

Beginning of the GST Bachat Utsav

on the Auspicious Occasion of Navratri

From today, lower GST rates
are applicable across the Country

On most of the daily use items,
GST is 0% or 5%

Now, primarily only 2 tax slabs



99% of Goods and Services are either tax-free or have a 5% or 18% GST

Groceries  From ***** To ***** 18/12/5% ***** NIL/5% Savings upto 13%	Daily Essentials  From ***** To ***** 18/12% ***** 5% Savings upto 13%	Clothing & Footwear  From ***** To ***** 12% ***** 5% Savings upto 7%
Health & Life Insurance  From ***** To ***** 18% ***** NIL Savings upto 18%	Medicines  From ***** To ***** 12% ***** NIL/5% Savings upto 7-12%	Stationery  From ***** To ***** 5/12% ***** NIL/5% Savings upto 7%

GST rate reduction on these as well

Tractor (upto 1800 cc)  Savings: around ₹40,000	Small Cars (upto 1500 cc)  Savings: around ₹70,000	Bikes/Scooters (upto 350 cc)  Savings: around ₹8,000	Television  Savings: around ₹3,500	Air Conditioner  Savings: around ₹2,800
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Now, every home will have more savings and plenty of happiness



“With these new GST reforms, every family in the country will benefit immensely. Everyone including the poor, the neo-middle class, the middle class, farmers, women, students and youth will gain from the tax reductions.”

Narendra Modi
Prime Minister

GST- Better & Simpler!

For the complete list of
reduced rates & other GST changes
please scan




FORTUNE FORECAST

GaneshaSpeaks.com™

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FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181*

ARIES



A plain Jane day. Work goes on as usual, and there is progress. But as Ganesha says, it's an ordinary day. Hum, whistle, doodle, and sip your green tea. While day dreaming, start planning your dream home. After all, that's where the first plan takes shape.

TAURUS



This is a bright, rosy day for students and scholars, particularly who are engaged in, or are looking forward to higher studies, specializing in a particular professional stream. This a great day for making plans for higher studies abroad. Do not miss this opportunity. Plans made today are likely to materialize. The day also promises to be positive and eventful for employed people, assures Ganesha.

GEMINI




The day will be dedicated to spending quality time with children, predicts Ganesha. You will be overloaded with household responsibilities and will find it tough to deal with them. However, you will manage to do well and will be satisfied with the outcome. Avoid getting too sentimental if you are a parent; also, you may have to act tough with your kids, suggests Ganesha.

CANCER



Today, it will be all about finding your comfort zone, and spending the day there. You are likely to spend most of the day with your close friends. Your smooth demeanour will help you breeze through all business deals. The opposite sex may find you irresistible.

LEO



Most battles are fought and won inside our head. Hence, Ganesha urges you to maintain a positive outlook today. The stars grant you the ability to double your efforts, and allow your imagination to take flight and chart new routes to success. This should curb your frustration of the last few days.

VIRGO




You will charm people with your flexibility of thought and willingness to adjust today. Those under the spell of love will see an unexpected turn of events; but don't panic, as things will eventually work out in your favour. Some quality family time is also on the cards.

LIBRA



Ganesha has a feeling that today may not be the best day to undertake any government dealings. Call it red-tapism, or bureaucratic procrastination, but it is highly unlikely that such tasks shall be fruitful today.

SCORPIO



It is about time you learn to deal with frustration in a more healthy manner. The right choice is always the hardest to make. Do not let sentiments sway you into hasty choices because they may feel right, but might also be extremely impractical. There may some strain on your relationship with near and dear ones. Learn to be patient and calm in the face of adversity, advises Ganesha.

SAGITTARIUS



You will enjoy the magic of the Midas touch today, feels Ganesha. In business, sheer brilliance will help you derive the best possible results in productivity and clinching new contracts. Your approach, in general, will be methodical, disciplined and systematic for most part of the day.

CAPRICORN



You have always been generous by nature, but your benevolent attitude will do you no good, warns Ganesha. People will try, almost blatantly, to take advantage of you, and for once, you will feel that being crafty and unrelenting would have helped kept those blood-sucking leeches at bay. But as the day progresses, you will thank the Almighty for all the precious things he made you the guardian of. Your trust in Him will remain unshaken.

AQUARIUS



You zoom in on research and development today. Your fabulous work speaks volumes and your commitment pays off. You're keen to play Romeo today, and all your gimmicks and surprises will work wonders! Love on, says Ganesha.

PISCES



You set irreproachable standards for yourself, but what keeps your subordinates from grumbling about it is the efforts you make to help them achieve perfection in their endeavours, says Ganesha. You inspire, they aspire.



JENNIFER ANISTON PLANS SILENT MEDITATION RETREAT IN INDIA

Jennifer Aniston is looking to make her next visit to India a deeply spiritual one. In a recent interview, Aniston shared her desire to participate in a silent retreat and explore meditation as part of her journey, marking a shift from her previous, more cinematic experience of Indian culture.

FLANAGAN'S SURPRISE ROMANCE CONFESSION AFTER SPLIT

Helen Flanagan has navigated major personal shifts, from splitting with longtime partner Scott Sinclair to ending her year-long romance with footballer Robbie Talbot in May. Now, the former *Coronation Street* star admits she's ready to date again—though uncertain where to start.



WAMIQA on meaning of life

MUMBAI: Actress Wamiqa Gabbi decided to take a small breather from her hectic schedule and reminded herself that 'life is much more than what we worry about'.

The *Bhool Chuk Maaf* actress took to her official IG and treated her InstaFam with some 'random' photos from her phone. The album enjoys a variety of stills, from getting her makeup done, to some goofy selfies at different occasions - from inside a car, to the set, to a fun getaway.

Effectively putting her state of mind into words, Wamiqa wrote on the photo-sharing app, "What do I call these set of random photos I have in my phone? Random? Does everything in life happen randomly? This chaos that we create

or encounter with, is it a random chaos? It's an organised chaos. It's a journey that is the most beautiful and the most unpredictable- impossible to predict (sic)."

Claiming that the desire that beats every other desire is life itself, she added, "The journey of becoming one with the universe. It's as exciting as it can get. The magic of learning that it offers beats every other desire in life. It's life itself (White heart emoji) This is what I'm feeling today, reminding myself that life is much more than what I worry about (Flower emoji) #PremiqaIsOverwhelmedToday."

Mumbai: Actress Anya Singh, who essays the role of a talent manager in the recently released streaming show *The Ba***ds of Bollywood*, has spoken



up on the importance of an artiste standing their ground in front of the pressures from different facets of filmmaking.

The actress spoke with this news agency during the promotional run of the show, and cited the example of the Yash Raj Films head-honcho Aditya Chopra, who stood his ground with his debut film *Dilwale Dulhania*

Le Jayenge as it broke many prevalent norms of Hindi back in time.

She told, "DDLJ was ly because Chopra stood and made what was. I truly and lieve, and all my that belief, in The lywood that you have like this, at least on Indian OTT platforms. And this is the reason for that, because Aryan Khan, I won't call it stubbornness, but it was his vision, his writing, his characters, and he really stuck by what he wanted to make".

She further mentioned, "I remember, there was a scene where I went and I told him, listen, 'I think it's a bit much'. And he was like, 'But that's the character'".

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Anya speaks about artistic resolve



Vaani's acting approach

MUMABI: Vaani Kapoor recently opened up about her approach to choosing projects, highlighting how she gravitates toward stories and characters that resonate with her on a personal level. At a recent event, the actress explained that she carefully selects roles that spark curiosity, intrigue, or emotional connection, even in subtle ways. "As a human being, anything that connects to me, even in the smallest way, is something I try to pick up. I also feel responsible about my choices, but as an actor, I don't judge my characters," she shared.

Reflecting on her role as a trans woman in *Chandigarh Kare Aashiqui*, Kapoor emphasised the importance of empathy

and humanity in storytelling. She believes that every character becomes soulful when infused with life, allowing audiences to sympathise and understand the diversity of human experiences. "That's the beauty of cinema—you get to live different people, different characters, and different lives. The hope is always that it connects with the audience," she added.

Kapoor also expressed her strong desire to portray celebrated writer Amrita Pritam on screen, calling her life fascinating and worth exploring in cinema. On the work front, she was last seen as an investigative officer in *Mandala Murders*, co-directed by Gopi Puthran.

PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

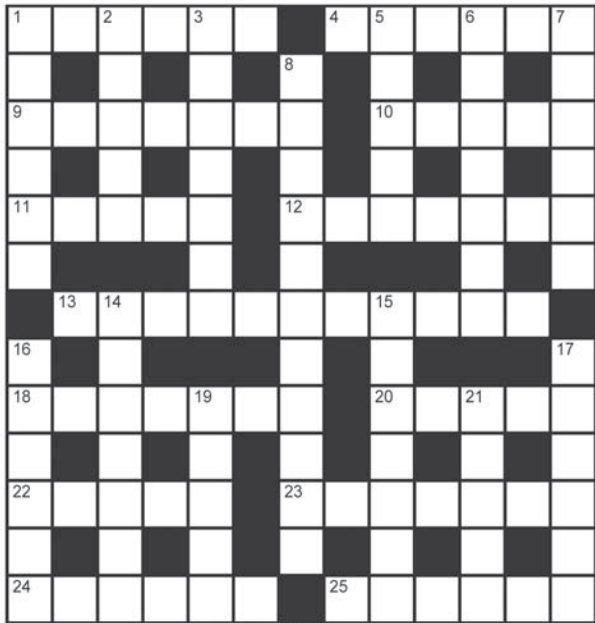


BREVITY



FUN post

CROSSWORD



- Across

1 Airport necessity

4 Cask

9 "Ode on a ____ Urn" (Keats)

10 Tells jokes

11 Bounding main

12 Cotacachi's place

13 Chips, to the Brits (6,5)

18 Goofball

20 Words to remember
- 22 Assists, in a crime

23 On the way (2,5)

24 Ski downhill

25 Building material
- 6 What's left over

7 Sheen

8 Sneaky

14 Web site command

15 Guilt feelings

16 Depth charge targets (1-5)

17 Packing a wallop

19 Sanctuary in the Gobi

21 Hosiery shade

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

SUDOKU

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

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

SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

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

SUDOKU

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



Fertiliser fury

Assembly Opposition Leader Naveen Patnaik slams state government over fertiliser crisis vowing to fight for farmers



Two-state solution

Britain, Canada and Australia all recognise a Palestinian state, in a move borne out of frustration over the Gaza war



Gold to shine

Gold expects to remain buoyant in the coming week as a combination of global monetary easing, festive demand in Asia rising



India dominate Pak

Abhishek Sharma's knock powers India to beat arch rivals Pakistan by six wickets in Asia Cup Super 4s match

DOWNTOWN | **P2**

INTERNATIONAL | **P8**

BUSINESS | **P9**

SPORTS | **BACK PAGE**

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BHUBANESWAR | MONDAY | SEPTEMBER 22, 2025

P1

Get ready for SIR by Sept 30: EC to states

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 21: The Election Commission (EC) has asked its state election officers to get ready for the special intensive revision (SIR) by September 30, in an indication that the apex poll authority could launch the voter list cleanup exercise as early as October-November.

According to officials, at a conference of state chief electoral officers (CEOs) here earlier this month, the EC top brass asked them to be ready for the SIR roll-out in the next 10 to 15 days. But for the sake of greater clarity, the deadline of September 30 was set.

The CEOs have been told to keep voter lists of their states, published after the last SIR, ready.

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

The website of the Delhi CEO has the voter list from 2008, when the last intensive revision took place in the national

capital.

In Uttarakhand, the last SIR took place in 2006 and the electoral roll from that year is now on the state CEO's website.

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

Most states had the last SIR between 2002 and 2004 and have nearly completed mapping of current electors with those as per the last intensive revision.

The EC has said that after Bihar, SIR will be carried out in the entire country.

Assembly elections in Assam, Kerala, Puducherry, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal are due in 2026.

The primary aim of the intensive revision is to weed out foreign illegal migrants by checking their place of birth.

The move assumes significance in the wake of a crack-down in various states on illegal foreign migrants, including from Bangladesh and Myanmar.

THE PRIMARY AIM OF THE INTENSIVE REVISION IS TO WEED OUT FOREIGN ILLEGAL MIGRANTS BY CHECKING THEIR PLACE OF BIRTH, SAYS THE APEX POLL BODY

ANTI-CORRUPTION STIR: Protesters try to break the police cordon while proceeding towards Malacanang presidential palace compound at Manila in the Philippines Sunday, as part of their agitation against an alleged scam involving lawmakers, officials and businesspeople who allegedly pocketed huge kickbacks from flood-control projects in the poverty-stricken and storm-prone Southeast Asian country

Jharsuguda likely venue for PM visit

BHUBANESWAR: The state government has proposed to the Centre to change the venue of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's public meeting September 27 from Berhampur to Jharsuguda in view of the forecast for heavy rain, the state's Disaster Management Minister Suresh Pujari said Sunday.

Speaking to reporters, Pujari said the venue in Berhampur has been prepared for the function, but it needs to be changed in the wake of the weather forecast. "We've decided Jharsuguda as the alternative venue for the PM's meeting and accordingly sought permission from the PMO," the minister said.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL

Why waste \$11k on an H1B visa? Let's go back and join the 'Bachat Utsav' - we'll save so much

PM: GST reforms to accelerate growth

Seventeen days after the GST Council decided to replace the four-tiered indirect tax structure with a citizen-friendly two-slab structure that will kick in Monday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi Sunday pitched for India-made goods while claiming that the reforms in the tax structure will foster economic growth. Stating that the rollout of next-generation GST reforms will be a "double bonanza" for citizens after the govt raised the income tax exemption limit up to ₹12 lakh, the PM said the 'GST saving festival' will bring happiness to every family as the Navratri begins Monday

'swadeshi' products to the country's prosperity.

Addressing the nation on the eve of the auspicious Navratri, which will mark the implementation of the revised GST rates, Modi said swadeshi will render strength to the country's prosperity in a similar way it powered India's freedom movement.

"We have to make every home a symbol of swadeshi. We have to decorate every shop with swadeshi (goods)," he said.

The rollout of next-generation GST reforms months after his government raised the income tax exemption on annual earnings of up to ₹12 lakh will

be a "double bonanza" for citizens, helping them realise their dreams by slashing expenditure and increasing savings, he said. Citizens will save ₹2.5 lakh crore from the twin decisions, he said.

He urged states to boost manufacturing and create a conducive atmosphere for investment, saying that when the Centre and states work together, the dream of a self-reliant India will be realised.

He had a message for citizens too. It should be the spirit of every Indian that he says with pride that he purchases or sells made-in-India products, the Prime Minister said, stressing that it will quicken the pace of the country's development.

In his over 19-minute address, Modi said the revised GST rates reflect his government's mantra of "naagrik devo bhawah" (citizens are like gods) as it will bring down the price of everyday items besides cutting expenditure in construction and health sectors.

CM speaks to citizens at tea stall

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 21: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Sunday interacted with people at a tea stall after flagging off and participating in 'Namo Yuva Run' held between Kalinga Stadium and Janata Maidan here, marking the 75th birthday celebrations of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Flagging off 'Namo Yuva Run' here, Majhi said he is optimistic that PM Narendra Modi's call for a drug-free India will create awareness among the youth. Majhi participated in the run for a short distance, spreading the message of a drug-free nation.

"Many of PM Modi's resolutions have solved several problems of the country. Poverty is now at its lowest level. We have reached the threshold of achieving perfection in providing electricity and drinking water to every village," he said.

Appealing to the youth to keep away from any kind of addiction, such as alcoholism, smoking or drug abuse, Majhi said it not only destroys a per-

son but also damages families. While returning from the programme, he stopped at a tea stall near Mayfair Chowk and interacted with the people in 'chai pe charcha'.

Majhi enquired about the health of a woman and asked whether she gets the facilities provided by the government.

Taliban nixes Trump's bid to retake Bagram

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jalalabad, Sept 21: Taliban government Sunday rejected US President Donald Trump's bid to retake Bagram Air Base, four years after America's chaotic withdrawal from Afghanistan left the sprawling military facility in the Taliban hands.

Chief Taliban spokesman, Zabihullah Mujahid, rejected Trump's assertions and urged the US to adopt a policy of "realism and rationality." Afghanistan had an economy-oriented foreign policy and sought constructive relations with all states on the basis of mutual and shared interests, Mujahid posted on X.

PK Jena Bhub Club prez

BHUBANESWAR: Former Chief Secretary Pradeep Kumar Jena was elected president of the prestigious Bhubaneswar Club Sunday evening. According to reports, Jena contested against two-time president Asit Tripathy, with both having previously served as chief secretaries of the state government. Jena won the election by 18 votes.

1 killed, 12 hurt in Boudh blast

POST NEWS NETWORK

Boudh/Harbhanga, Sept 21: One person was killed and 12 others sustained serious injuries when an explosion ripped through a firecracker warehouse at Jiakata village under Purunakatak gram panchayat of Harbhanga block in Boudh district Sunday.

The blast was so powerful that the warehouse was reduced to rubble, nearby houses were damaged, and Purunakatak market shook under the impact.

According to reports, Alok Kanti of Purunakatak had been renting a house belonging to Magi Behera of Jiakata for years to run his firecracker storage and business. Around 11am Sunday, a fire broke out in the warehouse, triggering a massive explosion.

Laxmidhar Behera, 42, a differently-abled man, who was walking along the road, died on the spot. Twelve others also sustained greivous injuries. Two of the injured were shifted to Phulbani Medical College, while six were admitted to Boudh hospital and four to Purunakatak hospital, the reports added.

Police stated that the body was severely burnt. An inquiry has been launched to determine the exact cause of the explosion. Senior officials, including Boudh

SP Rahul Goel, ADM Aniruddha Pradhan, Sub-Collector Vinay Kumar Bhoi, Harbhanga tehsildar Baladev Behera, along with Purunakatak police, IRB personnel, fire services and the ODRAF team, reached the site for investigation and rescue operations.

Meanwhile, the family members of the deceased and injured villagers staged a road blockade on the Khurda-Bolangir National Highway, demanding immediate arrest of those responsible and compensation. Hundreds of vehicles were stranded for over three hours before the administration assured compensation, leading to withdrawal of the blockade.

Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi announced ₹4 lakh ex gratia for the next kin of the deceased person.

'Lahari' picked for Oscar-qualifying film fest

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 21: Bringing laurels to the state, Odia feature film 'Lahari' has been officially selected for screening at the 20th edition of Tasveer Film Festival—popularly known as Seattle South Asian Film Festival—the only Oscar-qualifying South Asian film festival in the world. The film will be screened at Seattle, USA October 8.

'Lahari', which had its World Premiere at the 30th Kolkata International Film Festival, was released across theatres in Odisha September 12.

"My films have been selected at over 200 international festivals worldwide, including some of the best in the world, but this is the first time one of my films has been chosen at an

Oscar-qualifying festival. I am thrilled—this Seattle festival has been on my wish list for years. Finally, with LAHARI, we achieved it. Since the film is still in theatres, I urge all film lovers in Odisha to watch this internationally celebrated Odia film. Opportunities to see such films on the big screen are rare, and we should embrace them wholeheartedly," said the di-

rector of the movie Amartya Bhattacharyya.

'Lahari, produced by actress Jhilik Bhattacharjee under the banner of Jhilik Motion Pictures, follows the lives of the central characters as they navigate the complexities of relationships, personal growth and the challenges of life in a rapidly changing world. The film has earned praises not only for its compel-

ling narrative but also for cinematic celebration of the region.

The cast includes Choudhury Jayaprakash Das, Choudhury Bikash Das, Dipanwit Dash-mohapatra, Smruti Ranjan Mahala (child artiste), Susant Misra, Swastik Choudhury and Zeinab Doer, alongside a range of prominent names from the Odia film industry. It also features cameo appearances by Babushaan Mohanty, Devasis Patra, Hara Ratha, and Jhilik herself. Music is composed by Kisaloy Roy, with songs voiced by Gaurav Anand, Navya Jaiti, and Kisaloy.

Uniquely, 'Lahari' highlights themes of organic ecotourism and rural entrepreneurship, while featuring a diverse cast drawn from 15 different countries—a first in the history of Odia cinema.

DEMENTIA-FREE ODISHA 2036 CAMPAIGN

BMC to identify geriatric, dementia patients in City



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 21: Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) will soon begin ward-level mass screenings to identify geriatric and dementia patients among senior citizens in the City, said Mayor Sulochana Das at a state-level event on the occasion of World Alzheimer's Day here Sunday. On the occasion, Das

launched 'Dementia-Free Odisha 2036' campaign and inaugurated the Odisha Outreach Office of the Dementia India Alliance (DIA) Bangalore here. The state-level event was organised by the Dementia Care Odisha Chapter—a joint initiative of DIA, Bangalore, and local organisation SWORD Bhubaneswar. Addressing over 200 senior citizens, Das emphasised the

importance of early detection and inclusive healthcare for the elderly. The campaign aims to make Odisha a model state for dementia care by 2036, starting with the Capital city. Key note address was delivered by Prafulla Kumar Dhal, who said, "Over 89 per cent of senior citizens in Odisha are geriatric-affected, with over 7 lakh people currently living with dementia. Bhubaneswar alone has more than 20,000 dementia patients." He stressed the urgent need for a comprehensive support system and medical care ecosystem in the state. Former chief secretary BK Pattanaik attended as chief patron of the campaign, unveiled the official campaign poster and urged the government to establish a Neuroscience Resource Centre in Bhubaneswar.

Modi's Sept 27 event likely at Jharsuguda

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Sept 21: The state government has proposed to the Centre to change the venue of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's public meeting September 27 from Berhampur to Jharsuguda in view of the forecast for heavy rain, the state's Disaster Management Minister Suresh Pujari said Sunday. Speaking to reporters, Pujari said the venue in Berhampur has been prepared for the function, but it needs to be changed in the wake of the weather forecast. "We have decided Jharsuguda as the alternative venue for the PM's meeting and accordingly sought permission from the PMO," he said. "We are expecting that the PMO will respond to the proposal by this evening," he said. Pujari, who was overseeing arrangements in Berhampur, visited Jharsuguda during the day and held discussions with the district administration over the proposal. He said district officials have visited some proposed venues in Jharsuguda.

Naveen flags fertiliser crisis, vows to fight for farmers

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Sept 21: Leader of Opposition in Assembly Naveen Patnaik Sunday expressed concern over the state government's 'inability' to resolve the fertiliser crisis and said the BJD would continue to fight for the farmers and further amplify its voice at various levels. The BJD president said the party's MLAs have strongly raised their voices on the fertiliser crisis in the Assembly. Patnaik, in a post on X, said: "There is no solution to the farmers' fertiliser problems so far. The illegal sale of fertilisers is rampant everywhere. While farmers are facing inconveniences regarding fertilisers, the government's inability to resolve this is a matter of concern." He said, "For the interests of the farmers, the Biju Janata Dal is always raising its voice. For their rights, the party will further amplify its voice at various levels." For an immediate solution to



the fertiliser problem, the BJD MLAs have sought the intervention of the governor. They urged the governor to take steps to provide the necessary fertilisers to farmers as soon as possible and to stop black marketing. The Assembly could not transact any business and was adjourned September 19 and 20 as BJD MLAs protested in the House over the fertiliser crisis during the ongoing Kharif season in the state. BJD's deputy leader in Assembly, Prasanna Acharya, said his party has launched an agitation in the Assembly because the government "failed" to resolve the fertiliser crisis even as it claimed that there is no shortage of nutrients.

"Despite claims of sufficient stock, fertilisers are being sold illegally at ₹800 to ₹1,000 per 45 kg bag of urea against the government-fixed price of ₹242," he said. Acharya alleged that the government has no sincerity to resolve the farmers' crisis. "The BJD demands timely and adequate fertiliser supply to all farmers, strict measures to curb black-marketing and hoarding," he said. Senior BJP MLA and former minister Jayanarayan Mishra, however, accused BJD of deliberately disrupting Assembly proceedings at the instruction of their 'super leader'. He, however, did not reveal the name of the BJD's so-called 'super leader'. "Their leader has not been coming to the House, and the BJD MLAs are stalling the proceedings instead of moving a motion to discuss the issue. They are avoiding a structured debate. Even senior BJD leaders privately admit that they are obeying directives to disrupt the House," Mishra alleged.

Pedagogues review higher education roadmap for 2036

Bhubaneswar: The Utkal University Teachers' Association (UUTA), in collaboration with All Odisha University Teachers' Association (AOUTA), hosted a strategic conference titled 'Odisha's Higher Education Landscape 2036: Challenges, Opportunities, and Strategic Interventions' at Utikal University's PG Council Hall here Sunday. Bringing together educationists, policymakers, and academic leaders, the conference aimed to assess the current state of higher education in Odisha and shape a future-ready roadmap. Key discussions focused on implementing the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, fostering university-industry partnerships, establishing startup incubation centres, and promoting research and innovation. Speakers highlighted the urgent need for seed funding to support faculty-led research, aiming to enhance Odisha's performance in the NIRF.

Pradeep Kumar Jena elected Bhubaneswar Club president

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 21: Former Chief Secretary Pradeep Kumar Jena was elected president of the prestigious Bhubaneswar Club Sunday evening. According to reports, Jena contested against two-time president Asit Tripathy, with both having previously served as chief secretaries of the state government. Jena won by 18 votes, Pragati Mohanty was elected vice president with a 60-vote lead, Lalit Das secured the secretary post by 76 votes, and joint secretary Sambit Mohanty won by 68 votes. The club's presidential election was held over two days, with E-voting on Saturday and



offline voting on Sunday for those unable to vote digitally. A total of 2,321 electors participated, including 1,922 individual and 399 corporate members. "I am grateful to Asit Tripathy for this wonderful contest and to my team for their hard work throughout this journey. We will ensure transparency and accountability in financial matters and implement transformative measures. Our first resolution will limit both the president and secretary to a maximum of two terms," said Jena.

Daan Utsav kicks off at Bakul

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 21: Despite heavy rains Sunday, Bakul Foundation kicked off its 'Daan Utsav' celebrations with 400 volunteers and over 2500 children who braved the rains and celebrated the joy of giving with story creation and storytelling activities, craft sessions and games. The theme of 'Daan Utsav' is embodied in the spirit of giving, sharing, mobilising donations in the form of materials such as old and new clothes, books and toys for charities and by spreading joy through simple acts of service. Started in 2007, Bakul Foundation demonstrates the power of volunteerism and small individual contributions and has been celebrating Daan Utsav every year.



Shruti Kanungo, who has been coordinating the event for the last few years said, "The rains did affect the activities. Some of the volunteers and children did not turn up because of the rains, and we had to cancel activities in two slums. But the volunteers were not ready to give up." Joining the Day of Service at

Bakul Library, Additional DG of Police Soumendra Priyadarshi motivated the children and the volunteers to develop the reading habit. "I am inspired by how Bakul engages young people for volunteering and gives the best leadership training one could ask for, by developing the idea of empathy for everyone," he said.

Outfit to protest at OSPCB

Bhubaneswar: The Sainik School Banchao Alia Gada Hatao campaign Sunday announced plans to gherao the regional office of the Odisha State Pollution Control Board (OSPCB) at Chandaka Industrial Area near Patia September 22. The protest targets the Board's alleged inaction and complicity regarding the illegal Gadakana dumping yard operating on Sainik School land. The campaign alleged that the Gadakana dumping yard has, for the past 22 years, caused severe environmental and health hazards, affecting over half of Bhubaneswar's population, including thousands of students from institutions like Sainik School and Utikal University at Vani Vihar. Members claimed that more than 20 acres of Sainik School land have been illegally encroached for dumping, leading to unbearable stench, pollution, respiratory and skin ailments, and potential cancer risks.

CLASSIFIED AFFIDAVIT

By virtue of an affidavit sworn before the Executive Magistrate, Agalpur, No.434 dated 20.09.25, I Dinesh Suna, R/o. Village- Semelmunda, P.O.- Patuapali, P.S.- Loisingha, Dist.- Balangir, Odisha, Pin- 767021 declare that I have changed my name from Dinesh Senapati to Dinesh Suna. Henceforth, I shall be known as Dinesh Suna for all purposes. Dinesh Suna

Heavy rain to lash until Sept 27: IMD



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 21: Odisha is witnessing heavy to very heavy rainfall with thunderstorms and lightning, a pattern expected to persist until September 27, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said. Sunday, the Capital recorded 13.4 mm of rainfall, reflecting the region's ongoing intense weather conditions. The India Meteorological Department attributed the rainfall to multiple active weather systems over the Bay of Bengal. An upper-air cyclonic circulation over the north Andaman Sea and adjoining Myanmar coast, extending up to 5.8 km above sea level, is influencing weather patterns and is expected to trigger the formation of a low-pressure area over the north Bay of Bengal within the next 24 hours. Another low-pressure system is expected to form around September 25 over the east-central and adjoining north Bay of Bengal. Moving west-north-

west, it could intensify into a depression by September 26 and cross the South Odisha-North Andhra Pradesh coasts around September 27. Authorities have urged residents to stay alert, warning that heavy rains may lead to water-logging, disruptions, and power outages. Fishermen have been advised against venturing into the deep sea amid rough weather conditions. The IMD has issued a yellow warning for Monday, predicting heavy rain and thunderstorms with lightning and gusty winds of 30-40 kmph. These conditions are expected at one or two places across districts including Mayurbhanj, Keonjhar, Dhenkanal, Angul, Cuttack, Khurda, Puri, and Ganjam, as well as in Balasore, Bhadrak, Jajpur, Kendrapara, Jagatsinghpur, Nayagarh, Gajapati, Sundargarh, Jharsuguda, Bargarh, Sambalpur, Deogarh, Subarnapur, Boudh, Nuapada, Bolangir, Kalahandi, Kandhamal, Nabarangpur, Rayagada, Koraput, and Malkangiri.

SSB lecturer aspirants to gherao Assembly today

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 21: Aggrieved by prolonged delays in the State Selection Board (SSB) lecturer recruitment, aspirants have announced a gherao of the Assembly September 22. Aspirants said that for years, thousands of post-graduate candidates have awaited progress in the stalled SSB lecturer recruitment. Court cases and repeated adjournments have left them in limbo, with the next hearing set for October 9 but



fears of another delay looming. "We have been waiting endlessly, but nothing has moved forward. Our patience has run

out," said Parameswar Bal, an SSB lecturer aspirant, urging the government to ensure the case is settled October 9 and the exam date announced without further delay. Echoing similar frustration, another aspirant, Hari Sankar, said, "We will not allow the future of educated youths to be played with any longer. Our clear demand is that the case must end October 9, and the examination should be held in December." The aspirants argue that

years of preparation, financial strain, and the risk of crossing the upper age limit for government jobs have compounded their struggles. Many feel psychologically drained due to the uncertainty. With the Assembly gherao, aspirants have warned the government that they will intensify their agitation if their demands are not met. "This is only a beginning. If justice is delayed again, we will have no choice but to escalate our protest," Bal added.

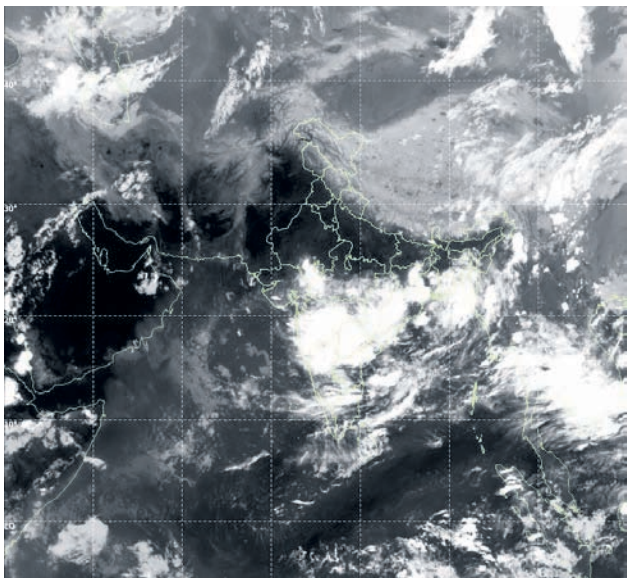
OCO unveils 'The Popular Pipli' exhibition




POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 21: Odisha Craft Odyssey (OCO), a pioneering cultural initiative by the MGM Foundation and Bhubaneswar Experimental Art and Design Studio (BEADS), unveiled its second landmark research exhibition titled 'The Popular Pipli: Threads of Memory, Networks of Power' at Bhubaneswar Lalit Kala Akademi Sunday. Curated by Sibdas Sengupta, the exhibition presents a compelling narrative around one of Odisha's most iconic yet critically under-examined traditions—the vibrant Appliqué craft of Pipli.

More than just an exhibition, The Popular Pipli marks the public culmination of OCO's 2025 residency programme, which embedded contemporary artists within the artisan community in Pipli. These residencies are a cornerstone of OCO's unique approach, blending ethnographic research, fieldwork, and cross-disciplinary collaborations to challenge the divide between fine arts and crafts. This edition brought together three contemporary practitioners—Madhulika S Naidu, who traced Pipli's historical trajectory through motifs, techniques, and social hierarchies, culminating in an installation exploring coexisting craft epistemologies, Rhea Moras, whose participatory projects highlighted stitching techniques as embodied knowledge, particularly foregrounding women's voices and collective authorship and Raj Maurya, who employed archival methods and cyanotype to explore labor networks, memory, and the repetitive rhythms of craft-making.



WEATHER			
	BBSR	CTC	FORECAST
Max Temp	33.7°	32.6°	Partly cloudy sky with possibility of rain or Thunderstorm 
Min Temp	27.0°	25.6°	
Humidity	79%	80%	
Rainfall	9.4mm	Nil	

FOR CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS CONTACT OUR BOOKING STATIONS

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

Lightning strikes kill 4, injure as many

POST NEWS NETWORK

Berhampur/Sukinda/Ma-hakalapara, Sept 21: Four people were killed and four others critically injured in separate incidents of lightning strikes over the weekend.

In Ganjam district, a woman was killed and another seriously injured after lightning struck them on a farmland near Brajarajpur village under Khalilikote block Sunday afternoon. The deceased was identified as Chandrama Goud, while the injured, Urmila Gouda is



undergoing treatment at the Khallikote Community Health Centre.

In Kendrapara district, a 47-year-old fisherman, Bijay Parida of Tantiapali village under Mahakalapara block, was

killed after lightning struck his boat in the sea Saturday during a thunderstorm. His son Manas was thrown off the boat and remains missing. The incident came to light after nearby fishermen informed locals and the family. Parida is survived by two minor daughters and a son. Locals have demanded financial assistance from the state government for the bereaved family.

Another fatal lightning strike occurred in Ganjam district, where 37-year-old goatherd Biswanath Goud of

Pentha village in Kaithakhandi panchayat was killed while grazing goats near Sindhaba village in Digapahandi block. He was rushed to the Digapahandi CHC, where doctors declared him dead.

In Jajpur district, 40-year-old Balam Hembram died after being struck by lightning while working on farmland near Srirampur village under Sukinda police limits. Two men and a woman working nearby sustained critical injuries and were admitted to Sukinda CHC for treatment.

Koraput sees 19,578 dropouts with 1,355 in Nandapur alone

POST NEWS NETWORK

Nandapur/Padua, Sept 21: Despite the Central and state governments launching multiple education schemes to encourage students to continue their studies and parents to send their children to school; such efforts have failed to yield desired results in Koraput district.

According to official data, Koraput district has recorded as many as 19,578 dropouts while 1,355 students between the ages of 7 and 18 have dropped out of schools in 23 panchayats under Nandapur block alone. This has led to an increase in child labour, observers said.

Educationalists blamed the rise in dropouts on shortcomings in government policies, while intellectuals and locals pointed to widespread illiteracy, poverty, poor infrastructure in schools and the long distance between villages and schools as major reasons for the increase in dropouts. They urged the Education department, block authorities and the district administration to take corrective measures to address the problem.

A recent government survey revealed that the number of dropouts in different panchayats of Nandapur block. As per the findings, there are 118 dropouts in Atanda, 109 in Badel, 24 in Balda, 14 in Bheja, 79 in Bilaput, 65 in Chatua, 48 in Khinbar, 28 in Golor, 98 in Hatibari, 153 in Nandaka, 79 in Nandapur, 62 in Khurji, 52 in Malibelgaon, 62 in Thuba, 72 in



Raisingh, 51 in Kasandi, 29 in Khemunduguda, 68 in Hikimput, 39 in Padua, 27 in Kulabir, 39 in Panthalung, 26 in Kularsing and 13 in Paraja Badapada.

Similarly, 490 students in Semiliguda block and 1,279 in Pottangi block under Potangi Assembly segment of Koraput district have also left school midway.

In total, 19,578 children have dropped out of schools across 14 blocks of Koraput district, officials said. Education experts have attributed the rising number of student dropouts to shortcomings in the Central and state governments' Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan, the failure of schemes designed to attract children to schools, and ineffective awareness programmes targeting students and parents.

Intellectuals said factors such as Koraput district's topography, poor economic

conditions of residents, lack of school infrastructure, and the distance between villages and educational institutions are forcing rural children to abandon their schools for household chores and daily labour. They added that child labour cases are increasing in the district.

Responding to the issue, Nandapur Block Education Officer Bhabani Nandan Pattnayak said teachers appointed in the block are conducting door-to-door campaigns to raise awareness among parents and students.

Under the Right to Education Act, children in 6 to 14 years age group are being re-enrolled in elementary schools based on their age. For those above 15, efforts are being made to admit them into the State Institute of Open Schooling (SIOS) and include them in bridge courses designed by the department, Pattnayak said.

Elderly man dies in tusker attack

CHAMPUA/JODA: An elderly man was killed in a tusker attack in the wee hours of Sunday at Jodapokhari village under Champua forest range in Keonjhar district. The victim was identified as Narottam Mohanta, 65. Around 5am, while heading out to answer call of nature, he encountered the elephant on the road. The animal lifted him with its trunk, dashed him on to the ground and trampled him under its feet, police said. As he did not return for long, his son Prashant Mohanta went looking for him when he found him lying unconscious near their house with chest injuries and saw elephant footprints nearby. With the help of forest personnel, he was rushed to Champua sub-divisional hospital, where doctors pronounced him dead. Champua police registered a case (46/25) and launched an investigation. The body was handed over to the family members after a post-mortem. Woman critical in bear attack In another incident of man-animal conflict, a woman was critically injured in a bear attack at Keratpadia village in Nilagiri block of Balasore district. The victim has been identified as Kanak Swain, 44. While she had gone to the foothills of a nearby forest to relieve herself Sunday morning, she came across a bear. The animal attacked her, leaving deep wounds on her head and left ear. Hearing her screams, villagers rushed to the spot, prompting the bear to retreat into the forest. She was initially taken to Nilagiri Sub-divisional Hospital and later shifted to Balasore district headquarters hospital after her condition deteriorated.

DS Law College hosts 3-day NSS camp

KENDRAPARA: A three-day NSS camp comprising student volunteers from colleges across Kendrapara district concluded at Dinabandhu Sahu (DS) Law College at Udayanagar here Sunday. Guests speaking at the valedictory function of the camp said that Mahatma Gandhi once envisioned a nation where everyone could live in peace and harmony and NSS, run by the Union Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, is working towards realising that dream. The camp, which began Friday, drew more than a hundred student volunteers from colleges across Kendrapara district. They participated in various workshops, awareness programmes and rallies. Sessions focused on social responsibility, discipline, teamwork and dedication, while awareness drives covered environmental cleanliness, literacy, health, drug-free living, civic participation, career counseling and road safety. Students also emphasised tree plantation. The event was inaugurated by principal Rabindra Kumar Bai while Kalinga Keshari Behera, Ramesh Chandra Behera, Braja Narayan Patra and Padmaja Kabi Satapathy were the guests. Social worker Imran Ali, Raghunath Mandal, Satya Shree Soumya Mahapatra, Major Bharat Chandra Jena and Madhusudan Das addressed students on the NSS motto "Not Me, But You" on the second day. At the valedictory session, Educationist Nirad Baran Khunta, college governing body president Sujit Kumar Mohanty and NSS regional director Sarita Patel urged students to contribute to nation-building through social service at the valedictory session. Prabhas Ranjan Dalai, Jathartha Dhal, Aishwarya Ray, Swastiprakash Dash, Arup Narayan Behera and Sasmita Behera, along with other NSS volunteers of DS Law College coordinated the camp.



IIMC, DFO Dhenkanal organise nature walk at Kapilas, Saptasajya

DHENKANAL: The Indian Institute of Mass Communication (IIMC), Dhenkanal, in collaboration with the Divisional Forest Office (DFO), Dhenkanal, organised a nature walk Sunday at the Kapilash and Saptasajya forest ranges. The initiative aimed to raise awareness about forest conservation, wildlife protection, and the importance of biodiversity, while also promoting an ongoing photography competition jointly conducted by IIMC and the DFO. The submission deadline for photography competition is September 25. Students from the Post Graduate Diploma programs in English Journalism, Odia Journalism, and Corporate Communication and Business Management (CCBM) participated in the walk. The Saptasajya trail was led by Divisional Forest Officer Sumit Kar and Assistant Professor BN Seth, while the Kapilash trail was guided by Prof Anand Pradhan, regional director of IIMC Dhenkanal, and Asit Chakraborty of the Forest department.

Thousands throng Samaleswari Temple to witness special ritual



PNN & AGENCIES

Sambalpur, Sept 21: Thousands of devotees gathered at Samaleswari Temple in Sambalpur town to have a glimpse of the 'Dhabalamukhi Beshha' (white attire) of the deity on the occasion of Mahalaya Sunday. Goddess Samaleswari remains in red costume round the year except on Mahalaya, the day on which people make "Pinda Daan" to their forefathers. Keeping in view the large congregation on the day, the doors of the temple were opened for the devotees at 5am. Devotees from across the district

and neighbouring areas made a bee-line in front of the temple from the wee hours to witness the Dhabalamukhi Beshha of the Goddess.

"On the day of Mahalaya, the Goddess adorns 'Dhabalamukhi Beshha', also referred to as 'Ganga Darshan'. It takes more than six hours to adorn the deity in a white incarnation. Goddess Samaleswari will remain in 'Dhabalamukhi Beshha' till Tuesday afternoon," said President of Samaleswari Temple Trust Board, Sanjaya Babu.

He said that elaborate arrangements have been made by the temple authority for the devotees coming from across western Odisha and

the neighbouring states.

Similarly, adequate police arrangements have also been made for the peaceful 'darshan' of the deity, he added.

After the Mahalaya, from Monday, Navaratra Puja begins and continues for nine days in the Samaleswari shrine. The Navaratri celebrations will feature the illumination of 5,000 diyas, creating a mesmerising atmosphere for devotees.

Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi and Leader of Opposition and BJD president Naveen Patnaik greeted the people of Odisha on the occasion of Mahalaya and prayed for the blessings of Maa Durga.

ORGANIC RICE TO BE OFFERED TO DEITY

Rice prepared from organically grown paddy will soon be used in the daily offerings to the deity at the Samaleswari Temple here. Farmers from Padampur area of Bargarh district have agreed to supply rice cultivated through organic methods to the temple's bhog mandap starting next January. The matter came to the fore after representatives of Bimal Farmer Producer Organisation of Mahulpali and Gandhamardan Farmers Producer Organisation of Dahita, along with local farmers from Padampur recently visited the shrine of Maa Samaleswari and paid their obeisance to the deity. Later, they held discussions with Sanjay Babu, chairperson of the Samaleswari Temple Trust Board, expressing their intent to provide organically grown rice for daily rituals and temple offerings. Farmers' representatives Ashok Kumar Sahu, Hrudananda Nayak, Suresh Chand, Malay Bhoi and Kulamani Barik participated in the meeting. Farmer leader Saroj Mohanty and social worker Pritam Meher coordinated the discussions. Temple trust board members Prafulla Kumar Hota and Birendra Ray were also present. Chairperson Babu said using organically produced rice for the deity's offerings is a noble initiative. He added that the step would enhance the sanctity of the offerings while opening new opportunities for local farmers and boosting the region's economic prospects.

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, RWSS DIVISION, BERHAMPUR

Near Jarada Bunglow, Pin - 760004, Ph. - 0680-2296344
eerwss_bam@nic.in, rwsbham@gmail.com

Government of Odisha "e" Procurement Notice
NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING
Bid Identification No. EERWSSBAM-18/ 2025-26

No.O-828 : The Superintending Engineer, RWS&S Division, Berhampur, Ganjam on behalf of Governor of Odisha invites bids in Single Cover & Double Cover system according to the norm of "e" Procurement system in online mode for Supply, drawing, design, construction, testing and commissioning and maintenance of different PWS Schemes in Ganjam District from the eligible contractors as per DTCN.

1	Name of the work	Execution of different works of different P.W.S. scheme in Ganjam District
2	No. of Work (Tender)	03 Nos.
3	Estimated cost (Approximate)	From Rs 33.97 Lakhs to Rs.67.98 Lakhs
4	Period of completion	From 180 to 270 days
5	Date & Time of availability of bid document in the Portal	From 26.09.2025 at 11.00 hrs to 13.10.2025 up to 17.00 hrs
6	Last date & time for seeking clarification	10.10.2025 up to 17.00 hrs
7	Dt. of opening of Bid	14.10.2025 at 11.00 hrs
8	Last date / Time for receipt of bids in the Portal.	13.10.2025 up to 17.00 hrs
9	Name & address of the Officer inviting tender	Superintending Engineer, RWSS Division, Near Jarada Bunglow, Berhampur-760004, Dist. Ganjam, Odisha

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

OIPR-25035/11/0029/2526

No.O-777

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA RURAL WATER SUPPLY & SANITATION ORGANISATION OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, RWS&S DIVISION, ANGUL, AT : TALCHER

At : Baghuabole, P.O. - Hatatota, Talcher, Dist. - Angul, Pin - 759 100 (Ph. No./Fax - 06760-240762, E-mail : eerwssang@gmail.com)

INVITATIONS FOR BIDS (IFB) [e-Procurement]
Bid Identification No. 13/SE/RWSS/2025-26 Dt.12.09.2025

- The Superintending Engineer, RWS&S Division, Angul on behalf of Governor of Odisha invites lump sum bid in **SINGLE** cover system in **ONLINE MODE** from eligible contractors for pipe line work in Angul District.
- Name of the work : **PWS work**
- No. of Work : **01 (One) No.**
- Value of the work : **Rs.31.36 Lakhs**
- Concerned tender inviting Authority : **Superintending Engineer, RWS&S Division, Angul, At-Talcher**
- Security amount (Rs.) (Online) : **Nil**
- Cost of Bid documents (Rs.) (Online) : **Rs.6,000/-**
- Class of Bidder : **"C" & "B" Class**
- Period of Completion : **180 days**
- Availability of bid documents in the website : **From date 23.09.2025 at 11.00 A.M. to date 06.10.2025 till 5.30 P.M.**
- Last Date & Time of seeking tender clarification : **Up to 03.10.2025 till 5.30 P.M.**
- Date of Opening of Bid : **On date 08.10.2025 at 12.00 Noon**

The bidders have to participate in the tender through **ONLINE** bidding only. Further details can be had from the website i.e. <http://tendersorissa.gov.in> Subsequent corrigendum / addendum if required shall only be appeared in the above website.

Sd./- Additional Chief Engineer, RWS&S Division, Angul at Talcher

OIPR-25195/11/0009/2526

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, RWS&S DIVISION, BARGARH

Email : eerwss_bgh@nic.in, Ph (O) : 06646 233220, FAX : 06646 234626
No.3712 / Dt.16.09.2025

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA "e" PROCUREMENT NOTICE
Bid Identification No. 03 Dt of 2025-26

No.O-821 : The Superintending Engineer, RWS&S Division, Bargarh on behalf of the Governor of Odisha invites tenders from the valid licensed holder contractors of class 'B' or 'A' registered with any department of State Government or equivalent class of Central Govt. etc. to be eventually drawn up in G2 Contract Form for the below work as per terms and condition noted below.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Name of the work | : Execution of Improvement with Retrofitting to Rural Piped Water Supply to Village Bheunria under Padampur Block |
| 2. approx. Estimated cost | : Rs.83.47 lakh |
| 3. Date and time of availability of document in the portal | : Dt.23.09.2025 to Dt.13.10.2025 up to 5.00 P.M. |
| 4. Last date/time for receipt of bids in the portal | : Dt.13.10.2025 up to 5.00 P.M. |
| 5. Date & time of Opening of Tender | : Dt.14.10.2025 at 11.00 A.M. |
| 6. Name and address of the Officer Inviting Bid | : Superintending Engineer, RWS&S Division, Bargarh, District : Bargarh |

Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal <http://tendersorissa.gov.in>. The authority reserves the right to reject any or all the tenders without assigning any reason thereof.

Sd./- Superintending Engineer
RWS&S Division, Bargarh

OIPR-25018/11/0003/2526

ଅଧୀକ୍ଷକ ଯନ୍ତ୍ରୀଙ୍କ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟାଳୟ, (ରାସ୍ତା ଓ କୋଠାବାଡ଼ି) ବିଜାପୁର, ଜଞ୍ଜାବାଜି

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, (R&B) DIVISION, KANTABANJI

E-mail ID : serbki@rediffmail.com
Bid Identification No. 11 / KBJ / 2025-26

No.B-550 : The Superintending Engineer, Kantabanji (R&B) Division, Kantabanji on behalf of Governor of Odisha invites **Percentage Rate** bid in Single Cover system in **ONLINE MODE** for the E.I. work detailed in the table below from the contractor registered the State Government ELBO for execution of **Electrical work**. The proof of registration from the appropriate authority shall be enclosed along with the Bid.

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. No. of work | : 01 No. (Single Cover) |
| 2. Nature of work | : E.I. work |
| 3. Class of contractor | : HT |
| 4. Approximate value of work | : Rs.16.03 Lakh |
| 5. Tender Cost | : Rs. 6,000/- |
| 6. Date and time of availability of Bid documents in online | : From 11.00 A.M. of Dt.24.09.2025 Up to 05.00 P.M. of Dt.03.10.2025 |
| 7. Date of Opening of Bid in online | : Dt.04.10.2025 at 11.30 A.M. |
| 8. Other details can be seen in the bidding documents from the e-procurement portal "www.tendersodisha.gov.in" | |
| 9. The bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the website : www.tendersodisha.gov.in . All future corrigendum will be available on ONLINE MODE only. | |

Sd./- Superintending Engineer
Kantabanji (R&B) Division

OIPR-34099/11/0026/2526

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER (AGRI.), CENTRAL ZONE, BHUBANESWAR, ODISHA

Phone No. : (0674)-2571075, E-mail ID - secz_bag@gov.in
e-Procurement Notice No - 1970/Agri/, Date - 19.09.2025

Bid Identification No. : 10/S.E. (A), C/Z, BBSR/2025-26

No.L-70 : The Superintending Engineer (Agri.), Central Zone, Satya Nagar, Bhubaneswar, Odisha on behalf of Governor of Odisha, invites percentage rate bids in double cover system from the eligible class of contractors through e-procurement in **ONLINE MODE** only in the website "www.tendersodisha.gov.in" for the work as detailed below (Composite Tender)


- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Name & Type of the work | : Civil construction works-RCC framed structure Building Construction of Office Building of EE (Agri), Cuttack Division, District - Cuttack |
| 2. Estimated Cost put to Tender | : Rs.9988750.00 |
| 3. EMD Amount | : Rs.99887.00 |
| 4. Bid Cost | : Rs.10,000/- as Mentioned in Column - 04 |
| 5. Period of completion | : 08 (Eight) Calendar Months Mentioned in Column - 07 |
| 6. No. of work (Tender) | : 01 no. |
| 7. Class of Contractor | : 'B' class with valid LT/HT/MV Electrical License as Mentioned in Column - 06 |
| 8. Date & Time of availability of bid document in the portal | : 22.09.2025 at 10 A.M. to Dt.06.10.2025 at 5.00 P.M. |
| 9. Last date / Time for receipt of bids in the portal | : Dt.06.10.2025 at 5.00 P.M. |
| 10. Last Date of submission of documents/Hardcopy | : Dt.08.10.2025, 5.00 P.M. (Working days) only |
| 11. Date & time of opening of online bids | : Dt.09.10.2025 at 11.30 A.M. & onwards |
| 12. Name and address of the officer inviting Bid | : Superintending Engineer (Agri.), Central Zone, Satya Nagar, Bhubaneswar, Odisha-751007 |

NB : The Bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only in the e-Procurement website : www.tendersodisha.gov.in with matching class DSC. Any addendum / Corrigendum / cancellation of tender / other details of the DTCN can also be seen in the said website. Authority reserve the right to reject/accept any or all of the tenders, increase/decrease the quantities of works without assigning any reason thereof.

Sd./- Superintending Engineer (Agri.)
Central Zone, Bhubaneswar

OIPR-01573/11/0012/2526

The Atheist is God playing at hide and seek with Himself; but is the Theist any other? Well, perhaps; for he has seen the shadow of God and clutched at it.



SRI AUROBINDO

Cost of Ineptness

US President Donald Trump on Saturday, 20 September, once again asserted that it was he who stopped the four-day military conflict between India and Pakistan in May through trade. Since 10 May, when Trump announced on social media that India and Pakistan had agreed to a “full and immediate” ceasefire after a “long night” of talks mediated by Washington, he has repeated this claim over 40 times. India on its part has miserably failed in handling this matter and made it worse by repeatedly denying Trump the credit, making the PoTUS look like a liar. The consequences of this are there for all to see. First came the humiliating remark from Trump that the Indian economy was “dead.” Then, steep tariffs of 50 per cent on Indian goods entering the US, including a 25 per cent for buying Russian oil and arms. The tariffs were among the highest for any country. Even China, which is the biggest buyer of Russian oil, faces a lower tariff than India. Of course, this was only expected since China, unlike India, enjoys enormous economic, geopolitical and strategic clout and it will be too risky for America to bully China the way it does India or any other country.

As if these punitive actions weren’t enough, now the Trump administration has decided to hit Indians where it hurts most. The shocking move to hike the fee for H1B visas, previously ranging from \$2000 to \$5000, to a whopping \$1,00,000 (approximately Rs 88 lakh) is going to significantly hit skilled Indian professionals in the US, especially the hordes of software engineers hired by tech giants including the FAANG companies – Facebook (now Meta), Amazon, Apple, Netflix and Alphabet (formerly Google). For, of all the H1B visa holders, a majority, about 70-71 per cent, are Indians. Over the last five years (from 2020 to 2024), about 2.1 million H1B visas were approved by the US Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS). Of those, about 1.48 million were issued to Indians. Even as the White House has clarified that the new fee of \$1,00,000 will be applicable only to new applicants and is a one-time fee, it’s unlikely that US companies, that pay this fee to attract highly skilled people from across the world, will continue employing H1B visa holders at such a high expense. In all likelihood, the visas of existing holders may not be renewed, while US firms will, going forward, hesitate hiring Indians or other immigrants on that status.

The \$100,000 H1B fee is a signal, not just a policy. It reflects US politics shifting toward protecting domestic workers at any cost – even if it hurts foreign talent or US tech firms. Those surprised by this move perhaps couldn’t see the writing on the wall. All through his presidential campaign Trump has promised his MAGA (Make America Great Again) base that their jobs can longer be taken away by “illegal aliens.” There is indeed a growing discontent among white Americans about their jobs going to immigrants. This is especially concerning for Indians as they are the ones who are in direct competition with white Americans when it comes to white-collared jobs whereas the blue-collared jobs are mostly taken by Moslem, Black and Hispanic immigrants.

The Trump administration’s H1B shocker has lessons for both Indian professionals and policymakers. For professionals, the overdependence on H1B visa has turned out to be their undoing. Indians desperately need to do two things. They need to skill up beyond the mid-level IT roles and move into areas where the US has a genuine talent crunch such as advanced AI, semiconductor design and cybersecurity. Apart from this, they may require diversifying their options and consider Europe, Canada and Australia for career opportunities. However, these places now are also gradually hardening their stance on immigrants such as Moslems and Indians. The anti immigrant movements are picking up almost in all Western countries, thereby limiting the scope for Indian techies to be choosers. Among alternatives is Japan which could welcome Indian techies. A recent Japan-India government level agreement signed early 2025 incorporates a human resource exchange program for IT and manufacturing sectors which could be exploited in future. Instead of teaching Hindi, Indian schools could be encouraged to teach Japanese and Mandarin as language options.

For Indian policymakers, it is important to strengthen the country’s own tech and research ecosystem so that the cream talent isn’t forced to go abroad for greener pastures. As US barriers rise, highly skilled Indians may return home. India should prepare policies and start building infra that will help absorb this talent pool.

America’s recent aggressive posturing towards India reflects the failure of New Delhi’s foreign policy apparatus. Its flawed understanding of Trump and misdirected policy of cozying up to authoritarian regimes at the cost of the democratic world are costing ordinary Indians in unprecedented ways. The future could get bleaker.

WISDOM CORNER

If you always put limit on everything you do, physical or anything else. It will spread into your work and into your life. There are no limits. There are only plateaus, and you must not stay there, you must go beyond them.

BRUCE LEE

If you're losing your soul and you know it, then you've still got a soul left to lose.

CHARLES BUKOWSKI

Keep me away from the wisdom which does not cry, the philosophy which does not laugh and the greatness which does not bow before children.

KAHLIL GIBRAN

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

- 1692:** In what was to be the last executions during the Salem witch trials, eight people were hanged.
- 1869:** Richard Wagner's opera Das Rheingold or The Rhine Gold is heard for the first time. The first of 4 musical works of art that constitute Wagner's Der Ring des Nibelungen, Das Rheingold was played at the National Theatre in Munich. The other three music dramas are Die Walküre or The Valkyrie, Siegfried, and Götterdämmerung or Twilight of the Gods.
- 1888:** The first issue of National Geographic Magazine was published, and it became famous for its richly illustrated articles on the various geographic regions of the world.
- 1980:** The Iran-Iraq War began when Iraqi armed forces invaded western Iran along the countries' joint border; fighting continued until 1988, and a formal peace agreement was signed in 1990.
- 1980:** Solidarity, the Polish trade union and political party that became a hotbed of resistance to Soviet control, was founded this day in 1980 when delegates of 36 unions met and united under the leadership of Lech Wals.
- 1994:** The first episode of Friends aired on NBC, and the show became one of the most popular sitcoms in the United States.

AGRICULTURE FOR THE YOUNG

FOCUS SUSTAINABILITY



It is time to recognise the need to engage young people in agriculture and food systems, both to create decent jobs and, more fundamentally, to feed the world

a paradigm shift in how we view the sector. It must be reimagined as a first choice for young people – at the frontier of economic development and offering enticing employment opportunities along the supply chain – rather than a last resort. After all, agriculture is not just about growing food. It also creates jobs in processing, transportation, retail, and other connected industries.

In addition to its impact on employment, a thriving agriculture sector bolsters overall well-being. In low-income countries, growth in agriculture is 2-3 times more effective at reducing poverty than growth in other sectors, while higher farm productivity is critical to improving nutrition and food security.

But the sector suffers from a problem of perception. Young people tend to see farming as dirty, low-tech, poorly paid, and lacking status – the opposite of “modern work.” If governments are serious about luring the young to agriculture, they must sell its profitability, breadth, and scale. Presenting a convinc-

ing case will require policies that address the valid concerns underlying how young people view the sector. That means reforming land-tenure systems, mandating higher wages, and providing entrepreneurial support.

Too often, though, government policies focus on low-return farming activities that offer little financial stability or career progression. Instead of being encouraged to grow crops or raise animals, young people should be steered toward the rapidly growing category of off-farm jobs fueled by urbanization, technological advances, and increased demand for locally sourced food. This includes food processing, packaging, storage, and distribution (such as urban farm markets). For example, to boost the incomes of producers and workers, Kuapa Kokoo, Ghana’s leading cooperative of smallholder cocoa farmers, is investing in domestic processing facilities.

In the Mekong Delta – Vietnam’s rice bowl and one of Asia’s most important farming regions – few young peo-

ple want to work the fields. Rather, they see their future in agricultural services, extension, and research, as well as agribusiness. In fact, agri-tech startups are already reshaping supply chains in Vietnam by helping smallholder farmers and cooperatives access financing and export markets.

Developing digital solutions is especially important for ensuring the sustainability and resilience of small producers and expanding the industry. In Croatia, specialised software tailored to short supply chains automates delivery, pickups, and accounting, freeing small farmers to focus on growing food. In Colombia, a low-cost smartphone app helps citrus growers improve crop quality and access markets by linking them to agronomists and merchants. And in Africa, where processing and logistics already account for 40 per cent of the farm-to-market chain, platforms that connect farmers to equipment and buyers are flourishing.

Continuing this expansion would provide higher-paying, skills-based employment for young people in rural and urban areas, providing a powerful signal that there is more to agriculture than tilling the soil. But that requires policymakers to provide younger generations with the resources and skills – digital and otherwise – to modernise farming and build sustainable, innovative agribusinesses. It is time to recognise the need to engage young people in agriculture and food systems, both to create decent jobs and, more fundamentally, to feed the world.

The writer is Chief Economist of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

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SPECTRUM SOCIETY

Allow youth the freedom to flourish

The patriarchs in various walks of lives often describe younger generations with labels such as “lazy, unproductive, lost, anxious, depoliticised, unpatriotic or wayward,” based on their skewed perception of young people. These judgements reflect a kind of generational panic rooted in fear of losing control over young and spread distorted perceptions of youth, especially in the context of deepening capitalist crises intensified by imperialist conflicts and wars in which many idealistic young people lose their lives in the slaughterhouses of imperialism.

Meanwhile, ruling and non-ruling elites, along with their paid intellectuals, reinforce this generational panic. They produce empiricist arguments that normalise stereotypes, for example by claiming that early-career workers and young people’s jobs are most vulnerable to the rise of generative AI. However, these arguments oversimplify the issue with reductionist numbers. These empiricist intellectuals fail to account for the real conditions of automation, and the structural biases embedded in technological development,

and the socioeconomic data that shape the working lives and career choices of young people in the digital age.

Geriatric voices often claim that moral decay among young people is the root cause of all their ailments and challenges, and use this argument to abrogate patriarchal capitalism and its reactionary religious allies. In reality, these forces produce and deepen alienation, which leads to anxiety, depression, and other mental health issues among young people. Young people suffer under a system they neither created nor chose. So, the younger generation is not inherently at fault; they are victims of conditions imposed on them and reinforced by the old guard through customs, traditions, and family values, all of which are intertwined with different regimes of capitalism. The so-called morality of the old guard is not morality at all, but rather a tool of domestication and a mechanism of control.

The empiricist arguments of the older generation against young people are not only rooted in logical fallacies but also in a wilful ignorance of history and a lack of understanding of

the conditions in which young people live today. Despite the weight of capitalist and imperialist hegemony, young people hold on to their idealism and confront challenges in their own ways. It is young Ukrainians and young Russians who are sacrificed in the slaughterhouse of imperialist wars imposed upon them. It is young Israelis who resist their Zionist regime and fight for justice for Palestinians. Across the world—in London, New York, Mumbai, Delhi, Beijing, and Tokyo—countless young people march against war, Zionist occupation of Gaza, capitalist exploitation, and imperialism. Throughout history, it has been the youth who fought against colonialism, racism, apartheid, and gender injustice. It is young people who continue to research, create, and produce new knowledge for a radical and progressive transformation of their societies. These values of the young remain invisible to the reactionary geriatrics because youthful spirit threaten entrenched ideologies, dominant authorities of power and open new pathways for transformation. Young people suffer under

the weight of capitalist alienation, student debt, unemployment, hunger, and homelessness—and for those who do have a home, the burden of crushing mortgages and long working hours. Yet, despite such hardships, they hold fast to the youthful essence and to universalistic values of sacrifice, solidarity, equality, freedom, and fraternity. In doing so, young people reject the reactionary values and the stagnant status quo upheld by the older generation.

The constant, unfounded worries projected onto youth are nothing more than a strategy by the old guard to maintain their hegemony over younger generations. The geriatric assault on young people must end to pave the way for a new society grounded in the collective values of equality, justice, liberty, and solidarity. Young people are their own masters, and they alone know their interests, needs, desires, destinations and struggles best. Allow young people the freedom to flourish on their own terms.

The writer teaches at the London Metropolitan University

Letters TO THE EDITOR

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

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

Visa shocker

Sir, This refers to “Trump’s H1B shocker for Indians,” Orissa POST, Sept 21. President Trump’s impulsive decision to hike H1B visa fees to a staggering \$100,000 has sent shockwaves through the Indian IT community and US higher education system. Indian professionals, who constitute nearly 70 per cent of H1B holders, are left anxious and insecure, unsure whether their careers could be jeopardized by another of Trump’s whimsical policy shifts. Indian students, many carrying education loans exceeding Rs 50 lakh, now face a bleak reality: with no US company willing to pay the exorbitant fees, securing employment post-graduation is almost impossible. They risk returning home jobless yet burdened with debt, their American Dream cruelly snatched away. The ramifications extend beyond individuals. The US tech industry, heavily reliant on Indian talent, faces a looming shortage of skilled professionals. Startups and tech giants alike may struggle to fill critical roles, potentially stalling innovation and undermining global competitiveness. By weaponising immigration for political theatre, Trump has not only punished aspirants but also sabotaged decades of India-US collaboration, education exchange, and goodwill.

N Sadhasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

Fitting tribute

Sir, Mohanlal, the Malayalam actor being designated for the Dadasaheb Phalke Award is a fitting tribute to a four-decade journey defined by excellence, versatility and dedication. He has consistently raised the bar: acting in over 350 films across multiple languages; winning five National Film Awards; and being decorated with Padma Shri and Padma Bhushan for his contribution to the arts. His performances in seminal works like Bharatham, Vanaprastham, Drishyam, Thanmathra and regional classics have shown range from psychological depth to popular mass appeal. For newcomers in cinematic field his story is nothing short of inspirational giving a message that persistence, humility and fearless experimentation with roles can build a legacy. The way Mohanlal has honored both art-house nuance and commercial success shows that one need not choose between acclaim and popularity, but can aim for both.

RS Narula, PATIALA

K'taka 'caste census' from today

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, Sept 21: The stage is set for the Social and Educational Survey, popularly known as the 'caste census' in Karnataka from Monday, amid efforts by various castes and community groups to consolidate their respective population, aimed at ensuring their numerical strength.

However, the survey may be delayed by a day or two in the Greater Bengaluru area, where five corporations have been newly formed, on the request of the authorities for training and necessary preparations.

The survey, at an estimated cost of Rs 420 crore, will be conducted "scientifically," with a 60-question questionnaire prepared for the exercise, according to officials.

Meanwhile, amid criticism and objections from various sections, including within the ruling Congress, regarding the castes list prepared for the survey, containing a number of castes with dual identities -- having both Christian and Hindu caste names -- like 'Kuruba Christian', 'Brahmin Christian', 'Vokkaliga Christian' among others, the commission said, the names of these castes will be "masked", but not removed.

Backward Classes Commission's Chairman Madhusudan R Naik on Sunday said the list of castes in the handbook was not for public information and doesn't have any legal sanctity, it was only to help the enumerators get the list of castes in the drop-down as per the alphabetical order.

He said the app used for the survey will not show these 33 castes with dual identities, with them being masked now. However, the citizen is free to enumerate according to his choice. "Our survey will commence



The survey by the Karnataka State Commission for Backward Classes that will go on till October 7, will see as many as 1.75 lakh enumerators, mostly government school teachers, covering around 7 crore people in approximately 2 crore households across the state

from September 22. We have made all the preparations. In the public perception, there were misconceptions and certain issues were being debated. Taking note of those concerns, the commission met and deliberated," Naik said.

Speaking to reporters here, he said, "Taking note of the possible creation of confusion in the minds of the public, we have resolved that the drop-down which is only for our internal consumption, will not prompt certain castes, which were perceived to be something which is not acceptable to certain sections of the people."

"Those castes will not get prompted by the surveyors for noting them down, but however it will remain in the system and anybody out of his free will, can always notify the surveyor

that he belongs to such caste," he added.

Noting that in addition, the commission has also addressed certain other concerns like the KYC difficulties that may be faced, Naik said, an app has been introduced to have the face recognition, and it will possibly bring down the concerns with regard to authentication of Aadhaar.

"Otherwise our preparation is complete, we will be commencing our survey from Monday," he said.

The commission's chairman also said, at the request of the administrative authorities of Greater Bengaluru, there may be a delay by a day or two for the survey in the city. "But our programme is there for the entire period of September 22 to October 7," he added.

According to officials, each household will be geo-tagged using its electricity meter number and will be assigned a Unique Household ID (UHID).

During the data collection process, ration cards and Aadhaar details will be linked to mobile numbers.

For those who are not at home during the survey and to address grievances, if any, a dedicated helpline number (8050770004) has been set up. Citizens can also participate online, they added.

Aimed at consolidating their castes strength, seers and leaders of Vokkaligas, a dominant community, have asked their people to identify their religion as 'Hindu' and caste as just 'Vokkaliga', while 'sub-caste should be mentioned only if it is absolutely necessary.

There seems to be some lack of clarity among another dominant community, the Veerashaiva-Lingayat in the caste column. There were voices within the community to mention Veerashaiva-Lingayat as a religion, instead of Hindus.

Several other communities like Kurubas, Muslims, Scheduled Castes, Brahmins, among others too have held meetings to decide how they should identify themselves during the survey in order to consolidate their numbers.

The BJP, which has accused the Congress government of conducting the survey "hastily" to "divide Hindus", has also questioned the need for the survey, when the Centre has already announced caste enumeration in the national census.

Political row continues over Ayyappa conclave

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Thiruvananthapuram, Sept 21: With the Global Ayyappa Sangamam, organised by the Travancore Devaswom Board (TDB) in association with the Kerala government, having ended, a political debate erupted here Sunday between the ruling CPI(M)-led LDF and the opposition Congress-led UDF over whether the event was a success or a failure.

CPI(M) leaders hailed the Sangamam as a "major success", while the Opposition dismissed it as a "flop", citing visuals of halls with mostly unoccupied seats during some sessions.

CPI(M) state secretary M V Govindan was the first to respond, asserting that participation had exceeded expectations. "We had planned for 3,000 people. More than 4,600 attended. Is that a flaw?" he asked.

Taking on critics, he alleged that sections of the media were running a "fake campaign" and even using AI-generated pictures and videos to "discredit" the event.

Devaswom Minister V N Vasavan said 4,126 persons participated, including 182 foreign delegates (39 from Sri Lanka) and 2,125 from other states such as Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Odisha, Delhi, Chhattisgarh, Punjab, Gujarat, and Maharashtra.

The remaining 1,219 were from Kerala, including representatives of various devaswom boards.

He maintained that the Sangamam was conducted transparently as per Kerala



High Court directions, without inconveniencing devotees and while following the green protocol.

"No complaints were received, including from Karnataka Congress leaders who attended. Allegations of empty halls are baseless—delegates were attending parallel sessions at different venues," he said.

Vasavan said critics had circulated videos of the venue before the inaugural session to "falsely portray poor attendance."

He emphasised that neither the government nor the TDB had any political agenda, and that the sole aim was to position Sabarimala as a global spiritual centre.

An 18-member committee has been set up to evaluate the recommendations that emerged from the three sessions, and its report will be made public.

Meanwhile, Leader of the Opposition in the Kerala Assembly, V D Satheesan, said that the Ayyappa Sangamam, organised under the leadership of Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, turned out to be

a "mockery driven by political motives."

He said that empty chairs at the venue were proof that the government's attempt to mislead Ayyappa devotees and believers had collapsed.

"Realising that this was nothing but a political drama staged with elections in mind, devotees stayed away," he said.

Satheesan said that the world had seen, through the media, the visuals of vacant chairs.

"Arguing that these images were AI-generated is an insult to public intelligence. M V Govindan should not make himself a laughingstock with such statements," he claimed.

Satheesan also said that inviting Yogi Adityanath, Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, was an "insult to Kerala's secular spirit."

"The chief minister himself had said that those who wear the cloak of devotion have a hidden agenda. As elections near, it is you who have now donned that cloak, revealing your own special agenda," he claimed, adding that the people of Kerala would deliver a fitting reply to this betrayal.

Siddaramaiah sets 1-month deadline to fix B'lore roads



According to him, about 6,000 potholes have been filled, while 8,000 more are yet to be fixed

The CM also cautioned officials not to compromise on the quality of the work

According to him, about 6,000 potholes have been filled, while 8,000 more are yet to be fixed.

The CM also cautioned officials not to compromise on the quality of the work. Recently BlackBuck CEO and Co-founder Rajesh Yabaji had posted on X that he was planning to move out of Outer Ring Road (Bellandur) due to pothole ridden road.

On Saturday, the Peenya Industries Association too highlighted the poor state of roads in the city and told D K Shivakumar, who holds Bengaluru development portfolio, that many companies may move to neighbouring states which are providing better infrastructure.



Kerala BJP President Rajeev Chandrasekhar lays a wreath on the mortal remains of party leader and councillor K Anil Kumar, at party office, in Thiruvananthapuram

PTI PHOTO

Palace city of Mysore gears up for Dasara festival

Celebrated as 'Nada Habba' (state festival), the festivities is expected to be a grand affair this year depicting Karnataka's rich culture and traditions, coupled with reminiscence of royal pomp and glory

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mysore, Sept 21: It is that time of a year again, when this palace city gets decked up for annual Dasara celebrations, playing host to a plethora of religious and cultural events, to keep up the tradition of Navaratri festival that began in 1610.

Celebrated as 'Nada Habba' (state festival), the festivities is expected to be a grand affair this year depicting Karnataka's rich culture and traditions, coupled with reminiscence of royal pomp and glory.

Incidentally, a controversy broke out over the govern-



ment's decision to invite International Booker Prize winner Banu Mushtaq to inaugurate this year's Mysore Dasara. As the Supreme Court declined to intervene in the state's decision to invite her, decks were cleared for the schedule of events. This year's Dasara celebration will be for eleven-days, till 'Vijayadashami' October 2, based on the lunar calendar.

Dasara, considered one of the biggest and most important

festivals of the region, grew as a festival of masses under the royal patronage of the then Mysore dynasty. Nowadays, the festival is being celebrated under the auspices of the Government of Karnataka.

Mushtaq will be inaugurating the festivities during the auspicious 'Vrushchika Lagna' between 10.10 am and 10.40 am on September 22, by showering flowers on the idol of goddess Chamundeshwari, the pre-

siding deity of Mysore and its royals, amid chanting of vedic hymns, at the premises of Chamundeshwari temple atop the Chamundi Hills here.

She will be accompanied by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, several of his cabinet colleagues, senior officials among others at the inaugural.

The Supreme Court Friday had dismissed a plea challenging the Karnataka High Court's decision upholding the state government's invitation to Mushtaq to inaugurate Dasara.

Critics argue that choosing her to inaugurate the festival, which traditionally begins with Vedic rituals and floral offerings to Goddess Chamundeshwari, disrespectful to the religious sentiments and long-standing traditions associated with the event.

BJP leaders objected to the idea, especially after an old video went viral in which she reportedly expressed reservations about worshipping the Kannada language as "Goddess Bhuvaneshwari", stating that it was exclusionary to people like her (minorities).

Kerala excise records all-time high NDPS Act cases in 2025

As per the excise department's data, 8,622 cases under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act were registered till August this year

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kochi, Sept 21: The number of narcotic cases registered by the excise department in Kerala has touched a new high this year, surpassing the figures recorded in 2024.

As per the excise department's data, 8,622 cases under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act were registered till August this year. In comparison, the department registered 8,160 cases in 2024 and 8,104 in 2023.

The surge in cases has also been reflected in the number of arrests made by Excise in drug cases. As of August this year, 8,505 persons have been arrested in drug-related offences, compared to 7,946 in 2024 and 8,060 in 2023. A senior Excise official attributed the rise to both increasing drug inflow



into Kerala and intensified enforcement. "The higher number of NDPS cases indicates more people are abusing drugs. At the same time, our enhanced operations have led to more detections and arrests," the officer said. Apart from the excise department, the Police are also registering a high number of NDPS Act cases in the state this year. As per the data with the police, 25,262 narcotic cases have been registered in the state till July this year. The number of NDPS Act cas-

es registered by police in 2024 and 2023 was 27,530 and 30,697, respectively. What worries enforcement agencies most is the growing number of students caught in narcotics cases. Till August this year, 312 students, including minors, were arrested by the excise department in the state. The figure stood at 379 in 2024 and 531 in 2023.

This year, 18 drug seizure cases were reported by excise from educational institutions, of which 13 were from Ernakulam district—five in schools and eight in colleges. "We have strengthened surveillance near educational institutions after these incidents. Our teams also coordinate with students and teachers to curb drug abuse on campuses. Ahead of the academic year, we visited schools and colleges to identify vulnerable spots," the officer added.



Kochi Water Metro touches 50L passenger mark in 29 months

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kochi, Sept 21: The Kochi Water Metro has achieved a new milestone of 50 lakh passengers within just 29 months of commencing operations, officials said Sunday.

The landmark was reached Saturday afternoon when an Australia-based Malayali couple, Naina and Amal, purchased tickets from the High Court terminal to Fort Kochi.

To mark the occasion, Kochi Metro Managing Director Loknath Behera presented a gift to Naina, who was the 50 lakhth passenger.

Behera said the feat was made possible due to the high-quality travel experience offered by the Water Metro, despite its limited route network.

Launched April 25, 2023, by the Kerala government, the Kochi Water Metro quickly became popular among island residents as well as tourists.

The project has also attracted

interest from 21 other locations in India, as well as from abroad.

The World Bank has expressed its willingness to partner with the project, according to an official statement.

The service has also won multiple awards for its operational excellence.

Currently, 20 boats operate across 10 terminals, including High Court, Fort Kochi, Vypeen, Bolgatty, Mulavukad South Chittoor, Cheranalloor, Elamkulam, Vyttila, and Kakkand, covering approximately 24 km across five routes. Services run from 7.30 am to 9 pm daily, completing about 125 trips.

of the day

quote

We are moving fast in that direction. (I) will give the good news soon

ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL | UNION LAW MINISTER

All panchayats, councils, municipalities and the district panchayat of Raissen have passed separate resolutions for 'One Nation, One Election'. These include one district panchayat, 521 panchayats, three municipalities and nine municipal councils

SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUDHAN | UNION AGRICULTURE MINISTER

You too can adopt indigenous products in your daily use, make every home a symbol of swadeshi, and contribute to building a self-reliant nation

AMIT SHAH | UNION HOME MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Tremors felt in Meghalaya

Shillong: Tremors were felt in Meghalaya after a 4-magnitude earthquake hit Bangladesh Sunday, officials said. The earthquake happened near Meghalaya's border with Bangladesh at 11.49 am Indian time, they said. There were no immediate reports of any damage or casualties in Meghalaya, they added.

3 militants, arms dealer arrested

Imphal: Three militants belonging to different proscribed outfits, and an arms dealer, have been arrested in Manipur, police said Sunday. Two insurgents belonging to the banned PREPAK outfit were nabbed from Tronglaobi in Bishnupur district Friday. The militants, identified as Thokchom Manimatum Singh (20) and Laishram Premasagar Singh (24), were involved in extorting the public, local businesses and schools, a police statement said.

5 foreign nationals arrested in Bihar

Motihari: Five foreign nationals, who allegedly escaped from jail in Nepal during the recent protests in the neighbouring country, have been caught in Bihar's Motihari, an official said Sunday. The foreigners, four of them residents of Sudan and one hailing from Bolivia, were "apprehended September 20 following a tip-off from the Sashastra Seema Bal", East Champaran SP Swarn Prabhat said.

Crowdfunding scam: UP ATS arrests 3 from Maha

Lucknow: The Uttar Pradesh Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) has arrested three persons from Bhiwandi in Maharashtra for allegedly raising crores of rupees through crowdfunding campaigns in the name of helping Gaza war victims and then misappropriating a large portion of the funds.

Fire erupts on 'Army special' train

Ujjain: A fire broke out on an 'Army special' goods train at Ujjain station in Madhya Pradesh Sunday morning, though there was no major damage to property nor was anyone hurt, an official said. The fire started from the tarpaulin sheet covering the trucks mounted on a wagon of the rake placed on the 'through' line between platform numbers 1 and 2 at 9:30am, he added.

'Insult' to PM's mother sparks row

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Patna, Sept 21: The BJP Sunday alleged that abuses were again hurled at Prime Minister Narendra Modi's late mother, this time by some RJD workers during Leader of Opposition Tejashwi Yadav's 'Bihar Adhikar Yatra'.

The RJD, however, dismissed the allegation and claimed that a video in circulation of the alleged incident is "doctored".

The politically charged environment of Bihar, where elections are due later this year, recently saw a major controversy as abuses were allegedly hurled at the PM's late mother by a man from a stage set for Rahul Gandhi's 'Voter Adhikar Yatra' in Darbhanga district last month. Sharing a video of the purported latest incident on his X handle, Deputy Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary wrote, "Tejashwi Yadav has once again insulted Modi ji's late mother. He has once again torn apart the culture of Bihar. In the rally, the RJD workers were hurling as many abuses as they could, and Tejashwi was encouraging them. The mothers and sisters of Bihar will



Devi Durga, please be awake. My best wishes to everyone on the occasion of Mahalaya

MAMATA BANERJEE | WEST BENGAL CM



It is not for the first time that the Opposition is facing such allegations as abuses were allegedly hurled from a stage in Darbhanga during Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's 'Voter Adhikar Yatra'

surely hold him accountable for this thuggish mentality and abusive behaviour." PTI could not independently verify the authenticity of the video, which has gone viral on social media.

"This is extremely unfortunate and a grave insult to democracy. Has insulting mothers and sisters become their culture and weapon to counter parties in opposition? The people of Bihar understand this dirty politics well and will respond in a democratic manner,"

Choudhary added.

"This incident has established the fact that the RJD is patronising such elements in the party... RJD is a party of goons... they protect criminals. Both Rahul Gandhi and Tejashwi Yadav should apologise for this," he said. Echoing a similar view, another Deputy Chief Minister, Vijay Kumar Sinha, wrote in an X post, "Once again, abuses were hurled at the late mother of PM Modi Ji during Tejashwi Yadav's yatra... and the RJD

leader was boosting the morale of his workers... It's shocking... This shows their mindset."

Senior BJP leader and Union minister Nityanand Rai also condemned the alleged incident. In a post on X, he said, "Having earned a PhD in abusive language, Tejashwi Yadav and his goons have committed yet another shameful act... This abuse is directed against PM Modi out of frustration over impending defeat. Tejashwi Yadav and RJD members must remember that they have been completely exposed... they will have to face the consequences of hurting the sentiments of 14 crore people of the state." Reacting to the BJP's allegations, RJD spokesperson Chitrnanjan Gagan accused the saffron party of trying to divert the attention of the electorate from the core issues ahead of polls. "RJD will not allow this to happen... As far as the latest video is concerned, which BJP leaders are talking about, it is doctored. BJP leaders are scared of the success of Tejashwi Yadav's 'Bihar Adhikar Yatra'. People will give them a befitting reply in the coming Assembly polls in the state," Gagan said.

PM Modi to visit Arunachal, Tripura today

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 21: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit Arunachal Pradesh and Tripura Monday and lay foundation stones of multiple development projects worth over Rs 5,100 crore in Itanagar as well as inaugurate the development work of Mata Tripura Sundari Temple Complex.

Harnessing the vast hydro-electric potential of Arunachal Pradesh, Prime Minister Modi will lay the foundation stone of two major hydropower projects worth over Rs 3,700 crore in Itanagar, a statement issued by the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) said.

Prime Minister Modi will visit Arunachal Pradesh and Tripura September 22. He will lay foundation stones of multiple development projects worth over Rs 5,100 crore at Itanagar and also address a public function, the statement said.

Thereafter, he will visit Tripura and perform a puja and 'darshan', and inaugurate the development work of 'Mata Tripura Sundari Temple Complex' at Matabari, it said.

In Arunachal Pradesh, the PM will lay foundation stones of two major hydropower projects worth over Rs 3,700 crore in Itanagar -- the Heo Hydro Electric Project (240 MW) and Tato-I Hydro Electric Project (186 MW).



People clean the mud on themselves on the last day of 'Pitru Paksha, paying homage to ancestors in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh

PTI PHOTO

'Centre not imposing any language on any state'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, Sept 21: Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan Sunday said the Centre was not imposing any language anybody.

He termed those who claim that the Centre imposes the three language policy on states as "politically motivated".

"We are not imposing any language on anybody. For Class 1 and 2, there will be two language formula. One will be mother tongue. Here, it will be Tamil language. Government

of India's condition is that you have to teach in Tamil in primary school. You can teach another language that is your choice," he said. Pradhan was speaking to reporters in the presence of professor V Kamakoti, Director, IIT Madras, after taking part in the 'Think India Dakshinapatha Summit 2025'.

Elaborating about the three language policy, he said that from Class six to ten there is three language formula. "One language will be mother tongue. The rest two will be your choice. No language will

be imposed by the Government of India on any state," he said.

To a query about how the three language policy is being implemented in a state like Uttar Pradesh, he said, "We are implementing it in that state also. Many state governments, forget BJP ruled states, are implementing three language policy, prior to National Education Policy." "In Uttar Pradesh, a student will learn Hindi, as mother tongue. After that, they may opt for learning Marathi and Tamil also. Some students in UP, can take Tamil as a third

language. The UP government has to provide the facility to teach Tamil," he said.

Pointing out that only 10 per cent of India's population speak in English, he said rest of the population prefer to speak in their mother tongue. He quoted Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu's comments that he would encourage Telugu speaking students to learn as many as 10 languages so that every Telugu boy would become 'globally competitive' and they would be proficient in different languages.

India's people's train driving a new era of connectivity



OM PRAKASH

Indian Railways has also been known as the lifeline of the country. It accommodates more than 2.3 crore passengers a day and it is neither just a transport system but a socio-economic support system. The Amrit Bharat Express has become a game-changer in this large ecosystem - a low-cost, modern and inclusive venture that is changing the way Indians travel. Although it addresses the hopes of the whole country, its transformational effects are especially notable in Bihar, a government where the destinies of its inhabitants were always largely dependent on the connection via rail.

Amrit Bharat is the real peo-

ple train unlike premium trains which just serve a small number of people. The trains are non-AC superfast trains and are designed to be offered at a price close to that of traditional mail and express trains, but offering the comfort of the modern day. A sleeper ticket of Patna-Delhi Amrit Bharat only runs around 560, which is not very expensive compared to normal trains but the ride is jerk free, seats are better, bio-vacuum toilets, LED lighting and even mobile charging point. They have such features as fire detection systems, semi-automatic couplers and onboard condition monitoring without sacrificing on the affordable aspect.

Amrit Bharat trains are growing rapidly at a nation level. There are already over a dozen routes in operation, and the Railways are already planning to introduce as many as 200 of such trainsets within the next few years. They are all manufactured in India as part of the Make in India program, and are not only a breakthrough in passenger service, but also an

industrial one. Individual rakes of the trains cost approximately 65 crore to manufacture, whereas the train manufactures employment in the factories, supply chains, and maintenance facilities as well as enhancing India self-reliance in terms of railway technology.

In no other state is the social and economic effect more evident than in Bihar. Amrit Bharat services have opened the first 14 services and 10 of them directly relate to Bihar- a key point which brings out the centrality of the state in this new connectivity era. Darbhanga, Patna, Saharsa, Motihari, and Sitamarhi as well as Gaya now have direct services to Delhi, Mumbai, Lucknow, Amritsar and even Bengaluru. The new 3,129-km Jogbani-Erode Amrit Bharat Express also connects the north-eastern extremity of Bihar with the south, Tamil Nadu, in one weekly service, binding two ends of the country together. To students, employ-

ees and families, this translates to less time of travelling, easier commuting, and a sure bridge to the opportunities in metropolitan India.

The fiscal spillovers are high. Rural supply chains are reinforced by small traders and farmers sending their goods to big city markets within a short time because these trains were equipped with parcel vans. Better connectivity contributes to local business in and around the stations, such as rickshaw pullers and tea sellers, hotels and handicraft traders. These advantages are further enhanced by the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme by the government which is modernizing over 1300 stations (98 in Bihar) to provide modern marketplaces where artisans could market their goods directly to travelers (Madhubani paintings or the local sweets). Tourism, too, is set for a boost. Bihar has been plagued by inaccessibility due to its heritage treasures such as Bodhi

Gaya, Nalanda and Patna Sahib among others. It is now much easier to visit the state with direct cheap trains to Gaya, Sitamarhi, and Patna allowing pilgrims and other international visitors to explore the state. On the contrary, Bihar's will have an easier time traveling to such tourist destinations as the Golden Temple in Amritsar or Haridwar in Uttarakhand, which contributes to the further culture exchange and inter-state tourism.

Finally, Amrit Bharat is not merely a steel on wheels, but indicative of the inclusive development. It is changing the way millions of people move by bringing modern technology and cost-effectiveness together and is driving the expansion of industries, tourism, and livelihoods. It is a move towards the future-ready railways to India; it is a new chapter where the connectivity will be the driving force of aspiration, opportunity, and pride to Bihar.

The author is IRTS (Rtd) Ex PCCM NR and Ex PCCM WCR

AI PLANE RETURNS TO HEATHROW GATE AFTER PASSENGER MISSES BOARDING

A Delhi-bound Air India aircraft returned to the London Heathrow airport Sunday when it was taxiing for takeoff as a passenger who was issued the boarding pass failed to board the plane



Nitish govt unveils schemes before polls

Nitish Kumar Sunday announced that over 10,000 'Vikas Mitras', who work in villages to make SC and ST people aware of government schemes and convert them to beneficiaries, would be given a one-time allowance of ₹25,000 each for purchasing tablets so that they can do their work effectively

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Patna, Sept 21: Ahead of the Assembly polls, the NDA government in Bihar has announced a series of schemes, prompting the opposition to claim that after remaining in power for 20 years, all that Chief Minister Nitish Kumar could offer was a copy of promises made by the INDIA bloc.

Among several promises of the Opposition was 200 units of free electricity, which the longest serving CM has sought to neutralise by announcing, notwithstanding his earlier anti-freebies stands, that consumers will not have to pay for 125 units in a month.

Kumar Sunday announced that over 10,000 'Vikas Mitras', who work in villages to make SC and ST people aware of government schemes and convert them to beneficiaries, would be given a one-time allowance of Rs 25,000 each for purchasing tablets so that they can do their work effectively.

Their transportation allowance will also be increased from Rs 1,900 to Rs 2,500 per month, and their stationery allowance will be hiked from Rs 900 to Rs 1,500 per month.

The government has also decided to provide Rs 10,000 each to more than 30,000 Shiksha Sevaks and Talimi Markaz, who connect children belonging to Mahadalit, minorities and extremely backward communities to formal school education,



for purchasing smartphones. Earlier, the government increased pensions to senior citizens, widows and people with disability by Rs 700 per month in June. The CM on July 11 transferred an increased pension amount of Rs 1100 directly into the bank accounts of 1.11 crore beneficiaries entitled to get pension under six social security schemes.

Another populist decision of the government was the announcement of an unemployment allowance for the youth: Rs 1,000 per month for two years for graduates and those who have completed class 12 but remain unemployed.

In the Mukhyamantri Mahila Rojgar Yojana for women entrepreneurs, the government will provide Rs 10,000 each in the first instalment, and later Rs 2 lakh to each entrepreneur after assessing their business initiatives. Besides, the administration announced a Rs 5,000 clothing allowance each to 16 lakh construction workers and raised honorariums to Jeevika, Anganwadi and ASHA workers.

Responding to the recent decisions of the government, RJD spokesperson Mrityunjay Tiwary said, "They (NDA leaders) are simply copying our welfare agendas. The youth of Bihar want to get rid of this copycat and useless government. We have a vision for Bihar."

The youth of Bihar have resolved that they will remove the "old rickety government", and make RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav the CM after the Assembly polls, Tiwary claimed.

ABVP sweeps Hyderabad varsity students' union poll

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Hyderabad, Sept 21: The Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) panel swept the University of Hyderabad (UoH) Students' Union Elections for 2025-26, defeating the Left-backed alliance.

ABVP won all six posts—president, vice-president, general secretary, joint secretary, cultural secretary and sports secretary—in the elections held on September 19, a press release said.

Shruti Priya secured the general secretary's post, Saurabh Shukla was elected joint secretary, Venus became cultural secretary, and Jwala was chosen as sports secretary.

Union Coal and Mines Minister G Kishan Reddy, Union Minister of State for Home Bandi Sanjay Kumar and Telangana BJP president N Ramchander Rao on Sunday congratulated ABVP on the victory.

In a post on X, Sanjay Kumar said, "Gen Z of UoH is with ABVP. From president to sports secretary, every key position has been secured."

This clean sweep reflects the trust Gen Z at UoH has placed in nationalist ideology. From Punjab to DU to UoH, campus after campus, the saffron wave is turning momentum into mandate." The ABVP Greater Hyderabad unit, in the release, said the victory signified students' commitment to nationalism and their united stand against "divisive politics".

"ABVP's relentless efforts in promoting campus peace, protecting HCU lands, and addressing student concerns through movements have earned widespread support, making this a landmark moment in HCU's history," it added.

of the day

quote

For development, tourism or sports... we need peace for everything. If we talk about having day and night matches, and if the situation is not good, then who will come to play in the evening?

OMAR ABDULLAH | J&K CM

Your foreign policy has failed in the foreign countries. Your economic policies have failed. You have failed in making relationships

AKHILESH YADAV | SP PRESIDENT

Heartiest greetings to the people of the state on 'World Peace Day'! Global peace and the progress of humanity are rooted in the eternal ideal of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam', which leads from conflict to resolution

YOGI ADITYANATH | UTTAR PRADESH CM

X

POST OF THE DAY

We have spent Rs. 2,82,000 crore on Swachha Bharat mission. And Rs 1,65,000 Crore on Smart Cities.

We already have ethanol blended fuel to keep environment clean. Inflation is less than 1%. We are creating 2 Cr jobs every year. Our roads are at par with the US. What else do NRIs want? They shouldn't have waited for Trump's trigger.

@manoj_216

SHORT TAKES

Encounter breaks out in J&K

Jammu: Army troops exchanged fire with terrorists in a forest area in Kishtwar district of Jammu and Kashmir Sunday, officials said. However, there was no immediate report of any casualty in the gunfight which took place in Keshwan, the officials said. "Alert troops of White Knight Corps at around 1 pm today, while carrying out an intelligence based operation in general area of Kishtwar, have established contact with terrorists. Fire exchanged with terrorists. Operation is in progress," the Army said in a post on X.

Police station in Ranchi vandalised

Ranchi: A police station in Jharkhand's Ranchi district was vandalised and its officer-in-charge injured in a mob attack, a senior officer said Sunday. The incident took place at Pandra police station late on Saturday evening, when a mob barged into the premises after a person, undergoing treatment at a private hospital after a road accident, succumbed to his injuries.

Shootout at gym triggers panic

Kolkata: Armed men opened fire at a gym in the busy Charu Market area in south Kolkata Sunday, triggering a panic, police said. The gunmen, wearing raincoats and helmets, arrived on a two-wheeler and barged into the gym on the arterial Deshapran Sashmal Road, looking for its owner Joy Kamdar, they said. Unable to find the gym owner, they fired two rounds in the air and left, they added.

AIRCEL-MAXIS CORRUPTION CASE

Fresh summons issued to Malaysian telecom giant Maxis

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 21: A special court here has issued fresh summons to Malaysian telecom giant Maxis and its former director Augustus Ralph Marshall on a CBI request in connection with FIPB clearance granted to its subsidiary during the tenure of former finance minister P Chidambaram for the takeover of Aircel in 2006, officials said.

The agency has also requested the issuance of a summons to the Malaysian company Astro All Asia Network in connection with the case, which has been cleared by the special court, they said.

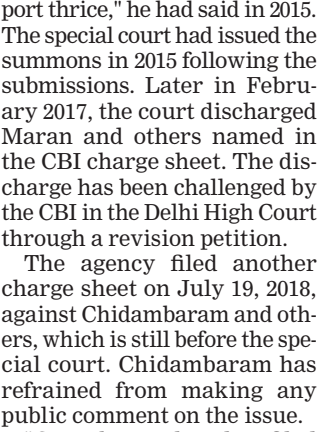
The CBI has sought three months from the court to serve the summons in Malaysia, they said. The probe agency had filed its first chargesheet against former telecom minister Dayanidhi Maran and some others on August 29, 2014, after which the special court had issued summonses a number of times to the Malaysia-based accused, but in spite of efforts of the Indian High Commission and the Ministry of Home Affairs, they were not served.

In 2015, Senior Public Prosecutor (SSP) K K Goel had told the special CBI judge that the High Commission and the MHA have tried thrice to serve the summons. "In the first set of summons, they said there was

some problem. They are not co-operating. We have sent the report thrice," he had said in 2015. The special court had issued the summons in 2015 following the submissions. Later in February 2017, the court discharged Maran and others named in the CBI charge sheet. The discharge has been challenged by the CBI in the Delhi High Court through a revision petition.

The agency filed another charge sheet on July 19, 2018, against Chidambaram and others, which is still before the special court. Chidambaram has refrained from making any public comment on the issue.

"CBI has already filed a Chargesheet in the Aircel-Maxis case. ED has now filed a Complaint in the same case. If and when summons is issued by the Honourable Court, the cases will be contested. I will not make any other public comment," he had said in 2018 on 'X'.



Lakhs of fans turn up to bid one last farewell to Zubeen



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Guwahati, Sept 21: More than one lakh people converged at the Sarusajai stadium in Guwahati Sunday, queueing up to catch a glimpse of their heart-throb Zubeen Garg for one last time, as the singer's mortal remains lay inside a glass casket, draped in a traditional Assamese 'gamosa'.

From scorching heat to heavy rain, the fans braved the vagaries of weather without flinching, as they jammed the Arjun Bhogeswar Baruah Sports Complex in Sarusajai.

Zubeen's wife Garima, during an address, thanked his fans for their overwhelming love and blessings.

Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said the mortal remains would be kept at the stadium throughout the night and also Monday, to enable people to pay their last respects.

Thousands of mourners thronged the venue since morning, even as hundreds camped outside it overnight, with the administration making elaborate arrangements to receive the body.

Fans, holding aloft cut-outs



We must continue, with strength, the efforts initiated by Sree Narayana Guru to bring humanity together under the shade of compassion

PINARAYI VUJAYAN | KERALA CM

ALLAHABAD HC ASKS UP TO CEASE PRACTICE OF MENTIONING CASTE IN POLICE RECORDS

The Allahabad High Court has directed the Uttar Pradesh government to immediately cease the practice of mentioning the caste of an accused in police records, describing the practice as a "legal fallacy" that "undermines constitutional morality" and poses a serious challenge to constitutional democracy. The direction was passed by Justice Vinod Diwakar while hearing a criminal case related to liquor smuggling



Congress dubs GST as 'Growth Suppressing Tax'

The Opposition party slammed the reforms as "applying band-aid after inflicting deep wounds" and said the government should apologise to the public for its GST on essential items

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 21: The Congress Sunday accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi of taking "sole ownership" of the amendments made to the GST regime and said the current reforms were inadequate, with no resolution to the states' demand for an extension of compensation for another five years.

The Congress Sunday hit out at Prime Minister Narendra Modi after his televised address on GST reforms, calling the regime a "Growth Suppressing Tax" that continues to suffer from structural flaws and inadequate reforms.

The Opposition party slammed the reforms as "applying band-aid after inflicting deep wounds" and said the government should apologise to the public for its GST on essential items.

A day before reduced GST rates come into effect, Modi made a strong pitch for promoting 'swadeshi' goods and asserted that the next generation GST reforms would accelerate India's growth story, increase ease of doing business, and attract more investors.

In his address to the nation, Modi said a 'GST bachat utsav (savings festival)' will begin from the first day of Navratri, and coupled with the income tax exemption, it will be a "dou-



ble bonanza" for most people.

Reacting to his address, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge took a swipe at the PM with a Hindi proverb, 'nau sau choohe khakar, billi haj ko chali'.

"Narendra Modi ji, instead of the simple and efficient GST of the Congress party, your government imposed the 'Gabbar Singh Tax' by collecting 9 different slabs and collected over Rs 55 lakh crore in eight years. Now you are talking about a Rs 2.5 lakh crore 'savings festival' and applying a simple band-aid after inflicting deep wounds on the public!" Kharge said in a post in Hindi on X.

"The public will never forget that you collected GST on their pulses, rice, grains, pencils, books, medical treatment, farmers' tractors - everything. Your government should apologise to the public!" he said.

Congress general secretary,

in-charge, communications, Jairam Ramesh, said Modi addressed the nation to "claim sole ownership of the amendments made to the GST regime by the GST Council, a constitutional body."

The Indian National Congress has long argued that the Goods and Services Tax has been a "Growth Suppressing Tax", he said.

"It is plagued with a high number of tax brackets, punitive tax rates for items of mass consumption, large-scale evasion and misclassification, costly compliance burdens, and an inverted duty structure (lower tax on output as compared to inputs)," Ramesh said in a post on X.

"We have been demanding a GST 2.0 since July 2017 itself. This was a key pledge made in our Nyay Patra for the 2024 Lok Sabha Elections," he said.



An artisan works on the idol of Goddess Durga on the occasion of 'Mahalaya' marking the beginning of the 'Durga Puja' festival in Nadia, West Bengal

PTI PHOTO

Shinde's X handle hacked; images of Pak, Turkey flags posted

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Sept 21: Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde's 'X' handle was found to be hacked on Sunday, with hackers posting images of flags of Pakistan and Turkey, an official said.

The account was later recovered in about 45 minutes, he said. Senior Maharashtra Congress leader Nana Patole,

however, raised questions over cyber security and demanded that the state home department provide clear answers to safeguard people from such threats.

The hackers live-streamed images with photographs of the two Islamic countries, on a day when India and Pakistan are set to play their second game in the Asia Cup. "We immediate-

ly alerted the cyber crime police. Our team that is in-charge of the Dy CM's X handle later retrieved the account," the official said. It took 30 to 45 minutes to set the account in order, the official added. Former Maharashtra Congress president Patole said the incident was shocking and raised questions over the state's cyber security framework.

BSF adds drones to training, opens innovation centre

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Tekanpur (MP), Sept 21: The Border Security Force (BSF) has updated its training curriculum and added drone warfare as a mandatory subject for its troops and officers, apart from commissioning an innovation centre to develop indigenous tools for the new-age warfare post-Operation Sindoor.

The premier Officers' Training Academy of the about 2.70 lakh-strong force based in this Madhya Pradesh town near Gwalior has also created a drone technology lab for the students of Rustamji Institute of Technology (RJIT), the only higher education institute run by a paramilitary force under the Union home ministry.

The BSF guards India's over 6,000-km-long front with Pakistan and Bangladesh, apart from operating the home ministry's air wing for special missions

During Operation Sindoor, the force countered drone attacks, loitering munitions and launched effective firepower against Pakistani positions along the border

Eighteen BSF personnel, including two posthumously, were awarded gallantry medals for displaying courage during Operation Sindoor, launched by India in May following the April 22 Pahalgam terrorist at-



tack that claimed 26 lives.

"We have recently revised the training curriculum for the jawans and officers, and drone technology has now been in-

cluded as a mandatory subject."

"New standard operating procedures (SOPs) are being formalised and a drone school was recently inaugurated as

part of this initiative to make the force self-reliant with indigenously developed technology to combat the changing method of warfare across the globe," Director of the BSF Academy Shamsheer Singh told PTI.

Singh, an Additional Director General (ADG) rank IPS officer, said the force has brought its various arms and engineering workshops, centres, RJIT and allied institutions on one platform. The BSF has also signed MoUs with various IITs and government research organisations to prepare a road map for the tactical employment of drone technology in the border force.

PTI recently reported that a drone squadron and school of drone warfare have been com-

missioned in the BSF post-Operation Sindoor.

The BSF Academy has also created a 'police technology innovation centre' with the participation of its own expert officers, industries, startups, academicians and innovators to find solutions to emerging challenges in the internal security domain, including drones or unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs).

A special area that the B.Tech students of RJIT are working on in their lab is improving and bringing about improvisations so that drones can be better used by the BSF for surveillance, defence and tactical combat, said the officer, who did not wish to be named.

of the day

quote

Let us organise 1,000 joint rallies. Let us also hold satyagrahas. I know some of you are experienced in leading Paada Yatras. So let us unite and stand together against this constitutional dictatorship

RANIL WICKREMESINGHE | FORMER PRESIDENT, SRI LANKA

Trump is cancelling an annual government survey that measures hunger in America, rather than allow it to show hunger increasing under his tenure

BOBBY KOGAN | SENIOR DIRECTOR OF FEDERAL BUDGET POLICY, CENTRE FOR AMERICAN PROGRESS

We are holding talks with the Syrians, there is some progress, but there was still a ways to go

BENJAMIN NETANYAHU | PM, ISRAEL

SHORT TAKES

US lawmakers make rare China visit

Bangkok: A bipartisan group of US lawmakers pushed for more military-to-military dialogue in a meeting Sunday with China's Premier Li Qiang, a rare congressional visit since the US-China relations soured. The last trip by a group of senators was in 2023, and Sunday's delegation was the first from the House of Representatives to visit Beijing since 2019. Li welcomed the delegates led by Rep Adam Smith and called it an "icebreaking trip that will further the ties between the two countries." "It is important for our two countries to have more exchanges and cooperation, this is not only good for our two countries but also of great significance to the world," Li said. Smith, a Democrat on the House Armed Services Committee, said both sides were in agreement on the overarching aim of the visit.

European airports chaos enters 2nd day

Brussels: Fallout from a cyberattack that affected check-in systems at several European airports extended into a second full day Sunday, as passengers faced dozens of cancelled and delayed flights and airport teams scrambled to limit the damage to travel plans. Starting late Friday, major airports in Brussels, London and Berlin were hit by disruptions to electronic systems that snarled up check-in and sent airline staffers trying options like hand-writing boarding passes or using backup laptops. Many other European airports were unaffected. It was not immediately clear who might be behind the cyberattack, but experts said it could turn out to be hackers, criminal organisations, or state actors.

Pakistan panel seeks action on child abuse

Islamabad: A Pakistan parliamentary panel urged strong action to protect children from abuse at seminars and schools, saying that no child should suffer in the name of education, according to a media report. The Senate Functional Committee on Human Rights, under the chair of Senator Samina Mumtaz Zehri, met Thursday to review disturbing reports of corporal punishment, torture, and sexual abuse at religious seminars across Punjab, Sindh, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, reported Dawn Friday. Officials from federal and provincial departments briefed the committee on steps taken to address the issue. Senator Zehri stressed that the state's foremost responsibility was to protect children.

Allies defy US, back Palestine

UK joins Australia, Canada in recognising Palestinian state despite opposition from US and Israel

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, Sept 21: British Prime Minister Keir Starmer confirmed Sunday that the UK is formally recognising a Palestinian state despite vociferous opposition from the US and Israel.

His announcement follows those from Canada and Australia, in what appears to be a coordinated initiative from the Commonwealth nations.

Starmer, who has faced pressure to take a harder line on Israel within his own governing Labour Party, said the move is intended "to revive the hope of peace for the Palestinians and Israelis" but that it wasn't a reward for Hamas, which he stressed will have no role in any future governance of the Palestinian people.

"We must channel our efforts, united together in hope, behind the peaceful future that we want to see: the release of the hostages, an end to the violence, an end to the suffering and a shift back towards a two-state solution as the best hope for peace and security for all sides," he said.

The announcement was widely anticipated after Starmer said in July that the UK would recognise a Palestinian state unless Israel agreed to a cease-fire in Gaza, allowed the UN to bring in aid and took other steps toward long-term peace.

NOT UNIVERSALLY AGREED

The UK's recognition of a Palestinian state comes just days after a state visit from US President Donald Trump, during which he voiced his



HISTORIC RECOGNITION

Though the move is largely symbolic, it is a historic moment as the UK arguably laid the groundwork for the creation of the Israeli state when it was in control of what was then known as Palestine in 1917

More than 140 countries have already taken that step and more are expected to do so at the UN General Assembly this week, including France

disapproval of the plan.

Critics, including the US and the Israeli government, which has shown no interest in a two-state solution, have condemned the plans, saying it rewards Hamas for its attack October 7, 2023. As well as arguing that recognition is immoral, critics argue that it's an empty gesture given that the Palestinian people are divided into two territories — the West Bank and Gaza — with no recognised international capital.

HISTORICAL OVERLAY

France and the UK have a historic role in the politics of the Middle East over the past 100 years, having carved up the region following the de-

Together with the pastors of the churches in the Holy Land, I repeat that there is no future based on violence, forced exile, and revenge

POPE LEO | CATHOLIC CHURCH LEADER

the Jewish people."

However, the second part of the declaration has been largely neglected over the decades. It noted "that nothing shall be done, nothing which may prejudice the civil and religious rights" of the Palestinian people.

"It's significant for France and the UK to recognise Palestine because of the legacy of these two countries' involvement in the Middle East," said Burcu Ozelik, senior research fellow for Middle East Security at London-based Royal United Services Institute.

"But without the United States coming on board with the idea of a Palestine, I think very little will change on the ground."

The Palestinian head of mission in the UK Husam Zomlot told the BBC that recognition would right a colonial-era wrong.

"The issue today is ending the denial of our existence that started 108 years ago, in 1917," he said. "And I think today, the British people should celebrate a day when history is being corrected, when wrongs are being righted, when recognition of the wrongs of the past are beginning to be corrected."

Netanyahu accuses West of backing Hamas

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu says the establishment of a Palestinian state "will not happen." Netanyahu put out an angry statement after Britain and other Western allies said they were unilaterally recognising a Palestinian state in a step seen as a show of displeasure with Israel. Netanyahu accused the foreign leaders of giving a "prize" to Hamas. "It will not happen," he said. "A Palestinian state will not be established west of the Jordan River." Netanyahu said he would announce Israel's response after a trip next week to the US, where he is to meet President Donald Trump at the White House.

Chinese Covid-19 whistleblower gets 4 more years in jail

REUTERS

Beijing, Sept 21: A Chinese journalist jailed for four years after documenting the early phases of the Covid-19 outbreak from the pandemic's epicentre was sentenced Friday to four more years in prison, Reporters Without Borders said.

Zhang Zhan, 42, was sentenced on a charge of "picking quarrels and provoking trouble" in China, the same charge that led to her December 2020 imprisonment after she posted first-hand accounts from the central city of Wuhan on the early spread of coronavirus, the international press freedom group, known by its French initials RSF, said Saturday.

Zhang was initially arrested after months of posting accounts, including videos, from crowded hospitals and empty streets that painted a more dire early picture of the disease than the official narrative.



Ethnic Inntha people row a boat near pagodas in Inle Lake, southern Shan State, Myanmar Sunday

PTI PHOTO

German, Swedish jets track Russian plane over Baltic Sea

The latest incursion comes days after three Russian MiG-31 fighter jets entered Estonian airspace without permission

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Berlin, Sept 21: Air force fighter jets from Germany and Sweden were scrambled Sunday to intercept and track a Russian surveillance plane that was flying unidentified over the Baltic Sea, military officials said.

Two Swedish Gripen jets and two German Eurofighter jets deployed in international airspace to monitor and photograph the Russian IL-20 reconnaissance aircraft. It had been flying without providing a flight path or radio contact that could signal its presence, Swedish and German air force officials said.

The monitoring, which ended



without incident, came as NATO and European Union member countries have been on heightened alert for Russian military and reconnaissance activities in and around their airspace.

On Friday, three Russian fighter aircraft entered Estonia's airspace without permission and stayed there for 12 minutes, the Estonian Foreign Ministry said. That happened just over a week after NATO planes downed Russian drones over Poland and heightened fears that the war in Ukraine could spill over.

H1B workers abroad race to US as Trump order sparks dismay

India was the largest beneficiary of H1B visas last year, accounting for 71% of beneficiaries, while China was a distant second at 11.7%

REUTERS

San Francisco, Sept 21: Panic, confusion, and anger reigned as workers on H1B visas from India and China were forced to abandon travel plans and rush back to the US after President Donald Trump imposed new visa fees, in line with his wide-ranging immigration crackdown.

Tech companies and banks sent urgent memos to employees, advising them to return before a deadline of 12:01 am US Eastern Time Sunday (4:01 am GMT), and telling them not to leave the country.

A White House official Saturday clarified that the order applied only to new applicants

and not holders of existing visas or those seeking renewals, addressing some of the confusion over who would be affected by the order.

But Trump's proclamation a day before had already set off alarm bells in Silicon Valley.

RUSH BACK TO US

Fearing they would not be allowed back once the new rule took effect, several Indian nationals at San Francisco airport said they cut short vacations. "It is a situation where we had to choose between family and staying here," said an engineer at a large tech company whose wife had been on an Emirates flight from San Francisco to Dubai that was scheduled to depart at 5:05 pm local time (12:05 am GMT) Friday.

The flight was delayed by more than three hours after several Indian passengers who received news of the order or memos from their employers demanded to deplane, said the person who spoke on condi-



tion of anonymity. At least five passengers were eventually allowed off, said the engineer.

A video of the incident was circulating on social media, showing a few people leaving the plane. The engineer's wife, also a H1B visa holder, chose to head to India to care for her sick mother. "It's quite tragic. We have built a life here," he told Reuters. On the popular Chinese social media app Rednote, people on H1B visas shared their experiences of having to

rush back to the US - in some cases just hours after landing in China or another country.

Companies including Microsoft, Amazon, Alphabet and Goldman Sachs were among those that sent urgent emails to their employees with travel advisories.

TRUMP'S U-TURN ON H1B

Since taking office in January, Trump has kicked off a wide-ranging immigration crackdown, including moves to limit some forms of legal im-

PHARAOH'S BRACELET STOLEN, MELTED

Egyptians reacted with outrage this week after officials said that a 3,000-year-old bracelet that had belonged to an ancient pharaoh was stolen from Cairo's famed Egyptian Museum and then melted down for gold. The bracelet, containing a lapis lazuli bead, belonged to Pharaoh Amen-emope, who reigned about 3,000 years ago



Saudi key source of cheap loans for Pak

Saudi loans are about one-third cheaper than Chinese cash deposits and less than half the cost of foreign commercial borrowing

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Islamabad, Sept 21: Saudi Arabia remains the major source of cheap foreign loans for Pakistan, charging an annual interest rate of only 4 per cent, a media report said Sunday.

Riyadh charged a 4 per cent interest rate on two separate cash deposit facilities obtained by Islamabad in recent years, according to official records. The loan, originally contracted for one year, has yet to be repaid, The Express Tribune reported.

The kingdom has been rolling it over annually without imposing additional costs.

The Saudi loans are about one-third cheaper than Chinese cash deposits and less than half the cost of foreign commercial borrowing, the report added.

A \$2 billion Saudi cash deposit facility is set to mature in December, and the Ministry of Finance plans to roll it over again, according to the report, which quoted sources as saying.

Another \$3 billion Saudi loan, obtained to plug the external financing gap under the IMF programme, will mature in June next year.

The IMF has stipulated that Pakistan's three bilateral creditors, Saudi Arabia, China and the United Arab Emirates, must maintain their cash deposits until the completion of the three-year programme.



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Together, these countries have provided \$12 billion in deposits, forming the bulk of the central bank's \$14.3 billion gross foreign exchange reserves

Together, these countries have provided \$12 billion in deposits, forming the bulk of the central bank's \$14.3 billion gross foreign exchange reserves, the report said. IMF programmes are no longer as effective in helping Pakistan as they were in the past. The central bank had to purchase over \$8 billion from the local market to meet maturing debt obligations, despite the IMF package.

The Finance Ministry is reportedly more dependent on multilateral banks' credit guarantees to access international markets, as the global lender's economic "clean bill of health" is no longer sufficient on its own.

Sources said that while Saudi loans carry a 4 per cent interest rate, Pakistan is paying around 6.1 per cent on four cash deposit facilities worth \$4 billion.

of the day

quote

Private companies have a lot of capital and now they should invest in India's growth journey. Investments and exports will drive the country's economic growth.



S MAHENDRA DEV | EAC-PM

(With) the advantage ...in terms of having a strategic investor, ability to raise capital, somebody willing to put (money) ...the possibility of our rating upgrade is there



PRASHANT KUMAR | MD, YES BANK

AI has certainly accelerated the hiring process, but our report shows the Indian workforce remains clear, technology cannot replace human judgment, empathy, and fairness. Companies must strike the right balance, using AI as a partner, not a proxy



R P YADAV | CHAIRMAN, GENIUS HRTECH

SHORT TAKES

Patanjali Foods cuts MRPs of products

New Delhi: Patanjali Foods Ltd has reduced retail prices (MRP) of various products, including Nutrela soya chunks, with effect from Monday, passing on the benefits of GST reduction to consumers. In a statement Sunday, Patanjali Foods announced the decision to reduce the maximum retail price (MRP) across its product portfolio in line with the GST rationalisation. The revised prices cover the entire range of food and non-food categories, it added. Patanjali Foods has cut prices of Nutrela Range of soya products. Nutrela Chunks, Mini Chunks & Granules (1 kg pack) will be sold at ₹190 from Monday as against ₹210 now. There will be a reduction of ₹3 in the 200 gm pack. In biscuits & cookies category, the MRP of Doodh Biscuit (35g) has been reduced to ₹4.5 from ₹5. In Noodles, Patanjali Twisty Tasty Noodles (50g) will be sold at ₹9.35 as against ₹10 now. Patanjali Foods has also reduced rates of Oral Care and hair care (Dant Kanti Range). The MRP of Dant Kanti Natural Toothpaste 200g has been reduced to ₹106 from ₹120. Kesh Kanti Amla Hair Oil (100ml) retail prices will be ₹42 from Monday as against ₹48.

States' expense report

New Delhi: The committed expenditure on salaries, pensions, and interest payments increased by 2.49 times to ₹15,63,649 crore in fiscal 2022-23 across all states from ₹6,26,849 crore in 2013-14, said a CAG report on state finances. During the 10-year period from 2013-14 to 2022-23, revenue expenditure by the states constituted 80-87 per cent of the total expenditure and as percentage of combined GDP, it was about 13-15 per cent. In FY 2022-23, revenue expenditure was 84.73 per cent of total expenditure and 13.85 per cent of combined GDP, said the publication on State Finances 2022-23, the first of its kind by the Comptroller and Auditor General of India. In FY 2022-23, out of the total revenue expenditure of ₹35,95,736 crore, the committed expenditure was ₹15,63,649 crore; ₹3,09,625 crore on subsidies and ₹11,26,486 crore on grants-in-aid. These three components totalling ₹29,99,760 crore together constituted more than 83 per cent of total revenue expenditure, according to the report which provides an overview of finances of 28 states for the financial year 2022-23, together with fiscal data and analysis relating to the ten-year period from FY 2013-14.



Despite having a two-year transition period since October 2023, India has not significantly advanced its CBAM preparedness. Exporters, especially MSMEs, lack clarity on emissions reporting and verification processes

AJAY SRIVASTAVA | GTRI FOUNDER

INDIA, OMAN TO SIGN CEPA TRADE PACT SOON

India and Oman are set to sign the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) "very soon" with both nations eyeing diversification of their trade basket to include more commodities and exchange of services, the country's Ambassador to India Issa Saleh Abdullah Saleh Alshibani said



GST 2.0: Goods and services to become cheaper

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 21: Prices of kitchen staples to electronics, from medicines and equipment to automobiles, will get cheaper from Monday as the reduced GST rates on about 375 items come into effect.

In a bonanza to consumers, the GST Council, comprising Centre and states, has decided to reduce tax rates on goods and services, from September 22, the first day of the Navaratri.

Mass consumption items like ghee, paneer, butter, 'namkeen', ketchup, jam, dry fruits, coffee and ice creams, and aspirational goods like TV, AC, washing machines will become cheaper.

Various FMCG companies have already announced reduction in prices in view of GST rationalisation.

With GST on most drugs and formulations, and medical devices like glucometers and diagnostic kits reduced to 5 per cent, the cost of medicines will come down for the common man. Also, home builders will benefit as GST on cement has been cut to 18 per cent, from 28 per cent.

The government has already directed pharmacies to revise their MRP or sell medicines at a lower rate after taking into account GST cut benefits.

The biggest beneficiary of GST rate cut is buyers of automobiles wherein tax rates have



been slashed to 18 per cent and 28 per cent for small and big cars, respectively.

Several car companies have already announced reduction in prices.

With regard to services, GST on beauty and physical well-being services including services of health clubs, salons, barbers, fitness centres, yoga, etc has been slashed from 18 per cent with Input Tax credit (ITC), to 5 per cent without tax credit.

Also, daily use products like hair oil, toilet soap bars, shampoos, toothbrush, toothpaste, too are likely to get cheaper as tax on them has been cut to

5 per cent from 12/18 per cent currently.

Other daily use items like talcum powder, face powder, shaving cream, after-shave lotion too could see reduction in prices as GST has come down to 5 per cent, from 18 per cent.

Effective September 22, GST will be a two-tier structure wherein majority of goods and services will attract tax of 5 and 18 per cent. A 40 per cent tax will be levied on ultra luxury items while tobacco and related products will continue to be in the 28 per cent plus cess category.

Currently, Goods and Services Tax (GST) is levied in 4 slabs of 5, 12, 18 and 28 per cent. Besides, a compensation cess is levied on luxury items and demerit or sin goods.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had last week said that the GST reforms will infuse ₹2 lakh crore into the economy, leaving people with more cash in hand that otherwise would have gone as taxes.

About 99 per cent of goods under the 12 per cent GST slab currently will move to 5 per cent. The rejig will also result in 90 per cent items under 28 per cent tax slab coming down to 18 per cent bracket.

Govt to promote municipal bonds

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 21: In a bid to promote issuance of municipal bonds, the government is considering a proposal to hike interest subvention from the present ₹26 crore per urban local body (ULB).

Considering immense scope for expansion of municipal bond markets in a bid to develop world class urban infrastructure, there is a need to increase the ceiling of interest subvention from existing ₹26 crore per urban local body, sources said.

The interest subvention is provided to municipal bodies under Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) to make such municipal bonds or muni bonds more attractive. The ₹26 crore is the maximum interest subvention an ULB can receive from the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) for issuing municipal bonds.

The central government has extended the facility of 2 per cent interest subvention on such bond issues in order to incentivise this market and facilitate participation of more civic bodies. This interest subvention is on the total size of the bond issue by an ULB.



For their first bond issuance, ULBs can receive incentives of up to ₹13 crore for every ₹100 crore raised, with a maximum cap of ₹26 crore under the AMRUT 2.0.

For subsequent bond issuances, the bonds must be categorised as green bonds, focusing on sectors like water, sanitation, renewable energy, or urban resilience. In such cases, ULBs would be eligible for incentives of ₹10 crore per ₹100 crore raised, capped at ₹20 crore.

Bengaluru was the first to come out with municipal bonds as early as 1997. After that, some more ULBs such as Nashik, Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation and Ahmedabad hit the bond market.

Despite SEBI issuing comprehensive guidelines for Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) to raise funds via municipal bonds since a decade ago, progress has been limited.

Govt aid, corp funds help MSMEs to cut emission

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 21: Support from the government and funds under the corporate social responsibility (CSR) can help finance MSMEs' measures to curb carbon emission, according to experts.

Transition to clean energy, climate-informed building by-laws and combining active and passive cooling technologies to improve workers' productivity are some of the other steps that can protect MSMEs from climate-related risks, they said.

"The government and the private sector need to provide seed funds so that industrial clusters can empower local leaders to anticipate risks, prepare plans and act proactively before climate shocks hit," said Giriraj Amarnath, Research Group Leader, Water Data for Climate Resilience, International Water Management Institute.

CSR funds, too, can be leveraged for building resilience measures, he said, adding, "data-driven early warning and IoT-based forecasting models can help MSMEs adopt a no-regret approach".

Citing an example of the impact of extreme weather on MSMEs, Raghav Dalmia from Prayagraj Dyeing and Printing Mills pointed out that Surat's textile MSMEs face acute heat stress challenges, with machines operating at 130-180 degrees and poor ventilation compounding the problem.

Umamaheshwaran Rajasekar recommended establishing new infrastructure that can account for emerging climate risks during the design phase.

"Besides, for new MSME clusters or SEZs, the government can mandate climate-informed building bylaws (e.g., raised plinth levels, soft stories for flood safety).



"Retrofitting is far harder once clusters are already operational, especially against floods... MSMEs need guidance on locating critical equipment (e.g., batteries, electrical panels) in safer, elevated zones to reduce flood risk," he said.

Vidhya Venugopal, Professor Industrial hygiene, and Coun-

try Director, National Institute of Health and Care Research Environmental Change-Non Communicable Diseases, said during heatwaves, MSMEs can compulsorily provide 5-10 minutes of cooling breaks every hour and combine active and passive cooling technologies to effectively improve work-

ers' productivity and mitigate the impacts of heat stress.

"Cluster-level vulnerability assessments can support MSMEs to integrate resilient infrastructural planning. Knowledge about climate resilience measures like Heat Action Plans or flood drills developed by big brands and corporations need to be effectively communicated to MSMEs," said Aditya Raghwa, Head, Governments & Policy South Asia, Climate Group.

Most climate change-related finance instruments in India such as green bonds, ESG-linked loans, blended finance are designed for large corporates, while MSMEs struggle to access even basic working capital

NAMBI APPADURAI | DIRECTOR, CLIMATE RESILIENCE PRACTICE, WRI INDIA

FPIs take out ₹7,945 cr from equities in Sep; net outflow at ₹1.4 lakh cr

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 21: Foreign investors have pulled out ₹7,945 crore from Indian equities so far in September, weighed down by global uncertainties such as tariffs and persistent geopolitical tensions.

This follows heavy outflows of ₹34,990 crore in August and ₹17,700 crore in July, taking the total equity sell-off by Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) in 2025 to ₹1.38 lakh crore, according to depository data.

Looking ahead, market experts believe that upcoming macroeconomic data from India and the US, along with progress in tariff negotiations, will be key drivers of FPI flows in the coming week.

Although FPIs remain net sellers in September, with cumulative equity outflows of ₹7,945 crore till September 19, their selling has moderated. In fact, during the latest week, they briefly turned net buyers, purchasing ₹900 crore of equities after the US Federal Reserve cut interest rates by 25 basis points.

"For the current week FPIs bought Indian equities worth ₹900 crore on the back of the Fed's rate cut. With two more cuts projected in 2025, liquidity in global markets could improve significantly. However, FPIs remain net sellers in September," said Vaqarjaved Khan, Senior Fundamental Analyst, Angel One Ltd.

Abhishek storm blows away Pak

OPENERS SHINE AS INDIA DEFEAT PAKISTAN BY SIX WICKETS IN ASIA CUP SUPER 4S MATCH

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dubai, Sept 21: Abhishek Sharma was brutal and beautiful in equal measure during his scintillating 74 as India made a tricky chase look comfortable, winning an ill-tempered Super 4 contest of the Asia Cup against Pakistan by six wickets here Sunday. Left-handed Abhishek, who got 30-plus knocks in all the group league games, hit six fours and five sixes in his 39-ball knock.

As he was dismissed trying to hit his sixth maximum, it left everyone in a daze and still yearning for more.

If Shivam Dube's double blows in the Pakistan innings' back-10 opened the game for India, Abhishek and his best buddy Shubman Gill (47 off 28 balls) set up the chase of 172 with a 102-run opening stand.

The inseparable duo, who had been playing together since their Punjab U-12 days, sent the bowlers on a leather hunt.

It started with a hooked six by Abhishek off the very first delivery from Shaheen Shah Afridi (0/40 in 3.5 overs) as he picked wrist spinner Abrar Ahmed for special treatment, sending him for four more maximums.

Gill, who had a poor first 10 days of the tournament, was finally in his elements and was severe on pacers and spinners alike.

But the lofted drive over extra cover off Afridi, would be remembered for a long time.

The match didn't end without its share of skirmishes and every time it was Pakistani players, who started it but Indians, who finished it.

After being hit for a boundary, Afridi had a word for Gill, who showed him where the ball went.

Similarly when ill-tempered Haris Rauf was given a belt treatment by Abhishek, he



India's Abhishek Sharma celebrates his half century during the Asia Cup 2025 Super Four match between India and Pakistan, in Dubai, UAE

PTI PHOTO

tried to get into a physical altercation only to be stopped by the umpires as Gautam Gambhir sent three of his reserves to diffuse the situation.

Rauf, who was looking for a confrontation, didn't stop there. After removing Indian skipper Suryakumar Yadav cheaply, the fast bowler celebrated

with a gesture of flying a fighter aircraft, trying to add fuel to the fire.

After that, wherever Rauf was positioned the field, Indi-

INDIA STAMP AUTHORITY AS MEN IN BLUE THRASH PAKISTAN TWICE IN EIGHT DAYS

THERE WAS NO HANDSHAKE BETWEEN SURYAKUMAR AND HIS PAKISTAN COUNTERPART SALMAN AGHA AT THE TOSS

an fans would chant "Kohliiii Kohliiii" rubbing it in about those two iconic sixes the Indian talisman hit at the MCG during a T20 World Cup game in 2022.

Tilak Varma (30 not out off 19 balls) ensured that after a mini-collapse, that there were no more twists in the tale, finishing the chase with utmost calm in 18.5 overs.

Tilak and Hardik Pandya (7 not out) walked off the ground without shaking hands with opposition players in continuation of the 'No Handshake Policy.'

It may be recalled that skipper Suryakumar too did not shake hands with his counterpart Salman Agha during the toss earlier in the night.

Earlier, Dube turned out to be an unlikely bowling hero as India bowlers were better at the back-10 after a listless front-10 even as Pakistan managed a competitive 171 for 5 after being put into bat.

Stylish right-handed opener Sahibzada Farhan headlined the Pakistan innings with an attractive 58 off 45 balls as Kuldeep Yadav's dropped catch off Varun Chakravathy's bowling turned out to be costly.

BRIEF SCORES

Pakistan: 171 for 5 in 20 overs (Sahibzada Farhan 58, Saim Ayub 21, Mohammad Nawaz 21; Hardik Pandya 1/29, Kuldeep Yadav 1/31, Shivam Dube 2/33) lost to **India:** 174 for 4 in 18.5 overs (Shubman Gill 47, Abhishek Sharma 74, Tilak Varma 30 not out; Haris Rauf 2/26)

SECOND AGAIN

Heartbreak for Sat-Chi as Indians go down fighting

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Shenzhen, Sept 21: India's top men's doubles duo of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty endured yet another heartbreak, falling in straight games to world No 1 Kim Won Ho and Seo Seung Jae of Korea in a gripping China Masters Super 750 final here Sunday.

The Asian Games champions had hoped to end their title drought but squandered a 14-7 advantage in the opening game before slipping to a 19-21, 15-21 defeat in 45 minutes.

Satwik and Chirag came into their second successive final in supreme touch, not dropping a game all week after adding a second World Championships bronze and finishing runners-up at the Hong Kong Open. But they would rue letting slip the opening game from a position of strength.

Kim and Seo, who reunited this season after experimenting with other partners, were contesting their ninth final of 2025, having already won six titles, including a World Championships gold in Paris and Super 1000 crowns at the All England and Indonesia Open.

It was billed as a battle between the world's best attack and the best defence and it did have its moments but in the

end Kim and Seo showed better nerves and technical acumen to emerge victorious.

In the opening, the Koreans jumped to a 3-0 lead but the Indians stormed back with a flurry of angled smashes to make it 6-all. Chirag's deft touches at the net gave them an 11-7 cushion at the break and soon they stretched it to 14-8.

However, errors crept in, a lost video challenge broke their rhythm and the Koreans pounced on eight of the next nine points to wrest back the momentum at 15-all. Kim served a fault but a deceptive return kept it tight at 17-17.

A net error from Chirag handed Korea a 19-17 lead, but the Indians struck back as Seo miscued to make it 19-all.

The left-handed Kim earned game point with a sharp winner, and Chirag went wide to give the Koreans the opening game.

It could have been a different scenario had we won the first game. I felt like we are right up there. It's just a matter of one point here and there. It's all about confidence and really happy the way we are playing and good to be on back-to-back podium

SATWIKSAIRAJ RANKIREDDY



SHORT TAKES

Swiatek battles back to win Korea Open

Seoul: Top-seeded Iga Swiatek overcame a poor first set to beat No 2-seeded Ekaterina Alexandrova 1-6, 7-6 (3), 7-5 and win the Korea Open Sunday. Swiatek dropped her own serve five times, was edged out 6-2 in aces, had nine double-faults and even won fewer points than Alexandrova during a tight contest at Seoul Olympic Park Tennis Center lasting close to three hours. Even Swiatek could not believe how she did it. It was the six-time Grand Slam champion's third title of the year and 25th overall. The 24-year-old Pole won the Cincinnati Open title last month and clinched her first Wimbledon title in July. She improved to 25-5 overall in WTA finals and also chalked off a personal milestone.



Mithun Manhas in fray for BCCI prez

New Delhi: Former Delhi skipper Mithun Manhas has emerged as the frontrunner to take over as the new BCCI president even as some seasoned BCCI administrators and key decision makers held a rather informal meeting here Saturday. The meeting was held to finalise the candidates for the vacant posts in the Board ahead of the annual general meeting September 28. PTI has learnt that those who were in contention for the posts have been summoned for the meeting, with Manhas and the Karnataka State Cricket Association (KSCA) president Raghuram Bhatt among them. But it has now emerged that the top post could go to Manhas, who was also involved as director of cricket operations with the Jammu and Kashmir Cricket Association (JKCA).



AZERBAIJAN GRAND PRIX

Piastri crash hands Verstappen Baku win



Verstappen made it back-to-back wins for the first time since the Spanish Grand Prix of June 2024 as McLaren's dominance this season came under threat for the second race in a row

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Baku (Azerbaijan), Sept 21: Max Verstappen looked to be back at his title-winning best. McLaren's title-chasing drivers looked like also-rans.

Verstappen cruised to victory in the Azerbaijan Grand Prix Sunday as championship leader Oscar Piastri's first-lap crash allowed Lando Norris to trim his Formula 1 points advantage — but not deal a decisive blow.

Verstappen was in control from start to finish after taking pole position in a chaotic qualifying session Saturday and had a vast lead by the time he made his only pit stop.

“The car was working really well,” Verstappen said. “It

was pretty straightforward. Of course, it's not easy around here, very windy today so the car is always moving around a little, but of course, incredibly happy with this performance.”

George Russell said he was “pretty glad” to see the checkered flag after taking second for Mercedes while battling illness and Carlos Sainz, Jr was third for Williams' first podium finish in four years.

“Best podium in my career,” the former Ferrari driver told the team.

McLaren's worst day Norris was seventh as he missed the chance to fully exploit Piastri's error and slash the Australian's lead in the Formula 1 title fight, which drops from 31 points to 25, the value of a race win. Verstappen still has a slim chance of a fifth consecutive title in third, 69 points off the lead.

Norris struggled to pass cars on track and spent the final lap behind Red Bull's Yuki Tsunoda, but could have finished as high as fourth if not for losing time — and likely three places — in a slow McLaren pit stop for the second race running.

Golden comeback for Pramod

Odisha para shuttler wins gold and silver; Sukant Kadam claims two silver

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 21: India's Pramod Bhagat, Sukant Kadam and Krishna Nagar brought glory to the country at the China Para Badminton International 2025 with their remarkable performances.

Ace shuttler Pramod made a golden comeback after 18 months, clinching the men's singles SL3 gold medal.

Facing stiff competition from Indonesia's Muh Al Imran, Pramod lost the first set 15-2 but bounced back brilliantly to win the next two sets 21-19, 21-16 and sealing the top prize in a thrilling contest.

This was an emotional victory for Pramod, marking his return to the international circuit after missing the Paris Paralympics due to three whereabouts failures.

In men's doubles, he paired with Kadam and secured silver after falling short against compatriots Jagadeesh Dilli and Naveen Sivakumar in a gripping final that ended 18-21, 22-20, 18-21.

Man United beat Chelsea in thriller; Reds flawless

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Manchester, Sept 21: Bruno Fernandes struck his 100th goal for Manchester United in a chaotic 2-1 win against Chelsea and helped ease pressure on coach Ruben Amorim.

Fernandes and Casemiro struck in a wild first half at Old Trafford where both teams went down to 10 men and Chelsea lost star player Cole Palmer to injury.

Fernandes hit a century of goals in his 200th Premier League appearance. But the biggest celebration came after the final whistle as United won for only the second time this season.

“Every win, especially in this moment, is important against a great opponent,” Amorim told the BBC. “Our crowd, our fans are easy to please. If you give everything they will be there. That is something our players



World No 1 Kadam put up a strong show in the men's singles SL4 category, battling through a tough draw before finishing with a silver medal. In the final, he went down to France's Lucas Mazur 9-21, 8-21.

Tokyo 2020 Paralympic

This gold medal is very special for me. Coming back after 18 months and proving myself again is a priceless feeling. I want to thank my coaches, supporters, and everyone who believed in me during the tough phase. This is just the beginning of my comeback story

PRAMOD BHAGAT

champion Krishna also added to India's tally with a silver medal in the men's singles SH6 event. He fought valiantly against Thailand's Natthapong Meechai in a close three-setter before settling for second place, with the final scoreline reading 22-20, 7-21, 17-21.

PREMIER LEAGUE



need to understand. To have the crowd with us we just need to run, to fight and tackle.” Earlier, defending champion Liverpool maintained its 100% start with a 2-1 victory against Everton at Anfield in the Merseyside derby.

Relief for United

Amorim will take wins however he can get them after a torrid 10 months in charge.

After overseeing the 20-time English champion's worst ever Premier League campaign last

season, there have been more struggles this term, raising questions about his ability to revive United. So when Sanchez was shown red for bringing down Bryan Mbeumo just outside the area, it looked like the perfect chance for United to get back to winning ways following last week's 3-0 defeat to Manchester City.

And United took advantage with Fernandes converting from close range in the 14th and Casemiro heading home in the 37th. The win moved United up to 10th and one point behind sixth-placed Chelsea, which was tipped to challenge for the title this season.

Perfect Liverpool

Ryan Gravenberch scored and assisted to help improve Liverpool's record to 5-0. For the first time this season, it didn't require a late goal to secure victory.