



## Dream fulfilled

Actor Anya Panday says working with Vikramaditya Motwane in 'CTRL' was like a dream come true for her

LEISURE | P2



## Mounting toll

Israel's retaliatory offensive in Gaza kil more than 40,000 Palestinians, according to the Health Ministry

INTERNATIONAL | P10



## IPO buzz

The IPO market will be bustling this week, with 4 companies, including Bajaj Housing Finance, set to launch their initial share-sale to raise ₹8,390 crore

BUSINESS | P11



## Record medal haul

India achieves their most successful performance in Paralympic history at the Paris 2024 Games, securing a total of 29 medals

SPORTS | P12

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## SHORT TAKES

### TMC MP resigns over RG Kar horror

**Kolkata:** TMC MP Jawhar Sircar Sunday wrote to West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee, the chief of his party, and said he has decided to quit Rajya Sabha and leave politics altogether, describing the steps taken by the state government in handling the rape and murder of the doctor at RG Kar hospital "too little and quite late". In the letter, Sircar said he became increasingly "disillusioned" with the state government as it seemed "quite unconcerned" about corruption and "strong-arm tactics" of a section of leaders. P8

### DeepVeer blessed with baby girl



**New Delhi:** Bollywood star couple Deepika Padukone and Ranveer Singh Sunday became parents to their first child, a baby girl. The duo, who has co-starred in films such as 'Ram-Leela', 'Bajirao Mastani' and '83', welcomed the baby a day after Deepika was admitted to a private hospital in Mumbai. They announced the news in a joint Instagram post. "Welcome Baby Girl! 8.9.2024," it read. Several industry colleagues, including Alia Bhatt, Arjun Kapoor, and Anya Panday, congratulated Deepika and Ranveer on social media. Deepika, 38, and Ranveer, 39, were photographed offering prayers at the Siddhivinayak Temple on the eve of Ganesh Chaturthi Friday. P2

### IRREGULAR by MANJUL



No more outing! Even if you dodge road rage, lynch mobs, or gau rakshaks, you could still get beaten by autowallahs

### WEATHER

	BBSR	CTC
Max Temp	32.2°C	31.4°C
Min Temp	25.9°C	24.5°C
Humidity	91%	94%
Rainfall	7.2mm	2.2mm

**FORECAST**  
Generally cloudy sky with one or two spells of rain or thundershower



**FALLEN APART:** Passengers on railway tracks after coaches of Magadh Express train split into two following an accident near Tudiganj station in Buxar district of Bihar, Sunday

PTI PHOTO

# ₹925cr CM Kisan boost for farmers

PNN & AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 8:** In what has come as a boon for poor landless farmers left out under PM Kisan, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi rolled out CM Kisan Yojana at Sambalpur on the special occasion of agrarian festival Nuakhai, Sunday. Around 46 lakh farmers were included under the scheme as the government disbursed ₹925 crore in the first tranche under the the state government's flagship programme. The BJP government had earlier announced implementation of CM Kisan Yojana replacing the KALIA scheme of the previous BJD government. Under CM Kisan, the state government will provide ₹4,000 annually to small and marginal farmers in two instalments to be released on the days of Nuakhai and Akshaya Tritiya. Addressing the public gathering, Majhi said a total of 46 lakh farmers including landless agriculture households will be benefited from the scheme. As the Centre is providing



Due to some technical issues, all beneficiaries of CM Kisan have not been included under PM Kisan, he said, adding, "To bridge the gap, our government has launched a two-month saturation drive to include all eligible registered farmers under the PM Kisan scheme from today." Majhi said the previous BJD government had announced providing a bonus of ₹100 to paddy farmers in 2014 at Sohela in western Odisha. However, it failed to implement it. "We have promised to procure paddy with an MSP of ₹3,100 and now we are going to give a ₹800 bonus for a quintal of paddy," the CM said. Majhi further said that the Odisha government has submitted a proposal to the Centre for setting up of an AIIMS in Sambalpur, which would happen in the coming days. He also launched CM Kisan portal and Krushak Odisha Unified Portal in presence of Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, Revenue Minister Suresh Pujari and local MLA Jayanarayan Mishra.

## Save Manipur's integrity, Biren Singh tells Centre

AGENCIES

**Imphal, Sept 8:** Amid a fresh bout of violence in Manipur, Chief Minister N Biren Singh Sunday appealed to the Centre to take steps to protect territorial integrity of the state, according to an official. Singh also urged the Union government not to give in to the demand for a separate administration raised by Kuki Zo groups, said the official on condition of anonymity. The Chief Minister made these appeals in a memorandum submitted to Governor Lakshman Prasad Acharya when he, along with a number of MLAs and Assembly Speaker, called on him at Raj Bhavan and held a meeting. In the memorandum to Acharya, Singh said the Centre should ensure peace in Manipur and give adequate power to the elected state government, according to the official. Singh also called for revoking the Suspension of Operations (SoO) agreement. The SoO pact was signed by the Centre, the Manipur government and two conglomerates of Kuki militant outfits - Kuki National Organisation (KNO) and United People's Front (UPF).

# Suspected mpox case in India

SAMPLES BEING TESTED; PATIENT STABLE

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, Sept 8:** India has recorded a suspected case of mpox found in a man who recently travelled from a country suffering an outbreak of the virus, the Health ministry said Sunday. The patient has been isolated in a hospital and is in a stable condition, the ministry said. Samples have been collected from the man and are being tested to confirm the presence of mpox. Mpox is a viral zoonosis with symptoms similar to those seen in the past in smallpox patients, although clinically less severe. It can spread through close contact. Usually mild, it is fatal in rare cases. It causes flu-like symptoms and pus-filled lesions on the body. "The case is being managed in line with established protocols, and contact tracing is ongoing to identify potential sources and assess the impact within the country," the ministry said.



The country is fully prepared to deal with such isolated travel-related cases and has robust measures in place to manage and mitigate any potential risk, the ministry added. The development of this case is consistent with the earlier risk assessment conducted by the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) and there is no cause of any undue concern, it said. Last month, media reports said India had been on alert since a new strain of mpox became virulent in Africa. The World Health Organisation (WHO) has declared the outbreak a public health emergency of international concern after the new variant was identified. Since the 2022 declaration of PHEIC by WHO, 30 mpox cases have been reported in India. The last case of mpox was detected in March this year. According to WHO's earlier statement, 99,176 mpox cases and 208 deaths have been reported from 116 countries since 2022.

# NAVDEEP'S SILVER UPGRADED TO GOLD

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Paris, Sept 8:** In a dramatic turn of events at the 2024 Paris Paralympics, Navdeep Singh's silver medal was upgraded to gold after a decision taken by the International Paralympic Committee (IPC), following a thorough review process. Navdeep, who initially secured silver in the men's javelin throw F41 event, was awarded the gold medal after the disqualification of Sadeq Beit Sayah due to a violation of Rule 8.1 of the World Para Athletics Rules and Regulations. This is India's first-ever gold medal in the men's javelin F41 category. The 23-year-old para-athlete from Haryana, who had finished fourth at the Tokyo Games



three years ago, produced a personal best effort of 47.32m to claim the top position. Navdeep, who competes in the classification meant for athletes of short stature, originally ended with a silver after he upstaged world record holder Sun Pengxiang of China with a 47.32m throw. However, that was upgraded to an unprecedented gold after Sadeq's disqualification. Pengxiang (44.72m) finished with a silver.

# Beating odds, three Kandhamal tribal students crack NEET

ARUNA SAHU, OP

**Daringbadi, Sept 8:** "Desire is the key to motivation, but it's the determination and commitment to unrelenting pursuit of your goal that will enable you to attain the success you seek." This famous saying proves well for three tribal youths of Kandhamal who have cracked the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET) this year. Using borrowed books and going to hilltops, 3km away from his village, daily to access internet for months, a 19-year-old tribal student Sanatan Pradhan from a remote village in Kandhamal district has qualified for NEET in his first attempt. The journey of Sanatan marked by determination, hard work and a relentless pursuit of a dream to become a doctor, has not only brought pride to his



family, but also ignited hope in the region where opportunities are very rare. Sanatan's father Kaneswar Pradhan is a small farmer in remote Tadimaha village in Kandhamal district. Sanatan, who belongs to Kondh tribe, cracked NEET without any formal coaching and is set to join the government-run MKCG Medical College in Berhampur. After completing his Class X at a government-run



school at Daringbadi, Sanatan moved to Khallikote Junior college for pursuing his Class XII. After completing his Class XII, he returned to his village for preparation of NEET. As internet service is not available in his village, he used to travel 3-4 km and climb the hilly areas daily to access internet and prepare for the medical entrance exam. "Though I was confident to get a seat in medical college in



the state, it was a dream come true for me to obtain a seat in MKCG Medical College here," he said. "I will study sincerely and become a doctor to serve the people living in remote areas, where the medical facility is scarce," he said, adding, he has already deposited his money to confirm his seat by borrowing. "Now several bankers are coming to us and offering student loans. We will request the government for financial help for

Santan's medical studies," Kaneswar said. Similar is the case with Kalakar Pradhan of Saberenga village under Sinabali panchayat and Linsa Pradhan of Garjedi village under Badabanga panchayat who have defeated all odds to crack NEET. Kalakar was preparing for the medical entrance while tending his herd of cattle and attending to agricultural works with his family members. He was collecting necessary tips from social media platform YouTube and cleared NEET in his second attempt. Similarly, Linsa, a differently-abled girl, also cleared the test in her second attempt. She was preparing for NEET by collecting materials online. She has 70 per cent problems in her backbone and helping her mother in all household chores as well as in the farm works.

# leisure

## FORTUNE FORECAST

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FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181\*

### ARIES

Today will be a very romantic day for you. Ganesha says you will be faced with many temptations, and you may forget that your wishes are not being reciprocated. If your relationships are in troubled waters, you will get some hints about pending matters.

### TAURUS

You may, this day, get your moods ruffled, your emotions hurt. Emotionally you are likely to be too touchy and, therefore, vulnerable. Ganesha sees you being grouchy and upset throughout the morning. Later, however, the clouds of gloom will disperse and you will gradually regain your exuberance.

### GEMINI

You will make diligent efforts to keep your loved ones happy and content and will expect the same from them today. However the more expectations you fulfill, the more they will rise. You need to give some time to yourself as well, says Ganesha.

### CANCER

You will be an eternal optimist today. Ganesha says that your accomplishments will motivate others to emulate you. You will spend the evening with family members and enjoy it, too, your value for family values and plans will go up to-day.

### LEO

Your expenses will increase today owing to your care-free attitude. You need to curb down on your spending. The latter half of the day will see you deal with minor issues related to the work-place. If you ignore these issues now, they will crop up into major problems later on.

### VIRGO

Your mission of finding an engrossing relationship has been fulfilled. At work, you may try to outdo other people with both your actions and words. Ganesha suggests you may go ahead and charm people with your repository of enchanting anecdotes and win their goodwill.

### LIBRA

Ganesha says you will see your hard work come to fruition today. This is a good and profitable day for all those of you who are associated with the business field. For those of you who are working professionals this will be a day when your senior officials will praise you for taking up tough tasks and completing them satisfactorily.

### SCORPIO

You wake up to a new ray of hope, flaunting your sunny side up, predicts Ganesha. You leave no stone unturned to fulfil your desires. With boundless optimism, you are all set to win the world. Push your limits to know your strengths.

### SAGITTARIUS

Your belligerent mood will be taken care of by the good news that may light up your face and cheer you up. Your imagination has just got wings as you become creative and think beyond boundaries. Go on a long drive with friends or beloved in the evening.

### CAPRICORN

There is a creative side to your personality which will come to the fore now. With your unusual wit and intelligence you will guide others on their paths. Many will come to you for guidance and you will be able to spread a harmonious environment around. You don't look down upon people because of their problems which will earn you great respect in the society.

### AQUARIUS

It may seem that all of your plans are going haywire. It is not too late; you can still have things under control. All you need to do is focus on your work rather than helping everyone around.

### PISCES

You will contemplate adopting a new strategy today. It is an auspicious day for making a new beginning and undertaking new ventures. A promotion may be on the cards at the work front and you will find success knocking at your front door today. Your self confidence will find a new lease and you will emerge much more certain of your capabilities and goals.



## McKELLEN RECEIVES CALLS TO RETURN KNIGHTHOOD

Veteran actor Ian McKellen, who recently called the late Queen Elizabeth II 'rude', has been receiving calls to return his Knighthood for his comments. The Royal experts believe that the actor went too far in his criticism of the late queen and he should return his Knighthood.

## KIDMAN: DON'T MEDDLE IN PEOPLE'S RELATIONSHIPS

Oscar-winning actress Nicole Kidman recently shared her thoughts on perfect couples. *The Perfect Couple* star told *Extra*: "You never know why people stay together ... I always say that about couples. So, don't meddle in people's relationships, because you actually never know what they are really doing."



# SubraMania delights audience with musical fusion

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 8:** The week-long 30th Guru Kelucharan Mohapatra (GKCM) Award Festival 2024 at Rabindra Mandap, organised by Srjan-Guru Kelucharan Mohapatra Odissi Nrityabasa, reached its half-way mark Sunday, with a delightful musical evening by 'SubraMania'.

It was led by the brilliant and young violinist Ambi Subramaniam and vocalist Bindu Subramaniam, who are carrying on the rich musical legacy of their father, celebrated violin virtuoso Dr L Subramaniam.

The fourth evening of Srjan commenced with the auspicious lighting of the lamp. The esteemed guests for the evening included Yogesh Bahadur



OrissaPOST and Dharitri Chief Executive Adyasha Satpathy lights the ceremonial lamp on the fourth day of GKCM Award Festival 2024 at Rabindra Mandap along other dignitaries look on, Sunday

Khurania, Director General of Police (DGP), Odisha; Subodh Chandra Acharya, Joint Director-cum-Joint Secretary, Department of Odia Language, Literature & Culture, Govt of Odisha; Adyasha Satpathy, Chief Executive, Dharitri and OrissaPOST; and

Guru Ratikant Mohapatra, Director, Srjan, and Dean, Faculty of Arts, Communication and Indic Studies, SSU.

It was an evening of musical celebration as the band 'SubraMania', led by Ambi Subramaniam on the violin,

Bindu Subramaniam on vocals, Frijio Francis on the keyboard, Anirudha Bhat on the mridangam, Prashanth Gnanamuthu on the guitar and Karthik Mani on the drums captivated audiences with their contemporary world music, a fusion of traditional Indian music with elements of pop, rock, and jazz, with their breakthrough track "Days in the Sun".

Hailed as "India's Itzhak Pearlmann," by *Ozy Magazine*, Ambi is a Carnatic violin prodigy, music educator, and UN youth delegate, while Bindu, hailed as a third-generation prodigy, is an entrepreneur, singer-songwriter, and educator. Together, they run SaPa (Subramaniam academy of Performing arts), while teaching music to over 30,000 students in India annually through the SaPa in schools programme.

With a unique musical arrangement using the violin, mridangam, drums, and guitar, SubraMania presented a unique harmonic blend of different sounds, tonality, and pieces. Each track had a distinct element including Spanish Flamenco, Hungarian gypsy, and rhythmic intricacies. The band weaved the intrinsic classicism of

Carnatic music into the contemporary milieu, making for harmonic world fusion. It is their interpretation of the inherent classical elements that made the concert an auditory delight. State's only home-grown English daily OrissaPOST and one of the largest circulated Odia dailies Dharitri are the print media partners for the event.



A musical performance by Ambi Subramaniam and Bindu Subramaniam OP PHOTO

# DeepVeer welcomes baby girl

Mumbai: Actor Ananya Panday says she was in disbelief when filmmaker Vikramaditya Motwane approached her to star in his next feature film CTRL. The cyber-thriller movie marks her maiden collaboration with Motwane, known for directing critically-acclaimed movies such as Udaan, Lootera and Trapped. Panday said she has been a fan of Motwane's work as a filmmaker, starting from his 2010 debut movie Udaan. "Udaan is my and my mother's favourite film to watch together, so it was a dream for me... I actually did not believe for the longest time that he was actually asking me to be a part of the film. I was like, 'You are just going to be there, you are not actually directing the film?' He said, 'I'm directing it', the 25-year-old

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Mumbai, Sept 8:** Bollywood star couple Deepika Padukone and Ranveer Singh

have officially announced that they have been blessed with a baby girl.

Taking to Instagram Sunday afternoon, the post shared by the stars read: "Welcome baby girl 8.9.2024... Deepika and Ranveer."

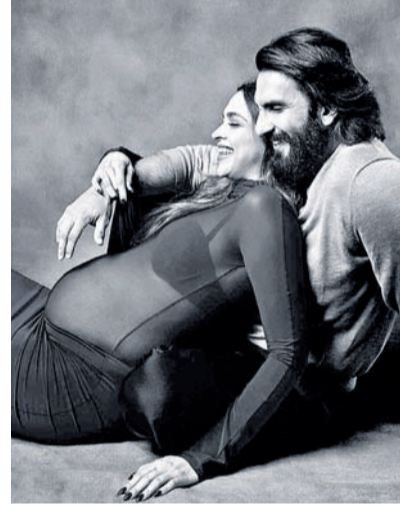
It was Sunday, the news about the two welcoming their first bundle of joy went viral. On September 7, photographs and videos of Deepika going to the HN Reliance Hospital in the Girgaon area of Mumbai started doing the rounds, which raised speculations about her giving birth to their first child.

The couple and their families September 6 had visited the Siddhivinayak Temple in Mumbai.

It was in February 2024, when actor told this agency. Also starring Vihaan Samat, CTRL has been described as a cutting-edge thriller that will challenge the way people view their reliance on technology.

Talking about Motwane, the *Liger* actress said, "He is just wonderful, he is one of those directors who are in the moment. But the more time I spent away from him, I realised how much I learned from him. He is outstanding," she added.

CTRL is set to arrive on streaming service Netflix October 4.



nouncing their pregnancy. The post read: "September 2024". With cute motifs of baby clothes, baby shoes and balloons.

After the announcement, a string of personalities including Arjun Kapoor, Sharvari and Ananya Panday among many others congratulated the new parents and said that the "queen is here."

Ranveer and Deepika got married in November 2018 at a private and intimate ceremony at Lake Como and shared some pictures with fans on Instagram, and five years later on Koffee With Karan, fans got to see their stunning wedding video.

Meanwhile, on the work front, both the husband and the wife will be seen in the upcoming Rohit Shetty directorial Singham Again. While Deepika is a new entrant into Shetty's cop universe, Ranveer will be seen in a cameo avatar as Simmba.

# Amitabh could have prevented Salim-Javed split!

**Mumbai:** Weeks after the release of TV series *Angry Young Men*, a glimpse into the careers of the iconic writing duo Salim Khan and Javed Akhtar, aka Salim-Javed, the former shared his thoughts on their separation and hinted that Amitabh Bachchan might have played a role in preventing it. In an interaction with a news portal, Salim recalled the moment when Javed expressed his desire to work independently. While Salim Khan accepted the decision without resistance, he admitted that he still doesn't fully understand why the split happened.

"When he informed me that he wanted to work separately, I said okay, no problem. You can't force someone to stay. Even now, I don't know why we separated. It just happened," Salim Khan stated. Despite their separation, Salim stated that their friendship remained intact. "We didn't talk behind each other's backs. We used to meet, talk, and I would pass by his house every day. The friendship is still there," he said.

When asked if the end of their partnership

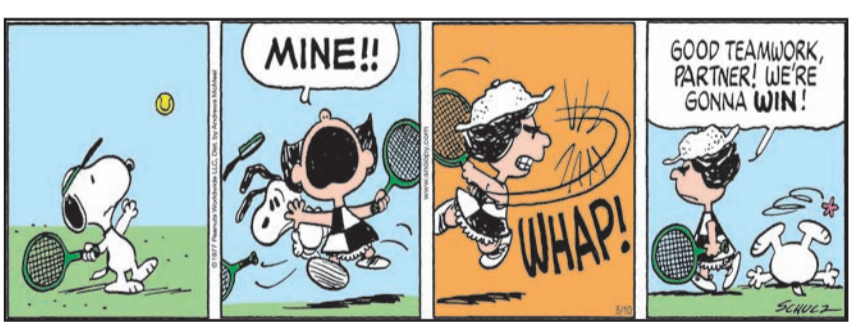
affected Amitabh, Salim responded affirmatively. The duo had written some of Bachchan's most iconic roles, and their split undoubtedly had an impact on him. Salim then went on to say that if he were in Amitabh's position, he might have acted as a mediator to prevent the break.

"If I were in Amitabh Bachchan's place, I would have told Javed, 'Don't leave, you have a great partnership, everything is going well, why would you want to end this?' If it were me, I would have done that," he explained. Salim also shared that while he often meets Amitabh, they do not discuss this topic. "We still talk and even meet. We don't speak harshly. We don't get too close to anyone," he mentioned.

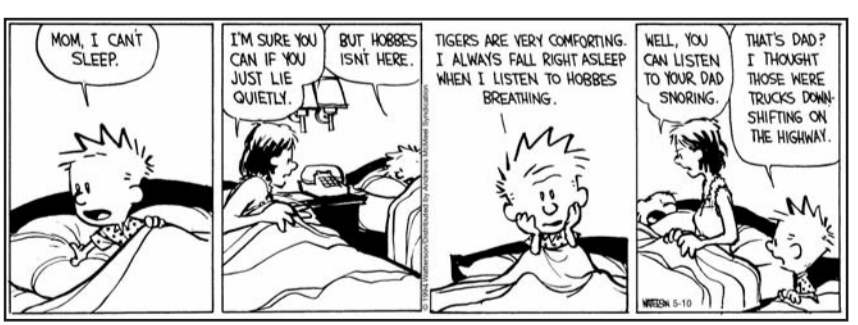
Even though Salim and Javed parted ways professionally, their collaboration continues to be celebrated. Both attended the special screening of *Sholay* in Mumbai recently to mark the 49th anniversary of the film.



## PEANUTS



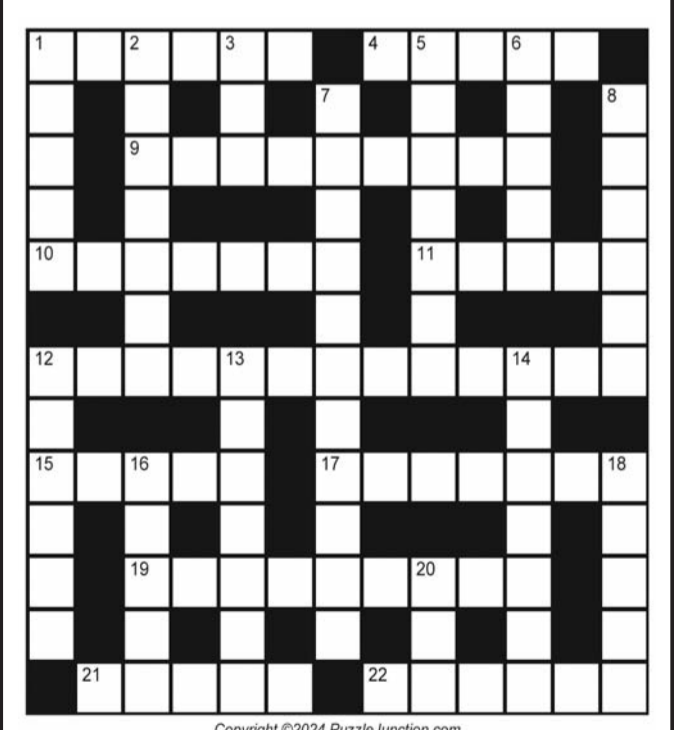
## CALVIN AND HOBBS



## BREVITY



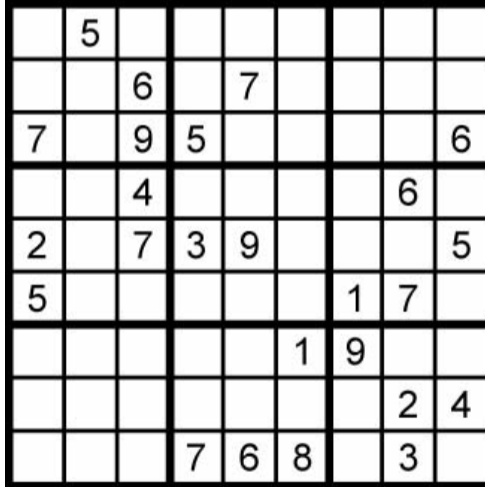
## FUN post CROSSWORD



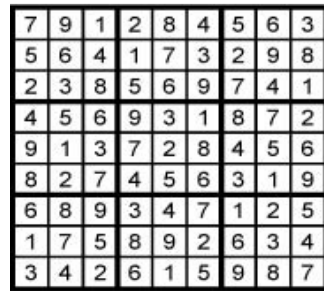
- Across
- 1 Dank
  - 4 Out of whack
  - 9 Condo (4,5)
  - 10 Destructive sea wave
  - 11 Dogie catcher
  - 12 Agreement
  - 15 Flock members
  - 17 Type of marketing
  - 19 Yucatan, for one
  - 21 Sword
  - 22 Video store section
- Down
- 1 Inched along
  - 2 Fill with wonder
  - 3 Cut down
  - 5 Mushy
  - 6 Eyeglasses, briefly
  - 7 Religious or new ship ceremony
  - 8 Appertain
  - 12 Barefoot
  - 13 Matured
  - 14 Set apart
  - 16 Kick out
  - 18 Poker pot
  - 20 ET carrier

## SUDOKU

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



## SOLUTIONS



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown

BOOK LAUNCH

Dignitaries unveil a book, titled 'Religious Life', by Kashinath Nayak on the occasion of Samikhya Saraswat Samaroha- 2024 at Soochana Bhawan in Bhubaneswar, Sunday



PREZ, GUV, CM GREET PEOPLE ON 'NUAKHAI'



Priests offering 'Nabanna' to deities at Samaleswari temple in Sambalpur, Sunday

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar/Sambalpur, Sept 8: President Droupadi Murmu, Governor Raghubar Das, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi and Union Home Ministers Amit Shah Sunday greeted the people on the occasion of Nuakhai, a festival mostly celebrated in the western parts of the state. Nuakhai is an agrarian festival where the first crop of the field is offered to the goddess and people seek the blessings of elders in each household. Murmu, who hails from Odisha, extended her heartfelt greetings of Nuakhai to all Indians, especially the people of the state. Stating that Nuakhai is a major agrarian festival, Murmu on X said, "Nuakhai festival is an occasion to express gratitude to the farmers of the country. May this festival bring happiness and prosperity in everyone's life." Majhi wished for the prosperity and happiness of all people on this auspicious day and prayed for the welfare of the world. Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi arrived in Sambalpur on a two-visit. After offering prayers

at Maa Samaleswari temple, he is scheduled to launch the CM Kisan Yojana in the western Odisha Sunday. He will also participate in 'Nuakhai Bhethga' programmes. Union Home Minister Amit Shah in a social media post, said, "Warm greetings on the occasion of Nuakhai. A festival that revives our bond with nature, Nuakhai is a living relic of our ancient culture. May the blessings of Maa Samaleswari bestow upon everyone good health, happiness, and prosperity." Union Education Minister and Sambalpur MP Dharmendra Pradhan said, "Nuakhai is a shining symbol of our cultural, spiritual and social lifestyle. This festival gives a strong message to everyone to live together. On this occasion, I pray to Maa Samleswari for the happiness and prosperity of everyone." Leader of Opposition in Odisha Assembly Naveen Patnaik in a post on X wished people through a video message and said, "My Nuakhai greetings to all. May Maa Samleswari bless you all with good life, happiness and prosperity." Special preparations have been made in the temple of presid-

ing deities including Goddess Samaleswari in Sambalpur, Patneswari in Balangir, Sureshwari in Sonapur, Sekharbasini in Sundargarh and Manikeswari in Kalahandi for the festival. The celebrations of Nuakhai include wearing of new clothes, worshipping the presiding deity and having a sumptuous lunch with the entire family, apart from the usual rituals. People exchange 'Nuakhai Juhar' greetings with friends, relatives and well-wishers. On this day, farmers of western Odisha offer their first crop of the year to their presiding deity. The head of the family offers rice and other food items to their presiding deities. In Sambalpur, thousands of devotees thronged to their presiding deity, Maa Samaleswari temple on the occasion of Nuakhai. The new rice made out of the first harvested paddy crop was offered to goddess Samaleswari at the stipulated lagna (auspicious moment) between 9.12 am and 9.27 am. "The new rice with new vegetables and fruits of the season were offered to the goddess at the stipulated lagna and later the other 115 deities (Parsva Deva Devi) were offered the new harvest," said Samaleswari temple's priest Ambika Rai. Earlier, Nuakhai was being observed on different days in different places. But since 1991, the people of the state have been celebrating the festival on the same day. "The festival is observed to express gratitude to the almighty for the food grain. Nuakhai in western Odisha is not a festival of any particular group, caste or creed. It is a festival celebrated by all the people of the region with great enthusiasm," said Siddhartha Panda, a local writer.

'BNSS not free from colonial provisions'

DEBADURLLAV HARICHANDAN, OP

Bhubaneswar, Sept 8: The ruling establishment, in the guise of introducing 'Swadeshi' criminal laws in the country, has instead reinforced the draconian aspects of colonial era IPC in the Bharatiya Nagarika Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), said former Madaras High Court judge, Justice K. Chandru. Speaking at a session organized by Student's Federation of India (SFI) at the Press Club of Odisha here Sunday, Justice Chandru said the BNSS, which got passed with a brute majority in the parliament, has conferred higher authority to law enforcement agencies which could potentially be used by the po-



lice to crush civil liberties and rights. "In the recent times, when the Supreme Court has stressed that 'bail' is the rule and 'jail' is an exception, such moves only subjugate the fundamental liberty

of citizens", he asserted. Justice Chandru said despite much hue and cry about the 'Sedition Act', which fell under Section 124A in the erstwhile IPC, the new law has rephrased it and added a new context to it under Section 152 of the BNS (Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita). On the recent introduction of Mamata Banerjee-led TMC government's Aparajita Bill in West Bengal which seeks to impose death penalty for different kinds of sexual violence against women, he said the provision for stricter punishment in criminal laws will yield lesser impact in prevention of crime. "Counseling measures in the society must be upgraded to keep these ac-

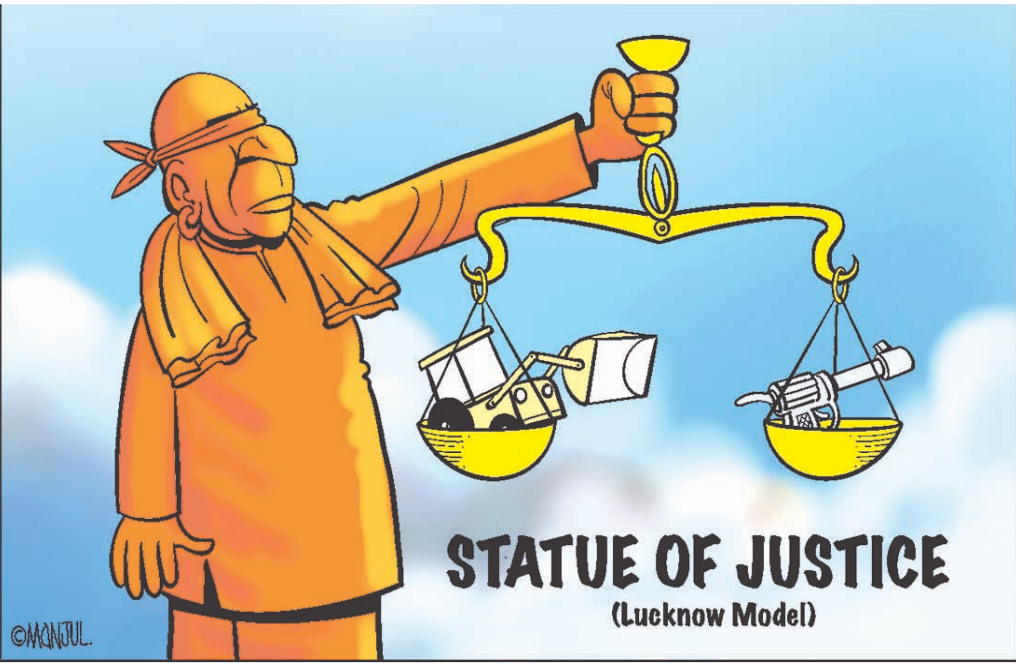
tivities at check," he added. Former DGP Odisha Amiya Bhushan Tripathi said the hush-hush manner in which the ruling establishment cleared up the bill in the Parliament must be given a thought. "The majoritarianism policies of the ruling-BJP could not be overlooked if one would see how scores of Opposition MPs were expelled in the Parliament while passing the bill. This move was justified by Home Minister Amit Shah who said around 1,000 experts were taken into consideration during making of the law," he added. The session was attended by SFI volunteers, students and academicians from across the state.

Senior BJD leader calls for introspection in party

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Sept 8: With two Rajya Sabha MPs of Opposition Biju Janata Dal (BJD) quitting the party within one month and joining the BJP, a leader of the regional outfit called for introspection in the party, while others claimed that it will have no impact on the BJD. The resignation of Mamata Mohanta and Sujeet Kumar from the BJD and joining the BJP has come as a major blow for the regional outfit which ruled Odisha for 24-years. With the resignation of Mohanata and Kumar, BJD, which has no member in the Lok Sabha for the first time since its inception in 1997, now has seven MPs in the Rajya Sabha. Odisha has 10 Raja Sabha seats of which 9 were with BJD and one BJP's Ashwini Vaishnaw was elected to the Upper House of Parliament with the support of the BJD. The seven BJD Rajya Sabha MPs are - Sulata Deo, Sasmit Patra, Manas Mangaraj, Niranjan Bishi, Munna Khan, Debasish Samantray and Subhashish Khuntia. Senior BJD leader and former minister Amar Satpathy called for introspection in the party following the resignation of the two MPs. "If any ordinary member quits the party, it may not have any impact. If an MP quits, it changes the situation. Therefore, we need an introspection and take measures accordingly," Satpathy said. With speculation rife that more BJD MPs may join the BJP, BJD Raja Sabha MP Manas Mangaraj claimed that all BJD MPs are behind Naveen Patnaik. "We will always stand by Naveen Patnaik and BJD through thick and thin. At the same time, people will never accept the way @BJP4India is undemocratically poaching elected lawmakers of other parties to boost its own numbers. This is sheer murder of democracy," Mangaraj posed on X. Mangaraj described Kumar's resignation as "unfortunate and betrayal of trust". "You (Kumar) only know how much trust our beloved leader Naveen Patnaik reposed in you. You got everything from him. BJD honoured and rewarded you always. But, the way you deserted the party at this crucial juncture and joined another, really pained us. We, at BJD as well as the people of Kalahandi feel let down," Mangaraj said. "The BJP has already taken two wickets in a span of one month. One should not be surprised if it attracts more Rajya Sabha MPs from the BJD," said political analyst Braja Kishore Mishra.

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



IMD warns of extremely heavy rain in 5 dists today

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Sept 8: The India Meteorological Department (IMD) Sunday said the well-marked low-pressure area in the Bay of Bengal has turned into a depression and the state is likely to face heavy rain for the next three days. The weather office issued a red alert in five districts of the state which is already witnessing rainfall in several parts. Fishermen have been advised not to venture into the sea till September 11. According to an IMD bulletin, the depression was located at a distance of about 270 km from Kalingapatnam in Andhra Pradesh, 210 km from Gopalpur and 370 km from Digha in West Bengal. The weather system is expected to move towards the Odisha-West Bengal coasts and intensify into a deep depression Monday. After crossing the coasts between Puri and Digha by noon Monday, it is likely to move towards Jharkhand and adjoining north Chhattisgarh during the subsequent two days, the IMD said in



its evening bulletin. Under its impact, heavy rainfall lashed several parts of Odisha with Kundra and Boipariguda blocks of Koraput district becoming worst affected. The low-lying areas in the two blocks have remained under water and crops over acres of land were affected, officials said. Dighapur of Kundra block has remained cut off as water flows above the connecting road. The authority has opened two gates of Machkund dam to release excess water, they said. As per IMD's prediction, heavy to very heavy rain (7 to 20cm) with isolated extremely heavy rainfall (over 20 cm) would occur at isolated places in the districts of Puri, Jagatsinghpur, Khurda, Cuttack, Dhenkanal Monday. The weather office has issued a red warning (take action) for these five districts. An orange warning (be prepared to take action) was issued for Ganjam, Koraput, Kandhamal, Bolangir, Bargarh, Boudh, Sonapur, Jajpur, Kendrapara, Sambalpur, Angul, and Nayagarh districts for Monday. The authorities have issued a yellow warning (be updated) for Gajapati, Rayagada, Malkangiri, Nabarangpur, Kalahandi, Nuapada, Jharsuguda, Sundargarh, Deogarh, Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj, Balasore, and Bhadrak districts. The IMD also forecast rain in many districts of the state for Tuesday and Wednesday. It said that under the influence of the depression, squally weather with strong surface wind speeds reaching 45-55 kmph gusting to 65 kmph is prevailing over the Bay of Bengal and off the Odisha coast. It is likely to increase to 50-60 kmph gusting to 70 kmph over the same region from Sunday night, and continue till the morning of September 10 and decrease gradually thereafter, the Met office said.

MET DEPARTMENT ISSUES 'RED' WARNING FOR PURI, JAGATSINGHPUR, KHURDA, CUTTACK, DHENKANAL DISTRICTS MONDAY FISHermen HAVE BEEN ADVISED NOT TO VENTURE INTO THE SEA TILL SEPTEMBER 11

Advertisement for TPWODL (TP Western Odisha Distribution Limited) featuring a rooster logo and the text: 'On the occasion of Nuakhai, TPWODL family extends heartfelt greetings to all. Wishing you joy and prosperity.'

Advertisement for GKCMF 2024 (Guru Kelucharan Mishra Award Festival) featuring a photo of Rakesh Chaurasia and Ojas Adhiya, with details about the event on September 9th at 7pm at Rabintra Mandap, Bhubaneswar.



BJD, BJP spar over RMC election delay

RAJESH MOHANTY, OP

Rourkela, Sept 8: A war of words has ensued between BJD and BJP over the inordinate delay in conduct of the much-hyped Rourkela Municipal Corporation (RMC) election...

The slugfest started after Rourkela MLA Sarada Nayak raised the issue in the ongoing Assembly session. Sarada asked, "Whether the government of the day is aware of the fact that the election to Rourkela Municipal Corporation has not been held since 2013..."

The question stirred up a hornet's nest as BJP spokesperson Dhiren Senapaty retaliated by saying, "Sarada babu should ask himself instead of asking the new government. He should not forget that his party was in power for the last 24 years and the term of RMC expired during BJD's tenure..."

Senapaty lampooned Sarada by terming his statement as "a big joke and nothing else". He said, "The Rourkela MLA should



not forget that he was the labour minister during the BJD's term and he must recall what he has done for the RMC election to happen. He should not forget that when BJP and other social institutions were putting pressure on the government to set in motion the RMC polls, he was maintaining a studied silence..."

When Rourkela Municipality was declared a Municipal Corporation in 2014, two gram panchayats - Jhartarang and Jagda - along with some other

areas were included in it. However, this led to public resentment and the issue reached the Orissa High Court where the matter is yet sub-judice.

Senapaty further stated, "Sarada was tightlipped over the issue and now he is raising questions on the ability of a two-month old government. Did the previous government try to address the issues of Jagda and Jhartarang by speaking to the residents there? No, the BJD leaders are good at shedding

crocodile tears. This is the reason why Jagda and Jhartarang could not participate in the panchayat election." Terming the tenure of Sarada from 2013 to 2024 as autocratic, the BJP spokesperson said, "He did nothing and now he is trying to shift the blame to us..."

When Rourkela Municipality was declared a Municipal Corporation in 2014, two gram panchayats - Jhartarang and Jagda - along with some other areas were included in the RMC

crocodile tears. This is the reason why Jagda and Jhartarang could not participate in the panchayat election."

Terming the tenure of Sarada from 2013 to 2024 as autocratic, the BJP spokesperson said, "He did nothing and now he is trying to shift the blame to us..."

Replying to Sarada's question, Urban Development Minister Krishna Chanda Mohapatra said, "The government will initiate steps to do the needful as per the decision of the High Court..."

Senapaty supported the minister's statement and said the MLA should have some patience. Sarada could not be reached for his reactions over phone.

Ganjam farmers demand sponsorship, cold storage

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sergad, Sept 8: Farmers under Sergad block in Ganjam district have demanded the state government to ensure sponsorship along with cold storage facilities so that they continue yam cultivation in the area.

The Sergad block has carved a niche for itself in yam cultivation and the Gobindapur village under the block can be termed as the hub of the crop with the farmers carrying out cultivation over 2,000 hectare of land.

Apart from Gobindapur, the cultivation has now spread to Dengapadar, Dhanantar, Gohagaon, Marudi, Narendrapur and Baliarsingpur villages.

The cultivation starts from the month of June and continues till March. The harvest of the tuber starts from the month of December.

However, with the tuber harvested in lot, farmers find it difficult to store them due to lack of cold storages in the area.

TUBER CULTIVATION



To check the harvested tuber from rotting, farmers transport their harvest daily to districts like Cuttack and Khurda and other big towns and urban areas of the state. As a result, the profit margin declines as they are compelled to sell their harvests before the tuber starts rotting. This is the very reason why farmers are fast turning

away from yam cultivation.

They have demanded the state government to intervene and provide them with modern agricultural techniques as well as supply fertilisers, seeds and establishment of a cold storage in their area which will help in bringing back reluctant farmers towards tuber cultivation.

HC stay on MGNREGA ombudsman proceeding



POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar/Hatadihi, Sept 8: The Orissa High Court issued an interim stay order regarding the proceedings of the MGNREGA ombudsman concerning a case (W.P.(C) No. 20995/2024) related to Hatadihi block in Keonjhar district September 6, sources said Sunday.

Notices have been issued to the concerned parties, including Himanshu Shekhar Nayak,

the District Collector of Keonjhar, the CEO of Keonjhar Zilla Parishad, the Sub-Collector of Anandapur, the BDO of Hatadihi, and the ombudsman of Keonjhar MGNREGA.

The case pertains to allegations of financial irregularities in the MGNREGA scheme in Hatadihi block.

Initially, Himanshu Shekhar Nayak had filed a complaint with the Odisha Lokayukta regarding the matter.

Based on Lokayukta's notice,

the government officials and local representatives had submitted written responses.

While the case was being heard, the Lokayukta requested a report on the actions taken by the Keonjhar District Collector. In response, the block staff approached the High Court, challenging the Lokayukta's report. The High Court issued a stay order, and the case remains under trial.

Subsequently, Himanshu Shekhar filed another complaint with government offices regarding similar incidents, demanding action. Following this, the Keonjhar MGNREGA Ombudsman issued a notice (No.15/2024) to the Hatadihi block office and conducted an investigation.

Opposing the move, engineers Suprabha Pradhan and Jyoti Ranjan Samantaray approached the High Court. After hearing the case, Justice SK Mishra issued a stay order on the proceedings of the ombudsman and directed that notices be served to the concerned parties.



AGRI-FEST: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi and his wife Dr. Priyanka Marandi having 'Nabanna' on the occasion of Nuakhai festival at the Samaleswari temple, the presiding deity of Sambalpur, Sunday

Four robbers who stole 39kg silver from bus passenger held

POST NEWS NETWORK

Khallikote, Sept 8: Police here Sunday arrested four inter-state robbers on charges of stealing 39 kg silver from a private passenger bus - Khambeswari - near Bhejiput under Khallikote police limits in Ganjam district July 26.

The accused were identified as Amin Khan, 27, of Naurachowki Nayakheda village, Firoj Khan, 35, of Dudhia village under Napanagar police limits, Sadique Khan of Dharamपुरi police limits in Dhar district and Mustaque Khan, 40, of Kherma Jagir village under Manwar police limits in

Dhar district of Madhya Pradesh.

The accused were in the habit of targeting inter-state buses in various places of the state to loot gold and silver from passengers. Police also seized a Mahindra XUV 300 (MP 09 ZJ 5369), ₹65,600 cash and five mobile phones from their possession.

However, the police are yet to recover the stolen silver from the accused persons.

Police said the gang members stole the silver which a Bengali trader was carrying in two bags in the Kolkata-bound bus July 26 when all the passengers got down to have snacks and tea near Bhejiput.



RISKY PROPOSITION: A man precariously walks on the barricade of an overflowing river bridge on Biri river at Digipur panchayat under Kundura block in Koraput district Sunday following incessant rainfall in the area

'NUANKHAI' CELEBRATION AT JHURIMAL

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, Sept 8: Nuakhai celebrations in Jhurimal village under Lefripara block of the district is perhaps one of the finest examples of brotherhood and bonhomie among the villagers, a rarity these days.

On this day, members of all the 163 families in the village come together and organise a community feast, and observe the occasion with dance and various events.

"Our kitchens remain shut for the whole day as all cooking activities take place at one place, i.e. on the main road of the village. This has been a practice for the last 12 years, and it will continue in the future," said Deigambar Bhoi, a resident of the village.

The tradition began with five families in the village who came together to celebrate Nuakhai by

organising a feast. Over the years, the entire village joined in.

There is no caste bar, and all are welcome to this community celebration. "Since we don't cook at home on this day, we bring along all food articles and cook at one place. After the food is ready, we sit together for lunch and share each other's food. Such a celebration is unique," said another villager.

On the day, people forget their personal differences and celebrate the occasion like one family.

"When you cook together and share food, the chances of personal preferences, or differences take a back seat," said Dharanidhar Pradhan, a villager.

The day started with the offering of 'nabanna' to the presiding deity of the village, Lord Hanuman. Thereafter, families offered prayers to their household deities. Then started the



community cooking. After the cooking was over, volunteers serve the food. Earlier, the seniors were served first, but the tradi-

tion has stopped these days. The platter included traditional dishes such as rice, dal, khiri, pitha, mixed vegetables etc.

MLA Sundargarh Yogesh Kumar Singh who participated in the feast as a guest said, "I have never seen such bonding among villagers. This is rare and special. This can set an example of brotherhood and harmonious living."

As no celebration is complete without entertainment, the villagers organised traditional games like 'puchi'; 'blowing the conch cell', 'hulhuli', 'pulling sticks', and the likewise which added colour to the festivities. The main attraction of the day was 'dul-duli' dance, wherein almost all came together and danced.

Celebrities like Pradeep Dutta from the Odia film industry, emerging singer Anant Nayak, comedian Mohit Meher and others, who were present on the occasion, were honoured by the villagers. Moreover, the state Millets Mission had put up a small exhibition of its products at the village.

Advertisement for 'Nuakhai' festival in Odia, mentioning 'ନିୟନ୍ତ୍ରିତ ବଜାର କମିଟି, ବରଗଡ଼' and 'ସା./-ଛବିଲ ଖମାରୀ ସା./-ଶ୍ରୀମତୀ ମଧୁସୁଧା ସାହୁ'.

Advertisement for 'ୱାଣ୍ଟେଡ୍' (Wanted) notice regarding 'Road & Building Work' with details of bidding and contact information.



It is only when we are not disturbed that we can always do the right thing at the right time in the right way.

THE MOTHER



## War In Backyard

Ethnic violence that has rocked Manipur for more than 400 days has now taken a deadlier turn with the warring groups using drones and rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs) even as fresh killings over the weekend kept the north-eastern state on the edge. Six people were killed in renewed violence in Jiribam district Saturday. Militants entered an isolated home about five kilometres away from the district headquarters and shot a man while he was asleep. Following this, a fierce gunfight erupted between members of the conflicting Kuki and Meitei communities in the hills, about seven kilometres from the district headquarters, resulting in the deaths of five more people. Jiribam, an ethnically diverse district, that had previously remained largely unaffected by the ethnic conflicts in the Imphal Valley and the surrounding hills, experienced an outbreak of violence in June this year following the killing of a 59-year-old man from one community by militants from another.

Saturday's gunfight marks the highest number of casualties in a single day during the recent bout of violence that started a week ago. Meanwhile, the use of drones and RPGs has escalated the conflict to a war-like situation.

In light of the fresh violence, Chief Minister N Biren Singh met Governor Lakshman Prasad Acharya Sunday to present a memorandum requesting control over the Unified Command, which manages security operations in the north-eastern state. Additionally, the Chief Minister called for the termination of the Suspension of Operations (SoO) agreement with the Kuki insurgent groups. The SoO pact was signed by the Centre, the Manipur government and two conglomerates of Kuki militant outfits – Kuki National Organisation and United People's Front – in 2008 and has periodically been extended ever since. The Unified Command is currently overseen by a coalition of officials from the Union Home Ministry, state security forces, and the Army. This development is seen as significant, given that the BJP holds power in both the state and the Centre, suggesting a potential conflict between the two administrations.

With a population of 3.2 million, Manipur has been split into two ethnic regions since the conflict erupted in May 2023 – the valley controlled by the Meiteis and the hills dominated by the Kukis. These areas are divided by a stretch of no-man's land that is overseen by Central paramilitary forces. More than 225 people have lost their lives in the violence, while about 60,000 people have been displaced.

All the while, the Chief Minister has shrugged off multiple demands for his resignation despite his inability to control violence in the troubled state for more than one year. Besides, the Opposition has criticised Prime Minister Narendra Modi for not visiting the strife-torn state even once in these 400 days. What should truly worry the Indian government is the escalation of the trouble. Earlier, both sides involved in the violence were limited to using only hand held weapons. The recent surge of violence has introduced drones and other modern weaponry indicating the clear involvement of external forces. This becomes all the more complex if the clashes between rebels and the junta in neighbouring Myanmar and the unrest in nearby Bangladesh are taken into account. This may also show that the situation in Manipur may have already gone out of control and maybe the government has given up on all hopes of settling the issue.

Earlier, in the first phase of violence, excuse for neglect of the trouble was election in Karnataka. Nothing seems to have been done in the interim period. Now the excuse should not be Haryana and Jammu & Kashmir elections. While the government in Delhi wants to play the peacemaker in the faraway Russia-Ukraine conflict, it has to first put a stop to the war in its backyard.

### WISDOM CORNER

Have you learned the lessons only of those who admired you, and were tender with you, and stood aside for you? Have you not learned great lessons from those who braced themselves against you, and disputed passage with you?

WALT WHITMAN

Everybody believes in something and everybody, by virtue of the fact that they believe in something, uses that something to support their own existence.

FRANK ZAPPA

Before success comes in any man's life, he's sure to meet with much temporary defeat and, perhaps some failures. When defeat overtakes a man, the easiest and the most logical thing to do is to quit. That's exactly what the majority of men do.

NAPOLEON HILL

### THIS DAY IN HISTORY

■ **1948:** Kim Il-sung establishes North Korea. After the Second World War, the Korean peninsula had been divided across the 38th parallel. The northern part was occupied by the Soviets while the south was occupied by the Americans. The Cold War impeded unification and on October 9, 1948, Kim Il-sung declared the creation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea with the support of the USSR.

■ **1956:** Rock and roll star Elvis Presley made his first appearance on The Ed Sullivan Show.

■ **1976:** Marxist revolutionary Mao Zedong, who died this day in 1976, emerged as the undisputed Chinese Communist Party leader following the Long March (1934-35) and dominated China in the period after the communist takeover in 1949.

■ **1991:** Tajikistan Declares its Independence from the Soviet Union. The Central Asian country had been conquered by Russia in the late 19th century. In 1929, the Tajik Soviet Socialist Republic was created as a constituent republic of the Soviet Union. Independence in 1991 came after the collapse of the USSR.

### LOL

#### Lonely child

Sandy began a job as an elementary school counsellor and she was eager to help. One day during recess she noticed a girl standing by herself on one side of a playing field while the rest of the kids enjoyed a game of soccer at the other. Sandy approached and asked if she was all right. The girl said she was. A little while later, however, Sandy noticed the girl was in the same spot, still by herself. Approaching again, Sandy offered,



"Would you like me to be your friend?" The girl hesitated, then said, "Okay," looking at the woman suspiciously. Feeling she was making progress, Sandy then asked, "Why are you standing here all alone?" "Because," the little girl said with great exasperation, "I'm the goalie!"

### FOCUS SEBI

## TIME TO GO

It is time to end the misery of SEBI Chairperson Madhabi Puri Buch. It is time to ask her to go, if she has not sent in her resignation already. Indeed, it is in her interest that she quits and faces an impartial inquiry rather than continue to sit at the helm of what is a critical regulatory institution and see herself and the institution undermined in the way SEBI has never been before. There are those defending her conduct, but only half-heartedly, calling the allegations a game of politics or of vested interests. But it should be clear at this stage of the ballooning scandal that none of these defences cut ice.

We have reached a stage where SEBI has been robbed of the confidence and moral standing it needs to function and carry out even the most basic of regulatory functions. The preamble of The SEBI Act, 1992, lays down its charter: "...to protect the interests of investors in securities and to promote the development of, and to regulate the securities market and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto." This is a task beyond SEBI under the current circumstances.

It is irrelevant if the charges against Buch will be proven and if she will eventually be found guilty or not. There is already enough in the air that raises questions that will not be easily dismissed. The external pressure is compounded by an internal revolt in SEBI that instead of being taken seriously, given that it points to an alleged toxic culture, is being countered with sorry and laughable explanations. To say, as SEBI insiders from the establishment have suggested, that class 'A' officers of SEBI were misled by external elements, is to insult the entire SEBI workforce.



We have reached a stage where SEBI has been robbed of the confidence and moral standing it needs to function and carry out even the most basic of regulatory functions

The officers surely know what they are talking about. To anyone who knows how the Indian system works, it takes a lot of courage and gumption to get together to speak against the powerful. Buch, untouched despite the entanglement cited with Adani-related funds and the Hindenburg allegations, is reckoned to be close to the powers that be. That the officers have managed to protest against such a person is only an indicator of the extent of the rot that has forced them to speak up at the risk of being targeted. Protests are rare in a culture that is hierarchal, top-driven, boss-obsessed in the public sector, and dissent-killing in the private sector. SEBI seems like a hybrid -- it has brought the worst of both worlds to the workplace.

From a political lens, it is critical that the BJP stops defending Buch and gives in to a full-fledged inquiry. Political strategists of the BJP will see that the political cost of allow-

ing her to continue grows with each passing day that she sits in the saddle. The larger question is of where India stands today and how key institutions are undermined under this kind of a leadership.

It is undeniable that Buch could not have worked the way she allegedly has without political cover. This is what amplifies the power of people in some key positions, enlarges their sphere of influence and lends a sense of adventurism, a gung-ho-ism and an arrogance that we see come crashing down every once in a while.

Who can, after all, question the all-powerful Chairperson of SEBI? Five years ago, the question was different: Who can question the all-powerful Chairperson of ICICI Bank? That was Chanda Kochhar, refusing to quit till the bank could hold on no more and sacked her ("termination for cause") in the light of the findings against her recorded by the Justice BN Srikrishna Committee.

Interestingly, both cases emerge from managers with roots in ICICI Bank. Buch and Kochhar rose at ICICI Bank under KV Kamath, the man who brought aggression to what was an easy-going project finance company in the public sector and saw it become at one point the largest private sector bank of the nation (since then beaten by HDFC Bank). Those were the days Kamath and ICICI fantasised about becoming a top global bank. Aggressive business methods brought a new sense of energy, quick growth but also practices that many would question. It turned key personnel into millionaires and delivered the managers of the kind Kochhar and Buch (and many others unnamed) turned out to be. Buch joined ICICI Bank in 1989. In 2006, she joined ICICI Securities and led it as the CEO from 2009 to 2011. The company was later delisted with many questions asked of ICICI Bank and SEBI's conduct in the process. SEBI was accused of favouring ICICI, allowing in effect a violation of rules by ICICI to go unpunished.

Generally speaking, SEBI has in many ways been unable to keep its independence from the government, unlike the RBI, which has at least attempted to strike an independent chord. Yet, the RBI man on the SEBI board, like others, has kept his silence so far. SEBI and RBI are both statutory bodies. The RBI url is rbi.org.in; SEBI's url is sebi.gov.in -- one at least proclaims to be separate from the government while the other headlines itself as a part of the government, or so it seems. And thereby hangs many a tale!

The writer is a journalist and faculty member at SPJIMR. Views are personal. @THEBILLIONPRESS

### SPECTRUM REGULATION

## Beware of Big Tech

Last October, the European Commission adopted a new roadmap to fight drug trafficking and organised crime, one of the most serious security threats facing the bloc. For obvious reasons, European Union policymakers did not invite cartel members to help design and develop this strategy; asking for input from criminal networks would have only made it easier for them to continue operating with impunity.

But when it comes to regulating the digital transformation and artificial intelligence, both of which pose myriad risks, policymakers are doing the opposite. They are collaborating with Big Tech companies such as Meta (Facebook), Alphabet (Google), Amazon, Apple, and Microsoft, even though their executives have demonstrated a brazen willingness to create dangerous tools and harm users in the name of maximizing profits.

For example, national, regional, and international "working groups," "expert groups," and "advisory boards" that include representatives from Big Tech companies are preparing proposals to regulate the digital transformation and AI. Beyond that, some initiatives and conferences on this topic are funded by the very companies those endeavors aim to regulate.

The threats posed by digital systems are complex and far-reaching. New technologies are

dramatically widening global inequality, and tech giants have emerged as massive energy users, with serious implications for climate change and the environment. Perhaps most worrying are the near-constant violations of the right to privacy, owing to the lack of data security or protections against surveillance. It is standard industry practice for vast amounts of data to be collected and sold to the highest bidder. As a result, digital platforms seem to know us better than we know ourselves, and life online is awash in economic and political manipulation.

Moreover, algorithmic manipulation and disinformation have already been shown to threaten the proper functioning of democracy. Ahead of the 2016 presidential election in the United States, for example, the political consulting firm Cambridge Analytica harvested information from as many as 87 million Facebook users in an attempt to sway voters. The company and its affiliates had already likewise misused data to try to influence the United Kingdom's Brexit vote.

More recently, the rapid development of large language models such as OpenAI's ChatGPT has opened up new avenues for fraud, including through audio and visual deep-fakes that can destroy reputations. LLMs have also facilitated

the spread of fake news, a scourge that is most acutely felt in democracies, where a flood of AI-generated content threatens to drown out quality journalism and to destabilise entire countries within a few hours (as happened with the recent far-right riots in the UK). Moreover, the same strategies can be used to hoodwink consumers.

But that is not all: use of social media has been associated with significant mental-health harms for young people. And many in the field have expressed concern about the disruptive impact that AI-enabled cyberattacks and autonomous weapons could have on international peace and security, not to mention the existential risks such weapons pose.

Big Tech firms have consistently shown little concern about harming people and violating their rights. That is especially true for social-media companies, which generally earn more in advertising revenue the longer that users stay on their platforms. In 2021, a whistleblower provided documents showing that Facebook knew that its algorithms and platforms promoted damaging content but failed to deploy meaningful countermeasures. That should come as no surprise: studies have found that users spend more time online when expressing hate, anger, and rage.

Despite its unwillingness to

police itself, Big Tech wants to help devise regulations for the digital sphere and AI. Giving these companies a seat at the table is both ironic and tragic. Governments and the international community are allowing these behemoths to dominate the process of establishing a new global regulatory framework and oversight mechanisms. But entrusting those who profit from the sector's fundamental problems is a dangerous mistake.

The good news is that there are plenty of independent experts and academics who can provide valuable input about how best to regulate the development and use of AI and other digital technologies. Of course, the private sector must be involved in such policymaking processes, but not more than other stakeholders, including civil-society organisations.

Technological innovation should no longer serve only the interests of a few multinational corporations. To ensure a sustainable future in which everyone can lead dignified and prosperous lives, policymakers must not allow tech giants to steer the regulation of digital platforms and emerging AI applications.

The writer is Professor of Ethics and Director of the Institute of Social Ethics at the University of Lucerne. @PROJECTSYNDICATE

### Debt trap diplomacy

Sir, The Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) underscores China's strategic interests in Africa, going beyond the promotion of South-South cooperation. Through significant financial aid, infrastructure development, and military support, China aims to increase its economic and political clout across the continent. This relationship, however, is not purely altruistic as China seeks to advance its national interests by solidifying its influence in Africa. One of the most debated aspects of China's engagement in Africa is its lending practices, particularly through the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). While African countries may benefit from the immediate financial assistance, these loans often come with the risk of debt trap diplomacy. The conditions of these loans can be restrictive, making it difficult for African nations to renegotiate terms and placing them at risk of long-term financial instability. The economic dependency is exacerbated by Africa's limited access to Chinese markets, in contrast to China's dominance in African economies. China's motivations in Africa are not limited to economic expansion; they also reflect its broader geopolitical ambitions. By establishing a military presence and providing training to African forces, China aims to counterbalance Western influence on the continent. Moreover, China's backing of African nations in global institutions such as the United Nations helps solidify its role as a major player on the international stage, further advancing its global strategic interests. Despite China's leverage in its dealings with African nations, African governments are increasingly aware of the potential risks posed by Chinese investments. Many are now negotiating for more favourable terms, seeking to mitigate the challenges posed by debt and economic dependence.

Amarjeet Kumar, HAZARIBAGH

### Procedural lapses

Sir, This refers to "WB Guv sends anti-rape Bill to Prez (OrissaPOST, September 7). I am really at a loss how the West Bengal government could be unaware of the procedure of sending a Bill to the Governor for his assent once it is passed in the State Assembly. The technical report is mandatory along with the Bill which the department concerned is expected to know. The Chief Minister should not take these procedural lapses lightly and reprimand the officer concerned responsible for compliance.

Arun Gupta, KOLKATA

## 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**  
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# Visit TN; CM appeals to Tamil diaspora

Stalin underlines that the welfare board constituted by the DMK government would help overseas residents of TN in need

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, Sept 8: Chief Minister MK Stalin, who is now touring the US to attract investments, has appealed to the Tamil diaspora to visit Tamil Nadu with their children at least once a year and make them aware of the state's rich culture and heritage.

Addressing a programme organised by Chicago based Tamil associations September 7, Stalin thanked the people for their love and affection and said, "Our biggest identity is that we are the children of mother Tamil."

Referring to the Tamil Nadu government's 'Vergalai Thedi Thittam' (In pursuit of roots scheme), a cultural tour programme in Tamil Nadu for young Tamil men and women living outside India, the CM said a participant from Myanmar recently renewed contacts with her extended family in the state.

Under the Vergalai scheme, the state government takes selected men and women with Tamil ancestry and living abroad on a guided tour to archaeological sites and those related to Tamil culture and heritage. It was launched by Stalin in Singapore May 24, 2023.

Stalin, referring to setting up of a welfare board for the non-resident Tamils by his government and outlining related ini-



We had literacy, we were a developed society and belonged to an urban civilisation and that is why I have been continuously saying that the history of Indian sub continent should hereafter be written beginning it from the Tamil landscape

tiatives like observance of January 12 as diaspora (Tamils) day, he said, "That is why I say all the time that this is not a government by a party, but it is the government of a race. Only Tamil has the strength to unify all and trounce caste and religious differences."

Furthermore, he urged the participants to visit Tamil Nadu, along with their children at least once a year and enlighten them on saint poet Tiruvalluvar and take them to archaeologically significant places like

Sivakalai, Korkai and Porunai besides the Keeladi museum. "Do whatever you can for Tamil Nadu."

Citing the archaeological excavations at Keeladi in Sivaganga district of the state, he said it showed that even 4,000 years ago, "We had literacy, we were a developed society and belonged to an urban civilisation and that is why I have been continuously saying that the history of Indian sub continent should hereafter be written beginning it from the Tamil landscape."

TN CM embarked on a visit to

## Stalin meets BNY Mellon executives

Chief Minister MK Stalin, currently on a tour to the US, invited senior officials of BNY Mellon (The Bank of New York Mellon Corporation) to make new investments in Tamil Nadu. Had a productive discussion with BNY Mellon on exploring potential AI investment opportunities, he said Saturday. "Let's embrace the future through technology, harnessing AI's transformative power!" the chief minister said in a post on the social media platform 'X'. Stating that the chief minister met senior executives of BNY Mellon and invited them to make new investments in Tamil Nadu, an official release here said the government achieved various milestones in the industrial sector over the past three years under the leadership of Stalin. "Each step taken to attract investments is driven by a grand vision to create more job opportunities. The state's initiatives have caught the attention of global corporations, drawing them toward Tamil Nadu for their investments," it said.

the US August 27 to attract investments to the state and MoUs, totally worth over ₹4,000 crore have been signed so far with several companies and he is scheduled to be there till September 13.

# Civic body starts control room to improve safety of school students

THE MOVE COMES AFTER TWO FOUR-YEAR-OLD GIRLS WERE SEXUALLY ASSAULTED ALLEGEDLY BY A MALE ATTENDANT IN THE WASHROOM OF A SCHOOL

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Thane, Sept 8: The Mira Bhayander Municipal Corporation (MBMC) in Maharashtra's Thane district has launched a new 'Central School Control Room' to bolster the safety of students by monitoring CCTV footage across the civic schools, officials said.

The move comes after two four-year-old girls were sexually assaulted allegedly by a male attendant in the washroom of a school in Badlapur area of the district last month.

Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde September 5 inaugurated the MBMC's 'Central School Control Room' via video conferencing.

The facility, located at the Bharat Ratna Lata Mangeshkar Auditorium in Mira Bhayander area, is designed to monitor CCTV footage across municipal schools to enhance student safety, a civic release said Saturday.



The control room promises to address security concerns proactively and provide a secure learning environment for students, parents and school staff

Municipal Commissioner Sanjay Katkar said the control room, which can monitor nearly 1,000 CCTV cameras, is equipped with advanced technology and a UPS generator backup. It will oversee footage from 200 cameras installed in 36 municipal schools with approximately 10,000 students.

The control room promises to address security concerns proactively and provide a secure learning environment for students, parents and school staff.

Initially focusing on municipal schools, the initiative plans to include private institutions in the future, the release said.

In his address, CM Shinde stressed on the significance of ensuring a secure environment for students, particularly emphasising the need for real-time CCTV surveillance to deter wrongful activities.

He urged other municipal corporations to adopt the MBMC's model to enhance educational safety standards across Maharashtra.

The chief minister also highlighted the state's commitment to student safety through stricter regulations and the 'Shakti' law, aimed at strengthening measures against crimes targeting women and children, the release said.

He encouraged schools to conduct thorough background checks of the staff and install complaint boxes to facilitate reporting of grievances, it added.

# TAMIL ACTOR VIJAY'S PARTY TVK GETS EC RECOGNITION

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, Sept 8: Tamizhaga Vetri Kazhagam party founder-president and top Tamil actor Vijay Sunday announced that the Election Commission has duly registered his outfit and expressed confidence of emerging as the primary political party of Tamil Nadu.

Underscoring that equality is the basic principle of his new party, Vijay said that an application was filed with the EC February 2 to register Tamizhaga Vetri Kazhagam (TVK) as a political party.

After legally considering it, the EC has now registered the TVK as a political party and "has given permission to take part as a registered party in electoral politics. I am happy to share this with you."

The popular actor, in a statement posted on X, said the "first door has opened for us, which heralds all round success."



Furthermore, he said that by pursuing the path of defined principles and by breaking barriers, his party would rise as the key political party of the Tamil people in Tamil Nadu.

The actor said preparatory work to hold TVK's first state conference, which will declare the party's ideology, has commenced and, "please wait for a formal announcement about it."

The TVK leader's comment comes against the background of his party functionaries approaching authorities seeking permission to hold the state conference this month at Vikravandi in Villupuram district and police reportedly clearing the decks to conduct the rally.

Last month, Vijay unveiled the party flag and the party anthem.

The formation of the political party was announced by Vijay in February this year.



## GANESH VISARJAN

# Mumbai households bid an emotional adieu

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Sept 8: Thousands of devotees bid an emotional farewell to Lord Ganesh Sunday by immersing the idols of the elephant-headed deity across Mumbai.

More than 10,000 Ganesh idols have been immersed in the city till late in the evening, said Bhushan Gagrani,

commissioner of Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC).

The 10-day Ganesh festival began in the city with pomp and gaiety Saturday, with families and 'savjanik mandals' (public groups) installing the idols of their beloved god at homes and community pandals.

The idols taken out for immersion Sunday afternoon after one and a half days were mostly from households.

Chants of "Ganpati Bappa morya, mangal murti

morya... pudchya varsh lakar ya," urging the Lord to return early next year filled the air as devotees took their idols to beaches and artificial water bodies for immersion.

BMC and police have ensured that there are arrangements for separate parking, mobile toilets, flood lights, bodyguards, prayer mandaps (platforms) for devotees and VIP pandals, he said.

As many as 12,000 personnel have been deployed to help citizens with the idol immersion off the beaches and in 204 artificial ponds across the city and suburbs. As many as 71 control rooms have been set up, civic officials said earlier.

They said that 761 life-guards and 48 motor boats have been pressed into service at the beaches. BMC has also made facilities to collect the 'nirmalya' (flowers and other offerings) brought with the idols.

# Shah releases docu on Mumbai Samachar's 200-year journey

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Sept 8: Union minister Amit Shah Sunday said Parsis have made silent but immense contribution to India's development, and lauded the role of Gujarati newspaper Mumbai Samachar in that journey.

Speaking after releasing the documentary film "Mumbai Samachar- 200 Not Out", which chronicles the remarkable 200-year journey of Asia's oldest newspaper, Shah said the Camas, who run it exemplify journalism of trust. Entering its 203rd year of publication, Mumbai Samachar has become an integral part of Mumbai's identity.

"Dynasties don't last 200 years here but a newspaper has lasted for so long," Shah said.

Hormusji N Cama, the managing director of the Mumbai Samachar, was present at the event.

"Mumbai Samachar- 200 Not Out" delves into the newspaper's pivotal role in the freedom movement, its unwavering commitment to unbiased reporting and the secrets behind its enduring success.

# Grit and passion for Olive green make them Indian army officers

THE 'PASSING OUT PARADE,' WAS HELD AT THE PARAMESHWARAN DRILL SQUARE OF THE INSTITUTE, AND FIFTEEN OFFICER CADETS INCLUDING FIVE WOMEN FROM FRIENDLY FOREIGN COUNTRIES TOO SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED THEIR TRAINING

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, Sept 8: The dream of Usha Rani, who lost her husband Captain Jagtar Singh of Army Educational Corps in a train accident in 2020, Jigmit Ringzin, Electrical & Electronics engineer, Phalke Nishant Balasaheb, an external auditor, and Bhavsar Jayesh Mahesh who grew up in the congested chawl tenements in Mumbai, of donning the olive green uniform materialised Saturday.

They were among the 258 officer cadets and 39 women officer cadets who were commissioned into various arms and services of the Indian Army at an impressive ceremony at the Officers Training Academy, Chennai.

The 'Passing Out Parade,' was held at the Parameshwaran Drill Square of the institute, and it was reviewed by Vice Chief of Army Staff Lieutenant General NS Raja Subramani. Fifteen officer cadets including five

women from friendly foreign countries too successfully completed their training.

Despite a train mishap shattering her, Usha Rani chose military training to overcome her loss. The young mother of three-year-old twins completed her Bachelor of Education and began to mentor children, as a teacher in the Army Public School. She prepared for Services Selection Board (SSB) to join the Indian Army, following in her husband's footsteps.

Officer Cadet Jigmit Ringzin, from Pooh, in Kinnaur district of Himachal Pradesh, rejected a job he was offered at Tata Consultancy Services and succeeded in his seventh attempt and joined Officers Training Academy, Chennai, in October 2023. He has toiled hard to complete the rigorous and grueling training of 49 weeks to finally become an officer in the Indian Army.

Phalke Nishant Balasaheb son of a Head Constable in Central Reserve Police Force,



The dreams of Usha Rani, Jigmit Ringzin, Phalke Nishant Balasaheb, and Bhavsar Jayesh Mahesh to join the Indian Army came true at the Officers Training Academy in Chennai

lost his father to terminal illness, and had to bear the responsibility of taking care of his mother and younger sister. He worked as an external auditor at Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC), Ahmednagar, during weekends, to support his family.

They were among 258 officer cadets and 39 women officer cadets commissioned into various arms and services

He cleared first Combined Defence Service Examination (CDSE), but was unsuccessful in the Services Selection Board. This pattern repeated for six times and in the seventh attempt he finally got recommended and joined OTA.

In the case of Bhavsar Jayesh Mahesh, who grew up in

the congested chawl tenements in Mumbai, his journey was full of setbacks. He failed eleven times at the Service Selection Board but didn't give up. He supported his family by working as an online mathematics educator, and a gym instructor.

His perseverance paid off when he was finally recommended in his 12th attempt. He is the first in his family to join the Armed Forces.

Kshitij was born in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh, and raised in Mumbai. Their family of eight were dependent on the income of the father, an auto-rickshaw driver, and Kshitij's elder brother, an accountant. Despite the financial constraints his family encouraged him to pursue his dreams.

He was also inspired by his uncle, Jitendra Kumar Tiwari, who served in the Army Service Corps, to join the Defence forces.

Ritesh, son of a Non-Commissioned Officer in the 15 Mechanised Infantry Regiment, was in secondary school, when the family faced

a harsh tragedy in the passing of Ritesh's father, who was suffering from blood cancer. At the time, Ritesh was in 6th grade and his younger sister in 1st grade.

During his 12th grade, a short circuit burned everything in their house, leaving the family without books, uniforms, clothes, or shelter just before the final exams. The 15 Mechanised Infantry Regiment and his School Principal provided crucial financial and emotional support, helping Ritesh to continue his education.

After 12th grade, Ritesh took a year off to help his mother rebuild their home. By his third year of college, with the introduction of the Agniveer scheme, Ritesh faced a dilemma whether to join the Army as a sepoy for four years or complete his degree and pursue the option of joining Army as an Officer. He chose to finish his degree, aspiring to join the Army as an officer.

Their grit and determination earned them stars on her shoulders today.

## of the day quote

I am 30 years old and I have come through many challenges. When people are with you, one can overcome any challenge

VINESH PHOGAT | WRESTLER AND CONGRESS CANDIDATE

We have prepared a blueprint to form metropolitan authorities in four cities. However, the best feasibility report in this regard has come from Indore and Ujjain. Metropolitan authorities will also be formed in the rest of the metros

MOHAN YADAV | MADHYA PRADESH CM

With the election approaching, the CM, who had promised five lakh jobs and realised that it cannot be fulfilled, made the youths run for 10 km. This led to the death of 12 youths

SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN | UNION MINISTER

## SHORT TAKES

### Punia receives threat message

Chandigarh: Olympic wrestler Bajrang Punia, who joined the Congress, has received a threat message over WhatsApp warning him with dire consequences, police said Sunday. Punia has filed a complaint at Bahalgarh police station in Sonapat. A police official said they received a complaint from Punia after which they launched an investigation. When asked that some reports say that in the threat message Punia was asked to quit Congress or be prepared to face dire consequences, Bahalgarh police station SHO Madan Singh said over the phone, "The matter is under investigation..." Olympians Punia and Vinesh Phogat entered the political arena on Friday by joining the Congress.

### Rajasthan receives 60% excess rainfall

Jaipur: Rajasthan has received 60 per cent more than the average rainfall this monsoon and none of its districts recorded deficit or scant rain, according to data by the state's water resources department. So far, 28 out of 50 districts in the state recorded 60 per cent or more rainfall that come under the abnormal category, the data said.

### KNPTR to reopen Oct 1

Guwahati: After the five-month monsoon break, the Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve (KNPTR) in Assam would reopen for tourists October 1 focusing on enhanced visitor experience and safety, officials said Sunday. Announcing the park reopening schedule, an official announcement said that in view of present road conditions and due to inclement weather, the Park is partially opened only for Jeep Safari in three ranges -- Kaziranga Range Kohora, Western Range, Bagori and Burapahar Range.

### MoD to organise CORE today

New Delhi: Ministry of Defence (MoD) said Sunday that it will organise the Combined Operational Review and Evaluation (CORE) programme September 9 to review the security preparedness of the combined forces. "Army, Navy, Air Force, senior officers from the Ministry of Defence, External Affairs, and Home Affairs will also participate in the five-day programme in New Delhi from September 9 to 13," said a MoD official.



We have done all round development in Baramati. Most funds in Maharashtra are sanctioned for Baramati. I am now 65 years old and I am satisfied. Baramatikars once should get someone other than me as an MLA. They can then make comparison between me and the new MLA

AJIT PAWAR | MAHA DEPUTY CM

## TOLL IN AP FLOODS MOUNTS TO 45

The death toll in Andhra Pradesh floods rose to 45 with authorities reporting 12 more deaths Sunday. Ten of the latest fatalities were reported from Vijayawada and two from Eluru district. The death toll is mounting as bodies are being recovered with receding flood water in areas affected by last week's heavy rains and floods



# Join India: Rajnath to PoK residents



INDIA IS READY TO START DIALOGUE WITH PAKISTAN IF IT STOPS TERRORISM IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR, DEFENCE MINISTER RAJNATH SINGH SAID

AGENCIES

Jammu, Sept 8: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said Sunday that the Pakistan government has called the people of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) as 'foreigners' while India considers them as its own citizens. Addressing an election rally of the BJP in Ramban district of Jammu division, Rajnath Singh referred to the BJP-PDP coalition government and said, "During Mehbooba-led government, we withdrew cases against minors and those who were innocent. But the problem was that the PDP was sympathetic to separatists. I would always tell her to bring the ground situation under control, but she couldn't. People of J&K are free citizens of India and they have a right to peace and prosperity. "In contrast to this, in a re-

cent affidavit, the solicitor general of Pakistan has called the people of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) as 'foreigners'. We don't call them foreigners. They are our people. Let them come and join us. After a government is formed in J&K, the people of PoK will want to come and join India," he asserted. He strongly criticised former J&K Chief Minister and National Conference (NC) vice president, Omar Abdullah for saying Afzal Guru should not have been hanged. "Omar Abdullah has said Afzal Guru should not have been hanged. I want to ask him did he want Afzal Guru to be garlanded?" Singh queried. The Union Minister said he has come for the first time to Ramban, but the people have given him a warm welcome. "I greet all of you. After 10 years, Assembly elections are being held in J&K. Entire country is watching the outcome of this election. I was in America recently and the Indian diaspora there asked me what would happen in these elections. I told them BJP will form the govt in J&K," he claimed. "While coming here, I asked Dr Jitendra Singh about the ground situation and he told me that such a conducive political atmosphere in favour of BJP is

far greater than his expectations. In the past, whenever, 2, 6 or 10 per cent voting would take place in Kashmir it would become a big news. 58 per cent voting took place in Lok Sabha elections and in Ladakh it went to 72 per cent," he added. "First time, there was an election here which was held without fear and without any partisan consideration. This is a great change for us. The people of J&K are hard-working and talented. If BJP rules J&K for the next 10 years, J&K will be the most prosperous place in India," Rajnath Singh opined. "Since Modiji took over as the Prime Minister, our economy has grown from 11th place to become the 5th largest economy in the World. Independent economic surveys and media reports now accept that in 2027 India would be 3rd largest in size after US and China," he claimed. "Give an opportunity to BJP to form the government here and we will change the face of this place in 10 years. We have already changed the ground situation in the last 10 years. Even Tazia (Muharram) procession was not allowed in Kashmir and we made this procession take place," the Union minister said. "PM Modi abrogated article 370 and nobody rose against this. NC manifesto says they will restore 370. Nobody can restore 370 now. For the first time, a G-20 meeting was held in Kashmir Valley. This is called governance. Kashmir was called a terrorism spot, but now it is called a tourism spot," he said. He referred to developments in the last 10 years and said that the Muharram procession, railway link, ₹38000 crore worth developmental works, reducing the travel time from Jammu to Srinagar from 14 to 4 hours, 40,000 recruitments in last 5 years.

## RG KAR HORROR TMC MP Sircar offers resignation



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, Sept 8: TMC MP Jawhar Sircar Sunday wrote to West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee, the chief of his party, and said he has decided to quit Rajya Sabha and leave politics altogether, describing the steps taken by the state government in handling the rape and murder of the doctor at RG Kar hospital "too little and quite late". In the letter, Sircar said he became increasingly "disillusioned" with the state government as it seemed "quite unconcerned" about corruption and "strong-arm tactics" of a section of leaders. Terming the protests over the doctor's death spontaneous, the retired IAS officer said he had not seen "such angst and total no-confidence" against a government, even when it was saying things that were correct or factual. "The primary purpose of joining as an MP, without any direct involvement in party politics, was that it offered an excellent forum to carry on the struggle against the autocratic and communal politics of the BJP and its Prime Minister. To that extent, I have some satisfaction and my several interventions in parliament...", he said in the letter. Sircar said that in 2022, a year after he joined the TMC, he was "quite shocked" to see the "open evidence of corruption" that former education minister Partha Chatterjee had indulged in. "I made a public statement that corruption must be tack-

led by the party and government, but I was heckled by senior leaders in the party. I did not resign then as I had hoped that you would carry on your public campaign against 'cut money' and corruption that you had started a year earlier," he said. The former bureaucrat said that he was persuaded by well-wishers to remain an MP to "carry on the battle" against "a regime that is the greatest ever threat to Indian democracy and civil liberties". Noting his middle-class way of living, Sircar said he was amazed to see that several elected panchayat and municipal representatives of the TMC acquired big properties and moved around in expensive vehicles. Referring to the protests over the rape and murder of the doctor, he said the "spontaneous outpouring of public anger" is against this unchecked overbearing attitude of the "favoured few and the corrupt". "In all my years, I have not seen such angst and total no-confidence against the government, even when it says something correct or factual," he said. Sircar said he had "suffered patiently" for a month since the incident at RG Kar hospital, hoping for direct intervention with the agitating junior doctors, "in the old style of Mamata Banerjee". Sircar said the agitation was non-political and spontaneous and it was not correct to take a "confrontational stand, by labelling it political".

## Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi arrives, to meet PM today

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 8: Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi Sheikh Khaled bin Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan arrived here to a warm welcome Sunday as he kick-started a two-day maiden visit to India to further boost bilateral ties in a range of areas, including energy and connectivity, amid escalating tensions in West Asia. Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal received the Crown Prince at the airport following which he was accorded a ceremonial welcome, in reflection of the importance India has attached to the visit. "A new milestone in a historic relationship. His Highness Sheikh



Khaled bin Zayed Al Nahyan arrived in Delhi on his first official visit to India," External Affairs Ministry Spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said on 'X'. The Crown Prince is accompanied by several ministers from the UAE government and a business delegation. After concluding the Delhi leg of his visit, Al Nahyan will travel to Mumbai to participate in a business forum. Top business leaders from both countries will participate in the forum Tuesday. Prime Minister Modi and the Crown Prince will hold talks Monday. Following the landmark visit of Modi to the UAE in August 2015, bilateral relations between the two countries were elevated to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.

## J&K POLLS

### BJP releases 6th list of 10 candidates

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 8: The BJP Sunday released a fresh list of 10 candidates for the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly polls, replacing ex-deputy chief minister Kavinder Gupta with former member of legislative council (MLC) Vikram Randhawa from Bahu seat of Jammu district. Gupta was elected from Gandhi Nagar, renamed as Bahu Assembly segment, in 2014 elections. With the release of the sixth list for the third phase of elections, the BJP has so far named 62 candidates, including 20 for the Kashmir Valley, where the BJP is yet to open its account in Assembly elections. Randhawa found himself embroiled in controversies on three occasions between 2019 and 2021, leading to filing of two FIRs against him at separate police stations in Ladakh and Jammu and also forcing him to tender an unconditional public apology to Union minister Jitendra Singh for levelling baseless allegations of corruption against him.

## Sexual harassment: DAEI suspends Bengali filmmaker



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, Sept 8: Bengali filmmaker Arindam Sil was suspended by the Directors' Association of Eastern India (DAEI) following a complaint of sexual misconduct by an actress. Sil was the first big name in the Bengali film industry, also called Tollywood, against whom action was taken after allegations of sexual harassment shook the entertainment industries of the southern states.

The suspension came into force with immediate effect, said a letter sent by DAEI late Saturday. "Due to certain allegations made against you, and prima facie evidence we have with us, which are of deep concern and is maligning to the entire organisation, DAEI has decided to suspend you from membership for indefinite period or till the allegations against you are cleared," said the letter sent by DAEI president Subrata Sen and secretary Sudeshna Roy. Sil, who is also a well-known actor, told reporters that what was being construed as misbehaviour was unintentional. He said the incident being referred to happened recently when he was explaining a scene to the actress during the shooting of a film.



An excavator being used to demolish an illegal building in Hyderabad

PTI PHOTO

## EMPOWERING RURAL VOICES

# Community radio revolution in Panchayati Raj

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 8: To enhance its outreach among the rural population, the Panchayati Raj Ministry is using community radio to spread awareness about a range of issues, including combating the "sarpanch pati" practice and promoting digital initiatives. The "sarpanch pati" system is a practice in which the husband of an elected woman sarpanch wields the actual power. According to officials, the pilot project for using community radio has been started in three states -- Bihar, Karnataka and Maharashtra -- and have received a good response. In Bihar, the pilot project is being run through five community radio stations -- Radio Snehi,

Siwan, Radio Active in Bhagalpur, Radio Rimjhim in Gopalganj, Radio Mayur in Chapra, and Radio Risarch in Munger. Similarly, Radio Sarang, Radio Manipal, Radio Shivamogga, Nammadhvani Radio, and Antarvani Radio have been engaged in different places of Karnataka. In Maharashtra, Radio Manbhavan in Jalgaon, Guruwani CRS in Kalyan, Radio Vishwas in Nashik, Radio Wardha in Wardha, and Radio Nagar in Ahmednagar have been engaged. "The objective is to actively involve the local populace in grassroots governance by providing them with critical updates on various activities, interventions, and initiatives spearheaded by the Ministry of



Panchayati Raj," the official told PTI. The official added this initiative is part of the ministry's broader effort to involve local communities in advancing towards self-sustaining models of

Smart Panchayats. The issues being raised through the community radios include eliminating unwarranted practices like "Sarpanch Pati", "Pradhan Pati", and "Mukhiya Pati", a practice where male rel-

atives of Elected Women Representatives (EWRs) such as their husband, exert undue influence on the woman representatives, the official said. Augmenting Own Source of Revenue (OSR) for Panchayats, and popularising digital interventions such as the Meri Panchayat app, GramSwaraj Bhashini, Panchayat NIRNAY, Vibrant Gram Sabha will also be covered through the programme. Localisation of Sustainable Development Goals (LSDGs) will also be covered, which includes having poverty-free villages with enhanced livelihood, healthy, child and women friendly, water sufficient, clean and green village, with self-sufficient infrastructure, socially just and socially secured environment, and good governance. The official added that the ministry has requested the state departments of Panchayati Raj to support the community radio initiative by providing inputs and finalising content in local languages to maximize outreach.



# national



From tomorrow (Monday), the procedure to start estimating flood losses will begin  
VANGALAPUDI ANITHA | AP HOME MINISTER

## INDIA GETS ITS 1ST HAND TRANSPLANT REGISTRY

India has set up a registry for the first time for patients requiring hand transplantation, with officials saying it will facilitate the allocation of the donated organ in a transparent manner and on a priority basis



## of the day quote

Soon after the havoc caused by heavy rains and flood, Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke to Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy, PM Modi asked him (Revanth Reddy) to utilise the advance of ₹1,345 crore in the SDRF. There should be no politics over flood relief

G KISHAN REDDY | T'GANA BJP PRESIDENT

The central government is coming up with a proposal to impose GST on online transactions of less than ₹2000. No GST was earlier imposed on such small transactions. We will oppose this proposal

ATISHI MARLENA | DELHI FINANCE MINISTER

You (people) all know where the mafias have gone one by one after 2017. Uttar Pradesh has become mafia free. Those who used to create hindrances in festivals and celebrations are all gone

YOGI ADITYANATH | UP CHIEF MINISTER

## MEDIC'S RAPE-MURDER

AGENCIES

**Kolkata, Sept 8:** People from all walks of life - former students of several educational institutions, clay modellers, rickshaw pullers and junior doctors - separately hit the streets of Kolkata Sunday in continued protest over the rape and murder of a medic in a state-run hospital a month ago.

Demanding the arrest of all culprits in the case, the mother of the post-graduate trainee whose body was found in RG Kar Medical College and Hospital August 9 said she had one child and now all the protesting medics are her children.

In south Kolkata, around 4,000 former students of over 40 schools, a large number of them women, walked a distance of 2 km demanding justice for the victim. The former students of various ages chanted 'We Want Justice' as they walked along Rash Behari Avenue to the crossing of Shyamaprasad Mukherjee Road from Garjiahat.

Ex-students of institutes like Binodini Girls School, Mitra Institution, Garfa High School, Carmel High School and St John's Diocesan took part in the procession, singing the iconic composition of rebel poet Kaji

## Kolkata rocked by rallies



### Major lapses in initial probe in CBI's notice

**Kolkata:** The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) officials investigating the case are now focusing on what prompted severe lapses in carrying out the initial probe before it took over the case on the Calcutta High Court's order. Sources said that the central agency officials believe that their probe process could have been much smoother had these lapses been avoided during the initial investigation before the CBI took charge. The first lapse, according to sources, was the lackadaisical videography of the process of post-mortem of the victim's body and the mentioning of the wounds on the body in the report.

Nazrul Islam: "Karar oi louho kopat, bhenge phel korre lopat" (Destroy the iron gates of prison).

In another rally from the protesters' hub of Kumartuli in north Kolkata, clay modellers took out a rally along Rabindra Sarani to Shyambazar five-point crossing, with a girl dressed as Goddess

Durga leading the procession. Singing Arijit Singh's song 'Aar kabe' (how long) in solidarity with sexually violated women, the protesters held aloft placards demanding speedy investigation and justice in the R G Kar murder-rape incident. Sculptor Sanatan Dinda and

### SC to hear RG Kar incident case today

**New Delhi:** The Supreme Court is scheduled to hear Monday the case related to the murder and alleged rape of a junior doctor at the RG Kar Medical College and Hospital in Kolkata. According to the cause list uploaded on the apex court's website, a bench of Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud and justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra is slated to hear September 9 the case, which was initiated by the top court on its own. The Centre has recently filed an application in the apex court alleging "unpardonable" non-cooperation by the West Bengal government in extending logistical support to the CISF, tasked with providing security at the hospital.

singer Lagnajita were also part of the procession. Around 100 people with their hand-pulled rickshaws also rallied from Hedua Park to College Square in north Kolkata. Hundreds of junior doctors of state-run NRS Hospital took out a rally from Sealdah to Esplanade in the heart of the city. The parents of the murdered doctor were present at the spot in Esplanade where the rally culminated.

## Doval to visit Russia to attend BRICS meet

**AJIT DOVAL'S VISIT TO RUSSIA COMES TWO-AND-A HALF WEEKS AFTER PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA MODI'S HIGH-PROFILE TRIP TO THE UKRAINIAN CAPITAL KYIV**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Sept 8:** National Security Advisor Ajit Doval is travelling to Russia this week against the backdrop of calls for India's possible role in finding a solution to the Ukraine conflict following Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visits to Moscow and Kyiv.

Doval is visiting Russia primarily to attend a conclave of national security advisors of the BRICS (Brazil-Russia-India-China-South Africa) grouping that is taking place amid a renewed push for peace talks between Moscow and Kyiv to end the conflict.

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Doval's visit to Russia comes two-and-a-half weeks after Prime Minister Narendra Modi's high-profile trip to the Ukrainian capital Kyiv. On Saturday, Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni, following her talks with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, said India and China can play a role in finding a solution to the dragging conflict.

Russian President Vladimir Putin, speaking at a panel discussion at the Eastern Economic Forum in the Russian city of Vladivostok Thursday, named India, Brazil and China as possible intermediaries that could play a role in resolving the conflict. "First of all, it is the Chinese People's Republic, Brazil and India - I am in contact with my partners and I have no doubt that the leaders of these countries, and we have relations of trust and confidence with one another, will be really interested and provide a helping hand," he said. His remarks came in



NSA Doval is travelling to Russia for the BRICS meet, official sources said

He is also expected to hold talks with his Russian counterpart and is likely to discuss ways to bring peace to the region

response to a question on possible countries that can act as a mediator between Russia and Ukraine.

In his talks with President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, Modi had said both Ukraine and Russia should sit together without wasting time to end the ongoing war and that India was ready to play an "active role" in restoring peace in the region. The Prime Minister said India was on the side of peace since the beginning of the conflict and he would even like to contribute personally to a peaceful resolution of the crisis. Modi's nearly nine-hour visit to Ukraine August 23, the first by an Indian Prime Minister since its independence in 1991, came six weeks after he held summit talks with Russian President Vladimir Putin in Moscow.

India has been maintaining that the conflict in Ukraine must be resolved through dialogue and diplomacy.

## X POST OF THE DAY

#StalinsvsModi ELECTRIC! The CM of a state receiving a welcome grander than the Prime Minister by his people in the USA tells a lot about his popularity. & This crowd isn't even brought by arranging buses or giving them a sweetbox, they have all come here voluntarily. Unprecedented, MK Stalin is the most popular Chief Minister Tamil Nadu has seen

@Roshankrtrial

## SHORT TAKES

### Ripun Bora returns to Cong

**Guwahati:** Former Assam Congress chief Ripun Bora, who had recently resigned as the state Trinamool Congress president, returned to the grand old party Sunday. AICC general secretary in-charge of the state, Jitendra Singh, welcomed Bora back into the party fold at the beginning of an Extended Executive Committee meeting at Charaideo. Besides Singh, state Congress president Bhupen Kumar Borah, Leader of Opposition Debabrata Saikia and other leaders were present on the occasion.

### 4 workers killed

**Ambikapur:** Four workers were killed, and one sustained injuries after a hopper filled with coal collapsed on them at an alumina refinery in Chhattisgarh's Surguja district Sunday, police said. The incident occurred around 11 am at Maa Kudargarhi Alumina Refinery in Silsila village under the Raghunathpur police chowki, an official said. A steel tower-mounted hopper filled with coal collapsed and fell on ten men working below it, he said.

### 23 houses gutted

**Itanagar:** At least 23 houses were completely gutted in a devastating fire in Seppa in Arunachal Pradesh's East Kameng district, police said. The incident happened in Abotani Colony around 7 pm Saturday, Superintendent of Police Kamdam Sikom said. The reason behind the fire is yet to be ascertained but an electric short-circuit is suspected to be the cause, he said. The SP, however, said that no casualty was reported in the incident.

## HARYANA POLLS

### 'No final decision yet on AAP-Cong alliance'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Sept 8:** No final decision has been taken on the alliance with the Congress for the October 5 Haryana Assembly polls yet, sources in AAP said Sunday.

The last date to file nominations is September 12. "The talks are underway but there is no final decision yet," said an AAP source. Earlier in the day, AAP Rajya Sabha MP Raghav Chadha said both Congress and his party are trying to forge an alliance for the Haryana elections by keeping aside their individual aspirations.

Chadha said while the parties are yet to reach a consensus on the alliance, the talks are progressing in a "positive" direction and they are hopeful of a good outcome. "The talks are happening in a positive atmosphere. Both parties are working towards contesting the elections together, prioritising unity and the demands of the people of Haryana, while setting aside individual party and candidate aspirations," he told PTI Videos. "Ball by ball commentary cannot be done on the seat-sharing arrangement. Both the parties have desire and hope to form an alliance," he added. According to sources, while the AAP is demanding 10 seats, the Congress is ready to give them only seven.

However, Chadha refused to divulge any details about the seat-sharing talks held so far. Earlier, the Congress and AAP partners in the Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance (INDIA), entered a seat-sharing agreement for Lok Sabha polls in Delhi, Haryana and Gujarat. In Haryana, AAP state president Sushil Gupta was the lone party candidate in the Lok Sabha polls in the state. He lost to BJP's Naveen Jindal.

## SEBI has lot to explain: Cong

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Sept 8:** The Congress Sunday said the SEBI investigation into "the Adani Group's brazen attempt" to bypass regulations is still languishing and the capital markets regulator has a lot to explain.

Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh's remarks attacking SEBI came after a media report which claimed that two Mauritius-based foreign portfolio investors (FPIs), who were mentioned in the January 2023 report on the Adani Group by short-seller Hindenburg Research, have petitioned the Securities Appellate Tribunal, seeking urgent relief from complying with SEBI's new foreign investor norms.

"Two Mauritius-based foreign portfolio investors (FPIs), a part of the revelations in the still-unfolding Modani mega scam, have

now petitioned the Securities Appellate Tribunal, seeking urgent relief from complying with SEBI's new foreign investor norms before the upcoming September 9th deadline," Ramesh said. These rules are meant to ensure that black money routed through tax havens does not flood back into Indian capital markets, Ramesh said, adding they must be upheld at all costs. "These are the very same FPIs who stand accused of participating in the Adani Group's brazen attempt to bypass SEBI's regulations and amass benami stakes in its own companies. These are the very firms that benefitted from SEBI's removal of the requirement to identify the 'ultimate beneficial owner' of offshore funds, a decision that it was forced under public pressure to reverse in June 2023 in a tacit admission of its guilt," the Congress leader said in his post on X.

## Surat claims top spot in India's air quality rankings

The Union Environment Ministry presented the "National Clean Air City" Awards during the Swachh Vayu Survekshan 2024 held at a national workshop celebrating the "International Day of Clean Air for Blue Skies" in Jaipur Saturday

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi, Sept 8:** Surat has emerged as the leading city in India for air quality improvements, followed by Jabalpur (Madhya Pradesh) and Agra (Uttar Pradesh).

These three cities with population of more than one million, have topped the Swachh Vayu Survekshan (clean air survey) Awards for clean air, the government announced Saturday.

Union Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav and Rajasthan Chief Minister Bhajan Lal Sharma presented the awards to the best-performing cities where the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) is being implemented.

In the category for population between 300,000 and 1 million, Firozabad (Uttar Pradesh), Amravati (Maharashtra) and Jhansi (Uttar Pradesh) were recognised as the top three and for cities with fewer than 300,000 people, the toppers were Raebareli (Uttar Pradesh),



Nalgonda (Telangana) and Nalagarh (Himachal Pradesh). Municipal commissioners of winning cities were awarded cash prizes, trophies and certificates. The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) reported that 51 cities have shown a reduction in PM10 levels by more than 20 per cent compared to the base year 2017-18, with 21 of these cities achieving a reduction of over 40 per cent.

According to the NCAP assessment document, sectors given weightage include biomass and municipal solid waste

burning, road dust, dust from construction and demolition waste, vehicular emissions and industrial emissions, among others. Experts have previously noted that NCAP does not focus on combustion sources and may not be effectively curbing toxic emissions.

A Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) assessment released in July found that road dust mitigation has been the primary focus of NCAP, which was launched in 2019 as the first effort to set clean air targets for 131 polluted cities and reduce particulate pollution nationally.

The assessment revealed that 64 per cent of the total funds (Rs 10,566 crore) has been allocated to road paving, widening, pothole repair, water sprinkling and me-

chanical sweepers. Only 14.51 per cent of funding has been used for controlling biomass burning, 12.63 per cent for reducing vehicular pollution and a mere 0.61 per cent for controlling industrial pollution. "The primary focus of the funding is thus road dust mitigation," the assessment said.

NCAP aims to reduce particulate pollution by up to 40 per cent by 2025-26 from the base year of 2019-20. It is India's first performance-linked funding programme to improve air quality. Originally, NCAP was planned to tackle both PM10 and PM2.5 concentrations in the 131 non-attainment cities. In practice, only PM10 concentration has been considered for performance assessment.

# international



There's no doubt about it - India is definitely a leader at the United Nations. India has been an avid and committed advocate of multilateralism, which is very much valued by the United Nations  
DENNIS FRANCIS | GENERAL ASSEMBLY PRESIDENT, UN

## POPE'S HUMANITARIAN AID

Pope Francis celebrated the Catholic Church of the peripheries Sunday as he travelled to the remote jungles of Papua New Guinea, bringing with him a ton of medicine and toys and a message of love overcoming violence for the people who live there



## of the day quote

The Harris-Biden DOJ is trying to throw me in jail - they want me in jail - for the crime of exposing their corruption  
DONALD TRUMP | FORMER PRESIDENT, US

Any transfer of Iranian ballistic missiles to Russia would represent a dramatic escalation in Iran's support for Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and lead to the killing of more Ukrainian civilians  
SEAN SAVETT | NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL SPOKESMAN, US

Evidence against founder Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf party founder (Imran Khan) points towards military trial  
KHAWAJA ASIF | DEFENCE MINISTER, PAKISTAN

## SHORT TAKES

### Brazil's X ban drives rally for 'free speech'

Sao Paulo: Supporters of former Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro began flooding Sao Paulo's main boulevard for an Independence Day rally Saturday, buoyed by the government's blocking of tech billionaire Elon Musk's X platform, a ban they say is proof of their political persecution. A few thousand demonstrators, clad in the yellow-and-green colours of Brazil's flag, poured onto Av. Paulista. References to the ban on X and images of Musk abounded. "Thank you for defending our freedom," read one banner praising the tech entrepreneur. Saturday's march is a test of Bolsonaro's capacity to mobilize turnout ahead of the October municipal elections, even though Brazil's electoral court has barred him from running for office until 2030.

### Philippines arrests celebrity pastor

Manila: An influential evangelist preacher from the Philippines accused of sex trafficking and sexual abuse has been arrested, the interior minister said Sunday. Apollo Quiboloy, self-proclaimed "owner of the universe" and "appointed son of god", is wanted on charges of child and sexual abuse and related allegations of human trafficking. He has denied wrongdoing. "Apollo Quiboloy has been caught," Interior Secretary Benjamin Abalos Jr said on his Facebook page, without specifying how or where he had been. The pastor is also on the FBI's "most wanted" list in the United States on separate charges of sex trafficking and bulk cash smuggling, over which he has also denied wrongdoing.

## INTERNATIONAL LITERACY DAY

To reduce the dropout rate and encourage every child to complete their education, Shehbaz pointed out that the government had introduced scholarships and other incentives

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Islamabad, Sept 8: Pakistan Sunday declared an education emergency on International Literacy Day to educate around 26 million out-of-school children in the country. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif announced the measure and urged the private sector and civil organisations to join hands with the government, the state-run Associated Press of Pakistan reported. The 72-year-old Pakistan

## ISRAEL-HAMAS WAR

# Gaza death toll tops 40K

### ISRAELIS PROTEST IN THE STREETS AGAIN AS THE TOLL IN GAZA MOUNTS

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Deir Al-Balah, Sept 8: Israelis again poured into the streets for another large protest over the government's failure to secure the return of remaining hostages in Gaza, while hospital and local authorities said Israeli air raids in the territory killed more than a dozen people overnight on Saturday.

Israel's retaliatory offensive in Gaza has killed more than 40,000 Palestinians, according to the Health Ministry, which doesn't distinguish between civilians and combatants in its count. The ministry says more than 94,000 people have been wounded. Health workers wrapped up the second phase of an urgent polio vaccination campaign designed to prevent a large-scale outbreak. The drive, launched after the first polio case in the Palestinian enclave in 25 years, aims to vaccinate 640,000 children during a war that has destroyed Gaza's health care system and much of its infrastructure. The third phase of vaccinations will be in the north.

Israel kept up its military offensive. In central Gaza's urban refugee camp of Nuseirat, Al-Awda Hospital said it received the bodies of nine people killed in two air raids. One hit a residential building, killing four people and wounding at least 10, while five people were killed in a strike on a house in western Nuseirat.



Separately, Al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital, central Gaza's main hospital, said a woman and her two children were killed in a strike on a house in the nearby urban refugee camp of Bureij.

The war began when Hamas and other militants attacked Israel October 7, killing around 1,200 people, primarily civilians. Hamas is believed to still be holding more than 100 hostages. Israeli authorities estimate about a third are dead. Anger again led large crowds of Israelis into the streets Saturday night, a week after one of the largest demonstrations of the war following the discovery of another six dead hostages in Gaza. Violence has also spiked in the occupied West Bank. A day-long military operation in Jenin left dozens of dead. "They (Israeli forces) besieged the area and brought in bulldozers. As you see, they destroyed the whole area," said a resident, Mahmoud Al Razi.

A day after an American protester was shot and killed in the West Bank, her family urged President Joe Biden to order an independent investigation, saying that "given the circumstances of Aysenur's killing, an Israeli investigation is not adequate".

Eleven months into the war, numerous rounds of diplomacy have so far failed to clinch a ceasefire deal to end the conflict

## MASS MURDERS

# B'desh to take steps for Hasina's extradition



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dhaka, Sept 8: Bangladesh will take necessary steps to extradite deposed Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina from India to try her on charges of mass killings during the student-led mass movement against her government, the newly-appointed chief prosecutor of the country's International Crimes Tribunal said Sunday.

The White House has said it was "deeply disturbed" and called on Israel to investigate. The Israeli military said it was looking into reports that troops had killed a foreign national while firing at an "instigator of violent activity".

More than 500,000 Israeli settlers live in the West Bank, a territory captured by Israel in 1967. Israeli raids, attacks by Palestinian militants on Israelis and attacks by Israeli settlers on Palestinians have left more than 690 Palestinians dead since the Israel-Hamas war began in October, according to Palestinian health officials.

Israel has been under increasing pressure from the United States and other allies to reach a cease-fire deal in Gaza, but Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu insists on continued Israeli control of the Philadelphi corridor, a narrow band along Gaza's border with Egypt where Israel contends Hamas smuggles weapons. Egypt and Hamas deny it.

Information, documents and evidence against the accused persons will have to be collected from across the country and those will have to be compiled, examined and placed properly before the tribunal, which is very much challenging and huge task

MD TAJUL ISLAM | CHIEF PROSECUTOR, INTERNATIONAL CRIMES TRIBUNAL

Replying to a question, he said a decision would be taken after consulting with the government about amendments to the existing International Crimes Tribunal Act for holding trial of the new cases filed with IT.

"Information, documents and evidence against the accused persons will have to be collected from across the country and those will have to be compiled, examined and placed properly before the tribunal, which is very much challenging and huge task," Islam added.

According to the interim government's Health Adviser Nurjahan Begum, more than 1,000 people have been killed and hundreds injured during the protests against the Hasina-led government.

Bangladesh's International Crimes Tribunal (ICT) last month launched an investigation against Hasina and nine others on charges of genocide and crimes against humanity that took place from July 15 to August 5 during the students' mass movement.

## BUILDING TIES

### Rahul in US to strengthen nations' bond

Houston: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi Sunday arrived in the US on a three-day visit during which he will hold "meaningful discussions and insightful conversations" to further strengthen the bond between India and America. "I am truly delighted by the warm welcome I've received in Dallas, Texas, USA, from the Indian Diaspora and members of the Indian Overseas Congress," Gandhi, the Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha, said in a Facebook post. "I eagerly look forward to engaging in meaningful discussions and insightful conversations that will further strengthen the bond between our two nations during this visit," he said, sharing some photographs of his arrival. In a post on X, the Congress party said that Gandhi received a "warm and enthusiastic" welcome at Dallas Fort Worth International Airport. Indian Overseas Congress chairperson Sam Pitroda said last week that the Opposition leader is not coming to the US in his official capacity but will have a chance to interact with a variety of people on Capitol Hill at an "individual level". "He (Gandhi) will have interactions with the press at the national press club, he will meet with the think tank people and will also have interaction at Georgetown University which is equally important in Washington DC," Pitroda said of Gandhi's first visit to the US since assuming the mantle of the Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha. During his visit from September 8-10, the Congress leader would hold numerous interactions in Washington DC and Dallas, including at the University of Georgetown and the University of Texas.



### First India-GCC foreign ministers' meeting

Riyadh: External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar arrived here in the Saudi capital Sunday on a two-day visit to attend the first India-Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) foreign ministers' meeting. Jaishankar is here on the first leg of his three-nation tour that will also take him to Germany and Switzerland. "Arrived in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia to take part in the First India - Gulf Cooperation Council Foreign Ministers' Meeting. Thank Abdulmajeed Al Smari, Deputy Minister for Protocol Affairs for the warm reception," Jaishankar said in a post on X. The GCC is an influential grouping comprising the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Qatar and Kuwait. The total volume of India's trade with GCC countries stood at \$184.46 billion in the financial year 2022-23. In Riyadh, Jaishankar is also expected to hold bilateral meetings with foreign ministers of several GCC member countries. Ahead of the visit, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) in New Delhi Saturday said India and the GCC enjoy a deep and multifaceted relationship, including in areas of trade and investment, energy, cultural and people-to-people ties.



## Algerian Prez elected to serve second term

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Algiers, Sept 8: President Abdelmadjid Tebboune has been named the winner of Algeria's presidential election, granting him another term leading the gas-rich North African nation five years after pro-democracy protests led to the ouster of his predecessor.

In a result that surprised few observers internationally or in Algeria, the country's independent election authority Sunday announced that Tebboune had won 94 per cent of the vote, far outpacing his challengers Islamit Abdelali Hassani Cherif, who won 3 per cent and socialist Youcef Aouchiche, who won 2.1 per cent.

Election officials reported less than six million of the country's 24 million voters had turned out to vote Saturday, perpetuating the low voter turnout rates that marred Tebboune's first term and raised questions about his popular support.

Algeria is Africa's largest country by area and, with almost 45 million people, it's the continent's second most populous



after South Africa to hold presidential elections in 2024 - a year in which more than 50 elections are being held worldwide, encompassing more than half the world's population.

Throughout the campaign, activists and international organizations, including Amnesty International, railed against the campaign season's repressive atmosphere and the harassment and prosecutions of those involved in opposition parties, media organisations and civil society groups. Some denounced this election as a rubber stamp exercise that can only entrench the status quo.

## In a first Oz census to include sexual orientation, gender questions

REUTERS

Sydney, Sept 8: Australia will include questions on sexual orientation and gender in its census for the first time, after more than a week of controversy over the centre-left Labor government's earlier decision to exclude them.

Treasurer Jim Chalmers said Sunday the 2026 census would include sexual orientation and gender, although he declined to specify the questions and said the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) would design them later. "We have listened to the LGBTQ+ community to make sure that we can work with the ABS to deliver this really important change when it comes to the 2026 census," he said.

"We say to Australians from the LGBTQ+ community: you matter, you've been heard, you will be counted."

The questions will be optional and only asked of those over 16 years of age.

The move reverses an August decision to exclude questions about LGBTQ+ identity.

Deputy Prime Minister Richard Marles said then the government did not want to open up divisive debates. He denied any political motives behind the decision amid media reports that the government was apprehensive about sparking a culture-war-style campaign ahead of an election likely to be called within nine months.

The United Kingdom added an optional question on sexual orientation in its 2021 census for the first time.



## Pak PM declares education emergency

Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader reaffirmed his commitment to advancing the education agenda, striving for a more informed and sustainable nation.

"We have declared an educational emergency across the country, launched an enrolment campaign for students and initiated midday meals for children in schools," he stated.

He said that literacy is a fundamental human and constitutional right that guarantees the future of our country and added that literacy was not merely the ability to read and write but rather a "gateway to empowerment, economic opportunities and active participation in society".

"In this rapidly emerging world, developing literacy and skills in line with technology is inevitable," the premier stressed, adding that the government was implementing a comprehensive



plan to integrate technology into the educational system and ensuring that the youth were equipped with the necessary skills to thrive in the digital economy.

He said that the private sector and civil society organisations were equal partners in the government's efforts.

"By establishing effective partnerships, we can link education

Today, with iron conviction, and the support of provinces, we will handle the challenge of 26 million out-of-school children. We will bring them back to school...I declare from this moment an emergency in education all over Pakistan...The way we did it in Punjab, we will do it in Pakistan  
SHEHBAZ SHARIF | PM, PAKISTAN

with employment and self-employment opportunities, creating a stronger and more inclusive workforce," he added.

"Today, with iron conviction, and the support of provinces, we will handle the challenge of 26 million out-of-school children. We will bring them back to school...I declare from this moment an emergency in education all over Pakistan...The way we did it in Punjab, we

will do it in Pakistan," the prime minister said while addressing the National Conference on Education Emergency.

The premier said the enrolment of 26 million out-of-school children and stunted growth were major challenges facing Pakistan which required huge financial resources. International Literacy Day is observed September 8 to remind policymakers, practitioners, and the public of the critical importance of literacy for creating a more literate, just, peaceful, and sustainable society.

UNESCO has highlighted that the lack of access to education remains a significant barrier, as three out of four children in developing countries cannot read or comprehend a basic text by the age of 10, and there are still 754 million illiterate adults globally, two-thirds of whom are women.



