



Unapologetic Taapsee

Actor Taapsee Pannu says she fearlessly owns up her flaws and makes them her identity


LEISURE | **P2**



Pak FM visits Dhaka

Pakistan's Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar arrives in Dhaka for a rare two-day visit, aimed at rebuilding ties with Bangladesh

INTERNATIONAL | **P10**



FIIs dump equities

FIIs continue their selling spree in August, offloading equities worth ₹25,564cr through the exchanges

BUSINESS | **P11**



Wave warriors

Odisha athletes finish second at the inaugural Khelo India Water Sports Festival with 10 medals – 4 gold, 5 silver and 1 bronze

SPORTS | **P12**

Trump picks aide Gor as US envoy to India

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New York/Washington, August 23: US President Donald Trump has nominated his longtime aide Sergio Gor, who is currently the Director of the White House Presidential Personnel Office, as the next US Ambassador to India.

In a social media post Friday, Trump said Gor, 38, is a “great friend, who has been at my side for many years.”

“I am pleased to announce that I am promoting Sergio Gor to be our next United States Ambassador to the Republic of India,” he said.

He would also serve as a special envoy for South and Central Asian affairs, Trump said.

The announcement comes amid tariff tensions between Washington and New Delhi.

Trump said Gor and his team had overseen the hiring of nearly 4,000 officials across federal departments and agencies “in record time,” adding that over 95 per cent of positions were



Sergio Gor

now filled. Gor will remain in his current role at the White House until his confirmation by the Senate, he said.

“Gor has worked on my historic presidential campaigns, published my best-selling books, and ran one of the biggest Super PACs, which supported our movement,” Trump wrote. “For the most populous region in the world, it is important that I have someone I can fully trust to deliver on my agenda and help us make America great again. Sergio will make an incredible Ambassador. Congratulations Sergio!” Trump said.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL

We finally realised TikTok is the best thing to happen to mankind – it makes people forget everything, even voter fraud



A BUMPY RIDE: A commuter rides his two-wheeler through a pothole-ridden waterlogged road

PTI PHOTO

Whistleblower held

AGENCIES

Mangalore, August 23: The complainant, who had alleged multiple murders, rapes, and burials in Dharmasthala in Karnataka over the past two decades, was arrested Saturday by the SIT probing the charges, officials said.

The whistleblower, who had so far appeared before the probe panel wearing a mask, has been identified as CN Chinnaiiah, they said.

After a medical examination, he was produced before Judicial First Class Magistrate Vijayendra in Belthangady and the SIT sought 10 days' custody for further investigation. The court granted the request, officials added. The SIT, led by senior IPS officer Pronab Mohanty, had questioned Chinnaiiah late into Friday night. Officials said the arrest followed inconsistencies found in his statements and documents.

Chinnaiiah was reportedly arrested on charges of “perjury,” according to official sources.

While giving a statement before the magistrate in Belthangady July 11, the complainant had produced a skull and a few bones, claiming to be that of a woman he had buried. He had also claimed that the woman was sexually assaulted before

death. However, forensic reports indicated that the skeletal remains produced by the complainant were that of a man, the sources added.

Confirming the arrest, Karnataka Home Minister G Parameshwara said no conclusion could be drawn in the case, until the SIT completes its probe. Speaking to reporters in Udupi, he said the SIT is likely to continue its investigation based on the statements given by the complainant.

Reacting to the arrest, Deputy Chief Minister DK Shiva-



DHARMASTHALA 'MASS BURIALS'

The masked whistleblower CN Chinnaiiah

CM CALLS ON LoP



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, August 23: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Saturday called on Leader of Opposition (LoP) and BJD president Naveen Patnaik at his house and enquired about his health condition. I pray to Lord Shri Jagannath for his good health and long life.”

The CM also shared two photographs of him shaking hands with Patnaik and holding a discussion.

Patnaik was in the evening of August 20 discharged from a private hospital where he underwent treatment for dehydration for about 80 hours.

ceremony, sources said.

Later, taking to X, Majhi said, “I met the Leader of the Opposition, Shri @Naveen_Odisha, at his residence in Bhubaneswar and enquired about his health condition. I pray to Lord Shri Jagannath for his good health and long life.”

The CM also shared two photographs of him shaking hands with Patnaik and holding a discussion.

Patnaik was in the evening of August 20 discharged from a private hospital where he underwent treatment for dehydration for about 80 hours.

The former CM was admitted to the hospital August 17.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge called up Patnaik at the hospital and wished him a speedy recovery August 20.

Besides, Health and Family Welfare Minister Mukesh Mahaling, Law Minister Prithiviraj Harichandan, and OPCC president Bhakta Charan Das had also visited the hospital where Patnaik was under treatment.

Meanwhile, Prem Patnaik, the brother of the BJD president, Friday came down to Bhubaneswar from Delhi and discussed with doctors about the treatment of the former CM.

Prem is the elder son of former CM Biju Patnaik, after whom the previous ruling party of the state was named. The elder brother of the BJD chief had also visited him in Mumbai, where he underwent a spine surgery for cervical arthritis in June. Naveen Patnaik returned to Odisha 21 days later.

The 78-year-old former CM, who is a bachelor, stays alone at Naveen Niwas, while his elder brother and his family stay in Delhi. Their sister Gita Mehta died in 2023.

Security concern: Parl’s ‘No. 1’ tree to be transplanted

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 23: A lone tree standing at the Gaj Dwar, one of the six gates into the new Parliament building and often used by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has been flagged as a security hindrance by the SPG and will soon be transplanted within the complex itself.

Several agencies are involved in the decision – the Special Protection Group (SPG), responsible for the security of the prime minister, the Central Public Works Department (CPWD), the Central government’s primary construction agency that has to implement it, and the Delhi Forest Department that has to greenlight such a move.

The chosen spot is the Prerna



A tree at the Gaj Dwar of the Parliament House complex, in New Delhi

PTI PHOTO

Sthal, which houses the statues of national icons and freedom fighters that were earlier at different places on the premises.

“Tree transplantation site proposed at near IG4 Prema Sathal (sic), Parliament House, was inspected by concerned field staff on 21.07.2025 and was found suitable and sufficient

for transplantation of 01 nos. of tree,” the document states.

The tree, about seven years old, grows quickly, needs little care and thrives in full sunlight and well-drained soil, which is why it is commonly seen in gardens, along roads and in other public spaces. Besides this, the CPWD will also have to carry out compensatory plantation of 10 saplings of native species such as neem, amaltas, peepal, bargad, sheesham and arjun at Prerna Sthal.

Officials said the CPWD has deposited a refundable security amount of ₹57,000 with the forest department. The department’s permission mandates geo-tagging of new saplings, their maintenance for 7 years, and an annual progress reporting to the forest department.

Baby care centre on Srimandir premises

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Puri, August 23: The Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA) Saturday decided to open a breastfeeding centre on the premises of the 12th-century shrine in Puri.

SJTA chief administrator Arabinda Padhee said that such a facility was the need of the hour as a large number of nursing mothers visit the temple every day along with their children. “In view of the need of children dependent on breast milk, a breastfeeding centre is being planned on the temple premises,” he said.

Padhee said it has been decided to operate the breastfeeding centre near the branch office of the administration on the temple premises. The centre will focus on privacy, hygiene and the safety of mothers and children. There will also be a special women’s assistant for the centre, he said.

There had been a demand for such a facility for a long time. Padhee directed the officials to work towards establishing the centre. The decision was taken at a meeting attended by Padhee, Puri SP Pinak Mishra, ritual administrator Jitendra Sahu, senior supervisor Bakshi Pratihari, assistant administrator Subhashri Suchismita and other officials.

leisure

FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
Your attractive personality is always at the disposal of others, and today you could benefit immensely through it. However, there is room for improvement and you could be drawn towards charity work. Ganesha says you will surely feel satisfied by helping the needy.

TAURUS
Ganesha finds this an excellent day for managers and administrators. If you are one, the results you will achieve by the end of the day will far exceed the efforts you put in. This is mainly because your subordinates will be enthusiastic, compliant and cooperative. You will be focusing on the elements of leadership and team work and will use them resourcefully.

GEMINI
You will want some change in your daily routine today. You are likely to be fed up of the rut of daily life and are looking for a refreshing change. You need to apply your inherent creativity to your work to get more satisfaction out of it and to ease the boredom of your daily schedule, says Ganesha.

CANCER
Your social prestige will go up. People will praise your personality traits and try to emulate you. You will be a role model, too. Ganesha feels that this will be highly profitable day for you.

LEO
You will try to take up new projects to the best of your abilities today. You will be able to successfully tackle all your tasks today. You will face a little instability in your personal relationships, but will be able to solve all issues successfully, says Ganesha.

VIRGO
Today there will be a tug-of-war between your work and personal affairs. But being a Leo, you know how to keep both well balanced. Ganesha says you may have loads of fun in whatever way you choose to make merry. Your will to succeed will be boosted today even as you enjoy yourself.

LIBRA
Ganesha says that you shall soon be able to travel or plan a trip, not for family or business matters, but for getting away from the mundane life. You will pay more importance to your professional matters as opposed to your personal matters.

SCORPIO
An electric wire of 440 volts is apt to describe you today. According to Ganesha, you are in a belligerent mood today and can burst like a fireball. Meditation and yoga is likely to improve the situation. Remember, treat others the way you want to be treated by them.

SAGITTARIUS
Keeping all the work aside, you may be painting the town red today. Falling in love is exciting, isn't it? However, for all those who are already in a relationship, Ganesha shows a red signal. Avoid arguments with your loved one, He suggests. Impress 'the special one' with a bouquet of red roses and make up for all the petty fights during the day.

CAPRICORN
Your interests are guarded by the Almighty, so don't worry about them. Not that you are not ambitious, but you are satisfied with what you have and gained. You have set some realistic goals for yourself and you are making sincere efforts to achieve them. You are a simple person and you like your life to be uncomplicated.

AQUARIUS
You have changed your approach towards life from materialism to mysticism. Your friends and family members are pleasantly surprised to see this change. Later on the day, you may plan to visit a temple or other religious places, foresees Ganesha.

PISCES
You will display kindness and generosity today and will do your best to help anyone in need. At work you will receive praise for the efforts that you've put in and your dedication will be validated. Even though you intend to give utmost importance to your family, this intention will trail in the shadow of pending work which will require long hours.



MIRREN HATES BEING PATRONISED IN OLD AGE

Award winning actress Helen Mirren,80, has hit out at the 'condescension' that others sometimes treat older people with. "If my husband and I are holding hands, someone might say, 'Oh, look. How sweet.' I think they think they are being kind and generous. But they're not. They're being insulting."

SOPHIE TALKS ABOUT HER FEARS FOR CHILD ACTORS

Game of Thrones star Sophie Turner has spoken about her fears for young actors, and feels that the toxicity of social media might affect them negatively. The 29-year-old actress was just 13 when she was cast in the HBO fantasy series *Game of Thrones*.



Taapsee's identity

Mumbai: Taapsee Pannu's journey, which began in South Indian cinema before she made her mark in Bollywood, stands as a testament to embracing failure as a teacher. She has openly admitted that many of her early choices were driven by conventional formulas that failed to connect. This realization became a turning point when she stepped into Hindi films, choosing to set aside star power and industry trends, and instead commit herself to projects that truly inspired her. She said, "I decided I'll not make the same mistakes. I'll make new ones,".

Taapsee's authenticity also defines her entrepreneurial ventures, including co-owning a badminton team. She stresses the importance of choosing the right partners in business and investing only in projects that can fuel her passion in the long run. When it comes to defining the 'Taapsee Pannu' brand, she identifies "fearless authenticity" as its essence. In an industry fixated on image, she stands apart by embracing and owning her flaws unapolo-

getically. "Might as well just fearlessly own up my flaws and make them my identity," she added.

On the work front, Taapsee Pannu is ready to impress audiences with *Gandhari*, an action-packed thriller. She plays a brave mother on a determined mission to save her kidnapped child, showing both deep emotions and strong action skills.

AGENCIES



Manisha feels a new sense of freedom

Mumbai: From captivating audiences in the '90s to battling cancer with immense courage, Manisha Koirala's journey has been one of ups and downs. At 55, she chooses to embrace life with hope and joy. Reflecting on life, Manisha shares, "Reaching this milestone is a blessing — one that not everyone gets to experience — so I pause to thank life for the journey so far. To me, 55 feels like balance, renewal and freedom — an invitation to embrace growth, joy, and new beginnings. And most of all, it's a celebration, not just of the years I've lived, but of the stories I've told, the people I've loved, and the resilience I've carried."

The actress, originally from Nepal, has now spent over three decades in Mumbai. Manisha, who came back into the spotlight with her performance as Mallikajaan in *Heeramandi*, says, "My 35 years in Mumbai have been a journey of love, friend-



ship, and blessings, because of the amazing people who have touched my life in the most beautiful way. Mumbai is all heart for me." Looking ahead, the actress is embracing the future with hope and optimism. "I'm looking forward to certain shifts in this new chapter of my life—more settling in, more good health, and more clarity as I organise and navigate my journey," she signs off.

AGENCIES

Shagun avoids being typecast

Mumbai: After spending around a decade in the television industry, actress Shagun Sharma strongly believes that 'content is king.' Known for playing a vast variety of roles, she revealed that she consciously avoids being typecast.

Shagun revealed that she never wants to be comfortable in one type of role. "I try to pick varied characters and push myself, even if it scares me at first. For me, the depth of the role matters more than whether it's positive, negative, lead, or supporting," she says.

Her short film *Mera Number Kab Aayega*, which bagged more than 25 awards across the globe has reinforced her belief that good content will always be well received by the audience. Shagun added: "That film is close to my heart. When it received recognition-

friend, Dr. Aashna Kanchwala, shared an emotional post from the hospital. Dropping a picture of a visibly unwell Sana on her Instagram stories, she wrote: "My strongest diva," Aashna wrote. "I'm so proud of you for showing so much strength and resilience as you battle such a grave condition... Inshallah, you will fight this and come out even stronger. Allah is with you."

AGENCIES

tion worldwide, it gave me confidence that good stories will always connect, no matter how short or small. It motivated me to keep experimenting." Shedding light on the rapidly evolving television industry, she added:

"The audience today doesn't want clichés. Storytelling has become faster, more relatable, and grounded. Viewers have so many choices now, which has made the industry competitive but also more creative."

At the moment, Shagun is seen as Pari in the revised version of Kyunki *Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi...*

AGENCIES



Sana: Women often put themselves last

Mumbai: Actress Sana Makbul is back in work mode with a women-oriented web series following a brief break. During her time away, Sana was quietly recovering from an autoimmune disorder and preparing herself for her next project.

Reflecting on

her journey, Sana shared that when life forced her to slow down, she realized how often women put themselves last- their dreams, their health, and their happiness.

"That's why returning with a women-oriented story feels so right. It's my way of saying we all deserve second chances, and we all deserve to be heard," she shared.

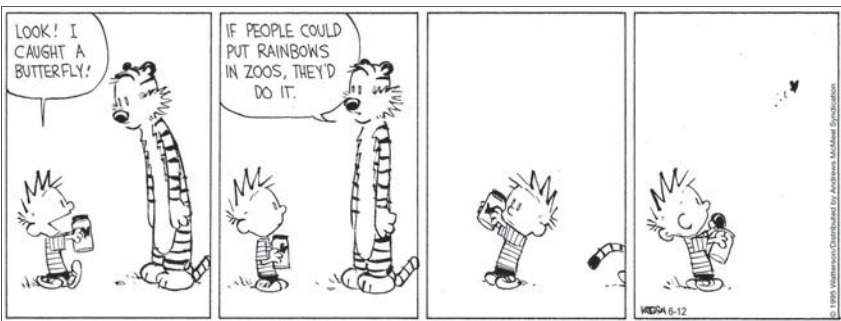
Sana's forthcoming series will focus on women's emotions, strength, and resilience - a theme that deeply connects with Sana's personal experiences. She chose the project for her return to the screen as she wanted to bring forward stories that highlight courage, hope, and self-discovery, reminding audiences that setbacks don't define anyone's future. The *Bigg Boss OTT 3* winner made headlines back in June when her



PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

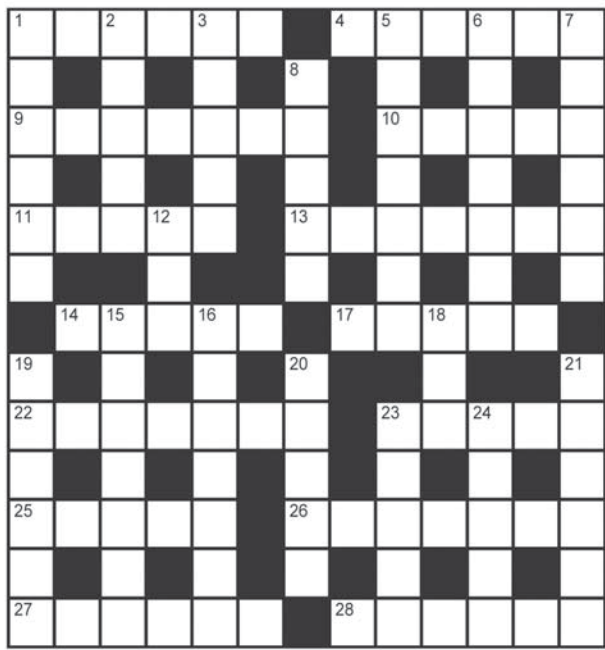


BREVITY



FUN post

CROSSWORD



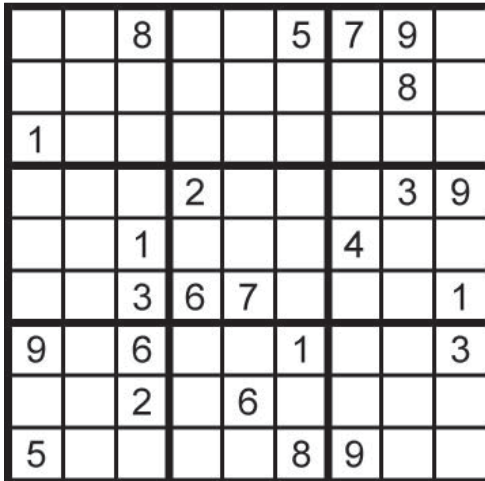
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|------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------|
| Across | 25 Sir or madam | 7 Treeless plain |
| 1 Pungent edible root | 26 Gruesome | 8 Terminate |
| 4 Estimates | 27 Duck hunter's lures | 12 Washout |
| 9 Dracula, for one | 28 Allergic reaction | 15 Undependable |
| 10 Maxim | | 16 Showplace for art |
| 11 Eat away | Down | 18 Outrage |
| 13 Accelerate (5,2) | 1 Critique | 19 Broke up |
| 14 Marsh plant | 2 Disney elephant | 20 Little rascal |
| 17 La Scala highlights | 3 Pie order | 21 Chèvre, e.g. |
| 22 Synthetic resin | 5 One not ready for prime time | 23 Ice cream |
| 23 Brandy flavour | 6 Nana, to some | 24 Stroll |

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

SUDOKU

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

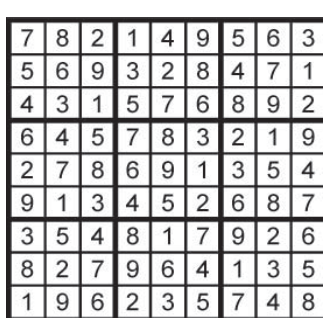


SOLUTIONS



CROSSWORD

SUDOKU



OCPL bags commercial coal block in Sundargarh

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 23: In a bid to boost self-reliance in the energy sector, Odisha Coal and Power Limited (OCPL), the state-owned coal mining company, has emerged as the successful bidder for the Tangardihi-North coal block in the 12th tranche of commercial coal block auctions conducted by the Union Ministry of Coal.

The coal block is located in Sundargarh district, and OCPL has become the first state-owned mining company in India to win a commercial coal block. The allocation, secured through a competitive bidding process, marks a major milestone in OCPL's growth journey and its contribution to strengthening the state's energy security.

The auction process conducted by the Ministry of Coal, along with OCPL's bid, was closely monitored by Deputy



Chief Minister Kanak Vardhan Singhdeo and Energy Principal Secretary Vishal Dev.

Speaking on the occasion, a senior OCPL official said that winning the Tangardihi-North block was a proud moment for the company, adding that it aligned with OCPL's strategic vision of emerging as a key player in the coal sector while upholding its commitment to responsible mining and sustainability.

The win reinforces OCPL's commitment to expanding

its operations and supporting the energy needs of the state and the nation. With the addition of Tangardihi-North to its portfolio, OCPL is expected to enhance its coal production capacity, further strengthening the state's industrial backbone and employment generation efforts.

The commercial coal block auction, conducted under a transparent and competitive process, witnessed active participation from public and private sector players. The Ministry of Coal has stated that these auctions are a step forward in ensuring coal availability for various sectors while promoting Atmanirbhar Bharat.

OCPL has already two coal blocks, Manoharpur and Dip Side Coal block but both are dedicated for the Captive Coal supply to Odisha Power Generation Corporation Limited (OPGC). This commercial coal block, Tangerdihi-North is a partially explored coal block.

Youth Cong's executive body meet at party HQ

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 23: The Odisha Pradesh Youth Congress on Saturday held its executive body meeting at the state Congress headquarters here. The meeting, chaired by state Youth Congress president Ranjit Patra was attended by Odisha Pradesh Congress Committee (OPCC) president Bhakta Charan Das along with several senior and youth leaders.

Das urged the Youth Congress to strengthen its grassroots network and independently launch initiatives to mobilise young people. He stressed that the organisation should spearhead movements against the ruling government starting from the booth level.



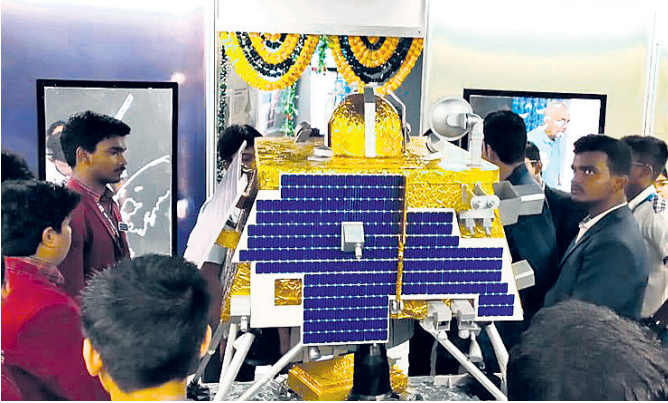
Das alleged that Odisha's youth have been "suppressed, neglected, and victimised" for the past 25 years and continue to bear the brunt of rising unemployment. He noted that nearly 11 lakh jobless youth have registered for employment and are now expressing their frustration through street protests.

Mahesh Deshmukh presented a draft action plan for the next three months, detailing how protests, awareness drives, and organisational activities would be conducted across districts and assembly constituencies. He urged state office-bearers to spend more time at the grassroots to strengthen the Youth Congress network.

Addressing the gathering, Patra said the organisation has been working as the voice of Odisha's neglected youth. He alleged that Odia youth are being overlooked in both public and private sector recruitments and vowed that the Youth Congress would soon launch agitations to press the issue.

It is worth noting that earlier in the day, the OPCC constituted a 'Youth Connect Committee' under the directives of its president, Bhakta Charan Das. The initiative seeks to re-engage young people and strengthen the party's base at the grassroots level.

City RSC celebrates National Space Day



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 23: Regional Science Centre (RSC), Bhubaneswar, celebrated the second National Space Day here Saturday, marking India's historic achievement of becoming the first nation to soft-land on the Moon's South Pole through the Chandrayaan-3 mission.

A special exhibition, titled 'From Ancient Skies to Modern Horizons', developed by the National Council of Science Museums, Ministry of Culture was inaugurated on the occasion. The exhibition traces India's journey from ancient astronomical tools of the Vedic era to landmark space missions – Aryabhata, Mangalyaan, and Chandrayaan-3.

The exhibition features six sections, including 'Ancient

Cosmic Insights', 'The Modern Era of Space Science', 'Missions That Changed History', and 'India and the Future of Space'. Models of Chandrayaan-3's Vikram Lander and Pragyan Rover were displayed, alongside a film showcasing ISRO's transformation into a global space leader.

The exhibition was inaugurated by ORSAC former chief executive Gandharba Behera, who also addressed school students on the topic 'India's Glorious Space Saga'.

As part of the weeklong celebration, RSC hosted elocution competitions, rocket-making workshops, water rocket launch, Moon robotics mission contest, and panel discussions. Successful participants were felicitated by Behera at the valedictory function.

SAI INT'L HOSTS AFS INDIA REGIONAL MEET

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 23: SAI International School is hosting the AFS India Regional Meet 2025 (East Zone) from August 22 to 24 across its campuses in Bhubaneswar and Cuttack. Themed "Global Goals, Local Action," the three-day event brings together educators, student leaders, and dignitaries to celebrate diversity and promote intercultural dialogue.

The meet was inaugurated by Law, Works and Excise Minister Prithiviraj Harichandan, who stressed the importance of intercultural exchanges in today's interconnected world. "They allow our youth to widen their horizons, develop empa-



thy, and learn to appreciate diversity as a strength," he said.

Welcoming the delegates, SAI International Education Group chairperson Silpi Sahoo high-

lighted the school's mission of nurturing globally aware citizens. "Our students are the true ambassadors of peace and positive change. This meet pro-

vides them with a unique opportunity to engage, interact, and learn from diverse cultures. The theme of this meet aligns closely with our mission at SAI International to shape young minds into compassionate leaders who will contribute to a sustainable and peaceful future," she remarked.

Key speakers included Jayant Lal, Member, AFS India Board; Diya Badgel, National Director, AFS India; and Carolina from AFS Global, who spoke on the transformative power of intercultural learning. The event also featured thought-provoking sessions by Swati Mishra on sustainable change and Kaibalya Kumar Sethi on youth-led peace initiatives.

OPF threatens protest on gutkha sale near schools

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 23: The Odisha Parents' Federation (OPF) has threatened to launch an agitation if the state government fails to implement the directives of the Odisha Human Rights Commission (OHRC) to curb the sale of gutkha, tobacco and other intoxicants near educational institutions.

In a statement, the Federation recalled that it had filed a petition before the OHRC in 2019 seeking strict action against the sale of tobacco, pan masala, nicotine-based products and other addictive substances near schools, colleges and universities. Acting on the plea, the Commission had directed the state government to constitute district- and state-level monitoring committees under the National Tobacco Control Cell (NTCC) framework to enforce the ban.

According to the OHRC order, district NTCC cells were to be headed by the District Public Health Officer (DPHO) as nodal officer, with members from the police and health departments. It had further directed bi-monthly review meetings at the district level, a state-level oversight committee under a senior nodal officer, allocation of funds by the Health department, and awareness drives through print and electronic media.

However, despite three months passing since the order, no such committees have been formed, alleged the Federation.

"Open sale of gutkha, ganja and cigarettes near schools and colleges is destroying our younger generation. If the government does not act immediately, we will be compelled to launch a mass protest," warned Federation president Basudev Bhatta, working president Prasanna Bishoyi and general secretary Ashok Paikaray.



BOOK LAUNCH: On the occasion of birth centenary celebrations of Fidel Castro, Cuba's Ambassador Juan Carlos Marsan inaugurates the revolutionary's biography in Odia, written by Bijay Kumar Padhiari, at Barabati Stadium in Cuttack Saturday

OP PHOTO

H&UD min visits Varanasi waste-to-charcoal plant

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 23: Housing and Urban Development (H&UD) Minister Krushna Chandra Mahapatra visited the 'waste-to-charcoal plant' at Ramana in Varanasi Friday, to study its innovative zero residue green technology for Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) management.

The plant demonstrates the torrefaction process, a thermochemical treatment of waste at 250 to 300 degrees Celsius in a controlled oxygen environment. Through this process, moisture and volatile matter are removed, and the waste is transformed into torrefied charcoal—a hydrophobic, high-calorific-value, carbon-rich fuel that can effectively substitute fossil coal.

Mahapatra commended the initiative and said, "The Ramana waste-to-charcoal plant



at Varanasi is a path-breaking model for sustainable solid waste management. By turning garbage into green fuel, it eliminates landfills, reduces carbon emissions, and contributes to energy security. Odisha is determined to replicate such innovative, zero-residue technologies in our cities to build a cleaner and greener future."

A 400 tonne per day (TPD)

plant can prevent 13 TPD methane emissions, earning nearly 390 carbon credits by same-day processing of waste. It can generate 100 TPD of green charcoal, replacing an equal amount of fossil coal.

This substitution translates into a saving of 250 to 290 TPD of carbon emissions, offering significant climate benefits.

The minister was accompanied by H&UD department's additional secretary Binaya Kumar Dash, NTPC DGM (WTE), Varanasi Ashish Ranjan and other key officers.

Varanasi Municipal Corporation has already earmarked 16 acres of land along with trunk infrastructure support for the facility. Significantly, NTPC has adopted this model under its CSR initiative and is successfully using the torrefied charcoal in its thermal power plants, reducing reliance on conventional coal.

Burnout breeds extremism in workplaces

When Luigi Mangione was arrested for the alleged murder of United Healthcare's CEO in December 2024, public reaction stunned many observers. Instead of universal condemnation, a surprising number of people, particularly younger adults, expressed sympathy. Polls even showed that 41 per cent of young people considered the act acceptable. This raises a troubling question: what could drive ordinary individuals to justify such violence?

The recent study, published in the APA Journal Psychology of Violence, suggests that workplace burnout may be one overlooked factor. Burnout is typically seen as a personal health problem, marked by exhaustion, cynicism, and disengagement. Yet our findings indicate it can quietly shift people's attitudes in more dangerous directions, including sympathy for extremist ideas.

Mangione's own writings denounced "corruption and greed," a sentiment that reso-



nates widely in modern work environments. Many employees today feel trapped in systems they perceive as unfair or exploitative. When this frustration collides with burnout, it can create fertile ground for radicalisation.

To explore this link, researchers conducted daily surveys with over 600 employees. Participants tracked their feelings of burnout, their emotional states, and their attitudes toward extremist beliefs. The results were striking: on days when employees felt more burnt out, they were

more likely to report sympathy for extremist ideas, including the justification of violence in response to perceived injustices.

Burnout did not just produce fatigue but also intense emotions like fear, shame, sadness, and guilt. Some individuals appeared to relieve these feelings by turning to radical ideologies that promised a renewed sense of meaning and purpose.

This pattern aligns with long-standing psychological theories. General Strain Theory suggests that daily frustrations and negative emotions can push

people toward violent extremism. The existential model of burnout highlights the despair that comes when work no longer feels meaningful.

Significance Quest Theory adds that when people lose their sense of importance in everyday life, they may seek radical beliefs to restore it. Together, these perspectives reveal burnout not as mere exhaustion but as a failed search for meaning—one that extremist ideologies are often ready to exploit.

Importantly, the study does not argue that burnout automatically leads to violence. Rather, it shows how burnout can normalise extremist attitudes, making violence seem more justifiable even if most people never act on it.

This is still a serious problem, since the spread of extremist opinions erodes social cohesion and fuels polarisation. Given that surveys suggest three out of four employees experience burnout, the scale of the risk is significant.

(The Conversation)

WEATHER			
	BBSR	CTC	FORECAST
Max Temp	32.2°	30.4°	Generally cloudy sky with possibility of rain or thundershower
Min Temp	24.6°	22.6°	
Humidity	94%	98%	
Rainfall	10.5mm	21.2mm	

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Taramakant tea estate set to reopen after 2 decades



POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, August 23: The Taramakant tea estate in Banspal block of Keonjhar district is soon expected to resume operations after remaining defunct for 21 long years.

The move follows Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi's initiative to restore the estate soon after assuming office. Hopes for its revival rekindled after a directive was issued from the Directorate of Soil Conservation and Watershed Management, which has prepared a detailed project report (DPR) and submitted it to the Chief Minister's office.

Officials said once revived, the estate could generate significant employment opportunities and emerge as a tourist attraction.

The Taramakant region, situated at an elevation of 1,800 to 2,200 feet above sea level, has long been considered ideal for tea cultivation. The area is supported by the

Punyatoya river and its three major distributaries namely Ranima nullah, Bainga nullah, and Jalpa nullah along with other natural water sources. It receives an annual rainfall of 900 mm to 1,050 mm, while winter temperatures often dip as low as 2 to 3 degrees Celsius, creating conditions conducive for tea cultivation.

The tea plantation was originally launched in 1982 on 896.54 hectare land under the Orissa Tea Plantations Ltd. (OTPL), a joint venture between the state government and Kolkata-based industrialist Basant Kumar Dubey. At its peak, the estate exported tea to domestic and international markets, earning substantial profits.

The project employed 12 staff members in office operations, 29 technical workers, 149 regular labourers, and provided direct and indirect employment to nearly 1,000 workers. By 2002, the venture had reached its peak of success before oper-

ations came to a halt.

The Taramakant tea estate abruptly shut down in 2003 and was completely closed by 2004 reportedly due to mismanagement and lack of government attention.

In the years that followed, valuable furniture and equipment were stolen because of poor security. The closure also cost hundreds of workers their livelihoods in Taramakant, Kushkala, Adal, Kalanda, Jatra and nearby villages, who were directly or indirectly dependent on the estate.

The factory, costly machinery, staff quarters, a Belgian-glass guesthouse and even the tea garden have fallen into ruin. Although more than 40 per cent of the tea bushes still remain, the estate is now overrun with wild vegetation.

The current BJP government has initiated steps for its revival. In a letter dated March 24, 2025 (No. 2488), the director (technical) of the Directorate of Soil Conservation and Watershed Development suggested that the estate could be restored and run on solar or wind power. While the report did not mention the funds required, it submitted several proposals and was forwarded to the Chief Minister's office.

"If the state government takes up the project, it can generate employment opportunities for tribals in Banspal, including Taramakant," said Bansapal block chairman Manas Dehury.

56 schools showcaused for not serving MDM on I-Day

POST NEWS NETWORK

Boudh, August 23: The District Education Officer (DEO) of Boudh has issued show-cause notices to 56 government schools after they failed to serve mid-day meals (MDM) to students on Independence Day despite clear instructions from the state government.

According to reports, meals were not distributed in 15 schools under Boudh block, 33 schools in Harabhanga block, and eight schools in Kantamal block. The state government had directed all schools to ensure providing MDM on Independence Day, August 15 and the DEO had circulated the order to nodal officers in advance.

The errant schools have been asked to submit explanations within seven days. They must also provide dry rations for the missed meals through the School Management Committees (SMCs) and submit photographic or video evidence as proof of compliance.

Viral video shows girl being assaulted; police draw flak

POST NEWS NETWORK

Binika, August 23: A video showing a college girl being assaulted at Binika bus stand in Subarnapur district has gone viral, sparking outrage in the locality Saturday.

The incident occurred when the girl was waiting to return home at Binika bus stand August 19. The video shows a minor boy and two of his associates attacking the girl and pulling her hair in the presence of people at the bus stand.

The victim, who is also a minor, has been left traumatised and is currently being counselled under the care of the District Child Welfare Committee. Many have condemned the incident after the video surfaced online.

Sources said police have come under criticism for their lax response. Police officials released the minor boy after summoning his family and issuing a notice on the day of the incident. The other

two accused are yet to be called in for questioning, sources said.

Family members of the girl have demanded strict action against the accused. They have also lodged a complaint in the police station against the three students. Police inaction has raised questions, especially since the case involves a sensitive matter and the mental well being of the victim.

Investigations revealed that the accused boy is a classmate of the girl. Both are pursuing Plus II studies at a local college. The motive behind the assault remains unclear.

According to police, three minor boys approached her at the bus stand. Two of them grabbed her hands, while the third verbally abused her and allegedly hit her. The girl managed to escape and ran to the nearby Binika police station, where she lost her sense and collapsed.

Police officers immediately rushed her to Binika hospital.



SCENIC SPECTACLE: Floodwater being discharged for the second time from Hirakud dam in Sambalpur district through eight sluice gates, Saturday. The dam discharged season's first floodwaters July 6 through 20 sluice gates before closing them down August 3

OP PHOTO

Private tutor arrested for blackmailing minor girl

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kendrapara, August 23: Police Saturday arrested a private tutor in Kendrapara district for allegedly sexually harassing and threatening to upload objectionable morphed pictures and videos of a 17-year-old girl on social media platforms, an officer said.

The accused Rajesh Behera,

a native of Marshaghai area of the district, was the private tutor of the girl when she was in Class X. He had allegedly clicked pictures and videos of the girl and morphed them with obscene content.

Later, the 29-year-old private tutor proposed to marry the girl, but she flatly turned down the proposal. Following the rejection of his proposal,

the accused resorted to blackmail tactics and threatened to upload the objectionable pictures and videos.

The family members of the girl lodged a police complaint against the accused following which he was arrested and booked under Sections 296 (obscene acts), 75 (2) (sexual harassment), 78 (2) (stalking) and 351 (3) (criminal intimidat-

tion) of BNS, under Section 12 of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012 besides 67 and 67 (A) of Information Technology Act, 2000.

Behera was remanded to judicial custody for 14 days after a local court rejected his bail application, said the Inspector-In-Charge of Marshaghai police station, Tapan Nayak.

Flood alert issued as heavy rain swells Baitarani, Subarnarekha



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhandaripokhari/Bhograi, August 23: Continuous heavy rainfall for the past four days has pushed water levels of the Baitarani and Subarnarekha rivers to danger marks, prompting flood alerts in several districts.

In Bhandaripokhari block, Baitarani at Akhuapada crossed the danger level of 18.33 metres Saturday afternoon and reached 18.43 metres by 6pm, marking the third wave of flood this season. The river is rising at a rate of 5mm

per hour. Rainfall in the past 24 hours has been significant, with Champua recording 63.66 mm, Swampatana 19.8 mm, Anandapur 68.2 mm, and Akhuapada 38.12 mm. Authorities estimate that floodwaters could reach a maximum of 18.90 metres.

Meanwhile, Subarnarekha river has risen at Rajghat in Jaleswar block due to water released from the Galudih barrage in Jharkhand. Heavy to very heavy rainfall is expected in the upper reaches of Jharkhand, prompting the Water Resources department

to maintain vigilant monitoring. Currently, 13 gates of the Galudih dam are releasing water at a rate of 5,400 cubic metres per second into the Subarnarekha river.

Recent rainfall reports from Jharkhand indicate 122.48 mm at Jamshedpur, 44.66 mm at Fekghat, 81.91 mm at Ghatsila, and 51.48 mm at Jamsula, according to the Central Water Commission. At Rajghatej, Subarnarekha river stands at 9.45 metres against the danger mark of 10.36 metres. Water levels are rising at 20 mm per hour, reaching 7.56 metres above normal flow.

Authorities, including Assistant Executive Engineers Priyabrata Singh, Basant Kumar Behera, Pramath Kumar Dey, Daktara Singh, and Junior Engineer Chittaranjan Sial, are maintaining round-the-clock monitoring of river embankments. Flood alerts have been issued for Bhograi, Baliapal, Jaleswar, and Basta blocks.

Op Anweshan: 115 kids, women rescued

Chhatrapur: Ganjam police have rescued 115 missing individuals over the past five days, including 26 girls, three boys and 86 women. The rescued children and women have been handed over to their families. The operation, launched Monday, aims to locate and recover missing children and women across the district and will continue for a week, Ganjam Superintendent of Police Suwendu Kumar Patra said.

Youth ends life by lying in front of truck

Gopalpur: A 26-year-old youth was killed Saturday afternoon after he lay down in front of a moving truck on National Highway 16 near the Gopalpur overbridge in Ganjam district, police said. The victim was identified as S Papeya of Digipur village under Gopalpur police limits. Reports said that Papeya left home on his motorcycle saying he was heading to Berhampur for some work. After parking his bike near the overbridge, he suddenly lay down in front of an approaching truck. The vehicle ran over him, killing him instantly due to excessive bleeding. Gopalpur police reached the spot, sent the body to MKCG Medical College and Hospital in Berhampur for post-mortem. The body was later handed over to the family members.

TPCODL pushes rural outreach through 'Gaan Chala' initiative



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 23: TP Central Odisha Distribution Limited (TPCODL), a joint venture of Tata Power and Government of Odisha, has been intensifying its rural outreach through the 'Gaan Chala' initiative.

Organised across its licensed area, these village-level service camps have become important touch points for delivering electricity-related services directly to the community.

Thousands of rural customers have already been reached through these camps, where new service connections are being processed, bill revisions are carried out and consumer queries are addressed with on-the-spot solutions. This doorsteps approach has ensured hassle-free service delivery while reducing the need for consumers to travel to Customer Care Centres for assistance.

Beyond service facilitation, the initiative also places strong

emphasis on digital inclusion. Many rural customers have successfully enrolled in TPCODL's digital platforms, which allow them to pay bills online, register complaints and receive real-time service updates. This shift is enabling rural households to enjoy faster, more transparent and convenient access to services.

The camps also feature dedicated counselling sessions to create awareness about the ongoing 'Bill Pay & Win' scheme. These sessions encourage timely bill payments and highlight the benefits and rewards of adopting digital payment modes, making consumers active partners in the digital transformation journey.

Through 'Gaan Chala', TPCODL is not only bridging service gaps but also fostering stronger bonds with rural communities by ensuring that electricity services are accessible, transparent and customer-friendly at the grassroots level.

Woman makes self-immolation attempt at Dhenkanal SP office

POST NEWS NETWORK

Dhenkanal, August 23: A 28-year-old woman allegedly tried to immolate herself by pouring petrol on her body outside the office of the Dhenkanal Superintendent of Police Saturday evening.

The woman was identified as Lija Sethy, 28, a native of Jagatsinghpur district and wife of Amarnath Jena of Ankanartipur under Dhenkanal Sadar police limits.

However, her efforts were frustrated after police personnel present at the spot immediately responded seizing a plastic bottle of petrol and matchsticks from her.

On being informed, SP Abhinav Sonkar rushed to the office and heard the woman's grievance. She alleged that she decided to immolate herself after getting fed up with the behaviour of police officials of Sadar and Town police stations.

Meanwhile, four hours after the incident, the SP suspended Town police station SI Utkal Bijay Mohanty and Sadar police station SI Rojalin Minz from service. The couple was staying in Angul on rent. Lija alleged that her brother-in-law residing at Rameshwarpur in Dhenkanal abused her using



Four hours after the incident, the SP suspended Town police station SI Utkal Bijay Mohanty and Sadar police station SI Rojalin Minz from service

obscene language, prompting her to approach Town police station for help.

However, according to her statement, officials at the Town police station told her to file the complaint at Sadar police station as her in-laws' house is under their jurisdiction. When

she visited Sadar police station, they directed her to Angul police station. Frustrated after repeated pleas for justice, she resorted to the extreme step at the SP office.

After listening to her complaint, SP Sonkar instructed police officers to safely escort her home and called both station officers for explanation. He said an inquiry has been ordered into the incident, and strict action will be taken against officers found negligent. The Sadar SDPO has been directed to submit a report on the conduct of police officials. Authorities said an investigation will also be carried out into how the woman procured petrol in a plastic bottle.

PEACE PLAN UNCERTAIN



Netanyahu and his ultra-nationalist supporters disregard the fact that the Jewish nation could be achieved only with British help first and later through the Americans who agreed to the UN partition of Palestine

Gantz, who was earlier Chief of Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) recommended that Netanyahu accept the proposal.

Israel's relationship with the Palestinians had worsened after Netanyahu's Likud party teamed up with ultra-nationalist and ultra-Orthodox parties in December 2022. His opponents had then said that Netanyahu was forced to sign deals with hard-line parties as his erstwhile liberal allies refused to participate in his government since he was on trial on charges of bribery, fraud and breach of trust.

His present allies are United Torah Judaism, Shas, Otzma Yehudit, The Religious Zionist Party and New Hopewho believe that "the Jewish people have an exclusive and unquestionable right to all areas of the land of Israel." This includes the land portions given to the Palestinian Arabs by the UN Palestine Partition Plan which was adopted by the UN General Assembly on 29 November 1947 as Resolution 181 (II), which created the new Jewish State of Israel within the then existing Arab Palestinian State.

Netanyahu and his ultra-nationalist supporters disregard the fact that the Jewish nation could be achieved only with British help first and later through the Americans, especially President Harry S Truman, who agreed to the UN partition of Palestine. This is because earlier efforts by Theodor Herzl, father of modern Zionism, to enlist support from Kaiser Wilhelm II, emperor of Germany in 1898 and with the Ottoman Sultan in 1901 to grant a "homeland" to the Jewswere in vain.

Chaim Weizmann, a British research scientist of Russian Jewish origin who later became the first President of Israel had also played an important role. Weizmann had helped the British government with acetone supplies during the First World War. It was on his request that the Balfour Declaration was issued in 1917 when the Jewish population in Palestine was only 18,000 (3%) out of 6,00,000.

The Arabs protested when migration increased Jewish numbers to 83,790 by 1922. To this Winston Churchill, then Colonial Secretary gave an assurance that there was no

intention to turn Palestine into a Jewish State. By 1939 Jewish numbers reached 4,45,457 which was one third of Palestine's population.

On April 5, 1945, US President FD Roosevelt, while writing to King Ibn Saud of Saudi Arabia, assured him that no action would be taken in Palestine by America "which might prove hostile to the Arab people". However, his successor Truman altered this policy due to domestic political considerations.

On 2 April 1947 Britain moved the UN General Assembly on the future of Palestine. UNGA appointed a special committee of 11 members including India to recommend a solution. On September 1, 1947, the Committee recommended two options: the majority plan was to partition Palestine into Arab and Jewish areas with Jerusalem under international control, while the minority plan, proposed by India etc. was to have a federated State of Palestine, comprising of two autonomous States.

The US State Department, which had preferred the minority plan and not partition, was over-ruled by President Truman to pass Resolution 181 (II), creating the new Jewish State of Israel within the then existing Arab Palestinian State.

Later Israel breached this UN plan in 1967 by forcibly wresting East Jerusalem, West Bank and Gaza. Since then, Israel has been developing illegal Jewish settlements on Arab lands, forcibly evicting Palestinians who are rendered refugees.

The writer is a former Special Secretary, Cabinet Secretariat. Views are personal

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Vappala Balachandran

SINCE 1967, ISRAEL HAS BEEN DEVELOPING ILLEGAL JEWISH SETTLEMENTS ON ARAB LANDS, FORCIBLY EVICTING PALESTINIANS WHO ARE RENDERED REFUGEES

On August 19 Hamas said that it had accepted the new ceasefire proposal presented on the 17th by Qatar and Egypt to renew talks ahead of the planned major Israeli assault on Gaza City. This is mostly based on US President Donald Trump's envoy Steve Witkoff's plan, to which Israel had reportedly agreed. Consequent to this Qatar and Egypt put pressure on Hamas to accept the proposal. However, on August 20, a day after Hamas accepted peace, Israel bombed Gaza City and seemed to be going ahead with its threat of a large-scale offensive. This move by Israel leaves the outcome of the Qatar-Egypt peace plan uncertain.

The latest peace proposal, put together by Qatar and Egypt, envisages the release of 10 living Israeli hostages and 18 deceased hostages in exchange for 140 Palestinian prisoners serving life sentences and 60 serving sentences of more than 15 years. Israel will also release all Palestinian minors and female prisoners. A ceasefire will be effective during which Israeli forces would redeploy to the lines specified in the Steve Witkoff proposal, on which the Qatar-Egypt plan is modelled. Following this, humanitarian aid would flow to the Gaza population.

The peace bids coincided with a massive demonstration of nearly 400,000 Israelis on August 17th in Tel Aviv, supported by a grassroot strike by nearly one million in the whole country. While Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said that he had heard about the Qatar-Egypt proposal, hardliners like Itamar Ben-Gvir opposed the idea. However former Defence Minister Benny



Piotr Opalinski

BY ALIGNING STRATEGIC ECONOMIC INTERESTS, TECHNOLOGICAL EXPERTISE, AND LONG-TERM VISION, BOTH NATIONS CAN REALISE SUBSTANTIAL MUTUAL BENEFITS

Indian businesses seeking to expand into Europe are eyeing Poland as a prime destination. Beyond being a market for goods and investments, Poland serves as a strategic gateway to the European Union. Located at the heart of Central and Eastern Europe, it combines geographic advantage, modern infrastructure, economic stability, and a dynamic business environment. For Indian companies planning European expansion, leveraging Poland as a hub for logistics, innovation, and investment is increasingly essential.

Several Indian companies have successfully leveraged Poland as a European gateway. Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) and Infosys operate development centers in Warsaw and Kraków, providing IT and software services across the EU. Mahindra & Mahindra uses Poland as a hub for automotive parts distribution and after-sales services, enabling rapid market access.

Polish companies also benefit from Indian collaboration. Joint ventures in automotive and technology sectors combine Polish engineering expertise with Indian innovation, strengthening industrial capabilities and global market reach. These cases illustrate that Poland functions not only as a market but as a launchpad for sustainable European operations.

Poland's geographic position at the crossroads of Western and Eastern Europe offers access to over 500 million European consumers. Sharing borders with Germany, the Czech Republic,

Slovakia, Ukraine, Belarus, and Lithuania, the country allows Indian firms to distribute products efficiently across the continent.

Modern highways, rail networks, and airports enable smooth movement of goods, while the Port of Gdansk provides a critical maritime link between Europe and Asia, including India. Poland is also developing multimodal logistics corridors that integrate road, rail, and air transport, ensuring flexible and efficient supply chains. For e-commerce, automotive, pharmaceuticals, and industrial manufacturing, Poland offers a reliable and cost-effective base for European operations.

Key sectors such as information technology, automotive, chemicals, and renewable energy offer numerous opportunities for collaboration with Indian firms. The Polish workforce is highly educated, particularly in engineering, IT, and research & development. This talent pool supports technology-intensive partnerships, enabling Indian companies to establish development centers, innovation hubs, and R&D collaborations efficiently. Operational costs in Poland remain competitive compared to Western Europe, enhancing its strategic appeal.

Poland hosts industrial clusters, logistics parks, and innovation centers that provide skilled labour, advanced technology, and research facilities. Establishing a presence in Poland enables Indian firms to access the EU market efficiently while benefiting from a supportive regula-

tory environment and proximity to European partners.

Over recent years, India-Poland trade has expanded significantly, moving beyond traditional sectors like textiles and IT services into high-value areas including machinery, automotive components, pharmaceuticals, and electronics. Indian IT companies collaborate with Polish firms on software development, cybersecurity, and digital transformation projects, while Polish companies benefit from India's expertise in technology and research.

Sectors such as artificial intelligence, fintech, renewable energy, and smart manufacturing present substantial potential for joint ventures, enhancing India's global competitiveness and contributing to Europe's innovation agenda. Growing cooperation is also visible in green technologies, particularly in renewable energy integration, energy storage, and the development of electric mobility solutions, where both India and Poland see long-term strategic benefits.

Trade missions, business incubators, and bilateral chambers of commerce further facilitate connections between Indian and European companies. Leveraging these resources, Indian firms can establish partnerships, joint ventures, and technology collaborations, enabling faster and smoother European expansion. In addition, Poland's well-developed advisory sector and widespread proficiency in English and other European languages make it easier for Indian entre-

preneurs to communicate effectively and adapt to the European business culture.

Beyond economic interests, Poland and India share strategic values, including democratic governance, economic liberalisation, and international cooperation. Both nations emphasise technological advancement, infrastructure development, and sustainable energy solutions.

Educational and cultural exchanges reinforce these ties. A growing number of Indian students pursue higher education in Poland, particularly in engineering, medicine, and IT. This fosters a pool of talent familiar with both Indian and European business practices, supporting long-term partnerships. Collaborative research, academic programmes, and cultural initiatives further strengthen trust and continuity in bilateral relationships.

Looking forward, India-Poland cooperation is set to grow in renewable energy, digital transformation, advanced manufacturing, and smart logistics. Poland's continued investment in infrastructure, innovation, and business-friendly policies ensures that Indian companies can establish competitive European operations and diversify supply chains amid global uncertainties.

For Indian businesses, Poland is increasingly becoming more than a destination—it's a bridge to Europe.

The writer is an expert, Centre for International Relations, Poland

INFA

India's Pak Policy

Problems between two parties can be resolved in one of only three ways. The first is through negotiation between these two parties. The second is through arbitration from a third party. The third is through force: one party compels the other to do what it wants. Whether the two parties are individuals, groups, litigants, corporations or nations, these are the only three ways in which a problem can be solved.

Indian children use a fourth way, which is called katti. It involves pretending that the other side does not exist. This does not solve the problem but it gives the child a sort of satisfaction.

On August 21, this headline appeared in our media: 'No bilateral events with Pakistan but Indian cricket team free to play in Asia Cup: Sports Ministry.'

Here is a question: Which of these statements was a part of the Modi government's official Pakistan policy? 1) India will talk to Pakistan. 2) India will not talk to Pakistan. 3) India will not talk to Pakistan so long as it keeps firing across the LoC. 4) India will talk to Pakistan only after it stops exporting terror. 5) India will not talk to Pakistan if it talks to Kashmiris. 6) India will talk to Pakistan but only about terrorism. 7) India will talk to Pakistan about Kashmir. 8) India will talk to Pakistan but only about PoK not about Kashmir. 9) India will talk to Pakistan but only about terror, not Kashmir. 10) India will talk to Pakistan because it had already lectured it on terror.

11) India will exchange sweets with Pakistan on Independence Day. 12) India will not exchange sweets with Pakistan on Independence Day. 13) India will exchange sweets with Pakistan on Republic Day. 14) India will not exchange sweets with Pakistan on Republic Day. 15) India will exchange sweets with Pakistan on Diwali. 16) India will not exchange sweets with Pakistan on Diwali. 17) India will exchange sweets with Pakistan on Eid. 18) India will not exchange sweets with Pakistan on Eid.

19) India will do cricket diplomacy with Pakistan. 20) India will not do cricket diplomacy with Pakistan. 21) India will not talk to Pakistan but will reply to each bullet with a bomb at LoC. 22) India will talk to Pakistan because war was not an option. 23) India can defeat Pakistan in war in a week.

24) India would not give in to pressure on LoC firing. 25) India will agree to LoC ceasefire because violations have increased. 26) India will trade with Pakistan. 27) India will not trade with Pakistan.

The correct answer is of course that each and every one of these were the Modi government's official policy. These are the news headlines that correspond to the statements above.

1) 'Narendra Modi holds impromptu talks with Nawaz Sharif in Lahore', 25 December 2015. 2) 'No message for talks sent to Pakistan, says MEA', 15 October 2020.

3) 'Sushma Swaraj squarely blames Pakistan for spoiling foreign secretary-level talks with India', 26 September 2016. 4) 'India can talk to Pakistan but not to "Terroristan": S Jaishankar', 25 September 2019. 5) 'No talks with Pakistan if it meets Hurriyat: Sushma', 22 August 2015. 6) 'India will talk to Pakistan only on cross-border terrorism, not Kashmir', 18 August 2016. 7) 'Ready to talk with Pakistan on J&K within bilateral framework: India', 28 August 2014. 8) 'Any future talks with Pakistan will be on PoK, not on J&K: Rajnath Singh', 22 September 2019.

9) 'Ready to talk on terror but not Kashmir: India to Pakistan', 17 August 2016. 10) 'After tough talk on terror, India ready to restart talks with Pakistan', 28 May 2014. 11) 'Independence Day: India-Pak security forces exchange sweets at border', 15 August 2018. 12) '73rd Independence Day: No exchange of sweets at Attari-Wagah border post', 15 August 2019. 13) 'On Republic Day, Indian, Pakistan troops exchange sweets on LoC', 26 January 2017. 14) 'BSF, Pak Rangers not to exchange sweets on R-Day', 25 January 2020, Hindustan Times.

15) 'On Diwali, India, Pakistan troops exchange sweets at Wagah Border', 7 November 2018. 16) 'No exchange of sweets at Attari border this Diwali', 30 October 2016. 17) 'Indian and Pakistani armies exchange sweets on the occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr', 5 June 2019. 18) 'No exchange of sweets between BSF, Pakistan Rangers at Wagah Border on Eid', 25 March 2020. 19) 'Modi's cricket diplomacy: Renewing political contact with Pakistan', 13 February 2015.

20) 'Amit Shah rules out Indo-Pak "bilateral" cricket series; BJP backs him', 18 June 2017. 21) 'Will reply to Pakistan's bullets with bombs: Amit Shah', 29 March 2019. 22) 'War with Pakistan not an option, India will continue talks: Swaraj', 16 December 2015. 23) 'India can now defeat Pakistan "in 7-10 days", says Narendra Modi', 29 January 2020. 24) 'Everything will be fine soon: Narendra Modi on LoC firing', 9 October 2014. 25) 'The surprise India-Pakistan ceasefire call and what it means, explained', 26 February 2021. 26) 'Modi seeks full trade normalisation with Pakistan', 24 November 2017. 27) 'India suspends cross-LoC trade with Pakistan', 18 April 2018.

And this was all just the first five years of this government. The dictionary defines the word policy as 'a definite course or method of action selected from among alternatives and in light of given conditions to guide and determine present and future decisions'; and also as 'a high-level overall plan embracing the general goals and acceptable procedures especially of a governmental body'.

One wonders how the dictionary would describe India's Pakistan policy.



Aakar Patel

The dictionary defines the word 'policy' as 'a definite course or method of action selected from among alternatives and in light of given conditions to guide and determine present and future decisions'

WISDOM CORNER

Die to everything of yesterday so that your mind is always fresh, always young, innocent, full of vigor and passion.

JIDDU KRISHNAMURTI

Be miserable. Or motivate yourself. Whatever has to be done, it's always your choice.

WAYNE DYER

No matter what illnesses and injuries you are carrying, while you are still breathing, there is more right with you than wrong with you."

VIDYAMALA BURCH

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

■ **1572:** The Massacre of St. Bartholomew's Day, plotted by Catherine de' Medici against the French Huguenots, was carried out by Roman Catholic nobles and other citizens.

■ **1814:** During the War of 1812, British forces captured Washington, D.C., and burned various government buildings, notably the Capitol and the Executive Mansion (now known as the White House).

■ **1932:** American aviator Amelia Earhart took off from Los Angeles, and, when she landed in Newark, New Jersey, the following day, she became the first woman to complete a solo nonstop flight across the United States.

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

Readers of Orissa Post are most welcome to contribute letters (100 words), articles and columns (between 600-1000 words). Contributors are requested to send their contact numbers and full postal address/email ID. They may also send in their valuable comments, opinion and suggestions, preferably by email, to: edit@orissapost.com

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



Jail for politicians

Sir, The proposed bill to punish ministers who remain in jail for more than 30 days can truly benefit society only if genuinely tainted politicians are permanently barred from re-entering politics, rather than being welcomed back with a clean slate after serving their term. However, safeguards must ensure that punishments are based on proven crimes, not political vendettas. Equally important is reforming parliamentary conduct—sessions must reflect discipline and decorum on par with Army standards. The shameful scenes of legislators hurling papers, footwear, or using abusive language damage democracy. Strict enforcement against unruly behavior and unparliamentary language is essential. Parliament must embody dignity, respect, and responsibility, setting the highest example for the nation.

RS Narula, PATIALA

Stray dog management

Sir, Apropos, "SC modifies harsh stray dog ruling," Orissa POST, August 23. The Supreme Court's order on stray dogs, delivered by a three-judge bench, carries significance well beyond the immediate question of canine management. By explicitly acknowledging dogs as territorial beings, the court injects a measure of empathy into a debate often framed only in terms of human inconvenience or public safety. More importantly, the order has been made applicable across the country, thereby eliminating jurisdictional ambiguities that previously allowed state and municipal authorities to pass the responsibility back and forth. This uniformity in law is crucial given that stray dog-related conflicts are largely an urban problem but vary in intensity across regions. The court has also drawn a clear line between harmless strays and those that are ferocious or rabid, rightly mandating confinement for the latter. Yet, the order recognizes that the authority to decide which dogs fall into these categories must be properly defined. Unless accountability is clearly fixed—whether on municipal bodies, veterinary experts, or local welfare boards—the risk of arbitrary decisions remains. In striking this balance between compassion and caution, the bench has created a framework that could guide humane yet practical stray dog management nationwide.

N Sadhasiva Reddy, BANGALORE



Illegal weapons: U'khand officials update High Court

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Nainital, August 23: Uttarakhand Home Secretary Shailesh Bagauli and Director General of Police (DGP) Deepam Seth Friday informed the High Court 1,700 people have been booked in 1,550 cases related to illegal weapons in the state while 3,000 such weapons have been seized.

Appearing before a bench of Chief Justice G Narendra and Justice Subhash Upadhyay through video conference, both the officials said that a total of 48,418 licenses of weapons have been issued in Uttarakhand.

Recently, 481 licenses were canceled, the court was told.

The officials apprised the court that 72 cases of firing and waving weapons while making social media reels were registered and 120 people were arrested in such cases.

The Home Secretary and DGP told the court that a factory of illegal weapons was busted in Udham Singh Nagar district. They said that since Udham Singh Nagar shares its border with a neighbouring state, special vigilance is being maintained there.

Earlier, the High Court had expressed concern over the incident of a student coming to school with a pistol and shooting and injuring his teacher in Kashipur of Udham Singh Nagar district.

In this regard, Bagauli said that the pistol belonged to the student's father who has been arrested while the student has been sent to the juvenile protection home.

The officials also said that the Uttarakhand Police is working in coordination with the STF of neighbouring states in the case of illegal weapons.

While hearing a suo motu PIL regarding free and fair elections of Nainital District Panchayat August 19, the Uttarakhand High Court had expressed concern over the law and order situation in the state and asked the Home Secretary and DGP of the state to appear before the court.

The division bench directed both the officers to prepare a detailed plan to curb illegal weapons, ensure free and fair elections, provide security to elected representatives and stop illegal mining.

Regarding the Nainital Panchayat elections, the court asked the Home Secretary and the DGP to review the video evidence once again.

The bench said that the earlier order given by the court regarding providing security to the elected members was not followed.

The bench emphasized that all elections should be conducted freely and safely. The court also suggested installing cameras in sensitive and remote areas and using modern technology for surveillance.

The court listed the hearing of the case for two weeks later.

India's first shipment of Garhwali apples exported to Dubai

The experience gained from the trial shipment will further refine cold chain management, post-harvest operations, and logistical frameworks, with future expansion targeting South-East Asia and Europe

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, August 23: India has dispatched the first shipment of 1.2 MT of Garhwali apples from Dehradun to Dubai as part of an effort to increase exports of agricultural products to raise farmers' incomes.

The experience gained from the trial shipment will further refine cold chain management, post-harvest operations, and logistical frameworks, with future expansion targeting South-East Asia and Europe.

Flagging off the consignment of Garhwal's King Roat variety of apples in Dehradun,

J&K takes over schools linked to banned Jel

The School Education Department had Friday ordered the takeover of 215 schools affiliated with Jel and its Falah-e-Aam Trust, where over 51,000 students are enrolled, in order to 'safeguard their academic future'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar, August 23: Teams of officials accompanied by police visited schools affiliated with the banned Jamaat-e-Islami (Jel) across the 10 districts of Kashmir as the J&K government Saturday took over their management.

According to officials, the entire process was conducted "peacefully and smoothly", without disturbing the education of the students.

The School Education Department had Friday ordered the takeover of 215 schools affiliated with Jel and its Falah-e-Aam Trust, where over 51,000 students are enrolled, in order to "safeguard their academic future".

Officials of district administrations, principals of the respective nearest high and higher secondary schools, accompanied by police teams,



reached these schools Saturday morning. The administrative teams took charge of the schools, checked their documents and the infrastructure, as well as interacted with the staff, the officials said.

The move drew criticism from political parties in Jammu and Kashmir, including PDP, People's Conference and Apni Party, which called it "administrative overreach".

Justice and Development Front (JDF) J&K -- formed by the former members of the banned Jel -- denounced the government move, saying it was a "painful reminder" of the National Conference's "history of betrayal".

PDP president Mehbooba Mufti said it is unfortunate that the ruling party in J&K "is going against its own people and implementing the BJP's agenda".

However, a teacher at one

of such schools in south Kashmir's Anantnag district welcomed the government move.

"I think it is a good step. We used to face a lot of difficulties, but now I think everything will be streamlined," Mohamad Ishaq, teacher at Hanfia Islamia Institute at Tachloo area of the district, said.

He said the district magistrates used to frame the managing bodies of the schools in the 1980s as well.

A student at the school, Aliya Irshad, said the move will benefit the students and the staff. "The school will improve and prosper," she said.

She also demanded that the government increase the salaries of the staff as they work very hard for the students.

The Friday order said, "The Managing Committee of the 215 schools shall be taken over by the District Magistrate/ Deputy Commissioner



concerned who shall propose a fresh Managing Committee in due course for the concerned schools after getting these duly verified."

The Union Ministry of Home Affairs, February 28, 2019, and again February 27, 2024, declared the Jel as an unlawful association under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act.

"The Intelligence Agencies have identified a number of schools which were found to be directly or indirectly affiliated with proscribed organisation Jamat-e-Islami (Jel)/ Falah-e-Aam Trust (FAT)," the order said.

It said the validity of the managing committees of these schools has expired, and also these panels have been "reported adversely" by the intelligence agencies.

The order said the decision to take over the managing committees of such schools

has been taken in order to safeguard the academic future of the students enrolled in these schools.

The concerned District Magistrate/ Deputy Commissioner shall take appropriate steps in consultation and in coordination with the School Education Department to ensure that the academic career of the students enrolled in these schools is not affected in any manner, it added.

Education Minister Sakina Itoo, however, said that the schools will be looked after by the principals of the nearby high or higher secondary schools. She said the draft approved by her Friday mentioned that the cluster principals would look after these schools, contrary to the order issued by the School Education Department Secretary, an IAS officer who reports to the LG.

Several parties criticise govt; BJP welcomes it

Several political parties in Kashmir Saturday criticised the J&K government's takeover of the management of 215 schools affiliated to the banned Jamaat-e-Islami (Jel) and called for revoking the order, while the BJP welcomed it as a "much-needed intervention" in national interest.

PDP president Mehbooba Mufti slammed the ruling National Conference in Jammu and Kashmir, accusing it of "implementing BJP's agenda" and "bringing an established educational system to the brink of destruction". "It is unfortunate that they are going against their own people and implementing the BJP's agenda," she told reporters here. "Why take over the schools? When they were not taken over in the LG rule, why now in the popular government? If the minister is saying there is confusion, the order should be cancelled. I think it is very bad to play with the lives of the people and especially with the education system," Mufti said.

The former chief minister of the erstwhile state of J&K appealed to Education Minister Sakina Itoo to stand up for her own people. "It is not about Jel or FAT. You have done this today for the people in Delhi, tomorrow they will ask you to do something else," she said, adding, "It seems they (NC) are on the same page with the BJP".

Justice and Development Front (JDF) J&K -- formed by the members of the banned Jel -- denounced the government move, saying it was an "administrative overreach" and a "painful reminder" of the National Conference's "history of betrayal".

The outfit and some others claimed that these schools have been "banned", but Education Minister Sakina Itoo denied it and asserted that the schools will only be looked after by the government till the new management committees are formed. Itoo assured the people that no school will be taken over by the government permanently. "Once the managing committee is formed, schools will be handed over to them," she said.

Heavy rain wrecks havoc in Chamoli



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Gopeshwar, August 23: A young woman died and another person went missing Saturday after heavy overnight rain in Tharali town of Chamoli district sent a rain drain flooding and depositing debris at several houses and markets in the area, according to State Emergency Operations Centre.

Tunri Gadhera, the rain drain that channels excess rainwater, also filled the tehsil office with debris before joining the Pindar River.

Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami expressed grief over the death of the woman. The incident took place around 1 am when Tunri Gadhera started overflowing, filling muck in many houses in the tehsil complex, Chepdon Bazaar, Kotdeep

Bazaar and the surrounding areas of Tharali.

The officials said the woman died in a house in Sagwara village after being buried under debris. Her body has been recovered. On the other hand, a person is reported to be missing in Chepdon market.

Some vehicles are also buried in the debris while the SDM residence has also been damaged. According to the Chamoli District Disaster Management Centre, the Karnaprayag-Gwaldam National Highway connecting Tharali has been closed. Additionally, the Tharali-Sagwara Motorway and the Dungri Motorway have also been blocked.

The district administration has declared a holiday for Saturday in all the schools of the three development blocks, including Tharali, due to the

Water level in artificial lake in Syanachatti recedes by 12 feet

Uttarkashi (Uttarakhand): Water level in the artificial lake that formed in Syanachatti of Uttarkashi district after debris obstructed the flow of the Yamuna river has decreased by about 12 feet, officials said Saturday. Uttarkashi District Magistrate Prashant Arya said that the channel created in the artificial lake by disaster response teams to drain the water is bearing fruit. "A channel was created to drain the lake, and today the water level of the lake has decreased by 12 feet," Arya said, adding that the Syanachatti bridge, which was briefly underwater, has now resurfaced. The bridge is now being cleaned and will soon be opened for traffic under police supervision, the DM said. Due to heavy rains, a temporary lake formed Thursday in Syanachatti when boulders and debris from the hills fell into town and blocked the river flow. According to the State Emergency Operations Centre (SEOC) in Dehradun, the artificial lake had flooded houses, hotels and other buildings in the town, which is located on the way to Yamunotri -- a part of the revered Char Dham Yatra pilgrimage in Uttarakhand. Following this, about 300 people had to be shifted to safer places. The Centre said that the State Disaster Response Force (SDRF), National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), Public Works Department, the irrigation department and other agencies are present at the spot and continuing their work to drain the lake completely.



current situation and the forecast of heavy rain.

According to the Disaster Mitigation and Management Centre (DMMC), many agencies, including the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), the State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) and the Indo-Tibetan Border Police, are engaged in relief and rescue operations on the spot.

Meanwhile, orders have been issued for the acquisition of the rest house and office of Satluj Jal Vidyut Nigam in Kulsari village and the building of Garhwal Mandal Development Corporation in Dewal village with immediate effect. They will be used temporarily to carry out the work of the tehsil office and set up relief camps for the affected people.

Terror links: LG sacks two govt employees

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar, August 23: Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor (LG) Manoj Sinha Friday terminated the services of two government employees in the Union Territory over their alleged involvement in terror activities, officials said.

The sacked employees were identified as Siyad Ahmad Khan, an assistant stockman in the Sheep Husbandry Department residing in the Keran area, and Khurshid Ahmad Rather, a school teacher from the Karnah area -- both in north Kashmir's Kupwara district.

Article 311 (2)(c) of the Constitution was invoked to terminate their services after investigations by security and intelligence agencies established their involvement, they said. Both of them are currently lodged in the Kupwara district jail.

According to officials, Rather is accused of working as an overground worker (OGW) for the Lashkar-e-Taiba.

A probe revealed that Rather, who was appointed under the Rehbar-e-Taleem scheme in 2003 and confirmed in 2008, allegedly procured and distributed arms and narcotics for Pakistan-based handlers. He was arrested earlier this year after arms were seized in Kupwara.

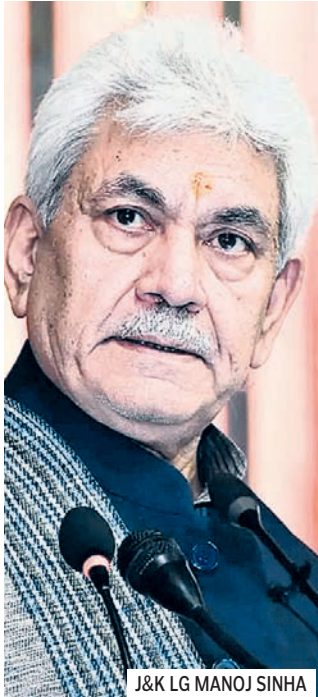
He was tasked by Pakistan-based handlers to procure and distribute arms, ammunition and narcotics among active terrorists in the Valley. He reportedly received several consignments through the LoC in Karnah. The weapons were supplied to terrorists, while proceeds from narcotics sales were used to fund operations, they said.

His role surfaced after intelligence inputs on January 25, 2024, indicated that two Pakistani terrorists, with the help of four associates, including Rather, were smuggling arms in Kupwara.

Khan, appointed in 2004, was caught with an AK-47 and is accused of sheltering and infiltrating terrorists and smuggling arms.

Investigators revealed that he was in touch with a Pakistan-based handler, who used him for smuggling arms and narcotics across the LoC for further distribution to active LeT terrorists.

Officials described their actions as "betrayal of national trust", underscoring the ad-



- KEY TAKEAWAYS**
- Siyad Ahmad Khan, an assistant stockman in the Sheep Husbandry department residing in the Keran area, and Khurshid Ahmad Rather, a school teacher from the Karnah area, were terminated
 - Article 311 (2)(c) of the Constitution was invoked to terminate their services after investigations by security and intelligence agencies established their involvement
 - Officials described their actions as "betrayal of national trust", underscoring the administration's zero-tolerance policy against terror support networks within government ranks
 - Over 70 government employees have been dismissed in Jammu and Kashmir in recent years over alleged terror links

ministration's zero-tolerance policy against terror support networks within government ranks.

They said the Lieutenant Governor was satisfied after considering the facts and circumstances of the cases and noted that, on the basis of the information available, the activities of the two are such as to warrant their dismissal from service.

More than 70 government employees have been dismissed in Jammu and Kashmir in recent years over alleged terror links.



Commerce Secretary Sunil Barthwal asked the Agricultural & Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) to expedite the opening of its regional office in Uttarakhand to increase exports from the state's agricultural sector.

Through a regional office, the APEDA aims to export more fresh fruits, millets, pulses, and organic products from the state, which currently exports jaggery, confectionery, and guar gum among edible products.

The APEDA has been working with farmers to increase access to remunerative international markets by assisting in resolving issues relating to infrastructure, connectivity, and post-harvest handling to build sustainable export pathways. The Commerce Ministry wing is sensitising farmers about Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs), adherence to international quality standards and post-harvest management techniques to meet the imports.

The APEDA supports and

promotes the export of fresh and processed fruits from India by providing financial aid, developing export facilities, establishing quality management systems, facilitating market access, and organising buyer-seller meets.

Key fruits exported include grapes, pomegranates, mangoes, bananas, and oranges, with significant export growth seen in recent years into new markets like Australia and Uganda.

As a result of these initiatives, there has been a growth of 47.3 per cent, in the volume of India's exports of fruits and vegetables between 2019-20 and 2023-24. The country's fruit and vegetable exports reach 123 countries, with 17 new markets added in three years.

Last month, the APEDA organised a Mango Promotion Programme in Abu Dhabi as

part of its ongoing efforts to enhance the global presence of Indian agricultural products. Timed with the peak mango season, the promotion showcased India's finest varieties of the fruit to international consumers, especially the large Indian diaspora across the UAE and the Gulf region.

Premium Indian mango varieties displayed included GI-tagged and regional specialties such as Banarasi Langda, Dasheri, Chausa, Sunderja, Amrapali, Malda, Bharat Bhog, Prabha Shankar, Lakshman Bhog, Mahmood Bahar, Vrindavani, Faslai, and Mallika.

The UAE remains the top export destination for Indian mangoes. In 2024, India exported over 12,000 MT of mangoes worth \$20 million to the UAE, demonstrating strong demand for the Indian fruit.

In 2024, India exported over 12,000 MT of mangoes worth \$20 million to the UAE, demonstrating strong demand for the Indian fruit



We are thinking of turning waste into wealth. There are many ways
N CHANDRABABU NAIDU | AP CM

UJJAIN TO HOST GLOBAL SPIRITUAL TOURISM CONCLAVE AUGUST 27

Ujjain -- the holy city of Mahakal in Madhya Pradesh -- will host a global spiritual tourism conclave August 27 that will provide a platform for dialogue on strengthening infrastructure and the impact of AI and virtual reality in the sector



of the day quote

BJP people had not spoken anything, they are fence sitters, after I spoke on the issue (calling it a conspiracy) they are speaking

D K SHIVAKUMAR | K*TAKA DY CM

On one hand they are saying that they want to make the country a 'Vishwa Guru'. On the other hand, after 'vote chor', they are becoming 'ration chor'

BHAGWANT MANN | PUNJAB CM

For me, everyone is equal. The entire party believes in the Congress ideology, and we will support any appointment made by the high command

SUKHVINDER SINGH SUKHU | HP CM

SHORT TAKES

Fake currency notes seized

Ranchi: Two persons were arrested after fake currency notes with a ₹2-crore face value were recovered from their possession in Jharkhand's Ranchi Saturday, police said. Three cartons, each containing 42 bundles of notes of ₹500 denomination, were seized after they were being shifted to a car from a bus near New Market Chowk in Ratu Road area under the Sukhdeo Nagar Police Station limits, he said. The consignment had arrived from Patna in Bihar, the officer said.

LPG tanker fire: Toll rises to three

Hoshiarpur: The death toll in the LPG tanker fire incident rose to three after one more person succumbed to burn injuries, police said Saturday. Earlier, two people were killed and 21 others injured when an LPG tanker exploded after another vehicle collided with it around 10 pm Friday near Mandiala Adda on the Hoshiarpur-Jalandhar road. According to police, the blaze spread rapidly, engulfing nearly 15 shops and four to five residential houses in the vicinity.

Animal lovers protest at stray dog shelter

New Delhi: Members of animal welfare organisations and dog lovers staged a protest outside a stray dog shelter in north Delhi's Rohini, alleging cruelty towards the animals and demanding their release in line with Supreme Court directions, police said Saturday. The top court Friday modified its August 11 direction prohibiting the release of vaccinated stray dogs from shelter homes in Delhi-NCR calling it "too harsh", and ordered the canines be released post sterilisation and de-worming.

Auto driver held for raping minor

Satna: A 21-year-old man allegedly raped a four-year-old student of a nursery school while transporting her in an auto-rickshaw in Madhya Pradesh's Satna district, police said Saturday. The accused has been arrested. The child, a student of a private school, usually travelled in an auto-rickshaw.

Onion growers allege financial loss

Nashik: Onion growers in Maharashtra are facing financial losses due to non-transparent procurement of the crop by a Central agency, an association representing farmers alleged Saturday.

BANK FRAUD

CBI books Anil Ambani, RCom & searches premises

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi/Mumbai, August 23: The CBI searched the Mumbai residence of Reliance Communication Ltd. (RCom) Director Anil Ambani Saturday after recently registering a case over the alleged defrauding of State Bank of India of ₹2929.05 crore, officials said.

Teams of CBI conducted the searches at two locations in Mumbai Saturday -- the official premises of Reliance Communication Ltd., and residential premises of Anil D Ambani, the agency said in a statement.

The action took place after the CBI registered an FIR Thursday against Reliance Communication Ltd (RCom), Mumbai, its Director Anil D Ambani, unknown public servants and unknown others on the basis of a complaint from the SBI, it said.

The searches took place at Ambani's residence 'Sea Wind' at Cuffe Parade in Mumbai, sources said.

According to the SBI complaint, now part of the FIR, the company had an outstanding of over ₹40,000 crore to various lenders with the public sector bank alone facing a loss of ₹2929.05 crore, according to 2018 figures. The agency has booked Am ani and RCom for allegedly committing offences of criminal conspiracy, cheating and criminal breach of trust, the CBI has said. "It is alleged that the accused persons, in criminal conspiracy, misrepresented and got sanctioned credit facilities from SBI in favour of Reliance Communication Ltd.," the CBI Spokesperson said.

She said it was also alleged that there was misutilisation and diversion of loan funds, potential routing of loan funds, inter-company loan transac-



Anil Ambani and others were booked on an SBI complaint that alleged criminal conspiracy, misrepresentation of facts for getting credit, and diversion of loan

tions, misutilisation of sales invoice financing, discounting of bills of RCom by Reliance Infratel Ltd., movement of funds through inter-company deposits, among others.

According to the SBI complaint, now part of the FIR, Reliance Communications Ltd. (RCom), Reliance Infratel Ltd. (RITL), a step-down subsidiary of RCOM and Reliance Telecom Ltd. (RTL), a subsidiary of RCom, cumulatively received ₹31,580 crores from banks.

The forensic audit done in 2020 mapped the utilisation of funds obtained from banks which flagged deviations in funds received and utilised by RCom. The utilisation was not as per the terms of sanction, it alleged. It is alleged that ₹13667.73 crore (44 pc) were utilised for repayment of loans and other obligations to Banks and FIIs, and ₹12692.31 crore (41 pc) were utilised to pay to connected parties.

The audit underlined that ₹6265.85 crore obtained from

banks through loans were utilised for repayment of other bank loans, ₹5501.56 crore of loans were used for paying related and connected parties and investment of ₹1883.08 crore were made from the loans received from various banks, it alleged while giving details of a number of other irregular transactions.

Capital advances given to Netizen Engineering Pvt. Ltd. -- a group company of Reliance ADA Group -- were written off. Besides, fictitious debtors were created and written off, the CBI Spokesperson said in the statement. The audit had red-flagged a capital advance of ₹5525 crore extended to Netizen Engineering Pvt Ltd (Netizen) in 2015-16.

"In 2017-18, Netizen acquired two assets (one tangible worth ₹3041.24 crore and a receivable worth ₹3042 crore) from Millenium Private Network Ltd. (MP'NL), one of which was immediately transferred to RCIL."

4-year-old boy's body found in train toilet bin in Mumbai

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, August 23: The body of a four-year-old boy was found dumped in a garbage bin kept in the toilet of an express train at Mumbai's Lokmany Tilak Terminus (LTT) early Saturday, with the police saying the victim was abducted by his cousin from Surat in Gujarat.

The body was found inside an air-conditioned coach of the Kushinagar Express (22537) train that runs daily between Gorakhpur in Uttar Pradesh and the LTT, police said.

The incident came to light after the train arrived at the LTT, a police official said. A public relations officer of the Central Railway said the cleaning staff found the body of the boy in one of the toilets of B2 coach of the express around 6 am during the sanitation process, after which they alerted the Railway Protection Force

The body was found inside an air-conditioned coach of the Kushinagar Express (22537) train that runs daily between Gorakhpur in Uttar Pradesh and the LTT

(RPF) and the Government Railway Police (GRP). A Gujarat police team also reached Mumbai in search of the boy after a missing person complaint was lodged there. During the probe, they found that he had been abducted from Amroli in Surat Friday, the police official said. "After contacting the LTT GRP officials, the Gujarat police team verified the victim's identity and confirmed that he was the same kidnapped boy. After that, they alerted his family members back home," he said.



People stand near Hatia Dam after its gates were opened following rise in water level due to heavy rainfall in Ranchi, Jharkhand

FROM BULLOCK CARTS TO MOON LANDING

NCERT launches special modules on space journey

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 23: From carrying rockets on bicycles and bullock carts in the 1960s to landmark space missions like Chandrayaan and Gaganyaan, India's rise among the global space powers is now part of NCERT's special modules.

Two modules titled 'India: A rising space power' highlights how the Indian National Committee for Space Research (IN-COSPAR), set up in 1962 under Vikram Sarabhai, grew into the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), which went on to script achievements that have placed India among the leading spacefaring nations.



"India's first rocket was so small and light that its parts were carried on bicycles and bullock carts. Scientists chose bicycles and bullock carts for the purpose! Motorised vehicles like cars and trucks cre-



ate electric and magnetic fields that could disturb the delicate rocket equipment. So, using simple transport kept everything safe," the module read.

The two modules -- one catering to middle-stage students

and the other to secondary students -- pay tribute to India's astronauts, Squadron Leader Rakesh Sharma who became the first Indian to travel to space in 1984 on a Soviet mission, and Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla who in June 2025 became the first Indian to stay at the International Space Station.

The modules also feature a quote from Prime Minister Narendra Modi, which says, "Space may seem distant, but is an integral

part of our daily life. It derives our modern communication and connects even the remotest family to the ordinary. India's space programme is a perfect example of our vision of Scale, Speed and Skill". The modules list several landmark missions, such as Chandrayaan-1 (2008), through which water molecules

The special modules have been designed with photographs, diagrams and timelines to help students understand the country's space journey

were discovered on the Moon; Mangalyaan (2013), which made India the first Asian country to reach Mars and the first in the world to succeed on its first attempt; Chandrayaan-2 (2019), whose orbiter continues to provide critical lunar data; and Aditya-L1 (2023), India's first solar observatory at Lagrange Point-1 that studies the Sun's outer atmosphere and solar storms.

They also talk about the upcoming NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration)-ISRO NISAR satellite, which will offer high-resolution data on Earth's ecosystems, ice cover, and natural disasters by surveying the world once every 12 days.

8 killed after mini-van, truck collide near Patna

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Patna, August 23: Eight people were killed and four others injured in a head-on collision between a mini-van and a truck on the outskirts of Patna Saturday, police said.

The accident took place in the early hours in Shahjahanpur near the Patna-Nalanda border, they said. Among the deceased were seven women, they added. The injured were admitted to a nearby government hospital, said SP (Rural) Vikram Singh.

"The driver of the truck managed to flee from the spot," he said. Chief Minister Nitish Kumar condoled the deaths.

"The CM expressed his deep anguish at the tragic accident in Patna and offered his condolences to the bereaved families," a statement from the CMO said.



of the day


quote

Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India has made a big leap in space sector. On this very day in 2023, our country achieved success in the Chandrayaan Mission 3




ANURAG SINGH THAKUR | FORMER UNION MINISTER AND HAMIRPUR MP

Mahayuti alliance cannot win if elections are held honestly, certainly not in Maharashtra. Rahul Gandhi has exposed how they stole votes. He has torn their 'burqa' (veil)



UDDHAV THACKERAY | SHIV SENA (UBT) CHIEF


Dream of good governance and a developed Uttar Pradesh can be realized only when the judicial system is smooth, quick, and accessible



YOGI ADITYANATH | UP CHIEF MINISTER

POST OF THE DAY

When a Chinese envoy uses an Adani funded Chintan Research Foundation platform to equate India with Pakistan and claim that Pakistan is a 'victim of terrorism', should Modi Government remain a mute spectator wooing the Chinese or 'speak up' in National Interest - to question the Chinese as also Adani?



@rssurjewala

SHORT TAKES

India-Thailand military exercise from Sept 1-14

New Delhi: The 14th edition of a joint exercise between the militaries of India and Thailand is set to take place in Meghalaya's Umroi from September 1 to 14, the Indian Army said Saturday. Exercise Maitree is designed to further sharpen the operational capabilities of both the armies in undertaking joint company-level counter-terrorism operations in semi-urban terrain, it said.

4 teenagers drown in Bihar

Darbhanga (Bihar): Four teenagers, including three girls, drowned in Kamla River in Bihar's Darbhanga district Saturday, police said. The incident took place around noon in Basaoli village under the jurisdiction of Ghanshyampur police station.

Man slaps woman for feeding stray dogs

Ghaziabad (UP): Police in Ghaziabad have arrested a man for allegedly slapping a woman multiple times for feeding stray dogs in a residential area, officials said Saturday. According to police, the incident took place under the Vijay Nagar police station limits Friday night. In a video that went viral on social media, the woman could be heard saying, "Didi make the video," to which the man responds, "Make the video." After this, the woman says, "You are hitting me," and the man replies, "Who hit first?"

Gangster Mayank Singh brought back to Ranchi

Ranchi/ Ramgarh: Gangster Mayank Singh was brought back to Ranchi by the Jharkhand Anti-Terrorist Squad (ATS) on Saturday morning following his extradition from Azerbaijan, officials said. The team led by Jharkhand ATS SP Rishav Kumar Jha visited Azerbaijan to bring back Singh, alias Sunil Meena, after the completion of the formalities as per the extradition treaty between the two countries, they said.

Modi speaks more, works less: Kcharge



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 23: Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge Saturday took a swipe at Prime Minister Narendra Modi, saying he "talks more and works less" unlike his predecessor Manmohan Singh who "talked less and worked more".

Kharge also alleged that Modi considers responding to questions raised by the Opposition an insult, and recalled how the Opposition raised several issues, including on the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in Bihar and halting of Operation Sindoor, but the prime minister did not respond.

Addressing a Dr Manmohan Singh Fellowship Programme function at the Congress headquarters at Indira Bhawan, Kharge said he worked with the former prime minister who would talk less and work more.

"He used to talk less and work more. But today's Prime Minister talks more and works a little less. Manmohan Singh ji was always present in the House during Parliament sessions. He used to answer questions and respond to the Opposition's comments as well. Today's Prime Minister considers this an insult," Kharge alleged.

"Not even 10 per cent of the work done during his time has been done in the last 11 years. Those who become leaders after studying have more knowledge, they work more. They do not pay much attention to publicity," the Congress chief said. Congratulating the fellows of the first batch of the Manmohan Singh Fellowship Programme launched by the All-India Professionals Congress, he said, "It is also your responsibility to carry forward the ideas of the Congress, which has a 140-year-old glorious heritage."

"Professionals and intellectuals have always played

Kharge alleged that Modi considers responding to questions raised by the Opposition an insult, and recalled how the Opposition raised several issues, including on the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in Bihar and halting of Operation Sindoor, but the Prime Minister did not respond

a major role in our freedom struggle and politics. When the Congress was formed in 1885, lawyers, teachers, doctors, engineers, scientists and officers were at its core."

"Hundreds of heroes such as Mahatma Gandhi, Nehru ji, Sardar Patel, and Sarojini Naidu left their illustrious careers to serve the country. Congress is the only party that has always given space to professionals and respected their abilities."

"Manmohan Singh is the biggest example of this. Rajiv Gandhi ji was also a pilot before joining politics. His work as the Prime Minister was excellent," Kharge said.

Noting that in Indian history, the UPA regime after 1990 was a different era of change, Kharge said that under the leadership of Sonia Gandhi, historic decisions like Right to Information Act, MNREGA, Right to Education, Food Security, and Forest Rights were taken with the help of professionals.

"Manmohan Singh did not let the shadow of the 2008 global recession fall on India. India's average GDP growth rate was 8 per cent."

"I would like to tell you that the work on Aadhaar card started during that time. By 2014, bank accounts had been opened in more than half of the rural households," he claimed.

Cong MLA arrested in betting racket

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore/New Delhi, August 23: Karnataka Congress MLA K C Veerendra 'Puppy' was arrested Saturday under the anti-money laundering law from Sikkim in an alleged illegal online and offline betting case, the Enforcement Directorate (ED) said.

The federal probe agency also said it seized ₹12 crore in cash (including about ₹crore in foreign currency), gold jewellery worth ₹6 crore, silver about 10 kg along with four vehicles following raids launched Friday in multiple states.

The agency did not specify exactly what was seized from where. A picture issued by the agency showed huge wads of currency notes kept on a casino table. The ED said the 50-year-old MLA from Chitradurga Assembly seat in Karnataka



was taken into custody from Sikkim's capital Gangtok on Friday under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) in an "illegal" online and offline betting case.

The legislator had gone to Gangtok along with his associates on a business visit to lease a casino, the agency said.

He was produced before a designated magistrate and a transit remand was obtained for producing him before the jurisdictional court in Bengaluru,

The BJP is a gang of looters. It has captured institutions and resources. There is no limit to BJP's lies. It is the biggest liar party. Doing injustice and oppressing people is their agenda

AKHILESH YADAV | SP CHIEF



A worker puts dyed yarns for drying in Nadia, West Bengal

KWATRA'S DIPLOMATIC ENGAGEMENT

Indian envoy meets more US lawmakers amid tariff tensions

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New York, August 23: Continuing his diplomatic engagement, Indian envoy to the US Vinay Mohan Kwatra met more US lawmakers to discuss "balanced trade ties" amid tariff tensions between New Delhi and Washington.

The Indian Ambassador has met 19 US senators and Congressmen since August 9, as revealed by his social media posts. Kwatra met Rep Claudia Tenney, Member of Ways and Means Committee and House Intelligence Committee, on Friday (local time) and had an in-depth conversation on the importance of fair and balanced trade ties.

"We discussed US-India bilateral relations and the importance of fair and balanced trade ties," Kwatra posted on social media.

Kwatra said he highlighted India's "growing hydrocarbon purchases from the US as an important component of India's energy security" in the meeting with Rep Tenney. In



The series of meetings comes 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

another such meeting, Kwatra had a productive conversation with Rep Jonathan L Jackson, a Member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee Democrats and the House Agriculture Committee Democrats.

Kwatra also apprised Rep Haley Stevens, Congresswoman for Michigan, of India's significant hydrocarbon purchases from the US.

"We discussed US-India bilateral economic partnership,

including our fair and balanced trade engagement," Kwatra posted on social media after the meeting with Stevens who is also a ranking Member of the Research and Technology Subcommittee and the Science Committee Democrats.

He also talked about "India's significant hydrocarbon purchases from the US as an important component of India's energy security" in meeting with Stevens.

The Indian envoy also thanked her for her steadfast support to the India-US relationship.

The series of meetings comes 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.

Defending its purchase of Russian crude oil, India has been maintaining that its energy procurement is driven by national interest and market dynamics.

Misbehaviour with Army personnel: NHAI terminates contract of agency

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, August 23: A week after an army soldier was brutally assaulted during an altercation at a toll booth in Uttar Pradesh's Meerut, the NHAI Saturday terminated the contract and debarred the toll collection agency from participation in bids for one year for misbehaving with the army personnel by toll staff deployed at Bhuni Toll Plaza on Meerut-Karnal section of NH-709A.

In addition, NHAI has imposed a penalty of ₹20 lakhs on the toll collecting agency and the performance security of the agency amounting to ₹3.66 crores will be encashed towards the repair/replacement cost of the damaged equipment and infrastructure at the Bhuni Toll Plaza. A 'Show-Cause Notice' was issued to the toll collect-

ing agency M/s Dharm Singh, seeking an explanation about the incident. "The reply from the agency was not found to be satisfactory. The agency was found to be in direct violation of contract obligations involving misconduct by toll staff, physical altercation, damage to public property and disruption of fee collection operations," NHAI said in its press release.

To avoid recurrence of such incidents in the future, NHAI has instructed all toll collection agencies to take strong action against their employees who indulge in such behaviour with the road users and public representatives. It has also issued directions to all toll collection agencies to provide training to toll plaza staff for good behaviour with the National Highway users.



UP: Girl mauled by stray dogs, gets 17 stitches on face

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kanpur (UP), August 23: A pack of stray dogs brutally attacked a 21-year-old final year BBA student in the Shyam Nagar area of Kanpur, leaving her severely injured, officials said Saturday.

Vaishnavi Sahu, the victim, was rushed to the Kانشiram Hospital where received 17 stitches on her face.

She is presently being treated for multiple bite wounds. On Wednesday, Vaishnavi was returning home from an institute in Maharajpur when she was attacked by the dogs near Madhuvan Park.

Her uncle Ashutosh Nigam told reporters on Saturday that a scuffle between monkeys and stray dogs triggered the attack, with the dogs pouncing on her, dragging her to the ground and badly mauling her face.

Her right cheek was badly damaged and part of her nose was ripped off, Nigam said. Locals armed with sticks managed to chase the dogs away but by then she was left unconscious and bleeding profusely.

"My niece is in trauma, unable to eat or speak. She wakes up screaming in fear. I only want that she gets the best treatment so that her face and future are not ruined," Nigam told reporters.



"Today it was my niece, tomorrow it could be someone else's child," he added. The local residents have demanded urgent civic action and relocation of stray dogs to animal shelters. The matter came to light a day after the top court Friday modified its August 11 direction prohibiting the release of vaccinated stray dogs from shelter homes in Delhi-NCR calling it "too harsh", and ordered the canines be released post sterilisation and de-worming.

Translation: Al Qaeda's new propaganda weapon

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, August 23: The Islamic State (IS) is known for its propaganda material, and among the terror groups, it has the strongest propaganda media, and its reach is higher than one's expectations.

Since its fall in Iraq and Syria, the focus has been extensively on propaganda rather than running the outfit like a conventional terror group. If one were to look at the Indian scenario, it does not have its own modules, but they are inspired. Any three persons who follow the ideology of the Islamic State can come together

and form a module.

Such a module is inspired by the outfit, but not funded by it. Even the creation of such a module is done by people with a common thought process, and the Islamic State does not even oversee the creation of such modules.

While the first part of its drive was largely successful following its fall in Iraq and Syria, the second part took some time to crack. The first part of the propaganda drive led to several attacks by Islamic State-inspired lone wolves in different parts of the world, such as the UK, the US and France. Even in India, there were two

failed attempts by lone wolves, one at Coimbatore and another at Mangaluru.

In India, the Islamic State did create an im-



pact, but it found it hard to convey its message to a larger audience. For instance, in the Gulf,

the message could go out in Arabic. The use of English and Urdu is also quite extensive.

India, on the other hand, is a diverse country, and the people of different states speak different languages. This is what the Islamic State sought

to crack and hence tasked its Al-Isabah Foundation with the task.

Not only does this foundation today circulate propaganda material by the Islamic State, but ensures that it is translated into every single language that is spoken in India. Today, such propaganda material can be found in Marathi, Tamil, Malayalam, Kannada, Assamese, Gujarati, Bengali, and Telugu, among others.

The Al-Isabah Foundation, on its part, set up the Islamic Translation Centre to ensure that the material goes out in multiple languages.

Taking a cue from the Islam-

ic State, Al-Qaeda too decided to follow suit. It immediately set up the Al-Kifah media to translate its material into multiple languages. Both groups are aware that language is a sensitive issue, and if the material is provided in a language of choice, then the chance of success is much higher.

A similar trend is being witnessed in other parts of the world, too. When propaganda material is sent out to Sri Lanka, the country would be referred to as the Wilayahs of Sri Lanka. The same applies in the Maldives or Bangladesh. For India, the reference is the Wilayahs of Kashmir.

of the day

quote

With the arrival of President Trump, I think that a light at the end of the tunnel has finally loomed. And now we had a very good, meaningful and frank meeting in Alaska




VLADIMIR PUTIN | PRESIDENT, RUSSIA

We are seeing an increasing number of mediation cases from India, which is a global market and a leading member of the global supply chain. This means there is an urgent need to build mediation capacity in the country



CHUAN WEE MENG | SIMC CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

The renewed prospect of your return to your native archipelago is an encouraging sign and a powerful symbol on the international stage: all peoples, even the smallest and weakest, must be respected by the powerful in their identity and rights, in particular the right to live on their land; and no one can force them into exile



POPE LEO XIV | CATHOLIC CHURCH LEADER

SHORT TAKES

12 killed as Chinese bridge collapses

Beijing: The collapse of an under-construction railway bridge over a major river in China has killed at least 12 workers and left four others missing, state media reports said. Aerial photos from the official Xinhua News Agency show a large section missing from the bridge's curved aquamarine arch. A bent section of the bridge deck hangs downward into the Yellow River below. Sixteen workers were on the bridge in northwest China's Qinghai province when a steel cable snapped about 3 am.

Indian returns home from Saudi

Dubai: The Indian Embassy in Riyadh Saturday said it intervened to secure exit clearance from Saudi Arabia for an Indian national who faced significant financial liabilities that prevented his return. Shavej Hamid was hospitalised in Saudi Arabia for four months following an accident and "is returning to India today," the Indian Embassy in Riyadh said. "Despite facing an exit ban due to substantial dues, the Embassy's intervention ensured that most of these were waived, and we also facilitated the payment of his government fines," the embassy said in a post on X.

NK accuses SK of 'serious provocation'

Seoul: North Korea accused South Korea of a "serious provocation" Saturday after South Korean troops fired warning shots at North Korean soldiers setting up barriers along their tense border. Ko Jong Chol, vice chief of the North Korean People's Army's General Staff, noted that Tuesday's warning shots coincided with the South Korea-US summertime military drills and accused Seoul of deliberately trying to raise tensions.

Tour bus rollover kills 5 on highway

New York: A tour bus returning to New York City from Niagara Falls with 54 people, including Indians, aboard crashed and rolled on its side on an interstate highway, killing five passengers and injuring many others, authorities have said. The driver apparently became distracted, lost control and overcorrected before the bus went into the right shoulder and flipped over shortly before 12:30 pm.

FIRST IN 13 YEARS

Pak's Foreign Minister Dar arrives in B'desh

Bangladesh Foreign Ministry officials said the top Pakistani diplomat was scheduled to hold bilateral talks Sunday with Foreign Affairs Advisor Touhid Hossain, where up to half a dozen agreements and memoranda of understanding (MoU) could be signed

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dhaka, August 23: Pakistan's Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar arrived in Dhaka Saturday for a rare two-day visit, aimed at rebuilding ties with Bangladesh following the ouster of longtime prime minister Sheikh Hasina. A special flight carrying Dar, the most senior Pakistani leader to visit Bangladesh since 2012, arrived in Dhaka, with Islamabad calling it a "significant milestone" in bilateral relations. Bangladesh's Foreign Secretary Asad Alam Siam received Dar at Dhaka's Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport. Hina Rabbani Khar was the last Pakistani foreign minister to visit Dhaka in November 2012 to invite then then premier Hasina to a summit in Islamabad. Bangladesh Foreign Ministry officials said the top Pakistani diplomat was scheduled to hold bilateral talks Sunday with Foreign Affairs Advisor Touhid Hossain, where up to



half a dozen agreements and memoranda of understanding (MoU) could be signed. "He (Dar) is expected to pay a courtesy call on Chief Advisor (interim government chief) Muhammad Yunus later in the day. In addition, meetings are expected with BNP (Bangladesh Nationalist Party) Chairperson Khaleda Zia and leaders of Jamaat-e-Islami," an official familiar with his schedule said. Pakistan's Foreign Office said that a whole range of bilateral relations and several regional and international issues will be discussed during these meetings. Dar was set to visit Bangladesh in April, but it was delayed due to tensions with India after the Pahalgam terrorist attack. However, Pakistan's Foreign Secretary Amna Baloch visited Dhaka in April for consultations after a 15-year break in diplomatic engagement with Bangladesh. Dar arrived in Dhaka at a time when Pakistan's Commerce Minister Jam Kamal

Khan was on a visit as part of bilateral efforts to renew and boost economic and trade ties between the two countries that fought a war in 1971, resulting in the birth of Bangladesh. Khan earlier held talks with the interim government's commerce adviser, Sheikh Bashir Uddin, mainly aiming to form a new Trade and Investment Commission and revive the long-dormant Bangladesh-Pakistan Joint Economic Commission. Khan also held a meeting with Bangladeshi businessmen in the southeastern port city of Chattogram, seeking to boost "business-to-business" ties between the two countries. According to officials, the two countries have finalised several deals, including a visa exemption for diplomatic passport holders, a cultural exchange MoU, cooperation between foreign service academies, a joint trade and investment group, and MoUs on strategic studies and state news agency cooperation.

Sharifs, Bhuttos to jointly contest by-polls in Pakistan

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Islamabad, August 23: Pakistan's two major political parties in the current ruling dispensation – the PML-N and the PPP –Saturday announced to jointly contest the upcoming by-elections. The decision by the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) leaders to cooperate in the national and provincial elections was announced at a press conference here. Several seats of the national and provincial assemblies became vacant last month after the conviction of leaders of the incarcerated former prime minister Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) for their involvement in the May 9, 2023 riots.

As per the schedule issued by the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), the by-elections will be held September 18 for the NA-66 Wazirabad, NA-129 Lahore-XIII, and PP-87 Mianwali-III constituencies. It would be followed by elections in NA-143 Sahiwal-III, NA-185, DG Khan-II, PP-203 Sahiwal-VI, NA-96 Faisalabad-II, NA-104 Faisalabad-X, and PP-98 Faisalabad-I on October 5, the ECP said. "Both parties (PPP and PML-N) have agreed to contest the by-elections together," said Hanif Abbasi, a PML-N leader, who also holds the federal railways portfolio. Both parties made the decision in the country's best interest, he said. "We are allies, and the leadership of both parties has shown maturity."



Japan's Ishiba, SK's Lee agree closer cooperation

REUTERS

Tokyo, August 23: Japanese Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba and South Korean President Lee Jae Myung agreed Saturday to closer security and economic ties ahead of Lee's planned summit with US President Donald Trump Monday. On his first official visit to Japan since taking office in June, Lee met Ishiba at the premier's residence in Tokyo to discuss bilateral ties between the East Asia neighbours, including closer security coordination with the United States under a trilateral pact signed by their predecessors. "As the strategic environment surrounding both our countries grows increasingly severe, the importance of our relations, as well as trilateral cooperation with the United States, continues to grow," Ishiba said in a joint announcement with Lee after their meeting.

Lankan ex-prez shifted to ICU after remand

Wickremesinghe, 76, was taken to the main Magazine Remand prison close to midnight Friday after the Colombo Fort magistrate's court remanded him till August 26



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Colombo, August 23: Sri Lanka's former president Ranil Wickremesinghe was Saturday shifted to the intensive care unit of the Colombo National Hospital, a day after he was arrested and refused bail over alleged misuse of state funds during his tenure. Wickremesinghe, 76, was taken to the main Magazine Remand prison close to midnight Friday after the Colombo Fort magistrate's court remanded him till August 26. He was admitted to the prison hospital as his blood sugar and blood pressure levels were high, prison spokesman Jagath Weerasinghe said. By afternoon, there was no improvement and the prison doctors opined that he should be transferred to the Colombo National Hospital. Wickremesinghe was kept in the emergency care unit first but was later transferred to the intensive care unit of the Colombo National Hospital, director of the hospital Dr Rukshan Bellana told reporters.

The former president was arrested at the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) headquarters Friday, where he was summoned to record a statement in connection with an investigation into the alleged misuse of government funds amounting to Sri Lankan rupees 16.6 million. The veteran opposition leader was subsequently brought before the Colombo Fort magistrate's court. The CID charged him under Section 386 and 388 of the penal code and under Section 5(1) of the Public Properties Act. The charges carry a punishment of not less than one year but not exceeding 20 years in jail. After a lengthy session which lasted over six hours, Magistrate Nilupuli Lankapura remanded him while ruling that the defence lawyers had failed to submit any special matters that would have been possible for the court to grant bail to the former president. A stream of former colleagues and rivals, including former President Mahinda Rajapaksa, visited Wickremesinghe Saturday.



Palestinians cool off in the Mediterranean on a hot summer day near a tent camp by the seaside in Zawiada, central Gaza Strip, Friday

PTI PHOTO

Taiwan nuclear plant re-opening vote fails as approval threshold missed

REUTERS

Taipei, August 23: A referendum to push for the re-opening of Taiwan's last nuclear plant failed Saturday to reach the legal threshold to be valid, though the president said the island could return to the technology in the future if safety standards improve. The plebiscite, backed by the opposition, asked whether the Maanshan power plant should be re-opened if it was "confirmed" there were no safety issues. The plant was closed in May as the government shifts to renewables and liquefied natural gas. The small Taiwan People's Party (TPP) proposed the ref-

erendum earlier this year, and with the backing of the much larger Kuomintang (KMT) passed the legislation for the vote, saying Taiwan needs reliable power supplies and not to be so reliant on imports. Around 4.3 million people voted in favour of the plant's re-opening in the referendum, a clear majority over the 1.5 million who voted against, figures from the Central Election Commission showed. But the motion needed the backing of one quarter of all registered electors - around 5 million people - to get through under electoral law, meaning the plant on Taiwan's southern tip will not re-open. Taiwan's government says



there are major safety concerns around generating nuclear power in earthquake-prone Taiwan and handling nuclear waste. Taiwan President Lai Ching-te told reporters Saturday eve-

ning that while the referendum had failed, he understood "society's expectations for diverse energy options". "If in the future, the technology becomes safer, nuclear waste

Opposition says nuclear power needed for stable supplies
Government raises safety fears on earthquake-prone island
President open to nuclear in future, if standards improve

is reduced, and societal acceptance increases, we will not rule out advanced nuclear energy," he added. In a separate vote Saturday, electors rejected the recall of seven KMT lawmakers. A larger recall vote, to try and oust 24 lawmakers from the same party, also failed last month. Civic groups who had run the recall campaigns, with the backing of Taiwan's ruling

Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), accused the lawmakers of being too close to China and intentionally trying to snarl government spending and legislation, charges the legislators strongly denied. Lai said Premier Cho Jung-tai had asked many times to resign after the failure of the recall votes in July, but he had asked Cho to stay on. There will be a cabinet reshuffle to make the team more efficient and governance more effective, Lai added. The two opposition parties together form a majority in parliament, though the DPP controls the presidency and hence the government in Taiwan's system.



KILAUEA'S ERUPTION IS BACK

Hawaii's Kilauea volcano resumed erupting Friday by shooting an arc of lava 30 metres into the air and across a section of its summit crater floor. It was Kilauea's 31st display of molten rock since December, an appropriately high frequency for one of the world's most active volcanoes

Under the agreement, the US will purchase a 9.9% stake in Intel for \$8.9 billion, or \$20.47 per share, which represents a

PLAYING CATCH UP

The Intel investment marks the latest unusual deal with US companies, including a US gov-

Trump met with Tan Friday
a White House official said
That followed Trump's August

PLAYING CATCH UP

The Intel investment marks the latest unusual deal with US companies, including a US gov-

Odisha makes waves at Dal Lake

In the inaugural edition of Khelo India Water Sports Festival, Odisha finishes runner-up with 10 medals – four gold, five silver and one bronze

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar, August 23: Madhya Pradesh showcased their dominance at the Khelo India Water Sports Festival by winning 18 medals, 10 of them gold, as they topped the tally in the inaugural edition held at the scenic Dal Lake, here Saturday.

Odisha and Kerala, riding on fine showing by their athletes who train at Sports Authority of India centres in Jagatpur in Odisha and the National Centre of Excellence in Alappuzha, finished second and third with 10 and 7 medals respectively.

Odisha bagged four gold, five silver and a bronze, while Kerala finished with three gold, one silver and three bronze.

It was another fruitful day for Madhya Pradesh water sports exponents as they added six more gold to the four kayaking and canoeing gold they had won Friday, with the celebrated trio of Shikha Chauhan, Rina Sen and Pallavi Jagtap winning two gold and a silver for Madhya Pradesh.

There was a lot of focus on Shikha, Rina and Pallavi who returned with a historic silver medal from the Asian Canoe Slalom Championship in Guizhou, China. Shikha, who hails from Indore, won the kayaking singles slalom gold, while Pallavi, a 12th standard student from Dewas, clinched the No 1 spot in the C1 Slalom event.

Madhya Pradesh, whose canoe and kayak athletes train at the state-run centre of excellence in Bhopal, also won three silver and five bronze medals in the two-day event.

Odisha's Rasmita Sahoo, who won the women's C2 500m sprint pairing Achoibam Sanatombi Devi Saturday, was a standout athlete at the KIWSF winning two gold medals.



Rasmita Sahoo and Achoibam Sanatombi Devi win gold medal in C2W-500m event. Sahoo was a standout athlete with two gold medals



Odisha's Sweeti and Anshika Bharti secure silver medal in Light Women's Double Scull (LW2X) event

The performance of kayakers and canoeists who train at the five SAI centres across In-

dia, but represented their respective states and union territories here, was heartening as

SPLASHES OF GLORY



Odisha's Aviraj clinches gold in Men's Single Scull (M1X) event, notably beating Tokyo Olympian Arjun Lal Jat



Odisha's Bhagyashri Ghule and Gursharanpreet Kaur secure silver in Women's Double Scull (W2X) event

they won five gold, seven silver and three bronze medals. Tokyo Olympian, Arjun Lal

Jat, representing Delhi, won silver behind Odisha's Aviraj in the men's 1000m single scull.



Odisha bags gold in the K4W-500m event. The winning team featured Bidya Devi, Shruti Chougule, K Yaiphatombi Devi and L Sonia Devi



Odisha's team featuring Sonali Swain, Anushka Patel, Sonalika Das and Arunpreet Kaur bag bronze in the Women's Fours (W4) event

Aviraj (3.37.54 sec) won a tight race against his celebrated rival, who locked 3.28.68 seconds.

ASIAN SHOOTING CHAMPIONSHIP

Ela-Arjun fire India to mixed team gold

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Shymkent (Kazakhstan), August 23: Arjun Babuta and Elavenil Valarivan led the charge as India excelled in both senior and junior level to claim gold medals in the 10m air rifle mixed team events at the 16th Asian Shooting Championship here Saturday.

The senior Indian pair outclassed China's Dingke Lu and Xinlu Peng 17-11 to finish on top of the podium.

The pair of Shambhavi Shrivani and Naraen Pranav grabbed the gold medal in 10m air rifle mixed team junior event. They beat China 16-12 after a dominant show in the latter part of the series. After these two gold medals, India's medal tally reads an impressive 22.

Elavenil (316.3) and Babuta (317.7) shot 634.0 in qualification to top the 27-team field in the Olympic event, while India's second pair of Mehuli Ghosh (317.7) and Rudrankksh Patil (314.9) also shot well for a tally of 632.6, giving them second position on the leaderboard.

However, given the rules of the tournament, Mehuli and Rudrankksh had to miss out on a shot at a medal as Ela and Arjun setup a gold medal clash with the young Chinese pair of Peng Xinlu and Lu Dingke, who were third with 632.3.

The effort meant that both Tamil Nadu's Elavenil and the 26-year-old Babuta from Punjab have now won two gold medals each at the prestigious tournament.



DURAND CUP

NorthEast United defend title in style

As the final whistle blew, the Highlanders' bench erupted in celebration in front of a packed crowd, lifting the Durand Cup trophy for the second year in a row — becoming the first team to defend the title in 25 years

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kolkata, August 23: Defending champions NorthEast United FC produced a dominant display to dismantle debutants Diamond Harbour FC 6-1 in the grand finale of the 134th Durand Cup at the Vivekananda Yuba Bharati Krirangan here Saturday, sealing their second straight title in style.

A night of relentless attacking football saw the Highlanders overwhelm their opponents, with six different players on the scoresheet and talisman Alaaeddine Ajaraie starring with three assists and a late penalty. Diamond Harbour's solitary strike came in the 68th minute, credited to Luka Majcen after Jobby Justin's header deflected off him.

Juan Pedro Benali made two attacking tweaks from the semifinal win against Shillong Lajong FC, introducing Huidom Thoi Singh and Parthib Gogoi to join Alaaeddine Ajaraie in the forward line. Skipper Miguel Zabaco marshalled the backline alongside Asheer Akhtar, Redeem Tlang, and Buanthanglung Samte, with Gurmeet in goal. Spaniards Andy Gaitan and Chema Nunez partnered with Mayakkannan

in midfield, maintaining Benali's trusted 4-3-3 setup.

Kibu Vicuna, meanwhile, fielded his Diamond Harbour side in a similar shape, with captain Jobby Justin and Girik Mahesh Khosla supporting Slovenian striker Luka Majcen upfront. Spaniard Mikel Kortazar paired Saiuruatkima in central defence ahead of goalkeeper Mirshad Koottappunna. Liansanga, Paul, and Samuel provided balance in midfield as the debutants looked to continue their dream run.

The final began at a brisk but tactical pace, with both sides cautious in possession. NorthEast tested Mirshad early, Ajaraie's long-range shot, and Parthib's header, forcing routine saves inside the opening four minutes.

Diamond Harbour responded with intent. In the 14th minute, Luka Majcen narrowly failed to connect with a headed flick from Kortazar after a long throw by Jobby. Four minutes later, Kortazar himself headed wide from a clever Jobby cross on the turn. The newcomers looked the more composed side after the 20-minute mark, with Jobby forcing a diving save from Gurmeet in the 23rd minute and later finding the side-netting. Yet, it was the defending champions who got the first goal.

As the final whistle blew, the Highlanders' bench burst with happiness in front of the crowd, lifting the Durand Cup trophies for the second successive year, the first team to do so in 25 years. The result also marked the joint-highest margin of victory in a Durand Cup final since 1896, when Somerset Light Infantry beat Black White by the same score line.



Haryana stun Odisha to lift junior hockey national title



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jalandhar, August 23: Haryana pumped in three goals in the final quarter to clinch the junior men's national championship with a close 3-2 win over Odisha in a thrilling final, here Saturday.

Punjab clinched the bronze medal with a 4-3 shoot-out win over Uttar Pradesh.

In the final, both sides exchanged possession but failed to find an opening goal. In the second quarter, Odisha showcased brilliant skill by converting two successive penalty corners courtesy Deepak Pradhan (17) and Pratap Toppo (19) to

take a comfortable 2-0 lead.

The scores remained the same in the third quarter, but Haryana turned the game on its head in the final quarter of the match. Chirag (50') scored his side's first goal through a penalty corner and in the very next minute, his teammate Nitin (51', 60') scored a field goal to level the game.

Moments later in the final minute of the match, Nitin skillfully dribbled past two defenders and fired a shot from distance to score the winning goal for Haryana and claim the championship.

In the 3rd/4th place match, Uttar Pradesh scored early in

the first quarter as Satyam Pandey (8') converted a penalty corner to open the scoring.

Punjab replied with two goals in the second quarter by Lovenoor Singh (21') and Japnit Singh (28', 59') to take the lead.

The third quarter saw the tide shift to Uttar Pradesh way as Ujjwal Pal (48') and Fahad Khan (57') scored to take the lead again.

In the last minute, Punjab's Japnit Singh scored a penalty stroke to push the game into a shootout. Charanjeet Singh, Lovenoor Singh, Om Rajesh Saini and Sunny were the goalscorers for Hockey Punjab in the shootout.

Messi-led Argentina to play FIFA friendly in India

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Thiruvananthapuram, August 23: India is all set to witness football history this November, as global icon Lionel Messi and the reigning FIFA World Cup champions Argentina are scheduled to arrive in Kerala for a friendly match.

Taking to his social media account Kerala Sports Minister V Abdurahiman said the official confirmation came through an email communication from the Argentine Football Association (AFA), confirming that the World Cup-winning squad will participate in an international fixture in Kerala during the FIFA International Match Window of November 2025.

The state, which has long celebrated the magic of South American football, is preparing for what many are calling



a "dream come true" moment. The Kerala Football Association (KFA), in collaboration with the All India Football Federation (AIFF), is working out the final logistics, including the choice of venue.

Preliminary discussions sug-

gest that the match could take place at the Greenfield Stadium in the state capital city.

The upcoming fixture will be part of Argentina's preparation schedule ahead of the 2026 FIFA World Cup qualifiers.

Lionel Messi, who led Argen-

The announcement has already sparked excitement among football fans across the country, particularly in football-loving Kerala

tina to World Cup glory in Qatar 2022, is expected to captain the side, though formal confirmation on the squad list will be announced closer to the date.

The state government is also expected to extend full support to ensure smooth arrangements for security, crowd management, and hospitality.

Tourism officials believe that Lionel Messi's arrival

could provide a major boost to Kerala's international profile, attracting fans and visitors from across the country and the globe.

For generations of Indian football lovers, particularly in Kerala, who have passionately followed Argentina since the days of Diego Maradona, Lionel Messi's presence on the nation's soil will be nothing short of historic. Incidentally for the past several weeks Sports Minister Abdurahiman had come under severe attack especially from the Congress party in Kerala and its state party president and senior MLA Sunny Joseph who came out with a hash tag, 'Messi is missing'.

Argentina's previous visit to India was in 2011 when they faced Venezuela at the Salt Lake stadium in Kolkata, which the former won 1-0.