



BELIEF IN KARMA

Actor Tamannaah Bhatia says she is not obsessed about success or failure as they're not in her hand

LEISURE P2



PRISONERS SWAP BY US, IRAN

Five US detainees fly out of Iran in a swap for five Iranians held in the US in a rare deal between the arch enemies

INTERNATIONAL P10



CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

PSG HOST DORTMUND

A new-look PSG kick-off their Champions League campaign against Borussia Dortmund at home tonight

SPORTS P12

GITA MEHTA'S FUNERAL HELD

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Sept 18: The mortal remains of Gita Mehta, the 80-year-old elder sister of Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, were consigned to flames at Lodhi Road Crematorium Ground in Delhi Monday, Naveen Niwas sources said.

Gita's son Aditya Singh Mehta lit the funeral pyre in the presence of Patnaik, his businessman brother Prem Patnaik and other relatives. Many Odisha leaders including MPs and MLAs were also present at the crematorium.

People from different walks of life paid their last respects to her at Patnaik's residence on Abdul Kalam Road. Senior BJD leader and family friend AU Singhdeo and BJP national vice-president Bijayant Panda also paid their tributes to her at the crematorium.

Gita Mehta, daughter of legendary Biju Patnaik, passed away at the age of 80 due to old age ailments Saturday.

2 separate road mishaps claim 5

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Sept 18: At least five persons were killed and six others injured in two separate road accidents in Cuttack and Puri districts Monday, police said.

Five friends were travelling in a car when it collided with a speeding truck coming from the opposite direction at Nuasadak in the Athagarh area of Cuttack district. While three died on the spot, another died on the way to the hospital. Another person sustained multiple injuries in the accident, said Tigriria PS IIC Gyana Ranjan Samal.

A report from Puri district said that one person was killed and five others were critically injured in a head-on collision between an OSRTC Mo bus and a car on the Puri-Konark marine drive road. One occupant of the car died on the spot while five injured are critical.

One occupant of the car died on the spot while five injured are critical.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Such an emotional moment... Reminds me all those walkouts, wasteful expenditures, unaccountability...

Adieu! Good Old House



A LOOK BACK AT LEGACY: Clouds hover over the old Parliament building as security personnel patrol the new Parliament building on the first day of the special session, in New Delhi, Monday



PTI PHOTOS

Parliament will shift to the new building on the auspicious occasion of Ganesh Chaturthi today

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 18: Prime Minister Narendra Modi Monday paid tributes to "every brick" of the old Parliament building and said MPs will enter the new building with "new hope and confidence".

In his over an hour-long speech in the Lok Sabha, Modi remembered the journey of India's democracy and said the last day in this heritage building should be dedicated to the over 7,500 parliamentarians who served in this building since Independence.

Parliament will shift to the new building on the auspicious occasion of Ganesh Chaturthi Tuesday.

"Today we have an opportunity

to connect with the past. We are leaving this building with hope for the future. I am confident that as we enter the new Parliament building, we will go there with new hope and confidence," the Prime Minister said.

"Today is the day for remembering the 7,500 MPs who have served here... I salute every brick of this building," he said.

Highlighting the historical importance of the old Parliament building, Modi recalled that while the order for its construction was given by foreign rulers, it was constructed through the sweat, hard work and money of Indians.

"Today, we are taking leave from this historic building. Before Independence, this was the

Imperial Legislative Council and after Independence, it became the Parliament building," he said.

"We may go to the new building but... This building will always continue to inspire the coming generations. This is an important chapter in the golden journey of India's democracy," the Prime Minister said, adding that the memories of the old Parliament House belong to everyone.

Modi also recalled his first day in the Parliament House. "When I became a Member of Parliament for the first time and entered this building... I naturally bowed my head before I set foot inside the door of this Parliament House, paying homage to this temple of democracy," he said.

"That moment was full of emotions for me, I could not have imagined but it is the strength of Indian democracy, it is a reflection of the faith of the com-

'EC Appointments Bill may not be tabled'

The government may not push for passage of the Bill on appointment of CEC and election commissioners in the five-day session of Parliament that began Monday, sources said amid criticism of its provisions including by the Opposition and former chief election commissioners. They said one view within the government is to refer the Bill to the standing committee on law and justice. The Bill was introduced in Rajya Sabha by Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal August 10. Some former CECs, including N Gopalaswamy, VS Sampat and SY Quraishi, had Saturday written to the Prime Minister opposing the provision to equate the CEC and the ECs to the cabinet secretary.

mon man of India towards democracy that a child from a poor family living on a railway platform could reach Parliament," Modi added.

The Congress has said it hopes that Prime Minister Narendra Modi will now sit more frequently in both Houses while claiming that he has the "worst attendance record of all prime ministers".

It is pertinent to mention that the Rajya Sabha and the

Lok Sabha will meet again Tuesday afternoon in the new Parliament building, with Speaker of the Lower House Om Birla urging the members to abstain from "organised disruptions" and "carrying placards" in the new chamber.

Speaking before adjourning the day's proceedings, Birla said a "constructive discussion" took place on the last day of the proceedings in this historic and prestigious chamber.

AIADMK: Not with BJP now

AGENCIES

Chennai, Sept 18: The simmering tension with the BJP over its leader K Annamalai's attack on Dravidian stalwart CN Annadurai prompted the AIADMK in Tamil Nadu Monday to state it had no alliance with the saffron party as of now, and that a decision on the matter will be made during the upcoming elections.

AIADMK sought to make it clear it cannot tolerate any affront to the late Chief Minister and its other leaders.

The party trained its guns against BJP TN president K Annamalai, saying he was only keen to "promote" himself and was therefore targeting late Dravidian stalwarts Annadurai, fondly addressed as Anna (elder brother), EV Ramasamy 'Periyar' and late AIADMK veterans MG Ramachandran (MGR) and J Jayalalithaa.

MINISTER DELETES TWEET

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 18: Minister of State Prahlad Singh Patel Monday posted on social media platform X that the Cabinet has approved the Women's Reservation Bill, but deleted the post within an hour.

While there was no official word on what transpired in the Cabinet meeting, which lasted for more than 90 minutes Monday evening, speculations were rife that it approved the Women's Reservation Bill.

"Only the Modi government had the moral courage to fulfil the demand for women's reservation which was proved by the approval of the Cabinet. Congratulations Narendra Modi ji and congratulations to the Modi government," the minister said in the post on X which was later deleted. Patel is the Minister of State for Food Processing Industries and Jal Shakti.

Government sources had ear-



Prahlad Singh Patel @prahladspatel

महिला आरक्षण की माँग पूरा करने का नैतिक साहस मोदी सरकार में ही था। जो कैबिनेट की मंजूरी से साबित हो गया। अभिनन्दन @narendramodi जी और मोदी सरकार का अभिनन्दन @PMOIndia @BJP4India @BJP4MP



lier indicated that the bill has been approved by the Cabinet and is likely to be tabled in Parliament.

It can be brought before Parliament, a top government

Man held for poisoning wife, twin sons to death

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sheragada, Sept 18: In a shocking incident, a woman and her minor twin sons were killed while her mother-in-law was left battling for life after the former's husband allegedly spiked their dinner with poison Sunday night at Srimannagar here in Ganjam district.

The deceased were identified as Sabitri Kumari Behera and her five-year-old twins Shibesh Dakua and Prithish Dakua in the area. Sabitri's mother-in-law Urmila Dakua is currently undergoing treatment at MKCG Medical College and Hospital in Berhampur.

Police registered a murder case and arrested the accused husband Prasant Dakua in this connection, Monday.

Police said Sabitri was working as an assistant teacher at Mahatma Gandhi High School

and had been staying at a rented house at Srimannagar in Sheragada with her family members since long.

Reports said, all the family members went to sleep after dinner, Sunday night, however, all except Prasant vomited and fell sick at night. He admitted all of them at Sheragada hospital in an unconscious condition, Monday morning.

There the doctors pronounced Sabitri and her two sons dead on arrival and shifted the elderly woman in critical condition to MKCG Medical College and Hospital in Berhampur.

Sheragada SDPO Uma Shankar Singh, SI Satyajit Benia rushed to the spot and launched an investigation. Sabitri's brother Dillip Behera reached the Sheragada police station in the afternoon and lodged a murder complaint in the presence of SP Jagmohan Meena in the police station.

'The Story Teller' becomes costliest Indian artwork ever



Artist Amrita Sher-Gil's painting 'The Story Teller'

Touted to be among the 12 works selected by Sher-Gil herself as her most important works, 'The Story Teller' is widely considered an example of the artist's most honest and expressive compositions

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 18: Fetching a whopping ₹61.8 crore, avant-garde artist Amrita Sher-Gil's oil on canvas 'The Story Teller' has unseated Sayed Haider Raza's 'Gestation' in becoming the most expensive work of Indian art sold at auction worldwide.

The 1937 artwork, sold here Saturday at Saffronart's 'Evening Sale Modern Art', was among the 70 plus art pieces by eminent artists including MF Husain, VS Gaitonde, Jamini Roy and FS Souza, featured in the auction.

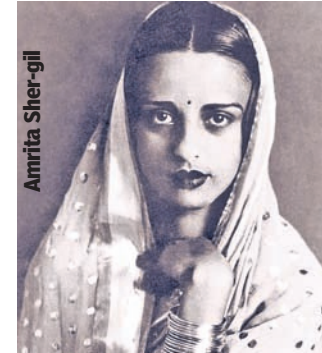
It was only last month that Raza's 1989 Gestation, also an oil-on-canvas painting, was sold at ₹51.75 crore by Pundole's auction house in Mumbai, becoming the most expensive Indian artwork ever sold at auction.

"We are delighted to have set multiple artist records at our Evening Sale in New Delhi this September. Most significantly, the record price achieved by Amrita Sher-Gil's 'The Story Teller' is an important milestone in the Indian art market and testament to the artist's immense skill and enduring legacy as one of India's art treasures,"

said Dinesh Vazirani, CEO and co-founder of Saffronart.

The Story Teller, touted to be among the 12 works selected by Sher-Gil herself as her most important works, is widely considered an example of the artist's most honest and expressive compositions.

The dominant subjects for the eminent artist are women, primarily because she could lend her empathetic self most easily to their condition. The painting was first exhibited at Sher-Gil's successful solo exhibition at Faletti's Hotel, Lahore, in November 1937.



Her other well-known portraits of women include Three Girls, Women on the Charpai, Hill Women, and Young Girls. Born to Indian father and Hungarian mother January 30, 1913 in Budapest, Hungary, Sher-Gil came to be known as one of the greatest avant-garde women artists for her oeuvre.

MARKET WATCH	
INDEX	VARIATION
SENSEX	67596.84 ↓ 241.79
NIFTY	20133.30 ↓ 59.05
DOLLAR	83.02 ↑ ₹0.08
EURO	89.06 ↑ ₹0.47
GOLD	₹59,175 ↑ ₹182
SILVER	₹72,254 ↑ ₹100

WEATHER	
BHUB	CTK
TEMP MAX	33.2°C
TEMP MIN	25.1°C
Humidity	92%
Rainfall	Nil
Forecast	Cloudy with light rain

leisure

FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
Just grab any chance you get to demonstrate your expressive abilities, as it will fetch widespread appreciation. Something about your children may make you proud. However, Ganesha says, don't neglect the aged members of your family.

TAURUS
This opt a good day for being too firm or demanding. Ganesha advises you to steer clear of conflicts, arguments disputes. If you cannot avoid confrontation be sure you are the one who will have to step back. Loss of face and self esteem may be unavoidable. You need to face the fact that this is not your day.

GEMINI
You will be able to express your thoughts and opinions to the people you come in contact with today. They will also reciprocate and echo your feelings and emotions. This will give you validation and satisfaction. The day should be filled with fun and entertainment overall, says Ganesha.

CANCER
You may face unwanted events and circumstances. As a result you will feel sad, yet you will wriggle out of it with your efficiency. Put in efforts in studies, says Ganesha. remember that in success destiny is one per cent and effort 99 per cent.

LEO
Your expenses may shoot through the roof if you do not pay careful attention to your finances. You will want to splurge on expensive perfumes and clothing. You will be able to attract those of the opposite sex. You must guard against coming off as a show-off. Be humble and polite to everyone, says Ganesha.

VIRGO
You will be the flag-bearer for people around you, spreading hope and inspiration. Ganesha advises you to be the ideal family man today. By doing this you will radiate affection and love. This will, in turn, work remarkably in cultivating positive relationships.

LIBRA
Ganesha says that you will be more careful about your outward appearance and will try to enhance it further. Towards the evening you may impress people around you when you attend a social function. Those of you who are single can put forth a marriage proposal to their beloved today and it will be accepted.

SCORPIO
Relationships are the crux of life. It's very important how you make your near and dear ones feel when you are around. Make someone feel special today. Try to sort out misunderstandings if any. Don't dominate your friends or family members, says Ganesha.

SAGITTARIUS
Someone from the opposite sex is likely to get attracted towards you. Enjoy being in the limelight. Today, your main activity becomes hanging around with friends and cherishing their company.

CAPRICORN
Pain and fun, both are the two sides of a coin and today, you will experience both of them in equal amount. You may have to slog yourself to earn money, but be careful and don't drain yourself out, advises Ganesha. You will get what you have wished for, however, you need not try your luck too much. Spend money for the happiness of others.

AQUARIUS
Today will not be your day. You will find it difficult to create a peaceful environment in your home and adding to the woes will your children who will be making things even more difficult for you to handle. There may be some family disputes also, and green-eyed neighbours will try to add fuel to the fire.

PISCES
Your day today will be like a tug-of-war competition. Try to come out on top in this competition. Ganesha advises you not to underestimate your enemies. It is advisable to find a solution or avoid conflict so that you don't need to waste your energy in this.



ADELE SPARKS SECRET WEDDING RUMOURS

Pop star Adele has sparked speculation she's married to Rich Paul. A video posted on TikTok shows a female fan asking to marry the singer and the request prompted Adele to reply: "You can't marry me, I'm straight, my love. And my husband's here tonight. He's here."

STALLONE COMPARES HIMSELF TO THE 'LAST OF DINOSAURS'

Actor Sylvester Stallone has exceeded his own expectations in the movie industry in terms of longevity. Speaking to a magazine the *Rocky* star said, "I consider myself like the last of dinosaurs. Yeah, it is. I don't take it for granted, but I really want to spend it with my loved ones."



'Would love to take Jawan to the Oscars'

Mumbai: Shah Rukh Khan's *Jawan* is doing well at the box office, as the action thriller has crossed the Rs 800 crore mark worldwide.

The film features Nayanthara, Vijay Sethupathi, Deepika Padukone (in a special cameo), Priyamani, Eijaz Khan, Sanjeeta Bhattacharya, Sanya Malhotra, Grijia Oak, Lehar Khan, and Aaliyah Qureshi, among others.



In a recent interview, Atlee, director of the movie, said that his film should go to the Oscars.

"If everything falls in place, I think every effort, everybody, every director, every technician who is working in cinema, their eyes are on the Golden Globes, Oscars, National Awards, every award. So, definitely, yeah, I would also love to take *Jawan* to the Oscars. Let's see. I think Khan, sir, will watch and read this interview. I will also ask him over a call, 'Sir, should we take this film to the Oscars?'" said Atlee.

Oscars, National Awards, every award. So, definitely, yeah, I would also love to take *Jawan* to the Oscars. Let's see. I think Khan, sir, will watch and read this interview. I will also ask him over a call, 'Sir, should we take this film to the Oscars?'" said Atlee.

Atlee, is a name to reckon with – a filmmaker who has only blockbusters to his credit. With *Jawan*, the South director has established his supremacy in the Hindi film industry.

AGENCIES



Tamannaah not addicted to success or failure

Chennai: Actress Tamannaah Bhatia is going through a good phase in her career with back-to-back releases like *Lust Stories 2*, *Jee Karda*, and *Jailer*. However, in a recent interview, the actress opened up about the failure of *Bhola Shankar* and how it is not something that's in her control.

She said, "If a film fails, I don't think it is a personal failure. It isn't. I still don't know the numbers. I am only assuming what you are saying (is

true). I'm not obsessed about success or failure. I just keep doing my job, that's what's in my hand. The rest... I can't control how people take it."

While her other releases the year have worked in favour of the actress, *Bhola Shankar* failed to make a mark at the box office despite starring Chiranjeevi in the lead role. The film is an official Telugu remake of Ajith's blockbuster film *Vedalam*. It follows the story of a brother who resorts to extreme measures to keep his adopted sister safe. AGENCIES

Ameesha's obsession with luxury bags

Her ₹70 lakh bag comes at a significantly lower cost as compared to the extravagant diamond-adorned bags owned by celebs like Rihanna and Victoria Beckham, says the actress

Mumbai: Ameesha Patel, who is currently riding high on the super success of her last release, *Gadar 2*, recently revealed that she has an obsession for luxury bags.

The actress revealed that she has had a collection of handbags since the age of 12. Her love for designer bags grew from there, and she received her first branded bag at the age of 16 as a birthday gift.

The *Kaho Naa Pyaar Hai* actress also revealed in an interview that her most expensive bag is worth Rs 70 lakh and also joked that it can easily rival the price of a house.

Elaborating further about the bag, which is an exquisite crocodile-skin bag, Ameesha added that the bag comes at a significantly lower cost as compared to the extravagant diamond-adorned bags owned by Hollywood celebrities like Rihanna and Victoria Beckham.

Ameesha also went on to talk about another luxury bag which her household staff described as 'sabzi ka thaila' upon seeing it. However, she added that her version is a customised design which took



approximately 2-3 months.

Earlier, in an interview with ETimes, the *Gadar 2* actress, who has seen her share of highs and lows in her career, said that irrespective of the films she landed or lost out on, she didn't align with any camp or banner.

AGENCIES

Shruti's ugly experience

Mumbai: Actress Shruti Haasan had an ugly experience when a man followed her and tried to come close to her after she returned to Mumbai from Dubai.

The incident took place at Mumbai airport and was captured by paparazzi going by the name Instant Bollywood. Shruti could be seen getting irritated at the man as he walked along with her at the airport.

The *Luck* actress looked stressed and later was seen getting angry at the man.

In the clip, Shruti was seen walking towards her car and kept turning back.

She then asked the camera people: "Who is he?" She then tried to avoid an encounter

with the person and walked in a different direction. However, in the end, the after she returned to Mumbai from Dubai.

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PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

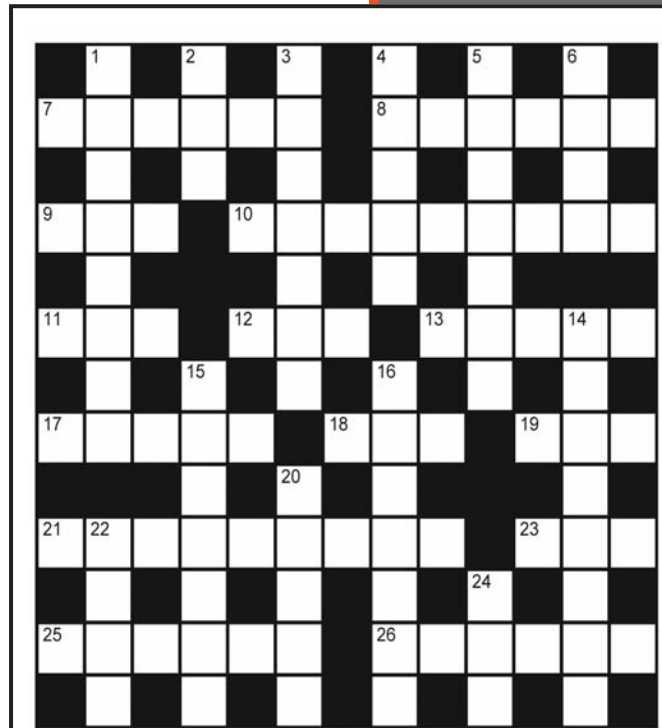


BREVITY



FUN post

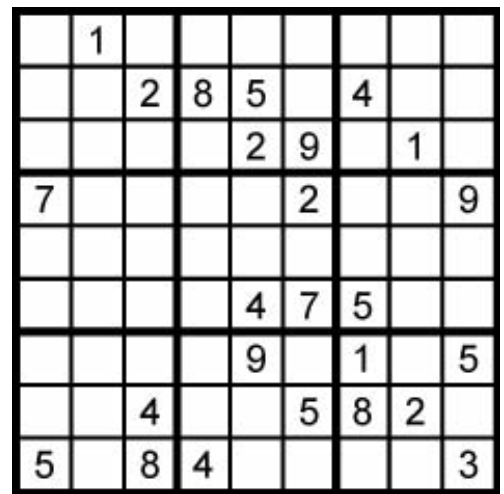
CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 7 Tease
 - 8 Calamine, e.g.
 - 9 Large snake
 - 10 Animal with plates
 - 11 Kind of dance
 - 12 Tough wood
 - 13 Ocean features
 - 17 Track event
 - 18 Little lie
 - 19 Mythical bird
 - 21 Airbus and 747, e.g. (5,4)
 - 23 Stole
 - 25 Panther
 - 26 Soften
 - 4 Bachelor's last stand?
 - 5 Unemotional
 - 6 Hoodwink
 - 14 Silver-tongued
 - 15 Seaport
 - 16 Nerves
 - 20 Greenland sight
 - 22 Caspian Sea feeder
 - 24 Foxy
- Down**
- 1 Summer quencher
 - 2 Offbeat
 - 3 Doctor's order, at times (3,4)

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

CULTURAL FETE

Artistes perform Odissi during an event organised by Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan and Infosys Foundation at Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan in Bhubaneswar, Monday



FINAL SALUTE: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, along with his family members, pays last respect to his sister Gita Mehta whose mortal remains were consigned to flames at the Lodhi Road Crematorium Ground in Delhi, Monday

Scrub typhus: Health teams in Bargarh, Sundargarh dists

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Sept 18: The Odisha government has sent two health teams to Bargarh and Sundargarh districts to inquire into the deaths due to scrub typhus infection, an official said Monday.

So far, six people have died of such infection in the two districts.

"There are some discrepancies in the scrub typhus death cases because the deceased had neither gone through proper testing nor treatment at any government facility. So, we have to collect details about the tests conducted and their symptoms," Public Health director Niranjan Mishra said. The teams will investigate the types of testing that were made in private hospitals and how the deaths occurred, he said. "Several private hospitals are conducting the

“There are some discrepancies in the scrub typhus death cases because the deceased had neither gone through proper testing nor treatment at any government facility. So, we have to collect details about the tests conducted and their symptoms”

NIRANJAN MISHRA | PUBLIC HEALTH DIRECTOR



kit test, which is not confirmatory. ELISA test is the right method to detect the disease," the director said.

According to health officials, five scrub typhus deaths have been reported in Bargarh district, while one person succumbed to the disease in Sundargarh. Scrub typhus infection spreads through bites of infected chiggers (larval mites).

The Health department has engaged accredited social health activists (ASHA) and auxiliary nurse and midwife volunteers to spread awareness about the disease. People, who frequently visit farmland or forests, are vulnerable to the infection.

The most common symptoms of scrub typhus include fever and a black inflamed mark on the skin called 'eschar'.

Ex-Forest official in STF net; drugs, wildlife items seized

GYAN RANJAN MOHAPATRA, OP

Bhubaneswar, Sept 18: The Special Task Force (STF) of Odisha Police Monday arrested a retired Forest department official and claimed to have recovered around 2.8 kg opium, deer skin, turtle scale and boar tusk from his possession.

On the basis of intelligence inputs, a raid was conducted by a team of STF personnel with the help of Boudh district police on Charichhak-Phulbani Road late Sunday night.

During the raid, the STF officials apprehended Sanatan Pradhan who was previously working in the Forest depart-

The STF has seized over 72kg brown sugar/heroin, 202gm cocaine, 116 quintal ganja/marijuana and 3kg and 650gm opium since 2020

ment and had taken VRS in 2008.

"During the house search of Pradhan, one deer skin, one turtle scale, one boar tusk and other incriminating materials were found. As the accused could not produce any valid authority in support of possession of such wildlife products, he was booked under multiple sections of the Wildlife Act, 1972," said an official.

STF sources further said the

accused was also found involved in illegal possession of narcotics. "During the search, around 2 kg and 880 gram of opium and 3 kg and 810 gram ganja and other incriminating materials were recovered from his possession," the official said, adding that another case was registered against Pradhan under Sections 18(B) and 20(B)(II)(B) of the NDPS Act, 1985.

The STF has seized over 72 kg of brown sugar/heroin, 202 gram of cocaine, over 116 quintal of ganja/marijuana and 3 kg and 650 gram of opium, including Monday's seizure, and arrested as many as 179 drug peddlers in the state since 2020.

EOW searches at Sambad office

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 18: The Economic Offences Wing (EOW) Monday conducted searches at the office of Eastern Media Limited in Rasulgurh area here in connection with a case of loan fraud, cheating, forgery and criminal intimidation against the proprietor and employees of the media house lodged by a former employee.

A 12-member team of the EOW, along with officials of Commissionerate Police, began searches at the office of Eastern Media Limited in the afternoon. The sleuths reportedly questioned the Human Resource (HR) head of daily Sambad and other staffers in the accounts section of the media house.

The searches continued till late in the evening.

Meanwhile, in a press note, the EOW stated that a case (24/23) under IPC Sections 506, 467, 468, 471, 420 and 120-B has been registered against owner of the media house, Soumya Ranjan Patnaik and others on the basis of the complaint lodged by Asim Mohapatra, an ex-employee of Sambad/ Eastern Media Limited.

"The case has been registered on the allegation that large number of employees of Sambad were forced to take personal loans under threat. The loan amount, running into crores, was not given to the employees concerned but allegedly used by their employer company,

Eastern Media Limited, Bhubaneswar," EOW stated.

Mohapatra in his complaint alleged that he was forced by the accused persons to sign on some bank loan forms against his will and paying capacity. The victim reportedly joined

Sambad in 2015 as a district correspondent at a salary of Rs 12,600.

Mohapatra was allegedly threatened that he would lose his job if refused to avail the loan. The accused persons allegedly made him sign many blank forms/documents including some blank cheques.

"At that time he did not know the details but later came to know that a loan of Rs 5 lakh was

taken in his name. But actually, it was used by Sambad/ Eastern Media Limited, Bhubaneswar. He did not get a single penny out of this loan. He was forced to sign for such loans on two different occasions in two different banks," claimed EOW.

Around 300 employees of Sambad/ Eastern Media Limited have allegedly been forced to sign on forged documents and about Rs 50 crore have thus been fraudulently secured by Soumya Ranjan.

"So far 15-20 ex-employees of Sambad have come forward with complaint of such forceful loans taken against their names using forged documents," EOW said, adding that many incriminating documents have been seized during the search.

LOAN FRAUD

SC unhappy over chit fund scam refund steps

KULDEEP SINGH, OP

New Delhi, Sept 18: The Supreme Court Monday expressed displeasure over the measures taken by the Odisha government to refund money to the victims of the chit fund scams in the state.

Terming the state government's affidavit, that contains details of payments to chit fund scam victims, complete eyewash, a two-judge bench of Justices Surya Kant and Dipankar Datta said that it will hear in detail the petitions seeking refund of money to small investors in Odisha.

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state government which can be used for payment to eligible depositors of the chit fund scam in Odisha.

In July, the Supreme Court had asked the Odisha government to file a status report in connection with the claims of around 24 depositors duped by various chit fund companies in the state.

The bench had asked the state government to look into the specific cases of these depositors at first and then, it said, the apex court will enlarge the scope to see what can be done about the other depositors. The bench had asked the petitioners to provide the details of the amount deposited by them along with the names of chit fund companies to the state government within two weeks. It had granted four weeks time to the state government to file the status report.

Earlier, the SC had passed a judgment in the case in March directing that out of the Rs 24,979.67 crore lying in the Sahara-SEBI Refund Account, Rs 5,000 crore shall be transferred to the Central Registrar of Cooperative Societies for payment against the legitimate dues of the depositors duped by Sahara Group.



LEGAL AWARENESS: Students of Rama Devi Women's University in Bhubaneswar during the launch of legal awareness programme 'Swayam Siddha' on the institution premises, Monday

Ratnabhandar repair work from Oct 15: HC

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, Sept 18: The Orissa High Court Monday asked the authorities to start the repair work of Srimandir Ratnabhandar from October 15.

A division bench of HC comprising Chief Justice Subhasis Talapatra and Justice Savitri Ratho also asked the authorities ensure that the repair works are carried out using technical assistance from IIT-Madras. Besides, the HC has also asked the authorities to decide on a suitable executing authority by October 15. The court posted the next hearing for October 19. The HC move came on a petition filed by lawyer Dilip Kumar Mohapatra opposing the report in the HC filed by the state government on the temple treasury repair works.

Bystanders less likely to give women CPR: Study

Bystanders are less likely to give life-saving cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) to women having a cardiac arrest in public than men, potentially leading to more women dying from the common health emergency, according to a study.

The research, presented at the European Emergency Medicine Congress in Spain, also shows that in private locations older people, especially older men, are less likely to receive CPR.

CPR combines mouth-to-mouth breathing and chest compressions to pump blood to the brain of people whose hearts have stopped beating, potentially staving off death until medical help arrives.

The researchers urged people to learn how to perform CPR and to give it without hesitation to anyone who needs it, regardless of gender, age or location.

"In an emergency when someone is unconscious and not breathing properly, in addition to

CPR combines mouth-to-mouth breathing and chest compressions to pump blood to the brain of people whose hearts have stopped beating, potentially staving off death until medical help arrives

calling an ambulance, bystanders should give CPR. This will give the patient a much better chance of survival and recovery," said Alexis Cournoyer, an emergency medicine physician at the Hopital du Sacre-Coeur de Montreal, Canada.

"We carried out this study to try to uncover factors that might discourage people from delivering CPR, including any factors

that might deter people from giving CPR to a woman," added Sylvie Cossette, a Ph.D. Nurse researcher at the Montreal Heart Institute Research Center, Canada.

The yet-to-be peer-reviewed study used data from records of cardiac arrests that happened outside of hospital in Canada and the US between 2005 and 2015, including a total of 39,391 pa-

We don't know why this is the case. It could be that people are worried about hurting or touching women, or that they think a woman is less likely to be having a cardiac arrest

ALEXIS COURNOYER | EMERGENCY MEDICINE PHYSICIAN

tients with an average age of 67.

They looked at whether or not a bystander performed CPR, where the emergency took place, and the age and gender of the patient. The team found that only around half of patients received CPR from a bystander (54 per cent). Overall, women were slightly less likely to be given CPR (52 per cent of women compared to 55 per cent of men).

However, when the researchers looked only at cardiac arrests that happened in a public place, such as the street, the difference was greater (61 per cent of women compared to 68 per cent of men).

These lower rates of CPR in public were found in women regardless of their age, according to the researchers.

When they looked at cardiac arrests that happened in a private setting, such as a home, the data indicated that with every ten-year increase in age, men were around 9 per cent less likely to be given CPR during a cardiac arrest.

For women having a cardiac arrest in a private setting the chances of receiving CPR were around 3 per cent lower with every ten-year increase in age. "Our study shows that women experiencing a cardiac arrest are less likely to get the CPR they need compared to men, especially if the emergency happens in public," Cournoyer said.

"We don't know why this is the case. It could be that people are worried about hurting or touching women, or that they think a woman is less likely to be having a cardiac arrest," the researcher added.

IMD: Heavy rain likely for 4 days



AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Sept 18: A low pressure area (Lopar) is likely to form over north-west Bay of Bengal (BoB) and neighbourhood in the next 48 hours, IMD sources said Monday, predicting rainfall in several districts of the state for the next four days.

The weather agency said that a cyclonic circulation lies over northeast and adjoining East Central Bay of Bengal and extends up to 5.8km above mean sea level. Under its influence, a low pressure area is likely to form over north-west Bay of Bengal and neighbourhood in the next 48 hours. "The monsoon trough at mean sea level now passes through Jaisalmer, Ajmer, Shivpuri, Sidhi, Daltongani, Digha and then south-east to east-central Bay of Bengal. Current meteorological features indicate widespread light to moderate rainfall with isolated heavy to very heavy rainfall over some parts of the state in the next 4 days," said an IMD official.

The IMD also said that thunderstorms with lightning are 'very likely' in the next two days

and advised people to take safe shelter to get protection from lightning. "Under the impact of the low pressure area, light to moderate rain and thunder-shower is 'very likely' to occur at many places of the state and at most places over the districts of interior Odisha and at many places over the districts of coastal Odisha," said the official. The IMD has issued yellow warnings to Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj, Koraput, Angul, Dhenkanal, Boudh, Kandhamal, Ganjam, Gajapati and Rayagada predicting heavy rainfall over one or two places.

Similarly, orange warning has been issued to Nuapada, Bolangir, Kalahandi, Bargarh, Jharsuguda and Sundargarh where heavy to very heavy rainfall is 'very likely' at one or two places. "There is possibility of water-logging in low lying areas, inundation of agriculture fields in the districts under orange warnings where there is a possibility of some damage to kutcha roads, risk of wall collapse for vulnerable kutcha houses and possibility of landslides and mudslides in hilly areas," added the official.

Capital to welcome Ganapati today

GIGANTIC IDOLS, THEMATIC PANDALS, LIVE MELODY BY TOP SINGERS AND CLASH OF A SERIES OF ODIA FILM RELEASE TO MARK THIS YEAR'S GANESH CHATURTHI

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, Sept 18: Gigantic Ganesh idols at several pandals are set to be the biggest attraction as the Capital city all set to welcome the Lord of Wisdom and celebrate Ganesh Chaturthi with all pomp and grandeur Tuesday.

Sarvajanic Ganesh Puja is going to be held at over 50 community pandals in Bhubaneswar apart from the various educational institutes, including schools, colleges, coaching centres and offices in the city.

The state government has decided to waive off rent for temporary use of government land within BMC limits for organizing different festivals like Ganesh Puja/Durga Puja/Kali Puja/Laxmi Puja/ Kartikeswar Puja etc, for the current year in the ensuing Parvana season.

Puja committees organisers said keeping in mind the guidelines set by the Pollution Control Board they are mostly using natural and eco-friendly colours to paint the idols.

Mammoth Idols

A 55-ft-tall idol at the Badagada pandal is going to be the biggest draw of the season. Moreover, 10kg weight Silver foot of Lord Ganesh made by artistes of Cuttack will be another major attraction, said Sangram Martha, secretary of Bright Star Youth Association, Badagada.

Apart from Badagada, Nayapalli-based Akhandalamani Seva Sansad has also made a 51-ft-high Ganesh idol for this year's Puja. It has been sculpted by artisans from Cuttack and Kolkata, said president of Sansad, Prashant Kumar Badajena.

Moreover, both the associa-



tions at Badagada and Saheed Nagar will offer around 50 kg laddoo at their respective pandals. Large idols will also feature the pandals at Saheed Nagar, Sailashree Vihar and other parts of the city. The Saheed Nagar club has prepared the pandal on the concept of the recently held G-20 Summit in New Delhi.

Cultural Events

The committees will continue the puja celebrations for five to seven days. Some Puja committees have also planned cultural events and Bhajan Sandhyas near pandals during this period.

This apart, popular Odia film singers like Humane Sagar, Aseema Panda, Deepti Rekha Padhi, Navya, Kuldeep Patnaik and others are scheduled to perform at various pandals during the festivities.

Immersion Points

Like every year, this year too the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) has constructed three separate immersion ponds: at Kuakhai bridge near Pandra, near Tankapani Road and near Lingipur adjacent to Daya bridge, respectively to facilitate seamless immersion of idols, starting from Ganesh Puja, the first celebration of the Puja season.

Multiple Odia movie releases to clash this Ganesh Puja

Release of several big ticket Odia movies will clash at cinema halls across the state during this year's Ganesh Puja.

Those include Sabyasachi Mishra-starrer Pushkara. Produced by Tarang Cine Production, Pushkara, starring Sabyasachi and Supriya Nayak

in lead roles, is based on Odia novel 'Nadabindu' written by eminent writer Sankar Tripathy. The movie marks the directorial debut of DOP-turned-director Subhranshu Das.

Elna Samantaray-starrer Pratisodh will be released September 22. The Zee Sarthak Films produced movie will show Elna in action avatar. The movie is directed by Sai Swaraj Renuka Mangaraj and also features Samaresh Routray, Kuna Tripathy in key roles. Other movies which will clash with them are Sohann Singh's Rowdy Raja, Cookies Swain's Kasturi, Sidhanth Mohapatra's 'Shankar' and Sambit Acharya's Hey Ram.

Fans expect that after recent success of 'Daman' and 'Pratikshya', the makers will produce good and original movies.

'Nurturing a tree similar to raising a child'

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, Sept 18: Bhubaneswar Development Authority (BDA), in collaboration with Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC), Odisha Forest Development Corporation (OFDC) and Chandaka Wildlife Division Monday organised a community afforestation programme at Buddha Jayanti Park under the 'Sabuja Pahada' (greening hills) initiative.

Around 2,000 people from different sections of the society gathered at the hilltop area of the park early morning and planted more than 1,000 saplings of different species on an area spreads across 12 acres. Members of Resident Welfare Associations (RWAs), members of self-help groups (SHGs), market associations, transgender community, NGOs and representatives of political parties among others joined the plantation drive.

BMC Mayor Sulochana Das said, "BDA's 'Sabuja Pahada' project is wonderful initiative since it involves local communities and people from all walks of life to save our environment. Nurturing a tree is similar to raising a child, so now our duty should be taking care of these planted saplings for its better growth then only we can achieve the desired target."

BDA vice-chairman Balwant Singh thanked the people for taking part in the initiative and urged them to take care of plants like their own children.



CP nabs 2 for killing construction worker

Bhubaneswar: The commissionerate police Monday arrested two persons on the charges of killing a construction worker near Kalpana bus stand here September 12. The accused were identified as P Narasingha Rao alias Nara and K Dashu Rao of Goutamnagar Basti under Badagada police limits. The 25-year-old deceased, Abdul Kuddush was a native of Mursidabad district in West Bengal. He along with his family was staying at Uttara under Dhauli police station.

CLASSIFIED LOST

I, Manjubala Patro, W/o-Sarat Chandra Patro have purchased a Flat bearing No. D on 2nd floor in RATH'S GREEN VILLA situated at BJB Nagar vide Regd. Sale deed Application No.11081903458, Dtd.13.03.2019. Due to require of Xerox Copy of the Said Sale deed. I prepar xerox copy at Ram Mandir Square and after that, I couldn't trace out the document. For this incident, I have furnished an affidavit on dtd.14.09.2023 before Notary public, Bhubaneswar and Lodged FIR at Kharvel Nagar, Police Station on Dtd.11.09.2023. I have not created any charge Mortgage, lien with any Financial Institutions by depositing original one. That the facts stated above is true and correct to best of my knowledge and if it is found false, then I will be guilty in eye of law. Please contact in this number 9938677424.

How Modi govt turned its back on forest conservation

CENTRE ABANDONED PROMISE OF A NEW FOREST POLICY. INSTEAD CHOSE TO CUT THE LAWS ON CONSERVATION DOWN TO THE SIZE IT DESIRED

TAPASYA AND NITIN SETHI

New Delhi: In July 2017, then Union minister for environment, forests and climate change Dr. Harsh Vardhan assured Parliament a new forest policy was being drafted and would be ready soon, 29 years after the last. The policy aims to yoke together all three central forest laws, which are currently working at cross-purposes because of changes in rules and regulations that tend to undermine forest conservation in favour of industries.

To date, the Modi government has yet to deliver on the promise of a forest policy. Records reviewed by The Reporters' Collective reveal the Parliamentary Committee on Assurances – an accountability watchdog – reprimanded the ministry for repeatedly trying to backtrack on the assurance made in Parliament after twice having had to roll back forest policy drafts. The policy drafts, which were put up for scrutiny in 2016 and 2018, had come under fire for ignoring the rights of tribal people and forest dwellers and facilitating corporate entry into forests.

While the Centre abandoned its responsibility to create a policy for governing the nation's forest resource, it instead made several dilutions to green laws through tweaks to rules and executive orders, making it easier for project developers to extract from forests. Executive orders do not require prior Parliamentary approval.

The government finally amended the Forest Conservation Act in August 2023 to bring the changes it had tried to bring in through the 2016 and 2018 drafts.

"The National Forest Policy is important because it lays down the overall vision of the state on how forests should be gov-

erned and the legal mechanisms that need to be established to ensure participatory forest management and the recognition of rights of communities. The 1988 policy shifted the focus from colonial extraction and revenue-oriented policy to forest dwellers' rights and their participation in forest management," said Tushar Dash, an independent researcher working on community forest rights.

"The 2018 draft policy nullified the progress of the 1988 policy when it came to tribal rights and people's participation. But the Centre still moved forward and brought the changes it wanted through executive orders and through amendments to the Forest Conservation Act. These go back to an extraction-oriented framework that favours private businesses," he said.

Two U-Turns in Three Years

In 2016, the Union Ministry for Environment made public a draft of the new forest policy. However, the government later disowned the draft after it received strong criticism for disregarding the rights of tribals and forest dwellers, which had already been legalised in 2006 by the Forest Rights Act. Additionally, the draft was criticised for making corporates' entry into forests easier.

Amid the cloud of uncertainty and policy vacuum, Lallu Singh, a parliamentarian from the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party, asked the ministry in 2017 if they had decided to have a new forest policy and when it was planning to do so. Without giving any time frame, then environment minister Vardhan informed Parliament that his ministry had tasked the Indian Institute of Forest Management in Bhopal to prepare a draft of the National Forest Policy. The institute had submitted it but the ministry



was yet to finalise it. The Centre assured Parliament that it was in the process of finalising the new forest policy.

Unlike elsewhere, ministers are held to their words given on the floor of the House. An assurance given to Parliament has to be implemented within three months, according to the Manual of Parliamentary Procedures in the Government of India. If the ministry or government department is unable to complete its job in time, it has to seek an extension. In cases where the government fails to implement its assurance, it has to request the Committee on Government Assurances to drop it.

This 15-member committee scrutinises ministerial promises, assurances and undertakings in Parliament and reports to Lok Sabha on their implementation within the stipulated time.

The Union government drew up another draft national forest policy in 2018. This too, repeated the transgressions of the previous one and prioritised the interests of the private sector over the rights of tribal and other forest-dependent communities. The gov-

ernment later went quiet on this draft policy as well. Faced with setbacks twice, the government tried to wriggle out of the commitment. In 2019, the government asked the Parliamentary committee it not be held to its assurance to have a new National Forest Policy. The committee did not agree.

The Modi government set out, for the third time, to see through a forest policy. In May 2020, the Union Environment Ministry prepared a cabinet note, a formal document outlining the policy proposal for which it is seeking approval, on a new forest policy and submitted it to the cabinet secretary, the senior most bureaucrat of the Union government reporting to the Prime Minister. But the Cabinet Secretary, for reasons unknown, returned the note in September 2021, asking the environment ministry to revise it. The environment ministry did not bother to revise.

Pending Assurances, a watered-down regime

The ministry of environment has against its name a long list of assurances that it broke or dragged on inordinately. The Committee on Government Assurances (2022-23) noted that there were 49 such assurances from the ministry that were pending implementation. Of these, 40 assurances were made in the current Lok Sabha, six in the 16th Lok Sabha elected in 2014 and the remaining three were given to the House elected after the 2009 elections.

Since the delay ranged from three to 11 years for 9 assurances given by the 15th and 16th Lok Sabha, the committee had sought clarity on how the ministry planned to fulfil the promises it made.

While the ministry said that it prioritised its assurances, it informed the committee that there was no fixed timeframe and frequency of meetings to review pending assurances. They also said that they had been "trying to conduct regular reviews since last one or two months".

The Committee looked at 21 of

the 49 pending assurances. These were on forest policy, amendments to environment and biodiversity laws, river zone regulation, coastal management, regulation on hunting, and conservation of Western Ghats among others. Though the government implemented 14 of the 21 pending assurances, the promise of a new national forest policy continued to be on the back burner.

But the government hadn't exactly given up. They over the years began deconstructing the contentious elements of the policy draft and patching them on to the fabric of existing laws – without a policy in place to be held accountable to. As part of the manoeuvre, by August 2023, the government brought in wholesale changes to a key forest law. The amended Forest Conservation law aligns with disputed provisions in the 2016 and 2018 draft National Forest Policy.

The Centre's communiques show that it relies in principle on the 2018 draft policy even though it wasn't officially finalised. A Press Information Bureau press release from July 2023 reads: "Ministry has formulated draft National Forest Policy after wide consultations with various stakeholders, including inter-ministerial consultations, and placed in public domain in 2018. The draft Policy recommends to integrate climate change mitigation and adaptation measures in forest management including resilience to climate change by forest-dependent communities".

(Next part: How the controversial, business-friendly elements of the shelved draft forest policies were weaved into forest laws.)
The Reporters' Collective

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Ganjam road mishap deaths spark concern



POST NEWS NETWORK

Chhatrapur, Sept 18: There is no let-up in deaths on roads in Ganjam district with the region witnessing a 1.31 per cent rise in accident related deaths from January to June this year as compared to the corresponding period of last year, a report said.

There has been no improvement in road accidents despite awareness campaigns, enforcement of road safety rules and meetings of road safety committee being held at regular intervals in the district. The Supreme Court led road safety committee has also expressed concern over the rising road fatalities in the district.

The secretary of the road safety committee set up by the Supreme Court attended a review meeting in Ganjam district and directed to take some steps to reduce road accident deaths. The meeting was held in the first week of this month. Reports said there has been a

THERE HAS BEEN A 1.31 PER CENT RISE IN ROAD ACCIDENT DEATHS FROM THE START OF THIS YEAR TILL THE MONTH OF JUNE IN COMPARISON WITH THE PREVIOUS YEAR

THE NHAI AUTHORITIES NOT ABIDING BY THE DECISIONS TAKEN AT THE MEETING OF THE DISTRICT ROAD SAFETY COMMITTEE IS SAID TO BE THE PRIMARY REASON BEHIND RISING ROAD FATALITIES

1.31 per cent rise in road accident deaths from the start of this year till the month of June in comparison with that of the last year. On the other hand, there has been a 12.27 per cent decline in number of road accidents from January this year till the month of June. The rising deaths amid decline in accidents have raised concern among the residents as well as road safety enforcement authorities of Ganjam.

The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) au-

thorities not abiding by the decisions taken in the meeting of the district road safety committee is said to be the primary reason behind rising road fatalities.

For instance, though the committee had decided to install a signage on Khallikote ghati on National Highway-16 and issued necessary instructions to NHAI authorities in this regard at a meeting held February 27, 2023, the NHAI authorities, despite their assurance, are yet to execute it. The Supreme Court led road safety committee also expressed its displeasure over the issue.

Meanwhile, directions have been issued to conduct an audit of the NH-16 and complete it within three months. Engineering errors in highway construction and necessary places to put up signage will find place in the audit with special focus on Khallikote ghati on the highway.

The meeting also directed to put up necessary signage on national and state highways and mark accident-prone zones as black spots and take necessary steps.

The review meeting found plantation alongside the NH-16 as quite discouraging. The NHAI and PWD officials were asked to install streetlights on busy stretches and ghati roads of the highways.

The meeting also directed to work out a standard operating procedure and take necessary steps accordingly to reduce road accidents and deaths. The meeting decided to intensify enforcement activities as deaths involving two-wheelers are increasing by the day.

ITI students turn scrap into Dashavatar idols

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Berhampur, Sept 18: Students of government-run Industrial Training Institute (ITI), Berhampur in Ganjam district have made idols of Dashavatar (10 incarnations of Lord Vishnu) using automobile waste products.

The six-ft idols, weighing between 100kg and 120kg, were placed in the open scrap park of the institute on the occasion of Vishwakarma Puja Sunday, said ITI principal Rajat Kumar Panigrahy.



Around 200 students of different trades were involved in the project. Automobile scrap items such as rims, clutch plates and shock absorbers were used to

create the idols. These discarded materials were collected from different garages in the city, he said.

"We have seen such types of

sculptures in Tirupati. We decided to replicate those with some modifications. The task was entrusted to the new students, while faculty members guided them. They completed all the 10 sculptures in a fortnight," he said.

Recycling and reuse of waste in innovative ways helps in protecting the environment, said Panigrahy.

The open scrap park in a 40,000 sq ft area on the campus has at least 20 giant sculptures, all made by students using discarded materials.

Man gets 7-yr RI for rape



POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, Sept 18: A local fast-track court judge Bijay Kumar Mishra convicted Binod Patra, 45, of raping a widow and sentenced him to seven years of rigorous imprisonment (RI) apart from imposing a penalty of Rs 10,000 on him. Failure to pay the fine will entail an additional six months' jail, the court ordered.

According to the case details, Binod, a resident of Kulanga

village under Telkoi block, committed the crime September 1, 2019 evening. The victim, a 45-year-old widow was asleep at her home along with her specially-abled son, when the accused entered the room and outraged her modesty before fleeing the spot.

He also threatened the woman to kill her if she lodges any complaint with police.

Telkoi police registered a case (92/2019) and forwarded Binod to court after arresting him September 3.

The judge pronounced the judgement after hearing 13 eyewitnesses and going through the police investigation report, special public prosecutor Gyanendra Nath Jena said.

47 gram brown sugar seized; 2 arrested

Berhampur: Excise sleuths here arrested two persons and seized 47 gram brown sugar from their possession near Bijipur embankment in Ganjam district Monday morning. The arrested were identified as Kailash Chandra Behera, 45, of Bijipur village under town police limits and Jitendra Kumar Sahu, 48, of Bhabinarayanpur village under Gopalpur police limits. Acting on a tip-off about brown sugar trading near Bijipur embankment, the excise sleuths, in the guise of customers, raided the place early Monday morning. The accused duo was sitting suspiciously in an auto-rickshaw (OD 07 C-3241). After interrogation police seized 47 gram brown sugar and Rs 2,400 cash from their possession. The accused duo acquired the contraband from Khurda, said the excise sleuths, adding that Kailash is the mastermind of this brown sugar peddling.

1 dies, 3 injured in electrocution

AGENCIES

Jajpur, Sept 18: A 35-year-old man died and three others were injured, two of them critically, after being electrocuted during transportation of a giant Ganesh idol on a tractor in Bari area of Jajpur district Monday, police said.

The incident took place in Balibili village under Bari-Ramachandrapur police limits around 3:30pm when a tractor carrying a giant idol of Lord Ganesh came in contact with a high-voltage live wire on Balibili-Bajapada road, said Subrat Kumar Jena, an eyewitness.

The driver managed to escape unhurt, he added.

On being informed, local police reached the spot and started an investigation.

According to police, four people accompanying the idol on the tractor were first taken to Bari community health centre (CHC) at Ramachandrapur by the locals, where one of them, identified as Sameer Rout of Dihabaringi village, died.

Of them, two critically injured persons were shifted to Jajpur district headquarters hospital after their condition deteriorated.



AGRARIAN FEST: Women selling 'sal' and 'kurei' leaves wait for customers at Maneswar Bazaar in Sambalpur, a day before the mass agrarian festival Nuakha in western Odisha, Monday

1 killed, another hurt in lightning

AGENCIES

Jajpur, Sept 18: A 21-year-old man was killed and another sustained critical injuries after being struck by a lightning in Chainihuda village under Dharmasala police limits in Jajpur district Monday, police said.

The deceased was identified as Manoranjan Nayak of Chainihuda and the injured as Manoj Kumar Tarei of the same village, they said.

Police said both Nayak and Tarei, friends to each other, were talking on their phones while standing on the village road when they were struck by lightning.

Onlookers rushed the duo to a nearby hospital, where Nayak was declared dead by a doctor while the condition of Tarei is said to be critical, police added.

Later, Tarei was shifted to SCB Medical College and Hospital in Cuttack after his condition deteriorated.

Shifting cultivation bane of orange farming in Gajapati

POST NEWS NETWORK



Gumma, Sept 18: Orange cultivation in Ajaygarh and Serang panchayats under this hill-locked and forested block in Gajapati district is on the wane with farmers turning away from the cultivation and taking to shifting and cashew cultivation, a report said.

Environmentalists, however, rued the atmospheric pollution caused by the shifting cultivation in the area, and loss of nutrients in the soil due to massive cashew farming.

They said that orange cultivation in Ajaygarh and Serang panchayats are on the decline despite conducive atmosphere for the produces. In past, orange farmers used to reap a bumper harvest but now the farmers are turning away from the cultivation after being drawn towards shifting and cashew cultivation.

Observers said that the government should step in and sensitise the farmers about the benefits and earnings from orange cultivation. They should be provided with enough orange saplings which will help in balancing the envi-

ronment.

Farmers of these two panchayats should be apprised that they should not depend on cashew and shifting cultivation which give less harvest and income, said the locals, adding they should rather take up orange cultivation which will fetch them good earnings. This will also help in conservation of traditional orange cultivation, they added.

Residents Suresh Bada Dalai, Maliya Paika, Debendra Pradhan, Rupa Sabar, Nohar Gamango, Elia Sabar and Kartik Gamango said the cultivation of a much sought after fruit like orange, if produced in the area, would augment the earnings of the local farmers while people in the state can get the fruit at a cheaper price.

Intellectuals of the locality said orange cultivation will benefit farmers and local residents if the state government provides incentives for the same.

When contacted, block horticulture officer Dillip Dingal said plans are afoot for cultivation of orange on 70 hectare of land in Adhei, Balmunda, Gira, Tibising and Luhara villages under the two panchayats during 2020-24 crop years.

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CWC invites on-line tenders from the contractors for the following work:

SL	Name of Work	Estimated Cost (Rs. Lakh)	Last date of on-line submission
1	Balance work of construction of Godown 1700MTC along with office & electrical work at CW, Rayagada (Odisha).	61.16	25.09.2023

Detailed Tender Notice along with Conditions of Contract and Notice Inviting E-Tender may be seen and downloaded from the CWC's website www.cewacor.nic.in or e-tender website www.cwceprocure.com or CPP Portal <http://eprocure.gov.in> or www.cewacor.nic.in

Further Corrigendum/Addendum to this Tender, if any, will be published on above websites only. Press advertisement in Newspapers shall not be issued for the same.

Executive Engineer

IndianOil
CIN : L23201MH1959G01011388

INDIAN OIL CORPORATION LIMITED (PIPELINES DIVISION)
SOUTH EASTERN REGION PIPELINES, JHARSUGUDA
REQUIRES PANEL DOCTOR

Applications are invited from Medical Professionals for part-time Doctor-in-Attendance on retainer basis to visit our Jharsuguda Office for 2 (two) hours per day for 8 (Eight) days a month. Doctors with MD qualification and with 5 years' experience as General Practitioner are eligible to apply. The retainer fees shall be ₹ 1386/- per hour and the maximum remuneration for working for 2 (two) hours per day for 8 (Eight) days a month will be ₹ 22176.00/-. An increase of 5% annually on cumulative basis will also be paid for the next four years or till next revision. The remuneration will be paid on actual attendance basis.

Interested candidates may send their application in a sealed cover superscribing 'Application for Panel Doctor' to Assistant Manager (O&M), Indian Oil Corporation Limited (Pipelines Division) South Eastern Region Pipelines, at-village Malimunda, PO -Talmal, Jharsuguda Odisha-768204 latest by 27.09.2023 in the format as enclosed at <https://www.iocl.com/latest-job-opening>

Please note that all further announcements in this regard including corrigendum, if any, would be made only at this website i.e. <https://www.iocl.com/latest-job-opening>

For further details, please write on e-mail id akhilshd@indianoil.in or contact at +91-8305398636.

ବରଗଡ଼ ଜିଲ୍ଲାର ଚାଷୀ ଭାଇ ଓ ଭଉଣୀମାନଙ୍କ ପାଇଁ ସୂଚନା

୧. ସମସ୍ତ ଚାଷ ପକ୍ଷୀ ଯୋଜନାରେ ସାମିଲ ହୋଇ କୃଷି ଓ ଆରୁଗ୍ଣତ୍ୱ ଚାଷ ପାଇଁ ନିଜର ଉପାଦାନ ତଥା ଆଉଁଶ କରୁଥିବେ କରନ୍ତୁ ଓ ଏହି ଯୋଜନା ମାଧ୍ୟମରେ ଉପକରଣ ସରକାରୀ ସହାୟତା ଲାଭ କରନ୍ତୁ ।

୨. କୃଷିକୁ ଏକ ଉନ୍ନତ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ରମରେ ଆପଣଙ୍କ ଦିନିକ ପ୍ରସାରଣ କୃଷି ଓ ଆରୁଗ୍ଣତ୍ୱ ଉନ୍ନତ କରନ୍ତୁ ଏବଂ ମୁଖ୍ୟମନ୍ତ୍ରୀ କୃଷି ଉନ୍ନତ ଯୋଜନାରେ ଉପକରଣ ସରକାରୀ ସହାୟତା ଲାଭ କରନ୍ତୁ ।

୩. ଜଳସେଚିତ ଅଞ୍ଚଳରେ ଉଚ୍ଚ ଓ ନ୍ୟମ ଜିଏମ ଜିଏମ ଧାନ ପରିଚାଳନା ଅଣ୍ଡାଧାର ଚାଷ କରି କୃଷିକାରୀ ତଥା ପରିବେଶର ସୁରକ୍ଷା କରିବା ସହିତ ଅଧିକ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ରମ ରୁଆଉ ଓ ଅନ୍ୟାନ୍ୟ ବିକ୍ରି ସମୟରେ ସୁରକ୍ଷା ରୁଆଉ ।

୪. କରୁ ଫସଲ ମାଟି ଓ ସାଧୁଗଣା ଯନ୍ତ୍ର ସାହାଯ୍ୟରେ ଫସଲକୁ ଧାତିରେ କୃଷି ମୂଲ୍ୟକାରୀ ସୁରକ୍ଷା ରଖିବା ସହିତ ଅଧିକ ଉତ୍ପାଦନ ଚାଷ କରି ଲାଭବାନ ରୁଆଉ ।

୫. ଦାନାଦାନ ସାର ବଦଳରେ ନାନୋ ସୁରକ୍ଷା ଓ ନାନୋ ଡି.ଏ.ସି. ସାରର ବ୍ୟବହାର କରି କମ ଖର୍ଚ୍ଚ ଓ ପରିଶ୍ରମରେ ଅଧିକ ଉତ୍ପାଦନ କରନ୍ତୁ ।

୬. ଯେଉଁ ବିଏସ୍ କିଷାନ ହିସାବକାରୀମାନେ ସେମାନଙ୍କର ସହାୟତା ରାଶି ପାଇନାହିଁ, ସେମାନେ ନିଜର ବିଏସ୍ କିଷାନ ଡ-କେ ଷାଡ଼ି, କୃଷକ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ପୋର୍ଟାଲରେ ଜିଏସ୍ ସହାୟତା ବିବରଣୀ ପ୍ରଦାନ କରନ୍ତୁ ଓ ଆଧାର ନମ୍ବର ସହିତ ଗୋପାଳ ନମ୍ବର ଏବଂ ଯୋଗ୍ୟ ତଥା ନିଜର ବ୍ୟାଙ୍କ ଆକାଉଣ୍ଟର ବି.ଏ.ସି.ଆର. ସହିତ ଏବଂ ଯୋଗ୍ୟ କରନ୍ତୁ ।

ଜିଲ୍ଲା ମୁଖ୍ୟ କୃଷି ଅଧିକାରୀ, ବରଗଡ଼

Bank of India
Zonal Office : Star House, 1/1D, Jayadev Vihar, Nayapalli, Bhubaneswar-751015

POSSESSION NOTICE
(Rule-8(1)) of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules-2002

Whereas, the undersigned being the **Authorised Officer of the Bank of India, Concerned Branches** under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued Demand Notices calling upon the Borrower/Partners in the loan account given below to repay the amount mentioned in the Notice plus interest & expenses thereon within **60 days** from the date of receipt of the said Notice. The Borrower has failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrower/Partners and the public in general that the undersigned has taken **possession** of the properties described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules. The Borrower/Partners in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the properties and any dealings with the properties will be subject to the charge of the **Bank of India, Concerned Branches** for an amount mentioned below with interest & expenses thereon. **The Borrower's attention is invited to provisions of Sub-Section (8) of Section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available to redeem the secured assets.**

BRANCH / Name & Address of Borrower/Partners	Liabilities due as per Notice	Date of Demand Notice/ Date of Possession	Description of the Immovable Properties
BHUBANESWAR BRANCH / Borrower: M/s. Tapaswini Food Products, Address-1: At: Gilinasi, P.O.: Siala, Krushnaprasad, Dist.: Puri, Odisha, Address-2: At: Plot No.: 1890, Sriram Nagar, Old Town, Bhubaneswar, Odisha / Partners: 1) Mr. Lalit Mohan Pradhan, 2) Mrs. Tapaswini Parida, Both are at Plot No.: 1890, Sriram Nagar, Old Town, Bhubaneswar, Odisha	₹ 2,50,18,991.05 + interest & expenses thereon	30.06.2023 / 16.09.2023	All that part and parcel of the property consisting of EQM of Land & Building under Khata No.: 109/113 of aggregate Area: Ac.4.100 Dec., Plot No.: 10/949, Sarada-3/2, Area: Ac.0.820 Dec., Plot No.: 10/952, Sarada-3/2, Area: Ac.0.820 Dec., Plot No.: 10/954, Sarada-3/2, Area: Ac.0.820 Dec., Plot No.: 10/956, Sarada-3/2, Area: Ac.0.410 Dec., Plot No.: 10, Sarada-3/2, Area: Ac.0.410 Dec., situated at Mouza: Gilinasi, Tahasil: Krushnaprasad, Thana: Krushnaprasad, Dist.: Puri, Odisha, standing in the name of M/s. Tapaswini Food Products
KHANDAGIRI BRANCH / Borrower: Mr. Jagannath Patnaik, S/o: Late Bipra Charan Patnaik, At: Plot No.: 248, Uppar Sahi, Jagamara, Bhubaneswar, Khordha-751030	₹ 7,35,393.24 + interest & expenses thereon	01.07.2023 / 15.09.2023	All that part and parcel of Land and Building situated over Flat No.: 422, 4 th Floor, Block-B, "Prabhujee Enclave", Plot No.: 401, 410, 410/995, Khata No.: 253/106, Mouza: Kujimahal, A/P.O.: Chandaka, P.S. Chandaka, SRO: Khandagiri, Dist.: Khordha, Total Area: 560 Sq.Ft., Type: Homestead, standing in the name of Mr. Jagannath Patnaik, Bounded by North: Open Space, South: Corridor, East: Open Space, West: Flat No.: 423
KHANDAGIRI BRANCH / Borrower: Mr. Jagannath Patnaik, S/o: Late Bipra Charan Patnaik, At: Plot No.: 248, Uppar Sahi, Jagamara, Bhubaneswar, Khordha-751030	₹ 7,11,061.01 + interest & expenses thereon	01.07.2023 / 15.09.2023	All that part and parcel of Land and Building situated over Flat No.: 105, 1 st Floor, Block-B, "Prabhujee Enclave", Plot No.: 401, 410, 410/995, Khata No.: 253/106, Mouza: Kujimahal, A/P.O.: Chandaka, P.S. Chandaka, SRO: Khandagiri, Dist.: Khordha, Total Area: 560 Sq.Ft., Type: Homestead, standing in the name of Mr. Jagannath Patnaik, Bounded by North: Plot No.: 399, 411 & 412, South: Road, East : Plot No.: 405 & 406, West: Plot No.: 400 & Road

Place: Bhubaneswar, Date: 19.09.2023

Chief Manager & Authorised Officer, Bank of India

FOCUS ECONOMY

HIGH DEFICIT, LOOSE MONEY



The Fiscal Responsibility legislation passed by Parliament in 2003 made it illegal to exceed 3% of GDP as the fiscal deficit limit. The stark reality is that in not even a single year has India not breached this limit

banking sector. But what cannot be denied is that fiscal spending is too stretched and leading to inflationary pressure.

India's fiscal situation is more dire than is acknowledged. If we compare the debt service ratio, i.e. how much of the government's revenue goes simply to pay interest on the rising debt mountain, India is way above the median for all countries. Due to the high deficit, the interest rate tends to remain high, leading to a disadvantage for crucial sectors like housing, real estate and indeed all the industrial projects. India tried very hard to curtail deficit spending tendency, by trying to make it illegal to exceed a certain limit. The Fiscal Responsibility legislation passed by Parliament in 2003 made it illegal to exceed 3% of GDP as the fiscal deficit limit. The stark reality is that in not even a single year has India not breached this limit. So much so that the FRBM law has been rendered toothless. A review of the law was conducted just before the pandemic and that too won't be of much use, since debt and deficit levels are far above what is healthy for the economy.

It is true that in a noisy and competitive democracy there is a clamour for more spending by vocal groups and vested interests. On top of this there is the increasing tendency to offer freebies. Plus, the new industrial policy which offers schemes like Production Linked Incentives and also protection from imports. All of these measures, for good or bad, have fiscal implications, which not only jeopardise sustainability of debt and fiscal stance, but also add to inflationary pressures. The large and heavy overhang of India's perennial fiscal dominance (and burden) cannot be undone merely by tightening the monetary policy. Even that is showing forbearance. The inflation fight is indeed a very difficult one in India.

The writer is a noted economist.
@THEBILLIONPRESS

India's official inflation rate for August is 6.83%, down from 7.44% the previous month. It is still above the 6% maximum rate which is the red line for the Reserve Bank of India. Ever since the monetary policy shifted to inflation targeting in 2016, the permissible band of inflation is between 2 and 6%, for the consumer price index (CPI). This is the seventh time in the past 12 months that the monthly inflation rate is above 6. Would that not be disconcerting to the RBI's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC)? They need to tighten money supply further to reduce inflation. But they have chosen to keep the interest rate unchanged, hoping that inflation will come down by itself. The RBI Governor too has indicated that inflation will remain high for some time.

India's CPI consists of a weighted average of around 450 different items in the consumption basket (different for rural and urban consumers). But almost 49% of the weight goes to food and related items. Hence if food inflation is high naturally the overall inflation is high. Food inflation which has a weight of nearly 49% is currently running at 10%, thanks to rising prices of vegetables, oilseeds, pulses, milk and even cereals. India has used a combination of banning exports or putting a hefty export tax on a variety of agricultural products. These include wheat, rice, sugar and onions. This affects the earnings of farmer's who were eyeing lucrative profits from exports. For instance, India exported 7.4 million tonnes of parboiled rice in 2022 but now there is a stiff 20% export duty in place. India accounts for 40% of the world's rice exports, and thanks to India's curbs, this has created additional scarcity in the world. The export curbs from India have affected importing countries like China, Philippines, Bangladesh, Indonesia and Nigeria. In Philippines a minister might have to resign due to the steep prices of rice. Has the ban or export tax reduced rice inflation

in India? Not really, because apparently the broken rice (on which the export tax applies) is headed for ethanol production. Using food to create fuel for cars is a controversial policy especially when the world is experiencing high food inflation. The FAO's all rice price index rose by 9.8% in August and is now at a 15-year high. Such inflation is bound to seep into India. The ethanol policy is motivated by trying to save precious dollars which we spend on the import of crude oil. But if domestic food inflation is the price to pay we have to think carefully about using food crops for fuel production.

Going beyond food inflation, the outlook for crude oil is also anticipating high prices. Due to supply cuts by Russia and Saudi Arabia, oil prices have already crossed 85 dollars, and will stay high. Since this affects India's imports adversely, there is a possibility that the Indian rupee will further decline from 83 to 85. Oil imports bill can only be beaten by more than expected exports of software and IT services. This is easier said than done, since there is a palpable slowdown in the software sector. Of course, the medium to long term outlook for India's software services remains very strong, as indicated

by NASSCOM, the industry body.

Apart from food inflation, oil prices and a slipping rupee-dollar exchange rate, one major contributor to the inflationary trend is the size of the fiscal deficit. India is running a high deficit, and its national debt is also rising. All attempts at controlling the deficit seem to be futile. Of course, during the pandemic, the deficit had to rise, since the government had to use emergency rescue measures in terms of free food, subsidised loans and ample liquidity. But some decisions can raise eyebrows. For instance, the free food grain scheme now running for more than 48 months, is costing the exchequer cumulatively 4.5 lakh crores. The cabinet recently announced the 1.7 trillion revival package for the debt-ridden telecom company Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited. In the past seven years, as per an answer to a Parliamentary question, nearly Rs 15 trillion worth of bad loans have been written off by public sector banks. This has fiscal implications, since equity capital has to be infused into the banks by the Central government. The write-off could be one contributory factor leading to the lower bad-loan ratio and improving health of the

Hostage Diplomacy

China's diplomatic manoeuvres and successes in the Middle East seem to have forced the US not to waste any more time and cement its ties with Iran. The Biden administration does not appear to have been nettled by critics in the Republican Party who have accused it of bartering away US interests. Confronted with an unprecedented crisis of legitimacy at home, the Islamic Republic of Iran is relying heavily on its strategy to use hostages to ease its economic crisis. The policy is characterised by its use of foreign prisoners to extract concessions from the West. The latest success of this is the agreement reached with the US mediated by Qatar. The agreement involves a prisoner exchange and the release of \$6 billion of Iranian funds, frozen in South Korea due to US sanctions. The money in Iranian assets – the proceeds of oil sales – were frozen under sweeping US oil and financial sanctions against Iran. Then president Trump in 2018 reimposed the sanctions when he pulled Washington out of a deal under which Iran had restricted its nuclear programme.

On September 11, Washington declared it was putting in place exemptions to assure the banks, involved in this money transfer, that they would not be placed under sanctions. The \$6 billion, which are to be transferred to Qatari banks, are intended to be used to buy food and medicine which are in short supply in Iran fuelling widespread resentment among the populace. Iran desperately needs the money to stave off the snowballing economic crisis that has been compounded by the regime's draconian treatment of the country's women fighting against medieval social taboos imposed on them by the leadership.

For its part, Tehran released five Iranian-American prisoners from Evin prison, north of Tehran, and placed them under house arrest on August 10. They will be exchanged for five Iranians imprisoned in the United States. Of these, four were tried in US courts and sentenced to prison for violating sanctions against Tehran's nuclear programme, or for attempting to send sensitive equipment and provide military information to Iran. US Secretary of State Antony Blinken called the move the first step of a process that would lead to their return home.

At the centre of the negotiations that forged this deal between the superpower which Iran brands as the "Great Satan" and the Islamic Republic which Washington calls a state sponsor of terrorism is the hugely rich state of Qatar. It hosted at least eight rounds of talks involving Tehran and Washington negotiators who were, funnily enough, sitting in separate hotels and speaking via gadgets as reported by media.

Qatar will implement a financial arrangement under which it will pay banking fees and monitor how Iran spends the unfrozen cash to ensure no money is spent on items under US sanctions and the prisoners will transit Qatar when they are swapped. Iran initially wanted direct access to the funds but in the end agreed to having access via Qatar.

That Iran has gained some measure of credibility among US allies is apparent from the fact that South Korean foreign minister Park Jin said efforts were under way to transfer Iran's funds back to that country. The US-Iran relationship is not characterized by trust. Yet the US, under Biden, is now ready to judge Iran by its actions as indicated by the State Department.

Interestingly, the deal sidestepped the main US-Iran dispute over Iran's nuclear aims, culminating in a rare show of cooperation between the long-time adversaries. They had been at daggers drawn on a host of issues from Iran's nuclear programme to the US military presence in the Gulf.

Ties between the US and Iran soured when Donald Trump quit a nuclear deal with Iran as US president in 2018. Reaching another nuclear deal has slipped out of Biden's agenda as he prepares for the 2024 US election.

However, there has not been much change in Washington's overall approach to Iran marked by deterrence, pressure and diplomacy. Once the funds are transferred, they will be held in restricted accounts in Qatar and the US will have oversight as to how and when these funds are used so as to forestall any attempt by Iran to divert them to purposes other than humanitarian.

The transfer of funds plan has drawn Republican criticism that Biden, a Democrat, is in effect paying ransom for US citizens. But, the criticism is not wholly justified as the Biden administration has made it clear that the deal does not mean that Iran would be getting any relief from sanctions.

The US claims it would continue its policy against Iran's "destabilising" activities in the region. It has only toned down its antagonism towards Iran in the backdrop of China's friendly policies in the Middle East that has been instrumental in making sworn enemies in the region friends. Hopefully this arrangement will continue until the coming presidential election. There will obviously be a re-look at the Iran policy after the election if power changes hands.

WISDOM CORNER

- If you realized how powerful your thoughts are, you would never think a negative thought.** — PEACE PILGRIM
- The only way of finding the limits of the possible is by going beyond them into the impossible.** — ARTHUR C. CLARKE
- Nurture your mind with great thoughts, for you will never go any higher than you think.** — BENJAMIN DISRAELI

WORDSWORTH

Nit-picking

The phrase comes from the task of removing the tiny eggs of lice (nits) from someone's hair and clothing, a tedious activity that required close attention and care. The word nit, which could also refer to the eggs of other insect parasites such as fleas, has been around in the language for as long as we have records (it appears in Old English around 825 as hnitu, but it has relatives in most European languages and has been traced back to an Indo-European root, so ancient has been the association of such pests with human beings). But what seems a little odd is that the figurative sense of nit-picking, of petty criticism or fault finding, is modern. The Oxford English Dictionary records it first only in 1951, in the form nit-picker, in this helpful explanation from Collier's: "Two long-time Pentagon stand-bys are fly-speckers and nit-pickers. The first of these nouns refers to people whose sole occupation seems to be studying papers in the hope of finding flaws in the writing, rather than making any effort to improve the thought or meaning; nit-pickers are those who quarrel with trivialities of expression and meaning, but who usually end up without making concrete or justified suggestions for improvement". The first of these two slang terms has died out, with the second taking on much of its meaning. Why it took so long for this expressive figurative sense to appear is a small mystery. Perhaps we had to wait for a time when the memory of the finicky nature of the task was still current, but when the need for it in industrialised countries had been greatly reduced through better hygiene and insecticides. Or perhaps the image came not from humans, but from some natural-history programme about our simian relatives, who spend much of their time literally nit-picking as part of grooming.



Ajit Ranade

USING FOOD TO CREATE FUEL FOR CARS IS A CONTROVERSIAL POLICY ESPECIALLY WHEN THE WORLD IS EXPERIENCING HIGH FOOD INFLATION

SPECTRUM POVERTY

A tragedy is unfolding

The poorest countries are in desperate straits, and the rest of the world is looking the other way. Doing so comes easy, because low-income countries (LICs) matter little to the fate of the world in the near term. At the end of June, the combined GDP of the 28 countries in this group was roughly \$500 billion – a drop in the \$100 trillion ocean that is the global economy. The world's poorest countries are also nobody's ideal export markets: the average annual income is barely \$1,000, and conflict and instability are the norm for about half.

Nonetheless, 700 million people live in these countries, and about half of them are in extreme poverty. Very poor people have long been accustomed to neglect from their own governments, which often have other priorities. For example, they spend about 50% more on war and defence than they do on health-care. Nearly half their budgets go toward public-sector wages and interest payments on debt, while a mere 3% of total government spending across LICs goes to support the most vulnerable citizens. That is one-

tenth the average for developing economies more broadly.

It therefore should surprise no one that a human tragedy is now unfolding in these countries. Key indicators of human development in today's LICs are far worse now than they were in the LICs of 2000, before many of the latter had ascended to middle-income status. For example, maternal mortality is 25% higher now, and the share of the population with access to electricity has fallen from 52% to barely 40% across this cohort.

Making matters worse, the odds of these countries getting help from abroad have declined. Wealthier countries have chosen exactly the wrong moment to become less generous. Even before the pandemic, foreign-aid flows to the poorest countries, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa, were slowing. Today, wealthier countries are redirecting more of their foreign-aid budgets to meet the surge of refugees arriving on their own shores.

Between 2011 and 2015, grants accounted for about one-third of government revenues in the world's poorest countries; but that share has since dropped to

less than one-fifth. Poor-country governments have made up the difference by going deeper into debt – and at punishing interest rates. Government debt-to-GDP ratios in these economies soared from 36% of GDP in 2011 to 67% last year – the highest level since 2005 (with the exception of 2020).

Wealthier countries, and all international financial institutions, should move decisively on three fronts. First, they must increase concessional financing for the poorest countries, with aid going to addressing emerging challenges such as climate change, economic fragility and pandemics. Increased aid also will help these countries invest in critical sectors such as health, education, and infrastructure, which will enhance their resilience and growth potential. International financial institutions, for their part, can help crowd in private finance in sectors that offer the promise of both development and profits.

Second, debt restructuring must be accelerated. The Common Framework for Debt Treatment Beyond the DSSI has struggled to deliver relief ever since the G20 announced it nearly

three years ago. For many lower-income countries, restoring long-term debt sustainability will depend on debt restructuring.

Finally, we must double down on the reform agenda by ensuring that global initiatives to bolster the poorest countries are complemented by ambitious domestic measures. International financial institutions can make a difference by helping LICs mobilise domestic revenues and improve spending efficiencies and debt management.

Time is running out. The growing hopelessness among citizens of the poorest countries will feed a vicious cycle that is already underway. Desperate to escape misery at home, many will risk everything to find refuge abroad. The suffering of millions of people in faraway lands is not as far away as it may seem. It is contagious, and it is already spilling over national borders, with unpredictable global consequences.

Indermit Gill is Chief Economist and M. Ayhan Kose is Deputy Chief Economist at the World Bank.

@PROJECTSYNDICATE



Indermit Gill & M. Ayhan Kose

TODAY, WEALTHIER COUNTRIES ARE REDIRECTING MORE OF THEIR FOREIGN-AID BUDGETS TO MEET THE SURGE OF REFUGEES ARRIVING ON THEIR OWN SHORES

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, Rasulpur Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

Green Card backlog

Sir, This refers to "Ramaswamy vows to end H-1B visa programme," OrissaPOST, Sept 18. The complicated immigration topic comes to the forefront in almost every presidential election in US, but no major breakthrough has happened yet. When it comes to the issue of employment based Green Card for about 4,00,000 Indian workers, the waiting period of staggering 195 years implies that there is no chance of getting it in one's lifetime, while spending the whole life working for US companies. However, the instrumental role played by Indian-Americans with significant heft in economic and political spheres is apparent. In this context, the demand by a group of US lawmakers, who urged the Biden administration to prioritise Green Card applicants from India, and reduce the wait period from 195 years in terms of the current backlog, is important too. Green Card barriers disproportionately affect Indian tech professionals, who constitute a large chunk of the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) talent pool, playing a crucial role in maintaining Washington's competitive edge. Long delays are a vexing wrinkle in an otherwise blossoming relationship. This should be addressed at the earliest for it can erode goodwill accrued organically over decades.

N Sadhasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

Terraforming technology

Sir, Terraforming is the theoretical process of deliberately modifying a planet, moon or other celestial body to make it habitable for humans or other forms of life. The concept of terraforming typically involves altering the environmental conditions of a celestial body to create an Earth-like ecosystem with a breathable atmosphere, liquid, water and suitable temperatures for life as we know it. While this idea has primarily been explored in science fiction, researchers and experts have also theorised possible approaches to make it a reality. The process of terraforming requires a deep understanding of a planet's atmospheres, climate, geology and other environmental factors. It may involve introducing greenhouse gases to increase temperature, creating or importing water sources, altering the landforms to provide habitable areas and introducing suitable organisms or modifying existing life forms. As humanity continues to explore space, the idea of terraforming may be a subject of ongoing scientific and philosophical debate.

Asit Mohanty, JAJPUR

Annamalai draws flak for remarks on Annadurai

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chennai, Sept 18: The statement of BJP Tamil Nadu state president, K. Annamalai against the first Chief Minister of Dravidian ideology, C.N. Annadurai popularly known as Anna (Elder Brother) September 11 has led the saffron party to a difficult situation in Tamil Nadu.

Annamalai while addressing a protest programme against Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments minister, PK Sekar Babu on his remarks against 'Sanatana Dharma' had made a statement against Annadurai also. He had said that "Annadurai had in the 1950s made a critical remark against the Hindu faith at a programme in Madurai which was staunchly opposed by freedom fighter Pasumpon Muthumarlinga Thevar."

Immediately after the statement of Annamalai, AIADMK leaders had come in hordes against the BJP state president. While Annamalai refused to be cowed down by this, there are clear indications that the grass-roots AIADMK cadres and sympathizers are having a bitterness towards BJP after the remarks.

AIADMK leader and former Minister, Sellur K. Raju had made a scathing attack on Annamalai and said, "There are people who are staunch followers of Anna who can cut the



tongue of those who speak ill of the late Chief Minister."

He also said, "In Tamil culture, no one speaks ill of departed people, including senior political leaders and added that the AIADMK leaders who had fervently criticized M. Karunanidhi while he was alive are speaking of respect about him."

Former ministers and AIADMK senior leaders, CV Shanmugham and D. Jayakumar have also come out against Annamalai on his comments against Annadurai.

CV Shanmugham, who was a former law minister in the AIADMK government of Tamil Nadu, said that the alliance between the AIADMK and BJP in Tamil Nadu was more necessary for the BJP than the AIADMK and not otherwise. He

had also castigated the Yatra undertaken by Annamalai as a 'Vasool Yatra' which means "paisa collection yatra".

Social activist and retired Professor of Political Science, M. Kadamban while speaking to IANS said, "The BJP leaders don't understand that in Tamil politics, culture and identity are very important and if a neopolitician like Annamalai thinks that he can alter Tamil Nadu politics in a day, he is thoroughly mistaken."

The social activist said, "The AIADMK is the only one to lose in an alliance with the BJP, and for BJP everything is for gain. Hence cadres want the party to break out from the alliance and contest independently. This argument is becoming more grave as days pass by."

UP parties go all out to woo sub-castes

Political parties in Uttar Pradesh are unabashedly organising sub caste conferences, ignoring the 2017 Supreme Court order that said that 'religion, race, caste, community or language would not be allowed to play any role in the electoral process'

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Lucknow, Sep 18: With the Lok Sabha elections approaching, the caste cauldron, as always, is on the boil in Uttar Pradesh - the only difference being that from caste it has gone on to sub-castes.

Political parties in Uttar Pradesh are unabashedly organising sub caste conferences, ignoring the 2017 Supreme Court order that said that "religion, race, caste, community or language would not be allowed to play any role in the electoral process".

The BJP which, till now, had put Hindutva on its priority list, is now wooing sub-castes from the OBC category with a vengeance.

The party apparently feels that addressing Hindus, in general, will not bring in adequate numbers in the elections.

The BJP has been holding sub-caste conferences in Lucknow under the leadership of its OBC leaders including Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Maurya - an OBC himself.

The Suheldev Bhartiya Samaj Party (SBSP) President Om Prakash Rajbhar is the new self-proclaimed leader of OBCs and is pushing the envelope to muster backward support for BJP.

The BJP is keen to wean away a part of the Samajwadi Party's vote base and also make a dent in BSP's following by wooing Most Backward Castes.

There are over 200 sub-castes



among the OBCs that constitute 40 per cent of the state's population. The OBC population is dominated by Yadavs (15 per cent) and followed by Kurmis (9 per cent).

The remaining sub-castes constitute one to two per cent of the population.

The BJP, till now, has held conferences for sub-castes that include Nishad, Kashyap, Bind, Kurmi, Yadav, Chaurasia, Teli, Sahu, Nai, Vishwakarma, Baghel, Pal, Lodh, Jat, Giri, Goswami, Jaiswal, Kalvar, Saini, Mali, Gangwar and even Halwai that has a population of .02 per cent.

The party is assuring these sub-caste groups that it would protect their interests.

A senior BJP functionary admitted that the party was keen to add on to its present vote base since that would make up for any depletion due to the anti-incumbency factor.

"This is a conscious effort to

bring marginalised sections of society into the party fold. What is wrong if we are trying to expand our vote base?" said the functionary.

Seeing the BJP making a concerted effort to woo the sub-caste groups, the Samajwadi Party that had so far remained content with its Yadav vote bank, has also started reaching out to non-Yadav OBCs. Its slogan of PDA (Pichhda, Dalit, Alpasankhyak) is a manifestation of its new strategy.

Samajwadi Party spokesman

Sunil Sajan, meanwhile, denied that the Samajwadi Party was following in BJP's footsteps.

"We are not holding sub-caste Sammelan like the BJP and becoming blatantly casteist in approach. We are holding social justice programme for OBCs in general," he said.

The Bahujan Samaj Party, on the other hand, is wooing various Dalit sub-castes through its Bhaichara committees.

The Congress, so far, has avoided any such conferences.

DMK hits out at Guv for remarks on social justice

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, Sept 18: The ruling DMK in Tamil Nadu Monday hit out at Governor R N Ravi for his comments regarding social discrimination in the state, alleging he was unable to digest its governance model of inclusive development and accused him of launching a "false propaganda."

At an event in Thanjavur Sunday, Ravi had said there exists social discrimination in the society which was unacceptable.

"We have untouchability, social discrimination. A large section of brothers and sisters are not treated equal. It is painful, it is unacceptable. It is not what the Hindu Dharma says. Hindu Dharma talks about equality," he said.

Those from the Scheduled Castes were once 'rishis' (sages) who contributed to the Vedas. There was no discrimination and it "crept in later," he claimed.

It is a social evil and must be eradicated, he said, adding saint Ramanujacharya dedicated his whole life towards eradicating inequality.

"Unfortunately in Tamil Nadu,

in our state this social discrimination is still a national problem. Every day I read in the newspaper, I get the report, I hear the story of our brothers and sisters from scheduled caste are not being allowed access to the temples. This is strange and I am surprised and shocked. Nowhere in India, no where in Bharat our young people have caste bands (on their wrist)," he said.

"Here in our state, our youth are wearing caste band- how shameful, how shameful that a state which talks so much about social justice, which makes so much politics about social justice but they have been exploiting the people in the name of caste, in promoting social discrimination," he charged.

He pointed out incidents like the one at Vengaiyaval, where "human excreta" was mixed in an overhead water tank catering to the local SC citizens and another at Tuticorin where locals refused to allow their children to have food prepared by a cook from the SC community in a school.

Such discrimination "is everyday affair," in Tamil Nadu, Ravi added.



"We have untouchability, social discrimination. A large section of brothers and sisters are not treated equal. It is painful, it is unacceptable. It is not what the Hindu Dharma says. Hindu Dharma talks about equality"

RN RAVI | GOVERNOR

He is not able to stomach the growth the Dravidian model of governance has achieved. He is against Dravidian ideology, propagates Sanatan ideology. Wherever he goes, he speaks about the virtues of Sanatana Dharma but Sanatana Dharma is responsible for this caste system

SARAVANAN ANNADURAI | DMK SPOKESPERSON

governance has achieved. He is against Dravidian ideology, propagates Sanatan ideology Wherever he goes, he speaks about the virtues of Sanatana Dharma but

Sanatana Dharma is responsible for this caste system."

"If we have division in the society, it is because of Sanatana Dharma," he said.

The inclusive growth that has happened in TN has not happened anywhere else, even as the number of women entrepreneurs as well as those from the SC/ST communities was 'incomparable' to other states, he told PTI.

"If he is randomly picking some events which has happened-look at the response the government has given to all those issues. Temple that denied entry to Dalits was closed and the issue remedied," he said.

Regarding the Tuticorin incident, he pointed out party's senior leader and Lok Sabha MP Kanimozhi had addressed the issue after having lunch with the students at the school.

Further, the historic achievement that anybody can become temple priests in the state "is breaking the glass ceiling."

"They are not able to take it, the governor is not able to take this. So he is making imaginary, wild allegations," Annadurai charged.

Tamil diaspora urges Centre to revoke ban on rice imports

Rice is a staple diet and with the ban on export of rice by India, the availability of boiled rice has come down leading to the Tamil diaspora suffering with shortage of rice



Tamils living abroad are finding it difficult to get their choice of specific varieties of rice.

Karthikeya Sivasenapathy of the Non Resident Tamil Welfare Board, in a statement, said that the disruption of the supply chain following the ban of boiled rice has led to deep reaching challenges in preserving the culinary traditions among non-resident Tamils.

He said that the Non Resident Tamil Welfare Board has urged the Union government to revoke the rice ban taking the culinary cultural traditions of the Tamil diaspora.

The functionary further said

that immediate measures should be taken to ensure a steady supply of rice to Tamil communities worldwide. He also stressed that the rice varieties essential for the traditional Tamil dishes are required and the government should take a pro-active position in this.

The Non Resident Tamil Welfare Board leader also said that the importance of export restrictions on rice was to ensure domestic food security, a balanced approach was essential in this regard and called upon the government to safeguard the interests of the Tamil population living abroad.

UP govt guarantees your security: Yogi to investors

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Corakhpur, Sept 18: Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath Monday assured investors and entrepreneurs that the government guarantees their security, recalling the "lawlessness" in the state before the BJP came to power.

Adityanath was speaking at a function where he distributed allocation letters to 97 entrepreneurs for 102 plots. Earlier, he inaugurated a plastic pipe factory in Sector 26 of GIDA (Gorakhpur Industrial Development Authority) and also laid the foundation stone and inaugurated development works worth Rs 136 crore.

"The government is providing a conducive environment for security and all types of facilities. Online portals such as Nivesh Mitra and Nivesh Sarathi have been created for this purpose, and incentives are being provided by the government to investors without any hindrances," the chief minister said.

The entire country is experiencing a positive atmosphere of

development, security, and prosperity today, he added.

"Everyone knows what was the situation in Uttar Pradesh before 2017, and specifically, what the condition of Gorakhpur was five to seven years ago. Crime and mafia held sway over every system.

Lawlessness was at its peak. The state experienced riots every other day. Corruption was rampant. In such an environment, the youth of the state faced an identity crisis," Adityanath said.

"Development work had come to a standstill. No one invested in an unsafe environment. All institutions were moving towards devaluation. This was the situation prevailing in Uttar Pradesh. However, in the last six years, after a double-engine government came to power in the state and under the guidance and leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the people have seen a transformed Uttar Pradesh," he added.

Adityanath said that GIDA is the same area where in 2005-06, during the Samajwadi Party government, a slaughterhouse was being established.



OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER
RURAL WORKS DIVISION-II, GANJAM, BERHAMPUR
 Phone- 0680-2404096; E-Mail: eerwgmt@yahoo.co.in
Government of Odisha e-Procurement Notice
Bid Identification No. Online Tender/16/SERWD-II/2023-24
 Memo No. 6119/RWD-IIGB, Date: 15.9.23

O-1070	
1 Name of the Work	: Road Works
2 Estimated Cost	: Rs. 25.21 Lakh
3 Period of Completion	: 60 (Sixty) Days as per Annexure
4 Date & Time of Availability of Bid Documents in the Portal	: 22.09.2023 at 10.00 A.M. to 03.10.2023 upto 3.00 P.M.
5 Last Date/Time for Receipt of Bids in the Portal	: 03.10.2023 upto 3.00 P.M.
6 Name and address of the Officer Inviting Bid	: Superintending Engineer, Rural Works Division-II, Ganjam, Berhampur

Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal tendersodisha.gov.in/nicgep/app
 Sd./- Superintending Engineer, R.W. Division-II, Ganjam, Berhampur
 OIPR-25073/11/0016/2324

OFFICE OF THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL: KHORDHA
 H & UD Department, Govt. of Odisha Khordha-752055
 e-Mail - khurda_municipality@yahoo.co.in
 Phone No-06755-220674 Website:-www.khordhamunicipality.in
"e" Procurement Notice
 No.3088/ Date:18.09.23

No.C-1455:Bid Documents consisting of Work, Estimated Cost, Cost of Tender Paper, EMD, time of completion, Class of Contractors and the set of terms and conditions of contract and other necessary documents can be seen in Govt. website i.e. <https://tendersodisha.gov.in/nicgep/app>

1. Tender Reference No.	: KMP/PLTY/ 06/2023-24
2. Name of the Work	: Civil Construction works as mentioned in website
3. No. of works	: 170 Nos.
4. Estimated Cost	: As per DTCN
5. Earnest Money Deposit (EMD)	: As per DTCN
6. Period of Completion	: As per DTCN
7. Date & Time of Bidding	: From Date 25.09.2023 at 11.00 A.M
8. Last date & time for receipt of bids in the portal	: Date. 13.10.2023 up to 5.00 PM
9. Bids received online shall be opened on	: Date.16.10.2023 from 11.00 AM
10. Name and address of the Officer inviting Bid	: O/o-Executive Officer, Khordha Municipality

Further amendments, corrigendum or other communication regarding this notice will be available only on <https://tendersodisha.gov.in/nicgep/app> and will not be published in print media.
 Sd./- Executive Officer, Khordha Municipality
 OIPR-13082/11/0011/2324

OFFICE OF THE PANCHAYAT SAMITI PAIKMAL, DIST- BARGARH
1st corrigendum to
Tender Call Notice No. Online - 01/2023-24, Dist-Bargarh
No. 4177 Dated 16.09.2023
 No.I-387:The following changes has been made to the Tender Call notice No 01 of 2023-24.

The Class of contractor for serial No- 3 and 5 Tender call notice No- 01/2023-24 may be read as "B" class instead of "B & C" class. As per Letter No- 12586/W, Dated 9th September, 2022 of Works Department, Odisha, Bhubaneswar.

In case, any bidder of "C" Class category has submitted tender for the above serial Nos. they are requested to withdraw their bid within the bidding period for early refund of tender cost and bid security.

All other terms & conditions as laid down in the above tender call notice will remain unchanged.

Sd./- Block Development Officer, Paikmal
 OIPR-19175/11/0001/2324

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE DIVISIONAL FOREST OFFICER, SAMBALPUR FOREST DIVISION
 Near Jail Chowk, e-mail id: dfo.sambalpur@odisha.gov.in
BID IDENTIFICATION No.
F&E/SBP/02 (Online)/2023-24
E-Procurement Notice
 No. 5570 Dated: 18.09.2023

No. MM-170: The Divisional Forest Officer, Sambalpur Forest Division, on behalf of Governor of Odisha, invites Percentage Rate bids in Single Cover System in ONLINE MODE.

1. Nature of Work	: Construction of Forester Quarters, Forest Guard Quarters & Seizure Yard
2. Tender Cost	: Rs 6000/-
3. Class of Contractor	: "C" & "D" Class Contractors
4. Availability of bid document in the website	: 18.00 hours of 27.09.2023 to 17.30 hours of 07.10.2023
5. Date of Opening of Tenders	: 11.30 hours on Dt.09.10.2023

The bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the website www.tendersodisha.gov.in in only. Any Corrigendum/Addendum/Cancellation of tender will be displayed in the website said only.

Sd./- Divisional Forest Officer Sambalpur Forest Division
 OIPR-08104/11/0009/2324



Bharatiya Kisan Union leader Rakesh Tikait during the 'Kisan Mahapanchayat' in Lucknow



An artist works on a replica of Shivaji Park beach, ahead of 'Ganesh Chaturthi' at a residential colony in Mumbai



Clouds hang above the Taj Mahal as people visit the monument in Agra



Parliament employees in their uniform on the first day of the special session of Parliament in New Delhi



Select iDEX winners & defence innovation startups showcase cutting-edge dual-use technologies to a US delegation, led by Under Secretary (Research & Engineering), Department of Defence Heidi Shyu, at IIT Delhi



A locality flooded by the Tapi river after release of water from the Ukai Dam in Surat



Workers unload sacks of agricultural compost from a freight train at a railway warehouse in Jalandhar



Members of Manipur's Kuki-Zomi community stage a protest demanding separation of the state in Washington

national

of the day quote

What the country needs is 'one nation, one education (equal education for all) and 'one nation, one treatment' (rich or poor, equal treatment for all). Never allow them (BJP) to implement 'one nation, one election' system in the country as it is only during polls that political parties take care of people and promise them to give everything, even the moon if they ask for it. They talk to you very sweetly (during elections)

ARVIND KEIRIWAL | DELHI CM

The J-K administration has strict policy of zero tolerance against corruption. It is heartening to see collective efforts to get rid of the scourge of corruption and integrated approach to strengthen transparency and accountability in the system to build a progressive, prosperous Jammu and Kashmir

MANOJ SINHA | J&K LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

We have demanded 33 per cent reservation for women in Lok Sabha and state legislative assemblies on the lines of local bodies. Women are not just there to press the (EVM) buttons (for voting) but must get equal opportunities like their male counterparts

AJIT PAWAR | MAHARASHTRA DEPUTY CM

SHORT TAKES

Lightning claims 6

Patna: Six people were killed after being struck by lightning in Bihar's Aurangabad district Monday, officials said. Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar expressed condolences over the death of six people due to lightning and announced an ex-gratia of Rs 4 lakh to the next of kin of those killed. Kumar appealed to the people of the state to remain alert and vigilant and stay indoors.

Over 100 fall ill

North Lakhimpur (Assam): Over 100 people have fallen ill due to food poisoning after consuming 'prasad' in Lakhimpur district of Assam, officials said Monday. According to senior officials, the incident took place at No. 1 Thekeraguri in Dhakuakhana on Saturday night and people started complaining of uneasiness from Sunday afternoon. "They consumed prasad at a namghar (a place of worship for Vaishnavite followers) after a programme, following which they complained of loose motion, vomiting and stomach ache," a health department official said.

Two bodies found

Srinagar: Security forces found two bodies from the Gadole forest area in Jammu and Kashmir's Anantnag district on the sixth day of an anti-terror operation on Monday even as Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha vowed to avenge the death of three officers and a soldier, who were killed by terrorists on Wednesday, sources said. The identity of the other deceased is being ascertained.

Boy detained

Palghar: A minor boy was detained for allegedly stealing jewellery worth Rs 3.62 lakh from a house in Palghar, a police official said Monday. The house breaking theft (HBT) had taken place on August 25 when the occupants were away, he said. "The accused cut the grille of a window and gained entry. He was held on Sunday and stolen items worth Rs 3.16 lakh have been recovered," Crime Unit III senior inspector Pramod Badakh said.



I have been saying that the NDA government at the Centre is planning to hold early Lok Sabha polls. We are always ready. Let them hold it early

NITISH KUMAR | BIHAR CM

NO SC RELIEF FOR SOREN

The Supreme Court Monday refused to entertain Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren's plea against the ED summons in a case of alleged money laundering. A bench of Justice Aniruddha Bose and Justice Bela M Trivedi granted Soren the liberty to approach the Jharkhand High Court for relief in the matter



SC asks Maha Speaker to set timeline

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 18: The Supreme Court Monday directed the Maharashtra Assembly Speaker to spell out the timeline within a week for adjudication of the disqualification petitions filed against Chief Minister Eknath Shinde and Shiv Sena MLAs loyal to him who had tied up with the BJP to form a new government in June 2022, saying apparently nothing has been done so far despite its direction for deciding the pleas within reasonable time.

"This cannot go on indefinitely. Tell us about the time schedule," the bench comprising Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud and Justices J B Pardiwala and Manoj Misra told Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, who was representing Maharashtra assembly Speaker Rahul Narwekar.

The top court referred to its May 11 verdict on the Maharashtra political crisis and the direction it had issued to the Speaker to decide the disqualification petitions within a reasonable time. "The order of this court requires the Speaker to decide the disqualification peti-



tions within a reasonable period. While this court is cognizant of the need to ensure the sense of comity... We would equally expect deference and dignity to the directions issued by us in the exercise of court's constitutional power of judicial review," the bench said.

"We now direct that the proceedings shall be listed before the Speaker, who is constituted as a tribunal under the 10th schedule of the Constitution, no later than within a period of one week wherein the procedural directions shall be issued for completing the record and setting out the time schedule for the hearing of the disqualification proceedings," it ordered.

The court asked the solicitor general to apprise the bench of the time schedule to be fixed by the Speaker for deciding the pleas for disqualification of 56 MLAs including lawmakers belonging to the Shinde faction. At the outset, senior advocate Kapil Sibal, appearing for the Uddhav Thackeray faction, said the separate plea challenging the Election Commission's decision to grant recognition to the Shinde-led bloc as real Shiv Sena may be heard later. He, however, sought urgent hearing of the petition seeking a direction to the Speaker to decide the disqualification pleas by Thackeray camp and alleged an illegal government was in power in the state. The solicitor general opposed the submissions,

asserting they ridiculed the office of the Assembly Speaker which was a constitutional office like the court.

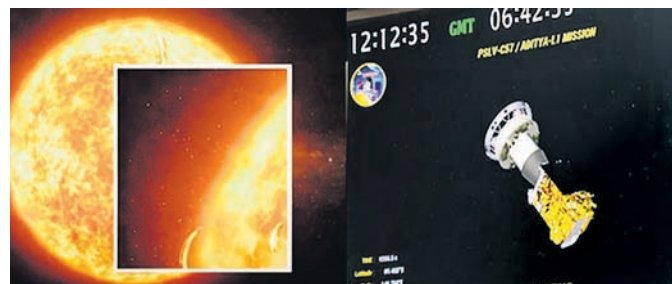
"We don't like the ridiculing manner in which this is presented. I have to go by the data, the rules. Why they are not circulating documents that is between them. I am an adjudicating authority," the law officer said, seeking to explain the delay.

"But, he (Speaker) has to decide. He can't do this... What did the speaker do after the May 11 judgement by the court? It appears that nothing has happened," the bench said, adding the office of the Speaker is also a tribunal under the Constitution and hence amenable to the court's jurisdiction.

Sibal said the Thackeray faction made three representations on May 15, 23 and June 2 for early adjudication of the disqualification petitions but there was no response from the office of the Speaker. "Then we filed a petition on July 4. The notice was issued on July 14. When we approached the Speaker, there were 100 replies by each MLA. This is a very serious issue... Each of these 100 matters will be tried separately," Sibal said.

Aditya-L1 begins data collection

Data collected around L1 would provide insights into the origin, acceleration, and anisotropy of solar wind and space weather phenomena



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, Sept 18: India's Aditya-L1 solar mission spacecraft has commenced collecting data that will help scientists analyse the behaviour of particles surrounding Earth, ISRO said Monday.

The sensors of an instrument on board India's first solar observatory have begun measuring supra-thermal and energetic ions and electrons at distances greater than 50,000 km from Earth, it said.

"This data helps scientists analyse the behaviour of particles surrounding Earth," the Bengaluru-headquartered national space agency said in a post on social media platform X. The Supra Thermal & Energetic Particle Spectrometer (STEPS) instrument is a part of the Aditya Solar Wind Particle Experiment (ASPEX) payload. "These STEPS measurements will persist during the cruise phase of the Aditya-L1 mission as it progresses toward the Sun-Earth L1 point. They will continue once the spacecraft is positioned in its intended orbit", ISRO said.

Data collected around L1 would provide insights into the origin, acceleration, and anisotropy of solar wind and space weather phenomena, it said. STEPS was developed by the Physical Research Laboratory with support from the Space

Application Centre in Ahmedabad.

ISRO had launched Aditya-L1 on September 2 using a PSLV-C57 rocket. The Aditya-L1 spacecraft carries a total of seven different payloads to study the Sun, four of which will observe the light from the Sun and the remaining three will measure in situ parameters of the plasma and magnetic fields. Aditya-L1 will be placed in a halo orbit around the Lagrangian Point 1 (L1), which is 1.5 million km from the Earth in the direction of the Sun.

It will revolve around the Sun with the same relative position and hence can see the Sun continuously. STEPS comprises six sensors, each observing in different directions and measuring supra-thermal and energetic ions ranging from 20 keV/nucleon to 5 MeV/nucleon, in addition to electrons exceeding 1 MeV. These measurements are conducted using low and high-energy particle spectrometers.

The data collected during Earth's orbits helps scientists to analyse the behaviour of particles surrounding Earth, especially in the presence of the magnetic field of Earth. STEPS was activated on September 10 at a distance greater than 50,000 km from Earth. This distance is equivalent to more than eight times the Earth's radius, placing it well beyond Earth's radiation belt region, ISRO added.

LS panel tables report on Adhir's conduct in House

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 18: The Lok Sabha panel on privileges Monday submitted a report recommending revocation of the suspension of Congress leader Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury from the Lower House.

The report was adopted by the Privileges Committee of the Lok Sabha on August 30 and Chowdhury's suspension was revoked by Speaker Om Birla on the same day. The Committee, in its report, said Chowdhury's conduct of frequently interrupting or disturbing the proceedings of the House during the speech of the prime minister or other ministers was a "clear case of 'contempt of the House'."

"Nevertheless, in view of the regrets expressed by Shri Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury, Member of Parliament, during his evidence before the Committee, the Committee would recommend that no further punitive action is called for in the matter," said the report, tabled by Committee Chairman Sunil Kumar Singh.

"The Committee, therefore, recommends that the suspension suffered by Shri Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury so far, be regarded as sufficient punishment and the Hon'ble Speaker, Lok Sabha may consider discontinuance/revoking the suspension... at the earliest, even without waiting for the House to reassemble for the forthcoming Winter Session in November/December 2023," the report said.

The Congress leader was suspended from Lok Sabha on August 10 for "repeated misconduct", pending an investigation by the privileges committee.



Health workers examine the residence of a Nipah virus victim and collect clinical samples, at Kuttiyadi in Kozhikode district, Monday

PM Modi recalls Parliament journey

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 18: Bidding farewell to the old Parliament building, Prime Minister Narendra Modi Monday sang paean to first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and subsequent leaders, including Lal Bahadur Shastri, Indira Gandhi, P V Narasimha Rao and Atal Bihari Vajpayee, but also reminded the Lok Sabha of the 'cash-for-vote' scam during the Manmohan Singh government.

Initiating the discussion in the Lok Sabha on "Parliamentary Journey of 75 years starting from Samvidhan Sabha -- Achievements, Experiences, Memories and Learnings", Modi also said there were celebrations everywhere when three new states of Uttarakhand, Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh were created during Vajpayee's time but lamented that Telangana



being carved out of Andhra Pradesh led to only bitterness and bloodshed in both the states.

"It is a very emotional moment to bid farewell to this building. As we leave this building our mind is filled with many emotions and memories," Modi said.

In his 52-minute speech, the Prime Minister recalled the bravery of Bhagat Singh and Batukeshwar Dutt who hurled

bombs in the same Parliament to wake up the British Empire from its slumber.

Modi said it was in this Parliament that Pandit Nehru delivered his "tryst with destiny" speech "at the stroke of midnight hour" and his words continue to inspire everyone.

The Prime Minister said the biggest achievement of these 75 years was that the common person's trust in Parliament continues to grow. "We may as well move to the new building, but this old building will always inspire generations to come," he said.

Modi said it is also an occasion to hail everyone who have led this House and shared their vision for India, ranging from Pandit Nehru to Vajpayee.

They have given new direction to the nation under their leadership and today is an occasion to highlight their achievements, the Prime Minister said.

The Prime Minister also recalled the terror attack on Parliament and remembered those who took bullets on their chests to save members while fighting terrorists.

The Prime Minister also lauded the contribution of B R Ambedkar, saying his vision for industrialisation, which was aimed at bringing social justice in the country during the first government of independent India, continues to remain at the heart of every industrial policy even today.

The Prime Minister also noted that the House saw the sittings of the Constituent Assembly for two years and 11 months and also was witness to the adoption and promulgation of the Constitution.

He said the House also benefited from the addresses of Presidents from Rajendra Prasad, A P J Kalam to Ram Nath Kovind and Droupadi Murmu.

Apex court plea says Adani probe panel members conflicted

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 18: An expert committee, set up by the Supreme Court to probe allegations against the Adani group following a bombshell report from a US short seller, has members with potential conflict of interest, a fresh petition filed in the Apex court on Monday said.

The six-member panel in an interim report in May found no regulatory failure or signs of price manipulation in the rise and fall of the Adani Group's stocks, giving reprieve for the embattled conglomerate that lost close to USD 150 billion in market value following the Hindenburg report.

Petitioner Anamika Jaiswal claimed that former State Bank of India chairman OP Bhatt, who is part of the six-member expert committee, is conflicted as he is also the head of renewable energy firm Greenko, which has commercial dealings with the Adani group.

The petition cited Greenko's March 14, 2022, press statement announcing the supply of up to 1,000 megawatts of renewable electricity to Adani's proposed industrial complex. It also cited news of a partnership between the two being entered into in Davos.

"The above shows a clear conflict of interest of Mr OP Bhatt which... Ought to have been pointed out by Mr Bhatt himself," the petition said. The petitioner claimed that the CBI also examined Bhatt in March 2018 in a case of alleged wrongdoing in disbursing loans to the former liquor baron and fugitive economic offender Vijay Mallya, who is accused of defrauding banks, including SBI, of USD 1.2 billion.

Bhatt was the chairman of SBI between 2006 and 2011 when a majority of loans were advanced to Mallya's companies, the petitioner claimed.

HOW THE JUDICIARY IS RESCUING A RIVER

....And quiet flows the Sabarmati, a river that became a sterling symbol of India's struggle for freedom and its folklore through association with the Mahatma and his ashram. As happens most of the time, lost in the glitter and glitz of an urban showcase edifice was the soul and substance of the river and its waters. That was, until a wake-up call came from the Central Pollution and Control Board (CPCB) which had ranked it as the second most polluted river in the country in its report of 2022. Lots of high pitched wailing and empty 'faffing' later, the Gujarat High Court stepped in.

The Sabarmati is a rain-fed river which originates from the Aravalli hills in Rajasthan and

meanders through Ahmedabad to end up in the Bay of Khambat (Cambay of old) and melt into the Arabian Sea after a 371 km journey. It would remain partially dry for most part of the year that is until it was linked up with water from the Narmada canal, upstream of Ahmedabad. Deliberately forgotten was that Gujarat had fought its entire case for 139 metres height of the Narmada dam to take waters to Kutch and Saurashtra and not splurge it enroute.

Though the development of a waterfront along the banks of the Sabarmati river in Ahmedabad had been proposed in the sixties, it was only in May 1997 that the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation launched a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV)



Gujarat files RK MISRA

the Sabarmati Riverfront Development Corporation Limited (SRFDCL) under Section 149(3) of the Indian Companies Act, 1956. The aim was to provide a green lung, reconnect the city with the river and positively transform the neglected aspect of the riverfront.

After Modi took charge as Chief Minister, the project acquired a new-found impetus. It's an almost must visit port-of-

call after Modi took over as Prime Minister. But for all its showcasing, the river per se has been declared the second most polluted one in the country with CPCB deciding to upgrade it to "category-1" or critically polluted status. The BOD (Bio oxygen demand) in Sabarmati river was found to be 292 mg per litre.

It was in 2021 that the Gujarat High Court had taken suo moto notice and has been relentless thereafter in cracking down on the civic body and errant industries. "There should be no discharge of untreated water in the Sabarmati river from either of the outfalls", the Court had then observed.

In a hearing of the suo moto river pollution petition on Friday

September 15, counsel for the closed down textile units had pleaded for some relaxation in rules to allow them to re-open. "We seek your intervention in asking the Gujarat Pollution Control Board (GPCB) to adopt a pragmatic approach", went the plea. "In this matter we will desist from doing so because we have adopted a pragmatic approach for years together and everyone is suffering because of it", said Chief Justice Sunita Agarwal. The directions were straightforward. 'Follow rules'. The hearing continues. In fact all government bodies which had been looking the other way while pollution ran riot in the river have buckled up after the higher judiciary cracked the whip of joint accountability.

international

of the day quote

Almost everyone recognises the deal (Brexit) Johnson struck is not a good deal – it's far too thin. As we go into 2025 we will attempt to get a much better deal for the UK

Health structures are lacking medical supplies. People are queuing for hours for bread. They urgently need sustained relief through regular humanitarian shipments

Pakistan has close fraternal relations with Afghanistan as we are neighbours and brothers. Pakistan-Afghanistan relations are rooted in religion, culture and history

SHORT TAKES

China's Yi heads to Moscow

Beijing: China's top foreign policy official is heading to Russia for security talks after two days of meetings with US President Joe Biden's national security adviser over the weekend in Malta. Foreign Minister Wang Yi, who simultaneously holds the ruling Communist Party's top foreign policy post, will be in Russia from Monday to Thursday for a round of China-Russia strategic security consultations, the Foreign Ministry said in a brief statement. The US and China are at odds over Russia's invasion of Ukraine. China has refrained from taking sides in the war, saying that while a country's territory must be respected, the West needs to consider Russia's security concerns about NATO expansion.

US F-35 aircraft goes missing

Washington: A US Marine Corps fighter jet has gone missing in South Carolina after its pilot safely ejected the aircraft Sunday. The US military officials have appealed to the public to help locate the missing multimillion-dollar plane, the Guardian reported. Military Corps pilot safely ejected the F-35 Lightning II jet over North Charleston Sunday afternoon after a "mishap". Base authorities said they were searching, in coordination with federal aviation regulators, around two lakes north of the city of Charleston.

UPPING THE ANTE

In its latest military provocation, Beijing flies record 103 military planes toward Taiwan in a new high of activity the island calls harassment

Beijing, Sept 18: China Monday dismissed the existence of a "median line" in the volatile Taiwan Strait after Taiwan's defence ministry said it detected a record 103 Chinese warplanes flying around the self-ruled island in a 24-hour period. "First of all, this is not a question about foreign affairs. I suggest you refer to competent Chinese authorities for specifics," Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Mao Ning said without commenting on Beijing's latest military provocation. "Let me say that Taiwan is

No median line in Taiwan Strait: China

part of China's territory. There is no so-called "median line" in the Taiwan Strait," Mao asserted when a reporter sought her response to Taiwan's defence ministry's statement that 40 of the 103 Chinese People's Liberation Army warplanes crossed the "median line" on the Taiwan Strait in a 24-hour span between Sunday and Monday. China views Taiwan – a democratically governed island of 24 million – as part of its territory, despite having never governed it. The ruling Communist Party of China has long vowed that the island must be unified with the Chinese mainland, by force if necessary, while Taiwan strongly rejects China's territorial claims over it. According to a flight map provided by Taiwan's defence ministry, 40 of the 103 Chinese warplanes crossed the "median line" on the Taiwan Strait and entered Taiwan's self-declared air



defence identification zone (ADIZ). Those 40 incursions were made by 10 Su-30 fighter jets, 12 J-10 fighter jets, four J-11 fighter jets, 10 J-16 fighter jets, two Y-20 aerial refuelling aircraft, and two KJ-500 airborne early warning and control planes, it said. The ministry said it had tasked combat air patrol aircraft, navy vessels and land-based missile systems to respond. The number of incursions marked a new high in recent times, posing a "serious challenge" to security in the Taiwan Strait and wider region, the ministry said. "Continued harassment by the Chinese military is

Let me say that Taiwan is part of China's territory. There is no so-called median line in the Taiwan Strait

MAO NING | FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESPERSON, CHINA

The number of incursions marked a new high in recent times, posing a serious challenge to security in the Taiwan Strait and wider region

DEFENCE MINISTRY | TAIWAN

QATAR DEAL UNFREEZES \$6BN

US, Iran swap detainees

The deal, after months of talks in Qatar, removes a major irritant between the US, which brands Tehran a sponsor of terrorism, and Iran, which calls US the "Great Satan"

Doha, Sept 18: Five US detainees flew out of Iran Monday in a swap for five Iranians held in the US in a rare deal between the arch enemies that also unfroze \$6 billion of Tehran's funds. Despite the deal, tensions are almost certain to remain high between the US and Iran, which are locked in various disputes, including over Tehran's nuclear programme. Iran says the programme is peaceful, but it now enriches uranium closer than ever to weapons-grade levels. The planned exchange has unfolded amid a major American military buildup in the Persian Gulf, with the possibility of US troops boarding and guarding commercial ships in the Strait of Hormuz, through which 20% of all oil shipments pass. A senior US administration official said the deal did not change Washington's adversarial relationship with Tehran, but the door was open for diplomacy on Iran's nuclear programme. "If we see an opportunity, we will explore it but right now, I've really nothing to talk about," the official said, speaking on condition of anonymity. Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Nasser Kanaani said two of the Iranians being released would return to Iran while two would stay in the US at their request. One detainee would join his family in a third country. Kanaani said the funds, blocked in South Korea after US sanctions on Iran were hardened in 2018, would be available to Tehran Monday. Under the deal, Qatar will ensure the cash is spent on



Today, five innocent Americans who were imprisoned in Iran are finally coming

JOE BIDEN | PRESIDENT, US

- Qatar mediated swap deal during months of negotiations
- Qatari plane carries five US citizens, two relatives
- Five Iranians in US to be freed, three will not return to Iran
- Deal involved unfreezing Tehran's \$6bn in South Korea

humanitarian goods and not items under US sanctions. A plane sent by mediator Qatar flew the five US citizens and two of their relatives out of Tehran soon after both sides received confirmation the funds had been transferred to accounts in Doha, a source said. At the same time, two of the five Iranians landed in Qatar, a US official said. Three have opted not to return to Iran.

SHUTTLE DIPLOMACY Qatar, a tiny but hugely wealthy Gulf Arab energy producer, has sought to raise its global profile, hosting the soccer World Cup last year and carving out a role in international diplomacy. The Sunni Muslim nation

likely to cause a sharp rise in tensions and deteriorate regional security," it said, calling on Beijing to "immediately cease such destructive and unilateral behaviour."

US INVOLVEMENT

The latest military action from Beijing came days after China decided to impose sanctions on two US defence companies - Lockheed Martin Corporation and Northrop Grumman - for their involvement in arms sales to Taiwan. In disregard of China's firm opposition, the US Government deliberately supplies weapons to China's Taiwan region, Chinese Foreign Ministry

Spokesperson Mao said Friday. The United States is going further down the wrong and dangerous path of arming Taiwan, Mao said at a press briefing. The Chinese government never wavers in its resolve to safeguard national sovereignty and territorial integrity, Mao said. "We call on the United States to earnestly abide by the one-China principle and the stipulations of the three China-US Joint communiques, stop arms sales to Taiwan, stop military collusion with Taiwan, and stop arming Taiwan, otherwise it will be met with China's resolute response," she warned.

UKRAINE RETAKES MORE TERRITORY

Kyiv, Sept 18: Ukraine reported Monday its troops had recaptured more territory on the eastern front and advanced in the south in its military counteroffensive against Russian forces. Deputy Defence Minister Hanna Maliar said Kyiv's forces had retaken two square km (0.77 square mile) of land in the past week around the shattered eastern city of Bakhmut, which was captured by Russian troops in May after months of fighting. Kyiv's forces also recaptured two villages on the southern flank of the city, Andriivka and Klishchiivka, Maliar said. Both cities lie on higher ground and their capture could set the stage to reasserting control over the pivotal city.



Kyiv's troops have liberated 51 square km (19 square miles) near Bakhmut since the start of the counteroffensive, Maliar said. Overall, Ukraine regained more than 260 square km (100 square miles) in the south during the counteroffensive, she said. During its three-month-old counteroffensive, Ukraine has reported slow, steady progress against entrenched Russian positions, retaking a string of villages and advancing on the flanks of Bakhmut, but taking no major settlements.

hosts a big US military base but has also forged close ties with Shi'ite Muslim Iran. Doha hosted at least eight rounds of talks with Iranian and US negotiators sitting in separate hotels, speaking via shuttle diplomacy, a source previously told Reuters. The transfer of Iran's funds under the agreement has drawn criticism from US Republicans who say President Joe Biden, a Democrat, is in effect paying a ransom for US citizens. The White House has defended the deal. Iran and the US have a history of prisoner swaps dating back to the 1979 US embassy takeover and hostage crisis following the Islamic Revolution. Their most recent major exchange happened in 2016, when Iran came to a deal with world powers to restrict its nuclear program in return for an easing of sanctions.

Russia lashes Ukraine at ICJ

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

GENOCIDE CASE



Ukraine's legal position is hopelessly flawed and at odds with the longstanding jurisprudence of the court

GENNADY KUZMIN | MOSCOW'S REPRESENTATIVE

Convention. Mere "statements" about genocide are not admissible under international law including the Genocide Convention, Gennady Kuzmin contended. Sitting only metres from the Ukrainian delegation, Kuzmin said, "As to expressions of concerns regarding the threat of genocide, they were unsurprising considering the policies of Kyiv regime, which were firmly

entrenched in the history, doctrines and practices of Nazism." Kuzmin urged the court to throw out the case, arguing that the UN Genocide Convention is about the "prevention and punishment" of genocide, neither of which apply to Ukraine's case. "Ukraine is not accusing Russia of committing genocide. Ukraine is also not accusing Russia of failing to prevent or punish genocide," he argued. "On the contrary, Ukraine insists no genocide has occurred. That alone should be enough to reject the case because... if there was no genocide there cannot be a violation of the Genocide Convention."

LANDMARK DECISION

Leaders adopt declaration to accelerate SDGs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

United Nations, Sept 18: World leaders Monday adopted a landmark political declaration here to accelerate action on implementing the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) while voicing alarm that progress on most of these targets is moving much too slowly or has regressed below the 2015 baseline when they were first announced. The high-level 78th session of the United Nations General Assembly began Monday with the 2023 SDG Summit that reviewed the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It provided high-level political guidance on transformative and accelerated actions leading up to the target year of 2030 for achieving the Goals, the UN said. Convened by President of the General Assembly Dennis Francis, the Summit will mark



With the world watching – including 193 young people in the balcony holding blue lamps of hope – you made a solemn promise. A promise to build a world of health, progress and opportunity for all. A promise to leave no one behind

ANTONIO GUTERRES | SECRETARY-GENERAL, UN

the halfway point to the deadline set for achieving the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals. The high-level political forum on sustainable development convened under the auspices of the General Assembly adopted the political declaration, in which world leaders reaffirmed their commitment to effectively implement the 2030 Agenda and

its SDGs and uphold all principles enshrined in it. "The 2030 Agenda remains our overarching roadmap for achieving sustainable development and overcoming the multiple crises we face. We will act with urgency to realise its vision as a plan of action for people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnership, leaving no one behind. We will endeavor

US SHUTDOWN LOOMS

McCarthy faces crucial challenge

REUTERS

Washington, Sept 18: US House Speaker Kevin McCarthy is facing the biggest challenge of his eight months as the top Republican in the US Congress, as he tries to muster his fractured caucus to avoid a government shutdown in less than two weeks without losing his speakership. The Republican-controlled House of Representatives and the Democratic-led Senate have until Sept 30 to avoid the US' fourth partial government shutdown in a decade by passing spending legislation that President Joe Biden can sign into law to keep federal agencies afloat. But hardline activism on spending, policy and impeachment have split Republicans in the House and slowed the Senate's path forward on approving bipartisan spending legislation. Political brinkmanship has begun to attract the attention of Wall Street, with rating agency Fitch citing repeated down-to-the-wire negotiations that threaten the government's ability to pay its bills when it downgraded US debt rating to AA+ from its top-notch AAA designation earlier this year. House Democratic leader Hakeem Jeffries warned Sunday that the situation amounts to a Republican "civil war." The logjams are not limited to the House, as one hardline Senate Republican holdout, Tommy Tuberville, has blocked confirmation of hundreds of senior military officers in a dispute over abortion access. McCarthy said he hopes to move forward this week on an \$886 billion fiscal 2024 defense appropriations bill, which stalled last week as hardliners withheld support to demand a top line fiscal 2024 spending level of \$1.47 trillion - \$120 billion less than what McCarthy and Biden agreed to in May.

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Climate activists march protesting energy policies and the use of fossil fuels in New York



India has managed to strengthen its macroeconomic stability and performance even in a period of large global shocks. India's GDP growth in FY24 will be above 6 per cent
ASHIMA GOVAL | MPC MEMBER, RBI

3RD TIME IN 2023, TATA HIKES CV PRICES

Tata Motors said Monday it will raise the prices of its commercial vehicles by up to 3%, its third hike this calendar year to offset the residual impact of past input costs. The price hike, effective October 1, will be applicable across its range of commercial vehicles, the automaker added. The company previously raised prices by 1.2% in January and by 5% in March to ensure its vehicles comply with the new emission norms



of the day quote

Indian economy is developing very fast and the country is poised to become a leader in sustainable technologies

GAVIN TOWLER | CORPORATE CHIEF SCIENTIST (SUSTAINABILITY TECHNOLOGIES), HONEYWELL

Generative AI is poised to impact labour markets significantly, but this impact will be highly different across different roles

SAADIA ZAHIDI | MD, WEF

TCS Product Life Cycle Profiler will help our clients identify the changes they need to make their product value chains more sustainable and advance their climate goals

SURANJAN CHATTERJEE | GLOBAL HEAD (STRATEGIC CAPABILITIES GROUP), TCS

PROFIT TAKING

Indices snap win streak

SENSEX, NIFTY BREAK 11-DAY WINNING RUN AND FELL FROM THEIR RECORD HIGHS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Sept 18: Snapping its record 11-day winning run, Sensex declined by around 242 points Monday as profit taking in metal, banking and telecom shares amid weak global trends dragged down the benchmark index from record high levels.

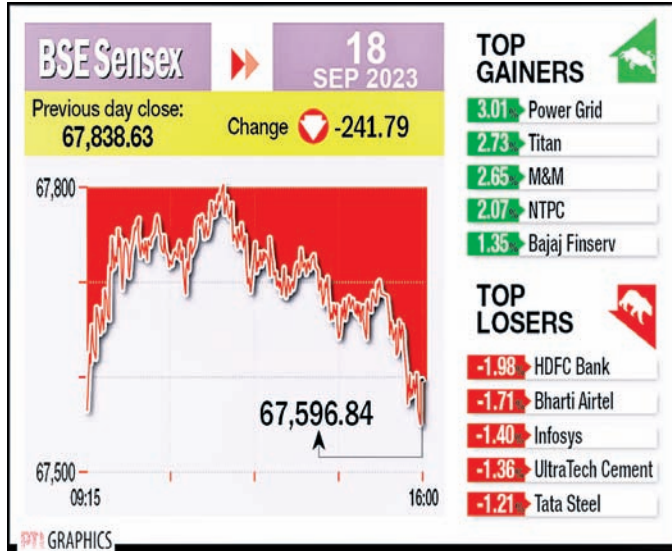
The 30-share BSE Sensex fell by 241.79 points or 0.36 per cent to settle at 67,596.84 in a volatile trading. During the day, it declined by 305.8 points or 0.45 per cent to a low of 67,532.83.

Retreating from its all-time high, the broader Nifty closed at 20,133.30, down by 59.05 points or 0.29 per cent, as 26 of its constituents closed in the red while 24 advanced.

BSE Sensex closed at a lifetime high of 67,838.63 after 11 straight days of gains while Nifty settled at record 20,192.35 on Friday following positive macro data.

Among the Sensex firms, HDFC Bank fell the most by 1.98 per cent. Bharti Airtel (1.71 per cent), Infosys (1.4 per cent), Tata Steel (1.21 per cent), UltraTech Cement (1.19 per cent), Wipro (1.17 per cent), Kotak Mahindra Bank (1.02 per cent), Reliance Industries, Tech Mahindra and JSW Steel were the major laggards.

Power Grid, Titan, Mahindra & Mahindra and NTPC were



Domestic markets relinquished their momentum as they anticipated a raft of policy rate decisions due this week
VINOD NAIR | HEAD OF RESEARCH, GEOJIT FINANCIAL SERVICES

among the gainers. "Markets finally reversed the 11-session winning streak as profit-taking came into play in banking, realty, IT and telecom stocks. Along with concerns over rising global crude oil prices and uptick in dollar index and US treasury yields, investors trimmed their exposure ahead

of the outcome of the US FOMC meeting on interest rates on Wednesday," Shrikant Chouhan, Head of Research (Retail), Kotak Securities Ltd.

Other than global headwinds, higher domestic index valuations after the recent upsurge is making investors nervous, which may lead to some more profit-taking in the near term, Chouhan said.

In the broader market, the BSE smallcap gauge fell 0.60 per cent and the midcap index declined 0.27 per cent. Among the indices, telecommunication fell by 1.86 per cent, realty declined 1.27 per cent, commodi-

Tax mop-up at 47% of budget estimates

NET DIRECT TAX COLLECTION RISES 23.5% TO OVER ₹8.65 LAKH CR

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 18: The net direct tax collection increased 23.51 per cent to over ₹8.65 lakh crore till mid-September on higher advance tax mop-up from corporates, the Finance Ministry said Monday.

The net collections have reached 47.45 per cent of the full-year budget estimates (BE) of ₹18.23 lakh crore.

The steady growth in tax collection was helped by a 21 per cent growth in advance tax mop-up. September 15 was the last date for paying the second instalment of advance tax for 2023-24.

In a statement, the ministry said the net direct tax collection includes corporate income tax (CIT) at ₹4,16,217 crore and personal income tax (PIT), including Securities Transaction Tax (STT), at ₹4,47,291 crore.

The net direct tax collection of ₹8,65,117 crore for the current fiscal as of September 16 grew at over 23.51 per cent, the ministry said.

The advance tax collection stood at ₹3.55 lakh crore till mid-September, a 21 per cent growth against ₹2.94 lakh crore mopped up in the corresponding period



The 2023-24 budget has pegged the direct tax collection at a little over ₹18.23 lakh crore, a 9.75 per cent higher than ₹16.61 lakh crore mopped up last fiscal

of the preceding financial year.

The advance tax collection of ₹3.55 lakh crore as of September 16 comprises CIT at ₹2.80 lakh crore and PIT at ₹74,858 crore.

Refunds of about ₹1.22 lakh crore have been issued up to September 16.

On a gross basis, the direct tax collection for the financial year 2023-24 stands at ₹9.87 lakh crore, an 18.29 per cent growth over ₹8.34 lakh crore in the corresponding period of the preceding financial year.

SHORT TAKES

JSW Infra IPO to open Sept 25

New Delhi: JSW Infrastructure, a part of the JSW Group, Monday fixed a price band of Rs 113-119 per share for its Rs 2,800 crore Initial Public Offering (IPO). The initial share sale will open for public subscription September 25 and conclude September 27, the company said in a statement. The public issue is entirely a fresh issue of equity shares worth Rs 2,800 crore. Investors can bid for a minimum of 126 equity shares and in multiples of 126 equity shares thereafter.

Apollo Hosps ties up with MotoGP

New Delhi: Apollo Hospitals Monday said it has tied up with MotoGP Bharat Grand Prix to provide medical support for the event. The capital-based Indraprastha Apollo Hospital would provide support for the first-ever MotoGP event in India to be held between September 22-24 at the Buddh International Circuit in Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh. "This partnership is a testament to the diverse strengths that Apollo has to offer to the world," Apollo Hospitals Group Chairman Prathap C Reddy said in a statement.

Sidbi to fully fund MSME green projs

Mumbai: Sidbi, the national development bank focused on refinancing loans to small businesses, Monday said it will offer 100 per cent financing to MSMEs' green energy and other clean projects. "We want MSMEs to avail of our various financial schemes for installing solar energy and adopting energy-efficient machinery and business processes. We are ready to extend 100 per cent loan at an interest rate as low as 7-8 per cent (depending on their credit ratings) to install rooftop and ground-mounted solar rooftop power projects," Jay Kumar Gupta, a deputy general manager of the lender said at an MSME financing event here Monday.

Foxconn declares big plans in India

New Delhi: Apple supplier Foxconn aims to double its workforce and investment in India by next year, a company executive said Sunday. Taiwan-based Foxconn, the world's largest contract manufacturer of electronics, has rapidly expanded its presence in India by investing in manufacturing facilities in the south of the country as the company seeks to move away from China.

Welfare measures for LIC agents, employees

LIC has over 13L agents, more than a lakh regular employees

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 18: The Finance Ministry Monday approved a series of welfare measures, including enhancement of the gratuity limit and family pension, for the benefit of Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) agents and employees.

The welfare measures are related to the amendments to LIC (Agents) Regulations, 2017, Enhancement of Gratuity Limit, and Uniform Rate of Family Pension, among others, the finance ministry said in a statement.

Sharing the details, the statement said the ministry has enhanced the gratuity limit from Rs 3 lakh to Rs 5 lakh for LIC agents aimed at bringing substantial improvements to the working conditions and benefits for them.

It has also enabled the reappointed agents to be eligible for renewal commission, thereby providing them with increased financial stability.

Currently, LIC agents are not eligible for renewal commission on any business completed under the old agency.

The term insurance cover for the agents has been expanded from the existing range



of Rs 3,000-10,000 to Rs 25,000-1,50,000, it said, adding this enhancement in term insurance will significantly benefit the families of deceased agents, offering them a more substantial welfare benefit.

With regard to LIC employees, the ministry has also approved family pension at a uniform rate of 30 per cent for the welfare of the families.

More than 13 lakh agents and more than 1 lakh regular employees, who play a pivotal role in the growth of LIC and deepening of insurance penetration in India, will benefit from these welfare measures, it said.

Incorporated in 1956 with an initial capital of Rs 5 crore, LIC has an asset base of Rs 45.50 lakh crore with a life fund of Rs 40.81 lakh crore as of March 31, 2023.

'Economy rising amid weak global odds'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Sept 18: Amid weakening global prospects, the Indian economy is gaining strength led by domestic private consumption and fixed investment with strong public sector capital expenditure, said an article published in the latest RBI bulletin.

The outlook for the global economy remains ambivalent, driven by a dichotomy in macroeconomic conditions across regions, the article on 'State of the Economy' stated.

While expectations of a 'Goldilocks' soft landing in the US are strengthening, concerns about slowdowns in China and



Europe are rife, it said, and added that the impact of aggressive monetary tightening is spreading, with the services sector joining housing, bank lending and industrial production in a loss of momentum.

The article authored by a team

led by RBI deputy governor Michael Debabrata Patra also noted that India's G20 Presidency and its outcomes with the ethos of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' as the vision of global progress assume significance in an environment where

global economic activity is experiencing a loss of momentum with a dichotomy in macroeconomic conditions across regions.

"Amidst weakening global prospects, the Indian economy is gaining strength led by domestic drivers - private consumption; and fixed investment with strong public sector capex. Supply responses are improving and headline inflation has softened in August from the previous month's peak," it said.

The central bank, however, said views expressed in the article are those of the authors and do not represent the views of the Reserve Bank of India.

BIZ BUZZ

BoM holds 'Export Oriented - Capacity Building' programme

Bhubaneswar: Bank of Maharashtra, a premier public sector bank in the country, is making strategic meets with various key departments and stakeholders of Odisha state, to leverage its services through its wide network of branches in the state. On the 89th Foundation day of the Bank, an exporters meet was organised by the bank with the active support of Federation of Indian Export Organisation, Odisha Chapter Monday. The programme is named as "Export Oriented - Capacity Building" mainly for discussion on government incentives and scheme for marine exporters of Odisha, importance of district as export hub in Bhubaneswar, export opportunities and value addition in marine sector in Odisha etc. Inaugural session is addressed by Kamal Sahoo, AD, Head, FIEO-Odisha Chapter, OC, MOC, GOI. Technical session is presented by Anup K Samantaray, Dean, IBCS, faculty of Management Science, SOA University, Dilip Kumar Sahoo, OAS, Special Secretary, MSME, Government of Odisha and SN Nayak, Asstt Director, MSME-DFO, Cuttack graced the programme with their vision & valuable guidelines.



Inflows in Gold ETF hit 16-month high

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 18: Gold exchange-traded funds (ETFs) attracted Rs 1,028 crore in August, making it the highest inflow in 16 months, amid continued hikes in interest rates in the US, which led to a slowing down in growth rate there.

With this, the year-to-date inflow in the category has reached more than Rs 1,400 crore, data with the Association of Mutual Funds in India (Amfi) showed.

Apart from inflow, the asset base of Gold ETFs and investors' account or folio numbers increased in the period under review.

According to data, gold-linked ETFs have seen an inflow of Rs 1,028 crore in August. This came following an inflow of Rs 456 crore in the segment in July.

Before that, Gold ETF saw inflow to the tune of Rs 298 crore during the April-June period after three quarters of consecutive outflow. The category saw a withdrawal of Rs 1,243 crore in the March quarter, Rs 320 crore in the December quarter, and Rs 165 crore in the September quarter.

The month of August witnessed the highest monthly inflow into Gold ETFs since April 2022 when the category attracted Rs 1,100 crore on the back of the Russia-Ukraine war.

Flows into Gold ETFs have been subdued since then as the US Federal Reserve embarked on its tightening cycle.

Investor accounts in Gold ETFs climbed by 20,500 folios to 47.95 lakh in August from 47.75 lakh in the preceding month. This shows that investors have become more inclined toward gold-related funds.

Over 200 organisations call for tripling RE capacity

Underlining the climate catastrophe, the organisations write a letter to world leaders seeking rise of renewable energy target to at least 11,000 gigawatts by 2030

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 18: A group of over 200 climate and energy organisations from around the globe issued an open letter Monday, calling on world leaders and Parties to the Paris Agreement to set a global target of tripling renewable energy capacity to at least 11,000 gigawatts by 2030 at the upcoming COP28 in the UAE.

This call to action coincides with the UN General Assembly

and New York Climate Week.

The coalition of organisations, including Adani, American Greenpower, Ember, and the Energy Transition Commission, emphasised that achieving this goal, combined with increased energy efficiency, is the most rapid and cost-effective way to decarbonise the global economy and mitigate climate change.

"Last year, power sector emissions reached an all-time high and the UN assessed that no country is currently on a credible pathway to (limiting global warming to) 1.5 degrees Celsius. It is clear that we need a profound course-correction of the energy system in this decade and time is running out," the open letter read.

It builds on the momentum created during COP27, which highlighted the pressing need for a rapid energy system trans-

COP28 MEET



formation and the commitment of the G20 grouping to triple renewable energy capacity by 2030.

Policymakers, including the COP28 Presidency and international energy agency heads, are already working towards this

ambitious target. This includes expediting the expansion of wind, solar, hydropower, and geothermal energy sources.

This accelerated deployment will also lay the foundation for emerging technologies such as long-duration energy storage and green hydrogen, ensuring not only clean energy but also a secure and equitable global energy system by 2050, the group said.

Renewable energy has already begun to transform communities worldwide by providing clean electricity generating millions of green jobs, and attracting investment for economic growth.

Tripling these efforts presents a significant opportunity to reduce climate-related harm to nature and communities while fostering sustainable, inclusive, and climate-resilient development, it said.

While each country and re-

gion will adopt a unique approach to reach the shared target, the letter highlighted key actions needed for its implementation.

This includes Paris Agreement parties committing to ambitious energy transition plans with clear interim milestones, reflected in Nationally Determined Contributions and national policy frameworks and streamlining permitting schemes for grid-scale renewable energy projects, long-duration energy storage, and renewable hydrogen projects.

The group encourages investment in grid action plans to expand electricity grids for renewables and long-duration energy storage and promotion of multilateral renewable energy partnerships and trade agreements to support energy transition, cooperation, and technology transfer.

India build perfect template

India ready to win World Cup: Kapil

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Colombo, Sept 18: Three weeks back, India arrived in Sri Lanka for the Asia Cup seeking answers for a multitude of riddles. Now, Rohit Sharma's band has left these shores after building a perfect template for the World Cup challenge through middle-order clarity and an all-weather bowling attack.

India's middle-order uncertainty, perhaps, was the most talked about topic in the run-up to the Asia Cup in view of the World Cup next month. But the return of KL Rahul and the emergence of Ishan Kishan as a middle-order option have considerably eased their worry.

Rahul's outing, in particular, will please the team management to no end. He scored a hundred against Pakistan in a Super Four match, and, more importantly, kept wickets in all the matches he played.

He dived around to take catches off pacers and kept to left-arm wrist spinner Kuldeep Yadav quite exceptionally. It was clear that Rahul is relishing the dual role and the clarity given to him by the team management.

India would have hoped for a similar return by Shreyas Iyer, but his fitness is still getting evaluated. But that will not raise much alarm in the Indian camp, because, now, they have a reliable middle-order option in Kishan.

It was a forced gamble when he was asked to bat at No.5 against Pakistan at Pallekele in a group match. Despite batting at that slot for the first time in his career, the Jharkhand player responded to the task in brilliant fashion. The left-hander made a composed fifty in that match in the company of Hardik Pandya, rescuing India from a top-order slump.

The only point of concern for



them could be the need to buckle up on gripping surfaces against spinners, a chink exposed by Lanka's Dunieth Wellalage and the Bangladeshi tweekers.

The effort of their bowlers provided a complete look to India's Asia Cup romp. India have one of the better bowling units in contemporary cricket, though usually it does not get as much encomiums as their counterparts from Pakistan.

Barring a sloppy effort against Bangladesh, the Indian bowlers were ruthless especially in important matches against Pakistan and in the final against Sri Lanka.

Kuldeep donned the lead role

against cross-border rivals, taking 5/25. The 28-year-old was on top of his game the whole tournament, and it came as no surprise to see him bagging the 'Player of the Series' award.

Rohit acknowledged the growth of Kuldeep as India's premier spinner in the white ball formats. While Kuldeep's transformation has added another dimension to India's bowling, the pacers too have made a statement during the Asia Cup.

India were able to field Jasprit Bumrah, Mohammed Siraj and Hardik Pandya together for the first time in a year or so, and the result was stunning. Bumrah,

who was sidelined with a back injury, played in ODIs for the first time since July 2022, and dished out performances dipped in intensity with the new ball.

Siraj, who often stands in the shadow of Bumrah, showed his ruthless face while wrecking Sri Lanka in the summit clash with a spell of 6/21. Hardik has taken big strides as the third seamer, even though that has made the management take the tough call of benching Mohammed Shami, primarily for batting depth.

"We have variety in the bowling attack. They bring in different skill sets and can deliver in any bowling conditions. So, when you get all these in one team, you feel confident as a captain," said Rohit.

That confidence has led India to the Asia Cup triumph, but the title win here does not guarantee a third trophy in the quadrennial extravaganza. But they can enter the tournament with a settled squad and mind – the first pre-requisite for a winning unit.

Ashwin named for ODIs against Australia

NEW DELHI: Seasoned spinner R Ashwin Monday made a comeback to the Indian ODI team for the three-match series against Australia while senior players including skipper Rohit Sharma and senior batter Virat Kohli were rested from the first two games. Ashwin, who last played an ODI back in January 2022 in South Africa, could be drafted into the Indian team for the World Cup if Axar Patel doesn't get fit before the September 28 deadline set by the ICC. Axar has sustained a quadriceps tear during the recently held Asia Cup in Sri Lanka. Off-spinner Washington Sundar has also been included in the squad for all three games and is another back up option for the World Cup. KL Rahul will lead the side in the first two games. The first ODI will be played in Mohali September 22, second in Indore Sept 24 and third in Rajkot Sept 27.

The Squad 1st & 2nd ODIs: KL Rahul (C), Ravindra Jadeja (vc), Rituraj Gaikwad, Shubman Gill, Shreyas Iyer, Suryakumar Yadav, Tilak Varma, Ishan Kishan (wk), Shardul Thakur, Washington Sundar, R Ashwin, Jasprit Bumrah, Mohd. Shami, Mohd. Siraj, Prasidh Krishna.

3rd ODI: Rohit Sharma (C), Hardik Pandya, (vc), Shubman Gill, Virat Kohli, Shreyas Iyer, Suryakumar Yadav, KL Rahul (wk), Ishan Kishan (wk), Ravindra Jadeja, Shardul Thakur, Axar Patel (subject to fitness), Washington Sundar, Kuldeep Yadav, R Ashwin, Jasprit Bumrah, Mohd. Shami, Mohammed Siraj.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 18: Former captain Kapil Dev believes India are ready to win the ODI World Cup at home but he doesn't want to put the favourite tag on the hosts as a lot would depend on luck.

"I think if we can come in top four, that is more important and then it will be about stroke of luck and everything," Kapil said on the sidelines of the launch of the third edition of J&K Open to be held at Jammu Tawi Golf Course, October 4-7.

"We can't say right now that we are favourites, of course our team is very good. Heart says something else, mind says no we have to work very hard. I know our team, I don't know about other teams, so I would say it is unfair for me to give a blank answer. As far as India team is concerned, it is ready to play and win the championships... They should play passionately, enjoy themselves."

India geared up for the World Cup with the Asia Cup triumph Sunday. The 10-wicket victory against hosts Sri Lanka was set up by the pacers, who claimed all 10 wickets with Mohammed Siraj returning with magical figures of 6/21.

"It is wonderful (to see Siraj bowl). I feel so happy that nowadays in all continents our fast bowlers are taking all 10 wickets, that's the cherry on the cake," said India's 1983 world cup winning captain.

"There was a time when we used to depend on spinners, it is not anymore, that's why the strength of the team becomes so good." Kapil, however, said as a fan he would have wanted to see a close match rather than a lop-sided final in Colombo.

"What a fantastic cricket



played! As a cricketer I would like to see much close games but as a player, I feel bowl them out for 30 and win. As a spectator, probably a little close matches would have been better."

India have a few fitness concerns ahead of the World Cup as some key players, including Axar Patel and Shreyas Iyer, suffered injuries during the Asia Cup.

While Axar is nursing both a wrist injury and a minor tear in his left quadriceps, Iyer had a back spasm and played only two matches during the continental event.

"In any team, if any two main players get injured then it hurts the team's fortunes. That's why stroke of luck is required, because if your main player gets injured, the team's balance gets disturbed," Kapil said.

Kapil also lauded India opener Shubman Gill. "This is a youngster who we can look up to. He is the future of Indian cricket. Very very proud to have a player of that ability in India," he said.

There has been a debate on the team selection with some senior players such as Shikhar Dhawan, Ravichandran Ashwin, Yuzvendra Chahal missing the World Cup bus. Kapil, however, backed the selectors, led by Ajit Agarkar, for the picking of the best Indian team for the World Cup.

Real's perfect league campaign continues



Joselu (No.14) and Jude Bellingham celebrate the former's goal against Real Sociedad, Sunday

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Madrid, Sept 18: Real Madrid remained perfect in the Spanish league after they rallied again for a 2-1 win over Real Sociedad. Federico Valverde and Joselu scored early in the second half at the Santiago Bernabeu to give Madrid their fifth straight victory to start the league season.

The only team still with a perfect record, Madrid have a two-point lead over second-placed Barcelona, who have won four in a row after opening with a draw.

Andar Barrenetxea put Sociedad ahead with a goal from inside the

area only five minutes into the match after a cross by Japan forward Takefusa Kubo. Valverde equalized for Madrid less than a minute into the second half with a one-timer from outside the area, and Joselu scored the go-ahead goal in the 60th with a header off a cross by Fran Garcia, who also assisted in Valverde's goal.

It was the third time that Madrid had to come from behind to pick up a win this season. They had also trailed early in victories against Almeria and Getafe. Sociedad drew their first three matches but were coming off a win against Granada.

India men climb to third spot, eves 7th in FIH ranking

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Lausanne (Switzerland), Sept 18: The Indian men's hockey team has climbed to the third spot in the latest world rankings issued by the International Hockey Federation (FIH) Monday. India (2771) are back into the top-3, after more than year since dropping out in May 2022. The elevation happened due to their undefeated run in the Asian Champions Trophy 2023 in Chennai last month.

Netherlands (3113) continue to lead the way, pulling off a comfortable lead over Belgium (2989) in second place. England (2745), Germany (2689) and Australia (2544) hold on to the fourth, fifth and sixth positions respectively, while Argentina (2350) climbed up to seventh ahead of Spain (2347).

In the women's rankings, Netherlands (3422) are perched at the top spot ahead of Australia (2818) and Argentina (2767). Belgium (2609) went past Germany (2574) to fourth.

Indian women (2325) have climbed one spot to the seventh position, at the expense of Spain (2173). New Zealand (2001) and Japan (1900) continue to hold their ninth and 10th spots.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Paris, Sept 18: Paris Saint-Germain started their previous UEFA Champions League campaign with a team featuring Lionel Messi and Neymar and a win over Juventus.

The two football greats didn't score that night and PSG later was eliminated from Europe's top competition in the pre-quarters for the fifth time in seven years. The premature exit, once again, highlighted the blatant failure of PSG's strategy of assembling star-studded teams without a real backbone.

The owners have changed their master plan during the off-season, though, and it's a revamped PSG that takes on Borussia Dortmund Tuesday as the group stage of the elite European tournament kicks off.

As usual, the French champion spent a lot of money on new recruits, but they no longer seem obsessed with the need for big names.

Taking part in the group stage for the 12th consecutive time, the PSG squad facing Dortmund Tuesday is radically different from the one that was knocked out by Bayern Munich last season.

Up front, Marco Asensio joined from Real Madrid, Goncalo Ramos arrived from Benfica and



Randal Kolo Muani signed to possibly form an all-French attack alongside Kylian Mbappe and Ousmane Dembele. PSG also transformed their midfield, hiring Kang-in Lee and Manuel Ugarte. At the back, Bayern Munich's Lucas Hernandez was added, as well as Milan Skriniar.

In addition to Messi and Neymar's departures, Sergio Ramos and Marco Verratti have also left, while PSG switched to a 4-3-3 formation under new coach Luis Enrique, who does not have to bother with accommodating Neymar, Messi and Mbappe together.

The cash-rich Qatari investors,

who took over in 2011, hope their new strategy will finally help them replicate the club's domestic dominance on Europe's biggest stage. But, the new players have not gelled into a solid unit yet and Enrique's possession-based system has not yielded immediate results.

In the French league, PSG has managed only eight points from five matches, their worst total since the 2010-11 season, and lost at home to Nice 2-3 over the weekend. PSG looked shaky and lacked attacking creativity, as Skriniar and Dembele delivered below-par displays. Enrique, however, said he was not troubled



MATCH SCHEDULE	
AC Milan vs Newcastle	
Young Boys vs RB Leipzig	Time: 10:15 pm
PSG vs Borussia Dortmund	
Man City vs Crvena Zvezda	
Barcelona vs Royal Antwerp	
Lazio vs Atletico Madrid	
Shakhtar vs Porto	
Feyenoord vs Celtic	
Time: 12:30 am (Wednesday)	
Telecast: Sony Ten channels	
Stream: Sony LIV	

by the result. After the feud between Mbappe and club officials over a contract dispute, the France striker has been a source of confidence for Enrique. After overcoming a small knee injury, Mbappe returned with two goals against Nice and should lead the attack against Dortmund.

Wrestlers disappoint at Belgrade Worlds

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Belgrade, Sept 18: India's men's freestyle wrestlers cut a sorry figure at the World Championships as five of the six Olympic-quota contenders have exited the prestigious tournament and only Abhimanyu could reach the medal round in the non-Olympic 70kg weight class.

What was more disappointing was that the wrestlers lost to rivals from the nations that are not known for their wrestling prowess, raising suspicion over their fitness.

Sachin Mor (79kg) lost to North Macedonia's Ahmad Magomedov while Anuj Kumar (65kg) went down to Mexico's Austin Klee Gomez. In the 70kg bronze play-off, Abhimanyu lost to Armenia's Arman Andreyan.

Akash Dahiya (61kg), Naveen (74kg), Sachin Mor (79kg), Sandeep Singh Mann (86kg), Pruthviraj (92kg), Sumit (125kg) all fell at different stages of the tournament.

Asian Games: One last hurrah for many Indian athletes

Several of India's achievers and consistent performers are gearing up for one last hurrah at the Asian Games. All of them might be in the twilight of their careers but remain medal contenders at the Games. Let's look at their chances ahead of the quadrennial event, which was delayed by one year due to COVID-19...

Rohan Bopanna, 43



The tennis veteran is turning the clock back with his exploits on the men's doubles circuit this year. Having made the semifinals and final of Wimbledon and US Open respectively this season, the big serving Indian is showing age is just a number. Bopanna, who made his Asian Games debut way back in 2002, goes into the tournament as the defending

champion, having won the doubles gold alongside Divij Sharan in the 2018 edition. He could partner Yuki Bhambri in Hangzhou.

Sharath Kamal, 41



The table tennis ace will look to add to his surprise two Asian medals in his fifth and final appearance. Last year, he was among the stand out players in the Commonwealth Games, where he



won as many as three gold medals. The men's team bronze in the last edition had ended a 60-year wait for a table tennis medal at the Asian Games and that event remains India's best bet.



Ankita Raina, 30 She will be another medal contender on the tennis court. The

30-year-old became only the second Indian female tennis player after Sania Mirza to win a singles medal at the Asiad when she secured a bronze in 2018. Raina is also likely to feature in the women's doubles and mixed doubles event.

PR Sreejesh, 35



By his own admission, the veteran goalkeeper is taking one tournament at a time at the fag end of his career. The upcoming Asiad is definitely Sreejesh's last shot at the continental showpiece and he will be giving his all to help India claim the gold and qualify directly for next year's Paris Olympics.

Dipika Pallikal, 32



The mother of two is certainly competing in her fourth and last Asiad. The 32-year-old, who has two singles and as many team medals to her name at the competition, will only be seen in the mixed doubles event alongside Harinderpal Sandhu.

Bajrang Punia, 29



The champion wrestler will be making his first appearance on the mat after leading the protest against former WFI president Brij Bhushan

Sharan Singh for alleged sexual harassment of female wrestlers. All eyes will be on the seasoned pro who will take the mat to defend his 65kg title in China. The Tokyo Olympics bronze medallist will be making his third appearance at the Asiad. Before the gold in Jakarta, he had secured silver in the 2014 edition.

Seema Punia, 40



The 40-year-old discus thrower has managed to win a gold and bronze in the previous two editions. The CWG in Birmingham last year was a disappointment as she failed to win a medal after doing so in the past four editions. Asian Games will be her last chance to end on the podium.