

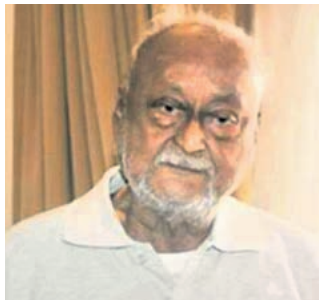
Jayanta Mahapatra passes away at 95

Bhubaneswar, August 27: Eminent litterateur Padma Shri Jayanta Mahapatra died Sunday while undergoing treatment at the SCB Medical College and Hospital in Cuttack. He was 95. Mahapatra was suffering from pneumonia and old-age related complications for the last several days.

Born October 22, 1928, Mahapatra was the first Indian to win the Sahitya Akademi Award for English poetry. He is the author of poems such as 'Indian Summer' and 'Hunger', which are considered classics in modern Indian English literature. The eminent poet was awarded the Padma Shri in 2009. However, he returned the award in 2015 protesting against the 'rising intolerance' in the country.

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik expressed deep grief and sorrow on Mahapatra's demise. In a message, the Chief Minister has described him as a legendary author and poet, who was a genius in both English and Odia literature.

Patnaik announced that the late poet will be laid to rest with full state honours Monday. **P3**



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Patnaik announced that the late poet will be laid to rest with full state honours Monday. **P3**

Tale of inaction

Authorities yet to act on ineligible admissions at Gopabandhu Ayurveda Mahavidyalaya, Puri

POST NEWS NETWORK

Khurda, August 27: Even as many ineligible students have managed to get admissions at Gopabandhu Ayurveda Mahavidyalaya in Puri, the authorities are yet to take any action in this regard for reasons best known to them.

At least three ineligible students, including a girl, managed to take admission and pass out of the prestigious institution during 2016-17, 2017-18 and 2020-21 academic years. Interestingly, principal Sudarsan Behera has admitted before the media to have expelled two ineligible students who have taken admission in 2020-21. Importantly, five students from Sri Sri Nrusinghmath Ayurved College and Research

Institute in Bargarh have allegedly been admitted to Gopabandhu Ayurveda Mahavidyalaya on transfer basis. Replying to a query of Directorate of AYUSH, Behera informed the Directorate that the five students do not belong to Gopabandhu Ayurveda Mahavidyalaya. Similarly, responding to a query of KATS Ayurveda College and Hospital in Ganjam, Behera informed that the students do not belong to the Puri institution.

The Directorate of AYUSH had asked the OJEE chairman June 21 to submit documents of the five students. However, the OJEE authorities are yet to respond, it was learnt.

Odia daily Dharitri had highlighted the issue in its January 10, 2023 edition. The next day,

the college authorities formed a nine-member committee. The committee informed the institution that certificates of all students admitted in 2020-21 batch were fake. With no way out, Behera expelled two students.

May 3, then AYUSH director Kalyan Rath asked the institution to submit a detailed report. Rath also wrote to the Health and Family Welfare department's additional chief secretary in this regard. Taking cognisance of Dharitri's report, Ministry of AYUSH asked National Commission for Indian System of Medicine to take appropriate action, but to no avail.

AYUSH director Premjit Nayak said, "Investigation is on. Action will be taken against those found guilty."

FRESH ARSON IN MANIPUR



A firefighter douses flames after unidentified miscreants burnt three houses in Imphal, Sunday **PTI PHOTO**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Imphal, August 27: Unidentified men torched three abandoned houses at New Lambulane locality in Manipur's capital Imphal Sunday afternoon.

Firemen rushed to the spot and put off the blaze, officials said.

Soon after the incident, people gathered in the area and demanded state and central forces deployed in the locality to allow them to enter the area, officials said, adding that the security forces later fired a few rounds of tear gas shells to disperse the crowd.

In another development, unidentified men snatched three weapons from the security personnel guarding the residence of former health and family welfare director K Rajo around 2am Sunday, police said.

The incident took place at Sagolband Bijoy Govinda under Imphal PS in Imphal West district, police said, adding the snatched weapons included two AK series rifles and a carbine.

Investigation is on to determine the circumstances leading to the incident, officials said.

Police, meanwhile, have launched multiple operations to retrieve the weapons and apprehend those involved.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



...and Neha Public School will now be known as Double Engine Shakti

'Suicide proof' hostels for Kota students

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kota, August 27: After spring-loaded fans in rooms, 'anti-suicide nets' are now being installed in balconies and lobbies of hostels in coaching hub Kota to prevent students from taking any extreme step. Hostel owners said such steps to make their premises 'suicide proof' are crucial to avoid tragic incidents.

Over two lakh students move to Kota annually to prepare for competitive exams such as JEE for engineering and NEET for ad-

mission to medical colleges. Twenty students preparing for competitive exams in Kota ended their lives so far in 2023 - the highest for any year. Last year, the figure was 15.

"We have installed huge nets in all lobbies and balconies to block students in case they jump from higher floors. These nets can hold weight up to 150 kg and also ensure that students do not get injured," said Vinod Gautam, owner of Vishalakshi Residency, a girls' hostel with over 200 rooms spread across eight floors. He

hoped spring coils in fans and these nets will help prevent any untoward incident.

Another hostel owner, who did not wish to be identified, said iron nets have been installed in all lobbies, windows and balconies. "Most students commit suicide either by hanging from fan or by jumping from higher floors or terrace. We have installed measures for both to avoid any tragedy. It is bad for business too because once a suicide happens, students in that hostel start shifting to other hostels," he said.

Robbers posing as CBI officers held

Bhubaneswar: The Commissionerate Police Sunday arrested five members of a gang who committed a robbery worth several crores impersonating CBI officers at Nandanvihar under Infocity police limits here August 2. The police seized ₹1.02 crore in cash, gold ornaments, a country-made pistol and other weapons from the accused - Hemanta Kumar Dhir, Sanatan Nahak alias Sana of Rengali and Arbaz Khan alias Bitu of Amalapada in Angul district, Sanjaya Mallik alias Kalika of Pattamundai in Kendrapara and Ajmer Alli of Bari Ramachandrapur in Jajpur district. **P3**

DSPL-198

Commencement of Distribution of Land Rights Certificates to Slum Dwellers in 5 Municipal Corporations by Hon'ble Chief Minister **Shri Naveen Patnaik** to **65000 families** from 875 Slums (1st Phase) in Bhubaneswar, Cuttack, Berhampur, Rourkela and Sambalpur. **2nd Phase Land Rights Distribution in Bhubaneswar will be in October 2023.**

Land Rights to Slum Dwellers

- 2 Lakh families will be benefitted in 5 Municipal Corporations.
- More than 1.72 lakhs families already granted with Land Rights in 110 Municipalities and NACs.

Biju Adarsh Colony

- 1010 Slums already upgraded as Biju Adarsh Colonies with basic facilities i.e. paved road, Tap water Supply at home, toilet, streetlights etc.

28th August 2023 | 11:30 AM
Kalinga Stadium, Bhubaneswar

urbanodisha.gov.in

[@HUDDeptOdisha](https://twitter.com/HUDDeptOdisha)

[hudd_odisha](https://www.instagram.com/hudd_odisha)

OIPR-13001/13/0034/2324

leisure



IGGY AZALEA CUT HER SAUDI GIG SHORT

Rapper Iggy Azalea says she was forced to cancel her gig in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia due to a wardrobe malfunction on stage, reports *Aceshowbiz*.

ARLEEN, VOICE ARTISTE OF HARLEY QUINN, PASSES AWAY

Actress Arleen Sorkin, who is best known for giving her iconic voice to the character of Harley Quinn in the classic cartoon series *Batman: The Animated Series*, has died at the age of 67.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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

ARIES

Life sometimes smiles down upon you, and today seems to be such a day. Though you will remain occupied with your work, there will be no pressure. Same is the case with your personal life. What more does one need? Ganesh is probably trying to teach you to be content.

TAURUS

Your health and fitness cannot be taken for granted this day, asserts Ganesh. Be careful of what you eat and drink. Avoid dust and smog. You could get indispensed in any number of ways. If there are signs of illness, consult a medical specialist with wasting any time. You may become too free and in spending money.

GEMINI

Unlike the last few days, today will be hectic and demanding. You will need to attend a few social get-togethers and functions. Socializing with friends and relatives is on the cards. However, you need to be careful about your health.

CANCER

An auspicious day to begin new ventures, which will be of long duration and also profitable. You may buy a new house or a car. Gain is also likely through your friend circle. Students may excel and may be able to concentrate well on their education.

LEO

You will be worried on account of issues related to your business. You need to work in the right direction to solve these issues. You will be able to put an end to your concerns with the right attitude. You will be unable to finish your tasks unless you concentrate fully upon your projects, says Ganesh.

VIRGO

You will gain a lot by way of goodwill by helping your mates at work. Besides, your work will make your seniors supremely happy. Your interaction with colleagues and friends will hold a special value for you. And, Ganesh says, you will enjoy your association with people you love.

LIBRA

Ganesh says that you will be full of joy and enthusiasm today to fulfill all your ambitions. You will be able to plan trips and excursions with friends or family members. Ganesh says that it is a good idea to plan the trip and go forth with it as soon as possible. Towards evening you will be able to visit a lovely place.

SCORPIO

You may call it an 'awesome' day, while Ganesh may call it just perfect. Unexpected financial gains on cards today. Academically and professionally, you may push your limits higher, proving your expertise. You may be on an emotional high, express yourself freely.

SAGITTARIUS

You get your rivals and competitors thinking for your sheer smartness in the professional field. It's time to clink glasses as you have the knack to survive the cut-throat competition. Evening will be spent rejoicing with near and dear ones at a social gathering.

CAPRICORN

You are practical and wise. With your worldly wisdom and intellect at display, you will be able to guide your near and dear today, says Ganesh. Your belief of working in a harmonious environment will inspire you to spread the message of love, peace, and joy. The extraordinary management skills that you possess will ensure cordial and healthy relationships.

AQUARIUS

You possess a nice quality of eloquence. Today, you will make a speech/presentation or conduct a discussion forum where everyone will love to hear your opinions. Your communication skill will help you get through the heart of someone you like. But, don't blow your own trumpet all the time, advises Ganesh.

PISCES

The day will start off on a sour note for you. But as the day progresses you will find your mood elevated. If you wish to progress in life, you need to stop minor setbacks from upsetting you disproportionately.

Kangana lauds ISRO's female scientists

New Delhi: Actress Kangana Ranaut heaped praise on India's leading women scientists of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), who were behind the success of Chandrayaan-3 mission, saying that they are the epitome of simple living and high thinking.

Taking to Instagram Stories, Kangana shared a happy picture of the ISRO's women scientists, who were dressed in sarees and represented Indian traditional culture.

She captioned the photo, "India's leading scientists, all of them with bindi, sindoor and Mangal sutra... epitome of simple living and high thinking... true essence of Bhartiyyata", followed by the emoji of Indian flag.

Meanwhile, Kangana will be next seen in *Chandramukhi 2*, and has *Tejas* and *Emergency* in the pipeline



No gimmicks needed to woo viewers: Rasika

Mumbai: Actress Rasika Dugal believes if you're true to your work, no gimmicks are needed to get the viewers hooked.

She said, "Along with a comfortable viewing experience, what OTT has also given rise to is the play/pause culture, where a viewer can move on from a project if they don't enjoy it, unlike a theatrical release, where they might wait, having paid for the ticket."

She adds, "I believe if a story is compelling and you have told it well, the audience will appreciate it. I don't feel that pehle episode mein kuchh dhamakedaar hona zaruri hai audience ko rokne ke liye. I have the pressure to perform and my job is to be present in the moment to do my work as an actor, to the best of my ability." Talking about sensationalism, she adds, "A show like *Delhi Crime* was not sensational at all. *The Family Man* was a well-told story and the audience stuck to it. But I like the idea that the audience has control and can move away if they don't like something. That's fair."

AGENCIES



Nawazuddin takes an indirect dig at SRK

Mumbai: Actor Nawazuddin Siddiqui is one of the most versatile actors of Bollywood. Despite working with 3 Khans he has proved his mettle and carved a niche for himself in the industry, the viral video sees him taking an indirect dig at the King Khan when asked about being typecast in films.

A Reddit user recently shared a short clip from his old interview where an audience member asks him about being typecast in Bollywood. Replying to the same, the *Sacred Games* actor answers, "I am very stubborn that I won't let myself get typecast. Typecast means film's hero who

do same thing for 35 years (imitating SRK's signature pose). I am very stubborn in such cases."

Soon after the video surfaced on the web, netizens trolled Siddiqui and slammed him for his attitude. Commenting on the post a user wrote, "Isko pata nahi hai... Par ye type cast ho chuka hai... As a GAREEB AADMI OR CRIMINAL" while another said, "Guy was typecast from the get-go. He's been trying so hard to get out of that typecast but nobody wants to see him as anything else other than a criminal or poor man."

AGENCIES



Sushmita gets candid on idea of love

Mumbai: Actress

Sushmita Sen who is now soaking in the reception for her latest web series *Tuuli* candidly opened up about her idea of love and how it's not about projecting but to love another is to love yourself. Sushmita said, "So the idea that I have been able to find happiness in this space is because I am also built that way. I believe in... nothing in life is more important than my freedom... very important to me. My freedom to be who I am, to choose the voice I want to speak with... I was 18 once and the world was all about 'somebody will complete me' kind of scenario. I am complete in myself. If someone can help enhance that feeling of completion, that would be lovely. I don't need that for completion. When you need validation you must have the courage to stand in front of the mirror."

In the same interview, the *Aarya* actress adds, "Oh its everything. It's what I am made of, that's how closely I associate with that word. It is not that love that you project or feel but the love you are. That to me is love, that everything you do in your life with that 'who you are' feeling. So to even love another is to love yourself. There is that self love that I speak of... is on a cellular level."

AGENCIES



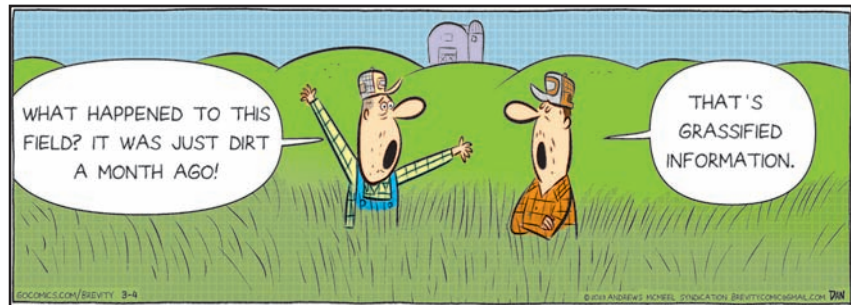
PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

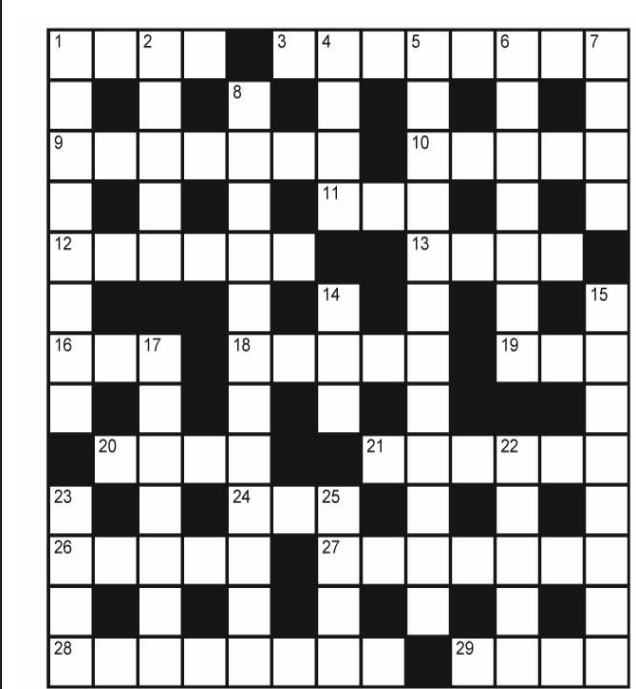


BREVITY



FUN post

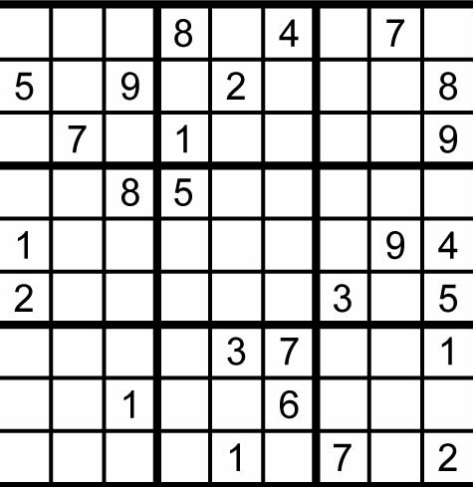
CROSSWORD



- Across
- 1 Identical
 - 3 Rural acreage, at times
 - 9 Football stat
 - 10 Soup scoop
 - 11 Stir-fry pan
 - 12 Write down
 - 13 Computer image
 - 16 Beluga yield
 - 18 Antler point
 - 19 Kind of story
 - 20 Parodied
 - 21 Building material
 - 24 Quick swim
 - 26 Tedium
 - 27 Worship
 - 28 Peel and Steed, e.g.
 - 29 Wild plum
- Down
- 1 Parting word, in Kyushu
 - 2 Kind of raise
 - 4 Over again
 - 5 Dairy equipment, once (7,5)
 - 6 Backbreaking
 - 7 Hard to fathom
 - 8 Sweetened porridge (5,7)
 - 14 Towel holder
 - 15 Antiquated
 - 17 Strike out
 - 22 Recipe direction
 - 23 Epsilon follower
 - 25 Jetty

SUDOKU

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



SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

URSA INSTINCT
M H E O H E I
B L E N D E R O R E A D Y
R E E D M R R D Y
E M P T Y A N N A L S
L A L S I E O
L A U R E L G Y P S U M
A L L S I E
M Y S T I C P E T A L
I S H A L O E
T E S T Y M E E R K A T
C H E M I P A A A T
H Y S T E R I A L Y R E

SUDOKU

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

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown

5 robbers held with ₹1.02cr

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 27: The twin city Commissionerate Police Sunday arrested five members of a gang for their alleged involvement in a robbery at Nandan Vihar under Infocity police limits here, August 2.

Hemant Kumar Dhir, Sanatan Nahak and Arbaz Khan of Angul, Sanjay Mallik of Kendrapara and Ajmer Alli of Jajpur district have been arrested in connection with a robbery case (263/23) registered at Infocity police station August 3, an official said, adding that Arbaz has been residing in Maitree Vihar area here, while Ajmer in Laxmisagar area of the Capital city.

"Rs 1.02 crore in cash, gold ornaments, a country-made pistol and other weapons were re-



covered from the possession of the accused," the official said.

According to deputy commissioner of police (DCP) Prateek Singh, Nibarani and his son were at their residence in Nandan Vihar area August 2 night when three of the accused entered their house after introducing themselves as CBI officers.

"They told Nibarani that a raid would be conducted at their res-

idence. Soon after, four to five associates of the miscreants too entered the house and took the father-son duo into the kitchen at gunpoint. The miscreants tied their (Nibarani and his son) mouth and hands with towels. They later decamped with crores in cash, jewellery and other valuables," Singh said, adding that around Rs 2 crore in cash was robbed by the miscreants.

On being informed, police reached the spot and launched an investigation into the matter.

During search of the crime spot, police came across a bag in which they got a SIM card registered in name of Badal Rengali in Angul, the former driver of Nibarani's close relative who used to visit the Nandan Vihar house in the past.

Police later learnt that Badal, in connivance with Hemant and Sanatan, hatched a plot to commit the robbery at the residence of Nibarani.

The accused were Sunday produced before the court that sent them to judicial custody.

Police sources said efforts are on to arrest other four accused, including Badal, involved in the crime.

LOC against 3 in crypto-ponzi scam

GYAN RANJAN MOHAPATRA, OP

Bhubaneswar, August 27: The Bureau of Immigration (BOI) has issued a Look Out Circular (LOC) against three members of Solar Techno Alliance (STA) accused in a multi-crore crypto-ponzi scam.

Acting on a request of the Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of the state Crime Branch, the BOI has issued the LOC against the accused who were planning to flee the country. The trio was identified as Krishna Kumar of Hanumangarh, Anil Kumar of Sri-Ganganagar and Bhoora Ram of Nagaur in Rajasthan.

EOW sources said that the accused persons, close associates of Gurtej Singh Sidhu, used to handle the financial and technical aspects of the scheme. "They were also the top earners with a place in the top hierarchy of STA Pyramid. It was ascer-



tained that these members are planning to flee to Dubai or Thailand. We have started the process for the issuance of LOC against several other top members of the racket," said an official.

Earlier, LOC was issued against David Gez, 32, a Hungarian national and the global head of STA Crypto Ponzi scam, the official said. The EOW has already arrested three accused—Gurtej Singh Sidhu, 40, the India head of STA Crypto token and a native of Punjab's Faridkot, Nirod Das of Bhadrak, the Odisha head,

and Ratnakar Pallai, an up-line member in the scam with huge number of members below him.

More than 10,000 people from Odisha have been members of this scheme, which has more than two lakh members mostly in Punjab, Rajasthan, Bihar, Jharkhand, Haryana, Delhi, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Assam. Police of these states were contacted EOW and the state Crime Branch following Gurtej's arrest. The total amount involved in this pan India scam has been estimated to be more than Rs 1,000 crore.

Flight services between Utkela & BPIA August 31

Bhubaneswar: Flight services between Utkela Airport in Kalahandi and the Capital city is scheduled to be inaugurated August 31. The flight operations will commence as the Director General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has granted the requisite license to the Utkela Airport August 7. According to sources, IndiaOne Air will provide air service between Utkela Airport and Biju Patnaik International Airport (BPIA) in Bhubaneswar in first phase. The service is likely to be extended to Raipur in Chhattisgarh in subsequent phases. Reportedly, IndiaOne Air will engage a nine-seater aircraft to start air service between Utkela and BPIA. Notably, the state government has spent around Rs 162 crore for acquisition of land, construction of runway and terminal building for Utkela Airport in Bhawanipatna.



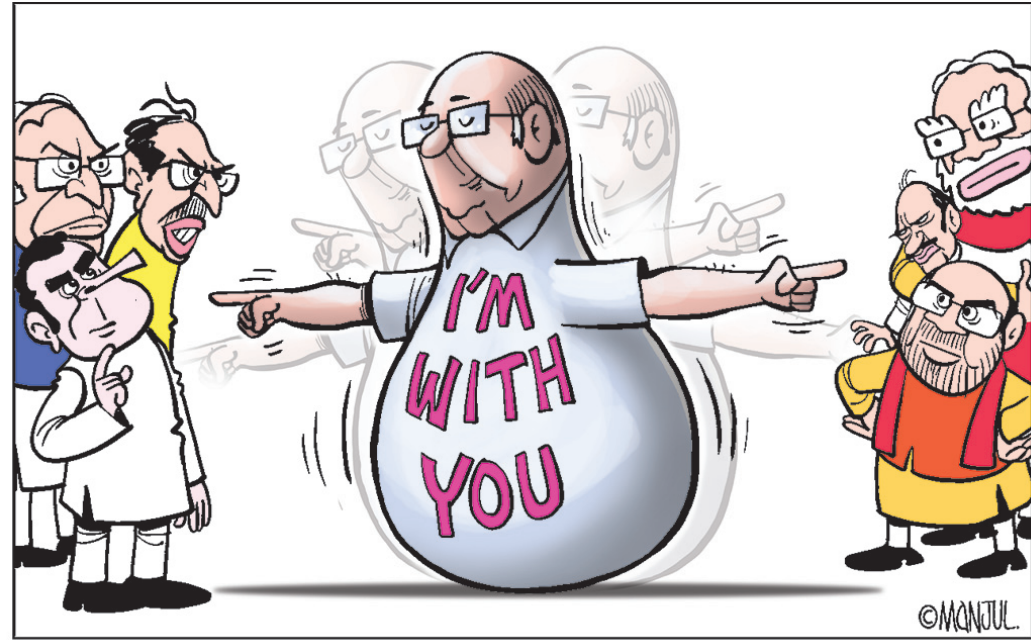
FOR A GREENER TOMORROW: Participants during the Cyclothon 3.0 organised by Marwari Yuva Manch in Cuttack, Sunday

HOLY SHRAVAN

Devotees congregate at Gadagadia ghat of Mahanadi in Cuttack, Sunday



POLITICKLE by MANJUL



END OF A GLITTERING ERA

With the passing of Jayanta Mahapatra, the bright Pole Star in the horizon of Indian English poetry stands extinguished.

Mahapatra, the first Indian English poet to have received the Sahitya Akademi Award (1981) for Relationship, has to his credit a Padma Shri (2009), but what many would consider to be the writer and poet's greatest achievement is his contribution to indigenisation of an art form as distant as English poetry.

Before Mahapatra and his contemporaries, Indian kids in their textbooks read Yeats, Wordsworth and Frost in the name of English poetry. The subjects of these poems included things like the English countryside, snowflakes, and Daffodils, something an average Indian kid might not have in her fortune to ever experience. But with Indian poets trying their hands at this foreign form, a new set of subjects entered the scene, like Indian mythology, culture, rituals and in case of Mahapatra, Odisha, its soil and its traditions.

Hence, in losing Mahapatra, India, and Odisha in particular, has lost a revolutionary, and a pioneer, who transformed a form through his writings. On the occasion, remembering a literary giant, **OrissaPOST** takes a look into his illustrious journey:

Birth and Early Life

Jayanta Mahapatra, born on 22 October 1928 in Cuttack (India), belongs to a lower middle-class family. He had his early education at Stewart school, Cuttack. After a first class Master's Degree in Physics, he joined as a teacher in 1949 and served in different Government colleges of Orissa.

Later Life

All his working life, he taught physics at different colleges in Orissa. He retired in 1986. Mahapatra has authored 18 books of poems. He started writing poetry at the age of thirty-eight, quite late by normal standards. Mahapatra's tryst with the muse came rather late in life. He published his first poems in his early 40s. The publication of his first book of poems, Swayamvara and Other Poems, in 1971 was fol-

lowed by the publication of Close the Sky, Ten By Ten.

His collections of poems include A Rain of Rites, Life Signs and A Whiteness of Bone. One of Mahapatra's better remembered works is the long poem Relationship, for which he won the Sahitya Akademi award in 1981. He is the first Indian English Poet to receive the honor. Besides being one of the most popular Indian poets of his generation, Mahapatra was also part of the trio of poets who laid the foundations of modern Indian English Poetry. He shared a special bond with A. K. Ramanujan, one the finest poets in the IEP tradition. Mahapatra is also different in not being a

OCT 22, 1928 - AUG 27, 2023

Poetry	Prose
1971: Close the Sky Ten by Ten, Calcutta: Dialogue Publications	1997: The Green Gardener, short stories, Hyderabad: Orient Longman
1971: Swayamvara and Other Poems, Calcutta: Writers Workshop	2006: Door of Paper: Essay and Memoirs, New Delhi: Authorspress
1976: A Father's Hours, Delhi: United Writers	2011: Bhor Moitra Kanaphula (Odia), Bhubaneswar: Paschima Publications
Poetry in Odia	
1976: A Rain of Rites, Georgia: University of Georgia Press	1993: Bali (The Victim), Cuttack: Vidyaipuri
1979: Waiting, Pune: Samkaleen Prakashan	1995: Kahibe Gotiye Katha (I'll Tell A Story), Arya Prakashan
1980: The False Start, Bombay: Clearing House	1997: Baya Raja (The Mad Emperor), Cuttack: Vidyaipuri
1980: Relationship, New York: Greenfield Review Press	2004: Tikie Chhayee (A Little Shadow), Cuttack: Vidyaipuri
2017: Collected Poems, Mumbai: Paperwall Publishing	

product of the Bombay school of poets. Over time, he has managed to carve a quiet, tranquil poetic voice of his own—distinctly different from those of his contemporaries. His wordy lyricism combined with authentic Indian themes puts him in a league of his own.

His recent poetry volumes include Shadow Space, Bare Face

and Random Descent. Besides poetry, he has experimented widely with myriad forms of prose. His lone published book of prose remains The Green Gardener, a collection of short stories. A distinguished editor, Jayanta Mahapatra has been bringing out, for many years, a literary magazine, Chandrabhaga, from Cuttack.

CUO TO CELEBRATE 15TH FOUNDATION DAY AUG 29

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, August 27: Central University of Odisha (CUO) is all set to celebrate its 15th foundation day August 29 at its Landiguda Campus in Koraput with Governor Ganeshi Lal delivering the foundation day speech as the 'Saraswati Atithi.'

The CUO was established in

2009 under the Central University Act along with thirteen other Central Universities in the country. Since its inception, the university has marched ahead with its vision and mission and strives to fulfill the educational aspirations of the region, said vice-chancellor Chakradhar Tripathi, who will preside over the foundation day event.

In the last 14 years, the university has started 8 schools and 18 departments, with research programmes in eight of them. From this academic session, the university is introducing BSc courses in agriculture science, forestry management, animal husbandry and dairy, and a PG MBA programme in logistics and sup-

ply chain management.

The new courses have been introduced to cater to needs of the local students who aspire to higher quality of education, said Tripathi, who joined the university in September last and has undertaken several infrastructure projects while also initiating recruitment processes for teaching and non-teaching positions.

Notably, Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), Sunabeda, general manager Sudhansu Mohan Jena will attend the foundation day event as special guest. The foundation day celebrations will be organised at the Landiguda Campus in Koraput with the vice-chancellor unfurling the university flag and addressing the gathering in morning.

STA wins SKOCH Award for eDetection

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, August 27: State Transport Authority (STA) has received the 'Silver Certificate' in SKOCH Award for eDetection during the 94th SKOCH Summit at New Delhi, Sunday.

Joint Transport Commissioner (Technical) Dipti Ranjan Patra received the award on behalf of STA.

"To ply on road, it is mandatory for a vehicle to have valid documents like registration certificate, fitness certificate, insurance and Pollution Under Control Certificate (PUC)." "Driving License (DL) is a must for all vehicle drivers, while permit is mandatory in case of a transport vehicle," said an official, adding that a substantial number of vehicles were found to be plying without valid documents.

To keep a check on vehicles ply-



ing without valid documents on highways, the state government started an eDetection portal from January 1, 2023. The portal helps to electronically detect movement of offensive vehicles and increase the road safety index in Odisha, it was learnt.

"In order to detect vehicles plying on national and state highways sans valid papers in Odisha, the Transport department has developed the eDetection portal," said Patra.

To keep a check on vehicles plying without valid documents on highways, the state government started an eDetection portal from January 1, 2023.

Data is collected, analysed with details in Vahan portal and automatically challan is generated for the vehicles plying without valid documents

The data is collected in accordance with the details fetched through the FASTag and images captured when a vehicle passed through a toll gate

lected from mining and industrial areas as well, he said.

Patra said data is collected, analysed with details in Vahan portal and automatically challan is generated for the vehicles plying without valid documents.

The data is collected in accordance with the details fetched through the FASTag and images captured when a vehicle passed through a toll gate, he stated.

WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
MAX	34.4°C	35.2°C
MIN	26.0°C	26.4°C
Humidity	86%	79%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil

Forecast
 PARTLY CLOUDY
 SKY

A slew of projects reviewed by 5T Secy in Ganjam dist

5T SECRETARY VK PANDIAN, DURING HIS GANJAM VISIT, TOOK STOCK OF A HOST OF DEVELOPMENTAL WORKS UNDER VARIOUS STAGES OF COMPLETION



ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, August 27: Continuing his visit, 5T Secretary VK Pandian reviewed the progress of various projects in Ganjam district Sunday.

He reviewed the progress of mega piped water supply projects from Ghodahad dam, Baghalati dam and Rushikulya river that would supply drinking water to Sanakhemundi, Dighapahandi, Chikiti, Patrapur, Chatrapur and Krushna Prasad block. The projects will cost around Rs. 770 crore.

Irrigation and drinking water being crucial, Pandian reviewed the ongoing Instream Storage Structure project at Jakamarapalli village across river Godahad to be completed by June 2024 at an estimated cost of Rs. 50 crore. The project, after completion by June 2024, will irrigate 1136 Ac of land and will provide drinking water supply to Dighapahandi block.

The 5T Secretary also reviewed Kansariganda Instream Storage Structure project across river Rushikulya at Barada village in Ganjam block at an estimated cost of Rs 152 crore that would provide drinking water supply to Ganjam block and Gopalpur TATA SEZ.

Pandian reviewed the progress of Ghatieswar Multipurpose Project at Kukudahandi at a cost of Rs 210 crore. The project would irrigate 1500 Ac of land in Kukudahandi block and supply 10 ML/D water to Gopalpur TATA SEZ Industrial Park.

In Dighapahandi and Sankhemundi, he reviewed the progress of construction of left link canal, left distribution system, right distribution system through underground pipe line system from Ghodahada reservoir of Chheligada Irrigation project. The project will cost around Rs 182 crore and will benefit an ayacut area of 14233 Ac in Dighapahandi and Sanakhemundi block.

Sanakhemundi block.

He also reviewed the progress of Biju Setu over Rushikulya river at Hansapur that will connect 5 Gram Panchayats of Chatrapur block and 10 Gram Panchayats of Ganjam block. The project would be completed by December end and will cost around Rs 23 crore.

Focusing on strengthening the road connectivity, he reviewed the progress of various road projects i.e. strengthening and widening of Palashpur Dengausta road in Sanakhemundi to be completed by June 2024, Jhilmili to Sadangipalli road in Dharakote and Surangi to Khariaguda road.

Pandian also reviewed the progress of Biju Patnaik Indoor Stadiums at Dighapahandi NAC, Chikiti NAC, Rambha NAC and Ganjam NAC.

In Berhampur Municipal Corporation, he reviewed the progress of important projects like, development of Beda Bandha at an estimated cost of Rs 26 crore to be completed in phases from November, 200-bedded sports hostel in Berhampur stadium at an estimated cost of Rs 16 crore to be completed by October.

He also reviewed Ama Hospital transformation works in City hospital at a cost of Rs 8 crore to be completed by November; Multi-level Car Parking at a cost of Rs 10 crore to be completed by April 2024, development of Giri Market at a cost of Rs 30 crore and development of Mission Shakti Bazar at a cost of Rs 5 crore.



CASTING A SPELL: A singer performs during the concluding ceremony of 46th Barsha Utsav organised by Chinta O Chetana at Rabindra Mandap in Bhubaneswar, Sunday

MoU signed between IIPA & GAA

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

New Delhi/Bhubaneswar, August 27: A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed, in New Delhi, between Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA), New Delhi and Gopabandhu Academy of Administration (GAA), Bhubaneswar recently.

GAA Director General Raj Kumar Sharma had a series of discussions with, IIPA Director Tripathy for establishing a collaborative framework between two institutions that culminated into signing of the MoU.

The shared vision and persistent efforts of Sharma and



Induction Training Programme on Public Administration & Governance cum Exposure Visit to Odisha Administrative Services Officers Training School (DR 2020 Batch), New Delhi, August 2023

Tripathy would enhance quality of teaching and learning experience of both the institutions. This will help building the capacity of training eco-system at all potential intersections and avenues in the state as well as nation. This collaboration will improve the knowledge, attitude and aptitude of public servants of the state and lead to constructive impact on the pace of good governance.

The MoU was signed by Amitabh Ranjan, Registrar, IIPA and Aradhana Das, Additional Director, GAA. The partnership will foster faculty exchange, joint research projects, and sharing of facilities.

To provide wider exposure on public administration and governance, and to build self-confidence of the young and budding administrators, GAA organised one-week long training programme of 127 OAS probationers of 2020 (DR) batch during August 21 to 25 at IIPA.

This is for the first time OAS probationers visited Rasthrapati Bhawan, Parliament House, PM Sangrahalaya, War Memorial and National Museum.

RIE holds session on ITEP in City



ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, August 27: National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE), New Delhi in collaboration with Regional Institute of Education (RIE), NCERT, Bhubaneswar organised an information sharing session on Integrated Teacher Education Programme (ITEP) aligned with NEP-2020 at Conference Hall of RIE, Sunday.

Asian Institute of Public Health vice chancellor AP Dash inaugurated the event in presence of NCTE Member Secretary Kesang Y Shepra, former vice chancellor of Central University, South Bihar HCS Rathore, RIE Principal, PC Agarwal, RAO Patel from MS University Vadodara and IP Gowamma Programme Coordinator.

Inaugurating the event, Dash reiterated the need for effective implementation of ITEP so as to fulfil the transformative vision of NEP 2020. Agarwal, in his address, highlighted the vision of NEP 2020 for transforming teacher education through ITEP. Shepra presented the implementation of the ITEP as a flagship programme of the government of India aligned with NEP-2020 on pilot mode for the first phase for which 42 institutions including the institutions. She stressed about the need for updated Teacher Education system as there is a paradigm shift in the field.

DAV Unit VIII celebrates 53rd Foundation Day

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, August 27: DAV Unit VIII celebrated the 53rd Foundation Day Sunday with benign gesture saluting the glorious past and the veteran founders.

The day began with the havan and invocation to the divine deity by the School chairman Santosh Upadhyay and Principal Ipsita Das. A blood donation camp was organised in collaboration with Capital Hospital and Red Cross. A total of 151 units of blood were

collected on the occasion. A health camp was also organised in association with Sunshine Hospital with the help of one of the alumni Gourab Das.

Institute of Physics Director Karuna Kar Nanda, in his address, exhorted the students by asking them to enhance their scientific temperament.

Regional Director, DAV Institutions, Keshaba Chandra Satapathy, Chairmen of DAV Public Schools, Bhubaneswar and Cuttack conveyed their best wishes to students and prayed for the success and glory of the institute.

Tobacco affects family of addicts more: Deo

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, August 27: Coalition for Tobacco Free Odisha, along with other civil society groups and concerned citizens, Sunday organised a public consultation programme to brainstorm strategies that can be used to reduce tobacco consumption, improve public health situation, and strengthen anti-tobacco policies of the Central and state governments.

The theme for the programme was 'improving public health by reducing tobacco use,' where a panel chaired by guests such as Rajya Sabha MP Sulata Deo and district tobacco control cell assistant manager Sushant Kumar Biswal discussed possible anti-tobacco and anti-addiction measures with Ranjan Kumar Mohanty, Minakshi Panda and Anuradha Mohanty

of PECUC. As per a report by global adult tobacco survey (GATS) 2016-17, nearly 267 million people, who are 15 years and above are tobacco users. And 38.7 per cent of adults are exposed to second hand

The theme for the programme was 'improving public health by reducing tobacco use'

smoke at home, 30.2 per cent at workplace, and 7.4 per cent at restaurants.

Addressing the gathering, Deo said, "Tobacco consumption affects more family members of the addicts. We should look deeper into reducing the production and distribution of to-



bacco as the revenue collected from the sale is less than what is spent on healthcare and treatment measures for tobacco related diseases. Such awareness programmes should be done in remote areas and villages, not just in urban areas." Children are seen consuming tobacco as it is easy available.

They are the future of our nation and protecting them from such hazard is protecting the future, said Mohanty of PECUC, while youth ambassadors Truptimayee Behera, Sasmita Bhoi and Subhash Chandra Mahanta shared their experiences in dealing with tobacco and addiction with the audience.

Moderate rain likely for next 5 days: IMD

Bhubaneswar: The regional centre of the India Meteorological Department (IMD) Sunday issued a yellow alert for thunderstorms accompanied by lightning in several districts of Odisha during the next five days. The midday bulletin of the weather office predicted light to moderate rain or thundershower at a few places in Malkangiri, Koraput, Rayagada, Nabarangpur, Kalahandi, Gajapati, and Ganjam districts. Light to moderate rain or thundershower is likely to continue in some places during the next two days despite the intensity of monsoon decreasing. A yellow warning of a thunderstorm with lightning has been issued for one or two places in Nuapada, Bolangir, Bargarh, Jharsuguda, Sambalpur, Angul, Deogarh, Sundargarh, Keonjhar and Mayurbhanj districts for August 30. In addition, light to moderate rain or thundershower is predicted at a few places in interior Odisha and in a few places in the coastal districts.

Gene therapy offers potential new treatment for liver cancer

US researchers have found that a type of gene therapy can someday help treat people with hepatocellular carcinoma - the most common form of liver cancer -- and metabolic diseases like diabetes.

The team led by University of California-Davis discovered a gene therapy that induces the body to create microRNA-22 (miR-22), a naturally occurring molecule, aided in treating mice with hepatocellular carcinoma.

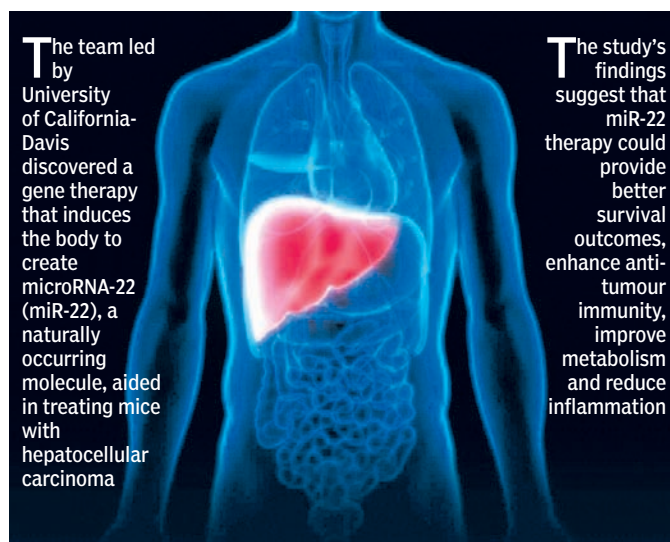
The miR-22 treatment also reduced liver inflammation and produced better survival outcomes with no observable toxicity compared to the US FDA-approved liver cancer treatment lenvatinib.

"This research introduces miR-22 gene therapy as a promising and innovative approach for treating hepatocellular carcinoma," said Yu-Jui Yvonne Wan, Professor from the UC Davis Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine.

"The study's findings suggest that miR-22 therapy could provide better survival outcomes, enhance anti-tumour immunity, improve metabolism and reduce inflammation."

In the study published in the journal Molecular Therapy, the researchers explained that the miR-22 acts like a brake, stopping the production of certain proteins, including cyclin A, protein deacetylases and hypoxia-inducible factor -- all that can fuel liver cancer growth.

Wan's previous research shows that metabolites produced by the gut microbiome help create miR-22 and have anti-cancer benefits. These metabolites include retinoic acid, short-chain fatty



acids, bile acids and vitamin D3. When people have colon or liver cancer, signalling from

these metabolites is reduced, which in turn reduces miR-22. This was a clue for Wan that

returning miR-22 to a higher level might act as a treatment for liver cancer.

For the study, Wan used an inactivated adenovirus, and introduced miR-22 into mice with a single intravenous injection.

The mice treated with the gene therapy were compared with mice treated with the current US FDA-approved drug lenvatinib (administered orally once a day), untreated mice and healthy mice.

Both miR-22 and lenvatinib inhibited the progression of liver cancer compared to untreated mice. However, the miR-22-treated mice had longer survival times without toxicity compared with lenvatinib-treated mice.

MI-22 and lenvatinib reduced serum alanine transaminase (ALT), aspartate aminotransferase (AST), and

cholesterol levels, indicating improved liver function. MiR-22-treated mice showed no blood or organ toxicity.

At five weeks, untreated mice had enlarged livers, making up 33.5 per cent of their body weight. The treated mice had smaller, less diseased livers, with ratios of 10.9 per cent (miR-22) and 12.0 per cent (lenvatinib) of body weight. The median survival rate was 46 days for the lenvatinib group and 50 days for the miR-22 group. Two mice treated with miR-22 remained alive for 60 days. In contrast, the survival time for the untreated mice was about 40 days. "The positive findings from this preclinical study give us hope that miR-22 could be a promising alternative to treat hepatocellular carcinoma," Hu said.

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Riverine port project hangs in balance

DURING A VISIT TO KENDRAPARA DECEMBER 8, 2018, CM NAVEEN PATNAIK HAD ANNOUNCED THAT THE FIRST RIVERINE PORT IN STATE WILL COME UP ON MAHANADI NEAR AKHADASALI VILLAGE

POST NEWS NETWORK

Kendrapara, August 27: Nearly five years after the state government made announcements regarding establishment of a much-awaited riverine port in this coastal district, the project has failed to make any headway, a report said Sunday.

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik during his visit to Kendrapara district December 8, 2018 had announced that a riverine port project will come up on Mahanadi near Akhadasali village under Mahakalapara block in Kendrapara district.

After the announcement, a special meeting was convened at Bhubaneswar where an estimate was made that ₹2,110 crore will be spent for the construction of the riverine port in the first phase.

It was stated that the proposed port project will also see an annual business of 18.43 million tonne cargo when it will become operational. However, despite declaration by the Chief Minister that the project will be completed in five years, the project has not made any real headway after announcement.

Meanwhile, environmentalists and the local intelligentsia have differences in opinion over the riverine port project. Environmentalists claimed that the port, when functional, will destroy the bio-diversity in Bhitarkanika wetland while the local intelligentsia claimed that its establishment is necessary to bring in economic growth to the district.

Arjun Mandal, member of



As per an official estimate, ₹2,110 crore will be spent for the construction of the riverine port in the first phase

It was stated that the proposed port project will handle annual cargo of 18.43 million tonne when operational

While environmentalists apprehend threats to the biodiversity of Bhitarkanika and Gahirmatha, local intelligentsia see the riverine port ushering in development in the district

district fishermen's association said that the proposed riverine port project will destroy the livelihood of over 30,000 fishermen.

He said that saline and freshwater fish are found in plenty in Mahanadi and its distributaries and related water bodies. However, the catch from these rivers and nullahs will decline after establishment of the port. The decline in fish catch will rob the people residing in over 20 villages of their livelihood.

Environmentalist Hemant Kumar Rout said that the riverine port when constructed will impact the bio-diversity of

Bhitarkanika adversely. The distance between the port and the nesting site of rare Olive Ridley turtles at Gahirmatha marine sanctuary will reduce which will be detrimental to the mating and nesting process of the sea turtles. The rare sea turtles will stop visiting this natural breeding site once the port comes up, he added.

Moreover, the port project will also destroy the natural mangrove cover on the coastlines which acts as a shield against ingress of tidal waves and natural calamities like tsunami and cyclonic storms, he added.

Biswajit Mohanty, secretary of

Wildlife Society of Odisha said the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change had declared 192 villages in Bhitarkanika and Gahirmatha regions as eco-sensitive zones eight years back. The marine wildlife in the area will be seriously affected if the riverine port comes up at Akhadasali.

District convener Pratap Chandra Mohanty of Odisha Sookhana Adhikar Abhiyan sought to differ and said that construction of the port at Akhadasali will result in economic development in the district when completed.

However, the announcement of the state government has proven to be an election gimmick as the dreams of port and industries are only shown to the residents when polls are around the corner.

The state government had earlier announced Barunei port project in 2009 and a thermal power plant at Rajgarh in 2014, both of which are yet to be realised. Therefore, uncertainty hovers over construction of a port at Akhadasali.

Local intelligentsia Ganesh Chandra Samal, Amarbar Biswal and Ashish Kumar Senapati said the port to be constructed in two phases will bring in direct and indirect employment for a minimum of 15,000 people. Moreover, small and medium industries will also come up which will result in economic growth. However, all those hopes will become a reality if the ambitious project sees the light of day.

Hearse missing: Man carries son's body in auto-rickshaw

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, August 27: A man had to carry the body of his son, who died of snakebite, in an auto-rickshaw due to unavailability of a hearse at the Keonjhar headquarters hospital, reports said Sunday.

Observers said that poor people often have to cough up more from their pocket and rent a vehicle to take home the body of their deceased kin as the Health department has never spared a thought to address the problem.

Sources said that Ganeswar Juang, 12, son of Bhimasen Juang in Talasumatha village under Banspal block, was bitten



by a poisonous snake late Saturday night. Family members rushed him to the district headquarters hospital where he underwent treatment. However, the boy succumbed to the snakebite at 8.35am Sunday despite best efforts given by the doctors to treat him.

Town police registered a case and handed over the body to the family members after conducting a post-mortem. The hospital authorities did not arrange a hearse to send the body home despite Talasumatha village being only 30 km from the district headquarters of Keonjhar.

Left with no option, the poor tribal hired an auto-rickshaw at ₹1,100 and carried the body of his dead son to his native village and conducted the cremation.

When contacted, CDMO KC Prusty said he will enquire about the matter from the concerned officials and take necessary steps so that such incidents do not recur in future.



FOR LEGAL AWARENESS: Students perform a skit at a competition on legal literacy at district level legal literacy festival organised by district legal services authority (DLSA) in Malkangiri, Sunday

IGH cures critically ill mother post delivery

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, August 27: A critically ill mother, who suffered severe bleeding or postpartum hemorrhage post delivery was saved by the doctors of Ispat General Hospital (IGH).

A 29-year-old woman of Relaposh village under Nuagaon block here had delivered a child at Bisra community health centre July 18. In a critical state, she was shifted to two other private hospitals but to no avail. Almost on the verge of collapsing and in pain, she was brought to Ispat

General Hospital (IGH).

She was immediately admitted into ICU with breathing difficulty due to altered sensorium. The doctors put her on a mechanical ventilator and kept her under critical care observation, round the clock. She responded to all the medical interventions being carried out on her and finally showed signs of recovery.

After six days she was finally shifted to the ward July 24. However, the doctors did not allow her to be discharged and continued to keep her under observation. Finally, she was released a few days back.

AWC worker dies, hubby loses hand in mishap

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhogarai, August 27: In a tragic incident, an Anganwadi worker died and her husband, a teacher, lost his left hand after a dumper collided with the scooter they were riding at Thana Chowk under this block in Balasore district Sunday.

The driver and the helper fled the spot leaving behind the dumper after the accident.

The deceased AWC worker was identified as Jayashree Das Mohapatra and the injured was identified as her husband Achint Das Mohapatra of Rasalpur village under this block.

As per reports, Achint along

with his wife Jayashree was going to Kalahi village on a scooter to attend death anniversary of his father-in-law.

A speeding sand laden dumper (Regd No-OD 01 AR 6250) hit their scooter from behind in which the couple fell on the road and got crushed under the rear wheel of the dumper. The left hand of Achint and both legs of his wife Jayashree were crushed under the wheel.

Locals immediately rescued them from under the dumper and rushed them to Jaleswarpur community health centre. As their conditions deteriorated, both were being shifted to a hospital in Bhubaneswar in an am-



balance. However, Jayashree died near Basta bypass on the way and Achint is undergoing treatment at a private nursing

home in Bhubaneswar.

Jayashree's body was handed over to family members after a post-mortem was conducted at Basta community health centre while the left hand of Achint was amputated. He is fighting for his life at a nursing home in Bhubaneswar.

As per sources, Jayashree was working as an Anganwadi worker in Rasalpur and Achint is a teacher at Pantei ME School.

A pal of gloom descended both at her own village as well as her in-laws' village after the news spread. Police investigation is underway after a case was registered at Bhograi police station.

Constable dies by suicide in Bhadrak

POST NEWS NETWORK

Thidi, August 27: A working constable of Thidi police station in Bhadrak district committed suicide Saturday night. The body of the constable was found hanging with a bedsheet around the neck from the ceiling fan at the government quarter where he was residing Sunday morning.

The deceased constable was identified as Tofan Kumar Patra, 36, of Bhandaripada village under Ramachandrapur police limits and Ghasipura block in Keonjhar district.

As per reports, an argument broke out between Tofan and his wife Saturday night due to some reason. Soon after Tofan went inside a room and closed it from inside.

As he did not open the door for long his wife suspected something amiss and called some other police personnel residing near their house and informed them about the incident. After they broke the door, Tofan was found hanging.

Police then register a case (No- 36/23) and sent the body for post-mortem. Due to a family dispute, Tofan had been living under mental stress for some days and that is the reason behind his extreme step, said IIC, Mohammed Hafiz.

Under-trial prisoner dies in Bonai sub-jail

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bonai, August 27: An under-trial prisoner died at the Bonai special sub-jail in Sundargarh district, Sunday. The deceased prisoner identified as Sukram Munda, 28, is a resident of Langalkata village under K. Balang police limits in Sundargarh district.

Police after seizing the body kept it at the morgue of Bonai Sub-Divisional Hospital and said they will conduct a post mortem after the arrival of the deceased prisoner's family members Monday. An investigation has also been launched, police said.

Reports said that Sukram suddenly collapsed on the ground after having his lunch, Sunday. Jail authorities rushed him to the Bonai Sub-Divisional Hospital where doctors pronounced him dead.

Police said that Sukram was lodged in the Bonai special sub-jail after his arrest on murder charge in 2020. Police had then registered a case and produced him in the court.



NOBLE CAUSE: Nursing students and para-medical staff take out a rally to promote eye donation on the occasion of National Eye Donation Fortnight at the Angul Headquarters Hospital

CUSTODIAL DEATH

NHRC directs CS to pay ₹7 lakh to kin of deceased

POST NEWS NETWORK

Kendrapara, August 27: National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has directed the Chief Secretary to pay ₹7 lakh to the kin of the deceased who died in custody of the Forest department and ensure disbursement of compensation amount in a period of six weeks.

The direction of the NHRC was issued August 24 while disposing of a petition filed by civil rights activist Radhakanta Tripathy.

The apex rights body also asked the Chief Secretary to forward the compliance report with the proof of payment of the compensation amount to

the Commission. Tripathy in his complaint pointed out that the 59-year-old Dhaneswar Behera, a resident of Khuntakata Satgachia village under Badamba PS in Athagarh of Cuttack district was picked up by Forest department officials, February 5 last on charges of poaching a tusker and removing its tusks.

However, later he was found dead in the custody of the Forest department. The villagers and family of the victim had alleged that Dhaneswar Behera was picked up by forest officials while he was returning from his daughter's house and was hacked to death by forest officials. Seeking magisterial enquiry of the issue, legal action against

the errant officials and heavy compensation to the bereaved family, Tripathy sought for the NHRC intervention on a war footing.

Pursuant to the direction of the NHRC, a report has been received from the Principal Chief Conservator of Forest Odisha which discloses that in the instant matter has been registered against six forest officials and they have been arrested and forwarded to the

court May 6 last and since then they are in jail custody.

They have been placed under suspension from February 8.

The inquiry and post-mortem have been conducted and the investigation is still going on. As per report, chemical and histopathological examination report of viscera, FCOD based on FSL, magisterial

enquiry report have not been received so far.

The commission considered the report and said it transpires that six forest officials have been found involved in this heinous crime and they have been placed under suspension therefore it appears that the human rights of the deceased have been violated by the public servants for which the government is vicariously liable.

The NHRC issued show cause notice to the Chief Secretary in May 2023 as to why the compensation of ₹7 lakh be not recommended by the commission to the state to be paid to the next of kin of the deceased for the negligence

on the part of the government employees.

In response to the same, the Conservator of Forest, Odisha has reported that all the reports related to the final cause of death of Dhaneswar Behera based on FSL, magisterial enquiry have not been received.

In view of the same, the payment of compensation to the next of kin of the deceased will be considered after completion of due procedure.

The NHRC found the reply not satisfactory as it does not contradict the findings of the Commission and issued notice to the Chief Secretary directing him to pay the compensation to the next of kin of the deceased.





By your stumbling, the world is perfected.

SRI AUROBINDO



Prigozhin & Putin

The reported death in an air crash of the controversial Wagner Group chief Yevgeny Prigozhin, who had rebelled against Russia's President Vladimir Putin two months ago, has cast doubts about whether it was just an accident or a brutal, cynical act of political vendetta. By hindsight it tends to confirm the forecast of CIA Director William Burns, who had quoted from Mario Puzo's Godfather book immediately after the mutiny, that "Putin is someone who generally thinks that revenge is a dish best served cold."

On August 23, exactly two months after his short-lived revolt, a private jet crashed outside Moscow, Russia with Prigozhin stated to be on board. As is natural, Russia is rebutting the charge and scotching speculation in this regard. The unrest and open rebellion by Prigozhin, who had come with his army dangerously close to Moscow, was seen by observers as having been the biggest threat to Putin's long rule. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov dismissed the suspicion of a plot leading to the death of Prigozhin as "an absolute lie."

What strengthens the suspicion, however, is the silence of Putin who took 24 hours after the crash to offer his "sincere condolences to the families of all the victims." He did not even explicitly mention Prigozhin's name as one of the casualties and only referred to him in a mysterious, oblique way. He described Prigozhin as a person who had "made serious mistakes in his life, but he achieved the right results." The Wagner Group and its charismatic chief, who was beholden to Putin, had played a crucial role on behalf of Putin's Russia in launching attacks in Ukraine and providing mercenaries for armed conflicts in dozens of countries in Africa and Arab. In the fitness of things the Russian President should attend his funeral. But, Peskov ruled it out saying the president's work schedule is quite busy at the moment.

The question is why Putin is distancing himself from the mysterious air crash and the death of one of his ardent followers who had seemingly turned hostile only about two months ago after doing his bidding for ever. The Russian President had apparently been jolted by the mutiny that lowered him in the eyes of his people who had thought he could be challenged by none. He looked very vulnerable and not invincible when he struck a deal with Prigozhin and let him fly to Belarus and condone his defiance. The subsequent tragic end of the Wagner chief appears to be a loud and clear message that challenging Putin's authority means death.

For many Russian observers Prigozhin's death hardly came as a surprise. Putin has a long history of taking out those he perceives as traitors. Throughout his political career, he has made clear that he values loyalty above all else. In the 1990s, when he was deputy mayor of Saint Petersburg and his then-boss Mayor Anatoly Sobchak lost a re-election bid, he supposedly turned down an offer to work for Sobchak's rival by stating: "It's better to be hanged for loyalty than be rewarded for betrayal." Much later in an interview he said what he cannot forgive is treason. He branded Prigozhin as a traitor after he rose in mutiny.

Since Putin captured power in 2000, many who crossed his path have mysteriously died. The list of such men is long enough starting from General Alexander Lebed, a widely popular governor who was seen as a possible challenger to Putin, to oligarch Boris Berezovsky who funded Opposition efforts after going into exile in London. Lebed died in a 2002 helicopter crash and Berezovsky died in London in 2013 under suspicious circumstances. Reaching further out, Putin's known detractors Pavel Antov and Vladimir Bidenov were, equally mysteriously, supposedly died by suicide at Rayagada in southern Orissa.

Prigozhin's mutiny also triggered a wave of dismissals of military officials. General Sergei Surovikin, on whom Prigozhin had publicly heaped praise in contrast to other Russian commanders and defence officials, disappeared after the mutiny. But, on the day Prigozhin's air crash occurred, reports surfaced of Surovikin's official dismissal as head of the air force. There are other Russian generals and critics of the Ukraine invasion who have apparently incurred the wrath of the Kremlin.

Surprisingly, Russian state media and institutions which have often shied away from reporting on suspicious deaths and assassinations, have gone overboard in reporting the plane crash that killed Prigozhin. The Russian aviation authority also quickly published the list of passengers on the jet, while onlookers were allowed close to the crash site. This is rather unusual in Putin's Russia.

The inescapable conclusion is Putin is trying to send out the message to all those influential countrymen of his who criticise his Ukraine adventure that they would meet the same fate as Prigozhin's, if they open their mouth against him.



Avner Gvaryahu

NETANYAHU'S FAR-RIGHT PARTNERS OPENLY ENDORSE JEWISH SUPREMACY AND DOMESTIC TERRORISM

In early August, Israeli settlers killed Qosai Mi'tan, a 19-year-old Palestinian from the West Bank village of Burqa. One of the suspects, Elisha Yered, is a right-wing extremist who until recently served as a spokesperson for Limor Son Har-Melech, a lawmaker from the far-right Otzma Yehudit (Jewish Power) party - a key member of Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's governing coalition.

Despite Yered's current status as a murder suspect, the Israeli far-right has rallied behind him. Otzma Yehudit leader Itamar Ben-Gvir, who as National Security Minister is in charge of the police investigation into the shooting, lauded the suspects as "heroes." The killing of Mi'tan, along with the settler riots in the West Bank village of Hawara in February, highlights the forces driving Netanyahu's coalition. While international observers often view the government's emasculating of Israel's judiciary as Netanyahu's bid to escape his ongoing corruption trial, his extremist allies are steering the government's agenda. Netanyahu's far-right partners openly endorse Jewish supremacy and domestic terrorism. They proudly align themselves with the late rabbi and former Knesset member Meir Kahane, who called for the expulsion of Palestinians from the occupied territories and whose radical proposals were once compared by a prominent member of Likud - Netanyahu's own party - to the 1935 Nuremberg Laws.

These Jewish supremacists are largely indifferent to Netanyahu's legal troubles. In their view, Netanyahu is merely a useful idiot helping them to remove the few remaining obstacles to settlement expansion and intensification of military action against Palestinians. Their primary goal is to annex the West Bank. Many far-right legislators openly express these sentiments. Simcha Rothman, chair of Knesset's Constitution, Law, and Justice Committee

FOCUS ISRAEL

END THE OCCUPATION



Jewish supremacists are largely indifferent to Netanyahu's legal troubles. In their view, Netanyahu is merely a useful idiot helping them to remove the few remaining obstacles to settlement expansion and intensification of military action against Palestinians

who has played a key role in advancing the judicial coup, is a settler whose home in Pnei Kedem faces potential demolition over illegal construction. Minister of Finance Bezalel Smotrich, who also oversees the Civil Administration, the body governing civilian life in the occupied territories, is also a settler and a lifelong annexation advocate.

In 2017, Smotrich unveiled his so-called "decisive plan" for the full annexation of the West Bank, under which Palestinians would be denied voting rights, and those who object would face deportation. Smotrich acknowledged that his proposal might lead to a "democratic deficit," but rationalised formal apartheid as a necessary sacrifice. Not very long ago, these politicians were fringe figures. For years, Otzma Yehudit was a marginal party, unable to win even one parliamentary seat. It was Netanyahu who persuaded the party to form an alliance with Smotrich's Religious Zionism ahead of the 2022 election, enabling the joint list to win 14 seats (out of 120).

But "fringe" fails to capture the broader context. In reality, there is little (if any) difference between these racist parties' stances and those of Netanyahu's Likud. Consider, for example, Justice Minister Yariv Levin

(Likud), the judicial coup's architect. Levin has endorsed multiple proposals to "apply sovereignty" - a euphemism for annexation - to the occupied territories. In explaining his eagerness to push the coup, every example he gave concerned maintaining Israeli occupation.

Israel's autocratic drift is inextricably tied to the occupation. The ongoing judicial coup reflects not just the determination of a power-hungry leader to evade legal scrutiny but also a settler-driven effort to establish an apartheid regime between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean. And it is the occupation that has also facilitated the meteoric rise of previously peripheral figures such as Ben-Gvir and Smotrich.

The 2022 election is a case in point. Israel was still reeling from the wave of violence between Jews and Arabs that erupted in May 2021. The unrest began with the eviction of Palestinian residents from Sheikh Jarrah in East Jerusalem and quickly escalated into Operation Guardian of the Walls in Gaza, resulting in hundreds of deaths and sparking riots across Israel's mixed cities. Deeply shocked by the scale of the violence, many Israelis found themselves particularly receptive to Ben-Gvir's promises to "show the Arabs

who is really in charge."

But Ben-Gvir's rhetoric also resonated because "conflict management" has long been Israel's preferred national-security approach. According to this logic, given that peace with the Palestinians is unattainable, maintaining the status quo is Israel's best option. For years, Israelis were indifferent to this strategic shift away from the peace process, largely because it was the Palestinians who bore the brunt of it. But trying to manage a conflict is like trying to manage a wildfire; when the winds shift, the flames turn toward you. For decades, Israel has tried to manage the conflict, only to be managed by it. Just as they learned to turn a blind eye to the horrors of occupation, many Israelis regarded Ben-Gvir as a mere provocateur, overlooking the dangerous implications of his Kahanist beliefs and admiration for figures like the Jewish terrorist and mass murderer Baruch Goldstein.

This is why the opposition to the Netanyahu-Ben-Gvir-Smotrich alliance must offer a coherent vision for resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Any political alternative - whether it originates from the Knesset, the massive pro-democracy protests that engulf Israel every Saturday, or the international community - must address the consequences of Israel's decades-long policies in the occupied territories.

As pro-occupation leaders become increasingly candid about its objectives, their opponents must articulate a clear strategy for the West Bank's illegal settlements and outposts - the epicenters of Jewish fascism - and the thousands of soldiers on the ground sent to uphold military law on a civilian population. Our strategy must, first and foremost, strive to end the occupation. As long as Israel insists on maintaining a military dictatorship in the West Bank, genuine democracy will be impossible.

The writer is Executive Director of Breaking the Silence. ©PROJECT SYNDICATE

SPECTRUM ECONOMY

Long way to prosperity

On August 18, 2023, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said India is making remarkable progress towards "achieving equitable and collective prosperity" as he cited some reports to assert that the country stands at the cusp of a new era of economic progress and is on course to become "Viksit Bharat" or developed by 2047. In the past, he had described the present times as "Amrit Kaal".

He said the SBI Research has pointed out (based on ITR returns) that the weighted mean income has made a commendable leap over the last nine years, from ₹4.4 lakh in AY (assessment year) 2013-14 to ₹13 lakh in FY 2022-23. In the past, he has resorted to the rise of GDP and per capita income as the measures of success for the Indian economy.

But the bitter truth is that every year, the income of people increases in nominal term or absolute value. Simply put, inflation bloats the income in nominal terms. However, the PM did not consider the corroding effects of inflation on income. Just compare the cost of constructing a house or the value of an ounce of gold, the price of various co-

essential commodities, cost of health and education during 2014 and now. How prices have escalated eroding the purchasing power of people.

In nominal value, when GDP, per capita income and weighted mean income have grown, the Central government's debt has grown too. The government's debt was ₹58.6 lakh crore (52.2% of GDP) as of March 31, 2014, which went up by 174% to ₹155.6 lakh crore (57.1% of GDP) as of March 31, 2023. The rise of GDP and mean income do not reflect the ground reality.

The ignominious fact remains that India ranks 139th in the world in terms of per capita income, which means it is below 138 countries, even Bangladesh. When we talk of prosperity, we should know that India is home to the largest number of hungry, poor, homeless, modern slaves in the world. According to the NITI Aayog report, in Gujarat, over 38% of the population remains undernourished.

Economic disparity and wealth inequality in India have surged over the years, with a Gini coefficient of an already high 74.6 in 2000 rising to 82.5 in 2022. The

wealth share of the top 1% in India also remained relatively unchanged, reaching 40.4% in 2022. The 2022 World Inequality Report showed that the gap between the rich and the poor in India is at a historical high, with the top 10% holding 57% of national income.

Prosperity is far more than wealth; it is when all people have the opportunity and freedom to thrive. Prosperity is underpinned by an inclusive society, with a strong social contract that protects the fundamental liberties and security of every individual. In a prosperous society, people live in peace, free from the threat of violence, oppression, and crime. Everyone's inherent dignity is respected, and freedom of speech, worship, and assembly are protected. Governing institutions act with integrity, are accountable to citizens, and are subject to the rule of law. Stable families and supportive communities instil the values that shape the culture and build the bonds of trust needed for society to flourish. Prosperity is driven by an open economy that harnesses ideas and talent to create sustainable pathways out of poverty. The Institute for Global

Prosperity (IGP), United Kingdom refocuses the attention on what supports prosperity and what makes life worth living. More specifically, the foundation for a prosperous life is based on a good quality of life, secure livelihoods, access to key public services, good quality, and genuinely affordable homes, and a sense of inclusion and belonging in the economic and social life of a city.

India is also termed a flawed democracy as manifested in various indices. Media is subverted. There is growing corruption and violence. Society is torn asunder. People's religious sentiments are exploited for political dividends. Family life is crumbling, peace is declining with the invasion of Western civilisation. Due to rampant consumerism and hedonism, people have grown more insensitive and greedier. Hence apart from addressing wealth inequality, preventing erosion of social and moral values carries a significant challenge for the nation's landscape.

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

WISDOM CORNER

"Intuition is perception via the unconscious that brings forth ideas, images, new possibilities and ways out of blocked situations."

CG JUNG

"When you start to develop your powers of empathy and imagination, the whole world opens up to you."

SUSAN SARANDON

"Imagination is the most marvelous, miraculous, inconceivably powerful force the world has ever known."

NAPOLEON HILL

WORDSWORTH

■ Mugwump

This archetypal American word derives from the Algonquian dialect of Native Americans in Massachusetts. In their language, it meant "war leader". The Puritan missionary John Eliot used it in his translation of the Bible into their language in 1663 to convey the English words duke, officer and captain. Mugwump was brought into English in the early nineteenth century as a humorous term for a boss, bigwig, grand panjandrum, or other person in authority, although often one of a minor and inconsequential sort. This example comes from a story in an 1867 issue of Atlantic Monthly: "I've got one of your gang in irons - the Great Mugwump himself, I reckon - strongly guarded by men armed to the teeth; so you just ride up here and surrender". It hit the big time in 1884, during the presidential election that set Grover Cleveland against the Republican James G Blaine. Some Republicans refused to support Blaine, changed sides, and the New York Sun labelled them little mugwumps. Almost overnight, the sense of the word changed to turncoat. Later, it came to mean a politician who either could not or would not make up his mind on some important issue, or who refused to take a stand when he was expected to do so. Hence the old joke that a mugwump is a person sitting on the fence, with his mug on one side and his wump on the other. There is also a slangy sense of a person who has been persuaded by his possession of a minor official position into a sense of self-importance, often becoming obnoxious as a result.

■ Mufti

This term for the off-duty civilian clothes of the military man, or these days anybody who usually wears some sort of uniform, was originally a joke among officers in the British Indian Army, and is first recorded early in the nineteenth century. It's usually said to come from Mufti, the title of a Muslim legal expert who is empowered to give rulings on religious law. The story is told in Yule and Burnell's Hobson-Jobson of 1886 that the word was "perhaps originally applied to the attire of dressing-gown, smoking-cap, and slippers, which was like the Oriental dress of the Mufti".



Santosh Kumar Mohapatra

PROSPERITY IS DRIVEN BY AN OPEN ECONOMY THAT HARNESSES IDEAS AND TALENT TO CREATE SUSTAINABLE PATHWAYS OUT OF POVERTY

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, Rishabgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

Dengue menace

Sir, Dengue is spreading its tentacles in Bhubaneswar. The number of dengue patients is increasing by the day. Stagnant water and garbage heaps have become the breeding grounds of mosquitoes in the city. Urbanisation has given rise to serious health hazards. Awareness about dengue will reduce its menace. BMC should rise to the occasion and take effective steps to arrest the spread of dengue. The public too has a lot to do in this regard. Sensitisation about dengue is the need of the day.

Prabhudutt Dash, BHUBANESWAR

Spectacular feat

Sir, In sports, we often read, "He lost the game, but won many hearts." This may be an overused phrase, but sometimes it aptly fits with star players, involving in big tournament games. And it did so with Indian chess prodigy R Praggnanandhaa, who lost to world No. 1 Magnus Carlsen in the tiebreaker in the FIDE Chess World Cup 2023 final at Baku. But despite the loss Praggnan won billions of hearts, as he defeated some top-ranked players on his way to the finals, playing only in his first world cup. His spectacular feat not only underscores the rising power of Indian chess at the world level, but also the fact that beyond cricket, India can consistently produce world champions in other sports. Unlike other indoor sports, the game of chess demands a lot of mental stamina, sharp focus and great anticipatory skills, and no doubt the 18-year-old Grand Master from Chennai possesses all these qualities in abundance. The saying goes, "To play chess you need brain, and not brawn." Praggnanandhaa is a perfect example of this saying.

Ranganathan Sivakumar, CHENNAI

Easing tension

Sir, It's encouraging that India and China have agreed to intensify efforts to disengage troops and ease tensions along the Line of Actual Control (LAC). Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping held the talks on the sidelines of the BRICS summit in South Africa. Modi stressed the significance of respecting the LAC to improve relations, citing India's concerns over unsettled issues along the LAC's western region. This is the first time the two leaders have discussed the stand-off.

NJ Ravi Chander, BANGALORE



Man-elephant conflict claims 118 lives since 2022 in Assam

INDIA IS HOME TO 27,312 ELEPHANTS AND ASSAM IS HOME TO 5,719 OF THOSE, SECOND MOST AFTER KARNATAKA

AGENCIES

Guwahati/Agartala, August 27: Deaths of people due to human-elephant conflicts is on the rise in Assam with 118 people losing their lives since last year. During the same period, as many as 29 wild elephants have died, either after being run over by trains or other reasons, including electrocution.



ALARMING STATS

- 73 people were killed due to elephant attacks last year, while 45 have died so far this year in Assam
- Between 1990 and 2018, a total of 115 elephants died in Assam due to train hits
- 21 elephants died due to train hits, electrocution and other mishaps last year, while 8 have died so far this year
- In May 2021, 18 jumbos were killed in a lightning strike in Nagaon district in central Assam

The loss lives is mostly caused as a large number of pachyderms often come out of the forests in search of food.

Assam Forest and Wildlife officials said that 73 people were killed due to elephant attacks last year, while 45 have died so far this year. The victims included many women.

In all, 21 elephants were killed due to accidents with running trains, electrocution and other mishaps last year, while eight have died so far this year owing to similar misfortunes.

According to reports, between 1990 and 2018, a total of 115 elephants died in Assam due to train hits. Assam's Forest and Environment department officials said that 71 elephants, including calves, were killed in 2021 mainly due to train hits, poisoning, electrocution, and accidental reasons including falling into ponds and ditches and lightning strikes.

In May 2021, 18 jumbos were killed in a lightning strike in Nagaon district in central Assam.

According to the latest census, India is home to 27,312 elephants and Assam is home to 5,719 of those elephants, the second largest pachyderm population in India after Karnataka (6,049).

According to the India State of Forest Report-2019, Assam has only 36.11 per cent forest cover out of its total geographical area of 78,438 sq km.

Out of the total 28,327 sq km forest area, only 2,795 sq km comprises dense forest, while 10,279 sq km area is moderately dense forest.

Northeast India's leading biodiversity conservation organisation 'Aaranyak' has launched a massive 'Gajah Kotha' (The Elephant Story) campaign involving over 1,500 people to mitigate human-elephant conflict in Assam and Meghalaya.

To address the pressing issue of the increasing human-elephant conflict in Assam and Meghalaya, Aaranyak and the British Asian Trust, in partnership with the Assam and Meghalaya Forest departments and with support from the Darwin Initiative, are implementing the 'Gajah Kotha' initiative as part of their efforts for fostering coexistence between local communities and elephants.

The initiative targets human-elephant conflict-affected villages and educates people about the elephants' behaviour; ecology, and cultural connection to the region and the importance of their conservation.

"We developed the Gajah Kotha campaign through multiple brainstorming sessions and launched it to facilitate coexistence between humans and elephants in Assam and Meghalaya. The campaign illustrates dynamic ways to coexist with the gentle giants, which are also India's national heritage animals. We work with a wide range of stakeholders in the society through Gajah Kotha, including students, community leaders, commoners, government departments, and NGOs, and we are looking forward to working with many more stakeholders to promote coexistence, which will ultimately contribute to the conservation of Asian elephants," said Bibhuti Prasad Lahkar, senior researcher and head of the Elephant Research and Conservation Division.

Aaranyak's conservation biologist Aloika Sinha said that educating locals on the causes of human-elephant conflict and how we can sustainably increase their capacity is an important component of mitigating the conflict, promoting coexistence and safeguarding people's well-being.

"Moreover, we must work towards a long-term approach such as securing habitats and elephant corridors to reduce human-elephant conflict and ensure conservation of elephants and other biodiversity" she added.

According to Aaranyak, 24 Gajah Kotha campaigns have so far been conducted at Majuli's Haldibari, Jaborchuk Kathoni, Gazera, Gazera High School, Ujani Majuli Kherkatia High School, Pub Majuli Kherkatia HS School, Jaborchuk Basa, and Jopanchuk.

The campaign was also held in many areas of Dibrugarh, Tinsukia, Sivasagar, Jorhat and other districts.

"Our community educators, field staff, and village champions are working relentlessly on this coexistence initiative in Assam, home to a well-established elephant population," said Zakir Islam Bora, an Aaranyak official in charge of the initiative in eastern Assam.

"We launched the outreach campaign 'Mongma Golpo' (elephant stories) in the West Garo hills district in Meghalaya on the occasion of World Elephant day August 12 using the IEC materials," Bora said.

So far, the leading NGO has conducted four such outreach campaigns, mostly targeting villagers, majority of whom belong to the indigenous communities of Garo, Rabha and Bodo in the villages of Jamdangre, Borogobol, Lower Darenchigre and Lower Kharsendap.

Aaranyak is also working in other human-elephant conflict hotspots and has adopted a multi-pronged and multi-stakeholder approach to conserve biodiversity, reduce conflict and ensure human well-being.

TRIPURA BYPOLLS

Tipra Motha chief calls on Shah

AGENCIES

Agartala, August 27: Tipra Motha chief Pradyot Kishore Manikya Debbarma met Union Home Minister Amit Shah in New Delhi ahead of the September 5 bypolls to two Tripura assembly segments, a senior BJP leader said.

The meeting, which happened Saturday, assumes significance as the CPI(M) recently held discussions with the regional party and sought its support for the upcoming Assembly bypolls to Dhanpur and Boxanagar seats in Sepahijala district.

"Shri @PradyotManikyaJi had a fruitful meeting with Hon'ble Home Minister Shri @AmitShah Ji in Delhi today. They discussed regarding the ongoing talks and the rights and welfare of the indigenous people. It has been the vision of the Prime Minister to secure the rights and empower the tribals of Tripura and the rest of the country," BJP's Northeast coordinator Sambit Patra posted on X.

Debbarma, who stepped down as the Tipra Motha chairman recently, thanked the BJP leader.

"This is indeed very encouraging. I am sure that under the leadership of Hon'ble Home Minister Amit Shah, a lasting solution of the problems faced by the indigenous communities of Tripura will be found," Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said in a reply to a post on the microblogging site.

Earlier in the day, the Tipra Motha supremo had indicated that his party was unlikely to support the CPI(M) which has fielded candidates in the by-elections.

On a social media post,



Debbarma said, "For the Tripura people what should be the priority is securing our rights and not running after parties which have denied us these fundamental rights."

"People may call us left wing or right wing but my view is that we should engage with those who assure us and give us our constitutional rights," he added. The BJP is set to take on the

CPI (M) as the Tipra Motha and the Congress have decided not to contest the by-elections.

The bypoll to the Boxanagar constituency was necessitated due to the death of CPI (M) MLA Samsul Haque.

Union Minister Pratima Bhoomik's resignation as the MLA of Dhanpur necessitated the by-election to that seat.

The CPI (M)-led Left Front has fielded Kaushik Chanda and Mijan Husain as its nominees for the Dhanpur and Boxanagar Assembly constituencies, respectively.

The BJP nominated Taffajal Hussain for the Boxanagar Assembly seat and Bindu Debnath for the Dhanpur segment.

Its BJP Vs CPI-M in Sept 5 bypolls

For the first time in over five years, a direct contest would be held between the ruling BJP and the opposition CPI-M-led Left Front in the September 5 by-polls to two Assembly seats in Tripura.

The Congress and Tipra Motha Party (TMP), other two opposition parties, have decided not to field candidates in the two assembly seats and support the Left candidates to prevent division of vote share of opposition parties.

The CPI-M has nominated Mizan Hossain in the Boxanagar seat and Kaushik Chanda in Dhanpur seat. The ruling BJP would field Taffajal Hossain in Boxanagar and Bindu Debnath



in Dhanpur seat. CPI-M's Mizan Hossain and BJP's Bindu Debnath are contesting elections for the first time while Chanda and Taffajal Hossain have contested the assembly polls in February 16 this year.

The three main opposition parties in Tripura -- CPI-M, Congress and TMP -- held a meeting August 12 and discussed how to fight the by-polls to two Assembly seats in the state jointly against the ruling BJP.

The leader of opposition and senior TMP leader Animesh

Debbarma said that in September 5 by-elections, they want to prevent the opposition vote division and ensure the BJP's defeat.

Debbarma said that in the February 16 Assembly polls, the BJP secured 40 per cent votes but it retained power, while the opposition parties got 60 per cent votes.

The by-election in the Dhanpur Assembly seat was necessitated after Union minister Pratima Bhoomik resigned from the Assembly days after her election from the seat as a BJP nominee.

The Muslim-dominated Boxanagar Assembly seat fell vacant after the death of sitting CPI-M MLA Samsul Haque.

TSF calls for 12-hour shutdown

AGENCIES

Agartala, August 27: The influential Twipra Students Federation (TSF) has called for a 12-hour shutdown in Tripura Monday demanding introduction of Roman script for the tribal Kokborok language and passage of the 125th Constitutional Amendment Bill.

The state's main tribal-based opposition Tipra Motha Party and the TSF have been holding a numerous agitational programme for the past few months to introduce Roman script in Kokborok language and approval of 125th Constitutional Amendment Bill, which when enacted would further empower ten tribal autonomous bodies in northeast - three each in Assam, Mizoram, and Meghalaya and one in Tripura.

TSF President Samrat



Debbarma and General Secretary Hamulu Jamatia said that despite agitations, the present state government is indifferent towards their demands.

Jamatia said that since the government is unresponsive towards their two vital demands they have been forced to call dawn to dusk shutdown Monday.

The Constitution 125th (Amendment) Bill was tabled in the Rajya Sabha by the govern-

ment in 2019 and it seeks to further strengthen the 6th Schedule of the Constitution, under which the ten tribal autonomous bodies were constituted in Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Tripura.

Tripura has a 12 lakh tribal population out of its 40 lakh inhabitants and 70 per cent of the tribals speak in the Kokborok language, which was recognised as the second official language by the then CPI-M led Left Front government in 1979.

The demand for the Roman script for Kokborok recently got strength after there were reports that students in various schools in Tripura, specially the Central Board of Secondary Education run schools, were compelled to write answers for the Kokborok subject in the CBSE board examination in the Bengali script.

The Tipra Motha Party has

also been spearheading agitations across Tripura demanding the introduction of the Roman script for Kokborok.

For over five decades, there has been a debate over the use of the Bengali and Roman scripts for the Kokborok language.

While some Kokborok speakers favour Bengali, the majority of the tribal intellectuals and academicians advocate for the Roman script.

Since 1988, two commissions have been set up on the issue under tribal leader Shyama Charan Tripura and linguist and academican Pabitra Sarkar.

A Tipra Motha Party leader said that Kokborok is the mother tongue of the tribal people and it belongs to the Tibeto-Burman family and is close to other languages of the north-eastern region such as Bodo, Garo and Dimasa.

Assam village where just one family lives

AGENCIES

Nalbari, August 27: A village in Assam's Nalbari district, which had the road leading to it inaugurated by a former chief minister many years ago, is now almost deserted.

From being a prosperous village in the last century to just 16 people in the 2011 census, No 2 Bardhanara village currently has a single family with five mem-

bers, due to lack of a proper road.

Bimal Deka, his wife Anima and their three children — Naren, Dipali and Seuti — are the only dwellers of this village in Ghograpara circle, around 12 km from the headquarters town Nalbari.

"We have to travel 2 km through water and muddy paths to reach the nearest motorable road to attend our school and college. During monsoons, we commute through a country boat," Dipali said.

Anima rows the boat to ferry her children back and forth, but despite such tough conditions, the

family has ensured proper education for all three.

While Dipali and Naren are graduates, Seuti is doing her higher secondary.

With no electricity, the children study under the light of kerosene lamps. The boat becomes the sole mode of transportation for the family when it rains as all the paths within the village get submerged.

The condition of this revenue village spread across 162 hectares was not so pathetic till a few decades ago, people of nearby areas claimed.

Known for high agricultural yield, former chief minister Bishnuram Medhi had visited No 2 Bardhanara a few decades ago to inaugurate a road leading to the village.

Anima said the apathy of local authorities has worsened the condition, which led villagers to abandon it. "Local agencies like the zilla parishad, gaon panchayat or the block development office are not interested in carrying out any work here," she claimed, adding agriculture and animal rearing is their mainstay.

Facilities for tourists soon at Unakoti

IN DECEMBER LAST YEAR, UNAKOTI FEATURED IN THE TENTATIVE LIST OF UNESCO'S WORLD HERITAGE SITES

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

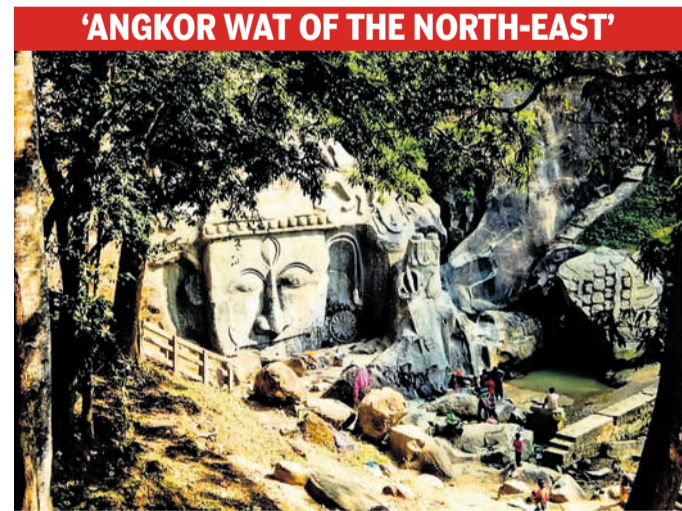
Agartala, August 27: Unakoti, known for its centuries old 'Shaivite rock' sculptures in the northern part of Tripura, will soon have a cafeteria, toilets, drinking water and other facilities for travellers, a senior tourism department official said here.

Unakoti, also called the 'Angkor Wat of the North-East' region, has been shortlisted as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

"During a recent meeting, Tourism Minister Sushanta Chowdhury requested the ASI to set up a cafeteria at Unakoti to cater to the needs of the tourists and pilgrims," Director of Tourism Tapan Kumar Das told PTI.

The Archeological Survey of India (ASI) is the custodian of the Unakoti rock carvings created in the 8th-9th century on Raghunandan hills, about 180 km from the state capital Agartala.

"The ASI also assured us that steps will be taken to open the cafeteria by September 15.



Besides, they will ensure that other amenities - safe drinking water and toilets - come up there," he said.

Presently, only rudimentary facilities exist at the site. Das said the Tourism department has been working on infrastructure development centring Unakoti archaeological site.

The Union Ministry of Culture has sanctioned ₹70 crore for the development of the Unakoti site, he said adding that the Asian Development Bank (ADB) is also expected to sanction a loan of ₹70 crore for setting up tourism-related infrastructure there.

The Tourism department has initiated a move to build a modern accommodation facility at

Sonomukhi Tea Estate, 7-8 km away from Unakoti archaeological site.

"At least 32 families can be accommodated there. It will have a swimming pool, a meditation centre and arrangements for adventure sports," the tourism director said.

The Tourism department is also working on setting up a parking lot for tourists at the Unakoti site.

The structures of the rock-cut sculptures are gigantic and have distinct mongoloid features and display almost the same mystical charm as the spell-binding figures in the Angkor Wat temple of Cambodia. That is why it is called 'the Angkor Wat of North-East'.

Badminton court under Jorhat's 1st ever flyover

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jorhat, August 27: The space below flyovers which is generally turned into vehicle parking area or simply left open has been utilised in Assam's Jorhat district by building a badminton court.

As Jorhat town got its first flyover recently, the people were also gifted with a badminton court under the flyover.

A local businessman, MP Agarwalla, has donated the synthetic court along with basic amenities under the flyover in the Na-Ali area of the town in memory of his father, Diganta Buragohain, secretary, Assam Badminton Association (ABA), told PTI.

The wall on one side of the court has been decorated with posters of star shuttlers of the country, including Olympic medalist Saina Nehwal.

Chairs have been installed for players, coaches and others, while the sides of the court have been cordoned off with wire nets.

It was a unique idea to use the public place for a purpose that will benefit the people, especially the youngsters. The Jorhat Badminton Association will be maintaining it, Buragohain said.

He added that the court will be open for members on payment of stipulated fees and it will start operations soon.



Local sports organisers Raktim Saikia and Tapan Dutta, among others, will be guiding the local players in the unique court.

Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, who had inaugurated the flyover August 16, had appreciated the idea of the badminton court below it.

"The innovative use of space beneath the Railway Over Bridge for a badminton court is a creative way to promote sports and recreational activities. We're glad to be taking such initiatives that contribute to the #KholoIndia movement," he had written on X.

Buragohain said that there are plans to convert more open space below the flyover into areas for other sports.

The other spaces below the flyover are not so big for sports like badminton, etc. But these can be used for promoting other games, like chess, which don't require so much space. We are contemplating using the other available space for such other sports, the ABA secretary added.



A contingent of IAF before departing for its maiden participation in Exercise BRIGHT STAR-23, a biennial multilateral tri-service exercise, scheduled to be held at Cairo (West) Air Base, Egypt from August 27 to September 16, 2023



Devotees from the Malayali community prepare a 'Pookalam' ahead of the Onam festival, at Mahabali Nagar in Bhopal



People walk in front of destroyed Russian tanks installed on Khreschatyk street in downtown of Kyiv, Ukraine



Punjab's climber Saanvi Sood after scaling Mount Elbrus in Russia



Congress leader Rahul Gandhi during a visit to the chocolate making factory 'Moddys Chocolates' in Ooty



A traffic police personnel wearing an 'AC helmet' to keep himself cool on a hot day in Kolkata



G20 logo installed near the Indira Gandhi International Airport ahead of the G20 Summit in New Delhi



Women employees participate in a protest against the state government in Bhopal

national

of the day quote

The opposition has been creating obstacles to prevent the government from functioning smoothly. Sometimes, they (opposition) bring the news of horse trading of MLAs and sometimes they mislead people through CBI and ED raids so that the government cannot do its work

HEMANT SOREN | JHARKHAND CM

As many as 26 opposition parties came together to fight against the Modi government but Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao who calls himself secular has not attended even a single meeting

MALLIKARJUN KHARGE | AICC PRESIDENT

We are the first country in the world to land a spacecraft on the Moon's South Pole. It is a glorious moment for us. What could not happen in 60 years has been done in just 8 years by Modiji

ANURAG THAKUR | UNION MINISTER



WELCOME MOVE

The divergent views offered by India and China to characterise the conversation between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Xi Jinping is not 'trivial or cosmetic' but reveals the 'huge gap' between what the government wants the Indian people to believe and the reality

P CHIDAMBARAM | CONGRESS LEADER



WELCOME MOVE

With frequent cases of suicides and attempts being reported from different stations of Kolkata Metro Rail, the authorities have decided to introduce automatic platform screen doors at all the stations

All eyes on Oppn meeting in Mumbai

ALLIANCE LOGO, SEAT SHARING FOR 2024 POLLS ON AGENDA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 27: As the race for the 2024 Lok Sabha polls heats up, all eyes are on the Opposition bloc INDIA's meeting in Mumbai where a logo of the coalition is likely to be unveiled and strategic issues including seat sharing are expected to be deliberated upon.

There is also talk of the 26-party opposition alliance expanding with some more regional outfits joining it in Mumbai as top leaders in opposition ranks huddle for a two-day conclave starting August 31 in the capital city of Maharashtra where the BJP-Shiv Sena government is in power.

The INDIA bloc's first meeting was held in Patna in June, while the second one took place in Bangalore in mid-July. The Bangalore conclave had finalised the name of the bloc - Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance (INDIA).

Ahead of the Mumbai meeting, Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar Sunday said that a few more political parties were likely to join the opposition INDIA bloc



Ahead of the Mumbai meeting, Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar Sunday said that a few more political parties were likely to join the opposition INDIA bloc during its upcoming meeting

during its upcoming meeting. However, the JD(U) leader, who played an instrumental role in bringing together different parties opposed to the BJP, did not reveal the names of the likely entrants but said that poll-related modalities such as seat-sharing will be discussed at the meeting.

Talking to reporters in Patna, Kumar said, "We will discuss the INDIA bloc's strategies for next year's general elections

during the upcoming meeting in Mumbai. Issues such as seat-sharing will be discussed and several other agendas will be finalised. A few more political parties will join our coalition."

"I wish to unite the maximum number of parties before the 2024 Lok Sabha polls. I am working in that direction... I have no desire for myself," he said. Shiv Sena (Uddhav Thackeray faction) leader Sanjay Raut had said last week that there is a

possibility that new political parties, especially from northeast India, will take part in the two-day gathering.

The Rajya Sabha MP had said leaders of the INDIA alliance, including Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and MPs Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi, will participate in the third meeting of the bloc in Grand Hyatt, a luxury hotel in suburban Mumbai.

"The INDIA (alliance) logo will be unveiled (during the meeting). Discussions are on for the same. We are trying to reach out to 140 crore Indians. The logo will symbolise the country, its unity, and reflect the energy needed to keep the country together," Raut had said.

Meanwhile, Congress leader Milind Deora said seat sharing for the 2024 Lok Sabha polls among alliance partners is more or less finalised in many states with only a few states requiring more time. Deora, who is closely involved in the organising of the meeting, hailed the "evolving chemistry" between INDIA partners and said the best example of that was in Maharashtra.

Bengal blast claims 8



The blast's impact was so intense that over 50 houses in the neighbourhood were partially damaged and body parts of people were found on terraces of several buildings, a senior police officer said

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Barasat (WB), August 27: At least eight people were killed and scores injured in a blast at an illegal firecrackers factory in West Bengal's North 24 Parganas district Sunday morning, police said.

The explosion took place when people were working at the factory in Nilgunj's Moshpole within Duttapukur police station limits, around 30km north of Kolkata, they said. The blast's impact was so intense that over 50 houses in the neighbourhood were partially damaged and body parts of people were found on terraces of several buildings, a senior police officer said, adding they suspect several people were still stuck under the rubble.

Police said the owner's son, who was present in the unit, was also killed in the blast. "The matter is under investigation. Guilty will be punished. We are conducting rescue operations now," the officer said.

Governor Dr CV Ananda Bose, who reached Duttapukur from Kolkata airport after returning to the city after a three-day trip to North Bengal, said he would evaluate the situation after paying a visit to the injured undergoing treatment at Barasat Medical College and Hospital.

"This is very shocking and disturbing. I was in Siliguri earlier in the day where one of our young friends died because of an assault on her modesty. That is very painful. Now, we have this incident. I understand that eight precious lives have been lost. I will make an assessment of the situation later," Bose said.

A CID bomb squad, personnel of the disaster management department and a contingent of police are at the spot, police said and added locals ransacked the house of one of the owners of the factory following the blast. Asked whether the factory was also manufacturing bombs under the veil of firecrackers, the officer said the matter should be probed.

"We have seized raw materials used for manufacturing firecrackers. Our forensics team is checking and taking details," he said. Twelve people were killed in a similar explosion at an illegal firecracker factory in Purba Medinipur district's Egga in May. Soon after Sunday's blast, the TMC and BJP got involved in a war of words with the saffron party demanding a NIA probe while the Trinamool asked the BJP to stop doing "vulture politics." Leader of the Opposition and BJP leader Suvendu Adhikari said the state was sitting on a powder keg.

"There is no monitoring of illegal activities by police. These crackers' units are patronised by local TMC leaders," he alleged. The party claimed that the factory was running with the support of local MLA and state Food Minister Rathin Ghosh.

BJP state president Sukanta Majumdar wrote to Union Home Minister Amit Shah demanding a NIA probe into the matter. Senior BJP leader Dilip Ghosh also demanded a probe by the central agency.

SHORT TAKES

3 die in hotel blaze

Mumbai: Three persons died in a fire that broke out Sunday afternoon in a hotel in Santacruz East in Mumbai that civic officials said had been issued a notice for failure to adhere to fire safety norms and had even been taken to court over it. The blaze broke out on the third floor of the ground-plus-four Galaxy Hotel in Prabhat Colony at 1:10pm and gutted the electric wiring, power installations, air-conditioning, curtains, mattresses, wood furniture in a couple of rooms and common areas like the duct, staircase and lobby, a fire brigade official said.

Four Dalit men assaulted

Mumbai: Four Dalit men were allegedly hanged upside down from a tree and beaten up with sticks by six persons on suspicion of stealing a goat and some pigeons at a village in Maharashtra's Ahmednagar district, police said Sunday. A video of the incident that took place in Haregaon village of Shirampur taluka surfaced on social media, following which the police on Saturday arrested one person in connection with the attack, while five others are absconding, an official from Ahmednagar police said.

Man arrested

Thane: A seven-year-old girl was allegedly assaulted and injured by a man in Bhiwandi town of Maharashtra's Thane district, police said Sunday. The police have arrested a 35-year-old man in connection with the crime that took place August 24, an official said. The accused lived in the same residential building as the victim, he said.

ROLLS-ROYCE, OIL TANKER CRASH

Kuber Group director asked to join probe

PRESS TRUST INDIA

Nuh (Haryana), August 27: Kuber Group director Vikas Malu, who was injured in a crash between a Rolls-Royce and an oil tanker that killed two people, has been sent a notice by police to join the investigation into the accident, an official said Sunday.

While the oil-tanker's driver and his helper were killed, the three occupants of the car, including Malu, were injured in the accident on the Delhi-Mumbai-Baroda Expressway near Haryana's Umri village on Tuesday afternoon.



Malu has been asked to join the investigation, the senior police official said. Initial reports suggested that the oil-tanker was being driven on the wrong side of the road and it collided with the luxury car near Umri village under the Nagina police station limits.

However, according to the FIR registered on the day of the accident at the police station, it was the car that came from behind and hit the front tyre of the oil tanker. Because of this, the tanker overturned, according to the FIR. Police Friday had said Malu was admitted to a private hospital in Gurugram. Malu's statement will be recorded once he is discharged from the hospital, they had said.

Pro-Khalistan graffiti in Delhi

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 27: Ahead of the G20 Summit, pro-Khalistan messages were found in at least five Delhi Metro stations, officials said Sunday.

A senior police officer said unidentified people wrote "Delhi Banega Khalistan" and "Khalistan Zindabad" on the walls of the metro stations. Police sources identified the stations as Shivaji Park, Madipur, Paschim Vihar, Udyog Nagar, and Maharaja Surajmal Stadium. A wall of a government school in Nangloi was also found defaced.

Legal action is being taken, the officer said, adding that the CCTV camera footage of the areas near the five metro stations is being analysed to identify the culprits. A purported video was released by the banned outfit Sikhs for Justice (SFJ)



A worker paints a wall on which pro-Khalistan slogans were written at Shivaji Park metro station, in New Delhi, Sunday

which showed the defaced walls of the metro stations. Gurpatwant Singh Pannun, spokesperson for the SFJ, said in the video, "G20 nations, when you will be meeting in Delhi on September 10, we will be organising a Khalistan referendum in Canada."

The Delhi Metro Rail

Vikram records 70-degree temperature

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, August 27: ISRO Sunday released a graph of the temperature variation on the lunar surface and a senior scientist of the space agency expressed surprise over the high temperature recorded on the Moon.

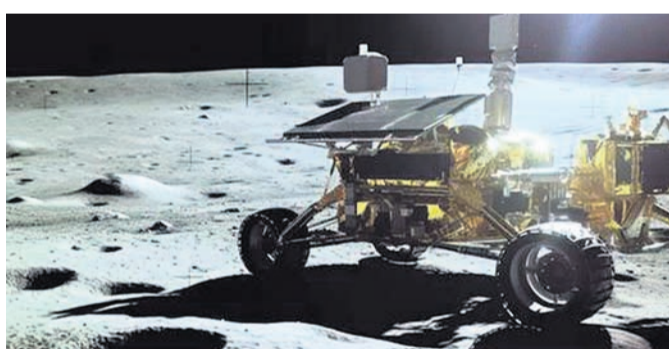
The national space agency said Chandra's Surface Thermophysical Experiment (ChaSTE) payload onboard Chandrayaan-3's Vikram lander measured the temperature profile of the lunar topsoil around the pole to understand the thermal behaviour of the Moon's surface.

"Here are the first observations from the ChaSTE payload onboard Vikram Lander: ChaSTE (Chandra's Surface Thermophysical Experiment)

measures the temperature profile of the lunar topsoil around the pole to understand the thermal behaviour of the moon's surface," ISRO said in an update on social media platform 'X'.

Speaking about the graphic illustration, ISRO scientist B H M Darukesha said: "We all believed that the temperature could be somewhere around 20 degree centigrade to 30 degree centigrade on the surface but it is 70 degree centigrade. This is surprisingly higher than what we had expected."

The space agency said the payload has a temperature probe equipped with a controlled penetration mechanism capable of reaching a depth of 10 centimetres beneath the surface. "The probe is fitted with 10 individual temperature sensors. The presented graph illustrates the tem-



perature variations of the lunar surface/near-surface at various depths, as recorded during the probe's penetration. This is the first such profile for the lunar South Pole. Detailed observations are underway," ISRO said in a statement.

Scientist Darukesha explained, "When we go two to three centimetres inside the Earth, we

hardly see two to three degree centigrade variation whereas there (in Moon), it is about 50 degree centigrade variation. This is something interesting."

The temperature dips to minus 10 degree Celsius below the lunar surface, the senior scientist said, adding that the variation is from 70 degree Celsius to minus 10 degree Celsius.

Pregnant woman killed by parents

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Muzaffarnagar, August 27: An eight-month pregnant woman was strangled to death by her parents before her appearance at a court here in Uttar Pradesh to testify in a kidnapping and rape case, police said Sunday.

The 19-year-old woman, police suspect, was killed as she had refused to give a statement before the court against her alleged partner in the case, registered on a complaint by her parents.

She and her partner had eloped in October 2022, and after she was traced in December that year, he was arrested and sent to jail, according to police. Police said the 19-year-old's parents have been arrested. She was strangled Friday and her body was dumped in a river at Goyla village, they said.

Security tightened in Nuh after 'shobha yatra' call

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Nuh (Haryana), August 27: Outsiders will be barred from entering Nuh and security has been beefed up in the district and other areas in view of the Sarv Jatiya Hindu Mahapanchayat's call for a 'shobha yatra' on Monday, despite the authorities denying permission for the procession.

Officials said police and paramilitary forces have been deployed to keep a strict vigil while security at inter-state and inter-district borders has also been tightened.

As a precautionary measure, the Nuh district administration has already ordered the closure of educational institutions and

banks on Monday, suspended mobile Internet and bulk SMS services, and imposed prohibitory orders in the communally-sensitive district.

It has also imposed prohibitory orders under Section 144 of the CrPC, preventing the assembly of four or more people in an area, till Monday. Communal clashes had erupted in Nuh and its adjoining areas after a Vishva Hindu Parishad procession was attacked by a mob on July 31 leading to the death of six people, including two home guards and a cleric.

On August 13, the Sarv Jatiya Hindu Mahapanchayat gave a call to resume the Brij Mandal Shobha Yatra in Nuh on August 28 which was disrupted by the



communal clashes in July. The Vishva Hindu Parishad has said the procession will be taken out and asserted that there is no need to obtain permission for such religious events. However, the authorities have denied permission for the yatra.

Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar Sunday asked devotees to offer prayers at temples in their neighbourhood on Monday instead of holding any 'yatra'. Permission has not been granted for the 'yatra', he said. "Instead of a 'yatra', people can visit temples in their areas for 'jalabhishek'," he said and asserted that it is the state government's responsibility to maintain law and order.

August 28 is the last Monday of the holy month of Shraavan. A few locals said they have no objection to holding the religious procession if it is allowed but asserted that there should be no provocative sloganeering during the yatra.

Amit Gujjar, a resident of Nuh

said he has no objection to holding the 'yatra' but it must be ensured that no slogans are raised during the procession that may hurt religious sentiments. Another local, Naseem Ahmed, said they will welcome the 'yatra' if it is allowed by the authorities.

Multiple layers of barricades have been erected by police at various points and vehicles entering Nuh were thoroughly checked by security personnel. The Haryana chief minister is learnt to have held a meeting with Director General of Police (DGP) Shastrujeet Kapur in Chandigarh Sunday to take stock of the situation. ADGP CID Alok Mittal was also present at the meeting.

Dalit youth beaten to death in MP; 8 held

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhopal/Sagar, August 27: A Dalit community youth was allegedly beaten to death by a group of people over an old enmity in Madhya Pradesh's Sagar district, police Sunday said, adding they have arrested eight persons so far in this connection.

The opposition Congress and as well as the Bahujan Samaj Party hit out at the Bharatiya Janata Party government over the incident, which took place Thursday. The ruling BJP, however, said action was promptly taken in the case and it was fortunate that Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and his

party leaders adopt a selective approach on crimes.

The assembly polls in the state are due this year-end. The deceased, Nitin Ahirwar aka Lulu, in the age group of 18 to 20 years and a resident of Barodia Nonagir village under Khurai Dehat (rural) police station limits, was beaten up on Thursday following which the police registered a case against nine identified and three-four unidentified persons under Indian Penal Code (IPC) section 307 (attempt to murder), Additional Superintendent of Police Sanjeev Uiksey said. The youth died when he was being taken for treatment to a hospital in Sagar.

international



A stronger US-India relationship could help the US declare independence from China. The US is economically dependent on China today
VIVEK RAMASWAMY | REPUBLICAN PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE, US

INFAMOUS TRUMP

For former President Donald Trump, a picture is worth more than \$7 million. Trump's campaign says he has raised \$7.1 million since Thursday when he was booked at the Fulton County Jail in Georgia on charges that he illegally schemed to overturn the 2020 election in the state and became the first former president in US history to ever have a mug shot taken



of the day quote

Our nuclear enrichment continues based on the strategic framework law

MOHAMMAD ESLAMI | NUCLEAR CHIEF, IRAN

Tests of seawater near Japan's Fukushima nuclear power plant have not detected any radioactivity

AKIHIRO NISHIMURA | ENVIRONMENT MINISTER, JAPAN

I share the pretty substantial concerns that people have voiced about the Chinese economy. It is concerning to see the weakness, the softness, in the recent weeks and months in the Chinese economy because it has obvious implications for us here in Australia

JIM CHALMERS | TREASURER, AUSTRALIA

Greece blaze out of control Taliban stop women from visiting national parks

Over 600 firefighters backed by water-dropping aircraft struggle to control wildfires in Greece

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA



Athens, August 27: More than 600 firefighters, including reinforcements from several European countries, backed by a fleet of water-dropping planes and helicopters were battling three persistent major wildfires in Greece Sunday, two of which have been raging for days.

A massive blaze in the country's northeastern regions of Evros and Alexandroupolis, believed to have caused the deaths of 20 people, was burning for a ninth day.

The blaze, one of the largest single wildfires ever to have struck a European Union country, has decimated vast tracts of forest and burnt homes in the outlying areas of the city of Alexandroupolis.

On Sunday, 295 firefighters, seven planes and five helicop-

ters were tackling it, the fire department said.

The wildfire has scorched 77,000 hectares (770 square kilometres) of land and had 120 active hotspots, the European Union's Copernicus Emergency Management Service said Sunday.

Greece has been plagued by daily outbreaks of dozens of fires over the past week as gale-force winds and hot, dry summer conditions combined to whip up flames and hamper firefighting efforts.

With firefighting forces stretched to the limit, Greece has called for help from other European countries. Germany, Sweden, Croatia and Cyprus have sent aircraft, while dozens of Romanian, French, Czech, Bulgarian, Albanian, Slovak and Serb firefighters are helping on the ground.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Islamabad, August 27: The Taliban will use security forces to stop women from visiting one of Afghanistan's most popular national parks, according to information shared by a spokesman for the Vice and Virtue Ministry.

The ministry alleges that women have not been observing the proper way to wear the hijab, or Islamic headscarf, when going to Band-e-Amir in the central Bamiyan province.

This comes a week after the minister, Mohammad Khalid Hanafi, visited the province and told officials and religious clerics that women haven't been adhering to the correct way of wearing the hijab, asking security personnel to stop women from visiting the tourist hotspot.

Ministry spokesman Molvi Mohammad Sadiq Akif shared a report of Hanafi's remarks late Saturday night, including the use of security forces, clerics and elders to carry out Hanafi's order.

A recording of the minister's

Going sightseeing is not a must for women

MOHAMMAD KHALID HANAFI | SPOKESMAN, VICE AND VIRTUE MINISTRY



speech in Bamiyan, aligning with Akif's report, was shared on social media.

"Not content with depriving girls and women of education, employment, and free movement, the Taliban also want to take them from parks and sport and now even nature, as we see from this latest ban on women visiting Band-e-Amir," said Heather Barr, the associate women's rights director at Human Rights Watch in an emailed statement.

"Step by step the walls are

TURBULENT TIMES

Since taking over the country August 15, 2021 after the withdrawal of US and NATO forces, they have imposed several restrictions targeting Afghan girls and women, including stopping girls from going to school beyond the sixth grade, and prohibiting Afghan women from jobs at local and non-governmental organisations while cracking down on media

closing in on women as every home becomes a prison."

Last, November, the Taliban-led government barred women from using public spaces, including parks, saying that they were not wearing the hijab correctly or following gender segregation rules.

Since taking over the country August 15, 2021 after the withdrawal of US and NATO forces, they have imposed several restrictions targeting Afghan girls and women, including stopping girls from going to school beyond the sixth grade, and prohibiting Afghan women from jobs at local and non-governmental organisations while cracking down on media.

These harsh measures triggered a fierce international outrage, including from Muslim-majority countries.

Band-e-Amir is a major tourist attraction in Bamiyan. It became the country's first national park in 2009 and pulls in thousands of visitors every year. It is a major source of income for locals and their sightseeing, restaurant, hotel and hand-craft businesses.

Putin had decried Wagner group's day-long mutiny act as 'treason' and vowed punishment for those involved

Russia confirms Prigozhin death

AGENCIES

Moscow, August 27: Russia's Investigative Committee said Sunday that it confirmed that Yevgeny Prigozhin, founder and head of the mercenary force Wagner who led a short-lived armed rebellion against Russia's military, was killed in a plane crash.

Committee spokeswoman Svetlana Petrenko said in a statement that forensic and genetic testing identified all 10 bodies recovered at the site of Wednesday's crash and the findings "conform to the manifest" of the plane. The statement didn't offer any details about what might have caused the crash.

Russia's civil aviation authority earlier this week said Prigozhin, 62, and some of his top lieutenants were on the list of the passengers and crew members on board the plane. All seven passengers and three crew died when the plane plummeted from the sky halfway between Moscow and St. Petersburg, Prigozhin's hometown.

Two months ago, Prigozhin mounted a daylong mutiny against Russia's military, leading his mercenaries from Ukraine toward Moscow. President Vladimir Putin decried the act as "treason" and vowed punishment for those involved.

Instead, the Kremlin quickly cut a deal with Prigozhin to end the armed revolt, saying he would be allowed to walk free without facing any charges and to re-settle in Belarus.



SHROUDED IN MYSTERY

▶ A preliminary US intelligence assessment concluded that an intentional explosion caused the plane to go down

▶ It found Prigozhin was very "likely targeted" and that an explosion would be in line with Putin's "long history of trying to silence his critics"

▶ As suspicions grew that the Russian president was the architect of an assassination, the Kremlin rejected them as a 'complete lie'

who described the initial assessment said it determined that Prigozhin was "very likely" targeted and that an explosion would be in line with Putin's "long history of trying to silence his critics."

Prigozhin's second-in-command, Dmitry Utkin, as well as Wagner logistics mastermind Valery Chekalov, also were killed in the crash. Utkin was long believed to have founded Wagner and baptised the group with his nom de guerre.

The fate of Wagner, which until recently played a prominent role in Russia's military campaign in Ukraine and was involved in a number of African and Middle Eastern countries, has remained uncertain.

After the mutiny, the Kremlin said Prigozhin would be exiled in Belarus, and his fighters were offered three options: to follow him there, retire or enlist in Russia's regular army and return to Ukraine, where Wagner mercenaries had fought alongside Russian troops.

SHORT TAKES

UK min blasts Sunak, resigns

London: UK member of parliament Nadine Dorries has delivered a scathing attack on her Conservative Party's leader Rishi Sunak in her formal resignation letter, accusing the prime minister of running a "zombie parliament" and lacking any political vision. Dorries, a close ally of former leader Boris Johnson, had announced in June she would quit and then faced mounting criticism for not actually doing so, preventing the election to replace her from being held alongside three other local votes last month. Dorries formally quit late Saturday with a lengthy resignation letter that tore into Sunak. "Since you took office a year ago, the country is run by a zombie parliament where nothing meaningful has happened. What exactly has been done or have you achieved?" said Dorries.

3 Marines killed in chopper crash

Sydney: Three U.S. Marines died in an aircraft crash off the coast of northern Australia on Sunday while transporting troops during a routine military exercise, officials said. Five others were "transported to Royal Darwin Hospital in serious condition", Marine Rotational Force - Darwin said in a press release. They were among 23 Marines on the MV-22B Osprey tilt-rotor aircraft when it crashed, the statement said, adding the cause of the crash was being investigated.

'BLATANT AND GIGANTIC FRAUD'

Zimbabwe Prez gets re-elected

Zimbabwe's opposition alleges election fraud in vote that extends the ruling party's 43-year rule

REUTERS

Harare, August 27: Zimbabwe's re-elected President Emmerson Mnangagwa suggested Sunday that those people questioning the results of last week's election, which an opposition leader dismissed as a "gigantic fraud", take their case to court.

The election commission said Saturday that Mnangagwa, 80, had won the election with 52.6% of the vote while the opposition Citizens' Coalition for Change (CCC) leader Nelson Chamisa got 44%.

Mnangagwa took over when longtime strongman Robert Mugabe was toppled in a 2017



military coup. His first term was marked by runaway inflation, currency shortages and sky-high unemployment. Mnangagwa welcomed the election result.

"I competed with them and I am happy that I have won the race," he said at State House Sunday amid heavy police presence in parts of the capital. "Those who feel the race was not run properly should know where to go to."

Chamisa, speaking on social media platform X, formerly Twitter, said: "It's a blatant and gigantic fraud."

It was unclear whether the

opposition would use the courts to dispute the election results, as Zimbabwe's judges have historically sided with the governing party.

Political analyst Munjodzi Mutandiri, from the Southern Africa Liaison Office, said the opposition had more to gain by taking to the streets than to the courts.

"The questions around judicial independence won't cure the legitimacy challenge (of the results) just as (the electoral commission's) impartiality and perceived lack of independence have created" the disputed results, he said.

CCC spokesman Promise Mkwanzanji said in a statement that the official results differed from those tallied by the opposition. "The CCC has initiated a comprehensive citizen's review of the vote count," he said.

KHAN GRILLED IN ATTOCK JAIL

MISSING CYPHER CASE



REUTERS

Islamabad, August 27: Jailed former prime minister Imran Khan admitted misplacing a confidential diplomatic cable as he was interrogated by Pakistan's top investigative agency at the Attock Jail in a case filed under the Official Secrets Act for wrongful use of the classified document, according to media reports Sunday.

Khan, 70, is currently serving

a three-year jail term after he was sentenced by a court in a corruption case earlier this month.

The cable in question was the same document Khan had for long mentioned as evidence of a US-backed conspiracy to remove him as the prime minister last year.

Khan had waved a document at a rally days before his ouster as prime minister in April 2022, saying it was proof of foreign conspiracy.

The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman's interrogation in the matter comes days after he was booked under the Official Secrets Act for making the content of a confidential diplomatic cable from the country's embassy in the US public.

COVID CURBS EASED

NKorea to allow foreign citizens to return home

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Seoul, August 27: North Korea said Sunday it will allow its citizens staying abroad to return home in line with easing pandemic situations worldwide, as the country slowly eases its draconian coronavirus restrictions.

In a brief statement carried by state media, the State Emergency Epidemic Prevention Headquarters said those returning to North Korea will be put in quarantine for a week for "proper medical observation."

The statement didn't elaborate. But analysts predicted the announcement would lead to the return of North Korean students, workers and others who have had to stay abroad, mostly in China and Russia, because of the pandemic. The workers are a key source of foreign income for the country.

North Korea banned tourists, jettied out diplomats and severely curtailed border traffic and trade after the pandemic began. The lockdown has further worsened the North's chronic economic difficulties and food insecurity.

On Tuesday, a North Korean commercial jet landed in Beijing in what was the North's first such commercial international flight known to leave the country in about 3½ years. The plane returned from Beijing later in the day, but it wasn't known who was aboard it.

In August 2022, North Korea made a highly dubious claim to have overcome the Covid-19 pandemic. In the following month, the North resumed freight train service with China, its biggest trading partner and economic pipeline, but much of its restrictions on border crossings by individuals have remained in effect.

Trump trials: A unique dare for Biden's Prez campaign

AMERICA'S OTHER LIVING PRESIDENTS — BARACK OBAMA, GEORGE W. BUSH, BILL CLINTON, JIMMY CARTER — HAVE ALSO STAYED MUM, LEAVING THE COUNTRY WITHOUT A TRUSTED VOICE OF POLITICAL AND MORAL AUTHORITY WHO CAN LAY OUT THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE CHARGES AGAINST TRUMP

REUTERS

Washington, August 27: A barrage of state and federal criminal charges leveled against your main political rival should be good news for any democratic leader facing reelection, but Donald Trump's legal woes present US President Joe Biden with a unique challenge in the months ahead, political strategists say.

Biden has so far remained mum as his Republican predecessor was charged with 91 felony counts in four indictments this year related to paying hush money to a porn star, unlawfully keeping classified documents and attempting to overturn the 2020 election. Don't expect any change, Biden advisers say, until after decisions are handed down in those trials.

However, sustaining that strategy, during the most contentious and consequential judicial ac-

tions in US presidential history, will be severely tested in the coming months, political strategists say.

Expect Trump to use a series of criminal trials from New York City to Georgia and Florida in the months ahead to fuel a campaign deeply rooted in grievance politics. Biden has sought to use a routine schedule of presidential events - promoting the economy and infrastructure investments - to draw a contrast with Trump's chaotic legal woes.

The trials, some carried live on television, are likely to dominate news cycles, providing Trump an unorthodox platform to rally supporters who have put him at the top of the Republican primary field and believe the former president is being politically persecuted, despite the evidence.

Biden's less dramatic reelection efforts will likely draw less



valuable free air time, and any effort to provide some counter-programming will be complicated by the Democratic president's decision to not wade into the charges or use them to frame the potential dangers to democracy posed by Trump.

the trials will keep the details of Trump's unprecedented actions that led to the serious charges fresh in voters' minds, giving Democrats and Biden an opportunity to provide a sharp contrast.

And all bets are off if Trump is convicted on any of the charges, officials say.

"A conviction changes everything. You will then see a more detailed, forceful effort by the president to connect the crimes to a broader threat to the nation," said a senior Democrat working on Biden's campaign, who spoke on condition of anonymity because they are not authorized to speak publicly.

Until then, any Biden comment would fuel unfounded Republican attacks that the state and federal charges are politically motivated, and aides believe his silence reinforces a cen-

tral tenet of his campaign: a return to normalcy.

The White House and the reelection campaign are content to use the upcoming months - when Republicans are embroiled in a nasty nominating race - to pitch Americans on the success of Biden's economic policies, interviews show.

His public approval rating held steady at 40% in early August, with concerns about the economy souring Americans' opinion of his performance despite falling inflation, according to the latest Reuters/Ipsos poll.

"Increasing the president's economic poll numbers requires lots of time, repeating numbers and a lot of message discipline. We can always go back to Trump," said a senior Democrat involved in the reelection effort, who spoke on condition of anonymity because they are not authorized to speak publicly.

"It's going to be very tricky and a real tough balancing act," said Jimmy Seagull, a Democratic strategist working on congressional races.

TRUMP'S CONVICTION 'CHANGES EVERYTHING'
On the plus side for Democrats,

of the day quote

With the support of the government's forward-thinking policies, we are proud to be the first battery-operated transport vehicle to be registered, paving the way for a greener, sustainable future in transportation

DEVNDRA CHAWLA
MD AND CEO, GREENCELL MOBILITY

My own assessment is that the dermatology business, which is the primary focus for Taro, is a business under constant, increasing competition pressure

DILIP SHANGHVI | MD, SUN PHARMA

I understand there is very big demand at this time from not only G20 but also from tourists and people who are coming to the metropolitan cities to see all this happening in the cities and for that demand is quite high

MP BEZBARUAN | SECRETARY GENERAL, HOTEL ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

SHORT TAKES

EFTA proposes FTA with India

New Delhi: Four-nation bloc EFTA is looking at significant reduction in trade barriers on sectors such as machine tools, advanced chemicals, pharma, chocolates, Norwegian and Icelandic fish in the proposed free trade agreement with India, a Swiss minister said. Swiss State Secretary for Economic Affairs Helene Budliger Artieda also said that with India, the EFTA grouping is aiming for an ambitious and comprehensive agreement in trade in goods, services and protection of intellectual property rights (IPRs). India and European Free Trade Association (EFTA) states – Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland – are negotiating a Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA) with a view to boosting economic ties between the two regions. Negotiations on the agreement were officially launched in January 2008. 13 rounds of negotiations were held until autumn 2013 before the talks were put on hold. After talks were resumed in October 2016, a number of rounds have taken place.

Vedanta wins arbitration case

New Delhi: Mining magnate Anil Agarwal's Vedanta Ltd has won an arbitration against a demand for a higher payout from its prolific Rajasthan oil and gas fields after disallowance of ₹9,545 crore (\$1.16 billion) in certain costs incurred, the company said. The government has sought additional profit petroleum (or its share from the oil and gas fields) after it reallocated certain costs between the fields in the block and disallowed a portion of the cost incurred on laying a pipeline to evacuate oil produced from the Rajasthan block. As per the contract, companies are allowed to recover all costs incurred before splitting profit in a predetermined ratio with the government. If a certain portion of cost is disallowed, it would result in higher profits and a resultant higher share to the government. Vedanta had challenged such a demand before an arbitration tribunal.

PM Vishwakarma meet today: Govt

New Delhi: The government has called a meeting of senior officials from states, public sector banks and State Level Bankers Committee (SLBC) Monday, to discuss the implementation of the ₹13,000 crore 'PM Vishwakarma' scheme, which seeks to support traditional artisans and craftsmen.



It will be a pure-play, focused on hospitality, which can leverage the institutional strengths of ITC. And ITC in turn will be able to leverage the synergy on its hospitality business, or its FMCG businesses
SANJIV PURI | CHAIRMAN & MD, ITC

GOVT CONSIDERS EVs FOR PRIVATE SECTOR LENDING

India's finance ministry is considering a proposal to include electric vehicles under the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) priority sector guidelines, a move that would make it cheaper to raise funds, a government official said



PM flags concerns over AI bias

MODI CALLS FOR ETHICAL USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE, FRAMEWORK ON CRYPTOS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 27: Prime Minister Narendra Modi Sunday called for a global framework for ethical use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) as he flagged concerns surrounding bias in such modern technologies and their impact on the society.

Days ahead of the G20 Summit, the prime minister also made a strong case for developing an integrated approach to deal with issues concerning cryptocurrencies.

Modi, addressing B20 Summit India 2023 organised by CII, said India is preparing a global framework for Green Credit and urged industry leaders to adopt life and businesses with emphasis on planet positive actions.

Highlighting issues concerning climate change, energy sector crisis, food supply chain imbalance, water security, Modi said such matters have a big impact on business and to combat these challenges, there is a need to increase common efforts.

"Now, there is a challenge related to cryptocurrencies. There is a need for more and more integrated approach in this matter. I think, a global framework should be created for this, in which all stakeholders are taken care of," Modi said at the gathering attended by global and domestic business leaders.

A similar approach, he said, is needed regarding artificial intelligence as well.

"Today, the world is showing a lot of excitement regarding AI. But amidst the excitement



As a business, we also have to focus on creating an ecosystem that will benefit us in the long term
NARENDRA MODI | PRIME MINISTER

there are also some ethical considerations. Regarding skilling and re-skilling, concern is being raised about algorithm bias and its impact on the society. Such issues also have to be resolved together," he added.

Modi called business communities and governments to work together to ensure usage of ethical AI as "we have to sense the potential disruptions in different sectors. This problem has to be solved under the global framework."

The prime minister asked for a reconsideration of the traditional approach to business, stating they should go beyond brand and sales.

Modi stressed that businesses should focus on improving the purchasing power of more and more people as a self-centric approach will harm everyone.

GLOBAL RESPONSIBILITY

Referring to a similar challenge of uneven availability and universal need in critical material and rare earth metals, Modi said, "If those who have them do

B20 SUMMIT

not look at them as global responsibility then it will promote a new model of colonialism."

He also underlined that a profitable market can be sustained when there is a balance in the interests of producers and consumers, and it also applies to nations. He said treating other countries only as a market will not work, and added it will eventually harm the producing countries sooner or later. The way forward is to make everyone equal partners in this progress.

He added businesses have successfully gone beyond borders and boundaries and now it's time to take businesses beyond the bottomline. It can be carried out by focusing on supply chain resilience and sustainability.

The Business 20 (B20) is the official G20 dialogue forum with the global business community. B20 Summit India brings policymakers, business leaders and experts from across the world to deliberate and discuss the B20 India Communiqué.

Govt halts basmati rice exports below \$1,200/T

Seeking to control retail prices of rice, the government has been taking hard steps to boost domestic supply

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 27: The government has decided not to allow exports of basmati rice below \$1,200 per tonne to restrict possible "illegal" shipment of white non-basmati rice in the garb of premium basmati rice.

In a statement Sunday, the commerce ministry said it has directed trade promotion body APEDA not to register contracts below \$1,200 per tonne.

Existing contracts below \$1,200 per tonne have been kept in abeyance. A committee under the chairman of APEDA will be set up to evaluate future course of action. In September last year, it banned exports of broken rice, while last month it imposed restrictions on non-basmati white rice. Last week, a 20 per cent export duty was slapped on parboiled non-basmati rice.

With these curbs, India has now imposed restrictions on all varieties of non-basmati rice.

According to the statement of the commerce ministry, the government has issued instructions to APEDA (Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority) to introduce additional safeguards to prevent the possible illegal exports of white non-basmati rice in the garb of basmati rice.

As per the instructions, "contracts for basmati exports with



Total exports of basmati rice stood at \$4.8bn in 2022-23 in terms of price, while in volume terms it was at 45.6LT

Exports of non-basmati rice stood at \$6.36bn in the last fiscal. In volume terms, it was 177.9LT

Rice production is estimated to have risen to 135.54MT in the 2022-23 crop year (July-June) from 129.47MT in the previous year

the value of \$1,200 per MT (tonne) only and above should be registered for issue of Registration - cum - Allocation Certificate (RCAC)".

As per the Foreign Trade Policy, APEDA is mandated to register all contracts for export of basmati rice and then it issues RCAC for the export of basmati rice. The ministry added that contracts with value of below \$1,200 per tonne may be kept in abeyance.

The ministry said that to check domestic prices and to ensure domestic food security, the government has been taking measures to restrict export of rice from India.

The FAO (Food and Agriculture Organisation) Rice Price Index reached 129.7 points in July 2023; its highest value since September 2011, registering an increase of 19.7 per cent over past year levels.

IndianOil names chef Kapoor as brand ambassador for Indane XTRATEJ LPG

Bangalore:

IndianOil announced its collaboration with renowned celebrity chef Sanjeev Kapoor as the brand ambassador for its innovative Indane XTRATEJ LPG brand. The announcement was made at the prestigious Indane XTRATEJ Hospitality Harmony Meet here, a confluence of culinary excellence and industry insights. The event witnessed the unveiling of the new XTRATEJ TV commercial featuring chef Sanjeev Kapoor, who commended IndianOil's commitment to culinary innovation and efficiency. He praised the company's dedication to creating a cost-efficient solution that conserves LPG while enhancing business operations, thereby meeting evolving customer expectations.

V Satish Kumar, Director (Marketing), IndianOil, revealed the brand-new video commercial for the Indane XTRATEJ LPG brand in the presence of Sanjeev Kapoor, K Sailendra, Executive Director (LPG)-HO, P Gur Prasad, Executive Director & State Head of IndianOil in Karnataka, and Sandeep Sharma, Executive Director (Corporate Communications & Branding), HO. The event was also a platform for Sanjeev Kapoor and V Satish Kumar to felicitate major Indane XTRATEJ customers and celebrate their unwavering brand loyalty.



FDI equity inflows dip 34% in Q1

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 27: Foreign direct investment (FDI) into India declined 34 per cent to \$10.94 billion during April-June 2023-24, dragged by lower inflows in computer hardware and software, telecom, auto and pharma, according to government data.

FDI inflows stood at \$16.58 billion during April-June 2022-23. Inflows during January-March 2023 too had contracted 40.55 per cent to \$9.28 billion.

Investments from overseas fell in April, May and June this fiscal to \$5.1 billion, \$2.67 billion and \$3.16 billion, respectively as against \$6.46 billion, \$6.15 billion and \$3.98 billion in the year-ago corresponding periods, the data from Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) showed.

Total FDI, which includes equity inflows, reinvested earn-



ings and other capital, contracted 21.4 per cent to \$17.56 billion during the period under review as against \$22.34 billion in April-June 2022.

During the quarter, FDI equity inflows decreased from major countries including Singapore, Mauritius, the US, UK, and UAE.

Investments dipped significantly from Cayman Islands and Cyprus to \$75 million and \$6 million during April-June 2023 as against \$450 million and \$605 million in the year-ago period.

However, inflows increased from the Netherlands, Japan and Germany.

Sector wise, inflows contracted in computer software and hard-

ware, trading, telecommunication, automobile, pharma and chemicals. However, services, construction (infrastructure) activities, construction development and metallurgical industry registered growth in inflows.

STATE-WISE DATA

In terms of states, though Maharashtra received the highest inflow of \$4.46 billion during the period, it was down as compared to \$5.24 billion in April-June 2022.

Similarly, overseas inflows in Karnataka plunged to \$1.46 billion in April-June 2023 as against \$2.8 billion in the same period last year. Other states/UTs where FDI dipped in the quarter include Gujarat, Rajasthan, Delhi, Tamil Nadu, and Haryana. On the other hand, FDI in Telangana, Jharkhand, and West Bengal reported growth during the quarter.

FDI equity inflows into India declined 22 per cent to \$46 billion in 2022-23.

FPIs' investment momentum dips

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 27: After infusing a staggering amount in Indian equities in the past three months, the pace of inflow from foreign investors ebbed in August with a net investment of ₹10,689 crore on higher crude oil prices and resurfacing of inflation risks.

According to the data with the depositories, Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) invested a net amount of ₹10,689 crore in Indian equities this month (till August 26).

This figure includes investment through the primary market and bulk deals, which have been gathering momentum recently.

Before this investment, FPIs invested over ₹40,000 crore each in the past three months in Indian equities.

The net inflow was at ₹46,618 crore in July, ₹47,148 crore in June, and ₹43,838 crore in May. Before that, the inflow was ₹11,631 crore in April and ₹7,935 crore in March, data with the depositories showed.

The next Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) meeting is scheduled for September 19-20.

Apart from equities, FPIs invested ₹5,950 crore in the country's debt market during the period under review.

With this, the total investment by FPIs in equity has reached ₹1.37 lakh crore and ₹26,400 crore in the debt market so far this year.

In terms of sectors, FPIs are consistently buying capital goods. And, of late, they have started selling in financials.



Sunak faces tough questions over India-UK FTA

UK PM FACES CONFLICT OF INTEREST QUESTIONS OVER WIFE AKSHATA'S INFOSYS SHARES IN FTA WITH INDIA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, August 27: British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak could face some transparency questions related to wife Akshata Murthy's Infosys shares, worth an estimated 500 million pounds, in a proposed free trade agreement (FTA) with India, according to a media report.

"The Observer" claims the Opposition Labour Party and trade experts are questioning the full financial impact as Infosys, the Bangalore-headquartered software service major co-founded by Akshata's father Narayana Murthy, stands to benefit from any such trade deal.

India and the UK have been negotiating an FTA, now in its 12th round of negotiations, as Sunak prepares for his first visit to India as British Prime Minister for the G20 Leaders' Summit next month.

"As the Prime Minister recently learned, it's important he declares any interests properly. I expect him to do so in respect of the India trade deal too," said Darren Jones, Labour MP and chair of the cross-party House of Commons Business



India, UK to continue FTA negotiations till Aug-end

and Trade Select Committee - which has been scrutinising the FTA talks.

Earlier this week, the UK parliamentary watchdog released its report into an inquiry concluding that Sunak had inadvertently failed to correctly declare his wife's shares in childminding firm Koru Kids that stood to benefit from the government's budget policy. The 43-year-old

British Indian leader apologised for the "inadvertent" breach that arose "out of confusion", and the matter was closed.

According to the 'Observer' report, Infosys - which has contracts with the British government as well as many UK companies - is known to want to improve access to the UK for its thousands of contract workers through changes to the visa

Because software services are one of India's biggest export sectors, India will naturally be looking for opportunities to grow them in their trade deals. As the PM's family may have a direct financial interest in any deal on immigration, he should recuse himself from this part of the negotiations to avoid any perception of conflict of interest
ALAN MANNING | PROFESSOR OF ECONOMICS, LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS

regime. Allowing more visas for its workers in sectors such as IT and artificial intelligence (AI) is claimed to be a "key Indian demand in the talks".

The newspaper claims that the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) has even warned the Business and Trade Select Committee against conducting a trip to India in the coming months to examine issues around a potential deal.

"The committee was advised by the government that it would

be better to visit India next year instead of during sensitive trade negotiations," committee chair Jones told the newspaper.

Shadow trade secretary Nick Thomas-Symonds said while his party backed a trade deal with India, it is important that Sunak is "transparent about any relevant business links and his personal role in negotiations".

Meanwhile, The Sunday Times reports that India is prepared to cut tariffs on Scotch whisky and British cars and parts by at least a third if the UK is prepared to slash its workers' tax to clinch an FTA.

According to reports, New Delhi is pushing London to sign a social security agreement similar to deals it has signed with countries, including Canada, Australia and France, that could exempt Indian workers from social security contributions if they continue to make payments in India.

"The social security agreement is a very important thing for us. It creates a lot of ill will if folks have to surrender a significant amount of their savings," the newspaper quoted an Indian source as saying.

ASIAN HOCKEY 5s WC QUALIFIER

INDIAN WOMEN BEAT THAILAND



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Salalah, August 27: India continued their unbeaten run in the Women's Asian Hockey 5s World Cup Qualifier after registering a hard-fought 5-4 win over Thailand in their third match of the tournament here Sunday. For India, skipper Navjot Kaur (1st minute), Monika Dipi Toppo (1st, 7th), Mahima Choudhary (20th) and Ajmjina Kujur (30th) were on target. Thailand's goals were scored by Piresram Anongnat (3rd), Aunjai Natthakarn (10th, 14th) and Suwapat Konthong (19th). The Indian women had registered a 7-1 win over Japan in their second match of the tournament Saturday night. This was after the Indians started their campaign with a 7-2 thrashing of Malaysia Friday. On Sunday, India got off the blocks at a rampaging pace, putting pressure on the Thailand defenders from the scoring. Navjot opened the game in the first minute of the game through a field goal. India doubled their lead in no time when Monika found the back of the net

from a field effort. Thailand pulled one back through captain Anongnat two minutes. Monika soon scored her second goal of the day to make the score-line 3-1 in favour of India. With five minutes remaining in the first half, Natthakarn's strike got Thailand back in the game. With a minute remaining in the first half, Natthakarn found the back of the net again for Thailand to level the scores. India came out attacking in the second half and held most of the ball possession. The players continued to make dangerous runs inside Thailand's striking circle, particularly from the left flank. However, it was Thailand who took the lead through Konthong four minutes after the change of ends. India immediately equalised through in-form Mahima as she flawlessly converted a challenge goal. With five minutes left on the clock, India started showcasing urgency to get back their lead. Monika created an opportunity from the left flank, but the ball just went wide. With just a minute left in the game, Kujur scored the winner for India.

Messi's dazzling MLS debut

Forty-eight years after Pelé joined the North American Soccer League's New York Cosmos in an effort to jumpstart the sport in the US, Messi follows David Beckham, Thierry Henry and Zlatan Ibrahimovic in the bid to boost MLS closer to the more popular US Leagues



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Harrison, August 27: Lionel Messi needed just a few seconds for his unparalleled skills to shine, a flash of brilliance that capped a memorable Major League Soccer debut. Messi's dazzling goal in the 89th minute helped a transformed Inter Miami beat the New York Red Bulls 2-0 on Saturday night and end an 11-match league winless streak. "I just catch myself watching

him instead of picking up on my assignment," Miami defender Kamal Miller said. "It's tough to stay focused when you have such a great presence." Messi entered in the 60th minute along with former Barcelona teammate Sergio Busquets. Miami had gone ahead on a 37th-minute goal by Diego Gómez in a buildup started by Jordi Alba, another Barcelona alum on a night Miami gave six players MLS debuts. Chants of "We Want Messi!"

It's pretty surreal to see. He's probably the only man in the world that can get that kind of respect and reception every stadium he goes to

KAMAL MILLER | INTER MIAMI DEFENDER

began in the sixth minute and a loud "Mes-si!" "Mes-si!" reverberated throughout in the 35th. "When we found out that he wouldn't be starting, I expected

there was going to be a couple angry fans," Miami right back DeAndre Yedlin said. "But if I was a kid or a fan and I came, I would want to see the greatest to ever play the game, as well, so I can't blame them." Streets around outside the stadium were packed 2 1/2 hours before the match, filled with dozens of scalpers and people selling unlicensed Messi jerseys, and about half the fans wore jerseys of Messi's three clubs and Argentina's national

No care for media rules

Lionel Messi did not speak with reporters after his Major League Soccer debut, a violation of the league's media rules. Miami spokeswoman Molly Dreska said after the match that Messi was not being made available to reporters. Dan Courtmanche, MLS's executive vice president of communications, said before the game that Messi, like all players, was required to be available to media after games.

A simulcast of the game was scheduled on a videoboard in Times Square. A record crowd of 26,276 arrived at Red Bull Arena in the Red Bulls' first home sellout this season, and resale tickets were listed for over \$1,000 leading to the game. Fans cheered when Messi started to warm up three minutes into the second half, and a roar erupted when coach Tata Martino signaled for him to take off his pinny and head to the center stripe. Messi, Busquets and Alba were a class above the others. "It's like just instinct to them now," Miller said. "They don't even have to think where each other are going to be. They know where each other want the ball." Messi failed to score in his La Liga and Ligue 1 debuts. Anticipation was high when the seven-time Ballon d'Or winner took a free kick from 21 yards in the 88th minute, but it was blocked by the defensive wall.

KEEPING ASIA CUP IN MIND Clean sweep over Afghans will inspire us: Babar Azam

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Colombo, August 27: Pakistan skipper Babar Azam believes the recent thumping 3-0 ODI series win over Afghanistan will "inspire" his side and provide much-needed momentum heading into the Asia Cup, starting Wednesday. The Asia Cup is set to be hosted in a hybrid model by Pakistan and Sri Lanka from August 30 till September 17. Pakistan came up with a terrific performance against Afghanistan, clean sweeping the latter 3-0 in the just-concluded ODI series just before the continental showpiece. On Saturday, Pakistan triumphed over Afghanistan by 59 runs in the third and final ODI at the R Premadasa Stadium here. "We are thrilled heading into the Asia Cup. How we have won the (ODI) series against Afghanistan will be an inspira-



The series sweep has allowed Pakistan to leapfrog Australia and reach the summit of the ICC ODI team rankings

tion for us in the tournament," Azam was quoted as saying by PCB. The series sweep has allowed Pakistan to leapfrog

Australia and reach the summit of the ICC ODI team rankings. Azam credited the achievement to team effort. "When you attain the No 1 spot, you get a lot of satisfaction. It is all due to the efforts of the entire squad along with the support staff," he said. "We had been at the top of the ODI rankings earlier. But, we came back down to No. 2 after losing a fixture."

India's historic feat in Tent Pegging WC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

George, August 27: A five-member Indian team achieved a historic first by finishing third in the Tent Pegging World Cup held in South Africa. Tent Pegging is a cavalry sport wherein the rider is supposed to pick a wooden block, placed on the ground, with a spear. India, who secured a podium finish on Saturday, had finished at the sixth and the seventh spots in the last two editions of the Tent Pegging World Cup. The most recent edition — fourth — was originally slated to be held in 2022, but was delayed due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The International Tent Pegging Federation comprises 29 countries, which earn World Cup qualification while being divided in groups of four teams each. During its general assembly in Oman, a draw was conducted for each national federation to pick a group. India were placed in Group D.

SAFF U-16 Championship squad out

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 27: The AIFF Sunday announced India's U-16 squad comprising 23 members for the upcoming SAFF Championship to be played next month. India's men's U-16 head coach Ishfaq Ahmed has named Rohit, Aheibam Suraj Singh and Arush Hari as goalkeepers for the tournament to be held in Thimpu, Bhutan, from September 1-10. Ngariyambam Abhijit, Mohammed Kaif, Yaipharemba Chingakhom, Usham Thougamba, Vumlenlal Hangshing, Chingtham Renin Singh and Karish Soram will be India's defenders. In the midfield, Newton Singh, Kangujam Yoihenba Meitei, Levis Zangminlun, Bobby Singh, Abdul Salha, Ngamgouhou Mate, Vishal Yadav, Manbhakupar Malngiang and Md Arbash have been named. India's forward line will be powered by Ningthoukhongjam



Rishi Singh, Ahongshangbam Samson, Lairenjam Bharat and Aiborlang Kharthangmaw. India have been clubbed alongside Nepal and Bangladesh in Group A, while Group B consists of Bhutan, Maldives, and Pakistan. The top two units from each group will qualify for semifinals. "The training camp began in Srinagar in July with over 50 probables picked up after extensive scouting in five zones

across the country — East, West, North, South, and North-east," AIFF said. "The final list of 23 was chosen by Ahmed after over a month of training in Srinagar," the statement added. **INDIA SQUAD:** **Goalkeepers:** Rohit, Aheibam Suraj Singh and Arush Hari. **Defenders:** Ngariyambam Abhijit, Mohammed Kaif, Yaipharemba Chingakhom, Usham Thougamba, Vumlenlal Hangshing, Chingtham Renin Singh and Karish Soram. **Midfielders:** Newton Singh, Kangujam Yoihenba Meitei, Levis Zangminlun, Bobby Singh, Abdul Salha, Ngamgouhou Mate, Vishal Yadav, Manbhakupar Malngiang and Md Arbash. **Forwards:** Ningthoukhongjam Rishi Singh, Ahongshangbam Samson, Lairenjam Bharat and Aiborlang Kharthangmaw. DDV

NEWS IN BRIEF

Djokovic, Alcaraz poised for US Open collision

Washington: Novak Djokovic and Carlos Alcaraz are on a US Open collision course as the final Grand Slam tournament of season gets under way Monday with American teenager Coco Gauff chasing a breakthrough first major title. A little more than six weeks after world number one Alcaraz defeated Djokovic in an enthralling finale to the Wimbledon championships, the two men could meet again at Flushing Meadows if the seedings go to play over the next fortnight.



Petrovic joins Chelsea on 7-yr deal

London: Chelsea completed the signing of goalkeeper Djordje Petrovic from Major League Soccer club New England Revolution Saturday. The 23-year-old Serbia international signed a seven-year deal at Stamford Bridge and will initially be expected to be a backup to summer signing Robert Sanchez. The clubs did not disclose the transfer fee but British media reported the deal was worth 14 million pounds (\$17.6 million). "Playing in the Premier League is something I'm really looking forward to doing and I hope to learn many things here at Chelsea. I can't wait to meet everyone and play at Stamford Bridge," Petrovic said in a statement.



Mbappe brace scripts PSG win

Paris: Paris Saint-Germain returned to winning ways and Kylian Mbappe returned to the Parc des Princes with a bang Saturday. Playing for the first time this season at PSG's home stadium following his contract standoff with the club, there was no ill feeling from the crowd. Mbappe received an ovation from supporters during the teams presentation. He then gave them a lot to cheer about by scoring twice in the 3-1 win over last season's French league runner-up Lens. Because of his dispute, Mbappe was not included in the squad when PSG began the defense of its league title with a draw at home this month.



'India has entered golden era of chess'

WE WILL HAVE 100 GMS SOON, SAYS AICF CHIEF SANJAY KAPOOR

AGENCIES

New Delhi, August 27: All India Chess Federation (AICF) president Sanjay Kapoor said Indian chess has entered the "golden era" and the country will have over a hundred Grandmasters within two years. For years, five-time World Champion Viswanathan Anand dominated the conversation on Indian chess and rightly so. However, the dynamics have changed in the past decade with youngsters like R Praggnanandhaa, D Gukesh and Arjun Erigaisi making rapid progress in the international arena. "There was one Vishy (Anand) before but now I believe the golden era of chess has started in India," Kapoor told PTI. "Anand is a stalwart of the game. He is the face of Indian chess. But now we'll have many faces and that will be very good for Indian chess," he said.



All India Chess Federation is working on organising an Indian Chess League

India produced its 83rd Grandmaster - Aditya Samant - in July this year and Kapoor said the country will get its 100th GM sooner than later. "Many men and women players are coming up. We have 83 GMs now and in two years, we'll have at least 100-100-plus Grandmasters," he added. Teenaged GM Praggnanandhaa caught the country's imagination as he defeated world number two Hikaru Nakamura and number three Fabiano Caruana en route his silver medal at the FIDE World Cup. He became the world's

fully hosted the Olympiad and won bronze both in the men's and women's sections. To keep the momentum going, Kapoor wants to spread chess across India by holding camps and tournaments all over the country. "Tamil Nadu is the chess point of India. But players have started coming from different places. I'd like to take chess from Jammu Kashmir to the Northeast... Everywhere. We are holding a (Asian Games) camp in Kolkata. I brought the AGM to Kanpur. Arjun became a champion in Kanpur," he said. Kapoor said the federation is also working on organising an Indian Chess League. "We're going to start a league. By the first week of January... I don't know the tentative dates, but we are working on that," he said. Chess will make a return to the Asian Games after a 13-year gap. Veteran Grandmaster Koneru Humpy will lead a 10-member Indian team which also includes Praggnanandhaa, Gukesh, and Harika Dronavalli. "We are going to be favourites to win gold in both the men and women's events. We will be on the podium for sure," he concluded.