



### SONAM'S DESIRE

Actor Sonam Kapoor says she is desperate to act in a period film with jewellery and heavy costumes

LEISURE P2



### TRUDEAU APOLOGISES

Canada PM Justin Trudeau apologises for the Canadian Parliament's recognition of a man who fought for a Nazi unit during WW II

INTERNATIONAL P10



### ROSHIBINA DEVI SHINES

Naorem Roshibina Devi bags silver in women's 60kg sanda event of wushu and dedicates the medal to Manipur

SPORTS P12

## Mob bid to attack Manipur CM house

AGENCIES

**Imphal, Sept 28:** A mob tried to attack Chief Minister N Biren Singh's empty ancestral house Thursday night, despite a security clampdown and curfew in the Imphal valley where protestors have been holding violent demonstrations after photos of bodies of two youths missing since July surfaced on social media earlier in the week.

Security forces, however, were successful in foiling the attempt and stopping them 100-150 metres from the residence after firing several rounds of tear gas shells.

The chief minister lives in a separate, well-guarded official residence in the centre of the state's capital. Amid reports that militants have been seen moving around openly and instigating mobs in Imphal valley, Srinagar Senior Superintendent of Police Rakesh Balwal, who has expertise in handling terror-related cases, has been 'prematurely' brought back to Manipur.

The incident occurred after a mob vandalised the deputy commissioner's office in Imphal West district and torched four-wheelers in the early hours of Thursday.

### IRREGULAR by MANJUL



MARKET WATCH			
	INDEX		VARIATION
SENSEX	65508.32	↓	610.37
	19523.55	↓	192.90
DOLLAR	83.24	↑	₹0.14
	87.89	↑	₹0.40
GOLD	₹57,121	↓	₹551
	₹70,457	↓	₹92

WEATHER		
	BHUB	CTK
TEMP	MAX 34.3°C	34.5°C
	MIN 25.8°C	26.5°C
Humidity	87%	79%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil
Forecast	Cloudy sky with light rain	



FOR PEACE: Women take part in a candlelight vigil against the 'killing' of two students by unknown miscreants and demand peace in Manipur's Imphal, Thursday

PTI PHOTO

## 15 dists at quake risk

AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 28:** As many as 15 districts in the state, including the capital city of Bhubaneswar, are at risk of the most unpredictable natural disaster, earthquake, according to Revenue and Disaster Management (R&DM) Minister Sudam Marndi.

As per the seismic zonation map of India, prepared by the Building Materials and Technology Promotion Council under the Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation, these districts fall under Zone III (moderate intensity zone) category, the Minister said responding to a question raised by Jeypore MLA Tara Prasad Bahinipati in the Odisha Assembly, Thursday.

The districts are Khurda that encompasses Bhubaneswar, Puri, Cuttack, Kendrapara, Jagatsinghpur, Jajpur, Dhenkanal, Angul, Deogarh, Sambalpur, Bargarh, Jharsuguda, Sundargarh, Balasore and Mayurbhanj.

The remaining districts in Odisha have been classified under earthquake Zone II (low damage risk zone), the Minister said.

On the initiatives taken by the Odisha government to deal with possible disasters in areas prone to earthquakes, the R&DM Minister said that public aware-

## 16K disaster deaths

Natural disasters, including lightning, drowning and snakebite, have claimed 16,372 lives in Odisha in the last five years - from 2018-19 to 2022-23, Revenue and Disaster Management (R&DM) Minister Sudam Marndi told the Assembly, Thursday.

Drowning deaths topped the chart with 7,874 persons having met watery graves, followed by 5,219 snakebite fatalities and 2,058 lightning strike casualties, Marndi said in reply to a question from BJP MLA Kusum Tete.

Similarly, 759 people died in fire accidents, 140 in cyclones, 46 in boat capsizing incidents, 73 in floods, 141 due to heatwaves, while whirlwinds and heavy

rain accounted for 31 deaths each during the period. Mayurbhanj has registered the highest number of 1,444 disaster deaths during the period, followed by Ganjam (1,162), Balasore (1,139) and Keonjhar (1,115). Boudh reported the lowest of 85 deaths. Of the 7,874 drowning deaths, the highest of 651 cases were reported in Mayurbhanj, followed by 605 in Ganjam, 592 in Balasore and 545 in Keonjhar. Other districts reported less than 500 deaths. Mayurbhanj also registered the highest number of snakebite deaths at 460, followed by Balasore (378), Keonjhar (352), Ganjam (335), and Sundargarh (325).

added the Minister. Around 59 per cent of India's land mass is prone to earthquakes of different intensities. The National Centre for Seismology, under the Ministry of Earth Sciences, is India's nodal agency for monitoring seismic activity, having 115 observatories spread across the country. The seismic micronisation of the cities is based on factors such as population to mitigate the earthquake impact better.

This apart, students are being taught about earthquake in primary schools by including the subject in their curriculum, said Marndi.

## 2 BJP MLAs throw 'dal' at Speaker, suspended

AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 28:** Two BJP MLAs, including Opposition chief whip Mohan Majhi, were suspended from the Odisha Assembly till the end of the current session for allegedly throwing 'dal' (pulses) at Speaker Pramila Mallik's podium Thursday.

The other BJP lawmaker who was suspended is Mukesh Mahaling.

Majhi rejected the allegation and claimed that he had not thrown 'dal' at the Speaker's podium. He, however, said the BJP members had brought some 'dal' to the House for gifting it to the Speaker.

Speaker Mallik said the decision to suspend the two MLAs was taken as per the rules of the House.

On denial of the charge by Majhi, the Speaker said, "I do not know what he says. They have been suspended till the end of the ongoing session."

The session is scheduled to end October 4.

Senior Biju Janata Dal leader Pramila Mallik was September 22 elected unopposed as the Speaker of the Assembly, becoming the first woman in the state to occupy the post.

"The action against me is totally unjustified as I did not throw 'dal' at the Speaker's



podium. The allegation against me is completely motivated. The Speaker suspended me without examining the CCTV footage," Majhi told reporters.

Majhi also challenged the Speaker and the ruling party to prove the allegation against him.

The Opposition chief whip alleged that he was targeted by the government because he put the administration in a tight spot by placing fact-based evidence.

The other suspended BJP MLA, Mukesh Mahaling, said, "I did not throw 'dal' at the Speaker's podium. We brought the 'dal' to gift it to the Speaker as she is fond of pulses."

Mahaling alleged that Mallik, as the former women and child development (W&CD) minister, was entangled in a 'dal' scam, and "we brought the pulses to gift it to her".

The BJP members brought the pulses to the House in a polythene bag to draw the attention of the Speaker whom they accused of not being impartial while running the House.

## Another gold for Indian shooters

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Hangzhou, Sept 28:** The men's 10m air pistol team continued India's success story at the Asian Games here, winning gold with two marksmen also making it to the individual finals Thursday.

With today's success, Indian shooters have so far won four gold, four silver and five bronze medals.

The team of Sarabjot Singh, Arjun Singh Cheema and Shiva Narwal narrowly beat the Chinese team to take the top podium and earn India its fourth gold medal from the shooting ranges.

The Indian trio's aggregate score of 1734 was just one better than Chinese team, which settled for the silver medal, while Vietnam, with a score of 1730, bagged the bronze.

This was the third team gold at the shooting ranges here after the 10m air rifle top-podium finish and women's 25-metre pistol gold.

Sarabjot and Arjun also made it to the eight-shooter finals and will be in contention for individual medals as well.

Sarabjot, 21, scored 199, while Arjun ended up eighth and last, exiting on the second elimination shot.

P12

## Murder accused gunned down

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Kamakhyanagar, Sept 28:** Unidentified miscreants shot a businessman, accused of killing a panchayat samiti member in Dhenkanal district, dead allegedly over past enmity, police said Thursday.

The victim was identified as Nirakar Sahu alias Nira, a trader of minor minerals and a native of Kantioputasahi under Tumusinga police limits in Dhenkanal.

According to sources, Nirakar was the prime accused in the murder case of Deepak Mahunta, samiti member of Baruan (A) panchayat. Mahunta was allegedly shot dead by Nirakar and his associates September 24, 2021. Police had then registered a case and arrested Nirakar on the charge. He was released on bail four months back.

Nirakar's bullet-riddled body was found in a mango orchard near Malabandha railway bridge in Alatuma village under Kamakhyanagar police limits, Thursday. Police registered a case on the basis of a complaint filed by his wife, Janaki Sahu, and launched an investigation. His brother Sarbeshwar Sahu also alleged that Nirakar was killed in a planned manner over past enmity.

P5

## 'BJP REWARDS HATE'

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, Sept 28:** Opposition leaders have slammed the BJP over its Lok Sabha member Ramesh Bidhuri, who is in the eye of a storm for his derogatory comments against BSP MP Danish Ali, being given poll responsibility by the party in Rajasthan's Tonk district.

In a post on X, Rajya Sabha MP Kapil Sibal said the BJP has 'rewarded' Bidhuri for attacking Ali with the 'unspeakable words' in Parliament. "BJP rewards hate. Bidhuri rewarded for attacking Danish Ali (BSP) for the unspeakable words he used in the Special Session of Parliament. Made BJP in-charge of Tonk District in Rajasthan." "Muslim population in Tonk 29.25 per cent. Symbolises hate for political dividends," he said Thursday.

Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh, in a post on X, said, "Sabka saath, sabka vikas,

sabka vishwas yeh sab hai inka bakwaas."

TMC MP Mahua Moitra also slammed the BJP and said Bidhuri has been 'rewarded' for his remarks against a Muslim MP.

"How does a showcase person be given a new role by BJP? Narendra Modi ji, is this your Sneha Yatra for minorities, your love outreach?" she said on X.

In a post of X, Congress leader Shashi Tharoor said, "So much for the #BhajaParty's show cause notice! The foul-mouthed MP is now in charge of Tonk, where no doubt he will have plenty of opportunities to polarise the electorate even further with his divisive rhetoric!"

Later, speaking with PTI, Sibal said an 'irresponsible' person has been given responsibility and that is the politics of the BJP.

Sibal said Bidhuri should have been expelled but instead, he has been 'rewarded'.

## Swaminathan, the genius who sowed it right

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Chennai, Sept 28:** "As I was working on agriculture, my family wanted me to take over the management of our plantations. But my aim was to master the art of developing new varieties, that is genetics and breeding. As the proverb has it, we reap what we sow. Consequently, sowing the right things is very important," Monkombu Sambasivan Swaminathan had once said.

Swaminathan, known as the father of India's Green Revolution, passed away at his residence here, Thursday. He was 98 and is survived by three daughters including Dr Soumya Swaminathan, the former chief scientist of the World Health Organisation.

Madhura Swaminathan and Nitya Rao are his other two daughters and his wife Mina Swaminathan predeceased him. Fondly addressed as MS by his



1925 - 2023

friends and colleagues, Swaminathan, in his long career demonstrated what he said and ensured bumper crops by working side by side with farmers.

Born in Kumbakonam in Tamil Nadu August 7, 1925 to M

K Sambasivan and Parvati Thangammai, Swaminathan played a significant role in changing the trajectory of the agriculture sector when farmers were dependent on archaic farming techniques.

He belonged to an era when hunger and malnutrition were the order of the day in several parts of the country and the nation, with a population of about 300 million, was on the cusp of independence. The Bengal famine (1943-44) not only haunted the people but also greatly influenced his career and made him fix his goal on ensuring food security and then nutrition security.

Swaminathan's research that began as a plant geneticist addressed the issue of food insecurity, helped small farmers increase their income by enhancing productivity. Eventually, a nation that once depended on American wheat to feed its people in the 1960s was transformed into a foodgrain surplus nation.

In recognition of his stellar contributions, he has been awarded Padma Vibushan and numerous other academic awards and honours including

the prestigious Ramon Magsaysay Award.

In 1968, Indian farmers harvested 17 million tonnes of wheat, in contrast to 12 million tonnes that had been the best in a very good monsoon. The extra five million tonnes was really a quantum leap.

This became the wheat revolution and the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi had released a special commemorative stamp in July 1968. He dedicated his life to make a turnaround in agrarian economy by employing innovative techniques. He began his research career with cytogetic studies in potato in 1949 at the Agricultural University, Wageningen, the Netherlands, and later at Cambridge University, where he obtained his PhD in Genetics in 1952. He received the prestigious Padma Shri, Padma Bhushan, and Padma Vibhushan awards besides receiving 84 honorary doctorate degrees.

# leisure



## HAILEY SCOLDED BY RESTAURANT STAFFER

Model Hailey Bieber got into a controversy with her parking habit. In a viral TikTok video, the model could be seen getting yelled at by a restaurant employee for parking her car in the wrong spot in Paris, reports [aceshowbiz.com](#).

## MICHAEL GAMBON PASSES AWAY AT 82

Veteran actor Michael Gambon, famous for playing Hogwarts headmaster Albus Dumbledore in six of the eight *Harry Potter* movies, has died from pneumonia. He was 82.



### FORTUNE FORECAST

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

**ARIES**  
Today is a bright day, and the stars foretell success for you. If you find yourself in a creative mood, indulge in some activity that will satisfy the urge. But, Ganesh says, if you are driving alone, exercise a great deal of caution to be on the safe side.

**TAURUS**  
Fortune favours the brave and you will wake up feeling gutsy. Your performance will peak today and you will reap the benefits of real estate and construction business. Your peers and boss will extend all the support you need. All in all, a day to bask in the glory of advantages and awards.

**GEMINI**  
Maintaining the image you have created in the minds of people, as well as upholding your reputation in society will give you some anxious moments today. You will work hard to improve your social standing, and will get results by the end of the day. It is an auspicious and lucky day for you, says Ganesh.

**CANCER**  
Today, you are likely to be brimming with love and compassion. However, certain negative thoughts will spoil all your good work. But don't fret! Your efforts won't go wasted and you will get the desired results sooner or later, says Ganesh.

**LEO**  
Do not be surprised if you find yourself today in a situation that somehow feels like a landmark moment in your life. Whether it is a personal matter or something related to work, that you must wait to find out, you will need all your grit and diplomacy to sail through.

**VIRGO**  
The bulb of ideas will burn bright today. A possible see-saw between your contractual obligation and current duties may baffle you. New contacts will stand you in good stead. Blood will prove thicker, and family and friends will consolidate their place in your life.

**LIBRA**  
Your instincts are at their peak today. Generally, this means a lot of good, but for you, it may also mean having to put up with the trouble of small things bothering you in a big way. So, it becomes highly important for you to remain balanced and focused.

**SCORPIO**  
Investing in real estate could yield maximum profits today, says Ganesh. An unusual gain from speculative trade is also on the cards. But you may need to spend time in the waiting room, before a more profitable opportunity comes by.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
You are on a high today and a feeling of ecstasy surrounds you. You are performance driven and shall give your best in anything you take up. Listen to your inner voice, it will guide you to the correct path. Ganesh showers His benevolent blessings on you.

**CAPRICORN**  
You will be overpowered with nostalgia and may long to get in touch with old pals. And as Ganesh says, chances are that you may take a liking to your ex-lover, while simultaneously strengthening your social standing. All in all, the day will be a productive one.

**AQUARIUS**  
You will be on a spending spree today. But, make sure that your desire to enjoy life doesn't burn a hole in your pocket. Watch your words and steps, as people are observing your every move. You have put all of your eggs in one basket, so make sure that you don't mess up and lose everything that you have, advises Ganesh.

**PISCES**  
Some conflicts could crop up in the morning on the domestic front. However, they will cease to be a cause of annoyance as the day progresses. Come evening and you will be in as fine a mood as you ever were, ready to spend time basking in the affection of your near and dear ones, says Ganesh.

## Sonam desperate to headline a period drama

**Mumbai:** Actress Sonam Kapoor recently said filmmakers have preferred to cast her in girl-next-door parts rather than giving her the chance to star in a movie that will need her to wear heavy costumes and jewellery.

"I've done period dramas but for some reason, every director, even though I'm known for my clothes, every director likes me in simple clothes and no make-up. I'm always (playing) the girl-next-door. I've never done a period film with jewellery and Indian clothes. (In films) I'm always wearing simple salwar kameez... So, my dream is to do a period dramatic role one day," Kapoor said at the Jio MAMI Mumbai Film Festival panel discussion on The Art of Costume Design - Celebrating the book and the legacy of Bhanu Athaiya.

The actor, known for sartorial fashion choices off the screen, said she feels boxed in the image of a simpleton in films.

The 38-year-old actor adds, "Movies have a huge impact on how people dress... With her designs, Bhanu Athaiya created so many trends. With Sadhna ji, the short kurtas and tight churidars, which only Sadhna ji could wear... It was so significant that when you think of that era you think of that outfit." PTI



## Ranbir explains why he doesn't have a publicist



**Mumbai:** Actor Ranbir Kapoor who turned 41 Thursday, has been in the industry for over a decade but he has never hired a publicist or a Public Relations manager. He manages his dates himself.

In an interview to media agency then, the Barfi! actor said, "PR is the death of an actor. What happens is when you use PR the wrong way, you start believing it. People who plant articles about themselves or about other people, it becomes a very addictive game. And you start believing that my stardom is dependent only on how many times my face is featured on the cover of a magazine."

He went on to add, "I think PR is something you have to use intelligently; where your skills are concerned. You use PR intelligently when you're really doing something. And if you don't believe in something... if I'm going to a charity event for a PR thing, the audience sees through it. If you don't believe in something, they'll always see through you."

On the work front, Ranbir will next be seen in *Animal*, which is slated to release December 1.

AGENCIES

## Wamiqa wanted to quit acting



**Mumbai:** Actress Wamiqa Gabbi is garnering rave reviews for her latest web *Charlie Chopra*. However, there was time when she wanted to quit acting.

Wamiqa said, "Bombay can make you really underconfident. Any profession for that matter, but especially Bombay when you are living alone. I was here alone when I came, though I had all the support of my parents and I always had that, Bombay made me feel that way."

She added, "As a young girl with dreams, I once believed that my mere presence in Bombay would transform the city. This idealistic notion, born in Chandigarh, eventually burst. I realized the world didn't revolve around me. Rejections followed, partly due to my own lack of self-improvement. Over eight or nine years, my confidence waned. Mumbai, a stark contrast to my pampered family life, served as a humbling reality check."

The *Jubilee* actress recalled, "During those times, I remember feeling very low and doubtful about myself and my craft. I was comparing myself to others and their journey, always wanting to be someone else. At that time, I felt anxiety, uneasiness...not peaceful. I was not happy with my work. I thought I was done, did not want to be an actor anymore."

AGENCIES

## National Theatre Festival- 2023: Day 4



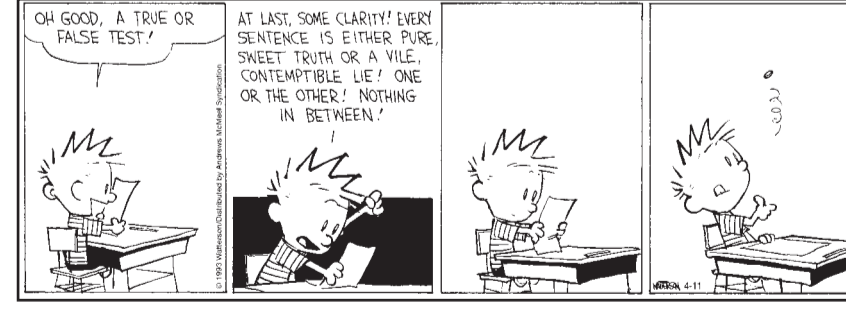
Members of Thealight theatre troupe of Kolkata presented Bengali play *Mayapari* on the fourth evening of the festival at Rabindra Mandap, Thursday. The metaphorical play involving four dolls, a fairy and a wicked queen of ghosts was written and directed by Atanu Sarkar. Theatre directors Manoj Patnaik, Lala Biren Roy and Nalini Nihar Nayak were among the dignitaries present on the occasion. Eminent dramatist Hemendra Mohapatra was conferred with Odisha Natya Sangh (ONS) Samman on the occasion. The five-day event is being held to celebrate the 36th Foundation Day of ONS.

PIC: MAUSAM NANDA

### PEANUTS



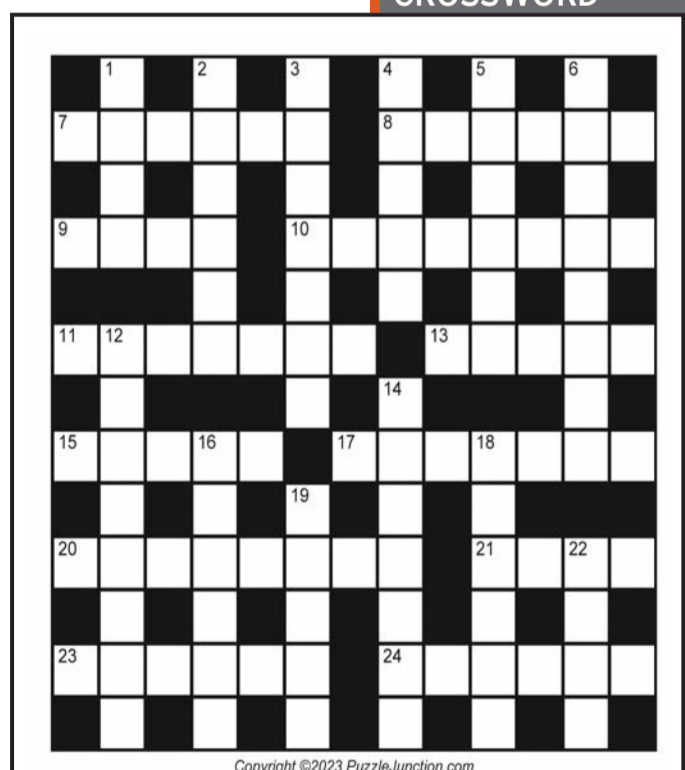
### CALVIN AND HOBBS



### BREVITY



### FUN post CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 7 Rock dove
  - 8 Spotted wildcat
  - 9 Songbird
  - 10 Limitless
  - 11 Delinquent
  - 13 Camelot, to Arthur
  - 15 Torment
  - 17 City on the Tigris
  - 20 Family keepsake
  - 21 Atomiser output
  - 23 Attack by plane
  - 24 Clan members
  - 6 Mexican dish
  - 12 Sketch
  - 14 Olive family shrub
  - 16 Christiania locale
  - 18 Tiny village or Shakespeare hero
  - 19 North and South, e.g.
  - 22 Goblet feature
- Down**
- 1 City founded by Pizarro
  - 2 Chemist's jar
  - 3 Jealous
  - 4 Zany
  - 5 Spirit rapping

### 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.

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

### SOLUTIONS

**CROSSWORD**

C	P	T	F	B	S
T	U	M	O	U	R
B	O	E	A	S	R
T	E	N	D	A	N
L	C	S	U	N	
G	A	Z	L	L	E
R	E	R	L	E	T
S	C	I	F	I	
H	O	A	L	L	
A	D	O	R	A	B
U	U	H	I	T	H
A	K	I	M	B	O
E	S	R	H	E	Z

**SUDOKU**

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

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



DIETARY HABITS HAVE SHIFTED TOWARDS PROCESSED AND UNHEALTHY FOODS, LOADED WITH SUGAR AND FAT. THIS, COMBINED WITH A DECREASE IN PHYSICAL ACTIVITY DUE TO MORE SEDENTARY LIFESTYLES, CONTRIBUTES TO CARDIAC AILMENTS

Rising heart attacks among schoolkids, teens worrisome



- What is bad: Processed food (chips, cookies, sweets, soft beverages, instant noodles, sugary cereals, frozen meals, ice cream, bakery items, and chocolates)
Decrease in physical activity
Sedentary lifestyle
Obesity
Tips for fit and healthy life: Better nutrition, Increased physical activity, Improved stress management

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 28: Riddhi Mewada, 12, a class VIII student in Gujarat's Surat, collapsed in the class and died of a suspected heart attack Wednesday.

Last week, Atif Siddiqui, 14, a student of Class IX in Lucknow, died after he collapsed in his classroom due to suspected heart attack during a lecture.

Riddhi and Atif are not the lone victims, as, in the recent past, many young and school going children have lost their precious lives to heart attacks.

"This rise in heart attack cases among school-going kids is a concerning trend," Ashwani Mehta, Cardiologist at Sir Ganga Ram Hospital, New Delhi, said.

He pointed out several key factors at play.

"Dietary habits have shifted towards processed and unhealthy foods, loaded with sugar and fat. This, combined with a decrease in physical activity due to more sedentary lifestyles, contributes significantly," he said.

A recent report by Delhi-based nutrition think tank Nutrition Advocacy in Public Interest (NAPI) showed that regularly used pack-

Work pressure and lack of exercise are the major reasons behind heart attacks among young people. Awareness is very much necessary among the people for treatment of heart related issues at right time

TANMAY KUMAR DAS | SENIOR CARDIOLOGIST AT CARE HOSPITAL

aged products such as chips, cookies, sweets, soft beverages, instant noodles, sugary cereals, frozen meals, ice cream, bakery items, and chocolates have salt, sugar and fat at higher-than-recommended levels.

This has increased the "incidence of high blood pressure, diabetes and high cholesterol levels in the younger population, and these lifestyle factors lead to further complications for heart health issues in kids", Mehta said.

He suggested "a multi dynamic approach" to help youngsters stay fit and live a healthy life. This in-

cludes better nutrition, increased physical activity, and improved stress management techniques.

Early education about cholesterol and heart health will also be an important factor to curb this trend, he said.

Not just school kids, instances of growing heart diseases, including Coronary Artery Disease (CAD), among teens and youth has also witnessed quantum rise, of late.

Dibyaranjan Behera Cardiologist of AMRI Hospital said, "The main causes for CAD include diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, stress, smoking, bad lifestyle, obesity and alcoholism."

Earlier, we used to notice this trend among elderly people, but now we are finding it among 25-30 year age group. "Recently I came across a case where a 23 year old

suffered a heart attack. The reason behind the rising cases among the youth is social media and work stress. Also the jump from middle income to higher income and pressure of maintaining it is another factor," he said adding, "heart attack is 90 percent preventable if we avoid bad lifestyle and maintain good health by doing exercise and eating healthy."

Debasish Das additional professor, Dept of Cardiology of AIIMS Bhubaneswar said youngsters these days mostly eat outside and work long time by sitting at one place. "Work stress is also one of the causes of heart attack. Due to stress, cholesterol increase in the body. The awareness to change lifestyle is necessary and it is the only way to avoid the heart attack at young age," he said.

PIC FOR REPRESENTATION

(WITH IANS INPUTS)

Air pollution may up risk of stroke within 5 days

Short-term exposure to air pollution may be linked to an increased risk of stroke, according to a study.

The meta analysis, published recently in the journal Neurology, defined short-term exposure as occurring within five days of the stroke.

A stroke can cause lasting brain damage, long-term disability, or even death. Signs of a stroke can range from mild weakness to paralysis or numbness on one side of the face or body.

"Previous research has established a connection between long-term exposure to air pollution and an increased risk of stroke," said study author Ahmad Toubasi, from the University of Jordan in Amman.

"However, the correlation between short-term exposure to air pollution and stroke had been less clear. For our study, instead of looking at weeks or months of exposure, we looked at just five days and found a link between short-term exposure to air pollution and an increased risk of stroke," Toubasi said.

The analysis involved a review of 110 studies that included more than 18 million cases of stroke. Researchers looked at pollutants such as nitrogen dioxide, ozone, carbon monoxide and sulfur dioxide.

They also looked at different sizes of particulate matter, including PM1, which is air pollution that is less than 1 micron (µm) in diameter, as well as PM2.5 and PM10.

PM2.5 or smaller includes inhalable particles from motor vehicle exhaust, the burning of fuels by power plants and other in-

Higher concentration of pollutants such as nitrogen dioxide and ozone linked to 28% and 5% increased risk of stroke, respectively

dustries as well as forest and grass fires. PM10 includes dust from roads and construction sites.

People who had exposure to a higher concentration of various types of air pollution had an increased risk of stroke.

Higher concentrations of nitrogen dioxide were linked to a 28 per cent increased risk of stroke and higher ozone levels were linked to a 5 per cent increase, the researchers said.

Carbon monoxide had a 26 per cent increased risk and sulfur dioxide had a 15 per cent increase, they said.

The study found that a higher concentration of PM1 was linked to a 9 per cent increased risk of stroke, with PM2.5 at 15 per cent and PM10 at 14 per cent.

Higher levels of air pollution were also linked to higher risk of death from stroke, according to the researchers.

Higher concentrations of nitrogen dioxide were linked to a 33 per cent increased risk of death from stroke, sulfur dioxide, a 60 per cent increase, PM2.5, a 9 per cent increase and PM10, a 2 per cent increase, they said.

"There is a strong and significant association between air pollution and the occurrence of stroke as well as death from stroke within five days of exposure," Toubasi said.

"This highlights the importance of global efforts to create policies that reduce air pollution. Doing so may reduce the number of strokes and their consequences," the researcher added.

KIMS performs record 500+ EPS & RFA

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, Sept 28: Another milestone was set by the Kalinga Institute of Medical Sciences (KIMS), under KIIT-DU, here when its Cardiology department conducted 500+ Electro-Physiology Studies and Radio Frequency Ablation (EPS & RFA) procedures, Thursday.

The crucial treatment is meant to control, or correct, abnormal rhythm in heart.



The procedures initially started at KIMS Cathlab November 29, 2017 and the institution is still a major centre for EPS & RFA in the eastern region of India.

Medical superintendent Rama Chandra Das and faculty members of Cardiology and Department of Cardio Thoracic and Vascular Surgery (CTVS) and Cathlab staffs were present during a special celebration to mark the occasion.

Anupam Jena of KIMS Cardiology department who has done a special course in EPS & RFA management from South Korea said, "Earlier, people from Odisha had to travel to Hyderabad or Chennai for EPS & RFA procedures. KIMS had started it for the first time in Odisha. Now people are availing the service here. It is helping the people of our state in a big way."

He also added that on an average, KIMS has been receiving 10 or more cases in a month for EPS & RFA procedures and such cases are on the rise. "During Covid-19 pandemic, we did not get any such case. But now we are getting more patients and provide them the best of facilities," added Jena.

He also thanked the KIMS authorities and, especially, the founder of KIIT & KISS Achyuta Samanta for providing infrastructure for the EPS & RFA procedures at KIMS Cathlab.

Women at 25% higher risk of heart diseases: Experts

This year's theme for World Heart Day is 'Use Heart, Know Heart' that underlies the importance of caring for our hearts, increase public awareness cardiovascular diseases, including their prevention and global impact



Indian women are at 25 per cent higher risk of having heart diseases than men, say experts on the occasion of World Heart Day, Thursday.

Over the past two decades, prevalence of heart disease in women has increased by 300 per cent due to various factors.

India accounts for 60 of the world's heart disease burden and according to cardiologists, the growing issue of heart disease among Indians is multifaceted.

World Heart Day was declared at The UN Conference on Human Environment in Stockholm in 1972 and is celebrated September 29 every year to raise awareness among people about heart health, including talks, social events, access to health screenings, fundraising events and other activities.

This year's theme for World Heart Day is 'Use Heart, Know Heart' that underlies the importance of caring for our hearts, increase public awareness cardiovascular diseases, including their prevention and global impact.

Cardiologists say that on the occasion of World Heart Day, everyone has an opportunity to stop and consider how best to use heart for humanity, for nature and for you.

Beating cardiovascular diseases is something that matters to every beating heart.

Use heart means to think differently, engage for important causes and learn a few things about its potential to unite all of us.

According to P Rajendra Kumar Jain, HOD and Senior Consultant Cardiologist KIMS Hospitals, the World Heart Federation promotes the concept of heart healthy lifestyle as a basic human right.

Heart is a vital organ that is responsible for pumping nutrient rich blood for the body. It also supplies oxygen while removing toxins and waste. Heart can weigh 289.6 gram for men and 284.7 gram for women that beats 60-100 times

HEALTHY HABITS

- Achieving and maintaining a healthy weight
Eating well
Exercising regularly
Staying motivated
Being aware and mindful
Taking a dance class
Trying Pilates
Hiking
Swimming for social time

per minute.

Blood travels 12,000 miles throughout body each day and heart pumps 2,000 gallons of blood a day.

"There are special dietary requirements for people with cardiac issues. Sodium and fat intake can increase the impact of cardiovascular diseases. Excessive sodium can increase the risks of heart for heart attacks and other heart problems," Jain said.

About the types of heart diseases Hemant Kaurkuntla, Chief Cardiothoracic Surgeon and CEO, Century Hospitals, Banjara Hills, said: "The term heart disease is a blanket term for various heart-related diseases. Rheumatic heart diseases, valvular heart disease, hypertensive heart disease, cerebrovascular disease, conditions related to abnormality of the rhythm, inflammatory heart diseases, coronary artery diseases etc are some common heart conditions amongst which hypertensive heart disease is one of the most common types of heart disease in Indian patients with high blood pressure that invariably damages the blood cells."

According to Imran Ul Haq, consultant interventional cardiologist

at Amor Hospitals, "World Health Organisation conducted a study which has found 35,40,000 deaths in India due to cardiovascular disease, being more prevalent amongst younger population. Also, Indians have the highest rate of Coronary Artery Disease."

According to studies, India's standardised CVD death rate is higher than the global average. Indians have been affected by high rates of diabetes, metabolic syndrome, hypertension and smoking which have increased the demographics of heart problems without prior warning.

Achieving and maintaining a healthy weight is one of the best things you can do for your heart. For example, eating well, exercising regularly, staying motivated, being aware and mindful can contribute towards a healthy heart. Most of the women face challenges in accessing quality healthcare, such as cardiovascular screening, preventive care, timely treatment among others.

Bhanu Kiran Reddy, consultant interventional cardiology, SLG Hospital, says that taking a dance class, trying pilates, hiking, swimming for social time can multiply healthy heart effects.

"The campaign for this year's theme reminds us to safeguard our health by caring and understanding the importance of our heart. This can help us reduce risk factors such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol, obesity, diabetes etc. On most occasions, heart disease is looked at as a broad term that encompasses several conditions. Most people may know about coronary heart diseases and heart attacks, other heart diseases include, heart failure, arrhythmias in which the heart has rhythm abnormalities." IANS

Advertisement for Apollo Hospitals, Bhubaneswar, featuring World Heart Day 29th Sep and Cardiac Package for Preventive Cardiac Health. Includes details for Level 1 and Level 2 packages with prices and inclusions.

Advertisement for CARE Hospitals, featuring World Heart Day 29th Sep and the slogan 'We are the CAREtakers of your heart'. Includes contact information and a list of services offered.

# 'Mental health disorder' jibe triggers ruckus in Assembly

Nayagarh MLA Arun Kumar Sahoo terms the opposition members' behaviour as "mental health disorder" and urged them to come to the House with good mental health



## IN THE HOUSE

Bhubaneswar, Sept 28: For the fourth day in a row, the state Assembly Thursday witnessed ruckus over the statement of a ruling BJD MLA who urged the opposition members to come to the House with good "mental health".

The statement was made by Nayagarh MLA Arun Kumar Sahoo, who came down heavily on the leader of opposition (LoP), Jaynarayan Mishra of BJP, and Congress Legislature Party leader Narasingha Mishra after the opposition targeted Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik's private secretary and 5T secretary without taking the officer's name.

"Two Mishras have been criticising the 5T governance style of the state government which is a concept. There has been overall development in all the constituencies including those of opposition MLAs through the 5T concept. I will quit politics if there is no development in Odisha," Sahoo said rejecting the opposition parties' criticism towards the 5T initiative of the state government.

He said there seems to be some "mental health disorder" and requested all to come to the House in a good mental health condition.

the last three-and-a-half years, Rs 40 crore was spent on the chopper. The CM should give the details of money spent on security arrangements and other expenditure made from the public exchequer on the grievance meetings."

He also raised question on the helicopter use allegedly by the 5T secretary to attend Pallahara MLAs' wedding and the 11th-day ceremony of Talcher MLAs' father:

"How did the 5T secretary use the helicopter booked in name of Minister Pradip Amat to travel to Cuttack?" Mishra asked.

Referring to Patnaik's statement, the LoP asked, "How can a person be the CMO? Does CMO mean a particular person? No other officer from the CMO was seen in the grievance meetings all along."

Congress Legislative Party leader Narasingha Mishra also slammed the state government over a series of protests over several grievances at Lower PMG here.

"The CM in his statement said the CMO is going to several districts to address people's grievances but why is it not hearing people's plight at Lower PMG in the state capital?" the Congress leader asked.

The CLP leader also alleged that he has seen the video where ministers were making arrangements for the secretary's meeting. "What the CM actually wants? Does he suggest ministers to become servants of government officers," Mishra asked.

When the House reassembled at 4 PM, similar protests were held again following which Speaker adjourned proceedings till 5pm.

Protesting the words used by the BJD lawmaker, the opposition BJP members trooped into well of the House and demanded immediate expunge of the words "mental health disorder" from Sahoo's statement.

Speaker Pramila Mallik said she would examine the matter. She also adjourned the proceeding till 4pm as the BJP members refused to stop shouting in the well of the House.

Annoyed over the Speaker's statement, the BJP members continued to stage protests even when Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik moved a motion for the passing of the home and general administration departments' supplementary expenditure for the 2023-24 fiscal.

While speaking during the Zero Hour, LoP Jaynarayan Mishra raised the issue relating to 5T secretary's chopper rides across the state and his conduct of grievance meetings in 190 places.

The BJP leader said, "We have sought an answer on the spending on the official's chopper rides. The CM during his September 25 statement said in



**FIGHT FOR RIGHTS:** Members of Odisha Government High School (secondary) NPS Teachers Association protest at Lower PMG in Bhubaneswar, Thursday, demanding fulfillment of their 2-point charter of demands

# DGP launches Cyber Safety Campaign, 2023

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 28: State Director General of Police (DGP) Sunil Kumar Bansal Thursday unveiled the mascot and theme song of the 'Cyber-Safety Campaign, 2023' at the Police Bhawan here, Thursday.

The massive state-wide awareness campaign on cyber security, which is said to be the first of its kind in the country, will be formally launched by Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik at Kalinga stadium September 30 with the flagging off the 'Cyber Suraksha Rath', a special campaign vehicle. 34 such vehicles will be rolled out across all police districts of the state during the fortnight-long campaign



which will culminate October 15.

Apart from unveiling the mascot, an Irrawaddy Dolphin, Bansal also released campaign posters and two cyber safety advisory brochures during the special launching programme.

As many as 22 videos have been prepared which will be shown to people to educate them

on ways to avoid getting trapped by cyber fraudsters.

Police sources said the educational videos highlighting two critical aspects - addressing fraudulent activities through loan apps, shedding light on the dangers of such schemes, and the other addressing the grave issue of child pornography, emphasizing the importance of safeguarding children from online exploitation, are aim at educating and empowering public to recognize and combat these threats effectively.

The campaign will be organized through both online and offline modes. Asha workers, Anganwadi members and SHG members will be roped in during the campaign in rural areas.

Meanwhile Bansal said cyber crimes are rising in the country and globally too. The crimes have many dimensions. It is easy to prevent cyber crimes than arrest the accused and recover the lost money. The recovery procedure for the money swindled away is often tardy and fraught with many difficulties, especially when the accused spunged on buying goods and valuables.

"I would like to appeal people to assist in the awareness campaign. Moreover, our intention is to make them aware of the do's and don'ts in order to remain safe while using social media, making banking transactions or charting with relatives on messenger apps," said the police Chief.

## PERSONAL PRESENCE OF OCSSL MD

# SC stays High Court order

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, Sept 28: The Supreme Court has stayed an order of the Orissa High Court requiring the personal appearance of the managing director (MD) of Odisha Civil Supplies Corporation Ltd (OCSSL) to show cause as to why contempt proceedings be not initiated against him.

A three-judge bench headed by Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud also issued notice on the petition filed by the MD of Odisha Civil Supplies Corporation Ltd and sought response of the respondents in three weeks. The notice was issued to Babul Agrawal, who was the petitioner before the High Court, Odisha government and Bolangir Collector. The bench posted the matter for hearing October 20.

"Pending further orders, the impugned order of the High Court dated 22 September 2023 requiring the personal presence of the Managing Director, Odisha State Civil Supplies Corporation Ltd, shall remain stayed," the bench



also comprising Justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra said. It has been submitted before the apex court that there was absolutely no justification for the High Court to issue a notice invoking the contempt jurisdiction and requiring the personal presence of MD.

Significantly, the Orissa High Court September 22 directed the MD of State Civil Supplies Corporation Ltd to appear in person before it October 3 to show cause as to why contempt proceedings be not initiated for the award of a contract in favour of a person, despite the alleged pendency of criminal proceedings.

The High Court's order had come on a writ petition filed before it by Agrawal challenging the award of the contract to Abani Kanta Sai for appointment as a handling contractor in Bolangir district for 2023-2025.

# Naveen: Govt has zero tolerance towards crime

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Sept 28: The overall law and order situation in Odisha has remained largely peaceful and under control, said Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik in the Assembly, Thursday.

Replying to a debate on Home and GA&PG demand discussion, he said that there have been no major law and order incidents on students, services, industrial, labour and agrarian fronts. The overall Maoist scenario has also shown remarkable improvement.

Stating that more than 5,000 candidates have been appointed in Odisha Police and the Prisons this year, Patnaik said further clearance has been given to fill up more than 3,300 posts in police and almost a thousand in prisons and fire services.

Under the 5T charter, Odisha Police launched the 'Monitoring of Atrocity, National Commission Cases and Assistance to Victims' (MANAV) portal in August to expedite the investigation cases under the



Patnaik said Mo Sarkaar (My government) initiative has instilled people's confidence in public services

SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act and for timely delivery of compensation to the victims, he added.

He said the Odisha government adopts zero tolerance towards crime, particularly those against women and the government has ensured free, fair, and impartial investigation.

However, the Chief Minister was pained to see the politicisation of very sensitive cases for "narrow vested interest. "I am pained to see the politicisation of very sensitive cases for narrow vested interests. This

is an injustice to the victims, and committed policemen. Even an on-duty lady officer was physically assaulted. This cannot be tolerated in a civilised society," the Chief Minister said.

Patnaik said Mo Sarkaar (My government) initiative has instilled people's confidence in public services.

Recruitment examinations by the three recruiting commissions are being conducted regularly. This year, they have recommended more than 12,000 candidates for appointment, the chief minister added.

## WORLD MARITIME DAY

# 'Private investment will boost maritime sector'

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, Sept 28: Maritime shipping is the strongest driver of world economy as shipping carries majority of goods and commodities across the world said Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on World Maritime Day Thursday.

In his social media account, the Chief Minister pledged to unlock Odisha's huge potential in maritime shipping and celebrate state's glorious seafaring heritage.

He said, "Odisha is ensuring holistic development of maritime ecosystem through effective policies. The government is facilitating integrated development of non-major ports and inland waterways and promoting private sector investments into the maritime sector. It will make the state a favoured investment destination and create more job opportunities."

Meanwhile, Thursday an event was organised to celebrate World

Maritime Day at Dharma Port which was attended by Port officials and marine staff. Dhamra Port COO Sanjeev Gupta, Conservator of Dharma Port Captain Ajit Narayan Mahapatra and senior marine pilot Pradyut Sekhar Patra addressed the event. Captains of ship visiting Dharma Port appreciated the port's efficiency and safety standards.

It is to be noted that since 1978, World Maritime Day has been observed to acknowledging the commitment, dedication and contribution of seafarers in the global trade.

This year's theme is International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL) at 50. The International convention on Marine Pollution came into existence in the year 1973 with an aim to reduce marine pollution from ships operating worldwide. Seafarers are committed to protect the marine environment by complying with the MARPOL convention.

# Bhima Prusty bags 44th Sarala Puraskar

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 28: Prestigious 'Sarala Puraskar' presented every year by IMFA Charitable Trust (IMPACT) for literary excellence, has been awarded for 2023 to fictionist Bhima Prusty for his novel 'Jambuloka,' published by Paschima Publications in 2017.

The writer will be presented a plaque and a sum of five lakh rupees October 26. Along with Bhima Prusty's 'Jambuloka,' the other books that made it to the final round were Bijay Kumar Satpathy's 'Nastanidara Upakatha,' Aparna Mohanty's 'Agni Kamalini,' Amaresh Patnaik's 'Chahan Ba Nachahan,' Sarojini Sahoo's 'Dadan,' Ramesh Prasad Panigrahi's 'Kanina' and



Pradeep Kumar Panda's 'Jaha Mun Chahan Nathibi'.

Sitish Tripathi, Sucheta Mishra, Parameswar Mund, Baijayanti Mishra and Prithidhara Samal were the preliminary judges for selection of books while the judges for the final round were Biswaranjan, Mrinal Chatterjee, Prasanna

Kumar Mohanty, Yashodhara Mishra, Ranjan Kumar Das, Chirasree Indrasingh and Aditeswar Mishra.

Besides Sarala Puraskar, the 'Ila-Bansidhar Panda Kala Samman' for lifetime excellence in a field of art has been conferred this year on Guru Benuddhar Mohapatra, a pattachitra sculptor, and famous flute player Guru Mohini Mohan Patnaik. As part of the award, both of them will receive a certificate and a plaque with a monetary reward of two lakh rupees each. Aruna Mohanty, Ratikant Mohapatra, Mitali Chinara were judges in the music section and Panchami Manu Ukil, Biyot Projna Tripathy and Ramakanta Samantaray were judges for the art section.

# Tribal kids' edu to be supported by parents

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, Sept 28: ST & SC Development, Minorities and Backward Classes Welfare department has conducted first edition of its 'parents as partners' programme for parents of tribal kids studying in department-run residential schools and hostels on six scheduled dates this September across the state.

"The parents, busy earning their sustenance in distant hills, fields, and markets, came in large numbers to participate in the initiative, which aims to ensure their respectful involvement in their children's education," said a department official, adding that the initiative has



given these parents a platform to share their feedback and gain knowledge about other government initiatives.

As many as 3,91,433 parents attended these 'parents as part-

ners' programmes held in 1,776 institutions that included residential schools and Anvesha hostels, where 4,48,828 children are currently studying

ners' programmes held in 1,776 institutions that included residential schools and Anvesha hostels, where 4,48,828 children are currently residing and studying. "More than 87 per cent at-

tendance of parents speaks volumes about the eagerness of tribal people to have a say on matters of their children's education and services the kids are availing at these institutions," said department Secretary Roopa Roshan Sahoo.

As per sources, the school headmasters, teachers, non-teaching and hostel staff made sure parents and students felt at home by involving them in various cultural activities. "Along with parents, local people and PRI members attended the programmes, demanding such events to be organised at regular intervals, which would encourage them to actively contribute to their children's progress," the official said.

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# 'Murder accused' trader shot dead



**THE DECEASED SAHU WAS THE PRIME ACCUSED IN THE MURDER CASE OF A PANCHAYAT SAMITI MEMBER DEEPAK MAHUNTA OF BARUAN (A) PANCHAYAT**

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Kamakhyanager, Sept 28:** Unidentified miscreants shot dead a businessman accused in the murder case of a samiti member here in Dhenkanal district allegedly over past enmity, police said Thursday.

The victim was identified as Nirakar Sahu alias Nira, a trader of minor minerals and a native of Kantioputasahi under Tumusinga police limits in the district.

Reports said Sahu was the prime accused in the murder case of a panchayat samiti member Deepak Mahunta of Baruan (A) panchayat.

As per sources, Mahunta was allegedly shot dead by Nirakar and his associates, September 24, 2021. Police had then registered a case and arrested Nirakar on the charge. Later, he was released on bail four months back.

Nirakar's bullet ridden body was found lying in a mango orchard near Malabandha railway bridge in Alatum village under



Kamakhyanager police limits, Thursday. Police have registered a case over a complaint filed by his wife Janaki Sahu and launched an investigation. His brother Sarbeshwar Sahu also alleged that his brother has been killed in a planned manner over past enmity.

Police after preliminary inquiries said that three bullets pierced his chest and head and there are severe injury marks on his neck. People rushed to the crime spot after reports of the incident spread sending shockwaves in the area.

Dhenkanal SP Gyanaranjan Mohapatra, ASP Suryamani Pradhan, Kamakhyanager SDO Prabhakar Kumar Tripathy, Kamakhyanager police station IIC Sarat Chandra Mahalik rushed to the spot and took stock of the crime scene.

A scientific team and a dog squad were also pressed into service.

When contacted, Dhenkanal SP Gyanaranjan Mohapatra said it is suspected to be a planned murder. Multiple teams have been formed to nab the accused persons, he said expressing hope that very soon the accused will be arrested and put behind the bars.

# DSP to probe Susmita death case

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Rourkela, Sept 28:** Rourkela Superintendent of Police has ordered a probe into the controversial Susmita Minz death case. Sources said, the inquiry will be led by a DSP. Meanwhile, it is learned that HRPC will also monitor the case.

Rourkela SP Mitrabhanu Mohapatra informed that he gave an order for inquiry by a DSP level officer. "I have ordered an inquiry into the case and DSP Banita Majhi will lead the investigation," he said.

Another contentious angle of the death case is the complaint filed by the deceased's brother Sandeep Minz accusing five top officials of the district -- the



Sundargarh Collector, Rourkela ADM, Gurundia BDO, Gurundia CDDO and the lady ASI who was guarding Susmita Minz. Asked about this issue, the SP said, "No FIR has been registered and a senior officer will investigate that also."

It is pertinent to mention that

Sunita was working as an assistant collector in the local ADM office. On September 19 afternoon, her body was found floating in a pond in the Sensory Park here. The park is situated just in front of the main administrative building of RSP and also the main gate of the plant. Besides, the area is thickly populated. On September 16, she had started from her residence at Rambahal near Rajgangpur. It is reported that she had a meeting that day. Her brother also mentioned this in his complaint to the police. In the meeting, she was allegedly declared to be in depression. Later that day she shifted to a local hotel and her family registered a complaint with Uditnagar police station

the next day.

The police later traced her to the Radhika Regency Hotel. However, she did not go back home despite persuasion from her family. She was also given police protection and a lady ASI of Uditnagar PS, Alice Narmi Lugum was pressed into this. The question everybody is asking and her brother has also raised in the complaint that when she was given a police officer for protection, where was the cop when she died?

Speaking to the media the deceased's brother said, "When I filed the complaint at Plant Site PS the IIC did not register the case because I have given the complaint against the top officers. I want the FIR to be registered."

# Man killed after nephew shoots him with arrows

**Telkoi:** A man was killed after he was allegedly shot with arrows by his nephew over property dispute at Tigiria under this police limit in Keonjhar district, Thursday. The deceased was identified as Ramrai Munda, 49, of the village. The accused nephew Dasa Munda surrendered before police after murdering his uncle. Police said the deceased was working in a mining firm but often had fights with his elder brother and nephews over their landed properties. The issue cropped up again Thursday afternoon when he had a bitter altercation with his nephew on the issue. Enraged, his nephew Dasa Munda shot two arrows at Ramrai Munda. Ramrai collapsed on the spot and died after the two arrows pierced his chest. On being informed, Telkoi police reached the spot and sent the body for post-mortem.



# 7.9-ft croc rescued from village pond

PNN & AGENCIES

**Kendrapara, Sept 28:** The forest personnel of Rajnagar forest range rescued a 7.9-foot-long female estuarine crocodile from a village pond and released the reptile in Baunsagarh river Thursday.

DFO of Rajnagar Mangrove forest and wildlife division Sudarshan Gopinath Jadav said the crocodile was spotted in the pond of one Basudev Bhuiyan of Harishpur in Rajnagar.

Basudev Bhuiyan and some fellow villagers casted a net in the pond to catch fish, but to their surprise when they pulled out the net from the pond water, they found an estuarine crocodile entangled in their fishing net.

They informed the Rajnagar forest personnel who rushed to the spot, rescued the saltwater crocodile and took the reptile with them to release it in Baunsagarh river.

# Couple killed in mishap

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Baripada/Bangiriposhi, Sept 28:** A couple was killed after a speeding truck hit their bike on Dwarasuni ghati road on National Highway-49 near Bangiriposhi in Mayurbhanj district, Thursday.

The deceased couple was identified as Rabi Narayan Dash, 50, and his wife Rebati Dash, 40, residents of Biso police station area in the district. On being informed, police seized the body and sent it for post-mortem.

Rabi Narayan and his wife were travelling on their bike when the speeding truck hit them from rear on Dwarasuni ghati road. The truck after hitting their bike struck a roadside tree and skidded down the ghat road. The driver fled the scene after the mishap.

# NHRC seeks report on primary teachers' stir

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Kendrapara, Sept 28:** The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has issued notice to the Chief Secretary asking for an Action Taken Report (ATR) within four weeks on the ongoing primary teachers' strike in the state.

The NHRC passed the order, acting on a petition filed by human rights activist Radhakanta Tripathy who had stated that more than one lakh primary school teachers are on strike for more than two weeks in support of their demands.

Tripathy alleged that lack of government initiative to resolve the issue by mutual discussion and logical conclusion is primarily responsible for the teachers



to continue their agitation. He said the rights of education, a fundamental right of primary school students, have been violated.

These students have become accustomed to mid-day meals which have not been served to them due to ongoing strike.

The inaction and failure of the government in addressing the issue posed a serious violation

of human rights of the school going children, the petition contended.

Tripathy sought for intervention of the NHRC to address the grievances of the teachers and ensure uninterrupted education to the school students including mid-day meals and also with other child rights.

The NHRC in its order stated that primary school students

are suffering due to the ongoing strike by the teachers. The strike began September 8 and the teachers have refused to work.

Due to this strike, the school students are being deprived of their education and mid-day meals.

The teachers, Tripathy said, have warned that all 56,000 primary and upper primary schools in the state will be shut down in the coming week, if their demands are not met by the government.

He said the innocent students are bearing the brunt of this strike. Now the question arises who will bear the compensation for the loss of education and violation of children rights during the strike period.

# Man jumps into river with toddler daughter

The family members told police that Chandan was depressed after his wife's suicidal death around a month ago



PNN & AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 28:** A 30-year-old man jumped into the Baitarani river from Akhuapada bridge in Bhadrak district, along with his infant daughter, Thursday.

Chandan Sahu, a resident of Balipokhari village in Bhandaripokhari police station area, suddenly stopped his two-wheeler on the bridge over the Baitarani river at Akhuapada around 9 pm Wednesday, and jumped off along with his daughter, an eyewitness said.

He left his motorcycle, mobile phone and shoes on the bridge before taking the extreme step.

"After having dinner, the father and daughter went out to get some things from a nearby shop. Later, he called home and said that they were going to die by sui-

cide," a family member said.

On being informed, police and fire services personnel reached the spot and started a search operation.

However, the search was postponed due to poor visibility in the night and increased water level of the river.

The fire services personnel resumed the search again this morning but the father-daughter duo is yet to be traced. The family members told police that Chandan was depressed after his wife's death around a month ago. He used to work in a spinning mill in Surat of Gujarat, said a local police official.

Sources stated that Chandan's wife Laxmi Priya had reportedly died by suicide in Surat over family related issues. He had later returned to Odisha along with his two-and-a-half-year-old daughter.

# OPCC chief visits Sundargarh



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Rourkela, Sept 28:** OPCC chief Sarat Pattnaik, who undertook a tour of Sundargarh district, had an interaction with the media-persons Thursday evening at the Congress Bhawan here.

Pattnaik, who seemed to be in a hurry, was not ready to take uncomfortable questions. When asked why the lone Congress MLA from the district Rajan Ekka of Rajgangpur constituency was not present in the meeting, seemingly a little irritated Pattnaik said, "Don't you know the Assembly is going on?"

When he was reminded that the Assembly was closed he said, "I have asked him to be there." When he was asked about his source confidence of 9-90, he again looked irritated and said, "Don't you worry, we cannot discuss our strategy in public but we are confident that the result would be much better."

The PCC chief was not ready to take any Sundargarh-centric questions. In a monologue spanning nearly five to seven minutes

he just went on speaking against the BJD government at the beginning. "Babudom would not be allowed. If you want to do politics, then leave your job. The CM is not meeting the people as he is not coming out. There is a vacuum in administration. The media is being gagged and it is not even allowed inside the Assembly."

"There are vacancies not being filled. Corruption is at its peak. Crime against women has gone up in the state. The state has gone back in its development and the shameless government is saying everything is all right and the state is the best in the country."

His next target was the Centre and he said, "The women's bill was a dream of Rajiv Gandhi ji, then Soniji. We want the bill to be operational in 2024. This bill is a big eyewash. The country is going through the worst phase and BJP is responsible. Where are the two crore jobs annually? This is a government, which has pushed back the country by several years. Where are the smart cities? Where is the bullet train?" he questioned.

# PASSENGERS' THUMBS UP TO VANDE BHARAT

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Rourkela, Sept 29:** With the second Vande Bharat Express for the state plying between Puri and Rourkela, the Steel City has now got its first connectivity to anywhere through the much-hyped Vande Bharat. For the last 15-20 days, Rourkela has been abuzz with the impending commencement of the semi-high-speed train.

The train arrived at its designated time 12.45 hours at Rourkela, Thursday. As soon as the announcement is made ahead of the arrival of the train, the entire station becomes active. There is a visible enthusiasm amongst the passengers and also those who come to see the train.

Alighting from the train a lady travelling here from Puri said that she was extremely satisfied with the train and its facilities. "I had heard about bullet trains and TGV but today I found it is in no way inferior to those except for the speed. Everything inside was just out of the world given the kind of facilities we used to have in the Indian Railways trains," she said.



"This is a unique experience and I must say, I and my family enjoyed the journey thoroughly. The cleanliness is impeccable, the food that was served was the best in quality so far in comparison to other trains and the other facilities are wonderful. I am impressed," A passenger said.

Another passenger said, "Well to get a good service you have to pay some more and the quality of service totally matches the price. There is no denial."

Similarly, those boarding the train for the first time from here

to Puri and Bhubaneswar were also equally eager to experience it.

"I had heard about it from my friends but never got the opportunity to try myself. Now I am going to do that. Price is not an issue. What matters is the kind of services it offers," said Abhishek Das, a software specialist.

Another person who was travelling with his family to Puri said, "The train is great so a little steep price is not going to affect travellers."

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Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC) Kolkata, an R&D organization under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), Govt. of India, Plot-E2/1, Block-GP, Sector-V, Salt Lake Electronics Complex, Bidhan Nagar, Kolkata-700091, invites "Expression of Interest (EoI)" from interested parties/entrepreneurs for Transfer of Technology (ToT) of "COLOSENS" - an affordable colorimetric diagnostic instrument for bacteria diarrhoea screening. For details, please visit [www.cdac.in](http://www.cdac.in). For any query, please contact 9477355692 / 9405138189. Last date of EoI submission: 27.10.2023 by 5.00 P.M. CBC 06147/12/0001/2324

FOCUS DIPLOMACY

# FRAUGHT RELATIONSHIP



With a lot at stake India has to tread the ground cautiously from here on as the Nijjar killing could portend dangerous ramifications for the future

At a recent Law Conference on "Intervention and State Sovereignty" I was asked if the Canadian PM's allegations about the involvement of Indian intelligence agents in the extraterritorial killing of Canadian-Sikh extremist and leader of the banned Khalistan Tiger Force (KTF) Hardeep Singh Nijjar amounted to an infringement of Canadian sovereignty by a foreign power. The answer is simple; it would, but are the allegations credible? Going by Indian government and media reports, Canada has not produced any credible evidence so far to prove the charges while at the same time asking for India's cooperation in the investigation supported by its Five Eyes Intelligence ally USA.



Malay Mishra

**FOR MORE THAN FOUR DECADES THE KHALISTAN ISSUE HAS BEEN FESTERING IN CANADA**

The question raises several intersecting issues, normative to geopolitical, passing through trade, economic, diasporic and even historical considerations. It rests largely on imagining the future of a fraught India-Canada relationship with the Khalistan issue being the infamous peg on which this current controversy has been tied. Going back in time, the issue had taken dangerous overtones in 1980s with the attack on the Golden Temple and flushing out of radical Sikh leader Bhindranwale leading to the assassination of then PM Indira Gandhi by her Sikh bodyguards and its deadly aftermath with anti-Sikh riots. That issue had been long buried in history and nobody in Punjab today would like to either relive those gory events or support in any way a state of Khalistan in India.

However, for more than four decades the Khalistan issue has been festering in Canada; over the past few years it has only aggravated and taken violent overtones. The Trudeau government's support to Khalistani groups has been conspicuous because of its domestic compulsions (his Liberal party is supported by the New Democratic Party led by Khalistani leader Jagmeet Singh)

while the Khalistani cause has been revived in parts of Sikh diaspora in Canada, UK and USA with death threats to Indian diplomats, vandalising of diplomatic missions and desecration of Hindu temples. Added to that has been the recent call by leader of the Sikhs for Justice (SHJ) Pannun for Hindus to leave Canada in a brazen attempt to disturb harmony of Indian diaspora who have been contributing substantially to the country's development. The SFJ organised a referendum this month on setting up a Khalistani state in India under the eyes of the Canadian government. Several extradition requests of Khalistani leaders by GOI have been lying with Canadian government with no action. It would therefore be not unwarranted to claim that Canada has become a safe haven for such terrorists and secessionist leaders.

The killing of Nijjar, a declared terrorist and fugitive from law with a bounty of Rs 10 lakh on his head, on June 18 at Surrey in British Columbia, burst out in the open exactly three months later with Trudeau's explosive statement to the Canadian House of Commons alleging an Indian hand in the killing. The Indian government has completely rejected such accusations as "absurd" and "motivated." EAM Jaishankar in his address to

the UNGA categorically stated that India did not indulge in such acts adding, "respect for territorial integrity and non-interference in internal affairs cannot be exercised in cherry-picking."

A recent New York Times report claimed that the US government had shared human and signals intelligence with Canada based on intercepted communications in the Indian Mission in Ottawa. Soon after, two senior US officials, Secretary of State Antony Blinken and National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan, known to be India-friendly, took a strong position in calling for "accountability" from Indian authorities and cooperation with the Canadian government, and ruling out any "special exemption for any country" respectively. The US stand, as a vocal member within Five Eyes, can be attributed to deflecting domestic critics that it was going too soft on India in its strategy of propping India as a counterweight to China in the region despite the latter's democratic backsliding, rights violations and treatment of minorities.

Amid all these shocks the core issue stands out, the spreading of tentacles of a reinvigorated Khalistani movement on foreign soil with tacit support of Western governments, and how to stem it, lest its repercussions do not cause long term damage

to Indian polity. It would be therefore diplomatically prudent for India to raise this issue at all possible forums. In fact, Jaishankar minced no words in his UNGA address that political convenience should not determine responses to "terrorism, extremism and violence."

There are alternative reports that the Nijjar killing could have been the result of an internecine quarrel within the Canadian Khalistani community. The Washington Post has broken a story of there being six individuals and two vehicles involved in the killing rather than two men and one getaway vehicle. Be that as it may the Indian government two diametrically opposite options. Either go public and strongly claim India's innocence as a democracy with adherence to rule of law while underpinning the extremely serious matter of collusion of certain countries in encouraging the Khalistani movement which amounts to an attack on India's sovereignty and territorial integrity, or adopt quiet diplomacy, talk directly with the Canadian government through government and non-government channels (use its enormous diasporic clout) and diffuse the matter. With its premier external intelligence agency under cloud, it would be doubly serious if India were to acquire the reputation of a "rogue state" killing anti-India elements on foreign soil, particularly in liberal democracies.

In the tit-for-tat syndrome which has vitiated bilateral relations; expelling diplomats, issuing travel advisories, stopping issuance of visas and aborting trade talks while targeting Khalistani operatives abroad and confiscating their properties at home, maybe par for course in short-term. However, with a lot at stake India has to tread the ground cautiously from here on as the Nijjar killing could portend dangerous ramifications for the future.

*The writer is a retired diplomat and political analyst. Views are personal.*

Sin and virtue are a game of resistance we play with God in His efforts to draw us towards perfection.

SRI AUROBINDO



## Vulnerable Lot

Of the many natural disasters that afflict India each year, floods are by far the most prevalent. This is no surprise, given that around 40 million hectares of land in the country are prone to flooding, and nearly 75% of the annual rainfall comes in the space of a few months.

But as rising temperatures increase the frequency and severity of natural disasters, floods in India have become deadlier and more destructive (relatedly, cyclones have grown more intense). The country has the highest number of flood-related fatalities in Asia, and the economic damage caused by flooding has swelled from nearly \$1.4 billion in 2013 to \$11.5 billion in 2020. While this escalation has upended the lives of many rural Indians, who account for 65% of the population, women have borne the brunt of its impact.

There are many reasons why natural disasters disproportionately affect women in India. For starters, they comprise a significant share of the agricultural sector's workforce. In 2021-22, 57.3% of working-age women in India were employed in agriculture, compared to 34.4% of men. Despite a structural employment shift to non-agricultural sectors, many rural women have been unable to take advantage of these opportunities, owing to limited resources and mobility restrictions. Working on family farms or as agricultural wage labourers, they are exposed to the economic volatility caused by floods and other extreme weather. Moreover, since only 14% of women in India own land, very few have the ability to adapt and respond to climate change.

Family responsibilities, as well as other constraints imposed by traditional cultural practices and patriarchal social norms, reinforce this dynamic by preventing women from participating in activities – including non-agricultural employment – outside the household. This, in turn, makes women more vulnerable to flooding than men: they have higher mortality rates and less access to relief measures.

Besides the immediate threat to their lives and livelihoods, women are more susceptible to violence in the wake of a natural disaster: a global systematic review has found an increase in rape, sexual assault, and human trafficking in such situations around the world. In the months following 2005's Hurricane Katrina, for example, the percentage of women in southern Mississippi reporting intimate partner violence (IPV) increased from 33.6% to 45.2%, and low-income mothers were relocated to temporary mass shelters that many viewed as unsafe for themselves and their children.

Likewise, research based on National Family Health Surveys has shown a rise in IPV in four Indian states after the 2004 tsunami, with physical and sexual violence increasing by 61% and 232%, respectively, in Tamil Nadu and emotional violence increasing by 122% in Karnataka. Moreover, between 2010 and 2019, floods in the Indian state of Bihar damaged more than half a million houses, forcing residents to move to temporary refugee camps where women faced verbal and sexual harassment.

Violence against women is deeply rooted in social and structural problems, such as their lower socioeconomic status, gender-based disparities in resource distribution, unsafe environments, and limited access to support services, all of which can be exacerbated by natural disasters. For example, loss of employment from such catastrophes can weaken households' bargaining power and cause psychological and financial stress for men, often leading to an increase in alcohol and drug use – typical triggers of IPV. Women are even more constrained than before, and yet the same social and cultural barriers that prevent their shift to non-agricultural employment remain intact, precluding them from engaging in economic decision-making.

Disasters not only increase IPV but also make communities unsafe. Adolescent girls are at high risk of sexual abuse and exploitation, mainly because of their dependence on others. Makeshift camps that serve displaced people are often rife with crime. Men seek sexual favours in exchange for basic needs such as food, water, and shelter, and women are often raped and sexually assaulted. Moreover, traveling long distances to collect firewood and drinking water, as well as unreliable street lighting, only leads to higher rates of victimisation.

The long-term effects of floods and other natural catastrophes are equally devastating. The economic shock caused by such a disaster can create an environment of negative growth for women who have been socially and economically deprived. For example, flood damage usually precipitates a dramatic and sustained fall in agricultural employment, severely constraining women's future opportunities outside the home.

To prevent natural disasters from disproportionately harming Indian women, the government must enact laws that curb gender-based violence, such as liquor bans, as well as policies that improve police responsiveness, such as staffing stations with female officers. Securing greater economic independence will also be essential, and policymakers must work with other stakeholders to ensure that women have access to alternative employment opportunities, including in the dairy industry and other agriculture-adjacent sectors. Moreover, officials should hire women to help run evacuation shelters and include them in disaster planning.

The International Rescue Committee should collaborate with local government, NGOs, and individuals – particularly women – to develop strategies that rein in gender-based discrimination and violence during natural-disaster recovery. Through a direct transfer of relief funds to affected women, governments and international organisations can empower them to leave abusive relationships and focus on developing their own skills.

The recent catastrophic floods in Libya, which have taken thousands of lives and forced thousands more to leave their homes, illustrate the urgent and ongoing global threat posed by extreme weather. In India and elsewhere, the focus must be on addressing pre-existing gender inequalities and violence to limit the initial damage of such disasters and reduce the subsequent risks of displacement and migration. As women become resilient, societies become more resilient, too.

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### WISDOM CORNER

Sin and virtue are a game of resistance we play with God in His efforts to draw us towards perfection. SRI AUROBINDO

If you have no critics you'll likely have no success. ALCOLM X

The quieter you become, the more you can hear. RAM DASS

### SPECTRUM SOCIETY

## Challenges of aging population

India has undergone significant demographic changes in recent decades. While the population has tripled over 50 years, the number of elderly has increased more than fourfold. This dramatic shift can be attributed to factors such as better medical facilities and liberal family planning policies. As a result, India's elderly population is now the fastest-growing segment of society, with an average life expectancy of over 70 years. However, this demographic transition has profound implications at the macro and household levels.



SN Tripathy

**INDIA FACES A PRESSING CHALLENGE AS ITS ELDERLY POPULATION GROWS**

At macro level, the sheer magnitude of the elderly population underscores the need for substantial efforts to provide social services and other benefits. Moreover, many of the upcoming generation of individuals aged 60 and above will belong to middle and upper-income groups, have higher education qualifications, and lead active lives in their 60s. However, despite these positive aspects, numerous challenges exist. Several forces in India are currently at play making older persons vulnerable. They cannot assume that their children can

care for them in old age, especially considering the longer life spans that imply extended periods of dependency and higher healthcare costs. It's crucial to note that the well-being of older persons is enshrined in the Constitution, which guarantees the right to equality as a fundamental right, applicable to older persons. Social security has been made the concurrent responsibility of Central and state governments.

With advancing age, elderly individuals must contend with health-related problems, some of which may be chronic, multifaceted, and demand constant attention. Additionally, these health issues carry the risk of disability and consequent loss of autonomy. Managing specific health problems impairing functional capacity requires long-term medical care and nursing.

The transformation of the traditional joint family system into nuclear or small family system has been a primary factor contributing to violation of human rights of the elderly. This issue is particularly pronounced in urban areas with limited inter-generational interaction, reduced social engagement of older per-

sons, and age discrimination.

Looking ahead, India faces a pressing challenge as its elderly population grows. It is projected that by 2050, over 300 million individuals in India will be over 60. This demographic shift poses significant social and economic challenges that demand immediate intervention.

One of the foremost concerns regarding India's ageing population is inadequate access to healthcare. Older adults are more prone to chronic illnesses that require ongoing care and management. However, a shortage of healthcare professionals and limited resources result in many older adults not receiving necessary medical attention. Furthermore, India's ageing population is at risk of poverty and isolation. Many older adults cannot work due to health issues and may lack access to sufficient financial support, leaving them vulnerable to poverty. This economic vulnerability exacerbates health problems and social isolation. Older adults are also more susceptible to abuse and neglect, especially living alone or in institutional settings. Age discrimination remains prevalent

in India, with older adults often undervalued for their contributions to society. They may also be excluded from social and cultural events, further perpetuating isolation and the lack of social support that negatively impacts their mental health and well-being.

The Indian government must invest in healthcare infrastructure and ensure that older adults can access affordable and quality healthcare services. Besides, policies should be implemented to provide financial support to older adults who cannot work and protect them from abuse and neglect. Society must also challenge negative stereotypes associated with ageing and recognise the valuable contributions of older adults to the community. India urgently needs an inclusive social security programme for older persons at grassroots level, supported by value-based education, awareness campaigns, research, and advocacy to protect the human rights of older persons.

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

### Father of Green Revolution

Sir, In the passing of Dr. MS Swaminathan, the nation has lost a legendary agricultural scientist. In the 1960s when the country was on the brink of a mass famine and faced with severe food shortages, Dr. Swaminathan collaborated with fellow scientist Norman Borlaug and others to develop high-yielding varieties of wheat and rice, which marked the inception of the Green Revolution, a transformative initiative that would significantly increase crop productivity, helping India to become self-sufficient in food grains. Dr. Swaminathan was honoured with Padma Shri, Padma Bhushan and Padma Vibhushan, besides receiving the HK Firodia Award, the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Award and the Indira Gandhi Prize. In recognition of his impact on international agricultural and environmental initiatives, TIME international magazine named Dr. Swaminathan as "one of the most influential Asians of the 20th century." Said Dr. Swaminathan once: "If agriculture goes wrong, nothing else will have a chance to go right." His legacy as the Father of the Green Revolution will ever be remembered. **Ranganathan Sivakumar**, CHENNAI

### Holding ground

Sir, This refers to "Jaishankar blasts Canada allegations," Orissa POST, Sept 28. Amid a diplomatic fracas with Canada over the killing of pro-Khalistan terror accused Hardeep Singh Nijjar, External Affairs Minister Jaishankar in 78th UN General Assembly exhorted the UN member states not to allow "political convenience" to determine responses to terrorism, extremism and violence. While reaffirming India's fiercely independent foreign policy, Jaishankar said the days when a few nations set the agenda and expected others to fall in line are over. It is laudable that India has held its ground despite being in the crosshairs of the Five Eyes – the intelligence-sharing alliance between Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the UK and the US – with regard to the Nijjar case. During a discussion at the Council on Foreign Relations after his UN address, Jaishankar said New Delhi had conveyed to Ottawa that it was open to looking at "specific" and "relevant" information concerning the case. With regard to Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's allegation that agents of the Indian Government were linked to the June 18 murder, he clarified that it was not India's policy to indulge in such activities. **N Sadhasiva Reddy**, BANGALORE

## Letters

### TO THE EDITOR

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

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## Militants mingling with mobs

### THE WORST FEARS FOR SECURITY AGENCIES SEEM TO HAVE COME TRUE IN IMPHAL VALLEY

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi/Imphal, Sept 28: The worst fears for security agencies seem to have come true as militants have been seen moving around openly and instigating mobs in Imphal valley which have been on a rampaging spree after pictures of two missing teenagers surfaced on social media.

According to officials, during attacks carried out on a police party Wednesday evening, armed men dressed in black uniform were seen giving directions to the agitated youths to attack the police and many vehicles were then torched.

The security agencies have been warning that militants belonging to United National Liberation Front (UNLF), People's Liberation Army (PLA) and other banned groups had become part of the mobs and carrying out sneak attacks on security forces as well as giving directions to the agitators.

Recently, the presence of insurgents was found within a mob that carried out an attack on security forces injuring a Lt Col of army near Pallel in Tengnoupal.

As reported by PTI September 11, central security agencies had warned about the possibility of militants mingling with crowds during any protest to stoke tensions in restive Manipur.

The burning down of a police vehicle saw the presence of armed militants directing the crowd. Besides this, miscreants in the crowd used iron pieces which were fired towards security personnel with the help of



automated slingshots.

Over a dozen police personnel including an officer of the rank of additional Superintendent of Police have been injured in these clashes that erupted in Imphal valley after surfacing of pictures of missing teenagers, who are suspected to have been killed during the ethnic clashes.

The officials reiterated that the current unrest has seen resurgence of near dormant banned groups like UNLF, PLA, Kanglei Yawol Kanba Lup (KYKL), Kangleipak Communist Party (KCP) and People's Revolutionary Party of Kangleipak (PREPAK) in the state.

The officials have also warned that the recent release of four youths, who were possessing deadly weapons looted from police armoury, was a dangerous sign and efforts should be intensified to nab and book them under relevant sections of law.

They said at present, UNLF has a cadre strength of 330 followed by PLA with 300 and KYKL with 25 who are active within the groups of the majority community.

June 24, Army and Assam Rifles, based on specific intelligence, nabbed 12 members of KYKL in East Imphal including self-styled 'Lt colonel' Moirangthem Tamba

alias Uttam. Uttam was one of the masterminds of the ambush on 6 Dogra regiment in 2015 that left 18 army soldiers dead.

The officials said there was every likelihood that the arms and ammunition looted from the Manipur police armoury could have landed with these terror groups.

Among the arms looted included .303 rifles, Medium Machine Guns (MMG) and AK assault rifles, carbines, Insa Light Machine Guns (LMG), Insa rifles, M-16 and MP5 rifles.

The officials said around 4,537 arms and 6.32 lakh bullets were missing mainly from Manipur

Police Training Centre (MTPC) at Pangei in East Imphal, 7th India Reserve battalion and 8th Manipur Rifles, both located at Khabeiso in Imphal city.

According to them, out of the stolen weapons, 2,900 fell in the lethal category whereas others comprised teargas and mini flare guns.

Repeated calls by politicians have yielded no results as none of the looted weapons have been deposited back except for those returned in the last week of July.

There has been no forward movement on disposal of dead bodies and opening of supply routes from Imphal to hill areas.

## 2 central mins may contest Raj polls

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jaipur, Sept 28: Union Home Minister Amit Shah and BJP president JP Nadda held night-long discussions with the party's Rajasthan leadership here on a range of issues about the upcoming assembly elections.

The meeting began at a hotel late Wednesday evening and continued till 2 am, party sources said Thursday.

The discussions were held amid a buzz that two central ministers might be asked to contest the upcoming polls. The speculation follows the BJP's decision to name three Union ministers and four MPs in its second list of candidates for poll-bound Madhya Pradesh.

Following the meeting, both Shah and Nadda left for Delhi Thursday. A meeting with local RSS leaders was not held, party sources said.

"Discussions on election strategy were held in the meeting last night," Gajendra Singh Shekhawat told reporters at the hotel Thursday.

Shah and Nadda arrived in Jaipur on a special plane Wednesday evening and headed to the hotel near the airport for the core committee meeting. Party sources said that Shah and Nadda first held a meeting

with former Rajasthan chief minister Vasundhara Raje for around 15 minutes.

It was followed by a meeting with senior leaders in which the party's election strategy was discussed. Feedback on the four 'Parivartan Yatras' that the BJP held recently was

also discussed.

Union minister and the party's election in-charge for Rajasthan Pralhad Joshi, co-in-charge Nitin Patel, BJP's in-charge for Rajasthan Arun Singh, state unit president C P Joshi, Union Ministers Gajendra Singh, Arjun Meghwal, Kailash Chaudhary, leader of opposition in Assembly Rajendra Rathore, deputy leader of opposition Satish Poonia and other leaders were present at the meeting, the sources said.

The meeting continued for around three hours. Poonia and MP Rajyavardhan Rathore were the first to leave the venue after the first round. Nadda and Shah held the next round of meeting with the BJP's national general secretary (organisation) B L Santosh, Union minister Pralhad Joshi, Nitin Patel, Arun Singh, Kuldeep Vishnoi and Vijaya Rahatkar, among others, the party sources said.

"The leaders held discussions on the assembly constituencies and brainstormed on ways to win the maximum number of seats in Mewar, Vagad, Shekhawati, Hadauti and Marwar regions and in eastern Rajasthan in the assembly and Lok Sabha elections," a source said.

"During the meeting, a clear message was sent out that the party organisation is supreme and all have to work together to ensure victory of the party in the elections." Some leaders said that ticket distribution and other poll-related issues were discussed in the meeting.

## Fresh violence: Centre sends senior IPS officer to Manipur



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Sept 28: Senior police officer Rakesh Balwal, who was part of the National Investigation Agency (NIA) team probing the 2019 Pulwama terror attack case, has been deployed by the Centre in Manipur after tensions flared up again in the violence-hit state.

Balwal, a 2012-batch IPS officer of Manipur cadre, had taken over as the Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) in Srinagar in late 2021.

A source said that an order been issued by the Union Home Ministry for his new deployment.

Balwal had previously served on deputation to the NIA as Superintendent of Police (SP) for three and a half years, where he was part of the team that investigated the 2019 Pulwama terror attack, in which 40 CRPF personnel were killed.

The decision to send him to Imphal came after fresh violence erupted in Manipur over the brutal killing of two students, with people taking to the streets in large numbers to protest the murders.

As a result, the Manipur government once again suspended Internet services on Tuesday until October 1, just days after it was restored.

At least 100 students, including girls, have been injured during the agitations over the past two days after they clashed with the security forces, who prevented them from marching towards the Chief Minister's bungalow.

The security forces used tear gas shells and smoke bombs to disperse the agitating students.

## Speculation over Raje's future in Raj

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Jaipur, Sept 28: Union Home Minister Amit Shah and BJP national President JP Nadda's sudden visit to Jaipur with General Secretary, Organisation, BL Santhosh has triggered speculation in Rajasthan and raised questions over the future role of former Chief Minister Vasundhara Raje.

If sources are to be believed, Raje has been asking for a bigger role while trying to position herself as the CM face. However, the party high command has reiterated many times that the Assembly polls will be contested on the face of PM Narendra Modi and the BJP symbol.

Modi, during his Jaipur visit, asked all party workers to ensure that the lotus blooms in the state. In fact, he neither spoke of the former government's achievements nor of Raje. Surprisingly, Raje also did not address the meeting.

Even Wednesday, when Shah and Nadda were in the state capital, speculation was rife about her role. However, the two leaders stayed silent on the CM face and said that the elections will be fought on the PM's face.



Sources said that Raje has been invited as chief guest to Barmer where the Rajput community members in large numbers will be present. This will put direct pressure on the BJP leaders from the most dominant community in the state to announce her as the CM face.

Further some more events of Raje are lined up to show her strength. Reading between the lines, Shah and Nadda were in Jaipur in damage control mode. "Raje and her followers will be pacified as they will get a good chunk of tickets, a source said.

The sources added that further announcements will be made post the party's parliamentary board meeting scheduled in the first week of October which will discuss the poll preparations in Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan.

## Cong may drop several sitting MLAs

THE PARTY IN ITS INTERNAL REPORT HAS FOUND ANTI-INCUMBENCY AGAINST MANY MINISTERS AND SITTING MLAs

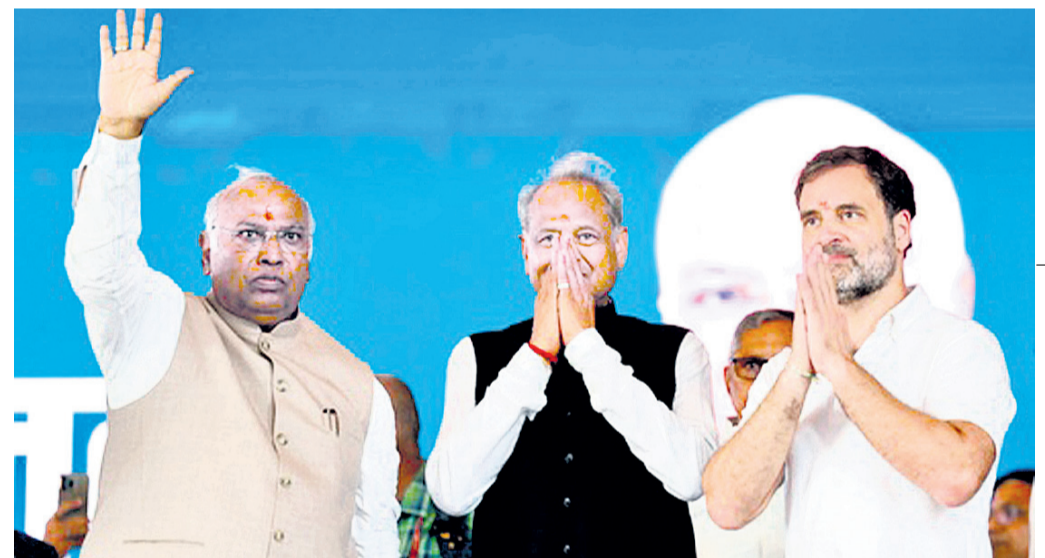
INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Sept 28: Even as the crucial assembly elections are inching closer in Rajasthan, the Congress is mulling the idea of dropping several of the ministers and sitting MLAs in the polls, sources said.

Party source said that the Congress in its internal report has found anti-incumbency against many of the ministers and the sitting MLAs.

The source said that the reporter prepared by the team of party strategist Sunil Kanugolu has found a number of issues and thus highlighted it to the party leadership.

The source said that the team of Kanugolu has identified at least 50 seats where the sitting MLAs and ministers have strong anti-incumbency against them and they would not be able to



win the elections.

Following the startling revelation in its internal report, the party is mulling to drop many of its ministers as well as the MLAs in the coming elections.

However, the source further said that the final decision will be taken by the party's central election committee (CEC) which will sit on deciding the candidates for Rajasthan.

The party had earlier said that it plans to release the list of candidates for Rajasthan in the month of September.

Rajasthan's Screening Committee chairman Gaurav Gogoi had earlier also indicated that the candidates will be decided on the basis of the winnability.

Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot had also launched several pro-people schemes ahead of the assembly election in the desert state. Meanwhile several senior leaders, including party Chief Mallikarjun Kharge, Rahul Gandhi, Priyanka Gandhi had been visiting the state for campaigning.

Even the BJP, which was voted out of power in the 2018 assembly elections is eyeing to make a comeback in the desert state and is leaving no stones unturned for the victory.

Home Minister Amit Shah, BJP President Nadda on Wednesday night held meetings with the senior party leaders in the state to chalk out strategy for the assembly elections.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has also been visiting the state to campaign for the party.

## AFSPA NO SOLUTION TO MANIPUR CRISIS: SHARMILA

CRITICISING CHIEF MINISTER N BIREN SINGH, THE RIGHTS ACTIVIST ALLEGED, 'WRONG POLICIES OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT HAVE PUSHED MANIPUR TOWARDS THIS UNPRECEDENTED CRISIS'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, Sept 28: A day after AFSPA was extended in most parts of Manipur, rights activist Irom Sharmila said the 'oppressive law' was not a solution to the conflict in the state.

Sharmila, hailed as the 'Iron Lady of Manipur', told PTI in a telephonic interview Thursday

that the BJP-led government at the Centre should respect diversity instead of working for uniformity through proposals like the Uniform Civil Code.

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

"The extension of AFSPA is not a solution to the problems or ethnic violence in the state. The Centre and the Manipur government have to respect the diversity of the region," she said.

"The values, principles, and practices of different ethnic groups must be respected. India is known for its diversity. But the central government and the BJP are more interested in creating uniformity through proposals like the Uniform Civil Code," she added.

Sharmila questioned why PM Narendra Modi couldn't visit



The values, principles, and practices of different ethnic groups must be respected. India is known for its diversity. But the central government and the BJP are more interested in creating uniformity through proposals like the Uniform Civil Code

IROM SHARMILA | RIGHTS ACTIVIST

Manipur since the violence broke out in May.

"PM Modi is the leader of the country. If he had visited the state and spoken to the people, the problems would have been resolved now. The solution to this violence lies in compassion, love and humane touch. But it seems the BJP is not keen on resolving the issue and wants this problem to linger," she claimed.

Criticising Chief Minister N Biren Singh, she alleged, "Wrong policies of the state government have pushed Manipur towards this unprecedented crisis."

Stating the youths of the state have suffered the most in the ethnic violence, Sharmila said the deaths of the young man and woman that triggered widespread protests brought tears to her eyes.

She also hit out at the Centre over the condition of women in the Northeastern state.

"Women of Manipur have been facing the brunt of AFSPA and this ethnic violence. The talks of women's empowerment, and the women's reservation bill would serve no purpose if you can't protect the dignity of the women. Are the women of Manipur any different from those of mainland India? Just because we look different doesn't mean we can be treated like this," she said.

Sharmila, who was on a 16-year-long hunger strike de-

manding the repeal of AFSPA, wondered how long the law would solve the problems in the Northeast.

"India is a democratic country. For how long should we carry forward this colonial law? In the name of fighting insurgency, crores of rupees are wasted, which could have been utilised for the overall development of the Northeast. The internet is suspended for months, and basic rights are taken away. Can you impose AFSPA if there is a law and order problem in Mumbai or Delhi?" she questioned.

Sharmila had started her hunger strike against AFSPA after ten civilians were allegedly killed by security forces at a bus stop in Malom near Imphal in 2000.

She waged her peaceful resistance for 16 years before ending it in 2016. The 51-year-old rights activist got married in 2017, and the mother of twin girls is now settled in Bengaluru.



Punjab Mazdoor Sangharsh Committee activists raise slogans as they block railway tracks during a protest demanding flood compensation, MSP guarantee law and debt relief, at Devidaspura village in Amritsar, Punjab



Indian Youth Congress (IYC) President Srinivas BV with IYC workers garlands a statue of freedom fighter Bhagat Singh on his birth anniversary at Shaheed Park in New Delhi



ISRO Chief S Somanath with others during his visit to Aadi Jyotirling Shree Somnath Mahadev Temple, in Saurashtra, Gujarat



Devotees carry an idol of Lord Ganesha during a procession for immersion in the Beas river on the last day of Ganesh Chaturthi in Kullu, Himachal Pradesh



A pair of lion and lioness sits inside their enclosure at TATA Steel Zoological Park (TSZP), in Jamshedpur, Jharkhand



Congress leader Rahul Gandhi during his visit to the furniture market, at Kirtinagar in New Delhi



Religious leaders and Ethiopians celebrate the Ethiopian New Year, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, Wednesday. Meskel, meaning the Cross in Amharic, is an annual religious Ethiopian holiday among Orthodox Christian believers and the first outdoor feast in the Church calendar



Indian Air Force fighter planes during the final rehearsal over the upper lake ahead of an air show to commemorate the 91st anniversary of IAF, in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh



# national

## of the day quote

The demise of renowned agricultural scientist Shri M S Swaminathan, the father of the Indian Green Revolution and Padma Vibhushan awardee, is an irreparable loss for the Indian agricultural sector

MANOHAR LAL KHATTAR | HARYANA CM

Today I went to Asia's largest furniture market located in Kirti Nagar, Delhi and met the carpenter brothers. Apart from being hard workers, they are also amazing artists - experts at carving durability and beauty

RAHUL GANDHI | CONGRESS LEADER

The youth should take inspiration from these noble souls for which necessary changes in syllabus of schools will be made. This will help perpetuating the glorious legacy of the state amongst our coming generations

BHAGWANT MANN | PUNJAB CM

## SHORT TAKES

### J'khand IED blast: 1 CRPF personnel dead

**Ranchi:** Two CRPF personnel were seriously injured in an IED blast in Jharkhand's West Singhbhum district Thursday and one of them died later in the course of treatment, police said. The two CRPF personnel belonging to its elite Cobra battalion were grievously injured in the blast near a forest between Tumbahaka and Sarjomburu villages in Tonto police station area of district during a combing operation against the Maoists by security forces, the police said.

### K'taka bandh likely to hit normal life

**Bangalore:** The Karnataka bandh call given by Kannada organisations over release of water to Tamil Nadu is likely to affect normal life in Bangalore Friday. The Congress government has warned that there is no room for observing a bandh and the permission has only been given for a peaceful protest. However, Kannada activist Vatal Nagaraj has claimed that the bandh is going to be a success and it does not matter whether prohibitory orders are clamped in the state or not.

### AI & Manish Malhotra partner for uniforms

**New Delhi:** Air India's flying crew, ground and security staff will soon sport new uniforms designed by fashion designer Manish Malhotra as the Tata Group-owned airline embraces a new global brand identity. As Air India pursues a revival and modernisation plan, the new uniforms are expected to be introduced for the frontline staff by the end of this year and are likely to coincide with the induction of the airline's first wide-body A350 aircraft into its fleet.

### EC to visit T'gana, Raj

**New Delhi:** The Election Commission will be on a three-day visit to Rajasthan beginning Friday to assess preparedness in the poll-bound state. Chief Election Commissioner Rajeev Kumar, Election Commissioners Anup Chandra Pandey and Arun Goyal will hold a meeting with representatives of recognised political parties in Jaipur Friday, Chief Electoral Officer Praveen Gupta said.

### Rajkumar quits BJP

**Imphal:** Celebrated Manipuri actor Rajkumar Somendra popularly known as 'Kaiku' Thursday resigned from the primary membership of BJP over the state government's "inept handling of the current ethnic turmoil and the brutal murder of two students", sources said.



I withstood many physical injuries in 34 years of political life during which I was attacked many a time. These wounds often create problems as the pain revives. But I never let the pain come in the way of my work

MAMATA BANERJEE | WEST BENGAL CM

### ED SUMMONS ABHISHEK AGAIN

The Enforcement Directorate on Thursday summoned senior Trinamool Congress leader Abhishek Banerjee again October 3 for questioning in connection with the school jobs scam in Kolkata, which the party described as an attempt by the BJP to disrupt its planned rally in New Delhi on the same day



## KHAIRA HELD, SENT TO 2-DAY POLICE REMAND



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Chandigarh, Sept 28:** Congress MLA Sukhpal Singh Khaira was arrested here Thursday by the Punjab Police in connection with a 2015 drug trafficking case, triggering accusations of political vendetta by his party against the ruling AAP in the state.

A Congress delegation led by Punjab unit chief Amrinder Singh Raja Warring met Governor Banwarilal Purohit in the evening, complaining about the "fake case", as the rift widened in the state between the two parties.

Both are part of the opposition INDIA bloc that seeks to put up a united fight against the BJP in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls. The BJP too has criticised the arrest.

The MLA from Bholath was produced in a court in Fazilka's Jalalabad and remanded in police custody for two days. The police had sought a seven-day remand.

A team led by Superintendent of Police Manjeet Singh reached Khaira's Chandigarh home around 6 am, and his son went on Facebook Live. The video showed the MLA arguing with the police team, asking it to produce an arrest warrant.

He also asked police officers to show their identity cards. The MLA was told that he was being arrested under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act case.

When Khaira asked the team where he was being taken, a police official told him that he was being taken to Jalalabad in Fazilka.

Khaira was arrested on the basis of an investigation conducted by a special investigation team led by Deputy Inspector General of Police Swapam Sharma.

## TRIAL TOOK 40 YEARS! SC grants bail to 75 yr-old rape-murder convict

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Sept 28:** The Supreme Court has granted bail to a 75-year-old man, who was convicted in a 1983 rape and murder case, while taking note that it took the trial 40 years to conclude.

Noting the "peculiar feature" of the case, the apex court asked the Calcutta High Court to give "out of turn priority" to the disposal of the man's appeal against his conviction.

A bench of Justices Abhay S Oka and Pankaj Mishra said,

normally, the top court should not issue a direction to a constitutional court or any other court to fix a schedule to decide a case.

"However, this case has a peculiar feature that the trial has taken forty years to conclude. We, therefore, request the high court to give out of turn priority to the disposal of the appeal in accordance with law," the bench said in its order passed on September 25.

The apex court was hearing an appeal filed by the man challenging the May 17 order of the



high court which had rejected his prayer for bail. While noting that the appellant was the maternal uncle of the victim, the

high court had said in view of the material on record and the gravity of the offence, "we do not consider it appropriate to suspend the sentence of the appellant".

In its order, the high court had noted that the case involves brutal rape and murder of a girl who was found strangled in a room.

The top court, while pronouncing its order, said the incident had taken place in 1983 and there are "reasons and reasons why the trial was delayed".

"The trial came to an end with

the order of conviction of the appellant April 21, 2023. The appellant was throughout on bail. The present age of the appellant is about 75 years. The appeal before the high court has been admitted for final hearing," it said.

The bench said considering the delay in disposal of the trial, the fact that the occurrence was of 1983 and the present age of the appellant, "he deserves to be enlarged on bail, pending the final disposal of the appeal before the high court on appropriate stringent terms and conditions".

## Om Birla refers complaints to Privileges Committee

While Ali and several other Opposition MPs, including Congress leader Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury and DMK's Kanimozhi, wrote to the Speaker seeking action against Bidhuri, some BJP parliamentarians like Nishikant Dubey said the BSP member "incited" the South Delhi MP when he was speaking in the House and urged the Chair to look into this as well



DANISH-BIDHURI ROW

House and urged the Chair to look into this as well.

Sources said Birla has sent all these complaints to the Privileges Committee headed by BJP MP Sunil Kumar Singh.

Bidhuri had made certain derogatory remarks, later expunged from records, targeted at BSP member Danish Ali September 22 when he was speaking in the Lok Sabha during a discussion on the success of the Chandrayaan-3 mission.

Several members of the Congress, TMC and NCP among others have written to Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla seeking the strictest action against Bidhuri.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, who was present in the House, expressed his regret at the ruling party MP's conduct.

As opposition parties rallied around Ali after a video of Bidhuri's remarks went viral triggering an outrage, the Lok Sabha Speaker took "serious

note" and warned him of "strict action" if such behaviour is repeated in the future. The BJP also issued him a show-cause notice. Ali wrote to the Speaker, seeking an enquiry by the Privileges Committee, describing Bidhuri's comments as "hate speech". Almost all opposition parties also wrote to Birla, seeking action against him. However, a few BJP MPs, including Dubey, asserted that Ali incited Bidhuri with highly objectionable remarks against Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

While Dubey condemned Bidhuri's conduct, he urged the Speaker to look into Ali's behaviour as well. Other BJP MPs echoed the view.

In a post on X Thursday, Dubey thanked the Speaker for referring the matter to the committee. "It was possible because the BJP has a majority in Lok Sabha," he said, as he cited several previous incidents to assert that no committee was formed to probe these issues and nor was anyone punished.

In this context, Dubey alleged that the RJD-JD(U)-Congress members were engaged in a fight involving shoes and microphones in 2006, Sonia Gandhi was involved in an incident in 2012 besides the commotion and injuries to parliamentarians in 2014 during the creation of Telangana as a separate state.

## Ujjain horror: Auto rickshaw driver held

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Ujjain/Indore, Sept 28:** An auto rickshaw driver has been taken into custody by police while five other persons were being questioned in connection with the rape of a 12-year-old girl who was found in injured condition in Madhya Pradesh's Ujjain city, a senior official said Thursday.

A counsellor interacted her and found that she belongs to Satna district of Madhya Pradesh. Whether she was the same girl about whom a missing person's report had been filed will be confirmed after the missing girl's family identifies her, police said.

She was taken to a hospital where medical examination found that she had been raped. She was operated upon by a team of specialist doctors at the Government Maharaja Tukojirao Holkar Women's Hospital in Indore Wednesday.

"The police have taken an auto rickshaw driver into custody on the basis of video footage. We also found blood stains on the passenger seat of his rickshaw," Ujjain Superintendent of Police Sachin Sharma said. "Five others are also being questioned," he said.

The girl's identity was yet to be established as she could not tell her name, age and address



- The minor rape victim has undergone initial medical examinations, confirming that she had been sexually assaulted
- The girl was found bleeding on a road in Mahakal police station limits in Ujjain Monday
- Her condition remains critical but stable after undergoing surgery by a team of specialist doctors in Indore Wednesday

properly, but a counsellor interacted with her and found that she belongs to Satna district, he said in a statement.

A missing girl report had been filed at Jaitwara police station in Satna September 25, Sharma added. A Special Investigation Team (SIT) of police is conducting further probe, the SP said.

Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra slammed the Shivraj Singh Chouhan government in Madhya Pradesh over the incident, saying that girls, women, tribals and Dalits are not safe under the "misrule" of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

## BUNGALOW RENOVATION CASE

### Will not bow down: Kejriwal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Sept 28:** Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal Thursday "welcomed" the CBI's preliminary inquiry into alleged irregularities in the construction of his bungalow while asserting that nothing will come out of it as there "is nothing wrong".

He also targeted Prime Minister Narendra Modi, alleging the action showed his "nervousness" and asking whether he would resign if nothing comes out of the probe.

The Aam Aadmi Party national convener said that he may



have faced the maximum number of inquiries in the world during his tenure as chief minister in the last eight years, and added he will not bow down.

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has registered a preliminary enquiry (PE)

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 the chief minister, officials said on Wednesday.

Reacting to the CBI action, Kejriwal told reporters on the sidelines of an event, "This is not the first time. The prime minister is nervous. This shows his nervousness. The inquiry against me is nothing new. So far, inquiries have been conducted against me in more than 50 cases in the last eight years."

## Indians now represent over 10% of US visa applicants

LAST YEAR OVER 1.2 MILLION INDIANS VISITED THE UNITED STATES. INDIANS NOW REPRESENT OVER 10% OF ALL VISA APPLICANTS WORLDWIDE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Sept 28:** The US Mission in India Thursday surpassed its goal of processing one million non-immigrant visa applications this year and said that Indians now represent over 10 per cent of all visa applicants worldwide, including 20 per cent of all student visa applicants and 65 per cent of all H&L-category (employment) visa applicants.

The number of visa applications processed in India are 20 per cent more than the numbers processed in pre-Covid 2019 and 2022 and Indians made over one in 10 applications worldwide,

the embassy said. US Ambassador to India Eric Garcetti personally handed over the one millionth visa to a couple, who will be heading to the United States to attend their son's graduation at MIT.

Dr Ranju Singh, senior consultant, Lady Hardinge College was elated at receiving an email from the US Embassy about hers being the one millionth visa this year. Her husband Puneet Dargan, was granted the next visa. The couple will be travelling to the US in May 2024.

Greeting the couple as "Mr and Mrs One million", Ambassador Garcetti enquired about their travel plans to the US



and made suggestions about what not to miss in the country as a tourist.

"I couldn't be happier today, happy for India, Indians and the United States. Prime Minister (Narendra) Modi and President

(Joe) Biden had said let's do better job in moving faster on the visas and so the Ministry of External Affairs here approved more bodies in places like Hyderabad...More people who can work on these visas, we

changed our systems, we worked harder and smarter and we hit a million visa applications processed this year," the ambassador said.

"Our partnership with India is one of the United States' most important bilateral relationships, and in fact one of the most important relationships in the world. The ties between our people are stronger than ever, and we will continue our record-setting volume of visa work in the coming months to give as many Indian applicants as possible the opportunity to travel to the United States and experience the US-India friendship firsthand," he added.

The mission has already surpassed the total number of cases processed in 2022 and is processing almost 20 per cent more applications than in pre-pandemic 2019.

Last year over 1.2 million Indians visited the United States. Indians now represent over 10 per cent of all visa applicants worldwide, including 20 per cent of all student visa applicants and 65 per cent of all H&L-category (employment) visa applicants.

According to a statement by the US Embassy here, recognising the continued high demand for US visas, the United States continues to invest heavily in its operations in India.

# international

## of the day quote

Australian parliamentarians and former prime ministers who visit Taiwan carry political significance. It might be easily utilised by the political forces in Taiwan for their independent forces movement, for their secession movement, and I don't want to see that happen

XIAO QIAN | CHINA'S AMBASSADOR TO AUSTRALIA

I'm running because important freedoms we have now are at stake

JOE BIDEN | US PRESIDENT

Soon the physical and digital will come together in what we call the metaverse

MARK ZUCKERBERG | META CEO

## SHORT TAKES

### Explosion kills one, injures 162

Tashkent: A powerful explosion in the Uzbek capital, Tashkent, killed a teenage boy Thursday and injured at least 162 people following a fire caused by a lightning strike, Uzbekistan's Ministry of Health said. The Ministry of Emergency Situations said the explosion happened early in the morning at a warehouse in southern Tashkent but did not say what was inside it to cause the powerful blast which it said was attended by 16 fire crews.

### Israel reopens Gaza crossing

Gaza City (Gaza Strip): Israel reopened a main crossing with the Gaza Strip Thursday, allowing thousands of Palestinian labourers to enter the country for the first time since sealing it last week. The crossing reopens after weeks of violent protests along Gaza's frontier with Israel, where demonstrators have thrown explosives and rocks and flew incendiary balloons that sparked fires. The protests have driven up tensions, prompting Israel to launch airstrikes in the territory that targeted military posts belonging to the militant Hamas that rules Gaza.

### UK's famous tree 'deliberately felled'

London: A famous tree that had stood for nearly 200 years next to Hadrian's Wall, a Roman landmark in northern England, was "deliberately felled" in an apparent act of vandalism, authorities said Thursday. Thousands of visitors each year walk along Hadrian's Wall, a UNESCO World Heritage Site that guarded the Roman Empire's northwestern frontier. Many have paused to admire and photograph the tree at Sycamore Gap, a beloved icon of the landscape that was made famous when it appeared in Kevin Costner's 1991 film "Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves." Photographs from the scene on early Thursday showed that the tree was cut down near the base of its trunk, with the rest of it lying on its side.

### Soldier back in US

San Antonio (US): The American soldier who sprinted into North Korea across the heavily fortified border between the Koreas more than two months ago arrived back in the US early Thursday, video appeared to show. North Korea abruptly announced Wednesday that it would expel Pvt Travis King. His return was organised with the help of ally Sweden and rival China, according to the White House. While officials have said King, 23, is in good health and the immediate focus will be on caring for him and reintegrating him into US society, his troubles are likely far from over.



US efforts to normalise Arab-Israeli relations at a time that the "de facto" international legal framework for an Israeli-Palestinian peace settlement is being dismantled not only circumvents the logic of the Arab Peace Initiative, but it stymies any prospects for reviving direct negotiations between Palestinians and Israelis to achieve peace

VASSILY NEBENZIA | RUSSIA'S UN AMBASSADOR

### REMARKABLE OPPORTUNITY

An Indian-American cancer physician, Kamal Menghrajani, is among 15 "exceptional young leaders" appointed to the 2023-2024 class of White House Fellows. Placed at the Office of Science and Technology Policy, Kamal will spend a year working with senior White House Staff and Cabinet Secretaries

## AFTER GLOBAL CONDEMNATION

# Trudeau apologises for honouring Nazi veteran

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ottawa, Sept 28: Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has apologised for the Canadian Parliament's recognition of a man who fought for a Nazi unit during World War II, an incident that drew global condemnation and was termed by the Opposition as the "biggest single diplomatic embarrassment" in the country's history.

Trudeau, already under pressure for jeopardising Canada's relations with India over the killing of a Khalistani separatist in Canada, said the Canadian government has reached out to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, who was present during the event last Friday, in the wake of the incident.

Russia has painted his enemies in Ukraine as "neo-Nazis" after the incident although Zelenskyy is Jewish and lost relatives in the Holocaust. Speaker Anthony Rota, who has assumed responsibility for inviting Yaroslav Hunka, 98, resigned Tuesday. The incident has drawn global condemnation.



Hunka, who fought with a Nazi unit in World War Two, got a standing ovation and was praised as a Ukrainian and Canadian "hero". He served in the 14th Waffen-SS Grenadier Division, a voluntary unit made up mostly of ethnic Ukrainians under Nazi command.

Division members are accused of killing Polish and Jewish civilians, although the unit has not been found guilty of any war crimes by a tribunal. "This was a mistake that has deeply embarrassed Parliament and Canada. All of us who were in this House on Friday regret

deeply having stood and clapped even though we did so, unaware of the context," Trudeau told reporters, indicating his plans to personally address the House of Commons about the controversy for the first time since it exploded.

He called the incident a "horrendous violation" of the memory of the millions of people who died in the Holocaust and said it was "deeply, deeply painful" for Jewish people, as well as members of the Polish, Roma, and LGBTQ2S+ communities who were also "targeted by the Nazi genocide".

## Pak to reopen 4 graft cases against Nawaz

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Lahore, Sept 28: Pakistan's anti-graft body is reopening at least four corruption cases against former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif as he is scheduled to return to the country next month, ending four years of self-exile in the United Kingdom, an official said Thursday.

The 73-year-old Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) supremo is scheduled to return to Pakistan from London on October 21 to lead the party's election campaign. Nawaz left the country in November 2019 on medical grounds after the Lahore High Court granted him bail for four weeks. He was serving a seven-year imprisonment in the Al-Azizia Mills corruption case at Kot Lakhpat Jail Lahore.



On arrival in Lahore, his party says he will address a rally at Minar-i-Pakistan where he will give a road map to steer the country out of the economic crisis, governance problems and other issues the country is facing today. The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) in the light of a Supreme Court ruling which struck down amendments made to the accountability laws by the previous Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) government led by Nawaz's younger brother Shehbaz Sharif, is reopening the four pending probes against Nawaz.



Thousands of dead fish float in Piranha Lake due to a severe drought in the state of Amazonas, in Manacapuru, Brazil

## Gunman opens fire, kills two

REUTERS

Rotterdam, Sept 28: Dutch police said a gunman killed a teacher and a local woman after opening fire in a classroom at a university hospital campus in Rotterdam and a nearby house on Thursday.

The 32-year-old suspect, a university student, fatally shot a 39-year-old woman living in his neighbourhood and seriously injured her 14-year-old daughter, police said in a televised news conference.

After setting the woman's house on fire, the gunman went to the Rotterdam Medical Centre university hospital, where he entered a classroom and fatally shot a 46-year-old teacher.

The man was arrested near the hospital, where he also set a fire. His motive was unknown.

"We have been shocked by a horrible incident. Shots were fired in two different places in the city. Many people witnessed it," Rotterdam Mayor Ahmed Aboutaleb said. "Emotions in the city are very high. My condolences go out to the victims."

"The suspect was known to law enforcement and in 2021 he was prosecuted and convicted for animal abuse," said Hugo Hillenaar, Rotterdam's chief prosecutor.

Videos posted online showed police instructing students, some wearing medical gowns, to run outside as heavily armed arrest teams arrived at the scene. One video showed a man in handcuffs wearing what appeared to be camouflage pants. Police said there were no indications of a second shooter.

## DEFENCE MILESTONE AMID CHINA'S THREATS

# Taiwan reveals first homemade submarine



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kaohsiung (Taiwan), Sept 28: Taiwan's president launched the island's first domestically made submarine for testing Thursday at a port in Kaohsiung.

The submarine, if successful in its tests, will be a major breakthrough for Taiwan in shipbuilding and design. "In the past, a domestic-made submarine was considered impossible, but today a submarine designed and built by our countrymen is in front of you," President Tsai Ing-wen said at the launch ceremony.

"Building a submarine is the concrete realization of our resolution to protect our country. Submarines are an important piece of equipment for the Taiwan navy to develop asymmetric combat power in terms of strategy and tactics," she said. The US has been pushing Taiwan to develop asymmetric warfare strategies by investing in smaller and lighter weapons such as the reduced-size submarine. The process was "torturous," said Cheng Wenlon, head of Taiwan's CSBC Corp, which led the construction of the submarine.

"Although we have worked quietly during the past several years, it doesn't mean the process was very smooth," he said at the ceremony held in CSBC's shipyard. After seven years of design and construction, the prototype will begin tests in the harbour before heading to the ocean. The submarine is named Hai Kun after a fish in Chinese mythology called kun with legendary proportions. It will only be handed over to the military after passing both its harbour and ocean-faring tests. Taiwan plans to build another submarine if successful, with both to be deployed by 2027, according to the semi-official Central News Agency. Taiwan began the expensive and time-consuming task of building its own submarines after Beijing prevented it from purchasing such craft from abroad through the use of economic and diplomatic threats. In recent years, China has stepped up its military exercises aimed at the island, sending fighter jets and navy vessels to patrol and hold drills in the waters and skies near Taiwan. China's Defense Ministry said Thursday that the submarine's construction was Taiwan "heading down the path of its own destruction".

## BIDEN IMPEACHMENT INQUIRY

# Republicans open first hearing

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Washington, Sept 28: House Republicans launched their formal impeachment hearing Thursday against President Joe Biden, saying they intend to "provide accountability" as they make their case to the public, their colleagues and sceptics in the Senate.

The chairmen of the Oversight, Judiciary, and Ways and Means committees are using the first hearing of their impeachment inquiry to review the constitutional and legal questions involved. They are trying to show what they say are links to his son Hunter's overseas businesses, though key witnesses said they do not yet see hard evidence of impeachable offences.

Rep. James Comer, R-Ky, the Oversight chairman, said the lawmakers have "a mountain of evidence" that will show that the elder Biden "abused his public office for his family's financial gain." Comer said the panel will continue to "follow the money and the evidence to provide accountability" to the American people.

It's a high-stakes opening act for Republicans, coming in the midst of a potential federal government shutdown, as they begin a process that can lead to the ultimate penalty for a president, punishment for what the Constitution describes as "high crimes and misdemeanours."

The hearing comes as House Republicans face scattered reluctance from their own ranks to the inquiry and deep resistance in the Senate from Republicans who worry about political ramifications of impeachment — and who say Biden's conviction and removal from office is a near impossibility. As the hearing began, Democrats displayed a screen showing the days, hours and minutes left until the government shuts down as Congress struggles to fund the government before Saturday's deadline.

## SECOND REPUBLICAN PRESIDENTIAL DEBATE

# Ramaswamy calls for ending birthright citizenship in US

RAMASWAMY, WHO WAS ADDRESSED AS 'TRUMP'S HEIR APPARENT' BY TIME MAGAZINE HAS GARNERED QUITE AN ATTENTION AFTER HIS MAIDEN REPUBLICAN PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY DEBATE HELD ON AUGUST 23

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Washington, Sept 28: Continuing his proposals of harsh policy changes, Indian-American presidential aspirant Vivek Ramaswamy, in his second

Republican presidential debate, has said he would favour ending birthright citizenship for children of illegal immigrants in the US.

The second Republican debate of the 2024 election cycle which was held at Ronald Reagan Presidential Library and Museum in Simi Valley, California Wednesday saw Ramaswamy sharing the stage with six other candidates including Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis and former United Nations Ambassador Nikki Haley.

When asked "what legal premise" he would use to expel undocumented immigrants and their American-born children from the country, Ramaswamy, the son of Indian immigrants, resurrected a 2015 proposal of ending birthright citizenship from then-candidate Donald

Trump, reported the Washington Post Wednesday.

The first section of the citizenship clause of the US Constitution's 14th Amendment says, "All persons born or naturalised in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside."

Although most agree with the long-held tradition that it grants citizenship to those born on US soil, some legal scholars argue that the phrase "and subject to the jurisdiction thereof" seems to give the government some leeway to restrict the right, just as other constitutional principles can be limited, the report said.

Because of this, he argued, children of undocumented immigrants born in the United



States should not be granted citizenship, because their parents "broke the law" to be in the country. Ramaswamy, 38, also supported his opponents on-stage and acknowledged other measures such as militarisation of the southern border, defunding "sanctuary cities," and an end to foreign aid to Mexico

and Central America. He said he would go a "step further" by ending "birthright citizenship for the kids of illegal immigrants in this country." A second-generation Indian-American, Ramaswamy had earlier criticised the H-1B visa programme saying the current "lottery" system needs to be "gut-

ted" and replaced with a "meritocratic" skill-based immigration scheme to match the needs of the US.

The H-1B visa, much sought-after among Indian IT professionals, is a non-immigrant visa that allows US companies to employ foreign workers in speciality occupations that require theoretical or technical expertise. His stance on H-1B visas is also reminiscent of the 2016 Trump campaign, when then-candidate Donald Trump, who has also hired a number of foreign workers under H-1B visas for his businesses, took a hard-line stance on these foreign workers before later softening his rhetoric.

It is to be noted that Ramaswamy himself has used the H-1B visa programme 29 times.

# business

## of the day quote

It is a welcome step which will boost exports, generate employment and will go a long way in making India a global manufacturing hub



SANJAY BUDHIA | CHAIRMAN, CII

The steel industry is facing an upward movement in prices because there has been a dramatic shift in coking coal prices, so the industry has no option but to pass on the cost to consumers



BIMLENDRA JHA | MD, JSP

The buoyancy of revenue is 1.43 of nominal GDP growth meaning thereby revenue collection is not entirely on account of growth in GDP, but a major contribution is made by increased compliance level



SANJAY KUMAR AGARWAL | CHIEF, CBIC

## SHORT TAKES

### Mineral output rises

**New Delhi:** India's mineral output rose 10.7 per cent in July as compared to the same month a year ago, the mines ministry said in a statement Thursday. The index of mineral production of the mining and quarrying sector for July 2023 was at 111.9, higher 10.7 per cent as compared to the year-ago period, as per the provisional figures of Indian Bureau of Mines (IBM). The cumulative growth for April-July period of this fiscal year over the corresponding period of FY23 is 7.3 per cent. The production level of important minerals in July includes coal (693 lakh tonne), lignite (32 lakh tonne), petroleum (crude) 25 lakh tonne, bauxite (14,77,000 tonne), and chromite (2,80,000 tonne).

### HP partners Google

**New Delhi:** PC maker HP has joined hands with Google to manufacture Chromebooks in India from October 2, the company said Thursday. The Chromebook devices will be manufactured at the Flex Facility near Chennai, where HP has been producing a range of laptops and desktops since August 2020, it said in a statement. "Manufacturing Chromebook laptops in India will allow Indian students to get easy access to affordable PCs. By further expanding our manufacturing operations, we continue to support the Make in India initiative of the government," HP India, Senior Director - Personal Systems, Vikram Bedi said. HP is one of the applicants under the government's Rs 17,000 crore production linked incentive scheme for IT hardware.

## India retains 40th rank in GII 2023

The ranking puts India in a leading position among the lower middle-income country group

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, Sept 28:** India retained its 40th rank out of 132 economies in the Global Innovation Index (GII) 2023 rankings, according to a report by the Geneva-based World Intellectual Property Organization.

"India maintains its 40th position overall and takes the helm in the lower middle-income group. It holds the record for overperforming on innovation for the 13th consecutive year. India holds top rankings in key indicators, including ICT services exports (at place 5), VC re-



In 2015, India stood at the 81st spot and has been rising in the past eight years. The country also holds the record for overperforming on innovation for the 13th consecutive year

ceived (6), graduates in science and engineering (11) and global corporate R&D investors (13)," read a press state from the GII.

Government think tank NITI Aayog said in a statement Thursday that India has been on a rising trajectory over the past several years in the GII - from 81st position in 2015 to 40 this year.

"The consistent improvement in the GII ranking is owing to the

immense knowledge capital, the vibrant start-up ecosystem, and the amazing work done by the public and private research organizations. Innovation has been at the forefront of our battle against the unprecedented crisis created by the pandemic and will be pivotal in driving the country's resilience, as enshrined in the Prime Minister's clarion call on Atma Nirbhar Bharat," NITI Aayog said in a statement

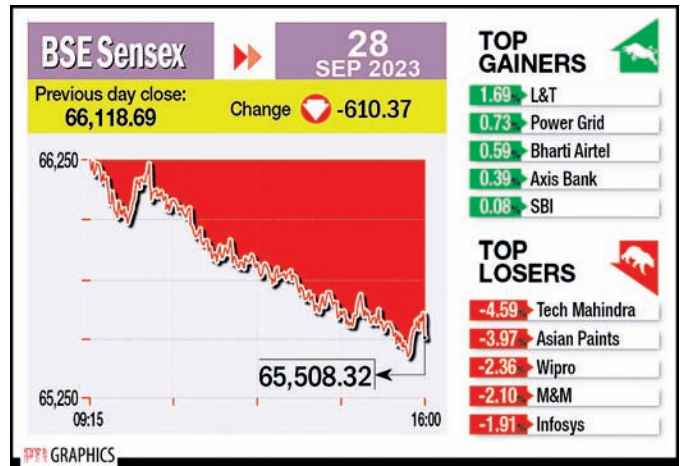
## FOREIGN TRIPS TO GET DEARER FROM OCT

The higher rate of 20 per cent TCS to be levied on spending above Rs 7 lakh on foreign tour packages and liberalised remittance scheme (LRS) will kick in from October 1. Currently, funds transferred overseas under the Reserve Bank's LRS attract 5 per cent Tax Collection at Source (TCS) on amounts exceeding Rs 7 lakh



## BLOODBATH AT D-STREET

# Indices dip nearly 1%; at 4-week low



Investors' wealth eroded by ₹2.95 lakh crore as markets fell by nearly 1 per cent amid feeble global cues and unabated foreign capital outflows. The market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms fell by ₹2,95,144.09 crore to ₹3,16,65,937.80 crore

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, Sept 28:** Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty fell by nearly 1 per cent Thursday, a four-week low, due to unabated foreign capital outflows amid a largely negative trend in global markets.

Besides, heavy selling pressure in index major Reliance Industries, Infosys and ITC also dented market sentiments, traders said. The 30-share BSE Sensex fell 610.37 points or 0.92 per cent to settle at 65,508.32. During the day, it plunged 695.3 points or 1.05 per cent to 65,423.39.

The Nifty declined 192.90 points or 0.98 per cent to end at 19,523.55. Tech Mahindra was the biggest loser in the Sensex pack, slipping 4.59 per cent, followed by Asian Paints, Wipro, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Bajaj Finserv,

## Nomura upgrades Indian equities

Japanese brokerage Nomura has upgraded Indian equities to "overweight" from "neutral", primarily on the stronger structural story presented by Asia's third largest economy. In a report Tuesday, the brokerage said India is a major beneficiary of the "China+1" theme and possesses a large and liquid equity market. "The structural story of India is now well known as a major beneficiary of the 'China+1' theme, possessing a large, liquid equity market," the report by its analysts said. Nomura said the stock market is benefiting from the "k-shaped growth", which has led to concerns about equitable growth, where there are fears of the rich getting richer and the poor getting poorer.

Infosys, ITC, Mahindra & Mahindra, Hindustan Unilever, IndusInd Bank, Reliance Industries and JSW Steel.

In contrast, Larsen & Toubro, Bharti Airtel, Power Grid and Axis Bank were among the gainers. Global oil benchmark Brent crude dipped 0.38 per cent to \$96.18 a barrel. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth ₹354.35 crore Wednesday, according to exchange data.

The BSE benchmark had climbed 173.22 points or 0.26 per cent to settle at 66,118.69 Wednesday. The Nifty gained 51.75 points or 0.26 per cent to end at 19,716.45.

# CAD narrows in Q1

Current account deficit narrows to 1.1% of GDP from 2.1% YoY

AGENCIES

**Mumbai, Sept 28:** India's current account deficit narrowed to \$9.2 billion or 1.1 per cent of GDP for the April-June period, the Reserve Bank said Thursday.

The current account deficit (CAD), which represents the difference between the total amount of money sent abroad and money received from overseas across the economy, stood at \$17.9 billion or 2.1 per cent of GDP in the year-ago period.

However, the crucial number, representing external sector strength, has widened considerably compared to the \$1.3 billion or 0.2 per cent level in the preceding quarter, the RBI said.

"The widening of CAD on a quarter-on-quarter basis was primarily on account of a higher trade deficit, coupled with a lower surplus in net services and decline in private transfer receipts," it added.

Net services receipts decreased sequentially, primarily due to a decline in exports of computer, travel and business services, though was higher on a year-on-year (y-o-y) basis, the central bank said.

Merchandise trade deficit widened to \$56.6 billion in the quarter, from \$52.6 billion in the preceding quarter, but was less than the year-ago deficit of \$63.1 billion. The country's merchandise trade deficit widened more than expected to \$24.16 billion in August.

Private transfer receipts, mainly representing remittances by Indians employed overseas, moderated to \$27.1 billion in the quarter against \$28.6 billion in the quarter-ago period but were higher on a year-on-year basis.

Net outgo on the income account, primarily reflecting payments of investment income, declined to \$10.6 billion in the June quarter from \$12.6 billion in the March quarter, but was higher than the year-ago period.



The improvement in CAD (on an annual basis) was mainly due to a lower trade deficit of \$56.6 billion as against \$ 63 billion last year. This improvement was mainly due to the decline in commodity prices globally this financial year

MADAN SABNAVIS | CHIEF ECONOMIST, BANK OF BARODA

The deficit widened to \$9.2bn, from \$1.3bn in last quarter

The net foreign direct investment decreased to \$5.1 billion from \$13.4 billion a year ago, but the net foreign portfolio investment recorded inflows of \$15.7 billion against net outflows of \$14.6 billion in the year-ago period.

The net external commercial borrowings to India recorded an inflow of \$5.6 billion in the quarter compared to an outflow of \$2.9 billion a year ago, the RBI said.

Non-resident deposits recorded net inflows of \$2.2 billion against \$0.3 billion in the year-ago period, it added.

There was an accretion of \$24.4 billion to the forex reserves on a balance of payments basis in the quarter compared to \$4.6 billion in Q1FY23, the central bank said.

Reacting to the release of data, Aditi Nayar, chief economist at the domestic rating agency Icr, said that with the average mer-

chandise trade deficit trending higher in July-August 2023 relative to Q1 FY24 levels and the recent rise in crude oil prices, the CAD is likely to widen sequentially to \$19-21 billion or 2.3 per cent of GDP in Q2 FY24.

Overall, ICRA projects the CAD will widen to \$73-75 billion (-2.1% of GDP) in FY24 from \$67.0 billion (-2.0% of GDP) in FY23, building in an average crude oil price of \$90 a barrel in the second half of FY24, Nayar added.

The July-September quarter will see a "substantial widening" of the deficit due to the trade balance worsening sequentially, oil and higher core imports rising, and services exports slowing further, said Madhavi Arora, lead economist at Emkay Global Financial Services. The second-quarter CAD/GDP ratio could range from 2.4% to 2.6%, more than double that of the first quarter, he estimated.

## New registrations on NSE touch 1cr in last 8 months

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Sept 28:** Leading stock exchange NSE Thursday said the number of new investor registrations reached 1 crore mark on its platform in the last eight months, taking the total to over 8 crore.

These new investor registrations are not restricted to top-tier cities and cities beyond top 100 accounted for 45 per cent of new investor registrations, the National Stock Exchange (NSE) said.

The eight crore unique PAN investors correspond approximately to around 5 crore unique households in India amounting to around 17 per cent households directly investing in the Indian stock market via the NSE's extensive nationwide network of trading members, it said.

Total number of unique client code accounts registered with the exchange was at 14.9 crore. In terms of regions, states from northern part of India accounted for 43 per cent towards the last 1 crore new investor registrations, followed by west (27 per cent), south (17 per cent) and east (13 per cent).

# External debt edges past \$629bn

India's debt rose by about \$4.7bn from \$624.3bn at March-end

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, Sept 28:** India's external debt rose marginally to \$629.1 billion at June-end 2023, although the debt-GDP ratio declined, according to a Reserve Bank data released Thursday.

"The external debt to GDP ratio declined to 18.6 per cent at end-June 2023 from 18.8 per cent at end-March 2023," RBI said.

Valuation effect due to the appreciation of the US dollar vis-à-vis the major currencies such



as yen and SDR amounted to \$3.1 billion.

US dollar-denominated debt remained the largest component of India's external debt, with a share of 54.4 per cent at end-June 2023, followed by debt denominated in the Indian rupee (30.4 per cent), SDR (5.9 per cent), yen (5.7 per cent), and the euro (3.0 per cent).

Excluding the valuation effect, external debt would have in-

creased by \$7.8 billion instead of \$4.7 billion at end-June 2023 over end-March 2023, the central bank said. According to the data, at end-June 2023, long-term debt (with original maturity of above one year) was placed at \$505.5 billion, recording an increase of \$9.6 billion over its level at end of the preceding quarter.

The share of short-term debt (with original maturity of up to one year) in total external debt declined to 19.6 per cent at end-June 2023 from 20.6 per cent at end-March 2023.

RBI further said outstanding debt of the general government decreased, while non-government debt increased at end-June 2023.

## 'Vedanta to spin off 4 commodity firms'

AS PART OF A BROADER RESTRUCTURING PLAN, VEDANTA IS NEARING A DEAL TO SPIN OFF ITS BUSINESSES INTO SEVERAL LISTED ENTITIES

REUTERS

**Mumbai, Sept 28:** Indian conglomerate Vedanta Ltd will separate its commodities businesses into four companies to get better valuations, a source with direct knowledge of the move told Reuters Thursday.

The company will spin off its metals, power, aluminium and oil and gas businesses, with an official announcement likely to come this week, the source said. The move will need shareholder and other regulatory approvals and the process could take two to three months, the source said, declining to be named as they are not authorised to speak to the media.

Vedanta did not immediately respond to a Reuters' request seeking comments.

The company was valued at Rs 776.29 billion (\$9.33 billion) as of Wednesday, down by about a



third so far this year. Its shares climbed 1.2% Thursday morning following the reports of a split.

Chairman Anil Agarwal said last month that Vedanta will consider separately listing all or some of its businesses, in contrast to a failed attempt in 2020 to delist the company to speed up the process of simplifying its corporate structure.

Vedanta Resources, the UK-based parent of Vedanta Ltd, should be bringing in equity investors, instead of the debt-swap

moves they have been doing, due to its debt repayment issues, said Deven Choksey, managing director of KRChoksey Shares and Securities.

Vedanta Resources, which has a debt load of \$7.7 billion, has been struggling to raise funds due to rating downgrades and concerns about meeting its debt obligations.

Furthermore, Choksey said, Vedanta Resources has limited ability to demerge other units, given the charge of creditors on cash-generating assets, particularly Hindustan Zinc.

Earlier this year, Agarwal sought to trim down the group's debt by getting Hindustan Zinc, a unit of Vedanta Ltd, to buy some of the parent group's zinc assets in a \$2.98 billion deal.

However, the Indian government, which owns nearly 30% stake in Hindustan Zinc, opposed the move.

## ROBUST DEMAND

# Housing sales at all-time high in Q3

The rise in demand is notable given that the average home prices in the top seven Indian cities saw a double-digit yearly growth of 11% during July-September

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Sept 28:** Housing sales rose 36 per cent year-on-year to a record 1,20,280 units across seven major cities during the July-September period on robust demand amid stable mortgage rate, according to Anarock.

It highlighted that quarterly sales in July-September touched an all-time high.

Housing sales stood at 88,230 units in the year-ago period across the seven major cities.

Releasing the data, real estate consultant Anarock said average housing prices across the seven cities grew 11 per cent annually in the July-September period



The continued healthy sales momentum is at least partially attributable to the repo rate pause maintained by the Reserve Bank of India in the two recent monetary policies. This has kept home loan interest rates stable, keeping housing purchase sentiment high

ANUJ PURI | CHAIRMAN, ANAROCK

this year. Hyderabad saw the highest rise of 18 per cent.

In housing data, sales of apartments, villas and independent floors are included while plots are excluded.

Anarock Chairman Anuj Puri highlighted that Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR) and Pune contributed 51 per cent of the total sales.

According to the data, housing sales in Delhi-NCR rose 6 per cent to 15,865 units during July-September 2023 from 14,970 units in the year-ago period.

In MMR, housing sales increased 46 per cent to 38,500 units from 26,400 units during the period under review.

Housing sales in Bangalore went up 29 per cent to 16,395

units during July-September this year from 12,690 units in the corresponding period of last year. In Pune, sales grew maximum by 63 per cent to 22,885 units from 14,080 units.

Sales of residential properties in Hyderabad increased 41 per cent to 16,375 units from 11,650 units.

In Chennai, housing sales rose 42 per cent to 4,940 units from 3,490 units.

Housing sales in Kolkata went up 7 per cent to 5,320 units during July-September from 4,950 units in the year-ago period.

"The ever-rising aspiration of owning a home mainly driven by rising income levels has meant a strong demand for housing over the last couple of years. The trend is expected to continue in the foreseeable future," Gurugram-based realty firm Krimisi Corporation Managing Director Mohit Jain said.

The demand for luxury housing too is likely to remain strong amid the desire for upscale living experiences, he said.

# Shooters continue to deliver

Indian men's 10m air pistol team strike gold at Asian Games, Sarabjot fumbles in finals

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Hangzhou, Sept 28:** The men's 10m air pistol team extended India's impressive show at the Asian Games by shooting another gold but individual success eluded Sarabjot Singh and Arjun Singh Cheema, who fizzled out in the final here Thursday.

The team of Sarabjot, Cheema and Shiva Narwal narrowly beat the Chinese team to take the top podium, earning India's fourth gold medal from the shooting ranges. With Thursday's success, Indian shooters have so far won four gold, four silver and five bronze medals.

The Indian trio's aggregate score of 1734 was just one better than the Chinese team, which settled for the silver medal, while Vietnam, with a score of 1730, bagged the bronze.

Sarabjot and Arjun also made it to the eight-shooter individual finals but finished fourth and eighth respectively.

Vietnam's Pham Quang Huy won gold with a score of 240.5, while South Korea's Lee Wonho (239.4) and Uzbekistan's Vladimir Svechnikov (219.9) took the silver and bronze, respectively. Sarabjot, 21, scored 199, while Arjun ended up eighth and last, exiting on the second elimination shot.

## TEAM GOLD FOR INDIA

It was another fruitful day for Indian shooters, with Sarabjot, who will be celebrating his 22nd birthday Saturday, giving himself an early birthday gift as he led the air pistol trio to team gold, scoring 580 in the qualification round, while Cheema shot 578 and Narwal amassed 576 to aggregate 1734.

In the qualification round, whose aggregate score decides



Sarabjot Singh, Arjun Singh Cheema and Shiva Narwal pose for pictures during presentation ceremony in Hangzhou, Thursday

the team medallists, Sarabjot shot cards of 95, 95, 97, 98, 97 and 98 to aggregate 580 and entered the finals at fifth place.

Team-mate Cheema shot series of 97, 96, 97, 97, 96 and 95 for his 578 to also make the eight-shooter finals, placed eighth.

Shiva Narwal, the younger brother of 2020 Tokyo Paralympic gold medallist in mixed 50m pistol Manish and the third member of the gold-winning team here, could not make it to the

individual finals, finishing 14th. Narwal shot a series of 92, 96, 97, 99, 97 and 95 for his 576.

This was the third team gold at the shooting ranges here after the 10m air rifle top-podium finish and women's 25-metre pistol gold.

## INDIVIDUAL MEDAL MISSED

Sarabjot had won his first individual senior gold medal at the ISSF World Cup in Bhopal earlier this year, and was gunning for more success today in the

individual category after being placed fifth among the eight finalists at the end of the qualification round.

But a string of below-par scores in the finals, undid his efforts in the qualification round. He managed just 9.8 and 9.4 on the third and fourth shots in the finals and another rank bad shot of 8.9 on the seventh shot pegged him further back from where he could not recover.

## SKREET TEAM SEVENTH

The Indian mixed skeet team of Ganemat Sekhon and Anant Jeet Singh Naruka failed to qualify for the six-team finals, finishing seventh. The pair shot an aggregate of 138 with Ganemat scoring 67/75, while Naruka shot 71.

Wednesday, Naruka had claimed the silver medal in men's skeet event, adding to the team bronze he won alongside Angad Vir Singh Bajwa and Gurjoat Khangura.

# KIWIS LOOK TO PASS GRAND FINAL HURDLE

New Zealand are considered one of the powerhouses in world cricket. Despite having some of the greats - like Martin Crowe, Richard Hadlee, Shane Bond, Brandon McCullum, Stephan Fleming, Daniel Vettori and Chris Cairns - in their side, they failed to achieve the ultimate success in the game.

However, under the captaincy of McCullum, the Black Caps breathed the air in the never-seen-before territory - the final - in 2015. But, whether it's a bad day or their failure to control the nerve, they were mauled by their Trans-Tasmanian rivals Australia, who were the co-hosts of the edition along with NZ.

Although they failed to lift the trophy, that journey somehow lit a fire in the hearts of every Kiwi cricketer. Four years later, Kane Williamson led the side to their second successive final...this time in England. And yet again, the opposition was the home team. But this time, the Black Caps put up a splendid fight in the title clash, making it arguably the best-ever final the world had ever seen.

The Kiwis scored 241/8 while batting first before bowling the hosts out for the same, guiding the match into Super Over. However, the Super Over also finished as tied, with England scoring 15 for no loss and NZ, in replay scored 15/1. But it was nothing, compared to the final drama that decided the result.

It was the rule of boundary counts (26-17) that went against Williamson & Co. It broke the Kiwi hearts as well as every cricket fan's. The rule proved to be anticompetitive to a contest of

**66** The key for us was finding the right balance for the squad (when announced) and making sure we had our bases covered for what is going to be a very competitive tournament

GARY STEAD | HEAD COACH



such caliber. The incident led the cricket lawmakers Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) to change the rule to find a winner.

And finally they ended their ICC title drought a couple of years later when they won the inaugural ICC World Test Championship beating India in the final. They last won an ICC title in 2000 - the ICC KnockOut Trophy.

So it would be interesting to see how the Gary Stead-coached team perform in India, where their record is quite impressive.



HOLDING THE KEYS TO SUCCESS  
Kane Williamson, Tom Latham, Trent Boult, Ish Sodhi & Devon Conway

# Ramkumar-Myneni pair one win away from gold



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Hangzhou, Sept 28:** The Indian tennis camp had something to cheer Thursday with Ramkumar Ramanathan and Saketh Myneni reaching the men's doubles gold medal round and the mixed doubles pair of Rohan Bopanna and Rutuja Bhosale assuring itself of a medal.

The second-seeded team of Ramkumar and Myneni downed the gutsy Korean pair of Seongchan Hong and Soonwoo Kwon 6-1, 6-7(8-10), 10-0 to move to the title clash.

Myneni will now gun for his second Asian Games gold, having won a mixed doubles yellow metal with Sania Mirza in the

2014 edition. It will be a maiden Games medal for Ramkumar.

The Koreans fought back after losing the opening set in a rather sedate manner but Myneni and Ramkumar held their nerves to outplay their rivals in the super tie-break. The Indian team will now take on Chinese Taipei, that ousted Thailand, in the gold medal match Friday.

India had won the men's doubles title in the last edition in Indonesia with Rohan Bopanna and Divij Sharan emerging victorious in the final. The second-seeded Bopanna-Bhosale pair moved to the mixed doubles semifinals with a five-set 7-5, 6-3 win over Kazakhstan's Zhibek Kulambayeva and Grigoriy Lomakin.

# ROSHIBINA DEVI SECURES SILVER

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Hangzhou, Sept 28:** For India's Naorem Roshibina Devi the silver medal in women's 60kg sanda event of wushu was a victory for the victims of Manipur violence that has been raging in her native state since May this year.

Hailing from the Meitei community in Kwashiphai village in Bishnupur district adjoining Churachandpur, which is dominated by the rival Kuki ethnic community, Roshibina fought a valiant fight against local heavy-weight Wu Xiaowei before going down 0-2 in two rounds in the final.

The conflict between the two communities in Manipur has killed scores of people and injured so many more. "Manipur is burning. Fighting is going on in Manipur. I can't go to my village. I want to dedicate this medal to those who are protecting us and suffering there," said Roshibina after clinching the silver.

The Manipuri athlete was crying inconsolably as she added: "I don't know what will happen, the fighting has been continuing. When will it stop and return to normal life of earlier times."

China has dominated the women's 60kg category and an ultra-aggressive Wu ensured that the hosts defended their gold medal of the Jakarta-Palembang edition.

Roshibina's effort was good enough for the 22-year-old to upgrade her bronze from the Asian Games 2018. She had confirmed at least a silver Wednesday when she put up a terrific fight to knock out world championship silver and bronze medallist Thi Thu Thuy Nguyen of Vietnam 2-0.

**Anush clinches bronze**  
India's Anush Agarwalla



NAOREM ROSHIBINA DEVI (L) & ANUSH AGARWALLA



clinched a bronze medal in the individual dressage event, first ever for the country in this segment, of the equestrian competition. Astride Etro, Agarwalla scored 73.030 to finish third and claimed his second Asian medal.

## Medals assured

Indian men's and women's teams assured themselves of medals at the Asian Games after progressing to the semifinals of the squash events here Thursday.

While the men's team, comprising Abhay Singh, Mahesh Mangaonkar and Harinder Pal Singh, blanked Nepal 3-0 in their final pool tie, the women's team, comprising Joshna Chinappa, Tanvi Khanna and Anahat Singh, were handed a 0-3 loss by Malaysia in their last pool B fixture. Both teams sealed top two spots in their respective pools to make the semifinals, which guarantees them at least a bronze.

## Trio in pre-quarters

Star Indian paddlers Manika Batra, Sharath Kamal and G Sathiyan dominated their oppo-

nents en route their pre-quarter-finals entry in the table tennis competition. However, Sreeja Akula faced a humiliating defeat.

India fared better in the women's doubles as the pair of Sreeja and Diya Chitale as well as Sutirtha Mukherjee and Ayhika Mukherjee du won their matches. In the men's doubles, Indian duo of Manav Vikash Thakkar and Manush Utpalbhai Shah, and the pair of Sathiyan and Sharath also won their matches to enter round of 16.

## Contrasting fortunes

Deepak Bhoria's Asian Games campaign ended in heartbreak as he bowed out with a pre-quarter-final loss even as Nishant Dev and Jaismine Lamboria advanced to the last eight.

## Splendid performance

The Indian men's 4x100m and women's 4x200m freestyle relay teams sailed into the finals with new national records. Srihari Nataraj, Tanish George Mathew and Vishal Grewal clocked 3:21.22s to finish fifth in the heats to qual-

ify for the final of the 4x100m freestyle relay event. They rewrote the previous 'Best Indian Time' of 3:23.72s set by Nataraj, Sajan Prakash, Viradhwal Khade and Anil Kumar Shylaja in 2019.

The quartet of Dhinidhi Desinghu, Shivangi Sarma, Vritti Agarwal and Hashika Ramachandra (8:39.64s) followed suit by notching up the 'Best Indian Time' in women's 4x200m freestyle relay. The Indians finished eighth in the 10-team heat to move to the final. The four women swimmers bettered the 8:40.89s mark set by Hashika, Dhinidhi, Vihitha Nayana and Shirin at the nationals earlier this year.

## Eves enter quarters

Indian women's badminton team, comprising PV Sindhu, Ashmita Chaliha and Anupama Upadhyaya, thrashed Mongolia 3-0 to sail into the quarterfinals of the team championships. India will face a formidable Thailand in the quarterfinals.

## India crash out

Saudi Arabia were strong enough to ward off a gutsy challenge from India winning their pre-quarterfinal match 2-0 in the men's football competition.

## India beat Japan

Young striker Abhishek fired two goals as India beat defending champions Japan 4-2 to register their third consecutive victory and take a giant step towards semifinal of the men's hockey competition. India will play arch-rivals Pakistan in their next Pool A match Saturday.

Abhishek (13th, 48th minutes) scored two field goals, while Mandeep Singh (24th) and Amit Rohidas (34th) were the other scorers for India. Japan scored through Genki Mitani (57th) and Ryosei Kato (60).

# Ashwin replaces injured Patel in World Cup squad

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Sept 28:** India have predictably named veteran off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin as a replacement for injured spin bowling all-rounder Axar Patel in their 15-member squad for the upcoming World Cup, ICC announced Thursday.

Axar had sustained a quadriceps tear and is not expected to recover anytime soon, forcing the Ajit Agarkar-led selection committee to name the 37-year-old Ashwin, who took four wickets in the two ODIs during the recently concluded series against Australia, in the squad.

"Axar Patel has failed to recover in time for the World Cup after sustaining a left quadriceps strain during India's Asia Cup Super Four encounter against Bangladesh. The spin-bowling all-rounder missed the final of the Asia Cup as a result. Veteran spinner Ravichandran Ashwin has been named his replacement," ICC stated in a media release.

# Odisha FC, MCFC play out exciting stalemate in ISL

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, Sept 28:** Odisha FC and former champions Mumbai City FC (MCFC) played out an exciting 2-2 draw in their Indian Super League (ISL) match here Thursday.

Odisha took the lead at the stroke of the first half after Jerry Mawia exploited a defensive lapse by Akash Mishra. However, Mumbai found the equaliser two minutes into the second half. Rostyn Griffiths rose high above the Odisha defenders to head in a perfect cross by Greg Stewart.

Odisha went ahead for the second time in the match through Roy Krishna in the 76th minute. Mumbai's Nawaz made a rough tackle on Krishna, and the referee awarded a penalty which the latter converted easily.

However, Mumbai restored the parity in the 89th minute. Vikram Pratap Singh delivered a fine cross into the box that Jorge Diaz headed into the net as the teams shared the point.

# PAKISTAN CRICKETERS FLOORED BY 'UNEXPECTED' WELCOME

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Hyderabad, Sept 28:** "Zabardast. Mazza aa gaya," responded premier Pakistan pacer Haris Rauf as he walked into the main nets of the Hyderabad Cricket Association (HCA) ground and asked about "the overwhelming" welcome his team received at the airport barely 12 hours ago.

Indians' love for the game is unmatched, therefore, fans chanting Pakistan skipper Babar Azam's name at the Hyderabad airport should not come entirely as a surprise.

After all, one of the leading batters in the game had set foot on Indian soil for the first time

alongside most of his teammates, marking Pakistan's return to India after seven years.

The perpetual tension between the nations was clearly forgotten as fans were left in awe of Babar and Co. Within no time of their arrival, the Pakistan cricket team was "trending" in India. Babar was clearly the fans' favourite but the entire Pakistan squad was floored by the unexpected welcome.

"We did expect people to turn up at the ground but a proper welcome at the airport from fans, we did not see that coming. They had lined up for the team. It was wonderful to witness that, even the players got emotional about it," a team source told PTI.



Pakistan players were having fun during their practice session, Thursday

Insta stories from Babar and Shaheen Afridi upon their arrival

in the heavily guarded team hotel in Banjara Hills summed

up their emotions. "Overwhelmed with the love and support here in Hyderabad," wrote Babar. Shaheen added "great welcome thus far".

Pakistan arrived here less than 48 hours before their opening World Cup warm-up fixture against New Zealand Friday and fully aware of the task at hand, as many as 10 players including two travelling reserves turned up at the ground for the optional training session. The team spent close to two-and-half hours at the ground.

## PAKISTAN'S DIET PLAN

With beef not available to all the 10 participating teams in India, Pakistan will rely on chicken, mutton and fish for

their daily protein intake. The team's diet chart, which is in PTI's possession, includes grilled lamb chops, mutton curry, the hugely popular butter chicken and grilled fish.

For their carbohydrate intake, the team has asked the stadium caterer for steamed basmati rice, spaghetti in Bolognese sauce, a favourite of the great Shane Warne, and vegetarian pulao. As Pakistan are here for almost two weeks, the cheat meals could include the famous Hyderabad biryani.

If the first 12 hours are an indication, irrespective of what happens on the field, it will be a memorable first trip to India for Babar and his team.