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Nara Chandrababu Naidu
CHIEF MINISTER, ODISHA

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ANNUAL COVERAGE OF **RS. 10 LAKH** FOR WOMEN MEMBERS OF FAMILY



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ZENDAYA TO SKIP VENICE FILM FEST

Actress Zendaya has decided to skip Venice Film Festival due to the Hollywood strikes, reports Variety. The actress was initially slated to go to the event to promote Luca Guadagnino's film *Challengers*, which was also the movie that was supposed to open the 80th annual Venice Film Festival.

BEYONCE NOW HONOURARY MAYOR OF SANTA CLARA

Pop star Beyonce will now be running the town of Santa Clara as she is given the key to the city and made the town's honorary Mayor for her concert at Levi Stadium, reports *People* magazine.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
Today, you will meet with success, and you do it on your own merit, without any divine intervention. You may be a student of science or arts, but you will excel due to your deep knowledge of the subject. There are chances you may decide to study further, says Ganesh.

TAURUS
At work or in business, you are likely to feel uneasy about the people around you, says Ganesh. You will be unable to trust them and will be suspicious of their moves and intentions. Eventually you'll prefer to handle all major and sensitive things in your own hands.

GEMINI
Religious, cultural and intellectual pursuits will keep you busy throughout the day. You will need to compulsorily attend some social function. You will encounter expenses in charitable or philanthropic work. It is a good time for conducting business deals, says Ganesh.

CANCER
You must get ready yourself to handle a few usual situations in an unusual way, foretells Ganesh. You will probably learn a few lessons in public psychology during the afternoon. Before arriving at any crucial decision, weigh the pros and cons with an unbiased mind, says Ganesh.

LEO
You will spend an enjoyable day with your family members today. Even at the work-place you will be thinking of ways to be with your family. You will take time out for some self-improvement projects. It is necessary to bring about some changes in life, says Ganesh.

VIRGO
Take stock of the situation you are in. Assess first and only then make a move, cautions Ganesh. In the afternoon, get footloose and relieve yourself of the cramped and overworked environment of your desk. But bid your time on bids and sealed tenders using all of your experience and business sense, says Ganesh.

LIBRA
The mind is a pool of infinite thoughts; this is more true for you today than any other day. Ganesh says you will explore the depths of your thoughts. At work, you may share some precious moments with peers of the opposite sex. Intense thoughts and frivolous moments aside, today you may also cultivate a new interest in jewellery and artists.

SCORPIO
The flamboyance with which you do your work leaves people awestruck. At work, your dedication will win rich favour from your bosses. After dusk, let your hair down and have a great time, says Ganesh. Unwind with music or meditation in the night, suggests Ganesh.

SAGITTARIUS
Goldfinger might just be your nickname today. Whatever you take up to do will yield results much more than expected. You would not shy away from showering praise on others for their contribution. Beloved ones will be the cynosure of your attention. Ganesh, however, advises you to be prudent when spending on them.

CAPRICORN
Uncertainties - the only certainty of life, will not bog you down. You are ready to take risks and try your luck out. Start a business or project today, and there are fair chances of you succeeding at that, predicts Ganesh.

AQUARIUS
Today, you will seek direct and frank communication like never before, and it does seem to solve some of your problems. You will remain edgy, and at work, minute things will bother you no end. Later in the day, Ganesh will grant results.

PISCES
Your social standing ought to receive a boost today, and the financial success coming your way today plays no small part in it, says Ganesh. You may find yourself enjoying your own company in the afternoon, but come evening, you are likely to find yourself indulging in some intellectual discussion in the company of like-minded people.

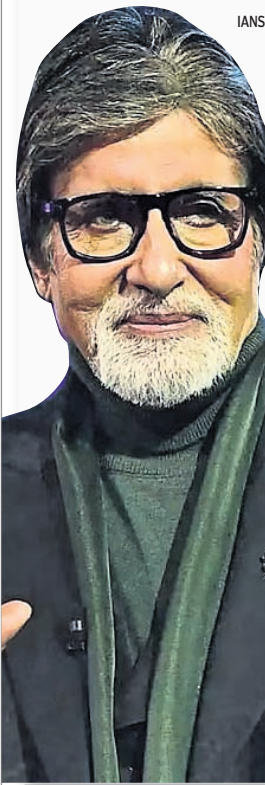
'I AM ALIVE BECAUSE OF EVERY SINGLE CLAP'

New Delhi: Megastar Amitabh Bachchan, expressing gratitude to the fans and the audience of *Kaun Banega Crorepati - Season 15*, said that every single clap adds another breath to his life, and he is alive because of them.

Greeting the audience at the 13th episode of the quiz-based reality show, Big B said, "I witness miracles happening to me every day on this stage. The moment I come running from that tunnel and sit on this chair, I see these gleeful smiling faces. I hear the applause, and see their enthusiasm and ecstasy. Believe me, ladies and gentlemen, every single clap adds another breath to my life, I am alive because of them."

Thanking the audience for their love, the 80-year-old actor said, "The bond they, I and the show share is through *KBC*. This stands true not only for our audience. But I feel your presence too and I know that I always will. There probably was never a single moment in my life, when you weren't with me. I extend my gratitude to you all on behalf of *KBC* and thank you all once again. Thank you so much."

Kaun Banega Crorepati - Season 15 airs on Sony.



Mrunal opens up about her lucky charm

Mumbai: Mrunal Thakur is juggling multiple film industries with so much ease, it feels like she was born to do this. In her short film career, she has managed to work with names like Dulquer

Salmaan, Vijay Deverakonda, Hrithik Roshan, Farhan Akhtar and more.

In an interview, the *Dhamaka* actress mentioned that all her co-stars are her friends and mentors and they have made her a better actor.

They have all taught her something or the other that she needed to learn.

Delving into specifics, from John Abraham, Hrithik, Roshan and Farhan Akhtar, she learned how to worship her body and how one cannot look the same in every character. While Shahid taught her how not to be distracted by all the 10000 things happening on the sets, from Dulquer she learned how to deliver lines in different languages and not to be afraid.

But it is Ranveer Singh whom she calls her lucky charm. She was working in television when Shakun Batra gave her an opportunity to work with a star like Ranveer Singh in an ad. From him, she learned that you cannot be dull! You have to have a certain energy, a charisma when you walk into a set. That ad became popular and paved the way for her filmy career.

AGENCIES



Rahul Dev starts shooting for his fourth Odia movie Ram



Arindam and Rahul Dev during a shoot of Odia film *Ram*

Bhubaneswar: Hindi film actor Rahul Dev, known for his roles in movies such as *Asoka*, *Champion*, and *Footpath*, started shooting for his four Odia film. Titled *Ram*, the movie is headlined by Arindam Roy and being made under Ratna Films banner. Ashok Pati is the director of the movie while Bengali actress Rupsha Mukhopadhyay has been finalised to play the female lead.

Though the makers haven't divulged details about the character Dev plays in the film,

from the shared images, it seems that the Hindi film actor has been roped in to portray main antagonist's character opposite Arindam.

This is not the first time Dev is acting in an Odia movie. Earlier, he had worked in several Odia films such as *Mahanayak*, *Shatru Sanghar* and *Premi No 1*.

The shooting of the action movie is going on in full swing in Bhubaneswar; a report said. PNN

BEING JEALOUS, POSSESSIVE ISN'T COOL: SAMANTHA

Hyderabad: Actress Samantha Ruth Prabhu, one of the most popular actresses and popularly known for her acting skills, shared about her big no-nos in a relationship.

The Yashoda actress in a throwback interview opened up about the things she thinks are not cool in a relationship.

The actress shares that jealousy and possessiveness are a few things she doesn't think are cool in a relationship. However, she mentioned that it is right to be caring but being jealous and possessive are not good to run a relationship successfully.

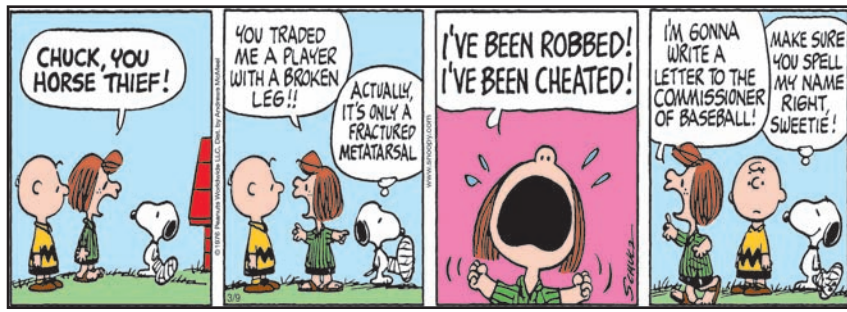
Samantha fell in love with her first co-star Naga Chaitanya while shooting for her debut film *Ye Maaya Chesave*. After dating many years, they tied the knot in 2017 but parted ways in 2021. The couple is officially divorced.

On the work front, Samantha will be seen next in *Kushi*.

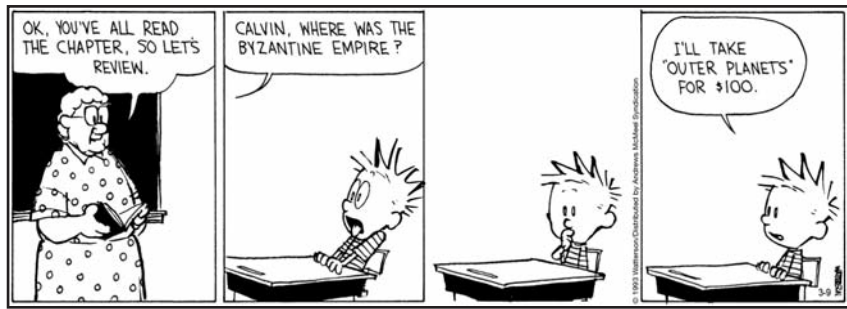
AGENCIES



PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

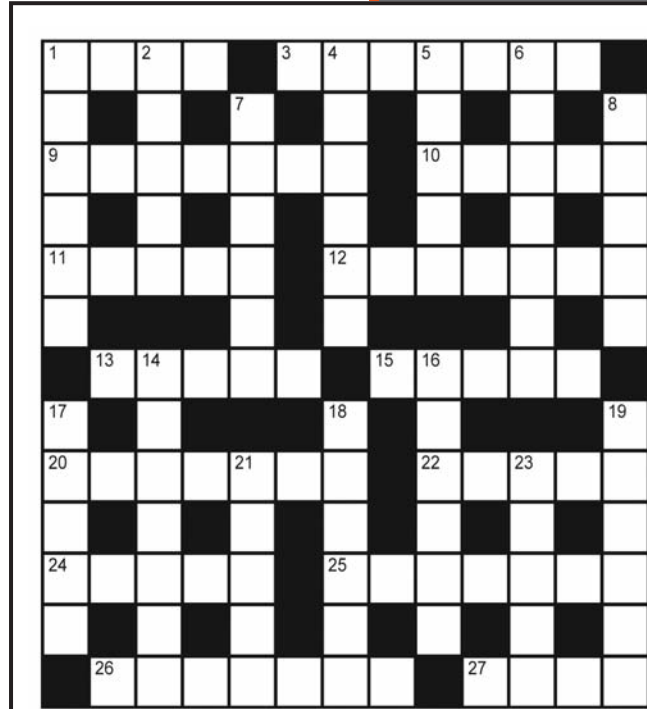


BREVITY



FUN post

CROSSWORD

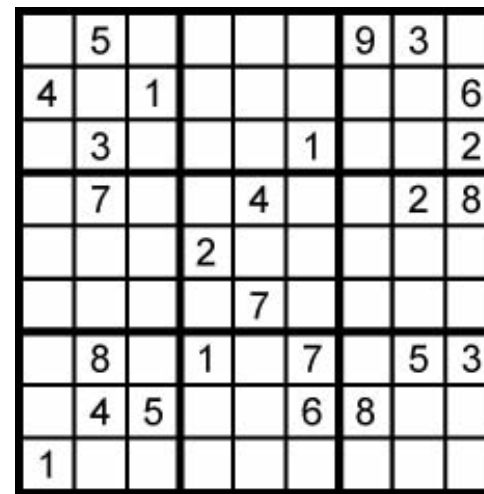


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- Across**
- 1 Minor setback
 - 3 Bit-by-bit
 - 9 Bridge type
 - 10 Removes
 - 11 Gate fixture
 - 12 Shirts and pants, e.g.
 - 13 Harsh
 - 15 Reef material
 - 20 Eyeglass
 - 22 Designer's concern
 - 24 Sensational
 - 25 Enumerate
 - 26 May birthstone
 - 27 Flock
 - Down**
 - 1 Unchanging
 - 2 Fancy tie
 - 4 Landing strip
 - 5 Wilt
 - 6 Graz locale
 - 7 Stringed instrument
 - 8 Sacred hymn
 - 14 Connoption fit
 - 16 Heaps
 - 17 Sufficient
 - 18 Type of manoeuvres
 - 19 Fresh and animated
 - 21 Hot or cold drink
 - 23 *Shoot 'Em Up* actor Owen or author Barker

SUDOKU

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



SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD



SUDOKU



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



J&K POLLS

Elections in J&K can be held anytime now as updation of voter list is almost over, the Centre tells SC

NATIONAL P7



NEW UK DEFENCE MINISTER

British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak appoints Grant Shapps as his new Defence minister in a mini reshuffle

INTERNATIONAL P8



DJOKO EASES THROUGH

Novak Djokovic moves into the third round at the US Open with a straight-set victory over Bernabe Zapata Miralles of Spain

SPORTS BACK PAGE ****

8 KILLED IN FRESH MANIPUR VIOLENCE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Imphal, August 31: At least eight persons have been killed and 18 injured, including two security personnel, in Manipur's Bishnupur and Churachandpur districts following continuous gunbattle between Kukis and Meiteis over the last 72 hours, officials said Thursday.

An official said firing was continuing intermittently in the foothills of Khoirentak in Bishnupur district and adjoining Chingphei and Khausabung areas in Churachandpur district.

Violence started August 29 when a village volunteer aged around 30 years was killed following heavy firing in Khoirentak area, an official said.

MAN LYNCHED

POST NEWS NETWORK

Kalimela, August 31: A man was allegedly beaten to death by angry villagers of Majhiguda under Sadar police limits in Malkangiri district late Wednesday night, an official said Thursday.

The deceased was identified as Deba Madkami of the village.

Deba had attacked Mani Madhi, 24, wife of Muka Madhi of the locality with a sharp weapon when she was washing utensils near a tube well in the village, Tuesday. Irked over the attack, villagers caught Deba and beat him to death. **P3**

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



In this day and age, how can somebody release a map claiming other countries' territories?

MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VAIATION
SENSEX	64831.41 ↓ 255.84
NIFTY	19253.80 ↓ 93.65
DOLLAR	82.65 ↑ ₹0.02
EURO	89.69 ↓ ₹0.65
GOLD	₹59,406 ↓ ₹72
SILVER	₹74,408 ↓ ₹229

WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
TEMP MAX	34.6°C	35.2°C
TEMP MIN	26.9°C	28.0°C
Humidity	76%	70%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil

Forecast: Light to moderate rain



MAROONED: A woman uses a raft to travel at a flood-affected village in Morigaon district of Assam, Thursday

PTI PHOTO

SA BUILDING FIRE CLAIMS 73 LIVES

AGENCIES

Johannesburg, August 31: At least 73 people were killed and 52 others injured after a massive fire broke out in a multi-storey building occupied by migrants in central Johannesburg of South Africa (SA) Thursday, emergency services said.

Authorities said it was unclear what sparked the blaze at the five-storey building in the city centre.

City of Johannesburg emergency services spokesperson Robert Mulaudzi said firefighters were alerted to the fire in a building on the corner of Delvers and Alberts streets at about 1:30 am.

Dozens of emergency and rescue workers were on the scene as bodies continue to be brought out.

"We managed to evacuate the people who were inside the building as soon as we arrived while we were conducting fire-fighting operations," Mulaudzi said, adding that most of those treated for injuries had suffered smoke inhalation or minor injuries.

Mulaudzi said arrangements were being made to accommodate those who had been left homeless by the incident.

The fire gutted the five-storey building.

A total of 73 bodies were recovered and 52 were injured in the fire, Mulaudzi said.

A video posted by Mulaudzi on X, formerly known as Twitter, showed fire trucks and ambulances outside the building with burnt-out windows.

Assembly from Sept 22

Parl spl session from Sept 18 sans agenda

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET TO BE PRESENTED ON THE FIRST DAY OF MONSOON SESSION

ELECTION TO THE SPEAKER'S POST LIKELY SEPTEMBER 21

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 31: Finance Minister Bikram Keshari Arukha will present the first Supplementary Budget for financial year (FY) 2023-24 on the first day of Odisha Assembly's Monsoon session that will begin September 22 and conclude October 4, according to an official notification, Thursday.

On the first day of the session, the Finance minister will present the first Supplementary Budget for FY 2023-24, the notification issued by the Assembly secretariat said.

"September 23 and 24 will be no working days on account of fourth Saturday and Sunday respectively, while official businesses will be taken up on the next three days (September 25 to 27). Demands for grants for the first Supplementary Budget will be discussed September 28 and 30," it said.

The Appropriation Bill for the first supplementary expendi-



ture of the statement will be tabled October 3. The last day of the session has been reserved for private members' business (bill and resolution), it said.

The election to the Speaker's post will be held before commencement of the session, it was learnt. Although no official notification was issued in connection with the Speaker election, sources said it will be held September 21.

Senior BJD MLAs Prafulla Samal, Debi Prasad Mishra,

- September 23 and 24 will be no working days on account of fourth Saturday and Sunday respectively, while official businesses will be taken up on the next three days (September 25 to 27)
- Demands for grants for the first Supplementary Budget will be discussed September 28 and 30
- The Appropriation Bill for the first supplementary expenditure of the statement will be tabled October 3

Kant Singh has been working as the acting Speaker since then.

The state government is likely to place a Supplementary Budget of around Rs 25,000 crore during the Monsoon session of Assembly.

Sources said provision for some of the schemes like 'Mo Ghara' and 'Mission Shakti Scooter' will be made in the Supplementary Budget. Much importance will be given to the works and projects which were promised by the 5T Secretary during his district visits.

and Winter - are held in a year. Sources said the special session could see parliamentary operations being shifted to the new Parliament building which was inaugurated by the Prime Minister May 28.

With the government not spelling out its agenda, speculation swirled that the government may push some showpiece bills in the run-up to some key state assembly polls followed by the all-important Lok Sabha election.

Sources, including in the ruling BJP, spoke of the possibility of bills on simultaneous general, state and local polls, something Modi has assiduously pushed, and reservation for women in directly elected legislatures like Lok Sabha and assemblies.

Congress leader Jairam Ramesh alleged that the special session announcement just three weeks after the end of the Monsoon session was aimed at managing 'the news cycle' and countering the news about the on-going meeting of INDIA parties in Mumbai and the latest revelations on Adani. **More P3**

ADANI IN SOUP AGAIN

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 31: Billionaire Gautam Adani's group was Thursday hit by fresh allegations that it used family associates to secretly invest hundreds of millions of dollars through 'opaque' Mauritius-based investment funds to fuel the spectacular rise in group stocks. The conglomerate vehemently denied the charge.

The Organised Crime and Corruption Reporting Project (OCCRP) said documents obtained by it revealed details of a complex offshore operation in two Mauritius-based funds managed by the partners of the promoter family to support prices of shares of group companies from 2013 to 2018 - a period during which the ports-to-energy

conglomerate saw meteoric rise to become India's largest and most powerful businesses.

OCCRP said two close associates of Vinod Adani - the elder brother of group founder, and chairman Gautam Adani - are sole beneficiaries of Mauritius-based companies through which the money appeared to flow.

Nasser Ali Shaban Ahli from the UAE and Chang Chung-Ling from Taiwan spent years trading hundreds of millions of dollars worth of Adani group stock through two Mauritius-based funds that were overseen by a Dubai-based company run by a known employee of Vinod Adani.

SEBI had been handed evidence in early 2014 of alleged suspicious stock market activity by the Adani Group, OCCRP said citing a letter.

U K Sinha, who headed the SEBI in 2014, is now a director and chairperson of Adani-owned news broadcaster NDTV.

The fresh broadside, which comes months after US short-selling firm Hindenburg Research published an explosive report in January that accused Adani Group of running the 'largest con in corporate history', sent all 10 listed Adani stocks down. Shares of flagship Adani Enterprises Ltd closed 3.72 per cent lower after dipping as much as 5.2 per cent. Other group stocks closed 2-3.5 per cent lower.

On the Forbes Billionaire list, Gautam Adani lost USD 2.2 billion in personal wealth and was now ranked 24th on the rich list.

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi questioned the PM's silence on the allegations.

Now, make video & voice calls on X

BLOOMBERG/AGENCIES

California, August 31: Users of X, the social network formerly known as Twitter, will be able to make video and audio calls through the platform without having to share their phone number, owner Elon Musk said in a post Thursday, in the latest expansion of services as he seeks to create an 'everything app'.

Musk wants X to become more like Tencent Holdings Ltd's WeChat, a messaging service-turned-super-app that offers everything from social media and video games to fintech.

X chief executive officer Linda Yaccarino has said X will include features such as payments and banking. Musk, who bought Twitter

last year for \$44 billion, said X will serve as an 'effective global address book' for the new features, and users will be able to make calls through X on iOS, Android, Macs and PCs.

"Video & audio calls coming to X - Works on iOS, Android, Mac & PC - No phone number needed - X is the effective global address book," Musk posted on X.

"That set of factors is unique," he added.

The announcement came after the platform updated its privacy policy to include the collection of biometric data. X does not define what it considers biometric, though other companies have used the term to describe data gleaned from a person's face, eyes and fingerprints. X also said it would gather infor-



mation about users' jobs and education histories. Several users expressed their thoughts on this new development.

"Now I can call more people and tell them to buy #DogeCoin directly from X," a user wrote.

"Please make sure there are privacy options to stop randoms from calling us. Even if I follow someone it doesn't mean I want them to be able to call me," another user said.

One more user wrote: "Absolutely groundbreaking! Your team never fails to spearhead innovation! Can't wait to enjoy seamless video & audio calls on X across multiple platforms without the fuss of phone numbers. Truly visionary, setting a new benchmark in user experience. Bravo."

Meanwhile, X has announced that it will allow US political candidates and parties advertise on the platform ahead of the 2024 presidential election.

Since acquiring Twitter, Musk has axed the signature blue bird logo and introduced a raft of changes including reinstating formerly banned users and scrapping the ability to block accounts.



AT LORD'S SERVICE: Rakhis prepared by Patara Bisoi servitors being taken to Srimandir on the auspicious occasion of Shraavan Purnima or Balabhadra Janmotsav in Puri, Thursday

5T Secy resumes Jaipur tour

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, August 31: As part of the tour to take stock of and redress public grievances on the instructions of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, 5T Secretary VK Pandian visited Jajpur district and reviewed the progress of various developmental works, Thursday.

The 5T Secretary discussed the development of Mahabiniyak temple in Badachana and Baruneswar temple in Binjharpur, where he interacted with servitors, trustee members and locals for development of both the temples along with better facilities for the devotees.

He took suggestions on various aspects of transformation of the temples and related pilgrim/tourist amenities. He directed the district administration to prepare a master plan for the purpose.

Pandian reviewed the progress of ongoing mega piped water supply projects at a cost of ₹956 crore in Badachana, Binjharpur, Dasarathpur, Dhar masala, Rasulpur and Jajpur blocks. These projects will supply water to households across all the blocks. The projects will be operationalized in phases from December onwards. He directed the officials concerned to ensure timely completion and quality service.

He also reviewed the progress of mega lift irrigation projects at a cost of ₹223 crore and in-stream storage structures across Kochila and Baitarani river at a cost of ₹373 crore. These projects will be completed by September 2025. He asked the officials concerned to ensure adherence to project



timelines. During the day, he participated in the public grievance meetings in Badachana, Binjharpur, Dhar masala and Jajpur. He interacted with the public regarding their grievances. He said that Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik gives top priority towards citizen grievances and assured early resolution of the petitions submitted.

Pandian reviewed the progress of other major ongoing projects in the district such as the new 250-bedded DHH building at Jajpur with at a cost of ₹98 crore and sports stadium and sports academy at Jajpur at a cost of ₹41 crore. He instructed for early completion of these projects adhering to the principles of 5T.

He also reviewed the progress of major roads in the district: Sayadpur to Uttangara Road via Chilika Road at a cost of ₹21 crore, Narigaon to Dubakan via Garabandha & Jundhupur road at a cost of ₹29 crore, construction of road Malia Balabhadrapur via Kapila at a cost of ₹20 crore, improvement

Kustira Gadamadhapur Baramana Dhenkanal Border Road at a cost of ₹13 crore, improvements such as widening strengthening of Neulapur Haridaspur road at a cost of ₹13 crore, improvements such as widening strengthening to Dhar masala bypass road at a cost of ₹16 crore, construction of road Dhar masala to Nakpole of Dhar masala Kabatabandha road at a cost of ₹17 crore, construction of road Sribantapur to NH-16 via Khanditara, Sanatrilochanpur at a cost of ₹21 crore, improvement of Kabatbandha Manjuripada road at a cost of ₹11 crore, Improvement of Kuakhia Jenapur Road at a cost of ₹27 cr, improvement of Gadamadhapur to Dankari Turanga road at a cost of ₹12 crore, improvement of Achutpur to Badabarisahi road at a cost of ₹15 crore, Ankula-Panikoilli road via Nuapada-Trilochanpur & Adanga Budhaghata (TRE) Buddha Right Embankment and Adanga Mokeipur road at a cost of ₹37 crore.

Odisha among 4 leading investment destinations

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, August 31: The Indian economy is at the cusp of a new private capital expenditure cycle with Odisha being one of the leading states attracting investments, said a domestic credit rating agency here Thursday.

After analysing official data from 2005 to 2022, India Ratings and Research said Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat and Maharashtra continue to dominate fresh capex allocation, while Odisha is getting attention with projects spread across textile, steel and power sectors.

For the past few years, the government led on the investment front while private capital expenditure, which has a trickle-down effect on growth and employment, did not take off.

"Analysis of Industrial



Entrepreneur's Memorandum (IEM) and Business Expectation Index (BEI) data of 2005 to 2022 shows that the Indian economy is at the cusp of a new private corporate capex cycle," the rating agency said in a note.

The IEM data is collected by the government's Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade department, while data related to BEI is released by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in its industrial outlook survey of corporate entities.

The agency said a recent RBI

study on private capex allocations hitting a decade high in 2023-24 also illustrates a pick-up in private corporate capex. There is a steady uptick in project allocations across all ticket sizes and there could be a significant push from large projects of over ₹1,000 crore in this cycle, the agency said.

India's push for roads and renewable energy will continue to dominate the country's investment cycle, while recent expansions in railways and electronics suggest a more ambitious shift away from modular capex, it said.

Crude oil, base metals, power and telecom continue to dominate the capex activity, the agency said, adding that broad basing is visible with increase in capex activity across cement, chemicals, healthcare and logistics.

City folks celebrate 'Rasabali Dibasa'

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 31: A state-level 'Rasabali Dibasa' was celebrated here at the Guru Kelu Charan Mohapatra Odissi Research Centre auditorium Thursday.

Organised by 'Odisha Sanskruti O Parampara Punaruddhara Samiti' (Odisha Culture and Tradition Restoration Committee), participants in the event demanded geographical indication (GI) tag for the delicacy, which is said to be favourite of Lord Baladev of Kendrapara.

The committee convener Jyotsnamayi Parida presided over the event which also featured pala, kendera and sankirtan performances by performers from Kendrapara. In the evening, on occasion of Lord Baladev's birthday, the participants observed the 'Raksha Bandhan' festival.



A rasabali stall from Kendrapara was inaugurated for the visitors, who enjoyed the prasad and demanded the programme to be celebrated every year as Rasabali Dibasa on 'Raksha Bandhan' - birth anniversary of Lord Baldev. At the event, a music video and book on rasabali by Jayashree Dhal were released by the guests.

MP Amar Patnaik, MLA Shashi Bhusan Behera, BMC Mayor Sulochana Das, Odia Language, Literature & Culture department director Dilip Routray, OTDC chairman Lenin Mohanty were among the guests.

SSB lecturers seek grade pay revision

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, August 31: Members of the Odisha SSB Lecturers' Association (OSLA) have passed a resolution to start wearing black badges in the workplace if the state government doesn't act on their demand to revise grade pay of SSB-recruited lecturers by September 5.

The lecturers have urged the state government to revise their grade pay from ₹4600 to ₹ 5400, with retrospective effect from 2016.

In a press conference here Thursday OSLA treasurer-cum-state spokesperson Prasanna Kumar Baral said that despite having been recruited to degree colleges through an open merit-based system, the lecturers are being deprived of their basic due with a salary as per ₹4600 grade pay.

Baral said, "Though we have been presenting our grievances

Mason chased to death; 1 held

GYAN RANJAN MOHAPATRA, OP



at various forums of the government since 2016, it has not drawn the attention of the Chief Minister and the 5T Secretary."

Mentioning that some 3,000 lecturers of the state have been making these demands for the last eight years, he further said, "We request some sympathy from the CM and expect a positive response by September 5. If our request is not considered by then, we will be compelled to wear black badge at our workplaces."

The press conference was attended by the state office bearers including president Sarojakanta Nayak and secretary Lambodar Rout and district office bearers of OSLA from all 30 district of Odisha.

Bhubaneswar, August 31: The Commissionerate Police Thursday arrested a person on charges of unintentionally causing death of his roommate at Maitri Vihar here Tuesday night.

The accused, identified as Bijay Kumar Hembram, 33, of Gandia block in Dhenkanal district, was apprehended in connection with a case (279/23) registered at Maitri Vihar police station August 30.

Police sources said the victim, Kumbhakar Nayak of Keonjhar district, along with accused Bijay and two others were staying in a mess at an under-construction building at OSAP 7th Battalion in Gajapati Nagar area here. Kumbhakar was working as the head mason for the building work while the accused used to assist him.

Kumbhakar was in charge of collection of money and purchase of vegetables and grocery for the mess. Tuesday, the mess members had given ₹500 each to Kumbhakar for buying grocery.

However, other members engaged in a verbal duel with Kumbhakar suspecting misappropriation of money. An argument ensued when Bijay sought details of the money collected from Kumbhakar.

The three mess members tried to assault Kumbhakar with wooden stick and iron rods. Scared, Kumbhakar ran upstairs. Though others stopped at the third floor, Bijay chased Kumbhakar upto sixth floor following which the latter fell off the building causing his instant death.

Youth stabs classmate

Bhubaneswar: A Plus III second year student of a private college in Pandav Nagar area under Badagada police limits here sustained grievous injuries after being attacked by one of his classmates over a trivial issue, Thursday. The injured was identified as Biswajeet Swain. Biswajeet and accused classmate, Chandan Panda, were returning home after an examination in the college Thursday afternoon when they engaged in a verbal duel over sharing some study notes.

Direct flight between Utkela & Bhub begins



KULDEEP SINGH, OP

New Delhi, August 31: Union Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia Thursday inaugurated the Utkela Airport and a direct flight between Utkela and Bhubaneswar through video-conferencing.

The ministry said that IndiaOne Air will be running 9-seater Cessna C-208 aircraft, sanctioned under Ude Deshka Aam Naagrik (UDAN) scheme, on this route from Thursday onwards.

According to Union Civil Aviation Ministry, Utkela airport has been developed as a regional airport under UDAN scheme at a cost of ₹31.07 crore. The airport, which has a runway length of 917 metres (2,995 ft) and a width of 30 metres, is owned by the state government.

With this, Utkela becomes the fifth airport after Bhubaneswar, Jharsuguda, Jeypore and Rourkela.

"The newly inaugurated Utkela-Bhubaneswar-Utkela flight route will enhance re-

gional air connectivity and play an important role in the economic development of the region," the ministry said.

Scindia said Utkela to Bhubaneswar air connectivity will reduce the time taken to travel by road which is nearly eight hours. Now with Utkela-Bhubaneswar flight, the distance could be covered in 1 hour and 20 minutes, the minister said. Elaborating further, the Union minister said, "This will be a new beginning for Kalahandi region as economic activities will come up and generate a range of employment opportunities."

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik was present at Biju Patnaik International Airport here to flag off the flight.

"Glad to flag off first flight between #Bhubaneswar and newly inaugurated Utkela Airport in #Kalahandi district. The airport has added yet another golden chapter to Odisha's aviation sector. It will boost connectivity, commerce and tourism, fulfilling aspirations of people of the region," Patnaik said in X.

Govt to reimburse ST & SC medical, engg students' fees

Bhubaneswar: ST & SC Development, Minorities and Backward Classes Welfare department has extended financial assistance to the ST & SC students pursuing medical and engineering courses under Mukhyamantri Medhabhi Chhatra Protshan Yojana (MMCPY). Under MMCPY, the entire course fees of those eligible students studying in government institutions offering MBBS and Engineering (B-Tech, M-Tech) courses will be reimbursed. The fees include admission charge/seat acceptance charge, initial deposit, annual course fee (tuition fee and all compulsory payable charges to the institution), hostel admission fee and annual hostel/mess charges and any other incidental expenses for study like purchase of books/study materials coaching/tutorial expenses. All such expenses duly signed by the Dean/Head of the institution and student may be forwarded to the district collector for reimbursement under MMCPY.

Tracking devices for undertrials

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, August 31: The Odisha Directorate of Prisons has proposed the state government to allow it to fit GPS-enabled tracking devices on the ankles of undertrial prisoners (UTPs) and free them of the four walls of prisons.

DG (prisons) Manoj Chhabra said if the proposal is accepted and implemented, Odisha will be the first state in the country to free UTPs involved in non-heinous crimes.

Stating that overcrowding was the biggest problem in jails across the country including Odisha, Chhabra said about 80 per cent of prison inmates were UTPs. Many of them were lodged in jails even though they were caught in offences having provision of less than seven years imprisonment.

According to the department's proposal to Odisha government, GPS-enabled tracking devices will be fitted on the ankles of

UTPs facing non-heinous charges for crimes carrying a maximum imprisonment of seven years to reduce prison overcrowding.

Chhabra said this will be voluntary and the UTPs will have the option to wear the devices or stay in jails. He said police and jail authorities will be able to track any UTP with help of the device. If any UTP tries to damage the tracker, the local police station will get an alert and act immediately, he added.

Replying to a question, Chhabra said there are a few factors behind such a move. "While chances of escape is there, a UTP may also commit crime while outside the jail. This apart, he/she may threaten witnesses or attempt to tamper evidence. In all such cases, police can nab them and put them in jail," he said.

Asked whether the move would violate human rights of a person, Chhabra said, "I think human rights activists will support our effort as the UTPs will remain free and not within four walls."

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Speculations fly over Parl spl session

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, August 31: Amidst the announcement of a special session of the Parliament from September 18 to 22 by Union Parliamentary Affairs minister Pralhad Joshi, speculations have intensified over the palpable reasons behind the unprecedented move of the Narendra Modi government.

Joshi announced on a social media platform that the government is looking forward to having a fruitful discussion and debate amid Amrit Kaal. The officials are tight lipped to share anything beyond the one agenda that Joshi revealed.

However, sources said that the government would utilize this session for 'branding' ahead of crucial elections in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Telangana and Mizoram.

During the five days of the session, the government is likely to highlight the success of the Moon mission, G20 summit and would celebrate the Amrit Kaal.

Though the government has not announced any legislative business yet for the special session, there is a buzz that the intent is to bring the 'one nation one election' bill. The idea of 'one nation one election' deals



with holding Lok Sabha and state assemblies' elections simultaneously. The idea has been very close to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's heart and he, on several occasions, pushed for it stating that it would reduce the cost of elections and give more time for governance. In January last year, the PM had said that the continuous cycle of elections results in politicization of everything and suffering of developmental works.

The talk is also high over the Women's Reservation bill. The bill seeks to provide 33 percent

reservation to women in Lok Sabha and Assemblies. The government may bring the bill in this Lok Sabha as there has been near uniformity on the issue among all the parties. According to the Election Commission of India, women voters had outshined men in 2019 Lok Sabha elections. The voting percentage of women was 67.18 percent in 2019 while that of male voters was 67.01 percent. In view of the increasing participation of women in elections, it would be imperative for the government to

consider the introduction of the bill in the lower house. The bill was passed in the Rajya Sabha in 2010.

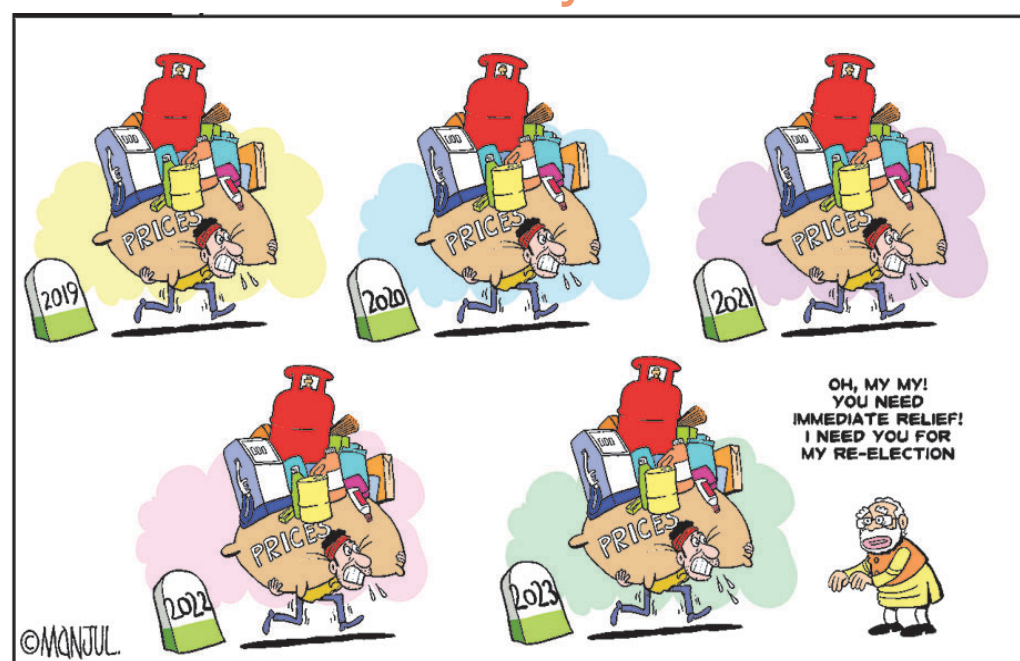
And finally, there are assumptions that the government may pass a resolution giving back State status to the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir - as Wednesday both the AG and SG, on instructions of the Central government told the Supreme Court that the status of the UT of J&K is only temporary - and thus pave the way for assembly elections in the state.

Significantly, the Opposition attacked the government for "managing the News Cycle, Modi Style." Senior Congress leader Jairam Ramesh alleged that the announcement is a Modi style of diverting the news from latest revelations on alleged Adani scam.

"News today has been dominated by the latest revelations on the Modani-scam. Tomorrow the ever-growing INDIA parties meet in Mumbai. How to counter? Announce a 5-day special session of Parliament when the Monsoon session has just ended 3 weeks back," Jairam said.

He also asserted that joint parliamentary committee demand will continue to resonate inside and outside Parliament.

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



Croc attacks continue in coastal Kendrapara

Sexagenarian killed by giant croc in front of son

POST NEWS NETWORK

Kendrapara, August 31: Kendrapara district in coastal Odisha continues to experience a distressing surge in human-animal conflict, with yet another tragic incident of a crocodile attack resulting in a fatality as a sexagenarian lost his life Thursday in Brahmani river in front of his son.

As the person identified as Abhaya Rout stepped into the water on the river bank to clean his utensils, a giant crocodile pounced on the leg of Rout and later dragged him into the middle of the river.

Abhaya's son Anil Rout who was standing near him screamed for help and made an attempt to save his father by attacking the crocodile with a bamboo stick but in vain.

On being informed, Forest officials and Fire brigade personnel reached the spot and launched a search and rescue operation, but till the last report came in, the body was yet to be retrieved from river water.

The reptile-human conflict has been going on in regular intervals mostly at Pattamundai, Kendrapara, Rajnagar, Aul, Rajkanika and Mahakalapara blocks of the coastal district.

As many as six persons, including a minor boy and a

woman, have lost their lives in crocodile attacks in the last two months.

In another incident, a huge crocodile was spotted roaming on the main road in Rajnagar area in Kendrapara district Tuesday night.

The huge reptile was spotted in the Khandamara penta in Rajnagar block. The movement of the crocodile has been recorded on camera which has gone viral in the social media.

As per reports, local people saw a huge crocodile roaming on the main road Tuesday night. First a few local children saw the crocodile roaming on the road. As they screamed the crocodile ran into a canal nearby.

The fear of crocodile attack has largely increased in the villages Kendrapara, Pattamundai, Rajnagar blocks along the Brahmani river. The locals have expressed frustration towards the Forest department officials, accusing them of inaction in the face of these recurring tragedies.

Saltwater crocodiles, whose population is booming in the Bhitarkanika National Park and surrounding wetlands near the Odisha coast after four decades of conservation, are now out to explore new territories, fuelling a conflict with humans.

AM/NS India builds toilet block for school



Paradip: In its efforts towards promoting hygiene and education in the community, the CSR wing of ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel India (AM/NS India) has constructed a new toilet block at Musadia Upper Primary (UP) School under Kujang block of Jagatsinghpur which will benefit more than 200 schoolchildren and teaching staff.

The toilet facility was inaugurated by Vikas Yadvendu, Head of CSR, AM/NS India in the presence of Aruna Kumar Rout, Headmaster, Musadia UP School, other teaching, non-teaching staff and students August 28, 2023. The toilet block comprises four toilets, two each for boys and girls. It has been equipped with supply of clean water and provision of a hand-washing facility, thus promoting the value of proper sanitation in maintaining a healthy environment.

On the occasion, Yadvendu said, "Quality education and community welfare are inseparable goals. Under our Project 'PadhegaBharat', we are focusing on further improving the infrastructure in government schools in nearby villages to give children access to essential sanitation facilities and thereby enhance the overall learning experience. We believe that proper sanitation and toilets will reduce the spread of diseases and protect the health of the children".

Ponzi fraud: 3-year RI to ex-branch manager

POST NEWS NETWORK

Balasure, August 31: A special OPID (Odisha Protection of Interest of Depositors) court Thursday sentenced a senior official of a Ponzi firm to three years of rigorous imprisonment (RI) after convicting him for defrauding depositors of their hard-earned money.

The convict was identified as Saroj Kumar Nayak, the branch manager of a Ponzi firm Micro Finance Ltd and Micro Leasing and Funding Limited at the Kaptipada branch.

Special Judge Biswajit Das of the OPID court also slapped a penalty of ₹61, 000 on Nayak, apart from the punishment. In default, Nayak has to undergo additional 10 months of imprisonment, the judge observed while pronouncing the order. This was stated here by special public prosecutor Pranab Kumar Panda to mediapersons, Thursday. The judge passed the order after examining 25 documents and statements of 35 witnesses.

Man lynched, hung upside down for attacking woman

POST NEWS NETWORK

Kalimela/Korukonda, August 31: Irrate villagers beat up a man to death and hung him upside down from a tree after he allegedly attacked a woman and rendered her critical at Majhiguda village under Chintalwada panchayat and Sadar police limits in Malkangiri district, Wednesday night.

The deceased was identified as Deba Madkani of the village. On being informed, police arrived at the spot and sent the body for post-mortem. Police also arrested four persons and interrogated them in this connection, Korukonda police station IIC Reagan Kindo said.

The accused were identified as Ganga Madhi, Rama Madhi, Irma Madhi of Kamwada village and Bhima Madhi of Chintalwada village. A case was registered in this connection



and the accused persons were produced in the court, Thursday. Further investigations were on, the IIC said.

The victim had reportedly killed his wife earlier, the IIC added.

Reports said that the deceased Deba reportedly attacked a woman Mani Madhi, 24, wife of Muka Madhi in his neighbourhood with a sharp-edged weapon

when she was washing utensils at a tube well in the village, Tuesday. Deba ran away after the attack when villagers rushed to the rescue of the woman.

The woman sustained critical injuries on her neck and face as family members rushed her in an ambulance to Kalimela community health centre.

However, before the Korukonda police could reach the spot and arrest Deba for the assault, the irate family members of the woman took law into their own hands and retaliated. They caught Deba and brutally beat him to death. Later, they hung his body upside down from a tree on the roadside.

After getting information, Malkangiri police reached the spot and started an investigation into the incident. Sources said the woman is currently critical and undergoing treatment at a hospital in Kalimela.

Couple commits suicide 6 months after wedding

Banki: A newly married couple allegedly committed suicide by hanging over suspected tiff at Bheda Ramachandrapur village under Dampara block under Banki police station limits in Cuttack district, late Wednesday night. The deceased were identified as Chakradhar Sahu, 28, and his wife Sasmita Sahu, 23. The couple had married six months back, March 1, 2023. They committed suicide by hanging from the ceiling fan on a single piece of cloth. The matter came to fore after the couple did not come out of their room till late in the morning, Thursday. The youth's mother knocked at the door of their bedroom and raised an alarm when they did not respond. Villagers broke open the door and recovered the couple hanging from the ceiling fan. The family members and villagers were taking the bodies for cremation when Banki police, after getting a tip-off, reached the spot and seized the bodies. The bodies were handed over to the family members for cremation after a post-mortem was conducted at Banki Sub-Divisional Hospital. An investigation was launched into the matter. A case was registered in this connection and further investigations were on, Banki police SI Samir Kumar Lenka said.

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FOCUS GEOPOLITICS

UNDECLARED WAR



New Delhi should never be lulled into complacency by its advisors, policymakers, so-called friendly countries; it must be ready for multi-pronged defence preparedness against China

China has done it again. Beijing has brought out a new map that claims vast swathes of Indian territory in the North-East and the entire South China Sea. That too after Narendra Modi's active participation in BRICS, subsequent one-to-one meeting with Xi Jinping and the perceived thaw in the relationship in the run-up to G20 Summit next week in New Delhi. All the efforts and expectations on normalisation of relations seem to end in smoke. As we have persistently maintained in this column, China's belligerence goes unabated, New Delhi needs to seriously rethink its China strategy.

The Chinese Ministry of Natural Resources brought out a map on 28 August that shows within China's borders all of Arunachal Pradesh and Aksai Chinn. Expectedly, New Delhi has reacted strongly to the new map. External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar said on 29 August that the Government of India, "is very clear about what is our territory and making absurd claims does not make other peoples' territories yours." Recall, Beijing had in 2019 strongly objected to an Indian map showing the newly-created Union Territory of Ladakh. Despite India's clarification on the above said map, Beijing did not seem to withdraw its strong protest. Now, in response to India's protest, Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Wang Wenbin said that the map was a part of a routine exercise. "It is a routine practice for China to exercise sovereignty in accordance with the law. We hope the relevant side can stay objective and calm, and refrain from over-interpreting it." In fact, he is reiterating the claim made in the map. How ridiculous!

It seems obvious that China is testing India. Also, the timing of the cartographic aggression is perhaps to undermine India's stature in the eyes of the world as it hosts the powerful G20 Summit with several world leaders participating. New Delhi should have no doubt that Beijing has an incorrigible appetite for territories. It has territorial disputes with all its neighbours. It sees India as its competitor in the geopolitics of the region. For now, New Delhi seems to contain China not confront it unless it is forced to. This may not work. Beijing should get the vibes from New Delhi that it will be ready to confront China at any time. From my conversations with Indian Armed Forces, they are willing and ready to take on China should such an eventuality occur. They are sure that the preparedness as well as the capacity of our Armed Forces is qualitatively much different from what it was in 1962. They say, "Although we may be smaller in size, our determination and commitment is greater than that of Chinese PLA."

War is avoidable any day. In Indian tradition and culture, peace is always preferred to war. Remember, Lord Krishna's effort to achieve peace and avoid the epic battle of Mahabharata. He himself went to the Kuru dynasty in Hastinapur as the messenger of peace. Having

noted that, let us also remember that Lord Krishna was clearly committed to protecting the virtuous (Dharma) and to destroying the evil (Adharma). While talking peace and giving everyone opportunities to embrace it, he was preparing for a decisive war to establish Dharma. As the omniscient God, he knew that war was inevitable, because of persistence of Adharma by Kauravas. Although we have discussed many a time in this column India's prospective allies vis-à-vis China it needs briefly recounting the arguments and analyses in the wake of the new map brought out by China. One strategic argument is that India should stand firm and resolute on its own. That goes without saying. But pragmatically and in view of global geopolitics, alliance-building is indispensable. Two countries have been important for India in relation to its China policy - the United States and former Soviet Union, now Russia. The prevailing perception about United States is that it likes to fish in the troubled water. It has done the double-speak on Pakistan. While Washington recognised Pakistan as a terrorist hub, it continued to arm Pakistan perhaps to pres-

sure New Delhi. This has created lingering doubts about the dependability of the US as an ally. The situation involving USA, China and India has drastically changed. It is no more India needing US support to confront China. It is US seeking India as an ally in containing China in the region. So, New Delhi's and Washington's interests for the first time in their bilateral history coincide. President Biden is making a maiden visit to New Delhi for the G20 Summit. His huge entourage indicates Biden's intention of consolidating ties with India. Modi should reciprocate and indicate India's willingness in deepening Indo-US ties in all possible sectors. At the same time, Modi should assert India's position to Chinese leadership through the G20 Summit and in the fringe meetings.

The traditional ally USSR does not exit any longer as it was. Its successor Russia is tied with its own troubles. By badly calculating the war on Ukraine, Russia has saddled itself in self-created isolation. Russian 'strong man' Vladimir Putin cannot travel for fear of arrest issued by International Criminal Court. He did not go to Johannesburg to attend the BRICS Summit and cannot come to New Delhi for G20. So, relying on Russia to restrain China is no more realistic. In sum, New Delhi cannot trust Beijing as the latter never keeps its words and excels in duplicity. Though Beijing is struggling to stabilise its economy and to cope with the Western boycott, it cannot restrain its territorial ambitions. New Delhi should never be lulled into complacency by its advisors, policymakers, so-called friendly countries; it must be ready for multi-pronged defence preparedness against China.

The writer is Secretary General, Association for Democratic Socialism.

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SPECTRUM SOCIETY

Destined for a future of hardship

In India, the alluring promise of a demographic dividend, presumed to drive economic prosperity, masks a grim reality: marginalised and exploited children across rural and urban settings. These young lives, shackled by illiteracy, malnutrition, abuse, and exploitation, appear destined for a future of enduring hardship. Their transition to adulthood seems fraught with persistent adversity, perpetuated deprivation, and unrelenting exploitation, surpassing the challenges many adults face.

Despite extensive research by non-governmental organisations, international bodies, and the government, the scourge of child labour persists amidst India's economic progress. Disturbingly, children are ensnared in hazardous migration and trafficking, manipulated by unscrupulous agents and employers, subjecting them to brutal exploitation. Research has investigated the origins and driving forces behind child labour, identifying sectors where it thrives, scrutinising the State's role and legal framework, and advocating for improved working conditions and protections.

Within India, child migration across state boundaries is an escalating concern, marked by stag-

gering figures. The 2011 Census revealed that India harbors the world's largest migrant child population, comprising 18.9% (92.95 million) of the total population. This concerning trend is particularly noticeable in metropolitan areas where child labour is rampant, often involving hazardous jobs accompanied by exploitation and forced labour. Geographic patterns emerge, with certain regions serving as sources of migrant and trafficked child labour, while others become destinations for these unfortunate children. Chronic poverty, inequality, social discrimination, and natural disasters' aftermath drive this dichotomy, pushing families, including children, into distressing migrations for urban livelihoods, where they are often subjected to neglect and exploitation.

This reality necessitates urgent tailored strategies against child trafficking and migrant child labour: For instance, from Kalahandi, children migrate to states like Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu, where brick kilns are the primary employers, highlighting the prevalence of child migrants in impoverished regions. These areas are characterised by

poverty, landlessness, inadequate livelihoods, and low education levels, making rural households vulnerable, with children often accompanying their migrating families. Despite economic growth, the persistence of these issues casts a shadow on progress. Globalisation and modernisation haven't shifted societal attitudes towards child labour significantly. Paradoxically, even segments of middle-class prosperity indirectly rely on the toil of migrant child labourers. While India advances economically, exploiting vulnerable groups remains entrenched, coexisting with modernisation. Rural poverty and lack of assets drive impoverished households' reliance on adult and child labour migration.

Increased attention from national and international entities has drawn focus to the issue. Collaborative efforts strive to align domestic policies with international norms. Initiatives to identify, rescue, and rehabilitate child labourers have been implemented, though with mixed results. Despite commendable efforts, the problem persists. The numbers of child labourers and trafficked youngsters continue to

rise, mirroring a global trend of human trafficking. Profiteering drives this sinister trade, while contributing communities remain stagnant due to dire poverty, illiteracy, unemployment, and gender-based discrimination.

Focusing on these complex issues requires multifaceted solutions. Strong legislation must be enforced to curb these practices. Source areas require sustained interventions such as livelihood programmes and education initiatives. Empowering women, eradicating discrimination, and eliminating factors perpetuating child labour and trafficking are imperative.

The absence of education is a shared challenge among children migrating with or without parents, with the latter facing more significant obstacles. Government intervention is crucial for establishing residential schooling and counseling facilities for at-risk children. Without such efforts, child migrant labour and trafficking will persist, robbing countless children of their rightful opportunities and futures.

The writer is a former Professor of Economics, Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics, Pune.



SN Tripathy

THE ABSENCE OF EDUCATION IS A SHARED CHALLENGE AMONG CHILDREN MIGRATING WITH OR WITHOUT PARENTS

Peace is the first condition, without which nothing else can be stable.

SRI AUROBINDO



Collateral Damage

Since enacting the National Education Policy 2020, India has sought to position itself as a twenty-first-century knowledge hub featuring globally competitive institutions of higher education. But the abrupt resignation of a young economist from one of the country's most prestigious universities, and the subsequent campus revolt over his exit, casts doubt on India's ability to realise this ambition.

In July, Sabyasachi Das, an assistant professor at Ashoka University, released a working paper alleging irregularities in India's 2019 general election. The study, which has not yet been peer-reviewed, suggested that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) won a disproportionate share of closely contested constituencies because of electoral manipulation - namely, the selective culling of Muslims from voter rolls.

To be sure, Das notes that the purported irregularities did not affect the outcome of the vote; the BJP won by a landslide. But given that Modi's party promotes a strident form of Hindu nationalism and views India's Muslim minority as electorally irrelevant, the spectre of electoral tampering is troubling.

The paper ignited a firestorm. Ashoka, a private liberal arts university located outside New Delhi, sought to distance itself from Das, questioning both the relevance and integrity of his research. After university authorities subjected him to a gag order and launched a committee of inquiry, Das resigned. The economics department swiftly condemned the move, insisting that Das be unconditionally reinstated. Other university departments chimed in, and students have also voiced their discontent.

For decades, government has applied pressure - often indirectly to facilitate plausible deniability - on academics whose work contradicts official narratives. But since Modi came to power in 2014, that pressure has reached new heights. In 2021, the political scientist Pratap Bhanu Mehta, a vocal critic of Modi's policies, also resigned from Ashoka, writing that the university's founders made it "abundantly clear" that his association with the institution was a "political liability."

Moreover, the pressure on researchers, likely greater in lesser-known schools, extends beyond college campuses, as evidenced by the regulatory assault on the Centre for Policy Research, one of India's most highly regarded think tanks.

Modi's government seems to want foreign universities to set up outposts in the country and has invested heavily in select Indian universities designated as "Institutes of Eminence." Yet the recent controversies suggest that India will not be a vishwaguru (teacher to the world), as Modi often boasts, unless both the government and university leaders credibly commit to uphold intellectual freedom.

India's academics must be free to explore controversial subjects and to publish politically uncomfortable findings. The university leaders tasked with creating these conditions are in an unenviable position, given the leverage that the government retains over institutions of higher education - a reminder that its regulatory control never disappeared, but merely evolved after liberalisation. Even private universities with diversified funding sources are not as shielded from political pressure as many had believed.

But that should not stop university administrators from broadcasting their unwavering support for faculty, even - or especially - when they take on contentious topics. In a globalised world, talented Indians who feel stifled at home can seek better opportunities abroad. Many have already done so: more than 225,000 Indians renounced their citizenship in 2022, the most in over a decade. The last thing Indian higher education needs is a mass exodus of talent, not least because the country's best performing university placed 149th in the latest QS World University Rankings.

Government supporters who deride dissenting thinkers as "anti-national" fail to recognise the merits of peer review - a painstaking process through which independent experts weed out subpar research. The controversial findings Das reported in his working paper may wither under scrutiny, but if they pass muster, his data and code will be open for all to scrutinise.

Unfortunately, this case represents the worst of all possible worlds: a promising researcher who felt compelled to leave his job; a prominent university facing a crisis of confidence, as faculty and students push back against administrators; and an abject failure to understand the basic principles of social-science research. As a result, India's liberal credentials have suffered another serious blow.

India, like all societies that aspire to academic excellence, cannot let ideology - emanating from either the left or the right - guide research, and Indian universities cannot abandon faculty who ask politically provocative questions. Otherwise, students - the human capital that is expected to fuel a "new India" - will become collateral damage, watching helplessly as the government snuffs out the spirit of inquiry.

The writer is a senior fellow and Director of the South Asia Program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

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WISDOM CORNER

- Until you are happy with who you are, you will never be happy with what you have. ZIG ZIGLAR
- Think of all the beauty still left around you and be happy. ANNE FRANK
- If you spend your whole life waiting for the storm, you'll never enjoy the sunshine. MORRIS L. WEST

WORDSWORTH

Mumchance

The form and meaning of mumchance suggest it ought to be a close relative of mum in phrases like keep mum, stay silent. There is indeed a close connection, though the words have different origins. Mum is an imitative term known from the fourteenth century, while mumchance is sixteenth century, from Middle Dutch mommance, which has cousins in other Germanic languages and in French. Paradoxically, the link between the dice game and silence is the notoriously noisy carnival, since it was traditionally played in the Netherlands during such festivities, in particular by mummers, masked actors in dumb-show. Mumchance was always played in silence, hence the sense. The game of hazard, by the way, is the source of our word meaning a risk or danger. Mumchance seems to have been similarly perilous, as it evolved to mean a high-risk venture and continued in use in that sense after the dice game had been forgotten. The same name was also given to a card game, whose rules are as poorly recorded as those of the dice game, but which was also played in silence.

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

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

Tightrope walk

Sir, This refers to the article "An alternate order," Orissa POST, Aug 31. India has been a "strategic partner" of the US for at least two decades, but they're not formal allies. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has advanced an inverted version of the policy - picking and choosing relationships in either camps of West and Russia that he believes best suit India's own interest. Most notably, the country is deepening security links with the US while snapping up military hardware and cheap crude oil from Russia. It's a tightrope walk for India. With India chairing the Group of 20 nations this year, the dance has become more delicate. If a newly independent India was seeking to keep its distance from big power blocs, the newly assertive country under Modi is seeking ties that advance its own interests. New Delhi sees itself both as a power broker in big geopolitical rivalries - having influence with Putin as well as the West - and a champion for the voice of the Global South. India's links to Moscow seem to have had no significant political cost in Washington. That's at least partly due to the growing economic and political clout of the country.

N Sathasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

Gaze at the sun

Sir, Even as the grand success of Chandrayaan-3's launch continues to reverberate and vibrate the entire nation, ISRO has swiveled its gaze at the sun, as it will launch Aditya L-1, the country's first space-based observatory, September 2. Like Chandrayaan-3, the Aditya-L1 mission is yet another bold venture by ISRO to stamp its mark in history, as it will mark a pioneering stride for India into the domain of space-based missions. It is said the major advantage of this celestial arrangement is that Aditya-L1, named after a Sanskrit term, meaning 'Sun God', will enable an uninterrupted view of our life-star, free from any veils of occultation or eclipses, thereby maintaining a real-time vigilance over solar activities and their intricacies. No doubt, similar to Chandrayaan-3's triumphant launch, Aditya-L1 mission launch will ignite a renewed wave of excitement across the country. This adventurous enterprise has the potential not only to unravel the mysteries concealed within the sun's fiery grasp, but also to redefine our understanding of the cosmos at large.

Ranganathan Sivakumar, CHENNAI

Fresh plea seeks survey of 'wuzukhana' in Gyanvapi

THE ASI, AT PRESENT, IS SURVEYING THE MOSQUE COMPLEX, EXCLUDING THE 'WUZUKHANA' IN WHICH THE PURPORTED 'SHIVLING' WAS FOUND DURING A COURT-MANDATED SURVEY MAY 16, 2022

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Varanasi, August 31: A fresh application has been moved before Varanasi district judge by Rakhi Singh, the main plaintiff in the Shringar Gauri case, demanding survey of the 'wuzukhana' (ablution pond), excluding the purported 'Shivling' found in it last year, in the Gyanvapi mosque by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI).

The court has fixed September 8 for taking up the application.

The ASI, at present, is surveying the mosque complex, excluding the 'wuzukhana' in which the purported 'Shivling' was found during a court-mandated survey May 16, 2022.

The Varanasi district judge ordered this survey July 21 on an application filed by the other four plaintiffs in the Shringar Gauri case.

Anupam Dwivedi, the lawyer



of Rakhi Singh, who is a founder member of Vishwa Vedic Sanatan Sangh (VVSS), said that a 62-page application was moved before the court Tuesday.

"In this plea, we have sought

the ASI survey of the wuzukhana also by excluding the Shivling found in it, in order to bring the actual facts of complete Gyanvapi compound to light," he said, adding: "The

court has accepted the application and fixed September 8 as the date of hearing."

July 21, district judge Ajay Krishna Vishvesha had directed the ASI to conduct a scientific investigation of the Gyanvapi mosque compound using ground penetrating radar (GPR), excavation, dating method and other modern techniques to determine whether it has been constructed over a pre-existing structure of a Hindu temple.

This survey was to be conducted by excluding the 'wuzukhana' area, sealed on the orders issued by various courts May 17, 2022, May 20, 2022 and November 11, 2022.

In view of the order, the ASI started the survey July 24 but the survey was stopped after a few hours, as the Supreme Court allowed the Anjuman Intezamia Masjid (AIM) to move the Allahabad High Court for relief.

August 2, the High Court dismissed the plea of AIM after which ASI resumed the survey from August 4. August 2, Rakhi Singh had moved an application before the Varanasi district judge to seek directions to preserve signs of Hindu temple on the premises.

Further hearing on this application will also take place on September 8.

In the Shringar Gauri case, first filed in August 2021, Rakhi Singh and four other women plaintiffs are seeking regular worship of Shringar Gauri and other deities in the Gyanvapi mosque compound.

This plea led to the court-mandated survey in May 2022 in which a Shivling-like structure was found in the ablution pond of the compound. This case has now been clubbed with seven other cases of similar nature and being heard by the Varanasi district judge.

UP to reward power theft informers

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Lucknow, August 31: A cash reward now awaits those who provide information about electricity theft anywhere in Uttar Pradesh to the UP Power Corporation Ltd.

The corporation may plan and announce a scheme in this regard very soon. "People who share information about power theft on Biji Mitra Portal must be rewarded with some cash incentive to encourage more people," said UPCL chairman Ashish Kumar Goel. He said a lot of people were giving information about power theft on the department's

portal. He said the portal needed to be made more popular by announcing a cash reward on accurate tip-offs. Goel asked officials to make a policy in this regard very soon with the provision that names of informers did not come in public domain.

He also said there was a possibility of power theft on feeders with high power demand. He said a special watch should be kept on such feeders and action taken accordingly. Goel stressed the need for designing a portal for displaying the amount of assessment in power theft cases to bring about greater transparency.

AI TO SOLVE TRAFFIC WOES

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Lucknow, August 31: The Lucknow administration will now implement traffic control through artificial intelligence (AI) at major intersections of the city.

In this change, the help of sensors will be taken to control vehicles at the intersection.

For this, a new software which is already in place but not used often will be added to the signal system.

It is hoped that the move will help control the traffic scenario in the city which right now seems to be running out of control.

Changes will be made in the traffic signals installed in Lucknow under the Smart City project.

According to the traffic department spokesman, there are 85 intersections in the city of which 10 major intersections will have such a provision.

With the help of sensor-based integrated traffic management system (ITMS), the vehicle load in a particular direction will be detected and the green light will be given to that direction rather than the one which does not have traffic.

"So far, three types of software are working in the traffic control system at ITMS. This AI-based software will be added to the system. Within a month, the system of controlling traffic through sensors will be implemented," said Ashish Srivastava, DCP Traffic, Lucknow.

"The measure will give relief from traffic jams at the intersection. It will also save time for commuters," he added.



Caste compounds Malana's garbage woes

THE VILLAGE IS FAMOUS FOR ITS INDIGENOUS DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM AND RATHER INFAMOUS FOR HOW THE NATIVES PERCEIVE OUTSIDERS - AS 'UNCLEAN' AND UNTOUCHABLE



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kullu, August 31: Nestled amid the picturesque landscape of the Himalayas, Malana village is well-known for many reasons, the primary of which is the premium hashish that is produced here, nicknamed 'Malana Cream'.

It is also famous for its indigenous democratic system and rather infamous for how the natives perceive outsiders — as 'unclean' and untouchable. The hamlet draws around 15,000 to 20,000 tourists every year during the peak season in April-June and September-October.

This mountain village is now grappling with a mounting garbage crisis which is marred by the natural beauty. Piles of garbage welcome you as you enter the village, and along the way, the shiny wrappers of chips and chocolates are littered until even the remotest parts of the village.

Experts say that the surging influx of tourists coupled with the village's unique social and cultural practices have hindered effective waste management initiatives.

According to Pradeep Sangwan, founder of Healing Himalayas - which conducted a clean-up drive in the village in 2019 - the social fabric of the village impeded their campaign since the locals of the area identify themselves as descendants of Aryans, upper caste and refused to participate.

The village is overwhelmingly homogenous with only 28 out of

the 1,722 people in the village identifying as Schedule Caste, according to the 2011 Census.

Sangwan tells of his experience in other villages while conducting a cleanliness drive.

"In other areas like Kaza town and Chitkul village, we always received strong support from the local panchayat and the community - especially from the younger generation and educational institutions. In many villages, residents themselves also volunteered to collect the trash," he says.

This is in stark contrast to how the population reacted to the drive in Malana.

"Residents were not willing to clean their surroundings. We even obtained permission from the temple committee but they refused to participate due to their high social status. Some even said that they were willing to pay as much as required but they would not participate in any cleanliness drive. This was very discouraging for the volunteers," Sangwan said, adding that the organisation has not organised any other cleanliness drives in the village since then.

When asked about whether the

panchayat has initiated any community-led cleanup drive in the past, he evaded the question citing lack of funds as an excuse.

Swaru Thakur (82), one of the oldest residents of the village, blames 'outsiders' for dirtying their surroundings, saying that the tourists bring their trash and dump it in the village area.

Thakur's statement is not without merit. A spot near a water stream cutting across the village has a mound of plastic bottles, courtesy of the tourists.

According to Sharwan, a cafe owner, all of this is due to a misunderstanding.

"The locals have a belief that water flowing through this stream is scared to Jamlu Devta. No outsider has to be allowed to cross the stream with 'outside' water, and therefore the tourists are asked to empty their water bottles before proceeding further. However, due to a language barrier tourists often misinterpret the villagers' intention thinking that they should discard their bottles, which is leading to a significant buildup of plastic waste there," he said.

No attempt has been made by the residents or panchayat to find an alternative to check the miscommunication.

The unsegregated solid waste is not only hampering the beauty of the village but also plaguing its only water source. Most of the garbage is dumped at the entrance of the village near Malana Nala.

"In certain areas, the river has completely changed its flow due to the garbage heaps," says the sole ASHA worker of the village Nirmal Devi.

No official study or testing has been done regarding the contamination of water in the area. The deputy commissioner of Kullu Ashutosh Garg expressed concern over the garbage crisis in the Malana village.

"The administration has attempted numerous clean-up drives with NGOs and school children in the past but received no support from the village. No one came forward to participate."

The official adds that there is a glimmer of hope as some of the youth of the village have started leaving to pursue higher education, signalling a gradual shift in mindset and possible progress in future.

When asked about whether the

HP bans felling of mango, 5 other tree species

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Shimla, August 31: The Himachal Pradesh government has announced a ban on felling mango and five other tree species.

Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu said apart from mango, the other species were Triyambal (Ficus species), Toon (Toona ciliata), Padam or Pajja (Prunus cerasus), Ritha (Sapindus mukorossi) and Baan (Quercus leucotrichophora).

All these six species have been brought under 10-year felling programme and these can now only



be axed with the permission from the Forest Department. However, under the new regulations the felling of a maximum of five trees in a year for domestic purposes

will be allowed, he said.

The Chief Minister said there would be a total ban on export of timber and fuel wood of these species out of the state - a meas-

ure to curb illegal trade and preserve the valuable resources.

"This ban is imposed keeping in mind to address the issue of illegal deforestation and to preserve biodiversity. A revised list of permissible tree species has been notified, allowing only 13 species to be felled with intimation to the Range Officer, while felling of the other species will require forest clearances. This step not only safeguards indigenous species but also plays a pivotal role in wildlife preservation," added the Chief Minister.

PUBLIC NOTICE

By virtue of an affidavit no-3645, dt.18.8.23 before Notary Public, Angul declare for general information to all that, I, Manjubala Mishra-49Yrs, W/o-Upendra Mishra of Naraharipur, PO-Paipurunakote, PS-Kantabania, Dhenkanal-759121 at present Banarpal, Angul inform you that, I am the owner of Khata vide ROR no-104/1021, Plot No-150/380 area Ac.0.04 dec. (Homestead) under mouza-Kathagada- 226 under Dhenkanal Tahasil & the said plot had purchased by me through registered sale deed bearing no-10501803608/dt.22.11.18 from middle side out of total measuring area Ac.0.339 dec. vide plot bearing no-150 under Khata no-104/997 from Ranjan Kumar Rath, S/o- Late Sudarsan Rath of Deulsahi, Dhenkanal Town, which one executed before RO, Dhenkanal. That, I have lost the original above mentioned Sale Deed vide no-10501803608/18 in between 10.30 AM to 11.00 AM dt.14.08.23 while travelling from my house to Banarpal Tahasil market area for photocopy purpose. I have never mortgaged or not avail any loan against this property from any financial institution. Now I want to mortgage the same land before SBI, Banarpal Branch, Angul for availing a Home loan against this property mentioned above. If any claim by anyone against this property, inform to me or Branch Manager, SBI, Banarpal Branch, Angul within 15 days from date of publication of this general notice.

Sd./- Manjubala Mishra
Mob: 9438277357, 9861828612

SURYO FOODS & INDUSTRIES LIMITED

Dinalipi Bhawan, A-54/1 & A-55/1, Nayapalli, Baramunda, Bhubaneswar-751003, Odisha (India)
CIN: L05004OR1989PLC002264
E mail: suryofoods.industries@gmail.com
Website: <http://www.suryofoods.com>

NOTICE is hereby given that the 34th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Members of SURYO FOODS & INDUSTRIES LIMITED will be held on Monday, 25th September, 2023 at 11.30 A.M at the registered office of the company at Dinalipi Bhawan, A-54/1 & A-55/1, Nayapalli, Baramunda, Bhubaneswar, Odisha-751003 to transact the business, as set out in the Notice of 34th AGM. The Annual Report of the Company for the Financial year 2022-23 along with the Notice of AGM has been e-mailed on 31st September, 2023 to the members whose e-mail address have been made available by the Register and Transfer Agent or are registered with the Company and sent by permitted mode on 31st September, 2023 to Members who have not registered their e-mail address.

Members are hereby informed that the notice of the 34th Annual General Meeting and 34th Annual Report of the Company are available on the website of the Company www.suryofoods.com and the Notice & Annual Report can be viewed directly on the following links: <https://suryofoods.com/notice> and <https://suryofoods.com/annual-report>

Click- Notice of 34th AGM and Click- Annual Report for the F.Y. 2022-23. The Notice & Annual Report are also available for inspection at the registered office of the Company on all working days during business hours of the Company.

In compliance with Section 108 of the Companies Act, 2013 read with Rule 20 of the Companies (Management and Administration) Amendment Rules, 2015 and Regulation 44 of SEBI (Listing Obligation and Disclosure Requirement) Regulations, 2015 Members are provided with the facility to cast their votes on all resolutions set forth in the Notice of the AGM using remote electronic voting system from a place other than the venue of the AGM ('remote e-voting'), provided by Central Depository Services (India) Limited (CDSL) and the business may be transacted through such voting. In order to enable its Members, who do not have access to e-voting facility, to send their assent or dissent in writing in respect of the resolutions as set out in the Notice of AGM, the Company has also enclosed a ballot form with the Notice of the Annual General Meeting.

Members can opt for only one mode of voting, i.e., e-voting or ballot form. In case members cast their votes through both the modes, voting done by e-voting shall prevail and votes cast through ballot form shall be treated as invalid.

The e-voting period commences on Friday, 22nd September, 2023 at 10.00 A.M and ends on Sunday, 24th September, 2023 at 5.00 P.M. During this period, Members may cast their vote electronically. The e-voting module shall be disabled by CDSL thereafter.

The voting rights of Members shall be in proportion to the equity shares held by them in the paid up equity share capital of the Company as on 18th September, 2023 ('cut-off date'). Any person, who is a Member of the Company as on the cut-off date is eligible to cast vote on all the resolutions set forth in the Notice of AGM using remote e-voting or ballot form or voting at the AGM.

In case you have any queries or issues regarding e-voting, you may refer the Frequently Asked Questions ("FAQs") and e-voting manual available at www.evotingindia.com, under help section or write an email to helpdesk.evoting@cdslindia.com or may call on 18002005533.

The Company has appointed M/s. Saroj Ray & Associates, Company Secretaries, Bhubaneswar-751015, as the scrutinizer to scrutinize the e-voting process as well as voting at the AGM through ballot paper in a fair and transparent manner.

The facility for voting, either through electronic voting system or ballot or polling paper shall also be made available at the AGM and Members who have not cast their vote by remote e-voting shall be able to exercise their right at the AGM. The Members who have cast their vote by remote e-voting prior to the AGM may also attend the AGM but shall not be entitled to cast their vote again.

A person who has acquired shares and become a member of the Company after the dispatch of notice of AGM and holding shares as of cut-off date, may obtain the login ID and password by sending a request at www.evotingindia.com. However, if the person is already registered with CDSL for remote e-voting then the existing user ID and password can be used for casting vote.

Every member entitled to attend and vote is entitled to appoint a proxy to attend and vote instead of himself/herself and such proxy need not be a member. Proxies in order to be effective should be duly completed, stamped (if applicable) and signed and must be deposited at the registered office of the company not less than 48 hours before the time for holding the Annual General Meeting.

Notice is also hereby given that pursuant to section 91 of the Companies Act, 2013 the Register of Members and Share Transfer Books of the Company will remain closed from Tuesday, 19th September, 2023 to Monday, 25th September, 2023 (Both days inclusive) for the purpose of Annual General Meeting.

By Order of the Board
For Suryo Foods & Industries Limited

Place: Bhubaneswar
Date: 31st August, 2023

Sd./-
Manisha Satapathy
Company Secretary and Compliance Officer

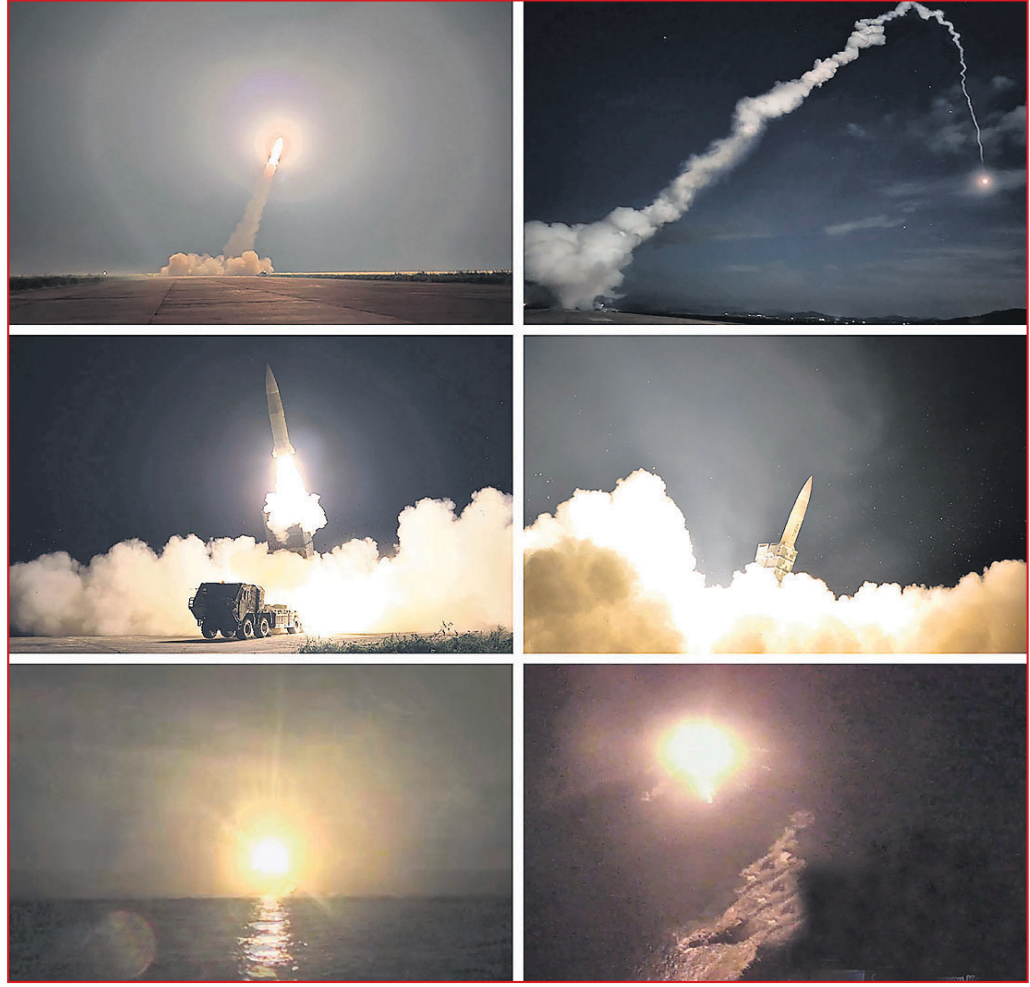
EAST COAST RAILWAY

E-AUCTION FOR PARCEL PACKING

Auction Catalogue No.: WAT-MISC-2WR-PK
LOT NO./CATEGORY: MSS-WAT-RGDA-TWnOPS-19-23-1
DESCRIPTION: PACKING OF TWO WHEELER AND OTHER PARCEL/ LUGGAGE WITH OPTIONAL FACILITY OF DOOR PICK UP AND DOOR DELIVERY SERVICES., RATE UNIT: ANNUAL LICENSING FREE., TRIPS/DAYS: 1096.
Auction Start Date & Time: 08.09.2023 at 11:00 Hrs.
Auction End Date & Time: 08.09.2023 at 11:30 Hrs.
MIN. INCR(%): 0.2, LOT STATUS: New in Draft Catalogue.
Note: Prospective bidders are advised to visit the <https://www.iireps.gov.in> and check the upcoming e-auctions leasing tab to get all required information regarding this e-auction.
Div. Railway Manager (Commercial), PR-516/O/23-24
Waltair



Pedestrians cross a road amid monsoon rain in Kolkata, West Bengal



This combination of photos provided by the North Korean government shows what it says a tactical nuclear strike drill in Pyongyang



CPI(M) supporters march through a waterlogged road during a rally against Central and State Governments on the occasion of 'Food Revolution Sahid Diwas' in Kolkata, West Bengal



An Indian Air Force (IAF) helicopter during a security drill atop hotel Le Meridien ahead of the G20 Summit in New Delhi



Students of Rishikesh Parmarth Niketan Gurukul offer prayers on the banks of the Ganges river in Rishikesh, Uttarakhand



Young women tie 'Rakhi' to Border Security Force (BSF) personnel during a ceremony on the occasion of 'Raksha Bandhan' at the Attari-Wagah Border post in Amritsar district of Punjab



Tanks during the Integrated Capability Demonstration of weapon systems upon a visit of Commander of Brazilian Army General Tomas Miguel Mine Ribeiro Paiva (unseen) at the Pokhran field firing ranges



Participants during a boat race competition at Kumarakom in Kottayam district, Kerala

national



India's reputation is at stake ahead of the G20 meet in the country. PM Modi should take action and get the Adani issue investigated
RAHUL GANDHI | CONGRESS LEADER

MONSOON EXPECTED TO REVIVE IN SEP: IMD
After deficient rainfall activity resulted in India experiencing the driest August since 1901, the Southwest Monsoon is expected to revive over the weekend bringing rain to central and southern parts of the country, the weather office said Thursday



of the day quote

Glad to have gone the extra mile in enabling our Naari Shakti to break barriers, challenge norms, and create a future where every woman's voice and choice matter
PEMA KHANDU | ARUNACHAL CM

People who have betrayed the public will be thrown out of power in the year 2024. Those who came in 2014, will go out in 2024
AKHILESH YADAV | SP PRESIDENT

I wholeheartedly welcome Retd Justice Jayant Nath ji as the new Chairperson of DERC. Congratulations and best wishes. Electricity is a very vital sector and we have been trying our best to keep improving it. I assure full cooperation of my govt
ARVIND KEJRIWAL | DELHI CHIEF MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

WB CM to visit Spain, Dubai
Kolkata: West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee is likely to visit Dubai and Spain in September to seek investments, a senior official said Thursday. The central government has given its nod to Banerjee's trip, which is expected in the second week of September, he said. Banerjee will most likely fly to Dubai September 13, and visit Spain thereafter, the official said.

Cauvery dispute: Protests erupt
Bangalore: With Karnataka starting release of Cauvery water to Tamil Nadu in compliance with the directives of the Cauvery Water Management Authority (CWMA), protests have erupted in southern parts of the State. Various farmers' bodies staged demonstrations in Mysuru, Mandya and Chamara Nagar in Cauvery heartland against the government's move; the BJP accused the Congress government of "doing nothing" to protect the interests of Karnataka.

Goa AAP chief Palekar held
Panaji: The Goa Crime Branch Thursday arrested state Aam Aadmi Party president Amit Palekar for allegedly misrepresenting facts in connection with an accident wherein a Mercedes car mowed down three people near Panaji earlier this month, an official said. Palekar has been accused of misrepresenting facts by introducing a wrong person as the car driver before the investigation officer in an attempt to save the main accused who was at the wheels at the time of the accident, a senior police official told PTL.

Youth sentenced to death in Bengal
Kolkata: A special fast-track court at Berhampore in West Bengal's Murshidabad Thursday sentenced to death youth Sushanta Chowdhury for brutally murdering his former fiancée Sutapa Chowdhury last year. After fast-track court judge Santosh Kumar Pathak announce the sentence, the youth's counsel Sushanta Chowdhury said that he pleaded for a life term for his client.

ED arrests 4 in HP scholarship 'scam'
New Delhi: Four people, including a former official of the Himachal Pradesh higher education directorate, have been arrested in a case linked to an alleged ₹200 crore scam in grant of scholarships to SC, ST and OBC students of the state, the ED said.

Xi likely to skip G20 summit

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 31: India has not yet received any confirmation on Chinese President Xi Jinping's in-person participation at the upcoming G20 summit, people familiar with the matter said Thursday amid reports that he is likely to skip the conclave.

A majority of G20 leaders including US President Joe Biden, French President Emmanuel Macron, Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida and Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva have already confirmed their participation at the summit.



Russian President Vladimir Putin has already conveyed to Prime Minister Narendra Modi that it will not be possible for him to travel to India to participate in the summit.

In its capacity as current president of G20, India is hosting the annual summit of the influential grouping in New Delhi September 9 and 10.

2 women among 3 of family beaten to death after pigs destroy crops

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ranchi, August 31: At least three persons, including two women, were beaten to death by a dozen people Thursday after their pigs allegedly destroyed crops in their relative's farm on the outskirts of the Jharkhand capital, police said.

The incident took place in Jhanjhi Tola village in Ormanjhi police station area, around 25 km from the city, Ranchi Rural Superintendent of Police Haris Bin Zaman told PTL.

"Pigs belonging to one family allegedly destroyed crops in their relative's farm a few days back. A dispute had erupted between the two families over the issue. Around 11 am Thursday, around a dozen people armed with sticks and agricultural tools attacked the members of the other family. Three members of the family, including two women, were beaten to death by the mob," he said.

The deceased were identified as Janeswar Bedia (42), Sarita Devi (39) and Sanju Devi (25). The bodies were sent for post-mortem examination and police forces have been deployed in the village, he said.

Pragyan makes more discoveries on Moon

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, August 31: ISRO Thursday used an adorable mother-child reference and a term for the Moon most Indians have a nostalgic connect with—'chandamama'—to inform the progress of the Chandrayaan-3 mission, as rover 'Pragyan' continued to make more discoveries on the lunar surface.

Another instrument onboard the Chandrayaan-3 mission's rover 'Pragyan' has confirmed the presence of sulphur in the lunar region by deploying a different technique, ISRO said. What caught the eye of many on X, formerly Twitter, Thursday was the mother-child mention by ISRO's official handle. "The rover was rotated in search of a safe route. The rotation was captured by a Lander Imager Camera. It feels as though a child is playfully frolicking in the yards of Chandamama, while

J&K polls can be held any time: Centre to SC

THE FIVE-JUDGE CONSTITUTION BENCH, HEARING THE PLEAS CHALLENGING THE ABROGATION OF ARTICLE 370, HAD ASKED THE CENTRE TO SET A SPECIFIC TIME FRAME FOR RESTORATION OF ELECTORAL DEMOCRACY IN THE ERSTWHILE STATE

AGENCIES

New Delhi, August 31: Elections in Jammu and Kashmir can be held "anytime from now" as the work on updation of voters' list is almost over, the Centre told the Supreme Court Thursday but remained non-committal about setting a time-frame for restoration of statehood to the union territory (UT).

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Centre, told a five-judge constitution bench headed by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud that the UT status of Jammu and Kashmir is a "temporary thing" and it is for the Election Commission of India and the union territory's election commission to decide when the elections for panchayats, municipal bodies and the legislative assembly will be held.

"The central government is ready to hold elections anytime from now... It is for the Election Commission of India and the Election Commission of the UT to take the call on which election will take place first and how.



The updating process of the voters' list is almost complete and will be over in a month," he told the bench, also comprising Justices Sanjay Kishan Kaul, Sanjiv Khanna, BR Gavai and Surya Kant.

The solicitor general said as far as restoration of statehood to the union territory of J&K is concerned, Union Home Minister Amit Shah has already made statements in Parliament that it will be done in due course. "The UT is a temporary thing in J&K. We are dealing with an

extremely extraordinary situation. The exact time frame for restoration of complete statehood in J-K cannot be given at the moment. It might take some time. Various steps are being taken to restore the status of the state in Jammu and Kashmir," Mehta said at the outset.

The central government made the submissions in response to the apex court's August 29 observations on restoration of electoral democracy in Jammu and Kashmir. Mehta, on the 13th day of hearing on a batch of petitions

SIBAL SLAMS CENTRE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi: Senior advocate Kapil Sibal Thursday asked Centre to not make "mockery of democracy" after Solicitor General Tushar Mehta said that "right people were under house arrest" as there "was no bandhs" post abrogation of Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir. At the outset on the 13th day of hearing, the Centre told the Supreme Court that it cannot give any fixed timeline for restoration of statehood in J&K and the Union government is ready for elections at any time in the valley. SG Mehta argued that the region is continuously progressing by citing different figures. He apprised that in the previous year, around 1.88 crore tourists visited J&K and the one crore mark has been crossed till date for 2023. He said that on comparing the present situation with 2018, terrorist initiated instances are reduced by 45.2 per cent, infiltration has been reduced by 90.2 per cent, stone pelting reduced by 97.2 per cent, and security persons casualties reduced by 65.9 percent.



Large-scale investment proposals post abrogation of Article 370 have been received, which include ₹28,400 crore of central sector schemes for industrial development, ₹78,000 crore of private sector and the actual investment done in 2022-23 is ₹2,153 crore," he said.

tions challenging the abrogation of Article 370 which accorded special status to the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir, said, "Peace does not merely come by policing." He told the court about the various steps the Union government has taken for restoration of normalcy in the region.

Oppn has come together to save Constitution, democracy: INDIA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, August 31: Leaders of the Opposition's INDIA alliance Thursday said they have come together to save the Constitution and democracy in the country, and would evolve a common program as they prepare to take on the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

A two-day meet of the Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance (INDIA) is being held at Grand Hyatt hotel here. Former Bihar chief minister Lalu Prasad Yadav said the need of the hour is to strengthen the unity and sovereignty of the country, and protect the Constitution and democracy.

"The Modi government has failed to address the issues of poverty, unemployment and welfare of farmers. At the INDIA al-



liance meet, we will work on evolving a common programme. We have to contest elections one-on-one (put up common candidates against the BJP)," the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) leader said.

Yadav's son and deputy chief minister of Bihar Tejashwi Yadav said the Maha Gathbandhan came to power in Bihar last August and Lalu Prasad Yadav and Janata Dal (United) leader Nitish Kumar decided to work on getting all

like-minded parties on board for a larger Opposition alliance. Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann said the formation of the INDIA alliance is aimed at saving the country.

Jharkhand CM Hemant Soren said parties taking part in the meeting will deliberate on their views about the country, its democracy and the Constitution. Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader Raghav Chadha said the BJP fears the INDIA alliance.

Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Aaditya Thackeray said the INDIA alliance leaders have come together to protect democracy and the Constitution. RJD leader Manoj Jha said the alliance is working to unite the country. It is not just a coalition of parties but that of ideas, he said.

SC questions convict for depositing fine

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 31: The Supreme Court Thursday questioned one of the convicts in the Bilkis Bano gangrape case and the murder of seven of her family members during the 2002 Gujarat riots for depositing the fine imposed on him when the hearing on the pleas challenging his remission was underway before it.

BILKIS BANO CASE

Senior advocate Sidharth Luthra, appearing for convict Ramesh Rupabhai Chandana, told a bench of justices BV Nagarathna and Ujjal Bhuyan that convicts have approached the trial court in Mumbai and have deposited the fine imposed upon them.

"Does non deposit of fine has a bearing on the remission? Did

you apprehend that non deposit of fine would have an impact on the merits of the case. First you ask for permission and now without permission you have deposited," the bench said.

Responding to the court's query, Luthra said non-deposition of fine does not affect the decision on remission but he had advised his clients to deposit the fine to "reduce the controversy".

Adv.No.3501 Dated-25.08.2023
TENDER CANCELLATION NOTICE
No.i-349:Due to some unavoidable administrative & technical circumstances the Tender Call Notice bearing No.01/Sadar/2023-24, dated 17.07.2023 & 02/Sadar/2023-24, dated 28.07.2023 is hereby Cancelled.
OIPR-19123/11/0008/2324

CUTTACK MUNICIPAL CORPORATION
No. C-1265 "e" PROCUREMENT NOTICE
Tender Call Notice No. (PW) Date: 31.08.2023
Tender ID: 2023_ORULB_91649
Civil Work : 23 Nos.
Bid Value : Rs.2.64 Lakhs to Rs.49.97 lakhs
&
Tender ID: 2023_ORULB_91650 (Two Bid)
Civil Work : 6 Nos.
Bid Value : Rs.88.31 Lakhs to Rs.172.49 lakhs
Date and Time Schedule :

Start	End	Opening
11.00 A.M. on Dt.04.09.2023	5.00 P.M. on Dt.13.09.2023	11.00 A.M. on Dt.16.09.2023

Tender details can be seen from the procurement portal: www.tendersorissa.gov.in.
Executive Engineer, City Division-II, CMC
OIPR-13031/11/0057/2324

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER
HEAD WORKS DIVISION, SAMAL
INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)
Email ID-ee.hwd.samal@gmail.com
'e'-Procurement Notice No.SE_HWD-06/2023-24
No.A-501:The Superintending Engineer, Head Works Division, Samal on behalf of Governor of Odisha invites Percentage Rate Bid in Single Cover System to be received in ONLINE MODE from eligible contractors registered with the State Government, contractors of equivalent Grade/Class registered with Central Government/MES/Railways/CPWD for execution of different works mentioned as detailed below:

No. of Works	5(Five) Nos.of Works
1 Estimated Cost	Approximately 2.40 Lakhs to 23.83 Lakhs
2 Cost of Tender Paper	Rs.2000.00 to Rs.6000.00 (Non-refundable)
3 EMD/Bid Security	Rs.2400.00 to Rs.23,834.00 (Refundable)
4 Class of Contractor	'D' & 'C' Class with valid labour license and 'C' & 'B' Class
5 Period of Completion of Work	137 days to 5 Calendar Months
6 Date and Time of availability of bid document in the website	From 11.00 A.M. of Dt.01.09.2023 to 5.00 P.M. of Dt.10.09.2023 in the website (www.tendersodisha.gov.in)
7 Date, Time and Place of Opening of online tender	Dt.11.09.2023 at 11.00 A.M. in O/o, the Superintending Engineer, Head Works Division, Samal
8 Date, time and place for finalization of tender through Transparent Lottery System (if required)	Dt.13.09.2023 at 3.30 PM onwards in O/o, the Superintending Engineer, Head Works Division, Samal
9 Digital Signature Certificate (DSC)	The bidders must possess compatible Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) of Class II or Class III
10 Name and Address of Officer Inviting Tender	Superintending Engineer, Head Works Division, Samal, At/Po-Samal Barrage Township, Dist-Angul, Odisha, Pin-759037 Email Id: ee.hwd.samal@gmail.com

The bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only further details can be seen from the e-Procurement Portal: www.tendersodisha.gov.in. Any addendum/corrigendum/cancellation of tender can also be seen in the said website.
Sd./Superintending Engineer, Head Works Division, Samal
OIPR-32020/11/0006/2324

BHUBANESWAR DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Akash Shova Building, Sachivalaya Marg, Bhubaneswar - 751001, Visit us at: <http://www.bda.gov.in>
No. CAD-1904
INVITATIONS FOR BIDS (IFB)
Bid Identification No. 1140 Dated: 31.08.2023
1. Executive Engineer, Division-IV, BDA, Bhubaneswar on behalf of Bhubaneswar Development Authority invites percentage rate bids in Double Cover System conforming to the Detailed Tender Call Notice (DTCN) from Solar EPC Company for the work mentioned below and having PAN and valid EPF & ESI registration No., GST Certificate.

Sl. No.	Name of Work	Estimated Cost (In Rs.)	EMD (In Rs.)	Cost of Tender Paper	Period of Completion
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
1.	Provision of 2x40KW on grid solar power generation plant for K-9(A) Housing Complex, Bhubaneswar	47,42,658.00	47,500.00	6000.00 + 18% GST	30 (Thirty) Days

1. The Bid documents will be available in the website: <https://tendersodisha.gov.in> from 04.09.2023 to 18.09.2023 upto 17.00 hours.
2. Bids shall be received only "Online" on or before 18.09.2023 upto 17.00 hours. The bidder must possess compatible Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) of Class-III.
3. Other details can be seen in the bidding documents.
4. The authority reserves the right to cancel any or all bids at any moment without assigning any reason therefor.
5. Any addendum/corrigendum/cancellation shall only be uploaded in the website: <https://tendersodisha.gov.in>.
OIPR-13033/11/0281/2324
Sd./ Executive Engineer, Division-IV, BDA

international



It is unacceptable that some of the country's most horrendous criminals have refused to face their victims in court. They cannot and should not be allowed to take the coward's way out
RISHI SUNAK | BRITISH PM

NEW WEAPON DEVELOPED

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Thursday his country has developed a weapon that hit a target 700 kilometres away, in an apparent reference to the previous day's strike on an airport in western Russia



of the day quote

Wagner will continue to operate in the service of Putin in Africa, doing what they do, which is not contributing to peace in the Sahel or the defence of the rights of Saharan Africans
JOSEF BORRELL | EUROPEAN UNION FOREIGN POLICY CHIEF

Russia is looking for additional artillery shells and other basic materiel to shore up its defence industrial base
JOHN KIRBY | WHITE HOUSE NATIONAL SECURITY SPOKESMAN

The only path to ending the war in Ukraine would be the reelection of Donald Trump to the presidency
VIKTOR ORBÁN | HUNGARY'S NATIONALIST PRIME MINISTER

Philippines, Malaysia reject China's new map

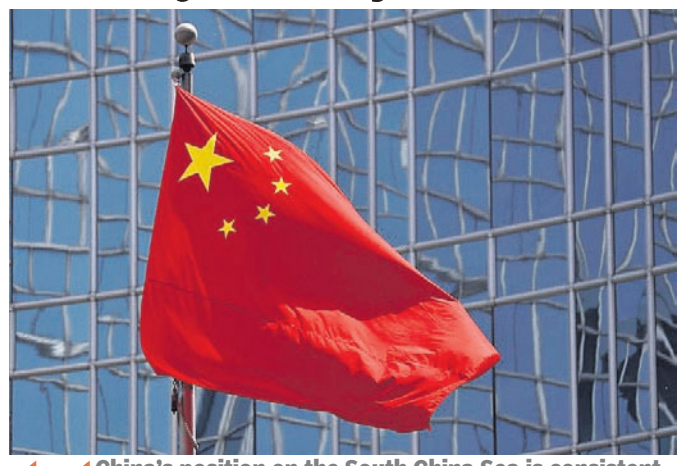
PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Beijing, August 31: Governments in the Philippines, Malaysia, Vietnam and Taiwan Thursday joined India in rejecting China's new national map, issuing strongly worded statements accusing Beijing of claiming their territory.

China published a new version of its national map Monday to correct what Beijing has in the past referred to as "problematic maps" that it claims misrepresent its territorial borders. India Tuesday lodged a strong protest with China over its so-called "standard map" laying claim over Arunachal Pradesh and the Aksai Chin, and asserted that such steps only complicate the resolution of the boundary question.

The External Affairs Ministry also rejected China's claims as having "no basis". "Just making absurd claims does not make other people's territories yours," External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said while reacting to the Chinese move.

The Philippine government Thursday slammed China's 2023 edition of its so-called "standard map" that still shows swaths of Philippine features in the West Philippine Sea. The Chinese Ministry of Natural Resources



China's position on the South China Sea is consistent and clear. The competent authorities of China routinely publish standard maps of various types every year, which aims to make standard maps available to all sectors of society and raise public awareness of the standardised use of maps. We hope parties concerned can view it in an objective and rational light

WANG WENBIN | CHINA FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESPERSON

issued on August 28 a controversial map that includes the nine-dash line, now a 10-dash line, that supposedly shows China's boundaries in the South China Sea.

"This latest attempt to legitimise China's purported sovereignty and jurisdiction over Philippine features and maritime zones has no basis under international law, particularly the

1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)," Foreign Affairs Spokesperson Ma. Teresita Daza said in a statement. Daza said the 2016 Arbitral Award has already invalidated the nine-dashed line and called on China to abide by its obligations under UNCLOS.

The Malaysian government said Thursday that it will send a protest note to China over the

latter's claims on the South China Sea as outlined in the 'China Standard Map Edition 2023', which also covers Malaysia's maritime areas. Foreign Minister Dr Zambry Abdul Kadir said the move was a follow-up step taken by the government over the matter.

"This has been our practice (when dealing with issues like this)... And based on the statement issued by Wisma Putra yesterday, the next step includes sending a protest note," he was quoted as saying by the official Bernama news agency.

The Vietnamese government also criticised China's latest provocation. Vietnam strongly reiterates its consistent stance on the sovereignty over Hoang Sa (Paracel) and Truong Sa (Spratly), and resolutely rejects any maritime claims of China that are based on the "nine-dash line" in the East Sea, spokeswoman of the Vietnamese Ministry of Foreign Affairs Pham Thu Hang said Thursday.

Hang made the statement while answering reporters' questions regarding Vietnam's response to China's release of the so-called "standard map 2023" which covers Vietnam's Hoang Sa and Truong Sa, the official Vietnam News Agency reported.

MINI RESHUFFLE

Shapps new UK defence minister

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, August 31: British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak Thursday appointed Grant Shapps as his new defence minister in a mini reshuffle following the resignation of Ben Wallace as Defence Secretary for personal reasons.

Shapps, who was Energy Security and Net Zero Secretary in the Cabinet, has been a strong supporter of Sunak as Conservative Party leader. The new post of Defence Secretary marks his fifth ministerial portfolio within a year, having previously served as Transport Secretary and briefly also as Home Secretary.

"I'm honoured to be appointed as Defence Secretary by Rishi Sunak. I'd like to pay tribute to the enormous contribution Ben Wallace has made to UK defence & global security over the last four years," Shapps, 54, tweeted soon after his



meeting with the Prime Minister at Downing Street.

Another Sunak ally and Indian-origin junior minister, Claire Coutinho, replaces Shapps in the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero.

The Minister for children will take over the energy security brief, marking her first Cabinet post since being elected a Tory MP in 2019. Coutinho, 38, is a London-born Oxford University graduate whose migrant parents are of Goan descent.

I'm honoured to be appointed as Defence Secretary by Rishi Sunak. I'd like to pay tribute to the enormous contribution Ben Wallace has made to UK defence & global security over the last four years

GRANT SHAPPS
UK DEFENCE MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

15 killed in Manila fire

Manila: A fire killed 15 people Thursday in a small apparel factory in a Philippine residential area, where firefighters were delayed by flooding, traffic and a wrong address, a fire protection official. Most of the victims appeared to be factory workers and carpenters who were sleeping in rooms when the fire broke out Thursday morning. Some were found dead on an aisle outside the rooms and the factory owner and his child were among the dead, Chief Superintendent Nahum Tarroza of the Bureau of Fire Protection said.

Iranian man dies

Dubai: An Iranian man arrested last year during nationwide protests over the death of a 22-year-old woman detained over her headscarf has died after suffering a convulsion in prison, state media reported Thursday. Javad Rouhi, 35, suddenly fell ill while awaiting resentencing after Iran's Supreme Court overturned his death sentence, according to the state-run IRNA news agency. He was taken to a local hospital in the city of Noshahr on the Caspian Sea, some 100 kilometres north of the Iranian capital, Tehran, and pronounced dead there. Authorities were investigating his death, IRNA said.

Palestinian kills 1

Tel Aviv: A Palestinian driver slammed his truck into soldiers at a busy checkpoint in the occupied West Bank Thursday, killing one Israeli before being shot dead, Israeli authorities said, in the latest bloodshed in a relentless cycle of violence to roil the region. The violence came a day after Israeli police shot and killed a 14-year-old Palestinian boy who stabbed a man in a Jerusalem light-rail station and after Palestinian militants detonated a bomb near a convoy of Israeli troops escorting Jewish worshippers to a holy site in the West Bank, wounding four Israeli troops.

Five dead

Rome: A speeding work train slammed into a group of workers doing nighttime track maintenance in northern Italy early Thursday, killing five of them, authorities said. The crash occurred shortly after midnight at the station in Brandizzo, a town in Italy's Piedmont region. Piedmont Gov. Alberto Cirio provided the death toll and said the crash's cause was under investigation.

AFTER COUP

Gabon military names new leader

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Libreville, August 31: Army officers who seized power in Gabon in a coup have named General Brice Oligui Nguema, former head of the presidential guard, as the new transitional leader of the Central African nation, while President Ali Bongo Ondimba has been deposed.

Just hours after the military announced on Wednesday that they have dissolved state institutions and annulled the result of the August 26 election which declared President Bongo as the winner giving him a third term in office, generals met to discuss who would lead the transition and agreed by a unanimous vote to appoint the 48-year-old Gen Nguema, the BBC reported.



Gen Nguema was absent from the first three statements read out by senior army officers on national television to announce the coup.

As soon as he was named transitional leader, the General was carried triumphantly through the streets of the capital Libreville by his troops.

Gen Nguema was aide-de-camp to the ousted President's father, Omar Bongo, who ruled for almost 42 years until his death in 2009, reports the BBC.



Military personnel on armoured vehicles salute during the National Day parade in Putrajaya, Malaysia

China issues highest typhoon warning

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Beijing, August 31: Chinese state media report at least 121 passenger trains are suspending service in anticipation of the arrival of Typhoon Saola.

People in areas of southern China were warned to stay away from the coastline and several cities delayed the start of the school year. The suspensions on key lines running from north to south as well as on regional networks will begin Thursday and continue through Sept. 6, state broadcaster CCTV reported.

China's National Meteorological Center said Saola was moving toward the coast at a speed of about 15 kph (9 mph) and was due to make landfall Friday afternoon in the southern province of Guangzhou with sustained winds of 119 kph (74 mph) and gusts of up to 220 kph (137 mph).

The Guangdong city of Shanwei, closest to where Saola is expected to make landfall, ordered a halt to classes, transport and most economic activity until the all-clear is sounded



People in areas of southern China were warned to stay away from the coastline and several cities delayed the start of the school year

The storm will then travel west down the coast into the Guangxi region before curving south out to sea between Saturday night and Sunday morning, gradually weakening as it goes. The Guangdong city of Shanwei, closest to where Saola is expected to make landfall, ordered a halt to classes, transport and most economic activity until the all-clear is sounded.

Other cities, including Shantou, Shanwei, Jieyang and Chaozhou, have ordered the start of the school year to be delayed until Monday. Regional airports have also suspended flights until the storm passes. The weather center has already issued a red alert for potentially destructive winds and possible flooding,

with some areas expected to receive up to 200 millimetres (8 inches) of rain.

Other typical safety precautions include recalling fishing boats to port and moving people who work on coastal fish and shrimp farms further inland, but no figures on evacuations were immediately released.

As the storm moved closer to Hong Kong, the city's leader, John Lee, said in a Facebook post that he had requested various government departments to plan ahead and urged residents to take precautionary measures.

The Hong Kong Observatory plans to issue a No. 8 typhoon signal, the third-highest warning under the city's weather system, for early Friday, and schools will be suspended that day, Chief Secretary Eric Chan said during a news conference.

Pak to hold polls by February 2024

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Islamabad, August 31: Pakistan's election commission has assured the political parties that the general elections would be held by January-end or mid-February, allaying fears about the fate of the polls in the cash-strapped nation.

The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) gave assurance to the Awami National Party (ANP) when the party leaders met the election body, the Dawn newspaper reported Thursday. The meeting held on Wednesday was chaired by Chief Election Commissioner Sikandar Sultan Raja and also attended by senior ECP officials. The ANP delegation was led by its secretary general Iftikhar Hussain, central spokesman Zahid Khan, and party leaders Khushdil Khan and Abdul Rahim Wazir.

SPEEDIER TREATMENT

In a first, England rolls out 7-minute cancer treatment jab

THE HEALTHCARE SYSTEM OF ENGLAND ANTICIPATES THE MAJORITY OF THE APPROXIMATELY 3,600 PATIENTS STARTING THEIR ANNUAL ATEZOLIZUMAB TREATMENT IN ENGLAND TO SWITCH ONTO THE TIME-SAVING INJECTION

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 31: An anticancer jab that can cut down treatment time for some by three quarters has been rolled out by National Health Service (NHS) England, the UK's publicly funded healthcare system.

The jab takes as little as 7 minutes to administer, NHS England said in a statement, adding that it will be the first health system in the world to roll out the seven-minute injection to hundreds of NHS cancer patients each year.

The vaccine has been approved by the Medicines and Healthcare

products Regulatory Agency (MHRA), the statement said. MHRA is a UK state agency responsible for ensuring that medicines and medical devices work and are acceptably safe.

Currently, the patients receive the life-extending immunotherapy atezolizumab in hospital directly into their veins via a drug transfusion (intravenously), which can take from 30 minutes to up to an hour to administer, the statement said.

This anti-cancer jab, a subcutaneous or under-the-skin injection, is swifter and is expected to enhance the patients' experi-



ence, it said. The quicker administration could also free up

valuable time for NHS cancer teams, it said.

The healthcare system of England anticipates the majority of the approximately 3,600 patients starting their annual atezolizumab treatment in England to switch onto the time-saving injection. Atezolizumab is an immunotherapy drug, currently offered by transfusion that empowers a patient's own immune system to seek and destroy cancerous cells. The drug is administered to NHS patients with a range of cancers, including lung, breast, liver and bladder.

However, patients receiving intravenous chemotherapy in combination with atezolizumab

may remain on the transfusion, the statement said. "Maintaining the best possible quality of life for cancer patients is vital, so the introduction of faster under-the-skin injections will make an important difference," said NHS National Director for Cancer, Peter Johnson.

"This is great news for both patients and clinicians. We welcome any new initiative that brings speedier treatment to patients and gives them more comfortable care," said Alexander Martin, a consultant oncologist at West Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust.

of the day quote

For lakhs of small businesses across India, digitisation can offer economic growth, broader customer reach, reduced marketing and distribution expenses, and access to foreign markets

JITENDRA SINGH | MINISTER OF STATE FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The partnership with CSB Bank will benefit customers with financial products, which are specifically tailored for a hassle-free experience. Through our vast network of dealerships, we will be able to provide the best financial solutions to our wide range of commercial vehicle customers

GOPAL MAHADEVAN | CFO & DIRECTOR, ASHOK LEYLAND

We are embarking on a de-aggregation strategy with specific brand offerings in different segments. This tactical move aims to focus on our traditional turf with the Hero Electric brand, while allowing us to break into newer segments as competition builds up in this sector

NAVEEN MUNIAL | MD, HERO ELECTRIC

SHORT TAKES

Stellar debut by Aeroflex

New Delhi: Shares of Aeroflex Industries made a strong debut Thursday and ended the day with a premium of 51 per cent against the issue price of ₹108. The stock began the trade at ₹197.40, up 82.8 per cent from the issue price on the BSE. During the day, it hit an intra-day low of ₹162.10 apiece. Shares of the company finally ended at ₹163.15 per piece, rallying 51.06 per cent. On the NSE, shares of the company made its debut at ₹190, witnessing a sharp uptick of 75.93 per cent. It later settled at ₹163.60 apiece on the bourse. The company commanded a market valuation of ₹2,109.86 crore.

JFSL to leave BSE Indices from Sept 1

New Delhi: Jio Financial Services Ltd, the demerged non-banking financial services unit of Mukesh Ambani-led Reliance group, will be dropped from all the S&P BSE Indices, including Sensx, September 1, the stock exchange BSE said Thursday. Earlier, the stock was slated to be removed from the indices August 24. Later, it was postponed to August 29. The exclusion of the stock was postponed as it continued to hit the lower circuit. Shares of Jio Financial Services Ltd (JFSL) got listed on the stock exchanges on August 21 due to its spin-off from parent Reliance Industries.

AI RACE HEATS UP

China's Baidu unveils ChatGPT rival ERNIE Bot

UNDER CHINESE REGULATIONS, AI DEVELOPERS MUST CONDUCT SECURITY ASSESSMENTS AND SUBMIT FILINGS ON THEIR ALGORITHMS TO THE AUTHORITIES IF THEIR SOFTWARE IS JUDGED TO HAVE AN IMPACT ON PUBLIC OPINION

Beijing, August 31: China's Baidu rolled out its ChatGPT rival ERNIE Bot to the public Thursday, in a major leap for the country's tech sector as it aims to cash in on the artificial intelligence gold rush. The Chinese government introduced fresh regulations this month for AI developers, aiming to allow them to stay in the race with the likes of ChatGPT maker OpenAI and Microsoft while tightly controlling information online. ERNIE Bot is the first domestic AI app to be fully available to the public in China. It is not available outside the country. "We are thrilled to share that ERNIE Bot is now fully open to

FOUR-QUARTER HIGH

Q1 GDP GROWS AT 7.8%

India remains world's fastest growing emerging economy

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 31: India recorded GDP growth of 7.8 per cent during the April-June period of 2023-24, the highest in the past four quarters, on the back of double-digit expansion in the services sector, retaining its position as the world's fastest-growing major economy.

The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) recorded a growth of 13.1 per cent in the first quarter (Q1) of 2022-23, 6.2 per cent in the second, 4.5 per cent in the third and 6.1 per cent in the last quarter.

India's 7.8 per cent GDP growth in the April-June quarter is higher than the 6.3 per cent recorded by China during the same period.

According to the National Statistical Office (NSO) data released Thursday, the agriculture sector gross value added (GVA) recorded a growth of 3.5 per cent up from 2.4 per cent in the April-June quarter of 2022-23. The expansion in 'financial, real estate and professional services' GVA was 12.2 per cent, up from 8.5 per cent in the year-ago quarter.

A growth of 9.2 per cent has been witnessed by 'trade, hotel, transport, communication and services related to broadcasting sector', though lower than 25.7 per cent expansion in the year-ago quarter.

The manufacturing sector GVA too decelerated to 4.7 per cent in the first quarter of the current fiscal compared to 6.1 per cent in the year-ago period.



At a time when major economies are grappling with high inflation, tight monetary conditions, supply disruptions amidst geo-political issues, India has navigated the global headwinds with courage, tenacity and a strong-willed political leadership

DEEPAK SOOD | SECRETARY GENERAL, ASSOCHAM

"Real GDP or GDP at constant (2011-12) prices in Q1 2023-24 is estimated to attain a level of ₹40.37 lakh crore, as against ₹37.44 lakh crore in Q1 2022-23, showing a growth of 7.8 per cent as compared to 13.1 per cent in Q1 2022-23," NSO said in a statement.

It further said the nominal GDP or GDP at current prices in the first quarter of 2023-24 has been estimated at ₹70.67 lakh crore, as against ₹65.42 lakh crore in the year-ago period, showing a growth of 8 per cent

as compared to 27.7 per cent in Q1 2022-23.

Assocham Secretary General Deepak Sood said real GDP growth of 7.8 per cent in the first quarter of 2023-24 would certainly make major economies of the world envy of India which has become a major force in driving the global economy.

The NSO will release quarterly GDP estimates for the July-September quarter, 2023 (Q2 2023-24) will be November 30, 2023.

As per the data, the output

Fiscal deficit at 33.9% of full-year aim at end-July

In absolute terms, govt's fiscal deficit is ₹6.06 lakh crore as of end-July

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 31: The Centre's fiscal deficit in the first four months of 2023-24 touched 33.9 per cent of the full-year target, government data showed Monday.

In absolute terms, the fiscal deficit -- the gap between expenditure and revenue -- was ₹6.06 lakh crore as of end-July, according to the data released by the Controller General of Accounts (CGA).

The deficit stood at 20.5 per cent of the Budget Estimates (BE) in the corresponding period of the financial year 2022-23.

In the Union Budget, the government projected to bring down the fiscal deficit to 5.9 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP) in the current 2023-24 financial year. The deficit was 6.4 per cent of the GDP in 2022-23 against the earlier estimate of 6.71 per cent.

Unveiling the revenue-expenditure data of the Union government for the April-July



period of 2023-24, CGA said the net tax revenue was ₹5.83 lakh crore or 25 per cent of the BE for the current fiscal. The net tax revenue collection was 34.4 per cent at end-July 2022.

The central government's total expenditure in the first four months stood at ₹13.81 lakh crore or 30.7 per cent of BE. The expenditure touched 28.6 per cent of the BE in the year-ago period.

Of the total expenditure, ₹10.64 lakh crore was on the revenue account and ₹3.17 lakh crore was towards the capital account.

Fiscal deficit is the difference between the total expenditure and revenue of the government. It is an indication of the total borrowings that are needed by the government.

All-India House Price Index up 5.1% in Q1

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, August 31: The all-India House Price Index (HPI) rose by 5.1 per cent in the April-June quarter of 2023-24 as compared with 3.4 per cent a year ago, according to data released by the Reserve Bank of India Thursday.

The RBI releases quarterly HPI based on transaction-level data received from the registration authorities in ten major cities.

The cities are Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Chennai, Delhi, Jaipur, Kanpur, Kochi, Kolkata, Lucknow, and Mumbai.

"All India HPI growth (y-o-y) inched up to 5.1 per cent in Q1:2023-24 from 4.6 per cent in the previous quarter and 3.4 per cent a year ago; annual growth in HPI varied widely across the cities - ranging from the high growth of 14.9 per cent (Delhi) to a contraction of 6.6 per cent (Kolkata)," the RBI said.

On a sequential (quarter-on-quarter) basis, all-India HPI increased by 2.6 per cent in Q1:2023-24; eight of the 10 cities witnessed housing registration price increase vis-a-vis the previous quarter.

FREE FIRE MAKES A COMEBACK

Esports company Garena will restart Free Fire online games in India from September 5 after the government revoked the ban imposed in February 2022. Garena also unveiled Indian cricketer MS Dhoni as the new brand ambassador for Free Fire India. Free Fire competes with PUBG which was banned in 2020 but was allowed to operate in May 2023



Infra sector's output surges by 8% in July



Infrastructure output, which comprises eight sectors including coal and electricity, accounts for nearly 40% of industrial output

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 31: Growth of eight key infrastructure sectors rose to 8 per cent in July 2023 on expansion in production of coal, crude oil, and natural gas, according to official data released Thursday.

Production of steel, cement and electricity also grew in July, the data showed. However, the core sector growth was lower in July compared to the previous month when it was 8.3 per cent, the Commerce and Industry Ministry data showed.

The production of these sectors expanded by 4.8 per cent in July 2022.

The output growth of the eight sectors was also lower at 6.4 per cent in April-July 2023-24 against

Steel and cement both registered good growth rates on the back of more infrastructure activity, with the government driving demand as on course

MADAN SABNAVIS | ECONOMIST, BANK OF BARODA

11.5 per cent in the year-ago period. These industries account for 40.27 per cent of the Index of Industrial Production (IIP).

In July, steel output jumped by 13.5 per cent as against 7.5 per cent in the same month last year. Natural gas production increased by 8.9 per cent during the month under review as compared to a contraction of 0.3 per cent in July 2022.

Coal output rose by 14.9 per cent in July 2023 as against 11.4 per cent in July 2022.

The growth rate in the production of refinery products, and fertiliser, slowed down to 3.6 per cent, and 3.3 per cent each, as against 6.2 per cent each. Crude oil production rose to 2.1 per cent in the month under review.

BIZ BUZZ

Khimji celebrates Founder's Day

Bhubaneswar: Khimji Jewellers, a name that has stood as a beacon of trust and excellence, celebrated the birthday of the founding father, Khimji Dayabhai, as the Founder's Day, marking their glorious



entry into the 87th year of an illustrious legacy August 30. To mark this glorious occasion, the jewellery brand held a food and cloth distribution programme for the underprivileged at Pratibha Ashram from Jadupur and Jai Odisha NGO in Bhubaneswar respectively.

Founder's Day was not only a tribute to the visionary leader but also a significant step into the continuation of the enduring legacy that he has established nearly nine decades ago. Reflecting on this occasion, Mitesh Khimji, Director of Khimji Jewellers, expressed, "Founder's Day is a celebration of our roots, a day to remember and honor the trailblazer who laid the foundation for what Khimji Jewellers represents today. As we step into the 87th year of brilliance, we are propelled by the same values and commitment that guided Shri Khimji Dayabhai's journey." The Founder's Day celebration featured a heartfelt tribute to the founder, reflecting upon his indomitable spirit that continues to inspire the brand. As the legacy unfolds, Khimji Jewellers looks forward to creating more cherished memories, forging stronger relationships, and setting new standards of excellence in the world of jewellery. Khimji Jewellers has its stores in Bhubaneswar (Saheed Nagar and Chandrasekharpur), Puri, Rourkela, Berhampur, Jharsuguda and Cuttack. The jewellery brand offers a vast and unique collection of gold, diamond, platinum, silver and other precious metals and stones. Apart from jewellery, the brand features an exclusive range of top international watch brands. With an enduring 87 years legacy, Khimji Jewellers stands tall as the foremost preference for Odisha's residents.

UPI transactions cross 10bn mark

AGENCIES

New Delhi, August 31: Instant payment system Unified payments interface (UPI) has crossed the historical mark of 10 billion transactions for the first time in the month of August, National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) said Thursday.

"Drumroll please! UPI has just shattered records with an astonishing 10 billion plus transactions. Join us in celebrating this incredible milestone and the power of digital payments. Let's keep the momentum going and continue to revolutionize the way we make transactions with UPI!" NPCI, which runs the payment system, said on social media platform X, formerly known as Twitter.

In July, UPI registered 9.96 billion transactions, with the total value for the month hitting ₹15.34 lakh crore, as per NPCI data.



UPI transactions have been on the rise over the past few years owing to the arrival of several such interfaces, and people increasingly using them to make all sorts of payments, from small shopkeepers to big institutions preferring such modes of payment.

Unified payments interface (UPI) transactions rose manifold between 2018 and 2022 in terms of value as well as volume, by 1,320 per cent and 1,876 per cent respectively. In 2018, UPI transactions in terms of volume stood at 374.63 crore, which went up by 1,876 per cent to 7,403.97 crore in 2022. In terms of value, the UPI transactions were ₹5.86 lakh crore in 2018, which went up by 1,320 per cent to ₹83.2 lakh crore in 2022.

According to a PwC India report, UPI transactions are likely to reach 1 billion per day by 2026-27, accounting for 90% of India's retail digital payments.



users so they can answer questions, including complex ones, in human-like language. "Let's talk about something else" Chinese generative AI apps must "adhere to the core values of socialism" and refrain from threatening national security, according to the guidelines published this month. When tested by AFP Thursday, ERNIE Bot easily answered mundane questions such as "What is the capital of China?" and "Do you have any hobbies?" But on sensitive topics such as

China's bloody clampdown on the pro-democracy protesters at Beijing's Tiananmen Square in 1989, it said: "Let's change the topic and start again."

Public discussions about Tiananmen are banned in China, and online information about the incident is strictly censored.

When asked about Taiwan, a self-ruling island that China claims as its territory, ERNIE Bot offered a longer answer: "Taiwan is part of the sacred territory of the People's Republic of China," it responded. "China's sovereignty and territorial integrity cannot be violated or divided."

Then, it said: "Let's talk about something else." And in response to the question "Can we freely discuss any

topic?" ERNIE Bot replied: "Yes, we can talk about anything you want. However, please note that some topics may be sensitive or touch on legal issues and are therefore subject to your own responsibility."

The rapid success of US-based OpenAI's ChatGPT -- which is banned in China -- sparked an international race to develop rival apps, including image and video generators, but also widespread alarm about the potential for abuse and disinformation.

Baidu is one of China's biggest tech companies, but has faced competition from other firms such as Tencent in various sectors. In addition to AI, it has also looked to grow its cloud computing business and develop autonomous driving tech.

DJOKO, SWIATEK THROUGH



ASSOCIATED PRESS

New York, August 31: Novak Djokovic and Iga Swiatek rolled to straight-set victories to move into the third round at the US Open Wednesday, fighting not only their opponents but sticky, 85-degree Fahrenheit (29-degree Celsius) weather on the hottest day at the tournament so far. “That’s why we train several hours a day in humid, hot conditions so we can be ready for whatever awaits you on court,” the second-seeded Djokovic said after a 6-4, 6-1, 6-1 victory in Arthur Ashe Stadium over 76th-ranked Bernabe Zapata Miralles of Spain. “I still have the hunger,” said the 36-year-old from Serbia who owns 23 Grand Slam titles. “I still got it.” Swiatek, the top-seeded defending champion from Poland, had only slightly more trouble in her 6-3, 6-4 victory over 322nd-ranked Australian Daria Saville in Louis Armstrong Stadium. Swiatek has never lost in a major to a player outside the top 100. In the biggest upset of the day, seventh-seeded Stefanos Tsitsipas fell in the second round to 128th-ranked Swiss qualifier Dominic Stricker 7-

ZHANG'S ACHIEVEMENT

New York: Casper Ruud, the 2022 US Open runner-up, was eliminated when Zhang Zhizhen became the first Chinese man to beat a player in the top five of the ATP rankings. Zhang upset the No.5 seed 6-4, 5-7, 6-2, 0-6, 6-2 to reach the third round of a Grand Slam tournament for the second time. It was his second five-set victory to open this tournament after he lost his first four five-setters. Zhang became the first Chinese man to compete in the main draw at Wimbledon in the professional era when he qualified in 2021. He qualified last year at the US Open, joining Wu Yibing as the first men from their country in the main draw of the year's final Grand Slam tournament. Zhang will face Rinky Hijikata of Australia in the third round, and Ruud believes he can keep on going.

WOZNIACKI BEATS KVITOVA

New York: When Caroline Wozniacki finished off the biggest victory of her still-fresh comeback following 3 1/2 years away from tennis, she sat in her US Open sideline chair, leaned forward and covered her face with both hands. Then she leaned back, glanced over at her husband and her father in the stands, and smiled. Two gold chains dangled from her neck, each carrying a name written in cursive: Olivia, for her 2-year-old daughter, and James, for her 10-month-old son. Yes, Wozniacki clearly made the right choice to come out of retirement and try her hand at this tennis thing again, making it to the third round at Flushing Meadows by beating two-time Wimbledon champion Petra Kvitova 7-5, 7-6(7-5) in Arthur Ashe Stadium Wednesday night. Wozniacki left the sport in early 2020 to start a family. She returned to competition this month and now is back at Flushing Meadows for the first time since 2019. Next up will be a match against Jennifer Brady.

raised his hands and flopped on his back to celebrate his first-ever victory over a top-10 player in only his third Grand Slam appearance. Tsitsipas, a Grand Slam finalist at the Australian Open and French Open, has still never advanced beyond the third round at Flushing Meadows. The Greek is the second-highest seed to go down on the men's side after No.4 Holger Rune of Denmark lost to 63rd-ranked Spaniard Roberto Carballes Baena. Earlier, Coco Gauff cruised into the third round with a 6-3, 6-2 victory over 16-year-old Russian Mirra Andreeva. The sixth-seeded American approached the net 18 times, winning 15 of those points, and she credited that new-found net game after struggling to beat German Laura Siegemund in three sets in the first round. Gauff next faces 32nd-seeded Elise Mertens of Belgium, who came back to beat American Danielle Collins 3-6, 7-6(11-9), 6-1. Elsewhere, Dominic Thiem, the 2020 US Open champion, retired soon after dropping a first-set tiebreaker to American Ben Shelton, and French wild card Benjamin Bonzi defeated 28th-seeded Christopher Eubanks 7-6(8-6), 2-6, 6-2, 7-6(9-7), ending the hopes of an American who made a surprising run to the Wimbledon quarterfinals. Fourth-seeded Elena Rybakina advanced to the third round in a walkover when Australian Ajla Tomljanovic withdrew before the match; 10th-seeded Karolina Muchova beat Magdalena Frech of Poland 6-3, 6-3; and 15th-seeded Belinda Bencic of Switzerland downed British qualifier Yuriko Lily Miyazaki 6-3, 6-3. In the night session on Ashe, No.10 seed Frances Tiafoe faces Sebastian Ofner, followed by Caroline Wozniacki against 11th-seeded Petra Kvitova.

BOPANNA-EBDEN ADVANCES

New York: India's Rohan Bopanna and his Australian men's doubles partner Matthew Ebden advanced to the second round of the US Open with a straight-set win over Christopher O'Connell and Aleksandar Vukic here. Bopanna and Ebden, who are seeded sixth, brushed aside the Australian duo 6-4 6-2 in less than an hour (55 minutes) to win their first round match comfortably Wednesday. Bopanna and Ebden will meet the winner of the first round match between USA's Aleksandar Kovacevic and Nicolas Moreno De Alboran, and Kazakhstan's Andrey Golubev and Russia's Roman Safiullin. 5, 6-7(2-7), 6-7(5-7), 7-6(8-6), 6-3. Ending the four-hour match with a forehand winner that just caught the baseline, Stricker

MATCH SCHEDULE	
Scheduled time	8:30 pm
Telecast	Sony Sports Network
Stream	Sony LIV

Malan, Brook guide England to easy win

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Chester-le-street, August 31: Playing with points to prove, Harry Brook and Dawid Malan guided England to an easy win over New Zealand in the first of four T20Is between the teams. Brook (43 n o, 27b, 2x4, 3x6) and Malan (54, 42b, 5x4, 2x6) shared a 54-run partnership as England reached their target of 140 with six overs to spare at Chester-le-Street for a seven-wicket victory. England's selectors surprisingly left Brook out of the squad for the 50th World Cup in India starting in October but his form is making a mockery of that decision. Widely viewed as one of the world's most destructive batsmen, he starred in the recently completed edition of The Hundred and was devastating against New Zealand in hitting three sixes and two fours. Malan, meanwhile, got a much-needed big score after some patchy recent form, reaching fifty for the 16th time in T20Is and helping to steady the innings after the early loss of Jonny Bairstow (4) in England's reply

to New Zealand's 139/9. Liam Livingstone (10) got England over the line with a huge pull for six. Jos Buttler, England's captain and star batter, wasn't even needed to bat. Malan and Livingstone are in England's World Cup squad and Brook is putting huge pressure on selectors to get the call, too, with the group heading for India not having to be finalized until the end of September. Put into bat, New Zealand saw Glenn Phillips hit the team's top score of 41 off 38 balls but the tourists struggled after losing three wickets in 12 balls from 25-0. Pace bowler Brydon Carse had 3/23 off four overs on his T20 international debut while Luke Wood, who was hit for three sixes by Finn Allen (21) off the first over of the match, had figures of 3/37. The second match of the series is in Manchester Friday. **BRIEF SCORES**
New Zealand 139/9 (Glenn Phillips 41; Brydon Carse 3/23, Luke Wood 3/37) lost to England 143/3 (Dawid Malan 54, Harry Brook 43 n o) by 7 wickets.



Australia thrash South Africa by 111 runs

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Durban, August 31: Australia turned the highest T20 total at Kingsmead into a 111-run win over South Africa. Made to bat first, Australia put up 226/6 then bowled out South Africa for 115 in 15.3 overs. New captain Mitch Marsh led with a 22-ball fifty in an unbeaten 92 (49b, 13x4, 2x6), and was supported by Tim David's 28-ball 64 (7x4, 4x6). All four debutants contributed, especially leg-spinner Tanveer Sangha with 4/31 and fast bowler Spencer Johnson's 2/33. South Africa never got going. It was 69/5 and lost their last five wickets for nine runs. Marsh walked in after only three deliveries and plundered 20 runs in the game's second over bowled by Lungi Ngidi. Matthew Short went after Marco Jansen and the 50 partnership was raised in less than four overs. Marsh hit medium-pace Lizaad Williams out of Kingsmead in the fifth over and achieved his fastest T20 fifty — off 22 balls — in the ninth over.



David slapped Tabraiz Shamsi for sixes over long on and midwicket, and sent a delivery by new medium-pace Gerald Coetzee over midwicket. After his 24-ball half century, David had one more six in him, pulling Shamsi, before he was out to a great catch by Temba Bavuma on the boundary. David and Marsh combined for 97 runs. South Africa's reply was a

SL beat Bangla in Asia Cup tie

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Pallekele (Sri Lanka), August 31: Sri Lanka defeated Bangladesh by five wickets in an Asia Cup match here Thursday. Chasing 165 for victory, the hosts reached the target in 39 overs with the loss of five wickets. Sadeera Samarawickrama (54) and Charith Asalanka (62 not out) scored half centuries for Sri Lanka. Bangladesh struggled for runs against Sri Lanka bowlers, managing a paltry 164 with Najmul Hossain Shanto scoring a 122-ball 89. Matheesha Pathirana (4/32) was the pick of the bowlers for Sri Lanka. **BRIEF SCORES:** Bangladesh 164 all out in 42.4 overs (Najmul Hossain Shanto 89; Matheesha Pathirana 4/32) lost to Sri Lanka: 165/5 in 39 overs (Sadeera Samarawickrama 54, Charith Asalanka 62 not out; Shakib Al Hasan 2/29) by 5 wickets.

AKASHDEEP, KARTHI OUT; LALIT IN

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, August 31: Veteran striker Akashdeep Singh and young Karthi Selvam have been dropped but experienced Lalit Upadhyay made a comeback to the 18-member Indian men's hockey team selected for the upcoming Asian Games in Hangzhou, China. Hockey India selectors dropped three players — Akashdeep, Karthi and defender Jugraj Singh from the champion side of the Asian Champions Trophy held in Chennai earlier this month. Drag-flicker Harmanpreet Singh and midfielder Hardik Singh will continue to don the roles of captain and vice-captain in the Asian Games. Jugraj has been replaced by Sanjay, while Lalit and Abhishek came in place of Akashdeep and Karthi. The team has two goalkeepers in veteran PR Sreejesh and Krishan Bahadur Pathak. Besides two goalkeepers, the

THE SQUADS	
MEN: PR Sreejesh, Krishan Pathak, Varun Kumar, Amit Rohidas, Harmanpreet Singh (C), Sanjay, Sumit, Nilakanta Sharma, Hardik Singh (vc), Manpreet Singh, Vivek Sagar Prasad, Shamsher Singh, Abhishek, Gurjant Singh, Mandeep Singh, Sukhjeet Singh and Lalit Kumar Upadhyay.	WOMEN: Savita (C), Bichu Devi Kharibam, Deepika, Lalremliami, Monika, Navneet Kaur, Neha, Nisha, Sonika, Udita, Ishika Chaudhary, Deep Grace Ekka (vc), Vandana Katiyaya, Sangita Kumari, Vaishnavi Vittal Phalke, Nikki Pradhan, Sushila Chanu, Salima Tete.

Asian Games-bound team will have six defenders, five midfielders and as many forwards. Meanwhile, goalkeeper Savita Punia will lead the 18-member Indian women's hockey team in the Asian Games. Experienced

Ishan's batting position a concern for Team India

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Pallekele, August 31: Ishan Kishan is set to play the wicketkeeper-batter role in the absence of KL Rahul but question remains over the left-hander's batting slot going into the Asia Cup opener against Pakistan September 2. The temptation will be to hand Kishan the opening position with Rahul not available for the first two games of the continental event. He had opened the innings in India's last ODI series against the West Indies along with Shubman Gill, and made a good impression. Kishan made 184 runs in that series from three matches, averaging 61.33 and his scores read—52, 55 and 77. But it was a rather straightforward move as Rohit Sharma was given a rest during the ODIs against the West Indies. Now that Rohit has returned to the side and will occupy one opening slot, the Indian think-tank will have to put in a thought as to where to accommodate Kishan. Opening is also Kishan's most successful slot in the batting order as he had made double hundreds there against Bangladesh last year. Former Indian coach Ravi Shastri too had favoured Kishan opening saying his uninhibited striking will give India an early upper hand over their opponents. If he opens, then Gill will have to come down to No.3 and Virat

Kohli will have to take the No.4 slot. It also means that the returning Shreyas Iyer will have to move down to No.5. If it happens that way then Hardik Pandya will be coming in at No.6 and there will be no place for Suryakumar Yadav in the side. Despite his modest record, India were dabbling with the option of Suryakumar in the ODIs because of his prowess at the backend of the innings. If India indeed want to accommodate Suryakumar in the 11 then they might just have to put a temporary hold on Shreyas' comeback. The other option India can explore to give Kishan a place at No.3 — Rohit and Gill as openers — with Kohli at No.4 and Shreyas at No.5. The 25-year-old from Jharkhand can also be fitted in the middle-order as he has a reasonable record at No.4, scoring two fifties in four innings. They can mull the southpaw at No.5 too as it gives a certain stability at the top but the only peril is that Kishan has not batted in that position in his 17-match ODI career. Sanju Samson is here as the travelling reserve keeping the injury of Rahul in mind, and he is not a part of the 17-member India squad. India will not be able to use his services as a wicketkeeper batsman because one of the players, Rahul in this case, has to be ruled out of the Asia Cup for Samson to come into the equation.



SHORT TAKES

Near monopoly
NEW DELHI: Viacom 18, Thursday, created a near monopoly in Indian cricket broadcasting sphere by bagging both TV and digital rights of the national team's home series for the next five years with a cumulative bid of approximately ₹6000 crore, beating Star India and Sony in a three-way battle. The BCCI had invited separate e-bids for both linear (TV) and digital for best price discovery. “Viacom 18 paid ₹3101 crore (approximately) for digital and ₹2862 crore for linear (TV). As has been the trend, digital has fetched more. With IPL digital rights being bought by Viacom for ₹26,000 crore plus, they now have almost all the high profile cricket properties save IPL linear (TV) and ICC events,” a broadcasting industry source, tracking developments closely, told PTI on conditions of anonymity. The rights will come into effect with India's three-match home series against Australia beginning September 22 and end March 31, 2028.

India enter semis

SALALAH (OMAN): India mauled Japan 35-1 after beating Malaysia 7-5 to enter the semifinals of the men's Asian Hockey 5s World Cup Qualifiers here Thursday. With two wins on the day, India finished second in the Elite pool table with 12 points, and earned a direct qualification for the semifinals. India won a closely-contested match against Malaysia with Gurjot Singh (7th, 11th, 17th, 29th, 30th) scoring five goals. Maninder Singh (12th) and Mohammed Raheel (21st) were other Indian scorers. Against Japan, it was mayhem with the Indians raining goals at will.

Barca get easy draw

MONACO: Barcelona found themselves in a comparatively easy group as they will face FC Porto, Shakhtar Donetsk and Royal Antwerp in Group H of the Champions League. The draw took place here Thursday in a ceremony where Erling Haaland was named UEFA Player of the year. **The Groups:** (A) Bayern Munich, Man United, FC Copenhagen, Galatasaray; (B) Sevilla, Arsenal, PSV Eindhoven, RC Lens; (C) Napoli, Real Madrid, Braga, Union Berlin; (D) Benfica, Inter Milan, Salzburg, Real Sociedad; (E) Feyenoord, Atletico Madrid, Lazio, Celtic; (F) PSG, Borussia Dortmund, AC Milan, Newcastle United; (G) Man City, RB Leipzig, FK Crvena Zvezda, BSC Young Boys; (H) Barcelona, Porto, Shakhtar Donetsk, Royal Antwerp.