



Nehal busts myth

Miss Diva Universe in 2018 Nehal Chudasama says that it's a myth that beauty queens are perfect

LEISURE | **P2**



Trump fires Cook

US Prez Donald Trump fires Federal Reserve Governor Lisa Cook in a sharp escalation in his battle to exert greater control over the institution

INTERNATIONAL | **P10**



Penalty on Eternal

A total GST demand of more than ` 40 crore, including interest and penalties, has been imposed on Eternal

BUSINESS | **P11**



Golden double

Olympian Sift Kaur Samra bags individual and team gold medals in the women's 50m rifle 3 positions at the 16th Asian Shooting Championships

SPORTS | **P12**

Woman gangraped after conversion

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhograi, August 26: A woman in Balasore district was allegedly gangraped in captivity for five months by her boyfriend and his relatives after she was kidnapped and forced into religious conversion by the accused, police said Tuesday.

The victim, a kabaddi player from Bhograi, lodged a complaint with police Tuesday, alleging she was lured into a false romance by Abdul Gafar of Majhichhak village. She claimed that Gafar and others abducted her, kept her at multiple locations. Later, they raped her after changing her religion forcibly.

Police sent the woman to a shelter home in Balasore and scheduled for a medical examination Wednesday. An officer said a thorough investigation is underway to secure justice.

As her family planned her marriage elsewhere, the victim allegedly eloped with Gafar March 1, taking jewellery worth Rs 4 lakh. Her mother reported her missing, prompting a kidnapping case (76/2025) under relevant sections of BNS. The victim returned Tuesday with her parents and a lawyer, alleging she was held in Baripada, Baisinga and Gafar's home, where Gafar, his father Fakir Khan, brother-in-law, uncle and others raped her. However, she somehow managed to escape.

2-day holiday for Nuakhai

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, August 26: The state government Tuesday announced an additional holiday for the Nuakhai festival, which is celebrated in a big way in the western part of the state.

According to separate orders, government offices and schools will remain shut August 29 in addition to August 28, the day of the festival.

Coupled with the holiday for Ganesh Chaturthi August 27, government employees and students would get a five-day break from Wednesday to Sunday.

However, September 13, which is a Saturday, has been declared a working day for government employees.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



RAIN FURY: Vehicles stuck as a portion of the Fourth Tawi Bridge damaged after relentless rainfall at Bhagwati Nagar in Jammu, Tuesday

PTI PHOTO

Additional 25% US tariff from today

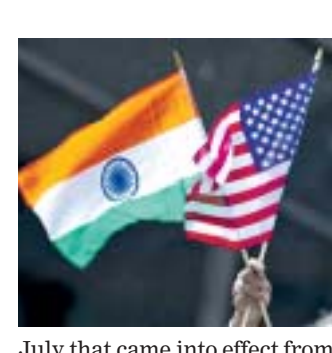
Although Prime Minister Narendra Modi insisted Tuesday that India will “continue to build its strength to withstand any economic pressure,” experts view the extra 25% US tariff as a direct blow to India’s export-reliant industries. Beyond immediate job losses and factory shutdowns in several cities, the move signals Washington’s unilateralism that erodes trust in strategic partnerships, built over decades. As the deadline approached, market sentiment was severely affected. Investors Tuesday lost ` 6.02 lakh crore as the Sensex shed 849.37 points

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Washington, August 26: The United States has issued a draft notice detailing plans to implement the additional 25 per cent tariff on Indian products, as previously announced by President Donald Trump, that will come into effect from August 27.

The Department of Homeland Security, in the draft order said the increased levies would hit Indian products that are “entered for consumption, or withdrawn from warehouse for consumption, on or after 12:01 am eastern daylight time on August 27, 2025”.

This was on top of the 25 per cent tariff announced in late



July that came into effect from August 7.

However, Indian products will be exempt from the new 50 per cent tariff if they were “already loaded on a ship and in transit to the US before 12:01 am (EDT) on August 27, 2025, provided they are cleared for use in the country or taken out of a warehouse for consumption before 12:01 am (EDT) on September 17, 2025, and the importer certifies this to US Customs by declaring the special code HTSUS 9903.01.85”.

White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt earlier this month said President Trump

NATIONS THAT STAND TO GAIN

Countries with lower US duties, Bangladesh, Vietnam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Pakistan, and Kenya, could quickly step in to capture India's share. Once buyers shift, winning them back isn't easy. Experts caution that this could mean widespread job losses in export hubs and a reduced role for India in global value chains. They added that rivals ranging from China, Vietnam, Mexico, and Turkey to smaller players like Nepal, Guatemala, and Kenya could cement their presence, keeping India out of crucial markets even if tariffs are eventually rolled back.

Sensex tumbles 1%

Indian stocks slipped Tuesday after Washington moved ahead with plans to slap tariffs of up to 50% on Indian exports starting Wednesday. The tariff shock dominated trading sentiment, while a weaker rupee and continued selling by foreign investors added to the pressure. The Sensex shed 849.37 points, or 1%, to settle at 80,786.54. The Nifty 50 fell 255.70 points, also 1%, to 24,712.05. Investor wealth took a heavy hit, with the combined market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms dropping by ` 6.02 lakh crore to ` 449.38 lakh crore.

imposed sanctions on India to bring an end to the conflict between Russia and Ukraine.

US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent has accused India of “profiteering” by reselling Russian oil.

India has called the tariffs imposed by the US “unjustified and unreasonable”.

New Delhi said that, like any major economy, it will take all necessary measures to safeguard its national interests and economic security.

CM launches ‘Ama Shasana’

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, August 26: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Tuesday launched ‘Ama Shasana’ (Our governance), a public service initiative, to reach out to people and take their feedback on the implementation of different welfare schemes.

Majhi inaugurated it at Lok Seva Bhawan here in the presence of ministers and secretaries of different departments. A dedicated portal — www.amashasana.odisha.gov.in — was also launched to facilitate people to give their opinion on the implementation of different schemes.

Majhi said in order to connect with the people, the state government has launched ‘Ama Shasana’. It is not just an initiative but it is the government’s firm resolve to bring



governance to every village, he said. To establish a direct interface between citizens and the government, under the initiative, the scheme has a toll-free helpline number (14471) and a WhatsApp number (7400221903) for quick communication and grievance redressal.

Under this initiative, the chief minister and ministers will call up the people at random and take their feedback in order to further strengthen different people-centric and welfare schemes. This would

NEW HERITAGE POLICY SOON TO PROTECT 3K SITES

Bhubaneswar: A high-level meeting was conducted here at Lokseva Bhavan Tuesday to introduce a comprehensive heritage policy aimed at protecting, preserving, and developing the state’s rich cultural legacy. Deputy Chief Minister Pravati Parida, who chaired the session, announced that a dedicated task force will oversee the conservation of more than 3,000 heritage sites across the state. The policy will initially focus on the holistic development of 75 key heritage sites. Law, Works, and Excise Minister Prithwiraj Harichandan; Minister of Odia Language, Literature and Culture, Sports and Youth Services, and Higher Education Suryavanshi Suraj; and senior officials from relevant departments attended the meeting. “Odisha’s heritage is very ancient, yet many sites remain neglected,” Parida observed. “A coordinated task force—bridging the tourism, culture, and works departments—is essential to safeguard these treasures,” she said. Harichandan stressed the need to restore monuments and improve road connectivity to heritage destinations. He also announced plans to geo-tag all ancient temples and integrate initiatives linked to Jagannath culture across multiple sectors. To mark the 75th birth anniversary of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the first phase will prioritise the protection of 75 heritage monuments with significant tourism potential, Suraj added.

Submerged Stone Age settlement unearthed in Denmark

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Bay of Aarhus (Denmark), August 26: Below the dark blue waters of the Bay of Aarhus in northern Denmark, archaeologists search for coastal settlements swallowed by rising sea levels more than 8,500 years ago.

This summer, divers descended about 26 feet below the waves close to Aarhus, Denmark’s second-biggest city, and collected evidence of a Stone Age settlement from the seabed.

It’s part of a 13.2 million euro (\$15.5 million) six-year international project to map parts

of the seabed in the Baltic and North Seas, funded by the European Union, that includes researchers in Aarhus as well as from the UK’s University of Bradford and the Lower Saxony Institute for Historical Coastal Research in Germany.

Most evidence of such settlements so far has been found at locations inland from the Stone Age coast, said underwater archaeologist Peter Moe Astrup, who’s leading underwater excavations in Denmark.

“Here, we actually have an old coastline. We have a settlement that was positioned directly at the coastline,” he said. “What

we actually try to find out here is how was life at a coastal settlement.” After the last ice age, huge ice sheets melted and global sea levels rose, submerging Stone Age settlements and forcing the hunter-gatherer human population inland.

About 8,500 years ago, sea levels rose by about 6.5 feet per century, Moe Astrup said.

Moe Astrup and colleagues at the Moesgaard Museum in Højbjerg, just outside Aarhus, have excavated an area of about 430 square feet at the small settlement they discovered just off today’s coast.

Early dives uncovered ani-



mal bones, stones tools, arrowheads, a seal tooth, and a small piece of worked wood, likely a simple tool. The researchers

are combing the site meter by meter using a kind of underwater vacuum cleaner to collect material for future analysis.

They hope further excavations will find harpoons, fish hooks or traces of fishing structures.

“It’s like a time capsule,” Moe Astrup said. “When sea level rose, everything was preserved in an oxygen-free environment... time just stops.”

“We find completely well-preserved wood,” he added. “We find hazelnut... Everything is well preserved.”

As today’s world faces rising sea levels driven by climate change, the researchers hope to shed light on how Stone Age societies adapted to shifting coastlines more than eight millennia ago.

relief and rescue operations are in full swing in affected districts.

The minister said many people have been evacuated and sheltered in relief camps in all affected districts. The people were being provided with cooked food, dry food and also fodder for cattle.

Alleging that the floods in north Odisha are caused mostly due to unregulated flow of water from neighbouring Jharkhand, Pujari urged Governor Hari Babu Kambhampati to intervene into the matter and take measure to complete the Chandil Dam and Galudih Barrage projects across the Subarnarekha river.

As per the latest report, the water level of the Subarnarekha river at Rajghat was 10.70 metre above the danger mark of 10.36 metre. Similarly, the water level of Baitarani at Akhiapada was also flowing close to the danger mark, the official said.

Meanwhile, the IMD said that a fresh low-pressure area has formed over the northwest Bay of Bengal off the Odisha coast at 5.30 am Tuesday.5

leisure

FORTUNE FORECAST

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FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181*

ARIES
You are likely to remain careful and watchful today, foretells Ganesha. And because you'll be invited to parties and other social events, your enthusiasm will remain buoyant. You will also strike the right balance between business and pleasure, says Ganesha.

TAURUS
You are likely to be in a mood to get away from the daily grind and take a much needed break. You would naturally try to stay free from future concerns and commitments and keep all your woes and worries aside for the day. An adventurous and fun filled outing or a trip to some happening resort, along with your friends and family members is a near certainty, assures Ganesha. Don't miss out on this opportunity.

GEMINI
You will be faced with house-hold problems and worries about your children today. You will need to help your children with schoolwork in the morning. In the evening you will likely head out to dinner with family and friends and relax, says Ganesha.

CANCER
Your speech will today explode your thoughts. You will ponder over new deals and decide to act only after much thought. Ganesha feels that you met with success in your ambition to achieve a breakthrough.

LEO
Don't expect you'll be handed everything on a silver platter. Especially today, you must put such expectations on the back burner, says Ganesha. Today, you would do better to dig deep into your resources of persistence, as a somewhat less productive day awaits you.

VIRGO
Today is a day for introspection and you will find yourself in a pensive mood. Ganesha advises you to search for the inner peace that you want. Stay calm to discover the hidden treasures within you. In the evening you will be glad to help someone who is in need of it.

LIBRA
Somebody in a position of power at your workplace may decide to pick on you, just for fun. But your luck is strong, and no one but your own thoughts and misgivings can harm you. You shall find it relatively easy to come out of these troubles; much to the chagrin of those who wish otherwise, predicts Ganesha.

SCORPIO
If you have recently started a joint business venture, today you may take your first step towards sealing a profitable deal. However, you should buy some time before signing any contract today; also, be cautious that you do not get the short end of the stick.

SAGITTARIUS
You may have to make important decisions of life today, says Ganesha. Remember, haste makes waste, so take every decision only after thinking about its long-term consequences or end results. Be patient.

CAPRICORN
Your power of reasoning will be strong today, says Ganesha. Those of you beginning your career will show a disposition to take up a job in television or print media. The spiritual side of you may also come to the fore and make you feel at peace, especially when visiting a holy place.

AQUARIUS
You will feel deeply inclined towards development and research, today. Actions speak louder than words, and your efforts and overall growth will speak plenty about your character. Your romantic side will come to the fore today. You will be willing to do anything and everything to bring a bright smile on the face of sweetheart, feels Ganesha, all of it will get noticed.

PISCES
For those who are salaried, today should be a progressive day for you. Important meetings at the work-place will benefit from your presence and the suggestions you have to make. This should enhance your relationship with your superiors. Compliments galore will come your way throughout the day. There are also indications of an important event occurring in your personal life today, says Ganesha.



LEONA LEWIS ADMITS PARENTING STRUGGLES

Singer Leona Lewis revealed how much she has relied on her parents in order to successfully balance her personal and professional lives. The 40-year-old, who has daughter Carmel, three, with husband Dennis Jauch, said: "I did my tour two years ago, and she was one. What it was, it was hard. It was hard. I needed my family."

RIO, KATE FERDINAND RELOCATE TO DUBAI

Rio and Kate Ferdinand have moved their family to Dubai for a 'fresh start.' The 46-year-old retired soccer star and his 34-year-old former reality star spouse have given a glimpse at their new life in the United Arab Emirates, where they first met in 2016.



CHINTA O CHETANA'S BARSHA FESTIVAL

Day II celebrates Odisha's cultural heritage

Bhubaneswar, August 26: The second evening of the 48th edition of Barsha Festival 2025, organised by cultural organisation Chinta O Chetana, unfolded Tuesday at Rabindra Mandap with an enchanting celebration of rich classical and folk traditions.

The evening commenced with the ceremonial lighting of lamp by a distinguished gathering of dignitaries including educationist, social activist and founder of Zindagi Foundation Ajay Bahadur Singh, former Culture Secretary Manoranjan Panigrahi, founder and chairman of Hi-Tech Group of Institutions Tirupati Panigrahi, sitar maestro Subrata De, renowned presenter Mrutunjay Rath, along with Chinta O Chetana president Sahadev Sahoo and general secretary Surendra Das.

Speaking on the occasion, Manoranjan Panigrahi reflected on the significance of rain in cinema and art. "Rain has always been glorified in films — through iconic scenes and songs, it becomes a meta-



phor for romance and beauty. It connects deeply with human emotions," he observed.

Ajay Bahadur Singh, however, struck a note of concern over the environmental changes that have altered this essence. "Rain is losing its charm due to environmental degradation. Instead of joy, it often brings floods and calamities. With a population of

140 crore, if each person plants even two trees we can restore balance. Planting trees, coupled with education and awareness, is the only way forward," he emphasised.

The evening also witnessed the presentation of the prestigious Chinta O Chetana Barsha Award 2024. The awardees included Ananya

Parida for Odissi, Nitisha Banerjee and Animikha De for Kathak, Vidushi Sangita for Kathak and Bharatanatyam, Tapash Paul for Tabla, Vidushi Sahelee Bose and Sangita Chati for her contributions to performing arts. **OrissaPOST** and **Dharitri** are the media partners of the three-day festival.

RESHMI YADAV, OP

Malaika's definition of 'own it'

Mumbai: For Malaika Arora, "own it" means showing up as yourself, without filters or apologies and said that her journey has been about fearlessly being herself.

Asked what does "own It" mean to her personally, and how does it reflect her journey with confidence and individuality, Malaika told this agency: "To me, 'Own It' means showing up as yourself, without filters or apologies. My journey has been about fearlessly being myself, whether it was in fashion, fitness, or just the way I live life. Confidence isn't about perfection, it's about authenticity."

The 51-year-old glamorous star professed her love for lipsticks and said that it can instantly uplift the

mood and boost confidence.

Malaika was first selected as a VJ for MTV India. She then entered the modelling world, appearing in many advertisements, as well as album songs like Bally Sagoo's *Gur Naalo Ishq Mitha* opposite Jas Arora, and Bollywood chartbusters such as *Chaiyya Chaiyya* in the 1998 Bollywood film *Dil Se...*

She was then seen in numbers such as *Maahi Ve* (2002), *Kaal Dhamaal* (2005) and *Munni Badnaam Hui* (2010). As an actress, she has starred in films like *Kaante* (2002) and *EMI* (2008).

IAN S



Taylor Swift, Travis Kelce engaged

New York: Taylor Swift and Travis Kelce are engaged, they announced Tuesday.

In a five-photo joint post on Instagram, the superstar singer and football player revealed their engagement-

ment, the fairytale culmination of a courtship that for two years has thrilled and fascinated millions around the world, but especially Swifties, the pop star's enormous and ardent fan base.

"Your English teacher and your gym teacher are getting married," the caption read, accompanied by an emoji of a dynamite stick.

Kelce was a famous football player when they met — a star tight end for the Kansas City Chiefs and a *Super Bowl* champion — but Swift's unique level of fame catapulted him into a different orbit entirely.

Their relationship was documented in countless shots of Swift celebrating at Chiefs games and fan videos of Kelce dancing along at Swift's *Eras* concert tour as it travelled the globe.

Kelce and Swift's relationship featured prominently in the just-released six-part ESPN documentary *The Kingdom*, which chronicles the franchise's pursuit of an unprecedented third consecutive *Super Bowl* title last season.

AGENCIES



PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

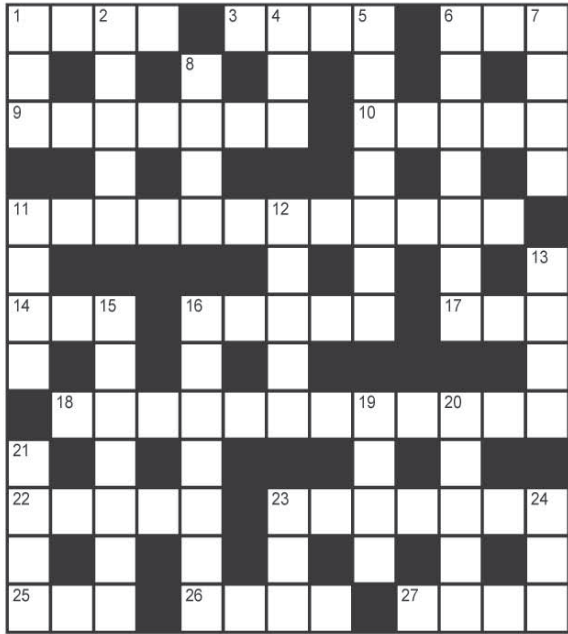


BREVITY



FUN post

CROSSWORD

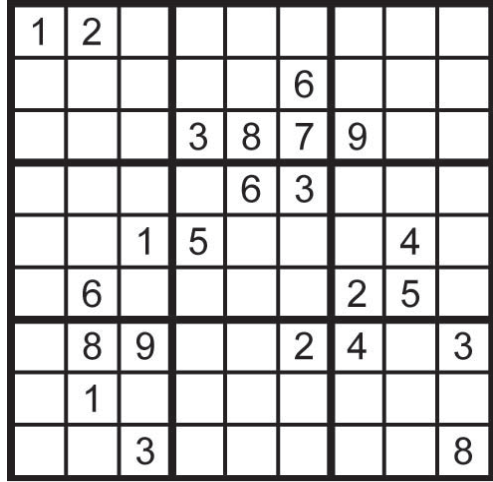


- Across**
- 1 Scarf material
 - 23 Helping
 - 25 Harem room
 - 6 Slow-witted
 - 9 Japanese dish
 - 10 Tussocks
 - 11 Kind of runner (4-8)
 - 14 Ground cover
 - 16 Social affair
 - 17 Male cat
 - 18 Tattler
 - 22 Bedouin's mount
 - 26 Blubbers
 - 27 Wildcat
 - 7 Kind of ox
 - 8 Finance
 - 11 Mascara site
 - 12 Mall binge
 - 13 Nanking nanny
 - 15 Catch-22
 - 16 Little rocks
 - 19 Foal's mother
 - 20 Bring together
 - 21 Canyon sound
 - 23 Suds source
 - 24 Rule out
- Down**
- 1 Parked oneself
 - 2 Zest producer
 - 4 Chinese tea
 - 5 Little sound
 - 6 Shortfall

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

SUDOKU

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

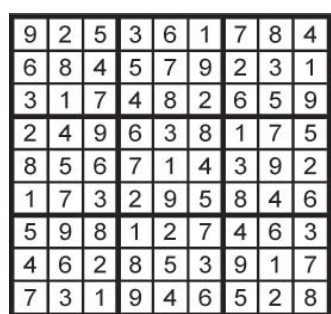


SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD



SUDOKU



Capital gears up for green Ganesh Puja

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, August 26: The Capital is abuzz with festive spirit as Ganesh Puja 2025 begins Wednesday, marked by grandeur, creativity, and a rising focus on sustainability. Over 340 pandals have illuminated the City—some soaring over 60 feet—promising to draw lakhs of devotees and visitors in the coming days.

This year's highlight is the focus on eco-friendly themes, supported by meticulous preparations from the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) and Commissionerate Police to ensure a safe and vibrant celebration.

At the heart of the spectacle is the 61-ft Ganesh idol at Badagada, among the tallest in the state this year. Built with eco-friendly materials, it features silver feet and a silver Mooshika (mouse), blending tradition with modern craftsmanship. The colossal idol has already drawn large crowds ahead of the puja. “Our artisans worked day and night for over a month to complete it,” said Sanjay Sahu, chief coordinator of the Badagada Puja Committee.

Not far behind is Saheed Nagar, where two major pandals are drawing thousands of visitors. The Winner Association has crafted a 46-ft Ganesh idol seated on a grand elephant-drawn chariot, built entirely with non-toxic materials. The venue will also host cultural programmes, prasad distribution, and devotional performances every evening.

Also in Saheed Nagar, the



Sahid Club is winning praise with its tribal-themed pandal, crafted from bamboo, palm leaves, and traditional tribal artistry. The design not only showcases Odisha's indigenous heritage but also underscores the message of environmental consciousness.

Other standout installations include the Tarang Club in Old Town, which has set up a 50-ft idol along with cultural evenings, and the Akhandalamani Seva Sansad in Nuasahi, which has created the tallest idol in their locality with themes highlighting women's safety and road safety awareness.

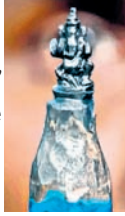
“With every major neighbourhood contributing its own artistic vision and social message, Ganesh Puja in Bhubaneswar this year is more than a religious celebration — it has become a community-wide cultural movement,” said Anjali Mishra, a City resident.

The BMC has issued strict guidelines for all puja committees, including a ban on single-use plastics, mandatory use of LED and safe lighting systems, construction of eco-friendly idols, and immersion only at designated artificial ponds at Kuakhai Bridge, Tankapani Road, Lingipur (Daya River), and other notified zones to curb water pollution. Sanitation drives, emergency medical services, and mobile control rooms have been deployed across the City to manage the massive footfall expected in the coming days. The BMC has also launched an initiative to collect floral waste from pandals for recycling into incense sticks.

The Commissionerate Police has put in place robust security and crowd-control measures, including a ban on high-decibel DJ sets and unauthorised lighting, along with extra personnel

Miniature artist crafts tiny Ganesh idol on pencil tip

Bhubaneswar: In a unique display of devotion, miniature artist L Ishwar Rao from Gopinathpur in Jatni has crafted what he claims is the smallest Ganesh idol this festive season. The sculpture, carved on a pencil tip, stands just 0.5 cm tall and took him nearly eight hours to complete. Sharing his thoughts, Rao said his aim is not only to showcase his skill but also to spread Lord Ganesha's spiritual message. “Every year, I dedicate my craft to Lord Ganesha. This time, I challenged myself to create the smallest idol possible. Through it, I convey my wishes of peace, prosperity, and happiness to all on the occasion of Ganesh Puja,” he said. Rao, known locally for his exceptional miniature art, has been presenting innovative creations every year on special occasions. Though he has sculpted idols on pencil tips before, this year's work stands out as the tiniest he has ever produced. His latest creation has drawn admiration from locals, art lovers, and devotees alike.



at key junctions, immersion sites, and popular pandals. Real-time CCTV surveillance and quick-response teams have also been deployed. “We've banned high-decibel DJs and unsafe lighting setups. CCTV surveillance and quick-response teams are in place to ensure a peaceful and joyful celebration for all,” police officials said.


Odisha gets ₹240cr for Rural Local Governance

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 26: The Union government has released the first installment of the Fifteenth Finance Commission (XV FC) Untied Grants to Rural Local Bodies (RLBs) for 2025-26, with Odisha receiving ₹240.81 crore. The funds will benefit 6,085 Gram Panchayats and 63 Block Panchayats, enabling them to take up development projects based on local needs and priorities.

The XV FC grants, released by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj and the Ministry of Jal Shakti in two installments annually, are meant for location-specific needs under the 29 subjects in the Eleventh Schedule of the Constitution. They cannot be used for salaries or administrative expenses. The grants focus on basic services such as sanitation, ODF (Open Defecation Free) maintenance, waste and fecal sludge management, drinking water supply, rainwater harvesting, and water recycling. Tripura has received ₹29.75 crore under the same scheme, while Mizoram has been allocated ₹14.27 crore. The initiative underscores the Centre's commitment to strengthening grassroots democracy and public service delivery.

Ph.D.



Dr. Namita Karna has done her Ph.D. in Polymer Engineering and technology from the country's leading educational institution and deemed university, Institute of Chemical Technology, Mumbai. She was doing her research under the supervision of Professor Dr. Shashank, T. Masket of this university. Her research topic "Development and Modification of Polymeric resin by Silane" has been highly appreciated by all. Dr. Namita is the daughter of founder Chairman of Maheshwari Group of Institutions, a leading educational institution in Western Odisha Shri Fakir Karna and Secretary Santoshini Karna and a native of Barghar Dist. Atabira Block Bugbuga, Bhutatikra Village. Dr. Namita Karna is currently working as an Asst. Professor. She has thanked his parents, all the teachers and staff of the Institute of Chemical Technology, Mumbai and her friends for this success.

14th 'Aahar Kendra' opens in City

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 26: A new Aahar Kendra (Centre) was inaugurated Tuesday on the premises of Dr Harekrushna Mahtab State Library under the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC). With this, the total number of such centres in the City has risen to 14.

The Aahar Centre was formally inaugurated by Housing & Urban Development Minister Krushna Chandra Mohapatra and Higher Education Minister Suryabanshi Suraj. Bhubaneswar (Central) MLA Ananta Narayan Jena, BMC Mayor Sulochana Das, and other dignitaries were also present on the occasion.



After the inauguration, the ministers, MLAs, Mayor, Deputy Mayor, corporators, and other attendees had lunch at the Aahar Centre, each paying ₹5 for a meal.

Speaking on the occasion, Mohapatra said, “The new Aahar Centre will be a great relief for students and visitors.”

Students present at the event also welcomed the move, noting that the facility would provide

affordable meals without disrupting their study schedules. The library premises attract hundreds of students, researchers, historians, and intellectuals daily, but the lack of affordable food nearby had long posed difficulties. The new Aahar Centre is expected to benefit visitors, especially poor students who often skipped meals as they could neither afford restaurants nor spare time to travel for food. Now, they can access a nutritious meal for just ₹5. According to reports, the Aahar Centre is supported by the state government and managed by the BMC. Together, these centres serve meals to nearly 14,000 people every day.

AIDSO protests over student poll dates

Protesters say suspension of student polls undermines democratic rights and silences campus voice

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 26: The All India Democratic Students' Organisation (AIDSO) staged a protest at Master Canteen Square Tuesday, demanding the immediate announcement of dates for students' union elections in colleges and universities.

The protest saw the participation of AIDSO state president Somnath Behera, state secretary Sidharth Rath, vice-president Bhagyaravi Das, Nirupama Behera, and other leaders.

The protesters highlighted that student elections in many institutions across the state have remained suspended for years



under various pretexts. They said despite repeated assurances, the government has yet to issue an official notification.

They stressed that forming an elected Students' Union is a democratic right rooted in India's freedom struggle. Citing Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose's October 31, 1938 call for elected unions, the protesters alleged that by suppressing this right today, the government is denying students their democratic voice.

The protesters further alleged that the suspension of student elections is being used to silence student voices at a time when the education sector faces mounting problems. They urged the government to uphold democratic rights and announce the election dates without delay.

Later, a delegation led by Behera submitted a memorandum to the Higher Education Minister, urging immediate action.



UP FOR SALE: A roadside vendor puts up handmade toys on display near Exhibition Ground in Bhubaneswar, Tuesday

PICTURE BY BIKASH NAYAK

BJD slams 'Ama Shasana' as copy of 5T-Mo Sarkar

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 26: The Biju Janata Dal (BJD) Tuesday slammed the state government, alleging that the newly launched 'Ama Shasana' initiative is nothing but a copy-paste version of the 5T-Mo Sarkar governance model introduced by the Naveen Patnaik government in 2019.

Addressing a press conference at Shankha Bhawan here, former minister and BJD vice-president Atanu Sabayasachi Nayak said, “The BJP government, after 14 months in power, has only rebranded schemes once initiated by the BJD.

“The same schemes that the BJP criticised in opposition are



now being relaunched under new names. Ama Shasana is the 25th such renamed scheme,” Nayak alleged.

He pointed out that the 5T-Mo Sarkar model, unveiled by former chief minister Naveen Patnaik on Gandhi Jayanti 2019, had drawn praise from national bodies including NITI Aayog, the Prime Minister's Office, and even then Union Min-

ister Jitendra Singh. While the BJP had politicised and opposed the model, they are now forced to accept its relevance and effectiveness Nayak said accusing the government of focusing on repainting projects completed during the BJD regime instead of delivering real governance.

Nayak further said, “Law and order has collapsed with rape incidents occurring one after another, but the people remain deprived of benefits due to hollow, ineffective governance,” he said.

The BJD leader dismissed the BJP's move as old schemes in new wrappers and accused the government of resorting to copy-paste politics with no substantive administrative effort.

Seagrass revival in Odisha's Haripur creek

Seagrass meadows return, offering fresh hope for coastal resilience and marine biodiversity

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 26: After nearly a decade, seagrass meadows—crucial for marine ecosystems—have naturally reappeared in Haripur Creek near Gopalpur, Odisha. Scientists attribute this rare ecological revival to reduced human activity during the Covid-19 lockdowns between 2019 and 2021.

Seagrasses, often called “ecosystem engineers,” play a key role in stabilising coasts, trapping carbon, and sheltering marine life. Once lost from Haripur Creek due to cyclones, pollution, and overfishing, their natural return is now being hailed as a “major ecological breakthrough.”

The findings, published in the prestigious National Academy Science Letters, were authored by marine scientists Debasish Mahapatro and Sangita Mishra. Their three-year field study (2019–2021) showed that the pause in tourism, fishing, and boating during the lockdown enabled seagrasses to naturally recolonise the creek.

“This is a globally rare phenomenon. The pandemic unin-



tionally gave nature a chance to heal,” said Mahapatro, who had first documented seagrass in Haripur Creek in 2010.

Once confined to Chilika Lake, seagrasses were first reported in Haripur Creek between 2010 and 2012, dominated by the species Halophila ovalis. However, the meadows were wiped out between 2012 and 2019 by successive cyclones—Phailin (2013), Hudhud (2014), and Fani (2019)—as well as pollution from shrimp farms, plastics, and boating.

During the lockdown, stable salinity, active tidal flows,

and the absence of extreme weather events created favourable conditions for regrowth. New species such as Halodule uninervis and Halodule pinnifolia were also recorded, signalling improved biodiversity.

Biomass studies also confirmed the recovery. While Phase-I (2010–2012) recorded 23.1 g/100 cm², Phase-II (2019–2021) showed 25.3 g/100 cm². Researchers attributed the increase to the coexistence of multiple species, unlike the earlier period dominated by a single species.

Among the most striking

outcomes of the seagrass revival was the first live sighting of the golden mantis shrimp (Lysiosquilla tredecimdentata) in Haripur Creek, a clear indicator of improving ecosystem health.

However, researchers caution that the fragile ecosystem remains under threat. “Plastic waste, ghost nets, and unregulated coastal development continue to endanger the seagrass meadows. We must act swiftly to protect what has been restored,” warned Mahapatro.

The revival of seagrass in Haripur Creek is seen not just as a local triumph but as a global example of how easing human pressure can help marine ecosystems recover naturally. Scientists are urging authorities and stakeholders to adopt long-term conservation measures to safeguard this vital underwater habitat.

As climate change and biodiversity loss dominate global debates, this ecological success from a small creek in southern Odisha offers a powerful message: sometimes, letting nature be can achieve far more than human intervention.

MARKET WATCH					
CURRENCY		BOURSES		COMMODITIES	
INDEX	VARIATION	INDEX	VARIATION	INDEX	VARIATION
DOLLAR	87.61 ▲ 0.03	SENSEX	80786.54 ▼ 849.37	GOLD	₹100,996 ▲ ₹372
EURO	102.16 ▲ 0.34	NIFTY	24712.05 ▼ 255.70	SILVER	₹115,896 ▼ ₹81

WEATHER

	BBSR	CTC	FORECAST
Max Temp	31.8°	32.2°	Generally cloudy sky with one or two spells of rain or thundershower
Min Temp	25.0°	23.5°	
Humidity	86%	88%	
Rainfall	18.3mm	4.2mm	

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FLOOD FURY: Heavy rains caused the Biri river to overflow, submerging a bridge near Digapur and disrupting communication with the Kundura block headquarters in Koraput district Tuesday

OP PHOTO

Snakebite kills 2 minor siblings

Lahunipada: A six-year-old boy and his eight-year-old sister died after they were bitten by a venomous snake at Jhirpani village under Tamda panchayat in Sundargarh district. The deceased were identified as Emeralon Ekka and his sister Ablin, children of Isaac Ekka of the village. According to reports, the siblings asleep with their parents after dinner when a snake bit both of them around 11pm Monday. The family rushed them to the government hospital in Rourkela. However, doctors declared them dead around 3am. On being informed, Chandiposh police reached the hospital, seized the bodies, and sent them for postmortem. Later, the bodies were handed over to the family. Police have registered an unnatural death case and are investigating the incident.

MAN GETS 7-YR RI FOR RAPING MINOR

Bhubaneswar: A man in Bargarh district was sentenced to seven years of rigorous imprisonment (RI) by a designated PCOSO court Tuesday for raping a minor girl two years ago. The accused, Balaram Sa, had raped the minor of his neighbourhood August 8, 2023. Sa gave her a 50-rupee note and sent her to purchase a packet of biscuits. Accordingly, the victim returned with a biscuit packet and handed over the packet and the rest ₹40 to him. Later, the accused dragged her inside to his house and raped her. Twenty-four witnesses were examined during the investigation and a chargesheet was submitted against the accused.

Collector chairs key meet on Koraput Bypass project



NARENDRA RAUT, OP

Koraput, August 26: A special review meeting on the proposed Koraput Bypass construction was held at Koraput District Collector's office Monday evening. The meeting chaired by Koraput Collector Manoj Sanyal Mahajan, and attended by several key public representatives and officials deliberated upon the long-pending issues related to the project.

The meeting primarily focused on reviewing the status of the bypass project, its essentiality for easing traffic congestion in Koraput town, and the challenges the proposed project is facing.

Public representatives expressed concern over the increasing vehicular load on the town's main roads, particularly heavy transport vehicles passing through the narrow stretches, which often cause traffic snarls and pose safety risks. The bypass, they noted, would

9 fishermen held from Gahirmatha



PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, August 26: Forest officials Tuesday arrested nine marine fishermen and seized their seaworthy fishing trawl from the seawaters of the Gahirmatha marine sanctuary of Kendrapara district on the charges of illegally fishing within the turtle congregation zone, an official said.

The fishing trawler, used by the intruders for fishing along the prohibited sanctuary area, was seized by the Forest patrolling teams.

The intruders who were arrested are the marine fishermen of Bhadrak and Balasore districts. They were later remanded to judicial custody, said Assistant Conservator of Forest (ACF) Manas Das.

The fishing vessel had trespassed into prohibited sanctuary corridors near Barunei coast contravening the provisions of Wildlife Protection Act, Orissa Marine Fishing Regulation Act and mandatory rules of marine sanctuary, added the forest officer. It should be noted here that the state government has clamped a seven-month log fishing ban along the 20-km stretch Dhamara-Devi river mouth from November 1 till May 31 in view of the ensuing mass nesting of endangered Olive Ridley marine turtles.

However, the fishing prohibition remains enforced round the year in Gahirmatha as it is accorded the status of marine sanctuary. The mute species, accorded as Schedule-I animal under Wildlife Protection Act for its highly threatened status, get entangled in the nets for prolonged periods and die of asphyxiation. The turtles also perish in large numbers after getting hit by the fast moving propeller of the fishing trawlers, forest personnel said.

Lightning claims 3 lives in Ganjam

POST NEWS NETWORK

Chhatrapur, August 26: Three women were killed by lightning strikes Tuesday in Chhatrapur and Ganjam blocks of Ganjam district while working in paddy fields, police said.

The incident in Chhatrapur block occurred near Sarabhimpur village under Potlamapur panchayat when sudden rain and lightning struck as farm workers were transplanting paddy saplings. Victims were identified as Puni Gouda, 51, wife of Mardaraj Gouda, and his sister Nirupama Gouda, 46. Both collapsed in the fields and were rushed to the Bipulingi health center, where doctors pronounced them dead. Chhatrapur police and the local revenue inspector visited the hospital and launched an investigation.

In a separate incident, 47-year-old Mini Gouda of Raulibandh village in Ganjam block also died after being struck by lightning while working on her farmland. Ganjam police and the Malad revenue inspector conducted an inquiry at the spot. All three bodies were sent for postmortem to the Chhatrapur sub-divisional hospital.

On being informed, Chhatrapur MLA Krushnachandra Nayak visited the hospital and met the families of the victims to offer condolences.

Minor gangrape: 4 held in Balasore



POST NEWS NETWORK

Balasore, August 26: Four persons, including three minors, were arrested Tuesday for allegedly gangraping a minor girl and circulating a video of the assault online, police said.

Though the incident occurred seven months ago, police registered a case (305/25) and began an investigation Monday, after the survivor revealed it before her family members. Police arrested one adult suspect and detained three minors for

questioning. The victim, the detained minors, and the arrested suspect underwent medical examinations Tuesday.

The incident occurred when the 15-year-old girl from a village under Darada panchayat was lured by a male friend to a secluded location. There, the friend, along with three other minors, allegedly gangraped her. The perpetrators recorded the assault on their mobile phones and threatened to make the video and photos public if she reported the incident. Frightened and ashamed, the girl remained silent. The victim's statement was recorded in court Tuesday. The adult accused was produced in court while the minors were sent to Juvenile Justice Board.

Missing kid rescued from Joda forests

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar/Joda, August 26: A three-year-old boy, who had gone missing from Dalko Sahi, Nuagaon village under Rugudi police limits in Keonjhar district, was rescued in a critical and unconscious condition from a nearby forest, police said Tuesday. The child, Bikash Munda, son of Subhas Munda, was admitted to Tata Hospital in Joda with multiple injuries on his body. Doctors said the wounds appeared to have been caused by the claws of a wild animal. According to reports, Bikash went missing August 21 while playing near his house.

Subhas later lodged a complaint with Rugudi police who registered a case and began an investigation. Villagers spotted the boy lying unconscious in Rengalbada forest Tuesday.

Truck swept away; driver missing

Bargaon: A coal-laden truck was swept away in Safei river near Jhantelbuda under Bargaon police station in Sundargarh district Tuesday, leaving the driver missing. Police and Fire Services personnel began a search operation but failed to trace the driver, Sujit Aind, a resident of Jhantelbuda. Police said Aind had visited his home while on the way to Kalunga in Sundargarh district to deliver coal at a factory. He called a local Abinash Barla to assist him in unloading of coals. While crossing a low-lying bridge over the Safei River, the truck was swept away by strong currents. Locals managed to rescue Barla, but Aind remained untraced.

4 highwaymen held for robbing trader

POST NEWS NETWORK

Chikiti, August 26: Police have arrested four anti-socials for assaulting a gutkha trader and robbing him of more than ₹4 lakh near Balarampur Square under Nuapada outpost in Ganjam district July 22.

The accused were identified as Deepak Gouda, 30, of Jagannathpur, Jitendra Pradhan of

Plea in HC over DMF tender irregularities



POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar/Hatadihi, August 26: A petition has been filed in the Orissa High Court alleging irregularities in the request for proposal (RFP) tender process for the selection of a project management unit (PMU) under Keonjhar District Mineral Foundation (DMF) and in the approval and disbursement of salaries with goods and services tax (GST) support for PMU employees.

Petitioner's counsel Prashant Kumar Satapathy said the DMF published an RFP May 29, 2025, for selecting an agency as PMU. The decision followed an executive committee meeting held

March 29, 2025. The RFP set a turnover value of ₹50 crore. However, under ODMF Rules 2015, Rule 6(2), the executive committee has no authority to issue such an RFP. Its administrative approval powers are limited to ₹10 crore.

Satapathy alleged that the committee also extended the PMU's agreement beyond its tenure. Despite approving large sums from DMF funds for salaries, employees were reportedly paid much less, and copies of invoices were not available in DMF records. Additionally, 18 per cent GST was sanctioned over and above the salary component, but instead of being deposited, the GST grant was

allegedly misappropriated.

Complaints were also filed June 1, 2025, with the Chief Minister, Chief Secretary, and the departments of Planning and Convergence, Finance, Steel and Mines, General Administration, and Public Grievances.

The petition further noted that while the RFPs issued in both 2022 and 2025 were identical, the 2022 RFP was neither approved by the Trust Board nor included in the budget. As per Rule 4(4) of the ODMF, the trust board is required to meet at least twice a year. However, no such meeting has been held since December 2022, the petition claimed.

EAST COAST RAILWAY
'E' PROCUREMENT SYSTEMS

Tender Notice No. SDMM/KUR/EP/2025-26/E-procurement Tender Notice/08, Dt : 22.08.2025


The following tenders have been uploaded on website www.ireps.gov.in

SL. NO. 01 | TENDER NO. 81256096, BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF MATERIALS : SUPPLY OF LONG BLOCK FOR ENGINE MODEL, QUANTITY : 5 SET.


Tender Closing Date & Time : At 1500 hrs. of 22.09.2025.

Sr. Divisional Materials Manager / Khurda Road


PR-521/Q/25-26



ଶ୍ରୀ ନରେନ୍ଦ୍ର ମୋଦୀ
ପ୍ରଧାନମନ୍ତ୍ରୀ



ଶ୍ରୀ ମୋହନ ଚରଣ ମାଝୀ
ମୁଖ୍ୟମନ୍ତ୍ରୀ, ଓଡ଼ିଶା



ସୁସ୍ଥ ଓଡ଼ିଶା
ବିକଶିତ ଓଡ଼ିଶା

ମ୍ୟାଲେରିଆ ଓ ଡେଙ୍ଗୁ ନିରାକରଣ ସଚେତନତା ଅଭିଯାନ

୧ ଅଗଷ୍ଟ - ୩୦ ସେପ୍ଟେମ୍ବର ୨୦୨୪

ବର୍ଷା ଋତୁରେ ମଶା ବଂଶ ବୃଦ୍ଧି ପାଇବା ଏବଂ ମ୍ୟାଲେରିଆ ଓ ଡେଙ୍ଗୁ ରୋଗ ବ୍ୟାପିବାର ଆଶଙ୍କା ଅଧିକ ଥାଏ । ଏଥିରୁ ନିଜକୁ ସୁରକ୍ଷିତ ରଖିବା ପାଇଁ ନିମ୍ନଲିଖିତ ଉପାୟ ଆପଣାନ୍ତୁ ।

• ଘର ପାଖ ପରିବେଶ ସଫା-ସୁତୁରା ରଖନ୍ତୁ

• ଘର ପାଖରେ ଜମୁଥିବା ପାଣିକୁ ସଫାହରେ ଅନ୍ତତଃ ଥରେ ନିଷ୍କାସନ କରିଦିଅନ୍ତୁ

• ଘରେ କିମ୍ବା ଘର ପାଖରେ ଥିବା ଫୁଲ କୁଣ୍ଡ, ପାଣି ଟାଙ୍କି, କୁଲର, ଫ୍ରିଜର ପଛପଟେ ଥିବା ଡିଫ୍ରେଷ୍ଟ ଡ୍ରେନର ଝରମର ଆଦିକୁ ସଫାହକୁ ଥରେ ପାଣି ବାହାର କରି ପରିଷ୍କାର କରନ୍ତୁ

• ଘର ପାଖରେ ଥିବା ଭଙ୍ଗା ଡବା, ବୋତଲ, ପୁରୁଣା/ ଛିଣ୍ଡା ଟାୟାର, କଟା ପଇଡ଼, ନଡ଼ିଆ ଷଡ଼େଇ, କୁଡୁଆ, ବାଉଁଶ ଗଛର କଟା ଯାଇଥିବା ମୂଳ ଅଂଶ ଆଦି ସବୁକୁ ନଷ୍ଟ କରିଦିଅନ୍ତୁ

• ଦିନ ହେଉ ବା ରାତି, ଶୋଇବା ବେଳେ ମଶାରି ନିଷ୍ଠୟ ବ୍ୟବହାର କରନ୍ତୁ, ମଶା ଦାଉରୁ ସୁରକ୍ଷିତ ରହିବା ପାଇଁ ଘରର ଝରକାରେ ସରୁ ଜାଲି ଲଗାନ୍ତୁ


• ଶରୀରକୁ ପୁରା ଘୋଡ଼ାଇଲା ଭଳି ପୋଷାକ ପିନ୍ଧନ୍ତୁ

• ଆବଶ୍ୟକ ସ୍ଥଳେ ମଶା ନିବାରକ ବ୍ୟବହାର କରନ୍ତୁ


• ଜ୍ୱର, କମ୍ପ, ଆଣ୍ଟି-ଗର୍ବି, ଆଣ୍ଟି ଓ ମାଂସପେଶୀରେ ଯନ୍ତ୍ରଣା ହେଲେ ତୁରନ୍ତ ନିକଟସ୍ଥ ସ୍ୱାସ୍ଥ୍ୟକେନ୍ଦ୍ରରେ ରକ୍ତ ପରୀକ୍ଷା କରି ଚିକିତ୍ସିତ ହୁଅନ୍ତୁ


ଉପଯୁକ୍ତ ସଚେତନତା ସହିତ ସମଯୋଚିତ ପଦକ୍ଷେପ ସୁସ୍ଥ ଜୀବନର ମୂଳମନ୍ତ୍ର


ରାଜ୍ୟ ସ୍ୱାସ୍ଥ୍ୟସେବା ହେଲ୍ପ ଲାଇନ୍: ୧୦୪



ସ୍ୱାସ୍ଥ୍ୟ ଓ ପରିବାର କଲ୍ୟାଣ ବିଭାଗ, ଓଡ଼ିଶା ସରକାର

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OIPR-10003/13/0251/2526

The heart's words fall back unheard from Wisdom's throne.

SRI AUROBINDO



Hope in UK

England had its #MeToo moment when a court recently dismissed the libel claim of actor Noel Clarke accused of inappropriate sexual behaviour against his junior colleagues and actors and held him guilty of the charges levelled against him. The case did not simply concern one offender as the powerful entertainment industry was put on the dock for its complicity of silence while the victims had moved from pillar to post till leading British daily “The Guardian” took up the matter. The verdict is also a triumph of investigative journalism in the UK, which sends a message of hope across the globe at a time when a large section of the media in different countries is kowtowing before the powers that be.

In fact, the judgement of Mrs Justice Steyn is about power and complicity as well as the failure to protect vulnerable people. In her verdict, she agreed with the justification of the campaign run by the daily to champion the cause of hapless victims. The reporters did a commendable job of piecing together the accounts of several victims taking utmost care to base their stories on authentic documents. The judge ruled that there were “strong grounds to believe that (Clarke) is a serial abuser of women.”

The court heard testimony from 26 witnesses before concluding that Clarke had engaged in harassment, bullying and abuse of power over many years. To be fair, the judge accepted some of his evidence but found him to be neither credible nor reliable. The journalists, on the other hand, meticulously collected facts, spoke to the victims, drew them out of their shells and gave Clarke reasonable opportunity to respond as well as fairly presenting his denials. Full credit goes to the women who spoke up, broke their silence and enabled the media to expose the wrongdoing that is almost endemic in the entertainment industry across the globe.

This is borne out by the fact that Clarke was not just another actor and he was being honoured by the British film academy, BAFTA for his “outstanding British contribution to cinema” even as serious allegations began to circulate. The deeper indictment is therefore of an industry that turned a blind eye to the rampant phenomenon known as “casting couch” which is a euphemism for sexually exploiting women aspiring for stardom. Clarke was rewarded and celebrated while women, who spoke out, risked their careers. The structures of power that enabled him – and the colleagues who were too ready to pretend as if nothing had happened – are the same factors that help abusers thrive in society with impunity.

Clarke prospered in this cultural climate. It is this culture that needed #MeToo before the voices of the women being persecuted silently with the help of a cynical and colluding industry could be heard. When politicians and business tycoons get involved in this web of murky, sexual racket, as is being revealed in the US and elsewhere, the hapless victims become doomed.

On the other hand, unfortunately, the list of young British girls raped by mostly Pakistani grooming gangs in the UK is yet to get due attention either by the media or by the justice system. After the damning report by Baroness Louise Casey criticising decades of institutional failure to protect children from so-called “grooming gangs,” the Labour Party headed by Prime Minister Kier Starmer has agreed for a probe into the matter. The Casey report points to grave failure by successive governments to protect children from organised sexual abuse for decades. But the fact that now the UK government has agreed for an independent investigation, whether it be because of the sheer scale of the scandal or because it gained international attention due to Elon Musk constantly drawing attention to the subject on X and criticising the Starmer administration over its failure to act, a probe is underway and hopefully will bring justice to the victims and their families. An unbiased probe may also deter such crimes in future as the system sheds its race, power and gender based bias.

WISDOM CORNER

“When you are joyous, look deep into your heart and you shall find it is only that which has given you sorrow that is giving you joy. When you are sorrowful look again in your heart, and you shall see that in truth you are weeping for that which has been your delight.”

KAHLIL GIBRAN

“Usually, people have a tendency to be caught in the worries concerning the future or in the regret concerning the past. There is some kind of energy that is pushing them to run, and they are not able to establish themselves in the present moment.”

THICH NHAT HANH

“If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor. If an elephant has its foot on the tail of a mouse and you say that you are neutral, the mouse will not appreciate your neutrality.”

DESMOND TUTU

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

- **1576:** The death of Titian. Titian, the greatest Italian Renaissance painter of the Venetian school, who was once described as “the sun amidst small stars not only among the Italians but all the painters of the world,” died this day in 1576.
- **1859:** Edwin Laurentine Drake struck oil while drilling in Titusville, Pennsylvania, becoming the first driller of a productive oil well in the United States.
- **1962:** NASA Launches Mariner 2. Part of NASA’s Mariner program, the unmanned space probe was the first man-made object to flyby another planet – it encountered Venus on December 14, 1962. The space probe made its last contact with scientists on Earth on January 3, 1963.
- **1979:** Louis Mountbatten, 1st Earl Mountbatten of Burma, was assassinated by members of the Provisional Irish Republican Army, who placed on a bomb on his boat, which was in Donegal Bay, Ireland.
- **1985:** Military coup in Nigeria. General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida took over the government after overthrowing Muhammadu Buhari in a bloodless coup.
- **1991:** Moldova gains its Independence. The Eastern European country was part of the Soviet Union since August 2, 1940, from parts of Romania and parts of the Moldavian Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic. In 1991, after the dissolution of the USSR, the country gained its independence.

power post

FOCUS GAZA

ISRAEL’S SELF-HARM

Italy’s current government is among the most Israel-friendly in the country’s history, which is why Italian Defense Minister Guido Crosetto’s recent remarks about the ongoing war in Gaza should set off alarm bells among Israelis, particularly within the government.

In an interview with La Stampa, Crosetto delivered a blunt message to Israel’s leaders. “Fighting terrorists is no longer an excuse,” he said, adding that “We need decisions that will force [Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu] to stop.” Such measures, he added, should not be directed against Israel itself, but instead serve as a “way to save its people from a government that has lost its reason and its humanity.”

Crosetto is right. The war in Gaza has taken a devastating toll not only on Palestinians but also on Israel’s economy, democracy, and global standing. Without an immediate change of course, Netanyahu’s agenda could make Israel an international pariah for decades to come.

True, the current round of violence started with the malicious attack by Hamas terrorists on Israeli civilians in October 2023. True, this attack included murder, sexual assaults, and kidnappings, with almost 1,200 civilians killed. And true, as of now, almost two years after the attack, 50 (mostly) Israelis remain missing, either as hostages held by Hamas or dead.

Yet what began as an existential Israeli response to that Hamas atrocity has degenerated into mass destruction. The United Nations World Food Program has warned that one-third of Gazans have gone days without food. Although the international outcry at the lack of available food did lead to an increase in supply, this has been of little benefit, owing to a distribution method encouraged by the Israeli government, executed by a private company, and forced upon the obedient, though reluctant, army to supervise.



The war in Gaza has taken a devastating toll not only on Palestinians but also on Israel's economy, democracy, and global standing. Without an immediate change of course, Netanyahu's agenda could make Israel an international pariah for decades to come

A recent UN experts’ report found that famine now affects at least a half-million people in northern Gaza, including Gaza City. The Israeli government’s proposal in July to create a “humanitarian city” that would force hundreds of thousands of Gazans into confinement, and the August decision to conquer Gaza City, including more forcible transfers, indicate that the situation will only get worse.

Netanyahu’s government persists on its ruinous course because his own political survival depends on it. Weakened by corruption trials, Netanyahu’s means of clinging to power is through endless war. This desire is giving the most extreme members of his coalition the whip hand, with some openly advocating the mass transfer of the Palestinians from Gaza and the West Bank. For them, famine and displacement are not unintended consequences but goals.

This ongoing Israeli response is more than a moral calamity. As 24 leading academic

economists – among them 11 Nobel laureates – wrote in a recent open letter to Netanyahu, Israel is on the brink of inflicting lasting self-harm.

Western leaders should not treat Israel’s policies in Gaza as “business as usual.” To continue backing Netanyahu’s government is to enable a rogue regime, one more akin to Vladimir Putin’s Russia than to a Western democracy. Europe, facing immense domestic pressure to act to save the people of Gaza, will not stand idle. Targeted sanctions on Israel are becoming ever more likely. These would undermine Israel’s trade with the European Union, its largest trading partner, and jeopardize much research funding that supports Israel’s booming tech sector.

Credit downgrades are underway, borrowing costs are rising, and skilled Israelis are emigrating in significant numbers. While the United States may, for its own strategic reasons, choose to bear part of these costs, it is hard to see any

way that the Israeli economy is not badly wounded, for many years, by Netanyahu’s policies.

US President Donald Trump’s administration, reluctant to bankroll foreign wars, has its own reasons to reconsider its support of Israel’s Gaza strategy. Leading Israeli economists who have consulted for Netanyahu and his government for decades have concluded that Israel cannot finance the conquest of Gaza City and the indefinite “hosting” of more than two million people. As with the aftermath of the 1982 war between Israel and Lebanon, further aggravation of the already terrible situation in Gaza would probably end up costing the US billions of dollars, on top of the more than \$20 billion already spent on military aid to Israel since October 7, 2023.

The path forward is well articulated in the economists’ letter. First, Israel must restore sufficient provision of food and medical aid to keep Gazans alive, measured by its efficiency and not merely by the volume of food entering Gaza (only to be kept out of people’s reach). Second, Israel must renounce any plans to herd Gazans into camps. Third, Israel must recommit publicly to basic human rights as per international law, even in periods of armed conflict. And finally, Israel must seek a genuine ceasefire that brings home the hostages and ends the fighting. Western governments should use diplomacy, economic measures, and politics to press for these steps.

Israel today stands at a crossroads. It can choose Netanyahu’s path of extremism, which will inevitably lead to more war-crimes charges, international isolation, and national decline. Or it can heed the warnings of allies and their best minds and reclaim its democratic future.

Eran Yashiv is Professor of Economics at Tel Aviv University. Daniel Tsiddon is Professor Emeritus of Economics at Tel Aviv University. ©PROJECT SYNDICATE

IN JEST THIS

Looking for a treadmill that’s not too ‘used’

I’m in the market for a new treadmill. When I say “new,” I don’t mean “brand new.” I mean “new to me.” I am looking for a treadmill that someone within 100 kilometers of my city is advertising as “almost new,” “like new” or “heavily used, but only to dry clothes.”

I would not buy the treadmill sight-unseen of course. People in some cultures get married sight-unseen, but it’s a little different with a treadmill as I hope it gets turned on every single night. And it can’t go into “sleep mode” after just three minutes. It needs to keep going for half an hour or more, until it gets turned off -- and not by profuse sweating.

Sight-unseen may work for some marriages, but for a treadmill, I want to not only see it, but also push its buttons. I want to see if it can go fairly fast without slipping,

vibrating too much or making too much noise. Like a spouse who talks incessantly, a noisy treadmill can make it hard to watch TV while you’re on it. But at least “shut up” works for one of them. (The one with built-in AI.)

While I’m checking out the treadmill, I also want to take a good look at the person selling it. If they’re in great shape, slim and athletic, then it probably means that the treadmill has been used too much. I want to buy a treadmill from someone who looks like they’ve never used it. When you’re showing me photos of your treadmill on Facebook Marketplace from 12 angles, please include a photo of yourself. I’m not buying a treadmill from Sha’Carri Richardson. (Especially if she treats it like she treats her boyfriend.)

You may be wondering why I don’t just buy a brand new

treadmill. Well, it’s partly because of the price and partly because I’ve been reading reviews online. Every time I think I’m going to like a particular treadmill, someone online spoils it for me by writing, “This treadmill is a total waste of money. I bought it, assembled it, plugged it in and right away, it made a terrible sound like a cat was stuck in it. I immediately panicked and thought, ‘Oh no, what if it’s one of my cats?’ I counted my cats -- luckily they were all at home -- and was relieved that all nine were safe and sound. I called customer service and a woman said that my treadmill probably just has a bad roller and they will ship another one to me within 30 days. It has to come all the way from China. ‘Well, can I just return the treadmill to the store?’ I asked. Yes, you can, she said, but you’ll have to put it back

in the box. Luckily, I still had the box, but I had taken it apart. So I had to disassemble the treadmill and reassemble the box. What a pain that was! The store took the treadmill back, but when I got home, I panicked again. One of my cats was missing. I called the store and asked, ‘Did you happen to find a cat in the box that I just returned?’ And the woman said, ‘Hold on. I will transfer you to our pet department.’”

I may eventually buy a new treadmill, but only if I can’t find a good used one. My last treadmill was a used one. You could also call it “pre-owned” or “second-hand,” though I have a suspicion it was more like third-hand or fourth-hand. It wasn’t perfect but it lasted five years. Five years is a long time to stick around, especially when someone is constantly walking all over you.

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
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Bhubaneswar-751010

Social decay

Sir, This refers to “All 4 accused held in Noida dowry killing,” *Orissa POST*, Aug 26. The recent dowry killing in Noida underscores a chilling truth: despite legal safeguards and social progress, the practice of dowry continues to consume lives, exposing the deep bankruptcy of morality and family values in modern society. A young woman, full of dreams, was reduced to a victim of greed disguised as tradition. Marriage, meant to be a bond of love and respect, is still treated in many households as a commercial transaction where women are priced, bargained for, and punished when demands go unmet. This tragedy reflects not just the crime of individuals but the collective failure of a society that normalizes dowry in subtle ways—through status displays, silent acceptance, and misplaced pride. Families that should protect daughters instead push them into exploitative arrangements, prioritizing wealth over human dignity. The Noida case is not an isolated crime but a symptom of an enduring cultural malaise where modernity coexists with primitive greed.
N Sadhasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

Recipe for chaos

Sir, The introduction of the Constitution (130th Amendment) Bill and two related bills, which allow removal of elected representatives arrested on serious criminal charges and held in custody without bail for more than 30 days, are politically motivated, badly drafted and are a recipe for political chaos. Ironically, if the Bills come into force, they primarily applies to the ruling BJP, as the party tops the list with 63 MPs facing serious criminal cases against them as per latest media reports. Over the years, the involvement of politicians in criminal cases has become a significant issue, raising concerns about governance, accountability, and the rule of law. Legal cases against politicians are a reflection of both the strengths and weaknesses of India’s democratic framework. Unfortunately, the slow pace of legal proceedings and systemic inefficiencies allow many politicians to evade justice. Addressing these challenges requires comprehensive electoral and judicial reforms, aimed at ensuring accountability and upholding the rule of law in Indian politics. Without these reforms, criminalization of politics will continue to undermine the country’s democratic ethos.

Ranganathan Sivakumar, CHENNAI



Tourism, terror, turf wars fuel ISI's strategy

INDO- ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, August 26: When the Pahalgam attack took place, it became amply clear that Pakistan wanted to disrupt tourism in Jammu and Kashmir and hurt its economy. Post the abrogation of Article 370, J&K witnessed several positive changes, and key among them was the thriving tourism industry.

While this was one of the main reasons, the other was to address a massive rift between the Jaish-e-Muhammad and Lashkar-e-Taiba. Over the last year and a half, there have been sharp differences between the two terror groups. There have been ideological differences, and also relating to the strategy in Jammu and Kashmir.

Both outfits focus largely on Jammu and Kashmir, and a rift had broken out, which the ISI wanted to fix.

This is, however, not the first time that the ISI has targeted India with the intention of fixing internal rifts within the terror networks in Pakistan. The same was done during the Mumbai 26/11 attacks as well.

The plan to attack Mumbai was originally that of Ilyas Kashmir, the head of Al-Qaeda's 313 Brigade. This was confirmed by David Headley, with whom Kashmiri shared a good rapport. The two would often discuss the Kashmir issue,

FROM MUMBAI 26/11 TO PAHALGAM



and during one such interaction, the plan to attack came up. The Mumbai attacks were part of Kashmiri's larger plan to launch his ambitious Ghazwa-e-Hind project.

This was, in fact, confirmed by Kashmiri during an interview with the late Syed Saleem Shahzad, who was then the chief of Asia Times Pakistan bureau.

At around the same time, the ISI was finding it hard to keep the Jaish-e-Muhammad and Lashkar-e-Taiba cadres. Both were insistent that they go and fight in Afghanistan. At that time, the Taliban was facing losses at the hands of the US forces, and the cadres of both these groups felt that they

needed to support the Taliban.

The ISI, however, did not want either the Lashkar-e-Taiba or Jaish-e-Muhammad to divert from Jammu and Kashmir and the rest of India. Hence, it approached Kashmiri and told him to hand over the plan to the Lashkar-e-Taiba. This acted as a diversionary tactic, and the rift was sorted out.

The Pahalgam attack, too, has a similar back story. One of the goriest attacks was planned to settle a rift between the Lashkar and Jaish-e-Muhammad. The Lashkar-e-Taiba was unhappy that the ISI was giving the Jaish-e-Muhammad preferential treatment in J&K.

It was also giving the

Jaish-e-Muhammad terrorists a safe passage into India, while not allowing the Lashkar-e-Taiba cadres to infiltrate from Pakistan. The ISI wanted the Lashkar-e-Taiba to use its existing cadre already inside J&K to carry out attacks.

The army, too, had been roped in to sort out the differences, but it failed to make any impact. The Lashkar would not settle for anything short of a massive attack, and hence the outfit was commissioned to carry out the Pahalgam attack. The understanding was that the Lashkar-e-Taiba would carry out the Pahalgam attack while the Jaish-e-Muhammad would continue with its infiltrations.

This diversion and understanding were much needed for the ISI to ensure that its two biggest assets remain united. The rift had become so bad that it was the terrorists of the Jaish-e-Muhammad who killed Qari Abdul Rehman, the chief financier of the Lashkar-e-Taiba and a relative of the outfit's chief Hafiz Saeed.

While the rift may have been sorted out for now, Indian agencies say that this would be short-lived. The problem does not just begin and end with who is getting preferential treatment. There are ideological differences as well.

The Lashkar-e-Taiba follows the Ahl-i Hadith, formed by the

Agencies warn of ISI-driven push as BKI adopts new strategy in Punjab

New Delhi: Opening up a war on another front, the ISI has been pushing the Babbar Khalsa International (BKI) to ramp up terror activities in Punjab and the neighbouring states. The number of busts that are taking place in Punjab relating to the BKI has been alarming, with the police stating that this is a clear sign that the outfit wants to revive the Khalistan movement. The modus operandi of the BKI, which is the most dangerous Khalistan terror group, has been different this time. Earlier, these outfits would indulge in bombings or shootings in which even civilians would be killed. However, this time around, the intention is to target the establishment directly. Their targets include police stations, Intelligence Bureau offices, government offices and courts. The idea is to send out a message to the people that their fight is against the establishment and not them. They want to tell the people that their fight is for a separate Khalistan nation, and it is the establishment that is preventing them from attaining that. While attempts have been made to revive the movement, it has not gained much traction in Punjab. The recruitments have not gone as planned, and the youth in the state are not buying their argument. This explains why these elements have become aggressive in countries such as Canada and the UK. There have been many instances where Indians who do not support the Khalistan cause have been assaulted. Further, there are several anti-India events that have been held by these elements. India has often complained that these countries are not doing enough to stem this rot. The BKI realises that if it does not have the support of the people, especially the youth, this movement cannot go forward. Hence, by not targeting civilians, it is trying to send a message that the fight is against the establishment and not the people. In a recent operation, the Punjab police had busted a BKI module that was being operated by foreign-based handlers Maninder Billa and Manu Agwan. Three persons were arrested in connection with a case relating to a grenade attack at the police post Badshapur in Patiala. The attack took place April 1 2025. The probe by the police found that all activities of the BKI are being controlled by Harvinder Singh Rinda and Harper Singh alias Happy Passia. The arrest of Passia in the US was a major shot in the arm for the agencies. Rinda and Passia were behind the attacks on several police stations in Punjab and are key assets of the ISI. While the agencies have been successful in curtailing the activities of the BKI, they are, however, worried that if the youth join in, then the problem would be hard to solve. The Punjab Police has been campaigning heavily to urge the youth to distance themselves from such criminal elements and embrace the path of positivity and progress. The BKI operatives have, in the past, made several attempts to get the youth on board. They have used drugs, brainwashing techniques, among others, but have largely been unsuccessful. In the wake of these developments, the BKI decided to change its strategy and target the establishment. The Intelligence agencies say that activities of the BKI would go up as the ISI would want to keep the Indian agencies busy on yet another front.

18th-century ideologue Shah Waliullah Dehlavi, while the Jaish-e-Muhammad follows

the Deobandi sect, which is a revivalist movement within Sunni Islam.

Relief efforts intensify as rivers overflow, villages submerge

PUNJAB FLOOD CRISIS



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chandigarh, August 26: Incessant rains and rising river levels have triggered a severe flood crisis across Punjab, with multiple villages and low-lying regions submerged under water. The situation, worsened by the release of excess water from key dams and heavy rainfall in neighboring Himachal Pradesh and Jammu & Kashmir, has led to large-scale evacuation and rescue operations.

RESCUE OPERATIONS ACROSS THE STATE

Massive rescue and relief efforts are underway in the worst-hit districts, including Pathankot, Gurdaspur, Fazilka, Kapurthala, Tarn Taran, Ferozepur, and Hoshiarpur. Teams from the Army, National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), State Disaster Response Force (SDRF), and Border Security Force (BSF) are working round-the-clock to evacuate people and livestock

from flood-affected areas.

A central flood control room has been set up in Jalandhar to coordinate relief measures. Helicopters have been deployed to airlift stranded residents in critical zones like Narot Jaimal Singh and Bamial blocks in Pathankot.

SCHOOLS CLOSED, MINISTERS ON GROUND

With the India Meteorological Department forecasting continued rainfall, Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann announced the closure of all schools across the state from August 27 to 30. Multiple state ministers, including Water Resources Minister Barinder Kumar Goyal and Lal Chand Kataruchak, have visited flood-hit districts to oversee the situation and direct relief operations.

DAMS AND RISING WATER LEVELS

The water levels in the Sutlej, Beas, and Ravi rivers have surged following the release of

water from the Ranjit Sagar, Bhakra, and Pong dams. In Pathankot, around 1.10 lakh cu-secs of water was released from the Ranjit Sagar dam, raising the Ravi and Ujh rivers to dangerous levels. In Fazilka, 2.20 lakh cu-secs was released from the Hussainiwala headworks.

EVACUATIONS AND RELIEF CAMPS

Thousands of residents have been evacuated and shifted to relief camps or safer locations. In Kapurthala district alone, over 45 individuals were rescued from inundated villages such as Baupur Jadid and Muhammadabad. Relief centres have been set up in schools and religious institutions, offering food, shelter, and medical aid.

In Fazilka and Ferozepur, villagers are on high alert, moving their belongings and livestock to higher ground. Some have taken refuge on rooftops as water levels continue to rise.

CROP DAMAGE AND LIVELIHOOD LOSSES

Farmers are facing massive crop losses, with vast tracts of farmland submerged. In Kalu-wala village, for instance, one resident reported that his entire three-acre crop has been washed away. Similar devastation is being reported across multiple districts, raising concerns over food security and rural livelihoods.

Minister Goyal stated the government's immediate focus is on protecting lives, minimizing property damage, and ensuring timely delivery of relief supplies. All leaves for district officials have been cancelled, and 24/7 operations are ongoing at the ground level.



Customers buy Lotus seeds from a roadside vendor amid rainfall, in Srinagar, Tuesday

PTI PHOTO

J&K bans pen drives in govt offices

Srinagar: To strengthen cybersecurity, the Jammu and Kashmir government Monday said it has decided to prohibit the use of pen drives on official devices at all administrative departments in the civil secretariat and deputy commissioners' offices across districts. The use of public messaging platforms such as WhatsApp or unsecured online services like iLovePDF for processing, sharing or storing official or confidential materials has also been prohibited to uphold data sovereignty and prevent security breaches, a government order said. The decisions were taken to enhance the cybersecurity posture of the Union Territory, protect sensitive government information, and minimise the risks of data breaches, malware infections, and unauthorised access.

SUSPENSION OF WORK VISAS BY US

BJP's Ashwani Sharma urges EAM to intervene

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chandigarh, August 26: Punjab BJP working president Ashwani Sharma has urged External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar to take up with US authorities the matter of a Punjabi truck driver facing charges of vehicular homicide after a fatal crash in Florida.

In a letter, Sharma appealed to the minister to ensure that the trucker's case is dealt with fairly, transparently, and in a humane manner.

Sharma further sought the intervention of the Union minister into the issue of pausing of work visas of all foreign truck drivers by the US after the accident in Florida. Harjinder Singh, the truck driver from Punjab's Tarn Taran is facing charges of vehicular homicide in the US after three people were killed when he allegedly took a wrong turn while driving a truck on a Florida



highway, according to a media report. After the incident, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio announced a pause to all issuances of commercial truck driver work visas. In a letter to the EAM, Punjab BJP leader Sharma said "sweeping restrictions" on the issuance of work visas for foreign truck drivers has caused "widespread distress and uncertainty among thousands of Indian nationals, particularly Punjabis, who

form a vital part of the American logistics and transport sector."

He asserted that people from Punjab have earned a global reputation for their resilience, industrious nature, and commitment to hard work.

In the US, Punjabi truck drivers constitute a significant proportion of the workforce that sustains the supply chains by ensuring timely delivery of essential goods, medicines, food supplies, and industrial material, he said. Beyond trucking, Punjabis are engaged in farming, business, academics, and public service, thereby making significant contributions to the economic growth and social fabric of the US, while also serving as a strong cultural and economic bridge between our two nations, he said.

Sharma also sought legal and consular support to Harjinder, so that his case is dealt with fairly and transparently.

Thousands turn up to watch day-night cricket match in Pulwama

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Pulwama (J&K), August 26: Thousands turned up to watch the first-ever day-night cricket match in this south Kashmir district, a spectacle PDP legislator Waheed-ur-Rehman Para hailed as the "start of a new inning" for valley's youngsters.

The inaugural match of the Royal Premier League is being played at Pulwama Sports Stadium between Royal Goodwill and Sultan Springs Baramulla. In total, 12 teams from across Jammu and Kashmir are participating in the tournament being played under the floodlights.

Calling it a landmark for youth engagement in the region, PDP's Pulwama MLA Para, who was present among the spectators, described the event as the "start of a new inning" for youngsters in the valley.



"Sports can be a bridge of hope and opportunity. This is more than a match — it is a celebration of aspirations," he told PTI.

Pulwama along with other districts of south Kashmir including Anantnag, Kulgam

and Shopian was once considered as the bastion of various terrorist groups and a strong base of separatist politics.

"This is for the first time that a day and night cricket match is being played anywhere in Kashmir, especially in Pulwa-

ma. This is the start of a new inning for our youngsters who were earlier hopeless and depressed due to growing unemployment and political uncertainty," Para said.

Referring to the jam-packed stadium, Para said the record gathering of people from across the valley for this match is a good start.

"This is a youth-led initiative, the organizers, the promoters and the players who have come from different parts of J&K. Our effort is to keep our youngsters away from drugs, pull them out of depression caused by unemployment and political uncertainty and give them new hope through such tournaments," the PDP leader said.

He said the tournament will reach every district and "we wish the players good luck".

Cross-border arms smuggling racket busted; 1 arrested

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chandigarh, August 26: Punjab Police Tuesday claimed to have busted a cross-border arms smuggling racket with the arrest of a person in Amritsar. Five sophisticated Glock pistols and four magazines were recovered from his possession, they said.

Director General of Police (DGP) Gaurav Yadav said the accused has been identified as Amit Singh, a resident of Guru Ki Wadali, Chheharta in Amritsar. Apart from recovering weapons, police teams also impounded his motorcycle, which the accused was using to deliver the consignments. Preliminary investigation has revealed that Singh and his associate, Gurpreet Singh alias Ginny, was in touch with Pakistan-based smugglers, who were pushing weapon consignments to disturb peace and harmony in the state.

The DGP said the arrest and recovery have helped in unearthing the network and averting a major crime in the region. More arrests and recoveries are expected in the coming days, he said. Sharing operation details, Commissioner of Police (CP), Amritsar, Gurpreet Singh Bhullar said acting on reliable information, a police team carried out an intel-based operation, leading to the arrest suspect Amit Singh, when he was on the way to deliver the weapon consignment to someone.



of the day **note**

After 2011, we provided 2.26 lakh home pattas, 1.80 lakh agricultural land pattas, and over 47,000 forest pattas across the state. In Purba Bardhaman alone, 28,840 pattas, 832 refugee pattas and 1,443 forest pattas have been distributed. We will give another 24,000 pattas in the coming days



MAMATA BANERJEE | WEST BENGAL CM

BJP leaders are indulging in Vote Chori through the Election Commission... People must come forward to protect their right to vote and also to protect the Indian Constitution



RAHUL GANDHI | CONG LEADER

Common traditions of ancestors bind people living in undivided India since ancient times, asserting that the DNA of those living in the vast landmass for over 40,000 years is the same



MOHAN BHAGWAT | RSS CHIEF

SHORT TAKES

Jarange firm on quota agitation from Aug 29

Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar: Notwithstanding the Maharashtra government's attempts to dissuade him, activist Manoj Jarange Tuesday asserted that he would launch a fresh hunger strike for Maratha reservation in Mumbai from August 29. On the eve of the Ganesh festival, Rajendra Sable Patil, Officer on Special Duty from Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis's office, met Jarange at his village Antarwali Sarathi in Jalna district in a bid to conciliate him, but the latter refused to budge.

₹5.8 crore worth drugs seized, 3 held

Guwahati: Three persons have been arrested and ₹5.8 crore worth of drugs have been seized from Cachar and Sribhumri districts in Assam's Barak Valley region, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said Tuesday. Based on specific information, an anti-narcotics operation was launched by the police in the Lakhipur area of Cachar district Tuesday, Sarma said in a post on X.

SC extends interim bail of Vikas Yadav

New Delhi: The Supreme Court Tuesday extended by a week, the interim bail of convict Vikas Yadav, undergoing a 25-year jail term in the 2002 Nitish Katara murder case. A bench of Justices Dipankar Datta and A G Masih was hearing a plea filed by Yadav against an August 22 order of the Delhi High Court which refused to extend his interim bail granted by the top court July 29.

3 kids, man drown in swollen stream

Bilaspur (Chhattisgarh): Three children and a man drowned after being swept away in a stream following a sudden heavy rainfall in Chhattisgarh's Bilaspur district, police said Tuesday.

RAS paper leak mastermind dies

Jaipur: The alleged mastermind of the Rajasthan Administrative Service (RAS) 2013 exam paper leak died under suspicious circumstances while being shifted from Jaipur from Uttar Pradesh's Varanasi, police said Tuesday.



Disposal is important, but so is the citizen's happiness index. After every RTI disposal, a personal call for counselling or feedback ensures that applicants feel heard and engaged

JITENDRA SINGH | UNION MINISTER

PRESIDENT GREETS CITIZENS ON EVE OF GANESH CHATURTHI

President Droupadi Murmu Tuesday greeted people on the eve of Ganesh Chaturthi and said the festival inspires everyone to move ahead with new goals and a positive spirit. This festival is celebrated with great devotion and enthusiasm, she asserted



RAIN HAVOC IN JAMMU

13 dead, including 9 in landslide on Vaishno Devi route



Har ki Pauri Temple partially submerged following heavy rainfall, in Jammu

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jammu/Srinagar, August 26: Rivers overflowed, the raging waters flattening everything in their way, and boulders, trees and rocks hurtled down slopes across Jammu region Tuesday, killing at least 13 people, including nine pilgrims struck by a landslide on the Vaishno Devi route.

Relentless heavy rain led to havoc not just in Jammu, which saw flashfloods, landslides and the pilgrimage to the Vaishno Devi shrine being suspended, but also in Kashmir Valley.

Traffic on the Jammu-Srinagar and Kishtwar-Doda national highways was suspended and dozens of hill roads were blocked or damaged by landslides or flashfloods, they said. Many trains to and from Jammu were cancelled.

The winding route to the Mata Vaishno Devi shrine atop the Trikuta hill was a picture of devastation. While nine people were killed when the mountain-side literally gave way around 3 pm, 21 people were injured. The toll could go up.

Several people were feared trapped, officials said as rescuers scrambled to pull out those buried under the debris near the Inderprastha Bhojnalaya at Adhkwari.

The landslide struck at a point about halfway along the winding 12-km trek from Katra town to the hilltop shrine. Kiran, from Mohali in Punjab, was among those caught in the hail of stones, trees and boulders. "I was coming down the hill after performing darshan when people started shouting. I saw stones falling down. I rushed to safety but was injured," Kiran told PTI Videos from a hospital bed in Katra. Many relatives gathered at the hospital and Vaishno Devi base camp in Katra looking for news of their loved ones. Some of the injured have been shifted to the Narayana Hospital in Katra, about 15 km from Jammu.

Three relief columns of the Army were swiftly mobilised in rescue and relief operations in and around Katra, the PRO Defence Jammu said.

This day of rain havoc comes days after flash floods triggered by a cloudburst struck Kishtwar district's Chisoti, the last

motorable village en route the Machail Mata temple, on August 14, killing 65 people, mostly pilgrims, and leaving more than 100 injured. Several people are still missing. Twelve days on, the despair returned.

In other rain-related incidents across the Jammu province Tuesday, at least four people were reported killed in Doda district. Three of these slipped and fell into a river, drowning in the swift flowing waters, while one died in a house collapse.

Hundreds of people were evacuated from low lying areas in the region. Reports came in of damage to public and private infrastructure from the high altitude areas of Kishtwar, Reasi, Rajouri, Ramban, and Poonch districts, the officials said. The real picture of the disaster will emerge only after an assessment of the ground situation, they said. Chief Minister Omar Abdullah termed the situation serious. He presided over an emergency meeting and ordered district administrators to be on high alert. Abdullah also ordered the administration to provide essentials such as food, water, and medicine to affected families in a timely manner and prioritise relief to vulnerable groups.

The deluge has forced nearly all water bodies in the area to overflow above the danger mark, inundating low-lying areas and prominent roads.

The overflowing Modhupur barrage on the Ravi river in Kathua crossed the one lakh cusec mark, resulting in heavy flooding in Kathua district.

Major rivers such as Taranah, Ujh, Tawi, and Chenab have also overflowed their danger marks, forcing police and civil authorities to make repeated public appeals for people to shift to safer areas.

The administration issued advisories asking people to stay away from water bodies and landslide-prone areas. The communication blackout impeded emergency response measures and caused panic among residents. Telecom operators said technical teams have been deployed to restore services as soon as possible. All government and private schools in the Jammu division were directed to close till August 27.

SC AGREES TO REEXAMINE CASE OF DEATH ROW CONVICT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 26: The Supreme Court has agreed to reexamine the case of a death row convict punished for raping and killing a minor in 2022.

A bench of Justices Vikram Nath, Sanjay Karol and Sandeep Mehta said the case could be reopened on the point of sentence if guidelines on mitigating factors framed by the apex court in 2022 were not followed at the time of punishment.

Vasant Sampat Dupare, who hails from Nagpur, was punished for raping and killing the four-year-old minor girl in April 2008.

The top court upheld the conviction but set aside the 2017 view on sentencing for now and placed the matter before Chief Justice B R Gavai for appropriate directions.

Dupare lured the girl with chocolates, raped her and disguised her face to avoid identification.

While allowing Dupare's plea, the top court referred to the 2022 verdict in Manoj v. Madhya Pradesh in which it issued several guidelines and mandated trial courts to collect the accused's psychiatric and psychological evaluation report before awarding death.

"We hold that Article 32 of the Constitution of India 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 Manoj (supra) were followed," the bench held August 25.

Calling it "corrective power", the bench underlined its precise use in rigorously applying the safeguards in the 2022 verdict to ensure the condemned were not deprived of the fundamental rights.

The top court said the majesty of the Constitution was not in the might of the state but in its restraint.

When the court contemplates capital punishment, it enters a domain where justice must be tempered by conscience and guided by the unwavering promises of equality, dignity and fair procedure, it added.

BJP-ruled states in SC defend powers of Guv, Prez over Bills

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 26: Some BJP-ruled states Tuesday defended in the Supreme Court, the autonomy of governors and President in assenting to bills passed by their assemblies and said "assent to a law cannot be given by court".

A five-judge Constitution bench headed by Chief Justice B R Gavai was informed by senior advocate Harish Salve that under the constitutional scheme power to accord assent to Bills passed by state legislators vests only with governors or President and there was no concept of "deemed assent". The bench is hearing the pres-



Police detain Samajwadi Party supporters during a protest march towards Vidhan Bhavan in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh

PTI PHOTO

CCTV, hosp memo, family statements deepen mystery

Nikki's father, Bhikari Singh, has demanded the harshest punishment for Vipin Bhati

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Noida, August 26: Fresh evidence, including a hospital memo citing a gas cylinder blast, CCTV footage of husband Vipin Bhati and individual statements, have deepened the mystery in the suspected dowry murder of 26-year-old Nikki Bhati who was allegedly set ablaze in Greater Noida's Sirsa village August 21.

A CCTV clip from outside a shop near the Bhati family's home, claimed to be of the time when the incident happened, shows a man, identified by locals as Vipin, standing behind a parked car, suddenly running and then hurrying back. Moments later, an elderly man and neighbours are seen rushing towards the house and the women appear visibly panicked.

Police said the footage is part of the ongoing investigation but stressed that its authenticity has not yet been established.

"It is a part of our investigation. Whatever facts come out,



action will be taken accordingly. The investigation will cover all possible angles and suitable action will follow upon its completion." Additional Deputy Commissioner of Police (Greater Noida) Sudheer Kumar told PTI. Vipin, his parents Satveer and Daya, and brother Rohit have been arrested. Vipin was shot in the leg Sunday while allegedly trying to escape police custody. The National Commission for Women (NCW) has sought a time-bound probe, strict action against the accused, and security for Nik-

ki's family and witnesses. Her family alleges she was tortured for dowry since her 2016 marriage, though they had given a Scorpio SUV, motorcycle, and jewellery. They claim she was later pressured for ₹36 lakh and a luxury car. The memo from the private hospital where Nikki was first admitted states in Hindi: "Ghar par gas cylinder fatne se maree ko kaafi gambheer roop se jal gaya hai" (The patient has suffered severe burn injuries due to a gas cylinder explosion at home.)

every disease. "The court cannot issue a writ of mandamus asking the governors to grant assent to Bills. Assent to a law cannot be given by the court. Assent to a law has to be given either by governors or by President," Salve, who was representing Maharashtra, submitted.

The bench also comprises Justices Surya Kant, Vikram Nath, P S Narasimha and A S Chandurkar. On April 8, a different bench of the top court invoked its powers under Article 142 to rule that 10 bills cleared by Tamil Nadu assembly and pending since 2020 with Governor were deemed to be assented. Referring to Article

361 of the Constitution, Salve said President, or Governor "shall not be answerable to any court for the exercise and performance of the powers and duties of his office or for any act done or purporting to be done by him in the exercise and performance of those powers and duties".

"The court can only ask what your decision is. But the court cannot ask why you have taken a decision," Salve added. Additional Solicitor General K M Nataraj, appearing for Uttar Pradesh and Odisha, said President and Governor enjoy functional autonomy and they have absolute discretion prior to giving assent.

One-third school students take pvt coaching: Survey

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 26: Nearly one-third of school students take private coaching and the trend is more common in urban areas, the Centre's Comprehensive Modular Survey (CMS) on education has found.

The survey noted that government schools play a pivotal role in providing education across India, accounting for 55.9 per cent of total enrolments.

"It is higher in rural areas, where two-thirds (66.0 per cent) of students are enrolled, in comparison to urban areas (30.1 per cent). The private unaided (recognised) schools account for 31.9 per cent of enrolment nationwide," the survey report said.

The CMS Education survey, part of the 80th round of the National Sample Survey (NSS), focused specifically on household expenditure for currently enrolled students in school education. Data was collected from 52,085 households and 57,742 students across India using Computer-Assisted Personal Interviews (CAPI).

The survey noted that nearly a third of all students (27.0 per cent), were taking or had taken private coaching during the current academic year. This trend was more common in urban areas (30.7 per cent) than in rural areas (25.5 per cent).

The average annual household expenditure on private coaching per student in urban areas (Rs 3,988) was higher than that in rural areas (Rs 1,793).



Among the students who made expenditures for school education, 95 per cent of students in India reported that the first major source of their funding was from other household members. This trend is

consistent across both rural (95.3 per cent) and urban (94.4 per cent) areas. In India, 1.2 per cent of students reported that Government scholarships were their first major source of funding for school education.

The survey noted that government schools play a pivotal role in providing education across India, accounting for 55.9 per cent of total enrolments

The last comprehensive education survey undertaken by the National Sample Survey (NSS) was the 75th Round (July 2017-June 2018).

However, officials said, its findings cannot be directly compared with those of the current survey.

"In the NSS 75th Round, anganwadi centres were not classified under pre-primary

education and expenditures on school education included private coaching. However, CMS: E classified anganwadis within the pre-primary category and collected and presented spending on school education and private coaching separately," a senior Ministry of Education (MoE) official explained.

The primary objective of the CMS was to generate national-level estimates of average expenditure on school education and private coaching during the current academic year.

Across all types of schools, the highest average expenditure per student during the current academic year was on course fees (Rs 7,111), followed by textbooks and stationery (Rs 2,002) at the all-India level.

of the day

quote

We are in the process of adding 100 more MBBS seats in AGMC. We have received an indication to go ahead with the plan. We are also planning to introduce super speciality medical courses at AGMC. We are in touch with the National Medical Council (NMC) to materialise the plan

MANIK SAHA | TRIPURA CM

Each collector kept ₹one or two lakh, and the rest was sent to Kalighat. This is not just about Jiban Krishna or Partha Chatterjee, the entire TMC is a party of thieves

SUVENDU ADHIKARI | LEADER OF OPNN IN WB IN ASSEMBLY

Like the eyes of a bird, I have only one goal - how to increase agricultural production, how to boost farmers' income, how to develop rural areas, how to make more Lakhpati Didis

SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUGHAN | UNION AGRICULTURE MINISTER

XPOST

OF THE DAY

As usual, the answer lies in caste. Desi parents treat it as their spiritual duty to preserve caste 'purity' by arranging marriages within caste and preventing 'pollution' through intermixing (varna-sankara). They will inflict and endure any extent of violence to uphold this.

@DearthOfSid

SHORT TAKES

Woman panchayat member found dead

Thiruvananthapuram: A 48-year-old woman panchayat member was found dead Tuesday in Aryanad in the district, police said. Sreeja S, a local Congress worker and member of Kottakkakam ward in the Aryanad village panchayat, was found dead in a shed adjacent to her home here in the morning. According to police, it is suspected that her death was caused by the consumption of an acidic substance.

Jharkhand: Ruling MLAs create ruckus in Assembly

Ranchi: The Jharkhand Assembly witnessed uproarious scenes on the third day of the monsoon session oTuesday, with MLAs of the ruling coalition trooping into the Well of the House protesting against the special intensive revision (SIR). The BJP legislators followed them into the Well, demanding a CBI probe into the Surya Hansda 'encounter' death case. The ruckus forced Speaker Rabindra Nath Mahato to adjourn the House twice, first till noon and then till 2 pm.

Court allows accused to use laptop in jail

Mumbai: A court here has permitted an accused in the Elgar Parishad-Maoist links case to use a laptop in jail, noting that the case papers are voluminous. Special NIA Judge C S Baviskar, in an order passed Monday, said it would not be possible for applicant Sagar Gorkhe to carry their hard copies and read them in prison. Gorkhe had filed an application seeking permission to use a laptop.



I am not against sympathising with the 'Miyas'. I have extended benefits to them through various government schemes, but it is our responsibility to guide people in the right direction. They must understand that forest lands, VGRs and PGRs cannot be encroached upon

HIMANTA BISWA SARMA | ASSAM CM

CELLS CAN REVIVE FROM BRINK OF DEATH

A new discovery from CSIR-Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology, Hyderabad, has brought forth a novel way to expedite tissue repair and regeneration



MARITIME MILESTONE

Navy commissions INS Udaygiri, Himgiri

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Visakhapatnam (Andhra Pradesh), August 26: In a major boost to the country's maritime strike capabilities, the Indian Navy Tuesday commissioned two multi-mission stealth frigates, INS Udaygiri and INS Himgiri, each equipped with eight BrahMos missiles and featuring a suite of advanced weapons and sensors developed by the indigenous manufacturers.

The commissioning of two state-of-the-art Project 17A stealth frigates, which was presided over by Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh here at the Eastern Naval Command of the Indian Navy, marks the first occasion when two frontline surface combatants constructed at two different shipyards were commissioned simultaneously. This development also underscores the growing maritime importance of India's eastern seaboard.

"These warships' weapons and sensor packages make them the unparalleled guardians of the sea. It has been told to me that these warships also include many advanced capabilities. These two warships, which can cover long distances, have advanced systems such as surface-to-surface air missiles, supersonic BrahMos missiles, torpedo launchers, combat management systems, and fire control systems," Singh said.

They were modern vessels and will prove to be a game-changer in very complex and risky operations in the sea, he added. Incidentally, Udaygiri happens to be the 100th ship designed by the Navy's Warship Design Bureau (WDB), marking a milestone in five decades of indigenous warship design.

The two are follow-on ships of the Project 17 (Shivalik) class frigates, and both the vessels incorporate significant improvements in design, stealth, weap-



on, and sensor systems, capable of executing a full spectrum of maritime missions in 'blue water' conditions, according to officials.

"Two state-of-the-art combatant platforms join the Indian Navy fleet, fortifying India's strength at sea..." said the Indian Navy in a post on 'X' late on Monday.

Udaygiri is the second ship from Project 17A stealth frigates and was built by Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL) in Mumbai, while Himgiri is the first of the P17A ships to be constructed by Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE), Kolkata. Both the frigates represent a generational leap over earlier designs.

Udaygiri also holds the distinction of being the fastest ship of her class to be delivered post-launch, a result of the modular construction methodology adopted by Indian shipyards.

Displacing about 6,700 tons, the P17A class frigates are roughly five per cent larger than their predecessor Shivalik-class frigates, incorporating a sleeker form with a reduced radar cross section.

They also feature a suite of advanced weapons and sensors developed by Indian manufacturers. The weapons suite of these frigates includes supersonic surface-to-surface missiles, medium-range surface-to-air missiles, 76 mm MR Gun, and a combination of 30 mm and 12.7 mm close-in weapon systems. Both ships are the result of an industrial ecosystem spanning over 200 MSMEs, supporting approximately 4,000 direct jobs and more than 10,000 indirect jobs.

LG'S NOTIFICATION

Advocates to continue strike

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 26: The co-ordination committee of all district bar associations of Delhi Tuesday unanimously decided to continue the lawyers' strike for the fifth day Wednesday to protest against a notification issued by the lieutenant governor, allowing police to virtually present evidence in courts from police stations.

Tarun Rana, secretary of the New Delhi Bar Association (ND-BA), said the strike would continue as there was no concrete results from the meeting held with the chief minister of Delhi and other authorities.

Rana said it has also been decided that public prosecutors, including those appearing for the ED and CBI and police officials, including naib courts, would also be not allowed to appear in the courts.

"...it has been unanimously decided to continue to completely abstain from work on August 27 in all district courts of Delhi against the arbitrary notification dated August 13 issued by Lieutenant Governor of Delhi," he said.

"Since the impugned notification is against the public at large, there shall be a demonstration on August 27 outside all court complexes of Delhi to make the public at large aware of this arbitrary notification," said Rana, who is also the secretary general of the committee.

"We express our sincere gratitude for the unity and solidarity shown by the respected members of NDBA and all other stakeholders in understanding the issue and extending cooperation and look forward to their continued support," the bar leader added. Earlier in the day, a circular by the committee said that authorities concerned had assured it of a "positive decision" and that advocates would be informed regarding the decision about continuing the strike after 8 pm. The advocates have been completely abstaining from work for four days since August 22.

Tribal girl gangraped, boyfriend assaulted

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dumka, August 26: A 17-year-old tribal girl was allegedly gang-raped in Jharkhand's Dumka district by four to five men who also assaulted her boyfriend, police said Tuesday.

The incident happened in the Gumra forest in the Kathikund police station area Monday, they said.

"The girl, belonging to a particularly vulnerable tribal group (PVTG), had come on a coal-laden truck along with the cleaner of the vehicle with whom she was having an affair," said Kathikund police station's officer-in-charge Tripurari Kumar. "They asked the driver to unload the coal at Dumka and return, and they would board the truck again. While they were walking along the road, they were accosted by four-five youths," he said.

Modi makes a pitch for swadeshi, Make in India

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ahmedabad, August 26: A day before US President Donald Trump's additional 25 per cent tariff kicks in, Prime Minister Narendra Modi Tuesday made a vehement pitch for swadeshi and Make in India that should help create jobs in the country.

Swadeshi should be everyone's life mantra and irrespective of who is investing, production must take place domestically, Modi asserted on a day when Japan's Suzuki Motor Corporation committed to invest over ₹70,000 crore in the country in the next five to six years.

The government's 'Make in India' initiative has created a favourable environment for both global and domestic manufacturers and the world will drive electric vehicles that are made in India, Modi said.

He was speaking after flagging off exports of Maruti Suzuki's first electric vehicle, the e VITARA, from the Hansalpur facility in Gujarat to over 100 countries and also inauguration of production of lithium-ion battery, cell and electrode manufacturing for strong hybrid electric vehicles.

"My definition of swadeshi is very simple: it doesn't matter whose money is invested, whether it is dollars, pounds, whether the currency is black or white, it doesn't matter to me. What matters is that in production, the sweat belongs to my countrymen. The money may be someone else's, but the sweat is ours," he asserted.

In that way, Maruti Suzuki is also a swadeshi company, he said. The world will drive electric vehicles that are made in India, he said.

Today is a great day for 'Make in India' as e-vehicles made in the country will be exported to 100 countries. The world will



drive electric vehicles that are made in India, he said.

Lauding India-Japan ties, he said both countries are "made for each other". Japanese automaker Suzuki Motor Corporation will invest ₹70,000 crore in the next five to six years in India to strengthen its operations in the country, its Representative Director and President Toshihiro Suzuki said Tuesday.

Speaking at the event, Suzuki Motor Corporation Representative Director and President Toshihiro Suzuki said, "Suzuki will invest over ₹70,000 crore in India, over the next 5-6 years."

Later, in an interaction with reporters, Maruti Suzuki India Chairman R C Bhargava said the investments would be to meet the company's target of achieving 40 lakh units annually. About the finalisation of the second plant to be set up in Gujarat, which was announced last year for an investment of ₹35,000 crore, Bhargava said, "I am hoping we will be answering that question more specifically after the GST Council meeting (September 4) because after that everybody will be making an estimate of what the impact of the GST decisions are going to be on future growth." He, however,

India, US hold 2+2 Intersessional Dialogue

New Delhi: Senior officials of India and the US have discussed bilateral in the areas of trade and investment, critical minerals, and energy security, including strengthening civil nuclear cooperation. The virtual talks held Monday under the framework of '2+2 Intersessional Dialogue' came against the backdrop of strain in ties between the two countries over Trump administration's policies on trade and tariff.

declined to comment on the implications of the proposed changes in GST slabs.

Suzuki Group, of which Maruti Suzuki India is a part, has already invested over ₹1 lakh crore in India.

These investments have also led to the creation of over 11 lakh direct jobs in the value chain.

On the e VITARA, Bhargava said it will be for the export markets, and no timeline has been set for launching the vehicle in the domestic market.

Manufactured exclusively at Suzuki Motor Gujarat (SMG), a unit of Maruti Suzuki India, the first batch of export-bound e VITARA will be shipped from Pipavav port to the European region, including the UK, Germany, Norway, France, Denmark, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Sweden, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Austria, and Belgium.

On the reasons for Maruti Suzuki not launching the e VITARA in India as yet, Bhargava said, apart from meeting export order obligations, cost factors have played a part, as the price of the EV is still on the higher side, as the battery is imported.

Toshihiro Suzuki said the Gujarat facility, which serves customers across India and global markets, will soon become one of the world's largest automobile manufacturing hubs, with a planned capacity of 10 lakh units.

SNIPPETS

Army officer gets 5-year ban for SpiceJet assault

Mumbai: SpiceJet has imposed a five-year flying ban on the senior army officer, who had allegedly assaulted its staff at the Srinagar airport in July, sources said Tuesday. Police had registered a case against the army officer for allegedly assaulting and injuring four employees of SpiceJet at the Srinagar International Airport July 26. The sources close to the development Tuesday said the officer has been placed on the no-fly list for a period of five years.

SC acquits two in rape, murder case

New Delhi: The Supreme Court Tuesday acquitted two men, including a death row convict, in a case of rape and murder of a minor girl and called it a "classic example of lackluster and shabby investigation". The apex court said no document on collection of blood samples from the two accused was produced and exhibited in evidence, rendering the DNA reports to be a "piece of trash paper".

Landslides, flash floods leave trail of destruction in Himachal

Shimla/ Manali (HP): Shops were washed away, buildings collapsed, highways were cut off, and residential areas inundated as heavy rain triggered landslides and flash floods at several places in Himachal Pradesh, officials said Tuesday. The state reported 12 flash floods, two major landslides and one cloudburst since Monday evening. Nine flash floods occurred in the Lahaul and Spiti district, two in Kullu and one in Kangra, while a cloudburst was reported in the Chamba district.



Stray dogs play in a park, in Gurugram

PTI PHOTO

Global human exposure to wildfires up 40% in 20 yrs: Study

Population dynamics -- population growth and migration -- from 2002 to 2021 was found to account for 111.3 million exposures to wildfires, which forms 25.3 per cent of the world's population exposed to wildfires over the past two decades

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 26: Humans exposed to wildfires have increased by 40 per cent in the past two decades, with climate change being responsible for a 54 per cent rise in extreme fire weather since 1979, according to a new study.

Population dynamics -- pop-

ulation growth and migration -- from 2002 to 2021 was found to account for 111.3 million exposures to wildfires, which forms 25.3 per cent of the world's population exposed to wildfires over the past two decades.

Findings published in the journal Science also reveal that Africa accounted for nearly all of the increase in humans exposed to wildfires (85 per cent), with significant increases in the Americas and Asia.

Researchers, led by those from the United Nations University-Institute for Water, Environment and Health, found climate change increased the number of days of weather conducive to triggering extreme fire events, "culminating in a (more than) 54 per cent increase in extreme fire weather from 1979 to 2022 globally, longer fire-weather seasons, and



increased night-time flammability".

Human activity, such as changes in land use, have altered vegetation in many areas, making landscapes more flammable, the researchers said.

"While the human exposure to fires is rising, we saw that burned land is shrinking by 26 per cent," said co-author Amir AghaKouchak, Lead-Water, Climate and Infrastructure Risk at the United Nations Univer-

sity-Institute for Water, Environment and Health.

The study analysed 18.6 million fire records from the global fire atlas (GFA) between 2002 and 2021.

"We show that the population directly exposed to wildland fires increased 40 per cent globally from 2002 to 2021 despite a 26 per cent decline in burned area," the authors wrote.

The researchers said addressing wildfire risks requires more than tracking burned areas, calling for a strengthening of resilience in the regions most exposed to fire.

Improved strategies in fire management tailored to local contexts, investments in fire-resilient infrastructure, and policies that address the growing overlap of human settlements and fire-prone landscapes, they said.

The authors said that while under five per cent of the world's land involves an interaction between uncultivated wildlands and humans (or 'wildland-urban interface'), nearly half the world's population resides in such areas.

"Wildfires are no longer seasonal or regional anomalies; they have become a global crisis, intensified by rising heatwaves, worsening droughts, and drastic land use changes," Kaveh Madani, director of the United Nations University-Institute for Water, Environment and Health, said.

By combining measures that address wildfire risks with global efforts to curb climate change, societies can better protect vulnerable populations and mitigate the escalating human toll of wildland fires, the authors said.

business

of the day quote

Japanese automaker Suzuki Motor Corporation will invest Rs 70,000 crore in the next five to six years in India to strengthen its operations in the country

TOSHIIRO SUZUKI | PRESIDENT, SUZUKI MOTOR

The bias for the rupee is still weak amid an imbalance between dollar demand and supply. The local rupee got support from MSCI rebalances inflows in today's session. Looking at the current market conditions, the rupee's new low is looking imminent, while a move to 86.50 appears distant

DILIP PARMAR | RESEARCH ANALYST, HDFC SECURITIES

Spot gold surged, buoyed by renewed dollar weakness amid concerns over the US central bank's independence after President Trump dismissed Fed Governor Lisa Cook

KAYNAT CHAINWALA | AVP COMMODITY RESEARCH, KOTAK SECURITIES

SHORT TAKES

SBI Card, Flipkart launch credit card

New Delhi: SBI Card, the country's largest pure-play credit card issuer, and e-commerce marketplace Flipkart Tuesday announced the launch of a co-branded credit card with a host of features. The 'Flipkart SBI Credit Card' was launched in the presence SBI Chairman C S Setty and MD Ashwini Kumar Tewari, the card company said in a statement. The Flipkart SBI Card has been designed with curated cashback benefits to offer a rewarding shopping experience for discerning customers on the majority of their purchases, it said. The launch reflects SBI Card and Flipkart's ongoing efforts to empower shoppers with greater value, flexibility, and access to formal credit while enhancing their overall shopping journey, it said. Customers can seamlessly apply for the credit card digitally via the Flipkart App, and SBI Card SPRINT, by visiting the SBI Card website SBI Card.com, it said. With the Flipkart SBI Card, customers can earn 7.5 per cent cashback on spends made on Myntira, and 5 per cent cashback on spends made on Flipkart, Shopsy, and Cleartrip, it said. Customers can utilise the rewarding value proposition to make purchases across a broad range of products and services across the Flipkart ecosystem, including mobiles, electronics, fashion, furniture, appliances, travel bookings, and more, it said.

Euler Motors expands

Mumbai: Euler Motors Tuesday announced its entry into the commercial passenger vehicle segment with the launch of e-three-wheeler Neo HIRANGE in three variants for the last-mile connectivity. The company said it plans to roll out a dedicated umbrella brand, 'Neo by Euler', for the new portfolio of eCVs. The vehicles under the new brand will serve a diverse customer base - from first-time EV buyers and ride-hailing drivers to fleet operators and self-employed owners. Over the next few 3-4 months, Euler Motors plans to roll out the vehicles under the dedicated brand across 50 cities in the country. Launched at an introductory price of Rs 3.1 lakh, Neo HIRANGE is designed for everyday travel and is built for drivers covering 120-200 kms daily. Its top variant delivers 200+ km real range with a 3.25-hour charge, ensuring longer shifts with fewer stops, the company said.



India is really an "important market" for Casio's watches business, which has a lot of potential as the disposable income is on the rise with the growing economy of the country, along with an increasing number of millennials

TAKUTO KIMURA | COUNTRY HEAD, CASIO

NAYARA ENERGY APPOINTS NEW CEO

Russian oil giant Rosneft-backed Nayara Energy has appointed Teymur Abasgulyev as the new CEO of the company, replacing a European national who had to resign following EU sanctions on the company. The appointment of Abasgulyev, an Azerbaijan national who currently as the chief financial officer at SOCAR Turkiye Enerji AS, was confirmed by the Nayara board at its meeting Tuesday, two sources aware of the matter said



TARIFF TROUBLE

Export units halt production

Labour-intensive export sectors such as leather, shrimp, ceramics, chemicals, handicrafts, and carpets would face a sharp erosion of competitiveness

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 26: Apex exporters body FIEO Tuesday expressed serious concerns over high US tariffs on Indian goods and said that textiles and apparel manufacturers in Tirupur, Noida, and Surat have halted production amid worsening cost competitiveness due to these steep duties.

The US duties on Indian goods will increase to 50 per cent from August 27.

The move will severely disrupt the flow of Indian goods to its largest export market, Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) President S C Ralhan said.

He described the development as a setback and stated that it can severely impact India's exports to the US, with about 55 per cent of India's US-bound shipments (worth \$47.48 billion) now exposed to pricing disadvantages of 30-35 per cent, rendering them uncompetitive in comparison to its competitors from China, Vietnam, Cambodia, Philippines and other Southeast and South Asian countries.

"FIEO expresses grave concern over the US government's imposition of an additional 25 per cent tariff on Indian-origin goods - raising total duties on



many export categories up to 50 per cent, effective from August 27, 2025," he said, adding that "textiles and apparel manufacturers in Tirupur, Noida, and Surat have halted production amid worsening cost competitiveness".

This sector is losing ground to lower-cost rivals from Vietnam and Bangladesh, Ralhan said.

Labour-intensive export sectors such as leather, shrimp, ceramics, chemicals, handicrafts, and carpets would face a sharp erosion of competitiveness, particularly against European, Southeast and Mexican producers, Ralhan added.

"Delays, order cancellations, and negated cost advantages

loom large on these sectors," he said.

Looking at the current emerging scenario, he urged that there is a need for immediate government support, which includes a push for interest subvention schemes and export credit support to sustain working capital and liquidity.

The sector currently requires low credit cost and easy access to credit, especially to MSMEs, with support from banks and financial institutions. Special direction in this regard from the government and Reserve Bank of India is needed, he said.

Ralhan also urges for moratorium on payment of principal and interest for loans up to a period of one year.

Multiplexes seek GST relief

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 26: Cinema and multiplex operators have urged the government to put film tickets priced below Rs 300 under the lowest 5 per cent slab under the new GST regime.

The move will make cinema viewing more affordable for masses and help the film exhibition industry, which is facing financial difficulties since the pandemic, the Multiplex Association of India (MAI) said.

Under the current GST regime, cinema tickets that are priced over Rs 100 are put under a GST slab of 18 per cent and below that under 12 per cent.

"We are recommending that the Rs 100 slab be raised to Rs 300, so ticket prices till Rs 300 should attract 5 per cent GST, and anything higher than Rs 300 should attract 18 per cent GST," MAI President Kamal Gianchandani told PTI.

According to Gianchandani, the slab of Rs 100 is now considered a low number, and this point was represented to the finance ministry and the I&B ministry, but in the last 7.5 years, it has not changed.

Over ₹40cr penalty on Eternal

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Mumbai, August 26: The Goods and Service Tax (GST) department has issued three orders to Eternal, the company that owns the Zomato and Blinkit brands, imposing a total tax demand of more than Rs 40 crore, including interest and penalties.

According to the company, the Joint Commissioner, Bengaluru, issued these directives for the period from July 2017 to March 2020.

"The Company has received 3 orders 25 August 2025 for the period July 2017 to March 2020 passed by Joint Commissioner, Appeals-4, Bengaluru, confirming total demand of GST of Rs 17,19,11,762 with interest of Rs 21,42,14,791 and penalty of Rs 1,71,91,177," Eternal said in an exchange filing.

Zomato, Blinkit, District, and Hyperpure are the four main companies that make up Eternal. The company announced that it will appeal the tax demand orders.

Meanwhile, the shares of the food delivery giant were trading slightly lower during intraday trade.

Earlier last month, Eter-



nal reported a massive 90 per cent year-on-year decline in consolidated net profit to Rs 25 crore for the first quarter of the current financial year, compared to Rs 253 crore in the same quarter of the previous fiscal year.

According to its stock exchange filing, Zomato's net profit decreased by 35.89 per cent on a sequential basis (month-over-month) from Rs 39 crore in the Q4 FY25. The operator of Zomato and Blinkit reported operating revenue of Rs 7,167 crore, an increase of about 70 per cent from Rs 4,206 crore in the previous year.

In terms of profitability, consolidated Adjusted Earn-

ings before Interest, Taxes, Depreciation, and Amortization (EBITDA), is a financial metric that measures a company's operating performance by excluding non-cash expenses and non-operating costs like interest and taxes. fell 42 per cent year over year to Rs 172 crore in Q1 FY26, "primarily due to the ongoing investments in quick commerce and going-out," the company stated in a letter to shareholders.

Despite ongoing investments in new store roll-outs and seasonal factors, the margins for its quick commerce business, Blinkit, improved from -2.4 per cent of Net Order Value (NOV) in Q4 FY25 to -1.8 per cent.

Sensex tumbles 849 pts amid widespread selloff



Sharp fall in markets erode Rs 5.41 lakh cr of investors' wealth

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, August 26: Benchmark BSE Sensex tumbled 849 points to close below the 81,000 level Tuesday due to widespread selling pressure after the US issued a draft notice on the implementation of an additional 25 per cent tariff on Indian products.

The 30-share BSE Sensex tumbled 849.37 points, or 1.04 per cent, to close at 80,786.54 with 25 of its constituents ending lower and five with gains. During the day, the index nosedived 949.93 points, or 1.16 per cent, to hit a low of 80,685.98.

The 50-share NSE Nifty dropped 255.70 points, or 1.02 per cent, to finish at 24,712.05. In the intra-day session, it dived 278.15 points, or 1.11 per cent, to hit a low of 24,689.60.

Persistent foreign fund outflows and losses in global equities following US President Donald Trump's firing of a Fed governor also dampened investor sentiment, analysts said.

Realty, pharma, banking and metal stocks bore the brunt of the selling, while FMCG shares displayed relative resilience with marginal gains.

Sun Pharmaceutical was the

biggest laggard among Sensex firms, declining by 3.40 per cent following reports that Donald Trump had suggested a cut in drug prices of between 1,400 per cent and 1,500 per cent.

Tata Steel, Trent, Bajaj Finance, Mahindra & Mahindra, Bajaj Finserv, Reliance Industries, Axis Bank, Tech Mahindra, Adani Ports, Titan, BEL, and Larsen & Toubro were also among the losers.

However, Hindustan Unilever, ITC, Tata Consultancy Services and UltraTech Cement were the gainers. Maruti Suzuki India gained 1.85 per cent as the company kicked off exports of its first electric vehicle e VITARA.

"Sentiment was largely dampened by caution ahead of the upcoming tariff deadline, which weighed heavily on export-sensitive sectors," Ajit Mishra - SVP, Research, Religare Broking, said.

Market breadth was negative as a total of 2,891 stocks declined, while 1,220 advanced and 130 remained unchanged on the BSE.

The BSE Smallcap index went lower by 1.68 per cent, while Midcap gauge slipped 1.34 per cent.

PhonePe adds new service

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, August 26: Fintech major PhonePe has announced the launch of its latest home insurance product line, designed to offer homeowners a simple and affordable solution to protect their homes.

With premiums starting as low as Rs 181 (including GST) for coverage ranging from Rs 10 lakh going up to Rs 12.5 crore, buyers can insure both structure and contents of their homes, with the convenience of an end-to-end digital journey, directly on their PhonePe app.

Vishal Gupta, CEO at PhonePe Insurance Broking Services, said, "We believe India's homeownership aspirations are larger than ever, and PhonePe is eager to be a part of that journey, backed by its expertise. We

are committed to making insurance accessible and affordable for every Indian".

While most home insurance plans come bundled with home loans, this often comes at a higher cost with limited flexibility and the additional burden of paperwork.

PhonePe said it aims to bridge this gap with expertise by offering hassle-free, transparent and accessible solutions to homeowners, whether they have availed a home loan or not.

Users can secure their homes and its contents (furniture, appliances, valuables, etc) against significant risks such as fire, floods, earthquakes, riots and theft, amongst others. This offers homeowners access to a trusted and competitive insurance experience, all within a few taps on the PhonePe app.

Wind energy capacity to expand: GWEC

The report says wind capacity in India is under utilised, and how the installed wind capacity can more than double from 51 GW at present to 107 GW by 2030, in line with state-level Resource Adequacy Plans (RAP)

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 26: India's wind energy capacity is estimated to reach 107 GW by 2030, compared to the government target of 100 GW, according to a report by the Global Wind Energy Council (GWEC) released Tuesday.

The latest report, Wind at the Core: Driving India's Green Ambitions and International Influence, was unveiled in the presence of New & Renewable Energy Secretary Santosh Kumar Sarangi.

The report details how installed wind capacity in India can more than double from 51 GW at present to 107 GW by 2030, in line with state-level Resource Adequacy Plans (RAP).

This is pivotal to help India achieve the least cost pathway for a successful energy transition.

Further, reports from organisations like NREL, IEA, WRI, and Lawrence Berkeley recommend even higher wind capacity (121-164 GW) by 2030.



Addressing grid concerns, strengthening RPO compliance, and aligning bidding processes with state offtake needs could push installations toward the full potential, the report stated.

Sarangi said that about 30 GW of wind energy projects are in different stages of implementation, which would be operational over the next couple of years and hoped that this year, India will be adding six to seven GW of wind energy capacity.

India is now the third-largest wind manufacturing hub and is set to meet 10 per cent of global demand and will create 1,54,000 new jobs (Scaling annual installations to 15 GW), the survey noted.

According to industry data, last year, India recorded 3GW of wind energy equipment exports, while the global size of the export market was 117 GW, which would be 135 GW this year.

Industry data also indicates that 60 per cent of the wind energy export market is contributed by China.

Union Minister of New & Renewable Energy Pralhad Joshi said, "We are committed to installing 500 GW of non-fossil capacity by 2030, including 100 GW wind. With wind expected to contribute nearly a quarter of the renewable mix, India is not only building clean energy infrastructure, but we are also building the future".

According to the report, India has a total wind potential of 1,164 GW, but only 4.5 per cent of this has been utilised so far. Scaling installations to 8 GW (wind) annually could create 1,16,000 jobs, reduce costs by 10 per cent, and raise domestic content to 80 per cent. The addition of 15 GW (wind) annually could generate 1,54,000 jobs.

India's manufacturing capacity has grown from 12 GW in 2022 to 20 GW in 2024, positioning it to meet 10 per cent of global wind energy demand.

ASIAN SHOOTING CHAMPIONSHIPS

Kaur's golden double for India



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Shymkent (Kazakhstan), August 26: Olympian Sift Kaur Samra pulled off an incredible show, clinching the individual women's 50m rifle 3 positions gold and helping the country to the team title as well in the Asian Shooting Championships here Tuesday.

The 23-year-old world record holder fired a superb 459.2 in the final to beat China's Yang Yujie (458.8) for gold, and the trio of Samra, stalwart Anjum Moudgil and Ashi Chouksey also bagged the top podium in the team event with an aggregate of 1753 points.

India are placed second on the charts with 20 medals, nine of them gold. China are leading the table with 24 medals, including 13 gold.

This was Samra's fourth Asian Championships gold, and she was in a different zone altogether

er in the event as she qualified for the eight-shooter final placed No 1 with a score of 589. Another Indian, Shriyanka Sadandi, who had topped the qualification round was not eligible for the final as she was competing for 'Ranking Points Only' (RPO).

RPO shooters cannot compete for medals.

Samra, who had the highest world ranking of No 5 among the eight finalists, had scores of 151.0, 156.2 in the kneeling and prone positions. In the standing-elimination round, she was simply unbeatable and led till the end despite a late fight-back by her Chinese rival, who finished just 0.4 points behind the Indian.

Japan's Nobata Misaki (448.2) took the bronze.

Chouksey, who had entered the final placed fourth, ended up seventh with 402.8 points.

Senior pro and two-time Olympian Anjum finished

22nd in a high-class field of 41 shooters.

Samra led from the front in the team event as well as she guided India to the gold medal along with Anjum and Ashi.

While Samra fired a superb 589, Ashi shot 586, and Anjum managed 578 as the trio clinched the top spot ahead of Japan, who totalled 1750 and South Korea (1745).

Juniors excel

Indian teenager shooter Anushka Thokur bagged her maiden international medal in style, clinching gold in the junior women's 50m rifle 3 positions event. She, along with Prachi Gaikwad and Mahit Sandhu, made it a grand double by winning the team gold.

A national championships and Khelo India Youth Games medallist, the 18-year-old Anushka fired a brilliant 460.7 in the final to win by a

huge margin of five points. South Korea's Oh Sehee 455.7 claimed silver, while compatriot Sim Yeojin (443.9) took the bronze.

Two other Indians who made it to the eight-shooter final, Sandhu and Gaikwad, finished fifth and sixth respectively.

In the team category, Anushka (583), Gaikwad (588) and Sandhu (587) aggregated 1758 to win gold, while South Korea (1740) and Kazakhstan (1706) took the silver and bronze respectively in a competition where four teams participated.

Sameer from India bagged the junior men's 25m rapid-fire bronze, notching a score of 21 in the six-shooter final. The other two Indians, Suraj Sharma and Abhinav Choudhary, finished fifth and sixth respectively.

The trio of Sameer (576), Suraj (577) and Abhinav (571) aggregated 1724 to finish on top of the podium in the team section on Monday.

India's Haris Sabeera and Addya Katyal took the junior women's trap gold and silver, shooting 39 and 38 in the final. The trio of Sabeera (105), Addya (110) and Bhavya Tripathi (109) also took the trap team gold, aggregating 324 in an event where their only competitor was Kazakhstan (323).

India also won the junior men's trap team gold after the trio of Arya Vansh Tyagi (112), Arjun (110) and Udhav Rathore (106) totalled 328. Arya Vansh also bagged the individual junior trap silver after a tense shoot-off with Kazakhstan's Nikita Moiseyev.

Both Arya Vansh and Nikita were tied at the top spot, shooting 40 birds each. But Nikita won the gold on the first tie-shoot after Arya Vansh missed the target.



Odisha's Sneha Soren secures Silver medal in the Senior Women's 53kg category at the Commonwealth Weightlifting Championships 2025 in Ahmedabad Tuesday

BWF WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

Sindhu, Prannoy advance

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Paris, August 26: Star Indian shuttlers PV Sindhu and HS Prannoy advanced to the second round of women's and men's singles competitions respectively with straight-game wins at the BWF World Championships here Tuesday.

Sindhu, a former champion, looked nervy at the start but slowly stepped up the pace and sharpened her attack to outwit world number 69 Bulgaria's Kaloyana Nalbantova 23-21 21-6. The 2023 bronze winner, Prannoy, who has slipped to world number 34, then prevailed 21-18 21-15 over Finland's world no 47 Joakim Oldorff in a 47-minute battle.

Sindhu will next meet Thailand's Karupathevan Letshanaa, while Prannoy is likely to take on second seed Anders Antonsen. Mixed doubles pair of Rohan Kapoor and Ruthvika Shivani Gadde also crossed the opening



hurdle, beating Macau's Leong Lok Chong and NG Weng Chi 18-21 21-16 21-18 in 47 minutes.

Sindhu, a two-time Olympic medallist, looked nervy at the start to fall 0-4 behind due to a series of miscued shots early on.

From 6-2, Nalbantova gave away few freebies as Sindhu narrowed it to 5-7. The Bulgarian kept the pressure on the Indian to move to 9-5. A well-placed shot followed by another precise return saw Nalbantova grab a 11-7 advantage at the break. After the break, world number 15 Sindhu unleashed a series of smashes, including her trademark cross-court returns, to claw back at 12-12. With the Bulgarian finding the net twice,

Sindhu took a 14-12 lead.

The Indian's deep clears sailed out thrice as it was 15-15. Nalbantova moved to 19-17 after Sindhu's net shot tumbled inside after kissing the net.

After Sindhu levelled things with a fine net shot, she went long again as the Bulgarian had a game point but Nalbantova sprayed into the net as it was 20-20. A forehand slice went to net as the Bulgarian grabbed a second game before not only squandering it again but handing her fancied opponent the game point once more. Sindhu sealed it this time.

Prannoy vs Oldorff

Prannoy fell behind a bit early on but found his range soon to turn the tables at 8-7 with his round-the-head cross-court smashes. The Indian controlled the rallies, making his opponent twist and turn to set up the points and finishing with his smashes.

SHORT TAKES

Free entry for fans at Hockey Asia Cup

Rajgir: Hockey India Tuesday announced free entry for fans for the Asia Cup beginning here August 29. Fans can register for their free tickets by visiting www.ticketgenie.in or Hockey India app, where they will receive a virtual ticket upon completion of the process. "This system has been designed to provide a seamless and hassle-free experience, eliminating the need for physical redemption and ensuring smooth access to the venue," said Hockey India in a statement. The Hero Men's Asia Cup will feature eight top Asian nations -- India, Japan, China, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Korea, Bangladesh, and Chinese Taipei.

Sneha, Amandeep headline Hero Women's Pro Golf Tour

Bangalore: Sneha Singh and Amandeep Drall, fresh off a stint in Sweden, will headline the 12th leg of the Hero Women's Pro Golf Tour at Clover Greens, starting Wednesday. Last week's winner Heena Kang, who claimed her maiden title, has withdrawn from the Rs 15 lakh event citing a back strain. A total of 34 players including five amateurs will tee up this week at Clover Greens, which recently hosted a men's professional event also. Sneha and Amandeep, who among others are trying to get ready for the upcoming Hero Women's Indian Open by playing as many events ahead of it as possible, will be among the leading contenders.

US OPEN

Alcaraz, Ruud sail through first-round wins

AGENCIES

New York, August 26: Carlos Alcaraz downed big-serving American Reilly Opelka 6-4, 7-5, 6-4 to begin his campaign at Flushing Meadows, where this fortnight Alcaraz is aiming for his second US Open crown and sixth major trophy overall.

With the win, Alcaraz stays on course in the battle for World No 1. If the Spaniard matches or betters Jannik Sinner's result, Alcaraz will leave New York atop the ATP Rankings.

Alcaraz boasts a season-leading 55 wins and six titles, according to the ATP Win/Loss Index. Last Monday, Alcaraz lifted his first Cincinnati Open title. Elsewhere, Casper Ruud registered a 6-1, 6-2, 7-6(5), victory against unseeded Sebastian Ofner in their first-round match in Louis Armstrong Stadium.

Ruud, who's most comfortable on clay, has had mixed success on the hard courts at the Australian Open and US Open since his '22 final run in Flushing Meadows, where he fell to Carlos Alcaraz in four sets. In eliminating Ofner, Ruud collected just his ninth win at a hard-court Grand Slam event since then.

Zarazua stuns Keys, Andreeva dismantles Park

Renata Zarazua staged an upset at The US Open by beating Australian Open champion Madison Keys to reach the second round. The Mexican had scored her first ever Top 10 triumph with a gruelling 6-7(10), 7-6(3), 7-5 scoreboard to down No 6 seed Keys.

Zarazua fell in six previous attempts against Top 10 talents, but secured a career-best result in three hours and 10 mins to book a Round 2 rumble with France's Diane Parry. In another action, Mirra Andreeva made an impressive return to competition on Monday night at the 2025 US Open, dismissing a wayward Alycia Parks under lights in Louis Armstrong Stadium. Andreeva had played just one match since Wimbledon due to an ankle injury, while Parks had arrived in New York fresh off her run to last week's WTA Monterrey semifinals.

Pragg in joint lead after facile win; Gukesh loses

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

St Louis, August 26: Indian Grandmaster R Praggnanandhaa scored a fluent victory over Frenchman Alireza Firouzja to claim the joint lead after the seventh round of the Sinquefield Cup, which is a part of the Grand Chess Tour.

With his second victory coming after a string of draws, Praggnanandhaa joined Fabiano Caruana of United States at the top of the table with 4.5 points on a day when world champion

D Gukesh was outplayed by American Wesley So.

With Praggnanandhaa and Caruana in front, Levon Aronian and Wesley So now share the third spot on four points apiece while Maxime Vachier-Lagrave, Duda Jan-Krzysztof of Poland and Samuel Sevian of United States are jointly holding the fifth spot with a fifty per cent score.

Gukesh and Alireza are next in the standings on three points each and Nodirbek Abdusattorov seems destined to finish last having just 1.5 points.

After a relative lull that failed to provide a single decisive game in the last two rounds, the seventh round provided as many as three decisive games out of a possible five in this 10-player 375000 USD prize money tournament.

Apart from Alireza and Gukesh, lady luck continued to



desert Nodirbek as he lost his fourth game in the tournament at the hands of Duda.

Praggnanandhaa outclassed Alireza who apparently overrated his position after the opening.

The Rosolimo against the Sicilian is known to be a potent weapon but Alireza went astray right from the early stages of the middle game.

Praggnanandhaa found the right moves at the right time and seized the initiative by attacking the centre wherein his pair of Bishops had a towering impact on white's centre.

Alireza kept looking for some tactical solutions that never saw the light of the day and ended up blundering in a lost endgame. The game was over in just 27 moves.

Gukesh started with the Berlin defense as black and Wesley decided to push for an advantage by not going for the traditional endgame. The opening favoured Wesley a little as Gukesh gave the Bishop pair and it was a dynamic balance on the board in the early middle game.

contingent comprising 20 boys and 20 girls, supported by 12 coaches, 6 support staff, and 1 Referee Judge. Only U-17 boys and girls are representing India at this edition.

The team was selected from the 6th U-17 Junior Boys Girls National Boxing Championships 2025, with medalists across Asian Youth Games and Non-Asian Youth Games weight categories earning a place.

The junior girls began their bouts August 25, with Khushi Chand (46kg) defeating China by RSC in the 3rd round in Ring A, and Priya (66kg) also

Cadillac sign veteran duo Bottas, Perez for 2026

AGENCIES

New Delhi, August 26: Cadillac have signed veteran duo Sergio Perez and Valtteri Bottas to be their drivers when the team joins the Formula 1 grid for the first time in 2026. The American squad, who are backed by General Motors and will be led by former Marussia Sporting Director Graeme Lowdon, will become the sport's 11th team next season.

Cadillac have opted for experience with their line-up, signing 'Checo' Perez and Mercedes reserve Bottas – who boast 527 Grand Prix starts and 16 Grand Prix wins between them – on multi-year deals.

It marks a remarkable return for the veteran duo, both 35, after they lost their respective F1 race seats at the end of last season. Perez took some time out to consider his future goals and spend time with his family after leaving Red Bull, while Bottas stayed in the paddock as a reserve for Mercedes following his Sauber exit. Mexican Perez brings immense F1 experience, having competed for Sauber, McLaren, and Force India/Racing Point before moving to Red Bull, where he helped the team win the Teams' Championship in 2022 and 2023.

"Joining the Cadillac Formula 1 Team is an incredibly exciting new chapter in my career," said Perez. "From our first



conversations, I could sense the passion and determination behind this project."

"It's an honour to be part of building a team that can develop together so that, in time, we will fight at the very front. Cadillac is a legendary name in American motorsport, and to help bring such a fantastic company to Formula 1 is a huge responsibility, one I'm confident of taking on."

"I'm proud to be part of such an ambitious and meaningful project from the very beginning. I'm really pleased to be part of such a dynamic line-up, and together I believe we can help shape this team into a real contender, the team of the Americas. We're counting on support from across the continent – and we want to make

FORMULA 1

everyone proud."

Finland's Bottas enjoyed incredible success at Mercedes, playing a key role in the Silver Arrows winning the Teams' Championship every year from 2017 to 2021.

"From the moment I began speaking with the Cadillac Formula 1 Team, I felt something different – something ambitious but also grounded," said Bottas. "This isn't just a racing project; it's a long-term vision."

"It's not every day that you get a chance to be part of something being built from the ground up and helping shape it into something that truly belongs on the F1 grid." "I've had the honour of working with some of the best teams in the world, and I can already see the same professionalism and hunger here."

Junior boxers impress at int'l training camp in China

AGENCIES

Xinjiang (China), August 26: India's young boxers are making their presence felt at the 3rd 'Belt and Road' International Youth Boxing Gala, an International Training Camp and Tournament for U-17, U-19, and U-23, currently underway in Xinjiang, China, from August 15-30, 2025. Organised by the Chinese Boxing Federation and the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region Government, the event has brought together top youth boxing talent from across the globe.

India has sent a 59-member



defeating China by RSC in the 3rd round in Ring B.

Same day, the junior boys delivered strong performances with Dhruv Kharb (46kg) defeating Iran's Akbari Maghsoudian Amirmahdi 5:0, Ritesh Kumar (57kg) overpowering Kyrgyzstan's Ergeshov Alikhan 5:0, and Aryan (60kg) advancing against Kazakhstan's Dulat Aziz via disqualification. Despite losses for Lanchenba Singh, Sahil Duhan, and Bhavya Pratap, the team displayed resilience against experienced opponents.

The competition phase of the tournament continues till August

29 in Urumqi and Yili, with both boys and girls aiming to showcase India's emerging boxing talent on the international stage.

Meanwhile, the Boxing Federation of India (BFI) has sent a strong 27-member Indian senior boxing contingent to Sheffield, United Kingdom, for a high-intensity combined training camp in the lead-up to the World Boxing Championships. The move is part of BFI's continued efforts to give Indian boxers international exposure and the best possible preparation by ensuring they acclimatise to conditions well before the tournament.