

NIA RAIDS ON K'STAN, GANGSTER HIDEOUTS

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 27: The National Investigation Agency (NIA) detained Wednesday several suspects during a massive multi-state crackdown on a nexus of Khalistani separatists, terrorists, gangsters and drug-smugglers, an official said here. The raids are related to cases against the associates of Arsh Datta, a listed terrorist, and many dreaded gangsters, a spokesperson of the federal agency said.

The respective state police force provided necessary support to the daylong raids carried out at 53 locations in Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh and the Union Territories of Delhi and Chandigarh.

Officials said weapons and a large number of digital devices were seized during the raids aimed at dismantling the Khalistani-gangster nexus. **P9**



FIGHTING FOR THEIR RIGHTS: Ayush doctors demonstrate Wednesday at the Lower PMG Square in Bhubaneswar for the fulfilment of their five-point charter of demands including jobs in government-run hospitals (MORE P3)

School trip turns tragic

TEACHER DIES ON SPOT, 20, INCLUDING STUDENTS, CRITICAL

POST NEWS NETWORK

Nabarangpur, Sept 27: A physical education teacher (PET) of a private school was killed while 34 persons including students suffered injuries Wednesday after a bus they were travelling in, overturned on Jharigaon-Chandahandi ghati road in Nabarangpur district, police said. The conditions of 20 of the injured are stated to be critical.

The deceased was identified as Prabhas Kumar Jena, 24. He was a physical education teacher at the Swami Vivekananda Vidyalaya in Umerkote of the district. Some of the critical in-

BLOOD ON ROADS

JUNE 14: 5 members of a family, including 2 children, killed in Bolangir district

JUNE 26: 12 members of a marriage party killed as 2 buses collide head-on in Ganjam district

SEPT 15: 4 members of family from Odisha die after ambulance rams into a stationary truck in Andhra Pradesh's Chittoor.

SEPT 18: 4 people die in a deadly road mishap in Athagarh

jured persons were identified as Narendra Mistry, 32, Kailash Mandal, 26, Rashmita Baral, 46, Nibedita Swain, 46, students Ananda Marandi, 16, Mithun Santa, 16, Jeevan Pangi, 16, Uapati Santa, 14, Trinath Santa, 15, Sradhanjali Pranka, 15, Chumita Santa, 14, and Jahan Santa, 15. The incident took place in the

morning when the students and their teachers were on their way to attend a three-day district-level sports meet at Chandahandi block in the district. There were 58 students from various schools in Umerkote block in the bus along with 10 teachers.

Locals informed that despite the best efforts of the administration to prevent accidents, it happened as a signboard had been stolen by miscreants. They informed that the ghati road had recently been widened and if the board had been there, the mishap could have been averted.

Officials said those critical are undergoing treatment at the district headquarters hospital here. The RTO has been asked to examine the papers of the bus including its fitness certificate to ascertain how the accident occurred.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Party has promoted you and given you an MLA ticket. You see, these days MLA has a bigger say than a central minister

'2018-Everyone is a Hero', India's bet for Oscars

AGENCIES

Chennai, Sept 27: Survival drama *2018-Everyone is a Hero*, based on the Kerala floods that year, is India's official entry to the Academy Awards 2024, the Film Federation of India (FFI) announced here Wednesday. Noted filmmaker and chairperson of the selection committee Girish Kasaravalli, informed the media that the 16-member jury unanimously selected the Malayalam film to represent India.



"It was a pan-Indian selection. And we are happy that we 16 members watched 22 films in one week. It was a difficult decision because there were so many good films and we had to analyse to find out which film had

better merit. Finally, we decided on *2018 - Everyone is a Hero*," the filmmaker said.

According to Kasaravalli, the Jude Anthony Joseph-directed film highlights 'Indian ethos, situation and people'. "It's a film that talks about a calamity that Kerala faced in 2018. It not only represents India but also the calamity that's happening around the world," Kasaravalli pointed out. "Such messages are linked to climate change and the so-called development," he added.

Lead star Tovino Thomas, who is currently in Amsterdam for the 'Septimus Awards' where he won the best 'Asian Actor' trophy for *2018*, said it was time for celebration for the team.

"I was very happy last (Tuesday) night and woke up even happier to this exciting news as our film '2018' has been selected as India's official entry (to Oscars). We worked in extreme conditions but it's all paying off. This movie is now getting international acclaim. It's great," he said.

Oppn peeved by CM statement

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 27: The BJP moved a breach of privilege notice against Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik in the Assembly here Wednesday for allegedly calling opposition parties 'anti people' in his 'suo-moto' statement in the House September 25 and demanded an apology from him.

Opposition Chief Whip Mohan Majhi of the BJP who moved the privilege notice, alleged that Patnaik had made the statement

on his own in order to 'shield' his private secretary.

The BJP leader also accused the CM of insulting the opposition MLAs through his statement. "We are elected to the Assembly by the people. How can we be anti-people?" Majhi asked and demanded an apology.

Supporting the BJP's privilege notice, Congress Legislature Party (CLP) leader Narasingha Mishra said: "It is unfortunate to call elected representatives of the people anti-people. This is not democracy."

BIJU SWASTHYA KALYAN YOJANA
DSPL-188

HEALTHY ODISHA, HAPPY ODISHA

Ajay Kumar Das
4189872XXXX

ଓଡିଶା ସରକାର Government of Odisha
ବିଜୁ ସ୍ୱାସ୍ଥ୍ୟ କଲ୍ୟାଣ ଯୋଜନା
Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojana

" EVERY LIFE IS PRECIOUS "

CHIEF MINISTER, ODISHA

MY LIFE WAS SAVED BY AVAILING CASHLESS HEART SURGERY OF RS. 5 LAKH THROUGH BSKY

JASOKETAN, BARGARH

1.25 LAKH BENEFICIARIES AVAIL CASHLESS CARE OF ₹ 225 CRORE EVERY MONTH

98% POSITIVE PATIENT FEEDBACK

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SHAKIRA ACCUSED OF TAX FRAUD FOR SECOND TIME

Colombian singer Shakira has once again been charged with tax evasion by the Spanish government. Prosecutors in Spain claim Shakira defrauded the state of \$7.1million in 2018 after she allegedly failed to declare millions in advance payments for her El Dorado world tour, among other payments, reports *aceshowbiz.com*.

SCORSESE CALLS FOR NOLAN TO SAVE CINEMA FROM SUPERHERO MOVIES

Acclaimed filmmaker Martin Scorsese has asked renowned director Christopher Nolan and others to 'save cinema' from a comic book culture. The 80-year-old filmmaker, who has made the likes of *Taxi Driver*, *Raging Bull*, and *Goodfellas* has previously claimed Marvel movies 'aren't cinema.'



FORTUNE FORECAST

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FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181

ARIES
You may have a wide circle of casual friends, but today, these associations will prove to be beneficial. Your friends will help you chase away the blues. That way, you will also understand the deeper role of friendship, says Ganesh.

TAURUS
Today, passionate and possessive are the two words that will define your relationship with the people you love, predicts Ganesh. You may choose to take pains for the sake of others, which seems to be highly fulfilling. Your good spirit will sky-rocket by evening.

GEMINI
If you are embroiled in a legal dispute, an out-of-court settlement is likely, predicts Ganesh. You are a courageous person and you'll need a lot of it today. Don't back down from your decisions. You may have to be stern with a few people. Your resilience will pay off.

CANCER
Today, you will put your heart and soul into whatever task you take up. But the results may not be too forthcoming. However, that should not be a reason for you to get dejected or anxious. You will get your due sooner or later. Also, spending some time with your loved ones will be quite gratifying emotionally.

LEO
Sometimes, it takes courage to be honest and admit to your failures. Doing so only goes a long way in establishing your credentials as a real person, feels Ganesh. So understand that, while it is only human to make mistakes, it takes more than that to accept them. Also, today is a good day to reconnect with old contacts. Make the effort to do so. It should not be so difficult considering your skills in public relations, says Ganesh.

VIRGO
A renewed zest for life will bring in a transformation in you. It is a good time to let people know how important and intelligent - yes, you can be both - are. Your eminence will be obvious as you show how things are meant to be done.

LIBRA
Good news! You will be a people's person today. Close friends, relatives and family - you seem to want to spend your time with all of them today, says Ganesh. Better news? Your romantic brilliance will be at its peak today as your fancy takes wings and creativity flows freely in manners that seem irresistible.

SCORPIO
A cascade of let-downs will dent your confidence and shake your determination, says Ganesh. But don't let these failures affect you as they are temporary. At work, your subordinates may force you to take drastic measures.

SAGITTARIUS
A day full of cheer and joy is in store. You will probably enrol in a part-time course and sharpen your skills. But for those in police and legal professions, you will be the lions of the jungle! Roar and stamp your authority, says Ganesh.

CAPRICORN
You may not get as popular as Romeo did, but your exceedingly romantic nature will earn you quite a reputation, not to forget the hypnotic effect it will have on your sweetheart, says Ganesh. On the flip side, troubles will chase you everywhere; you are likely to face problems with your business rivals and health condition, but your mind will be on guard always, giving you an edge over your opponents.

AQUARIUS
Today is an important day in the larger scheme of things. You may finally decide to buy a home, change your job, or marry! Sudden and unexpected profits are on the cards too. Reputation and rewards are all yours today.

PISCES
You are human enough to make mistakes, and humble enough to admit them, and it is this honesty that people admire in you. Your affectionate nature will see you excel at tending to the needs of your family members today, says Ganesh.

India gets 4 Emmy nods



THE GLOBAL COMPETITION IS A BENCHMARK FOR RECOGNISING EXCELLENCE IN TELEVISION

IAN S

New Delhi: The International Emmy Awards are coming up soon as the nominees have been announced with India garnering four nods. These nominations include two



for *Rocket Boys*, one for *Delhi Crime - Season 2* and one for *Vir Das: Landing*. Jim Sarbh has been nominated in the Best Performance by an Actor category for *Rocket Boys*, competing against Gustavo Bassani in *Iosi, El Espia Arrepentido* from Argentina, Martin Freeman in *The Responder* from the UK, and Jonas Karlsson in *Nattryttarna (Riding in Darkness)* from Sweden. Shefali Shah has been nominated in the Best Performance by an Actress category for her role in the series *Delhi Crime 2*. In this category, she is competing against Connie Nielsen in *Drommeren - Karen Blixen Bliver Til (The Dreamer-*



Becoming Karen Blixer) from Denmark, Billie Piper for *I Hate Suzie Too* from the UK, and *Karla Souza in La Caida / Dive* from Mexico. Actor-comedian Vir Das has been given the Emmy nod in the Comedy category for his show *Vir Das: Landing* where his competition includes: *Derry Girls - Season 3* from the UK, *El Encargado (The Boss)* from Argentina, and *Le Flambeau - Season 2* from France. In addition, producer Ekta Kapoor is also set to get an Emmy Award for the Directorate Award. The 51st International Emmy Awards will be held in New York November 20, 2023.

'Can't relate to toxic masculinity in films'



Chennai: Actress Tamannaah Bhatia is known for her work in Telugu, Tamil and Hindi films, in an interview opened up about south films where toxic masculinity is celebrated.

Tamannaah said, "In the south, certain formulas are used because they are easy. In certain commercial films, I couldn't relate to my characters and would request that the filmmaker lower the intensity. Having said that, I came to a point where I stopped doing those parts. I started making a conscious effort not to be part of such films where toxic masculinity is celebrated to the point where it is almost intolerable." The *Baahubali* actress said, "The films I made here (Bollywood) didn't work because it was their destiny. I never took it as a personal failure because a movie is made with a lot of people contributing to it. That way, I am a bit detached from both my successes and failures. I don't take either seriously. I am alive. I am here. That's how I look at it. After 17 years, I still wake up every day wanting to do it over and over again. Acting is my passion. I wake up to face the camera. It excites me the most."

AGENCIES

Simplicity of Bonda people crux of Odia play Remo



NAT'L DRAMA FESTIVAL: DAY 3

Bhubaneswar: Members of Koraput Cultural Society Wednesday performed Odia play *Remo* here at Rabindra Mandap, Wednesday, on the third evening of 2nd National Drama Festival. The five-day event is being organised by Odisha Natya Sangh to celebrate its 36th Foundation Day. The drama, written by Hruday Ranjan Satpathy and directed by Jogendra Prasad Mohanty, emphasised the tribal Bonda community's simplicity and innocence. It depicted how a man from so-called civil society, appointed as a teacher in a tribal village, falls in love with a Bonda girl and turns into a Remo, as the region's original inhabitants are known, to live forever with the community.

Odisha Sangeet Natak Akademi President Aruna Mohanty, theatre directors Ramesh Maharana, Sudhanshu Dwivedi, Manoj Dandpat, and drama organiser Ramchandra Sasmal were among the luminaries who graced the occasion. Eminent director Raju Padhi was conferred with Odisha Natya Sangh Samman.

PWN

14MN FOLLOWERS ON WHATSAPP CHANNELS

Kat reigns supreme



The actor's remarkable feat surpasses even the likes of singer-rapper Bad Bunny and tech magnate Mark Zuckerberg, the owner of Meta

Mumbai: Katrina Kaif has achieved a remarkable milestone on WhatsApp channels. The *Welcome* actress has emerged as the most followed individual globally, boasting a staggering 14 million followers on her channel. This remarkable feat surpasses even the likes of singer-rapper Bad Bunny and tech magnate Mark Zuckerberg, the owner of Meta, WhatsApp's parent company. As of the latest rank-

ings, WhatsApp itself reigns supreme with 23 million followers, closely trailed by streaming giant Netflix with 16.8 million. The official channel for Real Madrid secures the third spot with 14.4 million followers, while Katrina Kaif proudly occupies the fourth position with her 14.2 million strong fan base. Notably, Bad Bunny claims the fifth spot with 12.6 million followers, and Mark Zuckerberg is not far behind with 9.2 million admirers. Katrina's entry into the WhatsApp Channels arena September 13 marked a pivotal moment in her digital journey. On her channel, the *Phone Bhoost* actress has shared glimpses of her life, including a collection of captivating selfies. However, she has intriguingly refrained from sharing teasers related to her highly anticipated film *Tiger 3*.

AGENCIES

PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

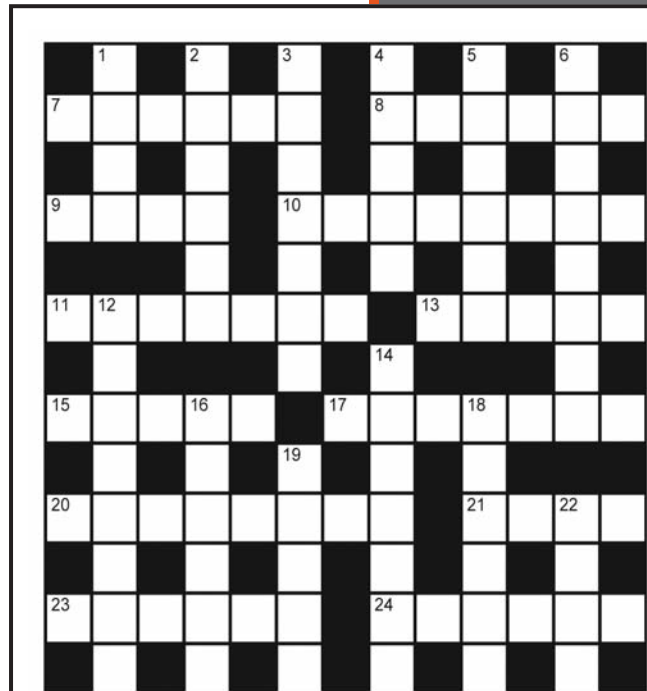


BREVITY



FUN post

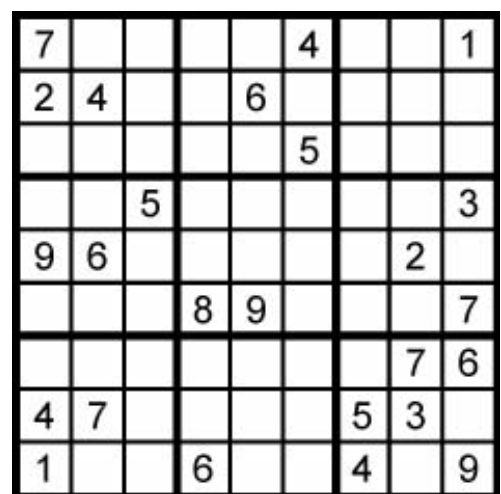
CROSSWORD



- Across
- 7 Doctor's concern
 - 8 Hang out
 - 9 Look after
 - 10 Expensive stuff, usually
 - 11 Graceful antelope
 - 13 TV, radio, etc.
 - 15 Video store section (3-2)
 - 17 Pike-like freshwater perch
 - 20 Cute and lovable
 - 21 Fire
 - 23 With hands on hips
 - 24 Transparent gem
 - 4 Drivers' woes
 - 5 Thick cream soup
 - 6 Quietude
 - 12 Franz Ferdinand, e.g.
 - 14 English courtier
 - 16 Group meetings
 - 18 Effulgence
 - 19 Abominate
 - 22 Word in many French restaurant names

SUDOKU

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



SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD



SUDOKU



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown

BAMANA BESHA

Lord Jagannath and His siblings, Devi Subhadra and Lord Balabhadra, adorn Bamana Besha as part of 'Sunia' in Puri, Wednesday



1K teaching posts vacant in varsities

Expeditious steps are being taken to get the clearance from the Supreme Court for completion of recruitment process, said the HE minister

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 27: As many as 1,094 teaching and 1,747 non-teaching posts are lying vacant in different universities across Odisha, Higher Education (HE) Minister Atanu Sabyasachi Nayak told the Assembly Wednesday.

While responding to a query of Bolangir MLA Narasingha Mishra, the HE Minister said 1,094 teaching and 1,747 non-teaching posts are vacant in several universities, including Rajendra University in Bolangir, across the state.

Steps have already been taken to fill the teaching posts through Odisha Public Service Commission and non-teaching ones through State Selection Board (SSB). The recruitment, however, has been stalled due to cases pending with the Supreme Court, Nayak told the House.

He added that expeditious measures are being taken to get the clearance from the top court for completion of recruitment process. As an interim measure,

137 workers died in industrial accidents



IN THE HOUSE

At least 137 labourers died and 132 others were injured in industrial accidents in different factories of the state during the last three years, Labour and Employees' State Insurance Minister Sarada Prasad Nayak said Wednesday.

universities have been engaging guest faculties.

Responding to another query of Congress member Tara Prasad Bahinipati, the HE Minister said 48 government degree colleges, 16 colleges for teachers' education and 198 aided non-government colleges are operational in Odisha.

"385 teaching posts out of the 2,373 sanctioned posts are lying

vacant in state-run colleges, while 115 out of the 468 sanctioned posts are yet to be filled in institutions for teachers' education. Out of the 7,110 sanctioned teaching posts in aided non-government colleges, 1,065 are vacant," Nayak said, adding that the state government has recently invited applications for filling up the teaching posts in aided non-government colleges through SSB.



DOG DAY AFTERNOON: People enjoying midday siesta near two fiberglass statues on the footpath near Silver City Boat Club in Cuttack, Wednesday

RTO lodges case against OLA, Uber & Rapido

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bhubaneswar, Sept 27: The authorities of Regional Transport Office (RTO), Bhubaneswar-I has lodged a case against online cab aggregator companies like OLA, Uber and Rapido for operating in the state capital and adjoining areas without license.

The RTO asserted that the aggregators are required to obtain license from the concerned agencies

of the state where they want to operate as per the section 93 (iii) of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988.

"The government notified the aggregator policy (Odisha On-demand Transportation Technology Aggregators Guidelines, 2023) April 20, 2023. However, the aggregators are yet to apply for license as per the policy despite repeated meetings and issuing of notices. They are also hiring private two wheelers in their services violating the rules," said Bikash

Chandra Choudhury, RTO, Bhubaneswar-I.

"The policy allows the aggregators to use only transport vehicles. We also issued several notices to them and held discussions with the aggregators during meetings, even at the Commissioner level. But, they are still operating sans license. So, we registered a case against these companies with the police Tuesday," Choudhury added. Different private vehicle owners

associations in the city had also complained to the authorities against the aggregators for engaging private motorcycles in commercial activities in the city.

Meanwhile, police sources stated that they have sought all the relevant documents from the RTO on this issue.

Police will take action against online aggregator firms after examining the documents, sources added.

Jharkhand tourist drowns in Puri sea

Bhubaneswar: A tourist from Jharkhand drowned while taking a bath in the sea in Puri town Wednesday. The deceased was identified as Vishal Oraon, 24, a resident of Pahadi Tola of

Jharkhand's Ranchi district, said Manas Ranjan Chakra, IIC, Sea Beach police station. Vishal along with 20 friends were bathing in the sea near the Light House. He was swept away in the sea due to a strong current and drowned. After getting information, he said, lifeguards and fire brigade personnel rushed to the spot and fished out the body. "We have informed the family members of the deceased," the IIC said.

Table with Market Watch: INDEX, VARIATION, SENSEX 66118.69 (+173.22), NIFTY 19716.50 (+51.80), DOLLAR 83.24 (-0.04), EURO 87.68 (-0.60), GOLD 757,835 (-597), SILVER 770,750 (-1,027)

Table with Weather: Bhub, CTK, MAX 34.2°C, 34.0°C, MIN 26.0°C, 26.2°C, Humidity 80%, 79%, Rainfall Trace, Nil

Superbike rally, food fest mark World Tourism Day celebrations

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 27: Superbike rally in Bhubaneswar, food festival in Cuttack and cultural programme marked the World Tourism Day 2023 celebrations by the Odisha Tourism department, Wednesday.

Earlier during the day, state Tourism Minister Aswini Kumar Patra flagged off the annual superbike rally, 'Kalinga Riders' at Hotel Sandy Tower in the Capital city. More than 150 Super Riders took part in the rally, under the banner of 'Odisha Super Riders', which culminated at Silver City Boat Club in Cuttack.

Speaking on the occasion, Patra encouraged all stakeholders - from entrepreneurs to local communities - to join hands in promoting sustainable tourism in the state. "Odisha is known not only for its natural beauty but also for the authenticity of its tourism experiences. Let us continue to work together to make Odisha a world-class destination under the leadership of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik," the minister said.

Director Tourism, Sachin Ramchandra Jadhav said the 'Odisha by Road' campaign was launched 3 years ago with the intention of welcoming more and more riders to the state. "Super bikers have been an integral part of the Tourism ecosystem, and they have been working tire-

'Best Tourism Village' award for Raghurajpur

Bhubaneswar: Known for its heritage homes and artistic wonders, Raghurajpur has been adjudged the 'Best Tourism Village 2023' by the Union Ministry of Tourism (in Silver category) on the occasion of World Tourism Day, Wednesday. "A proud moment for Odisha! Raghurajpur has been awarded the 'Best Tourism Village of India 2023' in the Best Tourism Village Competition organised under the aegis of Ministry of Tourism, Government of India", the Odisha Tourism department said.

The Union Ministry has given the Best Rural Tourism Village Awards to rural tourism villages for promotion and preservation of their cultural heritage and sustainable development through tourism. As many as 35 villages including Raghurajpur have been selected for the prestigious award. Located about 12km from Puri, Raghurajpur is best known for its Pattachitra art. The art form is used to decorate Lord Jagannath and His siblings. The attachment with the holy trinity elevated the art form and helped it gain prominence.

lessly as ambassadors of Odisha Tourism. With green investments being the central theme for World Tourism Day 2023, the Tourism department will strive towards spreading the message of the day in the days to come", he said.

Jadhav also read out a special message of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik at a special function organised at the Silver City Boat Club where the 30 km rally via Trisulisa culminated. "Our flagship project, Eco-Retreat Odisha is a highly successful zero-waste glamping product that ensures tourists can explore nature's beauty and engage in vivid experiences in the most sustainable manner. The glamping event is organized every year at lesser-explored exotic destinations to promote local tourism and biodiversity,"

Patnaik said in his message.

Speaking at the function, Member of Parliament (MP), Cuttack, Bhatruhari Mahatab said Cuttack city is renowned for its rich history and heritage and is a major pivot in the tourism map of Odisha. "Destinations like redeveloped Silver City Boat Club will serve as great avenues for recreational tourism for the residents of Cuttack," he said.

On this occasion, a 6-day food festival, organised jointly by the Tourism department and Cuttack Municipal Corporation, was inaugurated by Mayor, Subhash Singh. In the evening, a cultural programme was organised at the Bhanja Kala Mandap in Bhubaneswar where Tourism department officials performed a stage play 'Nistabdhah Sahanai'.

AFSPA EXTENDED IN MANIPUR HILLS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Imphal, Sept 27: The Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act or AFSPA was extended by another six months in Manipur Wednesday, barring 19 police stations falling under the Imphal valley and an area that shares its boundary with neighbouring Assam.

An official notification said the state government is of the opinion, after analysing the prevailing law-and-order situation, that it is not expedient to have detailed assessment on the ground as security agencies are preoccupied in maintenance of law and order.

"Now, therefore, in exercise of the powers conferred by Section 3 of Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act... The Governor of Manipur hereby declares the entire state of Manipur excluding the areas falling under the jurisdiction of 19 police stations... As Disturbed Area for a period of six months with effect from October 1, 2023," the notification said.

The police station areas where the Disturbed Areas Act has not been imposed are Imphal, Lamphel, City, Singjamei, Sekmai, Lamsang, Pastol, Wangoi, Porompat, Heingang, Lamlai, Iribung, Leimakhong, Thoubal, Bishnupur, Nambol, Moirang, Kakchin and Jirbam. Significantly, the areas that

have been kept out of the purview of AFSPA are dominated by the majority Meitei community which includes Jirbam, adjacent to Silchar valley of Assam.

The extension of the AFSPA in the hill areas was of least significance as more than 20 terror groups from the tribal areas had entered into an agreement Suspension of Operations (SoO) with the Centre and the state government.

With the extension of AFSPA, the Army and Assam Rifles cannot operate inside the areas under the 19 police stations without the consent of the state police.

Security officials have been advocating bringing the entire state under AFSPA so that they could easily ensure that the presence of terror groups within the valley is reduced or eliminated, sources said.

The security agencies have been warning that banned terror groups United National Liberation Front and People's Liberation Army (PLA), Kanglei Yawol Kanba Lup, People's Revolutionary Party of Kangleipak and KCP have been forming their bases in the Imphal valley of the state.

They have also been warning about the possibility of these terrorists mingling with crowds during any protest to stoke tensions in restive Manipur, the sources said.

Arka Keshari, wife join BJP

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Sept 27: Former BJD MP Arka Keshari Deo Wednesday returned to the BJP after a gap of about 10 years, claiming that the saffron party is the "only outfit which is working for the welfare of people".

Deo, a member of the Kalahandi royal family, joined the BJP along with his wife Malvika Devi at its state headquarters here in the presence of the party's Odisha unit president Manmohan Samal and other senior leaders.

The former Kalahandi MP said he joined the BJP as he considered that it was the "only party which has been working for the welfare of people and development of the country. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's foreign policies are being appreciated by all". "So, my supporters have suggested that I must switch over to the BJP," he said.

Deo had joined BJD in 2013 following the demise of his father Bikram Keshari Deo. He was elected to the Lok Sabha in 2014 from Kalahandi on a BJD ticket.

Ph.D. DEGREE AWARDED (PSYCHOLOGY)



Ravenshaw University has awarded the prestigious Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D) in Psychology to MS. SIPRA KHUNTIA, D/O. Mr. Binod Chandra Khuntia and Mrs. Asha Rani Khuntia on 13th September, 2023, vide notification no. Ph.D/ PSYCHOLOGY-595/2023 for her thesis entitled "Psychological Correlates of Depression and their Management". She worked under the supervision of Prof. (Dr.) Sangeeta Rath (Ex-Member of OPSC and Retd. Professor at Ravenshaw University). Ms. Sipra was awarded a Gold Medal in 2017 by Ravenshaw University for being topper in her batch (MA) and was also a topper in MPhil. She cleared NTA UGC-NET and GATE in 2022 (Psychology) and was awarded JRF in UGC-MANF fellowship (2017). She has presented and published several research papers in state, national and international seminars, conferences, and journals. She has also co-authored of two books (Psychological Assessment; & Psychological Research and Measurement) in psychology. At present, she is working as an Assistant Professor at Amity University, Noida campus. For all her success, she has given her heartfelt thanks and gratitude to Almighty God Jesus Christ, her family, supervisor, teachers, friends, near and dear ones.

About 70% premature cancer deaths in 2020 preventable: Study

About 70 per cent of the 5.3 million premature deaths from cancer globally in 2020 were preventable, while the remaining 30 per cent were treatable, as per a new Lancet Global Health research.

Of the total deaths, 2.9 million were in men, while 2.3 million were in women, the study said, which had used the GLOBOCAN 2020 database on cancer mortality from the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) for analysis.

The IARC conducts and coordinates research into the causes of cancer and is an intergovernmental agency under the World Health Organisation (WHO) of the United Nations.

Tobacco, alcohol, obesity, and infections accounted for roughly 1.3 million deaths in women across all age groups in 2020, the study reported, acknowledging that the burden of cancer in women due to these risk factors

were widely under-recognised.

Further, the study suggested that 1.5 million premature cancer deaths in women could be prevented each year through the elimination of exposures to key risk factors or via early detection and diagnosis, while a further 0.8 million lives could be saved each year if all women had access to optimal cancer care.

This study is a global estimation of the burden of premature, preventable, and treatable deaths from 36 cancer types in 2020 in 185 countries, by world region and Human Development Index (HDI).

"Discussion about cancer in women often focus on 'women's cancers', such as breast and cervical cancer, but about 3,00,000 women under 70 die each year from lung cancer, and 1,60,000 from colorectal cancer: Two of the top three causes of cancer death among women, globally.



"Furthermore, for the last few decades in many high income countries, deaths from lung cancer in women have been higher than deaths from breast cancer," said study author Isabelle Soerjomataram, Deputy Branch Head of Cancer Surveillance at IARC.

Greater scrutiny of the causes and risk factors for cancer in women is also needed as they

are less well understood compared with cancer risk factors for men, the study said.

Further, it said, growing evidence suggests links between commercial products predominantly used by women, including breast implants, skin lighteners and hair relaxers, and an enhanced cancer risk.

According to a new Lancet Commission report, gender in-

TOBACCO, ALCOHOL, OBESITY, AND INFECTIONS ACCOUNTED FOR ROUGHLY 1.3MN DEATHS IN WOMEN ACROSS ALL AGE GROUPS IN 2020, THE STUDY REPORTED

THE STUDY SUGGESTED THAT 1.5MN PREMATURE CANCER DEATHS IN WOMEN COULD BE PREVENTED EACH YEAR THROUGH ELIMINATION OF EXPOSURES TO KEY RISK FACTORS OR VIA EARLY DETECTION AND DIAGNOSIS

equality and discrimination influence women's rights and opportunities to avoid cancer risk factors and impede their ability to seek and obtain timely diagnosis and quality cancer care.

Further, gender inequalities have resulted in an unpaid caregiver workforce that is predominantly female, and hinder women's professional advancement as leaders in cancer research, practice, and policy-

making, which in turn perpetuate the lack of women-centred cancer prevention and care, the report said.

"The impact of a patriarchal society on women's experiences of cancer has gone largely unrecognised. Globally, women's health is often focused on reproductive and maternal health, aligned with narrow anti-feminist definitions of women's value and roles in society, while cancer remains wholly under-represented," said study author Ophira Ginsburg, co-Chair of the Commission.

"There are important factors specific to women which contribute to this substantial global burden - by addressing these through a feminist approach we believe this will reduce the impact of cancer for all," said Verna Vanderpuye, senior consultant at the Korle Bu Teaching Hospital, Ghana, and co-chair of the Commission.

Bhub best Smart City in eastern region

PRESIDENT DROUPADI MURMU LAUDS CHIEF MINISTER NAVEEN PATNAIK'S VISIONARY LEADERSHIP FOR BHUBANESWAR'S TRANSFORMATION INTO A SMART CITY

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, Sept 27: Bhubaneswar bagged the honour of being awarded the prestigious 'Best Smart City in Eastern Region' at the India Smart Cities Conclave-2023 in Indore, Wednesday.

In addition, Bhubaneswar also received the 'Partner MSI Award,' presented to Honeywell Automation for their outstanding contributions to the Bhubaneswar Smart City Limited project.

A delegation from Bhubaneswar, including representatives from the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) Mayor Surochana Das, Additional Commissioner II Subhendu Sahu, and General Manager of Bhubaneswar Smart City Limited (BSCL) Subrat Kumar Behera, received the awards from President Droupadi Murmu.

While presenting the awards, President Murmu highlighted the City's unwavering dedication to innovation, sustainability, and inclusive urban develop-



ment in alignment with the Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik's visionary leadership for Bhubaneswar's transformation into a Smart City.

BMC Commissioner Vijay Amruta Kulange, said, "This recognition is a testament to our unwavering commitment to innovation, sustainability, and inclusive urban development. It reflects the tireless efforts of our dedicated team, our visionary partners, and the collective spirit of our community."

"Bhubaneswar Smart City is more than just a project; it's a vision brought to life. We remain steadfast in our mission to create a modern, accessible, and people-centric environment that enriches the lives of our residents and sets a shining example for urban development in India," he added.

It is worth mentioning that Bhubaneswar, known for blending tradition with technology, has transformed itself into a modern metropolis. The city's Smart City initiatives have

brought forth innovations in urban planning, infrastructure development, and sustainability.

From pedestrian-friendly streets to efficient waste management, Bhubaneswar's smart solutions enhance the quality of life for its residents while preserving its natural beauty. With a focus on inclusivity and community engagement, Bhubaneswar continues to evolve as a model Smart City, setting the stage for a brighter and more sustainable urban future.

The Smart Cities Conclave 2023 is an annual event that brings together government officials, urban planners, industry leaders, and experts from across India. This prestigious conclave serves as a crucial platform for stakeholders to converge, fostering discussions on state-of-the-art strategies and innovations within the realm of smart cities. Participants engage in knowledge-sharing sessions, policy dialogues, and exhibitions that showcase cutting-edge technologies and successful urban development projects.

Record 91 Indian varsities in Times world rankings

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 27: A record 91 Indian universities have made it to the World University Rankings announced by the Times Higher Education (THE) magazine, with the top performing Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bangalore, returning to the global 250 for the first time since 2017.

Ninety-one Indian universities in the list is a significant increase from last year's 75 even though top Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) boycotted the rankings for the fourth consecutive year.

India has also become the fourth best represented nation in the 2024 rankings, up from the sixth last year.

According to the rankings announced by the London-based THE magazine Wednesday, the second best performing universities in India are: Anna University, Jamia Millia Islamia, Mahatma Gandhi University, Shoolini University of Biotechnology and Management Sciences. They are all in the 501-600 band.

Two IITs – the Indian Institute



IIT Guwahati

of Technology, Guwahati and Indian Institute of Technology (Indian School of Mines) Dhanbad - moved up two bands to join the world's top 800 universities, from 1001-1200 to 601-800.

While Anna University in Chennai moved up from 801-1000 band last year to the 501-600 band, Aligarh Muslim University moved up from the 801-1000 band last year to the 601-800.

The Bharathiar University in Coimbatore moved up from the 801-1000 band last year to the 601-800 band, while Malaviya National Institute of Technology, Jaipur has entered the ranking for the first time, breaking into

the 601-800 band. Seven IITs — Bombay, Delhi, Guwahati, Kanpur, Kharagpur, Madras, and Roorkee — opted out of THE World University Rankings in 2020, casting doubt on the rankings' transparency and standards. IIT Guwahati reentered the rankings last year.

In the 20th year of the ranking, 1,904 universities – up from 1,799 last year - from 108 countries and regions were ranked.

The THE World University Rankings 2024 assessed the universities across 18 indicators covering their core missions of teaching, research, knowledge transfer and internationalisation.

'Swachhata Hi Seva' campaign till Oct 2

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, Sept 27: The annual Swachhata Hi Seva (SHS) campaign is being celebrated as a prelude to Swachh Bharat Diwas under the joint aegis of Department of Drinking Water Supply (DDWS) and Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA). The campaign will continue till October 2. The theme of SHS-2023 is 'Garbage Free India' with focus on visual cleanliness and welfare of Safai Mitras.

Odisha conducted the state level launch of SHS 2023 September 15 in which CDOs of all 314 districts and BDOs of all 314 blocks participated along with their district and block teams.

A state-level planning and co-ordination meeting was convened under the chairpersonship of the Chief Secretary to plan the SHS activities. The Panchayati Raj & Drinking Water Department (PR&DW) which is the nodal department for Swachh Bharat Mission Gramin SBM-G issued necessary guidelines on the celebration of SHS-2023 campaign.

Landslides hit train services

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 27: Train services were between Manabar and Jarati stations in Kothavalasa-Kirandul (KK) line of East Coast Railway (ECoR) affected due to landslides.

The services of the trains that were affected include 18107 Rourkela-Jagadulpur Express that will run up to Koraput and remain cancelled from Koraput to Jagadulpur September 27 and 28. Similarly, 18108 Jagadulpur-Rourkela Express will originate from Koraput and remain cancelled from Jagadulpur to Koraput September 28 and 29.

Likewise, 18447 Bhubaneswar-Jagadulpur Hirakhand Express will run up to Koraput and remain cancelled from Koraput to Jagadulpur September 27 and 28.

Moreover, 18448 Jagadulpur-Bhubaneswar Hirakhand Express will originate from Koraput and remain cancelled from Jagadulpur to Koraput September 28 and 29. Further, 08552 Kirandul-Visakhapatnam

Special will originate from Araku instead of Kirandul and will remain cancelled from Kirandul to Araku September 28 and 29.

The ECoR sources said 08551 Visakhapatnam-Kirandul Special from Visakhapatnam will run up to Araku and remain cancelled from Araku to Kirandul September 28 and 29.

Moreover, 18005 Howrah-Jagadulpur Samaleswari Express from Howrah will run up to Titilagarh and remain cancelled from Titilagarh to Jagadulpur September 27 and 28. Similarly, 18006 Jagadulpur-Howrah Samaleswari Express from Jagadulpur will originate from Titilagarh instead of Jagadulpur September 28 and 29. 18514 Visakhapatnam-Kirandul Express will run up to Koraput and will remain cancelled from Koraput to Kirandul September 27 and 28.

Likewise, 18513 Kirandul-Visakhapatnam Express will originate from Koraput instead of Kirandul and remain cancelled from Kirandul to Koraput September 28 and 29.



BRAINSTORMING: Governor Ganeshi Lal speaks during the 2nd India Mining Conclave 2023 organised by ICC Odisha State Council in Bhubaneswar, Wednesday

AYUSH students stage protest, fight with cops

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, Sept 27: Thousands of AYUSH students, who have been agitating at Lower PMG here for several days demanding regular appointment of Ayurvedic and Homoeopathic doctors, Wednesday had a scuffle with police when they tried to break the barricade and enter the Assembly which is currently in session.

The agitating students of AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy) alleged that no new appointments were made

during the last 21 years. After clearing NEET and completing their medical degree, thousands of AYUSH doctors are waiting for government recruitments for the last several years, but in vain.

Though the government has appointed over 1,000 new Allopathic doctors, no Ayurvedic or Homoeopathic doctors have been appointed, the protestors claimed.

They also demanded that necessary steps be taken to open at least 500 government Homoeopathic and Ayurvedic dispensaries and 30 district AYUSH hospitals this year to

The protestors said that the AYUSH students will intensify the protests if their demands are not met at the earliest

propagate the usefulness of the medicine and create new posts for Ayurveda and Homoeopathy graduates. The protestors said that the AYUSH students will intensify the protests if their demands are not met at the earliest.

"We will intensify our agitation and continue it until our demands are met," said a protester.

Earlier, the All Odisha Ayush Doctors' Association (AOADA), an association of AYUSH doctors working under National Health Mission (NHM), had gone for a non-cooperation agitation urging the Chief Minister to regularise their services for the betterment of rural health management system and the society as a whole.

Around 1,150 AYUSH doctors, who have been working in co-located CHC/PHCs of Odisha on contractual basis for the last 16 years, had earlier written to the Chief Minister demanding regularisation of their services.



River interlinking projects may aggravate water stress

India's ambitious river interlinking projects, designed to address the country's increasing droughts and floods, may inadvertently worsen water stress and disrupt monsoon patterns, according to a study published in the journal Nature.

The research used several techniques, including regional climate models and reanalysis data, to shed light on the intricate web of hydro-meteorological consequences that could be unleashed by these massive infrastructure projects.

The researchers, including those from Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay and Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM), Pune incorporated atmospheric variables, accounting for common drivers such as the El Nino-Southern Oscillation (ENSO). The analysis focused specifically on the summer monsoon

season, a crucial period for India's water cycle and agriculture. The study revealed intricate causal pathways between river basins driven by land-atmosphere feedbacks.

These feedback loops create connections between land variables, including soil moisture, and influence the moisture content of the air, temperature, and precipitation in different basins.

Certain river basins were identified as "donor basins" with more outgoing links, while others were labeled "recipient basins" with a higher number of incoming links.

This classification depends on the net transfer of moisture through atmospheric pathways, indicating that some basins contribute moisture, while others receive it.

The study noted both positive and negative land-atmosphere feedbacks between river basins.



The research suggests that inter-basin water transfer, as proposed in river interlinking projects, could perturb the land-atmosphere interactions, affecting the moisture content of the air and wind patterns

One of the most concerning outcomes highlighted by the research is the potential reduction of mean rainfall in September by up to 12% in already water-stressed regions of India due to increased irrigation from transferred water

For instance, soil moisture from one basin could either reduce or amplify soil moisture in another basin, depending on the nature of the feedback.

The research suggests that

inter-basin water transfer, as proposed in river interlinking projects, could perturb the land-atmosphere interactions, affecting the moisture content of the air and wind patterns. These

perturbations could lead to changes in rainfall patterns across the country.

"The findings of this study carry significant implications for India's massive river interlinking projects," the authors of the study wrote in their paper.

"The proposed projects involve transferring water from surplus to deficit river basins through reservoirs and canals without a comprehensive understanding of the hydro-meteorological consequences," they said.

One of the most concerning outcomes highlighted by the research is the potential reduction of mean rainfall in September by up to 12 per cent in already water-stressed regions of India due to increased irrigation from transferred water; the researchers said.

This could exacerbate water stress across the country, ren-

dering the interlinking projects ineffective or even counterproductive, they said.

The team, which also included researchers from the University of Hyderabad and King Abdullah University of Science and Technology, also observed those La Nina years, which are characterised by cooler sea surface temperatures in the tropical Pacific Ocean, can lead to more severe drying compared to El Nino years, intensifying the challenges posed by interlinking projects.

In light of these findings, the researchers emphasise the need for model-guided impact assessment studies of large-scale hydrological projects, not just in India but across the globe.

Such assessments should consider the intricate land-atmosphere interactions and feedbacks that can influence water availability and climate patterns, they said.

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Farmer ends life over loan burden

Angry locals put up the body at Saradhapali Square under Gaisilet block and blocked the Loisingha-Padmapur road demanding justice and damages



Bereaved family members

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bargarh, Sept 27: Debt burden and rampant harassment for payback of loan by micro-finance recovery employees allegedly forced a farmer to commit suicide by consuming pesticide at Umrad village under Raisalpadar panchayat and Gaisilet police limits in Bargarh district, Tuesday night. The deceased was identified as Padman Bhue, 34, of the village. The matter came to the

fore after his wife Santoshini Bhue lodged a complaint at the Gaisilet police station, Wednesday. In her complaint, Santoshini alleged that her husband took the extreme step following mental agony and helplessness over loan burden and harassment by the micro-finance firm's recovery employees over repayment of loan. Police have launched an investigation into the incident. Locals put up the body at Saradhapali Square under Gaisilet block and blocked the

Loisingha-Padmapur road demanding arrest of the micro-finance employees responsible for the death, an Indira Awas house for the bereaved family and ₹5 lakh insurance claims. Officials rushed to the spot and held talks with the agitators but the villagers and the deceased's kin refused to relent and continued with their road blockade. The road blockade was learnt to be continuing when reports last came by 8pm, Wednesday. Sources said the deceased

farmer Padman had cultivated paddy on three acre of land. He had borrowed from a micro-finance company for his agricultural works, pesticides and fertilizers. The micro-finance employees visited his house at 4pm, Tuesday and asked him for immediate repayment of the loan which he had borrowed from their firm to raise his crops. Sources said they abused him using foul language when he expressed his inability citing unavailability of money and sought some more time from them. His wife who was a witness to all these developments visited her parent's house at Patrapali village to arrange money. However, when she returned home she found her husband writing in pain after consuming pesticide to end his life. Family members rescued him in critical condition and rushed him to the Bolangir headquarters hospital where he succumbed during treatment, Tuesday night.

Photocopy shop owner fined ₹25K for refusing to return ₹3 to customer

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sambalpur, Sept 27: The District Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission here has ordered a photocopy shop owner to pay a fine amounting ₹25,000 for refusing to return ₹3 to a customer, a report said Wednesday. The order issued Tuesday by the Commission read, "The OP (opposite party) is directed to refund ₹3 towards excess money received from the complainant towards photocopy (Xerox) charges and ₹25,000 as compensation towards mental agony and harassment to the complainant within 30 days from the date of order, failing which the amount will carry 9 per cent interest per annum till realisation of the amount to the complainant." Sources said Prafulla Kumar Dash, a journalist and resident of Modipara area in Sambalpur



visited a shop April 28, 2023, to obtain a photocopy of a document. Dash handed over five rupees to the shopkeeper and requested three rupees in return, as the standard rate for photocopy was ₹2 per copy. However, the shopkeeper declined to refund the excess amount and instead verbally abused Dash, added the source. According to the source, after

Dash's repeated pleading, the individual in charge of the shop eventually returned the five rupees but humiliated Dash stating that he is giving the money to a beggar. Additionally, the shopkeeper failed to provide a receipt or bill, which constitutes an unfair business practice. In accordance with the order, the shopkeeper is obligated to compensate the complainant for these aforementioned grievances. "The opposition party had not given any receipt or bill which is an unfair trade practice adopted by the OP. Further, the OP is collecting excess money per photocopy as compared to market rate. Hence, the OP is deficient in service. It is exploitation of a consumer," the order further read.

JMFC court summons Jena to appear Oct 6

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Sept 27: The Judicial Magistrate First Class (JMFC) court of Salipur Wednesday summoned senior BJD leader Pratap Jena for personal appearance October 6 to record his statement in the 2021 Mahanga double murder case. Jena is the MLA from Mahanga. While adjudging a case of 2021, the JMFC court Monday found that a prima facie case punishable for the offences under sections 302 (murder), 506 (criminal intimidation) and 120(B) (criminal conspiracy) of the Indian Penal Code exists against Jena.

BPUT, VSSUT tie up for e-evaluation

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, Sept 27: Biju Patnaik University of Technology, Odisha here signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Veer Surendra Sai University of Technology, Burla Tuesday for establishing an e-evaluation centre at VSSUT, Burla in the presence of Vice Chancellors Prof. Amiya Kumar Rath of BPUT, Odisha and Prof. Banshidhar Majhi of VSSUT, Burla. Also present on the occasion were the two registrars Nishi Poonam Minz of BPUT and Pradeep Dang of VSSUT.



These two universities shall facilitate timely publication of the semester results of all programmes. The online evaluation with the best features shall help faculty members to evaluate the answer scripts at their convenient time without hampering their

usual academic assignments. BPUT started the digital evaluation system in 2015 and established e-evaluation centres throughout Odisha. Senior officials of BPUT were present during the signing. BPUT VC Prof. Rath expressed

his happiness over the signing of the MoU. "I am happy that this has become possible. I am also confident that the faculty members will contribute with their knowledge and effort to make this digital evaluation a successful drive and the centre at VSSUT, Burla will be a big boost for the entire process of evaluation." VSSUT VC Prof. B Majhi said, "We are going to extend all our support to provide good service for the technical education in Odisha under the ambit of SD&TE department."

The court had gone through the case record, statements of complainant recorded under section 202 (postponement of issue of process) of CrPC and other available materials on record.

School students visit NIT-R



POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, Sept 27: The Central Research Facility (CRF), NIT-Rourkela organised its first educational excursion for school students. The excursion included an inspirational workshop on robotics, artificial intelligence techniques and high-end scientific equipment at CRF-NITR. Total 82 Class IX and X students of Delhi Public School, Rourkela attended the one-day workshop to learn the basic concepts of advanced machines and their mechanism. Head of CRF and coordinator of the workshop Prof. Dayal R

Parhi welcomed the students and teachers of DPS and said, "The world of science has always held an aura of fascination for young minds and thus NIT Rourkela is taking proactive steps to inculcate this interest further." Inaugurating the workshop, chief guest Prof. Chandan Kumar Sahoo (Director-in-Charge, NIT-R) in his welcome speech said, "This is an exciting initiative aimed at fostering a passion for science and new-age machines among school students. This immersive excursion will definitely be a unique and engaging educational experience for the students.

CoBRA jawan shoots self with service gun

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Sept 27: A jawan of Commando Battalion for Resolute Action (CoBRA) shot himself dead using his service revolver in Koraput Wednesday. The deceased was identified as S Dillip, who hailed from Dwarka in Gujarat, was deployed in Rajput area under Sunabeda police limits in Koraput.

According to sources, the incident took place at around 3:40am when Dillip was guarding gate No-2 of their camp at Rajput. "Dillip shot himself fatally below his chin by using his service revolver at around 3:40am," an official said. On being informed, Sunabeda police reached the spot and sent the body for autopsy. "We are probing the incident. We are yet to find out the reason behind the CoBRA jawan's suicide," said Sunabeda Inspector-in-Charge Ramani Ranjan Dalei. Notably, the Centre had raised the CoBRA in the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) to tackle the Naxal menace in several states in India, including Odisha, in 2008.

Odia youth's mural wins King Khan's appreciation



account formerly known as Twitter. Shahrulkh described Rahul as a talented artist and said the artwork is a fantastic one in his post. After Shahrulkh's tweet reply, the family members, friends and relatives of Rahul have poured praise on him. Rahul's father Shibaprasad Patra and mother Subasini Patra both are teachers. After completing engineering, Rahul started his career as a software engineer at Bangalore. However, currently he is working from home. During leisure he draws various paintings.

POST NEWS NETWORK

Papadahandi, Sept 27: Superstar Shahrulkh Khan has praised the artwork of Rahul Patra of Nuasahi village under this block in Nabarangpur district. Rahul had painted a 10x6 ft mural of Shahrulkh's look in his latest blockbuster 'Jawan' on the wall of a cashew nut mill at Pradhaniguda. He took three days time to complete the artwork painted in acrylic and shared it on social media platform YouTube. To his surprise, after seeing his post, Shahrulkh praised the artwork of Rahul and thanked him with a post on his 'X'

Shah Rukh Khan @iamsrk · 7h Thank you so much for this video Rahul... Naam toh suna hi hai. Ha ha... You are very talented my man. Fantastic artwork... Love u

ADITYA @AdiSRKian · 1d It is unbelievable how talented people are

@iamsrk @Atlee_dir @SRKUniverse @SRKCHENNAIFC @RedChilliesEnt ...

3 minors killed in freak mishap

Koraput/Narayanapatana: In a tragic road mishap, three minors were killed on the spot as the scooter they were travelling on skidded off a ghat road and fell 60 feet into the gorge near Langalbedi village under Narayanapatana police limits in Koraput district, Wednesday. According to police sources, the trio from Anas Bhadra area of Andhra Pradesh had come to Borigi area in Narayanapatna for some work on a scooter. After completing their work they were returning to Andhra Pradesh when the rider lost balance and the two-wheeler skidded off the ghat road and they fell down 60 feet into a gorge leading to their untimely death. On being informed, police reached the accident site and recovered the three bodies and brought those to Narayanapatana hospital for post mortem.

Man gets 5-year RI in POC SO case

Balasure: Special POC SO Judge Ranjan Kumar Sutar Wednesday convicted an accused for outraging the modesty of two minor girls and sentenced him to five years of Rigorous Imprisonment (RI) along with a fine of ₹2,000. The judge further ordered that in default of the fine the convict would further undergo another one-year jail term. The convict identified as Miltan Jadav of village Badakia under Chandipur police had outraged the modesty of two girls, who are siblings, after finding them alone.

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER
RURAL WORKS DIVISION, GAJAPATI, PARLAKHEMUNDI
NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING THROUGH e-Procurement
No.3826 1st Corrigendum to Tender Call Notice Dtd.26.09.2023
Identification No. Online Tender 06/GJP/2023-24 T.O. Letter No.3518,Dtd.08.09.2023
No.O-1130: The tender for the works invited vide Tender Identification No. Online Tender 06/GJP/2023-24 is hereby modified as follows due to unavoidable circumstances. The modification dates are as below:

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	No. of Works	Availability of Tender online for bidding		Date & Time of Opening of Tender
			From	To	
1	2	3	4	5	6
Superintending Engineer, Rural Works Division, Gajapati	Online Tender 06/GJP/2023-24	2 (Two) Nos. of Building works	04.10.2023 from 10.00 A.M.	11.10.2023 upto 5.30 PM	12.10.2023 at 11.30 AM

All other contents will remain unchanged.
OIPR-25158/11/0011/2324

EAST COAST RAILWAY
E-AUCTION OF PARKING STANDS
Station & Locations : (1) SAKHIGOPAL-2 Wheeler (Station building side), (2) CUTTACK-MIX (2-cum-4 Wheeler) (Near gate-01)
Auction Start Date & Time: 07.10.2023 at 1100 hrs. (for sl. no. 1 & 2).
Auction End Date & Time: 07.10.2023 at 1130 hrs. (for sl. no. 1) & at 1140 hrs. (for sl. no. 2).
Note: Prospective bidders are advised to visit the https://www.ireps.gov.in and check the upcoming e-auctions leasing tab to get all required information regarding this e-auction.
Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager/ PR-617/O/23-24 Khurda Road

EAST COAST RAILWAY
Tender No.: 14-KUR-TRD-OT-2023-24
Name of the Work : EXECUTION OF OHE MODIFICATION WORK IN CONNECTION WITH PROVISION OF 12 MTR. WIDE FOOT OVER BRIDGE AT BRAHMAMPUR, BHADRAK, JAJPUR KEONJHAR ROAD AND KHURDA ROAD STATIONS UNDER AMRIT BHARAT STATION SCHEME.
Advised Value : ₹ 98,75,005.40, EMD: ₹ 1,97,500/-, Period of Completion: 180 days.
Bidding start date : 29.09.2023, Tender closing date & time : at 1300 hrs. of 13.10.2023.
Manual offers are not allowed against this tender and any such manual offer received shall be ignored.
Complete details & tender documents will be available at website www.ireps.gov.in
Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer (TRD), PR-613/O/23-24 Khurda Road

EAST COAST RAILWAY
Tender Notice No. 39/ET/SP/ENG/2023-24 Date : 22.09.2023
e-Tender No. 21-eT-DENW-SBP-23
Name of work: RAISING OF HIGH LEVEL PLATFORM AT BAGBAHRA (BGBR) (PLATFORM 'A'), PLATFORM SURFACING WORKS AT BAGBAHRA (BGBR) (PLATFORM-2), NAWAPARA ROAD (NPD), LAKHNA (LKN) & TUREKLA ROAD (TRK) AND IMPROVEMENT WORKS FOR PLATFORM LIKE BOUNDARY WALL, DRAIN ETC. AT MAHASAMUND (MSMD), KHARIAR ROAD (KRAR), HARISHANKER ROAD (HSK) & KANTABANJI (KBJ) STATIONS IN LAKHOLI-TITLAGARH SECTION OVER SAMBALPUR DIVISION.
Approx. cost of the works ₹ 8,86,24,080/-, Bid Security : ₹ 5,93,200/-
Completion period : 12 (Twelve) months
Tender closing Date and Time : At 1500 hrs. on 17.10.2023.
No manual offers sent by post/courier/Fax in person shall be accepted against such e-tenders.
Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-tender is available in website : http://www.ireps.gov.in
Note : The prospective tenderers are advised to visit the website 15 (Fifteen) days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes/corrigendum issued for this tender.
Divisional Railway Manager (Engg), PR-618/O/23-24 Sambalpur

राष्ट्रीय डिजाइन संस्थान
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF DESIGN
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Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India.
Paldi, Ahmedabad - 380 007.
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Recruitment of various positions at NID Ahmedabad Campus
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3) Senior Assistant for Academic Office, Ahmedabad Campus
For details on the post, eligible criteria, job description, how to apply, online application form etc. visit www.nid.edu/careers.
Last date of submission of online application is 27th October 2023 (up to 05:00 p.m. IST).
Any modification, addendum, etc. will be posted on the above referred website only. CBC 05216/12/0004/2324

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (AGRI), KANDHAMAL DIVISION, PHULBANI
Email Id: eeagrilkandhamal@gmail.com
Govt. of Odisha "e" Procurement Notice
Bid Identification No.: E.E (A)- KANDHAMAL Division -04/2023-24
No.L-104: The Executive Engineer (Agril.), Kandhamal Division, Phulbani, Odisha on behalf of Governor of Odisha invites Percentage Rate bids in Single cover system for the works in ONLINE MODE only.
1. Estimated Cost: Ranging from Rs.8,31,488/- to Rs.8,33,522/- (Excluding GST)
2. Bid Cost: Rs.4000/Mentioned in Column - 04
3. Period of completion: Mentioned against each work. (Column - 06)
4. No. of works (Tender): 15
5. Class of Contractor : C & D Mentioned in Column - 05
6. Date & Time of availability of bid document in the portal: Dt.04.10.2023 at 10.00 AM upto 5.30 PM of Dt. 12.10.2023
7. Last date / Time for receipt of bids in the portal : 12.10.2023 upto 5.30 PM
8. Date of submission of original documents: Dt.05.10.2023 at 10.30 AM to Dt. 17.10.2023 upto 5.30 PM. (working days only)
9. Date & time of opening of online bids : 18.10.2023 at 12.00 P.M. onwards
10. Name and address of the officer inviting bid : The Executive Engineer (Agril.), Kandhamal Division, Phulbani, Odisha
Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal http://tendersodisha.gov.in
A. All the volumes / documents shall be uploaded in the portal by the Procurement Officer Administrator and published by Procurement Officer Publisher (Officer Inviting Tender)
B. The Tender documents published by the Tender Inviting Officer (Procurement Officer Publisher) in the website 'http://tendersodisha.gov.in' will appear in the Latest.
C. The Bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the website 'http://tendersodisha.gov.in'. Any addendum / corrigendum / cancellation of tender can also be seen in the said website.
Sr./ Executive Engineer (Agril.)
Kandhamal Division, Phulbani
OIPR-01468/11/0007/2324

एनएचपीसी NHP Limited
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FOCUS DIPLOMACY

EAST OUTREACH



India's proactive Act East policy is a net positive for the US' Indo-Pacific strategy aimed at countering China

Earlier this month, the diplomatic bustle at the national level was focused on G20 Summit. However, in addition to that, the Prime Minister also focused on India's Look East policy and participated at ASEAN and East Asia Summit in Indonesia, focusing on ways to counter China's regional dominance. The G20 Summit was in fact a global brand and image making exercise for the Centre. However, Prime Minister Modi as a leader of the Global South and keeping in mind India's strategic and regional priorities, in spite of his heavy commitment to G20 Summit, undertook a whirlwind tour of Jakarta.

This shows the priorities of the Centre at both the regional and global level. Let's take a look at the reasons for Modi to fly to Jakarta to participate at these two events. In fact, India is evolving into a strategic actor in Southeast Asia. It has promoted ties - diplomatic, trade, defence and people to people, with almost all countries in the region from Vietnam, to Philippines to Indonesia, Malaysia, Cambodia, Laos, Brunei, Thailand, Singapore, Japan and South Korea.

Over the years, India has signed an arms deal with Vietnam, stood with Philippines over China on sovereignty disputes in the South China Sea, and has increased defence cooperation with Indonesia. The manner it has managed the balance-of-power politics in the region is a classic model of diplomacy. Basically, China's aggressive posture in and around the South China Sea is driving India and its partners in the region together. Though these bilateral and multilateral relationships have not transformed into any formal alliances, the trend is clear: India's regional forays will increasingly complement the US' Indo-Pacific strategy to counter China in coming years.

India initiated its Look East policy in 1991, which was transformed into an Act East policy in 2014, when India initiated a proactive engagement policy in the region to prevent it from falling a prey to the Chinese domination. Under Prime Minister Modi, India in recent years has steadily strengthened key partnerships across Southeast Asia, particularly with countries along the maritime rim of the Indo-Pacific. These moves are clearly designed to cooperate with Southeast Asian partners, who besides supporting the international rules-based international order insist on regional norms of behaviour in the face of rising Chinese assertiveness in the region.

Currently, India and Vietnam enjoy a "comprehensive strategic partnership" after Modi visited Vietnam in 2016. The Philippines, has also expanded security partnership with India. For first time, India recognised the legitimacy of the 2016 arbitration ruling by the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague in favour of Philippine sovereignty claims over China in the South China Sea.

India has also remained committed to evolve a security partnership with Indonesia. Indo-Indonesian defence relations

got a boost in 2018, when Modi visited Jakarta and elevated relations to a comprehensive strategic partnership. Indonesia may also follow in the footsteps of the Philippines by purchasing BrahMos missiles.

India is also cooperating with Malaysia, on the basis of an enhanced strategic partnership signed in 2015. Although Kuala Lumpur's decision earlier this year to cancel a deal to purchase Indian-made Tejas fighter aircraft may have dampened the partnership somewhat, the intent clearly remains to strengthen ties in line with upholding the mutual goal of maintaining the rules-based international order in the region.

India's strategic partnerships with Singapore and Thailand are also close and longstanding. Singapore regularly engages in bilateral exercises, high-level dialogues, visits, and professional training with India. Modi visited Singapore twice in 2018, and on the first trip, he signed 35 memoranda of understanding agreements on a range of security and economic issues.

In 2022, India and Thailand renewed their partnership and pledged to elevate defence engagements further, to include cybersecurity. Perhaps of greater importance is the economic side

of their relationship. In a nod to New Delhi's original Look East policy, Bangkok implemented its own Look West policy in 1997, in part to tap into the enormous Indian market. Moreover, Thailand and India are partnering with Myanmar to construct the India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway that will significantly upgrade transport links between Southeast Asia and South Asia. Once the highway is completed, Modi and his government also want to add connections to Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam - another clear rival to China's BRI.

India further has good relations with both Cambodia and Laos. In May, Cambodian King Norodom Sihamoni visited India, and the two sides reaffirmed "the strong civilisational bond" between the two nations. Phnom Penh and New Delhi cooperate on a range of socioeconomic projects, de-mining, water conservation, and heritage protection. India's engagement with Laos is less robust, but nevertheless, New Delhi and Vientiane are likely discussing ways to boost economic ties. This is all the more remarkable as both Phnom Penh and Vientiane are widely considered to be firmly in China's camp.

Overall, India's proactive Act East policy is also a net positive for the US' Indo-Pacific strategy aimed at countering China. To provide a further impetus to New Delhi to do even more, the US should also help India in its infrastructure and developmental projects, as well as trade deals, which could help lessen Beijing's economic dominance of Southeast Asia. However, New Delhi's policy of practical outreach to Southeast Asia - even if it were sustained only at current levels - would help further undermine Beijing.

The writer is a Delhi-based senior political and international affairs commentator. @IANS



Asad Mirza

INDIA INITIATED ITS LOOK EAST POLICY IN 1991, WHICH WAS TRANSFORMED INTO AN ACT EAST POLICY IN 2014



Joshua Castellino

Today, every country in the world faces water-related challenges, underscoring our collective vulnerability as the planet's most vital natural resource is increasingly threatened

A recent petition proposed by prominent water-rights activist Rajendra Singh offers a potential path forward. Singh, chairman of the People's World Commission on Drought and Flood, outlines ten critical transformations required to restore water harmony. By transcending anthropocentrism, his proposed pledge aims to rejuvenate the global water cycle and harness its immense power to improve the well-being of all living things.

At the heart of Singh's pledge lies the bedrock principle of climate-oriented thinking: a complete system overhaul. This perspective views humanity as part of a much larger whole that encompasses the diverse species with which we share our planet. Instead of commodifying natural resources for profit and relentless consumption, this ethos encourages people to be mindful of the potential consequences of their actions and commit to repairing any damage they cause.

This raises three fundamental questions. First, what actions are required to address the global water crisis? Second, which key stakeholders must step up? Third, how can we ensure that these stakeholders implement vital systemic changes?

For too long, policymakers have emphasised minor changes in household consumption habits, thereby unfairly shifting the burden to families and communities whose contributions to the water crisis have been negligible. The root causes of water scarcity are large-scale industrial production, lack of attention to quality, and the failure to address rampant pollution. At the macro level, extractive industries and an economic system centered on profit maximisation drive the increase in global temperatures, further disrupting water cycles.

While reducing household consumption is important, it pales in comparison to the potential impact of forcing corporations to adopt sustainable practices. But the increasingly symbiotic relationship between politics and big-business interests complicates this task. Instead of pursuing systemic changes, the world's most powerful governments have opted for incremental reforms to create the appearance of commitment. The recent UN Water Conference underscored the urgency of today's crisis. If governments are unwilling or unable to pursue the necessary structural reforms, they must be replaced by political leaders with the vision and determination to overhaul the systems that jeopardise the natural resource sustaining all life on Earth.

Growing up in India, I observed the country's relentless drive to catch up with wealthier economies. By investing in higher education, building roads and hospitals, and boosting economic growth through consumption and increased production, the thinking went, India could become richer and eliminate poverty. The mainstream education system frequently championed the commodification of nature, anthropocentric dominance, and extractivism. It revered the architects of our flawed economic system, treating their words as sacrosanct.

Indigenous communities have long warned that such "progress" was misguided, but they were dismissed as hidebound and out of touch with reality. As climate change disrupts water and food systems around the world, many now recognise the prescience of these warnings. Given that we might be the last generation capable of mitigating the worst effects of the water crisis, it is our responsibility to hold accountable those who are exploiting the planet for personal gain.

The writer is Professor of International and Comparative Law at the University of Derby. @PROJECT SYNDICATE

SPECTRUM SUSTAINABILITY

Getting closer to the goal



Sujit Kumar Mishra & Pratyusna Patnaik

INADEQUATE SUPPLY OF WATER, LACK OF PROPER SANITARY FACILITIES AND LACK OF GOOD PUBLIC HEALTH SEVERELY AFFECT THE LOWER INCOME CATEGORY IN TERMS OF MONETARY BURDEN FOR ILLNESS

A robust health goal requires access to clean fuel, electricity, clean drinking water, and sanitation in one's daily life. The recently released data of the National Family Health Survey (NFHS) - 5 (2019-21) examined the state of Odisha in comparison to the NFHS-4 (2015-16) on these parameters in line with achieving a sound health environment in Odisha.

According to NFHS-5, majority of the households have inadequate access to clean fuel for cooking in Odisha. Only 34.7% of households in the state cook with clean fuel. Rural areas have a lower availability (26.1%), compared to urban areas (76.9%). Around 64.9% of households of which 73.7% specifically in rural areas in Odisha use solid fuel, such as wood, charcoal, straw, grass, agricultural crop waste, and dung cakes for cooking.

Inadequate access to clean fuel for cooking is spread across all the districts. The percentage of households with clean cooking fuel in each district (excluding Khurda and Ganjam) is lower than the national average of 58.6%. Mayurbhanj, Deogarh, Nabarangpur, Malkangiri, Bhadrak, Nuapada, Angul and Kandhamal have less than 25% of households using clean fuel for cooking. Furthermore, ubiq-

uitous access to electricity and living standards are positively correlated. According to the survey report of NFHS-5, Odisha ranks high in this category, with 97% (96.6% in rural areas) of dwellings electrified.

Clean drinking water and sanitation are two critical indicators of good public health. Inadequate supply of water, lack of proper sanitary facilities and lack of good public health severely affect the lower income category in terms of monetary burden for illness. According to NFHS-5, the overall status of households with access to improved drinking-water sources appears to be substantially better in Odisha (91.1%). However, district-level data of improved drinking water sources depict 10 districts having low coverage than the state average. Out of the 10 districts, Dhenkanal, Kandhamal, Angul and Gajapati are the low performing districts. This leads to households spending more time in fetching water. The report shows that around 5.1% of households spend more than 30 minutes in fetching water which increases to approximately 4 to 5 hours during summer as per our research. Overall, only 17.4% of households have access to piped water in dwelling/yard/plot. In urban areas the access to piped

water is high (50.4%) in comparison to rural areas (10.7%). Moreover, around 62.6% of households do not treat the drinking water.

Things are bleak on the sanitation front as well. Around 34% of households in Odisha do not have latrine. Open defecation is more common among rural households (37%) than urban areas (18.5%). The situation is more dismal in mining areas. Many socio-cultural factors force people, specifically women to practise open defecation in rural areas. Women in such areas face severe situations as they get abused by drivers who operate mining trucks. Several cases of molestation, rape and even murder have been reported and many go unreported from these areas.

Only 60.5% of households (which is an increase from 30% of NFHS-4) have access to improved sanitation facilities such as connections to piped sewers, flushing systems and septic pits. Districts with under 50% of households having improved sanitation facilities are Koraput, Malkangiri, Nabarangpur, Jajpur and Keonjhar. The percentage of households with improved sanitation facilities among all 30 districts (except Khurda, Ganjam and Balasore) is below the national average of 70.2%.

The analysis of the data on standard of living over a period of five years (2015-16 to 2019-21) in the recently released report of Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) by the NITI Aayog mentions that in comparison to NFHS-4, there has been a marked improvement in the parameters of cooking fuel, sanitation, drinking water and electricity under the spectrum of standard of living dimension in NFHS-5 for Odisha. Besides, according to the reports of SDG India Index (2020-21), Odisha has scored 61 and ranks among the performer states.

However, this performance needs to be seen holistically. Large regional disparity is noticeable in terms of performance on the same indicators, especially in under-developed districts. These districts require evidence-based policy formulation and special attention from the state government for enhanced public health and accelerate the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals.

Sujit Kumar Mishra is Professor at Council for Social Development, Hyderabad. Pratyusna Patnaik is Assistant Professor at National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Hyderabad.

WISDOM CORNER

- I felt in need of a great pilgrimage, so I sat still for three days and God came to me.** KABIR
- Our anxiety does not come from thinking about the future, but from wanting to control it.** KAHLIL GIBRAN
- Be realistic: plan for a miracle.** OSHO

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

- 1961:** A coup in Damascus led to the dissolution of the United Arab Republic, which was a short-lived union between Syria and Egypt. The United Arab Republic was established on 1 February 1958 as the first step towards a larger pan-Arab state.
- 2008:** SpaceX successfully launched Falcon 1, becoming the first privately owned company to send a liquid-fueled rocket into orbit. Falcon 1 was a small-lift launch vehicle that was operated the US aerospace manufacturer.

AIADMK drama

Sir, The announcement of severance of ties with the NDA (read the BJP) by the AIADMK appears to be a ploy enacted by both the parties. Knowing fully well that if the AIADMK-BJP alliance continued in Tamil Nadu, they will not be able to win even a single seat in the ensuing parliamentary elections in 2024, the BJP has forced the AIADMK to take such a quixotic decision just to hoodwink their party cadres, particularly the minorities and the Dalits who vehemently oppose the BJP. The reason attributed for the separation by the AIADMK that they were unable to digest the diatribes of BJP leader K Annamalai against tall Dravidian leaders like Periyar and Anna and their former party supremo Jayalalithaa sounds hollow. If it was the real reason, they should have come out of the alliance immediately after Annamalai spoke ill of Jayalalithaa first and would not have waited so long. Instead, they tried all tricks up their sleeves to retain the alliance by sending emissaries to Delhi and appease the BJP leaders.

Tharcus S. Fernando, CHENNAI

Health ATM revolution

Sir, The partnership between the HEAL Foundation and India Health Link (IHL) in northern India to introduce Health ATMs for preventive health screenings is a noteworthy accomplishment. This is making healthcare easier to get and cheaper, and more and more people in the country are noticing and liking it. These ATMs are automated machines that screen vital parameters like pulse, blood pressure, temperature, and more without the need for paramedic assistance. These Health ATMs were also featured at the G20 Health Working Group meeting held in Goa. These Health ATMs address the issue of limited healthcare access in rural areas. They provide easily accessible medical services and allow patients to connect with doctors virtually. Initially automated, they now have local personnel, often community health workers, to assist rural patients. The integration of cloud-connected technology facilitates telemedicine and securely stores medical records as Electronic Health Records (EHR), effectively bridging the healthcare divide in rural India.

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

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

No cheer for Agra hospitality industry

Apart from tourism organisations' ritualistic welcome of tourists at the railway stations and hotels, there was little else to commemorate World Tourism Day and no sign of activity to make the Taj City anymore tourist-friendly

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Agra, Sept 27: Frustrated and sore with the continued neglect of Agra by the state and central governments, the World Tourism Day celebrations in the Taj City brought little cheer or hope for buoyancy, even as a new tourist season is about to begin.

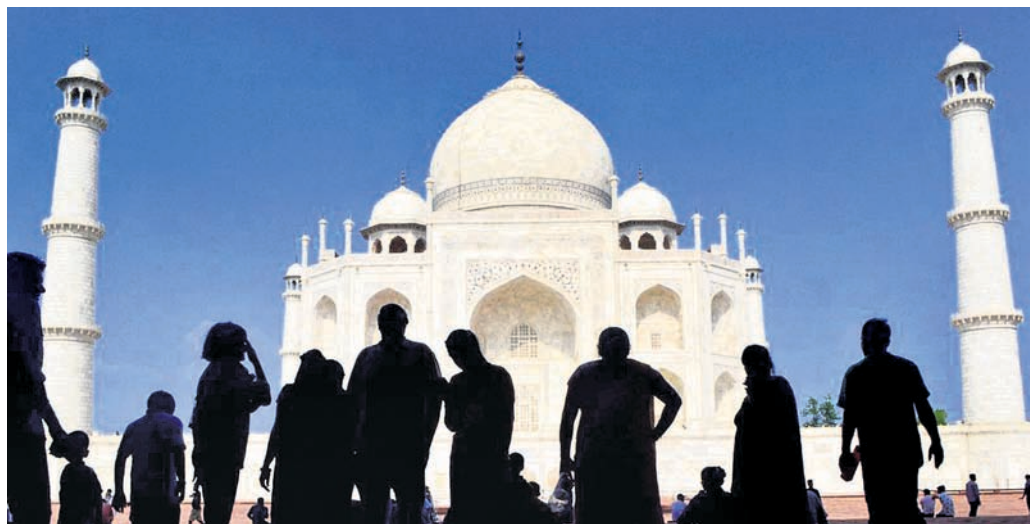
Half a dozen local WhatsApp groups were full of gloomy posts as tourism industry leaders expressed deep concern over the cold apathy of the state government to promote Agra as the country's number one destination.

Senior tourism industry leaders said, "There was nothing much to look forward to as a number of our demands that could spur the growth in this vital sector have been rejected or cold-storaged."

The travel trade laments the lack of air connectivity to Agra. "Smaller cities have regular flights but not India's tourist destination number one," says Anil Sharma, spearheading a movement for an international airport at Agra, for the past several years.

The hotel industry being affected not only by the rising burden of a variety of taxes but also by the falling graph of visitors staying overnight in Agra is a major cause for concern. The Supreme Court is seized of crucial issues like declaring Agra a heritage city and imposing restrictions on industrial development. "This has created an uncertainty, as hotels can neither expand nor open new units in the city because of the ad hoc moratorium on industries," says Agra Development Foundation secretary KC Jain.

"The city's growth is stunted. This is because of the total lack of futuristic planning. There is



neither the will nor any major policy push being contemplated by the state government, which had made many promises at the time of the elections. The UP tourism department looks hardly prepared to create the kind of ambiance required to take advantage of the boom in the industry after the recent G20 summit, Anil Sharma, president of the Agra Civil Society said.

Tourism organisations in Agra Wednesday organised the ritualistic welcome of tourists at the railway stations and at different hotels. But there was little else to commemorate the day and no sign of activity to make the city anymore tourist-friendly.

Agra is one of India's top tourist destinations. Yet, it lacks basic infrastructure, and thus cannot take advantage of the interest generated in India and

LEADERS IN THE TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY IN THE CITY SAID THAT THERE WAS A LACK OF VISION AND OF WILL, IN THE POLITICAL LEADERSHIP OF THE STATE

EVEN WITH THREE WORLD HERITAGE MONUMENTS, AGRA HAS NOT BEEN ABLE TO SIGNIFICANTLY INCREASE THE NUMBER OF VISITORS DUE TO LACK OF BASIC INFRASTRUCTURE

its tourist attractions, Sharma added. "The Mayawati government did nothing, and we had great hopes from the young Akhilesh Yadav, while the Yogi Adityanath government seems more interested in Mathura and Vrindavan, Ayodhya and Varanasi to appease Hindu sentiments than focus on Agra, the city of many glorious Mughal monuments," hotelier Sandip Arora said.

"We thought the scenario would change for the better, we expected some action on our long list of demands. So far, however, there is nothing to indicate that the state government is treating Agra as a priority," Rakesh Chauhan, hotel industry captain said.

Leaders in the tourism and

hospitality industry in the city said that there was a lack of vision and of will, in the political leadership of the state. Even with three world heritage monuments, Agra has not been able to significantly increase the number of visitors; and those who visit often make brief trips. Neither the state nor the Central government seems interested in promoting Agra. The Yamuna Expressway has made it easier for tourists to return the same day to Delhi. The hotel industry in Agra has little to look forward to in the next tourist season, Rakesh Chauhan, president of the Agra Hotels and Restaurants Association said.

Industry leader Rajiv Gupta said "The tourism sector needs big initiatives. The outlook for the coming season is bleak, with the general slowdown. The situation now is no different from 1982, when we had presented a memorandum to the Central government."

"Our demand for a decent civil airport in Agra has been cold-storaged. Smaller cities like

Mysore had an airport and were more easily accessible to tourists," he added.

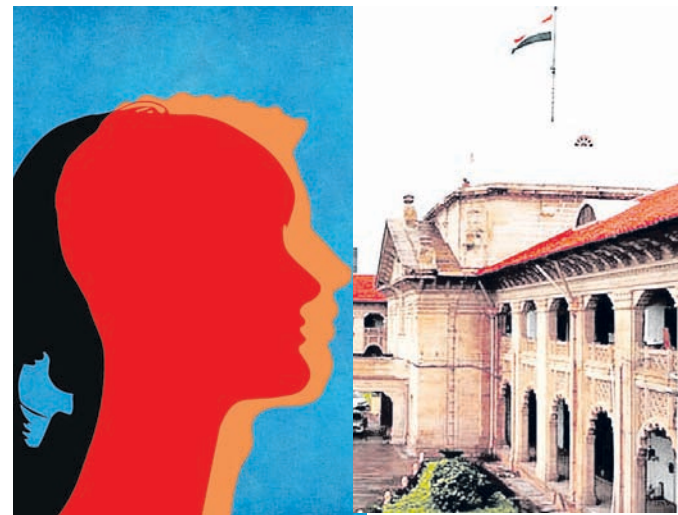
The UP tourism department has still to evolve a tourism policy for the state. Agra gets a lot of money from various agencies, but where it goes no one knows. Why is there no proper mechanism for monitoring? Tourism bodies have hardly done anything to promote lesser-known monuments in and around Agra. The result is that most tourists visit the Taj Mahal and return the same evening. We need a comprehensive action plan for tourism development for the whole Braj region that includes Mathura, Vrindavan, Bateshwar, and several important sites of religious importance," Tourist guide Ved Gautam said.

The annual World Tourism Day was observed by several organisations in the city but most people gave it a miss. A sense of detachment and cold apathy has been visible as conservationists and the industrial lobby fight out a long-drawn battle in various forums, including the apex court.

Even with three world heritage monuments and half a dozen other architectural marvels, the locals feel no sense of pride in their heritage which draws millions of visitors from all corners of the world around the year.

The 'disconnect' between local aspirations and heritage or history, is causing concern as conservation efforts need emotional involvement of the citizens of the city, said heritage conservationist Devashish Bhattacharya. "It is a sad fact that Agra is not tourism-friendly and the locals see tourism as a hurdle in their march towards material prosperity," he adds.

Allahabad HC asks UP govt to decide on sex change issue by Oct 18



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Prayagraj, Sept 27: The Allahabad High Court has expressed dissatisfaction over the Uttar Pradesh government not framing guidelines as per the 2014 Supreme Court judgment that recognised transgender individuals as the 'third gender' and accorded them the right to self-identify as male, female, or third gender.

Justice Ajit Singh's observations came during the hearing of a writ petition submitted by an unmarried woman constable in the Uttar Pradesh Police, seeking permission for sex reassignment surgery (SRS).

The petitioner claimed to be experiencing gender dysphoria and expressed a desire for SRS to align her physical appearance with her true male identity.

The state government counsel sought three months' time to decide the application of the constable seeking SRS.

The court declined the re-

quest and directed, "In the circumstances, it is hereby directed that by the next date fixed (October 18) appropriate decision shall be taken on the pending application of the petitioner by the competent authority (state DGP)."

"The court further records its dissatisfaction over the affairs at the level of state government for non-compliance of the Supreme Court judgment that was delivered April 15, 2014, whereas, the Central government has acted immediately upon the same by framing Act but the state has remained a passive spectator and has not taken any decision, it appears, till date."

"The manner in which the period of three months has been requested for seeking further time shows that the state is again adopting a very casual approach. No reason has been assigned as to why the state wants three months' time to file an affidavit as was requested by this court August 18."

ALERT FROM INTERPOL ON SUICIDE SEARCH ONLINE HELPS SAVE A LIFE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Sept 27: The Mumbai police traced a 28-year-old man here and saved him from ending his life following an alert from the Interpol that he was searching about the 'best way to commit suicide' on Google, an official said Wednesday.

The man, who hails from Rajasthan, was rescued Tuesday from suburban Malvani after the police traced his location on the basis of his mobile number shared by the Interpol, he said.

The International Criminal Police Organisation, commonly known as Interpol, is an international organisation that facilitates worldwide police cooperation and crime control.

The rescue operation was conducted by the Unit-11 of the

Interpol facilitates worldwide police cooperation and crime control

Mumbai Police's crime branch based on the information given by the Interpol Tuesday afternoon, the police official said.

The victim, a resident of Malvani in Malad west is a native of Rajasthan. During the probe, the police found that he was under pressure as he was not able to secure the release of his mother from jail in Mumbai since her arrest in a criminal case two years ago, he said.

The man earlier stayed in Mira Road locality (in neighbouring Thane district) with his relatives before shifting to Malvani, a western suburb, he said. He has

been jobless since the last six months. Since he was not able to secure the release of his mother from a jail, he was under depression.

As the thoughts of ending life came to his mind, he started an online search to find ways to commit suicide, the official said. He searched 'Suicide best way' on Google several times, which caught the attention of Interpol officials, who sent an email about it to the Mumbai Police along with his mobile phone number, he said.

On the basis of that information, the crime branch found that the user of the mobile phone was in Malvani, he added. Accordingly, the police rushed to the place. The victim was then taken into custody and counselled, he said.

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Lucknow, Sept 27: Postal services across the country may be dying a slow death but one Ganesh Pandal in Lucknow -- known as 'Manautiyon Ka Raja' -- is getting sacks of letters every day.

Devotees write letters to the Lord every day, listing their wishes -- from a job to good results in examinations, marriage and trips abroad -- in a letter and leaving it at the designated counter.

It is believed that if one writes a letter to Lord Ganesh and offers it to him, his or her wish is bound to be fulfilled.

"I have been coming here since the past seven years and each year, my wish has been fulfilled. My father was seriously ill and I asked for his recovery and today, he is hale and hearty, I got my job and my life



partner because of the blessings from the Lord here. I come here every year to write a letter -- even if it is a thanksgiving letter," says Rajeshwar Sharma, a young software engineer.

Writing letters to Lord Ganesh to seek blessings and favours has become a tradition at the Manautiyon ke Raja pandal at Jhulelal Park.

While it is a common sight

to see devotees praying to the Lord, writing letters to him is a rare one. The tradition is believed to be inspired by Gujarat's Dhank Temple.

The devotees at the pandal are given a pen and a letter pad where they first have to write the mantra, 'Om Gan Ganpataye Namah' 108 times, and then write their wishes or grievances.

Speaking about the custom of writing letters, member of the managing committee, Bharat Bhushan said that "Om Gan Ganpataye Namah" is the favourite mantra of Lord Ganesh.

"We generally get about 60,000-65,000 letters from devotees every year. Once the puja is over, we organise bhoo-visarjan (burying the idol in soil). Along with the idol, all the letters are also buried," he said.

Mumbai Dawoodi Bohras 'gifted' swank new mosque

Rebuilt Saifee Masjid weaves in different architectural styles like Indian, Islamic and elements of classical architecture blended in a harmonious and distinctive design, two tall minarets with graceful ornamentation rise imposingly above two corners of the mosque



gured the Saifee Masjid Monday night at a formal ceremony in the presence of a large number of joyous Dawoodi Bohras.

This is the same venue where the mosque was first inaugurated by the late Syedna Taher Saifuddin (51st Syedna) in 1926, and where his son the late Syedna Mohammed Burhanuddin (52nd Syedna) regularly led prayer congregations for decades till his passing in January 2014 -- they were the father and grandfather, respectively of the present 53rd Syedna.

"The old Saifee Masjid building was constructed between 1923-1926 but had passed its utility and was dilapidated after serving the community for nearly a century. It was demolished in 2018 and another replica of the earlier mosque, with certain modern innovations, was constructed here in the past five years," said an official from the Syedna's team.

columns, beams, doors, windows and decorative grills which allow a play of light and shadows.

The inside walls are adorned with Quranic verses, ornate floral motifs and decorative patterns, presenting an overall pleasing ambience.

Designed to reduce its carbon footprints, the new mosque has a rainwater harvesting system and a sewage treatment plant to slash overall water consumption, the utility building is powered and lit entirely by solar light, while a decorative fountain and date palm trees provide natural shade in the courtyard between Saifee Masjid and the world-renowned Raudat Tahera mausoleum complex.

Besides, over 150 shops on the periphery of the Saifee Masjid and Raudat Tahera mausoleum complex have also been redeveloped as part of the ongoing Saifee Burhani Upliftment Trust (SBUT) mega-project on the 16.5 acres here.

Kicked off in 2009 by the 52nd Syedna, the SBUT aims to provide modern, spacious homes and commercial premises to over 20,000 people in and around the Bhandi Bazar areas, in what will be one of the biggest urban renewal projects for the inner city redevelopment.

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Mumbai, Sept 27: In an epochal development, the tiny Dawoodi Bohra community has got a swank and glittering, eco-friendly mosque, the biggest in the city and among the largest of the clan in the country.

The place of worship is the iconic 'Saifee Masjid', which was first built in 1923, and after a century of prayers, now redeveloped in 2023, in the heart of south Mumbai's Bhandi Bazaar area.

The community's spiritual head Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin inau-

GOVT. OF ODISHA No. O-1129
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, RURAL WORKS DIVISION-I, KEONJHAR
 Tel.: 06766-258094 (O), Mail: eerw1_kjr@yahoo.com

"e" Procurement Notice for Road Works
Identification No. Online NCB - 07/2023-24

- Name of the work : 6 Nos. Road Work
- Total Number of Work : 6 Nos.
- Estimated Cost : Rs.32.34 Lakhs to Rs.45.89 Lakhs
- Class of Contractor : C and B Class
- Period of Completion : As per Annexure of e-Procurement Notice No. 07/2023-24
- Other Details :

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/o. S.E., R.W. Division-I, Keonjhar Technical Bid
		From	To		
1 Superintending Engineer, Rural Works Division-I, Keonjhar	2 Road NCB No. 07	3 Dt.03.10.2023 at 11.00 A.M.	4 Dt.10.10.2023 upto 5.00 P.M.	5 Dt.09.10.2023 upto 5.00 P.M.	6 Dt.11.10.2023 at 11.00 A.M.

Further details can be seen from the website www.tenderorissa.gov.in.
 OIPR-25110/11/0014/2324 Sd./- Superintending Engineer, R.W. Division-I, Keonjhar

OFFICE OF THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL, BELPAHAR
 Ph:06645-356292, Fax:06645-250236, Email:municipalitybelpahar@gmail.com

"e" PROCUREMENT NOTICE
 BID REFERENCE NO.EO/BPHM/05/2023-2024
 BID IDENTIFICATION NO.2023_ORULB_94737
 TENDER CALL NOTICE NO.2435, DT.25.09.2023

No.C-1515

Bid documents consisting of specification, the schedule of quantities and the set of terms and conditions of contract and other necessary documents can be seen in the Govt. website i.e. www.tendersorissa.gov.in.

Name of the Work	Construction of Model Crematorium within Belpahar Municipality area.
No. of Works	01 Nos.
Value of Works	Rs.1,09,74,200.00
Period of Completion	06 Calendar Months
Date & Time of availability of the bid documents in the portal	From dt.27.09.2023 at 10.00 AM to dt.09.10.2023 upto 5.00 PM
Submission of original Financial documents (Bid cost & EMD) by Regd. Post/Speed Post	On or before dt.12.10.2023 upto 5.00 PM on working days.
Bids received online shall be opened on	11.00 A.M. on dt.13.10.2023
Name & Address of the Officer Inviting Bid	Executive Officer, Belpahar Municipality

Further the details can be seen from the procurement portal: www.tendersorissa.gov.in. If any addendum/corrigendum/cancellation of tender shall be publish in the above website only.
 OIPR-13024/11/0008/2324 Sd./- Executive Officer, Belpahar Municipality



South Korean Chief of Army Staff Gen. Park Jeong-hwan inspects a Guard of Honour at South Block lawns, in New Delhi



West Bengal Group-D candidates shout slogans during a protest demanding immediate recruitment, in Kolkata



US President Joe Biden joins striking United Auto Workers on the picket line, in Van Buren Township, Mich



Actors Michele Weaver and her baby daughter, left, and Lori Livingston, join demonstrators outside the Paramount Pictures Studio walking a picket line in Los Angeles



Devotees during Eid Milad-un-Nabi festival, at Ajmer Sharif Dargah



An aircraft passes the Sun after taking off from the airport in Frankfurt, Germany



An electric multiple unit (EMU) train, which climbed onto a platform at the Mathura Junction Railway Station, Uttar Pradesh



Prime Minister Narendra Modi visits Robotics Gallery at Science City, in Ahmedabad, Gujarat

national

of the day quote

In a free country, an aspect of patriotism is to follow the rules of public life. To not flout the law or take it one's hands and democratically express our grievances. But the other aspect is to share the pain of everyone in the country because they are all our own

MOHAN BHAGWAT | RSS CHIEF

The idea of sustainability and inclusivity has been reinforced by the recent G-20 leadership summit, which emphasised the key role of tourism in advancing social and economic development

ARIF MOHAMMED KHAN | KERALA GOVERNOR

I have nothing against English. It was the medium of my instruction while I was studying engineering. Many of my speeches in Parliament, too, were in that language

NITISH KUMAR | BIHAR CHIEF MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Rape survivor found injured on street

Ujjain/Indore: A 12-year-old girl, who was raped and found bleeding on a street in Madhya Pradesh's Ujjain city, was Wednesday operated upon by a team of specialist doctors, following which her condition is critical but stable, an official said. A special investigation team (SIT) has been formed to probe the matter and a suspect has been detained, said MP Home Minister Narottam Mishra amid opposition attacks on the ruling BJP over law and order in the state and massive public outrage.

Fresh SC bench to hear Naidu's plea

New Delhi: The Supreme Court Wednesday said it will not restrain the trial court from dealing with a plea seeking police custody of former Andhra Pradesh chief minister and TDP leader N Chandrababu Naidu as it announced a new bench will hear his petition for quashing the FIR in the alleged Rs 371 crore scam in the state's Skill Development Corporation October 3.

DXN to be Noida int'l airport's IATA

Noida: Noida has found a place in the international aviation map with the upcoming Jewar airport getting the three-letter code 'DXN' from the global airlines' body IATA. Officials Wednesday said the airport has received the code 'DXN' which symbolises the airport's proximity to Noida, Delhi and western Uttar Pradesh.

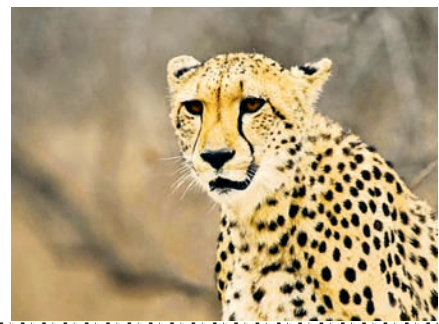


China's conduct is shameful and when the Games are over, India should protest officially and demand that China be denied the right to host any future international sporting contest until they permit every accredited athlete to enter & participate

SHASHI THAROOR | CONGRESS LEADER

INDIA MAY IMPORT CHEETAHS

India is considering importing cheetahs from northern Africa due to concerns that some of these big cats from Namibia and South Africa have developed a winter coat in Indian summer, officials said



NIA RAIDS

Several detained, weapons seized

Amid Indian investigating agencies' efforts to dismantle the Khalistani terrorist-gangsters nexus, a probe by the NIA has found that the gangsters -- to acquire sophisticated weapons, joined hands with Khalistani organisations and carried out operations -- bearing a distinct resemblance with the functioning of the 'Mumbai Underworld' to target important personalities, carry out murder and kidnapping

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 27: The National Investigation Agency Wednesday detained several suspects during a massive multi-state crackdown on a nexus of terrorists, gangsters and drug-smugglers, an official said.

The raids related to cases against the associates of Arsh Dalla, a listed terrorist, and many dreaded gangsters, a spokesperson of the federal agency said.

The respective state police force provided necessary support to the daylong raids carried out at 53 locations in Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh and the union territories of Delhi and Chandigarh, a spokesperson of the federal agency said. The official said pistols, ammunition, a large number of digital devices and incriminating material were seized during the raids aimed at dismantling the terror-gangster-smuggler nexus.

The action focused on weapon suppliers, financiers and logistics providers associated with various hardcore gangs working with drug-smugglers and terror outfits based in Pakistan, the UAE, Canada, Portugal and other countries, he said.



Police personnel outside a residential premises during a raid by National Investigation Agency (NIA) in Dehradun district, Uttarakhand

Some of the locations where raids were conducted included Amritsar, Moga, Fazilka, Ludhiana, Mohali, Faridkot, Barnala, Bhatinda, Ferozepur, SAS Naga and Jalandhar districts of Punjab; Rohtak, Sirsa, Fatehabad and Faridabad districts of Haryana; Sri Ganganagar, Jhunjhunu, Hanumangarh and Jodhpur districts of Rajasthan; Gorakhpur in Uttar Pradesh; Dehradun and Udham Singh Nagar districts of Uttarakhand, the spokesperson said.

Raids were also carried out in the southeast district of Delhi-NCR and Chandigarh, he said.

Besides Dalla, others under the NIA scanner in these raids were notorious gangsters Lawrence Bishnoi, Sukha Duneke, Harry Maur, Narendra alias Lali,

Kala Jatheri and Deepak Tinu, the spokesperson said. The raids were the seventh in the series of such crackdowns launched by the NIA following the registration of five cases since August 2022, including the two new registered against organised criminal gangs in July this year.

Investigations have revealed that these conspiracies were being hatched in jails in various states and were being executed by an organised network of foreign-based operatives.

These conspiracies included the sensational killing of Maharashtra builder Sanjay Biyani, mining trader Mehal Singh and international Kabaddi player Sandeep Nangal Ambia in Punjab last year, the spokesperson said. The official said many

THE NIA RAIDS - AND THE FOCUS ON LINKS WITH CANADA-BASED SYNDICATES AND CRIMINALS - COME AS DELHI IS LOCKED IN A MAJOR DIPLOMATIC ROW WITH OTTAWA.

LAST WEEK CANADIAN PRIME MINISTER JUSTIN TRUDEAU CLAIMED "CREDIBLE" INFORMATION CONNECTING "AGENTS OF DELHI" TO THE KILLING OF KHALISTANI TERRORIST HARDEEP SINGH NIJJAR IN JUNE

of the criminals and gangsters who were earlier leading gangs in India have fled abroad in recent years and are now carrying out terror and violence-related activities from there.

The official said the spotlight on these gangs got sharper after reports of several prisons becoming havens of the deadly nexus and hubs of gang wars which recently resulted in violence and murder inside Goindwal Jail.

The NIA had earlier conducted similar raids at over 370 locations, leading to seizure of 38 arms, including four lethal weapons, along with 1,129 rounds of ammunition.

The agency has so far frozen 87 bank accounts and attached 13 properties, besides seizing 331 digital devices, 418 documents and two vehicles.

Cong slams PM over Manipur situation



Manipur has been on the edge since ethnic clashes broke out in the state May 3, when a 'Tribal Solidarity March' was organised in the hill districts to protest against the majority Meitei community's demand for Scheduled Tribe status

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 27: The Congress Wednesday attacked Prime Minister Narendra Modi over the Manipur situation, accusing him of inaction and demanding that he sack the BJP's "incompetent" Chief Minister as a first step to control the turmoil.

The Opposition party alleged that Modi was not concerned about the people of Manipur but his image, and was busy campaigning for elections while the situation in the state "has gone from bad to worse".

In a post on X, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge alleged that the northeastern state has turned into a "battlefield" because of the BJP and violence against women and children has been "weaponised".

His remarks came after a clash broke out in the Singjamei area of Imphal Tuesday night between RAF personnel and locals protesting the killing of two students, who had been missing since July 6.

"For 147 days, people of Manipur are suffering, but PM Modi does not have time to visit the state. The horrific images of students being targeted in this violence have once again shocked the entire nation," Kharge said.

"It is now apparent that violence against women and children was weaponised in this strife. The beautiful state of Manipur has been turned into a battlefield, all because of the BJP," he said.

AICC general secretary Jairam Ramesh said on X, "The entire

Fresh clash erupts along Assam-Meghalaya border

Shillong/Diphu: One person was injured in a clash at a disputed area along the Assam-Meghalaya interstate border as locals from both sides used bows and arrows and catapults to attack each other, officials said Wednesday. The incident occurred Tuesday in the disputed place along the boundary between the Lapangap village in Meghalaya's West Jaintia Hills district and the Tapat area under the Hamren subdivision of West Karbi Anglong district of Assam. The situation was brought under control after police teams from both states visited the spot and placated the locals.

state of Manipur has been declared 'disturbed'. But the Prime Minister has to remain undisturbed."

The entire country is feeling the pain of Manipur today, he said and accused the state government of trying to "suppress" the voice of students through lathicharge and tear gas. "How much more evidence does PM Modi need? When will he order that the chief minister of Manipur should resign? The BJP government in Manipur has failed to save women and children. Neither the soldiers nor the policemen are safe there," Gogoi told reporters.

Congress leader P Chidambaram said the situation in Manipur has gone from bad to worse and no section of people has confidence in the state government or the Chief Minister.

Navy to release indigenisation roadmap soon

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 27: The Indian Navy will unveil an updated new "indigenisation roadmap" next week with a focus on specific initiatives to achieve self-reliance in acquiring various critical technologies and platforms to boost its overall military might.

The roadmap will be released at the second edition of the annual 'Swavlamban' seminar to be held October 4 and 5, Navy officials said Wednesday adding Prime Minister Narendra Modi is scheduled to attend the conclave.

At a media briefing, Vice Chief of the Naval Staff Vice Admiral Sanjay Jasjit Singh said the Navy resolved to develop 75 technologies at the Swavlamban seminar last year and the aim has been achieved.

The Vice Chief said the Navy has invested considerable time and efforts towards realising this commitment.

"Today, I can say with confidence that the Swavlamban initiative has gained critical mass, and is gathering continuous momentum. And, I am happy to inform you that the promises made last year have been fully met, and even surpassed in some cases," he said. These technologies will be showcased during the upcoming Swavlamban seminar.



FLYING HIGH: Indian Air Force helicopters rehearse over the upper lake ahead of an air show to commemorate the 91st anniversary of IAF, in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh

'CWRC order will be challenged in SC'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chamarajanagar, Sept 27: The direction of the Cauvery Water Regulation Committee to release water at the rate of 3,000 cubic feet per second (cusecs) to Tamil Nadu from Thursday to October 15 will be challenged before the Supreme Court, the Chief Minister Siddaramaiah said Wednesday. Siddaramaiah said he has spoken to the State's legal team which opined that it should be

challenged in the apex court. "We are challenging the order of the Regulation Committee before the Supreme Court. We don't have water to give," the CM told reporters at Male Mahadeshwara Hills in this district.

Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar had Tuesday expressed satisfaction over the CWRC rejecting the request of Tamil Nadu, which wanted Karnataka to release 12,000 cusecs.

Karnataka submitted before CWRC at its meeting in New



Delhi Tuesday that the shortfall in cumulative inflows to its four reservoirs in the Cauvery basin up to September 25 is 53.04 per cent. According to Karnataka offi-

cial, due to the failure of the south-west monsoon (from June to September) this year, there is no sufficient storage in the four reservoirs and the State is facing such a grave situation that it is finding it extremely difficult even to cater to the drinking water requirements let alone supplying for irrigation.

The rainfall received in Karnataka this year in the months of August and September is the lowest in the last 123 years, they said.

Kejri bungalow controversy: CBI launches probe

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 27: The CBI has registered a preliminary enquiry to look into alleged "irregularities and misconduct" by unidentified public servants of the Delhi Government in connection with the construction of a new official residence for Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, officials said Wednesday.

The ruling Aam Admi Party in Delhi rejected the allegation of any wrongdoing and accused the BJP of "using all its power to finish AAP".

The CBI has registered the PE against unidentified public servants of the Delhi government, the officials said. The preliminary enquiry is the first step to ascertain if the allegations have prima facie material to proceed with a regular FIR.

It also asked the PWD to deposit records related to payments made to the contractor AK Builders and consultant to the project in addition to several other relevant documents.

Reports had surfaced in April claiming that a total of Rs 44.78 crore against a sanctioned amount of Rs 43.70 crore was spent on "addition/alternation" of Kejriwal's government accommodation on 6, Flagstaff Road in Civil Lines. The money was spent in six tranches between September 9, 2020, to June 2022, documents showed.

JOSHIMATH DISASTER

65% HOUSES IMPACTED BY LAND SUBSIDENCE: REPORT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 27: Land subsidence has affected around 65 per cent of the houses in the pilgrimage town of Joshimath in Uttarakhand, according to a report by government agencies.

Starting January 2, a number of houses and civil structures in an area located near Joshimath-Auli road began to display major cracks due to land subsidence, prompting the relocation of 355 families.

A 35-member team conducted a "Post Disaster Needs Assessment" from April 22 to April 25 to assess the damage caused and to identify the assistance required for the long-term recovery and reconstruction of the affected sectors.

The team consisted of professionals from the National Disaster Management Authority, UN agencies, Central Building Research Institute, National Institute of Disaster Management, and other agencies.

According to the assessment report, 1,403 of the total 2,152 houses in Joshimath have been affected due to land subsidence and these need immediate attention.

"A total of 472 houses need to be reconstructed and 931 houses need to be repaired/retrofitted. It is important to note that the partially damaged houses must be retrofitted in line with 'build back better' principles in order to enhance their resilience against not just landslides, but



also other disasters," the report read.

The report said the main causes of damage to buildings in Joshimath include the use of weak building materials, insufficient reinforcement, structural

flaws, and the location of buildings on steep slopes.

It highlighted that the buildings suffered more damage, even when subjected to minor ground subsidence, due to the use of weak mud-based mortar to hold

the bricks or stones together. Some buildings do not have strong support structures like reinforced concrete (RC) or wooden bands to keep them stable. The agencies said some buildings have very long walls that aren't well supported and light roofs which cause the building to expand and contract, leading to damage when the ground moves.

They also urged the state government to completely ban new construction in the town till the end of the monsoon season and

allow relaxation only for lightweight structures after post-monsoon reassessment of ground conditions.

The report highlights that although building bylaws exist, they are not mandatory for residential buildings.

Another issue of concern identified in the report is the "lack of town planning and absence of risk-informed land use maps".

The agencies emphasised the immediate need for the development of a prospective plan with the objective of creating a safe and resilient Joshimath for the next 10-15 years.

According to local residents, land subsidence had been noticed over several years but became increasingly severe from January 2 to January 8

international



We ask you to lend your full support to an intergovernmental process to explicitly codify gender apartheid in international law

SIMA BAHOUS | EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, UN WOMEN

SUCCESSFUL MISSION

Iran claimed Wednesday that it successfully launched an imaging satellite into space, a move that could further ratchet up tensions with Western nations that fear its space technology could be used to develop nuclear weapons



of the day quote

They are such concerning allegations that we think there ought to be a full and fair investigation. Canada has said it is committed to doing that, and we believe the Indian government should cooperate with it

MATTHEW MILLER | STATE DEPARTMENT SPOKESPERSON, US

You know, one of the pleasures of dealing with China is that they never quite tell you why they do things. So you often end up trying to figure it out. And it's always, there's certain ambiguity out there,

S JAISHANKAR | EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER, INDIA

The Democratic Progressive Party's attempt to seek independence in the name of economy and trade will not succeed

ZHU FENGLIAN | SPOKESPERSON FOR TAIWAN AFFAIRS OFFICE, CHINA

SHORT TAKES

NK to expel Travis

Seoul: North Korea has decided to expel American soldier Travis King who it said has admitted to illegal intrusion into the country and was "disillusioned about unequal US society," state media KCNA said Wednesday. KCNA released the final results of an investigation into King's border crossing in July, after saying in its interim findings that he wanted refuge in North Korea or elsewhere because of maltreatment and racial discrimination within the army.

Trump in trouble

New York: A judge has ruled that Donald Trump committed fraud for years while building the real estate empire that catapulted him to fame and the White House. Judge Arthur Engoron, ruling in a civil lawsuit brought by New York Attorney General Letitia James on Tuesday, found that the former president and his company deceived banks, insurers and others by massively overvaluing his assets and exaggerating his net worth on paperwork used in making deals and securing loans.

Canada min quits

Toronto: The speaker of Canada's House of Commons resigned Tuesday for inviting a man who fought for a Nazi military unit during World War II to Parliament to attend a speech by the Ukrainian president.

Zealandia: World's hidden 8th continent found

THE NEW CONTINENT IS 94% UNDERWATER, WITH JUST A HANDFUL OF ISLANDS, SIMILAR TO NEW ZEALAND

AGENCIES

Washington, Sept 27: After almost 375 years, geoscientists have discovered a continent that had been hiding in plain sight, as per a BBC report.

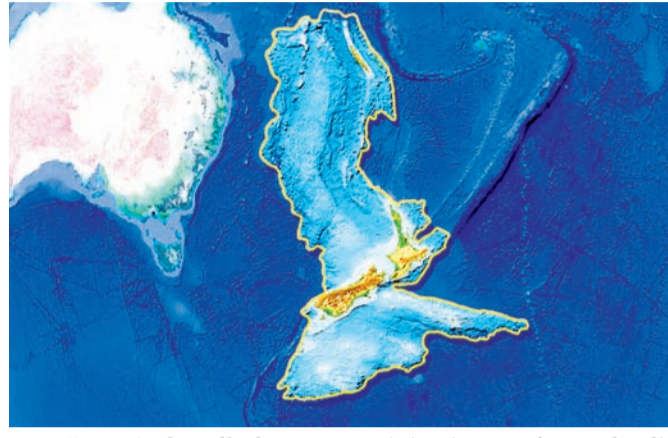
The small team of geologists and seismologists has created a newly refined map of Zealandia or Te Riu-a-Mau, reported Phys.org. The researchers found it by using the data obtained from dredged rock samples recovered from the ocean floor. The details of the research have been published in the journal Tectonics.

According to the report, Zealandia is a vast continent of 1.89 million sq miles (4.9 million sq km) it is around six times

Zealandia was originally part of the ancient supercontinent of Gondwana, which was formed about 550 million years ago

the size of Madagascar. The team of scientists informed that there are in fact 8 continents and the latest addition breaks all records, as the smallest, thinnest, and youngest in the world.

The new continent is 94 per cent underwater, with just a handful of islands, similar to New Zealand. "This is an example of how something very obvious can take a while to un-



cover," says Andy Tulloch, a geologist at the New Zealand Crown Research Institute GNS Science, who was part of the team that discovered Zealandia, BBC reported.

Scientists say that Zealandia has always been difficult to study. Scientists are now studying collections of rocks and sediment samples brought up from the

ocean bed, most of which came from drilling sites-others came from the shores of islands in the area.

Phys.org reported that the study of the rock samples showed geologic patterns in West Antarctica that hinted at the possibility of a subduction zone near the Campbell Plateau off the west coast of New Zealand. The researchers did not find magnetic anomalies in that area, however, which argues against theories surrounding a strike-slip in the Campbell Fault.

The newly refined map shows not only the location of the magmatic arc axis of the Zealandia continent but other major geological features as well.

Amid backlash, UK okays biggest oilfield in years

REUTERS

London, Sept 27: Britain has given the go-ahead for one of its biggest new oil and gas projects in years, Equinor's North Sea Rosebank field, saying energy security was the priority despite opposition from environmentalists.

Wednesday's announcement comes after Prime Minister Rishi Sunak watered down interim plans for the government's 2050 net zero emissions target, a move that critics said could also encourage other countries to rein in their climate ambitions.

Energy Security Minister Claire Coutinho said Rosebank would be less emissions-intensive than older oil and gas developments.

"We will continue to back the UK's oil and gas industry to underpin our energy security, grow our economy and help us deliver the transition to cheaper, cleaner energy," she said.

The cornerstone of the plan to make Rosebank less emissions-intensive is to electrify the extraction process.

Norwegian energy group Equinor said the earliest the field, located west of the Shetland Islands and due to start output in 2026/27, would be electrified is 2030.

Environmental campaigners had urged the government to halt development of Rosebank, saying it contravened the plan for a net-zero economy.

But Sunak threw his weight behind the North Sea in July, saying Britain needed new domestic fossil fuels to improve energy security and that oil and gas would still feature in the country's energy mix even by 2050.

The Rosebank field, relatively small in the global context, is expected to produce 300 million barrels of oil in its lifetime.

Green Party lawmaker Caroline Lucas said that "giving the green light to this huge new oil field is morally obscene. This government must be held accountable."

CHARRED WRECKAGE

Wedding turns graveyard

FIRE AT WEDDING HALL IN NORTHERN IRAQ HAS KILLED AT LEAST 114 PEOPLE AND INJURED 150 AS THE TOLL IS EXPECTED TO RISE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mosul, Sept 27: A raging fire caused by fireworks set off to celebrate a Christian wedding consumed a hall packed with guests in northern Iraq, killing at least 100 people and injuring 150 others as authorities warned Wednesday the death toll could still rise.

The fire happened Tuesday night in the Hamdaniya area of Iraq's Nineveh province in its, authorities said.

The area, predominantly populated by members of Iraq's dwindling Christian minority, is just outside of the city of Mosul, some 335 kilometers (205 miles) northwest of Baghdad. Television footage showed flames rushing over the wedding hall as the fire took hold. In the blaze's aftermath, only charred metal and debris could be seen as people walked through the scene of the fire, the only light coming from television cameras and the lights of onlookers' mobile phones.

Survivors arrived at local hospitals in bandages, receiving oxygen as their families milled through hallways and outside as workers organised more oxygen cylinders.

The health department in Nineveh province raised the death toll to 114.

Health Ministry spokesman Saif al-Badr earlier put the number of injured at 150 via the state-run Iraqi News Agency.

"All efforts are being made to



provide relief to those affected by the unfortunate accident," al-Badr said.

Prime Minister Mohammed Shia al-Sudani ordered an investigation into the fire and asked the country's Interior and Health officials to provide relief, his office said in a statement online.

The Interior Ministry said it had issued four arrest warrants for the owners of the wedding hall, state media reported, and President Abdul Latif Rashid called for an investigation.

There was no immediate official word on the cause of the blaze but initial reports by the Kurdish television news channel Rudaw suggested fireworks at the venue may have sparked the fire.

Other footage appeared to show the bride and groom on the dance floor when the fire began, stunned by the sight of the burning debris. It wasn't immediately clear if they were among those hurt.

Civil defense officials quoted by the Iraqi News Agency described the wedding hall's exterior as decorated with highly flammable cladding that is ille-

This was not a wedding. This was hell. I lost my daughter, her husband and their 3 year-old. They were all burned. My heart is burning

MARIAM KHEDR | A RESIDENT OF HAMDANIYA

gal in the country. "The fire led to the collapse of parts of the hall as a result of the use of highly flammable, low-cost building materials that collapse within minutes when the fire breaks out," civil defense said.

CHRISTIAN MINORITY

Three people who attended the wedding said the hall appeared poorly equipped for the disaster with no visible fire extinguishers, few exits, and draped in flammable material that one said lit "like petrol". Fire fighters arrived 30 minutes after the blaze began, they said.

The fire was the latest disaster to strike Iraq's shrinking Christian minority, which over the past two decades has been violently targeted by extremists first from al-Qaeda and then the Islamic State militant group.

Although the Nineveh plains, the historic homeland, was wrested back from the Islamic State group six years ago, some towns are still mostly rubble and lack basic services. Many Christians have left for Europe, Australia or the United States.

Only about 300,000 Christians remain in Iraq after most of the 1.5 million who lived in the country fled during the chaos following the U.S.-led invasion in 2003, an exodus aggravated by Islamic State's seizure of Nineveh plains towns in 2014.

SHUTDOWN COUNTDOWN

US Congress has 4 days to fund govt

REUTERS

Washington, Sept 27: The fourth partial shutdown of the US government in a decade was four days away Wednesday, with House Republicans preemptively rejecting a bipartisan bill advancing in the Senate that would fund agencies through mid-November.

Hundreds of thousands of federal workers will be furloughed and a wide range of services, from economic data releases to nutrition benefits, if Congress fails to pass legislation that Democratic President Joe Biden can sign into law by midnight Saturday.

The Senate voted by an overwhelming 77-19 Tuesday to begin debate on a measure that would fund the government through November 17, as well as authorizing about \$6 billion for domestic disaster responses and



another \$6 billion in aid to Ukraine.

Leading House Republicans dismissed the Senate stopgap measure out of hand, saying any short-term funding measure to pass Congress with their approval must address the flow of migrants across the US border with Mexico.

"The Senate bill really just continues to fund Biden's open border plan. The country wants to address the open border. We need to address the open border," said House Majority Leader Steve Scalise, the chamber's No 2 Republican.



Young girls dressed as living goddess Kumari wait for Kumari Puja, a worship ritual at Hanuman Dhoka, Basantapur Durbar Square in Kathmandu, Nepal. Girls under the age of nine gathered for the tradition of worshipping young prepubescent girls as manifestations of the divine female energy

Jaishankar blasts Canada allegations

This isn't govt of India's policy, open to specific and relevant info, says EAM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New York, Sept 27: In the wake of Canada's allegations about India's "potential" involvement in the killing of a Khalistani separatist on its soil, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar has said that New Delhi conveyed to Ottawa that it is not the government of India's policy and it is open to looking at "specific" and "relevant" information in the case.

Jaishankar made the comments in a conversation at the Council on Foreign Relations in New York Tuesday after addressing the UN General Assembly session.

"Yes, I do have a comment. I'll share with you very frankly what we told the Canadians," Jaishankar said when asked if he had any comment on recent allegations by Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau that "agents" of the government of

We have actually been badgering the Canadians, we have given them a lot of information about organised crime leadership, which operates out of Canada. There are a large number of extradition requests. There are terrorist leaders who have been identified. One has to understand that there is an environment out there

India are linked to the killing of Khalistani extremist Hardeep Singh Nijjar on Canadian soil June 18.

"One, we told the Canadians that this is not the government of India's policy," Jaishankar said. "Two, we told the Canadians saying that look, if you have something specific, if you have something relevant, let us know. We are open to looking at it," Jaishankar said while responding to a question from former US Ambassador to India



S JAISHANKAR | EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER, INDIA

and CFR Distinguished Fellow Kenneth Juster, in his first public comments on the issue.

Jaishankar asserted that one must also understand the context because the "picture is not complete" without the context of it.

Tensions flared between India and Canada following Trudeau's allegations of the "potential" involvement of Indian agents in the killing of Nijjar outside a gurdwara June 18. India had designated Nijjar as a terrorist in 2020.

YOUTH VS EUROPE 'Unprecedented' climate trial kicks off

IN LANDMARK COURT CASE, 6 YOUNG CLIMATE ACTIVISTS TAKE ON 32 EUROPEAN NATIONS

REUTERS

Strasbourg, Sept 27: Six young people from areas in Portugal ravaged by wildfires and heatwaves took 32 European governments to court Wednesday, arguing their failure to act fast enough on climate change is a violation of their human rights.

The case - filed in September 2020 against the 27 EU member states as well as Britain, Switzerland, Norway, Russia and Turkey - is the largest climate case ever to be heard by the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) in Strasbourg.

A ruling in the case is expected in the first half of 2024. With the support of the British-based Global Legal Action Network (GLAN), the Portuguese applicants, aged between 11 and 24, are seeking a legally-binding decision that would force states to act.

If the complaint is upheld, it



could result in orders from national courts for governments to cut carbon dioxide emissions blamed for climate change faster than currently planned.

"Today we will stand up at the ECHR to argue for our rights and our future," the applicants, who are all attending the hearing in person, wrote on social media.

Gerry Liston, one of GLAN's lawyers, said that if the case

were successful it would be up to national courts to enforce the rulings and that they would be provided with a roadmap to ensure enforcement was effective.

To show support, people of all ages gathered outside the court holding banners that read "Stand with youth" and "We are rooting for you".

'UNPRECEDENTED IN SCALE' The applicants argue climate

change threatens their rights including to life, physical and mental wellbeing.

One of the six, 15-year-old Andre Oliveira, previously told Reuters their goal was to force governments to "do what they promised they would do", referring to the 2015 Paris Agreement to cut emissions to limit global warming to 2 degrees Celsius and ideally 1.5C. Current policies would fail to meet either goal, according to the United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

"Without urgent action to cut emissions, (the place) where I live will soon become an unbearable furnace," another applicant, 20-year-old Martim Agostinho, said in a statement.

Agostinho and three other applicants are from the central Portuguese region of Leiria, where two wildfires killed more than 100 people in 2017.

business



If we are to transit from the middle income trap, the private sector needs to enhance its contribution to R&D through its own investments and under corporate social responsibility

SUMAN BERY | VC, NITI AAYOG

HINDUJA REVAMPS CHURCHILL'S OFFICE

The Old War Office (OWO) of Britain's World War II era Prime Minister Winston Churchill opened its doors as a brand-new luxury hotel made by Hinduja Group in London. The Indian-origin Hinduja Group conglomerate and the UK's richest family had acquired the landmark on Whitehall, opposite Downing Street, over eight years ago



of the day quote

India's electric revolution is gaining momentum at an astonishing pace. Government policies and private investments are propelling us towards a future with clean, accessible electric mobility

India's retail landscape is undergoing an unprecedented shift, owing to a surge in retailers, store expansion, and rapid growth in online shopping

As we think about expanding our credit offerings, we will absolutely look at whether we want to tie-up with more banks and also want to expand to more networks and (that is) something we are deliberating right now

SHORT TAKES

Adani Ports to buy back \$195 million

New Delhi: Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone will prepay \$195 million of debt due in 2024 as the conglomerate helmed by Gautam Adani looks to boost investors' confidence post being targeted by a US short-seller. In a stock exchange filing, APSEZ said it will buy back \$195 million of bonds due in 2024 using its cash reserves. Out of the \$520 million principal outstanding, \$325 million will be left after the buyback, it said. The company board "has approved tranche II of the tender offer to purchase for cash up to \$195 million in aggregate principal amount of the outstanding 3.375 per cent senior notes due 2024 which represents 30 per cent of the principal amount of the notes," it said.

Evergrande boss under surveillance

Beijing: The billionaire boss of beleaguered Chinese property developer China Evergrande is being held by police, a report said Wednesday, as the debt-ridden company grapples with severe financial difficulties. Xu Jiayin, who is known as Hui Ka Yan in Cantonese, was taken away by authorities earlier this month, according to anonymous sources cited by Bloomberg News. He is being held under "residential surveillance", the report said, which does not mean he has been arrested or charged with a crime.

FROM DORM TO INTERNET KING

INITIALLY CALLED BACKRUB, THE INTERNET SEARCH ENGINE GIANT, WHICH HAD ITS ORIGIN IN A RENTED GARAGE, IS NOW ONE OF THE WORLD'S MOST VALUABLE AND INFLUENTIAL COMPANIES

AGENCIES

California, Sept 27: More than 25 years ago, two students at Stanford University brainstormed in their dormitory and came up with an idea - to create an internet search engine that would organize web pages and also rank them.

The search engine giant turned 25 Wednesday and marked the silver jubilee occasion with a special doodle that depicted the journey of the company from its humble origin in a rented garage in the US to becoming a global search giant.

The firm is recognised around the world for its vibrant logo that embrace colours and sim-

ON EXPANSION MODE

Toyota plans 3rd plant

The world's biggest car manufacturer plans to expand output capacity for the first time in over a decade in India as domestic sales surge



New Delhi, Sept 27: Toyota Motor plans to build a third car plant in India, expanding production capacity in the country for the first time in over a decade as its partnership with Suzuki Motor boosts domestic volumes, two sources said.

The world's biggest car maker wants the plant to start with capacity of 80,000-120,000 vehicles a year, which could grow to around 200,000 over time, said one of the people who has direct knowledge of the plans.

The plant's proposed initial capacity would expand Toyota's existing manufacturing capacity in India by as much as 30% from 400,000 units currently.

Toyota has also begun development of a new sport utility vehicle (SUV) for the Indian market that would be launched in early 2026 and be an anchor product for the new factory, said the person and a third source briefed on the company's plans.

The sources declined to be identified as the automaker has not disclosed the expansion plans. A representative for Toyota's India unit declined to comment.

New SUV for the Indian market to be launched in 2026

Toyota aims production capacity of 5L vehicles per year

It is also planning 'mini' Land Cruiser planned for India

Toyota's India sales have soared due to a global partnership with Suzuki under which the two Japanese car makers take some vehicles originally developed by their partner, then tweak and sell under their own brands to fill out their product line-up.

Cars originally from Maruti Suzuki's stable such as the Glanza hatchback and Urban Cruiser Hyryder SUV now account for 40% of Toyota's India sales. About two-thirds of Toyota's current production capacity is used by Maruti Suzuki to build vehicles for both car makers as part of their partnership.

Toyota, known for its Fortuner SUV and Camry hybrid in India, told Reuters earlier in September it expects record domestic sales in 2023.

The Japanese car maker is now aiming to have production capacity of 500,000 vehicles per year before the end of the decade, including the car models it will supply to Suzuki, said

INDIA GROWTH

Toyota's expansion in India, the world's third-largest car market, comes at a time when it is seeing slowing growth in markets like Europe and North America and competition in Southeast Asia from Chinese players.

It currently has two car plants in Bidadi, a town in the southern Indian state of Karnataka, and the third one is being planned at the same premises. It added a third shift at the two plants in May, raising their combined annual capacity by 30% to over 400,000 vehicles.

It is working with suppliers to produce 60,000 units a year when it launches in early 2026.

Toyota is also looking at introducing a "mini" Land Cruiser in India, they said, though added the car maker is not forecasting a large amount of sales and has yet to make a final decision. If Toyota does decide to press ahead with the model, parts would be imported for assembly in India, they said.

Hundreds of Chinese vendors deboarded from GeM platform

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 27: Hundreds of companies that were either owned by Chinese nationals or with substantial Chinese beneficiary interest have been removed from the government's procurement portal GeM in the last three years, a senior official said Wednesday.

Meanwhile, Chief Executive Officer of GeM (Government e Marketplace) Prashant Kumar Singh Wednesday said by and large there is no product on the platform from companies, whose owners are from countries that share land border with India.

"We have weeded out a lot of fake sellers, particularly after the order of the department of expenditure regarding land border sharing countries, wherein certain country products are not to be used on GeM," Singh told reporters here.

"This has to be a very rigorous exercise. So, we look into the shareholding pattern... to see if there is a land border sharing country and then remove/disqualify them. It's a huge amount that we have removed. Categories that were severely impacted include laptop, desktops, medical devices, where people had a Chinese footprint," he said.

After the border stand-off with China, the Department of Expenditure had made changes in General Financial Rules in July 2020 that forbade bidders from countries sharing land borders with India from participating in any government procurement of goods, services and works unless they register with a competent authority.

Moody's downgrades Vedanta Resources

FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING MARCH 31, 2023, VRL GENERATED REVENUES OF \$18.3 BILLION AND ADJUSTED EBITDA OF \$4.8 BILLION

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 27: Moody's Investors Service has downgraded the rating of Vedanta Resources Ltd because of the elevated risk of debt restructuring over the next few months, as the firm has not made progress on refinancing its upcoming debt maturities.

Moody's said it has downgraded to Caa2 from Caa1, the corporate family rating (CFR) of Vedanta Resources Limited (VRL).

At the same time, Moody's has maintained a negative outlook. "The downgrade reflects the elevated risk of debt restructuring over the next few months because VRL has not made any meaningful progress on refinancing its upcoming debt maturities, in particular the \$1 billion bonds maturing each in January 2024 and August 2024," said Kaushtubh Chaubal, a Moody's Senior Vice President and lead analyst on VRL.

VRL's credit quality is constrained by its weak liquidity because of large refinancing needs and interest expenses amid tightening financing conditions in global capital markets, the agency noted.

"The company continues to face challenges in refinancing its debt, a reflection of reduced appetite from the lending com-



munity, and a key credit concern," the rating agency said. "VRL's Caa category CFR reflects the company's unsustainable capital structure, aggressive risk appetite and weak financial management."

In August 2023, VRL sold a 4.3 per cent stake in key subsidiary Vedanta Limited (VDL) for around \$500 million to stave off some of the pressure arising from the holding company's imminent cash needs.

"Given that its entire shareholding in VDL and that VDL's entire 64.9 per cent shareholding in Hindustan Zinc Limited (HZL), which holds around two-thirds of the group's consolidated cash, have already been pledged, this implies VRL has limited financial flexibility to raise financing," the rating agency said.

Moody's said a softening commodity price environment will somewhat strain the ability of VRL's operating subsidiaries to generate cash flow. More importantly, the potential for contagion risk from the holding company's debt woes may also impair the operating subsidiaries' ability to raise funds to distribute dividends.

"The negative outlook reflects VRL's persistently weak liquidity profile and Moody's concerns over the company's ability to address the imminent cash needs, especially at the holding company," it said.

BIZ BUZZ

ICC holds 2nd India Mining Conclave 2023



Bhubaneswar: The Indian Chamber of Commerce, Odisha State Council in collaboration with the Department of Steel & Mines, Government of Odisha, successfully organised the 2nd India Mining Conclave at Hotel Mayfair Convention here September 27. The event brought together industry stalwarts, government officials and experts to discuss key issues and opportunities in the mining sector. Governor of Odisha, Ganeshi Lal graced the event as the Chief Guest and said, "The theme of the mining industry should be that it should result in a city of mankind, a common heritage of mankind and a larger cosmos. It should be like whatever we derive should go to each and every one and everywhere." Setting the tone at the inaugural session, JB Pany, Chairman, ICC Odisha State Council said, "Mining sector plays a pivotal role in driving industrial growth and employment opportunities. As we gather here today, we acknowledge the immense potential and responsibility that rests upon us to foster sustainable development in this sector." Corporate leaders from renowned companies such as Jindal Steel & Power Ltd (JSPL), Vedanta Zinc Business, JSW Steel Limited, and AMNS shared their insights during this session. Odisha Mining Corporation (OMC) played a pivotal role as the event partner, while Jindal Steel & Power and Vedanta Ltd provided their support as co-partners. The event also received sponsorship from JSL, JSW, MGM Minerals Ltd, SNM Group, AMNS India, Deepak Fertilisers and Petrochemicals Corporation Ltd, NALCO and Tata steel. ICC Regional head JP Pal and other members of ICC were also present in this occasion.

Indices witness choppy trade

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Sept 27: Benchmark Sensex rebounded from early lows to settle higher by 173 points on Wednesday following buying in Reliance Industries, Larsen & Toubro and ITC and positive trends in Asian and European markets.

The 30-share BSE Sensex rose by 173.22 points or 0.26 per cent to settle at 66,118.69 with 20 of its components ending in the green and 10 closing lower.

The index opened lower and fell further to a low of 65,549.96 in morning trade. However, buying in Reliance, L&T, Infosys and Maruti helped it recover losses. Later, it jumped 226.8 points or 0.34 per cent to a high of 66,172.27.

The Nifty gained 51.75 points or 0.26 per cent to end at 19,716.45. It moved between a low of 19,554 and a high of 19,730.70 in day trading.

Among the Sensex firms, Larsen & Toubro, ITC, Sun Pharma, Maruti, Reliance Industries, Axis Bank, IndusInd Bank and Hindustan Unilever were among the gainers.

Titan, State Bank of India,



₹ snaps two-day fall

The rupee Wednesday staged a recovery after two days of steep losses to end 6 paise higher at 83.22 against the US dollar on positive cues from domestic equity markets. The rupee lost 34 paise in the past two sessions. It closed 15 paise lower at 83.28 against the dollar Tuesday, a day after registering a decline of 19 paise.

BSE midcap gauge climbed 0.76 per cent and smallcap index jumped 0.68 per cent. Among the indices, capital goods jumped 1.14 per cent, healthcare climbed 1.13 per cent, industrials (0.97 per cent), FMCG (0.77 per cent), realty (0.70 per cent), IT (0.48 per cent) and teck (0.43 per cent).

Banex, consumer durables and oil & gas were the laggards.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) were net sellers in the capital market Wednesday as they offloaded shares worth Rs 354.35 crore, according to exchange data.

ICICI Bank, HDFC Bank, Tata Steel and Nestle were the major laggards.

In the broader market, the

Gift Nifty sets record single day turnover

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 27: Gift Nifty index recorded an all-time high single day trading activity of 38.63 lakh contracts with a turnover of \$15.25 billion (about Rs 1.27 lakh crore) Tuesday.

The index surpassed its previous record of a turnover of \$12.98 billion touched August 29, NSE IX said in a statement Wednesday.

Gift Nifty is a dollar-denominated futures contract based on the Nifty 50 index and is traded on the NSE IX, an international multi-assets exchange set up at GIFT City.

Trading turnover on NSE IX has been growing since the commencement of a full-scale operation of Gift Nifty July 3, 2023.

Since the first day of full-scale operations, Gift Nifty has witnessed a total cumulative volume of over 4.59 million contracts with a total turnover of \$178.54 billion.

NSE IX offers a diversified portfolio of products, including Indian single stock derivatives, index derivatives, currency derivatives, depository receipts, commodity derivatives and global stocks.

Google celebrates 25th anniversary



a more accessible place, it said. "The pair worked tirelessly from their dorm rooms to develop a prototype for a better search engine. As they made meaningful progress on the project, they moved the operation to Google's first office—a rented garage. On September 27, 1998, Google Inc. Was officially born," the firm said in the note.

"Much has changed since 1998—including our logo as seen in today's Doodle—but the mission has remained the same: to organise the world's information and make it universally accessible and useful. Billions of people from all over the globe use Google to search, connect, work, play, and SO much more! Thank you for evolving with us over the past 25 years. We can't wait to see where the future takes us, together," it added.

here at Google we're oriented towards the future, birthdays can also be a time to reflect. Let's take a walk down memory lane to learn how we were born 25 years ago".

By fate or luck, doctoral students Sergey Brin and Larry Page met in Stanford University's computer science programme in the late 1990s. They quickly learned they shared a similar vision: make the World Wide Web

MAJOR OVERHAUL

BYJU'S TO MERGE BUSINESSES, AXE AROUND 5,500 EMPLOYEES

REUTERS

Bangalore, Sept 27: Indian education firm Byju's plans to cut around 5,500 jobs to decrease costs amid a restructuring of its business, the Economic Times reported Tuesday.

With this, total number of employees at Byju's will fall in the range of 31,000-33,000 compared to 50,000 workforce at group level that it announced in October 2022.

Arjun Mohan, who took over as the chief executive of the company's India business, has briefed senior executives that he will be merging several business verticals as part of the changes, which are expected to be rolled out later this week or early next week, the newspaper said.



The job cuts are being implemented only at Byju's parent, Think & Learn, and are not linked to any of its subsidiaries, the report said, adding that a significant number of roles to be made redundant would constitute senior positions at the firm.

"They (Byju's) want to bring more students to offline centres and that's the main way the new management has identified to

run operations that can sustain over a period of time," ET said, citing a person aware of the discussions.

The firm, valued at \$22 billion last year, has experienced a series of business setbacks, including its auditor and board members quitting. In the last few months, it has also been negotiating the repayment of a \$1.2 billion loan.

INDIANS WIN SEVEN MEDALS INCLUDING A TEAM AND AN INDIVIDUAL GOLD IN ASIAN GAMES

Shooters in medal rush

AGENCIES

Hangzhou, Sept 27: Young star Sift Kaur Samra stole the show with a gold medal in the women's 50m rifle 3 position event as Indian shooters set the range ablaze by securing seven medals at the Asian Games here Wednesday. In the same event, Ashi Chouksey, who was in contention for a silver, settled for bronze with a score of 451.9.

Meanwhile while Esha Singh claimed silver in the women's 25m pistol event with a total of 34. On her way to silver, Esha upstaged her senior Manu Bhaker who finished a disappointing fifth after topping the qualification. However, the Indian trio of Esha, Manu and Rhythm Sangwan won the gold in the team event.

Manu, Esha and Rhythm tallied 1759 to finish on top of the podium and help India clinch their fourth gold medal in the ongoing sporting extravaganza.

Samra produced some excellent shooting to claim the yellow metal with a World and Games record score of 469.6. She also became the first Indian shooter to win gold in rifle 3 position. And immediately after the medal ceremony, she was cheeky enough



GOLDEN GIRLS: Sift Kaur Samra, and the trio of (from R) Esha Singh, Rhythm Sangwan and Manu Bhaker pose for photos during the presentation ceremony



to say, "It feels good to see the Indian Tricolour rising in China. In the day's last shooting final, Anant Jeet Singh Naruka claimed the silver medal in men's

skeet event, adding to the team bronze he won alongside Angad Vir Singh Bajwa and Gurjoat Khangura. Naruka finished his last round

with 10/10 to end his event with an impressive 58/60 but it was still not good enough for gold as Kuwait's Abdullah Alrashidi equalled the world record with a perfect 60/60

to finish on top of the podium. Meanwhile, the Indian team of Angad, Gurjoat and Naruka shot a total of 355 to win the bronze in the men's skeet event.

Pakistan cricket team arrive in India after 7 yrs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Hyderabad, Sept 27: The Pakistan cricket team arrived here Wednesday, their first visit to India in seven years, to compete in the ODI World Cup beginning October 5.

The Babar Azam-led side will spend a lot of time in Hyderabad, having arrived here Dubai where it had a long nine hour layover. The squad had left Lahore in the wee hours of Wednesday and reached Hyderabad in the night.

Pakistan will play their opening warm-up game against New Zealand September 29 before taking on Australia October 3. They open their tournament campaign against Netherlands here before battling with Sri Lanka October 10.

The Pakistan players had got their Indian visas less than 48 hours before their scheduled travel. Both India and Pakistan only face each other Asia Cup and ICC events due to the tense relations between the two countries.

Only Mohammad Nawaz and Salman Ali Agha have visited India for cricket. Babar could not play the T20 World Cup in India in 2016 due to an injury.

"The BCCI has assured the ICC that all teams will be provided the best security and will be well looked after so I don't expect anything different for our team. I don't think our team will face any issues in India," head of PCB management committee Zaka Ashraf told reporters before team's departure.

Hockey eyes humble Singapore

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Hangzhou, Sept 27: Young striker Sangita Kumari slammed a hat-trick as a dominant Indian women's hockey team scored goals at will to thrash lowly Singapore 13-0 in its opening Pool A match at the Asian Games here Wednesday. India will take on Malaysia in their next pool match Friday.

While the Indians pumped in as many as eight goals in the first two quarters, the Singaporeans did show some resistance after the halfway break as they conceded just five goals.

Sangita (23rd, 47th, 56th) scored thrice, while Navneet Kaur found the net twice in the 14th minute. Udita (6th), Sushila Chanu (8th), Deepika (11th), Deep Grace Ekka (17th), Neha (19th), Salima Tete (35th), Monika (52nd) and Vandana Katiyara (56th) were the other goal scorers.

Nikhat in quarters
Two-time World Champion Nikhat Zareen cruised to the 50kg quarterfinals but seasoned Indian pugilist Shiva Thapa and Sanjeet bowed out of the boxing competition Wednesday. Nikhat notched up an easy 5-0 win over South Korea's Chorong Bak in the second round of the women's event.

However, record six-time Asian Championship medallist Shiva couldn't capitalise on a favourable draw as he was beaten comprehensively (5-0) by Kyrgyzstan's Askat Kultayev in the 63.5kg pre-quarterfinals. Sanjeet (92kg) was completely outpunched (5-0) by world championship bronze medallist Lazizbek Mullojonov.



Thrilling stalemate

The Indian women's handball team held Hong Kong to a thrilling 26-26 draw in their second group-stage tie, Wednesday. For India, Menika, Nidhi Sharma, Sushma, Priyanka Thakur, Bhawana, Jyoti Shukla and Shalini Thakur found the back of the net.

India remains winless in its opening two meetings of the tournament, having lost their first match to Japan 13-41. They will next be up against hosts China Friday, followed by their final group game against Nepal Saturday.

Paddlers impress

G Sathiyam and Manika Batra stormed into the mixed doubles pre-quarterfinals of the table tennis competition. Sathiyam and Batra defeated Thailand's Napat Thanmathikom and Suthasini Sawettabut 10-12, 11-8, 11-3, 11-8.

Later, Harmeet Desai teamed up with Sreeja Akula to overcome Macau's Chi Cheng Cheong and Hui Li Seak 12-10, 11-7, 11-7 to also enter the last 16 stage. In

the men's doubles event, Manav Thakkar and Manush Shah beat Thailand's Napat Thanmathikom and Sitisak Nuchchart 11-8, 8-11, 11-6, 7-11, 12-10.

Disappointment in chess

A defeat in the final round cost Vidit Gujrathi a medal as Indian chess players failed to finish on the podium in the individual events. Grandmasters Gujrathi (5.5 points) and Arjun Erigaisi (5.5) finished fifth and sixth respectively while former bronze medallist D Harika (6 points) took fourth place and 2006 champion Koneru Humpy ended seventh.

Troika enters final

Hriday Vipul Chheda, Anush Agarwalla and Divyakriti Singh continued their fine show and moved into medal contention after qualifying for the individual dressage final of equestrian. Astride his horse Chemxpro, Hriday topped the qualification round with total score of 73.883, while Anush, riding Etro, finished fourth with score of 71.706.

Hoopsters in quarters

The Indian men's 3x3 basketball team continued their winning streak, progressing to the quarterfinal with a dominating win over Macao in a Pool C game. Sahaj Pratap Singh Sekhon scored a maximum of 10 points in the match and helped India beat Macao 21-12. India will face last-edition gold medallist China in their next match Friday.

BANGLADESH, A TEAM TO WATCH OUT FOR

Bangladesh may not be considered a powerhouse in world cricket, but they are a team who can challenge any opposition around the world. And when it comes to sub-continent conditions, they are even stronger having quality spinners and experienced batting line-up.

They made their World Cup debut in 1999 and stunned everyone beating Pakistan, who had the likes of Saeed Anwar, Ijaz Ahmed, Saleem Malik, Inzamam-ul-Haq, Shahid Afridi, Wasim Akram, Waqar Younis, Shoaib Akhtar and Saqlain Mushtaq.

In 2007 edition, they pulled off yet another huge upset beating India, which led India's exit from group stage. They qualified for Super 8 stage - their joint-best at a WC. They also defeated a strong South Africa in that edition. In 2011, they defeated England in the group stage. The next edition of WC witnessed the Bangla Tigers reach the quarterfinals - the top 8 stage for second time - where they lost to India. They had secured another win over England this year.

In 2019, they defeated South Africa, West Indies and Afghanistan in the group stage, but couldn't go beyond that stage. Having registered a win over India in the recently-concluded Asia Cup, Bangladesh would be eager to reach the semifinals.

This will probably be the last World Cup for their cricket



greats - Shakib Al Hasan, Tamim Iqbal and Mushfiqur Rahim. The troika has the experience in Indian condition, which will definitely come in handy for the side.

They will play their warm-up games against Sri Lanka and England before the World Cup. However, they will be without arguably the best batter in the country's history - Tamim Iqbal - due to his persistent back injury. It will be huge loss for the team.

HOLDING THE KEYS TO SUCCESS
Shakib Al Hasan, Najmul Hossain Shanto, Mushfiqur Rahim, Mehidy Hasan Miraz & Mustafizur Rahman.

66 We are concerned with our batting and we need to see those areas and work on it so that we can rectify those areas. We don't have history because we have not succeeded (in big tournaments) though we played two or three finals in Asia Cup and if we could win it would have been better but we are always a promising side
SHAKIB AL HASAN



Tamim slams BCB saying he opted out of 2023 WC

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Mirpur (Bangladesh), Sept 27: Tamim Iqbal opted out of next month's ICC Cricket World Cup after a dispute with a member of the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB), the opening batsman said Wednesday while describing the situation as "a dirty game."

"Someone called me from the top level of the board who is very involved with our cricket. He said that if you go to the World Cup you have to play the matches by managing your (back) injury. So, you better do one thing, don't play the first match against Afghanistan (October 7)," Tamim said on a video posted on his official Facebook account.

"I replied that the Afghanistan match is still 12/13 days away. In 12/13 days, I will be in better condition. Why shouldn't I play? Then, he said that if you play you have to bat down the order."

"After hearing this, I am shocked, as I have never in my 17-year career batted down the order. I feel like I'm being forced to do many things. I said, 'Look, if you have such thoughts then don't

send me. I don't want to be in this mess. I don't want to be part of this dirty game. You make me face something new every day. I don't want to stay here'."

The 34-year-old batsman said he felt ready to take the plane to India for his fifth World Cup. "I was very happy after that game, 44 is not a big score, but I was very happy at the way I batted. I felt confident," said the opener.

Local media reported that Tamim told the selectors that he would play just five matches in the World Cup considering his long-term back injury, and the team management responded by saying they did not want to include a player in the squad who was only half fit.

Tamim, however, denied the reports, saying: "The medical department believed that if I was rested and played the second warm-up match (against England) October 2, I would get enough time (to prepare) ahead of the first World Cup match. I am sure chief selector Minhajul Abedin also denied the report that I told him that I would play five matches in the World Cup."

Ramkumar-Saketh ensures medal INDIA GO DOWN TO AUSSIES BY 66 RUNS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Hangzhou, Sept 27: Ramkumar Ramanathan and Saketh Myneni ensured that tennis will contribute to India's medal tally at the Asian Games by reaching the men's doubles semifinals but Sumit Nagal and Ankit Raina drew a blank after losing their respective singles quarterfinals.

The second-seeded Indian pair quelled a late challenge from China's Zhizhen Zhang and Yibing Wu for a 6-1, 7-6(10-8) win in the quarterfinals. Reaching the semifinal stage means that India is assured of at least a bronze.

While it will be third Asian Games medal for Myneni, who won the men's doubles silver and mixed doubles gold in 2014 - it will be the first-ever medal for Ramkumar, who has endured a torrid 2023 season, in which he lost 17 first round singles matches.

The top-seeded pair of Rohan Bopanna and Yuki Bhambri was considered a sure-shot medal contender but the Indian team made a shock early exit.

In the singles matches Wednesday both Nagal and last edition's bronze medallist Raina exited the continental champi-



onship, squandering a one-set advantage.

In another disappointing result, the top seeded Indian pair of Yuki Bhambri and Raina crashed out of the mixed doubles event, following a 4-6, 6-4, 8-10 defeat against Philippines' Francis Casey Alcantara and Alex Eala in the pre-quarterfinals.

Veteran Rohan Bopanna and his partner Rutuja Bhosale inched closer to a mixed doubles medal, winning their pre-quarter-final match against 13th seeded Japanese pair of Ayano Shimizu and Shinji Hazawa 6-3 6-4.

SINGLES DISAPPOINTMENT

Up against top seed and home

favourite Zhizhen Zhang, it was always going to be a herculean task for Nagal to go past the World No.60.

To his credit, Nagal took a set off the Chinese before losing steam in the men's singles quarterfinals, which he lost 7-6(7-3), 1-6, 2-6 in two hours and 16 minutes.

Somdev Devvarman had won a men's singles gold in 2010 and after that Yuki Bhambri (2014, Incheon) and Prajnesh Gunneswaran (2018, Jakarta & Palembang) won a bronze each in the following editions.

Raina, who had become only the second Indian woman to win a singles bronze in 2018, waged a gritty battle against Japan's Haruka Raji before losing her quarterfinal 6-3, 4-6, 4-6 in a marathon two hours and 53-minute contest.

Their exit means that India will not have a singles medal from the Asian Games for first time after the 2006 Doha edition where Rohan Bopanna and Karan Rastogi could not reach the medal rounds in the men's singles. Ramkumar and Rutuja Bhosale had exited the singles competition in the third and second round respectively.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Rajkot, Sept 27: India's dream of rare ODI series clean against Australia dream continues as they failed to achieve the feat after suffering a 66-run defeat in the final ODI here, Wednesday. They had already sealed the 3-match series after winning the first two matches.

Mitch Marsh's stroke-filled 96 (84b, 13x4, 3x6) and Marnus Labuschagne's polished 72 (58b, 9x4) took Australia to a commendable 352/7. In response, the hosts were bowled out for 286 with two balls to spare in their essay.

Skipper Rohit Sharma (81, 57b, 5x4, 6x6) was excellent throughout his stay after opening the innings with makeshift opener Washington Sundar (18) as the duo stitched together 74 runs. After Sundar's departure, Virat Kohli (56, 61b, 5x4, 1x6), who returned to the side along with his skipper and Kuldeep Yadav after being rested for the first two matches, joined Rohit in the middle.

The pair stitched together 70 runs before Glenn Maxwell (4/40) caught a stunner off his own bowling to get rid of dangerous Rohit. India then lost wickets at regular intervals, with Shreyas Iyer (48, 43b, 1x4, 2x6) and KL Rahul (26) failing to convert their



The heat got to Steve Smith (L) and Mitch Marsh at various points during their partnership at Rajkot, Wednesday

starts. Ravindra Jadeja (35) also played a good knock.

Earlier, Marsh missed the three-figure mark by a whisker, but the Australian batters came good collectively in their last official ODI before the start of the World Cup.

David Warner had himself to blame for his dismissal after a fiery 56 (34b, 6x4, 4x6), but he set the tone for Australia early on. Steve Smith also put brakes on his poor run of scores to make a rapid 74 (61b, 8x4, 1x6) and towards the end, Labuschagne

upped the ante to help Australia post their challenging score.

On a hot and humid day drinks were brought out more often than not between change of over while batters dropped down to their haunches, turning out to be quite a laborious effort for the Australian batters after their captain chose to bat.

There was no help off the wicket for Indian pacers at start as they were punished by Aussie batters. Jasprit Bumrah (3/81 in 10 overs), Mohammed Siraj (1/68 in 9 overs) and Prasad Krishna

(1/45 in 5 overs) were expensive. However, the spinners - Kuldeep (2/48 in 6 overs), Jadeja (0/61 in 10 overs) and Sundar (0/48 in 10 overs) - and the heat slowed their flow of runs.

BRIEF SCORES: Australia 352/7 (Mitch Marsh 96, Steve Smith 74, Marnus Labuschagne 72, David Warner 56, Jasprit Bumrah 3/81, Kuldeep Yadav 2/48) beat India 286 (Rohit Sharma 81, Virat Kohli 56, Shreyas Iyer 48, Glenn Maxwell 4/40) by 66 runs. Match to continue.