



## TALENT OVER MARKETING

Yami Gautam admits to lacking self-promotion skills and criticises film industry's focus on marketing

LEISURE P2



## TAIWAN VP'S US 'STOPOVER'

China's foreign ministry condemns Taiwan's vice president William Lai's stopover in the US, calling him a "troublemaker"

INTERNATIONAL P10



## INDIA 3RD IN RANKING

India Sunday rose to third place in FIH rankings following their ACT triumph

SPORTS P12

## Convoy carrying Chinese engineers attacked in Pak; 2 terrorists killed

AGENCIES

**Karachi/Islamabad, August 13:** Two terrorists were killed by Pakistani security forces Sunday when they attacked a military convoy carrying Chinese workers in the port city of Gwadar in the restive Balochistan province, officials said.

Gwadar is one of the focal points of the multi-billion China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) with many Chinese workers working at the port. China is investing heavily in Balochistan under the CPEC. According to the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the military's media wing, the terrorists attacked at 10 am, using small arms and hand grenades. "However, due to the efficient and swift response, two terrorists were sent to hell with no harm to any military or civil persons," the ISPR said.

The Baloch Liberation Army - Majeed Brigade, a militant group active in Balochistan, claimed responsibility for the attack. While Pakistani officials tried to downplay the Gwadar attack as just a terrorist act, the Chinese embassy in Islamabad demanded a "thorough investigation" into the attack on a convoy carrying Chinese citizens in the port city.



**SPIRIT OF FREEDOM:** Students perform Punjabi folk dance during full dress rehearsal for the 77th Independence Day celebrations, at Guru Nanak Stadium in Amritsar, Sunday

PTI PHOTO

## Man jumps into river with infant daughter in Cuttack

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Phulnakhara, August 13:** In a shocking incident, a man went missing in Sidhua river, Sunday near Sainda village under Sadar police limits in Cuttack district after he jumped into the river with his 10-month-old daughter following a tiff with his wife the previous night.

The missing man was identified as Prakash Chandra Pradhan, a power department employee at Chauhaganj in Cuttack city and a native of Danduasi village under Kandarpur police limits in Cuttack district.

He was staying at his in-laws' place at Sumandi village under Sadar police limits. His wife Deepali also jumped into the river but was rescued by locals.

While the baby was rescued by local people, the man was yet to be traced despite police and fire personnel conducting a search operation.

Locals rescued the baby and rushed her to Sishu Bhawan in Cuttack where she is undergoing treatment.

The incident occurred when Pradhan accompanying his wife and the baby daughter visited a temple, Sunday.

He suddenly jumped into the river near the temple carrying the baby girl.

## Will go alone in Odisha: Munda

**Bhubaneswar:** Union Minister of Tribal Affairs Arjun Munda Sunday said there is no possibility of any coalition with the BJD now or in the near future and the party will fight the elections alone. Responding to a media query here he said, "The work of organisation is completely different and strategies are chalked out accordingly. There is no such topic of alliance in Odisha now or in the coming days." Munda said the BJP is in a good position and will perform well in upcoming elections.

## IRREGULAR by MANJUL



We'll certainly form the govt in 2024, 2029 & 2034. We're also making some changes the way we appoint EC

## WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
MAX	31.7°C	33.8°C
MIN	24.6°C	26.0°C
Humidity	97%	82%
Rainfall	0.1mm	33.8mm
Forecast	Light to moderate rain	

# Support sans support

KULDEEP SINGH, OP

**New Delhi, August 13:** In the just concluded Monsoon session of Parliament, the Biju Janata Dal (BJD) stunned everyone by the announcement of opposing the no confidence motion brought against the Narendra Modi government and supporting the contentious Delhi Services Bill in both the Houses. It was an unprecedented move by the party which took everyone by surprise. However, none of the demands that were frequently and aggressively raised by the BJD in the Parliament in the last five years have been fulfilled by the BJP at Centre.

In 2018, BJD had staged a walk-out when the first no-confidence motion was brought against Modi government and hardly two years ago, in 2021, opposed a Delhi Bill, which sought to undermine the powers of the democratically elected government in Delhi. All political pundits were expecting the party to stage a walkout as it has always done in the past. However, it was a major shift in BJD's equidistance policy in national politics. Its leader in the Lok Sabha, Pinaki Misra, cited numerous reasons to defend the party's pro-government stand. He began with the BJD's foundation on anti-Congressism principle and

### Contentious legislations supported by BJD in RS

- The Delhi Services Bill
- Citizenship Amendment Bill 2019
- Inter-State River Water Disputes (Amendment) Bill, 2019
- Right to Information (Amendment) Bill 2019
- The Triple-Talaq Bill
- Abrogation of Article 370

### Pending demands of Odisha

- Special status or special focus tag
- Legislative Council
- Women's Reservation Bill
- Withdrawal of GST on kendu leaves
- Inclusion of tribal communities in ST list
- Houses under PMAY
- Lifting of surplus parboiled rice
- MSP guarantee to farmers
- Banking & telecom connectivity

then read down a list of demands of Odisha fulfilled by the Modi government.

"It is not possible for every Central government to give in to every state government's demands. But in terms of rise in coal production; in terms of mineral royalty revision which has long been Odisha's just demand; in terms of the removal of an export tax on iron ore and manganese ore which was vital for Odisha's fiscal management; in terms of the Bill, which was there the other day, for exploration of offshore minerals which has long been our demand; in terms of Puri International Airport in my constituency which has again long been a dream of the people of Puri, that is well underway, and in terms of the Jagannath Puri Heritage Corridor, I am grateful

for many things that the Central government has done for Odisha," Misra said during his speech on no-confidence motion.

Interestingly, none of these demands were frequently and aggressively raised by the BJD in the Parliament in the last five years. And the demands which made headlines in the state and the national media are still up in the air as the Union government is paying no heed to them. Whether it is special status to Odisha, withdrawal of GST on kendu leaves, inclusion of left out tribal groups in Odisha's ST list, lifting of surplus parboiled rice and other demands related to welfare of farmers, Women's Reservation Bill, houses to poor under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (G) and banking and telecom connectivity to hundreds of villages in the state. There

are plenty of unsettled issues even today despite the BJD's continuous support to the Union government on crucial legislations in the Rajya Sabha, where the NDA lacks majority.

Special status or special focus tag to Odisha has been one of the most prominent demands of the BJD for many years and in every session its MPs raised the issue in Parliament. The BJD has been demanding special focus status to Odisha through which the Union government should change the financial sharing pattern of the government schemes between the Centre and the state for a period of three years from the date of incidence of a natural disaster in the state. The establishment of Legislative Council in Odisha and passage of Women's Reservation Bill to reserve 33 per cent seats for women in Legislative Assemblies and Parliament were among the other prominent demands of BJD.

The BJD has also been struggling for inclusion of around 169 left out tribal communities in the state's ST list and some of the proposals for inclusion of certain tribal groups have been pending since 1970. Despite the repeated requests and letters by the Chief Minister, the Centre has not tabled the Bill for the same. Hundreds of villages in the state still lack telecom connectivity.

## Baby delivered near UP Raj Bhavan, dies

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Lucknow, August 13:** A four-and-a-half-month pregnant woman delivered her baby on the roadside near the Raj Bhavan here Sunday. The foetus was brought dead to a hospital, doctors said.

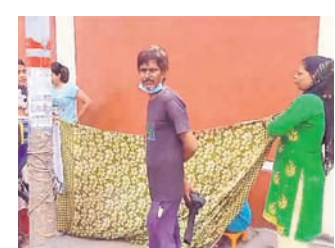
A video of the incident surfaced on social media leading to a sharp reaction to the state of health services in UP from Samajwadi Party leader Shivpal Yadav.

Uttar Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Brajesh Pathak, who also holds the health portfolio, confirmed the incident.

"I have taken cognisance of the incident and I am going to the spot. What I have been told by the principal secretary is that this family was going in a rickshaw and the incident took place near gate number 13 of the Raj Bhavan," the minister said when contacted by PTI.

The baby was taken to Veerangana Jhalkari Bai Women and Child Hospital where it was declared dead by doctors. It was later buried at Baikunth Dhaam in Lucknow.

"Earlier in the day, she had gone to the Shyama Prasad Mukherjee (Civil) Hospital in Lucknow after experiencing pain and was administered an injection. She went home but did not



get any relief," a doctor said. "While on her way here, she delivered (the baby) outside Raj Bhavan. The baby was brought dead," the doctor said.

Pathak said the woman decided to take a rickshaw and not an ambulance to the hospital, but when some passersby outside the Raj Bhavan called an ambulance, it arrived in 25 minutes.

"The ambulance responded in 25 minutes. They (the family) had not sought an ambulance initially and took a rickshaw," Pathak said.

"The state's health system is on ventilator support despite lakhs of advertisements and claims. A pregnant woman going to the hospital by rickshaw was forced to deliver on the roadside near Raj Bhavan due to the non-availability of an ambulance. It is shameful for the entire system and it is the reality of the state's health system," Yadav said in a post in Hindi on X.

## Ganjam SHGs to deliver 4 lakh Tricolours for I-Day

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Berhampur, August 13:** Thirty-year-old Jhili Moharana of Ganjam district has been relentlessly stitching Tricolours for the second edition of the 'Har Ghar Tiranga' programme to be held on Independence Day.

Jhili, secretary of a tailoring group under Mission Shakti in Hinjili, is among 1,700 members of 73 women self-help groups and producers' groups in all 22 blocks and the Berhampur Municipal Corporation who are engaged in making 4 lakh na-

tional flags that will flutter on government buildings in the district on Independence Day. The SHGs have almost completed their task.

"The initiative is not only extra earnings for them, but also awakens the patriotic spirit among people," said Meeta Swain, secretary of a tailoring unit in Sheragada.

The flags made by the SHGs will flutter on all government buildings across the district August 15, said Keerthi Vassan V, chief executive officer, zilla parishad. P5

## ₹5.80cr daily cost: ChatGPT maker may go bankrupt

THE FASTEST-GROWING APP IN HISTORY IS WITNESSING A GRADUAL DECLINE IN USER ENGAGEMENT OVER RECENT MONTHS

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, August 13:** OpenAI, the AI studio led by Sam Altman might be on the brink of a potential financial crisis, Analytics India Magazine reported.

The report says that it costs OpenAI about \$700,000 (Rs 5.80 crore) a day to run just one of its AI services - ChatGPT. The company might go bankrupt by end-2024, it says. Presently, OpenAI is burning through cash despite the attempt to monetise GPT-3.5 and GPT-4. The firm is unable to clock enough revenue to break

even. ChatGPT, the fastest-growing app in history after its launch in November 2022, is witnessing a gradual decline in user engagement over recent months. SimilarWeb says that by end-July ChatGPT user-base continued to drop by 12 per cent compared to June.

OpenAI's APIs are also part of the problem. The report says that several companies previously discouraged their employees from using ChatGPT, have now begun acquiring access to OpenAI's APIs, enabling them to create their own AI chatbots



for diverse workflows. According to Analytics India Magazine, there are several open-source LLM models that are free

to use and are allowed to be repurposed, without any licensing issues. Thus, they can properly customise and adapted to

specific use case scenarios that an organisation might have.

The report says that OpenAI is not profitable yet. In May, its losses doubled to \$540 million ever since it started developing ChatGPT. Microsoft's \$10 billion investment in OpenAI is possibly keeping the company afloat at the moment. But on the other hand, OpenAI projected annual revenue of \$200 million in 2023, and expects to reach \$1 billion in 2024, which seems to be a long shot since the losses are only mounting, the report added.

# leisure



## JASON WARNS TOURISTS AGAINST TRAVELLING TO MAUI DUE TO WILDFIRES

Actor Jason Momoa, who is from Hawaii, took to Instagram to warn travellers who might be planning to visit Maui in the wake of the devastating wildfire that swept through Lahaina this week, killing at least 60 people and causing property damage worth billions.

## WINSLET'S ICONIC OVERCOAT FROM TITANIC SET TO BE AUCTIONED

Actress Kate Winslet's iconic overcoat which she wore while playing her on-screen character Rose in the superhit 1997 romantic movie *Titanic*, is set to be auctioned online by NJ-based collectibles auctioneer Goldin through September 13, 2023.



### FORTUNE FORECAST

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**ARIES**  
With your substantial inter-personal abilities, you will accomplish a great deal today, says Ganesh. Your power of expression will impress many people. Financial rewards are on the cards, but be cautious about minor accidents and illnesses.

**TAURUS**  
You have a very pleasant day ahead. Though you are, by nature, restless and excitable you will be very steady and focused in whatever you do today. So says Ganesh. Later you will desire to enjoy the company of your friends and will call them over to chat and gossip with them. The evening will provide you lots of fun and laughter.

**GEMINI**  
You will spend your day fulfilling the demands made upon you by your family members and colleagues. You will need to devote time to matters at home. Pay attention to the needs of your relatives for they will be helpful to you in the near future, says Ganesh.

**CANCER**  
A wondrous beginning of the day! A unique vibrations in romantic life. Ties with life partner will be cordial. Blissful moments of married life are indicated. Peace and happiness prevail in the family. The whole day will be blooming and jovial, says Ganesh.

**LEO**  
You may have arguments with your family members today. You need to adopt an accommodating attitude today, since it is not a very promising day for you. Otherwise nothing may go in your favour. You will have to work harder than usual in the office, says Ganesh.

**VIRGO**  
Ganesh suggests that you take a much-needed break from the daily rigmarole. Introduce an element of the exotic in order to replace all the mundane work that fills up your day. You may attend private and social get-togethers, and Ganesh advises you to mingle with other people to keep your spirits high.

**LIBRA**  
Ganesh says you shall pay more attention to your family and family issues. You will want to renovate and change the interior of your house or go in for purchasing new gadgets and décor for the home. You will spend time today with your family members. Ganesh says his best wishes are with you always.

**SCORPIO**  
You nearly emerge as a superhero today, as you have the knack of balancing home and work just perfectly. Intellectual discussions and brainstorming with peers would provide food for thought today. You may look forward to merry-making and soiree with family and friends in the evening.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
Whatever you take up today, you are on a winning spree, foresees Ganesh. A leader, you will guide and instruct your subordinates when they seek your advise. In a way, you even encourage and motivate them. All in all, you are a happy soul at the end of the day!

**CAPRICORN**  
The hassle and bustle around you will not disturb you today. You've been holding your emotions in your heart and they have started suffocating you. Such an uncomfortable situation may hamper your logical reasoning power and make you feel trapped. But, this too shall pass. You will easily come out of the negative zone and move ahead on the path, foretells Ganesh.

**AQUARIUS**  
Flash warning signals to your arch rivals as you will be in a mood to prove you metal and give them a run for their money. Doubts and inhibitions - all will vanish in the air and you will be determined to make your mark, feels Ganesh. While on your path to success you will win the hearts of one and many.

**PISCES**  
There is a thick chance that your day will be profitable on the monetary front. Money may pour in from business or even through overseas investments. Your knack for good public relations and networking will work to your benefit and good deals will come from far and unexpected sources as well.

## Mona basks in success of *Made in Heaven*



**Mumbai:** Actress Mona Singh is riding high on the success of her recent release, *Made In Heaven* Season Two. She said that working with Reema Kagti, Zoya Akhtar and Alankrita Srivastava have always been on her wish list. "The 3 *Idiots* actress said, "The praise I'm getting for my performance in *Made In Heaven* Season 2 is just overwhelming. I am very grateful to be part of such a big franchise, and getting such an overwhelming response makes me happy. Working with such a stellar cast and with the biggest directors in the industry has always been on my wish list, and it's incredible to witness the amount of affection outpouring towards my character Bulbul, not only from the directors but also on social media." "When I started shooting for the character, I was sure that once people started watching the show, it would resonate with them because she is rock solid and firm, goes well with the narration, and finds its way in between such a big cast. I am thankful to everyone for pouring so much love into the much-anticipated show and making my character, Bulbul, a favorite." The season 2 of *Made In Heaven* has been streaming currently on Amazon Prime. **ANS**



## Dilip guided Dharam on handling stardom: Saira

**Mumbai:** Veteran actress Saira Banu recalls a few anecdotes about Dharmendra and Dilip Kumar's bond. She also shared about their first meeting in a new social media post. In her latest Instagram post, she wrote, "Sahib spoke to him like an elder brother, full of love and adoration. Dharam Ji listened to him, spellbound as Sahib spoke in English, Punjabi, and Urdu in a soft, refined voice. It was a chilly night outside, and Dharam Ji was in a cotton shirt. Seeing him shiver, Sahib swiftly pulled out a sweater for him to wear on his way home." She also adds, "Since then, Dharam Ji has always walked into Sahib's house without ceremony or appointments. Be it midnight or the day, Sahib always welcomed him. He became the beacon of light in Dharam Ji's life when stardom and success came to him and he did not know how to handle them." **AGENCIES**

## 'Showbiz relies more on marketing, not content'

**Mumbai:** Actress Yami Gautam, who is being praised for her role as a lawyer in *OMG 2*, admitted that she isn't good at promoting herself and pointed out that the industry places a strong emphasis on marketing actors and films. The *Vicky Donor* actress wrote, "Some people find success overnight, some people have to prove themselves persistently for years. Some people are great at marketing their talent (or lack of it), some people only want their talent to speak. As an actor I just know how to act and work exceptionally hard on identifying good scripts and versatile characters, that's my talent." She said, "I don't understand or get involved much with marketing of my talent. Unfortunately for majority of our industry everything relies on marketing of a person or project and not on the depth of a script or character. May be that's the reason why people feel I am under-utilised. Anyways, Thanks so much Aavishkar for your kind words, it's truly very encouraging. I will get there eventually, slowly but steadily, one film at a time." **AGENCIES**

## Google's doodle on Sri's birth anniv

**Mumbai:** Hailed as Indian cinema's first woman superstar, Sridevi was honoured with Padma Shri, the fourth-highest civilian award given by the Government of India and now search engine giant Google Sunday celebrated the 60th birth anniversary of Indian cinema icon with a special doodle dedicated to her on-screen charisma. Born on 1963, Sridevi fell in love with movies as a child and started acting at the age of four making her debut with the Tamil movie *Kandhan Karunai*. "Today's Doodle, illustrated by Mumbai-based guest artist Bhumika Mukherjee, celebrates Indian actress Sridevi's 60th birthday! Starring in nearly three hundred

movies over the course of four decades, Sridevi made Bollywood's sweeping dramas and comedies shine, oftentimes without a male counterpart in a traditionally male-dominated industry," said the search engine in its description of the doodle. The actor gained national recognition in 1976 for K Balachander's *Moondru Mudichu*, co-starring cinema veterans Rajinikanth and Kamal Haasan.

Following her portrayal of the main character in the action-comedy *Himmatwala*, Sridevi solidified her position as a Bollywood icon. She subsequently featured in successful films such as *Sadma*, *Chaalbaaz*, *Lamhe*, *Chandani*, and *Judaai*, before temporarily stepping away from acting. She returned in 2012 with *English Vinglish* and in 2017, her final film *Mom*. Her impact on the film realm endures as she paved the way for women to assume prominent roles in Indian cinema. The actor passed away in 2018 in Dubai at the age of 54. **PTI**

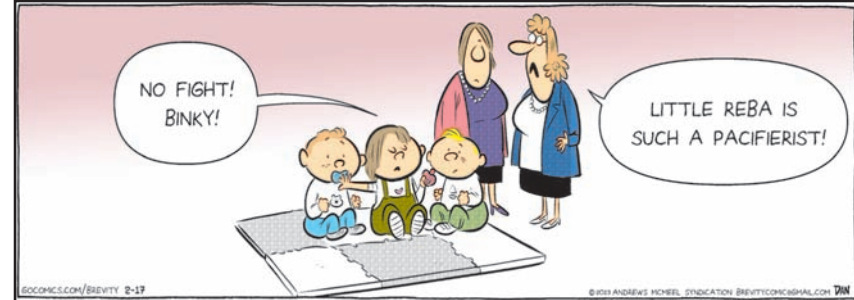
### PEANUTS



### CALVIN AND HOBBS



### BREVITY



### FUN post CROSSWORD

1	2	3	4	5	6	
7			8			
9		10			11	
12		13		14	15	
			16			
17	18			19		20
			21			
22			23			24
		25				
26					27	

**Across**

7 Brand of disgrace  
8 Steam  
9 Stick around  
10 Tree covering  
11 Highest degree  
12 Baffle  
14 Fencing move  
17 Garrisons  
19 Martial art  
22 Shark feature  
23 Boyfriend

**Down**

24 Incinerate  
26 Food flavouring  
27 Almost

6 Links club  
13 Avocado or peach seed  
15 Friend, in Bordeaux  
16 Waiting at the theatre  
18 Source  
20 Go for a leisurely walk  
21 African equine  
24 Wild pig  
25 Hen dropping

### 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.

3		8	9					
		7	6	2				
4			5		2	6		
7					8			
	8				6	3	4	
	9							
				7			1	
		6	9				5	
1				8				

### SOLUTIONS

**CROSSWORD**

B	A	D	M	A	G	I	C	D	R	Y	
A	R	I	R	O	E					O	
W	O	E	I	S	M	E	R	I	S	K	Y
L	A	J	A	D	S	O					
V	D	E	E	L	R	W					
I	N	D	I	G	O	B	O	T	T	L	E
M	E	E	O	L	D						
A	S	H	L	U	L	L	A	B	Y		
H	P	H	I	L	M						
A	L	I	B	T	C	A	P	S	U	L	E
R	E	S	H	O	F	F	E	R			
E	Y	E	S	H	E	E	P	F	E	E	

**SUDOKU**

5	1	8	4	9	2	3	6	7
2	3	7	6	5	8	1	9	4
6	4	9	1	7	3	8	2	5
4	8	3	9	2	6	7	5	1
9	6	1	7	4	5	2	8	3
7	2	5	8	3	1	6	4	9
8	9	6	3	1	4	5	7	2
1	7	2	5	6	9	4	3	8
3	5	4	2	8	7	9	1	6

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

# downtown

## Bhubaneswar witnesses big spike in dengue cases

DENGUE CASELOAD BREACHES 1K MARK IN CAPITAL CITY

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

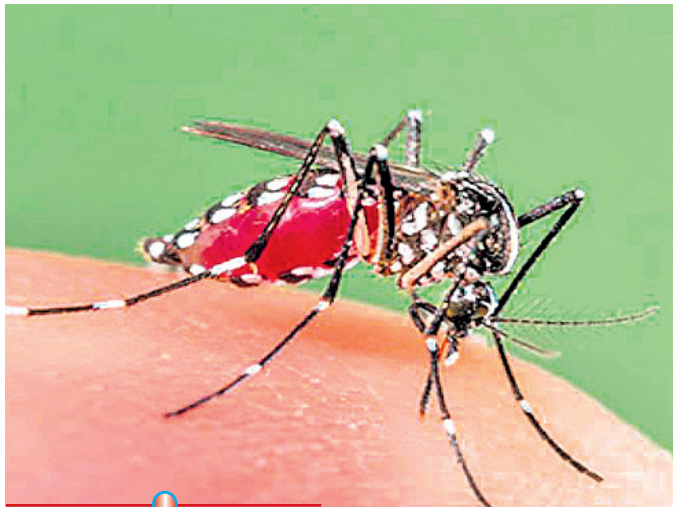
**Bhubaneswar, August 13:** The Temple City has been witnessing a big leap in the number of dengue cases for the past one month with the Capital hospital recording 50-60 daily cases.

Superintendent of Capital Hospital Dillip Panda told **OrissaPOST** Sunday that around 300-400 blood samples are received at the hospital every day for testing, out of which 50-60 are detected positive for the vector borne disease.

Only Saturday, blood samples of 393 individuals were tested and 61 of those came positive for dengue.

A hospital source said every day around 15 dengue patients are being admitted at the hospital for treatment. This deluge of patients has raised fears of an imminent shortage of beds in the near future as 48 out of the total 60 designated beds are occupied at present.

The source further informed that as many as eight to nine serious patients are being transfused with blood platelets every day. As per reports, dengue case load has breached the 1,000 mark in the Odisha capital. The figure puts Bhubaneswar at a precarious position in the



- Capital Hospital recording 50-60 cases every day
- 15 admissions daily
- 48 out of 60 dengue beds occupied
- Shortage of bed looms large
- 1,670 cases across Odisha till Aug 11

dengue map of the state where a total of 1,670 cases were reported till August 11.

Significantly, around 153 breeding sources and ground have been detected by the dengue

monitoring team of Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) till Sunday. The civic body has stepped up efforts to contain the spread of the disease by identifying and destroying it at source.

The corporation has decided to deploy drones for mosquito control in the City, while from August 15 onwards it will start levying penalty on households (Rs 1,000) and commercial establishments (Rs 5,000) if mosquito breeding grounds were found unattended on their respective premises.

## Special counter at AIIMS for CGHS beneficiaries

**Bhubaneswar:** A special registration counter was launched here in the outpatient department of AIIMS Sunday to make access to treatment hassle-free for all Central Government Health Scheme (CGHS) beneficiaries. Inaugurating the counter, AIIMS executive director Ashutosh Biswas said, "This facility will particularly be helpful for the senior citizens, retired pensioner and beneficiaries of Central Government Health Scheme, who find it difficult to submit individual reimbursement claims and follow up approvals." Through this special facility, CGHS Pensioners and other entitled categories of CGHS beneficiaries will have the advantage of accessing state of the art treatment facilities without the hassle of first making payments and then seeking reimbursements from CGHS.

GYAN RANJAN MOHAPATRA, OP

**Bhubaneswar, August 13:** The Economic Offences Wing (EOW) is facing a serious crunch of senior officials to investigate the rising cyber financial frauds in the state at present.

This is on account of the fact that the Information Technology (IT) Act 2000 mandates these cases to be investigated only by an officer in the rank of an Inspector and above, a top EOW official told **Orissa POST** Sunday. "The biggest hurdle in the probe process is the lack of enough investigating officers

## POLITICKLE by MANJUL



## Lack of officers hinders EOW probe

(IOs) as only Inspector and above rank officers can investigate cyber crime cases under the IT Act, 2000," said Jai Narayan

the menacingly rising cyber financial crimes in which hundreds of crores are being siphoned off out of the country

regular intervals. Cyber Crime and Economic Offence police stations have also been constituted in districts to probe cyber offences. Pankaj said smart phones have become a common possession even in the remotest parts of the state. The wide prevalence of internet and smart phones has made all vulnerable to cyber financial frauds. "Now the fraudsters don't need to open offices and physically meet victims to lure them into making investments in sham schemes. They are engaged in financial shenanigans by sitting outside the state and even from foreign destinations," he said.

### CYBER FINANCIAL FRAUD

Pankaj, Inspector General of Police (IGP), EOW.

Pankaj said though newly posted young officers in ranks like Sub Inspectors (SIs) and ASIs are more tech savvy and receptive to advanced level trainings, they end up assisting the senior cops in the conduct of the investigation. "This is a major problem in the wake of

every year," he added.

The EOW as well as other units of state police have in the near past busted several pan-India rackets which duped scores of gullible people from different parts of the state. The IGP said the Odisha Police have been organizing training programmes on cyber crime investigation and other related technical issues for sleuths at

## Easy loans to street vendors: Centre asks banks, civic bodies

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, August 13:** Union Minister Bhagwat K Karad has asked banks and civic bodies in Odisha, and three more states, to collaborate to achieve the goals of the PM SVANidhi scheme which was launched to help street vendors get easy loans.

Chairing a regional-level meeting Saturday to assess the scheme's progress in Bihar, Jharkhand, Odisha and West Bengal, Karad asked civic bodies to review the applications returned by banks and re-submit them after rectification.

The Minister of State for Finance also asked municipal bodies to work in a 'camp mode' and mobilise fresh applications to achieve the targets in a time-bound manner.

Karad urged urban local bodies (ULBs) to intensify their efforts with innovative strategies to enhance the digital onboarding of street vendors, a statement said. He emphasised on improvement in profiling of the scheme's beneficiaries and their families to facilitate their linkages to various Central welfare schemes, it added.



I-DAY AHEAD: Police personnel participate in full dress rehearsal for the Independence Day parade at Exhibition Ground in Bhubaneswar, Sunday

## DGP takes stock of security measures

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, August 13:** Director General Police Sunil Kumar Bansal, along with senior police officials, Sunday reviewed security arrangements for the state level 77th Independence Day celebrations, going to be held at the IDCO Exhibition Ground here, Tuesday

DGP Bansal also inspected the full dress parade rehearsal by contingents at the ground.

"Four contingents of Odisha police are participating in the pa-

### INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATIONS

rade. A contingent from neighbouring Chhattisgarh is also joining us. We have also sent one contingent to Chhattisgarh under mutual exchange programme. Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik will receive salute at the parade on the Independence Day," Bansal said.

Special arrangements have been made for flag hoisting programmes at district head quarters with extra precautions in naxal affected areas, Bansal told

Special arrangements have been made for flag hoisting programmes at district head quarters with extra precautions in naxal affected areas

media persons.

He said the Commissionerate Police have made elaborate arrangements for smooth traffic movement and security of VVIPs during the celebrations in Bhubaneswar.

"We have made security arrangements in consultations with the Special Branch and Intelligence Bureau of Odisha Police for the state level parade. Three-tier security measures at the parade ground, peripheries and beyond peripheral have been put in place. As many as 15 platoons of police force along with around 100 senior officials will be deployed for the security arrangements. DCP Pardeep Singh is personally supervising the arrangements," said Saumendra Priyadarshi, Twin City Police Commissioner.

## Tribal outfit demands withdrawal of UAPA cases against members

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, August 13:** A tribal body, which has been protesting against bauxite mining in the eco-sensitive Niyamgiri hills in Kalahandi and Rayagada districts for over a decade, has demanded immediate withdrawal of UAPA cases against its members.

The demand comes after the police framed charges under the stringent Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 against nine members of Niyamgiri Suraksha Samiti (NSS) for allegedly protesting "police action against the left-wing extremism", a senior officer said.

In a press conference Saturday, NSS leader Lingaraj Azad criticised the state government and the Rayagada district police for

registering an FIR against the nine members of the tribal body under provisions of UAPA.

A group of men and women had staged a demonstration in front of Kalyansinghpur police station August 6, seeking the whereabouts of two villagers who were allegedly picked up by policemen from Lanjigarhaat, Azad claimed.

"Initially, the police did not give the whereabouts of the two. Later, one of the villagers was booked for a 2018 rape case and the other was released," he claimed.

Alleging that the state government was "trying to stifle the local people's voice against the bauxite mining" in the eco-fragile zones of Kalahandi and Rayagada, Azad said, "The police registered an FIR against nine members of our body, in-

cluding me, under various sections of UAPA. I was not present at the protest site August 6. They have abruptly framed charges."

Rayagada Superintendent of Police (SP) Vivekanand Sharma could not be contacted for his comment, but Kalyansinghpur police station Inspector-In-Charge Sumati Mohanty, in the FIR, mentioned that around 200 people armed with lathi and weapons organised a procession at Parsali village to "protest the police action against the Left-Wing Extremism (LWE)".

"This is yet another attempt by the police to stifle the voices of local people, especially that of the Dongria Kondh community of Niyamgiri, which has been protesting against bauxite mining," Azad added.

## Storms can last for 100 years on Saturn

THE LARGEST STORM IN THE SOLAR SYSTEM, A 10,000-MILE-WIDE ANTICYCLONE CALLED THE GREAT RED SPOT, HAS ALSO DECORATED JUPITER'S SURFACE FOR HUNDREDS OF YEARS

Saturn has long-lasting megastorms with impacts deep in the atmosphere that persist for centuries, according to a new study.

Previously, only Jupiter was known to have megastorms. The largest storm in the solar system, a 10,000-mile-wide anticyclone called the Great Red Spot, has also decorated Jupiter's surface for hundreds of years.

"Understanding the mechanisms of the largest storms in the solar system puts the theory of hurricanes into a broader cosmic context, challenging our current knowledge and pushing the boundaries of terrestrial meteorology," said lead author Cheng Li, formerly at Universities of California-Berkeley and now an assistant professor at the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor.



For the new study, astronomers looked at radio emissions from Saturn, which come from below the surface, and found long-term disruptions in the distribution of ammonia gas.

They found something surprising in the radio emissions from the planet - anomalies in the concentration of ammonia gas in the atmosphere, which they

connected to the past occurrences of megastorms in the planet's northern hemisphere.

According to the team, the concentration of ammonia is lower at mid-altitudes, just below the uppermost ammonia-ice cloud layer, but has become enriched at lower altitudes, 100 to 200 km deeper in the atmosphere. They believe that the ammonia

is being transported from the upper to the lower atmosphere via the processes of precipitation and re-evaporation. The effect can last for hundreds of years.

The study, published in the journal 'Science Advances', further revealed that although both Saturn and Jupiter are made of hydrogen gas, the two gas giants are remarkably dissimilar.

While Jupiter does have tropospheric anomalies, they have been tied to its zones (whitish bands) and belts (darkish bands) and are not caused by storms like they are on Saturn. The considerable difference between these neighbouring gas giants is challenging what scientists know about the formation of megastorms on gas giants and other planets and may inform how they're found and studied on exoplanets in the future.

WORLD ORGAN DONATION DAY

# Saving a life is the greatest virtue: CM

On the occasion, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik felicitated family members of Suraj Award recipients

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

**Bhubaneswar, August 13:** Saving a life is the greatest virtue which can be achieved through organ donation, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik said on the World Organ Donation Day Sunday.

Taking to social media account, the Chief Minister said, "Odisha raises awareness on this noble act through the Suraj Samman which recognises Good Samaritan organ donors, and their invaluable service to save lives of others."

On this occasion Chief

high with their timely, selfless service.

The Chief Minister described the incident as a tragedy that shook the nation with numerous deaths, severe injuries, immense pain and unimaginable sufferings.

He offered condolences and sympathy to the family members of the deceased. He also congratulated all the volunteers and organisations who were felicitated.

Earlier, the Chief Minister thanked the family members of the recipients of Suraj Award.



Minister Naveen Patnaik presented awards to family members of recipients of Suraj Award and felicitated volunteers, institutions and response forces for their support during Bahanaga train tragedy.

Patnaik said that the emergence of human values and compassion just after the Bahanaga incident has re-established our trust in the conscience of our society.

He further said, "The incident at Bahanaga reminds us that disasters can strike at any time and anywhere. We need to enhance the capacities of our response teams and community volunteers to respond to such unpredictable disasters in a better manner. We need to be in a constant state of preparedness."

Recalling the contribution of people and agencies, he said that the people of Bahanaga, local volunteers, institutions and response forces have held our heads

Late Master Sudhanshu Sekhar Lenka of Jagatsinghpur district, Late Tanuja Kar of Cuttack district, and Late Prasenjit Mohanty of Bhubaneswar received the Suraj Award. Their vital organs were donated to save precious human lives.

Thanking the family members of Suraj Award winners, the CM said that they will always be remembered for their inspiring and exemplary humanitarian act. The family members of Suraj Award winners received a cash award of Rs 5 lakh each.

CM also paid tributes to late Suraj Behera on whose name this award is instituted and said that the sacrifice made by his parents has encouraged organ donation in the state.

Health & Family Welfare Minister Niranjan Pujari also spoke about the incident and the role of locals and district administration.



AT LORD'S COURT: People standing in queue for a 'darshan' of the deities at Srimandir in Puri, Sunday

OP PHOTO

## 'Indigenous people should engage in self-reflection'

WORLD ANTHROPOLOGY CONGRESS CONCLUDES AT KISS DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

**Bhubaneswar, August 13:** Indigenous people should engage in self-reflection, researching on their own communities which would be possible through quality education, Union Minister of Tribal Affairs Arjun Munda said.

Addressing the valedictory session of the World Anthropology Congress (WAC) at KISS Deemed to be University, Sunday, Munda said, "If we could empower the indigenous people with proper education, they would be able to solve their issues on their own."

The Union Minister spoke on Emperor Ashoka's transformation in the historic land of Kalinga as well as the intricate relationship between the cult of Jagannath and tribal culture.

On establishing a world-class museum for the indigenous people at KISS University, the Minister said, "The Tribal Affairs Ministry is ready for this collaborative project, but it could only be initiated following a formal proposal from the state government."



Praising the efforts of KIIT-KISS founder, Munda said, "Achyuta Samanta is the best human being in the world and he is a genuinely sensitive individual. He personifies how, with determination, dedication, vision and selfless hard work, success could be achieved. Every one of us should learn this from him." On learning Anthropology, he said, "We have to interact with the indigenous people as they understand nature from very first day. Without the Mother Nature our survival is also at stake."

In his address, Samanta said,

"For World Anthropology Congress, KISS is the ideal venue and best place for research on Anthropology". He recounted an international conference he attended in Europe, where a renowned Japanese anthropologist hailed KISS as the "largest anthropological laboratory of the world." Samanta also drew attention to the fact that KISS was home to 2,000 students from Jharkhand, the home state of Union Minister Arjun Munda. He mentioned that the 2023 Class X topper was also from Jharkhand.

KISS-DU VC and United India

Anthropology Forum (UIAF) President Deepak Kumar Behera said, "KISS University organised the WAC 2023 in collaboration with the UIAF, Delhi University, Utkal University and Sambalpur University. In the grand five-day event there were 350 sessions, 20 round-table meetings, 20 workshops and 120 panel discussions."

More than 1,100 anthropologists from 51 nations around the world joined and presented 1,200 research papers. There were 8 pre-congresses before the WAC and there will be 10 post-WAC sessions, he informed.

## Heavy rain likely during I-Day celebrations: IMD

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, August 13:** Several districts of the state are likely to experience heavy rain again from August 15, the regional centre of the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said Sunday.

Heavy rain will also come as relief for farmers in the rain-deficit districts of the state. Odisha has received 657.7 mm against its normal value of 713.3 mm till Sunday in this monsoon season. "During the period, 10 districts were deficient, 2 in excess and rest 18 districts were in the normal category," the regional centre tweeted.

The midday weather bulletin published by the IMD issued a yellow warning of heavy rain accompanied with thunderstorm with lightning for 2 days.

The IMD has sounded an alert



for thunderstorm with lightning for one or two places Monday in Sundargarh, Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj, Balasore, Bhadrak, Jajpur, Malkangiri, Koraput, Rayagada, Gajapati, Ganjam, Puri, Khurda, and Kandhamal districts. Light to moderate rain or thundershower is also likely at many places in north Odisha and at a few places in the southern districts of the state.

Similarly, heavy rainfall may occur at one or two places Tuesday in Sundargarh, Deogarh, Keonjhar Mayurbhanj, Sambalpur, Angul, Dhenkanal, Bhadrak, Balasore, Cuttack, Jajpur, Kendrapada and Boudh districts. Light to moderate rain or thundershower is also likely at most places in north Odisha and at many places in the southern districts of the state.

## NHRC seeks ATR on human sacrifice

AGENCIES

**Kendrapara, August 13:** The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has issued notice to Chief Secretary and DGP on its alleged failure in acting on human sacrifice, sorcery, aghori, black magic and witchcraft in the state and sought an action taken report (ATR) within four weeks including the steps taken by the state for curbing the menace of human sacrifices/murders.

Acting on a petition of Human Rights Activist Radhakanta Tripathy, the NHRC August 11 last asked the Chief Secretary and the DGP to submit a report on the steps taken by the state for curbing the menace of human sacrifices in name of sorcery, black magic and witchcraft in four weeks.

Tripathy pointed out that due to failure, negligence and inaction of the state government, the prolonged problems arising out of superstitions continue in the state.

Citing recent case of human sacrifice of a minor boy in Angul district, Tripathy requested the NHRC to ensure justice to the victims and their families with a permanent solution of the heinous practice.

The NHRC, in its order stated the complainant has cited a number of incidents of human sacrifices happened recently and alleged that the root cause of these barbaric acts is negligence on part of state officials in implementing the Odisha Prevention of Witch Hunting Act 2013.

## BMC LAUNCHES 'SHINE' TO KEEP THE CITY CLEAN

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

**Bhubaneswar, August 13:** To ensure that all measures to maintain the City's cleanliness are enforced properly, Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) Mayor Sulochana Das Sunday launched Team SHINE (sanitation and hygiene inspection for neat environment) in presence of deputy mayor Manjulata Kanhar, Police Commissioner SK Priyadarshi and BMC Commissioner Vijay Amruta Kulange.

Team SHINE comprises of 10



teams of 5 or 6 members each and will be responsible for reinforcing sanitation and hygiene practices across the Capital.

These teams will work closely with Sanitation Inspectors (SIs) in each ward, seeking citizen participation towards cleanliness.

Along with the 67 SIs, these teams will conduct enforcement visits across the City to check for illegal dumping of garbage. Initially, the teams will inform the public about the sanitation norms and later will take strict action against rule violators.

"The launch event showcased the commitment of various key figures, including Das, who emphasized the importance of maintaining cleanliness for a healthier and more vibrant Bhubaneswar. Others present in the event highlighted that col-

laborative effort is necessary to achieve this goal," said a BMC official.

Earlier, given the spike in dengue cases in the City, the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) had appealed to all citizens, commercial establishments, public offices and institutions to take preventive measures to contain the spread of the vector-borne disease. It also said that from August 15 onwards households and commercial establishments will be penalised if mosquito breeding grounds are left unattended to.

## Gene therapy shows promise for children with kidney disease

British researchers have made a remarkable step forward in finding a potential cure for a type of childhood kidney disease.

The team from the University of Bristol showed that just one dose of gene therapy targeting cells in the kidney has the potential to cure a condition known as steroid-resistant nephrotic syndrome.

The findings, published in the journal Science Translational Medicine, suggested that replacing one faulty gene that codes for a protein known as podocin could cure the condition. Podocin is a protein essential for the functioning of cells called podocytes which have a critical role within the kid-

ney's filtration system. Nephrotic syndrome is a condition where the kidney's filtering units are damaged, allowing large amounts of protein that should be kept in the bloodstream to leak into the urine.

This can lead to swelling, particularly in the eyes and legs, and an increased risk of infections and blood clots, and the risk of kidney damage. It can occur at any age but is most commonly diagnosed in children under five years old.

Often the symptoms can be managed with a type of medication known as steroids, however, around 10 per cent of children with nephrotic syndrome do not respond to steroids and many will go on to develop kid-



ney failure and will need dialysis or transplant within two to five years.

This is the group where a faulty gene is frequently the cause of the disease.

"We are hoping that this treat-

ment could be curative. You keep the same podocytes for life, so if we can change their gene expression right at the beginning of the disease, we should be able to prevent this disease from progressing," said Professor Moin

Saleem, from the Bristol Medical School.

"With most kidney diseases, there is a reasonable window of opportunity, often years, before you get irreversible damage to the kidneys, where we would hope to be able to intervene with gene therapy and avoid the need for dialysis or transplantation," he added.

The discovery could bring major benefits to hundreds of children who currently suffer from nephrotic syndrome.

If the intervention works, patients will be saved from a life of kidney failure and subsequent dialysis and transplant treatments. For gene therapy to be successful, researchers must make sure the new genetic ma-

terial reaches the right cells and is used by those cells for a long time to restore their normal function.

The team used a virus - incapable of causing disease but excellent at carrying genetic information directly into cells - called adeno-associated virus (AAV) to deliver the podocin gene to the correct cell type.

Using this technique, the team members were able to replace the original faulty gene in the podocytes, successfully treating several different laboratory-based models of nephrotic syndrome.

Further research in the coming years will determine whether the therapy is viable to be used within the health service.

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**SPREADING THE MESSAGE:** CRPF personnel taking out a bike rally as part of awareness drive on 'Har Ghar Tiranga' programme in Khaprakhol block of Bolangir district, Sunday

# Chunaghati on NH-520 turns into a deathtrap

RAJESH MOHANTY, OP

**Rourkela, August 13:** Chunaghati stretch on NH-520, a busy transport corridor, has become extremely accident-prone as the frequency of mishaps taking place on this hilly stretch of road is very high.

The NH-520 links Koira and Rajamunda. Chunaghati stretch is situated between Jamdihi and Toda. This road is famous for the transportation of minerals, mainly iron ore mined from this mineral-rich region. Hundreds of heavy to very heavy vehicles carrying minerals ply every day on this particular stretch of the national highway.

The latest mishap took place August 8 when a local truck and a hyva collided. Two people got stuck in the mangled vehicles.

After four hours of hard labour and rescue efforts using different machinery and gas cutters, the duo had a miraculous save. They were later shifted to Rourkela for further treatment. The available data shows more than 30 persons on this stretch have either died or survived accidents with loss of limbs leaving them disabled.

Notably, the topography of the hilly road is slightly different from other roads. The slope here is very long making it difficult to manoeuvre when heavily loaded vehicles move the slope. Besides, there are deep gorges on either side of the road in some places. Sometimes, trucks catch fire after accidents. In addition, mobile network coverage is very erratic on the entire stretch. Owing to this fact, emergency services like police,

ambulance and fire brigade take time to reach here. News gets spread only when any of the locals living down the hilly road discovers about the mishap.

Locals complain that accidents are occurring frequently largely due to the faulty construction of the road. However, an NHAI official said, "It is not faulty construction; rather the road is very different from regular hilly stretches making people think that it is faulty."

A local Parsu Oram said, "At least mobile network coverage should be strengthened so that someone can at least relay the information soon and rescue and other emergency services can reach there early." Bonai SDPO Swaraj Debata could not be reached for his comment on the situation as his phone went unanswered.

## Cultural campaign held ahead of I-Day



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Koraput, August 13:** Theatre troupe Nandanik Saturday observed 'Meri Maati Mera Desh', a culminating campaign of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav (AKAM) in three blocks - Koraput, Jeypore and Semiliguda - of this district. Under the programme, National Flag was unfurled, 'Maati Daan' soil was placed in 'Amrit Kalash' and a pledge was taken.

This apart, the troupe members participated in plantation programme and 'Har Ghar Tiranga', a campaign under the aegis of AKAM to encourage people to bring home the Tricolour and to hoist it to mark this year's Independence Day.

Nandanik also staged a patriotic street play on the occasion. The programme, with support from Eastern Zonal Culture Centre, Ministry of Culture, Government of India, was concluded with recitation of the National Anthem.

# BJD likely to field women, newbies

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Sambalpur, August 13:** The ruling Biju Janata Dal (BJD) may field women candidates in at least one or two Assembly segments while it is likely to opt for new faces in rest of the four Assembly segments in Sambalpur district, a report said Sunday.

Anticipating an early election, all political parties have launched hectic preparations here as the general election draws nearer. The district has four Assembly segments namely Sambalpur, Rengali, Kuchinda and Redhakhole and the lone Sambalpur Lok Sabha segment. BJD is also preparing its battle plan and trying to stitch up the loopholes that have been plaguing the party in the western district.

The ruling party has started its preparations in earnest after its organisational secretary and Jajpur MLA Pranab Prakash Das alias Bobby was appointed as observer for the party organisation in the district.

Das, accompanied by Bhatli MLA Susant Singh, is touring the district and holding talks with leaders to iron out the differ-

ences among them. He has even called the frontline leaders in these four Assembly segments to Sankha Bhawan in Bhubaneswar in order to find out their problems and seek their opinions.

He has even asked the party leaders to bury their differences and work unitedly for the party. The ruling party is reportedly plagued by intense factionalism here with leaders conducting parallel programmes in all the Assembly seats. Aware of this, observer Das pulled up the party leaders and asked them to mend fences and work unitedly for the party.

Meanwhile, there are several aspirants in all four Assembly constituencies. Among the aspirants, there are women leaders, youths, senior leaders, newcomers and a highly qualified youth who is yet to join the party. The district's party leaders are tightlipped on the probable candidates. They have said that the party will field only those candidates who will be nominated by the party supremo and Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik.

However, speculation is rife that BJD may prioritise women leaders and field them from one or two Assembly seats in the

## SAMBALPUR DISTRICT



The ruling party is reportedly plagued by intense factionalism here with leaders conducting parallel programmes in all the Assembly seats

Observer Pranab Prakash Das, accompanied by Bhatli MLA Susant Singh, is touring the district and holding talks with leaders to iron out the differences among them

district in the 2024 elections.

The party played the woman card in 2019 elections and fielded former MLA Raseswari Panigrahi from Sambalpur Assembly seat who had won in 2014 elections from the same seat. She, however, lost the elections to BJP's Jaymarayan Mishra in 2019.

Similarly, the party also fielded an engineer Reena Tanti from Rengali seat in 2019 but she was trounced in the election. It only won from Kuchinda and

Redhakhole where it had fielded Kishore Nayak and Rohit Pujari as its candidates respectively.

The party lost two seats by fielding women candidates but it may again field women candidates from at least one or two seats owing to the dearth of female leaders in comparison to male leaders in the district.

It is learnt that some party leaders are also interested to field their female kin or wife from the women seat and work from behind. Reliable sources

said that the party may not field the female kin of party leaders and opt for other women candidates.

The party may give its ticket to any woman who is talented and well-known, having good organisation skills if they do come from any political family. Some party workers stated that the party may once again field a woman from Rengali Assembly seat which is set to leave all those aspiring for tickets disappointed.

Chatters were abuzz about whether the party will field a new candidate in Sambalpur or pit former MLA Raseswari Panigrahi. Several youth and senior leaders are aspiring for the party ticket from this seat.

In Redhakhole seat, MLA Pujari's vote margin increased by 8,000 votes in 2019 elections than the 2014 elections. The party received a drubbing in this Assembly seat where it lost one Zilla Parishad zone and the post of NAC chairperson which established the weakness in the party organisation. Similarly, MLA Kishore Nayak's popularity is also on decline in Kuchinda seat which is witnessed in the form of factional war in party meetings.

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Rourkela, August 13:** DSP Prabhat Kumar Biswal, who was earlier posted at Sundargarh police headquarters and is presently serving at Jajpur district headquarters has been adjudged to receive the Home Minister's medal for the outstanding ability he showed during investigation.



Biswal was posted at different police stations in Rourkela. He started his career in 2009 here and was posted to Bisra, Sector-19 and Chhend police stations. Biswal's ability always remained to carry out the investigations in a typical manual book manner. And so far he has managed to solve 21 cases leading to convictions. He has been awarded by the SP and range DIG on several occasions. Biswal is also a sports enthusiast and yoga exponent.

# Ganjam WSHGs to make 4L Tricolours for I-Day

**1,700 MEMBERS OF 73 WSHGS AND PRODUCERS' GROUPS IN ALL 22 BLOCKS OF THE DISTRICT AND BEMC AREA ARE ENGAGED IN MAKING 4 LAKH NATIONAL FLAGS**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Berhampur, August 13:** 30-year-old Jhili Moharana of Ganjam district has been relentlessly stitching Tricolours for the second edition of the 'Har Ghar Tiranga' programme to be held this Independence Day.

Jhili, secretary of a tailoring group under Mission Shakti in Hinjili, is among 1,700 members of 73 women self-help groups (WSHGs) and producers' groups

in all 22 blocks of the district and Berhampur Municipal Corporation (BeMC) who are engaged in making four lakh national flags that will flutter on government buildings in the district on Independence Day.

The WSHGs have almost completed their task, a government officer said. "The initiative not only brings extra earnings for them, but also awakens the patriotic spirit among people," said Meeta Swain, secretary of a tailoring unit in Sheragada.



The flags made by the WSHGs will flutter on all government buildings across the district August 15, said Keerthi Vassan V, chief executive officer, Ganjam Zilla Parishad.

In the first edition of the 'Har Ghar Tiranga' programme last year, around 700 members of the WSHGs of 14 blocks had prepared around 2.50 lakh national flags which were distributed across the district, officials said.

"Our group has received an order to stitch 5,480 national flags. Each flag measures 20x30 square-inches and costs ₹25. The flags will be completed before August 14 and given to the district administration. "We have engaged 45 members to meet the target," said Jyoti Nayak, president of Matru Shakti tailoring producers' group at Padmapur in Sheragada block.

"We have distributed the work among 73 WSHGs in the district and all of them have been asked to complete it before August 14," said Padmanabh Panda, chief executive officer, Ganjam Producers' Company Limited, the marketing wing of the WSHGs.



**AGAINST DRUG ABUSE:** A bicycle awareness rally on drug abuse was taken out at Atharbanki in Paradip, Sunday. The rally was jointly organised by Neelachakra Youth Club and Vivekananda Youth Club in Paradip and voluntary outfit of Banidhara of Kujang in Jagatsinghpur district

## ODIA JAWAN DIES IN MANIPUR

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bheden, August 13:** Coming close on the heels of the death of a CRPF jawan in an encounter with Maoists in Jharkhand, another Odia jawan working in Assam Rifles-7 died in a road mishap in Manipur, Friday night.

The deceased jawan was identified as Nilachal Patel, 48, youngest son of Adi Patel in Baghapali Sunalambha village under Bheden block in Bargharh district. He joined the Assam Rifles in 2004 and was posted at Manipur.

According to reports, an Assam Rifles vehicle met with an accident during patrolling in Manipur injuring Patel fatally. He succumbed to his injuries Saturday.

His body was flown from the army camp in Manipur to Kolkata, Sunday from where it will be brought to Bargharh in an ambulance and arrive in his native village Monday morning, his elder brother Nilambar Patel said. His last rites will be performed in the village with all full state honour, he said. A pall of gloom and mourning spread in the area after reports of his death spread.

# Snakebite cases on rise in Rourkela

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Rourkela, August 13:** Snakebite is a known hazard in Rourkela region resulting in loss of lives, chronic physical disability, enormous suffering and premature deaths.

The Steel City experiences extreme tropical weather. Besides, it has a unique terrain surrounded by hills and rivers, rich in flora and fauna. All these factors lead to an increased probability of human-snake encounters here. This year there have been 92 cases of snakebite so far resulting in five deaths.

"Given the total numbers of snakebite cases, death rate is very low and this is very heartening. This is due to the quick medical attention the victims are receiving," said the medical staff at Rourkela Government Hospital (RGH).

RGH has received the maximum number of snakebite cases. It received eight patients in the month of April. "This is the time when we start receiving snakebite cases," informed the director of RGH Santosh K



Swain. In the month of May, the number was six with no death, followed by 22 cases in the month of June with two deaths and 33 in the month of July resulting in three casualties.

The total comes to 69 cases in RGH alone, of which maximum patients were males (48) and the rest were females. Similarly, the data available from Ispat General Hospital (IGH) of Rourkela Steel Plant (RSP) says the total number of cases received so far is 26. And there are no reported cases of death there. The August data

said chief pharmacist Jaydev Mohanty of RGH. He further added, "There were maximum numbers of cobra bite cases and then 'chiti' or kraits as far as we can ascertain from the bite marks." Snakebite victims come to RGH from every nook and corner of Sundargarh district and also from Giridih and other nearby places of Jharkhand.

The heartening fact is the less number of deaths. "This is happening because of the awareness being created by the government to prevent snakebite deaths. People are now aware that anti-venom is the only cure against snakebites, not the blind acts of black magic," said the director.

At IGH, eight critical cases were treated in the intensive care unit. "We have sufficient stock of anti-venom to treat these cases. At least no one will suffer from the non-availability of anti-venom," said the head pharmacist of RGH. And the case is the same with IGH where anti-venom is available in sufficient numbers to meet any emergency, informed a doctor there.



were not compiled in both the hospitals.

"The snakebite cases start appearing from the month of April with the onset of summer and continue till October, when the rains finally stop,"

**EAST COAST RAILWAY**  
Tender No. MSM-TADK-SBP-16-23  
NAME OF WORK : ENGAGEMENT OF ATTENDANT IN LIEU OF TADK FOR A PERIOD OF THREE YEARS ON OUTSOURCING IN SAMBALPUR DIVISION.  
Approximate Cost of the Work (₹) : 82,97,135.40, EMD (₹) : 1,66,000.00, Cost of Tender Document (₹) : 5,900/-, Completion Period of the work : Three Years  
Closing Date & Time : At 1600 hrs. of 22.08.2023.  
Manual offers are not allowed against this tender and any such manual offer received shall be ignored.  
Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-tender is available in website : <http://www.ireps.gov.in>  
Sr. Divisional Mechanical Engineer, Sambalpur  
PR-444/O/23-24

**EAST COAST RAILWAY**  
Tender No. eT-M-AMC-FT-PUII-016-2023  
NAME OF WORK : ANNUAL MAINTENANCE CONTRACT OF AXLE MOUNTED DISC BRAKE SYSTEM OF M/S FAVELEY MAKE IN LHB TYPE COACHES AT COACHING DEPOT, PURI FOR A PERIOD OF THREE YEARS.  
Advised Value (₹) : 15,57,73,677.38  
EMD (₹) : 9,28,900.00, Period of Completion : 36 Months.  
Bidding Start Date : 11.08.2023  
Closing Date & Time : At 1300 hrs. of 25.08.2023.  
Manual offers are not allowed against this tender and any such manual offer received shall be ignored.  
Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-tender is available in website : <http://www.ireps.gov.in>  
Sr. Divisional Mechanical Engineer, Khurda Road  
PR-438/O/23-24

Turn all things to honey; this is the law of divine living.

SRI AUROBINDO



# Hope for Amazon

Climate Change has impacted every single nation around the globe and its effects are accentuated this year with disastrous results. A lot of promises and assurances towards climate action by rich nations made in various international meets including the United Nations Climate Change Conference or Conference of the Parties (COP) have failed to see results. However, when a political leader is committed to fulfilling pledges he made to the people of his country, it can have far reaching effects on not just his country but beyond the borders as well. This is what is happening in the case of Brazil which is likely to have positive consequences for Latin America and the rest of the world.

In October, 2022 Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva of Brazil won the election on the pledge of protecting the rainforest of Amazon against the rapacity of timber mafia and business conglomerates ruthlessly exploiting the natural resources. He defeated Jair Bolsonaro by the narrow margin of 1.8%. But, that small margin opened a large window of opportunities to save the Amazon and the Earth from monumental environmental disaster. When Bolsonaro was in power, the Amazon rainforest, known as the 'Lungs of the Planet', was being exploited and denuded at an alarming rate. The extent of crimes against planet Earth committed by Bolsonaro and his accomplices can be gauged from the fact that in one year alone from August 2021 to July 2022, the area of Amazon rainforest that was cleared to serve the interests of big businesses measured the size of Qatar, according to an estimate.

Inversely, Lula's government decided to reverse the trend from the day it assumed office. He took a series of measures to impose sanctions on companies involved in illegal deforestation and set the army to end illegal mining operations, while new conservation areas have been established. The result is for all to see - deforestation dropped by 42% during Lula's first seven months in office.

In this backdrop, a regional summit of eight Latin American countries forming the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization (ACTO) and sharing the Amazon rainforest, was held August 8 in Belem near the Amazon River delta in Brazil to prepare a blueprint for sustainable development. Such an event was the first in the past 14 years.

Hard statistics paint a grim picture of the toll the rainforest has taken for man's greed for natural resources. Over the past five decades, deforestation has already wiped out 17% of the Amazon rainforest, 60% of which is in Brazil alone. Continued deforestation threatens to turn this immense carbon sponge into a net emitter of greenhouse gases, with the potential to trigger disastrous chain reactions throughout the world.

Lula has taken the lead during the past seven months as Brazil's President in reactivating the ACTO to promote the idea of shared responsibility among the Latin American countries where the Amazon rainforest is located. He has also roped in countries such as France, the two Congos, Indonesia and major donors Germany and Norway for protection of the Amazon. Such commitment to arrest climate change has not been seen since the historic Rio Summit in 1992.

Surely, the initiative is just a beginning by Latin American countries to bestir themselves to protect the Amazon and fight climate change on their own without relying on the plethora of promises without much substantive action made by Europe and the USA. They have a long way to go. There are some internal contradictions which came to the fore at the summit when Colombian President Gustavo Petro called for a halt to all oil exploration in the Amazon rainforest. Lula avoided making any concrete commitment in this regard since Brazil's state-owned oil company, Petrobras, has a huge project in the mouth of the Amazon. The summit has also failed to formalise a target of ending deforestation by 2030 - a commitment already adopted by Lula's Brazil which has proved to be key to the progress his government has made this year. Leaders at the summit were also unable to agree on a common position on the future of industries such as cattle farming and oil, which have been wreaking havoc on the rainforest.

Yet, the summit declaration has identified important new areas of cooperation in combating illegal logging, mining and fires in the Amazon. This gives hope for the protection of one of the most important rainforests in the planet. It is now up to the richer nations who have benefited from exploitation of the Amazon's resources to help the remarkable initiative become truly successful with their cooperation.

## WISDOM CORNER

By three methods we may learn wisdom: First, by reflection, which is noblest; second, by imitation, which is easiest; and third by experience, which is the bitterest."

CONFUCIUS

The secret of life, though, is to fall seven times and to get up eight times.

PAULO COELHO

The journey is what brings us happiness not the destination.

DAN MILLMAN

## WORDSWORTH

### Minigarch

A minigarch is like an oligarch, only less well-endowed in the back-pocket department. It's a weird formation, not least because oligarch means a member of a small group that holds power in a state (from Greek oligoi, few, plus archein, to rule), and strictly has nothing to do with money. But the term has long been tainted with the implication that oligarchs use their great power to gather riches; in particular it has been used for members of the nomenklatura, former Communist Party appointees, who were most directly involved in gaining wealth in post-communist Russia. The Financial Times wrote in January 2001, "The oligarchs divided up among themselves the most valuable state companies, which Yeltsin privatized under fire-sale conditions." Minigarch appeared in British newspapers in 2006, an early instance in the Independent on 26 May: "Vladimir Gusinsky, 53, used to be one of Russia's most powerful media magnates, but he lost almost everything and is now more minigarch than oligarch." It has never been common, though it turned up several times in 2007, but the global financial turmoil of 2008 hit the Russian super-rich especially hard and the word has had a resurgence. Moscow's exclusive watering holes, such as this expensive fusion restaurant near the Kremlin, are still hosting so-called minigarchs and the merely wealthy further down the scale (NPR Morning Edition, 15 Oct. 2008). A lower oil price may affect the geopolitical ambitions of Russia and its allies. Some oligarchs may become minigarchs. But Russia will not need to beg for cash from the outside world (The Economist, 23 Oct. 2008).

### Misanthrope

A misanthrope dislikes the human race and avoids human society as far as possible. He - most people called misanthropes are male - isn't an easy person to get along with, and he would greatly prefer you didn't try. Misanthrope is from the classical Greek misanthropos. It shares with misogyny and a few other words a beginning from misein, to hate. The second part is from anthropos, a human being, which we also have in words such as anthropology. From the same source, philanthropy is the opposite of misanthropy, literally a love of mankind that expresses itself in active efforts to help other people. History and fiction record many misanthropes. The best-known fictional one is Alceste, in Molière's comedy Le Misanthrope of 1666, which helped to popularise the word. The most famous real person was Timon, though strictly speaking we have to take the word of a couple of classical Greek writers that he actually existed.



Kelly Born

CONCERNS ARE GROWING REGARDING HOW GENERATIVE AI WILL AFFECT ELECTIONS

Predicting how generative artificial intelligence might affect democracy is a formidable challenge, given that its potential applications are still largely unknown - and seem virtually limitless. While narrow AI tools, designed for specific tasks like reconciling voter records, are already in use in various countries, the impact of generative AI is harder to foresee. This technology is not merely another app, like a social-media platform, but rather a foundational technology more akin to the emergence of the internet itself. It will influence democracy both directly, transforming the mechanics of elections and governance, and indirectly, as it threatens to shift the very foundations of information ecosystems, public trust, and opinion.

In terms of direct impact, generative AI could revolutionise policymaking by enabling a more accurate and nuanced understanding of potential policy outcomes. Organisations like Climate Change AI, for example, already use this technology to explore how "roads, power grids, and water mains must be designed to account for the increasing frequency and severity of extreme weather events." Law-enforcement agencies use it for surveillance and predictive policing. More recently, lawyers and judges have begun to employ generative AIs like ChatGPT to assist them in filing cases and even in issuing court rulings.

Meanwhile, concerns are growing regarding how generative AI will affect elections. At least 45 countries will hold elections in 2024, including globally consequential races in the United States and the European Union. While narrow AI is already helping to streamline election administration, generative AI could introduce new biases and uncertainties. America's highly decentralised election system, for example, encompasses 10,000 jurisdictions, with each state maintaining separate voter records that must be

## FOCUS TECHNOLOGY

# AI & DEMOCRACY



At its core, democracy depends on citizens' trust in both leaders and institutions to represent their interests. But trust is fragile and must be safeguarded

constantly updated as voters move, die, or otherwise become ineligible. Narrow AI systems are now extensively used in this process, and while they can boost efficiency, early evidence suggests that the algorithms used to maintain voter rolls struggle with matching Asian names and may be biased against minorities in general. Similar biases have been identified in the use of AI for signature verification, a common requirement for mail-in ballots.

But AI's influence could easily extend beyond merely administering elections; it could also be used to help shape electoral rules and structures, affecting how competitive elections are, the degree of political polarisation, voter turnout, and candidate incentives. As many as 90% of US Congressional districts are considered "safe" from a partisan perspective - meaning that the outcome is typically predictable, favouring either Republicans or Democrats. There are now dozens of apps helping legislators draw district lines. While advanced generative AI programmes could be used to improve the fairness and representativeness of the US political system, they could just as easily enable even more repressive partisan gerrymandering by political incumbents, further shielding parties and candidates from genuine competition. Beyond redistricting, generative AI could facilitate

other structural reforms. European countries, for example, use a mix of closed and preferential voting. By contrast, the US uses single-member winner-take-all districts. Reformers seeking to promote moderation and reduce polarisation debate the merits of reforms such as ranked-choice voting, open primaries, and proportional representation. Yet the potential impact of these changes across diverse political environments and contexts, and their potential interaction effects when combined, remain unclear. Generative AI could shed light on these complex dynamics, enhancing our ability to estimate electoral reforms' long-term effects.

While these changes would directly influence the mechanics of democracy, the indirect effects are perhaps more concerning. AI is likely to disrupt labour markets profoundly, with all of the attendant political fallout. It may also reshape the information ecosystems that governments, candidates, and voters rely on. Generative AI could prove to be a valuable asset for journalists, streamlining tasks such as summarising government hearings, organising contributions from various sources, and even assisting in the drafting and editing of articles. And it could result in even more journalists being laid off.

Social-media platforms could use AI to moderate online content, combating the spread of

election disinformation and sparing human content moderators from the often traumatic task of screening the internet's most offensive content. But generative AI will also almost certainly exacerbate today's disinformation crisis, making it easier to craft highly personalised, persuasive content that can be tested, tweaked, tailored, and targeted across all media. In April, the Republican Party released its first-ever AI-generated attack ad against US President Joe Biden. It is not far-fetched to imagine a political landscape flooded with cheaply produced ads (or even podcasts) using the voices or images of trusted sources and crafted to manipulate specific audiences, using personal online histories to identify and exploit psychological vulnerabilities. Whether this really is a game-changer remains to be seen.

Generative AI's capacity to create persuasive disinformation in multiple languages could also be a boon for foreign adversaries, previously plagued by a lack of language and cultural fluency. At the same time, pro-democracy advocates could use these tools to develop more persuasive anti-authoritarian messaging micro-targeted at the most vulnerable communities. As it stands, however, democratic voices are significantly outnumbered and outgunned.

At its core, democracy depends on citizens' trust in both leaders and institutions to represent their interests. But trust is fragile and must be safeguarded. While generative AI could offer significant benefits in fields such as medicine, manufacturing, and education, its impact on democracy must be carefully considered. Otherwise, it will undermine, rather than strengthen, rule by the people.

The writer is Director of the Democracy, Rights, and Governance initiative at the David and Lucile Packard Foundation.

PROJECT SYNDICATE

## SPECTRUM ECONOMY

# Flawed red letter priorities

Speaking at the US India Business Council's India Ideas Summit on 10 August, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman flagged three red letter priorities - job creation, not escheving the high growth path and equitable wealth distribution. Surprisingly, inflation has been taken off the radar. Given the fact that unemployment is hovering around 8.1% (Economist) to 8.3% (CMIE) and high growth since economic liberalisation has made the biggest impact on poverty, red-flagging both of them as priority markers makes sense. What is surprising is her priority for equitable wealth distribution, given the fact that her predecessor the late Arun Jaitley had abolished Wealth Tax in February 2016. What is also surprising is that she has not flagged the serious development deficits like poor quality school education in our government schools, 33% of children suffering from malnutrition and 50.4% of women of reproductive age suffering from anaemia (NFHS V report) as red flag priority.

One of the enigmas of liberalisation is the huge mismatch between high GDP growth and negligible employment genera-

tion. The years 2004-2009 witnessed an average growth of 8.7% while the growth in employment has been only 0.1%.

The position is no better under the BJP dispensation with around 6% average growth and additional employment of around 0.6% during 2014-2019. This is largely due to the fact that the share of manufacturing, which has the best spin-offs in employment generation, is stagnant, while the service sector has really taken off with very little potential for massive employment generation. The National Manufacturing Zone Policy (2011) unveiled by V Krishnamoorthi had targeted a rise in the GDP share of manufacturing from 16% to 25% in a decade's time. The Committee had also assessed that the proposed manufacturing zones will generate additional 10 million jobs per year. This was based on the experience of countries like Germany, Japan, China and South Korea which have profited hugely through global manufacturing hubs. The progress of India in regard to the creation of manufacturing zones is sporadic and confined to a few states. The poll promise of the BJP to cre-

ate 10 million jobs has largely remained unreddeemed.

Barro & Martin in their seminal book Economic Growth aver that economic growth leads to a substantial reduction in poverty. They bring out how the poverty percentage globally has come down from 20% in 1970 to 7% in 2000 due to an increase in growth. This has been the experience in India too. As Prof. Tendulkar brings out, with the increase in average growth rate 3% before liberalisation to around 7% (1991-2011), the percentage of people below poverty line fell from 45.3% in 1991 to 21.9% by 2011.

While the relationship between the increase in growth and poverty reduction is positive, a similar correlation does not exist between high growth and income inequality reduction. As a matter of fact, the World Inequality Report (2022) brings out that the top 10% account for 52% share of total global income and 76% of wealth. On the contrary, the share of the bottom 50% in income and wealth is 8.5% and 2% respectively. India is not an outlier in this propitiation of the super-rich as Regan paved the path in the 70s, Thatcher followed in the 80s and

Manmohan in the 90s. Modi is carrying on molly-cuddling the super-rich since 2014.

This drives us to two central questions that Sitharaman has parried; should India's growth story be fuelled by debt or improved tax collection and how significant human capability development (Sen) can be created to walk hand in hand with high growth (Bhagwati).

The World Inequality Report rightly brings out that with modest rates of wealth tax and marginal increase in tax rates of the super-rich, countries like India will not only eliminate poverty and hunger, two cardinal targets of SDG, but also be able to fund several social sector programmes. While people below the poverty line are around 21.9%, the SDG report by NITI Ayog on India disturbingly shows that the Multi-Dimensional Poverty percentage is 27.9%. This index combines health, education, and living standards. By getting fixated on the Bhagwati Model of high growth, Sitharaman has missed the red line of multi-dimensional deprivation of the common man.

The writer teaches macro economics.



Satya Narayan Misra

ONE OF THE ENIGMAS OF LIBERALISATION IS THE HUGE MISMATCH BETWEEN HIGH GDP GROWTH AND NEGLIGIBLE EMPLOYMENT GENERATION

## Justified allegation

Sir, This refers to "Manipur crisis: Rahul attacks PM". The Congress leader Rahul Gandhi has levelled a most justified allegation against Prime Minister Narendra Modi for failing to adopt the best course of action available with the government to douse the Manipur fire. Instead, the authority allowed the miscreants to indulge in all sorts of violence leading to the loss of precious lives. The Prime Minister was not seen at all concerned about Manipur violence during his speech in the Parliament against the no-confidence motion as if the violence of this magnitude does not deserve the government's special attention. Modi was found cracking jokes in Parliament and surprisingly he was not stopped and/or reprimanded by the Speaker. This is most unfair on the part of the Speaker.

Arun Gupta, KOLKATA

## Revamp of laws

Sir, The tabling of three Bills in the Lok Sabha on Friday sounds the death knell of British-era criminal laws. The Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita Bill, 2023 replaces the IPC and punishes mob lynching with death and the false promise of marriage with a 10-year jail sentence. Armed rebellion, subversion, separatism, and endangerment of India's sovereignty are now crimes. The new Bill also allows trials of absconders and fugitives in absentia. The revamp of criminal laws has the potential to be a game-changer.

NJ Ravi Chander, BANGALORE

## Change partners

Sir, It is said that the foundation of every state is the education of its youth and a nation's youth are the trustees of its posterity. The contribution of youth towards making the world environmentally sustainable and climate friendly is now focused upon. There are approximately 1.8 billion youngsters in the age group of 10 to 24 years across the globe. Youth are potent instruments in nation building, and the world recognises youth as "change partners" who play a significant part in fostering peace and harmony. About 87 per cent of the world's youngsters live in developing countries which emphasise their vitality to bring in positive changes in the community.

Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA

# 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

OrissaPOST  
B-15, Rasulgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

# WB Cong adopts wait and watch policy for BJI 2.0



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Kolkata, August 13:** As the Congress nationally is getting enthused over the Bharat Jodo Yatra 2.0 by their leader Rahul Gandhi, in West Bengal the enthusiasm is yet to pick up.

There is no clear roadmap of how the Congress in West Bengal will participate in the mega event or which leaders of the allies of the Indian National Development Inclusive Alliance (INDIA) will be invited to participate in the event.

State Congress leaders like S Aich Roy feel that the state unit of the party is waiting for specific instructions from the party high command. "The situation in West Bengal is tricky considering our arch political rival in the state, the ruling Trinamool Congress, is also a part of the INDIA alliance. As regards the CPI (M) - led Left Front there is not much complication since we are already having an understanding with them at the state level. So we are waiting for instructions from our high command on whether we will be inviting leaders of other INDIA constituents to participate in the event," said a senior Congress leader who did not wish to be named.

He admitted there is a high possibility that leaders from no other INDIA constituent from West Bengal might be invited for the event. "In the case of West Bengal we are having an understanding with the CPI (M) - led Left Front, which is the Congress's principal opposition in Kerala. So in case the Left

Front leaders in West Bengal are invited for the event, our Kerala unit might be offended. So we have decided to leave the decision entirely to our high command," he explained.

In Tripura also, the Congress is having an understanding with the CPI (M) - led Left Front and in Tripura as well the party's state unit will in all probability leave the decision to the central leadership.

As for the Trinamool Congress leadership it will not discuss the matter until they receive a formal invitation from the Congress. According to veteran party MLA Tapas Ray, any decision will be taken only after a formal invitation comes from the Congress and it will be taken only by chief minister Mamata Banerjee. "The party will act as per the directions of the chief minister," he said.

The CPI (M) leadership in West Bengal too feels that giving the matter a thought before a formal invitation is counting the chickens before they are hatched. "The problem for us is the same as that of the Congress on this count in the perspective of Kerala, where the principal opponent for the Left Front is the Congress. So whatever needs to be done will be a collective decision," said a state committee member of the party on condition of anonymity.

Political observers also feel that the question of inviting INDIA alliance partners is relevant in states where the relationship of the country's oldest national party with the regional parties is extremely smooth.

# Bihar to get real-time AQM reports from all 534 blocks

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Patna, August 13:** The Bihar government is all set to get real-time air quality monitoring (AQM) reports from all 534 blocks in the state from next month.

The Bihar State Pollution Control Board (BSPCB) in association with Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Kanpur, has already installed indigenously developed sensor-based AQMs in 432 blocks, covering 33 districts, in the state.

"Work is on to install AQMs in the remaining 102 blocks in the state by the end of this month.

From September 1 this year, the BSPCB will start getting real-time AQM reports from all 534 blocks, covering 38 administrative districts."

"Bihar will become the first state in India to get AQM reports from indigenously developed sensor-based systems from the block level. Currently, there are only 41 air sensors in Bihar and they have been installed in urban areas", BSPCB chairman Devendra Kumar Shukla told PTI.

"The AQM reports will help identify factors responsible for increase in air pollution at any spot, such as vehicles, dust, bio-

Poor air quality, especially during winter, in different cities of Bihar has always remained a matter of concern for the authorities

mass burning, and emissions from industries so that preventive measures can be taken accordingly. Air pollution remains a major challenge in our state", he said.

The Indo-Gangetic plain also consists of several rural and urban hot spots of air pollution in the state and improving air quality in these areas is the top priority of the state government, Shukla said. The AQM reports from the rural areas will help local communities, policymakers and researchers understand the ground situation, he said, adding the data will also enable actionable and evidence-based decision-making.

This study is aimed to investigate the seasonal mass concentration level of PM2.5 and PM10 in ambient air of the ex-

tended urban area of Patna, Shukla said.

PM stands for Particulate Matter. PM2.5 and PM10 are minute particles present in the air and exposure to it is harmful to health. When the level of these particles increases and penetrates deeply into the lungs, a person experiences health issues like breathing problems, burning and sensation in the eyes.

After Patna, a similar pilot study may be conducted in other major cities of the state, including Gaya and Muzaffarpur, he added.

## Bengal BJP to observe 'Partition Horror Day'

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Kolkata, August 13:** Besides celebrating Independence Day August 15, the BJP state unit in West Bengal this year will also observe "Partition Horror Day" to remind people of the atrocities committed during the partition.

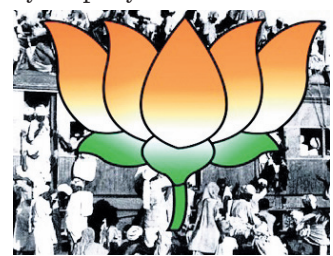
"An instruction has been sent to preferably observe Partition Horror Day August 15 and if not, when it can be observed on any day between August 13-15," a state committee member of the BJP said.

According to the member, while gaining independence from the British rule was a joyous occasion for all Indians, the event is painful for some, especially those who witnessed and were victims of the partition.

"Since Bengal, along with Punjab, were the worst affected because of the partition, our party leadership has decided to observe this 'Partition Horror Day' in a parallel manner this time."

Political observers have opined that this move of the BJP was in lines with the saffron camp's traditional strategy of holding the Congress responsible for the partition of the country.

The Prime Minister himself at times had been vocal about the plight of people becoming victims of the partition. According to the state committee member, there was no reason to believe this initiative as a political move by our party.



Members of Vegan India Movement campaign for 'Freedom for all' aiming to shed lights on the mistreatment and exploitation of farm animals ahead of Independence Day at Sealdah railway station in Kolkata, West Bengal

# Bihar cops target cyber scammers

When it comes to cybercrime, people generally think of Jamtara in Jharkhand, but there are many pockets in Bihar like Nawada, Nalanda, Aurangabad and Jamui where cyber criminals are active and working on the lines of Jamtara scammers



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Patna, August 13:** On Saturday, cyber criminals tried to dupe a pharma trader in Bihar's Saharsa in the name of the DIG of Saharsa range.

The accused sent a threat message telling the pharma trader - Suchain Kumar, a resident of Bhartiya Nagar - about a raid to

be carried out at his outlet by the Saharsa DIG for keeping illegal items in his shop. They also sent the copy of the 'notice' on his WhatsApp number.

Suchain, however, did not panic and lodged a complaint with the cyber cell. This was an incident which reflects how cyber criminals are duping the common people of Bihar and other states.

On August 9, Nalanda police had arrested eight cyber criminals who duped common people of lakhs of rupees using the website of a Central ministry.

The district police also recovered ₹7.25 lakh in cash, 24 mobile phones, three laptops, 62 SIM cards and a fingerprint cloning machine from their possession.

"The accused made a website of the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare and duped many people, especially in Nagarnausa, Chandni and other places in Nalanda district," said Ashok Mishra, SP of Nalanda district.

GS Gangwar, the ADGP of Bihar Police (Headquarter), said: "We have zero tolerance towards any crime, including cyber frauds. Hence, we have opened 44 cyber police stations in the state. The officers deployed in the cyber police stations are dedicated to deal with cases related to various kinds of cyber crime. Since the opening of the cyber police stations, we have registered over 300 FIRs."

# Bengal forest dept, rlys to prevent train-tusker clash



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Kolkata, August 13:** In an attempt to arrest the case of elephant deaths because of collision with speeding trains the Railways and West Bengal government are adopting some initiatives as regards to ensuring the safety of the tuskers on tracks passing through the elephant corridors.

Among the many joint initiatives to be undertaken on this count, the first will be regarding arrangements of regular workshops to sensitize the locomotive pilots of the precautions to be adopted by them while steer-

Recently, the railway department has sanctioned a hefty amount of ₹77 crore to introduce and put in place the intrusion detection system to avoid such collisions to the best possible extent

ing the train through the elephant corridors, especially as regards to the speed limit at that point of time.

The second initiative will be coordination meetings between the officials of the Railways department and state forest department and if possible in every quarter. It has come to the notice of the authorities concerned that the last coordination meeting between the officials of the two departments happened a year ago. A sort of passing the buck exercise has already started between the officials of the departments on which department is actually scheduled to convene such coordination meetings.

On one hand, the state department has claimed that the Railways are supposed to convene such coordination meetings as the latter is responsible for managing the tracks passing through the elephant corridors.

On the other hand the Railways officials claim they are supposed to provide technical and financial support and the forest department, with better expertise in the field, are to carry out the on-ground exercise on this count.

Recently, the railway department has sanctioned a hefty amount of ₹77 crore to introduce and put in place the intrusion detection system to avoid such collisions to the best possible extent.

The amount of ₹77 crore has been sanctioned for four divisions of Railways which are the most prone to such collisions, namely Alipurduar, Rangia, Lumding and Katihar.

## CASTE-BASED CENSUS

Field survey exercise in Bihar complete: Officials

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Patna, August 13:** The field survey exercise pertaining to the ongoing caste-based headcount survey in Bihar is complete now, officials said.

District authorities across the state have intensified the process of digitally recording the data collected during the field survey on the BJAGA (Bihar Jaati Adharit Ganana) app, they said.

All District Magistrates (DMs), who are also the principal census officers, have already given written declaration to the General Administration Department (GAD), the government's nodal agency, that the second phase of the survey for filling up pro forma on the 17-point socio-economic indicators, including caste, has been completed in their respective districts.

Patna District Magistrate Chandrashekhar Singh told PTI on Sunday that "Data of 10,63,040 families, out of a total 13.69 lakh, of Patna district has so far been digitally recorded/uploaded on the BJAGA App. It means 77.65 per cent of data from Patna district has so far been uploaded. The remaining data will be uploaded by this evening". All concerned officials and technical experts have been given instruction to expedite the data entry process and complete it by this evening (Sunday), he said.

## HOPE FOR FISHING CATS

# WB: New breeding effort aims to bolster population

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Kolkata, August 13:** A conservation breeding programme has been launched in a zoo in West Bengal to protect the fishing cat, a 'vulnerable' species, state Forest Minister Jyotipriya Mallick said.

The exercise will be carried out in other places as well, and, if the breeding programme for West Bengal's state animal becomes successful, several of the fishing cats to be born will be released into their natural habitat by 2024.

The programme started at Garchumuk Zoological Garden in Howrah district and it will be conducted in districts like Bankura and Jhargram in the southern part of the state and a few places in the north, Mallick said.

The Conservation Breeding Programme is the science of conserving a species by preventing imminent population collapse in the wild due to a large number of eliminative pressures such as habitat loss, habitat fragmentation, industrialisation, poaching, illegal trade and climate change, an official said.

The conservation breeding programme aims at conserving the genetic diversity of the species and restocking or reintroducing the species to re-es-



The fishing cat (*Prionailurus viverrinus*) or 'Baghrol' in Bengali is a medium-sized wildcat that is found in the Indian subcontinent and parts of south-east Asia

Certain characteristics allow the animal, which has been described as a 'vulnerable' species, to survive in wet, watery conditions

establish a self-sustaining population in its natural wild habitat, the official said.

"A total of six to eight pairs of fishing cats are expected to be released into their natural habitat in 2024," Member Secretary of West Bengal Zoo Authority, Sourav Choudhury, said.

According to the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), Vulnerable is a category containing those species that possess a very high risk of extinction as a result of rapid

population decline. Besides Garchumuk Zoological Garden, the zoo in Kolkata's Alipore has initially been selected for the conservative breeding of the fishing cat, Choudhury said.

A study is underway to identify the places where the animals born in captivity could be released. "The study is needed to find out whether the people in and around the places where the fishing cats would be released, would be friendly enough so that the animals could survive," Choudhury said.

The aim is to reduce human interference as much as possible before the animals are released into their natural habitat, he said.

Initially, Jharkhali in the Sundarbans in South 24 Parganas district has been selected for releasing the fishing cats bred in captivity. The place was selected after a study was conducted there, the official said.



Dancers from Purulia perform during full dress rehearsal for the Independence Day celebrations, in Kolkata



Locals ride 'shikaras' as they participate in a 'Tiranga' rally ahead of the Independence Day, on the banks of Dal Lake in Srinagar



Army soldiers stand guard near the Line of Control at Akhnoor sector in Jammu



Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel felicitates Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge during the 'Bharose Ka Sammelan', in Janjgir



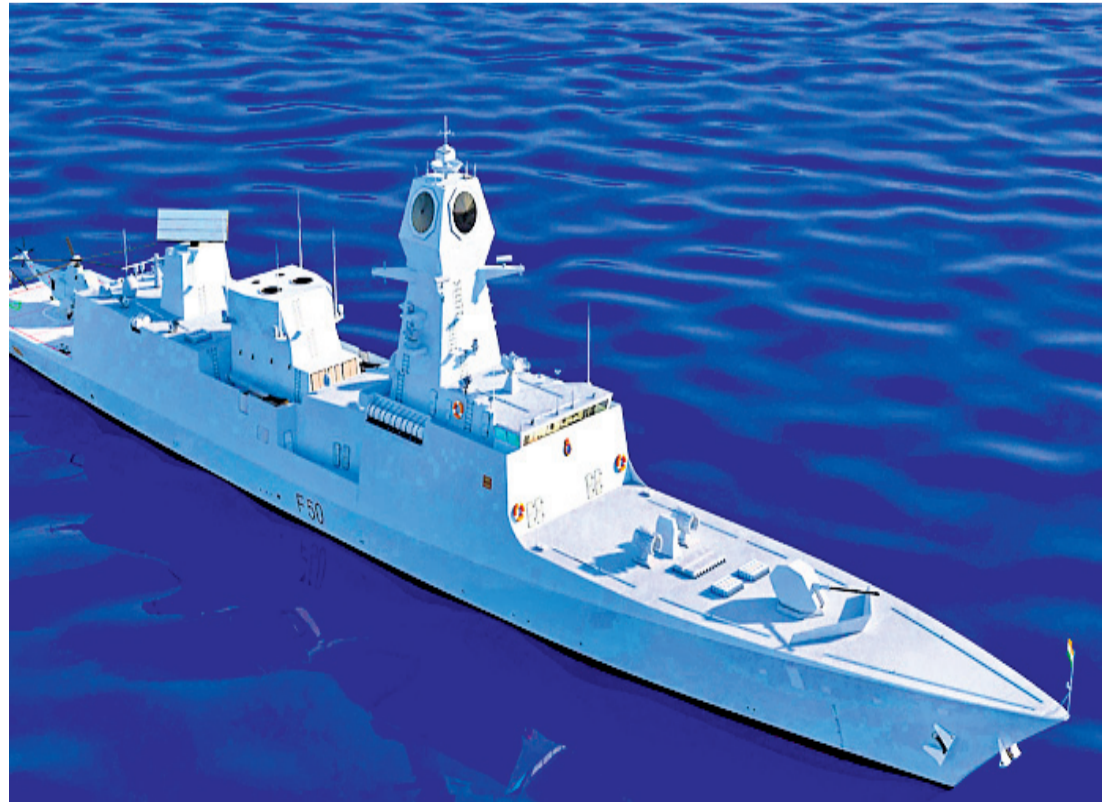
A vintage-style clocktower installed on DB Road which has been developed as a 'Model Road' in Coimbatore



A pair of painted storks at Alipore Zoological Garden in Kolkata



An artisan gives final touches to an idol of Lord Ganesh ahead of the Ganesh Chaturthi festival in Mumbai



Animated photo of Vindhyagiri, a Project 17A Frigate, that will be launched by President Droupadi Murmu August 17



# national

## of the day quote

The Centre has rendered the country's health system sick with even AIIMS facilities grappling with staff shortage

MALLIKARJUN KHARGE | CONGRESS PRESIDENT

The UPA and Congress are a group of leaders involved in Rs 12 lakh crore corruption. They have now changed their name, haven't they? But you must refer to them as UPA...Who will vote for those who have committed a scam of ₹12 lakh crore?

AMIT SHAH | UNION HOME MINISTER

Lawyers made significant contributions in the country's freedom movement and their role is important in building an ideal society. They have deep knowledge of the basic sentiments of the Constitution. In today's worrying circumstances, it is the duty of the advocates to protect the constitutional values of the country

ASHOK GEHLOT | RAJASTHAN CM

## SHORT TAKES

### IIT Delhi revamps exam system

New Delhi: The Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi has revamped its evaluation system and dropped a set of mid-semester exams to reduce students' stress, according to institute director Rangan Banerjee. The decision comes against the backdrop of several cases of student suicides across IITs which has sparked a debate about whether the curriculum and the rigorous study schedule are impacting the mental health of students.

### CBI to probe 9 more cases

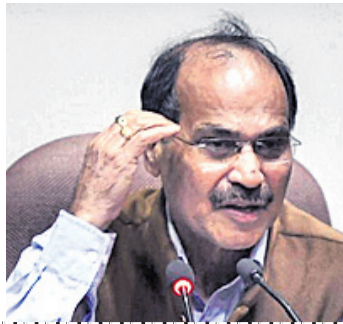
New Delhi: The CBI is set to investigate nine more cases related to Manipur violence, which will take the total number of cases probed by the agency to 17, officials have said. Officials in the know of the developments said the probe by the central agency would not be limited to these 17 cases. Any other case related to crime against women or sexual assault may also be referred to it on priority, they said. The CBI has so far registered eight cases which include two related to alleged sexual assault on women in Manipur.

### Beheaded body of student found

Silchar (Assam): The beheaded body of a 12-year-old student was found inside the hostel of a Madrasa in Chachar district of Assam on Sunday, police said. A senior official said the incident took place at Darus Salam Hafizia Madrasa in Dholai area, and his body was noticed by one of the six roommates. "There were seven students, including the deceased, inside the hostel room. His roommate saw the beheaded body when he woke up in the morning," the official said.

### Punjab cops bust terror module

Chandigarh: Ahead of Independence Day, the Punjab Police busted a terror module with the arrest of three people from Tarn Taran and also seized three pistols from them. Director General of Police Gaurav Yadav said the module was being operated by Czechia-based Gurdev Singh alias Jaisel. Jaisel is a key operative of Canada-based terrorists Lakhbir alias Landa and Satbir Singh alias Satta, who were allegedly behind the RPG attack at Sarhali police station in Tarn Taran and numerous plots to commit targeted killings in Punjab.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi must lead an all-party delegation to Manipur and hold a peace rally there to bring an end to the ethnic violence in the northeastern state

ADHIR RANJAN CHOWDHURY | LEADER OF CONGRESS IN LOK SABHA

## NURSE TERMINATED

The Kerala government Sunday decided to terminate the service of a nurse working on contract basis at a taluk hospital in Angamally near Ernakulam for allegedly wrongly administering a rabies vaccine to a feverish child



# 18 deaths in 24 hrs in Thane hospital

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Thane, August 13: Eighteen patients have died in the last 24 hours at the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Hospital in Kalwa in Thane, civic commissioner Abhijit Bangar said Sunday.

These comprise 10 women and eight men, of which six are from Thane city, four from Kalyan, three from Sahapur, one each from Bhiwandi, Ulhasnagar and Govandi (in Mumbai), one patient is from some other place and one is unidentified, he said.

Twelve of the deceased were above the age of 50, Bangar added. Earlier, state health minister Tanaji Sawant and local Deputy Commissioner of Police Ganesh Gawde had put the number of deaths at 17.

Addressing a news conference, Bangar said Chief Minister Eknath Shinde had taken feedback about the situation and had ordered the setting up of an independent probe committee that will be headed by the commissioner of health services and will include collector, civic chief, director of health serv-



ices, interventionist at state-run JJ Hospital in Mumbai and civic surgeon.

It will carry out probe into the clinical aspect of the deaths, he added. These patients had complications of kidney stone, chronic paralysis, ulcer, pneumonia, kerosene poisoning, septicemia etc, he said.

"The line of treatment will be probed and statements of kin of the deceased etc will be recorded. Allegations of negligence levelled by some kin is a serious matter, which the probe

committee will look into," Bangar said. "The entire COVID staff of 500 has been shifted to this hospital and additional nursing staff has been appointed. We are also aiming to have round the clock post mortem facility here," he told reporters.

Earlier in the day, state health minister Sawant said the dean of the hospital had been asked to submit a report in two days. A Thane Municipal Corporation official said the deaths were being analysed and several civic officials are at the heavily-patronised facility for inspection of records

# PFI plot case: NIA carries out raids

Fourteen locations were searched in Kerala, Karnataka, Maharashtra, West Bengal and Bihar, leading to the seizure of several digital devices as well as incriminating documents, a spokesperson of the federal agency said



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 13: The National Investigation Agency Sunday conducted a series of raids in five states as part of its continued efforts to foil the Popular Front of India's conspiracy to disturb peace by driving a communal wedge among the people and destabilise the country, an official said.

Fourteen locations were searched in Kerala, Karnataka, Maharashtra, West Bengal and Bihar, leading to the seizure of several digital devices as well as incriminating documents, a spokesperson of the federal agency said.

The official said the raids were conducted in Kannur and Malappuram districts of Kerala, Dakshin Kannada in Karnataka, Nashik and Kolhapur in Maharashtra, Murshidabad in West Bengal and Katihar in Bihar.

"The NIA has been working to unravel and thwart the attempts by PFI and its top leadership to create an armed cadre and raise a PFI Army for establishing an Islamic caliphate in India by 2047 through acts of terror, violence and sabotage.

"PFI has been conspiring to radicalise gullible youth and provide them weapons training

in a bid to further its violent anti-India agenda by fighting against certain sections of the society," the spokesperson said.

The official said the agency suspects that several mid-rung PFI agents are operating as master trainers, conducting arms training camps in various states for its highly radicalised cadres.

"Based on intelligence and investigative analysis and insights, it (NIA) has been raiding multiple locations in various states over the past several months to identify and arrest these cadres and operatives," the spokesperson said.

NIA registered a case against PFI in April last year and arrested several of its top leaders, including over a dozen National Executive Council members, following country-wide operations in September 2022.

The probe agency has filed a charge sheet against PFI as an organization and 19 of its members in March followed by a supplementary charge sheet against the PFI national coordinator of weapons training in April. "Investigations are continuing to unearth and expose the complete PFI conspiracy to indoctrinate and train susceptible youth to create mayhem in the country," the spokesperson said.



A monkey drinks water on a hot day in New Delhi

PTI PHOTO

# Missing cheetah captured

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Sheopur (MP), August 13: A South African female cheetah that went untraceable in the Kuno National Park in Madhya Pradesh's Sheopur district since her radio collar stopped working on July 21, was captured Sunday after a 22-day search operation, officials said.

The cheetah, Nirva, was caught at around 10 am in Dhoret range of the Kuno National Park (KNP), after which a health check-up was conducted on her, they said. An intense search for the female feline was on for the last 22 days after her radio collar stopped functioning on July 21, a release issued by the Chief Wildlife Warden of the Madhya Pradesh forest department said.

More than 100 field staff, including officers, veterinarians and cheetah trackers were searching for the spotted cat day and night, it said. Besides the team on ground, two drone teams, one dog squad and available elephants were deployed in the search operation.

An area of 15-20 square kilometres was being searched, it said. In addition to this, local villagers were informed about Nirva and any information received about the feline from villagers was being checked and verified immediately, the release said.

On August 12, information about the cheetah's location was received from the satellite. It gave information about her location on August 11 evening, it stated.

# NCP will not go with BJP: Pawar

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, August 13: Nationalist Congress Party chief Sharad Pawar Sunday said his party will not go with the BJP though some "well-wishers" are trying to persuade him.

Addressing reporters at Sangola in Solapur district of Maharashtra, Pawar said any association with BJP doesn't fit into NCP's political policy. "As the national president of the NCP, I am making it clear that my party (NCP) will not go with the BJP. Any association with the Bharatiya Janata Party does not fit in NCP's political policy," he said.

Pawar revealed that some "well-wishers" are trying to persuade him but he will never align



with the Bharatiya Janata Party. "Some of us (Ajit Pawar-led NCP group) have taken a different stand. Some of our well-wishers are trying to see if there can be any change in our stand. That is why they are trying to have a cordial discussion with us," he said without taking names.

Queried about his "secret" meeting in Pune on Saturday with his nephew and Deputy CM Ajit Pawar, who is part of the Shiv Sena-BJP

government in Maharashtra, the senior Pawar said, "I want to tell you a fact that he is my nephew. What is wrong with meeting my nephew? If a senior person in a family desires to meet another family member, there should not be any issue with that."

The NCP chief also said that people will hand over the reins of the state to Maha Vikas Aghadi-comprising Shiv Sena (UBT), NCP (Sharad Pawar group), and Congress.

Notably, the Pawar senior shared the dais with Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister and BJP leader Devendra Fadnis in Solapur district to unveil the statue of late MLA Ganpatrao Deshmukh on Sunday.

# MEGA PLAN STAGE SET FOR 77TH INDEPENDENCE DAY

AROUND 1,800 PEOPLE FROM DIFFERENT VOCATIONS, WITH THEIR SPOUSES, HAVE BEEN INVITED AS "SPECIAL GUESTS" FROM ACROSS THE COUNTRY TO BE A PART OF THE CELEBRATIONS AT THE RED FORT, THE DEFENCE MINISTRY SAID IN A STATEMENT SUNDAY

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 13: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will lead the nation in marking the 77th Independence Day as the stage is set for celebrations at the historic Red Fort on August 15.

Around 1,800 people from different vocations, with their spouses, have been invited as "Special Guests" from across the country to be a part of the celebrations at the Red Fort, the defence ministry said in a statement Sunday. Modi will unfurl the national flag and deliver the customary address to the nation from the ramparts of the historic monument.

This year's Independence Day will also see culmination of the 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav', which was launched by the prime minister from Sabarmati Ashram

in Ahmedabad on March 12, 2021 and will, once again, usher the country into 'Amrit Kaal' with renewed vigour to realise the dream of making India a developed country by 2047, it said.

A large number of guests have been invited as compared to the figures last year. The invitation to about 1,800 'Special Guests' has been extended in line with the government's vision of 'Jan Bhagidari', the ministry said.

These 'Special Guests' include over 400 sarpanches of more than 660 vibrant villages; 250 from farmer producer organisations scheme; 50 participants each of Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi Scheme and Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana; 50 Shram Yogis (construction workers) of the Central Vista Project, including the New Parliament Building; 50 each

Khadi workers, those involved in construction of border roads, making of Amrit Sarovar and Har Ghar Jal Yojana, as well as 50 each primary school teachers, nurses and fishermen.

Some of these 'Special Guests' are scheduled to visit the National War Memorial and call on Minister of State for Defence Ajay Bhatt as part of their stay in Delhi, the statement said. Seventy-five couples from each state and Union Territory, in their traditional attire, have also been invited to witness the ceremony at Red Fort, it said.

Selfie points dedicated to different schemes and initiatives of the government have been installed at 12 locations, including National War Memorial, India Gate, Vijay Chowk, New Delhi Railway Station, Pragati Maidan, Raj Ghat, Jama Masjid



Delhi Police personnel during full dress rehearsal for the celebrations of 77th Independence Day, at Red Fort in New Delhi, Sunday

PTI PHOTO

Metro Station, Rajiv Chowk Metro Station, Delhi Gate Metro Station, ITO Metro Gate, Naubat Khana and Sheesh Ganj

Gurudwara, the ministry added. As part of the celebrations, an online selfie contest will be conducted by Ministry of Defence

on MyGov portal from August 15-20. All official invites have been sent online through aamantran portal, and 17,000 e-invitation cards have been issued through the portal, the statement said.

Upon his arrival at the Red Fort on August 15, the prime minister will be received by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, his deputy Ajay Bhatt and Defence Secretary Giridhar Aramane, the ministry said.

The Defence Secretary will introduce the General Officer Commanding (GOC), Delhi Area, Lt Gen Dhiraj Seth to the prime minister, it said.

The GOC, Delhi Area will then conduct the PM to the Saluting Base where a combined Inter-Services and Delhi Police Guard will present general salute to the prime minister.

# international



More than two-thirds of the Afghan population now requiring assistance  
NANAIA MAHUTA | MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF NEW ZEALAND

## RUSSIA EVACUATES 2K IN FAR EAST FLOODING

Over 2,000 people have been evacuated from flooded areas of the Primorye region in Russia's Far East, emergency officials said Sunday. Heavy downpours flooded villages in the region in the aftermath of Typhoon Khanun, which battered Japan earlier this week before making its way toward the Korean peninsula



## of the day quote

Essentially, the funds can only be accessed for food, medicine, medical equipment that would not have a dual military use



JOHN KIRBY | WHITE HOUSE SPOKESPERSON

More than a public investment portfolio, the new PAC is a collective compromise (...) born out of many conversations with governors and mayors



LUIZ INACIO LULA DA SILVA | BRAZILIAN PRESIDENT

The debt crisis faced by 40 per cent of the developing countries is because of the inequality built into our outdated global financial system, which reflects the colonial power dynamics of the era when it was created



ANTONIO GUTERRES | UN SECRETARY-GENERAL

## SHORT TAKES

### Explosions rock Syrian capital

**Beirut:** The sound of repeated explosions could be heard in the area around the Syrian capital before dawn Sunday, state media and Damascus residents said. There was no immediate statement from government officials on the source or target of the attack. Similar incidents in the past have usually been attributed to Israeli airstrikes, with Syrian air defenses responding to shoot down the missiles. Britain-based opposition war monitor the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said the explosion came from a warehouse storing rockets for Iran-backed militias, though it could not confirm whether it was an Israeli strike.

### Death toll in China mudslide rises to 21

**Beijing:** The death toll from a mudslide triggered by heavy rain on the outskirts of the western Chinese city of Xi'an rose to 21 Sunday and rescuers were still looking for six missing people, the government said. The mudslide and a flash flood Friday evening also damaged a highway and knocked out power to 900 households, the Xi'an Emergency Management Bureau said on its social media account. It said rescue teams totalling 980 people with dogs were looking for the remaining missing people. Parts of China suffer heavy rains and flooding every summer, but this year has been unusually severe in some areas, while other regions struggle with drought that is damaging crops.

### Indian-American gets over 3 yrs jail

**New York:** A 41-year-old Indian-American has been sentenced to more than three years in prison after he pleaded guilty to the possession of false identity documents and operating an unlicensed money transfer business. Vimalkumar Trivedi's fraud led to approximately \$1.5 million in losses to the victims, the Attorney's Office in the Southern District of Indiana said.

### Argentines vote

**Buenos Aires:** Argentines vote Sunday in a primary election that will act as a bellwether ahead of October general elections and give a hint at how eager citizens are for a change in a country that is suffering one of the world's worst inflation rates. The primary will determine who will be the presidential candidate in the main centre-right opposition coalition in which Buenos Aires Mayor Horacio Rodríguez Larreta is facing off against former Security Minister Patricia Bullrich.

# Taiwan VP's US visit irks China

Lai, front-runner to be Taiwan's next President at elections in January, arrived in New York late Saturday for what is officially a transit on his way to Paraguay for the inauguration of its president

AGENCIES

**Beijing/Taipei, August 13:** China Sunday condemned a brief US visit by Taiwan Vice President William Lai, saying he was a separatist and "troublemaker through and through" and Beijing would take strong steps to protect its sovereignty, drawing a rebuke from Taipei.

Lai, front-runner to be Taiwan's next President at elections in January, arrived in New York late Saturday for what is officially a transit on his way to Paraguay for the inauguration of its president.

China, which claims democratically governed Taiwan as its own territory, has repeatedly denounced Lai's trip, which includes another stopover in San Francisco Wednesday on his way back to Taipei.

In a statement issued shortly after Lai landed in New York on a scheduled flight from Taipei, China's foreign ministry said it opposed any form of visit by "Taiwan independence separatists" to the United States.

"Lai stubbornly adheres to the separatist position of Taiwan independence and is a troublemaker through and through," the ministry said.

Taiwan is the "core of China's core interests" and facts have shown again and again that the reason for the rise in tensions in the Taiwan Strait is Taiwan trying to "rely on the United States to seek independence", it said.

"China is closely following developments and will take resolute and vigorous measures to defend national sovereignty and territorial integrity."



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Taiwan's China-policymaking Mainland Affairs Council said China was the real troublemaker, pointing to its stand-off this month with the Philippines in the South China Sea and continued military harassment of Taiwan, among other actions. "Our government firmly defends national sovereignty and security, guards the lines of defence of democracy and freedom, and will never back down, let alone capitulate," the council said in a statement.

China has an especial dislike of Lai, who has previously described himself as a "practical worker for Taiwan independence", though he has repeatedly said on the campaign trail he is not seeking to change the status quo, but that only Taiwan's people can decide their future.

A person familiar with the trip's planning said Lai will join receptions with overseas Taiwanese during the stopover in New York, during which he will make a speech.

He will not meet US lawmakers, the person said, adding Lai will keep the visit "low key", in line with Taipei and Washington's shared position to "jointly manage risks when facing an authoritarian region at this sensitive time".

Lai, greeted by supporters waving flags as he arrived at his New York hotel, wrote on social media platform X he was "looking forward to seeing friends and attending transit programs in New York". Laura

Rosenberger, chair of the American Institute in Taiwan (AIT), a US government-run non-profit that carries out unofficial relations with Taiwan, said on X that she would meet Lai in San Francisco, where he is due Wednesday on his way home.

China is likely to launch military drills this week near Taiwan, using Lai's US stopovers as a pretext to intimidate voters ahead of a next year's election and make them "fear war," Taiwanese officials say.

On Sunday, the Eastern Theatre Command of China's People's Liberation Army, which is responsible for the area around Taiwan, posted on its WeChat account a short video of fighter jets practicing dog fights at an undisclosed location.

It said its forces had recently been engaged in "high-intensity flight training".

Lai's transits come as Beijing and Washington are trying to improve relations.

That includes the prospect of a visit to the US by Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, which could pave the way for a meeting between US President Joe Biden and China's leader Xi Jinping this year. China has stepped up its military activities around Taiwan over the past three years, seeking to force the island into accepting Beijing's sovereignty.

In April, China staged war games around Taiwan in an angry response to Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen meeting US House Speaker Kevin McCarthy in California on a stopover on the way back to Taipei following her visit to Central America.

# Nigerian delegation says Niger junta is open to diplomacy



REUTERS

**Abuja/Conakry, August 13:** Coup leaders in Niger are open to diplomacy to resolve a stand-off with West Africa's regional bloc, a group of senior Nigerian Islamic scholars said Sunday after meeting the junta in Niamey.

Their visit comes as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) explores its options to restore civilian rule in Niger, including potential military intervention, following the July 26 ouster of President Mohamed Bazoum - the seventh coup in West and Central Africa in three years.

In a sign the bloc is still pushing for a peaceful resolution, ECOWAS chairman and Nigerian President Bola Tinubu approved Saturday's mission to Niamey by the delegation of Islamic scholars, who had vowed to promote dialogue.

The group's meeting with junta leader General Abdourahamane Tiani lasted several hours, said Sheikh Abdullahi Bala Lau, who led the delegation. Tiani reportedly

- West African bloc has threatened force as a last resort
- Tian meets Nigerian scholars after rebuffing other missions
- Junta sends delegation to Guinea

emphasised the historic ties between Niger and Nigeria, saying the countries "were not only neighbours but brothers and sisters who should resolve issues amicably".

There was no immediate comment from the junta on the meeting, but Tiani's reported comments are one of few recent signs he is open to negotiation.

The coup leaders' previous rebuffs of diplomatic efforts by ECOWAS, the United States and others had raised the spectre of further conflict in the impoverished Sahel region of West Africa, which is already dealing with a deadly Islamist insurgency. With diplomacy faltering last week, ECOWAS activated a standby military force it said would be deployed as a last resort if talks failed. For now, the bloc is pursuing efforts for further negotiations.

# Russia fires warning shots at cargo ship in Black Sea

AGENCIES

**Moscow, August 13:** A Russian warship Sunday fired warning shots at a cargo ship in the south-western Black Sea as it made its way northwards, the first time Russia has fired on merchant shipping beyond Ukraine since exiting a landmark UN-brokered grain deal last month.

Russia in July halted participation in the Black Sea grain deal that allowed Ukraine to export agricultural produce via the Black Sea and Moscow cautioned that it deemed all ships heading to Ukrainian waters to be potentially carrying weapons.

Russia said in a statement that its Vasily Bykov patrol ship had fired automatic weapons on the Palau-flagged Sukru Okan vessel after the ship's captain failed to respond to a request to halt for an inspection.

Russia said the vessel was making its way towards the



Ukrainian port of Izmail. Refinitiv shipping data showed the ship was currently near the coast of Bulgaria and heading towards the Romanian port of Sulina.

"To forcibly stop the vessel, warning fire was opened from automatic weapons," the Russian defence ministry said.

The Russian military boarded the vessel with the help of a Ka-29 helicopter, the ministry said.

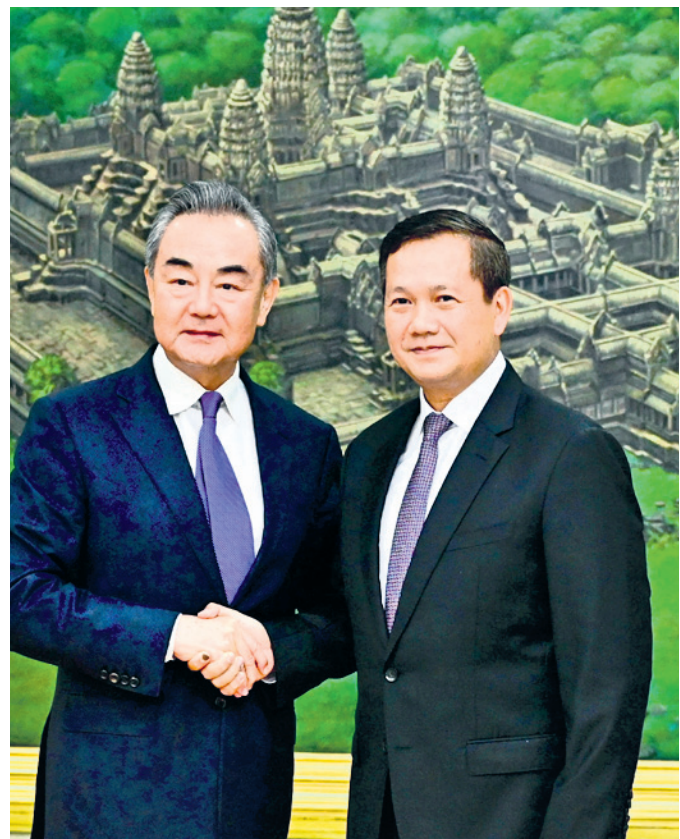
"After the inspection group completed its work on board, the Sukru Okan continued on its way to the port of Izmail," the defence ministry said.

A Turkish defence ministry of-

## 7 killed in Kherson

Seven people - including a 23-day-old baby girl - were killed in Russian shelling in Ukraine's southern Kherson region Sunday, the country's Internal Affairs Ministry said. Artillery shelling in the village of Shiroka Balka, on the banks of the Dnieper River killed a family - a husband, wife, 12-year-old boy and 23-day-old girl - and another resident.

Official said he had heard an incident had taken place involving a ship heading for Romania, and that Ankara was looking into it. A spokesman for Ukraine's defence ministry said officials had no details about the incident yet but that it was "clearly another hostile act" by Russia. Reuters could not immediately reach the vessel or its owners for comment.



In this photo provided by Kok Ky/Cambodia's Government Cabinet, Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen's son, right, shakes hands with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, left, during a meeting in Peace Palace in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, Sunday

# Suella speaks of tragic loss of lives as migrants drown

The Opposition Labour Party and campaigners renewed their calls on the government to act on the small boat crisis of unsafe vessels being used by migrants to cross over illegally into the UK

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**London, August 13:** The British government is under renewed pressure Sunday as six migrants drowned in the English Channel and 59 were rescued after their vessel sank off the French coast.

Home Secretary Suella Braverman said she spoke to UK Border Force teams as she expressed her grief over the "tragic" loss of lives.

The overloaded vessel got into difficulty and capsized 20km off Sangatte in France Saturday.

Five French ships, two British ships and a helicopter were involved in the rescue operation to save lives.

"This incident is sadly another reminder of the extreme dangers of crossing the Channel in small boats and how vital it is that we break the people smugglers' business model and stop the boats," a UK government spokesperson said.

Labour's shadow immigration minister, Stephen Kinnock, accused the government of having "no workable plan" to sort out the asylum system.

"It's time to end the small boats nightmare - we can't sit by as more lives are put at risk. The country deserves better than this mess," he writes in the 'Sunday Mirror'.

The Conservative Party government also faced pressure on the issue from within its own ranks, with former Tory chairman Jake Berry calling for "radical changes" to turn the



Human rights groups are urging the government to create more safe routes for asylum seekers to the UK, with the Refugee Council warning "more people will die" unless urgent action is taken

tide. "We have a moral duty, both to our own citizens and those asylum seekers, to act," he writes in the 'Sunday Express'.

Meanwhile, human rights groups are urging the government to create more safe routes for asylum seekers to the UK, with the Refugee Council warning "more people will die" unless urgent action is taken.

demonstrates yet again the need for a system of safe passage to the UK for refugees," said refugee charity Care4Calais.

The incident came in the wake of a backlash over the UK government's plan to house asylum seekers on a barge docked in south-west England after the first set of migrants had to be removed just days after being moved in over dangerous bacteria fears.

The Bibby Stockholm, a large floating vessel docked at Portland in Dorset opened up to its first set of migrants earlier this week amid controversy as human rights groups questioned its suitability as a long-term accommodation.

British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak has made "stop the boats" one of his government's top priorities as he pledged to clamp down on people smugglers facilitating migrants landing up on the country's shores illegally.

# Maui wildfires death toll hits 93

AGENCIES

**Lahaina, August 13:** The death toll from the Maui wildfires in Hawaii reached 93 Saturday, according to the Maui County website, making it the deadliest U.S. wildfire in more than a century, with the total likely to rise as cadaver dogs sift through the ruins of Lahaina.

The scale of the damage came into sharper focus four days after a fast-moving blaze leveled the historic resort town, obliterating buildings and melting cars. The wildfires are the Hawaii's deadliest natural disaster in decades, surpassing a 1960 tsunami that killed 61 people. An even deadlier tsunami in 1946, which killed more than 150 on the Big Island, prompted development of a territory-wide emergency alert system with sirens that are tested monthly.

Hawaii emergency management records do not indicate that the warning sirens sounded before fire hit the town. Officials sent alerts to mobile phones, televisions and radio stations, but widespread power and cellular outages may have limited their reach.

Fueled by a dry summer and strong winds from a passing hurricane, the wildfires on Maui raced through parched brush covering the island.

The most serious blaze swept into Lahaina Tuesday and destroyed nearly every building in the town of 13,000, leaving a grid of gray rubble wedged between the blue ocean and lush green slopes.

Maui water officials warned Lahaina and Kula residents not to drink running water, which may be contaminated even after boiling, and to only take short, lukewarm showers in well-ventilated rooms to avoid possible chemical vapour exposure. Maui's firefighting efforts may have been hampered by limited staff and equipment.



# business



With the overall passenger vehicle sales expected to be in the range of 40 lakh units this fiscal, the festive season is expected to witness sales of around 1 million units

**SHASHANK SRIVASTAVA** | SENIOR EXECUTIVE OFFICER (MARKETING & SALES), MSI

## NO NEW ACQUISITIONS: TATA STEEL CEO

Tata Steel - which is in an expansion mode in India - is not so keen on any other new acquisitions, the company CEO T V Narendran has said. The statement from Narendran has come amid Vedanta Ltd reviewing and evaluating its steel and steel-making raw materials businesses



## of the day quote

Rural growth, which was lagging after the pandemic, has outpaced urban demand and this trend is likely to continue over the next six months led by a good monsoon

**BHARAT PURI** | MD, PIDILITE INDUSTRIES

EV is determined primarily by the battery running the powertrain of the vehicle. Advancements in the battery technology space is pivotal for the development of better-performing EVs

**VIPIN SONDIH** | CHAIRMAN, CII NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON FUTURE MOBILITY

Even if it means transfer of technology from US to India, gradually that will happen because there are certain technologies that America was not really forthcoming in terms of sharing but after this visit by the Prime Minister, there is a considerable shift towards manufacturing in India

**GURUPRASAD SOWLE** | FOUNDER MEMBER & DIRECTOR (INDO - US AFFAIRS), IIRF

## SHORT TAKES

### Sebi's focus on tech

**New Delhi:** Capital markets regulator Sebi is betting big on technology, as it plans to implement a Geotagging solution in the current financial year to strengthen the process of its enforcement activities. While focussing on technology, Sebi said it plans to undertake various projects to boost its information technology (IT) capacity and build a "fault-tolerant" architecture. The move is aimed at further enhancing its technological and cybersecurity capability, and to better serve its stakeholders. "In the coming year, Sebi plans to implement a Geotagging Solution to strengthen the process of its enforcement activities," the regulator said in its annual report for 2022-23.

### OVL seeks extension

**New Delhi:** India's flagship overseas firm ONGC Videsh Ltd has sought another three-year extension to explore for oil and gas in a Vietnamese block in the contested waters of the South China Sea, officials said. If granted, this will be the eighth extension for OVL, the overseas arm of state-owned Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC). Officials said the seventh extension to explore for oil and gas was till June 15, 2023 and the company is in talks with Vietnamese authorities for another three-year extension.

## AHEAD OF ELECTIONS

India's gig workers, those outside traditional employer-employee relationships, are rapidly becoming an important part of the world's fifth-biggest economy as the sector surged under Covid-19 restrictions and has been boosted by high unemployment

REUTERS

**New Delhi, August 13:** India plans to roll out welfare measures for "gig" workers employed through platforms like Amazon, Uber and India's Zomato as Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government prepares for elections, government and trade union officials said.

The plan, part of the Social Security Code enacted in 2020, could include accident, health insurance and retirement benefits, said a senior government official with direct knowledge of the plan.

Ahead of the elections early next year, Modi's party is eager to announce steps after the northern state of Rajasthan, ruled by

## FY23 REVISED BUDGET ESTIMATES

# Odisha ranks 3<sup>rd</sup> in fiscal health

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, August 13:** Chhattisgarh, one of the poorest states in the country, is the second best in overall fiscal health scorecard after Maharashtra, and ahead of Telangana, while the bottom three are Bengal, Punjab and Kerala, shows a report by a foreign brokerage.

Based on the FY24 first budget estimates, the top three states are Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh and Telangana, and the bottom three states are Bengal, Punjab and Kerala, shows a report on the fiscal health of the key 17 states, penned by Kaushik Das, the chief economist at Deutsche Bank India.

Based on the FY23 revised budget estimates, Maharashtra tops the ranking, followed by Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Telangana and Jharkhand.

In contrast, Bengal fares the worst, followed by Punjab, Bihar, Rajasthan and UP, Kerala moving out of the worst five; while Andhra' ranking has dropped to 11th in FY23 from eighth in FY22, and Gujarat has slipped to the seventh rank from fifth.

However, based on the revised FY22 actual budget data of 17 key states, Chhattisgarh tops the list followed by Maharashtra, Odisha, Jharkhand and Gujarat, and in contrast, Punjab fares the worst, followed by Bengal, Kerala, Rajasthan and Bihar, the report said.

The report on the fiscal health of the key 17 states is based on the four key fiscal parameters-



One of the poorest states Chhattisgarh second best after Maharashtra; Bengal, Punjab, Kerala biggest laggards

Fiscal deficit of the key 17 states is estimated at around 3.3% of GDP in FY24, down from 3.7% in FY22

Punjab, Bengal, Bihar, Rajasthan and Kerala to remain most vulnerable to debt sustainability risks

-fiscal deficit; own tax revenue, state debt levels, all as a percentage of their individual gross state domestic product; and finally the interest payment to revenue receipts.

Based on these four parameters, Punjab, Bengal, Bihar, Rajasthan and Kerala, are and will remain the most vulnerable to debt sustainability risks given their weak fiscal and debt metrics even prior to the pandemic, says the report, adding a June 2022 report by the Reserve Bank had also warned these states.

A historical ranking of these key states over a longer time horizon shows Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Chhattisgarh typically in the top quartile during fiscals 2004 to 2016.

However, demand for accommodating farm loan waivers, power sector debt restructuring, an unprecedented Covid-19 shock and other state-specific factors have impacted the fiscal dynamics of some of these states severely.

For the 2004-2016 period, the

states that featured repeatedly in the bottom quartile are Bengal, Bihar, UP, and Rajasthan.

As per the latest FY22 final figures, Bengal, Bihar and Rajasthan continue to be in the bottom quartile, but Uttar Pradesh has shown some improvement. Meanwhile, the fiscal health of Punjab and Kerala have deteriorated significantly based on the FY22 actual fiscal data.

Meanwhile, the fiscal deficit of these 17 states is estimated at around 3.3 per cent of Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) in FY24, down from 3.7 per cent in FY22. With the Centre's debt/GDP estimated at 56.1 per cent for FY24, this should result in a general government debt/GDP of 85 per cent.

However, the report warns of a risk of the states' debt/GSDP ratio to be higher than the FY24 budget estimate, given that nominal GDP growth is likely to moderate sharply to 9-9.5 per cent in the current fiscal from the double-digit nominal GDP growth recorded in the last two fiscals.

## Sports Emporium opens new store

**Bhubaneswar:** Sports Emporium has launched a new store in Bapuji Nagar, Bhubaneswar Saturday. This is the third store in the capital city along with stores in Janpath and Jaydev Vihar. The store provides all sports-related and gym equipment under one roof at affordable prices. It has also announced up to 50 per cent discount on the opening of the new store for one month. Sports Emporium was started in 1978 with an aim to uplift the sports ecosystem in the state. Pramod Kumar Dhupar, Sudhir Dhupar, Raunak Dhupar, Sahil Dhupar, Devam Dhupar and Aarti Dhupar, the owners of the store were present during the inauguration.

## BIZ BUZZ



# Power production dips YoY

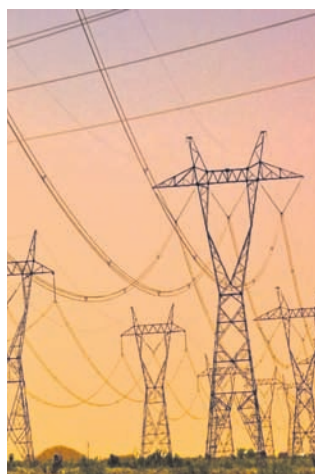
Electricity output sees marginal growth of 1.3% in April-June compared to 17.1% in the same period last year

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, August 13:** The country's electricity output witnessed a marginal growth of 1.3 per cent in April-June quarter of 2023, compared to 17.1 per cent in the same period a year-ago, mainly due to unseasonal rains, government data shows.

According to the latest Index of Industrial Production (IIP) data, a measure for factory output, electricity output contracted by 1.6 per cent in March and 1.1 per cent in April this year.

The electricity output remained almost flat and saw a growth rate of 0.9 per cent in May and improved marginally to 4.2 per cent in June this year. The data showed that the elec-



tricity output growth was robust at 12.7 per cent in January and 8.2 per cent in February this year.

The Ministry of Power had estimated 229GW of peak power demand during the summers this year. But the data showed that peak power demand remained at 224.10GW in April-July 2023.

The ministry took many steps and asked imported coal-based plants to run at 100 per cent capacity as well as directed domestic coal-based plants to import coal for blending to ensure adequate power supply in the country.

The industry experts are of the view that the electricity output growth would improve July onwards.

The latest Central Electricity Authority (CEA) data showed that power consumption has grown by 6.4 per cent to 136.44 billion units in July this year, from 128.25 billion units in the same month of 2022.

# Mcap of seven of top 10 firms falls by ₹74,603 crore

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, August 13:** The combined market valuation of seven of the top 10 valued firms declined by Rs 74,603.06 crore last week, with HDFC Bank emerging as the biggest laggard.

The BSE benchmark declined 398.6 points or 0.60 per cent last week.

ICICI Bank, Hindustan Unilever, Infosys and ITC saw erosion in their market valuation while Reliance Industries, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) and State Bank of India added to their market valuation.

The valuation of HDFC Bank declined by Rs 25,011 crore to Rs 12,22,392.26 crore.

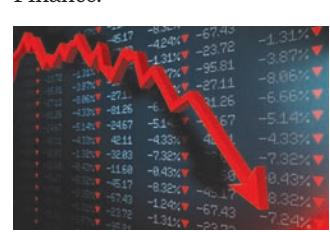
ICICI Bank's market valuation eroded by Rs 12,781 crore to Rs 6,66,512.90 crore and that of Bharti Airtel fell by Rs 11,096.48 crore to Rs 4,86,812.08 crore.

The valuation of Hindustan Unilever tanked Rs 10,396.94 crore to Rs 5,87,902.98 crore and that of ITC skidded by Rs 7,726.3 crore to Rs 5,59,159.71 crore.

The market capitalisation (mcap) of Bajaj Finance declined by Rs 4,935.21 crore to Rs 4,27,996.97 crore and that of Infosys dipped Rs 2,656.13 crore to Rs 5,69,406.39 crore. However, Reliance Industries added Rs 25,607.85 crore taking its valuation to Rs 17,23,878.59 crore.

The market valuation of TCS jumped Rs 2,579.64 crore to Rs 12,62,134.89 crore and that of State Bank of India climbed Rs 847.84 crore to Rs 5,12,451.22 crore.

In the ranking of top-10 firms, Reliance Industries retained the title of the most valued company followed by TCS, HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank, Hindustan Unilever, Infosys, ITC, State Bank of India, Bharti Airtel and Bajaj Finance.



# India plans welfare measures for gig workers



There are no official figures for the size of India's gig economy, although estimates put the number employed at 10mn-15mn people

BY 2030, NITI AAYOG ESTIMATES, THE GIG ECONOMY COULD EMPLOY MORE THAN 23.5MN, ABOUT 7% OF THE NON-FARM WORKFORCE

through contributions by federal and state governments, as well as the platforms.

An industry expert with direct knowledge of the discussions said the platforms unanimously agreed with the labour ministry's proposal about social security for gig workers and were ready to contribute to a "transparently" run welfare fund.

"We expect the announcement of federal measures in the next few months as players don't want to deal with multiple states."

Amazon, asked for comment on the proposed scheme and its

potential costs, referred Reuters to a Thursday media statement that the company had created over 1.3 million jobs in India for delivery agents and sellers, including 140,000 in the past year; while boosting the retail business of small firms.

In addition to the big-name companies, hundreds of other online platforms and the people they hire for piecemeal work would be affected, spanning services such as cab-sharing, retail, food, construction and finance.

The government has not calculated the cost of the planned welfare measures as it must get data from the companies, said the sources, who asked not to be named because they were not authorised to speak to the media. **'WE SHOULD BE RECOGNISED'**

The government could initially provide gig workers with state-funded medical and accident insurance and a mechanism to address complaints, one official said, while a setting mechanism for employers' contributions to the fund.

The measures propose employers contribute between 1% and 2% of their annual revenues to a security fund, up to 5% of the amount paid to workers, the sources said.

More than 290 million people

have registered for an online government portal meant to issue identity cards to gig workers and other unorganised employees, while gathering such details as biometric data and their skills.

Blinkit, the grocery unit of food delivery platform Zomato, faced disruptions in operations in April when hundreds of workers protested over commission cuts. "We have no channel to raise our complaints," said Uber driver Sheetal Kashyap, 47, adding women workers like her face safety risks and exploitation due to low bargaining power.

Shaik Salauddin, national general secretary of the Indian Federation of App-based Transport Workers representing over 45,000 cab drivers, said they were lobbying political parties for a package before the elections.

"We should be recognised as employees, eligible for all benefits under labour laws, including fixed working hours and decent working conditions."

# India flop as WI dominate

WEST INDIES INCH TOWARDS WINNING T20 SERIES DECIDER BEFORE RAIN PLAYS SPOILSPORT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Lauderhill, August 13: The Indian batters fluffed their lines when it mattered most as a determined West Indies are on course of handing captain Hardik Pandya his first bilateral series defeat before rain stopped play in fifth and final T20 International here Sunday.

Within 24 hours of producing a batting master-class on a feathered, the Indian batters, save Suryakumar Yadav's scratchy yet effective 61 off 45 balls, posted a sub-par score of 165 for 9 after opting to bat on a used track that had become slower.

On a pitch where stroke-making wasn't an easy proposition, Surya had to curb his flair a bit but still had enough firepower in his arsenal to hit four fours and three sixes during his knock.

In reply, India's nemesis Nicholas Pooran (46 not out off 32 balls) looked way more fluent in company of Brandon King (54 not out off 38 balls) as they added 105 runs for the second wicket to put West Indies at a comfortable 117 for 1 in 12.3 overs when lightning stopped play.

They were way above DLS par-score of 91 and will be deserving winners even if play doesn't start.

On same track where the Caribbean bowlers put Indian batters under tight leash, the bowling attack looked horribly out of depth barring Kuldeep Yadav (0/18), who delivered yet another steady performance.



Pooran and King cleverly decided to play out Kuldeep's spell and attacked others with disdain. Once the West Indies got 60 in the powerplay, there was no looking back as they maintained the tempo with most of the Indian bowlers pitching it short giving Pooran ample time to tonk them in the arc between the long-on and cow corner.

However it was the batting that became India's undoing as they never got the desired mo-

mentum during the middle as well as end overs.

Even Surya was a bit subdued by his own lofty standards because the slowness didn't allow him to play his natural game.

It was a used track where the ball started gripping from the very first over bowled by left-arm spinner Akeal Hosein (2/24 in 4 overs), who made an impact against the Indian batters throughout the series.

Between him and off-spinner

Roston Chase (1/25 in 4 overs), they bowled eight overs for just 49 runs taking three wickets in the process.

Yashasvi Jaiswal (5) started with a reverse sweep but Hosein's delivery that stopped and turned with a tad extra bounce forced the batter to offer a simple return catch.

Shubman Gill (9) was unlucky as he would have survived had he taken a review with TV replays showing that Hosein's arm

ball was drifting down the leg-side.

Tilak Varma (27 off 18 balls) was at his fluent best taking 19 off the final powerplay over bowled by Alzarri Joseph. But he also fell prey to the slowness of the track offering Chase a return catch.

Tilak's dismissal did become the turning point as far as India's downfall is concerned.

This was Surya's 15th T20I fifty but it was on the scratchier side despite some glorious strokes including the six off Joseph over long-off to complete his milestone.

But it didn't help as Sanju Samson (13 off 9 deliveries) played a nothing shot without any footwork off Romario Shepherd (4/31 in 4 overs) to put more pressure on Surya.

Skipper Hardik Pandya (14 off 18 balls) couldn't get off the blocks and wasted too many balls before finally connecting one and then perishing off the very next ball as Shepherd used the slower ones to good effect.

Pandya's problems did have its effect as Surya couldn't provide the final flourish. Axar Patel (13) and Mukesh Kumar, who hit a final ball boundary, pushed India towards a par-score but that wasn't enough in the end.

### BRIEF SCORES

India: 165 for 9 in 20 overs (Suryakumar Yadav 61, Tilak Varma 27; Romario Shepherd 4/31)

### DREAM DEBUT

# Bellingham strikes as Real Madrid win

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Barcelona, August 13: Jude Bellingham enjoyed a dream debut for Real Madrid after the England midfielder scored his team's second goal in a 2-0 win at Athletic Bilbao in their Spanish league opener Saturday.

Wearing the No 5 of Madrid great Zinedine Zidane, Bellingham started the match while Luka Modric and Toni Kroos, the veterans he is tapped to take over from, watched from the bench at San Mames Stadium.

His goal was not a work of beauty like so many crafted by Zidane, and he perhaps had a bit of good fortune to guide it into the net. A left-side corner kick by David Alaba found Bellingham unmarked in the area, where he knocked the ball with one touch down onto the turf, only for it to bounce high and sail into the net over Spain goalkeeper Unai Simón.

The 20-year-old Bellingham jogged to the endline and raised his arms to soak up the applause from the section of Madrid fans

in the otherwise red-and-white stands. His goal doubled Madrid's lead in the 36th after Rodrigo had put Madrid ahead eight minutes earlier.

Bellingham, who joined Madrid on a 130-million-euro (\$142 million) move from Borussia Dortmund this summer, did show some Zidane-like flair when he made a graceful slalom to elude three defenders as he raced down the field and into Bilbao's area in the second half.

"Bellingham is one of a kind," said Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti. "He is motivated to play here. He is fantastic, with a great personality, he is hard working. He is a very important signing."

Rodrygo, and fellow Brazilian Vinicius Junior, will likely need all the extra goals that Bellingham and Madrid's midfield can provide. The 14-time European Cup winners have not signed a world-class striker to replace Karim Benzema since his move to Saudi Arabia, as Madrid appears to be once again hoping it can lure Kylian Mbappe from Paris Saint-Germain.



First game, first victory, first goal. Hala Madrid. JUDE BELLINGHAM

# PSG draw 0-0 sans Mbappe, other stars

MBAPPE TOPPED LAST SEASON'S SCORING CHARTS WITH 29 LEAGUE GOALS, BUT WAS NOT ON THE FIELD AGAINST LORIENT BECAUSE HE IS MIRED IN A CONTRACT STANDOFF



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Paris, August 13: Star striker Kylian Mbappe watched from the stands as Paris Saint-Germain began its title defense with a drab 0-0 home draw against Lorient in the French league Saturday.

Mbappe, Neymar and Marco Verratti were all left out by new PSG coach Luis Enrique at Parc des Princes.

Mbappe topped last season's scoring charts with 29 league goals, but was not on the field

against Lorient because he is mired in a contract standoff. He wants to play this season and leave for free when his contract runs out, but PSG wants to sell him to stop this happening.

Looking pensive, Mbappe sat alongside his younger brother Ethan as PSG struggled to break down a well-organized Lorient, which hit the post from midfielder Laurent Abergel's shot in the 43rd and went close near the end through midfielder Romain Faivre.

Central defender Milan

Skriniar, attacking midfielder Marco Asensio, and forward Goncalo Ramos all had their PSG debuts but made little difference.

Neymar trained alone Friday, with the club saying it was because he was recovering from a viral infection. But Neymar could leave PSG this summer. Verratti and Neymar have been linked with a move to the lucrative Saudi Arabian league.

Earlier, Portugal forward Vitinha scored a second-half winner as Marseille opened its

campaign with a 2-1 home win against Reims.

### 'Constructive talks'

Kylian Mbappe has returned to training with Paris Saint-Germain after "constructive and positive talks" between the two parties, the club said Sunday.

Mbappe watched from the stands on Saturday night as defending champion PSG drew 0-0 at home to Lorient because he is mired in a contract standoff. He wants to play this season and leave for free when his contract runs out, but PSG wants to sell him to stop this happening.

"After very constructive and positive discussions between Paris Saint-Germain and Kylian Mbappe before the PSG-Lorient match, the player has returned to training with the first-team group this (Sunday) morning," PSG said in a statement.

PSG received a world-record \$332 million bid from Saudi Arabian team Al-Hilal for Mbappe, who reportedly refused to meet with representatives from the Saudi club when they were in Paris last month to sign another player.

The 24-year-old Mbappe is widely thought to want to join Real Madrid next season on a free transfer, complete with a massive signing-on fee.

# Pegula stuns World No. 1 Swiatek to reach final



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Montreal, August 13: Jessica Pegula beat top-ranked Iga Swiatek Saturday to reach the National Bank Open final, breaking serve 11 times in a 6-2, 6-7 (4), 6-4 victory.

Pegula, the 29-year-old American seeded fourth, finally broke through in the semifinals after falling in the round the previous two years.

"It was a great match," Pegula said. "It was tough. Kind of a roller-coaster. Really up and down, but I'm glad I was able to hold my nerve there at the end."

Pegula beat Swiatek a day after fellow American Tommy Paul knocked off top-ranked Carlos Alcaraz in the men's event in Toronto. US players had not beaten the top-ranked man and woman in the same week since April 2008 in Miami when Serena

Williams beat Justine Henin, and Andy Roddick topped Roger Federer.

Both players struggled to hold serve, with Swiatek breaking Pegula eight times. They only won 11 of 30 service games combined.

"I was getting frustrated that I wasn't holding," Pegula said. "But then at the same time I knew she was having trouble holding as well. I was just like, I know I'll get more chances if I can just... hold. Basically it was whoever could kind of consolidate the break."

Rain forced the postponement of the night semifinal between third-seeded Elena Rybakina of Kazakhstan and 15th-seeded Liudmila Samsonova of Russia until Sunday. Early Saturday, Rybakina outlasted 10th-seeded Daria Kasatkina of Russia 5-7, 7-5, 7-6 (8) in a nail-biting match.

### FIFA WOMEN'S WC

# Australia make it through to semis

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Auckland, August 13: There will be a first-time winner of the Women's World Cup this year, and maybe, just maybe, it will be host country Australia.

The Matildas, serving as co-hosts of the tournament with New Zealand, became the first home team since the United States in 1999 to win a quarter-final in nine Women's World Cups. Australia has reached its first semifinal in team history and faces England on Wednesday for a chance to play for the title.



"I genuinely really believe that this team can do great history in so many ways," Australia coach Tony Gustavsson said, "not just winning football games, but the way that they can inspire the next generation, how they can unite the nation, how they can leave a legacy that is much bigger than football."

England, the European champion, advanced with a 2-1 victory over upstart Colombia. England also reached the semifinals in 2015 and 2019, only to finish third and fourth and never reach the Women's World Cup final.

But before the Australia and England showdown, first-time semifinalist Spain takes on powerhouse Sweden on Tuesday in Auckland.

Aside from a 4-0 loss to Japan in group play, Spain has been a force throughout the tournament. It even tuned out an earthquake roughly an hour before its quarterfinal win over 2019 runner-up Netherlands.

Sweden, meanwhile, is the highest ranked team still in the tournament at second in the world, according to FIFA. The Swedes got into the semifinals by knocking off previously undefeated Japan, the 2011 winners and last remaining champions in the tournament after so many early eliminations of the best teams in women's soccer.

"I think we have the team to go all the way," left back Jonna Andersson said, "and now we are one step closer."

### SHATTERING RECORDS

# Ronaldo beats Muller for most headed goals

One of the greatest footballers of all time, Cristiano Ronaldo has registered a huge new record, scoring the most number of headed goals in the history of the game (145), surpassing Germany and Bayern Munich legend Gerd Muller. Ronaldo was on song in the Arab Club Championship Cup 2023 final between Al-Nassr and Al-Hilal, scoring twice to help his team secure the title for the first time in its history. It was also the first time that Ronaldo lifted a trophy with Al-Nassr, the team had joined last year. Ronaldo, having played an instrumental role in the team's triumph, also registered a huge new record, scoring the most number of headed goals in the history of the game (145), surpassing Germany and Bayern Munich legend Gerd Muller.

# Jaiswal breaks Rohit's India T20I milestone

Yashasvi Jaiswal hammered an explosive 84 not out of 51 balls as India thrashed West Indies by nine wickets in the fourth T20I in Lauderhill Saturday. Jaiswal pummeled West Indies all across the park, hitting 11 fours and three sixes during his stay in the middle, and helped the visitors level the five-match series ahead of the decider Sunday. The 21-year-old not only won the

Player of the Match, but also broke a huge record held by India captain Rohit Sharma. With his knock, Jaiswal became the youngest Indian batter to register 75-plus runs in a T20I match. Jaiswal achieved the feat at 21 years and 227 days, surpassing Rohit, who held the record at 23 years and seven days.

### ACT TRIUMPH IMPACT

# India jump to third place in FIH rankings

INDIA HAD ACHIEVED A SIMILAR RANKING IN 2021 AFTER SECURING A BRONZE IN THE TOKYO OLYMPICS, WHICH WAS THEIR FIRST MEDAL AT THE GAMES IN 41 YEARS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 13: Giving them a big boost ahead of the Asian Games, India Sunday rose to third place in FIH rankings following their Asian Champions Trophy triumph.

India (2771.35 points) jumped one place to third and went past England (2763.50 points) behind top-ranked Netherlands (3095.90 points) and Belgium



(2917.87 points).

This was the second time India rose to No 3 in FIH rankings. India had achieved a similar ranking in 2021 after securing a bronze in the Tokyo Olympics, which was their first medal at the Games in 41 years.

On Saturday, the Harmanpreet Singh-led side defeated Malaysia 4-3 to lift the

ACT title. They made an incredible comeback from 1-3 down.

In the last edition of the event in 2021, India had finished third. The Indian hockey team's next assignment will be the Asian Games in Hangzhou from September 23.

The ACT runners-up Malaysia remained on ninth in

# Stalin announces cash prize

Chennai: Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin Sunday announced a cash prize of Rs 1.10 crore to the Indian hockey team members who defeated the Malaysian team 4-3 in the final of the Asian Champions Trophy in Chennai. The Hockey India has also announced Rs 3 lakh per player of Team India and Rs 1.5 lakh each for the support staff. Hockey India President and former national player Dilip Tirkey said that Hockey India was announcing a cash prize of Rs 3 lakh for players and Rs 1.50 lakh for each support staff.

the FIH rankings. Apart from India and Malaysia, South Korea too find themselves at 11th while Pakistan is placed 16th.