# HERE. NOW Orissa Pos

**BHUBANESWAR | MONDAY SEPTEMBER 9, 2024** 

**Dream fulfilled** Actor Ananya Panday says

working with Vikramaditya Motwane in 'CTRL' was like a dream come true for her

LEISURE | P2



### Mounting toll

### **IPO buzz**

The IPO market will be bustling this week, with 4 companies, including Bajaj Housing Finance, set to launch their initial share-sale to raise ₹8,390 crore

BUSINESS | P11



### Record medal haul

India achieves their most successful the Paris 2024 Games, securing a

### VOLUME 14, ISSUE 160 | www.orissapost.com

### **TMC MP resigns**

Kolkata: TMC MP Jawhar Sircar Sunday wrote to West Bengal CM altogether, describing the steps handling the rape and murder of "disillusioned" with the state

### **DeepVeer blessed** with baby girl



New Delhi: Bollywood star couple Deepika Padukone and Ranveer Singh Sunday became parents to their first child, a baby girl. The duo, who has co-starred in films such as 'Ram-Leela', 'Bajirao Mastani' and '83', welcomed the baby a day after Deepika was admitted to a private hospital in Bhatt, Arjun Kapoor, and Ananya 38, and Ranveer, 39, were photographed offering prayers at the Siddhivinavak Temple on the

### IRREGULAR by MANJUL



No more outing! Even if you dodge road rage, lynch mobs, or gau rakshaks, you

### WEATHER

**BBSR** CTC 31.4°( **Max Temp** Min Temp Humidity 7.2mm 2.2mm

Generally cloudy sky

Rainfall



Israel's retaliatory offensive in Gaza kil more than 40,000 Palestinians, according to the Health Ministry

INTERNATIONAL | P10





### SHORT TAKES

### over RG Kar horror

Mamata Banerjee, the chief of his party, and said he has decided to guit Rajya Sabha and leave politics taken by the state government in the doctor at RG Kar hospital "too little and guite late". In the letter, Sircar said he became increasingly government as it seemed "quite unconcerned" about corruption and "strong-arm tactics" of a section of leaders.



Mumbai. They announced the news in a joint Instagram post. "Welcome Baby Girl! 8.9.2024," it read. Several industry colleagues, including Alia Panday, congratulated Deepika and Ranveer on social media. Deepika, eve of Ganesh Chaturthi Friday. P2



could still get beaten by autowallahs

**FORECAST** with one or two spells of



three years ago, produced a personal best effort of 47.32m to

claim the top position. the classification meant for athletes of short stature, originally ended with a silver after he upstaged world record holder Sun Pengxiang of China with a 47.32m throw. However, that was upgraded to an unprecedented gold after Sadegh's disqualification. Pengxiang





performance in Paralympic history at total of 29 medals

SPORTS | P12

12 PAGES | ₹5.00

### **DHENKANAL GANGRAPE** Dy CM orders stringent action

Bhubaneswar, Sept 8: A day after it came to the fore that a woman was allegedly gangraped for several months in a deserted house at Mahulpunji village of Dhenkanal district, Deputy Chief Minister Pravati Parida Šunday directed for stringent action against the culprits.

Bhapur police have arrested four persons and handed them over to Sadar police. The Deputy CM talked to Dhenkanal SP about the incident and directed the police to take stringent action.

The incident that took place at Mahulpunji a few days ago came to light after SAKHI centre officials lodged a police complaint in this regard, a police official said, adding that a case (713/24) was registered in this regard.

While the victim's mother had died, her father is mentally unsound. As the family is poor, they live in a deserted house, according to the police. The local administration recently rescued the victim and shifted her to the nearest SAKHI centre, after which the victim, who is stated to be sevenmonths pregnant, narrated the entire incident, the police official said. Investigations are going on under the direct supervision of the SP, said Sadar police.

FALLEN APART: Passengers on railway tracks after coaches of Magadh Express train split into two following an accident near Tudiganj station in Buxar district of Bihar, Sunday

# ₹925cr CM Kisan boost for farmers

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 8:** In what has come as a boon for poor landless farmers left out under PM Kisan, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi rolled out CM Kisan Yojana at Sambalpur on the special occasion of agrarian festival Nuakhai, Sunday. Around 46 lakh farmers were included under the scheme as the government disbursed ₹925 crore in the first tranche under the the state government's flagship programme.

The BJP government had earlier announced implementation of CM Kisan Yojana replacing the KALIA scheme of the previous BJD government.

Under CM Kisan, the state government will provide ₹4,000 annually to small and marginal farmers in two instalments to be released on the days of Nuakhai and Akshava Tritiva.

Addressing the public gathering, Majhi said a total of 46 lakh farmers including landless agriculture households will be benefited from the scheme.

As the Centre is providing



₹6,000 to each farmer under PM Kisan scheme in three instalments every year, the farmers of Odisha will now get ₹10,000 annually in their bank accounts, he said. As preparations for Rabi crop begin from Nuakhai, the first instalment has been disbursed during the day.

The farmers can utilise the fund for procuring farm equipment, seeds, fertilizers and pesticides well in advance, he said.

The government also rolled out a scholarship scheme for the children of the CM Kisan beneficiaries to pursue technical education. The government is providing a scholarship of ₹2 lakh to the eligible farmer's son or daughter, he pointed out.

Due to some technical issues, all beneficiaries of CM Kisan have not been included under PM Kisan, he said, adding, "To bridge the gap, our government has launched a two-month saturation drive to include all eligible registered farmers under the PM Kisan scheme from todav.

Majhi said the previous BJD government had announced providing a bonus of ₹100 to paddy farmers in 2014 at Sohela in western Odisha. However, it failed to implement it. "We have promised to procure paddy with an MSP of ₹3,100 and now we are going to give a ₹800 bonus for a

quintal of paddy," the CM said. Majhi further said that the Odisha government has submitted a proposal to the Centre for setting up of an AIIMS in Sambalpur, which would happen

in the coming days. He also launched CM Kisan portal and Krushak Odisha Unified Portal in presence of Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, Revenue Minister Suresh Pujari and local MLA Jayanarayan Mishra.

### Save Manipur's integrity, **Biren Singh tells Centre**

AGENCIES

Imphal, Sept 8: Amid a fresh bout of violence in Manipur, Chief Minister N Biren Singh Sunday appealed to the Centre to take steps to protect territo-rial integrity of the state, according to an official.

Singh also urged the Union government not to give in to the demand for a separate administration raised by Kuki Zo groups, said the official on condition of anonymity. The Chief Minister made these

appeals in a memorandum submitted to Governor Lakshman Prasad Acharya when he, along with a number of MLAs and Assembly Speaker, called on him at Raj Bhavan and held a meeting. In the memorandum to

should ensure peace in Manipur and give adequate power to the elected state government, according to the official. Singh also called for revok-

Acharya, Singh said the Centre

ing the Suspension of Operations (SoO) agreement.

The SoO pact was signed by the Centre, the Manipur government and two conglomerates of Kuki militant outfits -Kuki National Organisation (KNO) and United People's

Beating odds, three Kandhamal tribal students crack NEET

## case in India **SAMPLES BEING TESTED; PATIENT STABLE**

Suspected mpox

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 8: India has recorded a suspected case of mpox found in a man who recently travelled from a country suffering an outbreak of the virus, the Health ministry said Sunday.

The patient has been isolated in a hospital and is in a stable condition, the ministry said. Samples have been collected from the man and are being tested to confirm the presence of mpox.

Mpox is a viral zoonosis with symptoms similar to those seen in the past in smallpox patients, although clinically less severe. It can spread through close contact. Usually mild, it is fatal in rare cases. It causes flu-like symptoms and pus-filled lesions on the body

"The case is being managed in line with established protocols, and contact tracing is ongoing to identify potential sources and assess the impact within the country," the ministry said.

The country is fully prepared\_\_ to deal with such isolated travelrelated cases and has robust measures in place to manage and mitigate any potential risk, the ministry added.

The development of this consistent with the earlier risk assessment conducted by the National Centre for

Disease Control (NCDC) and there is no cause of any undue concern, it said. Last month. media

reports said India had been on alert since a new strain of mpox became virulent in Africa. The World Health Organisation

(WHO) has declared the outbreak a public health emergency of international concern after the new variant was identified. Since the 2022 declaration of PHEIC by WHO, 30 mpox cases have been  $reported \ \bar{in\ India}.$ 

The last case of mpox was detected in March this year. According to WHO's earlier statement, 99,176 mpox cases and 208 deaths have been reported from 116 countries since 2022.

## NAVDEEP'S SILVER UPGRADED TO

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Paris, Sept 8: In a dramatic turn of events at the 2024 Paris Paralympics, Navdeep Singh's silver medal was upgraded to gold after a decision taken by the International Paralympic Committee (IPC), following a thorough review process. Navdeep, who initially secured silver in the men's javelin throw F41 event, was awarded the gold medal after the disqualification of Sadegh Beit Sayah due to a violation of Rule 8.1 of the World Para Athletics Rules and

This is India's first-ever gold medal in the men's javelin F41

Regulations

The 23-year-old para-athlete from Haryana, who had finished fourth at the Tokyo Games



Navdeep, who competes in (44.72m) finished with a silver.

### ARUNA SAHU, OP

Daringbadi, Sept 8: "Desire is the key to motivation, but it's the determination and commitment to unrelenting pursuit of your goal that will enable you to attain the success you seek. This famous saying proves well for three tribal youths of Kandhamal who have cracked the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET) this year.

Using borrowed books and going to hilltops, 3km away from his village, daily to access internet for months, a 19-year-old tribal student Sanatan Pradhan from a remote village in Kandhamal district has qualified for NEET in his first attempt.

The journey of Sanatan

marked by determination, hard

work and a relentless pursuit of

a dream to become a doctor, has

not only brought pride to his



family, but also ignited hope in the region where opportunities

are very rare. Sanatan's father Kaneswar Pradhan is a small farmer in remote Tadimaha village in Kandhamal district.

Sanatan, who belongs to Kondh tribe, cracked NEET without any formal coaching and is set to join the government-run MKCG Medical College in Berhampur. After completing his Class X at a government-run



school at Daringbadi, Sanatan moved to Khallikote Junior college for pursuing his Class XII. After completing his Class XII,

he returned to his village for preparation of NEET. As internet service is not available in his village, he used to travel 3-4 km and climb the hilly areas daily to access internet and prepare for the medical en-

trance exam. "Though I was confident to get a seat in medical college in



the state, it was a dream come true for me obtain a seat in MKCG Medical College here," he said. "I will study sincerely and be-

come a doctor to serve the people living in remote areas, where the medical facility is scarce," he said, adding, he has already deposited his money to confirm his seat by borrowing.

"Now several bankers are coming to us and offering student loans. We will request the government for financial help for

Santan's medical studies," Kaneswar said.

Similar is the case with Kalakar Pradhan of Saberenga village under Sinabali panchavat and Linsa Pradhan of Garjedi village under Badabanga panchayat who have defeated all odds to crack NEET. Kalakar was preparing for the medical entrance while tending his herd of cattle and attending to agricultural works with his family members. He was collecting necessary tips from social media platform YouTube and cleared NEET in his second attempt.

Similarly, Linsa, a differentlyabled girl, also cleared the test in her second attempt. She was preapring for NEET by collecting materials online. She has 70 per cent problems in her backbone and helping her mother in all household chores as well as in the farm works.



# eisure



### **MCKELLEN RECEIVES CALLS TO RETURN KNIGHTHOOD**

Veteran actor Ian McKellen, who recently called the late Queen Elizabeth II 'rude', has been receiving calls to return his Knighthood for his comments. The Royal experts believe that the actor went too far in his criticism of the late gueen and he should return his Knighthood.

### **KIDMAN: DON'T MEDDLE IN PEOPLE'S RELATIONSHIPS**

Oscar-winning actress Nicole Kidman recently shared her thoughts on perfect couples. *The Perfect* Couple star told Extra: "You never know why people stay together ... I always say that about couples. So. don't meddle in people's relationships, because you actually never know what they are really doing."



### FORTUNE **FORECAST**

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FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181

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

**TAURUS** You may, this day, get your moods ruffled, your emo-tions hurt. Emotionally you are likely to be too touchy and, therefore, vulnerable. Ganesha sees you being grouchy and upset throughout the morn ing, Later, however, the clouds of gloom will disperse and you will gradually

regain your exuberance.

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

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

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

### VIRGO

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

Ganesha says you will see fruition today. This is a good and profitable day for all those of you field. For those of you who are working professionals this will be a day when you senior officials will praise you for taking up tough tasks and completing them satisfactorily.

### **SCORPIO** You wake up to a new ray of

hope, flaunting your sunny side up, predicts Ganesha. You leave no stone unturned to fulfil your desires. With boundless optimism, you are all set to win the world. Push your lim its to know your strengths.

### **SAGITTARIUS**

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

### CAPRICORN

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

### **AQUARIUS**

It may seem that all of your plans are going haywire. It is not too late; you can still have things under control. All you need helping everyone around.

### PISCES

You will contemplate adopting a new strategy today. It is an auspicious day for making a new beginning and undertaking new ventures. A promotion may be on the cards at the work front and you will find success knocking at your front door today. Your self confidence will find a new lease and you will emerge much more certain of your capabilities and goals.

## SubraMania delights audience with musical fusion

Bhubaneswar, Sept 8: The week-long 30th Guru Kelucharan Mohapatra (GKCM) Award Festival 2024 at Rabindra Mandap, organised by Srjan-Guru Kelucharan Mohapatra Odissi Nrityabasa, reached its half-way mark Sunday, with a delightful musical evening by 'SubraMania'.

It was led by the brilliant and violinist Ambi Subramaniam and vocalist Bindu Subramaniam, who are carrying on the rich musical legacy of their father, celebrated violin virtuoso Dr L Subramaniam.

The fourth evening of Srjan commenced with the auspicious lighting of the lamp. The esteemed guests for the evening included Yogesh Bahadur



OrissaPOST and Dharitri Chief Executive Adyasha Satpathy lights the ceremonial lamp on the fourth day of GKCM Award Festival 2024 at Rabindra Mandap as other dignitaries look on, Sunday

Khurania, Director General of Police (DGP), Odisha; Subodh Chandra Acharva, Joint Directorcum-Joint Secretary, Department of Odia Language, Literature & Culture, Govt of Odisha; Adyasha Satpathy, Chief Executive, Dharitri and OrissaPOST; and

Guru Ratikant Mohapatra, Director, Srjan, and Dean, Faculty of Arts, Communication and Indic Studies, SSU.

It was an evening of musical celebration as the band 'Subra Mania', led by Ambi Subramaniam on the violin, Bindu Subramaniam on vocals, Frijo Francis on the keyboard, Anirudha Bhat on the mridangam, Prashanth Gnanamuthu on the guitar and Karthik Mani on the drums captivated audiences with their contemporary world music, a fusion of traditional Indian music with elements of pop, rock, and jazz, with their breakthrough track "Days in the Sun".

Hailed as "India's Itzhak Pearlmann," by Ozy Magazine, Ambi is a Carnatic violin prodigy. music educator, and UN youth delegate, while Bindu, hailed as third-generation prodigy, is an entrepreneur, singer-songwriter, and educator. Together, they run SaPa (Subramaniam academy of Performing arts), while teach ing music to over 30,000 students in India annually through the SaPa in schools programme.

With a unique musical arrangement using the violin, mridangam, drums, and guitar, SubraMania presented a unique harmonic blend of different sounds, tonality, and pieces. Each track had a distinct element including Spanish Flamenco, Hungarian gypsy, and rhythmic intricacies. The band weaved

temporary milieu, making for harmonic world fusion. It is their interpretation of the inherent classical elements that made the concert an auditory delight. State's only home-grown English daily OrissaPOST and one of the largest circulated Odia dailies Dharitri are the print media partners for the event.



A musical performance by Ambi Subramaniam and Bindu Subramaniam OP PHOTO

## DeepVeer welcomes baby girl

Mumbai: INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE Actor Mumbai, Sept 8: Ananya Panday says she Bollywood star couple was in disbelief Deepika Padukone when filmmaker and Ranveer Vikramaditya

Motwane For proached her to star in his next Ananya *CTRL* feature film CTRL. The is a dream cyber-thriller movie marks her maiden colcome true laboration with Motwane, known for directing criti-

cally-acclaimed movies such as *Udaan*, *Lootera* and *Trapped*. Panday said she has been a fan of Motwane's work as a filmmaker, starting from his 2010

debut movie Udaan. "*Udaan* is mv and mv mother's favourite film to watch together, so it was a dream for me.. I actually did not believe for the longest time that he was actually asking me to be a part of the film. I was like, 'You are just going to be there, you are not actually directing the film?' He said, 'I'm directing it'," the 25have officially announced that they have been blessed with a baby girl.

Taking to Instagram Sunday afternoon, the post shared by the stars read: "Welcome baby girl 8.9.2024... Deepika and Ranveer.

It was Sunday, the news about the two welcoming their first bundle of joy went viral. On September 7, photographs and videos of Deepika going to the HN Reliance Hospital in the Girgaon area of Mumbai started doing the rounds, which raised speculations about her giving birth to their first child.

The couple and their families September 6 had visited the Siddhivinayak Temple in Mumbai.

It was in February 2024, when actor told Deepika and Ranveer, fondly this agency. called as DeepVeer by their Also starring fans, announced that they Vihaan Samat, are set to become parents. CTRL has been The actress was said to

be in her second described as a cutting-edge trimester thriller that will February. challenge the way people view their reiance on technol-

Talking about Motwane, the *Liger* actress said, "He is just wonderful, he is one of

But the more time I spent away from him, I realised how much direc-I learned from him. He is outstanding are in she added. the

mo-

ment.

CTRL is set to arrive on streaming service Netflix October 4. PT

They took to

Instagram to

share a

post an



nouncing their pregnancy. The post read: September 2024". With cute motifs of baby clothes, baby shoes and balloons.

After the announcement, a string of personalities including Arjun Kapoor, Sharvari and Ananya Panday among many others congratulated the new parents and said that the "queen is here." Ranveer and Deepika got married in

November 2018 at a private and intimate ceremony at Lake Como and shared some pictures with fans on Instagram, and five years later on Koffee With Karan, fans got to see their stunning wedding video. Meanwhile, on the work front, both the

husband and the wife will be seen in the upcoming Rohit Shetty directorial Singham Again. While Deepika is a new entrant into

Shetty's cop universe, Ranveer will be seen in a cameo avatar as Simmba

## Amitabh could have prevented Salim-Javed split!

Mumbai: Weeks after the release of TV series Angry Young Men, a glimpse into the careers of the iconic writing duo Salim Khan and Javed Akhtar, aka Salim-Javed, the former shared his thoughts on their separation and hinted that Amitabh Bachchan might have played a role in preventing it. In an interaction with a news portal, Salim recalled the moment when Javed expressed his desire to work independently. While Salim Khan accepted the decision without resistance, he admitted that he still doesn't fully understand why the split happened.

"When he informed me that he wanted to work separately, I said okay, no problem. You can't force someone to stay. Even now, I don't know why we separated. It just happened," Salim Khan stated. Despite their separation, Salim stated that their friendship remained intact. 'We didn't talk behind each other's backs. We used to

meet, talk, and I would pass by his house every day. The friendship is still there." he said. When

asked if the end of their partnership

affected Amitabh, Salim responded affirmatively. The duo had written some of Bachchan's most iconic roles, and their split undoubtedly had an impact on him. Salim then went on to say that if he were in Amitabh's position, he might have acted as a mediator to prevent the break.

"If I were in Amitabh Bachchan's place, I would have told Javed, 'Don't leave, you have a great partnership, everything is going well, why would you want to end this?' If it were me, I would have done that," he explained. Salim also shared that while he often meets Amitabh, they do not discuss this topic. "We still talk and even meet. We don't speak harshly. We don't get too close to anyone," he mentioned. Even though Salim and Javed

parted ways professionally, their collaboration continues to be celebrated. Both attended the special screening

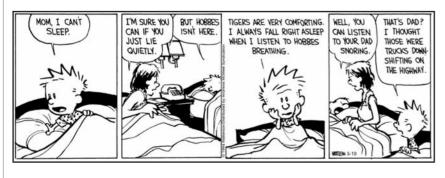
of Sholay in Mumbai recently to mark the 49th anniversary of the film.

### **PEANUTS**

year-old



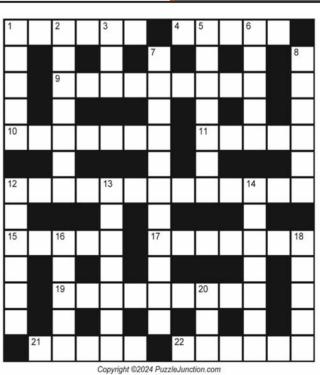
### CALVIN AND HOBBES



### BREVITY



### FUN **CROSSWORD**



19 Yucatan, for

21 Sword

22 Video store

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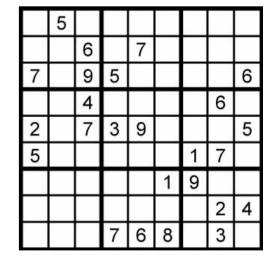
14 Set apart

16 Kick out

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

### SUDOKU

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



### SOLUTIONS

VALUED FE CROSSWOR RUPTSEMP Т REPAIR FILTER 

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SUDOKU

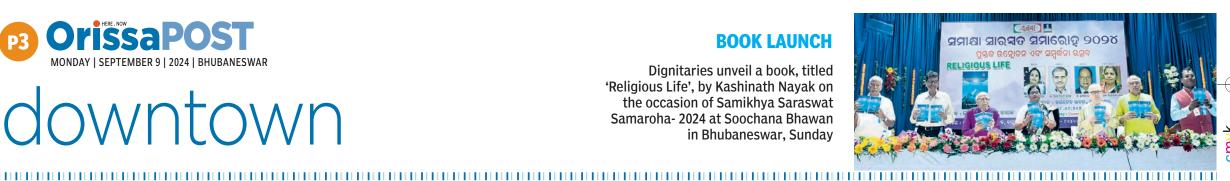
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## downtown

### **BOOK LAUNCH**

Dignitaries unveil a book, titled 'Religious Life', by Kashinath Nayak on the occasion of Samikhya Saraswat Samaroha- 2024 at Soochana Bhawan in Bhubaneswar, Sunday



# PEOPLE ON 'NUAKHAI'



Priests offering 'Nabanna' to deities at Samaleswari temple in Sambalpur, Sunday

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar/Sambalpur, Sept 8: President Droupadi Murmu, Governor Raghubar Das, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi and Union Home Ministers Amit Shah Sunday greeted the people on the occasion of Nuakhai, a festival mostly celebrated in the western parts of the state.

Nuakhai is an agrarian festival where the first crop of the field is offered to the goddess and people seek the blessings of elders in each household.

Murmu, who hails from Odisha, extended her heartfelt greetings of Nuakhai to all Indians, especially the people of the state.

Stating that Nuakhai is a major agrarian festival, Murmu on X said, "Nuakhai festival is an occasion to express gratitude to the farmers of the country. May this festival bring happiness and prosperity in everyone's life."

Majhi wished for the prosperity and happiness of all people on this auspicious day and prayed for the welfare of the world.

Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi arrived in Sambalpur on a two-visit. After offering prayers at Maa Samaleswari temple, he is scheduled to launch the CM

Kisan Yojana in the western

Odisha Sunday. He will also par-

ticipate in 'Nuakhai Bhetghat'

programmes. Union Home Minister Amit Shah in a social media post, said. "Warm greetings on the occasion of Nuakhai. A festival that revives our bond with nature, Nuakhai is a living relic of our ancient culture. May the blessings of Maa Samaleswari bestow upon everyone good health, happiness, and prosperity."

Union Education Minister and Sambalpur MP Dharmendra Pradhan said, "Nuakhai is a shining symbol of our cultural. spiritual and social lifestyle. This festival gives a strong message to everyone to live together. On this occasion, I pray to Maa Samleswari for the happiness and prosperity of everyone.'

Leader of Opposition in Odisha Assembly Naveen Patnaik in a post on X wished people through a video message and said, "My Nuakhai greetings to all. May Maa Samleswari bless you all with good life, happiness and prosperity."

Special preparations have been made in the temple of presid-

**POLITICKLE by MANJUL** 

Samaleswari in Sambalpur, Patneswari in Balangir, Sureshwari in Sonepur, Sekharbasini in Sundargarh and Manikeswari in Kalahandi for the festival.

The celebrations of Nuakhai include wearing of new clothes, worshipping the presiding deity and having a sumptuous lunch with the entire family, apart from the usual rituals. People exchange 'Nuakhai Juhar' greetings with friends, relatives and well-wishers.

On this day, farmers of western Odisha offer their first crop of the year to their presiding deity. The head of the family offers rice and other food items to their presiding deities.

In Sambalpur, thousands of devotees thronged to their presiding deity, Maa Samaleswari temple on the occasion of Nuakhai. The new rice made out of the first harvested paddy crop was offered to goddess Samaleswari at the stipulated lagna (auspicious moment) between 9.12 am and 9.27 am.

"The new rice with new vegetables and fruits of the season were offered to the goddess at the stipulated lagna and later the other 115 deities (Parsva Deva Devi) were offered the new harvest." said Samaleswari temple's priest Ambika Rai.

Earlier, Nuakhai was being observed on different days in different places. But since 1991, the people of the state have been celebrating the festival on the same day.

"The festival is observed to express gratitude to the almighty for the food grain. Nuakhai in western Odisha is not a festival of any particular group, caste or creed. It is a festival celebrated by all the people of the region with great enthusiasm," said Siddhartha Panda, a local writer.

## PREZ, GUV, CM GREET 'BNSS not free from colonial provisions'

DEBADURLLAV HARICHANDAN, OP

Bhubaneswar, Sept 8: The ruling establishment, in the guise of introducing 'Swadeshi' criminal laws in the country, has instead reinforced the draconian aspects of colonial era IPC in the Bharativa Nagarika Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), said former Madaras High Court judge, Justice K. Chandru.

Speaking at a session organized by Student's Federation of India (SFI) at the Press Club of Odisha here Sunday, Justice Chandru said the BNSS, which got passed with a brute majority in the parliament, has conferred higher authority to law enforcement agencies which could potentially be used by the po-



lice to crush civil liberties and

"In the recent times, when the Supreme Court has stressed that 'bail' is the rule and 'jail' is an exception, such moves only subiugate the fundamental liberty

of citizens", he asserted.

Justice Chandru said despite much hue and cry about the 'Sedition Act', which fell under Section 124A in the erstwhile IPC, the new law has rephrased it and added a new context to it under Section 152 of the BNS (Bharativa Nyaya Sanhita).

On the recent introduction of Mamata Banerjee-led TMC government's Aparajita Bill in West Bengal which seeks to impose death penalty for different kinds of sexual violence against women, he said the provision for stricter punishment in criminal laws will yield lesser impact in prevention of crime. "Counseling measures in the society must be upgraded to keep these activities at check," he added. Former DGP Odisha Amiya

Bhushan Tripathi said the hushhush manner in which the ruling establishment cleared up the bill in the Parliament must be given a thought. "The majoritarianism policies of the ruling-BJP could not be overlooked if one would see how scores of Opposition MPs were expelled in the Parliament while passing the bill. This move was justified by Home Minister Amit Shah who said around 1,000 experts were taken into consideration during making of the law," he added.

The session was attended by SFI volunteers, students and academicians from across

## Senior BJD leader calls

Sabha MPs of Opposition Biju Janata Dal (BJD) quitting the party within one month and joining the BJP, a leader of the regional outfit called for introspection in the party, while others claimed that it will have no impact on the BJD.

and Sujeet Kumar from the BJD and joining the BJP has come as a major blow for the regional outfit which ruled Odisha

Kumar, BJD, which has no member in the Lok Sabha for the first time since its inception in 1997, now has seven MPs in the Rajya Sabha. Odisha has 10 Raya Sabha seats of which 9 were with BJD and one BJP's Ashwini Vaishnaw was elected to the Upper House of Parliament with the sup-

Sulata Deo, Sasmit Patra, Manas Mangaraj, Niranjan Bishi, Munna Khan, Debasish

Amar Satpathy called for introspection in the party following the resignation of

quits, it changes the situation. Therefore, we need an introspection and take measures accordingly," Satpathy said. With specualation rife that more BJD

MPs may join the BJP, BJD Raya Sabha MP Manas Mangaraj claimed that all BJD MPs are behind Naveen Patnaik.

"We will always stand by Naveen Patnaik and BJD through thick and thin. At the same time, people will never accept the way @BJP4India is undemocratically poaching elected lawmakers of other parties to boost its own numbers. This is sheer murder of democracy," Mangaraj posed on X.

Mangaraj described Kumar's resignation as "unfortunate and betrayal of trust".

trust our beloved leader Naveen Patnaik reposed in you. You got everything from him. BJD honoured and rewarded you always. But, the way you deserted the party at this crucial juncture and joined another, really pained us. We, at BJD as well as the people of Kalahandi feel let down,'

ets in a span of one month. One should not be suprised if it attracts more Rajya Sabha MPs from the BJD," said political analyst

# for introspection in party

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Sept 8: With two Rajya The resignation of Mamata Mohanta

for 24-years.

With the resignation of Mohanata and port of the BJD.

The seven BJD Rajya Sabha MPs are -Samantray and Subhashish Khuntia. Senior BJD leader and former minister

"If any ordinary member quits the party, it may not have any impact, If an MP

"You (Kumar) only know how much Mangaraj said.
"The BJP has already taken two wick-

Braja Kishore Mishra.

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MINISTRY OF CULTURE OF THE PROPERTY OF THE PRO

## IMD warns of extremely heavy rain in 5 dists today

STATUE OF JUSTICE

(Lucknow Model)

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Sept 8: The India Meteorological Department (IMD) Sunday said the well-marked lowpressure area in the Bay of Bengal has turned into a depression and the state is likely to face heavy rain for the next three days. The weather office issued a red

alert in five districts of the state which is already witnessing rainfall in several parts.

Fishermen have been advised not to venture into the sea till September 11. According to an IMD bulletin, the

depression was located at a distance of about 270 km from Kalingapatnam in Andhra Pradesh, 210 km from Gopalpur and 370 km from Digha in West Bengal.

The weather system is expected to move towards the Odisha-West Bengal coasts and intensify into a deep depression Monday.

After crossing the coasts between Puri and Digha by noon Monday, it is likely to move towards Jharkhand and adjoining north Chhattisgarh during the subsequent two days, the IMD said in



Under its impact, heavy rainfall lashed several parts of Odisha with Kundra and Boipariguda blocks of Koraput district becoming

worst affected. The low-lying areas in the two blocks have re-

mained under water and crops over acres of land were affected, of-

ficials said. Dighapur of Kundra block has

MET DEPARTMENT ISSUES water flows above RED' WARNING FOR PURI, AGATSINGHPUR, KHURDA CUTTACK, DHENKANAL DISTS MONDAY FISHERMEN HAVE BEEN ADVISED NOT TO VENTURE

INTO THE SEA TILL

the connecting road. The authority has opened two gates of Machkund dam to release excess water, they said.

As per IMD's prediction, heavy to very heavy rain (7 to 20cm) with isolated extremely heavy rainfall (over 20

cm) would occur at isolated places in the districts of Puri, Jagatsinghpur, Khurda, Cuttack,

red warning (take action) for these An orange warning (be prepared to take action) was issued for Ganjam, Koraput, Kandhamal,

Dhenkanal Monday.

Bolangir, Bargarh, Boudh, Sonepur, Jajpur, Kendrapara, Sambalpur, Angul, and Nayagarh districts for Monday. The authorities have issued a yellow warning (be updated) for Gajapati, Rayagada, Malkangiri, Nabarangpur, Kalahandi, Nuapada, Jharsuguda, Sundargarh, Deogarh, Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj, Balasore, and Bhadrak districts. The IMD also forecast rain in

The weather office has issued a

many districts of the state for Tuesday and Wednesday.

It said that under the influence of the depression, squally weather with strong surface wind speeds reaching 45-55 kmph gusting to 65 kmph is prevailing over the Bay of Bengal and off the Odisha coast.

It is likely to increase to 50-60 kmph gusting to 70 kmph over the same region from Sunday night, and continue till the morning of September 10 and decrease gradually thereafter, the Met office said.

# **Tata-Berhampur Vande Bharat Express trial run successful**



2nd Puri Heritage

Walk organised

Bhubaneswar, Sept 8: The trial run of Tata-Berhampur Vande Bharat Express, the fourth semi high-speed train for Odisha, was successfully conducted Sunday.

According to East Coast Railway officials, the Vande Bharat left Tatanagar Junction in Jharkhand at 5:20am and arrived at Banspani at 7:45am, and Keonjhar at 8:20am, where people had gathered in large numbers to catch a glimpse of the train. It reached Berhampur station at 2:30pm during the trial run.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is scheduled to flag off Tata-Berhampur Vande Bharat Express September 15 during his proposed visit to Jharkhand.

Sources further said that the train is expected to take nine hours and ten minutes to cover 586km after leaving Tatanagar at 5:20am and arrive in Berhampur at 2:30pm with halts at Banspani, Nayagarh, Keonjhargarh, Harichandanpur, Cuttack. Jakhapura, Bhubaneswar, Khurda Road and

In the return journey, it will leave Berhampur at 3pm and

itage expert Ashoka Nayak spoke

about the importance of Pancha

Tirtha in Puri and the role of

Then the group visited

Neelakantheswar Temple and

Gopinath Temple. After they

were briefed about the iconog-

raphy, the participants visited

Following this, the group went

to heritage expert Krushna

Chandra Mishra's residence.

They listened to his talk on Indian

heritage and sculptures of

Jagannath Temple at Mrutyunjay

Mishra was felicitated by her-

itage expert and advisor of PHW

Debi Prasanna Nanda, conven-

ers Sanjay Kumar Baral,

Biswaranian Dehury and Kumar

Aurojyoti. The walk concluded

with the participants taking

prasad at the Siddha

Siddha Mahavir Temple.

Temple on the premises

Indradyumna Sarovar in it.

Indradvumna

**Prime Minister Narendra** Modi is scheduled to flag off Tata-Berhampur **Vande Bharat Express September 15 during** his proposed visit to Jharkhand

reach Tatanagar at 11:55pm the same day. It will run six days a week except Tuesdays.

People of Keonjhar are happy with the timings of the train as it will leave Bhubaneswar at 5pm and arrive in Keonjhar at 8pm on its return journey, making it easier for them to travel to the twin cities for medical and other works, the sources

In March, the PM had flagged off Odisha's third Vande Bharat Express train, connecting Visakhapatnam Bhubaneswar. The state's second semi-high-speed train service inaugurated on Puri-Rourkela route in September 2023 and the first between Puri and Howrah in May that year.

### **Second AIIMS to** be in Sambalpur

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sambalpur, Sept 8: Launching the CM-KISAN Yojana in Sambalpur on the occasion of Nuakhai Sunday, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi announced that second All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) in the state will come up in Sambalpur.

Majhi said that the state government has already taken up the matter with the Centre considering the need for specialised health services in western Odisha. The Chief Minister expressed hope that the process for opening the second AIIMS would begin soon.



Launching the CM-KISAN Yojana, he said that the scheme aims to extend financial assistance to farmers who have not been covered under the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN)

Currently, Odisha has one AIIMS under operations which is established in the state capital Bhubaneswar. Established in 2014, the foundation stone for the project was laid by the late Bharat Ratna Atal Bihari Vajpayee July 15, 2003.



FESTIVE MOOD: Devotees rush at Sahid Club puja pandal during the Ganesh Chaturthi celebrations at Saheed Nagar in Bhubaneswar, Sunday

'Double engine' govt will help Odisha prosper: CM

is a people-centric government.

The BJP in the state has set a target to ensure at least 1 crore members from the existing 41 lakh

new Odisha," the chief minister said.

The term 'double engine' is used by BJP leaders to refer to the party being in power at the Centre as well as in a state.

"Immediately after the formation of the government, we decided to open all four gates of Srimandir and also the Ratna

Bhandar. This shows that the state government is people-centric," Majhi said.

He said the BJP is the largest party in the world with a different ideology and appealed to people to take its membership.

The BJP's ideology is to develop the country and take all people along in the journey,"

The BJP in the state has set a target to ensure at least 1 crore members from the existing

Majhi also had lunch at the house of a party worker.

**Govt to simplify** 

application process

### PM-SURYAGHAR: MUFT BIJLI YOJANA

## TPCODL to install 1L solar panels

POST NEWS NETWORK

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Sept 8: Chief

Minister Mohan Charan Majhi

said Odisha has a 'double en-

gine' government which would

help the state develop and

Addressing a gathering at Barang in Banki Assembly seg-

ment in Cuttack district recently,

he said the BJP has provided a

people-centric government

government, which will help

the state develop and prosper. It

"Odisha has a double engine

in Odisha.

Bhubaneswar, Sept 8: TP Central Odisha Distribution Limited (TPCODL), a joint venture of Tata Power and the state government has set an ambitious target of installing one lakh rooftop solar power system for residential consumers in order to reduce carbon dioxide emission.

The initiative would ensure addition of 300 MW solar power in distributed generation mode and would reduce Co2 emission ov 4.5 lakh tons per annum.

For setting up of the rooftop solar panels, consumers can avail a central financial assistance of up to ₹78,000 for 3 kW sys tem. Residents of the Capital city can avail additional state subsidy at ₹20,000 per kW of installed capacity under the Green City Mission

Bank finance up to ₹2 lakh is available at 7 per cent interest and a tenor of 120 months with no prepayment penalties. Residential welfare associations or group housing societies can set up rooftop systems to offset their common area power consumption at 3 kW per household, and



Central financial | Special state assistance and options to all residential consumers

subsidy to Bhubaneswar under Green City Mission **Initiative promotes** 

sustainable energy and reduces carbon footprint

can avail central subsidy at ₹18.000 per kW. Consumers adopt ing the scheme can reduce their grid power consumption by about 1,200 units per kW of installed capacity and simultaneously contribute towards global warming, climate change and sustainable development.

Interested customers can login to www.pmsuryaghar.gov.in for registration, application submission, vendor selection and end-to-end guidance on the processes

state implementing agency for the 'PM-Suryghar: Muft Bijli Yojana' within its service area.

TPCODL is the designated

"By providing clean, renewable energy options, the initiative not only significantly reduces the financial burden on households but also facilitates a more environmentally conscious lifestyle for our consumers. With flexible financing options and extensive consumer support, we aim to make the transition to solar energy smooth and accessible to all," said TPCODL CEO

## **SUBHADRAYOJANA**

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 8: In a meeting held at Odisha **Computer Application Centre** (OCAC) here Sunday, Chief Secretary Manoj Ahuja and **Development Commissioner** and Additional Chief Secretary Anu Garg discussed ways to make Subhadra Yojana registration process simpler

and easier. The meeting was attended by chairman of Electronics and Information Technology department, OCAC Vishal Kumar Dev. Information and Public Relations (I&PR) Principal Secretary Sanjay Kumar Singh Women and Child Development Principal Secretary Shubha Sharma, and Science and Technology Principal Secretary Chithra Arumugam among others.

Ahuja said in view of the fact that applicants can apply quickly within the system, immediate steps are being taken in all technical aspects.

He emphasised on ways to simplify the application process and make the system easier, simpler and more developed so that the applicants can submit the forms quickly.

## KIMS to introduce robotic rehab unit

POST NEWS NETWORK

Indradvumna

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Puri, Sept 8: More than 30 peo-

ple turned up to participate in the

second heritage walk, organised

by Puri Heritage Walks (PHW),

The participants from Puri

Konark. Bhubaneswar and

Cuttack assembled at Gundicha

Temple in the morning. After

offering puja before Mundia

Maraa Patita Pavana and Mundia

Maraa Mahavir on the temple

premises, they went to Yajnya

Nrusingha Temple. Heritage ex-

pert Sidharth Acharva narrated

the importance of Nrusingha

Upasana in Jagannath culture

and historical as well as archi-

tectural aspects of the temple.

and legends associated with

Neelakantheswar Temple,

Gopinath Temple and Siddha

Mahavir Temple. Another her-

He also spoke on the heritage

Sarovar.

in the Pilgrim Town Sunday.

Bhubaneswar, Sept 8: To further the mission of providing advanced medical care, Kalinga Institute of Medical Sciences (KIMS) here, recently launched School of Physiotherapy, with focus on academics and research innovations.

KIMS has made significant strides in addressing the issue, with the Physiotherapy department playing a key role in providing relief and long-term recovery to patients, saving them to seek recourse to other forms of treatment. The institution is also set to in-



troduce specialised facilities such as a gait lab, research lab, and robotic rehabilitation unit, which will incorporate the latest technologies in physiotherapy. These initiatives aim to foster growth and innovation in the field, benefiting students and patients alike.

"We have treated thousands of cases including challenging ones," said the principal (in charge) of the KIMS School of Physiotherapy Priyabrata Dash.

'Our aim is to not only provide relief but also to equip patients with strategies for long-term management of their condition,"

Dash said. "Physiotherapy is essential in treating lower back pain, as it offers solutions that go beyond temporary fixes, allowing patients to lead pain-free and productive lives," he said.

Dash said that nearly about 30 to 40 per cent of the younger generation, with the female ratio eclipsing male, and ranging from 12 year to 25 year reported lower back pain.

"This is because of several factors including lack of exposure to morning sunlight and deficiency of vitamin D3 level, lack of awareness about human engineering, lifestyle modification and nutrition" he added.

### ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, Sept 8: With an

aim to create awareness on air pollution and improve air quality in and around Capital, Forest, Environment and Climate Change department, State Pollution Control Board and the Centre for Environmental Studies organised a bicycle rally to mark the International Day of Clean Air for Blue Skies here Sunday.

Forest, Environment and Climate Change Additional Chief Secretary Satyabrata Sahu flagged off the rally.

Holding banners and placards, more than 200 students covered a distance of five kilo-



meters from Forest Park to the State Pollution Board headquarters in Unit VIII here. The cyclists also raised slogans on reducing air pollution.

Speaking on the occasion, Sahu said, "United Nations is has put emphasis on reduction of atmospheric pollution. Several daily life activities like high consumption of fuel, industrial

emissions and disposal of agricultural waste have adversely affected the health of many people around the world.

"As air pollution is caused by carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide, nitrogen oxides, nitrogen dioxide, ground level ozone, particulate matter, sulfur dioxide and hydrocarbons, they can be reduced by proper management," Sahu said

The state government is taking various measures to combat air pollution, he added.

Attending the event as guest of honour, State Pollution Control Board Member Secretary K Murugesan said, "The theme this year is 'Invest in Clean Air Now'.

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### MONDAY | SEPTEMBER 9 | 2024 | BHUBANESWAR

# BJD, BJP spar over RMC election delay

Rourkela, Sept 8: A war of words has ensued between BJD and BJP over the inordinate delay in conduct of the muchhyped Rourkela Municipal Corporation (RMC) election which has been overdue since 2013. The last election was held

The slugfest started after Rourkela MLA Sarada Nayak raised the issue in the ongoing Assembly session. Sarada asked, "Whether the government of the day is aware of the fact that the election to Rourkela Municipal Corporation has not been held since 2013.

The question stirred up a hornet's nest as BJP spokesperson Dhiren Senapaty retaliated by saying, "Sarada babu should ask himself instead of asking the new government. He should not forget that his party was in power for the last 24 years and the term of RMC expired during BJD's

Senapaty lampooned Sarada by terming his statement as "a big joke and nothing else". He said, "The Rourkela MLA should



not forget that he was the labour minister during the BJD's term and he must recall what he has done for the RMC election to happen. He should not forget that when BJP and other social institutions were putting pressure on the government to set in motion the RMC polls, he was maintaining a studied silence."

When Rourkela Municipality was declared a Municipal Corporation in 2014, two gram panchayats - Jhartarang and Jagda – along with some other areas were included in it. However, this led to public resentment and the issue reached the Orissa High Court where the matter is yet sub-judice.

Senapaty further stated, "Sarada was tightlipped over the issue and now he is raising questions on the ability of a twomonth old government. Did the previous government try to address the issues of Jagda and Jhartarang by speaking to the residents there? No. the BJD leaders are good at shedding

When Rourkela **Municipality** was declared a Municipal Corporation in 2014, two gram panchayats -Jhartarang and Jagda - along with some other areas were included in the RMC

crocodile tears. This is the reason why Jagda and Jhartarang could not participate in the panchavat election

Terming the tenure of Sarada from 2013 to 2024 as autocratic, the BJP spokesperson said, "He did nothing and now he is trying to shift the blame to us.

Replying to Sarada's question, Urban Development Minister Krushna Chanda Mohapatra said, "The government will initiate steps to do the needful as per the decision of the High Court.'

Senapaty supported the minister's statement and said the MLA should have some patience. Sarada could not be reached for his reactions over phone.

## Ganjam farmers demand sponsorship, cold storage

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sergad, Sept 8: Farmers under Sergad block in Ganjam district have demanded the state government to ensure sponsorship along with cold storage facilities so that they continue yam cultivation in the area.

The Sergad block has carved a niche for itself in yam cultivation and the Gobindapur village under the block can be termed as the hub of the crop with the farmers carrving out cultivation over 2.000 hectare of land.

Apart from Gobindapur, the cultivation has now spread to Dengapadar, Dhanantar, Gothagaon, Marudi. Narendrapur and Baliarsinghpur villages.

The cultivation starts from the month of June and continues till March. The harvest of the tuber starts from the month of December.

However, with the tuber harvested in lot, farmers find it difficult to store them due to lack of cold storages in the area. **TUBER CULTIVATION** 



from rotting, farmers transport their harvest daily to districts like Cuttack and Khurda and other big towns and urban areas of the state. As a result, the profit margin declines as they are compelled to sell their harvests before the tuber starts rotting. This is the very reason why farmers are fast turning

away from vam cultivation. They have demanded the state government to intervene and provide them with modern agricultural techniques as well as supply fertilisers, seeds and establishment of a cold storage in their area which will help in bringing back reluctant farmers towards tuber

# HC stay on MGNREGA ombudsman proceeding



POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonihar/Hatadihi, Sept 8: The Orissa High Court issued an interim stay order regarding the proceedings of the MGNREGA ombudsman concerning a case (W.P.(C) No. 20995/2024) related to Hatadihi block in Keonjhar district September 6, sources said

Notices have been issued to the concerned parties, including Himanshu Shekhar Nayak,

the District Collector of Keonjhar, the CEO of Keonjhar Zilla Parishad, the Sub-Collector of Anandapur, the BDO of Hatadihi,

The case pertains to allegations of financial irregularities in the MGNREGA scheme in Hatadihi block.

and the ombudsman of Keonjhar

MGNREGA.

Initially, Himanshu Shekhar Nayak had filed a complaint with the Odisha Lokayukta regarding the matter.

Based on Lokayukta's notice,

the government officials and local representatives had submitted written responses

While the case was being heard, the Lokayukta requested a report on the actions taken by the Keonjhar District Collector. In response, the block staff approached the High Court, challenging the Lokayukta's report. The High Court issued a stay order, and the case remains under trial.

Subsequently, Himanshu Shekhar filed another complaint with government offices regarding similar incidents, demanding action. Following this, the Keonjhar MGNREGA Ombudsman issued a notice (No.15/2024) to the Hatadihi block office and conducted an investigation.

Opposing the move, engineers Suprabha Pradhan and Jyoti Ranjan Samantaray approached the High Court. After hearing the case, Justice SK Mishra issued a stay order on the proceedings of the ombudsman and directed that notices be served to the concerned parties



AGRI-FEST: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi and his wife Dr Priyanka Marandi having 'Nabanna' on the occasion of Nuakhai festival at the Samaleswari temple, the presiding deity of Sambalpur, Sunday

RISKY PROPOSITION: A man precariously walks on the barricade of an overflowing river bridge on Biri river at Digipur panchayat under Kundura block in Koraput district Sunday following incessant rainfall in the area

## Four robbers who stole 39kg silver from bus passenger held

Khallikote, Sept 8: Police here Sunday arrested four inter-state robbers on charges of stealing 39 kg silver from a private passenger bus – Khambeswari- near Bhejiput under Khallikote police limits in Ganjam district July 26.

The accused were identified as Amin Khan, 27, of Naurachowki Nayakheda village, Firoj Khan, 35, of Dudhia village under Nepanagar police limits, Sadique Khan of Dharampuri police limits in Dhar district and Mustaque Khan, 40, of Kherma Jagir village under Manwar police limits in

Dhar district of Madhya Pradesh. The accused were in the habit of targeting inter-state buses in various places of the state to loot gold and silver from passengers. Police also seized a Mahindra XUV 300 (MP 09 ZJ 5369), ₹65,600 cash and five mobile phones from their possession.

However, the police are yet to recover the stolen silver from the accused persons.

Police said the gang members stole the silver which a Bengali trader was carrying in two bags in the Kolkata-bound bus July 26 when all the passengers got down to have snacks and tea near

### ବକାର/ କାତୀୟ କୃଷି ବକାର (ଇ–ନାମ ମାର୍କେଟ) ମାଧ୍ୟମରେ ବିକ୍ରୟ କରି ଲାଭବାନ ହୁଅନ୍ତୁ । ସ୍ୱା./-ଛବିଲ ଖମାରୀ ସ୍ୱା./-ଶ୍ରୀମତୀ ମଧୁଛନ୍ଦା ସାହ ଓ.ପୁ.ସେ. (s) ନିୟନ୍ତ୍ରିତ ବଜାର କମିଟି, ଅତିରିକ୍ତ ଜିଲ୍ଲାପାଳ-ତଥା-ଅଧ୍ୟକ୍ଷ

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ନିୟନ୍ତ୍ରିତ ବଜାର କମିଟି, ବରଗଡ଼

ପଣ୍ଟିମ ଓଡ଼ିଶାର କୃଷିଭିଭିକ ମହାନ୍ ଗଣପର୍ବ

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ଦ୍ୱାରା ସ୍ଥାପିତ ନିକଟସ୍ଥ ବଜାର ପାଙ୍ଗଣ/ସାସ୍ତାହିକ

### 'NUANKHAI' CELEBRATION **AT JHURIMAL**

## A unique example of brotherhood

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, Sept 8: Nuakhai celebrations in Jhurimal village under Lefripara block of the district is perhaps one of the finest examples of brotherhood and bonhomie among the villagers, a rarity these days.

On this day, members of all the 163 families in the village come together and organise a community feast, and observe the occasion with dance and various events.

"Our kitchens remain shut for the whole day as all cooking activities take place at one place, i.e. on the main road of the village. This has been a practice for the last 12 years, and it will continue in the future," said Deigambar Bhoi, a resident of the village.

The tradition began with five families in the village who came together to celebrate Nuakhai by

organising a feast. Over the years, the entire village joined in.

There is no caste bar, and all are welcome to this community celebration. "Since we don't cook at home on this day, we bring along all food articles and cook at one place. After the food is ready, we sit together for lunch and share each other's food. Such a celebration is unique," said another villager.

On the day, people forget their personal differences and celebrate the occasion like one family.

"When you cook together and share food, the chances of personal preferences, or differences take a back seat," said Dharanidhar Pradhan, a villager.

The day started with the offering of 'nabanna' to the presiding deity of the village, Lord Hanuman. Thereafter, families offered prayers to their household deities. Then started the



community cooking. After the cooking was over, volunteers serve the food. Earlier, the seniors were served first, but the tradition has stopped these days. The platter included traditional dishes such as rice, dal, khiri,

pitha, mixed vegetables etc.

MLA Sundargarh Yogesh Kumar Singh who participated in the feast as a guest said, "I have never seen such bonding among villagers. This is rare and special. This can set an example of brotherhood and harmonious living.'

As no celebration is complete without entertainment, the villagers organised traditional games like 'puchi; 'blowing the conch cell', 'hulhuli', 'pulling sticks', and the likewise which added colour to the festivities. The main attraction of the day was 'dulduli' dance, wherein almost all came together and danced.

Celebrities like Pradeep Dutta from the Odia film industry, emerging singer Anant Nayak, comedian Mohit Meher and others, who were present on the occasion, were honoured by the villagers. Moreover, the state Millets Mission had put up a small exhibition of its products at the village.



urther details can be seen from the Govt, website www.tendersorissa.gov.in ସ୍ୱା./- ଅଧୀକ୍ଷଣ ଯନ୍ତ୍ରୀ, ଯାଜପୁର ଜଳସେଚନ ବିଭାଜନ, ଯାଜପୁର



It is only when we are not disturbed that we can always do the right thing at the right time in

THE MOTHER



## War In Backyard

thnic violence that has rocked Manipur for more than 400 days  $\dashv$  has now taken a deadlier turn with the warring groups using drones ✓ and rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs) even as fresh killings over the weekend kept the north-eastern state on the edge. Six people were killed in renewed violence in Jiribam district Saturday. Militants entered an isolated home about five kilometres away from the district headquarters and shot a man while he was asleep. Following this, a fierce gunfight erupted between members of the conflicting Kuki and Meitei communities in the hills, about seven kilometres from the district headquarters, resulting in the deaths of five more people. Jiribam, an ethnically diverse district, that had previously remained largely unaffected by the ethnic conflicts in the Imphal Valley and the surrounding hills, experienced an outbreak of violence in June this year following the killing of a 59-year-old man from one community by mil-

Saturday's gunfight marks the highest number of casualties in a single day during the recent bout of violence that started a week ago. Meanwhile, the use of drones and RPGs has escalated the conflict to a war-like situation

In light of the fresh violence, Chief Minister N Biren Singh met Governor Lakshman Prasad Acharya Sunday to present a memorandum requesting control over the Unified Command, which manages security operations in the north-eastern state. Additionally, the Chief Minister called for the termination of the Suspension of Operations (SoO) agreement with the Kuki insurgent groups. The SoO pact was signed by the Centre, the Manipur government and two conglomerates of Kuki militant outfits - Kuki National Organisation and United People's Front - in 2008 and has periodically been extended ever since. The Unified Command is currently overseen by a coalition of officials from the Union Home Ministry, state security forces, and the Army. This development is seen as significant, given that the BJP holds power in both the state and the Centre, suggesting a potential conflict between the two ad-

With a population of 3.2 million, Manipur has been split into two ethnic regions since the conflict erupted in May 2023 -- the valley controlled by the Meiteis and the hills dominated by the Kukis. These areas are divided by a stretch of no-man's land that is overseen by Central paramilitary forces. More than 225 people have lost their lives in the violence, while about 60,000 people have been displaced.

All the while, the Chief Minister has shrugged off multiple demands for his resignation despite his inability to control violence in the troubled state for more than one year. Besides, the Opposition has criticised Prime Minister Narendra Modi for not visiting the strife-torn state even once in these 400 days. What should truly worry the Indian government is the escalation of the trouble. Earlier, both sides involved in the violence were limited to using only hand held weapons. The recent surge of violence has introduced drones and other modern weaponry indicating the clear involvement of external forces. This becomes all the more complex if the clashes between rebels and the junta in neighbouring Myanmar and the unrest in nearby Bangladesh are taken into account. This may also show that the situation in Manipur may have already gone out of control and maybe the government has given up on all hopes of settling the issue.

Earlier, in the first phase of violence, excuse for neglect of the trouble was election in Karnataka. Nothing seems to have been done in the interim period. Now the excuse should not be Haryana and Jammu & Kashmir elections. While the government in Delhi wants to play the peacemaker in the faraway Russia-Ukraine conflict, it has to first put a stop to the war in its backyard.

### WISDOM CORNER

Have you learned the lessons only of those who admired you, and were tender with you, and stood aside for you? Have you not learned great lessons from those who braced themselves against you, and disputed passage with you?

WALT WHITMAN

Everybody believes in something and everybody, by virtue of the fact that they believe in something, uses that something to support

Before success comes in any man's life, he's sure to meet with much temporary defeat and, perhaps some failures. When defeat overtakes a man, the easiest and the most logical thing to do is to guit. That's exactly what the majority of men do.

### THIS DAY **IN HISTORY**

- 1948: Kim Il-sung establishes North Korea. After the Second World War, the Korean peninsula had been divided across the 38th parallel. The northern part was occupied by the Soviets while the south was occupied by the Americans. The Cold War impeded unification and on October 9, 1948, Kim Il-sung declared the creation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea with the support of the
- 1956: Rock and roll star Elvis Presley made his first appearance on
- 1976: Marxist revolutionary Mao Zedong, who died this day in 1976, emerged as the undisputed Chinese Communist Party leader following the Long March (1934–35) and dominated China in the period after the communist takeover in 1949.
- 1991: Tajikistan Declares its Independence from the Soviet Union. The Central Asian country had been conquered by Russia in the late 19th century. In 1929, the Tajik Soviet Socialist Republic was created as a constituent republic of the Soviet Union. Independence in 1991 came after the collapse of the USSR.

### **Lonely child**

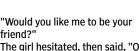
Sandy began a job as an Selementary school counsellor and she was eager to help. One day during recess she noticed a girl standing by herself on one side of a playing field while the rest of the kids enjoyed a game of soccer at the other.

Sandy approached and asked if she was all right.

The girl said she was. A little while later, however, Sandy

noticed the girl was in the same spot, still by herself.

Approaching again, Sandy offered,



The girl hesitated, then said, "Okay," looking at the woman suspiciously. Feeling she was making progress, Sandy then asked, "Why are you standing here all alone? "Because," the little girl said with great exasperation, "I'm the goalie!"



## TIME TO GO



Jagdish Rattanani

THE LARGER

**QUESTION IS OF** WHERE INDIA STANDS TODAY **AND HOW KEY** INSTITUTIONS **UNDERMINED UNDER THIS** KIND OF A

**LEADERSHIP** 

t is time to end the miserv of SEBI Chairperson Madhabi Puri Buch. It is time to ask her to go, if she has not sent in her resignation already. Indeed, it is in her interest that she quits and faces an impartial inquiry rather than continue to sit at the helm of what is a critical regulatory institution and see herself and the institution undermined in the way SEBI has never been before. There are those defending her conduct, but only halfheartedly, calling the allegations a game of politics or of vested interests. But it should be clear at this stage of the ballooning scandal that none of these defences cut ice.

We have reached a stage where SEBI has been robbed of the confidence and moral standing it needs to function and carry out even the most basic of regulatory functions. The preamble of The SEBI Act, 1992, lays down its charter: "... to protect the interests of investors in securities and to promote the development of, and to regulate the securities market and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto." This is a task beyond SEBI under the current circumstances.

It is irrelevant if the charges against Buch will be proven and if she will eventually be found guilty or not. There is already enough in the air that raises questions that will not be easily dismissed. The external pressure is compounded by an internal revolt in SEBI that instead of being taken seriously, given that it points to an alleged toxic culture, is being countered with sorry and laughable explanations. To say, as SEBI insiders from the establishment have suggested, that class 'A' officers of SEBI were misled by external elements, is to insult the entire SEBI workforce.



We have reached a stage where SEBI has been robbed of the confidence and moral standing it needs to function and carry out even the most basic of regulatory functions

The officers surely know what they are talking about. To anyone who knows how the Indian system works, it takes a lot of courage and gumption to get together to speak against the powerful. Buch, untouched despite the entanglement cited with Adani-related funds and the Hindenburg allegations, is reckoned to be close to the powers that be. That the officers have managed to protest against such a person is only an indicator of the extent of the rot that has forced them to speak up at the risk of being targeted. Protests are rare in a culture that is hierarchal, top-driven, boss-obsessed in the public sector, and dissentkilling in the private sector. SEBI seems like a hybrid -- it has brought the worst of both worlds to the workplace.

From a political lens, it is critical that the BJP stops defending Buch and gives in to a full-fledged inquiry. Political strategists of the BJP will see that the political cost of allowing her to continue grows with each passing day that she sits in the saddle. The larger question is of where India stands today and how key institutions are undermined under this kind of a leadership.

It is undeniable that Buch could not have worked the way she allegedly has without political cover. This is what amplifies the power of people in some key positions, enlarges their sphere of influence and lends a sense of adventurism, a gung-ho-ism and an arrogance that we see come crashing down every once in a while.

Who can, after all, question the all-powerful Chairperson of SEBI? Five years ago, the question was different: Who can question the all-powerful Chairperson of ICICI Bank? That was Chanda Kochhar, refusing to quit till the bank could hold on no more and sacked her ("termination for cause") in the light of the findings against her recorded by the Justice BN

Interestingly, both cases emerge from managers with roots in ICICI Bank. Buch and Kochhar rose at ICICI Bank under KV Kamath, the man who brought aggression to what was an easy-going project finance company in the public sector, and saw it become at one point the largest private sector bank of the nation (since then beaten by HDFC Bank). Those were the days Kamath and ICICI fantasised about becoming a top global bank. Aggressive business methods brought a new sense of energy, quick growth but also practices that many would question. It turned key personnel into millionaires and delivered the managers of the kind Kochhar and Buch (and many others unnamed) turned out to be. Buch joined ICICI Bank in 1989. In 2006, she joined ICICI Securities and led it as the CEO from 2009 to 2011. The company was later delisted with many questions asked of ICICI Bank and SEBI's conduct in the process. SEBI was accused of favouring ICICI, allowing in effect a violation of rules by

Generally speaking, SEBI has in many ways been unable to keep its independence from the government, unlike the RBI, which has at least attempted to strike an independent chord Yet. the RBI man on the SEBI board, like others, has kept his silence so far. SEBI and RBI are both statutory bodies. The RBI url is rbi.org.in; SEBI's url is sebi.gov.in -- one at least proclaims to be separate from the government while the other headlines itself as a part of the government, or so it seems. And thereby hangs many a tale!

ICICI to go unpunished.

The writer is a journalist and faculty member at SPJIMR. Views are personal. The BILLION PRESS

### SPECTRUM REGULATION

# Beware of Big Tech



Peter G. Kirchschläger

**BIG TECH FIRMS CONSISTENTLY SHOWN LITTLE CONCERN ABOUT HARMING PEOPLE AND VIOLATING THEIR RIGHTS** 

TO THE EDITOR

are most welcome to contribute letters

postal address/email ID. They may also

and suggestions, preferably by email, to: edit@orissapost.com

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send in their valuable comments, opinion

Readers of Orissa POST

(200 words), articles and

words). Contributors are

requested to send their contact numbers and full

columns (between 750-1250

Commission adopted a new √roadmap to fight drug trafficking and organised crime, one of the most serious security threats facing the bloc. For obvious reasons, European Union policymakers did not invite cartel members to help design and  $develop\ this\ strategy; asking\ for$ input from criminal networks would have only made it easier for them to continue operating with impunity.

But when it comes to regulating the digital transformation and artificial intelligence. both of which pose myriad risks, policymakers are doing the opposite. They are collaborating with Big Tech companies such as Meta (Facebook), Alphabet (Google), Amazon, Apple, and Microsoft, even though their executives have demonstrated a brazen willingness to create dangerous tools and harm users in the name of maximizing profits.

For example, national, regional, and international "working groups," "expert groups," and "advisory boards" that include representatives from Big Tech companies are preparing proposals to regulate the digital transformation and AI. Beyond that, some initiatives and conferences on this topic are funded by the very companies those endeavors aim to regulate.

The threats posed by digital systems are complex and farreaching. New technologies are

ast October, the European dramatically widening global inequality, and tech giants have emerged as massive energy users, with serious implications for climate change and the environment. Perhaps most worrying are the near-constant violations of the right to privacy. owing to the lack of data security or protections against surveillance. It is standard industry practice for vast amounts of data to be collected and sold to the highest bidder. As a result, digital platforms seem to know us better than we know ourselves, and life online is awash in economic and political manipulation.

Moreover, algorithmic manipulation and disinformation have already been shown to threaten the proper functioning of democracy. Ahead of the 2016 presidential election in the United States, for example, the political consulting firm Cambridge Analytica harvested information from as many as 87 million Facebook users in an attempt to sway voters. The company and its affiliates had already likewise misused data to try to influence the United Kingdom's Brexit vote.

More recently, the rapid development of large language models such as OpenAI's ChatGPT has opened up new avenues for fraud, including through audio and visual deepfakes that can destroy reputations. LLMs have also facilitated

that is most acutely felt in democracies, where a flood of AI-generated content threatens to drown out quality journalism and to destabilise entire countries within a few hours (as happened with the recent far-right riots in the UK). Moreover, the same strategies can be used to hoodwink consumers.

But that is not all: use of social media has been associated with significant mental-health harms for young people. And many in the field have expressed concern about the disruptive impact that AI-enabled cyberattacks and autonomous weapons could have on international peace and security, not to mention the existential risks such weapons pose

Big Tech firms have consistently shown little concern about harming people and violating their rights. That is especially true for social-media companies. which generally earn more in advertising revenue the longer that users stay on their platforms. In 2021, a whistleblower provided documents showing that Facebook knew that its algorithms and platforms promoted damaging content but failed to deploy meaningful countermeasures. That should come as no surprise: studies have found that users spend more time online when expressing hate, anger, and rage.

Despite its unwillingness to

police itself, Big Tech wants to help devise regulations for the digital sphere and AI. Giving these companies a seat at the table is both ironic and tragic. Governments and the international community are allowing these behemoths to dominate the process of establishing a new global regulatory framework and oversight mechanisms. But entrusting those who profit from the sector's fundamental problems is a dangerous mistake.

The good news is that there are plenty of independent experts and academics who can provide valuable input about how best to regulate the development and use of AI and other digital technologies. Of course, the private sector must be involved in such policymaking processes, but not more than other stakeholders, including civil-society organisations.

Technological innovation should no longer serve only the interests of a few multinational corporations. To ensure a sustainable future in which everyone can lead dignified and prosperous lives, policymakers must not allow tech giants to steer the regulation of digital platforms and emerging AI applications.

The writer is Professor of Ethics and Director of the Institute of Social Ethics at the University of Lucerne.

### Debt trap diplomacy

Sir, The Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) underscores China's strategic interests in Africa, going beyond the promotion of South-South cooperation. Through significant financial aid, infrastructure development, and military support, China aims to increase its economic and political clout across the continent. This relationship, however, is not purely altruistic as China seeks to advance its national interests by solidifying its influence in Africa. One of the most debated aspects of China's engagement in Africa is its lending practices, particularly through the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). While African countries may benefit from the immediate financial assistance, these loans often come with the risk of debt trap diplomacy. The conditions of these loans can be restrictive, making it difficult for African nations to renegotiate terms and placing them at risk of long-term financial instability. The economic dependency is exacerbated by Africa's limited access to Chinese markets, in contrast to China's dominance in African economies. China's motivations in Africa are not limited to economic expansion; they also reflect its broader geopolitical ambitions. By establishing a military presence and providing training to African forces, China aims to counterbalance Western influence on the continent. Moreover, China's backing of African nations in global institutions such as the United Nations helps solidify its role as a major player on the international stage, further advancing its global strategic interests. Despite China's leverage in its dealings with African nations, African governments are increasingly aware of the potential risks posed by Chinese investments. Many are now negotiating for more favourable terms, seeking to mitigate the challenges posed by debt and economic dependence. Amarjeet Kumar, HAZARIBAGH

### Procedural lapses

Sir, This refers to "WB Guv sends anti-rape Bill to Prez (OrissaPOST, September 7). I am really at a loss how the West Bengal government could be unaware of the procedure of sending a Bill to the Governor for his assent once it is passed in the State Assembly. The technical report is mandatory along with the Bill which the department concerned is expected to know. The Chief Minister should not take these procedural lapses lightly and reprimand the officer concerned responsible for compliance.

Arun Gupta, KOLKATA

# Visit TN; CM appeals to Tamil diaspora

Stalin underlines that the welfare board constituted by the DMK government would help overseas residents of TN in need

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, Sept 8: Chief Minister MK Stalin, who is now touring the US to attract investments, has appealed to the Tamil diaspora to visit Tamil Nadu with their children at least once a year and make them aware of the state's rich culture and heritage.

Addressing a programme organised by Chicago based Tamil assocations September 7, Stalin thanked the people for their love and affection and said, "Our biggest identity is that we are the children of mother Tamil."

Referring to the Tamil Nadu government's 'Vergalai Thedi Thittam' (In pursuit of roots scheme), a cultural tour programme in Tamil Nadu for young Tamil men and women living outside India, the CM said a participant from Myanmar recently renewed contacts with her extended family in the state.

Under the Vergalai scheme, the state government takes selected men and women with Tamil ancestry and living abroad on a guided tour to archeaological sites and those related to Tamil culture and heritage. It was launched by Stalin in Singapore May 24, 2023.

Stalin, referring to setting up of a welfare board for the nonresident Tamils by his goverment and outlining related ini-



We had literacy, we were a developed society and belonged to an urban civilisation and that is why I have been continuously saying that the history of Indian sub continent should hereafter be written beginning it from the Tamil landscape MK STALIN CM, TAMIL NADU

tiatives like observance of January 12 as diaspora (Tamils) day, he said, "That is why I say all the time that this is not a government by a party, but it is the government of a race. Only Tamil has the strength to unify all and trounce caste and reli-

gious differences." Furthermore, he urged the participants to visit Tamil Nadu, along with their children at least once a year and enlighten them on saint poet Tiruvalluvar and take them to archeaologically significant places like Sivakalai, Korkai and Porunai besides the Keeladi museum. "Do whatever you can for Tamil Nadu."

Citing the archaeological excavations at Keeladi in Sivaganga district of the state, he said it showed that even 4,000 years ago, "We had literacy, we were a developed society and belonged to an urban civilisation and that is why I have been continuously saying that the history of Indian sub continent should hereafter be written beginning

it from the Tamil landscape.' TN CM embarked on a visit to

### Stalin meets BNY Mellon executives

hief Minister MK Stalin. currently on a tour to the US, invited senior officials of BNY Mellon (The Bank of New York Mellon Corporation) to make new investments in Tamil Nadu. Had a productive discussion with **BNY Mellon on exploring** potential AI investment opportunities, he said Saturday. "Let's embrace the future through technology, harnessing Al's transformative power!" the chief minister said in a post on the social media platform 'X'. Stating that the chief minister met senior executives of BNY Mellon and invited them to make new investments in Tamil Nadu, an official release here said the government achieved various milestones in the industrial sector over the past three years under the leadership of Stalin. "Each step taken to attract investments is driven by a grand vision to create more job opportunities. The state's initiatives have caught the attention of global corporations, drawing them toward Tamil Nadu for their investments," it said.

the US August 27 to attract investments to the state and MoUs totally worth over ₹4,000 crore have been signed so far with several companies and he is scheduled to be there till September 13.

## Civic body starts control room to improve safety of school students

**THE MOVE COMES FOUR-YEAR-OLD GIRLS WERE SEXUALLY ASSAULTED ALLEGEDLY BY A MALE ATTENDANT IN** THE WASHROOM **OF A SCHOOL** 

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Thane, Sept 8: The Mira Bhayander Municipal Corporation (MBMC) in Maharashtra's Thane district has launched a new 'Central School Control Room' to bolster the safety of students by monitoring CCTV footage across the civic schools, officials said.

The move comes after two four-year-old girls were sexually assaulted allegedly by a male attendant in the washroom of a school in Badlapur area of the district last month.

Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde September 5 inaugurated the MBMC's 'Central School Control Room' via video conferencing.

The facility, located at the Bharat Ratna Lata Mangeshkar Auditorium in Mira Bhavander area, is designed to monitor CCTV footage across municipal schools to enhance student safety, a civic release said



The control room promises to address security concerns proactively and provide a secure learning environment for students, parents and school staff

Municipal Commissioner Sanjay Katkar said the control room, which can monitor nearly 1,000 CCTV cameras, is equipped with advanced technology and a UPS generator backup. It will oversee footage from 200 cameras installed in 36 municipal schools with approximately 10,000 students.

The control room promises to address security concerns proactively and provide a secure learning environment for students, parents and school staff.

Initially focusing on municipal schools, the initiative plans to include private institutions in the future, the release said.

In his address, CM Shinde stressed on the significance of ensuring a secure environment for students, particularly emphasising the need for real-time CCTV surveillance to deter wrongful activities.

He urged other municipal corporations to adopt the MBMC's model to enhance educational safety standards across Maharashtra.

The chief minister also highlighted the state's commitment to student safety through stricter regulations and the 'Shakti' law. aimed at strengthening measures against crimes targeting women and children, the release said.

He encouraged schools to conduct thorough background checks of the staff and install complaint boxes to facilitate reporting of grievances, it added.

### TAMIL ACTOR **VIJAY'S PARTY** TVK GETS EC RECOGNITION

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, Sept 8: Tamizhaga Vetri Kazhagam party founderpresident and top Tamil actor Vijay Sunday announced that the Election Commission has duly registered his outfit and expressed confidence of emerg ing as the primary political party of Tamil Nadu.

Underscoring that equality is the basic principle of his new party, Vijay said that an application was filed with the EO February 2 to register Tamizhaga Vetri Kazhagam (TVK) as a political party.

After legally considering it, the EC has now registered the TVK as a political party and "has given permission to take part as a registered party in electoral politics. I am happy to share this with you.'

The popular actor, in a statement posted on X, said the "first door has opened for us, which heralds all round success.



Furthermore, he said that by pursuing the path of defined principles and by breaking barriers, his party would rise as the key political party of the Tamil people in Tamil Nadu.

The actor said preparatory work to hold TVK's first state conference, which will declare the party's ideology, has commenced and, "please wait for a announcement about it.

The TVK leader's comment comes against the background of his party functionaries approaching authorities seeking permission to hold the state conference this month at Vikravandi in Villupuram district and police reportedly clearing the decks to conduct the rally.

Last month, Vijay unveiled the party flag and the party

The formation of the political party was announced by Vijay in February this year.



### **GANESH VISARJAN** Mumbai households bid an emotional adieu

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Sept 8: Mumbai. Thousands of devotees bid an emotional farewell to Lord Ganesh Sunday by immersing the idols of the elephant-headed deity across

More than 10,000 Ganesh idols have been immersed in the city till late in the evening, said Bhushan

commissioner Brihanmumbai Municipal

The 10-day Ganesh festival began in the city with pomp and gaiety Saturday, with families and 'savajanik mandals' (public groups) installing the idols of their beloved god at homes and community pandals.

The idols taken out for immersion Sunday afternoon after one and a half days were mostly from households.

Chants of "Ganpati Bappa morya, mangal murti morya...pudchya varshi lavkar ya," urging the Lord to return early next year filled the air as devotees took their idols to beaches and artificial water bodies for immersion.

BMC and police have ensured that there are arrange ments for separate parking, mobile toilets, flood lights, bodyguards, prayer mandaps (platforms) for devotees and VIP pandals, he said.

As many as 12,000 personnel have been deployed to help citizens with the idol immersion off the beaches and in 204 artificial ponds across the city and suburbs. As many as 71 control rooms have been set up, civic officials said earlier.

They said that 761 lifeguards and 48 motor boats have been pressed into service at the beaches. BMC has also made facilities to collect the 'nirmalya' (flowers and other offerings) brought with the idols.

### Shah releases docu on Mumbai Samachar's 200-year journey

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Sept 8: Union minister Amit Shah Sunday said Parsis have made silent but immense contribution to India's de velopment, and lauded the role of Gujarati newspaper Mumbai Samachar in that journey.

Speaking after releasing the documentary film "Mumbai Samachar-200 Not Out", which chronicles the remarkable 200year journey of Asia's oldest newspaper, Shah said the Camas, who run it exemplify journalism of trust. Entering its 203rd year of publication, Mumbai Samachar has become an integral part of Mumbai's identity.

"Dynasties don't last 200 years here but a newspaper has lasted for so long," Shah said.

Hormusji N Cama, the managing director of the Mumbai Samachar, was present at the event

"Mumbai Samachar- 200 Not Out" delves into the newspaper's pivotal role in the freedom movement, its unwavering commitment to unbiased reporting and the secrets behind its enduring success

## Grit and passion for Olive green make them Indian army officers

THE 'PASSING OUT PARADE,' WAS HELD AT THE PARAMESHWARAN DRILL SQUARE OF THE INSTITUTE, AND FIFTEEN OFFICER CADETS INCLUDING FIVE WOMEN FROM FRIENDLY FOREIGN COUNTRIES TOO SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED THEIR TRAINING

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, Sept 8: The dream of Usha Rani, who lost her husband Captain Jagtar Singh of Army Educational Corps in a train accident in 2020, Jigmit Ringzin, Electrical & Electronics engineer, Phalke Nishant Balasaheb, an external auditor, and Bhavsaar Jayesh Mahesh who grew up in the congested chawl tenements in Mumbai, of donning the olive green uniform materialised

They were among the 258 officer cadets and 39 women officer cadets who were commissioned into various arms and services of the Indian Army at an impressive ceremony at the Officers Training Academy, Chennai.

The 'Passing Out Parade,' held Parameshwaran Drill Square of the institute, and it was reviewed by Vice Chief of Army Staff Lieutenant General NS Raja Subramani. Fifteen officer cadets including five women from friendly foreign countries too successfully completed their training.

Despite a train mishap shattering her, Usha Rani chose military training to overcome her loss. The young mother of three-year-old twins completed her Bachelor of Education and began to mentor children, as a teacher in the Army Public School. She prepared for Services Selection Board (SSB) to join the Indian Army, following in her husband's footsteps.

Officer Cadet Jigmit Ringzin, from Pooh, in Kinnaur district of Himachal Pradesh, rejected a job he was offered at Tata Consultancy Services and succeeded in his seventh attempt and joined Officers Training Academy, Chennai, in October 2023. He has toiled hard to complete the rigorous and grueling training of 49 weeks to finally become an officer in the

Indian Army. Phalke Nishant Balasaheb son of a Head Constable in Central Reserve Police Force,



he dreams of Usha Rani, Jigmit Ringzin, Phalke Nishant Balasaheb, and Bhavsaar Jayesh Mahesh to join the Indian Army came true at the Officers Training Academy in Chennai

lost his father to terminal illness, and had to bear the responsibility of taking care of his mother and younger sister. He worked as an external auditor at Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC),Ahmednagar, during weekends, to support his family.

hey were among 258 officer cadets and 39 women officer cadets commissioned into various arms and services

He cleared first Combined Defence Service Examination (CDSE), but was unsuccessful in the Services Selection Board. This pattern repeated for six times and in the seventh attempt he finally got recommended and joined OTA.

In the case of Bhaysaar Jayesh Mahesh, who grew up in the congested chawl tenements in Mumbai, his journey was full of setbacks. He failed eleven times at the Service Selection Board but didn't give up. He supported his family by working as an online mathematics educator, and a gym instructor.

His perseverance paid off when he was finally recommended in his 12th attempt. He is the first in his family to join the Armed Forces.

Kshitij was born in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh, and raised in Mumbai. Their family of eight were dependent on the income of the father, an auto-rickshaw driver, and Kshitij's elder brother, an accountant. Despite the financial constraints his family encouraged him to pursue his dreams.

He was also inspired by his uncle, Jitendra Kumar Tiwari, who served in the Army Service Corps, to join the Defence forces.

Ritesh, son of a Non-Commissioned Officer in the 15 Mechanised Infantry Regiment, was in secondary school, when the family faced a harsh tragedy in the passing of Ritesh's father, who was suffering from blood cancer. At the time, Ritesh was in 6th grade and his younger sister in 1st grade.

During his 12th grade, a short circuit burned everything in their house, leaving the family without books, uniforms, clothes, or shelter just before the final exams. The 15 Mechanised Infantry Regiment and his School Principal provided crucial financial and emotional support, helping Ritesh to continue his education.

After 12th grade, Ritesh took a year off to help his mother rebuild their home. By his third year of college, with the introduction of the Agniveer scheme, Ritesh faced a dilemma whether to ioin the Army as a sepoy for four years or complete his degree and pursue the option of joining Army as an Officer. He chose to finish his degree, aspiring

to join the Army as an officer. Their grit and determinationearned them stars on her shoulders today.

# national



We have done all round development in Baramati. **Most funds in Maharashtra** are sanctioned for Baramati. I am now 65 years old and I am satisfied. **Baramatikars once should get** someone other than me as an MLA. They can then make comparison between me and the new MLA AJIT PAWAR I MAHA DEPUTY CM

### **TOLL IN AP FLOODS MOUNTS TO 45**

The death toll in Andhra Pradesh floods rose to 45 with authorities reporting 12 more deaths Sunday. Ten of the latest fatalities were reported from Vijayawada and two from Eluru district. The death toll is mounting as bodies are being recovered with receding flood water in areas affected by last week's heavy rains and floods 





many challenges. When people are with



VINESH PHOGAT

We have prepared a blueprint to form metropolitan authorities in four cities. However, the best feasibility report in this regard has come for Indore and Ujjain. Metropolitan authorities will

MOHAN YADAV | MADHYA PRADESH CM

also be formed in the rest of the metros

With the election approaching, the CM, who had promised five lakh jobs and realised that it cannot be fulfilled, made the youths run for 10 km. This led to the death of 12 youths

SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN UNION MINISTER

### SHORT TAKES

### Punia receives threat message

Chandigarh: Olympic wrestler Bajrang Punia, who joined the Congress, has received a threat message over WhatsApp warning him with dire consequences, police said Sunday. Punia has filed a complaint at Bahalgarh police station in Sonipat. A police official said they received a complaint from Punia after which they launched an investigation. When asked that some reports say that in the threat message Punia was asked to quit Congress or be prepared to face dire consequences. Bahalgarh police station SHO Madan Singh said over the phone, "The matter is under investigation..." Olympians Punia and Vinesh Phogat entered the political arena on Friday by joining the Congress.

### Rajasthan receives 60% excess rainfall

Jaipur: Rajasthan has received 60 per cent more than the average rainfall this monsoon and none of its districts recorded deficit or scant rain, according to data by the state's water resources department. So far, 28 out of 50 districts in the state recorded 60 per cent or more rainfall that come under the abnormal category, the data said.

### KNPTR to reopen Oct 1

Guwahati: After the fivemonth monsoon break, the Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve (KNPTR) in Assam would reopen for tourists October 1 focusing on enhanced visitor experience and safety, officials said Sunday Announcing the park reopening schedule, an official announcement said that in view of present road conditions and due to inclement weather, the Park is partially opened only for Jeep Safari in three ranges --Kaziranga Range Kohora, Western Range, Bagori and Burapahar Range.

### **MoD to organise CORE today**

New Delhi: Ministry of Defence (MoD) said Sunday that it will organise the **Combined Operational Review** and Evaluation (CORE) programme September 9 to review the security preparedness of the combined forces. "Army, Navy, Air Force, senior officers from the Ministry of Defence, External Affairs, and Home Affairs will also participate in the five-day programme in New Delhi from September 9 to 13," said a MoD official.

# Join India: Rajnath to Pok residents



**INDIA IS READY TO START DIALOGUE WITH PAKISTAN IF IT STOPS TERRORISM IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR, DEFENCE MINISTER RAJNATH SINGH SAID** 

AGENCIES

Jammu, Sept 8: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said Sunday that the Pakistan government has called the people of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) as 'foreigners' while India considers them as its own citizens.

Addressing an election rally of the BJP in Ramban district of Jammu division, Rajnath Singh referred to the BJP-PDP coalition government and said. "During Mehbooba-led government, we withdrew cases against minors and those who were innocent. But the problem was that the PDP was sympathetic to separatists. I would always tell her to bring the ground situation under control, but she couldn't. People of J&K are free citizens of India and they have a right to peace and prosperity.

"In contrast to this, in a re-

cent affidavit, the solicitor general of Pakistan has called the people of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) as 'foreigners'. We don't call them foreigners. They are our people. Let them come and join us. After a government is formed in J&K, the people of PoK will want to come and join India," he asserted. He strongly criticised former J&K Chief Minister and National Conference (NC) vice president, Omar Abdullah for saying Afzal Guru should not have been hanged.

"Omar Abdullah has said Afzal Guru should not have been hanged. I want to ask him did he want Afzal Guru to be garlanded?" Singh queried.

The Union Minister said he has come for the first time to Ramban, but the people have given him a warm welcome.

"I greet all of you. After 10 years, Assembly elections are being held in J&K. Entire country is watching the outcome of this election. I was in America recently and the Indian diaspora there asked me what would happen in these elections. I told them BJP will form the govt in J&K," he claimed.

'While coming here, I asked Dr Jitendra Singh about the ground situation and he told me that such a conducive political atmosphere in favour of BJP is far greater than his expectations. In the past, whenever, 2, 6 or 10 per cent voting would take place in Kashmir it would become a big news. 58 per cent voting took place in Lok Sabha elections and in Ladakh it went to 72 per cent," he added

"First time, there was an election here which was held without fear and without any partisan consideration. This is a great change for us. The people of J&K are hard-working and talented. If BJP rules J&K for the next 10 years, J&K will be the most prosperous place in India," Rajnath Singh opined.

"Since Modiji took over as the Prime Minister, our economy has grown from 11th place to become the 5th largest economy in the World. Independent economic surveys and media reports now accept that in 2027 India would be 3rd largest in size after US and China," he

"Give an opportunity to BJP to form the government here and we will change the face of this place in 10 years. We have already changed the ground situation in the last 10 years. Even Tazia (Muharram) procession was not allowed in Kashmir and we made this procession take place," the Union minister said.

"PM Modi abrogated article 370 and nobody rose against this. NC manifesto says they will restore 370. Nobody can restore 370 now. For the first time, a G-20 meeting was held in Kashmir Valley. This is called governance. Kashmir was called a terrorism spot, but now it is called a tourism spot," he said.

He referred to developments in the last 10 years and said that the Muharram procession, railway link, ₹38000 core worth developmental works, reducing the travel time from Jammu to Srinagar from 14 to 4 hours. 40,000 recruitments in last 5 **RG KAR HORROR** 

## TMC MP Sircar offers resignation



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, Sept 8: TMC MP Jawhar Sircar Sunday wrote to West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee, the chief of his party, and said he has decided to quit Rajya Sabha and leave politics altogether, describing the steps taken by the state government in handling the rape and murder of the doctor at RG Kar hospital "too little and quite late"

In the letter, Sircar said he became increasingly "disillusioned" with the state government as it seemed "quite unconcerned" about corruption and "strong-arm tactics" of a section of leaders.

Terming the protests over the doctor's death spontaneous, the retired IAS officer said he had not seen "such angst and total no-confidence" against a government, even when it was saying things that were correct or factual.

"The primary purpose of joining as an MP, without any direct involvement in party politics, was that it offered an excellent forum to carry on the struggle against the autocratic and communal politics of the BJP and its Prime Minister. To that extent, I have some satisfaction and my several interventions in parliament...," he said in the letter. Sircar said that in 2022, a year after he joined the TMC, he was "quite shocked" to see the "open evidence of corruption" that former education minister Partha Chatteriee had indulged in.

'I made a public statement that corruption must be tackled by the party and government, but I was heckled by senior leaders in the party. I did not resign then as I had hoped that you would carry on your public campaign against 'cut money and corruption that you had started a vear earlier,"" he said.

The former bureaucrat said that he was persuaded by wellwishers to remain an MP to "carry on the battle" against "a regime that is the greatest ever threat to Indian democracy and civil liberties'

Noting his middle-class way of living, Sircar said he was amazed to see that several elected panchavat and municipal representatives of the TMC acquired big properties and moved around in expensive vehicles.

Referring to the protests over the rape and murder of the doctor, he said the "spontaneous outpouring of public anger" is against this unchecked overbearing attitude of the "favoured few and the corrupt".

"In all my years, I have not seen such angst and total noconfidence against the government, even when it says something correct or factual," he said. Sircar said he had "suffered patiently" for a month since the incident at RG Kar hospital. hoping for direct intervention with the agitating junior doctors, "in the old style of Mamata Banerjee". Sircar said the agitation was

non-political and spontaneous and it was not correct to take a "confrontational stand, by labelling it political".

### **Crown Prince of** Abu Dhabi arrives, to meet PM today

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 8: Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi Sheikh Khaled bin Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan arrived here to a warm welcome Sunday as he kick-started a two-day maiden visit to India to further boost bilateral ties in a range of areas, including energy and connectivity, amid escalating tensions in West Asia.

Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal received the Crown Prince at the airport following which he was accorded a ceremonial welcome, in reflection of the importance India has attached to the visit. "A new milestone in a historic relationship. His Highness Sheikh



Khaled bin Zayed Al Nahyan arrived in Delhi on his first official visit to India," External Affairs Ministry Spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said on 'X'. The Crown Prince is accompanied by several ministers from the UAE government and a business delegation. After concluding the Delhi leg of his visit, Al Nahyan will travel to Mumbai to participate in a business forum. Top business leaders from both countries will participate in the forum Tuesday. Prime Minister Modi and the Crown Prince will hold talks Monday. Following the landmark visit of Modi to the UAE in August 2015, bilateral relations between the two countries were elevated to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.

### **J&K POLLS**

### **BJP releases 6th list** of 10 candidates

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 8: The BJP Sunday released a fresh list of 10 candidates for the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly polls, replacing ex-deputy chief minister Kavinder Gupta with former member of legislative council (MLC) Vikram Randhawa from Bahu seat of Jammu district.

Gupta was elected from

Gandhi Nagar, renamed as Bahu Assembly segment, in 2014 elections. With the release of the sixth list for the third phase of elections, the BJP has so far named 62 candidates, including 20 for the Kashmir Valley, where the BJP is yet to open its account in Assembly elections. Randhawa found himself embroiled in controversies on three occasions between 2019 and 2021. leading to filing of two FIRs against him at separate police stations in Ladakh and Jammu and also forcing him to tender an unconditional public apology to Union minister Jitendra Singh for levelling baseless allegations of corruption against him.

## Sexual harassment: DAEI suspends Bengali filmmaker



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, Sept 8: Bengali filmmaker Arindam Sil was suspended by the Directors' Association of Eastern India (DAEI) following a complaint of sexual misconduct by an actress.

Sil was the first big name in the Bengali film industry, also called Tollywood, against whom action was taken after allegations of sexual harassment shook the entertainment industries of the southern states.

The suspension came into force with immediate effect, said a letter sent by DAEI late Saturday. "Due to certain allegations made against you, and prima facie evidence we have with us, which are of deep concern and is maligning to the entire organisation. DAEI has decided to suspend you from membership for indefinite period or till the allegations against you are cleared," said the letter sent by DAEI president Subrata Sen and secretary Sudeshna Roy. Sil. who is also a well-known actor, told reporters that what was being construed as misbehaviour was unintentional.

He said the incident being referred to happened recently when he was explaining a scene to the actress during the shooting of a film.



An excavator being used to demolish an illegal building in Hyderabad

### **EMPOWERING RURAL VOICES**

## Community radio revolution in Panchayati Raj

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 8: To enhance its outreach among the rural population, the Panchayati Raj Ministry is using community radio to spread awareness about a range of issues, including combating the "sarpanch pati" practice and promoting digital initiatives

The "sarpanch pati" system is a practice in which the husband of an elected woman sarpanch wields the actual power. According to officials, the pilot project for using community radio has been started in three states -- Bihar, Karnataka and

Siwan, Radio Active in Bhagalpur, Radio Rimjhim in Gopalganj, Radio Mayur in Chapra, and Radio Risarch in Munger.

Similarly, Radio Sarang, Radio Manipal, Radio Shivamogga, Nammadhwani Radio, and Antarvani Radio have been engaged in different places of Karnataka. In Maharashtra. Radio Manbhavan in Jalgaon, Guruwani CRS in Kalyan, Radio Vishwas in Nashik, Radio Wardha in Wardha, and Radio Nagar in Ahmednagar have been engaged.

'The objective is to actively involve the local populace in



Panchayati Raj," the official

Smart Panchayats.

The issues being raised

"Jan Jan Tak Jankari", a series of community radio programmes launched by the Ministry of Panchavati Rai. aims at involving the local populace in grassroots governance by providing them with updates on various activities, interventions, and initiatives spearheaded by the government, an official told PTI

Five community radio stations have been engaged in different districts of the three states, the ministry official said

atives of Elected Women Representatives (EWRs) such as

and popularising digital interventions such as the Meri Panchayat app, GramSwaraj Bhashini, Panchayat NIRNAY, Vibrant Gram Sabha will also be covered through the programme.

Localisation of Sustainable Development Goals (LSDGs) will also be covered, which includes having poverty-free villages with enhanced livelihood, healthy, child and women friendly, water sufficient, clean and green village, with self-sufficient infrastructure, socially just and socially secured environment, and good governance.

The official added that the ministry has requested the state initiative by providing inputs-



# national



From tomorrow (Monday), the procedure to start estimating flood losses will begin VANGALAPUDI ANITHA AP HOME MINISTER

### **INDIA GETS ITS 1ST HAND** TRANSPLANT REGISTRY

India has set up a registry for the first time for patients requiring hand transplantation, with officials saying it will facilitate the allocation of the donated organ in a transparent manner and on a priority basis

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Moscow and Kyiv.

end the conflict.

the region.

China-South Africa) grouping

that is taking place amid a

renewed push for peace talks

between Moscow and Kyiv to

NSA Doval is travelling to

Russia for the BRICS meet,

official sources said. He is also

expected to hold talks with his

Russian counterpart and is likely

to discuss ways to bring peace to

Doval's visit to Russia comes

two-and-half weeks after Prime

Minister Narendra Modi's high-

profile trip to the Ukrainian

capital Kyiv. On Saturday,

Italian Prime Minister Giorgia

Meloni, following her talks

with Ukrainian President

Volodymyr Zelenskyy, said

India and China can play a

role in finding a solution to

Russian President Vladimir

Putin, speaking at a panel dis-

cussion at the Eastern Economic

Forum in the Russian city of

Vladivostok Thursday, named

India, Brazil and China as pos-

sible intermediaries that could

play a role in resolving the con-

flict "First of all, it is the Chinese

People's Republic, Brazil and

India -- I am in contact with my

partners and I have no doubt

that the leaders of these coun-

tries, and we have relations of

trust and confidence with one an-

other, will be really interested

and provide a helping hand,' he said. His remarks came in

the dragging conflict.



to attend BRICS meet

**AJIT DOVAL'S VISIT TO RUSSIA COMES** 

TWO-AND-A HALF WEEKS AFTER PRIME

MINISTER NARENDRA MODI'S HIGH-PROFILE



Soon after the havoc caused by heavy rains and flood, Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke to Telangana Chief

over flood relief

Minister A Revanth Reddy. PM Modi asked him (Revanth Reddy) to utilise the advance of ₹1,345 crore in the SDRF. There should be no politics

G KISHAN REDDY T'GANA BJP PRESIDENT

The central government is coming up with a proposal to impose GST on online transactions of less than ₹2000. No GST was earlier imposed on such small transactions. We will oppose this proposal

ATISHI MARLENA DELHI FINANCE MINISTER



who used to create hindrances in

festivals and celebrations are all gone YOGI ADITYANATH UP CHIEF MINISTER



#StalinvsModi ELECTRIC! The CM of a state receiving a welcome grander than the rime Minister by

USA tells a lot about his popularity. & This crowd isn't even brought by arranging buses or giving them a untarily. Unprecedented, MK Stalin is the most popular Chief Minister Tamil

### SHORT **TAKES**

### Ripun Bora returns to Cong

**Guwahati:** Former Assam Congress chief Ripun Bora, who had recently resigned as the state Trinamool Congress president, returned to the grand old party Sunday. AICC general secretary in-charge of the state, Jitendra Singh, welcomed Bora back into the party fold at the beginning of an Extended Executive Committee meeting at Charaideo. Besides Singh state Congress president Bhupen Kumar Borah, Leader of Opposition Debabrata Saikia and other leaders were present on the occasion.

### 4 workers killed

Ambikapur: Four workers were killed, and one sustained injuries after a hopper filled with coal collapsed on them at an alumina refinery in Chhattisgarh's Surguia district Sunday, police said. The incident occurred around 11 am at Maa Kudargarhi Alumina Refinery in Silsila village under the Raghunathour police chowki, an official said. A steel tower-mounted hopper filled with coal collapsed and fell on ten men working below it, he said.

### 23 houses gutted

Itanagar: At least 23 houses were completely gutted in a devastating fire in Seppa in Arunachal Pradesh's East Kameng district, police said. The incident happened in Abotani Colony around 7 pm Saturday, Superintendent of Police Kamdam Sikom said. The reason behind the fire is yet to be ascertained but an electric short-circuit is suspected to be the cause, he said The SP, however, said that no casualty was reported in the incident.

## MEDIC'S RAPE-MURDER

Kolkata, Sept 8: People from all walks of life - former students of several educational institutions, clay modellers, rickshaw pullers and junior doctors - separately hit the streets of Kolkata Sunday in continued protest over the rape and murder of a medic in a state-run hospital a month ago.

Demanding the arrest of all culprits in the case, the mother of the post-graduate trainee whose body was found in RG Kar Medical College and Hospital August 9 said she had one child and now all the protesting medics are her children.

In south Kolkata, around 4,000 former students of over 40 schools, a large number of them women, walked a distance of 2 km demanding justice for the victim. The former students of various ages chanted 'We Want Justice' as they walked along Rash Behari Avenue to the crossing of Shyamaprasad Mukherjee Road from Gariahat.

Ex-students of institutes like Binodini Girls School, Mitra Institution, Garfa High School, Carmel High School and St John's Diocesan took part in the procession, singing the iconic composition of rebel poet Kaji

### HARYANA POLLS 'No final decision yet on AAP-Cong alliance'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 8: No final decision has been taken on the alliance with the Congress for the October 5 Haryana Assembly polls yet, sources in AAP said

The last date to file nominations is September 12. "The talks are underway but there is no final decision yet," said an AAP source. Earlier in the day, AAP Rajya Sabha MP Raghav Chadha said both Congress and his party are trying to forge an alliance for the Haryana elections by keeping aside their individual aspirations.

Chadha said while the parties are yet to reach a consensus on the alliance, the talks are progressing in a "positive" direction and they are hopeful of a good outcome. "The talks are happening in a positive atmosphere. Both parties are working towards contesting the elections together, prioritising unity and the demands of the people of Haryana, while setting aside individual party and candidate

aspirations," he told PTI Videos. 'Ball by ball commentary cannot be done on the seat-sharing arrangement. Both the parties have desire and hope to form an alliance," he added. According to sources, while the AAP is demanding 10 seats, the Congress

is ready to give them only seven. However, Chadha refused to divulge any details about the seat-sharing talks held so far. Earlier, the Congress and AAP, partners in the Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance (INDIA), entered a seatsharing agreement for Lok Sabha polls in Delhi, Haryana and Gujarat. In Haryana, AAP state president Sushil Gupta was the lone party candidate in the Lok Sabha polls in the state. He lost to BJP's Naveen Jindal

### Major lapses in initial probe in CBI's notice

Kolkata: The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) officials investigating the case are now focusing on what prompted severe lapses in carrying out the initial probe before it took over the case on the Calcutta High Court's order. Sources said that the central agency officials believe that their probe process could have been much smoother had these lapses been avoided during the initial investigation before the CBI took charge. The first lapse, according to sources, was the lackadaisical videography of the process of post-mortem of the victim's body and the mentioning of the wounds on the body in the report.

Nazrul Islam: "Karar oi louho kopat, bhenge phel korre lopat" (Destroy the iron gates of prison).

In another rally from the potters' hub of Kumartuli in north Kolkata, clay modellers took out a rally along Rabindra Sarani to Shyambazar five-point crossing, with a girl dressed as Goddess

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 8: The

Congress Sunday said the SEBI

investigation into "the Adani

Group's brazen attempt"to by-

pass regulations is still lan-

guishing and the capital markets

regulator has a lot to explain.

Congress general secretary

in-charge communications

Jairam Ramesh's remarks at-

tacking SEBI came after a media

report which claimed that two

Mauritius-based foreign portfo-

lio investors (FPIs), who were

mentioned in the January 2023

report on the Adani Group by

short-seller Hindenburg Research, have petitioned the

Securities Appellate Tribunal,

seeking urgent relief from com-

plying with SEBI's new foreign

portfolio investors (FPIs), a part

of the revelations in the still-un-

folding Modani mega scam, have

"Two Mauritius-based foreign

investor norms.

Durga leading the procession. Singing Arijit Sing's song 'Aar kabe' (how long) in solidarity with sexually violated women, the protesters held aloft placards demanding speedy investigation and justice in the R

G Kar murder-rape incident.

### SC to hear RG Kar incident case today

Kolkata rocked by rallies Doval to visit Russia

New Delhi: The Supreme Court case related to the murder and alleged rape of a junior doctor at the RG Kar Medical College and Hospital in Kolkata. According to the cause list uploaded on the apex court's website, a bench of Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud and justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra is slated to hear September 9 the case, which was initiated by the top court on its own. The Centre has recently filed an application in the apex court alleging "unpardonable" noncooperation by the West Bengal government in extending logistical support to the CISF, tasked with providing security at the hospital.

of the procession. Around 100 people with their hand-pulled rickshaws also rallied from Hedua Park to College Square in north Kolkata. Hundreds of junior doctors of state-run NRS Hospital took out a rally from Sealdah to Esplanade in the heart of the city. The parents of the murdered doctor were present at the spot in Esplanade where the rally culminated.

singer Lagnajita were also part



■ NSA Doval is travelling to Russia for the BRICS meet,

official sources said

He is also expected to hold talks with his Russian counterpart and is likely to discuss ways to bring peace to the region

response to a question on possible countries that can act as a mediator between Russia and Ukraine.

In his talks with President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, Modi had said both Ukraine and Russia should sit together without wasting time to end the ongoing war and that India was ready to play an "active role" in restoring peace in the region. The Prime Minister said India was on the side of peace since the beginning of the conflict and he would even like to contribute personally to a peaceful resolution of the crisis. Modi's nearly nine-hour visit to Ukraine August 23, the first by an Indian Prime Minister since its independence in 1991, came six weeks after he held summit talks with Russian President Vladimir

India has been maintaining that the conflict in Ukraine must be resolved through dialogue\_\_

Putin in Moscow.



now petitioned the Securities Appellate Tribunal, seeking ur-

gent relief from complying with

SEBI's new foreign investor norms

before the upcoming September

These rules are meant to en

sure that black money routed

through tax havens does not

flood back into Indian capital

markets, Ramesh said, adding

they must be upheld at all costs.

"These are the very same FPIs

who stand accused of partici-

pating in the Adani Group's

brazen attempt to bypass SEBI's

regulations and amass benami

stakes in its own companies.

These are the very firms that

benefitted from SEBI's removal

of the requirement to identify

the 'ultimate beneficial owner

of offshore funds, a decision that

it was forced under public pres-

sure to reverse in June 2023 in a

tacit admission of its guilt." the

Congress leader said in his

9th deadline," Ramesh said.

Devotees pray at the shrine of Naqshband Sahib during his annual Urs in Srinagar

**SEBI** has lot to explain: Cong

### **SNIPPETS**

### Chhattisgarh: Seven killed in lightning strike

Balodabazar: Seven men were killed and three injured after they were struck by lightning in Chhattisgarh's Balodabazar-Bhatapara district Sunday, officials said. The incident took place this evening in Mohtara village when the victims were working in a field, a district administration official said. "As per preliminary information, these persons gathered at the edge of a pond near their field amid heavy rainfall when lightning struck. The deceased were identified as Mukesh (20), Tankar Sahu (30), Santosh Sahu (40) Thaneshwar Sahu (18), Pokhraj Vishwakarma (38), Dev Das (22) and Vijay Sahu (23)," he said. The three injured persons have been hospitalised, the official added.

### Coupling of Magadh Express breaks, train splits into two

Patna: The coupling of Magadh Express from New Delhi to Islampur broke, splitting the train into two between Twiniganj and Raghunathpur railway stations in Bihar's Buxar district Sunday, officials said. No one was injured in the incident which occurred at around 11.08 am between Twiniganj and Raghunathpur railway stations, they said. Chief Public Relations Officer (CPRO) of East Central Railway Sharswati Chandra told PTI, .... the incident took place when the coupling of the Magadh Express (20802) from New Delhi to Islampur broke, splitting the train into two between Twiniganj and Raghunathpur railway stations."

### Lucknow building collapse: Toll rises to eight

Lucknow: The death toll in the building collapse here has climbed to eight, with rescuers pulling out three more bodies from the debris, officials said Sunday. Joint Commissioner of Police Amit Verma said there is a minimum possibility of someone still being trapped inside. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath visited the Lok Bandhu Hospital here to meet those injured in the incident after returning from Ambedkar Nagar. "Met the people injured in the unfortunate building collapse incident in Lucknow at Lokbandhu Shri Rajnarayan Joint Hospital today. Enquired about their well-being and gained information from the doctors about their treatment," he said in a post on X.

## Surat claims top spot in India's air quality rankings

The Union Environment *Ministry presented the* "National Clean Air City" Awards during the Swachh Vayu Survekshan 2024 held at a national workshop celebrating the "International Day of Clean Air for Blue Skies" in Jaipur Saturday

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Sept 8: Surat has emerged as the leading city in India for air quality improvements, followed by Jabalpur (Madhya Pradesh) and Agra (Uttar Pradesh).

These three cities with population of more than one million, have topped the Swachh Vayu Survekshan (clean air survey) Awards for clean air, the government announced Saturday.

Union Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav and Rajasthan Chief Minister Bhajan Lal Sharma presented the awards to the best-performing cities where the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) is being implemented.

In the category for population between 300,000 and 1 million. Firozabad (Uttar Pradesh) Amravati (Maharashtra) and Jhansi (Uttar Pradesh) were recognised as the top three and for cities with fewer than 300,000 people, the toppers were Raebareli (Uttar Pradesh),



Nalgonda (Telangana) and Nalagarh (Himachal Pradesh).

Municipal commissioners of winning cities were awarded cash prizes, trophies and certificates. The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) reported that 51 cities have shown a reduction in PM10 levels by more than 20 per cent compared to the base year 2017-18, with 21 of these cities achieving a reduction of over 40 per cent.

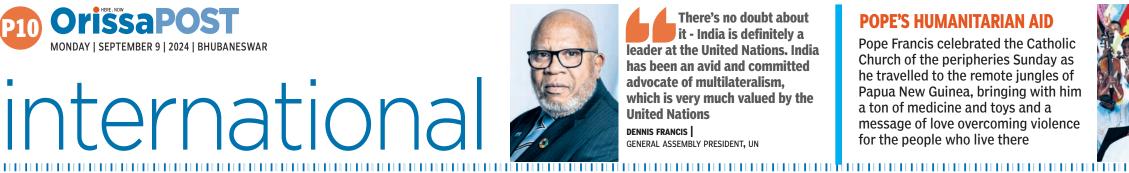
According to the NCAP assessment document, sectors given weightage include biomass and municipal solid waste burning, road dust, dust from construction and demolition waste, vehicular emissions and industrial emissions, among others. Experts have previously noted that NCAP does not focus on combustion sources and may not be effectively curbing toxic emissions.

A Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) assessment released in July found that road dust mitigation has been the primary focus of NCAP, which was launched in 2019 as the first effort to set clean air targets for 131 polluted cities and reduce particulate pollution nationally.

The assessment revealed that 64 per cent of the total funds (Rs 10,566 crore) has been allocated to road paving, widening, pothole repair, water sprinkling and mechanical sweepers. Only 14.51 per cent of funding has been used for controlling biomass burning, 12.63 per cent for reducing vehicular pollution and a mere 0.61 per cent for controlling industrial pollution. "The primary focus of the funding is thus road dust mitigation," the assessment said.

NCAP aims to reduce particulate pollution by up to 40 per cent by 2025-26 from the base year of 2019-20. It is India's first nerformance-linked funding programme to improve air quality. Originally, NCAP was planned to tackle both PM10 and PM2.5 concentrations in the 131 non-attainment cities. In practice, only PM10 concentration has beenconsidered for performance assessment.

# international



There's no doubt about it - India is definitely a leader at the United Nations. India has been an avid and committed advocate of multilateralism, which is very much valued by the

DENNIS FRANCIS GENERAL ASSEMBLY PRESIDENT, UN

### **POPE'S HUMANITARIAN AID**

Pope Francis celebrated the Catholic Church of the peripheries Sunday as he travelled to the remote jungles of Papua New Guinea, bringing with him a ton of medicine and toys and a message of love overcoming violence for the people who live there





trying to throw want me in jail — for the crime of exposing

Any transfer of Iranian ballistic missiles to Russia would represent a dramatic escalation in Iran's support for Russia's

war of aggression against Ukraine and lead to the killing of more Ukrainian civilians

SEAN SAVETT NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL SPOKESMAN, US





KHAWAJA ASIF DEFENCE MINISTER, PAKISTAN

### **SHORT TAKES**

### **Brazil's X ban drives** rally for 'free speech'

Sao Paulo: Supporters of former Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro began flooding Sao Paulo's main boulevard for an Independence Day rally Saturday, buoyed by the government's blocking of tech billionaire Elon Musk's X platform, a ban they say is proof of their political persecution. A few thousand demonstrators, clad in the yellow-and-green colours of Brazil's flag, poured onto Av. Paulista. References to the ban on X and images of Musk abounded. "Thank you for defending our freedom," read one banner praising the tech entrepreneur. Saturday's march is a test of Bolsonaro's capacity to mobilize turnout ahead of the October municipal elections, even though Brazil's electoral court has barred him from running for office until 2030.

### Philippines arrests celebrity pastor

Manila: An influential evangelist preacher from the Philippines accused of sex trafficking and sexual abuse has been arrested, the interior minister said Sunday, Apollo Quiboloy, self-proclaimed "owner of the universe" and "appointed son of god", is wanted on charges of child and sexual abuse and related allegations of human trafficking. He has denied wrongdoing. "Apollo Quiboloy has been caught," Interior Secretary Benjamin Abalos Jr said on his Facebook page, without specifying how or where he had been. The pastor is also on the FBI's "most wanted" list in the United States on separate charges of sex trafficking and bulk cash smuggling, over which he has also denied wrongdoing.

### **ISRAEL-HAMAS WAR**

# Gaza death toll tops 40K

### **ISRAELIS PROTEST IN THE STREETS AGAIN AS THE TOLL IN GAZA MOUNTS**

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Deir Al-Balah, Sept 8: Israelis again poured into the streets for another large protest over the government's failure to secure the return of remaining hostages in Gaza, while hospital and local authorities said Israeli air raids in the territory killed more than a dozen people overnight into

Israel's retaliatory offensive in Gaza has killed more than 40,000 Palestinians, according to the Health Ministry, which doesn't distinguish between civilians and combatants in its count. The ministry says more than 94,000 people have been wounded.

Health workers wrapped up the second phase of an urgent polio vaccination campaign designed to prevent a large-scale outbreak. The drive, launched after the first polio case in the Palestinian enclave in 25 years, aims to vaccinate 640,000 children during a war that has destroyed Gaza's health care system and much of its infrastructure. The third phase of vaccinations will be in the north.

Israel kept up its military offensive. In central Gaza's urban refugee camp of Nuseirat, Al-Awda Hospital said it received the bodies of nine people killed in two air raids. One hit a residential building, killing four people and wounding at least 10, while five people were killed in a strike on a house in west-



hostages in Gaza.

Violence has also

spiked in the occu-

pied West Bank.

A day-long mili-

tary operation

in Jenin left

dozens of dead. "They

(Israeli forces)

besieged the

brought in bull-

dozers. As you see,

they destroyed the

area

whole area," said a resident,

A day after an American pro-

tester was shot and killed in the

West Bank, her family urged

President Joe Biden to order an

independent investigation, say-

ing that "given the circumstances

of Aysenur's killing, an Israeli

investigation is not adequate".

Mahmoud Al Razi

Separately, Al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital, central Gaza's main hospital, said a woman and her two children Eleven were killed in a months into the strike on a house in the nearby

war, numerous urban refugee rounds of diplomacy camp of Bureij. The war have so far failed to began when clinch a ceasefire deal Hamas and other militants atto end the tacked Israel conflict October 7, killing around 1,200 people, primarily civilians. Hamas is believed to still be holding more

are dead. Anger again led large crowds of Israelis into the streets Saturday night, a week after one of the largest demonstrations of the war following the dis-

than 100 hostages. Israeli au-

thorities estimate about a third

year-old recent university graduate a "ray of sunshine" and an advocate for human dignity. Aysenur Ezgi Eygi, who also

Their statement called the 26

holds Turkish nationality, was shot in the head, two Palestinian doctors said. She had been demonstrating against Israeli settlements in the West Bank. Witnesses said she was shot during a moment of calm following earlier clashes.

The White House has said it was "deeply disturbed" and called on Israel to investigate. The Israeli military said it was looking into reports that troops had killed a foreign national while firing at an "instigator of violent

More than 500,000 Israeli settlers live in the West Bank, a territory captured by Israel in 1967. Israeli raids, attacks by Palestinian militants on Israelis and attacks by Israeli settlers on Palestinians have left more than 690 Palestinians dead since the Israel-Hamas war began in October, according to Palestinian health officials.

Israel has been under increasing pressure from the United States and other allies to reach a cease-fire deal in Gaza. but Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu insists on continued Israeli control of the Philadelphi corridor, a narrow band along Gaza's border with Egypt where Israel contends Hamas smuggles weapons. Egypt and Hamas deny it.

### MASS MURDERS

# B'desh to take steps for Hasina's extradition



Dhaka, Sept 8: Bangladesh will take necessary steps to extradite deposed Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina from India to try her on charges of mass killings during the student-led mass movement against her government, the newly-appointed chief prosecutor of the country's **International Crimes Tribunal** said Sunday.

Following unprecedented antigovernment protests that peaked August 5, Hasina resigned as prime minister and fled to India.

Necessary steps will be taken to bring former premier back under the extradition treaty with India to try her on charges of mass killings during the student-led protests in July and August, International Crimes Tribunal Chief Prosecutor Md Tajul Islam was quoted as saying by The Daily Star newspaper.

"We will file an application with the International Crimes Tribunal, when it resumes functions, to issue arrest warrants against all the absconding accused including Sheikh Hasina in connection with the cases filed for mass killing and crimes against humanity," he said at a press briefing on the ICT premises in Dhaka.

**66** Information, documents and evidence against the accused persons will have to be collected from across the country and those will have to be compiled, examined and placed properly before the tribunal, which is very much challenging and huge task

MD TAJUL ISLAM | CHIEF PROSECUTOR, INTERNATIONAL CRIMES TRIBUNAL

Replying to a question, he said a decision would be taken after consulting with the government about amendments to the existing International Crimes Tribunal Act for holding trial of the new cases filed with IT.

"Information, documents and evidence against the accused persons will have to be collected from across the country and those will have to be compiled. examined and placed properly before the tribunal, which is very much challenging and huge task," Islam added.

According to the interim government's Health Adviser Nurjahan Begum, more than 1,000 people have been killed and hundreds injured during the protests against the Hasinaled government.

Bangladesh's International Crimes Tribunal (ICT) last month launched an investigation against Hasina and nine others on charges of genocide and crimes against humanity that took place from July 15 to August 5 during the students' mass movement

## Algerian Prez elected to serve second term

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Algiers, Sept 8: President Abdelmadjid Tebboune has been named the winner of Algeria's presidential election, granting him another term leading the gas-rich North African nation five years after pro-democracy protests led to the ouster of his

In a result that surprised few observers internationally or in Algeria, the country's independent election authority Sunday announced that Tebboune had won 94 per cent of the vote, far outpacing his challengers Islamist Abdelali Hassani Cherif, who won 3 per cent and socialist Youcef Aouchiche, who won 2.1 per cent.

Election officials reported less than six million of the country's 24 million voters had turned out to vote Saturday, perpetuating the low voter turnout rates that marred Tebboune's first term and raised questions about his popular support.

Algeria is Africa's largest country by area and, with almost 45 million people, it's the continent's second most populous



after South Africa to hold presidential elections in 2024 — a year in which more than 50 elections are being held worldwide, encompassing more than half the world's population.

Throughout the campaign, activists and international organizations, including Amnesty International, railed against the campaign season's repressive atmosphere and the harassment and prosecutions of those involved in opposition parties, media organisations and civil society groups. Some denounced this election as a rubber stamp exercise that can only entrench

### **BUILDING TIES**

### Rahul in US to strengthen nations' bond

Houston: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi Sunday arrived in the US on a three-day visit during which he will hold "meaningful discussions and insightful conversations" to further strengthen the bond between India and America. "I am truly delighted by the warm welcome I've received in Dallas, Texas, USA, from the Indian Diaspora and members of the Indian Overseas Congress," Gandhi, the Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha, said in a Facebook post. "I eagerly look forward to engaging in meaningful discussions and insightful conversations that will further strengthen the bond between our two nations during this visit," he said, sharing some photographs of his arrival. In a post on X, the Congress party said that Gandhi received a "warm and enthusiastic" welcome at Dallas Fort Worth International Airport.

US in his official capacity but will have a chance to interact with a variety of people on Capitol Hill at an "individual level". "He (Gandhi) will have interactions with the press at the national press club, he will meet with the think tank people and will also have interaction at Georgetown University which is equally important in Washington DC," Pitroda said of Gandhi's first visit to the US since assuming the mantle of the Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha. During his visit from September 8-10, the Congress leader would hold numerous interactions in Washington DC and Dallas, including at the University of Georgetown and the University of Texas.



### First India-GCC foreign ministers' meeting

Riyadh: External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar arrived here in the Saudi capital Sunday on a two-day visit to attend the first India-Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) foreign ministers' meeting. Jaishankar is here on the first leg of his three-nation tour that will also take him to Thank Abdulmajeed Al Smari, Deputy Minister for Protocol Affairs for the warm reception," Jaishankar said in a post on X. The GCC is an influential grouping comprising the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain,





hold bilateral meetings with foreign ministers of several GCC member countries. Ahead of the visit, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) in New Delhi Saturday said India and the GCC enjoy a deep and multifaceted relationship, including in areas of trade and investment, energy, cultural and people-to-people ties.

## with GCC countries stood at \$184.46 billion in the financial year 2022-23. In Riyadh, Jaishankar is also expected to

### **INTERNATIONAL LITERACY DAY**

*To reduce the dropout* rate and encourage every child to complete their education, Shehbaz pointed out that the government had introduced scholarships and other incentives

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Islamabad, Sept 8: Pakistan Sunday declared an education emergency on International Literacy Day to educate around 26 million out-of-school children in the country.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif announced the measure and urged the private sector and civil organisations to join hands with the government, the state-run Associated Press of Pakistan

reported. The 72-year-old Pakistan

### Pak PM declares education emergency Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-Today, with iron

N) leader reaffirmed his commitment to advancing the education agenda, striving for a more informed and sustainable nation.

We have declared an educational emergency across the country, launched an enrolment campaign for students and initiated midday meals for children in schools," he stated.

He said that literacy is a fundamental human and constitutional right that guarantees the future of our country and added that literacy was not merely the ability to read and write but rather a "gateway to empowerment, economic opportunities and active participation in society

"In this rapidly emerging world, developing literacy and skills in line with technology is inevitable," the premier stressed, adding that the government was implementing a comprehensive



plan to integrate technology into the educational system and ensuring that the youth were equipped with the necessary skills to thrive in the digital economy.

He said that the private sector and civil society organisations were equal partners in the government's efforts.

"By establishing effective partnerships, we can link education

conviction, and the support of provinces, we will handle the challenge of 26 million out-of-school children. We will bring them back to school...I declare from this moment an emergency in education all over Pakistan...The way we did it in Punjab, we will do it in Pakistan

SHEHBAZ SHARIF | PM, PAKISTAN

with employment and self-employment opportunities, creating a stronger and more inclusive workforce," he added.

'Today, with iron conviction, and the support of provinces, we will handle the challenge of 26 million out-of-school children. We will bring them back to school...I declare from this moment an emergency in education all over Pakistan...The way we did it in Punjab, we

will do it in Pakistan," the prime minister said while addressing the National Conference on Education

The premier said the enrolment of 26 million out-of-school children and stunted growth were major challenges facing Pakistan which required huge financial resources. International Literacy Day is observed September 8 to remind policymakers, practitioners, and the public of the critical importance of literacy for creating a more literate, just, peaceful,

and sustainable society. UNESCO has highlighted that the lack of access to education remains a significant barrier, as three out of four children in developing countries cannot read or comprehend a basic text by the age of 10, and there are still 754 million illiterate adults globally, two-thirds of whom are women.

### In a first

### Oz census to include sexual orientation. gender questions

Sydney, Sept 8: Australia will include questions on sexual orientation and gender in its census for the first time, after more than a week of controversy over the centre-left Labor government's earlier decision to exclude them.

Treasurer Jim Chalmers said Sunday the 2026 census would include sexual orientation and gender, although he declined to specify the questions and said the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) would design them later.

"We have listened to the LGB-TIQ+ community to make sure that we can work with the ABS to deliver this really important change when it comes to the 2026 census," he said.

'We say to Australians from the LGBTIQ+ community: you matter, you've been heard, you will be counted."

The questions will be optional and only asked of those over 16 years of age.

The move reverses an August decision to exclude questions about LGBTIQ+ identity.

Deputy Prime Minister Richard Marles said then the government did not want to open up divisive debates. He denied any political motives behind the decision amid media reports that the government was apprehensive about sparking a culture-war-style campaign ahead of an election likely to be called within nine months.

The United Kingdom added an optional question on sexual orientation in its 2021 census for the first time.



# business



**Our expansionary moves** are aligned with our business model transformation. The upcoming demerger of our diverse verticals that represent more than 15 commodities, will see us progress from being asset managers to asset owners

ANIL AGARWAL | VEDANTA CHAIRMAN

### **BOEING REACHES HISTORIC** PAY CONTRACT WITH UNION

Global aerospace major Boeing Sunday announced it has reached a tentative pay agreement with the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM) which represents more than 33,000 employees. The pact has ended weeks of intense negotiations and avoiding a potential strike. 





strategically expand our near major highways stations, providing travellers with convenient and comfortable options

for overnight stays

WYNDHAM HOTELS AND RESORTS



delivery partners and the staff of our 2 lakh restaurant partners to easily access online skill development courses, offline certifications, and training modules

ROHIT KAPOOR CEO OF SWIGGY FOOD MARKETPLACE



semiconductors are a very important and strategic

commodity, and therefore, we need substantial resilience in the production of semiconductors

MINISTRY OF ELECTRONICS AND IT SECRETARY

### SHORT **TAKES**

### **Mcap of valued** firms erodes

New Delhi: The combined market valuation of eight of the top-10 most valued firms got eroded by Rs 2,01,699.77 crore last week, with Reliance Industries and Tata Consultancy Services emerging as the biggest laggards, in line with weak trends in equities. Last week. the BSF benchmark dropped 1.181.84 points, or 1.43 per cent. The market valuation of Reliance Industries tumbled Rs 60.824.68 crore to Rs 19,82,282.42 crore. The valuation of Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) slumped Rs 34.136.66 crore to Rs 16,12,762.51 crore. State Bank of India's valuation dropped 6.98.440.13 crore and that of Bharti Airtel diminished Rs 28,379,54 crore to Rs 8.76.207.58 crore.

### Shriram Finance to raise \$1bn

New Delhi: NBFC Shriram Finance plans to raise USD 1 billion (about Rs 8,300 crore) from overseas in the next 6 months to fund its business growth. "We are planning to raise USD 300 million in the next few weeks, may be by October and rest USD 500-700 million during the remaining part of the current financial year," Shriram Finance Managing Director and CEO YS Chakravarti told PTI. The fund raise would also include loans from development financial institutions like Asian Development Bank, Kfw, and **United States Development** Finance Corporation (DFC). The timing would depend on market conditions, he added.

### SpiceJet promoter may sell 10% stake

New Delhi: SpiceJet promoter and chairman Ajay Singh may offload more than 10 per cent stake in the struggling carrier as part of the latest funding round that is expected to close by the end of September, according to sources. The budget carrier -- which is grappling with multiple woes, including financial challenges. legal battles and grounding of aircraft -- is looking to raise money that will help it meet various obligations. One of the sources said that Singh could offload up to a 15 per cent stake in the airline if certain conditions are conducive. Singh, who is the Chairman and Managing Director, would be offloading around 10 per cent shareholding in the airline.

# IPO buzz: 13 firms to hit primary market this week

So far this year, more than 50 main-board IPOs have been launched, along with one FPO by Vodafone Idea

New Delhi, Sept 8: The IPO market will be bustling this week, with four companies, including Bajaj Housing Finance, set to launch their initial sharesale to raise a total of ₹8,390

Besides these four main-board IPOs, nine SMEs are preparing to debut with their maiden public issues next week, targeting to collect ₹254 crore. Together, these 13 firms are looking to raise ₹8,644 crore through IPO.

Munish Aggarwal, Managing Director Head - Equity Capital Markets, Equirus, expects the next two weeks to be hectic in terms of issuance activity in IPO markets.

"While this seems to indicate that the markets are overheating, we believe that this is more symptomatic of the attempt by most issuers who have valid Sebi observations and decent traction with investors to try and utilize their financials for Fiscal 2024 to launch IPOs," he said.

According to Sebi, financial data in the Red Herring Prospectus (RHP) must be less than six months old at the time of the IPO. Therefore, September is the last month when companies can use their FY24 financials to launch IPOs, he added.

The four main-board IPOs include that of Bajaj Housing Finance, which is expected to mobilise around ₹6,560 crore, PN Gadgil Jewellers (₹1,100 crore), Kross Ltd (₹500 crore), and Tolins Tyres (₹230 crore).

Of these, the initial sharesales of Bajaj Housing Finance,

open for subscription September 9 and conclude September 11, while that of P N Gadgil Jewellers will open September 10 and close September 12.

Additionally, Arkade Developers is expected to float IPO September 16 and Western Carriers India may also soon come out with its public issue.

So far this year, more than 50 main-board IPOs have been launched, along with one Followon Public Offering (FPO) by Vodafone Idea.

The public issue of Shree Tirupati Balajee Agro Trading Company is underway and IPOs of Baazar Style Retail and Gala Precision Engineering closed earlier this month.

Before that, IPOs of 10 firms, including Ola Electric Mobility and Brainbees Solutions Ltd, the parent firm of online e-commerce platform FirstCry, were concluded in August.

'We believe that the amount raised through main-board IPOs which was ₹80,000 crore till end of August, will expand to over this calendar year," Equirus Aggarwal said.

Sunil Damania, Chief Investment Officer, MojoPMS, said: "As long as the secondary market remains strong, we can expect continued growth in the primary market for IPOs. However, if some IPOs start listing below their offer price, it could reduce this momentum and slow down IPO activity."

The companies are tapping the primary market to raise funds for expansion plans, retire debt, support working capital requirements and provide exit route to the existing share-

Apart from the main-board, SMEs launching their IPOs next week are -- Aditya Ultra Steel. Shubhshree Biofuels Energy, Share Samadhan, Gajanand International, SPP Polymers, Trafiksol ITS Technologies, Excellent Wires and Packaging, Innomet Advanced Materials, and Envirotech Systems.

These companies are aspiring to mobilize between ₹12-45

### **Adani Group floats China subsidiary**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 8: Adani Group has formed a subsidiary in China to carry out business of providing supply chain solutions and project management services, according to a regulatory filing.

Adani Enterprises, the group's flagship firm, in the filing said a Singapore-based step-down subsidiary incorporated a whollyowned subsidiary, Adani Energy Resources (Shanghai) Co. (AERCL), domiciled in Shanghai, China September 2, 2024.

"AERCL is incorporated to carry out business of providing supply chain solutions and project management services," it said without providing details.

The subsidiary was incorporated by Adani Global Pte (AGPTE), Singapore - a step-down subsidiary of Adani Enterprises Ltd (AEL). AEL houses the conglomerate's mining, roads, airports, data center and water infrastructure businesses.

"AERCL has been incorporated and registered under the laws of Company Law of the People's Republic of China on September 2, 2024," the filing said. AERCL is yet to commence its business operations.

The new unit comes days after AEL set up a subsidiary in Kenya, Airports Infrastructure PLC (AIP) "to take over, operate, maintain, develop, design, construct, upgrade, modernize and manage the airports" in the African nation.

The group, which currently operates seven airports in the country, is looking to expand overseas. AEL had previously incorporated Global Airports Operator L.L.C., Abu Dhabi, to handle investment, acquisition, construction, operation, and maintenance of airports outside India. This unit has now set up the Kennian subsidiary.

Adani Group had reportedly submitted a proposal to the Kenyan government for investing in its main airport, the Jomo Kenyatta

## FPIs invest ₹11,000 crore in equities in Sept so far



New Delhi, Sept 8: Foreign investors infused nearly ₹11,000 crore in domestic equities in the first week of the month owing to resilience of the Indian market and expectations of rate cut in the US.

Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) have been consistently buying equities since June. Before that, they had pulled out funds to the tune of ₹34,252 crore in April-May.

The recent inflows are promising and could continue, supported by India's stable macroeconomic position. However, global factors like US interest rate and geopolitical scenario would continue to be the driving force, Himanshu Srivastava, Associate Director- Manager Research, Morningstar Investment Research India, said.

According to the data with the depositories. FPIs put in a net investment of ₹10,978 crore into equities this month (till September 6).

FPIs have been on a buying spree in the Indian equity markets after the sentiments improved following comments from US Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell, who suggested that a rate cut might be on the horizon.

The substantial net inflows this week can be attributed to enhanced speculation of the commencement of interest rate cut proved prospects for India's economic growth," Srivastava said.

Additionally, buying in few select large-cap stocks also contributed to the inflows, signalling foreign investors' eagerness to capitalize on the opportunities presented by the Indian equity markets, he said.

Also, a series of regulatory reforms aimed at streamlining the process for FII investments has further uplifted investor sentiment.

The consequent fall in the US 10-year bond yield to 3.73 per cent is positive for FPI inflows into emerging markets like India, V K Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Financial Services, said. However, the elevated valua-

tions are a concern. If the US growth concerns impact global equity markets in the coming days, FPIs are likely to use the opportunity to buy in India, he

Apart from equities, FPIs invested over ₹7,600 crore in the debt market during the period under review. Sunil Damania, Chief Investment Officer. MojoPMS, said concerns over a potential US recession and China's ongoing economic challenges are critical considerations for investors re-evaluating their allocations.

If the risk-off strategy continues to gain traction, emerging markets may experience a slow-

## Inflation data, global cues GST Council to meet over tax on insurance premium to dictate market trends

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Macroeconomic data announcements, global trends and trading activity of foreign investors would be the major driving factors for the equity markets this week, according to analysts.

"Crude oil prices has seen a meaningful correction over the few days with Brent crude now close to USD 73 per barrel. In India, investors will look forward to release of macro data this week, including CPI inflation. Globally, investors remain optimistic about the possibility of a rate cut by the US Fed and would keenly look forward to the US Fed meet scheduled later this month," Shrikant Chouhan, Head of Equity Research, Kotak Securities, said.

Among macroeconomic data announcements, industrial production for July and inflation data for August will be an-

Last week, the BSE benchmark dropped 1.181.84 points. or 1.43 per cent, while the Nifty declined 383.75 points, or 1.52 per cent.

Falling for the third day running Friday, the 30-share BSE Sensex tumbled 1,017.23 points, or 1.24 per cent, to settle at 81,183.93.

The NSE Nifty dropped 292.95 points, or 1.17 per cent, to

24,852.15, its third day of decline. 'We expect consolidation mode to continue in the market over the near term," Siddhartha Khemka, Head, Research, Wealth Management, Motilal Oswal

Financial Services Ltd, said. Investors would also track movement of global oil benchmark Brent crude and rupeedollar trend.

In the week ahead, US inflation data will be closely monitored, Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services, said.

### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 8: The GST Council Monday is expected to deliberate on a host of issues, including taxation of insurance premium, GoM's suggestions on rate rationalisation, and a status report on online gaming.

sources said Sources said the fitment committee, comprising Centre and state tax officials, will present a report on GST levied on life, health and reinsurance premiums and the revenue implications.

The GST Council, chaired by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and comprising state ministers, will decide on whether to reduce the tax burden on health insurance from the current 18 per cent or exempt certain categories of individuals, like senior citizens.

The deliberations will also happen with regard to the goods and services tax (GST) cut on life insurance premium.

In 2023-24, the Centre and states collected Rs 8,262.94 crore through



GST on health insurance premium, while Rs 1,484.36 crore was collected on account of GST on health reinsurance premium.

The issue of taxation on insurance premium figured in Parliament discussions with opposition members demanding that health and life insurance premiums be exempt from GST. Even Transport Minister Nitin Gadkari wrote to Sitharaman on the issue

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in her reply to discussion on the Finance Bill had said 75 per cent of the GST collected goes to states and opposition members should ask their state finance ministers to bring the proposal at the GST Council.

West Bengal Finance Minister Chandrima Bhattacharya had raised the issue in the meeting of the Group of Ministers (GoM) on rate rationalisation last month and the matter was referred to the fitment committee for further data analysis. The GoM had opined against any tinkering of four-tier GST slab of 5, 12, 18, and 28 per cent for the time being. The panel, however, had asked the fitment committee to look into any scope for rationalisation of rates of goods and services.

With regard to online gaming, Centre and state tax officers will present a "status report" before the GST Council The report would include GST revenue collection from the online gaming sector before and after October 1, 2023.

From October 1, 2023, entrylevel bets placed on online gaming platforms and casinos were subject to 28 per cent GST. Prior to that, many online gaming companies were not paying 28 per cent GST, arguing that there were differential tax rates for games of skill and games of chance.

The GST Council in its meet ing in August 2023 had clarified that online gaming platforms were required to pay 28 per cent tax and subsequently Central GST law was amended to make the taxation provision clear.

Offshore gaming platforms were also mandated to register with GST authorities and pay taxes, failing which the government would block those sites.

## Gen Z scripting big shifts in consumption trends: Bernstein

Brands are seeking a deeper connection with this digitally-native, app-first generation that 'swipes up' for practically everything from social media to ride-hailing and food delivery

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 8: The digitallynative, app-first Gen Z cohort is assuming the centre stage in India's consumer markets by scripting 'big shifts' in consumption trends, including the rise of quick commerce delivery and direct-to-consumer brands, according to a report by Bernstein.

Brands are seeking a deeper connection with this digitally-native, app-first generation that 'swipes up' for practically everything from social media to ridehailing and food delivery.

Indian Gen Zs' are the world's largest, the report said about the cohort born into a digital age, that shops, works and eats online. Gen Z is the generation born between 1996 and 2010. Indian Gen Zs make up 20 per

cent of the world and about 27 per cent of India's population, it

Gen Zs have become the 'Swipe Up' generation considering the amount of time they spend on social media. They swipe up for practically everything - social media, ride-hailing, and food delivery, according to Bernstein's report on 'India Internet'.

Gen Zs are showing a preference for digital-first, new-age

brands, it observed. 'We see big shifts in consumption trends dominated by

GenZs...scale up of short-form content (Instagram, Youtube deeper connections with GenZs.

shorts)...preference for quick commerce delivery, 15-20 minutes (Blinkit, Zepto)... the emergence of D2C brands...discovering new food choices through food delivery apps (Zomato, Swiggy)," the report said, adding this has led to brands building

Gen Zs have significant headroom in consumption, contributing to about 17 per cent of India's total consumption.

"GenZ has been not only a 'mobile-first' generation but also an app-first 'Swipe Up' generation. Time on smartphones has gone up 60 per cent," according to Bernstein.

Gen Z behaviour has helped scale up internet use cases driving monthly or daily active users (MAU/DAU) growth across app ecosystems.

"D2C brands are scaling faster versus traditional FMCG (3-4 years vs 10 years) led by the buying power of Gen Z customers. They have been able to target Gen Z customers through social media," the report said.

India is the world's largest footprint for Meta across their app universe (Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, FB messenger), it said, adding that quick commerce platforms like Blinkit and Zepto are enabling digitalfirst brands to reach GenZ customers, rapidly driving growth.

These broad trends are seen benefiting certain companies, which are digital-first and focus on large consumption areas.

The report highlighted that consumption behaviour, preferences and adoption differ between the three primary consumer cohorts 'Gen Zs, Millennials and Gen X.

'GenZ prefer categories which

are app-first digitally-native and prefer categories like quick commerce, food delivery, short-form videos, EdTech, athleisure, co-living, new age D2C brands," the report observed.

This is very different from 'millennials' who prefer e-commerce, multiplexes, OTT, casual wear, and renting; and 'Gen X' who veers towards offline retail, malls, kiranas, office wear, Bollywood movies, buying houses/ real estate, or the baby 'boomer generation', which goes for kiranas, home food, traditional wear and are more inclined towards savings.

D2C brands are differentiating through specialised customer need identification, marketing, technology and operations. At the same time, multiple untapped niche categories with white space have presented a unique opportunity for D2C brands to thrive in India, as per Bernstein's report.

**BRONZE** 

air rifle standing

Pal in

Women's

Preethi

# India emerges as Paralympic power

The country bagged seven gold, nine silver and 13 bronze medals to achieve its best-ever haul at Paralympic Games

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Paris, Sept 8: Differently-abled but exceptionally resolute, India's para-athletes would look back at their Paralympics campaign with pride as most of the established names lived up to expectations and many talented greenhorns made the big stage their own in a record-smashing medal haul of 29.

Seven of these 29 medals are gold, which is another first for the country that started to make its presence felt only in the 2016 edition, where it won four medals. The upswing in performance after that has been meteoric with Tokyo yielding 19, a number that was surpassed this time.

Not to forget, a lot of medalwinning performances here were record efforts and personal bests, demonstrating that the athletes have made significant progress as far as their self-belief is concerned.

The 29 medals in five sports, including a whopping 17 at the track and field events, have ensured that the country will end in the top 20 of the mega-event that was once again dominated by China with over 200 medals.

India is still far away from becoming a force at the Olympic level but the nation has certainly emerged as a force to be reckoned with in the competition for the differently-abled.

The government did its bit with increased spending on training, recovery and support staff. The sports ministry had 59 para-athletes in its Target Olympic Podium Scheme roster, 50 of whom qualified for

### Unexpected medals in track, judo

The contingent of 84 ensured plenty of firsts for India in Paralympic history including



who was born without arms,

was already a beacon of hope to

millions but with her mixed

team bronze, the 17-vear-old

gave her community another

No wonder she became a

crowd favourite in Paris as she

left everyone in awe using her

reason to never give up.

Paralympics 2024 have been special and historical. India is overjoyed that our incredible para-athletes have brought home 29 medals, which is the best-ever performance since India's debut at the Games

NARENDRA MODI | PRIME MINISTER

medals in track events with sprinter Preethi Pal winning a bronze in the women's 100m T35 and 200m T35 class.

T35 classification is meant for athletes who have coordination impairments such as hypertonia, ataxia and athetosis Preethi was born with weak legs and it became progressively worse as she grew up.

Another first ever medal came via Kapil Parmar in Judo. He made India proud by securing a bronze in the men's 60kg J1 class.

His was another story of remarkable resolve as the 24-yearold lifted himself from a life altering accident in his childhood when he got electrocuted while playing in the fields of his village. Kapil was forced to sell tea as well later in his life to make ends meet but he turned things around and how.

### Archery, club throw prop up medals tally

The likes of Harvinder Singh and Dharambir pushed India considerably higher up the medals tally by securing pathbreaking gold medals in archery and club throw respectively. Armless archer Sheetal Devi.

bulls' eye. The crowd was left hugely disappointed as she narrowly lost her 1/8 elimination contest in the singles event.

Days later, Harvinder kept his nerve under extreme pressure to land the first ever gold for India in archery, also changing the colour of his medal from the Tokyo edition where he won bronze

In the club throw event, it was a rare one two finish for India with Dharambir and Pranav Soorma ending up on the podium in the F51 class.

Mandaviya, Usha hail record medal haul

increase has facilitated improved training facilities, better coaching, and greater opportunities for athletes

addressed the assembly, expressing her pride in India's role as the host. "It is a tremendous honour and

that it fosters. We are incredibly proud to host this General Assembly in New Delhi," she said.

across the nation. This strategic investment is paying off, as evidenced by India's impressive medal hauls at the

Asian Games and Asian Para Games, said the Minister. Indian Olympic Association (IOA) President PT Usha also

privilege to stand before you today as convener for the 44th Olympic Council of Asia (OCA) General Assembly,"

Usha said. "India has always held a deep respect for the Olympic movement and the spirit of sportsmanship

latter in his darkest days

### Antil, Avani defend titles

While plenty of firsts were registered, some of the Indian athletes including javelin thrower Sumit Antil and shooter Avani Lekhara had high expectations to meet, having won gold in Tokyo.

Sumit, whose left leg was amputated after an accident, broke his own Paralympic record for a second successive javelin gold while wheelchair-bound rifle shooter Lekhara dominated the field in the air rifle SH1 final.

A gold also came from the uation from IIT-Mandi.

A tragic diving accident had Dharambir paralysed from waist down but the Sonepat resident found much needed support from fellow para athlete Amit Kumar Saroha who guided the

badminton court via Kumar Nitesh who pipped Britain's Daniel Bethell in a thrilling final. Nitesh too lost his leg after a train accident. He took to badminton while pursuing his grad-

Going forward, India can aspire to finish in the top-10 if it manages to create a pool of para swimmers too. Only one swimmer represented the country in Paris.

Sports Minister Mansukh

Mandaviya said India is set to

bid for the 2030 Youth

Olympics, a precursor to the

country's ambition to host the

*2036 Olympics. The 2030* 

Youth Olympics will be the

fifth edition of the

international event

### Yogesh Kathuniya in Men's discus Avani Lekhara throw F56 in Women's 10m

Manish

Narwal in

pistol SH1

(Shooting)

Kumar in

jump T47

Men's high

(Athletics)

Nishad

Men's 10m air

- (Athletics) air rifle Thulasimathi standing SH1 Murugesan in (Shooting) Women's Nitesh Kumar singles SU5 in Men's
- (Badminton) singles SL3 Suhas Yathiraj (Badminton) in Men's Sumit Antil in singles SL4 Men's Javelin (Badminton)
- throw F64 Ajeet Singh in (Athletics) Men's Javelin Harvinder F46 (Athletics) Singh in Men's
- Sharad individual Kumar in Recurve Men's High (Archery) Jump T63 Dharambir in (Athletics)
- Sachin Khilari throw 51 in Men Shot (Athletics) Put F46 (Athletics)
- Pranav Soorma in Men's club throw 51 (Athletics)

### 100m T35 (Athletics) Rubina Francis in Women's 10m Air Pistol

MEDAL WINNERS

- SH1 (Shooting) Preethi Pal in Women's
- 200m T35 (Athletics) Manisha Ramadass in
- Women's singles SU5 (Badminton) Rakesh Kumar / Sheetal

Devi in Mixed team

- compound open (Archery) Nithya Sre Sivan in
- Women's singles SH6 (Badminton) Deepthi Jeevanii in
- Women's 400m T20 (Athletics) Sundar Singh Gurjar in
- Men's Javelin F46 (Athletics) Mariyappan Thangavelu Men's club in Men's High Jump T63
  - (Athletics) Kapil Parmar in Judo
- Praveen Kumar Men's - 60kg (Judo) T64 High Jump Hokato Sema in Men's (Athletics) Shot Put F57 (Athletics)
  - Simran Singh in Women's 200m T12 (Athletics)



Navdeep Singh

in Men's Javelin

F41 (Athletics)

### Pant returns as India announce squad for 1st **Test against Bangladesh**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Sept 8: Rishabh Pant Sunday returned to the Test side after nearly 20 months as India announced their 16-man squad for the opening match of the two-Test series against Bangladesh starting September 19.

Virat Kohli also made a comeback having missed the five-Test series against England at home earlier this year for having taken a break for the birth of his second child.

While fast bowler Mohammed Shami remains on a comeback trail and was not included in the squad, uncapped left-arm Uttar Pradesh fast bowler Yash Dayal received his maiden Test

India pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah, who was last seen in national colours during the T20 World Cup, returned to the squad and he is expected to play a couple of more Tests against New Zealand in October-November, before the team flies out to Australia for a five-Test series. Bumrah is perhaps the only

player apart from Kohli and skipper Rohit Sharma to have been given freedom to choose as per the workload requirement and how his body responds, according to sources. Having played in the second

and final Test against Bangladesh at Mirpur from December 22-25, 2022, Pant had met a road accident a few days later December 30 and made his return to top flight cricket only in IPL this

Dayal, who was once smashed for five consecutive sixes by Rinku Singh in an IPL match, has had a remarkable redemption with his India call-up.

India squad: Rohit Sharma (c), Yashasvi Jaiswal, Shubman Gill, Virat Kohli, KL Rahul, Sarfaraz Khan, Rishabh Pant (wk), Dhruv Jurel (wk), Ravichandran Ashwin, Ravindra Jadeja, Axar Patel, Kuldeep Yadav, Mohammed Siraj, Akash Deep, Jasprit Bumrah, Yash Dayal.

### Sabalenka survives Pegula storm



proud of myself, super proud of my team that no matter what, no matter what situation we were facing this season and ın tne past we were able to go through it

REUTERS

New York, Sept 8: Belarusian Aryna Sabalenka hoisted the trophy in New York at last after years of close calls, as she outplayed American sixth seed Jessica Pegula 7-5 7-5 in the US Open women's final Saturday.

Sabalenka won her first title at Flushing Meadows a year after coming up short in the final. Twice before, she reached the semi-finals. On Saturday, she blocked out the wild cheers for the hometown favorite at Arthur Ashe Stadium to break Pegula in the final game.

"So many times I thought I was so close to get US Open title. Finally, I get this beautiful trophy," said the second seed, who fought back from a breakdown in both sets to claim victory and fell to the court in her moment of triumph.

### I'm super

New Delhi: The 44th Olympic Council of Asia (OCA) General

Assembly, held in New Delhi Sunday, showcased India's commitment

to sports and its achievements on the international stage. Union

Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya highlighted the significant

strides India has made under the leadership of Prime Minister

Narendra Modi. "Under the dynamic leadership of PM Modi, the

government has significantly increased the sports budget from

approximately \$ 143 million in 2014-2015 to around \$470 million

today. This has contributed to India's exceptional performance at

the Asian Games with 117 medals and Asian Para Games with 111

medals...we focus on grassroots talents..." Mandaviya stated. He

emphasized the government's focus on nurturing grassroots talent

a crucial aspect of India's sports development strategy. The Sports

Minister underscored the transformative impact of increased funding and support for sports in India. The substantial budget

ARYNA SABALENKA

Pegula, 30, had waited a long time to reach her first major final and came to New York in fine form after winning in Toronto. But she could not match her opponent's raw power despite the noisy backing of the

New York crowd. 'To be standing here in my first Grand Slam final and then coming off such a hot summer, I mean I didn't expect it so I'm just really grateful for the last few

weeks of tennis," said Pegula. The roof on Arthur Ashe Stadium was closed due to heavy rain and the players traded breaks twice as they settled into the stormy affair in front of a celebrity-packed house.

### **ASIAN CHAMPIONS TROPHY**

## Defending champions India thrash China

Hulunbuir (China), Sept 8: The Indian men's hockey team dished out a dominant performance to launch its title defence with a commanding 3-0 win over hosts China in the Asian Champions Trophy here

Sukhjeet Singh (14th minute), Uttam, Singh (27th) and Abhishek (32nd) were the goal-scorers for India. Coming into the tournament after securing a second successive bronze at the Olympics, India looked the more enterprising side, grabbing opportunities up front and was rock solid in defence to emerge winners.

"I think we played very well. We created some good chances but the best part is that we kept a clean sheet," captain Harmanpreet Singh said.

"Some new faces got an opportunity to perform and I think they played very well. It's a good opportunity for them to play with the Asian teams and gel with the senior team. They are skillful and very talented. I wish them the best for the future.

he said. India were slow off the blocks as China created an early

counter attack opportunity but

an alert Krishan Pathak saw the

ball sail wide harmlessly. Halfway through the quarter, Abhishek forced a penalty corner from China but Harmanpreet's drag flick was saved and China initiated a blistering counter attack which was thwarted by the Indian defence.

squandered the opportunity. India pegged China back in the last few minutes of the quarter, registering a few circle entries.

But no clear chance was made

until Jugraj Singh thundered the

Sukhjeet deflected it into the top China received a penalty corcorner to make it 1-0 for India. ner with six minutes left but India will play Japan in their second pool one match Monday.

In other matches, Malaysia held Pakistan 2-2 in a high-voltage contest, while Japan and Korea engaged in a goal-fest before settling for a 5-5 draw.

ball into the shooting circle and

## Randhir becomes first Indian to be elected as OCA president

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 8: Veteran sports administrator Randhir Singh Sunday became the first Indian to be elected as the president of the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA) during the 44th General Assembly of the continental body here.

A five-time Olympic shooter, Randhir was the lone eligible candidate for the OCA president's post. His tenure will run from 2024 till 2028, and his election was unanimous.

The 77-year-old Randhir has been the OCA acting president since 2021, filling in for Kuwait's Sheikh Ahmad Al-Fahad Al-Sabah, who was handed a 15year ban from sports administration in May this year over ethics breaches.

Randhir, who held different administrative posts in Indian and Asian sports bodies, was officially named OCA president in the presence of Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya and top sports leaders from all 45 countries of Asia.

He hails from Patiala in Punjab and belongs to a family of sportspersons.

His uncle, Maharaja Yadavindra Singh, played Test cricket for India and was an IOC member. His father Bhalindra Singh, also a first-class cricketer, was an IOC Member between 1947 and 1992.

Randhir was also a member of the IOC between 2001 and 2014, after which he continued as the honourary member of the global sports body.

'Congratulations to all my



team. I sincerely thank you all from the bottom of my heart. Asia is one family. Thank you all for all support. We will try to carry on for long," Randhir said after his election.

"Special congratulations to all the ladies who have joined the team. I wish to express my deepest gratitude to all of you for your dedication to the Olympic course. Let's all work together to**2026 ASIAN GAMES** 

### OCA includes Yogasana as demonstration sport

New Delhi, Sept 8: India's ancient sport, yogasana was Sunday included as a demonstration event at the 2026 Asian Games to be held in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan. Yogasana's inclusion in the Asian Games calendar as a demonstration sport was unanimously passed at the 44th General Assembly of Olympic Council of Asia, where India's Randhir Singh was elected unopposed as the OCA president for a term of four years from 2024 till 2028. "Yoga will be a demonstration sport in Nagoya as the calender for 2026 Asian Games has already been made and approved," Randhir said. "In 10 days time we have managed to convince all members and include yoga, which is being promoted by our Prime Minister Narendra Modi. There are risk of injuries in all other sports, but yoga is a sport which rejuvenates your body," he added.

wards a future where the Olympic values of excellence, friendship and respect are cele-

brated," he added. The post of president, five vice presidents for the five zones and five executive board members were all uncontested.

The electronic voting, by tablet, required a simple majority of 50 per cent plus one from the 45National Olympic Committees.

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