



### Saiee's defence tact

Actor Saiee Manjrekar says she's a very thick-skinned person and things don't affect her so easily

LEISURE | P2



### Power to Army

Bangladesh's interim govt grants magisterial powers to Army for two months to improve law and order in the violence-hit country

INTERNATIONAL | P10



### Diamond crisis

India's diamond sector faces a severe crisis as both imports and exports sharply decline in the past three years

BUSINESS | P11



### Bangla no pushovers

Head coach Gautam Gambhir says India are not taking Bangladesh lightly, ahead of the 1st Test starting Thursday

SPORTS | P12

## 2K Subhadra forms rejected: Pravati

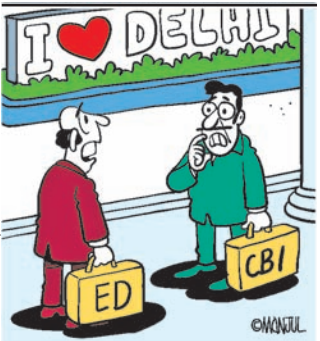
POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 18:** Deputy Chief Minister Pravati Parida Wednesday said that as many as 2,000 applications for Subhadra Yojana have been rejected so far due to errors in bank accounts.

According to Parida, as many as 97,000 applications for Subhadra Yojana were pending by Tuesday night. All applications have been cleared, except 2,000 due to likely mistakes in bank accounts.

The Deputy CM said that for people in areas where there is no internet facility we have arranged Subhadra registration centre where they can register and apply with the help of Jan Seva Kendra employees.

### IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Back to square one! A new CM means starting from scratch once more



**EXERCISING FRANCHISE:** Women voters show their voting slips at a women-only polling booth during the first phase of J&K Assembly elections in Kishtwar district, Wednesday (Report P8) PTI PHOTO

## Medical colleges in all dists soon: CM

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 18:** Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Wednesday said his government is committed to opening of a medical college in each of the 30 districts and filling up vacant doctors' posts on a priority basis.

Addressing the annual conference of Odisha Medical Service Association (OMSA) in Balasore, Majhi called upon the doctors to work with dedication and upkeep the faith of people in the medical fraternity.

While accusing the previous BJD government of neglecting the health sector, the CM said of the 15,774 sanctioned doctor posts, as many as 5,765 have remained vacant for a long time.

He said that the previous government had appointed 443 doctors on ad hoc and contractual basis. "Our government's priority is to fill all the vacant posts soon and upgrade medical services in the state. Apart from doctors, there is also a big role of nurses in providing treatment to the people," Majhi said. P4

# Cabinet nod to sync polls

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, Sept 18:** The nation may soon experience the kind of democratic exercise adopted way back in 1951-67 period, as the Union Cabinet has approved the recommendations of a panel led by ex-President Ram Nath Kovind for holding simultaneous elections to Lok Sabha, state Assemblies and local bodies in a phased manner, the move dubbed by the Opposition a 'cheap stunt' and 'impractical'. However, this would require several constitutional amendments, most of which will not need ratification by state Assemblies. Certain amendment Bills would have to be passed by Parliament.

Asserting that several political parties are already on board, the government said even those parties that are opposed to it may now feel pressure from within to change their stand due to the widespread support on the issue from the people of the country.

Announcing the Union Cabinet's approval to the proposal, Information and Broadcasting Minister Ashwini Vaishnav said an implementation group would be formed to take forward the recommenda-



tions of the panel headed by former president Ram Nath Kovind and detailed discussions would be held on various fora across the country over the next few months.

Asked by reporters when the recommendations could be implemented, Vaishnav evaded a direct reply but pointed out that Union Home Minister Amit Shah has said the government would implement it in its current tenure.

After the discussions are completed, implementation would follow in steps and it would be the government's endeavour to build a consensus over the next few months, he said.

Once the consultation process is over, the government will draft

a Bill, place it before the Cabinet and subsequently, take it to Parliament for simultaneous polls to come into effect, he added.

In its report submitted to the government in March, just before the general election was announced, the panel recommended implementing simultaneous polls in two phases - for Lok Sabha and state Assemblies in the first phase and local bodies like panchayats and municipal bodies within 100 days of the general election in the second phase.

Meanwhile, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said 'one nation, one election' is not practical and alleged that the ruling BJP comes up with such things to

## Green signal for 2 space missions

AGENCIES

**The Cabinet approved a new moon mission 'Chandrayaan-4' to develop and demonstrate technologies needed for landing of Indian astronauts on the moon and safely bring them back to Earth. Chandrayaan-4 mission will achieve the foundational technologies for the landing of Indian astronauts on the moon (planned by year 2040) and return safely back to Earth. The fund requirement for the mission is ₹2,104.06 crore. The Cabinet also approved development of Venus Orbiter Mission for exploring and studying the planet. 'Venus Orbiter Mission' to be helmed by the Department of Space will involve placing a scientific spacecraft in the orbit of Venus for better understanding of its surface and subsurface, atmospheric processes and influence of the Sun on the Venusian atmosphere.**

divert attention from real issues when polls approach.

Likewise, TMC leader Derek O'Brien called it a 'cheap stunt' of BJP and questioned why the Maharashtra polls were not announced with those in Haryana and Jammu & Kashmir, if the government wants simultaneous elections.

## Bharatpur torture: Axe falls on 5 cops

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 18:** Three days after OrissaPOST and Dharitri began a campaign for ensuring justice to an Army officer and his female friend who were allegedly subjected to assault and ill-treatment by Bharatpur police, the Odisha Police Wednesday suspended five officials, including the IIC and SI of the police station, on charge of gross misconduct.

The order issued by DGP YB Khurania Wednesday said inspector Dinakrushna Mishra, sub-inspector (SI) Baisalini Panda, ASI Salilamayee Sahoo, ASI Sagarika Nath and constable Balaram Hansda have been suspended with immediate effect in exercise of powers conferred vide Rule 840 of Police Manual Rules 1940.

In the wee hours of Sunday, Major Gurbansh Singh, attached to 22 Sikh Regiment in Kolkata, and his female friend Ankitia Pradhan were allegedly abused by a group of miscreants when the duo intercepted their vehicle and confronted them for driving dangerously. To their horror,

they were allegedly subjected to physical torture and misbehavior when they approached Bharatpur police. Singh was allegedly kept in the lockup while Ankitia was taken to a secluded room where she was allegedly assaulted, stripped and molested. But the police booked Ankitia.

Condemning the police excess, All Odisha Veteran Soldiers' Association members staged a dharna in front of the Police Seva Headquarters, Wednesday.

Meanwhile, the Orissa High Court Wednesday granted bail to Ankitia, who has been lodged at Jharpada Special Jail for the last three days.

The court also raised concern over the police personnel's poor behaviour to the woman.

### MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VARIATION
SENSEX	82948.23 ↓ 131.43
NIFTY	25377.55 ↓ 41.00
DOLLAR	83.66 ↓ ₹0.12
EURO	92.98 ↓ ₹0.14
GOLD	₹73,090 ↓ ₹4
SILVER	₹88,388 ↓ ₹752

### WEATHER

	BBSR	CTC
Max Temp	33.0°C	33.0°C
Min Temp	25.8°C	25.0°C
Humidity	92%	91%
Rainfall	22.8mm	6.8mm

### FORECAST

Partly cloudy sky with one or two spells of rain

## PAGER BLASTS TOLL 12 14 killed as Hezbollah walkie-talkies explode

AGENCIES

**Beirut, Sept 18:** A day after pagers used by Hezbollah killed at least 12 and wounded nearly 3,000 in Lebanon, walkie-talkies and hand-held radios detonated Wednesday across Lebanon's south and in Beirut's southern suburbs, killing at least 14 people and injuring more than 400, a security source said, further stoking tensions with Israel.

Sources said at least 14 people were killed and at least 450 injured as a result of the explosions targeting walkie-talkies across Lebanon Wednesday afternoon, Lebanon's health ministry said.

The ministry added that first responders had almost finished transferring people to hospitals.

Several solar power systems exploded in people's homes across Lebanon, according to the National News Agency, injuring at least one girl in the town of al-Zahrani, south Lebanon.

Pictures of exploded solar panels, finger-print readers and



other devices were circulated on social media, though it was unclear if they blew up by themselves or were simply near walkie-talkies which blew up. At least one of the blasts took place near a funeral organised by Iran-backed Hezbollah for those killed the previous day when thousands of pagers used by the group exploded across the country and wounded many of the group's fighters.

The group, which was thrown briefly into disarray by the pager attacks, said Wednesday it had attacked Israeli artillery positions with rockets, the first strike at its arch-foe since blasts wounded thousands of its members in Lebanon and raised the prospect of a wider Middle East war. P10

### SHORT TAKES

#### ASI starts Ratna Bhandar inspection

**Puri:** Experts and scientists of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) Wednesday carried out a preliminary inspection of Srimandir's Ratna Bhandar, officials said. The team, including 17 technical members, also conducted a laser scanning of the structure, they added. The temple authorities had earlier urged the ASI to initiate scanning and geophysical investigation of the temple vault before undertaking its repair and renovation work. The exercise took place between 2pm and 5pm. The ASI team led by its Additional Director General Janhwi Sharma also comprised experts from Hyderabad-based CSIR-National Geophysical Research Institute (CSIR-NGRI). P4

#### Utkal University prof suspended

**Bhubaneswar:** A senior professor of Utkal University was Wednesday placed under suspension for allegedly sexually harassing a female student. The action was taken on the basis of a report of the internal complaint committee, a senior university official said. Sources indicate that the professor has been instructed not to leave the varsity premises without the Vice-Chancellor's permission. The action came a day after the Secretary of Governor Raghubar Das, Chancellor of varsities, sought a report from Utkal University VC on the incident. The student in her complaint had alleged that she was subjected to sexual harassment by the professor of the Analytical and Applied Economics dept in his chamber in August this year.

ODISHA'S FIRST NATIONAL LEAGUE CRICKET TEAM  
KONARK SURYAS  
Odisha Kheliba Duniya Dekhiba

DSPL - 113

## ଭୋଟର ତାଲିକାର ସ୍ୱତନ୍ତ୍ର ସଂକ୍ଷିପ୍ତ ସଂଶୋଧନ ୨୦୨୪

ଆପଣଙ୍କ ଘରକୁ ବୁଝାସୁଣା ଅଧିକାରୀ ଭୋଟର ତାଲିକାର ବିବରଣୀ ଯାଞ୍ଚ ପାଇଁ ଆସିଲେଣି କି?

ଯଦି ଆସିନାହାନ୍ତି, ତେବେ ନିକଟସ୍ଥ ବୁଝାସୁଣା ସହ ଯୋଗାଯୋଗ କରନ୍ତୁ ।

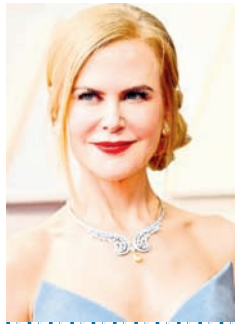
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**Chief Electoral Officer, Odisha**

OIPR-12113/13/0009/2425

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# leisure



## 'MY WHOLE LIFE, I WANTED TO BE 5'2", CURVACEOUS'

Academy award-winning star Nicole Kidman revealed that she was teased for being tall and that she wanted to be curvaceous as she hated her body, while growing up. The Oscar winner opened up about her insecurities in a new documentary series, *In Vogue: The 90s*, reports *people.com*.

## HALLE: VAN HUNT IS THE MAN I SHOULD HAVE MARRIED

Hollywood star Halle Berry has spoken up about her beau Van Hunt and said to *etonline.com* on *Never Let Go* that he is the man she should've married. The 58-year-old married thrice before being in a relationship with Hunt for over four years.



### FORTUNE FORECAST

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**ARIES**  
Carry the peace sign if you have to, because today, people will literally pull you into arguments. You could even be facing some kind of litigation or trouble with peace-keeping forces, warns Ganesh. Meditate, walk, or simply seek the company of friends and loved ones.

**TAURUS**  
Your business is going to thrive this day, says Ganesh. Your plans, projections, speculations and gambles are likely to pay off and give you good dividends. You will be admired and respected in the business world for your honesty and integrity.

**GEMINI**  
Today, you may decide to get a little more conscious about your health. Filled with positive drive, you may even plan to join a gymnasium or start taking a hard look at your calorie intake. Don't go overboard, though! You don't want to do it only today, and forget it tomorrow - plan and execute in a step-wise manner, so it doesn't get a bit too much.

**CANCER**  
Not a good day for you in terms of fortune and opportunities. You will constantly find yourself in unwanted tricky situations without any fault of yours. You, however, are likely to know what to do in such situations by now, for you have been in too many of those in the past.

**LEO**  
Working hard, or hardly working - there is a vast difference between the two. You would be wiser to be working hard today, especially if it is success that you desire, says Ganesh. Remember that there is no substitute for hard work, and the sooner you realise this, the better. So sweat it out today.

**VIRGO**  
You may relieve all the tension and pressure inside you today, a day which will be full of light and relaxing moments. Ganesh foretells a beneficial and progressive day for you. You will receive many invitations to social gatherings and parties.

**LIBRA**  
Letting things build up inside you is never a good idea. Learn from this as there is every possibility that today might turn out to be an aggravating and exasperating day for you. You may feel that way due to all the amassed emotions and resentments, so let it all go. It would be a good idea to take a break from the routine and bring in some freshness. Recharge yourself by indulging in some fun and frolic today, says Ganesh.

**SCORPIO**  
Ganesh predicts today will be a day full of focus and a clear thought process. The clarity of thought you have has been acquired over a period of time, says Ganesh, and that could make all the difference. A crisp application of thoughts to ideas and actions will bring much appreciation from bosses and peers.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
The winds of fortune will usher in your dreams and make them come true. Be careful not to go overboard with your foresightedness, lest they be marked delusions, warns Ganesh. You must realise that the only thing permanent is change, and hence, you must overcome any disappointment with strong will and determination.

**CAPRICORN**  
It may seem too far-fetched, but your boss will bank on your brilliance and unmatched abilities to get respite from the existing problems, says Ganesh. Moreover, much to the dismay of your rivals, you will have your way and gain popularity by winning the hearts of your clients.

**AQUARIUS**  
Today, you will iron out any trouble with ease. But you may choose to play martyr and shoulder a bit of blame. That's quite a lot to do for others, even if it is done out of compassion. You may think you are setting standards for others to follow, says Ganesh, but that may not be the case.

**PISCES**  
Needless rigidity only serves to imprison you within out-moded walls of faulty reasoning. Inculcating some flexibility will give you some much-needed wriggle room to manoeuvre things your way for good, says Ganesh.

## Sai calls herself thick-skinned

**Mumbai:** Saiee Manjrekar made her acting debut in *Dabangg 3* alongside Salman Khan, portraying the character of Rajjo. Despite the excitement around the film, it faced significant backlash due to the 37-year age gap between the leads—Saiee was 17, while Salman was 54 during filming. However, in a recent interview, Saiee revealed that the criticism did not impact her, largely due to her detachment from social media at the time.

In a conversation with Siddharth Kannan, Saiee reflected on her initial experience post-*Dabangg 3* and explained how being away from social media shielded her from the negative discussions. "I was oblivious to that discussion because that was the time I had just started, and I had no management, no PR, so I was unaware of all this. I was just happy to see myself on the big screen," she shared. She further elaborated that by the time she became active on Instagram six months after the film's release, the conversation around the age gap had already quieted down.

Saiee also discussed her ability to handle criticism. "I'm a very thick-skinned person; things don't affect me quickly. I've always been like that since childhood," she explained.

AGENCIES



## 'NO.1 HINDI MOVIE OF ALL TIME'

**Mumbai:** Maddock Films, one of the production companies of *Stree 2*, has confirmed that the film has become the 'number one Hindi film of all time' in India. Taking to X Wednesday, it shared a poster of the film and also penned a note. The film has surpassed the lifetime collections of Shah Rukh Khan's film *Jawan*.

The poster read, "Indian box office's no. 1 Hindi film of all time!" written on it. The caption read, "She is Stree and she has finally done it...India's best film No. 1 Hindi film of all time!!!" Thanks a lot to all fans for scripting this history with us."

## Stree 2 beats SRK's Jawan



The Shraddha-Rajkumar starrer has collected Rs 586 crore



at the Indian box office, as per trade analyst

Taran Adarsh.

As per *Sacnilk.com*, *Jawan*'s net collection in India, for all languages (Hindi, Tamil and Telugu) is Rs 640.25 crore. In Hindi, its lifetime collection in India is Rs 582.31 crore nett.

*Stree 2*, directed by Amar Kaushik, also has cameos by Varun Dhawan and Akshay Kumar. The first instalment, *Stree* (2018), was already a massive hit, setting high expectations for the sequel. However, *Stree 2* has managed to exceed those expectations, capturing the hearts of fans across the country.

AGENCIES

## Chitrangda's new emotion

**Mumbai:** Actress Chitrangda Singh has discovered a new emotion 'nexcited', which is a combination of nervous and excited. Chitrangda took to Instagram, where she shared a boomerang video of herself in monochrome. In the clip, the 48-year-old actress is seen sitting in a robe and smiling at the camera.

For the caption, she wrote: "Nervous + excited = NEXCITED!!!"

However, the actress did not share what she is nervous and excited for. She used the queen of pop Madonna's song True Blue as the background score for the boomerang clip.

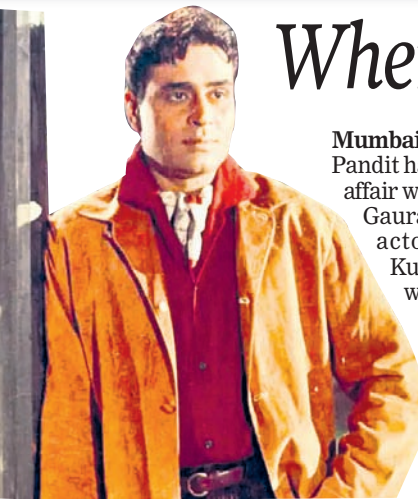
It was recently announced that Chitrangda has joined the cast of *Housefull 5* starring Akshay Kumar.

Chitrangda will be seen sharing screen space with Akshay once again after *Desi Boyz* and *Khel Khel Mein*. She had heaped praise on the star and called him a 'true master of comedy.' "Akshay is incredibly talented and a true master of comedy. We've known each other for a long time, and working with him is always a pleasure," the actress told this agency.

The actress was last seen in *Gaslight* in 2023. The film, which is a mystery-thriller; is directed by Pavan Kirpalani. It also stars Vikrant Massey and Sara Ali Khan. IANS



## When Rajendra Kumar played anti-cupid in son's love story



**Mumbai:** Actress-singer Vijayta Pandit has opened up about her affair with former actor Kumar Gaurav, and shared that the actor's father, Rajendra Kumar was the one who was against their union.

Vijayta Pandit recently appeared on a chat with *Lehren*, and shared how her romance with Kumar Gaurav was cut short on the insistence of

Rajendra Kumar, who cast her in the movie *Love Story*.

She said, "He (Kumar Gaurav) was my first love. He used to be a very charming boy. Eventually, we fell in love. Rajendra Kumar guessed that we were in love, and he was against it. He told him, 'You are my prince, and I'll get you married to a princess, someone who belongs to an affluent family.'"

She also recollected her mother telling Kumar Gaurav, "Bolo

tum isse shaadi karoge."

In *Love Story*, she and Kumar Gaurav played star-crossed lovers, and they also developed a relationship off-screen. After the film became a hit, she turned down film offers wanting to be with Gaurav. But the relationship ended due to family tensions.

She went back to films and had another hit *Mohabbat*.

She was also briefly married to film director Sameer Malkan.

Kumar Gaurav went on to marry Namrata Dutt, the daughter of Sunil Dutt and actress Nargis.

Rajendra Kumar, who worked with Sunil Dutt and

Nargis in *Mother India* was a good friend of Sunil Dutt, and wanted his son to marry a girl who came from a well-known family.

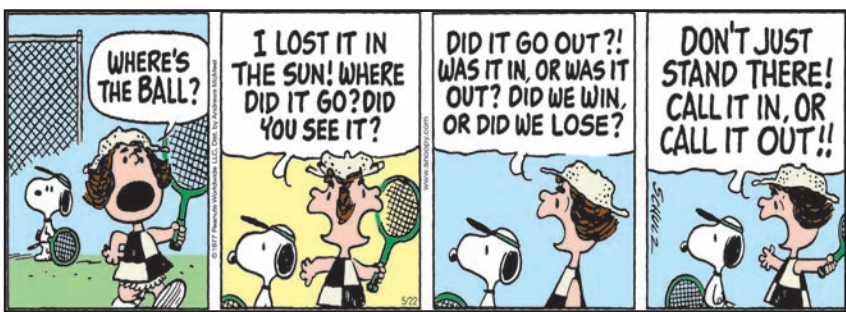
Vijayta married music composer Aadesh Shrivastava, who passed away in 2015.

Vijayta is the sister of music composer duo Jatin-Lalit, who are known for their work in *Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge*, *Jo Jeeta Wohi Sikander* and others.

AGENCIES

### FUN post

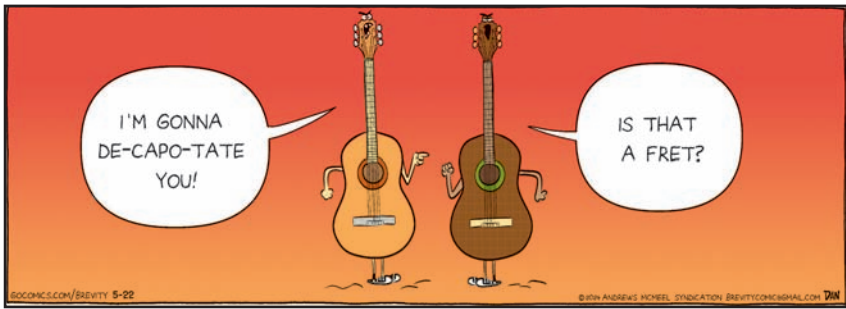
#### PEANUTS



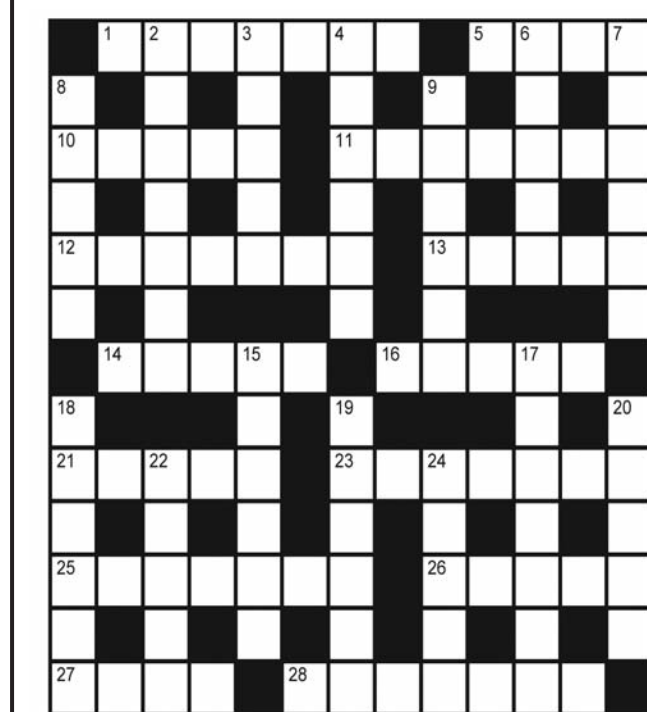
#### CALVIN AND HOBBS



#### BREVITY



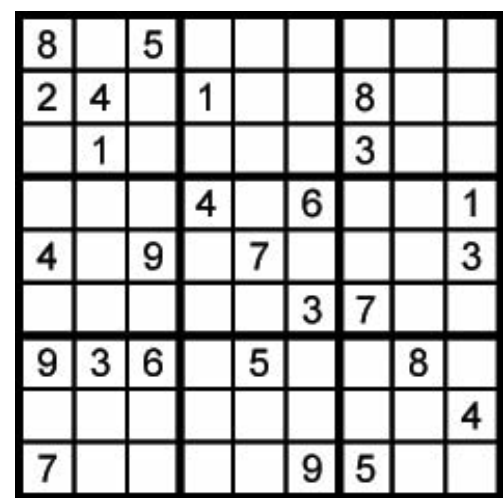
#### CROSSWORD



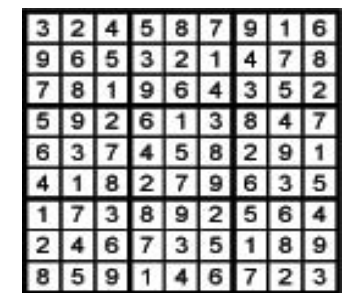
- Across**
- 1 Menacing
  - 5 "Beowulf," for one
  - 10 Most trifling
  - 11 Gambled
  - 12 In pieces
  - 13 Succeed
  - 14 Spent
  - 16 Festoon
  - 21 Small three-masted vessel
  - 23 Overshadow
  - 25 Picture house
  - 26 Damp
  - 27 Secret message
  - 28 Livingstone's finder
  - 7 Club
  - 8 Cantina pots
  - 9 Concurred
  - 15 Render verbally
  - 17 Tortoise, e.g.
  - 18 Some holiday locales
  - 19 Concrete
  - 20 Trifling
  - 22 Naan, e.g.
  - 24 Fish topper
- Down**
- 2 Evaluate
  - 3 Observed
  - 4 Onward's pal
  - 6 Harbours

#### 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





# 100 DAYS OF BJP GOVT

In a significant turn of events, the BJP stormed to power in last Assembly polls dethroning the BJD which was in the office for the last 24 years. As the Mohan Charan Majhi-led government completes 100 days today, **OrissaPOST** takes a close look at some of its landmark achievements

**All 4 gates of Srimandir reopened**

Just a few hours after taking oath, state's BJP government in its first Cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi June 12 approved the proposal to reopen all four gates of Srimandir in Puri. Accordingly, the four gates of the shrine were reopened in the presence of the CM, Deputy CMs, Cabinet ministers, MLAs and Puri MP Sambit Patra the next morning. The government, in line with the Cabinet decision, also created a corpus fund of Rs 500 crore for conservation, maintenance and management of the 12th century shrine.

Stating that reopening all the gates of the temple was one of the promises in the BJP's election manifesto, the CM said that devotees were facing problems due to closure of the gates by the previous administration since the Covid-19 pandemic. The devotees could enter through only one gate and there were demands that all gates be opened.

**Subhadra Yojana**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched Odisha's government's flagship women empowerment scheme – Subhadra Yojana, September 17. After the launch, the PM initiated the fund transfer to more than 10 lakh women.

The scheme will cover over one crore beneficiaries. Under it, each eligible woman is entitled to receive a total sum of Rs 50,000 over a span of five years, starting 2024-25 fiscal. The financial aid will be disbursed in annual instalments of Rs 10,000, delivered in two equal parts directly into their Aadhaar-linked bank accounts.

**CM-Kisan Yojana**

The Chief Minister launched the CM-Kisan Yojana from Sambalpur on the occasion of Nuakhai, the state's major agrarian festival, September 8. Under the scheme, eligible farmers will receive Rs 4,000 in two instalments per annum. The first instalment was disbursed on Nuakhai, and the rest will be credited to the beneficiaries' accounts on Akshaya Tritiya. Around 46 lakh farmers are likely to benefit from the scheme.

On the occasion of Nuakhai, around Rs 925 crore was credited to the accounts of the farmers. Landless farmers will also benefit from the scheme. The landless farmers are entitled to Rs 12,500. Launching the scheme at the GM University campus in Sambalpur, the CM said, "A special drive will be launched across the state, and it will continue for two months."



**CM revives grievance cell**

The CM revived the public grievance hearing July 1 around 16 years after its discontinuation. Many people, including the differently-abled, turned up to meet the CM and lodge their

grievances. Majhi said, "The first priority of the state government is to listen to the people's grievances and resolve them. For this, from the grassroots to the district and state levels, we are trying to revive the system of hearing

the public grievances and how the people benefit from it."

He added, "For the last few years during the last regime, there was an iron wall between the people and the administration. Today, we dismantled the iron wall. The Chief Minister's Grievance Cell started again. Sometimes people go to different forums but they fail to get their issues addressed. Many people who fail to get justice now can hope to get justice."

**Paddy MSP up**

In what came as a good news for farmers, the state government June 20 decided to procure paddy from farmers at Rs 3,100 per quintal from this Kharif season. "Rs 800 per quintal to be paid for paddy over and above the minimum support price (MSP) under Samrudha Krushak Yojana. The move aimed at benefitting over 20 lakh farmers," the state government said. The Centre had declared Rs 2,300 as MSP for paddy for this year.

**Secretariat access to scribes**

On its first day in office, the BJP government opened the doors of Lok Seva Bhawan, the heart of the state's administration, to the media. For nearly four years, the Secretariat had been off limits to journalists, as the previous

government had barred their access during the Covid-19 pandemic. Even after the pandemic subsided, the former administration did not revoke the entry ban, despite calls for change from Opposition leaders and journalist associations. The BJP had highlighted this issue during their poll campaign, promising to end this undemocratic practice if elected.

**Ratna Bhandar reopened after 46 yrs**

Ratna Bhandar, the revered treasury at the 12th-century Srimandir in Puri, was reopened July 14 after 46 years for an inventory of valuables and the repair of its structure. The reopening of the Ratna Bhandar was a major political issue during the last Assembly elections. The treasury was last opened in 1978, and at that time, it took 70 days to prepare the inventory of the valuables, which have been donated to the temple by devotees over centuries. An attempt was made in 2018 as well to reopen the Ratna Bhandar on the direction of the Orissa High Court but the original keys could not be found, and eventually, the plan was abandoned. The government has decided to prepare a digital catalogue of the valuables in the Ratna Bhandar that will have details such as their weight.



## Solar Power lights the way to Odisha's bright future



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## Achieving Peace

Russian President Vladimir Putin denies Ukraine's right to sovereignty, having invaded it twice since 2014. Thankfully, his efforts to subjugate the country have been thwarted by the courage of the Ukrainian people.

After two and a half years of fiercely defending their homeland, it has become abundantly clear that Ukrainians will never submit to Russian tyranny. But despite their resilience, Putin's brutal war of aggression continues. If Ukraine's allies fail to show the necessary resolve, the conflict could drag on for years, undermining European stability.

Moreover, an increasingly militaristic Russia threatens not only Ukraine but the entire world, with potentially catastrophic consequences. Russia's war has already sent shockwaves around the world, driving up energy and food prices and jeopardizing nuclear safety. By violating fundamental principles of international law, Russia has destabilised the global order.

To promote peace, Ukraine's allies must make Putin understand that he cannot dictate the terms of how the war will end. They can do this by building global support for a peace agreement rooted in the fundamental principles of international law, strengthening Ukraine's position on the battlefield, providing long-term security guarantees, and outlining a clear path to NATO accession.

While Putin aims to prolong the war, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy is actively pursuing a sustainable peace. This summer, he gathered representatives from more than 90 countries in Switzerland to rally support for his ten-point peace formula, which calls for strengthening nuclear safety and addressing the conflict's environmental repercussions, in addition to full Russian withdrawal.

Global pressure will be critical to reaching an agreement, but enduring peace also requires strong security guarantees. Given that Russia has repeatedly shown its disregard for international law and basic human rights by violating treaties and committing widespread war crimes, peace cannot rest on Putin's promises alone. The outcome of the war will depend on Ukraine's ability to defend itself.

The immediate priority is to improve Ukraine's position on the battlefield. As Russian missiles and drones continue to kill civilians across the country, with most attacks launched from Russian territory, Ukraine has every right to deploy long-range weapons to hit these targets and enter Russia to prevent further assaults. Limiting its ability to do so is essentially asking it to fight with one arm tied behind its back. Ukrainian forces have consistently shown they can use Western-supplied weapons effectively and responsibly. It is time for allies to lift any remaining restrictions on the types of weapons delivered and how they can be used.

But along with immediate support, Ukraine's allies must commit to providing it with military equipment and financial resources for as long as needed. Ukraine has already received long-term security guarantees from more than 30 countries as part of the Kyiv Security Compact, which we co-authored. Now is the time to prove that these guarantees have teeth.

In the coming months, our efforts will focus on ensuring that the guarantees deliver on their promise. This involves monitoring their implementation, assessing evolving threats, and highlighting the ways Ukraine's security needs align with Europe's broader defense strategy.

Preventing Putin from winning the peace will require more than security guarantees. Ukraine's allies should expand their support by taking steps like training Ukrainian forces within the country and deploying civilian contractors or specialised military teams to repair damaged equipment on-site. Neighbouring allies could establish an extended air-defense shield over Western Ukraine to intercept incoming Russian missiles and drones, thereby saving civilian lives and enabling Ukraine to redeploy its air-defense systems to the front lines.

Each of these steps will undoubtedly strengthen Ukraine's position in any future negotiations. But ultimately, the only way to ensure long-term peace and security in Europe is to bring Ukraine into NATO. Leaving Ukraine in the grey zone between Russia and the Alliance would only invite more instability, aggression, and violence. NATO leaders must act decisively and offer Ukraine a path to membership. While this does not mean that Ukraine will join overnight, such a commitment would send a strong message to Putin that his war will not prevent its eventual accession.

Faced with Putin's heavily militarised and increasingly revanchist Russia, Ukraine and its allies must embrace the ancient Roman maxim *si vis pacem, para bellum* ("If you want peace, prepare for war"). Over the past two and a half years, the Ukrainian people have demonstrated an unwavering determination to defend their freedom. But to achieve lasting peace, the international community must muster the courage and strength to support and maintain it.

**Anders Fogh Rasmussen, a former NATO secretary-general (2009-14) and former Prime Minister of Denmark, is Founder of the Alliance of Democracies Foundation. Andriy Yermak is Head of the Office of the President of Ukraine.**

PROJECT SYNDICATE



Anders Fogh Rasmussen & Andriy Yermak

To promote peace, Ukraine's allies must make Putin understand that he cannot dictate the terms of how the war will end

# TAXING LIFE'S UNCERTAINTIES

FOCUS GST ON INSURANCE

The 54th GST Council has reached a broad consensus to set up a group of ministers chaired by Deputy Chief Minister of Bihar Samrat Choudhary to examine and review the present tax structure of GST on life and medical insurance. The specific modalities will be decided in the next council meeting in November 2024. The Terms of Reference of the panel also include suggesting tax rate of health/medical insurance and life insurance.

Previously, life insurance premiums were subject to a 15% service tax, which included 14% towards Basic Service Tax, 0.5% towards Swachh Bharat Cess, and 0.5% towards Krishi Kalyan Cess. Before GST implementation, it was propagated that this will be reduced to 12%, but this has instead increased to 18%. The transition from 15% service tax to the fixed 18% GST has directly impacted policyholders by raising their premium payments.

The GST rate for term insurance plans, ULIPs, and health insurance policies is 18%, while for traditional life insurance policies, also known as endowment plans, is 4.5% in first year premiums and 2.25% in subsequent years. Further, insurance becomes costlier when maturity value of life insurance policies is taxed, though subject to certain condition.

To make insurance affordable and raise insurance penetration and density, the All India Insurance Employees' Association of LIC met more than 400 MPs/Union Ministers across the country and urged them to raise their voice to eliminate GST on insurance premiums.

What is plausibly different this time around is that the government's own minister has echoed this sentiment. Union Minister Nitin Gadkari has



While one saves for cash requirements and invests for wealth accumulation, insurance is bought to get decoupled from uncertainties of life. Tax on the uncertainties of life is a social evil

avowed that GST levy on life insurance premium is tantamount to taxing the uncertainties of life. He also pointed to the high GST rates on insurance "detracting growth in the segment," and is a major impediment to India's vision of "Insurance for all by 2047." Similarly, the INDIA bloc staged a protest on Parliament premises on 6 August demanding a rollback of GST on health and life insurance premiums. It must be noted that a reconsideration of GST levies on insurance had come up at least three times under the Council's aegis, starting a year and a half since GST's July 2017 launch, but the status quo was preferred each time.

During the 37th meeting of the Council, the issue of GST on insurance resurfaced. A detailed proposal was presented, receiving backing from the Financial Services Department and IRDAL. The proposal put forth substantial recommen-

dations, including lowering the GST rate on health insurance, term life insurance, and motor third-party insurance premiums from 18% to 5%. Moreover, the proposal advocated for exemption of GST on annuity purchases made with accumulated pension funds.

The proposal to lower GST on insurance premiums has met with resistance from several states, which fear a significant loss of revenue, particularly from medical insurance. Many states fear that cutting the tax could result in a significant drop in revenue, a concern made even more pressing by the fact that they no longer have the cushion of compensation from the Centre, which was previously offered when GST was introduced.

The Centre should not stop GST cess compensation on select products which are supposed to end by March 2026 due to increasing GST collection

from Rs 90,000 crore in 2017 to around Rs 2 lakh crore now. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman indicated that the surplus from the compensation cess could reach roughly Rs 40,000 crore and expected a substantial surplus of around Rs 70,000 crore, even after settling loans taken out on behalf of states during the pandemic.

Another way of generating resources is to curb GST evasion. The GST evasion detected by the Directorate General of GST Intelligence has increased to Rs 2,01,931 crore in 2023-24 compared to Rs 1,01,354 crore last fiscal. Further when Centre is talking of states' probable loss to elimination of GST on insurance premium, it does not tell when states suffered due to corporate tax cut. Revenue lost was Rs 1.5 lakh crore in 2019-20 and loss is increasing with each passing year, affecting states' share.

Over 40 crore people in the country lack any financial cover for healthcare, according to a Niti Aayog report. Indians are plagued by financial distress and household indebtedness. India's health sector is in a decrepit condition. The country's public health expenditure as a percentage of GDP is one of the lowest in the world. It is around 1.35% of GDP as compared to the world average of 6%.

Insurance is not just a savings product like bank deposit, provident fund, share or debenture, it involves risk transfers, ensures sharing of the losses of a few by many. It is a cooperative endeavor that should not be taxed. While one saves for cash requirements and invests for wealth accumulation, insurance is bought to get decoupled from uncertainties of life. Tax on the uncertainties of life is a social evil.

The writer is an Odisha-based columnist and economist.

SPECTRUM ENVIRONMENT

## Cycling towards a sustainable future

Air pollution is a significant environmental threat that affects public health and economic growth worldwide. In India, where this issue is particularly acute, solutions like promoting cycling and walking are being explored to combat its harmful effects.

India has already joined the Climate & Clean Air Coalition (CCAC), underscoring its commitment to reducing air pollution and positioning itself as a global leader in air quality efforts. The dangers of air pollution are well-documented. The WHO attributes nearly one-third of deaths from stroke, chronic respiratory diseases, and lung cancer to polluted air. It also causes around 25% of heart attacks. Vulnerable populations suffer the most from these impacts, making air pollution not only a health crisis but also an economic challenge. Strained healthcare systems and reduced productivity add to the burden.

India's National Clean Air Programme (NCAP), launched in 2019, aims to reduce particulate matter levels by 20-30% by 2024. The initiative, along with programmes like Swachh Bharat and the Smart City Mission, has contributed to improved air quality in some cities. However, many challenges remain, especially in states like Odisha, where sev-

eral cities are designated as "Non-Attainment Cities" due to their failure to meet national air quality standards. Despite these obstacles, Odisha has the opportunity to promote sustainable urban mobility through cycling, which could reduce air pollution, traffic congestion, and carbon emissions.

Odisha's government is in a strong position to lead cycling initiatives by introducing policies and legislation at the regional and local levels. Drawing inspiration from countries like the Netherlands and Denmark, where cycling is a way of life, Odisha can integrate cycling into broader policies related to land use, health, and the environment. However, several barriers must be addressed, such as safety concerns, the perception of cycling as a low-status mode of transport, and issues related to theft and weather conditions. With coordinated efforts involving local authorities, civil society, and the private sector, Odisha can overcome these obstacles and make cycling a mainstream choice.

Investing in cycling infrastructure is essential for creating a safe and attractive environment for cyclists. Odisha can look to international best practices, where dedicated cycling

lanes, bike-sharing programmes, and traffic-calming measures have reshaped urban mobility. Ensuring cyclist safety by separating bike lanes from roads, reducing vehicle speeds, and improving signage and lighting will further encourage the shift to cycling.

Public awareness campaigns are also crucial in changing societal attitudes toward cycling. Events like the Konark International Cyclothon and the "Let's Pedal" initiative can help build a cycling culture. Further efforts, such as introducing school-level education on the benefits of cycling for both health and the environment, can encourage more people to adopt cycling as a regular mode of transport.

Integrating cycling with public transportation systems will make it a more convenient option for shorter trips. Building secure bicycle parking at railway stations and allowing bicycles on public transport will facilitate seamless multimodal journeys, making cycling more practical for daily commuting.

By incorporating cycling into its broader Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) strategy, the state could set an example for the rest of the country. Just as Odisha has revived hockey in India through gov-

ernment support, it can inspire a national movement for cycling that transforms urban environments across India.

The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways could support this shift by amending policies to include resilient infrastructure that encourages cycling and walking. This would align with national goals for low-carbon mobility, as outlined in India's National Urban Transport Policy of 2006, which emphasises prioritising people over vehicles.

By fostering a cycling culture, the state can ensure that its residents enjoy cleaner air, quieter neighbourhoods, and a higher quality of life. As the world grapples with the twin challenges of climate change and air pollution, Odisha's push for cycling could be a model for others to follow.

As Martin Luther King III said, "No matter who we are or where we come from, we're all entitled to the basic human rights of clean air to breathe, clean water to drink, and healthy land to call home."

The writer is a Senior Officer at the Parliament of India who advocates for integrating cycling into daily life as a sustainable and healthy lifestyle choice.



Bhagirathi Jena

INTEGRATING CYCLING WITH PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS WILL MAKE IT A MORE CONVENIENT OPTION FOR SHORTER TRIPS

WISDOM CORNER

It is easy to hate and it is difficult to love. This is how the whole scheme of things works. All good things are difficult to achieve; and bad things are very easy to get.

CONFUCIUS

Between stimulus and response there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom.

VIKTOR E. FRANKL

Most of the important things in the world have been accomplished by people who have kept on trying when there seemed to be no hope at all.

DALE CARNEGIE

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

1783: The Montgolfier brothers sent aloft a balloon with a rooster, a duck, and a sheep aboard, rapidly advancing French aeronautics.

1796: George Washington's Farewell Address published. In his Farewell Address, printed in a Philadelphia newspaper on this day in 1796, George Washington, the first U.S. president, implored his country to maintain neutrality and avoid entangling alliances with Europe.

1944: The Moscow Armistice ends the Continuation War. The peace treaty was signed between the Soviet Union, United Kingdom, and Finland. It put an end to the conflict between the USSR and Finland between 1941 and 1944.

1955: President Juan Perón of Argentina was overthrown and fled to Paraguay after an army-navy revolt led by democratically inspired officers.

Clever Kejriwal

Sir, The selection of Atishi Marlena Singh as Delhi's new chief minister does not come as a surprise. In fact, any name as chief minister would not have turned heads because it is amply evident that the man holding all the aces is still Arvind Kejriwal. Since the Delhi Assembly elections are only a few months away, Kejriwal aims to divert the excise policy corruption issue by pitch-forking a party leader, with no real mass base, as the executive head of the state. However, Atishi's comparatively clean image, administrative experience and fighting spirit should come in handy for the AAP supreme who is sure to go the whole hog to retain power for the party in Delhi. That way, Kejriwal can intensely focus on the election campaign with little to answer on a "corrupt chief minister" holding on to his chair.

Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA

Nightmarish process

Sir, Income Tax refund is a nightmarish process. There was a time when the amount used to be refunded to taxpayers when excess payment of tax was made without request from taxpayers. Of course, even now some cases of tax refund without request can be found. But instances of refunds not given for many years despite huge correspondence with the department have become common. Excess tax paid used to be refunded within a very reasonable time. Taxpayers never felt the burden of approaching the Income Tax office for refund. This was in practice when the ITR were filed manually. The online submission of ITR has made the refund of the amount more complicated. Rectification requests are not yielding the desired results. Online ITR has been paving for chartered accountants to make easy money. Delhi High Court has given a land-mark judgment wherein it has been held that discrepancy in Form 26AS is not the excuse for denial of tax refund. The Court has observed that there is provision for condoning the delay for filing of ITR under Section 119. The court has also ruled that refund and review is in line with the constitutional imperatives of Article 265. Tax authorities cannot take undue advantage of honest mistakes by taxpayers.

KV Seetharamaiah, BANGALORE

## 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

Orissa POST

B-15, Rasulgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010



# Med colleges in all districts soon: CM

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 18:** Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Wednesday said his government is committed to opening a medical college in each of the districts and filling up vacant posts of doctors on a priority basis. Addressing the annual conference of Odisha Medical Service Association (OMSA) in Balasore, Majhi called upon the doctors to work with dedication and upkeep the faith of people in the medical fraternity. While accusing the previous BJD government of neglecting the health sector, the Chief

Minister said that of the 15,774 sanctioned posts of doctors, as many as 5,765 have remained vacant for a long time. He said that the previous government had appointed 443 doctors on ad hoc and contractual basis. "Our government's priority is to fill up all the vacant posts soon and upgrade medical services in the state. Apart from doctors, there is also a big role of nurses in providing treatment to the people," the Chief Minister said. "We will establish a medical college in each district soon," he said. The CM said his govern-



ment has increased the Health department's allocation by 32 per cent in the 2024-25 fiscal.

"The government is committed to providing quality healthcare to all. We are all set to im-

plement Ayushman Bharat scheme, the benefits of which were denied to the people of Odisha due to politics," he said. Majhi claimed that the previous BJD government had not implemented the Ayushman Bharat scheme fearing that Prime Minister Narendra Modi would get credit for it. On demands of the OMSA, the Chief Minister said that doctors' incentives and housing problems will be sorted out soon. He also assured the doctors of ensuring a safe environment where they can work without fear.

# Govt comes up with new policy for safety of docs in medical institutions



File photo of protests by the medics at AIIMS-Bhubaneswar

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 18:** Following the Kolkata rape-murder incident, the state government Wednesday formulated a policy to ensure a safe workplace environment for doctors, students and all medical personnel in health-care facilities and health education institutions. According to a notification issued by the state Health and Family Welfare department, any incident of violence against medical students should be promptly investigated by the college management and an FIR should be lodged with the police within six hours by the head of the institution.

The superintendent of police (SP) of the district concerned has to take immediate and appropriate action as per law against the miscreants, it said. The detailed action taken report of such an incident of violence should invariably be sent to the National Medical Commission (NMC) within 48 hours of the incident, it said. The healthcare institutions have been asked to deploy security guards in all OPDs and outside wards 24/7. As far as possible, both male and female security guards must be posted. The healthcare institutions will provide ID cards and dress codes to all employees, wherever applicable. Visitors pass system would be made mandatory for indoor patients. Only two entry passes are to be issued per patient, for attending the patient during official visiting hours and the attendants entering the ward should be frisked by the internal security guards to check for possession of any dangerous or objectionable items, the notification said. The government asked the head of the institutions to install CCTV cameras at strategic locations in the hospitals for monitoring the activities in the hospital. CCTVs should be installed outside all hostels' main gates, roads, roundabouts, stairwells, other strategic points on campus and on each floor of the hostels, it said. Besides, a control room will be set up in each institution for security personnel to keep 24/7 watch on CCTV footage, which must have at least three months of backup. The policy also said that a police outpost may be established within the premises of all government medical colleges and hospitals, with posting of at least one female police staff on duty at all times.

# ASI begins Ratna Bhandar inspection

**Puri, Sept 18:** Experts and scientists of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) carried out a preliminary inspection of Srimandir Ratna Bhandar (treasury) here, Wednesday. The team, including 17 technical members, also conducted a laser scanning of the structure, they said. The temple authorities had earlier urged the ASI to initiate scanning and geophysical investigation of the Ratna Bhandar before undertaking its repair and renovation work. The exercise took place from 2 pm to 5 pm. The ASI team, led by its ADG Janhwi Sharma, also comprises experts from the Hyderabad-based CSIR-National Geophysical Research Institute (CSIR-NGRI). "Today, we conducted laser scanning. The NGRI team will visit again and conduct the ground-penetrating survey. This will help in conservation and repair work of the Ratna Bhandar," Sharma said. S.J.T.A chief administrator Arabinda Padhee told reporters that the first day of the inspection work was over. The team conducted a detailed assessment using laser scanners for docu-

## Konark: Sand removal progress inspected

**A**six-member team of ASI, led by its ADG Janhwi Sharma, inspected the progress made in removing sand from the Jagamohan of Sun Temple at Konark, Wednesday. The structure was filled with sand in 1903 and sealed by the then British administration to protect it from collapsing, according to official records. "Konark Sun Temple is a world heritage site, and we conduct inspections from time to time. It was a regular inspection today," Sharma said. Though the structure remained intact, the ASI during one such inspection had found that sand filling had reduced, leaving a vacuum at the top. An endoscopy study carried out by CBRI found the sand filling settled by around 12.5-ft and some stones had dislodged. The ASI then engaged a company, which after a brief pause, resumed the work in August 2023 with a target to complete it in three years.

mentation and other information required for taking up the repair work, Padhee said. He said the ground penetrating radar (GPR) survey will be done at a later date. "After getting reports from ASI, S.J.T.A will place it before the government. The repair work will begin only after completion of the inspection," he said.

# Flood situation in Balasore grim; over 11,000 evacuated

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 18:** The state government Wednesday expedited rescue and relief operation in Balasore district as the flood situation continued to remain grim, prompting the administration to evacuate over 11,000 people to safety. Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, who undertook an aerial survey of the flood-affected areas in the district, directed the authorities concerned to ensure the rescue of people living in villages marooned due to the flood in Subarnarekha River following deep depression-induced heavy rain in northern Odisha and upper catchment areas of the river.

After taking an aerial survey of worst-affected Baliaipal, Jaleswar and Bhogral blocks, the chief minister told reporters, "One team of NDRF, three teams of ODRAF and eight teams of fire service personnel have been deployed in the rescue and relief operations in the affected areas." He also asked the district administration to speed up the rescue and relief efforts, as people are still marooned in several villages.



At least six blocks and about 8,000-hectare of agricultural field have been affected in the flood. One NDRF, three ODRAF and eight fire services teams have been deployed.

The overflowing Subarnarekha, Budhabalang and Jalaka rivers led to flooding in the district following heavy rainfall in the wake of a deep depression over Bay of Bengal. "There has been no report of any human casualty thus far," he said. Majhi said at least six blocks and about 8,000 hectares of agricultural field have been affected by the flood. Stating that the Odisha gov-

ernment is taking steps to control flooding in Balasore district, Majhi asked the engineer-in-chief (EIC) of the Water Resources Department to prepare a roadmap for a permanent solution. Meanwhile, sources in the Water Resources Department said that Subarnarekha was flowing above the danger mark at Rajhat. "The state government has opened 51 free kitchens and the people evacuated have been provided with cooked food," an official said. Similarly, 1,603 people were evacuated in neighbouring Mayurbhanj district as floodwater entered 101 villages. Low-intensity flooding was also reported in Keonjhar and Sundargarh districts, the official said.

## RSC holds STEM exhibition to mark 36th anniv day

**Bhubaneswar:** As part of its week-long celebrations to mark the 36th anniversary day, Regional Science Centre (RSC), Bhubaneswar organised a Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) exhibition here Wednesday. Superintendent of Odisha State Museum Bhagyalipi Malla, the chief guest of the event, interacted with students who showcased their 3D models on various issues including science and technology related challenges with problem-solving approach. Expressing her delight to see the positive energy in the students, Malla encouraged them to continue their pursuit. A large number of students from all over the state are participating in the events aimed at realising the national goal of inclusive 'science education for all' through non-formal mode. The institute has planned a host of activities like hands on science workshop, interactive lecture, science quiz contest and poster and slogan contest among others till September 23. Institute project coordinator Kapil Jain said, "I am hopeful that the institution will continue to expand science and technology based learning ecosystem with an inclusive approach to reach out to every corner of the society."

# SOA's 32 researchers in Stanford Univ's top 2% list

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 18:** As many as 32 researchers of Siksha 'O' Anusandhan (SOA) Deemed to be University here have been named in the list of world's top two per cent scientists for 2024 by the prestigious Stanford University of USA. The university had 22 of its scientists in Stanford's 2023 list of which 20 have found place in the latest list. The SOA list includes 14 researchers drawn from different disciplines of engineering who are working in the Institute of Technical Education and Research (ITER), SOA's faculty of engineering and technology, while 11 have been picked from six of the 19 research centers set up by the university. Five of the scientists are from



the Centre for Nano Sciences and Nano Technology (CNSNT) while two are from the Bio-fuels and Bio-processing Research Centre. One researcher each has been chosen from the Center for Industrial Biotechnology Research (CIBR), Multi-Disciplinary Research Cell (MDRC), Centre for Internet of Things (CIOT) and Center of Excellence in Theoretical and Mathematical Sciences (CETMS). Among the researchers named in the list are Pradipta Kumar

# Propack Odisha, Odisha Plast to be held in City

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 18:** The Odisha Assembly of Small and Medium Enterprises (OASME), in collaboration with Futorex, will organise international expos 'Propack Odisha-2024' and 'Odisha Plast-2024' from November 21 to 24, the association said Wednesday. The event will be jointly supported by Ministry of MSME, Government of India and state MSME department. The announcement in this regard was made here in the presence of OASME secretary general Satwik Swain, Futorex director Namit Gupta and Mechatronics Machinery & Tools India managing director SS Chauhan. The third edition of the four-day long expos will focus on plastics, printing, packaging, converting, and food processing industries. "Odisha Plast and Odisha Propack is a technology-oriented



and innovation-driven trade fair that provides a launch pad for businesses to showcase their products, discover innovations, and network with new distributors, retailers, and exporters," said Swain. He added that it will be one of the largest events in eastern India providing significant networking opportunities for businesses. Gupta said, "We are expecting more than 250 participants from Odisha, India, and globally renowned companies to showcase their innovations." "The platform will showcase new business and networking opportunities for MSMEs, helping create markets and business channels for exhibitors and visitors alike," Chauhan said.

# Sri Sri University hosts hackathon

**Cuttack, Sept 18:** Students from diverse fields such as CSDC, AIML and Data Science (DS) participated in a hackathon organised by Sri Sri University here Wednesday. The event started with an opening ceremony, where university officials and industry experts encouraged students to think outside the box and embrace the spirit of innovation. Teams were tasked with presenting their 'problem statements' across a range of critical categories, including education, sustainability and technology. The participants demonstrated determination and creativity as they worked tirelessly to refine their ideas and develop solutions. A panel of judges including Gopinath Palai, Deepak Sahu, Gyan Ranjan Panigrahi and Suvendu Nayak evaluated the efforts of various teams participated in the event based on their creativity, functionality, potential impact and overall execution. The coordinator and SPOC of SIH-2024 Satyajit Pattnaik played a pivotal role in ensuring the smooth execution of the event. Both Pattnaik and Pradipta Mishra guided students throughout the hackathon, helping them identify impactful problem areas for their innovative solutions.

## CLASSIFIED AFFIDAVIT

By the virtue of an affidavit dated 18.09.24 before the Court of Executive Magistrate, BBSR, I Monalisha Mohanty residing at LIG 1/6, Arya Vihar, Sailashree Vihar, BBSR declare that Monalisha Padhihari & Monalisha Mohanty is one & same person.

# Workshop on new pension system for ULB employees

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 18:** A two-day workshop on the implementation of the new pension system (NPS) for the urban local body (ULB) employees was organised at the conference hall of State Urban Development Agency (SUDA) here Wednesday. Accountants from 40 ULBs including five municipal corporations and 35 municipalities across the state participated in the event

which was inaugurated by Municipal Administration director Debasis Singh. Speaking on the occasion, Singh emphasised the importance of NPS in ensuring a sustainable and transparent pension mechanism for ULB employees. He urged participants to leverage the training to address any challenges in NPS implementation and to ensure seamless coordination with the Directorate



of Treasuries and Inspection (DTI). Financial Advisor Sikha Biswal spoke on the key aspects of the NPS, focusing on the critical role of ULB accountants in managing employee contributions and ensuring proper fund

management. SUDA project director Rabindra Kumar Sahu underscored the importance of capacity building in ULBs for the smooth operation of the NPS. "Proper training would lead to better financial management and accountability, which is crucial for the success of the pension system," he said. DTI joint director Nishikanta Mishra held a detailed technical session on the operational

aspects of NPS. The workshop also featured interactive Q&A sessions for participants seeking clarification on practical challenges faced during the NPS implementation. The workshop marked an important milestone in strengthening the financial management capabilities of ULBs, aligning with the state's broader goal of ensuring efficient governance and welfare of municipal employees.

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# VIKSIT ODISHA @2036

## New Initiatives, New Horizons

“Ours is a People's Government committed to realisation of the aspirations of 4.5 crore people of Odisha and the vision of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi for ‘Viksit Bharat’ @ 2047. We aspire to be a 1.5 trillion USD economy by 2047. The state will scale new heights of development by 2036 when we celebrate 100 years of State formation. Odisha's all-round development will contribute immensely to achieve the goal of ‘Poorvodaya’ envisioned by our Prime Minister.”

Chief Minister Shri Mohan Charan Majhi

## THE JOURNEY OF 100 DAYS

### Finance and Economy

- Budgetary outlay of **Rs 2.65 Lakh Crore** in FY 2024-25 to accelerate economic growth, ensure social justice and empower 'Narishakti' and 'Annadata'
- Viksit Odisha@2036 for Viksit Bharat@2047:** Odisha teams up with NITI Aayog to formulate vision document
- Aspire to be a **1.5 trillion US Dollar economy**

### Odia Asmita

- Corpus of **Rs 200 Crore** for promotion of Odia art, literature, culture and heritage
- 'Heritage Development Scheme' to re-develop century old schools

### Janajati Vikas

- Financial incentive of **Rs 5,000** per student under 'Madho Singh Haath Kharcha Yojana' to reduce dropout among ST students at high school and higher secondary level
- Habitat Rights** granted to six **Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs)**, Juangia in Jajpur and Kendujhar Districts, Chuktia Bhunjia in Nuapada, Saora in Gajapati, and Mankidia and Hill Kharia PVTGs in Mayurbhanj.
- 15 new Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS) & 10 new Higher Secondary Schools made functional from current academic year
- For the PVTGs, **43 Van Dhan Vikash Kendras (VDVK)** and **61 Multi-Purpose Centres** coming up under PM-JANMAN
- PM JANMAN:** All-weather connectivity for **73 unconnected** PVTG habitations
- Tribal Research & Development Centre (TRDC) to be established at Rairangpur, Mayurbhanj

### Subhadra Flagship scheme for empowerment of 'NariShakti'

- Rs 55,000 Crore** committed over 5 years
- More than **1 Crore Women** to be benefited
- Rs 1255.57 Crore** already transferred into the accounts of **25.11 Lakh women beneficiaries**

### Public Grievances

- Chief Minister's Grievance Cell (CMGC)** fully functional from July 1, 2024 after a gap of 16 years
- Chief Minister's grievance hearing to be conducted at Sambalpur and Berhampur in future

### Shree Jagannatha Temple, Puri

- Promise Fulfilled:** All four 'Dwaras' of Shree Jagannatha Temple, Puri opened for devotees.
- Inner Ratna Bhandar of Jagannatha Temple, Puri opened
- Corpus of **Rs 500 Crore** for Promotion and Propagation of Jagannatha culture

### Health

- Odisha to join 'Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana' (AB PMJAY) too. 'AB PMJAY' & 'Gopabandhu Jana Arogya Yojana' to provide cashless treatment to about 1 Crore families in **27,000+ hospitals** across the country
- New Nursing Colleges** to be co-located with Medical Colleges at Jajpur, Balasore, Bolangir, Puri, Koraput, Mayurbhanj, and Talcher
- Corpus fund of **Rs 200 Crore** for Medical College and Hospitals to procure medical supplies

### Social Security

- Social Security pension for persons above 80 years and more than 80% disability **enhanced** from **Rs 1,200 to Rs 3,500**
- Ex-gratia to construction workers: Increased from **Rs 4 Lakh to Rs 6 Lakh** for accidental death, and from **Rs 2 Lakh to Rs 3 Lakh** in case of natural death

### Environment & Climate Action

About **4.15 Crore seedlings** planted under 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' campaign, **highest in the country**

### School Education

- Under Prime Minister's Schools for Rising India (PM SHRI) **500 primary schools** across the state to be transformed as **Centres of Excellence**
- '**Nipun Odisha**' a specially designed Government initiative to promote foundational literacy and numeracy
- '**Godabarish Mishra Adarsha Prathamika Vidyalaya**' scheme for ensuring **quality education** in elementary schools

### Higher Education

- MoU signed with the Ministry of Education, Government of India to implement Pradhan Mantri Uchcharat Shiksha Abhiyan (**PM-USHA**)
- In line with NEP 2020, syllabus for 40 undergraduate courses revised**
- To improve access to higher education, **18 new government colleges** made operational in uncovered blocks
- In principle decision taken to repeal the Odisha Universities (Amendment) Act, 2020

### Skill Development & Technical Education

- Kaushal Bhawan setup** at Bhubaneswar, a specialised hub to offer courses in Hospitality sector.
- Digital Skilling initiative** launched in **30 Skill Development Hubs**, offering **6,000+ courses** to **30,000+ students** in Higher Education Institutions in line with NEP 2020

### Water Resources

- Rejuvenation of **Hirakud Canal system** after 46 years, at a cost of **Rs 855 Crore** for efficient water management in Hirakud Command Area
- Forest Clearance obtained for **Brutanga Irrigation Project** with proposed Ayacut of 23,300 ha in the 5 drought prone blocks of Nayagarh district
- '**Mahanadi River Front Development**' project to be undertaken at Sambalpur and other places for promoting tourism

### Housing & Urban Development

- '**AMRUT MITRA**' initiative under 'AMRUT 2.0': **60 Projects of water body rejuvenation** through WSHGs
- PM e-Bus Seva: **400 e-Buses** to be operational soon in Bhubaneswar, Cuttack, Sambalpur, Rourkela and Berhampur
- Promoting Ease of Living:** Five important Municipal services related to building plan and trade licence notified under Odisha Right to Public Services Act, 2012
- Celebration of State Level Local Self Government Day has been initiated and Foundation stone laid for **136 Infrastructure development project** at an investment of **Rs 791.61 Crore. 22 Lakh people** to be benefited across all cities
- Completion of **335 urban development projects** at an investment of **Rs 359 Crore** were expedited and dedicated to the people of Odisha by Hon'ble Chief Minister on August 31, 2024. **17 Lakh people** benefitted across all cities

### Agriculture and Allied Sectors

- Rs 800 per quintal** to be paid for paddy over and above the MSP under 'Samrudha Krushak Yojana', **around 20 Lakh farmers** to be benefited
- Special saturation drive undertaken in the state, to include all eligible left out farmers under **PM-KISAN, around 5 Lakh farmers** to be benefited
- Rs 1,084 Crore** for revival of **defunct lift irrigation points**
- '**Mukhyamantri Kamadhenu Yojana**' launched for doubling the daily milk production in the state, more than **15 Lakh farmers** to be benefited
- MoU signed with NDBB for strengthening milk cooperatives and boosting milk production in the state, **1.5 Lakh dairy farmers** to be benefited
- Construction of the State-of-the-Art Hygienic Wholesale Fish Market at Basta, Balasore

### Boost to Trade And Industry

- 19,000+ jobs** to be created from **26 projects worth about Rs 5,992 Crore** approved by State Level Single Window Clearance Authority (SLSWCA)
- FDI Park in State Capital Region** for industries like automobile, EV, semiconductor, and IT sectors
- Two **Garment Manufacturing Parks** at Kalibati and Bhuni in Khordha District to create huge employment opportunities
- Mega food parks** to be set up to promote ready-to-eat and ready-to-cook products
- Establishment of **11 new MSME parks** and enhancement of existing MSME parks
- Multi Modal Logistics Parks** for facilitating trade and logistics across **8 key locations** planned under 'Connect Odisha' Scheme
- India's first Integrated Silicon Carbide Manufacturing Facility** launched at Info Valley EMC Bhubaneswar
- Setting up of **200 Acre dedicated Semiconductor Park** at Aranga near Bhubaneswar
- 10 million sq ft** of plug and play space for tech industries, **50,000 new jobs** to be created in IT/ITeS/Electronics manufacturing sector in next 5 years
- Industrial corridor** connecting Rourkela, Sambalpur, Paradip and Dhamra by June 2027
- Construction of **Workers' Hostels** under Deen Dayal Karmachari Niwas in Industrial Townships of Kalinganagar, Jharsuguda, Rourkela, Bhubaneswar, Jagatpur, Keonjhar and Damanjodi
- Gopalpur Port being developed to **handle 50 MMT cargo**

### Rural Development

- '**Setu Bandhan Yojana**': **500 new bridges** to be constructed to improve rural connectivity.
- PMGSY-4:** All-weather connectivity to 1523 unconnected habitations
- '**Bikashita Gaon Bikashita Odisha**': **Rs 1,000 Crore** for building rural infrastructure and ensuring holistic development
- Around **1 Lakh houses** completed in **last 100 days** under PMAY(G)
- '**Antyodaya Gruha Yojana**': Housing for left out low income households with budgetary support of **Rs 100 Crore**
- In **last 100 days**, Household Tap Connection to more than **1.25 Lakh households** provided through a combination of Mega, Single and Solar Piped Water Supply projects

### Youth and Sports

- Allocation of **Rs 952 Crore** for the development of Grassroots Sports, Mini Stadiums, District level Sports Academies, state-of-the-art academies in four zones of the state.
- State of the art **multi-sports complex** planned in Sambalpur.
- '**Yuva Shakti Scheme**' for nurturing youth leadership and volunteerism, fostering culture of sports & sportsmanship. **Rs 100 Crore** allocated

### Push For Renewable Energy

- Push for Renewable Energy for achieving national Net Zero target
- '**Odisha Akshaya Shakti Bikas Yojana**' launched with an outlay of **Rs 613 Crore**
- '**PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijili Yojana**' to be implemented in the state. Additional viability gap funding through 'Soura Shakti Protsahana Yojana'

### Boost to Employment and Livelihood

- Massive Recruitment Drive: **1.5 Lakh Government jobs** in 5 years. **65,000 posts** to be filled up in the first two years and **20,000** by December 2024
- 10% horizontal reservation** to ex-Agniveers along with 3 year age relaxation and exemption from physical ability test for recruitment in all Group 'C' and 'D' posts of the uniformed services of the state
- Lakhpati Didis: **25 Lakh Women** to turn **Lakhpati Didis by 2027**. Allocation of **Rs. 1,162 Crore** for generating economic activities and enhancing the reach of SHG products

### Major Government of India Initiatives

- Record allocation of **Rs. 10,586 Crore** for railway infrastructure in Odisha in 2024-25
- Eight New railway projects worth **Rs 19,000 Crore** approved, focusing on unconnected aspirational districts and tribal areas.
  - Bargarh Road-Nuapara Road (138 km) new line
  - Sardegga-Bhalumuda (37 km) new double line
  - Gunupur-Therubali (73.6km) new line
  - Junagarh- Nabarangpur (116.2km) new line
  - Badampahad-Kendujhargarh (82km) new line
  - Bangiriposhi-Gorumahisani (85.6km) new line
  - Malkangiri-Pandurangapuram via Bhadrachalam (173.6km) new line
  - Budhamara-Chakulia (60km) new line
- Three more **Vande Bharat Express** trains to improve connectivity of Odisha
  - Berhampur - Tatanagar Vande Bharat Express (via Kendujhargarh)
  - Rourkela - Howrah Vande Bharat Express
  - Raipur - Visakhapatnam Vande Bharat Express (Connecting Khariar Road, Kantabanji, Titilagarh, Kesinga and Rayagada in Odisha)
- New **National Highway** projects to **improve road connectivity and spur economic growth** of the state
  - Six-lane 60 km Bhubaneswar-Puri highway at an estimated cost of Rs 1,800 Crore
  - 200 km Chandikhole-Barbil at Rs 10,000 Crore
  - Four-lane 54 km Khurda-Nayagarh NH-57 at Rs 1,100 Crore
  - Four-lane 46 km Kesinga-Junagarh NH-26 at Rs 1,000 Crore



# national

## of the day quote

The government should get an award for being bogus and cunning. You could not schedule the Maharashtra and Haryana polls together. You could not hold Mumbai civic body polls. Can't people see through this (plan)?

ARVIND SAWANT | SENA (UBT) SPOKESPERSON

CM Himanta Biswa Sarma wants to confuse people of Assam to sail through the 2026 assembly polls. Corruption by his family is a big issue in people's minds. He has raised the Assam Accord topic just to divert public attention from his family

BHUPEN KUMAR BORAH | CONGRESS PRESIDENT, ASSAM

Fulfill our demands in the next four days, otherwise you will have to face serious repercussions in the elections....Marathas will not forgive you

MANOJ JARANGE | ACTIVIST

## SHORT TAKES

### Kerala reports 2nd monkeypox case

Malappuram (Kerala): Kerala reported a confirmed case of monkeypox (Mpx) Wednesday, marking the second known such case of infection in the country following the recent global outbreak of the disease. Last week, a new case of monkeypox (Mpx) emerged in the national capital when a 26-year-old resident from Hisar, Haryana, tested positive for the virus and was admitted to the LNJP Hospital, a government facility in Delhi. According to the Kerala Health Department, a 38-year-old man from Malappuram district, who had recently returned from the United Arab Emirates, tested positive for the virus. He had been hospitalised with symptoms consistent with monkeypox, Kerala Health Minister Veena George said in a statement.

### Maha CM launches cleanliness drive

Thane: Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde has called for making Thane plastic-free as he launched a cleanliness campaign being implemented by the city municipal corporation. Speaking to reporters Tuesday night, Shinde emphasised the vital link between cleanliness and health. He also offered a pledge of maintaining cleanliness to citizens. Officials distributed saplings and compost to promote the 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' initiative. The 'Swachhata Hi Seva' campaign will be implemented till October 2, featuring public awareness activities, cleanliness drives, and dedicated selfie points highlighting themes such as 'Swachhata Karma' and 'Green Thane', the Thane Municipal Corporation stated.

### History sheeter shot dead in TN

Chennai: A history sheeter, with over 50 serious criminal cases against him, was Wednesday shot dead after he opened fire at them to resist arrest, police said. The accused, 'Kakkathoppu' Balaji, in his late forties, was an absconder and evading arrest for quite some time. Based on a tip-off about his hideout, when a police party inspected an area at Vyasarpadi in busy north Chennai, he was spotted. At the same time, the accused, having noticed the police team, opened fire at them and in an act of self-defence, they had to return fire, in which he died, an official said.



This kind of water discharge had never happened before. DVC has released 3.5 lakh cusecs of water. I have talked with DVC officials and the Jharkhand chief minister. But of no avail

MAMATA BANERJEE | CM, WEST BENGAL

### RIYAD MATHEW ELECTED CHAIRMAN OF AUDIT BUREAU OF CIRCULATIONS

Riyad Mathew, chief associate editor and director of the Malayala Manorama Group, has been unanimously elected as the chairman of the Audit Bureau of Circulations (ABC) for 2024-25, the organisation said Wednesday. Mathew is also a director on the board of the Press Trust of India (PTI) since August 2009



## CHANDRAYAAN-4, VENUS MISSION GET GOVT NOD

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 18: In a boost to the space programme, the government Wednesday approved the Chandrayaan-4 mission to bring back moon rocks to earth, to send a spacecraft to orbit planet Venus and to expand the Gaganyaan project to build an Indian space station. The Union Cabinet, at a meeting chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, also approved a proposal of the Department of Space to build a Next Generation Launch Vehicle capable of placing heavier payload in orbits, which could also be key to achieving the targets of setting up a space station and landing an Indian astronaut on the moon. "Great news for the space sector!

The Union Cabinet has approved the first step towards the Bharatiya Antariksh Station (BAS), expanding the Gaganyaan programme," Modi said in a post on X. "This landmark decision brings us closer to a self-sustained space station by 2035 and a crewed lunar mission by 2040," the prime minister said. Briefing reporters about the cabinet decisions, Information and Broadcasting Minister Ashwini Vaishnav said that the government has allocated ₹2,104 crore for the Chandrayaan-4 mission. The Chandrayaan-4 will involve multiple launches, and the premier space agency is set to perform a space docking experiment later this year to develop



its capabilities for the challenging endeavour. The Cabinet approved ₹1,236 crore for the Venus Orbiter Mission (VOM), which is expected to be launched sometime in March 2028.

The Cabinet also approved a proposal to expand the scope of the Gaganyaan programme to build the first unit of the Bharatiya Antariksh Station. The approval includes missions to demonstrate and validate various technologies for building and operating BAS. Now the human spaceflight program of technology development and demonstration is through eight missions to be completed by December 2028 by launching the first unit of BAS-1," an official statement said. The cabinet also approved an additional funding of ₹11,170 crore to the Gaganyaan Programme, which already has a sanctioned budget of ₹9,023 crore.

mosphere, ionosphere, solar forcing and the Sun-Venus interaction. The Cabinet also approved a proposal to expand the scope of the Gaganyaan programme to build the first unit of the Bharatiya Antariksh Station. The approval includes missions to demonstrate and validate various technologies for building and operating BAS. Now the human spaceflight program of technology development and demonstration is through eight missions to be completed by December 2028 by launching the first unit of BAS-1," an official statement said. The cabinet also approved an additional funding of ₹11,170 crore to the Gaganyaan Programme, which already has a sanctioned budget of ₹9,023 crore.

## Sitharaman launches NPS Vatsalya scheme

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 18: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman Wednesday launched the NPS Vatsalya scheme, which will allow parents to save for their children's future by investing in a pension account. Parents can subscribe to NPS Vatsalya online or visiting a bank or post office. The minimum contribution to open Vatsalya account is ₹1,000. Subscribers will have to contribute ₹1,000 annually thereafter. The guidelines for withdrawal from NPS accounts are being finalised. Launching the scheme, Sitharaman said NPS has generated very competitive returns and offers the option to people to save while ensuring future income. NPS Vatsalya is an extension of the already existing NPS to children. In the last 10 years, NPS has 1.86 crore subscribers with an Asset Under Management (AUM) of ₹13 lakh crore. Children below the age of 18 years can open NPS Vatsalya account, which will automatically get converted to regular



NPS account on completion of 18 years of age. Pension will come from the account only upon attainment of 60 years of age. NPS has generated 14 per cent, 9.1 per cent, and 8.8 per cent returns for investments in equity, corporate debt and G-Secs, respectively, Sitharaman said. NPS Vatsalya was announced in the FY25 Budget presented in July. Many lenders, including ICICI Bank and Axis Bank, have joined hands with the PFRDA to launch National Pension Scheme (NPS) - Vatsalya. ICICI Bank inaugurated the scheme's commencement in Mumbai at its service centre by registering a few children's accounts under NPS Vatsalya. Financial Services Secretary Nagaraju Maddirala said the government will be receptive of subscriber feedback and improve pension scheme accordingly.

## Phase 1 of J&K polls passes off peacefully

Of the 90 seats, 24 voted in the first phase -- 16 in the Kashmir Valley and eight in Jammu region

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar/Jammu, Sept 18: About 59 per cent of the electorate in Jammu and Kashmir turned out to vote Wednesday, giving a thumbs up to the union territory's first Assembly election since the abrogation of Article 370 in 2019 with round one going off without incident. Chief Electoral Officer PK Pole said this is the highest voter turnout in the past seven Lok Sabha and Assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir: The figures might go up after the final reports are received from the remote pockets and postal ballots, he said. Voting began at 7 am and proceeded steadily through the day. Men and women, the young and old, some too frail to walk and



others patiently waiting their turn, queued up outside polling booths across Kashmir Valley and Jammu. Of the 90 seats, 24 voted in the first phase -- 16 in the Kashmir Valley and eight in the Jammu region. Over 2.3 million voters were eligible to cast the ballot to determine the fate of 219 candidates, including 90 Independents. At 9 am, two hours after polling began, the turnout was 11.11 per cent. At 1 pm, it was 26.72 per cent. At 3 pm, 50.65 per cent of the voters had turned up. And by 5 pm, the number had inched up to 58.19 per cent. After the polling ended at 6 pm, Chief Electoral Officer PK

Pole said that tentatively the overall voter turnout was about 59 per cent -- the highest in the past seven Lok Sabha and Assembly elections. The elections to the 90-member Assembly are the first since Article 370 granting special status to Jammu and Kashmir was abrogated in August 2019 and the state was downgraded into the union territories of Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh. Security forces fanned out to ensure that there was no trouble. The day was largely without incident except for reports of clashes between political workers in some areas of Bijbehara and DH Pora.

## India serves notice to Pakistan

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 18: India has served a formal notice to Pakistan seeking a review of the Indus Water Treaty, arguing that "fundamental and unforeseen" changes in the circumstances require a reassessment of the pact. The notice was issued to Pakistan August 30 under Article XIII(3) of the Indus Water Treaty (IWT), government sources said Wednesday. India and Pakistan signed the IWT September 19, 1960 after nine years of negotiations, with the World Bank being a signatory to the pact, which sets out a mechanism for cooperation and information exchange between the two sides on the use of the waters of a number of



cross-border rivers. India's notification highlights fundamental and unforeseen changes in circumstances that require a reassessment of obligations under various articles of the treaty, the sources said. Among various concerns, the important ones include a change in population demographics, environmental issues and the need to accelerate the development of clean energy to meet India's emission targets, they said. India has

also cited the impact of persistent cross-border terrorism as one of the reasons for demanding the review. "The notification was issued in the background of a separate prolonged controversy with respect to the Kishanganga and Ratle hydro projects," a source said. "In this regard, the World Bank has simultaneously activated both the neutral-expert mechanism and the Court of Arbitration on the same set of issues," the source added.

## Cabinet agrees to continue PM-AASHA scheme

New Delhi: The government has approved continuation of the PM-AASHA scheme, with an outlay of ₹35,000 crore, to provide better prices to farmers and also control price volatility of essential commodities for consumers. "The Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has approved the continuation of schemes of Pradhan Mantri Annadata Aay Sanrakshan Abhiyan (PM-AASHA) to provide remunerative prices to farmers and to control price volatility of essential commodities for consumers," an official statement said. The total financial outgo will be ₹35,000 crore during the 15th Finance Commission Cycle up to 2025-26, it added. The government has converged the Price Support Scheme (PSS) and Price Stabilization Fund (PSF) schemes in PM-AASHA to serve the farmers and consumers more efficiently. PM-AASHA will now have the components of Price Support Scheme (PSS), Price Stabilization Fund (PSF), Price Deficit Payment Scheme (PDPS) and Market Intervention Scheme (MIS). PM-AASHA is an umbrella scheme to ensure MSP (minimum support price) to farmers. Under the PSS, the procurement of notified pulses, oilseeds and copra at MSP will be 25 per cent of national production from 2024-25 season onwards. This would enable states to procure more of these crops at MSP from farmers to prevent distress sale.

CABINET SCOOP

## ₹31,000cr to fence 1,643 km India-Myanmar border

UNION HOME MINISTER AMIT SHAH SAID FENCING WORK HAD BEEN COMPLETED IN 30 KM OF THE BORDER, WHICH HE TERMED THE ROOT CAUSE OF THE ETHNIC VIOLENCE IN MANIPUR

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 18: The entire 1,643 km porous India-Myanmar border, known for the smuggling of arms, ammunition and narcotics, will be fenced at a cost of ₹31,000 crore, sources said Wednesday. Union Home Minister Amit Shah Tuesday said fencing work had been completed in 30 km of the border, which he termed the root cause of the ethnic violence in Manipur. The Cabinet Committee on Security has, in principle, approved the construction of border fencing and roads along the

1,643-km international border between India and Myanmar at an approximate cost of ₹31,000 crore, sources said. About 10 km of fencing has already been completed near Moreh and work is underway to fence another 21 km of the border in other areas of Manipur. The India-Myanmar border passes through Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh. The Central government has already scrapped the the India-Myanmar Free Movement Regime (FMR), which allows people residing close to the border to venture 16 km into each



Two battalions of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) have already been deployed in Manipur

The Manipur government has started using 25 mobile vans as shops to provide essential commodities at fair prices to the general public

In addition, around 200 companies (about 100 personnel in one company) of central police forces were deployed in the restive states

As a new initiative, the Kendriya Police Kalyan Bhandars (KPKB, police canteens) have been opened from Tuesday to provide essential commodities to the people of Manipur at fair prices

general public. These shops on wheels are operating in all districts of Manipur, sources said. As a new initiative, the Kendriya Police Kalyan Bhandars (KPKB, police canteens) have been opened from Tuesday to provide essential commodities to the people of Manipur at fair prices, they said. In addition to the 21 existing such police canteens, 16 new stores are being opened. Of the 16 new police canteens, eight will be in the valley districts of Manipur, and the remaining eight in hilly areas. Ethnic violence started in Manipur May 3 last year after a tribal solidarity march in the hill districts of the state to protest against the majority Meitei community's demand for Scheduled Tribe status. Since then, over 220 people belonging to both the Kuki and Meitei communities and security personnel have been killed in the continuing violence.

other's territory without any documents. It was implemented in 2018 as part of India's Act East policy. Home Minister Shah has been regularly reviewing the security situation in Manipur



POLITICKLE by MANJUL



Teacher accused of corporal punishment

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Khajuripada, Sept 18:** Despite schools being declared as punishment-free zones across the state, two 5-year-old kids studying at Chhandurupadar Government Primary School under this block in Kandhamal district Wednesday sustained critical injuries after they were allegedly beaten up by a woman teacher with sticks over trivial mistakes.

The victim children were identified as Shankar Kanhar, son of Ranjan Kanhar, and Kiran Jani, son of Chitrasen Jani; both are aged five and students of Class I in the school. The accused teacher was identified as Kumudini Kanhar.

Sources said the primary school has a total of 16 students on its rolls and two teachers including the accused to teach the students.

The incident occurred when the two kids committed some trivial mistake. Enraged, Kumudini allegedly called the two kids and brutally beat them up with a stick resulting in injuries, Shankar's grandmother Anita Kanhar and grandfather Yudhisthir Kanhar alleged.

The primary school has a total of 16 students on its rolls and two teachers including the accused to teach the students

When contacted, headmaster Jayant Dehuri said the incident occurred when he had been to the office of the Block Education Officer (BEO) over some work at around 3.30pm. He however, expressed his regret for the incident.

BEO Binod Bihari Dugal said that he has ordered for a probe which is underway Cluster Resources Centre Coordinator (CRCC) Swarnalata Moharana said that after completion of the probe, a report will be submitted to the BEO who will take a call on the issue. Locals have demanded stringent action against the accused teacher.

This incident once again has brought to light the atrocities being perpetrated by teachers and forced the parents and the teachers alike to rethink the problem of corporal punishment in schools.

Forester found hanging in government quarters

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhawanipatna, Sept 18:** A forester was found hanging in his government quarters located here in Kalahandi district Wednesday morning.

The deceased forester identified as Sanjay Nayak, 33, a native of Shundisahi in Rayagada district, was serving at the High-Tech Silviculture Nursery at Jaring in Junagarh block. He also held the additional responsibility of the Range Officer in-charge of the Silviculture Office in Bhawanipatna. It was learnt that he was transferred to Bolangir district three days back.

Upon receiving information, Bhawanipatna Town police arrived at the scene, seized the body, and sent it to the local hospital for post-mortem. After the procedure, the body was handed over



to the family members. Meanwhile, the deceased forester's brother Rabi Narayan has lodged a written complaint at the Town police station here leveling charges of mental harassment against Debendra Behera, the Divisional Forest Officer (Research Wing) of Rayagada, and holding him responsible for his brother's death.

The deceased's brother has lodged a police complaint leveling charges of mental harassment against a senior Forest official

According to the complaint, Behera constantly harassed Sanjay and demanded bribes, threatening Nayak of suspension or dismissal if his demands were not met. A suicide note which was found near the deceased's body also indicated the same. Rabi Narayan in his complaint alleged that Behera was the culprit behind Sanjay's suicide and urged the police administration to take appropriate action against him.

Meanwhile, Kalahandi SP Abhilash G has reportedly directed the Town PS IIC to investigate the matter and take action against the guilty party.

Ganjam tops in adoption of TB patients

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Berhampur, Sept 18:** Ganjam district has topped the state in adoption of tuberculosis (TB) patients under the 'Pradhan Mantri TB Mukta Bharat Abhiyan', the health officials here claimed.

The Health administration felicitated some of the Ni-kshay Mitra (donors) at a meeting held Tuesday.

Any individual, institution, non-governmental organisation (NGO), cooperative society, elected representative, political party and partner can become Ni-kshay Mitra (donor).

They can adopt blocks, districts or even an individual TB patient, and provide nutritional and treatment support to the patients, the officials said.

As many as 540 individuals and organisations in the Ganjam district have adopted all 3,779 TB patients under the scheme and the district stood first in the state in adopting TB patients, the district TB officer, Abani Kumar Patra, said.

PM TB MUKTA BHARAT ABHIYAN

The scheme aims to eradicate TB in the country and provides free diet/nutrition to such patients.

It was launched by the Centre in September 2022. The meeting was held to felicitate the Ni-kshay Mitras and to create awareness about the scheme to mark the second year of the scheme on the occasion of the birthday of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Chief District Medical Officer,

SK Padhy, said. He urged people to come forward and adopt the patients by providing them with nutritional foods.

Bideshi Jena, the programme coordinator, said that as a part of the scheme, there won't be any cash provided to the patients, rather food kits will be provided monthly.

A diet worth around ₹700 to ₹800 will be given to a single patient. It will include 3 kg cereals and millets, 1.5 kg pulse, 1 kg milk powder and 250 grams of vegetable and cooking oil per month, he said.

Apart from this, if anybody is willing, they can be provided non-vegetarian food as well. One can adopt a patient to provide nutritional food from six months to three years, he added.

Forest officials tranquilise, fix radio collar on elephant



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Rourkela, Sept 18:** Forest department officials Wednesday tranquilised and fixed a GPS-enabled radio collar on an elephant which had been running amok in areas under Bonai Forest Division for the last five years and claimed the lives of at least 15 people during the period. Besides, the pachyderm had caused enormous damage to properties and crops making the locals' lives miserable.

"The elephant was tranquilised near the Jamdih section under Koira forest range of Bonai Forest Division and the process of attaching the radio collar began at around 4am Wednesday morning," informed Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) Lalit Patra. Units of Bonai Forest Division, consisting of Koira, Bonai, Tamra, Jarla and Sole ranges, were engaged for the purpose, the top Forest official informed.

The DFO informed that the entire process was carried out in the presence and guidance of Principal Chief Conservator of Forest (PCCF), Wildlife and Chief Wild Life Warden (CWLW) Susanta Nanda.

Besides, the Regional Chief Conservator of Forest (RCCF) of Rourkela Circle, the veterinary units of Satkosia Wildlife Division, Kapilash Wildlife Division, Rourkela Forest Division and RRT team were also present.

"It is our primary duty to avoid human-elephant conflict and ensure safe passage to the elephants using various safety measures," clarified Patra adding that the solitary elephants especially are aggressive and cause damage.

The DFO further informed that the radio collar started providing information once the elephant became mobile around midday. "Regular tracking will help us track the movement of the elephant and take necessary action much before it could cause any damage to human lives and properties in Koira and Barsuan forest ranges. We will keep a constant watch on the animal through the signals," informed Patra.

Diarrhoea outbreak: Medical team takes stock at Jhiripani

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Baliguda, Sept 18:** Following reports of diarrhoea outbreak in Jhiripani panchayat of Tumudibandha block under Baliguda subdivision in Kandhamal district, a medical team took stock of the situation Wednesday and stated that the situation in the panchayat is under control.

Various media outlets reported the death of two individuals due to diarrhoea outbreak in the area. While several villagers have been affected by the disease, the exact cause of deaths remains unclear.

Dr Abhishek Nayak, the medical officer of the Tumudibandha Community Health Centre, and his team visited villages under Jhiripani panchayat. They conducted health check-ups and provided treatment to the residents.

However, he stated that the deaths were not solely due to diarrhoea and could have been caused by other factors.

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is to information to all that on dated 20.09.24 33 KV overhead HT line from Kalunga GSS (OPTCL) to Bajrangbali Sponge and Power Ltd. will charge. So public will avoid any activity under to this line.

V.K. Panda  
Director  
Bajrangbali Sponge and Power Ltd.

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF DISTRICT MEDICAL & PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICER, RAYAGADA

Letter No. 6572 Date: 17.09.2024  
CORRIGENDUM-2

No. E-327: In pursuance to this office Tender Call Notice No. 5355 Dt.31.07.2024 for "Rate contract of Printing & Supplying of IEC/BCC Materials & different Logistics etc for the year 2024-25". The last date of receipt of the tender is 03.10.24 instead of 16.09.2024, which is rescheduled to be opened on 04.10.2024 instead of 18.09.2024. All other terms and conditions remain unchanged.

Sd./ Chief District Medical & Public Health Officer, Rayagada

OFFICE OF THE DHENKANAL MUNICIPAL COUNCIL, DHENKANAL

E-Procurement Notice  
Tender Call Notice No.3800/DKMLPLY/Date:18.9.2024

- Name of the Work: Individual Civil Construction Work Published on the website.
- No. of Works put to tender: 11 Nos. individual works
- Estimated Cost: Rs.2.28 Lakhs to 20.0 Lakhs
- Period of Completion: 30 days
- Date and Time of availability: From 11.00 hours of Dt.19.09.2024 to 17.30 hrs of Dt.25.09.2024
- Last date/time for receipt of bid documents in the portal: 17.30 hours of Dt.25.09.2024
- Date and Time of Opening of Bid: 11.00 hours of Dt.26.09.2024
- Name and Address of the Officer Inviting Bid: Executive Officer, Dhenkanal Municipality, Dhenkanal

Further details can be seen from the e-Procurement portal <https://tenderodisha.gov.in>.  
Sd./ Executive Officer  
Dhenkanal Municipality  
OIPR-13146/11/0014/2425

OFFICE OF THE BARIPADA MUNICIPAL COUNCIL, BARIPADA

Phone: 06792-252703, Fax: 06792-252703  
Email: [baripadam.hud@nic.in](mailto:baripadam.hud@nic.in), Website: [www.baripadamunicipality.in](http://www.baripadamunicipality.in)  
No. 5859 Date: 17.09.2024

DTCN PART-I (TECHNICAL BID) SECTION-II

**COMPETITIVE BIDDING THROUGH 'e' Procurement**  
No. C-615: The Executive Officer on behalf of Baripada Municipality, Baripada invites percentage rate bids in Single Cover System in ONLINE MODE only in conformity with Detailed Tender Call Notice (DTCN). Bid documents consisting of work, estimated cost, cost of tender paper, EMD and time of completion, class of contractors and the set of terms and conditions of contract and other necessary documents can be seen in Govt. website i.e. [www.tendersorissa.gov.in](http://www.tendersorissa.gov.in).

Sl. No.	Description	Tender I.D. No.: 2024_ORULB_104941	Critical Dates
1	Procurement Officer - Publisher/ Tender Inviting Authority/Bids	Executive Officer, Baripada Municipality, Baripada	
2	Name of the Work	As per DTCN	
3	Nos. of Work	As per DTCN	
4	Estimated cost of the works	As per DTCN	
(i)	Period of availability of tenders Online for bidding	From Dt.20.09.2024 (01.00 P.M.) to Dt.03.10.2024 (5.00 P.M.)	
(ii)	Last date & time of bidding Online (Submission of Bids)	Dt.03.10.2024 (5.00 P.M.)	
(iii)	Date & time of opening of the Bids received Online	Dt.04.10.2024 (11.30 A.M. onwards)	
(iv)	To be intimated later to the bidder(s) found qualified after evaluation of Technical Bids and Price Bid received Online.		

Detail Tender Call Notice (DTCN) may also be seen from the e-procurement portal i.e. [www.tendersorissa.gov.in](http://www.tendersorissa.gov.in) and Baripada Municipality Website i.e. [www.baripadamunicipality.in](http://www.baripadamunicipality.in).  
Corrigendum or Addendum if any will not be published in newspapers and can be seen in e-procurement portal as well as in Baripada Municipality website.  
OIPR-13078/11/0011/2425 Sd./ Executive Officer, Baripada Municipality

EAST COAST RAILWAY

Tender Notice No. : 33/ET/SSP/ENGG/ 2024-25, Dtd. 11.09.2024

(1) e-Tender No. : 26-eT-DENE-SBP-24

Name of the work: GPS TRACKER ON RENT FOR A PERIOD OF 36 MONTHS UNDER JURISDICTION OF DIVISIONAL ENGINEER (DEN)/EAST OF SAMBALPUR DIVISION.

Approx. cost of the work : ₹ 10,76,750.00, Bid Security: ₹ 21,600.00

(2) e-Tender No. : 21-eT-SDENW-SBP-24

Name of the work: GPS TRACKER ON RENT FOR A PERIOD OF 36 MONTHS UNDER JURISDICTION OF SR. DIVISIONAL ENGINEER/WEST OF SAMBALPUR DIVISION.

Approx. cost of the work : ₹ 10,33,680.00, Bid Security: ₹ 20,700.00

(3) e-Tender No. : 26-eT-DENC-SBP-24

Name of the work: GPS TRACKER ON RENT FOR A PERIOD OF 36 MONTHS UNDER JURISDICTION OF DIVISIONAL ENGINEER (DEN)/CENTRAL AND BADMAL (BUDM) SECTION OF DIVISIONAL ENGINEER/SOUTH IN SARLA (SLRA)-SAMBALPUR (SBP)-TITLAGARH (TIG) SECTION OF SAMBALPUR DIVISION.

Approx. cost of the work : ₹ 12,92,100.00, Bid Security: ₹ 25,900.00

(4) e-Tender No. : 25-eT-DENC-SBP-24

Name of the work: MAINTENANCE OF TRACK BY FIXING ALIGNMENT RETAINERS ON GIRDER BRIDGES WITH STEEL CHANNEL/H-BEAM SLEEPERS UNDER JURISDICTION OF ASSISTANT DIVISIONAL ENGINEER (ADEN)/BALANGIR (BLGR) OF SAMBALPUR DIVISION.

Approx. cost of the work : ₹ 2,69,84,209.54, Bid Security: ₹ 2,85,000.00

Completion period: 36 (Thirty Six) Months (for sl. no. 1, 2 & 3) and 12 (Twelve) Months (for sl. no. 4).

Tender closing Date & Time: At 1500 hrs. on 07.10.2024 (for all tenders).

No manual offers sent by post/courier/Fax in person shall be accepted against such e-tenders.

Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-tender is available in website : [www.treps.gov.in](http://www.treps.gov.in)

Note : The prospective tenders are advised to visit the website 15 (Fifteen) days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes/corrigendum issued for this tender.

Divisional Railway Manager (Engg.) PR-535/P/24-25 Sambalpur

**STEEL AUTHORITY OF INDIA LIMITED**  
Rourkela Steel Plant  
Rourkela - 769 011, Odisha, India

ENGAGEMENT OF APPRENTICES UNDER THE APPRENTICES ACT, 1961

Rourkela Steel Plant invites applications for 2nd Phase from the candidates for Apprenticeship Training as Graduate/Technician Apprentices and Trade Apprentices for a period of 01(One) year under the Apprenticeship Act 1961/1973 in the categories mentioned below:

- TRADE APPRENTICES (ITI Passed out): 168
  - TECHNICIAN APPRENTICES (Diploma Passed out): 135
  - GRADUATE APPRENTICES (B.Tech. Passed out): 53
- 356 Nos.

AGE CRITERIA: Minimum 18 years and maximum 28 years as on date 30th September, 2024.

STIPEND: The apprentices are eligible for monthly stipend as per Apprentices Act, 1961, Apprenticeship Rules 1992 as amended from time to time during their engagement period.

RESERVATION: As per the guidelines of Govt. of Odisha, shall be followed with applicable age relaxation.

SELECTION: Selection for engagement of Apprentices for training would be on merit basis, considering their percentage (%) of final marks obtained in the basic prescribed qualifications as applicable to respective branch/trade.

Last date for applying in the portal: 30th September, 2024.

REQUIREMENT BEFORE FILLING ON-LINE REGISTRATION

I. Before applying for above apprentices positions, candidates have to first register themselves in online portals of the following agencies of Govt. of India:  
(a) For Trade Apprentices: In the link <https://apprenticeshipindia.gov.in>  
(b) For Graduate / Technician Apprentices: National Apprenticeship Training Scheme (NATS) in the link <https://nats.education.gov.in>

II. The candidate must have an active email ID and Mobile Number which must be valid for at least next one year. All future communication including Corrigendum/Addendum with regard to this advertisement with candidate will take place only through e-mail/SMS Alerts.

III. The candidate must ascertain the correctness of all information before filling in the online registration and its final submission.

IV. The candidate shall be wholly/exclusively responsible for the information provided in his/her online registration.

V. After successfully registration/apply online, the candidate must take a print out of the filled-in online application for future reference.

HOW TO APPLY

A) For ITI: Candidates are first required to register in the web portal <http://apprenticeshipindia.gov.in> for registration as candidate. After registering oneself, one can login into the home page in the apprenticeship portal as candidate then go to Apprenticeship Opportunity than click search by Establishments Name (SAIL ROURKELA STEEL PLANT) to click on apply as the prescribed trade against vacancies appearing on the portal. The candidates have to apply for the respective trade through Apprenticeship Opportunity of the establishment SAIL Rourkela Steel Plant. The application will not be accepted without registration and apply on the portal.

B) For Degree/Diploma: Candidates are advised to register as a student online on <https://nats.education.gov.in>. After registering oneself, one can login into the home page of NATS portal as candidate then go to Establishments Requests then click Find Establishments. Candidate should select STEEL AUTHORITY OF INDIA LIMITED, Rourkela Steel Plant, Rourkela apply in passed out branch of engineering appearing on the portal.

Eligible Sundargarh District residents will be given preference over others. Eligible applications from other districts of Odisha & then rest of India may be considered, only if there are any vacancies left after the selection process which cannot be filled by Sundargarh District residents.

Management reserves the sole right to cancel the selection process there under at any point of time whatsoever. Decision of Management regarding the selection will be final. Further Management reserves the full right to fill up or otherwise any or all the vacancies for apprenticeship training depending on the availability of the candidates in any trade/discipline. The vacancies in each apprenticeship trade are indicative and may vary during selection process.

RSP shall have no obligation to offer regular employment to Apprentices during and/or after the completion of the apprenticeship training which is one year from the date of joining.

Registered Office: Ispat Bhawan, Lodi Road, New Delhi 110 003  
Corporate Identity Number: L27109DL1973GOI006454, Website: [www.sail.co.in](http://www.sail.co.in)

There's a little bit of SAIL in everybody's life

**Bank of India** Gold Auction Notice  
Zonal Office: Bhubaneswar Zone, 1/1D, Star House, Jaydev Bihar, Nayapalli, Bhubaneswar-751015, Ph.-0674-2362249

It is hereby brought to the notice of the following gold loan borrowers, their legal heirs, person engaged in the business of gold ornaments and general public that in spite of repeated notices by the Bank, the following borrowers are not repaying their dues to the Bank. Notice is hereby published that if they fail to deposit all their dues in their respective gold loan accounts (including Up-to-date interest and all costs, charges/expenses) by 03.10.2024, their pledged gold ornaments will be auctioned at **Concerned Branch Premises on 04.10.2024 at 11.00 AM**. For this Bank shall not be held responsible for any inconvenience or damage caused to the concerned borrowers and no allegations or representations will be entertained from any borrowers in this regard. Bank reserves the right to cancel the auction without assigning any reason in case, the bidding price so arrived at is observed to be low or inadequate. Further, if needed be Bank reserves the right to change the date and time of the above scheduled auction or cancel the same without assigning any reasons thereon. Purity and net weight and reserve price of gold ornaments/ coins etc. will be available to interested bidders on auction date and auction venue/auction portal.

Sl. No.	A/c. No.	Name & Address of the Borrower(s)	Gross Wt. in Gram	Net Wt. in Gram	Total Dues as on 31.08.2024 (excluding unapplied interest Charges, Cost & Expenses)
<b>BANK OF INDIA, GANGANAGAR BRANCH, PLOT NO.: 13, UNIT-6, GANGANAGAR, BHUBANESWAR-751001, MOB.: 9776032273</b>					
1.	557277610000761	Biswanath Barik, S/o- Bipin Bihari Barik, Flat No.: Balmik-3/401, Block-H 3, Debashram, Kesura, Bankual, Bhubaneswar-751002.	19.560	18.210	₹ 92,603/-
2.	557277610000706	Rangalata Barik, W/o- Nidhi Barik, Baba Trinath Basti, Pichupadia Basti, Unit-7, Bhubaneswar-751003	9.130	7.700	₹ 38,874/-
<b>BANK OF INDIA, BAHUGRAM BRANCH, PAGA CHHAK, BAHUGRAM, CUTTACK-754200, MOB.: 9438669709</b>					
1.	512577610000271	Suvransu Sekhar Rout, S/o- Dharendra Rout, At: Ganapur, Suvrabhampur, Cuttack-754200.	46.000	41.000	₹ 1,54,375/-
2.	512577610000282	Basant Kumar Sethi, S/o- Bishnu Prasad Sethi, At: Sunakhandi, Cuttack-754202	12.500	8.800	₹ 35,799/-

Place: Bhubaneswar Date: 18.09.2024 Zonal Manager, Bank of India



# international



The big thing is to make sure that Canadians understand the choice they get to make in the next election. That's the work we're going to continue to do  
**JUSTIN TRUDEAU | PM, CANADA**

**SL BANKRUPTCY TO END**  
Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickremesinghe Wednesday said that the island nation's bankruptcy is officially due to end Thursday, remarks aimed at boosting his re-election chances on the last day of the presidential election campaign



## of the day quote

The incarcerated former premier wants to attach himself not just to constitutional amendments but to everything (that's happening) in Pakistan as he considers himself the centre of everything  
**KHAWAJA ASIF | DEFENCE MINISTER, PAKISTAN**

If I don't win, you will have no auto industry within two to three years. You will not have any manufacturing plants. China is going to take over all of them because of the electric car  
**DONALD TRUMP | FORMER PRESIDENT, US**

I have just informed the EU Commission that I want a migration opt-out within Europe for the Netherlands. We need to be in charge of our own asylum policy again  
**MARJOLEIN FABER | MIGRATION MINISTER, THE NETHERLANDS**

# ISRAEL DECLARES 'NEW PHASE' OF WAR

**NEW WAVE OF BLASTS HITS LEBANON DAY AFTER PAGER ATTACK**

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Beirut, Sept 18:** Walkie-talkies and solar equipment exploded in Beirut and multiple parts of Lebanon Wednesday in an apparent second wave of attacks targeting electronic devices a day after hundreds of pagers used by Hezbollah blew up, state media and Hezbollah officials said.

At least 14 people were killed and more than 450 people wounded in the second wave, the Health Ministry said.

The attacks, which were widely believed to be carried out by Israel targeting Hezbollah, have hiked fears that the two sides' simmering conflict could escalate into all-out war.

Speaking to Israeli troops Wednesday, Israeli Defence Minister Yoav Gallant said, "We are at the start of a new phase in the war, it requires courage, determination and perseverance." He made no mention of the explosions of electronic devices but praised the work of Israel's army and security agencies, saying "the results are very impressive."

In Wednesday's attacks, several blasts were heard at a funeral in Beirut for three Hezbollah members and a child killed by exploding pagers the day before, according to Associated Press journalists at the scene. An AP photographer in the southern



coastal city of Sidon saw a car and a mobile phone shop damaged after devices exploded inside of them. A girl was hurt in the south when a solar energy system blew up, the state news agency reported.

The new blasts hit a country still reeling with confusion and anger after Tuesday's pager bombings, which appeared to be a complex Israeli attack targeting Hezbollah members that caused civilian casualties, too. Tuesday's bombings killed at least 12 people, including two children, and wounded some 2,800 others.

The second wave also deepens concern over the potentially indiscriminate casualties caused

in the attacks, in which hundreds of blasts went off wherever the holder of the pager happened to be, in homes, cars, at grocery stores and in cafes, often with family or bystanders nearby.

While the pagers were used by Hezbollah members, there was no guarantee who was holding the device at the time of the blast. Also, many of the casualties were not Hezbollah fighters, but members of the group's extensive civilian operations mainly serving Lebanon's Shiite community.

At least two health workers were among those killed Tuesday. Doctors, nurses, paramedics, charity workers, teachers and

**We are at the start of a new phase in the war, it requires courage, determination and perseverance**  
**YOAV GALLANT | DEFENCE MINISTER, ISRAEL**

office administrators work for Hezbollah-linked organisations, and an unknown number had pagers.

The UN human rights chief, Volker Türk, called for an independent investigation into the mass explosions. "The fear and terror unleashed is profound," he said in a statement, urging world leaders to step up "in defence of the rights of all people to live in peace and security."

Iran-backed Hezbollah, Lebanon's strongest armed force, and Israel's military have ex-

changed fire almost daily since October 8, the day after a deadly Hamas-led assault in southern Israel triggered the war in Gaza. Since then, hundreds have been killed in strikes in Lebanon and dozens in Israel, while tens of thousands on each side of the border have been displaced. Hezbollah said its strikes are in support of its ally, Hamas.

Israeli leaders have issued a series of warnings in recent weeks that they might increase operations against Hezbollah in Lebanon, saying they must put a stop to the exchanges to allow people to return to homes near the border. Israel began moving more troops to its border with Lebanon Wednesday as a precautionary measure, according to an official with knowledge of the movements who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak to the media.

In his comments, Gallant said that after months of fighting Hamas in Gaza, "the center of gravity is shifting to the north by diverting resources and forces."

As Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu huddled with top security officials at Israeli military headquarters in Tel Aviv, the country's army chief, Lt General Herzi Halevi, said plans have been drawn up for additional action against Hezbollah.

## B'desh interim govt gives Army magistracy powers to improve law

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Dhaka, Sept 18:** Bangladesh's interim government has granted magisterial powers to the Army for two months to improve law and order in the violence-hit country and prevent "subversive acts".

The Ministry of Public Administration issued a notification on the government's decision Tuesday, saying it will be applicable with immediate effect.

The powers will be given to commissioned officers of the Army. The order will remain in force for the next 60 days.

Home Adviser Lt Gen (retd) Md Jahangir Alam Chowdhury said Wednesday that the people will get the benefit of bestowing magistracy power upon the army, state-owned BSS news agency reported.

"Police officials who are yet to join the services, won't be allowed to join anymore," he said, adding that the "people of Bangla (Bangladesh) will reap the benefit of bestowing the magistracy power upon the commissioned officers of Bangladesh Army."

Responding to questions from the media after the closing ceremony of the basic training for 40th BCS (Ansar) officers and 25th batch sepoy recruits at the Bangladesh Ansar and VDP Academy in Safipur, Chowdhury said, "The Army has been given the magistracy power to ensure public service and maintain the law and order."

## SHORT TAKES

### Russia's Deputy PM arrives in Pakistan

**Islamabad:** Russia's Deputy Prime Minister Alexei Overchuk Wednesday arrived in Islamabad on a two-day visit during which he will hold talks with Pakistan's top leadership and discuss ways to enhance bilateral ties. According to the Foreign Office, a high-level delegation is also accompanying the Deputy Prime Minister during the visit September 18-19. It said that Overchuk will hold meetings with President Asif Ali Zardari, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and the Deputy Prime Minister/Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar. The discussions will centre on boosting cooperation in various critical sectors, reflecting the growing trust and goodwill between the two nations.

### Jordan's King swears in new government

**Amman:** Jordan's King Abdullah swore in a reformist government Wednesday tasked with accelerating IMF-backed reforms and pushing through political and economic modernisation crucial to reversing a decade of sluggish growth, officials said. The Harvard-educated Prime Minister, Jafar Hassan, headed the monarch's office in his last job. Hassan has proven to be an able administrator during a long public career in which he oversaw economic reforms as a deputy premier and during a stint as planning minister, according to officials and politicians.

### China to sanction US companies

**Beijing:** China Wednesday announced sanctions on American companies selling arms to the self-ruled island of Taiwan, which Beijing claims as its own territory and threatens to annex by force. Chinese state media made the announcement, citing the Foreign Ministry, but gave no details on the companies involved. Taiwan is awaiting deliveries of F-16 fighter jets, Abrams tanks and a range of missiles from the US. China has been upping its threats to attack Taiwan, whose 2.3 million citizens overwhelmingly favour their current status of de-facto independence. Despite their lack of formal diplomatic ties, the US has long been a key provider of armaments and is legally bound to ensure the island can defend itself.

## UK launches eVisa

The country urges all, including Indians, to take immediate transition to eVisa



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**London, Sept 18:** The UK Wednesday launched a major drive urging all immigrants across the country, including Indians, who are using a physical immigration document to take immediate action to transition to an eVisa.

As part of plans to fully digitise the UK border and immigration system, all those using a physical biometric residence permit (BRP), a passport containing a visa vignette sticker or ink stamp confirming their "indefinite leave to enter remain" in the country, or biometric residence card (BRC) as evidence of their immigration rights will be switched over to an entirely online system by next year.

A majority of the BRPs are set to expire towards the end of this year and are being automatically transitioned online in phases to be accessed by creating and logging into a UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) online account.

"Everyone with physical immigration documents is urged to take action now to switch to an eVisa, and I want to reassure those who need it that free advice and support is available, said

Seema Malhotra, the Indian-origin Minister for Migration and Citizenship at the UK Home Office.

To help with the transition process, during which physical documentation will still be accepted, the Home Office is laying out around GBP 4 million of grant funding from this month to a UK-wide network of voluntary and community sector organisations to provide independent support for "vulnerable customers" unsure about accessing eVisas.

A nationwide advertising campaign will also raise awareness of the move to eVisas and encourage those affected to take action before many immigration documents expire in December 2024.

"It is free and straightforward to switch to an eVisa, which offers greater customer convenience, significant cost savings and enhanced security for the UK's border and immigration system. An eVisa cannot be lost, stolen or tampered with, and allows visa holders to instantly and securely prove their immigration rights. Switching won't change, impact or remove a customer's current rights or immigration status," the Home Office said.

## Pak HC bars trial court from issuing verdict against Khan

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Islamabad, Sept 18:** A Pakistan high court Wednesday restrained a trial court from delivering its verdict in a case of alleged corruption against former Prime Minister Imran Khan and his wife Bushra Bibi.

The move comes after Khan and his wife petitioned the Islamabad High Court to stay the proceedings of the Al-Qadir Trust case and acquit them.

An anti-corruption court has been hearing the Al-Qadir Trust case against the former first couple which is based on the charges that Khan caused a loss of over ₹50 billion to the national exchequer.

During the hearing, a two-member bench headed by Chief Justice Amir Farooq rejected the plea to stay the legal proceedings against Khan and his wife. However, in a relief to them, the High Court restrained the accountability court hearing the case from delivering its final verdict.

## PORTUGAL DECLARES STATE OF CALAMITY



View of a burning area during a wildfire in Sao Pedro do Sul, Portugal

**LISBON:** More than 100 wildfires stretched thousands of firefighters to the limit in northern Portugal on Wednesday, with seven deaths since the worst spate of fires in recent years spread out of control over the weekend. Portuguese Prime Minister Luis Montenegro declared a state of calamity for the hardest-hit areas late on Tuesday, invoking powers to mobilise more firefighters and civil servants. He also called on police investigators to redouble their efforts to find those who started the fires and pledged help for those who have lost their homes or have been evacuated. "We are well aware that these difficult hours are not over yet," Montenegro told the nation in a televised address. "We have to continue to give everything we have and ask for help from our partners and friends so that we can reinforce the protection of our people and property." The hot, dry conditions behind the outbreaks in Portugal coincided this week with flooding in central Europe. The European Union said Wednesday that the juxtaposed extreme weather phenomena are proof of a "climate breakdown".

## SNIPPETS

### UNGA supports Palestinian resolution

**UNITED NATIONS:** The UN General Assembly strongly supported a nonbinding Palestinian resolution Wednesday demanding that Israel end its "unlawful presence" in Gaza and the occupied West Bank within a year. The vote in the 193-member world body was 124-14, with 43 abstentions. Among those in opposition was the United States, Israel's closest ally. The resolution was adopted as Israel's war against Hamas in Gaza approaches its first anniversary and as violence in the West Bank reaches new highs. Troubled efforts to broker a cease-fire deal in Gaza and are pressing ahead, with Secretary of State Antony Blinken meeting fellow mediators Wednesday in Egypt, even as attacks elsewhere in the region raise fears of escalating conflict in the Middle East.

### US issues fresh Iran sanctions

**WASHINGTON:** The United States issued a new round of Iran sanctions Wednesday targeting 12 individuals who it said were tied to Tehran's "ongoing, violent repression of the Iranian people," including its "brutal crackdown on peaceful protests." The sanctions, which come two years after the death of Kurdish-Iranian woman Mahsa Amin in police custody, target members of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), Iranian prison officials "and those responsible for lethal operations overseas," the US Treasury Department said in a statement.

## Chinese aircraft carrier enters Japan's contiguous waters

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Tokyo, Sept 18:** A Chinese aircraft carrier entered Japan's contiguous waters for the first time Wednesday, leading Tokyo to convey its "serious concerns" to Beijing over China's increasingly assertive military actions around Japan, officials said.

The Chinese carrier Liaoning, accompanied by two destroyers, sailed between Japan's westernmost island of Yonaguni and nearby Iriomote, entering the country's so-called "contiguous zone," the Defense Ministry said.

That's an area of sea beyond a country's territorial waters in which it can still exercise some control over maritime traffic, reaching up to 24 nautical miles offshore.

The Liaoning's transit was part of a fleet movement Tuesday and Wednesday, during which Chinese warships also passed off the western coast of the disputed Japanese-controlled islets it calls the Senkakus, the ministry said. China claims the same islets, calling them the Diaoyus.

Japan's Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Hiroshi Moriya told reporters that "the latest incident is absolutely unacceptable from the perspective of the national and regional security."

# Worst drought lowers Amazon river levels

The second-consecutive year of critical drought has parched much of Brazil's vegetation and caused wildfires across South American nations

REUTERS

**Brazil, Sept 18:** The worst drought on record has lowered the water level of the rivers in the Amazon basin to historic lows, in some cases drying up riverbeds that were previously navigable waterways.

The Solimoes, one of the main tributaries of the mighty Amazon River whose waters originate in the Peruvian Andes, has fallen to its lowest level on record in Tabatinga, the Brazilian town on the border with Colombia.

Downriver in Tefe, a branch of the Solimoes has dried up completely, as seen by Reuters reporters who flew over the river Tuesday.

The nearby Lake Tefe, where more than 200 freshwater dol-



phins died in last year's drought, has also dried up, depriving the endangered pink mammals of a favorite habitat.

"We are going through a crit-

ical year," said Greenpeace spokesperson Romulo Batista, pointing to where the riverbed of the branch of the Solimoes had turned to mounds of sand. "This

**Climate change is no longer something to worry about in the future, 10 or 20 years from now. It's here and it's here with much more force than we expected**  
**ROMULO BATISTA | GREENPEACE SPOKESPERSON**

year, several months have broken last year's records."

The second-consecutive year of critical drought has parched much of Brazil's vegetation and caused wildfires across South American nations, cloaking cities in clouds of smoke.

"Climate change is no longer something to worry about in the future, 10 or 20 years from now. It's here and it's here with much

more force than we expected," Batista added.

The Solimoes in Tabatinga was measured at 4.25 meters below average for the first half of September.

At Tefe, the river was 2.92 meters below the average level for the same two weeks last year and is expected to drop further to its lowest-ever.

In Manaus, the Amazon's largest city, where the Solimoes joins the Rio Negro to form the Amazon River proper, the level of the Rio Negro is approaching the record low reached in October last year.

"Last year, we were in this situation by October," said Indigenous leader Kambeba. "This year, the drought has gotten worse."



## of the day quote

On the rate front, a lot of central banks are taking independent calls. While Fed rate cut would influence everyone, RBI would be mindful of the food inflation before taking a call on interest rate cut



CS SETTY | CHAIRMAN, SEBI

India is in discussions to tackle higher steel imports. Rising imports are a key issue for steelmakers even as demand for the metal continues to surge



HD KUMARASWAMY | STEEL MINISTER

We have been able to maintain prices at a reasonable level for consumers. The upcoming festival season is looking good. We are not anticipating any kind of spike in prices of essential commodities



SANJEEV CHOPRA | FOOD SECRETARY

## SHORT TAKES

### Windfall tax on crude oil slashed to zero

**New Delhi:** The government has slashed windfall tax on domestically produced crude oil to 'nil' per tonne with effect from September 18. The tax is levied in the form of Special Additional Excise Duty (SAED) and is notified fortnightly based on average oil prices in two weeks. The last such revision took place effective August 31 when the windfall tax on crude petroleum was set at ₹1,850 per tonne. The SAED on the export of diesel, petrol and jet fuel or ATF, has been retained at 'nil'. The new rates are effective from September 18, an official notification said Tuesday. India first imposed windfall profit taxes July 1, 2022, joining a host of nations that tax supernormal profits of energy companies.

### Refund for Sahara depositors raised

**New Delhi:** The government has raised the cap on refund amounts for small depositors of the Sahara Group Cooperative Societies to ₹50,000, up from the previous limit of ₹10,000, a senior cooperation ministry official said Wednesday. The government has so far released ₹370 crore to more than 4.29 lakh depositors of Sahara Group of Cooperative Societies through the CRCS-Sahara refund portal. "With an increase in the limit of refund amount to ₹50,000, about ₹1,000 crore payment will be made in the next 10 days," the official said. Last week, the cap on refund amount for small depositors was raised to ₹50,000 each from ₹10,000, the official said. The government is vetting the claims of depositors carefully before releasing the refund.

### Reliance Infra cuts debt by 87 per cent

**New Delhi:** Anil Ambani's Reliance Infrastructure Ltd has slashed its standalone debt by 87 per cent to ₹475 crore after it cleared outstanding dues of Life Insurance Corporation of India, ICICI Bank and other lenders, the firm said Wednesday. In stock exchange filings and press statements, Reliance Infrastructure said its standalone external debt has reduced from ₹3,831 crore to ₹475 crore. "Consequently, the net worth of the company will stand at ₹9,041 crore." "Reliance Infra has cleared its funded outstanding dues to Life Insurance Corporation of India, Edelweiss Asset Reconstruction Company Limited, ICICI Bank, Union Bank, and other lenders," it said. It paid ₹600 crore to Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) to settle all outstanding.



India is prepared to keep buying oil from Russian companies that are allowed to make such sales, since prices are cheap

HARDEEP SINGH PURI | OIL MINISTER

### FIRST OFFSHORE MINERAL AUCTION SOON

India is set to kick off its first-ever offshore minerals auction shortly, with 10 blocks up for grabs, Mines Secretary VL Kantha Rao said Wednesday. "We are ready with 10 blocks on both the east and west coasts of India. These blocks will include sand, lime mud, and polymetallic nodules," Rao said during the Federation of Indian Mineral Industries (FIMI) event



### India tops China for 1st time ever in key MSCI equities index

REUTERS

**Bangalore, Sept 18:** India has overtaken China for the first time ever in a key MSCI equities index, bolstered by steady economic growth and strong flows.

India's weight in the MSCI investible large-, mid- and small-cap index has risen to 2.35%, greater than China's weight of 2.24%, Morgan Stanley said in a note Tuesday.

"India will continue to gain share due to market outperformance, new issuances and liquidity improvements," analysts led by Jonathan Garner of Morgan Stanley said.

India's nominal gross domestic product growth rate is running in the low teens, more than thrice the economic growth in China, generating a "profound divergence in earnings growth environment", according to the brokerage.

China's weight on the index had peaked in early 2021.

Earlier this month, Morgan Stanley forecast that India will overtake China in the MSCI Emerging Markets index as India's stock market rally was "only past the halfway mark".

India's rising weightage in the MSCI indexes will bring additional inflows, analysts said.

India is among the best-performing markets this year globally, with its benchmark indexes NSE Nifty 50 and S&P BSE Sensex up 17% and 15%, respectively.

China's Shanghai Composite index is down about 9% this year amid concerns over the economy and the property sector.

### BROADCASTING DEAL FAIL

### Star seeks \$940 million from Zee Entertainment

REUTERS

**Bangalore, Sept 18:** Disney-owned Star India has sought \$940 million from Zee Entertainment in damages in a London court for the termination of a cricket broadcasting agreement, the Indian broadcaster said Wednesday.

In January, Zee quit a \$1.4 billion deal with Star India, under which the latter was to license television broadcasting rights for the International Cricket Council's tournaments to Zee for four years.

Zee said in a statement Wednesday that Disney India has quantified damages to the tune of \$940 million as of August 31, which Zee has rejected.

"The arbitration is at its initial stage and the London Court of International Arbitration Tribunal is yet to determine if the company is liable in any manner," the company said.

Zee said that Star India breached the agreement and had sought a repayment of ₹685.4 million (about \$8 million), according to its December-quarter earnings report.

The company is among the biggest players in India's media and entertainment industry where the likes of Reliance Industries and the Adani Group are expanding their presence.

# Diamond sector in jeopardy

## THE INDUSTRY FACES SEVERE CRISIS WITH FACTORY CLOSURES, JOB LOSSES, SAYS GTRI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Sept 18:** India's diamond sector is facing a severe crisis as both imports and exports have sharply declined in the past three years, which has triggered defaults, factory closures, and widespread job losses, think tank GTRI said Wednesday.

It said that while export returns have surged, a large inventory of unprocessed rough diamonds is piling up due to reduced orders and growing competition from lab-grown diamonds.

"This has triggered defaults, factory closures, and widespread job losses. Tragically, more than 60 people in Gujarat's diamond sector have committed suicide, reflecting the severe financial and emotional strain India's diamond sector is facing," Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI) Founder Ajay Srivastava said.

He said that immediate action is essential to address these problems and safeguard the future of the sector.

According to the think tank data, a 24.5 per cent drop in rough diamond imports from \$18.5 billion in 2021-22 to \$14 billion in 2023-24 shows weaker global markets and fewer processing orders.

After adjusting for re-exported rough diamonds, net imports declined by 25.3 per cent, from \$17.5 billion to \$13.1 billion, indicating reduced demand for processing in India.

Exports of cut and polished diamonds fell by a higher margin of 34.6 per cent, from \$24.4 billion in FY2022 to \$13.1 billion in



While export returns have surged, a large inventory of unprocessed rough diamonds is piling up due to reduced orders and growing competition from lab-grown diamonds

FY2024, it said.

"Additionally, the share of unsold diamonds returned to India increased from 35 per cent to 45.6 per cent during this period," it said adding the net exports of cut and polished diamonds dropped by 45.3 per cent, from \$15.9 billion to \$8.7 billion, reflecting a weak market and rising unsold inventory.

The gap between net rough diamond imports and net cut and polished diamond exports widened significantly, from \$1.6 billion in FY2022 to \$4.4 billion in FY2024, signalling a large inventory buildup and a lack of sufficient export orders.

It added that some challenges of the sector stem from regulatory issues and internal inefficiencies within the industry.

It said the demand for polished diamonds has dropped sharply in key markets like the US, China, and Europe due to economic uncertainty, inflation, and geopolitical tensions, leading to reduced consumer spending on luxury goods, including diamonds.

"Fluctuations in global diamond prices have caused uncertainty, with buyers hesitant to purchase rough diamonds in anticipation of further price drops," Srivastava said.

He added that the Russia-Ukraine conflict has also disrupted the global diamond supply chain, with sanctions on Russia, a major rough diamond producer, further complicating trade and slowing down the global diamond trade.

Tragically, more than 60 people in Gujarat's diamond sector have committed suicide, reflecting the severe financial and emotional strain India's diamond sector is facing



AJAY SRIVASTAVA | FOUNDER, GTRI

Shifting consumer preferences toward lab-grown diamonds, which are more affordable, ethical, and sustainable, are also impacting the demand for natural diamonds.

On internal factors, the think tank said that many polishing units have large unsold inventories of polished diamonds, which discourages them from importing fresh rough diamonds as they cannot afford to take on more stock without selling their existing inventory.

"Rising operational costs, including labour, energy, and materials, along with reduced margins in the global diamond trade, have made it difficult for many polishing units to remain viable, leading to shop closures and layoffs, especially in Surat," he said.

The industry also heavily depends on financing, but tighter credit conditions and reduced lending from banks have made it difficult for companies to purchase rough diamonds, further stalling production, he said.

"Additionally, a significant

portion of cut and polished diamonds exported from India are being returned due to quality issues, overstocking by buyers, mismatches in specifications, and price fluctuations. Handling these returns is costly and time-consuming due to complex customs procedures, putting further strain on exporters," he added.

### THE DUBAI CONNECTION

GTRI also stated that Dubai does not produce diamonds, yet its share in India's import of rough diamonds is increasing steadily.

Dubai imports rough diamonds from Botswana, Angola, South Africa, Russia and re-exports these to India.

Dubai's share increased from 36.3 per cent in FY 2020 to 60.8 per cent in FY 2024 and further to 64.5 per cent in April-June 2024.

It said that a major reason for higher share of Dubai is India's high corporate tax regime applicable on foreign suppliers of rough diamonds, and this forces them to re-export diamonds to Dubai and export from there to India.

"This has rendered India's Special Notified Zones (SNZs) in Mumbai and Surat largely ineffective," it added.

Further to support the sector, GTRI suggested host of steps including extending export credit terms, exempting foreign rough diamond sellers from corporate tax in India; regulating the lab-grown diamond industry; and reconsidering zero tariff import of cut and polished diamonds from Dubai under the India-UAE trade pact.

## BIZ BUZZ

### NPS Vatsalya launched in state



**Bhubaneswar:** The NPS Vatsalya scheme was launched at the Guru Kelucharan Mohapatra Odissi Research Centre in Bhubaneswar

Wednesday. The event, organised by SLBC Odisha and convened by UCO Bank, attracted over 150 attendees, including dignitaries, bank heads, parents, guardians, and students. The day commenced with vibrant cultural performances, including a magic show arranged by SLBC and a street play arranged by NABARD, creating a lively and engaging atmosphere for all present. The formal programme began with a welcome address by Gautam Patra, Convenor of SLBC Odisha, who stressed the importance of financial security for minors. Special addresses were delivered by Ramesh Kumar, Senior Lead for NPS at Protean CRA, and Sudhansu KK Mishra, Chief General Manager of NABARD, both of whom spoke on the broader objectives of NPS Vatsalya in creating a financially secure future for the younger generation. A live telecast of the national launch event in New Delhi was followed by the ceremonial distribution of Permanent Retirement Account Number (PRAN) cards to 20 minor subscribers in Bhubaneswar.

### Gugnani Kia unveils 'Gravity Edition' for Carens, Sonet, Seltos

**Bhubaneswar:** Gugnani Kia has launched the exclusive 'Gravity Edition' for Carens, Sonet and Seltos, unveiled by Director Yasneet Gugnani. This special edition showcases Kia's commitment to design innovation, blending elegance and performance with unique exterior and interior upgrades. The Gravity Edition features a distinctive dark chrome grille, redesigned alloy wheels, and sleek metallic accents, offering a bold, aggressive look. Inside, the models boast plush leatherette seats, advanced infotainment systems, and refined trim options, enhancing the premium driving experience. Equipped with Kia's Advanced Driver Assistance Systems (ADAS), the Gravity Edition ensures top-tier safety. Gugnani Kia CEO Mahesh Jhunjhunwala emphasised the competitive pricing and premium features, making the Gravity Edition an attractive choice for consumers. "KIA's Gravity Edition reflects our dedication to providing premium, unique experiences for our customers," he said.



## PROFIT BOOKING

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, Sept 18:** Benchmark stock indices Sensex and Nifty hit fresh lifetime intra-day highs before closing lower Wednesday due to profit booking in IT shares ahead of the keenly-awaited US Fed's decision on interest rates.

The 30-share BSE Sensex dropped by 131.43 points or 0.16 per cent to settle at 82,948.23 in a volatile trade. The index opened lower but cut short losses in late morning trade, climbing 246.72 points or 0.29 per cent to scale a new all-time intra-day peak of 83,326.38.

The barometer re-entered the negative territory in afternoon trade as investors preferred to book profits at record levels. Sensex hit a low of 82,700.63 in pre-close session.

The NSE Nifty declined by 41 points or 0.16 per cent to close at 25,377.55. During the day, it advanced 63.65 points or 0.25 per cent to hit a fresh intra-day lifetime high of 25,482.20.

From the 30 Sensex firms, Tata Consultancy Services and HCL Technologies dropped over 3 per cent each. Infosys, Tech Mahindra, Sun Pharma and Tata Motors were the other major

## D-St retreats from peaks

**BSE SENSEX** SEPTEMBER 18, 2024



Stock	Change
BAJAJ FINANCE	+3.65%
BAJAJ FINSERV	+2.11%
NESTLE INDIA	+1.61%
ICICI BANK	+1.55%
HDFC BANK	+1.54%

Stock	Change
TCS	-3.49%
HCL TECH	-3.15%
INFOSYS	-3.09%
TECH MAHINDRA	-2.79%
SUN PHARMA	-1.79%

Markets remained volatile for another session, ending flat in line with global trends ahead of the US Fed meeting

**AJIT MISHRA | SVP, RESEARCH, RELIGARE BROKING**

## Iconic Tupperware Brands seeks Chapter 11 bankruptcy

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**New York, Sept 18:** Tupperware Brands, the company that revolutionised food storage decades ago, has filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection.

Orlando, Florida-based Tupperware plans to continue operating during the bankruptcy proceedings and will seek court approval for a sale, "in order to protect its iconic brand," the company said just before mid-night Tuesday.

The company is seeking bankruptcy protection amid growing struggles to revitalise its business. Tupperware sales growth improved some during the early days of the Covid-19 pandemic, but overall sales have been in steady decline since 2018 due to rising competition. And financial troubles have contin-

ued to pile up for the company. Doubts around Tupperware's future have floated around for some time. Last year, the company sought additional financing as it warned investors about its ability to stay in business and its risk of being delisted from the New York Stock Exchange.

The company received an additional non-compliance notice from the NYSE for failing to file its annual results with the Securities and Exchange Commission earlier this year. And Tupperware had continued to warn about its ability to stay afloat in more recent months, with an August securities filing pointing to "significant liquidity challenges".

In Tuesday's bankruptcy petition, Tupperware reported more than \$1.2 billion in total debts and \$679.5 million in total assets.



Shares for the company have fallen 75% this year and closed Tuesday at about 50 cents apiece. Tupperware's roots date back to 1946. According to the company's website, shortly after the Great Depression, chemist Earl Tupper found inspiration while creating molds at a plastics factory — setting out on a mission to create an airtight seal for a plastic container, similar to that

on a paint can, to help families save money on food waste. The brand experienced explosive growth in the mid 20th century — particularly with the rise of Tupperware parties, first held in 1948. Tupperware parties notably gave many women a chance to run their own businesses out of their homes, selling the products within social circles.

The system worked so well that Tupperware eventually removed its products from stores. And in Tuesday's bankruptcy announcement, the company maintained that there were no current changes to Tupperware's independent sales consultant agreements.

According to court documents published Tuesday, Tupperware currently employs more than 5,450 employees across 41 countries — and additionally partners with global sales force of over 465,000 consultants who sell products on a freelance basis in nearly 70 countries.

Tuesday's announcement also pointed to aims to "further advance Tupperware's transformation into a digital-first, technology-led company," possibly signalling a move toward increased reliance of sales on the

brand's website or perhaps more online-focused marketing, although the company did not provide exact specifics.

In a statement, Tupperware President and CEO Laurie Ann Goldman acknowledged Tupperware's recent financial struggles and said that the bankruptcy process is meant to provide "essential flexibility" as the company pursues this transformation. She also maintained that the brand wasn't going anywhere.

"Whether you are a dedicated member of our Tupperware team, sell, cook with, or simply love our Tupperware products, you are a part of our Tupperware family," Goldman said in a statement. "We plan to continue serving our valued customers with the high-quality products they love and trust throughout this process."



# Batters good enough to play spin: Gambhir

Head coach backs players to handle Bangladesh bowling attack in the two Test series



(Left): India head coach Gautam Gambhir speaks to the media Wednesday; Rishabh Pant bats at the nets

"We respect everyone. We don't take any opposition lightly. We are going to go out there and play the brand of cricket that we want to play because that is what champions do. They don't look at the opposition. They try to control the game, they try to play the way they want to play the game," Gambhir emphasised.

Gambhir also pointed out that he is extremely

proud of the fact that India have a world-class bowling unit at their disposal. "You've got to give credit to (Jasprit) Bumrah, (Mohammed) Shami, (Mohammed) Siraj, (Ravichandran) Ashwin and (Ravindra) Jadeja. They're turning this nation into a bowling-obsessed one," he stated.

"In fact, Bumrah is the best bowler in the world. It's not just his performance. It's his hunger as well. And the best part is that he wants to play as much Test cricket as he can," Gambhir added.

Gambhir also underlined the significance for him to build on the existing cordial relationship with senior players like skipper Rohit Sharma and Kohli to take Indian cricket forward.

"It's still early days (for him as coach). But the good part is that I have played with those guys (seniors). At one stage we were sharing the dressing room as players, when they were younger, who have now become experienced guys," Gambhir said. "So it is an advantage for me," Gambhir added.

# 'Camaraderie helped India bag ACT title'



Harmanpreet Singh with the various trophies

New Delhi, Sept 18: Skipper of the Indian hockey team Harmanpreet Singh credited India's recent success to strong team camaraderie, emphasising that their deep bond and willingness to 'die for one another' helped them overcome China to win the Asian Champions Trophy for a record-extending fifth time. India rode on Jugraj Singh's late strike Tuesday to defeat China 1-0 in a tense final in Hulunbuir.

"The final was really intense. The Chinese were breathing down our necks throughout the game and made it really difficult for us to create a clear goal scoring chance," Harmanpreet said in a Hockey India (HI) release.

"But the team over the last year has built immense trust in each other. We are willing to die for one another. It was this sense of unity reassuring us that we will find a way to win the game together," the skipper added.

Harmanpreet said India's successful run in last one year has instilled a strong belief among players. "The gold medal in last year's Asian Champions Trophy in Chennai, the gold in Hangzhou Asian Games and the bronze medal at the Paris Olympics have instilled a deep camaraderie within the team," Harmanpreet asserted.

Harmanpreet, who has been shortlisted for FIH's 'Player of the Year' award after scoring 10 goals at Paris, once again led from the front with seven goals (all from penalty corners) as the team remained unbeaten in the competition. He said it is now crucial for India to keep building on the success.

The players have immense trust in one another. We are ready to step up and die for one another

"We are proud to have retained our title but the work doesn't stop now," he said. "We have areas we need to improve; we need to build depth in our squad as well. The team will head back to camp after a short break and start preparing for the tournaments ahead to make our supporters proud again," added Harmanpreet.

Vice-captain Vivek Sagar Prasad said the Olympics bronze medal made India the 'team to beat' in the tournament.

"All the teams in the group stage were tough. The bronze medal from the Olympics painted a target on our backs; we were the team to beat," Prasad said. "But every single person in the team stepped up to deliver," Prasad pointed out.

AGENCIES

Chennai, Sept 18: India head coach Gautam Gambhir expressed confidence Wednesday in the team's batting unit to negate quality spin bowling, a challenge they are expected to face in the Test series against Bangladesh. In the recent past, India batters, including Virat Kohli have struggled against opposition spinners, leading to a tinge of apprehension ahead of the Bangladesh rubber.

"Our batting unit has so much quality that it can take on any spin attack. There is a lot of difference between ODIs and Tests. It's all about the mindset and working and strengthening your defence and once you have it, then you play around it," Gambhir told the media on the eve of the opening Test against Bangladesh here Thursday.

The former Indian opener also stated that Bangladesh have experienced and quality tweakers in their ranks. "They have a very

## Pant set for Test comeback

Chennai: A harsh sun beating down on him, Rishabh Pant was engrossed preparing for his first Test in two years, taking down net bowlers in that unmistakably Pant-ish way. It is hard to believe that 632 days have passed since Pant played a Test match, and, coincidentally, his last five-day game was also against Bangladesh in 2022. Now, the same opposition awaits him on his return to Test cricket Thursday. "We all know how destructive he can be (as a batter) and what he can do in Test cricket. Obviously, it gives him the freedom to go out there and express himself. He has got runs everywhere around the world. It is always good to have someone like him who can open the game for us and more importantly can bring a lot of impact as well," head coach Gautam Gambhir said ahead of the game Wednesday.

good bowling attack. Shakib (Al Hasan) has got the experience. Mahidi (Hasan) is there as well. So, we know that there is talent in the Bangladesh squad. The important thing is that we need to be switched on from day one," added the head coach.

Gambhir accepted the fact that Bangladesh are coming off a brilliant Test series win over Pakistan, and asserted that India will not take the visitors lightly.



## SHORT TAKES

### Top athletes turn dope offenders

New Delhi: Asian Games bronze-winner shot-putter Kiran Balyan has been provisionally suspended by the National Anti Doping Agency (NADA) for testing positive for a banned substance as a slew of athletes across sports figured in the latest list of dope offenders. The 25-year-old Balyan, who had become only the second Indian to win a medal in women's shot put at Hangzhou last year, returned positive for metandienone, an anabolic androgenic steroid banned at all times. She stares at a maximum ban period of four years, if she is proven guilty. Among other athletes who have tested positive are hammer thrower Manju Bala, sprinter Shalini Chaudhary, and long-distance runner Chavi Yadav.

## MALVIKA STUNS PARIS MEDALLIST



Malvika Bansod

Changzhou (China), Sept 18: Young Malvika Bansod pulled off a sensational straight-game victory over Paris Olympics bronze medallist Gregoria Mariska Tunjung of Indonesia in the women's singles opening round to emerge as the lone Indian survivor in the China Open Super 100 badminton tournament here Wednesday.

The 22-year-old Indian, ranked 43rd in the world, displayed immense grit as she saved game points thrice in the

opening game to defeat the World No. 7 Tunjung, seeded fifth, 26-24, 21-19 in a 46-minute match, marking the biggest win of her career.

Malvika, a B Tech graduate in computer science from SRM University in Chennai, will next take on Scotland's Kristy Gilmour, a two-time Commonwealth Games medallist in the next round. She was the sole Indian bright spot in the women's singles as compatriots Aakarshi Kashyap and Samiya Imad Farooqui exited in the first round. Aakarshi lost to Chinese Taipei's Chiu Pin-Chian 15-21, 19-21, while Samiya was outplayed by Gilmour 9-21, 7-21 in a one-sided contest.

In other Indian results, the women's doubles pair of Treesa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand went down 21-16, 15-21, 17-21 to Chinese Taipei's Hsieh Pei Shan and Hung En-Tzu. The pair of Rutuparna Panda and Swetaparna Panda also lost 11-21, 21-16, 11-21 to bow out.

## Kane leads goal rush in CL

Liverpool, Real Madrid also script facile victories

AGENCIES

London, Sept 18: Bayern Munich became the first team to score nine goals in a game in the modern Champions League (CL) as the new format of Europe's elite club competition kicked off Tuesday, with title holders Real Madrid and Liverpool also among the winners.

Harry Kane scored four goals, including three penalties, as Vincent Company's Bayern hammered Croatian champions Dinamo Zagreb 9-2 at the Allianz Arena in Munich. Michael Olise scored twice on his Champions League debut, while Raphael Guerreiro, Leroy Sane and Leon Goretzka were also on target for the home team.

Dinamo were 0-3 down at the break but scored twice in two minutes just after half time to give the hosts a scare, with Bruno Petkovic and Takuya Ogiwara on target. But Bayern then scored six times from the 57th minute



Harry Kane scores from the penalty spot Tuesday against Dinamo Zagreb

onwards. "An amazing game, a bit of a crazy game," Kane told broadcaster DAZN. "It's the first time I've scored three (penalties) in a game. That doesn't happen at all really."

There was plenty of excitement with reigning champions Real Madrid made to work hard before beating VfB Stuttgart 3-1 at the Santiago Bernabeu. Kylian Mbappe marked his first game in the competition with Madrid by scoring the opening goal just after half time. However, Deniz Undav equalised midway through the second half. Madrid nevertheless emerged

victorious as Antonio Rudiger headed them back in front seven minutes from time, and Brazilian youngster Endrick got the third goal in stoppage time.

Liverpool marked their return to Europe's top table by coming from behind to win 3-1 away to seven-time champions AC Milan in Italy. Christian Pulisic gave Milan an early lead, but Ibrahima Konate equalised and Virgil van Dijk headed the away side in front before the interval. Dominik Szoboszlai then wrapped up the victory for Liverpool at San Siro. In between Mo Salah also hit the woodwork.

## Odisha girls lose in final of sub-jr nationals

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 18: The Odisha eves finished as runners-up in the Sub-Junior National Football Tournament, a release from the Football Association of Odisha (FAO) stated Wednesday. In the final of the tournament played Tuesday evening at the Dr Rajendra Prasad Stadium in Neemuch, the Odisha eves went down to hosts Madhya Pradesh 1-2. Despite finishing second best, the sub-junior girls from Odisha displayed admirable fighting spirit for which their performance was lauded by everyone.



The MP girls started on an aggressive note and their efforts paid off when Odisha conceded an own goal. In an effort to clear a ball, Pujja Oram put the ball in the net and from then on, Odisha were always up against the wall. Their troubles increased when MP captain Somni Dhurwey scored after a combined move down the middle in the 33rd minute of the game. However, even though they were down 0-2, the Odisha eves went on fighting.

In the second half, the Odisha eves began on an aggressive note and repeatedly troubled the opposition defence. Their efforts bore fruit when Khundogbam Ambalika pulled a goal back with a fierce strike from inside the opposition penalty box. Odisha then continued to pile on the pressure, but the equaliser eluded them.

It must also be said that MP got the home advantage as many times the match officials came to their rescue. A number of attacking moves by the Odisha footballers were nullified as the referee indulged in unnecessary stoppage of play.

## Sunrise Club win FAO Super Cup

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, Sept 18: Sunrise Club emerged champion in the MGM FAO Super Cup football tournament defeating Rovers Club 1-0 in the final played Wednesday at the Barabati Stadium here. In a hard-fought game, Dinabandhu Das scored the all-important goal for the winners.

In the thrilling final, both sides created a number of opportunities, but failed to utilise on those. Sunrise Club dominated proceedings for long stretches of the game, but footballers of Rovers Club were quick to counter-attack. They got a couple of chances in the second half and had they utilized any one of those, then the result of the match could



have been different. Abinash Muduli and Sanjeeb Oram (both of Rovers Club) were nominated as the best defender and best midfielder of the final respectively.

Dinabandhu of Sunrise Club was chosen as the best forward. Along with the trophies Sunrise Club were handed a cash award of ₹1,00,000 while Rovers Club got ₹50,000.

## 5 meet records on day 1

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 18: A total of five meet records were set on the opening day of the 70th Odisha State Senior Athletics Championships which began at the Kalinga Stadium here Wednesday. Over 900 athletes from 30 districts of Odisha including 268 women are taking part in the three-day event. Athletes participated in over 40 track and field events on day 1 of the championships.

Pradip Mahanta of Mayurbhanj set a new meet record in the boys' under-20 5000m event with a timing of 14:56.94 seconds. In the boys' under-23 high jump, Nikhil Das of Cuttack created a new meet record clearing a height 2.01 metres. Later in the day Chiranjib Singh of Cuttack set a new meet



Chiranjib Singh (centre) created a new meet record

record in the boys' under-23 shot put with a throw of 13.91 metres. P Arpita Archana Sahoo of KIIT also set a new meet record in the girls' under-20 javelin event with a throw of 42.98 metres. Following her, Dhanmati Xess of Sundargarh also created a new meet record in the girls under-23 javelin event with a throw of 41.67 metres.