### Tamannaah's philosophy

Actor Tamannaah Bhatia shares an inspiring glimpse into her personal philosophy through social media

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LEISURE | P2



### **Attacks persist**

Russia bombards Ukrainian city hours after US President Donald Trump meets European leaders in Washington

INTERNATIONAL | P10



### **GST overhaul**

FM Nirmala Sitharaman is likely to present the Centre's proposal for rationalising GST rates at a meeting starting August 20 in Delhi

BUSINESS | P11



### Itinerary rescheduled

Bangladesh and Kazakhstan have replaced Pakistan and Oman respectively for the men's Asia Cup hockey tournament

SPORTS | P12

**BHUBANESWAR | WEDNESDAY | AUGUST 20, 2025** 

12 PAGE | ₹5.00



CYNOSURE OF ALL EYES: Rajasthan's Manika Vishwakarma being crowned Miss Universe India 2025 by last year's winner Rhea Singha at Jaipur, Tuesday. The event marked Manika's official selection as India's representative for the upcoming Miss Universe pageant. Sushmita Sen became the first Indian Miss Universe in 1994, followed by Lara Dutta in 2000. Two decades later, Harnaaz Sandhu brought the crown home again in 2021.

### **Centre to move Bills** for removal of PM, CMs held on criminal charges

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 19: The government is planning to introduce three bills in Parliament Wednesday for the removal of a prime minister, a Union minister, a chief minister or a minister of a Union Territory when arrested or detained on serious criminal charges.

These bills are the Government of Union Territories (Amendment) Bill 2025; the Constitution (One Hundred And Thirtieth Amendment) Bill 2025; and the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation (Amendment) Bill 2025.

There is a need to amend several articles of the Constitution, for providing a legal framework for the removal of the prime minister or a minister and a chief minister, according to official sources.

The objectives of the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation (Amendment) Bill, 2025, say there is no provision under the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019 (34 of 2019) for the removal of the chief minister or a minister arrested and detained in custody on account of serious criminal charges.

# B Sudershan Reddy Oppn's VP candidate

New Delhi, August 19: Former Supreme Court judge B Sudershan Reddy is the joint candidate of the Opposition parties for the Vice-Presidential polls, Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge announced Tuesday, as he called the upcoming election for the country's second-highest office an 'ideological battle'.

Reddy is a former judge of the Supreme Court and the first Lokayukta of Goa. He is also on the Board of Trustees of the International Arbitration and Mediation Centre in Hyderabad.

Reddy would arrive in the national capital Tuesday evening and meet with various Opposition leaders. He will file his nomination August 21. The joint opposition would hold a meeting in the central hall of Samvidhan Sadan (old Parliament building) Wednesday afternoon.

"All Opposition parties have decided to have a common candidate; the decision has been taken unanimously. I am happy that all opposition parties have agreed on one name. It is a big achievement for democracy, Kharge said.



the Constitution are under attack, Opposition parties unite to fight against it. So we have decided to field a good candidate in this election," he said.

Reading out a joint statement of the Opposition parties, Kharge, who is the Leader of the Opposition in Rajya Sabha, said Reddy is one of India's most "distinguished and progressive jurists." "He is a pro-poor man, and in many of his judgments... he favoured the poor people and also protected the Constitution and fundamental rights," the Congress chief, flanked by various opposition leaders including NCP-SP leader Sharad Pawa, CPI-M's M A Babv. TMC's Derek O'Brien, DMK's Tiruchi Siva and SP's Dharmendra Yadav, said. **PROFILE -P8** 

### Big breakthrough in Sino-Indian ties

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 19: In a major thaw in their frosty ties, India and China Tuesday unveiled a series of measures to forge a "stable, cooperative and forward-looking" relationship that included jointly maintaining peace along the fron tier, reopening border trade, promoting investment flows, and resuming of direct flight connectivity at the earliest.

The announcements aimed a realising the full development potential of the two Asian gi ants came amid growing es trangement in ties between India and the US over Presi dent Donald Trump's policies on trade and tariff. India and China listed the measures in a joint document after Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi held wide-ranging talks with External Affairs Minister S Jais hankar and National Security Advisor Ajit Doval over the last two days besides meeting Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The two sides agreed that they should earnestly implement the important common understandings reached between Prime Minister Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping and promote sustained, sound and steady development of India-China relations.

# Cabinet okays 6-lane Bhubaneswar Bypass



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 19: The Union Cabinet has approved the construction of a six-lane access-controlled capital region ring road (Bhubaneswar Bypass) in Odisha on Hybrid Annuity Mode (HAM) at a total capital cost of Rs 8,307.74 crore, I&B Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said Tuesday.

Currently, connectivity between Rameshwar and Tangi on the existing National Highway experience significant congestion due to high traffic volumes, passing through highly urbanised cities Khordha, Bhubaneswar and Cuttack. To address these challenges, the 110 km-long project is proposed to be developed as a 6-lane access-controlled greenfield highway, an official statement said.

"The project will provide significant benefit to Odisha and other eastern States by diverting heavy commercial traffic away from Cuttack, Bhubaneswar and Khordha Cities. This will enhance the efficiency of freight movement, reducing logistics cost and driving socio-economic growth in the region," it said.

The project alignment integrates with three major National Highways (NH-55, NH-57 and NH-655) and one State Highway (SH-65), providing seamless connectivity to key economic, social, and logistics nodes across Odisha.

The statement also said that the upgraded corridor will enhance multi-modal integration by connecting with a major railway station, an airport, a proposed multi-modal logistics park (MMLP), and two ma-

### **CM thanks Centre**

Charan Maihi thanked the Centre for approving the project, calling it a landmark infrastructure initiative that will decongest major urban centres and boost the economy. He said the project will also enhance logistics efficiency and open new avenues for economic growth and prosperity in Odisha and the eastern region. "I extend my sincere gratitude to Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri @narendramodi ii and Hon'ble Union Minister for Road Transport & Highways Shri @nitin gadkari ji for according approval to the construction of the 6-Lane Access-Controlled Capital Region Ring Road (Bhubaneswar Bypass - 110.875 km) in Odisha at a total cost of ₹ 8,307.74 crore," Majhi posted on X.

jor ports, thereby facilitating faster movement of goods and passengers across the region.

Upon completion, the bypass will play a pivotal role in regional economic growth, strengthening connectivity between major religious and economic centres and opening new avenues for trade and industrial development. "The project will also generate approximately 74.43 Lakhs person-days of direct and 93.04 lakh person-days of indirect employ-

# YOUTH CONCLAVE 2025

DHARITRI



### **DHARITRI CLIMATE GRANT**

Inviting young people and youth organisations of Odisha deeply engaged in climate action with local communities.

Kindly send us entries of your work with simple bio description (250-300 words) with 4 high resolution photos, a video of your climate action activities & future climate action plan to get a chance to win the prestigious **Dharitri Climate Grant.** 

You can also nominate someone else by following the same process.

> Selected entries will be awarded the **Dharitri Climate Grant**

as encouragement and impetus for their climate action work at Dharitri Youth Conclave 2025 to be held in November at Bhubaneswar.

Chosen entries will also get invited to attend the Conclave along with young climate warriors and experts in the field.

Last Date of Entry: 10th October 2025 Please send details to: dharitriyouthconclave@gmail.com Visit: www.dharitriyouthconclave.com for details



YOUTH



### IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Only 10%! We've cut everything by 50% just to survive

# 13-yr-old fights off crocodile

Rajkanika, August 19: A 13-year-old boy from Khunta village in Jaynagar panchayat under this block in Kendrapara district, narrowly escaped death Tuesday after fighting off a crocodile attack.

Rakesh, son of farmer Ratnakar Mallick and a student of Class-VIII, was carrying lunch for his father working in the fields around 2:15 pm. He



went to wash a kettle at Khunta creek, a water channel linked to the Brahmani River, when a crocodile suddenly attacked him and bit his left thigh.

Rakesh screamed for help and grabbed a nearHearing cries, his father rushed to the spot and pulled him away from the reptile.

Rakesh sustained deep wounds on his left thigh, with part of the flesh below the knee torn. Villagers rushed him to the local community health center, where doctors administered him first aid before shifting him to the Kendrapara district headquarters hospital for advanced treatment.

# eisure



### RENEE ZELLWEGER TURNS DIRECTOR WITH THEY

Actor Renee Zellweger presented her directorial debut, They, a hand-drawn and animated seven-minute short, at the Edinburgh International Film Festival. In an interview with entertainment news outlet The Hollywood Reporter, the Bridget Jones star shared the inspiration behind her project.

Mumbai: In an era where social media

often dictates how people measure

their value, Aishwarya Rai

Bachchan is reminding audi-

ences to look inward. The ac-

tor and former Miss World,

featured in a new video for

a cosmetic brand's Les-

validation.

sons of Worth series.

spoke candidly about

the dangers of tying

self-worth to online

Aishwarya noted

that many people to-

day depend heavily

on likes, comments,

and curated im-

ages to feel ac-

cepted, but

warned

that true

worth

cannot

self-

### FERRER ACCUSES BALDONI **OF HARASSMENT**

Justin Baldoni faces fresh harassment allegations from Isabela Ferrer, an actress in It Ends With Us, amid his legal battle with Blake Lively. Ferrer has accused Baldoni of harassing her in connection with his ongoing legal battle with Lively. DESCRIPTION OF BUILDING



nounce her next project, she continues

to remain in the public eye

🡼 Ganesha Speaks.com accuracy • reliability • trust

Ganesha says you are going to have the time of your life; that is if you make the right plans. At work, there will be the usual ups and downs. But plan the evening well and you may surprise yourself. Try

### **TAURUS**

It is quite possible that today, you will remain decisive and determined on new joint ventures, predicts Ganesha. The results may fall below your expectations in the afternoon. Fight off stress with a candlelight dinner with your sweetheart, says Ganesha.

It is quite probable that your sweetheart will take most of your time either in person or in thoughts, predicts Ganesha, A casual conversation with someone special in the afternoon may lead to exhilarating moments later in the day. You may fil your wardrobe with new clothes

**CANCER** 

Today, you will feel blessed. And blessed you are, indeed You will have the proverbial Midas touch. albeit with a slight difference: you will not touch the people you love and turn them to gold. You will just touch their heart and make them happier.

There are good days, bad days, and then there are days like today, when Ganesha foresees a mixed bag of fortunes for you. Make your family the centre of your world, and show them the love and affection that they deserve. Early in the day, you may make an attempt to severe ties with your spouse or life partner. Proceed cautiously and deal with this in an open manner. Just make sure that the tension does not escalate within the family.

Handicrafts business will fascinate you today, predicts
Ganesha. People will be left wondering what fuels all that dedication and commitment – at work and at home! Ganesha advises you to consummate those bonds of love and roll in the hav with your spouse.

Ganesha's got a feeling that today is going to be a good day for you, as you go ahead and indulge yourself and the ones around you. Chances are that you may shop till you drop, and spend a sizeable amount buying goodies for your loved ones later in the evening. In matters of business, Ganesha foresees you displaying your maturity, and setting an example for others in the team.

### **SCORPIO**

Self-improvement is on your mind today. Self-employed neonle should expect good profits in business. Expenditure may be more at work today. At the end of the day, the cocktail of work and family will be a heady, pleasing mixture, says Ganesha.

**SAGITTARIUS** 

You act responsible today, and plan a secured future for your kids. For that matter, you go for long-term investments. You will put in extra efforts at work and come out with flying colours. In the evening, you are in a mood to paint the town red. Have a lovely evening!

### CAPRICORN

In total control of yourself, you will have the tendency to dominate those around you. It's a trait that keeps resurging at intervals, making you feel all powerful, says Ganesha. Later in the day, you may even enrol yourself for a personality development course to hone your communication and professional skills. But it won't be sailing smooth all throughout. An unfortunate incident at the end of the day may take you off guard, so be careful of your moves, Ganesha advises.

### AQUARIUS

Time is money, and you need to understand it fast! Scrap your old schedules and plan new ones that work. Ganesha suggests that the good old planner will work wonders in organising your work. Remember the old adage? A stitch in time saves nine. So get going.

### PISCES

Friends are the subject of all your activities today. You will make new acquaintances that will prove to be helpful in times of need. A loved one will make you happy like you've never been before. A candlelight dinner with your sweetheart is probably in the offing, says Ganesha.



Mumbai: Tamannaah Bhatia recently shared an inspiring glimpse into her personal philosophy through social media. Taking to Instagram stories, the actress posted a motivational quote originally written by mindfulness educator Case Kenny, reflecting on the powe of audacity in shaping one's life. The quote read, "I have a theory that life meets you at your level of audacity.

In a follow-up slide, she elaborated on the idea of audacity, describing it as the courage to directly ask for what one wants instead of waiting for opportunities to arrive. The post highlighted the importance of confidence, decisiveness, and action, suggesting that life rewards those who embrace boldness rather than hesitation. Tamannaah's choice of message resonated strongly with her audience, offering a window into her mindset of self-belief and proactive living.

On the professional front, Tamannaah continues to maintain a busy schedule. She was most recently seen in the thriller Odela 2 and has a series of high-profile projects lined up. These include Rohit Shetty's untitled biographical drama opposite John Abraham, the action entertainer Ranger with Ajay Devgn and Sanjay Dutt, and the folk thriller Vvan - Force of the Forest, codirected by Deepak Kumar Mishra and Arunabh Kumar, alongside Sidharth Malhotra.

# John speaks up on US tariffs Tehran, has spoken up on the heavy tariffs levied by US

ing movie President Donald Trump The actor, who has a keen wants to soften the blow of the alternative markets Talking about how the I would face hurdles concerned, but I wantto make. We wanted to Eastern geopolitics for happens in the Midthat matter, whatever on India". Talking with Trump

Mumbai: Bollywood actor John Abraham, who is receiving a lot of positive response for his recently released stream-

on India, and how they can be countered. interest in geo-politics, has shared that if India the tariffs, then the nation needs to look at makers mounted Tehran he said, "I knew

with the censor board and everyone ed a voice and to make the film I wanted break down the complexities of Middle our audiences and explain that what dle East has an impact on India or, for happens in the world has an impact about the tariffs, he said, "Even today, and his tariffs, a lot of us don't care about 50%, but yes, they are going to have a massive impact on India. The good news is that we are pretty sound as

a country. If we have to address this tariff, we have to look at alternative markets. So, for people who think this is not going to affect our country, it is going to affect our coun-

and should not be defined by digital approval. Drawing from her perspective as both a woman and a mother, she emphasised that the growing influence of social media mirrors the pressures of society, often affecting not just young people but also impressionable adults. Calling it a "grave concern," she urged individuals to stop seeking validation externally and instead recognise that worth comes from within. She ended with a powerful

reassurance: "You are worth

it—believe it. The message resonated strongly with fans, who praised authenticity her and called her words powerful. On the professional front, Aishwarya was last seen in Mani Rat-Ponniyin nam's Selvan I and

II. While she

redefines self-worth

Mrunal's part joy, part terror

Mumbai: Actress Mrunal Thakur decided to 'open a piece of her heart' by dropping some candid clicks from her camera. From a posing shadow in the sand to the beauty of the endless sea, the Sita Ramam actress has Her album further included a calming still of a church, along with a photo of a bartender at work.

> "I have always believed that "A picture is worth a thousand words"... and ever since I started taking my love for photography more seriously, I feel it even more. Photography is one of my fav things and I want to know and do more. I've always had this keeda in me to learn, to explore, to pick up every little thing that sparks curiosity."

Through her latest post, Mrunal also ex-

pressed her love for photography, saying:

She revealed that she decided to move her passion to practice last year when she brought home her . first Leica camera.

"It was part joy and part terror! I was so excited to start clicking pictures and also terrified that I would be terrible at it. But I decided to take the leap and at least try...", she added.

On the professional front, Mrunal will next be seen in Dacoit, opposite Adivi Sesh

5

3

9

5

4

6

To solve the Sudoku puzzle, fill in the boxes in such a

manner that every row, column and 3x3 box contains

8

2 5 4

O I Z Y W I T H E R S

4

the digits 1 to 9, without repeating any.

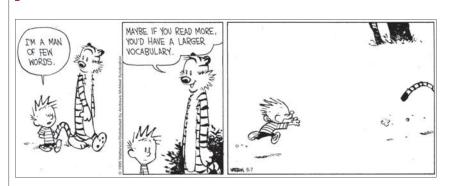
6

### **PEANUTS**

25% or



### CALVIN AND HOBBES

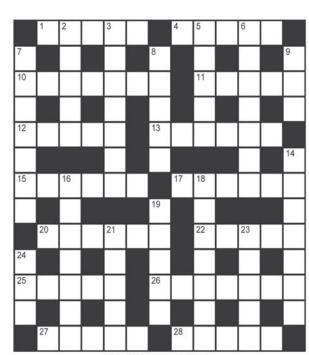


### BREVITY



### POST

### **CROSSWORD**



### Copyright ©2025 PuzzleJunction.com

27 Viper

25 Earthy colour

28 Lazybones

**26** Contemplating

### Across

- 1 Condition
- 4 Certain berth
- 10 Type
- 11 Happen 12 Weeper of myth
- 13 Garrisons
- 15 Being
- 17 Fishing spot
- 20 Neutron star
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- Down 2 Trunk
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21 Kind of

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9 Sphere

14 Encroach

16 Strengthen

18 Undertook

19 Pulitzer Prize

category

together

- preview 23 Light-footed

# SUDOKU

SUDOKU

6 2

2 9

**SOLUTIONS** 

CROSSWORD

9

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

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

# owntown

### **IN MEMORIAM**

Educationist Mousumi Parida being conferred with 'Sarala Devi Saraswat Samman' at a function organised at Sarala Bhawan in Cuttack, as part of 121st birth anniversary celebrations of renowned freedom fighter Sarala Devi. Tuesday



# **Pending Ayushman Bharat** dues hit patients, pvt hosps

Bhubaneswar, August 19: Beneficiaries of Ayushman Bharat–Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY) are facing difficulties in availing healthcare services at private hospitals across the state as a staggering ₹2,034.6 crore dues is pending on the govern-

After the fall of BJD government in the state, the BJP replaced Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojana (BSKY) with AB-PM-JAY in April 2025 which promises health insurance coverage of ₹5 lakh per family per annum. However, beneficiaries under this scheme have started

### **IN A NUTSHELL**

**≪** A staggering ₹2,034.6 crore owed to 40 private hospitals in Odisha has been pending since the last quarter

**≪** Several patients alleged they are unable to access services at private hospitals that were previously available

 It is suggested that a designated nodal officer, as existed in BSKY, should be appointed for proper functioning of AB-PMJAY

experiencing issues since then. Several patients alleged they are unable to access services at private hospitals that were earlier available under BSKY. Some alleged that they are being asked to pay for treatments which were previously available for free. This compels them to seek treatment elsewhere, thereby increasing their financial burden.

Pramod Kumar Das, a renal cancer patient from the Capital City who is currently undergoing treatment at AIIMS-Bhubaneswar, said that treatments such as immunotherapy and chemotherapy were accessible under BSKY but are now unavailable under Ayushman Bharat. "Under Ayushman

CONFERENCE

hospital refused to provide the treatment, saying the government is no longer sanctioning immunotherapy under this (AB-PMJAY) card," he said.

Similarly, a relative of



patient

"Previsaid, my sister received all the facilities under BSKY. But after the rollout of the new scheme, we faced several issues. We had to avail paid chemotherapy, and later the hospital neglected the patient, forcing us to shift her to another hospital where we availed paid treatment."

Meanwhile, private hospitals have expressed dissatisfaction over capped package rates and long delays in reimbursement, which they say are making it difficult to provide quality care without passing costs onto patients. Reports suggest that bills to

the tune of ₹1.21 lakh crore remain pending at the national level, while ₹2,034.6 crore owed to 40 private hospitals in Odisha has been pending since the last quarter. As a result, many private

hospitals in the state have either curtailed or denied treatment under AB-PMJAY.

Indramani Jena, director of Hillside Nursing Home in Bhubaneswar, said, "It was mentioned in the MoU that dues would be cleared within a month. However, we have not received reimbursement even after four months. Since we are

**POLITICKLE by MANJUL** 

have stopped providing services under Ayushman Bharat until the dues are cleared.'

Similarly, Debadatta Kumar Sahu, director of Shree Hospitals, said, "Apart from the payment issues, the scheme's complex processes are creating confusion among patients.

> BSKY also had issues, but they were rectified immediately when we complained. In case of Ayushman Bharat, the response is very slow. Though the scheme has its advantages, people are currently facing its drawbacks. We haven't received

any payments for the last four months. It is an uphill task for us to treat Ayushman Bharat patients with hospital funds. The government must clear the dues immediately and bring in reforms to the scheme.

Ashwini Group of Hospitals chairman Subrat Kumar Jena said, "The long-pending dues are creating serious problems for private hospitals, and the low package rates in some cases have worsened the situation. Running a private hospital involves multiple expenses, and managing them under these circumstances is really difficult. At the same time, it is our duty to attend to patients. We hope the government clears the dues soon."

Gouranga Mohapatra, convener of Jana Swasthya Abhiyan, emphasised the need for robust reforms to ensure smooth functioning of the scheme, "The government should clear dues on time to maintain continuity. A designated nodal officer, as existed in BSKY, should be appointed for proper functioning. The technical systems must also be stabilised and lengthy procedures streamlined." Moreover. there should be a clear grievance redressal mechanism for both patients and hospitals, Mohapatra added.

CONFERENCE

# COURTESY CALL: British Deputy High Commissioner, East & North East, Andrew Fleming shares his thoughts with Dharitri and Orissa POS1

Editor Tathagata Satpathy and the dailies' Chief Executive Adyasha Satpathy at the twin publications' office in Bhubaneswar, Tuesday

### Portion of BMC office ceiling collapses

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 19: A portion of the false ceiling at Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) office collapsed Tuesday morning, raising serious safety concerns about the newly built civic body building.

According to reports, the incident took place around 9am. A small portion of the ceiling collapsed inside the underground floor of the BMC building. However, nobody was injured in the incident.

A BMC staffer said they heard a loud noise and when they came to the spot saw the fallen debris of the ceiling on



Mayor Sulochana Das said, "The ceiling might have collapsed due to seepage from the air conditioner. It has been two years since the building is being used and the condition of the structure is absolutely fine. This is normal and it often happens in our houses as

It is to be noted that the BMC office building was inaugurated February 16, 2023 by the then Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik. The building is part of Bhubaneswar Smart City project.

# HC: No need to monitor BP of forest job aspirants

Bhubaneswar, August 19: The Orissa High Court has ruled that there is no such requirement to monitor the blood pressure (BP) of the candidates aspiring for forest officers' post and to disqualify them from the recruitment test solely on the basis of BP measurement.

The High Court's direction came in the wake of a batch of writ petitions filed by at least nine candidates for the Assistant Conservator of Forests (ACF) and Forest Ranger post who were disqualified for the physical endurance test after qualifying the written test.

Describing the petitioners disqualification as arbitrary and illegal, a single-judge bench of Justice Aditya Kumar Mohapatra Monday said, "The Court is of the considered view that there is no such provision to disqualify a candidate only on the basis of the measurement of blood pressure of such candidates. Therefore, this Court has no hesitation in coming to a conclusion that the Opposite Parties (government have committed a gross error of law by not adhering to the terms and conditions of the advertisement as well as the Rules, 2013 and, as such, their conduct can very well be declared as illegal and arbitrary.

The petitioners who were disqualified from appearing the physical endurance test have already qualified the combined written test of Forest Ranger



They sought High Court's intervention seeking a direction to the state government to allow them to participate in the next phase of recruitment test, i.e. Physical Endurance Test of Walking, and to permit them to participate in the viva voce test.

In May, 2023, the Odisha Public Service Commission (OPSC) published an online notification for recruitment to 45 ACF posts (Group A - JB) and 131 Forest Ranger (Group-B) posts under Odisha Forest Service Cadre.

The petitioners alleged that the digital instrument for measuring BP was a faulty one and the same did not reflect the correct reading.

The recruitment clause provided that the candidates must pass the physical endurance test of walking which has been prescribed as 25 km in four hours for male candidates and 16 km in four hours

for female candidates. "The Court directs the Op-

posite Parties to allow the pe titioners to participate in the physical endurance test subject to the petitioners furnishing an undertaking supported by a certificate from a registered medi cal practitioner/physician that their blood pressure is normal Such physical endurance tests be conducted by the opposite parties within a period of four weeks from the date of communication of this order." Justice Mohapatra directed the state government in the order.

It is needless to mention here that in the event the petitioners are found suitable in the physical endurance test, they shall be allowed to participate in further recruitment process the court said. The final result of the recruitment shall de pend upon the performance of the petitioners in such test, the order read.

# Depression: Heavy rain lashes state

Bhubaneswar, August 19: Heavy rain lashed Odisha Tuesday as the low-pressure area (Lopar) over Bay of Bengal intensified

**Landslides**, into a depres morning," sion, the Insubmergence of dia Meteororoads and bridges, and logical Deuprooting of trees were partment (IMD) said. reported from southern Among districts of Malkangiri, the

that tricts **Koraput and** received **Nabarangpur** heavy rain are Koraput, Malkangiri, Nabarangpur, Ka-

lahandi, Rayagada, Gajapati and Kandhamal, it said. "The depression over northwest and adjoining westcen-

tral Bay of Bengal and north

Andhra Pradesh-south Odisha coasts moved north-northwestwards with a speed of seven kmph during the past six hours and crossed South Odisha coast close to Gopalpur during early

> IMD said in its 9:20am bulle-The

weather system is likely to move northwestwards across Odisha south

and south Chhattisgarh, and weaken into a well-marked low-pressure area during the next six hours,

Rain is likely in most parts of the state till August 23, offi-



Rainwater overflows on Saberi river bridge, disrupting communication between Malkangiri district in Odisha and Sukma district in Chhattisgarh

Landslides, submergence of roads and bridges, and uprooting of trees were reported from southern districts of Malkangiri, Koraput and Nabarangpur, they said.

The weatherman said sea condition is very likely to be rough along the Andhra Pradesh, Odisha and West Bengal coast during the period, advising fishermen not to venture out.

### e-Admission to Plus II vacant seats from Aug 25

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 19: The state Higher Secondary Education Directorate Tuesday announced the commencement of Phase-II e-Admission to Plus II vacant seats in Higher Secondary Schools (HSSs) across the state for 2025-26 academic session. The online admission process, which will be carried out through official SAMS Odisha portal www.samsodisha.gov. in, will begin August 25, said an

This phase of admission covers Arts, Science, Commerce, Upashastri, and Vocational streams in institutions affiliated with the Council of Higher Secondary Education (CHSE), Odisha and Shree Jagannath Sanskrit University, Puri.

Applicants must have passed HSC Examination conducted by Board of Secondary Education (BSE), Odisha or by an equivalent recognised board.

No reservation or weightage claims will be entertained during Phase-II admission against vacant seats.

Students and guardians are advised to read the prospectus available on the SAMS portal thoroughly.

### CIVIC, POLITICAL & WILDLIFE ISSUES

# 3 bandhs disrupt life

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, August 19: Three bandhs in different areas of Odisha over various local issues Tuesday brought life to a standstill with shops remaining shut and vehicular traffic off the roads.

In Cuttack district's Salipur, opposition Biju Janata Dal (BJD) observed an eighthour bandh from 6am to 2pm demanding Notified Area Council (NAC) status for the town.

The bandh brought the town to a standstill, with markets, shops, and transport services shut during the agitation.

Salipur MLA Prasanta Behera led a blockade on the busy Cuttack-Chandbali highway at Kuanpal Square, joined by party workers and residents.

"The people of Salipur have been demanding NAC status for over 40 years. The previous BJD government had initiated the process, but the current BJP government is ignoring our rightful demand, said Behera.

In Tarbha NAC of Sonepur district, political outfits including the BJD observed a 12-hour bandh to protest the August 12 assault on elected representatives.

A group of miscreants reportedly attacked the block chairperson, a sarpanch, and a samiti member in broad daylight when they were heading to report alleged irregularities in block administration. Widespread outrage followed the circulation of video footage of the assault.

The bandh was observed demanding action against the miscreants.

A 12-hour bandh was also been observed in G Udavagi ri area of Kandhamal district from 6am demanding reloca tion of a wild tusker, which killed three people in the past three months and destroyed crops in the region, locals said.

The bandh, supported by several organisations and residents from eight panchayats, led to a complete shutdown of vehicular movement in the region besides markets remaining closed.

**OrissaPOST** 

**4TH CII EAST INDIA SUMMIT 2025** 

# Dy CM Singh Deo showcases **Odisha's investment potential**

**DEPUTY CM KANAK VARDHAN SINGH DEO HIGHLIGHTS STAT** STRATEGIC RESOURCES AND CONNECTIVITY FOR INVESTORS



Bhubaneswar, August 19: Deputy Chief Minister Kanak Vardhan Singh Deo highlighted Odisha's vast investment potential while addressing the 4th Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) East India Summit 2025, held Tuesday in Mumbai.

The summit, a flagship initiative of CII, aims to unlock Eastern India's economic potential through state-focused sessions, policy roundtables, and investor-government dialogues.

In his keynote address, Singh Deo said, "Odisha presents a strong investment proposition with its rich mineral resources, deep-water ports, robust rail and road connectivity, ample land, and natural resources supporting port-led industrial

He highlighted Odisha's stra-

Naveen's health shows

improvement: Hospital

Patnaik has significantly improved,

treatment said Tuesday. Patnaik,

the former chief minister, is fully

been a significant improvement

Naveen Patnaik," it added. Patnaik

in the health condition of Shri

the leader of the opposition in

the Assembly, was admitted to

**SUM Ultimate Medicare Sunday** 

evening due to dehydration. He

room to a cabin Monday. In a

was shifted from the observation

video message Monday, Patnaik

said the hospital staff was taking

'wonderful' care of him. He asked

him at the Naveen Niwas after his

discharge from the hospital. His

supporters from across the state

had thronged the hospital. State

into Patnaik's room as per the

VK Pandian, his wife Sujata and

about his health. As chief of a

other leaders of BJD and enquired

political party in the state, I went

to the hospital to meet the former

Mukesh Mahaling and Law Minister

Pritihiviraj Harichandan, who visited

the hospital Sunday, were also not

allowed into Patnaik's room when

he was under observation.

chief minister." Health Minister

Congress president Bhakta Charan

Das said, "Visitors were not allowed

doctor's advice. I met his close aide

stable, talking to doctors, and

BHUBANESWAR: The health

condition of BJD chief Naveen

**ODISHA IS DEVELOPING** INDUSTRIAL ECOSYSTEMS AND EXPORT CORRIDORS WITH STRONG LOGISTICS AND OPPORTUNITIES IN ADVANCED MANUFACTURING AND **GREENFIELD PROJECTS** 

THE STATE HAS LAUNCHED 56 PROJECTS WORTH ₹1.78 LAKH CRORE, CREATING 1.11 LAKH JOBS, WITH A TARGET OF ONE LAKH NEW JOBS TO ENSURE INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

tegic approach in building integrated industrial ecosystems and export-oriented manufacturing corridors, ensuring strong logistics and market access. Reiterating the words of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, he said, "This is the right time to invest in East India," and invited industrialists to explore strategic partnerships in Odisha—ranging from anchor manufacturing and advanced technology to greenfield value chains.

Showcasing Odisha's eco-'Our government has already grounded a record 56 projects amounting to ₹1.78 lakh crore in investments, with a job potential of 1.11 lakh. We are targeting the creation of one lakh new jobs, ensuring inclusive and sustainable growth.'

The Summit brought together key policymakers, industry leaders, and entrepreneurs to discuss the region's developmental roadmap. Other prominent attendees included Deputy Chief Minister of Bihar Samrat Choudhary. Industries Minister of Bihar Nitish Mishra, Finance Minister of Chhattisgarh OP Choudhary, Chairman of CII Eastern Region Shashwat Goenka. Chairman of CII Western Region Rishi Kumar Bagla, Commissioner-cum-Secretary of MSME department, Odisha D Prasanth Kumar Reddy, along with administrative officers, investors, and industry lead-

ers from across Eastern India. The CII East India Summit 2025 reaffirmed its role as a catalyst in transforming Eastern India into an economic powerhouse through collaborative policymaking, industry participation, and regional synergy.

### BJD delegation meets ECI, flags poll irregularities

**CONCERNS OVER** 

IN THE 2024 POLLS,

CITING MISMATCHED

VOTE COUNTS,

DISCREPANCIES IN MP-

**MLA TALLIES** 

DEMANDS INCLUSIVITY

IN SIR PROCESS.

THREATENS STIR

**OVER VOTER RIGHTS** 

**VIOLATIONS** 

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 19: A Biju Janata Dal (BJD) delegation met the Election Commission of India (ECI) in New Delhi Tuesday to submit suggestions aimed at strengthening the electoral process.

The delegation included BJD senior vice president Debi Prasad Mishra, former MP Amar Patnaik, ex-minister Sanjay Das Burma, former Speaker Pramila Mallick MP Sulata Deo, Priyabrata Majhi, and other party leader

During the meeting, the BJD raised

concerns over alleged irregularities in the 2024 simultaneous General and Assembly elections. The party highlighted unexplained differences between votes polled and counted, discrepancies in MP and MLA segment tallies, and a sudden spike in voter turnout after 5 pm.

The delegation also expressed dissatisfaction over not receiving Form 17C despite repeated

requests. The ECI reportedly acknowledged that the form should have been provided.

The delegation also raised transparency concerns in constituencies, including Jaipur, and called for reforms in electoral roll preparation to safeguard the rights of migrants

temporary and workers.

Mishra stressed ALLEGED IRREGULARITIES that while NRIs enrolment denying the same to migrants could trigger socio-cultural tensions. The ECI assured flexibility in enrolment time-

On the Special

Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in Odisha, Patnaik cautioned against a hasty exercise similar to Bihar, where genuine voters were allegedly disenfranchised. The BJD emphasised that SIR must be inclusive, transparent, and consultative, warning that the party may launch agitational programmes if voter rights and transparency concerns are not

# Women empowerment a top priority, says CM

Bhubaneswar, August 19: Women's empowerment remains the top priority of the state government, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi said Tuesday. He made the remarks while addressing the Rising Odisha Conclave as chief guest, organised by News18 Odia in association with print media partners OrissaPOST and Dharitri in Bhubaneswar.

"Schemes like Subhadra Yojana reflect our strong commitment. Within just one year, we have created 17 lakh Lakhpati Didis, ensured ₹800 additional per quintal under Samruddha Krushak Yojana, and implemented Ayushman Bharat in Odisha," the CM said.

The CM highlighted key

DA case: Vig nabs Angul

**Irrigation Div Engineer** 

Bhubaneswar, August 19:

Vigilance sleuths Tuesday

arrested Surendra Behera,

Superintending Engineer of

Irrigation Division, Angul, in

a disproportionate assets (DA)

Directorate, Behera will be

forwarded to the Court of the

Special Judge, Vigilance, Sund-

Searches conducted on his

These include two multi-sto-

reyed buildings, as many flats

in Bhubaneswar, four high-val-

ue plots, cash amounting to

₹2.33 lakh, and deposits of ap-

proximately ₹54 lakh, which he

In a separate case, Kumuda

Chandra Pradhan, former as-

in the office of the Executive

Engineer, Lift Irrigation Divi-

sion, Balasore, was convicted

Tuesday by the Special Judge

He was sentenced to three

had

years of rigorous imprisonment

charge-sheeted by the Vigilance

under Sections 13(2) read with

13(1)(d)/7 of the Prevention of

Corruption Act, 1988, for de-

manding and accepting a bribe

of ₹10,000 from a contractor to

process agreement papers relat-

failed to account

for satisfactorily.

Vigilance, Balasore.

and fined ₹50,000.

ed to a work order.

Pradhan

properties revealed that Behera

argarh, for possession of DA.

ing 14 grievances in 14 months with over 90 per cent success, launching Shishu Batika for

months, we have come much closer to the people," he remarked.

On industrialisation, Majhi cited the Make in Odisha and Textile Conclaves, reaffirming zero tolerance towards corrupbeen given, and recruitment of 85,000 more is underway. Focusing on present-day excellence will lead us towards a Prosper

ous Odisha," he added. Appreciating News18's role he noted, "Its extensive coverage and programmes like Asal Katha have gained wide

acceptance in every corner of

Earlier, Editor Narendra Jena welcomed the gathering The conclave featured sessions with Industries Minister Sam pad Chandra Swain, Pancha yati Raj and Drinking Water Minister Rabi Narayan Naik Agriculture and Farmers Empowerment department Principal Secretary Arabinda Kumar Padhee, and a panel with social media influencers

### **WORLD PHOTOGRAPHY DAY**

### UPC, Ketaki host photo exhibitions, workshops



early childhood education, and

strengthening primary educa-

tion through the Godabarish

Mishra Adarsha Prathamik

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 19: Utkala Photography Foundation Trust (UPC) and Ketaki Foundation Trust celebrated World Photography Day Tuesday in Bhubaneswar with photo exhibitions, workshops, and other activities highlighting the art and value of photography.

UPC marked the occasion at Lalit Kala Akademi with the 6th edition of its annual photo festival. Chitrabarnali 2025. The five-day festival running until August 25, will showcase a total of 120 photographic frames as part of the exhibition.

The inaugural day was attended by Mayor Sulochana Das, Nayagarh MLA Arun Kumar Sahoo, MLA Ananta

Narayan Jena, former Mumbai Police Commissioner Arup Patnaik, and other dignitaries. Visitors admired the photographs on display and praised the pho-

tographers for their work. Similarly, Ketaki Foundation Trust, in collaboration with Silicon University and the Silicon Photography Club, celebrated World Photography Day with a photo exhibition, Obscura 2025, held on the university campus. The event was attended by Satyabhushan Hota, trustee of Ketaki Foundation Trust, Jaideep Talukdar, Vice-Chancellor of Silicon University, renowned photographer DK Pattanayak and other dignitaries. Pattanayak delivered a talk

on 'Trends in Photography', while photographer and author Pramod Dhal showcased a curated collection of his nature and wildlife photographs. Participating students were also awarded for their work. The event saw the presence of eminent guests, acclaimed photographers, and enthusiastic students. Alongside the exhibition, discussions on photography were held, with a student photo display drawing significant attention. An interactive Q&A session allowed students to engage

with expert photographers

and clarify their queries.

### **'JSW-POSCO** to set up steel plant in Keonjhar'

on youth and digital trends.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, August 19: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi has said that South Korean steel major POSCO is all set to establish a 6 MT-PA green field project in the state's mineral-rich Keonjhar district in a joint venture with the JSW Group.

Welcoming the return of POSCO to the state, Mjahi said the JSW CEO met him during the day and confirmed that their plant will be set up in Keonjhar, the CM's home district. In 2005, POSCO signed a MoU

with the Odisha government to set up a steel plant in Jagats inghpur district at an initial investment of Rs 52,000 crore However, the project could not progress due to resistance from locals and regulatory hurdles The company abandoned the project in 2017.

Majhi said PM Narendra Modi also thanked JSW Group chairman Sajjan Jindal for joining hands with POSCO and looking forward to set up a mega steel project in Odisha

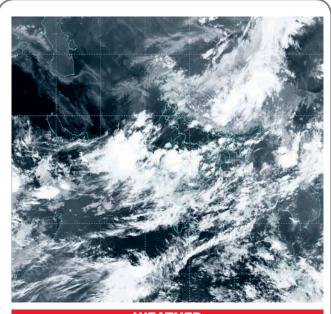
The chief minister made the statement at an interac tive session held at a media house here.

In a statement Monday, JSW Steel said it has signed a non-binding Heads of Agree ment (HoA) to jointly explore setting up a 6 million tons per annum (MTPA) integrated steel plant in India. However the company did not mention where it will be established.

### **Sri Sri varsity promotes safe, inclusive campus**

BHUBANESWAR: Sri Sri University observed Anti-Ragging Week from August 12 to 18, reaffirming its zero-tolerance policy towards ragging through a series of awareness programmes and student-driven initiatives. The week was inaugurated August 12 with an oath-taking ceremony led by Priyanka Parija and an awareness talk by NSS volunteer Ritesh Nayak. Prof JP Bhatt dedicated the campaign to fostering dignity and mutual respect among students, while Rupali Nayak of the Anti-Ragging Committee highlighted the university's robust preventive measures. University leaders, including President Rajita Kulkarni, Vice-Chancellor Prof Tej Partap, and Director of Operations Swami Satyachaitanya, extended their support and appreciation to the organising teams and students. The campaign culminated in a seminar organised jointly by the Rover & Ranger Unit, NCC, and NSS, where Dr Lagnajit Dash, Associate Professor at IMS & SUM Hospital and Senior Consultant at CARE Hospital, discussed the psychological impact of ragging, and Advocate Lalitendu Mishra of the Odisha High Court explained UGC regulations and the legal framework, urging students to be aware of their rights. The programme began with a ceremonial lamp lighting by executive registrar Prof Anil Sharma, Dean Students' Welfare Prof JP Bhatt, and other dignitaries. Over 180 students participated in the event, which also featured competitions to creatively engage with the anti-ragging theme.

### **MARKET WATCH** CURRENCY BOURSES INDEX VARIATION **INDEX** VARIATION **INDEX VARIATION** DOLLAR 87.05 \$\rightarrow\$ 0.36 SENSEX 24980.65 \$\rightarrow\$ 103.70 GOLD ₹**99,318 †** ₹83 101.8 **♦** 0.42 NIFTY **81644.39 ▲** 370.64 SILVER ₹113,426 **†** ₹166



La Contraction of the Contractio			
WEATHER			
	BBSR	CTC	FORECAST
Max Temp	30.6°	29.8°	Partly cloudy sky with possibility of moderate rain or thundershower.
Min Temp	25.4°	23.4°	
Humidity	91%	97%	
Rainfall	4.3mm	13.2mm	
			4

# BMC launches major plantation drive in Patrapada

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 19: Aiming to make Bhubaneswar cleaner, greener, and healthier. the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) Tuesday launched a major tree plantation drive in the Patrapada area. Led by Mayor Sulochana Das and Commissioner Chanchal Rana, BMC plans to plant over 3,000 trees of various species at Maharaja Khela Padia (Raj Padia) within the Patrapada locality.

This tree plantation initia-

tive is part of BMC's ongoing efforts to expand green zones and promote sustainability in the City. Last year, BMC had planted over 8,000 trees of fruit-bearing, medicinal, ornamental, and evergreen species at the same location.

These trees have shown a 100 per cent survival rate and are now gradually developing into a small urban forest. Building on this success, BMC is now creating similar urban forests using the Miyawaki method in various locations, in collaboration with



the City Forest Division. At Tuesday's launch, Mayor Sulochana Das and Commissioner Chanchal Rana

were joined by Deputy Mayor Manjulata Kahur, City DFO Bishwaraj Panda, local corporators, senior BMC and Forest Department officials, residents, senior citizens, NGO volunteers, and members of women's self-help

As part of the Prime Minister's call – 'One Tree for My Mother', the Mayor urged the public to plant trees in the name of their mothers. She further stated that BMC is committed to making Bhubaneswar a green, beautiful, and healthy

City. Citizens were encouraged to actively participate in the initiative and plant trees in their nearby open spaces or backvards.

Rana emphasised that if each citizen collaborates with BMC and the Forest department by planting and caring for trees around them, it would help reduce temperature and ensure cleaner air for all.

Earlier, BMC had established a Miyawaki forest on 1.5 acres of government land in Ward No. 6, Sundarpada, Pokhari-

### **BOOKING STA**

Acharya Vihar-Dayal Agency-9437135727, A.P. Tours and Travel, Maitri Vihar, C.S. Pur-9861301598, Aurobindo Market-Sai Audio & Electronics-9438304668, Airport Road-Sai Baba Variety Store-9090071530, Anish Infotech-Tankapani Road-9861341488

Bapuji Nagar- Dreamland Studio- 9777517314, Baramunda Rental Colony-Maa Ramchandi Communication-9658821469, Baramunda Housing Board Colony-Pappu Variety Store-9040500106, Cuttack Road-Alishan Snacks-8984236754, District Center (Chandrasekharpur)-Sai Google Mart-9776056507, Forest Park-DTDC Couriers & Services (HB Services)-7381024156, IRC Village-Bapi Xerox-9090090404, Gift Hut(Antriksh Gifts & Decors Pvt. Ltd.)-9954781084, Pruthvi Medicine-9853314816 Janpath-Krupajal Book Store-7978646669, Jaydev Vihar-AK Enterprises-7978116618, Subam Sai Books Store-8895550649, Swain Graphics- 9337121249, Jagannath Mobile Point- Janpath Road, Ram Mandir- 9938475415, Kanan Vihar-Auro Electronics-8260697560, Khandagiri- Swosti Mobile Centre- 7992914045, World Solution- 9938317559, KIIT Road-Jugad Jn-9338545031, Laxmi Sagar-Aditya Mobile-9438191836, Lewis Road-Spider Web-7809186415, Metro Satellite City-Arogya Mitra Medicine Store-9853621640, Madhusudan Nagar-Mohapatra Communication-9124446664, Maa Santoshi travels- Gajapati Nagar- 9777675867, Nayapalli- The Cake Room- 7873660137, Near Mayfair Lagoon-Cookieman-9439491273, Nigamananda Omm Sai Travels-9668284823, Nr Cosmopolis Main Gate- Shreeram Medical Store- 8763711714, Net Square- Niladri Vihar (C.S. Pur)- 7205634821, Priyadarshini Market-Astro Point-9938134346, R.N. General Store-Nilakantha Nagar-9438642501, Sahid Nagar- Maa Communication- 9437353424, Sahini General Store- Near Patia Railway Station, Mahavir Vihar- 9937586626, Satya Nagar-Baishnavi Mixture & Sweets-7894821764, Samantapur- Download Point-7504557743, Sailashree Vihar-Harsha Book Store-8093449515, Saheed Nagar-Jagannath Graphics-7978652670, Photo World-7978468191, Sainath Photo Studio-8984436129, Shanti & Co-9937071063, Siripur-Omm Maa Sarala Communication-9777682449, Sushree fashion-Jagmara-9938714347, Shree Vision- Sailashree Vihar-9861476678, Unit-3-LIC of India Premium Point-9337787080, Unit-7- LIC Premium Point-9338227422, VSS Nagar-Friends Cake & Bake-8658200930, Jeet Infoworld-7205195782, XIMB Square-LD Books-9658061373.

### Lightning claims 2 in Jharsuguda



Kolabira, August 19: In a tragic incident, two youths were killed after being struck by lightning Tuesday in Kalibahal village under this police limits in Jharsuguda district.

The deceased were identified as Bir Kisan and Dukhabandhu Maihi, both residents of Kalibahal. Bir had gone to his farmland to spray pesticides, while Dukhabandhu, who worked as a tractor helper, had gone to plough a field.

Around 3pm, as rain and thunder began, both sought shelter under a mahua tree in the village. A sudden lightning strike hit them, knocking them unconscious. Locals rushed them to the nearby community health centre, where doctors declared both dead. Police have registered an unnatural death case and sent the bodies for post-mortem examination.

# Murder accused injured in Tension at Jajpur DHH following patient's death Sambalpur police encounter

Sambalpur, August 19: A man accused of murdering a youth in Motijharan area under Dhanupali police limits of Sambalpur district was critically injured in a police encounter

The accused, identified as Mohammed Samad, 42, of Motijharan, sustained a bullet wound in his left leg. He was admitted to VSS Institute of Medical Sciences and Research (VIMSAR) in critical condition. His brother, Mohammed Wasim, 35, who was also allegedly involved in the crime, remains absconding.

This was stated here by Additional SP Srimanta Kumar Barik at a presser held at the district police headquarters Tuesday, According to ASP, the accused duo attacked 30-yearold Asfaq Khan, a driver by profession of Motijharan area with sharp weapons late Mon-



spot after being alerted and rescued Khan in a profusely bleeding state. However, doctors declared him dead at the

Based on a complaint filed by the victim's brother, Jabej Khan, police registered a case (280/25) under Sections 103(1), 3(5) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) and began investigation. Acting on the SP's direc-

tive, a special police team was formed, roads in the city were sealed, and raids were conducted overnight.

Police tracked Samad hiding near Khandual village Tuesday

morning. When asked to surrender, he allegedly opened fire at the police, firing two rounds. Police retaliated, and Samad was shot in the leg before being overpowered.

Police seized a 7.6 mm pistol, one live round of bullets, three spent shells, a mobile phone, and a motorcycle used in his escape. A separate case (281/25) was registered against him under Sections 132, 224, 109(1), and 25(1)(B)(A), 26 of the Arms Act.

Additional SP Barik said efforts are underway to nab Wasim soon. He added that Samad has over 15 criminal cases pending against him in different police stations.

Police said a trivial dispute led the accused to murder Asfag. Notably, Samad was arrested three months ago in a case involving the rape of a minor girl in Motijharan two years ago. He was recently released on bail and committed the present crime.



Jajpur Town, August 19: A 30-year-old patient who had been admitted after ingesting pesticide died Tuesday at Jajpur District Headquarters Hospital (DHH) minutes after a nurse administered him an injection, his family alleged, sparking a sit-in on the hospital premises and police deployment.

The deceased was identified as Bharat Das, son of Anadi Charan Das of Baunsakantia village under Jabara panchayat in Rasulpur block. Police and family sources said Bharat drank pesticide in a field Monday morning following an argument with a friend.

He was first taken to Jajpur Road Community Health Centre (CHC), where his condition improved, and later shifted to the district headquarters hospital for further care. Relatives said he was ambulant Tuesday morning and even stepped out for tea. However, soon after a nurse gave him an injection, his condition deteriorated rapidly and he died.

The family filed a written complaint against the nurse at Jajpur Town police station. Acting on the complaint, police registered case (389/25) and launched an investigation.

After a post-mortem examination, the body was handed over to the family.

### **Absconding teacher** arrested in student misconduct case

Baisinga: A teacher ing for weeks after allegedly misbehaving with girl students was arrested Tuesday in According to reports, Pramod Kumar Mohant, a teacher at Patalipura Primary School under Baisinga police limits, allegedly misbe

haved with minor students of Classes 6 and 7. He reportedly called the girls aside under the pretext of checking their notehooks and then acted inan propriately, including making them sit on his lap. Based on complaints from the school headmaster, the Block Educa tion Officer suspended Mohant July 21. However, no formal police complaint was filed at the time, allegedly in an attempt to suppress the matter. The incident came to light after media reports prompted the district collector to intervene. Following the collector's direction, a complaint was lodged July 28, and police registered a case (380/25) against the accused. Since then, Mohant had gone into hiding. Mohant appeared at Baisinga police station Tuesday with what he claimed was a bail order from the Orissa High Court. However, police discovered that the document was in fact a rejection of his bail plea. He was immediately taken into custody, produced in court after a medical examina

tion, and sent to iail.

Tender No. 40255942

First of Vol. 19.2025.

E-Tender is not transferrable and the same is to be submitted with DSC by the pre authorized personnel of the tenderer who are already registered in the website. The Railway deserves the Right to cancel the tender or reject any or all the tenders without assigning any reason thereof.

Sr. Divisional Materials Manager

### E-Tender Notice No.: Sr.DMM/ SBP/Stores/Tender Publication/

DESCRIPTION OF ITEM: WEDGE T 6305/A FOR TWS, QUANTITY: 43,00

Complete details available at

PR-496/Q/25-26

# Honour killing ruled out in student's death

POST NEWS NETWORK

Kendrapara/Pattamundai,

August 19: The mysterious death of Sangita Parida, a Plus 3 college student from Kathianada village under Pattamundai police limits, was a case of self-immolation and not an honour killing, Kendrapara Superintendent of Police Siddharth Kataria told the mediapersons Tuesday

The SP said post-mortem, viscera and forensic (FMT) reports confirm she died of burn injuries, with about 95 per-



cent burns, and indicate the act occurred between 8am and 10 am August 6, CCTV footage shows her parents left home at about 7:14am and returned around 11am.

Call-detail records show Sangita spoke for 23 minutes from

7:40am with a male friend, Pramod Behera of Terohi village under Bilikana panchayat. Police arrested Pramod August 10 and seized his phone, which contained 60 intimate videos; one was sent to Sangita's father July 17 and some were forwarded to others, police said. The extent of circulation remains under investigation.

Even as police term the death self-immolation, chatters had been abuzz as to why no cries were heard, how petrol was procured, whether Pramod's phone and videos played a role, why

evewitnesses estimated about 20 percent burns while reports cite 95 percent, whether the body was found tied to ropes, and the number of recipients receiving the videos. The SP said some local accounts do not align with the reports, and the probe is continuing.

Sangita's charred body was recovered inside a locked house in Kathiapada village August 6. Her father, Sashikant, filed a complaint, leading to registration of a case-284/25 at the rural police station in Patta-

' COAST RAILWAY

WALK-IN-INTERVIEW FOR

**ENGAGEMENT OF FULL TIME** 

**CONTRACTUAL MEDICAL PRACTITIONER** 

It has been decided to engage 'Contract Medical Practitioner (CMP)

Specialist (Pediatrics) on full time contract basis in Khurda Road

Division, East Coast Railway, from willing, eligible Doctors as per the

scheme provided by the Railway Board, from time to time, or till the

posts are filled up by regular IRMS (now IRHS) Doctors, whichever is

the willing doctors, the date / time / venue of which are provided below.

earlier. A Walk-in-Interview will be conducted to adjudge the suitability of

Employment Notice No. 02/2025-CMP Specialist

### Minor tribal girl raped; 1 held

Baripada, August 19: A 10-year old tribal girl was allegedly raped by a 20-year-old youth of her community in Mayurbhanj district, police said Tuesday. Quoting the FIR filed by the

survivor's family, police said the youth raped the girl when she went outside her house in Jashipur police station area to attend nature's call Monday. Police have registered a case at Ja-

shipur police station

Swain, officer-in-charge of Jashipur police station. The incident came close on the heels of a similar incident August 2 when police arrested a youth for allegedly attempting to rape his girlfriend along with his friends in the district. The complainant, a 17-year-old girl, was on her way home from tuition when youth took her to a nearby jungle on some pretext and committed the crime with his four other friends.

### **GOVERNMENT OF INDIA** MINISTRY OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS [Scholarship Division]

National Fellowship for Higher Education of ST students (NFST) for the year 2025-26.

The Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India invites online applications for the National fellowship under the scheme "National Fellowship & Scholarship for Higher Education of ST Candidates" for the year 2025-26. The Fellowship is awarded to students selected for pursuing Ph.D. programmes

Number of slots for Fellowship: 750

Interested candidates should apply online through National Tribal Fellowship portal https://fellowship.tribal.gov.in/. The portal will remain open from 1st August 2025 to 30th September 2025 (5:30 PM) for submission of applications. For more details candidates should visit Ministry's portal:-

https://tribal.nic.in/ScholarshiP.aspx

CBC-43101/11/0019/2526

Swain, father of Sri SUBRAT KUMAR SWAIN has lost the original link RSD bearing No. 11141101303 dt.11.03.2011, in the Khan bearing plot No. 1610/1912 Mouza - Palla, Tahasil - Khurda Khata No. - 866/146, on 07,08,2025 at around 12:00 P.M. at Cosmopolis Square while I was travelling from my residence at Rajiv Nagar by bike to Khurda and could not retriev hem despite my best efforts. Therefore, if anyone has found the

same, please contact Advocate Sri N.C. Pattnaik, Mob. - 9853311189 of LICHFL at Chandrasekharpu within 15 days from the date of the publication, failing which the document will lose its legal force and any misuse of the documen will be punishable under law.

### it deep into the forest-a testament to wildlife con-Baripada, August 19: In a scene straight out servation rules. of a thriller, a venomous The house owner. cobra—nearly eight feet still shaken, recalled, long—coiled itself inside "I woke up to find the a mosquito net, spending

Miraculous escape as cobra shares

mosquito net with sleeping man

the entire night inches from a man's head. The spine-tingling incident unfolded in Pratappur village, on the outskirts of Baripada town, Mayurbhanj district, leaving locals in shock.

According to eyewitnesses, the man slept peacefully, oblivious to



the deadly guest curled beside him. At dawn, family members spotted the lethal predator and panic erupted. Miraculously, the cobra never struck, despite hours of close contact. On being informed, a trained rescuer from Snake Helpline, arrived in minutes. With expert precision, he safely extracted

Subarnapur woman's PMAY

the cobra before releasing

snake inches away. We called the rescue team instantly. The cobra was taken away unharmedso were we.'

Villagers now speak of divine intervention, calling the incident "a night of miracles"—where man and serpent shared a bed, vet both walked away

"Walk-in-Interview" Divisional Railway Hospital, 02.09.2025 (Tuesday) Khurda Road NB: For application format, Total no. of vacancies, Educational

qualification / Eligibility, Age, Remuneration and other terms & conditions, please refer to website www.eastcoastrail. indianrailways.gov.in C About us C Division C Khurda Road Division C Recruitment.

Divisional Railway Manager (Personnel) /

### OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER DHENKANAL (R&B) DIVISION, DHENKANAL

Email- eedklpwd@gmail.com

**INVITATION FOR BIDS THROUGH e-Procurement** Bid Identification No.SEDKL (R&B) 18/2025-26 **Invitation For Bids** 

The Superintending Engineer, Dhenkanal (R&B) Division, Dhenkanal on behalf of Governor of Odisha invites

percentage rate bids in single cover system in ONLINE MODE only, for Construction of Building work as detailed Nature of Work 1 No. Road Works 3. No. of Work 01 No. Bid Cost 5. Class of Contractor 'B' License From 10.00 AM of 25.08.2025 Availability of Bid docuto 5.00 PM of 08.09.2025 ments in the website

Date of Opening of Bid : Dt.09.09.2025 at 11.00 AM The Bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the website: https://tendersodisha. gov.in. Any addendum/ corrigendum/cancellation of tender can also be seen in the said website only.

Sd./- Superintending Engineer 

### **GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA, DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES** OFFICE OF THE ENGINEER-IN-CHIEF. WATER RESOURCES. SECHA SADAN, BHUBANESWAR

Name of the Work No. of Works Category of executors

> Bid Identification No. Period of Completion bid documents in the portal Last date/time for receipt of

> Date and Place of Opening of Technical Bid 10. Date and Place of Opening of Financial Bid

OIPR-32520/11/0065/2526

11. Name of the Officer Inviting Bid: Chief Engineer, Mechanical, O/o the Bhubaneswar.

Cancellation Notice shall be uploaded in the aforesaid website only. Sd./- Chief Engineer, Mechanical O/o. Engineer-in-Chief,

### **GOVERNMENT OF INDIA** MINISTRY OF EDUCATION DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Appointment of the first Registrar and the first Finance Officer of Sindhu Central University (SCU)

Applications are invited for the posts of the first Registrar (01-UR, Pay level 14) and the first Finance Officer (01-UR, Pay level 14) of Sindhu Central University through deputation of Direct Recruitment for a term of three years (Age - preferably below 57 years) in exercise of power conferred under Section 44(b) of Central Universities Act, 2009. In case of Misconduct or unsatisfactory performance such employee appointed as Registrar or Finance Office may be repatriated/removed.

(1) Educational and other qualifications for the Registrar: On Direct recruitment basis:

Master's degree with at least 55% of the marks or an equivalent grade in a point scale wherever grading system is followed; and

At least 15 years of experience as Assistant Professor in the Academic Level 11 and above or with 8 years of service in the Academic Level 12 and above including as Associate Professor along with experience in educational administration;

Comparable experience in research establishment and/or other institutions of higher

15 Years of administrative experience, of which 8 years shall be as Deputy Registrar or an equivalent post.

On Deputation basis:

education;

Qualifications & Experience: As indicated above for Direct Recruitment basis. Grade: Holding analogous post or eight years' experience at Pay Level-12.

(2) Educational and other qualifications for the Finance Officer:

On Direct recruitment basis: Same as that for Registrar on Direct Recruitment basis

On Deputation basis: Appointment preferably by drawing officers not below the Level 12 belonging to the Indian Audit and Accounts services or other similar organized Services in Central/ State Govt.

University System/ Other organisation subject to fulfilment of qualification as indicated for

Direct Recruitment basis.

Procedure for appointment

Appointment will be made by the Hon'ble Visitor (Hon'ble President of India) from a panel each for the first Registrar and the first Finance Officer consisting of at least three persons, in alphabetical order, recommended by a Committee, consisting of three persons of eminence in academic and public life, constituted by the Visitor for the

The advertisement is available on the websites <a href="http://www.education.gov.in">https://www.education.gov.in</a>. and <a href="https://www.education.gov.in">https://www.education.gov.in</a>. and <a href="https://www.education.gov.in">https://www.education.gov.in</a>.

Candidates are required to "APPLY ONLINE ONLY" on the Ministry of Education SAMARTH portal as per the link given below:

https://moegroupant.samarth.ac.in/

The above link will be active from 20.08.2025, 10:00 Hours to 18.09.2025, 17:00 Hours. cbc 21201/11/0011/2526

# journey gains national spotlight haven for her children.



PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar/Sonepur, August 19: From selling bangles on the streets of Binika in Subarnapur district to walking into the grandeur of Rashtrapati Bhawan, the journey of Surekha Mallick is one of extraordinary resilience

Life was never easy for her. With her husband bedridden for years due to a rare respiratory illness, Mallick had to shoulder the dual responsibilities of caregiving and earning. Living in a cramped kutcha house,

dignity, often relying on her meagre income from selling bangles. A turning point came in 2019 when she received support under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban). With

financial assistance, she built a modest

she struggled to raise her children with

pucca house with two rooms-one for her ailing husband and another as a safe

President, August 15.

"This honour is not mine alone. It belongs to every family that has found dignity and courage through owning a home. I am deeply grateful to the Prime Minister for PMAY (Urban), which has given us more than shelter as well as

State Housing & Urban Development Minister, Dr Krushna Chandra Moha-

home can transform lives. Her presence at Rashtrapati Bhawan is a matter of pride for Odisha and a shining example of the impact of PMAY (Urban). The State Government remains committed to ensuring every deserving family has a roof over their head and a foundation

Surekha Mallick's success is not just her personal achievement but it is Odisha's pride and India's inspiration, the Minister added

Though she lost her husband earlier this year, the house today stands as a pillar of security and strength for her family. Her inspiring journey was recognised nationally by the Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs (MoHUA). Selected to represent Odisha, she was invited by the President of India to attend the 79th Independence Day celebrations at Rashtrapati Bhawan, Officials of the Odisha Urban Housing Mission (OUHM) facilitated her visit to New Delhi, where she was accompanied by her son Alok. She also attended the prestigious At Home Reception hosted by the

Speaking with emotion, Mallick said,

patra, hailed her story as inspirational. "Surekha Mallick's life proves that a

for a better future," Mohapatra said.

From the dusty streets of Binika to the lawns of Rashtrapati Bhawan,

Email Address:cemech.eicwr.od@gmail.com e-Procurement Notice - Bid Identification No.CEM/MDS-07/2025-26 Mechanical Gate Works 01 (One) SSI Units registered under DIC/

NSIC/MSME for Irrigation Shutters/ Hydro mechanical gates. CEM/MDS-07/2025-26 Rs.40,89,299.00 3 (Three) Calendar Months From dt.25.08.2025 (10.00 AM) to dt.08.09.2025 (5.30 PM) Date & Time of availability of

dt.09.09.2025 (12.00 Noon onwards in the O/o the undersigned) To be intimated to the qualified Bidders after evaluation of Technica

Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal https://tendersodisha.gov.in. Any further issue of Addenda/Corrigenda/

Secha Sadan, Bhubaneswa

dt.08.09.2025 (upto 5.30 PM)



## power post





If you can always smile at life, life will always smile at you.

THE MOTHER



### 'TACO' Effect

t is interesting to note US President Donald Trump keeps changing his deadline for imposing new tariffs on goods from China, while he does not show any wavering when it comes to other countries, including India and also his European allies. In May, the US and China had averted an economic catastrophe by reducing massive tariffs they had slapped in April on each other's products, which had reached as high as 145 per cent against China and 125 per cent against the US. Both countries seem to have struck a secret deal between themselves which others are not privy to.

Those triple-digit tariffs threatened to effectively end trade between the US and China, causing a frightening sell-off in financial markets. In a May meeting in Geneva, both agreed to back off and keep talking: America's tariffs went back down to a still-high 30 per cent and China's to 10 per cent. The "reciprocal tariffs" Trump initially rolled out in early April were quickly paused for 90 days. But, Trump extended a trade truce with China for another 90 days on 11 August, only a day before the earlier deadline was to expire. This was obviously to delay, once again, a dangerous showdown between the world's two biggest economies and military powers.

The pause buys time for the two countries to iron out some of their differences, Trump's intent seemingly being to prepare the groundwork for a summit later this year between him and Chinese President Xi Jinping which has been widely welcomed by US companies doing business with China. The pause will also give time for the two governments to negotiate a trade agreement that US businesses hope would improve their market access in China and provide the certainty needed for companies to make medium and long-term plans for agriculture and energy exports and manufacturing electronic goods.

Trump's trade policies have turned the US from one of the most open economies in the world into a protectionist fortress. The average US tariff has gone from around 2.5 per cent at the start of the year to 18.6 per cent, the highest since 1933. The European Union, Japan and other trading partners do not have the economic muscle like China and hence had to agree to lopsided trade deals with Trump, accepting once unthinkable US high tariffs of 15 per cent on Japanese and EU imports.

China could rebuff Trump's tariff aggression using it as a cudgel to extort concessions from trading partners because it has a cudgel of its own which is cutting off or slowing access to its rare earth minerals and magnets used in everything from electric vehicles to jet engines. The outcome is the US decision in June to pull back export restrictions on computer chip technology and ethane needed in petrochemical production, while China too agreed to make it easier for US firms to get access to rare earths.

It appears Trump has realised China is not only a hard nut to crack, but also the US itself does not have the upper hand so far as China is concerned. In this sense it is highly appropriate for a journalist from the Financial Times, Robert Armstrong, to coin the sobriquet of "TACO" to describe Trump's politico-economic actions and erratic approach to tariffs. TACO is an acronym for "Trump Always Chickens Out." Three months later, it is quite possible that the TACO theory truly applies to the American President's policy toward China only.

The world, especially India, needs to learn so much from China which has not got its economic and military prowess overnight, but through hard work and discipline undergoing periodic socio-cultural convulsions. If India is forced to gravitate towards China through Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) meet scheduled to be held from 31 August to 1 September and other means due to Trump's heavily tilted policy towards Pakistan at its cost and conciliatory overtures to China. New Delhi itself is to blame. It has, for far too long, been lulled into complacency for its misplaced pride in its strength among the international community and the ill conceived notion of being the Vishwaguru.

### WISDOM CORNER

By all means let's be open-minded, but not so open-minded that our brains drop out.

RICHARD DAWKINS

Optimism is the faith that leads to achievement. Nothing can be done without hope and confidence.

History is an account, mostly false, of events, mostly unim-

portant, which are brought about by rulers, mostly knaves, and soldiers, mostly fools.

### THIS DAY IN HISTORY

- 1741: Danish explorer Vitus Bering, who was working for Russia, encountered Alaska.
- 1914: The German army captured Brussels during the initial German invasion of World War I.
- 1940: Russian revolutionary and founder of the Red Army, Leon Trotsky was attacked in his home by an undercover agent of the Peoples Commissariat for Internal Affairs or N.K.V.D. He died a day later due to the injuries sustained during the attack.
- 1968: The Warsaw Pact nations (except Romania and Albania), led by the Soviet Union, invaded Czechoslovakia to put an end to the
- **1975:** The robotic U.S. spacecraft Viking 1, built to explore the surface of Mars, was launched this day in 1975 and nearly one year later landed on Chryse Planitia, a flat lowland region in the northern hemisphere of the planet.
- 1988: The Iran-Iraq War comes to an end after 7 years. The deadly conventional war between the two Middle Eastern countries began when Iraq invaded Iran on September 22, 1980.

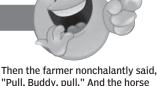


### **HORSE PULLS THE CAR**

n out-of-towner drove his car into a ditch in a desolated area. Luckily, a local farmer came to help with his big strong horse named

He hitched Buddy up to the car and yelled, "Pull, Nellie, pull." Buddy

didn't move. Then the farmer hollered, "Pull, Buster, pull." Buddy didn't respond. Once more the farmer commanded, "Pull, Jennie, pull." Nothing.



"Pull, Buddy, pull." And the horse easily dragged the car out of the

The motorist was most appreciative and very curious. He asked the farmer why he called his horse by the wrong name three times. The farmer said, "Oh, Buddy is blind, and if he thought he was the only one pulling, he wouldn't

FOCUS TECHNOLOGY

# **CAN DEMOCRACY SURVIVE AI?**

supposed to disperse power. Early internet visionaries hoped that the revolution they were unleashing would empower individuals to free themselves from ignorance, poverty, and tyranny. And for a while, at least, it did. But today, ever-smarter algorithms increasingly predict and shape our every choice, enabling unprecedentedly effective forms of centralised, unaccountable surveillance and control.

That means the coming AI revolution may render closed political systems more stable than open ones. In an age of rapid change, transparency, pluralism, checks and balances, and other key democratic features could prove to be liabilities. Could the openness that long gave democracies their edge become the cause of their undoing?

Ian Bremmer

AS AI SPREADS,

**BOTH TIGHTLY** 

**CLOSED AND** 

**HYPER-OPEN** 

**WILL BECOME** 

**MORE FRAGILE** 

**RELATIVELY** 

**THAN THEY** 

**WERE** 

**SOCIETIES** 

Two decades ago, I sketched a "J-curve" to illustrate the link between a country's openness and its stability. My argument, in a nutshell, was that while mature democracies are stable because they are open, and consolidated autocracies are stable because they are closed, countries stuck in the messy middle (the nadir of the "J") are more likely to crack under stress.

But this relationship isn't static; it's shaped by technology. Back then, the world was riding a wave of decentralisation. Information and communications technologies (ICT) and the internet were connecting people everywhere, arming them with more information than they had ever had access to, and tipping the scales toward citizens and open political systems. From the fall of the Berlin Wall and the Soviet Union to the colour revolutions in Eastern Europe and the Arab Spring in the Middle East, global liberalisation appeared inexorable.

That progress has since been thrown into reverse. The



**Every previous technological revolution** - from the printing press and railroads to broadcast media - destabilised politics and compelled the emergence of new norms and institutions that eventually restored balance between openness and stability. The question is whether democracies can adapt once again, and in time, before AI writes them out of the script

decentralising ICT revolution gave way to a centralising data revolution built on network effects, digital surveillance, and algorithmic nudging. Instead of diffusing power, this technology concentrated it, handing those who control the largest datasets - be they governments or big technology companies - the ability to shape what billions of people see, do, and believe.

As citizens were turned from principal agents into objects of technological filters and data collection, closed systems gained ground. The gains made by the colour revolutions and the Arab Spring were clawed back. Hungary and Turkey muzzled their free press and politicised their judiciaries. The Communist Party of China (CPC), under Xi Jinping, has consolidated power and reversed two decades of economic opening. And most dramatically, the United States has gone from being the world's leading exporter of democracy - however inconsistently and hypocritically - to the leading exporter of the tools that undermine it.

The diffusion of AI capabilities will supercharge these trends. Models trained on our private data will soon "know" us better than we know ourselves, programming us faster than we can programme them, and transferring even more power to the few who control the data and the algorithms.

Here, the J-curve warps and comes to look more like a shallow "U." As AI spreads, both tightly closed and hyper-open societies will become relatively more fragile than they were. But over time, as the technology improves and control over the most advanced models is consolidated, AI could harden autocracies and fray democracies, flipping the shape back toward an inverted J whose stable slope now favours closed

In this world, the CPC would be able to convert its vast data troves, state control of the economy, and existing surveillance apparatus into an even more potent tool of repression. The US would drift toward a system in which a small club of tech titans exerts growing influence over public life in pursuit of their private interests. Both systems would become similarly centralised and dominant - at the expense of citizens. Countries like India and the Gulf states would head the same way.

while Europe and Japan would face geopolitical irrelevance (or worse, internal instability) as they fall behind in the race for AI supremacy. Dystopian scenarios such as those outlined here can be avoided, but only if decentralised open-source AI models end up on top. In Taiwan, engineers and activists are crowdsourcing an open-source model built on DeepSeek, hoping

to keep advanced AI in civic,

rather than corporate or state,

hands. (The paradox here is that DeepSeek was developed

in authoritarian China.) Success for these Taiwanese developers could restore some of the decentralisation the early internet once promised (though it could also lower the barrier for malicious actors to deploy harmful capabilities). For now, however, the momentum lies with closed models centralising power.

History offers at least a sliver of hope. Every previous technological revolution from the printing press and railroads to broadcast media destabilised politics and compelled the emergence of new norms and institutions that eventually restored balance between openness and stability. The question is whether democracies can adapt once again, and in time, before AI writes them out of the script.

The writer, Founder and President of Eurasia Group and GZERO Media, is a member of the Executive Committee of the UN High-level Advisory Body on Artificial Intelligence.

IN JEST THIS

# Flying etiquette: 10 rules you should follow



Melvin Durai

**IT'S COMMON COURTESY TO USE EARPHONES AROUND** OTHER PEOPLE, WHETHER YOU **ENJOY LISTENING TO DRAKE OR HAVE GOOD TASTE IN MUSIC** 

TO THE EDITOR

are most welcome to contribute letters

requested to send their contact

address/email ID. They may also send in their valuable comments, opinion and

suggestions, preferably by email, to:

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B-15, Rasulgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

Readers of Orissa Post

(100 words), articles and

words). Contributors are

numbers and full postal

columns (between 600-1000

f you do a lot of flying, you already know this: Iflying can be challenging. Not only do you have to arrive at the airport early, you have to stand in a long line to get through airport security. And then you have to sit at your boarding gate for an hour or more, waiting for the announcement that your flight has been cancelled. "Sorry, we're having a software glitch," the airline says. Eventually, the problem is fixed and you're sitting on a plane. That's when the real challenge begins: spending a few hours or more with hundreds of people, some of whom have no clue how to behave around other people.

Many people, unfortunately, have not been exposed to flying etiquette. That's why, in the interest of public decorum, I've decided to compile a list of 10 rules everyone should follow.

1. Use earphones or headphones. This rule applies even if you're listening to Drake. Wait, this rule applies especially if you're listening to Drake. The Ca-

nadian rapper and singer is very popular, but his music isn't for everyone, which is why I keep reminding my daughter Divya to use earphones. It's common courtesy to use earphones around other people, whether you enjoy listening to Drake or have good taste in music.

2. Don't introduce your feet to the passengers around you. You may be tall, but that doesn't give you the right to put your foot on the armrest in front of you. Just the other day, someone on social media shared a photo of a foot that had appeared next to them on a flight and asked what they should do. The options, as it turns out, are numerous, including: (1) sneeze on it; (2) tickle it; and (3) alert the flight attendant, so they can make an announcement: "Your attention please. We have found a foot beside Seat 17E. If this is your foot, please come to Seat 17E to claim it. If you do not claim it within five

minutes, we will have to remove it and store it in the overhead bin.'

- 3. Don't expose yourself to anyone. If you managed to get through the airport by keeping a part of your body covered, don't think you are now free to expose it. (Feel free to take off your hat, but please keep your shoes on.)
- Don't do too much touching. Touching strangers is always unwise, but getting too romantic with a partner can also make people uncomfortable. How are they supposed to focus on the movie they're watching?
- Don't clip your fingernails. Don't clip your toenails either. In fact, don't do any clipping whatsoever on a flight. This includes clipping your eyebrows, mustache or nose hairs. In general, clipping should be done in a salon or barbershop -- or in the privacy of your home.
- Follow the arm rest rule: the person in the middle seat gets two arm rests. the person in the window

- seat gets the window, and the person in the aisle seat gets to run to the restroom
- Take a shower or bath before your flight. It's not always possible to do this, especially if you've been stuck in airports for days, but in general. please remember this: To help everyone cope, use lots of soap
- 8. Try to smell your best, but don't douse yourself in perfume. A little goes a long way. When your plane is over the Indian Ocean, do you really want your Uber driver to still smell you?
- 9. Don't get drunk before vour flight. It may be fun to drink at the airport, but nobody wants to sit next to a drunk passenger, especially if he's in the window seat and keeps pointing out clouds that look like his exwives.
- 10. Recline your seat gently The person sitting behind you will appreciate it. To show their gratitude, they may even pull their foot back from your arm rest.

### Strategic autonomy

19. The Chinese Foreign Minister's visit to New Delhi comes at a time when India is under unusual pressure from its traditional partners, making this engagement a crucial step in recalibrating its strategic choices. For both countries, the visit reflects recognition that while competition persists, cooperation on shared challenges is vital. External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar underscored the importance of ensuring stability along the contested border and reiterated the idea of a multipolar Asia — an implicit call for China to recognise India's role as a regional pole of influence. Meanwhile, the US continues to push for closer ties with India, viewing it as an essential counterweight to Chinese dominance in the Indo-Pacific. Yet, trust in Washington has eroded significantly after Donald Trump's punitive tariffs — 50% on Indian imports and 25% on oil from Russia. The fact that China, despite importing far more Russian oil, has avoided similar penalties has only reinforced India's belief in pursuing an independent course. Prime Minister Modi's upcoming participation in the SCO summit in China and Russian President Vladimir Putin's planned

partnerships and demonstrate its strategic autonomy

Sir, This refers to "EAM holds meet with Wang Yi," OrissaPOST, August

visit to India later this year underline New Delhi's effort to diversify

N Sadhasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

### Transparency protocol

Sir, Thanks to the Supreme Court for directing the Election Commission to implement a comprehensive transparency protocol for the SIR of electoral rolls in Bihar, which emphasises the principles of procedural fairness and the sanctity of the right to vote. The SC's intervention fortifies and restores voter confidence in the politically charged environment of the poll-bound state. It also reinforces the judiciary's role as a guardian of fundamental rights and ensures that administrative exigency does not overrule the procedural safeguards essential to a functioning democracy. The right to vote is not just a statutory right, but is linked to a citizen's constitutional identity, the deprivation of which demands the highest standards of fairness and transparency. The efficacy of this judicially mandated transparency will be a critical test of the resilience and fairness of India's electoral machinery

Ranganathan Sivakumar, CHENNAI



# TWO STATES





### HARIYALO CAMPAIGN

### **Over 10cr saplings** planted in 2025, claims Rajasthan CM



Jaipur, August 19: Rajasthan has achieved a historic milestone under the Hariyalo Rajasthan campaign, with the state crossing the target of planting 10 crore saplings this year.

Minister of State for Forest and Environment (Independent Charge) Sanjay Sharma met Chief Minister Bhajan Lal Sharma at his residence and congratulated him on this achievement Tuesday.

On this occasion, the Chief Minister released a campaign poster, while the Forest Minister presented a sapling to him.

Taking inspiration from Prime Minister Narendra Modi's "Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam" initiative, the state government launched Hariyalo Rajasthan under the Chief Minister's Plantation Mahabhiyan on Hariyali Teej last year.

The government has set a goal of planting 50 crore saplings in five years, ensuring their survival through geo-tagging and systematic monitoring.

The Chief Minister said that last year the target of 7 crore saplings was surpassed by planting 7.5 crore saplings, and this year's goal of 10 crore has also been exceeded, with 10.21 crore saplings planted so far.

He urged the department to continue motivating citizens to participate actively, as the monsoon season still offers opportunities for plantation.

Sharma emphasised that this success reflects the collective awareness and commitment of the people of Rajasthan towards environmental conservation.

He noted that the plantation is not merely symbolic but a concrete step towards securing a greener future for the coming generations. The Chief Minister also appealed to the public to take an active part in plantation drives

under 'Hariyalo Rajasthan'. So far, 37.5 lakh saplings have been planted individually and 9.83 crore at the block level, covering nearly 20 lakh hectares of land across 2,74,920 plantation sites.

Various departments have also contributed significantly Education Department (3.25 crore), Rural Development (2.65 crore), Forest Department (2 crore), and Pollution Control

# Relentless showers batter Maha

Ten persons have died, hundreds displaced, crops spread across 12 to 14 lakh acres of land suffered damages due to heavy rains

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, August 19: Rains pummelled most parts of Maharashtra Tuesday, leaving 10 persons dead, bringing Mumbai to a near standstill, damaging properties and crops, and prompting the authorities to shift hundreds to safer loca-

Apart from paralysing Mumbai and its metropolitan region, where train services and flight operations were affected, heavy rainfall battered Gadchiroli in Vidarbha region and Nanded in Marathwada region, among other districts.

Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, who reviewed the flood situation with the disaster management department, said the next 48 hours would

Raigad, Ratnagiri and Sindhudurg districts, which remain on high alert.

Eight persons have died in Maharashtra's Nanded district which witnessed flooding due to a cloudburst-like situation. while Mumbai received a record rainfall of around 300 mm, the CM said.

He said crops spread across 12 to 14 lakh acres of land suffered damages due to heavy

Coordination was being done with neighbouring states for the management of discharge from dams. "The uncontrolled catchment areas are a worry,

The district collectors have been authorised to take decisions on financial aid to the





A Monorail train after it came to a halt between Mysore Colony and Bhakti Park stations amid rainfall, in Mumbai, Tuesday

house damage and loss of lives, as per the NDRF rules. The administration has been asked to conduct panchnamas (spot inspection) for crop losses, he added.

As heavy downpour continued overnight, the low-lying areas were inundated in Mumbai, affecting the suburban train service, prompting the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation to declare a holiday for all government and semi-government offices.

The Bombay High Court, which operates from 11 am to 5 pm, functioned only till 12.30

due to heavy rains. Schools and colleges were also shut in view of the 'red alert' warning issued by the India Meteorological Department (IMD), which forecast extremely heavy showers at isolated places in tricts Tuesday. The Directorate of Higher Education declared a holiday for all senior colleges in the Konkan region, applicable to institutions in Palghar, Thane, Raigad, Ratnagiri and Sindhudurg districts.

The downpour affected the aviation sector as at least eight flights were diverted and many were delayed.

Local train services were delayed, and the public transport buses in Mumbai were diverted at a few locations due to submerged roads, as per officials.

The Central Railway suspended its local train services on the Harbour Line between Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus and Kurla stations due to submergence of tracks in a section after heavy rains.

It also suspended services on its main line between Kur-

rail tracks got waterlogged, they said. The Mithi river in Mumbai reached the danger-level mark and 400 to 500 persons had to be evacuated, Fadnavis said.

Several parts of Mumbai received more than 200 mm of rainfall in the last 24 hours, with Vikhroli in the eastern suburbs reporting the highest downpour at 255.5 mm, the IMD said.

More than 1,100 people were moved to safer locations in Maharashtra's Thane and Palghar after torrential rains disrupted normal life and inundated parts of the two adjacent districts.

More than 290 people were rescued from the flood-hit villages of Nanded district over the last two days, with the State Disaster Response Force and the Army deployed in the

### **Over 700 rescued** from 2 stranded **Monorail trains**

s many as 782 passengers

were rescued Tuesday evening after two overcrowded Monorail trains on elevated tracks got stuck between stations in Mumbai on a day of torrential rains, leading to panic and frantic rescue efforts More than a dozen passengers complained of suffocation with a couple of them reportedly fainting as electricity and air-conditioning shut down, though only one passenger had to be hospitalised and her condition was said to be stable. Overcrowding by passengers, who had no other option left with the downpour crippling the suburban local train services. led to the power failure as the Monorail system is not capable of handling a sudden rush, the Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA) said. As many as 582 passengers were rescued from the Monorail train stuck between Mysore Colony and Bhakti Park by deploying snorkel ladders, as the train could not be towed back. Whereas 200 passengers were evacuated from another Monorail train which was successfully towed back to the nearby Wadala

Seven persons travelling in an autorickshaw and a car got swept away on a flooded Mukhed-Udgir Road around 1.40 am. Local rescue teams have managed to save three men, while a search is underway for a man and three wom-

station, officials said.

### Cabinet okays proposal for building new airport in Kota

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, August 19: The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Tuesday approved the proposal of the Airports Authority of India (AAI) for the development of a greenfield airport at Kota-Bundi in Rajasthan at an estimated cost of Rs 1,507 crore.

The Rajasthan government has transferred 440.06 hectares of land to AAI for the development of a greenfield airport, suitable for the operation of A-321 type aircraft.

The project includes the construction of a terminal building spanning an area of 20,000 sqm capable of handling 1,000 peak hour passengers (PHP) with an annual capacity of 2



million passengers per annum. A runway 11/29 of dimensions 3,200m x 45m, an apron with 7 parking bays for A-321 type aircraft, two link taxiways, an ATC cum technical block, a fire station, a car park, and allied works also form part of

the project, according to an official statement issued after the CCEA meeting.

Kota, situated on the banks of the Chambal River, is recognised as the industrial capital of Rajasthan. In addition, it coaching hub of India for stu dents aspiring to join the IITs, engineering institutes and medical colleges across the country.

Kota's prominence in educational and industrial sectors makes the greenfield airport a critical infrastructure project, aimed at addressing the anticipated traffic growth in the region, the statement said.

The existing Kota Airport is under the ownership of the Airports Authority of India (AAI). It comprises a runway (08/26) of dimensions 1.220m x 38m, suitable for Code 'B aircraft (such as DO-228), and an apron capable of accommodating two such aircraft. The terminal building spans an area of 400 sam and is capable of handling 50 passengers during

safaris are large, open-top,

diesel-powered vehicles spe-

cifically designed for group

wildlife tours. These vehicles

are typically modified to carry

multiple passengers (up to 20

people), allowing them to ex-

plore the park's wilderness in

a safe and comfortable manner.

safaris due to their capacity to

accommodate more tourists

compared to smaller vehicles

like Maruti Gypsies, making

them a cost-effective option for

Many of the canters in the

RTR, which are still operating

on BS-III-compliant engines,

do not meet the latest emission

cern about the environmental

impact of tourism in the park.

especially given the growing

"This is a significant con-

the operators.

standards (BS-VI).

Canters are popular for tiger

### Maha waives stamp duty for cancer hospital

As part of the project, 10 hectares of government land at Tambati in Khalapur taluka has been allotted to the Tata Memorial Centre on a 30-year lease at a nominal rent of ₹1 per year

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, August 19: In a move aimed at expanding healthcare infrastructure in Maharashtra, the state cabinet Tuesday approved a complete stamp duty waiver for a proposed cancer hospital by Tata Memorial Centre in Raigad

As part of the project, 10 hectares of government land at Tambati in Khalapur taluka has been allotted to the Tata Memorial Centre on a 30-year lease at a nominal rent of Rs 1 per year.

The stamp duty of Rs 38.99 lakh applicable on the lease agreement has been fully waived, it was stated.

The centre is establishing an Integrated Ayurvedic Cancer Hospital and Research Centre. which will include a 100-bed

At least 12 per cent of beds at the facility will be reserved at subsidised rates under Central and state government health schemes for poor and economically weaker sections.

Additionally, accommodation for one attendant per patient will be provided at minimal cost.

The decision to waive the stamp duty was taken under provisions of the Maharashtra Stamp Act, with necessary notifications to be issued after consultation with the Law and Judiciary Department.

Revenue Minister Chandrashekhar Bawankule, in a statement, said that the waiver will facilitate the expansion of cancer research and treatment services by Tata Memorial Centre and provide quality healthcare access to the general public, especially in rural and semi-urban areas

In another decision, the cabinet approved the regularisation of encroachments at Vengurla Camp Gawaliwada in Sindhudurg district.

At least 42 families most of them from the Gawli community, have been residing on this land since the British era, with structures dating back to 1905, as per a resolution passed by the Vengurla Municipal Coun

The residents have been demanding legal ownership of the land and their homes.

Under the approved policy, encroachments of up to 1,500 so ft per household will be regularised free of cost.

For any area above 1,500 sq ft, occupants will be required to pay as per the 1989 government valuation rates, to which residents have already consented in meetings with the Sub-Divisional Officer of

Sawantwadi. The land will be granted under Occupant Class-2 tenure meaning it cannot be sold or transferred without the gov ernment's permission.

The total area under encroachment includes 0.69.32 hectares of built-up land and 2.23.88 hectares of open land totalling 2.93.20 hectares, excluding religious structures.

The move overturns earlier rules from 2002, which mandated payment of 2.5 times the market rate plus interest for regularisation.

Bawankule said this decision brings long-awaited justice to generations of the Gawli community, who have lived on this land for decades. It not only resolves a long-pending issue but also sets a precedent for similar cases across the state, he said in a statement.





an hour after their safari canter broke down, nearly four kilometres from the park's exit

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jaipur, August 19: In the wake of tourists getting stranded inside the Ranthambore Tiger Reserve (RTR) after their safari vehicle broke down, tourism stakeholders are raising an alarm over the growing number of ageing diesel-powered canters operating in the park, many of which are more than a decade old.

The incident that occurred in Zone 6 of the park Saturday evening saw 20 tourists, including a seven-month-old child. stranded in the jungle for more than an hour after their safari canter broke down, nearly four kilometres from the park's exit.

The situation was further exacerbated by a guide who allegedly abandoned the group, leaving the tourists in panic as darkness descended. However, park authorities said the guide had gone to seek help. With darkness falling, heated exchanges broke out between the tourists and the guide, parts of which were recorded. The tourists were finally escorted out of the park after they were stranded for more than an hour.

Deputy Conservator of Forests (DCF) Pramod Dhakad said three canters, their drivers and the guide have been barred from entering the park till further orders.

Meanwhile, an audio clip



anters are popular for tiger safaris due to their capacity to accommodate more tourists compared to smaller vehicles like Maruti Gypsies, making them a cost-effective option for the operators

has surfaced on social media

in which a woman tourist is

explaining the ordeal, telling

an officer how they managed to

reach the exit gate to seek help

and a canter with no working

headlight eventually came with

the help of a torchlight to res-

concerns about the safety and

reliability of the park's ageing

safari vehicles.

The incident has raised

the RTR, which are still operating on BS-IIIcompliant engines, do not meet the latest emission standards (BS-VI)

Ranthambore is home to around 70 tigers and the breakdown highlights the challenges regarding the park's tourism infrastructure, including the

condition of the safari vehicles. According to officials, the canter that broke down was one of the older models running on outdated BS-III engines.

The fleet of safari vehicles, which includes both Maruti Gypsies and canters, plays a the famed park. There are 287 canters and 269

Maruti Gypsies are engaged in tiger safaris. They are made available for tourists on a roster basis. "When canters are used for more than eight to 10 years, maintenance issues typically begin to surface. Although their registration with the transport department is valid for up to 15 years, it is generally advisable to replace them before they demand high maintenance and service to avoid escalating problems and ensure reliability," an official source said.

The canters used in tiger

demand for sustainable practices in wildlife tourism," an environmentalist said. 'The impact of these old diesel vehicles cannot be ignored. Switching to BS-VI-compliant canters has crucial benefits as these vehicles reduce emissions, can help parks like Ranthambore meet stricter environmental standards and appeal to eco-conscious tourists, Himanshu Jangid, an activist based in Jaipur, said. Ranthambore attracts thou-

sands of domestic and international visitors annually.

# national



The crack forced the Axiom-4 mission (Ax-4) to be postponed from June 11 to 25 of the same month V NARAYANAN

### **VETERAN ACTOR ACHYUT POTDAR DIES**

Actor Achyut Potdar, best known for his roles in TV shows and films like "Bharat Ek Khoj", "Pradhan Mantri", "3 Idiots", has died at a hospital here due to heart related issues. He was 90



tee decided to give back to the deity. Now he is giving 121 kg gold to Venkateswara



Those who have lesser stakes after retirement can speak more boldly, more candidly. Their obser-

vations help us course-correct our policies and ensure better service delivery

JITENDRA SINGH | UNION MINISTER



tra's skilled workforce, robust markets, and investor-friendly environment. This also under lines the state's leadership in the financial sector

DEVENDRA FADNAVIS | MAHARASHTRA CM

### SHORT **TAKES**

### **J&K: Properties of** 2 terrorists attached

Srinagar: Properties of two active terrorists were attached in Anantnag and Baramulla districts of Jammu and Kashmir Tuesday, police said. In Anantnag, the police attached the land belonging to active terrorist Adil Hussain Thoker, while an orchard of designated terrorist Asif Maqbool Dar, who is presently operating from across the border, was attached in north Kashmir's Baramulla district, a police spokesman said.

### **Suspended IAS officer Vinay Choubey gets bail**

Ranchi: Suspended IAS officer Vinay Kumar Choubey was granted bail Tuesday by a court in Ranchi in a liquor scam case, after the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) failed to file the charge sheet within the stipulated time. However, Choubey will not be released from jail immediately as he is also an accused in a landrelated case in Hazaribagh.

### T'gana: Four electrocuted

**Hyderabad:** Four people died and two others sustained injuries due to electrocution in separate incidents in Hyderabad and Kamareddy district of Telangana over the past 24 hours, police said. The incidents occurred during activities related to Ganesh festival, as people were either transporting idols on vehicles or settting up pandals. Two persons died from suspected electrocution and another suffered injuries when a Lord Ganesh idol being transported in a vehicle came in contact with a high-tension wire in the Bandlaguda area here early Tuesday, they said.

### PM Modi to inaugurate highway project in Bihar

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will Friday inaugurate a highway project connecting Aunta (Mokama)-Simaria (Begusarai) that includes a 1.865-km bridge over the Ganga, according to an official statement. The project will provide direct connectivity between Mokama in Patna district and Begusarai

### **CRPF** launches 'BMI campaign'

New Delhi: Country's largest paramilitary force, the CRPF, Tuesday launched a 'BMI campaign' to improve the overall health of its more than 3 lakh personnel and keep them combat-ready.

### Sudershan Reddy held constitutional courts for over 16 years

New Delhi, August 19: Former Supreme Court judge B Sudershan Reddy, who was named as INDIA bloc's candidate for Vice-Presidential election, presided over country's constitutional courts for over 16 years.

Born in July 1946, Justice Reddy was appointed as a permanent judge of the Andhra Pradesh High Court May 2, 1995 and was later appointed as the chief justice of the Gauhati High Court December 5, 2005.

He became a Supreme Court judge January 12, 2007 and

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

said Tuesday.

centives.

New Delhi, August 19: Union

Cabinet has approved a Bill

related to promotion and reg-

ulation of online gaming, and

the government is likely to bar

platforms offering any online

money gaming service, a source

The Bill is likely to be tabled

"The Cabinet has approved

the Bill to regulate online

gaming platforms that involve

real money. The government is

trying to table the Bill in Parlia-

ment Wednesday," the source

said on condition of anonymity.

account significant mental

health issues among users

of online games, particularly

those involving monetary in-

Sources said that the deci-

sion has come following obser-

vations from the government

that online money gaming

provides means to facilitate

money laundering, fraudulent

financial transactions, and cy-

As per the present legal

framework in place, states

and Union Territories are

primarily responsible for the

prevention, detection, inves-

tigation and prosecution of

crimes, including action on

illegal betting and gambling.

firms masquerading them-

selves as "game of skills" to

differentiate themselves from

betting or gambling platforms

Several real money gaming

ber crime, among others.

The Bill has taken into

in Parliament Wednesday, the



retired July 8, 2011. He was enrolled as an advocate in Hyderabad with the Bar Council

In June, Madras High Court

had dismissed a petition filed

by real money gaming plat-

forms Play Games 24X7, Head

Digital Works, Junglee Games

and others challenging the ban

imposed by the Tamil Nadu

of the real money gaming

The court rejected arguments

firms challenging jurisdic-

tion of the state to regulate digi-

tal platforms as well as their ar-

gument to differentiate "games

of chance" from the "game of

The Tamil Nadu government,

citing an expert committee re-

port, said that online games in-

volving real money have posed

serious mental and physical

health risks to the citizens,

including suicides by some, in

The court upheld that the

state has full competence to

pass legislation to govern mat-

ters affecting public health and

rejected arguments challenging

its power to ban game of skills

The real money platforms

had cited IT Rules 2021 of the

Centre, saying that it has ad-

equate safeguard for online

games to defend themselves,

but the court observed that

it has not come into effect till

taking a series of measures to

block online betting and gam-

bling platforms. It issued 1,524

orders from 2022 till June 2025

to block online betting and gam-

bling platforms.

The Centre has also been

involving real money

government.

online money games

Sources said that the decision has come following

observations from the government that online money gaming

provides means to facilitate money laundering, fraudulent

financial transactions, and cyber crime, among others

The former top court judge worked as a government pleader in the high court during 1988-90 and also as additional standing counsel for Central government for six months during 1990.

He was a legal adviser and standing counsel for Osmania University. Justice Reddy became the first Lokayukta of Goa in March 2013 but resigned within seven months citing personal

He is also in the Board of Trustees of International Arbitration and Mediation Centre,

Justice Reddy is the joint candidate of the Opposition parties for the Vice-Presidential

> polls, Congress President likarjun Kharge announced Tuesday. "All INDIA bloc parties has decided to have a common candidate,

the decision has been taken unanimously. I am happy that all opposition parties have agreed to one name. It is a big achievement

### No change in India's position on Taiwan, savs govt sources

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 19: There is no change in India's position on Taiwan and New Delhi's relationship with it focuses on economic, technology and cultural ties, government sources said Tuesday

The clarification came after the Chinese foreign ministry misquoted External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar as saying during his talks with his Chinese counterpart, Wang Yi that Taiwan is part of China.

The Jaishankar-Wang talks took place Monday evening, shortly after the Chinese foreign minister landed in Delhi on a two-day visit. There is no change in India's position on Taiwan, the sources cited above said.

"We stressed that like the rest of the world, India has a relationship with Taiwan that focuses on economic, technolo gy and cultural ties. We intend to continue it," one of the sourc-

At Monday's meeting, Wang called upon the Indian side not to deal with Taiwan, another source said. In his response, Jaishankar wondered how is it possible when China itself is dealing with Taiwan in the same areas as India, it added.

The sources said the Chinese foreign ministry misquoted Jaishankar. In the past, India had endorsed the "one-China policy but the formulation has not featured in any bilateral document since 2011.

China has often urged India to adhere to the "one-China" policy.

Though India and Taiwan do not have formal diplomatic ties. the bilateral trade relations have been on an upswing.

In 1995, New Delhi set up the India-Taipei Association (ITA) in Taipei to promote interactions between the two sides and facilitate business, tourism and cultural exchanges.

# Centre plans ban on Guv proposes reforms for migrant workers from WB

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, August 19: A day after Chief Minister Mamata Baneriee announced a scheme to rehabilitate migrant labourers from West Bengal allegedly harassed outside the state, Governor CV Ananda Bose put forward a set of recommendations to address the challenges faced by these workers, a well-placed source in the Raj Bhavan said

The recommendations, sent to both the Centre and the state government, came amid growing concerns over alleged incidents of exploitation, lack of social protection, and poor living conditions that many Bengali migrant workers endure in the states where they work, he said.

Bose, in his recommendations, sent to the Centre, has stressed the creation of a 'West Bengal Migrant Workers' Registration Portal', signing of Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with major destination states, and appointing labour welfare officers (LWOs) in key



migrant hubs, he said.

PTI has a copy of the recommendations made by the gov-

"He also recommended de veloping affordable hostels for the migrant labourers, introduction of the 'One Citizen One Ration Card' in lieu of the 'One family One Ration Card scheme, alongside establishing 'skill training centres in high migration districts," the official

Bose sought facilitation of certification of informally acquired skills, creation of a 24x7 multilingual helpline, legal aid and mediation services, and special monitoring of the

placement agencies "The proposed West Bengal

Migrant Workers' Registration portal is a multilingual, Aadhaar-linked platform designed to register and track migrant workers. Once registered, each worker would receive a 'Migrant Worker Card', both in physical and digital formats, serving as a portable identity document across states," the official elaborated.

This card would grant access to essential services such as healthcare, micro-insurance, and banking, thereby reducing the workers' dependency on informal or exploitative networks, he explained.



A cremation ground inundated due to an increase in the water level of a nearby stream following heavy rains, at Adawal in Jagdalpur, Chhattisgarh

# Tree planting in tropics offers best climate cooling: Study

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 19: Planting trees in the tropics, rather than in higher latitudes, could be more rewarding in terms of cooling the planet, according to a new study on regional effects of afforestation.

Researchers, including those from the University of California Riverside, US, said that planting trees provides an overall positive effect for the world's climate by pulling out warming carbon from the atmosphere.

However, local effects on temperature not related to carbon varied significantly by region. For instance, trees at higher latitudes could have a slight heating effect, while the opposite is true in the tropics, they said.

"Our study found there is more cooling from planting trees in warm, wet regions, where they grow year-round. Tropical trees not only pull carbon dioxide from the air, they also cool while releasing water vapour," first author James Gomez, a graduate student at the University of California Riverside, said.

Using global climate models, the team found that adding trees yield weak global mean cooling of 0.01 degrees Fahrenheit (minus 17.77 degrees Celsius), which translate to a significant cooling of about 0.1 degrees Fahrenheit (minus 17.72 degrees Celsius) in the

Regions, such as those in central Africa, can experience a cooling of up to 0.8 degrees

Fahrenheit (minus 17.33 degrees Celsius), the team said.

"It's not that planting elsewhere doesn't help. It does, but the tropics offer the strongest

returns per tree," Gomez said.

In a previous research, the

team had looked at chemical effects resulting from trees interacting with the atmosphere and found that planting trees could cool the surface of the planet more than expected.

This study, published in the

from soil, which then travels up through the trunk and into the leaves. Pores of the leaves open up so the tree can take in carbon dioxide for photosynthesis, and that is when part of the

Our study found there is more

cooling from planting trees in

warm, wet regions, where they

not only pull carbon dioxide

while releasing water vapour

from the air, they also cool

grow year-round. Tropical trees

journal 'npj Climate and Atmo-

spheric Science', helps under-

stand the physical effects of tree

planting which include evapo-

transpiration -- or tree sweating

-- similar to how humans sweat

to cool their body, the authors

Roots of a tree pull out water

water pulled up from the soil evaporates into the air, they explained. "It's just like the way sweat

ing cools your body. In the tropics, there is constantly water available for trees, and that increases transpiration, Gomez said.

The researchers said trees can also lower the amount of sunlight reaching the planet's surface. Trees give off water vapour and make the air more humid. More humidity can mean more clouds and water vapour itself can soak up some sun, thereby reducing sunlight reaching the ground and providing a cooling effect, they said.

The researchers also found that, in some cases, trees can have a fire suppression effect.

# national



**Kishtwar situation** is before you. With every passing day, the hope for the survival of the 70 missing persons is fading away. Our focus will now be on retrieving the bodies and handing them to their families so that they can perform the final rites

OMAR ABDULLAH | J&K CM

### **CABINET CLEARS NEW AIRPORT** AT KOTA-BUNDI IN RAJASTHAN

The Union Cabinet Tuesday cleared a proposal to set up a new airport at Kota-Bundi in Rajasthan at an estimated cost of ₹1,507 crore



the August 24 'Hal Joto, Ropa Ropo' (plough field, protest by farm

ers, whose land was forcefully acquired by the government. The farmers were stopped from tilling their land by fencing it

CHAMPAI SOREN | EX J'KHAND CM

The Nitish Kumar-led government 'khattara' (rickety) and it needs to be The young should now get a

chance... We have a vision for Bithey will remove from power this old and rickety government, and ensure that Rahul Gandhi is the PM after the next Lok Sabha polls TEJASHWI YADAV | RJD LEADER



from Kerala, Mumbai or Delhi. These are fundamentalists who promote and protect activities of

HIMANTA BISWA SARMA | ASSAM CM





normal retail investors actually 1) Buy Index (if

you don't know any investing). 2) Decide how much you wish to buy between Large vs Small/Mid

caps (I would say keep 60-40%). 3) Don't buy debt products. They are taxed at highest slabs in India 4) Invest in direct stocks in high growth industries. Eg. Tech stocks in the US. You don't need to be a genius to understand this. 5) But only at discount (eg. an

6) Do not do blind SIPs (when the market is crazy high, wait. There is no bus you are missing). 7) Follow people who invest their own money. And, show results. 8) Avoid storytellers & podcasts.

SHORT **TAKES** 

Man kills wife

with sleeping pills

New Delhi: A 47-year-old house

painter allegedly killed his wife

by lacing her sleeping pills with

weedicide over suspicion of

infidelity and buried her body

in a graveyard in south Delhi,

police said Tuesday. The body

was not shared by police, was

exhumed August 15 — eleven

days after she was buried.

of the woman, whose name

@Akshat\_World

# BIG BREAKTHROUGH SC questions Centre, IN SINO-INDIAN TIES



Doval and Wang held the 24th round of talks under the framework of the Special Representatives mechanism, a day after External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar met his visiting Chinese counterpart

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 19: In a major thaw in their frosty ties, India and China Tuesday unveiled a series of measures to forge a "stable, cooperative and forward-looking" relationship that included jointly maintaining peace along the frontier, reopening border trade, promoting investment flows, and resuming of direct flight connectivity at the earliest.

The announcements aimed at realising the full development potential of the two Asian giants came amid growing estrangement in ties between India and the US over President Donald Trump's policies on trade and tariff.

India and China listed the measures in a joint document after Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi held wide-ranging talks with External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and National Security Advisor Ajit Doval over the last two days besides meeting Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The two sides agreed that they should earnestly implement the important common understandings reached between Prime Minister Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping

and promote sustained, sound

and steady development of In-

dia-China relations. Wang landed in Delhi Monday on a two-day visit and his trip is largely seen as part of ongoing efforts by the two neighbours to rebuild their relationship after it came under severe strain following the deadly Galwan Valley clashes in 2020.

Doval-Wang talks The under the framework of the Special Representatives dialogue Tuesday produced five concrete outcomes that included setting up an expert group. under the Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination (WMCC) to explore an "early harvest in boundary delimitation".

In the meeting, Doval and Wang agreed on the need to take a political perspective of the overall bilateral relationship while seeking a fair, reasonable and mutually acceptable framework for settlement of the boundary question in accordance with the agreement on political parameters and Guiding Principles for Settlement of the boundary question signed in 2005.

They also agreed on setting up a working group, under the WMCC, to advance effective border management in order to maintain peace and tranquillity in India-China border areas.

Both sides also agreed to create a "general level mechanisms" in Eastern, and Middle sectors, in addition to the simi-

tor, and holding an early meeting of the the mechanism in the Western sector, according to a joint statement.

The two sides also agreed to use the border management mechanisms at diplomatic and military levels to carry forward the process of border management, and discuss de-escalation, beginning with the principles and modalities.

The talks between Jaishankar and Wang Monday produced a total of 12 outcomes that included a decision to explore and resume various official bilateral dialogue mechanisms and exchanges, to enhance cooperation and address each other's concerns and properly manage differences.

The joint document said both sides agreed to reopen border trade through the three designated trading points, namely Lipulekh Pass, Shipki La Pass and Nathu La Pass.

India and China also agreed to facilitate trade and investment flows between the two countries through "concrete measures", it said.

Both sides agreed to jointly maintain peace and tranquillity in the border areas through friendly consultations, it added India and China also agreed

to resume direct flight connectivity between Chinese mainland and Indian cities at the earliest, and finalise an updated Air Services Agreement. They also agreed on the fa-

cilitation of visas to tourists, businesses, media and other visitors in both directions, the ioint document said.

"Both sides agreed to continue and further expand the scale of the Indian pilgrimage to Mount Kailash/ Gang Renpoche and Lake Manasarovar/ Mapam Yun Tso in Tibet Autonomous Region of China starting 2026," it said.

The two sides exchanged views on trans-border rivers cooperation and agreed to give full play to the role of India-China expert level mechanism on trans-border rivers and keep communication on renewal of the relevant MoUs.

# AG over pendency of Bills with Guvs

New Delhi, August 19: The Supreme Court Tuesday questioned the Centre and the attorney general over the long pendency of Bills passed by assemblies with governors, underscoring the limitations of constitutional courts in situations where legislation has been pending since 2020.

The query from a five-judge Constitution bench led by Chief Justice B R Gavai came while hearing a presidential reference seeking clarity on whether fixed timelines could be imposed on governors and President while dealing with bills passed by the state legislatures.

The bench, also comprising Justices Surva Kant, Vikram Nath, P S Narasimha and A S Chandurkar, said it would be expressing its views only on the law and not on the April 8 decision in the Tamil Nadu case. fixing a timeline for governors and President for acting on bills passed by state legislatures.

The bench, while responding to the preliminary objections raised by Tamil Nadu and Kerala governments on maintainability of the presidential reference, said it would exercise its advisory jurisdiction as it was not sitting in the appellate iurisdiction.

Attorney General R Venkataramani, whose assistance was sought by the top court, said courts cannot exercise its plenary power under Article 142 of the Constitution to rule the bills pending with Governor, are deemed to have been

Justice Kant asked Venkataramani whether bills were pending before Tamil Nadu Governor since 2020. The AG said those facts were

not before the court and the court had to examine the "lis" before it.

'The court has to look at the law, whether such an order can be passed. Even if it is factually correct...there were explanations given for that. There was



an explanation why the governor kept the bills pending. We ers on whether Article 142 can be invoked to declare the bills deemed to have been passed,'

The bench, however, asked him, "What can you enlighten us about what a constitutional court would do if it has to deal with such facts (where bills passed by assembly in 2020 were pending)? If the court went wrong according to you, what is the constitutionally permissible way to deal with this situation?

The CJI and Justice Narasimha also questioned Venkataramani while referring to certain paragraphs in the April 15 verdict, dealing with the reasons for invoking Article 142 of the Constitution

"Just see the egregious situation where it had come to.. it was to remedy that situation that the court had to step in. The bills were pending for so long. What option did the court have?" Justice Narasim-

Venkataramani said once the court enters into this arena, it would be asked to consider any "mind-boggling fact" but the question was "can the court enter this arena at all".

Solicitor General Tushar Meh ta, appearing for the Centre, said these questions have come before the republic for the first time and urged the court to not go into the facts of individual cases.

### Top court asks U'khand HC to decide over Haridwar temple receiver plea PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 19: The Supreme Court Tuesday directed the Uttarakhand High Court to decide the plea of "sevayat" of the Maa Chandi Devi Temple in Haridwar, seeking a stay on an order directing the Badri Kedar Temple Committee to appoint a receiver for overseeing the tem ple management.

A "sevayat" is a priest active ly involved in the daily rituals and management of a temple.

A bench of Justices Ahsanud din Amanullah and SVN Bhatti directed the Haridwar district magistrate (DM) to submit a report after hearing all the parties concerned on whether there was any mismanagement in the temple administration. The top court directed the

official to consider the overall situation and involve other par ties in its investigation if need be to get a broad-based response with regard to the actual ground situation. "He is also at liberty to sug

gest what should be the interim arrangement with regard to managing of the affairs of the Math, till the matter is finally decided by the high court. He shall focus on the best interest for the Math and its devotees the bench added. The top court asked the high

court to take up the matter on priority and finally decide the issue to put in place a perma nent or regular arrangement instead of an adhoc arrangement

While disposing of the plea, the top court asked the DM to submit a report in the high court, deferring the matter by six weeks.

The court, however, did not express opinion on the merits

### BLUE DRUM HORROR

### Wife, lover held for man's murder

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jaipur, August 19: A woman and her lover were arrested in connection with the murder of her husband in Kheirathal Tijara district here, police said

Tuesday. Laxmi Devi, the wife of Hansram, and her lover Jitendra Sharma, the son of the married couple's landlord, were nabbed Monday night, they said.

The two, who had decamped after dumping Hansram's body in a plastic tank, confessed to the crime during questioning. police said.

The incident that took place in the Kishangarhbas Police Station area came to light

Superintendent of Police

Manish Chaudhary said the two were detained from a brick kiln in Alwada village of Alwar district. "Initial investigations indicate that Laxmi and Jitendra plotted the murder in a bid to conceal their affair. The victim, Hansram, was killed on the night of August 15. The body was later found inside a blue plastic drum on the roof of their rented accommodation, he said. Laxmi had borrowed the drum from her landlord saying she needed it to store water. The couple's three children, whom Laxmi and Jitendra had taken away with them, were restored to their grandfa ther, the SP said.



NDRF personnel carry mortal remains of a victim during search and rescue operation at cloudburst-hit Chisoti village in Kishtwar, Jammu and Kashmir

### Delhi govt to launch app for receiving complaints

New Delhi: Delhi government Tuesday announced the launch of the "Delhi Mitra" app, enabling people across the city to register their grievances with various departments and agencies. The decision was made in a cabinet meeting chaired by Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta. The new system is expected to be implemented within the next two months. Following its launch, the existing Public **Grievance Monitoring System** (PGMS) will be integrated into this new platform, consolidating all grievance redressal tools in one location.

### Constable injured after fall near Rahul's convoy

Nawada (Bihar): A police constable was injured after falling in front of Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's vehicle Tuesday while the latter was passing through Bhagat Singh Chowk in Bihar's Nawada district during the ongoing Voter Adhikar Yatra, a senior official said.

### NCERT introduces special modules on Op Sindoor for Classes III to XII

New Delhi: The NCERT has introduced two special modules on the Operation Sindoor for Classes III to XII describing the mission not just as a military operation but a promise to protect peace and honour the lives lost in the Pahalgam terror attack The modules which have been introduced as supplementary material in the curriculum come over three months after Operation Sindoor. The modules also state that although Pakistan denied any involvement in the Pahalgam terror attack, it was carried out on "direct orders" by "Pakistan's military and political leadership'

### Par passes Mines Amendment Bill 2025 to boost critical minerals production

and Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2025, aimed at further liberalising and modernising India's mineral sector with a particular focus on critical and strategic minerals essential for the country's green energy transition. The legislation, which amends the original Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957, and was earlier passed by the Lok Sabha on August 12, received approval from the Rajya Sabha through a voice vote. Around 19 members participated in the debate.

### Lok Sabha passes Bill to set up IIM in Guwahati

New Delhi: The Lok Sabha Tuesday passed a bill to set up an Indian Institute of Management (IIM) in Guwahati with the Union government providing capital support of ₹550 crore. The Indian Institutes of Management (Amendment) Bill. 2025 -- which wa passed amid din in the Lower House -- will help set up the second IIM in the Northeast after Shillong. Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan piloted the Indian Institutes of Management (Amendment) Bill, 2025, as the Opposition continued with its protest over the issue of Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in Bihar.

### DECODING THE LAW

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 19: As Opposition parties threaten to impeach Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Gyanesh Kumar and take action against the two election commissioners if the INDIA bloc comes to power, here is a look at the law on how they can be removed:

-The CEC and ECs are granted immunity from any legal action for decisions taken while in office under Clause 16 of the Chief Election Commissioner and other Election Commissioners

(Appointment, Conditions of Service and Term of Office) Act, 2023 ... no court shall entertain

or continue any civil or criminal proceedings against any person who is or was a Chief Election Commissioner or an Election Commissioner for any act, thing or word, committed, done or spoken by him when, or in the course of acting or purporting to act in the discharge of his official duty or function," the clause reads. -Clause 11(2) of the Act

states that the CEC cannot be removed from his office except in like manner and on like



grounds as needed for the removal a Supreme Court judge.

Supreme Court and high court judges can be removed only through a motion passed by both houses of Parliament.

A motion supported by 50 MPs of the Rajya Sabha or 100 MPs of the Lok Sabha has to be moved in Parliament and passed by the House with a two-thirds majority of those present.

The law says the other ECs cannot be removed from office except on the CEC's recommendation.

-According to Clause 11(1) of the Act, the CEC or an EC can,

at any time, by writing under his hand addressed to the president, resign from his office.

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi has threatened "stern action" against Kumar and the two ECs over allegations of "vote chori" (vote theft) through the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of the electoral rolls in Bihar, when the IN DIA bloc comes to power.

Gandhi's threats came days after the CEC served him a seven-day ultimatum to submit a signed affidavit to back his vote-theft claims and said or else, his allegations will be considered invalid.

# international



I don't want to hide the fact that I wasn't sure it (Washington summit) would go this way... But my expectations were not just met, they were exceeded

FRIEDRICH MERZ

### KILAUEA ON VERGE OF ERUPTION

Scientists expect Kilauea volcano in Hawaii to again gush lava in the coming days for the 31st time since December as the mountain lives up to its identity of one of the world's most active volcanoes. A few lucky residents and visitors will have a front row view at Hawaii Volcanoes National Park.



India and **China should** other as partners rather than adver-



China and

Pakistan are ironclad friends and all-weather strategic cooperative partners, and our bilateral relationship is not affect

ed by any third party and does not target any third party MAO NING CHINESE FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESPERSON



support the government in ensuring a free, fair and neutral electior

GENERAL WAKER-UZ-ZAMAN I BANGLADESH ARMY CHIEF

### SHORT TAKES

### Man jailed for racist death threat to Sunak

London: A 21-year-old man has been sentenced to 14 weeks' imprisonment and a two-year restraining order for sending racist death threats to Rishi Sunak in June last year, when he was still the British prime minister. Liam Shaw from Birkenhead in Merseyside, north-west England, pleaded guilty to sending two threatening and offensive emails to the public parliamentary email address of Sunak, MP for Richmond and Northallerton in Yorkshire. the UK's Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) said. The emails were spotted by the British Indian leader's personal assistant and reported to the police. "Liam Shaw took to his phone that night to send racist and threatening messages to a person in an extremely important public office," said Matthew Dixon, Senior Crown Prosecutor at CPS Mersey Cheshire. "Racist abuse has no place, anywhere, in this day and age," he said.

### Spain battles record fires

Madrid: Spain tackled several major wildfires Tuesday in one of the country's most destructive fire seasons in recent decades, despite temperatures dropping across the Iberian Peninsula. Thousands of firefighters aided by soldiers and water-bombing aircraft continued to fight fires tearing through parched woodland that were especially severe in northwestern Spain. where the country's weather agency AEMET reported a still "very high or extreme" fire risk - particularly in the Galicia region. The fires in Galicia have ravaged small, sparsely populated towns, forcing locals in many cases to step in before firefighters arrive. Firefighting units from Germany arrived in northern Spain on Tuesday to help fight the blazes, Spain's

### Nepal partners with TikTok

Interior Ministry announced.

Kathmandu: Nepal Tourism Board (NTB) Tuesday signed a deal with social media platform TikTok to promote its landscape, cultural heritage, and adventure experience among a global audience. The deal was signed in the presence of Minister for Tourism, Culture and Civil Aviation Badri Pandey, said a press release issued by the board during a programme Tuesday. "The initiative focuses on #LifetimeExperiences, a creator-led campaign that will feature a dedicated in-app experience designed to help travellers discover the country's must-see destinations and hidden gems," the press release

# US troops won't be sent Zelenskyy deploys gratitude diplomacy and to defend Ukraine: Trump



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Washington, August 19: US President Donald Trump Tuesday offered his assurances that US troops would not be sent to help defend Ukraine against Russia after seeming to leave open the possibility the day

Trump also said in a morning TV interview that Ukraine's hopes of joining NATO and regaining the Crimean Peninsula from Russia are "impossible."

The Republican president, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and other European leaders held hours of talks at the White House Monday aimed at bringing an end to Russia's war against Ukraine. While answering questions from journalists, Trump did not rule out sending US troops to participate in a European-led effort to defend Ukraine as part of security guarantees sought by Zelenskyy.

Trump said after his meeting in Alaska last week with Russian President Vladimir Putin that Putin was open to the idea of security guarantees for

But asked Tuesday on Fox News Channel's "Fox & Friends" what assurances he could provide going forward and beyond his term that American troops would not be part of defending Ukraine's border, Trump said, "Well, you have my assurance, and I'm presi-

Trump would have no control over the US military after his terms ends in January 2029.

The president also said in the interview that he is optimistic that a deal can be reached to end the Russian invasion, but he underscored that Ukraine will have to set aside its hope of getting back Crimea, which was seized by Russian forces in 2014, and its long-held aspirations of joining the NATO military alliance.

"Both of those things are impossible," Trump said.

Putin, as part of any potential deal to pull his forces out of Ukraine, is looking for the

from the Donetsk and Luhansk regions, as well as recognition of Crimea as Russian territory

### Russia bombards Ukrainian city hours after Washington summit

KYIV: Russia struck the central Ukrainian city of Kremenchuk overnight, leaving a thick column of smoke hovering over the city in an attack that the local mayor called a sign that Russian President Vladimir Putin does not want peace. The bombardment on that city as well as other locations in Ukraine was Russia's largest so far in August, according to the Ukrainian air force It followed Donald Trump's meeting with Ukrainian President Volodymy Zelenskyy and European leaders in Washington Monday as the US president seeks an end to Russia's war in Ukraine. Moscow launched 270 drones and 10 missiles, the Ukrainian air force said. Although it said it had downed 230 of the drones, it said 16 sites were struck "While hard work to advance peace was underway in Washington, D.C. ... Moscow continued to do the opposite of peace: more strikes and destruction," Ukrainian Foreign Min-ister Andrii Sybiha wrote on X. The governor of Poltava region, where Kremenchuk is located, said there were no casualties but nearly 1,500 households were left without electricity. The Energy Ministry said energy facilities were hit in the attack, resulting in damage and a large fire. Moscow launched 270 drones and 10 missiles, the Ukrainian air force said. Although it said it had downed 230 of the drones, it said 16 sites were struck. "While hard work to advance peace was underway in Washington, D.C. ... Moscow continued to do the opposite of peace: more strikes and destruction," Ukrainian Foreign Minister Andrii Sybiha wrote on X. The governor of Poltava region, where Kremenchuk is located, said there were no casualties but nearly 1,500 households were left without

# gratitude diplomacy



ASSOCIATED PRESS

London, August 19: Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy wasn't going to risk being accused of being ungrateful this time. With peace talks on the table and a chance to rebound from his disastrous White House scolding six months ago, Zelenskyy made sure to show his gratitude to US President Donald Trump during Monday's meeting in the Oval Office.

In fact, he thanked Trump nine times in the first minute of their brief public meeting that preceded a short news conference. "Thanks so much, Mr President." he said, "First of all, thank you for the invitation and thank you very much for your efforts, personal efforts to stop killings and stop this war. Thank you.'

In February, Zelenskyy's meeting with Trump quickly spiralled into a public relations disaster when Vice President JD Vance berated him for not being sufficiently thankful.

'You should be thanking the President for trying to bring an end to this conflict." Vance said

in a moment that caught Zelenskyy off guard. "Have you said thank you once? In this entire meeting? No, in this entire meeting, have you said thank you?"

Zelenskyy tried to defend himself, saying he had always expressed his appreciation to the US for the military and financial support it provided after Russia invaded it in 2022. But the damage was done. World leaders took their cue

and learned that flattery is the way to winning over the unpredictable Trump.

With a chance to make a second impression in the same setting, gratitude diplomacy was front and centre for Zelenskyv and his peers. He went on to extend his thanks to Melania Trump for personally writing to Russian President Vladimir Putin to think about the Ukrainian children and urge peace.

And he thanked his European allies who had arrived as reinforcements in Washington to present a unified front to push for a ceasefire and security guarantees if there is a peace deal with Russia

### Death toll in Pak rains rises to 706

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Islamabad, August 19: Paki stan Tuesday said the death toll in rain-related incidents and floods has increased to 706, as the army intensified relief operations in the worst-affected regions.

In its latest update, the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) said that during the last 24 hours, at least 24 more people died, taking the death toll to 706 people since June 26. The number of injured has increased to 965.

Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa was the worst hit, where 427 people have died so far, followed by 164 in Punjab, 29 in Sindh, 22 in Ba lochistan, 56 in Pakistan-occu pied Kashmir and eight in the Islamabad region, it said.

Meanwhile, Army spokes man Lt Gen Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry on Tuesday said the army had intensified relief operations, rescuing 6,903 people and providing medical support through nine camps in Khy ber-Pakhtunkhwa, The Express Tribune newspaper reported.

He said eight army units were engaged in relief work in the province, while two battalions were operating in Buner Army Aviation was also assisting in rescue and supply missions. Federal Information and

Broadcasting Minister Attaullah Tarar said that relief activities had been expedited in the affected regions, with the ND MA, Pakistan Army, and feder al and provincial governments coordinating closely.

He added that so far, 25,000 people had been relocated to

### Bessent accuses New Delhi of 'profiteering' from Russian oil

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New York, August 19: US treasury secretary Scott Bessent Tuesday accused India of "profiteering" by reselling Russian oil while sparing China for the same, saying it has "diversified inputs of their oil."

The remarks came amid strain in India-US relations after US President Donald Trump imposed tariffs totalling 50 per cent on India. This includes 25 per cent for New Delhi's purchases of Russian oil that will come into effect from August 27.

While replying to a question on CNBC on different treatment to China and India for purchasing Russian oil. Bessent said China's oil import from Russia has increased only 3 per cent post the Russian-Ukraine war, while India's oil imports from Russia have increased over 40 per cent.

"China's importing (Russian oil) is suboptimal. If you go back and look pre-2022, pre-invasion (of Ukraine by Russia),

13 per cent of China's oil was already coming from Russia; now it's 16 per cent, so China has diversified inputs of their oil." said Bessent.

Bessent added that "less than one per cent" of Indian oil was coming from Russia pre-invasion "and now I believe it's up to 42 per cent"

"India is just profiteering, they are reselling... They made 16 billion in excess profits..... some of the richest families in India. This is a completely different thing," added Bessent. He further said that this "Indian arbitrage, buying cheap oil and reselling it as product, has just sprung up during the war ...is just unacceptable.

Bessent made similar comments last week ahead of the Trump-Putin meeting. In an interview with Bloomberg, he said if "things don't go well" between Trump and Putin at the summit meeting, then secondary sanctions on India for purchasing Russian



Keeper Jessica Ray weighs Humboldt Penguins as keepers at London Zoo record animals' vital statistics at the annual weigh-in as a way of monitoring their health, development and even identifying pregnancies, in London, Tuesday

### SWEDISH CHURCH BEING MOVED DOWN THE ROAD

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kiruna (Sweden), August **19:** How do you move one of Sweden's most beloved wooden churches down the road? With a little bit of engineering, a lot of prayer — and some Eurovision for good luck.

The Kiruna Church — called Kiruna Kyrka in Swedish and its belfry are being moved this week along a 5-kilometre route east to a new city centre as part of the town's relocation. It's happening because the world's largest underground iron-ore mine is threatening to swallow the town.

This week, thousands of visitors have descended upon Kiruna, Sweden's northernmost town, at 200 kilometres above the Arctic Circle. It's home to roughly 23,000 inhabitants, including members of the Sami Indigenous people, spread over nearly 19,500 square kilo-

Lena Tjarnberg, the church's vicar, is set to kick off the move

with a blessing on Tuesday

morning. The journey is sched-

uled to end on Wednesday af-

The church was a gift from the mining company

In 2001, the Swedish people voted the wooden church the "best building of all time, built before 1950" in a poll connected to the Ministry of Culture.

Built on a hill so worshippers could overlook the rest of Kiruna, the Swedish Lutheran church was designed to emulate the Sami style as a gift from LKAB, the state-owned mining company.

The Kiruna mine itself dates back to 1910, and the church was completed in 1912. Its neo-Gothic exterior is considered the town's most distinctive building, and tourists regularly travelled there before it was closed a year ago to prepare for the relocation. It's set to reopen in the new location at the end of 2026

Tjarnberg said the final service in the old spot was bitter-

"The last day you go down the stairs and close the church door, you know it's going to be several years before you can open it — and in a new place,"

she said. "We don't know how it's going to feel to open the

This week's move has turned into a two-day, highly choreographed media spectacle, run by LKAB and featuring an appearance by Swedish King Carl XVI Gustaf.

Musical performances will include a set from KAJ, Sweden's 2025 Eurovision entry that was the bookies' favourite to win this year's contest but lost out to classically trained

countertenor JJ of Austria.

SVT, Sweden's national broadcaster, is capitalising on the showcase and will livestream the move both days, billing it as "The Great Church Walk" to play off its success with the spring showing of The Great Moose Migration' that has enthralled millions of

viewers annually since 2019. Known for both the Midnight Sun and the Northern Lights. Kiruna and the surrounding area are a major draw year-round

for visitors to Swedish Lapland. The region also features the Aurora Sky Station, the Icehotel and Kebnekaise, the Nordic country's highest mountain.

British tourists Anita and Don Haymes had already trekked to Kiruna twice before this year's trip. When they heard about the church's move, they changed their itinerary to ensure they'd be here for it. They took photographs of it, propped up on beams and wheels, this week before the move.

"It's an amazing feat that they are doing," Anita Haymes said Sunday. "It'll be interesting to see it moving, unbelievable."

But not everyone is thrilled about LKAB's extravaganza. Lars-Marcus Kuhmunen, chairman of one of the Sami reindeer herding organisations in Kiruna, said LKAB's plans for a new mine could threaten reindeer migration routes and imperil the livelihood of herders in the area.

The move of Kiruna's town centre, including the church, has been in the works since 2004. As the mine expanded deeper underground, residents began seeing cracks in buildings and roads.

In order to reach a new depth of 1,365 metres — and to prevent Kiruna from being swallowed up — officials began moving buildings to a new downtown at a safe distance from the mine.

As of July, 25 buildings had been lifted up onto beams and wheeled east. Sixteen, including the church, remain.

At approximately 40 metres wide with a weight of 672 met ric tons, the church required extra effort. Engineers widened a major road from 9 metres to 24 metres and dismantled a viaduct to make way for a new

intersection. A driver, using a large control box, will pilot the church through the route as it travels roughly 12 hours over Tuesday and Wednesday, with a pause each day for fika, the tradition al Swedish afternoon coffee break. It's expected to move at a varying pace between 0.5 and 1.5 kilometres per hour.

Stefan Holmblad Johansson, LKAB's project manager for the move, would not say how much it has cost the mining company.

# business

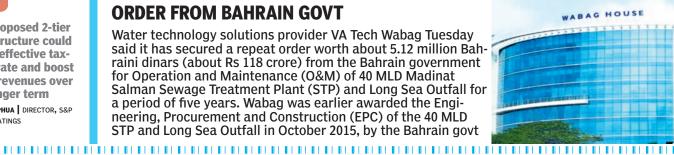


The proposed 2-tier **GST structure could** lower effective taxation rate and boost fiscal revenues over the longer term

YEEFARN PHUA | DIRECTOR, S&P

### **WABAG SECURES REPEAT** ORDER FROM BAHRAIN GOVT

Water technology solutions provider VA Tech Wabag Tuesday said it has secured a repeat order worth about 5.12 million Bahraini dinars (about Rs 118 crore) from the Bahrain government for Operation and Maintenance (O&M) of 40 MLD Madinat Salman Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) and Long Sea Outfall for a period of five years. Wabag was earlier awarded the Engineering, Procurement and Construction (EPC) of the 40 MLD STP and Long Sea Outfall in October 2015, by the Bahrain govt





a global hub for green hydroger exports, eveing nearly 10 per cent of the worldwide demand by 2030



SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK | UNION MINISTER





India cannot build an inclusive **Digital India if the** very device that enables it remains unaffordable for

millions. 5 per cent GST classification will restore affordability, stimulate demand, and accelerate India's journey towards universal digital access

PANKAJ MOHINDROO | CHAIRMAN, ICEA

SHORT **TAKES** 

TCS opens AI-led

The new office in Mexico City

is TCS' eighth operations

centre in Mexico, where

the company has built a

workforce of over 11,000

skilled associates in the

facility will be staffed with

AI specialists and software

technologies. "Establishing

component of TCS' growth

strategy in Latin America

and is expected to generate

employment opportunities

within the country over the

next two years," it said.

TCS' new office in Mexico

innovation and collaboration

with local and international

cloud, cybersecurity, IoT, IT

infrastructure, application

development and cognitive

business operations, the

release said.

IOC to supply

**SAF to Air India** 

New Delhi: Indian Oil

a landmark agreement to

supply sustainable aviation

fuel to Air India, representing a significant step towards a greener and cleaner aviation

in India, IOC plans to begin production of sustainable

aviation fuel (SAF) from

used cooking oil starting

December this year at its

Sahney. The facility is

using waste cooking oil

sourced from hotel and

restaurant chains such as

alternative fuel made from

non-petroleum feedstocks

that reduces emissions from

air transportation. It can be

turbine fuel (ATF or iet fuel).

depending on availability.

India has mandated 1 per

cent SAF blending in iet

fuel sold to international

was signed by Shailesh

Dhar, Executive Director

Regulatory, Compliance

airlines from 2027. The MoU

(Aviation), IOC, and P Balaji,

(GRC) and Corporate Affairs,

Air India, in the presence of

Sahney and Air India CEO

Campbell Wilson.

Group Head - Governance.

blended up to 50 per cent

in conventional aviation

Panipat refinery, according

to Chairman Arvinder Singh

expected to produce 35,000

tonne of green fuel annually.

ITC and Haldiram's. SAF is an

Corporation (IOC) has signed

clients, offering a variety

of solutions from its

portfolio, including AI,

engineers with expertise

in emerging enterprise

this new office is a key

past two decades. The

# for 4th day

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

### centre overseas Mumbai, August 19: Rising New Delhi: Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) has opened an AI-driven operations centre in Mexico City, as the company affirmed its commitment to accelerating innovation in Mexico and Latin America.

cal worries.

The 50-share NSE Nifty per cent to 24,980.65.

Optimism prevailed in the market, buoyed by plans for big hang reforms in the GST regime by Diwali and easing geopoliti-

gained 3.16 per cent. Reliance Industries rose by 2.82 per cent. Eternal, Tech Mahindra, Kotak among the gainers.

However, Bajaj Finserv, Power Grid, Mahindra & Mahindra and HCL Tech were among the



stricter position limits

on equity derivatives

**India looking to curb** 

activity of large firms in equity

derivatives

trading volumes

monitor trading firms' intraday positions.

The panel will also discuss the maximum allowable exposure an individual trading member

can hold in equity derivatives and the exchange

Its recommendation will be put to the market regulator's board before a final decision is made. SEBI did not

**India's equity derivatives** markets account for nearly immediately re-60 per cent of global spond to an emailed request for comment. In May, SEBI set the total option exposure for a firm across its entire portfolio at the

end of the trading day at 15 billion rupees, without specifying limits on trading members.

India's equity derivatives market accounts for nearly 60% of global trading volumes, although retail investors have recorded large losses.

In the 12 months ended March 31, 2024, retail trader's losses totalled 524 billion rupees, a SEBI study showed. In contrast, proprietary traders, who make trades for financial institutions, made gross profits of 330 billion rupees over the same period, while foreign investors made 280 billion rupees.

SEBI has already increased the minimum lot size and reduced the number of deriva tives contract expiries to control trading

The additional steps being considered are part of the structural reforms to manage market risks and curb the activity of large firms in the Indian derivatives market, one of the sources said.

The ban on Jane Street was lifted last month after the firm deposited \$567 million in an account that gives SEBI rights over the money until it has

Strict limits for equity derivatives Duty free cotton import till Sept 30



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 19: The government has allowed duty-free import of raw cotton till September 30 to improve the availability of the key raw material for the textile sector, to help US.

Cotton was a subject to an 11 per cent import duty along with the Agriculture Infrastructure and Development Cess (AIDC). According to a finance ministry notification dated August 18, the duty exemption will take effect from August 19 and shall remain in force till September 30.

The scrapping of the import duty is expected to ensure raw material availability at globally competitive rates for the textile sector. Domestically, the sector also faces duty inversion under the GST regime.

The import duty relief by India comes at a time when Indian exporters, including the textile sector, face a steep 50 per cent duty in US.

The US tariff comprises an existing 25 per cent with an additional 25 per cent, which will take effect from August 27, imposed as a penalty for India's purchases of Russian oil.

Commenting on the decision, think tank GTRI said India has suspended import tariffs on raw cotton for 40 days to tackle tight supplies and stabilize prices ahead of the harvest season.

Cotton imports have surge 107.4 per cent, rising from \$579.2 million in FY2024 to \$1.20 billion in FY2025. Major suppliers last year included Australia (\$258.2 million), the United States (\$234.1 million), Brazil (\$180.8 million), and Egypt (\$116.3 million).

Since February 2021, imports were subject to an 11 per cent duty including 5 per cent Basic Cus toms Duty and 5 per cent AIDC.

"The waiver is expected to help mills facing high input costs and support varn and fabric exporters struggling with competitiveness, particularly ahead of India's festival season," GTRI Founder Ajay Srivastava said.

He added that the government limited the relief to 40 days to avoid sustained downward pres sure on domestic cotton prices, which could hurt farmers.

"The measure is a time-bound stopgap to stabilize markets before the new crop arrives," he said adding almost all (99 per cent) of \$1.20 billion cotton imported in FY2025 was of fibre staple length of 28 mm or above.

**Ü**nder **İ**ndia-Australia trade pact, India already allows duty free import of 51,000 tonne cotton of fibre staple length of 28 mm or above. "This means, the largest beneficiary of the duty-free import will be US the second largest supplier to

India," Srivastava said.

# Markets rally

Mumbai, August 19: A top

panel of India's market regula-

tor is meeting Tuesday to con-

sider placing stricter limits on

positions in index derivatives

in the Indian markets, two

The Securities and Exchange

Board of India (SEBI) is look-

ing at the rules on equity de-

rivatives after the regulator

temporarily banned US high

frequency trading firm Jane

Street from the Indian markets

saying some of its trading strat-

egies were manipulative and

left retail investors with losses.

visory committee, tasked with

framing equity market policies,

will discuss and make recom-

mendations on intraday limits

for index derivatives to prevent

large traders and trading firms

from accumulating significant

In February, SEBI proposed

an intraday limit of 10 billion

Indian rupees (\$114.89 million)

for positions taken in index de-

rivatives but scrapped the plan

following opposition from the

large market making firms. In-

stead, SEBI asked exchanges to

exposures, the sources said.

SEBI's secondary market ad-

sources said.

for the fourth consecutive day, benchmark stock indices Sensex and Nifty closed higher on Tuesday following gains in oil major Reliance Industries and Tata Motors amid prevailing optimism over sweeping GST reforms and easing geopoliti-

The 30-share BSE Sensex jumped by 370.64 points or 0.46 per cent to settle at 81,644.39. During the day, it spurted by 482.13 points or 0.59 per cent to 81,755.88.

climbed 103.70 points or 0.42

cal worries, analysts said. Among Sensex firms, Tata

Motors rose the most by 3.5 per cent while Adani Ports Mahindra Bank, Hindustan Unilever and Maruti were also

The BSE midcap and smallcap indices jumped 0.97 per cent each. All BSE sectoral indices ended higher. Oil & Gas climbed 1.49 per cent, followed by energy (1.48 per cent), auto (1.45 per cent), consumer discretionary (1.25 per cent), services (1.12 per cent) and telecommunication (1.04 per cent).

# India curbs solar power output to ease congestion

*India's renewable energy generation, mainly solar, rose at a record pace* in the six months ended June as previously awarded projects came online, while overall power generation growth was largely flat

New Delhi, August 19: India is curbing solar output during periods of low demand to keep its power grid stable and to ease congestion in power lines as green energy supply rises, Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) said Monday

Congestion in power lines due to some new plants coming into operation ahead of schedule and delayed transmission projects have also forced power output curbs, also known as curtailment.

The curtailments are the latest setback to India's renewable power developers, who are increasingly languishing without supply contracts as demand for power slows.

The National Solar Energy Federation of India (NSEFI) said in a July 24 letter to the ministry that solar power producers in Rajasthan, the top green power producing state, were facing prolonged and frequent curtailments, which had touched nearly 50 per cent of output during peak generation hours.

The producers have lost more than \$26 million in revenue since April due to the curbs,

NSEFI said. NSEFI, whose members include the green energy arms of Indian conglomerates and Tata.

Amazon Web Services, Dutch



investment firm SHV and Malaysia's Gentari, said curtailments undermined project viability and future investments.

"Projects in the state had been deferred by 18-20 months to accommodate for the delays in the transmission system. but are still unable to be commissioned due to even further delays," NSEFI said.

NSEFI has asked the government to accelerate transmission and battery storage projects, some of which face up to two years of delay. The federal power ministry has said it is fast-tracking interstate transmission lines to support renewable energy.

### Worst affected areas

While Rajasthan is the worst affected by curtailments, other major green energy producers such as the southern Tamil Nadu state, and Guiarat and Maharashtra in the west are to four industry officials and analysts. Data compiled by Tamil Na-

also curbing output, according

du's Renewable Energy Producers Association showed solar output was 10 per cent lower than forecast in the quarter ended June. J Radhakrishnan, a spokes-

man for the Tamil Nadu energy department said solar was being curbed as a "last resort' measure, and that coal power was also being curtailed amid low demand. India's renewable energy

generation, mainly solar, rose at a record pace in the six months ended June as previously awarded projects came online, while overall power generation growth was largely flat compared with an increase of nearly six per cent in 2024. However, solar projects

awarded in the three months ended June fell 75 per cent annually and tenders for new projects declined 65 per cent, according to Mercom.

The decline reflects a "temporary recalibration rather than a slowdown," MNRE said, adding that bids were being issued in line with national targets and

Government data shows the usage rate of solar capacity fell to 21.4 per cent in May and 19.5 per cent in June.

### **BOI organises Re-KYC saturation camp**

Bhubaneswar: Bank of India, Bhubaneswar Zone organised Re-KYC saturation camp at Balipada Panchayat, Chandanpur, Puri. RBI General Manager Anita Pattnaik, Bijoy Kumar Malik, Zonal Manager, Bank of India, and Balipada Panchayat Sarpanch Namita Mishra attended the programme. The purpose of the camp was to promote Re-KYC, PMJJBY, PMSBY, Atal Pension Yojana and RBI ombudsman Facility. RBI General Manager narrated



### India Post's APT project for modern services

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 19: The India Post has rolled out Rs 5,800-crore Advanced Postal Technology across the country that will transform it into world-class public logistics organization by enabling mobile-ready services and real time decision making, Union Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia said Tuesday.

The Advanced Postal Technology (APT) based infrastructure gives India Post access to new technology layers like modern logistics companies.

"Elated to announce the nationwide rollout of Advanced Postal Technology (APT) by @ IndiaPostOffice, a historic leap in Bharat's digital journey. Backed by an investment of Rs 5800 crore under IT 2.0, APT will transform India Post into a world-class public logistics organization," Scindia said on



social media platform X.

The technology platform will enable India Post to support fully fledged digital transactions and accept Unified Payment Interface (UPI) payments for services from customers of any bank. Earlier, UPI transactions

of only India Post Payments Bank accounts were supported at post offices for purchase of services and other payments due to technical issues.

Scindia said the APT is a fully indigenous platform driven by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of Digital India and Make in India.

# FinMin likely to place GST rate proposal on August 20

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, August 19: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman is likely to present the Centre's proposal for rationalising goods-and-services-tax (GST) rates before a Group of Ministers (GoM) at a two-day meeting starting August 20 in the national capital.

The GoM, headed by Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary, is slated to meet in person at Vigyan Bhawan on August 20 and 21, with proceedings beginning at 12 noon, as per the report. A six-member state panel

expected to deliberate on the Union government's plan to move to a simplified two-slab GST structure. The GST Council is expected

to meet on September 18-19 to



take a final call on the proposal.

The proposed GST revamp comes at a time when global investment house Morgan Stanley has flagged tax reforms, along with other policy measures, as crucial in supporting India's consumption story.

In its latest report, Morgan Stanley said a likely overhaul of GST rates, together with income-tax cuts, policy easing, rising job growth and improving real wages, brightens the outlook for domestic demand. The report added that while

there could be some short-term slowdown in volume growth as consumers wait for clarity on the new tax rates, demand is expected to bounce back once the revised GST system comes into force.

Lower indirect taxes, it noted, tend to improve affordability for low-income households since indirect taxes are regressive. According to the analysis, the proposed GST overhaul could amount to a stimulus of about 0.5-0.6 per cent of GDP annually, with the potential to lift GDP growth by 50-70 basis

It also projected a possible downside of 40 basis points in CPI inflation, although both the Centre and states may face short-term revenue pressures due to lower collections.

### Icra pegs Q1 GDP growth rate at 6.7%

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 19: The Indian economy is expected to grow at 6.7 per cent in April June period of current fiscal higher than 6.5 per cent a year ago, on the back of higher government capex and exports, rat ing agency Icra said Tuesday.

This projection also outpaces the RBI's Monetary Policy Committee's (MPC's) forecast of 6.5 per cent growth in the June quarter. India's economy grew 7.4 per cent in March quarter

Official data for FY26 Q1 GDP is scheduled to be released Au-

Icra Chief Economist Aditi Navar said investment activ ity held up in Q1 FY2026 was boosted by the front-loading of government capex. She mentioned that this came amidst the heightened uncertainty ow ing to geopolitical tensions and tariff-related developments.

# Gill as vice-captain, Shreyas misses out

Mumbai, August 19: Test skipper Shubman Gill was Tuesday appointed India's T20 vice-captain for next month's Asia Cup where Jasprit Bumrah will also be there to bolster the team's bowling attack even as a strong contender like IPL-winning captain Shreyas Iver missed out due to abundance of talent in the format.

The 25-year-old Gill's last T20 International match was against Sri Lanka at Pallekele in 2024 and he has now replaced Axar Patel as the deputy of skipper Suryakumar Yadav in the 15-strong squad.

Asia Cup begins September 9 and India is placed in Group A of alongside Pakistan, Oman, and the UAE.

Gill's inclusion was hardly a surprise after a stupendous run in the recent Test rubber against England where he scored four hundreds in the drawn five-match series.

"Gill's form in England was something we expected but he exceeded it all," chief selector Ajit Agarkar said during the squad announcement press conference here.

However, the management will have to ponder over Gill's batting slot during the continental showpiece because Abhishek Sharma and Sanju Samson have forged an effective pair at the top.

Agarkar looked at it as a delightful problem of plenty rather than a headache.

"There are more options (for top order) now and Shubman has been in a great form anyway. When they get to Dubai, they can decide on the playing XI according to the opposition



squad for the Women's ODI World Cup at home along with top-order batter

Pratika Rawal but the big-hitting Shafali Verma was left out. The squad will

be led by Harmanpreet Kaur with Smriti Mandhana, who was also present at

the selection meeting here at the BCCI headquarters, as her deputy in the ICC

event which begins September 30. The selectors also announced the squad for

change in both the sides. The series begins September 14, Rawal, who has done

as the latter was excluded from both, with chairperson of selectors Neetu David

young seamer Kranti Goud and Arundhati Reddy in the pace attack, which could

grabbed 10 wickets in five T20Is against England to make a strong mark. Charani

and five T20Is since, Goud, whose aggression and attitude has impressed skipper

Harmanpreet, took six wickets in the third ODI against England to tilt the result

with Charani teaming up with senior pros Deepti Sharma, Sneh Rana and Radha

Yaday in the department which would be expected to do the heavy lifting for the

home team. "Spinners have always done well for the team even when we played

in England, which is why we kept (most of them) in the playing XI. This is the

best team we can have (for WC)," Harmanpreet said.

of the series in India's favour. On expected lines, the India squad is spin-heavy

made her international debut only in April this year and has played eight ODIs

also feature Amaniot. It is a largely settled squad which has been on a winning

spree. and the selectors also stuck with young spinner Shree Charani, who

exceptionally well in 14 ODIs, was chosen ahead of hard-hitting opener Shafali

saving the right-hander remains in their focus. Besides Renuka, India have the

the three ODIs against Australia which precedes the World Cup with only one

and the conditions," said the former India pacer.

**WOMEN'S ODI** 

But the team think tank has the option of pushing Samson

### Squad for Asia Cup:

Suryakumar Yadav (cap-Shubman (vice-captain), Abhishek Sharma, Hardik Pandya, Axar Patel, Jasprit Bumrah, Jitesh Sharma, Shivam Dube, Arshdeep Singh, Sanju Samson, Harshit Rana, Tilak Varma, Rinku Singh, Varun Chakravarthy, Kuldeep Ya-

Standbys: Prasidh Krishna, Washington Sundar, Riyan Parag, Dhruv Jurel, Yashasvi Jaiswal.

down to the middle-order, where the Kerala batter batted quite often in the past, and gave Gill the opening slot.

### Renuka picked in squad, no room for Shafali

Mumbai: Fit-again pacer Renuka Singh Thakur was Tuesday included in India's For World Cup: Harmanpreet Kaur (c), Smriti Mandhana (vc), Pratika Rawal, Harleen Deol. Deepti Sharma. Jemimah Rodrigues, Renuka Singh Thakur, Arundhati Reddy, Richa Ghosh (wk), Kranti Goud, Amaniot Kaur,

Radha Yadav, Shree Charani,

Yastika Bhatia (wk).

Sneh Rana.

Sneh Rana.

For ODIs against Australia: Harmanpreet Kaur (c), Smriti Mandhana (vc), Pratika Rawal, Harleen Deol, Deepti Sharma. Jemimah Rodrigues, Renuka Singh Thakur. Arundhati Reddy, Richa Ghosh (wk), Kranti Goud, Savali Satghare, Radha Yaday, Shree Charani, Yastika Bhatia (wk),

## East Bengal face debutants Diamond Harbour FC in semi

Kolkata, August 19: A reinvigorated East Bengal will fancy their chances when they face tournament debutants Diamond Harbour FC in the semifinals of the 134th Durand Cup football tournament here Wednesday

The match will be played at the Vivekananda Yuba Bharati Krirangan. East Bengal qualified for the semifinals after their 2-1 quarterfinal derby victory over arch-rivals Mohun Bagan, while debutants Diamond Harbour FC stunned ISL side Jamshedpur FC with a commanding 2-0 victory to book their spot in the last-four stage

Under head coach Oscar Bruzon, East Bengal have transformed from a side that struggled in recent derbies to one brimming with confidence and tactical sharpness.

The Spanish tactician finally broke the jinx of not winning a Kolkata Derby since his appointment and now sets his sights on extending this remarkable journey.

Bruzon acknowledged the unique challenge that awaits his team, understanding that Diamond Harbour's fearless approach and tournament momentum make them dangerous opponents, "We face Diamond Harbour, a team that has shown incredible spirit throughout this tournament," Bruzon emphasised during his pre-match briefing.

"They are debutants, but they play without fear, and that makes them very dangerous. We've had a good result in the quarterfinals, but now we must show the same intensity and focus.

East Bengal's journey to the semifinals has been nothing short of spectacular. In the group stage, the Red and Gold brigade remained unbeaten. demolishing South United FC 5-0, edging past Namdhari FC 1-0, and crushing Indian Air Force 6-1 to top Group A with a perfect record of nine points.



**DURAND CUP** 

The quarterfinal against Mohun Bagan was their ultimate test, and substitute Dimitrios Diamantakos rose to the occasion with a memorable brace after replacing the injured Hamid Ahadad, helping East Bengal claim their first senior derby victory in over 18 months.

Diamond Harbour FC's Durand Cup debut has been the stuff of dreams. They started their group stage campaign with a stunning 2-1 victory over former champions Mohammedan Sporting, thanks to Luka Majcen's injury-time winner, before running riot against Border Security Force with an emphatic 8-1 triumph.

Though they suffered a 1-5 defeat to eventual group winners Mohun Bagan, their goal difference of +4 was sufficient to secure qualification as one of the best second-placed teams.

In the quarterfinals in Jamshedpur, they delivered a masterclass performance, winning 2-0, courtesy of Sairuatkima's first-half brace. The tournament has been a remarkable vindication for Diamond Harbour's head coach Kibu Vicuna, the Spanish tactician who previously guided Mohun Bagan to I-League glory.

For Bruzon's East Bengal, the challenge lies in maintaining the emotional high from their derby triumph while adapting

### NorthEast United reach final

Shillong: Redeem Tlang's first half goal was enough for defending champions NorthEast United to beat Shillong Lajong 1-0 and book their place in the final of the 134th **Durand Cup football tournament** here Tuesday. NorthEast United had beaten Shillong Laiong 3-0 at the same venue in the semifinal in 2024. The first half saw Shillond Laiong restrict NorthEast United from playing their free flowing attacking game, keeping Ajaraje and Jithin MS quiet which saw chances coming at premium. The only attempts on goal were Chema Nunez's header and Andres Rodriguez's long range effort which were straight at the goalkeeper. On the other end. the home side showcased their pace on counter attacks but the final decision making was flawed with most attempts coming through long range shots. Striker Everbrightson Sana was especially lively upfront troubling the Highlanders' defence on multiple occasions. NorthEast United used their experience to hold on to their slender lead until the end of regulation time and six added minutes to book their spot in their

to face a completely different

### SINQUEFIELD CUP

### Praggnanandhaa outplays Gukesh

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

St. Louis (USA), August 19: Grandmaster R Praggnanandhaa outplayed World Champion D Gukesh in the opening round of the Sinquefield Cup Chess tournament to rise to the third position in live world rankings.

He now shares the lead with the unstoppable Levon Aronian of United States, who outsmarted Nodirbek Abdusattorov of Uzbekistan after the opening round Monday.

In other games of the first round Fabiano Caruana of USA played out a draw with Duda Jan-Kryzstof of Poland while wild card Samuel Savian split the point with American country-mate Wesley So while Maxime Vachier-Lagrave of France also drew with another Frenchman Alireza Firouzja.

With eight rounds still to come in the USD 350,000 prize money tournament, as many as six players share the third spot behind Praggnanandhaa and Aronian while Gukesh and Abdusattorov are at the bottom of the heap hoping to open their respective accounts in the next round.

Praggananandhaa faced the Queen's gambit accepted by Gukesh who played with black pieces. The solid approach was under the scrutiny early as Gukesh spent a lot of time in a known position and went for a dubious set-up that involved early exchange of queens.

Praggnanandhaa had the Bishop pair as playing with white pieces gave him a distinct advantage. Making things worse for himself, Gukesh also fell short of time and had to find some really difficult moves to stay in the game. Relentless, as he is, Praggnanandhaa did not let the position slip out of hand as he won a pawn by force and the rest was easy. The game lasted just 36 moves. "I don't really know what happened today. I think he was a bit off," said Praggnanandhaa after the game.

Incidentally with this victory, Praggnanandhaa also restored parity with Gukesh in classical format in which both have three wins each.

### ASIA CUP MEN'S HOCKEY Bangladesh, Kazakhstan replace Pakistan, Oman

Rajgir, August 19: Bangladesh and Kazakhstan have replaced Pakistan and Oman respectively for the men's Asia Cup hockey tournament to be held here from August 29 to September 7 as per the schedule released Tuesday.

Hosts India have drawn China, Japan and Kazakhstan in Pool A, while Pool B comprises defending champions Korea. Malaysia, Chinese Taipei and Bangladesh. The winner of the eight-team tournament will qualify for the 2026 World Cup in Belgium and the Netherlands. Malaysia and Bangladesh will get the continental tournament underway with their opening fixture August 29 before Korea begin their title defense against Chinese Taipei. India will play China in the first day's last game in front of the home crowd.

The pool stage will be followed by the Super 4s from

September 3 to 6. The sequence of Super 4s matches will be confirmed after the completion of pool stage. The final will be held September 7 between the teams finishing first and second in the Super 4s. The third-place match -- between the teams finishing third and fourth in the Super 4s -- and 5/6th classification games are also scheduled September 7.

The Indian government had said that it would provide visas to the Pakistani players for the tournament, but the Pakistan Hockey Federation (PHF) has refused to travel, citing security concerns. The organisers had in advance approached Bangladesh to fill up Pakistan's place in the tournament.

Korea are the most successful side in the tournament, having won the title five times in the past. India and Pakistan have been champions three times each. India's last title win was in 2017 when they beat Malaysia 2-1 in the final in Dhaka.

# Manu's bronze, Rashmika's junior gold light up day for India

Shymkent (Kazakhstan), August 19: India's double Olvmpic medallist Manu Bhaker won the bronze medal in the women's 10m air pistol competition and Rashmika Sahgal was crowned champion in the junior women's air pistol event of the Asian Shooting Championship here Tuesday.

Bhaker shot 219.7 in the eight-woman finals to finish in third position. China's Qianke Ma claimed the gold medal with 243.2 after pipping Korean Jiin Yang who settled for the silver with 241.6. Rashmika then struck gold, India's third individual vellow metal of the competition, displaying amazing career consistency to score 241.9 and finish a massive 4.3 points ahead of silver winning Korean Han Seunghyun.

It was double delight for Rashmika (qualification score 582), as she combined with Vanshika Chaudhary (573) and Mo-



hini Singh (565) to win the team gold in the event.

Bhaker (583) also won a team bronze in women's air pistol, alongside reigning Asian Games champion Palak (573) and Suruchi Singh (574). Both Palak and Suruchi, however, missed out on the individual final by three and two points respectively

In the final, Bhaker was fifth after the first five-shot series and fourth after the second, but a 10.5 on the 11th single shot took her up to second behind eventual winner Ma Qianke of China.

From then on, with Ma out

of reach, it was a battle of attrition between Korean 25m pistol Olympic champion Yang Jiin. experienced Iranian Haniyeh Rostamiyan and Bhaker. The Indian though managed to fire the big shots when it mattered the most, to settle for bronze, with Haniveh finishing fourth.

In the junior women's final. Rashmika was involved in a battle for supremacy from the get go with Korea's Han. However, the Indian crept past her opponent for first time after the 13th single shot and from there never looked back, a 10.9 on her 15th being the icing on the cake.

### J&K athletes eye glory at Dal Lake

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

second straight finals.

Srinagar, August 19: The Jammu and Kashmir contingent has undergone a 21-day camp to prepare for the inaugural Khelo India Water Sports Festival (KIWSF) here and the 17-strong group is hopeful of securing national spotlight with a strong performance in the event starting August 21.

The Festival will run till Au gust 23 and feature three med al sports -- rowing, canoeing and kayaking. More than 400 athletes from the 36 states and Union Territories of the country are here to compete at the iconic Dal Lake, an established world famous tourist spot.

Muhammad Abbas Kand of Rainawari in Srinagar downtown has been preparing hard for the upcoming Games. He will take part in rowing doubles in the light weight category.

"I am hopeful of fetching a gold medal for Jammu and Kashmir. I am also elated that the Games are being held inside Dal Lake. It will give a boost to water sports in the region and also bring the much-needed limelight to water sports ath-

letes like me," said Abbas.

Abbas, who has won nine state and district level medals and participated in seven national events, including the 37th Na tional Games in Goa, is among the 17 water sports athletes from J&K here. Abbas and other wa ter sports athletes from J&K have been training under the guidance of water sports coaches Parvez Ahmad Shagu of the J&K Police team and Waseem Raja of the J&K Sports Association.

Like Abbas, Irtiza Ali and Muntazir Ali are also looking forward to their participation in the rowing Pairs event.

Irtiza, who hails from the Saida Kadal area of Srinagar and won a bronze medal in the 43rd junior national row ing championships at Sukhna Lake in Chandigarh, wants to improve his performance and fetch gold this time around.

Zahid Hussain is another J&K

# Badminton staring at shuttle crisis

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 19: The humble shuttlecock, the lifeline of badminton, has become the sport's biggest worry with prices of imported feather shuttles more than doubling in the past year amid an acute shortage of raw material in China.

A recent article in French newspaper L'Equipe attributed the crisis to changing food habits in China, where preference for pork over duck and goose meat has reduced poultry farming, and to a global surge in badminton's popularity.

The squeeze has forced India's top stakeholders to admit the sport can no longer depend solely on goose and duck feathers.

"Sooner or later, we have to move away from feathers as a natural product. The sport has grown exponentially, and between China, Indonesia and

India alone, we account for nearly two-fifths of the world's population consuming shuttles," chief national coach Pullela Gopichand told PTI.

"The scarcity isn't just about fewer ducks or geese being reared, it's also because more people are playing badminton. That's a good sign, but unless we find lab-grown or synthetic options, we will have a problem. I am confident a breakthrough will come in the next five years." While reports suggested Gopichand's academy in Hyderabad was left with less than two weeks of shuttle reserves, BAI secretary Sanjay Mishra said supply to national camps will stabilise this week but admitted the long-term challenge remains.

"Yonex has assured us shipments after August 20, so there's no immediate panic. The shortage hasn't affected the camp or any tournament.



But these shuttles are made of goose and duck feathers, and as demand rises globally, we have

during a meeting, they have to think of alternatives. "I had a discussion with BWF

been experimenting with plastic shuttles but somehow they didn't have the same control or accuracy." Karan Dhar, Managing Director of Yonex India, also assured to fast-track deliveries. "We are working to address

the immediate concerns. Shipments are expected shortly, and in a day or two, we will be sending shuttles to Hyderabad and the national camps" he said.

The price of a tube of high-quality shuttles has soared from Rs 1,200 at the end of 2023 to nearly Rs 3,000 now. GST adds 12 per cent to already inflated imported prices, prompting calls for government intervention.

India has a few production units in Kerala and West Bengal, but they are limited in scale and quality and have struggled to compete with mass-produced Chinese imports.

Asked what role India can play, Gopichand said, "Shuttle costs are already a big reason why badminton is so expensive. If we can bring them down, the sport will grow even bigger.

water sports athlete who is keen to make a splash in KIWSF. Za hid, a national bronze medal winner, has also won 25 district and state medals.

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