



## Felicitation Ceremony of The Heroes of Indian Hockey

Chief Guest

**Sri Mohan Charan Majhi**

Hon'ble Chief Minister, Odisha

Convention Centre, Loka Seva Bhavan

5:00 P.M., 21 August 2024

Watch Live: | Sports Odisha

Bronze in Paris | Pride at Home

**Welcome Roadshow**

Biju Patnaik International Airport to  
Kalinga Stadium

12.30 P.M. Onwards



Odisha is proud to support and sponsor  
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Sports & Youth Services Department, Odisha



# leisure



## MADSEN ARRESTED FOR DOMESTIC BATTERY

Actor Michael Madsen, who is known for his work in *Kill Bill: Volume 1 & 2*, and *Reservoir Dogs*, was arrested in Malibu on charges of domestic battery following a disagreement between the actor and his wife, DeAnna Madsen, reports *Variety*.

## SELENA REACTS TO BEING PART OF EMILIA PEREZ

Singer-actress Selena Gomez shared that she wanted to cry after getting the part in the upcoming film *Emilia Perez*, a French musical crime comedy film directed by Jacques Audiard. She took to Instagram, where she posted a gamut of pictures and videos.



### FORTUNE FORECAST

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**ARIES**  
Today, you may be stumped by some mysterious and wonderful event. That, or you may encounter an unexpected yet advantageous incident. It may not exactly be path-breaking, but it is sure to make you take stock of things. Also, you may find it difficult to meet deadlines today. Nevertheless, let people know how important your work is, says Ganesh.

**TAURUS**  
Hoist the sails and prepare to leave port. Your sugar-coated words will seal business deals with ease, predicts Ganesh. The activity and action may slow down as the day progresses. Resist the urge to get sentimental as it could lead to conflicts that will haunt you in the days to come, warns Ganesh.

**GEMINI**  
You will tend to be religiously inclined today, feels Ganesh. For this purpose, you may spend some time visiting a temple, mosque or church. You are also likely to go shopping, and chances are that this too is for a religious purpose. May God bless you, says Ganesh.

**CANCER**  
Today, you will be at the centre of all your plans. Your responsibilities at home are likely to be unnecessary digressions for you, with your help-yourself-only attitude. However, you may feel that you are not getting enough returns of your hard work.

**LEO**  
If you are wondering whether you'll get the carrot or the stick today, then Ganesh has some good news for you: the day promises to bring only rewards for you. This will be especially true for your workplace, where your innate talents get recognised today.

**VIRGO**  
A sudden bend in the journey of life is important to understand it better, says Ganesh. Excellence will drone on throughout the day today. Top on the list are money matters and your loved ones - not necessarily in that order! Much of your time may be spent in appeasing the Gods.

**LIBRA**  
Get a bigger wallet, since it is very likely that today shall prove to be a money-making day for you. It might be through some sort of a partnership deal that this may happen, predicts Ganesh. Destiny lends you a helping hand and guides you in your goals. But it is your sentiments that may darken your thoughts today. Don't stress yourself out too much, and try and keep your expectations under control.

**SCORPIO**  
Two words will define your day - eloquence and elegance. Sweet talk and compliments may take you a long way, but do not become complacent and get carried away with your success. Sometimes, saying the right thing may be more beneficial than saying what the other person wants to hear.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
Friendship with a few like-minded people is likely to develop today. You shall spend a large share of your time discussing issues like attitude, beliefs and values. Those with you will enjoy sharing their ideas and opinions, and casting them in a new mould.

**CAPRICORN**  
Paradise is where patience leads you, success is the other terminus, says Ganesh. Keeping your cool will benefit you in more ways than you would have imagined, so think twice before you unleash your vengeance on your foes. You are also likely to have a heart-to-heart conversation with your beloved and make him/her feel wanted. Colleagues will appreciate the amiable and amusing side of you.

**AQUARIUS**  
Today, you will understand the value of your job. You decide to do away with everything that has been hampering your work till now. You realise you need to set some long-term goals in your career. Grab the opportunity while the intention lasts, says Ganesh.

**PISCES**  
Your inherent talents, competitive colleagues and supportive superiors will spur you on to great heights at the workplace, beginning today. Make sure that you do not get carried away by little victories, says Ganesh. There is many a slip between the cup and the lip!

## Shweta calls Palak a compulsive shopper

**Mumbai:** Actress Palak Tiwari, after making waves with *Bijlee Bijlee* and *Kisi Ka Bhai Kisi Ki Jaan*, frequently seeks her guidance, shares mother Shweta Tiwari, a seasoned TV star.

She also reveals in an interview with a media house how Palak loves luxury shopping, often preferring London over local showrooms.

Spilling the beans on Palak's spending habits, Tiwari recalled that during her own busy shooting days, she hardly had time to spend her earnings, jokingly adding, "Back then, my husband was there to handle the spending" (laughs). However, Palak is quite the opposite—she loves indulging in luxuries. She has a particular fondness for branded bags and clothes. Unlike Shweta, who might not frequent mall showrooms, Palak prefers to do her shopping in London.

Shweta, in the same interview, also shared that her daughter frequently turns to her for advice when preparing for auditions. Whenever Palak gets a script, she consults her mother for guidance on delivering lines effectively. Shweta practices scenes with her, using these sessions to help Palak grasp the nuances of the performance. This collaboration not only deepens their bond but also enhances Palak's acting skills through Shweta's industry experience.

Shweta describes herself as a tough critic but acknowledges Palak's dedication. "Palak values my feedback, giving multiple takes and seeking approval," added the proud mother.

## Bhumi connects science to rituals

**Mumbai:** Actress Bhumi Pednekar has given a peek into her meal of *saavan ka aakhri somaar*, and shared how our culture is backed by science.

Taking to Instagram Stories, Bhumi, dropped a picture of her meal. In the snap, we can see a plate full of mashed potatoes, kuttu paratha, lemon, and green chutney. She captioned it as: "*Saavan Ka Aakhri Somaar...Our culture is backed by science... learning slowly and steadily*".

Elaborating more, she continues: "Kuttu Atta also known as buckwheat flour is used for making fasting dishes, as it is gluten-free and provides essential nutrients. The holy month of Sawan is dedicated to Lord Shiva, and people avoid eating grains, onion, garlic, among other food items during this time period." Consuming Kuttu Atta during the fast helps people in purifying their body and mind, and connecting with the divine power, she further added.

On the work front, Bhumi was last seen in the crime thriller film *Bhakshak* and has *Dadda* and *The Royals* in the kitty.

## Kabir: Every blockbuster doesn't need a sequel



**New Delhi:** After chatter about Kabir Khan dropping hints about the Salman Khan-starrer *Bajrangi Bhaijaan* sequel started doing the rounds, the filmmaker said that every blockbuster does not need a sequel.

He strongly believes a sequel should only be made if a worthy story is found and is worth taking it forward. Asked if he feels that every blockbuster needs a sequel, Kabir told this agency: "Not at all. I am the first person to say that every blockbuster does not need a sequel. That is why I have not made sequels in my life." "Everytime I have had a successful film, people have said 'sequel bana lo'. They told me after New York, Tiger, and Bajrangi Bhaijaan, but I have never made it. So, I am the first one to say that just because a film is successful, a sequel shouldn't be made. A sequel should only be made if you truly find a story worthy of taking that story forward," he said.

Kabir said that he never said that he is working on the *Bajrangi Bhaijaan* sequel. "All I have said is, Yes, maybe... Sometimes a good script comes up that is worthy of becoming a 'Bajrangi' sequel. Then I would love to do it. But not only because it is one of the most successful films in the industry; therefore, it needs a sequel. No," he shared.

## Kangana's take on companionship

**Mumbai:** Actress Kangana Ranaut recently shared her views on marriage and the significance of having a companion. The actor-politician expressed a nuanced perspective on the subject, highlighting both the challenges and the benefits of companionship.

In a recent conversation, when asked if she wants to marry and start a family, Kangana responded affirmatively, saying, "Ya of course." However, she also addressed the complexities surrounding the institution of marriage and the concept of finding a perfect partner.

She remarked that while having a companion is crucial, finding the 'right' person is not necessarily the solution. She commented, "It's difficult to be without a companion, it's not easy to be without a companion. Everybody should have a companion, it's important. It is difficult with a companion also, more difficult without a companion."

She further said, "You don't have to find the right person. That is another thing that needs to go. If you find your own partner, that's the biggest disaster that can happen to you. It will come along, no timelines."

Kangana also pointed out that adjusting to a partner becomes increasingly challenging as one gets older.

On the professional front, Kangana is set to direct and star in the upcoming film *Emergency*, which is scheduled to release worldwide, September 6, 2024.

### PEANUTS



### CALVIN AND HOBBS

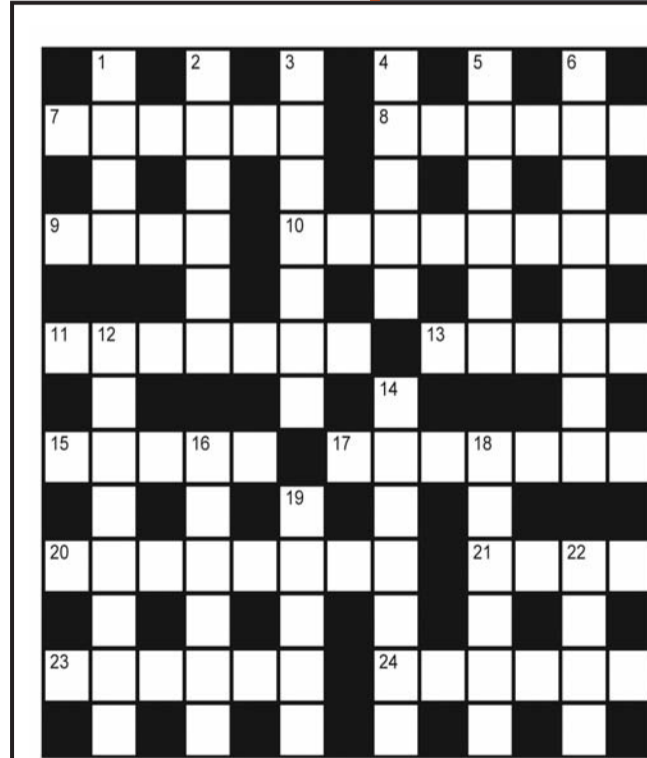


### BREVITY



### FUN post

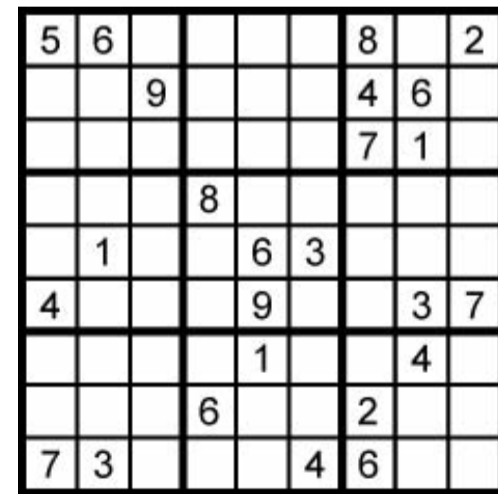
### CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 7 Go-getter
  - 8 Allow
  - 9 Toxic element
  - 10 Chartres cop
  - 11 Offense
  - 13 Terminal
  - 15 Like krypton
  - 17 Stronghold
  - 20 Dressmaker's need
  - 21 Type of worm or deck
  - 23 Hardship
  - 24 Certain print
  - Down**
  - 1 Harp's cousin
  - 2 Male goose
  - 3 Dark Ages, e.g. (4-3)
  - 4 Medicinal plant
  - 5 Kind of boat or split
  - 6 Beach cookout
  - 12 Beijing dialect
  - 14 Life science
  - 16 South African antelope
  - 18 Director's cry
  - 19 Personal journal
  - 22 Word on a door

### SUDOKU

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



### SOLUTIONS



CROSSWORD

SUDOKU



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



**Jajpur again**  
10 malnutrition cases have been reported from villages adjacent to Nagada in Jajpur district

STATE | 3

**Blinken in Egypt**  
US Secretary of State Antony Blinken visits fellow mediators from Egypt and Qatar with the mission to secure a ceasefire

INTERNATIONAL | P8

**FSSAI fiat**  
FSSAI gives four more months till December-end to food business operators to exhaust all packaging materials claiming '100 per cent fruit juices'

BUSINESS | P9

**Roadshow today**  
The bronze-winning Indian hockey team will hold a roadshow in Bhubaneswar ahead of their felicitation by Odisha government

SPORTS | BACK PAGE

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BHUBANESWAR | WEDNESDAY AUGUST 21, 2024

P1

**SHORT TAKES**

**House din over campus polls**

**Bhubaneswar:** The state Assembly was adjourned by Speaker Surama Padhy till 4 pm Tuesday as Opposition Congress and BJD MLAs created ruckus over different issues. As soon as the House made obituary reference to a former MLA, Sunder Mohan Majhi, Congress members led by Taraprasad Bahinipati rushed to the well of the House and raised slogans demanding holding of student union elections in different colleges and universities. Odisha Law Minister Prithviraj Harichandan Monday announced that the students' union elections would be held next year. Congress member Bahinipati said that student union elections were stopped in the state since 2017 and the previous BJD government had avoided it. The new BJP government had announced to hold such elections in different campuses but avoided the exercise this year. P2

**State's reply sought on Dara Singh's remission**

**New Delhi:** The Supreme Court Tuesday sought a response of the Odisha government on the remission plea of Ravindra Pal alias Dara Singh, who is serving life sentence for the ghastly killings of Australian missionary Graham Stuart Staines and his two minor sons in Keonjhar district in 1999. Singh has sought application of a more liberal remission policy to ensure his premature release from a prison in the state where he is lodged for more than 24 years. P2

**Bharat Bandh today**

**New Delhi:** Dalit and Adivasi organisations have called for a "Bharat Bandh" Wednesday over their demand for stronger representation and protection for marginalised communities. The National Confederation of Dalit and Adivasi Organisations (NACDAOR) has released a list of demands, including justice and equity for Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), and Other Backward Classes (OBCs). The NACDAOR has taken an opposing view to a recent Supreme Court judgment by a seven-judge bench that, according to them, undermines the earlier ruling of a nine-judge bench in the landmark Indra Sawhney case.

**IRREGULAR by MANJUL**



You expect us to investigate a crime, sir? We're only good at giving clean chits to politicians

**MARKET WATCH**

INDEX	VARIAION
SENSEX	80,802.86 ↑ 378.18
NIFTY	24,698.85 ↑ 126.20
DOLLAR	84.80 ↑ ₹0.94
EURO	92.79 ↑ ₹0.13
GOLD	₹72,107 ↑ ₹523
SILVER	₹85,033 ↑ ₹695

**WEATHER**

	BBSR	CTC
Max Temp	35.4°C	34.2°C
Min Temp	26.4°C	25.0°C
Humidity	78%	85%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil

**FORECAST**  
Partly cloudy sky with possibility of moderate rain



**PUBLIC OUTRAGE:** Police personnel speak with people blocking railway tracks in protest against the alleged sexual abuse of two girls at a school, at Badlapur railway station, in Thane district of Maharashtra, Tuesday

**Ajmer rapes: 6 more get lifer after 32 years**

AGENCIES

**Jaipur, August 20:** A POCSO court has sentenced six more men to life imprisonment in the sensational Ajmer sex scandal, in which more than 100 girls were raped and blackmailed. Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) court judge Ranjan Singh also slapped fines of ₹5 lakh on each of the accused. Prosecution counsel Virendra Singh said that Nafees Chishti, Naseem alias Tarzan, Salim Chishti, Iqbal Bhati, Sohail Gani and Sayed Zameer Hussain were convicted of being involved in the crime. Bhati was brought to Ajmer from Delhi in an ambulance.



The trial of Farooq Chishti ran separately after he was diagnosed with schizophrenia and he was given a life term in 2007. One of the accused committed suicide. The other eight accused were sentenced to life imprisonment in 1998. He said the second chargesheet was filed against Nafees Chishti, Salim Chishti, Iqbal Bhati, Sohail Gani, Sayed Zameer Hussain, and Almas who is still at large. The remaining five - Nafees Chishti, Salim Chishti, Iqbal Bhati, Sohail Gani, and Sayed Zameer Hussain and another accused Naseem alias Tarzan - named in the first chargesheet and went absconding - were awarded life imprisonment Tuesday. P6

The Ajmer sex scandal came to light in 1992. Incidentally the reporter who exposed the crime was murdered. The primary accused, Farooq Chishti, served as the president of the Ajmer Youth Congress. The school and college-going girls aged between 11 and 20 years were victimised by a gang, whose members befriended them and shot their photographs in compromising situations, and later raped them. There were a total of 18 accused in the case. Singh said the first chargesheet

**Over 100 school and college-going girls were victimised by a gang, whose members befriended them and shot their photographs in compromising situations, and later raped them**

**Centre's U-turn on UPSC lateral entry**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, August 20:** The Centre Tuesday asked the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) to cancel the latest lateral entry recruitment, amid a row over reservation in the advertised posts.

Union Minister of State for Personnel Jitendra Singh wrote to UPSC Chairman Preeti Sudan and asked her to cancel the advertisement so that marginalised communities get their rightful representation in government services.

Later, the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) cancelled the advertisement.

The UPSC had August 17 issued a notification for recruiting 45 joint secretaries, directors and deputy secretaries through lateral entry - referred to as appointment of specialists (including those from the private sector) in government departments.

The decision had ignited criticism from the Opposition parties, which claimed it undermined the reservation rights of OBCs, SCs and STs.

In the letter, Singh said that for Prime Minister Narendra Modi, reservation in public employ-

ment is a cornerstone of "our social justice framework", aimed at addressing historical injustices and promoting inclusivity.

"Since these positions have been treated as specialised and designated as single-cadre posts, there has been no provision for reservation in these appointments. This aspect needs to be reviewed and reformed in the context of the Hon'ble Prime Minister's focus on ensuring social justice," he said.

"I urge the UPSC to cancel the advertisement for lateral entry recruitment issued on 17.8.2024," he added.

Singh said this step would be a significant advance in the pursuit of social justice and empowerment.

"It is well known that, as a principle, lateral entry was endorsed by the Second Administrative Reforms Commission which was constituted in 2005, chaired by Shri Veerappa Moily. The recommendations of the Sixth Pay Commission in 2013 were also in the same direction," he said.

However, both before and after that there have been many high-profile cases of lateral entrants, he said. P7

**Nation can't wait: SC**

PNN & AGENCIES

**New Delhi, August 20:** Expressing concern over the lack of workplace safety in healthcare institutions, the Supreme Court, hearing the brutal rape and murder of a trainee doctor at Kolkata's RG College and Hospital Monday, said the nation cannot wait for another rape for changes on the ground.

While constituting a 10-member National Task Force (NTF) to formulate a protocol for ensuring the safety and security of doctors and other health care professionals, the three-judge bench led by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud said, "The constitutional value of equality demands nothing else and will not brook compromises on the health, well-being and safety of those who provide healthcare to others. The nation cannot await a rape or murder for real changes on the ground."

Terming the incident as "horrific", the bench, also comprising Justices J B Pardiwala and Manoj Misra, excoriated the West Bengal government over the delay in filing the FIR and allowing thousands of miscreants to vandalise the state-run facility. It also asked the West Bengal government to not unleash the "power of the State" on peaceful



protesters and to deal with them with "great sensitivity in this moment of national catharsis".

The 10-member task force headed by Vice Admiral Arti Sarin has been asked to submit its interim report within three weeks. The Supreme Court, which directed the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) to submit a status report on the progress made in its investigation into the killing, also asked the state government to submit a report on the action it has taken against the vandals.

The court also expressed its deep concern over the name of the victim, her photographs and video clips showing her lifeless body having been splashed all over the media.

Taking a serious note of mob violence in the hospital and the allegation that the Kolkata police fled the scene, the top court ordered deployment of Central

**Top court constitutes 10-member National Task Force (NTF), headed by Vice Admiral Arti Sarin, to formulate a protocol for ensuring the safety and security of doctors and other health care professionals, and submit an interim report within three weeks**

Industrial Security Force (CISF) at the hospital to enable doctors to resume work. "In the aftermath of the brutal incident and the demonstrations which followed, the State Government was expected to ensure the deployment of the state machinery to prevent a breach of law and order."

"It was all the more necessary to do so since investigation of the crime which took place in the precincts of the hospital was underway. We are unable to comprehend how the State was not prepared to deal with the incident of vandalism of the premises of the hospital," the top court said. The bench headed by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud criticised the expiring of RG Kar Medical College Dr Sandip Ghosh for trying to pass off the case as that of suicide and not letting the parents of the deceased to see her body for several hours. P8

**BJP FIELDS MOHANTA FOR RAJYA SABHA**



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, August 20:** BJP Tuesday announced Mamata Mohanta as its candidate for the Rajya Sabha by-poll in Odisha that was necessitated after she resigned from the Upper House of Parliament as a BJD MP and switched over.

Mohanta's re-election to Rajya Sabha was certain considering the BJP's strength in the Assembly. In the 147-member Assembly, the BJP has 74 MLAs, while the BJD has 51 legislators, the Congress has 14, and there are three Independent MLAs, and one CPI(M) MLA.

After quitting the Naveen Patnaik-led BJD and giving up her Rajya Sabha membership July 31, Mohanta joined the BJP the next day. The election is scheduled September 3 and the deadline for filing nominations ends Wednesday.

**New question pattern for Class XII students**

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, August 20:** The Council of Higher Secondary Education (CHSE) Tuesday decided to change the question pattern for Class XII students appearing the Annual Higher Secondary Examinations, 2025. The changed pattern will be applicable for students in Science, Arts, Commerce and Vocational streams.

Regular students having practical and project components (70 marks theory and 30 practical/ 80 marks theory and 20 project), integrated vocational subjects (50 marks theory and 50 practical) and vocational trade subjects (40 marks theory and 60 practical) will appear under the new pattern. "Students having non-practical/non-project subjects will appear for theory 80/40 marks and internal 20/10 marks in the exam," a CHSE official said.

**King Charles III coins with British bees released**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**London, August 20:** The first one pound coins featuring King Charles III with a design incorporating British bees have gone into circulation in the UK from Tuesday, with a total of 2.975 million coins making their way into tills via Post Offices and banks around the country.

According to the Royal Mint, the tribute to British bees is one of eight new designs that will appear on the country's coins - in one pence to two pound denominations. They feature animals such as the Hazel Dormouse, Puffin, and the Atlantic Salmon as all species which are in active conservation programmes, reflecting the 75-year-old monarch's

environmental concerns.

"The Royal Mint has made the circulating coinage of each of Britain's monarchs since Alfred the Great and it is an honour to reveal that King Charles III's one-pound coin is now in circulation," said Rebecca Morgan, Director of Commemorative Coin at the Royal Mint.

The design symbolises the over 250 species of bees which exist in Britain such as bumblebees, mason bees and mining bees.

First revealed in October last year, the Mint said the new designs highlight King Charles' passion for conservation with the number indicating the value of each coin also enlarged to



help children understand the value of money.

Unifying the new coins is a unique repeating pattern fea-

turing three interlocking C's, taking its inspiration from history and the cypher of Charles II. Meanwhile, the flora and

fauna on the coins look to the future and the importance of the natural world.

Following the reveal of the designs, production of the coins began with several million struck by the Royal Mint in South Wales. The Atlantic Salmon 50 pence was the first of the eight designs to enter circulation at the end of 2023.

In a poll hosted by the Royal Mint, the 1-pound coin was crowned as the favourite among all eight-coin designs, with the 2-pence depicting the Red Squirrel following closely in second place. Close to 3,000 people cast their votes to crown their favourite design, with the one-pound coming out on top with nearly 30 per cent of the votes.



# SC SEEKS STATE'S RESPONSE ON DARA SINGH'S REMISSION PLEA

Bench comprising Chief Justice DY Chandrachud and Justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra says the offence was very serious in nature

## STAINES MURDER CASE



Dara Singh, the prime accused in the triple murder, was convicted and sentenced to death by a CBI court in 2003

The Orissa HC had commuted his death sentence to life imprisonment in 2005 and it was upheld by the SC in 2011

Another bench of the SC is also seized of Singh's another petition seeking similar relief

A mob led by Dara Singh had burned Graham Stuart Staines and his two sons—Philip, 11, and Timothy, 8,—while they were sleeping in their station wagon at Manoharpur village in Keonjhar district on the intervening night of January 22-23, 1999

A mob led by Dara Singh had attacked Staines and his two sons — 11-year-old Philip and 8-year-old Timothy — while they were sleeping in their station wagon. It set the vehicle on fire in Manoharpur village of Keonjhar district on the intervening night of January 22-23, 1999.

Dara Singh, the main accused in the triple murder, was convicted and sentenced to death by a CBI court in 2003.

The Orissa High Court had commuted his death sentence to life imprisonment in 2005 and it was upheld by the Supreme Court in 2011.

Mehendra Hembram, an accomplice of Dara Singh, is also serving life imprisonment in the case, while 11 other accused were acquitted by the HC due to lack of evidence.

Staines and his wife Gladys worked with Mayurbhanj Evangelical Missionary organisation and cared for leprosy patients.

Gladys Staines, who was awarded the Padmashree in 2005, had said she had forgiven the killers of her husband and sons and that she holds no bitterness against them.

Another bench of the top court is also seized of Singh's another petition seeking similar relief.

While seeking a response from the state government within two weeks, a bench comprising Chief Justice DY Chandrachud and Justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra said the offence was very serious in nature.

The bench took note of the submissions of lawyer Vishnu Shanker Jain, appearing for the convict, that a more liberal policy on remission has to be applied in his case. Singh, he said, has already served 24 years and six months.

"We have issued the notice and sought response in two weeks," the bench said.



RAIN PAIN: Commuters negotiate a waterlogged road in Bhubaneswar after rain lashed the City, Tuesday

OP PHOTO

# State home to 2,098 elephants, 27 tigers

PNN & AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, August 20:** Odisha is home to a total of 2,098 elephants and 27 tigers, Forest, Environment and Climate Change Minister Ganesh Ram Singh Khuntia told the Assembly, Tuesday.

According to the census conducted in 2024, the state has 2,098 wild elephants and 27 tigers. Bhitarkanika National Park is home to 1,850 saltwater crocodiles, while the Mahanadi river system has 257 mugger crocodiles and 14 gharials, Khuntia said while replying to a question from BJD MLA



- 3.01 lakh Olive Ridley sea turtles were in Gahirmatha during the last nesting season
- 743 dolphins are found in the entire coastal Odisha, including the Chilika Lagoon
- 1,850 saltwater crocodiles are in Bhitarkanika National Park, while Mahanadi river system is home to 257 mugger crocodiles and 14 gharials

Dhruba Charan Sahoo.

"The mugger crocodiles are found in Satkosia (97), river systems of Similipal Tiger Reserve (76) and Ghodahada Reservoir, Digapahandi, Ganjam (84)," the minister said.

The state government has also

estimated that 3.01 lakh Olive Ridley sea turtles were in Gahirmatha during the last nesting season, he said.

Besides, 743 dolphins are found in the entire coastal Odisha, including the Chilika Lagoon.

The government has counted

more than 15.92 lakh migratory birds of different species in Chilika Lagoon, Bhitarkanika Mangrove Wetland and Hirakud reservoir, Khuntia told the Assembly.

Khuntia said the state government does not carry out a head count of all animals, including birds.

"However, gharial, mugger and saltwater crocodiles, deer and elephants have been counted and the estimation of Olive Ridley sea turtles, dolphins, tigers and foreign birds was carried out at regular intervals by the Forest department," he said.

## POLITICKLE by MANJUL



# HOUSE DIN OVER CAMPUS ELECTIONS, ASO ASSAULT

PNN & AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, August 20:** The state Assembly was adjourned twice until 4:00pm Tuesday without transacting any business, as members of Opposition Congress and BJD created a ruckus in the well of the House over separate issues, including student union elections and assault on ASO.

The disruption began when the House reconvened after a 19-day break to resume business. The session started with an obituary motion to pay tribute to the late former Jashipur MLA Sundar Mohan Majhi, who passed away August 13.

Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi moved the obituary motion, which was supported by BJD Chief Whip Pramila Mallick on behalf of the Leader of the Opposition, Congress Legislature Party leader Ram Chandra Kadam, CPI(M) leader Laxman Munda, and Speaker Surama Padhy.

The House expressed its condolences to the bereaved family and observed a minute of silence to honour the departed soul. As the Speaker proceeded with the Question Hour and asked Panchayati Raj Minister Rabi Nayak to respond, Opposition Congress members rushed to the well of the

## 'Continue health insurance for journo'

Senior Congress MLA Taraprasad Bahinipati Tuesday raised in the Assembly several issues faced by journalists. He urged the BJP government to continue the Gopabandhu Sambadika Swasthya Bima Yojana for working journalists that was implemented by the previous regime. He also demanded the coverage be increased to ₹20 lakh from the existing ₹5 lakh per year. He urged the state government to allow authorised journalists in the lobby of the Assembly as was the practice before the pandemic. Delegations of different journalists' organisations met CM Mohan Charan Majhi after he assumed office and raised these demands.

House, shouting slogans demanding student elections in educational institutions, which have been suspended for the past six years during the previous BJD government's tenure. Simultaneously, BJD members were seen standing and raising slogans against the government over Governor's son 'assaulting' an ASO.

The BJD Chief Whip demanded to know what action the government has taken against the Governor's son and also called for the expungement of Parliamentary Affairs Minister Mukesh Mahaling's remark about arresting Leader of the Opposition Naveen Patnaik from the House proceedings.

She also sought clarity on the privilege notice moved against BJD Minister Mohan Charan Majhi for making announcement on reservations for Agniveers from Odisha in the state's uniformed services out-

side the House while the Assembly was in session.

With both sides creating a chaotic situation, the Speaker, finding no other alternative, adjourned the House at 10:41am for an hour until 11:41am.

There was no change in the situation when the House re-assembled at 11:41am after the adjournment. The Congress members again trooped into the well of the House and reiterated their demand for student union election in the state.

The Parliamentary Affairs Minister was seen reading the Cabinet decisions in the House, which were not audible in the din.

The Speaker then again adjourned the house till 4:00pm without transacting any business, and in the process, the Question Hour business, Zero Hour, and adjournment motion could not be taken up and washed out.

# Ratna Bhandar cupboards to be shifted August 23

AGENCIES

**Puri, August 20:** The empty cupboards and treasure chests in the outer and inner Ratna Bhandar of Srimandir will be shifted to a room near the Niladri Vihar temple museum August 23, the shrine's public relations officer Jeetendra Patnaik said, Tuesday.

According to Patnaik, the empty cupboards and treasure chests will be moved in accordance with the standard operating procedure (SOP) set by the state government.

"The shifting process will begin at 1:00pm. To facilitate this, the temple rituals will be rescheduled and public darshan will remain suspended until the shifting work is finished," he said.

Both the outer and inner chambers of the temple vault were opened July 14 and 18, following the SOP finalisation, and the treasure was moved to two temporary strongrooms inside the temple.

However, since the cupboards and treasure chests are larger than the vault door, they were not moved, and the temple managing committee sought an additional SOP for this purpose.

After the state government issued the necessary directive, the team worked out the details.

The entire Ratna Bhandar will be handed over to the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) to explore the possibility of other concealed treasure compartments in the facility using modern gadgets. And it will be done after a fresh SOP is issued by the state government, Patnaik said.

The ASI, in consultation with the core committee and temple managing committee, will also carry out repairs to the damaged portions to stabilise the structure, temple sources said.

"Darshan of the deities will be closed from 5:00pm to 9:00pm August 21 for the Banaklaji ritual," they said.

## Ayurvedic manuscripts at Parija Library to be digitised soon

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, August 20:** In a major step towards preservation and restoration of ancient Ayurvedic medical science manuscripts in Parija Library, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between Utkal University, University of Uttar Pradesh and the Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic



Sciences (CCRAS) here, recently. The objective of the collaboration is to digitise the ancient Ayurvedic medical science manuscripts at Parija Library and integrate its knowledge

into the modern medical research and practice. On the occasion, vice-chancellor Sabita Acharya highlighted that the university's collaboration with CCRAAS will pave the way for groundbreaking research and will contribute to global recognition of Indian medical heritage.

The signing ceremony was attended by distinguished members and researchers from both institutes.

## CLASSIFIED

### AFFIDAVIT

I, Sanjulata Pagal, W/o Bhagirathi Pagal, R/o Barapada, Kiagadia, Bhadrak Rural, Odisha 756113 have changed my name to Sanjulata Nayak for all future purposes.

I BHABATOSH PAGAL S/o BHAGIRATHI PAGAL R/o Kiagadhia, Barapada, Bhadrak Rural, Odisha 756113 have changed my name to BHABATOSH NAYAK for all future purposes.

## IMFA bags awards for excellence in exports

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, August 20:** Indian Metals and Ferro Alloys (IMFA) recently received the prestigious 'EEPC India Eastern Region Award for Export Excellence' in large enterprise category for the fiscal years 2019-20 and 2020-21, during a ceremony held in Kolkata.

Organised by the Engineering Export Promotion Council (EEPC) of India, the 38th and 39th editions of the award ceremony celebrates organisations that have demonstrated exceptional export performance and significantly contributed to country's engineering export industry.

Chief guest at the ceremony,



Minister of department of Industry, Commerce and Enterprises, Government of West Bengal Shashi Panja presented the awards to IMFA.

"This achievement is particularly noteworthy given the challenges posed by the pandemic. With more than 90 per cent of its total production being exported, IMFA maintains a strong export focus and has a long-term cus-

tommer base in Southeast Asian markets including Korea, Japan, and Taiwan," an official said.

"IMFA's consistent commitment to quality, innovation, and customer satisfaction has been instrumental in securing this esteemed recognition," he added.

The company was honoured among five award categories for its significant contribution to the export sector.

## Kej's anthem rendition with KISS garners 800mn views

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, August 20:** The captivating rendition of the National Anthem, created by acclaimed musician and three-time Grammy Award winner Ricky Kej with the students of Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS), has not only entered the Guinness Book of World Records, but has also won the hearts of millions globally.

The music piece featured illustrious musicians, including flautist Hari Prasad Chaurasia, sarod players Aman and Ayaan Ali Khan, and santoor player



Rahul Sharma, among others. The music was ceremoniously released August 14th at 5pm, on the eve of Independence Day.

The project received widespread promotion across various platforms, including print, electronic, digital, radio, and social media. The collaboration saw immense viewership, with major national and international media channels playing a crucial role in its broadcast.

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# Malnutrition strikes again in two Jajpur villages



hunger and malnutrition and other diseases.

The death of the 19 kids due to malnutrition was sort of an eye-opener. The Odisha government constructed a road through the hills to the Nagada villages spending over ₹13 crore. The state government also ensured education, healthcare, power supply, drinking water facilities and distribution of essentials through public distribution system to Nagada villages.

However, no road has been constructed to connect Tumuni village which is about 2.7km from Nagada. It is inhabited by 25 tribal families who eke out their living by collecting wild fruits, herbs and honey from the jungle and selling those in the weekly market. With the money they earn, they use it to buy kerosene and other rations. However, on many occasions, the money is not enough for them to meet their daily requirements.

Tumuni village is located in such a remote area that a villager wishing to buy salt, leaves home in the morning and returns only the next day. As the area is forested, there is always the chance of animal attacks. A number of residents of Tumuni village have lost their lives to bear attacks in the past. The village does not have electricity. The situation in Taladiha village is similar to that of Tumuni. Here also road connectivity is an issue.

When contacted, Moharana said that every Thursday a medical team is visiting the two villages. However, the residents of the two villages are not ready to follow the advice given to them due to which they suffer from malnutrition, he added.

them for treatment in a nutrition rehabilitation centre. He also asked him to rush a medical team to the villages, Tuesday.

However, no medical team visited these two villages when reports last came. A six-member team only visited Nagada and returned. They avoided visiting Tumuni and Taladiha as there are no pucca roads to the villages. The members of the team refused to walk through forests, fearing attacks by wild animals.

Lack of connectivity to many villages in this district is one of the main causes of malnutrition among kids, locals pointed out. Both children and adults have always been deprived of proper food and treatment facilities as they stay in remote areas. Despite the presence of many prominent industries in Kalinaganagar, Sukinda, Danagadi and Dharmasala of this district, the poverty which exists in many villages is a huge cause of worry.

Locals pointed out that a number of mining units and companies earn revenue in crores by using forest, land and water in the district but they do not come to aid of those suffering from

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Jajpur, August 20:** The death of 19 children in July 2016 due to malnutrition in the three Nagada villages in this district had grabbed international attention. However, it seems that neither the district administration nor the state government has learnt from that tragedy. Eight years on hunger and malnutrition continue to plague other areas.

Sources informed here Tuesday that 10 cases of malnutrition have been reported from villages adjacent to Nagada. Six cases including two who are suffering from acute malnutrition, have been reported from Tumuni village which is to the left of Nagada. Four more cases of acute malnutrition have been reported from Taladiha village which is to the right of Nagada. In all the 10 cases, those affected are kids.

Chief district medical officer (CDMO), Shibashis Moharana on getting the news directed the medical officer of Sukinda CHC to rescue the malnutrition afflicted kids from Tumuni and Taladiha villages and admit



**FLARING PROTEST:** Doctors and healthcare professionals staging a demonstration against the alleged rape and murder of a lady doctor at a Kolkata hospital, outside the administrative office of Kamakhyanagar sub-divisional hospital in Dhenkanal district, Tuesday

# Dengue cases on the rise in Rourkela

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Rourkela, August 20:** The rapid increase in dengue cases has become a constant source of worry to the local administration in this city. In fact, dengue has turned into a massive headache for the Sundargarh district administration.

Till Monday evening, 457 persons diagnosed with dengue have been admitted to the Rourkela Government Hospital (RGH) here. Doctors pointed out that the number of affected patients is quite high. "If the official figure is 457, just imagine what could be the unofficial numbers. The situation is indeed alarm-



ing," said a doctor Tuesday.

Fear of the disease has led to a surge in testing in public and private hospitals and labs. Even those suffering from mild fever with cough and cold are opting to go for dengue tests to be on the safe side. The owner of a patho-

logical lab said, "If RGH's official figure is 457, then the number of dengue-affected people in the district could well be well over 600. One must remember that many cases go undetected as those hit by the disease may not opt for tests due to various reasons."

RGH director Dr Ganesh Das stated that the challenge for them is to control the spread of dengue. "We are fully prepared to tackle any situation. We have enough kits for testing and medicines for the patients. We have dedicated one ward for dengue patients," Das said.

Nodal officer for dengue in this city, Dr Shakti Padhi in-

formed that most of the cases have been reported from areas under RSP jurisdiction. Sectors I, IV, VI, and XIV have emerged as hotspots for dengue. From these localities, the disease has spread to areas under Rourkela Municipal Corporation (RMC) including Koel Nagar," Padhi said. He added that abandoned buildings with stagnant water have turned into breeding havens for mosquitoes. "These should be demolished immediately," Padhi opined.

Padhi informed that efforts are on to contain the spread of the disease. "We are sanitising entire localities from where cases are being reported," he stated.

## Couple attempts to die by suicide

**Kesinga:** A young couple attempted to die by suicide Tuesday by jumping before a goods train after both families objected to their relationship in this locality of Kalahandi district. The girl, who was a minor, died on the spot after being run over by the train. However, the youth survived and was initially taken to the Titilagarh Hospital with serious injuries. The injured youth has been identified as Ghanashyam Bag, 20, a resident of Binekela village under Kesinga police limits. As his condition deteriorated, he was shifted to Bhima Bhoi Medical College and Hospital in Bolangir later in the day. Amputation of one of the legs of the survivor was carried out by the doctors in the evening. In his statement before the police Ghanashyam blamed his family for the tragedy. He stated that his family was opposing to their relationship. Meanwhile police recovered the body of the girl and sent it for post-mortem. An investigation has been initiated on the basis of the complaint filed by the loco-pilot of the goods train.

# Ganjam youth who killed sister succumbs to injuries



PNN & AGENCIES

**Berhampur, August 20:** A youth who allegedly stabbed Monday his minor cousin sister to death, succumbed to his injuries at a hospital here Tuesday, police said. The murder took place at Jagannath Bihar under Bada Bazar police station area in this town.

After allegedly stabbing his cousin sister and brother, the accused Ashutosh Panigrahi suffered serious injuries in a road accident near Hinjili when he was trying to flee. He was taken to the MKCG Medical College and Hospital here, where he succumbed to his injuries Tuesday, a police officer said. The boy who was injured in the knife at-

tack is undergoing treatment at a hospital in Bhubaneswar, family members said.

According to the family members, all the cousins brothers and sisters were on the first floor of the house of Ashutosh to attend a 'shradh' ceremony.

After the two minors were stabbed, their family members with the help of local people immediately rushed them to the MKCG Medical College and Hospital. The minor girl Prajukta Panigrahi, breathed her last en route to the hospital.

"The cause of the incident is yet to be ascertained. We have started an investigation," said Baba Shankar Saraf, inspector-in-charge, Bada Bazar police station. However, with the accused breathing his last, it will now be difficult for the police to ascertain why he suddenly attacked his minor cousins with a knife.

## Youth held in a snatching case

**Bhubaneswar:** Personnel from the Chandrasekharpur police station arrested Tuesday a 20-year-old youth for allegedly snatching a gold chain from a woman in the capital city. The chain has been recovered from the possession of the accused, police said. The accused has been identified as Badal Sethi, a native of Amrutamahoni village in Kendrapara district. Police said he did odd jobs to eke out a living.

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## Undertrial prisoner kills self in Barbil sub-jail

**Barbil:** An undertrial prisoner allegedly committed suicide in the Barbil sub-jail of Keonjhar district, jail officials said Tuesday. The victim was identified as Tusharkanta Mallick, 29, a native of Sahidpur-Bidapada area under Binjharpur block in Jajpur district. He was engaged as a security guard by Group-4 security agency and was residing in the quarters of Odisha Mining Corporation (OMC) at Matkambeda. He was remanded to jail custody Monday night on charge of murder of his wife Anasuya, but his body recovered, Tuesday morning. Jail authorities said that he went to sleep in cell at 3 am but woke up and committed suicide by hanging from the iron railings of the cell. Barbil police registered a case of unnatural death and launched an investigation with the help of a scientific team. Sources said that Tushar had a love marriage with Anasuya, daughter of Ajay Kumar Pattnaik of Lekhanpur village under Jankia police limits in Khurda district June 29, 2020.

## 20 fall ill after drinking country liquor in Ganjam

**Berhampur, August 20:** About 20 people fell ill after allegedly consuming spurious liquor in Ganjam district, police said Tuesday.

The incident took place in Moundpur village in Chikiti late Monday night. Those taken ill hailed from Moundpur, Jenapur and Karabalua villages, they said.

While 14 people were undergoing treatment at the MKCG Medical College and Hospital in Berhampur, five were admitted to the Chikiti CHC, they added.

Two persons were admitted to the ICU of the MKCG MCH, police said.

At least six people, including the mastermind of spurious liquor manufacturing unit Surendra Mallick, were arrested and over 50 litres of liquor was seized, they said.

Excise Minister Prithviraj Harichandan said strict action would be taken against those involved in the illegal liquor business and measures would be taken to prevent liquor smuggling. Excise Commissioner Narasingha Bhol and district collector Dibyajyoti Parida visited the hospital.

"Samples of the liquor have been collected and sent for laboratory test," the district collector said. Bhol said a joint action team, comprising police, forest and excise officials, will be set up to intensify raids on the illegal liquor joints in the district.

Locals claimed that those taken ill complained about stomach pain and started vomiting after some hours of drinking the liquor.

## Five of family critical as car hits illegally parked truck on NH-49

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Keonjhar, August 20:** At least five persons, including a two-year-old girl were injured when the car they were travelling in hit a truck illegally parked on National Highway-49 near Dangapani village under Sadar police limits in Keonjhar district, Tuesday morning.

It was a major accident, although no one died. The mishap occurred at around 9.30 AM when a family was travelling from Talcher to Keonjhar in their car. Locals rescued them from the vehicle and admitted them to the Keonjhar headquarters hospital for treatment where their health conditions were stated to be stable after treatment.

The injured persons were identified as Dipti Mahakud, 25, her daughter Dikshita Mahakud, 2, mother Mahadei Mahakud, 47, father Dilip Mahakud, 52, and father-in-law Basant Kumar Mahakud, 60, who was driving the vehicle, were injured.

Locals fear to travel on the route due to occurrence of frequent accidents. Dipti Mahakud's husband is working in a mining company in Suakati area of Keonjhar dis-

trict and lives in Keonjhar city with his family. After the accident, traffic was stopped on the road for several hours.

The police have impounded both the vehicles and started investigating the incident. Notably, frequent accidents are taking place on the route due to illegal parking on National Highway-49 from Anjar to Suakati under Sadar police limits. The road become narrow and unsafe to travel as trucks are illegally parked on the highway for hours together.

The illegal parking of trucks also leads to traffic jam on the highway and the emergency vehicles often get stranded on the road for hours together. Since the area is considered as an elephant corridor, the forest department has put up an information board to prevent vehicles from parking but drivers continue to park their trucks on the highway.

As a result, elephants and other animals face difficulties in crossing the highway to visit the jungles on the opposite of the road. However, neither police nor forest or transport departments are taking any steps in this regard which is only resulting in more accidents.



**SPLENDID PERFORMANCE:** Artistes of Soukhin Kalakar Sangha enacting a scene from play 'Bhutiari Hatari' in Bargarh

OP PHOTO



FOCUS DISINFORMATION

# THE RIGHT TO TRUTH



The world is awash in lies and distortion largely because of the rise of social media and digital platforms

must be better equipped to distinguish truth from lies. Schools should prepare young people to spot falsehoods of all kinds. Finland and Denmark are leading the way by incorporating lessons on disinformation into curricula.

Lastly, tech pioneers such as Factiverse, Fullfact in the UK, Myth Detector in Georgia, and Norway's Faktisk Verifierbar are developing new tools combining artificial intelligence and collective intelligence to spot and assess misinformation. These and other initiatives should be encouraged and supported.

To ensure success, the right to truth – in other words, the right not to be lied to or knowingly misled by powerful and influential organisations – should be added as a protocol to the European Convention on Human Rights and should balance the US Constitution's guarantee of free speech. There would need to be a high bar for invoking this right, to account for differences of opinion and interpretation. And it should be enforced by courts, not by governments or "Ministries of Truth."

All other civil liberties implicitly rely on some right to truth. For example, a right to a fair trial by jury has little meaning unless judges ensure that juries have the best possible information. More broadly, truth is dependent on a never-ending process of discovery bolstered by laws and institutions.

Musk and others fervently believe that freedom of speech is an absolute good, and that the right to lie should outweigh any right to truth. Their view is understandable, and has honorable roots. But it has become increasingly dangerous and ill-suited to the times.

The seventeenth-century French mathematician Blaise Pascal wrote, "Truth is so obscure in these times, and falsehood so established, that unless we love the truth, we cannot know it." Today, we should demonstrate that love by making it a right, and putting it at the heart of our laws and constitutions.

The writer is a professor at University College London. #PROJECTSYNDICATE

Trump resulted in a settlement of nearly \$800 million. But much more can be done to open pathways for legal recourse against blatantly dishonest news outlets and political figures through new laws that proscribe intentional distribution of lies.

Second, independent institutions that are committed to truth must be strengthened. These already exist in science, finance, health, and safety. In media, nonprofit news outlets and public-service broadcasting fill this role. The key to these institutions' success is their insulation from political and market pressures.

Third, regulation could force powerful information providers to become purveyors of truth. In July, the European Commission released its preliminary finding that Musk's X deceives users by letting anyone pay for a verified account, and was therefore in breach of the Digital Services Act. As a result, X could face fines of up to 6% of global revenue. Meanwhile, Germany's Network Enforcement Act, passed in 2017, requires platforms with more than two million users to remove "clearly illegal" content.

Fourth, independent electoral commissions need powers to fact-check and correct false claims and block the most damaging misinformation or deepfakes in the run-up to elections, when truth is most vulnerable, the risk of interference is greatest, and the stakes for democracy are highest.

Fifth, the next generation

better judgements. And modern science mobilises critical peers to interrogate claims.

We now need to build on these foundations to ensure that every powerful institution provides the best available knowledge. At the heart of such an effort would be a new right to truth, which could rest upon long-established principles like the golden rule and the categorical imperative. Found in almost every civilization, the idea of treating others as one would want to be treated by them can serve as a foundation for rebuilding the infrastructure of truth.

The first place to start is with the law. Many governments in Europe and elsewhere have strong consumer-protection laws that prohibit misleading and false claims in advertising and marketing. The same principle should be applied to all political communications – a move that Australia is contemplating alongside a raft of other measures to bolster democratic resilience – and eventually to any type of mass communication. Knowingly spreading lies should have consequences – primarily financial, but perhaps including bans from holding public office or working in media.

The justice system has occasionally been used to penalise media organisations for spreading misinformation. For example, Dominion Voting Systems' defamation case against Fox News for airing conspiracies about its voting machines "rigging" the 2020 US presidential election against

Hardly a week goes by without a new piece of misinformation circulating online, from the freshest of conspiracy theories unleashed by the attempt on former US President Donald Trump's life to Elon Musk tweeting the far right's false claim that the United Kingdom has a two-tier policing policy. Truth is under attack, and people know it. According to a recent global survey conducted by the United Nations, more than 85% of respondents were worried about the impact of online disinformation.

The world is awash in lies and distortion largely because of the rise of social media and digital platforms. Designed to profit by maximising audience engagement, these platforms' algorithms amplify information that attracts attention, regardless of its veracity. Moreover, negativity has been found to boost engagement, with one study showing that each additional negative word in a headline increased the click-through rate by 2.3%.

But another reason for our failure to combat disinformation is that the liberal tradition has prioritised freedom of expression over the right to truth. Any restrictions on free speech in the democratic world, the argument goes, would be used by dictators to justify censorship or worse.

The West's approach to speech assumes that free and fair competition in the "marketplace of ideas" will ensure that truth triumphs over lies. But we now know that this is wrong. Something similar to Gresham's Law, which says that bad money drives good money out of circulation, can be applied to information: "flooding the zone with shit," as Trump's former chief strategist Steve Bannon put it, fuels distrust and makes it harder to distinguish fact from falsehood.

Some believe that truth is now fragmented beyond repair. But many countries have strengthened institutions that are designed to seek the best available truths, and on which societies and economies often depend. Finance laws penalise falsehood and deception in accounts and public statements. Courts use sophisticated forensic tools such as DNA to make

ANY RESTRICTIONS ON FREE SPEECH IN THE DEMOCRATIC WORLD, THE ARGUMENT GOES, WOULD BE USED BY DICTATORS TO JUSTIFY CENSORSHIP OR WORSE



Geoff Mulgan

## Sri Lankans' Choice

Sri Lanka's upcoming presidential election, scheduled to be held next month, is the first since an economic crisis plunged the country into turmoil two years ago. This will decide, among things, whether the unelected incumbent Ranil Wickremesinghe can hold on to his position.

United National Party's Wickremesinghe assumed the presidency after Gotabaya Rajapaksa was ousted in the political upheaval of 2022. He faces challenge from an unprecedented number of candidates – 39 – though he will have to vie with three main competitors of whom Opposition leader Sajith Premadasa is the most popular.

Whoever comes into power after the vote on 21 September will have many complicated tasks on hand. He will not only have to oversee Sri Lanka's economic recovery and negotiations over an International Monetary Fund bailout, but must also show great political skill to navigate the geopolitical landscape at a time of heightened tension. Sri Lanka's strategic location in the Indian Ocean means major powers like China, India and the US all have great stakes in the outcome of the election.

For that reason, 38-year-old Namal Rajapaksa, representing the Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna (SLPP) party, seems to have a bleak prospect since members of his family presided over the worst economic meltdown in the country's history. Namal is a descendant of the powerful Rajapaksa family, nephew of Gotabaya and son of another former president, Mahinda.

A June survey, the latest available, conducted by a nonprofit research outfit showed that Premadasa, representing the Samagi Jana Balawegaya (SJB) party has support from 43 per cent of voters. Anura Kumara Dissanayake of National People's Power (NPP) came second with 30 per cent support and Wickremesinghe with 20 per cent.

Analysts say Wickremesinghe's association with the Rajapaksas, who gave him their support after Gotabaya fled the country while in office during the 2022 uprising, may go against him. Facing severe shortages of fuel, food and medicine, soaring prices and lengthy power cuts, Sri Lankans took to the streets to demand change. Sri Lanka's Supreme Court ruled late last year that Gotabaya and Mahinda Rajapaksa were among 13 former leaders guilty of economic mismanagement that led to the crisis.

Since Wickremesinghe has assumed charge, Sri Lanka has sought IMF aid and the economy has again started to grow. However, the IMF reforms have also hit hard some segments of society. It is also hoped that the way he has tried to steady the ship may serve him in good stead in the coming contest. When he took over in 2022, the country's economy had collapsed. But since then, he has successfully tackled the problems and stabilized the economy.

His detractors, however, point out he does not have support beyond urban centres. While the economy was brought back from ruin, he has also imposed burdens on large sections of the population, mostly the poor and the middle classes. This has resulted in social discontent that is likely to work against his political fortunes.

Prices have risen threefold, but the salaries of most people have remained stagnant. This has created immense hardships for the majority of people. Opposition leader Sajith Premadasa's supporters hope Sri Lankans will vote for a clean break from any link to the Rajapaksa clan. For now, the Opposition parties are promising that they will fight against corruption.

Despite Sri Lankans' desire for change, some are still pinning their hopes on Wickremesinghe who is credited with the recovery from economic collapse when the people had to go for months without gas or fuel and had daily power cuts.

Inflation has dropped to about 5 per cent from 70 per cent two years ago under Wickremesinghe's administration. Interest rates have also dropped, the Sri Lankan rupee has rebounded, and foreign reserves have increased. The election is seen as a referendum on his economic reforms, which have not affected many people despite improving key economic figures.

### WISDOM CORNER

You must take personal responsibility. You cannot change the circumstances, the seasons, or the wind, but you can change yourself. That is something you have charge of  
JIM ROHN

No man ever got very high by pulling other people down. The intelligent merchant does not knock his competitors. The sensible worker does not knock those who work with him. Don't knock your friends. Don't knock your enemies. Don't knock yourself  
ALFRED LORD TENNYSON

A man may imagine things that are false, but he can only understand things that are true, for if the things be false, the apprehension of them is not understanding  
ISAAC NEWTON

### THIS DAY IN HISTORY

1858: The famous debates in Illinois between Abraham Lincoln, Republican Party nominee for the U.S. Senate, and incumbent Senator Stephen A. Douglas of the Democratic Party began.

1879: Oldsmobile is founded by Ransom Eli Olds of Olds Motor Works. The popular brand of car was first manufactured in Lansing, Michigan. The company was purchased by GM in 1908 and closed its doors in 2004.

1911: Mona Lisa stolen. On this day in 1911 Leonardo da Vinci's Mona Lisa was stolen from the Louvre by three Italian handymen; it was not recovered until 1913, and the media sensation helped make it one of the world's most famous paintings.

1942: The animated film Bambi had its theatrical release in the United States, and it became a classic in the Disney canon, noted for its lush hand-drawn animation and sensitive affective narrative.

1991: Latvia gains full independence from the Soviet Union. Founded in 1918, the Republic of Latvia was fully incorporated as a Soviet republic after the Second World War. Independence for the Baltic state was achieved after a peaceful revolution known as the Singing Revolution, which began in Estonia.

### LOL



### Growing chickens

New York City yuppie moved to the country and bought a piece of land. He went to the local feed and livestock store and talked to the proprietor about how he was going to take up chicken farming. He then asked to buy 100 chicks. "That's a lot of chicks," commented the proprietor. "I mean business," the city slicker replied.

A week later the yuppie was back again. "I need another 100 chicks," he said. "Boy, you are serious about this chicken farming," the man told him. "Yeah," the yuppie replied. "If I can iron out a few problems." "Problems?" asked the proprietor. "Yeah," replied the yuppie, "I think I planted that last batch too close together."

### IN JEST THIS

## Don't overdrink coffee and tea

I drink two cups of tea or coffee every day—usually coffee in the morning and tea in the afternoon. I drink them mostly for taste, not as a stimulant, except on those days when I'm sleep-deprived. On such days, I might even have a third or fourth cup to keep me awake.

Am I addicted? No, not at all. If my local stores ran out of tea and coffee for a month, I wouldn't panic. I wouldn't go crazy. I'd just buy a big lock for the cabinet where I keep my stash of tea and coffee. I probably have a year's supply of tea and coffee, but only if I keep it away from the rest of my family.

My wife, in particular, loves tea and coffee. She's the one who got the rest of us hooked. She's the reason that every one of us is more likely to rob a Starbucks than a bank.

Thankfully none of us drinks more than four cups of coffee a day. That would be unhealthy, according to a new study that was presented at the recent American College of Cardiology

(ACC) Asia conference in New Delhi.

The study, conducted at Zydus Medical College and Hospital in Dahod, Gujarat, found that consuming more than 400 mg of caffeine per day on most days of the week puts you at risk for cardiovascular disease. You get 400 mg of caffeine by drinking four cups of coffee, or 10 cans of Coke, Pepsi or other soft drinks, or two energy drinks such as Redbull and Monster.

"Regular caffeine consumption could disturb the parasympathetic system, leading to elevated blood pressure and heart rates," said Nancy Kagathara, lead author of the study.

I did not know that I had a parasympathetic system, but apparently I do. It's part of the nervous system that helps our bodies relax, as opposed to the sympathetic system, which puts our bodies on high alert, producing a "fight or flight" response. If a tiger runs toward us, our sympathetic system causes us to either fight or take flight.

(If I'm in a place where there's a chance of encountering a tiger, I'd definitely take the next flight out of town.)

But if our body is always on alert, as it is when we consume too much caffeine, it can cause health problems.

"Our study sought to determine the effects of chronic caffeine consumption on heart health, specifically the recovery of heart rate and blood pressure," Kagathara said.

The researchers defined chronic caffeine consumption (CCC) as the intake of any caffeinated drinks five days per week for more than one year. In other words, most adults in the world suffer from CCC. I consume caffeine seven days a week, 365 days a year, so I might suffer from CCC (chronic caffeine consumption compulsion).

The researchers evaluated a randomised group of 92 people aged 18 and 45, checking their blood pressure and heart rates, and recording their sociodemo-

graphic data and daily caffeine intake. Almost 20 per cent or one-fifth of the participants consumed more than 400 mg of caffeine every day. The study found that chronic caffeine consumption at 400 mg daily raised an individual's heart rate and blood pressure over time, while chronic caffeine consumption of more than 600 mg daily significantly elevated heart rates and blood pressure.

"Due to its effect on the autonomic nervous system, regular caffeine consumption could put otherwise healthy individuals at risk of hypertension and other cardiovascular events," said Kagathara.

These "other cardiovascular events" are not events that you want to attend. They're events that you want to avoid, such as heart disease, heart failure, chronic kidney disease, and dementia.

So please don't consume too much coffee or tea. Choose other beverages, and leave the coffee and tea for me.



Melvin Durai

I PROBABLY HAVE A YEAR'S SUPPLY OF TEA AND COFFEE, BUT ONLY IF I KEEP IT AWAY FROM THE REST OF MY FAMILY

## 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](mailto:edit@orissapost.com)

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

### Monitoring essential

Sir, The recent developments regarding the Monkeypox virus, serve as a wake-up call for us all, especially since the WHO has declared it a public health emergency of international concern. While this has caused global concern, it's important to note that the risk of an outbreak in India remains very low. The last reported case in our country was in March 2024, with only 30 confirmed cases since 2022. Mpx, a highly contagious disease belongs to the same family of viruses as smallpox but causes milder symptoms. Mpx is a viral infection characterised by painful lesions. It spreads by direct contact with an infected person, animal or contaminated items like clothing or bedding. Key symptoms include fever, rash, and swollen lymph nodes. If you or someone you know shows these symptoms, seek medical attention promptly. Anyone in close contact with symptomatic individuals can catch the virus. Vulnerable groups include young children, those without the smallpox vaccine, people with weakened immune systems, and pregnant women. To prevent spread, avoid close contact with infected individuals, practice good hygiene, and isolate until lesions heal.  
Krishna Kumar Vepakomma, HYDERABAD

### CM in soup

Sir, Karnataka Governor Thawar Chand Gehlot has accorded sanction for prosecution of Chief Minister Siddaramaiah in the MUDA scam. Supporters of Siddaramaiah are blowing hot and cold at the action of the Governor. The Governor claims that on examining the petitions and the supporting documents, he is satisfied on prima facie allegations made against the Chief Minister before according sanction for prosecution. A Governor is supposed to act under the advice of the Chief Minister like the President of India is supposed to act on the advice of the Prime Minister. But this concept cannot hold good in the Karnataka case as the charges are directed at the CM. As usual, it has been alleged that the prosecution sanction is the conspiracy to destabilise the elected government. The charge that the Governor is puppet in the hands of central government holds substance if the Congress acknowledges that Hansaraj Bharadwaj was also puppet in the hands of the then central government when the Governor accorded sanction to prosecute the then CM BS Yediyurappa.  
KV Seetharamaiah, BANGALORE



# Rahul ensures justice for slain Dalit man's family

The purpose of his visit was to meet with the grieving family of Arjun Pasi, a 22-year-old Dalit man who tragically lost his life in a shooting incident earlier this month

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Raebareli (UP), August 20:** Congress leader Rahul Gandhi Tuesday met the family of a 22-year-old Dalit man who was shot dead in Salon area here recently, and said he would ensure the family gets justice.

Gandhi claimed that people in the area were angry because no action was being taken against the "mastermind" behind the killing. "All people here are demanding justice because a Dalit man has been killed. His entire family has been threatened, one person has been killed but no action is being taken here..." Gandhi told reporters at Bhuvalpur Sisni village.

Gandhi, the Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha, is the Member of Parliament from Raebareli constituency.

"The SP (superintendent of police) here is not taking action against the mastermind, he is arresting small people. I want that every section of the society should be respected in Uttar Pradesh and everyone should get justice... We are not going to step back until this family gets justice," he said.

The victim, Arjun Pasi, was shot dead August 11 allegedly after an altercation with some locals. Six people have been arrested in the case so far, according to police. After his brief interaction with the victim's



**The SP (superintendent of police) here is not taking action against the mastermind, he is arresting small people. I want that every section of the society should be respected in Uttar Pradesh and everyone should get justice... We are not going to step back until this family gets justice**

RAHUL GANDHI | CONGRESS LEADER

family, Gandhi said the killing of the Dalit man is a "clear cut" case of injustice and he will "put pressure" to ensure that justice is delivered to them.

Gandhi arrived at the Fursatganj airport in adjoining Amethi district around 1 pm and straightway headed for the Bhuvalpur Sisni village in Raebareli, some 30 km from the airport.

He was accompanied by Congress' Uttar Pradesh unit president Ajay Rai, AICC general secretary in-charge of the state Avinash Pande and senior party leader Pramod Tiwari, among others. "Clearly injustice has been done against the family, against the community. This will have to be rectified. There is no choice, they will have to rectify it and the family will get justice," the Congress MP said.

Pasi was allegedly killed after quarrel over the money owed by the accused to his brother, who is a barber.

"I spoke to the family, talked

to his mother. She said her younger son cuts hair. The youth came to him six or seven times and got his hair cut but did not pay," Gandhi told reporters. When he insisted on payment, his brother was murdered, he added.

When asked what punishment the accused should get, Gandhi said, "This is court's job, not mine. But my job is to make sure the law is enforced, to put pressure for it. I am not going to back out. It is a Dalit family, that is why it is happening."

When asked for comments on the Kolkata rape and murder case of a doctor, Gandhi said he has come to Raebareli for this incident and has spoken about the Kolkata case earlier.

Alleging that the press doesn't want to highlight the Dalit's issue, Gandhi said that he won't allow any distraction. "I will speak about the Kolkata issue later," he added. After his visit, Gandhi returned to Fursatganj airport to fly back to Delhi.

# Hema Committee report kicks up political storm

The report has recorded explosive accounts of harassment, exploitation and ill-treatment of female professionals in the film industry and alleged that a 'criminal gang' was controlling the industry where unyielding women are squeezed out

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Thiruvananthapuram, August 20:** The Justice Hema Committee report, which exposed the shocking harassment and sexual exploitation faced by women in the Malayalam film industry, sparked a political storm in Kerala Tuesday.

While the Opposition parties criticised the Left government for its silence and inaction over the past four years, despite receiving the report, the government affirmed its support for the victims.

The Congress-led UDF questioned whether the government had kept the report confidential to shield the accused and alleged the Pinarayi Vijayan government was siding with the 'hunters' rather than the hapless victims.

Coming down heavily on the government and Cultural Affairs Minister Saji Cheriyan, the BJP charged they had failed to take any legal action against the accused despite receiving information about the crimes committed by them.

However, the government rejected the charges and made it clear that they had already started measures to implement the recommendations and suggestions made by the Committee.

"The government is always with the victims...and with the women community," Saji Cheriyan told reporters here.

Stating that no particular name has been heard in connection with the report, the minister said it was the High Court and the Information Commission that had decided which portions were to be released.

Cheriyan said the government



would discuss all aspects of the report and would take further action in the necessary areas.

"It was Justice Hema who had first said that the report should not have been published because of its confidential nature," the minister said, adding that a proposed cinema conclave, to be organised by the government, would discuss all these issues.

However, the minister's reply didn't go down well with the Opposition Congress and BJP, which raised suspicions about whether the government had kept the report confidential so far to protect the accused.

Leader of Opposition in the Assembly VD Satheesan alleged the government was trying to protect the privacy of the accused and asked the authorities to register a case based on the Hema Committee report.

"Sexual exploitation, including assaults under the POCSO Act, had happened. Still, the Cultural Affairs Minister is saying that a film conclave will be

held to discuss the issues," Satheesan told reporters in Chempazhanthy near here.

Senior BJP leader and former union minister V Muraliedharan attacked Cheriyan and said the cultural affairs minister had also become part of the crime by not taking any action over the report so far.

When reporters sought his reaction, actor-turned-politician and Transport Minister KB Ganesh Kumar said he didn't read the report but was sure the government would take necessary action in this regard.

"No one in the film industry has complained to me so far. If anyone comes to me with such an issue, I would have raised my voice for them," he said.

The shocking revelations of the Hema Committee report on harassment faced by women in the Malayalam cinema industry evoked strong reactions across society, with demands for stringent actions to ensure a safe working atmosphere and equal treatment for women professionals.

POSH Act stands for Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013.

Welcoming the release of the report, Women in Cinema Collective (WCC), an outfit of women professionals in the industry, expressed hope that the government would take all necessary steps to study and act upon the recommendations. The WCC has been pressing for a long time to address the issues being faced by women in the Malayalam film industry and seek necessary interventions by the government to ensure gender equality there.

The much-awaited report, released on Monday, has recorded explosive accounts of harassment, exploitation and ill-treatment of female professionals in the film industry and alleged that a "criminal gang" was controlling the industry where unyielding women are squeezed out.

# Kerala orders 'space audit' in state medical colleges



**HEALTH MINISTER VEENA GEORGE MANDATED SECURITY MEASURES LIKE MOCK DRILLS, CCTV INSTALLATION, AND THE CODE GRAY PROTOCOL**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Thiruvananthapuram, August 20:** In the wake of protests by healthcare professionals against the rape and murder of a resident doctor at a hospital in Kolkata, the Kerala government has ordered a space audit to ensure safety of the employees in medical colleges in the state.

State Health Minister Veena George has directed the Director of Medical Education to carry out the audit, the government said in a statement Tuesday.

The direction was issued by the minister in a high-level meeting of medical colleges called by her, the statement said.

The conduct of the space audits has to be ensured at the institution-level by the principals and at the state-level by the Director of Medical Education, it said.

The additional measures ordered by the minister to ensure safety in medical colleges in Kerala, include organising mock drills, installing public address systems, CCTVs and alarms, using walkie talkies, intensifying security monitoring and not allowing unauthorised persons to stay inside the hospitals at night, the statement said.

Besides these, George also ordered that safety of women employees returning to the hostel after duty at night should be ensured and implementing a plan in collaboration with the district administration to protect the staff and hospital visitors from the attacks of stray dogs.

The minister also directed that all medical colleges should implement the Code Gray protocol - which is used if someone, including a patient, is being aggressive, abusive, violent or displaying threatening behaviour.

The minister said that all medical colleges are conducting security, fire, electrical and lift audits to ensure safety of employees and patients.

George, according to the statement, said that many hospitals were doing exemplary work in ensuring safety on the basis of the audits.

Apart from that, places like the duty rooms, examination rooms, restrooms, etc are also checked as part of ensuring safety, she said in the meeting.

All non-emergency medical services, including OPD, were affected in various hospitals and medical colleges across Kerala on August 17 as doctors and nurses protested against the rape and murder of a resident doctor at a hospital in Kolkata.

The doctor, whose body was found August 9, was allegedly raped and murdered while on duty.

A civic volunteer was arrested the following day in connection with the crime.

The Calcutta High Court Tuesday had ordered the CBI to probe the crime.

# Railways to install AI-enabled CCTVs on locomotives

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Prayagraj, August 20:** The Railway Board will install CCTV cameras equipped with Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology on every locomotive and at key yards to address the rising incidents of rail accidents across the country, according to officials.

In a press briefing at Prayagraj Railway Junction, Railway Board Chairperson and CEO Jaya Verma Sinha said these cameras will help detect any unusual situations.

"We are installing CCTV cameras with AI technology on every locomotive and at all significant yards," she said.

# Kerala to host Robotics Round Table in Kochi

The event is the third in the government's series of missions which seeks to bolster the links between the state and the innovative technology sector so as to facilitate a suitable ecosystem

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

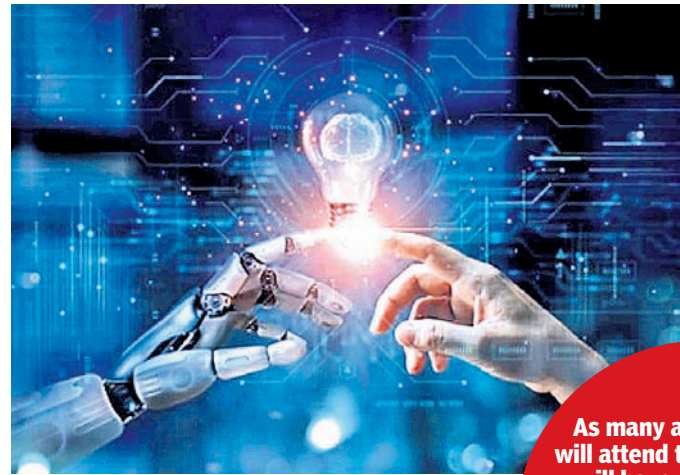
**Kochi (Kerala), August 20:** Kerala is all set to host a Robotics Round Table August 23 here as part of its efforts to make the state a global destination for innovative technology, the state Industries Department said Monday.

The day-long event at Bolgatty Island will witness experts from various parts of the world leading discussions on what Kerala can expect about becoming a hub for robotics technology, State Industries Minister P Rajeev said today.

Organised by the Kerala State Industrial Development Corporation (KSIDC) in association with the Department of Industry and Commerce, the round table will feature three sessions, Rajeev said in a press meet.



Congress MP Shashi Tharoor pays floral tribute to former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi on his birth anniversary, in Thiruvananthapuram, Tuesday



**As many as 195 startups will attend the event, which will have more than 400 delegates. The startups and IEDCs can pitch their ideas and prototypes before a high-level panel to attract investments and opportunities**

P RAJEEV | STATE INDUSTRIES MINISTER

"As many as 195 startups will attend the event, which will have more than 400 delegates. The startups and IEDCs can pitch their ideas and prototypes before a high-level panel to attract investments and opportunities," he said.

The minister said there will also be an exhibition featuring 35 stalls and the first session will be addressed by Armada AI Vice President, Prag Mishra, Industrial AI Accenture MD, Derick Jose and startup mentor Robin Tommy, who is also an impact innovator.

Following this Dr Saji Gopinath, Vice Chancellor of

Kerala Technical University and Digital University, will lead a discussion on 'Future Innovations and Commercial Growth under Government's Industrial Community', along with Inker Robotics CEO Rahul P Balachandran, Ira CEO Pallavi Bajuri and Dr MV Judy of CUSAT," he said.

The subsequent session will see GenRobotics Co-founder Nikhil NP, Asimov Robotics CEO, Jayakrishnan T, Sastra Robotics

Co-founder Akhil Asokan and IROV Co-founder Johns T Mathai sharing their career experience, the department said in a release.

The talks will be moderated by Kerala Startup Mission CEO Anoop Ambika.

The event is the third in the government's series of missions which seeks to bolster the links between the state and the innovative technology sector so as to facilitate a suitable ecosystem.

It said the opening chapter was an

International Conclave on Gen AI held in association with IBM in Kochi last month. A subsequent meeting was attended

by 300 entrepreneurs who had brought in an overall investment of Rs 12,000 crore in the last three years.

Recently, the organisers hosted a roadshow in Chennai. More are coming up in Mumbai, Delhi, Dubai, Qatar and Saudi Arabia. The finale of the series will be a Global Investor Meet in Kochi in January next year.

# WAYANAD LANDSLIDE

## 'Banks have taken steps to financially help survivors'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Thiruvananthapuram, August 20:** Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan Tuesday said that steps to rehabilitate survivors of the landslides in Wayanad district were progressing and as part of it, banks have decided to refund EMIs deducted from victims' accounts after July 30 and re-structure their existing loans.

Vijayan said the banks will also present to their boards the suggestion to completely waive the loans taken by those affected by the landslides.

These decisions were taken at a State Level Bankers' Committee (SLBC) meeting held here Monday, the CM said at a press conference here.

He said that in the meeting, it was decided to refund the EMIs collected after July 30 from those in the disaster areas to their respective bank accounts.

The decision was taken to provide financial support to those who had to make various repayments even after the calamity.

In the meeting, it was also decided to restructure all existing loans taken for agricultural and



non-agricultural purposes as soon as possible, provide unsecured consumption loans of up to Rs 25,000 for immediate relief that can be repaid in 30 months and suspend all the recovery procedures in the disaster-hit areas for the time being, the CM said.

Besides that, it was also decided that financial assistance provided to the affected persons shall not be converted into repayment of their existing financial obligations and review the National Automated Clearing House mandates related to bank accounts of people from disaster-hit areas to avoid financial stress on them, he said.

Additionally, the SLBC also asked banks to take necessary steps to ease the terms of new loans and provide them quickly to those affected by the disaster.





**We have initiated long-term policy reforms, particularly in the mineral sector, which have already begun benefiting the eastern states. The Centre is making efforts, but state governments must cooperate. Industrial growth and job opportunities are contingent on a stable environment**

**DHARMENDRA PRADHAN** | UNION MINISTER

## TRAINER AIRCRAFT GOES MISSING

A two-seater trainer aircraft went missing after it took off from an aerodrome in Jharkhand's East Singhbhum district Tuesday, following which a massive search was started to locate it, officials said



## of the day quote

The School Education Department has issued instructions enforcing a ban on religious teaching to students of faiths other than those prescribed by their respective religions, in compliance with Article 28(3) of the Constitution

**MOHAN YADAV** | CM, MADHYA PRADESH

Sena chief Bal Thackeray harshly criticised Rajiv Gandhi (when Gandhi was PM) but at no point I recall CBI, ED or Income Tax knocking on the doors of Shiv Sena leaders

**UDDHAV THACKERAY** | SHIV SENA (UBT) CHIEF

The BJP's political plans have been hit due to the growing number of parties joining the opposition INDIA bloc, which won 234 Lok Sabha seats

**MALLIKARJUN KHARGE** | CONGRESS PRESIDENT

## SHORT TAKES

### Terrorist hideout busted in Rajouri

**Rajouri/Jammu:** Security forces Tuesday busted an underground terrorist hideout in the Rajouri district of Jammu and Kashmir, officials said. The well-built hideout was unearthed during a cordon and search operation by a joint party of police, Army and CRPF at Sagrawat forest in the Darhal area of the border district, the officials said. They said a large quantity of daily use items including cooking gas, blankets and utensils were recovered from the hideout. However, no one was arrested during the operation as the terrorists using the hideout managed to escape before the start of the search operation, the officials said.

### Student found dead in Kota hostel

**Kota (Rajasthan):** An 18-year-old coaching student was found dead in a suspicious condition in the bathroom of his hostel room here, police said Tuesday. A police team reached the hostel room upon information from the hostel's caretaker and collected evidence but did not proceed with registration of an FIR on the request of the teenagers' parents, they said. The parents also refused to conduct a postmortem, following which the body was handed over to them for last rites, they added.

### Heavy rains flood Guwahati

**Guwahati:** People of Guwahati Tuesday faced a harrowing situation following a spell of heavy rains that flooded almost all peripheral roads, leading to massive traffic jams. The rains that started in the early hours continued till afternoon, leading to knee-deep water on all roads across the city, while at some places water levels touched the chest. Flooding was reported from Zoo Road, RG Baruah Road, GS Road, Nabin Nagar, Anil Nagar, Hatigaon, Ganeshguri, Maligaon, Hedayetpur, MLA quarters in Dispur, Lachit Nagar, Tarun Nagar, Jyotikuchi, Ghoramara, VIP Road, Rajgarh Road, Jorabat and Chatribari, among others.

### Waterlogging across Delhi

**New Delhi:** Traffic crawled in Delhi as heavy rain caused waterlogging in several parts of the city Tuesday, officials said. Some of the places where heavy waterlogging was reported included the Minto Bridge underpass, Feroz Shah Road, Patel Chowk Metro Station area and Maharaj Ranjeet Singh Marg.

## AJMER SEX SCANDAL

# Justice served after 32 years

**THE SCANDAL INVOLVED A SERIES OF GANGRAPES AND BLACKMAILING, IN WHICH MORE THAN 100 SCHOOL AND COLLEGE GOING GIRLS WERE VICTIMISED**

**O**n August 20, six accused in the Ajmer sex scandal that sent shock waves across the country 32 years ago, were sentenced to life by a POCSO court in Jaipur Tuesday. They convicts also have to pay a fine of ₹5 lakh each. Those who got life sentences are Nafees Chishti, Naseem alias Tarzan, Salim Chishti, Iqbal Bhati, Sohail Gani, and Syed Zameer Hussain. They were found guilty of the crime 20th August after the trial ran for 32 years. A total of 12 accused were named in multiple chargesheets in the case.



Police personnel present a convict at the POCSO court

The Ajmer blackmail case of 1992 rocked the nation when stunning facts were disclosed leaving residents of Ajmer city shocked and surprised. Around 100 girls were blackmailed after their obscene pictures surfaced in the market after their molestation. Around six girls had committed suicide following the harassment and torture due to blackmailing. Overall, there were 18 accused

in the case out of which nine have already been sentenced. However, four have been acquitted by the High Court later. One of the accused, Purushottam alias Babli, committed suicide in 1994 when he was out on bail. Another accused namely Almas Maharaj is still absconding while one person was tried separately on charges of molesting a boy.

### HISTORY OF THE SCANDAL

In April 1992, Ajmer woke up to a shocking story of sexual exploitation of over 100 women aged 17 to 20. Notably, some of the later reports claimed the number could be as high as 250. The scandal was exposed by a local newspaper in 1992, leading to widespread outrage and fear in the country. A gang of individuals used to befriend minor girls, took their photographs in compromising situa-



The farmhouse where several of the rapes took place

## India, Malaysia ink key pacts

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, August 20:** India and Malaysia Tuesday elevated their ties to a comprehensive strategic partnership after Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Malaysian counterpart Anwar Ibrahim held extensive talks focusing on resetting the relations that came under some strain during the tenure of Mahathir Mohamad.

A pact for promoting the recruitment of Indian workers in Malaysia and protection of their interests was one of the eight agreements inked between the two sides. The talks largely focused on boosting cooperation in areas of digitalisation, defence and security, semiconductors, artificial intelligence and people-to-people contact. Ibrahim began a three-day visit to India Monday night - his first trip to the country after he became the prime minister in 2022.



"Today, we have decided that our partnership will be elevated to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership," Modi said in his media statement. Modi said investments from Malaysia to India were worth \$5 billion last year and the two sides had begun trade in their national currencies.



AAP leader Manish Sisodia gets a rakhi tied by a supporter during a 'Padyatra' in New Delhi

AGENCIES

## Kolkata horror: Docs refuse to end protest



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi/Kolkata, August 20:** Junior doctors at government hospitals in several states across the country remained off duty disrupting OPD and elective services as major doctors' associations Tuesday decided against calling off their indefinite strike over the alleged rape and murder of a medic in Kolkata.

The protest continued even as the Supreme Court intervened in the matter and constituted a 10-member National Task Force (NTF) to formulate a protocol for ensuring the safety and security of doctors and other healthcare professionals. The apex court also requested the protesting doctors to end the strike, saying abstinence from the work of doctors affects those segments of the society that are in need of medical care.

In West Bengal, the epicentre of the protests, healthcare services were severely affected at state-run hospitals as the ceasework agitation by junior doctors entered the 12th day Tuesday.

Long queues of patients were seen at several hospitals in the state where senior doctors and assistant professors attended them at OPDs. In the national capital, within hours of calling it off, central government-run RML Hospital said

it will continue with its strike in solidarity with other resident doctors' associations (RDAs), which have been agitating for more than a week demanding a central law on doctors' safety.

On the ninth day of the nationwide strike, both the Federation of Resident Doctors' Associations (FORDA) and the Federation of All India Medical Association (FAIMA) announced that they would continue their strike until the Health Ministry takes concrete action on the issue of Clinical Practice Allowance (CPA).

The association has decided to continue the strike after thorough discussions with the stakeholders until the Health Ministry takes concrete action on the issue of Clinical Practice Allowance (CPA), the statement said. The strike will persist, with OPD and elective operating theatres remaining closed.

The association emphasized that it is "now or never" and announced plans to pursue justice through legal channels in the Supreme Court. Meanwhile, the FORDA said in a statement that in response to the Supreme Court's intervention and the pressing need for enhanced safety for healthcare workers, the FORDA conducted a nationwide virtual meeting with representatives of over 35 doctors' associations.

## Seven die in Tripura landslides

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Agartala, August 20:** At least seven people, including three members of a family, were killed while two villagers went missing after landslides triggered by incessant rains occurred at three to four places in Tripura, a senior official said Tuesday.

While five deaths were reported from South Tripura district, one casualty each happened in Gomati and Khowai districts, Revenue Department Secretary Brijesh Pandey said. The two missing cases were reported from Khowai and Gomati districts, he said. A number of

areas were waterlogged as the state was lashed by heavy rain since Sunday.

The official said a red alert has been sounded in South Tripura district following the Meteorology department's warning for moderate to heavy rain, while there was an orange alert in the remaining seven districts of the northeastern state. "For the past 48 hours, the state recorded unprecedented rainfall triggering landslides in many areas and rendered thousands of people homeless. Currently, 5607 families who were severely affected by the rain took shelter in 183 relief camps.

# Another massive bomb hoax in Delhi

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, August 20:** Security agencies searched over 100 hospitals and malls in the national capital after they received bomb threat emails Tuesday.

However, it turned out to be a hoax as nothing suspicious was found, officials said.

There have been similar bomb scares in recent months including May 1 when threatening emails

were received by around 150 schools in the Delhi-NCR region. According to officials, AIIMS, Safdarjung, Sir Ganga Ram, Apollo and Fortis hospitals were among more than 50 health facilities that received the same threat email Tuesday.

An official said that over 50 malls, including Chanakya Mall, Saket Select City Walk Mall, Ambience Mall and DLF Mall in south Delhi, also received the



mail with similar content.

The local police along with the Bomb Detection Teams (BDT), Bomb Detection Squads (BDS) and other authorities conducted

thorough checks on the premises of these establishments, ensuring that there was no panic among people.

According to preliminary investigation, it seems that the sender of mails to hospitals and malls was the same person as the content of the threat was similar.

Another official said that a case will be registered in connection with the threat and the

Delhi Police's anti-terror unit Special Cell is likely to launch an investigation.

Giving details about the threat to health facilities, a Delhi Fire Services official said that on Tuesday, a call was received at 1.04 pm from a hospital in Nangloi and another from Primus Hospital at 1.07 pm in central Delhi's Chanakypuri, informing that they had received bomb threats.

# SC sets aside Cal HC verdict on advice to adolescent girls

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, August 20:** The Supreme Court Tuesday set aside a Calcutta High Court order that acquitted an accused in a sexual-assault case and made "objectionable" remarks advising adolescent girls to "control sexual urges", saying these observations are "shocking" and perverse.

Restoring the conviction of the accused for rape and sexual assault under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, a bench of Justices Abhay S Oka and Ujjal Bhuyan said his sentence will, however, depend on the report of an expert committee to be constituted by the West Bengal government for interacting with

the victim, who is now married to the accused and residing with him with her minor daughter.

Deprecating the high court's verdict, the bench said a judge has to decide a case and not preach and his or her personal opinion cannot be made a part of a judgment.

"The high court went to the extent of observing that the case of criminalisation of a romantic relationship between two adolescents of opposite sex should be best left to the wisdom of the judiciary. The courts must follow and implement the law. The courts cannot commit violence against the law," the bench said. Observing that brevity is the hallmark of a quality judgment, it said a ver-



dict must be in simple language and should not be verbose and it must be remembered that an order is neither a thesis nor a piece of literature.

The top court said it is the responsibility of the State to take care of the helpless victims of

such heinous offences and time and again, the court has held that the right to live a dignified life is an integral part of the fundamental right guaranteed under Article 21 of the Constitution. The child, who is the victim of offences under

**Deprecating the high court's verdict, the bench said a judge has to decide a case and not preach and his or her personal opinion cannot be made a part of a judgment**

the POCSO Act, is also deprived of the fundamental right to live a dignified and healthy life, the bench said and added that immediately after the knowledge of the commission of a heinous offence under the Act, the State, its agencies and instrumentalities must step in and render all possible aid

to the victim. The bench added that even a child born to such a victim needs to be taken care of in a similar manner by the State.

"Sadly, in the present case, there is a complete failure of the state machinery. Nobody came to rescue the victim of the offence, and thus, for her survival, no option was left to her but to seek shelter with the accused," the bench said.

It further said "the importance of rehabilitation of the victims of offences under the POCSO Act, which is a mandatory requirement of law, is being overlooked by all stakeholders. Perhaps, at levels, there is a need for introspection and course correction. We include even the judiciary in that".





Forensic units will be built in Hamirpur, Una, Sirmaur, Kullu, Kinnaur and Lahaul-Spiti districts  
SUKHVINDER SINGH SUKHU | HIMACHAL CHIEF MINISTER

### INSTALL BIOMETRIC ATTENDANCE: RLY

The Railway Board has issued a written direction to the general managers of 17 zones for the installation of biometric attendance machines or facial recognition systems for station staff to overcome the irregularities in claiming overtime



### of the day quote

When we are proposing to install the statue of Rajiv Gandhi, who sacrificed his life for the country, they (BRS leaders) are saying that they will remove it. Despite losing power their arrogance remains. Our party activists will take the responsibility of crushing this arrogance

A REVANTH REDDY | T'GANA CM

Governor is a constitutional post and we respect it. What we say is that he should work as a representative of the President of India and not the Central government

SIDDARAMAIAH | KARNATAKA CM

I believe that with the central government's support, we can build on the foundation laid by the Delhi government and work towards a long-term solution to this crisis. I trust that you will take the necessary steps to ensure a cleaner and healthier future for all

GOPAL RAI | DELHI ENVIRONMENT MINISTER

## X POST OF THE DAY

Breaking! A major landslide struck the NHPCC Teesta Stage V Power House in Sikkim. During recent Wayanad, Kerala Landslide, Amit Shah told we have advanced alarm system. But non of them seems to be working #earthquake #LateralEntry #Badlapur

@DrJain11

### SHORT TAKES

#### Court orders arrest of MP Sanjay Singh

Sultanpur (UP): A Sultanpur court Tuesday took strong objection to Aam Aadmi Party MP Sanjay Singh skipping the hearing in a two-decade-old case and ordered police to arrest and produce him August 28. On August 13, a non-bailable warrant was issued against Singh, SP leader Anoop Sanda, and four others, with the hearing scheduled for Tuesday. The accused however did not appear before the court.

#### Suhail Bukhari quits party ahead of polls

Srinagar: PDP chief spokesperson Suhail Bukhari Tuesday quit the party ahead of the Assembly polls in Jammu and Kashmir. Bukhari was apparently miffed at not being given the mandate to contest the polls. He had hoped to contest the polls from Wagoora-Kreeri, but the return of former minister Basharat Bukhari to the PDP last month diminished his chances of getting the ticket. Bukhari, a journalist-turned-politician, was a close aide of PDP president Mehbooba Mufti and had also served as her media consultant when she was the chief minister. Speaking to reporters, Bukhari said he had joined the party in 2019 after the fall of the PDP-BJP government.

#### Biker held for creating scare

Bangalore: A biker, in an inebriated state, who had created a scare for a couple with their baby and damaged their car in the city on Monday night has been arrested, police said. According to police, the accused has been identified as Naveen Reddy (26), a bouncer in a pub in Koramangala.

## Opposition claims credit as lateral entry ad cancelled



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 20: The Opposition Tuesday claimed that the Centre's move to withdraw the advertisement for lateral entry in bureaucracy was due to pressure exerted by it and the power of the Constitution, even as the government asserted that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has always shown his commitment towards social justice.

BJP ally and Union minister Chirag Paswan, who had voiced opposition to the lateral entry recruitment, welcomed the decision and asserted that the Modi government has reaffirmed its "commitment towards SCs, STs and OBCs" by asking the Union Public Service Commission to withdraw the advertisement.

Reacting to the development, Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi asserted that the Congress will protect the Constitution and the reservation system at all costs and foil the "conspiracies" of the BJP. In a post in Hindi on X, Gandhi said, "We will protect the Constitution and the reservation system at all costs. We will foil the BJP's conspiracies like that of 'lateral entry' at any cost." Kharge said, "Long live the Constitution! The Congress party's fight for social justice for our Dalits, tribals, backward and weaker sections has foiled the BJP's plans to snatch away reservation." Information and Broadcasting Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said the Modi government has decided to apply the principle of

THE CENTRE TUESDAY ASKED THE UPSC TO CANCEL THE LATEST LATERAL ENTRY RECRUITMENT, AMID A ROW OVER RESERVATION IN THE ADVERTISED POSTS  
LATER, THE UNION PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION (UPSC) CANCELLED THE ADVERTISEMENT

reservation in lateral entry to ensure social justice. Vaishnaw told reporters the prime minister had reinforced BR Ambedkar's commitment to the Constitution with this important decision. However, opposition parties were scathing in their criticism of the government and claimed that the pressure exerted by them led to the withdrawal of the advertisement by the government. Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav took a swipe at the BJP-led central government over the issue, saying it succumbed to the unity of the 'PDA'. Yadav's "PDA formula" refers to a combination of "Pichde (backward classes), Dalit and Alpasankhyak (minorities)".

RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav alleged that "lateral entry" in bureaucracy was aimed at filling up posts with those inclined towards the RSS, the ideological parent organisation of the BJP. Bahujan Samaj Party chief Mayawati claimed that the Centre has withdrawn the advertisement for recruitment to bureaucracy through lateral entry after her party's opposition to the move, stressing that "all such anti-reservation processes" need to be stopped.

## Massive protests erupt in Badlapur

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, August 20: Thousands of protesters Tuesday blocked railway tracks at Badlapur station in Thane district and stormed a local school building after the alleged sexual assault of two four-year-old girls by the school sweeper in the washroom.

Police cane-charged the protesters, who occupied the railway tracks, pelting stones at policemen. Hundreds of protesters, many of them angry parents, vandalised the school building to express their disgust over the sexual assault.

Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis said he has ordered the formation of a special investigation team headed by senior IPS officer Arti Singh.

Chief Minister Eknath Shinde said action will be taken against the school, adding that the case will be fast-tracked and the guilty won't be spared.

At Badlapur station, incensed protesters were seen shouting "hai, hai" slogans against the police officials and demanded



death penalty for the sweeper allegedly involved in the assault.

Maharashtra School Education Minister Deepak Kesarkar said 'Vishakha committees' will be formed in schools, which will also face action if CCTV cameras installed on their premises are found to be non-functional.

The panels will provide a platform for raising grievances of girl students, especially those in standards 9th, 10th and junior college, the minister said.

A notice has been issued to the Badlapur school, and its principal, a few teachers and two assistants have been suspended, Kesarkar said.

The protest at Badlapur railway station in Thane district continued throughout the day as the crowd, including several women, refused to heed pleas of officials to allow the passage of trains.

State minister Girish Mahajan tried to pacify the protesters in the afternoon who raised slogans seeking justice for the victims and capital punishment for the arrested accused.

BJP MLA from the Murbad constituency in Thane district, Kisan Kathore, alleged the protest at Badlapur railway station was politically motivated, adding the agitators came from

neighbouring areas and not from Badlapur.

Police on August 17 arrested an attendant at the school for sexually abusing the two girl students of the kindergarten. As per the complaint, he abused the girls in the toilet of the school, an official said.

While the school management has suspended the principal, a class teacher, and a female attendant, over the incident, the state government on Tuesday ordered the suspension of three police officials, including a senior police inspector, for alleged dereliction of duty in probing the sexual abuse of the two girls.

"The orders of immediate suspension of the senior police inspector, assistant sub-inspector and head constable attached to Badlapur police station for the dereliction of duty have been issued," said Fadnavis, who also holds the Home portfolio.

The opposition parties have alleged that the parents of the victim girls were made to wait for 11 hours at Badlapur police station before the officials took note of taking their complaints.



A man casts a net to catch fish on a flooded road after heavy rains at Baldakhal village on the outskirts of Agartala

## MPOX 3 Delhi govt hosps directed to set up isolation rooms

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 20: The Delhi government has directed three of its hospitals to set up isolation rooms for management of suspected and confirmed cases of Mpxo, officials said Tuesday, even as they stressed that there were no patients detected here till now.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has declared Mpxo a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) in view of its prevalence and spread across many parts of Africa.

"Three Delhi government hospitals -- LNJP, GTB and Baba Saheb Ambedkar -- have been directed to set up isolation rooms for suspected and confirmed cases of the disease. While LNJP has been designated as the nodal facility, two other hospitals are on standby," a senior health department official told PTI. The Lok Nayak Jai Prakash (LNJP) Hospital will have a total of 20 isolation rooms for the patients, including 10 for confirmed cases.

The Guru Teg Bahadur (GTB) Hospital and Baba Saheb Ambedkar will have 10 rooms each for such patients, with five rooms each for suspected cases. However, the official said that there was no need to panic and the government is fully prepared. "There are no cases as of now. We are fully alert and monitoring the situation," he added.

An earlier statement from the WHO stated that 99,176 cases and 208 deaths had been reported due to Mpxo from 116 countries globally since 2022. Mpxo cases have been steadily increasing in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

## KOLKATA DOC'S RAPE-MURDER SC orders removal of name, photos, videos of deceased

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 20: The Supreme Court Tuesday ordered the removal of the name, photos and videos of a trainee doctor, who was raped and murdered in Kolkata's RG Kar Medical College and Hospital, from all social media platforms.

A bench headed by Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud said disclosure of the identity of a victim of sexual assault is a violation of its order passed in the Nipun Saxena case.

"The pictures and video clips of the body of the deceased has been circulating on social media...we direct that name, photographs and video clippings of

the deceased be immediately removed from all social media platforms," the bench, also comprising Justices J B Pardiwala and Manoj Misra, said.

The top court was hearing a plea filed by lawyer Kinnori Ghosh and others against the disclosure of the victim medic's identity on social media.

Earlier in the day, the apex court had said it was deeply concerned that the name of the deceased, who was assaulted and murdered, was published all over social media. "Photographs and video clips are all over the media. This is extremely concerning. We are first to recognise free speech but there are well-settled parameters. There are judg-

ments of the court like in Nipun Saxena (case) that names of survivors of sexual assault will not be published," the apex court said.

In its 2018 judgement in the Nipun Saxena case, the top court had said, "No person can print or publish in print, electronic, social media, etc. the name of the victim or even in a remote manner disclose any facts which can lead to the victim being identified and which should make her identity known to the public at large."

A civic volunteer was arrested by the Kolkata Police the following day for his alleged involvement in the rape-murder incident.

## Patanjali's research in world renowned journal

POST NEWS NETWORK

Haridwar, August 20: It's hard to find someone who doesn't enjoy eating carrots, whether in the form of halwa or other Indian dishes, as a vegetable or as juice, especially in winter, carrots are everyone's favourite.

In the market, one can find various types of carrots, such as black, orange, and red. While they all look equally enticing, they can also be confusing when it comes to determining which is more beneficial and nutritious.

Patanjali's research has brought clarity to this, and its findings have been published by the prestigious American

journal Heliyon from Cell Press publication. The study reveals that while all carrots are excellent, black carrots are the best because they contain a higher amount of anthocyanin. The research paper is available at this link: On this occasion, Acharya Balkrishna stated that this research is a testament to the profound knowledge embedded in our ancient texts.

Acharya Balkrishna further emphasized that these findings not only highlight the health benefits of black carrots but also underscore the need for more research on the therapeutic properties of plants described in traditional Indian medicine.

## CLIMATE FINANCE Developed countries push for broader contributor base

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 20: As the deadline to agree on a new climate finance goal nears, developed nations are pushing to expand the list of countries responsible for contributing funds to help developing countries address climate change, with Switzerland even proposing criteria to broaden the donor base.

Submissions made by some developed countries to the UNFCCC regarding negotiations on the New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) -- the new climate finance goal to be finalised in Baku, Azerbaijan, in November -- suggest that wealthy nations might pressure countries with high emissions and high gross national income (GNI) per capita,

such as Saudi Arabia, Russia, and China, to contribute.

Some developed countries, led by the EU and the US, argue that the global economic landscape has changed significantly since 1992. They suggest that nations which have become wealthier during this period, like China and some Gulf states, should also contribute to the new climate finance goal.

Developing countries view this as an attempt to shift responsibility from those who have historically benefited from industrialisation and contributed the most to greenhouse gas emissions. They argue that expecting them to contribute, especially when many are still struggling with poverty and inadequate infrastructure, undermines the principle of equity.



In a submission to the UNFCCC last week, the European Commission said the "collective goal can only be reached if parties with high GHG emissions and economic capabilities join the effort."

The US said that while current

contributors will continue to support developing countries, other nations with the "capacity to support others in pursuing mitigation and adaptation must also be accountable for delivering on the NCQG's support layer."

Their contributions will also

Negotiators from developing countries say a discussion on broadening the climate finance contributor base goes far beyond the mandate for NCQG and could stall negotiations at COP29

According to the 1992 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), high-income industrialised nations (referred to as Annex II countries) are responsible for providing finance and technology to help developing countries combat and adapt to climate change

These countries include the US, Canada, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, and European Union member states such as Germany, France and the UK.

enable a larger quantum for the support layer of the NCQG," the US said, adding that contribut-

ing parties could be identified in various ways.

Switzerland proposed that in addition to developed countries, parties that are among the "10 largest current emitters and have a purchasing power parity-adjusted gross national income per capita of more than USD 22,000" should also contribute to the new climate finance goal.

This proposal puts the spotlight on countries such as Saudi Arabia, Russia, and China.

According to the Swiss proposal, countries with cumulative past and current emissions per capita of at least 250 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent and a purchasing power parity-adjusted gross national income per capita of more than USD 40,000 should also contribute.



# international

## of the day quote

We would hope that Indian companies with Malaysian companies collaborate further in all fields, including the new challenging areas like energy transition, digitalization, and also food security

We are convening a world Congress against fascism, neo-fascism and other such manifestations and will invite participants from all continents. Venezuela will be a global epicentre of anti-fascism fight

We (Indonesia-Australia) have had our ups and downs as the political situation and the geopolitical situation of course evolved, but I think we are very happy today to have several decades of very close cooperation

SHORT TAKES

### China lets down Philippines

Manila: The Philippines Tuesday said China's coast guard was not helping efforts to build confidence in the South China Sea, after accusing it of ramming and damaging its vessels in the latest in a succession of altercations. The Philippines urges China to refrain from aggressive actions and adhere to international law, said Alexander Lopez, a spokesperson for the country's maritime council, an inter-ministerial body that formulates policy on the South China Sea.

### Search resumes for six in Sicily

Porticello: Rescue teams and divers were returning to the site of a storm-sunken superyacht off Sicily Tuesday to search for six people, including British tech magnate Mike Lynch, who are believed to be still trapped in the hull, 50 meters underwater. Divers were loading a rescue dinghy at the port of Porticello, near Palermo, after a first search Monday ended unsuccessfully. Fire rescue crews reported that divers were unable to access the below-deck cabins because they were blocked by debris that had shifted during the violent storm.

### PIO jailed for duping bank

Singapore: An Indian-origin man was sentenced to seven years and six months' jail for being a part of a group that duped a bank into disbursing more than SGD 5.1 million loans related to the sale of two houses here, a media report said Tuesday. Bijabhadur Rai Shree Kantrai, 54, was convicted of seven similar charges. Sufandi Ahmad, 44, Kok Chiew Leong, 51, Mohamed Haron Hassan, 43, and Juma'at Johari, 44, all his accomplices in the ruse were also sentenced to different terms for different counts in connection.

### Taiwan conducts live-fire missile drills

Jiupeng: Taiwan's military launched surface-to-air missiles in live-fire drills conducted Tuesday in response to growing military pressure from China. The exercises took place at the Jiupeng Military Base in a remote area in southern Taiwan. Among the missiles launched were Taiwan's domestically made Sky Bow III anti-ballistic missiles along with the US-made Patriot PAC II and surface-to-air Standard missiles.

## Mpox is not the new Covid: WHO

The virus transmits through close physical contact but unlike previous global pandemics such as Covid-19 there is no evidence it spreads easily through the air



Berlin, August 20: A World Health Organization official stressed Tuesday that mpox, regardless of whether it is the new or old strain, is not the new Covid, as authorities know how to control its spread. "We can and must tackle mpox together," said Hans Kluge, WHO regional director for Europe, in a UN media briefing. "So will we choose to put the systems in place to control and eliminate mpox globally? Or will we enter another cycle of panic and neglect? How we respond

now and in the years to come will prove a critical test for Europe and the world," he added. Mpox, a viral infection that causes pus-filled lesions and flu-like symptoms, is usually mild but can kill. The clade 1b variety has caused global concern because it seems to spread more easily through routine close contact. A case of the variant was confirmed last week in Sweden and linked to a growing outbreak in Africa, the first sign of its spread outside the continent. The WHO declared the recent outbreak of the disease a public health emergency of international concern after the new variant was identified. Kluge said that the focus on the new clade 1 strain will also help in the fight against the less severe clade 2 variety that has spreading globally since 2022, allowing Europe to improve its response through better health advice and surveillance. About 100 new cases of the clade 2 mpox strain are now being reported in the European region every month, added Kluge. Mpox transmits through close physical contact, including sexual contact, but unlike previous global pandemics such as Covid-19 there is no evidence it spreads easily through the air. Health authorities need to be on alert and flexible in case there are new, more transmissible clades or ones that change their transmission route, but there are no recommendations for people to wear masks, said WHO spokesperson Tarik Jasarevic.



It is our call to you (India) that you should hand her over to the government of Bangladesh in a legal way. The people of this country have given the decision for her trial. Let her face that trial

MIRZA FAKHRUL ISLAM ALAMGIR | NATIONALIST PARTY'S SECRETARY-GENERAL, BANGLADESH

### WORLD'S OLDEST PERSON DIES

Maria Branyas, who was the world's oldest person, has died peacefully in Spanish at the age of 117, according to her account on the X platform Tuesday



Britain's King Charles III looks at the tributes outside Southport Town Hall, in Southport, England

## AMID CEASEFIRE DEAL

# Blinken visits Gaza mediators

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Jerusalem, August 20: US Secretary of State Antony Blinken was visiting fellow mediators Egypt and Qatar as he pressed ahead Tuesday with the latest diplomatic mission to secure a cease-fire in the war in Gaza, even as Hamas and Israel signalled that challenges remain. Hamas in a new statement called the latest proposal presented to it a "reversal" of what it agreed to previously and accused the US of acquiescing to what it called "new conditions" from Israel. There was no immediate US response. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, meanwhile, told relatives of hostages in Gaza that a key goal is to "preserve our strategic security assets in the face of great pressures from home and abroad." He noted the "capture" of a narrow buffer zone along the Gaza-Egypt border that Israel calls the Philadelphi corridor.



Sisi warns of conflict expanding in the region  
Hamas criticises US 'bridging proposal' as ambiguous  
Gaps remain over border security, Israel's military presence

Neither Hamas nor Egypt wants an Israeli presence there. Blinken's meetings in Egypt and upcoming ones in Qatar come a day after he met in Israel with Netanyahu and said the Prime Minister had accepted a US proposal to bridge gaps separating Israel and Hamas. Blinken called on the militant group to do the same. But there still appear to be wide gaps between the two sides, including Israel's demand for lasting control over strategic corridors in Gaza, which Hamas has rejected. Blinken has called the latest push for a deal "probably the best, possibly the last opportunity", and said his meeting with Netanyahu was constructive, adding it was incumbent on Hamas to accept the bridging proposal.

### Bodies of Gaza hostages retrieved

Jerusalem: Israel retrieved the bodies of six hostages from the Khan Younis area in southern Gaza, the military said Tuesday, as negotiations continued in an effort to bring back more than 100 who remain in the besieged Palestinian enclave. The return of the six bodies leaves 109 hostages still believed to be in Gaza, around a third of whom are thought to be dead, with the fate of the others unknown. Defence Minister Yoav Gallant said the bodies of Yagev Buchshtab, Alexander Dancyg, Abraham Munder, Yoram Metzger, Nadav Popplewell and Chaim Peri were recovered by Israeli soldiers from tunnels under Khan Younis after a "complex operation". "We will continue working to achieve the goals of this war - returning the hostages to Israel and dismantling Hamas," he said in a statement.

## Biden bids farewell

Biden receives a standing ovation when he comes on stage at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chicago, August 20: US President Joe Biden has passed the baton of the Democratic Party to Kamala Harris and urged Americans to vote for her, saying she will be a historic President who is tough, experienced and respected by world leaders. Biden, who received a standing ovation when he came on stage at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago Monday night, said choosing Harris as his running mate in 2020 was the best decision he made in his whole career. "She'll be a President our children can look up to. She'd be a President respected by world leaders because she already is. She'd be a President we can all be proud of. And she'd be a historic President who puts her stamp on America's future," Biden said. Harris, 59, is scheduled to formally accept the Democratic Party's presidential nomination Thursday to take on Republican rival Donald Trump, 78, in the November 5 election. Selecting Kamala was the very first decision I made when I became our nominee and it's the best decision I made in my whole career," he said. "She's tough, she's experienced, and she has

enormous integrity," Biden said. "Are you ready to elect Kamala Harris as the President of the United States of America, Biden said, amidst cheers from thousands of members and leaders of the Democratic Party at its four-day national convention here as he urged his countrymen to vote and elect his deputy for four years. "I love my job. I love my country more. We need to preserve our democracy. We need you to beat Donald Trump and elect Kamala and Tim as President and Vice President of the United States," Biden, 81, said in a nearly hour-long address. He said Trump will find out women's power in 2024. Harris will soon serve as the 47th President of the United States, Biden said, amidst cheers from his party members and leaders. "We saved democracy in 2020 and we must do it again in 2024," he said, urging his countrymen that America's future is in their hands. "America, America, I gave my best to you. I made a lot of mistakes in my career. But I gave my best to you," he said. "Let me ask you Are you ready to vote for freedom Are you ready to vote for democracy and for America And let me ask you Are you ready to elect Kamala Harris and Tim Waltz as President and Vice President" he asked.

### Imran, wife in soup

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Islamabad, August 20: Pakistan's anti-corruption watchdog Tuesday filed a new case of Toshakhana corruption against jailed former Prime Minister Imran Khan and his wife Bushra Bibi. This is the third Toshakhana case, including the first filed by the Election Commission of Pakistan against Khan, while the second filed by NAB against both Khan, 71, and Bibi, 50. The new Toshakhana corruption case is based on a probe by the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) about the alleged violation of rules in the purchase of a piece of jewellery from the state depository where all gifts are stored which are presented to top political leadership during foreign trips.

## Russia hits energy infrastructure in Ukraine

REUTERS

Kyiv, August 20: Russia hit energy infrastructure in northern Ukraine in an overnight missile and drone attack and caused a huge fire in the west of the country, resulting in an increase in chlorine levels in the air, Ukrainian officials said Tuesday. Ukrainian forces shot down three ballistic missiles and 25 of the 26 drones launched in the attack on nine regions across the country, Ukraine's air force commander said. Regional officials in the north-eastern Sumy region bordering Russia said an energy facility was hit, causing blackouts for 72 settlements and more than 18,500 consumers. Energy workers rushed to re-



pair the damage, the regional administration said on the Telegram messaging app. Ukrainian energy facilities have come under nearly daily bombardment over the past six months as the war grinds on following Russia's full-scale invasion in February 2022. Ukraine buys electricity from

its neighbours in the European Union but not enough to make up the deficit. Power cuts are regularly announced during peak evening consumption hours. An industrial facility was attacked in the western region of Ternopil during the latest bombardments, and a fuel reservoir was hit, officials said.

# Taliban dismisses men without beards from security forces

TALIBAN'S MORALITY MINISTRY HAS DETAINED MORE THAN 13,000 PEOPLE IN AFGHANISTAN FOR 'IMMORAL ACTS' IN THE PAST YEAR

REUTERS

Kabul, August 20: The Taliban's morality ministry has dismissed more than 280 members of the security force for failure to grow a beard and have detained more than 13,000 people in Afghanistan for "immoral acts" in the past year, officials said Tuesday. The Ministry for the Prevention of Vice and Propagation of Virtue said in its annual operations update that around half of those detained had been let go after 24 hours. It did not break down the type of the alleged offences or gender of the detainees. Mohibullah Mokhlis, Director of Planning and Legislation at the ministry, told a press con-

ference officials had destroyed 21,328 musical instruments in the past year and prevented thousands of computer operators from selling "immoral and unethical" films in markets. It had identified 281 security force members for not having a beard and they had been dismissed, he said, in line with their interpretation of Islamic law. The morality ministry, which took over the disbanded women's ministry premises in Kabul after the Taliban took over in 2021, has been criticised by human rights organisations and the United Nations for restrictions on women and inhibiting freedom of expression. The United Nations' mission



to Afghanistan has reported cases of morality ministry officials stopping and detaining

women, at times for a few hours, for not meeting their interpretation of Islamic dress.

The Taliban has called the allegations of detentions "baseless" and say the rules apply their interpretation of Islamic law and Afghan customs. The morality ministry did not provide figures in relation to policing of women's attire or their travel without a male guardian, which authorities have also barred for longer distances. It said that a new plan was being worked on to ensure its Islamic dress rules were followed, overseen by the supreme spiritual leader who is based in the southern city of Kandahar. "Based on the guidance of the Supreme Leader, the draft plan for observing women's hijab (Islamic dress) has been

formulated and approved," Mokhlis said. The morality ministry has previously said that women should cover their faces or wear an all-enveloping burqa and that enforcement would involve "encouragement" with women's male family members being targeted rather than women directly. Most Afghan women covered their hair in public in the conservative country even before the Taliban takeover, but some, especially Kabul, did not usually cover their faces or wear a burqa. Mokhlis said they had prevented just over 200 cases of the sale of women and over 2,600 cases of violence against women.



of the day **quote**

We remain confident in our guidance of achieving ₹10,000 crore in revenue within three years of full-scale operations

**KUMAR MANGALAM BIRLA** | ADITYA BIRLA GROUP CHAIRMAN

Agriculture is an important pillar of the Australia-India relationship, and Australia has a lot to offer in agricultural expertise

**PHILIP GREEN** | AUSTRALIAN HIGH COMMISSIONER TO INDIA

We are delighted to have successfully transitioned from losses to full-year profitability. We have brought very interesting innovative products on our platform and...used machine learning and data that has helped us to cross-sell better

**UPASANA TAKU** | MOBIKVIEW CO-FOUNDER

**SHORT TAKES**

**EPFO adds 19.29L net members in Jun**

**New Delhi:** Retirement fund body EPFO has registered a net addition of 19.29 lakh members in June 2024, the Labour Ministry said Tuesday. The ministry stated that a year-over-year analysis showed a 7.86 per cent growth in net member additions compared to June 2023. This surge in membership can be attributed to numerous factors, including increased employment opportunities, a growing awareness of employee benefits, and the effectiveness of EPFO's outreach programmes, it noted. The data indicates that around 10.25 lakh new members have been enrolled during June 2024. There is an increase of 4.08 per cent in the new members from May 2024 and a 1.05 per cent rise against June 2023.

**Antfin sells 2.1% in Zomato**

**New Delhi:** Antfin Singapore Holding Tuesday divested a little over 2 per cent stake in online food delivery firm Zomato for ₹4,771 crore through open market transactions. Antfin Singapore Holding Pte is an arm of Ant Financial Group, while the latter is a part of Chinese e-commerce giant Alibaba. According to the bulk deal data available on the BSE, Antfin Singapore Holding sold 18,54,40,550 shares in two tranches, amounting to a 2.1 per cent stake in Gurugram-based Zomato. The shares were disposed of in the price range of ₹257.17-257.46 apiece, taking the transaction value to ₹4,771.66 crore. After the share sale, Antfin Singapore Holding's stake has been reduced to 2.14 per cent from 4.24 per cent.

**Tata Chemicals raises ₹1,700cr**

**New Delhi:** Tata Chemicals has raised ₹1,700 crore through the issue of Non-convertible Debentures (NCDs) to investors on a private placement basis. In a regulatory filing on Tuesday, Tata Chemicals said an internal Committee, constituted by its board, has approved the allotment of 1,70,000 NCDs, having a face value ₹1 lakh each for cash, aggregating to ₹1,700 crore, for a tenor of 3 years, to identified investors on private placement basis. The NCDs have a fixed rate coupon of 7.81 per cent and have been issued based on multiple yield allotment method. The NCDs will be listed on the Debt Segment of National Stock Exchange of India Limited (NSE), the filing said. Recently, Tata Chemicals reported a 72 per cent decline in its consolidated net profit to ₹150 crore for the first quarter of this fiscal year on lower income and higher expenses.



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**PRATIVA MOHAPATRA** | ADOBE INDIA VP AND MD

**BIS LAUNCHES HACKATHON**

The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) Tuesday announced a new hackathon initiative to develop an online platform to promote awareness of Indian standards through interactive activities and games. The competition is open to students from institutions that have existing memorandums of understanding (MoUs) with BIS.



# Food cos get 4 more months to exhaust '100% fruit juices'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, August 20:** Food regulator FSSAI has given four more months till December-end to food business operators to exhaust all pre-printed packaging materials claiming '100 per cent fruit juices' in their packaged juice products.

The decision to extend the current deadline of August 31 has been taken following consultations with stakeholders.

In June, FSSAI had asked food business operators (FBOs) to immediately remove claims of 100 per cent fruit juices in advertisements as well as labels on packaged products, amid rising concerns over misleading claims.

"Based on the various representation received from stakeholders, it has been decided to extend the deadline for using pre-printed packaging materials. The new deadline for utilising these materials is now December 31, 2024," Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) said in an advisory to FBOs.

Additionally, the regulator said that products manufactured by FBOs before December 31, 2024 can be "sold in the market across all channels until the end of their shelf life."

Initially, FBOs were instructed to exhaust all existing pre-printed packaging materials before September 1, 2024.



In June, FSSAI had issued a directive mandating all FBOs to "remove any claim of '100 per cent fruit juices' from the labels and advertisements of reconstituted fruit juices with an immediate effect." "It has come to the attention of FSSAI that several FBOs have been inaccurately marketing various types of reconstituted fruit juices by claiming them to be 100 per cent fruit juices," the regulator had said.

Upon thorough examination, FSSAI had concluded that, according to the Food Safety and Standards (Advertising and Claims) Regulations, 2018, there

is no provision for making a '100%' claim.

"Such claims are misleading, particularly under conditions where the major ingredient of the fruit juice is water and the primary ingredient, for which the claim is made, is present only in limited concentrations, or when the fruit juice is reconstituted using water and fruit concentrates or pulp," FSSAI had said.

FBOs were told to comply with the standards for fruit juices as specified under sub-regulation 2.3.6 of the Food Safety and Standards (Food Products Standards & Food Additives)

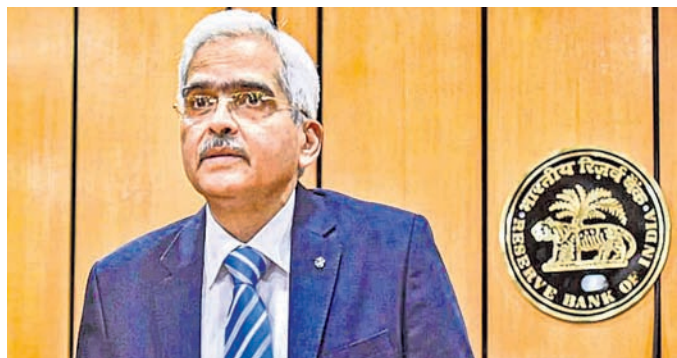
Regulation, 2011.

"This regulation states that products covered by this standard must be labelled in accordance with the Food Safety and Standards (Labelling and Display) Regulations, 2020," FSSAI had said.

Specifically, in the ingredient list, the word "reconstituted" must be mentioned against the name of the juice that is reconstituted from the concentrate.

"Additionally, if added nutritive sweeteners exceed 15 gm/kg, the product must be labelled as 'sweetened juice,'" the regulator had said.

## RBI Governor urges banks to monitor credit-deposit gap



REUTERS

**Mumbai, August 20:** Indian banks need to carefully monitor the gap between credit and deposit growth to avoid a potential structural liquidity issue, the governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said Tuesday.

"Young Indians are aspirational. They get attracted to different markets. There is nothing wrong in it, it's a natural process and a positive development," Shaktikanta Das told local television channel NDTV Profit in an interview.

"We are cautioning banks to monitor this situation carefully. There is no problem now, but it

can become a structural liquidity problem in the future."

Indian banks' loans rose 13.7% as of July 26 from a year earlier, while deposits grew 10.6%, latest provisional data from the RBI showed.

Healthy economic growth and rising urban consumption has boosted loan demand but deposit growth has lagged.

Banks must garner more deposits through innovative products and service offerings, Governor Das said. While credit growth and disbursement has become fast paced due to technology, deposit mobilisation, done largely through physical channels, was lagging, he said.

## Indian cos to spend \$45-50bn in capex: Moody's

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, August 20:** Moody's Ratings Tuesday said rated Indian companies will spend USD 45-50 billion annually over the next 1-2 years towards capex as companies boost capacity, with the country's most valued firm Reliance Industries alone accounting for 30 per cent of the spendings.

Investments to increase vertical integration and achieve net zero targets will also keep spending high, Moody's Ratings said in a report on corporates in India and Indonesia.

"Rated Indian companies' capex will remain elevated at around USD 45-50 billion annually over the next one to two years. With an annual capex budget of around USD 15 billion spread across its different business segments, Reliance Industries alone will account for around 30 per cent of the portfolio capex," Moody's Ratings said.

The oil and gas sector and Reliance Industries will collectively account for over 60 per cent of the rated Indian portfolio's spending over the next couple of years.

Moody's said the seven rated oil and gas companies in India



will also account for around 30 per cent of rated Indian companies' capex.

These companies will spend around USD 15 billion annually to expand existing capacity and make green energy investments to reduce carbon transition risk.

For instance, Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (Baa3 stable) and Indian Oil will spend USD 6 billion and USD 4 billion, respectively, in each of the next two years on reserves addition, downstream integration and energy transition, Moody's added.

## Sensex rebounds 370 points

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, August 20:** Stock market benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty found firmer ground Tuesday, propelled by robust buying in banking, financial and auto stocks amid a largely firm trend in global equities.

Besides, easing geopolitical tensions in the Middle East and falling global crude oil prices further bolstered sentiment, traders said.

The 30-share BSE Sensex rebounded 378.18 points or 0.47 per cent to settle at 80,802.86. During the day, the benchmark soared 518.28 points or 0.64 per cent to 80,942.96. Rising for the fourth consecutive day, the NSE Nifty surged 126.20 points or 0.51 per cent to 24,698.85.

"The domestic market started the session with a strong surge, buoyed by positive global sentiment amidst Israel-Hamas ceasefire talks and diminishing US recession fears due to recent favourable data. Concurrently, easing geopolitical risks and weak China demand have led to a decline in crude prices, benefiting the domestic economy,"

said Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services.

Among the 30 Sensex firms, Bajaj Finserv, IndusInd Bank, Tech Mahindra, Bajaj Finance, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Axis Bank, NTPC, and Sun Pharma were the major gainers.

On the other hand, Bharti Airtel, ITC, Adani Ports, JSW Steel and Tata Motors were among the laggards.

In the broader market, the BSE midcap gauge climbed 0.98 per cent and smallcap index went up by 0.52 per cent.

Among the indices, financial services jumped 1.19 per cent, utilities (1.07 per cent), power (0.80 per cent), IT (0.76 per cent) and auto (0.75 per cent). Capital Goods and FMCG were the laggards.

"Meanwhile, inflationary pressure in Japan and the appreciating Yen cautioned the rally. This week's Japan inflation data and FOMC minutes will provide insights into future interest rate trajectories and market trends," Nair said.

In Asian markets, Seoul and Tokyo settled higher, while Shanghai and Hong Kong ended lower.



## Abandoning RBI's inflation target regime could be risky

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, August 20:** The Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) inflation targeting regime has worked well and need not be abandoned in favour of a more discretionary regime that could be risky and counterproductive, a new research paper has said.

The paper titled 'Inflation Targeting In India: A Further Assessment' said the weight of food-price inflation in the CPI inflation basket should be reduced to better reflect the circumstances of Indian households.

"The RBI's inflation targeting regime has worked well. Given this record, radical changes such as broadening its mandate or abandoning the target in favour of a more discretionary regime would be risky and counterproductive," it said.

The paper is authored by economists Barry Eichengreen (University of California,

Berkeley) and Poonam Gupta (NCAER).

In contrast, the paper noted that the 4 per cent point target, +/-2 percentage point tolerance band and focus on headline inflation remain broadly appropriate.

"That said, the regime can be tweaked to improve performance," it suggested.

The government and the RBI signed an inflation-targeting agreement in February 2015 and amended the RBI Act in May 2016.

The inflation target was set by the government in consultation with the RBI with the possibility of revisiting it after five years.

Accordingly, the government announced, via the Official Gazette, 4 per cent Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation as the target from August 5, 2016, with an upper tolerance limit of 6 per cent and a lower limit of



2 per cent. For most part, the paper

pointed out that targets set under the inflation-targeting agree-

ment have been met; and on almost all counts, it has performed as envisaged.

"It has been only once that inflation exceeded the upper tolerance band of 6 per cent for three consecutive quarters (during January 2022-September 2022)," the paper said.

According to the paper, evidence points to improved outcomes during inflation targeting.

"Inflation is lower and less volatile; inflation expectations are better anchored, and the transmission of monetary policy is more effective," it said.

Recently, Chief Economic Advisor V Anantha Nageswaran had pitched for excluding food inflation from the rate setting calls, saying that the monetary policy has no bearing on the prices of food items, which are dictated by supply side pressures.

Finally, contrary to earlier

skepticism, the paper argued that it does not appear that inflation-targeting agreement has made the RBI overly hawkish or reactive to every small deviation in inflation rate from its target of 4 per cent or to every spike in food inflation.

Since September 2016, the RBI has changed the key policy rate 17 times, majority of them during two turbulent years -- in 2019-20 when the policy rate was eased five times by a cumulative 185 basis points in response to a sharp growth slowdown; and in 2022-23 when the policy rate was increased six times by a cumulative 210 basis points in response to accelerated inflation emanating from global shocks.

During the remaining six years, the policy rate was changed only six times, about once every year. Compared to this, the RBI changed its policy rate 24 times in the eight years prior to IT.



# Vinesh eyes glory on political mat

ACE WRESTLER KEEPING ALL OPTIONS OPEN AFTER HEART-BREAK IN PARIS



Both Vinesh Phogat and Bajrang Punia may be surprise contestants in the upcoming Haryana Assembly elections

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi, August 20:** Ace wrestler Vinesh Phogat is likely to contest the upcoming Haryana Assembly elections, sources close to her told this agency Tuesday. It should however, be stated that Vinesh had earlier said she will not join active politics.

However, sources close to the wrestler said that some political parties are trying hard to 'convince' her to join politics and

Some political parties are trying to convince Vinesh to jump into the election fray and there is a possibility that she may contest against cousin Babita Phogat

contest the elections.

Vinesh missed the opportunity to win a gold medal in

women's freestyle 50kg category at the Paris Olympics after getting disqualified from the final for being 100gm overweight. She received a rousing welcome Saturday in the national capital and her village Balali, Sonapat. She was garlanded by Congress MP Deepender Hooda and other members of his family at the Indira Gandhi International Airport.

However, the party which Vinesh is going to join is yet to

be confirmed. "Yes, why not? It's likely that in Haryana Assembly elections you will see Vinesh Phogat vs Babita Phogat and Bajrang Punia vs Yogeshwar Dutt. Some political parties are trying to convince her," sources said Tuesday.

As Vinesh exited the airport on her arrival at New Delhi, she was met with loud cheers from her fans, family, and friends, who had gathered in large numbers despite the early hours. The overwhelming support and affection brought the wrestling icon to tears. Among the first to welcome Vinesh home were Sakshi Mallick, who retired from wrestling last year, and Bajrang Punia.

In a poignant moment, Vinesh and Sakshi, both of whom have faced significant challenges in their careers, embraced and broke down in tears, sharing the weight of their struggles.

"Our fight has not ended and the fight will continue and I pray to god that the truth will prevail," Vinesh had said Saturday.

Earlier Friday, Vinesh expressed her deep sorrow over missing out on the Olympic podium, linking her personal disappointment to the broader struggle for women's rights in India, a cause she championed in her protests against the former wrestling federation chief Brij Bhushan Singh Sharan.

On the same day, in a three-page letter posted on social media platform 'X', Vinesh hinted at a possible return to the sport, leaving the door slightly open despite her earlier decision to retire after the Paris Olympics disqualification.

# Titles for Sinner, Sabalenka



MEMORABLE MOMENT: Jack Sinner (left) and Aryna Sabalenka pose with their trophies Monday at Cincinnati

AGENCIES

**Cincinnati, August 20:** Top-ranked Jannik Sinner and women's No. 2 Aryna Sabalenka earned straight set victories in the finals of the Cincinnati Open tennis tournament here Monday, the first titles at the tournament for both players.

Sabalenka defeated Jessica Pegula 6-3, 7-5 for her first title since the Australian Open in January while Sinner, who turned 23 Friday, beat American Frances Tiafoe 7-6 (7-4), 6-2 to become the youngest Cincinnati champion since 21-year-old Andy Murray won in 2008. It was Sinner's third ATP title in the ongoing season.

"I'm very happy to be in the position where I am," Sinner said after the match. "I'm just try-

ing to keep going this way mentally. It's important to recover to be ready for New York (US Open). That's the most important thing now," the Italian added.

The Italian top seed warmed up for next week's US Open in style, bidding his time in a hard-fought first set before breaking the match open in the second. Tiafoe, whose game faded after losing the first set tie-breaker, still made an impression. The American, who moved into the top 20 ranking, saved three match points before Sinner claimed his 15th career title.

"Frances and I were both tired from the (Sunday) semifinals and there was a lot of tension. I'm just glad I kept my level in the important moments. I handled the situations on court well," Sinner stated.

Against Tiafoe, Sinner hit 29 winners, including 13 aces and broke the American twice from eight attempts.

In the women's final, Sabalenka had it all her way against the American sixth seed Pegula until the closing stages when she lost serve for the first time leading a set and 5-4. But a quick re-break and another hold of serve solved that problem and produced a first Masters-level trophy on hard court since 2021 for the Belarus player.

"I really couldn't have wished for more - it was a really great day at the office," Sabalenka said afterwards. "Just super happy with the level I played in the final and I was able to get this title. It's really important going into the US Open."

## SHORT TAKES

### Sangwan chosen Paralympics CDM

**New Delhi:** Paralympic Committee of India (PCI) vice-president Satya Prakash Sangwan was Tuesday appointed as the chef de mission (CDM) of the Indian contingent at the upcoming Paris Paralympics. Sangwan brings with him over a decade of dedicated service and experience within the Paralympic movement. "It is a great honour to be entrusted with this responsibility. I am committed to ensuring that our athletes have everything they need to succeed and make India proud at the Paralympics," Sangwan stated.

### Dismal day for Indian shuttlers

**Yokohama (Japan):** Indian shuttlers Ashmita Chaliha and Malvika Bansod bowed out with opening-round losses in the women's singles competition of the Japan Open badminton tournament here Tuesday. While Ashmita lost 16-21, 12-21 to top seed Tai Tzu Ying of Chinese Taipei, Malvika was shown the door by Ukraine's Polina Buhrova 21-23, 19-21. Later in the day, Aakarshi Kashyap encountered the same fate as her compatriots as she went down 13-21, 12-21 to Korea's Kim Ga Eun.

### Eves' T20 WC shifted

**Dubai:** The ICC moved Tuesday the upcoming Women's T20 World Cup from Bangladesh to the UAE. The ICC said it "wasn't feasible to conduct the event there after governments of a number of participating countries advised against travelling to the unrest-hit nation. The event, which also features India and is scheduled to take place October 3 to 20, will now be staged in Dubai and Sharjah with Bangladesh retaining the hosting rights, ensuring that it receives its share of revenue. "It is a shame not to host the Women's T20 World Cup in Bangladesh as the BCB would have made it memorable," the ICC said in a statement.

### Messi ruled out

**Buenos Aires:** Argentina captain Lionel Messi will miss his team's World Cup qualifiers against Chile and Colombia next month due to injury. The 37-year-old was a glaring omission from the Albiceleste's 28-man squad named Monday. Messi is recovering from an ankle ligament injury sustained during Argentina's victory over Colombia in the Copa America final in July. Argentina will meet Chile here September 5 and Colombia in Barranquilla five days later.

## Hockey team's road show today

EACH PLAYER TO GET ₹15 LAKH, ₹10 LAKH FOR SUPPORT STAFF



Sports and Youth Affairs Minister Suryabanshi Suraj talks to the media Tuesday at the Kalinga Stadium

OP PHOTO

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, August 20:** Odisha is gearing up to welcome the Indian hockey team that won the bronze medal at the recently-concluded Paris Olympics 2024, Sports and Youth Affairs Minister Suryabanshi Suraj stated here Tuesday.

Suraj informed that Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi will felicitate the Indian hockey team members at Lok Seva Bhavan's Convention Centre here Wednesday. He added that a grand welcome has been planned for the Olympic heroes.

"The Indian hockey team will arrive in Odisha tomorrow (Wednesday) at about noon and

hold a road show from Biju Patnaik International Airport to the Kalinga Stadium. Later, the team will be felicitated by the CM," Suraj said at a press conference.

Meanwhile, the state government, which is the official sponsor of the Indian hockey team, both men and women, has announced ₹15 lakh cash prize each for the players and ₹10 lakh for each supporting staff who participated in the Paris Olympics.

Suraj said that the Indian men's hockey team have made the country proud by winning the second consecutive Olympic medal. The minister said this victory will inspire the youths of Odisha and India.

The men's hockey team defeated Spain 2-1 to finish with the bronze medal at the Paris Olympics. In the semifinals they suffered a huge heart-break losing 2-3 to Germany.

Suraj pointed out that Odisha has been supporting sports and games with a special focus on hockey. The Odisha government has been sponsoring the hockey team since 2018 when the sport struggled financially.

The previous BJP government led by Naveen Patnaik supported the team when they were in dire need of a sponsor. The present state government will support the team till 2036 as its commitment towards long-term support to the game.

## Shibani, Minati honoured

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, August 20:** Shibani Priyadarshni, a student of KIIT University and Minati Singh, who studies at the KISS University were honoured with the Iconic Sports Awards 2024 at a function in the Odisha capital Tuesday. While Shibani is a volleyball player, Minati is a cyclist as a sport. The two thanked the Odisha Volleyball Association and the Odisha Cycling Association for supporting them in their respective endeavours.

Shibani has won a number of medals while representing both the state and the national team in various meets. She was a part of the Indian women's beach volleyball team that won the bronze medal in the Special Olympics Summer Games at Berlin in 2023. She represented the Odisha women's volleyball team that won a bronze at the Federation Cup played here in 2022. The same year, she again was a member of the Odisha beach volleyball team that won bronze at the 36th National Games in Gujarat.

For Minati, even though success has eluded her at the national level, she has won a number of gold medals in the State Cycling Championships in 2022 and 2023. She has also repre-



Shibani Priyadarshni (left) and Minati Singh

OP PHOTO

sented the state in the National Cycling Championships on a number of occasions.

## Smruti shines at Khelo India meet

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, August 20:** Smruti Prangya Nayak was the only judoka from Odisha to win a gold medal at the Khelo India East India Judo Championships which concluded Monday in Shillong. Paradip girl Smruti was coached by Biswajit Maharai and Lopamudra Pati. She performed very well in the cadet category.

Overall, Odisha finished with eight medals including the gold by Smruti. The squad also bagged three silver medals and four bronze medals.

In the sub-junior category Sara Mohapatra of Bhubaneswar Sports Hostel bagged silver while Tanushree, also a judoka from the Odisha capital finished with the bronze medal.

Sanjay Gomango, who was a contestant in the boys' cadet segment bagged a bronze medal. The KIIT and KISS student was coached by Kandan Murmu. Another KIIT and KISS student, Dali Murmu bagged a bronze medal in the junior segment. Namrata Dorjee, a judoka from Bolangir bagged a bronze in the same category. Smruti, who also was a contestant in the junior segment ended with a silver medal. Thus she was the only judoka from Odisha to win two medals.

## Player smashes 39 runs in 1 over

# Samoa batter Visser sets T20 world record

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, August 20:** Samoa middle-order batter Darius Visser set Tuesday a new world record for most runs in an over in T20s, accumulating 39 against Vanuatu in the World Cup East Asia-Pacific Region Qualifier in the capital city of Apia.

Visser hammered pacer Nalin Nipiko for six sixes in an over that also included three no balls. The 28-year-old right-handed batter, who learned the ropes in Sydney grade cricket, was playing in only his third T20, and comes with the reputation of being a genuine power-hitter. His big-hitting ability was evident in his knock against Vanuatu - 132 off 62 balls with five fours and 14 sixes.

Previously, there were five occasions when a bowler conceded 36 runs in an over and they were Stuart Broad (2007), Akila Dananjaya (2021), Karim Jannat (2024), Kamran Khan (2024) and



Darius Visser

Azmatullah Omarzai (2024).

Broad conceded six sixes in as many balls against Yuvraj Singh of India in the 2007 T20 World Cup, while Windies batsman Kieron Pollard achieved the feat against Dananjaya during a bilateral T20 at Coolidge, Antigua.

Nepal's Dipendra Singh Airee creamed six sixes off Qatar's Kamran Khan in the ACC Premier Cup, while Windies' Nicholas Pooran hit Afghanistan pacer Azmatullah Omarzai for six sixes during the T20 World Cup this June. Rohit Sharma and Rinku Singh combined to take 36 runs off Afghanistan pacer Karim Janat at Bangalore.

## 'Sports offers a beautiful life'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Chennai, August 20:** She has been crisscrossing the country since returning from Paris with two historic Olympic medals. However, ace shooter Manu Bhaker who was here Tuesday is not tired. She tried exhorting students to try making a career out of sports as it offers 'a beautiful life'.

"My journey, coming from the Tokyo Olympics, it was very difficult for me to be confident again. I was World No 2, but I did not do good in there," a garlanded Manu said after being felicitated by the Velammal Nexus School here. "I know the taste of losing and then winning. It's the beauty of sports. One competition you lose and you can win the other. But, it would only happen if you put in hard work," the ace shooter added.

Manu urged young students to take up sports as career options. "We have many career options. You don't have to become a doctor or an engineer. Sports life is a beautiful life. From financial support to any kind of it, you get everything in sports," she asserted

# Now a biopic on Yuvraj

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, August 20:** An upcoming biographical movie will chronicle the inspiring journey of former Indian cricketer Yuvraj Singh, the makers announced Tuesday. The yet-to-be-titled biopic will be produced by Bhushan Kumar's 'T-Series' and co-produced by Ravi Bhagchandka, known for films like *Sachin: A Billion Dreams* and the upcoming Amir Khan-starrer *Sitaare Zameen Par*.

The film is touted as a 'grand celebration of Yuvraj's unparalleled journey and contributions to cricket. It will capture the essence of his career, unforgettable six sixes in the 2007 T20 World Cup, his courageous off-field battles and his subsequent return to cricket in 2012," a press release said.

Yuvraj, who began his career at the age of 13, said he is hoping his life story will inspire people to overcome challenges.

"I'm deeply honoured that my story will be showcased to millions of my fans across the globe



(From left): Yuvraj Singh, Bhushan Kumar and Ravi Bhagchandka at the announcement of the biopic for the cricketer

PHOTO COURTESY X

by Bhushan and Ravi. Cricket has been my greatest love and source of strength through all the highs and lows. I hope this film inspires others to overcome their own challenges and pursue their dreams with unwavering passion," the man of the tournament in the 2011 50 overs World Cup said.

Kumar, known for backing blockbuster films such as *Drishyam 2*, *Animal*, *Bhool Bhulaiyaa 2*, *Kabir Singh* and *Tanhaji: The Unsung Warrior*

said he is excited to bring out the inspiring journey of Yuvraj on the big screen.

"Yuvraj's life is a compelling narrative of resilience, triumph, and passion. His journey from a promising cricketer to a cricketing hero, and then to a hero in real life, is truly inspiring. I'm thrilled to bring a story that needs to be told and heard through the big screen and to celebrate his extraordinary achievements," Kumar said.