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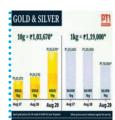
Actor Samantha Ruth Prabhu shares her fitness regime which is not only practical but also very inspirational

LEISURE | P2



Court sacks Thai PM

Thailand's Constitutional Court dismisses PM Paetongtarn Shinawatra for ethics violations, ending her year-long tenure



Gold hits fresh all-time high of ₹1,03,670 per 10 gram in the national capital Friday, according to All India Sarafa Association



Winning start

Skipper Harmanpreet fires a hat-trick but India were far from

BHUBANESWAR | SATURDAY | AUGUST 30, 2025

Declining dialogue in Parl, Assemblies concerning: Birla

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, August 29: Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla said Friday that the role of parliamentary committees has been growing as they work above the divide of partisan politics at a time when the declining level of discussion and dialogue in Parliament and state assemblies has caused concerns.

Speaking at the national conference of chairpersons of committees of Parliament and state legislatures on the welfare of SCs and STs. Birla said these panels, which comprise members of different parties and oversee works of ministries, have made a big contribution to democracy since Independence.

Their role has been rising as they work above partisan politics, he said. "The decline in the level of the expected dialogue and discussion in the Lok Sabha and state legislatures has made all of us concerned," Birla said in his speech, as he also flagged the choice of words and conduct in these Houses. His comments came in the backdrop of an almost washed-out Monsoon session in Parliament due to the relentless protests of the opposition parties over the Special Intensive Review (SIR) of electoral rolls in Bihar. Protests and disruptions by the Opposition, irrespective of parties, in state assemblies are also a common occurrence.

lawmakers Addressing drawn from different parties, Birla said the committees related to the welfare of SCs and STs can play an important role in their economic empowerment by scrutinising the budget allocated for them and its efficacy. and by making appropriate recommendations. Education has still not reached these communities as it should, he is the basis for socio-economic betterment.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



policeman. I can park you in a jail for 30 days, anytime

INTERNATIONAL | P10

Gold shines

BUSINESS | P11



impressive in their narrow 4-3 win over lower-ranked China

SPORTS | P12

12 PAGE | ₹5.00

PUBLIC IRE: A protester throws a rock at riot police officers during an agitation against lavish allowances given to parliament members, in Jakarta

Ethanol push faces backlash

New Delhi, August 29: The Union government is facing a backlash from motorists after the nationwide rollout of fuel blended with 20% ethanol, amid fears - stoked by a lack of clarity from some automakers - that it may affect the performance of particularly older vehicles.

India, the world's third largest car market, set a 2025 target years ago for 20% ethanol blending in fuel, called E20, as part of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's focus on clean energy. But in recent weeks it has become the only choice at nearly all of the country's 90,000 fuel stations. Older blends, like E5 and E10. typically seen as more compatible with old cars, have mostly been removed, leaving drivers with just one choice.

The government says E20 lowers carbon emissions, but has conceded in press statements addressing consumer worries that there could be a "marginal" hit on fuel efficiency of old cars. Automakers, already bat-

ages of rare-earth magnets, have provided mixed guidance, adding to consumer anger over the lack of choice. A PIL against the move will be heard in the Supreme Court Monday.

Two fuel station managers in the northern city of Luc know told Reuters that driv ers were getting so angry that some stations had stopped pro viding information about the change. "People hurl abuse at us. We then decided to not tell people about it," said one manager, Ramesh Pandey.

The ministries of petroleum and road transport did not respond to requests for comment.

"India's ethanol journey is unstoppable," petroleum minister Hardeep Singh Puri said August 8, adding that "some lobbies with vested interests are actively attempt ing to create confusion."

Days later, Puri's minis try said "in case of certain older vehicles, some rubber parts and gaskets may re quire replacement" calling it a "simple process."

₹ breaches 88 against \$ GDP grows 7.8% in Q1: Govt data The rupee plunged to its lifeup from 1.5 per cent in the

time low Friday, breaching past the 88-per-dollar mark for the first time, amid fears that harsh US tariffs could hamper economic growth. This week. Washington imposed an additional 25% duty on Indian goods, effectively doubling the total tariff burden to 50%. These measures risk widening India's trade said, stressing that education deficit at a time when foreign portfolio inflows are already weak, putting further strain on the country's balance of payments. So far this year, foreign portfolio investors have pulled \$9.7 billion from Indian debt and equity markets. Over the three trading sessions since the tariff announcement, more than \$1 billion has been withdrawn by foreign investors from Indian equities

AGENCIES

Mumbai, August 29: The rupee breached the 88-mark for the first time and closed at an all-time low of 88.09 against the US dollar Friday, registering a sharp

decline of 51 paise amid

heightened Indo-US trade deal tensions.

Forex traders said the rupee is under persistent pressure amid the imposition of steep tariffs by the US compounded with persistent foreign fund outflows and month-end dollar demand.

Moreover, a negative trend in domestic equities dented market sentiments.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the rupee opened at 87.73 against the US dollar, then lost ground and fell to an intra-day low of 88 33. The domestic unit settled for the day at an alltime low of 88.09 against

a sharp fall of 51 paise over its previous close. On Thursday, the rupee

rose by 11 paise to close at 87.58 against the US dollar. This is the first time the rupee has breached the 88/

US dollar level. On February 10, 2025, the unit had witnessed an intra-day low of 87.95 and on August 5, 2025, the domestic unit had settled at 87.88 against the greenback

"We expect the rupee to trade with a negative bias as additional trade tariffs on India by the US raise worries over India's trade deficit. Weak domestic markets and selling pressure from the greenback, registering FIIs may pressurise the

₹11.21L-cr wiped out in three days

NEW DELHI: Stock market investors became poorer by ₹11.21 lakh crore in three days of selling pressure, where the enchmark Sensex tumbled 1.826 points. In the past three trading days, the BSE benchmark has plummeted 1.826.26 Friday, the 30-share BSE Sensex dropped 270.92 points or 0.34 During the day, it declined 338.81 points or 0.42 per cent to 79,741.76. The market capi talisation of BSE-listed firms to ₹4.43.65.504.09 crore (\$5.05

rupee further," said Anuj Chaudhary, Research Analyst Currency and commodities Mirae Asset ShareKhan.

The Reserve Bank of India, in its latest bulletin Thursday, said 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

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 29: Indian economy grew by 7.8 per cent in April-June -- the highest in five quarters - before the disruptive US tariffs were imposed. The GDP growth in the first quarter of the ongoing fiscal year was mainly due to good showing by the farm sector, as per government data.

India remains the fastest-growing major economy, as China's GDP growth in the April-June period was 5.2 per cent. The previous highest GDP growth was 8.4 per cent in January-March of 2024, as per the data.

The agriculture sector recorded a 3.7 per cent growth, April-June period of 2024-25, as per NSO data released Friday. However, manufacturing sector growth marginally increased to 7.7 per cent in the first quarter of FY26 compared to 7.6 per cent in the year-ago period. The NSO said, "Real GDP

or GDP at Constant Prices in Q1 of FY26 is estimated dia police station August 20 at ₹47.89 lakh crore, against ₹44.42 lakh crore in Q1 of FY25, registering a growth rate of 7.8 per cent. Nominal GDP or GDP at Current Prices in Q1 of FY26 is estimated at ₹86.05 lakh crore, against ₹79.08 lakh crore in Q1 of FY25, showing a growth rate

sexually harassing seven girl students

Teacher booked for

Bhubaneswar, August 29: A 36-vear-old Sanskrit teacher of a government-run school in Sundargarh district has been booked for allegedly sexually harassing seven girl students of the institute, police said Friday.

According to police, the headmistress of the school lodged a complaint at Gurunafter the allegations surfaced. A case was registered un-

der Sections 74 (assault or criminal force on a woman with intent to outrage her modesty), 75 (sexual harass ment) and 351 (2) [criminal intimidation] of BNS and sections 8 and 12 of POCSO Act, a police officer said.

Tokyo using AI to prepare for Mt Fuji eruption

Tokyo, August 29: Mount Fuji hasn't erupted since 1707. But for Volcanic Disaster Preparedness Day, Japanese officials have released computer- and AI-generated videos showing a simulation of a potential violent eruption of the active volcano.

The videos, released this week, are meant to prepare the 37 million residents in the greater Tokyo metropolitan area for potential disasters

The Tokyo Metropolitan Government's video warns an eruption could strike "at any moment, without warning," depicting volcanic ash shrouding central Tokyo, about 100 kilometres (60 miles) away, within hours, paralyzing transportation. disrupting food and power, and causing long-term respi-



The video ends with the message: "We need to arm ourselves with facts and prepare for disaster in our daily lives." It shows a family's pantry stocked with canned food and a first-aid kit.

in case of an emergency," it The Tokyo government explained.

there are currently no signs of Fuji erupting. "The simulation is designed to equip residents with accurate knowledge and preparedness measures they can take

caused anxiety and confusion among some residents. "Are there actually any

signs of eruption?" said Shinichiro Kariya, a 57-yearold hospital employee. "Why are we now hearing things like 10 centimeters of ash could fall,' even in Tokyo? I'm wondering why this is happening all of a sudden."

Hiromi Ooki, who lives in Mishima City, which has prime views of Fuji, said she planned to buy emergency supplies the next day. "Nature's power is so great that maybe it's better if it scares us a little," she said.

Representatives of both the Tokyo Metropolitan Government and Japan's Cabinet Office Disaster Prevention Division said they had not received complaints from Tokyo residents about the videos.

fessor and risk communication expert Naoya Sekiya said the government has for years modeled scenarios for volcanic eruptions and earthquakes, but added that does not mean Fuji is about to erupt.

'There's no particular significance to the timing," Sekiya said

Japan is highly vulnerable to natural disasters because of its climate and topography and is known for its meticulous disaster planning which spans earthquakes, typhoons, floods, mudslides and volcanic eruptions.

The Japan Meteorological Agency last August issued its first-ever "megaquake advisory" after a powerful quake struck off the southeastern coast of the southern main island of Kyushu.



eisure



KENDRICK, SETH ROGEN SET TO STAR IN BABIES

Actors Anna Kendrick and Seth Rogen are in negotiations to feature in an upcoming comedy film, titled Babies. According to the entertainment news outlet Variety, the project is a Los Angeles-set contemporary comedy drama

EMMA STONE REVEALS HER FAME COPING MECHANISM

The two-time Oscar winner Emma Stone addressed the challenges of navigating fame and the demands of her career during a press conference at the Venice Film Festival, where her new film Bugonia is premiering



FORTUNE **FORECAST**



You may take a holiday today to be with your family, and perhaps go to meet your relatives who live nearby. It will make your kith and kin very happy. They will be surprised and Ganesha gives you the thumbs-up.

TAURUS

This day you could be in for some unexpected and unpleasant shocks, warns Ganesha. There is a strong likelihood of getting insulted or humiliated. You must therefore be alert and on your toes. You could that way, manage to avert situations that may threaten your standing and reputation. If, however, you do get hurt, control you urge to retaliate.

Life.

about

movie

meeting

commer-

cial

Shruti

offered an

insightful

perspec-

When asked

the

not

expectations,

It is the time to indulge in luxury and entertainment. You will pay more attention to household matters and tend to your children's needs. You will be concerned about your diet and other health matters in the evening, however, these worries are only of a temporary nature, says Ganesha.

CANCER

You will be ready to understand the meaning of life. You will get new responsibilities in your job or business, which means a promotion and pay hike. You may take an instinctive decision, which you may repent later. Take a calculated and thoughtful step, says Ganesha

You will spend time with

your friends. You will be helpful to your friends and colleagues. You will work hard according to your capability today. You will experience the satisfaction of a job well done at the end of the day, says Ganesha.

VIRGO

An outspoken discussion with a loved one is on the cards today. Work hard to complete the work that you have been procrastiating for a long time, says Ganesha. A holy place is beckoning you. However. Ganesha advises you to evaluate all your options while taking your decisions.

Ganesha says you will try to impress other people with your appearance and personality. Under current circumstances there are chances of you falling in love with a new person who will become your beloved. The time spent with this person will be unforgettable says Ganesha, as love is in the air.

SCORPIO

Your kids are your pride, especially today when they come out with flying colour in their academics. It's a favourable day to invest your money in home or land. In the evening, you may just feel like going to a secluded place and enjoy the twilight.

SAGITTARIUS

Today, you may discover vour innate talents and will be recognised for that with a huge round of applause. Aiming to carve a niche for yourself, you may take up Herculean task at work under the guidance of your boss. Way to go!

CAPRICORN

You will be in chirpy mood today, want to do anything and everything. Business opportunities will grab your eye balls, and you want to go ahead with those ideas. Ganesha predicts you will succeed in these ventures as luck is by your side. Socially, you will be busy as you will meet a lot of people and impress them with your wit and humour.

AQUARIUS

Today may give you an all-time high! The day will prove important with regard to your future. Sudden and unexpected profits are on the cards, and recognition and rewards at your workplace will make you happy. Ganesha says that you should enjoy it while it lasts.

PISCES

Today is likely to be an extremely competitive and demanding day for you. You need to be extremely careful in how you go about doing your tasks, so as to not give anyone a chance to pick out mistakes in your work. You will feel like taking a break from work during the later part of the day and go visit some nearby places, says Ganesha.

THUG LIFE'S POOR SHOW

Shruti defends dad Kamal

Mumbai: Shruti Haasan, She emphasised one of Indian cinema's that her father has faced most versatile actresses both success and failure and daughter of legendary throughout his illustrious actor Kamal Haasan, has career, but neither defines him. "The ending of Thug been shining on screen for over a decade with an im-Life didn't affect him. He pressive lineup of films. In a lives for cinema," she said recent interview that drew with conviction. Shruti rewide attention, Shruti spoke vealed that Kamal reinvests candidly about her father's everything he earns back enduring relationship with into films, without person filmmaking and the lukeal indulgences. "He has no warm audience response to desires like buying cars or his latest film Thug houses-his only dream

has always been cinema," she explained underlining his lifelong dedication to the craft.

Meanwhile, Shruti's own nerformance in Rajinikanth's Coolie has been earning praise. Her portrayal of a bold, confident woman with both style and substance has struck chord with audiences. this With

role, Shruti has again prov en her art istic depth while con tinuing win hearts.

Sam's fitness philosophy

Mumbai: Samantha Ruth Prabhu has long been admired not just for her acting, but for her discipline and commitment to fitness. Her approach is refreshingly different-fitness, for her, isn't about achieving a "bikini body," but about building strength, resilience, and longterm wellness.

She believes strength training is the backbone of her routine, dismissing the myth that lifting weights makes women bulky. Instead, she highlights its benefits in boosting metabolism, improvbone density, and maintaining energy-especially crucial for women in

Unlike many who indulge in cheat Samantha days, maintains a consistent and structured diet. She eats similar meals every day, a practice she credits for her lean physique and glowing skin. While some might find it monotonous, for her, food is fuel to support performance, not just to satis-

their 30s and 40s.

Consistency is her mantra. Whether at home or traveling, her mornings begin with training-weightlifting, core exercises, or mobility work. She often shares glimpses on social media, inspiring her followers to see fitness as daily hard work, not shortcuts.

For Samantha, it's not about perfection, but progress. Her journey proves that true transformation stems from discipline, patience, and a mindset rooted in strength and consistency.



It's okay to have days off: Malaika

Mumbai: Bollywood diva Malaika Arora has shared her mantra for keeping her confidence intact on days when you don't feel her best. In a conversation with

this news agency, Malaika told: "I remind myself it's okay to have days off . Moving my body, practicing gratitude, and owning my flaws always

bring me back to cen-Talking about her fashion choices, which are often trendsetting and how she balances com-

ambassador for HYUE, said: "For me, glamour should never come at the cost of comfort. True style is when you can walk into room look-

> ing stunbut ning still feel like yourself.

> > Malaika was





Law has teeth but we got the bite

he revised Supreme court directive implied our '*galli ki* Rani' and her daughter Renee (meaning reborn) christened by hubby after being rescued from a sewer, shall be immunized and returned to their 'safe haven'. But pregnant Renee was about to deliver.

Narrow roads have been further narrowed by 10-12 gaping holes drilled straight through them to prop up huge decorative gates. Even Lord Ganesha, the remover of obstacles must have sighed in exasperation! (Government or Gods- "Of the people, by the people and for the people"). A rat-tled Vigneshwara would have barely managed to ride to the pandal on his mousey carriage

Dig it, dismantle it, ditch it and leave



Vakratunda Mahakaya: Survakoti Samanrabha Nirvighnam Kuru Me Deva: Sarva Karveshu Sarvada behind perfect traps for little pups to slip in, suffocate and 'meet their maker in heaven.' I wish to bare my canines and growl, not that I possess sharp pointed ones like Yudhisthira's loyal companion. Morsels of aloo-chaat and momos tossed out of love by civilian crowd with meagre civic sense, thronging the carnival (mela), are an open invitation for the strays to go astray. So much for banning public feeding of street dogs and establishing designated feeding places!

At least, the 4-legged canines trolls past the barricades while my 4- wheeler is banned from my home-lane as festive excursions are underway. Am I to come in the way of scores of revellers claiming the thoroughfare for month-long celebrations! How can I not

choose to make this hooman sacrifice of mutely staring at vehicles parked *chock-a-bloc*k on all possible streets and abandon mine a block away from home! Designated parking spaces indeed are mythical creatures for iunta! Are the courts up for tackling this

one? Of course not. Have I been bitten and mauled by a stray dog? No, Sir. Humans bite the peace out of each other every single day. Why the tantrum?

A forensic anthropology module taught me to differentiate between non-human bones from human remains. I am dying to take a module on behavioural anthropology that reminds and reassures me that we were meant to be more evolved than non-humans. Ganapati Bappa Morya

9

8

SUDOKU

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

manner that every row, column and 3x3 box contains

4

5 8

2

9

9

2

3

6

4

2

9 4

the digits 1 to 9, without repeating any.

8

9

SOLUTIONS

5

PEANUTS



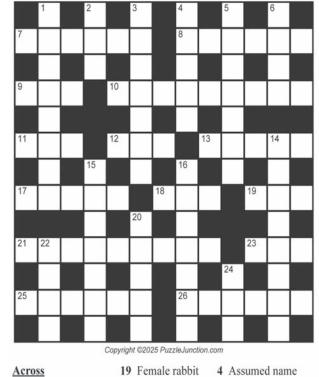
CALVIN AND HOBBES



BREVITY



DOST **CROSSWORD**



Across

7 Be a busybody

- 8 Calamine, e.g. 9 Wetland
- 10 Methodical 11 Skye cap
- 12 Nile reptile
- 13 River

- 17 Chill out 18 Evergreen
- embankment
 - 3 She's in the
- 1 Move

23 Assist

- 2 Tokyo, once
- Down

21 Smelly cheese

25 Jovian planet

26 Plump

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

- e.g. 15 Seaport

 - 16 Gallery display

5 Now and then (2,5)

6 Apple leftover

14 Anger and hate,

- (4,3)
- 20 Combat zone
- 22 Persia, today 24 Greek letter
- SUDOKU





owntown

Special anti-drug CM: Meet will pave way for prosperous future of SCs, STs drive from Sept 1

launch a special anti-drug campaign September 1, in a bid to curb consumption, smuggling and sale of illegal drugs and instate Law and Excise Minister Prithiviraj Harichandan at Lok Seva Bhavan Friday.

Officials from the Police Administration, Excise department, Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC), and Narstances Act (IT-NDPS Act) and CrPC 110 (BNS Section-129) to apprehend habitual offenders, establishment of model drug control units at district levels, intensification of raids in educational institutions, especially in Bhubaneswar, inter-departmental coordination using technology and strategic planning. Harichandan stressed the ur-

gency of the campaign, noting a rise in crimes linked to drug abuse. Chief Secretary Manoj



cotics Control Bureau (NCB) participated in the strategy session, according to sources.

Key actions discussed during the meeting include 'Operation Prahar' by the Special Task Force (STF) targeting professional criminals, enforcement of prevention of Illicit Traffic in Narcotics Ahuja assured full administrative support to the initiative. Senior officials, including

Principal Secretary Bhaskar Jyoti Sharma. IG-CID-CB Sarthak Sarangi, Excise Commissioner P Anvesha Reddy, NCB Regional Director Kuldeep Sharma, and ACP Narasingh Bhola also attended the meeting.

Surrender licences, OSBC tells non-practising lawyers

Bhubaneswar, August 29: Keeping in view several lawvers in the state are not practicing law and instead are engaged in other activities, the Odisha State Bar Council (OSBC) has asked these lawyers to surrender their licences within a month.

The bar council, in a statement issued Friday, said that it was found that some lawyers are engaged in other activities, including business activities and also hold offices of profit after getting licences to practise law.

The OSBC also said that disciplinary action would be taken against those non-practising lawyers who fail to surrender their licences within a month.

The direction comes after allegations came to the fore that some law graduates are doing jobs in private companies and government entities, and are also engaged in business activities after securing licences to practise law. This is a clear violation of the norms prescribed under the Advocates Act, 1961, said the statement. The OSBC, in a resolution passed April 12 this year, has decided to initiate disciplinary action against such non-practising lawyers. The council has asked all bar associations in the state to take action against these non-practising lawyers if they fail to surrender their licences within a month.

and Members of Parliamentary and State/UT Committees on the Welfare of SCs and STs

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, August 29:

Participating in the National

Conference of Chairpersons

here, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi said that this conference is being held outside Delhi for the first time in 25 years, and that too in Odisha, which is a matter of pride. He expressed gratitude to Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla for this. He noted that several national and international conferences have been held in Odisha, enhancing the state's significance at national level.

The Chief Minister stated that the present condition of STs & SCs has improved significantly. "Our present is good, tomorrow will definitely be much better,' said Majhi, expressing confidence that this conference will pave the way for a prosperous

future for these communities. He recalled that during Independence, the country faced many social and political challenges, particularly concerning Dalits and tribals. However, following Babasaheb Ambedkar's principles, significant progress has been achieved. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, efforts have intensified to bring these communities fully into the mainstream and enable their meaningful contribution to building a developed India. Programmes

Stating that SCs & STs comprise 40 per cent of Odisha's population, the CM highlighted various development schemes for their welfare

such as PM Janman and Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhivan play a critical role in achieving these objectives.

Stating that SCs & STs comprise 40 per cent of Odisha's population, the CM highlighted various developmental schemes for their welfare. He said that along with development, the Odisha government is also focusing on preserving tribal culture through initiatives like Tribal Culture and Heritage Building and the Tribal Language Institute. Steps are being taken to introduce education in tribal languages as well.

He remarked that this conference will be historic in every sense, as its recommendations will shape new policies and programmes. Majhi expressed hope that people from these communities will join the mainstream and significantly contribute to a prosperous Odisha and a developed India.

Attending the conference. Union Tribal Affairs Minister Jual Oram said nearly 5 efitted from PM Janman and Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Yojana.

He added that educational opportunities are being expanded through Eklavya Model Residential Schools and Ashram Schools.

Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan emphasised the government's responsibility to ensure that disadvantaged SC and ST students benefit from the new education policy.

"The number of students has increased from 46 lakh to 66 lakh in the last few years,

Rajya Sabha Deputy Speaker Harivansh noted that the welfare budget for SCs and STs has increased fourfold in the past decade, and the development of tribal-dominated states has helped control problems like

"This committee not only addresses security concerns but also works towards ensuring social equality," he added.

Chairman of the Lok Sabha's SC/ST Welfare Committee, Faggan Singh Kulaste, urged community members to play an active role not just in avail ing scheme benefits but also in contributing to the nation's development.

Assembly Speaker Surama Padhi, in her welcome address, said the role of legislators is to frame policies and ensure that their benefits reach the remot-

Birla bats for Ambedkar's **Constitutional principles**

Bhubaneswar, August 29: Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla Friday said that steps are being taken to ensure justice for Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), and other backward classes (OBCs) in social and economic spheres, based on the principles of the Constitution envisioned by Dr BR Ambedkar.

Inaugurating the twoday National Conference of Chairpersons and Members of Parliamentary and State/ UT Committees on the Welfare of SCs and STs, Birla said the progress achieved by these communities so far has been possible due to the continuous suggestions, observations, and supervision of these committees

bers of SC/ST Welfare Committees work beyond party affiliations, taking decisions solely for the welfare and development of the commu-

"In view of the changing

circumstances, the recom-

mendations made in this conference will be implemented Our goal is to build an egalitarian society, which will also contribute to the vision of a developed India," he added. Birla noted that adopting

innovative ideas emerging from discussions and replicating best practices from different states would help build an equal and just society for marginalized groups.

On the occasion, Birla also released a souvenir and also inaugurated an exhibition.

ence would guide efforts in this direction.

On the occasion, Birla also inaugurated an exhibition at the Convention Hall.

This is the sixth such nation al conference since its inception in 1976, but the first to be held outside Delhi. The event aims to foster dialogue, review

STs, and identify strategies for their full integration into the mainstream in line with con-

stitutional provisions.

More than 200 delegates, including Chairpersons and Members from Parliament and 19 State Legislatures, are attending the conference. Birla will address the valedictory



BIDING ADIEU: Immersion of Ganesh idols in progress at a makeshift pond on Kuakhai riverbed in Bhubaneswar,

GST reforms will be a gamechanger: (

Bhubaneswar, August 29: The proposed GST reforms will bring a huge change in trade and commerce in the country, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi said Friday.

Addressing the valedictory session of a seminar on 'Viksit Odisha, 2036 -- Odisha on Growth Path' organised by Indian Chamber of Commerce and Laghu Udvog Bharati, Majhi said if GST rates are reduced, consumption will increase. "If consumption increases, there will be more manufacturing, which will enhance employment," he said.

Majhi said the only goal of his government is to place Odisha among the top five states in the country.

"To achieve this goal, we have started working by taking agriculture, industry and social

development as growth engines. We need holistic development in the state. Our efforts are continuing to enrich the state with industry and turn it into a manufacturing hub by utilising mineral resources," he said.

The CM said the state government is giving importance to the development of sectors such as mining and metals, chemicals and petrochemicals, IT, food processing, tourism, and MSMEs.

"We have prepared a vision document, the collective dream of 4.5 crore people of our state,' he said. "Starting from education, health, to agriculture, we have to become self-reliant in all sectors. We have to build worldclass infrastructure. Along with this, we have to create skilled human resources, adequate energy," he added. 'Viksit Odisha 2036' roadmap is based on three principles - "People first, prosperity for all and technology-led development", Majhi said.

He said railway projects worth about ₹80,000 crore, along with highway and road projects worth more than ₹12,000 crore, are being implemented in the state.

"Along with this, a few days ago, the Centre announced the Capital Region Ring Road at a cost of ₹8,308 crore. Besides, the state government will also construct 75,000 km of high-quality roads over the next five years,' he said. "While there are three major ports in the state, we have set a target of constructing four new ports," he noted.

Majhi said his government has also decided to invest in develop-

employment opportunities, ing irrigation facilities for about over the next five years.

Stating that urbanisation in the state is projected to increase to 60 per cent by 2047, he noted, "For this, we are paying special attention to creating new urban areas, affordable housing, and world-class infrastructure. We will develop the cities of Bhubaneswar, Cuttack, Rourkela, Berhampur and Sambalpur as models of modern urban infra-

structure. Industries Minister Sampada Chandra Swain said time has already been set for building a

"developed Odisha". "A healthy society is necessary for a developed state and nation. This requires everyone's efforts. We have abundant resources. We have the youth power. We have to utilise them

and move forward." he said.

Ganesh Puja in Dubai

Bhubaneswar: Emirates Odia Paribar (EOP) celebrated Ganesh Chaturthi with devotion and cultural fervour at Karama Centre in Dubai. drawing participation of more than 300 Odias across the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Devotees from nearly all seven Emirates joined the celebrations. The puia was performed with complete adherence to traditional rituals, including Ganesh Arati, Pushpanjali, and offerings, creating an atmosphere of spiritual sanctity. A soulful Bhajan Sandhya followed, enhancing the festive spirit. Beyond rituals, the event became a platform for cultural bonding, as members dressed in traditional attire and expressed joy at celebrating one of Odisha's most cherished festivals away from home. Speaking on the occasion, a representative of Emirates Odia Paribar said, "Such celebrations are not only about devotion, but also about preserving our cultural roots and giving the younger generation a sense of belonging while living in a

multicultural country like the UAE."

An engineering marvel brings Aizawl onto rail map PRATYUSH KUMAR DASH, OP

Aizawl, August 29: In a moment of historic significance, Mizoram's capital Aizawl is now connected to the national railway network with the completion of Bairabi-Sairang Broad Gauge (BG) railway line, an engineering marvel, marking a milestone in the development of infrastructure in the Northeast. The 51.38-km line, which will be officially inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi September 13, promises to transform travel, trade, and tourism and foster economic growth in this remote hill state.

This newly constructed railway line is a victory of engineering and perseverance. Built over difficult terrain that restricted construction activities to just four months a year due to heavy rainfall, the project has taken nearly 11 years for completion. PM Modi had laid its foundation stone November 29, 2014. Involving an investment of about ₹5,021.45 crore, this is one of the most ambitious projects undertaken by Indian Railways in the Northeast.

The Bairabi-Sairang line comprises 48 tunnels with a combined length of 12,853 metres, 55 major bridges, 87 minor hridges, five road over bridges (ROBs), and six road under bridges (RUBs). Among the most striking features is Bridge No-196, which stands at a height of 104 metres—taller than Delhi's iconic Qutub Minar by 42 metres. The newly laid track also includes four new railway stations at Hortoki, Kawnpui, Mualkhang, and Sairang, offering fresh gateways for both

passenger and goods trains. The final leg of the project,

BAIRABI-SAIRANG LINE FLAG-OFF SEPT 13



from Hortoki to Sairang, was the most challenging stretch. The section includes 32 tunnels and 35 major bridges, built through rugged terrains covered with dense forest. The first ever successful trial run to Sairang near Aizawl was conducted May 1 this year.

Prior to this development, the rail network in Mizoram extended only as far as Bairabi. Travellers to Aizawl had to continue their journey by road. a route frequently disrupted by landslides and adverse weather. With the completion of the rail line, travel from Bairabi to Aizawl will now take only one to one-and-a-half hours, compared to the previous five to six hours by road.

The railway line is set to open direct passenger and freight services to major cities including Kolkata, Agartala, and Delhi. The operationalisation of this line is expected to give a major boost to tourism, ease of travel, and commercial activity in the state, which has long been dependent on road transport for connectivity with the rest of the country.

The project is not merely a transportation upgrade but a symbol of India's strategic focus on developing infrastructure in the Northeast. With Aizawl now connected by rail. four of the eight Northeastern state capitals—Dispur (Assam), Agartala (Tripura), Itanagar (Arunachal Pradesh), and Aizawl (Mizoram)-are linked to the Indian railway grid. This development is seen as a critical step towards regional integration and economic upliftment.

The railway line stands as a testament to the capabilities of Indian Railways and the engineering excellence that went into building this project through extremely challenging conditions

Looking ahead, there are strategic plans to further extend the Bairabi-Sairang railway line up to the Kaladan re gion in Myanmar, as part of India's ambitious Act East Policy This proposed extension aims to enhance cross-border connectivity and facilitate deeper economic and strategic integration between India's Northeast and Southeast Asia.



Apollo Hospitals Bhubaneswar Chief Operating Officer and Medical Services Director Dr Alok Srivastava inaugurates Odisha's first Nurse-Led Clinic at hospital premises, under the visionary leadership of Apollo Hospitals Group Director Nursing Capt (Dr) Usha Banerjee

MoU inked to aid education of IAF personnel, their wards

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 29: In order to facilitate higher education opportunities for currently serving and retired Indian Air Force (IAF) personnel, as well as their wards in both engineering and medical programmes, Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology (KIIT)-DU signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Indian Air Force (IAF) here Friday.

The agreement was formalised between Assistant Chief of the Air Staff (Education). Air Vice Marshal Hariit S Sidana and KIIT-DU Vice Chancellor Saranjit Singh.

The pact aims to offer significant educational benefits, including concession in tuition fees for wards of serving and retired IAF personnel. In addition, fee exemption and support will be extended to the wards of personnel who lost their lives during service. Admissions will be subject to eligibility criteria such as NEET for medical and dental programmes and KIIT Entrance Examination (KIITEE) for



engineering and other courses.

Speaking on the occasion, Singh said, "The main objective of the MoU is to ensure quality education and financial support for the wards of Indian Air Force personnel. This collaboration also paves the way for joint initiatives between KIIT and education wing of the Indian Air Force in R&D projects and development of short-term educational programmes."

On the side-lines of the signing ceremony, IAF officials also paid a courtesy visit to KIIT and KISS founder Achyuta Samanta and lauded his vision for inclusive education and nation-building process.

Bhubaneswar, August 29: Governor Hari Babu Kambhampati, speaking at the state-level National Sports Day celebration at Soochana Bhavan here Friday said that a society which embraces sports, nurtures healthier citizens. fosters inclusivity and builds stronger communities.

"Sports serve as a true equaliser, breaking barriers of caste, creed and gender, uniting everyone under the shared spirit of excellence," the governor said, adding that sport is not confined to stadiums and playgrounds alone but form an essential part of daily life. "They instill perseverance, teamwork, time management and resilience — qualities equally valuable in classrooms, workplaces and every walk of life," he noted.

The governor also presented Biju Patnaik Sports Awards for 2024 to outstanding athletes, coaches and sports journalists on the occasion.

Paying tribute to hockey legend Major Dhvan Chand on his birth anniversary, Kambhampati said his legacy reminds us that sport is not merely contest of strength or skill but a celebration of discipline and determination. He congratulated award winners, calling them torchbearers of Odisha's sporting spirit, and praised Biju Patnaik Bravery Award recipients for their courage and selfless service.

Highlighting Odisha's sport traditions, the governor said that the state has consistently produced champions in hockey, athletics, swimming and cricket. "In recent years, Odisha has emerged as a major sporting hub by hosting prestigious events such as the FIH Hockey Pro League, Kalinga Super Cup Football, International Badminton Tournament and the World Athletics Continental Tour Bronze," Kambhampati said.

The governor credited the



DGP felicitates sportspersons

Bhubaneswar: Odisha Director General of Police Yogesh Bahadur Khurania today felicitated 41 outstanding sportspersons of Odisha Police on the occasion of National Sports Day (NSD), observed to mark the birth anniversary of legendary hockey player Major Dhyan Chand. The DGP lauded the sportspersons for their extraordinary talent and excellence, stating that their achievements have enhanced the reputation of Odisha Police across the country in recent years. Khurania expressed confidence

that the felicitation would inspire young talents in the state to take up sports and motivate them to achieve greater milestones in the future. Highlighting recent achievements, he praised seven Odisha Police athletes for their remarkable success at the World Police and Fire Games held in Birmingham, USA. "The sportspersons created history by winning 13 gold, 3 silver, and 4 bronze medals, bringing glory to the state police," he added. The DGP further expressed hope that more Odisha Police sportspersons would participate in national and international events in the coming years, thereby enhancing the organisation's prestige. During the ceremony, held at RK Padhi Memorial Hall, Cuttack IPS Mess, the DGP presented awards and cash prizes to the sportspersons and wished them a bright future. The event was attended by senior police officers of the state.

transformation to the vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and proactive measures of the state government, including a historic allocation of over ₹4,000 crore for sports infrastructure across all 314 blocks.

Calling upon the youth, he said, "Every child who takes to the field carries immense hope and potential. It is our collective duty to nurture this spirit and make sports a way of life."

On the occasion, Higher Education, Sports & Youth Services and Odia Language Literature and Culture Minister Suryabanshi Suraj said that several initiatives are being taken to strengthen sports from the grassroots level and urged the citizens to transform possibilities into success. Ekamra-Bhubaneswar MLA Babu Singh also addressed the gathering. While

Sports and Youth Services department commissioner-cum-secretary Sachin R Jadhav delivered the welcome address, department's director Yeddula Vijaya proposed vote of thanks.

Meanwhile, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi and Leader of Opposition Naveen Patnaik paid tributes to hockev wizard Dhyan Chand on his birth anniversary. "Let us all come together to build our state as a powerful hub of sports in the entire world and strive to take our sports talents to the top echelons of world sports," Majhi wrote on X.

Patnaik on X, wrote, "The legendary hockey player mesmerised sports lovers with his unmatched hockey skills and passion for sporting excellence. His legacy will continue to inspire sportspersons for years to come."

Stewart School observes the day

Bhubaneswar: Stewart School, Bhubaneswar observed National Sports Day here Friday and honored the students who excelled in sports by presenting medals and recognising their hard work and dedication. The ceremony was graced by esteemed guests. including vice principal M Premanik, school secretary FC North and coordinator Swati Das. Former Indian football goalkeeper Ranjeeta Mohanty joined as chief guest at the event. Speaking at the event, DC North emphasised the importance of sports in a student's life, quoting the famous phrase, "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy." He highlighted how sports help in the holistic development of students, teaching them valuable life skills such as teamwork, discipline, and perseverance



LIST OF AWARDEES

BIJU PATNAIK SPORTS AWARD - 2024

- LIFE-TIME ACHIEVEMENT Bijay Kumar Satpathy (Weightlifting)
- OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE IN SPORTS & GAMES- Animesh Kujur (Athletics)
- EXCELLENCE IN COACHING- Sushama Nanda (Volleyball)
- BEST CONTRIBUTION TO PROMOTION OF SPORTS- Pradyumna Mishra (Kho Kho)
- EXCELLENCE IN SPORTS JOURNALISM- Bimal Kumar Raul (Prameya)
- BEST PARA SPORTSPERSON- Rakhal Kumar Sethy (Para
- UPCOMING ATHLETES (JUNIOR)- Sattwik Swain (Chess)
- BEST SPORTS TECHNICAL OFFICIAL / SUPPORT STAFF -**Sudeep Satpathy**

BIJU PATNAIK BRAVERY AWARD - 2024

Jiban Kumar Behera and Chittaranjan Pradhan

Initiative to revive Hental forest begins in Puri

POST NEWS NETWORK

Astarang, August 29: In a remarkable display of grassroot environmental activism, local communities and NGOs have initiated a major ecological restoration project to reintroduce the Phoenix Paludosa (Hental) at Devi

River estuary. The initiative, spearheaded by the Odisha Paribesh Suraksha Abhiyan Trust (OPSAT), in collaboration with Sabuja Sakha Astaranga, and supported by *Dharitri* and **Orissa POST**, aims to restore 10 hectares of Hental mangrove forests, covering different coastal gram panchayats through community participation under 'One Million Mangroves By 2030' mission.

"We realised we couldn't wait any longer for official channels

to carry out the revival effort," said OPSAT Managing Trustee Soumya Ranjan Biswal. "Our community-driven initiative will not only restore the Hental forests but also significantly enhance local biodiversity," he added.

The initiative has drawn widespread support from local stakeholders, including fisherfolk women groups, and environmental volunteers. "The disappearance of Hental palms affected our coastline and livelihood. This restoration is crucial for our community," said Purnachandra Kandi, a local fish

erman participating in the drive. The launch event saw participation from Sabuja Sakha president Ramakanta Bastia, joined by members Abhaya Kumar Nayak and Deepankar Chatoi, and mangrove community mobiliser trustee Suman Pradhan

Services disrupted as train derails at Vizianagaram

Bhubaneswar: Train services under the jurisdiction of the East Coast Railway (ECoR) were affected today after a goods train derailed at the Vizianagaram railway station yard under Waltair Division. According to ECoR sources, several trains were controlled at different stations en route due to the disruption. These includes Bhubaneswar-Visakhapatnam Vande Bharat Express (20841), Howrah-SMVT Bengaluru Express (12863), Bhubaneswar-KSR Bengaluru Prashanti Express (18463), Shalimar-Vasco-da-Gama Express (18047), Rourkela-Gunupur Rajyarani Express (18117), Patna-Ernakulam Express (22644), Howrah-Chennai Mail Express (12839), Bhubaneswai New-Visakhapatnam Intercity Express (22819) and Bhubaneswar New-Secunderabad Visakha Express (17015). Restoration work is in progress, and efforts are being made to normalise train movement in the section at the earliest, ECoR officials said.

MARKET WATCH			
CURRENCY	BOURSES	COMMODITIES	
INDEX VARIATION	INDEX VARIATION	INDEX VARIATION	
DOLLAR 88.34 • 0.64	SENSEX 79809.65 ▼ 270.92	GOLD ₹ 104,031 	
EURO 103.18 4 0.72	NIFTY 24426.85 → 74.05	SILVER ₹ 120,533 ♠ ₹3359	

	WEATHI		
	BBSR	СТС	FORECAST
Max Temp	33.2°	32.6°	Partly cloudy sky
Min Temp	25.5°	24.4°	with possibility of rain or
Humidity	88%	88%	thundershower
Rainfall	0.1mm	Nil	

IMD warns fresh spell of rain from today

Bhubaneswar, August 29: After experiencing relatively dry days this week, Odisha is expected to witness a fresh spell of heavy rainfall starting August 30, as per the India Meteorological Department (IMD) sources Friday.

The alert comes amid the forecast of a new low-pressure system likely to form over the North Bay of Bengal around September 3. "Thereafter, the system is likely to move west-northwestwards across the northwest Bay of Bengal, the coastal areas of West Bengal and North Odisha, and intensify into a depression around September 5. Accordingly, the monsoon trough is likely to remain south of its normal position during the entire week of August 29 to September 4," the national forecaster said in its

Another low-pressure area may also form at the end of the week from September 5 to 11, it added

According to the weather agency, thunderstorm and lightning, accompanied along with gusty surface wind speed reaching 30 to 40 kmph may occur at one or two places in Sundargarh, Jharsuguda, Bargarh, Sambalpur, Deogarh, Angul, Dhenkanal, Keonjhar, Mayurbhani, Balasore, Bhadrak, Jajpur, Kendrapara, Cuttack, Jagatsinghpur, Puri, Khurda, Nayagarh, Ganjam and Gajapati districts August 30.

Heavy rain accompanied by thunderstorm with lightning and gusty surface wind speed reaching 30 to 40 kmph is likely at one or two places in Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj, Koraput and Ravagada August 31.

sounded for districts of Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj and Sundargarh September 1 and September 3, and Keonjhar, Mayurbhani, Sundargarh, Koraput

and Malkangiri September 2. Thunderstorm and lightning accompanied along with gusty surface wind speed reaching 30 to 40 kmph may also occur at one or two places in Balasore.

Cuttack, Jagatsinghpur, Puri, Khurda, Nayagarh, Ganjam, Gajapati, Jharsuguda, Bargarh, Sambalpur, Deogarh, Angul, Dhenkanal, Sonepur, Boudh, Nuapada, Balangir, Kalahandi, Kandhamal, Nabarangpur and

Rayagada on these four days. While there is no warning thereafter, light to moderate rain may continue at many

Earlier this week, rains triggered by a well-marked low pressure over the Bay of Bengal threw life out of gear in Koraput and Malkangiri districts. Road communication between Koraput and Rayagada, as well as Koraput and Malkangiri, resumed Thursday after the downpour since Tuesday morning submerged stretches of National Highway 326 near Koraput Chhak, cutting off road communications between the

added.

While Bhubaneswar has seen scattered rain over the past few days, the upcoming week could bring intense showers, particularly between September 1 and 3. Commuters are advised to plan accordingly, with possible waterlogging in low-lying areas and traffic disruptions expected during peak hours.

Similar warning has been Bhadrak, Jajpur, Kendrapada, places across the state during **BOOKING STAT** FOR CLASSIFIED **ERTISEMENTS** CONTACT OUR

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

100 villages still marooned for 5th day

Around 30,000 people in the villages are affected by flood waters

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jajpur/Balasore/Bhadrak, August 29: Despite the water level of major rivers of north Odisha receding to below the danger level, around 100 villages in Balasore, Bhadrak and Jajpur districts were still under flood water for the fifth consecutive day Friday, an official said.

Around 30,000 people in the villages are affected by flood waters, he said.

While 80 villages under Baliapal and Bhograi blocks in Balasore are encircled by flood water of around 4 feet high, a similar condition prevailed at 14 other villages under Dasarathapur block in Jajpur district, the official said, adding some pockets in Dhamnagar block of Bhadrak district were still under water.

"Though the water level in river Baitarani has receded, flood waters have remained stagnant in our villages for the past five days. As a result, it damaged my house, destroyed household articles, stored grain and fodder for the livestock.' said Rabindra Samal, a flood-af-



fected villager from Dasaratha-

Samal said, "I returned home from the relief centre, wading through waist-deep water as the roads are still submerged under water. I found my house in bad condition. Presently, I neither have a house to live in nor any food to eat. Although we are being provided a little quantity of rice as relief by the administration, how can we prepare the food as our houses and 'chullah'

(oven) are still under water.

'The government claims that the flood situation has improved after the water level receded in the rivers. But the fact remains that water has now accumulated in our villages after being drained from the river. How could the flood situation improve till the people are in relief camp and unable to light their 'chullah'," asked Sabita Swain, a young woman from the same block. She said that drinking

water is a major problem as all sources of water have been contaminated due to the flood.

Swain said the Dasarathapur area was suddenly inundated due to a breach on the embankment of Kani river, a tributary of Baitarani. "We could not find time to collect our essentials and ran away from the village seeing the flood fury," she said.

According to official reports, over 8,000 people of at least 14 villages of Kasapa and Malikapur gram panchayats of the Dasarathapur block are still marooned by the flood after water gushed into their villages due to a 100 feet breach at Kani river embankment.

Over 5,000 people have been evacuated and sheltered in nearby school buildings since Saturday. As their houses have been badly damaged, household articles, food grains and livestock have been badly affected, the flood victims have been struggling to salvage their belongings.

Flood victims complained of scarcity of clean drinking water, food, with stagnant water

giving rise to health concerns. The affected people complained that the flood water had destroyed fodder, leaving livestock without feed

"Free cooked food has been provided in 25 relief camps. The water has receded from the rivers, and we are taking all sorts of measures to provide rice and dry food as relief materials in the marooned areas. Besides, we are also taking steps to provide fodder on a priority basis in the marooned areas. said Akash Pattanaik, BDO of Dasarathapur block. He said the breach repair work would start Friday.

A report from Balasore district said that this is the sixth spell of flood since June this year in river Subarnarekha.

Though lives of human beings and cattle could be saved due to timely evacuation, the entire population of Baliapal. Bhograi, Basta and Jaleswar, have lost their Kharif crop cul-

The affected people have lost food grain for the entire year due to frequent floods. The government should announce a special package for the affected people of the four blocks of Balasore, said a local sarpanch. **Jurisdictional dispute delays recovery**

Minor girl's body found

under Jajpur Road ROB



POST NEWS NETWORK

Jajpur Road, August 29: Residents near Ahmad Nagar, under the Jajpur Road railway over bridge (ROB), discovered the body of a minor girl Friday morning and alerted both the Government Railway Police (GRP) and the Jajpur Road police. Both police units arrived at the scene and found the body wrapped in cloth, with only the legs visible.

A jurisdictional dispute between the GRP and the Jajpur Road police delayed the recovery of the body for several hours. Eventually, the Jajpur Road police recovered the body and identified the deceased as a minor girl, estimated to be 6-8 years old. The girl's feet were bandaged, and her identity remains unknown.

The Jajpur Road police registered the case (37/25) as an unnatural death and sent the body for autopsy. Authorities suspect the girl, believed to be from a tribal community, may have died after receiving med ical treatment. Local residents reported that an unidentified person dumped the body late Thursday night.

The discovery caused a crowd to gather, leading to traffic disruptions on and around the ROB. Police faced challenges managing the crowd and controlling traffic. Jajpur Road police station Of

ficer-In-Charge Ashish Kumai Sahu said the body will be kept for three days for identification. If no one claims it, the police will arrange for the final rites.

FM SELF-IMMOLATION

No action taken against instigators, says victim's dad

Balasore: The father of the college

student from Balasore district, who died after setting herself on fire, Friday demanded speedy justice for his daughter, alleging that alleged that no action had been taken against persons who instigated her to take such a step The student had set herself on fire July 12 after allegedly being denied iustice in a sexual harassment case against the head of the Integrated BEd department of FM Autonomous College. She sustained 95 per cent burn injuries and died July 14 while undergoing treatment at AIIMS Bhubaneswar. Her father met Balasore District Collector and SP demanding legal action against people allegedly responsible for his daughter's death. "I enquired about the progress of the investigation. The SP has assured that he would take more action in the coming days," the victim's father told reporters. He alleged that no action had been taken against persons who instigated her to take such a step. "Those who tortured her mentally, including some members of the internal complaints committee (ICC). stern action has to be taken against all of them," he demanded.

CUO celebrates 17th foundation day 3 killed in road accidents



POST NEWS NETWORK

Koraput, August 29: The Central University of Odisha (CUO) celebrated its 17th foundation day August 29, 2025 at its Sunabeda campus. The event was inaugurated by Vice-Chancellor In-Charge Professor Narasingha Charan Panda, who unfurled the university flag in the presence of Basant Kumar Panda, retired professor and former director, Centre of Excellence for Studies in Classical Odia, and Professor Alok Kumar Chakrawal. Vice-Chancellor of Guru Ghasidas Vishwavidyalaya, Bilaspur, along with faculty, staff, and

Professor NC Panda highlighted recent faculty recruitment and infrastructure development, including plans for an international guest house, auditorium, hostels, academic blocks, a hospital, and a market complex, with support from the Ministry of Education. He emphasised the Indian Knowledge System, optimism, and holistic growth.

Delivering the foundation lecture, Professor Basant Kumar Panda urged the university community to work for a sustainable future, inspired by Koraput's natural beauty. He noted that NEP-2020 implementation would ensure a "future-ready university" and called for harmony between tradition and modernity, nature and humanity.

Professor Chakrawal encouraged faculty to teach beyond the syllabus, and NALCO Executive Director Niranjan Samal assured full support for university development. The welcome address was given by Registrar In-Charge Rakesh Kumar Lenka, and the vote of thanks by Professor Bharat Kumar Panda.

During the event, several publications were released, including CUO at a Glance, the CUO Newsletter, Deomali, Amrit Vidya, and works by various departments. The programme concluded with a cultural per-

Berhampur, August 29: Three persons were killed in two separate road accidents in Ganjam district Friday, police

Two persons, identified as Sanatan Swansea (40) and Karna Sethi (55) from Khallingi village, died on the spot when their motorcycle collided headon with a truck near Balipada in Berhampur Sadar police sta

They were going towards Berhampur, a police officer said. Irate locals blocked the road

stating that three accidents have taken place in the area in a month, claiming three lives. They demanded immediate

action against the driver and compensation for the next of kin of the deceased. They lifted the blockade after police intervention.

The bodies were sent to MKCG Medical College and perintendent of Police Sarava-

na Vivek M said. The truck has been seized

and its driver detained, he said. In another accident, a 55-year-old man, identified as Basant Parida, died when a pickup van loaded with LPG

cylinders ran over him in

Dhaugaon village in Dharakote

police station area, another officer said. Parida was returning from his farm land when the acci-

dent took place. After hitting the man, the vehicle also rammed into two roadside shops near the spot. Some portions of the shops were damaged, he said.

Local residents blocked the road demanding compensation

Dharakote police station In-

NIT Rourkela gets 1,274 placements Rourkela: Students at the

National Institute of Technology (NIT) Rourkela secured 1,274 placement offers and 509 sixmonth internships leading to potential pre-placement offers in the 2024-25 placement drive, despite global challenges such as recession-induced layoffs. The highest CTC recorded was ₹62.44 lakh per annum, with the average CTC for BTech students at ₹14.10 LPA and MTech students at ₹13.48 LPA. The top internship offer reached ₹1.26 lakh per month, and more than 85 students received annual packages above ₹30 LPA. Participation included 373 recruiters, nearly half joining for the first time. The majority were from software and IT services, followed by manufacturing, BFSI, electronics, and education. Top recruiters included Google, AMD, Qualcomm, Wells Fargo, Amazon, and ExxonMobil.

(1) Tender No. e-tender-BrKUR and action against the driver. Hospital here for post-mortem 211-2025, Dtd.: 18.08.2025 examination, (Berhampur) Su-

spector-In Charge Chandrika Swain said the vehicle has been seized and its driver detained.

EAST COAST RAILWAY

NAME OF WORK: OHE MODIFICATION
IN CONNECTION WITH PROPOSEL
REPLACEMENT OF 8 NOS. STEEL

GIRDER BRIDGES OF SPAN 12 20 MT BY PSC SLABS BETWEEN BHADRAM MANJURI ROAD SECTION OF KHURD

Advertised Value : ₹29,13,414.02

EMD : ₹ 58,300/-, Period of Completion

received shall be ignored. Complete information including e-Tende

documents and corrigendum is availab

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to

general public that, I Sri

Swagat Subhadarsi Behera

has lost the original I ROR

NO-660/723 in the name of

Jayashree Sahoo, Rajesh

Sahoo and Rakesh Sahoo

which was kept in my hand

Bag, while he was going to

court from his TATA capital

office by Auto and in between

and Kedar Gouri Temple and

Ravi talkies at Lewis road on

22.08.2025 lost the original

around Rasulgarh square

area and in spite of his best

efforts failed to trace the

Therefore, if any one has

found the same, please

contact Advocate Sri N.C.

Pattnaik, Mob.- 9853311189.

or Manager Tata Capital at

Lewis Road, Bhubaneswar

within 15 days from the date of

the publication, failing which

the document will lose its legal

force, and any mis-use of the

document will be punishable

somewhere.

documents

same.

under law.

Bidding Start Date: 01.09.2025

n website www.ireps.gov.in Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer (TRD)

PR-528/Q/25-26

180 Days.

EAST COAST RAILWAY

DESCRIPTION: ZONAL CONTRACT (BRIDGE WORKS) FOR HARIDASPUR-PARADEEP SECTION UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF SENIOR SECTION SURVISION OF SENIOR SECTION OF SENIOR SECTION OF SECTION OF SECTION OF SECTION OF SECTION OF SENIOR SECTION OF SECTION OF SENIOR SECTION OF SENIOR SECTION OF SECTION OF SENIOR SECTION OF SENIOR SECTION OF SEC

(2) Tender No. e-tender-eastkur228-2025, Dtd.: 19.08.2025

DESCRIPTION: ALL REPAIRS &
MAINTENANCE OF P.WAY ZONAL
WORKS FOR A PERIOD UPTO
30.09.2026 FROM KM. 409.70 TO 447.90
ON CUTTACK-GORAKHNATH SECTION
UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF
SENIOR SECTION ENGINEER (P.WAY)/
KANDARPUR OF KHURDA ROAD
DIVISION.

Approx. Cost of the Work : ₹ 218.22 .akh, <u>EMD :</u> ₹ 2,59,100/-

(3) Tender No. e-tender-eastkur-227-2025, Dtd.: 19.08.2025 DESCRIPTION ALL REPAIRS 8
MAINTENANCE OF P.WAY ZONAL
WORKS FOR A PERIOD UPTO
30.99.2026 FROM KM. 447.90 TO 491.66
ON RAGHUNATHPUR-PARADEEF SECTION UNDER THE JURISDICTIO

OF SENIOR SECTION ENGINEER (P.WAY) / GORAKHNATH OF KHURDA ROAD DIVISION. Approx. Cost of the Work: ₹ 253.56 akh, <u>EMD:</u>₹2,76,800/-

(4) Tender No. etenderEastkur-225-2025, Dtd.: 19.08.2025

225-2025, Dtd.: 19.08.2025

DESCRIPTION: AL REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE OF P.WAY ZONAL WORKS FOR A PERIOD UPTO 30.09.2026 FROM KM. 353.724 TO 399.10 BETWEEN JENAPUR-NERGUNDI & KAPILAS ROAD-SALAGAON SECTION UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF SENIOR SECTION ENGINEER (P.WAY) / DHANMANDAL OF KHURDA ROAD DIVISION. Approx. Cost of the Work : ₹ 219.00

(5) Tender No. etenderEastkur-

226-2025, Dtd.: 19.08.2025 226-2025, Dtd.: 19.08.2025

DESCRIPTION ALL REPAIRS &
MAINTENANCE OF P.WAY ZONAL
WORKS FOR A PERIOD UPTO
30.09.2026 FROM KM. 399.20 TO
418.363 BETWEEN NERGUNDI BARANG SECTION AND KM. 397.30 TO
410.37 ON TIE LINE UNDER SENIOR
SECTION ENGINEER (P.WAY)/CUTTACK
OF KHURDA ROAD DIVISION

Approx. Cost of the Work: ₹ 220.07 .akh, <u>EMD :</u> ₹ 2,60,000/-Completion Period : 12 (Twelve) Month (for all SI. Nos.).

Tender Closing Date and Time: At 1500 Hrs. of 10.09.2025 (for all the Tenders). Hrs. of 10.09.2025 (for all the Tenders). No manual offers sent by Post / Courier, Fax or in person shall be accepted against such e-tenders even if these are submittee on firm's letter head and received in time. All such manual offers shall be considered invalid and shall be rejected summarily without any consideration. Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-Tender is available in website: www.ireps.gov.in Note: The prospective tenderers are

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

Divisional Railway Manager (Engg) / PR-535/Q/25-26 Khurda Road PR-535/Q/25-26

26-feet apple Ganesh idol marks 50 yrs of Sambalpur Natraj Club

Sambalpur, August 29: In a remarkable display of devotion and creativity, Sambalpur's Khetrajpur-based Natraj Club crafted a 26-foot-tall idol of Lord Ganesh entirely out of apples approximately 1,500 kilograms of those. This towering apple idol is not just a visual spectacle but also a powerful message to society: Prioritise health and well-being. This year held special sig-

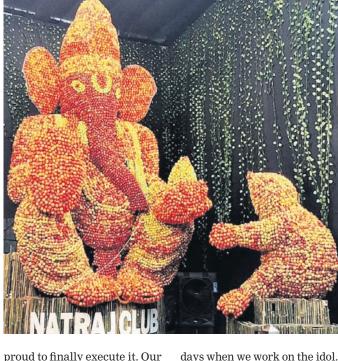
nificance for Natraj Club, as it marks the 50th year or golden jubilee of their Ganesh Puja celebrations. To commemorate this milestone, the club chose apples, a symbol of good health and one of Lord Ganesh's favourite offerings, as the material for the idol. The vibrant idol, adorned with apples of different colours, attracted public attention. What made this initiative

even more inspiring is the fact that no professional artisans were hired. The idol was meticulously built by the club's 15–16 dedicated members, all local businessmen, who worked tirelessly for over two months. The concept, however, was conceived three years ago in anticipation of the golden jubilee. "It took us more than two

we wanted to do something extraordinary," said senior club member Gopal Pansari. "We had this idea in mind

months to bring this idea to

life. Since it's our 50th year,



proud to finally execute it. Our aim is to make it memorable,'

True to their tradition, the Natraj Club does not collect donations or set a budget for the event. All expenses are shared voluntarily by the members. Over the years, the club has gained fame for creating idols from unique items like bananas, laddus, and coconuts — each carrying a theme or social mes-

Senior member Shiv Kumar Rathi added, "We are all busithree years ago, and we're nessmen, and we don't sleep for

Our devotion drives us. We've made idols from bananas in the past; this year, it's apples to promote the message of good

to the needy. Ganesh Chaturthi, also known as Ganeshotsav, is a revered Hindu festival celebrated with great devotion across India, with Mumbai at its heart. The occasion marks the birth anniversary of Lord Ganesha. the deity of wisdom, prosperity, and good fortune.

health. After the celebration,

we plan to distribute the apples

Almond 'Ganesh' draws devotees

Keonihar: A unique Ganesh idol made

with almonds has become the centre of attraction during the Ganesh Puja celebrations at Atopur Kansari Sahi in Keonihar town. Created by local youth under the banner of Satya Sanskritika Sanstha, the idol drew hundreds of devotees daily. The Ganesh Puia, observed over three days, will conclude with the immersion of the idol Sunday in a grand and colourful procession, ac cording to the organising committee. "We have been celebrating Ganesh Puja for over three decades," said Tulu Sahu, a member of the youth group. 'Each vear, we try something new, This time, although the idol is primarily made of clay, we used around 3 kilograms of almonds along with vibrant colours to give it a unique look." Standing 8 feet tall, the idol has been beauti fully decorated with various colours. The team also constructed eye-catching pandals and gates, enhancing the festive atmosphere. In addition to the worship, cultural programmes were held throughout the three-day celebra tion, adding to the festive spirit.



Written test for home guard posts in Koraput postponed indefinitely

Koraput, August 29: The written examination for recruitment to 125 Home Guard posts in Koraput district, scheduled to be held August 31 at DAV College, Koraput, has been postponed indefinitely due to adverse weather conditions.

issued around 7pm Thursday, Rohit Verma, IPS, Superintendent of Police (SP), Koraput, announced the decision. He cited continuous heavy rainfall, caused by a low-pressure system over the region, as the key reason. The downpour has severely affected normal life in several parts of the district, making it challenging to conduct the examination in a safe and orderly manner.

the safety and convenience of candidates remain their top priority. The exam was expected to draw participation from hundreds of aspirants across the district who had applied for the vacancies. Candidates have been advised to stay updated through official announcements regarding the SP Verma assured that new

first during such conditions.

POST NEWS NETWORK

In an official press release

Authorities emphasised that

rescheduled date.

dates will be declared only after weather conditions improve and proper arrangements are ensured. The indefinite postpone ment has left many candidates disappointed, as they had been preparing rigorously for the test. Some expressed concern over the uncertainty, while others welcomed the decision, acknowledging that safety must come



Let all circumstances, all happenings in life be occasions constantly renewed for learning more and even more



THE MOTHER

Morale Matters

elhi rarely does anything quietly. If the city sneezes, it makes the headlines. So, when the capital's police chief was abruptly changed overnight, the chatter was inevitable. Satish Golcha, a 1992-batch IPS officer, walked into the commissioner's office on August 21, a day after Chief Minister Rekha Gupta was attacked during a public event. The timing said it all; the capital's law-and-order machinery needed a steady hand, and quickly.

Golcha isn't exactly a stranger parachuted in for damage control. His three-decade résumé runs through Delhi's police system like a metro map—Special CP during the 2020 riots, head of intelligence, crime branch, even the prison system. He's also done stints outside, from Arunachal Pradesh to Tihar. In short, if there's a file, crisis, or committee Delhi Police has ever had, chances are Golcha's initials are somewhere in the margins.

The buzz from his first day was telling. Officers found the man to be a "hard taskmaster" but one who, refreshingly, wanted to hear their views. That mix may be precisely what the force needs at this delicate moment. Morale matters, and Delhi Police has taken more than its fair share of bruises in recent years, from riot response to political mudslinging.

Golcha will hold the post till 2027, which is practically a geological era in Delhi's revolving-door power games. Whether he can restore confidence and calm frayed nerves is the real test. But if nothing else, his arrival underlines a simple truth: in Delhi, crises don't just make headlines, they make careers.

Think tanks or babu turf wars?

The great irony of India's so-called "right-wing civil war" is that it doesn't look very ideological at all. It looks like an internecine turf battle fought by retired mandarins.



corporate benefactors and think tanks. On one side is the Observer Research Foundation (ORF), flush with Reliance funding and staffed at the top by an IFS-heavy leadership, not the least External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar's son Dhruva in its Washington outpost. On the other hand, we have the Adani-backed Chintan Foundation, steered by a retired IAS officer. If this feels less like an intellectual joust and more like a bureaucratic game of "my service versus yours," that's because it most probably is.

The gossip storm on X has only amplified the spectacle. One day it's about Russian crude and Reliance, the next it's about Jaishankar's loyalties, and the day after about online gaming apps and IPL rights. Strip away the noise and you see a pattern: India's "ideas industry" is no longer about ideas, but about networks, patronage and bureaucratic turf. ORF's dominance over India's think tank landscape was bound to invite rivals, and Chintan looks poised to play that counterweight role, with its own retired-officer ecosystem and corporate backing.

That's what makes the current slugfest so revealing. This isn't the Right fighting the Left, or Modi's camp battling the Opposition. It's the establishment gnawing at itself: old guard versus new, IFS pedigrees versus IAS loyalties, Ambani versus Adani, all wrapped in the garb of "policy debates."

India's Right is discovering that its fiercest battles are not over ideology, but over who gets to whisper in the Prime Minister's ear.

The real scandal isn't the scam, it's the system

The Enforcement Directorate has been awfully busy of late. Another day, another raid. It has now turned its attention to Guwahati, where retired IAS officer Sewali Devi Sharma is accused of siphoning off more than Rs 100 crore in the name of training teachers. What was supposed to be 59 centres became nearly 350, contracts landed in the laps of friends and family, and crores moved quietly through bank accounts controlled by a single individual. The figures are staggering, but the story is tediously familiar.

For those who have watched babudom up close, this is no bolt from the blue. Corruption here is not an aberration but a feature of the system. One officer having unchecked control over such huge sums should have been unthinkable, yet it seems almost routine. Oversight mechanisms are either weak, captured, or activated only after the loot has been pocketed. The real scandal is not just the alleged greed of one individual, but the way the system so obligingly allowed it.

This is the pattern that repeats itself across the country, whether in education schemes, welfare programmes, or infrastructure projects. Inflate the numbers, skip the tenders, reward loval contractors, and by the time anyone asks questions, the money is gone. Every such case erodes trust in what was once proudly called the "steel frame"

Raids and arrests make headlines, but they do little to change the script. Unless the architecture of accountability is rebuilt through real-time audits, stronger checks, and genuine transparency, today's Rs 100-crore scam will only be tomorrow's déjà vu.

Share a babu experience! Follow $dilip the cherian @twitter.com.\ Let's\ multiply\ the\ effect$

WISDOM CORNER

The only solutions that are ever worth anything are the solutions that people find themselves.

Man is a genius when he is dreaming.

AKIRA KUROSAWA

🚣 All of us every single year, we're a different person. I don't think we're the same person all our lives. STEVEN SPIELBERG

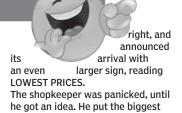
THIS DAY **IN HISTORY**

- **1862:** During the American Civil War, the Second Battle of Bull Run (Second Manassas) ended with a decisive Confederate victory.
- 1918: Soviet leader Vladimir Lenin was shot twice in an unsuccessful assassination attempt.
- 1983: US astronaut Guion S Bluford, Jr., became the first African American to travel into space, serving as a mission specialist aboard the shuttle orbiter Challenger, and later flew on three other missions.

FIGHT COMPETITION

he shopkeeper was dismayed when a brand new business much like his own opened up next door and erected a huge sign which

read BEST DEALS. He was horrified when another competitor opened up on his



sign of all over his own shop-it

read... MAIN ENTRANCE

FOCUS PM'S CHINA VISIT

LURKING DANGER

encroachments India's Himalayan borderlands triggered deadly clashes and a prolonged military standoff that nearly erupted into war. Five years on, the border crisis remains largely unresolved, yet Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi is headed to China in an apparent effort to ease friction just when India is facing punishing tariffs imposed by US President Donald Trump. But recent history offers a stark warning: trusting China is a dangerous path.

Once can certainly understand Modi's motivations for seeking a diplomatic thaw with China. The US-India relationship, once touted as a bedrock of America's strategy for ensuring a "free and open Indo-Pacific," has plunged to its lowest point this century.

Trump's actions are as ironic as they are absurd. The US long courted India as a vital counterweight to China across the vast Indo-Pacific region, yet it is India that is now being subjected to sky-high tariffs, while China is enjoying a reprieve. Trump's real objective, it seems, is to strong-arm India into a lopsided trade deal.

Meanwhile, Trump is attempting to woo Russian President Vladimir Putin – to whom he has shown far more respect than Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky - so that Putin not only ends the Ukraine war, but also takes a step back from China. But while Trump recognizes that punishing and isolating Russia drove the country closer to China, creating considerable risks for the US, he is repeating this mistake with India.

Modi, however, should beware of letting Trump push him into China's arms. In traveling to China at this moment, given the pressure he is under, India's prime minister will come across less like a con-



Ever since China annexed Tibet in 1951, turning what had previously served as a **buffer with India into a Chinese military** stronghold, Sino-Indian relations have been marked by rivalry and mistrust

fident leader shaping events than a wounded statesman courting his country's chief security threat. Past experience indicates that China is far more likely to exploit any hint of Indian weaknesses than act as a reliable partner.

Ever since China annexed Tibet in 1951, turning what had previously served as a buffer with India into a Chinese military stronghold, Sino-Indian relations have been marked by rivalry and mistrust. When Modi became prime minister in 2014, he made it his mission to change that. His initial hope of improving the relationship may not have been misguided; but his refusal to change course, even when China relentlessly exploited his goodwill to make quiet territorial advances on the ground, certainly was.

China took few pains to hide its intentions: its troops encroached on an Indian borderland as Modi welcomed Chinese President Xi Jinping to India for the first time. While that initial 2014 summit was portrayed as a success, Chinese forces remained on Indian territory until India dismantled its defensive fortifications there.

The following year, Modi delisted China as a "country of concern," in order to attract Chinese investment. What India got instead was a flood of cheap Chinese imports. China's trade surplus with India has grown so large that it now exceeds India's entire defense budget.

In 2014-19-as China steadily tightened its strategic axis with Pakistan, erected militarized "border villages" along India's frontier, and expanded its high-altitude military infrastructure - Modi met with Xi 18 times. So committed was Modi to rapprochement that he continued to engage in "appeasement diplomacy," even after China's 2017 seizure of the strategic Himalayan plateau of Doklam. It was only after Chinese soldiers quietly surged across multiple frontier points in April 2020 - inexplicably catching India off guard - that Modi suspended his overtures to China.

Five years later, Modi is at risk of falling into the same

trap. Modi is traveling to China mainly to attend the Shanghai Cooperation Organization summit in Tianiin. But the SCO is largely a Chinese initiative, and India – the only established democracy among its ranks - has not treated it as a priority. Last year, Modi skipped its summit in Astana, Kazakhstan's capital; and in 2023, when India held the rotating chair, he downgraded the summit to a virtual format. Modi's decision to show up this year was probably more about signaling conciliation toward China than about the SCO.

China has given India no reason to think this time will be different. On the contrary, when India conducted targeted strikes on Pakistani terrorist camps in May - a response to a brutal attack on tourists in the Indian-administered part of Kashmir – China lent Pakistan critical support, including real-time radar and satellite data. Furthermore, China recently confirmed plans to build the world's largest dam adjacent to India's border-an undertaking that will have grave ecological and national-security implications for India.

Appeasement has never tamed revisionist powers; more often, it has emboldened them. By allowing China to profit from Indian markets even as it chips away at India's sovereignty and security, Modi has conveyed that India, despite its tremendous economic and strategic clout, is willing to be treated as a doormat. Only with a hardnosed strategy that meets Chinese coercion with Indian resolve can Modi safeguard India's interests and territorial integrity.

> The writer is Professor **Emeritus of Strategic** Studies at the New Delhi-based Center for Policy Research

SPECTRUM

Brahma Chellaney

EXPERIENCE

THAT CHINA

IS FAR MORE

EXPLOIT ANY

WEAKNESSES

THAN ACT AS

A RELIABLE

PARTNER

HINT OF INDIAN

LIKELY TO

INDICATES

PAST

TAXATION

GST: More reforms needed



Santosh Kumar Mohapatra

WHILE THE **ATTEMPT TO RATIONALISE GST IS** WELCOME. THE **COMPLEXITY OF GST IS NOT ADDRESSED**

n 15 August, in his address from the ramparts of the Red Fort, Prime Minister Narendra Modi declared the launch of next-generation (Goods and Services Tax) GST reforms as a Diwali gift for citizens. On August 21, the six-member Group of Ministers (GoM) accepted the Centre's plan on GST rate rationalisation-- to reduce the number of tax slabs. They have proposed replacing the current four rates of 5, 12, 18 and 28 per cent with just two main slabs— "merit" goods and services will attract 5 per cent GST, while most other items (standard) will come under an 18 per cent standard

A higher 40 per cent levy will remain on a small set of so-called luxury, high-end items, such as SUVs and "sin" goods such as alcohol, tobacco, drugs, gambling, soft drinks, fast food, coffee, sugar, and even pornography. There will be no cess with elimination of 28 per cent slab. Most items will move from the 12 per cent to the 5 per cent rate and most from the 28 percent

to the 18 per cent rate, significantly simplifying the structure. The 18 per cent slab will be the dominant one since 64 per cent of the revenue was coming from this slab earlier, it will increase further. The GST Council is expected to meet on September 3-4 to finalise the details and the same is likely to be implemented on September 22.

While the attempt to rationalise GST is welcome, the complexity of GST is not addressed. The GST reform is meaningless if it doesn't streamline tax slabs. Despite reforms, in addition to 5, 18 and 40 per cent, other slabs like 0.25, 1.5 and 3 per cent will be in vogue which is imposed on just 1.5 percent of total goods traded in India, Normally most countries have settled on a three-rate structure.

Based on Kelkar Committee report, the GST was launched with much fanfare and hailed as the biggest tax reform since independence from Britain in 1947. But none of its objectives has been materialised till today nor likely to feature in GST 2.0 reforms. Rather GST

has exacerbated inequalities, appallingly impacted the unorganised workforce, and did not make a dent on tax evaders.

Critics think a reduction of GST rates may lead to decline of revenues especially, when revenue growth under the eight-year-old regime has slowed to its weakest level of 1.7 percent in July. It is not only GST revenue declining as a proportion of GDP but from April to August 11 of the current financial year, net direct tax collection dipped by 3.95 percent to 6.64 lakh crore from 6.95 lakh crore due higher refund.

Revenues lost by reduction of taxes should be accompanied by an increase of taxes from the rich to ensure equitable distribution of wealth. States will suffer too if the revenue declines. The Centre should compensate states.

It is argued that the reforms aim to increase disposable incomes and stimulate consumption, potentially increasing consumption led GDP growth. Lower rates could reduce tax evasion and promote greater compliance, contributing to

the formalization of the economy. But it may reduce the revenue generation capacity of the economy. The average GST rate at the time of its introduction was 14.4 per cent, which has been reduced to 11.6 per cent in 2019 and after this change, it will reduce to 9.5 per cent.

However, Standard and poor (S&P) global rating says GST rationalisation could bolster India's revenue in long term by making compliance easier. SBI reports say GST 2.0 will lift consumption by Rs 1.98 lakh crores. It is argued that the move appears designed to trigger a Laffer curve -type response, though the principle is rooted in direct taxation. This theory posits that both excessively high and low tax rates result in reduced tax revenues, suggesting that tax cuts can potentially enhance revenue collection. Hence the extension to GST suggests that lower rates could stimulate consumption and curb evasion.

> The author is an Odisha based economist and columnist.

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:

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

DMK's floating promises

Sir, It was shocking to observe that the petitions submitted by the people during the 'Ungaludan Stalin' (Stalin with you) event were found drifting in the Vaigai river. The district collector Porkodi has ordered an immediate investigation. The petitions personally handed over by the aggrieved citizens to CM being thrown in water is the height of disregard for the people. This reminds me of the DMK's former Chief Minister M Karunanidhi's famous word of support that he will be like a catamaran to rescue people whenever they are in problems. Maybe Stalin has to board this catamaran to pick all these petitions from the water as a face-saving exercise before their usual crocodile story emanates from them to take a defence by telling-crocodile ate all petitions.

AP Thiruvadi, CHENNAI Dr. Vijaykumar HK, RAICHUR

Worrying sign

Sir, When ambition is fueled Sir, Moldova, located south west of by fear rather than curiosity, education becomes a battleground, not a journey. The commodification of learning is not merely an economic burden it is a psychological one, alienating students from the joy of knowledge. Coaching centres fill a systemic vacuum, but their dominance signals a failure of inclusive schooling. Unless we redefine success beyond test scores, we risk raising a generation that excels on paper but falters in purpose.

Lithium lure

Ukraine, has announced a major tender for its lithium reserves, offering a 50-year licence to the winning bidder—an opportunity that has drawn keen interest from the United States. Poland's PM has voiced strong support for Moldova's accession to the European Union, a move also welcomed by the French Prez, signaling Europe's growing outreach into the Indian Ocean region. For India, competition for lithium may challenge New Delhi's clean energy transition plans, while Moldova's EU integration could shift regional power equations. India will need to deepen its mineral partnerships and reinforce its maritime influence to safeguard longterm interests. *RS Narula*, PATIALA



TWO STATES





Waste outpaces worship in Kedarnath

The Himalayan shrine generated more waste in 3 months of pilgrimage this year than entire 2022

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 29: The amount of waste generated at Kedarnath in the first three months of the ongoing yatra season has already crossed the quantity of waste produced at the ecologically fragile site in 2022, with most of it dumped untreated near the base camp, official records show.

According to information provided by Nagar Panchayat Kedarnath in reply to an RTI application filed by environmentalist Amit Gupta, a total of 17.6 metric tonnes of garbage was generated at the Himalayan shrine between May and July 2025.

Of this, only 7.1 metric tonnes could be processed or recycled while the remaining 10.5 metric tonnes was dumped untreated.

The month-wise data shows that 8.4 metric tonnes of waste was generated in May, 5.6 metric tonnes in June and 3.6 metric tonnes in July.

Waste processing stood at 3.2 metric tonnes, 2.4 metric tonnes and 1.5 metric tonnes respectively during these months. The untreated waste was dumped at a newly created landfill site near the Kedarnath base camp, which



has a capacity of 1,500 feet.

A new material recovery facility with a size of 278.8 square metres and a capacity of five tonnes per day has also been set up, while a detailed project report for a solid and liquid waste management plant costing Rs 3.13 crore is under approval.

Official figures accessed earlier by Gupta through RTI applications show that a total of 72.53 metric tonnes of garbage was generated at the shrine between 2022 and 2024. Of this, only 32 per cent was processed while the remaining 68 per cent was dumped untreated.

In 2022, Kedarnath generated 13.85 metric tonnes of waste,

The quantity of untreated waste is increasing every year. We are destroying Kedarnath ji. There is also a need to strictly implement

the ban on single-use plas-

AMIT GUPTA | ENVIRONMENTALIST

dumped as the processing stood

at just 0.65 metric tonnes. A small landfill of 7.5 by 6 square metres created near Nehru Institute of Mountaineering that year was filled the

In 2023, the total waste load jumped to 32.58 metric tonnes. with inorganic waste rising sharply to 14.1 metric tonnes.

Of this, only 14.1 metric tonnes was processed, while 18.48 metric tonnes was dumped untreated. A new landfill of 600 square metres was created near the helipad in 2023 but it also exhausted its capacity by the next season.

In 2024, 26.10 metric tonnes of waste was generated, of which 8.6 metric tonnes was processed and 17.5 metric tonnes dumped untreated. Between 2022 and 2024, Kedarnath generated 49.18 metric tonnes of organic waste and 23.35 metric tonnes of inorganic waste.

Despite the rising stress, no complaints were officially recorded and no fines were imposed by the authorities during

Troubling trash

- A total of 17.6 metric tonnes of garbage was generated between May and July 2025
- In 2022, Kedarnath generated 13.85 metric tonnes of waste
- 72.53 metric tonnes of garbage was generated at the shrine between 2022 and 2024

this period. Gupta said Kedar nath lacks a proper waste processing facility and, as a result, a large quantity of it is dumped at landfill

Kedarnath Temple is located in Rudraprayag district of Uttarakhand at a height of about 3,584 metres. It is one of the most important pilgrimage sites in the Himalavas.

The temple opens every year in April or May and closes around October or November due to snowfall. In the winter, the idol is shifted to Ukhimath for worship.

The yatra attracts lakhs of devotees every season. By the end of July 2025, more than 14 lakh pilgrims had visited Kedarnath, the highest among the Char Dham shrines

In 2022, over 14 lakh devotees completed the pilgrimage.

The pilgrimage also supports the local economy. In the first 48 days of the 2025 season, the vatra generated about Rs 300 crore through services such as transport, hospitality, horses, mules and helicopters.

Kolkata, August 29: With the Election Commission planning to add nearly 14,000 new polling booths amid prospective Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of rolls in West Bengal, the BJP faces a shortage of Booth Level Agents (BLAs), exposing a critical organisational gap that could weaken its 2026 poll challenge, while the TMC, with no such issues, exudes confidence.

the expansion of polling stations

from the existing 80,000 to an estimated 94,000, spread across 294 assembly seats, is less a burden than an opportunity to tighten its

statewide. In the 2024 Lok Sabha polls. the BJP could deploy polling agents in around 50,000-55,000

booths. The target now stands at 65,000-70,000, but insiders admit the party may struggle to get anywhere close. will be higher during the SIR

exercise. No political party can achieve a hundred per cent in terms of booth agents. But at the same time, it is a challenge for us in the booths where we are not able to appoint a BLA," a senior state BJP leader told PTI on condition of anonymity.

EC moves to test TMC's ground muscle, BJP's organisational mettle

BENGAL'S BOOTH BATTLE



The state's political history shows booth-level management can alter electoral destiny, from the

CPI(M)'s famed "panchayat-to-polling booth" network of the 1980s to TMC's building up on the same model after coming to power in 2011

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

For the Trinamool Congress

grip at the grassroots.

In contrast, the $\ensuremath{\mathsf{BJP}}$ functionaries acknowledge they are planning to cover only about 70 per cent of booths with BLAs during the SIR exercise, well short of what is needed to ensure an effective presence

of West Bengal's existing 80,681

"This time, the figure of BLAs

West Bengal BJP president Samik Bhattacharya sought to project confidence, insisting that the party would cover "maximum number of booths. "In booths where there are

challenges, we will chalk out a strategy to overcome those challenges. Right now, I won't divulge how many BLAs we have, as it's an organisational matter," he told PTI.

In the SIR process, BLAs work alongside Booth Level Of ficers (BLOs), government staff tasked with compiling accurate rolls. The agents collect and submit enumeration forms, flag names of deceased or shifted voters, and mobilise citizens to check draft rolls. In effect, they act as a party's eyes and ears at the booth level.

Analysts say that without a robust BLA network, translat ing a groundswell of sentiment into actual votes becomes un certain. Another BJP leader admitted that redeploying booth presidents as agents may be un avoidable. "We may be forced to

Booth politics is

about patience,

local embedding

and neighbour-

hood credibility.

The TMC has

mastered that;

the BJP has not

BISWANATH

do it. But it will weaken us when the real election comes," the leader

> The party's struggle is most acute in minority-dominated areas spread across districts of Malda Murshidabad, South Dinajpur and North Dinajpur, which ac count for about 19.000 booths. "In minority areas, finding a party

cadre as BLA is a real challenge. We have to ensure safe-

ty and security of our cadres first, said a BJP functionary. The contrast with Bihar could

not be sharper. There, the SIR was conducted smoothly with 1.5 lakh BLAs in place, aided by cooperation between the BJP-JD(U) alliance and the state machinery. In West Bengal, the atmosphere is far more combative. The Mamata Banerjee government is expected to resist EC initiatives, viewing them as extensions of the Centre's "authoritarian overreach." Con vincing the state administration to implement the exercise fairlv. political observers say, is a "herculean challenge".

Outcry over elephant relocation to temple

Animal

welfare groups

oppose baby

elephant's

transfer from

Uttarkhand to

Tirunelveli

temple

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chennai, August 29: More than 50 animal protection groups across India have urged the governments of Tamil Nadu and Uttarakhand to immediately halt the proposed transfer of a

baby elephant from Uttarakhand to the Arulmigu Nellai-Arultharum Kanthimathiamman Temple in Tirunelveli. The appeal, ad-

dressed to Tamil Nadu's Ministers for Forests and Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments and to Uttarakhand's Forest Minister, warns that moving a wild calf of less than two years into temple captivity would

cause lifelong suffering and violate multiple laws, including the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972, the Captive Elephant (Transfer or Transport) Rules, 2024, and the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960.

According to enquiries, the Uttarakhand Forest Department verbally confirmed that the elephant is a wild male calf. The temple's earlier elephant. Gandhimati, died in January 2025 after years of illness, including diabetes and severe

> finement. Chennai-based People for Cattle India (PFCI), one the signatories, has offered to donate a mechanical elephant to the temple as a compassionate

alternative. They urged that the calf, instead of being forced into captivity, should be rewilded with expert help or relocated to a sanctuary where it can live unchained

among its species. Advocating modern practices, the coalition highlighted that at least 20 temples in South India already use mechanical elephants, 11 of which were donated by PETA India.



A child throws garbage in a dust bin during rain, in Kolkata, West Bengal, Friday

Massive turnout at 'Amader Para, Amader Samadhan' camps

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, August 29: West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Baneriee Friday expressed delight over the overwhelming public response to the state government's civic outreach initiative, 'Amader Para, Amader Samadhan', saving over one crore people have visited around 14,500 camps in just 26 days.

"I am feeling extremely happy and proud to announce that within only 26 days, more than one crore people from all over Bengal have visited around 14,500 'Amader Para, Amader Samadhan' camps, in order to have sustainable solutions to the various issues and problems in and around their localities. Congratulations to all for crossing the one-crore mark so quickly," she posted on X.

This unprecedented and spontaneous participation of common men and women of Bengal in this socio-economic development initiative has further strengthened and added more life to the prevailing democratic and participatory good governance culture in this state, she said.

"I am taking this opportuni-

OVER ONE CRORE PEOPLE VISITED WEST BENGAL'S CIVIC OUTREACH INITIATIVE CAMPS IN 26 DAYS, SAYS CM MAMATA



ty to convey my heartfelt appreciation to all the people's representatives, government officials and other employees, as well as volunteers who are working relentlessly to translate this vision into reality, thus reaching to the doorsteps of all the citizens of this state. Besides, I also extend my sin-

cere gratitude to each and every person of Bengal who has kept faith in us and relied upon our commitment," she said.

"We are deeply committed to reaching out to every person in Bengal with various government benefits meant for them. Besides, I ensure that to shoulder further respon-

sibility and to provide quick and meaningful solutions to your problems, our 'Ma-Maati-Manush' government is always there and will be there in the days to come," Banerjee posted on X.

The initiative, announced July 22 with an estimated outlay of Rs 8,000 crore,

aims to address local civic issues at the grassroots level, including broken roads, defunct streetlights, leaking school roofs, and inadequate drinking water facilities. The state government plans to hold camps across all 80,000 polling booths in Bengal, offering an on-spot administrative redressal mechanism for citizens

A dedicated task force led by Chief Secretary Manoj Pant oversees the programme's implementation, with participation from senior officials of relevant departments, including finance and public works. District and state-level monitoring cells have been formed, while police personnel assist in coordination.

Under the project's design, each set of three booths forms a cluster with a designated officer who will camp in each booth on rotation, listen to public grievances, and identify works to be undertaken. The government has allocated Rs 10 lakh per booth for the scheme, which commenced August 2 and is expected to be completed within 60 days, excluding the Durga Puja break.

କ୍**କଟ୍ୟ ମହାନ୍ତର ନିର୍ମ** ସ୍ୱାୟଉ ଶାସନ ପାଳନ ଅବସ୍ତୁରେ କଟକ ମହାନଗର ନିଗମ ତରଫରୁ ହାର୍ଦ୍ଦିକ ଅଭିନନ୍ଦନ No. DSPL - 230 କାର୍ଯ୍ୟସୂଚୀ

ତା୩୦।୦୮।୨୦୨୫ରିଖ

ପ୍ରାତଃ ୦୯.୦୦ ଘଟିକା: ରକ୍ତଦାନ ଶିବିର, ଟାଉନହଲ, କଟକ

ତା୩୧।୦୮।୨୦୨୫ରିଖ <mark>ପୂର୍ବାହ୍ନ ୧୦.୩୦ଘଟିକା:</mark> ନିଗମ ଅଞ୍ଚଳରେ ନୂତନ ପ୍ରକଳ୍ପ ନିମନ୍ତେ ଭିଭିପ୍ରସ୍ତର ସ୍ଥାପନ ଓ ସମ୍ପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ହୋଇଥିବା ପ୍ରକଳ୍ପଗୁଡ଼ିକର ଶୁଭ ଉଦ୍ଘାଟନ।

ସନ୍ଧ୍ୟା ୦୫.୦୦ଘଟିକା: ସହିଦ ଭବନ, କଟକଠାରେ ସାଧାରଣ ସଭା

ଶ୍ରୀଯୁକ୍ତ କୃଷ୍ପଚନ୍ଦ୍ର ମହାପାତ୍ର

ମାନ୍ୟବର ମନ୍ତ୍ରୀ, ଗୃହ ନିର୍ମାଣ ଓ ନଗର ଭନୟନ, ସାଧାରଣ ଭଦ୍ୟୋଗ ବିଭାଗ, ଓଡ଼ିଶା

ଶ୍ରୀଯୁକ୍ତ ଭର୍ତ୍ତୃହରି ମହତାବ ମାନ୍ୟବର ସାଂସଦ (ଲୋକସଭା), କଟକ ଶ୍ରୀଯୁକ୍ତ ଦେବାଶିଷ ସାମନ୍ତରାୟ

ମାନ୍ୟବର ସାଂସଦ (ରାଜ୍ୟସଭା) ତଥା ସଭାପତି କଟକ ମହାନଗର ନିଗମ କର୍ମଚାରୀ ସଂଘ

ସଜ୍ଞାନିତ ଅତିଥି ବୃଦ: ଶ୍ରୀଯୁକ୍ତ ସୌଭିକ ବିଶ୍ୱାଳ, ମାନ୍ୟବର ବିଧାୟକ, ଚୌଦ୍ୱାର-କଟକ

ଇଂ. ସୋଫିଆ ଫିର୍ଦୋସ, ମାନ୍ୟବର ବିଧାୟିକା, ବାରବାଟୀ-କଟକ ଇଂ. ପକାଶ ଚନ୍ଦ ସେଠୀ, ମାନ୍ୟବର ବିଧାୟକ, କଟକ ସଦର

ଶ୍ରୀଯୁକ୍ତ ପ୍ରଭାତ ତ୍ରିପାଠୀ, ପୂର୍ବତନ ବିଧାୟକ ତଥା ସଭାପତି କଟକ ମହାନଗର ନିଗମ ମେହେନ୍ତର ସଂଶ **ଶ୍ରୀଯୁକ୍ତ ଦତାତ୍ରୟ ଭାଉସାହେବ ସିନ୍ଦେ,** (ଭା.ପ୍ର.ସେ.), ଜିଲ୍ଲାପାଳ, କଟକ

ଶ୍ରୀଯୁକ୍ତ ଖିଲାରି ଋଷିକେଶ ଦ୍ୟାନଦେଓ, (ଭା.ପୁ.ସେ.), ଡିସିପି, କମିଶନରେଟ ପୋଲିସ, କଟକ ନିଗମ ଅଞ୍ଚଳରେ କୃତିତ୍ୱ ଅର୍ଜନ କରିଥିବା ବିଶିଷ୍ଟ ବ୍ୟକ୍ତି ବିଶେଷମାନଙ୍କୁ ସୟର୍ଦ୍ଧନା ଜ୍ଞାପନ ।

ବିଭିନ୍ନ ପ୍ରତିଯୋଗିତାରେ ଅଂଶ ଗହଣ କରିଥିବା କୃତୀ ଛାତ୍ ଛାତ୍ମମାନଙ୍କୁ ପୁର୍ୟାର ବିତରଣ ।

ନିଗମର କର୍ତ୍ତବ୍ୟନିଷ୍ଣ କର୍ମଚାରୀମାନଙ୍କୁ ଡାଙ୍କର ଉଲ୍ଲେଖନୀୟ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟ ନିମନ୍ତେ ପୁରଦ୍ଧାର ବିତରଣ । ସୁଶ୍ରୀ କିରନ୍ଦୀପ୍ କୌର ସହୋତା, (ଭା.ପ୍ର.ସେ)

ଶ୍ରୀଯୁକ୍ତ ସୁବାସ ଚନ୍ଦ୍ର ସିଂହ

ନିଗମର ସମୟ କପୋରେଟର, ସମୟ ଅଧିକାରୀ ଏବଂ କମଚାରୀ ବୃନ୍ଦ

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ଡେପଟି ମେୟର

national



When India is called the world's largest democracy, Uttar Pradesh's extensive electoral process plays a significant role in that

DELHI ZOO SHUT FOR VISITORS

The Delhi Zoo will be shut for visitors from Saturday after two painted storks were found infected with the H5N1 bird flu virus, officials have said



not do any injustice to the Maratha commu nity. But while addressing the

issues, injustice will also not be done to other communities FKNATH SHINDE | MAHA DY CM

I respect the chair of the governor. But I cannot forget that when he was the governor of Jharkhand.

the chief minister of that state, who comes from a tribal community, was arrested inside the Raj Bhavan despite his request not to do so SHARAD PAWAR | NCP (SP) PRESIDENT





cessing. Today it stands at 12 per cent. There is a lot of scope. and we must raise it to 50, 60. or even 70 per cent—that is the potential available

N CHANDRABABU NAIDU | ANDHRA CN

SHORT **TAKES**

Four teens drown in J'khand's 'mini Goa'

Dumka: Four teenagers drowned in the Mayurakshi river in Jharkhand's Dumka district, police said Friday. The incident happened at the Bapupur bank, a popular picnic spot known as 'mini Goa' among locals. "Four friends, all between 16 and 17, had gone to take a bath in the river Thursday. When they did not return, their families started searching for them. Their clothes and mobile phones were found near the bank around 3.30 pm," Ajeet Kumar, the officer-in-charge of the Jama police station, told PTI. Divers managed to recover the body of one of the youth early Friday, while the other three bodies were recovered a few hours later, they said.

Narrow escape

New Delhi: Three schoolchildren returning home in east Delhi's Mandawali had a narrow escape Friday when the wall of an abandoned house collapsed amid rains, officials said, adding they suffered minor injuries. The injured have been identified as Pankaj (8), Dhruv (10) and Aadi (8), he said.

SC to hear plea for FIR against MLA, kin

New Delhi: The Supreme Court Friday agreed to hear a plea alleging a child suffered permanent disability after climbing a pile of illegally dumped stones crushed at a unit owned by Khurai MLA Bhupendra Singh's nephew and coming in contact with a high-tension wire. A bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta issued notice to the Madhya Pradesh government and others seeking their responses on the plea within four weeks.

Meth tablets worth Rs 165cr seized, 5 held

Aizawl: In a major blow to trans-border narcotics smuggling, security forces seized meth tablets worth Rs 165 crore and arrested five persons from various parts of Mizoram, officials said. In a joint operation by the Border Security Force (BSF) and the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB), 9.6 lakh methamphetamine (Yaba) tablets worth over Rs 144 crore was seized and three persons arrested in Serchhip district, the paramilitary force said in a statement Friday.

Japan to invest 10th yen in India over in next 1 decade

Tokyo, August 29: Japan Friday set an investment target of 10 trillion yen (approx Rs 60,000 cr) in India over a decade and the two sides sealed a raft of big-ticket pacts, including a framework for defence ties and a 10-year roadmap to largely boost economic partnership -- decisions that came amid turbulence triggered by Washington's trade policies. The new measures to further

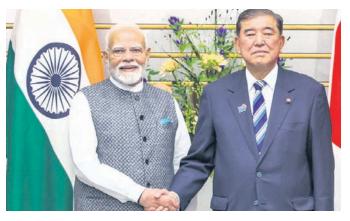
expand India-Japan special strategic and global partnership were unveiled following summit talks between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Japanese counterpart Shigeru Ishiba.

The two sides firmed up 13 key pacts and documents and announced the launch of several transformative initiatives, including an economic security architecture to promote supply chain resilience in strategic sectors such as semiconductors, clean energy, telecom, pharmaceuticals, critical minerals and new and emerging technologies.

"We both agree that as two major economies and vibrant democracies, our partnership is very important not only for our two countries, but also for global peace and stability. Strong democracies are natural partners in shaping a better world," Modi, flanked by Ishiba, said.

"Today, we have laid a strong foundation for a new and golden chapter in our Special Strategic and Global Partnership. We have set a roadmap for the next decade."

Of the agreements, one relates to promoting mobility of 50,000 skilled and semi-skilled personnel from India to Japan in the next five years, while another agreement will advance collaboration in digital public



Modi, Xi likely to meet twice Sunday at SCO summit

infrastructure.

The 10-year roadmap features several key pillars such as economic security, mobility, ecological sustainability, technology and innovation, health, people-to-people exchanges and engagements between Indian states and Japanese prefectures. Another key pact was to advance cooperation in supply chain resilience for critical minerals, including through the development of processing technologies, joint investments for exploration and mining and efforts for stockpiling critical minerals. A

separate declaration was sealed for promoting projects on hydrogen and ammonia.

The pacts signed also featured one on a joint crediting mechanism and another on cooperation between the Indian Space Research Organisation and Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency for a joint lunar-polar exploration mission.

The document defines terms and conditions for cooperation between India and Japan on the Chandravaan-5 mission, giving practical shape to a "landmark' collaboration

The comprehensive framework on defence will provide for defence and security cooperation to respond to contemporary security challenges. according to the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA).

The two prime ministers also expressed serious concern over the situation in the East China Sea and the South China Sea against the backdrop of China's increasing military muscle-flexing in the strategic waters. Modi and Ishiba reiterated their strong opposition to any unilateral actions that endanger the safety as well as freedom of navigation and overflight, and attempt to change the status quo by force or co-

Jarange begins hunger strike PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, August 29: Maratha quota movement leader Manoj Jarange began his indefinite hunger strike at the Azad Maidan in south Mumbai Friday, vowing not to leave the city till the community's demands were met.

"I will die, but won't back down this time. We will not leave Mumbai till our demands are met," he said, as he began his fast at 10 am.

Thousands of office-goers faced inconvenience

as Maratha protesters headed to Azad Maidan. Traffic slowed down in the city's southern and eastern parts.

Those arriving to take BEST buses or taxis to their workplaces in business areas like Nariman Point and Crawford Market had a tough time due to congestion in and around Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus (CSMT).

Jarange, 43, received a rousing welcome from thousands of supporters, sporting saffron caps, scarves and flags, after he reached the protest venue around 9.45 am.

Police Friday allowed Jarange to continue his hunger strike for Maratha reservation at the Azad Maidan in south Mumbai for another day, an official said. Jarange asked Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis to "show his commitment to Marathas through his actions".

"If the state government agrees to our demands, we will withdraw the agitation," he said. "But you have to be sincere or else, the Marathas will show their power to both the state and centre governments, he added.



ABUSIVE LANGUAGE AGAINST PM

BJP workers storm Bihar Congress HQ



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Patna, August 29: The issue of the alleged abuse hurled at Prime Minister Narendra Modi during Rahul Gandhi's 'Voter Adhikar Yatra' in Bihar spilled out on the streets Friday when BJP workers stormed the state Congress headquarters, prompting the Leader of the Opposition in Lok Sabha to declare "truth always triumphs".

While the person who had allegedly screamed expletives into the mic at Darbhanga two days ago was arrested, BJP workers in the state capital staged a march to the Sadaqat Ashram, the BPCC headquarters, and clashed with their counterparts in the Opposition party.

"We will not tolerate the insult to Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Rahul Gandhi, his party and alliance partners will have to apologise," said state minister Nitin Nabin who had led the procession from the BJP office, situated a couple of kilometres from Sadaqat Ashram.

Gandhi, who was in Gopalganj, about 120 kms away, and is likely to be in Patna on Monday when the Yatra will conclude, came out with an X post in Hindi, indirectly referring to the clash.

'Violence and falsehood stand no chance before truth and non-violence. Indulge in assault and vandalism to your heart's content. We will continue our fight to protect truth and

the Constitution. Truth always triumphs! (Satyamev Jayate)", wrote Gandhi.

Congress general secretary Sachin Pilot, who is accompa nying Gandhi, was more blunt

"Whoever used abusive language deserves condemnation. But it is wrong to associate the Congress and the INDIA bloc with the episode. And the attack on our party's state headquarters was abominable. We hope the Bihar government takes appropriate action against the accused. It is clear that the BJP is rattled by the success of Voter Adhikar Yatra", said Pilot.

Addressing the same press conference, RJD national spokesman Manoj Jha said "We took no time in condemning the incident. But has the BJP ever apologised for many foul remarks made, over the years, by its top leaders including the Prime Minister himself? They are the followers of Nathuram Godse who assassinated Mahatma Gandhi."

Today, they could not have fired bullets, so they wielded sticks, Jha said and claiming that it was an attempt by the saffron party to make headlines.

"The BJP, which rules the Centre, may get so-called mood of the nation surveys published in its favour, but it knows that if elections are held today Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be left looking for options for himself," he said.

K'taka shame: Class IX girl gives birth in school toilet



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Yadgir (Karnataka), August 29: A 17-year-old Class IX student of a government-run residential school gave birth to a baby boy in the school's toilet, police said Friday.

The incident occurred at around 2 pm August 27 at a school in Shahapur taluk of

The matter came to light after the girl's classmates, who reportedly saw her in labour, alerted the school administration, police said.

According to the FIR, the girl—aged 17 years and seven months—was full-term pregnant and had been "sexually assaulted" by an unidentified person about nine months ago. Initially, the girl, said to be

under "immense stress," refused to reveal details of the incident or the person involved. She only told authorities that she developed stomach pain while in the washroom and delivered the baby there.

Both the girl and the child were rushed to the hospital and

are reported to be stable. During the investigation, police identified the accused as a 28-year-old man. A senior officer said the girl will be counselled once she recovers and is declared fit by doctors, to ascertain what happened and whether she knew the accused.

Police also noted that the incident was not immediately reported by the school administration or even by the victim's brother, who was informed soon after the delivery.

Based on a complaint by the District Child Protection Officer, a case was registered under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act and relevant sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita against the accused.



A butterfly hovers over a wildflower in the Aravalli stretch of Gurugram

Do you want border wall to stop immigrants: SC to govt

The top court outlined the "same legacy of cultural and linguistic heritage" shared by Bengali and Punjabi speaking Indians with the neighbouring countries and speaking the same language but divided by borders

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 29: The Supreme Court Friday asked the Centre whether it wanted to build a border wall like in the US to prevent illegal immigrants from entering the coun-

try. The top court outlined the "same legacy of cultural and linguistic heritage" shared by Bengali and Punjabi speaking Indians with the neighbouring countries and speaking the same language but divided by borders.

A bench of Justices Surya Kant, Joymalya Bagchi and Vipul M Pancholi went on to ask Centre to apprise it about the standard operating procedures (SOP) adopted by the governments in deporting illegal migrants, especially to Bangladesh.

The top court also impleaded the Gujarat government as

a party in the matter. Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Centre,



objected to the petition filed by the West Bengal Migrant Welfare Board alleging detention of Bengali-speaking migrant workers on suspicion of being Bangladeshi nationals and said no aggrieved parties were present before the court. The



pearing for the petitioner board

and other NGOs said such "pub-

lic spirited persons" must help

them in approaching the court besides helping people in the US where the issue over illegal immigration was big.

Justice Bagchi subsequently asked Mehta, "Do you want to build a border wall like in America to prevent illegal immigrants from entering India?"

Mehta replied, "Certainly not but there are no individual complainants. How can the Union of India reply to the vague allegations made in the petition. Let some individual come saying I am being pushed out. We are trying to ensure immigrants don't eat away at our resources. We can't go by media reports. There are agents who facilitate illegal entry into the country." Justice Bagchi then

of national security, integrity of nation and as you said preser vation of our resources. One needs to remember that at the same time, we have a legacy of common heritage and in (West) Bengal and Punjab, language is the same and borders divide the country. We want the Union to clarify its position on the issue. Referring to the case of a pregnant woman, who was pushed into Bangladesh and whose ha beas corpus petition is pending before the Calcutta High Court Bhushan sought the interim re lief through a direction to states to not forcefully push migrants workers into Bangladesh till an authority decided on their nationality.

told Mehta, "There are questions

national



The rationalisation of GST rates must be supported by a robust revenue protection framework for states, a supplementary levy on sin and luxury goods, and a guaranteed compensation mechanism for at least five years

SPICEJET FLIGHT MAKES EMERGENCY LANDING

A SpiceJet flight carrying 205 passengers made an emergency landing at the Srinagar airport due to pressurisation problem Friday, officials said



ings. In reality, we are paying the price for years of negligence, when such structures were allowed to

come up unchecked GANESH NAIK | MAHA MINISTER

Ramdas Soren died just a few days after the death of Guruji (Shibu Soren). The demise of these two eminent per sonalities is an irreparable loss for the state and our party

HEMANT SOREN | J'KHAND CM

The Narendra Modi government has been caught stealing votes with the







Sitharaman The Rupee is getting weaker against the dollar and it is matter

Today, \$1 = ₹88.22But no Press Conference. No concerns, No protest against govt @Amockx2022

SHORT **TAKES**

RG Kar case: CBI grills TMC MLA Atin Ghosh

Kolkata: CBI officers questioned TMC MLA Atin Ghosh at his north Kolkata residence for nearly two and a half hours Friday over the alleged financial irregularities at the RG Kar Medical College and Hospital that the agency is probing alongside the rape and murder of a postgraduate intern within the institution premises last year, officials said. Ghosh, also the deputy mayor of Kolkata Municipal Corporation, is the second TMC lawmaker. after the party's Sreerampur MLA Sudipto Roy, to face the agency's examination in connection with the case.

Panel to probe landslide on Vaishno Devi route

Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha Friday constituted a highlevel three-member committee to inquire into the reasons behind the recent landslide along the pilgrim route leading to the Vaishno Devi shrine atop Trikuta Hills in Reasi district. The inquiry was ordered a day after protests against the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board (SMVDSB) rocked Katra, the base camp for the pilgrims visiting the revered shrine, alleging overcommercialising of the pilgrimage site, and two days after Chief Minister Omar Abdullah questioned allowing the pilgrims for the Yatra when there was a warning of heavy downpour.

Car falls into drain, 3 drown

Faridabad: Three men drowned after their car fell into a drain in Faridabad while they were returning from a pandal set up for Ganesh Chaturthi celebration, police said Friday. The incident took place around 10.40 pm Thursday when the driver lost control over the vehicle and it fell into the Gauchi drain, they said, adding that when people nearby saw the car plunging into the drain, they raised an alarm and reached the spot.

5 killed in U'khand cloudbursts; Manali hit, Punjab submerged



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 29: Cloudbursts killed five and 11 people were missing across districts in Uttarakhand early Friday, while a swathe of Manali town along a river was washed away in rain, veritably turning into a riverbed, and the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway remained closed for traffic for the fourth consecutive day due to landslides.

In Punjab's Patiala, the district administration issued an alert for several low-lying villages near the Ghaggar River following heavy rain in its catchment area.

The flooding in the Ferozepur district still persists with nearly 16,000 acres of crops inundated and 62 villages severely hit.

In Maharashtra, heavy downpour sent life out of gear in Latur and Nanded districts, leading to shutting of schools and a request to the army to launch rescue operations

Several landslides triggered by cloudbursts in Uttarakhand swept houses and buried many under mounds of rubble.

Chamoli, Rudraprayag, Tehri and Bageshwar districts bore most of the brunt of the natural calamity, which came close on the heels of the Tharali disaster August 23. On August 5, a devastating flash flood in the Kheer Ganga River in Uttarkashi district flattened nearly half of Dharali -- a key stopover en route to Gangotri. The Uttarakhand State Disaster Management Authority (USDMA) said heavy rain overnight damaged nearly half-a-dozen houses in Pausari gram panchayat in Kapkot area of Bageshwar district, leaving two dead, one wounded, and three missing. Two bodies were recovered, while one person was rescued

in an injured condition in

Bageshwar, the USDMA said. Three went missing there.

In Mopata village of Chamoli, a couple was killed in a landslide, Chief Development Officer Abhishek Tripathi said.

Heavy rain lashed Jammu and Kashmir's Katra on Friday, as the pilgrimage to the Vaishno Devi shrine remained suspended for the fourth consecutive day. On Tuesday, a landslide claimed 34 lives and left 20 others injured on the pilgrim route to the shrine at Adhkuwari, ensconced in the Trikuta hills.

Katra and Trikuta hills have been witnessing heavy rain since Friday morning. The downpour didn't stop till reports last came in.

Several landslides in the Udhampur-Ramban belt rendered the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway out of bounds for the fourth consecutive day.

More than 2,000 vehicles are stranded along the 270-km-long stretch – the only all-weather road linking Kashmir with the rest of the country.

In flood-hit Punjab, more than 2,500 people were rescued, and were housed in 13

camps, officials said. Pathankot, Gurdaspur, Fazilka, Kapurthala, Tarn Taran, Ferozepur, Hoshiarpur and Amritsar have been the worsthit. Yet heavy rain on Friday triggered a flood alert in Patiala - among the districts worst

affected in the 2023 floods. Water level in Sutlej, Beas and Ravi rivers and seasonal rivulets continued to rise Friday, as agencies joined hands to rescue the hundreds stranded across villages. Scores of tourist vehicles have been stranded in Manali town for the past few days, and with road connectivity snapped, their chances of retrieval are diminishing.

Putin to visit India in December: Kremlin

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Moscow, August 29: Russian President Vladimir Putin will travel to India in December, Kremlin foreign policy aide Yuri Ushakov said Friday. Ushakov said President Putin

will meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi Monday on the sidelines of the Shanghai Coopera-Summit in China's Tianjin city to discuss the preparations for his visit to India.

"Right after the SCO Plus meeting (September 1), our president will meet Indian Prime Minister Modi," Ushakov told journalists. "What is especially important is that preparations will be discussed for the upcoming visit of our president to India in December," he added.

In Tianjin, the two leaders will have their first meeting this year, although they have been regularly in touch on the phone, he said. 'Our countries are bound by a special strategic partnership, he said. "A relevant statement in this regard was passed in December 2010, which means that this vear marks the 15th anniversary since then." Prime Minister Modi had travelled to Russia twice last year for an annual summit with Putin and to attend the BRICS Summit in Kazan.



The Russian president is visiting India for the annual summit. US President Donald Trump has doubled tariffs on Indian goods to a whopping 50 per cent, including a 25 per cent additional duties for India's purchase of Russian crude oil. Defending its purchase of Rus-

sian crude oil, India has been maintaining that its energy procurement is driven by national



SC to hear RJD, AIMIM pleas on claim deadline extension Sept 8

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 29: The Supreme Court Friday agreed to hear September 8 pleas of the RJD and AIMIM for extending the deadline to file claims and objections in the special intensive revision of electoral rolls in poll-bound Bihar.

The deadline for filing claims and objections is September 1.

A bench of Justices Surva Kant, Joymalya Bagchi and Vipul M Pancholi said it would hear the applications of the political parties September 8.

"List all the interlocutory applications along with the main matter September 8," the order said. Advocate Prashant Bhushan and senior advocate Shoeb Alam, appearing for the Rashtriya Janta Dal (RJD). mentioned to the bench about several parties filing pleas for



Advocate Nizam Pasha, appearing for the AIMIM, sought the extension due to large-scale filing of claims and objections. "The number of claims filed

are exponentially rising. The deadline needs to be extended,' Alam said. Pasha said over 80,000 claims were filed before the August 22

order whereas after the order around 95,000 claims have been filed so far. "We are requesting that these applications be listed as bench asked the petitioners why they hadn't approached the Elec tion Commission (EC) for relief. Bhushan claimed their request was not considered by the EC The plea filed by RJD through advocate Fauzia Shakil said in the SIR, the number of polling booths had increased to 90,712 and the party appointed booth level agents (BLAs) in 47,506 polling booths which is approximately 52 per cent of the polling booths.

The party said after the Au gust 22 court order, the claims along with Aadhaar card were collected by the BLAs and despite the acknowledgment of claims by booth level officers (BLO) claims were not lodged and were not reflected on the daily EC status report against the party to portray a wrong narrative that the BLAs of political parties were not cooperating and filing claims.

Mahua's attack on Amit Shah over infiltration sparks row

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, August 29: TMC MP a fresh political controver sy with her remarks against Union Home Minister Amit Shah, accusing him of failing to check infiltration from Bangladesh and allegedly stating his "head should be cut off and put on the table.

The BJP, which was quick to hit back, slammed Moitra for her "distasteful and hate remarks" and wondered wheth-

er it was TMC's official stand. Speaking to reporters in West Bengal's Nadia district on the sidelines of an event Thursday, Moitra alleged that the Union government was shirking its responsibilities on border security. PTI, however, couldn't independently verify the au-



are repeatedly talking about infiltrators; but the border of India is protected by five forces, and that is directly the Home Ministry's responsibility," she said. Referring to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Independence Day address, she remarked, "Standing at Red Fort, the PM himself said infiltrators are causing demographic changes. But even as he was saying this, his Home Minister was standing in the front row. smiling and clapping.

She then launched a personal attack on Shah, alleging, "If we don't have anyone to protect our borders, if people from another country are entering every day, if our citizens complain that infiltrators are eyeing our mothers and sisters and snatching our lands, then the first thing you should do is cut Amit Shah's head and put it on your table."

The Krishnanagar MP also said, "When the home ministry and home minister cannot protect the nation's borders, and the PM himself says infiltrators are troubling our people, then who is at fault? Is it our fault? Or yours?" Moitra also questioned why infiltration continues despite the presence of the Border Security Force along the frontier. Though Moitra was yet to respond to the complaint, BJP leaders described her comments as "deeply objectionable" and "an insult to democratic discourse.'

lines and building foundations,

The CEC said pollen from the

tree aggravates asthma, rhini-

tis and respiratory allergies,

especially in children and the

Tamil Nadu reported "many

cases of pollen allergies during

the flowering season", prompt-

ing the state to impose a ban

The report also flagged fire

hazards, saying the tree pro-

duces dry, brittle wood that

is "highly flammable during

summer months, increasing

the risk of accidental fires in

public spaces". The committee

listed allelopathic impacts too.

Studies suggest the species re-

leases chemicals into the soil

that inhibit the growth of near-

by vegetation, alter soil pH and

the report said.

earlier this year.

Petitions under Stalin's scheme found floating in river, Oppn slams DMK

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, August 29: AIADMK general secretary Edappadi K Palaniswami and BJP leader K Annamalai Friday alleged that people's grievance petitions submitted under the DMK regime's outreach programme Ungaludan Stalin,' (Stalin with you) were thrown away like garbage in a river in south

Tamil Nadu. The government said the papers found floating in Sivaganga district were copies of 13 petitions. An enquiry has been ordered and a complaint has been lodged with the police and appropriate legal action would be taken, Sivaganga District Collector K Porkodi said.

Palaniswami, condemning the dumping of petitions in Vaigai river, alleged that the DMK's outreach scheme was launched merely for the sake of gaining publicity.

The petitions getting junked is "strongly condem nable", and the petitions were scattered in the river like the immersion of the ashes of a dead person, he claimed. Palaniswami fur ther alleged that the state government could not un derstand the trials and trib ulations and sentiments of the people and dubbed the Ungaludan Stalin as an "eye wash" of the DMK regime, and a "staged drama".

BJP Tamil Nadu President Nainar Nagenthran called the government a "negligent model government" over the

He sought to know if the chief minister would take action on this issue or focus on publicity.

PMK top leader Anbumani Ramadoss asked what else to expect from the DMK regime,

which is working for empty publicity? Anbumani said people will

teach a lesson to those who think of fooling the people.

SC panel seeks nationwide ban on Conocarpus tree ted to the apex court, the CEC footpaths, underground pipe-

Imported from the Americas and Africa, Conocarpus erectus and Conocarpus lancifolius were introduced in India over the past two decades as drought-tolerant and low-maintenance trees that could withstand pollution, salinity and poor soils

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 29: The Supreme Court-mandated Central Empowered Committee (CEC) has sought a ban on Conocarpus, a fast-growing exotic species planted widely in India for quick greening of roads and health risks.

urban spaces, saying it poses grave ecological and public

In a 40-page report submit-

described the tree as "ecologically unsuitable" and said its unchecked spread threatens biodiversity, groundwater, infrastructure and human health.

"The Conocarpus plant, although tempting for roadside plantation and quick creation of green belts, has serious negative interactions in terms of health risks and environmental degradation, which makes it quite unsuitable from an ecological point of view," it said. The committee said the tree is

often referred to as a "green desert" because it provides almost no nectar or shelter for birds, bees or other insects. Its dense canopy and chem-

ical-laden leaf litter suppress native plant growth, damaging natural regeneration, the CEC said. "Due to its prolific nature and varied adaptability to different climatic conditions, it poses a threat to native ecosystems. This will become yet another invasive species," the report Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh

cautioned.

Imported from the Americas and Africa, Conocarpus erectus and Conocarpus lancifolius were introduced in India over the past two decades as drought-tolerant and low-maintenance trees that could withstand pollution, salinity and poor soils.

Their rapid growth and evergreen foliage made them popular in Gujarat, Telangana,

and Tamil Nadu. But the CEC found that these very traits have turned the tree into a silent threat.

are aggressive and penetrate deep into aquifers, depleting regions like Kachchh.

In cities like Ahmedabad and Hyderabad, root intrusion from Conocarpus plantations has caused frequent damage to

The committee said its roots

shallow groundwater in arid

Guiarat banned Conocarpus

disrupt local ecosystems.

in September 2023, prohibiting its planting even in nurseries.

international



We need the architecture to be clear to everyone. Then we want to connect with President Trump during a meeting...and tell him how

VOLODYMYR ZELENSKIY

PUTIN TO MEET MODI MONDAY

Russian President Vladimir Putin will meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi Monday on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Summit in China's Tianjin, Kremlin foreign policy aide Yuri Ushakov said Friday. Both Modi and Putin will travel to China to attend the SCO Summit from August 31 to September 1



laundromat for the Kremlin,'

He went on to say that Indian

refiners buy cheap Russian oil,

process it, and export fuels to

"India now exports over

million barrels a day in refined

petroleum — more than half

the volume of Russian crude it

imports. The proceeds flow to

India's politically connected en-

ergy titans - and directly into

Putin's war chest," he claimed

world's largest democracy,

wants to be "treated like a stra-

tegic partner of the US, it needs

The trade adviser said Amer-

ican consumers buy Indian

goods while India keeps out

US exports through high tariffs

discounted Russian crude. In

dian refiners, with their silent

Russian partners, refine and

flip the black-market oil for

big profits on the international

market - while Russia pockets

hard currency to fund its war

on Ukraine," Navarro said.

"India uses our dollars to buy

and non-tariff barriers.

to act like one".

Navarro said if India, the

Europe, Africa, and Asia.

Navarro claimed.

happened, and my solidarity and

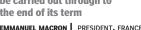
women who have been offended, insulted, and violated in their intimacy by the administrators of this forum and its 'users

GIORGIA MELONI | PRIME MINISTER, ITALY



MARIA ZAKHAROVA | FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESWOMAN, RUSSIA

The mandate which has been given to me by the French people, and by no-one else, is a mandate that will be carried out through to the end of its term



SHORT TAKES

Russia boosts fertilizer exports to india by 20%

Moscow: Russia has increased exports of fertiliser to India by 20 per cent to 2.5 million tonnes in the first six months of the current year, raising its share in the country's total imports to a record 33 per cent, a Russian industry official has said. "Overall, in the first half of 2025, supplies from Russia increased by 0.4 million tonnes, or 20 per cent, to 2.5 million tonnes. The share of Russian fertilisers in India's total fertiliser imports in the first half of the year increased to a record 33 per cent. That means that every third tonne of fertilisers imported by India is from Russia," the head of the Russian Fertilizer Producers Association (RAFP), Andrey Guryev, said, according to Russia's state-run news agency TASS.

Wife, ally of ousted SK president indicted

Seoul: The wife of South Korea's jailed ex-President Yoon Suk Yeol and his former prime minister were indicted Friday as part of investigations into his administration and his attempt to overcome opposition by declaring martial law. Yoon set off South Korea's most serious political crisis in decades when he attempted to force his agenda through an oppositiondominated legislature by declaring martial law

F-16 iet crashes ahead of air show, killing pilot

December 3, 2024.

Warsaw(Poland): An F-16 pilot was killed Thursday when his jet crashed during preparations for an air show in central Poland, a government spokesperson said. Spokesperson Adam Szlapka confirmed the death in a social media post. Polish news agency PAP reported that the plane was part of the Polish Air Force. The crash occurred ahead of the AirSHOW Radom 2025, which was scheduled to occur this

Ex-Austrian intelligence officer indicted

weekend.

Vienna: Austrian prosecutors said Friday they have indicted a former intelligence officer on charges that include supporting a Russian intelligence service in the country's biggest spying scandal in decades. Egisto Ott is accused of espionage to the detriment of Austria and abuse of office, among other charges, Vienna prosecutors said in a statement. The indictment was filed to the state court in the Austrian capital.



COURT SACKS PM SHINAWATRA

Bangkok, August 29: Thailand's Constitutional Court dismissed Prime Minister Paetongtarn Shinawatra from office Friday for an ethics violation after only a year in power, dealing another crushing blow to the Shinawatra political dynasty that could usher in a new period of turmoil.

Paetongtarn, who was Thailand's youngest prime minister, becomes the sixth premier from or backed by the billionaire Shinawatra family to be removed by the military or judiciary in a tumultuous two-decade battle for power between the country's warring elites. In its verdict, the court said

Paetongtarn violated ethics in a leaked June telephone call, during which she appeared to kowtow to Cambodia's powerful former leader Hun Sen - until recently a close ally of the Shinawatra family - when both countries were on the brink of an armed border conflict.

Fighting erupted weeks later and lasted five days. The ruling payes the way for the election by parliament of a new prime minister, a process that could be drawn out, with Paetongtarn's ruling Pheu Thai party losing bargaining power and facing a challenge to shore up a fragile alliance with a razor-thin majority.

In a 6-3 decision, the court



said Paetong tarn had put her private **COURT SAYS PAETONGTARN PUT** before

those of the nation and had damaged the country's reputation. causing a loss

of public confi-

"Due to a personal relationship that appeared aligned with Cambodia, the respondent was consistently willing to comply with or act in accordance with the wishes

PAETONGTARN of the Cambodian IS FIFTH PM REMOVED the court BY COURT IN 17 YEARS The ruling

PRIVATE INTERESTS BEFORE COUNTRY'S brings a premature end PAFTONGTARN SAYS PURPOSE OF CALL to the pre-WAS TO SAVE LIVES OF CIVILIANS, SOLDIERS miership of DEAL-MAKING FLURRY EXPECTED the daughter BETWEEN PARTIES and protégé of influential PM WAS 'CONSISTENTLY WILLING tycoon Thak-TO COMPLY' WITH CAMBODIA'S sin Shinawatra. WISHES, COURT SAYS

> was a political neophyte when she was thrust abruptly into the spotlight after the surprise dismissal of predecessor Srettha Thavisin by the same court a year ago.

Paetongtarn,

Paetongtarn called for unity

ical stability to Thailand.

"All I wanted was to safe guard the lives of people, whether soldiers or civilians. I was determined to do all I can to protect their lives before the violent clashes," she told reporters.

DEALMAKING BEGINS

She is the fifth premier in 17 vears to be removed by the Con stitutional Court, underlining its central role in an intractable power struggle between the elected governments of the Shinawatra clan and a nexus of powerful conservatives and royalist generals with far-reaching influence.

The focus will next shift to who will replace Paetongtarn, with Thaksin expected to be at the heart of a flurry of horse-trading between parties and other power-brokers to try to keep Pheu Thai in charge of the coalition.

Deputy premier Phumtham Wechayachai will be in charge as caretaker until a new prime minister is elected by the house, with no time limit on when that must take place.

Five people are eligible to become prime minister, with only one from Pheu Thai, 77-year-old Chaikasem Nitisiri, a former attorney general with limited cabinet experience, who has maintained a low profile. Pheu Thai confirmed on Friday it would nominate Chaikasem.

'oil money laundromat for Kremlin': Trump aide

India has turned into



New York/Washington, August 29: A day after claiming that the Ukraine conflict was "Modi's war", White House trade adviser Peter Navarro has accused India of being an oil money laundromat for the Kremlin".

Navarro, Trump administration's Senior Counsellor for Trade and Manufacturing, in a lengthy thread on X Thursday, ranted about India's oil purchases from Russia and New Delhi's high tariffs.

The 50 per cent tariffs slapped on India by the Trump administration came into effect Wednesday.

The trade adviser said the 50 per cent tariff — 25 per cent for unfair trade and 25 per cent for national security — was a direct response. "India's Big Oil lobby has

in the world into a massive

refining hub and oil money

He claimed that before Rus turned the largest democracy

sia's invasion of Ukraine, Russian oil made up "less than one per cent of India's imports and today it is over 30 per cent — more than 1.5 million barrels a day"

Trump ends security

SNIPPETS

B'desh court imprisons 1971 war veterans

DHAKA: A Bangladeshi court Friday sent 16 people, including several 1971 Liberation War veterans, to jail under the tough Anti-Terrorism Act, a day after a mob allegedly disrupted their scheduled public discussion in the capital. Magistrate Farzana Hague ordered them to be sent to jail after they were produced in court nearly 24 hours after their detention. Police had initially detained them for their protection from "public unrest" Thursday. Dhaka police after midnight Thursday said the detainees were being charged under the Anti-Terrorism Act of 2009 without further elaboration. The initial case document submitted in the court suggested at least six of the 16 arrested were in their 70s.

Kabul accuses Pak for airstrikes that killed 3

Islamabad: Airstrikes that Afghanistan's Taliban government blamed on neighbouring Pakistan struck two eastern provinces of the country, killing at least three people, wounding seven others and damaging homes, officials and witnesses have said. In Kabul, the foreign ministry decried the strikes that took place late Wednesday in Nangarhar and Khost provinces, calling them a "provocative act" by Pakistan and summoning the Pakistani ambassador in Kabul Thursday. The Afghan Defence Ministry also condemned the strikes. "Such barbaric and brutal actions benefit neither sides; rather intensify the distance between the two Muslim nations and fuel hatred. These irresponsible activities will have consequences," it wrote on the X social media platform.

Israel recovers body of hostage Ilan Weiss from Gaza

Gaza City: Israel has recovered the body of hostage Ilan Weiss from the Gaza Strip, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said Friday. The remains of a second hostage, whose name had yet to be released for publication, were also retrieved, the statement added. Weiss, 55, a resident of Kibbutz Be'eri, in southern Israel, was kidnapped from his home and killed during the October 7, 2023, cross-border attack by Hamas, the Israeli military said. His wife, Shiri, and daughter, Noga, were also abducted and later released as part of a hostageprisoner swap deal in November 2023. With Weiss's body recovered, Israel says 49 hostages remain in Gaza, of whom only 20 are believed to be alive.

Pak blames India for worsening floods

Islamabad, August 29: Flooding in Pakistan from water flowing downstream from India was made worse by New Delhi's suspension of a river-sharing treaty and the collapse of the gates on an Indian barrage, Pakistani officials said Friday.

Torrential monsoon rains ravaged neighboring adversaries India and Pakistan this week, with further heavy downpours forecast for this weekend. In eastern Pakistan, flood waters hit the outskirts of the country's second biggest city, Lahore Friday, and threatened to submerge the major town of Jhang, in the worst flooding in almost 40 years in that part of the country.

The nations share rivers that originate in India and flow into Pakistan, regulated for more than six decades under the Indus Waters Treaty. That agreement was suspended by India this year, following the shooting of 26 people by militants that New Delhi said were backed by Islamabad, which

Pakistan denies.

Ahsan Iqbal, Pakistan's Planning Minister, told Reuters that data on water flows which used to be shared by India under the treaty had not passed to Pakistan quickly enough, or in sufficient detail.

We could have managed better if we had better information," said Iqbal. "If the Indus Waters Treaty was in operation, we could have mitigated the impact."

The middle section of Madhopur barrage, which spans the Ravi River in India, was washed away by surging water, video broadcast by Indian

media Thursday showed. Pakistani officials said that this damage unleashed an uncontrolled flow across the border. flooding some parts of Lahore Friday. An Indian government source denied there had been any deliberate attempt to flood Pakistan, while confirming that two gates of Madhopur barrage had broken.

Indian authorities were trying to stem the flow on the Ravi River, despite the damage to the barrage, and the flow was being controlled by the Ranjit Sagar Dam upstream, said the source, who declined to be identified, citing government policy.

The letter to Harris, dated Thursday, says the termina tion of additional security is effective Sept 1, the official said

er to Harris, said in response to the move, "The vice president is grateful to the United States Secret Service for their professionalism, dedication, and unwavering commitment to safety," she said.

Harris lost the 2024 presidential election to Trump but has not ruled out a possible presidential bid in 2028. She announced July 30 that she would not run for governor of

Trump has also ended federal security protection for others including those who have criticized him such as former national security adviser John Bolton. In March, he ended protection for Biden's children Hunter Biden and

BANGLADESH 2026 ELECTIONS

EC terms upcoming polls 'most risky' in history

THE UPCOMING POLLS WILL BE THE FIRST SINCE THE OUSTER OF SHEIKH HASINA'S AWAMI LEAGUE GOVERNMENT IN AUGUST 2024. FOLLOWING THE VIOLENT PROTEST LED BY STUDENTS AGAINST DISCRIMINATION

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dhaka, August 29: Bangladesh's Election Commission (EC) Friday described the national election scheduled for February next year as the "most risky" in the country's electoral history, urging officials to brace for unpredictable challenges amid political uncertainty and social unrest.

The remarks came a day after it unveiled a roadmap for the election, which has drawn mixed reactions from political parties.

"The upcoming general election will undoubtedly be the most risky in Bangladesh's electoral history," Election Commissioner M Anwarul Islam Sarker said at a training programme for election officials, which was also attended by Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) AMM Nasir Uddin.

"We may have to confront challenges that we do not yet know," he said. Unveiling the roadmap for the general election, Bangladesh's top electoral

body had said the poll schedule would be announced at least 60 days before the voting date.

Another election commissioner, Abdur Rahmanel Masud, echoed Sarker's concern, saving that the upcoming election "will be risky but the matter does not end there"

"A former CEC was recently garlanded with shoes (by a mob), while another is currently in jail," he said, urging officials to "just follow the law" and not to look to anyone else.

CEC Uddin stressed pro-

upcoming polls", he said. The upcoming polls will be

fessionalism and neutrality, directing officials to prepare for possible threats to law and order as well as the spread of misinformation and disinformation through social media.

The commission "wants 100 per cent neutral behaviour from election officials in the

the first since the ouster of Sheikh Hasina's Awami League government in August 2024, fol-

lowing the violent protest led by Students Against Discrimination (SAD). Taher said the deadline was Nobel laureate Muhammad announced without taking a de-

Yunus has since been heading the interim government as Chief Adviser, with the Awami League barred from contesting the election pending trials of Hasina and her colleagues on charges, including crimes against humanity.

While former prime minister Khaleda Zia's Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and several left-leaning groups have welcomed the election roadmap, Jamaat-e-Islami on Friday rejected it as a "blueprint" to "undermine free, fair election"

Jamaat leader Syed Abdullah Mohammad Taher, in a meeting with election officials in Cumilla district, accused Yunus of breaking his "promise" by prematurely announcing the election deadline.

The Islamist party was demanding the introduction of a proportional representation (PR) system in the polls, apparently to enhance its possible stake in the future parliament.

cision on the matter and other reform issues. The newly formed National Citizen Party (NCP) -- an offshoot of the SAD seen as sympathetic to Yunus -- has also expressed reservations against

the planned polls under the ex-

isting system and scenario. The party, which is yet to get the EC registration, described the roadmap as a "breach of promise". NCP Joint Convener Ariful Islam Adeeb, in a press conference, warned that "this misstep" could create future crises for which "the govern-

ment must bear responsibility". The party is pushing for a new constitution to replace the 1972 charter through a Constituent Assembly. It is demanding that the "July Charter" announced by Yunus earlier this month, acknowledging last year's "revolution", be implemented through the new constitution.

protection for former **Vice President Harris** REUTERS Washington, August 29: US President Donald Trump has canceled Secret Service protec-

tion for former vice president and 2024 Democratic rival Kamala Harris, a senior White House official said Friday.

Former vice presidents typ ically receive six months of Secret Service protection after they leave office.

Harris' protection was extended to one year, until January 2026, by then-President Joe Biden before he left office last January, the official said.

Harris in September is to embark on a 15-city book tour for her memoir, "107 Days, about her unsuccessful pres idential run. She was the Democratic nominee for 107 days after Biden withdrew from the race in the weeks following a disastrous debate against Trump. Trump went on to defeat Harris.

Kirsten Allen, a senior advis-

California in 2026.

Ashley Biden.



business



be coming out with a variety of measures to support every sector, both to expand the domestic outreach and look for complementarities in other markets around the world to expand our global foray so that this year, our exports will exceed last year's exports

The government will

CAPGEMINI SEEKS CCI CLEARANCE TO ACQUIRE CLOUD4C

French IT services major Capgemini has sought clearance from the Competition Commission of India (CCI) to acquire full ownership of Singapore-based Cloud4C. The development comes after Capgemini announced Tuesday that it has signed an agreement to acquire Cloud4C, a leader in hybrid cloud platform services. Headquartered in Paris, Cappemini is a leading multinational in consulting, digital transformation, technology, and engineering services





enough for urban local bodies to deliver high-quality urban services

SRINIVAS KATIKITHALA | UNION HOUSING AND URBAN AFFAIRS SECRETARY

profiles of shrimp exporters focused on the US market will face further

challenges after two sluggish years. The financial leverage, however, is expected to remain stable at 0.5 times HIMANK SHARMA I CRISIL RATINGS DIRECTOR



RS GOENKA | CHAIRMAN, EMAMI

SHORT TAKES

Forex reserves drop

Mumbai: India's forex reserves dropped \$4.386 billion to \$690.72 billion for the week ended August 22, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said Friday. The overall reserves had jumped \$1.488 billion to \$695.106 billion in the previous reporting week For the week ended August 29, foreign currency assets, a major component of the reserves, have decreased \$3.652 billion to \$582.251 billion, the data released Friday showed. The special drawing rights (SDRs) were down \$46 million to \$18.736 billion, the apex bank said. India's reserve position with the IMF was also down \$23 million at \$ 4.731 billion in the reporting week, the apex bank data showed.

RBI imposes fine on Bandhan Bank

Mumbai: The Reserve Bank of India has imposed a penalty of Rs 44.7 lakh on Bandhan Bank for deficiencies in certain statutory and regulatory compliance. In a statement Friday, the RBI said that a statutory inspection for supervisory evaluation of the bank was conducted with reference to its financial position as on March 31. 2024. RBI said the bank paid remuneration in the form of commission to certain employees, Also, Bandhan Bank had carried out manual intervention through the back-end in respect of data of certain accounts and had not captured the audit trails/logs of access with specific user details in the system, RBI, however, said the penalty is based on deficiencies in statutory and regulatory compliance and is not intended to pronounce upon the validity of any transaction or agreement entered into by the bank

with its customers.

RIL shares dip New Delhi: Shares of Reliance Industries Ltd declined over 2 per cent amid profit-taking on the day of its annual general meeting Friday. The bellwether stock lost momentum soon after the beginning of the annual general meeting and later dropped 2.21 per cent to settle at Rs 1,357.05 apiece on the BSE. At one point during the day, the stock hit a high of Rs 1,403, up 1.10 per cent. During the day, it declined 2.69 per cent to Rs 1,350.30. On the NSE, the stock fell by 2.07 per cent to settle at Rs 1,357.20 per piece. Intra-day, shares of the firm edged lower by 2.59 per cent to Rs 1,350. The company's market valuation eroded by Rs 41,409.36 crore to Rs 18,36,424.20 crore.

Gold surges to new peak; silver slips

New Delhi, August 29: Gold prices rallied Rs 2,100 to hit a fresh all-time high of Rs 1,03,670 per 10 grams in the national capital Friday due to persistent buying by stockists and depreciation in rupee, according to the All India Sarafa

The precious metal of 99.9 per cent purity had closed at Rs 1,01,570 per 10 grams Thursday.

Continuing the upside momentum for the fourth straight session, gold of 99.5 per cent purity surged Rs 2,100 to hit a new lifetime high of Rs 1,03,100 per 10 grams (inclusive of all taxes) Friday, a day after settling at Rs 1,01,000 per 10 grams.

Gold of 99.9 and 99.5 per cent purity had recorded their lifetime highs of Rs 1,03,420 and Rs 1.03.000 per 10 grams, respectively, August 8 when the prices went up by Rs 800 per 10 grams. This was on the heels of a steep gain of Rs 3,600 per 10

New Delhi, August 29: Indi-

an refiners boosted US crude oil

purchases this month, drawn

by competitive prices, trade

sources said, and a move that

could help narrow the country's

trade deficit with the United

States amid tensions between

The country's top refiner,

Indian Oil Corp, has bought

5 million barrels of US West

Texas Intermediate (WTI)

crude for delivery in October

and November via a tender,

This came after another

state refiner Bharat Petroleum

Corp purchased 2 million bar-

rels of US WTI crude while

private refiner Reliance In-

dustries has bought 2 million

barrels of WTI crude from Vi-

Indian refiners, along with

others in Asia, stepped up

purchases after the arbitrage

window for US crude to Asia

opened. India is also under

pressure to buy more US oil af-

ter the United States doubled

its tariffs on Indian imports to

50%, citing New Delhi's buying

European traders Gunvor

and Equinor sold 2 million

barrels each, while Mercuria

sold 1 million barrels to IOC,

made its first purchase of Nige-

rian Utapate oil as it expands

its crude diet to include new

Meanwhile, BPCL has also

of Russian oil.

the sources said.

grades, they added.

tol, other sources said.

the two nations.

trade sources said.

GOLD & SILVER 10g = ₹1,03,670* 1kg = ₹1,19,000* ₹1,20,000 ₹1,19,000 ₹1,01,570 GOLD Aug 29 Aug 29

gram in the preceding session on August 7. "Gold prices witnessed a sharp gain and surged to a new record high in the domestic markets, led by a weaker rupee and a positive trend in the overseas market.

'The Indian rupee hit an all-time low, raising concerns about the impact of 50 per cent US tariffs on the country's GDP," Saumil Gandhi, Senior Analyst - Commodities at HD-FC Securities, said.

Friday, the rupee breached the 88-mark for the first time and closed at an all-time low of 88.19 (provisional) against the US dollar, registering a sharp decline of 61 paise amid tariff

During the week, the precious metal prices have increased by Rs 3,300 or 3.29 per cent. Meanwhile, silver prices retreated from its all-time high level and declined Rs 1,000 to Rs 1,19,000 per kilogram (inclusive metal had finished at Rs 1,20,000 per kg Thursday.

In futures trade, the most-traded gold contract for October delivery climbed Rs 713 or 0.70 per cent to hit a fresh peak of Rs 1,02,813 per 10 grams on the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX)

Subsequently, the precious metal for December delivery appreciated by Rs 702 or 0.68 per cent to hit a fresh all-time high of Rs 1,03,849 per 10 grams Additionally, the most-trad-

ed silver futures contract for September delivery increased Rs 651 to hit an all-time high of Rs 1,17,825 per kilogram. The white metal futures for December contract also rallied Rs 641 or 0.54 per cent to hit a fresh peak of Rs 1,19,285 per kg on the MCX.

In the overseas markets, spot gold was trading flat at \$3,407.39 per ounce in New York. Spot silver went down by 0.52 per cent to trade at \$38.84 per ounce.

Market decline wipes out ₹11.21L-cr from investors' wealth in three days



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 29: Market investors became poorer by Rs 11.21 lakh crore in three days of selling pressure, where the benchmark Sensex tumbled 1,826 points.

In the past three trading days, the BSE benchmark has plummeted 1,826.26 points or 270.92 POINTS OR 0.34 2.23 per cent.

Friday, BSE 30-share dropped Sensex BY 74.05 POINTS OF 270.92points or 0.34 per cent to settle at 79,809.65. During the day, it declined 338.81 points or 0.42 per cent to The market capitalisation

of BSE-listed firms eroded by Rs 11,21,459.36 crore to Rs 4,43,65,504.09 crore (USD 5.05 trillion) in three days.

The Sensex ended Friday's trade on a subdued note, slipping 270.92 points to close at 79,809.65 as persistent concerns over US tariffs on Indian exports weighed on investor sentiment and kept foreign inflows under pressure, Vikram

Kasat, Head - Advisory at PI

From the Sensex firms, Ma hindra & Mahindra fell by 2.96 per cent, followed by Reliance Industries, which lost 2.21 per cent. Infosys, NTPC, Tata Mo tors and Tech Mahindra were also among the laggards. However, ITC, Bhara

Electronics, and Larsen & Toubro were among the ma-PER CENT TO SETTLE AT jor gainers. Benchmark indi ces extended their

losing streak for the

Trent

third consecutive ses sion as investor senti ment remained risk-averse amid ongoing concerns around the broader implications of recently imposed US tariffs. according to Bajaj Broking

The BSE midcap gauge declined 0.41 per cent and the smallcap index dipped 0.29 per cent. Among BSE sectoral indices, realty declined 1.33 per cent, energy (1.01 per cent), BSE Focused IT (0.95 per cent) IT (0.94 per cent), auto (0.84 per cent), oil & gas (0.77 per cent) and services (0.63 per cent).

India boosts US oil trade **ONLINE GAMING BAN** on competitive prices

Banks, fintech firms seek RBI guidelines

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 29: Banks and financial services firms during a joint meeting with the Department of Financial Services and the IT ministry Friday sought detailed guidelines from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to implement the ban on online money gaming, sources said.

The firms also sought more time to put in place mechanisms to comply with the ban, they said. The government has banned all forms of online money gaming by bringing in the Promotion and Regulation

of Online Gaming Act after repeated complaints of people dying by suicide due to heavy monetary losses. Sources present in the meeting said the discussion was largely around familiarisation with provisions of the Act and understanding the manner to implement it. 'Transitional measures,

if any, along with challenges they expect in implementation of the Act's provisions were discussed. Everyone committed to implement it and have sought specific and detailed guidelines from the RBI on implementation of the rules. They have sought time for backend

compliance mechanisms to set tle in," an official source said. The government is in the

process of notifying the Act so that the same will have rules to execute. The Act seeks to prohibit advertisement related to online money games and bars banks and financial institutions from transferring funds for any of such games. Advertising of money games

can attract imprisonment up to two years and/or fine up to Rs 50 lakh. Facilitating financial transactions related to money games can lead to imprisonment up to three years and/or fine up to Rs 1 crore.

Fiscal deficit at 29.9% of full-year target at July-end pulled down the performance

In absolute terms, the fiscal deficit, or gap between the government's expenditure and revenue, was Rs 4,68,416 crore in the April-July period of

2025-26

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 29: Centre's fiscal deficit increased to 29.9 per cent of the full-year target at the end of July, according to data released by the Controller General of Accounts (CGA) Friday.

The fiscal deficit was 17.2 per cent of the Budget Estimates (BE) of 2024-25 in the first four months of the previous financial year.

The same stood at 17.9 per cent of the full-year target at the end of the first quarter (April-June).

In absolute terms, the fiscal deficit, or gap between the government's expenditure and revenue, was Rs 4,68,416 crore in the April-July period of 2025-26.

The Centre estimates the fiscal deficit during 2025-26 at 4.4 per cent of the GDP, or Rs 15.69 lakh crore.

The CGA data showed, the government received Rs 10.95 lakh crore (31.3 per cent of the corresponding BE 2025-26 of total receipts) up to July 2025.

It comprised Rs 6.61 lakh crore tax revenue (Net to Centre), Rs 4.03 lakh crore of nontax revenue and Rs 29,789 crore of non-debt capital receipts.

Further, it said Rs 4.28 lakh crore has been transferred to state governments as devolution of share of taxes by the Government of India during the period, which is Rs 61,914 crore



higher than the previous year. The total expenditure incurred by the Centre was Rs

15.63 lakh crore - 30.9 per cent of the corresponding BE 2025-26. out of which Rs 12,16,699 crore was on the revenue account and Rs 3.46 lakh crore on the capital account.

Of the total revenue expendi-

ture, Rs 4.46 lakh crore was on account of interest payments and Rs 1.13 lakh crore towards major subsidies.

Aditi Nayar, Chief Economist at ICRA Ltd, said a contraction in the personal income tax collections in July 2025, owing to the extension of the deadline to file taxes and an adverse base, of gross tax revenues in the month, even as devolution to states maintained a robust nace, further compressing the performance of net tax reve While revenue expenditure

expanded by 17 per cent, capital expenditure surged by 33 per cent on the last year's elec tion-curtailed base, she added While this fiscal headroom could be cut short by the implications of the proposed GST changes on revenues, more clarity is awaited on the same Nayar added.

CGA said the fiscal deficit figure shown in monthly accounts during a financial year is not necessarily an indicator of fiscal deficit for the year, as it gets impacted by a temporal mismatch between the flow of non-debt receipts and expenditure up to that month.

TOLIC organises 58th half yearly meeting at SBI Bhubaneswar



BHUBANESWAR: The 58th Half Yearly Meeting of the Town Official Language Implementation Committee (TOLIC), Bank & Insurance. Bhubaneswar was held August 26, at State Bank of India, Bhubaneswar in the Chairmanship of Sarada Prasan Mohanty, Regional Director, Reserve Bank of India and in the presence of Vichitrasen Gupta, Deputy Director (Implementation), Government of India, Suiit Kumar, Chief General Manager, IDBI Bank, Ayush Sheopuri, General Manager, NABARD, Samden Doriee Lama, Circle Development Officer, State Bank of India, and Senior Executives with Official Language Officers of all the Public Sector Banks and Insurance Companies located in Bhubaneswar were present on this occasion. Samden Doriee Lama extended a formal welcome to all the dignitaries with shawls and saplings by Sarada Prasanna Mohanty. He appreciated all the members for the active cooperation and informed them about the 'Narakas Raibhasha Samman' award received by TOLIC (Bank & Ins). Bhubaneswar at Guwahati, March 5. In the meeting, a report was presented about various programs organised for the promotion of official language in member banks and Insurance companies during the last six months. Mohanty said that this committee is doing commendable work in the promotion of official language in city. The General Manager of NABARD said that Hindi and regional languages are being used by NABARD to increase financial literacy and awareness among customers.

Industrial credit growth declines to 7.6 % in June

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, August 29: Growth in bank credit to industries declined to 7.6 per cent in June 2025 from 11.3 per cent a year ago while the personal loans segment continued to grow faster than overall advances, according to RBI data released The Reserve Bank data also

showed that bank credit growth decelerated to 9.9 per cent in June 2025 from 15 per cent in June 2024. The share of loans bearing

interest rates below 9 per cent increased to 54.1 per cent in June 2025, from 43.2 per cent in the previous year, with the easing of policy rates, the central bank said. "In line with monetary policy

actions, the weighted average lending rate (WALR) on outstanding credit declined by 39 basis points (bps) during April-June 2025, with reductions observed across all major sectors." RBI said.

Personal loans continued to grow faster than overall cred-



it, gradually increasing their share to 32 per cent of total credit by June 2025; within personal loans, housing loans accounted for more than half. "Industrial credit growth

(y-o-y) declined to 7.6 per cent in June 2025 from 11.3 per cent a year ago; its share in total credit declined marginally to 23.3 per cent in Q1: 2025-26 from 23.8 per cent a year ago," it said. Further, the share of indi-

viduals in total credit rose to 47.2 per cent in June 2025, up from 46.5 per cent in June 2024. Growth in credit to female borrowers continued to outpace that of males, lifting women's share within credit to individuals to 23.7 per cent from 23.4 per cent in June 2024.

Public sector banks recorded higher credit growth (11 per cent) than private sector banks

(8.3 per cent) and foreign banks

(8.0 per cent) in June 2025, sustaining their leading position of 53.7 per cent in total credit.

Another set of data showed that bank term deposits recorded a growth of 13.5 per cent, significantly outpacing the savings deposits growth of 5.4 per cent in June 2025

Consequently, the share of term deposits in total deposits soared to 62.2 per cent from 61 per cent in June 2024.

"Nearly 70 per cent of term deposits accounted for the original maturity bucket of one to three years in June 2025, whereas around 20 per cent of term deposits were short-term deposits with a maturity of less than one year," RBI said.

Reflection of recent monetary easing became evident in the interest rate structure of term deposits as the proportion of such deposits bearing higher interest rates of '7 per cent and above' declined to 65 per cent in June 2025, compared to that of

66.9 per cent a year ago. "The share of term deposits

of size 'Rs one crore and above'

inched up to 45.7 per cent in

June 2025 as compared to 44.8 per cent a year ago," it said.

The share of 'Household' de posits witnessed a modest decline in the recent period to 59.9 per cent in June 2025 as compared to that of 60.8 per cent in June 2024.

The corresponding share of 'Financial Corporations' moved up to 7 per cent in June 2025 as compared to that of 6 per cent a vear ago.

Senior citizens owned 20.4 per cent of the total deposits as at end-June 2025, according to

Deposits growth of public sector banks and private sector banks stood at 10.2 per cent and 12.4 per cent, respectively, in June 2025; whereas their cor responding shares in deposits were hovering at 57.3 per cent

and 36.0 per cent, respectively.

The top five states/ Union Territories – Maharashtra NCT of Delhi, Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh, and Tamil Nadu - collectively accounted for 54.3 per cent of total deposits and 47.8 per cent of 'Household' deposits as at end-June 2025.

National Sports Day: Will Dhyan Chand ever get a Bharat Ratna?

August 29 is celebrated across the **country** as National **Sports Day in memory** of Major Dhyan Chand, widely regarded as the greatest field hockey player in the history of the game

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 29: His name adorns the country's highest sports award, his birthday August 29 is celebrated as National Sports Day, and many stadiums across India stand in his honour.

But despite all the appeals, RTIs, and public movements, the Bharat Ratna continues to elude the hockey wizard Major Dhvan Chand.

In 2021, the Centre renamed the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna as Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award. But many wonder, why despite the public sentiment the country's highest civilian honour continues to elude the man who put Indian hockey on the world map.

Hockey India president and three-time Olympian Dilip Tirkev led a movement at Jantar Mantar in 2016 with this demand and also raised the matter in Parliament, but every attempt failed.

"Dhyanchand was the greatest player in the world in his time. I always say that hockey is the sport which got us out first Olympic gold medals and Major Dhyan Chand's contribution is incomparable," Tirkey told PTI. "If the country's biggest sports award is named after him, the National Stadium



is named after him, then why not he is given a Bharat Ratna.

Dhyan Chand, who was the architect of gold medals in three consecutive Olympics (Amsterdam 1928, Los Angeles 1932 and Berlin 1936), put India's strong presence on the world sports map for the first time.

His son, Ashok Dhyan Chand, a member of the Indian

team that won the only World Cup in 1975, said his father never promoted himself and he is proud of it.

"He was the first to put India on the world sporting map. Even 46 years after his death, his name is echoing today and this is called the legacy of a great player. I am proud of him for always staying away from

Dhvan Chand earned India three Olympic gold medals -- 1928, 1932 and 1936 -- with his extraordinary ball control skills and goal-scoring ability

- He also holds the record of scoring the most goals (570 in 185 matches) in the history of the sport

publicity."

He was awarded the country's third highest civilian award Padma Bhushan in 1956 but repeatedly ignored for Bharat Ratna.

In November 2013, the Manmohan Singh-led Government conferred the Bharat Ratna on Sachin Tendulkar, making the cricket maestro the first and only sportsperson to receive it.

"Despite being such a great sportsperson, my father saw very bad days but he did not give up his self-respect. He could never even think of asking for an award for himself. Seeing the condition of the house, we wanted to apply for a gas agency in 1977-78 but he refused to sign it," recalled Ashok. "He always used to say that it is the government's job to see what I have done. We will not beg from anyone.'

"So much work is being done for sports now and it is the high time to show that the legends of the past are not forgotten.'

In 2016, several Olympians including Ashok Kumar, Ajit Pal Singh, Zafar Iqbal, Ajay Bansal, and AB Subbaiah joined Tirkey at Jantar Mantar.

According to the 1954 rules. Bharat Ratna was originally limited to art, literature, science and public service but in December 2011 the rules were amended to "any field of human endeavour" thus making the sportspersons eligible.

On December 22, 2011, the then Indian Hockey Federation

also made a recommendation to the Centre. A delegation led by cricketer Bishan Singh Bedi met the then Sports Minister Jitendra Singh in 2013 and re-

iterated this request. Then in August 2014, the then Minister of State for Home Affairs Kiren Rijiju told the Lok Sabha that his ministry had

recommended Dhyan Chand's

name for Bharat Ratna but the

result was the same. In the last 10 years, Atal Bi hari Vajpayee, Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya (2015), Pranab Mukherjee, Bhupen Hazarika Nanaji Deshmukh (2019), Kar poori Thakur, LK Advani, PV Narasimha Rao, Chaudhary Charan Singh and MS Swami nathan (2024) have been award ed the Bharat Ratna. Even after so many years and so many ef forts, the wait for Bharat Ratna for the magician of hockey is not ending and the hope seems

to be fading away.

LACKLUSTRE START

India scrape past lowly China

Captain Harmanpreet bags hat-trick as India clinch dramatic 4-3 win against China on **Asia Cup opener**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Rajgir (Bihar), August 29: Skipper Harmanpreet fired a hat-trick but India were far from impressive in their narrow 4-3 win over lower-ranked China in their Asia Cup opener, here Friday.

Harmanpreet (20th, 33rd, 47th minutes) converted three penalty corners but missed a penalty stroke. The other goal getter for India was Jugraj Singh (18th).

China's goals came through Shihao Du (12th), Benhal Chen (35th) and Jiesheng Gao (41st). India stood on the right side

of the result but the hosts didn't have a very good day in office and were guilty of letting China come into the match.

India also squandered plenty of chances, converting just four out of 11 penalty corners.

As expected India started on an offensive note and created their first opportunity with the first move. Mandeep Singh set it up for Sanjay but his shot was saved by Chinese goalkeeper Weihao Yang.

India kept up the pressure

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Zurich, August 29: Two-time

Olympic medallist javelin throw-

er Neeraj Chopra finished run-

ner-up in the Diamond League

Finals for the third time in a row

as Julian Weber of Germany lift-

ed his maiden trophy with two

90m-plus throws in a command-

the fifth round following his

opening throw of 84.35m before

his final effort of 85.01m took

him to the second spot, over-

taking 2012 London Olympics

gold winner Keshorn Walcott

of Trinidad and Tobago who

Weber achieved a season

world leading throw of 91.57m,

his personal best, in his sec-

ond attempt. He began with

91.37m effort, and after that it

was a one-man show in the sev-

en-man field. None of Weber's

rivals could even come near his

mark, as his best effort of the

day was over 6m more than that

of Chopra. The German had a

foul, 83.66m, 86.45m and 88.66m

his best in the season's Dia-

mond League grand finale. He

had three legal throws out of

Known for his consistency

in producing 88m-plus throws,

Clearly, Chopra was not at

after his second throw

the six attempts.

ended third with 84.95m.

ing show here Thursday. Chopra was lying third till

Neeraj finishes 2nd in

Diamond League Finals

Weber wins maiden trophy as he goes 3-1

against Chopra in head-to-head this season

and seconds later secured their first penalty corner from which Mandeep scored but the goal was disallowed for a push by the striker after China went for referral.

later Dilpreet Minutes Singh's reverse hit from close range was saved by the Chinese custodian. It was China who took the lead from their first penalty corner in the 12th minute through Shihao Du.

A minute from the end of first quarter India had two more bright chances but on the first

The timing was not so

I didn't find today, but I still

World Championships, and I

He was hoping to regain the

trophy he had won in 2022, but

ended up finishing second for

the third time after 2023 and

derson Peters of Grenada was

self as he began with 84.35m

and then followed it up with

82m and a foul. He was at third

spot at the halfway stage, and

he fouled his fourth and fifth at-

tempts before coming up with a

85.01m effort in his last throw.

be different" in Tokyo during

the World Championships (Sep-

tember 13-21).

Chopra said everything "will

fourth with 82.06m.

Defending champion An-

Chopra was not his usual

have three weeks for the

will try my best

NEERAJ CHOPRA

good, run-up was not so

good. There is something

occasion Abhishek was denied by Wehao and then skipper Harmanpreet Singh flicked wide from the home team's second penalty corner.

India restored parity three minutes into the second quarter with a perfect penalty corner conversion by Jugraj. Two minutes later India earned their fourth set piece and this time Harmanpreet scored with a powerful dragflick.

A minute later the hosts secured another penalty corner but wasted the chance.

Paris, August 29: Two-time

Olympic medallist PV Sindhu's

quest for a sixth World Cham-

pionships medal ended Fri-

day after losing a hard-fought

three-game quarterfinal thrill-

er to Indonesia's Putri Kusuma

Sindhu, the 2019 world cham-

pion and five-time medallist at

the event, was eyeing a record

sixth podium finish but faltered

at the finishing line, losing 14-21

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Wardani.

China also got another penalty corner soon but shot wide. It was raining penalty corners for India as the hosts secured another three minutes from halftime, but Harman-

by a diving Weihao to his left. India continued from where they left in the first half and extended their lead three minutes into the third quarter from another penalty corner conversion by Harmanpreet.

preet's flick was brilliant saved

China, however, pulled a goal back two minutes later through

Shuttlers go down fighting

Sindhu's sixth World Champion medal bid ends in agony, Dhruy-Tanisha also bow out

Benhai Chen, whose flick from a penalty corner went through the legs of India keeper Krishan Bahadur Pathak.

In the 39th minute India had a golden opportunity to extend their lead when they were awarded a penalty stroke for a foul on Mandeep but Harmanpreet hit the post.

India had to pay heavy price for that miss as two minutes later Jiesheng Gao converted a penalty corner to level the scores at 3-3 as Pathak was found wanting yet again.

But luck favoured India as they secured three back-toback penalty corners in the 47th minute, the last of which was put into goal by Harmanpreet. Three minutes from the final hooter, India secured another penalty corner but didn't score.

In the first match of Pool A, Japan crushed lowly Kazakhstan 7-0.

For Japan, Koji Yamasaki (13th, 36th) scored a brace, while Kosei Kawabe (1st), Naru Kimura (5th), Ken Nagayoshi (48th), Shota Yamada (50th) and Rvosuke Shinohara (54th) were the other goal scorers.

The India-China match was attended by Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, who paid tribute to Major Dhyanchand on the occasion of National Sports Day before the start.

India will next play Japan

to bowed out after losing 15-21

13-21 to world No. 4 Malaysians

Chen Tang Jie and Toh Ee Wei,

Asian Shooting C'ship: Medal rush for India

India concludes their campaign with 31 medals, including 14 gold, eight silver and nine bronze in the senior category, placing them second behind China



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Shymkent, August 29: Young pistol marksman Rajkanwar Singh Sandhu gave himself a belated birthday present by winning the 25m centre fire event, while former world champion Ankur Mittal netted the double trap gold as India made merry in non-Olympic disciplines at the Asian Shooting Championships here India also made a clean

sweep in women's double trap with Anushka Bhati (93), Pranil Ingle (89) and Hafiz Contractor (87) finishing on the podium. The trio also cornered the team gold with an aggregate of 269.

India thus concluded their campaign with 31 medals, including 14 gold, eight silver and nine bronze in the senior category, placing them second behind China, who finished with 15 gold, 12 silver and three bronze, Overall, India won 103 medals, including 52 gold, 26 silver, and 25 bronze, in the three categories -- senior, junior and youth -- they participated in.

Sandhu, who turned 23 August 13, beat back the challenge from veteran country-mate Gurpreet Singh, a Korean and an Iranian shooter to win the biggest medal of his career with a score of 583 (Precision 289, Rapid 294).

This was Sandhu's first senior medal at the international level after winning a bronze and a medals, including 52 gold, 26 silver, and 25 bronze, in the three categories -- senior, junior and youth

silver in the junior world cup in 2018 and 2022 respectively.

Army stalwart Gurpreet (579) finished fourth, while Korea's Jaekyoon Lee (580) and Iran's Javad Foroughi (579) took silver and bronze respectively.

India also won the team gold in the event with Gurpreet coming up with a commanding performance for the second day in a row.

A day after he won the 25m standard pistol individual gold and helped the country to a top-podium finish in the team category as well, the 37-year-old Army shooter, along with Sandhu and Ankur Goel, secured another big win in centre fire with an aggregate score of 1733

The Olympian, who came close to making it to the rap id-fire pistol final at the 2016 Rio Games, had a combined preci sion and rapid round score of 579, and together with Sandhu (583) and Ankur (571), the trio aggregated 1733 points, which

earned them the team gold. Vietnam (1720) and Iran

(1700) won the silver and bronze respectively.

India submits bid to host **Commonwealth Games**

London: India Friday officially

submitted its proposal to host the 2030 Commonwealth Games marking a significant step in its ambition to bring the multi-sport event back to the country after two decades. The formal bid was submitted to the Commonwealth Sport (the Commonwealth Games Federation) by a delegation with representation from the Commonwealth Games Association of India and the Government of Guiarat. The bid positions Ahmedabad as the host city for the Centenary edition of the Games, marking 100 years of the Commonwealth Games. Gujarat Sports Minister Harsh Sanghavi said India's Games will be based on the ancient principle of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam'. meaning "the world is one family." offering unity and human connection. Atithi Devo Bhava, or "the guest is divine," will guide the planning for all the stakeholders

that will visit India for the Games



in a pulsating 64-minute contest. Earlier in the day, the Indian mixed doubles pair of Dhruv Kapila and Tanisha Cras-

ending India's hopes of a maiden mixed doubles medal at the showpiece. Sindhu, the 30-year-old from

Hyderabad had won her maiden medal in Guangzhou in 2013. She added another bronze in Copenhagen a year later to her tally, finished runner-up in Glasgow (2017) and Nanjing (2018), before scripting history with gold at Basel in 2019.

Messi drops WC retirement hint Argentina star to play last home World Cup qualifier

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PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Buenos Aires, August 29: Lionel Messi has not yet announced when he plans to retire, but he knows that next week's match against Venezuela could be his last one playing at home in a World Cup qualifier with Argentina's national team.

"It's going to be a very, very special match for me because it's the last qualifying match," the 38-year-old Messi said Wednesday night after Inter Miami progressed to the Leagues Cup final by beating Orlando City.

Argentina, with a spot already secured in next year's World Cup, will host Venezuela next Thursday at the Monumental Stadium in Buenos Aires for the penultimate round of South American qualifiers. Its last match will be at Ecuador September 9. Messi has hinted that he

will retire from the national team after next year's World Cup, where Argentina is going to defend the title they won in Qatar 2022.

The qualifiers for the 2030 World Cup will begin in 2027, when the soccer star will be 40 years old.

"I don't know if there will be friendlies or more matches after (Venezuela), but it is a very special match, so my family will be there with me: my wife, my children, my parents, my siblings," Messi said. "We're going to live it like that. I don't know what will happen next.'



it was a rare instance of the 27-vear-old Indian star just being able to touch the 85m mark.

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