orderliness of key tourism places is so vital. India could take its cue from the United States in putting long drawn-out plans to foster tourism. "Connectivity, cleanliness, certainty" are the three essential ingredients that make a tourist place much sought after. Needless to say, the role of the local population has a far reaching impact in making this a reality. Since it takes two to tango, the travellers have a huge task of keeping the attractions noise free and hygienic. Preventing the centres from deteriorating to mere structures, maintaining the liveliness of the places and ensuring no tourist is harassed by either beggars or sexual predators are critical to preserve the name and fame of a place. Road, rail and air accessibility to untapped places, and providing for decent accommodation, are too vital to be ignored.

Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA

### Iconic moment

Sir, The picture of tennis greats Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal sitting next to each other sobbing, each taking the other's hand to console or be consoled, after the former's swansong on the tennis court is one of the sport's most poignant and enduring images. The picture has gone viral on social media. The two tennis icons had teamed up in a doubles match in the Laver Cup in Federer's farewell game. Members of both the teams joined in hoisting Federer in the air as the GOAT bid an emotional farewell. Federer's sheer aesthetics redefined the men's game, and those beautiful memories will endure. Thank you so much!

NJ Ravi Chander, BANGALORE

## Letters

### TO THE EDITOR

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

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# national



**The central ideology of my Dravidian model of government is humanism and social justice. We have been establishing social justice everywhere, including in reservation benefits**  
M K STALIN | TN CM

## PRESIDENT TO VISIT KARNATAKA

President Droupadi Murmu will visit Karnataka from September 26 to 28 to attend a host of programmes, according to a statement issued by the Rashtrapati Bhavan Sunday. This will be her first visit to any state as the President of India, it said



## of the day quote

The world is looking at India as an inspirational place with what the country has achieved in the space sector in the last 60 years  
S SOMANATH | ISRO CHIEF

The present government, the LDF government, the CPI(M) government, is trying to create a situation where the government will be in a debt trap and the debt has almost doubled  
J P NADDA | BJP CHIEF

We don't take decisions sitting in Mantralaya (state secretariat), we take decisions on the spot. Our government has removed negativity and brought in positivity in the state. This has brought 'nav chaitanya' (new consciousness) among citizens  
EK NATH SHINDE | MAHARASHTRA CM

## SHORT TAKES

### Pakistani drone airdrops heroin

**Amritsar:** A Pakistani drone has dropped four packets of heroin weighing around 3.29 kg in the border village of Dhanoe Khurd in Punjab's Amritsar district, officials said. According to Border Security Force (BSF) officials, a BSF's patrolling party heard buzzing sound of a drone on the intervening night of September 24 and 25 following which the troopers fired in the direction of that drone that eventually flew back towards Pakistan.

### Dalit man forcibly converted

**Hubballi (Karnataka):** A Dalit man was allegedly forcibly converted to Islam, circumcised and compelled to eat beef against his wish, police said Sunday. Based on a complaint from Sridhar Gangadhar (26), the police said they have registered a case against 12 people, but no arrests have been made so far. Gangadhar, who hails from Mandya, in his complaint, said his name, too, was changed to Mohammed Salman. According to the complainant, the chain of incidents started from May when he told this to one of his friends Attavar Rehman from Koppa in Maddur Taluk of Mandya. Rehman allegedly took him to Banashankari mosque in Bengaluru, where Aziz Sab, another accused, started indoctrinating him in Islam, the police said, citing the complaint.

### 12 infants rescued

**Amravati:** Twelve infants kept on ventilator support in the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) at a government-run hospital here were rescued unhurt after a fire broke there out on Sunday, officials said. The incident occurred around 11 am at the District Women Hospital in Amravati city in eastern Maharashtra, they said. "The hospital staff noticed smoke coming out from the neonatal ICU. They immediately informed the fire brigade and rescued 12 newborn babies, who were kept there on ventilator support, in time and avoided a major tragedy," a district official said.

### Woman gangraped

**Hyderabad:** A married woman was allegedly gangraped by unidentified men near Zaheerabad town in Telangana's Sangareddy district, police said Sunday. The 24-year-old was sexually assaulted at Didgi village near Zaheerabad town on the night of September 23 but the incident came to light on Sunday.

## Nitish leads call for new anti-BJP front



Indian National Lok Dal chief OP Chautala with Bihar CM and JD(U) leader Nitish Kumar, CPI (M) General Secretary Sitaram Yechury and others during a rally organised on the occasion of the 109th birth anniversary of former deputy PM Devi Lal, in Fatehabad, Sunday

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Fatehabad (Hr), Sept 25:** In a major step towards forging a united anti-BJP front, Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, NCP supremo Sharad Pawar and other prominent opposition leaders Sunday called for a new alliance that includes the Congress for the 2024 Lok Sabha polls, stressing that a bipolar contest will ensure the BJP's defeat. "If all non-BJP parties unite, which must include our friends from Congress, then we can get rid of those working to destroy the country," Kumar said at a mega rally organised by the Indian National Lok Dal (INLD) here to mark former deputy prime minister Devi Lal's birth anniversary. The same sentiment was echoed by other leaders including Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) supremo Sharad Pawar, Communist

Party of India (Marxist) general secretary Sitaram Yechury, Shiv Sena's Arvind Sawant and Bihar Deputy Chief Minister and RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav. The leaders attacked the BJP, accusing it of trying to create "Hindu-Muslim disturbances" to benefit politically and making false claims and promises. Hitting back, BJP president J P Nadda, who was in Kerala, said the only thing common to these opposition parties is "dynastic politics and corruption". At the rally here, Nitish Kumar, whose JD(U) snapped ties with the BJP last month, said there is "no question of a 'Third Front' and there should be one 'main front' to trounce the BJP in the 2024 elections. Even INLD president OP Chautala said that "they will talk to all parties including Congress to form a united front of opposition

parties." Chautala and Shiromani Akali Dal's Sukhbir Singh Badal, both with a long history of fighting the Congress, were on the stage with other senior leaders. Though not in as many words, Badal underlined the need for opposition parties to come together. He asserted that the "real NDA is here on this stage not somewhere else. The founding members SAD, Shiv Sena, and JD(U) are present here. We removed the BJP from the NDA." Pawar spoke at length on the plight of farmers who protested against the three farm laws and said the government has still not fulfilled their demand for minimum support price (MSP). He also talked about the government not taking back cases filed against the protesting farmers. "The real solution to problems of farmers and unemployment can only be by bringing a change and everyone must strive for a change of the government at the Centre in 2024. All opposition parties should come together," he said. Speaking on similar lines, Yechury said it is time to change the manager who is "mismanaging the country and creating chaos". "We all should come on one platform including the Congress," the CPM leader said. Though no one from the Congress attended the rally, Nitish Kumar and RJD chief Lalu Prasad Yadav met Congress chief Sonia Gandhi at her residence in the national capital after the public meeting.

## Six IAF officers booked for trainee cadet's death



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bangalore, Sept 25:** Six Indian Air Force officers have been charged with murder after a trainee cadet, against whom a court of inquiry was initiated, was found hanging, a police officer said. According to police, Ankit Jha (27) was found hanging in one of the rooms of Air Force Technical College (AFTC). Police suspected that the death happened four or five days ago. Based on his brother Aman Jha's complaint, the police registered a case against six IAF officers at Gangamma Gudi police station on Saturday. Aman has also alleged in his complaint that attempts were made to tamper with the evidence as people from the AFTC were present around 4.30 am on Saturday at the police station with a piece of evidence he was also looking for. He even wondered how the peo-

## According to police, Ankit Jha was found hanging in one of the rooms of Air Force Technical College

ple from AFTC knew beforehand about his presence in the police station in the early hours and reached there. "The reason behind the death is yet to be ascertained. Our investigations are on. Jha was a trainee cadet and he was found hanging in one of the rooms of AFTC," a senior police officer said. "The officers against whom the complaint was lodged have not been arrested but the Indian Air Force has assured us all assistance," the officer said. He added that they are waiting for the post-mortem report to carry forward the investigation.

## Sadhu posing for reel-makers bitten by snake, dies

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Unnao, Sept 25:** A sadhu, posing for Instagram reel makers with a poisonous snake wrapped around his neck, died after being bitten by the reptile in Uttar Pradesh's Unnao district. As soon as the sadhu realised that he had been bitten by the snake, he raised an alarm and was taken to a nearby hospital from where the doctors referred him to the King George's Medical University (KGMU) in Lucknow. However, he died during treatment. The incident took place on Friday but came to light on Saturday evening when the video clip of the incident went viral on the social media. The sadhu has been identified as Bajrangi Sadhu, 55, resident of Baniya Khera village in Kakori (Lucknow). He had been living in Bhavna Khera village in Auras area for the past few years. According to reports, the poisonous black snake was found in the shop of one Subedar, who runs a puncture repair shop in the area. Subedar tried to kill the snake by hitting it with a stick. Bajrangi, who reached there, persuaded Subedar not to kill the snake. Later, Bajrangi caught the snake and kept it in the box and brought it out of the shop. After being asked by some of the curious onlookers who wanted to make a reel, Bajrangi took the snake out of the box and started posing for them. In the video, he could be seen posing with the snake by holding its mouth tight. Sometimes, he would wrap it around his neck and sometimes bring it near his shoulder. He was then bitten by the snake.

## Gujarat AAP leader arrested for rape

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Veraval (Gujarat), Sept 25:** The Gir Somnath Police have arrested an Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader from Gujarat's Veraval after a woman filed a rape complaint against him. The AAP leader Bhagu Vala will be officially arrested once his Covid-19 report comes out negative. Veraval Police Inspector Sunil Israni said that a 23-year-old woman Friday filed a criminal complaint against Vala and has alleged that the latter raped her. The medical examination of the victim was conducted on Friday. According to the police complaint, the AAP leader was allegedly running a video-making agency in the name of Vishwa films and lured the victim with a promise to give her work as a model in an advertisement and even in films, for which she will go for a photoshoot. On the pretext of shooting for the advertisement, Vala called the victim at his flat where he raped her.

## Doctor, two kids die in hospital fire

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Tirupati, Sept 25:** A doctor and his two children were killed in a fire that broke out at a newly constructed private hospital at Renigunta in Andhra Pradesh's Tirupati district Sunday. The fire broke in the top floor of the hospital building where the doctor was living with his family. Dr Ravishankar Reddy and his son and daughter lost their lives. His wife Dr Ananta Lakshmi and mother were rescued by the locals. The incident occurred around 4.30 a.m. at Kartika Hospital for children in Bhagat Singh Nagar at Renigunta near the temple town of Tirupati.



West Bengal CM and TMC supremo Mamata Banerjee during the inauguration of a community Durga Puja pandal ahead of the upcoming Durga Puja festival, in Kolkata

## ANKITA CREMATED, NH BLOCKADE ENDS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Dehradun, Sept 25:** Relatives of the 19-year-old receptionist allegedly murdered by a BJP leader's son cremated her Sunday and protesters lifted an eight-hour blockade of a key highway after Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhama assured justice. Ankita Bhandari was cremated on the banks of the Alaknanda at Shrinagar around 6.30 pm in the

presence of Commissioner, Garhwal, Sushil Kumar and Pauri District Magistrate Vijay Kumar Jogdande. Her body was found in the Cheela canal close to Rishikesh on Saturday, six days after her parents found her missing from her room. She was killed allegedly by her employer. Bhandari's family had initially refused to perform her last rites until they received the final post-mortem report. A preliminary report of an autopsy conducted at



AIIMS, Rishikesh, said she died of drowning but there were ante-

mortem injuries (injuries before death) on her body. A message from the chief minister that the SIT was doing its job and perpetrators of the murder would get the punishment they deserve helped convince the woman's relatives to finally cremate her. Earlier on Sunday protesters demanding justice for Bhandari sat on a dharna on the Rishikesh-Badrinath national highway in Uttarakhand's Srinagar. The blockade lasted for nearly eight

hours, leading to a nine-km-long traffic snarl. The woman worked at the Vanantara resort in Pauri district's Yamkeshwar block owned by Haridwar BJP leader Vinod Arya's son Pulkit Arya. Pulkit and two other employees have been arrested in the case. Violent protests had erupted in areas surrounding the resort with people breaking glass panes and some trying to torch a pickle factory on its premises as news of the murder spread.

## Shrinking habitat makes animals cross paths with humans

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Bangalore, Sept 25:** Karnataka has one of the richest and largest forest resources in the country. However, the fast receding forest cover due to urbanization and development has aggravated human-animal conflict to levels not seen before. In the man-animal conflict, it was only the elephant menace which had surfaced in Hassan and Mysuru districts of south Karnataka. Today, leopards are found prowling in cities, foxes are coming out in packs and attack-

ing people. Elephant attacks have also become common. There have been demands to cull elephant calves to reduce their numbers. Minister for Labour Shivaram Hebbar clarified that there is no such proposal before them and the government would not even think about it. President of the Environmental Protection Committee Bhanu Mohan told IANS that she has taken part in elephant and tiger census exercises. They had gone 20 to 25 kilometres into the jungles for this. "As far as you can see there are only scrubs which cannot support



elephants and leopards. Only rabbits and small animals can live there," she explains. Bhanu Mohan says that the population pressure on forests is lead-

ing to the loss of forest cover. Encroachments can be seen in the forests of Bandipur, Nagarahole, Biligiriranganabetta, Chamaraajanagar in south Karnataka, mostly done by politicians, she adds. Another important factor is that animals are not finding water sources inside the forests, she says. Environmentalist Neeraj Kamath, convenor, Uttishta Bharatha, told IANS that wildlife will flourish only when there is least or no human intervention in the wildlife sanctuaries. Any development which affects the natural habitat of wildlife must not be taken up and the National Green Tribunal (NGT) must strictly turn down any such requests, he says. Kamath says the interests of

adivasis who are part of such an ecosystem must be taken care of, they must be first provided with all basic, job and education facilities and then relocated. The traditional pathways of the animals have to be protected areas and illegal activities in such areas must be stopped with an iron hand, he underlines. The forest cover in the state is receding at an alarming rate. Earlier the forest cover was more, then it came down to 50 per cent and today only 30 per cent is remaining. The destruction of lakhs of trees has also changed rain patterns in Kerala and Karnataka.



# 5,000 militants held in Assam since 2011, only 1 convicted

Only about half of those arrested have been chargesheeted so far

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Guwahati, Sept 25:** A total of 5,202 militants have been arrested in the last 12 years from various parts of Assam, but only one of them has been convicted so far, according to official records. Only about half of those arrested have been chargesheeted so far.

Experts said investigators and the legal system "are at fault", resulting in an inordinate delay at multiple stages of the justice delivery system. The Assam Police arrested 5,202 cadres of ULFA and other extremist groups, comprising people from the Bodo, Garo, Rabha, Karbi, Adivasi, and Muslim communities, from 2011 to September 4 this year, the official documents stated.

A total of 2,606 persons have been charge-sheeted in connection with the cases to date and "most of the cases are under trial and one person has been convicted," it said. The conviction of the lone militant took place in the Lakhimpur district in 2012. No other militant has been convicted since then.

Of the arrested people, the highest 2,392 number was from militant groups formed by Bodo people, followed by 1,468 from ULFA and 582 from Karbi groups.

Police also arrested 346 people from Adivasi groups, followed by 178 from Garo, 155 from Muslim, and 81 from Rabha communities.



Gauhati High Court Advocate Santanu Borthakur told PTI that the delay in the conviction of an accused takes place at multiple stages and it is also done "deliberately at times". "Until we know the dates of arrest and the filing of the charge sheet, it is difficult to know where exactly the delay is taking place. At times, the investigators delay the probe purposefully because many militants get political patronage and eventually become political personalities," he added.

When the chargesheet is filed after a prolonged period, witnesses cannot be found on several occasions for giving evidence in court. Some witnesses do not appear even if they get notice after a long time, Borthakur said.

"There is a delay in our criminal justice system. ... Many a time,

the witnesses turn hostile and cannot be found," he said.

Another Gauhati High Court Advocate Rakhee Sirauthia Chowdhury said that the fault lies with both the police and the legal system. "The investigators do not probe the cases and keep it lying for years. On the other hand, a trial goes on for a long time due to various reasons," she added.

Chowdhury said that in the case of militants, the investigation often loses focus because several people start questioning the violation of human rights of the accused.

"That he or she is a criminal, killed many people, and waged war against the nation - these facts get diluted under the cover of allegations of human rights violation in police custody. And this leads to delay in investigation," she added.

# Are BJP, NPP headed for split?

THE NPP'S RELATION WITH THE BJP IS GRADUALLY SOURING OVER VARIOUS ISSUES

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Shillong, Sept 25:** After Manipur, the BJP's relations with National Peoples Party (NPP), headed by Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma, have been souring rapidly in Meghalaya even as the saffron party's central leadership remains silent and NPP leaders ignore the state BJP's threat to withdraw support to the MDA government.

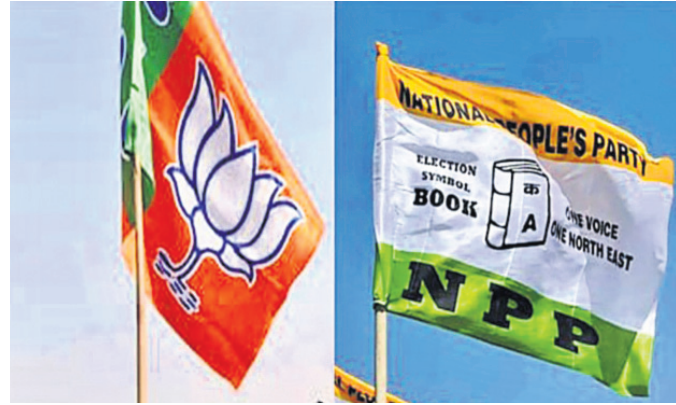
The BJP with two MLAs -- Alexander Laloo Hek and Sanbor Shullai - has been supporting the Meghalaya Democratic Alliance government, dominated by the NPP, and including few other local parties.

BJP's state president Ernest Mawrie, former Health and Family Welfare Minister Hek, and national Vice-President and party's Meghalaya in-charge M. Chuba Ao have separately said that the state party leaders unanimously decided to withdraw support from the MDA government but the final decision would be taken by the central leadership.

While Chief Minister Sangma termed the BJP leaders' threat as an "individual decision", NPP state president WR Kharlukhi called it a "farce".

BJP's top leadership would communicate with him if it has any concern which was not the case so far, said Sangma, who is also the NPP's national president.

Assembly elections to Meghalaya, Tripura, and Nagaland expected to be held in February after the polls in Gujarat and



Himachal Pradesh, and political pundits observed that some equations may change after the outcome of the latter two.

The NPP's relation with the BJP is gradually souring over various issues, especially after the arrest of BJP state vice president Bernard N Marak, who was arrested from Uttar Pradesh July 25 for allegedly running a brothel in the West Garo Hills district.

BJP workers and leaders had earlier organised protests in Tura demanding a fair probe in Marak's case. BJP leaders claimed that the farmhouse in the brothel case was been operational since 2019 but the raid was carried out just six months prior to the Assembly elections to malign Marak and to damage his political career.

Talking to IANS, Hek said that the decision of the party's state executive committee and the core committee has been communicated to the central leaders and

this is the right time to withdraw support from the MDA government.

BJP's national general secretary, organisation, BL Santhosh was also present in the meetings of the state executive committee and the core committee, held last week.

Replying to a query about the reasons behind the decision to quit the ruling coalition almost at the end of the full five year term, Hek said: "Everything would be disclosed and explained in detail at an appropriate time."

Ao had earlier said that there are huge allegations of corruption against the ministers and leaders of the MDA government.

Ahead of the assembly elections, the Trinamool Congress, a few months back, dramatically became the state's principal opposition force overnight and is now looking to grab the space left vacant by the Congress.

After 12 of the 17 Congress MLAs led by former Chief Minister Mukul Sangma (2010-2018) joined the Trinamool in November last year, the latter became the main opposition party in the 60-member Assembly.

The five remaining Congress MLAs, led by Ampareen Lyngdoh, had earlier announced to join the National People's Party-led MDA government.

Mukul Sangma told IANS that the Trinamool is focusing on strengthening the organisation at the grassroots level across the state.

"Lots of political dynamics would obviously unfold in the next few months. We have to see how the political parties, especially the non-BJP parties ally," he said.

Against the backdrop of the changing political situation in the hill state, Conrad Sangma announced that his party will not have any pre-poll alliances and will contest next Assembly elections on its own, leading to confusion among the MDA allies - UDP, PDF and HSPDP.

Political analyst Toki Blah said that it is too early to make any forecast on the Assembly elections, expected to be held in February next year.

"The voting pattern in Meghalaya is individual-oriented or candidate-centric, not party or organisation-based. Before selection of the candidates by various parties, it is very hard to make any assessment on party lines," he said.

# Himanta takes a leaf out of Yogi's playbook

IN THE RUN-UP TO LAST YEAR'S ASSEMBLY POLLS, THE BJP PLAYED THE CARD OF RADICAL HINDUTVA, WITH SARMA AT THE FOREFRONT

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Guwahati, Sept 25:** Soon after switching over to the BJP in 2015, Himanta Biswa Sarma started reading books on Sangh ideologues and even claimed of going to RSS shakhas when he was a child.

That was one of the very early signals of what was cooking in the mind of the former blue-eyed boy of the late Congress stalwart Tarun Gogoi. Before joining the saffron camp, Sarma had started practicing to be more Hindu than those who were already in the BJP.

In the 2011 state elections, the BJP only managed to win five seats in the 126-member Assam assembly. The party's stronghold in the state then was only the Barak Valley, which has a major chunk of Hindu Bengali voters. The seats came from that region only.

The saffron party never enjoyed a good support among the Assamese people in the state and that may be

the reason that in the 2004 Lok Sabha elections, Assamese icon Bhupen Hazarika lost the Guwahati seat. He was at that time welcomed in the city with a large number of black flags.

The Assamese people were seeing BJP as a party of mainly Bengalis and Hindi-speaking communities.

Things started to change in late 2013 after the mammoth rise of Narendra Modi in national politics. In the run-up to the 2014 general elections, Modi at a huge gathering in Guwahati challenged Tarun Gogoi with his Gujarat model of development.

He said that Gogoi could drive a Maruti car through the water pipes in Gujarat whereas despite having the Brahmaputra river, Assam was facing a scarcity of drinking water.

Sarma reacted to Modi's statement with reference to the 2002 riots by saying: "Muslim blood and not water was flowing through pipes in Gujarat."

In response, the BJP came down heavily on Sarma, and Election Commission also barred him from campaigning for a few days.

When he joined the BJP, Sarma was asked about his earlier statement, to which he said that it was the Congress party's views and he did that as per the instructions of the leaders.

When in Congress, Sarma was known for his liberal image. He



enjoyed quite a good support from the Muslim voters.

Though he started his career with the All Assam Students' Union (AASU), Sarma was never seen as an Assamese hardliner. Rather, he was known to be soft towards the Bengali speaking community in Assam which constitutes the nearly one-third population of the state.

Interestingly, in the run-up to the 2016 Assembly elections in the state, Sarma garnered his image as a hard-core Assamese leader. He openly advocated for 1951 to be the base year for updating the National

Registrar of Citizens (NRC) in Assam which was a long pending demand from AASU and other organisations.

His statement created a stir as according to the Assam Accord, NRC updation process started by considering March 25, 1971, as the cut-off date. Congress jumped into criticizing Sarma for his remarks, but the statement gained votes for the BJP as the party did remarkably well in the Upper Assam area.

Sarma also sent a message that they would come down heavily on immigrant Bangladeshi Muslims

which helped to consolidate the Hindu vote bank in favour of the BJP.

He further changed his position after the BJP swept to power in Assam. He started to portray himself as a Hindu hardliner leader and took charge of the education department along with various other portfolios in the Sarbananda Sonowal-led government.

At that time, in the government-run madrasas of Assam, Friday was considered a holiday. But, Sarma openly said this must be changed as we live in India, not in Pakistan or Bangladesh.

The statement attracted wide-scale criticism from the Muslim community but Sarma was firm on his position and ultimately the holiday was shifted to Sunday.

Sarma's defence of the controversial CAA was a political statement to send a message that Assam's Hindus had to coalesce to preserve its indigenous culture.

He extended it in the run-up of the previous year's Assembly election, describing it as a "civilisational war" in which only the BJP could "save Assam" from immigrant Bangladeshis.

In the run-up to last year's Assembly polls, the BJP played the card of radical Hindutva, with Sarma at the forefront. He set the chord to consolidate Hindu votes by making harsh comments against Muslims and he was completely successful in that plan.

which helped to consolidate the Hindu vote bank in favour of the BJP.

# Polarised politics opportunity for AIUDF's growth

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Guwahati, Sept 25:** In the political scenario of Assam, the All-India United Democratic Front (AIUDF) has been considered a key player in the power shift in the state where as per the 2011 census, 34.22 per cent, that is, one-third of the total population, is constituted by Muslims. However, the increasing dominance of AIUDF in Assam politics had created a ground for the BJP to grow, leading to the saffron party to form the government in 2016.

The Supreme Court in July 2005 declared the Illegal Migrants (Determination by Tribunal), Act as "undemocratic" and it was repealed which created fear among the immigrant Muslims in the state and therefore, the Assam unit of Jamiat came forward to address the



issue. Badaruddin Ajmal, president of the Assam unit of Jamiat took lead to form a new political outfit the Assam United Democratic Front, of which he became the president. The outfit promised to safeguard the interests of the minorities of Assam.

The AIUDF as a party showed significant growth in the Assam Assembly elections between 2006 and 2011 but remained almost stagnant during 2011-2021, whereas the BJP showed surprising growth during this period.

The AIUDF contested mainly from middle and lower Assam districts of the Brahmaputra and Barak valleys, where the Muslim population is concentrated. In the 2021 Assembly election, AIUDF contested just 20 seats of the total 126 in the state and won 16 seats forming "Grand Alliance" with the Congress, Bodoland Peoples Front (BPF), and CPI (M).

The immigrant Muslims of Assam had shown strong support for Congress and significantly helped Congress to stay in power

after Independence. To keep immigrant Hindu and Muslim communities living in the state within its fold, the Congress opposed the Assam Movement and imposed the IM (DT) Act on Assam.

However, the situation changed with the repeal of the IM (DT) Act by the apex court. AIUDF argued in support of immigrant Muslims and the party started to attract support from a large section of immigrant Muslims. When AIUDF won 10 seats in the 2006 Assembly election, the indigenous Assamese population began to believe that if one-third of the Muslims of the state rallied behind the party, it would come to power in the state very easily.

The Congress and veteran leader Tarun Gogoi exploited this fear of indigenous Assamese people and sharpened its attack on AIUDF

and Badaruddin Ajmal. The 2011 Assembly election was fought against the backdrop of Muslim politics under AIUDF and the soft Hindutva of Tarun Gogoi-led Assam Congress and as a result, Congress came to power for the third consecutive term.

In the 2011 elections, AIUDF won 18 seats and emerged as the main opposition party in the Assam Legislative Assembly. This again made the indigenous Assamese uncomfortable and led to the situation where BJP and Hindu organisations started to gain ground in Assam. Ajmal, inspired by the success of the 2011 Assembly elections, started divisive politics by delivering communally provocative statements; but these statements instead helped BJP significantly to unite Hindu votes against the AIUDF.

As a result of this, the state was completely communally polarised by AIUDF and BJP during the 2014 Lok Sabha election and both the parties showed unprecedented success in the election.

# Drugs worth ₹18cr seized in 4 months

AGENCIES

**Shillong, Sept 25:** Drugs worth over Rs 18 crore have been seized and 134 traffickers arrested in the last four months in Meghalaya, Director General of Police LR Bishnoi has said.

The seized drugs include 3.62 kg heroin, 4,500 kg ganja, 150 gm opium, 145 bottles of cough syrup and 11,902 amphetamines tablets. Thirty one vehicles, 90 mobile phones and cash Rs 24.22 lakh was also seized during the period, the DGP said.

"We have waged a war against drugs throughout the length and breadth of Meghalaya. During the last four months (from June to September), we have seized drugs worth Rs 18.33 crore. This is a huge recovery and credit goes to the state police, anti-narcotic task force as well as the special branch for timely collection and dissemination of intelligence," Bishnoi told reporters here.

A total of 134 drug traffickers have been arrested in 48 cases registered so far.

# Women strive to revive 200-yr-old artform

Kheng, which in Khasi means border, is unique to the village in East Khasi Hills district near the India-Bangladesh boundary, and the pattern resembles the multi-legged centipedes

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mustoh, Sept 25:** A group of women in the border village of Mustoh in Meghalaya is collectively reviving a 200-year-old embroidery art-Kheng, adding value to traditional silk shawls, wrap-arounds and mufflers.

Kheng, which in Khasi means border, is unique to the village in East Khasi Hills district near the India-Bangladesh boundary, and the pattern resembles the multi-legged centipedes. Victory Synrem, a master craftsman of Kheng, told PTI that the revival efforts began in 2014 when there were only three persons left who knew the art, and



she was one of them. "I picked up the skill from my great grand aunt. It was not easy but through perseverance and love of art, I am now good at it," she said.

Phrang Roy, an agrobiodiversity activist who founded North East Slow Food Agrobiodiversity Society (NESFAS), took it upon himself to revive the artform when he learnt that there were only three artisans left. The major challenge was a handful of people were there who could teach the artform to others, Roy said.

Roy's NESFAS joined hands with

Special Purpose Vehicle Society (SPVS), set up on the direction of the Supreme Court for development in mining-affected areas, to train the women of the village.

By 2019, seven women acquired the skills of Kheng, and now, there are 18 women who have learnt the embroidery form, a NESFAS coordinator said. "There is no documentation on how the art came into existence, but from the knowledge shared by the master craftsmen, it is safe to assume that it is about 200 years old," he said.

Mendon Pariat, a former direc-

tor of the Handloom and Handicrafts Department who was a part of the project, said a women-centric art finds lesser takers among the youths. "Even if the art is revived, we have to find the markets for them to make it a viable economic activity," he said.

Different patterns of Kheng are made on different kinds of clothes. A thick black band is stitched vertically on one side of the 'Jainpien' (wrap-around), while on a 'Jainkup' (shawl), a thicker and thinner band of embroidery works is stitched horizontally. Kheng is usually woven on ryndia (eri silk) cloth, unique to Ri-Bhoi district, about 200 km away, Victory said. While a silk cloth costs anything between Rs 2,500 and Rs 3,000, the value of the cloth doubles after Kheng embroidery is done, she said.

Aplaimon Khonglam, a weaving inspector, said that Kheng was a dying art, but the government wants to revive it.

Earlier this year, the Department of Arts and Culture and the Department of Textiles organised a Kheng embroidery competition to promote the art.



of the day quote

The demographic changes taking place along border areas are very worrisome and the security forces should stay alert

The thoughts of Bharatiya Jana Sangh founder Deendayal Upadhyay are relevant even in contemporary times and his vision on education was the basis of the new National Education Policy

Different voter lists for elections to Panchayat, Municipal Corporation, Municipality, Vidhan Sabha, Lok Sabha and other elections not only create confusion but also raise questions on the credibility of the voter lists.

SHORT TAKES

Student arrested

Lucknow: The Class 12 student, who shot his principal in Sitapur on Saturday, was arrested from Lucknow on Sunday.

Body found

Shamli: The highly decomposed body of a young woman, apparently in her twenties, has been found stuffed in a sack near the Eastern Yamuna canal in village Bhaneda Udda of Uttar Pradesh's Shamli district.

Racket busted

Kolkata: West Bengal Bidhannagar City Police on Sunday busted an international kidnapping racket near the Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose International (NSCI) Airport in Kolkata and arrested three masterminds.

Krishna hospitalised

Bangalore: Veteran politician and former Karnataka Chief Minister S.M. Krishna was hospitalised Saturday night after being diagnosed with acute respiratory tract infection.



Amit Shah has totally gone crazy. His government has been removed there (Bihar). It (BJP) will face a rout in 2024 as well. That is why he is going there running and speaking of 'jungle raj' and all those things. What did he do when he was in Gujarat?

LALU PRASAD YADAV | RJD PRESIDENT

BIZARRE INCIDENT

In a seemingly bizarre incident, guests at a wedding in Uttar Pradesh's Amroha district were asked to show their Aadhaar cards before they were allowed to pick up dinner plates.



Women participate in a marathon organised to spread awareness about the health benefits of sports in Srinagar

Cong MLAs threaten to resign over Gehlot decision

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jaipur, Sept 25: High drama unfolded in Rajasthan Sunday evening as a group of Congress MLAs loyal to Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot reached the assembly speaker's residence to submit their resignation ahead of a legislature party meeting which was called to decide on his successor.

The development suggested a worsening power struggle between the chief minister and Sachin Pilot who was tipped to be Gehlot's replacement after he declared his candidature for the Congress president's post.

One of the Gehlot-loyalist MLAs claimed more than 80 legislators, including Independents, have reached Speaker C P Joshi's residence in buses and will submit their resignation. However, the number could not be independently verified.

The group of MLAs earlier held a meeting at Minister Shanti Dhariwal's residence, which was seen as an attempt to thwart the possibility of Sachin Pilot being made the next chief minister.



Khachariyawas told reporters.

Congress observers Mallikarjun Kharge and Ajay Maken, along with Gehlot, reached the chief minister's residence where the Congress Legislature Party meeting was to be held Sunday evening.

Some of the MLAs loyal to Gehlot said his successor should be someone who was instrumental in saving the government during the political crisis in 2020 and not someone who was involved in the bid to topple it, a veiled reference to Pilot.

He said if Gehlot does not remain the chief minister, the party will face a major trouble in winning the next Assembly elections.

Gehlot and Pilot were at loggerheads for the chief minister's post soon after the Congress won the Assembly elections in December 2018.

Gehlot and Pilot were at loggerheads for the Chief Minister's post soon after the Congress won the Assembly elections in December 2018. The high command then chose Gehlot as the Chief Minister for the third time while Pilot was made his Deputy

In July 2020, Pilot along with 18 party MLAs rebelled against Gehlot's leadership. Earlier in the day, Gehlot said a one-line resolution stating all Congress legislators have full faith in the party president's decision on his successor is likely to be passed during the Legislature Party meeting Sunday.

"This has been a tradition in the Congress from the beginning that whenever the Legislature Party meeting is held at the time of election or for the selection of a chief minister, a one-line resolution is definitely passed to give all rights to the Congress president. And, I understand this will happen today too," Gehlot said in Jaisalmer.

Chandigarh airport to be renamed after Bhagat Singh

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 25: Prime Minister Narendra Modi Sunday announced that the Chandigarh airport will be renamed after Shaheed Bhagat Singh as a tribute to the great freedom fighter.

He said that September 28 is an important day of 'Amrit Mahotsav' when the birth anniversary of Bhagat Singh will be celebrated.

He congratulated the people of Chandigarh, Punjab and Haryana, and the entire country for this decision.

Just a few days ago, the country had made a similar effort by setting up the statue of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose on Kartavya Path and now the name of Chandigarh Airport after Shaheed Bhagat Singh is another step in that direction, he noted.

The decision had come after Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann and Haryana Deputy Chief Minister Dushyant Chautala held a meeting over this issue.

Muslim scholars seek ban on 'bhajans' in schools

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Srinagar, Sept 25: A body of local Muslim scholars has demanded that the Jammu and Kashmir administration should ban the singing of Hindu 'bhajans' and 'Surya Namaskar' in schools of the Valley.

The Islamic scholars are part of the 'Muttahida Majlis-e-Ulema' (United body of religious scholars) which is a body of around 30 Islamic and educational institutions in the Valley.

The leaders met Saturday at the Jamia Masjid in old Srinagar city Nowhatta area and passed a resolution



alleging that "The practice of asking school children to sing bhajans and do Surya Namaskar has created anguish among the local Muslims".

"We strongly resent the practice of furthering the Hindutva agenda through schools and educational institutions," the resolution said.



PM to discuss economic situation

The Prime Minister is likely to hold a crucial meeting with his Council of Ministers and secretaries for a marathon day-long meeting to discuss the economic situation prevailing in the country and the challenges.

away, the Prime Minister will review the challenges before the nation as global agencies including World Bank have predicted that the world will face a recession.

BJP's big worry

The BJP high command is worried about retaining Maharashtra even after installing the Eknath Shinde-led coalition government.

visited Mumbai recently. He roared that Uddhav remained enemy number one. Surprisingly, Uddhav opted to maintain studied silence.

Fight for pension

Former CBI chief Alok Verma is engaged in a bitter battle with the Department of Personnel & Training (DOPT) under the Prime Minister post retirement benefits.

The body of Muslim scholars has also said that the practice is aimed at undermining the identity of Kashmir

school children singing bhajans and doing Surya Namaskar at the behest of the teachers in a government school in south Kashmir Kulgam district.

In contrast to this, another former chief minister, Omar Abdullah, who is the vice president of the National Conference (NC) was quoted as saying, "We didn't believe in the Two Nation Theory. India is not communal, India is secular. If I am chanting Bhajan, is it wrong?"

Two terrorists killed

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Srinagar, Sept 25: Two infiltrating terrorists were killed by the security forces in J&K's Kupwara district on Sunday, a defence statement said.

"Based on specific intelligence inputs received from AJ&K police and other intelligence agencies about likely infiltration attempt in Macchal Sector of Kupwara district, troops were put on high alert and joint ambushes of J&K Police and army were laid on likely routes of infiltration," a defence spokesman said in a statement.

It said that at around 7.30 a.m. in prevailing poor weather conditions, alert troops observed two armed infiltrators crossing the LoC near Tekri Nar, Macchal, and engaged them. A firefight ensued, resulting in both terrorists getting neutralised, it said.

removal as Director, CBI. Verma was appointed for two years as CBI chief. But he had a bitter battle with his special director Rakesh Asthana. The government removed both of them from the CBI after the High Powered Committee's recommendation headed by the Central Vigilance Commission.

Centre may extend scheme

The Modi government is keen to extend the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY) providing free food grains to over 80 crore people for another three months.

ending September 30. The proposal is engaging the government's attention as it will have serious financial implications on the exchequer. The foodgrain stocks are sufficient at the moment at 60 million tons.



# international



**We will liberate ourselves from a colonial mindset. Our rich civilisational heritage will be a source of pride and strength**  
S JAISHANKAR | EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER OF INDIA

**FIONA DEVASTATION**  
Hundreds of thousands of people in Atlantic Canada remained without power Sunday and officials tried to assess the scope of devastation from former Hurricane Fiona, which swept away houses, stripped off roofs and blocked roads across the country's Atlantic provinces



## of the day quote

Pakistan could import wheat from Russia in the aftermath of the destruction of farmland caused by the recent floods  
SHEHBAZ SHARIF | PAKISTAN PM

I am stating the facts. My conversations with the Israeli leadership have done nothing to help Ukraine  
VOLODYMYR ZELENSKYY | UKRAINIAN PRESIDENT

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has made it clear that he wants to sign the FTA by Diwali. There are some outstanding issues to be resolved but I think there's a lot of optimism on both sides that we will get that done. Whatever the content of the agreement, it will be a real positive for the relationship between India and the UK across the board in the coming years  
VINCENT KEAVENY | LORD MAYOR OF LONDON



## NATURE'S FURY

Rescuers run as they check residents living at the seaside slum district of Tondo while Typhoon Noru approaches Manila, Philippines. The powerful typhoon shifted and abruptly gained strength in an 'explosive intensification' Sunday as it blew closer to the northeastern Philippines, prompting evacuations from high-risk villages and even the capital, which could be side-swiped by the storm, officials said  
PTI PHOTO

# WB pledges \$2bn in aid to flood-hit Pak

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Islamabad, Sept 25: The World Bank has said that it will provide \$2 billion in aid to Pakistan for reconstruction and rehabilitation that includes food, shelter and other urgent needs of the victims of the recent devastating floods. The announcement was made by the World Bank's new vice president for the South Asia region, Martin Raiser, Saturday in a statement issued at the end of his Pakistan tour. "As an immediate response, we are repurposing funds from existing World Bank-financed projects to support urgent needs in health, food, shelter, rehabilitation, and cash transfers," the statement said.

As per the official data, more than 1,600 people have been killed and over 33 million affected due to the massive floods since mid-June, leaving the government at the mercy of international support

The World Bank's commitment is so far the biggest help to Pakistan in dealing with the huge devastation

due to the devastating floods and we are working with the federal and provincial governments to provide immediate relief to those who are most affected," Raiser said.

In the wake of cataclysmic floods in Pakistan, the UN had also launched a \$60 million flash appeal for immediate relief of the victims but soon it became apparent that it was not enough after National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) officials said that the floods have caused about \$40 billion losses. Pakistan has seen unprecedented suffering because of the country's worst floods triggered by record rain in three decades.

As per the official data, more than 1,600 people have been killed and over 33 million affected due to the massive floods since mid-June, leaving the government at the mercy of international support. The World Bank's commitment is so far the biggest help to Pakistan in dealing with the huge devastation.

The World Bank had earlier agreed to provide \$850 million for flood relief in a meeting with Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York. The amount has now been increased to \$2 billion. As per the World Bank resident mission in Islamabad, the current portfolio has 54 projects and a total commitment of \$13.1 billion, the Dawn newspaper reported. The World Bank group's portfolio supports reforms and investments to strengthen institutions, particularly in fiscal management and human development. "We are deeply saddened by the loss of lives and livelihoods



## SHORT TAKES

**Yemen: 24 al-Qaida members killed**

Aden (Yemen): Yemen's pro-government forces continued anti-terror military operations in the southern province of Abyan, a security official told Xinhua. The troops raided the al-Qaida terrorist group's strongholds in various areas of the province in recent days, killing 24 armed al-Qaida members, the local security source said condition of anonymity Saturday. "The troops launched Saturday the fourth phase of the anti-terror campaign aimed at pushing their elements out of the whole province," the source added.

**Polls open in Italy in snap election**

Rome: Polls opened to renew the parliament in Italy early Sunday, in a snap election seen as crucial for the country. Over 50 million citizens, including some 4.7 million living abroad, are eligible to cast their ballots at 61,566 polling stations, which will remain open from 7 a.m. (0500 GMT) to 11 p.m. (2100 GMT) local time, Xinhua news agency reported.

**US spy satellite launched into orbit**

Vandenberg Space Force Base (US): A classified satellite for the US National Reconnaissance Office launched into orbit aboard a United Launch Alliance Delta 4 Heavy rocket Saturday. The NROL-91 spy satellite lifted off at 3:25 pm (local time) from Vandenberg Space Force Base in California's Santa Barbara County. It was the last launch of a Delta 4 from the West Coast. Additional launches are planned from Florida before the Deltas are replaced by ULA's next-generation Vulcan Centaur rockets.

**China launches two new satellites**

Beijing: China Sunday launched a Kuaizhou-1A carrier rocket to place two satellites in space. The pair of satellites, Shiyang-14 and Shiyang-15, were lifted at 6:55 a.m. (Beijing Time) from the Taiyuan Satellite Launch Center in the northern province of Shanxi and soon entered the preset orbit, Xinhua news agency reported. The Shiyang-14 will mainly be used to conduct scientific experiments and verify new technologies, while the Shiyang-15 will provide data in the fields of land survey, urban planning, and disaster prevention and mitigation. It was the 18th flight mission of the Kuaizhou-1A series rockets, according to the launch center.

## UKRAINE WAR: 'REFERENDUMS' CONTINUE

# Moscow vows 'full protection' to areas annexed by Russia

AGENCIES

Moscow, Sept 25: Russia has sought to defend its seven-month old war, with Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov telling the United Nations that regions of Ukraine where widely-criticised referendums are being held would get Russia's "full protection" if annexed by Moscow.

The votes in four eastern Ukrainian regions, aimed at annexing territory Russia has taken by force since its invasion in February, were staged for a third day Sunday. The Russian parliament could move to formalise the annexation within days.

By incorporating the four areas of Luhansk, Donetsk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia into Russia, Moscow could portray attacks to retake them as an attack on Russia itself, a warning to Kyiv and its Western allies. The Russian annexations raise the risk of a direct military confrontation between Russia and the NATO military alliance as Western arms are being used by Ukrainian troops.

British Prime Minister Liz Truss said Britain and its allies should not heed threats from Russian President Vladimir Putin who had made what she called a strategic mistake. "I think he didn't anticipate the strength of reaction from the free world," she told CNN.

Ukraine and its allies have dismissed the referendums as a sham designed to justify an escalation of the war and a mobilisation drive by Moscow after recent battlefield losses.

Putin Wednesday ordered Russia's first military mobilisation since World War Two. The move triggered protests across Russia and sent many men of mil-



People gather around a mobile ballot box on the third day of a referendum on the joining of the self-proclaimed Donetsk People's Republic (DPR) to Russia, in Mariupol, Ukraine  
REUTERS

- Third day of voting in referendums on joining Russia
- Regions would have Russia's 'full protection', says Lavrov
- UK's Truss says shouldn't listen to Russian sabre-rattling
- Two sides trade blame for rocket strikes, shelling

## UNSC: Russia backs India for permanent membership

United Nations: Russia has voiced its support for India and Brazil as "worthy candidates" for permanent membership in the UN Security Council, calling them "key international actors." During the 77th Session of the UN General Assembly, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov Saturday expressed his support for India, becoming a permanent member of the Security Council. In his address to the General Assembly just an hour before External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar's speech, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said that the UN and Security Council have to be aligned to contemporary realities.

ited to the United States and countries under its sway. Nearly three-quarters of states in the assembly voted to reprimand Russia and demand it withdraw its troops.

## US working to reduce Green Card wait time

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Washington, Sept 25: The White House is looking into the recommendations of a presidential commission to reduce the adjudication and processing of Green Card applications to just six months and remove all the backlogs by April 2023, a proposal if implemented would benefit hundreds and thousands of immigrant families, in particular, those from countries like India and China.

The recommendations were made in May this year by the President's Advisory Commission on Asian Americans, Native

A Green Card, known officially as a Permanent Resident Card, is a document issued to immigrants to the US as evidence that the bearer has been granted the privilege of residing permanently

Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders.

On Friday, the commission released its inaugural report detailing recommendations that were approved May 12 and transmitted to the President August 24. The White House Domestic Policy Council is currently reviewing the recommendation before it can be sent to President Joe Biden for his decision.

Silicon Valley-based Indian American entrepreneur Ajay Jain Bhutoria, who has been a Biden supporter from day one of his campaign, based on the feedback received from the community had moved the proposal on the issue during the first meeting of the commission in May this year.

The recommendations, if accepted and implemented by the White House, would come as a game changer for hundreds and thousands of immigrant families, in particular; those from countries like India and China.

## VIOLENT UNREST IN IRAN

# PROTESTS POSE BIGGEST THREAT TO HARDLINE REGIME

The demonstrations have evoked images of an anti-government protest in 2009, known as the green revolution, that followed contentious presidential elections and marked the last time citizens faced off against security forces on a large scale

AGENCIES

London, Sept 25: Demonstrations have spread to most of Iran's 31 provinces and almost all urban centres, pitting anti-government demonstrators against regime

forces, including the military, and posing the most serious test to the hardline state's authority in more than 13 years, local media reported.

"The main difference between the current protest compared to the green movement in 2009 is that now people are fighting back; they are not afraid of the brutal regime," said Sima Sabet, an Iranian journalist and presenter on the Iran International TV station, The Guardian reported.

Firuzeh Mahmoudi, executive director of human rights NGO United for Iran, said the recent unrest followed months of Iranians being prepared to hold smaller protests on an array of issues. "The uprising in 2009 in some ways was more expansive in certain cities," she said. "We had millions of people protesting in certain cities during the biggest day of



that protest. It was the biggest thing since the [1979] revolution. They did not see it coming and were very surprised. "Now we're seeing not only big cities, but smaller cities that we've never seen before. We're now also seeing unprecedented ways in which people are showing up, in the

## Iran summons UK, Norway ambassadors

Dubai: Iran's Foreign Ministry said Sunday it summoned Britain's ambassador to protest what it described as a hostile atmosphere created by London-based Farsi language media outlets. The move comes amid violent unrest in Iran triggered by the death of a young woman in police custody. The state-run IRNA news agency reported the ministry also summoned Norway's ambassador to Iran and strongly protested recent remarks by the president of the Norwegian parliament, Masud Gharahkhani. The death of 22-year-old Mahsa Amini in custody after being detained by Iranian morality police launched unrest across Iran's provinces and the capital of Tehran. State TV suggested Saturday that 41 protesters and police have been killed since the protests erupted Sept. 17. It said official statistics would be released by the Interior Ministry.

Middle East, smartphones have been used as organising tools, with messages and places of demonstrations widely circulated, despite widespread cuts to the country's internet. Substantial numbers of Iranians have long been opposed to unflinching societal rules and the reach of the state's security forces, which have enforced one of the re-

gion's most formidable theocratic states over more than four decades. As long as the protesters continue agitation on the streets and wear out the security forces, they will sustain and may expand the momentum. In at least one small city, Oshnavieh, in north-west Iran, the regime has lost effective control and retreated to the outskirts.





**Prime Minister Modi has made it clear that he wants to sign the FTA by Diwali. Whatever the content of the agreement, it will be a real positive for the relationship between India and the UK across the board in the coming years**  
VINCENT KEAVENY | LORD MAYOR, LONDON

## IRAN OFFERS INDIAN COMPANIES 30 PER CENT STAKE IN GAS FIELD

Iran has offered ONGC Videsh Ltd, the overseas arm of state-owned Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC), and its partners a 30 per cent interest in development of the Farzad-B gas field in the Persian Gulf that was discovered by the Indian consortium in 2008, officials said



### of the day quote

We are (Salesforce India's headcount) at about 7,500 plus. We are expecting that we will end FY23, which for us ends in January of 2023. We expect to be in the range of 10,000

ARUNDHATI BHATTACHARYA | CEO, SALESFORCE INDIA

We have just started a pilot for our pre-owned certified car platform Volvo Selekt with two dealers in India. We want to expand it in phases and we are looking to ensure that the platform is across our network by 2023 or early 2024

JYOTI MALHOTRA | MD, VOLVO CAR INDIA

We are expecting 20-25 per cent growth this fiscal in our annual turnover

KESHAV BHAIJANKA | EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CENTURY PLYBOARDS

### SHORT TAKES

#### 393 infra projects show cost overruns

**New Delhi:** As many as 393 infrastructure projects, each entailing an investment of Rs 150 crore or more, have been hit by cost overruns of more than Rs 4.65 lakh crore, as per a report. According to the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, which monitors infrastructure projects of Rs 150 crore and above, out of 1,526 projects, 393 reported cost overruns and as many as 647 projects were delayed. "Total original cost of implementation of the 1526 projects was Rs 21,26,460.93 crore and their anticipated completion cost is likely to be Rs 25,91,823.45 crore, which reflects overall cost overruns of Rs 4,65,362.52 crore (21.88% of original cost)," the ministry's latest report for August 2022 said. According to the report, the expenditure incurred on these projects till August 2022 was Rs 13,60,645.94 crore, or 52.49 percent of the anticipated cost of the projects.

#### MFs, AMC's total accounts at 13.65cr

**New Delhi:** With increase in digital access and growing awareness about mutual funds, asset management companies (AMCs) have added close to 70 lakh investor accounts in the first five months of the current fiscal, bringing the total to 13.65 crore. This came following an addition of 3.17 crore investor accounts in 2021-22 and 81 lakh accounts (or folios in mutual fund parlance) in 2020-21, data with the Association of Mutual Funds in India (Amfi) showed. The sharp increase in mutual fund (MF) folio count implies that a lot of new investors are coming into the capital markets and are embracing mutual funds as their preferred vehicle for investing.

#### boAt parent gets nod for ₹2K-cr IPO

**Mumbai:** IPO-bound Imagine Marketing, the parent company of wearables brand boAt, has firmed up plans to become a made-in-India global lifestyle brand by increasing its overseas reach, according to a top company official. The company has received regulatory nod for a Rs 2,000-crore public issue, of which Rs 900 crore will be fresh issue and the rest Rs 1,100 crore offer-for-sale. It expects to manufacture 60 lakh units (nearly double its present output) in H1 of FY23 under its make-in-India strategy and scale it further as the demand and market reach grow, which will also help it launch products faster and at lower prices, Aman Gupta, the co-founder and chief marketing officer, told PTI.

## Natural gas price to rise to record level next week

*This will be the third increase in rates since April 2019, and comes on the back of firming benchmark international prices*

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Sept 25:** Prices of natural gas, which is used to generate electricity, make fertiliser and is converted into CNG to run automobiles, is likely to rise to record levels at the rate review scheduled this week, sources said. The government-dictated price for natural gas produced in the country is to be revised October 1.

After factoring in the spike in energy prices witnessed in recent months, the rate paid for gas produced from old fields such as of state-owned Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) is likely to rise to \$9 per million British thermal units from current \$6.1. Simultaneously, difficult fields like the ones in Reliance Industries Ltd and its partner bp plc operated D6 block in KG basin, are



likely to get around \$12 mmBtu compared to the current rate of \$9.92, two sources aware of the matter said.

These are the highest rates for administered/regulated fields (like ONGC's Bassein field off the

Mumbai coast) and free-market areas (such as the KG basin).

The government sets the price of gas every six months -- April 1 and October 1 -- each year based on rates prevalent in gas surplus nations such as the US, Canada and Russia in one year with a lag of one quarter.

So, the price for October 1 to March 31, is based on the average price from July 2021 to June 2022. This is the period when global rates shot through the roof.

"The government has set up a committee to review the formula for pricing of domestically produced natural gas. It can for all

practical reasons not revise prices on October 1, citing the pendency of issues before the committee," a source said.

The sources said the increase in gas price is likely to result in a rise in CNG and piped cooking gas rates in cities, such as Delhi and Mumbai. It will also lead to a rise in the cost of generating electricity but consumers may not feel any major pinch as the share of power produced from gas is very low.

Similarly the cost of producing fertiliser will also go up but as the government subsidises the crop nutrient, an increase in rates is unlikely.

### INVESTMENT RATE SLOWS

## FPIs invest ₹8,600cr in September so far

FPIs REMAIN NET BUYERS IN EQUITY MARKETS FOR THREE MONTHS IN A ROW

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Sept 25:** After infusing more than Rs 51,000 crore last month, foreign investors have slowed down the pace of equity buying in India in September so far, as they invested a little over Rs 8,600 crore, on sharp depreciation in rupee.

Going forward, Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) are unlikely to buy aggressively amid rising dollar. VK Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist at Geojit Financial Services, said.

Indication of further rate hike by the US Federal Reserve, fears of a recession, depreciating rupee and continued tensions in Russia and Ukraine will affect FPI flows, Basant Maheshwari, smallcase manager and Co-founder, Basant Maheshwari Wealth Advisers LLP, said.

The latest inflow comes following a net investment of Rs 51,200 crore in August and nearly Rs 5,000 crore in July, data showed.

FPIs turned net buyers in July after nine straight months of net outflows, which started in October last year. Between October 2021 till June 2022, they sold Rs 2.46 lakh crore in the Indian equity markets.



According to the data, FPIs have bought equity to the tune of Rs 8,638 crore during September 1-23.

In addition, foreign investors have pumped in Rs 5,903 crore in the debt market during the month under review.

However, FPI activity has turned highly volatile with alternate bouts of buying and selling. They have sold on seven occasions in this month so far. In fact, in the last two trading sessions, they have pulled out Rs 2,500 crore from the Indian equity markets.

Foreign investors have been slowing down their equity buying in India since September. The scenario turned adverse after a hotter-than-expected inflation report dashed hopes that the US Fed would scale down its rate hikes in the coming months.

## Weak ₹ to fuel inflation

*The rupee declined by 30 paise to close at lifetime low of 81.09 against the US dollar Friday, weighed down by a strong American currency overseas and risk-off sentiment among investors*

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Sept 25:** The Indian rupee sliding to a historic low of 81.09 to a dollar will make import of crude oil and other commodities expensive further fueling inflation which for the past several months has remained above the Reserve Bank's upper tolerance level of 6 per cent.

The pressure on the domestic currency, which is mainly due to repeated hikes in interest rate by the US Fed, is likely to continue with rise in trade deficit and gradual withdrawal of funds by institutional investors.

The Reserve Bank, which is scheduled to announce its bi-monthly monetary policy later this week, is expected to increase the repo-rate or the short-term lending rates by 50 basis points in a bid to tame inflationary pressure.

For a nation that is 85 per cent dependent on imports to meet its oil needs and 50 per cent for gas requirements, a weakening rupee has a bearing on domestic price of fuel. Import of 'petroleum, crude & products' stood at \$17.7 billion in



**FRIGHTENING FIGURES** ■ Trade deficit more than doubled to \$27.98bn in August  
■ Forex kitty dip by \$5.219bn to \$545.652bn for the week ended Sept 16  
■ Foreign currency assets have declined by \$75bn since Ukraine War

August this year, an annual increase of 87.44 per cent.

The forex reserves, which have been dipping as the central bank deploys the kitty to defend the rupee amid pressure caused majorly by global developments, had declined by \$2.23 billion to \$550.87 billion in the previous week.

Solvent Extractors' Association of India Executive Director B V Mehta said the cost of imported edible oils will go up. The country imports about 13 million tonne of edible oils every year. "Ultimately, this will be passed on to consumers. However, the only silver lining is India's oilseed sector exports. The rupee depreciation will boost export realisation and support export," he said. Imports of vegetable oils stood at \$1.89 billion in

August 2022, up 41.55 per cent over the same month last year.

SBI in a report said global commodity prices have remained volatile after their fall in June from historical highs. Prices edged up during late July - early August, before moderating towards the end of the month, largely driven by concerns over demand slowdown.

As per the SBI report, no central bank can prevent currency depreciation currently and RBI may allow the rupee to depreciate for a limited period.

"This is also true that once the currency settles at a lower level, appreciation of the currency picks up at a dramatic pace, that is a distinct possibility given India's strong fundamentals," the report said.

### IN FIVE YEARS

## Defence exports rose by 334%

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Sept 25:** Defence exports have grown by 334 per cent in the last five years and India is now exporting to over 75 countries due to collaborative efforts, the government said Sunday.

The Press Information Bureau (PIB) said in a tweet: "The Indian Defence sector, the second largest armed force is at the cusp of revolution." "Defence exports grew by 334 per cent in the last five years; India now exporting to over 75 countries due to collaborative efforts," it said.

The PIB India Twitter handle also shared some data in a poster attached with the tweet to underline the indigenisation and boost of production in the defence sector. It mentioned the recent com-



missioning of India's first indigenous aircraft carrier INS Vikrant in Kochi. It also mentioned about the indigenous Advanced Light Helicopter Mk-III's squadron being commissioned into the Indian Coast Guard, and successful testing of new generation nuclear-capable ballistic missile 'Agni P'.

Defence Secretary Ajay Kumar, during an interaction held at an event here Thursday, had said ef-

forts were being made to "unleash the energy" of the Make-in-India initiative as a whole in the defence sector and the country's Amrit Kaal vision is to see it among the top five countries globally in defence production. In the last 75 years, India has continued to be one of the largest importers of defence products in the world, and this is the situation the government wishes to change, he had said.

## High NPAs in edu loan turn banks cautious

OUTSTANDING EDUCATION LOANS WERE ABOUT RS 80K-CR AT JUNE-END

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Sept 25:** High defaults of about 8 per cent in the education loan portfolio have made banks cautious and go slow on the sanction of such credit.

Non-performing assets (NPAs) in the education loan category including public sector banks' (PSBs) were 7.82 per cent at the end of June quarter of the current financial year. Outstanding education loans were about Rs 80,000 crore at June-end.

Cautious approach is adopted at the end of branches while sanctioning education loans due to high NPAs, a senior public sector bank official said. As a result some genuine cases are overlooked and there are delays, the official said.

Recently, the finance ministry had called a meeting of PSBs to take stock of the education loan



portfolio and cut down on delay. The ministry exhorted banks to spread awareness about the Central Sector Interest Subsidy Scheme among field formations.

The sharp rise in non-performing assets (NPA) in education loans extended by commercial banks in India in recent years is a matter of concern, as it could hamper the growth of bank credit for higher education in the country, according to an occasional paper published by RBI.

In India, around 90 per cent of education loans are disbursed by the PSBs. Private sector banks and regional rural banks (RRBs) ac-

counted for around 7 per cent and 3 per cent of total education loan outstanding, respectively, as at end-March 2020, the paper noted.

The outstanding education loans of all banks were Rs 79,056 crore at the end of March 2020 and at Rs 78,823 crore as of March 2021, as per the Report on Trend and Progress of Banking in India 2020-21. However, the outstanding loans surged to Rs 82,723 crore as of March 25, 2022.

According to Resurgent India managing director, Jyoti Prakash Gadia, fresh job creation has not kept pace with the number of graduates coming out of the colleges, thereby adversely impacting the timely repayment of education loans. As a result, NPAs have gone up and banks are hesitant to grant fresh education advances, particularly loans up to Rs 7.50 lakh which are without any collateral and third party guarantee, he said.

### COMFORTABLE COAL STOCKS

## No power crisis this festive season like last year

*Depleted coal stocks last year led to spot power rates surging and supplies of the fuel being diverted away from key customers including aluminum smelters and steel mills*

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Sept 25:** India is unlikely to see a repeat of the 2021 energy crisis this festive season as coal-fired power stations across the country have comfortable levels of the fuel stock to meet electricity demand of the world's fastest expanding major economy.

Learning lessons from the October 2021 energy crisis, when power stations were put on outage alert, due to coal stocks falling to the lowest level in years, the ministries of coal and power as

well as railways this year have worked out a plan to ensure adequate fuel stocks at electricity generating units, officials said.

With coal used to produce almost 70 per cent of electricity, officials are confident that the 2021 crisis will not be repeated this festive season that kicks in a week's time.

According to a coal ministry official, the coal stocks at power plants are at "comfortable" level as of now. The coal position in states like Haryana, Punjab which last year faced problems of coal shortages at their plants, have comfort-



able levels of dry fuel at their units.

"The government is holding regular review meetings twice a week with coal companies to firm up strategies for enhancing both coal production and off take," the

official said. Moreover, the coal ministry is also coordinating with Railways for rakes for smooth supply of coal to the power sector.

In May this year, several states suffered prolonged blackouts as scorch-

**ELECTRICITY DEMAND HAD SURGED 16% DURING THE FESTIVE SEASON LAST YEAR**

**DEMAND HAS SOARED WITH A REBOUND IN INDUSTRIAL ACTIVITY AFTER EASING OF PANDEMIC-RELATED CURBS**

**THE INCREASED LIGHTNING NEEDS DURING THE FESTIVE SEASON IS LIKELY TO SEND THE DEMAND SHOOTING**

ing heat waves boosted energy demand at a time when coal stockpiles were low. That sent the officials to the drawing board to rework a coal supply plan to avert future crises.

Coal-fired power plants were ordered to use imported fuel to operate at full capacity. Stock norms were

also revised. The revised norms mandated the coal stock of 17 days at pit head stations and 26 days at non-pit head stations to be maintained by power plants from February to June every year.

According to the official as September 11, the coal stock at domestic coal-based power plants is at 25 million tonne, while September 11, 2021 the coal stock at domestic power plants was just 11 million tonne.

Coal India's former Chairman Partha S Bhattacharya is of the view that the coal production and supply to power plants this year is much more comfortable than it was the same last year. "I don't anticipate a crisis situation coming up in the festive session," he explained.



# Tirkey sets ambitious targets

REVIVAL OF HIL IS ONE OF THE PRIORITIES OF NEW HOCKEY INDIA CHIEF



**I'm happy that the men's team won bronze in the Tokyo Olympics and I hope to give the necessary boost to the sport to raise the standard**  
DILIP TIRKEY

13 next year," Tirkey added. Tirkey was regarded one of finest defenders in the world during his playing days. The new HI chief said the 36th National Games in Gujarat will unearth fresh talent. "Indian hockey is in revival mode. Youngsters are taking to the game in large numbers once again and the National Games could well give the final push that the sport needs," asserted Tirkey.

"As only the top eight men's and women's teams will be in competition, the standard of hockey will be of the highest quality. Young players can showcase their talent and hope to get into national reckoning," informed Tirkey. He also informed that the selectors will be present at the National Games to spot new talent.

Tirkey also harped on the importance of penalty corners. "Modern hockey is all about penalty corners. We have to unearth and groom specialists who can score off penalty corners and also have good set of goalkeepers who can save those taken by the opposition," Tirkey pointed out.

Tirkey revealed that he also plans to revive Hockey India League (HIL), last played in 2017. "It is a very important tournament. We will look for an international window and will have talks with FIH officials on this," the former India captain signed off

is the men's World Cup to be played in Odisha in January next year. He asserted that the infrastructure is in place for Odisha to host the tournament successfully.

"States like Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and cities like Mumbai and Bhopal are crucial. I will go to these places and look to develop the game from the grassroots level. We need more

artificial turfs in these places to groom talent," Tirkey said in a press release issued by HI, Sunday.

"As a player, I worked hard and represented the country in the Olympics and other major international tournaments. Now, I have been entrusted with a new challenge. There are a lot of expectations and my immediate priority is the World Cup in Odisha from January

# Kohli, Surya ensure series win

MEN IN BLUE BEAT AUSSIES IN AN EXCITING THRILLER IN FINAL T20 GAME



**DEADLY DUO:** Virat Kohli (R) congratulates Suryakumar Yadav after the latter reached his half century Sunday against Australia  
PTI PHOTO

AGENCIES

**Hyderabad, Sept 25:** Virat Kohli's (63, 48b, 3x4, 4x6) scintillating stroke-play found its match in maverick Suryakumar Yadav's (69, 36b, 5x4, 5x6) batting pyrotechnics as the duo fashioned India's series-clinching six-wicket win over Australia in the third and final T20 International here Sunday. Kohli and Suryakumar shared a 104-run partnership to lay the platform for the Indian victory which enabled the hosts to win the three-match series 2-1.

Chasing 187, India didn't have the best of starts as openers KL Rahul (1) and Rohit Sharma (17) were out inside the first four overs. But Kohli and Suryakumar batted with authority, hitting boundaries and sixes at regular intervals to keep

the required run rate in check as Australian bowlers struggled to find answers.

While Suryakumar orchestrated the carnage, Kohli played the second fiddle. At the half-way mark India needed 96 with eight wickets in hand. After Suryakumar's dismissal, Hardik Pandya (25 n o, 16b, 2x4, 1x6) finished off the chase with a cameo. Kohli was dismissed with India needing five runs off four balls. However, Pandya steered the second last ball of the game from Daniel Sams (2/33) to the third-man boundary to ensure victory for the hosts.

Earlier all-rounder Axar Patel (3/33) continued to impress with the ball but Cameron Green (52, 21b, 7x4, 3x6) and Tim David (54, 27b, 2x4, 4x6) hit belligerent fifties to guide

Australia to 186 for the loss of seven wickets.

At the top of the order it was Green who provided the platform for the late assault by David to help Aussies put up a good score. Sloppy fielding from India towards the end only added to Australia's total.

Put into bat, Green was on the offensive from the start. He smashed the second delivery from Bhuvneshwar Kumar (1/39) to square-leg for a massive six, which was followed by a boundary as Australia collected 12 off the first over. Green continued the onslaught, smashing Jasprit Bumrah for a four before hitting back-to-back sixes. It was match that Bumrah would like to forget in a hurry as he went for 50 runs in his four overs.

With Australia going over 13 runs per over, Axar provided the home side with the first breakthrough as he bowled a slower one, forcing Aaron Finch (7) to mistime the shot with Pandya taking the catch at mid-on. Then Bhuvneshwar got rid of Green just after the batsman had completed his half century.

However, in spite of losing Glenn Maxwell (6) and Steve Smith (8) cheaply, Australia went past the 180-run mark thanks to David and Sams who smashed a 20-ball unbeaten 28.

**Brief scores:** Australia 186 for 7 (Tim David 54, Cameron Green 52, Axar Patel 3/33) lost to India 187 for 4 in 19.5 overs (Suryakumar Yadav 69, Virat Kohli 63) by six wickets.

## SHORT TAKES

### 3 Indian cueists get direct entry

**New Delhi:** Top Indian players Pankaj Advani, Sourav Kohari and Dhruv Sitwala have been granted direct entry into the IBSF World Billiards Championship to be held in Kuala Lumpur October 4 to 8. The other Indians who will take part in the championship are Dhvaj Haria, Loukic Pathare, S Srikrishna and Rohan Jambusaria. The world's top players from Myanmar, Singapore, India, Vietnam, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Malaysia and other nations shall be vying for top honours in the event which is being held after a gap of two years due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

### Kipchoge's show

**Berlin:** He's done it again. Two-time Olympic champion Eliud Kipchoge bettered his own world record in the Berlin Marathon here Sunday. The Kenyan star clocked two hours, one minute, nine seconds to shave 30 seconds off his previous best mark of 2:01:39 set on the same course in 2018. "My legs and my body still feel young," the 37-year-old Kipchoge said. "But the most important thing is my mind, and that also feels fresh and young. I'm so happy to break the world record," Kipchoge added.

### Ekaterina wins

**Seoul:** No 2 seed Ekaterina Alexandrova clinched Korea Open tennis tournament title and her third overall, after defeating No 1 seed Jelena Ostapenko 7-6(7-4), 6-0 in the final, here Sunday. Alexandrova came from a break down three times in the first set and saved a set point serving at 5-6 to win it. Then she simply ran away with the second set not allowing her opponent to win a single game. "I found my proper range in the second set and that helped. In the first set," Alexandrova said.

### West Zone triumph

**Coimbatore:** West Zone thrashed South Zone by 294 runs to win the Duleep Trophy here Sunday, completing the formalities before lunch on the fifth and final day's play. Set an improbable target of 529 runs for an outright win, South Zone were bowled out for 234 in 71.2 overs, with left-arm Shams Mulani (4/51) picking up three of the four wickets to fall on the final day. Resuming at 154 for six, South batters Ravi Teja (53, 97b, 3x4, 1x6) and R Sai Kishore (7, 82b) defended stoutly. But once, Kishore was dismissed, Mulani ran through the tail to ensure triumph for West Zone. It was Mulani who ended Teja's vigil before dismissing two other South Zone batters

# CM asks players to explore Odisha

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 25:** Players and officials of Manipal Tigers, a team playing in the Legends League Cricket (LLC) met Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik at the Naveen Niwas here Sunday. Patnaik wished the players the best of luck ahead of their game Monday and also asked them to explore Odisha.

Among the players, who met the Odisha CM was the highest wicket-taker in Test cricket, Muttiah Muralitharan from Sri Lanka. Then there were former England players, Matt Prior and Ryan Sidebottom. Also accompanying them were Indian cricketer Reetinder Singh Sodhi and Bengal and East Zone pacer Ranadeb Bose. Manipal Tigers will face Bhilwara Kings at the Barabati Stadium in Cuttack Monday. The players of the two teams arrived here Sunday.



It will indeed be an interesting game as both the teams have a number of cricketers who have represented their nations with distinctions. Bhilwara Kings have in their ranks players like Irfan Pathan, Yusuf Pathan, S Sreesanth and Shane Watson. On the other hand, Manipal Tigers also boast of a strong side with cricketers like Harbhajan Singh, Mohammad Kaif and Brett Lee.

The players at Naveen Niwas requested Patnaik to pose for a group photo with them and the Chief Minister readily obliged. He also presented them with jerseys of the Indian hockey team. Later, Patnaik wrote on Twitter, "It was a pleasure interacting with the players and management of @lclt20. Encouraged them to explore Odisha's treasure trove of natural beauty and heritage. Wished the teams all the very best for their upcoming matches."

# Spain suffer shock defeat

DEFENSIVE WOES EXPOSED IN SET-PIECE SITUATIONS AGAINST SWISS

AGENCIES

**London, Sept 25:** Switzerland earned a shock 2-1 win over Spain in the Nations League in Zaragoza to drag Luis Enrique's side off top spot in the group. Portugal thrashed the Czech Republic 4-0 in the other Group 2 clash to move two points clear of Spain, whom they host Tuesday in the final pool match. It was Spain's first defeat in the group in five games, and one which exposed their defensive frailty from set-pieces.

Manuel Akanji and Breel Embolo both scored from Switzerland corners, on either side of Jordi Alba's strike for Spain.

Spain never looked comfortable in the game, a far cry from the team that reached the Euro 2020 semifinals and were defeated on penalties by Italy. As a result, they stumbled to their first loss on home soil since 2018, after 22 matches unbeaten.

Luis Enrique selected six Barcelona players in his starting line-up, including the regular mid-field trio Xavi Hernandez utilises at Camp Nou, in Pedri, Gavi and Sergio Busquets. None of the three have enjoyed regular football with their clubs this season but were given Luis Enrique's trust. They did not repay it in the first half, with Spain anaemic in attack and asleep at the back when it mattered most.

"We were sluggish, no, worse than sluggish," Enrique said after the game. "We had the most imprecise first half of my reign as coach," he added.



The two scorers for Switzerland against Spain, Manuel Akanji (smiling) and Breel Embolo celebrate together after the former's goal

Switzerland took the lead when Manchester City summer signing Akanji got the better of Cesar Azpilicueta in the air from a corner and nodded past Unai Simon in the 21st minute.

However Asensio, early in the second half, created the Spain equaliser with an electric burst forward, before playing in Alba to finish clinically.

However, three minutes later Spain defended another corner poorly and Akanji's flick-on was nudged over the line by Embolo to restore the Swiss lead.

In the other game, Diogo Dalot

helped Portugal take control of their game against the Czech Republic with two goals.

Dalot put Portugal ahead in the 33rd minute when the right-back scored from a pass by Rafael Leao. Bruno Fernandes doubled the lead in first half injury time moments before Ronaldo was guilty of handball inside his own area. But Patrik Schick wasted the penalty kick by sending it onto the crossbar. Dalot put the result beyond all doubt in the 52nd with a curling shot into the corner. Ronaldo finished with an assist for Diogo Jota to take a fourth goal in the 82nd.

# Nabarangpur, Bargarh script facile victories

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 25:** Nabarangpur and Rayagada registered contrasting over Gajapati and Mayurbhanj districts in matches of the Sub-Junior Men's Hockey Championship which began here Sunday. The tournament will end September 30.

In the first match of the day, Rayagada managed to earn a hard-fought 1-0 victory over Mayurbhanj. The only goal of the match was scored by Ranjit Pidikaka in the 57th minute. Prior to that both sides had scoring chances but failed to utilise those. It was an even-paced game with both sides not ready to give an inch to the other.

The second match of the day between Nabarangpur and Gajapati was a one-sided affair with the former winning 5-0. All the goals were field goals in a game in which Nabarangpur players toyed with their opponents.

The goals for Nabarangpur district were scored by Heroj Santa (first minute), Manu Santa (10th), Singha Santa (23rd and 50th) and Pintu Santa (25th). Such was the domination of the Nabarangpur players, that Gajapati rarely had a look at the opposition goal.

In the last match of the day, Bargarh district scripted a facile 4-0 win over Jagatsinghpur district. The goals for Bargarh were scored by Albinus Tete (22nd), Prashant Roj (32nd), Usam Dang (34th) and Rohit Kandulua (58th). The first goal of the game scored by Tete was from a penalty corner while the other three were field goals.

# Cricketers all praise for Jhulan's longevity

BCCI SAYS A 'MONUMENTAL ERA' OF INDIAN CRICKET HAS ENDED WITH PLAYER'S RETIREMENT

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, Sept 25:** With the curtains finally coming down on the more than two decade-long career of Jhulan Goswami, an era in Indian cricket has ended. Players both past and present showered rich accolades on the fast bowler who represented India in two finals of the 50 overs World Cup. India lost both those finals and as Jhulan walked into the sunset, she said that it is the only 'unticked' box in her career goals.

In an international career spanning over two decades - the second longest in women's international cricket - Jhulan, who made her debut in 2002, represented India in 12 Tests, 204 ODIs and 68 T20Is, picking 355 wickets across formats. Here's what the stalwarts had to say about Jhulan's career on social media.

**Sourav Ganguly (BCCI president):** With Jhulan announcing her retirement from international cricket, an era has come to an end. She took immense pride in representing India and always put her best foot forward. She was the leader of



India's bowling attack and her feats will continue to inspire the present and budding cricketers. Her contribution to the game has been monumental.

**Virat Kohli:** A great servant of Indian cricket. Congratulations on an outstanding career; inspiring so many women to take up the sport. Your grit and aggression always stood out. I wish you the very best.

**Mithali Raj:** Her (Jhulan's) longevity as a fast bowler in women's cricket is beyond belief. We have played together since our under-19 days & @JhulanG10's

commitment to the game & her eternal optimism are lessons for all. The Indian jersey will miss you. Best wishes for your future endeavours, Jhulu (nickname).

**VVS Laxman (NCA Chief):** "You've inspired generations @JhulanG10. For 20 years you've ran in hard and delivered the best for your country and we couldn't be more proud. Many congratulations on a wonderful career and best wishes for the road ahead!"

**Jasprit Bumrah:** Your contribution to the sport has been immense and you've inspired so many young-

## Did not commit a crime: Harman

**London:** India women's team captain Harmanpreet Kaur has said her side had committed 'no crime' after completing a first-ever whitewash in ODIs on English soil with a legal yet debatable run out. Harmanpreet was responding to questions on the run out effected by her bowler Deepti Sharma at the non-striker's end to claim the crucial wicket of Charlie Dean. "Today whatever we have done I don't think it was any crime," Harmanpreet said at the post-match press conference. "It is part of the game and it is an ICC rule. I don't think she (Deepti) has done something wrong and we just need to back her," Harman added.

sters to take up the sport. Congratulations on a splendid career @JhulanG10 and all the best for everything the future holds.

**KL Rahul:** One of the greatest ever to play the sport. Your love, passion and dedication for the game is an inspiration to many. Thanks for all the wonderful memories. @JhulanG10.

# Bengal eves beat Odisha by 37 runs

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 25:** The Odisha women's cricket team suffered a heavy defeat by 37 runs against their Bengal counterparts at the KIIT stadium here Sunday. As a part of preparing for the BCCI domestic season, the Odisha eves are playing an invitational tournament against teams from Bengal and Jharkhand.

In the T20 game, Bengal after being put in, scored 116 for the loss of nine wickets in their quota of 20 overs. The Odisha bowlers restricted the opposition batters with some tight length and line bowling. Priyanka Sahu was the pick of the Odisha bowlers picking up four wickets. Indrani Chhatra (1/22 off four overs) was also economical. For Bengal Priyanka Bala topped the scoring with a fine attacking innings of 46 runs. She was well-supported by skipper Mita Paul (31).

However, the Odisha batters found it extremely difficult to get going against the Bengal bowlers and could only manage 79 runs for the loss of five wickets in their



Priyanka Sahu

quota of 20 overs. Rashmita Chinhara (23) and skipper Madhuri Mehta (16) were the only two batters to offer some resistance. However, they also consumed more deliveries than the runs they scored, something which cannot be done in T20 cricket.

For Bengal, Gauhar Sultana (1/14) and Jhumia Khatun (1/13) shone with the ball. They restricted the opposition batters with some incisive bowling and were well-supported by the other Bengal bowlers. **Brief scores:** Bengal 116 for 9 (Priyanka Bala 46, Priyanka Sahu 4/19) beat Odisha 79 for 5 (Rashmita Chinhara 23) by 37 runs.