



### Vidya's choices

Actor Vidya Balan opens up about the kind of roles she wants to pursue at the moment

LEISURE | P2



### Deadly Russian attack

A major Russian air attack on Kyiv early Thursday kills at least 18 and wounds 48 more

INTERNATIONAL | P10



### Factory activity rises

Industrial production growth accelerates to a 4-month high of 3.5% in July this year

BUSINESS | P11



### Smashing win

Olympic medalist PV Sindhu stuns world number 2 Wang Zhi Yi of China to storm into World Championships' quarterfinals

SPORTS | P12

## Dinesh K Patnaik named India's envoy to Canada

PNN & AGENCIES

New Delhi, August 28: India and Canada Thursday appointed envoys to Ottawa and New Delhi, respectively, signalling their efforts to repair ties that came under severe strain following the killing of a Sikh separatist in 2023.

India named seasoned diplomat Dinesh K Patnaik as the next high commissioner to Ottawa, while Canada appointed Christopher Cooter as its new envoy to New Delhi.

Patnaik, a 1990-batch Indian Foreign Service officer, is currently serving as India's ambassador to Spain.



"He (Patnaik) is expected to take up the assignment shortly," the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said in a brief statement.

In Ottawa, Canadian Foreign Minister Anita Anand announced that Cooter will become the next high commissioner to India, a position previously held by Cameron MacKay. "The appointment of a new high commissioner reflects Canada's step-by-step approach to deepening diplomatic engagement and advancing bilateral cooperation with India," Anand said.

Cooter has 35 years of diplomatic experience, having served most recently as Canada's charge d'affaires to Israel and as Canada's high commissioner to South Africa, Namibia, Lesotho, Mauritius and Madagascar.

He also served as first secretary at Canadian High Commission in New Delhi from 1998 to 2000. Notably, in June, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Canadian counterpart Mark Carney agreed to pursue 'constructive' steps to restore stability in India-Canada ties.

### IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Before I start... whose friend are we today—China's or America's? Just for the next 45 minutes, I mean



RAIN PAIN: People with their cattle wade through a waterlogged area following heavy rainfall, in Punjab's Kapurthala, Thursday

PTI PHOTO

## US blames Modi for Russia-Ukraine war

AGENCIES

New York/Washington, August 28: A few hours after US President Donald Trump's 50 per cent tariffs on Indian products came into effect, White House trade adviser Peter Navarro dubbed the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict as 'Modi's war'.

Navarro – Trump's Senior Counsellor for Trade and Manufacturing – alleged that India is helping feed the Russian war machine by purchasing its oil, which he said undermines American consumers, businesses, and workers.

"Everybody in America loses because of what India is doing. The taxpayers lose because we got to fund Modi's war," he said Wednesday on Bloomberg Television's Balance of Power.

When asked if he meant Putin's war, Navarro insisted, "I mean Modi's war, because the road to peace runs, in part, through New Delhi." Trump has imposed an additional 25 per cent tax on India for its purchases of Russian oil, levies that came into effect from Wednesday, bringing the total duties slapped on India to 50 per cent.

Navarro claimed it is 'easy' for the 25 per cent additional tariffs imposed on India to go away and for that New Delhi

### Investors lose ₹9.69L-cr

New Delhi: Equity investors became poorer by ₹9.69 lakh crore in two days of sharp fall in the stock markets, where the benchmark Sensex tumbled 1,555 points. The additional 25 per cent tax imposed by the US on India came into effect Wednesday, bringing the total of levies imposed on New Delhi to 50 per cent. Also, relentless foreign fund outflows dented investors' sentiment. On Thursday, the 30-share BSE Sensex tanked 705.97 points or 0.87 per cent to settle at 80,080.57. During the day, it dropped 773.52 points or 0.95 per cent to 80,013.02. In two days, the benchmark has plummeted 1,555.34 points or 1.90 per cent. The market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms declined by ₹9,69,740.79 crore to ₹4,45,17,222.66 crore (USD 5.08 trillion) in two days.

has to stop buying Russian oil.

"India can get 25 per cent off tomorrow if it stops buying Russian oil and helping to feed their war machine," Navarro said.

Calling Prime Minister Narendra Modi 'a great leader', Navarro said he was puzzled as "this is a mature democracy with intelligent people running it, and they look us bald-faced in the eye on the tariff part and say, 'we don't have the highest tariffs in the world', when, in fact, they do." "There's no dispute about that. If you look at the numbers and then they say..., 'We're not going to stop about Ukraine at all.

does that mean?" Navarro said.

The trade adviser then further alleged that India buys Russian oil at a discount and then Indian refiners, in partnership with Russian refiners, sell it at a premium to the rest of the world. "Russia uses the money it gets to fund its war machine, kill more Ukrainians. And then the next thing that happens, of course, is Ukraine comes to the US and Europe and says give us some more money," Navarro added.

India has called the tariffs imposed by the US 'unjustified and unreasonable'. New Delhi has said that, like any major economy, it will take all necessary measures to safeguard its national interests and economic security. The trade adviser further said that India is the biggest democracy in the world and it should 'act like one' and 'not side with the authoritarians'.

There was no immediate comment from New Delhi on Navarro's statement.

Meanwhile, the House Foreign Affairs Committee said that instead of imposing sanctions on China or others purchasing larger quantities of Russian oil, Trump is singling out India with tariffs, hurting Americans and sabotaging the US-India relationship in the process. It's almost like it's not about Ukraine at all.

## Bhubaneswar, Mumbai among safest cities for women: Report

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 28: Kohima, Visakhapatnam, Bhubaneswar, Aizawl, Gangtok, Itanagar and Mumbai have emerged as the safest cities in the country for women, while Patna, Jaipur, Faridabad, Delhi, Kolkata, Srinagar and Ranchi were ranked the lowest, according to the National Annual Report & Index on Women's Safety (NARI) 2025.

The nationwide index released Thursday, based on a survey of 12,770 women across 31 cities, placed the national safety score at 65 per cent, categorising cities as 'much above', 'above', 'below' or 'much below' this benchmark. Kohima and other top-ranked cities were associat-

Cities like Patna, Delhi and Jaipur fared poorly due to weak institutional responsiveness, patriarchal norms and gaps in urban infrastructure

ed with stronger gender equity, civic participation, policing and women-friendly infrastructure.

At the other end of the spectrum, cities like Patna and Jaipur fared poorly due to weak institutional responsiveness, patriarchal norms and gaps in urban infrastructure.

"Kohima, Vishakhapatnam, Bhubaneswar, Aizawl, Gangtok, Itanagar, Mumbai lead national safety rankings, often correlating with higher gender equity, infrastructure, policing, or civic participation, while Ranchi,

Srinagar, Kolkata, Delhi, Faridabad, Patna, and Jaipur scored lowest, correlating with poorer infrastructure, patriarchal norms, or weaker institutional responsiveness," the report said. Overall, six in 10 women surveyed felt 'safe' in their city, but 40 per cent still considered themselves 'not so safe' or 'unsafe'. The study revealed sharp drops in perceptions of safety at night, particularly in public transport and recreational spaces. Educational institutions (86 per cent safe) especially in daylight, but safety perceptions fall sharply at night or off-campus.

About 91 per cent of women reported safety, yet about half were unclear if their workplace had a POSH (Prevention of Sexual Harassment) policy.

## Lawyer immolates self in City

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 28: A 48-year-old man, lawyer by profession, died reportedly after setting himself on fire in Pandara area under Mancheswar police limits in the City Thursday.

The deceased, identified as Deepak Kumar Sahoo, had been residing with his mother, wife, daughter and son at a rented house in the locality, police said.

According to police, Deepak went to the terrace of his house and set himself ablaze after pouring petrol on his body at around 9pm. On being informed, Mancheswar police reached the spot and recovered the charred body of Deepak.

"The body has been sent to Capital Hospital for post-mortem. Though it is unclear as to why Deepak took the extreme step, depression is suspected to be the reason," a police official said.

## Maha building collapse death toll rises to 17

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Palghar, August 28: The death toll in the collapse of an allegedly unauthorised building at Virar in Maharashtra's Palghar district rose to 17 Thursday afternoon with the discovery of two more bodies as the search operation came to an end. Seven people are undergoing treatment at various hospitals, officials said.

While the Maharashtra government announced an assistance of Rs 5 lakh to the kin of the deceased, police have arrested the builder of the four-storey structure, Ramabai Apartment, after the Vasai Virar Municipal Corporation (VVMC) lodged a complaint.

The bodies of Omkar Jovil, 27, whose one-year-old daughter's birthday was being celebrated when the building came crashing down Wednesday, and Rohini Chavan, 37, were the last to be retrieved by the NDRF and other rescue agencies.

Jovil's wife Arohi, 24, and one-year old daughter Utkarsha too died in the collapse.

The search operations ended around 3pm, Assistant Municipal Commissioner Gilson Gonçalves told PTI.

## Oldest known ankylosaur fossil found in Morocco

AGENCIES

Morocco, August 28: With a tank-like build, armored body, and a collar of spikes as long as golf clubs, Spicomellus afer looked more like something out of a Pokémon game than a real animal. According to palaeontologists, this strange dinosaur once roamed the floodplains of present-day North Africa around 165 million years ago.

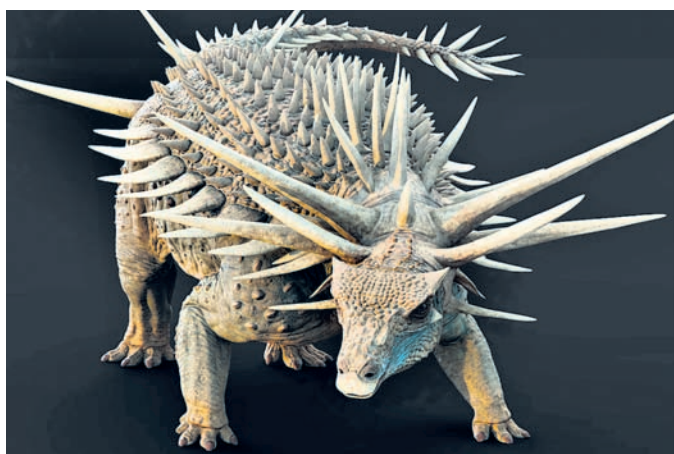
"The fossil – the oldest known ankylosaur specimen – was unearthed near the central Moroccan town of Boulemane. Its extravagant armour has confounded existing theories of how the ankylosaurs, a major group of plant-eating dinosaurs,

evolved." The Guardian reported. "It's absolutely bristling with spikes all over its body," said Prof Richard Butler of the University of Birmingham and the project co-lead.

"It has these incredibly distinctive spikes around the neck – an armoured collar that is absolutely enormous and totally out of proportion to the rest of the body, smaller spikes projecting out of the ribs, and at the end of its tail it would have had some kind of weapon," Butler said.

The dinosaur's anatomy was so outlandish that piecing together the body plan from the incomplete jumble of fossilised bones was not an easy task.

"We put all the armour out



on a table and tried to figure out where, most logically, it would fit," said Butler.

Ankylosaurs span the mid-Jurassic to the late Cretaceous epoch, when an aster-

oid crash-landing wiped out the majority of species, and are characterised by a squat, slow-moving and heavily armoured physique.

"They're probably a bit dim-witted as they have relatively small brains, but they're very successful," Butler said, adding, "They're around for about 100m years."

Spicomellus afer, now the earliest known example of the group, would have been around 4m in length and weighed around two tonnes. The fossil is missing the end of the tail, but fused vertebrae suggest that it would have culminated in a club-like structure, presumably used as a weapon to lash

at rivals or predators. This suggests that adaptations for tail weaponry evolved around 30m years earlier than previously thought.

The more modest body armour of later ankylosaurs is typically interpreted as having evolved as a physical defence. The sheer extravagance of Spicomellus's spikes, which would have protruded through tough skin, is more suggestive of dominance or mating displays, the researchers concluded.

"When you see the neck collar of this thing, it seems like total overkill," Butler said, adding, "It does seem like the kind of thing that would've complicated its life."



# leisure

## FORTUNE FORECAST

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FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181\*

**ARIES**  
Today you may try to make your loved one happy, and perhaps even try to woo the person in a fresh manner. You may not be too satisfied with your friends and relatives, but, Ganesha says, you can expect to go to a party in the evening and make new friends.

**TAURUS**  
This is a good day for being too firm or demanding. Ganesha advises you to steer clear of conflicts, arguments and disputes. If you cannot avoid confrontation be sure you are the one who will have to step back. Loss of face and self-esteem may be unavoidable. You need to face the fact that this is not your day.

**GEMINI**  
You will be in the mood to pursue your heart's many desires today. You will want to spend more time with your family and your children. You need to translate desires into action by better balancing your schedule, says Ganesha.

**CANCER**  
It is likely that you will reach an important milestone in life today. Keep in mind that your success may be a cause of envy for a few people, some of whom may want to harm you. You are left with two choices: either try to help them out of their troubles and miseries, or prepare for a battle.

**LEO**  
Forget the weather. Today, the only thing shining bright are your chances of spending some quality time with your near and dear ones. Going along these lines, Ganesha wonders how long has it been since you last did the same. So, make the most of this lucky day. Chances are that you shall make new friends, who might turn out to be very supportive in the future.

**VIRGO**  
Business acumen is natural to you. Your management skills are immaculate. Move with imagination, innovation and motivation to further your enterprise, advises Ganesha. Feel free to express and exercise your sense of judgement, says Ganesha.

**LIBRA**  
Ganesha says you will be more aware about your beauty and outward appearance and try to enhance it by going to a beauty parlor. You will spend most of your time looking after your external beauty. Due to this you will not be able to pay attention to anything else other than your looks.

**SCORPIO**  
Retail therapy with your loved ones is a perfect recipe to have a good time! You will be more than willing to buy things of their choice. Hagglng will be a trait you have closeted today as you go about being lavish in your expenses, says Ganesha.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
Staying away from home, for a long business trip may be painful. But, when you strike great deals, it's worth it. Besides good returns from business, Ganesha also has many other surprises in store for you. Be hopeful!

**CAPRICORN**  
You will walk down the memory lane, cherish those lost moments and later on feel an urge to meet or contact old friends, says Ganesha. Expectations of your near and dear ones, however, may seem burdensome. You will still see the brighter side of everything, and spending quality time with your sweetheart will certainly re-energise your powers to deal with difficulties.

**AQUARIUS**  
You will finally end today and you will enjoy the fruits of your hard-work. You are very good at considering all the pros and cons of every situation/project, drawing a plan on paper and distribution of responsibilities, however, execution of those plans is a problem area for you.

**PISCES**  
In spite of the hardships that you will encounter on your way, your high spirits, enthusiasm and innate confidence will overcome all obstacles. And no matter how troubled the day starts, it ought to end on a cheerful note, says Ganesha.



## CHRIS COLUMBUS QUESTIONS REBOOT OF HARRY POTTER

Chris Columbus, director of the original *Harry Potter* films, has raised doubts about HBO's upcoming reboot. Though once supportive, he questioned its necessity after seeing images of Nick Frost as Hagrid, noting the striking resemblance to Robbie Coltrane's portrayal in the earlier movies.

## TURNER CITES SOCIAL MEDIA'S TOLL ON MENTAL HEALTH

Sophie Turner, famed for her role in *Game of Thrones*, cautions the young *Harry Potter* cast. She highlights the adverse effects of social media on mental well-being. Turner advises the new actors to avoid social media. She suggests maintaining close ties with family and friends.



## Arjun shares his on-screen desire

**Mumbai:** Arjun Rampal has long been admired for his ability to transform seamlessly into the characters he portrays, often described as having a chameleon-like personality. His filmography reflects not only his evolution as an actor but also his hunger to challenge himself with diverse, unpredictable roles. Each choice he makes seems to peel back another layer, revealing his constant drive to explore new dimensions of performance. In a recent interview, Arjun shared what makes him say yes to a script. "It has to be real and honest for me," he explained. "It has to have a very strong belief system of that character, and once it does, I can build from there." Over the years, he has essayed an array of roles—heroic, flawed, or villainous—each time leaving a mark with his distinctive depth. Looking ahead, Arjun expressed a desire to step into the world of period dramas. "I love period films. I'd love to do something historical. Or even dystopian. Or mythological. Something that puts you in a new world," he said.

Currently, he is gearing up for *Dhurandhar*, a high-octane action drama directed by Aditya Dhar, releasing December 5, 2025, where he unveils yet another raw, striking persona.



## Vidya ready for a fresh turn

**Mumbai:** Vidya Balan, one of Bollywood's most acclaimed actors known for path-breaking films like *The Dirty Picture*, *Kahaani* and *Tumhari Sulu*, is now looking to embrace a new chapter in her career—one filled with freshness, fun, and comedy. Featured recently as the cover star of *Peacock Magazine*, Vidya opened up about her changing choices as an actor.

"For me today, a good role is something I haven't done before—something fresh, something that feels new to me. At this point, I just want to have fun with the films I do," she shared, adding with enthusiasm, "I want to do a comedy! Something light-hearted, something goofy. I genuinely want to entertain."

Reflecting on her journey,

Vidya said she feels grateful for the variety of stories she has lived on screen in the past two decades but is now drawn to roles that allow her to explore untapped territory. Interestingly, her personal movie preferences mirror this shift. "I don't enjoy watching anything that feels too heavy or intense. I want more of Priyadarshan, Anees Bazmee kind of energy," she explained.

After years of impactful, socially resonant performances, Vidya's fans can expect a refreshing turn as she embraces lighter, entertaining roles, a transition already hinted at in *Bhool Bhulaiyaa 3*.

AGENCIES



## Ananya's transformative experience

**Mumbai:** Bollywood actress Ananya Panday described her 2022 romantic drama *Gehraiyaan* as a transformative experience that pushed her to explore deeper emotions and self-reflection.

Talking about a role or a film that changed her as a person, Ananya told this news agency: "*Gehraiyaan* really changed a lot for me. It pushed me to explore emotions I hadn't tapped into before, both as an actor and personally."

The 26-year-old actress said that her role Tia taught her stillness, and restraint, which contrasts with her real-life personality.

"It was such an internal, nuanced role and I had to do a lot of self-reflection to get there. It also gave me a new level of comfort with silence, stillness, and playing with restraint, which is very different from how I am in real life!" said the actress, who hosted Airbnb's Original experience.

*Gehraiyaan* is directed by Shakun Batra. The film also stars Deepika Padukone, Siddhant Chaturvedi and Dhairya Karwa, with supporting performances from Rajat Kapoor and Naseeruddin Shah.

Ananya will next be seen in *Chand Mera Dil* and *Tu Meri Main Tera, Main Tera Tu Meri*.

*Chand Mera Dil* is a passionate love story. The film is directed by Vivek Soni, starring Sanya Malhotra and Abhimanyu Dassani in 2021. Meanwhile, *Tu Meri Main Tera Main Tera Tu Meri*, also features Jackie Shroff, Neena Gupta and others in pivotal roles.

IANIS

## Sunny talks about parenthood choices

**Mumbai:** Sunny Leone, mother of three—adopted daughter Nisha and twin sons Noah and Asher, born via surrogacy—recently shared candid details about her surrogacy journey. Speaking on Soha Ali Khan's podcast *All About Her*, Sunny revealed that the surrogate mother received substantial payments, which she used to build a house and fund a grand wedding.

The podcast episode, featuring gynecologist Kiran Coelho alongside Sunny and Soha, ex-

plores varied paths to parenthood. In the trailer released by Soha, she opens the discussion by highlighting the theme of becoming a parent through different means. Sunny, reflecting on her own experience, said, "In my head, I was like, I want to adopt a child," recalling how her adoption process coincided with the IVF procedure for surrogacy.

When asked if her choice was intentional because she did not want to carry a pregnancy, Sunny responded frankly,

"Yeah, I did not." She further explained that the surrogate was paid a weekly fee, along with compensation for her husband's leave from work.

Married to Daniel Weber since 2011, Sunny adopted Nisha in 2017 and welcomed Noah and Asher in 2018. The actor frequently shares glimpses of their family life, while continuing her career in Bollywood and television.

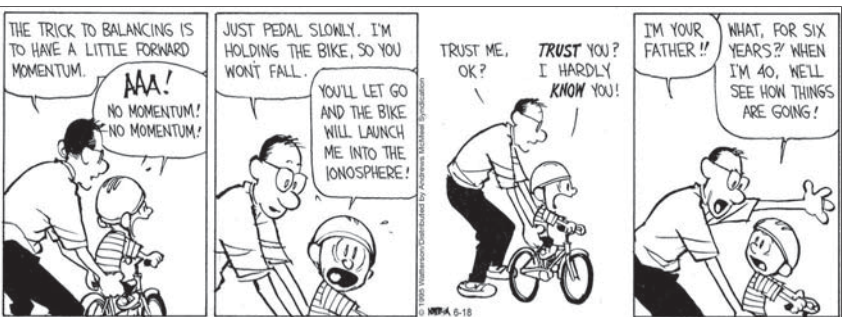
AGENCIES



## PEANUTS



## CALVIN AND HOBBS

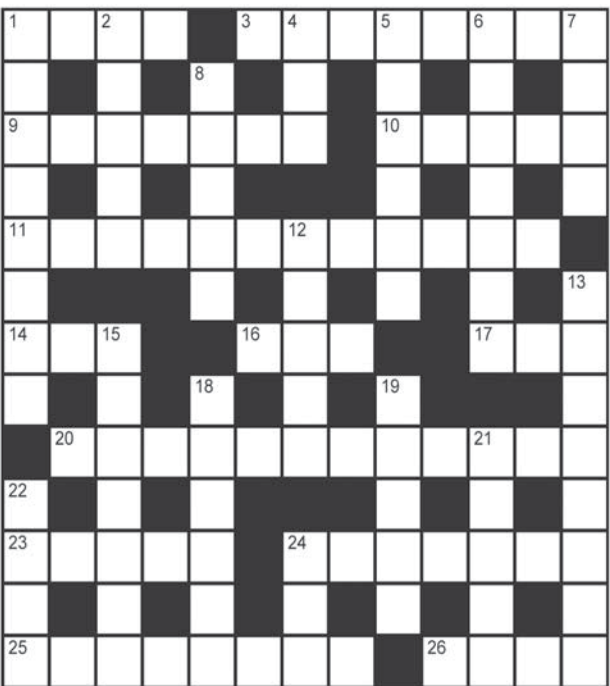


## BREVITY



## FUN post

## CROSSWORD



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### Across

- Diamonds, e.g.
- Identifiers (4,4)
- Antediluvian
- Turning point
- Rapa Nui (6,6)
- Raises
- Tear
- Outback runner
- Setts (6,6)
- Bush

### Down

- Appreciative
- Makes fun of
- Hill dweller
- Kicks out
- Move forward

- Location
- Euripides drama
- Cupcake topper
- Ebbbed
- Beetles of Egypt
- Unclean
- Scarecrow stuffing
- Saltpetre
- Samoan port
- Prevent

## 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.

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

## SOLUTIONS

### CROSSWORD

L	I	O	H	O	H
A	N	G	E	R	A
T	I	N	G	N	I
A	R	G	O	A	B
R	N	Y	H	W	
A	C	K	A	V	
A	C	I	D	S	A
A	O	S	U	D	
D	R	A	M	A	T
O	A	E	K	L	A
U	N	W	I	S	E
I	N	D	E	D	H

### SUDOKU

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

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW







### 3-day monsoon bird census at Bhitarkanika NP from August 30

PNN & AGENCIES

**Rajnagar/Bhubaneswar, August 28:** Bhitarkanika National Park will conduct a three-day monsoon bird census from August 30 at three locations within the park. Assistant Conservator of Forests (ACF) Manas Kumar Das said the enumeration will be carried out at Mathadia, Laxmiprasad Dia, and Durgaprasad Dia. Two seven-member forest teams have been formed to undertake the census under the supervision of Rajnagar Mangrove (Forest) Division DFO Varadaraj Gaonkar.

During the Annual Residential Bird Census 2024, enumerators had spotted an estimated 1,30,123 residential birds belonging to 10 different species. Over the past several years, Mathadia, Laxmiprasad Dia, and Durgaprasad Dia have emerged as the preferred nesting and breeding grounds for these birds. However, the Bagagahan heronry, once considered a paradise for residential birds, has been skipped by the avian visitors in recent years.

In the last census drive, as many as 27,282 nests were spotted across 1,300 mangrove trees. Laxmiprasad Dia recorded the highest number with 12,702 nests, followed by Mathadia with 12,502 nests, Durgaprasad Dia with 1,548 nests, and Bali Dia with 520 nests, Das informed.

A total of 10 out of 11 local bird species flock to Bhitarkanika National Park during the monsoon for nesting and breeding. These include the Open-billed Stork, Little Cormorant, Intermediate Egret, Large Egret, Little Egret, Purple Heron, Grey Heron, Night Heron, Darter, White Ibis, and Cattle Egret. The birds selectively use mangrove species such as Guan, Bani, Choranda, Kerauan, and Oruan trees for constructing their nests.

CLASSIFIED

AFFIDAVIT

By virtue of an affidavit No.- 2250, sworn before the Executive Magistrate, Bari dated 18.08.2025, I R. SANDIP MALLICK, Permanent resident of Vill.: Kenkarada, P.O.: Balibil, P.S.: Bari Ramachandrapur, Dist.- Jajpur, PIN - 755003 declare that I have changed my name from R. SANDIP MALLICK to R SANDIP MALLICK Henceforth, I shall be known as R SANDIP MALLICK for all purpose.

By virtue of an affidavit No.- 2334, sworn before the Executive Magistrate, Bari dated 26.08.2025, I SAGAR RANJAN SWAIN, S/o.- KHAGESWARA SWAIN permanent resident of Vill./P.O.- Balibil, P.S.- Bari Ramachandrapur, Dist.- Jajpur, declare that I have changed my name from SAGAR RANJAN SWAIN to SAGARA RANJAN SWAIN. Henceforth, I shall be known as SAGARA RANJAN SWAIN for all purpose.

## Capital to adopt enhanced municipal waste management



**Bhubaneswar has been selected along with Mumbai as one of the pilot cities for Comprehensive Municipal Waste Management Project, which aims to enhance municipal solid waste management and strengthen the revenue models necessary for sustainable urban infrastructure development**

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, August 28:** A delegation from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) visited Capital city Thursday as part of the Comprehensive Municipal Waste Management Project in Indian cities, under Swachh Bharat Mission 2.0 (SBM 2.0). Bhubaneswar has been select-

ed along with Mumbai as one of the pilot cities for the initiative, which aims to enhance municipal solid waste management and strengthen the revenue models necessary for sustainable urban infrastructure development. During the visit, the delegation met with Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) Commissioner, along with senior officials and conducted field visits to assess the oper-

ations at the Transfer Station Site (TTS) and the Faecal Sludge Treatment Plant (FSTP). The visit focused on evaluating the current waste management practices and exploring ways to implement efficient, financially viable solutions under the proposed project framework. ADB delegation members included urban development specialist Patrick Lavery, project analyst Lindy Lois M Gamolo, senior markets development advisory officer Priyanka Uberoi, senior markets development advisory specialist Yuki Inoue, investment officer Ankur Yadav, principal safeguard specialist Meenakshi Ajmer and project analyst Ankit Singhal. National Project Management Unit (NPMU) Consultant Rahul Singh and urban waste management expert Prashant Mohapatra attended as MoHUA delegation members. The project is a step forward in building sustainable urban ecosystems and promoting public-private partnerships for better waste management infrastructure in India.



**ENCHANTING MOVES:** Artistes perform Odissi during the Annual Day celebration of Jyoti Kala Mandir at Rabindra Mandap in Bhubaneswar Thursday

## 1000 e-buses to fly on state roads soon

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, August 28:** With a fleet of 450 e-buses already operational on the roads and future plans to cross the 1,000 mark in the coming years, Odisha has positioned itself as a frontrunner in sustainable urban transport, securing the fifth position in India in the adoption of electric buses (e-buses). The state is rapidly expanding its green mobility ecosystem to make cities cleaner, smarter, and more commuter-friendly. Nationwide, 14,329 e-buses are currently in operation, with Delhi (3,564), Maharashtra (3,296), Karnataka (2,236), and Uttar Pradesh (850) leading the tally. Odisha follows closely, ahead of several large states, with significant progress in integrating sustainable and cost-effective mobility solutions. In the eastern region, Odisha has far outpaced its neighbours—West Bengal (391), Andhra Pradesh (238), Chhattisgarh (215), and Jharkhand (46). The Central government, through schemes such as PM-e Bus Service and PM-e Drive, is providing financial assistance



to states. Odisha's Capital Region Urban Transport (CRUT) has been proactive in utilising this support while preparing to express services to Sambalpur, Jharsuguda, Keonjhar, Belpur, and Angul. To ensure smooth operations, charging stations are being installed at depots and terminals, while smart ticketing systems—including QR-based payments, NCMC cards, and app-enabled booking—are being introduced. CRUT is also investing in crew training and capacity building to deliver safe, reliable, and commuter-centric services. "Odisha's rapid strides in e-mobility reflect our commitment to both the environment and the people," said Housing and Urban Development Minister Krushna Chandra Mahapatra. "The expansion of e-buses is not just about technology—it is about providing dignified, affordable, and eco-friendly travel to every citizen, he stated. "Our endeavour is to build urban centres that are cleaner, greener, and sustainable



National Aluminium Company Limited (NALCO), a 'Navratna' company under the Schedule 'A' category of Central Public Sector Enterprise organised 'Media Connect 2025' in New Delhi Thursday. Joining the occasion, NALCO CMD Brijendra Pratap Singh and other board members discussed company's success stories, expansion plans and future avenues.

## AIIMS-Bhub launches neuromodulation service

PNN & AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, August 28:** AIIMS Bhubaneswar has inaugurated a state-of-the-art Centre for Neuromodulation Services to provide advanced treatment for drug-resistant and difficult-to-treat psychiatric disorders. The new facility, launched by AIIMS Bhubaneswar Executive Director Ashutosh Biswas, will offer cutting-edge, non-invasive brain stimulation therapies through its department of Psychiatry. Speaking on the occasion, Biswas said, "The launch of this Centre for Neuromodulation is a landmark achievement that aligns with our mission to bring the latest and



most effective medical technologies to the people of Odisha and beyond." The centre is equipped with advanced technologies such as, Repetitive Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (rTMS), Ultra-brief Pulse Electroconvulsive Therapy (ECT) and Transcranial Electrical Stimulation (TES). These non-invasive techniques modulate specific brain circuits, offering targeted treatment for mental health disorders, substance use disorders, and neuropsychiat-

ric conditions. By focusing only on affected brain areas, they provide a more precise and acceptable alternative to conventional treatments, enabling faster recovery and improved outcomes. Highlighting the significance of the initiative, department of Psychiatry head Dr Biswa Ranjan Mishra said, "This facility will be a beacon of hope, providing advanced treatment options for patients who have not found relief through conventional methods." The Centre for Neuromodulation Services is now operational and is expected to play a key role in both clinical care and research, strengthening psychiatric treatment in eastern India.

## Sri Lankan officials visit Kalinga Stadium, OSM

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, August 28:** A 30-member delegation from the Information and Public Relations (I&PR) wing of the Sri Lankan government, currently on a five-day visit to Odisha, toured the Kalinga Stadium and Odisha State Museum (OSM) here Thursday.

During the visit, delegations explored various state-of-the-art sports facilities at Kalinga Stadium, including the Sports Science Centre, Athletics Stadium, Hockey Stadium, and high-performance centers for weightlifting, swimming, badminton, shooting, and gymnastics. The officials praised the world-class sports infrastructure and also learned about successful hosting of several international tournaments in the state. Later part of the day, the delegation visited OSM and toured various galleries including the Pre-Historic gallery, Royal and Ivory gallery, Zoology gallery, Mining and Geology gallery, Palm-leaf Manuscript gallery,



Mask gallery, Tribal gallery, and Handloom gallery. The participants showed keen interest in learning about Odisha's history, culture, heritage, and unique traditions. A documentary on the Paika Rebellion and Odisha's contribution to the Indian freedom struggle was also screened during the visit. Officials from the state's Information and Public Relations department, Odia Language, Literature and Culture department, and the Sports and Youth Services department participated in the day's programme. The delegation also toured historic Konark Sun Temple, Emperor Ashoka's Rock Edicts and the Dhauli Peace Pagoda during the five-day visit. Earlier Tuesday, the delegation met Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi.

MARKET WATCH					
CURRENCY		BOURSES		COMMODITIES	
INDEX	VARIATION	INDEX	VARIATION	INDEX	VARIATION
DOLLAR	87.57 ▼ 0.06	SENSEX	80080.57 ▼ 705.97	GOLD	₹101,904 ▲ ₹362
EURO	101.27 ▲ 0.26	NIFTY	24500.90 ▼ 211.15	SILVER	₹117,017 ▲ ₹920

WEATHER

	BBSR	CTC	FORECAST
Max Temp	32.8°	31.8°	Partly cloudy sky with possibility of rain or thunder-shower
Min Temp	24.1°	23.2°	
Humidity	89%	91%	
Rainfall	13.3mm	7.8mm	

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# Twin murders mute Nuakhai



Road blockade at Sohela

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Kuchinda/Sohela, August 28:** The celebration of Nuakhai was muted following twin murders of a man and a youth in separate incidents in Sambalpur and Bargarh districts Thursday.

In the first incident, Krupasindhu Raksha, 70, of Charbhathi village under Kuchinda police limits in Sambalpur district was allegedly punched to death by his son Bibardhan Raksha, 23, over a dispute involving Rs 70. The accused allegedly demanded Rs 70 from his father for festival expenses, and when denied, he pushed him to the ground and punched on his face and back repeatedly, leaving Krupasindhu dead on the spot.

The incident occurred when the family members were busy preparing for the festival. The victim's daughter raised the alarm, alerting relatives and

residents. She also informed Kuchinda police who registered a case (249/25), and arrested Bibardhan. IIC Bamadev Sankhuala said, "A scientific team from Sambalpur has been pressed into service. The accused will be produced in court Friday."

Bibardhan stood near his father's body for some time before fleeing the scene when the cops approached. He was later arrested during raids in nearby areas, said the police.

The incident cast a pall of gloom on Charbhathi where the happiness of the residents received a jolt during Nuakhai.

In another incident, a 24-year-old youth was hacked to death in broad daylight Thursday at a petrol pump in Haldipali under Sohela police limits of Bargarh district over suspected past enmity.

Police said the victim, identified as Balishta Pradhan of

Haldipali, was attacked with an axe while sitting at the pump and scrolling through his phone around 11:15am. The assailant, Lipu Sahu, 24, alias Lipan of Garbhana village under Sohela police limits, allegedly attacked him with the weapon repeatedly from rear before fleeing the scene.

Profusely bleeding, Pradhan was rushed to a private hospital in Bargarh in critical condition, where doctors pronounced him dead. His body was later sent to the district headquarters hospital for post-mortem.

Police arrested Sahu from his home and registered a case. Investigators said CCTV footage from the petrol pump showed the accused delivering as many as 16 blows to the victim.

Residents blocked the traffic on the national highway near Haldipali Square around 3pm, burning tyres and wooden logs demanding death penalty for the accused.

On being informed, police officials, including Additional SP Indurekha Paschimakabat, Padmapur SDPO Pandav Sabar, Bargarh SDPO Padarabinda Tripathy, and another officer Sourav Ota rushed to the spot. As talks failed, police dispersed the protesters and cleared the road around 4 pm.



**RESCUE ACT:** Fire department and NDRF personnel had a tough time as they spent over 10 hours in rescuing a bull which climbed onto a 70-ft high water tank at Talabandha village under Tihidi block in Bhadrak district Thursday

OP PHOTO

# 4 fishers return home 7 days after boat sinks

PNN & AGENCIES

**Bhadrak, August 28:** Four fishermen of Bhadrak district battled waves, hunger and fatigue, floating on water for seven days after their boat sank in the Bay of Bengal, before returning home safely Thursday.

The four, including a 70-year-old man, refused to give up hope as they clung to some floats and survived only by drinking water they carried in a bottle.

When they ventured into the sea from Chudamani fishing harbour under Basudevpur block of the coastal district August 21 to catch fish, they did not know theirs would be a survival story.

"We had cast a net when the engine of the boat 'Hidimba' suddenly stopped working due to a snag. Despite repeated attempts, it failed to start. We dropped the anchor, but it was ripped away by the strong ocean currents," said 55-year-old Pabana Mallick, one of the four fishermen. The boat then drifted further towards the deep sea.



The fishermen tried to control the vessel for three days using the sail, but August 24, it broke apart and eventually sank, Mallick said.

"We fell into the water with only a bottle of water. We clung to floats and makeshift supports - some styrofoam articles - to stay afloat," he said.

After nearly seven days, the fishermen reached close to the Sunamuhin forest area on the night of August 27, when they were rescued by locals.

They were taken to Basudevpur CHC, where doctors confirmed their condition was stable, said Lopamudra Nayak, the inspector in charge of Basudevpur police station. The other three fishermen are: Prakash Mallick,,34, Bana Mallick, 27, and Sapana Mallick, 70.

# Nuakhai: Women served food first at Jhurimal

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Sundargarh, August 28:** The village of Jhurimal in Sundargarh district has once again stood as a symbol of community spirit by celebrating the agrarian festival 'Nuakhai' in a unique and collective manner. Here, women are served food first.

Unlike the traditional practice of confining the celebration to individual households, the villagers of Jhurimal have been observing Nuakhai together as one large family for the past 13 years. This year, 163 households participated in the celebration, which drew hundreds of villagers and guests from nearby areas.

Nuakhai, the most significant festival of Western Odisha, marks the offering of the season's first harvest to deities and ancestors. While it has always been an occasion of gratitude and festivity, Jhurimal has given it a new dimension by turning it into a collective celebration, thereby reinforcing the values of unity, compassion, and togetherness. The villagers prepared food in a single pot, shared the harvest as one community,



and came together in prayer, festivity, and cultural expression.

One of the most remarkable aspects of Jhurimal's Nuakhai is the tradition of men serving food to women first. This role reversal is not just symbolic but also a progressive step towards promoting gender equality and acknowledging the vital role of women in society. Such practices have made the festival not only a cultural event but also a social statement that bridges tradition with modern values.

The celebration was filled with vibrant activities that brought joy to all age groups. From sacred rice offerings and preparation of millet-based sweets to traditional games like 'Puchi Khel' and 'Shankh Phuka', the festival revived age-old customs while engaging the younger generation. Local artists were felicitated, and villagers followed the 'Ju-

har-Bhet' tradition by seeking blessings from elders and setting aside past differences.

Attending the congregation as the chief guest, Sundargarh MLA Jogesh Kumar Singh said, "The unique Nuakhai celebration of Jhurimal villagers is a true example of universal brotherhood, an extraordinary tradition of fraternity, and a historic step towards unity and collective participation."

On this occasion, the honoured guest and village Gauntia (headman) of Jhurimal, Janmejaya Patel, expressed his gratitude to all the organisers of the village for this innovative celebration and appealed to the neighbouring villages to join and adopt this tradition.

Jhurimal is also home to remarkable talent, who have brought pride and recognition to the community. During this

year's Nuakhai celebrations, the committee proudly felicitated its shining stars like Swarit Upadhyay, a 14-year-old prodigy and achiever of the India Book of Records as well as the Global Kids Achievers' Award; Swetanjali Patel, the village's first MBBS student; and Sarika Pandey, who brought laurels by winning the Miss Odisha Contest.

In addition, three local journalists — Sushant Sarangi, Rabi Tanty, and Kalo Singh — were honoured for their dedicated contributions to society and the community. The meeting was conducted by anchor Firoz Patel, and the vote of thanks was delivered by Digambar Upadhyay, the founder of 'Samuhika Nuakhai'.

With its unique blend of tradition, innovation, and inclusivity, Jhurimal's collective celebration of the agrarian fest has become a source of inspiration not only for neighbouring villages but also for communities far beyond. It stands as a reminder that festivals are not only about rituals, but also about reinforcing the timeless values of equality, harmony, and collective growth.

# 2 boys killed as bike crashes into tree

**BARIPADA:** Two minor boys were killed Thursday after the motorcycle they were riding crashed into a roadside tree along Baripada-Lulung road in Mayurbhanj district. The deceased were identified as Rakesh Naik, 13, son of Naveen Naik, and Shubham Naik, 17, son of Dibakar Naik, both residents of Bhabadihi village under Bangiriposi police limits. Police said the boys were traveling to Lulung, near the foothills of Similipal, when they lost balance and struck the tree. Locals rushed them to PRM Medical College and Hospital in Baripada, where doctors pronounced them dead. Sadar police have registered a case of unnatural death, conducted postmortem and handed over the bodies to their families.

# Youth detained for impregnating cousin

**KEONJHAR:** A 19-year-old youth was detained Thursday for allegedly impregnating his 13-year-old cousin sister reading in Class VII under Ghasipura police limits in Keonjhar district. Sources said the incident came to light when the girl, a student of a government-run residential school, was found to be pregnant during medical examination. The school authorities lodged a complaint with Ghasipura Police. During investigation, the girl told the police that she had gone home during school holidays a few weeks ago. During her stay at the village, her cousin brother had allegedly kept physical relations with her. Based on the statement of the girl, police registered a case and detained the youth following a probe. Anandapur SDPO Prasanta Behera said, "The accused has been detained."

# BEANS FARMING BOON FOR DARINGBADI WOMEN

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Daringbadi, August 28:** Beans cultivated in Raikia block of Kandhamal district are one of the most sought-after vegetables in Bhubaneswar and other major towns across Odisha. They are now being cultivated on a large scale in Daringbadi block of Kandhamal district, generating steady income for farmers, especially women.

While the demand for beans remains high, lack of organised marketing network and

absence of minimum support price (MSP) have prevented farmers from receiving fair returns for their hard work. Middlemen and traders are reportedly profiting the most from these lapses resulting in sufferings for the farmers.

To support farmers, some voluntary organisations have stepped in to ensure proper marketing facilities for the vegetables cultivated by the farmers. Under the guidance of Kailash Chandra Dandapat, secretary of Jagruti, a voluntary outfit, field coordinator



Sarat Nayak has trained 210 beans farmers across five

panchayats of the block. As a result, the farmers collective-

ly sold 560 quintals of beans at Rs 90 per kg, earning Rs 5.4 lakh in total.

However, with more harvests expected, many farmers are worried as traders continue to buy their produce at low prices. Farmers said the government should introduce regular marketing facilities and establish processing units to ensure beans are available in the market year-round.

The absence of cold storage facilities in the block has also created difficulties

for farmers. Kalpana Pradhan and Arupa Pradhan from Samagata village under Badabanga panchayat successfully marketed their beans, while groups from Tagapanga in Greenbadi panchayat also participated in the initiative.

Among the 25 panchayats in the block, Badabanga, Greenbadi and Pliheri are the major beans producing areas. Still, farmers are concerned as some crops are showing signs of leaf disease, with plants turning yellow.

# Chosen for national award, Koraput KV teacher feted



NARENDRA RAUT, OP


**Koraput, August 28:** Koraput Kendriya Vidyalaya (KV) Thursday witnessed a moment of pride as teacher Tarun Kumar Das was felicitated by the school authorities and students after he was chosen to receive the National Teacher Award 2025.

Das will receive the prestigious award from President Droupadi Murmu at a special ceremony in New Delhi September 5 – Teachers' Day. His dedication, innovative teaching methods, and relentless efforts in nurturing students have earned him the national-level recognition.

The school organised a special felicitation ceremony on the campus Thursday which was attended by the school principal, staff members, students and parents. Teachers highlighted Das' contribution to improving the academic environment and inspiring students to excel not only in academics but also in extracurricular activities.

Students expressed their joy through speeches and cultural performances, describing Das as a mentor who goes beyond the classroom to guide and support them. The principal, while addressing the gathering, said that Das' achievement is not only a personal milestone but also a matter of great pride for Koraput district.

Speaking at the event, Das expressed heartfelt gratitude to his colleagues, students, and the local community, emphasising that the award symbolised collective hard work and dedication. He described the recognition not just as a personal honour but as a shared achievement of the entire institution.



**CHOLAMANDALAM INVESTMENT AND FINANCE COMPANY LIMITED**  
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Branch Office : 3rd Floor Sreemaa Construction Building, Naya Chowk Madhupatna, Cuttack, Odisha, Pin - 753 010.

**E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE**

Contact Nos. : Mr. B. HariKrishna (Mob. 99374 90975), Pinaki Dutta (Mob. 94374 79421), Suman Kalyan Satapathy (Mob. 79787 44193)

E-auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8(6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower / Co-Borrower / Mortgagor(s) that the below-described Immovable Properties mortgaged to the Secured Creditor, the **Symbolic Possession** of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of **Cholamandalam Investment and Finance Company Limited** the same shall be referred hereinafter as **Cholamandalam Investment and Finance Company Limited**. The Secured Assets will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "What ever there is" basis through E-Auction.

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Account No. and Name of the Borrower / Co-borrower / Mortgagor	1. Date of Demand Notice : 06.02.2025	Descriptions of the Property / Properties	Reserve Price : Rs. 45,00,000.00
<b>Loan A/c. No. : HE01XBJ0000084343</b> <b>Borrower / Co-borrower / Mortgagor :</b> 1. Prasad Kumar Samal (Applicant), Balaji Pentho Bandha Huda Berhampur City, Post Office - Berhampur Sadar, Dist - Ganjam, Odisha, Pin - 760 002. 2. <b>Buli Samal (Co-applicant),</b> Balaji Pentho Bandha Huda Berhampur City, Post Office - Berhampur Sadar, Dist - Ganjam, Odisha, Pin - 760 002. 3. <b>Samal Shoppee (Co-applicant),</b> Balaji Pentho Bandha Huda Berhampur City, Post Office - Berhampur Sadar, Dist - Ganjam, Odisha, Pin - 760 002.	2. Demand Notice Amount : Rs. 37,17,471.00 as on 06.02.2025  3. Total Loan Outstanding : Rs. 34,60,039.00 as on 26.08.2025 together with further interest, penal interest, costs and charges thereon till the date of payment.  4. Possession Date : 10.07.2025 (Symbolic Possession)	All that part and parcel of the Property bearing Plot No. 858/2176, Khata No. 344/962, Area Ac. 0.015 Decimals, Ksiam Gharbari, Mauza - Madhabpur, Tehsil - Berhampur, SRO Berhampur, P.S. - Badabajar, District - Ganjam, (Odisha), Pin - 760 002. <b>Bounded as :</b> North - Land of Chenna Babu, South - Road, East - House of Basant Rao, West - House of S. Raju,	Earnest Money Deposit : Rs. 4,50,000.00 Bid Increment Amount : Rs. 50,000.00  E-Auction Date and Time : 06.10.2025 (11.00 A.M. to 1.00 P.M.) (with unlimited extension of 3 Minutes)  EMD Submission Last Date : 04.10.2025 (up to 5.30 P.M.)  Inspection Date : 22.09.2025 & 23.09.2025 (10.00 A.M to 1.00. P.M.)

1. All interested participants / bidders are requested to visit the website <https://bankauctions.in> & [www.cholamandalam.com/news/auction-notice](http://www.cholamandalam.com/news/auction-notice). For details, help, procedure and online training on e-auction, prospective bidders may contact - Mr. Muhammed Rahees - Ph. No. 81240 00030 / 63748 45616, M/s. 4 Closure; Rekha, Ph. No. 81420 00062, E-mail : [CholaAuctionLAP@chola.murugappa.com](mailto:CholaAuctionLAP@chola.murugappa.com).

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**THIS IS ALSO A STATUTORY 30 DAYS SALE NOTICE UNDER RULE 8(6) OF SECURITY INTEREST (ENFORCEMENT RULES 2002)**

Date : 29.08.2025  
Place : Cuttack (Odisha)

Authorised Officer  
Cholamandalam Investment And Finance Company Limited


**EAST COAST RAILWAY**  
**E-AUCTION FOR RAIL COACH RESTAURANT**  
**SL. NO. 1 - ASSETS DESCRIPTION :**  
PROVISION OF SETTING UP, OPERATION AND MANAGEMENT OF RAIL COACH RESTAURANT AT CIRCULATING AREA OF BALANGIR STATION FOR 08 YEARS.  
**SL. NO. 2 - ASSETS DESCRIPTION :**  
PROVISION OF SETTING UP, OPERATION AND MANAGEMENT OF RAIL COACH RESTAURANT AT CIRCULATING AREA OF HIRAKUD STATION FOR 08 YEARS.  
Auction Start Date & Time : 05.09.2025 at 1100 hrs. (for Sl. No. 1) & 08.09.2025 at 1100 hrs. (for Sl. No. 2).  
Auction Close Date & Time : 05.09.2025 at 1130 hrs. (for Sl. No. 1) & 08.09.2025 at 1130 hrs. (for Sl. No. 2).  
Complete details are available at website: [www.irops.gov.in](http://www.irops.gov.in)  
Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager / Sambalpur  
PR-518/Q/25-26

**EAST COAST RAILWAY**  
Auction Catalogue No. SDCM-KUR-PKMG  
(1) Lot No./Category: PARKING-KUR-KUR-MX-207-25-1 (Parking - Mixed)  
**DESCRIPTION :** PARKING LOT FOR TWO WHEELERS AND FOUR WHEELERS AT LOCATION EAST ENTRY SIDE OF KHURDA ROAD RAILWAY STATION IN (DIVISION - KHURDA ROAD). AREA OF 2W (1260sq) AND 4W (2304sqm). TOTAL AREA= 3564 SQM.  
(2) Lot No./Category: PARKING-KUR-NKP-MX-168-24-1 (Parking - Mixed)  
**DESCRIPTION :** PARKING LOT FOR TWO WHEELERS AND FOUR WHEELERS NEAR CIRCULATING AREA OF NIRKARPUR RAILWAY STATION (DIVISION - KHURDA ROAD). AREA - 220 SQM.  
(3) Lot No./Category: PARKING-KUR-NYGT-TW-210-25-1 (Parking - Two Wheeler)  
**DESCRIPTION :** PARKING LOT FOR TWO WHEELER AT BASEMENT OF STATION BUILDING OF NAYAGARH TOWN RAILWAY STATION IN (DIVISION - KHURDA ROAD). AREA 300 SQM.  
Lot Start Date & Time : 08.09.2025 at 1100hrs (for Sl. No. 1), 08.09.2025 at 1140 hrs (for Sl. No. 2), 09.09.2025 at 1130hrs (for Sl. No. 3)  
Lot End Date & Time : 08.09.2025 at 1130 hrs (for Sl. No. 1), 08.09.2025 at 1140 hrs (for Sl. No. 2), 09.09.2025 at 1130hrs (for Sl. No. 3),  
Trips/Days: 1096 (for all Sl. Nos.), Minimum increase : 0.2% (for all Sl. Nos.), Lot Status : New in Draft Catalogue (for all Sl. Nos.).  
Complete details available at website: [www.irops.gov.in](http://www.irops.gov.in)  
Sr. Divl. Commercial Manager / Khurda Road  
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If a religion is not universal, it cannot be eternal. A narrow religion, a sectarian religion, an exclusive religion can live only for a limited time and a limited purpose.

SRI AUROBINDO



# Democracy & Justice

The architecture of international justice – the rules, norms, and institutions that have guided efforts to hold accountable the perpetrators of grave crimes – was largely built upon the presumption that the world was moving toward greater respect for democracy and human rights.

To be sure, progress was not linear: there were steps sideways and backward. But from the Nuremberg and Tokyo war crimes trials, which prosecuted German and Japanese perpetrators after World War II, to the adoption in 1998 of the Rome Statute, which established the International Criminal Court (ICC), the general trajectory was proceeding in the direction of accountability. Despite their flaws and crimes, some of the world’s oldest and most powerful democracies helped lead the push for justice in the former Yugoslavia, Rwanda, and Sierra Leone.

But recent events have reversed this trend. Authoritarian leaders who scorn human rights have come to power in several democracies, including the United States. Donald Trump’s election as US president in 2016, and his re-election in 2024, have been particularly concerning. Already under Trump’s second administration, the US – whose leadership of the international justice system is as essential as it has been inconsistent – has gone so far as to impose sanctions on the ICC’s prosecutor, two deputy prosecutors, and six of its judges.

The US is not the only democracy under pressure from authoritarian forces that fear any form of accountability. According to news reports, even before the current war in Gaza, the then-director of Israel’s Mossad intelligence agency allegedly threatened the ICC’s then-prosecutor, Fatou Bensouda, as part of a years-long pressure campaign to prevent an investigation into alleged war crimes and crimes against humanity in Palestine. In 2019, the Philippines withdrew from the ICC following the court’s investigation of then-President Rodrigo Duterte’s drug crackdown. And earlier this year, proudly illiberal Hungary announced its intention to do the same, shortly after it refused to execute an ICC arrest warrant.

Of course, international justice is not only a concern for democracies. After all, Joseph Stalin was one of the Allied leaders who agreed to establish the International Military Tribunal that sat in Nuremberg after WWII. As Robert Jackson, the US Supreme Court justice who served as the chief American prosecutor at Nuremberg, observed in his opening statement, the trial was “part of the great effort to make the peace more secure.” The Rome Statute, whose signatories include governments of all stripes, similarly recognises that “grave crimes threaten the peace, security and well-being of the world.”

Even so, the global turn toward authoritarianism makes the world a less welcoming place for the independent judges and lawyers trying to bring justice to victims of genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity, and aggression. When elected heads of state seek to expand their power beyond traditional bounds, when governments remove and criminally charge the leadership of bar associations, when judges in national courts are threatened for acting as a bulwark against executive overreach, the rule of law suffers – to the detriment of everyone



James A. Goldston

When elected heads of state seek to expand their power beyond traditional bounds, when governments remove and criminally charge the leadership of bar associations, when judges in national courts are threatened for acting as a bulwark against executive overreach, the rule of law suffers – to the detriment of everyone

The question now is whether the project of holding high-level perpetrators to account will survive at all. Amid the challenges and disappointments, I find hope in the many expressions of courage, resistance, and faith in the law as an instrument for pushing back against arrogations of power. Such progress is contagious: advancing the rule of law anywhere makes a rule-of-law culture possible everywhere.

Just look at the judges who, in recent years, have defended the integrity of democratic elections in Senegal, India, Brazil, and other countries – often at great personal risk. Or consider the US courts that have rejected unlawful attempts to punish law firms for whom they represent and university students for what they say.

At the global level, the International Court of Justice has bravely taken the lead in shining a light on grave crimes in Myanmar, Syria, and Gaza. Over the past year, rulings by the ICJ, the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights have affirmed that states have a legal obligation to address climate change.

The current struggles for international justice and for democracy, though not identical, are related. And while hope alone is not enough to prevail in either fight, it is essential – for the victims of grave crimes, and for all those who worry that their next expression of dissent may be their last. In an atmosphere of pervasive fear, every decision to sign a letter, join a peaceful protest, or file a legal complaint against authoritarian measures is a step toward justice.

*The writer, Executive Director of the Open Society Justice Initiative and Adjunct Professor at NYU Law School, is a former prosecutor at the International Criminal Court and a former federal prosecutor in New York.* ©PROJECT SYNDICATE

## WISDOM CORNER

If one advances confidently in the direction of his dreams, and endeavors to live the life which he has imagined, he will meet with a success unexpected in common hours.

HENRY DAVID THOREAU

Half the world is composed of people who have something to say and can't, and the other half who have nothing to say and keep on saying it.

ROBERT FROST

In oneself lies the whole world and if you know how to look and learn, the door is there and the key is in your hand. Nobody on earth can give you either the key or the door to open, except yourself.

JIDDU KRISHNAMURTI

## THIS DAY IN HISTORY

- 1914: The first major engagement of the British and German navies during World War I occurred at the Battle of Helgoland Bight.
- 1952: Writer and teacher Rita Dove, poet laureate of the United States (1993–95) and winner of the 1987 Pulitzer Prize for Thomas and Beulah (1986), was born in Akron, Ohio.



Rajdeep Sardesai

TRUTHFULLY, THE INDIA-PAKISTAN RELATIONSHIP IS ANYTHING BUT NORMAL. CRICKET, IN THAT SENSE, IS ONLY AN INSTRUMENT TO CONVEY A FABRICATED SENSE OF NORMALCY IN A BADLY TWISTED EQUATION

## SPECTRUM SCIENCE

# India’s space mission: The road ahead

Nearly two years ago, India created history by softlanding its Chandrayaan-3’s Vikram lander on the permanently shadowed south pole of the Moon which is known for its treasure trove of mineral deposits. This made India the first country in the world to softland on the Moon’s south pole and explore the surface with a rover.

India has a glorious heritage of astronomy rooted in mathematical precision, observational skills, and philosophical insights. From a few shadow measuring devices of the post Vedic period to the colossal masonry observatories of Sawai Jai Singh, India ventured on a path to unravel the mysteries of the cosmos. The modern space age is dawned by insights of visionary scientist Dr Vikram Sarabhai. He realised that space exploration for a developing nation like India was not just a fancy, but a necessity to uplift the country



Nikunja Bihari Sahu

INDIA’S SPACE PROGRAMME IS CHARACTERISED BY COST AFFORDABILITY, RELIABILITY AND CONSISTENCY

## 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](mailto:edit@orissapost.com)

**OrissaPOST**  
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## FOCUS INDO-PAK CRICKET

# BLOOD & SPORT

‘Blood and water won’t flow together...’ warned Prime Minister Narendra Modi soon after the Pahalgam terror attack while taking the contentious decision to suspend the six decades old Indus Waters Treaty with Pakistan. Well, blood may not flow with water but it surely does with sport. In a fortnight from now, the Asia Cup cricket will begin with all eyes on the marquee India-Pakistan clash. The government has green-flagged the matches, claiming that they are making a distinction between bilateral engagements and multilateral events, while also rather piously claiming to “position India as a preferred destination for hosting international sporting events.”

In principle, the government is only adhering to the unwritten guidelines followed since 2012: the only cricket encounters between the two countries since have been in global tournaments. As a long-standing advocate of Indo-Pak sporting ties, I ought to be welcoming the government’s stand without demur. Cricket binds the subcontinent, sports is meant to be a bridge-builder. Some of my most cherished moments as a cricket fan have involved India-Pakistan matches. From Anil Kumble’s ten wickets at the Kotla, the heroics of a Sachin Tendulkar in the 2003 World Cup to Javed Mian-dad’s last ball six in Sharjah, Indo-Pak cricket has been the ultimate roller-coaster ride of emotion, one where competing nationalisms are tied into fractious history, past and present. An Imran Khan versus a Sunil Gavaskar, a Shoaib Akhtar versus a Virender Sehwag, Indo-Pak cricket has served up many a classic contest whose impact stretches far beyond the boundary.

And yet, somehow this time feels very different. Two teams will be locked in a battle on the field barely months after the two countries were on the verge of a potential nuclear conflict. What happened in Pahalgam was gruesome, an act of bestiality that sparked off rage across India. And yet, there was no remorse shown



Blood and water may not coexist but the colour of money knows no such boundaries. Let the ‘war’ on the pitch begin!

by the Pakistani army-state. Unwilling to take any responsibility for its active sponsorship of terror, there was a crude attempt to describe the attack on civilians as a ‘false flag’ operation. The army chief General Asim Munir, who only weeks ahead of the terror attack had brazenly endorsed the two nation theory, was promoted to Field Marshal even as he continued to spew venom against India.

What do international cricketers have to do with the machinations of the malevolent Pakistan army-state? Isn’t it possible to keep the purity of sport distinct from the coarseness of a political establishment that seeks to bleed India with a ‘thousand cuts’? In theory yes, in reality, no. In the aftermath of the Pahalgam attack, there wasn’t a single statement of empathy or solidarity with the Indian people from any recognisable voice within the Pakistan cricket fraternity. Instead, we had Shahid Afridi make provocative remarks blaming the Indian army for the terror attack. He wasn’t alone. The Pakistan Cricket Board chief, Mohsin Naqvi, who is also a minister in the Shahbaz Sharif government, was quoted as saying, “Pakistan is a nuclear power and India doesn’t have the courage to refuse playing cricket with us. They know what the consequences would be.”

The PCB chief’s incendiary statements show just how

deep the hostility is within the Pakistani establishment towards New Delhi. Yes, there are hotheads in this country too, who continue to peddle a dangerously jingoistic agenda that desires the ‘elimination’ of Pakistan. The media disinformation campaigns during Operation Sindoor on both sides of the border – perhaps far more bellicose on the Indian side – mirrors the complete collapse of any sense of institutional code of conduct.

In the circumstances, can an Indo-Pak cricket match provide a healing touch when the political class and media prefer war-mongering? Sadly not. I recall being in Pakistan in 2004 during what was in many ways a watershed tour, one where not only did India defeat Pakistan in Pakistan in a Test series for the first time but where there was a surge of warmth and goodwill towards the Indian team that held out a lingering ray of hope in the power of people to people contact. On one unforgettable evening in Lahore, I was surrounded by a group of frenzied Pakistani fans who were singing “Balaji zara dheere chalo,” a reference to the Indian fast bowler, Lakshmipathi Balaji whose infectious smile had won hearts across the border. There is also the lasting memory of a Chennai crowd giving a standing ovation to the Pakistani team after they had narrowly defeated India in a Test match in 1999. Those

were goose bump moments, instilling some optimism in a more ‘normal’, congenial relationship. Alas, they have proven to be a false dawn.

Truthfully, the India-Pakistan relationship is anything but normal. Cricket, in that sense, is only an instrument to convey a fabricated sense of normalcy in a badly twisted equation. Players are expected to be our ‘warriors in blue and green’, waging a ‘war’ with bat and ball even as we spectators on both sides of the border are pushed into unimagined bouts of national hysteria by a cricket eco-system that thrives on these match-ups.

Cricket between India and Pakistan is no longer about adhering to sporting protocols that frown upon the boycott of any national team. This is quite simply about the only thing that really matters in the greed-driven, amoral world of super-rich sports bodies: the size and volume of sponsorship money. An India-Pakistan cricket match will attract more eyeballs and advertising monies than all the other matches put together in the fortnight-long Asia Cup. It is the commerce of cricket that sustains Indo-Pak cricket. Poor ordinary Indians and Pakistanis divided by Partition won’t get visas to visit each other’s families in the Pahalgam aftermath but the VVIP elites of the two countries’ cricket boards will happily snuggle upto each other in air-conditioned boxes. Blood and water may not coexist but the colour of money knows no such boundaries. Let the ‘war’ on the pitch begin!

Post-script: I am part of an India and Pakistan WhatsApp group of cricket fans. To be honest, I find it almost therapeutic to listen to intelligent voices across the border sans the noise of politics. Gavaskar or Hanif, Imran or Kapil, Virat or Babar Azam, the debates rage on. Maybe one day we should pick an all-time combined India-Pakistan eleven. So much easier to deal with than verbal jousting over who downed how many jets!

*The writer is a senior journalist and author.*

## Shield-cum-sword

Sir, At the Ran Samwad seminar hosted at Army War College, Mhow, CDS Gen Anil Chauhan outlined India’s bold post-Op Sindoor roadmap toward air-defence transformation. The Indian Armed Forces are crafting an indigenous “Golden Dome” or Mission Sudarshan Chakra—a multi-domain shield-cum-sword. Targeted for completion within the next 10 years, this system merges missiles, radars, lasers, directed-energy weapons, and satellite sensors, spanning land, sea, air, undersea, and space. It relies on AI, advanced computation, big data analytics, and quantum technologies to ensure real-time detection, tracking, and neutralisation of aerial threats. These plans reinforce lessons from Op Sindoor, where domestic air-defence systems like Akashteer, Akash Shield, and D4 countered enemy drones and missiles with precision. Additionally, DRDO’s Integrated Air Defence Weapon System (IADWS) has successfully tested a layered defence using launchers and laser-based directed energy. The Air Chief commended the tri-service synergy during Op Sindoor urging caution against hastily adopting theatre commands as in China and the US. Instead, he advocated for a joint planning and coordination centre in Delhi—centralised planning, decentralised execution under the Chiefs of Staff Committee, leveraging existing structures effectively. It seems to prove advantageous if the joint coordination centre is established immediately, allowing it to mature while Sudarshan Chakra is developed simultaneously.

RS Narula, PATIALA

## GST relief on cards

Sir, The GST Council will discuss a plan to slash levies on a host of products including cement, mass-consumption services such as salon and beauty parlors as well as individual life and health insurance plans when it meets early next month. Also on the agenda will be a proposal to move all food and textiles products into the 5% slab as part of a move to simplify the tax regime and end all classification concerns. The levy on cement is proposed to be reduced from 28% to 18%, sources said, in what will address a long pending demand from the construction and infrastructure sectors with the building material being a key input. The move is expected to reduce costs for end consumers, provided the industry, which has often faced cartelization charges, passes on the benefit of lower taxes.

Jayanthy Subramaniam, MUMBAI



MARATHA QUOTA PROTEST

# JARANGE HEADS TO MUMBAI

Jarange has been demanding that all Marathas be recognised as Kunbis – an agrarian caste included in the OBC category – which will make them eligible for reservation in government jobs and education

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, August 28:** Activist Manoj Jarange and his supporters were set to reach the outskirts of Mumbai Thursday evening ahead of his indefinite hunger strike for reservations for the Maratha community, while the Maharashtra government said it was ready for talks.

Over 1,500 Mumbai police personnel have been deployed at the Azad Maidan in south Mumbai to maintain law and order in view of Maratha quota activist Manoj Jarange's agitation, officials said Thursday. Senior police officials, including Joint Commissioner of Police (Law and Order) Satya Narayan, on evening visited the protest venue in the evening and took stock of the security arrangements.

In view of the protest, the police have put in place security arrangements at the Azad Maidan. They expect more than 20,000 protesters in south Mumbai, an official said.

Besides the local police, one company each of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), Rapid Action Force (RAF), Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) and Maharashtra Security Force (MSF) are also deployed at the protest venue and its surrounding areas to avoid any untoward incident, he said.

This was the right time for Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis to win the hearts of Maratha community by accepting the reservation demand, the 43-year-old activist said after reaching Pune.

The activist set out for Mumbai from his Antarwali Sarati village in Jalna district Wednesday, and reached Shivneri Fort, the birthplace of Maratha king Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, in Pune district with hundreds of his supporters Thursday morning.

"I would like to once again



**We will not allow injustice to happen to the OBCs, and Marathas should know that it is my government which has worked for the community's welfare. The reservation granted (to the Marathas) by our government is still legally valid**

FADNAVIS | CHIEF MINISTER, MAHARASHTRA

reiterate my appeal to Chief Minister Fadnavis that this is the right opportunity for him to win the hearts of the Maratha community by implementing our demands...You are not our enemy. We urge you to give up the adamant stand towards the Maratha community," Jarange said.

"If you are giving one-day permission for the protest (at Azad Maidan), then fulfil the demand for quota in one day. One day is not sufficient for our protest. We urge the government to withdraw all the conditions (laid down before granting permission for the protest)," he said.

By giving permission to hold the protest only for a day, the government was "insulting" him and the Maratha community, Jarange said, adding, "My request to the CM is not to impose any conditions, like one-day protest or (maximum) 5,000 protesters I will not go back even if they fire bullets

at me." He also appealed to his supporters to remain patient while protesting, and not get provoked.

Jarange has been demanding that all Marathas be recognised as Kunbis – an agrarian caste included in the OBC category – which will make them eligible for reservation in government jobs and education. The OBC leaders are opposed to this proposal.

Water Resources Minister Vikhe Patil, meanwhile, told reporters in Shirdi that talks would take place with Jarange in Mumbai. The activist had earlier claimed that Vikhe Patil had sent him a message that a government delegation would meet him at Shivneri, but the minister Thursday said it was a misunderstanding.

"The government has always maintained a positive stand. We are open to discussions with Jarange, but since he is firm on going to Mumbai for his protest, we will talk to him

there. A decision will be taken after consulting the cabinet sub-committee members Friday," he said.

Vikhe Patil also said the Maratha quota issue will not be resolved if personal attacks were made against chief minister Fadnavis. Jarange had earlier called Fadnavis "anti-Hindu" and "anti-Maratha".

The MVA could not safeguard the Maratha reservation, the BJP minister said, referring to the scrapping of the quota, granted in 2018 when Fadnavis was CM, by the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court May 5, 2021, struck down reservations for the Marathas in college admissions and jobs in Maharashtra, saying there were no exceptional circumstances to justify the breach of the 50 per cent ceiling on overall reservations. The MVA led by Uddhav Thackeray governed the state then.

Speaking elsewhere, chief minister Fadnavis said his government was committed to protect the interests of both the Marathas and OBCs, and did not intend to pit the two communities against each other. "We will not allow injustice to happen to the OBCs, and Marathas should know that it is my government which has worked for the community's welfare. The reservation granted (to the Marathas) by our government is still legally valid," he said.

The reservation for Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) resolved the reservation issues in other states, but in Maharashtra, the way of looking at the EWS quota was not yet positive, Fadnavis said.

The Marathas already have 10 percent quota, and still there is a demand for reservations, he said, noting that there are more than 350 sub-castes among OBCs. "Still, we will try to understand what the protesters have to say," the CM said.

# All parties unanimous on 27% OBC quota in MP: CM



**Leader of Opposition Umang Singh said consensus reached on OBC reservation was a big victory for the Congress**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhopal, August 28:** All political parties in Madhya Pradesh are unanimous on giving 27 per cent reservation to Other Backward Classes (OBCs) in the state, Chief Minister Mohan Yadav said Thursday.

The consensus emerged during an all-party chaired by him, Yadav told reporters.

Addressing a press conference later, Leader of Opposition Umang Singh said consensus reached on OBC reservation was a big victory for the Congress.

Earlier, the ruling BJP and the Opposition Congress in Madhya Pradesh crossed swords on many occasions over the issue of 27 per cent reservation for OBCs, following which the matter reached the Supreme Court where it is pending.

The CM Thursday chaired an

all-party meeting at his official residence on the issue of OBC reservation.

"We all feel OBCs should get 27 per cent reservation in Madhya Pradesh. All parties have expressed unanimity on this," Yadav told reporters after the meeting.

"In the all-party meeting, it has been resolved unanimously that the legislature, the executive and the judiciary will make joint efforts to implement OBC reservation," he added.

The matter was pending in the Supreme Court and it will be heard daily from September 22, the CM said, adding that different lawyers (of various parties) were arguing the matter in the court.

Leaders of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Congress, Samajwadi Party (SP), Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and Communist Party of India (Marxist) participated in the meeting, he said.

The parties decided in the meeting that before September 10, all the lawyers (of different parties) will sit together and chalk out a common strategy, Yadav said.

All the parties are unanimous on this issue and want

the decision to come soon in the case pending in the Supreme Court regarding OBC reservation, the CM said.

Addressing a press conference after the meeting, Singh said, "The consensus reached on OBC reservation is a big victory for the Congress. After the continuous demand and struggle of the Congress, today the BJP government has agreed on the issue of OBC reservation."

In the meeting held during the day, Singh said it was agreed that lawyers of Congress and BJP will sit together and remove legal hurdles.

He, however, alleged there is a difference between the government's actions and words.

"It (BJP government) wants to take credit for the hard work of Congress. When it comes to the interest of society, there should be no politics and the path of reservation should be cleared as soon as possible," Singh opined.

The LoP said CM Yadav mentioned many complexities in the meeting, while Congress leaders gave concrete suggestions, including bringing the matter to the assembly and sending a proposal to the Lok Sabha.

# MP chief secretary Anurag Jain gets one-year extension

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhopal, August 28:** Madhya Pradesh Chief Secretary Anurag Jain, set to retire at the end of August, was Thursday given a one-year extension.

Making the announcement, Chief Minister Mohan Yadav, in a post on X, said, "Hearty congratulations and best wishes to you Anurag Jain, Chief Secretary of Madhya Pradesh Government, on the extension of your tenure by one year. May the developmental journey of the state continue to set new standards with your long administrative experience, innovations and continuous efforts, my best wishes."

Jain, a 1989 batch Indian

Administrative Service (IAS), took over as the 35th chief secretary of MP October 3, 2024 and his tenure was ending in August this year, an official said.

Jain was born August 11, 1965 in Gwalior. His first posting after becoming an IAS officer was as assistant collector in Sagar in June 1990. He has been collector of Mandla, Mandsaur and Bhopal districts, and has also discharged responsibilities of various state departments as secretary, principal secretary and additional chief secretary. Jain also held important posts on Central deputation.

Jain obtained a B.Tech degree in Electrical Engineering from IIT Kharagpur in 1986.



Madhya Pradesh Congress President Jitendra Patwari, party leader Harish Chaudhary and others during a protest over 'vote chori', in Bhopal, Thursday

PTI PHOTO

GLORY WITH GUN

# Visually impaired Army officer sets sights on shooting World Cup

THE 38-YEAR-OLD ARMY OFFICER, WHO PREFERS TO USE ONE NAME, COMPETES IN THE 10 METER AIR RIFLE CATEGORY OF SHOOTING

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Indore, August 28:** Lieutenant Colonel Dwarkesh, an accomplished marksman, lost his vision in an accident a few years ago, but that did not dent his determination to excel in sports and he has now set his eyes on winning a gold medal for India in the ensuing World Cup for visually impaired shooters.

The 38-year-old Army officer, who prefers to use one name, competes in the 10 meter air rifle category of shooting.

In run-up to the World Cup, Dwarkesh, probably the only visually impaired officer serving in the Army currently, has been practicing for a year at the Army Marksmanship Unit (AMU) in Mhow, a military cantonment located about 25km from Indore city.

At shooting competitions, he aims with the help of a de-



vice that indicates the target through sound (audio aiming device).

Talking to PTI Thursday, Dwarkesh revealed he always wanted to be a soldier and alongside also take part in sports.

"I wanted to join the Army since childhood and my dream

came true in 2009. Even after joining the Army, I remained associated with sports. After losing my eyes in an accident a few years later, I did not understand for a long time what to do next? However, in 2022, I came to know for the first time that there are international competitions for visually impaired

shooters. Then I decided to move forward in this direction (take part in such events)," said the officer.

He noted that competitions for visually impaired shooters have been going on in different countries for a very long time, but in India, such events at the national level started only a few years ago. Dwarkesh informed that he has won gold medals in the last two national competitions in the '10 meter air rifle prone' category.

Buoyed by his exploits at national competitions in India, the officer said he has now set a target of winning a gold medal in the visually impaired category of the Parachuting World Cup to be held in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in October-November.

Apart from shooting, Dwarkesh has also excelled in different national-level swim-

ming competitions and has an adventurous streak.

In 2021, he was part of a group of eight persons with disabilities who created a record by scaling the world's highest battlefield, the Siachen Glacier, a treacherous terrain in J&K where temperatures dip to below -55 degrees Celsius and blizzards are a common phenomenon.

The officer noted he uses ChatGPT, a popular, generative artificial intelligence chatbot, to understand the latest developments and tricks of shooting and his focus is on achieving his sporting goals.

Sharing facets of his life, Dwarkesh said, "From my experiences so far, I have learned that hard work never fails. If you keep moving forward on your path while working hard, then one day you will definitely reach your destination."

GANPATI FESTIVAL

# Nearly 30K idols immersed after one-and-half days in Mumbai

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, August 28:** Nearly 30,000 Ganesh idols have been immersed till Thursday night in Mumbai, the metropolis' civic body said.

During the 10-day festival, a large number of devotees immerse idols after one-and-half days as well as on the fifth and seventh days, a Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) official said, adding no untoward incident has been reported during this process from the city so far.

"A total of 29,965 'one-and-half-days' Ganpati idols were immersed in the sea, other water bodies and artificial ponds till 9pm Thursday, the second day of the festival. These include 29,614 'household' Ganpati idols and 337 from 'sarvajanik' (public festivity) pandals," the civic official said.

BMC claimed idols have been immersed in large numbers in artificial lakes. Till 3 pm, 326, or more than 55 per cent of 583 Ganapati idols, were immersed in artificial lakes, the official said. However, sources claimed the BMC commissioner's office has asked concerned departments to not publicize the number of idols immersed in artificial ponds.

When contacted by PTI, civic

commissioner-cum-administrator Bhusan Gagrani avoided giving a reply on the issue.

"The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation has taken action from time to time as per the orders given by the Hon'ble High Court and the Government of Maharashtra. It has also created public awareness in an effective manner," the civic body claimed in a statement.

This year, the BMC has earmarked 70 natural water bodies (including stretches of the sea shore) and set up 288 artificial ponds for immersion, the official added.

The festival, among the most patronised in Maharashtra, started on Ganesh Chaturthi (August 27) and ends on Anant Chaturdashi (September 6).

As part of measures to protect the environment, the civic body has urged citizens to immerse their eco-friendly Ganpati idol in drums or buckets, while Plaster of Paris (PoP) idols that are less than 6 feet in height must be immersed in artificial ponds.

It has also asked 'sarvajanik' mandals to segregate offerings so that biodegradable material can be turned into fertiliser.

The BMC has trained more than 1000 volunteers of such mandals in handling emergency situations, including overcrowding, officials said.





Let us not treat this merely as crisis management. This must be our clarion call for a decade-long mission to secure India's place in the supply chains of tomorrow; rare earths, semiconductors, batteries, power electronics, and advanced textiles

KAMAL HAASAN | MAKKAL NEEDHI MAIAM PARTY FOUNDER

People's only job is to find fault in whatever I utter -- be it politicians, journalists or anybody else. This is what is going on. Better not to speak. There are other leaders and party spokesperson. You (reporters) better speak to them

D K SHIVAKUMAR | KARNATAKA DY CM

There were heavy rains in both Jammu as well as in Kashmir. God saved us. Had the rainfall continued for a day or more, we would have faced immense difficulties. But the water has started receding. It recedes faster in Jammu and takes some time here in Kashmir

OMAR ABDULLAH | J&K CM

SHORT TAKES

Cops arrests 4 criminals links to Bishnoi gang

**New Delhi:** Delhi Police has arrested four wanted criminals linked to foreign-based gangsters Harry Boxer and Rohit Godara from the national capital and Mohali in Punjab, officials said Thursday. Two of them were arrested following an encounter with the Special Cell. According to police, Boxer, who was recently in the news for threatening comedian Kapil Sharma, and Godara are linked with the Lawrence Bishnoi gang.

Amit Shah to arrive in Assam on 2-day visit

**Guwahati:** Union Home Minister Amit Shah will arrive here Thursday on a two-day visit to Assam during which he would attend the state BJP's core committee meeting to discuss issues related to the Assembly polls due next year, among other programmes.

Apex court shields journalist from arrest

**New Delhi:** The Supreme Court Thursday granted interim protection for four weeks to journalist Abhisar Sharma in an FIR lodged against him in Assam over a video post allegedly criticising the state's policies. A bench of Justices M M Sundresh and N Kottiswar Singh refused to entertain his prayer challenging the FIR lodged against him in Assam and asked him to approach the Gauhati High Court.

ED grills arrested TMC MLA Jiban Saha's aunt

**Kolkata:** After arresting Trinamool Congress MLA Jiban Krishna Saha from West Bengal's Murshidabad district, the Enforcement Directorate (ED) Thursday questioned his paternal aunt for at least seven hours in connection with its probe into alleged irregularities in school recruitments, a senior official of the agency said.

Bombay HC gets 14 new judges

**New Delhi:** Fourteen advocates have been elevated as additional judges of the Bombay High Court. According to the Union law ministry, the 14 new additional judges were appointed Wednesday.

**The #USTariff hike to 50 % has hit Tamil Nadu's exports hard, especially #Tiruppur's textile hub, causing a trade impact of nearly ₹3,000 crore and putting thousands of jobs at risk**

M K STALIN | TN CM

INDIA, PHILIPPINES SPACE FIRMS EYE JOINT RESEARCH, DEVPT

Space industry associations of India and the Philippines have joined hands to deepen cooperation in the fields of electronics, space and satellite communication technologies, as private players are set to soar in the two countries



Rain, flash floods upend lives

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, August 28:** Ragging waters swallowed roads and bridges, swept away buildings and cut off villages in parts of India Thursday as the rain gods refused to relent, leaving many stranded and rescuers scrambling to reach them.

From Himachal Pradesh in the north to Kerala in the south, rains caused water levels of rivers and dams to rise and inundate residential areas and agricultural fields.

Kashmir, however, breathed easy as a let-up in rain after two days eased the flood threat. In Himachal Pradesh, flash floods in the Ravi river washed away several government buildings in the remote Bada Bangal village in Kangra district, officials said.

The Bada Bangal village, located at an altitude of 7,800 feet, is accessible only by foot through the high-altitude Thamsar and Kalihani passes. It remains cut off from the rest of the state for four to six months during winters.

According to the State Emergency Operation Centre, 536 roads are closed across 11 of the 12 districts in Himachal Pradesh. Reports from Chamba have not been received as the communication network in the district is snapped, it said.

According to the meteorological department, a spell of light to moderate rain at scattered to fairly widespread places with a



possibility of moderate to heavy rain or thundershowers in a few districts of Jammu is likely from August 30 to September 1.

From September 2 to 6, a brief spell of rain or thundershowers is expected at a few places. Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah said he would sit with officers in a few days to understand what flood mitigation measures were taken after the 2014 deluge and corrective measures would be taken wherever the union territory was lagging.

In Punjab, where at least eight districts have been hit by flash floods, central and state agencies worked tirelessly to evacuate people from the flooded areas.

Officials said 1,052 people have been rescued so far from

the flood-hit areas in Hoshiarpur district. Many villages in Tanda and Mukerian sub-divisions remained inundated because of heavy inflow of water from the Beas river and rain.

The officials said 15 relief camps are being run and these house 413 people, including 280 moved in the last 16 hours. The floods have so far damaged 5,287 hectares of agricultural land in the district.

Seventeen 'kutchas' houses have collapsed, five have suffered severe damage and one was partially damaged this monsoon, they said.

The rising water level of the Ganga disrupted normal activities, including the daily 'aarti' and cremations, on the ghats of Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh.

After a slight drop over

the past few days, the Ganga crossed the warning mark of 70.262 metres to reach 70.91 metres Thursday morning, nearing the danger level of 71.262 metres, officials said. In Rajasthan, waters receded in Bundi district and villagers in Nainwan, Kapren and Keshoraipatan regions were seen trying to salvage what they could from their flood-ravaged homes.

Heavy rain is likely at some places in Kota and Udaipur divisions. Some parts of Jodhpur and Bikaner divisions are also expected to receive moderate to heavy rain during this period, the weather office said.

In Maharashtra's Nanded and Latur districts, more than 2,200 people have been shifted to safety amid heavy rainfall, officials said.

BJP files FIR over 'abuses' at PM's mother during Rahul's yatra



*The BJP blames Rahul Gandhi for alleged abuses directed at Prime Minister Narendra Modi's mother during the Congress leader's 'Voter Adhikar Yatra' in Bihar*

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi/Patna, August 28:** Alleging that abuses were hurled at the late mother of Prime Minister Narendra Modi during Rahul Gandhi's 'Voter Adhikar Yatra' in Bihar, the BJP Thursday asserted the Congress-led INDIA bloc will be "punished" by the people in the upcoming Assembly polls.

A delegation of the state BJP also lodged a complaint at the Kotwali police station here Thursday in connection with Wednesday's incident in Darbhanga town, from where Gandhi, her sister and Congress general secretary Priyanka Vadra and RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav had left for Muzaffarpur on motorcycles.

Reacting to the episode of a video clip purportedly of Darbhanga district, which has gone viral on social media, Deputy Chief Minister and former state

BJP president Samrat Choudhary said "the behaviour of the crowds was characteristic of the RJD's hooliganism. And the Congress puts up with rowdy behaviour in its blind quest for power".

The video clip is of a small podium on which no prominent leader was present, but a person screaming an expletive into the mic, who can be heard but not seen, met with admonition from bystanders. PTI could not independently verify the authenticity of the video. "There has been tremendous anger among party workers who have burnt an effigy of Rahul and Tejashwi. We are also gathering evidence and look forward to lodging another FIR," said Aditya Narayan Jha 'Manna', the BJP's district unit chief in Darbhanga.

Union Minister of State for Home Nityanand Rai, a former state BJP president, also came out with a statement, asking Gandhi and Yadav to tender an apology for the behaviour of their alleged supporters.

Talking to reporters after lodging the police complaint, state BJP media in-charge Danish Egbal said, "Just look at the chronology of the INDIA bloc. First, they invite to the yatra Revanth Reddy and M K Stalin, both of whom have been known for abusing Bihar. Then their workers abuse the PM".

Reddy, the Chief Minister of Congress-ruled Telangana, and his Tamil Nadu counterpart Stalin, who heads the DMK, had joined the Yatra Tuesday and Wednesday, respectively.

CJI to administer oath to new SC judges today

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, August 28:** Chief Justice of India B R Gavai will on Friday administer oath to Bombay High Court Chief Justice Alok Aradhe and Patna High Court Chief Justice Vipul Manubhai Pancholi who were elevated to the Supreme Court August 27.

With their elevation, the apex court is set to regain its full working strength of 34 judges, including the CJI. Justice Pancholi will be in line to become the CJI in October 2031 after Justice Joyimalya Bagchi's retirement October 2, 2031.

He would assume the CJI's office October 3, 2031, and retire May 27, 2033. On August 25, the apex court collegium recommended to the Centre the names of Justices Aradhe and Pancholi for elevation as top court judges.

Collegium member and Supreme Court's Justice B V Nagarathna, however, registered a strong dissent to the apex court collegium's recommendation to elevate Justice Pancholi to the top court, saying his appointment would be "counter-productive" to the judiciary. Justice Nagarathna, the only woman judge in the top court, recorded her dissent on various counts.

Sources privy to the development said Justice Nagarathna, in her dissent, noted that pushing ahead with his appointment could erode "whatever credibility the collegium system still holds".



People arrive on a boat amid floods in Patna, Bihar

PTI PHOTO

Panel submits 450-page report on Sambhal violence to Yogi

**Lucknow:** A three-member judicial commission headed by retired Allahabad High Court judge Devendra Kumar Arora Thursday submitted its report on the November 2024 violence in Sambhal to Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath. The panel members, including Arora, retired IPS officer Arvind Kumar Jain, and ex-IAS officer Amit Mohan Prasad, met the chief minister and submitted their report on the violence that erupted near the Shahi Jama Masjid in Sambhal November 24 last year during an ASI-monitored survey of the mosque, claiming four lives and injuring several others. The commission was set up November 28, 2024. Its members visited Sambhal several times since December 1, 2024, when they first visited the violence-hit area to record witness statements.

Paper leak: HC cancels 2021 Raj police recruitment exam

**Jaipur:** The Rajasthan High Court Thursday cancelled the contentious 2021 police sub-inspector recruitment exam owing to allegations over paper leak and involvement of members of Rajasthan Public Service Commission (RPSC). Justice Sameer Jain cancelled the exam, which was the bone of contention for both BJP and Congress governments in the state and gave a detailed verdict. "The Hindi idiom: 'ghar ka bhedhi lanka dhaye' (insider does maximum damage), aptly encapsulates the egregious circumstances surrounding the Sub-Inspector Recruitment Examination 2021, wherein the very guardians entrusted with safeguarding the sanctity of the process, namely the members of the RPSC, were instrumental in its vitiation," the order said.

'NCAP target of 40% cut in pollution can add 2 yrs to lives'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, August 28:** Residents of 130 cities covered under the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) could see their life expectancy increase by two years compared to 2017 if India achieves its revised target of a 40 per cent reduction in particulate pollution by 2026, a new report said Thursday.

Launched in 2019, NCAP aimed to cut 2017 particulate pollution levels in 130 highly polluted cities by 20-30 per cent by 2024. In 2022, the government revised the target to

a 40 per cent reduction by 2026.

In practice, only PM10 concentration is being considered for performance assessment.

The Energy Policy Institute at the University of Chicago (EPIC) said in its 2025 report that residents in these 130 cities would gain two years in life expectancy as compared to 2017 if the target is met.

Government data shows 103 of the 130 cities recorded an improvement in PM10 levels in 2024-25 compared to 2017-18. Sixty-four of them reduced these levels by more than 20 per cent, while 25 achieved cuts of over 40 per cent.



Twenty-two cities met the National Ambient Air Quality

Standard (NAAQS) for PM10, defined as annual levels be-

The EPIC report said all of India's 1.4 billion people live in areas where average particulate pollution exceeds the WHO guideline

Even those in the cleanest regions could live 9.4 months longer if air quality met the global benchmark

low 60 micrograms per cubic metre.

The EPIC report said all of India's 1.4 billion people live in areas where average particulate pollution exceeds the WHO guideline. Even those in

the cleanest regions could live 9.4 months longer if air quality met the global benchmark.

It noted that PM2.5 concentrations in 2023 were higher than in 2022, more than eight times the WHO guideline. Bringing them down to the global standard would add 3.5 years to the average life expectancy of Indians.

The WHO's 2021 guideline sets the annual average limit for PM2.5 at 5 micrograms per cubic metre and for PM10 at 15 micrograms per cubic metre. However, India's standards allow 40 micrograms for PM2.5 and 60 micrograms for PM10.







of the day

quote

The special military operation continues. You can see that strikes on Russian infrastructure, often on Russian civilian infrastructure, by the Kyiv regime are also continuing. The Russian armed forces are also carrying out their tasks




DMITRY PESKOV | KREMLIN SPOKESMAN

The war isn't going to end as soon as some people said and believed ... I don't want to be a pessimist but I don't think there can be solutions before the end of the year



ANTONIO TAJANI | FOREIGN MINISTER, ITALY

I don't believe in a financial crisis. The country is rich, the country is growing, the country is managed, it is under control, and France's businesses are doing their job



ERIC LOMBARD | FINANCE MINISTER, FRANCE

SHORT TAKES

UK PM to replace key aide Nin Pandit

**London:** British Prime Minister Keir Starmer is set to replace one of his key aides at 10 Downing Street in London, Ninjeri 'Nin' Pandit, after just 10 months as his Principal Private Secretary (PPS), according to UK media reports Thursday. The Indian-origin top civil servant, in charge of running the team at the Prime Minister's office as PPS, is expected to be moved into a new role leading on policy delivery at No. 10 Downing Street. According to the BBC, Starmer had become concerned that Pandit was ineffective as one of the most influential members of his inner circle. However, allies of the UK PM have since dismissed this speculation and indicated that he retained trust and confidence in her.

Singapore toughens vape, drug penalties

**Singapore:** Singapore will impose increased penalties on vape users and etomidate suppliers while foreigners caught vaping risk having their passes revoked, being deported and banned from re-entering the city-state from September 1, it was announced Thursday. The stricter drive against the menace also includes issuing nicotine test kits to schools across Singapore amid a sharp rise in vaping among students. Foreigners caught with e-vaporisers will have their vapes seized, and they will be fined, and Short Term Visit Pass holders who re-offend will be banned from re-entering Singapore.

Anti-polio drive kicks off in KP

**Peshawar:** An anti-polio drive to immunise 5.7 million children in Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province was launched amid tight security measures Thursday. The immunisation campaign was formally inaugurated at the Police Services Hospital here by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Adviser on Health Entesham Ali "We have developed a more organised and strategic approach this time, especially in areas where cases have recently been reported," he told reporters.

Israeli airstrikes hit Yemeni capital

**Cairo:** Israeli airstrikes Thursday hit the Yemeni capital, Sanaa, the Houthis' media office reported. The strikes came after the Israeli military struck Sanaa Sunday, killing at least 10 people. Residents Thursday reported loud explosions in the southern and western parts of the city.

Russian missiles pound Ukraine

REUTERS

**Kyiv, August 28:** Russia pounded Ukraine with deadly missiles and drone strikes early Thursday in a sweeping attack that President Volodymyr Zelenskiy said was Moscow's answer to diplomatic efforts to end its war.

At least 18 people, including four children, were killed in the capital, officials from the city administration said. As the sun rose, rescuers dug through a wrecked block on Kyiv's left bank and pulled at least two bodies from the rubble.

The strikes damaged the European Union's mission and British Council offices in the city, officials said. The European Union and London summoned Russian envoys to protest. There were no reports of casualties at either site.

"Russia chooses ballistics instead of the negotiating table," Zelenskiy said on X, calling for new sanctions on Russia. "It chooses to continue killing instead of ending the war."

Russia said its attack had hit military industrial facilities and air bases, and that Ukraine had also attacked Russian targets. The Kremlin said it was still interested in pursuing peace talks.

Moscow has regularly denied targeting civilians. Ukrainian officials say scores of civilians have died in Russian strikes on densely populated areas over the recent months, and thousands since the start of the war.

During the attack on Kyiv, explosions rang out as clouds of smoke rose into the night sky. Drones whirled overhead.

Mayor Vitali Klitschko described it as one of the biggest attacks on the city in recent



At least 18 killed, including four children, officials say

Ukraine's Zelenskiy calls for new sanctions on Russia

EU and Britain summon Russian envoys to protest

months. At least 38 people were wounded in the hours-long assault which damaged buildings in all city districts, officials said.

Across the country, Ukraine's military said Russian attacks struck 13 locations. National grid operator Ukrenergo said energy facilities were hit, causing power cuts.

A push by Kyiv and its allies to end the invasion that Moscow launched in February 2022 has yielded little, despite meetings between US President Donald Trump and his Ukrainian and Russian counterparts.

'ANOTHER GRIM REMINDER'

"This is another grim reminder of what is at stake. It shows that the Kremlin will stop at nothing to terrorize Ukraine, blindly killing civilians and even targeting the European Union," EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen told reporters in Brussels.

She said two missiles had



I'm involved in changing the H1B programme. We're going to change that programme, because that's terrible

HOWARD LUTNICK | US SECRETARY OF COMMERCE

Fed Governor Cook sues Trump over his attempt to fire her

REUTERS

**Wyoming, August 28:** Federal Reserve Governor Lisa Cook filed a lawsuit Thursday claiming President Donald Trump has no power to remove her from office, setting up a legal battle that could reset long-established norms for the US central bank's independence.

The lawsuit said Trump violated a federal law allowing him to remove a Fed governor only "for cause" when the president took the unprecedented step August 25 of announcing he would fire her. Trump has accused Cook of committing mortgage fraud in 2021, a year before she joined the central bank's governing body.

Cook also filed a motion for a temporary restraining order which declares that Trump's effort to fire her is unlawful and seeks to bar the Fed from taking steps to remove her pending further litigation. A hearing on the motion is set for 10 am Friday.

"Neither the type of 'offense' the President cited nor the threadbare evidence against Governor Cook would constitute 'cause' for removal even if the President's allegations were true - which they are not," the motion said.

In the court filings, Cook said an unsubstantiated allegation about conduct that took place before she was confirmed to her position at the Fed does not amount to cause. She denied committing mortgage fraud, but said that even if she had it



Cook's lawsuit challenges Trump's authority to remove her

Fed's independence from White House at stake

Trump pressuring US central bank to lower interest rates

Cook denies wrongdoing

would not justify her removal.

"The President would not have 'cause' to remove a Federal Reserve Governor even if he possessed smoking gun evidence that she jaywalked in college," Cook's lawyers wrote in the lawsuit.

The lawsuit also accused Trump of violating her right to due process under the US Constitution by firing her without notice or a hearing.

The case was assigned to US District Judge Jia Cobb, an appointee of former President Joe Biden, a Democrat.

The case is likely headed to the Supreme Court, where a conservative majority has at least tentatively allowed Trump to fire officials from other agencies, though it recently signaled the Fed may qualify for a rare exception from direct control by the president.

B'desh top electoral body unveils roadmap for general election

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Dhaka, August 28:** Bangladesh's top electoral body Thursday unveiled a roadmap for the general election to be held in February next year, saying the poll schedule would be announced at least 60 days before the voting date.

"The Chief Adviser's Office has asked us to hold the election before Ramadan. If I am not mistaken, Ramadan will begin February 17 or 18. From this, you can calculate the probable election date," Election Commission's Senior Secretary Akhtar Ahmed said at a press briefing here.

He said under the roadmap, discussions with political parties and other stakeholders would be held by the end of September and "it may take one to one and a half months" to complete the process.

Ahmed said the Election Commission set the election target for the first half of February and the roadmap was prepared in line with the directives issued by the interim government's chief adviser Muhammad Yunus. It received the commission's approval Wednesday, he added.

The EC announced the roadmap prioritising 24 key tasks relating to the amendment of the relevant laws like the Representation of the People Order (RPO), Delimitation of Constituencies Act, the Voter List Act, the Election Officers (Special Provisions) Act 1991 and the Election Commission Secretariat Act 2009.

The roadmap expected that the EC could announce the election schedule in the second or third week of December.

US SCHOOL SHOOTING

'Nuke India' scribbled on shooter's gun

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New York/Washington, August 28:** A shooter who opened fire at a Minneapolis Catholic School, killing two children, had 'Nuke India' written on one of the guns, according to video footage of the alleged arsenal used by him.

The shooter, identified as Robin Westman, 23, from Minnesota, opened fire in the Annunciation Catholic School Wednesday killing two children aged 8 and 10 and injuring 17 people. Westman then allegedly killed himself.

Video footage circulating online allegedly showed Westman displaying his ammunition, rifles and guns. 'Nuke India' is written in white on one of the guns.

Journalist Laura Loomer said in a post on X that the Minnesota shooter had "Mashallah" and "Nuke India" written on his gun. He also wrote "Israel Must Fall".

"Clearly influenced by anti-Indian and Anti-Jewish Is-



lamic propaganda. Not really a shocker to see a person like this living in Ilhan Omar's district kill Catholics. Another example of the Red-Green alliance," Loomer said.

Ilhan Omar, a Democrat, is the US representative for Minnesota's 5th congressional district since 2019.

Israel steps up bombardment of Gaza

REUTERS

**Cairo, August 28:** Israeli forces killed at least 16 Palestinians across Gaza Thursday and wounded dozens in the south of the enclave, local health officials said, as residents reported intensified military bombardment in the suburbs of Gaza City.

The military is preparing to take Gaza City, the enclave's largest urban centre, despite international calls on Israel to reconsider this over fears that the operation would cause significant casualties and displace the roughly one million Palestinians sheltering there.

In Gaza City, residents said families were fleeing their homes, with most heading towards the coast, as Israel forces bombarded the eastern suburbs of Shejaia, Zeitoun, and Sabra. Thursday's deaths took to 71 the number of Palestinians killed by Israeli fire in the past 24 hours, the health ministry said.

Israel officials describe Gaza City as the last stronghold of Hamas, which ignited the war with its deadly Oc-



Mourners react during the funeral of Palestinians killed in Israeli fire, according to medics, at Al-Shifa hospital, in Gaza City, Thursday

« Israeli military preparing to take over Gaza City

« Seventy-one Palestinians killed in Israeli fire in 24 hours, local medics say

« Israel says it continues to operate against 'terrorist organisations' across Gaza

« Four dead, dozens wounded near aid sites in southern Gaza

zations" and infrastructure.

**Hundreds of UN staff pressure rights chief to call Gaza a genocide, letter shows**

Hundreds of UN staff at the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) Volker Turk have asked him

Europeans launch UN sanctions process on Iran

REUTERS

**Paris/United Nations, August 28:** Britain, France and Germany launched a 30-day process to reimpose UN sanctions on Iran over its nuclear programme Thursday, a step likely to stoke tensions two months after Israel and the United States bombed Iran, according to a letter sent by E3 to the UN Security Council seen by Reuters.

The trio, known as the E3, said in a statement they had decided to trigger the so-called snapback mechanism before they lose the ability in mid-October to restore sanctions on Tehran that were lifted under a 2015 nuclear accord with world powers.

They have held several rounds of talks with Iran since Israel and the United States struck its nuclear installations

in mid-June, aiming to agree to defer the mechanism but they deemed that talks in Geneva Tuesday did not yield sufficiently tangible commitments from Iran.

The E3 have pressed ahead now over accusations that Iran has violated the 2015 deal that aimed to prevent Tehran from developing a nuclear weapon. The United States, which was party to that deal, pulled out under President Donald Trump in 2018, and held failed indirect negotiations earlier this year with Tehran.

The E3, whose ministers informed US Secretary of State Marco Rubio of their decision Wednesday, said they hoped that Iran would engage by the end of September to provide commitments over its nuclear programme that will convince them to defer concrete action.



"The E3 are committed to using every diplomatic tool available to ensure Iran never develops a nuclear weapon. That includes our decision to trigger the 'snapback' mechanism today through this notification," they said in the letter.

"The E3's commitment to a

diplomatic solution nonetheless remains steadfast. The E3 will fully make use of the 30-day period following the notification in order to resolve the issue giving rise to the notification."

Iran has previously warned of a "harsh response" if sanctions are reinstated.

« Britain, France, Germany send letter to UN Security Council

« They hope the move will push Iran to make commitments

« Tehran has warned of harsh response if sanctions reinstated

GROWING FRUSTRATION IN IRAN

The UN process takes 30 days before sanctions that would cover Iran's financial, banking, hydrocarbons and defence sectors are restored.

Growing fears of renewed United Nations sanctions under the snapback mechanism

are fuelling frustration in Iran, where economic anxiety is rising and political divisions are deepening, three insiders close to the government said.

As the prospect of tighter international restrictions threatens to further isolate the Islamic Republic, officials in Tehran remain split — with hardliners urging defiance and confrontation, while moderates advocate diplomacy.

Iran's rial weakened sharply since Wednesday after a Reuters report about the E3 moving to trigger the return of United Nations sanctions.

Iran has been enriching uranium to up to 60% fissile purity, a short step from the roughly 90% of weapons-grade, and had enough material enriched to that level, if refined further, for six nuclear weapons, before the strikes by Israel started on June 13, according to the IAEA.



of the day

quote

Chinese importers are reportedly declaring inflated invoice values at the time of customs clearance, while subsequently selling the same products in the Indian market at significantly lower prices than those of domestic seamless pipe manufacturers

SHIV KUMAR SINGHAL | PRESIDENT, STMAI

Audit committees at companies should ensure the independence of auditors

NTIN GUPTA | CHAIRPERSON, NFRA

We are committed to consolidating our leadership in the EV space, driving India's electric mobility journey with a strong foundation of trust and innovation

ANIRUDDHA HALDAR | COMPANY SENIOR VICE-PRESIDENT, HEAD COMMUTER AND EV BUSINESS, TVS MOTOR

SHORT TAKES

Adani Group EBITDA crosses ₹90,000cr

**New Delhi:** The Adani Group reported its highest-ever trailing twelve-month EBITDA of ₹90,572 crore, driven by strong performance in its core infrastructure and clean energy businesses, along with contributions from its emerging airports segment, the conglomerate said Thursday. The group reported an earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization (EBITDA) of ₹90,572 crore for the period from July 2024 to June 2025, up from ₹85,502 crore pre-tax profit in the trailing twelve months ending June 2024, it said in a statement. The ports-to-energy group posted highest ever quarterly EBITDA of ₹23,793 crore in April-June, with core infrastructure businesses of utility, transport, and incubating infra businesses under Adani Enterprises accounting for about 87 per cent of this.

Rakesh, family trust sell stake in IndiGo

**New Delhi:** IndiGo promoter Rakesh Gangwal's family trust Thursday sold a 1.3 per cent stake in the country's largest airline for ₹2,933 crore through open market transactions, cumulatively offloading shares worth ₹14,497 crore so far this year. With the latest sale, the cumulative divestment by Rakesh Gangwal, along with his wife Shobha Gangwal and their family trust -- the Chinkerpoo Family Trust -- stood at ₹39,532.79 crore, translating to around \$4.51 billion. Since 2022, Gangwals and their family trust have offloaded a 28.32 per cent stake in IndiGo, according to an analysis by PTI.

Govt faces first legal fight on online gaming ban

Online money-based games were expected to be worth \$3.6 billion in India by 2029

REUTERS

**New Delhi, August 28:** Gaming company A23 has challenged the government's ban on online money-based games, a legal filing shows, in the first case against a law that led to the sudden shutdown of popular contests and has thrown the industry's future into doubt. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government issued a law last week to ban such games, which the industry says rely on skill and are therefore not gambling. Gambling was already highly restricted in India. The legislation is a setback for an industry backed by venture capital firms such as Tiger



It is our duty as Indians to do our very best to promote and maintain our dignity and respect and not give in to any kind of bullying in this matter... the nation has to stand united

RC BHARGAVA | CHAIRMAN, MARUTI SUZUKI INDIA

TURBULENCE AHEAD

The Indian aviation industry may post higher losses at ₹9,500-10,500 crore this fiscal from an estimated ₹5,500 crore in FY25, owing largely to the ongoing geopolitical situation and trade headwinds, ratings agency ICRA said Thursday



TRUMP'S TARIFF TIRADE

Small biz scrambles to cushion blow

US President Donald Trump's additional 25% tariff on Indian imports took effect Wednesday, raising duties on some shipments to as much as 50% - among the highest imposed by Washington and on par with Brazil and China

REUTERS

**Mumbai, August 28:** Tens of thousands of Indian small businesses are scrambling to find new buyers in markets across Europe, Africa and Asia to dull the impact of a 50% tariff on exports to the US that took effect Wednesday.

Firms also front-loaded shipments earlier in August ahead of the August 27 deadline, sending out existing orders before tariffs were doubled from the 25% import tax imposed by US President Donald Trump in July.

Over 50,000 exporters among India's nearly 60 million small enterprises, spanning sectors including textiles, jewelry and chemicals, face the tariff spike but the government has yet to announce any financial or credit support for those affected.

It has instead urged exporters to find alternative markets.

A survey of export-oriented businesses conducted by India SME Forum, a lobby group of nearly 100,000 small businesses, found that 57% of respondents were looking at using countries in the Gulf region, Latin America, Africa and Britain to re-route shipments or value-added transshipments.

The point would be to identify markets where shipped products could be modified or re-manufactured to obtain a new "country of origin" tag and then export on to the US market.

Another 27% were reviving business with buyers in non-US regions while 16% were looking at outsourcing parts of the orders to enterprises in other countries in order to retain those clients.

"The sense we are getting is that a lot of the times we try to actually sell to the US because we get better pricing. But there are a lot of other markets and it is those markets that are now going to come into focus," said Vinod Kumar, president of the India SME Forum.

"So every supplier, be it medium or small or large, is now

WHERE TARIFFS BITE					
Items	Share of U.S. in India Exports	Share of India in U.S. imports	Tariff Exempt	Impact on Exports	Impact
Capital Goods	18%	2%	No	HIGH	\$12 bln
Textiles	28%	9%	No	MODERATE	\$5 bln
Gems & Jewellery	31%	13%	No	MODERATE	\$5 bln
Pharmaceuticals	36%	6%	Yes	LOW	\$0 bln
Smartphones	33%	6%	Yes	LOW	\$0 bln
Chemicals	14%	3%	No	HIGH	\$7 bln
Food & Beverages	11%	2%	No	HIGH	\$6 bln
Oil & Gas	6%	1%	Yes	LOW	\$0 bln
Auto	12%	1%	No	HIGH	\$3 bln
Other	N/A	N/A		MODERATE	\$7 bln
Total	18%	3%		MODERATE	\$44 bln

Note: Data as of 2024. The impact is based on 50% tariff on all sectors except pharmaceuticals, smartphones and oil & gas which are currently exempted from tariffs.

Source: Ratings Direct, S&P Global Ratings | Reuters

relooking at the inquiries they received earlier, which they have not attended to because they had a better offer (in US markets)," he said.

Small and medium-sized businesses constitute a major part of India's economy, the world's fifth largest, contributing about one-third of GDP and 45% of all exports.

FRONT-LOADING TO SOFTEN TARIFF HIT

To cushion the blow from Trump's burgeoning tariff blitz, Indian exporters also front-loaded orders to the US in August.

"We shipped near double our monthly volumes in August and even diverted some orders from European clients to the US," said Sanket Gandhi, director at Ahmedabad-based Pheromone Chemicals, which supplies speciality chemicals used in fragrances to US customers including Procter and Gamble.

Gandhi's two firms, with a

TARIFFS CLOUD DEMAND OUTLOOK: RBI BULLETIN

**New Delhi:** Persisting uncertainties related to the US trade policies pose downside risk to the overall demand in the Indian economy while the inflation outlook for the near term has become more benign than anticipated earlier, RBI said in its latest bulletin Thursday. In the August bulletin, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) also said that India's sovereign rating upgrade by S&P bodes well for capital inflows and sovereign yields, going forward. The US has imposed a steep 50 per cent tariff on Indian goods. According to the central bank, favourable rainfall and temperature conditions bode well for the kharif agriculture season and an increase in real rural wages may support rural demand in the second half of the financial year. "Coupled with the benign financial conditions, ongoing transmission of rate cuts, supportive fiscal measures and rising household optimism, the environment is conducive for holding up aggregate demand. On the other hand, persisting uncertainties related to India-US trade policies continue to pose downside risk," it noted. Further, RBI said the inflation outlook for the near term has become more benign than anticipated earlier. "Headline inflation, driven by muted food price pressures supported by favourable base effects, are likely to soften further below the 4 per cent target in Q2 before inching up in the last quarter of the financial year." "Overall, the average headline inflation this year is expected to remain significantly below the target. Monetary policy, going forward, would continue to maintain a close vigil on the incoming data and the evolving domestic growth-inflation dynamics to chart out the appropriate monetary policy path," the bulletin said. In July, the central bank said domestic economic activity remained mixed across sectors and the timely progress of monsoon has boosted kharif sowing. While industrial activity remained subdued, manufacturing sector expanded along with services sector sustaining the growth momentum. Headline inflation fell for the ninth consecutive month in July. Financial conditions remained congenial and supportive of domestic economic activity.

turnover of ₹2.5 billion, are also negotiating with clients in Europe, Russia and Africa as a hedge against its US business while remaining hopeful of a resolution to the tariff standoff with the Trump administration.

"We pushed out most of our US shipments by last week. At 25% tariffs, between us and our customers, we could take the hit and continue our business, but not at 50%," said

N Thirukkumaran, owner of Tirupur-based apparel maker Esstee Exports.

Export data for August has yet to be released, but HSBC's Flash India PMI showed business activity expanded at the fastest pace in at least two decades this month.

A drop in exports to the US, which account for 2.2% of India's GDP, could impact economic growth by 0.6-0.8 percentage points over a 12-month

owned lender said.

"The environment is that of caution ... We are holding off on giving new loans to small and medium export-centric businesses that we have not lent to before," the banker said.

Reuters reported earlier this month that the government plans to offer credit guarantees to small firms and exporters to deter banks from halting fresh lending to these businesses, but it has yet to formally announce

D-St loses turf amid tariff tension

Textile, shrimp, leather, gems and jewellery stocks declined Thursday as the steep 50% tariff on Indian goods entering US came into effect

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, August 28:** Stock market benchmark indices tumbled Thursday, with the Sensex cracking 706 points, as the additional 25 per cent tariff imposed by US President Donald Trump on India for its purchases of Russian oil came into effect.

Besides, persistent foreign fund outflows also dented investors' sentiment leading to a steep fall in two consecutive sessions.

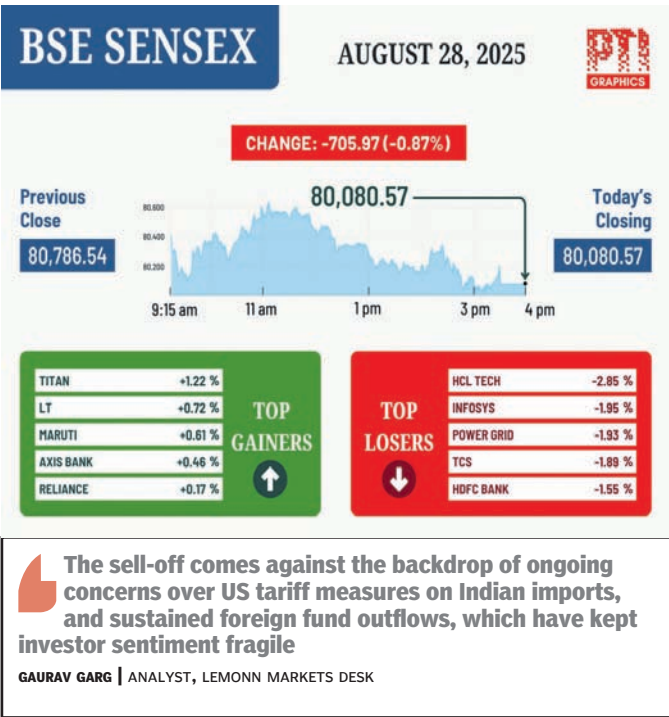
The additional 25 per cent tariff imposed by the US on India came into effect Wednesday, bringing the total levies on Indian goods to 50 per cent.

The 30-share BSE Sensex tanked 705.97 points or 0.87 per cent to settle at 80,080.57. During the day, it dropped 773.52 points or 0.95 per cent to 80,013.02.

The 50-share NSE Nifty dived 211.15 points or 0.85 per cent to 24,500.90.

From the Sensex firms, HCL Tech, Infosys, Power Grid, Tata Consultancy Services, HDFC Bank, Hindustan Unilever, Bharti Airtel and ICICI Bank were among the major laggards.

However, Titan, Larsen &



Toubro, Maruti and Axis Bank were among the gainers.

The BSE midcap gauge dropped 1.09 per cent and small-cap index declined 0.96 per cent.

Among BSE sectoral indices, services tumbled 2.27 per cent, telecommunication (1.73 per cent), IT (1.68 per cent), BSE Focused IT (1.59 per cent), teck (1.59 per cent), realty (1.47 per cent) and utilities (1.26 per cent). Consumer Durables emerged as the only gainer.

As many as 2,651 stocks declined while 1,458 advanced and 149 remained unchanged on the BSE.

The rupee rose by 11 paise

Russian oil imports to rise in September in defiance of US

**Moscow:** Russian oil exports to India are set to rise in September, traders said, as producers cut prices to sell more crude because they cannot process as much in refineries that were damaged by Ukrainian drone attacks on energy infrastructure. India has become the biggest buyer of Russian oil supplies that were displaced by Western sanctions after Moscow invaded Ukraine in 2022. This has allowed Indian refiners to benefit from cheaper crude. But the purchases have drawn condemnation from the government of US President Donald Trump, which increased US tariffs on Indian imports to 50% Wednesday. Three trading sources involved in oil sales to India said Indian refiners would increase Russian oil purchases in September by 10-20% from August levels, or by 150,000-300,000 barrels per day. In the first 20 days of August, India imported 1.5 million barrels per day of Russian crude, unchanged from July but slightly below the average of 1.6 million bpd in January-June, according to data from Vortexa analysts. The volumes are equal to around 1.5% of global supply, making India the largest buyer of seaborne Russian crude, which covers some 40% of India's oil needs. China and Turkey are also big buyers of Russian oil.

India extends cotton duty waiver amid US tariff pressure

**Mumbai:** India has extended an import duty exemption on cotton by three months, until the end of December, a government order showed Thursday, as New Delhi seeks to support the local garment industry that has been hit by hefty US tariffs. The imports are likely to support global cotton prices, which erased losses and rose 0.2% after the order. However, they are likely to reduce demand for local cotton, pressuring domestic prices, market watchers said. The world's second-biggest cotton producer had earlier announced an exemption on cotton imports from an 11% duty until September-end and has now extended that to December 31. The cotton is likely to be sourced from Australia, Brazil, the United States and Africa, which have a surplus available for export, industry officials said. The duty exemption until year-end will let Indian textile companies import cheaper cotton, easing pressure amid a slowdown in US demand, Atul Ganatra, president of the Cotton Association of India, told Reuters. "With the duty-free extension, imports could hit a record 4.2 million bales this year. Strong imports are likely to continue into the first quarter of next year as well," Ganatra said.

any relief.

Outstanding bank loans to small and medium enterprises amounted to ₹12.3 trillion as of June 2025, about 7% of the total loan book across Indian banks.



# Shuttlers stun top seeds



It's just one match at a time for me. I never thought about two rounds ahead or one round ahead. For me, it's not over yet. I need to come back tomorrow much stronger, and be prepared for everything

PV SINDHU

Sindhu stuns world No 2; Dhruv-Tanisha, Satwik-Chirag enter quarters in World C'ships

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Paris, August 28:** Two-time Olympic medallist PV Sindhu shocked world number 2 Wang Zhi Yi of China to storm into the quarterfinals of the World Championships here Thursday.

The 15th ranked Sindhu, who won the world title in Basel in 2019, took 48 minutes to prevail 21-19 21-15 in the pre-quarterfinals to lead head-to-head record against the Chinese 3-2.

Later in the day, India's top doubles pairing of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty came from behind to beat China's Liang Wei Kang and Wang Chang 19-21, 21-15, 21-17 and enter the quarterfinals. It was their first win against the Chinese pair after four succes-

sive losses.

In the women's singles, Sindhu will now face world number nine Putri Kusuma Wardani of Indonesia in the quarterfinals as the 30-year-old Indian is now just one victory away from securing a record-equalling sixth World Championships medal.

The Indonesian had beaten Sindhu in straight games at the Sudirman Cup earlier this year, though the Indian had prevailed in their Asian Games round-two clash in 2022.

A five-time World Championships medallist, Sindhu made a bright start in the opening game, racing to an 11-6 lead at the mid-game interval with a flurry of sharp smashes and net winners.

Wang fought back strongly to level at 19-19, but the Indian held her nerves to pocket the game.

In the second game, Sindhu kept up the pressure, once again opening up a 11-6 cushion at the break.

A stunning 57-shot rally briefly tested her, but she re-

gained control with decisive attacking play, closing out the match.

Sindhu thus extended her remarkable record against Chinese shuttlers at the Worlds, having previously beaten Wang Yihan (2013), Wang Shixian (2014), Li Xuerui (2015), Sun Yu (2017) and Chen Yufei (2017 and 2019) in earlier editions.



Another Upset

India's Dhruv Kapila and Tanisha Crasto also pulled off a big upset by stunning Hong Kong world number 5 pairing of Tang Chun Man and Tse Ying Suet 19-21 21-12 21-15 in a 63-minute battle to storm into the quarterfinals.

The Indians, who had earlier cruised past Ireland's Joshua Magee and Moya Ryan 21-11 21-16 in 35 minutes, came from a game down to topple the reigning Asian champions with a determined fightback.

"We had a rough run a couple of months back. I think we are building together, step by step, slowly, slowly we are getting there. Really happy with the way we played today," Tanisha said.

"We came prepared, prepared better this time. We didn't give up at any point in the match. Even after we lost the first set, we didn't let it get to us. We fought back even harder in the second and third. We kept pushing each other till the end, till the last shot. I think that was the real game changer today."

The Indian duo had endured a patchy start to the year, losing in the round of 16 at the Malaysia Open and India Open, before reaching the semifinals at the German Open in February.

However, early exits at the Orleans Masters and All England Championships followed.

## ALCARAZ EXORCISES 2ND-ROUND DEMONS



REUTERS

**New York, August 28:** Carlos Alcaraz demolished Mattia Bellucci to banish memories of last year's shock early exit, while Novak Djokovic shook off a sluggish start to reach the third round Wednesday and stay on course for a potential semi-final showdown with the Spaniard.

Alcaraz lost to Botić van de Zandschulp in the second round last year and while he made no mistake this time around he admitted that the stunning straight-sets defeat by the Dutchman had left a mark.

"If I'm honest, I thought about last year when I stepped on the court," the 2022 champion said. "Some bad thoughts. I was nervous about it, like thinking, okay, I don't want to do the same thing as I did last year, losing in the second round."

Despite the nerves Alcaraz unleashed 32 winners and won 86% of his first serve points in a clinical 96-minute, 6-1 6-0 6-3 demolition job that sets up a third-round match with another Italian, Luciano Darderi.

Djokovic's path proved a bit

bumpier, the 24-time major winner dropping the opening

set before finding his rhythm to beat American qualifier Zachary Svajda 6-7(5) 6-3 6-3 6-1.

The Serbian's 14 unforced errors in the first set dwindled to just 11 across the remaining three as he hit his stride at Arthur Ashe Stadium.

Svajda, who had poked fun at his own long odds against the former world number one in a now-viral TikTok video, put up a strong showing early on to the delight of home fans before being hampered by an apparent leg injury midway through the match.

Djokovic next faces Briton Cameron Norrie.

World number one Aryna Sabalenka's pursuit of her first major silverware of the year continued with a 7-6(4) 6-2 win over Polina Kudermetova.

Medvedev fined \$42,500 for antics

**New York:** Former champion Daniil Medvedev was fined a total of \$42,500 by the US Open Wednesday for his spectacular meltdown during a loss to Benjamin Bonzi at the start of the week. Medvedev lost 6-3 7-5 6-7(5) 0-6 6-4 Sunday but it was his behaviour in the third set that dominated the headlines, when the 2021 champion launched a tirade against the umpire and whipped up jeering fans who stopped his opponent from serving. The 13th seed was facing match point and a straight-sets loss when a photographer entered the Louis Armstrong Stadium court just as Frenchman Bonzi misfired his first serve. The official then allowed Bonzi another first serve because of the unauthorised incursion, sparking wild scenes as Medvedev raged at the official. Medvedev smashed his racket after the match concluded, prompting six-times Grand Slam champion Boris Becker to say that the Russian needed to seek professional help in the wake of his "public meltdown". While Medvedev collected \$110,000 for his first-round appearance, he coughed up fines of \$30,000 for unsportsmanlike conduct and \$12,500 for abusing his racket, the US Open said in a document listing on-site offences.

### SHORT TAKES

#### Pragg qualifies

**St Louis:** Indian Grandmaster R Praggnanandhaa sealed his spot in the Grand Chess Tour finale after finishing runner-up at the Sinquefeld Cup, where American Wesley So clinched the title with a dramatic three-way playoff victory. So defeated Nodirbek Abdusattorov of Uzbekistan in the ninth and final round to tie with Praggnanandhaa and compatriot Fabiano Caruana on 5.5 points at the top. He then went on to the play-off scoring 1.5 points out of a possible two. Praggnanandhaa played out a draw with Levon Aronian of United States and defeated Caruana in the tiebreak to finish second on one point while the latter had to be contend with the third place finish after the tiebreaker wherein he scored a lone draw against So.

#### Pak's Pro League debut

**New Delhi:** Pakistan men's hockey team are set to feature in the FIH Pro League for the first time after accepting an invitation to participate in the upcoming 2025-26 season, the International Hockey Federation (FIH) said Thursday. The Pakistan Hockey Federation (PHF), facing financial issues, fulfilled the requirement for joining the Pro League after the sport's governing body extended the earlier-given deadline.

#### New low for Man Utd

**Grimsby:** Manchester United plumbed new depths as fourth-tier Grimsby Town knocked them out of the League Cup 12-11 on penalties after a 2-2 draw on a tumultuous night at Blundell Park Wednesday. Goals by Charles Vernam and former Manchester United youth player Tyrell Warren put the hosts in charge of the second-round tie by halftime against the six-time winners. But after thunder and lightning and a torrential rain squall, United finally came to their senses with Bryan Mbemmo's first goal for his new club offering them an escape route.

## Shooters continue to shine

The gold and silver from Gurpreet and Amanpreet swelled India's medals tally to 82

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Shymkent, August 28:** Gurpreet Singh led India to a 1-2 finish in the 25m Standard Pistol with Amanpreet Singh securing the silver at the 16th Asian Shooting Championship here Thursday.

The gold and silver from Gurpreet and Amanpreet swelled India's medals tally to 82, including 44 golds, 20 silver and 18 bronze.

The duo also won the team gold along with Harsh Gupta with a combined score of 1709. The other gold medals of the day were won by the 50m Rifle Prone Junior team and 25m Standard Pistol Junior team.

The 37-year-old Gurpreet won his first ever gold medal in an international competition and bettered the bronze he had sealed in the Asian Champion-



ships in the same event 12 years ago in Tehran.

Both Gurpreet and Amanpreet shot identical scores of 572 but Gurpreet's 18 inner circle shots against Amanpreet's 11 ensured the Army shooter finished on top. 25m Rapid Fire Pistol gold medalist Su Lianbo of China won the bronze.

In the junior 25m Standard Pistol event, Suraj Sharma won silver with a score of 571-12x while Tanishq Naidu won the bronze with a score of 568-11x.

Mukesh Nelavalli, then combined with the duo to win the team gold with a combined score of 1703-39x.

## ASIA CUP

# Hockey: India seek WC berth

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Rajgir, August 28:** Three-time champions India will look to put behind their dismal recent form and secure a World Cup berth by winning the men's Asia Cup hockey tournament starting with a tricky opening game against lower-ranked China here Friday.

India and China are placed in Pool A with Japan and Kazakhstan. Pool B consists of title-holders and five-time champions South Korea, Malaysia, Bangladesh and Chinese Taipei.

Kazakhstan, set to play their first Asia Cup in over three decades, and Bangladesh replaced Pakistan and Oman, both of whom withdrew from the event.

Pakistan opted out citing security reasons in the backdrop of India's Operation Sindoor following the Pahalgam terror attack in April.

Top two teams from each pool



will qualify for the semifinals, with the final scheduled on September 7. The tournament is India's best and last chance to qualify for next year's World Cup to be jointly hosted by Belgium and the Netherlands from August 14 to 30. India stumbled in their first attempt to secure a spot, dropping to seventh in the world after a dismal European leg of the FIH Pro League.

India secured just one win from eight matches and recorded a record seven-game losing

streak -- the longest in the team's history, forcing chief coach Craig Fulton to go back to the drawing board and field a full strength side for the Asia Cup.

Fulton admitted that the Asia Cup is the "most important tournament of the year."

India are the highest-ranked side in the tournament, and the continent's flag-bearer in world hockey. The tag brings with it pressure and opportunity and the need to silence critics with a dominating show.

## Ajaya, Bedabrat win gold with record lifts

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Ahmedabad, August 28:** Seasoned campaigner Ajaya Babu Valluri and young lifter Bedabrat Bharali produced record-breaking performances to clinch gold medals at the Commonwealth Weightlifting Championships, here Thursday.

In the senior men's 79kg, National Games champion Ajaya lifted a total of 335kg, including a championship record 152kg in snatch and 183kg in clean and jerk.

After fouling his first attempt at 148kg, he lifted the same weight in his second before raising it to 152kg, eclipsing the previous snatch record of 147kg set by Nigeria's Eddion Joseph Umoafia.

In clean and jerk, he steadily went up from 176kg to 180kg before completing his final record-breaking lift of 183kg for a 335kg total.

Valluri had also won gold at last year's edition but in the higher 81kg category.

India added another medal in the women's section with 2022 CWG bronze medallist Harjinder Kaur settling for bronze in the 69kg.

She managed 95kg in snatch and 123kg in clean and jerk for a total of 222kg.

After fouling her opening attempt at 99kg, Harjinder cleared 95kg in the second but failed again at 99kg.

In clean and jerk, only her second attempt at 123kg stood as she faltered at 123kg and 128kg in her other lifts.

In the junior men's 79kg, Bharali registered record lifts across snatch, clean and jerk and total to clinch gold with 326kg with record performances in all three.

He improved steadily from 138kg to 142kg and finally 145kg in snatch, going past the previous record of 139kg. In clean and jerk, he lifted 173kg, 177kg and then 181kg, surpassing the earlier record of 169kg.

# AIFF, FSDL submit 'consensual resolution' to SC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, August 28:** The logjam in Indian football could be headed for a resolution with the AIFF and FSDL agreeing to a "transparent tender" process for the selection of a commercial partner to conduct the Indian Super League in December in a proposal submitted to the Supreme Court here Thursday.

The resolution was submitted to the Supreme Court after the All India Football Federation (AIFF) and Football Sports Development Limited (FSDL) held discussions on the matter Monday as per an earlier directive of the apex court.

The top court is also seized of a case relating to the constitution of the AIFF.

The AIFF and FSDL said that they have come to a "consensual resolution" in the larger pub-

## ISL LIKELY TO START IN DECEMBER

lic interest and for the promotion of the game in India.

"The AIFF has agreed that: It will conduct an open, competitive and transparent tender (or equivalent process) for selection of a commercial partner to conduct the ISL in line with global best practices," the resolution submitted before the court stated.

"Such process will be conducted in conformity with the National Sports Development Code 2011, the National Sports Governance Act 2025, the AIFF Constitution, and applicable FI-FA/Asian Football Confederation (AFC) regulations.

"The process may be managed by an independent professional firm of repute, such as



one of the 'Big Four' or an entity of equivalent standing."

The AIFF and the FSDL agreed that the process will be concluded by October 15, 2025, thereby providing certainty to clubs, broadcasters, sponsors and other stakeholders. Subject to the consent of the AFC, the new league season can thereafter commence in December.

The agreement between the two parties came a couple of days after the world football governing body FIFA and the Asian Football Confederation threatened an international ban on India, issuing a stern ultimatum to the AIFF that it must adopt and ratify a new constitution by October 30 or risk suspension.

To ensure the timely commencement of the football calendar in the country and to maintain competitive continuity, the AIFF and the FSDL agreed that the 2025-26 season may begin with the Super Cup or another domestic competition directly under the control of the national federation, after an adequate pre-season period.

"The Super Cup, being a domestic tournament open to clubs across multiple tiers ensures that the players and clubs remain competitively engaged pending the commencement of the league season," the resolution said.

The idea of holding Super Cup as season opener to give competitive matches to the players was first mooted in a meeting between the AIFF and 13 ISL clubs in Delhi August 7.