

CBC 15502/13/0019/2526

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FOR MY FAMILY



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DISPOSSESSED LOT: Displaced Palestinians flee Gaza City, by foot and vehicles, carrying their belongings along the coastal road in Nuseirat toward the southern Gaza Strip

AP PHOTO

## Assembly washout amid Opposition stir

PNN & AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 20:** The Odisha Assembly proceedings were washed out Saturday, the third day of the monsoon session, amid Opposition BJD's protest over the fertiliser crisis during the ongoing kharif season in the state. BJD MLAs created ruckus in the Assembly over alleged fertiliser scarcity across the state, prompting the Speaker to adjourn the proceedings till Monday morning.

The party MLAs, holding placards and banners highlighting the fertiliser crisis and farmers' distress in the state, trooped into the well of the House and demanded a full-fledged discussion on the issue.

Earlier, the House made an obituary reference to former MLA George Turkey, who died Friday night. The Opposition members continued to raise their voices against the BJP government in the state and blamed it for the farmers' distress. Unable to run the House, Speaker Surama Padhy adjourned the proceedings till 4 pm.

When the House reassembled at 4 pm, the BJD members started demanding a detailed discussion on the fertiliser crisis in the state. Proceedings lasted for about four minutes in the post-lunch session before the Speaker adjourned the House till 10.30 am Monday.

The BJD members demanded that the Speaker cancel all the business of the House, including Question Hour, and hold a detailed discussion on the alleged fertiliser scarcity in the state. They claimed that the alleged fertiliser scarcity was due to black marketing and hoarding.

Outside the House, BJP MLA Irasish Acharya blamed the Opposition BJD and the Congress for the disruption in the proceedings.

"When BJD MLAs were staging a protest in the well of the House, the Congress members were standing on their seats. The opposition parties do not want a discussion on important issues in the House. The Speaker has already accepted a notice of the Congress for a discussion on the fertiliser issue, but the BJD has rejected it," the BJP MLA claimed.

### Goyal to visit US for trade talks Sept 22

**New Delhi:** Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal will lead an official delegation to the US for trade talks September 22, an official statement said Saturday. The delegation plans to hold talks with the US team to take forward discussions with a view to achieve early conclusion of a mutually beneficial trade agreement, it said. The minister will visit New York and will be accompanied by special secretary in the ministry Rajesh Agrawal and other officials.

PS

### IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Patriotism always pays. Our decision to stay in the country saved us ₹1 crore

# Trump's H1B shocker for Indians

*The Trump administration's decision to hike the fee for H1B visas, currently ranging from \$2000 to \$5000, to a whopping \$1,00,000 annually is going to significantly impact Indians, especially technology workers, who are hired by tech companies and others on these visas. Indians form the majority of H1B visa holders: about 70-71 per cent. Over the last five years (FY20-24), about 2.1 million H1B visas were approved. Of those, about 1.48 million were issued for Indians. Many Indians use the H1B pathway not just for working but as a stepping stone for longer-term stays, availing green cards and even citizenship*

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New York/Washington, Sept 20:** In a development that could adversely affect Indian professionals in the US, President Donald Trump has signed a proclamation to raise the fee for H-1B visas to a staggering \$100,000 annually, a move described by American lawmakers and community leaders as

'reckless' and 'unfortunate.'

Trump signed the proclamation 'Restriction on entry of certain nonimmigrant workers', saying the abuse of the H-1B visa programme is a 'national security threat.'

Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi described the decision to hike the H-1B visa fee as a "reckless attempt to cut America off from high-skilled workers who have long strengthened our workforce, fuelled innovation, and helped build industries that employ millions of Americans."

Ajay Bhutoria, a former advisor to President Joe Biden and Asian-American community leader on immigration policy, warned of a potential crisis for the US technology sector's competitive edge with Trump's decision on the H-1B visa fee.

"The H-1B programme, a lifeline for innovation that has attracted top talent from around the world, faces unprecedented barriers with this massive jump from the current \$2000-\$5000 total fee, which will crush small



businesses and startups reliant on diverse talent," he said.

Currently, the H-1B visa fee ranges from about \$2000 to \$5000, depending on employer size and other costs. The visas are valid for three years and can be renewed for another three years. The move is going to significantly impact Indian technology workers who are hired by tech companies and others on H-1B visas.

Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) is the second-highest beneficiary with 5,505 approved H-1B visas in 2025, after Ama-

zon (10,044 workers on H-1B visas), according to the US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). Other top beneficiaries include Microsoft (5,189), Meta (5,123), Apple (4,202), Google (4,181), Deloitte (2,353), Infosys (2,004), Wipro (1,523) and Tech Mahindra Americas (951).

In his proclamation, Trump said the H-1B visa programme was created to bring temporary workers into the US to perform additive, high-skilled functions, but it has been deliberately exploited to replace, rather than supplement,

### \$100,000 FEE ONLY FOR NEW APPLICANTS

**Washington:** The H1B visa fee of \$100,000 would be applicable only to new applicants, a White House official clarified Saturday, a day after President Donald Trump signed a proclamation raising the fee on the visas used by companies to hire workers, including from India, to live and work in the US. "The H1B fee is likely to face legal challenges. But if it survives, companies that hire skilled international workers would have to pay \$100,000 each year for any employee working on the visa, for up to six years. The fee applies only to new applicants," a White House official said, according to a report in the New York Times.

American workers with lower-paid, lower-skilled labour. "The abuse of the H-1B programme is also a national security threat. Domestic law enforcement agencies have identified and investigated H-1B-reliant outsourcing companies for engaging in visa fraud, conspiracy to launder money..., and other illicit activities to encourage foreign workers to come to the US," he said.

### Dadasaheb Phalke Award for Mohanlal



AGENCIES

**New Delhi, Sept 20:** Malayalam superstar Mohanlal has been named the recipient of the Dadasaheb Phalke Award for 2023, the country's highest recognition in the field of cinema, the I&B Ministry announced Saturday.

In a post on X, the Information and Broadcasting Ministry said the actor, director and producer is being honoured on the recommendation of the Dadasaheb Phalke Award Selection Committee for his "iconic contribution to Indian cinema."

The award will be presented to the 65-year-old during the 71st National Film Awards ceremony September 23. **P2**

## Odisha to get new secretariat building

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 20:** The state government has initiated steps for the construction of a new secretariat building in Bhubaneswar, Works Minister Prithiviraj Harichandan told the Assembly, Saturday.

He said the Odisha Bridge and Construction Corporation (OBCC) has been directed to prepare the master plan for the new building.

"Once the plan is approved, the budgetary requirement will be estimated and will be sent to the government for approval," he said, replying to a query from BJD MLA Subasini Jena.

The current Lok Seva Bhavan is 68 years old, and has inadequate parking provisions, he said. The existing state sec-

retariat building was inaugurated by then Union Home Minister Govind Ballav Pant November 12, 1959, in the presence of then CM Harekrushna Mahatab.

It was renamed the Lok Seva Bhavan in 2019 by the previous Naveen Patnaik government.

The three-storey building houses the offices of the chief minister, deputy CMs, ministers and the chief secretary. Over 30 departments are also functioning from there.

Harichandan also said a second bridge will be constructed at Trisulia, connecting Bhubaneswar and Cuttack.

"The project is in the tendering phase by OBCC. The Detailed Project Report (DPR) had already been furnished, and administrative approval had been accorded," he said.

## Luxury brands' big challenge: Figuring out Gen Z

EXECUTIVES, CONSULTANTS, AND ANALYSTS SAY THIS GENERATION IS HARDER TO PIN DOWN THAN THEIR PREDECESSORS

REUTERS

**New York, Sept 20:** Fleur Arbel and Christophe Kairouz, both from France, were lured into Louis Vuitton's New York flagship recently by a colourful sculpture of a monogrammed giraffe and ostrich above the store's entrance.

But the two 24-year-olds are more likely to spend their shopping dollars elsewhere, as Louis Vuitton's heavy logos and styles strike them as passé.

"I think they failed to keep the luxury image in a way," said Kairouz. "I think they need to create something new, original."

Arbel and Kairouz are a tiny fraction of the Gen Z cohort born between 1998 and 2012: the luxury industry's new frontier. The group made up 4% of global luxury spending before the

pandemic; by 2030, they will account for 25%, according to Boston Consulting Group.

Executives, consultants, and analysts say this generation is harder to pin down than their predecessors. They are influenced by a global social media landscape and tend to mix-and-match goods from established names with trendier labels, shopping everywhere from TikTok to thrift stores. Legacy brands trying to attract Gen Z consumers have used influencers, pop-up shops, and affordable items like bag charms.

"There's a lot of similarity between Gen Z in Shanghai and Los Angeles and London," said Scott Roe, chief financial officer and chief operating officer of Coach-parent Tapestry.

More affordable luxury companies like Coach and Ralph Lauren - whose revenue rose



6.8% in the 12-month period ended in March - are capitalising on the generational shift. Coach has gained cache with Gen Z due to using influencers, personalisation services, and focusing on sustainability, experts said. Coach's total

revenue rose 9.9% to about \$5.6 billion for the 12-month period ended in June.

Tapestry's Roe said Gen Z is not less brand-loyal than other generations, but it is harder for brands to reach these consumers because shoppers

have more choices. "To break through, you need to have a strong share of voice."

That voice is pricey: Tapestry increased its marketing spend from 3% of sales pre-pandemic to 10% this year, according to its May earnings call, but did not disclose how much it targeted Gen Z specifically.

Not all fashion powerhouses are being left on the shelf. Luxury labels from Kering-owned Bottega Veneta, Prada Group's Miu Miu, and LVMH-owned Loewe continue to do well with Gen Z, as Miu Miu currently ranks first on the Lyst Index, followed by Loewe.

Miu Miu sales rose 49% in the first half of 2025 compared to the same period in 2024, capturing first-time luxury buyers with leather bag charms, which retail in the range of \$240 to \$1,250.



# leisure

## FORTUNE FORECAST

**GaneshaSpeaks.com**  
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FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181\*

**ARIES**  
To speak of your persuasive powers, you can even convince people to holiday in Alaska! Naturally, today also, the results will be amazing. But you also realise the need to improve yourself and your home. Today, there should be some action on this front, says Ganesha.

**TAURUS**  
Family matters might be the blinkers on your eyes today. Your temperament and maturity will help you deal with emotional issues. Your power and panache may partly yield expected results. There is a likelihood of some serious action in the bedroom tonight, mostly verbal though.

**GEMINI**  
There are chances that you will take a break from the routine to recharge your batteries today, feels Ganesha. In the afternoon, children will bring home delight and joy. Second half of the day will strengthen your financial position. You may get a little emotional in the evening, feels Ganesha.

**CANCER**  
Today, there is likely to be a twist in your tale. Something is going to happen that is likely to make your life turn a corner. It may be a major breakthrough or a seemingly innocuous accident, but your life is likely to change significantly.

**LEO**  
Falling into a routine can be dangerous if it traps you in a rut. So, bear this in mind and take a break from the usual, says Ganesha. A little change will go a long way in helping you recharge your batteries. Your children's achievements will make you proud, even as afternoon will bring glad tidings on the financial front. Chances are it shall be an emotional evening for you.

**VIRGO**  
Ganesha predicts that family matters will occupy most of your attention today. Your power of persuasion and your towering persona may help you get pending work done. Emotional issues may demand your attention as well, and you will handle them with practised ease. You will spend the night discussing intimate matters with your spouse.

**LIBRA**  
You will spin out a plan on a daily basis and prefer to go with the flow, predicts Ganesha. The afternoon may see your peers giving you some bit of unnecessary tension due to approaching deadlines. In the evening, you may consider spending some time meditating to attain peace of mind.

**SCORPIO**  
You will tackle work and commitments with a renewed zeal today, says Ganesha. Your enthusiasm will catch on at the workplace, contagious and inspiring as it is. On the career front, things will look up later in the day and opportunities will shower a plenty. Take a break when the stress begins to pile and indulge in some leisure activity of your liking.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
Your colleagues will enjoy your flexible and positive attitude at work today, feels Ganesha. Polish your social skills and your smile, because today afternoon might turn out to be a carnival of people. Your evening may be more laid-back as you will find breathing space to relax with your loved ones.

**CAPRICORN**  
You may wobble under the burgeoning work pressure and may have to endure tremendous stress to meet deadlines and achieve set targets. But the hellish situation will fail to affect your state of mind as well as your ability to make sensible decisions, says Ganesha.

**AQUARIUS**  
Today is just not your day. Accept that nothing will work perfectly, and get on. Any bickering at your workplace can be sorted out with tact. And patience will help you tide over difficult situations. Ganesha wishes you all the best!

**PISCES**  
The focus today is on your spouse. You may mutually give and receive pleasant surprises today. You are likely to take stock of your present and prepare for the future today, but be sure to do so in conjunction with your better half. Your business partners may bring you some good news, says Ganesha.



## THRICE-DIVORCED ROBIN STILL BELIEVES IN LOVE

American actress and film producer Robin Wright insisted that despite her three divorces, she is optimistic about her future and her broken relationships have not affected her belief about “how wonderful [love is] when it comes again.”

## PAMELA WORKING ON BARB WIRE REBOOT

Bay Watch actress Pamela Anderson is working on a *Barb Wire* TV reboot with her sons Brandon Thomas Lee and Dylan Jagger Lee. According to Deadline, the project will be the first from Anderson and her children's production company, And-Her-Sons Productions.



# Shehnaaz on 'real attitude'

**Mumbai:** Actress-singer Shehnaaz Gill, who rose to fame after her stint in the 13th edition of the controversial reality show *Bigg Boss*, turned heads in a stylish monochrome look that re-defined her idea of “real attitude”.

Shehnaaz took to Instagram, where she shared a motley of pictures on Instagram dressed in a black pantsuit paired with a crisp white shirt, exuding glamour, elegance and confidence.

In the caption section, Shehnaaz explained what “elegance” means to her, as she wrote: “Elegance is the real attitude.”

Shehnaaz's latest work includes the Punjabi film, *Ikk Kudi*, produced by Shehnaaz and directed by Amarjit Singh Saron. It follows the story of a woman from a family of broken hearts starts doubting her arranged marriage match and embarks on a quest to uncover her fiancé's mysterious past.

In Bollywood, she was last seen in *Vicky Vidya Ka Woh Wala Video* starring Rajkummar Rao and Triptii Dimri in a special appearance for the song *Sajna Ve Sajna*.

The actress, who gained stardom after her stint in *Bigg Boss* 13, was loved by the audiences for her innocence, fun banter and her chemistry with late star Sidharth Shukla, who was also the winner of the Salman Khan-hosted show. The two were fondly referred to as ‘SidNaaz.’

**Mumbai:**

Actress Deepika Padukone made headlines after Vyjayanthi Movies confirmed her exit from the *Kalki AD 2898* sequel. On Saturday, DP penned a cryptic note on her official Instagram handle saying that, “People you work with matter more than the success of a film.”

Announcing that she has commenced the shoot for Shah Rukh Khan's *King*, Deepika wrote, “The very first lesson he taught me almost 18 years ago while filming *Om Shanti Om*, was that the experience of making a movie, and the people you make it with, matter far more than its success. I couldn't agree more and have applied that learning to every decision I've made since. And that's probably why we're back making our 6th movie together? (sic)”

Deepika's latest post is being seen as an indirect dig at the makers of *Kalki AD 2898*.

As soon as the post was up, netizens used the comment section to applaud Deepika for taking a stand for herself.

One of the Instagram users wrote, “I'm so glad that u spoke up! I love you,” along with a red heart emoji.

The second one penned, “Who was saying that deepika's downfall has begun?”

A cybercitizen shared, “Im so proud of you! Stand for yourself and never stop believing what u deserve! I love you,” followed by a red heart emoji.

IANS

DP's cryptic note post *Kalki* exit

# 'Mohanlal epitomises excellence & versatility'

**New Delhi:** Congratulatory messages poured in Saturday following the naming of Malayalam superstar Mohanlal as a winner of Dadasaheb Phalke Award for 2023.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi congratulated the veteran actor, saying Mohanlal epitomises “excellence and versatility”.

“His cinematic and theatrical brilliance across mediums is truly inspiring. Congratulations to him on being conferred the Dadasaheb Phalke Award. May his accomplishments continue to inspire generations to come,” PM Modi said.

I&B minister Ashwani Vaishnav also congratulated the actor and said his legacy will keep inspiring “Bharat's creative spirit”.

“Congratulations to Lalettan @Mohanlal ji. From the adipoli, beautiful land of Kerala to audiences worldwide, his work

has celebrated our culture and magnified our aspirations,” he posted on X. Congress leader Shashi Tharoor said, “Wonderful news for all fans and admirers of @Mohanlal! As an MP I am proud to lay claim to representing his city... Congratulations to Kerala's pride, our very own Lal!”

Known for his effortless screen presence and wide range, he has received two National Film Awards for best actor, nine Kerala State Awards and international honours. In addition to acting honours, Mohanlal was honoured with the Padma Shri in 2001, and the Padma Bhushan in 2019 for his contribution to the arts.

With a career spanning more than four decades, Mohanlal has acted in over 350 films across Malayalam, Tamil, Telugu, Hindi and Kannada.

Some of his most popular and critically-acclaimed movies include *Thanmathra*, *Iruvar*, *Drishyam*, *Vanaprastham*, *Company*, *Munthirivallikal Thalirkkumbol* and *Pulimurugan*.

PTI

# Aamir against serving food in multiplexes

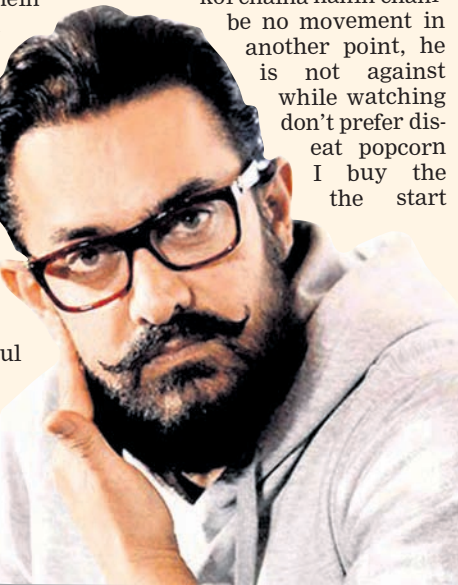
**Mumbai:** The advent of multiplexes has brought many changes to the idea of watching films on the big screen. Many multiplexes serve food directly on the seat, a practice not acceptable to Aamir Khan.

On his thoughts on this, the Dangal actor says, “Smartphones arrived in 2005. That was 20 years ago. Thanks to smartphones and the internet, the whole world is in my finger tips. Earlier, our audience in cinemas was captive. Today, they are not. They are watching the film and also glancing on their phones. They even reply to messages or check how many likes or comments have appeared on their posts.”

Aamir then exulted, “One thing that really disturbs me and I have told this to multiplexes – aap khana mat serve karo yaa! The scene is going on and someone comes and puts food in front of me. If you want to buy your food items, please do so before the film or in the interval. Usko aap organize karo at the start of the film. Film ke beech mein theatre mein koi chalna nahin chahiye. There should be no movement in another point, he is not against while watching don't prefer dis-eat popcorn I buy the start

the theatre.” At clarified that he consuming snacks a film. He stated, “I traction but I like to or samosa. But snacks before of the film. Or I buy in the interval. Beech mein mu-jhe hulchul nahin chahiye.”

AGENCIES



## PEANUTS



## CALVIN AND HOBBS

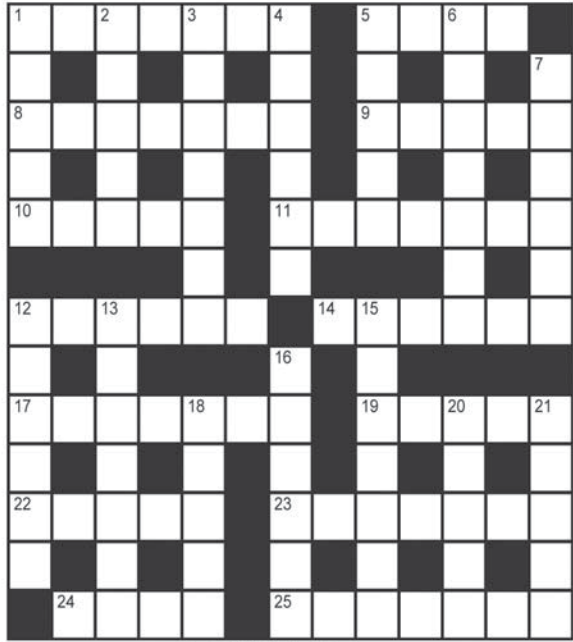


## BREVITY



## FUN post

## CROSSWORD



### Across

- Swooned
- Waiters' rewards
- Storm aftermath
- Dawdle
- Sweetener
- Prophets
- One of the Gorgons
- Clean house (4,2)
- Fast

### Down

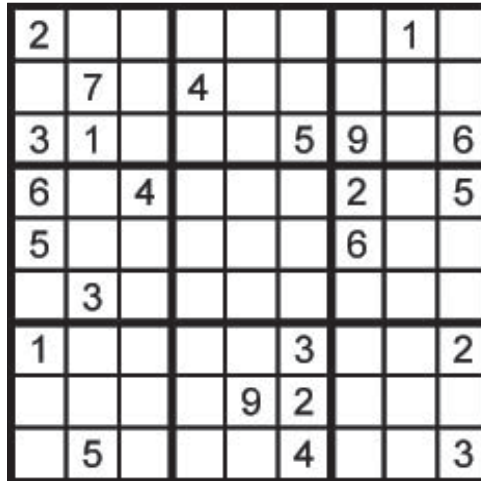
- Flowerless plants
- Cupcake topper
- Knight's tunics
- Forebodings
- Fragrance
- Jubilance
- Blood carrier
- Emblematic staff
- Grassland
- Undress
- Set apart
- Ticks off
- Cook's attire
- Kick out
- Burn slightly

### Across

- Yukon Territory town
- Aquarium fish
- Garnish herb
- European mint
- Grassland
- Undress
- Set apart
- Ticks off
- Cook's attire
- Kick out
- Burn slightly

## SUDOKU

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

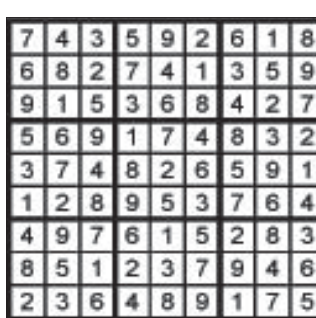


## SOLUTIONS

### CROSSWORD



### SUDOKU



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW







**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 Vihar Store-9040500106, **Cuttack Road**-Alishan Snacks-8984236754, **District Centre (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 Nagar**-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**-Cookiemani-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**- Jaggama-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-9658601373.



# Bargarh cancer hospital lies defunct; CM assures remedy

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bargarh, Sept 20:** With the Bargarh Cancer Hospital remaining non-functional for over a week amid absence of doctors, resentment has grown among the residents of the western Odisha town. The issue has drawn greater attention as State Health and Family Welfare Minister Dr Mukesh Mahaling also holds charge of the district.

A delegation from the United Forum for Cancer Hospital at Bargarh met Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Friday and urged immediate steps to make the hospital fully operational. After receiving their memorandum and holding discussions, the Chief Minister assured that the facility would start functioning soon.

Former Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik had approved the hospital following demands from the Fighters Group of Bargarh, various organisations, and the United Forum. By January 2024, the hospital was inaugurated with equipment installed and three doctors and paramedical staff appointed. The hospital, however, has remained idle for over a week after the appointed doctors left to pursue higher studies, fuelling public discontent.

During Friday's meeting, forum members pointed out that chemo-



therapy services had been completely halted. They said hematinic tablets used alongside chemotherapy were being supplied to Bargarh through the Acharya Harihar Regional Cancer Centre in Cuttack by the Odisha State Medical Corporation Ltd. (OSMCL), but the quantity was inadequate. The forum demanded that OSMCL supply the medicines directly to Bargarh.

Majhi instructed the health minister to take steps to address the issue. The government, he said, had already reviewed options for hospital management and would act swiftly to make the facility fully operational.

The meeting was attended by Health and Family Welfare Minister Dr Mukesh Mahaling, Revenue and Disaster Management Minister

Suresh Pujari, Chief Whip and Boudh MLA Saroj Kumar Pradhan, Sambalpur MLA Jayanarayan Mishra, Bargarh MLA Ashwini Kumar Sarangi, Attabira MLA Nihar Ranjan Mahanand, Bijepur MLA Sanat Kumar Gartia, and Bhatli MLA Irasis Acharya, among others.

Later, the delegation met Mahaling separately, pressing him to expedite the hospital's activation and ensure direct supply of hematinic tablets in adequate quantities. Mahaling assured that immediate instructions would be issued.

The delegation included forum convener Pradeep Debata, chief coordinator Krushnachandra Panda, coordinators Rabi Panda, Pratap Nayak, Deepak Rath, Bharat Sahu, Gopal Sharma, and Dipesh Joshi.

# 4-time MLA George Tirkey passes away

PNN & AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar/Sundargarh, Sept 20:** Noted trade union leader and former Odisha MLA George Tirkey died early Saturday, his family said. He was 67.

Tirkey, who was undergoing treatment at a hospital here for the last three months due to several health issues, died around 1am.

His last rites will be performed at his ancestral village Jhunjhur, in Sundargarh district.

Tirkey was elected to the state Assembly four times in 1995, 2000, 2009 and 2014 from Biramitrapur Assembly segment in Sundargarh district.

A popular tribal leader, Tirkey was elected twice on a JMM ticket, and once each as an Independent candidate and a nominee of Samata Kranti Dal, founded by him.

His son Rohit Joseph Tirkey was elected to Biramitrapur Assembly segment in 2024 on a BJD ticket.

Condoling his death, Deputy Chief Minister KV Singh Deo said, "Deeply saddened by the passing of George Tirkey ji, former MLA from Biramitrapur and a respected voice from



Sundargarh. His decades of public service -- across four terms in the Odisha Assembly -- reflected a deep commitment to tribal rights, grassroots leadership, and principled politics. Odisha has lost a dedicated son of the soil. May Mahaprabhu Shri Jagannath bless his soul and give strength to his family and admirers in this hour of grief."

Former chief minister and BJD president Naveen Patnaik and Odisha Pradesh Congress Committee (OPCC) president Bhakta Charan Das also expressed condolences over Tirkey's demise.

# Minor rape victim consumes poison; accused arrested

PNN & AGENCIES

**Kendrapara, Sept 20:** A 17-year-old college girl consumed poisonous substance after she was allegedly raped by a youth in Kendrapara district, police said Saturday, adding that they arrested a 21-year-old youth for his alleged involvement in the crime.

The crime was committed September 10. However, it came to light after the traumatised victim, who had allegedly attempted to commit suicide, mustered the courage to lodge a complaint against the accused Friday, the police said.

After consuming toxic substances to end her life September 10, the victim was hospitalised. She was discharged Friday. Acting on the complaint of the victim, police arrested the accused Saturday.

The rape survivor had named Chintu

Jena of Damodarpur village as the perpetrator of the crime and alleged that the accused befriended her on a social media platform recently and invited her to his house September 10, a police officer said.

However, the mother of the accused told him to drop her off at her house immediately, as she had come alone to their house in the evening. But on the way, the accused forcefully took her to a deserted cashew field and allegedly raped her, the officer said.

The police officer further said that the accused also assaulted the girl when she unsuccessfully tried to resist his heinous crime. The accused also threatened to kill her if she told anyone about the incident.

After reaching her

house, the girl consumed poison. Subsequently, the parents of the victim girl, studying Plus II Arts in a college, rushed her to a hospital on the night of September 10, soon after finding out that she had consumed poison, the police said.

The accused Chintu Jena, booked under relevant sections of BNS and section 6 (rape) of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, has been remanded to judicial custody after the local court rejected his bail application, said Sanjay Kumar Mallick, the Inspector-In-Charge (IIC) of Rajkanika police station.

Police arrested the accused within six to seven hours of the registration of the complaint, he said.

**GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA**  
**SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, BOUDH (R&B) DIVISION, BOUDH**  
E-mail : [eeboudhrb@gmail.com](mailto:eeboudhrb@gmail.com)  
**INVITATIONS FOR BIDS (IFB)**  
"e" procurement Notice  
No.B-537  
Letter No.4451 dtd.16.09.2025  
Bid Identification No. SE (R&B)-BDH 12/2025-26

1) Number of work : 01 (One) No. of Civil work (Single Cover) & 02 (Two) Nos. of Civil work (Double Cover)

2) Estimated Cost : 32.58 lakhs to 87.10 lakhs

3) Period of Completion : 04 (Four) to 06 (Six) months

4) Date & Time of availability of Bid documents in the portal : From 22.09.2025, 10.00 AM to 06.10.2025 5.00 P.M.

5) Last date/time for seeking of Tender Clarification : 06.10.2025 up to 1.00 P.M.

6) Last date / time for receipt of bids in the portal : Up to 5.00 P.M. of dated 06.10.2025

7) Date & time of opening of tender / Bid : 08.10.2025 at 11.30 A.M.

8) Name and address of the O.I.T : Superintending Engineer, Boudh (R&B) Division, Boudh

Further details corrigendum (s) if any issued can be seen from the website <http://tendersorissa.gov.in>

Sd./- Superintending Engineer, Boudh (R&B) Division, Boudh  
OIPR-34134/11/0027/2526

**GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA**  
**OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER**  
**RURAL WORKS DIVISION-I, BHADRAK**  
E-mail : [ee\\_rwbdk@yahoo.com](mailto:ee_rwbdk@yahoo.com)  
"e" Procurement Notice for Building Works  
Bid Identification No. Online Tender 06 of 2025-26

1. Name of the Work : Building. 2. Total No. of Works : 2 Nos. 3. Estimated Cost : Rs 5.40 Lakh to Rs.45.45 Lakhs. 4. Class of Contractor : "B", "C" & "D" Class. 5. Period of Completion : As per Annexure. 6. Type of Tender : Single Cover. 7. Other Details :

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of Tender On-line for bidding		Last Date & Time of seeking Tender clarification	Date & Time of Opening of Tender
		From	To		
Executive Engineer, Rural Works Division-I, Bhadrak	Online-06 of 2025-26	22.09.2025 At - 11.00 A.M.	04.10.2025 up to 4.00 P.M.	04.10.2025 up to 2.00 P.M.	06.10.2025 At - 11.00 A.M.

Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal "<https://tendersorissa.gov.in>"

Sd./- Er. Ganesh Chandra Hembram  
Executive Engineer  
R.W. Division, Bhadrak

OIPR-25060/11/0018/2526

# Woman paraded naked; hubby, 3 more detained

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bargaon, Sept 20:** Police Saturday detained four persons, including a woman's husband, after a video showing her being stripped, beaten and paraded in a village square went viral under this police limits in Sundargarh district.

The incident took place at Birimunda village near Timna village under the Bargaon police station limits. However, no formal complaint has been filed yet, police said.

Sources said the woman's husband works in Bangalore. During his absence, she had developed a relationship with a local unmarried youth. The youth had stayed at her house for four days. Villagers, angered by the affair, called a meeting last

week where both admitted to their relationship.

Meanwhile, the woman's husband returned from Bangalore and learnt about her relationship with the youth. Enraged, the accused husband allegedly stripped the woman and assaulted her in public. He even took her to a local hospital and got her treated. No one had lodged any complaint at the police station. However, the matter came to the fore after video of her being paraded naked went viral on social media platforms.

After the video surfaced, Sundargarh SP Amritpal Kaur, Additional SP Santa Samad, SDPO Bibhuti Bhusan Bhoi and local police visited the site and conducted an investigation.

# Centre seeks clarification over DMF funds misuse

**Keonjhar/Hatadihi:** The Union Ministry of Mines has asked the Odisha government to explain alleged large-scale irregularities and misuse of Keonjhar district's District Mineral Foundation (DMF) funds since 2017, in violation of the Odisha DMF Rules. In a letter dated September 8, 2025, issued under file No. M.IV-7/58/2023-Mines IV, the ministry directed Chief Secretary Manoj Ahuja to provide specific remarks on the allegations. The ministry said the Keonjhar DMF had submitted a report July 8, 2025, which was forwarded to the ministry by the chief secretary's office August 4, 2025, through letter No. 11135/PTI-PC-DMFC-DMF-0012-2025. However, the report lacked clear comments or observations from the state government. The ministry's letter referred to allegations of unauthorised spending of DMF grants on various projects without the approval of the trust board, irregular selection of the Project Management Unit, advance salary payments and arbitrary hikes in staff strength and pay, irregular use of contingency funds, misuse of interest and project funds, unauthorised appointments, awarding of contracts without tenders, and arbitrary increases in estimated project costs.

# Kurmi stir affects train services

**Baripada/Keonjhar:** Train services were affected in Mayurbhanj district Saturday as members of the Kurmi community blocked railway tracks, demanding Scheduled Tribe status. Hundreds of men, women and children under the banner of the Odisha Kurmi Sena blocked the railway tracks at Bhanjapur railway station. They held the Bangriposi-Bhubaneswar Super Fast Express for over 20 minutes before being removed from the tracks, an official said. Odisha Kurmi Sena president Divyasingh Mahanta said they were fighting for the community's constitutional rights. Members of the Kurmi community also staged a rail roko at Naranpur railway station in Keonjhar district. The protest was held under the leadership of Chittaranjan Mahanta, following a call from Ajit Prasad Mahato, national president of the Adivasi Kurmi Samaj.

**Social Responsibility Council (SRC)**  
114, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor Pratap Bhawan, 5 BSZ Marg, New Delhi 110002

Ref. No.: NSTFDC/CSR-EMRS Multiple Project-T1/2025-26 Dated: 21.09.2025

**Notice Inviting Proposals for Selection of Vendors for Implementation of Multiple CSR Projects in Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS)**

The Tender document is available on the official website of the Social Responsibility Council (SRC) at [www.srcouncil.in](http://www.srcouncil.in) from 21.09.2025. Interested Applicants are required to download the tender document from the SRC website [www.srcouncil.in](http://www.srcouncil.in) and submit their proposals via email to [pro@srcouncil.in](mailto:pro@srcouncil.in) only on or before **05.10.2025, 17:00 hrs (IST)**. The technical bids will be opened on **06.10.2025, 11:00 hrs (IST)**. The Authority reserves the right to reject any or all proposals at any stage without assigning any reason.

**Note: For each category separate bids are to be submitted.**

**PRO-SRC**

**ଅଧ୍ୟକ୍ଷ ଯନ୍ତ୍ରୀଙ୍କ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟାଳୟ**  
**ସ୍ୱତ୍ର ଜଳସେଚନ ବିଭାଗ, ଆନନ୍ଦପୁର**  
**OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, M.I. DIVISION, ANANDAPUR**  
At/P.O : Salapada, Dist.-Keonjhar, Pin Code-758020  
**e-Procurement Notice**  
Bid Identification No.-10/MIDA/2025-26  
e-mail ID : [mianandapur@yahoo.co.in](mailto:mianandapur@yahoo.co.in), [eermdanandapur@gmail.com](mailto:eermdanandapur@gmail.com)  
**No.2330 Date 16.09.2025**

No.A-639 : The Superintending Engineer, Minor Irrigation Division Anandapur on behalf of the Governor of Odisha invites online percentage rate tender through "e" procurement for the works as detailed in the Annexure to this bid notice

Name of the work	: Construction of New BT Road to Dam under CAPEX scheme.
No. of Works	: 07 (Seven) Nos. only
Estimated Cost	: Varies from 61.90 lakhs to 68.77 lakh (Approximately)
Cost of Tender Paper	: 10000/- (Non-refundable)
Period of Completion	: 6 (Six) Calendar months
Availability of bid documents for sale and receipt through online	: From dt.23.09.2025, 10.00 A.M. to dt.10.10.2025, up to 5.00 P.M.
Last date/Time of receipt of bids in the portal	: 10.10.2025 (5.00PM)
Date of Technical bid opening through online	: On dt.13.10.2025 at 10.00 A.M. in the Office of the S.E., M.I. Division, Anandapur
Mode of payment of Bid Cost	: Online
Digital Signature Certificate of Bidder	: The Bidder must possess compatible digital signature certificate (DSC)

The detail tender call notice can also be seen in the DOWR website <http://dowr.orissa.gov.in>

Further details can be seen from the e-Procurement market place <http://tendersorissa.gov.in>

Sd./- Superintending Engineer,  
M.I. Division, Anandapur

OIPR-32108/11/0038/2526


**REQUIREMENT OF BUILDINGS FOR 3 ODISHA CTC NCC, BURLA**

3 Odisha CTC NCC, Burla requires building/house for the following purpose:

Sl. No.	Purpose	Period	Plinth Area including Parking (Approx) in Sq.ft
1	PI Staff Accommodation of 3 Odisha CTC NCC, Burla	03 years w.e.f 01.09.2025	1411-56 Sq ft

The building preferably be surrounded by boundary wall. The same should be in well condition, maintained properly and also hygienic from sanitation point of view. The building should be connected by road and in suitable location at Burla. All electric and plumbing fittings should be in good working condition. Adequate water supply is also required with a separate electric meter. The property should have well parking space. The property should be free from any litigation/dispute. The interested property owners will submit their property details with valid ownership documents in the following address within 20 days from the date of publication of the advertisement.

**The Defence Estates Officer**  
**Govt. of India, Ministry of Defence**  
**163, Prachi Enclave, Chandrasekharpur**  
**Bhubaneswar, Odisha - 751016**  
**Tele : 0674-2747631, 345, E-mail: [deobhub-stats@nic.in](mailto:deobhub-stats@nic.in)**

**बैंक ऑफ बड़ौदा Bank of Baroda**

**Regional Office (Sambalpur Region)**  
G.M. College Chowk,  
Christian Para, Sambalpur-768001

(As per Appendix IV read with rule 8(1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002)

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of the **BANK OF BARODA** under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a demand notice calling upon the Borrower/Guarantor to repay the amount mentioned in the notice together with further interest thereon at the contractual rate plus costs, charges and expenses till date of payment within **60 days** from the date of receipt of the said notice. The Borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrower/Guarantor and the public in general that the undersigned has taken **POSSESSION** of the properties described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under Sub-Section (4) of Section 13 of the Act read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest Enforcement Rules, 2002 on the date mentioned below. The Borrower/Guarantor in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the properties and any dealings with the properties will be subject to the charge of the **BANK OF BARODA** for an amount stated herein below plus further interest thereon at contractual rate plus costs, charges and expenses till date of payment. **The Borrower's attention is invited to provision of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.**

BOUDHGARH BRANCH/ Name & Address of the Borrower/Guarantor	Description of the Immovable Property	Demand/ Possession Notice Date	Total Dues as on
<b>Borrower: Mr. Shankar Prasad Agrawala, S/o: Sri Bipin Bihari Agrawala, At: Maulimunda, Baunsuni, PO/PS.: Boudhgarh Dist.: Boudh, Odisha, PIN-762015</b>	Equitable Mortgage of Land situated at Mouza: Dantapali, PS.: Baunsuni, Tahasil: Boudh, Dist.: Boudh, having Khata No.: 136/94, Plot No.: 171/648, Area: Ac. 0.100 Dec., Kissam: Gharabari, standing in the name of <b>Mr. Shankar Prasad Agrawala, S/o: Sri Bipin Bihari Agrawala, Bounded by East: Self, West: Astami Karmi, North: Nayanjori, South: Self</b>	<b>04.03.2025 / 19.09.2025</b>	<b>₹11,22,067.19</b> as on 13.09.2025 + further interest thereon at contractual rate plus costs, charges and expenses till date of payment

**Place: Sambalpur, Date : 20.09.2025**  
**Authorised Officer, Bank of Baroda**

**इंडियन बैंक Indian Bank**

**ZONAL OFFICE: SAMBALPUR**  
**1ST FLOOR, SHYAM ARCADE,**  
**KHETRAJAPUR, SAMBALPUR - 768003,**  
**e-mail: [zosambalpur@indianbank.co.in](mailto:zosambalpur@indianbank.co.in)**

**E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE**  
(See proviso to rule 6(2) & 8(6) Sale Notice for sale of property /ies under SARFAESI Act 2002)

**Sale of Immovable property/ies mortgaged to Bank under Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (No. 54 of 2002)**

Whereas, the Authorised Officer of Indian Bank had taken possession of the following property/ies pursuant to the notice issued under Sec 13(2) of the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 in the following loan accounts with right to sell the same on **"AS IS WHERE IS BASIS", "AS IS WHAT IS BASIS"** and **"WITHOUT ANY RECOURSE BASIS"** for realization of Bank's dues plus interest as detailed hereunder and whereas consequent upon failure to repay the dues, the undersigned in exercise of power conferred under section 13(4) of the said Act proposes to realize the Bank's dues by sale of the said property/ies. **The Sale will be done by the undersigned through e-auction platform provided at the Website <https://www.baanknet.com>.**

Sl. No.	BRANCH / Name & Address of Borrowers / Guarantor/Mortgagor	Description of the Immovable Property / Property ID	Date of Demand Notice / Date of Possession Notice/ Outstanding Dues	Reserve Price / EMD / Bid Increment Amount
1.	<b>BARBIL BRANCH, MOB. NO.: 8249514030 / Borrower: M/s. Bijay Laxmi Enterprises, Prop.: Mr. Nakul Chandra Oram, At: Jhadgaon, Bhadrasahi, Barbil, Dist: Keonjhar-758035 / Guarantor / Mortgagor: Mr. Ashok Kumar Senapati, S/o.: Anama Charan Senapati, Vill/PO.: Serenda, P.S.: Barbil, Dist.: Keonjhar-758035</b>	All that piece and parcel of Land and Building recorded in the name of <b>Mr.Ashok Kumar Senapati, S/o.: Anama Charan Senapati</b> , under Plot No.: 157/1177, Khata No.: 128/303, with Area: Ac.0.05 Dec., at Mouza: Bhusugaon Unit No.: 15, Thana/Tahasil: Barbil, Dist.: Keonjhar, Bounded by North: Plot No.: 157, South: Plot No.: 204, East: Abhimanyu Mishra, West: Plot No.: 157 / <b>IDIB50475978907B</b>	<b>29.04.2025 / 11.08.2025 / ₹20,77,843/- as on 28.04.2025</b> + further interest, costs, other charges and expenses thereon	<b>₹25,00,000/- / ₹2,50,000/- / ₹10,000/-</b>
2.	<b>SAMBALPUR BRANCH, MOB NO.: 9777650733/ Borrower: M/s. Jagadamba Automobile, Prop.: Mr. Kiran Shankar Panda, At: Laderpali, Rengali Camp, Dist.: Bargarh - 768027 / Mortgagor: Mr. Kiran Shankar Panda, S/o.: Mr. Purna Chandra Panda, Lane 6/C-2, Kalyan Nagar, Budharaja, Sambalpur - 768004 / Guarantor: Mr. Tushar Ranjan Panda, S/o.: Mr. Kiran Shankar Panda, At: Lane 6/C-2, Kalyan Nagar, Budharaja, Sambalpur, PIN-768004</b>	All that piece and parcel of Land and Building recorded in the name of <b>Mr. Kiran Shankar Panda, S/o: Mr. Purna Chandra Panda</b> , at Mouza: Sambalpur Town Unit No.: 15, Ainthapali, having Plot No.: 1674/8916 with Area: Ac0.087 Dec. and Plot No.: 1673/8915 with Area: Ac0.013 Dec., <b>Total Area: Ac.0.10 Dec.</b> under Khata No.: 559/3883, Kissam: Gharabari, PS/Dist.: Sambalpur, Bounded by North: 20ft. Wide Road, South: Plot No.: 1802, East: Plot No.: 1674 (P), West: Plot No.:1673 (P) / <b>IDIB6865347093J</b>	<b>11.04.2025 / 28.07.2025 / ₹86,23,931/- as on 11.04.2025</b> + further interest, costs, other charges and expenses thereon	<b>₹1,56,00,000/- / ₹15,60,000/- / ₹10,000/-</b>

**DATE AND TIME OF E-AUCTION: 24.10.2025 from 11.00 AM to 5.00 PM with unlimited extension of 10 Minutes duration**  
**LAST DATE AND TIME FOR SUBMISSION OF EMD AND DOCUMENTS IN THEIR WALLET BY 24.10.2025 I.E. EFORE E-AUCTION DATE & TIME IN THE PORTAL.**

**Date & Time of Inspection of Properties: 03.10.2025 to 23.10.2025 between 10.00 AM to 4.00 PM (with prior appointment from bank) at their own expenses**

**TERMS & CONDITIONS:** 1) For detailed terms and conditions of the sale please refer to the link: <https://www.baanknet.com> Prospective bidders may also contact the Authorised Officers / Branch as mentioned in above list., 2) This is a statutory **30 days** sale notice to the above mentioned borrowers/guarantors under Rule 9(1) of the SARFAESI Act. 2002, 3) This is a **30 days** notice to the Borrower / Guarantor / Mortgagor of the above said loan about holding of this sale on the above mentioned date., 4) All expenses relating the stamp duty and registration of Sale Certificate/conveyance, if any, shall be borne by the successful bidder. 5) The Authorized Officer will not be held responsible for any charge, lien, encumbrance, property tax or any other dues to the Government or anybody in respect of the property under sale. 6) The Authorized Officer has the absolute right to accept or reject any bid or adjourn/postpone/cancel the sale without assigning any reason thereof. It may be noted that nothing in this notice constitute or deemed to constitute any commitment or representation on the part of the bank to sell the property.

**STATUTORY 30 DAYS SALE NOTICE UNDER RULE 8(6) OF THE SECURITY INTEREST (ENFORCEMENT) RULES, 2002.**  
Borrowers/Guarantors/Mortgagors are hereby notified to pay the total dues along with up to date interest and ancillary expenses before the date of E-Auction, failing which the property will be auctioned/ sold and balance dues, if any, will be recovered with interest & cost.

**Place: Sambalpur**  
**Date: 20.09.2025**

**Sd/-Authorised Officer**  
**Indian Bank**





# Bunch of Thoughts

The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh is celebrating its centenary and its epic successes in the cultural, and, especially, political field. Readers who are familiar with the organisation, the font of Hindutva ideology, but unclear about what it specifically stands for might benefit from this column. The RSS's longest-serving (33 years from 1940 to 1973) chief was MS Golwalkar. Two books are attributed to him, of which one is disowned. The other one, Bunch of Thoughts, is the subject here and we will look at what it says. It must be noted that it is not a book in the sense that it is a written work, but a compilation of Golwalkar's speeches and interviews and excerpts thereof. This gives it a jumpy and sporadic feel, but it is worth going through nonetheless. What follows is your columnist's representation of Golwalkar's views, in as unbiased a fashion as is possible.

Golwalkar says the RSS called itself the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh and not the Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh. This was because 'Rashtriya' naturally means Hindu and therefore the word 'Hindu' need not be used. The first RSS head Keshav Hedgewar had said: 'If we use the word Hindu it will only mean that we consider ourselves only as one of the innumerable communities in this land and that we do not realise our natural status as the nationals of this country.'

Savarkar's Hindu Mahasabha was wrong in once having passed a resolution that the Congress should not give up its nationalistic position by holding talks with the Muslim League but instead asking the Hindu Mahasabha to do so. This ceded equal position to the Muslims and was a perversion of the reality that India was wholly and only a Hindu Rashtra.

Federalism was a problem and the only way out was to be courageous enough to declare a unitary type of government by amending the Constitution. The country was one, the people were one, and therefore India ought to have only a single government and a single legislature. Executive authority could be distributed, but legislative authority should be one and not devolved to the states. One central legislature for the whole of the country should satisfy the demands of democracy.

India was special in the world because it offered something nobody else could and that was Hindu thought. The excellence of Hindu thought was that it alone knew something about the nature of the soul. This could be proved because it was only in India that from ancient times individuals rose to unravel the mystery of human nature, the 'science of spirit'. Golwalkar says Jesus saw Satan and the prophet met Gabriel. It was only in India that sages actually saw god. Westerners, no matter how much they understood the science of matter, would remain ignorant of the science of spirit. This unique offering was under threat because Hindus were abandoning their ancient wisdoms and it was the RSS which must revive them within India and organise Hindu society. It would do this by reversing the things that were damaging Hindus. Progressive societies were permissive. This led to licentious behaviour with respect to sex, food, drinks, family life and free social intercourse. These things did not produce real happiness. The individual must subsume himself into the larger nation, else the social fabric would be destroyed. This was what Hindu philosophy promoted and that was what would make Hindus happy.

All Hindus did not have this special Hindu knowledge; only some did. The common mass of people needed to be properly educated and enlightened. Making them merely literate would not serve the purpose because this special knowledge would still be absent. People were unequal in other ways also. Democracy was flawed because it excluded experts and preferred politicians. Panchayats functioned best when run along caste lines, to represent the interests of society as a whole. Elections should not be competitive but unanimous. (Again, if this sounds disjointed and rambling, it is because that is how Bunch of Thoughts is put together).

India was the nation from the oceans to the Himalayas. Not just the edge of the mountains but beyond them, which is why the ancients had places of pilgrimage (Kailash Mansarovar) on the northern side, making these regions 'our live boundary'. Tibet was the abode of the gods and the Hindu epics also give Hindus possession of Afghanistan, Burma, Iran and Lanka. Bharat Mata, for thousands of years, had dipped her arms in the two seas, from Iran to Singapore, with Sri Lanka as a lotus petal offered at her sacred feet. Bhoomi puja was done because the entire earth was sacred, but Bharat Mata was the most sacred. She needed total devotion, and not engagement through the intellect.

Partition was unacceptable because it was not a division of property between brothers: one does not cut up one's mother as settlement. The concept of Hindu Rashtra was not a mere bundle of political and economic rights. It was essentially cultural and not political or legal. It revealed itself through the urge for realisation of God: a 'living' god and not an idol or immaterial form. 'Our People Are Our God' is what the ancients had said. But they had not meant all our people. Ramakrishna Paramhansa and Vivekananda said, 'Serve man.' But man in the sense of humanity was too wide and cannot be grasped. It should be an Almighty with certain limitations. Man here meant only the Hindu people. The ancients did not use the word 'Hindu' but they did say in the Rig Veda that the sun and moon are his eyes, the stars and skies created from his navel and that Brahmin is the head, King the hands, Vaishya the thighs and Shudra the feet. The people who had this fourfold arrangement were the God. Service to and worship of this caste-defined society was then service to God.

There is more, and we will take it up another day.

## WISDOM CORNER

There is no failure. It's only un-finished success and every artist was first an amateur

RAJA RAVI VARMA

If you hear a voice within you say 'you cannot paint,' then by all means paint, and that voice will be silenced

VINCENT VAN GOGH

Every positive value has its price in negative terms... the genius of Einstein leads to Hiroshima

PABLO PICASSO

# power post

## FOCUS CULTURE

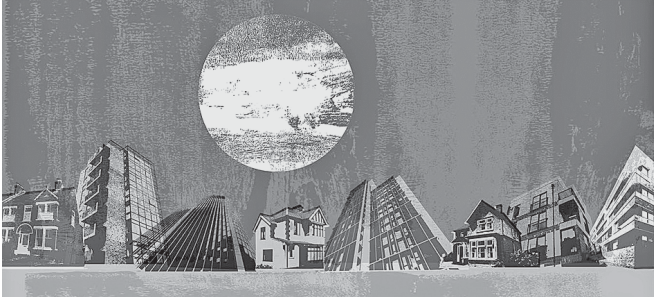
# DEREGULATED INNOVATION

Few policy ideas are as radical—or as misleadingly packaged—as “freedom cities.” Championed by Silicon Valley’s techno-libertarian elite and recently embraced by right-wing politicians like Donald Trump, the idea is to create digitally powered, master-planned enclaves of deregulated innovation.

It sounds promising. Freedom-city advocates want to cut through bureaucratic red tape, revive innovation, and solve America’s housing crisis. In practice, however, such projects risk becoming redoubts for the wealthy—managerial fiefdoms where inequality is built into the foundations. While promoters speak the language of liberty, their model outsources governance to corporate boards rather than the ballot box.

Still, the core idea of using purpose-built settlements as platforms for experimentation should not be dismissed. Throughout history, cities have served as crucibles for political and economic reform. From Periclean Athens to modern-day Barcelona, urban communities have pioneered innovations in governance, planning, and participation. The challenge lies not in building new cities, but in ensuring that they serve democracy, rather than undermine it.

Trump’s 2023 proposal to launch ten freedom cities on federal land was not conjured from thin air. The concept has intellectual roots in Nobel laureate economist Paul Romer’s “charter city” model, originally designed as a lever for economic renewal in developing countries. Venture capitalists later reinterpreted the idea, envisioning privately managed start-up cities insulated from oversight. Investors like Sam Altman, Marc Andreessen, Brian Armstrong, and Peter Thiel promote such enclaves as testing grounds for AI, biotech, and fintech; think tanks like the American Enterprise Institute have proposed dozens



The battle over freedom cities is about more than zoning, taxes, or land use. It is about the future of political governance itself

of new cities on federal land; and a newly created Freedom Cities Coalition is pushing to build “as many as the market can handle.”

Experiments of this kind are already underway. In Honduras, the short-lived “Próspera” project was backed by US investors and briefly operated under its own regulatory regime before succumbing to democratic backlash and litigation. In California, Andreessen and partners have launched “California Forever,” a plan for a 400,000-person settlement in Solano County designed to bypass zoning restrictions. Thiel’s seasteading movement goes further, envisioning autonomous city-states in international waters. And in 2025, investors unveiled plans for a high-tech enclave in Greenland. Marketed as a hub for AI, advanced energy, and geoeconomics, it has been criticized as a form of neo-colonialism that threatens protected ecosystems and Indigenous lands.

At their core, these ventures are less about improving cities than about reimagining sovereignty. Angel investor Balaji Srinivasan envisions “network states” governed through blockchain by online communities that crowdsource land. Far-right blogger Curtis Yarvin promotes “corporate monarchies” run by unelected CEOs. What unites their visions is not a passion for urbanism, but hostility toward de-

mocracy. Citizenship becomes a subscription, governance a service, and rights an afterthought.

Hoary criticism of government inefficiency provides these projects with political cover. Freedom-city advocates rail against zoning rules, permitting delays, and oversight, tapping into widespread frustrations about housing and infrastructure. They see labor rights, environmental protections, and civic participation as inefficiencies to be “optimized away.” The result is less Athens than Amazon: efficient, centralized, profit-driven, and lacking any democratic accountability.

History offers warnings. Top-down planned capitals like Brasília and Chandigarh may have offered dazzling architecture, but they have struggled to create resilient, inclusive communities. The company towns of the twentieth century showed how corporate control of housing and services further entrenches inequality and erodes rights. Without safeguards, freedom cities risk repeating these mistakes under a new digital gloss.

But cities have been engines of democratic renewal, and they could be again. Athens institutionalized civic participation through the boule and dikasteria (citizen-run councils and courts, respectively). Though flawed by modern standards, these institutions

were revolutionary in treating governance as a collective endeavor.

Later, in the nineteenth century, Charles Fourier’s phalanstères inspired experiments in cooperative housing. In the twentieth century, Copenhagen’s Freetown Christiania and Arizona’s Arcosanti modeled alternative self-governance and sustainability. And more recently, Barcelona pioneered participatory digital platforms, Vienna and Zurich expanded cooperative housing, and Helsinki and Taipei developed civic tech commons. These imperfect but instructive examples show that urban reinvention can expand democracy rather than diminish it.

Progressives should reclaim the freedom-city debate, not cede it to techno-authoritarians. New cities could serve as sandboxes for democratic innovation. They could have participatory assemblies instead of corporate charters. Housing could be seen as a right, rather than as an investment. Digital sovereignty would prevail over digital colonialism. The toolset: cooperative governance, climate-adaptive design, universal basic services, and public digital goods are already being tested worldwide.

The battle over freedom cities is about more than zoning, taxes, or land use. It is about the future of political governance itself. The choice is stark, and it is one we cannot afford to ignore. One path leads to privatized archipelagos of privilege, optimized for efficiency and enforced by algorithms and surveillance. The other leads to civic platforms that can renew democracy and harness technology to drive social and economic inclusion.

Robert Muggah is a member of the World Economic Forum’s Global Future Council on Cities of Tomorrow while Carlo Ratti is Director of the Senseable City Lab at MIT

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## SPECTRUM GEOPOLITICS

# A relook at India's Eurasian strategy

The 2025 Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit in Tianjin offered India both visibility and a reminder of the structural limits of its Eurasian engagement. Since joining the SCO in 2017, New Delhi has sought to navigate between Moscow and Beijing, strengthen its foothold in Central Asia, and hedge against encirclement through alternative partnerships. The Tianjin gathering confirmed that the SCO is a useful platform for dialogue, but hardly one where India can decisively shape outcomes. China and Russia continue to dominate, Pakistan remains disruptive, and Central Asian states defer to the larger powers. For India, the SCO is therefore less about influence and more about presence: being at the table without expecting to rewrite the rules.

This reality forces New Delhi to think beyond Eurasia’s immediate geography. Russia remains a valuable partner—discounted energy, legacy defence cooperation, and strategic corridors like the Chennai–Vladivostok route is significant. Yet the risks are evident: exposure to Western sanctions, Moscow’s deepening dependence on Beijing, and limited scope for India to expand in Central Asia under Russia’s shadow. Overreliance on this axis narrows rather than broadens India’s strategic autonomy.

At the same time, the volatility of US politics under Donald Trump’s presidency serves as another reminder that partnerships in today’s world must be judged not only by capability but also by predictability. India cannot afford to tie its long-term Eurasian and Indo-Pacific strategies to actors whose reliability is subject to domestic swings or geopolitical entanglements.

Here is where Europe, often overlooked in Indian debates on Eurasia, enters the picture. Unlike Russia’s transactional dependence or America’s political oscillations, the European Union offers India what it increasingly needs: stability, institutional reliability, and long-term partnership. For New Delhi, Europe is less a matter of crisis diplomacy and more a source of durable alignment. The EU has already signalled

its readiness to invest in India’s rise. The 2021 EU-India Connectivity Partnership laid the groundwork for cooperation in digital, transport, energy, and people-to-people exchanges. For India, plugging into these European-led initiatives means access to financing, technology, and political backing that can translate strategic rhetoric into tangible infrastructure.

For Indian strategists, the lesson is clear: Eurasian engagement should not be framed as a binary choice between Russia and China, or even between Eurasia and the Indo-Pacific. Rather, it should be approached as a spectrum, where Europe, anchored in stability and values, can balance the uncertainties of other partnerships.

This does not mean abandoning Moscow or diluting ties with Washington. It means broadening the toolkit. Russia will remain indispensable in defence and energy; the US continues to be India’s partner in high-tech and Indo-Pacific security. But neither provides the kind of structural stability that Europe can offer. In this sense, engaging Europe is not

simply diversification—it is investment in resilience.

As India reflects on Tianjin and the SCO, the message is that presence alone does not guarantee influence. The real challenge lies in transforming visibility into strategic autonomy. Here, Europe—stable, predictable, and aligned with India’s democratic ethos—can serve as the partner that New Delhi needs to navigate an increasingly volatile world. By investing in European partnerships through Global Gateway, advancing joint clean energy projects, and working with Poland and other CEE states to connect Indo-Pacific and European strategies, India can secure not only short-term diversification but also long-term resilience. In a century marked by shifting alliances and intensifying rivalries, Europe offers India something increasingly rare: a partner that combines capability with predictability.

The writer is Expert, Centre for International Relations, Poland

INFA

## Letters TO THE EDITOR

Readers of Orissa Post are most welcome to contribute letters (100 words), articles and columns (between 600-1000 words). Contributors are requested to send their contact numbers and full postal address/email ID. They may also send in their valuable comments, opinion and suggestions, preferably by email, to: [edit@orissapost.com](mailto:edit@orissapost.com)

OrissaPOST  
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### AI-driven governance

Sir, Albania has become the first country to appoint an Artificial Intelligence-based ‘minister.’ Called Diella, this non-human AI avatar supervises public procurement and combats corruption, working round-the-clock and receiving citizen inputs at any time. Japan has already shown interest in replicating such a model. The move signals a global shift toward algorithm-driven governance but also raises concerns over values, accountability, privacy and bias. If adopted in India, it could revolutionise public procurement, speed up grievance redressal and reduce corruption through real-time oversight. However, it would also demand strict legal safeguards, transparency standards and culturally sensitive algorithms to avoid misuse and protect citizens’ rights. India’s response is likely to be cautious—piloting AI in limited sectors first—while closely studying Albania’s results before scaling up nationwide.

RS Narula, PATIALA

### True trailblazer

Sir, Asia’s first woman train driver, Surekha Yadav, has officially retired after an illustrious 36-year career with Indian Railways, marking the end of an inspiring journey. Breaking barriers in a male-dominated field, Yadav became a trailblazer when she took the controls as the region’s first female loco pilot and went on to serve with dedication, skill, and passion. Her remarkable legacy not only transformed the face of Indian Railways but also inspired countless women to chase their dreams fearlessly. Her retirement is being celebrated as the conclusion of a historic chapter, leaving behind a powerful message of determination and empowerment.

CK Jayanthi Maniam, COIMBATORE

### Gaza genocide

Sir, It is unfortunate that the entire world remains a passive spectator to the genocide being committed in Gaza by Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu. Even after approximately 63,000 people, including women and innocent children, have been killed, countries—including India—have remained tight-lipped and are indirectly complicit in these atrocities. The fact that India has refused to sign or has remained absent whenever the UN introduced resolutions against the war crimes committed by Israel exposes the dubious and partisan attitude of India and the failure of the once well-acclaimed foreign policy of our country.

Tharcus S Fernando, CHENNAI







of the day **quote**

Technology is like a horse. It is the horse rider who decides the destination. If we use technology by taking it in the right direction, fearlessly and in the right manner, then I think we can take policing to the next stage

**DEVENDRA FADNAVIS** | CHIEF MINISTER, MAHARASHTRA

The entire Uttar Pradesh administration, including police and civil authorities, must remain on round-the-clock alert. Local needs must be carefully addressed to ensure that every festival is celebrated in an atmosphere of harmony

**YOGI ADITYANATH** | CHIEF MINISTER, UTTAR PRADESH

Six years have passed, but this government has miserably failed to do anything in the interest of the tribal community, who are they to infringe on our prevailing social system?

**CHAMPAI SOREN** | FORMER CM, JHARKHAND

**SHORT TAKES**

**32 drug samples fail quality test**

**New Delhi:** The central drugs laboratories have found 32 samples manufactured by various firms in August to be “not of standard quality”, health ministry officials said Friday. Additionally, the state drugs testing laboratories identified 62 samples as “not of standard quality” (NSQ) in the month under review, they said. As part of routine regulatory surveillance activity, the list of NSQ and spurious drugs are displayed on the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) portal on a monthly basis. For August, the central drugs laboratories identified 32 samples to be NSQ, while the state drugs testing laboratories identified 62 samples under the same category, an official said.

**Researcher found dead at IIT-Kharagpur**

**Kolkata:** The body of a researcher was found hanging from the ceiling of his hostel room in IIT-Kharagpur Saturday, in the fifth suspected case of suicide at the premier institute this year, officials said. Harsh Kumar Pandey (27), a resident of Ranchi, was found dead in his room at the BR Ambedkar Hall around 2 pm, they said. Pandey was pursuing a PhD in Mechanical Engineering, they added. “His parents could not reach him on the phone, and the door of his room was locked from the inside. Subsequently, police were informed, and they broke into the room to find his body hanging from the ceiling,” an IIT-Kharagpur spokesperson said. In a statement, the institute said it has constituted a fact-finding committee to examine the matter.

**Protests erupt over Assam Rifles ambush**

**Imphal:** Locals of Nambol in Manipur’s Bishnupur district Saturday morning staged protests against the killing of two Assam Rifles personnel in an ambush in the area the previous day. Search operations are being conducted in the area for the attackers and the vehicle used by them, police said. The locals, wearing traditional mourning attire, raised slogans and held placards condemning the attack and for “creating fear and panic among the public”, at a sit-in just 1 km from the ambush spot. Later, women took out a protest rally denouncing the attack, and criticised the opening of fire in public places.



“India is moving forward with the spirit of global brotherhood and India has no major enemy in the world today, but in true terms, India’s biggest adversary is dependence on other nations

**NARENDRA MODI** | PRIME MINISTER

**WOMAN FINDS 8 DIAMONDS AT MINE**

A woman labourer has found eight diamonds, which could fetch her lakhs of rupees, at a mine in Madhya Pradesh’s Panna district, an official said Saturday. Rachna Goldar, a local resident in her 50s, found eight precious stones with a total weight of 2.53 carats, six of which are of high quality, the official said



**CIK conducts searches at 8 locations across valley**

Seven suspects were detained for questioning and incriminating digital evidence that has bearing on the investigation was seized

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Srinagar, Sept 20:** The counter-intelligence wing of the Jammu and Kashmir Police detained seven suspects for questioning Saturday during raids conducted at multiple locations in the valley in a terror-related case, an official said.

The searches were conducted by the Counter Intelligence Kashmir (CIK) at eight locations, an official said.

He said the eight locations across Srinagar, Baramulla, Anantnag, Pulwama, Kupwara and Shopian were identified and subsequently, searched in connection with FIR No. 03/2023 registered under various sections of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA).

Seven suspects were detained for questioning and incriminating digital evidence that has bearing on the investigation was seized, the CIK official added.

The case was lodged on a credible input received by the CIK, wherein it had emerged that certain individuals in Jammu and Kashmir, under the cloak of social activism, were “misusing” platforms connected to mass media, social media, human rights, environment and women empowerment for activities detrimental to the sovereignty and security of the State, he said.

Discreet information indicat-



**HUNT FOR TERRORISTS INTENSIFIED IN UDHAMPUR**

A soldier, who was critically injured in a gunfight, succumbed to his injuries as security forces Saturday extended a search operation to neutralise terrorists hiding in the higher reaches of Jammu and Kashmir’s Udhampur district, officials said. The soldier, Lance Dafadar Baldev Chand, was injured late Friday evening, when the terrorists opened fire on a joint patrolling party of the Army and the Special Operations Group (SOG) of the Jammu and Kashmir Police at Kanji in the Seoj Dhar forest, between the Dudu-Basantgarh area of Udhampur and Bhaderwah in Doda district, the officials said. They said the soldier was shifted to a hospital where he succumbed to his injuries. The area around the scene of the encounter was kept under tight cordon during the night and a combing operation was resumed on Saturday morning and extended to new areas during the day to track down the terrorists. The officials said reinforcements were mobilised from both Doda and Udhampur and drones and sniffer dogs were also deployed to speed up the search operation. However, there was no fresh contact with the terrorists during the day, they added. The Army paid rich tributes to the fallen soldier and said “we stand with the bereaved family in this hour of grief”.

ed their suspected links with secessionist organisations and proscribed terror outfits, the official added.

He said the inputs further revealed that some of these people were in contact with Pakistan-based terror handlers through encrypted messaging applications.

“They were found to be involved in spreading false narratives, radicalising youngsters and attempting to disturb public order and peace in Jammu and Kashmir,” the official said.

He said the raids have “successfully disrupted a dangerous ecosystem” operating under the facade of social activism but serving terror interests.

The seized digital evidence is expected to reveal deeper footprints of the conspiracy and further arrests cannot be ruled out, he said.

Investigation is on to unearth the full scale of the conspiracy, identify other operatives and expose the suspected communication chains with handlers across the border, the official added.

**GOYAL TO VISIT US FOR TRADE TALKS SEPT 22**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Sept 20:** Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal will lead an official delegation to the US for trade talks September 22, an official statement said Saturday.

The delegation plans to hold talks with US team to take forward discussions with a view to achieve early conclusion of a mutually beneficial trade agreement, it said.

The minister will visit New York and will be accompanied by special secretary in the ministry Rajesh Agrawal and other officials. During the last visit of the team of officials from the office of United States Trade Representative to India September 16, positive discussions were held on various aspects of the trade deal, and it was decided to intensify efforts in this regard.

“In continuation of these discussions, a delegation led by Commerce and Industries Minister is visiting the United States for meetings with the US side 22nd September 2025,” it said.

The visit assumes additional significance amid the US administration’s sudden decision to hike the application fee for H-1B visas to \$1,00,000. Industry body Nasscom Saturday said the US’ move will impact India’s technology services companies as business continuity will be disrupted for onshore projects that may require “adjustments”.

Further, the visit comes in the backdrop of recently concluded daylong discussions here between US Chief Negotiator Brendan Lynch and his Indian counterpart Rajesh Agrawal on the proposed bilateral trade agreement.



An elderly man and his grandson pick lotus flowers, which are used as part of rituals during the Durga Puja, from a waterbody ahead of the festival, in Nadia district, West Bengal, Saturday

PTI PHOTO

**No polygamy for Muslim men lacking means: Kerala HC**

According to the court, a majority of Muslims follow monogamy, which reflects the true spirit of the Quran, while only a small minority practise polygamy, forgetting its verses

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Kochi, Sept 20:** The Kerala High Court has observed that it cannot accept multiple marriages of a Muslim man when he has no capacity to maintain his wives, and one of them approaches the court claiming maintenance.

The observation was made by Justice PV Kunhikrishnan when a 39-year-old Perinthalmanna native approached the court seeking a monthly maintenance of Rs 10,000 from her husband, who survives by begging.

Earlier, the petitioner had approached a Family Court,

which dismissed her plea, stating that her 46-year-old husband from Kumbadi, Palakkad, who was surviving on begging, cannot be directed to pay maintenance.

The court, in a satirical manner, referred to a Malayalam phrase implying, “Don’t put your hand into a begging bowl”.

The judge noted that the husband was also not a saint. “Even though he is blind and a beggar, as stated by the petitioner, who is his second wife, he has been threatening her that he will soon enter into a third marriage with another woman,” the court observed.

The court perused the petition and found that the respondent was receiving an income of Rs 25,000 from various sources, including begging, and that the petitioner had sought Rs 10,000 per month as maintenance. The respondent currently lives with his first wife.

The court also noted that it could not digest the contention



of the wife that her blind husband regularly assaulted her.

However, while highlighting the peculiar facts and circumstances of the case, the court said that judges are not robots.

**Will drop ‘hydrogen bomb’ to prove ‘vote theft’: Rahul**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Wayanad(Kerala), Sept 20:** Congress MP Rahul Gandhi Saturday accused the Election Commission of India of not providing information sought by the Karnataka CID regarding the alleged ‘vote chori’ in that state.

Rahul, who arrived in Wayanad Friday along with his mother Sonia Gandhi, told reporters here that Karnataka CID has sent several letters to the EC seeking information about the numbers used in the ‘vote chori’, but the poll panel is not providing it.

Gyanesh Kumar is the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) and he is not providing the information sought by the police, the Congress MP claimed.

“There can be no bigger indictment of the CEC than this. The police is asking for information, and he is not providing it. This is not my statement. It is a fact. It is there in black and white,” he said.

Rahul further said that the Congress will show evidence of the alleged ‘vote chori’ “in such a manner that no one will have any doubt that PM Narendra Modi did it and won the election”.

“We are going to reveal a hydrogen bomb, like I have said in my two press conferences, that will completely devastate the reality of the situation. We have open and shut proof of what we are saying. We are not saying anything without proof. I will do my job and I will deliver on my job,” he added.

Rahul had Friday too reiterated his “vote chori” allegations and took a swipe at the EC, calling it an “election watchman” who “stayed awake, watched the theft, and protected the thieves”.

**Kurmi protest blocks rail routes**



At least 25 passenger trains were cancelled and 24 diverted in Dhanbad division of ECR, while 12 trains, including Vande Bharat and Rajdhani Express, were cancelled and 11 trains diverted in Ranchi division of SER due to the agitation

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Ranchi, Sept 20:** More than 100 passenger trains were cancelled, diverted or short-terminated Saturday as a rail blockade by Kurmis is underway at various stations within the jurisdiction of the Ranchi division of South Eastern Railway (SER) and Dhanbad division of East Central Railway, an official said.

Defying prohibitory orders, protestors squatted on tracks at various stations in Muri, Rai, Tatisilwai stations in Ranchi district, Barkakana in Ramgarh, Parasnath in Giridih, Charhi in Hazaribag, Pradhankhanta in Dhanbad, Galudih in East Singhbhum and Chandrpura in Bokaro district under the banner of Adivasi Kurmi Samaj (AKS) to press their demand for a Scheduled Tribe (ST) status for the community and inclusion of the Kurmal language in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution.

AKS leader OP Mahto said they will spend the night on tracks and they will not withdraw the agitation until their demands are met.

At least 25 passenger trains were cancelled and 24 diverted in Dhanbad division of ECR, while 12 trains, including Vande Bharat and Rajdhani Express, were cancelled and 11 trains diverted in Ranchi division of SER due to the agitation.

Many trains were short-terminated in two divisions, according to statements issued by the railways. Thousands of passengers were stranded across Jharkhand after trains were halted by the agitators. Maloti Ghosh, a passenger of Howrah-Pune Duronto Express who was stranded at Ghatshila station in East Singhbhum district till in the evening said, “My daughter, who works in Pune, is unwell. I have to be there anyhow as her two children are suffering. Railway officials are just giving assurances about train movements, but there is no information when it will start running.”


Security personnel tried to pacify the protestors and made efforts to clear the tracks, railway officials said. Hundreds of passengers of Tata-Patna Vande Bharat Express were also stranded at Ranchi’s Muri station. The train was later cancelled, leading to ruckus by passengers.



of the day

quote

You have the duty and responsibility of inculcating a spirit of reasoning in students; moulding them to approach everything based on rational thinking, by asking questions like why and how




**MK STALIN** | CHIEF MINISTER, TAMIL NADU

We are committed to resolving the pothole problem and are working in a systematic manner. Those who want to do politics may do so



**DK SHIVAKUMAR** | DEPUTY CHIEF MINISTER, KARNATAKA

The biggest sector we can work on in Delhi is to make the city an education hub. Students searching for the best place to get education should think of Delhi first. We have to make our system so strong that our children do not need to go abroad for higher studies



**REKHA GUPTA** | CHIEF MINISTER, DELHI

X

POST OF THE DAY



> 80% reservation in government  
> Private sector Reservation soon  
> Sub Saharan Africa tier infrastructure  
> GC merit treated like a second class citizen blocked from every opportunity  
> Gulag tier labour law and Corruption  
> Dhandho  
But H1B prevented India's growth

@chakravartiin

SHORT TAKES

India signs deep sea deal with ISA

**New Delhi:** India has signed a 15-year contract with the International Seabed Authority (ISA) for exclusive rights to explore polymetallic sulphides in the Indian Ocean, Earth Sciences Minister Jitendra Singh said Saturday. Singh said, according to the contract, the ISA has granted exclusive rights to India to explore polymetallic sulphides (PMS) in the allotted 10,000 sq km area of the Carlsberg Ridge in the Indian Ocean. PMS contain valuable metals such as iron, copper, zinc, silver, gold, and platinum, and are precipitates formed by hot hydrothermal fluids from oceanic crust.

Village defence guard shoots himself dead

**Jammu:** A village defence guard allegedly committed suicide Saturday morning by shooting himself with his rifle in Jammu and Kashmir's Kishtwar, officials said. The incident occurred at his residence in Akra village of Kuntwara area. The deceased, identified as Tek Chand (45), was upset over the past few days after his teenage daughter, a class 10th student, went missing, with locals claiming that she had eloped with a local boy from her own community, a source stated.

Driver of Puja Khedkar's father held

**Thane:** The Navi Mumbai police have arrested the driver of former IAS probationer Puja Khedkar's father in connection with the road rage incident in which the helper of a truck was abducted last week, a senior official said Saturday. The accused, Praful Salunkhe, was apprehended by a team from Navi Mumbai police Friday from Sindhkhed in Dhule, Deputy Commissioner of Police Pankaj Dahane said.

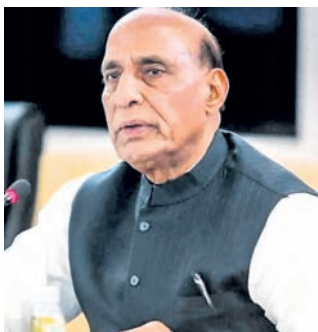


Under the Price Support Scheme system, the central government will procure green gram, black gram, sunflower, groundnut, and soybean from Karnataka, which will greatly benefit the state's farming community

**PRALHAD JOSHI** | UNION MINISTER

RAJNATH SINGH TO VISIT MOROCCO FROM SUNDAY

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh will dedicate a manufacturing facility of Tata Advanced Systems to produce wheeled armoured personnel carriers in Morocco during his two-day visit to the North African nation beginning September 21, the defence ministry said Saturday. The facility at Berrechid is the first-ever Indian defence manufacturing plant in Africa



H1B VISA FEE HIKE

Modi's foreign policy 'failed': Oppn

India's reaction came hours after US President Donald Trump signed a proclamation to impose a \$100,000 annual fee for H-1B visas, a move that is set to adversely impact Indian professionals in the US

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Sept 20:** The Opposition parties Saturday alleged that the Modi government's foreign policy has "failed" after the US imposed a \$100,000 annual fee for H1B visas for highly skilled workers which, they said, is "meant to target Indians", and asked the Centre to take steps to resolve the "crisis".

The Congress hit out at Prime Minister Narendra Modi, accusing him of being a "weak PM" whose preference for "strategic silence" and "loud optics" has become a liability for India. Its president Mallikarjun Kharge said that foreign policy is about safeguarding India's national interests and keeping "India First" and not holding "events".

Highlighting reports that H1B visa hike would hit Indians hardest, Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi said in a post on X, "I repeat, India has a weak PM."

Noting that Indian national interests are supreme, Congress chief Kharge took a swipe at the PM, saying, "Bear hugs, hollow slogans, concerts and getting people to chant 'Modi, Modi' is not foreign policy!".

"Foreign policy is about safeguarding our national interests; keeping India First, and steering friendships with wisdom and balance. It cannot be reduced to superficial bravado that risks undermining our long-term standing," Kharge said in a post on X.

"Birthday Return Gifts from your 'Abki Baar, Trump Sarkar' Government! -- \$100,000 annual fee on H1B visas hits Indi-



India hopes H1B fee hike disruptions addressed

India Saturday said the Trump administration's decision to raise the annual fee for H1B visas to a whopping \$1,00,000 is likely to have "humanitarian consequences" and hoped that the "disruptions" will be addressed "suitably" by Washington. As a proclamation signed by US President Donald Trump on the new visa rules comes into effect Sunday, New Delhi asked all its missions and posts to extend all possible help to Indian nationals who are travelling back to the US in the next 24 hours. The move came after various companies advised H1B visa holders or their family members currently outside America to return or risk being stranded and denied entry into the US. The Trump administration's abrupt roll out of the new visa norms are set to significantly impact Indian technology companies as well as skilled Indian professionals as India was the largest beneficiary of the H1B visa programme in the last few years.

"This measure is likely to have humanitarian consequences by way of the disruption caused for families," External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said. "The government hopes that these disruptions can be addressed suitably by the US authorities," he said, adding the full implications of the move is being studied by all concerned stakeholders.

an tech workers the hardest, 70 per cent of H1B visa holders are Indians and 50 per cent tariff already imposed, a loss of \$2.17 Lakh crore to India is already estimated in 10 sectors alone," Kharge said.

In a post on X, Congress deputy leader in the Lok Sabha Gaurav Gogoi said, "With the recent decision on H1B visas, the American government has

hit at the future of the best and brightest minds from India."

Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav slammed the Union government over the development. Speaking to reporters at the party office in Lucknow, Yadav said, "Your foreign policy has failed in the foreign (countries). Economic policies have failed. You have failed in making relationships."

Panic grips Indian H1B holders

**New York/Washington:** Widespread panic, confusion and concern gripped Indians in the US on H-1B visas Saturday hours after US President Donald Trump's order to impose a staggering \$1,00,000 fee on the work visas, with many cancelling their plans to travel to India. While many cancelled plans to travel at the last minute while waiting to board flights to India, several others already in India are scrambling to return amid lack of clarity after Trump Friday signed a proclamation to raise the H-1B visa fees, weeks before Indian professionals and their families travel to India for Diwali and other year-end holidays. Individuals on H-1B visas as well as those in the US tracking the news spoke to PTI on condition of anonymity and stressed that the underlying emotion among H-1B visa holders and their families right now is that of "a crazy sense of panic" and "worry." There are instances where people have cancelled their travel plans as they were waiting in line to board their flights to India across US airports Friday, the moment news came. An individual told PTI about a person who was to travel to India for their own wedding and who has now cancelled plans amid the uncertainty this proclamation has triggered. "This is a travel ban! Even if a person has a valid H-1B visa stamped on their passport, if they are travelling, or are on vacation, you cannot enter the US unless they have proof of the \$1,00,000 payment. No one knows what the process is, what the fine print is. There's absolute panic," one of the individuals said.

Aam Aadmi Party convenor Arvind Kejriwal took a swipe at PM Modi, saying he appeared to be "helpless".

"Prime Minister ji, do something at least. Why is the Prime Minister of 140 crore people so helpless? Are you unable to handle anything at all?" Kejriwal said on X with a hashtag "hibvisa".

AIMIM leader Asaduddin Owaisi said the "ending of H1B visas was meant to target Indians" and accused the Modi government of reducing foreign policy to "gimmicks".

"That the US is putting its relationship with India at risk

is proof that it does not care about our strategic value. We are a strategic partner of the US, and if they don't see us as allies, then it is a failure of this government," the Hyderabad MP said, noting Indians, especially people from Telangana and Andhra, were the biggest beneficiaries of the H1B visa system, which US President Donald Trump "has essentially ended".

"My complaint is not against Trump, he did what he wanted. My quarrel is with this government: what did you achieve with Howdy Modi and Namaste Trump?" Owaisi said on X.

Maha tribal farmers can lease land to private entities: Min

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, Sept 20:** Maharashtra Revenue Minister Chandrashekhar Bawankule Saturday said tribal farmers in the state will soon be able to lease their barren land to private entities, enabling them to generate additional income, and a law regarding this will be introduced.

The Congress, however, alleged that the government's decision will benefit industrialists and lead to the exploitation of tribals.

Officials said the move would not only provide tribals an opportunity to have a steady source of income but also safeguard their ownership rights.

Talking to reporters in Nagpur, Bawankule said, "Tribal landowners will benefit from this decision. If a tribal farmer wants to develop his land in partnership with an industrialist, he can now approach the district collector and take



the final decision. Earlier, such proposals had to be approved at Mantralaya, the state administrative headquarters in Mumbai."

He, however, clarified that the proposed law will apply only to barren land and not fertile land owned by tribals.

"I have received several requests from tribal landowners in Palghar and Nandurbar districts. If a private company wants to set up solar panels under a govern-

ment scheme, it can enter into an agreement with the tribal landowner, who will continue to receive a fixed annual payment. Such income would not be possible from barren land," Bawankule said.

He said that the proposed legislation would also safeguard tribal ownership, as even if land is leased for a longer period, the owner would continue to receive payments annually from the entity with whom the agreement is made.



Artists prepare an effigy of the demon king Ravana for the upcoming Dussehra festival, in Prayagraj, Saturday

Vaishnaw conducts breakthrough of bullet train tunnel

Calling it a 'landmark achievement', Vaishnaw, who initiated the breakthrough of the tunnel, said that the first phase of the high-speed corridor on the Surat-Bilimora section will start in December 2027

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, Sept 20:** The Mumbai-Ahmedabad bullet train project will act as a "multiplier" for India's economy the way it did when the high speed service was first introduced more than six decades ago in Japan, Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said Saturday.

He was speaking to reporters after a breakthrough was achieved for a 4.88 km-long tunnel between Shilphata and Ghansoli for the project this morning.

Calling it a "landmark achievement", Vaishnaw, who initiated the breakthrough of the tunnel, said that the first phase of the high-speed corridor on the Surat-Bilimora section will start in December 2027.

"The world's first bullet train, connecting major centres like Tokyo, Nagoya, and Osaka, created a multiplier effect on Japan's entire economy. Similarly, this project will unite Anand, Ahmedabad, Vadodra, Surat, Vapi, and Mumbai into a single economic corridor," he said at the Ghansoli shaft of the tunnel.

It will create unified markets and accelerate economic growth along the entire route, while also facilitating knowledge transfer and economic integration, Vaishnaw said.

"The economic gains will far exceed the initial investment through higher productivity and business expansion," he pointed out.

The tunnel excavation was carried out simultaneously from the Ghansoli and Shilphata



ta sides, with teams advancing toward each other through challenging underwater terrain.

"It is a remarkable feat. The project showcases cutting-edge engineering innovations that have earned international

recognition. The use of single tunnel technology to accommodate two bullet trains and deployment of 40-meter girders in viaduct construction represent significant technical achievements," he said.

The Japanese partners in the project have praised this technological innovation for its efficiency and design excellence, he said, adding that India has gained substantial knowhow in this regard. Vaishnaw said he met the Japanese delegation led by the Vice Minister a day before to review the project, during which both sides expressed satisfaction at the progress.

Discussions were also held on introducing the latest E10 Shinkansen (Japan's next-generation bullet train) in India, he said. Japan has agreed to provide India with this advanced train system, Vaishnaw said.

The minister said the bullet train will be the "transport for the middle class", and the fares will be "reasonable".

He said that the Google Maps app shows the journey time be-

tween Mumbai and Ahmedabad as nine hours, but people will be able to cover the distance in two hours and seven minutes on the bullet train.

The first phase of the bullet train project will be launched on the Surat-Bilimora section in 2027, covering Thane in 2028 and the Bandra Kurla Complex in 2029, Vaishnaw said.

The Union minister said 320 kilometres of viaduct have been completed, while station construction is advancing swiftly across all sites. River bridges are being systematically built, and the Sabarmati tunnel is nearing completion, he added.

There will be no need for ticket reservations for travel between Mumbai and Ahmedabad, and passengers can arrive at the station and board, the minister said.



of the day

quote

HERE NOW

We have to recognise the legitimate right of Palestinian people to have a state

EMMANUEL MACRON | PRESIDENT, FRANCE



HERE NOW

It is time to turn off the tap. I now call on member states to quickly endorse these new sanctions. We want Russia to leave the battlefield and come to the negotiation table, and this is the way to give peace a real chance


URSULA VON DER LEYEN | PRESIDENT, EUROPEAN COMMISSION



HERE NOW

They were intended to treat malnourished children in Gaza City, where famine is declared ... it was a life-saving shipment amid the severe restrictions on aid delivery to Gaza City

AMMAR AMMAR | SPOKESPERSON, UNICEF



SHORT TAKES

‘Midway Blitz’: ICE nabs 550 in Chicago

**Park Ridge(US):** Immigration enforcement officials have arrested almost 550 people as part of an operation in the Chicago area that launched a little less than two weeks ago, the Department of Homeland Security said Friday. The updated figure came hours after a senior immigration official revealed in an interview with The Associated Press that more than 400 people had been arrested in the operation so far. The figures offer an early gauge of what is shaping up as a major enforcement effort that comes after similar operations were launched in Los Angeles and Washington, DC. ICE launched its Chicago area operation dubbed “Midway Blitz” September 8, drawing concern from activists and immigrant communities who say there’s been a noticeable uptick in immigration enforcement agents.

Canada bans Irish rap group Kneecap

**Toronto:** The Canadian government banned the Irish-language rap group Kneecap from the country Friday, saying the group has endorsed political violence and terrorism. The group has faced criticism for political statements seeming to glorify militant groups like Hamas and Hezbollah. Hungary previously banned the group. Liberal lawmaker Vince Gasparro, parliamentary secretary for combating crime, said Kneecap has “publicly displayed support for terrorist organisations such as Hezbollah and Hamas” that goes beyond artistic expression.“Canada stands firmly against hate speech, incitement to violence and the glorification of terrorism,” Gasparro said in a video on social media. “Political debate and free speech are vital to our democracy, but open endorsements of terrorist groups are not free speech.”

19 killed as migrant boat capsizes

**Cairo:** The bodies of 19 people were recovered after the rubber migrant boat they were in sank off the eastern Libyan coast, the International Organization for Migration said. The boat, which was carrying more than 70 Sudanese and South Sudanese nationals, sailed on September 9 from a beach near the town of Kambout and sank the same day, an IOM spokesperson told The Associated Press Friday. A total of 14 people were rescued five days later, while 42 others remain missing, the IOM said.

RUSSIA’S EUROPEAN BLITZ

European diplomats, once heartened by Trump’s engagement with NATO, now worried

REUTERS

**Washington, Sept 20:** Pentagon officials sat down with a group of European diplomats in late August and delivered a stern message: The US planned to cut off some security assistance to Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia, all NATO members bordering Russia.

More broadly, Pentagon official David Baker told the group, according to an official with direct knowledge of the comments, Europe needed to be less dependent on the US Under President Donald Trump, the US military would be shifting its attention to other priorities, like defense of the homeland.

Some European diplomats fretted that the move could embolden Russian President Vladimir Putin.

On Friday, they may have been proven right.

Russian MiG-31 jets entered Estonian airspace for roughly 10 minutes, Estonia said, before being chased away by Italian F-35s. Russia denied violating Estonian airspace, saying its jets flew over neutral waters.

Hours later, Russian jets buzzed a Polish oil platform, Warsaw said. Last week, Russian drones were downed in Poland.

The US response to those incidents has so far been muted.



With tensions already high because of the war in Ukraine, the incursion came just over a week after more than 20 Russian drones entered Polish airspace on the night of September 9-10. That prompted NATO jets to down some of them and Western officials to say Russia was testing the alliance's readiness and resolve

Trump did not address the latest incursion for several hours, before saying it could be "big trouble." After last week's Polish incident, he posted cryptically on his Truth Social app: "Here we go!"

His responses appear to fit an emerging pattern.

After months of proposing both ideas to solve or intermediate some of the world's most intractable conflicts, Trump has largely withdrawn from diplomacy in recent weeks. Instead, he has allowed and

in some cases pressed allies to take the lead, with only distant promises of US help.

He has increasingly turned his attention to domestic issues, like tackling crime, confronting what he calls violent left-wing extremism and overhauling a major visa program.

MERCURIAL PRESIDENT, EXHAUSTED DIPLOMATS

The president's latest zig could easily be followed by a zag. In April and May, he publicly floated walking away from the war in Ukraine, only to

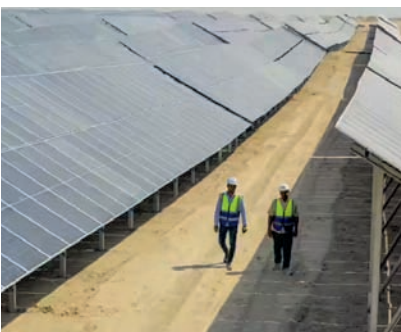


We are determined to defend freedom and democracy and a sustainable Taiwan

LAI CHING-TE | PRESIDENT, TAIWAN

IRAQ TURNS TO SOLAR ENERGY

Iraq is set to open the country's first industrial-scale solar plant on Sunday in a vast expanse of desert in Karbala province, southwest of Baghdad. It's part of a new push by the government to expand renewable energy production in a country that is frequently beset by electricity crises despite being rich in oil and gas



China widens social media crackdown

AGENCE-FRANCE PRESSE

**Beijing, Sept 20:** China's internet regulator said Saturday it would take "disciplinary and punitive measures" against popular apps Weibo and Kuaishou for highlighting celebrity news and "undesirable" content, extending a crackdown on social media platforms.

The Cyberspace Administration of China (CAC) said the measures would include "summonses for interviews, injunctions to correct breaches within a specified period, warnings and strict sanctions against those responsible".

The announcement followed similar action taken by the CAC last week against the Instagram-like Xiaohongshu, known as Rednote in English.

Chinese authorities require social media platforms to use moderation, with content strictly controlled to avoid anything deemed to be too subversive, vulgar, pornographic or generally harmful.

The CAC criticised Weibo and Kuaishou for "failing to fulfil their primary responsibility" in separate but almost identical statements Saturday.

It singled out rankings for the most popular searches on the two apps and "particularly content that over-hypes the activities of celebrities, as well as trivial posts".

The CAC accused Weibo of "damaging the online ecosystem" and Kuaishou of contributing to the excessive spread of celebrity content deemed "frivolous".

Cyberattack disrupts European airports



REUTERS

**Brussels, Sept 20:** A cyberattack on a provider of check-in and boarding systems has disrupted operations at several major European airports including London's Heathrow, the continent's busiest, causing flight delays and cancellations Saturday.

Collins Aerospace, which provides systems for several airlines at airports globally, is experiencing a technical issue that may cause delays for departing passengers, Heathrow Airport said, having warned of delays.

Brussels Airport and Berlin Airport were also affected by the attack, they said in separate statements.

RTX, Collins Aerospace's parent company, said it had become aware of a "cyber-related disruption" to its software at selected airports, without naming them.

- London's Heathrow, airports in Berlin, Brussels affected by disruption
- RTX experiencing 'cyber-related disruption' in airport software
- Electronic check-in, baggage drop affected, RTX says

"The impact is limited to electronic customer check-in and baggage drop and can be mitigated with manual check-in operations," RTX said in an e-mailed statement, adding that it was working to fix the issue as quickly as possible.

The attack has rendered automated systems inoperable, allowing only manual check-in and boarding procedures, Brussels Airport said on its website, adding the incident had occurred on Friday night.

"This has a large impact on the flight schedule and will unfortunately cause delays and cancellations," it said.

Saudi to defend Pak against India: Asif

Pak's defence minister draws parallels with Article 5 of the NATO agreement that refers to 'collective defence', which essentially means a military attack against one bloc member is an attack on all

AGENCIES

**Islamabad, Sept 20:** Saudi Arabia will defend Pakistan in the event of India declaring war on its neighbour, Pak Defence Minister Khawaja Asif told reporters in Islamabad Friday, emphasising the 'strategic mutual assistance' component of the deal two countries signed this week.

"Yes, absolutely. There is no doubt about it..." Asif told Geo TV, a Pak news channel, drawing parallels with Article 5 of the NATO agreement that refers to 'collective defence', which essentially means a military attack against one bloc member is an attack on all.

The Pak minister, however, stressed the deal with Saudi Arabia is a 'defensive' rather than 'offensive' arrangement', again drawing parallels with NATO. "If there is aggression, whether against Saudi Arabia or Pakistan, we will jointly defend against it," he told Geo TV.

"We have no intention of



If there is aggression, whether against Saudi Arabia or Pakistan, we will jointly defend against it

KHAWAJA ASIF | DEFENCE MINISTER, PAKISTAN

using this pact for any aggression," Asif told Reuters separately. "But if the parties are threatened, then obviously this arrangement will become operative." He also confirmed Pakistan's nuclear weapons are available for Saudi Arabia's use, although the former's stated doctrine says the warheads are for use only against India.

"Our capabilities will absolutely be available under this pact," he said, noting also that Pak had always allowed inspections of its nuclear facilities and never committed violations. A senior Saudi official,

asked if the deals means Pak is now obliged to offer a nuclear shield, told Reuters. "This is a comprehensive defensive agreement that encompasses all military means."

The 'mutual defence' agreement was signed during Pak Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's visit to Riyadh this week. According to reports, a key clause of this pact states that "any aggression against either country shall be considered an aggression against both".

In response, the Indian government said the Pak-Saudi pact "formalises a long-standing arrangement between the two countries" and that the implications are being considered.

Military and political analysts told Reuters the deal effec-

Nations ratify world’s first treaty to protect int’l waters

The high seas are home to an array of marine life and are crucial in regulating Earth’s climate – they absorb heat and carbon dioxide and generate half the oxygen we breathe

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Seattle(US), Sept 20:** A major agreement to protect marine diversity in the high seas was struck Friday when Morocco became the 60th nation to sign on, paving the way for the trea-

ty to take effect next year.

The High Seas Treaty is the first legal framework aimed at protecting biodiversity in international waters, those that lie beyond the jurisdiction of any single country. International waters account for nearly two-thirds of the ocean and nearly half of Earth's surface and are vulnerable to threats including overfishing, climate change and deep-sea mining.

"The high seas are the world's largest crime scene — they're unmanaged, unenforced, and a regulatory legal structure is absolutely necessary," said Johan Bergenas, senior vice president of oceans at the World Wildlife Fund.

Still, the pact's strength is uncertain as some of the world's



biggest players — the US, China, Russia and Japan — have yet to ratify. The US and China have signed, signaling intent to align with the treaty's objectives without creating legal obligations, while Japan

and Russia have been active in preparatory talks.

Ratification triggers a 120-day countdown for the treaty to take effect. But much more work remains to flesh out how it will be implemented,

The high seas are the world's largest crime scene — they're unmanaged, unenforced, and a regulatory legal structure is absolutely necessary

JOHAN BERGENAS | SENIOR VP OF OCEANS, WORLD WILDLIFE FUND

financed and enforced.

"You need bigger boats, more fuel, more training and a different regulatory system," Bergenas said. "The treaty is foundational — now begins the hard work."

The treaty is also essential to achieving what's known as the "30x30" target — an international pledge to protect 30 per cent of the planet's land and sea by 2030.

The treaty creates a legal

process for countries to establish marine protected areas in those waters, including rules for potentially destructive activities like deep-sea mining and geoengineering schemes. It also establishes a framework for technology-sharing, funding mechanisms and scientific collaboration among countries.

Crucially, decisions under the treaty will be made multilaterally through what are known as conferences of parties, rather than by individual countries acting alone.

Within one year of the treaty taking effect, countries will meet to make decisions about implementation, financing and oversight, and only countries that ratify before then will have voting rights.



# business

## of the day quote

All the efforts that were taken to promote the 'Make In India' programme have started yielding results

**PYUSH GOYAL** | COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY MINISTER

C-DOT lab is highly beneficial and would help in saving the lives of citizens, including the fishermen community. This engagement has set the stage for deeper, forward-looking collaboration in emergency alerting and telecom innovation

**AVINASH RAMTOMUL** | MAURITIUS MINISTER, IT

Glad to know from Jurgen Westermeyer, MD, Airbus India that Airbus is sourcing \$1 billion+ worth components and has 100+ Indian suppliers

**ASHWINI VAISHNAW** | UNION MINISTER ELECTRONICS AND IT

## SHORT TAKES

### Amul cuts price

**New Delhi:** Amul brand, Saturday announced reduction of retail prices of more than 700 product packs, including ghee, butter ice cream, bakery and frozen snacks, as it decided to pass on benefits of the GST rate cut to consumers. The new price will be effective from September 22. In a statement, Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation (GCMMF) announced revision in price list of more than 700 product packs, offering full benefit of GST reduction to its customers, effective September 22, 2025. The MRP of butter (100 gm) has been reduced to Rs 58 from Rs 62. Ghee rates have been cut by Rs 40 to Rs 610 per litre. The MRP of Amul processed cheese block (1kg) has been cut by Rs 30 to Rs 545 per kg. The new MRP of frozen paneer (200 gm) will be Rs 95 from September 22 as against Rs 99 now.

### Apple to clock record sales

**New Delhi:** US tech giant Apple is set to achieve its highest festive-sales count in India, with analysts forecasting a 28 per cent year-on-year sales increase in 2025 owing to the early success of the iPhone 17 series. Counterpoint research forecasted record growth in sales owing to an aggressive n-1 strategy during the festive season, and the 17 series performed better than the 16 series. Analysts said that the first week of sales for the iPhone 17 series is 19 per cent higher than the iPhone 16 series.

### Sampre Nutritions approves bonus issue

**New Delhi:** Health and confectionery products manufacturer Sampre Nutritions Saturday said its board has approved proposals for a bonus issue and split of equity shares. The company board in its meeting September 19 approved the subdivision of one equity share having a face value of Rs 10 into two equity shares of face value Rs 5 each, Sampre Nutritions said in a statement. The board also approved a bonus issue of equity shares in the ratio of 1:1, one bonus equity share of face value Rs 5 each for every one fully paid up equity share of Rs 5 each. Sampre said it has a balance of free reserves of Rs 59.86 crore in the securities premium account as of March 31, 2025. The bonus issue requires a balance of Rs 21.55 crore.



I was fortunate to graduate in 2005, when H-1B norms were far more favourable in the US. But things changed quickly in 2008 during the financial crisis -- many Indian students felt upset, lost, and stuck. India of 2025 is far more exciting place for talented students:

**RADHIKA GUPTA** | CEO, EDELWEISS MUTUAL FUND

## INDIA TOPS IN FDI STOCKS IN NEPAL

According to a study released recently by the Nepal Rastra Bank (NRB), the Central Bank, the FDI stock from India topped the chart. FDI stock is the total accumulated value of Foreign Direct Investments over time. According to the Survey Report on Foreign Direct Investment in Nepal (2023-24), the total FDI stock, India ranked in the top position (32.3 per cent), followed by China (10.2 per cent), Singapore (8.3 per cent), Ireland (6.9 per cent), and South Korea (6.1 per cent)



# Nasscom urges cos to bring H1B staff back to US

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Sept 20:** Nasscom has urged its member companies to urgently get their H1B employees who are currently outside America, to return to the US, amid the tight one-day countdown to visa fee hike implementation, Shivendra Singh, Vice President of the apex industry body said Saturday.

Singh referred to the H1B visa as a critical cog in the operations of both US and Indian companies.

"This particular move has come at a time when the technology is evolving at such a rapid pace, with AI and other front-end technologies gaining space to make the US the number one economy and the need to sustain American innovation leadership. This is something which is going to disrupt the system for some time, given the fact that not enough transition time was given. It was one day's deadline for professionals to return," he said.

Nasscom believes that more consultations with the industry should have taken place before a significant move like this was put in place. It said the US' move to raise H-1B visa application fee to \$100,000 will impact India's technology ser-

## H1B VISA FEE HIKE



vices companies as business continuity will be disrupted for onshore projects which may require "adjustments".

The association also flagged concerns over September 21 timeline for implementation saying a one-day deadline creates considerable uncertainty for businesses, professionals, and students across the world.

India's technology services companies will also be impacted as business continuity will be disrupted for onshore projects which may require adjustments. "Companies will work closely with clients to adapt and manage transitions,"

Nasscom added.

US President Donald Trump Friday signed a proclamation that will raise the fee for H1B visas to a steep \$100,000 annually. The H-1B visa fee ranges from about \$2,000 to \$5,000, depending on employer size and other costs.

Indian techies are among the main beneficiaries of the US H1B visa program, which attracts top talent and expertise from around the globe. The Congressional mandated pool is 650,000 such visas every year, along with an additional 20,000 visas reserved for those who have earned advanced degrees in the US.

## H M Bangur receives Honorary Doctorate

**Bhubaneswar:** H M Bangur, Chairman of Shree Cement, was Saturday awarded an Honorary Doctorate by the Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology (KIIT) in recognition of his leadership in Indian industry and commitment to sustainability and social responsibility.

Bangur said, "This recognition is not mine alone—it belongs to every colleague, mentor, partner, and community that has shaped our journey." He highlighted Odisha's role as a key growth driver, adding, "Odisha will remain a cornerstone of India's growth story, and as we expand our presence, we are committed to building a modern, green cement business that creates enduring value for stakeholders while contributing to India's sustainable future."



## TPSODL's power push for Ganjam

**Berhampur:** A major milestone in Ganjam's power infrastructure was achieved with the commissioning of a new 33KV line from the Hinjili Grid Sub-Station to the Sheragada Primary Sub-Station. The project was carried out by TPSODL, under the ODSSP V scheme (MukhyaMantri Shakti BikasJojana) at a cost of about ₹6 crore. It is set to benefit more than 40,000 consumers across 22 Gram Panchayats in Sheragada block.

The new line, 18 km in length and built with 148 sq mm conductor, will strengthen supply to four Primary Sub-Stations, Adapada, Sheragada, Karadakana, and Palashpur, in the area. This will ensure stable and quality electricity for households, farmers, and small businesses. Amit Kumar Garg, CEO of TPSODL, said, "This project reflects our commitment in strengthening rural power infrastructure. With the new line, consumers of Sheragada will enjoy more reliable, stable, and quality electricity. Our focus remains on building a robust network that supports households, farmers, and local businesses."



# SEBI eases securities transfer process

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi, Sept 20:** In a move aimed at reducing confusion and easing compliance, capital markets regulator Security Exchange Board of India (SEBI) Friday simplified the process of transferring securities from nominees to legal heirs.

In a circular issued, the regulator said that from January 1, 2026, all reporting entities, including depositories, listed companies, RTAs and depos-

itory participants, will be required to use a new code "TLH" (Transmission to Legal Heirs) while reporting such transfers to the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT).

Currently, when securities are passed on from a nominee to a legal heir, the transaction is sometimes treated as a taxable "transfer" and assessed under capital gains provisions.

Although Section 47(iii) of the Income Tax Act exempts such transmissions, the error



often forces investors to seek refunds later, causing unnecessary inconvenience.

To address this issue, SEBI had set up a working group that consulted with CBDT and recommended the adoption of a standard reporting code.

"It has been decided that a standard reason code viz. 'TLH' shall be used by the reporting entities while reporting the transmission of securities from nominee to legal heir, to the CBDT so as to enable proper application of the provisions of the Income Tax Act, 1961," SEBI said in its circular.

transfer process.

When an employee changes jobs, this transfer certificate guarantees that their pension service and PF accumulations are correctly transferred to a new account.

According to the Labour Ministry, the new rule will guarantee a smoother transfer process, enable employees to check the status of their transfer applications online, and confirm the accuracy of their PF balance and service period in the new account.

By logging into the EPFO member portal, going to the



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi, Sept 20:** The Employees Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) has introduced a significant change that will make it easier for professionals to transfer their provident fund balance when switching jobs.

Members can now download Annexure K, a crucial document needed for PF transfers, straight from the EPFO Member Portal, according to a circular released earlier this week by the Union Labour Ministry.

Until now, employees could only access Annexure K upon request, and it was only shared between PF offices, which frequently caused delays and inconvenience. By giving members immediate online access to the document, the reform seeks to improve convenience and transparency.

Because it includes detailed information about an employee's provident fund account, including member information, the PF balance with interest, full service history, job details, and joining and exit dates, Annexure K is essential for the PF

online services section, selecting "Track Claim Status," and then selecting the option to download Annexure K in PDF format, employees can obtain the document.

Steps to download Annexure K: Log in to the EPFO member portal using your details, go to 'Online Services', select 'Track Claim Status', and click on 'Download Annexure K'.

Earlier, Union Minister for Labour and Employment, Mansukh Mandaviya, also introduced a new facility called 'Passbook Lite' which will enable members to easily check their passbook and related summarised view of their contributions, withdrawals and balance in a simple and convenient format through the member portal itself - without having to go to the passbook portal

As part of the changes made to guarantee that members receive effective, transparent, and user-friendly services, the EPFO has added a new feature called "Passbook Lite" to its member portal.

The regulator has in recent months taken several steps to streamline processes related to nomination and transmission of securities.

Earlier, SEBI had simplified the appointment of nominees to ensure smooth transfer of securities after the death of an investor.

Nominees act as trustees and are required to pass on the securities to the rightful legal heir as per the succession plan.

ing startups and the Make in India initiative.

Additionally, Daily food items like UHT milk, roti, paratha, paneer, and packaged snacks bear a rough under 5 per cent or a Nil tax slab, easing household expenses.

The GST rationalisation also promotes affordability, healthier lifestyles, and improved ease of living for youth and households.

The Union government has also lowered the indirect tax on cement from 28 per cent to 18 per cent, lowering housing and infrastructure costs.

By simplifying tax structures, reducing rates across key industries, and addressing

long-standing anomalies, these reforms are designed to create an enabling environment for entrepreneurship, job creation, and affordable living.

Sectors with high youth participation, such as education, automobiles, technology, handicrafts, footwear, healthcare, food processing, and textiles —have been prioritised to lower costs, boost competitiveness, and encourage innovation.

Beyond reducing the financial burden on households and businesses, the reforms strengthen India's vision of inclusive growth, sustainability, and empowerment of the next generation.



# GST reforms assure commitment to empower youth, inclusive growth

*By simplifying tax structures, reducing rates across key industries, and addressing long-standing anomalies, these reforms are designed to create an enabling environment for entrepreneurship, job creation, and affordable living.*

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Sept 20:** The recent Goods and Services Tax (GST) reforms represent a landmark step in reshaping India's taxation system to better serve the aspirations of its youth, the Union Government said Saturday.

GST on leather, footwear, textiles, handicrafts, and toys has been reduced to 5

per cent to boost youth-led MSMEs and exports. Meanwhile, Essential learning materials like pencils, erasers, and exercise books have been made GST-free to ease education costs.

GST on gyms or fitness centres was slashed from 18 per cent to 5 per cent, making fitness more affordable and accessible. At the same time, the tax rates on two-wheelers

(under 350cc) and small cars have been reduced from 28 per cent to 18 per cent, enhancing youth mobility.

Moreover, Healthcare has been made affordable with GST

on medicines cut to 5 per cent or to Nil, while health insurance is exempted from GST.

The government has also introduced a uniform 5 per cent GST on drones, support-



# Mandhana's ton in vain

Smriti Mandhana's second-fastest hundred in women's ODIs goes waste as India's quest for a world-record chase in the series-deciding third game against Australia ended in a 43-run defeat

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 20: Smriti Mandhana's heroics couldn't trump Beth Mooney's master-class as Australia reinforced their dominance over India with a 43-run victory in the third women's ODI, clinching their 11th bilateral series against the hosts, here Saturday.

Mooney's blistering 138 off 79 balls powered Australia to their joint-highest ODI total of 412 all out. It was also Australia's highest-ever total against India, surpassing their 371/8 in Brisbane last year.

The Australian bowlers then held their nerve, weathering a 121-run stand between Mandhana (125 off 63 balls) and skipper Harmanpreet Kaur (52 off 35 balls), and a late onslaught by Deepti Sharma (72 off 58 balls) to bowl out India for 369



and preserve their 100 per cent series win record by taking the three-match contest 2-1.

Had India succeeded, they would have eclipsed the world record for the highest successful run chase which is currently held by Sri Lanka, who chased down 302 against South Africa in Potchefstroom in 2024.

On a day when boundaries flowed freely, India conceded a staggering 60 fours and five sixes. In contrast, Australia allowed 39 fours and seven sixes in their defence, a gulf that ultimately proved decisive.

India's fielding unit also floundered yet again with dropped chances and misfields, punctuated only by occasional flashes of brilliance like Deepti's one-handed return catch to get rid of Grace Harris.

Chasing a daunting 413, Mandhana blended elegance with belligerence to continue her dazzling form. Her second consecutive century, a 50-ball masterclass was the fastest by an Indian in ODIs, eclipsing her own mark of 70 balls. She hit five sixes.

Partnering with Harmanpreet, she kept the run rate well above par as the duo raced along at ten an over.

After early dismissals of Pratika Rawal (10) and Harleen Deol (11), Mandhana, who was dropped on 53, and Harmanpreet steadied India with a smart mix of singles and boundaries.

Their partnership silenced Australia's attack and kept the Kotla crowd buzzing. But momentum shifted in the 20th over when Harmanpreet, after taking a medical break, fell lbw in the very next ball.

An over later, Mandhana miscued a lofted stroke to deep

backward square, plunging the stadium into silence.

With the two gone, Deepti hit five boundaries and a couple of sixes to keep the chase alive but with wickets kept tumbling, India were unable to cross the line.

Earlier, Mooney matched the searing Delhi heat with a dazzling innings.

If Mooney's whirlwind knock, her highest score in ODIs, lit up the middle overs, young opener Georgia Voll (81), Ellyse Perry (68) and skipper Alyssa Healy (30) provided the early fireworks after electing to bat first.

India's bowling attack looked toothless on a flat Kotla track. The team made inroads at the fag end, but the damage had already been done.

## Brief scores:

**Australia** 412 all out in 47.5 overs (Beth Mooney 138, Georgia Voll 81; Arundhati Reddy 3-86, Deepti Sharma 2-75) beat **India** 369 all out in 47 overs (Smriti Mandhana 125, Deepti Sharma 72; Kim Garth 3-69, Megan Schutt 2-53) by 43 runs

## Ganguly, Harbhajan among frontrunners in BCCI chief race

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Sept 20: With the BCCI's Annual General Meeting (AGM) set for September 28 in Mumbai, the race for the board's presidency has narrowed to a clutch of high-profile names.

The Final Electoral Roll, released by Electoral Officer AK Joti September 19, features four former cricketers and administrators — Sourav Ganguly (Cricket Association of Bengal), Harbhajan Singh (Punjab Cricket Association), Raghuram Bhat (Karnataka State Cricket Association) and Jaydev Shah (Saurashtra Cricket Association) — who are seen as frontrunners for the top post. Their presence has strengthened calls for cricketer-administrators to lead the world's richest cricket body.

Adding intrigue is Kiran More, the former India wicketkeeper, ex-national selector and current Baroda Cricket Association secretary. Though not listed as a state representative in the roll, sources indicate a provision exists for his nomination. More, who has also worked with Mumbai Indians and is currently General Manager of the MI Women's side in the WPL, is regarded as a seasoned hand with both cricketing and administrative credentials.

Speculation had briefly swirled around Sachin Tendulkar, but the batting legend has categorically denied interest.

According to reports, an informal meeting on the top post is expected in New Delhi Saturday. The election process opens with nominations from September 20, scrutiny and the final list of candidates September 23, and voting during the AGM September 28.



## WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

### India ends on wrestling low

Antim was the lone medal winner for the country



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Zagreb, Sept 20: India's Greco-Roman wrestlers continued to struggle at the World Wrestling Championships with all three in action Saturday getting eliminated early, bringing an end to the abject show by the country at this year's edition.

Sunny Kumar, competing in the 63kg category, lost 1-3 to Aref Hosseinkhoun Mohammadi while Anil (67kg) could not score a single point against Qa-

tar's Gagik M Snjoyan, losing his 116 round 0-7.

Karan Kamboj (87kg) lost his Qualification round by technical superiority to American Payton Jacobson. Earlier in the competition, Suraj Vashishth (60kg) reached the quarterfinals, showing promise for future.

However, the rest of the team faced early eliminations.

Antim Panghal was the lone medal winner for India, bagging a hard-fought bronze in women's 53kg weight class.

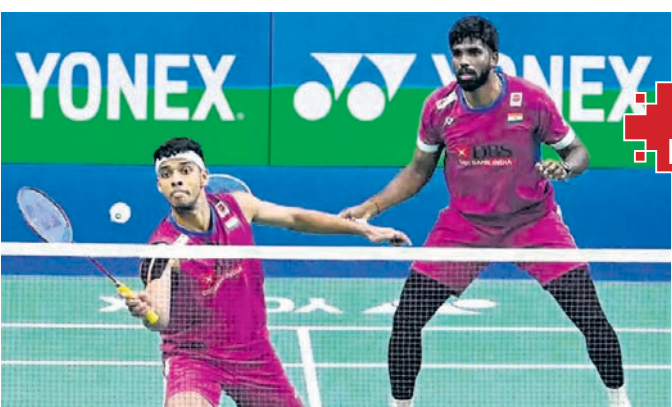
# Sat-Chi storm into 2nd final of season

The Indian pair, seeded eighth in this BWF World Series event, outclassed second-seeded Malaysia's Aaron Chia and Soh Wooi Yik, clinching a dominant straight-games victory 21-17, 21-14

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Shenzhen (China), Sept 20: The top Indian men's doubles pair, Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty, stormed into their second final of the season with a commanding performance at the China Masters 2025 here Saturday.

The Indian pair, seeded eighth in this BWF World Series event, outclassed second-seeded



Malaysia's Aaron Chia and Soh Wooi Yik, clinching a dominant straight-games victory 21-17, 21-14 in 41 minutes at the Shenzhen Arena here.

In the final, the Indian pair will take on the winner of the second semifinal clash between the top-seeded Korean pair, Won Ho Kim and Seung Jae

Seo and the Indonesian combination of Fajar Alfian and Muhammad Shohibul Fikri.

In the semifinal clash Saturday, Rankireddy and Shetty took an early lead as the two sides went neck and neck with lead changing hands regularly till 13-13, from where the Indian pair slowly built a 19-14 lead

## 'GRUDGE MATCH'

# INDIA, PAK MEET AGAIN IN CLASH OF UNEQUALS

Amid rising tensions, Men in Blue aim for another dominant show against Pakistan Sunday

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dubai, Sept 20: Skipper Suryakumar Yadav will depend heavily on his spin troika as India gear up for yet another demolition act of Pakistan in what promises to be an intense and tense Super 4 face-off of the Asia Cup here Sunday.

There have been numerous tense build-ups to Indo-Pak men's cricket matches in the past but 'surface tension' wasn't as visible as it has been in this case after last Sunday when Suryakumar and his team's decision to not shake hands with the rivals triggered a storm.

It is understood that the Indian team is likely to maintain the policy against the neighbours this Sunday too and handshakes might not be the order of the day even as Pakistani players and their supporters look at the game as a "Grudge Match".

Sundays are not always the most relaxed days and skipper Suryakumar, who anchored India's chase in their seven-wicket win on the previous one, would vouch for it.

In this tournament, Suryakumar is expected to be the best batter, a tactical genius and also an ambassador for his country - all rolled into one.

Before the Pakistan game, Surya needed to check all the important players in the line-up and it is very clear that Harshit Rana and Arshdeep Singh didn't look the part as little-known Pakistan-born Oman players - 43-year-old Aamir Kaleem and Hammad Mirza - thrashed the out-of-sync duo.

On Sunday though, one will get to see Jasprit Bumrah, whose mere presence lifts the



Close your room, switch off your phone and sleep. I think that's the best thing. It's easy to say, but sometimes it is difficult because you meet a lot of friends, you go out for dinner and you have a lot of players who like to see all these things so it's very difficult

SURYAKUMAR YADAV | SKIPPER, INDIA

## Pycroft to officiate Indo-Pak match again, Pakistan cancel media interaction

are two batters, who are trying to hit out of trouble and only Shaheen Shah Afridi, to everyone's surprise, has looked like the best batter in the squad.

Unlike the last game against India when Pakistan played a third spinner in left-armers Sufiyan Mugeem, there is more chance of fast bowler Haris Rauf getting the nod on Sunday after his impressive show against the UAE in their last group league game.

### Squads:

**India:** Suyakumar Yadav (captain), Abhishek Sharma, Shubman Gill, Tilak Varma, Sanju Samson (wk), Shivam Dube, Hardik Pandya, Kuldeep Yadav, Axar Patel, Varun Chakravathy, Jasprit Bumrah, Rinku Singh, Jitesh Sharma (wk), Arshdeep Singh and Harshit Rana. **Pakistan:** Salman Ali Agha (c), Abrar Ahmed, Faheem Ashraf, Fakhar Zaman, Haris Rauf, Hasan Ali, Hasan Nawaz, Hussain Talat, Khushdil Shah, Mohammad Haris, Mohammad Nawaz, Mohammad Waseem Jnr, Sahibzada Farhan, Saim Ayub, Salman Mirza, Shaheen Afridi, Sufiyan Moqim.

## Defender Jyoti to lead women's hockey team

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 20: Defender Jyoti Singh will lead a 23-member Indian junior women's hockey team on a five-match tour of Australia, scheduled at the National Hockey Centre in Canberra from September 26 to October 2.

The side will play three matches against the Australia junior women's team, followed by two fixtures against Canberra Chill, a club competing in Australia's Hockey One League.

The tour will serve as crucial preparation for the FIH Hockey Women's Junior World Cup 2025, slated to be held in Santiago, Chile, in December.

The squad, featuring a balanced mix of defenders, midfielders and forwards, will be led by Jyoti, who has already broken into the senior team during the FIH Hockey Pro League earlier this year.

Nidhi and Engil Harsha Rani Minz will shoulder the goalkeeping responsibilities, while the defence will comprise Manisha, Jyoti, Lalthanluangi, Mamita Oram, Sakshi Shukla, Puja Sahoo and Nandni.



Their only loss (12-21, 9-21) in the group stage came against Japan's Daiki Kajiware and Keita Nishimura.

WH1-WH2 is meant for wheelchair-bound players.

"Every match is a new challenge, and every medal is a reward for the hard work and support behind me. This bronze motivates me to push harder and represent India on bigger stages," said Abu Hubaida.

Abu Hubaida and Ale are ranked No 4 in the world in men's doubles. The pair is also Asia No 3 in the category.

## PREMIER LEAGUE

# Liverpool beat Everton to maintain perfect start



AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

London, Sept 20: Liverpool stretched their perfect Premier League start to maintain their stranglehold of the Merseyside derby with a 2-1 win over Everton and open up a six-point lead at the top of the table.

Goals from Ryan Gravenberch and Hugo Ekitike were

the defending champions' reward for a dominant first half and enough for a fifth consecutive Premier League win. But Liverpool ran out of steam after the break and were left hanging on after Idrissa Gana Gueye fired Everton back into the contest.

Arne Slot's men had needed late goals to win all of their previous four Premier League games and Champions League opener against Atletico Madrid in midweek.

This time the Reds did the bulk of their good work inside the first 30 minutes to leave Everton still without a win at Anfield in front of a crowd in the 21st century.