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भारत सरकार

GOVERNMENT OF BHARAT

# Odisha plants 1.5 crore saplings

## EVMs to have colour photos of candidates

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 17:** In a historic and unprecedented achievement, Odisha planted approximately 1.5 crore saplings within just 12 hours as a mark of gratitude towards Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who turned 75 Wednesday.

In a remarkable display of environmental commitment, a total of 1,49,11,339 seedlings have been planted across 30 districts by 4.30pm. This massive effort spans 71,924 plantation sites, highlighting a significant drive toward afforestation and ecological restoration in the state, a statement released by the Forest, Environment and Climate Change department read.

September 17, 2025, will be remembered not only in India's history but also as a global milestone - where a simple act of planting saplings blossomed into a magnificent movement of hope and harmony, the statement added.

Earlier in the day, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi announced through a social media post that more than one crore saplings were planted by 2.16pm, surpassing the target of 75 lakh plantations, which was achieved at 1.33pm.

"As of 2:16pm today, our collective efforts have successfully resulted in the plantation of 1,00,21,236 saplings. Sincere gratitude and congratulations to all involved," Majhi said in



**GRAND GREEN FEAT:** Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, along with Forest, Environment and Climate Change Minister Ganesh Ram Singkhuntia and other dignitaries, plants a sapling as part of a state-level plantation drive (Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam) to mark PM Modi's 75th birthday at Ekamra College in Bhubaneswar, Wednesday. About 1.5 crore saplings were planted across the state in 12 hours creating a world record.

a post on X. "The trees being planted today - each tree is a testament to our resolve for a green and beautiful Odisha, each tree is to thank Modi ji's love for Odisha, his reverence, and his commitment to Odisha's development. Today's campaign has united our entire society for the environment," Majhi said, adding that in the days to come, this campaign will become even more widespread.

The Chief Minister said it will have a positive impact on the environment and will carry

the testament of Modi ji's leadership and resolve, as well as our responsibility, for the safety of our future generations.

To put Odisha's achievement into perspective, previous records were held by Madhya Pradesh with 11 lakh saplings planted in one day and Assam with 9.26 lakh saplings. Odisha's incredible accomplishment far surpasses these, setting a new humanitarian record that will inspire generations to come.

Sundargarh district led the plantation drive with an impressive 14,21,618 seedlings planted. Following closely, Koraput secured the second position with 11,01,624 seedlings, while Keonjhar stood third with 10,42,927 seedlings. Around 25 lakh people, including industries and the armed forces, made it possible, an official said.

The picture and video of plantations were uploaded on 'Meri LiFE' portal. The progress of plantation was being tracked easily through the portal. All participants were requested to upload photos of their plantation activities on the portal, a Forest department official said, adding that the plantation drive is being conducted under the 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' campaign-2.

Meanwhile, Majhi also participated in a cleanliness drive under the 'Swachhata Hi Seva' campaign in Master Canteen area of Bhubaneswar on the occasion of Modi's 75th birthday.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL

Don't keep an eye on my opponent - keep it on Gen Z

## 50% voters may not have to show documents: EC

**New Delhi, Sept 17:** More than half the electorate in most of the states may not have to provide any document as they will be covered in the electoral roll of the last Special Intensive Revision (SIR) held in their states, Election Commission (EC) officials said Wednesday.

They pointed out that most states had the last special intensive revision of the voters' list between 2002 and 2004. That year will be considered their cutoff date for the next SIR.

The EC will soon decide on the date to roll out Special Intensive Revision pan-India, and the exercise to clean up the voter list across states may take place before the end of the year, officials had earlier said.

Chief Electoral Officers have been told to keep the electoral rolls of their states, published after the previous SIR, ready.

Some state CEOs have already put up the voter list published after their last SIR on their websites.

The website of the Delhi CEO has the 2008 voter list when the last intensive revision took place in the national capital. In Uttarakhand, the last SIR took place in 2006, and that year's electoral roll is now on the state CEO website.

The last SIR in states will serve as the cut-off date, just as the 2003 voter list of Bihar is being used by the EC for intensive revision.

According to the instructions issued by the poll authority to its Bihar poll machinery, the 4.96 crore voters - 60 per cent of the total electors - who were listed in the 2003 special intensive revision need not submit any supporting document to establish their date or place of birth, except the relevant portion of the electoral roll brought out after the revision.

## Cop 'hubby' killed missing constable

**Bhubaneswar/Keonjhar/Ghatagaon, Sept 17:** The body of a 25-year-old traffic constable, who had been missing for over 10 days, was found buried in a forest in Keonjhar district, and the police arrested her husband, who is also a constable, for murder, police said Wednesday.

The victim, Subhamitra Sahoo, a native of Paradip in Jagatsinghpur district and posted in Bhubaneswar, had been missing since September 6. Her mother, Sukanti Sahoo, filed a missing person's report at the Capital police station the next day after Subhamitra failed to return home from duty.

Following the complaint, police launched an investigation. Police had issued posters and announced a ₹25,000 cash reward to anyone providing information about the missing woman traffic constable.

During the probe, police discovered that Subhamitra had secretly solemnised a court marriage with Deepak Rout, a clerk in the Twin City Police



Commissioner's office, in July 2024. She was last seen with Rout on the day she went missing, Commissioner S Dev Datta Singh said. Rout soon emerged as the prime suspect.

During interrogation, he confessed that he picked up Sahoo from her workplace in his car and strangled her to death between 2 and 3pm in Bhubaneswar September 6. He later buried her body in a forest near Rajabandha Sahi under Upara-diha panchayat, around 3 km

from Ghatagaon police station in Keonjhar district, about 170 km from Bhubaneswar.

According to preliminary investigation, Rout murdered Subhamitra over a financial dispute. He had allegedly taken around ₹10 lakh from her, which she had been demanding back to fund a social ceremony to formally announce their marriage.

Based on Rout's confession, two special teams from Bhubaneswar and Keonjhar police reached the forest area Wednesday.

The recovery operation was delayed due to rain. Under heavy security and in the presence of a magistrate and scientific team, police used an earthmover to exhume the body, which had been tied up in a sack.

Local residents gathered at the site as the operation unfolded, prompting police to deploy additional forces to manage the crowd. The body was later sent to the Keonjhar District Head quarters Hospital for post-mortem examination.

Two others - Rout's cousin, Papu Bhuyan, and Papu's friend, Jatia Mohanta - have been detained for allegedly helping him commit and cover up the crime, police said. Further investigation is underway.

Meanwhile, Leader of Opposition and BJD president Naveen Patnaik Wednesday slammed the state government questioning the efficiency of the Home department. Highlighting the previous incidents of Gopalpur and Baliharchandi, Patnaik asked the department to wake up from its deep slumber.

## Odisha tech startup bags ₹66-cr deal from Indian Navy

**New Delhi, Sept 17:** A deep-tech startup based in Odisha has inked a ₹66-crore contract with the Indian Navy to manufacture indigenously developed Underwater Remotely Operated Vehicles (UWROVs).

The startup, Coratia Technologies, signed the contract last week to supply home-built underwater robots specialising in cleaning ship hulls, conducting minor salvage activities and performing surveys and inspections of submerged infrastructures.

"This is not only a recognition of our capability to design

and manufacture mission-critical underwater systems but also symbolises the Navy's relentless efforts to strengthen India's research and innovation ecosystem through well-structured initiatives like the iDEX," said Debendra Pradhan, Co-Founder and CEO of Coratia Technologies.

In January 2023, the company won the Innovation for Defence Excellence (iDEX) challenge which is aimed at creating an ecosystem to foster innovation and technology development in the defence and aerospace sectors.

Currently, the Indian Navy



has commissioned the flagship product of Coratia Technologies called Jalasimha, which underwent rigorous testing and cer-

tifications to pass Technology Readiness Level-9, enabling its induction into Indian Naval operations, Pradhan said.

The deep-tech robotics startup, incubated at the National Institute of Technology (NIT), Rourkela, will supply and maintain its indigenously developed UWROVs.

The frugal design delivers advanced capabilities at significantly lower cost, marking India's first cost-efficient underwater robotics breakthrough, a statement from Coratia Technologies said.

"Induction of indigenous UWROVs not only reduces costs and reliance on foreign suppliers but also combats trade restrictions and tariff uncertainties. We're here to unlock

new possibilities for defence preparedness and supporting India's blue economy," Biswajit Swain, Co-Founder & CTO of Coratia Technologies, said.

In July, Coratia Technologies raised ₹17.4 crore in a pre-Series A round led by MGF Kavachh, supported by Pontaq Ventures India. It plans to deploy the funds to scale up R&D initiatives, IPR and increase exports to tap rising global demand.

The underwater robotics market size stands at USD 5.08 billion in 2025, and is pegged to reach USD 9.53 billion by 2030, according to Mordor Intelligence.



# leisure


FORTUNE FORECAST

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FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181\*

ARIES




Today will be an industrious day. The stars foretell that you may visit a historical place, or perhaps a museum. However, Ganesha says, you may need to pay a little attention to your health. If such is the case, it would be better to take the evening off for yourself.

TAURUS




Today, Ganesha sees your mind shifting from your professional affairs and drifting, time and again, towards your home and family. You are likely to return home early and get happily engrossed in discussing pressing domestic issues with your family members.

GEMINI



There is a possibility of conflicts brewing at your home today. The demands made by your family members will increase and you may struggle to cope to meet them. This could make you ill-tempered. You will encounter large expenses in meeting these demands. You need to cut down on your expenses and increase your savings, says Ganesha.

CANCER



You can improve your finances with your mental capabilities. Ganesha says that you will get success in both private life and career. You will be entrusted many tasks and responsibilities. Yet by evening, you will spend time in your pursuits.

LEO



You may have arguments with your family members today. You need to adopt an accommodating attitude today, since it is not a very promising day for you. Otherwise nothing may go in your favour. You will have to work harder than usual in the office, says Ganesha.

VIRGO




You may have arguments with your family members today. You need to adopt an accommodating attitude today, since it is not a very promising day for you. Otherwise nothing may go in your favour. You will have to work harder than usual in the office, says Ganesha.

LIBRA




Ganesha says you will spend time with your family members by putting them above other commitments. There may be plans made to go out for dinner or for a short excursion with them. Ganesha says that the health of a close relative may be a cause of concern for you today.

SCORPIO




You nearly emerge as a superhero today, as you have the knack of balancing home and work just perfectly. Intellectual discussions and brainstorming with peers would provide food for thought today. You may look forward to merry-making and soiree with family and friends in the evening.

SAGITTARIUS



You are in a mood to spend money of home décor, paintings or artefacts. Go ahead, and decorate your home. Ganesha foresees success on your cards today. Workplace has never been such an interesting place before. Planning and implementation will make your day easier.

CAPRICORN




You will have heard of many emotional fools who let sentiments rule their lives. Try not be one of them, and if it's too difficult a task, at least pretend not to be one of them, for Ganesha says going by your feelings can leave you at a low ebb. In other words, your feelings can come in the way of your success.

AQUARIUS



If you are an astrologer, doctor or a spiritual leader, today is a favourable day for you. Those who may want to challenge you must reconsider the thought of testing your strengths, says Ganesha. Doing charity work, helping the needy, and working for humanitarian causes give you a feeling of contentment.

PISCES



Today will be a hectic day for you. Most of your time will be spent in making your relationships on the business as well as the personal front more meaningful. You will likely find yourself attending social events. There is also the possibility that you will attend some religious ritual today. Apart from this, nothing substantial is likely to occur today, says Ganesha.

## HAYDEN LONGS FOR NASHVILLE RETURN



American actress and singer Hayden Panettiere would love her show *Nashville* to be rebooted. The 36-year-old played country singer Juliet Barnes in all six seasons of the show - which ended in 2018

## ARNOLD WORRIED OVER AMERICAN DEMOCRACY



Hollywood actor and former politician Arnold Schwarzenegger is concerned that democracy in the United States could disappear with a widening political divide exacerbated by the murder of conservative activist Charlie Kirk in Utah last week

# Sydney Sweeney offered ₹540cr for Hindi debut



The *Euphoria* star would play a young American actress who falls in love with an Indian celebrity

**London:** Hollywood golden girl Sydney Sweeney has been offered a role in one of the most expensive Hindi films ever made, reports *The Sun*. The American, who initially found fame on hit TV shows such as *Euphoria* and *White Lotus*, is one of the hottest stars in the world. A production company approached her with the mega-deal — made up of a £35million fee alongside a further £10million in additional sponsorship agreements (about INR 540 crore), according to the British tabloid newspaper. Sydney, who hit the red carpet in a scarlet gown at Sunday night's Emmy Awards in Los Angeles, would play a young American star who falls in love with an Indian celebrity. Filming is currently pencilled

in to take place early next year in locations including New York, Paris, London and Dubai. A source said: “Sydney was shocked by the offer at first, £45million is an incredible sum. “But the project is intriguing, and it could elevate her global profile even further. “The Indian film industry is powerful and growing, and this movie is designed to bring its productions to the international market. “Nothing has been decided yet, but it's a huge opportunity and Sydney is weighing her options carefully. “Money isn't everything, and she has many projects lined up, but this could push her to new limits as an actress.”

## Saiyaara beats Fall For Me

The Aneet Padda- Ahaan Panday starrer is trending at No.1 in the list of non-English films worldwide on Netflix



bank of best-performing titles, *Saiyaara* is trending at number 1 in the list of non-English films worldwide, with 3.7 million views and 9.3 million hours viewed. *Fall For Me* is in the second spot with 6.5 million hours viewed, while *Inspector Zende*, starring Manoj Bajpayee, rounds up the top 3 with 6.2 million hours viewed. The only other Indian film in the top 10 is Vijay Deverakonda's *Kingdom*, which sits in the 9th spot with 2.5 million hours viewed.

On Wednesday afternoon, Netflix India shared a video message from the film's leads - Ahaan Panday and Aneet Padda - reacting to the film's performance on streaming. “For giving Saiyaara all the love in the world, we love you forever and ever and ever. Saiyaara is trending globally on Netflix, only because of you. Thank you for watching and rewatching, and rewatching,” the actors said in the message.

**Mumbai:** In its debut week on streaming, Mohit Suri's *Saiyaara* has scripted history by becoming the most-watched non-English film on the platform globally. The romantic drama has beaten German erotic thriller *Fall For Me* and Netflix's Hindi original, *Inspector Zende*, in the race. As per Tudum, Netflix's data-

## Sam on leading an uncomplicated life

**Hyderabad:** Samantha a Ruth Prabhu has never shied away from being candid about her journey with health. Diagnosed with the autoimmune condition myositis in 2022, the actress has since transformed her lifestyle, embracing a holistic approach that has not only strengthened her physically but also shifted her perspective on life. In a recent conversation with *Grazia*, Samantha reflected on her evolved relationship with health. “There's a saying that goes, ‘You can have 100 problems until you have a health problem, and after that you

only have one problem—and that's the health problem.’ Everything in life circles back to looking after my health,” she said. Her commitment to wellness has made her stricter about sleep, food, and mental health. “I'm stricter than I used to be about sleep, food, mental health, because of this situation I'm in. Honestly, it's a lot more of a simpler life and in a weird way I'm grateful for everything because now I get to lead an uncomplicated life.” What stands out most for Samantha today is her pride in the progress she has made. “My greatest flex right now are my health markers which are quite phenomenal and something that I'm extremely proud of,” she shared.



# Unni to play Modi in biopic *Maa Vande*

**Thiruvananthapuram:** On the occasion of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 75th birthday, production house Silver Cast Creations officially announced a new biopic titled *Maa Vande*. The film will trace the life journey of Narendra Modi—from his childhood years to his rise as the nation's leader—with a special focus on his relationship with his late mother, Heeraben Modi. Stepping into this powerful role is Malayalam actor Unni Mukundan, known for films like *Marco*, *Bro Daddy*, and *Bhraman*.

The announcement created significant buzz, especially among Mukundan's large fan base. Born in Thrissur, Kerala, on September 22, 1987, Unni was raised in Ahmedabad, Gujarat, where he completed his schooling at Pragati Higher Secondary School. He later pursued a degree in Literature and Journalism at Prayoti Niketan College in Thrissur. With over 2.9 million followers on Instagram, Mukundan has become one of the most recognizable faces in Malayalam cinema. He made his film debut in 2011 with the Tamil movie



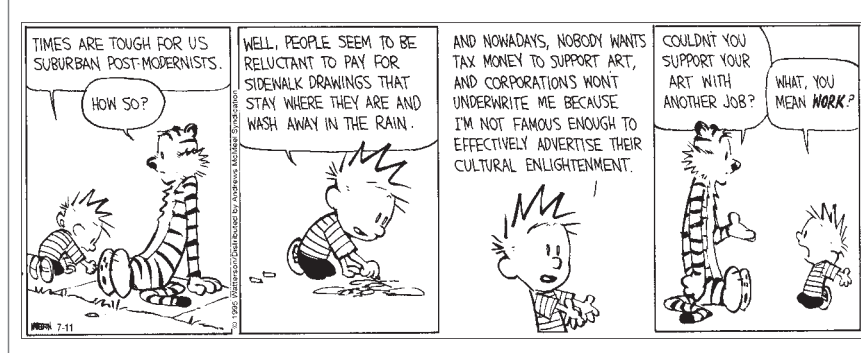
*Seedan*, starring opposite Dhanush. That same year, he also debuted in Malayalam cinema with *Bombay* March 12 alongside superstar Mammooty. His performance earned him several awards in the debutant category and marked the beginning of a successful career.

The turning point in Mukundan's journey came in 2012 with the film *Mallu Singh*, directed by Vyshakh. The movie ran for over 100 days in theatres and solidified his position in the industry.

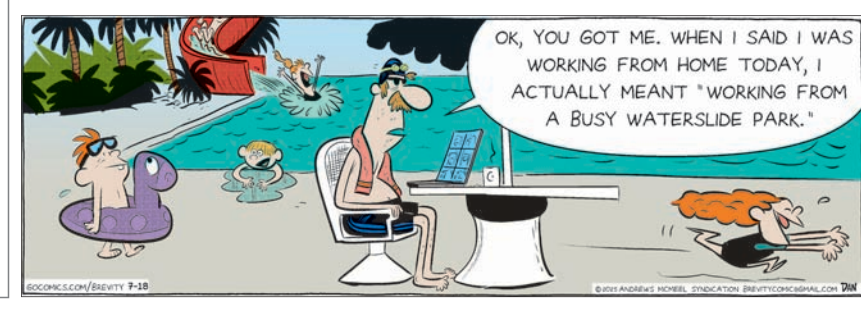
## PEANUTS



## CALVIN AND HOBBS



## BREVITY



FUN post

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Across

1 Netherlands

5 Nosy Parker

8 Mark Antony's fling

9 Electric fish

10 Stately tree

12 Old school (4,5)

13 Photo op time

14 Sound setup

17 He was great!

19 Easy mark

21 Outback runner

22 Brief literary descriptions

24 Jury

25 Witness

Down

1 Stockpile

3 Small pastry

4 Punctual (2,4)

5 Involuntary twitch

6 Reverses an order

7 Sicilian seaport

11 Dummy in the window?

13 Words to a goldbrick (5,2)

15 Deep serving dishes

16 Slowly, to a conductor

18 Blacksmith's block

20 Old-hat

23 Rocky peak

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CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

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# One-time settlement for pending e-challans



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 17:** With an initiative, aims to provide traffic and road safety violators an opportunity to settle outstanding fines at reduced rates and encourage safer driving behaviour, State Commerce and Transport department has announced a ‘One-Time Settlement Scheme’ for pending e-challans as of July 31, 2025.

Road safety remains a key concern in Odisha and across India, with the number of motor vehicle law violations continuing to challenge authorities despite multiple enforcement measures. E-challans, including those generated through the Intelligent Enforcement Management System (IEMS), have been issued to address violations, but a significant number of pending challans remain unresolved.

Under the new scheme, violators can clear their pending fines at a reduced amount, as per the schedule provided by the Transport department. However, challans for which

prosecution reports have already been submitted to designated courts are excluded from the scheme. The one-time benefit will be available for a period of six months from the date of the official notification.

“This initiative is designed to recover outstanding fines efficiently while promoting road safety by encouraging violators to adopt responsible driving habits,” the department said in an official statement.

Some of the key reductions under the scheme include Driving regulation violations (General Offence) – Fine reduced from up to Rs 500 to Rs 250. Oversized vehicles – fine reduced from Rs 5,000 – 10,000 to Rs 5,000. Jumping red lights or violating stop signs – fine reduced from Rs 1,000–5,000 to Rs 1,000. Using a mobile phone while driving, overtaking in no-overtaking zones, or driving against traffic flow – fine reduced to Rs 1,000 each. Violating air and noise pollution norms – Fine reduced by 50 per cent.

## Vishwakarma idol in Sahijata attire

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 17:** Odisha’s rich folk and traditional arts were celebrated this



idol of Lord Vishwakarma. Sculpted in the traditional Puri Sahijata dance style, the idol has garnered widespread admiration for its vibrant cultural expression and intricate craftsmanship.

Draped in traditional Sahijata attire and adorned with ornaments and weapons, the eco-friendly idol was crafted using cardboard, clay, coloured paper, and natural dyes. A team of 17 student artists dedicated 15 days to bring this vibrant creation to life.

# Mangrove drive marks PM’s b-day in Astaranga

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Puri, Sept 17:** The coastal community in Puri district marked PM Narendra Modi’s 75th birthday with events organised by Sabuja Sakha Astaranga and Odisha Paryavaran Sanrakshan Abhiyan (OPSA) Trust, including a public meeting, rally, and mangrove plantation drive at the Devi River mouth in Astaranga.

Hundreds of participants—including community members, leaders, youth, women, and fisherfolk—joined the celebrations. Jagatsinghpur MP Bibhu Prasad Tarai, the chief guest, praised the Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam 2.0 campaign, highlighting the role of mangroves in protecting Odisha’s coastline and supporting livelihoods, while lauding OPSA Trust’s



community-led conservation efforts.

OPSA managing trustee Soumya Ranjan Biswal urged the protection of Odisha’s mangroves, especially along

the Devi, Brahmani, Baitarani, and Budhabalanga rivers, and called on the MP and state government to consider a new conservation policy.

Eleven women from Jhadling

## Cleanliness must be continuous: Guv



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 17:** Governor Hari Babu Kambhampati, speaking at the Swachhata Abhiyan Campaign at Rama Devi Women’s University Wednesday, stressed that cleanliness should not be limited to one day a year but pursued continuously—every month, week, and ideally every day.

Highlighting the importance of maintaining clean surround-

ings, the Governor said, “Keeping our neighbourhood clean is, in fact, keeping ourselves clean. Cleanliness helps prevent many health issues and promotes the well-being of people.”

During the event, Kambhampati paid floral tribute to the statue of Rama Devi, joined students in a cleaning drive in the campus, and planted saplings to mark the occasion. Expressing his happiness at participating in the programme, he encour-

aged students to continue such initiatives as an integral part of their daily lives.

Recalling the origins of the Swachh Bharat initiative, the Governor said, “This programme was initiated by Hon’ble Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2014 and has since grown into a nationwide movement. As Gandhiji emphasised the importance of cleanliness, Narendra Modi ji translated it into action.” He also highlighted the positive impact of the nationwide movement on children, noting, “On many occasions, I have noticed that when children receive chocolates, they no longer throw the wrappers on the ground; instead, they put them in dustbins. This reflects the growing awareness and participation across the country.”

# City AIIMS rolls out women’s health drive

PNN & AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 17:** AIIMS-Bhubaneswar Wednesday launched the “Swasth Nari Sashakt Parivar Abhiyaan,” a 16-day nationwide campaign to promote women’s health, family well-being, and community empowerment. Institute director Ashutosh Biswas inaugurated the drive and also opened the Swasth Nari Sashakt Parivar Kutir at the OPD foyer, which will serve as a help desk and registration point for women patients, attendants, and staff.

On the opening day, many beneficiaries availed free health check-ups and cancer screenings. Running till October 2, the campaign will reach women patients, attendants, children, faculty, students, healthcare workers, and com-



munities in both rural and urban areas.

Daily services will feature free screening for NCDs, cancers (oral, cervical, breast), anaemia, TB, sickle cell disease, along with maternal-child health care, menstrual hygiene and nutrition awareness, personal hygiene sessions, and blood donation drives.

The initiative brings together multiple AIIMS-Bhubaneswar departments, including AYUSH, Nursing, Community & Family Medicine, Obstetrics & Gynaecology, Paediatrics, Oncology, Psychiatry, and Transfusion Medicine, to ensure wide outreach.

On the first day, the Gynaecology department held cervi-

cal and breast cancer screenings for women patients and attendants, alongside special sessions on menstrual hygiene, nutrition, and mental health for adolescent girls and their mothers. Emphasising the importance of the campaign, Biswas underscored early detection, awareness, and community participation as key to holistic health outcomes.

He said health camps and awareness sessions will also be organised in schools, slums, villages, and health centres to ensure last-mile coverage.

“With daily interventions both within the hospital and in communities, the Swasth Nari Sashakt Parivar Abhiyaan is expected to benefit thousands and serve as a model for institutions nationwide,” Biswas added.

# Rasulgarh to feature ‘Goddess on the Hill’

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 17:** The Rasulgarh Durga Puja Management Committee, known for its spectacular celebrations and social initiatives, is entering its 33rd year with an innovative and visually striking theme. For 2025, the mandap will be decorated around the concept ‘Goddess Maa on the Hill’, offering visitors an immersive experience that highlights Odisha’s rich natural landscapes and vibrant cultural heritage.

The pandal will be designed to resemble a picturesque hilltop temple, featuring an open courtyard at its heart. Around it, visitors will find meticulously crafted representations of Odisha’s lush natural landscapes, including verdant paddy fields, dense forests, caves, and wildlife sanctuaries. The display will also showcase indigenous tribes and their cultural practices, creating a vivid tableau that celebrates the har-



monious coexistence of nature and tradition.

For this grand setup, around 50 skilled craftsmen from Kolkata have been working since the beginning of the year to construct an enormous decorative arch measuring 80 feet in height and 120 feet in width. Built entirely with wood, plaster, and foam, the arch will serve as a majestic gateway to the pandal. To enhance the spectacle, five massive colourful light ar-

rangements will illuminate the structure each evening.

The idol of Goddess Durga, standing 22-ft tall and crafted with intricate detail, will be accompanied by idols of Lakshmi, Saraswati, Ganesha, and Kartik. Committee Secretary Sanjay Baliarsingh said that elaborate security and crowd management measures have been put in place. “This time, around 60 security staff along with 200 Puja Committee volunteers, 50 police personnel will be deployed. For public safety, 40

CCTV cameras and multiple barricading arrangements are being installed,” he informed.

The budget for this year’s celebrations has crossed ₹70 lakh, with significant allocations made for water supply, lighting, and safety measures.

Adding to the festive fervour, a variety of cultural programmes will take place every evening throughout the celebrations. Maha Ashtami and Dashami will feature a star-studded show with performances by Bollywood and Hollywood artists, while audiences will be enthralled by folk dance displays, including the traditional horse dance, highlighting Odisha’s rich cultural heritage.

With such meticulous planning, immersive decorations, and an innovative theme, the Rasulgarh Durga Puja Mandap is set to remain one of Bhubaneswar’s premier attractions during Durga Puja 2025, drawing lakhs of devotees and visitors from across the City and beyond.

## Agri dept plants 23 lakh saplings across Odisha

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 17:** In a major green push, the Agriculture and Farmers’ Empowerment department Wednesday launched a state-wide plantation drive under the Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam campaign. Over 23 lakh fruit saplings were planted across districts, contributing to the 75-lakh tree target set for the occasion.

The state-level event was held at the Deras Horticulture Farm, where 1,500 high-quality saplings of guava, litchi, coconut, and sapota were planted by departmental officials, farm staff, and trainees of the Centre of Excellence in Horticulture. The programme was inaugurated by department’s principal secretary Arabinda Kumar Padhee.

## Outfit unveils monthly vehicle-free campaign



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 17:** To promote sustainable living and curb vehicular pollution, city-based youth group Green World Odisha Wednesday launched the campaign “Say No to Motor Vehicles Once in a Month.” The initiative, held under the banner Pollution-Free Breath, was organised jointly with the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC). Mayor Sulochana Das, Commissioner Chanchal Rana, Corporator Nrupesh Kumar Nayak, and other dignitaries attended the launch.

Green World Odisha chairman Nrupesh Nayak urged BMC officials to lead by example by avoiding motor vehicles at least once a month. He

appealed to employees to use public transport, e-vehicles, bicycles, or walk, stressing that the initiative benefits both the environment and public health, while setting a nationwide example.

The proposal earned praise from Mayor Sulochana Das and Commissioner Chanchal Rana. The Commissioner urged BMC employees to voluntarily follow it, while the Mayor said it would be tabled at the next corporation meeting to formalise it as a monthly rule.

The campaign seeks to cut city pollution by encouraging people to avoid motorcycles and other vehicles once a month. The outfit said public cooperation can make a significant impact in reducing pollution.

MARKET WATCH					
CURRENCY		BOURSES		COMMODITIES	
INDEX	VARIATION	INDEX	VARIATION	INDEX	VARIATION
DOLLAR	87.88 ▼ 0.26	SENSEX	82693.71 ▲ 313.02	GOLD	₹109,859 ▼ ₹297
EURO	104.12 ▼ 0.02	NIFTY	25330.25 ▲ 91.15	SILVER	₹127,226 ▼ ₹1594

WEATHER			
	BBSR	CTC	FORECAST
Max Temp	32.8°	32.4°	Partly cloudy sky with possibility of rain or thunderstorm
Min Temp	24.4°	22.2°	
Humidity	94%	97%	
Rainfall	20mm	77.2mm	

## FOR CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS CONTACT OUR BOOKING STATIONS

Acharya Vihar-Dayal Agency-9437135727, A.P. Tours and Travel, Maitri Vihar, C.S. Pur- 9861301598, Aurobindo Market-Sai Audio & Electronics-9438304668, Airport Road-Sai Baba Variety Store-9090071530, Anish Infotech- Tankapani Road-9861341488, Bapuji Nagar- Dreamland Studio- 9777517314, Baramunda Rental Colony-Maa Ramchandi Communication-9658821469, Baramunda Housing Board Colony-Pappu Variety Store-9040500106, Cuttack Road-Alishan Snacks-8984236754, District Center (Chandrasekharpur)-Sai Google Mart-9776056507, Forest Park-DTDC Couriers & Services (HB Services)-7381024156, IRC Village-Bapi Xerox-9090090404, Gift Hut(Antriksh Gifts & Decors Pvt. Ltd.)-9954781084, Pruthvi Medicine-9853314816, Janpath-Krupajal Book Store-7978646669, Jaydev Vihar-AK Enterprises-7978116618, Subam Sai Books Store-8895550649, Swain Graphics- 9337121249, Jagannath Mobile Point- Janpath Road, Ram Mandir- 9938475415, Kanan Vihar-Auro Electronics-8260697560, Khandagiri- Swosti Mobile Centre- 7992914045, World Solution- 9938317559, KIIT Road-Jugad Jn-9338545031, Laxmi Sagar-Aditya Mobile-9438191836, Lewis Road-Spider Web-7809186415, Metro Satellite City-Arogya Mitra Medicine Store-9853621640, Madhusudan Nagar-Mohapatra Communication-9124446664, Maa Santoshi travels- Gajapati Nagar- 9777675867, Nayapalli- The Cake Room- 7873660137, Near Mayfair Lagoon-Cookiemann-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.



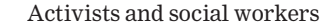
## POST NEWS NETWORK

POST NEWS NETWORK

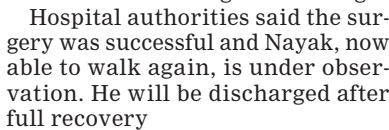
A truckload of fertilizer for distribution reached Bhanjanagar block Wednesday. However, mismanagement at multiple outlets left many farmers empty-handed as the sale was suspended after a scuffle at Dholapita society, sparking tension until police intervened. Officials later announced that distribution would resume after two days. Similar disorder was reported at Badakodanda and other societies.

## POST NEWS NETWORK

The inauguration at Aryapalli jetty was attended by Prashant Kumar Patra, business head of Gopalpur Port, Bhaktabandhu Satapathy, and several local leaders of fishermen and residents.



Experts emphasise that stricter enforcement of laws prohibiting child marriage, coupled with sustained awareness drives, is essential. They warn that child marriage not only darkens the future of individual girls but also obstructs the development of society as a whole.



## PNN &amp; AGENCIES

“My dream is to meet Prime Minister Modi one day in person

This quiet collector of rupee notes from Bolangir stands as an example of how a leader's impact can deeply touch the lives of ordinary citizens — inspiring dedication not through politics, but through personal passion and heartfelt respect.

**BHAWANIPATNA:** A POCSO court here in Kalandahi district Wednesday sentenced four men to 20 years of rigorous imprisonment each for the 2023 gang rape of two minor girls under Bijepur police limits. The convicts were identified as Dhanesni Naik, 31, Sumant Harijan, 20, Amar Harijan, 26, and Rajiv Majhi, 29, all residents of Pajibahali village. Special Judge Rajyachan Sahu delivered the verdict after examining the statements of 36 witnesses and 31 documents submitted under Section 376 (D) of the Indian Penal Code and Section 6 of the POCSO Act. The judge also imposed a fine of ₹50,000 on each of the convicts. In default of payment, they will serve an additional six months in prison. The court further directed the District Legal Services Authority to pay ₹500,000 each to the two survivors, public prosecutor Rohit Kumar Mishra said. The incident occurred in the early hours of April 19, 2023, when the two survivors were returning home after watching an opera at a fair with another woman. The convicts waylaid them near a bridge, took them to a deserted place, and raped them in turns. The third woman managed to escape and alert others. A complaint was lodged at Bijepur police station the same day, leading to the arrests, Mishra added.

# EAST COAST RAILWAY

**NOTIFICATION FOR ENGAGEMENT OF COMMISSION AGENT  
FOR BANABIHARI-GUALIPUR (BNHR) PASSENGER HALT**

**No. G.51/P/H/BNHR/3603** **Date : 08.09.2025**

**APPLICATIONS ARE INVITED FROM INTERESTED CANDIDATES FOR  
ENGAGEMENT AS COMMISSION AGENT TO SELL TICKETS AT BANABIHARI-  
GUALIPUR (BNHR) PASSENGER HALT IN BETWEEN RAGHUNATHPUR (RCTC)  
AND GORAKHNATH (GRKN) STATION OF CUTTACK - PARADEEP SECTION,  
UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF KHURDA ROAD DIVISION.**

**COMMISSION PAYABLE TO THE HALT AGENT WILL BE AS UNDER :**

Amount of Sale of tickets per month	Commission payable
₹ 1/- to 15,000/-	15%
₹ 15,001/- to 50,000/-	12%
₹ 50,001/- to 1,00,000/-	9%
₹ 1,00,001/- to 2,00,000/-	6%
₹ 2,00,001/- and above	3%

**Security Deposit for above halt is ₹ 2,000/- (Rupees Two Thousand) only  
which is to be deposited after selection.**


**Application duly filled in should reach this office by 1500 hrs. on or before  
22.10.2025 (Wednesday).** If the last day i.e. 22.10.2025 happens to be or is declared to  
be a holiday, applications will be received by the same time on the next working  
day. All the received applications will be opened at 1530 hrs. on 22.10.2025.

The Railway reserves the right to reject any application without assigning any  
reason whatsoever.

For complete details, application format and other terms & conditions please visit  
our website : [www.eastcoastrail.indianrailways.gov.in](http://www.eastcoastrail.indianrailways.gov.in)


PR-598/Q/25-26

**Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager /  
Khurda Road**

 <b>Indian Bank</b>		SAM Large Branch Kolkata 1st Floor, 14, India Exchange Place Kolkata - 700 001, West Bengal	SHOW CAUSE NOTICE FOR CLASSIFICATION AS WILFUL DEFAULTER		
Ref. : SAML Kolkata/GPIL/2025-26/428		Date : 25.07.2025			
To,					
Borrower : M/s. Gupta Power Infrastructure Limited (Borrower Company), Managing Director : Sri Mahendra Kumar Gupta (MD), Regd. Address : EN-62, Sector - V, 7th floor, Salt Lake City, Kolkata - 700 091, West Bengal.					
Guarantors :					
1. Sri Mahendra Kumar Gupta (Managing Director / Guarantor), S/o. Late Jagdish Rai Gupta, Gupta Niwas, Gupta Cables Compound, Cuttack, Puri Road, Bhubaneswar, Pin - 751 006.					
2. Sri Abhishek Gupta (Director / Guarantor), S/o. Mahendra Kumar Gupta, Gupta Niwas, Cuttack Road, Budheswari M. C. Budheswar, Khordha, Pin - 751 006.					
3. Sri Jitendra Mohan Gupta (Director / Guarantor), S/o. Late Bhagatram Gupta, Gupta Niwas, Cuttack Road, Opposite Budheswari Temple, Bhubaneswar, M.C. Khordha, Pin - 751 006.					
4. Smt. Kiran Devi Gupta (Retired Director / Guarantor), W/o. Late Bhagatram Gupta, Gupta Niwas, Cuttack Road, Opposite Budheswari Temple, Bhubaneswar, M. C. Khordha, Pin - 751 006.					
5. Sri Manmohan Gupta (Guarantor), S/o. Late Bhagatram Gupta, 8-2-293/82/103, Pavani Palazzo 24, Huda Heights 12 Banjara Hills, MLA Colony, Hyderabad, Pin - 500 034.					
6. Sri Vineet Mohan Gupta (Guarantor), S/o. Late Bhagatram Gupta, Gupta Niwas, Cuttack Road, Opposite Budheswari Temple, Bhubaneswar, M. C. Khordha, Pin - 751 006.					
Show Cause Notice for Classification as Wilful Defaulter					
A/c. : M/s. Gupta Power Infrastructure Limited with SAM Large Branch Kolkata					
Dear Sir,					
At your request, the Bank through its MCB Nayapally Branch has sanctioned credit facility of Rs. 572.30 Cr. under consortium banking to M/s. Gupta Power Infrastructure Limited where 1st is borrower Company and 2nd to 5th are Directors & Guarantors and 6th & 7th are Guarantors in the account.					
That the Borrower defaulted in meeting its payment / repayment obligations to the Bank as per terms of sanction and has failed to regularise the account.As such, the above mentioned account(s) has/have been classified as <b>Non-Performing Asset</b> on <b>24.09.2023</b> as per RBI Guidelines.					
That the Wilful Defaulter Identification Committee (WDIC) of the Bank has observed number of financial irregularities in the conduct/operation of account(s) & non-compliance of terms & conditions of sanction and more specifically undernoted ones which fall within one or more of the features set out in para 3(1)(t) of the Reserve Bank of India (Treatment of Wilful Defaulters and Large Defaulters) Directions, 2024.					
Relevant clause of Para 3 (1)(t) of the Reserve Bank of India (Treatment of Wilful Defaulters and Large Defaulters) Directions, 2024		Evidence of wilful default disclosing the acts of omission or commission by the Borrower / Proprietor / Guarantor(s) based on which this show cause notice is issued for the classification as Wilful Defaulter.			
Capacity to pay but unwilling to pay : The unit has defaulted in meeting its payment / repayment obligations to the lender even when it has the capacity to honour the said obligations		Net worth of the guarantor as on 31.03.2022 is as under :  (Rs in Cr.)			
		Name	Net worth as on 31.03.2022	Investment in Business	
		Mr. Mahendra Kumar Gupta	19.65	9.06	
		Mr. Jitendra Mohan Gupta	14.03	10.01	
		Mr. Abhishek Gupta	15.16	2.96	
		Mrs. Kiran Devi Gupta	11.77	7.58	
		Mr. Vineet Mohan Gupta	6.57	0.00	
		Mr. Manmohan Gupta	3.29	0.00	
		Total	70.47	29.61	
		This indicates that despite having capacity guarantor has wilfully not repaid the loan			
The forensic auditor M/s. Amit Ray & Co. was appointed by Canara Bank (Lead Bank) to conduct Forensic Audit in the account for the Audit period October'2018 to September' 2023. Following observations have been made by forensic auditor in the report submitted.					
Diversion of Funds : Transferring funds to the subsidiaries / Group companies or other corporates by whatever modalities		Transferring funds to the subsidiaries / Group companies or other corporates by whatever modalities			
		Fund Diversion through Related Party or Non Business Transactions			
		<p>● Forensic auditor has observed a total payment of Rs. 976.97 Cr. was made during 2017-24 for non-business transaction and all payments are outlined are either related party transaction or non-business transaction. Since no disclosure with respect to related party transactions has been made in the Audited Balance Sheet(which should have been done by GPIL as per provision of IND AS) and Annual returns of GPIL(Banks did not have any clue regarding these related parties, because of non-disclosures and CA certificates) and these parties are neither debtors nor creditors as per annual returns, ASM reports and stock audit reports and no backup of Annual Accounts, ledgers, sub ledgers, purchase and sales details of GPIL were provided to auditors, it is evident that the funds sanctioned to GPIL by way of Term Loans or Working Capital Demand Loans are not utilized for the intended purpose but channeled to related parties or for non-business transactions, aiming diversion of funds. Term loan/WCDL sanctioned by lenders was transferred to different CC account (held with lending banks) of GPIL and from these different accounts funds diverted to related party (non-business) in a period of time.</p> <p>● From the cash credit account statement of Bank of Baroda bearing account No. 06880500000217, it was found that payments amounting to Rs.1,28,35,000/- has been made to Flexco Conara Private Limited which is shareholder and related party of Gupta Power Infrastructure Limited from the period 27.09.2019 to 31.03.2023. This is a case of diversion of fund as it is neither debtor nor creditor as per annual Balance Sheet of Gupta Power Infrastructure Limited.</p> <p>● GPIL has not made necessary disclosures regarding any Related Parties in their audited BS for F.Y.2018-19 to F.Y.2021-22. Further the company has submitted CA certificate to the Banks dated 31.10.2021 and 21.09.2022 confirming about the same. However, during the scrutiny the forensic auditor observed that Tirupati Conductors Pvt. Ltd. is a related party to GPIL and also GPIL had many transactions with this company. Abhishek Gupta (Director of the company) is a 3.94% shareholder of GPIL and he is 9.92% shareholder in Tirupati Conductors Pvt. Ltd. till 31.03.2021. The audited Balance Sheet as on 31.03.2021 shows that the Trade Receivables from Tirupati Conductors Pvt. Ltd stands at Rs. 18.95 crores and the Trade Payable from Tirupati Conductors Pvt. Ltd stands at Rs.12.02 crores. The stock statement as on 31.03.2021 shows the debtors from Tirupati Conductors Pvt. Ltd. as Rs. 6.95 crores.</p> <p>On the other side the stock statement as on 31.07.2023 shows that the debtors of GPIL (Tirupati Conductors Pvt. Ltd) stands at Rs. 223 crores and the creditors of GPIL (Tirupati Conductors Pvt. Ltd) stands at Rs. 219 crores. It shows that there has been a 3108% massive jump in debtors in 2 years (from 31.03.2021 to 31.07.2023). TCPL has not filed their Financial Statements for F.Y. 2021-22 &amp; 2022-23 but has filed only MGT-7 &amp; AOC-4 for F.Y. 2021-22 in the public domain, as such it could not be verified.</p> <p>● During the scrutiny of the bank statements of Canara Bank it has been noticed that a sum total of Rs. 1786.83 crores have been received by GPIL from Tirupati Conductors Private Limited during the F.Y. 2019-2020. However, auditor has observed that as per the financial statements filed by "Tirupati Conductors Pvt. Ltd" in ROC, the total Cost of Materials Consumed by TCPL in 2019-2020 is only Rs. 861.65 crores, which implies a total upward exceptionally high deviation of Rs. 925.18 crores (107.38%) in the aforementioned figures.</p> <p>● Kunj Alloys Pvt. Ltd. is another related party to GPIL (not disclosed by GPIL). Mr. Abhishek Gupta is a 3.94% shareholder of GPIL and as per MCA (ROC) filing of Kunj Alloys Pvt. Ltd., Abhishek Gupta is a 7.06% shareholder in Kunj Alloys Pvt. Ltd. till 31/03/2021. The audited Balance Sheet as on 31.03.2021 shows that the Trade Receivables from Kunj Alloys Pvt. Ltd. stands at Rs. 17.65 crores and the Trade Payable from Kunj Alloys Pvt. Ltd stands at Rs.5.91 crores. Now, the stock statement as on 31.07.2023 shows that the debtors of GPIL (Kunj Alloys Pvt. Ltd.) stands at Rs. 245.79 crores and the creditors of GPIL (Kunj Alloys Pvt. Ltd.) stands at Rs. 245.79 crores. It shows that there has been a 1292.58% massive jump in 2 years (from 31.03.2021 to 31.07.2023</p>			



“To be free from all egoistic motive, careful of truth in speech and action, void of self-will and self-assertion, watchful in all things, is the condition for being a flawless servant.”



SRI AUROBINDO

## Self-Righteous All

It feels increasingly difficult nowadays to avoid righteousness; or, worse, self-righteousness. We are constantly being told what to do by those who supposedly have seen the light. For example, I was recently scolded by a colleague for suggesting that my own employer should aim to hire the best people, regardless of their sex or race. I was struck by the confidence that this person felt in instructing me on what I should value; it felt high-handed and uninformed.

Of course, there is a difference between righteousness and self-righteousness (though the slippery slope between them is short and steep). The advantage of righteousness is that it is justified, as in the case of a zealot who opens people’s minds to the possibility that they are prejudiced. By contrast, lecturing a stranger on how to weigh the trade-off between merit and equity strikes me as self-righteous.

Why is there so much of this behaviour today? To address that question, we need to understand what makes people so sure of themselves. The answer may be a little surprising: Self-righteousness comes from judging the world by the perceived correctness of actions rather than by the quality of outcomes.

Consider tariffs. To evaluate the issue objectively, one must understand the causes of trade, trade imbalances, and their effects. In other words, one must frame the issue “consequentially.” Presumably, the goal of a tariff policy is to produce beneficial outcomes. But that can be accomplished only by understanding why people trade and how to create conditions for the kind of trade you want. You must think about how the world works and how to tweak it to produce the outcomes you desire.

This may seem obvious, but successful execution requires a deep understanding of difficult economic questions. Once you begin trying to understand how trade works, you discover how complicated it is. Everyone is always looking for the best deal by guessing what everyone else is willing to buy and sell. Will imposing a 25% tariff on Canada cause Canadians to meet your demands, or will it drive them into a corner? This isn’t a question about what you value. It’s a question about how the world works. A good consequentialist analysis will try to deliver an objective answer.

Owing to this complexity, consequentialist perspectives are shockingly rare among politicians and the public. People tend to adopt a much simpler one, seeing issues in terms of sacred values with which a given action either does or does not accord. Thus, instead of looking at the causes and consequences of trade, the Trump administration focuses on a particular action, as if tariffs are, by virtue of their righteousness, some kind of cure-all. The framing of the issue plays the same role as a religious dictate. It is a core belief, in this case based on little more than the faith of one man.

If one’s position on trade can be determined by sacred values, imagine the role such values play on issues like concealed-carry permits for firearms, abortion, assisted suicide, or religion in education. Framing issues in terms of sacred values makes them seem simple, but only because it avoids all the hard analytical work needed to link consequences to causes.

Psychologists have shown that this perspective makes people more intransigent and less likely to compromise. Violations of sacred values cause outrage to the point that people will take actions to purify themselves (as with self-flagellation) and to right the perceived wrong. Sacred-value frames are thus a recipe for hostility, polarisation, and conflict. Because sacred values are inherently personal, they force the conversation to be about individual faith-based commitments that can brook no dissent, deepening the sense of opposition and corralling people into distinct identity groups.

By contrast, it is quite hard to be self-righteous when adopting a consequentialist frame. Discussions of causes and consequences are not only difficult; they require attention to detail, recognition of real-world complexities, and humility about what you don’t know. It is less about yourself and more about the issue, because such conversations leave no cognitive or emotional space for indignation. Yankees and Red Sox fans can have a conversation about strategy and statistics. But as soon as one side starts cheering for its team, there’s little that the other side can do but cheer for its own.

The problem with certainty is that it is rarely justified. Issues that elicit strong disagreement tend to be complicated. Offering an informed argument about trade policy requires an enormous amount of expertise, and even experts disagree (at least about the details; even advocates of tariffs agree that Trump’s implementation of the policy has been suboptimal).

People simply do not know how little they know. We live under the illusion that we have a better understanding of how things work than we actually do. Strong opinions demand justification. The conviction that America should impose tariffs just because you like tariffs, or because they are good for you personally, doesn’t cut it. Strong preferences give people strong convictions, but they will not persuade those who do not share them – nor should they.

So, before asserting self-righteous claims about someone else’s opinions or actions, think about their end goal. What consequences are they trying to achieve? In small matters, like how to interact with the people around us, and large ones, like how to strengthen the economy, thinking in these terms can open persuasive lines of argument. Perhaps more importantly, it would force us to stop talking past one another.

The writer is Professor of Cognitive and Psychological Sciences at Brown University. ©PROJECT SYNDICATE

### WISDOM CORNER

“The doctor sees all the weakness of mankind; the lawyer all the wickedness, the theologian all the stupidity.”

ARTHUR SCHOPENHAUER

“Men never do evil so completely and cheerfully as when they do it from religious conviction.”

BLAISE PASCAL

“The only way to deal with an unfree world is to become so absolutely free that your very existence is an act of rebellion.”

ALBERT CAMUS

FOCUS SOCIAL SECURITY

A RIGHT, NOT CHARITY



All private sector employees are under the EPF fold, and the government has the responsibility to protect their interest on equal footing with its own employees



PSM Rao

IS IT NOT UNDEMOCRATIC AND ARBITRARY TO SINGLE OUT EPF PENSIONERS IN FIXING SUCH A SMALL AMOUNT AS ₹1,000 MINIMUM ON BASELESS FEARS?



Steven Sloman

People simply do not know how little they know. We live under the illusion that we have a better understanding of how things work than we actually do

₹1,000 and less! Some 37 lakh senior citizens and their dependents survive on this monthly pittance called pension from the Employees’ Pension Scheme 1995 of the EPF Act 1952. They have to manage their food, clothing, medicine, and all other geriatric care needs within this provision. They deserve a higher minimum pension, not simply because the amount is so paltry and they are senior citizens. No. They are entitled to it because they have toiled all their productive lives for the creation of wealth and have sacrificed a part of the employer’s share of PF contribution to build a robust pension fund.

Without any of these – contribution or work – many of the poor in the country get much bigger support during their old age. For instance, the AP and Telangana governments give a welfare pension of ₹4,000; still more in certain cases in these states. Similarly, the state and Central government employees get a good amount of pension. The MPs and MLAs, too, get a pension; some of them who functioned in both roles at different times get two pensions. All their pension schemes have much bigger minimum provisions than the EPF minimum.

So, it is the EPF pensioners’ right to get an adequate pension, not some charity demand out of anybody’s compassion. No argument against the claim is tenable and just. Funds’ shortage and nonviability of the scheme and similar claims for not raising EPF minimum pension, concerning 5.39 crore members under EPF Pension Scheme and more than 81 lakh pensioners at present, therefore, are absolutely wrong and untenable. The government takes shelter under its inability, usually based on three impediments.

The EPF pension scheme is based on defined contribution and defined benefit. In other words, it is predetermined as to how much contribution is to be

pooled in the fund and how much pension is to be paid out of it. So, no scope for an increase; it is the first and foremost objection.

The second ground is based on an actuarial evaluation. The fund is periodically evaluated to determine if the present corpus and future accumulation are sufficient to meet the continued pension payment obligation. The claim is that there was an actuarial deficit as of 31.03.2019.

The third observation: the pension scheme, though not declared as such, appears to be of the Pay-As-You-Go (PAYG) type. Under PAYG, the current employees contribute to the pension fund while retired persons receive the pension; the cycle goes on without needing any additional help. But the government fears that it may not work without external support.

Looking from these very three premises, objectively, and adding to it the governmental responsibility in a welfare state to provide for old age social security, the payment of an adequate sum like half the salary as a pension to all the EPF members, and raising their minimum pension to a decent level is not only not impossible but not an escapable obligation.

Look at these hard facts. The total investment corpus in the

employees’ pension scheme by 31 March 2025, as Shobha Karandlaje, MoS in Labour Ministry, revealed in Parliament, was ₹9,92,689.56 crore. The pension outflow every year is minimal compared to the corpus. For instance, in 2023-24, the pension paid was ₹23,027.93 crore, equal to 2.59% of the corpus that year of ₹8,88,269.01 crore. Let alone the corpus comparison, the interest earned on it in one year, 2023-24, was ₹58,668.73 crore, more than double the pension.

The number of present pensioners (81 lakh) in the total number of members in the scheme (5.39 crore) constitutes about just 15%. True, more pensioners are added every year, increasing the pension payment burden, so will be the increased volume of funds, with more and more persons joining the labour force in an expanding economy.

The contribution in a given year will be more than the pension outgo. The pension accumulation last year was ₹71,780.41 crore against pension payment of ₹23,410.17 crore, which means ₹48,370.24 crore additional accretion to the pension fund. Then, where is the actuarial deficit? Why can’t PAYG work? Where are the non-viability signs?

Even if these things happen at any time, a hypothetical situation now, the government should come forward to meet its social responsibility to protect the interests of senior citizens. Is it not undemocratic and arbitrary to single out EPF pensioners in fixing such a small amount as ₹1,000 minimum on baseless fears, while providing a higher amount to government employees and legislators?

Also, the financial burden as a result of increasing the minimum is not going to be too big, as is being made out by the government. At present, more than 78 lakh of the total 81 lakh pensioners get less than ₹5,000 a month, while 58 lakh get less than ₹2,000. To raise the minimum to ₹5,000 from the present ₹1,000, it would require ₹46,918 crore; net of the present payment of total pension of ₹14,329 crore, it would need still a lesser sum, ₹32,589 crore. Around double this money is needed to raise the minimum to a very reasonable ₹10,000 a month. These are not unsustainably big sums given the fund’s position and of course, the government’s will.

If the government doesn’t agree with these facts, it may appoint a commission under the chairpersonship of a judge who can examine the pension systems under EPS of EPF and decide its overall restructuring to guarantee post-retirement income security for retired employees covered and required to be covered under this scheme.

The commission may take into account all the factors, including fund viability, and the government’s increasing social responsibility in the context of demographic changes. Equally important fact: all the private sector employees are under the EPF fold, and the government has the responsibility to protect their interest on equal footing with its own employees.

The writer is a development economist and commentator on economic and social affairs.

### SPECTRUM SCO DEVELOPMENT BANK

## Democratising development finance



Avilash Roul

THE SCO DEVELOPMENT BANK MAY JUSTIFY ITS ESTABLISHMENT IN DIVERSIFYING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACCESSING DEVELOPMENT FINANCES FOR THE GLOBAL SOUTH

Among several tangible outcomes, symbolic or strategic, from the 25th Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Summit in Tianjin, China, the agreement to set up a new multilateral development bank (MDB) is a calculative political decision. While the Summit has successfully invoked world attention for its timing, attendance, and outcomes, it is the striving for reallocation and realignment of power, characterised by multipolarity or polycentrism that attracts the most scrutiny. Is the SCO Development Bank (hereafter SDB) an attempt to amplify such multipolarity in the global financial structure?

Arguably, the approval of establishing the SDB is the most symbolic, startling, and strategic move under Chinese Chairmanship of the SCO. During the Summit, President Xi projected himself as the counterweight to the US leadership by presenting salient features of the global governance initiatives. The SDB is the outcome of one of Xi’s pathways of transforming global governance. What is the rationale behind establishing another MDB initiated by China? The world’s second-largest economy has already established the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), having the single

biggest shareholding, and the New Development Bank (NDB), having equal shareholding with BRICS countries. In general, MDBs are public financial institutions that extend loans, grants, technical assistance, and policy advice to member countries. They have tremendous political and economic clout over recipient countries, especially the poorer economies.

Undisputedly, the oldest and largest MDB, the US-led World Bank Group (WBG) established with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in 1944 as the Bretton Woods twins, is the mainstay of the world financial structure since World War II. Whereas the US, being the largest shareholder, with other Western countries, controls the governance of the WBG and IMF, both sides of the North Atlantic call the shots in the global economic affairs. Despite several concerted efforts for democratisation of developmental decision-making process in such global and regional MDBs, including the UNSC, WTO, the response has been insufferably limited.

Meanwhile, the developing member countries require an estimated \$4.3 trillion of development finance per year, including \$1.3 trillion for climate actions, to meet the ambi-

tious targets of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. It is estimated by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) that developing countries require at least 6 trillion dollars by 2030 to meet less than half of their existing Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).

At present, the 12 existing MDBs and their 44-odd batteries of bilateral development agencies, with private finances, are insufficient in fulfilling the developmental needs of developing countries and indifferent to reform in the governance of global financial edifices. Last year, 10 prominent MDBs, including AIIB and NDB, estimated that they could collectively expand their lending by an additional \$300 billion to \$400 billion in the next 10 years. Still, it’s a peanut to the huge shortfall. One of the major arguments behind setting up the SDB is fuelling the financial needs in the Eurasian region and beyond. Subsequently, the SDB, when it functions, technically will be accompanying the AIIB in expanding Chinese economic influence in the heart of Asia.

At the outset, the SDB will focus its operations in the Eurasian member countries of the SCO. The idea of the SDB can

be traced back to the Ufa Summit in 2015 of both BRICS and SCO, when the establishment of the NDB was formalised. The SDB will be, subsequently, supplementing and complementing the Eurasian Development Bank (EDB), an MDB established in 2006 with Russian clout, which lends \$2.5 billion annually in Eurasia.

While the world’s elite industrialised democracies (G7) were unperturbed in maintaining the status quo in Alberta, Canada, in June, the BRICS Summit in Rio in July and the SCO in Tianjin both have exposed the fallacies of fractured multilateralism that grappled with global governance. On the other hand, nearly five decades of permutations and combinations on multipolarity by ambitious regional power centres have achieved a zero-sum game against the mighty but cunning traditional powers. Yet, the SDB, being the 13th MDB, may justify its establishment in diversifying opportunities for accessing development finances for the Global South.

The writer is an international advisor on transboundary water and climate change risk.

### Needless controversy

Sir, Clearly, head coach Gautam Gambhir and Indian players made a mistake when they refused to shake hands with their Pakistani counterparts in their Asia Cup tie in Dubai. The episode triggered a needless controversy, and the game is now talked about more for the dissonance than for India’s victory over their archrivals. What Team India has achieved by turning down the customary handshake? Geopolitical tensions at times grip sporting rivalries, but they do not come in the way for regular niceties. Cricket field is not a warzone to score political points. Cricket, or for that matter any other sport, stands above politics and mixing them would be a perfect recipe for stirring up a hornet’s nest. Meanwhile, amidst the controversy, it was heartening to see that Pakistan cricket super fan Abdul Jalil, popularly known as ‘Chacha Cricket’ and famous Indian cricket fan Sudhir Kumar Chaudhary were shaking hands at the end of the match, teaching a lesson or two to the Indian players.

Ranganathan Sivakumar, CHENNAI

### A preventable threat

Sir, Rabies is a deadly zoonotic disease, killing nearly 60,000 people worldwide each year. India bears the highest burden, with 18,000–20,000 deaths annually — about 36 per cent of global cases. Despite being fully preventable, low awareness, delayed medical care, and incomplete vaccination lead to many avoidable deaths. Dog bites are rising sharply, from 2.1 million in 2022 to 3.7 million in 2024, highlighting the urgent need for action. The disease attacks the nervous system and is almost always fatal once symptoms appear. Immediate steps after a dog bite — wound washing, vaccination, and rabies immunoglobulin (RIG) if needed — can prevent infection. Yet, many people do not complete the full vaccine course or follow unverified remedies, increasing risks. India aims to eliminate rabies deaths by 2030 through stray dog vaccination, continuous vaccine supply, awareness campaigns, and the 15400 helpline. Experts emphasize that with timely and proper treatment, rabies is entirely preventable.

Krishna Kumar Vepakomma, HYDERABAD



# Rural Bengal women outearn urban peers

Economists find it unusual that rural working women in West Bengal earn more daily than urban counterparts despite fewer job options



Average daily income per woman in rural West Bengal stands at ₹320

Average daily income per woman in metro and urban areas at ₹316

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Kolkata, Sept 17:** The average daily income of working women in rural areas of West Bengal is higher than that of their counterparts in urban and metro areas, according to the latest statistics released by the Centre.

According to the said report christened Women and Men in India 2024 Selected Indicators and Data, used by the Union Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, as June 2024, the latest period statistics available on this count, the average daily income per woman in rural West Bengal stands at Rs 320, which is marginally higher than Rs 272 as September 2023.

According to the report prepared with inputs from the state finance department, as

of June 2024, the average daily income per woman in the metro and urban areas of West Bengal is Rs 316. And, the average daily income per woman in the metro and urban pockets of the state was comparatively higher at Rs 324 as of September 2023.

In both rural and urban pockets, the Left Front-ruled state of Kerala is at the top of the list in terms of the average daily income of the working women. In the case of Kerala, the amount earned by rural working women is Rs 454, and in urban and metro areas, it is Rs 505.

Economic observers feel that this phenomenon of rural working women enjoying marginally higher average daily income than their counterparts in urban and metro pockets is an indication of how lower rates of wages, even in organised sectors in ur-

ban and metro West Bengal, are encouraging workers' migration from the state, including women, to other states for much higher daily wages.

The economists feel that the phenomenon of the rural working women in West Bengal enjoying an average daily income higher than their counterparts in urban and metro pockets in the state is a strange phenomenon, considering that the picture is generally opposite, since the avenues of employment generation in urban and metro pockets are much higher than in rural pockets.

"In rural pockets, the scope of employment for women is generally limited to specific areas like farming, animal husbandry, and, to an extent, rural handicrafts, among others. But in urban and more specially metro pockets, the avenues of employment generation are far too many, namely security personnel in business establishments like hotels, shopping malls, multiplexes, big hospitals and other merchant establishments, health workers in big hospitals, selective factories where skills specialised by women are necessary and most importantly the traditional employment of working as domestic helpers, among others," acclaimed economist P Mukhopadhyay

He added, "These days, several women are even engaged in unconventional employment like app-cab drivers and product delivery, among others. But still with so many avenues of employment generation, when the average daily income for women in urban and metro pockets is so low, it does not cut a rosy picture of the economic health of the state, and more especially on daily wage rates in urban and metro pockets."



Assam Jatiya Bidyalya students perform during an event on the occasion of 'Vishwakarma Puja', at Sriniketan, in Birbhum, West Bengal, Wednesday

## Indian Army treks Sikkim's tough terrain

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Sept 17:** Troops of the Indian Army's Trishakti Corps successfully completed a route march with full battle loads across the challenging terrain of Sikkim, reaching altitudes of up to 17,000 feet.

The march, conducted over six days and nights from September 9-15 through steep gradients, icy winds, and rugged tracks, tested the soldiers' physical stamina, mental resilience, and collective spirit.

According to officials, each soldier carried his full operational load — weapons, equipment, and survival gear — replicating battlefield conditions in high-altitude areas.

"While the Army continues to integrate modern technology, drones, and smart logistics into its operations, such exercises remain indispensable," said PRO Defence.

"They ensure that soldiers are prepared to operate even in situations where technology may



be constrained, reaffirming the primacy of human endurance and adaptability," he added.

Lt Gen Zubin A Minwalla, GOC, Trishakti Corps, stated, "Technology enhances our capabilities, but it is the soldier's grit and teamwork that ultimately wins battles. This march reinforces confidence in our ability to fight and prevail

in the harshest conditions."

This comes days after Indian Army and Navy held high-altitude combat diving training in Sikkim from August 30 to September 5.

"A joint Scuba and Combat Diving Exercise was conducted by the Indian Army PARA (Special Forces) and the Indian Navy Marine Commandos (MARCOS)

The successful completion of this march reflects the Trishakti Warriors' commitment to operational readiness and their role in safeguarding the nation's frontiers in the eastern Himalayas

The march, conducted over six days and nights from Sept 9-15 through steep gradients, icy winds, and rugged tracks, tested the soldiers' physical stamina, mental resilience, and collective spirit

According to officials, each soldier carried his full operational load — weapons, equipment, and survival gear — replicating battlefield conditions in high-altitude areas

in Sikkim at an altitude of 17,000 feet, from August 30 to September 5," said a press release from Defence PRO last week.

During the training, participants carried out open circuit air diving, closed circuit pure oxygen diving, dives up to a depth of 17 metres in extreme cold-water conditions, and combat night diving.

## Kolkata Metro's Green Line stalls less than a month after launch



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Kolkata, Sept 17:** Services were disrupted on the Kolkata Metro's Green Line Wednesday due to a technical glitch, less than a month after the full stretch was made operational.

The 16.6-km Green Line,

which connects Howrah Maidan to Salt Lake Sector V, was made fully operational on August 22 after Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated its Esplanade-Sealdah section.

The glitch was detected around 10.34 am, following

which services were suspended on both lines, an official said.

Maintenance teams were activated, and services resumed on the Howrah Maidan-Sealdah section around 11.46 am. The snag was fully repaired, and the entire line up to Sector V was made operational around 1 pm, he said.

The glitch happened in the power supply lines, he said, refusing to share more details.

The snag led to huge crowds at several metro stations, including Howrah, Sealdah and Esplanade. With a lesser number of buses, taxis and auto-rickshaws plying on the road due to Vishwakarma Puja, the disruption of metro services caused severe inconvenience to commuters.

Disruption of services due to technical snags on the Blue Line, the country's first metro line, has become a regular affair, but the Green Line has so far remained largely untouched until this breakdown.

## Manipur launches grievance portal



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Imphal, Sept 17:** The Manipur government Wednesday launched an online grievance redressal portal designed to offer citizens a convenient, transparent, and efficient platform to register and track grievances related to government services, an official statement said here.

Manipur Governor Ajay Kumar Bhalla launched 'Gov-Connect Manipur' at the Raj Bhavan here in presence of

the chief secretary and other senior officers.

The ethnic violence-affected northeastern state is under President's Rule now.

Features of the portal include 24x7 online grievance registration where citizens can lodge complaints anytime, receiving instant confirmation and a unique tracking ID along with WhatsApp Integration which allows user-friendly access and real-time updates through a widely used messaging platform, the statement said.

Bhalla said, "The launch of the portal marks a transformative leap for the administration by embracing digital technologies, and reaffirms our commitment to transparency, accountability, and responsive governance for every citizen of Manipur.

He also urged all citizens to make full use of this portal and help build a more effective and people-friendly government.

Ethnic clashes between the Meitei and Kuki communities since May 2023 have left over 260 people dead and thousands homeless in Manipur.

## Post Malone to headline first solo show in Guwahati

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Sept 17:** Global superstar Post Malone is set to perform his first-ever solo headline show in India's Northeast, with a concert scheduled in Guwahati, Assam.

The show, produced by BookMyShow Live in collaboration with Live Nation and the Government of Assam, will be held at Guwahati's Khanapara Veterinary Ground December 8 and mark Malone's debut stadium performance in the region.

Post Malone previously performed in Mumbai in 2022 as part of the Zomato Feeding India Concert, a charitable event aimed at raising awareness about hunger and malnutrition.



In a statement, BookMyShow stated that the Northeast has emerged as a significant hub for India's live entertainment

industry, driven by a young, engaged audience and a rich musical heritage.

According to BookMyShow's

Throwback 2024 report, live events in tier-2 cities grew by 682 percent, with the Northeast leading this surge.

Recognising this potential, BookMyShow signed a memorandum of understanding with the Assam government earlier this year to develop the state's live entertainment ecosystem.

Post Malone's concert is the first milestone of this partnership.

"Post Malone represents the very best of contemporary global music, an artist whose unique sound and persona resonate with millions across the world. To bring him exclusively to Guwahati opens a powerful new chapter for live music in the Northeast," Naman Puga-

lia, Chief Business Officer – Live Events, BookMyShow, said.

Padmapani Bora, Managing Director of Assam Tourism Development Corporation, said, "Assam is endowed with rich heritage, music and culture. By hosting Post Malone for his first and only performance in India's Northeast, we aim to boost concert tourism and position the state as a destination for international entertainment."

Post Malone, a multiple Grammy award-nominated artist, recently completed his record-breaking North American and European tours.

Tickets for Post Malone's performance in Guwahati will be available beginning September 20th at 12 pm on BookMyShow.

### The Odisha Small Industries Corporation Ltd.

(A Government of Odisha Undertaking)  
(An ISO:9001:2008 certified Govt. Company)  
Industrial Estate, Madhupatna, Cuttack - 753 010, Odisha  
Tel No. : 0671-2341204, 2342816, Fax : 0671-2341875/2342561  
e-mail : osicldt@gmail.com, osicmd@gmail.com, website : osicldt.in  
No.CAD-1800 **OSIC GST No. 21AAACO2101M121**

### e-Procurement Notice for Procurement of Laboratory equipments

**Tender Notice No.1984 Date : 16.09.2025**  
**Identification No.OSIC/RE Cell/2025-26/005**

(A) 1. Name of the work  
Establishment of laboratory at Common Facility Center (CFC) in Rice Milling Cluster, Sonmaphur, Balasore, Odisha.

1. Total No. of works : One
2. Tender paper Cost : Rs.6000/- + GST 18% = Rs.7,080/-
3. Period of completion : Two (2) calendar months
4. EMD Cost : Rs.55,000/-
5. ISD Cost : 5% of the agreement value
6. Other details -

Procurement online	Bid Identification No	Availability of tender on-line for bidding		Date & time of opening of Tender in O/o MD OSIC Ltd., Cuttack
		From	To	
M.D., OSIC Ltd., Cuttack	005 of 2025-26	22.09.2025 At 5:00 P.M.	16.10.2025 Up to 5:00 P.M.	17.10.2025 at 3.30 P.M.

Further details can be seen from the website  
[www.tendersodisha.gov.in](http://www.tendersodisha.gov.in) / [www.osicldt.in](http://www.osicldt.in)

Any amendment, corrigendum, cancellation or re-tender may please be referred to the website.

**Sd./- Dy. General Manager (I/C) Constr./RE**  
**OSIC Ltd., Cuttack**

OIPR-14073/11/0053/2526

### OFFICE OF SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER MINOR IRRIGATION DIVISION, CUTTACK

Letter No. 4074/Dt. 16.09.2025

**GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA e-Procurement Notice**  
**Bid Identification No. online SECMD - 15/2025-26**

**eemidcuttack@yahoo.co.in**

1	Name of work	Improvement of MIPS under Capex Road scheme in MI Sub-Division Athagarh & Narasinghpur
2	Total Number of work	03 (Three) nos.
3	Estimated cost	Varies from Rs.80.35 lakhs to Rs.98.72 lakhs
4	Tender paper Cost	Rs.10,000/-
5	Bid Security (Online)	As per DTCN
6	Period of Completion	As per DTCN
7	Availability of Bid Document	From 22.09.2025, 10.00 A.M. to 08.10.2025, 5.00 P.M. in website ( <a href="http://www.tendersorissa.gov.in">www.tendersorissa.gov.in</a> )
8	Last date & Time of receipt	08.10.2025 at 5.00 P.M. through online Bid
9	Date of opening of Technical Bid documents	09.10.2025 - at 11.00 A.M. in the office of the SE, M.I. Division, Cuttack
10	Date of Opening of Financial Bid Documents	13.10.2025 at 11.00 A.M. in the office of the SE, M.I. Division, Cuttack
11	Date of Lottery, if required	17.10.2025 at 12.00 Noon in the office of the SE, M.I. Division, Cuttack
12	Name and address of the OIT	Superintending Engineer, M.I. Division, Cuttack. P.O. : Nayabazar, Cuttack, Phone : 0671-2443622, PIN CODE : 753004

Further details can be seen from the Government of Odisha Web - Site  
[www.tendersorissa.gov.in](http://www.tendersorissa.gov.in)

**Sd./- Superintending Engineer M.I. Division, Cuttack**

OIPR-32121/11/0045/2526



of the day

quote

The MET (Muslim Educational Trust) custodian land at Bhagat Barzulla used by local youth is reportedly being claimed by police for a martyrs' memorial. Similarly, the Zoo Ground at Sheeri Baramulla is reportedly being taken over by the CRPF

MEHBOOBA MUFTI | FORMER J&K CM

Safety of the people of the state remains the top priority for the state government and under the Special Relief Package, the state government is providing ₹10,000 and ₹5,000 as rent in urban and rural areas for those rendered homeless during the disaster

SUKHVINDER SINGH SUKHU | HIMACHAL CM

We are launching 'mission Chardi Kala,' which symbolises standing strong during our most difficult times with an unwavering spirit

BHAGWANT MANN | PUNJAB CM

SHORT TAKES

Putin calls PM Modi to extend birthday wishes

New Delhi: Russian President Vladimir Putin Wednesday extended birthday greetings to Prime Minister Narendra Modi during a phone conversation. Following the call, Modi said India is committed to further strengthening the Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership between the two countries. "Thank you, my friend, President Putin, for your phone call and warm wishes on my 75th birthday," Modi said on 'X'.

3 killed after speeding car rams pedestrians

Pratapgarh (UP): Three people were killed and two others injured after a speeding car lost control and ramed into pedestrians near Mirgadhwa crossing on the Prayagraj-Lucknow highway here, police said Wednesday. Circle Officer (Kunda) Amarnath Gupta said the car, heading from Prayagraj to Lucknow, went out of control around 9 pm Tuesday and hit four people before overturning.

Former Hurriyat chief Abdul Gani Bhat dead

Srinagar: Former Hurriyat Conference chairman Abdul Gani Bhat, who was seen as a moderate among the separatist leadership, died at his Sopore residence Wednesday. He was 90. Bhat, who was largely confined to his residence at Sopore in Baramulla district due to ill health over past few years, breathed his last this evening, Hurriyat chairman Mirwaiz Umar Farooq said.

Two Naxalites killed in encounter

Bijapur: Two Naxalites were killed in an encounter with security personnel in Bijapur district of Chhattisgarh Wednesday, police said. The gun battle broke out around 3 pm in the forest of the district's south-west region when a team of security personnel was out on an anti-Naxal operation, a police official here said.

IMA docs threaten to go on 24-hour strike

Mumbai: The Indian Medical Association's Maharashtra chapter has threatened to go on a 24-hour strike from September 18 to protest the government's decision to allow registration of homoeopathic doctors who have completed a certificate course in modern pharmacology.



In government medical colleges, we are able to provide free treatment, medicines and diagnostic facilities in a comprehensive manner

YOGI ADITYANATH | UTTAR PRADESH CM



GOURANGALAL DAS APPOINTED INDIA'S NEXT ENVOY TO REPUBLIC OF KOREA

Gourangalal Das, currently the joint secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs, has been appointed as India's next envoy to the Republic of Korea, the MEA announced Wednesday. He is expected to take up the assignment shortly



BJP celebrates with ‘Sewa Pakhwada’ as Prez, Oppn greets him

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 17: Prime Minister Narendra Modi turned 75 Wednesday, with a host of dignitaries and politicians lauding his leadership and the ruling BJP launching over a fortnight long “Sewa Pakhwada” to mark the birthday of its pre-eminent leader.

The BJP-run governments at the Centre and states have lined up an array of outreach, welfare, development and awareness programmes, ranging from health camps to cleanliness drive, get togethers of intellectuals and fairs to promote indigenous products across the country till October 2.

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath Wednesday launched the ‘Swasth Nari

Sashakt Parivar Abhiyan’ by rolling out 20,324 health camps across the state, and said that it is a tribute to Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

President Droupadi Murmu greeted Modi, who was born in a poor family in Gujarat’s Vadnagar, and praised him for instilling a culture of setting and achieving great goals in the country.

“Today, the global community is also expressing its faith in your guidance,” Murmu said in her birthday greetings to the PM.

“Heartfelt birthday greetings and best wishes to the Prime Minister of India, Shri @narendramodiji. By exemplifying the pinnacle of hard work through your extraordinary leadership, you have instilled a culture of



SC: Submit air pollution control plan in 3 weeks



The top court was hearing a suo motu plea related to filling of vacancies in the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM), the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) and state pollution boards, and pulled them up for the delay

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 17: The Supreme Court Wednesday directed the CAQM, CPCB and state pollution control boards to come out with measures to prevent air pollution within three weeks, ahead of winter when pollution levels spike.

A bench comprising Chief Justice of India (CJI) B R Gavai and Justice K Vinod Chandran asked Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Rajasthan and Punjab, CAQM and CPCB to fill the vacancies in three months.

It, however, granted six months for filling promotional posts in CAQM, CPCB and state pollution control boards.

In the meantime, the bench directed the states and the authorities to appoint persons either on deputation or contractual basis, keeping in mind the approaching winter season, when pollution level is expected to spike. The court came down heavily on the states for failing to fill the long-pending vacancies in their pollution control

boards, observing that inadequate manpower during peak pollution seasons aggravates the environmental crisis.

Presently, pollution control boards in Haryana, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan have 44, 43, 166 and 259 vacancies, respectively.

On the recurring problem of increase in pollution levels during winter, the CJI said that for the last several years, the court has been passing orders leading to the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) coming into force and various activities, including construction work, being stopped. The GRAP provides for a set of emergency measures to combat worsening Air Quality Index (AQI). It is

Top court: Why can't some farmers be held

New Delhi: Concerned over the usual spike in pollution levels in winter, the Supreme Court asked the Punjab government Wednesday why some errant farmers should not be arrested for indulging in stubble burning, a key contributor to air pollution, to send across a stern message. “You take a call, otherwise we will issue a mandamus,” a bench comprising Chief Justice of India (CJI) B R Gavai and Justice K Vinod Chandran said while making strong observations on the issue. The bench was hearing a suo-motu (on its own) plea relating to filling up vacancies in the state pollution control boards of Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Rajasthan and Punjab.

a stratified plan implemented in response to deteriorating air quality, with different stages triggering stricter actions, such as a ban on construction activities and vehicle restrictions.

The bench noted that the GRAP also leads to a situation where a number of vehicles are stopped from entering Delhi-NCR as they generate more air pollution. The bench sought a report from the CAQM and fixed the case for hearing on October 8.

Earlier, the top court slammed the Delhi government over vacancies in the Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPCC) and directed it to fill all the posts by September this year.

It said that of the total 204 vacancies in the DPCC, only 83 have been filled so far.

achieving great goals in the country,” she said.

Thanking her, Modi said his government will remain dedicated to building a strong, capable and self-reliant India with the help of its over 140 cr citizens, and described her vision and ideas as inspirational.

Vice President C P Radhakrishnan said India is making a mark on the global stage and moving steadily towards the goal of a developed nation under his visionary leadership.

Speaker Om Birla said his unparalleled dedication and commitment to the country is an inspiration to every Indian.

BJP leaders and members of other parties extended birthday wishes to Modi, who has led his party to unprecedented geographical expansion and

Swami Ramdev marks PM's birthday by giving away scholarships to students

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 17: Yoga guru Swami Ramdev Wednesday announced a series of national-level initiatives under the banner of Patanjali Yogpeeth to mark Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 75th birthday. Speaking at a press conference in Delhi, Ramdev hailed Prime Minister Modi as a visionary leader embodying the values of swadeshi, self-reliance, nationalism and Sanatan dharma. Besides, Ramdev announces a plethora of initiatives in several fields, including education and healthcare.

Scholarship awards for students

Patanjali will introduce the Pratibha Puraskar to honour meritorious students across CBSE, BSB (Bharatiya Shiksha Board) and state boards. Under this, students securing

electoral success since 2014.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said Modi with his visionary leadership, dedication to the nation and untiring hardwork has given the country new energy and shown it a new direction.

Home Minister Amit Shah said Modi has been working tirelessly for people's welfare for more than five decades, and he is a living inspiration of the 'nation first' motto for every citizen.

In posts on X, Shah described him as a symbol of sacrifice and dedication, and inspiration for crores of countrymen.

The home minister said from the RSS to the party and the government, Modi's journey in life shows the possibility of extensive transformations when resolve is as unwavering as the



the top three positions will receive cash awards ranging from ₹11,000 to ₹51,000.

Free health and wellness camps

As part of a nationwide drive, Patanjali will organise free medical check-ups, yoga and health camps in over 750 locations. Special treatment camps for chronic liver ailments such as liver disease, fatty liver and liver cirrhosis will also be conducted, offering free Ayurvedic

HC orders Cong to take down AI video of PM, his mother

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Patna, Sept 17: The Patna High Court Wednesday directed the Congress to take off from its social media handles an AI-generated video depicting Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his late mother.

Acting Chief Justice P B Bajanthri passed the order on a petition filed by advocate Vivekanand Singh and others, who had called the video a "defamatory publication" and violative of restraints placed on political parties under the Representation of the People Act.

Additional Solicitor General of India K N Singh, who appeared for the Union government, told PTI "the court has made it clear that the video shall remain withdrawn till the next date of hearing".

In the petition, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, the Union government and the Election Commission were also named

as respondents. EC's counsel Siddharth Prasad said "the court has also issued notices to Facebook, Twitter and Google, directing them to file their reply by the next date of hearing".

The high court is likely to mention the next date in the order sheet, which would be uploaded on its website.

Seeking to target the prime minister, the Bihar Congress had last week posted the video on its X handle, with a prompt in Hindi, "Sahab ke sapno mein aayi maa. Dekhiye rochak samvaad. (Mother came in sahab's dream. Watch an interesting interaction between them.)"

The video portrayed Modi's mother criticising him for his politics. The BJP and its allies had lashed out at the Congress over the video, while protests erupted across the country. The Congress maintained that no disrespect was shown to the PM or his mother.

AI crash: Pilot's father rejects suicide, mental health claims

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Sept 17: Perturbed with the preliminary findings of the AAIB inquiry into the Ahmedabad plane crash, Pushkaraj Sabharwal, father of Captain Sumeet Sabharwal who was one of the pilots of the ill-fated Air India Dreamliner, has demanded a 'formal investigation' by the central government.

In one of the worst aircraft accidents in India, a total of 260 people, including 241 passengers, died after Air India's Boeing 787-8 aircraft operating flight AI171 to London Gatwick crashed soon after take off from Ahmedabad June 12.

In a letter to the civil aviation secretary and AAIB Director General, 91-year-old Pushkaraj said that selective leaks about the accident have led to speculation that Sumeet (56) was under tremendous psychological pressure and therefore was contemplating committing suicide.

"These innuendos have very

Himalayas and vision is as vast as the ocean.

Shah said that for the past four decades, he has had the opportunity to observe Modi in various roles -- whether as an RSS pracharak, the BJP's organisational general secretary, chief minister of Gujarat, or as the country's Prime Minister for the past 11 years.

Union minister Nitin Gadkari hailed Modi as the world's most popular leader and wished that India under his leadership becomes self-reliant and a "vishwaguru", eradicating terrorism and corruption.

Actor-turned-politician Hema Malini also extended greetings to PM Modi, describing his tenure as a transformative period that positioned India as a global power.

medicines and therapies. Patanjali emphasised that these efforts will be particularly beneficial for people battling severe health conditions, while also strengthening the nation's commitment to education, healthcare, and indigenous growth.

Swadeshi movement for 'Viksit Bharat'

Patanjali announced its commitment to take Prime Minister Modi's 'Vocal for Local' and Swadeshi campaigns to every village and household. The initiative aims to strengthen India's economy by reducing foreign dependence and positioning India as a global economic power.

Reforms in education

Through the Bharatiya Shiksha Board, Patanjali plans to integrate India's traditional knowledge system with modern education.

J&K: Vaishno Devi pilgrimage restarts after 22-days pause

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Katra/Jammu, Sept 17: After a 22-day suspension due to a deadly landslide and continuous heavy rainfall, the pilgrimage to revered Mata Vaishno Devi shrine atop Trikuta hills in Jammu and Kashmir's Reasi district resumed Wednesday, bringing smiles on the faces of the devotees.

However, the respite was short-lived, as the shrine board once again suspended the yatra amid inclement weather this evening after allowing 2,500 pilgrims during the day, the officials said. The Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board (SMVDSB) announced the reopening of the yatra subject to favourable weather conditions from this morning, much to the relief of hundreds of devotees who were camping in Katra town -- the base camp for the pilgrims visiting the shrine.




adversely affected my health and mental setup and the reputation of Captain Sumeet Sabharwal. They tarnish Captain Sabharwal's reputation, which is a fundamental right guaranteed to a citizen of India under Article 21 of the Constitution of India," the letter, dated August 29, said. Pushkaraj has demanded that the central government order a formal enquiry into the accident under Rule 12 of the Aircraft (Investigation of Accidents and Incidents) Rules, 2017. Under Rule 12, the central government can institute a formal investigation into circumstances of any accident of an Indian registered aircraft if it appears that it is expedient to hold such a probe.



of the day

quote

Eligible people should not be removed. Ineligible should be removed. In case eligible people are left out, they should be added



SIDDARAMAIAH | KARNATAKA CM

The central government has also provided 50-year interest-free assistance to the state governments so that they can have their capital assets increased (with) money to spend on them



NIRMALA SITHARAMAN | UNION FINANCE MINISTER

Maybe for the first time in our history we have such a prime minister who not only raised ground-level problems but also gave solutions to those problems



JYOTIRADITYA SCINDIA | UNION MINISTER

POST OF THE DAY



Real Estate Prices are Ultra Expensive Govt Should Bring a Policy To Curb Black Money • Link All

Properties with Aadhaar / PAN • Strict Penalty For Payments in The Cash • Mandatory 2 Year ITR of The Buyer For Any High Value Property Purchase (>RS 50 Lakh)

@Ravisutanjani

SHORT TAKES

3 towers demolished in Chintels Paradiso

**Gurugram:** A review meeting of the district administration's internal committee of Chintels Paradiso in Sector 109 was held in the DC office Wednesday. In the meeting, all the updates regarding the demolition work at the society were discussed, but the meeting was not made public, said an official. In the meeting, not only the builder but also the president of the resident welfare association of the society was not invited, a senior official said, adding that the meeting was only about the updates.

Elderly woman hacked to death


**Khunti:** A 69-year-old woman was hacked to death while she was asleep in Jharkhand's Khunti district, police said Wednesday. The incident happened in Gudburu village in the Saiko police station area Tuesday night, they said.

Search operation launched near IB

**Jammu:** Security forces Wednesday launched a search operation in a dense nursery near the International Border (IB) in Kathua district of Jammu and Kashmir, officials said. The search operation was jointly launched by Special Operations Group (SOG) of local police and CRPF in the area of Dholka-Sanyal nursery along the possible infiltration route around 3 pm, the officials said.

Police arrest TMC panchayat member

**Kolkata:** The police Wednesday arrested a Trinamool Congress panchayat member on the charge of assaulting the acting headmaster of a state-run school in 24 South Parganas district of West Bengal over a dispute about the collection of money for a trip, an officer said. The member of the local panchayat was picked up from Kakkdwp rail station.



India will not only lead (GCCs), we will dominate. But most of the work on GCCs is being done from India

N CHANDRABABU NAIDU | ANDHRA PRADESH CM

BMW ACCIDENT: COURT EXTENDS JUDICIAL CUSTODY OF ACCUSED

A Delhi court Wednesday extended till September 27 the judicial custody of the woman who drove the BMW car involved in a crash that left a senior finance ministry official dead and his wife injured in Dhaula Kuan



Punjab floods: Rahul writes to PM

*"This crisis demands a bolder response. I request the government to facilitate a quick assessment of the damage and deliver a comprehensive relief package," Rahul Gandhi said in his letter to PM Modi*

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Sept 17:** Congress leader Rahul Gandhi has written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Punjab floods demanding quick assessment of the damage and a comprehensive relief package for those affected.

The Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha said the Rs 1,600-crore initial relief announced by the Central government is "grave injustice" to the people of Punjab and asserted that the crisis demands a bolder response. "The Rs 1,600 crore initial relief announced by the Union government does grave injustice to the people of Punjab. Estimates suggest that the state has suffered a loss of at least 20,000 crore."

"This crisis demands a bolder response. I request the government to facilitate a quick assessment of the damage and deliver a comprehensive relief package," Gandhi said in his letter to PM Modi.



The Congress leader said the catastrophic floods have ravaged Punjab as he himself witnessed the shocking devastation.

Gandhi had visited the flood-hit areas in Amritsar and Gurdaspur districts of Punjab Monday and interacted with those affected by nature's fury. He also visited the houses which were damaged by the recent floods and sat among some flood-affected people. He was accompanied by Punjab Congress leaders. The former Congress chief claimed that over 4 lakh acres of paddy crop have destroyed, and over 10 lakh animals have perished. Lakhs of people, mostly from marginalised communities, have lost their homes, he said.

"The flood has also rendered vast tracts of land uncultivable in the near future. Even today, thousands of acres are submerged and villages remain cut off," he said. "Despite the gravity of this crisis, I witnessed the very best of humanity. Communities rallied behind those who lost everything," he noted.

Gandhi said people opened their homes to strangers and shared whatever little they had. Their generosity, and commitment to help, often at great personal risk was admirable, he said. "Punjab will rise again. In their hour of need, we must reassure every farmer, every soldier, and every family in Punjab that India stands with them. We must come together and extend all possible support to help rebuild their future," he said in the letter to PM Modi.

The Punjab government has claimed that the floods resulted in damage to 3,200 schools, the loss of 56 lives, and the destruction of about 8,500 kilometres of roads and 2,500 bridges. Additionally, 1,400 clinics, government buildings, and 19 colleges were also severely damaged, it said.

Bank fraud case: ED arrests ex-Andaman MP, 2 others

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Sept 17:** The Enforcement Directorate Wednesday arrested former MP from Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Congress leader Kuldeep Rai Sharma along with two others in a money laundering case linked to an alleged Rs 500-crore cooperative bank fraud.

These are the first arrests made by the federal probe agency under the anti-money laundering law in the Union Territory. Sharma, 58, is a former chairman of the Andaman Nicobar State Cooperative Bank (ANSCB). The two others arrested are K Murugan, the MD of the bank, and K Kalaivanan, the bank's loan officer, the ED said in a statement.

A special Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) court in Kolkata has sent Sharma and Kalaivanan to eight days in ED custody, it said.

Murugan was not produced before the court as he was admitted to a hospital, officials said.

The case pertains to an over Rs 500 crore worth "fraud" allegedly committed by the officials of the cooperative bank, including Sharma, and others, who were responsible for sanctioning loans, according to the agency.

"These persons, in connivance with their accomplices, floated several shell companies and sanctioned large loans to them as well as to their regular entities in flagrant violation of the rules and laid down procedures of the bank with the sole intent of not repaying the funds, thereby causing losses to the bank and generating corresponding gains for themselves," the ED claimed.

The money laundering case stems from an FIR of the Crime and Economic Offences Cell of the Andaman & Nicobar Police.



An artisan works on an idol of Goddess Durga ahead of the 'Durga Puja' festival, in Prayagraj

PTI PHOTO

Disha Patani home firing: 2 shooters killed in encounter

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Sept 17:** Two active members of the Rohit Godara-Goldy Brar gang, allegedly involved in firing outside Bollywood actress Disha Patani's residence in Bareilly, were shot dead in an encounter near Tronica City in Ghaziabad Wednesday, officials said.

The encounter was carried out in a joint operation by Delhi Police Special Cell and Special Task Forces of Uttar Pradesh and Haryana, they said, adding that four officials of the joint party were injured during the shootout. UP Police's Additional Director General (ADG) Law and Order Amitabh Yash said Ravinder, resident of Haryana's Rohtak and Arun from Haryana's Sonapat were shot dead during an encounter by the joint party. According to officials, four personnel from the joint party were injured during the shootout. Among them were two Delhi Police Crime Branch personnel - Sub-inspector Rohit and Head Constable Kailash - and two others were UP STF officials, Ankur and Jai. They are all undergoing treatment and out of danger.

"The duo had a direct role in the Bareilly firing case, which had sparked security concerns around high-profile personalities. The incident was suspected to be an intimidation tactic linked to extortion," an officer of Delhi Police Special Cell said. Unidentified assailants had fired multiple rounds outside Patani's Bareilly residence around 3.45 am September 12, creating panic in the locality. A case was registered at the



Bareilly Kotwali police station, and Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath directed immediate action in the matter, reiterating the state government's zero-tolerance policy towards crime. ADG Yash said that police

RAIN FURY

2,500 tourists stuck in U'khand



*Heavy showers ravaged the Himalayan states of Uttarakhand and Himachal, already bruised by a string of deadly natural calamities over the past couple of months, Tuesday*

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Dehradun, Sept 17:** Around 2,500 tourists were stranded in Uttarakhand's Mussoorie Wednesday as the road from Dehradun to the popular hill station remained closed for the second consecutive day following cloudbursts and heavy rain in the capital.

Meanwhile, Delhi witnessed a cloudy sky Wednesday, with parts of the city receiving showers. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has issued a yellow alert, advising that the situation be monitored and updated in line with its colour-coded guidelines.

Heavy showers ravaged the Himalayan states of Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh, already bruised by a string of deadly natural calamities over the past couple of months, Tuesday.

The cloudbursts and heavy rains left 15 people dead, 16 missing, and more than 900 stranded in Uttarakhand, while in Himachal Pradesh, three members of a family were

killed as rains triggered massive landslides and flash floods.

As rehabilitation work picked up pace on Wednesday, Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami said that focus was on the swift restoration of essential services, while his Himachal Pradesh counterpart Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu said people still residing in unsafe buildings would be relocated to secure places to ensure their safety.

The cloudbursts and heavy rains in Dehradun Tuesday severely damaged the route to Mussoorie. It was breached at several points, prompting police to appeal to tourists and visitors to stay wherever they were - whether in hotels, homes or homestays - till the road was restored.

According to officials, the number of stranded tourists was much higher Tuesday, but several of them have left Mussoorie via Vikasnagar, a longer route blocked by landslides that was opened for traffic Wednesday.

Meanwhile, an alternative Bailey bridge is being erected at Kolhukhet, and it is likely to become operational for light vehicles by Wednesday night, a senior official said.

"Debris has been partially cleared from two points along the route, but installation of an alternative bridge at Kolhukhet may take a little more time," a police officer in Mussoorie said.

Apex court refuses to stay global Ayyappa devotee meet in Kerala

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Sept 17:** The Supreme Court Wednesday refused to entertain the pleas against the Kerala High Court order which dismissed petitions challenging the decision of the Travancore Devaswom Board to conduct a global conclave of Ayyappa devotees September 20.

The pleas came up for hearing before a bench of Justices P S Narasimha and A S Chandurkar which refused to interfere with the high court's order.

In its September 11 order, a division bench of the high court had passed a slew of directions in the larger interest of maintaining the sanctity of Sabarimala and the ecological balance of river Pampa.

"In view of the foregoing discussion, we find no reason to interdict the conduct of the Global Ayyappa Sangamam scheduled to be held on the banks of the river Pampa September 20, 2025," it had said.

The high court had said the Board shall exercise strict discretion to ensure that no event was conducted on the banks of Pampa river in any manner that compromises its sanctity, whether by erecting permanent or temporary structures.

Besides other directions, it had said during the days of conclave and throughout the preparatory works, the Board shall ensure that none of the rituals, ceremonies or related functions were disturbed or diminished to the detriment of devotees.

The high court had said all necessary steps be taken to ensure that no plastic bottles, cups or other non-biodegradable waste were used or generated.

Judicial system in India, UK taken for ride by mother: SC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Sept 17:** The judicial system in India and the UK was "taken for a ride" by a woman for reasons best known to her, the Supreme Court has observed, while directing that the custody of her minor son be handed over to his father.

Deprecating the woman's conduct, a bench of Justices J K Maheshwari and Vijay Bishnoi said the case reflected a deep-rooted conflict between the woman and her husband, arising from their divergent intentions regarding staying together and raising their children in India.

It said this discord had not only strained their marital relationship but also adversely impacted their two children, one of whom is staying with the mother in the United Kingdom.

The top court said the prolonged discord of ties between the couple, who got married in November 2010, led to a further dispute on visitation over their two children.

The bench said the circumstances compel it to focus on how best the welfare and interests of the children can be safeguarded.

Referring to the woman's conduct, the bench said while leaving her son in India, it was her primary duty to inform the father, which she did not discharge.

It said it was also her duty to

CHILD-CUSTODY CASE



disclose to the high court of the UK, where the man had moved an application, that the boy was not with her there.

It said it appeared that the woman never intended her son to meet his father and to say the least, to honour the

court orders.

The man told the apex court that his wife left India for the UK in May 2021 with both the children, without informing him or taking his consent.

Later, he found out that his minor son was in India with his parents-in-law.

He then approached the Punjab and Haryana High Court, raising the issue of alleged illegal custody of his children.

In its verdict delivered on September 16, the apex court noted that the woman had obtained a divorce from a family court in London, while the man secured a divorce from a family court in Jind.

The bench said the high court was justified to grant the boy's

interim custody to his father.

It directed that the custody of the boy be handed over to the man by September 30.

The bench directed that the mother or sibling of the boy shall have the right to audio or video access to him from 5 pm to 7 pm every Saturday.

The bench further directed that the boy's maternal grandparents shall also have visitation rights from 1 pm to 5 pm every Sunday at a place of mutual choice decided by the parties.

Passing a slew of directions, the bench said the father shall not take his son outside the jurisdiction of India without the leave of the jurisdictional high court.



# international

## of the day quote

I'm disappointed with what I see, but they have larger agendas to work out, you know, between China and the United States, and I'm understanding of that, and we're patient about it

JENSEN HUANG | THE CEO OF NVIDIA

The Times' has engaged in a decades long method of lying about your Favorite President (ME!), my family, business, the America First Movement, MAGA and our Nation as a whole. I am PROUD to hold this once-respected rag' responsible

DONALD TRUMP | PRESIDENT, US

The Colombian people will reply if they want a puppet president or a free and sovereign nation

GUSTAVO PETRO | PRESIDENT, COLOMBIA

## SHORT TAKES

### Indonesia's new security minister

**Jakarta:** Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto Wednesday appointed a former rival as the new security minister following deadly protests that have been viewed as one of the toughest tests for his presidency. Subianto, a wealthy ex-general, designated retired Gen Djamari Chaniago, 77, as the coordinating minister of politics and security to replace Budi Gunawan, who was removed from Subianto's Cabinet earlier this month without a successor, ending days of speculation about a replacement.

### Khan claims military trial by ISI in Jail

**Lahore:** Pakistan's jailed former prime minister Imran Khan Wednesday alleged that he is facing a military trial in jail as it's not being conducted by a civilian judge but by an ISI officer, who takes instructions directly from Army Chief Asim Munir. The 72-year-old former cricketer-turned-politician has been in jail for over two years in multiple cases. He is currently lodged in the Adiala Jail, Rawalpindi. "My so-called trial in Adiala Jail, Rawalpindi, is not being conducted by a judge but by an ISI (Inter-Services Intelligence) Colonel, who takes instructions directly from Army Chief Gen Asim Munir. This is a military trial, not a civilian one," Khan said in a post on X Wednesday.

### US labels 4 Iran-backed militias as terrorists

**Washington:** The Unites States designated four Iran-aligned militia groups as foreign terrorist organizations Wednesday, the State Department said. The groups are Harakat al-Nujaba, Kata'ib Sayyid al-Shuhada, Harakat Ansar Allah al-Awfiya and Kata'ib al-Imam Ali, the department said in a statement. All four have been previously cited as Specially Designated Global Terrorists and Kata'ib Sayyid al-Shuhada in 2023, it said.

### Guinea to vote on constitution

**Conakry:** Guinea is set to vote Sunday in a referendum on a new constitution that would permit junta leader Mamady Doumbouya to run for president, something he vowed not to do when he seized power four years ago. Wednesday is the final day of campaigning for the referendum, the latest attempt at a political transition in West and Central Africa, where eight coups between 2020 and 2023 reshaped the regional political landscape.

# UK embraces Trump with royal pomp

REUTERS

**Windsor, England, Sept 17:** US President Donald Trump kicked off his historic second state visit to Britain Wednesday amid unprecedented pomp, intense security, technology investments and protests as King Charles and other royals welcomed their nation's closest ally.

Trump and his wife Melania are being hosted by the king at Windsor Castle, the oldest and largest inhabited castle in the world and family home to British monarchs for almost 1,000 years, where he is being treated to the full array of British pageantry from a carriage procession to a lavish banquet.

Britainlaid on what it said was the largest military ceremonial welcome for a state visit in living memory, and Trump, an overt royal fan, has made little secret of his delight at being not just the first US leader, but the first elected politician to be invited for two state visits.

"It's a very special place," Trump said, adding that he loved Britain.

## UK HOPES VISIT WILL CEMENT 'SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP'

Prime Minister Keir Starmer is hoping to use that sentiment to Britain's advantage as his



- Trump starts unprecedented second state visit
- Royals to host lavish banquet for Trump
- Four arrested after image projected onto Windsor Castle
- Questions over Epstein among potential pitfalls

government seeks to use the trip to cement the two nations' "special relationship", deepen economic ties, secure billions of dollars of investment, discuss tariffs and press Trump on Ukraine and Israel.

Companies including Microsoft, Nvidia, Google and OpenAI have already pledged 31 billion pounds (\$42 billion) in British investments over the next few years, in AI, quantum computing and civil nuclear energy.

Starmer also wants further progress on trade, after Britain secured the first deal with Trump to lower some tariffs. Talks may touch on remaining levies on steel, whisky and

salmon.

But while Starmer is banking on the royals to help cajole the anglophile president, whose mother came from Scotland, many pitfalls for Britain's prime minister remain.

Polls show Trump is wide-

I express my deep closeness to the Palestinian people in Gaza, who continue to live in fear and survive in unacceptable conditions, forced once again to leave their land

POPE LEO | CATHOLIC CHURCH LEADER

## RUSSIA RESUMES KRASNODAR FLIGHTS

Russia resumed regular domestic passenger flights to the southern city of Krasnodar Wednesday, fully reopening a key regional airport that was closed for more than three years due to security concerns linked to the war in Ukraine



# EU lays out new tariffs, sanctions on Israel over Gaza war

REUTERS

**Brussels, Sept 17:** The European Commission Wednesday proposed suspending a trade arrangement affecting about 5.8 billion euros (\$6.87 billion) of Israeli exports due to the Gaza war, although the measure does not currently have enough support among EU nations to pass.

EU foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas also proposed a package of sanctions on two Israeli ministers, as well as "violent" Israeli settlers and 10 senior members of Palestinian militant group Hamas.

The two ministers are far-right National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir and Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich, an EU official said.

Israel's nearly two-year of offensive in Gaza and the worsening humanitarian situation has increased political pressure on European leaders to take action.

## ISRAELI EXPORTS TO FACE DUTIES IF SUSPENSION PASSES

The European Union is Israel's biggest trading partner, with trade in goods between the two amounting to 42.6 billion euros last year, according to the EU.

If the free-trade arrangement is suspended, Israel would face duties at the same level as other countries without a trade accord with the bloc.

In Israel's case, that would affect exports worth approximately 5.8 billion euros, resulting in an estimated 227 million euros a year in duties, a senior Commission official told reporters. Israeli Foreign Minister Gideon Saar said on X that the European proposals are "morally and politically distorted, and it is to be hoped that they will not be adopted".

The suspension of free-trade arrangements, first floated by European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen last week, would require the support of a qualified majority of EU governments - 15 out of 27 EU members representing 65% of the EU population.

EU diplomats told Reuters



- EU proposes sanctions targeting Israeli ministers, settlers, Hamas members
- Suspension of free-trade arrangements lacks sufficient support, Germany's stance crucial
- Israel's foreign minister criticizes EU proposals as distorted

that it is unlikely that the proposal would get the necessary support, with much depending on Germany, which has so far been reluctant to impose EU penalties on Israel.

## GERMANY NOT REACHED A FINAL VIEW ON PROPOSALS

A German government spokesperson said Wednesday it has not yet formed a final view on the EU proposals and Germany wants to keep the channels of communication with Israel open. Diplomats say the proposed measures against the Israeli ministers are also unlikely to pass as they require unanimous support from EU members.

Israel launched its long-threatened ground operation into Gaza City Tuesday, declaring 'Gaza is burning.'

Kallas said that although public opinion has been shifting due to suffering in Gaza, she believes "the political lines are very much in the place where they have been so far".

But the proposals mark a political shift in the EU's relationship with Israel. The Commission is also putting its bilateral support for Israel on hold, without affecting work with Israeli civil society and Yad Vashem, Israel's main Holocaust memorial centre.

## Navalny's wife says foreign tests show her husband was poisoned

REUTERS

**London, Sept 17:** Yulia Navalnaya, the wife of late Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny, said two foreign laboratories had carried out tests on biological samples obtained from her husband that showed he was poisoned.

Navalny died suddenly at the age of 47 February 16, 2024, in a Russian prison in the Arctic Circle, depriving the Russian opposition of its most popular leader.

Navalnaya has repeatedly accused Russia of killing him, an allegation the Kremlin dismisses as nonsense. President Vladimir Putin has said that before Navalny died there had been plans to swap Navalny in a prisoner exchange with the West. Navalnaya posted a video on X in which she said that biological material from Navalny was smuggled abroad in 2024 and that two laboratories examined the material.

"These labs in two different countries reached the same conclusion: Alexei was killed. More specifically, he was poisoned," Navalnaya said.

She demanded that the laboratories release their findings about what she called the "inconvenient truth". She did not specify what poison the laboratories had found. "These results are of public importance and must be published. We all deserve to know the truth," Navalnaya said.

When asked about Navalnaya's remarks, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said, "I don't know anything about these statements of hers, and I can't say anything."

The Kremlin casts Navalny's political allies as dangerous extremists out to destabilise Russia on behalf of the West. It says Putin enjoys overwhelming support among ordinary Russians.

Navalny described Putin's Russia as a brittle criminal state run by thieves, sycophants and spies who care only about money. He had long forecast Russia could face seismic political turmoil, including revolution.



Youngsters dive for fun into the Bosphorus at Kadikoy sea promenade, in Istanbul, Turkey, Tuesday

PTI PHOTO

## Ben without Jerry as ice cream co-founder exits



REUTERS

**New York, Sept 17:** Ben & Jerry's co-founder Jerry Greenfield, part of the duo whose names shaped the popular ice cream brand over the last half century, has quit the company after a rift and public feud with parent Unilever over the conflict in Gaza.

In an open letter shared by his partner Ben Cohen on social media platform X, Greenfield said that the Vermont-based company - well-known for its social activism - had in recent years been "silenced" by Unilever, which is currently spinning off its Magnum ice cream unit that includes the Ben & Jerry's brand.

"It's with a broken heart that I've decided I can no longer, in good conscience, and after 47 years, remain an employee of Ben & Jerry's," wrote Greenfield, 74, who had taken on a brand ambassador role at the firm. "Standing up for values like justice, equity, and shared humanity has never been more important, yet Ben & Jerry's has been silenced and sidelined for fear of upsetting those in power."

A spokesperson for the Magnum Ice Cream Company, Unilever's ice cream unit, said that it "disagrees with Greenfield's perspective and has sought to engage both co-founders in a constructive conversation on how to strengthen Ben & Jerry's powerful values-based position in the world."

## The 22-member fake football team, which managed to get a 15-day visa, reached Japan in June 2025

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Lahore, Sept 17:** A "fake" Pakistan Football Team was deported from Japan following the revelation of its fraud, the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) said Wednesday.

A human trafficking net-

work was involved in sending a 22-member fake football team to Japan, the FIA said in a statement.

The fake players were dressed in football kits and claimed they were registered with the Pakistan Football Federation. They also claimed to have scheduled matches with a Japanese club.

"The 22-member fake football team, which managed to get a 15-day visa, reached Japan in June 2025. However, it was deported by the Japanese immigration authorities from the airport, and the matter

# Nepal observes national day of mourning amid Gen Z protests

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Kathmandu, Sept 17:** All government offices and educational institutions remained closed across Nepal Wednesday as the country observed a national day of mourning in honour of those killed during Gen Z protests.

Candlelight vigils were held in several parts of Nepal, including Maitighar Mandala in Kathmandu, where demonstrations were organised September 8. All government offices and Nepali missions abroad flew the national flag at half-mast.

A charred body was recovered Wednesday from a supermarket, which was set ablaze, taking the death toll from the violent protests to 74.

According to the Home Ministry, the Cabinet Tuesday de-



cided to mark September 17 as a public holiday.

"In memory of those who died during the protests organised by the Gen Z generation September 8 and 9, the Government of Nepal has decided to observe a national day of mourning Wednesday, September 17," said a statement issued by the Home Ministry Tuesday.

It has also been decided to build 'Gen-Z Memorial Park' in memory of those who lost their



was then reported to the FIA," it said.

The FIA launched an investigation into the matter, and

Tuesday, it arrested a prime suspect, Waqas Ali, a member of the human trafficking gang involved in the incident.

During the investigation, the suspect revealed that his network also managed to send 17 people to Japan in 2024, showing them as members of the Pakistan Football Team who never returned.

The suspect revealed that forged letters and NoC of Pakistan Football Federation (PFF), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, were used for the purpose.

"Each person (player) paid PKR4.5 million for arranging their Japan visa," the FIA said and added that raids are underway to arrest the other members of the network.







# Stage set for Neeraj-Nadeem duel

India's Neeraj qualifies for World C'ships finals with first throw, sets up clash against Pakistan's Nadeem



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Tokyo, Sept 17:** Defending champion Neeraj Chopra will face Pakistan's Olympic gold medallist Arshad Nadeem in the World Championships finals in a much-anticipated clash between the two cross-border rivals as the duo made the cut in contrasting styles in the qualification round here Wednesday.

While Chopra stormed into the finals after clearing the automatic qualification mark of 84.50m in his very first throw in Group A, Nadeem (85.28m) spent some anxious time before making the grade in his third and final attempt later in Group B.

According to rules, those who touch the automatic qualifying mark of 84.50m or the best 12 finishers compete in the final round to be held Thursday.

The Pakistani has come into the showpiece after competing in just one event in the whole of 2025, winning gold in the Asian Championships in Korea in May. He then underwent a knee surgery in July.

Sachin Yadav also joined Chopra in the finals as second Indian after his 83.67m effort placed him at sixth in Group A and 10th overall. Two other In-

dians, Rohit Yadav and Yashvir Singh missed out after finishing 28th and 30th respectively out of 37 competitors in Group A and Group B together.

In the last edition in 2023, India had three javelin throwers in the finals with Kishore Jena and DP Manu finishing fifth and sixth respectively while Chopra won the gold.

The 27-year-old Chopra was the first thrower in the qualification round and he sent his spear to 84.85m without much exertion. Having achieved the objective of making it to the final with minimum effort, the two-time Olympic medallist packed up and left the arena.

He was third in Group A and sixth in the overall standings but that did not matter on the day.

Nadeem, on the other hand, began with a horrendous 76.99m and followed it up with a 74.17m. It seemed for a while that Nadeem, who had also won a silver in the last edition in 2023 behind Chopra, would not make it to the finals.

But the 28-year-old pulled off a 85.28m throw in his third and final attempt to be the fourth automatic qualifier for the finals from Group B. He qualified for the finals at fifth place, just above Chopra.

## PARIS HEARTBREAK

Chopra is set to face Nadeem for the first time after the 2024 Paris Olympics, giving him a chance to avenge his second-place finish in the French capital

Nadeem had won gold in Paris with a monster throw of 92.97m, while Chopra had a best of 89.45m that night

Chopra has been clubbed with German star Julian Weber, who topped Group A and was second overall with a throw of 87.21m, 2012 Olympic champion Keshorn Walcott of Trinidad and Tobago, last edition bronze winner Jakub Vadlejch of Czech Republic and Sachin in the 19-man Group A qualification round Wednesday.

The 18-strong Group B featured Nadeem, two-time world champion Anderson Peters, Kenya's 2015 world champion Julius Yego, Brazilian 90m-plus thrower Luiz Da Silva, and Indians Rohit Yadav and Yashvir Singh, and rising Sri Lankan Rumesh Tharanga Pathirage among others.

Peters topped the qualification round with a season best second round throw of 89.53m,

giving enough indication that he could be roaring back to form after an indifferent season.

In the last edition in Budapest, Hungary, Chopra had thrown 88.17m to win the gold, while Nadeem (87.82m) and Jakub Vadlejch (86.67m) had pocketed silver and bronze respectively.

**CHOPRA CHASES LEGACY**

Czech legend Jan Zelezny (1993, 1995), who is now Chopra's coach, and Peters (2019, 2022) are the other two who have won the crown on two consecutive occasions.

On form, Weber will be the frontrunner for the gold as he has been the most consistent one this season. The 31-year-old German has sent the spear to 90m-plus distances three times this year.

He is the world leader with 91.51m and his confidence is high after winning the Diamond League trophy last month.

In head-to-head against Weber this season, Chopra trailed 1-3, the last meeting being last month's DL Final where the Indian could only come up with 85.01m for a second-place finish.

Chopra breached the coveted 90m mark with a 90.23m throw at Doha DL in May but the year has also seen the Indian superstar logging some mediocre distances.

Nadeem may be short on competitive outings ahead of the World Championships but he is capable of producing a winning throw as he had done in Paris Games last year. Before Olympics too, he had participated in just one event in whole of 2024.

Thursday's fight for gold could see fierce competition among the four top throwers -- Chopra, Weber, Nadeem and Peters.

**KUJUR DISAPPOINT**

Animesh Kujur, the first Indian to qualify for World Championships in 200m, finished ninth and last in his heat with a time of 20.77 seconds, well outside his national record of 20.32 seconds.

In men's triple jump, Abdulla Aboobacker and national record holder Praveen Chithravel failed to make it to the finals after finishing 10th in Group A and eighth in Group B in the qualification round with disappointing efforts of 16.33m and 16.74m respectively.

# Barabati Stadium lights up for historic OPTL opener



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Cuttack, Sept 17:** The historic Barabati Stadium, Cuttack witnessed a spectacular start to the Odisha Pro T20 League (OPTL) 2025 with the grand opening ceremony held here Wednesday.

The event was graced by the Chief Minister of Odisha, Mohan Charan Majhi, who unveiled the league trophy and officially marked the beginning of the inaugural edition of the league.

On this occasion, Majhi said, "This is not just a league, it is a celebration of cricketing excellence. I want to thank the OCA Office Bearers, Secretary Sanjay Behera and Dr Asirbad Behera, under whose efforts many international matches and tournaments have been brought to the Barabati Stadium. I also extend my gratitude to the players, stakeholders and spectators for making this tournament possible. To make this league even bigger, I warmly welcome Irfan Pathan as the League Brand Ambassador. His involvement will certainly help cricket and this league grow further. I hereby declare the tournament open."

Following the unveiling of the trophy, he spun the coin for the first match of OPTL 2025, where Swastik Samal, Captain of Cuttack Panthers, won the toss and elected to bowl first against Bhubaneswar Tigers.

Just before the first ball of the match was bowled, the traditional Bell Ringing ceremony was observed. The Chief Minister rang the bell in the presence of Sanjay Behera, Secretary, OCA; S Dev Datta Singh, IPS, Commissioner of Police, Bhubaneswar-Cuttack; Souvic Biswal, MLA, Cuttack-Choud-

war; Prakash Chandra Sethi, MLA, Cuttack-Sadar; and Dr Sudhanshu Sarangi, IPS, Director General of Odisha Fire & Emergency Services, marking the official commencement of the league and its inaugural match.

The grand ceremony featured a vibrant line-up of performances including Raturaj Mohanty, Rapper Pratik, Sambalpuri Folk Dance, Malkhamb Dance, Nakash Aziz, and a special dance act by Chitrangada Singh, making it a truly memorable evening.

On the occasion, Dr Asirbad Behera welcomed and expressed gratitude to the Chief Minister, stating that the tournament is a great initiative for the players to showcase their talent. He further extended his thanks to all stakeholders of the tournament.

This is not just a league, it is a celebration of cricketing excellence

MOHAN CHARAN MAJHI  
CM, ODISHA

Irfan Pathan, speaking as the League Brand Ambassador, said, "Thank you for giving me the opportunity to be the League Brand Ambassador. I will do my best to ensure that Odisha's young talents get the right platform and exposure to take their game to the next level. This is a very essential stage for them, and I urge the players to utilize it fully."

On the occasion of the birthday of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Odisha Cricket Association announced a contribution of Rs 5,00,000 to Adruta Children Homes. The cheque was presented on stage by the Chief Minister along with the dignitaries present. This special gesture reflects OCA's commitment to extend support beyond cricket and towards the welfare of society.



## SHORT TAKES

### Antim makes semis

**Zagreb:** Young wrestler Antim Panghal effected a decisive take-down move in the dying moments against China's Jin Zhang to progress to the women's 53kg semifinals of the World Championships, keeping India's medal hopes alive but Radhika and Jyoti Berwal were eliminated on day five of the tournament, here Wednesday. Antim, targeting her second World Championship medal, had an easy start to her campaign when she knocked out Spaniard Carla Jaume Soner in mere 23 seconds but found a tough rival in Zhang, who she edged past 9-8. Antim got on board with a two-pointer when she off-balanced Zhang for a double-leg take-down.

### 8 enter ISSF WC final

**New Delhi:** Eight Indian shooters have secured their places in the International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) World Cup Final 2025, scheduled to be held in Doha, Qatar, from December 4 to 9. Double Olympic medalist Manu Bhaker, is the only Indian shooter to have made the cut in two events, the women's 10m air pistol and the women's 25m pistol, for the year ending ISSF showpiece, which determines the international Shooting season's best shooter, in each of the 12 individual Olympic events. Indian shooters have made the cut in five of the 12 events that will feature in the season-ending competition in Doha, an ISSF Prize money event.

### ODI: Eves thrash Oz

**Mullanpur:** Smriti Mandhana smashed the second-fastest ODI century by an Indian woman as the hosts handed Australia their heaviest defeat -- a 102-run thrashing -- in the second ODI to level the three-match series 1-1 here Wednesday. Mandhana's onslaught of 117 off only 91 balls with 14 fours and four sixes in the first half powered India to their highest-ever total of 292.

## Messi sends signed WC jersey for PM Modi's 75th birthday

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Sept 17:** Bracing up for his much-anticipated tour of India, Argentine superstar Lionel Messi has sent his signed 2022 World Cup victorious jersey to Prime Minister Narendra Modi for his 75th birthday.

Promoter Satadru Dutta, who is bringing Messi to India, told PTI Wednesday that the football icon's World Cup jersey will be delivered to the PM in two to three days.

"When I met him in February to discuss the visit, I had told him that the PM's 75th birthday is also coming and he said he would send a signed jersey for the Prime Minister," Dutta said.

Dutta said he is also trying to arrange a meeting with the PM during Messi's tour of India, which will comprise stopovers at Kolkata, Mumbai, and Delhi from December 13.

The football-mad city of Kolkata will be the first stop in Messi's whirlwind trip named



'GOAT Tour of India 2025', followed by Mumbai and New Delhi. The visit is scheduled to conclude after a meeting with the prime minister at his residence in the national capital December 15.

This will be the Argentine great's first trip to India since 2011 when he visited the country with his national team to play a FIFA friendly against Venezuela, at the Salt Lake Stadium in Kolkata.

Dutta had met Messi's father earlier this year to present the proposal, and February 28, Messi himself met him at his residence for a 45-minute discussion. A host of programmes are lined up during his stay in the country.

## Pak arrive for UAE game after day long drama

### ICC rejects demand for Pycroft removal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Dubai, Sept 17:** Pakistan was forced to climb down from its pullout threat and show up for a crucial Asia Cup game against the UAE here Wednesday but not before causing a dramatic delay after the ICC's persistent rejection of its demand to remove match referee Andy Pycroft.

The team had earlier refused to leave its hotel for the must-win group match as Pycroft will officiate the game that will now start at 9pm IST instead of the original 8pm start.

Teams are required to report at the stadium two hours before the start of the game which Pakistan failed to do in protest.

That Pycroft would remain match referee was communicated to PCB chairman and Asian Cricket Council head Mohsin Naqvi by ICC CEO Sanjog Gupta in a conference call.

The ICC maintained that the Zimbabwean will remain in



charge as he has followed the rules and regulations to the T".

Pakistan had held Pycroft responsible for the embarrassment it faced after its captain Salman Ali Agha and India skipper Suryakumar did not exchange a handshake and their team sheets during the toss Sunday.

The PCB said that Pycroft had told Salman to avoid a handshake with Suryakumar and told the two captains to not exchange team sheets.

On Wednesday, once the Pakistan team didn't leave from

the Grosvenor Hotel in Dubai, it was evident that the deadlock continued after the rejection of a second PCB complaint by the ICC. Pycroft himself was present at the Dubai International Stadium and left the venue surrounded by bodyguards after he was called to the ICC Headquarters just a kilometer away from the ground. The ICC gave a six-point rebuttal in which maintained that the PCB's complaints were baseless.

The PCB can lose up to \$16 million if they don't play the

### Pycroft apologised, claims PCB

The Pakistan Cricket Board Wednesday claimed that match referee Andy Pycroft apologised to its national team for prohibiting the handshake between Indian and Pakistani players during their Asia Cup match here. Pakistan, who delayed their departure for the game against the UAE here on Wednesday to protest the ICC's refusal to remove Pycroft, claimed that the Zimbabwean had apologised for his actions Sunday. "ICC's controversial match referee Andy Pycroft has apologized to the manager and captain of the Pakistani cricket team. Andy Pycroft had prohibited the captains of both teams from shaking hands during the India-Pakistan match," the PCB said in a statement on 'X'.

tournament. Naqvi took advice from two former PCB chairmen -- Ramiz Raja and Najam Sethi -- before deciding that the team would continue.

## Bolt, once fastest man alive, now breathless climbing stairs

AGENCIES

**Washington, Sept 17:** Time really flies, or what? Usain Bolt, the legendary sprinter, famously known as the fastest man on the planet, looks in great shape physically, but internally, he isn't quite the same. An eight-time Olympic gold medallist, Bolt retired from active competition in 2017, having held the world record in 100 meters, 200 meters and 4x100 meters relay.

Bolt admits that father time has caught up with him. An 11-time world champion revealed that he no longer engages in running or sprinting, and that the majority of his time is spent at home.

"Well normally, I wake up just in time to see the kids off to school, and then it depends on what I have to do. If I have nothing to do, I just chill out. I might work out sometimes if I'm in a good mood. I just watch some series and chill until the kids come home. I spend some time with them, hang out, until they start annoying me. Then I leave. And then afterwards, I just stay at home and watch movies, or I'm into Lego now, so I do Lego," Bolt said.

Bolt attended the World Championships, and as the world's greatest sprinter sat high above the stadium in a skybox, his presence was still looming over a sport that hasn't been



the same since he left. Oblique Seville may now be the 100-me-

ter world champion, but Usain Bolt remains the only track star

of this century whose fame extends far beyond the sport. Eight years after his retirement, no one has come close to matching his times, or his aura.

He is now a father to five-year-old daughter Olympia Lightning and four-year-old twin boys, Saint Leo and Thunder. They have no clue just how big a star his dad was back in the day. If there was ever a word 'unbeatable' in sport, Bolt came the closest.

However, the greatest sprinter of all time believes their perspective may change at the next World Championships, two years from now in Beijing -- the city where his career first took flight. Bolt plans to

take them there himself, to show them the stage where it all began and tell them about their father's legacy.

Outside track and field, time away from the sport has taken its toll. Even for someone as fast as Bolt, the rust has set in, the point where, at 39, even climbing a flight of stairs can feel like a challenge.

"I mostly do gym workouts. I'm not a fan, but I think now that I've been out for a while, I have to actually start running. Because when I walk up the stairs I get out of breath. I think when I start working on it fully again, I will probably have to do some laps just to get my breathing right," added Bolt.