

DSPL - 82



**Sri. Narendra Modi**  
Hon'ble Prime Minister

*Thank You*  
**Heroes  
of Indian Hockey**  
*for*  
**Making The Nation Proud**

**Bronze in Paris, Pride at Home**



**Sri. Mohan Charan Majhi**  
Hon'ble Chief Minister, Odisha

Odisha is proud to support  
the Indian National Hockey Team



OIPR-29001/13/0019/2425



# leisure



## MAYA RUDOLPH TO PLAY KAMALA HARRIS AT SNL

Actress-comedian Maya Rudolph, who is a regular at *Saturday Night Live (SNL)*, has teased her return to the stage as Kamala Harris, the current US Vice President and the presidential candidate of the Democratic Party on *Jimmy Kimmel Live* interview with *RuPaul*.

## JLO FILES FOR DIVORCE FROM BEN AFFLECK

Singer-actress Jennifer Lopez and actor Ben Affleck are headed for splitsville, and this time it's confirmed. This comes after two years of their marriage. JLo filed for divorce in Los Angeles County Superior Court. The official separation date is listed as April 26, reports *Variety*.



### FORTUNE FORECAST

GaneshSpeaks.com  
accuracy • reliability • trust  
FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL \$5181\*

**ARIES**  
You're finally impressed by the yogis. A degree course in Art of Living? Ganesh approves. You may even fulfill a desire to begin lessons in music or dance, or something that has interested you since long. A good, good day, and it smells of sweet success.

**TAURUS**  
You need to be very and practical and realistic in all that you do today, urges Ganesh. You are known to be pretty emotional and sensitive and generally go by your feelings. Your mind, your reason do not normally feature in your decision making. Even minor problems, complications get you worked up. Try to remain focused and down to earth this day.

**GEMINI**  
Your long-term goals seem to be shaping up well. You may also expect some good news, which will change the course of your life. Play a waiting game in matters of auctions and sealed tenders. And memorise these words: Prevention is better than cure.

**CANCER**  
Today, you may focus your entire attention on your relationships - your ties with your parents, spouse, children, siblings and even neighbours. However, all that effort and energy may not get its due, and you may get a cold response from one or more of your relatives.

**LEO**  
The bourgeoisie feasted on cake, while the masses starved for want of a mere loaf of bread. Ganesh foresees something similar for you today, as you show the propensity to indulge in unwanted expenses. Whether it is impulsive decisions or compulsive buying, they shall not serve as an excuse on a later date when the milk is already spilt.

**VIRGO**  
You will be cool as a cucumber today. Nothing that happens will unsettle that composure, says Ganesh. Your loved ones will stand tall and strong behind you, and inspire you to overcome obstacles. Your work will reflect dedication, says Ganesh. Go ahead and ask for work that is intellectually taxing.

**LIBRA**  
Sit back and think hard - think about what it is that you really want when it comes to your business enterprises, because there are many ways to go about things at work, and they all shall lead your somewhere different. The stars favour you today with a golden touch, so take it in your stride and make hay while the sun shines. Learn to take charge and take initiatives, says Ganesh.

**SCORPIO**  
Today, Ganesh is in the mood to give you health tips. Cultivate healthy eating habits and exercise regularly to stay away from disorders like obesity. Irregular eating habits and unhealthy lifestyle may lead to many other troubles. Eat healthy, stay happy.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
Your friend base is slated to multiply today. At work, additional responsibilities will be thrust upon you, and you will also be given charge of new resources. Ganesh predicts you taking up the challenge and emerging triumphant in all spheres today.

**CAPRICORN**  
Overcome with feelings, you may take decisions that may stand in the way of success. Don't let your sentiments ruin your future prospects because the damage done will be beyond repair, warns Ganesh. Today, there are also chances that your down-to-earth nature and amiable approach will win the hearts of many. A bit of caution and guidance from the elderly will help you move on the right path.

**AQUARIUS**  
You will come out top in whatever you choose to do, and success will smell honeysuckle sweet! Naturally, recognition and rewards await you. Take your friends to that trendy café; you needn't wait for a reason to party, says Ganesh.

**PISCES**  
Major expenses are coming your way, but the good news is a lot of them can be avoided simply by drawing a line between your needs and your wants. Exercising a little restraint now will go a long way in boosting your savings later on, says Ganesh.

# SHRADDHA SPEAKS OUT

**Mumbai:** Actress Shraddha Kapoor, who is basking in the success of her recent horror-comedy offering *Stree 2*, has spoken up about why she hasn't yet worked with the superstars of Hindi cinema, the holy trinity of Salman Khan, Shah Rukh Khan, and Amir Khan.

During a podcast with Shubhankar Mishra, the *Aashiqui 2* actress said that she hasn't yet got the opportunity to work with the 3 Khans of Bollywood. She said, "Many times you are offered a film, but if you feel the character isn't exciting enough or the role doesn't challenge the artiste in you, then you let go off that role. I'm very clear about the king of work that

choose." She further mentioned, "I want to be part of good films, engaging films with good stories, work with good directors, and do good work. If the by-product of all of this is the opportunity to work with good actors or huge stars, I'm happy to say yes to it."

*Stree 2*, which was released on Independence Day, also stars Rajkumar Rao, Pankaj Tripathi, Abhishek Banerjee, and Aparshakti Khurana.



## Sidharth shares his fashion mantra

**New Delhi:** Actor Sidharth Malhotra said his fashion journey has evolved a lot and that he ensures to invest time making sure each piece is tailored to perfection.

Asked how he would describe his fashion game, Sidharth told *IANS*: "I gravitate towards classic silhouettes with a subtle touch of masculine edge. My style is more about looking effortless than overly styled."

"It is certainly essential for me, and I ensure to invest time in making sure each piece is tailored to perfection," said the actor, who began his career as a fashion model. The 39-year-old actor agrees that his fashion journey has evolved in his 12-year journey in Hindi cinema. "But my everyday style prioritises comfort and simplicity. Ultimately, my on-screen wardrobe is a collaborative process, intricately tied to the character's narrative and the film's visual world," the *SOTY* actor said.

The *Yodha* actor also said that the fashion industry for men has evolved tremendously, offering a wide range of options from fast fashion to high-end luxury. He acknowledged the efforts by designers for pushing the envelope when it comes to fashion for men. "Designers are pushing boundaries, creating pieces that cater to various aesthetics and personalities. From streetwear to tailored suits, the possibilities are endless. It's an exciting time for men to experiment and find what resonates with them," ended Malhotra.

# Khushi reflects on sisterhood

**Mumbai:** Boney Kapoor and Sridevi's younger daughter Khushi Kapoor recently opened up about some of the best things about being a sister to Janhvi Kapoor, she also stated that her sibling is like her support system and a parent.

In a video interview by a magazine agency, Khushi expressed her profound love for her sister, actress Janhvi Kapoor. The former stated that the latter is very much her main support system. The *Archies* actress also added that the Mili actress always guides her through everything, even if it's something small and irrelevant. Moreover, she is always the first person Khushi calls when she needs any kind of advice.

"I feel she is a kind of parent to me. She just talks me through everything, tells me I am doing good," Kapoor stated, adding that the *Mr. & Mrs. Mahi* actress also gives her pep talks. But the fun part of being Janhvi's sister is stealing her clothes and shoes, which Khushi thinks is a great bonus.

Last month, Khushi walked her first fashion show along with her rumoured boyfriend, Vedang Raina. After concluding the event, she spoke to the media about her experience and revealed what advice her elder sister Janhvi gave her before the show. Khushi said, "Janhvi told me to be calm, be present, and listen to the music."

Meanwhile, on the work front, Khushi Kapoor is shooting for her upcoming romantic comedy movie, *Naadaniyaan*, with Saif Ali Khan's son Ibrahim Ali Khan. As for Janhvi Kapoor, she is all set to make her Telugu debut with Koratala Siva's *Devara: Part 1*.



**Mumbai:** Actress Samantha Ruth Prabhu made headlines at the World Pickleball League (WPBL) launch event in Mumbai, where she not only showcased her enthusiasm for the sport but also revealed exciting plans involving superstar Aamir Khan.

Talking to the press during the event, she disclosed her intention to invite Aamir Khan to join her for a game of pickleball. "I think Aamir Khan, be-

## Sam's invite for Aamir

cause I think sir has already expressed his interest in this sport, and why not dream big," she said.

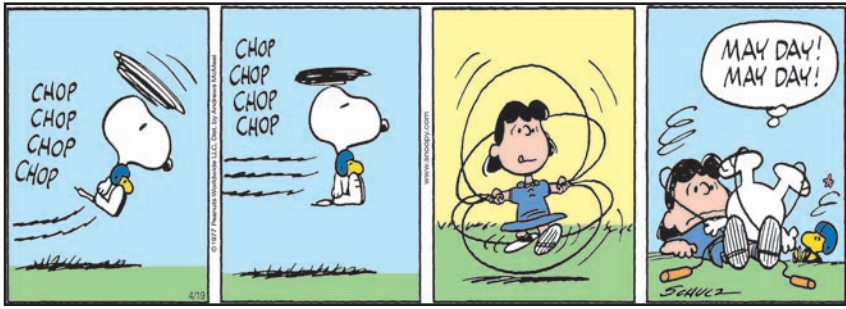
The actress also shared a personal touch, explaining that her background in a middle-class family, where the focus was primarily on academics rather than sports, led her to discover and fall in love with pickleball.



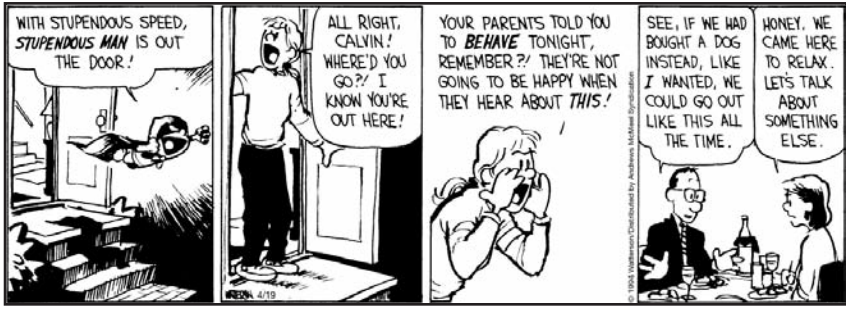
"Pickleball is a sport that is not intimidating and is for everyone. Even I at this age can pick up this sport," she noted. The WPBL aims to elevate the profile of pickleball and introduce it to a broader audience, with Samantha's involvement expected to play a significant role in this effort.

On the professional front, Samantha is gearing up for her next major release, *Citadel: Honey Bunny*.

### PEANUTS



### CALVIN AND HOBBS

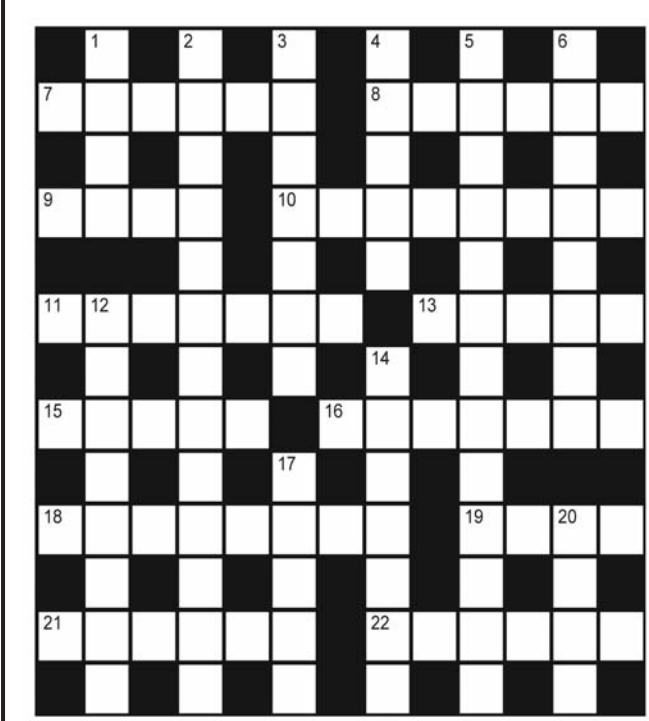


### BREVITY



### FUN post

### CROSSWORD



- Across**  
7 Salad ingredient  
8 Sparse  
9 Netting  
10 Like some fame  
11 Stalemate  
13 Chimborazo locale  
15 Wedding helper  
16 Herring  
18 It will croak
- Down**  
19 Mountain lion  
21 Large lizard  
22 Nagana carrier
- Across**  
4 Irish revolutionary  
5 Hair colour (4-3-6)  
6 Splendour  
12 Underestimate  
14 Antsy  
17 African village of huts  
20 Ponder

### 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.

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

### SOLUTIONS

**CROSSWORD**

L	G	L	S	B	C
D	N	A	M	O	E
N	A	M	O	E	N
L	E	A	D	G	E
E	A	A	N	B	A
U	M	B	R	A	L
A	O	B	A	K	L
I	N	E	R	T	C
D	H	D	O	C	E
M	A	T	E	R	I
R	B	A	O	I	T
R	I	G	O	U	R
N	K	Y	Y	N	H

**SUDOKU**

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

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW





## CISF at RG Kar

Around 150 personnel of CISF are being deployed at Kolkata's RG Kar Medical College and Hospital following an order of the SC

NATIONAL | P7



## Ukraine hits Moscow

Ukraine attacks Moscow with at least 11 drones that were shot down by air defences, in one of the biggest drone strikes on the Russian capital

INTERNATIONAL | P8



## CCI flags concerns

CCI flags possible anti-competitive concerns with respect to the proposed \$8.5-billion Viacom18-Star India merger

BUSINESS | P9



## Shah next ICC chief

BCCI president Jay Shah is all set to become the next ICC chairman once incumbent Greg Barclay's tenure ends in November

SPORTS | BACK PAGE

www.orissapost.com

BHUBANESWAR | THURSDAY AUGUST 22, 2024

P1

# Hooch claims 2 lives; ruckus in Assembly

PNN & AGENCIES

**Berhampur/Bhubaneswar, August 21:** The death toll in the Ganjam spurious liquor case rose to two Wednesday, after one more person undergoing treatment at MKCG Medical College & Hospital died, police said.

At least 15 people were receiving treatment at the medical facility after they fell ill after consuming illicit country liquor Monday.

The incident has sparked a political row as the issue was raised in the Assembly with the Opposition BJD demanding a probe by an RDC-level officer into the tragedy. Loknath Behera of Jenasahi died during treatment at the hospital Wednesday, while 60-year-old Jura Behera of the same village succumbed Tuesday night.

Excise minister Prithviraj Harichandan Wednesday directed the transfer of the excise superintendent of Berhampur. "All the persons involved in

such cases will be traced and strict punishment will be imposed as per law," he said.

The minister informed that as many as eight people have been arrested so far in the liquor death case in Chikiti.

"We demand the state government to inform the House about the actions taken in the incident so far. The BJP came to power with the slogan of regulating liquor, but now a hooch tragedy is taking place," Opposition chief whip Pramila Mallik said.

Congress MLA Taraprasad Bahinapati demanded adequate compensation to the families of liquor tragedy victims and stringent action against the persons responsible for the circulation of spurious liquor in Chikiti area.

BJP MLA from Chikiti, Manoranjan Dyan Samantray, blamed the previous BJD government for the tragedy and alleged that the people linked to the liquor business in the area are connected to the regional party.



**MOMENT TO CHERISH:** Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi poses with the Olympic bronze medal-winning Indian hockey team in Bhubaneswar, Wednesday (Report back page)

OP PHOTO

## IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Yesterday, I made tough decisions in the national interest. So, what U-turns do I need to take today for voters' interest?

# 151 MPs, MLAs face cases of crimes against women

West Bengal tops the list with 25 sitting MPs and MLAs facing charges related to crimes against women, followed by Andhra Pradesh with 21, according to an ADR report

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, August 21:** As many as 151 sitting MPs and MLAs have declared cases related to crimes against women in their election affidavits, with West Bengal having the highest number of lawmakers facing such cases, according to a recent report by a poll rights body.

For the report, the Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) examined 4,693 out of 4,809 affidavits of sitting MPs and MLAs submitted to the Election Commission of India during elections between 2019 and 2024. The organisation identified 16 MPs and 135 MLAs facing cases related to crimes against women.

West Bengal tops the list with 25 sitting MPs and MLAs facing charges related to crimes against women, followed by Andhra Pradesh with 21 and Odisha with 17, according to the report that comes amid the nationwide protests over the alleged rape and murder of a trainee doctor in a state-run hospital in Kolkata and sexual as-

- **BJP has the highest number of representatives (54 MPs and MLAs) with declared cases related to crimes against women, followed by the Congress with 23 and the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) with 17**
- **Both BJP and Congress have five sitting lawmakers each facing rape charges**
- **The report called for the fast-tracking of court cases against MPs and MLAs, ensuring professional and thorough investigations by police**

According to the report, there are 16 sitting MPs and MLAs who have declared cases related to rape under Indian Penal Code (IPC) Section 376, which carries a minimum sentence of 10 years and can be extended to life imprisonment. Of these, two are MPs and 14 MLAs.

The charges include repeated offenses against the same victim, further underscoring the gravity of these cases.

Among political parties, the BJP has the highest number of representatives (54 MPs and MLAs) with declared cases related to crimes against women, followed by the Congress with 23 and the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) with 17, according to the report.

Both BJP and Congress have five sitting lawmakers each facing rape charges.

The ADR has issued strong recommendations in response to these findings. It stressed on the need for political parties to refrain from giving tickets to candidates with criminal backgrounds, especially those with charges of rape and other crimes against women.

The report called for the fast-tracking of court cases against MPs and MLAs, ensuring professional and thorough investigations by police.

The ADR urged voters to avoid electing candidates with such charges.

sault of two children in Thane. The 17 from Odisha are MP Jual Oram (BJP) and MLAs Braja Kishore Pradhan (BJD), Sanatan Mahakud (BJD), Prakash Chandra Sethi (BJP), Krushna Chandra Patra (BJP), Prasanta Kumar Jagadev (BJP), Rabi Narayan Naik (BJP), Ashok Mohanty (BJP), Ashrit Pattanayak (BJP), Jayanarayan Mishra (BJP), Om Prakash Mishra (BJP), Prakash Soren (BJP), Suryabanshi Suraj Sthitaprajna (BJP), Pravati Parida (BJP), Ramesh Chandra Jena (Congress), Bijaya Kumar Dalabehera (Independent), and Himanshu Sekhar Sahoo (Independent), according to the ADR report.

## IAS RESHUFFLE

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, August 21:** The state government Wednesday effected a major bureaucratic reshuffle. R&DM department Additional Chief Secretary (ACS) Satyabrata Sahu was appointed as ACS to Home department.

ACS to Steel and Mines department Deoranjan Kumar Singh was appointed as ACS to R&DM department. ACS to GA&PG department Surendra Kumar was posted as ACS to Steel & Mines department.

Skill Development and Technical Education department Principal Secretary Usha Padhee was appointed as H&UD department Principal Secretary.

Industries department Special Secretary Vishal Gagan was appointed as Principal Resident Commissioner, Government of Odisha, New Delhi.

H&FW Commissioner-cum-Secretary Shalini Pandit was appointed as S&ME department Commissioner-cum-Secretary. S&ME Commissioner-cum-Secretary Aswathy S was posted as H&FW Commissioner-cum-Secretary.

ST & SC Development, Minorities and Backward Classes Welfare Commissioner-cum-Secretary Roopa Roshan Sahoo was appointed as RDC (South).

Tourism director Sachin Ramchandra Jadhav was posted as RDC (North).

OMC MD Balwant Singh was appointed as Tourism Commissioner-cum-Secretary. Consolidation Commissioner B Parameswaran was posted as RDC (Central). Similarly, Additional Chief Electoral Officer Noonsavath Thirumala Naik was appointed as BDA Vice-Chairman.

## RAJYA SABHA BYPOLL

# After Mohanta, Jagannath Pradhan files nomination

AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, August 21:** Hours after Kudumi community leader Mamata Mohanta filed her nomination as the BJP's official candidate for the Rajya Sabha bypoll Wednesday, another BJP leader Jagannath Pradhan also submitted his papers as an independent candidate, giving rise to speculations in political circles about a rift in the party.

He was accompanied 10 BJP MLAs - Agasti Behera, Durgaprasad Nayak, Raghunath Jagdala, Rupu Bhadra, Gourishankar Majhi, Dushmanta Kumar Swain, Laxman Bag, Umacharan Mallik, Prakash Soren and Manoranjan Dyan Samantray.

Odisha BJP in-charge Vijay Pal Singh Tomar, on the other hand, clarified that Mohanta is the official BJP nominee, while Pradhan is a 'dummy candidate' meant to safeguard Mohanta's position. "Mohanta is our official candidate and Pradhan is a dummy candidate. Pradhan has been fielded for safety of the party candidate. There should be no more discussions on Pradhan's candidature," Tomar said.

He emphasised that Pradhan's role is purely precautionary and that the party would proceed with its official candidate.

Pradhan had previously contested the Bhubaneswar-Central seat in the Assembly elections,

losing narrowly to BJD's Ananta Narayan Jena.

Earlier in the day, Mohanta, accompanied by Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, Tomar, and other party leaders, submitted her nomination papers to the returning officer at the Assembly.

Given the BJP's strong position in the 147-member Assembly, Mohanta is well-positioned to win the bypoll and secure the Rajya Sabha seat she vacated as a BJD member July 31. She joined the BJP the following day.

The BJP has 74 seats in the Odisha Assembly, compared to BJD's 51, Congress' 14, three Independents, and one CPI(M) legislator.

After submitting her papers, Mohanta expressed gratitude to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah, BJP president JP Nadda, and Majhi, pledging to work for the people of Odisha and her community.

Majhi expressed confidence in Mohanta's victory, saying, "We are optimistic that she will emerge as a winner and represent Odisha in the Rajya Sabha."

Mohanta had previously been elected to the Rajya Sabha as a BJD candidate in April 2020 but resigned with 18 months remaining in her six-year term.

Odisha has 10 Rajya Sabha seats - eight held by the BJD, one by the BJP, and one is currently vacant.

# Swift support latest in Trump's fake claims

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Washington, August 21:** Former US President Donald Trump has been active on his social media accounts as Democrats gather for their convention in Chicago, but some of his posts don't have much to do with reality.

Ahead of the Democratic National Convention, he posted a fake image of someone who looks like Vice President Kamala Harris addressing what appears to be a communist rally in Chicago with a depiction of a red banner with a communist symbol. That followed his repost of a phony video of himself dancing next to billionaire Elon Musk, one of his most vocal supporters.

Just before the convention kicked off, he reposted an image of Taylor Swift in an Uncle Sam



outfit and accepted her endorsement for his campaign, which she had never given.

They're the latest examples of how Trump is promoting in-

tegrity produced by artificial intelligence tools to attack his opponents or create illusions of support around his own campaign. It's in keeping with a long-

standing strategy in which Trump amplifies messages - from QAnon adherents to those who deny the results of fair elections - to score political points and satisfy his base by promoting alternate realities.

Some of the images and videos Trump has shared are cartoonish or obviously fake. Yet the rise in AI-generated content across political social media concerns experts who say it can be used to push more insidious and believable disinformation. As fake images, videos and audio clips created by generative AI models begin to saturate social media, they also risk eroding people's trust in what they see and hear.

"The AI-generated deepfakes of Taylor Swift are yet another example of AI's power to create misinformation that deceives and

defrauds voters," said Lisa Gilbert, co-president of Public Citizen, a progressive consumer rights advocacy group that has pushed for legislation to regulate AI.

One AI-generated image in Trump's Truth Social post, shared Sunday, showed women in "Swifties for Trump" shirts, a reference to the artist's devout fans. The fake image showing Swift dressed as Uncle Sam included text saying, "Taylor wants YOU to VOTE for DONALD TRUMP." In his repost of the image, Trump added, "I accept!"

One of the images Trump shared included a small satire label, though he didn't clarify whether he meant his post was in jest.

Swift, who remains on her world tour, has made no endorsement in this year's US presidential race.

# IAF fighter jet drops 'air store' near Pokhran

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Jaipur, August 21:** The Indian Air Force (IAF) Wednesday said one of its combat jets inadvertently released an 'air store' near the Pokhran firing range in Rajasthan following a technical glitch. There was no damage to life or property.

It said an inquiry has been ordered to investigate the incident. "An inadvertent release of an air store from an Indian Air Force (IAF) fighter aircraft took place near Pokhran firing range area, due to technical malfunction, today," the IAF said on 'X'.

The nature of the 'air store' released by the aircraft is not immediately known. In military parlance, anything attached to an



aircraft or part of it is called an 'air store'. Bombs, missiles, munitions and even fuel tanks are also referred to as 'air store'.

Sub-Inspector of Ramdevra police station, Shankar Lal, said some people heard a loud bang about a kilometre away from the village following which they rushed to the spot and found pieces of an object lying around.



# E-farming app & portal launched



**The digital crop survey programme will promote progressive agriculture policy and provide accurate information on crop yields in remote and inaccessible areas**

**KV SINGH DEO**  
DEPUTY CHIEF MINISTER & MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS' EMPOWERMENT

## ODISHA FIRST STATE IN THE COUNTRY TO ADOPT DIGITAL SURVEY POLICY IN AGRICULTURE

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

**Bhubaneswar, August 21:** Deputy Chief Minister and Minister for Agriculture and Farmers' Empowerment KV Singh Deo launched the e-farming app and portal to facilitate crop production and processing by implementing the digital survey policy in agriculture at Odisha University of Agriculture and Technology (OUAT) here Wednesday.

The launch event was held in the presence of Agriculture and

Farmers' Empowerment Principal Secretary Arabinda Padhee, Agriculture Director Prem Chandra Chaudhary, OUAT VC Pravat Kumar Roul and several agronomists and farm experts.

Speaking on the occasion, Deo said, "Odisha is the first state to adopt the digital survey policy in agriculture and about 48 lakh farmers will benefit from this app and portal.

"Based on the data, it will be helpful to formulate progressive policies in the field of agriculture," he said.

"The digital crop survey programme across the state will promote progressive agriculture policy and provide accurate information on crop yields in remote and inaccessible areas," Deo added.

Padhee said, "The e-farming app and portal is a pioneering ini-

tiative in the field of agriculture. This will provide farmers with a decentralised, single window platform. Through this, crop related data and information can be checked at any time and in any weather."

"In 2023, this survey was tested as a pilot project in Bhadrak, Deogarh, Nuapada and Nayagarh districts. After successfully surveying about 30 lakh plots, it has now been extended to other areas of Odisha," he said.

"The survey will be conducted in 48 lakh hectares of land. As many as 28,000 surveyors, 8,000 supervisors and 1400 inspectors have been employed for the exercise," said Padhee.

Chaudhary said that farmers can get accurate information about digital crop surveys, report their problems and get guidance. Farmers can get information and advice through Krushak Samrudhi Helpline -155333.



**IN THE FRAY:** BJP leader Jagannath Pradhan files his nomination for Rajya Sabha bypoll as an Independent candidate in Bhubaneswar, Wednesday. OP PHOTO

## KIMS HOSTS 'NEURO UPDATE 2024'

# Neurologists share stroke prevention tips

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, August 21:** The Kalinga Institute of Medical Sciences (KIMS), under the aegis of Neurology Association of Odisha (NAO), hosted the first 'KIMS Neuro Update 2024' here Wednesday.

The event brought together leading neurology experts from across the country to discuss the latest advancements and research in the field of neurosciences.

Among the distinguished speakers was P Satishchandra, a foremost epileptologist who



is associated with KIMS as a professor emeritus.

Speaking on the occasion, Satishchandra shared his insights on stroke prevention and cure, emphasising the importance of recognising the

signs of a stroke and acting swiftly.

"Family members should remember the 'BE FAST' acronym where the stroke-affected patient will show signs of sudden loss of balance (B), trouble see-

ing in both eyes (E), facial drooping (F), weakness in arm (A), difficulty in speaking (S) and time to call emergency service (T)," he added.

"Preventing a stroke is far better than treating one," he quoted.

KIIT and KISS founder Achyuta Samanta inaugurated the event. Over 100 distinguished neurologists from various parts of the country participated, contributing their expertise and insights at the conference. The NAO expressed gratitude to Samanta for his invaluable support of the event.

## Ten held, including 3 minors, for burglary

**Bhubaneswar:** The Badagada Police Wednesday arrested ten persons, including three minors, who allegedly broke into a retired judge's house and decamped with gold ornaments and articles worth around ₹2 lakh. Addressing the media persons, ACP Sone IV Manas Kumar Deo said the accused are identified as Rahul Dhala, Rabi Sethi, Ramesh Sethi, Basudev Kanhar, Kishor Lenka, Raju Dash and Narendra Kumar Patra. The arrested minors, however, would be produced before Juvenile Justice Board (JJB) for further counseling. Deo said miscreants broke open the main gate of the house and burgled gold ornaments, when the complainant had gone to his sister's house in Jaipur for Rakhi Purnima August 17. As he returned after two days, he found that the house was burgled. He filed a complaint at Badagada police station.

# SDTE boosts collaborations for job market

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, August 21:** In a significant event at the World Skill Center (WSC) here, Skill Development and Technical Education (SDTE) Minister Sampad Chandra Swain inaugurated series of skill development initiatives under the Nua Odisha scheme, Wednesday.

The inauguration ceremony was attended by SDTE Principal Secretary Usha Padhee, Higher Education department Commissioner-cum-Secretary Aravind Agrawal, and other senior officials from the concerned departments.

The initiatives, in collaboration with the Higher Education department are aimed at equipping youth with advanced skills required to meet the employability demands of an ever-evolving global job market.

A key highlight of the initiatives is the collaboration between SDTE and Coursera, which aims to provide access to 6,000

## EMPOWERING VIKSIT ODISHA'S YOUTH



world-class courses to youth across all 30 districts of the state. The digital skilling initiative is set to bridge geographical gaps and enhance access to high-quality education.

A total of 100,000 Coursera licenses will be distributed to learners from diverse academic backgrounds, including those enrolled in higher educational

institutions, ITIs, and polytechnics across the state.

Customised learning tracks have been developed for BTech, Polytechnic and ITI students. The initiative will enable students to engage with personalised and industry-relevant curricula offered by leading institutions such as Google, Microsoft, IBM, and Amazon.

In another significant development, SDTE has partnered with IIT-Delhi to launch an upskilling programme, focused on future technologies. The collaboration will provide training and certification to 4,000 youths in areas, including Blockchain Development, Augmented Reality, Virtual Reality, Artificial Intelligence (AI), and the Internet of Things (IoT). The programme will be launched in Kalahandi, Bhawanipatna, and Cuttack.

To date, 1,670 candidates from over 130 institutions have registered for these cutting-edge courses.

Further broadening the scope of opportunities, SDTE has forged a strategic partnership with AISATS, GMR and Bird group to offer certifications in aviation, under the Nua Odisha scheme. Currently, 40 trainees are undergoing aviation training in Hyderabad, preparing for certification in ground handling and airport operations.

## Road, rail services partially affected

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, August 21:** The day-long Bharat Bandh call by Dalit and Adivasi groups to protest against the Supreme Court's recent verdict on the sub-classification of Scheduled Castes (SCs) partially affected rail and road communications in the state, Wednesday.

Government offices, banks, business establishments and educational institutions functioned normally, the twin city Commissionerate Police said.

The Home department, in a note Tuesday, said, "... advised officers and employees of various departments working in the state Secretariat and heads of department building to reach office by 9.30 am." Security was beefed up in the state Secretariat, heads of department building and other important places in the state.

The agitators detained trains at Bhubaneswar and Sambalpur; while passenger buses did not operate on different routes. The protestors also staged demon-

## BHARAT BANDH



strations in different places and blocked national highways.

The agitators detained Visakha Express at Bhubaneswar railway station for some time. They also blocked Sambalpur-Puri and Sambalpur-Rayagada trains at Khetrarajpur station in Sambalpur. However, the train operation became normal after police evacuated the agitators from the tracks. Reports of road blockade were also received from Cuttack, Sambalpur, Bolangir, Malkangiri, Sundargarh, Keonjhar and other places.

## CLASSIFIED AFFIDAVIT

I, Subham Das, S/o Late Sisir Kumar Das, permanent resident of At-Ramanpada, P.O./P.S.-Bhawanipatna, Dist.-Kalahandi, presently residing At- Bye-Pass Road near Bapujinagar, P.O./P.S.-Jeypore Town, Dist.-Koraput (Odisha) do hereby solemnly affirm and oath that my original Sale Deed along (Document No. 3221/1995) along with original RoR (Khata No.988/406) and Survey Plot No.874/1483/2136 measuring to extent of Ac-0.0510 decimals under Mouza Laxmanpur, Tahasil- Jeypore (Koraput), has been misplaced / lost by me on dated 18.08.2024 while I was coming from Bhawanipatna to Jeypore.

# City IIT develops solar-powered reactor for waste mgmt

PNN & AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, August 21:** A research team from the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT)-Bhubaneswar has developed a solar-powered microwave pyrolysis reactor designed to recover valuable resources from both segregated and mixed waste materials, including biomass and plastics.

The reactor uses microwave-assisted pyrolysis to rapidly convert waste into valuable products such as highly porous carbonaceous material (biochar) and bio-oil, depending on the feedstock and operating conditions, the institute stated Wednesday.

Pyrolysis is the heating of an organic material such as biomass in the absence of oxygen.

Current solid waste management practices mainly involve incineration, biogas plants, or land-



fill disposal which offer limited recycling opportunities. While incineration serves as an alternative to land filling, it often leads to significant environmental pollution through the release of

toxic gases and ash, it said.

The microwave-assisted pyrolysis technology developed by IIT-Bhubaneswar's School of Infrastructure offers a promising solution to these challenges,

Current solid waste management practices mainly involve incineration, biogas plants, or landfill disposal which offer limited recycling opportunities.

While incineration serves as an alternative to land filling, it often leads to significant environmental pollution through the release of toxic gases and ash

the statement added.

"Microwave-assisted pyrolysis produces valuable end products like biochar, bio-oil, and syngas in a very short time, addressing the urgent need for sustainable waste management," said Remya Neelancherry, the lead researcher.

"Our research at IIT-Bhubaneswar focuses on the feasibility and applicability of these products across various sectors, including agriculture, trans-

portation, and energy production," Neelancherry added.

This environment-friendly technology can be implemented by municipalities and industries in various locations within cities, offering the potential for significant revenue generation with minimal pollution compared to incineration and other conventional waste management techniques, Neelancherry said.

Depending on waste management needs, the technology can be implemented with either a fixed bed reactor or a fluidised bed reactor, Neelancherry added.

"Research indicates promising potential for this technology to positively impact the alternative energy market. We encourage investors to explore this technology, ensuring environmental protection while fostering market growth," Neelancherry said.

## SIM BOX RACKET NIA member in City for probe

**Bhubaneswar:** A day after Commissionerate Police seized five SIM boxes from Ranchi and arrested another individual, a member of the National Investigation Agency (NIA) Wednesday arrived in the City to investigate the suspected angles of terrorism and anti-national activities linked with the case. Sources in the police said the NIA official visited the Police Seva headquarters early morning to obtain discreet details of the accused, Raju Mandal, a native of West Bengal. Later he moved to the Laxmisagar police station to access additional data of Mandal for the investigation. According to the top cops, the NIA will dig deeper into the case to unmask critical details involving the alleged links of Mandal with the Bangladeshi national, Asadur Rahman, related to SIM box setups. The national probe agency might seek a five-day remand before the court for interrogation of Mandal.

## FOR CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS CONTACT OUR BOOKING STATIONS

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



# Koraput sees uptick in Malaria cases

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Koraput/Sunabeda/Semiliguda, August 21:** Malaria has acquired an alarming proportion in Koraput district as the district administration is allegedly not taking enough measures for control of the vector-borne disease.

The disease continues to spread its tentacles in the district sparking concern among the residents. According to reports available from the district Health department, blood samples of 4, 62,734 persons were taken for malaria tests in 2022, out of which 2,830 persons were found affected of the disease.

In 2023, 5,43,080 blood samples were examined and 7,007 were found positive. Similarly, in 2024 3,22,812 blood samples were taken for test and 5,500 persons were found positive by July end showing an increasing trend.

The dengue fever case count is also spiraling in the district. Blood samples of 8,309 persons underwent test and 509 were



found positive in 2022. In 2023, blood samples of 6,594 persons underwent test out of which 160 were tested positive for dengue.

Similarly, by August 19 this year, blood samples of 2,371 persons were taken for test and 40 persons tested positive for the disease.

When enquired, district malaria officer Susant Das said that various measures are being taken by the district Health department for control of vector borne diseases like malaria and

dengue. An official has been specially engaged in every municipality area to keep a tab on the spread of the diseases.

ASHA workers, members of Gram Kalyan Samiti and Anganwadi workers are being trained and put on alert in their respective areas. They have been asked to admit the persons suffering from fever in hospitals in both rural and urban areas.

Anganwadi workers are also visiting every house in their areas and sensitising people on

the measures to stay safe from malaria and dengue, he added.

On the other hand, many areas under Sunabeda Municipality become waterlogged. Muddy water has stagnated at various spots due to the torrential rainfall which lashed the district in past weeks. This has given rise to mosquito menace in various wards resulting in spread of malaria and dengue fever in these areas, residents alleged.

However, the local civic body authorities are not taking any preventive measure like fogging, sprinkling of mosquito oil and cleaning of drains in the wards, locals alleged.

When contacted, executive officer Narayan Nayak of Sunabeda Municipality said fogging is done on a regular basis in various wards while phenyl, mosquito oils and bleaching powder are also being applied. Moreover, Swachh Sathis are visiting every house in the civic body area and conducting malaria survey, he added.



**LIVELIHOOD MATTERS:** An artisan casting a clay idol of Lord Ganesh ahead of Ganesh Chaturthi in Buguda area of Ganjam district, Wednesday

## 8 more killed in lightning strikes

PNN & AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, August 21:** At least eight people were killed in lightning strikes in different districts of the state Wednesday, taking the toll to 24 in the past four days. Additionally, five people suffered serious burn injuries after being outdoors during lightning strikes.

All the deceased were farmers who were struck while working in their fields. The tragic incidents occurred in Kendrapara, Balasore, Bhadrak and Dhenkanal districts Wednesday according to official reports. Most of the victims are from rural areas, primarily engaged in agricultural activities.

Condoling the fatalities, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi announced an ex-gratia amount of ₹1 lakh each for the bereaved families. The injured will also receive free medical treatment and financial assistance in accordance with disaster regulations, as stated by an official from the Revenue and Disaster Management department.

It is noteworthy that the state experiences approximately 300 lightning-related deaths annually. In response to this natural calamity, the state government has started an extensive campaign to plant palm trees, which experts believe can help mitigate lightning strikes.

## Huge cache of cough syrup seized in Sambalpur; 4 held

**THE APPROXIMATE COST OF THE SEIZED COUGH SYRUP IS ESTIMATED TO BE ₹7 LAKH**



**Sambalpur, August 21:** Excise department officials here seized 2,400 bottles of banned cough syrup while conducting raids at Sindurapanka and Choudhury Chhak area under Sadar police limits in this district, Wednesday. Four persons including the mastermind were arrested in this regard.

The four arrested persons were identified as Manoj Kumar Pruseth, 39, resident of Ladukhai village, Jitu Sahu, 30, resident of Goshala area, Gurumel Singh, 55, resident of Tekanaka in Nagpur district of Maharashtra and Bijinder Singh, 38, resident of Pabarali village in Gurudaspur district of Punjab. Manoj is the mastermind.

Police seized the mini truck along with cough syrup and a motorcycle from the possession of the accused.

According to information pro-

vided by Additional Excise Superintendent Asit Mallick, the department got a tip-off about a truck with the consignment of banned cough syrup coming to Sambalpur from Kolkata. Acting on the tip-off, the Excise sleuths of Sambalpur Sadar were waiting near Padiabahal on NH-55 to catch the vehicle.

While checking, a mini truck (MH 04-CT-0946) did not stop at the check point and fled the

scene. After chasing the vehicle, the excise sleuths managed to stop it near Choudhury Chhak around 5am.

While checking, they found huge stock of the banned contraband along with some machinery inside the truck. As the driver of the truck could not produce valid documents, the Excise sleuths seized the truck and arrested the truck driver along with other three accused.

The approximate cost of the seized cough syrup is estimated to be ₹7 lakh, said Mallick. He said that the prime accused Manoj had been arrested earlier in the banned cough syrup smuggling case and many cases are pending against him in the court.

## SIBLINGS KILL WOMAN OVER PAST ENMITY

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Baripada, August 21:** Two siblings killed a woman by slitting her throat over past enmity at Mendhamundi village under Raruan police limits in Mayurbhanj district, police said Wednesday.



The deceased was identified as Manguli Purty, 27, wife of Nalia Naik in the village. The accused siblings identified as Sana Pingua and Sonu Pingua surrendered at the police station after committing the crime. Police registered a case and produced the duo in court Wednesday. Police accompanied by a scientific team have launched an investigation into the matter.

The incident occurred Tuesday evening when the woman was at her residence with her husband and three children. The siblings came near their house and picked up a quarrel with her over past enmity. Sana flew into rage after the deceased retorted.

He took out a sharp-edged weapon and slit the woman's throat while his brother caught hold of her husband. The woman's husband raised an alarm to save his wife but no one in the village dared to come to the spot to rescue them.

Bleeding profusely and with no help coming, the woman died on the spot.

## Juvenile Maoist carrying ₹2L reward on head surrenders

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Malkangiri, August 21:** A 17-year-old Maoist, carrying a bounty of ₹2 lakh on his head, surrendered before the police in Malkangiri district Wednesday.

The boy, who hails from Sukma district of Chhattisgarh, joined the banned CPI (Maoist) last year, Malkangiri Superintendent of Police Nitesh Wadhvani said.

"He was involved in five major attacks in recent past," Wadhvani told reporters adding that he was influenced by the Odisha and India governments' appeal to join the mainstream.

The state government has announced a cash reward of ₹2 lakh on his head, the SP said. "The surrendered cadre will be properly rehabilitated and will receive monetary assistance as per the Surrender and Rehabilitation Scheme of the Government of Odisha. He will also get financial assistance for building a house, pursuing studies and getting training in a trade or vocation of his will," a statement issued by the police said.

Odisha Police also appealed to all the active Maoist cadres to join the mainstream and become part of the development process of the state as well as the nation.

## Bandh peaceful in Sundargarh; rural areas remain unaffected



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Rourkela, August 21:** The 12-hour Bharat bandh called by various organisations representing the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, was a success in Sundargarh district and passed off peacefully sans any violence or law and order situation.

The public transport unions, which also supported the bandh call, kept vehicles off the road. The Mo Bus which

operated for some time also stopped operation after 9am in the morning. There was no forcible closure of schools. However some of the leading schools and institutes of higher education remained closed as students did not turn up.

Meanwhile, production in some of the industrial units remained unaffected. Sources in Rourkela Steel Plant (RSP) informed that the attendance was above 99 per cent and production was not affected. Sundargarh MCL's production remained unaffected despite the bandh.

Some effect was visible in the urban areas. However, most of the rural areas remained unaffected. At Rourkela, Sundargarh, Biramitrapur, Bonai, and Rajgangpur the bandh was successful as banks, offices remained closed. Police officials informed that the bandh was peaceful.

## Workshop on horseshoe crab conservation

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Balasore, August 21:** A two-day national workshop on conservation of Indian Horseshoe crabs and associated organisms was held at Fakir Mohan University recently.

The workshop was inaugurated by the varsity's Vice-Chancellor Santosh Kumar Tripathy in the presence of the Chairman of PG Council Bhaskar Behera.

The workshop touched upon regular monitoring programmes, habitat restoration projects, and educational outreach initiatives for conservation of the rare species.

The programme was organised by the collaborative efforts of the PG department of Zoology with Bioscience and Biotechnology department in association with Zoological Survey of India.

Emeritus, Don Bosco University Sushil Kumar Dutta, RCCF Baripada Prakash Chandra Gogineni, former



WII scientist BC Chaudhury and former NIA-GOA scientist Anil Chatterjee were among the guests of the workshop.

The event fostered collaboration among various stakeholders, including scientists, conservationists, local authorities and the community to ensure the long-term conservation of horseshoe crabs.

"This workshop has been an eye-opener for many of us. The knowledge

shared here will undoubtedly contribute to the better protection of horseshoe crabs," said a participant and local conservationist.

"Horseshoe crabs are a vital part of our coastal ecosystems. We must work together to ensure their survival," stated a marine biologist and speaker at the event.

The workshop was a resounding success bringing together diverse stakeholders to discuss and develop strategies for the protection of these ancient and ecologically significant creatures. The event highlighted the need for ongoing conservation efforts and community involvement to safeguard horseshoe crab populations for future generations.

Bharat Bhusan Patnaik and Bishnu Prasad Dash coordinated the 2-day workshop, while Niladri Bhushan Kar took the responsibility of organising secretary. Manojit Bhattachary hosted the programme and led all technical sessions.

<b>Bank of India</b> Zonal Office : Star House, 1/1D, Jayadev Vihar, Nayapalli, Bhubaneswar-751015		<b>POSSESSION NOTICE</b> [Rule-8(1)] of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules-2002	
Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of the Bank of India, Gopalpur Branch under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a Demand Notice calling upon the Borrower/Co-Borrower/Guarantors in the loan account given below to repay the amount mentioned in the Notice plus interest & expenses thereon within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said Notice. The Borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrower/Co-Borrower/Guarantors and the public in general that the undersigned has taken Possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under Sub-Section (4) of Section 13 of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules. The Borrower/Co-Borrower/Guarantors in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the Bank of India, Gopalpur Branch for an amount mentioned below with interest & expenses thereon. The Borrower's attention is invited to provisions of Sub-Section (8) of Section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available to redeem the secured assets.			
<b>GOPALPUR BRANCH / Name &amp; Address of Borrower/Co-Borrower/Guarantors</b>		<b>Liabilities due as per Notice</b>	<b>Date of Demand Notice / Date of Possession</b>
<b>1) (For Cash Credit &amp; Term Loan) Borrower: Mrs. Aryakanya Maharana, W/o: Mr. Samarendra Kumar Maharana / Guarantors: 1) Mr. Samarendra Kumar Maharana, S/o: Mr. Prafulla Kumar Maharana, S/o: Mr. Prafulla Kumar Maharana, S/o: Late Krishna Chandra Maharana, All are At: Thoriasahi, Buxibazar, Cuttack-753001. 2) (For Housing Loan) Borrower: Mr. Samarendra Kumar Maharana, S/o: Mr. Prafulla Kumar Maharana / Co-Borrower: Mrs. Aryakanya Maharana, W/o: Mr. Samarendra Kumar Maharana / Guarantor: Mr. Prafulla Kumar Maharana, S/o: Late Krishna Chandra Maharana, All are At: Thoriasahi, Buxibazar, Cuttack-753001</b>		<b>₹ 26,32,806.58 + interest &amp; expenses thereon</b>	<b>27.04.2023 / 17.08.2024</b>
<b>Description of the Immovable Property</b>		<b>All that part and parcel of the Land and Building situated over Plot No.: 4, Khata No.: 37 D1, Area: Ac.0.16 Dec, Mouza: Cuttack Sahar Unit No.: 22 Mirkamalpatna, P.S.: Mangalbagh, Tahasil/SRO: Cuttack, Dist.: Cuttack, Standing in the name of Mr. Prafulla Kumar Maharana, Bounded by Maharana, North: Ghasisahi Lane, South: Road, East: Mahadev Maharana (Plot No.: 1352), West: Road</b>	
<b>Place: Bhubaneswar, Date: 22.08.2024</b>		<b>Authorised Officer, Bank of India</b>	

<b>Bank of India</b> Zonal Office: Bhubaneswar Zone, 1/1D, Star House, Jayadev Vihar, Nayapalli, Bhubaneswar, Ph.: 0674-2362249		<b>E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE</b> E-Auction Sale Notice Under SARFAESI ACT, 2002	
Where as the Bank acting through its Authorised Officer in exercise of its powers under-Section 13(4) of Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 (SARFAESI) has decided to put up for E-auction of the following property "As is where is", "As is what is" and "Whatever there is" basis for realization of the debts due to the Bank.			
Sl. No.	BRANCH/ Name & Address of the Borrower / Co-Borrowers/ Total Dues	Description of the Property	Reserve Price / EMD / Bid Increment Amount
1.	<b>SATYABADI BRANCH, PH.: 8249589889, 9040725742/ Borrower: Mr. Shrikanta Pradhan/ Co-Borrowers: 1) Mr. Prashant Kumar Pradhan, 2) Mrs. Basanti Dei alias Basanti Pradhan, All are at Plot No.: 1229, Khata No.: 366/87, Mouza: Jayapur, Sakhipogal, Satyabadi Block, Puri, Odisha / Total Dues: ₹3,41,736/- + interest, costs and expenses, less any part amount repaid.</b>	Ground Floor Residential Building on Khata No.: 366/87, Plot No.: 1229, Plot Area: Ac.0.030 Dec. i.e. 1306 Sqft., Mouza: Satyabadi, Tahasil: Satyabadi, Thana No.: 140, Dist.: Puri, Odisha, Standing in the name of <b>Mrs. Basanti Pradhan</b> , W/o: Mr. Lokanath Pradhan, Bounded by East: Mr. Narasingha Parida, West: Mr. Purna Chandra Kar, North: Road, South: Panchayat Pond.	<b>₹22,15,000/- (excluding GST &amp; other statutory dues) / ₹2,21,500/- / ₹10,000/-</b>
<b>Date &amp; Time of E-Auction : 26.09.2024 From 11.00 A.M. to 5.00 P.M. with unlimited extension of 10 (Ten) minutes each.</b>			
<b>Last date for submission of EMD &amp; Documents: 25.09.2024 upto 4.00 P.M.</b>			
<b>Inspection will be provided to the prospective bidders on any working day is before 25.09.2024 with prior appointment of the authorised officer</b>			
<b>The sale shall be subject to the terms and conditions and provisions prescribed in the SARFAESI Act 2002 read with the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002.</b>			
<b>This is also a 30 days sale notice to the Borrower(s)/Guarantor(s)/Mortgagor(s) of the aforesaid loan account for settlement of their outstanding dues with the Bank and to participate in the public auction on the above mentioned date. For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided in https://ebkraj.in</b>			
<b>Place: Bhubaneswar, Date: 22.08.2024</b>		<b>Authorised Officer, Bank of India</b>	



Let us keep flaming in our heart the fire of progress.

THE MOTHER



# Populism's Lost Summer

Think back to late June and early July. The French far right was favoured to win a snap parliamentary election. Trumpist judges in the United States were conveniently resolving the legal woes of the former president, who seemed to be gliding to victory after President Joe Biden's disastrous debate performance. And while Britain was getting a Labour government, a new anti-immigration party led by the chief Brexiteer, Nigel Farage, had made unprecedented gains. Faced with it all, pundits warned that a wave of populist, "anti-incumbency" rage was sweeping across the world's democracies.

The commentariat's bleak outlook should since have been tempered by new sources of political hope. Not only is there little evidence of a "populist wave" – a metaphor that conjures images of far-right parties inevitably rising to power in many countries – but recent experience suggests workable strategies for countering such forces.

One lesson from the past few months might sound like a truism: All parties that value democracy must unite to face down anti-democratic threats. This is what happened in France, to many pundits' surprise. Left-wing parties formed the New Popular Front, evoking memories of the fight against fascism in the 1930s, when the socialist leader Léon Blum led a coalition of Communists, socialists, and liberals to defend the republic.

After President Emmanuel Macron's surprise decision to dissolve the National Assembly, the left got creative, while Marine Le Pen's far-right National Rally was caught flat-footed. But more to the point, the New Popular Front did not merely appeal to abstract democratic values; it also repeatedly called attention to the far right's pro-business plans, making clear that the National Rally is not the pro-worker party that it claims to be.

A second lesson comes from the US, where few anticipated the enthusiasm and outpouring of joy that would greet the new Democratic ticket. Vice President Kamala Harris, an incumbent, has masterfully presented herself as a representative of change, in contrast to both former US President Donald Trump and the sitting president, Biden. Her pick for vice president, Minnesota Governor Tim Walz, has delighted many with his characterisation of the Republican ticket, particularly Trump's vice-presidential pick, JD Vance, as "weird." Finally, it seems, Democrats play the kind of rhetorical hardball that the right always has.

Of course, self-declared centrists preaching civil discourse are less pleased. They are reminding Democrats that Hillary Clinton's comments about "deplorables" came to haunt her 2016 campaign. Yet to condemn the "weird" label as childish name-calling misses the point. In the fight against far-right populism, this particular epithet can be especially effective.

After all, in claiming to speak for "the real people" or the "the silent majority," far-right populists are presenting themselves as the representatives of normality. In Germany, one of the far-right Alternative für Deutschland's slogans is: Deutschland, aber normal. The populists' supposed base comprises what are always presented as "ordinary people" who are threatened by nefarious elites and dangerous Others. That is how populists incite fear of already-vulnerable minorities, be they refugees or transgender people.

Savvy anti-populists should concentrate their rhetorical fire on populist leaders, rather than on their supporters. Vance is "weird" because he is obsessed with controlling women's bodies and punishing the childless, and because he appears sympathetic toward monarchists and other assorted alt-right figures. The GOP now holds many positions that are far out of step with US political traditions; open admiration for autocrats is an obvious example. One can point all this out without suggesting that Republican voters themselves are weird. The point is to dispute the claim to normality by leaders who are anything but.

The far-right populists who claim to speak for the silent majority in fact represent a loud minority. There is nothing wrong with that as such; plenty of progressive movements started the same way. But movements that pretend to speak for the majority while vilifying everyone else pose a threat to democracy. It is no accident that populists who lose at the ballot box often resort to accusations of fraud. Since they supposedly represent the silent majority, an electoral loss can be attributed only to foul play, usually by "liberal elites" who supposedly somehow silenced the majority.

Anti-populists should recognise that majorities do not in fact support far-right populist forces. The new Labour government's first few weeks in power have confirmed this salutary insight. The country has experienced its worst riots in more than a decade, as disinformation has fuelled racist violence. While being careful not to endorse violence directly, Farage has made it sound like the rioters have legitimate grievances shared by the silent majority. But polls show that only one in three Britons support the broader anti-migration protests, whereas opposition to the riots is overwhelming.

True, the argument "We are more!" – a slogan coined by anti-populist protesters in Germany – only goes so far. While the far right falsely claims a monopoly on normality, the truth is that far-right parties are becoming normalised as more center-right politicians copy their rhetoric or enter coalitions with them. A stance focused on defending democracy is necessary, but not sufficient, to counter this trend; one must offer a positive vision, too. That is what the French left and UK Labour both did this summer.

Those canvassing for Harris will be asked on doorsteps what she truly stands for, beyond being an alternative to Trump-Vance weirdness. It is a legitimate question, and one for which anti-populists must provide a good answer.

The writer is Professor of Politics at Princeton University.

PROJECT SYNDICATE

## FOCUS NON-VIOLENCE

# PRINCIPLED OR PRAGMATIC

The consensus among international relations scholars for a long time has been that violence has been the most efficacious method of achieving political ends. In recent years, the axiomatic nature of this claim has been challenged by political developments as well as the emergence of new scholarship. In the last two decades, we have witnessed a massive spate of organised non-violent civilian protests against the establishment across different societies. Prominent instances include the overthrow of Slobodan Milošević in Serbia, the Rose Revolution in Georgia, the Orange revolution in Ukraine, the Cedar revolution in Lebanon and the 2006 democracy movement in Nepal.



Anwesh Satpathy

**GANDHI'S PRINCIPLED NON-VIOLENCE CONSISTED OF A RADICAL ONTOLOGY THAT CONCERNED BOTH LARGER POLITICAL MOVEMENT AS WELL AS A STRUGGLE WITH THE INDIVIDUAL SELF**

The literature on explaining the reasons for the success of non-violent movements has been steadily becoming extensive. While it is easier for the state to justify violence against armed insurgents, violence against non-violent protesters is likely to backfire on the establishment. The masses at large may see violent militants as having undesirable extremist goals, as is the case with Naxalites in India. Non-violent protesters, on the other hand, are seen as virtuous and a legitimate expression of the public mood on the street. As the prominent political theorist Gene Sharp points out, non-violence is characterised by the actions of people, not beliefs. Thus, non-violence is essentially "an alternative weapons system."

Pragmatic or strategic non-violence does not demand any personal or moral commitment to non-violence. A commitment to non-violent lifestyle, such as the one that Mahatma Gandhi led, are often considered to be impractical by proponents of pragmatic non-violence. Pragmatic non-violence looks at physical violence as impractical.



In the last two decades, we have witnessed a massive spate of organised non-violent civilian protests against the establishment across different societies

It does not concern itself with what is morally correct but on what is most effective. Pragmatic non-violence is seen as a means to a political end. Thus, it focuses on short-term goals like the overthrow of an oppressive regime, the eradication of corruption or the withdrawal of oppressive laws. Principled non-violence, on the other hand, seeks to eradicate violence in all forms. Due to its belief in non-violence as an alternate weapons system, pragmatic non-violence focuses its attention towards articulating various types of protest tactics and civil disobedience to unjust laws and illegitimate regimes.

Even though pragmatic non-violent protests have proven to be effective in the short-run, its long-term efficacy is still debated. Proponents of principled violence are understandably critical and wary of the violence that lies at the heart of a state. This is evident in the works of Leo Tolstoy. For Tolstoy, the essence of slavery lay in the existence of legislation itself i.e. the idea that few people have the right to decree law in their interest. War, or violence, is merely the result of the state keeping armies. Tolstoy considered human beings to be irrational and thus found no jus-

tification at all for governmental violence. While Tolstoy was an anarchist, his wariness of the state is shared by other proponents of principled non-violence including Gandhi.

According to LK Bharadwaj, pragmatic non-violence is not only self-defeating but also merely a moderate form of Machiavellianism. Like Machiavellianism, pragmatic proponents of non-violence assert the immorality of politics and emphasise on the primacy of success i.e. the achievement of the end goal. The opportunistic acceptance of non-violence lays the ground rule for the consideration of the other alternative i.e. violence in case non-violent protests fail. This argument has been vindicated in recent years in both Egypt and Tunisia.

In contrast, Gandhi sought to seek the purity of the means as well as the end. He adopted truth and non-violence as his means and asserted that these principles were "as old as hills." When violence erupted during the Non-Cooperation Movement at Chauri Chaura, Gandhi immediately called off the movement. While it would have been easy to reject the incident as an aberration and fringe while continuing the movement,

Gandhi instead chose to make his rejection of violence in its entirety absolutely clear by calling off the movement.

Gandhi's principled non-violence consisted of a radical ontology that concerned both larger political movement as well as a struggle with the individual self. This is best exemplified by Gandhi's autobiography, where the majority of his "experiments with truth" concern the personal. Pragmatic non-violent activists assume that mere regime change will lead to a solution. Principled non-violence, on the other, emphasise on the local, exemplified by Gandhi's "swadeshi" movement. For Gandhi, swaraj, or self-rule, is as much about the assumption of full responsibility for organisation of one's community as it is about emancipation from the colonial power. Using the ancient Hindu and Jain idea of "ahimsa," Gandhi emphasises on non-harm to all species which will eventually culminate in "sarvodaya" or justice for all.

Over the years, the world has witnessed a steady but by no means satisfactory decrease of violence both for protests as well as the use of arbitrary violence by state. This is not due to the acceptance of non-violence means as effective but due to a growing normative and social disapproval of violence in all forms. In contemporary times, figures such as Gandhi, Martin Luther King Jr. and Mandela have served as guiding lights for principled non-violence. Due to its emphasis on compassion, non-harm and the personal, principled non-violence generates organisational and personal discipline and moral commitment to the cause in a way that pragmatic non-violence never can.

The writer is a columnist and an incoming student of Global Affairs at King's College London.

## SPECTRUM PERSONAL FINANCE

# Financialisation of household savings



Sourajeet Pradhani

**AS MORE HOUSEHOLD SAVINGS FLOW INTO EQUITY MARKETS, THERE IS A RISK OF OVER-RELIANCE ON STOCK MARKET PERFORMANCE FOR WEALTH CREATION**

Recently, Indian banks are facing a liquidity crunch in terms of deposits. Due to financial awareness and literacy, augmented by technological advancement, the common man has started to invest in financial instruments like stocks, bonds, mutual funds. For banks, customers' deposits act as liquidity to lend out to borrowers in the form of loans. If major banks like HDFC Bank or ICICI Bank will not have funds to lend, they will be compelled to borrow from the open market. This will eventually put more pressure on the banking system.

In America, the process of financialisation of household income started in the 1970s. While in Indian metropolitan cities, the trend started in early 2000s. Similar trend is now visible in tier 2 and tier 3 cities of India. The catalyst of this trend is the ease of access to information through technology. In today's time, knowledge and information have been democratised to the base of the pyramid. Irrespective of one's socio-economic status, one can easily get access to information through internet.

From an economic perspective, more liquidity in the formal financial sector is good for any country's economy. More liquidity in the market leads to more production by the corpo-

rates, which further leads to more employment. But, if all the money is invested in financial and real estate products, it will lead to liquidity imbalance in the financial ecosystem.

India's household savings have historically been directed towards physical assets such as gold, real estate, and other tangible forms of wealth. However, in recent years, a shift towards financial assets like mutual funds, equities, and bonds has been observed. For decades, Indian households have maintained a strong preference for physical savings. Gold, in particular, has held a special place in Indian society, not only as a symbol of wealth but also as a hedge against inflation and currency fluctuations. Similarly, real estate has been another major avenue for savings, providing both capital appreciation and rental income opportunities.

The dominance of these physical assets can be attributed to several factors. Historically, Indian households have had limited access to formal financial markets. The banking infrastructure, particularly in rural areas, was underdeveloped, and financial literacy was low. Furthermore, gold and real estate were considered safer investments, offering protection against market volatility and the complexities associated with financial products.

The reasons for this shift can be attributed to enhanced financial literacy, technological advancements, regulatory reforms, changing demographics and declining returns from physical assets. COVID also played a major role in the financialisation process. With multiple applications available in smartphones, one could invest in such products through a 'click of a button'. From just 40.9 million in March 2020, before the COVID outbreak, the number demat accounts in India has more than doubled to 100.5 million in 2024.

India's younger population, with its higher risk appetite and greater familiarity with technology, is more inclined towards financial assets than previous generations. Unlike older generations, who preferred the safety of gold and real estate, younger investors are exploring new avenues for wealth creation, such as stock markets and mutual funds.

While the financialisation of household savings presents several opportunities, it also brings with it certain challenges. Financial assets, particularly equities, are subject to market risks. Household savings invested in stocks and mutual funds can be adversely affected by market downturns, leading to potential wealth erosion. For risk-averse investors, this volatility can be a significant deterrent.

Despite improvements in financial literacy, large segments of the population, particularly in rural areas, still lack a comprehensive understanding of financial products. The benefits of financialisation are not evenly distributed across society. While wealthier households have the resources and knowledge to invest in financial products, poorer households may remain reliant on traditional savings mechanisms, perpetuating inequality.

As more household savings flow into equity markets, there is a risk of over-reliance on stock market performance for wealth creation. Any prolonged downturn in markets could have a negative impact on household wealth.

The financialisation of household savings in India marks a paradigm shift in how households approach wealth accumulation and investment. While the trend has numerous benefits, including greater market participation and economic growth, it also comes with inherent risks. As this trend continues, it will be crucial for policymakers and financial institutions to focus on promoting financial literacy, improving access to financial markets, and ensuring that the benefits of financialisation are inclusive and widespread.

The writer is the founder and CEO of fintech startup FinCist.

## WISDOM CORNER

I have learned silence from the talkative, toleration from the intolerant, and kindness from the unkind; yet, strange, I am ungrateful to those teachers.

KAHLIL GIBRAN

When you're thirsty and it seems that you could drink the entire ocean, that's faith; when you start to drink and finish only a glass or two, that's science.

ANTON CHEKHOV

All that is gold does not glitter, not all those who wander are lost; the old that is strong does not wither, deep roots are not reached by the frost.

JRR TOLKIEN

## 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, Rishabgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

### Step up surveillance

Sir, Mpox being allowed to worsen into a global public health emergency shows how little the global community has learned from previous disease outbreaks, including the COVID pandemic. Neglecting surveillance and a coordinated response against the disease seeing a surge in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and some other African nations could prove costly, given the viral strain in circulation this time is more infective. Clade 2b which was in circulation in 2022 was transmitted primarily through sexual contact. Clade 1b, in circulation this time, has seen non-sexual transmission, and is likely more virulent given the higher fatalities reported. Even when the sole vaccine that exists was deployed in the West in the first emergency, African nations didn't get as many shots as they required though the virus was endemic in parts of the continent. Given the levels of global interconnectedness, the fallout shouldn't be allowed to exacerbate. The disease reaching Western shores again is the price for neglecting Africa. The global community must now control it there, even as nations step up surveillance and work on boosting vaccine capacity and reach.

N Sadhasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

### Agriculture technology

Sir, The Union government has recently introduced two significant initiatives to enhance farm productivity through technology in Indian agriculture. These measures include the launch of the Krishi-Decision Support System (Krishi-DSS) and the National Pest Surveillance System (NPSS). Krishi-DSS is a digital platform designed to utilise geospatial data and satellite imagery to provide farmers with real-time information on crop conditions, weather patterns, water resources, and soil health. Additionally, it will offer early warnings on potential disasters like pest attacks and extreme weather events, assist in crop residue management, and inform the government about the specific needs of individual farm parcels. NPSS, on the other hand, is an AI-based system aimed at improving pest management nationwide by allowing farmers to upload photos of infested crops or pests, thus addressing the issue of excessive pesticide use. The integration of artificial intelligence and geospatial technology in agriculture is crucial in the context of climate change and the urgent need for sustainable agricultural practices.

Amarjeet Kumar, HAZARIBAGH



## SIKKIM LANDSLIDES

## Shah to chair meetings on anti-Naxal operations during Chhattisgarh visit

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 21: Union Home Minister Amit Shah will review the inter-state coordination among the Naxal-affected states at a high-level meeting to be held in Chhattisgarh Saturday.

At a separate meeting on the same day, Shah will also review security and development initiatives in Maoists-hit areas of Chhattisgarh, sources said.

The chief secretaries and directors general of police of Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra, besides top security officials of the central government are expected to attend the inter-state coordination meeting.

During his three-day tour of Chhattisgarh, Shah will also visit the Mahaprabhu Vallabhacharya Ashram in Raipur; review the functioning of the Narcotics Control Bureau in the state capital and attend a meeting related to the Ministry of Cooperation.

Earlier, Shah had said after a Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government assumed charge in the central Indian state late last year, about 125 Naxals were killed, more than 352 arrested and about 175 had surrendered in just five months.

On April 16, security personnel gunned down 29 Naxals, including some senior cadres, in Chhattisgarh's Kanker district. This was the highest number of fatalities suffered by the red ultras in a single encounter in the history of the state's fight against left-wing extremism.

According to the Union home ministry's data, the number of incidents of left-wing extremism has reduced from 14,862 in the decade from 2004 to 2014 to 7,128 from 2014 to 2023. The number of deaths of security forces personnel due to left-wing extremism has declined by 72 per cent, from 1,750 in the 2004-to-2014 period to 485 between 2014 and 2023, and the number of civilian deaths has declined by 68 per cent, from 4,285 to 1,383, in the said period.

## CONG FLAYS GOVT OVER HYDEL PROJECTS

A MASSIVE LANDSLIDE STRUCK EAST SIKKIM TUESDAY, DAMAGING PARTS OF A 510-MW HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT ON THE TEESTA RIVER



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 21: In the wake of landslides in Sikkim, the Congress Wednesday hit out at the government and said hydel projects in ecologically fragile regions have been coming up over the past few years without giving adequate thought to their cumulative environmental impact.

The opposition party also asserted that dams on the Teesta river are the prime example of how ecology is being fundamentally altered with grave consequences for this and future generations.

A massive landslide struck east Sikkim Tuesday, damaging parts of a 510-mw hydroelectric project on the Teesta river.

The landslide happened at Dipu Dara near Singtam in Gangtok district around 7.30 am, causing significant damage to the powerhouse of the Teesta Stage V hydroelectric project of the NHPC.

In a statement, Congress general secretary in-charge communications Jairam Ramesh said a series of landslide disasters in Sikkim has substantially damaged the Teesta V, a 510 MW hydel power station on the Teesta.

This disaster comes on the

heels of the Glacial Lake Outburst Floods (GLOF) and riverine floods in the Teesta River basin in October 2023, which caused massive devastation in Sikkim and Kalimpong, West Bengal, he noted.

The Union Budget, unveiled in July 2024, had a section dedicated to 'Irrigation and Flood Mitigation,' where Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman made the vague promise of "assistance" without any details of funds for Sikkim, he said.

"In a classic case of the Government's confrontational federalism, the Budget was indifferent to the areas in West Bengal which were equally affected," Ramesh said.

"The obvious vendetta politics aside, the Budget announcements were insufficient

Dams on the Teesta are the prime, but not the only, example of how - in the name of development - ecology is being fundamentally altered, with grave consequences for this and future generations

JAIRAM RAMESH | CONGRESS LEADER

what the entire region needs is for a development framework that centres ecological dimensions, the case for which has become apparent from the cascading series of disasters in the last year," the former environment minister argued.

National Highway 10, the lifeline of Sikkim and Kalimpong, runs along the Teesta and has been in a precarious state with frequent landslides and closures, he pointed out.

As of today, the NH has been closed for over a month, severely affecting trade, tourism, and more importantly, the security of these sensitive border areas of India, he said, adding these floods are an economic, social, and political disaster for these regions.

These natural disasters, like the October 2023 catastrophe

and the recent landslides, have become commonplace due to ecological destruction and unplanned constructions, Ramesh said.

A spate of hydro projects on the Teesta River has caused the river to become more flood-prone, washing away sections of the NH10, the Congress general secretary said.

As per the National Hydropower Development Corporation (NHDC), 47 hydropower projects are in different stages of development on the Teesta River in Sikkim and West Bengal, he noted.

Of them, nine have been commissioned, work on 15 dams is going on and another 28 are in the pipeline, Ramesh said.

The October 2023 disaster was provoked by the GLOF, but it only reached its catastrophic scales due to the failure of the Teesta-III dam, the Congress leader said.

Amidst these hydel projects, IRCON has also undertaken tun-

neling of this sensitive region for the Sivok-Rangpo railway line (14 tunnels), contributing to the region's increased vulnerability, Ramesh said.

"The mismanagement in the debris disposal has also resulted in the riverbed level going up, making the region more flood prone," he said in his statement.

Aside from this environmental catastrophe in the making, these projects have also been undertaken without local communities in mind, Ramesh argued.

The people of Sikkim and Kalimpong have not gained from the hydro projects in terms of employment, share in power, or revenue generation, he said.

No consultative process was undertaken with the local communities in advance of the railway line projects, he added.

Ramesh further said that the

recent experience has shown that this lack of consultation was a shortsighted decision. The authorities had dismissed members of the local Lepcha community when they challenged the Teesta V project's environment clearance in 2014, including on the grounds of the absence of studies on the potential impact of GLOFs on the project.

"True to their warnings, the GLOF overtopped the Teesta V dam as well, causing damage to the project back in October. A few months later, landslides have now struck the same dam," he said.

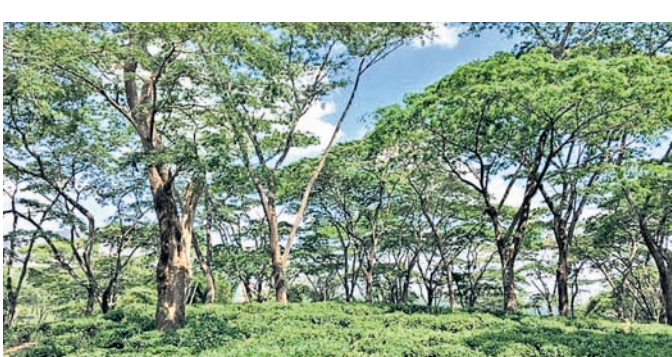
Hydel projects in ecologically fragile regions have been coming up over the past few years without giving adequate thought to their cumulative environmental impacts, Ramesh stressed.

## Maiden expedition to study high-risk GLOFs



Two teams of experts have been sent to six high-risk glacial lakes in Arunachal Pradesh for the first time to assess the possibility of glacial lake outburst floods (GLOFs) and the ways to access these water bodies for mitigation measures, official sources said. The two lakes are located in the high altitude areas of Tawang and Dibang Valley districts -- more than 11,000 feet above sea level, they said. As many as 27 glacial lakes have been identified as high-risk in Arunachal Pradesh across five districts -- Tawang (6), Kurung Kumey (1), Shi Yomi (1), Dibang Valley (16) and Anjaw (3). Meanwhile the Centre has approved a ₹150-crore glacial lake outburst flood risk mitigation programme to be implemented by the National Disaster Management Authority in Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh. There are nearly 7,500 glacial lakes in the Indian Himalayas and the NDMA has finalised a list of 189 high-risk glacial lakes for mitigation measures to reduce the threat emanating from them, official sources said.

## CIL arm's forestry drive rakes in carbon credits



SECL identified approximately 2,245 hectares of afforested non-forest de-coaled land, with 1,424 hectares in Chhattisgarh and 821 hectares in Madhya Pradesh

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, August 21: The Coal Ministry said Tuesday that the Coal India subsidiary South Eastern Coalfields Limited (SECL) has made significant strides in environmental sustainability through the successful implementation of the Accredited Compensatory Afforestation guidelines issued by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.

The ministry said that these guidelines were issued for increasing forest cover, thereby contributing to national environmental goals and earning valuable carbon credits.

"Coal mining projects often require forest land, necessitating Forestry Clearance (FC) as part of the environmental approval process. A major challenge in securing these clearances is the identification of suitable Compensatory Afforestation (CA) land," the ministry said.

The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change issued guidelines January 24, 2023, which encourage both government institutions and private landowners to undertake afforestation on fallow lands, thereby increasing the "Trees

Outside Forests" and supporting biodiversity.

The ministry said that in a proactive response to the ACA guidelines, SECL identified approximately 2,245 hectares of afforested non-forest de-coaled land, with 1,424 hectares in Chhattisgarh and 821 hectares in Madhya Pradesh.

"These lands were identified as suitable for ACA and were proposed to the respective State Forest Departments for notification as ACA land banks. This move is expected to expedite the FC process for future coal mining projects that require forest land diversion," the Coal Ministry said.

It said that SECL has undertaken biological reclamation and plantation across several sites, including Bishrampur Opencast (OC) Project, Dugga OC, Kurasia Colliery, Jamuna OC, Kotma OC, and Sharda OC in the districts of Surajpur and Manendragarh-Chirmiri-Bharatpur in Chhattisgarh, and Anuppur and Shahdol in Madhya Pradesh.

"These efforts have transformed de-coaled lands into thriving ecosystems with local species such as Teak, Sal, Babul and Neem," the ministry said.

It said that the reclaimed lands now host a rich variety of flora and fauna, including species like the Sloth Bear, Fox, and various reptiles and migratory birds, which have recolonised the area, particularly around water bodies.

The ministry added that out of the 1,424 hectares identified in Chhattisgarh, 696 hectares have been inspected by officials from the Surajpur and Korea Forest Divisions.

## Assam to promote tourism at tea gardens: CM

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Guwahati, August 21: Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma Wednesday announced that the state plans to promote tourism in its famed tea gardens, and select tea estates would be given ₹2 crore as grant by the government.

Sarma said that the tea gardens of Assam with their lush greenery, iconic bungalows and friendly people with their distinct music and dance, have the potential to attract both domestic and international tourists.

According to him, the tea gar-



To celebrate 200 years of Assam tea and promote its tourism potential, we are extending financial assistance to select tea gardens, who meet certain criteria, of up to ₹2 crore to develop their infrastructure and attract tourists from the world over

HIMANTA BISWA SARMA | CM, ASSAM

## 37 YEARS OF PAIN Tripura man returns home from B'desh jails

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Agartala, August 21: A man from Tripura's Sepahijala district returned home after spending 37 years in Bangladesh jails.

Shahjahan returned to India through the Srimantapur land customs station with the assistance of BSF personnel. Shahjahan, a resident of Rabindrangar, a border village in Sonamura subdivision, had gone to his in-law's house in Comilla, Bangladesh, in 1988. During his visit, police raided his relative's home and arrested him for illegally entering the neighbouring country, officials said.

"At the age of 25, I was sentenced to 11 years in prison by a court in Comilla. Despite completing my sentence, I was not released and spent an additional 26 years in custody, totaling 37 years before I was allowed to return home," Shahjahan said. The injustice faced by Shahjahan came to light a few months ago through media reports. His plight attracted the attention of the Zara Foundation, an organisation dedicated to helping immigrants who become trapped in foreign countries, his family said.



## 'Panchayat' pigeon scene comes alive in Chhattisgarh



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Raipur, August 21: A video of the Independence Day celebration in Chhattisgarh's Mungeli district, showing a pigeon released by a police officer failing to fly off, has gone viral, prompting the officer to demand action against those responsible.

Some social media users promptly noticed that a similar situation unfolds in season 3 of popular web series 'Panchayat'. During the function, BJP MLA and former minister Punnul Mohle who was the chief guest, Mungeli Collector Rahul Deo, and Superintendent of Police Girija Shankar Jaiswal were handed pigeons to release, signifying peace and freedom.

The birds released by the MLA and the collector successfully flew off. However, when the SP released the

pigeon, it fell to the ground.

Social media user Sachin Gupta shared the video on his 'X' handle and wrote, "Panchayat-3 was repeated in Chhattisgarh. SP sahib released pigeons on Independence Day: His pigeon fell down instead of flying. Watch the video."

Official sources Tuesday said the SP wrote a letter to the collector, seeking disciplinary action. "During a major national festival like Independence Day, the incident of a pigeon falling to the ground was prominently broadcast on social media and other media. This situation was created as a result of presenting a sick pigeon for flying in the main district-level programme. Had it happened at the hands of the chief guest of the function and honourable MLA, then the situation would have been more unpleasant," the SP wrote.

dens can act as a centre of attraction for tourists as many people in the country and abroad are eager to know about the cultural heritage of tea gardens in Assam.

"With so much to offer, the Assam government is developing select tea gardens as tourism destinations in a mission mode approach," Sarma said.

Under the scheme, the existing tourist infrastructure of tea gardens would be upgraded and private tea companies would be encouraged to promote tea tourism.

A senior government official said that promotional activities such as plucking of tea leaves,

nature walks, trekking, rafting, playing golf, etc have been planned.

The Chief Minister said that recently 34 tea gardens in the state were offered financial assistance to promote tea tourism.

Taking to X, Sarma wrote, "To celebrate 200 years of Assam tea and promote its tourism potential, we are extending financial assistance to select tea gardens, who meet certain criteria, of up to ₹2 crore to develop their infrastructure and attract tourists from the world over. This scheme will enhance facilities at tea gardens and propel them as centres of tourist attraction."

**ZILLA PARISHAD, MALKANGIRI**  
Dist: Malkangiri:764048, Phone No.06861-230409,  
Fax No.: 06861-230279, E-mail: ori-dmalkangiri@nic.in  
No.2947/xxxix-04/24 Date:20.08.24  
**INVITATION OF APPLICATION FOR RECRUITMENT TO THE POST OF GRAM ROZGAR SEVAK (GRS) UNDER MGNREGS IN THE DISTRICT OF MALKANGIRI**  
No.CAD-888:Applications are invited from the eligible candidates to fill up 88 nos. of post of Gram Rozgar Sevak (GRS) to be engaged in different Gram Panchayats in Malkangiri District on contractual basis under MGNREGA. The newly engaged GRS will get a consolidated monthly remuneration of Rs.7,000/-. After successfully working for more than 1 year & less than 6 years they will get 8500/- per month. They will get 8880/- per month after successfully working for more than 6 years. The last date for submission of application is 26.09.2024. The detailed advertisement having no. of vacancies, remuneration, age, eligibility criteria and other terms & conditions is available in the District Official Website (www.malkangiri.odisha.gov.in.)  
Sd./Collector-cum-DPC, MGNREGA, Z.P. Malkangiri  
OIPR-19401/11/0005/2425

**INVITATION FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST COMPETITIVE BIDDING THROUGH e-PROCUREMENT OFFICE OF THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL, SUNDARGARH**  
Bid Reference No. SNGM-03/2024-25  
No.3069, Date: 16.08.2024  
**Invitation of Expression of Interest for "Preparation of Comprehensive Drainage Master Plan and Detail Project Report for Drainage System of Sundargarh Municipality Area"**  
No.C-457:The Executive Officer, Sundargarh Municipality, Sundargarh (Odisha) on behalf of Sundargarh Municipal Council Invites Expression of Interest (EOI) for "Preparation of Comprehensive Drainage Master Plan and Detail Project Report for Sundargarh Municipality Area" from registered and eligible firm/ consultant for tendering their bids through offline mode only.  
Name of the Work: Preparation of Comprehensive Drainage Master Plan and Detail Project Report for Drainage System of Sundargarh Municipality Area.  
1.Intending bidders must participate through "Offline" bidding only. The website for download tender from district website. https://sundargarh.odisha.gov.in/ 2. The bid documents will be available in the above website from 11.00 AM of Dt. 20.08.2024 to 5.00 PM of Dt.05.09.2024 for offline bidding. 3. Bids received will be opened at 11.30 AM onwards on Dt.09.09.2024. 4. The tenders shall be available on the district website on the aforesaid dates.  
Sd./ Executive Officer,  
Sundargarh Municipality  
OIPR-13130/11/0013/2425



# national

## of the day quote

The holy pilgrimage of Shri Amarnathi was successfully completed. This year, the holy pilgrimage lasted for 52 days, a record number of more than 5.12 lakh pilgrims visited Baba, which is the highest number in the last 12 years

AMIT SHAH | UNION HOME MINISTER

Earlier, Muslim marriages were registered by the Kazis. However, this new bill will ensure that all marriages of the community will be registered with the government

HIMANTA BISWA SARMA | ASSAM CHIEF MINISTER

The rapid environmental degradation we have witnessed over the past few years prompted us to initiate a review of the 2019 policy. A stakeholder group was formed and meetings were held to discuss the necessary updates

GOPAL RAI | DELHI ENVIRONMENT MINISTER

## SHORT TAKES

### Flood situation in Tripura worsens

**Agartala:** The flood situation in Tripura further worsened Wednesday with the death toll rising to 10 and over 34,100 people taking shelter in 331 relief camps in all the eight districts, officials said, adding that incessant heavy rains since Monday have created havoc in the state. Chief Minister Manik Saha, who has sought deployment of additional National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) personnel, talked with Union Home Minister Amit Shah over the phone and apprised him about the prevailing flood situation in the state.

### MUDA case: K'taka BJP to protest today

**Baengalore:** Karnataka BJP Wednesday said that it would hold a statewide protest for 'disrespecting' Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot after he gave consent to investigate Chief Minister Siddaramaiah in the MUDA case. "The BJP will hold protests in all district centres across the state August 22 to condemn Congress for disrespecting the dignity of the Governor and to demand the Chief Minister's resignation in light of Siddaramaiah's involvement in the case," Karnataka BJP General Secretary V Sunil Kumar said.

### Telangana: BRS to hold protests

**Hyderabad:** The Opposition BRS announced state-wide protests August 22 seeking unconditional implementation of farm loan waiver by the Congress government in Telangana. Addressing a press conference, BRS Working President K T Rama Rao accused CM A Revanth Reddy and his ministerial colleagues of 'deceiving' farmers on loan waiver of up to ₹2 lakhs to all ryots.

### HC extends interim bail of Amit Arora

**New Delhi:** The Delhi High Court has allowed extension of the interim bail of businessman Amit Arora, an accused in a money laundering case linked to the alleged Delhi excise policy case, till August 30, on account of his "precarious medical condition". A bench of Justice Neena Bansal took note of the submission that Arora, Director of Gurugram based Buddy Retail Pvt. Limited, was suffering from serious life-threatening diseases and has recently been admitted to a hospital.



When Amazon says that we are going to invest a billion dollars in the country, we celebrate, and we forget that the billion dollars are not coming in for great service or investment to support the Indian economy. They made a billion-dollar loss in their balance sheet that year, they had to fill in that loss

PIYUSH GOYAL | COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY MINISTER

### HC TO HEAR SANJAY'S BAIL PLEA TODAY

The Allahabad High Court has held that Aam Aadmi Party leader Sanjay Singh need not surrender before a Sultanpur court till Thursday in connection with a case registered against him over a street protest in 2001



# Bharat Bandh most effective in Bihar, J'khand, tribal belts

THE RESPONSE WAS TEPID IN OTHER PARTS OF THE COUNTRY EVEN AS SEVERAL INDIA BLOC PARTIES AS WELL AS OTHER NON-BJP OUTFITS EXTENDED THEIR SUPPORT TO THE BANDH

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi/Patna, August 21:** The daylong nationwide strike called by some Dalit and Adivasi groups against the Supreme Court's verdict on the sub-classification of Scheduled Castes affected normal life in Bihar and Jharkhand as well as tribal areas of various states.

The Chhattisgarh unit of the Congress said the government should consider the "legitimate demands" of the protesters sympathetically. However, the BJP's prominent tribal leader Faggan Singh Kulaste accused the opposition of politicising the Supreme Court's ruling on the issue. Twenty-one organisations across the country had called for the Bharat Bandh against the apex court's order, which they said would harm the basic principles of reservation.

The protesters put up rail and road blockades in several districts of Bihar, and police used batons and water cannons to disperse them. Darbhanga and Buxar witnessed disruption in train services while traffic was blocked in Patna, Hajipur, Darbhanga, Jehanabad, and Begusarai districts.

The RJD and other partners of the INDIA bloc extended their support to the bandh. Independent MP Rajesh Ranjan alias Pappu Yadav, led demonstrations in Patna and other areas, criticising the NDA government's stance on SC/ST quota and alleging that it wants to undermine reservations.



Public buses stayed off the roads and schools remained closed in Jharkhand where the call for the bandh was backed by the state's ruling alliance.

The Left parties too have extended their support to the strike. Chief Minister Hemant Soren has cancelled his visit to Palamu Wednesday due to the strike, an official said, adding security was bolstered at key locations to prevent any untoward incident.

In parts of Bastar and Surguja divisions, and Mohla-Manpur-Ambargarh Chowki and Dhamtari districts several shops and commercial establishments remained closed. Bastar Division comprises seven districts and Surguja Division six districts.

At Dantewada district's headquarters, a huge motorcycle rally was organised by members of Sarva Adivasi Samaj (SAS), an umbrella body of tribal organisations. The Opposition Congress extended its "moral" support to the shutdown and called for addressing concerns of members of ST and SC communities.

The call for the nationwide strike had some impact in Gujarat's tribal belts as well, including in Chhota Udepur, Narmada, Surendranagra, Sabarkantha and Aravalli districts where markets in cities and semi-urban areas remained closed. The call for strike had little impact on normal life in Uttar

Pradesh as shops were open and it was business as usual in large parts of the state amid tight security arrangements.

The opposition BSP and SP extended their support to the bandh. BSP workers held a demonstration near Hazratganj, briefly affecting the traffic flow.

The Bhim Army held protests in pockets of western Uttar Pradesh where it has a sizeable presence.

Other northern states, including Rajasthan, Punjab and Haryana, remained largely unaffected, barring a few places where markets remained closed and public transport services were partially affected.

In Jaipur, the SC/ST Sanyukt Sangharsh Samiti held a rally against the August 1 Supreme Court. "During the rally, the markets remained closed and opened after 3 pm. The bandh was peaceful," Suresh Saini, general secretary of Jaipur Vyapar Mahasangh, said.

Shops and other commercial establishments functioned normally in Punjab and Haryana as police in both states made elaborate security arrangements to maintain law and order.

The bandh had no impact in Assam where schools, offices and business establishments functioned normally with almost full attendance across the state.

### 65 lakh students did not clear Class X, XII exams in 2023: MoE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, August 21:** More than 65 lakh students from across the country did not clear Class X and XII board exams last year with the failure rate being higher in state boards than the national boards, according to Ministry of Education (MoE) officials.

An analysis of Class X and XII exam results of 59 school boards, including 56 state boards and three national boards, revealed that more girls appeared in Class XII exams from government-managed schools but it is opposite in private schools and government-aided schools.

However, across school management it's they who are outperforming their male counterparts by a big margin.

Overall, across schools of different management as well the gap in pass percentage is also in favour of the girls by over six per cent.

"Around 33.5 lakh students of Class X did not reach next grade. While 5.5 lakh candidates did not appear, 28 lakh failed. This is one of the cause for low retention rate and Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) at higher secondary level," a senior MoE official said.

# 13 killed in reactor blast at Andhra pharma unit

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Atchutapuram (Andhra Pradesh), August 21:** The death toll in the fire accident at a pharmaceutical unit here Wednesday rose to 13, officials said.

Anakapalli District Collector Vijaya Krishnan said the fire broke out at 2:15 pm at Escientia Advanced Sciences Pvt Ltd at Atchutapuram in Anakapalli district.

"The factory operates with 381 employees in two shifts. The blast occurred during lunch time. Therefore, staff presence was less, Krishnan told PTI, adding that the explosion is suspected to be electricity-related.

As many as 33 injured people were shifted to different hospitals in Anakapalli and Atchutapuram while the Fire Department is engaged in rescue operations, deploying six fire tenders.

Further, the collector said 13 people trapped in the unit were rescued.

Meanwhile, Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu expressed grief over the loss of lives.

The CM assured that the government will stand by the families of the workers who died, said



The CM assured that the government will stand by the families of the workers who died

an official press release.

Escientia Advanced Sciences, which manufactures intermediate chemicals and active pharmaceutical ingredients (API) commenced production in April 2019 with an investment of ₹200 crore.

It is located in a 40-acre campus in the Andhra Pradesh Industrial Infrastructure Corporation's (APIIC) multi-product special economic zone (SEZ) at Atchutapuram cluster.



Police personnel lathi-charge protestors during the 'Bharat Bandh' called by SC/ST organisations over reservation issue in Patna, Bihar

# Centre accords Z plus security cover to NCP chief Sharad Pawar

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, August 21:** The Centre Wednesday accorded the highest category of armed VIP security cover -- Z plus -- to Nationalist Congress Party (NCP-SP) chief Sharad Pawar, official sources said.

The Union Home Ministry has asked the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) to extend the cover to the 83-year-old former chief minister of Maharashtra. A team of 55 armed CRPF personnel has been earmarked for the task.

A threat assessment review by central agencies has recommended a strong security cover to Pawar. The Centre has accorded him a Z plus cover to be



protected by the CRPF VIP security wing, the sources said. A CRPF team is already in Maharashtra to take up the task, they said. The VIP security cover categorisations begin from the highest Z+ followed by Z, Y+, Y and X.

# Haryana recruitment result halted till polls

THE ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS IN HARYANA WILL BE HELD IN A SINGLE PHASE OCTOBER 1 AND RESULTS WILL BE DECLARED OCTOBER 4

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, August 21:** To ensure a level-playing field in the Haryana assembly polls, the Election Commission Wednesday barred authorities in the state from announcing the results of ongoing recruitment processes of police constables and teachers till the election is over.

The Election Commission's (EC) model code instructions do not bar the continuing regular recruitment process or promotion through the UPSC, the state public service commission or

the staff selection commission or any other statutory authority. But state that "recruitments through non-statutory bodies will require prior clearance of the commission".

After ascertaining the facts from the state government and in view of the existing Model Code of Conduct (MCC) instructions, the commission found no violation of the code in the ongoing recruitment processes by the Haryana Staff Selection Commission (HSSC) and the Haryana Public Service Commission (HPSC). The commission has found



that the recruitment processes were initiated before the announcement of the election August 16 and is within the existing MCC instructions as stated above, where statutory authorities can continue their work.

However, in order to maintain level playing field and to ensure that no undue advantage is accrued to anyone, the EC has directed that announcement of

results of these recruitments by the authorities concerned (HSSC and HPSC) will not be released till completion of the Assembly poll in the state.

The commission took cognisance of a complaint from Congress leader Jai Ram Ramesh regarding violation of the MCC in the process of recruitment against 5,600 vacancies for the post of constable in the Haryana Police, 76 posts of two categories of teachers by the HSSC and recruitment for various posts by the HPSC.

The advertisement regarding 5,600 posts of police constable and 76 posts of two category of teachers (TGT and PTI) were published on the website of the HSSC at 1.45 pm August 16, 2024, the day EC announced polls.

# WHO calls for action to provide lifesaving vaccines to kids

The WHO-UNICEF Estimates of National Immunisation Coverage data released last month shows slow progress and no meaningful change in childhood-immunisation coverage last year compared to 2022, and the coverage is yet to be restored to the pre-pandemic levels

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, August 21:** The World Health Organization (WHO) Wednesday called on the countries in its South-East Asia Region to accelerate action to protect all children with life-saving vaccines being offered under the childhood immunisation programme, focusing on those who have missed all or some doses, and protect all adolescent girls from cervical cancer.

"We should aim for a big catch-up to vaccinate all zero-dose and partially-vaccinated children, and restore the immunisation progress lost during the (COVID-19) pandemic, protect all adolescent girls from cervical cancer and accelerate efforts to

eliminate measles and rubella from WHO South-East Asia by 2026," said Saima Wazed, Regional Director, WHO South-East Asia, in her inaugural address to the 15th meeting of the WHO South-East Asia Regional Immunisation Technical Advisory Group (SEAR-ITAG).

Wazed acknowledged and thanked all experts, national programme managers, immunisation champions and partners, including the vaccinators and community workers and the communities themselves, on the expanded immunisation programme completing 50 years this year.

However, the region missed the target to eliminate measles and rubella by 2023. The WHO-UNICEF Estimates of National



Immunisation Coverage data released last month shows slow progress and no meaningful change in childhood-immunisation coverage last year compared to 2022, and the coverage is yet to be restored to the pre-pandemic 2019 levels.

"Nearly 2.7 million (27 lakh) children in our region did not get

any vaccine and another 0.6 million (six lakh) children were partially vaccinated in 2023. We need to understand where and why these children were missed and prioritise reaching them as soon as possible. No child should ever fall sick or die of any vaccine-preventable disease, when safe and effective vaccines exist to protect them," Wazed said.

The stagnation in post-pandemic recovery highlights the need to innovate, she added. "We need to find locally-impactful approaches and most critically, enhance the political and social leadership that are the basis for intensified actions needed to meet our regional targets, Wazed said.

One of the priorities in the regional director's Regional

Roadmap for Results and Resilience is "reaffirming investment in women, girls, adolescents and vulnerable populations". "Against this, we must ensure that all adolescent girls in our region are protected and get at least one dose of HPV vaccine to protect them from cervical cancer," Wazed said.

Revitalising immunisation programmes, strengthening community-centred health systems, ensuring vaccine supply and boosting demand through community engagement are critical components for success. Policy and resources should urgently prioritise routine immunisation, particularly for measles, and focus on reducing zero-dose and partially-vaccinated children, she said.



# national



The women of Delhi have prayed for his (Kejriwal) release (from jail) and even fasted for him. With the blessings of the people of Delhi, he will be soon be out of jail and will come here to lay the foundation stone of the new academic block

ATISHI MARLENA | DELHI EDUCATION MINISTER

## NO NEW CASES OF CHANDIPURA VIRUS: GUJARAT HEALTH MINISTER

Gujarat Health Minister Rushikesh Patel stated Wednesday that the state had not reported any new cases of viral encephalitis or the Chandipura virus in the last six days. Furthermore, no deaths due to the virus were reported in the last 12 days



### of the day quote

This is a very important day in the industrial and development history of Tamil Nadu. It is a day to showcase our economic prowess to the world -- and a day to realise that Tamil Nadu has a bright future

I will willingly resign if needed, unlike you (Siddaramaiah) who found fault with the Governor's permission to prosecute you and commented about the Governor in a derogatory manner. The Karnataka ministers should be ashamed for using such words against the Governor

The situation is such that we cannot raise our voice, there is fear everywhere. In such a scenario, when new people join us and strengthen our party, it strengthens the voice of the people of J&K

### X POST OF THE DAY

KARNATAKA HIGH COURT : Wife asking for 6.16,000 per month maintenance 4.5 Lacs per month for knee pain, physiotherapy 15000 per month for shoes dresses 60000 per month for food inside home Few more thousands for dining outside home JUDGE : ASK HER TO EARN

### SHORT TAKES

#### Search ops on for missing aircraft

Jamshedpur: A NDRF team Wednesday joined the search operation in Jharkhand's Seraikela-Kharswan district to trace a two-seater aircraft that went missing after it took off from an aerodrome here, an official said. A six-member NDRF joined the search operation in Chandil dam this morning but nothing was found as yet, Deputy Commissioner of Seraikela-Kharswan, Ravi Shankar Shukla told PTI. Asked about the identity of the missing pilot and trainee pilot, the deputy commissioner said it would be available with the concerned aviation company.

#### Four killed as car rams into truck

Etwah (UP): Four people were killed and three, including two children, injured when their car collided with a stationary truck on the National Highway-2 here Wednesday, police said. The incident took place at 6.30 am near Pilkhar village on the Etwah-Kanpur carriageway of the national highway, Ikdil police station in-charge Bhim Sen Pauniya said. "The driver of the car, going from Delhi to Hamirpur-Mahoba, fell asleep and rammed the vehicle into the truck," Pauniya said.

#### Lightning strike kills 20 cattle

Korba: Twenty cattle were killed after being struck by lightning in Chhattisgarh's Korba district, an official said Wednesday. The incident took place at Kerakachhar village Tuesday. Two cowherds had taken the animals to the nearby forest for grazing when they were caught in a thunderstorm, said the official. The men escaped unhurt as they were standing at some distance from the spot.

## Rahul, Kharge on two-day J&K visit



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar, August 21: Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi and Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge arrived in Srinagar Wednesday on a two-day visit to Jammu and Kashmir to take stock of the party's preparations for the upcoming assembly elections in the Union Territory and explore a likely alliance with the National Conference.

The two leaders are visiting the UT for key meetings in connection with the three-phased assembly elections beginning September 18, a senior Congress leader said.

There were no official meetings scheduled for the two leaders for Wednesday, he said.

The two leaders will engage in extensive discussions with party leaders and workers of 10 districts of the Kashmir valley Thursday.

The meetings will begin at 10 am after which the two are likely to interact with the media here. They are also likely to meet National Conference (NC) leadership to discuss a possible pre-poll alliance. After wrapping up interactions here, they will fly

to Jammu in the afternoon to continue their interactions with the cadres of 10 districts of the Jammu region.

The two leaders will take feedback from party workers about the grassroots-level preparations for the elections which are being held in the UT after a gap of ten years, the Congress leader said.

Meanwhile, the BJP asked Rahul Gandhi to clear his party's stand on Article 370 and Article 35A during his visit.

BJP general secretary Tarun Chugh, who is his party's organisational in-charge for the Union Territory, said

Gandhi's visit will introduce him to the "peace and development" ushered in the region by the government headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

He alleged that three families, a reference to the leadership of Congress, the National Conference and the PDP, have over the last several decades stoked embers of separatism and terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir with their policies before the BJP government at the Centre turned things around in 2014.

### The two leaders are visiting the UT for key meetings in connection with the three-phased Assembly elections beginning Sept 18

## CISF deployed at RG Kar hospital

AGENCIES

New Delhi, August 21: Around 150 personnel of the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) are being deployed at Kolkata's RG Kar Medical College and Hospital following an order of the Supreme Court, official sources said Wednesday.

A day after the apex court's order, the Union home ministry wrote to the West Bengal chief secretary seeking deployment of the CISF at the state-run hospital. Subsequently, a decision has been taken for the deployment of the CISF, the sources said.

Earlier in the morning, a CISF team, led by a DIG-rank



Doctors shout slogans outside the Swasthya Bhawan during their protest march over the sexual assault and murder of the doctor

officer, surveyed the hospital complex where a 31-year-old

### Comply with SC order: Centre to social media firms

The Centre Wednesday directed social media platforms operating in the country to comply with the Supreme Court order to remove the deceased's identity in the RG Kar Medical College incident, or else face regulatory action. The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) said that prompt removal required all references including the name, photographs, and video clips depicting the deceased, from all social media platforms and electronic media. In its order dated August 20, the apex court had directed that all references to the name of the deceased, along with any photographs and video clips depicting the deceased, be promptly removed from all social media platforms and electronic media.

## Parl panel on Waqf Bill to hold first meeting



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 21: Parliament's Joint Committee on the Waqf (Amendment) Bill will hold its first meeting Thursday and its members are scheduled to interact with representatives of the ministries of minority affairs, and law and justice.

The 31-member committee, headed by BJP member Jagdambika Pal, has been tasked by the Lok Sabha to scrutinise

the contentious Bill, which has drawn protests from the opposition parties and Muslim organisations. The representatives from the minority affairs ministry are expected to brief the committee on the "amendments proposed on the Bill", the Lok Sabha secretariat said.

The Bill is the first major initiative from the BJP-led NDA government aimed at reforming the registration process for Waqf properties through a centralised portal. It proposes sev-

eral reforms, including establishing a Central Waqf Council alongside state Waqf Boards with representation to the Muslim women and non-Muslim representatives. A contentious provision of the Bill is the proposal to designate the district collector as the primary authority in determining whether a property is classified as Waqf or government land.

The Bill was introduced in the Lok Sabha on August 8 and referred to a joint committee of Parliament after a heated debate, with the government asserting that the proposed law did not intend to interfere with the functioning of mosques and the opposition calling it a targeting of Muslims and an attack on the Constitution.

The Bill was introduced in the Lok Sabha on August 8 and referred to a joint committee of Parliament after a heated debate, with the government asserting that the proposed law did not intend to interfere with the functioning of mosques and the opposition calling it a targeting of Muslims and an attack on the Constitution.

### CBI continues quizzing ex-principal

Kolkata: Although no fresh arrests were reported in the case, the CBI continued with its questioning of top officials of the RG Kar Hospital. A former administrator of the hospital, meanwhile, moved the state's top judiciary seeking an ED probe into the former hospital principal's alleged financial irregularities.

hundreds of resident doctors on strike under different banners demanding safety of medics through a central law. The Supreme Court Tuesday constituted a 10-member task force to formulate a national protocol to ensure safety and facilities for doctors. The task force will submit its interim report within three weeks and the final report within two months. The apex court also ordered the deployment of CISF at the RG Kar hospital to provide security to the doctors. Meanwhile, the Supreme Court, which has taken suo moto cognisance of the rape and murder of the doctor will resume hearing the matter Thursday.

### Engineer Rashid moves Delhi court seeking bail



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 21: Jailed Kashmiri parliamentarian Rashid Engineer has moved a Delhi court seeking regular bail in a 2017 Jammu and Kashmir terror funding case.

Sheikh Abdul Rashid, popularly known as Engineer Rashid, defeated former chief minister and National Conference leader Omar Abdullah in Baramulla in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls. Additional Sessions Judge (ASJ) Chander Jit Singh Tuesday issued notice to the National Investigation Agency (NIA) and directed it to file its response by August 28, when the court will hear arguments on the application.

The court had earlier granted Rashid custody parole to take the oath of office July 5.

Rashid has been in jail since 2019 after he was charged by the NIA under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act in the alleged terror funding case. He is at present lodged in Tihar jail.

The former MLA's name cropped up during the investigation of Kashmiri businessman Zahoor Watali, who was arrested by the NIA for allegedly funding terrorist groups and separatists in the Kashmir Valley.

The NIA had filed a charge sheet against several people, including Kashmiri separatist leader Yasin Malik, Lashkar-e-Taiba founder Hafiz Saeed and Hizbul Mujahideen chief Syed Salahuddin, in the case.

Malik was sentenced to life imprisonment by a trial court in 2022 after he pleaded guilty to the charges.

## Won't quit politics, open to floating new outfit: Champai Soren

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ranchi, August 21: Former Jharkhand Chief Minister Champai Soren Wednesday said he would not quit politics, asserting that an option to float a new political outfit was always open to him.

Soren said he was firm on his plans after "facing humiliation at the hands of leaders of JMM", a party to which the veteran leader claimed that he devoted his entire life.

"It is a new chapter of my life. I won't quit politics as I have received lots of love and support from my followers. I had mentioned three options - quitting politics, organisation or friend. I will not quit politics. The chapter (of quitting politics) has closed, I may form a new outfit," the senior Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) leader said shortly after he reached his ancestral village Jhilingora in Seraikela-Kharsawan district.



Opposition councillors protest during a meeting of the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD), at the Civic Centre in New Delhi

## Microplastics found in internal organs of penguins

Microplastics in natural environments present a formidable global environmental threat, a research paper said, adding that among the five identified polymer types, low-density polyethylene (LDPE) emerged as the most prevalent one, in approximately 63 per cent of the total microplastics

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Panaji, August 21: Research by scientists from different organisations including the CSIR-National Institute of Oceanography here has confirmed the presence of microplastics in the gastrointestinal tracts of Adelie Penguin in Antarctica, hinting at the "im-

pending emergence of microplastic hotspots" in Antarctic ecosystems.

The study, published in the "Science of the Total Environment" journal last week, claimed to be the first comprehensive examination of microplastics across various tissue types, gastrointestinal tracts and scat samples obtained from



Adelie Penguins inhabiting mainland Antarctica.

The research was conducted by a team of scientists including Mahua Saha, Shrayan Bhattacharjee, Chayanika Rathore, Akshata Naik, Praveen

Tudu, Prabir Ghosh Dastidar, Subarna Bhattacharyya, Jacob de Boer and Punarbasu Chaudhuri from research institutes including CSIR-NIO, University of Calcutta, Ramakrishna Mission

Vivekananda Centenary College (Autonomous), Academy of Scientific and Innovative Research (AcSIR), SGT University, Polar Science Division of the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES), School of Environmental Studies of Jadavpur University, and Vrije University, Netherlands.

Microplastics in natural environments present a formidable global environmental threat, the research paper said, adding that among the five identified polymer types, low-density polyethylene (LDPE) emerged as the most prevalent one, in approximately 63 per cent of the total microplastics.

The findings underscore the need for heightened attention and mitigation efforts to safe-

guard Antarctic ecosystems, the scientists said.

Adelie penguins, it is believed, either ingest microplastic fibers inadvertently, or ingest them indirectly through their prey species. Local or long-range airborne transport appeared to be additional sources of MP fibers found in lung and trachea tissues, the study said.

Past investigations into microplastics pollution across diverse penguin species have raised alarming concerns, hinting at the impending emergence of microplastic hotspots in Antarctic ecosystems, it noted. The latest findings underscore the urgency for future extensive research, the paper added.



# international



China is seriously concerned about the relevant report, and the facts have fully proved that the United States has constantly stirred up the so-called China nuclear threat theory in recent years

## IRAN PREZ'S CAB APPROVED

Iran's hard-line Parliament Wednesday approved all members of reformist President Masoud Pezeshkian's Cabinet, the first time in over two decades a leader has been able to get all of his officials through the body



### of the day quote

We must make it clear to the North Korean regime, which harbours dreams of forceful unification and constantly eyes the Republic of Korea, that any invasion will lead to the end of its regime

If Faiz Hameed (former Pakistan spymaster Lt General) is indeed the mastermind behind the May 9 conspiracy, then the trial should be held openly

We are taking strong and clear steps to boost our border security and ensure the rules are respected and enforced

### SHORT TAKES

Putin meets Chinese premier in Moscow

Moscow: Russian President Vladimir Putin met Chinese premier Li Qiang in Moscow Wednesday, the Kremlin said Wednesday. "Our countries have large-scale joint plans, projects in the economic and humanitarian areas, we expect them to last for many years," the RIA state news agency quoted Putin as saying.

Tate's house raided over rape charges

Bucharest: Romanian authorities Wednesday searched the home of controversial influencer Andrew Tate, who is awaiting trial over human trafficking and rape charges, as part of a new investigation, officials said.

5 bodies retrieved from superyacht

Porticello: Divers searching the wreck of a superyacht that sank off Sicily found the bodies of five passengers Wednesday and searched for one more as questions intensified about why the vessel sank so quickly when a nearby sailboat remained largely unscathed.

33 cases filed against Hasina

Dhaka: A case was filed Wednesday against Bangladesh's deposed Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and 86 others on charge of attacking a procession in Sylhet city which left several people shot and injured during the recent mass protests August 4.

# Drones swarm Moscow skies

Russia's defence ministry says its air defences destroyed a total of 45 drones over Russian territory

REUTERS

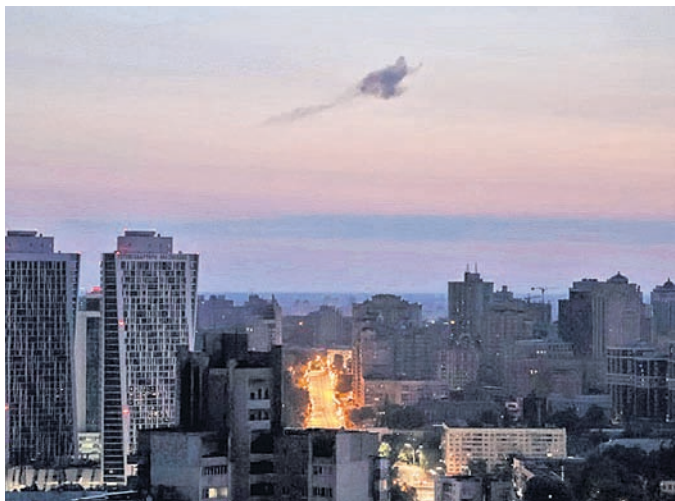
Moscow, August 21: Ukraine attacked Moscow Wednesday with at least 11 drones that were shot down by air defences in what Russian officials called one of the biggest drone strikes on the capital since the war in Ukraine began in February 2022.

The war, largely a grinding artillery and drone battle across the fields, forests and villages of eastern Ukraine, escalated August 6 when Ukraine sent thousands of soldiers over the border into Russia's western Kursk region.

For months, Ukraine has also fought an increasingly damaging drone war against the refineries and airfields of Russia, the world's second largest oil exporter, though major drone attacks on the Moscow region, with a population of over 21 million, have been rarer.

Russia's defence ministry said its air defences destroyed a total of 45 drones over Russian territory, including 11 over the Moscow region, 23 over the border region of Bryansk, six over the Belgorod region, three over the Kaluga region and two over the Kursk region.

Some of the drones were shot down over the city of Podolsk, Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyanin said. The city in the Moscow region is some 38 km south of the Kremlin.



Moscow says it foiled drone volley  
11 drones over Moscow region destroyed  
No damage or casualties reported

"This is one of the largest attempts to attack Moscow using drones ever," Sobyanin said on the Telegram messaging app in the early hours of Wednesday.

Along Moscow's boulevards, the cafes, restaurants and shops of the capital, which has been carefully insulated from the war,

verified footage of drones whirring over the dawn sky of the Moscow region and then being shot down in a ball of flame by air defences.

Moscow's airports, Vnukovo, Domodedovo and Zhukovsky, limited flights for four hours but restarted normal operations from 0330 GMT, Russia's aviation watchdog said.

Sobyanin said that according to preliminary information, there were no injuries or damage reported in the aftermath of the attacks. There were also no casualties or damage reported following the attack on Bryansk in Russia's southwest, the governor of the region, Alexander Bogomaz, wrote on Telegram.

The Russian defence ministry did not mention either Tula or Rostov in its statement listing destroyed Ukrainian air weapons. Ukraine's military said Wednesday it overnight struck an S-300 anti-aircraft missile system based in the Rostov region.

The drone attack on Moscow was on a par with a May 2023 attack when at least eight drones were destroyed over the capital, a strike Putin said was a Ukrainian attempt to scare and provoke Russia.

In Kursk, Russian war bloggers said intense battles were ongoing along the front in the region where Ukraine has carved out at least 450 square km of Russian territory. Russian media showed un-

# Modi arrives in Warsaw



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

From Warsaw, Modi will travel to Kyiv on the first visit by an Indian Prime Minister to Ukraine since the country became independent in 1991

Warsaw, August 21: Prime Minister Narendra Modi Wednesday said his maiden visit to Poland will add momentum to the bilateral friendship and benefit the people of the two countries as he arrived here on the first leg of his two-nation visit during which he will also travel to the Ukrainian capital Kyiv.

Modi, who will meet Poland's President Andrzej Sebastian Duda and hold bilateral talks with Prime Minister Donald Tusk, said he was looking forward to the various programmes in the Polish capital here.

"Landed in Poland. Looking forward to the various programmes here. This visit will add momentum to the India-Poland friendship and benefit the people of our nations," Modi said in a post on X soon after his arrival at the Warsaw military airport here.

Prime Minister Modi's visit to Poland is the first trip by an Indian Prime Minister to the country in the past 45 years.

The Indian community members in Poland gave a warm welcome to Prime Minister Modi when he arrived at the hotel where Polish and Indian artists performed Gujarati traditional dance.

"My visit to Poland comes as we mark 70 years of our diplomatic relations. Poland is a key economic partner in Central Europe," Modi said in his departure statement earlier today.

From Warsaw, Modi will travel to Kyiv on the first visit by an Indian Prime Minister to Ukraine since the country became independent in 1991.

"From Poland, I will be visiting Ukraine at the invitation of President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. This is the first-ever visit by an Indian Prime Minister to Ukraine," he said. Modi said he was confident that his visit to Warsaw and Kyiv "will serve as a natural continuation of extensive contacts with the two countries and help create the foundation for stronger and more vibrant relations in the years ahead".

India has not yet condemned the Russian invasion of Ukraine and has been calling for resolution of the conflict through dialogue and diplomacy.

## SNIPPETS

Pak police charge man over misinformation that led to riots in UK

Lahore: Pakistani police have arrested a man and charged him with cyber terrorism for his alleged role in spreading misinformation that led to widespread rioting in the UK earlier this month, a senior police investigator said Wednesday. The suspect was identified as Farhan Asif, 32, a freelance web developer, said Imran Kishwar, deputy inspector general of investigations in Lahore, the capital of eastern Punjab province.



Taliban bars UN human rights special rapporteur from Afghanistan

Kabul: The Taliban have barred United Nations-appointed special rapporteur Richard Bennett from entering Afghanistan, the administration's spokesperson told local broadcaster Tolo, accusing the human rights watchdog of "spreading propaganda". Bennett was appointed by the United Nations Human Rights Council in 2022 to monitor Afghanistan's human rights situation after the Taliban took over the previous year.



# Obama night at DNC: Barack, Michelle rouse crowd for Harris

America's first Black President, Obama has thrown his considerable political capital behind Kamala Harris

AGENCIES

Chicago, August 21: Former US President Barack Obama and his wife Michelle Obama delivered a one-two punch at the Democratic National Convention Tuesday night, urging Americans to back Kamala Harris in her 11th-hour presidential bid against Republican Donald Trump.

America's first Black President, Obama has thrown his considerable political capital behind Harris as she seeks to make history herself November 5 as the first woman and first Black and South Asian person to be elected US President.

"We do not need four more years of bluster and bumbling

and chaos. We have seen that movie before, and we all know that the sequel is usually worse," Obama told delegates on Day Two of the Chicago convention.

"America is ready for a new chapter. America is ready for a better story. We are ready for a President Kamala Harris."

He took aim at Trump, the Republican who followed him into the White House in 2017 and praised President Joe Biden, his vice president who was forced out of the 2024 race by Democratic allies who feared he would lose to Trump in November.

"History will remember Joe Biden as a President who defended democracy at a moment of great danger. I am proud to call him my President, but even prouder to call him my friend," Obama said, eliciting chants of "We love Joe."

Obama was introduced by his wife, Michelle, who tops Democrats' wish list as a future President. "America, hope is making a comeback," Michelle Obama

# Congo reports over 1K mpox cases in a week

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Cape Town, August 21: Congo reported more than 1,000 new mpox cases in the last week up to Tuesday as African health authorities asked for desperately needed vaccines to help fight its "growing" threat on the continent. The World Health Organisation has declared the outbreaks in Africa a global emergency.

Mpox belongs to the same family of viruses as smallpox but causes milder symptoms like fever, chills and body aches, and mostly spreads through close skin-to-skin contact, including sexual intercourse. People with more serious cases can develop lesions on the face, hands, chest and genitals.

While mpox has been reported in 12 of Africa's 54 countries during these outbreaks, the vast central African nation of Congo has recorded by far the most cases this year. Out of a total of 18,910 cases in 2024, 94%, or 17,794, were in Congo, the Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said, with 535 of the 541 deaths reported.

The figures are likely an underestimate, as only about one in five suspected cases in Congo are being tested for mpox. Africa CDC director-general Dr Jean Kaseya said many affected African countries had limited testing and surveillance capabilities.

## RISING THREAT



A 2022 global mpox outbreak was shut down with vaccines and treatments made available in rich nations, but hardly any doses reached Africa

its past efforts to raise donations for mpox failed to elicit even a single donor dollar.

Africa CDC's Kaseya said that his organization had received a pledge of 215,000 mpox vaccines from the European Union and the vaccine maker, Bavarian Nordic, which were due to arrive in the next few days. The United States' aid agency said it had donated 50,000 other doses of the same vaccine to Congo. Japan has also donated some doses to Congo.

A 2022 global mpox outbreak in more than 70 countries was shut down in the space of months with vaccines and treatments made available in rich nations, but hardly any doses reached Africa.



said, in a nod to Obama's first presidential campaign in 2008.

Pulling no punches, she cautioned that Trump would try to distort Harris' truth, much as he did "everything in his power to try to make people fear us."

Republicans delivered strong Trump rebukes

The program Tuesday night made a point to feature Republicans, former Republicans and former Trump allies who

election results). Trump has recently suggested without any evidence that Harris will lead the country to communism.

Harris's spouse plays up their blended family

Harris got what's likely to be her most significant character-witness speech of the week Tuesday night from her husband, second gentleman Doug Emhoff. And Emhoff's comments about the challenges involved in their blended family were a particularly potent moment in a Democratic convention that is focused on inclusivity.

"Those of you who belong to blended families know that they can be a little complicated," Emhoff said. "But as soon as our kids started calling her 'Mamala,' I knew we'd be okay."

Bernie Sanders made another notable Gaza mention

For the second straight night, the war in Gaza got a fleeting but high-profile mention on the

# 28 Pak pilgrims die in bus crash

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Tehran, August 21: A bus carrying Shiite pilgrims from Pakistan to Iraq crashed in central Iran, killing at least 28 people, an official said Wednesday.

The crash happened Tuesday night in the central Iranian province of Yazd, said Mohammad Ali Malekzadeh, a local emergency official, according to the state-run IRNA news agency.

Another 23 people suffered injuries in the crash, 14 of them serious, he added. He said all of the bus passengers hailed from Pakistan.

There were 51 people on board at the time of the crash outside of the city of Taft, some 500 kilometers southeast of the Iranian capital, Tehran.

Iranian state television later broadcast images of the bus, turned upside down on the highway with its roof smashed in and all of its doors open. Rescuers stepped gingerly through the broken glass and debris littering the road.

In the state TV report, Malekzadeh blamed the crash on the bus brakes failing and a lack of attention by its driver.

A surveillance video later aired by state TV showed the bus speeding past a parked car into a dirt lot just before the crash, narrowly missing bystanders.

A bona fide big-tent (and ironic) moment

Shortly after 8:30 am Central time, Sanders echoed his longstanding talking points on combating the influence of billionaires. "Billionaires in both parties should not be able to buy elections, including primary elections," Sanders said.

The very next speaker, Billionaire Illinois Governor JB Pritzker (D), who spent \$350 million of his fortune winning his two campaigns, including a competitive 2018 Democratic primary. "Take it from an actual billionaire, Trump is rich in only one thing, stupidity," Pritzker said, about 10 minutes after Sanders' comment.



## of the day quote

Africa's natural resources, demographic advantage and growing economic integration through the African Continental Free Trade Area make it an attractive destination for investments

JAGDEEP DHANKHAR | VICE PRESIDENT

A new scheme to strengthen the domestic medical device industry will be rolled out in the next one month

ARUNISH CHAWLA | DEPARTMENT OF PHARMACEUTICALS SECRETARY

The increase in hiring intent for freshers is an encouraging sign. It reflects growing confidence among employers and presents valuable opportunities for fresh talent entering the workforce

SHANTANU ROOI | FOUNDER AND CEO, TEAMLEASE ETECH

## SHORT TAKES

### NCLT okays delisting of ICICI Securities

**Mumbai:** The Mumbai bench of the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) Wednesday approved the delisting application of ICICI Securities from the stock exchanges and also rejected objections filed by minority shareholders. The NCLT in an oral order approved the Scheme of Arrangement for delisting of shares of ICICI Securities. As per the scheme of arrangement, shareholders of ICICI Securities (ISEC) will get 67 shares of ICICI Bank for every 100 shares they hold. The court also rejected objections filed by minority shareholders Quantum Mutual Fund and Manu Rishi Gupta. Quantum Mutual Fund held 0.08 per cent and Manu Rishi Gupta, a minority shareholder held 0.002 per cent shares in ICICI Securities opposed the scheme.

### Decathlon to invest 100mn euros in 5 yrs

**New Delhi:** French sports retailer Decathlon Wednesday said it will invest 100 million euros (around ₹933 crore) in India, its one of the fastest growing markets, in the next five years to expand retail footprint and manufacturing operations. The company expects its business to become double in next three to five years, said Decathlon India CEO Sankar Chatterjee. The company plans to have a network of 190 stores, having presence in over 90 cities in next 5 years as part of its expansion, he added. Besides, a handful of this would also be spent on enhancing the digital channel as per the omni-channel approach of the company. Decathlon will expand its manufacturing operations and increase sourcing from India for the local market and its global operations.

### Hero MotoCorp to drive in new scooters

**New Delhi:** Two-wheeler major Hero MotoCorp is gearing up to expand its scooter range and consolidate its position in the 125 cc bike segment as it looks to grow faster than the competition, according to CEO Niranjana Gupta. The company plans to roll out both petrol and electric scooter trims and also bolster the production capacity of 125 cc bike Xtreme 125R to cater to enhanced demand. "There will be action on the scooters front and action will be big on both ICE and EV side. The Destini full-body change will be unveiled very soon and then it will be followed by Xoom models - 125cc and 160cc - within this fiscal," Gupta said.



The size of the Indian economy has the potential to touch \$55 trillion by 2047 if the growth rate in dollar terms remains at 12 per cent

KRISHNAMURTHY SUBRAMANIAN | EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, IMF

## ONLINE VENDORS' JOBS CREATION

Online vendors have generated 15.8 million jobs in India, including 3.5 million for women, with about 1.76 million retail enterprises participating in e-commerce activity, says a report released Wednesday



# Disney-Reliance merger in soup

## Watchdog concerned about combined cricket broadcast rights

REUTERS

**New Delhi, Aug 21:** India's antitrust body has reached an initial assessment that the \$8.5 billion India merger of Reliance and Walt Disney media assets harms competition due to their power over cricket broadcast rights, four sources told Reuters.

It is the biggest setback so far to the planned Disney-Reliance merger which aims to create India's biggest entertainment player which will compete with Sony, Zee Entertainment, Netflix and Amazon with a combined 120 TV channels and two streaming services.

The Competition Commission of India (CCI) has flagged possible anti-competitive concerns with respect to the proposed Viacom18-Star India merger and has sought detailed responses from the parties concerned, sources said.

In case the regulator is not satisfied with the replies, it can go for public scrutiny of the deal, they added.

After the companies filed an application with the CCI for deal approval in May this year, the watchdog had sought various clarifications and additional information from the parties.

The sources said the parties have been served show cause notice asking why a detailed



scrutiny of the deal should not be carried out as there are anti-competitive concerns in relation to certain business segments, including cricket broadcasting rights.

Viacom is owned by Reliance Industries and Star India is part of the Walt Disney Company.

The merged company, which would be majority owned by Asia's richest man Mukesh Ambani's Reliance, would have lucrative rights worth billions of dollars for the broadcast of cricket on TV and streaming platforms, raising fears over pricing power and its grip over advertisers.

Antitrust experts had warned the merger, announced in February, could face intense scrutiny, especially on the sport-

ing rights issue.

The CCI earlier privately asked Reliance and Disney around 100 questions related to the merger. The companies have told the watchdog they are willing to sell fewer than 10 television channels to assuage concerns about market power and win an early approval, sources told Reuters.

But they had refused to relent on cricket, telling the CCI that broadcast and streaming rights will expire in 2027 and 2028 and cannot be sold right now, and that any such move would require the cricket board's approval, which could delay the process.

### 'GETTING COMPLICATED'

Reliance-Disney will own digital and TV cricket rights for top leagues, including for the

world's most valuable cricket tournament, the Indian Premier League.

**Once the \$8.5 billion deal, announced in February this year, is completed, it would create the biggest firm in the Indian media and entertainment sector, with over 100 channels in several languages, two leading OTT platforms and a viewer base of 750 million across the country**

The CCI notice may delay the approval process but the companies can still address the concerns by offering more concessions, the first source said.

"This is a precursor of things getting complicated... The notice means that initially the CCI thinks the merger harms competition and whatever concessions offered are not enough," added the person.

A second source said CCI has given the companies 30 days to respond and explain their posi-

tion, and the concerns currently revolve around how advertisers could face pricing challenges if the entities are merged.

"The CCI is concerned the entity can increase rates for advertisers during live events," said the person.

Jefferies has said the Disney-Reliance entity will have a 40% share of the advertising market in TV and streaming segments.

Cricket has a fanatical following in India, the world's most populous country with an estimated 1.4 billion people, and matches are sought after by advertisers.

Media agency GroupM estimates spending on sports industry related sponsorship, endorsement and media totalled to near \$2 billion in 2023. Cricket accounted for 87% of those spends.

The former head of mergers at the CCI, KK Sharma, has said the merger could lead to "almost an absolute control over cricket."

Zee and Sony planned to create a \$10 billion TV behemoth in India and in 2022 and got a similar warning notice. They offered some concessions by selling three TV channels which helped them win a CCI approval, but the merger eventually collapsed.

## Zomato to acquire Paytm's ent ticketing biz for ₹2,048 crore

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, August 21:** Online food delivery platform Zomato will acquire Paytm's entertainment ticketing business for ₹2,048 crore to strengthen its "going-out" segment in a deal that will help the troubled fintech firm to sharpen its focus on core payments and financial services distribution.

Paytm's entertainment ticketing business covers movies, sports, and events (live performances). The boards of Zomato and One 97 Communications Ltd (OCL) have approved the all-cash deal.

As part of this agreement, OCL's entertainment ticketing business will transfer business to its 100 per cent subsidiaries Orbgen Technologies Pvt Ltd (OTPL) and Wasteland Entertainment Pvt Ltd (WEPL), followed by the sale of 100 per cent stake in these subsidiaries (which operate the TicketNew and Insider platforms) to Zomato.

Subsequently, Zomato will spin off the new business into a new app called 'District'.

Under the deal, Zomato will fully acquire Orbgen Technologies Pvt Ltd (OTPL), which is into movie ticketing, for ₹1,264.6 crore and buy Wasteland Entertainment Pvt Ltd, which is into events ticketing for ₹783.8 crore.

# Shares log meagre gains

MARKETS RISE ON BUYING IN FMCG, CONSUMER STOCKS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, August 21:** Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty closed higher Wednesday, helped by gains in FMCG, consumer durables and healthcare stocks amid strong buying support from domestic institutional investors.

However, foreign capital outflows amid a cautious trend in global equities ahead of the release of US Fed minutes restricted the gains in domestic markets, traders said.

In a range-bound trade, the 30-share BSE Sensex gained for the second day in a row, rising 102.44 points or 0.13 per cent to close at 80,905.30. During the day, it rose 149.97 points or 0.18 per cent to hit an intra-day high of 80,952.83.

Rising for the fifth straight session, the NSE Nifty went up by 71.35 points or 0.29 per cent to end at 24,770.20. "While defensive sector outperformed due to a continued shift in portfolio towards FMCG, consumer, commodities, and pharma. Global markets exhibited a mildly cautious tone ahead of the release of the FOMC minutes later today. Currently, the expectation of a rate cut remains high, given the fall in US inflation and moderation in overall growth," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services, said.

Among the Sensex firms, Titan, Asian Paints, ITC, Hindustan



The Indian market traded on a tight range with a positive bias supported by strong DI flows

VINOD NAIR | HEAD OF RESEARCH, GEOJIT FINANCIAL SERVICES

Unilever, Nestle India, Bajaj Finserv and Bharti Airtel were among the gainers. In contrast, UltraTech Cement, Tech Mahindra, Tata Steel, Power Grid, HDFC Bank, HCL Technology, State Bank of India and ICICI Bank were the laggards.

Shares of FSN E-Commerce Ventures, beauty and personal care brand Nykaa, bounced 9.42 per cent Wednesday. During the day, it rallied 18.6 per cent to hit its 52-week high of ₹228.50.

GE T&D India stocks fell 5 per cent - its lower circuit limit - after the company said its promoters are considering selling a minority stake to simplify its hold-

ing structure. Meanwhile, the scrip of NHPC fell 0.88 per cent after a major landslide in East Sikkim caused significant damage to the 510-MW hydroelectric project on the Teesta River.

The European markets were trading higher Wednesday. In Asian markets, Tokyo, Shanghai and Hong Kong were closed in the negative territory, while Seoul ended higher Wednesday. The US stock markets settled lower in overnight trade Tuesday.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) again turned sellers Tuesday as they offloaded equities worth ₹1,457.96 crore, according to exchange data.

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

## India remains net steel importer as China cargoes rise

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, August 21:** India continued to be a net importer of steel during the first four months of the current fiscal year beginning April, with China as its biggest supplier of the alloy, according to provisional government data seen by Reuters.

India imported 2.69 million metric tonne of steel between April and July, and exported 1.57 million tonne, the data showed.

India, the world's second-biggest crude steel producer, became a net importer of the alloy in the fiscal year to March 31, 2024, and the trend has continued since then, with imports from China rising steadily.

China was the top steel exporter to India from April to July, shipping about 807,000 tonne to its neighbour. It was followed by Japan and South Korea, the data showed.

Leading Indian steelmakers such as JSW Steel and Tata Steel have cited rising imports into India as a major concern, and the government has initiated an anti-dumping investigation on certain steel products imported from Vietnam.

Steel prices in India have plunged to their lowest level in more than three years due to higher imports and subdued exports, according to data from commodities consultancy BigMint.

## Amazon's home, kitchen, outdoors segment sees robust growth in Odisha

BHUBANESWAR: E-commerce major Amazon India Wednesday said its home, kitchen and outdoors segment has grown by nearly 25 per cent in Odisha in the 2023-24 fiscal as compared to the previous year. The company also registered a 15 per cent growth in new customers in Odisha which is one of the fastest-growing states, Amazon India's Home, Kitchen and Outdoors segment Director KN Srikanth said.

There is growing demand for sports and sporting equipment in the region with the cricket gears experiencing more than 80 per cent year-on-year growth, he said. Similarly, demand for equipment for racquet sports, including badminton, tennis and table tennis, surged nearly 150 per cent during the last financial year, indicating a strong focus on outdoor sports, he said. The online marketplace has 51 service partners, 52 delivery stations and nearly 16,000 sellers in the state. The company will continue to work with local stores and MSMEs across the state, he added. Catering to evolving customers' needs, Amazon is currently live with 9 EV (electric vehicle) brands in more than 10 cities of Odisha. Interestingly, Bhubaneswar sold at least one electric scooter every two days in July, Srikanth said. The capital of the state has experienced nearly 30 per cent growth in the large furniture category, with premium items such as sofa sets, mattresses and wardrobes showing a 40 per cent increase in sales, the company official said.



## Hero Premia opens showroom in Cuttack

CUTTACK: Hero MotoCorp Ltd, world's largest 2W manufacturer, has announced the opening of their flagship showroom, Hero Premia by Essen Automobiles, located at Purighat in Cuttack. The store was unveiled in the presence of MD of Essen Automobiles Saurabh Thacker, Ashutosh Varma, National Sales Head, Hero MotoCorp, Laxmisha Urmi Nalluraya, Zonal Head - East, Abdul Ahad, Zonal Manager Sales and Ujjwal Kohli, Area Manager, Odisha.

Hero Premia is the hub of premium brands from the house of Hero MotoCorp Ltd, including Harley Davidson (HD-X440), VIDA (V1 & V1 Pro) and HMCL's own premium motorcycle range: Mavrick, Xpulse 200, Karizma XMR and Xtreme 160R. The showroom represents a new era in premium riding and aims to deliver exceptional customer experience. The outlet aims at offering the latest range of motorcycles and electric scooters to the customers in and around Cuttack.



## Non-banks' asset growth to dip, rise in NPAs likely: Icra

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, August 21:** The non-banking finance companies' (NBFC) growth in assets under management will moderate in FY25, and the year will also witness an uptick in dud assets, a domestic rating agency said Wednesday.

The NBFCs operating across various segments are estimated to show assets under management (AUM) growth of 13-15 per cent in FY25 from 18 per cent in FY24, largely impacted by regulatory measures on restricting bank lending to such entities and also concerns over unsecured and top-up loans, Icra Ratings said.

The sector is also expected to

witness a 0.30-0.50 per cent increase in delinquencies during the year, and the agency's group head Karthik Srinivasan told reporters that the "best days on delinquencies are behind us".

The non-performing assets (NPAs) will inch up due to factors like high growth in the last two years, some borrowers being over-leveraged and also sloppy assessment practices in some entities, the agency said.

The sector needs up to ₹6 lakh crore in funding for sustaining the credit growth in FY25, Srinivasan said, adding that capital is not a constraint but companies will have to look at sources beyond the mainstay of bank funding for the liabilities.

## Amul: World's strongest food, dairy brand

AMONG THE TOP 50 GLOBAL BRANDS LISTED BY UK'S BRAND FINANCE, AMUL IS THE ONLY INDIAN BRAND TO BE FEATURED AND RECOGNISED FOR ITS ACHIEVEMENTS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, August 21:** Amul has been ranked as the world's strongest food brand by consultancy firm Brand Finance, UK.

It has also retained the strongest dairy brand of the world title for the fourth consecutive year.

"Amul has been ranked as the world's strongest food brand and the strongest dairy brand as per Brand Finance, UK, world's leading brand consultancy, in its annual report titled 'Food & Drink 2024'," the company said in a statement.

The report lists the most valuable and strongest food, dairy and non-alcoholic drinks brands.

As per the report, Amul has risen from second rank in 2023 to



become the world's strongest food brand in 2024, with a Brand Strength Index (BSI) score of 91.0 out of 100 and an AAA+ rating.

"Amul's brand strength is attributed to its strong performance in familiarity, consideration,

and recommendation metrics," the statement said.

Brand Amul is marketed by the Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation, the largest farmers-owned cooperative in the world.

This is indeed a proud moment for the entire Amul team and our 36 lakh farmers, who have contributed to build and nurture this brand. We have always believed Amul's currency is not milk, but trust, and it is this trust, which has created the brand that is loved by every generation of consumers over the last 78 years

JAYEN MEHTA | MD, AMUL

Amul annually procures 11 billion litres of milk and is worth ₹80,000 crore (\$10 Billion), with its products being picked up 22 billion times in a year, the highest in the world.



# Majhi lauds Team India's show

Hockey squad honoured with cash awards for bronze-winning feat in Paris



(Left) Chief Minister Mohan Majhi presents a bouquet to Indian skipper Harmanpreet Singh at the Kalinga Stadium while Sports Minister Suryabanshi Suraj looks on; Amit Rohidas displays his bronze medal to fans who had gathered on the roads to welcome the team

PHOTOS BIKASH NAYAK

PNN & AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, August 21:** Amid beats of drums, tribal dance and cheers, the Indian men's hockey team that won the bronze in the recently-concluded Paris Olympics were given a rousing reception on their arrival at the Biju Patnaik International Airport (BPIA) here Wednesday. Sports Minister Suryabanshi

Suraj welcomed the team at the airport and accompanied them to Kalinga Stadium in a mega road show. Hockey lovers and locals stood on both sides of the road to cheer the players. Different cultural programmes were organised at the airport to welcome the players.

Players were seen waving from the bus to the large number of enthusiasts who stood

on both sides of the road with the Tricolour. They expressed happiness at the way the fans showed their happiness at the performance of the team.

After arriving at the Kalinga Stadium, the players and support staff joined a photo session with Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi and Suraj. Students of the Bhubaneswar Sports Hostel also saluted the

entire Indian squad in a unique manner which the players liked very much and applauded.

Later in the evening the CM felicitated the all the players and the support staff. The players were presented with cheques of ₹15 lakh each while the support staff was awarded ₹10 lakh each. It should be stated here that the only player from Odisha in the Indian team, Amit Rohidas, had

earlier been awarded ₹4 crore by the state government.

PR Sreejesh, whose last game for India was the bronze-winning medal match received a special 'Lifetime Achievement Award' for his outstanding contribution to Indian hockey and a cheque of ₹50 lakh.

Majhi lauded the team for the historic achievement. "The awards are in recognition of the men's hockey team's stellar performance. Their dedication, skill and performance have not only brought pride to the nation, but have also inspired the next generation. The state of Odisha remains committed to supporting the athletes and hockey players and nurturing future talent in the sport," the CM said.

Skipper Harmanpreet Singh said that his side were unlucky to lose to Germany in the semi-finals. "It (semifinal vs Germany) was a very close match. I think we created a lot of chances but we were not lucky that day and some hits were off target," Harmanpreet said during the felicitation ceremony.

"But I think the bronze medal was very important. It was the last match of the tournament and feeling very happy after winning the match. Our effort was that we should fulfil our dream (of winning gold) but somehow we were unlucky," Harmanpreet said. "But we've won back-to-back bronze in hockey; it's a very big thing for us," he added.

Harmanpreet was left speechless with the reception given to the players. He said the team get the same affection every time they come to Odisha. "And, this time, we are getting all the more affection. It feels nice," he stated.

The programme was also attended by Deputy CMs KV Singh Deo and Pravati Parida.

# PERFECT TIME TO RETIRE: SREEJESH



**PROUD MOMENT:** PR Sreejesh with Hockey India president Dilip Tirkey (left) by his side, proudly displays his bronze medal on his arrival at Bhubaneswar, Wednesday

OP PHOTO

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, August 21:** Former goalkeeper PR Sreejesh was one of the instrumental players for the Indian team in helping them to retain the bronze that they had won at the Tokyo Games in 2021. At the Paris Olympics, Sreejesh once more had an outstanding tournament to put India on the podium. He was simply magical in the game against Great Britain when a 10-man India won in the shootout with Sreejesh making two brilliant saves.

India would have wanted Sreejesh to continue, but the mercurial goalie had announced that the Paris Olympics would be his last for India. Sreejesh doesn't have any regrets as he feels that in future, India will get a better goalkeeper than him. But then it is a matter of conjecture.

"Look, no one is indispensable. I am sure India will get better goalkeepers than me," Sreejesh stated here Wednesday ahead of the felicitation ceremony. "When Sachin (Tendulkar) retired, there were questions as to who will fill his void. However, many other talented cricketers like Virat Kohli arrived. I am sure India will get a better goal-

keeper than me in future," Sreejesh added.

Sreejesh has been appointed as the head coach of the junior Indian team. However, he is in no hurry to take up the assignment. "I thank Hockey India for providing me the opportunity to stay associated with the game. However, at this juncture, I will be taking an extended break to spend time with my family, before taking up the new assignment.

**I played to the best of my ability and the team won a bronze at Paris and hence it was the best time to announce my retirement**

PR SREEJESH

The former Indian goalkeeper also hailed the Odisha government. "I really want to thank the Odisha government for sponsoring the national squad. We get the best of facilities in Bhubaneswar. The love from the fans is unbelievable. Even today you could see the enthusiasm. This motivates a player to raise the bar. It has really been an exhilarating experience playing in Bhubaneswar," Sreejesh stated.

## SHORT TAKES

### Bronze for Dahiya in U-17 world meet

**Amman (Jordan):** India's Ronak Dahiya bagged the bronze medal in the 110kg Greco-Roman category at the U-17 World Wrestling Championship here Tuesday night. Dahiya, currently ranked No. 2 in the world in his age-group weight category, comfortably disposed the challenge of Turkey's Emrullah Capkan 6-1 to claim India's first medal in the championships. Earlier, Dahiya had lost to eventual silver medalist Zoltan Czako of Hungary in the semifinal. The gold in this category was won by Ukraine's Ivan Yankovskiy, who beat Czako 13-4 by virtue of technical superiority.

### Sharath mulls on future endeavours

**Chennai:** Achanta Sharath Kamal may have played his last Olympics, but the veteran Indian table tennis player wants to stay connected to the sport as an administrator and said he will soon have a sit-down with powers that be to chalk out a 'roadmap'. "Still haven't decided clearly what will be my roadmap ahead. But, I'll sit down and have a talk with the TTFI and decide with my family as well about what exactly has to be done ahead," Kamal stated Wednesday. "But, I'll be staying around with the game and probably take up positions in the TTFI or SAI and try to help the sport and the junior players," he added.

### Mixed fortunes for Indian shuttlers

**Yokohama:** Indian shuttler Sathish Kumar Karunakaran progressed to the men's singles pre-quarterfinals after Denmark's Anders Antonsen retired hurt midway in their opening round match at the Japan Open badminton tournament here Wednesday. The 23-year-old Indian was leading 6-1 when Antonsen, the World No. 3 retired just three minutes into the contest at the Yokohama Arena. However, Kiran George made a first round exit going down to Japan's Kanta Tsuneyama 19-21, 14-21 in the Super 750 tournament. In women's doubles, Rutuparna Panda and Swetaparna Panda lost their round of 32 match to Julie Finne-Ipsen and Mai Surrow of Denmark 8-21, 14-21 in 34 minutes.

# Shah set to become new ICC chairman

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, August 21:** Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) secretary Jay Shah is all set to replace incumbent Greg Barclay as the new chairman of the International Cricket Council (ICC), sources stated here Wednesday. Earlier Barclay told ICC directors Tuesday, including Cricket Australia's (CA) chair Mike Baird, that he has no intention of running for the post, for the third term during a video conference.

His decision comes after being informed of Shah's intentions to replace him in November. Shah has the backing of cricket boards from England and Australia, and hence, has the numbers to be crowned as the chief of ICC.

Jagmohan Dalmiya (1997 to 2000), Sharad Pawar (2010-2012) - as presidents - and N Srinivasan (2014 to 2015) and Shashank Manohar (2015 to 2020) - as chairmen - are the only four Indians who have headed ICC in the past. Shah, who is also the son of India's home minis-

**Shah enjoys a lot of goodwill with most of the 16 voting members and hence it is expected that he will be elected unanimously**

ter Amit Shah, will become the fifth Indian to do so when he officially replaces Barclay.

"ICC chair Greg Barclay confirmed to the board that he will not stand for a third term and will step down from the post when his current tenure finishes at the end of November. Barclay was appointed as the independent ICC chair in November 2020, before being re-elected in 2022," a spokesperson of the body was quoted as saying by 'The Age'.

"Current directors are now required to put forward nominations for the next chair by 27 August 2024 and if there is more than one candidate, an election will be held with the term of the new chair commencing 1 December 1, 2024," the spokesperson added.

Shah at present heads the finance committee of the ICC.

# Para-athletes eye 12 medals

FIRST BATCH OF SPORTSPERSONS LEAVE FOR PARIS TO ACCLIMATISE TO CONDITIONS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, August 21:** Eyeing an unprecedented five gold and a dozen medals in total, the first batch of the Indian para-athletics team, including star javelin thrower Sumit Antil, left for the Paris Paralympics in advance to get acclimatised to the conditions. The 16 para athletes will stay at hotels in Paris for a few days before entering the Games Village August 25, three days before the opening ceremony.

The likes of Antil, who is bidding to become the first Indian to defend his Paralympics gold, will train at facilities near the French capital to acclimatise with the weather conditions there.

Para athletics events will be held from August 30 to September 8, the closing day of the Paralympics at Stade de France, the same venue where the able-bodied athletes competed during the Paris Olympics.

"Sumit Antil and some other para athletes will train at Nelson Mandela Sports Complex for a few days before entering the



Games Village," head coach Satyanarayana stated. "Some will stay at hotels near the Games Village and they can use the training facilities there during day time," he added.

Satyanarayana was asked about the Indian para-athletics team's medal prospects at Paris. "We are aiming for at least five

gold and 12 medals in total. If we can do that, it will be our best performance in the Paralympics," Satyanarayana said.

Satyanarayana's hopes stem from the unprecedented success at the 2024 World Para Athletics Championships in Kobe, Japan in May where India finished sixth in the medal tally

with six gold, five silver and six bronze medals.

Antil (men's javelin F64), Deepthi Jeevanji (women's 400m T20), Sachin Khilari (men's shot put F46), Ekta Bhanu (women's club throw F51), Simran Sharma (women's 200m T12) and Mariyappan Thangavelu (men's high jump T42) won gold at Tokyo. They start favourites in their respective events at Paris.

In the Tokyo Paralympics in 2021, India had won a record 19 medals (five gold, eight silver and six bronze).

India are sending their biggest ever team of 84 athletes across 12 sports disciplines to the Paralympics, with 38 in the para-athletics squad. Paralympic Committee of India (PCI) president Devendra Jhajharia has predicted at least 25 medals from the Paris Games.

Antil and Bhagyashree Jadhav, who won a silver in Hangzhou Asian Para Games in women's shot put F34, will be the joint flag-bearers for India during the opening ceremony, which will be held outside a stadium for the first time.

# India series equal to Ashes: Starc

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Sydney, August 21:** Australia pace ace Mitchell Starc believes that with the upcoming Border-Gavaskar Trophy against India becoming a five-Test affair for the first time in over three decades, it would be 'right on par' with the esteemed Ashes series for his team.

The marquee series between India and Australia, set to begin in November, was extended by a match this year for the first time since the 1991-92 season. "Being five matches now, the series is probably right on par with the Ashes series," Starc told 'Wide World of Sports', Wednesday.

Since 2014-15, Australia have failed to lay their hands on the Border Gavaskar Trophy, with India winning four consecutive series including the historic triumphs Down Under in 2018-19 and 2020-21.

Starc is not only intent on reversing this trend but also harbours aspirations of a clean



sweep, particularly as the series forms a crucial part of the World Test Championships. "We always want to win every game at home and we know India are a very strong team," Starc stated.

Currently, India lead the World Test Championships points table with Australia in second place. "As we're placed at the minute we're the top two teams on the Test ladder... so a very exciting series coming up for the fans

and certainly the players," Starc pointed out. "Hopefully when we're sitting there on the 8th of January we have that trophy back on our shores."

The 34-year-old is just 11 matches shy of reaching a milestone 100 Tests and has no plans to quit red ball cricket. In fact the left-arm pacer said he is scaling back his white ball commitments to prolong his Test career for as long as possible.

# 'NO ONE BETTER THAN BUMRAH'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, August 21:** New Zealand captain Tim Southee said Wednesday that India pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah has looked more formidable since making a comeback from a back injury, which kept him out of action for a major part of the last year.

"To be able to bounce back from the major injury and come back, he's even better than what he was beforehand. Juggling multiple formats, can be difficult at times as well, but he is doing it easily," Southee said on the sidelines of the Ceat Cricket Rating Awards here Wednesday.

"Bumrah is probably more experienced, understands his game a bit more. He probably had that time where he was injured to come back and be recharged, refreshed. He's brilliant across all three formats at the moment with no one better than him," the Kiwi skipper added.

# Chopra aiming to end season with DL title

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Lausanne, August 21:** Two weeks after winning his historic silver medal at the Paris Olympics, javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra will resume action at the Lausanne Diamond League (DL) meeting here Thursday. He will be seeking to reclaim the DL trophy at the season-ending finale next month.

The 26-year-old Chopra was the Diamond League champion in 2022 and finished second behind Jakob Vadlejch of Czech Republic in the winner-takes-all DL final in Eugene, USA, last year. This season's DL finals will be held September 14 in Brussels. Chopra needs to finish in the top six of the Diamond League series standings to qualify for the season-ending finale. He is currently in fourth spot with seven points. There is another DL meeting - in Zurich September 5 - which which has

**I have been managing my injury all through the season and will consult doctors only when I have the time**

NEERAJ CHOPRA

men's javelin throw in its roster. Chopra is determined to end the season on a high. "I came to Switzerland for training ahead of the Diamond League. Luckily, I did not aggravate my injury as I took extra care of that. I thought of continuing my season like most other athletes. There is one month to go until the season ends," Chopra stated.

Chopra has been managing his groin injury since winning the gold in the Budapest World Championships last year. "The final treatment will be after the season ends. I will try to take care of it as much as possible and consult the doctors later," he informed.