

Khushi's honesty
 Actor Khushi Kapoor confesses to getting a nose job and lip fillers before her debut, earning praise for her candidness on social media
 LEISURE | P2

Gaza's new threat
 Polio spreads fast in the Gaza Strip, prompting aid groups to call for an urgent pause in the war so they can ramp up vaccinations
 INTERNATIONAL | P10

More reforms needed
 India will need to undertake a lot more reforms to make sure that enough jobs are created, says IMF deputy managing director Gita Gopinath
 BUSINESS | P11

Rousing welcome
 Vinesh Phogat receives a grand welcome on her return to the country with hundreds of supporters standing in solidarity with her
 SPORTS | P12

SIM BOX SEIZURE
Racket linked to Bangladesh

DEBADURLLAV HARICHANDAN, OP

Bhubaneswar, August 17: A day after the Laxmisagar police arrested a West Bengal native in connection with the possession of seven SIM boxes, over 1,000 SIMs, and other electronic devices, Twin City Police Commissioner Sanjeeb Panda Saturday said the illicit activities were taken up under the supervision of a Bangladeshi national. "Accused Raju Mandal, a native of North 24 Paraganas in West Bengal, ran the operation from a rented accommodation in Mahadev Nagar area of the City, with the help of Assadur Zaman from Bangladesh. After Raju took the house on rent, October 21, 2023, Assadur came to Bhubaneswar via Agartala and assisted him in setting up the SIM boxes. During the period, the latter stayed at Lingaraj Hotel near Bhubaneswar Railway station. Besides, Assadur bore the monthly expenses of Raju to carry out the illicit activities", revealed Panda, adding that the City cops would take the help of national agencies to nab Assadur, who is absconding. As per the preliminary investigations, Raju made a series of calls to Pakistan and China along with Middle Eastern nations, evading the international telecom gateways of India. He used those to escape GPS location trackers for his dubious activity and give the police a slip. The SIM boxes have been smuggled from Bangladesh while the used SIMs are registered in the names of several people from West Bengal. P3



KALEIDOSCOPE OF FLYING COLOURS: People during the third edition of Tamil Nadu International Kite Festival, in Thiruvaidanthai, Saturday
 PTI PHOTO

LIGHTNING STRIKE CLAIMS 11 IN STATE

Bhubaneswar, August 17: As many as 11 persons including a couple were killed in separate incidents of lightning strike in various parts of the state, Saturday. A couple, died while working in a paddy field at Singarpura village in Mayurbhanj district, police said. The deceased have been identified as Lachhman Murmu, 45, and Sakar Murmu, 40, they added. In the second incident, a farmer Chakradhar Das, 58, of Sahupada village in Gopinathpur panchayat under Agarpada police limits in Bhadrak district was grazing his herd of goats on the canal embankment when lightning struck him. He died on the spot. Similarly, a youth Hemant Barik, 29, of Gobindpur village in Bijaynagar panchayat of Chandbali block in Bhadrak district died after hit by thunderbolt while he was returning home from his farmland. In another incident, Rajesh Munda, a 13-year-old boy of Dhurudiamba village under Harichandanpur block in Keonjhar district died after lightning struck him when he was sitting inside his house. Six more persons also died in Dhenkanal, Cuttack, Jajpur, Kendrapara, Ganjam and Balasore districts details of which are awaited. Meanwhile, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi has announced ₹4 lakh financial assistance for the deceased.

HEALTH SERVICES HIT

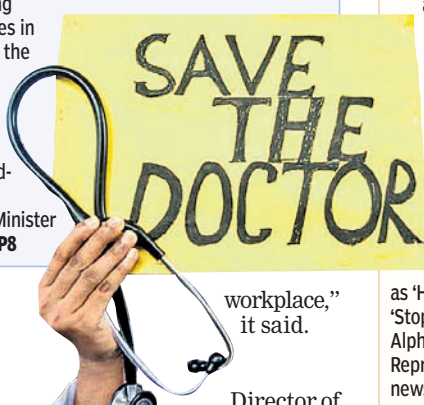
PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, August 17: Healthcare services were affected across the state Saturday as doctors joined the nationwide protest, demanding justice for the rape and murder of a post graduate trainee doctor at the RG Kar Medical College and Hospital in Kolkata. About 6,000 members of the Indian Medical Association (IMA) joined the protest across the state, leading to the closure of outpatient departments, elective surgeries and laboratory services in both government and private hospitals. The 24-hour protest will continue till 6 am of Sunday. Besides seeking justice for their colleague, the agitating doctors were demanding central legislation that ensured the safety and security of healthcare workers and pledged to continue their stir till it was met. State Health Minister Mukesh Mahaling said the government was in touch with different doctors' associations and requested

Panel soon for medicos' safety

New Delhi: The Union Health Ministry Saturday said a committee will be formed to suggest all possible measures for ensuring the safety of healthcare professionals. Representatives of all stakeholders, including the state governments, will be invited to share their suggestions with the committee, it added. The ministry has requested the doctors agitating across the country to resume their duties in the larger public interest and in view of the rising number of dengue and malaria cases. Representatives of the Federation of Resident Doctors' Association (FORDA), IMA and resident doctors' associations of government medical colleges and hospitals of Delhi met the Union Health Minister in the wake of the Kolkata incident. P8

the agitators to return to work so that healthcare services could be provided to the needy. In a statement, the Odisha Medical College Teachers' Association (OMTA) condemned the incident at the RG Kar MCH, and extended support to the stir. "We pray for the tortured soul to rest in peace, convey our deep condolence for the family and demand safety & security for doctors & medical professionals during the duty hours at the



Director of Medical Education and Training (DMET) doctor Santosh Mihsra said senior doctors and faculty members in medical colleges were engaged in providing service in emergency wards. "The leaves of all faculty members in the medical colleges have been suspended in vide of the

DHAKA STUDENTS IN SOLIDARITY

Dhaka: Students at the prestigious Dhaka University in Bangladesh held a protest in solidarity with ongoing demonstrations over the rape and murder of a woman trainee doctor at RG Kar Medical College in Kolkata. The protest, organised under the banner 'Awaaz Tolo Nari' (Raise Your Voice, Women), Friday, took place at the Raju Sculpture in Dhaka University where demonstrators held placards with messages such as 'Hang the Rapists', 'Am I Next?', 'Stop Violence', and 'Don't Be an Alpha Male, Question What It Represents', the Dhaka Tribune newspaper reported. "It's just a buffalo, he could've given me five acres of land instead!" joked Nadeem, in an interview to Pakistan-based news channel ARY News, much to the amusement of the interviewer. "But I thought, 'okay, a buffalo is not bad either'", he added. Nadeem's wife Ayesha admitted that her father had not told her about the gift, and that she had learnt about it from an interview. "I did not know either, I got to know from an interview," said Ayesha. "I told her 'He's so rich and he gave me a buffalo?' I asked her to tell him to give 5-6 acres of land, but she hasn't yet!" joked Nadeem. After his 92.97m Olympic record throw earned him gold, Arshad has received a hero's welcome upon his return to Pakistan. Tuesday, Pakistan Prime

Nod for prosecution of K'taka CM in MUDA case

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, August 17: Karnataka Governor Thawar Chand Gehlot Saturday granted sanction for prosecution of Chief Minister Siddaramaiah in connection with Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) site allotment 'scam'. "The Governor has granted sanction for prosecution against the Chief Minister. It is based on three petitions filed by -- T J Abraham, Pradeep Kumar and Snehamayi Krishna," an senior official at the Raj Bhavan told this agency. The Governor's secretariat has written to Pradeep Kumar SP, T J Abraham and Snehamayi Krishna about the decision of the competent authority on the request of sanction of prosecution against Siddaramaiah, under Section 17 of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 and Section 218 of Bharithiya Nagarika Suraksha Samhitha, 2023 for the commission of alleged offences mentioned in the petitions.

A special meeting of the state Cabinet has been called at 5 pm, following the Governor's decision. According to official and Congress sources, the Chief Minister will legally fight the prosecution sanction accorded by the Governor. Siddaramaiah has repeatedly said that the Congress government led by him is ready to fight legally and politically, in case the Governor rejects the Cabinet's advice to withdraw the 'show-cause notice' to him, and grants permission for prosecution. The Karnataka government had August 1 'strongly advised' the Governor to withdraw his 'show-cause notice' to the Chief Minister and alleged 'gross misuse of the Constitutional Office' of the Governor. In the MUDA 'scam', it is alleged that compensatory sites were allotted to Siddaramaiah's wife Parvathi in an up market area in Mysuru, which had higher property value as compared to the location of her land which had been 'acquired' by the MUDA. MORE P9

20 coaches of Sabarmati Express derail in Kanpur

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kanpur, August 17: Twenty coaches of the Ahmedabad-bound Sabarmati Express passenger train derailed near Govindpuri station in Kanpur early Saturday after the engine hit an 'object placed on the track'. Agencies are investigating the possible involvement of anti-social elements in the incident, railway officials said. There were no casualties in the derailment that occurred between Kanpur and Bhimsen railway stations at around 2.35 am, disrupting traffic on the route. According to the Railways, seven trains were cancelled and three were diverted due to the derailment. Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said that the

Intelligence Bureau and Uttar Pradesh police were looking into the incident and arrangements were being made for the onward journey of passengers. In a post on X, Vaishnaw said, "The engine of Sabarmati Express (Varanasi to Ahmedabad) hit an object on the track and derailed near Kanpur at 02:35 am today. "Sharp hit marks are observed. Evidence is protected. IB and UP police are also working on it. No injuries to passengers or staff. Train arranged for passengers for onward journey to Ahmedabad." Asked about the incident, Police Commissioner, Kanpur, Akhil Kumar said, "It is premature to reach a conclusion on whether it is an accident or an act of mischief, but it could be anything."

Nadeem 'unhappy' over father-in-law's buffalo gift

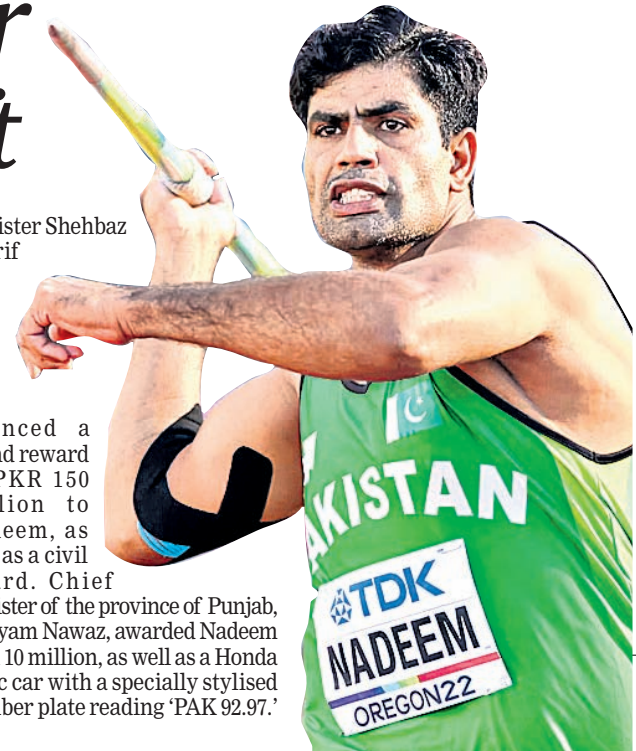
AGENCIES

Islamabad, August 17: After bagging a gold medal in javelin throw at Paris Olympics, Pakistan athlete Arshad Nadeem expected at least a five-acre of land from his father-in-law. However, he ended up getting only a buffalo from his wife's father. The Olympic gold medalist's wife Ayesha said she had no inkling about what her father was up to. She only came to know about it from an interview, shared Ayesha. Nadeem has been bestowed with several honours and rewards after his javelin throw gold at Paris. From PKR 150 mil-

lion to gold crowns and civil awards, Nadeem has received immense tribute from his nation. But none have created as many headlines as the unique gift that his father-in-law had gifted him. Arshad's father-in-law - the father of his wife Ayesha - gifted the star athlete a buffalo. Now, Nadeem and his wife have joked about the gift, with Nadeem requesting something else instead. "It's just a buffalo, he could've given me five acres of land instead!" joked Nadeem, in an interview to Pakistan-based news channel ARY News, much to the amusement of the interviewer. "But I thought, 'okay, a buffalo

is not bad either'", he added. Nadeem's wife Ayesha admitted that her father had not told her about the gift, and that she had learnt about it from an interview. "I did not know either, I got to know from an interview," said Ayesha. "I told her 'He's so rich and he gave me a buffalo?' I asked her to tell him to give 5-6 acres of land, but she hasn't yet!" joked Nadeem. After his 92.97m Olympic record throw earned him gold, Arshad has received a hero's welcome upon his return to Pakistan. Tuesday, Pakistan Prime

Minister Shehbaz Sharif announced a grand reward of PKR 150 million to Nadeem, as well as a civil award. Chief Minister of the province of Punjab, Maryam Nawaz, awarded Nadeem PKR 10 million, as well as a Honda Civic car with a specially stylised number plate reading 'PAK 92.97.'



leisure



I GET MISGENDERED ALL THE TIME: ELLIOT PAGE

Actor Elliot Page, who came out as transgender in 2020, said that he gets misgendered all the time but he doesn't let it bother him. "I get misgendered all the time, and I don't care unless someone's trying to, you know (be mean)," Page told the *Guardian*.

EUGENE, DAN LEVY TO HOST EMMYS

The 76th edition of the Primetime Emmy Awards is set to be telecast within a month, and the hosts for the event have been finally locked. The father-son duo of Eugene Levy and Dan Levy will emcee this year's Emmys, which is set to be held, September 15, reports *Variety*.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
Sometimes, pressure is a good thing, as it brings out the best in you. You will outshine your colleagues in whatever you choose to do. But your expectations may far exceed the outcome. Ganesh asks that you have patience. Results take time.

TAURUS
Today might be a day of untying and getting out of the tangles, says Ganesh. You may take the blame for the actions of another. Things may get frustrating around the afternoon and your confidence levels may stoop. Work on your strength and work out your weaknesses, advises Ganesh.

GEMINI
You had better start sharing your feelings with your family today, says Ganesh. Also, it's time to tell your family about your current financial status. It will help you feel better. Your energy levels will soar and you will approach everything with renewed vigour.

CANCER
You may discuss certain serious issues with your beloved today, predicts Ganesh. Your time till afternoon will be spent in discussions and deliberations about the issue. However, this issue may not be enough in letting you off the hook on the work front. Think twice before you act.

LEO
After a long time, it seems as if the stars are aligning to bring something special for you. Call it your field day, but today, everything will go your way, says Ganesh. Expect to get appreciated for your hard work in office. As for the home front, you will get all the support you need from your family members for refurbishing your home.

VIRGO
Surf's up as you enjoy an unexpected achievement! But your joy ride today may well be spent in vexing about the problems you have. Expect to gain new money for a new venture. Your business will rise atop the highest wave today, foretells Ganesh.

LIBRA
Working for the government is always a key responsibility, says Ganesh. But today of all days proves to be fabulous and phenomenal for all those in government service. Your actions will translate into accomplishment and you may rest assured that you shall be duly recognized and rewarded for your meritorious service.

SCORPIO
Your business associates will emerge as intangible assets for you today, says Ganesh. You will probably start off an innovative joint venture without any doubt or indecision. Hard work and enthusiasm are always a good combination for achieving success.

SAGITTARIUS
It is not your nature to warm the bench, but you will wake up feeling lazy and laid-back today, says Ganesh. This may be due to the fatigue of some recent endeavours. For a change, you will try and delegate your work and responsibility to those around you.

CAPRICORN
Plans for expanding business may require you to take risks, leaving you in a dilemma on more than one occasion. In such desperate circumstances, following your instincts can lead you to success, advises Ganesh.

AQUARIUS
Amid all the boring work buzz, you will manage to sustain your sense of humour. And, why not? After all, you are an expert at inducing a laugh riot! You are in a gregarious mood and that explains it. This also makes you a welcome guest at any party you may wish to grace.

PISCES
A day wherein you will be handling responsibilities on both the home front and at the workplace awaits you, says Ganesh. Expect to be involved in home refurbishing projects, where expenses are likely to soar. Appreciation and gratitude will come your way at the end of a hard day's work.

Uorfi, new Kim K!

Mumbai: Social media personality Uorfi Javed is all set to feature in the reality show *Follow Kar Lo Yaar*, which will stream on Prime Video. Soon after the trailer dropped, reactions poured in on how the upcoming web series would follow the personal and professional lives of the social media personality and her family, à la Kim Kardashian. In fact, Uorfi herself said in the trailer for *Follow Kar Lo Yaar* that she wants to be 'India's next Kim Kardashian'. Many on Reddit have reacted to her remarks. A clip of Uorfi and her sisters and mother was shared on Reddit with the caption, "Uorfi is the new Kim K (Kim Kardashian)?? A reality show about her and her sisters on Prime. Thoughts?" A Redditor commented, "Lol. They have taken entire storylines from the Kardashian show. Uorfi talking about putting poop on her face to get younger—Kim getting a vampire facial and saying she would inject and eat anything if it made her look young. The whole 'I need to get a super successful business/startup' bit. Fighting among the sisters/one sister saying no one cares about her/crying—the photoshoots and getting other influencers/reality stars to talk with—IT'S ALL BEEN DONE!!!!!!!!!!!!!!"

The nine-episode Prime Video series *Follow Kar Lo Yaar* will premiere, August 23.

Kirti wants to break the 'serious actor' tag

Mumbai: Actor-producer Kirti Kulhari has opened up about being stuck in a certain kind of role as an actor, resulting in a lack of opportunities to showcase her acting prowess. She said, "It is the people's perception that serious actors can do only intense roles well. This is not true for actors, and unfortunately, good actors get stuck in only serious, intense roles. But I think we are all capable of comedy as much. Having experimented with comedy, I would like to say that if this tag is taken off from us, we can do a lot more. It is about giving us an opportunity, and I think there are directors

who can see that, see beyond this, they can see what all you can do. I think those are the directors I want to work with." While Kirti has done many films in her 15-year-long career as an actor, the actor says she feels blessed to be a part of several OTT shows because here she found the kind of work she was looking for. "Life has been good, and I'm grateful for the opportunities I've had. However, I notice a divide between OTT and film stars. I hope we reach a point where this distinction fades and everyone is recognised for their talent, not the platform they work on. It's important to see people for who they are and what they do," she concluded.



Khushi's confession

Mumbai: Khushi Kapoor has openly confessed to undergoing plastic surgery, revealing that she got a nose job before stepping into the spotlight.

She made the confession on Instagram while reacting to a user on an old video of herself. In the video, she is seen as a kid coming to an event with her mother and late cine icon Sridevi, with a video of making an entry for the premiere of her first film, *The Archies*. A user wrote, "I'll be honest, Khushi looks so similar to how she used to look. Like it genuinely looks like she lost weight," while another wrote, "THANK YOU. She was 12 here, she also just got braces, she got lip fillers, and that was that." To this, Khushi wrote, "@archivekhushii lip filler and (nose emoji) hahaha."

Social media users were happy to read the confession. One user wrote, "Lmaoo, this is real. I just cross checked. Good that she's owning up to it. It's her money, she got it done for herself and isn't pretending to be natural, so I hope plastic hate stops." Another user wrote, "If you know her, she's never pretended and always been herself, unlike her sister. Better than Jhanvi, who claims it is Rose Water and Malai."

On the work front, Khushi will soon be seen in the Hindi remake of *Love Today* with *Maharaj* actor Junaid Khan as her co-star.



IFFM 2024

Top honours for 12th Fail, Laapataa Ladies

Mumbai: Actor Kartik Aaryan, who was recently seen in *Chandu Champion*, won the Best Actor honour at the 15th edition of the Indian Film Festival of Melbourne (IFFM). Filmmakers Kabir Khan and Nithilan Swaminathan were jointly awarded Best Director for their work on *Chandu Champion* and *Maharaja*. Vidhu Vinod Chopra's *12th Fail* was named the Best Film in the event, and filmmaker Kiran Rao's *Laapataa Ladies* was feted for its innovative approach and storytelling. Shah Rukh and Taapsee starer *Dunki* was given the

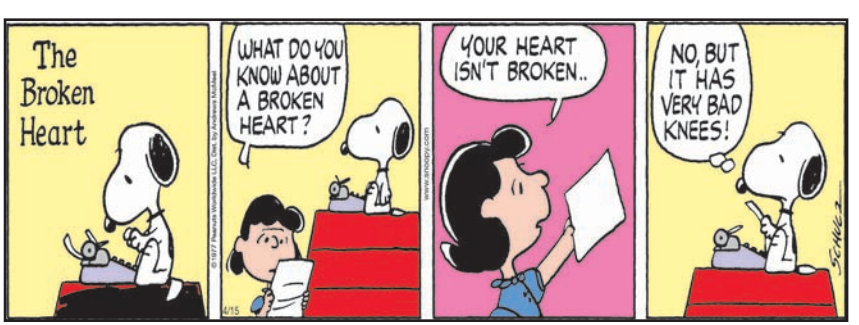


Equality in Cinema honour, and actress Rasika Dugal was named in the Diversity

Champion category. In the Disruptor in Cinema category, actor Adarsh Gourav, who has

showcased his prowess in films such as *The White Tiger*, *Kho Gaye Hum Kahan*, and *Woh Bhi Din The*, won the award. Rahman was honoured with the Excellence in Cinema, while Ram Charan was feted with the Ambassador of Indian Art & Culture award. Filmmaker Imtiaz Ali's Amar Singh *Chamkila* was tagged as the Breakout Film of the Year. *Kohrra* won the Best Series, and Arjun Mathur was named as the Best Actor in a Series for his work in *Made In Heaven 2*. *Laapataa Ladies* was named under the Best Film (Critics Choice), and Best Performance of the Year (Critics) went to actor Vikrant Massey for *12th Fail*.

PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

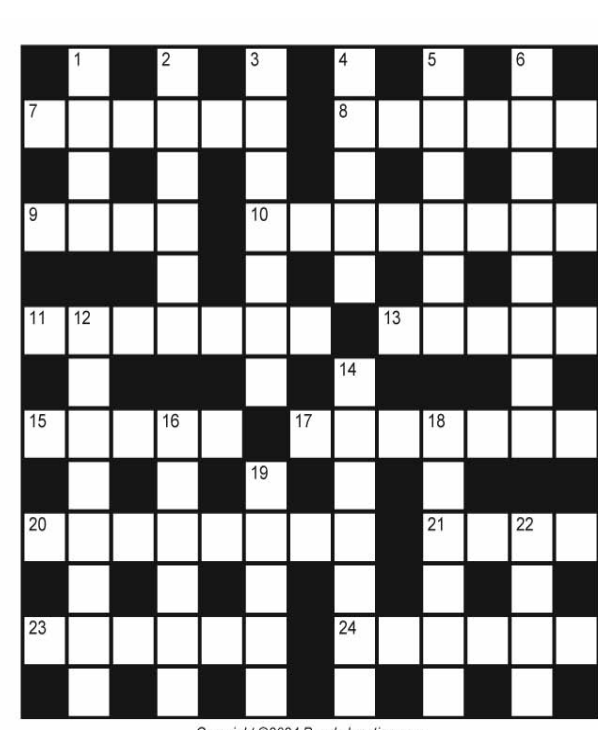


BREVITY



FUN post

CROSSWORD



Across
7 Water, e.g.
8 Stinger
9 Hidden valley
10 American-Chinese dish (4,4)
11 Set apart
13 Unwavering
15 Type of jet
17 Macaque and saki, for two

Down
20 Foe
21 Fishing lure
23 Kingdom
24 Chess piece

Across
4 Take a photograph
5 Magic word
6 Tranquility
12 Auguste Rodin, e.g.
14 Heyerdahl's ride (3,4)
16 Work shoe
18 OPEC member
19 Fencing move
22 Rhine tributary

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.

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

SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

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

SUDOKU

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

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

Patients suffer as doctors cease work across state



GANJAM



BHUBANESWAR



CUTTACK



BARIPADA



BHADRAK



SAMBALPUR



KORAPUT

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 17: Thousands of patients had a harrowing time Saturday as the nationwide protest against the alleged rape and murder of a medic in a Kolkata hospital, demanding exemplary punishment for the culprits, a Central law to ensure safety of medical professionals and better security infrastructure at their workplaces and public areas.

Outpatient departments (OPDs) and non-emergency services came to a near halt in all hospitals during the day as protesting doctors assembled on the premises, displaying placards to press for their demands.

In the Capital City of Bhubaneswar, the striking doctors from government as well as private hospitals took out a joint rally to Master Canteen Square where they organised sit-ins. They were joined by Ayush doctors.

Meanwhile, chaotic scenes were seen at all leading hospitals in the state. At the state's premier healthcare facility, the SCB Medical College and Hospital in Cuttack, many patients travelling from far off places had to return due to the non-availability of services. The worst affected was the Radiology department where the number of daily ultra-

sounds and X-rays came down to around 40 from 150.

An attendant at the hospital said the mass strike by doctors hit patients hard. "The doctors are well within their rights to protest. However, at the same time, they should understand the plight of patients, and their relatives, coming with the hope for treatment," he said.

Sudama Sahu, a patient from Kendrapara, said though he needed immediate ultrasound for his stomach ailment,

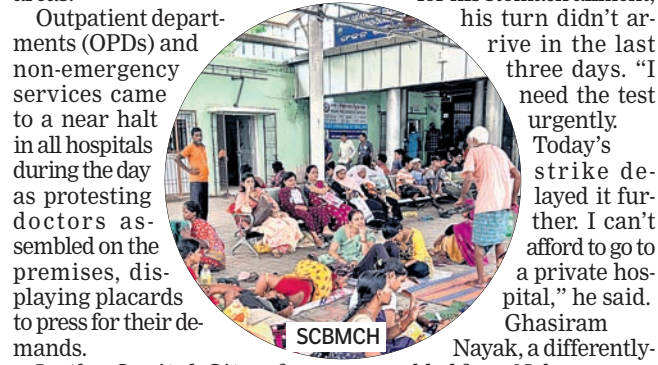
his turn didn't arrive in the last three days. "I needed the test urgently."

Today's strike delayed it further. I can't afford to go to a private hospital," he said. Ghasiram Nayak, a differently-

abled from Nabarangpur, who visited MKCG Medical College and Hospital in Berhampur over renal problems, said he was asked by the doctor in the first half to visit in the afternoon. "However, I found the OPD shut when I went," Nayak said.

OPD services at the hospital remained suspended from 2pm to 5pm due to the strike.

The Indian Medical Association (IMA) had declared a nationwide withdrawal of non-emergency medical services for 24 hours from 6 am on August 17 to protest against the crime that has sent shockwaves across the country.



SCBMCH



BERHAMPUR

UPHOLD DIGNITY OF HOUSE: RIJJU

Claiming breach of protocol, BJD and Congress boycott two-day orientation programme

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, August 17: Union Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijju Saturday advised newly-elected members of the Odisha Legislative Assembly to maintain discipline, work hard and uphold the dignity of the House.

Inaugurating the two-day orientation programme for newly-elected MLAs here, Rijju said they should not make any 'hungama' in the House. "Making 'hungama' (noise) in the House may give you a headline the next day, but it has no positive impact in the long-run," he said.

"I am here not to teach the new MLAs, but to share my experience as a member of the



Parliament. I am happy to see that there is convergence of both young and experienced members. It is a good sign for democracy," the Union Minister said.

Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, Speaker Surama Padhy, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Mukesh Mahaling and other members attended the session - Gyan Sanskar Programme.

Majhi said the first duty of the elected legislators and MPs is to adhere to the provisions of the Constitution, and make full use of the powers given to them by working diligently to fulfil

the expectations and hopes of the people.

The Opposition BJD and the Congress, however, boycotted the programme over 'breach of protocol' claims.

However, the Union Minister said the issue should not be politicised.

BJD deputy chief whip PK Deb said his party would organise a separate training programme for the new MLAs at Sankha Bhawan here August 25.

He said the BJD considers it a breach of protocol when a Union Minister inaugurates a

programme in presence of the Chief Minister.

Congress chief whip CS Raazen Ekka said his party was not opposed to any individual, but there is a breach of protocol when the Chief Minister is 'an ordinary guest and a Union Minister inaugurates' any function.

BJD chief whip Pramila Malik had earlier informed that party MLAs would not attend the orientation programme.

During the two-day programme, the senior leaders are scheduled to explain the newly-elected members among other things about the budgetary processes, Assembly questions and other procedures for raising matters of public importance on the floor of the House, legislative processes, and efficacy of committee system in a democracy.

Of the 147 members in the Assembly, 84 MLAs are first-timers.

Kendrapara ACSO held for 336% DA

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 17: Vigilance sleuths Saturday arrested Kendrapara Additional Civil Supplies Officer (ACSO) Pradeep Kumar Mohapatra on charges of possessing assets 336 per cent more than his known sources of income.

Following allegations of possession of disproportionate assets (DA), five teams of Vigilance, comprising four DSPs, five Inspectors and an Assistant Enforcer, carried out searches at five places related to Mohapatra Friday.

During searches, a two-storey residential complex at Lingipur in Bhubaneswar, a building in Madhupatna area of Cuttack, two plots of land in prime areas of Bhubaneswar and Cuttack, bank and insurance deposits along with investment in mutual fund of ₹2,86,09,569 and ₹1,21,500 in cash were found from the possession of Mohapatra. Around 850 gram of gold, a diamond necklace, a four-wheeler and two two-wheelers were also found in his possession,

Top GST officer under Vig lens



Binay Bhusan Tripathy

Vigilance sleuths Saturday carried out simultaneous searches at five places related to Binay Bhusan Tripathy, Assistant Commissioner of CT and GST Enforcement Unit of Jajpur, on allegations of embezzlement of ₹5.85 lakh government funds, official sources said. According to the anti-corruption wing, Tripathy intercepted a vehicle (OD 04 L 2233) carrying about 22,240 kilogram of scrap worth ₹8,89,600 at Revena in Jajpur May 7, 2024.

"Tripathy contacted the owner of the consignment and asked him to deposit ₹3,20,000 in the cash ledger as tax. He further demanded ₹2,50,000 towards illegal gratification in order to release the vehicle and material," a press statement said. "When Tripathy didn't get the bribe, he illegally sold the scrap to a dealer and misappropriated the entire amount (Rs 5,85,356)," it pointed out. "It was also alleged that Tripathy had collected huge amounts as bribes from various transporters/suppliers on grounds of evasion of taxes," it added.

They said. "After thorough search, inventory and further enquiry, the income, expenditure and assets of Mohapatra were calculated and he was found in possession of disproportionate assets which were 336 per cent in excess of his known sources of income," they said. According to the anti-corruption wing, the of-

ficer was taken into custody after he failed to give satisfactory accounts of such assets.

"A case (08/24) under Sections 13(2) r/w 13(1)(b)/12 PC (Amendment) Act, 2018 has been registered by the Cuttack Vigilance Cell police station against Mohapatra and his spouse," they pointed out.

Asit Tripathy resigns as WODC chairman

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, August 17: Asit Kumar Tripathy has resigned as the chairman of the Western Odisha Development Council (WODC), sources said Saturday.

"His resignation has been accepted by the government today," they added.

"The resignation of Asit Kumar Tripathy, chairman of the Western Odisha Development Council (WODC) under the administrative control of P&C department is hereby accepted with effect from August 17," an order issued by the Planning and Convergence department stated.

A former Chief Secretary of Odisha, Tripathy had been in the position since 2020.

In December 2020, he was appointed as the chairman of the WODC.

SIM box case: Landlord likely to be questioned



DEBADURLAV HARICHANDAN, OP

Bhubaneswar, August 17: The Laxmisagar police are planning to summon the landlord of the house at Mahadev Nagar for questioning as the investigation into the SIM box seizure case, involving overseas links, gathers steam.

An officer, who is privy to the investigation, said though the prime focus of the probe at present is to ferret out more information about Bangladeshi national Assadur Zaman - the alleged handler of Raju Mandal who has been arrested in the case - the landlord would be quizzed about the procedure he had followed before renting out his house to the

accused. He said the landlord had agreed to rent his premises on the basis of Mandal's Aadhar card. "However, he (landlord) did not bother to submit the mandatory NoC from Mandal's native police station in North 24 Praganas district of West Bengal with the local police here," the officer said.

He said the house was frequented by outsiders who are suspected to have provided the digital apparatus in the setup of SIM boxes. Even though the accused used the device for routing calls from five foreign countries, including UAE, Pakistan and China since last six months, his activities did not raise any suspicion among locals and cops as well, he added.

At a press conference Saturday Police Commissioner Sanjeeb Panda said the interrogation of Mandal has revealed that a similar operation (of making cross-border calls using SIM boxes) is going on at a different location at the behest of Zaman. He said the Odisha police might seek help from Central agencies in the investigation so as to bring Zaman to book.

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Low pressure may trigger heavy rain for 4 more days

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, August 17: With the low pressure area over Bay of Bengal (BoB) intensifying and the IMD forecasting heavy downpour in parts of Odisha till August 21, the state government Saturday put all the 30 districts on alert to deal with any possible flood-like situation or water-logging.

The India Meteorological Department, in its evening bulletin, said that the low pressure area over north BoB and adjoining areas along the Bangladesh-West Bengal coasts is likely to move north-north-westwards and become a well-marked low pressure area over Bangladesh and adjoining Gangetic West Bengal by August 19.



"Thereafter, it is likely to move west-northwestwards across Gangetic West Bengal, Jharkhand and adjoining Bihar and Uttar Pradesh and adjoining Madhya Pradesh during the subsequent 3-4 days," the IMD said.

The weather agency issued a yellow warning of heavy rain (7 to 11 cm) at a few places in Bolangir, Kalahandi, Rayagada, Gajapati, Ganjam, Kandhamal, Nuapada, Mayurbhanj and Keonjhar districts during the next 24 hours.

August 20, heavy rain (7 to 11cm) is likely to occur at one or two places over the districts of Keonjhar, Sundargarh, Deogarh, Sambalpur, Jharsuguda, and Bargarh.

Also, heavy rain (7 to 11cm) is likely to occur at one or two places over the districts of Sundargarh, Jharsuguda, Sambalpur, and Bargarh, August 21.

Meanwhile, Odisha's Special Relief Commissioner (SRC) Satyabrata Sahu, in a letter to all the collectors, said the district administrations should remain prepared for any eventuality and remain vigilant on water-logging in urban areas.

The SRC also asked the district collectors to ensure that no fishermen ventures into the sea from August 17 to August 21.



JUDICIAL LORDSHIPS: Supreme Court judge and NALSA Executive Chairman Justice Sanjiv Khanna presided over the Odisha Conference of District Legal Services Authorities at Judicial Academy in Cuttack, Saturday. Notable dignitaries including Orissa High Court Chief Justice Chakradhari Sharan Singh, Justice Debabrata Dash and Justice Arindam Sinha were present on the occasion.

OES, CSIR-IMMT hold OBPC meet

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 17: The first preparatory meeting of Odisha Bigyan 'O' Paribesh Congress (OBPC) organising committee was held at CSIR- Institute of Minerals and Materials Technology (IMMT) here Saturday, under the chairmanship of Orissa Environmental Society (OES) president Sundara Narayana Patro.

In the meeting, organisers informed that OBPC's 25th silver jubilee celebrations will take place from November 29 to 30 on the theme 'Science fostering holistic development of the na-



tion.' The event will be held at CSIR-IMMT.

According to the organisers, scientists, academicians, researchers and students working in the fields of science and technology will take part in the event.

The participants will present their research work and contributions. Also, discussions will be held highlighting the progress

made by them in various frontiers of science.

"In the days to come, our scientists will be able to identify sustainable solutions to serious social, economic and environmental challenges that will provide future generations with a wonderful environment to live on this planet," the organisers said.

14TH ADITYA MEMORIAL INTER-SCHOOL QUIZ 2024

DAV Public School, CDA bags 1st prize

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 17: DAV Public School, CDA, Cuttack bagged the first prize at the 14th Aditya Memorial Inter-School Quiz 2024 which was organised by the Loyola School, Bhubaneswar at XIM University here, Saturday.

Loyola School took the second prize, while DAV Kalinga Nagar claimed the third at the event which was held in collaboration with the Aditya Memorial Foundation.

While the winners were given away a trophy and special cash award of Rs 12,500, the first and sec-



ond runners-up received cash prizes of Rs 7,500 and Rs 5,000, respectively. The event was inaugurated by the Deputy Chief Minister KV Singh Deo who attended as the chief guest on the occasion.

Semi-finalist and finalist girl participants were each awarded Rs 1,000 in recognition of their exceptional performances.

As many as 164 students from 22 schools across Odisha,

Chhattisgarh, and Jharkhand participated in the quiz competition which was led by quiz-master Manas Nayak.

The event was graced by several prominent personalities, including Aditya Memorial Foundation founder Mihir Sahu, foundation member Jayashree Sahu, Director of the Institute of Physics Ajit Srivastava, Loyola School Rector Father Augustine, Principal Father A Amaladoss SJ, Vice Principal Nandita Pattanayak, and Sister Esther. The annual quiz competition is held in memory Aditya Manish Sahu, a student of the school, following his untimely demise.

CLASSIFIED AFFIDAVIT

I, Abaksh Swain, S/o Late Banamali Swain, resident of At- Nuasahi (Kapaleswar), P.O.- Kapaleswar, P.S.- Choudwar, Dist.- Cuttack, Pin- 754071, Odisha declare by this affidavit No.6409, dtd.14.08.2024 that now onwards I shall be known as ABAKASH SWAIN for all future purpose.

I Santosh Kumar Sahu, S/o Khageswara Sahu, resident Sitaramapur Agraharam P.O./P.S.- Purushottampur, Dist.- Ganjam, PIN- 761018, Odisha declare by this affidavit No.- A-7, Date- 16.08.2024 that now onwards I shall be known as Santosh Sahu, S/o Khageswara Sahu resident Kansari Sahi Purushottampur for all future purpose.

LOST

LOST OF SALE DEED & ORIGINAL PATTA
I, Manas Kumar Muni, S/o- Balakrushna Muni, Village/P.O.- M.Rampur, Dist.- Kalahandi declare that on dt.20.07.2024 at 11 A.M. while I am going to Bank I have lost my original Patna, Khata No. 905/609, Mouza- Rampur. After scrutiny, it was not found. A written complaint has been lodged in local Police Station. If anybody found kindly contact Manas Kumar Muni, Mob.- 9937751138.

ODM's chairman in CBSE governing body

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 17: The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) Saturday nominated Satyabrata Minaketan, the chairman of ODM Educational Group, as a member to its national governing body for three years, officials said.

The decision was taken by Ministry of Education, Government of India, they said.

In an official letter, CBSE conveyed the Central government's decision to Minaketan. He was nominated along with three other educators from across the country.

All the affiliated schools and educational institutions in Odisha and across India including the chain of schools



under ODM Education Group have extended their best wishes to Minaketan.

The ODM Education Group's staff and officials expressed their gratitude to the Ministry of Education and the CBSE on Minaketan's nomination.

Expressing his gratitude, Minaketan said, "I am committed to carrying out the responsibility with dedication to furthering the development and prosperity of education in the country for the greater good."

11th edition of KIIT-IS MUN inaugurated

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 17: The 11th edition of the KIIT International School Model United Nations (MUN) which was inaugurated here Saturday witnessed a participation of over 900 students from different educational institutions.

KIIT and KISS founder Achyuta Samanta highlighted the significance of MUN as a platform for young minds to express their ideas, engage in constructive discussions, and integrate knowledge.

Speaking on the occasion, Samanta said, "This is the age of knowledge, not just certificates. Having high academic scores alone is not sufficient without the ability to present ideas effectively. Therefore, empowerment, engagement, enablement and enlightenment are required besides education as keys to success in life."

Samanta also remarked on the demographic advantage of the country, with 65 per cent of the population being youth. He underscored the necessity of equipping young people with



the right skills to ensure that the country reaps the benefits of the demographic dividend.

"KIIT International School is among the top 10 schools in the country and the only school committed to imparting education to special children, with 200 of them currently receiving special education," Samanta said.

Joining the occasion, Group Captain RK Narang also addressed the gathering, calling upon the students to take responsibility for finding solu-

tions to global issues such as climate change.

He encouraged the participants to deliberate on contentious issues, with innovative thoughts, and to discuss aspects that impact humanity and the aspirations of people.

Other notable speakers included KIIT International School Chairperson Monalisa Bal, and Principal Sanjay Kumar Suar. Both expressed their enthusiasm for the event and the opportunities it provides for the development of the students.

Mission Shakti's green initiative

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 17: Spearheading the green initiative, Mission Shakti members are actively promoting the campaign in the state adding ecological stewardship to their drive to bring socio-economic change in the community.

Deputy Chief Minister and Minister of Mission Shakti Pravatini Parida launched the transformative 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' campaign in June. By planting a 'Baula' sapling, Parida underscored the campaign's message of nurturing and respecting nature in the same way one respects their mother.

Parida highlighted the dual significance of the initiative—honouring mothers and fostering a sustainable and green Odisha. She emphasised the importance of community involvement in achieving the campaign's goals. Mission Shakti leaders pledged to plant trees across the state. The campaign aligns perfectly with Mission Shakti's broader objectives of promoting women empowerment and community development.

Google's AI tools aim to target language barriers in India

Google is intensifying its focus on India with the introduction of advanced AI tools aimed at breaking down language barriers and enhancing agricultural practices, a senior company official said.

Abhishek Bapna, Director of Product Management at Google DeepMind, highlighted the importance of reducing language barriers in India's economic development.

"Language is very essential for economic development. For instance, a language barrier should not hinder someone from explaining their medical issues to a doctor or accessing banking services," Bapna said during his short visit to IIM-Calcutta.

The tech giant has launched Google Gemini, formerly known as Bard, an artificial intelligence chatbot that supports more than 40 global languages, including

nine Indian languages. Bapna added that Google's ongoing focus is on continuously improving language quality and expanding support for more Indian languages in the future.

Currently, the chatbot supports nine Indian languages - Hindi, Bengali, Gujarati, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, Tamil, Telugu and Urdu.

Bapna noted the complexity of India's multilingual environment, where people often use multiple languages simultaneously. This presents unique challenges for AI models, as they must correctly identify and apply the appropriate dictionaries to understand and generate accurate responses, Bapna said.

To empower developers in India, Google is expanding Project Vaani in collaboration with the Indian Institute of Science (IISc).



Language is very essential for economic and it should not hinder someone from explaining their medical issues to a doctor or accessing banking services

ABHISHEK BAPNA | DIRECTOR OF PRODUCT MANAGEMENT AT GOOGLE DEEPMIND

The project offers developers over 14,000 hours of speech data across 58 languages, collected from 80,000 speakers in 80 districts.

Additionally, Google introduced IndicGenBench, a comprehensive benchmark designed specifically for Indian languages. This initiative aims to assess

The tech giant has launched Google Gemini, formerly known as Bard, an artificial intelligence chatbot that supports more than 40 global languages, including nine Indian languages

Project Vaani offers developers over 14,000 hours of speech data while the ALU API aims to enhance farming practices and address climate change

and fine-tune language models for more accurate and effective use in India.

In a parallel effort to support India's agricultural sector, Google is working towards launching the Agricultural Landscape Understanding (ALU) Research API. This limited availability tool is designed to make agricultural practices more data-driven and efficient.

The ALU API aims to enhance

farm yields, improve access to capital, and provide better market access for farm products.

"On agriculture, right now we are conducting a pilot with the Telangana government that is already underway. Once the pilot is complete, we plan to scale it up and engage actively with state governments," Bapna said.

He emphasised that Google's agricultural initiatives are driven by two major goals: improving livelihoods and addressing climate change through necessary interventions.

"Banks and insurance companies could also be end users. Right now our focus is to make sure that the technology works properly," Bapna said.

By offering granular landscape insights at the farm field level, the ALU API is expected to transform India's agricultural ecosystem.

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4 die as fear of unknown disease grips Rayagada

THE MATTER ACQUIRES IMPORTANCE AT A JUNCTURE WHEN NEW VARIANTS OF VIRAL DISEASES SUCH AS MONKEYPOX OR MPOX HAVE BEEN SPREADING IN COUNTRIES



headquarters hospital in Rayagada where he underwent treatment and returned home. However, he died soon after.

Similarly, three other persons Anumal Dibaka, Nilu Dibaka and Dharmi Dibaka having similar symptoms died within a span of 10 days. Villagers alleged that they are yet to be provided with proper medical care and treatment despite the death of four villagers.

They said some of the patients have resorted to traditional herbal medicine as except for an AYUSH doctor there are no more doctors to provide them treatment.

The CDMO said a medical team reached the village and started treatment of the afflicted persons after his department was informed. Moreover, doctors at the Chandrapur community health centre (CHC) have been directed to provide proper medical care to the afflicted persons in the Jubagudi village. "The reason behind spread of the disease and other details can be ascertained only after the reports on examination of faecal and water samples are available to us," he said.

numbers of affected persons increasing in the village.

On being informed, a medical team rushed to the village and started treatment of the affected persons. Apart from water samples, the team also collected the faecal samples of the affected persons for examination, the Chief District Medical Officer (CDMO) Dr Lal Mohan Routray said.

Jubagudi village is situated at about 27 km distance from Chandrapur block. Over 100 families including 19 tribal households reside in the village. However, scare of the unknown disease has gripped the village for the last few days.

A villager Rajendra Dibaka was the first person to get affected. He experienced diarrhoea and vomiting and later developed lumps on his body. He was admitted to the district



EVICTON DRIVE: Four shops illegally built on government land being demolished at Sura Chhak Bazaar in Mahakalapara block of Kendrapara district Saturday following an order by the Orissa High Court

Biker killed after head-on collision with ambulance

POST NEWS NETWORK

Loisingha, August 17: In a tragic incident, a 25-year-old biker died after his bike collided head-on with a 108 ambulance coming from the opposite direction near Fasada Chhak on the Bolangir-Bargarh National Highway-26, Saturday.

The deceased has been identified as Sumant Pradhan, a resident of Mirdhapada here. Sumant was working as a sweeper in Bolangir OSRTC



LAccMI bus stand. According to eyewitnesses, Sumant was on his way to Loisingha from Bolangir on his bike (OD 03 F 5673) when the 108

ambulance (OD 02 BH 4314) coming from the opposite direction collided head-on with the bike. Sumant succumbed to his injuries on the spot.

Following the incident, angry locals caught the ambulance driver and thrashed him black and blue. Keeping the body of the deceased on the national

highway, they staged a blockade at Fasada Chhak demanding compensation for the victim's family.

After receiving information, Loisingha police reached the spot and pacified the agitated crowd and rescued the ambulance driver. An investigation into the incident is underway.

60 students hospitalised after having mid-day meal

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jharsuguda, August 17: As many as 60 students of Jamera UGME School under Sadar block in Jharsuguda district reportedly fell sick after consuming egg curry served in their mid-day meal, Saturday.

According to sources, 200 students study in Jamera UGME School from Class I to VIII. The students were served egg curry and rice as part of the mid-day meal programme Saturday.

However, as many as 50 students complained of stomach ache and vomiting after eating the mid-day meal. Out of them 25 became critical whom the teachers with the help of villagers rushed to the nearby health centre.



15 students were discharged from the hospital after preliminary treatment. 10 others who were undergoing treatment at the hospital were discharged from hospital in the evening after their condition improved.

The students took ill due to food poisoning, said Jharsuguda CDMO Jayakrushna Nayak.

The incident sparked outrage among parents, who have demanded action against the school authorities. Following this, as per direction of the Jharsuguda Collector Aboli Sunil Naravane, a team was formed under the guidance of Jharsuguda DEO and an investigation into the incident is underway.

RSP inaugurates Civic Centre after renovation



POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, August 17: Rourkela Steel Plant (RSP) has renovated its flagship auditorium with state of the art facilities and Atanu Bhowmick, Director In-Charge of the steel major inaugurated the facility August 15 on the occasion of Independence Day.

What one sees today as Civic Centre was a cinema hall known as 'Leela Talkies' in the 60s. After it shut down towards end of 60s, RSP decided to convert it into an auditorium, as proposed by the then officer of social welfare RB Singhdeo, scion of erstwhile Kuanrunda Estate. Singhdeo's suggestion was approved by then general manager RP Sinha.

Ironically the first play 'Trushna' that was enacted by Life and Rhythm was in honour of Singhdeo, who died due to a massive heart attack. Thus, the journey of the Civic Centre began. Over the years it has proudly hosted the country's Presidents, CMs, highly acclaimed artists like Utpal Dutt, danseuse Sanjukta Panigrahi, Yamini Krishnamurthy who passed away this month, and magicians like PC Sarkar Sr. "I think more than a thousand plays must have been performed at Civic Centre showing the rich and vibrant cultural atmosphere of Rourkela," said Uma Bishoi, director and stage crafts expert. Sarat Das, another theatre activist said, "Civic

Centre for us is our holy land, the four tirthas. I feel so complete while performing here."

To mark the beginning of the revamped facility, RSP hosted the 'Samman Samaroh-2024', a special award ceremony where various awards were presented to departments, employees, students and sports persons for their outstanding achievements. Twelve former employees of RSP who had joined the Steel Plant in the year 1960 were also presented with the 'Ispat Bindhani Samman' for their pivotal roles in the plant's foundation and growth.

Speaking on the occasion, Bhowmick said, "With this phase of modernisation and upgradation at Civic Centre, we have aimed to make it one of the best socio-cultural hubs of the state. I am sure this edifice with a living legacy will further enrich the lives of the people of Rourkela by providing a space that promotes creativity, learning, and togetherness."

This cultural cornerstone of the steel city was last renovated in 2005 under the leadership of Sanak Mishra, then Managing Director of RSP. Now it has now been transformed into a modern auditorium, complete with wooden floored stage, refurbished greenrooms, advanced lighting and acoustics, fire protection, a control room, a cyclorama screen with projector facility and stylised interiors.

Youth hangs self after losing money in game

POST NEWS NETWORK

Balasure, August 17: In a tragic incident, a 26-year-old youth from Sahajipatna village under Remuna police station in Balasure died by suicide after losing lakhs in an online gaming app, sources said Saturday.

The deceased has been identified as Gautam Nayak, son of Sharat Nayak, a resident of Sahajipatna village.

According to sources, Gautam was working in a private company at Balasure and was addicted to online game for a long time. After winning some money initially his hunger for the game increased. However, he lost more money than he won. Even after heavy loss of money in betting, he continued to be engaged in the game with the intention to recover the lost amount.

He even borrowed money for betting but did not get any success and lost his mental balance. Finally, Gautam committed suicide by hanging Friday night. Before taking the extreme step, he had warned his friends not to fall in trap of online games and betting through text messages. His mother came to know about the incident Saturday morning and informed others. He was rescued by family members and taken to Remuna hospital where doctors declared him 'brought dead'.

On being informed, Remuna police reached hospital for investigation. After registering a case (34/24) of unnatural death, Remuna police handed over the body to the family after post-mortem.

Denied money, man jumps into Luna river

Kendrapara: A 30-year-old married man, Suvam Sekhar Swain, alias Lucky, of Narilo village under Sadar police limits, jumped from the Basupur bridge into the Luna river Saturday to end his life after his family members refused to give him money. Kendrapara Sadar police station IIC Saroj Sahu said on getting information, a couple of fire brigade teams were deployed in search and rescue operations, but the youth are yet to be traced out. As per reports, Lucky was working at a Hyderabad-based company. He asked his family members Friday to give him money to consume liquor. Denied money, Lucky jumped from the bridge to the Luna river.

Kandhamal kids tie rakhis to save trees

POST NEWS NETWORK

Daringbadi, August 17: A Class VIII student along with his friends here in Kandhamal district has earned praise and made headlines by spreading awareness to save trees in a unique way. The kids are tying eco-friendly rakhis, which symbolise the bond between brothers and sisters, on the trees and pledging to protect those.

Ayushman Sahu, a Class VIII student of the Odisha Adarsha Vidyalaya, led his friends - Adyashree Sahu, Shyam Sundar Sahu, Piyush Kumar Digal, Rahul Sahu, Krishna Sahu, Archana Shobhasundar, Basant Nayak and Bibhudas Gamang - to the coffee



garden here early morning last Sunday along with guardians Jharana Sahu and Prabhakar Sahu. They first conducted a cleanup drive there and tied eco-

friendly rakhis on the trees. They also raised awareness among tourists who were visiting the coffee garden about the harmful effects of using single-use plastic

and polythene. They told the tourists about the importance of protecting trees just as a brother protects his sister, emphasising that it is essential to tackle climate change, which has led to irregular weather and severe natural calamities. The students also urged the community members to plant more trees in the area to safeguard the environment.

On the occasion of 78th Independence Day, students from various schools under Daringbadi block have been receiving praise for their efforts in cleaning up the tourist areas. Not only have they cleaned the areas, but have also engaged in tree plantation spreading environmental awareness.

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1. Name of the work : Building works 2. Total Number of works: 4 Nos
3. Approx. Estimated cost : Rs. 9.91 lakh 4. Class of contractor : C & D Class of Contractor
5. Period of completion : 4 months
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Block Development Officer, Nuagaon Online Tender / 01/2024-25 Dt. 20.08.2024 at 10:00 A.M. Dt. 02.09.2024 up to 5:00 P.M. Dt. 02.09.2024 up to 1:00 P.M. Dt. 03.09.2024 at 11:00 A.M.
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ic Khadi India
सूक्ष्म, लघु और मध्यम उद्यम मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार
Ministry of Micro Small & Medium Enterprises
Government of India
खादी और ग्रामेद्योग आयोग
KHADI AND VILLAGE INDUSTRIES COMMISSION
सूक्ष्म, लघु और मध्यम उद्यम मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार /
Ministry of MSME, Govt. of India
राज्य कार्यालय, भुवनेश्वर / State Office, Bhubaneswar
No. OSO/KVIC/GVY/Advt./2024-25 Date 16th August, 2024
NOTICE
State Office, KVIC, Bhubaneswar, Odisha is inviting applications from individual/SHG/NGOs/KIs-VIs/KVIB/DICs/Govt. & Semi Govt. agencies etc. of Odisha State for promotion of self-employment through training-cum-toolkit distribution/credit linked loan under PMEGP.
Sl. No. Application sought for Target (No. of artisan) Assistance
1. Credit Linked 1st loan under PMEGP for individual (upto Rs. 50.00 lakhs) Subsidy upto 35% 2152 Establishing New unit
2. Credit linked 2nd Loan for the existing PMEGP beneficiaries (Upto Rs. 1 Crore) 28 Existing enterprise under PMEGP
3. MBI-Kumbhakar Sashaktikaran 2000
4. FBI-Beekeeping 240
5. HMPFI-Paper Plate & Bowl (Group size-10) 240
6. HMPFI-Paper mache (Group size-10) 40
7. HMPFI-Paper conversion (Group size-10) 60
8. HMPFI-Sabai rope (Group size-10) 140
9. ABFPI-Palmgur 250
10. ABFPI-Spices & Cond. (Group size-10) 40
11. ABFPI-Tamarind (Group size-10) 100
12. ABFPI-Village Oil (Group size-10) 40
13. S.I- Sewing machine operator 80
14. PCBI-Agarbatti 20
15. PCBI-Leather toolkit repairing 50
16. PCBI-Leather footwear mfg. 50
17. RENTI-Waste wood Craft 20
18. RENTI-Turnwood Craft 20
19. RENTI-Wooden Toy 40
Beneficiary Contribution @ 20% for General, 10% for SC/ST and Nil for BPL category on Tools and equipments
For applying loan under Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP) may visit www.kviconline.gov.in/pmegportal/pmegphome/index.jsp
The detailed guidelines/application format may be obtained online from www.kvic.gov.in.
The last date of receipt of application under GVI is 30 days from the date of advertisement and send your application to this office through e-mail directorkvicbbsr@gmail.com
Sd./- State Director/ राज्य निदेशक
जे-16, भीमपुर, गण्डमुंडा, खंडगीरी, भुवनेश्वर - 751030
Plot No. J-16, Bhimpur, Gandamunda, Khandagiri, Bhubaneswar-751030
Tel: 06742351131, E-mail-directorkvicbbsr@gmail.com
देश के लिये खादी-केशन के लिए खादी - परिवर्तन के लिए खादी, आइए हम खादी को बढ़ाव दे

FOCUS PUBLIC HEALTH

NEW PHASE OF NEGLECT



It is depressingly obvious that the lessons of COVID-19 are being forgotten. The world remains stuck in the familiar cycle of panic and neglect that has characterised this past pandemic

Four years ago, at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, governments were scrambling to protect their populations and prevent an economic meltdown. No one would dispute that addressing this existential threat was the top political priority back then.

As a former Prime Minister and director-general of the World Health Organization, I was impressed by the coordinated international response to COVID-19. To be sure, there were large inequalities within and between countries, resulting in society's most vulnerable paying too high a price, especially when it came to vaccine access. But I saw reason to hope that the pandemic's devastating impact would prompt a political sea change and lead to a greater commitment to future preparedness, prevention, and response.

I was wrong. It is depressingly obvious that the lessons of COVID-19 are being forgotten. The world remains stuck in the familiar cycle of panic and neglect that has characterised this past pandemic. Political leaders are largely ignoring current threats, including COVID-19 (which has not been consigned to the history books, despite no longer being a public-health emergency), H5N1 bird flu, and dengue fever. And new pandemics with potentially catastrophic outcomes will almost surely occur, especially as climate change and environmental degradation worsen.

These are not hypothetical risks. Recently, WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus declared the latest outbreak of mpox in East Africa a "public-health emergency of international concern." Not only must the international community now rally behind affected African countries and

those at highest risk; it must also prepare itself for potential spread into more countries and across the globe.

Even before COVID-19 hit, I had been warning that our failure to break this vicious cycle was putting us at grave risk. In September 2019, the Global Preparedness Monitoring Board (which I co-chair) issued a report highlighting the acute risk of a devastating global epidemic or pandemic. Little did we know how prescient our warnings were. And now we find ourselves in a new phase of neglect, which can only be understood as a failure of political will. For all the pious words uttered in the COVID-19 era, heads of state and governments are failing to address the inequalities that stymied recovery efforts. It is unacceptable that rich countries have done so little to make the next pandemic response more equitable – and therefore more effective.

In June, for example, the 77th World Health Assembly failed to finalise a new pandemic accord,

even though Intergovernmental Negotiating Body (INB) had been working on the global pact, which aims to prevent a repeat of COVID-19, for two years. Member states have extended talks for up to 12 months. But, crucially, they still seem unwilling to provide negotiators with the political support needed to agree on measures that can address inequities in pandemic readiness, response, and recovery.

The failure to find consensus on substantive matters is symptomatic of the growing trust deficit between advanced and emerging economies, and of the ineffectiveness of the multilateral system in an era of deepening geopolitical tensions. But this cannot be an excuse to delay action on one of the biggest threats of our time. The INB needs a new approach that enables maximum engagement from independent experts and civil society organisations, while ensuring that member states stay focused on improving – instead of just paying lip service

to – global equity.

Moreover, if the past four years have taught us anything, it is that WHO-led processes alone are not enough to tackle the existential threat of pandemics. Other multilateral institutions should take up the cause of improving preparedness. The United Nations' Summit of the Future in September, as well as the upcoming meetings of the G7 and the G20, must highlight the urgency of this challenge and encourage world leaders to act. More visible advocacy for global health security in these fora could be crucial in securing the political leadership and financing needed to bring about meaningful change.

To that end, the group of former political leaders known as The Elders supports the adoption of an emergency platform – a set of protocols that would allow UN leaders to respond quickly to global shocks – at the Summit of the Future. World Trade Organization members should also agree to review, as proposed by Colombia, the implementation of the agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights. The TRIPS agreement governs patent protection for vaccines and treatments, and thus plays a key role in pandemic-response efforts.

Recommitting to pandemic preparedness is essential. But it also should be part of a broader revival of multilateralism. Only through compromise and collaboration can we confront humanity's gravest challenges.

The writer, a former Prime Minister of Norway and director-general of the WHO, is a co-chair of the Global Preparedness Monitoring Board.

PROJECT SYNDICATE

ONLY THROUGH COMPROMISE AND COLLABORATION CAN WE CONFRONT HUMANITY'S GRAVEST CHALLENGES



Gro Harlem Brundtland

Civil Code Conundrum

In his 15 August address, the Prime Minister said his government would work towards changing India's personal laws. He said "after 75 years of a communal civil code, it is crucial to move towards a secular civil code. Once this shift takes place, it will eliminate religious discrimination and will bridge the gap felt by ordinary citizens."

The personal laws govern marriage, divorce and inheritance. The BJP has had a curious relationship with this subject from the founding of the Republic. Dr Ambedkar had proposed modest changes to Hindu personal law, especially on the question of inheritance for women. He identified the two dominant forms of traditional inheritance law and modified one of them to make inheritance fairer for women. This was not acceptable to the RSS' political formation.

In its 1951 manifesto the Jana Sangh opposed the Hindu Code Bill, saying social reform should not come from above but from society. In 1957, it said that such changes were not acceptable unless rooted in ancient culture. 'Riotous individualism' would ensue as a result. In its manifesto of 1958, the party wrote: "Joint family and indissoluble marriage have been the basis of Hindu society. Laws that alter this basis will ultimately lead to the disintegration of society. Jana Sangh will therefore repeal the Hindu Marriage and Hindu Succession Acts."

Over time, as nuclear families became common and divorce became acceptable in society, the party dropped this position without explaining why

In its 1967 manifesto, it called for uniform civil code. From here on, this appeared in all the party's manifestos and it promised its voters it would enforce it if it came to power. The BJP had an absolute majority in 2014 and 2019 and in both elections it had promised a uniform civil code in its manifesto but it did not legislate it or produce a draft.

Now that the party has been reduced to 240, the promise has been made again but who is to fulfil it? Where is the draft law made by Modi and his ministers? It does not exist, of course. In the 15 years that this country has seen a BJP government there has been no draft, only speeches. The reason no draft exists is that it is not an easy problem to solve. For the BJP and its votaries, 'uniform civil code' or 'secular civil code' is a placeholder for the abolition of polygamy. But to get rid of it, the BJP will have to target more than just Muslims. The aspects relating to Hindu Undivided Family are not the only ones that will have to be resolved.

Most are familiar with Article 370, which the BJP long targeted and then gutted in 2019 but fewer likely know of the very next Article, 371, which says "no Act of Parliament in respect of religious or social practices of the Nagas (and) Naga customary law and procedure... shall apply to the State of Nagaland unless the Legislative Assembly of Nagaland by a resolution so decides."

What happens to a Secular Civil Code that is against Naga custom? We do not know. The BJP doesn't either. In March 2018, the Nagaland Bar Association submitted a memorandum to Nagaland Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio saying several Central laws pertaining to personal laws in the State are "badly contradictory and opposed to the Naga social customs and practices. Apart from the provisions of Article 371A of the Constitution of India, legislative power in matters of personal law is vested with the State Legislature."

The laws mentioned were the Indian Succession Act, 1925; Special Marriage Act, 1954; Indian Divorce Act, 1869; Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act, 1886; Guardians and Wards Act, 1890; and Family Courts Act, 1984. The Bar Association said these laws "are required to be substituted by our own State Acts." Similar provisions in 371 safeguard customary law for Mizos (371G).

Two things need to be considered now. First, there is no point in opposing or even commenting on the Prime Minister's call for a uniform or secular civil code till he produces a draft. He must be encouraged to show it, even if he is not pressed to explain why he didn't write and pass the law in the 10 years when he had a majority. The Opposition and communities threatened by the speech should consider holding back response till they see what, if anything, he actually produces other than talk.

The second thing to consider is why he is raising it at all given that his party is now in a minority. Why, similarly, was the Waqf bill introduced when it was obvious that a BJP at 240 seats could not get it passed and its allies were not interested in furthering its Hindutva agenda? Why was a broadcast bill aimed at throttling such people as Ravish Kumar and Dhruv Rathee written when again it was clear that it would run into trouble? Both these proposed laws have run into the reality of India after 4 June 2024. The speech on secular civil code shows no understanding of the meaning of the election and the fading of the Prime Minister's halo.

It shows no acceptance of the real new India, and so the government continues writing cheques its parliamentary minority cannot cash



Aakar Patel

The BJP had an absolute majority in 2014 and 2019 and in both elections it had promised a uniform civil code in its manifesto but it did not legislate it or produce a draft

WISDOM CORNER

Goodness is about character - integrity, honesty, kindness, generosity, moral courage, and the like. More than anything else, it is about how we treat other people. DENNIS PRAGER

Success is not the key to happiness. Happiness is the key to success. If you love what you are doing, you will be successful. ALBERT SCHWEITZER

Power is given only to those who dare to lower themselves and pick it up. Only one thing matters, one thing; to be able to dare! FYODOR DOSTOEVSKY

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

1227: Genghis Khan—a warrior and ruler of genius who, starting from obscure and insignificant beginnings, brought all the nomadic tribes of Mongolia into a rigidly disciplined military state—died at age 65.

1877: Martian Moon Phobos is discovered. One of the two natural satellites of Mars, Phobos, was discovered by American astronomer Asaph Hall. Hall also discovered Deimos, the other Martian Moon. Named after the Greek God of fear, Phobos orbits only 3700 miles from the surface of Mars, making it the Moon to orbit closest to its planet in the Solar System. Because of this, Phobos completes an orbit around Mars in 7 hours and 39 minutes.

1920: The State of Tennessee passes the 19th Amendment to the United States Constitution. This action by the Tennessee legislature brought the number of states passing the 19th amendment to 36 and provided the necessary majority to ratify the amendment, which extended universal suffrage to women.

1958: Lolita is first published in the US. The highly controversial novel written by Russian-American novelist Vladimir Nabokov detailed an adult man's obsession over 12-year-old Dolores Haze, who he secretly calls Lolita.

1969: The Woodstock Music and Art Fair—a legendary rock festival near Bethel, New York, that attracted some 400,000 fans—ended.

SPECTRUM SUSTAINABILITY

Climate resilience & social justice

Odisha has become a notable example of disaster management and climate adaptation. Frequent cyclones, floods, and coastal erosion have driven the state to implement adaptation strategies praised globally for their effectiveness. However, beneath these success stories lies a more complex narrative that challenges the sustainability and equity of these measures. As climate change intensifies, evaluating these strategies through a lens of long-term resilience and social justice is crucial.

Odisha's coastal region, home to 42 million people, has faced severe cyclones, such as the 1999 super cyclone, which claimed nearly 10,000 lives. This tragic event marked a turning point, leading to significant investments in disaster preparedness. Since then, measures have dramatically reduced fatalities in subsequent cyclones. For instance, Cyclone Phailin in 2013 resulted in just 45 deaths, showcasing the effectiveness of the state's interventions.

The construction of over 800 multi-purpose cyclone shelters along the coastline is a central aspect of Odisha's disaster management strategy. These shelters provide refuge during storms, safeguarding lives. Additionally, an effective early warning system, reaching over 1,200 villages, ensures communities are alerted well in advance of storms. These efforts have been instrumental in moving

Odisha toward a "zero casualty" goal, transforming it into a global model of proactive disaster management.

While reducing fatalities is undeniable, the long-term social and economic impacts on affected communities are often overlooked. Social and economic displacement is one major issue. For instance, the relocation of 818 households from Satabhaya to Bagapatia is often cited as a model of managed retreat—a strategy to move communities from vulnerable areas to safer locations. However, this disrupts community ties, severs connections to ancestral lands, and imposes new economic challenges as people adapt to unfamiliar environments.

Moreover, the emphasis on hard infrastructure like cyclone shelters and embankments often comes at the expense of more sustainable, nature-based solutions. Nature-based solutions, such as restoring mangrove forests, can provide multiple benefits: they offer a natural barrier against storm surges and support local livelihoods through enhanced fishery resources. Yet, despite their potential, these solutions represent only a small fraction of adaptation efforts in Odisha. Over-reliance on structural interventions can unintentionally alter natural hydrological systems, increasing vulnerability elsewhere.

While the benefits are widely recognised, they are not evenly distributed across the popula-

tion. Wealthier individuals and communities often have better access to government programmes and resources, enabling them to take full advantage of the support. In contrast, poorer and marginalised groups struggle to access these benefits, leaving them more vulnerable to climate change impacts. For example, the shift towards climate-resilient agriculture, including introducing saline-tolerant rice varieties, has largely benefitted larger landholders who can afford the necessary inputs and technologies. Smallholders often lack resources to implement these changes, making them more prone to crop failure and economic loss.

Furthermore, the focus on disaster risk reduction sometimes overshadows the underlying drivers of vulnerability, such as poverty, inequality, and lack of access to basic services. Addressing these root causes is essential for building true resilience. Without tackling these fundamental issues, even the most effective adaptation strategies will fall short of ensuring long-term sustainability and social justice.

Odisha's experience offers valuable lessons for other regions facing similar climate challenges. While the state's disaster management successes are commendable, as climate impacts intensify, a more balanced approach is necessary. This approach should prioritise immediate disaster risk reduction and long-term socio-ecological resilience and equity. Scaling up na-

ture-based solutions, such as expanding mangrove plantations and promoting sustainable agriculture practices, can provide immediate protection while ensuring the long-term health of ecosystems and communities.

Additionally, efforts must be made to ensure that adaptation benefits are distributed equitably, with targeted support for vulnerable groups. This includes enhancing access to resources and technologies for smallholders, ensuring that marginalised communities have a voice in decision-making, and addressing the social and economic impacts of relocation and other adaptation measures.

In conclusion, Odisha's journey from frequent disaster-induced tragedies to a global model of climate adaptation is impressive. However, as climate change's impacts grow more severe, it is crucial to critically assess the sustainability and equity of these efforts. By adopting a more holistic and inclusive approach, Odisha and other regions can build resilience that stands the test of time. The true test of effective climate adaptation will be our ability to balance immediate needs with the long-term goal of building resilient, equitable societies that can withstand future challenges.

The writer is a faculty member at NCAER, New Delhi. Views are personal.



Souryabrata Mohapatra

OVER-RELIANCE ON STRUCTURAL INTERVENTIONS CAN UNINTENTIONALLY ALTER NATURAL HYDROLOGICAL SYSTEMS, INCREASING VULNERABILITY ELSEWHERE

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

Readers of Orissa POST are most welcome to contribute letters (200 words), articles and columns (between 750-1250 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

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Exam frauds

Sir, Frauds in examinations in the country, particularly in the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (Undergraduate) or NEET-UG recently, remain a huge concern, and an issue to be considered seriously. The increasing sophistication of the tools being used by the examination authorities does not make prevention of cheating in the exams easier. Preventive measures will therefore have to be constantly tightened and renewed. Despite all the possibilities of fraud prevention, examinations must remain user-friendly and safe for students. By combining different measures or tools and data forensics, for example, you achieve the best results. However, support for these innovative applications and automated tools has yet to grow before it will become an integral part of a mainstream examination process. Security measures, such as biometric verification and secure paper distribution, combined with technological integration like using blockchain for results, psychometric analysis and regular audits can make examinations more foolproof.

Ranganathan Sivakumar, CHENNAI

Organic farming

Sir, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in his address to the nation on the 78th Independence Day, underscored the need for transformative reforms in the country's agricultural sector, particularly by championing organic farming. The Prime Minister highlighted the government's initiatives to enhance the livelihoods of farmers through improved access to loans, advanced technology, and better valuation of their produce. The Prime Minister expressed a vision of India becoming the "organic food basket of the world," aligning with a broader commitment to sustainability and environmental stewardship. Modi's emphasis on "Viksit Bharat" (a developed India) and the dual focus on modern infrastructure and "ease of living" reflect a holistic approach to national progress. Such a holistic approach not only aims to advance the nation's physical infrastructure but also ensures that the benefits of development are widely accessible across all segments of the society and improve the quality of life for all citizens. The Prime Minister's remarks suggest a future where the agricultural sector is integral to the nation's journey towards sustainable growth and prosperity.

Krishna Kumar Vepakomma, HYDERABAD

School stabbing in Udaipur sparks communal tension

INTERNET SHUT DOWN; ACCUSED STUDENT'S HOUSE BULLDOZED

AGENCIES

Jaipur, August 17: Mobile internet was suspended for 24 hours in several areas of Rajasthan's Udaipur and all schools were ordered to remain shut after a Class X student allegedly stabbed another boy at a government school, triggering communal violence in the city, officials said.

The incident took place Friday, they said, adding that the student injured in the attack is undergoing treatment at the district hospital while the accused is under detention.

The house of the accused boy has been razed by the district administration using JCB machines, the officials said. The demolition was carried out in the presence of police personnel.

"Fear of the administration is necessary for someone who commits a crime. It was found in an investigation that the house of the accused was built on forest land and action was taken in accordance with rules. A notice was served and action was taken," Udaipur District Collector Arvind Poswal said.

All government and private schools in Udaipur have been ordered to remain shut until further orders in view of the law-and-order situation, he said.

A team of three doctors has been sent from state capital Jaipur to Udaipur by a special plane for the treatment of the injured boy, the collector said, adding that his condition is stable.

"Our first priority is to save the life of the victim. A team has reached to treat him on the directions of the chief minister. The condition of the boy is stable. Law and order is also being



Ban on carrying sharp weapons to schools

The Rajasthan Education Department Saturday issued a guideline banning carrying sharp-edged instruments like knives or scissors to schools. The move followed violence in Udaipur Friday after a Class X student of a government school attacked one of his classmates with a knife, leaving the latter severely injured. As per the guideline, teachers will check the school bags of students to ensure that no such items are being brought to school. Action will be taken against the students who flout the guideline. Director of the Secondary Education Department Ashish Modi said that families send their children to school to study. "In such a situation, school premises should be the safest place for students. There should not be any kind of violence there. Keeping the security of students in mind, the Education Department has issued this guideline," he added. The new guideline will be pasted on school notice boards and students will also be informed about it during prayer assemblies.

maintained. Both the communities have assured the administration that peace will be maintained," he said.

Divisional Commissioner Rajendra Bhatt issued an order suspending mobile internet services for a period of 24 hours from 10pm Friday in Udaipur city and the Bedla, Badgaon, Bleecha, Debari, Eklingpura, Kanpur, Dheekli and Bhuwana areas.

The collector appealed to people not to pay heed to rumours.

A mob set cars on fire Friday amid communal tension following the stabbing incident outside a government school at Bhattiyani Chohatta.

Prohibitory orders banning the assembly of people were imposed in the city. According to police, members of some Hindu outfits gathered at Madhuban in the city to protest against the incident.

The mob pelted stones and set three-four cars on fire, police said. As the tension escalated in the evening, markets were shut in Babu Bazar, Hathipole, Ghanta Ghar, Chetak Circle and nearby areas. Some violent elements also pelted stones at a shopping mall, shattering the glass windows of shops, the officials said.

Additional policemen have been deployed in the city to maintain law and order, they added.

KOLKATA RAPE-MURDER

Delhi doctors' strike enters sixth day

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 17: Elective medical services at Delhi hospitals remain suspended for the sixth consecutive day as doctors in the national capital continue their protest, demanding justice for the rape and murder of a trainee doctor in Kolkata.

The Indian Medical Association's 24-hour nationwide strike also began at 6am Saturday.

Major hospital resident doctors' association (RDA) members will gather again in the evening to protest after demonstrations in various parts of the city Friday.

Doctors in Delhi government hospitals, responding to calls by multiple RDAs, including those from AIIMS, RML Hospital and DDU Hospital, have held protest marches, candlelight vigils across the city over the rape-murder incident.

The associations collectively agreed to implement a common unified action plan aimed at pushing for a central protection Act, which they believe is crucial for safeguarding the interests and lives of healthcare workers across the nation.

The RDAs emphasised this protest is not just a demand for justice but a call for action to prevent further violence and ensure the safety of those on the frontline of healthcare.

On Friday, thousands of doctors who had been protesting on their respective hospital premises came out and demonstrated in different parts of Delhi, including a dharna outside the Nirman Bhawan.

Meanwhile, patients have been struggling to receive necessary medical treatments since Monday and some of them expressed their frustration over it.

"We agree what happened was brutal and swift justice should be provided, but you cannot



FOR A CAUSE: Doctors stage a protest march amid the 24-hour nationwide strike called by the Indian Medical Association (IMA) demanding justice for the woman doctor who was allegedly raped and murdered at Kolkata's R G Kar Medical College and Hospital, in New Delhi, Saturday

harm innocent people. Since Monday, I've been trying to get my treatment but the hospital staff asked me to return because the doctors are on strike," a patient who has come for treatment at Delhi, AIIMS from Sohna, Haryana said.

"It's been five days now, and we're still not getting our treatment. If we could afford private services, we wouldn't have to stand in line at 4am. We hope a doctor will end this and eventually treat us," he said.

Protesting doctors have assured that essential emergency

services, including ICUs, emergency procedures and emergency operation theatres will continue to operate without disruption. Meanwhile, major private hospitals in Delhi joined the protest Saturday, shutting down their OPDs, elective surgeries and IPD services.

Hospitals like Sir Ganga Ram, Fortis and Apollo have halted their OPD, elective surgeries and IPD services.

CEASE-WORK IN RAJASTHAN

Health services in Rajasthan were affected Saturday due to

the Indian Medical Association's call for a one-day strike in protest against the rape and murder of a resident doctor in West Bengal.

Doctors boycotted OPD services in almost all government hospitals in Rajasthan though emergency services continued. A representative of IMA Jaipur said that after the call for a national-level strike by the IMA, doctors in all districts of Rajasthan, including Jaipur, boycotted work Saturday.

This boycott has been done in support of the ongoing movement after the rape and murder of a junior doctor in Kolkata.

Chandipura virus cases rise to four

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Jaipur, August 17: The deadly Chandipura virus is spreading across Rajasthan as the number of people infected by it has increased to four, while 74 people are suspected to be infected by it, state health officials said Saturday.

A new case was detected Friday in Rajasthan. The patient is a nine-year-old boy who was in close contact with the third positive patient in Shahpura.

Officials said that around 70 samples of people suspected to be infected by the virus were collected, in which reports of 32 are pending.

In fact 91 samples (71 in Udaipur and 20 in Dungapur) of animals have also been collected as the virus can infect them too. All animal sample results are pending.

Officials said that one confirmed death due to the virus was reported August 9 this year when a two-year-old girl from Shahpura died in Zydus Hospital in Gujarat while being treated.

Deceased Ishika, daughter of Hemraj Keer, resident of Itadiya village of Shahpura, was admitted in a private hospital in Ahmedabad since August 5. The last rites of the girl were performed under the Covid-19 protocol in the presence of the administration and medical team in the village.

The first death due to Chandipura virus in Rajasthan was reported in Udaipur where Himanshu (3), resident of Balicha village of Kherwada town, died June 27 at Himmatnagar Civil Hospital in Gujarat.



DELHI ASSEMBLY POLLS

AAP campaign to seek support of auto drivers

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 17: The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) will launch an 'auto samvad' campaign from next week to seek the support of auto-rickshaw drivers here ahead of the Delhi Assembly polls, which are due to be held early next year.

AAP Delhi unit convener Gopal Rai said auto drivers will become Arvind Kejriwal's representatives for the elections and will communicate and convey the AAP government's work to the people. The campaign will begin from August 20 and a 14-member committee will conduct it at auto stands across the national capital, he said.

In this campaign, auto drivers will convey works done by the Kejriwal government to the people, and will also tell them about the conspiracies of the BJP. Kejriwal has sent a message to auto drivers that even in jail he



was worried over their wellbeing, Rai said. It is the BJP that sent Chief Minister Kejriwal to jail to stop his work for the development of Delhi and harass people, Rai alleged.

Kejriwal is in jail in a corruption case-linked to the alleged Delhi excise policy scam being probed by the Central

Bureau of Investigation. Delhi BJP president Virendra Sachdeva said Kejriwal neglected auto drivers after using them as a campaign tool to win three elections in the national capital. In a meeting of the AAP's auto wing, which was also attended by autorickshaw drivers, Rai said during the Covid pandemic, the Kejriwal government was the only one in the country that provided a financial assistance of ₹5,000 to each auto driver twice.

This time the elections will be on the issue of whether work done by Kejriwal government will stop or will continue further. Kejriwal is committed to give free electricity and water, excellent schools and hospitals, and Mohalla Clinics to Delhi. The BJP wants to stop this, he claimed.

If Arvind Kejriwal goes away after the elections then electricity and water, and schools and

hospitals will also go away, and you will be charged double the price of facilities which were provided free of cost, he said at the meeting held at the AAP office. Kejriwal has supported auto drivers in every crisis, and now he is in a crisis and requires the support of autorickshaw drivers, Rai said.

The chief minister considers auto drivers of Delhi as family, said the AAP leader, who recently met Kejriwal in Tihar jail. BJP leader Sachdeva said Kejriwal has worked only to bring unprecedented changes in his own life by making auto drivers his brand ambassadors. Auto drivers are struggling with various challenges, he said.

Kejriwal, had vowed not to take a government bungalow (as residence) after (winning) the 2013 and 2015 elections. He now lives in a lavish mansion while auto drivers are still forced to buy autos in the black market, he charged.

Ravneet Bittu front-runner as BJP's RS pick from Rajasthan



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Jaipur, August 17: With the August 21 deadline to file nomination for the Rajya Sabha elections nearing, speculations are rife that the BJP might field a candidate from outside the state for the coveted post from Rajasthan.

Sources in the state BJP said that the name of Union Minister of State for Railways and Food Processing Industries, Ravneet Singh Bittu, is doing the rounds for the post.

A former two-time Congress MP from Ludhiana, Ravneet Bittu had switched to the BJP just before the Lok Sabha elections in March this year. The grandson of former Punjab Chief Minister late Beant Singh and the son of ex-Punjab minister Tej Parkash Singh, Ravneet Bittu was a surprise pick in Modi 3.0 after he lost the Lok Sabha elections from Ludhiana on a BJP ticket.

The other names doing the rounds include former state BJP chiefs Satish Poonia and Arun Chaturvedi, ex-leader of opposition Rajendra Rathore, BJP's national General Secretary Alka Gurjar, and former MP CR Chaudhary.

However, Ravneet Bittu seems to be emerging as the front-runner for a Rajya Sabha ticket as he needs to become a member of the Parliament since he has been made a Union Minister despite losing the Lok Sabha elections, party sources said.

AI tool that thinks like a chef, generates 1.18L recipes

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 17: Can an AI-generated recipe help someone win a cook off?

Ratatouille, an artificial intelligence (AI)-powered tool, developed by a professor and a research scholar of the Indraprastha Institute of Information Technology (IIIT), Delhi, could make this possible.

Designed to think like a chef, the tool can generate more than 1.18 lakh unique traditional recipes from 74 countries, claimed its developers - Prof Ganesh Bagler and PhD scholar Mansi Goel of the institute's Infosys Centre for Artificial Intelligence.

Moreover, Ratatouille - a name inspired from an animated movie in which a rat helps an aspiring chef become one - has passed a rigorous test conducted by a 24-member panel of faculty chefs from the Institute of Hotel Management Catering and Nutrition (IHM) in Delhi's Pusa,

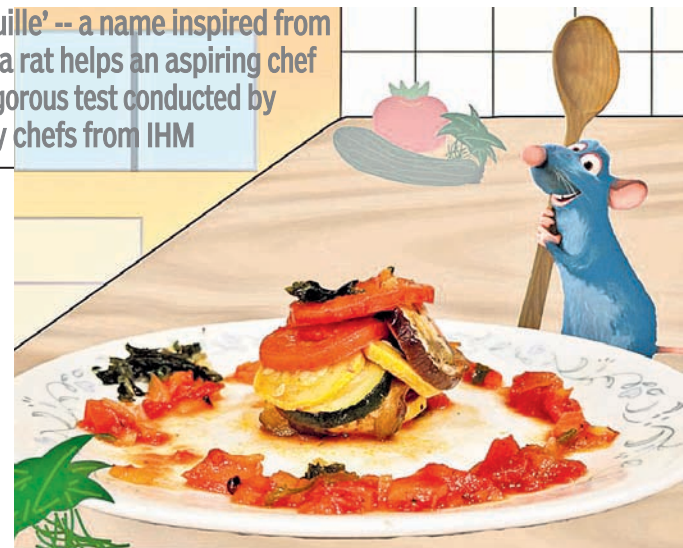
The AI-powered tool 'Ratatouille' -- a name inspired from an animated movie in which a rat helps an aspiring chef become one -- has passed a rigorous test conducted by a 24-member panel of faculty chefs from IHM

according to them.

Bagler - a professor of network science, network biology and computational gastronomy - and Goel - a student at the centre - developed the tool in a lab at the IIIT over nine years using large language models, a technology that drives ChatGPT, a widely used AI-powered platform for writing and learning.

"We began around nine years ago, exploring recipes and ingredient patterns. We have done three main things here. First, we compiled data and created structured databases of recipes, including over 1.18 lakh recipes from 74 countries, along with data on flavour molecules, nutrition profiles and carbon footprints," Bagler told PTI.

He said then algorithms were



applied to this data to generate novel recipes that follow patterns found in existing recipes.

Talking about the test Ratatouille underwent, he said, "Finally, we conducted a 'turing test for chefs'. We presented chefs with recipes from our data-

base and AI-generated recipes in a format that made it impossible to distinguish between them."

"We also asked the chefs to determine if the recipes were genuine or computer-generated. We achieved a 70 per cent success rate, meaning the chefs couldn't

reliably tell the difference," Bagler said.

The IHM panel of chefs evaluated 1,472 recipes on a scale of zero-to-five, where zero meant the recipe was fake and five meant it was genuine, he said.

Next, the developers planned to evaluate the recipes by actually cooking them and using sensory panels to assess taste, flavour, aroma, and aftertaste.

This helped make the AI-generated recipes not only novel but also palatable, Bagler said.

The project, which aimed at enhancing culinary creativity by leveraging AI and making food computable, has been published in the Nature Partner Journal, 'Systems Biology and Applications'.

The idea to come up with such an AI tool struck Bagler while he was taking a class at the IIT-Jodhpur in 2015.

"It started with my curiosity about food. I realized over time the potential (of the project) for industrial and societal applica-

tions. The field of computational gastronomy, which originated in India, offers significant opportunities for innovation and improvement," he said.

"While AI can't replace the creative aspect of cooking, it can assist chefs by generating recipes and offering new ideas. We aim to support chefs in exploring new culinary possibilities and making personalised recommendations," Bagler said.

Ratatouille can assist in making meal kits and in nutrition coaching by offering customised recipes, the professor said and added that he plans to offer this as a B2B service and is open to making data available for non-profit purposes. The one challenge, he feels that this project may face is collecting data as per individual needs. "We've gathered data at the cultural level but need more individual-level data for personalised recommendations. Ensuring the quality of this data is critical," he said.



Here too, India has argued for reformed multilateralism and sought reforms of Multilateral Development Banks through the G20. As a group, we need to press home our case
S JAISHANKAR | EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER

JAN SURAAJ LIKELY TO CONTEST BY-POLLS

Prashant Kishor, the chief of Jan Surraaj, Saturday, announced that Jan Surraaj is likely to contest the upcoming Assembly by-elections in the Bela Ganj and Imam Ganj constituencies of Gaya district in Bihar



of the day quote

The government, which talks about 'One Nation, One Election', is conducting the elections in four states simultaneously or does not want to conduct it. Various bypolls are pending, including Wayanad Lok Sabha seat. Don't know the reason why the Election Commission has not announced the elections
SACHIN PILOT | CONGRESS LEADER

Such a big agitation was never seen before, whether it was a festival or a normal day, the aggrieved youths kept agitating continuously. They met people by forming different delegations and now they have got justice
AKHILESH YADAV | SP PRESIDENT

In such a situation, it is important to worry about how the culprits will get strict punishment and the victim's family justice
MAYAWATI | BSP SUPREMO

X POST OF THE DAY

What's wrong with Indian Railways? Sabarmati Express derailed in Kanpur yesterday. On July 30, Howrah-Mumbai derailed in J'khand. On July 19th, Chandigarh-Dibrugarh Express met with an accident in UP. Likewise 130+ train accidents have occurred in last 3 yrs. Today, we'll be doing a deep-dive into what's lacking. And, why travelling in trains is riskier than trying to win an argument on @X
@ayusshanghi

SHORT TAKES

MP High Court asks doctors to end strike

Bhopal: The Madhya Pradesh High Court Saturday asked the doctors to withdraw their strike and resume medical services without any delay. The court has also asked the representatives of the doctors to submit their grievances that would be heard on priority.

Ch'garh: 3 killed in lightning strikes

Jashpur (Chhattisgarh): Three women were killed and seven others injured in lightning strikes in Chhattisgarh's Jashpur district, officials said Saturday. Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai has expressed grief over the incidents.

Hunger strike at JNU enters 6th day

New Delhi: The Jawaharlal Nehru University Students Union (JNUSU) has been staging an indefinite hunger strike, which entered its sixth day Saturday with the health of several protestors deteriorating, according to the students body. The students have been protesting on the campus against purported unresponsiveness of the JNU administration over their charter of demands since August 11.

Cong MLA held

Durg/Balodabazar: Congress MLA Devendra Yadav was arrested Saturday in connection with the June 10 violence in Chhattisgarh's Balodabazar city during a Satnam community agitation, a police official said. Yadav accused the BJP government of implicating Congress workers in the arson case. Yadav was apprehended from his residence in Durg district and brought to Balodabazar.

KOLKATA RAPE-MURDER

Strike cripples OPDs nationwide

The IMA had given a nationwide call for the withdrawal of non-emergency services for 24 hours from 6 am Saturday to protest the gruesome rape and murder at the R G Kar Medical College and Hospital in Kolkata and the subsequent vandalism at the facility



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 17: The government Saturday said a committee will be formed to propose safety measures for healthcare professionals even as OPD services were hit across the country as doctors joined the 24-hour nationwide strike called by the IMA to protest the alleged rape and murder of a trainee medic in Kolkata.

Resident doctors at government hospitals in different parts of the country, including Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Maharashtra, and Haryana among others, have been protesting since Monday.

The IMA also sought Prime Minister Narendra Modi's intervention in realising their five demands, including a central law to check violence against healthcare personnel and declaring hospitals safe zones with mandatory security entitlements.

The Union Health Ministry Saturday said representatives of all stakeholders, including the state governments, will be invited to share their suggestions

with the committee as it urged the doctors to resume their duties in the larger public interest and in view of the rising number of dengue and malaria cases.

Representatives of the Federation of Resident Doctors' Association (FORDA), IMA and resident doctors' associations of government medical colleges and hospitals of Delhi met the Union Health Minister in the wake of the Kolkata incident.

Reacting to the development, the IMA said it is studying the statement released by the Health Ministry assuring doctors of all possible efforts to ensure their safety and offering to form a committee to suggest measures for the same.

The IMA said it will respond to it after careful consideration of all aspects and consultations with its state branches. Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju said everyone was concerned about the rape and murder of the doctor in Kolkata and not just the healthcare fraternity. Rijiju was speaking to reporters at the

Bhubaneswar airport in Odisha. In West Bengal, the epicentre of the protest, the former principal of R G Kar Medical College and Hospital Dr Sandip Ghosh appeared before the CBI for questioning for the second consecutive day Saturday in connection with the horrific incident.

Ghosh reached the CBI office for the second time a little before 10.30 am. During his first round of questioning Friday, the former principal was asked about his first reaction after getting the news of the doctor's death whom he instructed to inform the family and how and who contacted the police.

Meanwhile, doctors in Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Assam, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Kerala, Chhattisgarh, Bihar, Rajasthan, Jharkhand, Mizoram, and Nagaland among other states joined the 24-hour strike called by the IMA.

In the national capital, major private hospitals shut down their OPDs, elective surgeries and IPD services.

Resident doctors in the capital have been on an indefinite strike since Monday.

As the strike entered its sixth day Saturday, private hospitals also joined the protest alongside government hospitals.

Hospitals like Sir Ganga Ram, Fortis and Apollo have halted their OPD, elective surgeries and IPD services. Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren condemned the alleged rape and murder and appealed to the protesting medics to return to work for the sake of the patients.

Healthcare services were affected in Jharkhand during the day as doctors joined the IMA's nationwide call for the withdrawal of non-emergency services.

Soren also said he has directed the DGP to take strict steps to ensure the safety of all the staff working in state hospitals.

More than 4,500 doctors in Chhattisgarh joined the strike that affected medical services across the state. In Gujarat, doctors stayed away from OPDs and did not conduct elective surgeries in several hospitals.

They also held protest gatherings and took out rallies, shouting slogans demanding justice for the trainee doctor who was raped and murdered August 9.

In Bihar, AIIMS-Patna Executive Director and CEO Gopal Krishna Pal told PTI that it has been decided to deploy more female security guards and install an additional 150 CCTV cameras on the campus, among other measures.

Doctors running private clinics and nursing homes associated with the IMA of Uttar Pradesh also abandoned work while in Mizoram, apart from OPDs in government hospitals, all private clinics were closed.

Raut defends Uddhav's push for decision on MVA's CM candidate



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, August 17: Shiv Sena (UBT) president Uddhav Thackeray has demonstrated a large heart by offering support to any leader from the Congress and NCP (SP) for the Chief Minister's post, party MP Sanjay Raut said Saturday.

Thackeray, a former CM, was acceptable to everyone, he claimed while denying that the Sena (UBT) chief's latest message to his allies was a pressure tactic.

Talking to reporters here, Raut dared the ruling Mahayuti, comprising the rival Shiv Sena led by Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, BJP, and the NCP headed by Ajit Pawar, to declare their CM face.

Elsewhere, Milind Deora, MP of the rival Shinde-led Shiv Sena, claimed that the Congress will never support Thackeray for the CM's post.

"Uddhav Thackeray showed a large heart (with his willingness to support any MVA leader for the CM's post). It was not pressure politics. His stand benefits Maharashtra," said Raut, a Rajya Sabha member.

"What is wrong with Uddhav Thackeray's demand? Thackeray is a former Chief Minister. His face is acceptable to everyone. He didn't

speak about himself. If anyone has the courage, they should declare their CM face," Raut said.

Thackeray, speaking at a meeting of the Maha Vikas Aghadi Friday, insisted that the Opposition alliance decide its Chief Ministerial face first rather than relying on the principle that the Chief Minister would be from the party which wins the largest number of seats.

He would support any candidate decided by the Congress and NCP (SP), he added.

"First, decide (the CM's face) and then go ahead but do not go by this policy (party with the most seats getting the CM's post). Uddhav Thackeray will back any candidate announced by Congress and NCP (SP) as the CM face of MVA. I don't feel that I am fighting for myself but it is for the rights of Maharashtra," Thackeray said.

But NCP (SP) president Sharad Pawar refrained from speaking on the issue while Maharashtra Congress chief Nana Patole said the decision on the CM's post will be taken by the INDIA bloc leaders.

Elections to the 288-member Maharashtra Assembly are likely in October or November.

Milind Deora, a Rajya Sabha member who joined the Shiv Sena in February this year after quitting Congress, said Thackeray would not get the support of the Grand Old Party.

"I knew the Congress' style of functioning very well. It will never agree on Uddhav Thackeray (for the CM post)," he said.

Naidu urges Modi for early release of funds for key AP projects

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 17: Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu met Prime Minister Narendra Modi Saturday and sought early release of funds for the Polavaram irrigation project and Amaravati capital city development.

During his two-day visit to the national capital, Naidu also held meetings with Home Minister Amit Shah, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and Jal Shakti Minister C R Patil. A few TDP MPs and Union Ministers K Rammohan Naidu and Pemmasani Chandrasekhar accompanied the Chief Minister in these meetings.

In his meeting with Modi, Naidu expressed gratitude for the ₹15,000-crore allocation for Amaravati's development announced in the Union Budget, an official statement said. The TDP chief requested early release of funds for the Polavaram project while calling for a decision in the upcoming cabinet meeting to expedite project completion. Naidu also sought Special Assistance for Capital Investment (SACI) and the release of backward region grants for underdeveloped districts in Rayalaseema, Prakasam and North Coastal regions.



BJP Medical Cell members burn an effigy during a protest demanding justice for the woman doctor who was allegedly raped and murdered at R G Kar Medical College and Hospital in Patna, Bihar
PTI PHOTO

Mall evacuated after hoax bomb threat

Gurugram: Ambience Mall in Gurugram was evacuated Saturday after it received an email claiming that a bomb had been planted on the premises, police said. The threat turned out to be a hoax. Bomb and dog squad teams were rushed to the spot and the search operation lasted four-and-a-half hours, police said. The Ambience Mall management received a bomb threat email at 9.27 am, police said. The email, which was sent from hiddenbones101@gmail.com, read, "I planted bombs in the building. Every person inside the building will be killed, none of you will escape. You deserve death. I planted the bombs in the building because I hate my life. The people behind this attack are Paige and Nora," Assistant Commissioner of Police, DLF (Gurugram), Vikas Kaushik said, "The search operation at Ambience Mall is over and nothing has been found.

Health min reviews Monkeypox situation

New Delhi: There are currently no reported cases of Monkeypox in India even though cautionary measures will be put in place to prevent and control the spread of the disease, the Union health ministry said Saturday. At a review meeting held during the day, although the possibility of a few imported cases being detected in the coming weeks was not entirely ruled out, it was assessed that the risk of a large outbreak with sustained transmission is low for India at present. Since WHO first declared the outbreak a public health emergency of international concern in 2022, a total of 30 cases were detected in India with the last case being reported this March, the Health Ministry said in a statement.

Meghalaya HC bans single-use plastic

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Shillong, August 17: The Meghalaya High Court has banned single use plastic in temples and shops across the state.

The High Court Bench headed by Chief Justice S Vaidyanathan also advocated for introduction of tetra pak cartons, which are primarily made from paper and could be an effective alternative to replace plastics. The fight against plastics is not just an environmental crusade, but a battle for the health and future of our planet.

"To begin with, such a move can be started from temple premises. Temple authorities must ensure that there is no usage of



plastic bags in and around the worshipping places," the Division Bench said in an order while hearing a PIL on the matter on Friday.

"CCTV cameras shall be installed in all temples, so that if anybody carries plastics inside the temple, that can be curtailed

to some extent," it added.

The bench also imposed a ban on shops from storing and using plastic bags proposing heavy fines to be imposed on violators.

"If any shops are found to have stored plastic bags, a heavy fine should be imposed on them and if the practice is continued,

The fight against plastics is not just an environmental crusade, but a battle for the health and future of our planet

such shops should be kept under lock and seal," the bench stated.

Directing the state government to be vigilant, the bench also ordered that the plastic items are stopped at the entry level itself. "A periodical raid should be conducted in all shops and the Government of Meghalaya should think of imposing huge amount of fine against those

who use plastics within the state of Meghalaya," it said, adding that strict enforcement of law will help eradicate plastic from society.

Citing how strong laws in Singapore force the same Indian who throws rubbish on the floor in his country to dispose of wastes in a designated dustbin in that country, the bench said, "Strict prohibitory measures and imposition of heavy fine on violators are the only solution to eradicate plastics from society, in addition to spreading awareness about the menace of plastics."

The high court has also asked the state government to file an affidavit on the matter:

Section of bridge over Ganga collapses

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhagalpur/Khagaria/Patna, August 17: A portion of an under-construction bridge in Bihar, which was being "dismantled", crashed into the river Ganges river Saturday, officials said.

The administration made it clear there were no casualties. Video footage of a slab of the bridge, connecting Bhagalpur and Khagaria districts, has gone viral on social media in which locals, beholding the sight from a distance, can be heard screaming "the structure has collapsed once again".

Notably, portions of the bridge, which would be 3.16 km long once complete, had collapsed earlier in 2022 and again, a year later. However, when contacted, Khagaria District Magistrate Amit Kumar Pandey asserted that "the entire structure of the under-construction bridge has been deemed to be faulty and it is being dismantled by the contractor as per direction of the Patna High Court".

The incident, which comes in the



backdrop of numerous incidents of bridge collapse across the state, many of these taking place a few months back, triggered a political slugfest.

RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav, a former Deputy Chief Minister who held road construction portfolio till his party lost power in January this year, squarely blamed the Nitish Kumar government for the incident.

"The structure was examined by a committee of experts from IIT Roorkee when I headed the department. They found flaws in the designs of the foundation and the superstructure. But Chief Minister Nitish Kumar seems least bothered and it appears the report is gathering dust".

Senior BJP leader Vijay Kumar Sinha, the current Deputy CM who holds road construction department, retorted, "Things would not have come to this, had the previous government been vigilant enough".



While Congress portrays itself as the guardian of Dalits and minorities, one of their own Chief Ministers is involved in grabbing land from a Dalit family. This is yet another instance of Congress' hypocrisy and its family-centric politics
J P NADDA | BJP PRESIDENT

ATISHI PULLS UP CHIEF SECRETARY

Taking cognizance of numerous complaints of sewer overflow from various parts of Delhi, Water Minister Atishi has pulled up the Chief Secretary (CS), holding him accountable, for the crisis



of the day quote

These centres are envisioned as hubs for empowering farmers through knowledge dissemination, skill development, and the adoption of modern agricultural practices
SUKHVINDER SINGH SUKHU | HIMACHAL CM

I urge people to come out and vote in large numbers because it's your way of standing up for the kind of Kashmir you want
SAM PITRODA | CHAIRMAN OF THE INDIAN OVERSEAS CONGRESS

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah often claims to have clean hands and says his political life is an open book. If that's the case, why is he afraid of any investigation?
PRALHAD JOSHI | UNION MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Khera criticises govt over train accidents

New Delhi: Senior Congress leader Pawan Khera slammed the Union government over the train accident near Kanpur that took place in the wee hours of Saturday. He also criticised the Centre over the CAG report stating that funds meant for the Indian Railways were being misused. The senior Congress leader also expressed concern over the rape and murder of a junior woman doctor in a Kolkata medical college and the Udaipur stabbing incident involving two schoolboys.

Cong reconstitutes law department

New Delhi: The Congress Saturday reconstituted its Law, Human Rights and RTI department, with Abhishek Manu Singhvi appointed as its chairman. The department includes the likes of senior lawyers Salman Khurshid, KTS Tulsii and Vivek Tankha. Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge has approved a proposal for the reconstitution of the AICC Law, Human Rights and RTI department with immediate effect, according to a statement issued by the party.

BSF arrests 3 smugglers

Kolkata: Border Security Force (BSF) has said that three smugglers have been arrested along the Indo-Bangladesh border with 1.1 kg of gold in West Bengal's Murshidabad district. BSF, South Bengal Frontier, DIG and Spokesperson, A K Arya, said that the two gold biscuits were taped to the axle of a tractor trolley returning from farmland across the border fence. "The gold is valued at nearly ₹75,14,000," he said. He said that troops of the 73 Bn BSF, posted at the India-Border Outpost received intelligence inputs of an attempt to smuggle gold into the country from Bangladesh.

UDF attacks PM

Thiruvananthapuram: The Opposition Congress-led UDF Saturday attacked Prime Minister Narendra Modi over his remarks against the existing civil code in his recent Independence Day speech and charged that it was a call to divide the country on the lines of religion. UDF Convenor M M Hassan termed the PM's remarks as "unfortunate" and an "insult" to the architects of the Constitution. "It was unfortunate that the Prime Minister who should have been called to protect freedom and strengthen the unity of people, tried to create an atmosphere of hatred among people," he said.

SANCTION FOR PROSECUTION

K'taka CM vows to wage legal battle



AGENCIES

Bangalore, August 17: Terming as "illegal" the sanction accorded by Karnataka Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot for his prosecution in connection with Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) site allotment 'scam', Chief Minister Siddaramaiah Saturday vowed to wage a legal battle and ruled out his resignation over the issue. Siddaramaiah said the entire Cabinet, the Congress high-command and MLAs have expressed their solidarity with him. Speaking to reporters after a special Cabinet meeting, held hours after the sanction, the Chief Minister said: "Tell me why and for what reason should I resign?...the Governor has to resign because he has acted as a puppet in the hands of the Government of India."

He said the Cabinet termed the Governor's decision to prosecute him as "illegal" and "unconstitutional" and condemned it.

"Governor is the representative of the President of India. He should function as the representative of the Constitution and not as the representative of the Centre and BJP," Siddaramaiah said.

He charged the Centre with trying to destabilise an elected government by "using" the Governor.

According to the Chief

Minister, the Standard Operating Procedures sent by the Centre September 3, 2021 to the Centre Secretaries of all States and Union Territories pertaining to cases under section 17(a) under Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 were not followed by the Governor.

"It is very clear based on the SOPs that the Governor has illegally granted sanction. He has no jurisdiction and the sanction is against the Constitution and is illegal. He has not followed the procedure," the Chief Minister said. Asserting that he will fight it legally against this "illegal sanction" by the Governor, Siddaramaiah alleged that the move was a "politically malafide decision to destabilise an elected government."

He said the BJP and its ally JD(S) will fail in their attempts to defame him politically.

BJP demands CM's resignation

The BJP in Karnataka Saturday demanded the resignation of the Chief Minister Siddaramaiah saying he has no moral right to stay in power after Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot granted permission to prosecute him in the Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) site allotment 'scam' The party, along with its NDA partner JD(S), had taken out a foot-march from Bengaluru to Mysuru from August 3 to 10 targeting Siddaramaiah over the 'scam'.

Maha govt launches 'Ladki Bahin' scheme

AGENCIES

Pune, August 17: Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde Saturday at the statewide launch programme of the ambitious Mukhyamantri Majhi Ladki Bahin Yojana, announced that the MahaYuti government will increase in phases the monthly financial aid to ₹2,500 and later ₹3,000 from the present ₹1,500 given to the eligible women beneficiaries from the age group of 21 to 65 years after being voted to power in the upcoming Assembly election.

Shinde also called upon the women participants at the function to vote for the MahaYuti so that the implementation of a slew of welfare and development schemes including the Ladki Bahin scheme continue.

Although the main function was held in Pune, similar functions for the launch of the Ladki Bahin scheme took place in all districts. Shinde slammed the opposition for criticising the MahaYuti government on the Ladki Bahin scheme while urging the women participants to show them (the opposition) their place at the right time.

"The stepbrothers are making false accusations. The opposition is saying that the scheme is fraudulent and it is an election gimmick. They went to court against this scheme which is meant to make women self-reliant and empowered. However, the court slammed them as it ruled in the favour of the scheme," he said in a statement.

The Maharashtra Chief Minister said that the government has done financial planning for the full year for the implementation of Ladki Bahin and other welfare and development schemes.

"The opponents are saying what will happen to women after receiving ₹1,500. But those who are born with a golden spoon in the mouth will not understand the value of ₹1,500. I see tears of joy in the eyes of many sisters and respect for the government. What else do you need? It is a sincere wish that happy days come in the lives of my sisters," he added.



Students show their 'rakhis' ahead of the 'Raksha Bandhan' festival in Nadia, West Bengal

Pti photo

UPSC advertises 45 lateral entry posts

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 17: Forty-five specialists will soon be joining key posts of joint secretaries, directors and deputy secretaries in different central ministries as part of the Modi government's ambitious plan to infuse fresh talent to further improve ease of governance.

Usually, such posts are manned by the officers of all-India services -- the Indian Administrative Service (IAS), Indian Police Service (IPS) and Indian Forest Service (IFoS) -- and Group A services, among others.

The Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) Saturday advertised 45 posts -- 10 of joint secretaries and 35 of directors/deputy secretaries -- to be filled through the lateral entry mode on contract basis. It is the biggest tranche of lateral recruitment being undertaken by the Centre, an official said.

"The government of India has submitted the requisitions for lateral recruitment of joint secretary and director/deputy secretary level officers.



Accordingly, online applications are invited from talented and motivated Indian nationals willing to contribute towards nation building to join the government at the level of joint secretary or director/deputy secretary...." reads the advertisement.

The vacancies in different ministries/departments with headquarters at New Delhi, are to be filled on contract basis (on deputation for officers of states/UT cadres, public sector undertakings (PSUs), autonomous bodies, statutory or-

ganisation, universities, recognized research institutes) for a period of three years (extendable to five years depending upon performance) through website <https://www.upsconline.nic.in> by September 17, it said.

The 10 posts of joint secretaries are in Home, Finance and Steel ministries among others. Thirty-five posts of director/deputy secretary-level will be filled in the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, Civil Aviation and Information & Broadcasting among others.

The latest induction through the lateral entry mode -- referred to as the appointment of specialists (including those from the private sector) in government departments -- is aimed at bringing fresh talent and perspective into the governance.

The lateral recruitment in the central government, has been undertaken since 2018 to appoint persons for specific assignments, keeping in view their specialised knowledge and expertise in the domain area. The officers at these levels play an important role in policy-making.

Pawar slams Modi for 'one nation one election' pitch

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Mumbai, August 17: Nationalist Congress Party (SP) chief Sharad Pawar Saturday slammed Prime Minister Narendra Modi on his 'one nation one election' announcement citing the Election Commission's decision not to announce the Assembly election in Maharashtra is contradictory.

Talking to media persons in Nagpur, he asked why was the Maharashtra election schedule not announced. On Friday, Chief Election Commissioner Rajeev Kumar announced that Assembly elections in Maharashtra have not been announced due to Ganeshotsav, Pitrupaksha, Navratri and Diwali.

However, he added, that the elections will be held before the



term of the present Legislative assembly expires. Shiv Sena UBT also criticised the non-declaration of Assembly elections in Maharashtra. Shiv Sena UBT leader and former minister Aadiya Thackeray said that the EC has busted the propaganda of the Union government.

"Election Commission has busted the propaganda of the Union government. For years, the BJP ruled J&K and kept saying that the situation was improving. However, we are seeing increased terror attacks in

PM Modi, while speaking from the Red Fort August 15, announced that the elections across the country should be held simultaneously proposing 'one nation one election'. However, less than 12 hours after making that announcement, we heard that the elections of J&K and Haryana were announced while Maharashtra and Jharkhand elections were not announced.

SHARAD PAWAR | NATIONALIST CONGRESS PARTY (SP) CHIEF

J&K. The Election Commission has reiterated the failure of the Union government to protect the common people of Jammu and Kashmir," he said. Meanwhile, while com-

menting on the violence in Bangladesh and its impact on India, especially in Maharashtra, Sharad Pawar said that there was a change of power in Bangladesh after the youth revolted, however, unfortunately, its reaction was also felt in some places in India as well.

"I never thought that what happened in Bangladesh would have consequences in Maharashtra. Today, there is a need for peace, unity and harmony among all elements of society. Whatever happened in Maharashtra is not in the interest of the state. If peace is to be established in the state, all I want to say is that people from social causes and politics should advocate peace and take precautions on how to maintain peace," said Pawar.

Himanta slams J'khand govt

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Giridih/Ranchi, August 17: Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma Saturday accused the JMM-led alliance government in Jharkhand of doing politics of "appeasement" in the state.

Sarma, the election co-in-charge of the BJP in Jharkhand, Saturday, visited Bengabad in Giridih district to meet the kin of Jharkhand Police personnel Chouhan Hembram, who was killed by a convicted prisoner in a Hazaribag hospital August 12. "No legislator either from JMM or Congress met the tribal victim family yet," Sarma said after meeting the mother of Hembram. Prisoner Shahid Ansari, serving a life sentence, escaped from Sheikh Bikhari

Medical College and Hospital (SBMCH) in Jharkhand's Hazaribag district after hitting Hembram with a rod and strangulating him to death with a saline pipe.

The accused was undergoing treatment in the hospital and Hembram was posted on guard duty.

The Assam CM alleged that the administration took no action to nab the absconding prisoner. Sarma said that when he came to know about the incident, he decided to meet the family with Jharkhand BJP chief Babul Marandi Saturday morning.

Sarma said he was told that police took Hembram's family members to Hazaribag for some paperwork. "If it is done for the benefit of the victim, it is good," he said.

TAARAK MEHTA KA OOLTAH CHASHMAH

Delhi HC restrains unauthorised use of content

The makers of the show, which was stated to have been on air for more than 16 years with approximately 4,000 episodes, alleged that several entities were using its name, images of characters etc for commercial gains by running websites, selling merchandise and even publishing "sexually explicit and vulgar" videos on YouTube

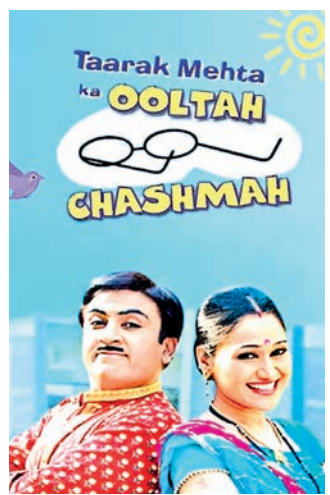
PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 17: The Delhi High Court has restrained the unauthorised use of the name, characters and content of popular television show "Taarak Mehta Ka Ooltah Chashmah".

In an interim order passed against several known and un-

known entities on a lawsuit filed by the show's producer, Justice Mini Pushkarna said if the ex-parte ad-interim injunction is not granted, the plaintiff will suffer an irreparable loss.

The plaintiff, Neela Film Productions Private Limited, said it has statutory rights over several registered trademarks in India pertaining to its show and



its characters, some of its trademarks being "Taarak Mehta Ka Ooltah Chashmah", "Ooltah

Chashmah", "Taarak Mehta", "Jethaalal", "Gokuldhaam" etc. The court was informed that while the plaintiff enjoys the copyright of the show's various characters and animations, some entities are, in an unauthorised manner, selling merchandise, such as T-shirts, posters and stickers, bearing the images and dialogues of characters from the show through websites and e-commerce platforms.

It was also claimed that content was generated through the use of artificial intelligence or deepfakes of characters as well as video games.

"An order of ex-parte ad-interim injunction is passed, thereby restraining the defendant nos. 1 to 12 and 14 to 21 (including the John Doe parties) ...

from, in any manner, ... publishing ... offering for sale on their websites ... the plaintiff's copyrighted material/registered trademarks, including, but not limited to the title, the characters, format and underlying materials in the said show or anything else, which otherwise amounts to an infringement of the plaintiff's copyright/registered trademarks/passing off of the goods/services offered by the defendants," the court said in an order passed on August 14.

The court further ordered that YouTube videos, which contain characters or material from the show, including pornographic content, are required to be brought down by those making the uploads.

In case the infringing videos are not brought down within 48 hours, the Information Technology (IT) ministry and the Department of Telecom will ask the respective internet service providers or intermediaries to suspend all links or videos, the court said.

It also granted liberty to the plaintiff to notify YouTube to block or suspend all the infringing links and directed the platform to provide the plaintiff with the necessary details of the offending uploaders.

Asit Kumar Modi, the producer of the show, expressed his relief at the high court's decision and said it sends a strong message that such infringement of the show's intellectual property will not be tolerated.

international



We are going to do everything that is needed to defend Israel against any attacks from Iran
ISRAEL KATZ | FOREIGN MINISTER, ISRAEL

SOMERSET HOUSE ON FIRE

More than 125 firefighters worked to douse a fire Saturday at Somerset House, a large central London arts venue that contains priceless works by Monet, Cezanne and Van Gogh



of the day quote

It's a remarkable testament to who we are as a people, and hosting the world yet again where major history will take place by launching the first Black woman of Asian descent to the most powerful post in the world
BRANDON JOHNSON | MAYOR, CHICAGO

Washington's efforts have created all the prerequisites for Ukraine to lose its sovereignty and lose part of its territories
NIKOLAI PATRUSHEV | AIDE TO RUSSIAN PRESIDENT

Our government is committed to ensuring a transition to inclusive and pluralistic democracy and creating an environment in which free, fair and participatory elections can be held
MUHAMMAD YUNUS | INTERIM GOVERNMENT HEAD, BANGLADESH

SHORT TAKES

Thaksin gets pardon
Bangkok: Thailand's billionaire former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra received a royal pardon shortening his parole by two weeks, his lawyer said Saturday, a day after his daughter was elected premier by parliament. Thaksin has been at the heart of a two-decade power struggle between the Shinawatra family and its allies on the one hand, and, on the other, a nexus of royalists, generals and old-money families that have long wielded influence over Thai governments and institutions. After a dramatic return last August from self-exile to avoid jail time in the wake of his overthrow in a 2006 military coup, Thaksin served six months in hospital detention, due to health reasons, before being released on parole in February.

PIO shot dead in US
Washington: A 36-year-old Indian-origin man has been shot and killed after a teenage boy robbed a convenience store in the US state of North Carolina, authorities said. Mainank Patel, the owner of the Tobacco House store at 2580 Airport Road, died after the shooting Tuesday morning, the Salisbury Post reported. A juvenile male is in custody for the crime, according to Rowan County Sheriff's Office. Because the young man is a juvenile, deputies are not able to release his name. The juvenile was arrested Tuesday evening but no additional details have been released.

Indian docs in UK pen open letter to demand justice

London, August 17: A group of Indian doctors and medical students in the UK have issued an open letter this weekend demanding justice for the post-graduate trainee doctor who was brutally raped and murdered at RG Kar Medical College and Hospital in Kolkata. The letter condemns the "brutal rape and murder of an on-duty female doctor" at the hospital and the "inaction" of the West Bengal government in its response to the incident last week. The letter follows a peaceful protest staged outside India House in London and similar gatherings in UK cities such as Edinburgh and Leeds in soli-

KOLKATA RAPE CASE



arity with the doctors protesting in India. "This incident is a symptom of the rising violence against women and the negligence of the state towards its citizens," reads the open letter. "The absence of investment in

public infrastructure and safety measures has a disproportionate impact on women, who are already marginalised by the patriarchal social conditions. Instead of supporting their empowerment by creating safe workplaces and efficient judicial mechanisms, government leaders, including Mamata Banerjee, have historically indulged in victim-blaming and misogynist responses," it notes. "The death of the female doctor at RG Kar Medical College is an indication of the urgent necessity to implement public safety measures and internal complaint mechanisms in all workplaces in the country," it adds. On August 9, a 31-year-old woman trainee doctor was raped

and murdered at Kolkata's RG Kar Medical College and Hospital, leading to protests across India where demonstrators demanded justice for the victim. Further protests are planned in the UK, with a peaceful demonstration by British Indian women doctors at Parliament Square in London near the Mahatma Gandhi statue, scheduled for August 22. "We stand in solidarity with our fraternity. Justice delayed is justice denied is the collective refrain of the doctors who have reached out to me from across the UK, US, Canada and the UAE," said Dr Dipti Jain, a National Health Service (NHS) geriatrician based in Brighton.

26/11 CONSPIRATOR

Rana can be extradited to India, says US Court

Washington, August 17: In a major setback to Pakistani-origin Canadian businessman, Tahawwur Hussain Rana, who is sought by India for his involvement in the 2008 Mumbai terror attack, a US court in California has ruled that he is extraditable to India under the extradition treaty between the two countries. "The (India US Extradition) Treaty permits Rana's extradition," the US Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit said in its ruling Thursday. Ruling on an appeal filed by 63-year-old Rana, a panel of judges of the US Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit affirmed the District Court in the Central District of California's denial of his habeas corpus petition challenging a magistrate judge's certification of his as extraditable to India for his alleged participation in terrorist attacks in Mumbai. Rana, currently lodged in a jail in Los Angeles, faces charges for his role in the 26/11 Mumbai attack and is known to be associated with Pakistani-American Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) terrorist David Coleman Headley, one of the main conspirators of the terror incident. Under the limited scope of habeas review of an extradition order, the panel held that Rana's alleged offence fell within the terms of the extradition treaty between the United States and India, which included a Non Bis in Idem (double jeopardy) exception to extraditability "when the person sought has been convicted or acquitted in the Requested State for the offence for which extradition is requested". A total of 166 people, including six Americans, were killed in the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks in which 10 Pakistani terrorists laid a more than 60-hour siege, attacking and killing people at iconic and vital locations in Mumbai.

Polio: Gaza's new battle

Gaza sees first polio case in 25 years as UN calls for mass vaccinations

Cairo, August 17: The threat of polio is rising fast in the Gaza Strip, prompting aid groups to call for an urgent pause in the war so they can ramp up vaccinations and head off a full-blown outbreak. At least one case has been confirmed, others are suspected and the virus was detected in wastewater in six different locations in July. Polio was eradicated in Gaza 25 years ago, but vaccinations plunged after the war began 10 months ago and the territory has become a breeding ground for the virus, aid groups say. Hundreds of thousands of displaced Palestinians are crowded into tent camps lacking clean water or proper disposal of sewage and garbage. To avert a widespread outbreak, aid groups are preparing to vaccinate more than 600,000 children in the coming weeks. They say the ambitious vaccination plans are impossible, though, without a pause in the fighting between Israel and Hamas. A possible cease-fire deal couldn't come soon enough. The World Health Organisation and UNICEF, the United Nations children's agency, said in a joint statement that, at a minimum, a seven-day pause is needed to carry out a mass vaccination plan. The UN aims to bring 1.6 million doses of polio vaccine into Gaza, where sanitation and water systems have been destroyed, leaving open pits of human waste in crowded tent camps. Families living in the camps have little clean water or even soap to maintain hygiene and sometimes use wastewater to drink or clean clothes and dishes. At least 225 informal waste disposal sites and landfills have cropped up around Gaza — many close to where families are sheltering, according to a report released in July by PAX, a



Deadly violence persists despite ceasefire talks

As mediators expressed optimism for an imminent cease-fire deal, violence raged Saturday in the Gaza Strip, where an Israeli airstrike killed at least 18 people, all from the same family. The attack came days after the Health Ministry in Hamas-run Gaza announced the death toll surpassed 40,000 in the 10-month-old Israel-Hamas war, and just hours after officials from the United States, Egypt and Qatar wrapped up two days of cease-fire talks with a message of hope that a deal could be reached. A joint statement from the three mediators said a proposal to bridge the gaps between Israel and Hamas was presented and they expected to work out the details of how to implement the possible deal next week in Cairo.

We are anticipating and preparing for the worst-case scenario of a polio outbreak in the coming weeks or month
FRANCIS HUGHES | GAZA RESPONSE DIRECTOR AT CARE INTERNATIONAL

Netherlands-based nonprofit that used satellite imagery to track the sites. Polio, which is highly contagious and transmits mainly through contact with contaminated feces, water or food, can cause difficulty breathing and irreversible paralysis, usually in the legs. It strikes young children in particular and is sometimes fatal. The aid group Mercy Corps estimates some 50,000 babies born since the war began have not been immunized against polio. WHO and UNICEF said Friday that three children are suspected of being infected and that their stool samples were being tested by a laboratory in Jordan. Aid workers anticipate the

number of suspected cases will rise, and worry that the disease could be hard to contain without urgent intervention. Health workers in Gaza are gearing up for a mass vaccination campaign to begin at the end of August and continue into September. The goal is to immunize 640,000 children under the age of 10 over two rounds of vaccinations, according to WHO.

Israel strike kills 10 in Lebanon

Beirut: Around 10 people were killed, including two children, and five were wounded by an Israeli airstrike on a residential building in the city of Nabatieh in south Lebanon, state news agency NNA said Saturday. The victims were all Syrian citizens, NNA said, adding that a final toll of the strike would be announced after DNA tests were conducted to determine the identity of the victims. The Israeli military said the airstrike targeted a weapons depot used by Hezbollah militants.

Key Russia bridge blown to pieces

Russia says Ukraine used Western rockets to destroy bridge in Kursk region

Moscow, August 17: Russia's foreign ministry said Ukraine had used Western rockets, likely US-made HIMARS, to destroy a bridge over the Seym river in the Kursk region, killing volunteers trying to evacuate civilians. "For the first time, the Kursk region was hit by Western-made rocket launchers, probably American HIMARS," Maria Zakharova, spokeswoman for the Russian foreign ministry, said late Friday on the Telegram messaging app. "As a result of the attack on the bridge over the Seym River in the Glushkovo district, it was completely destroyed, and volunteers who were assisting the evacuated civilian population were killed." Ukrainian army chief Oleksandr Syrskyi said Friday that Kyiv's forces were advancing



between 1 and 3 kilometres (0.6 to 1.9 miles) in some areas in the Kursk region, 11 days since beginning an incursion into Russia. Kyiv has claimed to have taken control of 82 settlements over an area of 1,150 square kilometres in the region since August 6. Russia has accused the West of supporting and encouraging Ukraine's first ground offensive on Russian territory and said Kyiv's "terrorist invasion" would not change the course of the war. The United States, which has said it cannot allow Russian President Vladimir Putin to win the war he launched in February 2022, so far deems the surprise incursion a protective move that justifies the use of US weaponry, officials in Washington said.

Perry's death sheds light on toxic celeb-doc relationships

ACCORDING TO PROSECUTORS, DOCTORS AND A 'KETAMINE QUEEN' TOOK ADVANTAGE OF PERRY'S ADDICTION AND PLAYED A ROLE IN HIS DEATH

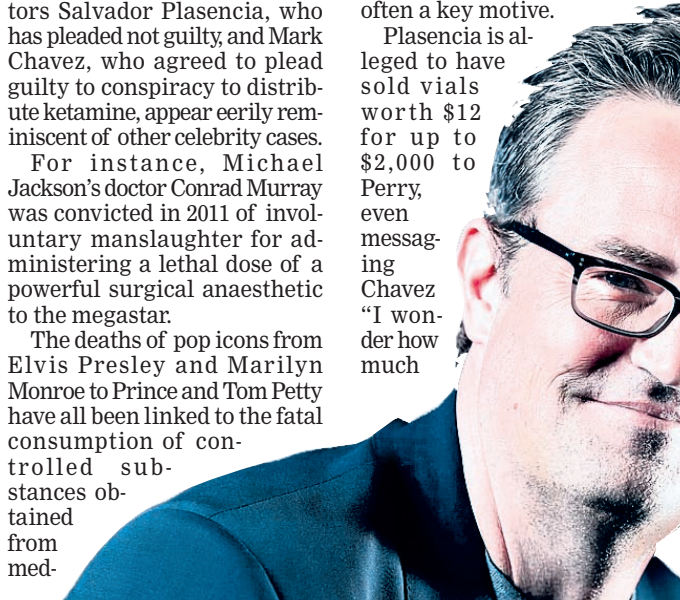
Los Angeles, August 17: "Friends" actor Matthew Perry's tragic death has highlighted the secretive and toxic relationship that has long existed between troubled celebrities and the doctors who service their addictions. Perry, who had a long history of substance abuse, was found dead in the hot tub of his luxury Los Angeles home last year with extremely high levels of ketamine in his system. Federal drug officials said the star had become addicted while seeking treatment for depres-

sion and "turned to unscrupulous doctors" when legal sources refused to increase his dosage. "Instead of 'do no harm,' they did harm so that they could make more money," Anne Milgram of the Drug Enforcement Administration told a press conference this week. The allegations against doctors Salvador Plascencia, who has pleaded not guilty, and Mark Chavez, who agreed to plead guilty to conspiracy to distribute ketamine, appear eerily reminiscent of other celebrity cases. For instance, Michael Jackson's doctor Conrad Murray was convicted in 2011 of involuntary manslaughter for administering a lethal dose of a powerful surgical anaesthetic to the megastar. The deaths of pop icons from Elvis Presley and Marilyn Monroe to Prince and Tom Petty have all been linked to the fatal consumption of controlled substances obtained from med-

ical professionals. "The rules go out the window with famous people, and it constantly leads to tragedy," said Harry Nelson, a prominent Los Angeles-based healthcare attorney. "It's crazy." **'A TRAP'** Financial gain is often a key motive. Plascencia is alleged to have sold vials worth \$12 for up to \$2,000 to Perry, even messaging Chavez "I wonder how much

this moron will pay... Lets find out." But Nelson, who has been personally involved in more than a dozen "front-page, headline-news tragedies" involving famous actors, rock stars and athletes, said the full picture is often more complicated. Celebrities have a genuine need for privacy. Going to a doctor for a prescription, followed by a pharmacy to collect the drugs, is not feasible for troubled A-listers who are frequently hounded by paparazzi. Yet doctors can quickly become awed by the "romance and excitement" of proximity to world-famous stars, who are likely to display a higher "sense of entitlement" regarding their treatment demands than typical patients. In order to "stay in the good graces of that person and con-

tinue to have this privileged role," doctors can end up rationalizing: "I'm gonna do what that person wants, even if it's against better judgment," said Nelson. "But it's a trap. It's a trap for both the celebrity patient, and for the doctor," he added. **'KETAMINE QUEEN'** Among the five people who have been charged in actor Matthew Perry's death due to a drug overdose last year is a woman called Jasveen Sangha, popularly known as "the Ketamine Queen". According to investigators, Sangha provided the lethal dose of ketamine that led to Perry's death. Sangha, a 41-year-old dual British and American citizen, has been under the radar of federal authorities for her involvement in the distribution of dangerous narcotics. Dubbed the "Ketamine Queen of Los Angeles," Sangha allegedly ran a drug operation out of her North Hollywood home, where officials claim she stored, packaged, and distributed various narcotics.



EL NINO HITS SOUTHERN AFRICA

68mn suffering from drought

Harare, August 17: About 68 million people in Southern Africa are suffering the effects of an El Nino-induced drought which has wiped out crops across the region, the regional bloc SADC said Saturday. The drought, which started in early 2024, has hit crop and livestock production, causing food shortages and damaging the wider economies. Heads of state from the 16-nation Southern African Development Community (SADC) were meeting in Zimbabwe's capital Harare to discuss regional issues including food security. Some 68 million people, or 17% of the region's population, are in need of aid, said Elias Magosi, SADC executive secretary. "The 2024 rainy season has been a challenging one with most parts of the region experiencing negative effects of the El Nino phenomenon characterised by the late onset of rains," he said. It is Southern Africa's worst



drought in years, owing to a combination of naturally occurring El Nino - when an abnormal warming of the waters in the eastern Pacific changes world weather patterns - and higher average temperatures produced by greenhouse gas emissions. Countries including Zimbabwe, Zambia, and Malawi have already declared the hunger crisis a state of disaster, while Lesotho and Namibia have called for humanitarian support. The region launched an appeal in May for \$5.5 billion in humanitarian assistance to support the drought response, but donations have not been forthcoming, said outgoing SADC chair Joao Lourenco, President of Angola.

of the day quote

On the occasion of India's 78th Independence Day, let us honour the sacrifices of our freedom fighters who envisioned a progressive and prosperous country. As a catalyst for wealth creation in India in addition to being a front line regulator, we are committed to building a stronger and more inclusive nation. NSE continues to foster the capital markets for investor awareness and protection in its sustained efforts towards nation-building. Happy Independence Day!

ASHISHKUMAR CHAUHAN
MD AND CEO, NSE

We are confident that our vehicles, coupled with our extensive aftermarket solutions, will demonstrate our dedication to providing comprehensive transportation solutions to our customers

SANJEEV KUMAR
PRESIDENT FOR MHCV, ASHOK LEYLAND

Health and motor account for 80 per cent of our portfolio, but in the next three years, we aim to reduce this dependence to 70 per cent by improving other miscellaneous insurance products like fire, home

T BABU PAUL | NIC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

SHORT TAKES

Windfall tax on crude cut

New Delhi: The government has slashed windfall tax on domestically produced crude oil to ₹2,100 per tonne, from ₹4,600 per tonne with effect from Saturday. The tax is levied in the form of Special Additional Excise Duty (SAED). The SAED on the export of diesel, petrol and jet fuel or ATF, has been retained at 'nil'. The new rates are effective from August 17, an official notification said. India first imposed windfall profit taxes on July 1, 2022, joining a host of nations that tax supernormal profits of energy companies. The tax rates are reviewed every fortnight based on average oil prices in the previous two weeks.

India exports fig juice to Poland

New Delhi: India has exported the first consignment of fig juice to Poland as part of its initiative to increase shipments of unique agro products from the country, the commerce ministry said Saturday. The Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) facilitated the export of India's first ready-to-drink fig juice, made from GI-tagged Purandar Figs, to Poland, it said. The GI (geographical indication) tag provides legal protection to that item, preventing unauthorized use by others, and helps in promoting exports of the product.

NCLAT sets aside restraining order

New Delhi: Allowing the plea of Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, the Insolvency Appellate Tribunal NCLAT has set aside the order passed by NCLT, which had restrained the Japanese multinational engineering from encashing the Performance Bank Guarantee submitted by its contractor Punj Lloyd. NCLAT said NCLT "committed an error" by allowing a plea filed by the RP of Punj Lloyd to restrain Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, State Bank of India and other banks who have given counter guarantee to invoke the Bank Guarantee. "Order passed by the Adjudicating Authority (NCLT), thus is unsustainable," said a National Company Law Appellate Tribunal bench.



Our priority should be a people-centric growth path that empowers the most vulnerable and marginalised to participate in the development journey

NIRMALA SITHARAMAN
FINANCE MINISTER

AI INFRASTRUCTURE

The government has invited bids for the empanelment of entities for providing artificial intelligence services on cloud under the ₹10,372-crore India AI mission, which was approved by the cabinet in March this year.



Focus on ESG in securities mkt

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 17: Markets regulator Sebi has proposed expansion of the sustainable finance framework in the securities market by introducing a new category of financial instruments.

This category will include Social Bonds, Sustainable Bonds, and Sustainability-linked Bonds in addition to the current green debt securities. It aims to provide issuers with flexibility in raising funds for projects that align with environmental, social, and governance (ESG) objectives.

In a consultation paper released Friday, Sebi proposed that issuers, in addition to existing green debt securities, be allowed to raise funds through issuance of social bonds, sustainable bonds, and sustainability-linked bonds. These bonds will collectively be known as ESG Debt Securities.

This will enable issuers to raise money for more sustainable projects, assisting in closing the funding gap for the Sustainable Development Goals.

Sebi said it received representations from market participants including the Confederation of Indian Industry to expand the scope of the regulatory frame-



work pertaining to sustainable finance to include Social Bonds, in addition to existing Green Debt Securities as a mode of raising sustainable finance, in line with global practices.

As per the consultation paper, Sebi said, it "proposed to introduce the concept of Sustainable Securitised Debt Instruments for the purpose of providing originators of the underlying credit facilities which are within such international or domestic frameworks for sustainable finance, and thereby provide investors as well an opportunity to participate in the sustainable securitised debt instruments."

The consultation paper also addressed the initial and continuous disclosures for sustainable securitised debt instruments

that would be based on international frameworks.

Initial disclosures could be made in the offer document for the securities, while continuous disclosures might be included in annual reports or other mandated formats.

The markets watchdog also suggested that issuers of ESG debt securities and sustainable securitised debt instruments appoint an independent external reviewer or certifier, to facilitate transparency and credibility.

The review could take various forms including, secondary party opinions, verification, certification, or scoring/ rating.

The Sebi has invited comments and suggestions from the public on the consultation paper by September 6.

India needs more reforms to create jobs: Gopinath

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 17: India will need to undertake a lot more reforms to continue its growth trajectory and make sure that enough jobs are created in the country, IMF deputy managing director Gita Gopinath said Saturday.

Addressing an event here, Gopinath further said that India will be required to reduce import tariffs if it wants to be an important player in the global supply chains.

"Significant improvements have been made by the government over the years in terms structural reforms," Gopinath noted. While noting that the world is in an environment where trade integration has been questioned, Gopinath said it is important for India to remain open for global trade.

"Tariff rates in India are higher than in its other peer economies. If it wants to be an important player on the world stage and an important part of global supply chains, it is going to require reducing those tar-



iffs," the eminent economist said.

Gopinath said it is a tremendous aspiration to get to a developed country status but it does not happen automatically, and requires ongoing, consistent efforts, pretty broad scale, across many areas to deliver on that.

"India has grown well in terms of its overall growth rate, and at 7 per cent, it is the fastest-growing major economy in the world. The question is, how does one keep up the momentum and raise it further so that you can increase per capita incomes in India to get to being an advanced economy," she said.

To a question on taxation, she

said India has parallels with other developing countries, where most of the tax revenue that is collected is indirect taxes and not direct taxes, not in the form of income taxes.

"We have been advising other developing countries too, that it is helpful to broaden the personal income tax base and so that you can have more income coming from there," she said. Referring to the cut in corporate tax rate by the Modi government, Gopinath said although it was helpful it is less the tax rate that matters, but what matters is just making sure that there are no loopholes and there are not too many leakages that happen in terms of tax exemptions.

"It is very important to have sufficient progressivity in your tax system...making sure that you are (India) getting enough from your capital gains tax from your capital income tax is going to be critical," she said.

Gopinath also suggested that now there is better technology to implement property tax and this is again another area where work is needed.

Enthusiasm & fervour of Independence Day



On the occasion of the 78th Independence Day, Swami Ramdev, President of Patanjali Yogapeeth and Patanjali University and Acharya Balkrishna, Vice Chancellor of Patanjali University, hoisted the National Flag and wished Happy Independence Day to all countrymen.



POWERGRID Northern Region Transmission System-II celebrated 78th Independence Day with patriotism & enthusiasm at all establishments across the region. At its regional office in Jammu, Rajesh Kumar, Executive Director, POWERGRID Northern Region-II hoisted the Tri-colour in the presence of Sangeeta Kumar, Patron Shrishti Mahila Samiti, senior officials, employees of the company and their family members.



TPCODL celebrated the 78th Independence Day with enthusiasm across its offices. CEO Arvind Singh hoisted the National Flag at the company's corporate office.



JSW Steel's Odisha Mines Division celebrated the 78th Independence Day with patriotic fervour and enthusiasm at its various operating sites and office locations in the state. Senior management of the company including COO of JSW Steel mining division Savuk Mazumdar and Odisha Business Head Prasanna Kumar Panda among others were present.



The 78th Independence Day was celebrated with great enthusiasm at all operating locations of AM/NS India in Odisha, highlighting the unwavering spirit of freedom and progress. Paradeep Pellet Plant celebrated the day as Suresha G, Executive Director, Odisha Operations, AM/NS India, hoisted the National Flag in the presence of employees and community members.



The 78th Independence Day was celebrated at NTPC ER-II Headquarters with traditional splendour. Arindam Sinha, Regional Executive Director NTPC (Eastern Region -HQ -II) hoisted the National Flag and took the ceremonial salute.

Majority of blue-collar jobs pay less than ₹20K per month: Report

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, August 17: Majority of blue-collar jobs in India pay within the salary range of ₹20,000 or less per month, suggesting that a substantial portion of the workforce is grappling with financial strain, struggling to meet essential needs such as housing, healthcare, and education, a report has said.

Over 57.63 per cent of blue-collar jobs fall within the salary range of ₹20,000 or less per month, indicating that many workers earn close to the minimum wage, tech-enabled blue collar recruitment platform WorkIndia said in a report.

In addition, the report revealed that about 29.34 per cent of blue-collar jobs are in the moderate earning bracket, with salaries ranging from ₹20,000-40,000 per month.

Workers falling under this cat-

egory, experience marginally improved financial security but are far from achieving a comfortable standard of living, it said.

"The income in this range may cover necessities but it leaves little room for savings or investments, which highlights the economic vulnerability of a large segment of the blue-collar workforce, it added.

"The data reveals a significant concentration of low-wage jobs and limited opportunities for higher earnings within the blue-collar sector. This disparity not only reflects the economic challenges faced by a large portion of the workforce but also has broader implications for social stability and economic growth," WorkIndia CEO and co-founder Nilesh Dugarwal told PTI.

Addressing these issues may require targeted interventions such as skill development, wage



reforms, and the creation of more high-paying job opportunities, he added.

The report further revealed that a very small segment of the workforce, constituting only 10.71 per cent, get salaries over

₹40,000-60,000 per month.

This higher earning bracket among the blue collar reflects the presence of specialised skills or experience among these workers, yet the restricted availability of such positions suggests

that upward mobility within the segment remains challenging, it said.

Only 2.31 per cent of blue-collar jobs offer salaries exceeding ₹60,000, which is an extremely small percentage that signifies the scarcity of well-paying opportunities in this sector, it stated.

Positions in this top bracket are typically highly-specialised or involve significant responsibility, making them accessible only to a select few, the report added.

The report is based on an analysis of job data collected from the WorkIndia platform over the past two years, which includes over 24 lakh job postings across various industries.

The report said, field sales positions lead the list of the highest-paying blue-collar roles, with 33.84 per cent of roles offering salaries above ₹40,000 per month. This is closely followed by back

office roles as 33.10 per cent get over ₹40,000 and tele-calling positions with 26.57 per cent earning more than ₹40,000, it stated.

Meanwhile, in the accounting field, 24.71 per cent of jobs offer salaries above ₹40,000 per month, driven by the need for accurate financial management.

Business development roles, which are crucial for expanding company operations, offer competitive pay, with 21.73 per cent of positions exceeding ₹40,000 per month, said the report.

Interestingly, it found that skilled cooks and receptionists also fall into the higher salary bracket, with 21.22 per cent and 17.60 per cent of these roles, respectively, earning above ₹40,000 per month.

Delivery jobs, while essential, have the lowest percentage in this category, with only 16.23 per cent of roles offering higher pay, it added.

OLYMPICS HEARTBREAK

PARIS PARALYMPICS

Hero welcome for Vinesh



I thank the entire country for support
VINESH PHOGAT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 17: Vinesh Phogat Saturday received a grand welcome on her return to the country and after being feted by several supporters and 'khop panchayats' en route to her village Balali, the celebrated wrestler said it was better than winning 1000 Olympic medals.

Hundreds of supporters gathered outside the IGI airport here and welcomed Vinesh to the beats of 'dhol' when she made her way out with husband Somvir Rath and Congress MP Deepender Hooda around 10:30am.

Fellow wrestlers Bajrang Punia, Sakshi Malik and panchayat leaders received Vinesh, who endured a heartbreaking exit at the Paris Olympics where she was disqualified for being overweight by 100 grams on the day of her 50kg final.

stood in an open Jeep and thanked all the supporters. Congress leader Deepender Hooda accompanied Vinesh and offered her sweets.

"I thank the entire country for support," she said, her hands folded in humility.

There was a thick security cover as Vinesh, who was found 100 grams overweight at the Olympics, landed in the national capital.

Vinesh's caravan left for her native village Balali in Haryana and on the way she met her supporters, positioned at different spots. Hooda presented a mace, a 'symbol of victory' to Vinesh, who got emotional and was consoled by her husband Somvir.

In a series of twitter posts, Hooda praised the 29-year-old Vinesh for her fighting spirit.

"In our eyes, you have been a winner in the past and will remain so in the future too. Your

courage, struggle and determination have not only won the hearts of crores of countrymen

but you are an inspiration to crores of youth of the country," read one of his tweets.

Vinesh had stayed back in Paris after challenging her disqualification in the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) and demanding a joint silver. The application was dismissed Wednesday.

"She has come back to her country after such a long time. She is very emotional also. She will spend time with family and calm herself. What Vinesh has done for women is praiseworthy. She might not have received a medal, but she is a champion for us," said Sakshi Malik.

London Olympics bronze medal-winning shooter Gagan Narang, who was the Chef de Mission of the Indian contingent in Paris, called her a cham-

peon, posting a photo with Vinesh at the Paris airport. Both of them were on the same flight to Delhi.

"She came as a champion on day 1 into the games village and she will always remain our champion. Sometimes one doesn't need an Olympic medal to inspire a billion dreams. @vineshphogat you have inspired generations. Salute to your grit," Narang posted on X.

The feisty wrestler, in her first reaction after her disqualification, Saturday said that under "different circumstances" she could see herself competing till 2032 because she still has a lot of wrestling left in her, but is now unsure about her future as things "might never be same again".

Vinesh had announced her retirement from the sport after her disqualification.

Jhajharia confident of 25 medals' target

BHAGAT'S SUSPENSION WON'T HURT CAMPAIGN, SAYS HOPEFUL PRESIDENT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA



Pramod being a gold medal winner of the last Games not being in the Indian team is extremely sad and unfortunate, but we cannot do anything

DEVENDRA JHAJHARIA | PRESIDENT, PARALYMPIC COMMITTEE OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 17: The shadow of Pramod Bhagat controversy won't linger on the Indian contingent, and Paralympic Committee of India president Devendra Jhajharia is hopeful of winning at least 25 medals at the upcoming Paralympics.

India has an 84-member contingent across 12 disciplines for the Paralympics slated in Paris from August 28-September 8.

Tokyo Paralympics gold medal-winning shuttler Pramod Bhagat was handed an 18-month suspension for breaching BWF's anti-doping whereabouts clause.

"Look, there is no doubt that Pramod Bhagat is our star athlete but the target of 25 medals that we have set is from our current contingent of 84 players. Pramod Bhagat is not included in this," the two-time Paralympics gold medal-winning javelin thrower Jhajharia told 'PTI Bhasha'.

Asked about his confidence about target of 25 medals, he said, "I have kept this target after closely monitoring our players."

"You may think I am exaggerating. But I have seen the practice sessions of players. We have worked hard on their physical fitness and mental strength."

Badminton's world governing body (BWF) had Tuesday announced that Bhagat has been "suspended for a period of 18 months and will miss" the Paris Paralympics.

"On 1 March 2024, the Court of Arbitration of Sport Anti-Doping Division found Bhagat in breach of the BWF anti-doping regulations for committing three whereabouts failures within 12 months." The five-time para world champion Bhagat had ap-

pealed this decision to the CAS Appeals Division but it was rejected last month.

Jhajharia further said the number of players this time is much more than the previous games and they are competing in more sports.

India were ranked 24th in the Tokyo Paralympics table with 19 medals which included five gold.

"I have set a target of 25 medals and to be in the top 20 in the medal table, but we will win more medals than this," said the 43-year-old former javelin thrower.

"We had 56 players in the Tokyo Paralympics, this time 84 players will compete. For the first time, our players will participate in Blind Judo, Para Sailing and Para Cycling."

Jhajharia is expecting the highest medal haul from the athletics team and is hoping new stars to emerge from these games.

"Each and every player of our contingent is a medal prospect. We have 38 track and field athletes and I am expecting the most medals from them. Our contingent has 47 new players, despite their first Paralympics games they are very confident and mentally strong about their performance," he concluded.

SHORT TAKES

Aditi finishes early

Irvine: Indian golfer Aditi Ashok carded a 3-over 75 in the second round to make an early exit from the ISPS HANDA Women's Scottish Open. Aditi, a five-time winner on the Ladies European Tour, had a 81 in the first round. Aditi had a bogey on the front nine and a double on the back nine and no birdies. It was one of those rare weeks, when she had no birdies in either round. The Scottish Open has never been kind to Aditi, who has now missed the cut at the event six times in eight starts since 2017 with a best of T-55 in 2023. She will be back in action at the AIG Women's Open next week at St Andrews.

Derby cancelled

Kolkata: The Durand Cup derby between Mohun Bagan and East Bengal, scheduled at the Salt Lake Stadium here Sunday, has been cancelled because of the prevailing unrest in the city, sources said. The decision was taken following a meeting between the Kolkata Police officials and organisers of the tournament. "Both the teams will be awarded a point each, while the fans will get full refund for the tickets they bought," an official told PTI. It is also learnt that all the Durand Cup matches slated in Kolkata could be shifted to Jamshedpur. There has been widespread protests following the alleged rape and murder of a post-graduate trainee doctor at the RG Kar Medical College and Hospital in the city August 9.

Shooting coach post

New Delhi: Legendary double trap marksman Peter Wilson of Great Britain, who guided country-mate Nathan Hales to trap gold at the recently-concluded Paris Olympics, has shown interest in the Indian team coaching job and wants to train the shooters for the 2028 Los Angeles Games. Wilson, 37, was the youngest competitor in double trap at the 2012 London Olympics to win a gold medal. After double trap was removed from the Olympic curriculum, Wilson started coaching the Great Britain team in trap, with the crowning glory coming in Paris where his ward Nathan won gold with an Olympic record to break a 12-year-long wait for the country in the event.

PREMIER LEAGUE

Liverpool's new era under Slot begins with triumph



Mohamed Salah breaks league's scoring record

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ipswich (England), August 17: Liverpool's new era under Arne Slot began with a 2-0 victory over promoted Ipswich Saturday, with Mohamed Salah netting the second goal to break a Premier League scoring record.

Salah poked home a finish from close range in the 65th minute to take his tally of goals in the opening round of a Premier League season to nine, breaking a tie he had with a trio of English soccer greats in Wayne Rooney, Alan Shearer and Frank Lampard.

Five minutes earlier, Salah set up Diogo Jota for the first goal as Liverpool improved after a slow first half in its first competitive game under Slot, who replaced longtime manager Jurgen Klopp during the offseason.

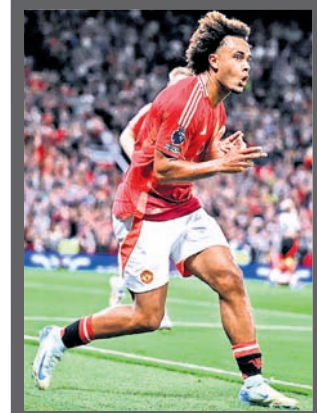
While Liverpool joined Manchester United — a 1-0 winner over Fulham Friday — in making a triumphant start to the season, it was an early lesson for Ipswich, whose most famous supporter, pop star Ed Sheeran, was cheering the team on from a VIP box at Portman Road.

This is Ipswich's first season in the top flight since 2002 and the team looks sure to entertain, even if it might concede plenty of goals in the process with its open, expansive style.

There were five more games

Zirkzee scores on debut for ManU

Joshua Zirkzee marked his debut for Manchester United by coming off the bench and scoring an 87th-minute goal to give his team a 1-0 victory over Fulham on the opening night of the Premier League season Friday. The Netherlands striker poked out his left foot to guide home a cross by fellow substitute Alejandro Garnacho at Old Trafford. "To win here in my first home game, and to grab a goal, it couldn't be better," Zirkzee said. Zirkzee, Mazraoui and De Ligt have arrived as part of a \$180 million spending spree by the record 20-time champions, a club under new leadership and looking to return to its former glories.



later Saturday, including Arsenal — the runner-up in the past two seasons — hosting Wolverhampton. Reigning champion Manchester City begins its title defense at Chelsea Sunday.

India to send 39-member squad to junior badminton championships in China

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 17: India will be sending a 39-member squad to the Badminton Asia (U-15/U-17) junior championships in Chengdu, China, from August 20-25 with an aim to create a strong pool of players ahead of next year's World Junior Championship, which the country is hosting.

The Indian contingent, which was picked after extensive selection trials in Bangalore, will be led by Gnana Dattu and Tanvi Reddy Andluri in the U-17 category, while Shyam Bindiganavile and Tanvi Patri will be the top singles players in the U-15 category.

In the last edition of the BAC championship, which was held in the same city, India had bagged one gold, one silver and one bronze with Bornil Changmai standing atop the U-15 boy's singles podium.

Speaking about the team's chances, Badminton Association of India (BAI) secretary Sanjay Mishra said, "India is fielding one of the biggest squads for the Badminton Asia Championships and I am confident that we can win sizable medals. The players and the coaches have put in a lot of work in the camp and our players are now ready to make a mark in the competition."

Neeraj confirms participation at Lausanne Diamond League

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 17: India's double Olympic medallist javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra Saturday confirmed his participation at the upcoming Diamond League meet in Lausanne August 22.

Nursing a long-standing groin injury, Chopra claimed a silver medal in the recently-concluded Paris Olympics, having won a historic gold in the Tokyo edition of the Games three years ago.

"I have finally decided to participate in the Lausanne Diamond League, which begins August 22," Chopra said during a virtual interaction.

After a busy couple of days post the Olympic final August 8, Chopra started training in Switzerland and is determined to finish the season on a high despite being restricted by the injury.

Following the season-ending Diamond League in Brussels from September 13-14, Chopra will consult the doctors on his groin injury with surgery being the most likely option.

"The final treatment will be after the season ends. There is just one month left. I will try to take care of it as much as pos-



I need to leave it to gods now. I just want to prepare well and see where the javelin goes. There has already been talk about 90m, now I feel just let it be. In Paris, I thought it would happen and it could have happened

NEERAJ CHOPRA

Championships last year.

Chopra needs to finish in the top-six of the Diamond League Meetings series to qualify for the season finale in Brussels.

"I came to Switzerland for training ahead of the Diamond League. Luckily, I did not aggravate my injury as I took extra care of that. I thought of continuing my season like most other athletes. There is one month to go until the season ends. I will go to the doctors in my free time," he said.

A back-to-back medal at the Summer Games was a monumental feat for an Indian athlete but his throw was way short of Arshad Nadeem's sensational 92.97m that comfortably secured a historic gold for the Pakistani.

Star-studded lineup for Indian Racing League

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, August 17: Akhil Rabintra and Nikhil Bohra will be among the Indian racers who will be seen in action in the Indian Racing League that gets underway August 24.

Six teams comprising four drivers each will feature in the IRL. The teams will feature two Indians and two overseas racers, including female driver.

Akhil Rabintra made the headlines in 2019 after being selected by Aston Martin for their racing academy as the only Asian and later clinched the inaugural IRL title in 2022.

Noted Swiss driver Neel Jani, who has an impressive resume, having won the World Endurance



Championship and the prestigious 24 Hours of Le Mans in 2016, will be seen in action in the league, said a press release here.

Returning to the competition again will be South Africa's Raoul Hyman, along with his partner Sohil Shah, who won the 2023 Car Championship by earning the most points.

The racers would be whizzing

around in their rapid World Thunder GB08s, single-seater cars that can achieve a top speed of 240 kmph.

The IRL, comprising five rounds, will begin at the Madras International Circuit at nearby Sriperumbudur August 24-25, followed by India's first-ever night race at the Chennai Formula Racing Circuit August

The Indian Racing League is a testament to the excitement and passion for motorsports in our country. The grid here is extremely competitive, pushing each of us to our limits and showcasing the immense talent we have

SOHIL SHAH | 2023 CAR CHAMPIONSHIP WINNER

31-September 1.

The six participating teams in the IRL are: Kolkata Royal Tigers, Speed Demons Delhi, Goa Aces JA Racing, Hyderabad Blackbirds, Chennai Turbo Riders and former champions Bangalore Speedsters.