HERE . NOW

OrissaPOST

Daisy's observation

Actress Daisy Shah criticises the lack of depth in direction for women in Kannada film industry

LEISURE | P2

5 journos killed in Gaza

Israel strikes a hospital in the southern part of Gaza Strip, killing at least 20 people, including five journalists

INTERNATIONAL | P10

Fitch retains 'BBB-'

Fitch labels India's sovereign credit rating at 'BBB-' with a stable outlook on robust growth and external finances

BUSINESS | P11

Strong comeback

Star Indian weightlifter Mirabai Chanu lives up to her top billing with a record-breaking show at the Commonwealth Championships

SPORTS | P12

VOLUME 15, ISSUE 146 I www.orissapost.com | BHUBANESWAR | TUESDAY | AUGUST 26, 2025 | 12 PAGE | ₹5.00

FLOODS WREAK HAVOC IN 3 DISTRICTS; 1 DEAD

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jajpur/Bhograi/Bhadrak, August 25: Floods in two major rivers have left over 1.67 lakh people marooned in Jajpur, Balasore and Bhadrak districts Monday, reports said, adding that one person drowned in Jajpur.

In Jajpur district, a 70-ft-long breach occurred around 4am Monday on the right embankment of Kani river, a distributary of Baitarani, near Bangalabadi in Kasapa panchayat of Dasharathpur block. More than 100 houses near the breach were submerged up to window level, forcing hundreds to flee to embankments and flood shelters.

The breach flooded parts of Mallikapur and Kasapa panchayats, directly affecting nearly 50,000 people. Informed, District Collector Ambar Kumar Kar, ADM Sibananda Swain, and BDO Akash Pattnayak rushed to the spot. Officials said rescue operations were carried out on a war footing to evacuate marooned villagers.

A 70-year-old man died after being swept away by the floodwaters of Baitarani river in Jajpur district Sunday. A 23-day-old infant was among those rescued from rising waters Monday. More P5

SALVAGING ACT: An elderly man retrieves a piece of wooden furniture from floodwaters at Baliapatna village in Dhusuri area of Dhamnagar block in Bhadrak district, Monday OP PHOTO

Goodwill gesture

India alerts Pak about potential flood in Tawi

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 25: India has informed Pakistan about a flood alert in the Tawi river on humanitarian grounds, even as the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) continues to remain in abeyance in the aftermath of the Pahalgam terror attack, sources said.

It is the first known official contact between India and Pakistan since a four-day conflict between the two sides in May.

The communication was made to the Ministry of External Affairs, which then reached out to Islamabad, sources in the Jal Shakti Ministry said.

"While India used to exchange data with Pakistan before the suspension of the treaty, this move was made purely on humanitarian grounds," a source said.

The Tawi river originates in the Himalayas and passes through the Jammu division before assembling in the Chenab in Pakistan. India's decision to suspend the decades-old treaty came after terrorists with cross-border links killed 26 people, mostly tourists, in Jammu and Kashmir's Pahalgam April 22.

Brokered by the World Bank, the Indus Waters Treaty governed the use of the Indus river and its tributaries between India and Pakistan since 1960.

Earlier, Pakistani news outlet The News reported that India has contacted Pakistan to share information about possible flooding. Citing official sources, the paper said that India alerted Pakistan about a possible major flood in the Tawi river in Jammu. The Indian High Commission in Islamabad conveyed the alert on Sunday, it added.

Pakistani authorities issued warnings based on the information provided by India, it added.

The flood alert from India comes as Pakistan witnesses one of its deadliest monsoon rains, with a death toll of 800.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL

Sir, the public has seen your work. Even if you show your degrees now, they won't believe them

Odisha IT Policy 2025 gets Cabinet approval

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 25: In a decisive step towards strengthening Odisha's digital and industrial infrastructure, the 24th Cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi approved several key proposals Monday, including the Odisha IT Policy 2025. The meeting was held at the Conference Hall of Lok Seva Bhawan.

Briefing the media after the meeting, Chief Secretary Manoj Ahuja stated that the Cabinet approved four key proposals from three departments. These include two major policy frameworks from the Electronics and Information Technology (E&IT) department, personnel appointments by the General Administration & Public Grievance department, and administrative arrangements for the upcoming Monsoon session of the state Assembly.

Odisha IT Policy 2025 aims to create a robust digital ecosystem by embracing cutting-edge technologies such as Artificial

Intelligence, Cloud Computing, Data Analytics, Blockchain, and 5G. The policy sets an ambitious target of generating one million direct and indirect employment opportunities in the IT and IT-enabled services (ITES) sector. It also envisions the development of new infrastructure including IT Parks, Special Economic Zones (SEZs), and Co-Working Spaces, while promoting research and development and encouraging partnerships with startups and academic institutions.

To attract investments and nurture the state's digital economy, the policy offers a broad range of business-friendly incentives such as capital subsidies, rental assistance, utility charge exemptions, SGST reimbursements, and support for marketing and patent registration.

In another key decision, the Cabinet approved the Odisha Electronics Component Manufacturing Policy 2025, a move aligned with the 'Make in India' initiative. The policy proposes substantial incentives for large-scale investments, including a 50 per cent capital subsidy for initial projects, turnover-based benefits, and a ten-year exemption from electricity duty. Special concessions will be extended to mega projects involving investments over ₹500 crore or those creating more than 1,000 jobs.

The Cabinet also cleared the appointment of three new members to the Odisha Public Service Commission (OPSC). The appointees include Udaya Narayan Das, retired IAS officer and former Director of Census Operations; Mihir Prasad Mishra, retired Principal of SCS (Autonomous) College, Puri; and Manoj Kumar Mohanty, retired IAS officer and former Additional Secretary in the General Administration & Public Grievance department.

PM Modi's degree 'personal info'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 25: The Delhi High Court Monday set aside a CIC order directing disclosure of details related to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's bachelor's degree, saying only because he was holding a public office, it did not render all his "personal information" to public disclosure.

Justice Sachin Datta ruled out any "implicit public interest" in the information sought, and said that the RTI Act was enacted to promote transparency in government functioning and "not to provide fodder for sensationalism".

Following an RTI application by one Neeraj, the CIC December 21, 2016, allowed inspection of records of all students who cleared the BA exam in 1978 -- the year Prime Minister Modi also passed it.

DELHI HC JUNKS CIC ORDER

"Something which is of interest to the public" is quite different from "something which is in the public interest," the judge said.

The judge opined the educational qualifications were not in the nature of any statutory requirement for holding any public office, or discharging official responsibilities.

The situation might have been different, had educational qualifications been a pre-requisite for eligibility to a specific public office, the judge said, calling the CIC's approach "thoroughly misconceived".

"The mark sheets/results/degree, certificate/academic records of any individual, even if that individual is a holder of public office, are in the nature of personal information. The fact that a person holds a public office does not, per se, render all personal information subject to public disclosure," the order said.

GUV MEETS NAVEEN

Bhubaneswar: Governor Hari Babu Kambhampati Monday visited the residence of BJD president and former chief minister Naveen Patnaik and enquired about his health. Patnaik, the 78-year-old leader, was released from a hospital here August 20 after recovering from dehydration. The Governor's visit to Naveen Niwas in Bhubaneswar was primarily aimed at enquiring about Patnaik's health and overall well-being, following his recent stay at a private hospital in the city," a statement released by Raj Bhavan said. P3

Seaplane services to restart by Oct: Naidu

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, August 25: The Civil Aviation Ministry will restart seaplane operations on at least two routes in India by October, Union Minister Ram Mohan Naidu said here Monday.

Addressing the Eastern Region Civil Aviation Ministers' Conference, Naidu said, "Seaplane operation was there once, but it was limited to a single route. The government has simplified the guidelines to operate seaplanes, and we hope that by October, we will have two seaplanes in the country operating either on the Andaman & Nicobar, Kerala, or Andhra Pradesh network."

He added that the service could also be extended to Odisha's Chilika Lake and the entire eastern coast.

The service can be started on any water body where you have more than five feet depth and 200 metres of landing space, he said.

Naidu said the norms for setting up a waterdrome, training pilots, and the rules and regulations governing seaplane operations have been simplified.

He urged airline operators present at the conference to explore the opportunity, saying, "There is huge potential for seaplane services, which is being missed out today."

The minister also urged states to come forward with innovative ideas and new locations to expand the network.

"There is a growing demand for Flying Training Organisations (FTOs)," Naidu said. "Right now, 1,700 planes are on order. Each aircraft requires 20 to 30 pilots. Every year, we must generate 3,000 pilots to meet the demand in India alone," he added. More P3

Udaan Yatri Café now in City airport

The Airports Authority of India (AAI) Monday opened the country's fifth Udaan Yatri Café at the Biju Patnaik International Airport (BPIA) here providing affordable food and beverage options for travellers. Civil Aviation Minister Rammohan Naidu Kinjarapu inaugurated the facility in the presence of MoS Civil Aviation Murlidhar Mohol and officials. This is Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision to provide food and beverages at affordable prices to air travellers. The Udaan scheme was introduced to make air travel accessible to all. There were repeated complaints about the high cost of food and drinks at airport premises, and this initiative addresses those concerns, the minister said. He said the first such facility was opened in Kolkata, which was later extended to Chennai, Ahmedabad, and Pune. At the café, a bottle of water and a cup of tea cost ₹10 each, and a samosa is sold for ₹20.

Lights, camera, action as MiG-21 makes final sorties

AGENCIES

Bikaner, August 25: In a striking blend of history and cinema, the Indian Air Force's iconic MiG-21 fighter jets thundered across the skies one last time at the Nal Air Force Station in Bikaner, even as cameras rolled to capture the jet's swan song for Sanjay Leela Bhansali's upcoming film Love And War. Vanity vans lined up on the tarmac, film crews buzzed with anticipation, and the moment was surreal – a historic farewell doubling as a cinematic milestone.

The film, starring Ranbir Kapoor, Alia Bhatt, and Vicky Kaushal, is rumoured to be a love triangle set against a wartime backdrop. The Russian-origin MiG-21, long hailed as a "rocket with wings," will feature prominently – both as a cinematic symbol and a real-life war hero making its final bow.

These final sorties August 18 and 19 mark the beginning of the end for the IAF's supersonic workhorse that has dominated the Indian skies for over six decades. Air Chief Marshal AP Singh led the farewell with solo flights, calling the aircraft "agile, manoeuvrable, and unforgettable." His connection with the jet dates back to 1985 when he first flew the Type-77 variant in Tezpur.

"The MiG-21 was built to intercept and it served that role exceptionally well," Singh noted. "But its technology is now outdated. It's time to move to newer platforms like the Tejas, Rafale, and Su-30."

The MiG-21's combat history is legendary. It played crucial roles in the 1965 and 1971 wars, with perhaps its most iconic mission being the bombing of the Governor's House in Dhaka December 14, 1971 – a strike that led to the governor's resignation and Pakistan's surrender two days later.

The jet continued to prove its worth in later conflicts, including the 1999 Kargil War and a 2019 aerial skirmish where it famously downed a Pakistani F-16. The aircraft saw several upgrades, most notably the Bison variant, with modern avionics and beyond-visual-range missile capabilities. Despite its aging frame, the MiG-21 has trained generations of pilots and served as the backbone of the IAF's combat fleet. Currently, only two squadrons remain active, set to be phased out next month.

A formal ceremonial farewell will be held September 26 in Chandigarh, the same city where the MiG-21 was first inducted into the IAF in 1963.

As jets soared over Nal for the last time, surrounded by cameras and cinematic fanfare, the scene was a poignant tribute. For onlookers, it was more than just a film shoot or an air display; it was history in motion, a proud yet emotional send-off to a legend.

Though its engines will soon fall silent, the MiG-21's legacy – in war, in service, and now in cinema – will continue to echo far beyond the skies.

leisure

KIMBERLY WYATT'S MARRIAGE SECRETS

Singer Kimberly Wyatt says the secret to a successful marriage is to "marry your best friend". The 43-year-old has children Willow, 10, Maple, eight, and five-year-old Ford with her husband, model Max Rogers, 43, and Kimberly credits their strong friendship with making their marriage work.

BRITNEY ON 'HARDEST' YEARS OF HER LIFE

Pop icon Britney Spears has opened up about the hardest year of her life. On Monday, she wrote on Instagram, "The hardest years of my life were when my two sons were gone for those 3 years when I was cut off from calling or texting."

FORTUNE FORECAST

GaneshaSpeaks.com™
accuracy • reliability • trust
FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181*

ARIES

Good news may bring cheer to you today! A job, a wedding, some profit... it could be personal or professional. Giving your best is almost a habit with you, says Ganesha, and it will pay off today.

TAURUS

Luck is a four-leaf clover in your pocket. You might get the long desired success in education related matters today — a favourable result of a competitive examination, maybe. You will proudly smile at your power of resilience and sense of proportion, says Ganesha.

GEMINI

It is a day filled with joy and happiness on the home front. You will spend a lot of time with children. You will complete long pending household projects as well as take an interest in ironing out differences between family members, says Ganesha.

CANCER

There is a chance today to benefit from womenfolk. Though you are methodical and disciplined in your work, you will feel rudderless. Yet you will et relief from this monotony and feel jovial, says Ganesha.

LEO

You will feel a little uneasy today. You will feel that nothing is going right. You will try to organise yourself and concentrate your scattered energies today. This phase of uncertainity will be gone in a few days, assures Ganesha.

VIRGO

You will enchant people with your adaptability and your desire to gel with your surroundings. For those who are in love, something unexpected may take place, but there is no need to panic as by and by things will turn out to be in your interest. You will spend quality time with your family. Ganesha advises you to strengthen bonding in the family by taking on responsibility and honouring your family traditions.

LIBRA

Ganesha says you will be able to spend ample time with your loved ones and may even taken them out for lunch or dinner which will bring you more closer to them. You will even try to please them by showering them with gifts and presents today.

SCORPIO

There's always a first time, and today is the day when you would seal a profitable deal for your new business venture. However, close the deal only if it is beneficial for a long term. Be cautious and watch your steps carefully to avoid any unfortunate situation.

SAGITTARIUS

You are a social butterfly as you attend a series of parties and events today, says Ganesha. You may even bump into old pals and relive good ol' days. Also, you meet your extended family! It's time for soiree and merry-making.

CAPRICORN

Print and electronic media will attract your attention, if you're just planning to begin your career. Your spiritual and philosophical approach give you inner peace, and also inspire you to visit a holy place.

AQUARIUS

You will try everything to please your colleagues and bosses, but they will still have something negative to say about your performance. In order to be in the good books of everyone you end up hurting your own interests, feels Ganesha. The second half of the day promises to be relaxing, thanks to your sweetheart who will make special efforts to lighten your burden of work.

PISCES

If you are the leader of a project or a team, then today is your day. Your enthusiasm and creativity will give a sense of purpose and direction to your colleagues. You are more concerned about the means rather than the ends. Today is a good day to progress on the work-front. While no remarkable events are likely to occur in your personal life, your family will expect you to pay attention to their needs, says Ganesha.

KANNADA MOVIES

Daisy calls out objectification of female actors

Mumbai: Actress Daisy Shah, who has worked in both Bollywood and Sandalwood, recently spoke candidly about what she described as the Kannada film industry's unusual fixation on female actors' navels. In an interview with Hauterrfly, Shah criticised the lack of depth in direction for women, noting that male actors often received more nuanced guidance.

She recalled, "When I was doing a Kannada film, during my off days I watched TV, and in all the Kannada songs I saw... there was a particular actor, and in all his songs, either a fruit salad or a vegetable salad was being made on the heroine's navel with close-up shots. Sometimes ice or water was being poured on the navel too."

Shah contrasted the superficial treatment of female roles with the richer direction afforded to male counterparts, suggesting the disparity stemmed partly from her limited fluency in Kannada.

Her reflection has ignited discussion across social media, drawing parallels to earlier observations by actress Malavika Mohanan about South Indian cinema's celebrated or controversial, "navel obsession." Some netizens even speculated that Shah's remarks were indirectly alluding to veteran actor-filmmaker V. Ravichandran, known for similarly stylized song sequences featuring women's midriffs.

AGENCIES

Barsha festival kicks off with lively show of dance, music

Bhubaneswar, August 25: The 48th edition of Barsha Festival 2025 , a three-day event, organised by Chinta O Chetana, commenced Monday evening at Rabindra Mandap with a vibrant showcase of Odisha's classical and folk traditions.

The inaugural evening began with a dance performance by Auroaditya Dance Academy on *Megha Barasila Mayura Nachila*. This was followed by a Mangala Charan by celebrated Odissi exponent Sujata Mohapatra, who set the tone with a soulful invocation.

The ceremonial lamp was lit by several dignitaries, including **Orissa POST** and *Dhartiri* Editor Tathagata Satpathy, DIG Bharat Bhushan Sethi, Tabla maestro Pandit Ramdas Palsule, spiritual leader Ram Narayan Das, musician Laxmikant Palit, Sitarist Subrata De along with Chinta O Chetana National Secretary General Surendra Das and President Sahadev Sahoo.

Welcoming the dignitaries, Surendra Das underscored the importance of environmental responsibility in cultural celebrations. "We should plant more and more trees. Planting alone is not enough; nurturing them is what truly matters. Even our stage decoration this year is designed with plants to spread this message," he said. Satpathy, lauding the efforts of the organisers, said, "It is heartening to see such enthusiasm for culture, especially when people have gathered in large numbers despite the inclement weather. Festivals like these reflect the spirit of our community."

Sharing his admiration for state's rich cultural heritage, DIG Bharat Bhushan Sethi remarked, "Though I am not an Odia speaker, I deeply admire the language and culture of this state. Odisha has such a rich heritage, and programmes like this help preserve it."

Chinta O Chetana Barsha Award were presented to Pandit Ramdas Palsule, Subrata De and Sujata Mahapatra. Gurukeerti Odissi Dance Group and Auroditya dance troupe were also felicitated on the occassion. **Orissa POST** and *Dhartiri* are the print media partners for the event.

RESHMI YADAV, OP

Orissa POST and Dharitri Editor Tathagata Satpathy presenting citation to Gurukeerti Odissi Dance Group led by acclaimed danseuse Sujata Mohapatra in the presence of other dignitaries PIC: BIKASH NAYAK

CHINTA O CHETANA'S MONSOON EXTRAVAGANZA

A rendition by Tabla maestro Pandit Ramdas Palsule and Sitarist Subrata De

Saiee's career lessons

Mumbai: Actress Saiee Manjrekar, who is the daughter of veteran actor, director, and writer Mahesh Manjrekar, said that her father has always been her inspiration, but never her shortcut.

Saiee shared, "My father has always been my biggest inspiration, but never my shortcut. I remember a very straightforward chat we had when I first spoke about acting, he told me, 'If you want to be an actor, it has to be your decision. I will never put you in a room with any friend of mine or make a call on your behalf.'' At first, Saiee agreed it felt "daunting."

"But today, I see how important that lesson was. I learnt to face rejection, to audition with strangers, to stand in lines like everyone else, and to earn every opportunity on my own merit. It made me value every role so much more," she said. For Saiee, the real gift of growing up around Mahesh wasn't just watching him on set, but observing the discipline, humility, and passion he carried into every project, added the *Dabangg 3* actress.

IANS

Sonu brings elderly lady's talent to light

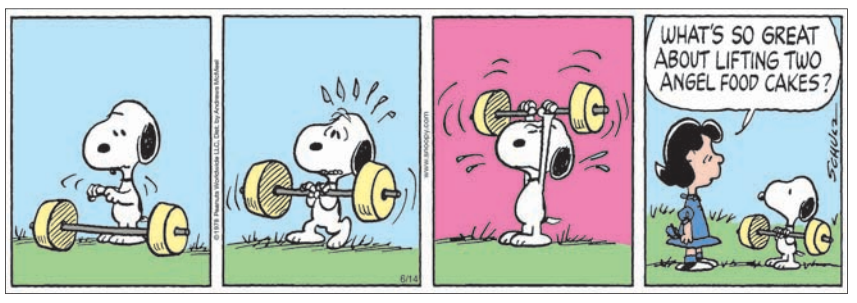
Mumbai: Actor and humanitarian Sonu Sood has once again shared a leaf from his travel diaries. On Monday, the actor took to his Instagram, and shared a video in which he can be seen sitting next to an elderly lady in front of a huge gate of an old structure.

In the video, the actor can be seen speaking to the elderly lady. He introduced her as a singer with distinctive voice as she sang bhajan in Marathi language ahead of the arrival of Lord Ganpati. He wrote in the caption in Hindi, "Everyone has talent. Someone's hide, Someone gets printed. Amma, you are amazing. Ganapati Bappa Morya".

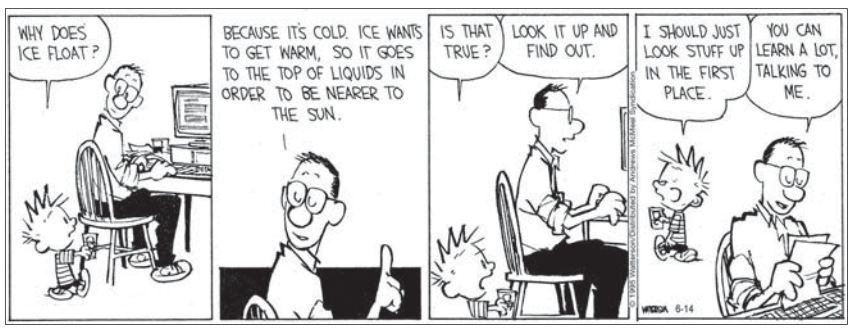
Towards the end of the video, the actor said sought blessings from the woman as she said, "Ganpati bappa morya."

IANS

PEANUTS



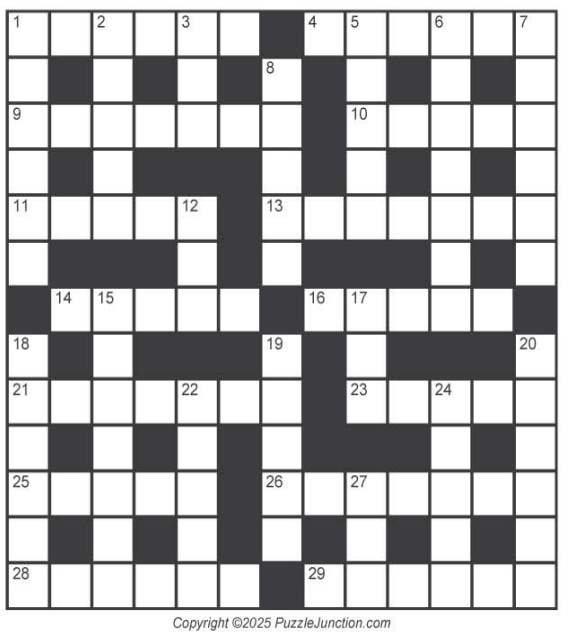
CALVIN AND HOBBES



BREVITY

FUN post

CROSSWORD



Copyright ©2025 PuzzleJunction.com

Across
1 Feeling of despair
4 Edible clam
9 Stone Age tool
10 Bout of indulgence
11 Cultural values
13 Writers
14 Entertain
16 Tropical vine
21 Snare drum
23 Marina sight
25 Geneva's river
26 Rust
28 Ancient Egyptian statue
29 Chewy candy

Down
1 Beast of burden
2 Upside-down grazer
3 French pal
5 Troubled
6 Fishing gig
7 Grunge
8 Sand bar
12 Family girl
15 Extinct elephant
17 Old World vine
18 Rubbernecks
19 Robin Hood's projectile
20 Flammable alkene
22 Classic theatre
24 Drop-off spot?
27 Chapel vow (1,2)

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.

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

SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

SUDOKU

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

downtown

AT LORD'S ABODE

Newly-appointed Puri SP Prateek Singh comes out of the Srimandir after a darshan of the sibling deities, Monday

Pilot training for tribal girls soon

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 25: The state government will soon launch a cadet pilot programme to train tribal girls to become pilots, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi said while addressing the Eastern Region Ministers' Conference on Civil Aviation here, Monday.

The cadet pilot programme would start under the state's flagship initiative B-MAAN (Building and Management of Aviation Assets and Network), he said.

According to officials, comprehensive theoretical and practical pilot training will be provided free to about 10 to 15 tribal girls per year for five years.

The CM said that a world-class international airport is being built in Puri, and it will be a spiritual and cultural gateway for crores of devotees of Lord Jagannath from all over the world.

Along with this, land has been arranged for the expansion of Jharsuguda airport. In the last 14 months of the new government, Odisha's airports have been connected to 15 new destinations, he said.

Due to its robust policy, the state has been successful in connecting Odisha with national and international air connectivity network, the CM said.

Stating that his government is also emphasising on skill development in the aviation sector, Majhi said a world-class aviation training centre is going to be set up at Birasal in Dhenkanal district to take Odisha forward in this field.

He said the government is also going to bring a progressive land allotment policy for airports of the state. Under the policy, flying training, UAV (drone) training, and air sports activities will be possible in the airports in Odisha, Majhi said.

> The state government inked a pact with Air Works to set up an MRO (Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul) facility for aircraft at BPIA
>
> Besides, the state signed another agreement with Air Works to offer skill development training and job opportunities to the youth of Odisha

The government is going to develop 14 non-functional airstrips in the state as airports, Majhi added.

The CM announced that his government is working to set up a total of 15 heliports in districts where there are no airports.

He further said that transformative initiatives like the UDAN scheme have inspired, which have truly democratised aviation and opened new horizons for eastern India.

"Aviation is not just limited to airports and air services, it is a unique effort to connect the dreams of our people with opportunities, strengthen our economy and realise the dream of a Viksit Bharat by 2047," Majhi said.

On the occasion, the state government signed an agreement with Air Works to set up an MRO (Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul) facility for aircraft at Biju Patnaik International Airport here.

Besides, the state has signed another agreement with Air Works to offer skill development training and job opportunities to the youth of Odisha

On the occasion, Union Civil Aviation Minister Kinjarapu Rammohan Naidu said the government is fully committed to implementing the Prime Minister's vision of enabling even those wearing 'Hawai Chappal' (slippers) to fly in airplanes. He assured that all possible support will be extended for Odisha's aviation infrastructure.

Earlier in the day, welcoming the Union Civil Aviation Minister, Minister of State for Civil Aviation Muralidhar Mohol, and other dignitaries, Majhi said hosting the conference was a proud moment for Odisha.

"With the divine blessings of Mahaprabhu Shri Jagannath, our state—where rich traditions harmoniously meet modern aspirations—remains committed to enhancing regional connectivity," he said.

Open satellite unit of TSU in Gopalpur, state urges Centre

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, August 25: The state government Monday urged the Centre to set up a satellite unit of the National Tribhuvan Sahkari University (TSU), the country's lone cooperative institute, at Gopalpur in Ganjam district.

TSU is the country's first national-level institute located in Gujarat that provides education, training and research in management, finance, law and rural development.

This was one of the demands of the state when Union Minister of State (MoS) for Cooperation Murlidhar Mohol called on Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi at Lok Seva Bhawan here.

Extension of repayment period of PACS (primary agricultural cooperative societies) from 5 years to 10 years, operationalisation of the sugar mills at Badamba in Cuttack district and Bolangir, setting up of cold storage and warehouses in every district and sub-divisions, increasing the number of Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) and providing financial assistance to all new primary agricultural cooperatives were among the demands of the state.

"The Union MoS has promised that all cooperation will be provided to Odisha," a statement issued by the Chief Minister's Office (CMO) said, adding that the Union minister was informed about various steps taken by the state government for the progress of the cooperative sector in Odisha.

> The Chief Minister's Office (CMO) said that the Union minister was informed about various steps taken by the state government for the progress of the cooperative sector in Odisha

The visiting Union minister, on his part, said that the Central government has taken extensive steps for the development of cooperatives in various states. He said that the Central government will provide all kinds of assistance required for the development of cooperatives by the Odisha government.

The CMO, in a post on X, said, "Union Minister of State for Cooperation Shri @mohol_murlidhar is meeting Chief Minister MohanMOdisha. On this occasion, the Chief Minister has discussed with the Union Minister of State for Cooperation about the development of the cooperation sector in Odisha. @MinOfCooperatn."

Governor meets Naveen, enquires about his health

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 25: Governor Hari Babu Kambhampati Monday visited the residence of BJD president and former chief minister Naveen Patnaik and enquired about his health.

Patnaik, the 78-year-old leader, was discharged from a hospital here August 20 after recovering from dehydration.

The Governor's visit to Naveen Niwas in Bhubaneswar was primarily aimed at enquiring about Patnaik's health and overall well-being, following his recent stay at a private hospital in the City, a statement released by the Odisha Raj Bhavan said.

They engaged in a cordial conversation lasting around 15–20 minutes, it said.

Patnaik, the Leader of Opposition in the Odisha Assembly, shared updates on his health, and the interaction remained friendly and informal, the statement said.

Taking to X, the Raj Bhavan said, "Governor Dr. Hari Babu Kambhampati paid a visit to @Naveen_Odisha Leader of the Opposition, at his residence and enquired about his health. He offered prayers to Lord Jagannath for his speedy recovery, good health, and long life."

Patnaik thanked the Governor for enquiring about his health. "Thank you, Hon'ble @GovernorOdisha Dr. Hari Babu Kambhampati for visiting Naveen Nivas and inquiring about my health," Patnaik wrote on X.

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

Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi had August 23 visited Naveen Niwas and met the Opposition leader.

Patnaik was admitted to the private hospital here August 17 evening. The BJD chief's elder brother Prem Patnaik, who lives in Delhi, had also visited Naveen Niwas.

The elder brother of the BJD chief had also visited him in Mumbai, where the politician underwent a spine surgery for cervical arthritis in June.

During his hospital stay, several prominent leaders, including Odisha ministers and Opposition leaders, had visited Patnaik.

Patna-Puri spl train to tackle festive rush

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 25: To cater to the festive rush during the upcoming Puja season, Indian Railways has announced introduction of Weekly Puja Special Train service connecting Patna and Puri. The move aims to manage the expected surge in passenger traffic and provide improved travel facilities.

According to an official release, the special train (03230/03229 Patna–Puri–Patna) will depart from Patna every Thursday from August 28 to December 25, 2025, while in return direction it will operate on Fridays from August 29 to December 26, 2025.

The train will include one Second AC coach, two Third AC coaches, nine Sleeper Class coaches, six Second Class seating coaches, two Luggage-cum-Second Class coaches, equipped with differently-abled-friendly facilities.

The special train will halt at major stations including Bakhtiyarpur, Barh, Mokameh, Kiul, Jhajha, Jasidih, Madhupur, Chittaranjan, Asansol, Durgapur, Barddhaman, Dankuni, Andul, Kharagpur, Balasore, Bhadrak, Jajpur Road, Cuttack, Bhubaneswar, Khurda Road, and Sakhigopal in both directions.

Indian Railways expects this service to provide much-needed relief to travelers heading to the coastal temple town of Puri and other destinations during the festive season.

State govt to implement livelihood schemes to curb distress migration

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, August 25: The state government has decided to implement effective livelihood schemes like Odisha PVTG Livelihood Model and the Chief Minister's Tribal Livelihood Mission to curb the migration of workers from Odisha, official sources said Monday.

The decision was taken at the third meeting of the High-Level Task Force on Distress Migration held here under the chairmanship of Deputy CM and Agriculture and Farmers' Empowerment Minister KV Singh Deo. The state government had earlier engaged The Nudge Foundation to conduct a study on the causes of migration and suggest possible solutions.

Based on the survey report, the task force resolved to expand livelihood opportunities and skill training for migrant workers. Currently, various welfare schemes such as MGNREGS, Subhadra, input support to farmers, CM's Agriculture Enterprise scheme, Kamdhenu, goat farming, and plantation programmes are being implemented across the state.

The government has decided to ensure 100 per cent coverage of these schemes in migration-prone districts and blocks. For this purpose, saturation drives will be conducted, and department officers and secretaries will verify the full coverage of beneficiaries.

Official sources said migration has already reduced to some extent following the implementation of input support to farmers during the kharif and rabi seasons.

In addition, departments including Labour, Rural Development, Panchayati Raj and Drinking Water, Fisheries and Livestock Development, and Agriculture have discussed strategies to further check distress migration.

These include more irrigation support through channels and canals, an additional 200 wage days for unskilled workers under state-supported MGNREGS, Gram Uday, development of Model Gram Panchayats, and promotion of contract farming—aimed at generating income equivalent to what workers would otherwise earn by migrating.

A committee will soon be formed to monitor outcomes at the household level, curb distress migration, and crack down on labour sardars. This committee will function in mission mode in coordination with enforcement officials, police, railway authorities, and district administrations.

Cop takes bribe from scrap dealer, arrested

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, August 25: Vigilance sleuths Sunday apprehended sub-inspector (SI) Jagga Bariha of Bijepur Police Station in Bargarh district while demanding and accepting a bribe of Rs 7,000 from a scrap dealer.

According to Vigilance sources, the SI had demanded Rs 10,000 from the complainant for allowing him to run his scrap business smoothly and for not lodging any case against him.

When the complainant expressed his inability to pay the full amount, Bariha reduced the demand to Rs 7,000 and threatened to take stern action if the bribe was not paid.

Left with no option, the scrap dealer reported the matter to the Vigilance authorities.

Acting on the complaint, Vigilance officers laid a trap and caught Bariha red-handed while accepting Rs 7,000. The bribe money was recovered from his possession and seized.

Following the trap, simultaneous searches were conducted at three locations linked to Bariha to investigate disproportionate assets.

Sambalpur Vigilance has registered a case against the accused SI under Section 7 of the Prevention of Corruption (Amendment) Act, 2018. Further investigation is underway, sources said.

Man gets life term for niece's rape, murder

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar/Berhampur, August 25: A POCSO court in Berhampur Monday awarded life imprisonment to a man after holding him guilty of rape and murder of his five-year-old niece in Ganjam district in April this year.

The court awarded Kalia Nahak alias Sanda Kalia, 27, rigorous life imprisonment under Section 6 of the POCSO Act. He was also convicted under Sections 103(1), 238(a), and 137(2) of the BNS.

The court directed the District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) to provide Rs 5 lakh as compensation to the victim's family. The girl's mother said she trusted the judiciary but a death sentence would have brought peace to her daughter's soul.

According to the prosecution, the minor girl was playing outside the home at Kholingi village under Pattapur police limits in Ganjam April 25 evening when Nahak kidnapped her. He later raped the child, killed her and dumped the body at an under-construction Anganwadi building.

Following the complaint, police launched an investigation and arrested the accused.

The matter was initially treated as a blind case, but scientific evidence and investigation, led by inspector Dipti Ranjan Behera under the supervision of the Ganjam Superintendent of Police, established the involvement of the accused, the prosecution said.

The chargesheet was filed within 50 days, and 20 prosecution witnesses were examined in a record timeframe. The trial concluded with conviction within four months.

The proceedings were monitored by the Inspector General (Southern Range) and the Inspector General (CAW), while close coordination between the prosecution and police secured the conviction.

Fertilizer crunch hits farmers in Ganjam

Bhubaneswar: Farmers in Ganjam district are facing an acute shortage of phosphate fertilizers during the Kharif paddy season. With agricultural cooperative societies running out of stock, dealers are reportedly hoarding and selling fertilizers at double the official price, sparking widespread resentment among the farmers. In Beguniapada block, farmers alleged that urea is being sold at Rs 700 per bag in black market. "Due to non-availability of the fertilizer at societies, dealers are exploiting farmers by charging double the price," claimed farmer leader Johan Swain. In Chhatrapur block, urea is being sold at Rs 520 per bag, farmer leaders Narendra Padhiari, Mohan Behera, Kuna Das, and Jay Lenka alleged. Farmers in Khallikote block also complained about rampant black marketing of fertilizers due to scarcity. They demanded immediate government intervention to check irregularities and ensure timely supply.
Every year, farmers encounter similar fertilizer shortages. Members of Rushikulya Rayat Mahasabha, led by Simanchal Nahak, urged the Agriculture department to promote organic farming and use of farmyard manure. "If farmers are encouraged to use more organic manure, dependence on chemical fertilizers will reduce and soil fertility will also improve," Nahak said.

CUO Koraput inks MoU with 4 Central varsities

Partnership to enable collaborations in academics, research and joint initiatives in tribal studies, regional growth, and socio-economic transformation

MoU to promote multidisciplinary learning under NEP 2020, strengthen collaborative research, faculty/student exchange and credit transfer

To support tribal empowerment, innovation, sustainable regional development, digital education, Indian knowledge systems and entrepreneurship

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, August 25: The Central University of Odisha (CUO), Koraput, Monday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with four Central Universities of India to advance the objectives of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 and promote inclusive, multidisciplinary education.

The partnering institutions include the English and Foreign Languages University (EFLU), Hyderabad, Central Tribal University of Andhra Pradesh (CTUAP), Vizianagaram, Indira Gandhi National Tribal University (IGNTU), Amarkantak, and Sammakka Sarakka Central Tribal University (SSCTU), Telangana.

The signing ceremony was attended by N Nagaraju, Vice-Chancellor, EFLU; YL Srinivas, Vice-Chancellor, SSCTU; T Srinivasan, Vice-Chancellor (I/c), CTUAP; Soubhagya Ranjan Padhi, Professor, IGNTU; Narasingha Charan Panda, Vice-Chancellor (I/c), CUO.

The MoU aims to foster academic and research collaborations, resource sharing, faculty and student exchanges, and joint initiatives focused on tribal studies, regional development, and socio-economic transformation.

The key objectives of the MoU are to promote multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary learning as envisioned in NEP 2020, enhance collaborative research and academic partnerships, encourage credit transfer, faculty exchange, and joint academic projects, support tribal empowerment, innovation, and sustainable regional development, strengthen digital education, Indian knowledge systems, and entrepreneurship and contribute towards increasing Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER) and institutional capacity building, said CUO officials.

Speaking at the event, Nagaraju emphasised the crucial role of faculty in turning MoUs into meaningful academic action. He praised the initiative for its focus on tribal research, which he described as a "potent and promising" field.

Srinivasan hailed the agreement as a "momentous occasion" and noted a shift in perspective—from educating tribal communities to learning from them.

Echoing similar sentiments, Srinivas shared that SSCTU has already established a tribal centre and is undertaking a funded nine-month collaborative research project.

Padhi elaborated on the tribal populations in Amarkantak and other regions of Madhya Pradesh, underlining the scope of research opportunities the MoU presents under NEP 2020.

In his address, NC Panda expressed gratitude to the partner universities for their commitment and participation.

He revealed that the idea for the MoU stemmed from discussions during union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan's visit to CUO in July 2025.

Panda emphasised the potential of the MoU to drive impactful research and policy-making aimed at improving the socio-economic conditions of tribal communities.

Basanta Kumar Rana to get Nat'l Teacher Award

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 25: Malkangiri's Basanta Kumar Rana, known for his dedication to children and passion for teaching, has been selected for the prestigious National Teacher Award 2025.

Rana currently serves as the in-charge headmaster of Kondel Government Upper Primary School in Malkangiri district. Throughout his career, he has focused on the holistic development of students, ensuring not only academic progress but also their overall growth and well-being.

He will be honoured with the award September 5 at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi. The recognition includes a cash prize of ₹50,000 and a certificate of honour.

Rana's achievement brings pride to Malkangiri and highlights the vital role of teachers in shaping young lives and strengthening the foundation of education in remote regions.

'Hospitals key to disaster response'

From triage to fire safety, the six-day training empowers healthcare leaders to ensure continuity of care during crises

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 25: Hospitals are the lifeline during disasters, and strengthening their preparedness and continuity plans is vital to ensure critical care reaches people when it is needed most, said AIIMS-Bhubaneswar executive director Ashutosh Biswas here Monday.

The remarks were made at the inauguration of a six-day Capacity Building Training on Hospital Preparedness for Health Emergencies, organised by AIIMS-Bhubaneswar in collaboration with the Disaster Management Cell, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MoHFW), Government of India.

"This event is a step towards building disaster-resilient healthcare systems in the country," said Biswas.

The programme aims to equip hospitals to respond effectively during disasters while ensuring uninterrupted healthcare services. Senior healthcare professionals from Odisha, Meghalaya, West Bengal, and Assam are taking part, including consultants, district medical officers, medical superintendents, senior medical officers, hospital administrators, and managers.

The inauguration ceremony was graced by medical superintendent Dilip Kumar Parida, DDA Lt Col Abhijit Sarkar, and nodal officer Jayanta Kumar Mitra.

The training covered a comprehensive set of modules, including: hospital disaster management principles, hospital emergency incident response systems, the Disaster Management Act, triaging, logistics, communication, fire safety, mock drills, psychosocial care, hospital evacuation, continuity of services, and return to normalcy. Participants also took part in a field visit to the Odisha Disaster Rapid Action Force (ODRAF) Base at Bhubaneswar to gain practical exposure.

The resource persons for the programme are AIIMS-Bhubaneswar faculty members trained in national capacity-building initiatives for health emergencies. This was the first time AIIMS-Bhubaneswar conducted the programme, which marked the fourth training held under the national initiative to strengthen hospital disaster preparedness across India.

'Pandian retires from politics, not from Naveen'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, August 25: The Biju Janata Dal (BJD) Monday said that bureaucrat-turned-politician VK Pandian might have announced his retirement from politics, but not from former chief minister Naveen Patnaik.

The BJD made this announcement at a press conference addressed by party's spokespersons Lenin Mohanty and Tambunath Panda.

"The people of Odisha know very well that VK Pandian has announced his retirement from active politics, not from former chief minister Naveen Patnaik. Therefore, there should be no dirty politics about Pandian," Mohanty told reporters here.

The BJD's clarification in regard to Pandian came hours after BJP MLA Saroj Padhi made some adverse remarks against the former IAS officer.

Padhi, earlier in the day, had accused Pandian of eyeing the BJD's fund, the amount of which would be nearly ₹1,000 crore. "Pandian remains glued

to Patnaik only for party fund. Therefore, he sidelined many BJD leaders who were once close to Patnaik. His real motive is no longer hidden," Padhi alleged.

The BJP MLA's statement sparked a political controversy.

"The BJP leaders, including Padhi, are utterly frustrated after knowing that the government has failed to meet the aspirations of the people. BJD will continue to win the upcoming rural polls in 2027 and the general elections in 2019. Patnaik will again become chief minister," Mohanty claimed.

Referring to Patnaik and Pandian's relationship, the BJD in a statement said, "We do not need to give clarification to the people of the BJP who are close to Patnaik. They are just afraid of Patnaik and fear of losing the next elections."

The regional outfit claimed that the BJD is a successful political party and its president, Naveen Patnaik, is the most popular leader in the state.

Two days ago, BJD leader and opposition Chief Whip in the Assembly, Pramila Mallik, had also said, "It is another matter whom Patnaik will choose to assist him. It is his personal matter, and there should be no politics over this."

However, issues relating to Pandian are being discussed in the political circles in the state since August 20, when Patnaik was admitted to a private hospital. Pandian and his wife Sujata Karthikeyan were found at the hospital, and the party also released two videos of him.

The first video, released on August 20, showed that Patnaik, while being discharged from the hospital, came out holding Pandian's hand.

The second video, which was released within 24 hours, showed that Pandian was very much present when Patnaik's elder brother, Prem Patnaik, was being briefed by the doctors on the treatment and health of the Leader of Opposition in the Assembly.

Pandian was also seen July 12 at Naveen Niwas when Patnaik returned from his spine surgery in Mumbai.

The bureaucrat-turned-politician had announced his 'sanyas' from active politics June 9, 2024, after he was held responsible by a section of people for the regional party's defeat in Lok Sabha and state Assembly elections.

Pandian had opted for voluntary retirement from civil service in October 2023 and officially joined the BJD next month.

Before the 2024 elections, though Pandian did not take any official post in the party, he was a star campaigner for the BJD and covered all the 147 Assembly segments in the state.

Stewart School honours Pooshan Mohapatra

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, August 25: Stewart School, Cuttack, felicitated its distinguished alumnus, Dr Pooshan Mohapatra, for securing All India Rank 1 in NEET PG 2025. A proud member of the Batch of 2017, Dr Mohapatra was honoured at a special ceremony held on the school campus Monday.

The programme opened with a hymn by the school choir, followed by a prayer led by Rev Palash Dey. Principal D Martina Netanya, in her welcome address, lauded Dr Mohapatra's exceptional achievement and described him as an inspiration for the younger generation of Stewartonians.

Teachers Shilpa Sahu, Preeti Mishra, Sushmita Das, and others fondly reminisced about his school days, recalling him as a hardworking, inquisitive, and soft-spoken student whose dedication and humility distinguished him. A citation narrating his journey of perseverance and success was also presented during the ceremony.

Special prayers for Dr Mohapatra's future were offered by Rev FC North, after which he was formally felicitated by Principal D Martina Netanya and Rev. North. In his address, Dr Mohapatra expressed heartfelt gratitude to his alma mater and teachers for instilling in him the values of discipline, perseverance, and integrity.

Anandapur Vikash Parishad holds general body meeting

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 25: The Anandapur Vikash Parishad held its general body meeting Sunday evening at Hotel Durene in Bhubaneswar.

Several residents of Anandapur sub-division, now living in Bhubaneswar, attended the meeting. Participants discussed various government schemes and development projects across Keonjhar district, with special focus on Anandapur sub-division. Key issues raised included demands for a new railway line connecting Anandapur, upgrading State Highway 57 to a national highway, establishment of offices for the additional district magistrate, an additional superintendent of police, and a regional transport officer in Anandapur. The council also sought government college status for Anandapur College, a super-specialty hospital with a trauma care center at the Anandapur sub-divisional hospital, and the upgradation of Hatadihi Primary Health Center to a community health center and other issues.

The meeting concluded with a unanimous decision to submit a memorandum to the state government pressing for these demands.

Art of Living brings light amid Ukraine's darkness

The global humanitarian movement has supported over 8,000 people in Ukraine, with volunteers risking their lives to bring healing amid war

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, August 25: Amid the devastation of war, with cities in ruins and civilians enduring immense trauma, a quiet revolution of compassion is taking root. The Art of Living Foundation, under the guidance of Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, has entered the heart of Ukraine's suffering — not with arms, but with breath, healing, and hope.

When Ukrainian army officers first entered the Art of Living trauma-relief sessions, the sight was heartbreaking — wounded bodies and eyes filled with fear and emptiness. "My heart broke seeing them," recalled one teacher. Yet, after learning Art of Living's breathing and meditation techniques, the same officers described feeling calm, relaxed, and secure, as the heaviness of war — emptiness, anger, and grief — began to lift.

The impact has been so profound that Ukraine's military leadership publicly recognised Gurudev's work. A battalion commander personally presented him with an honorary award, saying, "Gurudev, we thank you for the knowledge and programmes our men have received. When bombs fell, many of us rose to fight. But no one speaks of the other side of this coin — the emptiness of loss, anger, and hatred we live with 24 hours a day. After the Art of Living courses, our lives began to change. Even those with severe injuries now make plans for the future. There is life in their eyes again."

This recognition also extended to the Art of Living's leadership programmes, which have equipped Ukrainian commanders with "adaptive leadership skills and the ability to make strategic decisions in high-risk, unpredictable conditions." The military described this support as "a key factor in the successful completion of missions and the protection of lives."

The testimonies from the front lines are deeply moving. Natalia, who has been serving with the Ukrainian military since 2014 in the MPZ (moral and psychological support) unit of the first regiment, described soldiers crouching in narrow 80-centimetre trenches under relentless drone fire. She recalled the story of one soldier who, paralysed with fear, survived only because he remembered a simple breathing technique from the Art of Living programmes — the Ujjayi Breath, or "victory breath."

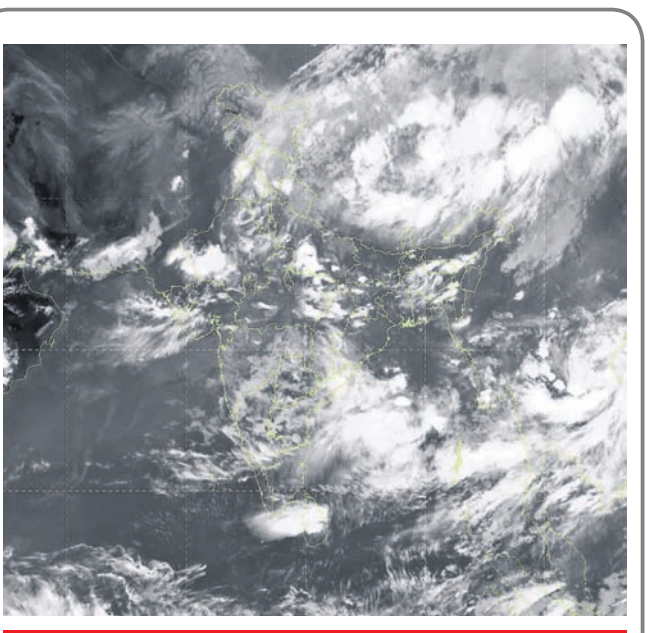
"He said he couldn't even move his eyelashes. Then he remembered the victory breath. Now, he uses it constantly. He believes this practice not only saved his life but also enabled him to protect four others in his unit," Natalia recounted.

Since 2022, the Art of Living has reached more than 8,000 people — soldiers, displaced civilians, and children from occupied territories — through its programmes. Volunteers often risk their lives to bring healing where it is needed most. "It is an honour and a deep inspiration to support those who need it most right now," said one instructor.

In a war that has taken so much, Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar is giving something back — peace amid chaos, hope in the face of despair, and the inner strength to rebuild. As he says, "Peace is not the absence of conflict, but the presence of compassion."

MARKET WATCH

CURRENCY INDEX	VARIATION	BOURSES INDEX	VARIATION	COMMODITIES INDEX	VARIATION
DOLLAR	87.55 ▲ 0.04	SENSEX	81635.91 ▲ 329.06	GOLD	₹100,670 ▲ ₹286
EURO	102.45 ▲ 0.90	NIFTY	24967.75 ▲ 97.65	SILVER	₹116,099 ▼ ₹137



WEATHER

	BBSR	CTC
Max Temp	29.9°	29.4°
Min Temp	25.1°	23.6°
Humidity	94%	95%
Rainfall	0.5mm	Nil

FORECAST

Generally cloudy sky with one or two spells of rain or thundershower

FOR CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS CONTACT OUR BOOKING STATIONS

Acharya Vihar-Dayal Agency-9437135727, **A.P. Tours and Travel**, Maitri Vihar, C.S. Pur- 9861301598, **Aurobindo Market**-Sai Audio & Electronics-9438304668, **Airport Road**-Sai Baba Variety Store-9090071530, **Anish Infotech-** Tankapani Road-9861341488, **Bapuji Nagar-** Dreamland Studio- 9777517314, **Baramunda Rental Colony**-Maa Ramchandi Communication-9658821469, **Baramunda Housing Board Colony**-Pappu Variety Store-9040500106, **Cuttack Road**-Alishan Snacks-8984236754, **District Center (Chandrasekharpur)**-Sai Google Mart-9776056507, **Forest Park**-DTDC Couriers & Services (HB Services)-7381024156, **IRC Village**-Bapi Xerox-9090090404, Gift Hut(Antriksh Gifts & Decors Pvt. Ltd.)-9954781084, Pruthvi Medicine-9853314816, **Janpath**-Krupajal Book Store-7978646669, **Jaydev Vihar**-AK Enterprises-7978116618, Subam Sai Books Store-8895550649, Swain Graphics- 9337121249, **Jagannath Mobile Point-** Janpath Road, Ram Mandir- 9938475415, **Kanan Vihar**-Auro Electronics-8260697560, **Khandagiri-** Swosti Mobile Centre- 7992914045, World Solution- 9938317559, **KIIT Road**-Jugad Jn-9338545031, **Laxmi Sagar**-Aditya Mobile-9438191836, **Lewis Road**-Spider Web-7809186415, **Metro Satellite City**-Arogya Mitra Medicine Store-9853621640, **Madhusudan Nagar**-Mohapatra Communication-9124446664, **Maa Santoshi travels**- Gajapati Nagar- 9777675867, **Nayapalli**- The Cake Room- 7873660137, **Near Mayfair Lagoon**-Cookieman-9439491273, **Nigamananda**-Omm Sai Travels-9668284823, **Nr Cosmopolis Main Gate**- Shreeram Medical Store- 8763711714, **Net Square-** Niladri Vihar (C.S. Pur)- 7205634821, **Priyadarshini Market**-Astro Point-9938134346, **R.N. General Store**-Nilakantha Nagar-9438642501, **Sahid Nagar**- Maa Communication- 9437353424, **Sahini General Store**- Near Patia Railway Station, Mahavir Vihar- 9937586626, **Satya Nagar**-Baishnavi Mixture & Sweets-7894821764, **Samantapur-** Download Point-7504557743, **Sailashree Vihar**-Harsha Book Store-8093449515, **Saheed Nagar**-Jagannath Graphics-7978652670, Photo World-7978468191, Sainath Photo Studio-8984436129, Shanti & Co-9937071063, **Siripur**-Omm Maa Sarala Communication-9777682449, **Sushree fashion-** Jagmara-9938714347, **Shree Vision-** Sailashree Vihar-9861476678, **Unit-3**-LIC of India Premium Point-9337787080, **Unit-7**- LIC Premium Point- 9338227422, **VSS Nagar**-Friends Cake & Bake-8658200930, Jeet Infoworld-7205195782, **XIMB Square**-LD Books-9658061373.

Man dies trying to save niece from electrocution

POST NEWS NETWORK

Patana, August 25: A man died while trying to save his differently-abled niece from electrocution at Chinamalipashi Tandia Sahi under this block of Keonjhar district Monday morning. The girl and the man's younger brother also sustained critical injuries.

The deceased was identified as Durjyodhan Behera, 40, son of Rabindra Behera. The injured are Durjyodhan's niece, Anjali Behera, 11, daughter of Chitrasen Behera, and his younger brother Dushasan Behera, 35.

According to reports, Anjali was drying clothes outside the house by hanging them on a GI wire tied to an asbestos-roofed shed. The wire had somehow come in contact with a live electricity line connected to the house. When Anjali received an electric shock, her uncle Durjyodhan and the latter's brother Dushasan rushed to rescue her but were also electrocuted.

Durjyodhan sustained severe burn injuries on his belly, while Dushasan suffered burns on his hands. Anjali also suffered grievous injuries. All three were rushed to Patana community health centre (CHC), where doctors declared Durjyodhan dead.

Ghatagaon police reached the CHC, conducted an inquest, and handed the body over to the family after conducting a postmortem. A case (39/25) has been registered, and an investigation is underway.

Rain exposes run-down Anganwadi centres

POST NEWS NETWORK

Nandapur, August 25: Early childhood education in Nandapur block of Koraput district has taken a beating as rainwater leaks through the decrepit roofs of 78 out of 240 Anganwadi centres (AWCs) under the block, a report said.

According to officials, the block has 240 AWCs under the state Women and Child Development (W&CD) department, of which 201 operate from their own buildings. However, 78 of these centres suffer roof leakage during rains. Another 39 centres lack their own buildings and continue having classes in schools, community halls and house verandas.

The centres are tasked with providing preschool education, nutrition and healthcare for children, adolescent girls and pregnant women. Despite the disruption, food and health services are continuing.

Parents and local representatives have expressed dissatisfaction and urged the panchayat, block, district administration and the W&CD department to intervene.

Officials said more than 60 Anganwadi centres will receive grants of ₹45,000 each from W&CD department for repairs

According to officials, Nandapur block is divided into 10 clusters across 23 gram panchayats. Reports show that centres in Hataguda, Kularsing, Malibelgaon, Padua, Nandapur, Baddel, Bilaput, Khemunduguda, Raisingh and Chatua clusters are among the worst affected, where roofs leak heavily and staff and children are unable to stay indoors during rainfall.

The Hataguda cluster has 11 AWCs, Kularsingh six, Malibelgaon 11, Padua six, Nandapur nine, Baddel five, Bilaput two, Khemunduguda six, Raisingh 18, and Chatua has four. Children, adolescent girls, Anganwadi workers, and assistants are unable to remain inside and run for cover when it starts raining. Resentment is brewing among parents and elected representatives over the poor condition of several AWCs in Nandapur block.

Child development project officer (CDPO) Minatibala Pattnaik said officials at the block, district and state levels have been informed about 39 AWCs lacking permanent buildings and leaking roofs of 78 centres.

Block development officer (BDO) Durgaprasad Dora and assistant executive engineer Jhashaketan Behera said funds were recently sanctioned for the construction of buildings at four AWCs in Darengba, Gulpandi, Khadaput and Dumuriguda.

They added that more than 60 AWCs will receive grants of ₹45,000 each from the W&CD department for repairs. The block and panchayat offices have also decided to support renovation of additional centres. Officials said all pending works will be completed soon. A cross-section of people in the region urged authorities to expedite development of AWCs, which serve as the first step toward children's education and health.

Land fraud: Dead man revived on paper; 3 held

POST NEWS NETWORK

Ganjam, August 25: Police have unearthed a bizarre case of land fraud in which a deceased man was shown as alive and his land sold using forged documents. Three people have been arrested and produced in court following preliminary investigations.

The arrested are: Manoj Kumar Gouda, 30, of Kumarbegpalli in Chhatrapur; Dillip Mali, 51, of Kalajamuna; and Dandapani Behera, 78, of Nimakhanda Bandha Sahi in Berhampur. Police seized fake Aadhaar cards and bank passbooks from them.

According to police, one of the arrested posed as the fake landowner while the other two acted as brokers. Sub-inspector Aniruddha Swain said the accused fraudulently sold the land belonging to a deceased man by passing him off as alive.

Records showed that real Dandapani Behera, a resident of Haladia Padar, had died in 2004. He owned 2.642 acre land under Malada panchayat. Since most of his family members lived outside the state permanently, the land was left neglected. Taking advantage, the accused conspired to forge ownership documents and sell the property.

The fraud came to the fore when Dandapani's son, Manas Behera, discovered discrepancies while verifying rent receipts for land mutation. He lodged a written complaint at Ganjam police station August 20. A case (270/2025) was registered, and an investigation started under the supervision of station in-charge Shradhanjali Subudhi.

Police said in 2024 the accused used a forged Aadhaar card to impersonate the deceased Dandapani, showing him as a 78-year-old, and sold the land to a local man D Bikash.

The registration was completed at Ganjam sub-registrar office September 1, 2024. The land, valued at far higher, was sold cheaply.

The total deal was worth ₹15 lakh, of which ₹1.5 lakh was shown as paid to the fake Dandapani, while ₹13.5 lakh was shared between the two brokers. The accused have confessed to the fraud, police said.

Officials added that further investigation is on and more arrests are likely.

Koraput: Suspected food poisoning claims 4 lives

NARENDRA RAUT, OP

Koraput, August 25: Four persons, including a four-year-old boy and two elderly people, have died during the last four days due to suspected food poisoning, sparking panic at Odapara village under Dasmantpur block in Koraput district. Three others are undergoing treatment at Saheed Laxman Nayak Medical College and Hospital (SLNMCH), according to reports.

Officials said the first casualty was reported Thursday when 42-year-old Manindra Gouda died during treatment at SLNMCH. A day later, four-year-old Rajesh Gouda passed away while 60-year-old Naina Gouda succumbed, followed by death of Khagapati Gouda, 60, Sunday. All four had been admitted to SLNMCH with complaints of vomiting and uneasiness.

"The sudden deaths have sparked fear among the villagers," said sarpanch Maheswar Gadba. A medical team from Koraput visited the remote village Sunday and collected water samples for laboratory testing.

Chief district medical and public health officer Rabi Narayan Mishra said no new cases were reported Sunday and the situation is under control.

"The deaths are suspected to be linked to food poisoning as the affected persons had attended a community feast. However, water samples have been collected for confirmation," Mishra said.

The district administration has chlorinated all drinking water sources and deployed a mobile health unit.

Additional district public health officer Siba Sai Swarup ruled out diarrhoea outbreak in the village.

Keonjhar boy dies; school lapse blamed

Keonjhar: An 11-year-old tribal student died Monday after being admitted to Padmapur community health centre (CHC) in Keonjhar district, while his family blamed the school authorities in Bhubaneswar for the incident. The deceased was identified as Milan Oram, the only son of Falguni and Chaitanya Oram of Dhanurjayapur-2 village under Jhumpura block. He was studying in Class VI and staying in a hostel of a private school in Bhubaneswar. According to family members, Milan fell from his bed at the hostel about a week ago, fracturing his right arm and injuring his leg. The school allegedly failed to inform his parents. His family learned about it only through a call from Milan from the phone of one of his classmates. Milan's mother and uncle brought him home from the hostel Sunday. The boy stayed at his uncle's house in Kanaposhi near Padmapur. However, his condition worsened around 6:30am Monday following which he was rushed to the CHC, where doctors declared him dead on arrival. Chaitanya filed a complaint with Sadar police, accusing the school authorities of negligence. Police registered a case and started a probe.

Floods hit three districts; 1 dead

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jajpur/Bhograi/Bhadrak, August 25: Floods in two major rivers have left over 1.67 lakh people marooned in Jajpur, Balasore and Bhadrak districts Monday, reports said, adding that one person drowned in Jajpur.

In Jajpur district, a 70-ft-long breach occurred around 4am Monday on the right embankment of Kani River, a distributary of Baitarani, near Bangalabadi in Kasapa panchayat of Dasharathpur block. More than 100 houses near the breach were submerged up to window level, forcing hundreds to flee to embankments and flood shelters.

The breach flooded parts of Mallikapur and Kasapa panchayats, directly affecting nearly 50,000 people. Informed, District Collector Ambar Kumar Kar, ADM Sibananda Swain, and BDO Akash Pattnayak rushed to the spot. Officials said rescue operations were carried out on a war footing to evacuate marooned villagers.

A 70-year-old man drowned after being swept away by the floodwaters of Baitarani river in Jajpur district Sunday. The victim, identified as Bhagabat Majhi of Tarei Sahi in Khatikata, was swept away by the strong current. Fire service personnel and an ODRAF team rescued him from the river, but doctors at the DHH declared him dead on arrival.

By afternoon, floodwaters had spread across 50 villages in 10 panchayats, inundating farmlands. Dasharathpur. Fire Services and ODRAF teams from Cuttack reached the site and began rescue operations. A 23-day-old infant was among those rescued from rising waters.

The swelling flood waters of Kani river have submerged much of Dasharathpur block. By evening, the Baitarani was flowing nearly 10 feet above the danger mark.

Meanwhile, the Water Resources department said it is closely monitoring the flood situation. Executive Engineer Ratnakar Dalai, Assistant Engineer Antaryami Mohanty, and junior engineer Arun Tripathy have camped in the flooded Dasarathpur block to oversee repair works on breaches.

Meanwhile, in Balasore, floods in Subarnarekha has affected over 1 lakh people in Bhograi, Baliapal, Jaleswar and Basta blocks. Floodwaters receded in Subarnarekha and found flowing at 10. 61 meter at Rajghat gauge against 11.21 meter at the same place by 11pm Sunday, reports from Central Water Commission said. Officials in neighbouring Jharkhand has closed down 13 gates at Galudiha barrage Monday.

Over 27 villages in Bhograi block have been affected and boat is the only medium of transport in between these villages.

Similarly, over 17,000 people in Dhamnagar and Bhandaripokhari blocks of Bhadrak district have been affected. Collector Dillip Routray informed this at a presser Monday.

2 get life term for gangrape of minor

Baripada: An Additional District and Sessions Judge-cum-Special POCSO Court here in Mayurbhanj district Monday sentenced two persons to life imprisonment in a case of gangrape of a minor girl in 2021. Judge Pratima Patra also imposed a fine of ₹60,000 on each convict. In default of payment, they would undergo an additional jail term of two years and six months.The convicts were identified as Samay Murmu, 33, and Motu Murmu, 33, both residents of Chadada under Udala police limits. According to case records, the minor girl had gone to a nearby playground when the duo raped her finding her alone. They later threatened to kill her if she disclosed the incident to anyone. However, the victim confided in her aunt, following which a village meeting was convened. As no resolution was reached, the family lodged a written complaint at Udala police station April 12. Police registered case (125/21) and began an investigation. Both accused were arrested and underwent medical examination.

DECLARATION

I, Pinki Pradhan, W/o-Budhi Pradhan, Vill-Gaudiaghai, P.O-Rahadamalla, P.S.-Puri Sadar, Distt.-Puri have purchased land through the R.S.D. vide No-11482502224, from the vendor on Dtd-22.04.2025 and delivered peaceful possession to me. I came to know that Tenant-Late Jati Pradhan has no Legal Heir Certificate in his favour and his legal successors -Sweta Pradhan & others were sold an Area-A0.12Dec. at Mouza-Gaudiaghai, Tahsil-Brahmagiri, Distt-Puri, from R.O.R. No-138/83, Plot No-338/947, executed R.S.D. No-11482003981, before S.R.O. on Dtd-22.10.2020, in favour of Amulya Kumar Pradhan & another and delivered peaceful possession. Now, I am declared, if any person/ Company has complaint about legal Succession, he/she can report before Svatantra Micro Housing Finance Co. Ltd. (SMHFCL), Branch, Puri within 14 days declaration in News Papers. Then, (SMHFCL) will not responsible for this.
Yours Faithfully,
Pinki Pradhan.

Algorithm to safeguard microgrids from cyberattacks

POST NEWS NETWORK

NIT-LED RESEARCH

Rourkela, August 25: A multi-institutional team led by National Institute of Technology (NIT) Rourkela has developed an algorithm to bolster cyber resilience and stability in microgrids, the localised power systems that play a crucial role in global energy transition.

The research spearheaded by Pravat Kumar Ray, professor and head of the Department of Electrical Engineering at NIT Rourkela, introduces a Modified Improved Whale Optimisation (MIWO) algorithm. The method draws inspiration from the hunting strategies of humpback whales, which use bubble-net feeding by circling fish and releasing bubbles to trap them.

Microgrids integrate renewable sources such as solar and wind power with storage and traditional generators. While vital to clean energy adoption, these systems rely heavily on digital communication networks, leaving them vulnerable to cyber threats such as false data injection and time-delay attacks.

To counter these risks, the team developed a Modified Improved Whale Optimisation–based Fractional Order PID (MIWO-FOPID) controller. This system ensures robust secondary frequency regulation during cyberattacks and fluctuations in energy storage systems. Fractional Order PID is an advanced form of the classic proportional-integral-derivative controller that allows more precise tuning for complex systems, while MIWO enhances optimisation by improving accuracy, speed, and the ability to avoid errors when searching for solutions.

"In modern microgrids, communication networks act as the primary medium for information exchange among different components, thereby increasing their vulnerability to cyberattacks," Ray said. "These include time-delay attacks, where information from sensors or controllers is intentionally delayed, and false data injection, where attackers manipulate system data to mislead control actions, potentially causing instability. To address these challenges, the proposed algorithm incorporates multiple advanced enhancements, including an adaptive strategy with dynamically tuned control parameters and a multi-phase exploitation mechanism."

The MIWO-FOPID controller minimises frequency deviations by optimising the cost function under scenarios including time-delay attacks, false data injection, random attacks, energy storage system status manipulation, and malware intrusions. Both computer simulations and real-world hardware experiments confirmed that the approach ensures resilient microgrid frequency control and maintains system stability under hostile conditions.

The research findings were published in IEEE Transactions on Consumer Electronics in a paper co-authored by Ray; Ramesh Chandra Khamari, research scholar at NIT Rourkela; Manoj Kumar Senapati of the Government College of Engineering, Keonjhar; and Sanjeevikumar Padmanaban of University of South-Eastern Norway. This breakthrough enhances the safety and reliability of modern power systems, enabling microgrids to maintain stable operations even under cyberattacks.

PUBLIC NOTICE
BRANCH OFFICE CLOSING

Bajaj Finance Limited having its Registered Office, Mumbai - Pune Road, Akurdi, Pune 411 035 and corporate office on 4th Floor, Bajaj Finserv House, Viman Nagar, Off Pune - Ahmednagar Road, Pune, Maharashtra 411 014 hereby informs its customers and concerned that it's office located at (Plot No - 388, 1st Floor, Gautam Nagar, Bhubaneswar, 751014) will be closing with effect from (29.11.2025). For better customer facility all the existing services shall continue to be available at the branch shifted to (1st floor, k1 Plaza, Plot No. 504, Madhusudan Nagar, in-front of Indian petrol pump, Bhubaneswar, Odisha 751012). All customers and concerned are requested to take a note of change of address and requested to contact our office at (1st floor, K1 Plaza, Plot No. 504, Madhusudan Nagar, in-front of Indian petrol pump, Bhubaneswar, Odisha 751012) thereafter.

Bajaj Finance Limited
4th Floor, Bajaj Finserv House
Viman Nagar, Off Pune - Ahmednagar Road,
Pune - 411 014, Maharashtra
Tel - 020-71505050

Date - 21.08.2025

NOTICE FOR CLOSURE OF OFFICE
(POLICYBAZAAR INSURANCE BROKERS PRIVATE LIMITED)

We are closing our office situated at **2nd Floor at Plot No 45/46, Ashok Nagar, Bhubaneswar, Orissa-751009** on 31st August 2025.

Our office at **"SAMABAYA BHAWAN", 6th Floor, Plot No-365, Bhoi Nagar, Janpath Road, Bhubaneswar, Odisha-751022** is the nearest operational office. However, our business, including website, email addresses and telephones are fully operational and no changes/delays is being experienced in servicing our customers.

Registered Office:- Plot No.119, Sector - 44, Gurgaon, Haryana – 122001
(IRDAI Registration No. 742, Valid till 09/06/2027, License category - Composite Broker CIN: U74999HR2014PTC053454)

Chola
Enter a better life

CHOLAMANDALAM INVESTMENT AND FINANCE COMPANY LIMITED
CORPORATE OFFICE : "CHOLA CREST", C54 & 55, Super B-4, Thiru Vi Ka Industrial Estate, Guindy, Chennai - 600 032, India
Branch Office : 2nd Floor, Plot No. 394, Bomikhal, Near Santoshi Maa Temple, Cuttack Road, Rasulgarh, Bhubaneswar, Pin - 751 010

POSSESSION NOTICE UNDER RULE 8(1) - FOR IMMOVABLE PROPERTY

Whereas, The undersigned being the Authorised Officer of **M/s. Cholamandalam Investment And Finance Company Limited**, under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 hereinafter called the Act in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13[12] read with Rules 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a Demand Notice on the date mentioned the account calling upon the respective Borrowers, to repay the outstanding amount with Interest thereon within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. The Borrowers having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrowers in particular and the Public in general that the undersigned has taken **Symbolic Possession** of the Property mortgaged with the Company described herein below on the date mentioned against the account in exercise of the powers conferred on him under Section 13(4) of the Act read with Rule 8 of the Rules made there under. The Borrowers in particular and the Public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with property mentioned herein below and any such dealings will be subject to the charge of **M/s. Cholamandalam Investment And Finance Company Limited** for an amount mentioned against the account along with Interest and other charges.

Loan Account No. : HE01BHU00000086448 **Name and Address of Borrower / Co-borrower :** **1. Soubhagini Swain (Applicant)**, W/o. Pradeep Kumar Swain Anuary VTC, Gopa, Near Temple, P.O. - Annuary, Sub-Dist - Banki, District - Cuttack, Odisha, Pin - 754 009. **2. Swadhin Swain (Co-applicant)**, S/o. Pramod Swain Anuary VTC, Gopa, Near Temple, P.O. - Annuary, Sub-Dist - Banki, District - Cuttack, Odisha, Pin - 754 009. **3. M/s. Sitaram Enterprise (Co-applicant)** Anuary VTC, Gopa, Near Temple, P.O. - Annuary, Sub-Dist - Banki, District - Cuttack, Odisha, Pin - 754 009. **4. Purna Chandra Swain (Co-applicant)**, S/o. Pramod Swain L-292, Phase-4, HB Colony, Near High School, Dumuduma Khorda, Odisha - 751019. **5. Pradeep Kumar Swain (Co-applicant)**, S/o. Pramod Swain Anuary VTC, Gopa, Near Temple, P.O. - Annuary, Sub-Dist - Banki, District - Cuttack, Odisha, Pin - 754 009.	**Description of the Immovable Property/ies :** **Property 1 :** All that part and parcel of the Property bearing Khata No. 227/259, Plot No. 305, Area Ac. 0.12 Decimal, Status - Home Stead, Mauja-Gopa, Tahsil - Banki, District - Cuttack (Odisha), Pin - 754 009. **Bounded as :** North - Road and Plot No. 298, South - Plot No. 306, East - Plot No. 304, West - Plot No. 269. **Property 2 :** All that part and parcel of the Property bearing Khata No. 227/246, Plot No. 269, Area Ac. 0.022 Decimal, Status - Home Stead, Mauja-Gopa, Tahsil - Banki, District - Cuttack (Odisha), Pin - 754 009. **Bounded as :** North - Plot No. 270, South - Plot No. 267, East - Road, West - Plot No. 267, 268, 270 & 272.	**Date of Demand Notice : 04.06.2025** **Outstanding Amount : Rs. 78,26,684.00** (Rupees Seventy Eight Lakhs Twenty Six Thousand Six Hundred and Eighty Four only) as on **04.06.2025** and interest thereon. **Date of Symbolic Possession : 23.08.2025**
Loan Account Nos. : HE01BHU00000015623 and HE01BHU00000013104 **Name and Address of Borrower / Co-borrower :** **1. Kamakshya Prasad Mohanty (Applicant)**, S/o. Siba Prasad Mohanty Plot No. 903 (Old 33/24), Chakeishihani, Mancheshwar, Near Shiv Temple, Rasulgarh, District Khorda, Odisha - 751 010, Plot No. 3324, Chakeisihani **2. Kanak Prava Mohanty (Co-applicant)**, W/o. Siba Prasad Mohanty Plot No. 903 (Old 33/24), Chakeishihani, Mancheshwar, Near Shiv Temple, Rasulgarh, District Khorda, Odisha - 751 010, Plot No. 3324, Chakeisihani **3. Jigismita Priyadarshini Nayak (Co-applicant)** Plot No. 903 (Old 33/24), Chakeishihani, Mancheshwar, Near Shiv Temple, Rasulgarh, District Khorda, Odisha - 751 010, Plot No. 3324, Chakeisihani	**Description of the Immovable Property/ies :** All that part and parcel of the Property bearing Khata No. 461, Plot No. 9038, Area Ac 0. 055 Decimal, Kisam Home Stead, Status - Stitiban, Mauja - Gadakana, Tehsil - Bhubaneshwar, P.S.- New Capital No. 25, DSR - Khorda, City Bhubaneshwar Sahar, Unit No. 39, District - Khorda, (C.G.). 751 010.	**Date of Demand Notice : 04.06.2025** **Outstanding Amount : Rs. 24,85,703.00** (Rupees Twenty Four Lakhs Eighty Five Thousand Seven Hundred Three only) as on **04.06.2025** and interest thereon. **Date of Symbolic Possession : 25.08.2025**

Date : 26.08.2025
Place : Cuttack, Bhubaneshwar (Odisha)

Authorised Officer
Cholamandalam Investment And Finance Company Limited

EAST COAST RAILWAY

File No. DRM/Engg/KUR/25-26/ E-Tender/60, Dt. 20.08.2025

(1) Tender No. e-Tender-CENTKUR-213-2025, Dtd.: 09.08.2025

DESCRIPTION : ALL REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE OF P.WAY ZONAL WORKS FOR A PERIOD UPTO 30/9/2026 FROM KM. 418.366 TO 422.00 ON MAIN LINE BETWEEN CUTTACK-BHUBANESWAR NEW, KM. 420.716 TO 422.103 BETWEEN MACHAPUR-RADHAKISHOREPUR AND KM. 424.273 TO 450.00 BETWEEN RAJATHGARH-BHUBANESWAR NEW STATION UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF SENIOR SECTION ENGINEER (P.WAY) / BARANG OF KHURDA ROAD DIVISION.

Approx. Cost of the Work : ₹ 171.48 Lakh, EMD : ₹ 2,35,800/-

(2) Tender No. e-Tender-CENTKUR-214-2025, Dtd.: 09.08.2025

DESCRIPTION : ALL REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE OF P.WAY ZONAL WORKS FOR A PERIOD UPTO 30/9/2026 FROM KM. 421.950 TO 450.201 ON MAIN LINE BETWEEN BARANG - KHURDA ROAD UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF SENIOR SECTION ENGINEER (P.WAY)/ BHUBANESWAR OF KHURDA ROAD DIVISION.

Approx. Cost of the Work : ₹ 176.81 Lakh, EMD : ₹ 2,38,400/-

(3) Tender No. etenderhqkur-170-2025 Dtd.: 11.08.2025

DESCRIPTION : PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION OF DOG KENNEL AT PURI WITH ALL FACILITIES.

Approx. Cost of the Work : ₹ 100.24 Lakh, EMD : ₹ 2,00,100/-

Completion Period : 12 (Twelve) Months (for Sl. No. 1 & 2) and 6 (Six) Months (for Sl. No. 3).

Tender Closing Date and Time : At 1500 Hrs. of 03.09.2025 (for all the Tenders).

No manual offers sent by Post / Courier/ Fax or in person shall be accepted against such e-tenders even if these are submitted on firm's letter head and received in time. All such manual offers shall be considered invalid and shall be rejected summarily without any consideration.
Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-Tender is available in website : **www.ireps.gov.in**

Note : The prospective tenderers are advised to revisit the website 10 (Ten) days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes / corrigenda issued for this tender. The tenderers/bidders must have Class-III Digital Signature Certificate and must be registered on IREPS Portal. Only registered tenderer/ bidder can participate on e-tendering.

Divisional Railway Manager (Engg) / Khurda Road
PR-511/Q/25-26

In concentration and silence we must gather strength for the right action.

THE MOTHER

Hindi-Chini Bhai Bhai

This is a good moment for fruitful and significant interactions between India and China at the highest level when Prime Minister Narendra Modi met China's top diplomat and the country's foreign minister Wang Yi recently in New Delhi. Modi hailed the 'steady progress' made in improving the bilateral relationship after years-long standoff between the two nuclear-armed Asian powers. This has happened at a time when the two nations navigate a shifting global economy upended by US President Donald Trump's tariffs. Modi also noted "respect for each other's interests and sensitiveness" in a statement on social media after meeting Wang.

Significantly, China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs reciprocated the Indian PM's diplomatic comment with the remark that said the two countries have entered a "steady development track" and they should "trust and support" each other.

The rebuilding of India-China ties coincides with friction between New Delhi and Washington after Trump imposed steep tariffs on India for continuing to buy Russian oil, which the US says is fuelling Moscow's war machine. India is learning the hard way about the risks of doing business with the US, trusting it too much and flirting with Trump as Modi did, bending over backward to placate him, throwing to the wind diplomatic conventions. This current phase is also showing how India is badly equipped politically to deal with global trade and business demands. The US entered into partnership with India for its strategic interest using India as a counterbalance against China's influence in Asia. This was the main reason for making India part of the Quad security alliance comprising the US, Australia and Japan. India failed to hold a steady stand and lost out in strategic partnerships due to clouded political thinking.

To the US' glee, relations between India and China soured after the deadly clash in 2020 between troops in the Galwan region. This affected trade, diplomacy and air travel, as both India and China deployed tens of thousands of security forces in border areas. However, some progress has been made since then. In fact, Wang visited India this time to meet Modi with the aim of easing border tensions and strengthening ties. Last year, India and China agreed to a pact on border patrols and withdrew additional forces along some border areas. Both countries continue to fortify their border by building roads and rail networks. In recent months, the countries have increased official visits and discussed easing some trade restrictions, movement of citizens and visas for business people. In June, Beijing allowed pilgrims from India to visit holy sites in Tibet. Both sides are working to restore direct flights.

Last week, India's Foreign Ministry spokesman Randhir Jaiswal said India and China were in discussions to restart trade through three points along their 3,488 km (2,167 mile) border. Settling the boundary issue between the two countries requires compromise at the highest political level.

Wang also met External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and National Security Adviser Ajit Doval over the countries' disputed border in the Himalayan mountains. The MEA said Wang's meeting with Doval discussed "deescalation, delimitation and boundary affairs." The conciliatory and friendly gesture made by Wang speaks volumes for the new thinking in China to mend relations with India to the advantage of both the countries which are at the receiving end of Trump's tariff war. India, of course, suffers far more than China. Wang said the setbacks the two countries had experienced in the past few years were not in the interest of their people. Sounding positive over the cooperation between the two countries in view of the economic hostility of the US, Wang said it was gratifying for China to "see the stability that is now restored in the borders."

Given the chequered history of Indo-China relations, it is premature to judge China's motive to extend the olive branch to India, especially after the recent Operation Sindoor had revealed how Pakistan could rebuff India's offensive with the help of Chinese military hardware and intelligence. At the same time it is of urgent necessity for India's foreign policy to be tailored in such a way that it does not embrace too tightly a powerful and unpredictable ally such as the US thereby closing doors to other powerful nations.

There is every possibility that China may take advantage of the current frosty relations between India and the USA to advance its own economic, military and territorial aspirations. But that does not mean India should put most of its eggs in one basket as it did in the case of the US. It needs to be circumspect about China's statement of backing India for Trump's skewed tariff policy vis-à-vis India, even while closing ranks with China for taking on the US tariff aggression.

WISDOM CORNER

How is it possible that a being with such sensitive jewels as the eyes, such enchanted musical instruments as the ears, and such fabulous arabesque of nerves as the brain can experience itself anything less than a god.

ALAN WATTS

Winning is not a sometime thing; it's an all the time thing. You don't win once in a while... you don't do things right once in a while... you do them right all the time. Winning is habit.

VINCE LOMBARDI

Your entire life only happens in this moment. The present moment is life itself. Yet, people live as if the opposite were true and treat the present moment as a stepping stone to the next moment - a means to an end.

ECKHART TOLLE

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

1429: Joan of Arc's arrival on the outskirts of Paris. In preparation for an attack on Paris, part of Charles VII's campaign to drive the English from French soil, Joan of Arc and her soldiers reached the city's outskirts on this day in 1429, but the assault ultimately failed.

1768: James Cook sails off on HMS Endeavour. The British explorer was the first European in recorded history to have visited the eastern shores of Australia. The ship reached Botany Bay in April 1770 and was back on British shores on July 12, 1771.

1883: The volcano Krakatoa in Indonesia began to erupt, and 36,000 people were killed by the eruption and the resulting tsunami.
1914: During World War I the Battle of Tannenberg began, fought between the Germans and the Russians; several days later the German forces, led by Paul von Hindenburg and Erich Ludendorff, handed Russia a crushing defeat.

1920: The 19th Amendment to the US Constitution takes effect. The amendment extended universal suffrage to women in the United States. Before this, women in some states could vote in local and state elections. The Amendment was first introduced in Congress 42 years ago in 1878 by Senator Aaron A. Sargent. In 1919, the Congress approved the amendment and sent it to the states to be ratified.

FOCUS DEFENCE TECHNOLOGY

ROBOTIC WARFARE IS HERE

Ragnar Sass

ONE OF UKRAINE'S BIGGEST SUCCESSES HAS BEEN THE USE OF MARITIME DRONES TO PUSH RUSSIAN SHIPS OUT OF THE BLACK SEA

Russia's war against Ukraine has become a full-scale technological conflict, where 70-80 per cent of casualties are now caused by unmanned aerial drones. After three and a half years, the war has become a nonstop cat-and-mouse game, where every new weapon system offers only a brief two- or three-month advantage before the other side develops countermeasures.

That means the age of robotic warfare is here. We are witnessing its first stage in Ukraine's skies, on the ground, and at sea. The fastest military-tech development in the world is happening in Ukrainian garages, basements, and factories, where hundreds of small teams are building new-model drones and interceptors.

Many have been working nonstop since February 2022, without weekends or vacations. As soon as a new product is ready, it is deployed to the front line. Soldiers test it the next day, and within 24 hours, combat feedback is sent to developers, starting a new cycle. Some defense-tech teams even hand deliver their products to combat zones and work directly with soldiers on integration and iteration.

But Russia's war machine is also operating at full speed, with many factories running around the clock. A clear sign of how quickly Russia can scale up effective weapon systems came on July 9, when it launched 728 Shahed drones in a single day. By the end of the month, more than 6,200 Shaheds had been deployed – 14 times more than in July 2024, and 16 per cent more than in June. To address this threat, at least two Ukrainian defense companies have developed AI-powered interceptor drones that use machine learning to identify and destroy Shaheds.

The fastest military-tech development in the world is happening in Ukrainian garages, basements, and factories, where hundreds of small teams are building new-model drones and interceptors

On the best nights, they have achieved 60-70 per cent success rates.

But the fight is evolving quickly. The Shaheds, too, are getting smarter. When Ukraine deployed machine guns for air defense, Shaheds responded by flying above three kilometers (1.9 miles) – well out of range. Then, in late July, Russia launched a jet-powered Shahed that can fly up to 700 kilometers per hour, faster than most known interceptors. Moreover, some Shaheds are now equipped with thermal imaging, advanced processors, and even autonomous swarm coordination. They appear to sense when they are being hunted, swerving and dodging to escape their pursuer.

Such is the nature of the first-ever robot-on-robot war. The conflict is being waged by two autonomous systems, each trying to outsmart the other in real time. Similar breakthroughs are happening on the ground. FPV (first-person view) drones with optical cable connections (meaning their signal cannot be jammed) can now strike targets up to 30 kilometers from the frontline – making any movement in that zone extremely dangerous. Both sides have begun using "sleeping drones" that wait on the ground for hours until a target appears.

As a result, unmanned ground vehicles are now being deployed at scale – mostly for logistics, resupply, evacuation, mining, and even attacks. For now, Ukraine appears to be ahead in this area. In July, its 3rd Assault Brigade carried out a historic fully autonomous operation, combining FPV drones and ground robots to force Russian troops to surrender in Kharkiv Oblast without any Ukrainian soldiers participating directly in the assault.

One of Ukraine's biggest successes has been the use of maritime drones to push Russian ships out of the Black Sea. These units, too, have been upgraded over time. On December 31, 2024, a Ukrainian Magura V5 sea drone armed with a surface-to-air missile destroyed a Russian Mi-8 helicopter over the Black Sea. Never before had an unmanned surface vehicle shot down a manned aircraft. And now, some maritime drones are being used as launch platforms or communication relays for smaller drones, expanding both range and capability.

These are not isolated cases. They confirm that we have entered a new era of warfare, in which autonomous systems are central to battlefield success. Ukraine's top drone units operate like high-performance tech startups, each with its own recruitment, training, funding, and team culture. One advanced brigade includes more than 70 data architects analysing live intelligence around the clock. These units build rapid learning loops, adapting to battlefield changes faster than traditional military units.

The most successful new player in the Ukrainian conflict is former Google CEO Eric Schmidt's defense company Swift Beat, which plans to deliver hundreds of thousands of drones this year. The company has developed one of the most effective Shahed-interceptor drones, and is developing systems capable of intercepting cruise and ballistic missiles. But, remarkably, many of the new technologies are being developed not by large defense contractors, but by thousands of volunteers and civil society.

These kinds of innovations help to explain how Ukraine has managed to hold off a military superpower for so long. NATO and its allies urgently need to study and bolster their support for Ukraine. Robotic warfare is here, and Ukraine is writing the field manual.

The writer, an Estonian tech entrepreneur and angel investor, is Founder of the Darkstar Coalition, which launched the first pan-European defense fund focused entirely on combat-proven military products.

©PROJECT SYNDICATE

SPECTRUM GAMING

Banning, balancing & betting

Bhaskar Nath Biswal

THE INDUSTRY HAS ENJOYED YEARS OF UNCHECKED GROWTH WHILE THE SOCIAL COSTS MOUNTED

India's digital revolution has always been a story of ambition outpacing regulation. From e-commerce to fintech, industries have flourished first and faced scrutiny later. Now it is online gaming's turn in the spotlight. What was once dismissed as a frivolous hobby has swelled into a multi-billion-dollar force, embedding itself in the daily lives of nearly 600 million Indians. But the thrill of play has collided with the pain of addiction, debt, and despair, leaving the government with little choice but to intervene. The Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Bill, 2025, is not just a piece of legislation but India's attempt to wrestle order out of chaos in one of its fastest-growing digital frontiers.

The industry's numbers are seductive: 400 companies, two lakh jobs, $3 billion in FDI, and Rs 20,000 crore in annual GST contributions. These are not small stakes. Gaming has been celebrated as both a cultural phenomenon and an economic engine. Yet its darker side has become impossible to ignore. Families have watched teenagers drain digital wallets, salaried workers gamble away paychecks, and headlines now routinely carry the grim news of suicides tied to online gambling losses.

The government's response is sweeping. The Bill bans all online money games, regardless of whether they are based on skill or chance. Fantasy sports, poker, and rummy once booming businesses are treated no differently than slot machines. The penalties are severe: fines up to Rs 1 crore and five years in prison, doubling for repeat offenders. Financial institutions are barred from facilitating transactions and advertisements that promote money games are outlawed. The message is blunt: online gambling has no place in India's digital economy.

But the Bill is not merely a hammer; it is also a chisel. It seeks to carve out a legitimate space for e-sports and non-monetary games, granting them official recognition and institutional support. A National e-Sports Authority will be tasked with ensuring fair play, enforcing compliance, and helping integrate e-sports into state policies. Educational and social games are actively encouraged, with government backing to promote learning and skill development through play. This dual approach - crushing real-money games while nurturing e-sports signals that the government does not reject gaming itself, only its most corrosive incarnation.

Critics, however, argue the cure may be worse than the disease. Industry bodies warn that a blanket ban ignores the legal protections afforded to skill-based games in several jurisdictions. By passing the Bill, the government is not only destroying a job-creating sector but also pushing players towards offshore platforms, accessed via VPNs. Tax revenues could dry up, investments could evaporate and thousands of livelihoods could be jeopardized. In trying to protect citizens, the government may inadvertently drive them into even more dangerous, unregulated spaces.

Yet defenders of the Bill see it as a necessary correction. The industry has enjoyed years of unchecked growth while the social costs mounted. If the short-term price is disruption, they argue, the long-term reward is a safer and more responsible digital ecosystem.

The truth, as always, lies in the execution. A blunt ban may satisfy public anger but risks creating a black market. Overregulation could strangle innovation, while underregulation could leave citizens vulnerable. What India needs is not just a law but a living framework, one that adapts to technological change, consults stakeholders and refines its definitions over time. Without this flexibility, the Bill risks being remembered not as a landmark reform but as a lost opportunity.

India's online gaming Bill is, in many ways, a gamble in itself. It bets that by outlawing one half of the industry and uplifting the other, the government can protect citizens while still reaping economic rewards. Whether this gamble pays off will depend less on what is written in the Bill and more on how it is enforced. For now, the dice are cast.

The writer is a former principal of Nabarangpur College and founder of Supporting Shoulders, an NGO.

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, Rasulgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

Balanced approach

Sir, The Supreme Court's updated order on stray dogs takes a more balanced approach to a contentious topic. The court chose compassion tempered with pragmatism, reversing its earlier ruling demanding the permanent removal of all stray dogs from streets. The Supreme Court's earlier order directing the authorities in Delhi, Gurgaon, Noida and the rest of the National Capital Region to remove all the stray dogs to specially-made shelters in eight weeks sounded impractical and financially untenable but it sought to address a very serious issue from the point of view of the most vulnerable segment of the human population in the light of the right to life guaranteed under Article 21 of the Constitution. It is noteworthy that dogs have been with humans in every civilization. In the past, the Supreme Court and various High Courts have repeatedly affirmed the territorial rights of community dogs, holding that removal or relocation is unlawful. Again mass confinement will violate Article 51A(g) of the Constitution, which enjoins citizens, and by extension the State, to show compassion to all living creatures.

Abhijit Roy, JAMSHEDPUR

Separate time zone

Sir, For decades, the Northeast has been chained to a clock that does not belong to us. Our mornings blaze with light while Delhi still sleeps, our evenings drown in darkness while the rest of India basks in sunset. Yet our lives are dictated by an alien timetable, as though the rhythm of our land counts for nothing. This is not an inconvenience. This is erasure. By the time offices open, half our sun has already set. By the time schools end, children walk home through shadows. We burn electricity to fill hours that nature already gave us, because governance refuses to see what every villager, every farmer, every student already knows—that our land runs on a different sun. Scientists have said it. Committees have urged it. Generations have demanded it. Yet Delhi resists, as if recognising our difference will weaken India. But what weakens India is this stubborn denial. A separate time zone is not whimsy—it is scientific and economical.

Noopur Baruah, TEZPUR (ASSAM)

FINANCIAL STRAIN

Delhi Metro raises fares after 8 years

Despite the latest increase, the DMRC maintained that its fares remain among the lowest worldwide

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 25: Grappling with financial stress due to COVID losses, loan repayments and upkeep costs, the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) on Monday revised passenger fares after a gap of nearly eight years. The hike ranges from ₹1 to ₹4 depending on the distance travelled, officials said.

In the financial year 2023-24, the DMRC incurred a loss before tax of ₹1,781.69 crore. In the following year, 2024-25, the losses are projected to be around ₹1,598 crore, as per a DMRC official.

"The latest fare increase is minimal and will only provide limited relief. The additional revenue, however, will help the DMRC sustain its operational standards by ensuring timely maintenance of trains and infrastructure, much of which is now ageing," the official added.

According to the new structure, the minimum fare has increased from ₹10 to ₹11 for journeys of up to 2 km, while the maximum fare for trips beyond 32 km has risen from ₹60 to ₹64. For the 12–21 km slab, fares now stand at ₹43, compared to ₹40 previously, and for the 21–32 km slab, the fare has been increased to ₹54 from ₹50.

The new rates apply on Sundays and national holidays as well. On these days, a journey beyond 32 km will now cost ₹54 instead of ₹50, while travel in the 12–21 km range has been revised from ₹30 to ₹32, the DMRC said in a statement.

A similar revision, with an increase of up to ₹5, has also been introduced on the Airport Express Line, it stated.

Calling the hike "minimal", the DMRC emphasised it was necessary to balance the rising operational expenses.

"The reason to increase the fare are losses during the COVID period, repayment commitments to the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the need for midlife refurbishment of trains, upkeep of infrastructure and salaries of staff as major financial pressures," officials said.

In the financial year 2023-24, DMRC incurred a loss before tax of ₹1,781.69cr

In the following year, 2024-25, losses are projected to be around ₹1,598cr

The revision has been carried out on the recommendation of the 4th Fare Fixation Committee and approved by the corporation's Board of Directors.

Delhi Metro fares were earlier revised in 2004, 2005, 2009 and twice in 2017 (May and October). Despite the latest increase, the DMRC maintained that its fares remain among the lowest worldwide, the statement mentioned.

Passengers using smart cards will continue to get a 10 per cent discount on every journey, with an additional 10 per cent discount available during off-peak hours before 8 am, between 12 pm and 5 pm and after 9 pm.

Agitators hold placards during a sit-in being staged by Awami Ittehad Party leaders demanding the immediate release of party chief and Lok Sabha MP Sheikh Abdul Rashid from prison, at Jantar Mantar, in New Delhi, Monday PTI PHOTO

How Naidu turned ₹7K into ₹6,755cr dairy empire

Andhra Pradesh CM Chandrababu Naidu emerges as richest CM with assets worth ₹936cr

AGENCIES

New Delhi, August 25: The latest report by the Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR), which pegs the collective assets of India's Chief Ministers at over ₹1,600 crore, places Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu at the very top with a declared wealth of ₹931 crore.

While the findings spotlight the disparities in the financial backgrounds of political leaders, Naidu's case is distinct in that his wealth is tied to a business enterprise he founded three decades ago, Heritage Foods Ltd, rather than inherited assets or opaque sources.

Across the country, other Chief Ministers also feature prominently in ADR's wealth analysis. Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu is second on the list with assets of ₹163 crore, followed by Odisha's Naveen Patnaik with ₹63 crore.

Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan declared the lowest assets at just ₹40 lakh, while Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal reported ₹3 crore. With most Chief Ministers now counted as crorepatis, with only two exceptions, the report highlights the broad divergence in wealth among India's political leadership.

Naidu founded Heritage Foods Ltd in 1992, when India's dairy sector was opening up to private investment under economic reforms. Starting with a paid-up capital of just ₹7,000, the company went public in 1994 with an IPO oversubscribed 54 times, raising ₹6.5 crore.

Over three decades, Heritage has grown into a pan-India brand with a presence in 17 states and partnerships with nearly 3 lakh dairy farmers. The company's turnover milestones-from ₹100 crore by FY2000 to ₹4,000 crore by FY2025-reflect its sustained expansion. The Nara family, which retains a 41.3 per cent stake, has seen Heritage's market capitalisation rise from ₹25 crore in 1995 to ₹4,500 crore in 2025, peaking at ₹6,755 crore in mid-2024.

Naidu's journey has also been marked by political upheavals. A four-time Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, he has alternated between power and opposition, steering his party through turbulent phases such as the bifurcation of the state in 2014, electoral setbacks in 2004 and 2019, and a return to office in 2024.

Parallel to his political career, Naidu has consistently projected himself as a tech-forward leader, branding Hyderabad as "Cyberabad" during his tenure in undivided Andhra Pradesh, and more recently emphasising the importance of artificial intelligence, high-tech manufacturing, and quantum computing for Andhra Pradesh's growth.

It was under his wife, Nara Bhuvaneswari, who took charge of Heritage in 1994 when Naidu entered government, the company has expanded steadily, maintaining a reputation for ethical growth and farmer-centric operations without state concessions or preferential contracts. Its net worth rose from ₹9.99 crore in 1994 to ₹972 crore in 2025, making it a rare example of a political leaders' declared wealth being linked to a transparent, publicly listed enterprise.

Andhra announces ₹1L for 55 SC NEET toppers

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Amravati, August 25: Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu Monday announced a cash incentive of ₹1 lakh for each of the 55 students from the state's Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribe (ST) residential schools who have secured seats in prestigious institutions like the IITs, NITs, and for MBBS through the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET) exam.

The announcement was made at a special felicitation event at the Secretariat in Amaravati, where the students met the Chief Minister and shared their success stories. The state government has reiterated its focus on empowering students from underprivileged backgrounds and providing them with the necessary resources to compete at the national level.

The state's residential school system provides free quality education to students from marginalised communities. The students received specialized coaching at Dr BR Ambedkar IIT-NEET coaching centres located in Chinnatekur, Kuntamukkala, and Adivi Thakkellapadu.

The results are particularly impressive given the competitive nature of these national-level entrance exams. Out of 176 students who were trained for JEE (Mains and Advanced), 129 qualified. From the 180 students who received coaching for NEET, 143 qualified. From this pool of successful candidates, 12 secured seats in IITs, 30 in NITs, and 13 got MBBS seats through NEET.

This cohort of high-achievers includes 20 girls, highlighting the program's success in promoting female education. An additional 14 students are also likely to secure BDS seats, with 19 gaining admission to GFTIs and Central Universities.

Monsoon sparks 'diamond rush', villagers turn fortune hunters

Rain-washed lands in Jonnagiri, Tuggali, and Peravali mandals, long known for diamond discoveries, are drawing crowds of villagers, traders, and outsiders eager to test their luck this season

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kurnool, August 25: The early rains in the Rayalaseema region of Andhra Pradesh have turned into a season of fortune seeking for farmers and villagers in Kurnool and Anantapur districts, where hunting for precious stones, including Diamonds, has intensified alongside kharif cultivation.

Rain-washed lands in Jonnagiri, Tuggali, and Peravali mandals, long known for diamond discoveries, are drawing crowds of villagers, traders, and outsiders eager to test their luck this season.

"Even if you pick a stone, it may turn your fortunes," Bharat Palod, an entrepreneur from Mahabubnagar district in Telangana, told PTI, adding that stories of ordinary farmers turning millionaires and billionaires fuel widespread interest in the region.

Palod said the precious stone hunting has changed his life. "I found my first piece in 2018 and this year I sold one for ₹8 lakh", he said.

Deepika Dusakanti, a social worker, recalled how she previously sold a diamond for ₹5 lakh to fund education of underprivileged children.

"This year's discovery worth ₹10 lakh will again go for students' benefit," she mentioned.

Naman, an archaeology student, said, "I came to study Telugu history. I found stones that will both fund my studies and serve research purposes," he told PTI.

A farmer from Chittoor, Godavariamma, said she travelled to Jonnalagiri after watching videos of diamond discoveries. "Though I came late, I will continue searching. If I find one, it will support my family's needs," she said. Kurnool DIG Koya Praveen said folklore about diamonds in Kurnool and Anantapur districts persists.

"People migrate for work, return during the monsoon, and harvest diamonds. No crimes have been reported despite high sums involved," Praveen told PTI.

He said that villagers claim the lands as their own and sometimes resist outsiders entering, yet 'no major disputes or criminal incidents' have been reported so far. This season, reports of multiple high-value diamonds have renewed excitement.

Venkateshwara Reddy, a farm worker in Peravali village, reportedly sold a diamond for ₹15 lakh to a local trader.

P Bajranglal, owner of the land in Anantapur district, said he owns over 40 acres where villagers search for diamonds, as many have found precious stones, and he has no objections. He mentioned that his family even provides water and food for people who come in search of diamonds.

"If these diamonds bring happiness to others' lives, I fully support it," he said.

Officials noted this as the most valuable diamond discovered so far this year.

Diamond hunts traditionally peak during the rainy months in Jonnagiri, Pagidirai, Erragudi and Upparlapalli regions of Rayalaseema as heavy rains expose buried stones, which are spotted by those combing black soil fields.

Despite some success stories, most villagers return empty-handed after days of digging and yet, the occasional jackpot keeps thousands motivated to try their luck every year.

'Diamond farming'

Even today, many villagers describe diamond hunting as part of their seasonal rhythm. After months of migration for work, families return home during the rains to try their luck in fields.

Officials noted that villagers treat the activity like "diamond farming." They spend hours digging, washing soil, and combing through stones in hopes of uncovering the prized gems. For now, the activity remains largely unorganised, carried forward by hope and folklore. With each monsoon, these districts once again transform into a hub of diamond seekers chasing hidden fortunes.

Delhi on track to become EV capital

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

GOING GREEN

New Delhi, August 25: Delhi is set to cement its place as the country's Electric Vehicle (EV) capital with 7,000 to 8,000 new electric buses on its roads by February 2026, Transport Minister Pankaj Singh said Monday.

At present, the city has 3,400 electric buses, up from 400 when Singh took charge. The fleet is expected to grow to 6,000 by the end of this year, he said.

"Based on route rationalisation, Delhi requires 7,000 to 8,000 buses. We believe we will reach that target by February," the minister said while addressing the India Clean Transportation Summit 2025 at the India International Centre here. The expansion also includes the city's Devi buses, aimed at strengthening last-mile connectivity. Singh added that Delhi's new EV Policy 2.0, likely to be unveiled by February, will focus heavily on charging infrastructure. "We are creating infrastructure in housing societies, under flyovers and on vacant land in outer Delhi. Resident Welfare Associations will be involved, and Public-Private Partnership models will be explored. The policy will be robust, covering scrapping of older vehicles, road tax and incentives," he said, calling it a policy "the public will love".

Based on route rationalisation, Delhi requires 7,000 to 8,000 buses. We believe we will reach that target by February

PANKAJ SINGH | TRANSPORT MINISTER, DELHI

Singh said Delhi will also learn from Norwegian capital's experience in expanding its charging network under the proposed 'Delhi-Oslo Smart Transport Initiative'. "Our friendship with Oslo will help us access the best technologies and move in the right direction," the minister said.

Audun Garberg, vice-director and head of the climate department in Oslo, said the Norwegian capital too faced hurdles in the early years of electrification.

"In 2006-07, we didn't have enough public charging points. That made adoption difficult. Now, infrastructure is widely available, and our next challenge is e-trucks and housing cooperatives," he said.

Andhra launches BRAIN programme

Amaravati: The Andhra Pradesh government, in collaboration with the APAC Biodesign Alliance and Stanford Biodesign, Monday launched the 'Bharat Biodesign Research and Innovation' (BRAIN) programme, aimed at developing affordable medical technologies and workforce training, with an initial focus on AI-enabled healthcare. Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu inaugurated the BRAIN programme at the Ratan Tata Innovation Hub (RTIH) in Amaravati, following a meeting with leaders from the Asia Pacific (APAC) Biodesign Alliance. "BRAIN will not only bring the best of global health innovation to Andhra Pradesh but also create local solutions that can be scaled across India and emerging markets," Naidu said in an official press release. "This is a step towards our vision of improving healthcare access, affordability, and quality for every citizen," he added. The chief minister's meeting focused on advancing healthcare innovation, medical technology, and entrepreneurial capacity building in India, with special emphasis on positioning Andhra Pradesh as a hub for transforming healthcare delivery through next-generation health technology solutions.

ଅଧିକ୍ଷଣ ଯନ୍ତ୍ରୀଙ୍କ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟାଳୟ (ରାସ୍ତା ଓ ଗୃହ) ବିଭାଜନ ନଂ.୧, ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱର

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER
BHUBANESWAR (R&B) DIVISION NO.I, BHUBANESWAR
Email:eebbsr1@yahoo.co.in

INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)

No.B-448: No.10326 Date:22.08.2025

Bid Identification No.C.C.(R&B)-01
e-Procurement Notice No.40 of 2025-26

1	Name of the Work	E.I Work
2	Total No. of Work	1 No. Work
3	Estimated Cost	i) Rs.3903300.00 (Excluding GST)
4	Class of Contractor	Manufacturer/Authorised Dealer having MOU with MV/HT Electrical Contractor or MV/HT Electrical Contractor having Authorisation (MAKE-LG/Carrier/ Toshiba/or Equivalent)
5	Period of Completion	3 (Three) Calendar Months
6	Type of Tender	Single Cover System (Online)
7	Date & Time of availability of bid document in the portal	From 15.00 Hours of 25.08.2025 to 17.00 Hours of 30.08.2025
8	Last Date & Time for Receipt of bids in the portal	30.08.2025 upto 17.00 hrs.
9	Name & Address of the Officer Inviting Bid	Superintending Engineer, Bhubaneswar (R&B) Division No.I, Bhubaneswar

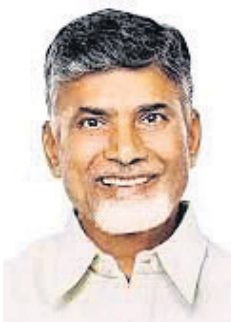
Further details can be seen from the e-Procurement portal https://tendersorissa.gov.in

N.B.:Subsequent Corrigendum/addendum if required shall be available in the website as indicated above.

Sd./- Er. Prabhudatta Pradhan
Superintending Engineer
Bhubanewar (R&B) Division No.I, BBSR

OIPR-34076/11/0027/2526

national



Congratulations to 55 SC and ST students who secured seats in national-level institutions. They studied in social welfare gurukul schools and achieved success in IIT, NIT, and NEET this year

N CHANDRABABU NAIDU | ANDHRA PRADESH CM

HC REFUSES TO STAY TRIAL COURT PROCEEDINGS AGAINST GAMBHIR

The Delhi High Court Monday refused to stay the trial court proceedings against Indian cricket team head coach Gautam Gambhir, his foundation and others accused of illegally stocking and distributing COVID-19 drugs

Quote of the day

You must not have seen such an example in India, perhaps not even in the world. Till 5 pm the vice president was working, holding meetings, and by 8 pm he resigned and completely disappeared from the scene. Nobody knew if he is even in the vice president's residence or not, and he was meeting no one

ASHOK GEHLOT | EX-RAJASTHAN CM

There are many benefits of adopting technology, but the main target is to provide trust regarding the governanc public. While technology provides many solutions, we must also be aware of not letting it turn into 'Bhasmasur' so that it turns harmful to us

MANOHAR LAL KHATTAR | UNION MINISTER

How many years of jail should such a person receive? If someone is falsely accused and sent to jail, and later proven innocent, then how many years of jail should the minister who framed the false case get?

ARVIND KEJRIWAL | AAP CHIEF

Display apology in shows: Top court to influencers

A bench of Justices Surya Kant and Joymalya Bagchi said the degree of repentance should be higher than the degree of offending and made it clear that the court would consider imposing a penalty on the influencers for offending disabled persons by social media influencers, at a later stage

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 25: Commercial and prohibited speeches are not covered under the fundamental right, the Supreme Court Monday said as it asked five social media influencers, including "India's Got Latent" host Samay Raina, to display their unconditional apology in their podcasts or shows for ridiculing persons with disabilities and rare genetic disorders.

"It is like purging contempt," Justice Kant said while asking the influencers to apprise the court on how much penalty they were willing to pay, which in turn can be utilised in the treatment of people suffering from rare genetic disorders like spinal muscular atrophy (SMA).

The five influencers are accused of making fun of the disabled and those suffering from SMA and visual impairment.

Except Sonali Thakkar alias Sonali Aditya Desai, four influencers including Raina were present in the courtroom.

Justice Bagchi said the influencers should be more cautious while creating humour related to different communities especially when it pertains to "apartheid in the society".

"Much of this media block is used like feeding your own ego. It feeds on yourself and when you become too big and have so many followers... It's not only freedom of speech here. It is purely commerce.... infact, there are various kinds of speeches and in the Amish Devgan case this court has classified various kinds of speeches like commercial speech and prohibited speech. This overlap of commercial and prohibited speeches is where you have no fundamental rights (sic)," Justice Bagchi said.

The bench allowed the intervention of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and asked Attorney General R Venkataramani to come up with guidelines to regulate the contents on social media while taking into account the views of all stakeholders.

Venkataramani said the government was in process of formulating the guidelines but ruled out any "gag order".

Justice Kant agreed and said that was the reason behind the suggesting in the last hearing that draft guidelines will be shared in public domain for the views of all stakeholders.

"There should be some accountability. Today it is disabled people but tomorrow it can be women, children and senior citizens," Justice Kant added.

Justice Bagchi weighed in, "Humour is definitely well taken as humour is a part of life. We laugh at ourselves but when you start laughing at others then we should have a sense of sensibility. It's not only disability but we are a country of varied communities..."

Senior advocate Aprajita Singh, appearing for NGO Cure SMA Foundation of India, which has sought action against the influencers for their utterances against the disabled, said a better sense prevailed among the influencers, who tendered an unconditional apology.

She said the issue was not of the influencers alone and the Information Technology Rules and the Cinematograph Act mandate that persons with disabilities cannot be targeted.

While Justice Kant said there should be penal action under the rules which should be proportionate to the harm caused to the dignity of people, Singh suggested influencers to spread awareness on the rare genetic disorder and disabilities through their shows.

The bench told the attorney general that the proposed guidelines for social media regulations should not be a knee-jerk reaction to one incident but based on broad based parameters incorporating views of all stakeholders.

US TARIFFS DEADLINE

Pressure might increase, but we will bear it all: PM

Addressing a gathering in Ahmedabad after launching multiple projects, he hit out at the Congress, saying the party, which ruled India for 60 to 65 years, made the nation dependent on other countries in order to indulge in "import scams"

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ahmedabad, August 25: Prime Minister Narendra Modi Monday asserted he can't compromise on interests of farmers, cattle-rearers, small-scale industries, cautioning "pressure on us may increase, but we will bear it", remarks coming in the backdrop of US move to slap 50 per cent tariffs on Indian goods.

Addressing a gathering in Ahmedabad after launching multiple projects, he hit out at the Congress, saying the party, which ruled India for 60 to 65 years, made the nation dependent on other countries in order to indulge in "import scams".

India is empowered by walking on the path of Sudarshan Chakradhari Mohan Lord Shrikrishna, who symbolised strength and protection, and Charkhadhari Mohan Mahatma Gandhi, the independence movement hero who pushed for swadeshi with his spinning wheel, the PM maintained.

Referring to Operation Sindoor, India's military response to the Pahalgam massacre, and in an oblique reference to Pakistan, he declared India no longer spares terrorists and their masters.

"Operation Sindoor embodied the bravery of our soldiers and determination of Sudarshana Chakradhari Mohan's India. Today, we do not spare terrorists and their masters, no matter where they are hiding," the PM told the gathering.

"For Modi, interests of farmers, cattle rearers and small scale industries are paramount. Pressure on us may increase, but we will bear it all," the PM affirmed as the August 27 deadline for 50 per cent US tariffs on Indian imports nears.

He pushed for the widespread use of swadeshi goods.

"All of us should follow the mantra of buying only 'made in India' goods. Businessmen should keep a big board outside their establishments, saying they sell only 'swadeshi' goods," he stated.

"I think I am fortunate to get the love and blessings of lakhs of people," said Modi, who in the evening held a roadshow in Ahmedabad.

Half-a-dozen drones from Pak sighted near LoC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mendhar/Jammu, August 25: Security forces have launched a search operation after around half-a-dozen drones from Pakistan were sighted hovering over several forward areas along the Line of Control (LoC) in Poonch district of Jammu and Kashmir, officials said Monday.

The movement of the drones from across the border was picked up over Balakote, Langote and Gursai nallah in Mendhar sector at 9.15 pm Sunday, the officials said.

They said the drones, believed to be launched for surveillance, were seen flying very high and returned to the Pakistani side within five minutes.

However, the area was cordoned off and a search was launched with the first light of the day in several areas where the movement of the drones was picked up to ensure that there

was no air dropping of weapons or narcotics, the officials said.

The use of drones by Pakistan to drop weapons and narcotics has emerged as a major challenge for the security agencies over the past couple of years and accordingly, police have announced a reward of Rs three lakh to anyone providing information about sighting of a drone leading to the recovery of the dropped material in February last year.

Farmers submit memorandum to agriculture minister

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 25: The Samyukta Kisan Morcha (non-political) Monday submitted a memorandum to Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, demanding a legal guarantee on the minimum support price (MSP) for all crops and the exclusion of agriculture and allied sectors from any proposed trade agreement between India and the United States.

The farmers' body said the memorandum was handed over to the Delhi Police during a "Kisan Mahapanchayat" organised at Jantar Mantar here. According to the SKM (non-political), the agriculture ministry wrote to it late on Sunday night, saying a meeting with a delegation of farmers would be fixed soon to discuss their pending demands. The memorandum reiterated three main issues -- the fulfilment of the demands raised during the farmers' agitation at the Shambhu, Khanauri and Ratnapura border points of Delhi, including the enactment of an MSP-guarantee law, keeping agriculture, dairy, poultry and fisheries outside the ambit of any India-US trade pact and withdrawing the cases lodged against farmers during their 2020-21 movement.

SHORT TAKES

3 pilgrims die en route Manimahesh

Shimla: Three pilgrims from Punjab died while en route to Manimahesh in Himachal Pradesh's Chamba district, allegedly due to hypoxia (lack of oxygen), officials said Monday. The deceased have been identified as Aman (18) and Rohit (18), both residents of Pathankot and Anmol (26) from Gurdaspur. According to preliminary reports, one pilgrim died Sunday night, while two died Monday due to hypoxia.

4 teens killed in road mishap

Noida: Four teenagers were killed when their motorcycle collided head-on with a car in Greater Noida Monday, police said. The accident occurred on the Kulsera Pusta Road in the Ecotech 3 area. Sumit, Luvkush, Rihan and Monu Thakur -- aged between 16 to 18 -- were taken to a hospital where they died during treatment, they added.

8 students injured as school van overturns

Cuddalore/Chennai: About eight students were injured Monday when a school van overturned while crossing a railway track at Poovanur village in Virudhachalam taluk of Cuddalore district, police said. The level crossing is an interlocked one, meaning that unless the gates are closed, trains will not get a green signal to proceed through the intersection.

CBI busts cybercrime gang

New Delhi: The CBI has busted a sophisticated cybercrime syndicate that siphoned off more than Rs 350 crore from US citizens since 2023, arresting three alleged fraudsters who bilked unsuspecting victims posing as tech support, officials said Monday. The meticulous operation executed in close coordination with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, USA led to the arrest of three key operatives of the gang -- Jigar Ahmed, Yash Khurana and Inder Jeet Singh Bali -- and recovery of Rs 54 lakhs, eight mobiles and laptops along with digital evidence pertaining to crime from their residence.

SNIPPETS

Espionage case: Court extends Jyoti Malhotra's judicial custody

Hisar: A Hisar court Monday extended till September 2, the judicial custody of YouTuber Jyoti Malhotra, who was arrested in May on suspicion of espionage. It was earlier learnt that the judicial custody was extended till September 3. Malhotra physically appeared before judicial magistrate (first class) Sunil Kumar, who remanded her to judicial custody till September 2, her lawyer Kumar Mukesh said. He said she will now be produced September 2. Malhotra, who hails from Hisar and ran a YouTube channel "Travel with JO", was arrested by Hisar Police May 16.

SC protects psephologist Sanjay Kumar in EC's FIRs

New Delhi: The Supreme Court Monday granted protection from arrest to psephologist Sanjay Kumar in connection with two FIRs lodged by the Election Commission of India accusing him of spreading misinformation over Maharashtra's electoral rolls through posts on social media. A bench comprising Chief Justice B R Gavai and Justice N V Anjaria took note of the submissions of senior advocate Vivek Tankha and advocate Sumeer Sodhi that the two FIRs were lodged against Kumar despite the deletion of the social media posts on "X" followed by a public apology.

SC collegium recommends names of HC Chief Justices Aradhe, Pancholi for top court

New Delhi: The Supreme Court collegium Monday recommended to the Centre, the names of Bombay High Court Chief Justice Alok Aradhe and Patna High Court Chief Justice Vipul Manubhai Pancholi for elevation as top court judges. Justice Pancholi, upon becoming a top court judge, would be in line to become the Chief Justice of India (CJI) in October 2031 after Justice Joymalya Bagchi's retirement October 2, 2031. Subject to Centre's clearance, he would assume CJI's office on October 3, 2031 and retire May 27, 2033.

An artisan gives a finishing touch to Goddess Gauri on the eve of the 'Ganesh Chaturthi' in Nagpur PTI PHOTO

Death sentence can be challenged under Article 32: SC

The top court also said the exceptional scope of Article 32 cannot be permitted to become a routine pathway for reopening concluded matters

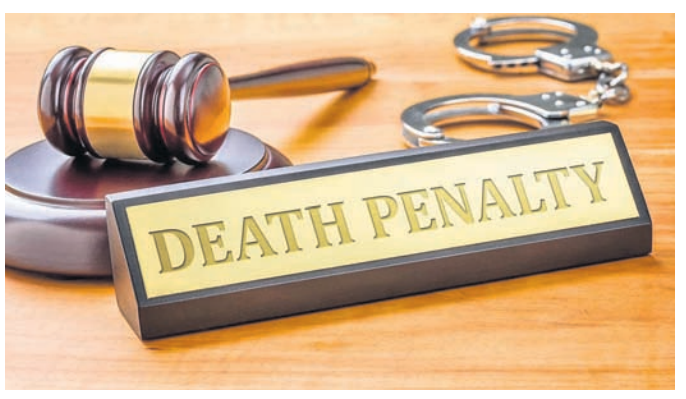
PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 25: Article 32 of the Constitution empowers the court to reopen sentencing in cases of capital punishment on grounds of breach of procedural safeguards, the Supreme Court said Monday while agreeing to hear again a death row convict's plea.

Vasant Sampat Dupare, who belongs to Nagpur, was convicted of raping and killing a four-year-old in April 2008. He lured her with chocolates and crushed her head with stones to avoid identification of the body.

A bench of Justices Vikram Nath, Sanjay Karol and Sandeep Mehta allowed the convict's plea filed under Article 32 noting that there had been a breach of procedural safeguards.

It also cited the 2022 Manoj Vs Madhya Pradesh judgement in which the top court issued several guidelines and mandated the trial courts to collect the accused's psychiatric and psychological evaluation report



before awarding death.

"We hold that Article 32 of the Constitution empowers this court in cases related to capital punishment to reopen the sentencing stage where the accused has been condemned to death penalty without ensuring that the guidelines mandated in the Manoj vs Madhya Pradesh was followed," the bench said.

"This corrective power is invoked precisely to compel rigorous application of the safeguards laid down in Manoj judgment in such cases, thereby ensuring that the condemned person is not deprived of the fundamental rights to equal treatment, individualised sentencing and fair procedure that Articles 14 and 21 of the Constitution secure to every person," the bench said.

The top court also said the exceptional scope of Article 32 cannot be permitted to become a routine pathway for reopening concluded matters.

"Reopening will be reserved for only those cases where there is a clear, specific breach of the new procedural safeguards, as these breaches are so serious that if left uncorrected, they would undermine the accused person's basic rights like dignity and fair process," the bench said.

The top court maintained the conviction but set aside the 2017 view taken on sentencing for the present and placed the matter before Chief Justice of India B R Gavai for appropriate listing of the case to be heard afresh.

Dupare's sentencing was confirmed by the apex court in 2014.

His review petition against the November 26, 2014 verdict was dismissed by the apex court May 3, 2017. He then filed mercy petitions before the Maharashtra governor and the president, which were rejected in 2022 and 2023, respectively.

national

It is a grave violation of the Theory of separation of powers. It undermines democracy. That's why we opposed the Bills

ASADUDDIN OWAISI | AIMIM PRESIDENT

UP TO LAUNCH SCHOLARSHIP IN SHUBHANSHU SHUKLA'S NAME

IAF Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla, who recently became the first Indian to visit the International Space Station (ISS) as part of an Axiom-4 mission, received a rousing reception in his hometown Lucknow Monday, with Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath announcing a scholarship in his name for students pursuing space technology

Quote of the day

No concrete steps were actually taken on the ground to clean the Yamuna by the previous Delhi governments

NAYAB SINGH SAINI | HARYANA CM

While criticising the BJP and PM Modi, the Opposition has started opposing the country. We have to expose them before the people

JP NADDA | BJP CHIEF

Today, Assamese identity is on the brink of extinction because of the tacit support of people like her. But we are the sons and daughters of Lachit Barphukan, WE WILL FIGHT till the last drop of our blood to save our State and our identity

HIMANTA BISWA SARMA | ASSAM CM

X POST OF THE DAY

If you invest in SIPs, read this:-
(Last 1 year data)
- Bitcoin +55%
- S&P 500 +14.8%
- QQQM + 19.3%
- Gold + 33.9%
- Silver + 32.8%
- Nifty 50 +0.9%
- Midcap 150 -5.2%

SIPs are not bad.
But, in which instrument you are doing your SIP is what would dictates your returns.
This is a less talked about fact.
Most people reading this might not even understand that you can do SIPs outside Mutual Funds.
** Returns are compared in USD/ not INR for parity.

@Akshat_World

SHORT TAKES

Bihar: Eight lakh in 7 districts hit by floods

Patna: Around eight lakh people in seven districts have been affected by floods in Bihar following torrential rain since August 24, according to an official statement Monday. Water levels of various rivers have started rising further at several places due to the rain.

Rane pleads not guilty before court

Mumbai: BJP Lok Sabha member Narayan Rane Monday pleaded not guilty in a defamation case filed by Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Sanjay Raut over certain remarks allegedly made by him in 2023. Following the recording of Rane's not guilty plea, the trial in the case will begin with the examination of witnesses from November 11.

Bihar SIR: 99% elector documents received

New Delhi: The Election Commission Monday said that documents of 99.11 per cent of the 7.24 crore electors in Bihar, as per the draft list, have been received so far. There is a September 1 deadline for the submission of documents by those who filled the enumeration forms during the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in the poll-bound state. The draft voter list was published on August 1 as part of SIR.

Himachal: Torrential rains cause widespread damage

Shimla: Heavy to very heavy downpour in the 24 hours till Monday evening led to widespread destruction in Himachal Pradesh with houses being damaged at several places and around 795 roads, including two national highways, being closed.

All 4 accused held in Noida dowry killing

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Noida/New Delhi, August 25: UP Police Monday arrested the fourth and last accused in the sensational case where a Greater Noida woman was set ablaze allegedly by her husband and in-laws for dowry, while the National Commission for Women (NCW) in Delhi also weighed in seeking a time-bound probe and strict action against the culprits.

In Sirsa village, where the incident occurred August 21, residents in the victim's neighbourhood shared chilling accounts of the behaviour of the accused and the chain of events that led to the killing of 26-year-old Nikki Bhati.

Among the accused, father-in-law Satveer Bhati (55) and brother-in-law Rohit Bhati (28) were taken into custody near Sirsa Toll Chauraha following a tip-off and manual intelligence inputs, officials said. They had been absconding since the incident that has sparked outrage across the region occurred.

Nikki's husband, Vipin Bhati, was arrested Saturday and later shot in the leg during an alleged attempt to escape police custody Sunday. His mother, Daya (55), was also arrested Sunday.

"All the named accused in the FIR registered at Kasna Police Station have been arrested by Greater Noida Police in the murder case of a woman who was burnt by her husband and in-laws. Investigation is on and facts are being collected," Additional DCP Sudhir Kumar said.

The police said Nikki was allegedly beaten and doused with a flammable substance before being set on fire at her home Thursday night. She succumbed to her injuries while being taken to a hospital in Delhi.

In Delhi, the National Commission for Women (NCW) demanded strict action in the case, saying it was deeply disturbing that "even after 75 years of independence, our daughters are still falling victim to the evil practice of dowry".

NCW Chairperson Vijaya Rahatkar said she had spoken to the Uttar Pradesh Director General of Police and sought a time-bound investigation and action against all those involved. She also requested protection for the victim's family and witnesses.

"The DGP has been asked to submit a detailed action taken report within three days," Rahatkar said, adding she would try to meet Nikki's family soon.

At a press conference, Rahatkar said that while India has robust laws such as the Dowry Prohibition Act, cases like Nikki's death show "gaps in societal attitudes".

"Despite good laws and their implementation, when such brutal murders take place, it shows that society too needs to introspect. The new forms in which dowry is surfacing must be curbed," she said.

Meanwhile, neighbours in Sirsa village claimed that the family was also embroiled in domestic disputes over Nikki and her sister's social media activities.

Both sisters reportedly ran a beauty parlour from their home and were active on Instagram, posting makeover reels that their husbands, Vipin and Rohit, objected to.

"They both used to make reels related to the makeover and would share them on social media. But both Rohit and Vipin did not like it and used to object," a neighbour said.

"In the panchayat, it was decided that the sisters would not make reels in future. It remained so for some days, but again they began making reels and that was responsible for the tension between them," another neighbour claimed.

However, Nikki's family dismissed these claims, insisting that dowry harassment was the sole reason for her death. "

Her younger brother, Atul, called for exemplary punishment to the culprits. "There should be strict punishment given to them so that it can give a message to others. Making reels or running a beauty parlour was not a matter of dispute because she used to run it from the third floor of the house. If they had not done anything, why did they run after she was taken to the hospital by neighbours?" he said.

Disturbing videos of the assault, recorded by Nikki's elder sister Kanchan who is married to Vipin's brother Rohit, had circulated widely on social media. One clip purportedly showed Nikki being dragged by her hair, while another showed her engulfed in flames.

> The police said Nikki was allegedly beaten and doused with a flammable substance before being set on fire at her home Thursday night
>
> She succumbed to her injuries while being taken to a hospital in Delhi

Lover kills woman by stuffing chemical into her mouth

Mysuru (Karnataka): In a horrific crime, a 20-year-old married woman was allegedly killed by a man, who was in a relationship with her, by stuffing some "chemical powder" into her mouth after a heated argument, police said Monday. The incident occurred Saturday at a lodge in Bherya village of Saligrama taluk in this district, they said, adding the woman died following consumption of the chemical.

Structures partially submerged as the water level of the river Yamuna rises following rainfall, in Sangam area, Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh

PTI PHOTO

Retired judges slam Shah's remarks on Oppn VP pick

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 25: A group of retired judges has termed Home Minister Amit Shah's attack on Opposition vice-presidential candidate B Sudershan Reddy over the Salwa Judum judgement "unfortunate", and said it would be wise to refrain from "name-calling".

The group of 18 retired judges, including the likes of former Supreme Court justices Kurien Joseph, Madan B Lokur and J Chelameswar, also said that "prejudicial misinterpretation" of the top court's verdict by a high political functionary is likely to have a chilling effect on its judges.

Citing the statement of the judges, the Congress slammed the home minister and said there are still people in India courageous enough to call him out.

Shah had accused Reddy, a former judge of the Supreme Court, of "supporting" Naxalism. He had claimed that Left Wing Extremism would have ended by 2020 in the absence of the Salwa Judum judgement.

"The statement of Union Home Minister Amit Shah, publicly misinterpreting the judgment of the Supreme Court in the Salwa Judum case, is unfortunate. The judgment nowhere supports, either expressly or by compelling implication of its text, Naxalism or its ideology," the statement signed by the 18 former judges said.

The former Supreme Court judges who signed the statement are A K Patnaik, Abhay Oka, Gopala Gowda, Vikramjit Sen, Kurien Joseph, Madan B Lokur, and J Chelameswar.

"While the campaign for the office of the Vice-President of India may well be ideological, it can be conducted civilly and with dignity. Criticising the so-called ideology of either candidate should be eschewed," the retired judges said.

"Prejudicial misinterpretation of a judgment of the Supreme Court by a high political functionary is likely to have a chilling effect on the judges of the Supreme Court, shaking the independence of the judiciary," they said.

Out of respect for the office of the Vice President of India, it would be wise to refrain from "name-calling", the retired judges said.

Besides the seven retired judges of the Supreme Court, three former chief justices of High Courts -- Govind Mathur, S. Muralidhar and Sanjib Bannerjee -- also signed the statement.

10 killed, 41 injured as truck hits tractor-trolley

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bulandshahr (UP), August 25: Ten people were killed and 41 injured when a truck rammed into a tractor-trolley carrying pilgrims in Uttar Pradesh's Bulandshahr district in the early hours of Monday, police said.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath condoled the demise of the pilgrims and directed officials to ensure the best treatment for those injured. He also announced an ex gratia of ₹2 lakh to the kin of those dead and ₹50,000 each for the injured.

The accident took place around 2.10 am on the Bulandshahr-Aligarh border near the Arnia bypass, when the canter truck hit the tractor-trolley from behind, causing it to overturn, Senior Superintendent of Police Dinesh Kumar Singh said.

"The tractor-trolley was carrying 61 people, who were travelling from the Rafatpur village in the Kasganj district to Jaharpeer in Rajasthan for a pilgrimage," he said.

The police officer said the victims were rushed to hospitals. "Eight people died, while 43 of them are undergoing treatment. Three of the injured are on ventilator support," Singh added. Later, two more victims, identified as Lekhraj (40) and Umashankar (60), succumbed to injuries during treatment at hospitals, taking the toll in the incident to 10, police said.

The Police said 10 passengers escaped with minor injuries.

SNIPPETS

ED arrests MLA in school jobs scam

Kolkata: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) Monday arrested TMC legislator Jiban Krishna Saha after a dramatic raid at his residence in West Bengal's Murshidabad district in connection with the multi-crore school jobs scam, triggering a fresh political slugfest ahead of the 2026 Assembly elections. Saha was later brought to Kolkata and produced at Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) special court, which sent him to a six-day ED remand till August 30. According to officials, the Burwan MLA allegedly tried to escape by scaling a boundary wall and was caught in a nearby agricultural field.

India, Fiji decide to boost defence ties

New Delhi: India and Fiji Monday firmed up a broad action plan to expand their defence ties following Prime Minister Narendra Modi's extensive talks with his Fijian counterpart Sitiveni Ligamamada Rabuka. India and Fiji may be oceans apart, but our aspirations sail in the same boat, Modi said with the Fijian leader by his side. Prime Minister Modi also said that India and Fiji support a free, inclusive, open, secure and prosperous India-Pacific. Rabuka arrived in Delhi on Sunday on a three-day trip. It is his first visit to India in his capacity as the prime minister of the South Pacific nation. Fiji is an important nation for India in the sphere of maritime security.

Govt introduces one-time, one-way switch facility from UPS to NPS

New Delhi: The Finance Ministry Monday introduced a one-time one-way switch facility from the newly introduced Unified Pension Scheme (UPS) to the National Pension System (NPS). From April 1, 2025, the government has introduced UPS as an option under the National Pension System (NPS) for central government employees. UPS will provide assured payouts to the employees. Around 31,555 central government employees have opted for the Unified Pension Scheme (UPS) till July 20, and the last date to enrol under the scheme is September 30. In an office memorandum, the Finance Ministry said it has been decided that a one-time, one-way switch facility from UPS to NPS will be made available to all Central Government employees who have opted for UPS.

DELHI CM ATTACK CASE

Police add criminal conspiracy charges

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 25: The Delhi Police Monday slapped criminal conspiracy charges against two men for the recent alleged attack on Chief Minister Rekha Gupta.

A senior police officer said the fresh charge was added after investigators found evidence suggesting the assault was not an isolated act but part of a planned conspiracy.

Criminal conspiracy charges under Section 61 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita have now been added to the case. According to Section 61 BNS, when two or more persons agree to commit an illegal act, or an otherwise legal act through illegal means, such an agreement amounts to a criminal conspiracy.

It further states that conspirators to offences, punishable with life imprisonment or rigorous imprisonment of two years or more, face the same punishment as if they had abetted the offence.

India's new laser weapon 'big leap': Chinese expert

The IADWS is a multi-layered air defence system consisting of indigenous quick reaction surface-to-air missiles (QRSAM), very short-range air defence system (VSHORADS) missiles and a high-power laser-based directed-energy weapons (DEW) system

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Beijing, August 25: India's successful test of the Integrated Air Defence Weapon System (IADWS), especially the high-power laser-based Directed Energy Weapon (DEW), drew praise from a Chinese military expert who said it should be considered a "significant advancement".

The IADWS is a multi-layered air defence system consisting of indigenous quick reaction surface-to-air missiles (QRSAM), very short-range air defence system (VSHORADS) missiles and a high-power laser-based directed-energy weapons (DEW) system.

The indigenous air defence system was flight-tested off the coast of Odisha Saturday.

The IADWS, especially the DEW, which is possessed by a few countries like the US, Russia, China, the UK, Germany and Israel, drew the attention of Chinese experts.

The Indian IADWS is an air defence system designed to counter low and mid-altitude targets such as drones, cruise missiles, helicopters and low-flying aircraft, with a limited strike range, Wang Ya'nan, chief editor of Beijing-based Aerospace Knowledge magazine, told China's state-run Global Times.

The key to such an integrated air defence system lies in having a highly effective information system capable of distributing target data to corresponding weapon components, or the system would merely consist of separate air defence weapons operating independently, he said.

"Among the three layers of the IADWS, the vehicle-based air defence missile QRSAM and the man-portable air defence system VSHORADS are not technologically novel, but the laser system should indeed be considered a significant advancement," Wang said.

"There are only a few countries in the world that have deployed combat-ready laser systems," Wang said, pointing to China's LW-30 vehicle-based laser defence weapon system, dubbed a killer of UAVs.

It has characteristics of light speed engagement, silent attack, continuous operation, flexible and accurate, and a high cost-effectiveness ratio, he said.

The Chinese experts' comments were regarded as significant, considering the People's Liberation Army, which is heavily investing in modern weapons for its use, also provides a significant amount of weapons to Pakistan.

According to a recent report by Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), China supplied over 81 per cent of Pakistan's military hardware, which the Pakistan military sought to use against India in the recent Operation Sindoor conflict.

The flight tests of the new air defence system came more than three months after Operation Sindoor.

international

Kyiv aims to secure at least $1 billion on a monthly basis from allies to purchase U.S. weapons for its war effort against Russia

VOLODYMYR ZELENSKYY | UKRAINIAN PRESIDENT

UK MIGRANT ARRIVALS ON SMALL BOATS REACH NEW RECORD

A record 28,076 migrants have crossed the Channel to Britain in small boats this year, a 46% rise on the same period in 2024, piling pressure on Prime Minister Keir Starmer over his handling of immigration. The sharp increase comes amid mounting public concern over immigration, which is polling as the public's top concern, with anti-migrant protests continuing outside hotels housing asylum seekers

Quote of the day

Now, we are ready for another transition in our political history... the country has come to this stable enough and ready to have the election. So, we announce the election in the first half of February 2026. The interim government will be replaced by an elected government

MUHAMMAD YUNUS | CHIEF ADVISER, BANGLADESH

I believe that (family) benefit should only be granted to those Ukrainians who make the effort to work in Poland, the same with healthcare

KAROL NAWROCKI | PRESIDENT, POLAND

We are hoping to get to a position where, in the near term, we have, with a lack of a better term, security guarantees. That's a work in progress

KEITH KELLOGG | TRUMP'S SPECIAL ENVOY

SHORT TAKES

Typhoon Kajiki batters Vietnam

Cua Lo: Typhoon Kajiki brought torrential rains to Vietnam's north central coast Monday, felling trees and flooding homes, despite wind speeds tapering off from earlier in the day. As of 0900 GMT, Kajiki was on the coast of Nghe An and Ha Tinh provinces, with wind speed easing to 118-133 kph from as strong as 166 kph, according to the country's weather agency. State media reports said power in several areas in Ha Tinh province had been cut off, roofs were blown out and floating fishing farms were washed away. Vietnam had earlier shut airports, closed schools, and begun mass evacuations as it prepared for the most powerful storm so far this year. The Vietnamese government said earlier Monday about 30,000 people had been evacuated from coastal areas. More than 16,500 soldiers and 107,000 paramilitary personnel had been mobilised to help with the evacuation and stand by for search and rescue.

Torrential rains kill 17 in Pak

Peshawar: At least 17 people including three children were killed and 50 others injured in northwest Pakistan in the last 24 hours as torrential rains and windstorms battered parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, officials said Monday. The deaths come as Pakistan reels from earlier monsoon spells between June 26 and August 20, which left more than 788 dead and 1,018 injured as of Saturday. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was the worst-hit province. Heavy rains accompanied by strong winds hit Dera Ismail Khan district and adjoining areas early Sunday, leaving thirteen people dead and over 50 hurt in various incidents, mainly roof collapses.

Indian envoy meets Japanese Speaker

Tokyo: India's Ambassador to Japan Sibi George Monday met with Fukushiro Nukaga, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and discussed ways to further strengthen the bilateral Special Strategic and Global Partnership. In a post on social media, the Indian Embassy here said that they "discussed ways to strengthen further India-Japan Special Strategic & Global Partnership, including deepening cooperation in human resource exchanges". George also held "fruitful discussions" with Toru Takakura, Group President of Sumitomo Mitsui Trust Group, on furthering India-Japan Financial relations, it said.

5 journalists killed by Israeli strikes on Gaza

REUTERS

- Israel strikes Gaza hospital, Palestinian health officials say
- At least 20 killed, including five journalists, they say
- Israel acknowledges striking area of Nasser hospital, orders inquiry

Deir al-Balah, August 25: Israel struck Nasser hospital in the south of the Gaza Strip Monday, killing at least 20 people, including five journalists who worked for Reuters, the Associated Press, Al Jazeera and others.

Cameraman Hussam al-Masri, a Reuters contractor, was killed near a live broadcasting position operated by Reuters on an upper floor just below the roof of the hospital in Khan Younis in an initial strike, according to Palestinian health officials.

Officials at the hospital and witnesses said Israel then struck the site a second time, killing other journalists, as well as rescue workers and medics, who had rushed to the scene to help.

The journalists killed included Mariam Abu Dagga, who freelanced for the Associated Press and other outlets, Mohammed Salama, who worked for Qatar-based broadcaster Al Jazeera, Moaz Abu Taha, a freelance journalist who worked with several news organisations including occasionally contributing to Reuters, and Ahmed Abu Aziz.

Photographer Hatem Khaled, also a Reuters contractor, was wounded.

Israel's military, the Israel Defense Forces, acknowledged striking the area of Nasser hospital and said the chief of the general staff had ordered an inquiry.

The IDF "regrets any harm to uninvolved individuals and does not target journalists as such. The IDF acts to mitigate harm to uninvolved individuals as much as possible while maintaining the safety of IDF troops," it said.

A Reuters spokesperson said in a statement, "We are devastated to learn that cameraman Hussam al-Masri, a contractor for Reuters, was killed this morning in Israeli strikes on Nasser hospital in Khan Younis in Gaza. Moaz Abu Taha, a freelance journalist whose work had been occasionally published by Reuters, was also killed, and photographer Hatem Khaled, a Reuters contractor, was wounded."

"We are urgently seeking more information and have asked authorities in Gaza and Israel to help us get urgent medical assistance for Hatem," the spokesperson added.

The AP said it was "shocked and saddened" to learn of the deaths of Abu Dagga and other journalists, adding that Abu Dagga had often based herself at the hospital for coverage, which recently included stories on starving and malnourished children.

The Palestinian Journalists Syndicate condemned Israel for the strikes, saying it represented "an open war against free media, with the aim of terrorising journalists and preventing them from fulfilling their professional duty of exposing its crimes to the world".

More than 240 Palestinian journalists have been killed by Israeli fire in Gaza since the war started October 7, 2023, according to the Palestinian Journalists Syndicate.

National Guard begins carrying firearms in DC

REUTERS

- Number of troops to carry weapons is fluid
- Pentagon plans anticipate potential Trump requests for troop deployment
- Trump suggests deploying troops to Baltimore amid crime criticism

Washington DC, August 25: US National Guard troops patrolling the streets of Washington DC as part of what President Donald Trump said was his crackdown on crime will begin carrying weapons Sunday night, two officials said.

The exact number of troops who would carry their weapons was fluid, but they will either carry their M17 pistols or M4 rifles, according to the officials who spoke on condition of anonymity as they were not authorized to discuss the matter.

Hundreds of unarmed National Guard troops have been in Washington's streets for the past two weeks after Trump declared a crime emergency in the district. Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth last week authorized the troops to carry weapons.

The Guard's Joint Task Force-DC said in a written statement Sunday that its personnel would only use force "as a last resort and solely in response to an imminent threat of death or serious bodily harm."

Meanwhile, Trump, a Republican, has said he would probably expand his crime crackdown to Chicago, intervening in another city governed by Democrats. And on Sunday he suggested the possibility of deploying troops to Democratic-run Baltimore in Maryland.

Democratic House of Representatives Minority leader Hakeem Jeffries said Sunday that Trump did not have the authority to deploy troops to Chicago as the Pentagon carried out initial planning for a possible deployment.

US officials, speaking on the condition of anonymity, said there had been initial planning at the Pentagon about what a deployment of National Guard troops to Chicago would look like.

One official said the plans were part of the military's efforts to anticipate any requests by Trump and noted senior Pentagon officials have not yet been briefed on them. It is not uncommon for the Pentagon to plan for potential deployments before formal orders are given.

PAK MAY 9 RIOTS

Anti-terrorism court sentences 75 leaders of Khan's party

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Lahore, August 25: An anti-terrorism court in Pakistan Monday handed down jail terms from three to 10 years to 75 leaders and workers of Imran Khan's party for their involvement in an attack on the house of a senior PML-N leader during the May 9 riots.

"The ATC Faisalabad sentenced 59 leaders and workers of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf party to 10 years of imprisonment, three years to 16 and acquitted 34 in the attack on Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz Punjab president Rana Sanaullah's house," a court official told PTI.

He said the court sentenced a total of 75 people out of the total 109 accused.

Prominent among those convicted are former opposition leader in the National Assembly Omar Ayub, former Senate Opposition leader Shibli Fraz, former lawmakers Zartaj Gul Ahmad Chatha, Ashraf Khan Sohna and Sheikh Rashid Shafique (nephew of former interior minister Sheikh Rasheed) and Kanwal Shauzab.

Earlier, these leaders were also convicted for 10 years each for attacking the ISI building in Faisalabad. The sentences will run concurrently.

Former information minister Fawad Chaudhry and ex-foreign minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi's son Zain Qureshi were acquitted in the case, the official said.

A child, wearing a headdress, gestures at the Children's Day Parade, during Notting Hill Carnival, in London, Monday

REUTERS

Trump blasts South Korea

REUTERS

- US president criticizes South Korea hours before summit
- Trump may pressure Lee on defense spending and troop upkeep
- Lee aims to balance US ties without antagonizing China

Washington/Seoul, August 25: US President Donald Trump launched criticism at South Korea Monday, just hours before a summit with its new President, Lee Jae Myung, as conflict over defense spending and trade tests the two countries' decades-old alliance.

The leaders were gearing up for their first talks when Trump said on social media, without evidence, that there "Seems like a Purge or Revolution" in South Korea and that "We can't have that and do business there."

The remarks cast a dark mood over what, for Lee, are high-stakes talks. He took office in June following a snap election called after his conservative predecessor, Yoon Suk Yeol, feted in Washington for his hard line on North Korea, was removed for his December attempt to impose martial law.

South Korea's economy relies heavily on the US, with Washington underwriting its security with troops and nuclear deterrence. Lee hopes to chart a balanced path of cooperation with the US, while not antagonizing top trade partner China.

The source of Trump's complaint was not immediately clear. But, for months, supporters of former President Yoon have hoped Trump would intercede in what they say is communist persecution of the impeached ex-president.

Yoon is now on trial on charges of inciting an insurrection. His wife is facing possible indictment on corruption and bribery cases.

South Korea has long come under targeted criticism from Trump, who has called it a "money machine" that takes advantage of American military protection.

South Korea's presidential office told local media they were looking into the matter. The White House did not immediately respond to emailed questions about Trump's post.

Bangladesh runs out of resources for Rohingya refugees

REUTERS

Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, August 25: Bangladesh has no scope to allocate more resources for its 1.3 million Rohingya refugees, Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus said Monday, urging the international community to find a sustainable solution to the crisis.

Children make up half the 1.3 million Rohingya refugees now living in Bangladesh, most of whom fled a brutal 2017 military crackdown in Buddhist-majority Myanmar that UN investigators called a "textbook example of ethnic cleansing".

Hosting the refugees has put a huge strain on Bangladesh, in areas from its economy and environment to governance, said Nobel peace laureate Yunus, the South Asian nation's de-facto prime minister.

"We don't foresee any scope whatsoever for further mobilisation of resources from domestic sources, given our numerous challenges," Yunus said at a conference.

He called for the international community to draft a practical roadmap for their return home. "The Rohingya issue and its sustainable resolution must be kept alive on the global agenda, as they need our support until they return home."

His comments marked the eighth anniversary since more than 700,000 Rohingya arrived within a matter of days, turning the area around the southeastern coastal town of Cox's Bazar into the world's largest refugee settlement.

- Dhaka seeks sustainable solution to Rohingya crisis
- Yunus urges practical roadmap for Rohingya repatriation
- Rohingya hold rallies demanding end to refugee life

Tens of thousands of them held rallies Monday in camps there, carrying banners and posters that proclaimed, "No more refugee life", "Stop Genocide" and "Repatriation the ultimate solution".

In Bangladesh, the refugees live in crammed bamboo shelters amid dwindling aid, closed schools and little hope of return. "Over the last seven years, we have seen countless conferences, dialogues, and press statements, but nothing has changed for us," said Sayed Ullah, a Rohingya community leader who was among 40 refugees attending the conference.

"Our situation remains the same - we are still stuck in camps with no rights, no future, and no guarantee of returning home safely."

Over the past year another 150,000 have arrived from Myanmar's western Rakhine state, where fighting has escalated between junta troops and the Arakan Army, an ethnic militia drawn largely from the Buddhist majority.

The Myanmar military calls the operation against the Rohingya a legitimate counter-terrorism campaign in response to attacks by Muslim militants, not a planned programme of ethnic cleansing.

Attempts to begin their return home in 2018 and 2019 failed as the refugees, fearing prosecution, refused to go back.

"The world once supported us, but now it feels like we are left alone to struggle," said Hafizur Rahman, a refugee.

"In Rakhine, our brothers and sisters are still running for their lives and crossing into Bangladesh. If the world forgets us here too, what kind of future will be left for our children?"

business

Beauty and Fashion are set to be the primary drivers of future growth, with the potential of making up 40 per cent of the market by FY30, which means Beauty and Fashion alone will be bigger than the entire ecommerce market of FY25

FALGUNI NAYAR | FOUNDER, NYKAA

PFRDA TO BRING 50L SVANIDHI BENEFICIARIES UNDER APY

The Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) targets to bring 50 lakh PM SVANidhi scheme beneficiaries under the Atal Pension Yojana (APY), its Chairman S Ramann said Monday. The micro-credit scheme for street vendors -- PM SVANidhi -- was launched by the government June 1, 2020. The scheme, under the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, provides collateral-free loans up to ₹50,000 for eligible street vendors in incremental tranches

Quote of the day

Every 2 to 3 years, companies are getting wiped out, and new companies are being born, new technologies are coming. So this generative AI you have seen ... it is a completely new thing. Coding might become obsolete. But people who develop niche skillsets and advanced technologies will always have a role in this world

CHANDRA SEKHAR PEMMASANI | MOS, COMMUNICATIONS

At the time when the balance sheets of the banks and the corporates are at their best, they should come together and drive the animal spirits to create an investment cycle, which is so important at this juncture

SANJAY MALHOTRA | GOVERNOR, RBI

Investors will closely watch the preliminary reading of the US GDP for the second quarter, which is scheduled to release Thursday will provide more insights into the monetary policy stance of the Federal Reserve and the trajectory of the bullion sentiment

RENISHA CHAINANI | HEAD – RESEARCH, AUGMONT

SHORT TAKES

Oil firms' Q1 results

Mumbai: State-owned fuel retailers Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) has reported strong profits in the April-June quarter of the current financial year (Q1 FY26), thanks to higher petrol and diesel margins. The three companies total earned a profit of ₹16,184 crore in the first quarter of FY26, more than two-and-a-half times higher than the same period previous year, as per their regulatory filings. Among the three, BPCL topped the list with a profit of ₹6,124 crore, overtaking IOC which reported ₹5,689 crore, even though IOC is nearly twice its size. HPCL posted a net profit of ₹4,371 crore during the quarter. In comparison, IOC earned $2.15 per barrel and HPCL $3.08. BPCL's refineries also operated at a higher efficiency, running at 118 per cent of their installed capacity, against 107 per cent for IOC and 109 per cent for HPCL. Its fuel sales per pump also outpaced rivals, averaging 153 kilolitres per month, compared to IOC's 130 kl.

India, UN WFP ink pact

New Delhi: India Monday agreed to supply fortified rice to the UN World Food Programme (WFP) to aid the food and nutritional requirements of the most vulnerable populations in crisis-hit zones globally. A letter of intent (LoI) was signed between India's Food Ministry and WFP here, underscoring the strength of global partnerships. The initiative signifies the culmination of discussions at the February 2025 Executive Board side event in Rome, where representatives from the Indian government and WFP explored ways to collaborate. By sourcing rice from India, WFP will utilise the resources of an agricultural surplus nation to deliver life-saving aid and make tangible progress against hunger. The WFP's Deputy Executive Director had lauded India's contribution to the fight against hunger, as the world faces rising food insecurity amid constrained humanitarian funding. Other ongoing collaborative efforts with WFP, such as Supply Chain Optimisation, Fortified Rice Rollout, Annapurti Devices (Grain ATMs), Jan Poshan Kendra, Smart Warehousing technology and Flospans (Mobile Storage Units) were deliberated, along with the potential areas for future collaboration.

Fitch affirms India at 'BBB-'

India's economic outlook remains strong relative to peers, even as momentum has moderated in the past two years, Fitch said

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 25: Fitch Ratings Monday retained India's sovereign credit rating at 'BBB-' with a stable outlook on robust growth and external finances. The proposed 50 per cent US tariffs on India pose a moderate downside risk to its 6.5 per cent GDP growth forecast for the current fiscal, the agency said.

"India's economic outlook remains strong relative to peers, even as momentum has moderated in the past two years," Fitch said, adding the ratings are supported by its robust growth and solid external finances.

'BBB-' is the lowest investment grade rating and comes within a fortnight of another global rating agency S&P upgrading India's credit rating by a notch to 'BBB'. This was S&P's first upgrade for India in over 18 years.

Another global rating agency Morning DBRS, had, in May this year, upped India's rating to 'BBB', citing structural reforms. Fitch's forecast of GDP growth at 6.5 per cent in the fiscal year ending March 2026 (FY26) is unchanged from FY25, and well above the 'BBB' median of 2.5 per cent.

It estimates India's medium-term growth potential at 6.4 per cent, led by strong public capex, a private investment pick up and favourable demographics.

"Proposed goods and services tax (GST) reforms, if adopted, would support consumption, offsetting some of these growth risks," Fitch added.

The Centre has proposed to the Group of Ministers on GST rate rationalisation a 2-tier rate structure of 5 and 18 per cent for 'merit' and 'standard' goods and services, and a 40 per cent rate for 5-7 goods. The proposal entails doing away with the current 12 and 28 per cent tax slabs.

"The government's deregulation agenda and GST reforms should support incremental growth. Passage of other significant reforms, especially on land and labour laws, seems politically difficult. Still, some state governments are likely to advance such reforms. India has signed several bilateral trade agreements, but trade barriers remain relatively high," Fitch said.

The rating agency said a strengthening record on delivering growth with macro stability and improving fiscal credibility should drive a steady improvement in India's structural metrics, including GDP per capita, and increase the likelihood that debt can trend modestly downward in the medium term.

Fitch, however, flagged fiscal metrics as a credit weakness, given the high deficits and debt compared to 'BBB' peers. "Lagging structural metrics, including governance indicators and GDP per capita, also constrain the rating," the agency said.

Honor returns to India

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 25: PSAV Global, the brand partner of Chinese smartphone company Honor, is in talks with electronic contract manufacturers to make devices in India in the first quarter of 2026, a top company official said.

PSAV Global Co-founder and CEO CP Khandelwal told PTI the company plans to garner 1 per cent market share in the first year with the 'Made in India' Honor smartphones, resulting in around ₹2,500 crore revenue.

"After CKD (complete knocked down) manufacturing begins, our first-year target is to achieve approximately 1 per cent market share, which translates to around ₹2,500 crore in revenue. This target will be achieved within the first year of manufacturing operations," he said.

According to Counterpoint Research report on global mobile phone supplies for the first quarter of 2025, besides the top 5 brands, Honor was among the fast-growing brands and providing tough competition globally.

Huawei was the biggest OEM in China in Q1 2025, while Honor and Motorola showed high growth in multiple markets, the report said.

PSAV is the official brand partner of Honor Tech in India. Earlier, it was part of the Chinese telecom gear giant Huawei.

Khandelwal said that after initial delays from the Bureau of India Standards, the company has received approval for four models. Honor has already launched Honor X9c, followed by Honor X7c this month.

The company is now gearing up to launch Honor V3, and Honor Magic 7 Pro.

"Once our local manufacturing starts, we will launch all global models in India in line with international timelines," Khandelwal said.

PSAV had set a target to start production in 2024, but missed the timeline because of external factors.

"Last year, BIS clearances were delayed by the government, and there were also management changes at Honor headquarters. These developments delayed our manufacturing plans for India," Khandelwal said.

Uniform, tariff-linked performance standards for airports

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 25: Regulator AERA plans to put in place a uniform, balanced and tariff-linked performance standards framework for major airports that will provide incentives for improved services as well as rebates for non-compliance by airport operators.

After a detailed study that covered a raft of aspects, including existing service quality requirements and global frameworks, the Airports Economic Regulatory Authority (AERA) has prepared a draft framework for performance standards at major airports in the country.

The framework will have 32 objective parameters, including those pertaining to airport operations, and 18 subjective parameters such as those related to the quality and reliability of passenger feedback.

Major airports handle more than 1.5 million passengers annually.

Currently, there are more than 160 operational airports in India, which is one of the world's fastest-growing civil aviation markets, and the government has ambitious plans to have 200 more airports in the next two decades.

AERA has come out with the draft consultation paper on 'Formulation of Performance Standards of Major Airports relating to Quality, Continuity

and Reliability of Service and Associated Activities'.

Airport services are characterised by natural monopoly or limited competition, wherein users have limited options on service providers, AERA said and added that in such an environment, the role of the regulator extends beyond tariff determination.

"In environments where competitive alternatives are limited, performance monitoring serves as a proactive mechanism to support continuous service enhancement," the watchdog said.

While pricing frameworks have traditionally been a central focus of regulatory oversight, AERA said the quality of service delivered is equally critical, as it directly influences user satisfaction and the overall efficiency of airport operations.

The focus of the proposed framework is to have uniform, comprehensive, future-ready, reliable and technologically-enabled performance standards that enhance passenger experience across all airport touchpoints through a technologically-advanced and inclusive approach.

The watchdog noted that there exists a compelling need to establish a structured, uniform, enforceable framework of service quality standards across all major airports in the country, comprising both objective metrics and user-centric indicators that can be embedded within tariff regulation through ongoing performance monitoring.

According to the regulator, the absence of a harmonised framework not only impedes effective oversight but also results in an uneven passenger experience and regulatory asymmetry.

Sensex rebounds

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, August 25: Benchmark BSE Sensex rebounded by 329 points Monday following heavy buying in IT and auto shares and a rally in global equity markets on hopes of a potential US Federal Reserve rate cut.

The 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 329.06 points or 0.40 per cent to settle at 81,635.91 with 20 of its constituents ending higher and 10 with losses. The 50-share NSE Nifty rose by 97.65 points or 0.39 per cent to 24,967.75.

Infosys was the biggest gainer among Sensex firms, rising by 3.03 per cent. Tata Consultancy Services rose by 2.85 per cent, HCL Tech by 2.6 per cent and Tech Mahindra by 1.32 per cent.

Gains in Tata Motors, Sun Pharma, Maruti, Titan and Reliance Industries also added to the recovery.

Bharat Electronics, Asian Paints, Bharti Airtel and ICICI Bank were among the laggards.

The BSE Midcap gauge went up marginally by 0.10 per cent, while the Smallcap index ended flat, with a mild dip of 0.02 per cent.

Among BSE sectoral indices, BSE Focused IT jumped 2.35 per cent, followed by IT (2.34 per cent), teck (1.67 per cent), auto (0.51 per cent) and consumer durables (0.46 per cent).

Capital Goods, telecommunication, industrials and financial services were the laggards.

In Asian markets, South Korea's Kospi, Japan's Nikkei 225 index, Shanghai's SSE Composite index, and Hong Kong's Hang Seng settled in positive territory.

Markets in Europe were trading lower. The US markets ended sharply higher Friday.

No AGR relief to Vi: MoS Telecom

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 25: The telecom department is not contemplating providing any relief to Vodafone Idea with regard to adjusted gross revenue, Minister of State for Communications Chandra Sekhar Pemmasani said Monday.

"We have recently converted a lot of their debt into equity. The government has done whatever we thought we could do. At this time, we do not have any discussion or plan to change anything other than what we have done," Pemmasani said.

The government has become the single largest shareholder in Vodafone Idea after acquiring shares worth ₹36,950 crore in lieu of outstanding spectrum auction dues in March.

Earlier, the government had acquired around 33 per cent stake in 2023 in lieu of statutory dues worth over ₹16,000 crore. Vodafone, in its affidavit before the Supreme Court, had said that it will not be able to survive without government support.

The company's AGR liability at the end of the June 2025 quarter stood at around ₹75,000 crore. Vodafone Idea, along with other players like Bharti Airtel, BSNL, MTNL, etc., had contested claims of the Department of Telecom on the definition of AGR. After several years of litigation, the Supreme Court in October 2019 ruled in favour of the DoT and asked the telcos to clear the entire dues as claimed by the government.

The company needs to pay AGR liability in six equal instalments post the moratorium period, starting from March 31, 2026.

SBI asks RBI to allow bank to fund mergers

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, August 25: State Bank of India (SBI), the country's largest lender, has requested the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to allow banks to fund acquisitions, its Chairperson Challa Sreenivasulu Setty said Monday.

Currently, Indian banks are not allowed to lend money for mergers and acquisitions.

Because of this rule, companies usually turn to non-banking financial institutions or raise funds through bonds when they plan to buy other businesses.

Speaking at the FIBAC event organised by FICCI AND IBA, Setty said SBI has asked the RBI to consider allowing acquisition financing, at least for large listed companies to

begin with.

The request comes at a time when public sector banks (PSBs) have reported strong profits and improved balance sheets. Together, the 12 PSBs earned a record profit of ₹44,218 crore in the April–June quarter (Q1) of FY26, an 11 per cent rise compared to the same period previous year.

SBI alone contributed 43 per cent of this, with a net profit of ₹19,160 crore.

With a net profit of ₹19,160 crore for the April–June quarter, which was 12 per cent higher than Q1 FY25, the SBI was at the top of the pack. In terms of size and profits, the biggest lender in the nation still controls the public banking market.

In the last three financial years (FY23 to FY25), PSBs also raised nearly ₹1.54 lakh crore through equity and bonds to strengthen their capital base and support credit growth.

The Finance Ministry is scheduled to review the performance of these banks this week, focusing on their financial health and growth outlook.

If the RBI accepts SBI's proposal, it could open a new funding option for Indian companies looking at expansion through merger and acquisitions.

Women's employment rate nearly doubled in last 7 years

Over the past seven years, 1.56 crore women have joined the formal workforce. Meanwhile, e-Shram as of August has recorded over 16.69 crore women unorganized workers' registration

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 25: Women's employment rate in India nearly doubled in past seven years from 22 per cent in 2017-18 to 40.3 per cent in 2023-24, the labour ministry said Monday.

It said that the unemployment rate dipped from 5.6 per cent to 3.2 per cent in the same period.

One of the key pillars for achieving the vision of Viksit Bharat by 2047 is ensuring 70 per cent women workforce participation in the country, the ministry said in a statement.

The ministry stated that India has witnessed a remarkable increase in the female workforce participation rate. PLFS (periodic labour force survey) data shows that the women's employment rate (WPR) grew from 22 per cent in 2017-18 to 40.3 per cent in 2023-24.

The unemployment rate (UR) dropped from 5.6 per cent in 2017-18 to 3.2 per cent in 2023-24, reflecting positive growth in employment opportunities for women.

This shift is even more significant in rural India, where female employment has grown by 96 per cent, while urban areas have seen an increase of 43 per cent in employment during the same period.

Reports indicate that the employability of female graduates has also increased from 42 per cent in 2013 to 47.53 per cent in 2024, the ministry noted.

The employment rate (WPR) among women with postgraduate education and above has risen from 34.5 per cent in 2017-18 to 40 per cent in 2023-24. As per India Skills Report 2025, nearly 55 per cent of Indian graduates are expected to be globally employable in 2025, up from 51.2 per cent in 2024.

Additionally, the retirement fund body EPFO payroll data further highlights the increasing participation of women in the formal sector.

Over the past seven years, 1.56 crore women have joined the formal workforce. Meanwhile, e-Shram as of August has recorded over 16.69 crore women unorganized workers' registration, providing them access to various social welfare schemes of Government of India.

At the national level, 70 central schemes across 15 ministries and more than 400 state-level schemes focus on supporting female entrepreneurship. PLFS data shows that female self-employment grew by 30 per cent - from 51.9 per cent in 2017-18 to 67.4 per cent in 2023-24, making women truly Atmanirbhar.

Gender budgets have increased by 429 per cent in the last decade, rising from ₹0.85 lakh crore in FY 2013-14 (RE) to ₹4.49 lakh crore in FY 2025-26.

This reflects a paradigm shift from women's development to women-led development, with a strong focus on employment, employability, entrepreneurship, and welfare, the ministry said.

Programmes like Startup India have fostered a thriving ecosystem, with nearly 50 per cent of DPIIT registered startups having at least one-woman director i.e., 74,410 out of over 1.54 lakh.

Today around two crore women have become Lakhpati Didi. Flagship programmes such as Namo Drone Didi, and Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana – NRLM are playing crucial role in this transformation, equipping them with resources and opportunities needed to drive sustainable progress, it noted.

Another important driver of the rise in women's self-employment is PM Mudra Yojana, which is playing a crucial role in financial inclusion, with women receiving 68 per cent of the total MUDRA loans - (over 35.38 crore loans worth ₹14.72 lakh crore).

Similarly, PM SVANidhi has empowered street vendors, around 44 per cent beneficiaries are women under the scheme. These initiatives are driving a new wave of economic self-reliance among women across India.

US Open

Sabalenka, Djokovic win before Medvedev tirade sparks chaos

REUTERS

New York, August 24: Aryna Sabalenka and Novak Djokovic overcame early tests to reach the US Open second round before the Grand Slam descended into chaos late Sunday when Daniil Medvedev launched a tirade at the match umpire and fans disrupted his opponent's service game.

New York's famously rowdy fans caused a six-minute delay by refusing to stop jeering and booing midway through Medvedev's 6-3 7-5 6-7(5) 0-6 6-4 defeat by Benjamin Bonzi on Louis Armstrong Stadium.

The controversy began when a photographer entered the court prematurely after Bonzi missed his first serve on match point at 5-4 in the third set, prompting chair umpire Greg Allensworth to award the Frenchman another first serve for the disturbance.

An incensed Medvedev exploded at the official and whipped up the crowd, preventing a rattled Bonzi from serving.

Medvedev, the 2021 champion at Flushing Meadows, fought off the match point and took the set in a tie break before bageling Bonzi in the fourth to set up a decider.

It was not to be his day, however, as Bonzi composed himself to secure a dramatic win.

"The energy was wild. Thanks to all the ones booing. Thanks for the energy in the fifth," the Frenchman said.

"It was crazy match point in the third. A crazy scenario. I was exhausted in the fourth set. I gave what I had in the final set. That's a crazy win."

Under the tournament's new extended 15-day format, first-round singles action is being contested from Sunday to Tuesday rather than over two days as in previous years, spreading out the star attractions and allowing access for another 70,000-odd spectators .

World number one Sabalenka was among the marquee names on the opening day's schedule and the Belarusian fed off the vocal Arthur Ashe crowd to overcome determined Swiss Rebeka Masarova 7-5 6-1.

"I didn't choose to play on Sunday, but if you win the match, it feels great. You have an extra day off, which can be good and bad. I've got used to it. I like it," Sabalenka said.

"But it only works when you win the match. Imagine if you finish the tournament on Sunday. Then you can be a little bit frustrated with the scheduling."

Novak Djokovic has had plenty of time to recuperate after his run to the Wimbledon semi-finals but the Serb needed to find an extra gear to battle past Learner Tien 6-1 7-6(3) 6-2 as he launched his latest bid for a record 25th major title.

India's fastest man Kujur sprints into record books

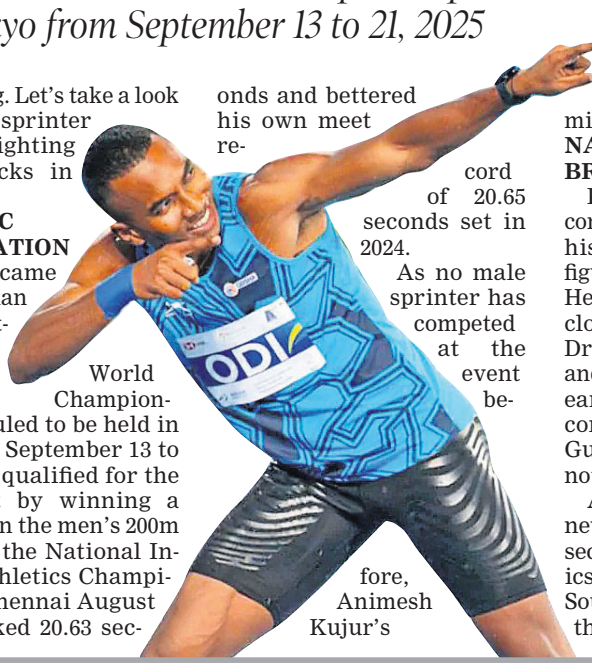
Sprinting sensation Animesh Kujur is the first Indian male sprinter to qualify for the World Athletics Championships scheduled to be held in Tokyo from September 13 to 21, 2025

Clocking 10.18s in the 100m and 20.32s in the 200m, Kujur's record-breaking season and Asian Championships bronze have positioned him as the torchbearer of India's sprinting future

AGENCIES

New Delhi, August 25: In a year filled with non-stop sporting events, no story has likely captivated the Indian sports enthusiasts quite like Animesh Kujur's meteoric rise in the field of sprint racing. Dubbed as the "fastest man of India", the 22-year-old has shown unreal consistency and has become one of the prominent sprinters of the country.

The sprinter from Chhattisgarh has quickly transformed from a promising athlete to a genuine medal contender on the international stage. For a nation hungry for sporting glory, his ascension signals the dawn of a new era in sprint racing. Let's take a look at how the sprinter has been lighting up the tracks in 2025.



HISTORIC QUALIFICATION

Kujur became the first Indian male sprinter to qualify for the World Athletics Championship, scheduled to be held in Tokyo from September 13 to 21, 2025. He qualified for the tournament by winning a gold medal in the men's 200m category at the National Inter-State Athletics Championship in Chennai August 23. He clocked 20.63 seconds and bettered his own meet record of 20.65 seconds set in 2024.

As no male sprinter has competed at the event before, Animesh Kujur's achievement is a special milestone.

NATIONAL RECORD BREAKER

Kujur has modified the record books of Indian sprinting history by capturing record figures at both 100m and 200m. He broke the 100m record by clocking 10.18 seconds at the Dromia International Sprint and Relays Meeting in Greece earlier this year. The record was previously held by Gurindervir Singh, who had notched 10.20 seconds.

As for the 200m, he set a new national record of 20.32 seconds at the Asian Athletics Championships in Gumi, South Korea, on May 31. With this performance, he improved his earlier record of 20.40 seconds from the Federation Cup in Kochi. Additionally, he registered 20.27 seconds at the AtleticaGeneve 2025, which is the fastest 200m time ever by an Indian. However, it did not go down in the record books because of the excessive wind speed at the tournament.

A TEAM PLAYER

Kujur made waves not only in the individual categories but also in the 4x100m relay. The sprinter was a part of the Indian men's 4x100m relay team alongside Gurindervir Singh, Manikanta Hoblidhar, and Amlan Borgohain, which set a new national record of 38.69 seconds at the National Relay Carnival 2025 in Chandigarh.

Kujur's exceptional performance in 2025 has established him as a beacon of hope for Indian athletics on the global stage. His performance has certainly uplifted the popularity of this vertical of athletics, and based on how he performs from here on, he could emerge as a massive inspiration for a new generation of athletes across the country.

With his sights set on the World Athletics Championships in Tokyo, Animesh is on the brink of creating another historic milestone for Indian athletics. His ultimate goal is to break the elusive sub-10-second barrier in the 100m dash, a feat yet to be achieved by any Indian.

ASIAN SHOOTING CHAMPIONSHIP

Neeru strikes gold; heartbreak for Manu

Neeru's double gold sees India's tally reach 50 medals on Day 8

Double Olympic medallist Manu finishes 4th in Women's 25m Pistol

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Shymkent (Kazakhstan), August 25: National Games champion Neeru Dhanda enjoyed one of her finest days in the sport en route to winning the women's trap gold medal while compatriots Aashima Ahlawat and Bhowneesh Mendiratta claimed bronze at the Asian Shooting Championship here on Monday.

Neeru shot 43 in the final to claim the top prize ahead of Qatar's Bassil Ray (37) and Aashima (29).

In the men's trap final, Bhowneesh shot 45 to grab silver with Chinese shooters Ying Qi (47) and Pengyu Chen (35) winning the gold and bronze medal respectively. Bhowneesh was placed fourth in the qualifications, while Kynan Chenai was 15th. Lakshay was way down in 41st position.

Earlier in the day, double Olympic medallist Manu Bhaker finished fourth in the women's 25m pistol competition before the Indian shooters swept the junior event at the continental tournament.

Bhaker's compatriot Esha Singh ended sixth in the eight-women final with 18 points. Bhaker shot 25, four less than Vietnam's bronze medallist Thu Vinh Trinh (29).

Neeru, Aashima and Preeti Rajak also won the team gold in women's trap with 319 ahead of China and Kuwait.

Neeru and Aashima entered the six-women final in fifth and sixth position respectively after being involved in a shoot-off.

Neeru, who reached her first-ever ISSF World Cup final and finished a remarkable fourth at the Shotgun World Cup in Lonato, Italy in July, is a cousin of Indian trap shooter Lakshay Sheoran and picked up the sport after watching him in action.

JUNIORS FIRE AGAIN

India's shooters, however, thoroughly dominated the 25m pistol women junior final, with Payal Khatri claiming the gold with a total of 36, Naamya Kapoor (30) winning silver and Tejaswani (27) bagging bronze.

They also won the team silver after aggregating 1700, finishing behind Korea and ahead of host nation Kazakhstan.

Naamya and Tejaswini were one and two in the qualifications, while Payal entered the junior final in sixth place.

Earlier in the day, Chinese shooters Yueyue Zhang and Jiaruixuan Xiao won the senior women's gold and silver medal respectively, the former prevailing 4-3 in the shoot-off after both were locked at 39 points.

The Indian trio of Bhaker, Esha and Simranpreet Kaur Brar won the team bronze with an aggregate score of 1749, finishing behind China and South Korea.

Esha topped the women's 25m pistol qualifications, finishing ahead of Bhaker and the two Chinese medallists Xiao and Zhang.

Bhaker, who won bronze medals in both the women's 10m air pistol individual and team events earlier in the tournament, was fourth in the women's 25m pistol qualification round after the precision stage, and Esha was second.

Mirabai returns to action in style

THE WRESTLER WINS COMMONWEALTH CHAMPIONSHIPS GOLD

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ahmedabad, August 25: Star Indian weightlifter Mirabai Chanu lived up to her top billing with a record-breaking show as she expectedly won a gold medal at the Commonwealth Championships here Monday.

The Tokyo Olympics silver medallist lifted a total of 193kg (84kg+109kg) to set new Commonwealth Championship records in snatch, clean and jerk, and total, finishing atop the women's 48kg podium.

Her effort was a whopping 14kg more than the previous total record in the tournament.

National Games champion Rishikanta Singh added the second gold of the day in the men's 60kg with a total effort of 271kg (120kg+151kg).

Returning to international action after a year-long hiatus due to an injury, Chanu did look rusty at times, managing only three successful lifts out of six.

"I am truly delighted to win the gold medal here because this is my first international event after the Olympics and in 48kg category. I had doubts if I will be able to give the same performance I did in this weight," Chanu said.

The 31-year-old faltered on her opening snatch attempt of 84kg as the judges were unhappy with her left elbow. But she cleared the same weight in her second attempt, shattering the 80kg snatch record.

> This victory is a great confidence boost as I prepare for the World Championships in October, and I'll continue to give my best to make India proud on the international stage
>
> MIRABAI CHANU

Her third try of 89kg also ended in a failed lift as she showed signs of discomfort in her right knee.

"I was not aware the first lift has been deemed no lift. But I think there was an issue with the left hand so that could be the reason," Chanu said

With no real competition to push her, Chanu was essentially competing with herself. She opened with a 105kg lift in clean and jerk, which 5kg more than the previous tournament record.

She improved that to 109kg, matching her 2017 World Championship-winning effort. However, she could not complete her final attempt of 113kg.

The event marked Chanu's return to the 48kg, a weight class in which she won her world championship title and two Commonwealth Games medals, but hasn't competed in since 2018.

Golden glory for Preetismita

Odisha's 16-year-old weightlifter and former youth world champion Preetismita Bhoi delivered an outstanding performance and secured victory in the Commonwealth Weightlifting Championship. Preetismita Bhoi wins the gold medal by lifting the highest weight in the 44 kg category. She lifted a total of 150 kg (63kg snatch+87kg clean and jerk), the highest in her category.

World Championships: Sen's campaign ends

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Paris, August 25: Top Indian shuttler Lakshya Sen's campaign at the BWF World Championships ended in disappointment as he went down fighting in straight games to world No 1 and top seed Shi Yu Qi of China in the men's singles opening round here Monday.

The 24-year-old Sen, a bronze medallist at the 2021 edition, went down 17-21 19-21 in 54 minutes. Despite pushing the Chinese to long rallies and producing bursts of his attacking brilliance, the Indian faltered in key moments, unable to breach Shi's rock-solid defence and explosive finishing.

Sen had come to Paris hoping to erase the memory of his heartbreaking fourth-place finish at the Olympics last August. Instead, he ran into the in-form Shi, who has won all nine finals that he contested since January 2024, and looked in complete command of his game. With the win, Shi extended his head-to-head advantage over Sen to 4-1.

SHORT TAKES

WFI drops Neha from World C'ship squad

New Delhi: Wrestler Neha Sangwan, who was disqualified from the recent U20 World Championships for being overweight, was on Monday dropped from the senior World Championships squad and suspended for two years by the national federation for her "consistent weight management issues". Neha, who hails from Charkhi Dadri in Haryana, was to compete in women's 59kg class in Samokov, Bulgaria last week but weighed about 600 grams more than the permissible limit. The organisers disqualified her and India went unrepresented in that weight category due to the transgression. India's women team won seven medals to finish runner-up behind Japan. Neha, without doubt, was a strong medal contender and could have helped India win the team championship by winning a gold.

Prag still joint second

St Louis: Indian Grandmaster R Praggnanandhaa settled for his fifth consecutive draw, splitting points with Poland's Jan-Krzysztof Duda in the sixth round of the Sinquefield Cup, part of the Grand Chess Tour. With this result, Praggnanandhaa moved to 3.5 points from six games, maintaining a joint second position. World champion D Gukesh is still tied for the fourth spot on 3 points along with Wesley So and Samuel Sevian of United States, and the French duo of Alireza Firouzja of and Maxime Vachier-Lagrave.

BCCI begins hunt for new sponsor after Dream11 walks out

WITH ONLY 15 DAYS LEFT FOR INDIA'S OPENING ASIA CUP MATCH IN THE UAE, BCCI SCRAMBLES TO FIND A NEW SPONSOR

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 25: Fantasy sports company Dream11 is no longer the title sponsor of the Indian cricket team and the Board has initiated the process to find a replacement, which is unlikely to be finalised in time for next month's Asia Cup.

As reported by the PTI Sunday, Dream11 won't be continuing as Indian cricket team's title sponsors, starting from the men's Asia Cup, after the government banned real money gaming under the recently-passed 'Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming' act.

BCCI secretary Devajit Saikia confirmed that the deal with Dream11 has ended and BCCI is putting the process in motion to get new title sponsor for various national teams.

"Our stand is very clear. With government regulations in place, the BCCI cannot continue its sponsorship relationship with Dream11 or any such other gaming company. Under the new restrictions, there is no scope and we are facing a roadblock with Dream11," Saikia told PTI Monday.

FANTASY NIGHTMARE

"So we cannot continue with them and therefore trying to find some alternatives, and that process is now ongoing. The vacant position of the sponsor is something that we are trying to fill and till now nothing has been completed. Once something happens we will let you know with a media advisory," he added. The ban on real money gaming has affected the revenue stream of all fantasy gaming companies.

"...no person shall offer any, aid, abet, induce, indulge, engage in offering online money gaming services nor shall involve in any advertisement which directly or indirectly promotes any person to play any online money game," the act states. The legislation also makes it clear that there could be financial penalty upto ₹ 1 crore or a jail term of three years in case of a violation.

Dream11 won the tender for Indian national teams (Senior Men, women, Emerging (U23), U-19 men and women) in 2023 for a period of three years for ₹358 crore ($44 million). They are exiting with almost a year still left in the contract but are unlikely to be penalised for it.

With Dream11's exit, another company My11Circle will also find it tough to remain the fantasy sports partner of the Indian Premier League. My11Circle has pledged ₹625 crore for a period of five years (Rs 125 crore annually).

"Obviously, we are keeping a watch on proceedings. Any company dependent on real money gaming is going to take a huge hit. But for IPL, the BCCI has enough time even if any company pulls out. IPL start in mid-March next year and a process, if required, can be put in place," an official said.

Printed and published by Adyasha Satpathy on behalf of Navajat Printers and Media Pvt. Ltd. and printed at Navajat Printers, B-15 Industrial Estate, Rasulgarh, Bhubaneswar -751010, Odisha;Phone:7894447142 (Marketing). Editor: Tathagata Satpathy, RNI No. ODIENG/2011/37159