



## BEAUTY QUEEN IN SOUP

Miss Universe Pakistan Erica Robin faces trouble as religious leaders said the beauty pageant was an insult to Pakistan

LEISURE P2



## AMERICANS ARRIVE HOME

Americans detained for years in Iran arrive home and tearfully hug their loved ones

INTERNATIONAL P10



## INDIA SUFFER DEFEAT

Indian men's football team go down 1-5 against hosts China in their opening group league encounter of the Asian Games

SPORTS P12

## Student among 2 electrocuted

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Cuttack, Sept 19:** Two persons, including a student, died of electrocution during the Ganesh festivities, Tuesday.

In the first incident, a student of a private university was electrocuted and four others sustained serious burns when the mast of a flag they were carrying alongside a Ganesh idol on a tractor came in contact with an 11 KV electric wire in Naraj area of Cuttack city, police said.

The deceased was identified as Soham Bhagwan Sawle, a native of Aurangabad district in Maharashtra. The injured have been rushed to a private hospital in serious condition for treatment.

The incident took place when the students of the private university were carrying the Ganesh idol to their institution.

In the second incident, J Khagesh, 28, of Totagumuda village under Gurandi police limits of Gajapati district was electrocuted while installing a loudspeaker on a Ganesh pandal.

Gurandi police officials reached the spot and sent the body for postmortem.

## 3 of family killed in Kalahandi road mishap



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhawanipatna, Sept 19:** At least three members of a family were killed and six sustained critical injuries in a head on collision between an auto-rickshaw and a truck at an intersection near Chikili Square under Junagarh police limits in Kalahandi district, on the eve of mass agrarian festival 'Nuakhai', Tuesday.

The deceased were identified as Krushna Chandra Naik, 25, Padusar Naik, 50, and Amrutsar Naik, 45, all members of a family and natives of Kathakura village under Thuamul Rampur police limits in Kalahandi district. The six critically injured persons were rescued and admitted to the district headquarters hospital at Bhawanipatna for treatment.

Police said the mishap occurred when nine members of a family were travelling to their relative's house at Chhilipa village under Dharmagarh block in an auto-rickshaw. A truck coming from the opposite direction collided with the vehicle at the intersection at Chikili Square.

Police rushed to the spot, seized the truck and detained its driver. The bodies were sent to the DHH at Bhawanipatna for post-mortem.

## IRREGULAR by MANJUL



You are Shakti. I always bow in front of you...33%

WEATHER		BHUB	CTK
TEMP		33.0°C	32.4°C
MAX		33.0°C	32.4°C
MIN		25.3°C	25.5°C
Humidity		86%	82%
Rainfall		10mm	12mm
		Forecast: Cloudy sky with light rain	



NEW BEGINNING: Parliamentarians in the Lok Sabha during a special session at the new House, in New Delhi, Tuesday

PTI PHOTO

## 10 more scrub typhus cases take tally to 832

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 19:** Ten more people were found positive for scrub typhus infection in the State in the last 24 hours, taking the total number of such cases to 832, a Health official said Tuesday.

All the new cases were detected in Sundargarh district, he said. Fifty-nine samples have been tested in the past 24 hours, of which 10 were found positive, Sundargarh chief district medical officer (CDMO) Kanhucharan Nayak said.

Earlier, 183 of 901 samples sent for testing were detected positive for the scrub typhus infection in the district. "Overall 193 scrub typhus cases have been reported in Sundargarh and one of them succumbed to the disease," he said. The maximum number of such cases were found in Rourkela and Sundargarh towns and Majhapada area, Nayak said.

Keonjhar recorded the highest number of scrub typhus infections at 627, but no death was reported from the district, CDMO Kishore Kumar Prusty said. Twelve positive cases were found in Bargarh district, and six of them died, another official said.

Scrub typhus infection spreads through bites of infected chiggers (larval mites).

# WOMEN'S RESERVATION BILL Not before 2029

KULDEEP SINGH, OP

**New Delhi, Sept 19:** The Women's Reservation Bill, which was introduced in the Lok Sabha Tuesday, would not serve its purpose during 2024 general elections even after both the houses passed the legislation as reservation of seats will only come into effect after a delimitation exercise is undertaken. The benefits are unlikely to pass on to women before 2029 Lok Sabha polls.

The Constitution amendment bill, introduced by Union Law and Justice Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal, seeks to provide 33 per cent reservation to women in Lok Sabha and Assemblies. Prime Minister Narendra Modi hailed the legislation as another historic move of his government towards women-led development. He said God has given him the opportunity to make this crucial law and appealed all the MPs to support the bill.

Union minister Arjun Meghwal said after the passage of the legislation, the number of women MPs in Lok Sabha will go up to 181, from the current 82.

However, the bill came under attack from the Opposition parties over the provision mandating delimitation exercise for implementation of one third reservation to women.

Significantly, the Constitution (One Hundred and Twenty-Eighth Amendment) Bill, 2023, inserts article 334A in the Constitution which mandates that the reservation of seats for women will only take effect after an exercise of delimitation is undertaken for this purpose, after the relevant figures for the first census taken and after commencement of the Constitution Amendment Act, 2023 have been published.

Provision Six of the bill states that the Constitution amendment act shall not affect the representation in the Lok Sabha and Assemblies until the dissolution of the Lok Sabha and Assemblies. In the wake of such provisions, the reservation of seats for women in the Lok Sabha is unlikely to come into effect before 2029 general elections.

The provisions of the Act will also cease to have effect after 15 years of its commencement.

The Constitution amendment bill seeks to insert Article 330A, Article 332A, Article 334A and clauses to Article 239AA. Article 330A seeks to reserve one third seats for women in Lok Sabha, while Article 332A provides for reservation of one third seats in Assemblies. The insertion of clauses in 239AA reserves seats for women in Delhi Assembly.

Meanwhile, Opposition parties questioned the intent of the government and asked whether the census and delimitation exercise will be done before 2024 elections.

"In a season of election jumbas, this one is the biggest of them all! A huge betrayal of the hopes of crores of Indian women and girls. Now it says that the reservation for women will come into effect only following the first decadal Census conducted AFTER the Women's Reservation Bill has become an Act," Congress Rajya Sabha MP

*The Constitution 128th Amendment Bill 2023 inserts following articles in Constitution*

- **ARTICLE 330A** reserves one third seats for women in Lok Sabha
- **ARTICLE 332A** reserves one third seats for women in Assemblies
- **ARTICLE 239 AA (2) (b) (ba) (bb) (bc)** reserves one third seats for women in Delhi Assembly
- **ARTICLE 334A** states that the act to come into effect after next census and a delimitation exercise is undertaken

Jairam Ramesh said in a post on X. The Aam Aadami Party too criticised the government over clauses regarding the implementation of the bill and said that the BJP is making a fool of women.

**Credit must go to Naveen: BJD** | P3

## India-Canada faceoff

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Sept 19:** India Tuesday rejected as 'absurd' and 'motivated' Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's allegations of 'potential' involvement of Indian agents in the killing of a Khalistani separatist leader and kicked out a senior Canadian diplomat in a tit-for-tat move to Ottawa's expulsion of an Indian official over the case, marking fresh strain to the already frayed ties between the two nations.

Canadian High Commissioner to India Cameron MacKay was summoned and was informed about the decision to expel the senior diplomat with the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) saying the action reflected New Delhi's growing concern at the 'interference of Canadian diplomats in our internal matters and their involvement in anti-India activities'.

The chain reactions followed after Trudeau, speaking at the House of Commons Monday, said Canada was looking at 'credible allegations potentially linking' Indian agents to the June killing of Canadian Khalistani terrorist Hardeep Singh Nijjar. He was shot dead by two gunmen in Surrey June 18. The MEA also trashed comments by Trudeau and Foreign Minister Melanie Joly, asserting that such unsub-

**India expels Canadian diplomat in tit-for-tat move; trashes Canada's allegations over Khalistani terrorist's killing**

stantiated allegations seek to shift the focus from Khalistani terrorists and extremists, who have been provided shelter in Canada and continue to threaten India's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Though New Delhi did not divulge the name of the Canadian diplomat who has been asked to leave India within five days, people familiar with the matter said it is Canadian intelligence agency's station chief in New Delhi Olivier Sylvestre.

The Indian action to expel the Canadian diplomat came hours after Joly announced that a top Indian diplomat has been expelled from Canada. Joly's office said the diplomat ordered to leave Canada is Pavan Kumar Rai, the head of the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), according to Canadian broadcaster CBC news.

Canada's public announcement of expulsion of the Indian intelligence operative is seen as 'rare' as such issues are generally handled in a discreet manner.

Nijjar, 45, was one of India's most-wanted terrorists who carried a cash reward of ₹10 lakh on his head.

## Nihar Malaviya permanent CEO of Penguin Random House

AGENCIES

**New York, Sept 19:** Nihar Malaviya, an Indian-origin publishing executive, has been named permanent CEO of New York-based international publishing group Penguin Random House, nine months after he was appointed the interim chief executive.

Malaviya, 48, assumed the role of Interim CEO of Penguin Random House, starting January 1, 2023. Malaviya will replace Markus Dohle, who departed after Penguin Random House's failed bid for Simon and Schuster last year.

"Nihar Malaviya will lead Penguin Random House permanently as CEO," the publisher's parent company Bertelsmann said in a statement Monday. Prior to his appointment as interim CEO of Penguin Random

House January 1, 2023, he served as President and COO of Penguin Random House US since 2014.

During his tenure in publishing, Malaviya has spearheaded the creation of a variety of industry-first capabilities in data science, supply chain, technology, and consumer insights. Malaviya began his career at Bertelsmann in 2001 as a participant in the Bertelsmann Entrepreneurs Programme.

In 2003, he moved within the group to Random House, taking on a number of leadership positions. Malaviya is a two-time recipient of the Bertelsmann Entrepreneur Award for Strategy Execution.

He holds an MBA in Finance and Marketing from the NYU Stern School of Business, as well as a Bachelor of Science in Computer Science.

## TV journos prioritise divisive issues more than real ones: Survey

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, Sept 19:** A survey conducted by CVoter for IANS has found that a majority of the respondents feel that during debates and discussions, TV journalists give preference to communal and divisive issues instead of real ones. The survey had a sample size of 2,433.

Almost 60 per cent of the respondents said that journalists give preference to communal and divisive issues instead of real ones.

More than two-third of the respondents or 67.8 per cent said some journalists speak in favour of the government instead of questioning the government on



issues of public concern. As many as 54.8 per cent of NDA supporters echoed this view, while 76.4 per cent of the Opposition supporters backed this view.

A total of 45.5 per cent respondents said boycotting some journalists would either benefit or harm the opposition INDIA bloc, while 30.8 per cent said it would benefit it. A majority of 67.5 per cent

said it is right to question the impartiality and credibility of journalists in present times. As per the survey, 33.7 per cent said newspapers are more impartial, while 32.8 per cent said TV channels are more impartial. A majority-51.4 per cent - respondents feel that the opposition INDIA bloc should withdraw its decision to boycott some journalists.

A majority of 50.8 per cent

*More than two-third of respondents or 67.8% said some journalists speak in favour of the government instead of questioning the government on issues of public concern*

feels that the INDIA bloc has taken the decision to boycott some journalists because elections are drawing near.

To a question on among the government, journalists and the public, whose responsibility is it to ensure that journalism remains impartial, a majority of 58.7 per cent respondents said the responsibility falls on the journalists, 24.6 per cent said it is the responsibility of the government, while 12.5 per cent said public should be responsible.

# leisure



## ARIANA, DALTON FILE FOR DIVORCE

Singer-actress Ariana Grande and her husband, Dalton Gomez have officially filed for divorce. The couple were married for two years, but in July of this year, Ariana and Dalton were reported to be "heading for divorce", reports Mirror.co.uk.

## KATY PERRY SELLS RIGHTS TO HER MUSIC CATALOG FOR \$225MMN

Singer Katy Perry has sold the rights to her music catalog in a deal reportedly worth \$225 million. The rights to the songs and albums released from 2008 to 2020 had been bought by Litmus Music, reports aceshowbiz.com.



### FORTUNE FORECAST

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

**ARIES**  
Today will be a very romantic day for you. Ganesh says you will be faced with many temptations, and you may forget that your wishes are not being reciprocated. If your relationships are in troubled waters, you will get some hints about pending matters.

**TAURUS**  
You may, this day, get your moods ruffled, your emotions hurt. Emotionally you are likely to be too touchy and, therefore, vulnerable. Ganesh sees you being grouchy and upset throughout the morning. Later, however, the clouds of gloom will disperse and you will gradually regain your exuberance.

**GEMINI**  
You will make diligent efforts to keep your loved ones happy and content and will expect the same from them today. However the more expectations you fulfill, the more they will rise. You need to give some time to yourself as well, says Ganesh.

**CANCER**  
You will be an eternal optimist today. Ganesh says that your accomplishments will motivate others to emulate you. You will spend the evening with family members and enjoy it, too, your value for family values and plans will go up to-day.

**LEO**  
Your expenses will increase today owing to your care-free attitude. You need to curb down on your spending. The later half of the day will see you deal with minor issues related to the work-place. If you ignore these issues now, they will crop up into major problems later on.

**VIRGO**  
Your mission of finding an engrossing relationship has been fulfilled. At work, you may try to outdo other people with both your actions and words. Ganesh suggests you may go ahead and charm people with your repository of enchanting anecdotes and win their goodwill.

**LIBRA**  
Ganesh says you will see your hard work come to fruition today. This is a good and profitable day for all those of you who are associated with the business field. For those of you who are working professionals this will be a day when your senior officials will praise you for taking up tough tasks and completing them satisfactorily.

**SCORPIO**  
You wake up to a new ray of hope, flaunting your sunny side up, predicts Ganesh. You leave no stone unturned to fulfil your desires. With boundless optimism, you are all set to win the world. Push your limits to know your strengths.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
Your belligerent mood will be taken care of by the good news that may light up your face and cheer you up. Your imagination has just got wings as you become creative and think beyond boundaries. Go on a long drive with friends or beloved in the evening.

**CAPRICORN**  
There is a creative side to your personality which will come to the fore now. With your unusual wit and intelligence you will guide others on their paths. Many will come to you for guidance and you will be able to spread a harmonious environment around. You don't look down upon people because of their problems which will earn you great respect in the society.

**AQUARIUS**  
It may seem that all of your plans are going haywire. It is not too late; you can still have things under control. All you need to do is focus on your work rather than helping everyone around. Because, you end up having no time for your goals, feels Ganesh.

**PISCES**  
You will contemplate adopting a new strategy today. It is an auspicious day for making a new beginning and undertaking new ventures. A promotion may be on the cards at the work front and you will find success knocking at your front door today.

# I'm an actor with no limit: Nikki

**Mumbai:** Actress Nikki Tamboli, after featuring in reality shows and music videos, admits she is on the road to break a major misconception about her and is confident that her upcoming work slate will break the misconception about her just being a 'pretty face'.  
"I am an artiste who has no limits. Slowly and steadily, the people who matter are coming to terms with the fact that Nikki Tamboli is more than just a pretty face. And that makes me do anything as an artiste," she says.  
The 27 year old actress adds, "And that will reflect in my work as well as my characters. Whatever the makers feel that I will be good at, I will put my 200 per cent to slay in that department. That's also because I have confidence that I can help you win over the world. When confidence blends with hard work and an unabashedly honest approach towards your craft, it is a seriously deadly combination".  
Tamboli signs off by saying, "I don't have a film background that will help me serve projects in a platter. I am here to create my own journey and there's so much to focus on myself that sometimes, even 24 hours in a day is less."



# Miss Universe Pakistan faces trouble at home

**London:** Erica Robin, the 24-year-old who won the inaugural Miss Universe Pakistan pageant held in Maldives, is being criticised in her home country. From religious leaders to caretaker Prime Minister, everyone has criticised the competition and Robin's participation, putting a question mark on her participation in the Global Miss Universe Pageant to be held in El Salvador in November, according to a report in Independent.

Religious leaders in deeply conservative Pakistan said the event was an insult to Pakistan. Taqi Usmani, an Islamic scholar, demanded that the government take action against the organisers of the pageant. He also wants to dispel the idea that Ms Robin was 'representing Pakistan'.

On X, politician Mushtaq Ahmed Khan said: "Who are the organisers of this beauty pageant in Pakistan? Who is doing this shameful act?"

As per the Independent report, caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar has asked the country's intelligence agency to launch an investigation against the organisers and how they were able to hold the pageant without the country's approval about using its name.

Talking to Voice of America, the 24-year-old said she felt a lot of responsibility on her shoulders as she believed it would be the first time Pakistan would have a participant in the global Miss Universe pageant.

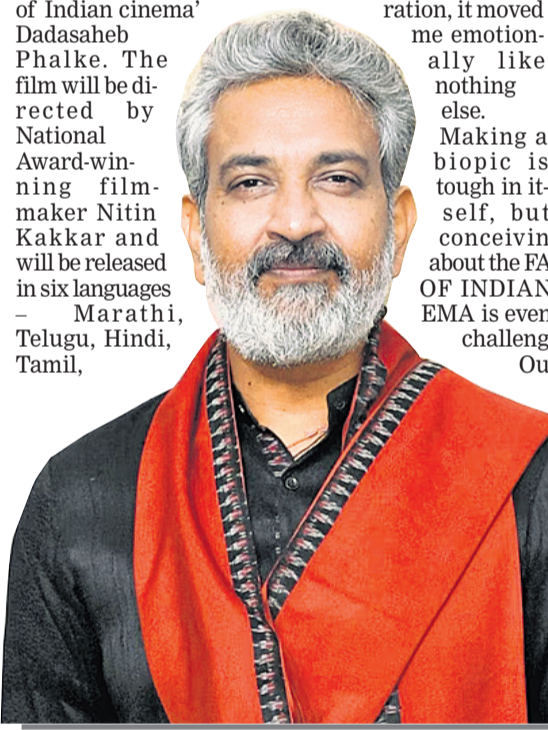
"However, I won't do anything that would harm the reputation of the country," she added.



# Rajamouli's next based on Phalke

**Hyderabad:** Director SS Rajamouli is back with a new story and this time he would be the force behind the biopic of Indian cinema, titled *MADE IN INDIA*. It is said to be based on the Father of Indian cinema Dadasaheb Phalke. The film will be directed by National Award-winning filmmaker Nitin Kakkar and will be released in six languages - Marathi, Telugu, Hindi, Tamil,

Malayalam and Kannada. Sharing the announcement video, SS Rajamouli Tuesday wrote on X, "When I first heard the narration, it moved me emotionally like nothing else. Making a biopic is tough in itself, but conceiving one about the FATHER OF INDIAN CINEMA is even more challenging. Our boys are



# Sunidhi: Divorce made me a better version of myself

**Mumbai:** Sunidhi Chauhan is one of the most popular singers in the Hindi film industry. Recently, the singer opened up about her personal life in an interview. She talked about how a divorce at a young age shaped her personality and helped her become a better version of herself.

During an interview, the singer confessed that she has made a lot of blunders in her life. She said that even though she is out of

marriage now, she isn't bitter about it. She added that every experience has made her a stronger person.  
"Everyone goes through a hard time. And it's okay to feel sad and depressed. But how long you stay in it is important. You cannot be like that for a long time," added the singer.

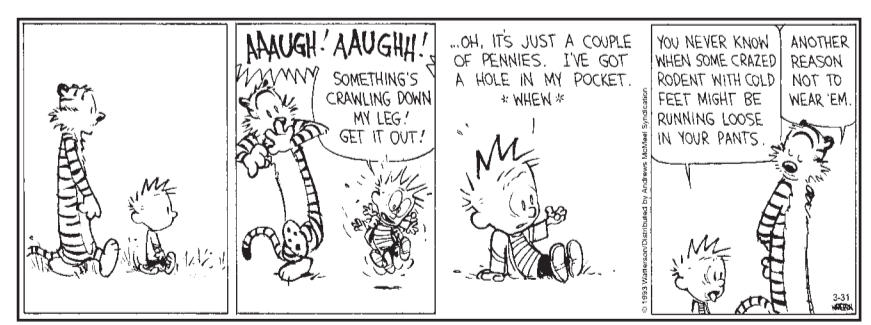
Sunidhi married singer Bobby Khan when she was just 18. After staying together for two years, the two separated and divorced each other in 2003. Later, in 2012, she found love again in music composer Hitesh Sonik, and the two tied the knot with each other. They welcomed their first child in 2018 and named him Tegh.

She also talked about how women are shamed when they decide to walk out of a marriage. She revealed that she didn't go through any ugly situations while moving away from marriage but still received a lot of backlash.

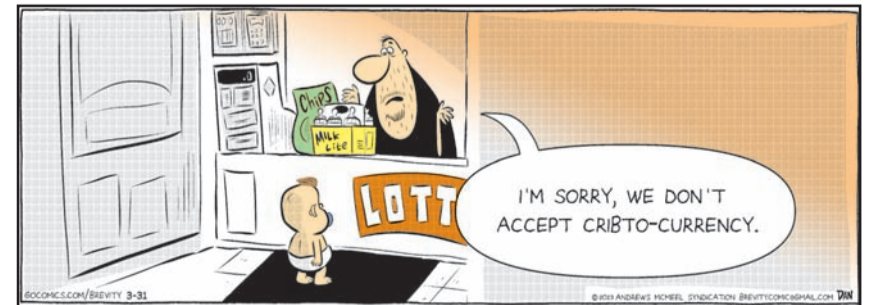
### PEANUTS



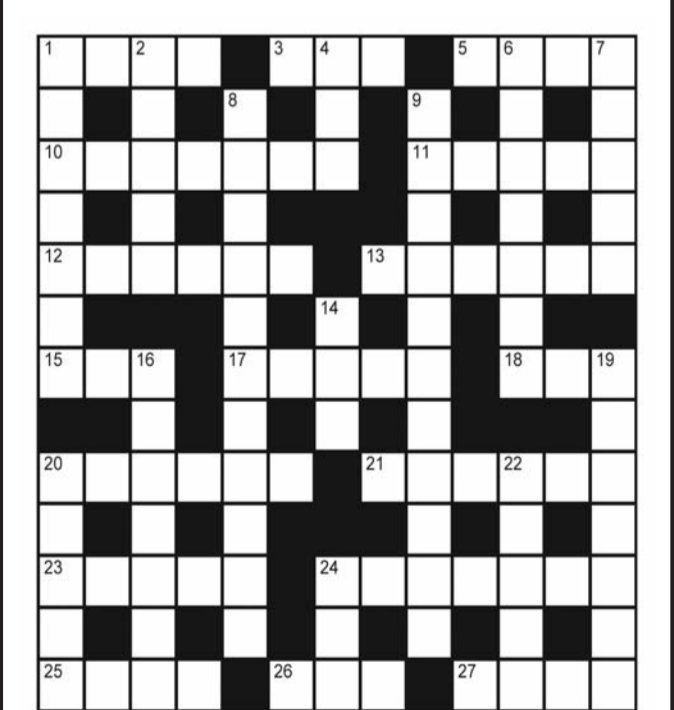
### CALVIN AND HOBBS



### BREVITY



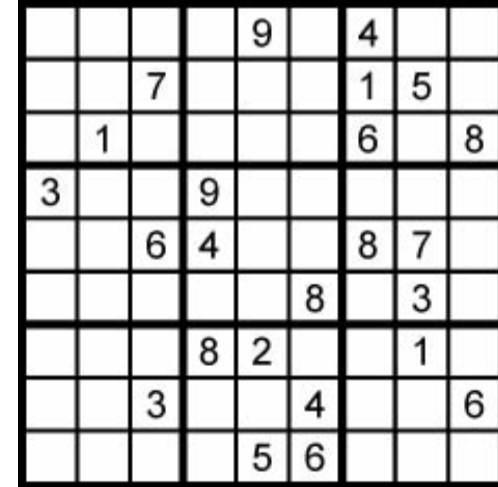
### FUN post CROSSWORD



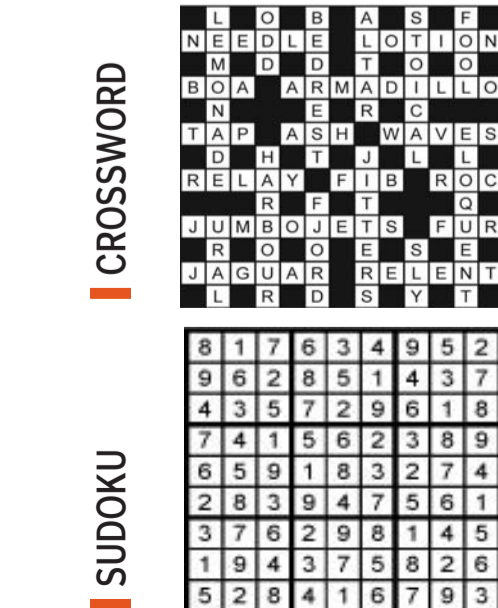
- Across**  
1 Charity  
3 Boxer's punch  
5 Malayan dagger  
10 Ostracise (4,3)  
11 Quartet member  
12 Proverbs  
13 Larder  
15 Beaver's work  
17 Travel accessory  
18 Dance step  
20 Ornate
- Down**  
21 Develop  
23 Lhasa's land  
24 Indonesian capital  
25 Do as directed  
26 Conceit  
27 Neighbor of Niger
- 6 Fancy desk (4-3)  
7 News feature  
8 Tame  
9 Swan Lake composer  
14 Young carnivore  
16 Gruesome  
19 Flight attendant  
20 Sine or cosine  
22 Careen  
24 Wine container

### 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



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

# Credit must go to Naveen: BJD A step forward in women empowerment

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 19:** The ruling Biju Janata Dal (BJD) Tuesday said Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik's efforts bore fruit with the Narendra Modi government introducing the Women's Reservation Bill in Lok Sabha.

BJD vice-president Debi Prasad Mishra said his party nominated 33 per cent women candidates from the state in 2019 Lok Sabha elections. Of the seven women candidates fielded by the party, five won the elections.

The BJD government has also reserved 50 per cent of seats for women in the local bodies of the state, he said.

Speaking to reporters, senior state minister Pramila Mallik said the credit for the introduction of the Bill in Lok Sabha must go to Patnaik and his efforts. He has been working all along

**The regional party has nominated 33 per cent women candidates from the state in 2019 Lok Sabha elections, said BJD vice-president Debi Prasad Mishra**

to elevate the status of women in society and his dream has now been fulfilled, she said.

The legendary Biju Patnaik gave opportunities to women in politics when he was the Chief Minister, and his son Naveen has accelerated the process, she added.

Odisha Assembly had adopted a resolution two years ago, seeking reservation of 33 per cent seats in Lok Sabha

and state legislatures for women, Mallik said.

The Centre introduced a constitutional amendment Bill to reserve one-third of seats in Lok Sabha and state Assemblies for women.

## WOMEN'S RESERVATION BILL

The government said it will enable greater participation of women in policy-making at the state and national levels and help achieve the goal of making India a developed country by 2047.

Women's reservation will come into effect after the delimitation exercise is undertaken and will continue for 15 years. Seats reserved for women will be rotated after each delimitation exercise, the bill said.

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 19:** The Union Cabinet Monday cleared the Women's Reservation Bill that seeks to reserve one-third (33 per cent) of seats in Lok Sabha and state Assemblies for women. Orissa POST talks to people from various walks of life on the issue.

### Poll bait

CPI(M) had been demanding 33 per cent reservation of seats for women in Lok Sabha and state Assemblies since UPA-1 government. The BJP, which opposed it during those days, is now getting it cleared in the Cabinet, especially just before the polls, is nothing but election bait.

JANARDAN PATI | CPI(M) LEADER

### Cong support

Congress has been trying hard to bring the Bill for a long. In fact, the party raised the issue (Women's Reservation Bill) in both the Houses Monday. It's a welcome move and

Congress will support it. Party will give priority to 33 per cent reservation to women in polls.

SAPTAGIRI ULAKA | CONGRESS MP

### Welcome move

It's a welcome move by the Union government. Most parties have been demanding 33 per cent reservation for women in Lok Sabha and state Assemblies. History has it that women sent to Lok Sabha and Assemblies have fared much better than their male counterparts.

NISHIKANTA MOHAPATRA | APP STATE CONVENER

### Focus backward sections

We welcome the Bill. However, it should have the provision of reservation for women from backward, minority sections of the society. Else, those from 'upper classes' will keep enjoying the benefits which is not a positive sign for democracy.

RABI BEHERA | SAMAJWADI PARTY LEADER

### Deserving should get chance

It's a welcome move. Cabinet nod to the Bill, though a bit late, is definitely good news as it's a move further towards women empowerment. New and 'deserving' candidates should be given chance in politics.

SABITA ACHARYA | UTKAL UNIVERSITY VC

### Avoid family politics

It was our longstanding demand. It should be ensured that leaders fearing to lose tickets should not pick female members from their family. Only those women with strong leadership quality and an urge to serve people should be picked.

NAMRATA CHADHA | SOCIAL WORKER

### Leadership boost

It'll be helpful in women empowerment and implementation of more and more women centric policies. It will also help create good women leaders who will fight for women's rights.

POLY PATNAIK | MOTHER'S PUBLIC SCHOOL CHAIRMAN-CUM-PRINCIPAL

### Time to shine

It will define the leadership of women in the country. It is very important to give women voice a chance to rise and shine. We need strong women representation to fight for women's rights and this will be a help in that direction.

PINKY PRADHAN | ACTRESS AND BJP LEADER

### Blow to patriarchy

Women constitute 50% of country's population. So, this will increase women's participation in democratic processes and patriarchy will come down to some extent.

SRUSTI MISHRA | STUDENT

### Dignity matters

Women have lived in a patriarchal society for long and unfortunately they were not given a chance to speak or rise. This Bill will give them a chance to live with dignity and it will also lead to implementation of good policy and growth.

SHWETA AGARWAL | SOCIAL ACTIVIST

# Loan scam charge: EOW claims bagful of evidence

GYAN RANJAN MOHAPATRA, OP

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 19:** The Economic Offence Wing (EOW) of Crime Branch Tuesday claimed to have collected vital evidence against the alleged loan scam by the authorities and owner of Eastern Media Limited.

"Investigation conducted/evidence collected, so far, revealed a huge, well & meticulously planned scam to get the loan amounts sanctioned in crores of rupees using fraudulent method of cheating, forgery and coercion," EOW stated in a press note.

The investigating agency also said that interrogation of several victims also corroborated the allegations of complainant Asim Mohapatra, a former district correspondent of Odia daily Sambad. The agency also revealed about seizing huge credible documents related to allegations including loan documents during the raid taken place at Sambad office in Rasulgarh Monday.

"More than 350 Sambad/EML employees have taken loan from Odisha Gramya Bank, IRC village branch alone over the last few years," EOW sources revealed.

Meanwhile, the investigating agency suspects that the actual figure is expected to be much higher as the loan taken from other banks like SBI and others are yet to be scrutinised.

All the 350 employees allegedly availed loans to the tune of ₹5 lakh each under easy schemes of the banks citing grounds like house building/repair. The agency also found that Sambad/EML authorities secured the loans producing forged salary certificates almost twice the actual salary



of the victims.

As per the press note, the EMI paid was almost equal to the net salary of employees. Some employees have been forced to take loan 2-3 times too.

"Employees are not given salary slip. EMIs are paid by Sambad/EML in 60 instalments. Strangely, in many cases, EMIs are paid by Sambad/EML even if employees have left/resigned/removed from the company months before," said the EOW.

Notably, a 12-member EOW team, along with officials of Commissionerate Police, Monday conducted searches at the Sambad office over the allegations of loan fraud, cheating, forgery and criminal intimidation against the proprietor, Soumya Ranjan Patnaik, and others levelled by Asim Mohapatra.

A case (24/23) has been registered under Sections 506, 467, 468, 471, 420 and 120-B of IPC against Patnaik and others September 16.

# Lopar forms over bay; more rain in store

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 19:** The India Meteorological Department (IMD) said a low-pressure area has formed over the Bay of Bengal and under its impact widespread rainfall would occur in some districts of Odisha for four days from Tuesday.

Besides rainfall, thunderstorms with lightning will also occur in some places of the state during the next two days, the IMD regional centre here said in a bulletin.

In its forecast till 8.30am of Wednesday, the IMD issued an Orange warning (be prepared) of heavy rainfall (7 to 20 cm) over the districts of Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj, Balasore, Bhadrak, Kendrapara, Jagatsinghpur, and Puri.

Similarly, a Yellow warning of heavy rainfall has been issued for the districts of Jajpur, Cuttack, Khurda, Ganjam, Dhenkanal, Angul, Deogarh, Sundargarh, Jharsuguda, Sambalpur, Subarnapur, Boudh, Kandhamal and Kalahandi.

Thunderstorm with lightning is also very likely to occur at one or two places in Balasore, Bhadrak, Jajpur, Kendrapara, Jagatsinghpur, Cuttack, Khurda, Puri, Nayagarh, Ganjam, Gajapati, Mayurbhanj, Keonjhar, Angul, Dhenkanal, Sambalpur, Sundargarh, Deogarh, Jharsuguda, Bargarh, Boudh, Kalahandi, Kandhamal, Subarnapur and Bolangir, it said.

Forecasting heavy rain from 8:30am Wednesday till 8:30am Thursday, the weatherman issued an Orange warning for Kalahandi, Kandhamal, Subarnapur, Bolangir, Boudh, Sambalpur, Angul, Bargarh and Jharsuguda districts.

Yellow warning has been issued for Mayurbhanj, Keonjhar, Dhenkanal, Cuttack, Sundargarh, Deogarh, Nuapada, Nabarangpur, Rayagada, and Ganjam, it said.

Moreover, the IMD forecast thunderstorm with lightning at one or two places in Balasore, Bhadrak, Jajpur, Kendrapara, Jagatsinghpur, Cuttack, Mayurbhanj, Keonjhar, Angul, Dhenkanal, Sambalpur, Sundargarh, Deogarh, Jharsuguda, Bargarh, Nuapada, Bolangir, Subarnapur, Boudh, Kalahandi, Kandhamal, Ganjam, Nayagarh, Puri and Khurda districts.

Meanwhile, in the last 24 hours, the state received an average rainfall of 4.6mm with the highest of 67.2mm recorded at Jhumpura in Keonjhar district, followed by 62mm at Khariar in Nuapada district, 60.4mm at Koraput, 50.6mm in Berhampur in Ganjam district.

# Striking teachers perform Ganesh puja on road

AGENCIES

**Puri, Sept 19:** In a novel way of protest the agitating primary teachers installed Lord Ganesh idol on the road in front of the block education office here and performed puja Tuesday.

Ganesh puja is being celebrated and observed in Puri in various schools and educational institutions and in market places across this town.

However, a typical Ganesh puja was organised by agitating teachers. They installed an idol of Ganesh on the road in front of the BEO's office, performed puja and made bhog offerings. The locals and passersby enjoyed the puja.

The teachers have been sitting on dharna for the last 12 days demanding fulfillment of their three-point charter of demands.

Most of agitating teachers reportedly withdrew their stir Monday following discussions with the inter-ministerial committee.

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# 'Elevating customers' shopping experience'



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 19:** Lalchnd Jewellers reopened its showroom at Master Canteen after a massive makeover here Tuesday. Lalchnd founder-cum-chairman Sunjoy Hans was present on the occasion with actors Kuna Tripathy, Akash Das Nayak, Bhoomika Dash and Suryamayee Mohapatra.

"Ever since this showroom came into being in 1988, we have been focused on making it all about customers. Throughout

the process of establishing the brand, we have strived towards elevating customers' shopping experience, through the range of our products and through our services and offers," said Hans.

For the reopening, Lalchnd Jewellers has come up with some limited-time offers valid during the September 19-24 period like: All HUID-hallmarked gold jewellery making charges at a flat rate of Rs 499 per gram; flat 30 per cent off on diamond; 50 per cent off on making charge for silver jewellery; 20 per cent off on

select branded watches; free silver coins with every purchase worth Rs 25,000 and above.

"With the back entrance, the showroom now offers customers added convenience of getting in from a quieter street in comparison to the ever-busy Janpath road," said a showroom manager.

It is significant to note that Lalchnd is not only offering jewellery shoppers the lowest MC in Odisha but it is also selling HUID-hallmarked gold at the lowest prices in all of eastern India.

# City celebrates Ganesh puja with festive fervour

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 19:** Ganesh Chaturthi, which marks the beginning of the festive season, was celebrated with pomp and gaiety across the state with the Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik wishing the people, Tuesday. However, patchy rain played spoilsport to the festive spirit a bit.

Taking to his social media account, Chief Minister greeted the people on the occasion. He said, "Heartly greetings and congratulations to the people of the state on the occasion of Ganesh Chaturthi. May every life be happy and prosperous with the blessings of Lord Ganesh."

Several educational institutions in City were beautifully decorated to mark the special day. Special prayers were offered to the Lord of Wisdom. The City

## 'Tree' Ganesh worshipped

**BHUBANESWAR:** Drawing inspiration from the age-old tradition of tree worship in India, Bakul Foundation volunteers worshipped Lord Ganesh in form of a tree here Tuesday. The foundation has been celebrating Ganesh Chaturthi in this unique eco-friendly way for the last five years. The Lord wore a pink dhoti and turban breaking gender stereotypes and his eyes were made of rice. Mustard seeds and dal adorned his crown and hands. This year, in a special addition, a painted coconut was transformed into the Lord's vehicle: the mouse. Devotees in attendance were served saplings as prasad. A tree close to Bakul's Park Library inside the Biju Patnaik Park was chosen for worship. Dharitri and OrissaPOST Editor Tathagata Satpathy and CEO Adyasha Satpathy joined the puja with BDA vice chairman Balwant Singh, Bakul Foundation's Sujit Mahapatra, volunteers, morning walkers and children, who also put up an art exhibition in the library on the theme of Green Ganesh. The volunteers of the foundation have left it to the rain to complete the Lord's visarjan, in a way that would pollute no water bodies.



pandals witnessed enthusiastic participation from people of all ages. More than 100 pandals of varying sizes have been set up in

various parts of the City creating joyful atmosphere. Some pandals stood out due to their unique idols and attractive decorations with vibrant lights and creative materials adding to the festive spirit. People in large numbers visited these pandals to take part in the puja rituals.

The Ganesh puja celebrations were interrupted due to intermittent downpour as predicted by the IMD. Due to this, several pandal organizers had to put up large tents for the devotees and even had to delay puja rituals.

A 55-ft-tall Ganesh idol at the Badagada pandal attracted a lot of attention. Sangram Martha,

secretary of Bright Star Youth Association, Badagada said, "Our goal was to make the Ganesh Idol more attractive and mammoth than previous years. Last year we had built a 51-ft Ganesh idol."

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

The Saheed Nagar club has prepared the pandal on the concept of the recently held G-20 Summit in New Delhi which was a huge attraction for people.



## Lady blackmailer's hubby on remand

GYAN RANJAN MOHAPATRA, OP

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 19:** The Commissionerate Police Tuesday brought lady blackmailer Irani Patra's husband on a two-day remand following court's order for further probe into the allegations of fraud and kidnapping by the couple. The cops had sought five days' remand of Nishikanta Patra but the court allowed only two days' remand.

According to sources the police will try to find out the involvement of other persons in the racket during Nishikanta's interrogation at Tamando police station. The police will also try to find out how many people were swindled by the couple.

The accused couple along with two of their associates was arrested September 12 for allegedly kidnapping a doctor and extorting Rs 10 lakh from him. One more aide was arrested by Tamando police September 17 over allegations of fraud leveled by a businessman from Bolagada area.

As many as four cases have been registered at the Tamando police station against the couple.

They used to target rich, high profile persons and students through social media.

# MODI GOVT UNLOCKS FORESTS FOR BUSINESS

TAPASYA AND NITIN SETHI

**New Delhi:** The Modi government persisted in finding ways to open up forests for commercial plantations, beginning shortly after taking office and ultimately achieving it through recent amendments to the Forest Conservation Act that damages the rights of tribal people, reveals a trail of official documents.

Documents studied by The Collective show the Union government's dogged efforts in opening up forests began to take shape as early as 2015, gained prominence during the making of a Green Credit Scheme (sidenote), and continued to evolve through subsequent iterations of the National Forest Policy drafts in 2016 and 2018 that focused on allowing private participation in plantations on forest land to increase the productivity of forests.

Despite having to shelve the forest policy drafts twice, after coming under fire from environmentalists for its pro-business language and objections from the tribal ministry for infringing on the rights of tribes people and forest dwellers, the government kept tweaking regulations to deliver for businesses. Finally, the government achieved in opening up the forest land for private parties through the recent amendments to the Forest Conservation Act of 1980.

The 2023 amendment to the Act gave wide-ranging relaxations to commercial plantations raised by private entities both on private land and government-regulated forest land.

## The Genesis

The efforts began in 2015. India's environmental laws aren't primarily a code for crime and punishment but rather are meant to provide options for restitution. One such option prescribed by the forest conservation law is compensatory afforestation, which involves planting trees elsewhere to compensate for forest cut down. But it hasn't been a success mainly because of the difficulty in finding land for afforestation, and neglect of saplings.

In 2015, the environment ministry began discussing ways to

make it work. One way they thought it could work was by roping in private planters. They prepared a scheme that incentivises private entities to go for plantations on degraded forest land and non-forest land, and then allowing these private plantations to be adjusted against compensatory afforestation.

This meant that instead of planting trees on a new patch, an already existing private plantation would be considered as an afforested patch. The private entities that have raised this plantation would be incentivised through the Green Credit Scheme as well as by allowing them to use the plantations commercially. The scheme, which is yet to take off, planned to incentivise individuals to earn credits by undertaking tree planting and trading these credits on a market platform with private developers obligated to fund afforestation to compensate for cutting down forests.

In January 2015, the environment ministry constituted a committee under the Director General of Forests & Special Secretary (DGF&SS) to work on the Green Credit scheme. The goal was to involve industry in raising plantations on degraded forests as well as non-forest lands.

In September same year, the forest division of the ministry held consultations to issue "Guidelines on Private Sector Participation for Afforestation on Degraded Forest Land".

It said degraded forests with forest cover not more than 10% would be made available to industries requiring timber and other forest produce for their use. This would start with pilot projects with private participation on forest lands. Of these lands given to private plantation companies, only 10-15% of the area would be earmarked for local communities and their collection of non-timber forest produce (NTFP), even if they had previously been legally collecting NTFP from a larger area.

The Union Ministry of Tribal Affairs came down heavily on the environment ministry. It said the guidelines for private participation "directly violate the statutory right of forest dwellers to protect, conserve and man-



age community forest resources" under the Forest Rights Act, 2006. The forest-dwelling communities have right of ownership, collection and disposal of minor forest produce, and the environment ministry's guidelines restricted it.

The tribal affairs ministry said that before moving further, the rights of tribal communities should be settled and private participation should be allowed only after the gram sabha gives its consent to "involve private sector in managing their forests".

As we wrote in the first part of this series, the environment ministry also drafted a forest policy in 2016, which it had to take down after coming under fire for favouring private players at the expense of tribal and forest-dependent communities.

The Union government subsequently assured Parliament that it would have a new forest policy. In 2018, another one was drafted and put in public domain. But it too carried the genes of its predecessor, focussing on allowing private partnerships in forestry activities like timber plantation while blurring out conservation and communities that depend on forests. It argued that the demand for timber was rising, leading to an increase in imports.

This is true. India's imports of timber have been rising. But, according to a report of International Tropical Timber Organisation with data till 2019, India's average annual wood productivity between 2009 and 2019 was around 46 million cubic metres. Of this, around 44 million cubic metres or 95% came from trees outside forests or timber plantations.

To cure what the government thought was a problem, the 2018 draft forest policy said there was a need to "stimulate growth in the forest-based industry sector" and "forest corporations and industry units need to step up growing of industrial plantations for meeting the demand of raw material". It said the productivity of forests had to be increased to encourage the use of timber so that "dependency on other high carbon footprint wood substitutes is reduced".

This draft too, which prioritised timber industry, threatened to undermine the rights of people under the Forest Rights Act (FRA).

"The 2018 forest policy draft was strongly opposed not only by civil society groups but also the tribal affairs ministry for ignoring tribal rights and favouring private interests in the name of increasing forest productivity," said Tushar Dash, an independent researcher who works on forest governance and community forest rights.

Responding to the draft, the tribal ministry said that "the public private partnership models for afforestation and agroforestry detailed in the policy open up areas over which tribals and forest dwellers have legal rights under FRA".

Even this draft national forest policy did not go anywhere. But the government brought into force the industry-friendly changes it struggled to enact since 2015 by tweaking rules and issuing executive orders that didn't face Parliament scrutiny.

In July 2019, the environment ministry approved guidelines to allow commercial plantations on degraded forests through a tri-

partite agreement between the local forest department, an NGO of repute and the private entity.

In July last year, the rules under the Forest Conservation Act of 1980, too, were changed to allow the government to hand over forest land to private developers before taking the consent of tribal and forest-dwelling communities, which is mandatory under the Forest Rights Act of 2006.

Finally, the Forest Conservation Act was amended in 2023 to provide a robust legal framework for the entry of commercial planters.

The amended forest conservation law

Both the 2016 and 2018 national forest policy drafts tried to make it easier for private players to enter forests for timber cultivation and other commercial purposes. To roll out the red carpet for private players, the environment ministry ran a chainsaw through the laws to protect forests and the legal rights of forest-dependent people over their traditional forests.

The extant 1988 forest policy stated that forest-based industry should raise, on its own, "the raw material needed for meeting its own requirements" and support - with inputs, like credit, technical advice and transportation services - those who can grow the raw material for them.

This was laid out in the forest conservation law as well. The forest law required that if any forest land was leased out to a private individual or a company, they had to first get clearance from the Union government to use the forest. This approval came with strict conditions to minimise harm to the forest, pay compensation (called Net Present Value) for the trees that would be cut down, and also plant new trees in an equal area of land.

But the amended Forest (Conservation) Act now allows forest land to be leased to private players according to orders that the Centre will write in the future. These orders wouldn't need Parliament's approval.

"The amended law leaves no space for parliamentary oversight. The Central government can specify guidelines, directives, orders and executive in-

structions for how forest land will be leased to private entities, what activities will be forest-purposes that don't require prior approval under Section 2 of the Forest Conservation Law and even issue directions to any government body or organisation or entity for the implementation of the Act," said Shomona Khanna, a lawyer of the Supreme Court of India who works extensively on the rights of indigenous peoples and tribal and forest dwelling communities.

The amended Act registers these timber and other plantations in forests, leased to private entities, as forestry activities, effectively leaving them out of the scope of the conservation law.

"If a forest land is being used for a forest purpose, it can be given on lease to a private company simply by following a 'direction' from the Central government and we don't know what those directions are going to be. There is no guidance in the amended Act for how this delegation of legislative power is to be exercised, which can result in all manner of arbitrariness," Khanna said.

And the cherry on top: For the private sector, the plantations they raise will be eligible to earn Green Credits that can be traded for profit.

Other changes brought into force through the amended forest law were also part of 2018 draft forest policy that was binned. In the section on wildlife management - another activity that did not require Centre's approval to use forests - the 2018 draft inserted "ecotourism models" and zoological gardens. With the new alterations, zoos, safaris and ecotourism facilities have also been left out of the purview of the forest conservation law.

*(The government changed the legal definition of forests, which leaves out private plantations and vast swathes from the scope of the conservation law. In the next part, we show how the definition of forests has changed and the government's controversial role in deciding India's forest cover)*

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# Kurmis withdraw proposed rail roko

AGENCIES

**Ranchi/Bhubaneswar/Jhargram, Sept 19:** Trains under the SER and ECoR jurisdictions will run on their scheduled routes in parts of West Bengal, Jharkhand and Odisha as an indefinite rail blockade called by Kurmi organisations from Wednesday has been withdrawn, officials said.

As a precautionary measure, at least 11 trains were cancelled and 12 others diverted Tuesday under the jurisdiction of South Eastern Railway (SER) and East Coast Railway (ECoR) in Jharkhand and Odisha respectively in view of the rail blockade, they said.

The ECoR said it has decided to run trains on normal routes with immediate effect as per schedule as the Kurmi Samaj agitation has been called off.

"All the trains that were earlier cancelled or diverted are being restored on their normal routes as per the directive of the



REPRESENTATIVE PICTURE headquarters. Ranchi railway division CPRO Nishant Kumar told PTI. "The indefinite rail blockade called by Kurmis has been withdrawn as our senior leaders are being harassed by police. We will take a collective decision on the next course of action September 30 in Purulia," said Ajit Mahato, a leader of Adivasi Kurmi Samaj in West Bengal. Sheetal Ohdar, the president of Totemik Kurmi Vikas Morcha

(TKVM), a leading Kurmi body in Jharkhand, however, claimed that they would continue their agitation from Wednesday. Several Kurmi bodies had called for the indefinite railway blockade at nine stations in Jharkhand, West Bengal and Odisha from September 20 to press for their demand of Scheduled Tribe (ST) status for the community and inclusion of Kurmal language in the eighth schedule of the

Constitution. Ohdar had, earlier, said that several organisations, including Adivasi Kurmi Samaj of West Bengal and Kurmi Sena of Odisha, would participate in the stir.

The indefinite blockade on railway tracks was supposed to take place at Muri, Gomoh, Nimdih, Ghagra stations in Jharkhand, Khemasuli and Kustaur in West Bengal, and Harichandapur, Jaraikele and Dhanpur in Odisha from September 20.

Ohdar urged the MPs from the community to raise the demand during the ongoing special session of Parliament.

Adivasi Kurmi Samaj central spokesperson Harmohan Mahto claimed that Kurmis were listed among aboriginal tribes in 1913 during British rule.

"When the Centre notified ST list on September 6, 1950, Kurmis were put in the list of Other Backward Castes (OBC) in West Bengal, Bihar and Odisha," he claimed.

# NHRC warns CS, IRB Chairman

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Kendrapara, Sept 19:** The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has warned the Chief Secretary (CS) of Odisha and the Indian Railway Board (IRB) Chairman to invoke its coercive power u/s 13 of the PHR Act, 1983 calling for their personal appearances before the Commission in connection with the Bahanaga Train tragedy report.

The action will be taken if they fail to submit the requisite report related to the accident within a period of four weeks.

The NHRC passed the order last week on a petition filed by human rights activist Radhakanta Tripathy.

Tripathy in his petition stated that the rare and tragic train accident happened in Bahanaga Bazaar station in Balasore June 2 due to gross negligence of the Railways.

There has been subsequent

## BAHANAGA TRAIN TRAGEDY



violation of human rights of the passengers, both dead and alive, due to lack of appropriate and timely action by the Railways and State administration, he alleged.

Tripathy said that the rights of deceased/ victims are being violated by the state Government/Railways as the authorities have failed to preserve the bodies till identification of the same by their kin.

He said dead bodies are still lying for disposal and fake claimants are coming forward to stake claims for which the compensation cases to the next

of kin of the deceased victims are pending.

The petitioner requested the NHRC for an in-depth analysis, independent and impartial investigation of the incident and sought for heavy compensation to the family members of the deceased, dignified farewell of the dead bodies and compensation with proper medical care to the injured ones.

He also sought for intervention of the administration and Railways for proper documentation of all the passengers for loss of documents and preparation of further documents for claiming insurance and service benefits, Students, children care etc.

Earlier the NHRC had sought Action Taken Reports from the Odisha CS and the IRB Chairman, within a period of four weeks.

However, despite direction neither the CS nor the Chairman submitted any report till date.

# Officials worried over safety of jumbo calves

**ELEPHANTS, ON BEING CHASED DOWN BY THE VILLAGERS, OFTEN FALL INTO DEEP CRATERS ENDANGERING THEIR LIVES, SAYS DFO SRIKANT NAYAK**

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Keonjhar, Sept 19:** Abandoned and ailing elephant calves have become a cause of concern for the forest personnel working in various parts of the state, according to reports.

The issue assumes significance after villagers rescued a 20-day old jumbo calf from a pit near Bhanra village under Karanjia forest range in neighbouring Mayurbhanj district and handed it over to Karanjia

forest officials, three days back. Another, ailing calf is also in the custody of forest officials.

Reports said a 22-member elephant herd has unleashed a reign of terror in villages under Patna forest range in Keonjhar and under Karanjia range in Mayurbhanj. The forest officials of both the districts are spending sleepless nights to protect the life and properties of the villagers from the fury of the animals as well as to save the pachyderms from external threats.



The animals often lose sight of their tracks and run here and there after people try to drive them away from the human habitats. As a result, they are falling sick due to lack of rest and exhaustion.

Panicked, the calves while running with the mother elephants either suffer from ill-

ness or fall into pits or craters. It is said that the herd members do not allow a calf in the group if it gets accidentally touched by humans while running to save their lives.

To save the lives of jumbo calves, forest officials sensitise the villagers urging them to contact the department when they find any ailing or abandoned calf.

Reports said that the calf rescued recently fell into a 5 to 6 feet pit and got injured. The mother elephant and other herd members fled towards the jungle after villagers arrived at the spot.

After rescuing the baby elephant, the villagers handed it over to the department and it is undergoing treatment.

Contacted, Karanjia DFO Srikant Nayak said the calf was safe following treatment. Meanwhile, it has been handed over to the Pithabata forest range officials in Similipal wildlife sanctuary who will decide on its release into the forest, added Nayak.

On the other hand, the villagers' chasing the elephant herd has turned a bane for the pachyderms. The forest personnel have repeatedly urged the villagers not to drive away the animals but instead inform them, but in vain. As a result, the herd members while running helter-skelter from one place to another often fall into pits or craters endangering their lives, the DFO said.



**MASS FEST:** Priest of a village deity at A Katapali in Sambalpur district offering newly harvested paddy shoots to the priests of Samaleswari temple of Sambalpur Town for use as offerings on Nuakhai, Tuesday

# Political turf war hotting up ahead of festive season

**ONE FACTION, WITH ALLEGIANCE TO MINISTER FOR LABOUR AND ESI SARADA NAYAK AND ANOTHER CLOSE TO KUNA DAS, THE CHAIRMAN OF STATE YOUTH WELFARE BOARD, ALMOST HAD A FIGHT AT A PREPARATORY MEETING**

RAJESH MOHANTY, OP

**Rourkela, Sept 18:** The Steel City is gearing up for the three major pujas, due in a month's time.

The puja committees are being formed and at the same time donation collection has also started. Keeping all these in mind the administration called for a preparatory meeting inviting members of the committees and office bearers of Central Puja Committee September 12.

However, little did then the administration or anyone had realised that this would expose the internal differences of ruling BJD here with two factions of the party having heated exchanges at the meeting. All hell broke loose when ADM Subhankar Mohapatra pro-



Labour Minister Sarada Nayak and State Youth Welfare Board Chairman Kuna Das during their good old days

posed instead of holding an election for the CPC office bearers, the old body to continue.

One faction, with allegiance to Minister for Labour and ESI Sarada Nayak and another faction close to Kuna Das, the Chairman State Youth Welfare Board almost fought with each other.

Two of Das' supporters nearly had a heated argument with the ADM and Chairman CPC. However, when the ADM stood his ground over his decision, the two surrendered meekly. Finally, those opposing the ADM's suggestion lost it by a margin of 38-32.

Speaking about this a Sarada supporter said, "The voting showed the mirror and where they stand. So, they kept quiet and left immediately after the division of the house." The fact remains is the current CPC body has also members from other political parties. No one wanted an election so all kept quiet and supported the ADM's motion from the beginning. This is being regarded as a small but significant victory for Sarada Nayak.

The whole issue between Kuna and Sarada is all about the prestigious Rourkela seat. Now Kuna is trying to stake his claim over it

because of his old association with the place. His father was working in RSP and he started his career in politics being a supporter of Dilip Ray. But, today this is being regarded as his bane.

"How can Kuna Das think of contesting from Rourkela in Sarada's place? Where was he all these years? He left the city in search of greener pastures in Bhubaneswar and now he thinks he will reap the benefit. This was one small lesson for him and more surprises wait for him," said another Sarada supporter.

BJD politics in the coming days is going to be more interesting. Sources close to Kuna say, "It is for nothing he is eyeing for the Rourkela seat. Just wait and watch things will be more in favour of him."

Meanwhile, another Sarada detractor said, "We knew there would be no election because the minister is opposed to it. This was a blatant misuse of power." When asked about the result and their position he said, "had there been an election a real one then the situation would have been different."

Anyway on Sarada's turf, where Kuna is searching for an opening, the first round of direct confrontation went to the minister. "So, let us wait and watch things will be interesting in BJD politics and media persons will have many things to write and report," said an independent observer.

## 3 fishermen missing near Paradip coast

**Paradip:** Three fishermen went missing after their boat capsized in the Bay of Bengal near the coast here in Jagatsinghpur district, Tuesday, police said. The incident took place near Nehru Bungalow when eight fishermen were returning from the deep sea. Five of them were rescued, while three others went missing, a police official said. The Coast Guard is leading the operation with assistance from the Fire and Emergency Services to rescue the missing persons, Special Relief Commissioner Satyabrata Sahu said.

## Woman dies from snakebite in Polasara

**Polasara:** A woman died from snakebite at Gochhabadi village under this block in Ganjam district, Monday. The deceased was identified as Rashmita Jena, 33, wife of Babula Jena of Baikuntha Nagar Sahi of Gochhabadi village. Sources said a poisonous snake bit Rashmita late Sunday night when she along with her two daughters and son slept in a room. Monday morning, her family members rushed her to the hospital where the doctors declared her brought dead. Informed, Polasara police reached the spot and started an investigation.

**Birthday Blessings**

**PRANSHU DASH (Sai, Sonu)**  
Mishrapada, Angul (Odisha)

On this auspicious day, we pray Mahaprabhu Jagannath to shower peace and happiness in your life. Wish you a bright future.

Best Wishes From: Japa, Jema, Aai, Baba, Mama, Younger Brother Praneel, Friends and Relatives

**ବଲାଙ୍ଗିର ପୌରସଭା, ବଲାଙ୍ଗିର**

ପବିତ୍ର ଦିବସର ପ୍ରସିଦ୍ଧ ଉତ୍ସବ "ନୁଆଁର-୨୦୨୩" ଉତ୍ସବରେ ବଲାଙ୍ଗିର ପୌରସଭାର ସମସ୍ତ କର୍ମଚାରୀଙ୍କୁ ସୁଭିଚ୍ଛା ଓ ପବିତ୍ରତା ସମର୍ଥନ କରାଉଛି । ଏହି ଅବସରରେ ସମସ୍ତ ସୁଖ, ଉତ୍ସାହ, ଶାନ୍ତି ଚାହୁଁଛନ୍ତି ଏବଂ ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କୁ ସୁସ୍ଥ ରଖନ୍ତି । ଏ ନୀତିର ଅଧିକାରୀ ଉପସେବା ନୀତି ସମର୍ଥନ କରି ଏବଂ ନୀତି ସମର୍ଥନ କରିବା ସମୟରେ ସମସ୍ତଙ୍କୁ ସୁସ୍ଥ ରଖନ୍ତି ।

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Timidity is a form of vanity. When you are timid, it means that you attach more importance to the opinions others have of you than to the sincerity of your actions.

THE MOTHER



## India Canada Tiff

The tiff between India and Canada seems to be swinging out of control. It all started some years ago when Canadian PM Justin Trudeau was facing elections. Undoubtedly, the Sikh community in Canada, a sparsely populated country, is not only large in number but also rich and powerful. Sikhs living in Canada are estimated to be 7,70,000 strong, which equals 2 per cent of Canada's population. Apart from Sikhs, there is also a huge community of Indians from different parts of India in Canada. There were few Sikhs in the first Trudeau Cabinet and one of them held the Ministry of Defence for a considerable period. Like in most democracies, all leaders are susceptible to strong vote banks. Trudeau in Canada is no exception. Some of the Sikh residents in Canada are known sympathizers of the Khalistan brand of politics. This is not new information. The bombing of Air India's Kanishka Boeing 747 on 23 June 1985 was one very big tragedy that showcased the negativity of Sikhs based in Canada. Investigations had discovered that the bomber in that aircraft was a Canadian Sikh. For many in India, this was probably the very first sign of the attitude of some Sikhs in Canada.

As a current day politician, Justin Trudeau's attitude towards the Sikhs in his country is akin to the BJP's support towards gau rakshaks. When some Indians scream that Justin Trudeau is a joker, they forget that the world may consider our politicians supporting cows and those who in the name of cows kill humans as equally big jokers as also highly dangerous.

Another phase of souring of relations between India and Canada could have been Trudeau's stand during the farmers' protest in India. No doubt that farmers' protest was an event that brought down the image of the current Indian political leadership and made it look helpless. Trudeau had openly expressed his support for the Indian farmers during the protests which ruffled feathers in New Delhi.

The tense situation existing now between the two countries is directly related to the killing of pro-Khalistan Sikh leader Hardeep Singh Nijjar earlier this year on 18 June at a Sikh cultural centre in Surrey, British Columbia. Trudeau claims that his Intelligence machinery has informed him that the Indian government had a hand in the killing of Nijjar. The Indian Ministry of External Affairs, while labeling this accusation as 'absurd' has also admitted that Trudeau had brought this subject up in his discussions with PM Modi at the G20 event at New Delhi recently. The escalation of this crisis has now reached a stage where Canadian Foreign Minister Melanie Joly has informed Parliament that the head of Indian Intelligence in Canada has been expelled as a consequence. Now India as a retaliatory move has expelled a senior Canadian diplomat based in New Delhi.

The dark shadows of these events have now been cast on India Canada trade relations. That apart, the non-Khalistan supporting Indian community and students in Canada may also face repercussions that would be difficult for the Indian government to counterbalance. A dispassionate observation of the current situation might indicate more of personality clashes at the highest level in both countries rather than any ideological or great security threat issues in either country.

The Indian government has to beware of sinister acts that could follow in the form of careless social media attacks that might ensue against the Sikh community in India. The preview of such a situation was seen during the farmers' protest. While the farm laws were equally damaging for all farmers across the country, it was only the brave Sikhs who withstood the water cannons and police brutalities. That situation should not be allowed to recur which could create hatred and disharmony towards the Sikh community within India.

## Piate

Tathagata Satpathy



Ana Palacio

**IF ANYONE HAD LINGERING DOUBTS ABOUT THE FRACTURED STATE OF GLOBAL RULE-MAKING, THEY SHOULD NOW BE DISPELLED**

If anyone had lingering doubts about the fractured state of global rule-making, they should now be dispelled. The just-concluded G20 summit in New Delhi attracted as much attention for who was not there – Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese President Xi Jinping – as for the discussions among those who showed up. But the real takeaway from the summit, as well as the gathering of the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) that preceded it, is that global rule-making is set to become increasingly uneven, shaped by small groups, swing states, and fluid coalitions.

Even without Putin and Xi, palpable divisions marked the G20 summit, belying its optimistic theme: "one earth, one family, one future." While India, which has worked hard to position itself as a unifying diplomatic force and a spokesperson of the Global South, managed to secure consensus on a final declaration, this was no easy feat, owing not least to disagreements over how to refer to the Ukraine war.

The compromises this demanded were reflected in the summit's final declaration, which featured far softer language on the Ukraine war – and, in particular, Russia's culpability – than the declaration that was issued in Bali last November. In 2022, G20 leaders acknowledged that perspectives on the invasion differed, but also strongly condemned Russia's actions and calling for the withdrawal of its troops. In 2023, they lamented the "immense human suffering and the adverse impact of wars and conflicts around the world," issued a pro forma exhortation to abjure the use of nuclear weapons, and touted the hallowed principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity – all without mentioning Ukraine by name.

Not surprisingly, Russia hailed the declaration, while Ukraine decried it for containing "nothing to be proud of."



**The war in Ukraine has accelerated both the fracturing of the world order and countries' scramble to establish new alignments that can secure their interests. If the G7 does not clarify its direction, it risks losing its influence, with potentially far-reaching consequences for the values that unite its members**

Meanwhile, analysts wondered about the potential costs of Western leaders' decision to accept the watered-down declaration in the name of salvaging the summit.

As for China, deepening global divisions and escalating superpower rivalry likely drove Xi's decision to skip the summit, though China's prolonged border dispute with India and its recent economic travails were probably also considerations. For US President Joe Biden, Xi's absence provided an opportunity to present the United States as a reliable partner to the developing world. But the US pledge to reform the World Bank and increase its lending capacity to \$25 billion is likely to ring hollow to low- and middle-income countries.

As for the developing world, it wasn't left empty-handed. G20 leaders formally decided to make the African Union, with its 55 member states, a permanent member, thereby putting the AU on equal footing with the European Union. This will go a long way toward amplifying the Global South's global influence.

The decision to extend a formal invitation to the AU might partly reflect the sense among Western powers that alternative groupings are breathing down their necks. After all, the BRICS bloc, which China is openly attempting to position as a rival to the G7, had just expanded its ranks to include six new members (Argentina, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates).

Much to China's satisfaction, the longstanding dominance of the G7 (Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, the US – plus the EU) does seem to be weakening. While the G7 still plays a vital role on the world stage, few today would echo US National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan's 2022 assessment that it is the "steering committee of the free world." On the contrary, with the US gearing up for next year's presidential election, and the EU preoccupied by questions about enlargement and reform, the G7 appears to lack unity of purpose, which is undermining its traction in world affairs.

This is not to discount the achievements of this year's G7 summit, carried out under Japan's capable leadership. Beyond securing a consensus on both the Ukraine war and China, Prime Minister Fumio Kishida convincingly advocated for combining the transatlantic and Indo-Pacific regions into a single strategic space. More broadly, Japan – the first to sound the alarm about the military threat posed by China – has rallied its allies and beefed up its own defenses, all while maintaining a balanced policy stance based on economic realism.

Nonetheless, assessments like that of Princeton's John Ikenberry – who hails the G7 as a "power player," and argues that, with Biden in the White House, "alliance cooperation across the liberal democratic world has entered a period of remarkable innovation and creativity" – are probably too sanguine.

The war in Ukraine has accelerated both the fracturing of the world order and countries' scramble to establish new alignments that can secure their interests. If the G7 – whose members comprise less than 10% of the world population – does not clarify its direction, it risks losing its influence, with potentially far-reaching consequences for the values that unite its members.

The G7's calls for greater inclusivity and reform of multilateral institutions are well-reasoned and sensible. But they have come late. Only with a combination of political will and geopolitical acumen can Western leaders ensure the survival of a rules-based order that reflects democratic values. In the meantime, the alphabet soup of new global coalitions will continue growing.

*The writer is a former minister of foreign affairs of Spain and former senior vice president and general counsel of the World Bank Group.*

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### WISDOM CORNER

I do not think there is any thrill that can go through the human heart like that felt by the inventor as he sees some creation of the brain unfolding to success. Such emotions make a man forget food, sleep, friends, love, everything.

NIKOLA TESLA

If you can't fly then run, if you can't run then walk, if you can't walk then crawl, but whatever you do you have to keep moving forward.

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

Do not wait. The time will never be just right. Start where you stand, and work whatever tools you may have at your command and better tools will be found as you go along.

NAPOLEON HILL

### THIS DAY IN HISTORY

- 1870:** Italian troops occupied Rome, leading to the eventual incorporation of Rome into the Kingdom of Italy and the limiting of papal governing authority to the Vatican itself and a small district around it.
- 1904:** Wilbur Wright, who with his brother Orville, is credited for inventing the first airplane, made a complete circle in 1 minute and 16 seconds on the Wright Flyer II.
- 1946:** Delayed because of World War II, the first Cannes film festival began, and it became one of cinema's major annual events.
- 1973:** The mixed gender tennis match between top tennis player Bobby Riggs and Billie Jean King was held in Houston, Texas after Riggs won another mixed gender match against Margaret Court earlier in the year. King beat Riggs and took home the \$100,000 prize money. The matches were prompted by Riggs' comments that even at an age of 55, he could beat any female tennis player. King beat Riggs and took home the \$100,000 prize money. The match was and still is one of the most viewed tennis matches on television - it was watched by about 90 million people around the world.
- 2001:** In an address to a joint session of Congress and the American people, US President George W. Bush declares a "war on terror." The global military campaign against terrorism was first declared in the aftermath of the September 11 attacks in the United States.

### LOL

#### COP & DRIVER

Police officer talks to a driver: Your tail light is broken, your tires must be exchanged and your bumper hangs halfway down. That will be 300 dollars.



Driver: Alright, go ahead. They want twice as much as that at the garage.

### IN JEST THIS

## Name changes can be confusing

If you are considering changing your name, I have some advice for you: don't.

Changing your name can be very confusing to everyone. Just look at Twitter. The company's owner, Elon Musk, decided that Twitter was not a good enough name, so he changed it to X.

Just imagine that your name is Bono. You're a famous singer and everyone has known you as Bono for many years. Then one day, you decide that Bono isn't good enough, so you change your name to Bonehead. That's basically what Musk did. He took a perfectly good name and made it far worse.

It's almost like Musk has played a big joke on everyone. Nobody knows what to do with 'X'. Media outlets are referring to it as "the social media platform formerly known as Twitter." Some users are calling it Xitter and saying that they Xeeted all their followers. Others are demanding that Musk's head be "Xamined."

Everyone will eventually get

used to X, of course. And then Musk will change it to Y.

I'm not fond of name changes, as you can guess. It isn't easy for me to just replace the old name in my brain with the new name. I don't have a "find and replace" key.

It's especially hard for me when a city or country changes its name. It took me a long time to get used to names like Mumbai and Chennai. I liked the names Bombay and Madras. I understood why names connected to the colonial period were being phased out. But why weren't the names just altered slightly? Bombay could have become Mombay And Madras could have become Dadras.

We can learn a lesson from the country formerly known as Turkey. Turkey is now known officially as Turkiye. It's a small change that allows the country to distinguish itself from a large bird.

There's been a lot of talk recently about India potentially changing its name to Bharat. It all started with President

Droupadi Murmu calling herself "President of Bharat" in a G20 dinner invitation. Supporters of a name change associate the name India with the British, but historians say that the name goes back many centuries, just like Bharat. I'm not in favour of a name change, partly because India is well-known and easy to pronounce. I don't want to have a conversation like this:

American: "Where are you from?"

Me: "Bharat."

American: "Bar rat?"

Me: "No, Bharat."

American: "Where is that?"

Me: "Between Pakistan and Bangladesh."

American: "Oh yes, the country formerly known as India."

A number of countries have changed their names, and some keep doing it. There's one country in Africa that was once known as Congo Free State, then became Belgian Congo, then Republic of the Congo-Léopoldville, then Democratic Republic of the Congo, then

Republic of Zaire, then once again Democratic Republic of the Congo.

It's much easier for people to change their names, and many of them do for various reasons. Some just don't like the names that their parents gave them. This is understandable, especially if your father happens to be Elon Musk. Musk and the singer Grimes have three children: a son named Techno Mechanicus, or "Tau" for short, another son named X Æ A-Xii, whom they call "X," and a daughter named Exa Dark Sideræl, whom they call "Y."

I have to confess that I changed my name, too. My parents didn't name me "Melvin." They named me "Melwin." I should have been happy to have a "win" in my name, but my schoolteachers were always confused about the spelling. When I was in my mid-teens, I caught a lucky break: someone at the Indian passport office misspelled my name. They printed it as "Melvin" – and I've gone with it ever since.

#### Commendable job

Sir, A recent incident in Uttar Pradesh has left everyone puzzled as Divya Mittal, the District Magistrate of Mirzapur was transferred just after she did a commendable job of arranging a piped water connection to Lahuria village. It is to be noted that the people of Lahuria village got access to tap water after 76 years of Independence. Divya Mittal happened to irk some local politicians as she did everything single-handedly without involving the politicians. She also did not invite the local politicians to the joyous event. She did something that no government in these seventy-odd years of Independence even tried to implement. The "change" is still an alluring dream but officers like Divya Mittal know how to make those dreams a reality. The going is tougher for good people but we should not stop our march.

Noopur Baruah, TEZPUR

#### Childhood obesity

Sir, The global crisis of childhood obesity is sending shockwaves through our society, with over 39 million children under the age of five already grappling with excess weight in 2020. Shockingly, if we allow the current trajectory to persist, projections suggest that this number could skyrocket to a horrifying 70 million by 2025. Designating September as National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month is a start, but it's high time we move beyond awareness to concrete action. Childhood obesity is not merely about kids carrying a few extra pounds; it's a ticking health time bomb. These young individuals face severe health risks, including the likes of type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, and heart disease, and this isn't something that only affects adults – children are falling victim to these conditions. What's more, these health issues tend to linger into adulthood, significantly increasing the chances of life-altering conditions such as diabetes and certain cancers. The repercussions aren't confined to the physical realm; they encompass psychological and social challenges too, with low self-esteem and social isolation becoming all too common. We must recognise the multifaceted factors driving this epidemic and take concrete steps towards a healthier future for our children through balanced nutrition and regular physical activity.

Krishna Kumar Vepakomma, HYDERABAD

## 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](mailto:edit@orissapost.com)

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## 'Escort websites' a challenge for Goa cops

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Panaji, Sept 19:** Two decades ago the Goa government had managed to demolish the infamous 'Red Light Area' from Baina beach of port town in South Goa. However, as the era of technology dawned, the flesh trade found its place on 'escort and massage' websites, which has now become a major challenge for the police to stop.

Last week, the Goa police busted an international sex trade ring operating between Kenya and India and rescued five women with the arrest of three persons in Kenya and Nigeria. According to the police young, educated, and vulnerable Kenyan women were falsely promised jobs in the hospitality industry by agents working on behalf of traffickers based in Goa.

"After being brought to India, the traffickers seized the women's passports and visas, forcing them into prostitution under threat of violence and imposing a debt of Rs 5-Rs 8 lakh," the police said.

Initially the police arrested accused persons Maria Dorcas, 28, and Wilkista Achista, 22, both natives of Kenya for allegedly running this sex trade. Later the police arrested one Charles Aihun, 32, a native of Nigeria, from Bangalore, while they were trying to trace another accused, Olokpa, a Nigerian national who had been absconding since the sex racket was busted.

Charles Aihun was booked under Sections 370, 370(A), 370(3), 212 r/w 34 IPC & Sections 4, 5 & 8 of the Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act. According to Deputy Superintendent of Police



Last week, the Goa police busted an international sex trade ring operating between Kenya and India and rescued five women with the arrest of three persons in Kenya and Nigeria

According to the police, young, educated and vulnerable Kenyan women were falsely promised jobs in the hospitality industry by agents working on behalf of traffickers based in Goa

Jivba Dalvi the police had managed to locate the accused person, Olokpa, on two occasions, however on both the occasions, he managed to escape before the police reached the spot.

On both the occasions Charles Aihun was found at the location where Olokpa was staying. After checking the mobile phone of Charles Aihun it was revealed that he was harbouring and providing information to Olokpa about the movements of the Goa police team in Bangalore.

"The racket, with a close-knit group involving the trafficker duo Maria Dorcas and Wilkista, operated largely online, leveraging escort websites to solicit clients. NGO ARZ became aware

of the operation when the victims were taken to Bangalore for prostitution. "Following a tip-off from a partner organization, ARZ successfully located the victims in Goa and facilitated a meeting with DSP Jivba Dalvi and Anjuna police inspector Prashal Dessai to share information. Later action was taken," the police said.

The sub divisional magistrate of Mapusa in north Goa has served show cause notices to two resorts for allegedly allowing their premises to be used for the international sex trade racket. Dalvi informed that these persons were allegedly operating a 'massage' website and were attracting customers through it. "We have written to the concerned domain provider and others to block this website. These accused persons were running the flesh trade through this website, hence we have started the process to take action," Dalvi said.

The police said that after bringing the girls in Goa, the accused persons provided mobiles to them and uploaded their information on websites.

Sources informed that the website, against which the police have sought action, mentioned

that it has around 94 escorts in Candolim-Goa, which is the beach area. They have listed the number of services on it with the photos of the women.

A senior police officer said that they were not getting enough support from the service and website providers to block such content. "Whenever we get such information we write to the appropriate authority, but we don't get support from them because if they block it they will lose revenue," he said. According to him, there are hundreds of websites providing escort and massage services in Goa, from the beach areas to any city of the coastal state.

Last year, the Goa police had launched a crackdown on illegal massage parlours operating in the state following an order from Chief Minister Pramod Sawant. Two decades ago the 'Red Light Area' from Baina beach of port town in South Goa was demolished after illegal activities were discovered there. Many people visiting the state used to through there.

According to sources, currently the flesh trade is operating at several places and also in resorts, with their publicity being done on 'escort' websites.

## BJP working on strategies to return to power in Raj

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Party leaders have confirmed that the 200 Assembly constituencies in the state will be divided into four categories -- A, B, C and D -- depending on the party's winnability in the respective seats



**Jaipur, Sept 19:** With Assembly elections nearing in Rajasthan, the BJP is working on different strategies to return to power in the desert state.

Party leaders have confirmed that the 200 Assembly constituencies in the state will be divided into four categories -- A, B, C and D -- depending on the party's winnability in the respective seats.

While the seats with highest winnability factor have been included in 'A' section, the lesser popular seats have been put under 'B' category. The seats weaker than 'B' section have been clubbed in 'C' category, while the weakest seats have been bracketed in 'D' category. The party will give top priority to the seats in A, B and C categories, party workers said.

The party workers also confirmed that the BJP's first list of candidates for the Assembly elections in Rajasthan will be released after Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Jaipur on September 25.

Earlier, there was speculation that the first list will be released

## Girl born with 26 fingers & toes

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Jaipur, Sept 19:** In a rare case, a baby girl was born with a total of 26 fingers and toes in the Deeg district of Rajasthan, doctors at a health centre said.

The newborn has seven fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot. While the doctors said that the extra fingers and toes were due to a rare condition caused by a genetic disorder, the girl's family members believe that she is an incarnation of a goddess they worship.

The girl was born at a community health centre in Kaman on Sunday night. The mother Sarju Devi and the baby girl are healthy, Dr B S Soni, doctor at the CHC Kaman said. "The girl has seven fingers in each hand and six toes in each leg. The condition is called Polydactyly, which is rare but there is no harm or side effect of this condition on the body," Soni said.

The newborn's maternal uncle Deepak said he believed that the girl was a blessing to the family and an incarnation of goddess Dholagarh Devi. "She has come to our home as a goddess. We all are lucky that 'Lakshmi' has taken birth in our family," he added.



## Cong to hold yatras in 13 districts

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Jaipur, Sept 19:** The Congress will take out yatras in 13 districts of Rajasthan which will benefit from the East Rajasthan Canal Project (ERCP) to urge the central government to grant it national project status.

Rajasthan Congress president Govind Singh Dotsara said Prime Minister Modi has not fulfilled the promise of declaring the ERCP as a national project. "Modiji has not given anything till date," he added.

The Congress leader also said that the party will lay the foundation stone of its new state headquarters in the coming days for which time has been sought from its president Mallikarjun Kharge and senior leader Rahul Gandhi.

He said five-day yatras will be taken out in the 13 districts where street meetings and pub-

lic meetings will also be held. The Rajasthan government has been demanding a national project status for the ERCP.

The districts that will benefit from the project are Jhalawar, Baran, Kota, Bundi, Sawai Madhopur, Ajmer, Tonk, Jaipur, Dausa, Karauli, Alwar, Bharatpur and Dholpur. On the prime minister's proposed public meeting in Jaipur on September 25, Dotsara said, "Five-six meetings were held which were flops, be it in Sikar or Ajmer. People are coming to our meetings while their factionalism is getting exposed in their meetings. They are not in harmony with each other."

"The public has understood the reality that the central government is a government of rhetoric whereas the government of Rajasthan works for the people. People say that the Congress government will be repeated," he added.

## IRONMAN 70.3 India triathlon to be held in Goa

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Panaji (Goa), Sept 19:** Triathletes and endurance sports enthusiasts from 30 countries will participate in the latest edition of the prestigious IRONMAN 70.3 India triathlon - the country's biggest and truly international triathlon - scheduled to be held in Goa next month.

This internationally acclaimed endurance race spread over three sports disciplines -- swimming, cycling and running -- is regarded as a global benchmark for the ultimate test of endurance, grit and an athlete's mental and physical strength.

The gruelling IRONMAN 70.3 India triathlon will begin with a 1.9 km swim off Miramar beach in Goa, followed by a 90 km bicycle ride, before concluding with a 21.1 km run; the latter two legs will start from the Miramar circle in Panaji, the state capital.

The race has a cut-off time of 8 hours and 30 minutes and each leg -- swimming, biking



Athletes from Maharashtra, Karnataka and Haryana top the list of states with the highest number of participants

and the run also has its individual cut-off timings. Participating athletes have to make it through the cut-offs in all three sections to complete the race and get their hands on that iconic medal.

"The response has been thrilling with participants registering from across India as

well as 30 countries and counting. We have entries from the UK, US, and the Russian Federation as well as from other far-flung countries like Bolivia, South Africa, Argentina, Estonia and New Zealand among others which is a testament to the fact that India is now on the radar of the global triathlon community,"

said Deepak Raj, chief executive officer of Yoska and franchise owner of the IRONMAN brand in India.

The triathlon is not just about competition, but also about the spirit of camaraderie and personal growth," he said.

"Over 60% of the triathlon finishers in the previous edition of the IRONMAN 70.3 India were first-time finishers which show that triathlons are gaining interest in the country," added Raj. Apart from hundreds of entries from India, athletes from six continents -- North America, South America, Africa, Europe, Australia and Asia have registered to participate in the race happening in Goa. Since its inception, athletes from 50 countries have participated in the IRONMAN 70.3 India event in Goa.

Athletes from Maharashtra, Karnataka and Haryana top the list of states with the highest number of participants. In 2019, Bishworjit Saikhom from India won the men's category in the

IRONMAN 70.3 India (2019) with a timing of 4:42:44, while Nihal Baig won the title in 2022 with a timing, clocking 4:29:45. Bishworjit has registered for the upcoming event on Oct. 8th. Catjin Schierbeek also from Switzerland won the women's category in 2022.

In all 30 slots are reserved for winners in their respective categories, qualifying them for the opportunity to compete in the 2024 IRONMAN 70.3 World Championship scheduled to be held in New Zealand.

The latest edition on October 8 is the third occasion when the IRONMAN 70.3 India is being held in the coastal state of Goa. Over 700 volunteers will aid in the organisation of India's biggest endurance race, the organisers said, adding that the scale of logistics on the racing day could be judged by the fact that over 21 tons of ice and 23,000 litres of potable water are being readied for providing refreshments to athletes, volunteers and onlookers.

## In Goa, Ganesh festival a time for devotion, family bonding

Main markets in Panaji, Mapusa, Vasco and Margao were abuzz with activities as people rushed in for the last-minute purchasing of various items including decoration items, flowers, and sweets



welcome puja.

Organisers at many pandals took out processions of big idols of Lord Ganesh, who is associated with wisdom and knowledge. The festival is a homecoming for natives of Goa who travel back to their home state from neighbouring Maharashtra and other states.

"The Ganesh festival epitomises the unity and spiritual harmony of Goa. May this occasion strengthen the bonds of brotherhood that have always existed among people of diverse traditions, in our State," the Chief Minister said in a post on X.

"The uniqueness and popularity of this festival is high-

lighted as the people of all religions, caste and creeds fervently participate in the celebrations, which in turn promotes goodwill, brotherhood and harmony in the society," he added.

Neeraj Bandekar, who has returned from Margao in south Goa to his hometown Palolem in Canacona taluka, said, "You will find that the cities are empty and villages are full during these days. People from across the state and even those who are living outside the state travel back."

The Konkarn Railway operated special trains to cater to huge rush as people travelled from Mumbai to coastal districts up to Goa.

## HC acts on appeal filed by Dhankhar 35 yrs ago

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Jaipur, Sept 19:** The Rajasthan High Court has reduced the punishment of a convict in an appeal filed around 35 years ago by Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar when he was a practicing lawyer.

A single bench of Justice Mahendra Goyal gave this decision while disposing of the appeal of convict Gurudayal Singh. In 1989, Dhankhar, as a lawyer, had presented this appeal in the high court on behalf of Singh. While giving the verdict on the appeal, the division bench of Justice Mahendra Goyal said that Gurudayal Singh's age was 43 when he was arrested, but today he is about 80-years-old.

"The accused is going through the trauma of this case being pending for the last 35 years. In such a situation, while maintaining his conviction and limiting his punishment to the punishment he suffered, this appeal is partially accepted and disposed of," said the court.

Advocate Bhavna Chaudhary, appearing on behalf of Gurudayal Singh, said that this incident took place on March 5, 1988. That day, Pritam Singh had lodged a report at Kishangarh Bass police station in Alwar district that Gurudayal Singh had injured Rajendra Singh by attacking him with a knife.



The police arrested Gurudayal Singh on March 13, 1988. When Rajendra Singh died during treatment, the police filed murder case against Gurudayal Singh. But on March 10, 1989, the court found Gurudayal Singh guilty of culpable homicide and sentenced him to four years' imprisonment. The appellant remained in jail for about two months and 19 days. After that he got the benefit of bail. During

this time, Singh filed an appeal in the high court against the decision of Additional District

Judge Kishangarh in 1989 and finally his plea was disposed of after 35 years on Monday.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Panaji, Sept 19:** Goan families welcomed their beloved Lord Ganesh Tuesday as the ten-day festival began with enthusiasm and fanfare.

Extending wishes for the festival, Chief Minister Pramod Sawant said people worship Vighnaharta Lord Ganesh, the remover of obstacles.

Main markets in Panaji, Mapusa, Vasco and Margao were abuzz with activities as people rushed in for the last-minute purchasing of various items including decoration items, flowers, and sweets.

Small idols were installed in households amid chanting of 'Ganpati Bappa Morya' with members of families joining the

**GOVERNMENT OF ORISSA** No. O-1884  
**OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, RURAL WORKS DIVISION, KARANJA (MAYURBHANJ)**  
 E-mail ID: eerw@karanja@yahoo.com

Letter No. 4226 "e" Procurement Notice for Special Repair to Roads & Bridges and Approach Road & Periodical Maintenance Works for year 2023-24  
 Bid Identification No. RWDKNJ-06/2023-24

1. Name of the Work	Road Works (As per Annexure)
2. Estimated Cost	Rs.25.42 to Rs.45.00 lakhs approximately (As per Annexure)
3. Class of Contractor	'D', 'C' & 'B' Class (As per Annexure)
4. Period of Completion	As per Annexure
5. Tender Paper Cost	Paper cost of bid as mentioned in Annexure of Road Works

Further details can be seen from the website [www.tendersodisha.gov.in](http://www.tendersodisha.gov.in).

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of Tender Online for Bidding		Last Date & Time of seeking Tender Clarification	Date & Time of Opening of Tender in O.C. S.E.R.W. Division, Karanja Technical & Financial Bid
		From	To		
1	2	3	4	5	6
Superintending Engineer, Rural Works Division, Karanja	Road Online RWDKNJ-06/23-24	Di.26.09.2023 at 11.00 A.M.	Di.03.10.2023 upto 5.00 P.M.	Di.02.10.2023 upto 1.00 P.M.	Di.04.10.2023 at 11.00 A.M.

OIPR-25086/11/0012/2324  
 Sd/- Superintending Engineer, R.W. Division, Karanja



All India Kisan Sabha (AIKS) members attend 'Krishak Samabesh' (farmers rally) amid rains in Kolkata, West Bengal



Family member and security personnel pay last respect to army soldier Serto Thangthang Kom who was killed after he was abducted in Imphal, Manipur



DPC chief Arvinder Singh Lovely with All India Mahila Congress workers celebrates the Women's Reservation Bill, at AICC Headquarters in New Delhi



IT professionals in Chennai stage a demonstration in support of former Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu following his arrest



Shiv Sena Dogra Front members protest against Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau over his remarks alleging Indian involvement in the killing of a Sikh extremist leader in Jammu



Climate activists are arrested after blockading the Federal Reserve Bank of New York to call for an end to the use of fossil fuels



Kashmiri Pandits immerse an idol of Lord Ganesh in the Jhelum river after Ganesh Chaturthi in Srinagar



# national

## of the day quote

Today we have moved from the old Parliament building to the new Parliament building. We carry a lot of memories of the old building to the new, and also carry the spirit of our great democracy to the new building

H D DEVE GOWDA | FORMER PRIME MINISTER

Canada must immediately take effective action against all anti-India elements active on its soil

TARUN CHUGH | BJP NATIONAL GENERAL SECY

Through the women's reservation bill...The foundation of a new India has been laid. During Ganesh Chaturthi, it is believed that any resolution taken will reach its conclusion, and today, PM Modi has dedicated the Narishakti Vandan Bill to the country. I want to thank him for finding solution to years of struggle

SMRITI IRANI | UNION MINISTER

## SHORT TAKES

### PM Modi joins WhatsApp Channels

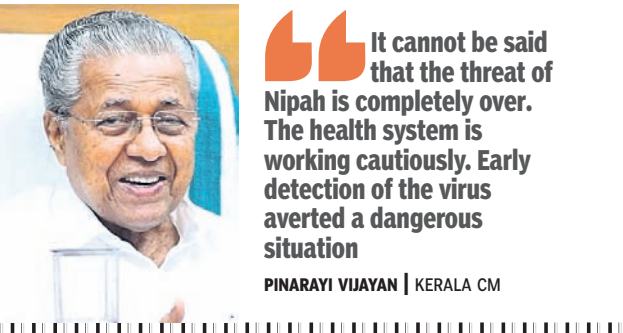
New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi Tuesday joined WhatsApp Channels in an outreach exercise through one of the most popular social media platforms. "Thrilled to join the WhatsApp community! It is yet another step closer in our journey of continued interactions. Let's stay connected here! Here's a picture from the new Parliament Building," Modi posted on X, while sharing the picture of him at work.

### ED searches at 9 locations in Kerala

New Delhi: The Enforcement Directorate has conducted searches at nine locations in Kerala in connection with an alleged Rs 150-crore scam in CPI(M) controlled Karuvannur Service Cooperative Bank Ltd, officials said Tuesday. The agency arrested prime accused Sathish Kumar P and Kiran P P earlier this month.

### Robbers hold staff hostage, loot Rs 5.62cr

Raigarh: Armed robbers targeted a leading private bank in Raigarh city of Chhattisgarh Tuesday morning and decamped with cash and gold estimated to be worth more than Rs 5.62 crore after attacking and injuring its manager, police said. The incident, during the robbers held the bank staff hostage, occurred at around 9.30 am at Jagatpur branch of Axis Bank located near Dimrapur Chowk under the city Kotwali police station limits, said police.



It cannot be said that the threat of Nipah is completely over. The health system is working cautiously. Early detection of the virus averted a dangerous situation

PINARAYI VIJAYAN | KERALA CM

### 8 DIE AFTER BUS FALLS INTO CANAL

Eight passengers died after a private bus carrying around 35 people fell into the Sirhind feeder canal in Muktsar district Tuesday, officials said. The incident took place near Jhabelwali village on the Muktsar-Kotkapura road after the bus skidded off the road when brakes were applied, they said, adding it was raining at the time of the incident



# Row over Women's Reservation Bill

Calling the Bill an "election jumla" and "huge betrayal of hopes of women", the Congress said that according to the Centre, the reservation will be effective only after census and delimitation exercise are conducted post-enactment of the Bill

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 19: The Opposition Tuesday termed as an "election jumla" the Women's Reservation Bill brought by the government with many leaders raising questions over the proposed legislation, contending it doesn't account for reservation for OBC communities and that it will be effective at the earliest by the 2029 Lok Sabha polls.

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said the party has always supported the Women's Reservation Bill. "In 2010, the Congress-UPA government got the Women's Reservation Bill passed in the Rajya Sabha. Just as SC-ST class has got a constitutional opportunity in politics, similarly everyone including women of OBC class should get equal opportunity through this bill," Kharge said in a post in Hindi on X.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah slammed the Opposition, particularly the Congress, for showing only "tokenism" on the Bill and said the party has never been serious about women's reservation in legislative bodies.

Congress general secretary



Jairam Ramesh wondered whether the Census and delimitation will be done before the 2024 elections, pointing out that the Narendra Modi government has not yet conducted the 2021 decadal Census.

Another ex-law minister Kapil Sibal alleged that the Bill was "yet another dream" being sold by Prime Minister Modi for the 2024 Lok Sabha elections and claimed that its benefits would accrue to women only in 2029.

RJD spokesperson and MP Manoj Jha noted that the Rashtriya Janata Dal president Lalu Prasad Yadav has long sought "quota within quota" for the SCs, STs and OBCs in reserved seats for women. Without this, this

serves no purpose, he said. While welcoming the Bill, JD(U) leader and Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar said it should provide for reservation for women from backward classes and called for early completion of the census exercise.

In Bihar, RJD leader and former chief minister Rabri Devi slammed the Bill. She asserted that "quota within quota" was essential for the weaker sections of society "since it is only their first generation of women which is becoming educated and aware".

Reacting to the development, Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav said reservation for women should be a balance of gender justice and

Meeting a long-pending demand, the government Tuesday introduced the Narishakti Vandan to provide 33 per cent reservation to women in Lok Sabha and state assemblies

However, it is unlikely to be in force for the next Lok Sabha elections in 2024 as the reservation will come into effect only after a census and delimitation exercise are completed

social justice and demanded a clarity on share of backward, Dalit, minority, and tribals in the seats set aside.

BSP supremo Mayawati said her party will support any bill that allows reservation for women in Parliament and other legislatures, even if the party's demand for a quota for the SC, ST and OBC within that quota is not met. Senior Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader Atishi alleged that the Women's Reservation Bill is a Bill to befool women ahead of the 2024 Lok Sabha polls.

AIMIM leader Asaduddin Owaisi said the government should have also provided for reservation of Muslim and OBC.

TMC leader Derek O'Brien said, "Why is Mr Modi so eager to do these things so secretly? Why is he so desperate to steal credit?"

## ANANTNAG GUNFIGHT OVER

# LeT commander among two terrorists killed



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar, Sept 19: Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) commander Uzair Khan was among the two terrorists killed in a gunfight in Jammu and Kashmir's Anantnag district that ended after seven days, Additional Director General of Police, Kashmir, Vijay Kumar said Tuesday.

Four security personnel, including two army officers and a police officer, lost their lives in the gunfight, which Kumar said is over. "Till now, LeT commander Uzair Khan's body has been recovered. The dead body of another terrorist is visible, but it has not been possible to retrieve it yet," the ADGP told re-

porters in Anantnag. He said the gunfight, which began in the Gadole forest area of the south Kashmir district Wednesday last week, is over, but the search operation will continue.

"There is a huge area that remains to be searched. There can be a lot of unexploded shells which will be recovered and destroyed. We appeal to the people not to go to the area," he added. The ADGP said security forces had reports that two to three terrorists were there. "There is a possibility that the third dead body may be somewhere. It will be known after the search is complete," Kumar said.

## Seven leopard cubs die at B'lore biological park after virus attack

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, Sept 19: Seven leopard cubs have died at Bannerghatta Biological Park here after being infected by a highly contagious virus, officials said Tuesday.

Feline panleukopenia (FP) is a viral disease of cats caused by the feline parvovirus. Kittens are most severely affected by the virus, they said.

According to officials, the first outbreak was reported August 22.

The seven cubs were aged between three and eight months. All of them were vaccinated but succumbed during the course of treatment.

Executive Director of Bannerghatta Biological Park, A V Surya Sen said though the seven cubs were vaccinated, they were still infected.

"It is now under control and in the last 15 days, no deaths have been reported. We have completely broken the chain and taken all necessary measures. We followed all the required procedure and also held discussions with all our senior veterinarians. All correct course of action was taken. Also, we have ensured hygiene of the entire zoo and the rescue centre was completely sanitised," he said in a statement.

Elaborating on the nature of virus, the official said once infected by Feline panleukopenia virus, the intestine of the animal gets completely affected.



Devotees immerse an idol of Lord Vishwakarma in the River Hooghly amid rains in Nadia, West Bengal

# K'taka CM to meet MPs & ministers

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, Sept 19: Chief Minister Siddaramaiah will be holding a meeting with all Members of Parliament and Union Ministers from Karnataka in the national capital Wednesday, to discuss a host of issues concerning the state, especially the release of Cauvery river water to neighbouring Tamil Nadu.

Several stalled developmental projects and those waiting for the Centre's clearances are likely to come up for discussion at the meeting, during which the Chief Minister is likely to urge the Union Ministers and MPs from the state to use their good

offices seeking intervention of the Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the Government of India on the Cauvery issue.

The meeting has gained significance with the Cauvery Water Management Authority (CWMA) Monday asking Karnataka to continue releasing 5,000 cusecs of water to Tamil Nadu for another 15 days.

According to the Chief Minister's tour plan released to the media Tuesday, Siddaramaiah will leave for Delhi tonight and will be holding a breakfast meeting with all MPs from Karnataka including Union Ministers Wednesday. He is later scheduled to meet several other Union

## CAUVERY ISSUE



Ministers during the visit, and his return journey to Bengaluru has been kept "open". According to official sources,

Siddaramaiah is also likely to meet the legal team, representing the state in the Supreme Court, ahead of the Cauvery water release issue coming up before the top court, probably later this week. The Chief Minister recently has been critical of Prime Minister Modi, for not responding to his letter seeking time to meet an all-party delegation, and to discuss with him on issues concerning the state including Cauvery water release.

Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar is also traveling to Delhi, and will accompany the CM during meetings with MPs from the state and Union Ministers.

## Bandh affects normal life in Imphal Valley

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Imphal, Sept 19: Normal life was affected in Imphal Valley districts of Manipur Tuesday as Meira Paibi, a collective of Meitei women, and five local clubs called for a 48-hour bandh from midnight, demanding the release of five persons who were arrested for carrying firearms and sporting camouflage uniforms, officials said.

Educational institutions, markets, banks and commercial establishments remained closed, while attendance in government offices was negligible and a few vehicles plied on the roads on the first day of the bandh.

Supplementary examinations of all subjects of class 10 board exams of the Board of Secondary Education, Manipur, scheduled Tuesday and Wednesday, were cancelled in view of the bandh. Those will be rescheduled at a later date. Women in large numbers came out on roads in Khurai, Lamlong and Bamon Kampu in Imphal East and held sit-ins on thoroughfares to prevent traffic movement. Protests were also held in Imphal West district. "The government is only taking action against people in the valley area and ignoring illegal activities in the hill districts. We see several armed people carrying out processions on the streets of Churachandpur but the state police have not done anything to stop them. The arrested five persons are village volunteers and should be released," said NThoiibi, a protester at Naoremthong in Imphal West district.

# PARLIAMENT MOVES INTO ITS NEW HOME

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 19: In a historic transition, the Parliament moved into a swanky new complex Tuesday, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi urging MPs to forget all past bitterness and start a new chapter and the introduction of the women's reservation bill taking centre stage.

Bidding goodbye to the adjacent colonial era Parliament building, the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha met for the first time in the new home on the second day of the five-day special session during which Modi made an impassioned plea to both houses to unanimously approve the women's reservation bill Narishakti Vandan Adhiniyam. The Constitution (One Hundred and Twenty Eighth Amendment) Bill, 2023, which envisages reserving one-third of the seats in Lok Sabha and state assemblies for women, was the



first legislative measure to be introduced by the government in the new building, a day after it secured Union Cabinet's approval.

Shortly before the introduction of the bill in the Lok Sabha, Modi told the lower house that the government wants more and more women to join the development process of the country.

The old Parliament building, which has stood for over 96 years as a sentinel of time and a repository of India's democratic journey and which its first prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru delivered his iconic "tryst with destiny" speech" to mark India's independence from colonial rule, will now be called the

Modi's suggestion to name the old Parliament building as "Samvidhan Sadan" was accepted by Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, who made an official announcement to the effect

The Lok Sabha Secretariat also formally notified the new building as the Parliament House of India

'Samvidhan Sadan'. The new four-storey triangular shaped complex has been named 'Parliament House of India', according to an official notification. Modi called on MPs to forget all past bitterness and start a new chapter, asserting that whatever they are going to do in the new complex, should be an inspiration for every citizen of the country.

Noting that the Rajya Sabha is considered the Upper House of Parliament, he underlined the intentions of the makers of

the Constitution that the House become a centre for serious intellectual discussions rising above the ebb and flow of political discourse while giving a direction to the nation. He described today's occasion as historic and memorable.

Dressed in colourful attire, members of the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha got their group photograph clicked in the old Parliament building with its circular design and an impressive colonnade of 144 creamy sandstone on the first floor, hours before the legislative proceedings shifted to the new Parliament House. The old building was opened on January 18, 1927 by Lord Irwin -- the then British viceroy -- amid fanfare.

Women members turned up in colourful sarees, while most of their male counterparts preferred white kurta-pyjamas with vibrant waist-coats for the photo-session.

## SKILL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION SCAM CASE

# AP HC reserves orders on Naidu's plea

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Amaravati, Sept 19: The Andhra Pradesh High Court Tuesday reserved orders on a petition filed by former Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu seeking quashing of an FIR filed against him by the police in the Skill Development Corporation scam case and the judgment is expected to be pronounced within two days' time.

The court heard arguments from the legal counsels of Naidu and the AP Crime Investigation Department. Senior counsels Harish Salve, who joined virtually, and Siddarth Luthra represented Naidu and argued that the CID did not obtain prior permission from the Governor as it is a mandatory requirement for police to seek prior approval for conducting any inquiry or investigation into any offence alleged to have been committed



by a public servant.

However, Mukul Rohatgi, who joined virtually on behalf of the CID from Delhi, and also supplemented by Ranjit Kumar and Additional Advocate General P Sudhakar Reddy, argued that Section 17 (A) of CrPC is not applicable to the TDP supremo and informed the court that an intensive investigation is required in the case.

He also said there was an embezzlement of government funds which should be taken up seriously.

# international

## of the day quote

Today Pakistan's prime minister goes country to country to beg for funds while India has reached the moon and is holding G20 meetings. Why Pakistan couldn't achieve the feats India did. Who is responsible for this here?

**NAWAZ SHARIF** | PAKISTAN'S SELF-EXILED FORMER PM

We must continue to push hard to provide Ukraine with air-defence systems and interceptors

**LOYD AUSTIN** | US SECRETARY OF DEFENCE

I trust Russia as much I trust the West

**RECEP TAYYIP ERDOGAN** | TURKISH PRESIDENT

## SHORT TAKES

### Israel closes main crossing with Gaza

**Gaza City (Gaza Strip):** Israel has barred entry to thousands of Palestinian labourers from the Gaza Strip following an eruption of violent protests that have escalated tensions along the volatile frontier. The string of protests — disrupting weeks of calm at the separation fence — comes during a sensitive holiday season in Israel that began with the Jewish new year last week and continues through the Sukkot festival next week. During Sukkot, large numbers of Jews are expected to visit Jerusalem's most sensitive holy site, revered by Jews as the Temple Mount and Muslims as the Noble Sanctuary. The compound, home to the Al-Aqsa Mosque, is often a focal point for violence.

### Nawaz 'excited' to return to Pak

**Lahore:** Pakistan's former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has said that he is "excited" to return to his country on October 21, ending a four-year "self-imposed exile" and to lead his party in the upcoming elections. Addressing an online meeting of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) ticket holders from London on Monday, the PML-N supreme also said that the price of petrol, which is currently hovering around Rs 330 per litre, would have been Rs 1,000 per litre had the coalition government led by PML-N not "saved" the country from default.

### Nepal Prez pardons 670 prisoners

**Kathmandu:** Nepal President Ramchandra Paudel Tuesday pardoned 670 convicts and those serving jail terms as per the government's recommendation on the occasion of Constitution Day. Nepal promulgated the new Constitution on September 20, 2015. The prison sentences of the 670 prisoners were waived in accordance with the recommendation of the Cabinet meeting held on Friday, President's Office spokesperson Shailaja Regmi Bhattarai said in a press release.

### Assad to visit China

**Damascus:** Syria's President Bashar Assad will head to China later this week in his first visit to Beijing since the start of his country's 12-year conflict during which China has been one of his main backers, his office said Tuesday. China has been expanding its reach in the Middle East after mediating a deal in March between Saudi Arabia and Iran, and it continues to support Assad in the Syrian conflict, which has killed half a million people and left large parts of the nation in ruins.

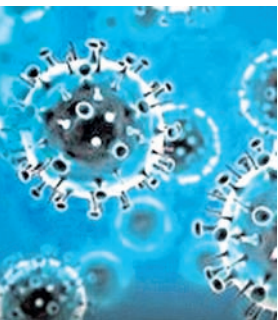


Amid the campaign unleashed by the collective West that is aimed at the double containment of Russia and China, it's particularly important to further deepen Russian-Chinese coordination and interaction on the international arena

**NIKOLAI PATRUSHEV** | SECRETARY OF RUSSIA'S SECURITY COUNCIL

## MATTER OF CONCERN

As Pirola, the new mutation of Omicron strain of Covid-19, worries health experts, the UK's National Health Service (NHS) has asked senior citizens above age 65 to immediately get their top-up booster jobs



# Pak rejects reports of secret arms deal with Ukraine

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Islamabad, Sept 19:** Secret Pakistani arms sales to the US to be used by Ukraine helped cash-strapped Islamabad secure a crucial IMF bailout earlier this year, a report cited internal Pakistani and American government documents as confirming.

The arms sales were made for the purpose of supplying the Ukrainian military — marking Pakistani involvement in a conflict it had faced US pressure to take sides on, the Intercept, an online investigative website has reported.

Pakistan's Foreign Office Spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch on Monday, however, rejected as "baseless and fabricated" the American non-profit news organisation's report, saying that the cash-strapped coun-



Pakistan has struggled to maintain a balance in ties with the Kremlin and Washington since the Russia-Ukraine crisis began earlier last year

During a visit to Pakistan in July, Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba had rejected similar reports that Islamabad was supplying arms to Ukraine to support its military during the ongoing conflict with Russia, according to Dawn

try provided arms to the US to get its support to clinch the USD 3 billion deal with the IMF towards the end of June to avoid default.

Pakistan has struggled to maintain a balance in ties with the Kremlin and Washington since the Russia-Ukraine crisis began earlier last year.

"The IMF Standby Arrangement for Pakistan was successfully negotiated between Pakistan and the IMF to implement difficult but essential economic reforms. Giving any other colour to these negotiations is disingenuous," Dawn News quoted Baloch as saying.

Baloch said Pakistan main-

tained a policy of "strict neutrality" in the dispute between the two countries and did not provide them any arms or ammunition in that context. "Pakistan's defence exports are always accompanied by strict end-user requirements," she said.

During a visit to Pakistan in July, Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba had rejected similar reports that Islamabad was supplying arms to Ukraine to support its military during the ongoing conflict with Russia, according to Dawn.

He had clarified that the two nations had no deal for the supply of arms and ammunition. Former foreign minister Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari had also expressed similar views, maintaining that Pakistan had not signed any agreement with Ukraine for military supplies since the war began.

# China declines to respond to report on Qin

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Beijing, Sept 19:** A senior Chinese foreign ministry official Tuesday declined to comment on a report that former



foreign minister Qin Gang was sacked from his position over an alleged extramarital affair, saying she was "not aware" of the information.

Qin, a career diplomat and trusted aide of Chinese President Xi Jinping, was replaced without explanation in July after only seven months in the role.

Citing people familiar with the matter, the Wall Street Journal reported on Tuesday that Qin, 57, was found by a Communist Party investigation to have been engaged in an extramarital affair while serving as China's ambassador to the US.

The investigation found that Qin had "engaged in an extramarital affair that led to the birth of a child in the US," the Wall Street Journal reported, citing two people. Qin's sudden absence and replacement in July has still not been fully explained.

When asked about the report during a regular press briefing on Tuesday, spokesperson for China's Foreign Ministry Mao Ning said she was "not aware" of the information.

# Americans released by Iran arrive home

HOWEVER, TENSIONS ARE ALMOST CERTAIN TO REMAIN HIGH BETWEEN THE US AND IRAN, WHICH ARE LOCKED IN DISPUTES OVER TEHRAN'S NUCLEAR PROGRAMME AND OTHER MATTERS

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Washington, Sept 19:** Americans detained for years in Iran arrived home Tuesday, tearfully hugged their loved ones and declared "Freedom!" after being let go as part of a politically risky deal that saw President Joe Biden agree to the release of nearly USD 6 billion in frozen Iranian assets.

The prisoners landed at Fort Belvoir, Virginia, with clapping and cheers heard in the predawn hours. Siamak Namazi, the first off the jet, paused for a moment, closed his eyes and took a deep breath before leaving the plane. Loved ones, some holding small American flags, enveloped them in hugs and exchanged greetings in English and Farsi, the main language of Iran.

"The nightmare is finally over," Namazi's brother, Babak, said

at the airport. "We haven't had this moment in over eight years," he added, his arm around his brother and his formerly detained father, Baquer, who had been earlier released by Iran. "It's unbelievable." The former prisoners later posed for a group photograph with their families, calling out: "Freedom!"

The successful negotiations for the Americans' freedom brought Biden profuse thanks from their families but heat from Republican presidential rivals and other opponents for the monetary arrangement with one of America's top adversaries.

"Today, five innocent Americans who were imprisoned in Iran are finally coming home," the Democratic president said in a statement released as the plane carrying the group from Tehran landed in Doha, Qatar, on Monday.

Iran's hard-line President Ebrahim Raisi, on hand for the United Nations General Assembly in New York, suggested the exchange could be "a step in the direction of a humanitarian action between us and America." "It can definitely help in building trust," Raisi said. However, tensions are almost certain to remain high between the US and Iran, which are locked in disputes over Tehran's nuclear programme and other matters.



Family members embrace freed American Emad Shargi after he and four fellow detainees were released in a prisoner swap deal between US and Iran, as he arrives at Davison Army Airfield, Tuesday



Military personnel stand near Indonesian Navy hospital ship KRI dr. Radioman Wedyodiningrat during the opening ceremony of the military non-combat exercise called ASEAN Solidarity Exercise at Batu Ampar Port on Batam island, Indonesia, Tuesday

## Fighting flares again

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Yerevan (Armenia), Sept 19:** Azerbaijan's forces rained artillery fire on Armenian positions in Nagorno-Karabakh Tuesday, and local officials reported that at least five civilians were killed and scores wounded in shelling around the breakaway region's capital.

Authorities in Azerbaijan accused the other side of killing a civilian.

Ethnic Armenian authorities in the Caucasus Mountains region urged Azerbaijan to sit down for talks, but Azerbaijan's presidential administration said what it called the "anti-terrorist operation" will continue until "illegal Armenian military formations" surrender and the separatist government of Nagorno-Karabakh dismantles itself.

The reports raised concerns that a full-scale war in the region could resume between Azerbaijan and Armenia, which have faced off for more than three decades in a conflict over the mountainous territory. The most recent heavy fighting there occurred for six weeks in 2020.

# Biden asks world to stand with Ukraine

REUTERS

**New York, Sept 19:** US President Joe Biden appealed to world leaders at the UN General Assembly Tuesday to stand with Ukraine against Russian invaders, hoping Republicans in Congress will also take notice.

"Russia believes that the world will grow weary and allow it to brutalize Ukraine without consequence," Biden said in his speech to UNGA. "If we allow Ukraine to be carved up, is the independence of any nation secure?"

Biden drew applause when saying that the United States and its allies would stand with Ukraine's fight for freedom. "Russia alone bears responsibility for this war," the President said. "Russia alone has the power to end this war immediately."

Biden's address at the annual gathering was the centerpiece event of his three-day visit to New York, which will include meetings with the heads of five Central Asian nations, and the leaders of Israel and Brazil.

Biden, a Democrat, has made rallying US allies to support Ukraine a leading component



Biden drew applause when saying that the United States and its allies would stand with Ukraine's fight for freedom

Biden has faced criticism from some Republicans who want the United States to spend less money on the war effort

of US foreign policy, arguing the world must send a clear signal to Russian President Vladimir Putin that he will not be able to outlast the West. Biden has faced criticism from some Republicans who want the United States to

spend less money on the war effort. Former President Donald Trump, the front-runner for the Republican nomination in the 2024 presidential election, has vowed to seek a quick end to the war if returned to power.

Trump has voiced skepticism about Washington's engagement with traditional allies, including NATO, and has been complimentary of Putin. House of Representatives Speaker Kevin McCarthy, the leading Republican in Washington, has questioned whether the United States should keep sending billions of dollars in weaponry to Ukraine.

# Designers showcase fashion created amid air raid sirens

Since the start of the war, more than 60 Ukrainian fashion brands have showcased their wares in cities including London and New York to "create, in contrast to the destruction brought by Russian aggression," according to Iryna Danylevska, the founder and head of Ukrainian Fashion Week

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**London, Sept 19:** For Ksenia Schnaider and her fellow Ukrainian fashion designers, the show must go on despite the war in their country — or precisely because of it.

For much of the past year, Schnaider and her team of seamstresses toiled away in their Kyiv studio, crafting her new collection of designer denim and luxury daywear even as air raid sirens, drone attacks and power cuts took over their lives and

made production almost impossible to continue.

Schnaider, 39, fled Ukraine with her husband and young daughter when Russia invaded her country in 2022. They found a temporary home with a British family in a peaceful corner of southern England. But she hasn't put down the fashion business she founded 12 years ago, dividing her time between the UK and Kyiv, where all her garments are still being made against the odds.

"My team needs this sense of



Ksenia Schnaider, a Ukrainian fashion designer, shows her designs at her studio in Haywards Heath, West Sussex, England

normality — they told me they want to go to work and have something to do, to support each other, rather than staying home

hiding," she added. "We want to show the world we don't give up."

On Tuesday she and two other Ukrainian fashion designers

showcased their latest creations in a joint catwalk show at London Fashion Week, which is adopting Ukrainian Fashion Week for the second time this year as the war drags on and Ukraine's fashion industry has nowhere to call home.

At the finale, they took their bows wearing a Ukrainian flag signed by three different military units. Some of those soldiers have died since signing the flags, she said. It's a poignant moment that the designer both looked forward to and dreaded because it's so emotionally overwhelming.

"It's very hard... But of course, it is important to show our unity. We're not competitors anymore, we're all united in working for our victory," she said. Since the start of the war, more than 60 Ukrainian fashion brands have showcased their wares in cities including London and New York to "create, in contrast to the de-

struction brought by Russian aggression," according to Iryna Danylevska, the founder and head of Ukrainian Fashion Week.

"Ukraine continues to live. Ukraine breathes, fights and creates," reads a note found on every seat at Tuesday's catwalk display. "Our London Fashion Week runway show is another chance to speak to the world about the value of freedom and the price that must be paid for it."

Schnaider, who has dressed celebrities including Dua Lipa, wonders how they keep going. "But for me, it's important to keep producing in Ukraine, to support its people, its economy." The catwalk may seem a million miles from the battlefield, but fashion is just one of many facets of a huge national effort to keep the world talking about Ukraine and raise funds and awareness for what its people are going through.



I am more concerned about RRBs (Regional Rural Banks), their digitisation and computerisation  
NIRMALA SITHARAMAN | FINANCE MINISTER

## TRAI FOR CUT IN ENTRY FEES FOR TELCOS

TRAI recommends to the government that the entry fees for telecom companies across various license authorisations should be reduced and bank guarantees that they have to provide should be merged in order to spur growth and make it easier to do business in the telecom sector.



### of the day quote

What I'm seeing in the (US) economy is a cooling in the labour market that's taking place in a healthy way, that does not involve mass layoffs

JANET YELLEN | US TREASURY SECRETARY

India has quickly become the most preferred destination for many global brands to meet their growth ambitions...

FALGUNI NAYAR | NYKAA CEO

Pre-trained large language models are changing the way we interact with people, content, and critical knowledge in our enterprises

ROB TARKOFF | GENERAL MANAGER, ORACLE CLOUD CX

# Household savings at five-decade low

Falling or stagnant incomes, at a time of raging inflation, is probably the main reason for the subdued savings and higher borrowings

AGENCIES

Mumbai, Sept 19: Net financial savings of households fell to a nearly five-decade low of 5.1% of GDP in FY23, down from 7.2% in FY22, according to an RBI bulletin.

The numbers suggest a severe income crunch and likely transience of the post-pandemic rise in consumption. Disturbingly, annual financial liabilities of households rose sharply by 5.8% of GDP compared with 3.8% in FY22, indicating larger-than-usual resort to loans for consumption purposes, and purchase of real estate.

The rate of increase in financial liabilities last fiscal was the second highest since Independence; only in FY07, the flow was sharper (6.7%).

In absolute terms, net household assets dropped sharply from ₹22.8 trillion in FY21, the pandemic year which saw a huge drop in spending, to ₹16.96 trillion in FY22, and further to ₹13.76 trillion in FY23. Household debt, in terms of the stock of financial liabilities, consequently remained



sharply elevated at 37.6% of GDP in FY23, as against 36.9% in FY22.

Falling or stagnant household and SME incomes, at a time of raging inflation, is probably the main reason for the subdued savings and higher borrowings.

The latest RBI data on household assets and liabilities also raise concerns about the immediate growth potential of the economy. The support to growth from private consumption may

turn out to be weaker than anticipated, even as a private capex cycle appears to be delayed.

Household savings, RBI data show, came in at ₹13.76 trillion in FY23 compared with ₹16.96 trillion in FY22. To be sure, the trend could reverse if the economy picks up pace and real incomes grow. However, both consumption and investments could be impacted if savings don't pick up meaningfully in the current year.

## Priority sector lending for solar panel makers likely

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Sept 19: The RBI is considering a proposal to bring the manufacturing of solar panels under priority sector lending by banks as part of the country's big push to green energy in the fight against climate change.

A senior official confirmed that the proposal discussed with bankers has the backing of the Finance Ministry as the government is keen to make more funds available to boost indigenous production of solar panels and cut imports.

Several discussions have taken place on the issue and a final decision is expected to come through soon.

The Ministry of Renewable

Energy has also been pursuing a proposal to make the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme for setting up solar PV module manufacturing capacities more liberal.

Besides, the government has restricted cheap imports of solar panels from China to encourage domestic production. However, there are complaints that some Chinese imports are still flowing in from third countries.

The total domestic capacity for manufacturing solar modules is about 20 GW, of which about 13.3 GW has been enlisted in the Approved List of Models and Manufacturers. The capacity for manufacturing solar cells is around 4 GW.



## Rupee faces risk from rising oil prices

Although the RBI has been releasing dollars in the market to prop up the rupee this has not been able to stem the slide of the Indian currency as the country imports around 85 per cent of its crude oil requirement

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Mumbai, Sept 19: With rising crude oil prices in the international market pushing up the demand for dollars, the Indian rupee has slumped to a record low of 83.2675 vis-à-vis the US dollar. Going ahead much will depend on oil prices in global markets which are now hovering around the \$95 per barrel mark.

Although the RBI has been releasing dollars in the market to prop up the rupee this has not been able to stem the slide of the Indian currency as the country imports around 85 per cent of its crude oil requirement for which immediate payments have to be made in dollars.

"The RBI will be there to defend the rupee with its ample stock of foreign exchange reserves and ensure that overall volatility is contained, but it cannot go beyond a point," said a foreign exchange expert of a private sector bank.

Foreign investments in the Indian stock markets have also helped to contain the volatility of the rupee but this is "hot



money" that can exit suddenly and cannot be relied upon, an analyst said.

Oil prices have been rising for three weeks in a row and have touched their highest level since November after Saudi Arabia and Russia decided to extend their supply cuts till the end of this year. Expectations of tighter supply in the days ahead have also led to some panic buying which is adding to the price spiral. Citi Bank Monday followed other peers in forecasting that prices of benchmark Brent crude could soar past the \$100 mark this year. Similarly, Chevron CEO Mike Wirth has also said that he expects crude

prices to go above \$100 a barrel. India's currency, debt and equity markets were closed Tuesday on account of Ganesh Chaturthi is a public holiday. The markets will resume trading Wednesday.

Forex traders said the depreciation in the rupee can be attributed to several factors, including elevated crude oil prices, strong US dollar, foreign fund outflows and a widening trade deficit.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) were net sellers in the capital market Monday as they offloaded shares worth ₹1,236.51 crore, according to exchange data.

## 'Innovation, tech hirings set to rise'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Sept 19: Companies are looking to ramp up headcount in their Global Capability Centres (GCC) as entities veer towards technology and innovation-led initiatives, according to a study.

There is a growing demand for specialised digital and machine learning skills, the study conducted by talent solutions provider Ciel Group said.

GCCs are hiring for roles such as Artificial Intelligence, Applied Machine Learning, Data Analytics, Cyber Security, Blockchain, Augmented Reality Apps Design, Engineering, and UI/UX design, it said.

These roles will be most sought-after in the Software, Automotive, Pharmaceuticals, and Banking Finance Services and Insurances (BFSI) sectors, the study, which was released Tuesday, said.

The report is based on inputs from 96 companies, which have a GCC and employ 57,500 professionals across sectors that were either established last year or expanded operations.

The study further revealed that the demand for software engineers has particularly gone up at the GCCs in the past year.

The demand for Cloud Engineers and Data Engineers has also increased, it said.

Around 51 per cent of all the GCC job openings are work from office, much lower than the IT Sector with around 77 per cent job openings for WFO roles, indicating a relatively higher openness to alternative work models in the sector, it added.

## Tech to clean dirty fuel for Indian refiners

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 19: It is considered a dirty fuel and has often been banned from use in the national capital and other cities around the world. But now a Monaco-based firm is offering Indian refiners a patented technology to emulsify fuel oil with water that helps cut down on emissions as well as gives better energy yield.

FOWE Eco Solutions (FOWE) says a process known as cavitation using its Cavitech device allows for emulsification of fuel oil, also known as furnace oil, with fresh water on land or onboard a vessel. This process does not require any additives or further processing.

The result is a considerable reduction in particulate matter, its chief operating officer Hemant Sondhi said. Emissions of NOx, the main greenhouse gas contributors, are significantly reduced and fuel efficiency is improved.

"We have successfully tested our patented technology to emulsify fuel oil, which is also known as furnace oil, with 10 to 15 per cent water," he said. "The FOWE emulsified fuel gives better energy yield of about 8 to 10 per cent due to better combustion of fuel."

## Google to integrate Bard with other Google apps

BARD WILL BE ABLE TO INTERACT WITH INFORMATION FROM GMAIL, DOCS AND GOOGLE DRIVE TO FIND, SUMMARISE AND ANSWER QUESTIONS ACROSS PERSONAL CONTENT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 19: Search engine Google has said it is opening up access to AI-powered chatbot Bard while integrating it with Google apps such as Maps, Docs and Drive and offering results in more languages and countries.

Touted as Google's answer to



open-source GenAI platform ChatGPT, Google said Bard is now available in languages and countries worldwide. Users can collaborate on creative projects, start in one language and continue in up to over 40 languages and countries.

Bard will be able to interact

with information from Gmail, Docs and Google Drive to find, summarise and answer questions across personal content.

Google is also integrating real-time info from Maps, YouTube, Hotels and Flights - expanding Bard's capabilities by pulling in information from the Google

apps and services. These extensions are enabled by default, and you can disable them any time, Google said.

"With permission, you can enable Bard to interact with information from your Gmail, Docs and Drive so you can find, summarise and answer questions across your personal content. Your Google Workspace data won't be used to train Bard's public model and you can disable it any time," the company said.

Google said it is making these features available in English and will be bringing it to other languages soon.

Bard will also be able to develop creative strategies, formulate points of view, create programs that are case-insensitive (where it does not matter if the text is capital or small), create interview questions with talking points, and so on.

## X will soon charge users 'a small monthly payment'

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Sept 19: Elon Musk is going to charge a "small monthly payment" from all X users and the social media platform would not be a free place anymore soon.

In a live-streamed interaction with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, the X owner floated the idea that the social network may no longer be a free site, in a bid to deal with the problem of bots on the platform. "It's the only way I can think of to combat vast armies of bots," Musk said late Monday.

"Because a bot costs a fraction of a penny - call it a tenth of a penny - but even if it has to



pay a few dollars or something, the effective cost of bots is very high," the billionaire added.

The idea of charging everyone on X is not a new idea as last year, Musk had floated it for the first time. The company currently charges \$8 per month from its X Premium users, that gives them an ability to edit posts, see less ads, write longer posts and prioritise rankings in

search and conversations.

During the interaction, Musk said that X now has 550 million monthly users, generating 100-200 million posts every day.

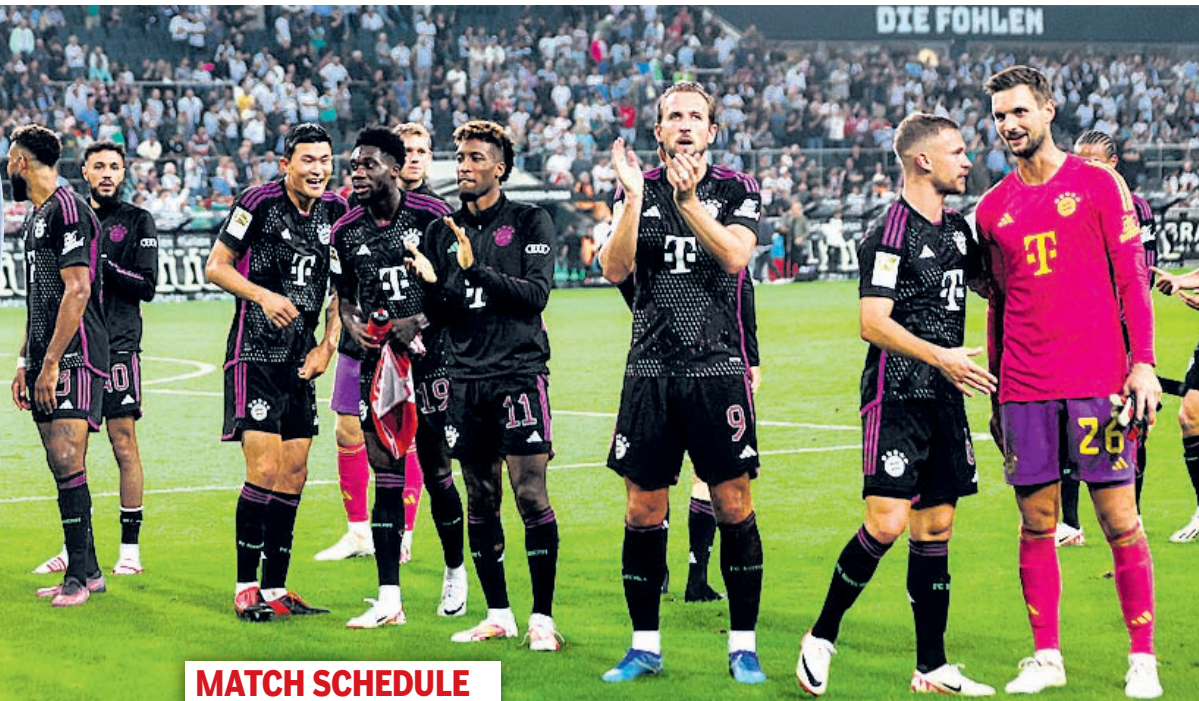
Musk did not disclose how many paid subscribers it currently has.

During its last public earnings in Q1 2022, Twitter had mentioned 229 million mDAUs (monetizable daily active user).

# Bayern test awaits Manchester United



ERIK TEN HAG



## MATCH SCHEDULE

**CHAMPIONS LEAGUE**  
Real Madrid vs Union Berlin  
Galatasaray vs Copenhagen  
Time: 10:30 pm

Bayern Munich vs Man United  
Arsenal vs PSV Eindhoven  
Real Sociedad vs Inter  
Benfica vs Salzburg  
SC Braga vs Napoli  
Sevilla vs Lens  
Time: 12:30 am (Thursday)  
Telecast: Sony Ten channels  
Stream: Sony LIV

Brighton that the team is not in crisis. Wednesday's trip to Munich could deal Ten Hag's players another blow — unless he manages to galvanize the team to atone for its poor start.

United defeated Bayern in improbable circumstances before. Injury-time goals from Teddy Sheringham and Ole Gunnar Solskjær earned United the 1999 Champions League title with a 2-1 win over Bayern in the final. Bayern, the 11-time defending champions in the Bundesliga, is unbeaten so far this season, though it dropped their first points Saturday when Bayer Leverkusen came from behind to draw 2-2 in Munich. Bayern coach Thomas Tuchel is suspended following his sending off in the team's loss to eventual champions Manchester City in the quarterfinals last season. Tuchel will be forced to watch the game from the stands and it's

likely Zsolt Low and Anthony Barry will direct the team in his place. United will be without right back Aaron Wan-Bissaka, who was injured after making a short appearance toward the end of Saturday's loss to Brighton. Bayern head coach Thomas Tuchel felt that his side 'needed more bite' across the pitch to get themselves over the line, and the former Chelsea boss will be chomping at the bit to put things right for Wednesday's match against United, a team who the German boss has never beaten on home soil as a manager in

four previous attempts. Bayern themselves have never lost at home to the Red Devils, though, winning three and drawing two, and Tuchel's men will be confident of progressing to the Champions League knockout rounds for the 16th successive year considering that they are strong favourites to secure top spot in Group A ahead of Man United, Galatasaray and Copenhagen.

The German giants have established themselves as group-stage experts in the competition over the years, as they boast a remarkable 34-game unbeaten run at this stage, the longest such run in the competition's history, and they will be looking to secure a record-extending 14th successive group-stage home win Wednesday.

Following a difficult week off the pitch, Man United boss Erik ten Hag was hoping to lift the atmosphere at Old Trafford with a positive result and performance from his players last weekend, but the Dutchman has instead been left with plenty to ponder.

Languishing in 13th place and already sitting nine points behind league leaders and bitter rivals Manchester City, Ten Hag has insisted that Man United are not in crisis and has encouraged his squad to 'stick to the plan' as they endeavour to turn their fortunes around.

Back-to-back away games are up next for the Red Devils, with a top-flight trip to Burnley Saturday preceded by Wednesday's challenging sojourn to Bavaria to face Bayern Munich, against whom they have won just one of their last eight meetings in the Champions League.

Man United have only lost more Champions League encounters against Barcelona (five) than they have against Bayern (four), although Red Devils supporters will certainly reminisce about the historic 1999 final triumph over the German club under former boss Sir Alex Ferguson; one of just two wins against the Bundesliga side in Europe's most prestigious club competition.

## HANGZHOU ASIAN GAMES

# Under-prepared, jaded India get a reality check

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Hangzhou, Sept 19: A severely-fatigued and under-prepared Indian team got a rude reality check with hosts China out-muscling them 5-1 in an opening group league encounter of the Asian Games football competition here Tuesday.

Giao Tianyi (17th minute), Dai Weijun (51st), Tao Qianglong (72nd & 75th) and Hao Fang (90+2) scored for the hosts, while Rahul KP's (45+1 minute) equaliser from an acute angle was possibly the best strike of the match.

It was heartening to see a third-string team holding the title contenders on an even keel during the first 45 minutes, which saw Indian custodian Gurmeet Singh Chahal valiantly save a spot-kick taken by rival captain Zhu Chenjie.

India now need to beat Bangladesh and Myanmar in their remaining two games to qualify for the second round. Myanmar beat Bangladesh 4-2 in another game in this group.

Having reached the Games Village late Monday evening, the third-string Indian team, with not even four specialist defenders in their ranks, didn't have enough co-ordination amongst themselves. They looked jet-lagged, not rested enough and there was no way that there could have been a miracle.

The gulf in class and quality was evident and most of the Chinese attacks happened from India's wide left (China's right flank) side, which was being manned by Sumit Rathi. It became a free-ride for the Chinese attackers.

Also, the humidity and lack of training time had its effect as

the Indians didn't have the legs to last beyond the first hour. And, once the second goal was scored due to Sandesh Jhingan's poor anticipation, the floodgates opened.

Jhingan was also responsible for another goal when he had a brain fade and wanted to dribble his team past the danger in his own penalty box and committed harakiri. A lot of players suffered from cramps due to humidity and, obviously, not having enough time to warm-up.

Skipper Sunil Chhetri was on the pitch for 85 minutes and, save a pile driver that sailed way over the horizontal, he had precious little to do with a literally non-existent feeder line.

The only silver-lining was the goal by Rahul, the former U-17 World Cupper, who was freed on the wide right by Abdul Rabeeh and the Kerala Blasters player sprinted and smashed it in from near zero degree, much to the awe of a capacity home crowd.

**Perfect beginning**  
India put up a dominant performance to outclass a lower-ranked Cambodia 3-0 (25-14, 25-13, 25-19) in their opening Pool C match of the men's volleyball competition. But a stern test await India Wednesday as they are up against World No.27 South Korea.

Men's volleyball was first introduced at the Tokyo Asian Games in 1958, where India secured a third position. The Indian men have won a total of three volleyball medals so far. Their best performance came in 1962 when they were runners-up. India's other two medals were bronze won in 1958 and 1986, the last of which came 37 years ago.

**SCHEDULE**  
MEN'S VOLLEYBALL  
India vs South Korea  
(4:30 pm)  
Modern Pentathlon  
Men's ranking round  
(12 pm onwards)  
In action: Mayank Vaibhav Chaphekar  
Rowing  
Multiple events  
(one after the other)  
Time: 6:40 am onwards



# Recurve archers hope to shake off Asias 'jinx'



"I am very much aware of my responsibilities to the team, and everyone is following my footsteps and guidance. So, the Games will be smooth for the team and individuals also," Das told this agency from Sonepat. "As a senior, I guide the team to be focussed on the work process and stay as a team, work hard as a team, and win as a team. Knowingly or unknowingly, most of the team members follow my technical, mental and physical instructions. So, we are in good shape as a team," added the former World No.6.

Das further said being the senior-most player in the squad does put a bit of expectation on him. He added that he has been working on his physical and mental sides to give his best at the Games.

In the last Asian Games in Jakarta, Das exited in the quarterfinals, while the team was also eliminated at the last-eight stage. "Yes, of course, there is little expectation on the results, but I am more focussed on my performance rather than the outcome because, in sports, anything can happen," Das said.

Archers are currently in the national camp at the Sports Authority of India centre in Sonepat and will head to Hangzhou September 28. They will begin their campaign in the continental showpiece October 1.

**Chennai, Sept 19:** He may no longer be the India No.1 recurve archer, but the seasoned Atanu Das is fully aware of the responsibility of not only bringing out the best in him but also the team as they look to overcome the Asian Games 'jinx'. Recurve archery, an Olympic discipline, has been on a downward spiral and its slide has ironically coincided with the rise in the compound section, where India now boasts of two recently-crowned World Champions in Ojas Deotale and Aditi Swami.

With the postponed Asian Games taking place just a year before the Paris Olympics, the pressure is more on recurve where no archer is inside the top 10 in world rankings. India have not won a recurve medal, individual or team, since the 2010 Guangzhou Asian Games. Das, who is set for a third Asian Games participation, is the senior-most archer in the recurve team, which will have promising Army man Dhiraj Bommadevara and the rookie duo of Mrinal Chauhan and Tushar Shelke.

In the women's section, two-time Asian Games participant Ankita Bhakat will have the company of Simranjeet Kaur, Bhajan Kaur and Prachi Singh.

# Odisha FC suffer 0-4 defeat to Mohun Bagan

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 19: Odisha FC suffered a 0-4 defeat against Mohun Bagan Super Giants in their inaugural home game of the AFC Cup 2023 at the Kalinga Stadium here, Tuesday.

In the 13th minute of the match, Roy Krishna appeared to have found the back of the net, but it declared offside. As the game progressed, Cy Goddard and Diego Mauricio displayed their skills in midfield in the 27th minute, setting the stage for Jerry Lalrinzuala and Roy to launch an attack from the left flank. However, Roy's precise ground-level cross failed to find a target in the box.

In the 36th minute, Carlos Delgado and Cy joined forces to execute a brilliant defensive maneuver against Manvir Singh. Mourtada Fall stepped in to block a dangerous cross from the right flank within minutes. Tempers



**AFC CUP™**

flared in the 43rd minute when Ahmed Jahouh received a caution from the referee. The situation worsened for Odisha FC as

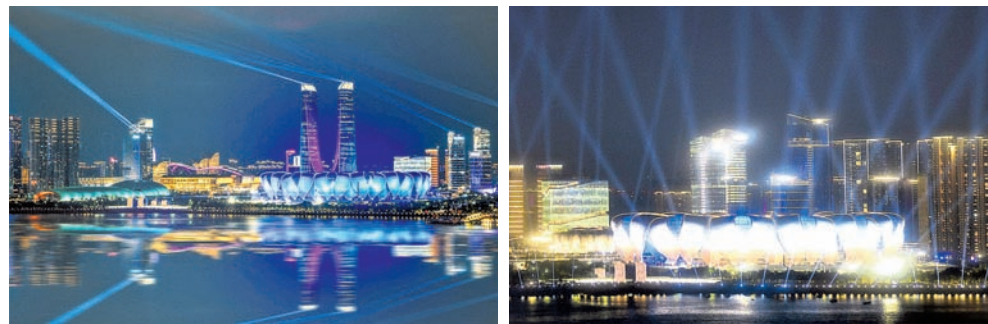
Fall received another yellow card, reducing the Kalinga Warriors to 10 men.

The second half saw Mohun Bagan maintain their momentum, with Sahal Abdul Samad capitalizing on quick passing to find the back of the net early on. In the 65th minute, Dimitri Petratos took advantage of a defensive lapse and attempted to slot the ball past Amrinder, but Jahouh came to the rescue by clearing it off the line. The 68th minute witnessed Dimitri doubling the Mariners' lead.

In the 79th minute, the travelers struck again, as Liston found the back of the net with a header, courtesy of an assist from Manvir. The 83rd minute sealed the deal for Mohun Bagan, with Dimitri securing his second goal of the match.

Odisha FC will next face Bashundara Kings October 2 in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

## LIGHTING THE NIGHT SKY



Dazzling light shows have been staged at Hangzhou Olympic Sports Centre Venue Cluster, illuminating the night sky, instantly enveloping the area with the festive atmosphere of the Asian Games. Pics: Asian Games official website

# Visa issues hit inaugural MotoGP race in India

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Greater Noida, Sept 19:** Some of the riders and team officials bound for the inaugural MotoGP round in India, including six-time champion Marc Marquez, are awaiting their visas ahead of the race this weekend.

Sources in Repsol Honda Team confirmed to PTI that the arrival of its riders Marquez and Joan Mir in India has been delayed due to visa issues. Both the Spanish riders were scheduled to attend a promotional event near Delhi on Wednesday but now that visit stands cancelled.

"The riders are yet to reach India due to visa issues. So there was no option but to cancel tomorrow's event," a source told PTI. Dorna Sports are the organisers and rights holders of the event. Fairstreet Sports are the local promoters of the event.

Sources in Fairstreet told PTI that around 1800 visas needed to

be applied for personnel in the paddock but a technical glitch in the application system caused the delay. However, sources said, as of Tuesday, most of the visas have been issued barring a few lacking proper documentation.

"The visa were applied September 5 but due to a technical glitch on the part of the travel agency, the delay happened. 600 visa applications were pending till yesterday, now most of them have been cleared including the visa to Marquez. Few individuals who have not filled up the form properly are left. You can't do anything about that as one has to follow law of the land. Majority of the team officials and riders are already here," said a source.

India is hosting an event of this magnitude for the first time since the now defunct F1 Indian Grand Prix. The race was dropped from the calendar due to financial, taxation and bureaucratic issues.