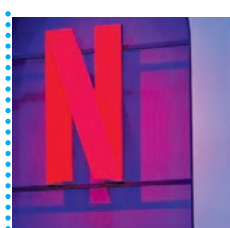




Shibani comes clean
Singer and actress Shibani Dandekar reacts to being called 'gold digger' following her marriage to actor-director Farhan Akhtar

LEISURE | P2



Netflix under scrutiny
India is investigating the business practices of Netflix's local operations, including allegations of visa violations and racial discrimination

NATIONAL | P9



Israel vs Hezbollah
Israel and Hezbollah exchange heavy fire into Sunday, with Israeli warplanes carrying out the most intense bombardment in almost a year

INTERNATIONAL | P10



India trounce Bangla
Ravichandran Ashwin picks up six wickets as India defeat Bangladesh by a massive margin of 280 runs in Chennai

SPORTS | P12

VOLUME 14, ISSUE 174 | www.orissapost.com

BHUBANESWAR | MONDAY SEPTEMBER 23, 2024

12 PAGES | ₹5.00

SHORT TAKES

Israel shuts down Al Jazeera bureau

Dubai: Israeli troops raided the offices of the satellite news network Al Jazeera in the Israeli-occupied West Bank early Sunday, ordering the bureau to shut down amid a widening campaign by Israel targeting the Qatar-funded broadcaster as it covers the Israel-Hamas war in the Gaza Strip. Al Jazeera aired footage of Israeli troops live on its Arabic-language channel ordering the office to be shut for 45 days. It follows an order issued in May that saw Israeli police raid Al Jazeera's broadcast position in East Jerusalem, seizing equipment there, preventing its broadcasts in Israel and blocking its websites. **P10**

Bid to derail two trains thwarted

New Delhi: In two separate incidents, attempts to derail trains in Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh were uncovered Sunday, raising concerns about coordinated efforts to sabotage rail operations across the country. In Madhya Pradesh's Neplanagar, a plot by unknown miscreants to derail a special military train using detonators was thwarted. In Uttar Pradesh, another attempt to derail the train was foiled when the loco pilot of a Kanpur-bound JTTN goods train spotted a cylinder lying on the tracks near Prempur station.

SC judgement on child porn today

New Delhi: The Supreme Court is scheduled to deliver Monday its judgement on a plea challenging a Madras High Court ruling that has said mere downloading and watching child pornography is not an offence under the POCSO Act and the information technology law. A bench of Chief Justice DY Chandrachud and Justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra is likely to pronounce the verdict. Terming atrocious, the apex court had earlier agreed to hear the plea challenging the high court ruling that has said mere downloading and watching child pornography is not an offence under POCSO Act and IT Act. **P4**

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



If you spot both goons and a police station, for your safety, head to the goons

WEATHER

	BBSR	CTC
Max Temp	34.2°C	34.0°C
Min Temp	27.1°C	25.5°C
Humidity	78%	85%
Rainfall	15.2mm	Nil

FORECAST

FOG/MIST IN THE MORNING



PLOTTING THE NEXT MOVE: Vantika Agrawal (left) and Harika Dronavali in action during matches against their Azerbaijan opponents in the 11th round of the Chess Olympiad in Budapest, Sunday

Odisha among most hostile states for Dalits

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 22: Odisha stands among the most hostile states for Dalits as it ranked fifth and third, respectively in cases of atrocities against the Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) in 2022, according to a new government report.

About 97.7 per cent of all cases of atrocities against SCs in 2022 were reported from 13 states, with Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh recording the highest number of such crimes, as per the report.

According to the latest government report under the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, the majority of atrocities against STs were also concentrated in 13 states, which reported 98.91 per cent of all cases in 2022.

Of 51,656 cases registered under the law for SCs in 2022, Uttar Pradesh accounted for 23.78 per cent of the total cases with 12,287, followed by Rajasthan at 8,651 (16.75 per cent) and Madhya Pradesh at 7,732 (14.97 per cent).

Other states with a significant number of cases of atrocities against SCs were Bihar with 6,799 (13.16 per cent), Odisha with 3,576



(6.93 per cent), and Maharashtra with 2,706 (5.24 per cent).

These six states accounted for nearly 81 per cent of the total cases. Thirteen states, cumulatively accounting for 97.7 per cent (51,656) of the total cases (52,866) relating to offences of atrocities against members of SCs, registered under the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, in conjunction with the Indian Penal Code, during the year 2022, the report said.

Similarly, the majority of cases of atrocities against STs were concentrated in 13 states.

Of the 9,735 cases registered under the law for STs, Madhya Pradesh reported the highest number at 2,979 (30.61 per cent), the report said.

Rajasthan had the second high-

est number of cases at 2,498 (25.66 per cent) while Odisha recorded 773 (7.94 per cent). Other states with a significant number of cases included Maharashtra with 691 (7.10 per cent) and Andhra Pradesh with 499 (5.13 per cent).

The data also provided insight into the status of investigations and chargesheeting under the Act.

Among the SC-related cases, 60.38 per cent led to chargesheets being filed while 14.78 per cent were concluded with final reports due to reasons such as false claims or lack of evidence.

By the end of 2022, investigation was pending in 17,166 cases. For ST-related cases, 63.32 per cent resulted in chargesheets being filed while 14.71 per cent ended with final reports.

At the end of the period under review, 2,702 cases involving atrocities against STs were still under investigation.

One of the most concerning trends highlighted in the report is the declining conviction rate for cases under the Act. In 2022, the conviction rate dropped to 32.4 per cent from 39.2 per cent in 2020.

Moreover, the report pointed out the inadequate number of special courts set up to handle cases under the law.

2 maiden gold medals for India

AGENCIES

Budapest, Sept 22: In a historic triumph, India's men's and women's teams clinched gold medals for the first time in the 45th Chess Olympiad Sunday.

Led by the stellar performances of D Gukesh and Arjun Erigaisi, the Indian men's team secured the gold medal after a thrilling final round victory over Slovenia in Budapest.

The decisive match against Slovenia saw Arjun Erigaisi

CHESS OLYMPIAD

emerging victorious over Jan Subelj, while Gukesh defeated Vladimir Fedoseev. India needed just one more point to clinch the title, which Gukesh delivered.

This victory capped off an impressive tournament for the Indian team, which had previously won bronze medals in the 2014 and 2022 editions.

The Indian squad showcased exceptional form throughout

the competition, winning eight consecutive matches before being held to a draw by the defending champions, Uzbekistan. However, they bounced back strongly, defeating the top-seeded USA in the penultimate round. They defeated Slovenia in their final encounter and Second-placed China dropped points on two boards against the USA.

India's success in the men's event was complemented moments later by a similar achievement from the women's team.

DISSANAYAKE WINS LANKA'S PREZ POLLS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Colombo, Sept 22: Marxist leader Anura Kumara Dissanayake Sunday was declared winner of the Sri Lankan presidential election by the country's Election Commission after an unprecedented second round of counting of votes.

Dissanayake, 56, the leader of the Marxist Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna party's broader front National People's Power (NPP), defeated his closest rival Sajith Premadasa of Samagi Jana Balawegaya (SJB).

Incumbent president Ranil Wickremesinghe was elimi-

nated in the first round after he failed to become within the top two in the vote list. NPP said Dissanayake will take oath Monday.

Earlier, the Election Commission ordered a second round of counting after no candidate secured over 50 per cent votes needed to be declared the winner of Saturday's election.

Dissanayake will be the country's 9th president. No election in Sri Lanka has ever progressed to the second round of counting, as single candidates have always emerged as clear winners based on first-preference votes. **P10**



2 minor girls from J'khand gangraped in Rourkela; 3 held

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, Sept 22: Two minor girls hailing from Jharkhand were allegedly gangraped here, police said Sunday adding that three youths have been arrested in this connection, they added.

The three accused have been identified as Rajendra Singh, Sajan Singh and Bholu Munda, all in their early 20s. The three allegedly waylaid the victims near the main bus terminus here Saturday evening and took them to a desolate place, where they raped them, police said.

Police said the two minors were staying with their sister at a slum located in Sector-14 here and had arrived at old Rourkela Township after buying footwear from a local market. As they were standing near the bus stand, the three accused struck up a conversation with the girls.

"They soon took the girls into confidence and said better footwear was available near the daily market and they would take the girls there. The accused took the victims in an auto-rickshaw to a desolate place near the stadium and raped them," informed SDPO Zone 1, Nirmal Chandra Mohapatra.

The accused left the place after threatening the victims that if they disclosed the matter, there would be severe consequences, police stated.

The incident came to light after one of the survivors informed the relatives and they lodged a police complaint late Saturday evening.

Phenomenal demand: Coldplay adds third Mumbai show

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 22: British rock band Coldplay Sunday added a third show to the Mumbai leg of its Music Of The Spheres World Tour 2025 citing 'phenomenal demand', hours after fans expressed disappointment over long virtual queues on the online ticket platform BookMyShow.

According to the platform's website, all three shows are sold out. The tickets for the new show, set to be held January 21 at Mumbai's DY Patil Sports Stadium, went live at 2pm on BookMyShow.

"Due to phenomenal demand, a third Mumbai date has been added at DY Patil Stadium for

the sale of the tickets of the two shows was supposed to open at 12 noon. Many said the tickets remained unavailable for booking well over 12.15pm.

The ticket prices range from Rs 2,500 to Rs 12,500, with Rs 35,000 for lounge area, according to the platform's website.

In less than an hour, the server got back up and BookMyShow shared a message of facing heavy traffic on every account trying to book a ticket, with the wait list going as high as 842,745 (data on BookMyShow website as per 1.39pm). "Because of heavy traffic, queue is moving slower than expected. Thank you for your patience!" read a message on the platform.

A few helpful fans suggested others waiting to refresh the

sale for the tickets of the two shows was supposed to open at 12 noon. Many said the tickets remained unavailable for booking well over 12.15pm.

The ticket prices range from Rs 2,500 to Rs 12,500, with Rs 35,000 for lounge area, according to the platform's website.

In less than an hour, the server got back up and BookMyShow shared a message of facing heavy traffic on every account trying to book a ticket, with the wait list going as high as 842,745 (data on BookMyShow website as per 1.39pm). "Because of heavy traffic, queue is moving slower than expected. Thank you for your patience!" read a message on the platform.

A fan claimed other platforms



The Mumbai concert will mark Coldplay's first visit to India in eight years

The Grammy-winning band previously performed in Mumbai as part of the Global Citizen Festival back in 2016

are selling Coldplay tickets at inflated prices. Soon, BookMyShow warned fans about unauthorised platforms selling fake tickets for the Coldplay India tour.

A few helpful fans suggested others waiting to refresh the

page. "If you are in the queue for coldplay tickets and it's going slow, refresh your page. It's going to be quicker #Coldplay #BookMyShow (sic)," said an X user. "Indians everytime when they try to book tickets of Coldplay and any other major

event on bookmyshow! Crashed again! #bookmyshow #Coldplay (sic)," wrote another.

"Bookmyshow server be like: Sir mai kaam hi nahi karta kuch! #BookMyShow #Coldplay (sic)," a user joked on X.

The Mumbai concert will mark Coldplay's first visit to India in eight years. The Grammy-winning band previously performed in Mumbai as part of the Global Citizen Festival back in 2016.

Music Of The Spheres World Tour 2025 will commence October 30 at the Marvel Stadium in Melbourne, Australia, and will conclude August 31, 2025, with a show at the Wembley Stadium in London, the UK.

downtown

SOAKED IN DEVOTION

Idols of Lord Ganesh being taken for immersion on Kathajodi river banks in Cuttack, Sunday



BJD calls 6-hr City shutdown Tuesday

PNN/AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Sept 22: The Opposition BJD has called Bhubaneswar shutdown Tuesday, protesting the alleged assault of an Army officer and his female friend in the custody of Bharatpur police station.

Addressing a press conference Sunday, BJD MLA Arun Kumar Sahoo said the hartal will be held for six hours - from 6 am till noon. BJD vice-president Debi Prasad Mishra said, "Our party president, Naveen Patnaik, is shocked over the incident. The custodial torture and sexual assault incident has shamed Odisha. The bandh will be ob-



served to intensify the protest against police brutality. After much discussion, we have decided to call for the six-hour bandh in Bhubaneswar."

Taking a jibe at the ruling BJP government, Mishra said a relative of Governor Raghubar Das

from Jharkhand assaulted an ASO during the initial period of the 100-day journey of the government, while the heinous incident at the Bharatpur police station occurred in the last part of the 100 days. "Odisha is known as a peace-

ful state where there has been a rich tradition of worshipping Goddess Mahalaxmi and Subhadra as symbols of women's power, but today this tradition is in danger. Following a discussion over the incident, the legislators, corporators and other leaders of the party in Bhubaneswar and surrounding areas have taken a decision to observe a six-hour bandh in Bhubaneswar Tuesday. The party president has also approved the decision," said Mishra.

On Friday, Patnaik demanded a court-monitored SIT probe and a judicial inquiry into the matter. The BJD has also submitted a memorandum addressed to President Droupadi Murmu and sought her intervention.

The party had earlier held a protest before the residence of the Governor demanding a judicial inquiry into the alleged incident and stringent action against the erring cops. The Army officer and his female friend were allegedly assaulted when they went to the Bharatpur police station to lodge a complaint after they were harassed in an incident of road rage in the wee hours September 15.

The woman also claimed she was sexually abused after being arrested by the police who alleged she misbehaved with on-duty officers. She also alleged that the Army officer was illegally detained and tortured.

BJD politicising the incident: Mallick

BHUBANESWAR: Senior BJP leader Dilip Mallick Sunday accused the Opposition BJD of politicising the Bharatpur incident.

He alleged that the BJD during its rule had turned a blind eye to a number of heinous crime incidents like murder and rape, and even used to shield the culprits.

Mallick said that the government has initiated strong steps in the matter related to the alleged police brutality against the Army officer and his fe-



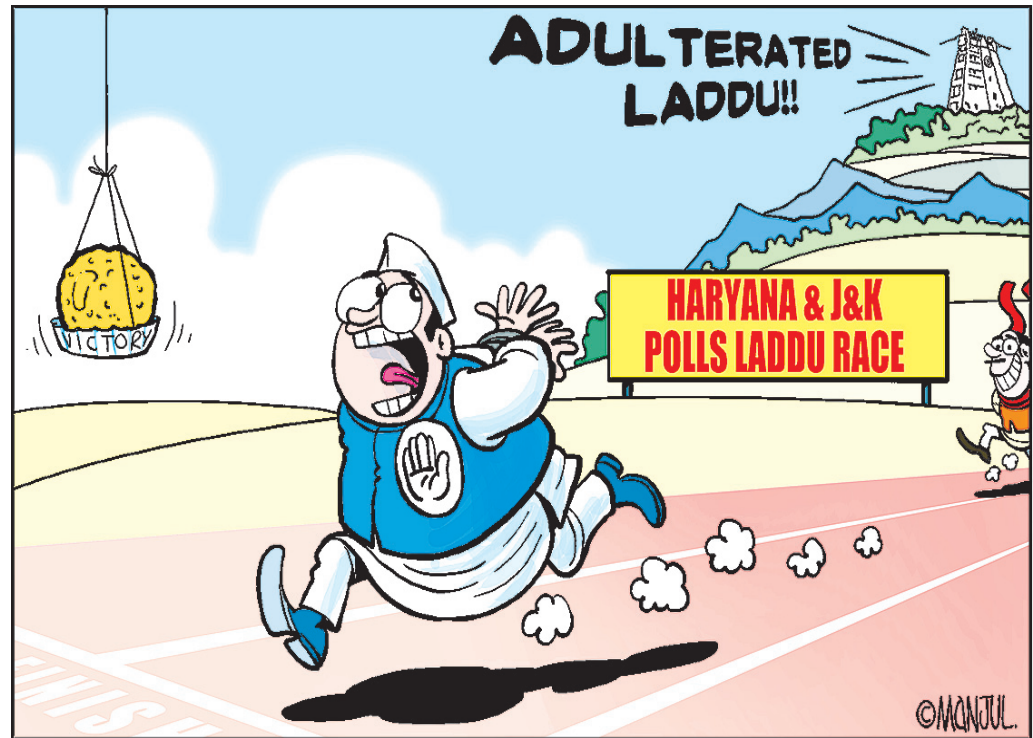
male friend by taking it seriously.

Five police officials of the Bharatpur police station had been placed under suspension on an order of the Director General of Police (DGP) fol-

lowing wide-spread furor over the alleged police brutality. The state Crime Branch is presently seized with an investigation against the errant cops against whom a case has been registered.

In a belated action Saturday, the Chandaka police arrested the seven persons involved in the alleged fracas with the woman and the Army officer September 14 night. They were however, bailed out by a magistrate's court just three hours after their arrest.

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



Row over BJD MP's comment on possible ties with Congress

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Sept 22: As the BJD MP Debashish Samantray's statement on a possible alliance with the Congress triggered a row, the Opposition party Sunday said it was his personal opinion.

While the Congress rejected such a proposition, the ruling BJP said the former ruling party of the state is "daydreaming".

After a video in which the BJD MP was heard speaking about the possible alliance between his party and the Congress went viral, Samantray said it is his personal opinion.

The BJP formed the government in the state in June, de-throning the BJD which was in power for 24 years.

BJD vice-president Debi Prasad Mishra said that people wanted the party to play the role of the Opposition.

"The BJD respects the verdict of the people. The comment made by Debashish Samantray is his individual view and doesn't reflect the party's stand," Mishra told reporters.

Samantray made the comment while addressing a party meeting at Kujang in

The question of Congress joining hands with BJD does not arise



MOHAMMED MOQIM | SENIOR CONGRESS LEADER

The comment made by Debashish Samantray is his individual view



DEBI PRASAD MISHRA | BJD VICE-PRESIDENT

BJD is daydreaming. They feel like fish out of water



GOLAK MOHAPATRA | ODISHA BJP VICE-PRESIDENT

candidates would lose all those cases leading to by-elections.

Samantray told party workers that he urged BJD president Naveen Patnaik to be prepared for by-elections for the seven Assembly seats and "if necessary, the BJD will join hands with the Congress and form a new government in the state".

The BJP has formed government after winning 78 seats in the 147-member Odisha Assembly, while BJD finished second with 51. The Congress bagged 14 seats and Independents won three. The three Independent MLAs are also supporting the BJP.

Senior Congress leader Mohammed Moqim alleged that the BJD is known for changing its colour as it had supported the BJP in Parliament in passage of several bills.

"The question of Congress joining hands with BJD does not arise," he said.

Responding to Samantray's comment, Odisha BJP vice-president Golak Mohapatra said, "The BJD is daydreaming. They feel like fish out of water after being ousted from power after 24 years."



ADIEU COMRADE: Dignitaries pay tributes to CPI(M) general secretary Sitaram Yechury at a state-level condolence meet held at Sookhana Bhawan in Bhubaneswar, Sunday

Tech glitch: CM cancels Mayurbhanj visit

Keonjhar: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Sunday cancelled his tour to Mayurbhanj district after his helicopter developed a snag, officials said. He cut short his tour and has started his return journey to Bhubaneswar from Keonjhar by road, they said. Majhi was on a three-day tour to his home district Keonjhar and neighbouring Mayurbhanj from Friday. He was scheduled to visit Baripada town in Mayurbhanj district from Keonjhar this afternoon. However, his chopper suddenly developed some technical glitches, the officials said. Due to the problem, the chief minister cancelled his Baripada visit and started his return journey to Bhubaneswar by road, they said.

ASI completes Ratna Bhandar technical survey

NO RESTRICTIONS ON THE ENTRY OF DEVOTEES MONDAY

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Puri, Sept 22: The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) Sunday completed its technical survey of the Ratna Bhandar of Puri's Jagannath temple, officials said.

Though the second round of the technical survey to ascertain whether there is any hidden chamber or tunnel inside the Ratna Bhandar was scheduled for three days (September 21 to 23), it was completed in two days, Shree Jagannath Temple Administration

(SJTA) chief administrator Arabinda Padhee said.

The SJTA had barred devotees from having a 'darshan' of the sibling deities from 1 pm to 6 pm during the survey of the treasury. However, as the ASI has already completed the survey, there will be no restriction on the entry of the devotees Monday, he said.

The SJTA chief administrator said the findings of the survey can be known from the ASI report.

"We hope that the ASI will submit its survey report very soon for the appraisal of the government," Padhee said, adding, the inventory of all valuables and jewellery stored inside the treasury will be done

after completion of the conservation work by the ASI.

The technical team also comprised experts from the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and National Geophysical Research Institute (NGRI), Hyderabad.

Ratna Bhandar Inventory Committee Chairman Justice Biswanath Rath, who also entered the temple to take part in the survey, said, "After getting report from the ASI, we will decide the future course of action."

Speaking to reporters here, NGRI senior scientist Anand Kumar Pandey said, "With the blessings of Lord Jagannath, the survey was completed in two days. We did all the mapping



and generated huge data. Once we go back, we will process the data and prepare the report. Data will be analysed in seven phases before preparing the report."

The first round of the survey was held September 18, when a 17-member technical team of ASI led by its Additional Director General Jahnnavij Sharma conducted the preliminary inspection of Ratna Bhandar and its laser scanning in the presence of Padhee and Justice Rath.

Rly to go tough on ticketless travellers; cops among top violators

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 22: The Railway Ministry has decided to launch a special ticket-checking drive around the festive seasons to keep a check on ticketless travellers, including policemen as they are among the top violators, officials said.

The Ministry, September 20, wrote a letter to the General Managers of 17 Zones asking them to start a special drive against ticketless and unauthorised travellers "for the period October 1 to 15 and October 25 to November 10" and take suitable action as per the provisions of the Railway Act of 1989.

Railway commercial officers, who are part of the ongoing reg-

ular drive in various rail divisions, say that along with common people, policemen will also be on their radar during the festive rush as they are among the top violators.

"In our recent surprise check between Ghaziabad and Kanpur, we found hundreds of policemen travelling in AC coaches of various Express and Mail trains without any ticket. When we imposed a fine on them, initially they refused to pay and threatened us with dire consequences," a railway official said.

He added, "We remained undaunted and made them pay. The response of the passengers was very encouraging as they were happy and surprised to see action being taken against police personnel."



Ticket-checking officials from North Central Railways Zone said that they want to focus on policemen and other unauthorised travellers because they create a nuisance for passengers with valid tickets.

When asked about the number of policemen caught travelling without a ticket in the recent past, a railway spokesperson

TTEs feel that policemen are the biggest nuisance as they not only break the law by travelling without a ticket but even harass valid travellers

from Prayagraj Division, said, "We don't maintain separate data for policemen, however, in the last three months, ie, June, July and August, 1,17,633 travellers were fined ₹9,14,58,171 only in the Prayagraj division under NCR zone for travelling without a ticket."

Train ticket examiners (TTEs) too feel that policemen are the biggest nuisance as they not only break the law by travelling

without a ticket but even harass valid travellers by forcibly asking them to share their berths and browbeat railway employees when confronted to take action.

"Dealing with WT policemen is a real nightmare as they not only misbehave with us but often threaten to file fake cases to harass us," Sanjay Singh, President, Indian Railway Ticket Checking Staff Organisation (IRTCSSO) said.

Singh added, "Of late, several videos were viral on social media platforms where policemen fought with railway staff, TTE and common passengers when confronted to produce valid tickets. I request the respective police departments to take exemplary action against such police personnel as they not only tarnish the image of police among citizens but also cause

inconvenience for authorised passengers."

Ticketless travelling is among the most common offences on the railways.

According to a response under the RTI Act by the Indian Railway to an applicant Chandra Shekhar Gaur, in the Financial Year of 2023-24, the Railway officials caught 361,045 lakh passengers travelling either without tickets or improper tickets and collected ₹2,231.74 cr as fines.

Keeping in mind the passengers' comfort during the festive rush, the Ministry has asked zones to nominate senior level officers to monitor these drives at divisional as well as zonal level. "Feedback of these drives may be sent to this office by November 18," the Ministry's letter said.

3 scientists from FMU in Stanford's global top 2% list

POST NEWS NETWORK

Balasure, Sept 22: As many as three scientists from the Fakir Mohan University (FMU) here have found place in the Stanford/Elsevier's Top Scientist Rankings for 2024. The rankings list the top 2 per cent of scientists globally.

The three scientists include, Pankaj Kumar Parhi of the department of Chemistry, Gouranga C Samanta of the department of Mathematics and Manojit Bhattacharya of the department of Zoology.

Parhi made it to the coveted list for the fifth year in a row, while Samanta made it for the fourth time. Bhattacharya has been listed for the second time consecutively.

Each of the three scientists has published a number of research articles, filed patents and wrote a number of books in the last five years.

The Vice-Chancellor of the university, Santosh Kumar Tripathy, has congratulated all the three scientists for the extraordinary feat.

The list, based on 'scopus' data, and curated by Elsevier in collaboration with Stanford University, identifies top scientists by analysing citations, h-index, and a comprehensive set of bibliometric indicators. The researchers are grouped into 22 fields and 174 sub-fields.

The rankings are designed to acknowledge both recent-year achievements and career-long contributions.

Watching child porn a crime or not? SC verdict today

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 22: The Supreme Court is slated to deliver Monday its judgment on an appeal filed by an NGO against a Madras HC order quashing a criminal case against a man charged with downloading and watching child pornography.

A bench of Chief Justice DY Chandrachud and Justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra is likely to pronounce the verdict.

Termining atrocious, the apex court had earlier agreed to hear the plea challenging the high court ruling that has said mere downloading and watching child pornography is not an offence under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act and Information Technology (IT) Act.

January 11, the Madras High Court quashed the criminal proceedings against a 28-year-old man charged with downloading pornographic content involving



children on his mobile phone.

The high court had also said that children these days are grappling with the serious issue of watching pornography and instead of punishing them, the society must be "mature enough" to educate them.

The Supreme Court had taken note of the submissions made in the matter by senior advocate HS Phoolka, who represented two petitioner organisations, that the high court verdict was contrary to the laws in this regard.

The senior lawyer appeared in the court on behalf of NGOs Just Rights for Children Alliance,

based in Faridabad, and the New Delhi-based Bachpan Bachao Andolan. The organisations work for the welfare of children.

The high court had quashed the criminal case against S Harish under the POCSO Act, 2012 and IT Act, 2000.

In order to constitute an offence under section 67B of the IT Act, an accused must have published, transmitted or created material depicting children in a sexually-explicit act or conduct, it had said.

"A careful reading of this provision does not make watching child pornography, per se, an offence under section 67B of the Information Technology Act, 2000," the high court had added.

Even though the said section of the IT Act has been widely worded, it does not cover a case where a person has merely downloaded child pornography in an electronic gadget and watched the same, without doing anything more, it had said.



IN SYNC: Artistes perform Odissi during Nuakhai Bhetghat Utsav at Sarala Bhawan in Cuttack, Sunday

OP PHOTO

We'll study proposal & take a stand: Naveen

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Sept 22: BJD president Naveen Patnaik said his party will undertake a detailed study on simultaneous elections before taking a stand on it.

During an interaction at an event in City, he said the party will examine the proposal and its execution.

"Let the details come forth, we will study and take a stand," he said.

Replying to a question on the new BJP government in the state, the former CM said, "All can see

how the law and order situation in Odisha has declined with the incident of the Governor's son at Puri.

Recently, an Army major and his fiancée were harassed violently at a major police station in the Capital city. This is not a good record."

He referred to the 'assault' of an Odia officer allegedly by Governor Raghubar Das' son.

The alleged sexual assault of an Army officer's fiancée at a police station here sparked outrage Friday with Patnaik condemning the incident as 'shocking' and demanding a judicial probe, while Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi vowing to take stringent action against the guilty.

Asked about the performance of the state and the Central government in its first 100 days, Patnaik said, "It is too early to start counting."

Stating that he had been serving the people of Odisha for the last 24 years, the BJD chief said his work would now continue as the leader of the opposition.

Interstate drugs racket busted

NEW DELHI: The Delhi Police Sunday claimed to have busted an interstate drugs racket with the arrest of four gang members. The accused used to bring the contraband from the bordering areas of Andhra Pradesh and Odisha for supply in Delhi-NCR, they said. Officials said the police also seized 357 kg of cannabis worth Rs 1.78 crore in the international market. The arrested accused have been identified as Sandeep, Joginder, Naveen Kumar and Rajesh, a senior officer of the Delhi Police's Crime Branch said. "During the investigation, a team arrested Odisha native Rajesh, who was in Delhi to collect payment for the contraband supplied by him," the officer added.

SWACHHATA HI SEVA CAMPAIGN

ECoR stresses on collective effort for cleanliness

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 22: In a spirited demonstration of commitment and shared responsibilities to cleanliness and environmental sustainability, East Coast Railway (ECoR) observed the 'Swachhata Hi Seva' campaign with a series of engaging activities, including a 'Prabhat Pheri', a 50km Cyclothon and a tree plantation drive.

The event was graced by ECoR general manager Parmeshwar Funkwal, who officially flagged off the Cyclothon, aimed at raising awareness for the 'Swachh Bharat Abhiyan'. Participants included ECoR staff, officers, and family members, who enthusiastically



took to the streets, promoting cleanliness and sustainability.

The Prabhat Pheri from Rail Sadan, saw participants marching with slogans, banners,

posters, and placards on the streets. A tree plantation drive was also organised on the occasion, led by Funkwal. Participants planted saplings to contribute to a greener and

healthier environment.

Activities also included an eco walk and a relay race, held at the Railway Stadium, fostering teamwork and promoting fitness among staff and officers from various departments.

"The campaign embodies our collective responsibility towards a cleaner and greener future. Together, we can make a significant difference," said Funkwal.

"ECoR remains committed to promoting environmental awareness and cleanliness as part of its ongoing initiatives, and the Swachhata Hi Seva campaign served as a perfect platform for reinforcing these values within the community," an ECoR official said.

Diversity the hallmark of Hinduism: Devdutt

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, Sept 22: Diversity is one of the hallmarks of Hinduism, renowned author and mythologist Devdutt Pattanaik said during the Odia translation of his book 'Ramayana Banama Mahbharta' at an event organised by the leading publishing house Pen In Books here recently. The book was translated by Tapan Kumar Panda.

Elaborating on the comparative aspects of religion, Devdutt said, "Unlike in Islam and Christianity, where there is a singular truth, in Hinduism, the truth changes depending on the person and the situation. The Western belief in a monotheistic God is at odds with



Hinduism's veneration of Ananta.

"The dualism of dharma-adharma and paapa and punya exists only in Islam and Christianity. In Hinduism, dharma and adharma are not equivalent to halal-haram. While some praise Rama, some argue that Rabana is fair. Hinduism has concepts like reincarnation, praprabda, and karma. There is no judgement day in Hinduism.

You have to take birth time and again," he explained.

The author said that the word of the word Itihasa emerged in Indian culture thousands of years before the word history came into action. History and Itihasa are not synonymous terms. The great epics Ramayana and Mahabharata are Itihasas, he said.

"Hinduism values creativity. In the absence of creativity, humanity would perish. Truth and creativity are intertwined in Hinduism. You can't conceive of anything outside of the sacred texts in Islam and Christianity. No religion, with the exception of Hinduism, offers a canon of sacred texts and a variety of interpretations of dharma," he added.

21kg ganja seized; 5 held

Bhubaneswar: The Mancheswar police Sunday arrested five drug peddlers, with a seizure of 21 kilogram of ganja from their possession, near Hi-Tech hospital square here. One four-wheeler, two motorcycle, and five smartphones were also seized from the accused, said a senior cop at the station. The accused were identified as Rashmiranjan Daku, Rajesh Kumar Nayak, Rashmiranjan Digaal, Ananta Nayak, and Ansar Khan. The peddlers were procuring the consignment from Kandhamal district, and later sold to small-time dealers at a higher price, said IIC Manas Ranjan Swain. IIC Swain said the cops received a tip-off from a reliable source early Sunday, stating five persons in a car are planning to sell ganja near Hi-Tech hospital. Following the receipt of information, the cops laid a trap and waited for the men to arrive near the spot. As they inched closer to the area, the cops intercepted their vehicle, and led searches inside it.

8th edition of 'Beyond Heritage' focuses on Odia Script & Language

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, Sept 22: More than 50 heritage enthusiasts from various parts of Odisha participated in an interactive edition of "Aithiyara Ante" (Beyond Heritage) at Odisha State Museum here Sunday.

Young and veteran researchers and enthusiasts spoke on the theme "Maa Bhasa, Maati Bhasa" (Language of the mother and motherland) focusing on the development of the Odia script and language.

The eighth edition of "Aithiyara Ante" tried to explore the epigraphic treasure of the Odisha State Museum which has a rich collection of inscriptions, copper plates and palm-leaf manuscripts. The participants also spoke on the subject and

raised several questions. The event ended with a short documentary on the palm-leaf conservation.

The young researchers including Soumya Ranjan Panda, Swetak Abhishek Mohapatra, Bishnu Mohan Adhikari and Prateek Pattanaik explained the development of the Odia script and its language. Noted linguist and scholar Subrat Kumar Prusty explained how the Odia or Kalinga script has evolved with a distinct and unique identity.

"As a race, we should feel proud that we have one of the oldest scripts in the pan-Indian arena. Odia, which was the sixth language to receive the Classical status, has its roots since 3rd Century BC or even earlier and we have proofs with us," he said. Epigraphist and independent



researcher Bishnu Mohan Adhikari appealed to the participants, especially the Odisha State Museum authorities, to initiate a process to bring back the dated first inscription of Odia script named "Urjam

Inscription" which was recovered in Andhra Pradesh, but it is still at a museum in Chennai as earlier the southern part of the state was under Madras Presidency. The participants also visited

TPSODL's campaign to promote solar energy

Scheme encourages households to install solar systems of up to 3 kW capacities and save up to 300 units of electricity per month

POST NEWS NETWORK

Berhampur, Sept 22: Tata Power Southern Odisha Distribution Limited (TPSODL) is actively promoting the PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana across Southern Odisha to encourage adoption of solar energy.

The government initiative aims to empower citizens with affordable solar energy solutions, contributing to a sustainable, green future. TPSODL's extensive outreach efforts span key districts, including Boudh, Koraput, Rayagada, Malkangiri, Ganjam, Kandhamal, Gajapati and Nabarangapur through stalls and outreach programmes. The scheme enables households to install solar systems of up to 3 kW capacities which can help consumers save up to 300 units of electricity per month. The scheme also provides a government subsidy, offering financial assistance of up to Rs 78,000, making solar energy more accessible to a wide range of consumers. TPSODL's initiative is focused on educating people about these benefits and guiding them through the process of adopting solar power.

At each event, TPSODL employees are available to assist consumers with detailed information on the scheme and to explain the technical and financial benefits of solar energy adoption. Consumers are also



briefed about long-term savings and environmental impact of switching to renewable energy sources.

Commenting on the initiative, TPSODL CEO Amit Kumar Garg said, "The PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana is a revolutionary step towards empowering citizens to adopt clean and renewable energy. At TPSODL, we are committed to supporting this transition by providing consumers with all the necessary information and resources they need to embrace solar energy. Our goal is to lower their carbon footprint, and contribute to building a sustainable future for Southern Odisha."

So far, over 2.7 lakh consumers have already registered for the scheme through the online portal, demonstrating a growing interest in solar power.

The museum authorities also displayed some select manuscripts for the heritage enthusiasts to see for themselves and realise how the process of conservation has created such a beautiful creation for future generations

the palm-leaf conservation wing of the museum and witnessed how the priceless palm-leaf manuscripts are preserved following their restoration and treatment through various scientific methods. The museum authorities also

displayed some select manuscripts for the heritage enthusiasts to see for themselves and realise how the process of conservation has created such a beautiful creation for the future generations.

It can be mentioned here that Beyond Heritage initiative has earlier covered topics like Temple architecture (at Parashurameswar temple), Martial heritage (at Barabati fort), Temple Food Heritage (at Bindusagar), Ekamra Astachandi (at Old Town Bhubaneswar), Maritime History of Kalinga (online), Math Heritage in Puri (at Puri) and Gajapati Kapilendra Deva (at Panda Pada in Cuttack). The group is mooting a future episode at the World Heritage site Sun Temple of Konark in near future.

FOR CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS CONTACT OUR BOOKING STATIONS

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

Devpt hit in Joda as ₹20K-cr penalty still to be recovered



POST NEWS NETWORK

Joda, Sept 22: Residents of this mining division in Keonjhar district, one of the major mining zones in the state, have urged the state government to initiate steps to recover penalty to the tune of ₹20,000 crore pending against violating mining companies, and make the mines operational so as to foster development of the area.

The huge penalty had been levied during the probe into the mining scam which is yet to be realised and deposited with the state government due to legal and legislative issues.

Reports said while the non-recovery of the dues has resulted in losses for residents of the mining zone, the state government has incurred thousands of crores of rupees loss in revenue.

According to information obtained under Right to Information Act (RTI), some

leaseholders who have been punished by the court for committing irregularities in mining have a cumulative outstanding penalty of ₹2079,47,63,992 crore. The state government has filed certificate cases against the defaulting leaseholders.

The HG Pandya mines has outstanding penalty of ₹92,66,21,483 crore in Case no-30/2018. M/s BPME Ltd has been levied a penalty of ₹846,28,63,209 crore in Case no-32/2018. The BK Mohanty mines have been levied a penalty of ₹412,57,62,893 crore in Case no-36/2018. M/s TB Lal and Company has been slapped with a penalty of ₹99,83,22,125 crore in Case no-37/2018.

Similarly, the BC Dev mines has been asked to pay a penalty of ₹125,67,83,406 crore in Case no-39/2018. However, the matter is now sub-judice in the Supreme Court. The Arjun Lodha mines have been levied ₹68,1,46,889

crore in Case no-40/2018. M/s Mineral Trading Syndicate has been levied a penalty of ₹3,66,14,868 crore in Case no-45/2018.

Leaseholder Bhanja Minerals has been levied with a penalty of ₹78,38,18,166 crore in Case no-46/2018. M/s Mideast Integrated Steel Ltd has been asked to pay a penalty of ₹677,92,23,53 crore in Case no-48/2018. The SN Das Mohapatra mines has been levied a penalty of ₹5,18,77,922 crore in Case no-50/2018, though the matter is sub-judice at present. Among the defaulters, some leaseholders have partially made payment of their penalty.

Similarly, the Sirajuddin Mines has been imposed a penalty of ₹18,800 crore, and the Jagatjanani Mines ₹820 crore for violation in mine development and production agreement. The amount is yet to be realized from them as the matter is sub-judice in the high court. While several leaseholders have paid their penalty and the cases against them has been closed, several thousand crore of penalty money are yet to be recovered from others.

When contacted, Niranjan Bohidar, president of Joda Vikash Parishad said some mines are now lying closed due to the irregularities committed by the leaseholders. "This has only resulted in losses for the residents of the mining zone. These mines, when operated, will result in more employment for which the state government should take steps in recovering the penalty amount and making the mines operational," he added.



LOOKING FOR A CATCH: Youths angling Sunday in the Mahanadi river in Sambalpur after closure of the sluice gates of Hirakud dam discharging floodwaters

Teacher held for molesting student

POST NEWS NETWORK

Pattamundai, Sept 22: Police here arrested Sunday a teacher of a primary school under Pattamundai Rural police limits in Kendrapara for allegedly molesting a Class IV girl student of the school. The accused has been identified as Ranjan Sutar.

It should be stated here that for the past few days, some students had been complaining to their parents about the teacher's inappropriate behavior and ill-intended looks towards them. The victim informed her parents that the teacher frequently called her



close to him and touched her inappropriately. After the parents got to know about the teacher's actions, the matter

was discussed at the school Saturday. Parents and villagers, including the girl's family, expressed outrage, demanding a life sentence for the teacher.

The villagers confined the accused teacher in a room before calling the police. On being informed, Rural PS IIC, Padmalaya Pradhan reached the spot, rescued the teacher and took him to the police station. Police formally arrested him Sunday after registering a case (No. 451/2024) following a complaint against him by the family members of the victim. The accused will be sent to POCSO court, said Pradhan.

Man dead, 4 hurt in honeybee attack

POST NEWS NETWORK

Lanjigarh, Sept 22: In a tragic incident, a man who was critically injured after being attacked by a swarm of honeybees at Betiapada village under Benagaon panchayat and Bijepur police limits in Kalahandi district lost his life while undergoing treatment at the district headquarters hospital (DHH) at Bhawanipatna late Saturday night. Four others, who were seriously injured and were admitted to the Benagaon hospital have now recovered and returned home.

The deceased was identified as Burja Majhi, 45, and the injured persons are Purna Majhi, 46, Lipa Majhi, 36, Mugri Majhi, 38 and Pagu Majhi, 38. All are residents of Betiapada village.

According to reports, the five individuals had gone to the forest near Titigaon waterfall Friday evening to collect firewood when they were suddenly attacked by a swarm of honeybees. Their family members rushed them to the Benagaon hospital. After showing signs of improvement Purna, Lipa, Mugri and Pagu returned to Betiapada village the same night.

However, Burja's condition deteriorated and he was shifted to the Bhawanipatna DHH by an ambulance. There he died Saturday night while undergoing treatment. Officials of the Bijepur police station visited the DHH and sent the body for post-mortem. The body of the deceased was handed over to his family members Sunday.



Locals said that the deceased's family comprises his mother Suri, 70, wife Lachinga Dei, 38, son Bikram, 18 and daughter Bhumika. They said that the family is extremely poor and they have requested the district administration to provide some financial support.

3 women held for assaulting Anganwadi worker



anybody violates laws, he said.

The 'Anganwadi' worker, identified as Urmila Samal, was allegedly tied to a tree and beaten up by villagers for "failing to serve eggs" in the mid-day meal at Mahapada Anganwadi centre.

According to reports, a group of more than 15 men and women barged into the Anganwadi centre while Urmila was carrying out her duties. They verbally abused her using filthy language, and when she protested, they tied her to a tree and subjected

her to a merciless beating. Some even recorded videos of the incident, seemingly enjoying her distress.

Upon receiving the news, Baliaipal CDPO Parvati Murmu and a few other Anganwadi workers rushed to Mahapada village and rescued Urmila. She was first admitted to Basta Community Health Centre (CHC), and later transferred to the District Headquarters Hospital (DHH) for further treatment. A case (No. 163/24) was registered at Singla police station, and an investigation was launched.

Deputy Chief Minister Pravati Parida spoke to the Anganwadi worker over phone Saturday, expressing her concern over the incident.

During the conversation, Urmila alleged that she was attacked for "organising women for 'Subhadra Yojana'", a women-centric scheme.

Parida, who is in charge of the Women and Child Development Department, also spoke to the chief district medical officer (CDMO) and the superintendent of police (SP) and directed them to take appropriate action in connection with the incident.

3 held over group clash



POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, Sept 22: Police arrested Sunday three persons related to the clash between two groups of puja revellers. An incidence of brawl Thursday over idol immersions has now boiled into a major headache for the police.

Officials of the Raghunathpalli police station initially detained four persons and finally arrested three Sunday after interrogation, Upasana Padhi, SDPO informed. "We have arrested them on the basis of two FIRs filed against the three accused. So far a total of four FIRs have been filed," said the lady officer. We have deployed forces at the disturbed areas to avoid any further incidents," she added.

There is palpable tension at the Keshari Nagar area, close to Labour Tenement near Jail road. The residents there are very much enraged about Saturday night's incident of arson. Many of them directly blamed the police for their delayed and callous action. "Despite being summoned, the police arrived quite late. All that time the mischief mongers were ransacking our area and the club building," informed a person.

"There were over 25-30 youths who brandished swords and other weapons and created havoc for over 30 minutes in the evening and the police arrived only after they left," another bystander added.

The first instance of trouble started Thursday when the STI Phatak puja committee members were going for the immersion of an idol. When the procession was passing through Keshari Nagar, some of its members had an altercation with the locals of the area. However, police did not let the situation get out of control.

However, Friday when Keshari Nagar committee members were out for immersion they had an argument with the

There were over 25-30 youths who brandished swords and other weapons and created havoc for over 30 minutes in the evening and the police arrived only after they left

some youths of the STI committee near ITI gate. Again, the police intervened and prevented the situation from going out of control.

However, Saturday night at around 7.30pm nearly 25-30 youths armed with swords and other weapons went on a rampage in Keshari Nagar locality. They ransacked shops, residence and the club room from which the Keshari Nagar committee operates. The hooligans also set two bikes on fire. There is a simmering tension in the area despite the posting of a police picket, locals said.

Doctor held for misconduct

POST NEWS NETWORK

Joda, Sept 22: A doctor from Mohta hospital located in this town of Kendujhar district, was arrested by the police and produced in court following allegations of misconduct with a female patient Sunday. The accused has been identified as Dr Anmol Mohta.

According to the allegations, Saturday afternoon at around 2.30pm, a woman had visited the hospital for treatment. After consulting Dr Om Prakash Mohta, the patient was advised to undergo an ultrasound. As per the doctor's instructions, a female staff member took the patient to the ultrasound room where Dr Anmol Mohta was present. After the ultrasound was done, the woman filed a complaint at the police station, accusing the doctor of misconduct during the procedure.

Following the complaint, a case (No-264/2024) was registered at Joda police station and police after arresting the accused produced him in court, Sunday. Commenting on the matter, hospital owner Dr Om Prakash Mohta stated that the allegations are baseless and the police took action without conducting a proper investigation.

Hindalco organises human rights conference

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 22: Hindalco Industries Ltd, in collaboration with the Odisha Human Rights Commission (OHRC), successfully organised the State Level Conference on Human Rights September 21 at Club House, Aditya Aluminium, Lapanga, Sambalpur.

This significant event brought together prominent dignitaries, human rights experts, government officials, academic experts, members of corporate and civil society organisation to engage in meaningful discussions on key human rights issues and explore collaborative approaches to enhance the protection of human rights in Odisha.

The conference featured an esteemed panel of dignitaries, including Justice Satrugana Pujahari, Chairperson of OHRC; Justice Bimal Prasad Das, Former Chairperson of OHRC; Asim Amitabh Dash, Member of OHRC and Chitta Ranjan Mohapatra, Member of OHRC.

The event was marked by insightful discussions, engaging panel sessions and interactive dialogues, making it an enriching experience for all partici-



pants. The speakers emphasised the importance of safeguarding the rights and dignity of every individual and explored ways to inspire collective action in the fight for human rights.

Addressing the gathering, Justice Pujahari addressed the evolving role of corporations, noting, "While corporates have often been seen as violators, they are now viewed as protectors of the inalienable human rights."

In his speech, Justice Das stated, "Children are born with inherent human rights, and denying these due to poverty is a violation. Just as oxygen is es-

sential for life, human rights are paramount."

The conference served as a platform to discuss critical topics such as indigenous rights, labour rights, gender equality, social justice and the responsibilities of governance in upholding human rights standards. The event fostered dialogue and raised awareness among participants, encouraging collective efforts to address human rights challenges. It reflected Hindalco's commitment to Human Rights and its ongoing efforts to contribute positively to the community.

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA, "e"-PROCUREMENT NOTICE
Bid Identification No. E.E. GTN (R&B)-09/2024-25
E-mail address - eeghatagaon2015@gmail.com
Letter No. : 6981 Dt. : 20.09.2024

1	The Executive Engineer, Ghatagaon (R&B) Division on behalf of Governor of Odisha invites percentage rate Bids in Single Cover system in online mode from the eligible contractor for Building / composite works as mentioned below	
2	Nature of the work	: Building Work (Composite)
3	Numbers of work	: 01(One) No.
4	Estimated cost	: Rs. 17.97 Lakhs (Approx)
5	Period of completion	: 02 (Two Calendar Months)
6	Date & Time of availability of bid document in the portal	: From 11.30 A.M. of Dt. 26.09.2024 to 05.00 P.M. of Dt. 03.10.2024
7	Last Date / Time for receipt of bids in the portal	: 05.00 P.M. of Dt. 03.10.2024
8	date of opening of Bid	: 11.00 A.M. of Dt. 04.10.2024
9	Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal https://tendersodisha.gov.in. Any addendum / corrigendum / cancellation of tender can also be seen in the same website only.	

Sd./- Executive Engineer
Ghatagaon (R&B) Division
OIPR-34140/11/0004/2425

FOCUS SUSTAINABILITY

PARADISE IN PERIL



Given rising debts, rising geopolitical tensions, and rising sea levels, the future of the world's paradise islands hangs in the balance

A perfect storm is brewing over the tranquil blue waters of the world's most picturesque islands. From the Caribbean to the Indian and Pacific Oceans, small island developing states (SIDS) are facing an escalating crisis fuelled by unsustainable debt burdens, exorbitant borrowing costs, and geopolitical competition. Of the Climate Vulnerable Forum's 68 member states, one-quarter are islands, and many are in or near debt distress, impeding their ability to invest in essential services, such as schools, hospitals, and roads.

volatility, that electricity often is expensive, further draining public finances and foreign-currency reserves. But because higher borrowing costs have made financing for investments in renewable energy inaccessible, many SIDS are left with no other option.

systems, and currency risks. These factors all drive up risk premiums, often putting the costs of clean-energy projects out of reach.

Few outsiders understand how central the energy transition is for island states. For all the reasons outlined above, SIDS leaders are desperate to reduce their fossil-fuel imports and switch to renewables. Yet they are hamstrung by a global financial system that discourages them from taking decisive action.

Acknowledging this problem, the heads of both the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank recently called for debt relief for developing countries to help them quickly install clean energy. The message is welcome, but insufficient. SIDS also need development banks to help by underwriting the risks of clean-energy projects and reducing the cost of capital. Without such support, the vision of a sustainable, carbon-neutral future that most SIDS share will remain unrealisable.

Compounding these economic challenges is an increasingly polarised geopolitical environment, with SIDS increasingly finding themselves in the

crosshairs of great-power rivalries. These tensions sometimes bring opportunities as richer countries compete for influence. Too often, however, SIDS are offered aid or investment only if they accept terms that will weaken the integrity of their political institutions and undercut their long-term interests.

Such geopolitical maneuvering tends to destabilise smaller players by turning them into pawns in a larger game. SIDS must navigate this terrain carefully to ensure that they do not trade long-term sovereignty and long-term stability for short-term gains.

We need an equitable and sustainable global financial system that does not penalise the most vulnerable. At the Climate Vulnerable Forum, we are demanding basic climate justice. Surely everyone can agree that those who contributed the least to the problem should not be left to shoulder the burden of adaptation and mitigation on their own.

We are also calling for an international system in which smaller countries' rights and interests have the same weight as those of large countries. As the secretary-general of the Climate Vulnerable Forum, I urge global leaders to recognise the unique challenges faced by SIDS. We want to be able to contribute to climate-change mitigation, instead of being shackled by economic conditions that exacerbate our vulnerability. But that will require restructuring debt to sustainable levels, and unlocking affordable capital for clean energy and infrastructure. Given rising debts, rising geopolitical tensions, and rising sea levels, the future of the world's paradise islands hangs in the balance.

The writer, a former President of the Maldives, is Founder and Secretary-General of the Climate Vulnerable Forum.

©PROJECT SYNDICATE



Mohamed Nasheed

WE NEED AN EQUITABLE AND SUSTAINABLE GLOBAL FINANCIAL SYSTEM THAT DOES NOT PENALISE THE MOST VULNERABLE

This debt crisis has multiple causes. As the United States and Europe hiked interest rates to tackle inflation after the pandemic, investors poured into safe, relatively higher-yielding bonds in the West and avoided riskier investments in developing countries. And as developing countries were forced to refinance debt at the higher rates, they suffered huge capital outflows. At the precise moment when poorer countries were trying to stage a recovery from the pandemic and make a once-in-a-century switch to clean energy, the cost to borrow on international markets skyrocketed, and the money left for domestic priorities plunged.

Climate change makes all this worse. Many SIDS are on the front lines of rising sea levels, increasingly severe hurricanes, heat waves, water shortages, mass coral bleaching, and other climate risks. Climate-driven disasters not only damage supply chains and infrastructure; they also force SIDS to borrow heavily for reconstruction and adaptation. The result is a vicious cycle that forces already poor countries to accumulate more debt, even as their repayment capacity shrinks.

Nearly all SIDS economies rely on imported fossil fuels, including to generate electricity. Owing to fossil fuels' price

SPECTRUM FOOD SAFETY

The scourge of adulteration

The controversy over adulterated 'laddoo prasadam' is snowballing into a major issue and has shaken the country because of the supposedly adulterated ghee or a combination of animal fat-based product supplied to Tirumala Tirupati, a widely revered Hindu temple in Andhra Pradesh. The "ghee" supplied by a Tamil Nadu dairy was sold at ₹320 a kg and was claimed to be FSSAI certified. At least 3 tonnes of it were sent to the Ayodhya Ramlala Temple at its 'pran pratistha' ceremony on 22 January.

The fake or adulterated products exceed the production of the basic raw material, milk, in the country. The ghee market in India was valued at ₹3,203 billion in 2023. It is expected to grow to ₹6,931 billion by 2032, with a CAGR of 9%. The fake ghee and milk product earnings may be double the market of pure milk and its products. The fake milk and ghee market would be worth ₹5 lakh crore. The average market price of any packaged ghee is ₹460 to ₹500 plus, though their quality can't be vouched for. This has not only raised suspicion about ghee quality but also capability of the country to produce such large quantities of paneer, ghee, butter milk, ice cream and various sweetmeat products, including perhaps milk chocolates.

According to a report in leading Hindi daily, to produce a kilo of ghee, 25 litres of milk is required and the unadulterated ghee can't be priced for less than ₹1500 to ₹2000. The story is attributed to pure ghee producers.

Officially, India's total milk production in 2022-2023 was 230.58 million tonnes, a 58% increase from 2014-2015. This makes India the world's top milk producer, contributing 25% of global milk production. The country produced over 6.7 million metric tonnes of butter in 2023, making it the world's top butter-producing country. This accounts for 58% of the world's total butter production.

In 2020, India produced around 170,000 metric tonnes (or 17 lakh quintals) of ghee. India is the world's largest producer and consumer of ghee because it is the world's largest producer of cow and buffalo milk.

The dairy sector contributes 5% per cent to the national economy and employs more than 8 crore farmers directly. Milk production in the country has grown at CAGR of 6.2% to reach 209.96 million tonnes in 2020-21 from 146.31 million tonnes in 2014-15.

That's impressive. Nearly half of all dairies in India fall in the unorganised sector and adulteration of ghee is rampant. Checks to ensure quality are irregular and often difficult. There are varying estimates of the amount of adulterated milk in India. A 2018 FSSAI study found that only 62.3% of milk sold in India meets quality standards. A Consumer Guidance Society of India (CGSI) report found that 79% of branded or loose milk in the market is adulterated.

In July 2024, 3,000 kg of adulterated ghee was seized in Gujarat. Almost at the same time, a team seized fake ghee at a retail mart in Jaipur; supposedly branded as state's popular brand Saras. About 5 quintals of fake Amul butter and ghee was seized in Noida, in June 2023, as the police busted a gang. Madhya Pradesh police raided three factories in Morena and Bhind districts on 19 July and ar-

rested 50 people at different places from Bhopal to Delhi having a chain of factories supplying two lakh litres of "milk" daily to five states.

Dr Sitaram Dixit, chairman, CGSI, says: "According to research conducted last year, the contamination has increased by 5 per cent." The most recent nationwide survey on milk and milk products in India was conducted by the FSSAI in May 2023. This survey is aimed at assessing the quality and safety of milk products and to curb adulteration. While the full results are still being compiled, earlier surveys highlighted that about 7% of milk samples were adulterated with harmful substances. The FSSAI has, meanwhile, launched nationwide surveillance on milk and its products to curb adulteration.

What has happened at Tirupati is merely the tip of the iceberg. With 79% products being adulterated, the spurious market may be having a huge share of ₹5 lakh crore or more as per conservative estimates. This is a great health hazard and must be checked.

INF A

In concentration and silence we must gather strength for the right action

THE MOTHER



Iris War

Israel and Hezbollah now appear to be going towards an all-out war after months of escalating tension. The deadly pager, walkie talkie and other communication equipment blasts triggered by Israel across Lebanon last week seems to have been the beginning of a new era of modern warfare. The Iran-backed Hezbollah might have fired a barrage of over 100 rockets towards Israel targeting a military base near the city of Hafiah but the new methodology of warfare has certainly changed the whole atmosphere globally. Israel's brilliantly audacious bobby trapping of thousands of Hezbollah pagers, followed by the blowing up of that terror group's walkie talkies could be considered a stunning fillip for the Jewish nation.

The Israelis have truly achieved what could be termed as a 'surgical strike'. The elimination of terrorist leader Ibrahim Aqil by Israel forces, whose funeral took place today, is a sign of great but partial success in this war of nerves.

But the most important lesson to be learnt by the world from this amazing success of Israel, no matter how partial it may seem later, is the act of virtually gouging out the eyes of thousands of Hezbollah combatants simultaneously who were spread over a large geographical area. The pager blasts, reportedly, could be activated when the user put the gadget near his eyes to open it to read the message. Those pagers were open-able, and thereby the confidential messages were readable, by the particular designated user only when the pre-scanned eyes (iris) of that combatant were in front of the screen. This is comparable to how iPhones, Samsung and some other phones, that can be programmed to open with facial recognition, operate.

Some countries, like India for example, have achieved hundred percent coverage of their military and para-military forces under biometric based registrations systems. These countries have to be extra careful in this modern day warfare situation. There will arise no need to 'avoid clouds to remain invisible to enemy radars' in future. The enemy might be lurking in the pockets (mobile phones) of every single Indian army, navy, air force, CISF and CRPF jawans and officers. The biometric based Aadhaar card that the Gov't of India has been insisting on using in every little activity, is issued after collecting iris scans of the holder. Along with this, hospitals and dispensaries insisting on Aadhaar numbers to accompany all medical treatment of every single citizen who reaches out to them for help, are also storing various health related data of the card holders. This dangerous move, that few if any Indians understand, is that any hacker can easily break into the humongous database of UIDAI and access all relevant information to make any modern communication or other such equipment to burst on the face of the user.

The whole world saw what modern warfare looks like as only 32 people were killed but thousands were blinded and disabled in two consecutive days of explosions across Lebanon. While Israel has not publicly acknowledged the intelligence operation that led to the simultaneous detonation of pagers and walkie talkies, the incident has drawn attention to the country's covert 8200 Cyber Warfare Unit. Going way beyond the capabilities of the US National Security Agency and Britain's GCHQ, Israel's Unit 8200 is the largest military unit within the Israel Defence Forces (IDF) and traces its origins back to the early code breaking and intelligence efforts established at the founding of Israel in 1948. However, following the IDF's inability to prevent the 7 October attack on Israel, the unit's reputation, along with that of the broader defense and security establishment, was immensely damaged.

The gadgets were apparently rigged by Israel long back but were detonated only recently. This raises questions on the timing of the operation. After international criticism of Israel due to its long drawn battle to dismantle Hamas in Gaza, resulting in the deaths of over 40,000 predominantly Palestinian civilians, Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu seems to have opted to shift the battleground to Lebanon to pre-empt a larger war on a second front. In order to maintain control over his Far-Right coalition partners, retain his position, and resist US pressure for what he considers an unacceptable resolution, Netanyahu had to show tangible results of the conflict to ease domestic pressure that was mounting on him to soften the war and negotiate for release of the remaining surviving hostages that were taken from Israel on the very first day of the war.

The war in Gaza is now threatening to turn into a regional conflagration. With the 7 November US presidential polls only weeks away, the focus of the White House seems to be to maintain status quo in the Middle East. And the future course of the war can only be determined after President Biden's successor takes the helm in January 2025. Until then, it appears to be a field day for Netanyahu and his brave IDF.

WISDOM CORNER

Sunshine is delicious, rain is refreshing, wind braces us up, snow is exhilarating; there is really no such thing as bad weather, only different kinds of good weather

JOHN RUSKIN

It is important to expect nothing, to take every experience, including the negative ones, as merely steps on the path, and to proceed

RAM DASS

The world is moving so fast these days that the man who says it can't be done is generally interrupted by someone doing it

ELBERT HUBBARD

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

1846: Neptune observed. This day in 1846, astronomer Johann Gottfried Galle became the first person ever to observe the planet Neptune, the existence of which had been mathematically predicted by Urbain-Jean-Joseph Le Verrier and John Couch Adams.

1889: Nintendo is founded. The Japanese gaming company was created by entrepreneur Fusajiro Yamauchi as a card company called Nintendo Koppai, which was based in Kyoto. The company originally produced and sold playing cards called Hanafuda. The release of Donkey Kong, an arcade game in 1981, brought Nintendo to the forefront of electronic and video games industry.

1909: Phantom of the Opera makes its literary debut. The novel about a disfigured musical genius was written by French writer Gaston Leroux. It was first published as a series in the French newspaper, Le Gaulois. The novel was later adapted as a popular musical and as a film.

1932: The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is founded. The Middle Eastern country was created by merging the kingdoms of Hejaz and Nejd by Ibn Saud, the King of the House of Saud. The day is celebrated as Saudi National Day in the Kingdom.

1969: The American film Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid had its world premiere, and it became a western classic, especially noted for the pairing of Paul Newman and Robert Redford as the titular outlaws.

1980: Jamaican musician Bob Marley, who was especially known for popularizing reggae, performed his last concert, a sold-out show in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; he died of cancer the following year.



Shivaji Sarkar

NEARLY HALF OF ALL DAIRIES IN INDIA FALL IN THE UNORGANISED SECTOR AND ADULTERATION OF GHEE IS RAMPANT

Water diplomacy

Sir, India has recently invoked the principle of "fundamental change of circumstances" under international law to seek modifications to the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT). This decision is driven by Pakistan's sustained cross-border terrorism, which India argues has drastically altered the circumstances under which the treaty was originally signed. The IWT, signed in 1960, governs the sharing of water resources from the Indus River and its tributaries between India and Pakistan. For decades, it has been a key framework in managing water relations between the two countries, despite their ongoing political tensions. The treaty has faced several challenges, particularly surrounding Indian hydropower projects on the Kishanganga and Chenab rivers. Pakistan has frequently raised concerns, claiming that India's development projects could potentially violate the treaty's provisions. These concerns have led to numerous attempts at dispute resolution, but the two nations have yet to reach a final solution, often remaining in deadlock. The unresolved nature of these issues continues to strain relations between India and Pakistan. India's recent notice to Pakistan, issued under Article XII(3) of the treaty, highlights a number of concerns, including population growth, environmental challenges, and terrorism. According to India, the treaty, which was negotiated and signed over 60 years ago, does not adequately address the modern realities of today.

Amarjeet Kumar, HAZARIBAGH

Peace is the way

Sir, Only if people are at peace with themselves can they live in the present. Peace denotes friendship without hostility at all levels. It is a celebration of culture, and ideals, of togetherness. The United Nations (UN) realised this as back as 1981 to observe the International Day of Peace or the World Peace Day on 21 September. World peace is critical for mankind because peace is akin to future. When weapons and insolence pave the way for harmony and tranquility across the globe, then the world would be a far better place to live in. Every nation has to bring in a "peace movement" that should act as a harbinger of an absolute peace in the world. Every single world leader would do a yeoman's service to mankind by sacrificing love for power for power of love.

Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA

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

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

WAYANAD AID MEMORANDUM

CHIEF MINISTER VIJAYAN ALLEGED THAT AFTER THE MEDIA SPREAD FALSE INFORMATION, A FAKE NARRATIVE EMERGED, CLAIMING THAT KERALA WAS ATTEMPTING TO UNFAIRLY GRAB AID

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Thiruvananthapuram, Sept 22: Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan Saturday slammed a section of the media for allegedly spreading "fake news" about the memorandum prepared by the state government for central aid in the context of the Wayanad landslide disaster, terming it "destructive journalism."

He warned that the government is increasingly compelled to take legal action against such "misleading campaigns."

"What is happening in Kerala is destructive journalism. A section of the media has turned into factories for creating controversies," Vijayan said at a press conference.

The Chief Minister said that



What is happening in Kerala is destructive journalism. A section of the media has turned into factories for creating controversies
PINARAYI VIJAYAN | CM, KERALA

Kerala has been discredited due to the fake news.

He alleged that after the media spread false information, a fake narrative emerged, claiming that Kerala was attempting to unfairly grab aid.

"The Opposition also seized upon these reports. The aim behind these stories was to discredit the state government by any means," Vijayan added.

The CM clarified that it is not the ministers who prepare the memorandum in the wake of a disaster, but rather professionals who have proven expertise in the field.

He said that the media had misinterpreted the data prepared by these experts.

The figures in the memorandum are not exaggerated, but are projected estimates, he added.

"Educated media personnel labelling expected expenses as 'expenditure' and later 'inflating amounts' is not merely a problem of lack of education; it reflects their specific vested interests. The government is compelled to take legal action against such misleading campaigns," the Chief Minister said.

The CM alleged that the media misinterpreted the High Court's

judgment regarding the memorandum.

"Interferences in Administrative Justice are occurring. Considering this, it's time to contemplate taking legal actions," Vijayan said.

In previous statements, Vijayan had said that the government had submitted a memorandum detailing estimated and additional expenses to the Kerala High Court.

"Currently, there are attempts to use that document to unjustly target the state government, which undermines the state's interests," he had asserted. Vijayan had also called on the media to rectify the "false report."

He criticised the media Saturday, asserting that this is not the first instance of media outlets spreading false information.

"We have numerous examples of the media's criminal obsession with distortion. They consistently launch attacks not only against the government but also against political figures and individuals who are not in their favour," Vijayan alleged.

Launching a scathing attack, he claimed that some media outlets are becoming tools for undermining Kerala.

The attempt to mislead by spreading false information on various issues. This unaccept-

able behaviour needs to be actively discussed by the public, which is why I'm elaborating on this," he said.

Vijayan noted that attacking individuals, political parties, and criticising the government is typical for certain media outlets.

Taking a dig at the media, Vijayan said that the recent false propaganda regarding Wayanad relief funds exemplifies the depth and extent of mainstream media's anti-leftist stance.

"After spreading falsehoods throughout the day, some even had the audacity to claim they were misled. After initially reporting incorrect information, they later corrected it, yet they pretend to be the ones who reported it accurately first. This is the state of the Malayalam media," the Chief Minister alleged.

Vijayan noted a surge of fake news and agenda-driven misinformation amid the competition among news channels.

Highlighting that the state has yet to recover from the calamity and that Kerala is working collectively towards Wayanad's recovery, he appealed to the media—"The struggles for survival of a community should not be trivialised for the sake of channel ratings."

Maha transporters claim delay in fitness renewal



It has become mandatory for commercial vehicles—such as trucks, tempos, taxis, and buses—to provide SLD certificate details during the fitness renewal process

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Sept 22: Commercial vehicle owners across Maharashtra claimed they faced challenges in renewing fitness certificates, particularly concerning Speed Limiting Devices (SLD) on vehicles compliant with BS-IV and BS-VI emission norms.

Transporters said issues began in mid-August following changes to the Vahan system—a national vehicle registration portal. It has become mandatory for commercial vehicles—such as trucks, tempos, taxis, and buses—to provide SLD certificate details during the fitness renewal process.

Many transporters and RTO officials the PTI spoke to view this requirement as unnecessary. They argue it not only delays the renewal of fitness certificates but also fosters corruption, forcing vehicle owners to seek assistance from dealers and RTO agents.

BS4 and BS6 are Bharat Stage (BS) emission norms set by the Central Pollution Control Board.

Under Rule 118 of the Central Motor Vehicles Rules

(CMVR), SLDs or speed governors, must be installed in all commercial vehicles (excluding auto rickshaws and quadricycles) to limit speeds to below 80 km/hr; a regulation enforced since October 1, 2015.

Older vehicles were equipped with external speed governors, while newer models feature an Electronic Control Unit (ECU) for speed regulation.

The Transport department requires detailed SLD information—including unique identification numbers, approval and fitment dates, and test report numbers—to be updated in the Vahan system. Without this information, fitness certificates cannot be issued, leaving many BS-IV and BS-VI vehicles in limbo.

"Without updating the SLD details on the Vahan system, fitness certificates for the vehicles cannot be generated," a senior Motor Vehicle Inspector said, adding that fitness renewals for several BS-IV and BS-VI vehicles now remain pending.

Up to 8 years, fitness certificates of commercial vehicles were renewed after two years and then once a year.

Transporters say they are frustrated over the situation. "I took my 2-year-old bus for fitness renewal September 3, but the RTO (Regional Transport Office) has yet to issue the certificate due to SLD details. It's been nearly 20 days since the renewal test, and I'm still waiting," claimed a school bus owner from Thane.

Another trucker also expressed discontent with the new process, noting that they previously could renew fitness certificates at any RTO.

Kerala Gov to inaugurate clinic in memory of doc stabbed to death

The clinic is being set up by the parents of Vandana Das at Thrikkunnappuzha in the Alappuzha district of Kerala



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Thiruvananthapuram, Sept 22: Kerala Governor Arif Mohammed Khan will inaugurate a clinic in memory of Dr Vandana Das, who was stabbed to death while on duty May 10, 2023. The Governor will inaugurate the clinic October 10.

The clinic is being set up by the parents of Vandana Das at Thrikkunnappuzha in the Alappuzha district of Kerala.

The building spans 2000 square feet and has the potential to be developed into a hospital in future. The clinic will operate daily from 9 am to 6 pm Union Minister Suresh Gopi will inaugurate a medical camp at the facility October 11.

Father of Vandana, Mohandas told media persons that his daughter had come here to spend her vacation at the family home near the National Waterway in Thrikkunnappuzha. He said that she had a strong desire to treat the poor at both Thrikkunnappuzha and Attapadi after completion of her MBBS.

Speaking to media persons Mohandas said that the family

was setting up the clinic to treat poor people for free as a memory to Vandana.

It may be recalled that Vandana Das who was doing her internship training after completing her MBBS course was brutally killed by a person later identified as 42 year old Sandeep May 10, 2023, in Kottarkara taluk hospital.

Sandeep, who was a suspect in a criminal case, was brought by police at around 4.30 am at the hospital where Vandana Das was on duty.

Police had brought Sandeep who had an injury in his leg and was under the influence of alcohol. The assailant, who was an upper primary teacher, had himself dialled the police and said that he was feeling threatened with his life by someone.

On reaching the hospital, Sandeep attacked policemen on duty and another person. After Sandeep turned violent, everyone ran out of the clinic except for Vandana who was inside.

The criminal took a pair of scissors from the dressing room and stabbed Vandana multiple times. Onlookers said that Sandeep continued to stab Vandana even after she fell motionless.

An autopsy conducted at the Thiruvananthapuram Medical College revealed that she was stabbed 10 times in her back and neck.

The drastic incident sparked outrage across the state and doctors accused the hospitals and government of poor working conditions for the interns and doctors.



Union Minister Nitin Gadkari presents Bharat Ratna Babasaheb Ambedkar Smurti Award 2024 to Minister of State for Social Justice and Empowerment Ramdas Athawale with his wife Seema Athawale during the Babasaheb Dr Ambedkar Smurti Award 2024, in Nagpur

IMF hosts health camp to mark Modi's 74th birthday

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Mumbai, Sept 22: As part of Sewa Pakhwada (service fortnight) to celebrate Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 74th birthday, a Mega Multispecialty Health Camp was organised by the Indian Minorities Foundation (IMF) along with various organisations of the Muslim community in Maharashtra Sunday.

The goal was to provide minority and underprivileged communities access to essential health services in line with the Modi government's goal of ensuring quality healthcare for every citizen.

Besides men, women and children from various sections of the society, the Mega Multispecialty Health Camp was attended by religious leaders from the Muslim community and Satnam Singh Sandhu, Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha) who is also the Convener of IMF.

As many as 200 renowned doctors from 16 medical specialties including Gynecology, Oncology, Ophthalmology, General Medicine, Diagnostic, Radiation Oncology, Pediatrics, Orthopedics, Internal medicine, Dermatology, Preventive Medicine, Homeopathic, Allopathic and Ayurvedic med-



icine among others, 300 paramedical staff, helpers and volunteers conducted the health camp during which more than 3500 patients, mostly from slum areas of Mumbai, were provided free screening, treatment and consultations.

The majority of the patients who availed free medical services including free medicines, health

kits and free-of-charge medical tests, during the camp belonged to the poor and underprivileged sections of the society.

More than 2000 sanitary pads were distributed and over 500 spectacles were also distributed to patients with vision impairments during the camp.

Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Cards were also created on the occasion to help people avail services at empanelled hospitals (public or private) anywhere in the country. Prosthetic arms and legs were also distributed and fitted to the patients in need during the camp.

Expressing gratitude to Prime

Minister Narendra Modi for ensuring easy accessibility to affordable and quality healthcare for all sections of society, doctors present at the Health Camp appreciated PM Modi for ensuring easy access to quality and affordable healthcare for every Indian in the last 10 years.

They also mentioned that PM Modi's mantra of 'Health for All' has ensured affordable quality medical services not just in metropolitan cities but also in remote rural pockets. People have been receiving quality medical services and medicines at almost every nook and cranny of the country today.

Play on CM Shinde's life, film on his mentor set to release

THE BIOGRAPHICAL DRAMA ON DIGHE, THE CHARISMATIC THANE DISTRICT CHIEF OF SHIV SENA REVERED BY LEGIONS OF SAINIKS, SHOWED SHINDE AND MINISTERS LIKE DADA BHUSE IN A POSITIVE LIGHT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Sept 22: In fragmented Maharashtra polity where perception management has become crucial ahead of the Assembly polls, a Marathi play on CM Eknath Shinde's life and the sequel to a film on his mentor late Anand Dighe are set to be released soon.

The play, 'Mala Kahi Tari Sangaycha Aahe --Eknath Sambhaji Shinde', is likely to be released after 'pitrupaksh' (a fortnight dedicated to one's ancestors which concludes October 2) next month, while "Dharmaveer Mulkam Post Thane 2" will hit the screens September 27.

The prequel of "Dharmaveer....." was released in May 2022 just before Shinde split Shiv Sena and joined hands with the BJP, leading to collapse of the Uddhav Thackeray-led

government.

The biographical drama on Dighe, the charismatic Thane district chief of Shiv Sena revered by legions of Sainiks, showed Shinde and ministers like Dada Bhuse in a positive light.

"Dharmaveer 2" was supposed to be released in August this year and its trailer was released by Shinde in June. The movie, however, missed the scheduled release due to floods in parts of the state.

"We will be releasing the movie across all theatres in the state," said director-writer Pravin Tarde. "Dharmaveer 2" delves deeper into the life of Dighe. Additionally, it provides a compelling perspective on contemporary politics and its connections to the past.

The Marathi play 'Mala Kahi Tari Sangaycha Aahe --Eknath Sambhaji Shinde' will be presented by veteran theatre per-



sonality Ashok Samel.

Talking to PTI, Samel said the 90-minute play will "very positively" showcase the character of Chief Minister Shinde.

Shinde, who rose from a humble background as an auto-rickshaw driver, works 20-22 hours as the chief minister, he said.

Samel also wants to take forward the flagship schemes of the Shinde government, like the Mukhyamantri Majhi Ladki

■ The play, 'Mala Kahi Tari Sangaycha Aahe --Eknath Sambhaji Shinde', is likely to be released after 'pitrupaksh' next month, while "Dharmaveer Mulkam Post Thane 2" will hit the screens September 27

■ The prequel of "Dharmaveer....." was released in May 2022 just before Shinde split Shiv Sena and joined hands with the BJP, leading to collapse of the Uddhav Thackeray-led government

Bahin Yojana that provides ₹1,500 per month to eligible women in Maharashtra. "The play will comment on how the undivided Shiv Sena sought votes as part of the alliance with the BJP, but later joined hands with the NCP and the Congress," he said, adding the actors are performing free.

The shows will be presented after 'pitrupaksh', he added.

The splits in the Shiv Sena and the Nationalist Congress

Party (NCP) have altered the political landscape in Maharashtra.

The developments not only bruised some egos but also burnt the chief ministerial ambitions in ruling Mahayuti comprising the Shinde-headed Shiv Sena, BJP, and NCP led by Ajit Pawar: Ahead of elections to the 288-member Maharashtra Assembly, the three parties are trying to claim the credit for the 'Mukhyamantri Majhi Ladki Bahin Yojana', which has been well-received among women in the state.

Against this backdrop, winning maximum seats has become pertinent not only for the ruling allies but also for the Opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi, comprising the Shiv Sena (UBT) led by Uddhav Thackeray, Congress and Sharad Pawar's NCP (SP), and an audio-visual medium which leaves a lasting impact on the audience can come in handy.

CJI to lay foundation stone of new HC complex in Mumbai

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Sept 22: Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud will lay the foundation stone of the Bombay High Court's new complex in Mumbai's Bandra East Today, an official said.

A Maharashtra government release Sunday said possession of 30.16 acre of land will be handed over the High Court in a phased manner, adding the first tranche measuring 4.39 acres has already been given.

It will have world class infrastructure, including well-designed and spacious court rooms, chambers for judges and registry personnel, an arbitration and mediation centre, an auditorium, library, as well as a host of features and amenities for staff, lawyers and litigants, the release informed.

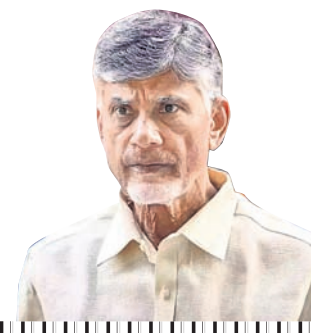
The plan is to enable stakeholders to have access to support services such as banking and



telecom, medical facilities, digitisation centre, creche, cafeteria, waiting areas, multi-storey car park, museum and lawyers' chambers, with the design keeping in mind accessibility features for differently-abled stakeholders, the release added.

The land on which the new premises will come up is well located, with proximity to the island city as well as the metropolitan suburbs, the arterial Western Express Highway and the Bandra Kurla Complex, among the country's leading commercial hubs.

national



People's sentiments were hurt after the revelation with regard to laddu
N CHANDRABABU NAIDU | AP CM

DENGUE CASES RISING IN MANIPUR

Manipur Health and Family Welfare Minister Sapam Ranjan Sunday said dengue cases in the state have been rising and sought people's participation to arrest spread of the vector-borne disease. Addressing a press conference, he said there were 148 dengue cases in August, while the number went up to 230 in September so far



of the day quote

I am confident that nationalist forces will win and disruptive and divisive forces will face a crushing defeat
JP NADDA | BJP PRESIDENT

Disasters and Congress government have taken the state decades back and I would appeal to people to root out the present government
KANGANA RANAUT | BJP MP

It is not only to serve the Tamil Nadu fishing community but also those who are living along India's coastline for thousands of years
NIRMALA SITHARAMAN | FINANCE MINISTER

Bihar: Flood-like situation grim, 12.67L affected

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Patna, Sept 22: The flood-like situation in Bihar was grim with 12.67 lakh people remaining affected in 12 districts, although water level has started receding in some places in the state, an official statement said Sunday. While the water level of Ganga River has started decreasing in Patna and its surrounding areas, the rising trend of water levels in several rivers in other districts is affecting low-lying areas.

A statement issued by the state Disaster Management Department (DMD) said, "Twelve districts along the Ganga are experiencing a flood-like situation and around 12.67 lakh people living in low-lying areas have been affected by rising water levels."



"A total of 361 panchayats in these districts have been impacted. Around 1,400 boats are being used by the district administrations in rescue and relief operations. The government is running eight relief camps in the 12 districts," it added. The 12 affected districts are Buxar, Bhojpur, Saran, Vaishali, Patna, Samastipur, Begusarai, Lakhisarai, Munger, Khagaria, Bhagalpur and Katihar.

Chief Minister Nitish Kumar had Saturday visited a relief camp for flood-hit people in Hajipur, and instructed officials to "take all-out efforts to provide assistance and relief".

Meanwhile, several trains were cancelled and many diverted as floodwaters touched the girder of a bridge in Bhagalpur district Sunday.

In a statement, the East Central Railway said that due to floodwaters touching the girder of bridge 195 between Sultanganj and Ratanpur stations, many trains have been cancelled and routes of several others passing through Jamalpur-Bhagalpur division diverted.

Kejriwal's dig at Modi on RSS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 22: In a new political strategy, AAP chief Arvind Kejriwal Sunday demanded answers from the RSS for Prime Minister Narendra Modi's actions, in an apparent bid to diminish his stature by implying that the parent Hindutva organisation was the master which should keep its child in control.

"Has the son become so big now that it is showing attitude to his mother?" Kejriwal said at a rally where he demanded five answers from Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) chief Mohan Bhagwat. The questions he asked were political softballs but the implication of bringing Bhagwat into his new political narrative is new and unusual. Kejriwal wanted to know if the RSS agreed with the BJP's politics of using central agencies to break up parties and topple opposition governments, and inducting "corrupt" leaders into its fold. In his first "Janta ki Adalat" public meeting at Jantar Mantar following his resignation as Delhi chief minister, Kejriwal also asked



Bhagwat if the BJP's rule on age of retirement would apply to Modi as it did for L K Advani. He questioned Bhagwat if he agreed with the BJP's politics of calling politicians "corrupt" and then inducting them into its fold. In another question, the AAP supreme asked Bhagwat how he felt when BJP president J P Nadda said his party did not need the RSS, which is the saffron party's ideological mentor. "BJP ke Rashtriya Adhyaksh J P Nadda ne Lok Sabha chunav ke dauran kaha tha ki ab BJP ko RSS ki zaroorat nahi. RSS BJP ki maa samman hai. Kya aaj beta itna bada ho gaya hai ki woh maa ko aankhein

KEJRIWAL -- WHO WAS RELEASED ON BAIL FROM THE TIHAR JAIL SEPTEMBER 13 ASSERTED TO THE CROWD THAT HE JOINED POLITICS TO SERVE THE COUNTRY AND NOT FOR ANY GREED FOR POWER OR POST

THE FORMER CHIEF MINISTER ALSO SAID HE RESIGNED BECAUSE HE WAS HURT BY THE CORRUPTION ALLEGATIONS AGAINST HIM

dikhaane lag gaya hai?" "Jis bete ko paal poskar bada kiya, jis bete ko Pradhan Mantri banaya, aaj woh beta apni maa tulya sanstha RSS ko aankhein dikha raha hai (BJP national president J P Nadda had said during the Lok Sabha elections that the BJP no longer needs the RSS. The RSS is akin to the mother to the BJP. Has the son grown so much that he has started showing attitude to his mother?)" "The son who was nurtured and raised, the son who was made Prime Minister, today that same son is challenging the RSS, the organisation that is like a mother to him," Kejriwal said. "Main Mohan Bhagwat se

poochna chahta hoon ki jab J P Nadda ne aisa kaha toh aapke dil par kya guzari. Kya aapko dukh nahi hua? Main RSS ke har karyakarta se poochna hoon ki jab J P Nadda ne kaha ki humein RSS ki zaroorat nahi hai, toh kya RSS ke karyakartaon ko dukh nahi hua." "(I want to ask Mohan Bhagwat weren't you aggrieved when J P Nadda said this. Didn't you feel sad? I ask every RSS worker that didn't you feel sad when JP Nadda said that we don't need the RSS?" the AAP supreme said. While Kejriwal was addressing the gathering, the BJP held a protest Connaught Place, barely a kilometre away from Jantar Mantar, against him and the AAP on issues of corruption. The saffron party held another protest against Kejriwal at the Rajghat on the same issue.

Jantar Mantar, on the other hand, was awash with the AAP's signature blue and yellow colours as hundreds of supporters filled the site with banners that declared Kejriwal as "one of us", affirming their unwavering belief in his innocence.

Uday Bhanu Chib appointed as IYC chief

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 22: The Congress Sunday appointed Uday Bhanu Chib as the president of the Indian Youth Congress (IYC), replacing Srinivas B V.

Srinivas B V had held the post for over five years and his tenure was seen as an eventful one for IYC with his relief work during the Covid pandemic being a major talking point in the media. Chib was serving as the general secretary of IYC and is a former president of the Jammu and Kashmir Pradesh Youth Congress.

Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge has appointed Uday Bhanu Chib as the president of the Indian Youth Congress with immediate effect, a party statement said. The party appreciates the contributions of the outgoing president Srinivas B V, it added. On Friday, Chib had posted a picture with Leader of the Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi, and wrote, "A memorable meet with my leader @RahulGandhi ji! Your struggle and perseverance for social justice is an inspiration to all of us."

SHORT TAKES

3 electrocuted in Tamil Nadu

Chennai: In a tragic incident, three persons including a Class VII student were electrocuted to death when they inadvertently stepped onto an illegal electric fence erected to prevent wild boars from entering into the farmlands. The incident occurred in Perumpattu village at the foothills of Yelagiri hills near Jolarpet town in Tamil Nadu's Tirupathur district Sunday.

15 held in ULFA(I)'s bomb planting case

Guwahati: A total of 15 people, including three women, have been arrested from across Assam in connection with the banned ULFA(I) "planting explosives at 24 locations to trigger serial blasts" on Independence Day. Assam Police Chief Public Relations Officer Pranabjyoti Goswami, in a statement, said that the force carried out the operations in collaboration with the National Investigation Agency (NIA)

Dharavi mosque protest: 3 held

Mumbai: Police Sunday arrested three persons for allegedly damaging public property and blocking a road, a day after locals protested to stop BMC from razing the "illegal" portion of a mosque at the "illegal" portion of a mosque at a vehicle of the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) and damaged its windshield, said the official from Dharavi police station.

2 killed after house collapses in Bihar

Patna: Two people were killed and seven others injured after the balcony of an under-construction house collapsed in Bihar's Jamui district, police said Sunday. A pall of gloom descended on Rishidi village in the Sikandra police station area in the district after two lives were lost in the incident on Saturday night. While one person died on the spot, the villagers rushed the injured to a nearby hospital where another person succumbed to his injuries.

Bus driver thrashed

New Delhi: A 45-year-old Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC) bus driver was allegedly assaulted and forcefully bundled into a car by a couple of men as he did not allow them to overtake. A purported video of the incident, which went viral on social media, showed a group of men holding the bus driver, forcefully pushing him inside their vehicle and allegedly kidnapping him.



Policemen at the spot after the bodies of missing fishermen, who were on board a trawler that capsized in the Bay of Bengal Friday, were found, West Bengal

Cong MP slams govt's 'inaction' on Manipur crisis

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 22: Amid the lingering crisis in Manipur, Congress MP A Bimol Akojiam raises pointed questions over the Centre's "inaction", suggesting that such a situation would not have been left unaddressed if it happened in states such as Uttar Pradesh and Bihar.

In an interview with PTI Videos, Akojiam vehemently criticised the Centre's handling of the situation in Manipur, asking why the government of India was allowing the north-eastern state to become like Afghanistan, which he described as a "banana republic".

"With 60,000 troops stationed in Manipur, the central government should have prevented this crisis from persisting for so long," Akojiam stated.

"If this were happening in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan, or Madhya Pradesh, would it have been allowed to linger? Most people would say no," he added. Ethnic violence in Manipur erupted May 3, 2022, following a tribal solidarity march in the hill districts to protest against the majority Meitei community's push for Scheduled Tribe status. Since then, the violence has claimed the lives of more than 220 individuals, including members of both the Kuki and Meitei communities, as well as security personnel.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi should have called his MLAs and ministers and said "this should not happen in India. Manipur is not a part of any banana republic, I will not allow this to happen, talk it out, what is the problem"

A BIMOL AKOJIAM | CONGRESS MP

Amid the continuing crisis, Akojiam urged the Centre to thrash out the issues in the state government, claiming that BJP MLAs were speaking in two different voices on the issue of separate administration.

"Prime Minister Narendra Modi should have called his MLAs and ministers and said 'this should not happen in India. Manipur is not a part of any banana republic, I will not allow this to happen, talk it out, what is the problem'," Akojiam said. Representatives of some Kuki groups in Manipur last month demanded the creation of a Union Territory with a legislature along the lines of Pondicherry, saying it was the only way out of the strife. Manipur Chief Minister N Biren Singh, however, has emphatically rejected the demand.

Akojiam, who represents the Inner Manipur constituency in the Lok Sabha, emphasised that while he viewed Singh as a "small-time player" in the overarching crisis, he could not be completely absolved of responsibility.



SNIPPETS

PMML Society member writes to Sonia Gandhi

NEW DELHI: Rizwan Kadri, a member of the Prime Ministers' Museum and Library (PMML) Society, Sunday said he has written to Congress leader Sonia Gandhi to allow physical or digit access to private papers related to former Prime Minister Jawaharlal

Nehru that are in her possession. Kadri, 56, who teaches history at a local college in Ahmedabad, said, he has been vocal in the AGM meetings of the PMML Society -- formerly Nehru Memorial Museum and Library (NMML) -- for "reclaiming" the papers that were taken back by Gandhi several years ago. Nehru, India's first Prime Minister, lived at Teen Murti Bhawan in central Delhi, which after his death became the NMML, housing a rich collection of books and rare records.

Chiranjeevi enters Guinness World Records

HYDERABAD: Megastar K Chiranjeevi Sunday received the Guinness World Records certificate as the most prolific film star in the Indian film industry. A representative of the Guinness World Records handed over the certificate to Chiranjeevi at an event here. "The most prolific film star in Indian Film Industry-actor/dancer is Konidela Chiranjeevi aka Mega Star (India) achieved 20 September 2024," said a certificate issued by the Guinness World Records. "I never expected to get Guinness World Records. All these years of my film career, dance had become part of my life," Chiranjeevi said, thanking everyone for the honour. "Mega star Chiranjeevi has performed 24,000 dance moves in 537 songs in his 156 films in a span of 45 years," sources close to the actor said.



Satya Pal Malik meets Uddhav Thackeray

MUMBAI: Former Jammu and Kashmir governor Satya Pal Malik met Shiv Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray here Sunday and said he will campaign for the Opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) in the upcoming Maharashtra polls. Speaking to reporters, Malik, a vocal critic of the current administration, expressed confidence that the MVA will emerge victorious and claimed the ruling BJP would be "wiped out" in the state elections, likely to be held in November. He suggested the MVA allies -- Shiv Sena (UBT), Congress and Sharad Pawar's NCP (SP) -- to make adjustments and stay united for the assembly polls. Malik, who had played a crucial role in the abrogation of Jammu and Kashmir's special status, met former Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray at the latter's residence in Mumbai.

Asia's oldest operating trams see slow death in India

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Kolkata, Sept 22: The dingling bell of a tram rattling through the streets of the Indian city of Kolkata is all it takes for Deep Das to have the "happiest moment" of his day. "There were times when there were frequent buses... but I still waited for the trams," the 18-year-old student said. But while their fans hail the slow-moving transport system as the "glory" of the megacity and an integral part of how historic Kolkata grew, the 151-year-old network is under

threat. A lackadaisical attitude to maintaining the tram system has contributed to its slow decay. Das is among a group of enthusiasts called the Calcutta Tram Users' Association (CTUA) fighting to protect the trams. CTUA leader and retired biochemist Debashish Bhattacharyya argues that city



authorities risk losing a cheap transport solution with green credentials. Brave the odds Introduced in the sprawling eastern city in 1873 during the early days of the imperial British Raj, trams in Kolkata were initially horse-drawn, then steam-driven. Electric-powered trams took to the streets in 1900. The tram now rumbles on the serpentine roads in the city, weaving its way through snarled

The trams now only function on two lines in the city, compared to a once-extensive network with scores of routes
The tram now rumbles on the serpentine roads in the city, weaving its way through snarled traffic jams

trundle along at around 20 kilometres (12 miles) per hour, at best, when they're not stuck in traffic. The state's West Bengal Transport Corporation argues its trams are cheap, safe, produce no noxious fumes and are economical, fitting five times more passengers than a bus, calling them part of the city's "glorious past, present and our future". Rides are affordable at seven rupees (\$0.08), less than a cup of tea on the street and cheaper than the bus. But since they now run on irregular schedules, many commuters would rather pay more to be on time.



Wayanad's beauty is undisputed, but it is the compassion and kindness of its people that has always drawn me to it. Today, so many of those people who rely on tourism for their livelihood are looking to you all for help

RAHUL GANDHI
LEADER OF OPPI IN THE LOK SABHA

11 BANGLADESHIS ARRESTED IN TRIPURA

A total of 11 Bangladeshis have been arrested in Tripura for allegedly entering India without valid documents, GRP said Sunday. Three of their Indian facilitators have also been nabbed, a GRP officer said. Acting on a tip-off, a GRP team nabbed the Bangladeshis at Agartala railway station Saturday evening when they were planning to go to Chennai and Ahmedabad by train



of the day quote

People have raised the flag of democracy so high that Pakistan is feeling pain in its belly. We do not want enmity with Pakistan as we want good relations with all our neighbours. Pakistan keeps doing unholy things against India to divert the attention of its people from its internal problems

RAJNATH SINGH | DEFENCE MINISTER

Fearing defeat, the BJP has fielded parties like the INLD, HLP and JJP in the elections to cut into Congress' votes. However, the public has understood that every vote given to vote cutters will benefit the BJP

BHUPINDER SINGH HOODA | CONGRESS LEADER

The Babri structure has been demolished forever. The structure of slavery was demolished, paving the way for construction of the Ram temple in Ayodhya

YOGI ADITYANATH | UTTAR PRADESH CM

X POST OF THE DAY

If Kerala belongs to ALL Indians as claimed by you then Uttar Pradesh should also belong of Malayalis if Uttar Pradesh belongs to Malayalis as per your observation then Malayalis should have the freedom to eat BEEF while living in Uttar Pradesh in a similar way they have in KL

@VarierAravind

SHORT TAKES

Nitish writes to PM Modi

Patna: Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar Sunday wrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, requesting him to introduce a Vande Bharat train between Ayodhya and Sitamarhi so that pilgrims get better rail connectivity between the two holy towns. The state government has been developing Punaura Dham Janki Mandir, a Hindu pilgrimage site, in Sitamarhi district that is considered the birthplace of the goddess Sita.

Tiger found dead in national park

Jaipur: A three-year-old male tiger was found dead Sunday following a territorial battle in Ranthambore Tiger Reserve, located in Rajasthan's Sawai Madhopur district, an official said. Ramanand Bhaskar, Deputy Conservator of Forest told PTI that the forest guards discovered the tiger's body in the Khandar range, showing signs of injury. With this incident, the total number of tigers in the national park, which is one of the biggest and most renowned national parks in Northern India, has decreased to 72.

Minor gangraped; two juveniles held

Ballia (UP): Two minor boys allegedly gang raped a seven-year-old girl here, police said Sunday. Both the accused have been apprehended, they said. The incident took place in Kotwali area Friday afternoon when the boys aged around seven to eight years lured the girl and raped her, the police said. They said the girl returned home later and when her condition deteriorated Saturday, the family took her to the district hospital.

Netflix under scrutiny

The Indian official's email shows growing scrutiny of Netflix in India, where it has roughly 10 million users and which it considers a growth market where companies target affluent people in the nation of 1.4 billion people

REUTERS

New Delhi, Sept 22: India is investigating the business practices of US streaming giant Netflix's local operations, including allegations of visa violations and racial discrimination, according to a government email sent to a former executive.

The details of India's investigation were included in a July 20 email, reviewed by Reuters, which was written by a Home Ministry official to Netflix's former director of business and legal affairs for India, Nandini Mehta, who left the company in 2020.

"This is regarding visa and tax violations concerns regarding the business practices of Netflix in India," wrote Indian official Deepak Yadav from the Foreigners Regional Registration Office (FRRO) of the Home Ministry in New Delhi.

"We have received certain details in this regard w.r.t (with respect to) the stated company's conduct, visa violation, illegal structures, tax evasion and other malpractices including incidents of racial discrimination that company has been engaged in while conducting its business in India," he added.

In an emailed statement, Mehta said she is pursuing a lawsuit in US against Netflix for alleged wrongful termination as well as racial and gender discrimination - charges the com-



Netflix faces growing scrutiny in key growth market of India
Indian official email shows many business issues being looked at
Netflix says not aware of any such investigation
Former Netflix executive was asked for documents, details

pany denies. Mehta said she welcomed the Indian investigation and hopes the authorities make their findings public, but did not elaborate on the allegations made by the government. Yadav declined to comment, saying he was not authorised to speak to media. The FRRO and India's home ministry did not respond to Reuters queries. A Netflix spokesperson said the company was "unaware of an investigation by the Indian government."

The Indian official's email shows growing scrutiny of Netflix in India, where it has roughly 10 million users and which it considers a growth market where companies target affluent people in the nation of 1.4 billion people. Over the years, the US streaming giant has developed more local content featuring Hindi film industry

actors. It has also often faced heat in India over its content deemed insensitive by some users. This month, it was forced to add new disclaimers to an Indian series about a plane hijack after social media outrage and government anger over what they said was Muslim hijackers being shown as Hindus.

SEEKING DOCUMENTS, US LAWSUIT
While it is known that Netflix has since 2023 faced an Indian tax demand - which it is challenging - the existence of a broader investigation into allegations including visa compliance and racial discrimination has not been previously reported.

The Indian government's email did not elaborate which agencies are looking at issues concerning Netflix. The FRRO works closely with home ministry's Intelligence Bureau, the domestic

intelligence agency, and is the main agency looking into foreigners' visa compliance and permissions to visit so-called "sensitive" regions.

Last year, India accused Chinese smartphone player Vivo and its Indian affiliates for breaching visa rules by visiting certain "sensitive" regions without permission. India classifies parts of certain states such as Jammu & Kashmir in north and Sikkim in east as restricted areas. The FRRO also acts as a liaison in matters related to foreigners with other government offices.

Mehta worked at the company's Los Angeles and Mumbai offices from April 2018 to April 2020, her LinkedIn profile shows.

The Indian government email asked her to provide "details/documents" as she was a former legal executive of the company. In 2021, Mehta sued Netflix in Los Angeles County Superior Court in California for alleged wrongful termination and racial and gender discrimination, among other things, US court filings show.

Netflix has in US court denied "each and every allegation" and said in its statement that Mehta was fired for repeatedly using her corporate credit card for tens of thousands of dollars in personal expenses. Mehta said she will "continue to fight for justice." Her case is set for a status hearing Monday in Los Angeles.

BENGAL FLOOD

MAMATA AGAIN WRITES TO MODI



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, Sept 22: Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee wrote another letter to PM Narendra Modi on the flood situation in West Bengal, maintaining that Damodar Valley Corporation (DVC) released water from its reservoirs without consulting her government, inundating several districts.

Responding to Banerjee's earlier letter to the PM, Union Jai Shakti Minister CR Paatil had said the state's officials were informed at every stage about the release of water from DVC reservoirs, which was essential to prevent a major disaster.

The CM said, "While the hon'ble minister claims that the release from DVC dams was carried out by consensus and collaboration with the Damodar Valley Reservoir Regulation Committee, including consultations with representatives of the government of West Bengal, I may respectfully disagree."

"Moreover peak release from the reservoirs lasting for a prolonged period of nine hours were conducted with only 3.5 hours notice which proved insufficient for effective disaster management," she said in the letter dated September 21, which was made public Sunday.

Banerjee said that on the night of September 16, she had requested the DVC chairman to defer the release, but it was not adhered to. Stating that her government did not consent to the

peak discharge of 2.5 lakh cusecs, she said it had requested the volume of discharge be reduced to 2.3 lakh cusecs at 4.34 pm September 17 and 2 lakh cusecs at 5 pm.

The CM said the peak discharge of 2.5 lakh cusecs could have been avoided.

Banerjee said that as a protest against the "apparent disregard for West Bengal's concerns" and the lack of cooperation regarding flood moderation, her government was withdrawing its representative from the

DVRRRC immediately.

She said the Ghatol Master Plan in Paschim and Purba Medinipur districts, and the flood management scheme for Uttar Dinajpur, Dakshin Dinajpur and Malda were approved with investment clearance of ₹1,238.95 crore and ₹496.70 crore.

Despite these projects being approved for a 100 per cent central grant under the River Management Activities in Border Areas (RMBAs) on March 14, no funds have been received, she said. In her letter to Modi September 20, she claimed that 5 million people in the state were affected by the floods.

In his response to it, Paatil had explained that the releases were managed by the Damodar Valley Reservoir Regulation Committee (DVRRRC), which includes representatives from the Central Water Commission, West Bengal, Jharkhand, and the DVC.

BJP MP Samik Bhattacharya accused Banerjee of politicising the flood instead of mitigating sufferings of people.

In her letter to Modi September 20, she claimed that 5 million people in the state were affected by the floods

Bengal Power secy steps down from DVC board

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, Sept 22: Amid a war of words between West Bengal government and Centre over release of water from reservoirs of Damodar Valley Corporation, state Power secretary Santanu Basu has stepped down from the board of DVC, officials said Sunday.

The Chief Engineer, Irrigation and Waterways of West Bengal has also quit the Damodar Valley Reservoir Regulation Committee (DVRRRC), they said. Basu in an email to DVC chairman on September 21 said, "In view of the unprecedented and uncontrolled release of water by the DVC from its dam systems, leading to widespread inundation causing immense sufferings to the people in vast areas of the state, I do hereby tender my resignation as the member of state from the board of DVC."

State Information and Cultural Affairs Department in a statement on Sunday said "Apart from the Power secretary, the Chief Engineer, Irrigation and Waterways, West Bengal, also resigned to voice protest on the same issue from Damodar Valley Reservoir Regulation Committee (DVRRRC)." DVC Chairman S Suresh Kumar did not respond to repeated phone calls.



National Conference Vice President Omar Abdullah holds the party flag as he takes a 'shikara' ride during a rally ahead of second phase election of Jammu and Kashmir Assembly, at Dal Lake in Srinagar

K'taka HC judge expresses regret

BANGALORE: Justice V Srishananda of the Karnataka High Court has expressed regret over the alleged objectionable remarks he made recently during judicial proceedings, which have gone viral prompting the Supreme Court to take cognisance of it. A five-judge bench of the Apex court headed by the Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud

September 20 took serious note of two videos in which the HC judge is seen making the comments in open court and sought a report from the Registrar General of the High Court. In one of the clips, Justice Srishananda referred to an area in Bengaluru as "Pakistan." As the court proceedings commenced, Justice Srishananda read out his statement in this connection Saturday afternoon. "A few observations made during judicial proceedings were reported out of context on social media platforms. The observations were unintentional and not meant to hurt any individual or any section of society. If such observations hurt any individual or any section of society or community, I express my sincere regrets," the HC judge said.

TIRUPATI LADDU ROW PIL IN SC SEEKS SIT PROBE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 22: A public interest litigation (PIL) matter has been filed in the Supreme Court, seeking a probe by a Special Investigation Team (SIT) into the alleged use of animal fat in Tirupati laddus.

The petition filed by Surjit Singh Yadav, a farmer and the president of the Hindu Sena, has contended that the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD), by serving "laddu prasadam"

Venkatswara Swamy temple has shaken the conscience of the Hindu community and outraged the religious feelings and sentiments of its members.

"The petition has been filed for the benefit of the public in general, who may be incapable of accessing the court themselves on account of being not fully/properly equipped, financially as well as legally, and thus, in no position to resort to the remedy of 'Public Interest Litigation,'" the plea has said.

'Poor most hit on fertility front due to lifestyle issues'

LIFESTYLE FACTORS SUCH AS OBESITY, POOR DIET, SMOKING, AND CHRONIC STRESS, WHICH ARE OFTEN EXACERBATED IN MARGINALISED COMMUNITIES DUE TO LACK OF RESOURCES AND AWARENESS, ARE INCREASINGLY RECOGNISED AS SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTORS TO INFERTILITY

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 22: Infertility is not just a medical condition but a crisis fuelled by lifestyle choices, with infertility rates soaring particularly in lower-income groups and tier 2 and 3 cities where access to healthcare is limited, a top IVF specialist said.

Dr Ajay Murdia, the man behind one of India's largest fertility chain, Indira IVF, said while advancements in assisted reproductive technologies like In Vitro Fertilization (IVF) offer hope, it is a reality that the underprivileged are hit hard.

"Infertility rates are soaring, particularly in lower-income and tier 2 and 3 cities, where access to healthcare, nutrition, and education is limited," Dr Murdia, founder and chairman of Indira IVF, told PTI.

"Infertility is no longer just a medical issue; it's a crisis fuelled by lifestyle choices that hit the underprivileged hardest. Without action, even advancements like IVF will remain out of reach for many," he said.

Lifestyle factors such as obesity, poor diet, smoking, and chronic stress, which are often exacerbated in marginalised communities due to lack of resources and awareness, are increasingly recognised as significant contributors to infertility.

These issues go beyond personal health; they represent barriers to conception that have a more pronounced impact on those with fewer means, Dr Murdia stated.

The scope of this crisis becomes evident when examining the startling statistics surrounding obesity and its impact



on fertility. The World Health Organization reports that one in eight people worldwide is classified as obese, a condition that dramatically raises the risk of infertility.

Obese women are three times more likely to struggle with

infertility compared to those maintaining a healthy weight, while for men, every additional 9 kg beyond their ideal weight raises their risk of infertility by 10 per cent.

These trends are often exacerbated in less affluent areas, where healthcare support and

Infertility rates are soaring, particularly in lower-income and tier 2 and 3 cities, where access to healthcare, nutrition, and education is limited

DR MURDIA | FOUNDER AND CHAIRMAN OF INDIRA IVF

lifestyle interventions are scarce, he said.

Smoking/tobacco chewing stands as another lifestyle choice with major implications for reproductive health, Dr Murdia highlighted.

Studies show that female smokers have a 54 per cent higher chance of delayed conception over a year compared to non-smokers, and men who smoke more than 20 cigarettes a day experience a 19 per cent decline in sperm concentration, he

said. These findings, published by the American Society for Reproductive Medicine and the National Library of Medicine, underscore the severe impact of smoking on fertility and the necessity of public health strategies to address this issue.

The consequences of these lifestyle factors in lower-income communities extend beyond physical health, he said adding infertility can place an enormous emotional and psychological burden on individuals and families, leading to anxiety, depression, and strained relationships.

This burden is often magnified for those in underprivileged areas, where social stigma around infertility is more pronounced and mental health support is limited, he highlighted.

international

of the day quote

We are involved in a set of ongoing conversations with interlocutors on all sides. Obviously, the people see value in India's engagement in these conversations, and we are able to talk to multiple interlocutors

What is being seen in Sinaloa is not the fault of the United States. US cannot be held responsible for the massacres that we see in different places'

This (UN's support in Bangladesh's reform initiatives) is a great opportunity for the country to reform the economy and fix almost every institution

SHORT TAKES

NK sends more trash balloons

Seoul: North Korea sent more balloons likely carrying trash toward South Korea Sunday, the South's military said, just four days after a similar launch. The Joint Chiefs of Staff said that North Korea resumed its balloon campaign and warned the balloons may float toward Seoul and the surrounding Gyeonggi Province. Since late May, the North has launched thousands of balloons carrying trash in retaliation against anti-Pyongyang leaflets sent across the border by North Korean defectors and activists in South Korea. In response to the balloon launches, the South's military has been blasting daily anti-North Korean propaganda broadcasts through loudspeakers on the border since July 21. It has refrained from directly shooting down the balloons, citing safety concerns.

Bomb hits foreign diplomats' convoy

Peshawar: A roadside bomb hit a convoy of foreign diplomats visiting northwest Pakistan Sunday, killing a police officer in their security detail, police said. Swat district police officer Zahidullah Khan said the diplomats were visiting the Swat valley area on the invitation of local chamber of commerce. "The squad that was leading the convoy was hit by a roadside bomb," he said. Another four police officers were wounded, Khan said. All the nearly dozen diplomats were safe and were heading back to Islamabad, police said. "All the ambassadors remained safe in the attack and had been shifted to a safe place before their departure to Islamabad," Deputy Inspector General of police Mohammad Ali Gandapur told Reuters.

Iran: Coal mine blast claims 31

Dubai: A gas explosion in a coal mine in Iran's South Khorasan Province killed at least 31 people and injured 20, Iran's state media said Sunday. The accident was caused by a methane gas explosion in two blocks, B and C, of the mine run by the Madanjoo company, state media said. "76% of the country's coal is provided from this region and around 8 to 10 big companies are working in the region including Madanjoo company," the governor of South Khorasan Province Ali Akbar Rahimi told state TV Sunday. The rescue operation in block B has been completed. Of the 47 workers who were in the block 30 died and 17 were injured, Rahimi said earlier.



I stand with those who see their basic rights trampled and with those who act for the common good in response to the cries from the poor of the earth
POPE FRANCIS | HEAD OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

NEPAL TO HOLD YOGA RETREAT

Hotel Association of Nepal is organising a yoga retreat in western Nepal's Pokhara where renowned yoga enthusiasts from across the world will train in theoretical and practical aspects of the ancient wisdom



Hezbollah, Israel step up attacks

ABOUT 150 ROCKETS, CRUISE MISSILES AND DRONES WERE FIRED AT ISRAEL OVERNIGHT AND INTO SUNDAY, MOST OF WHICH WERE INTERCEPTED BY AIR DEFENCES

REUTERS

Beirut, Sept 22: Israel and Hezbollah exchanged heavy fire into Sunday, with Israeli warplanes carrying out the most intense bombardment in almost a year of conflict across Lebanon's south and Hezbollah firing rockets deep into northern Israel.

Israeli Defence Minister Yoav Gallant said strikes would continue until it was safe for evacuated people in the north to return, setting the stage for a long conflict as Hezbollah has vowed to fight on until a ceasefire in the parallel Gaza war.

"In recent days we have inflicted a series of blows on Hezbollah that it never imagined," Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said in a video statement. "If Hezbollah has not understood the message, I promise you, it will understand the message."

The conflict, which sharply



In recent days we have inflicted a series of blows on Hezbollah that it never imagined. If Hezbollah has not understood the message, I promise you, it will understand the message

BENJAMIN NETANYAHU | PM, ISRAEL

We admit that we are pained. We are humans. But as we are pained, you will also be pained. Your economy will be destroyed and you will not achieve your goals

NAIM KASSEM | HEZBOLLAH'S DEPUTY LEADER

escalated over the past week, has raged since Hezbollah opened a second front against Israel, saying it was acting in solidarity with Palestinians facing an Israeli offensive further south in Gaza.

The Israeli military said it struck around 290 targets Saturday including thousands of Hezbollah rocket launcher barrels, and that it would continue to hit more.

Israel closed schools, restricted gatherings in the north and ordered hospitals there to move patients and staff to protected

areas, many have secured or underground facilities designed to withstand rocket fire.

Air raid sirens sounded constantly in Israel. About 150 rockets, cruise missiles and drones were fired at Israel overnight and into Sunday, most of which were intercepted by air defences, including an "aerial target" that came from the east, the military said.

Several buildings were struck, including a house badly damaged near the Israeli city of Haifa. Rescue teams treated

Israeli strike kills 7 in Gaza school

Cairo: An Israeli airstrike killed seven people in a school sheltering displaced families in Gaza City Sunday, Palestinian health officials said, with the Israeli military saying it had targeted militants operating from the compound. The strike hit Kafr Qasem School in Beach camp at around 11 am (0800 GMT), the officials said. Among those killed was Majed Saleh, the director of the Hamas-run Public Works and Housing ministry, they added. Israel's military said the strike targeted Hamas fighters there, and that it had used aerial surveillance and taken other steps to limit the risk to civilians. Six other Palestinians were killed in separate airstrikes in central and southern parts of Gaza, the medics said. They put the number of Palestinians killed in Israeli strikes so far Sunday at 16.

wounded but there were no reports of deaths. Residents had been instructed to stay near bomb shelters and safe rooms.

Hezbollah said it hit a barracks and another Israeli position with squadrons of attack drones Sunday.

It said it launched rockets at military-industrial facilities in an "initial response" to two days of attacks last week in which paggers and walkie-talkies used by its members exploded.

Israel raids, shuts Al Jazeera's bureau



REUTERS

Doha, Sept 22: Israeli forces raided the bureau of media network Al Jazeera in the West Bank city of Ramallah early Sunday morning, issuing it with a military order to shut down operations, the network and the Israeli military said Sunday.

The Qatar-headquartered channel aired live footage of Israeli troops entering the office with their weapons drawn and handing a military court order to Ramallah bureau chief Walid al-Omari forcing the bureau to close for 45 days.

The Israeli military said, in response to a Reuters query, that the channel's offices had been sealed and its equipment confiscated.

The military added that the order was signed after an intelligence assessment determined that the offices were being used "to incite terror, to support terrorist activities."

"The channel's broadcasts endanger the security and public order in both the area and the State of Israel as a whole," the statement said.

Al Jazeera called the raid "a criminal act" and held the government of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu responsible for the safety of its journalists, it said in a statement. The network added that it would take legal action to protect its rights and promised to continue its coverage.

"Al Jazeera rejects the draconian actions, and the unfounded allegations presented by Israeli authorities to justify these illegal raids," it said.

Israeli communications minister Shlomo Karhi confirmed the closure in a statement that called Al Jazeera "the mouthpiece" of Gaza's Hamas and Lebanon's Iran-backed Hezbollah. "We will continue to fight in the enemy channels and ensure the safety of our heroic fighters," he said.

Kate returns to public eye

ASSOCIATED PRESS

London, Sept 22: Kate, the Princess of Wales, made her first public appearance Sunday since she announced she had completed chemotherapy and would return to some public duties.

Kate and her husband, Prince William, were seen Sunday attending church with King Charles III and Queen Camilla near their royal Balmoral estate in Scotland.

Kate, 42, announced September 9 that she had completed treatment six months after revealing she had an undisclosed type of cancer. Her announcement came six weeks after

Buckingham Palace announced that the king was being treated for cancer.

In a video announcing her progress, she said the path to full recovery would be long and she would take it day by day. She said she would undertake some limited engagements through the end of the year.

While she stepped away from most public duties during her treatment, Kate made two appearances earlier this year: First, during the king's birthday parade in June, known as Trooping the Colour; and most recently during the men's final at Wimbledon in July, where she received a standing ovation.



Anura Dissanayake: JVP gets its biggest high with his rise

DISSANAYAKE IS SRI LANKA'S FIRST-EVER MARXIST PARTY LEADER TO BECOME HEAD OF STATE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Colombo, Sept 22: Marxist leader Anura Kumara Disanayake rose from a humble background to the pinnacle of leadership in Sri Lanka, presenting himself as a transformative leader to young voters and those tired of the "corrupt politics" of the traditional politicians.

Disanayake, 56, popularly known as AKD, was Sunday declared the winner of Saturday's

presidential election. The election Saturday was the first to be held since mass protests unseated Gotabaya Rajapaksa in 2022 after the country suffered an economic crisis.

His accession to the post is a remarkable turnaround for his half-century-old party Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP), which had long remained on the margins. He is Sri Lanka's first-ever Marxist party leader to become head of state.

The leader of the JVP's broader front, the National People's Power (NPP), Disanayake's anti-corruption message and his promise of a change in political culture resonated strongly with young voters who have been demanding system

change since the economic crisis.

The NPP's popularity has risen sharply since 2022 after securing only around three per cent of the vote in the last presidential election in 2019.

"In our country, only an un-corrupt force will take action

against the corrupt. The slogan of punishing the corrupt has been echoed on stage since 1994 under Chandrika (Kumaratunga), Mahinda (Rajapaksa), Maithripala (Sirisena) and Gotabaya (Rajapaksa). The corrupt will never punish the corrupt. The corrupt always protect the corrupt. It is the NPP's priority to end corruption," he said in an interview with Daily Mail online in August.

Disanayake, during another event in March, passionately asserted that the political struggle is not merely about a change of government but an endeavour to usher in political, economic, and social transformations of paramount importance in Sri Lanka's history.

Disanayake, who hails from rural Thambuttegama in the North Central province, is a science graduate from the Colombo suburban Kelaniya University.

He joined the JVP, the mother party of the NPP, in 1987 at the height of their anti-Indian rebellion.

The JVP eliminated many activists of all democratic parties that supported the Indo-Lanka

Accord of 1987. The Rajiv Gandhi-J R Jayawardena pact was the direct Indian intervention to solve the Tamil demand for political autonomy in the country. The JVP dubbed the Indian intervention as a betrayal of Sri Lanka's sovereignty.

However, Disanayake's visit to India in February this year is seen as a change in the NPP leadership's approach towards India, expressing alignment with foreign investment interests.

With JVP's taking up democratic politics in the late 90s, Disanayake got a place in the JVP central committee.

In the 2000 parliamentary election, he entered Parliament from the JVP. He has been an opposition livewire since 2001.



Members of the public view spectacular Kites during Filey Kite Festival at Filey Country Park, North Yorkshire, England

PTI PHOTO

business

of the day quote

It is hoped that India has negotiated enough flexibility to avoid strict clauses, such as the not to use export restrictions. These are critical during emergencies, as no country can be expected to supply essential goods when facing its own crisis

AJAY SRIVASTAVA | FOUNDER, GTRI

India's retail sector is at a pivotal moment. The rising consumer confidence and increasing discretionary spending are clear indicators of the sector's potential

SAURABH SHYDAL | MD (CAPITAL MARKETS AND HEAD RETAIL), C&W

While markets currently seem unfazed by geopolitical risks, these factors could pose a significant threat to the ongoing bullish momentum. As we approach the September F&O expiry, heightened volatility is likely

SANTOSH MEENA | HEAD OF RESEARCH, SWASTIKA INVESTMART

SHORT TAKES

India, EU FTA talks

New Delhi: Senior officials of India and the 27-nation European Union (EU) will commence the next round of talks for a proposed free trade agreement from Monday here, an official said. The agreement is aimed at further boosting bilateral trade and investments between the two regions. The two sides are negotiating a free trade agreement, an investment protection agreement and an agreement on geographical indications (GIs). "The five-day talks will start from September 23. It will be the ninth round of negotiations. Also, the concerns of Indian stakeholders regarding the EU's sustainability measures, such as CBAM, deforestation and others, will be discussed with the EU," the official said.

Coal import up 41%

New Delhi: India's coal import rose by 40.56 per cent to 25.23 million tonne (MT) in July, according to data compiled by B2B e-commerce platform mjunction services. The country's coal import was 17.95 MT in the corresponding month of previous fiscal. Coal import also rose to 100.48 MT in the April-July period of the ongoing fiscal from 89.11 MT a year ago, it said. mjunction MD & CEO Vinay Varna said the import demand is likely to be buoyant in coming weeks, ahead of the festive season next month. "Imports of non-coking coal showed an uptrend amid softening of prices in the seaborne market. There, however, was a drop in coking coal volumes due to tepid demand from the steel mills," mjunction services said.



Today, if you buy an electric car, you need 3-4 different apps on your phone. What we are requesting the government is to come up with something like a UPI-based system

SANTOSH IYER | MD AND CEO, MERCEDES-BENZ

FY26 BUDGET MAKING EXERCISE

The finance ministry will commence the exercise to prepare the annual budget for 2025-26 from the second week of next month in the backdrop of the Indian economy recording 7 per cent growth rate for the fourth consecutive year. The budget for the next financial year would focus on reforms to be pushed to further accelerate growth momentum and measures to generate jobs and boost demand in the economy



GST RATE RATIONALISATION

GoM to discuss slab, rate tweaks

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 22: The ministerial panel on GST rate rationalisation will meet September 25 and is expected to discuss tweaking of tax slabs and rates. "The meeting of the GoM on rate rationalisation is scheduled for September 25 in Goa," an official told PTI.

The six-member Group of Minister (GoM) under Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Samrat Chaudhary, last met August 22 and had submitted a status report to the GST Council September 9. During the August meeting, the panel had tasked the fitment committee comprising tax officers from the Centre and states to analyse the implication of tax rate change on some items and gather more data.

Currently, goods and services tax (GST) is a four-tier tax structure with slabs at 5, 12, 18, and 28 per cent.

Under GST, essential items are either exempted or taxed at the lowest slab, while luxury and demerit items attract the highest slab. Luxury and sin goods attract cess on top of the highest 28 per cent slab.

There have been talks of merging the 12 and 18 per cent tax slabs, but nothing has been proposed so far. Around 12 per cent, the average GST rate has fallen below the revenue neutral rate of 15.3 per cent. This has prompted the need to start discussions on GST rate rationalisation.

States such as West Bengal and Karnataka were not in favour of tinkering with GST slabs for now.

The six-member GoM also includes Uttar Pradesh Finance Minister Suresh Kumar Khanna, Rajasthan Health Services Minister Gajendra Singh, and Kerala Finance Minister KN Balagopal.

Union Bank organises U genius quiz contest

BHUBANESWAR: U genius, a national level quiz competition was organised by Union Bank of India September 21 at Rail Auditoriums Chandrasekharpur. About 700 students from Cuttack, Bhubaneswar, Balasore, Baripada, Berhampur and Puri participated in the quiz competition. About 300 parents and teachers were present during the competition and appreciated the efforts of Union Bank of India for motivating students. Sarvesh Ranjan, GM & Zonal Head of Union Bank of India was present in the competition. KIIT International School emerged as the winner, DAV Unit 8 was the runners up and Saraswati Shishu Vidya Mandir, Baramunda won the third position. All the students felt excited and motivated by the competition. The banks' executives said, "It is the social responsibility of Union Bank of India to instill a sense of team spirit, general awareness and financial knowledge in the students."



PRIVATE CONSUMPTION RISES

ASPIRATIONAL INDIA FUELS AUTO LOAN SURGE

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Sept 22: As private consumption rises across the country, there has been a surge in auto loans for car owners as people from tier 2, 3 cities and beyond opt for longer-tenure financing options to afford latest vehicles.

As per reports, auto companies like Maruti Suzuki, Hyundai, Mahindra and Tata Motors feel finance penetration to rise to up to 84 per cent this year from 75 per cent in the pre-pandemic era.

A leading digital marketing agency, Techmagnate, recently

ABOUT 80% OF CAR PURCHASES ARE FINANCED THROUGH BANK LOANS OR NBFCs

FINANCE PENETRATION TO RISE TO UP TO 84% THIS YEAR FROM 75% IN PRE-COVID ERA



revealed significant shifts in auto finance-related search queries, like an increased focus on affordability and transparency, demand for alternative financing solutions, inter-

est in electric vehicle financing and personalised and streamlined experiences.

"The consumers in the country are engaging in informed auto finance decisions by con-

ducting broader searches, using general terms like car loan interest rates or auto loan eligibility".

About 80 per cent of car purchases in the country are financed through bank loans or non-banking financial companies (NBFCs).

As per Jato Dynamics data, the aspirational India is now driving the auto loan industry.

A continued momentum in discretionary spending of consumers, coupled with favourable price effect, helped private final consumption expenditure (PFCE) pick up by 12.4 per cent in India in the April-June quar-

ter this fiscal, as against 8.1 per cent in Q1 FY24, according to the Bank of Baroda (BoB) report.

From two-wheeler sales to fast-moving consumer goods (FMCGs), the overall consumption is surging. The total production of passenger vehicles, three-wheelers, two-wheelers and quadricycle reached 24,37,138 units in July.

Passenger vehicles sales were 3,41,510, three-wheeler sales were 59,073 units and two-wheeler sales reached 14,41,694 units.

Two-wheeler segment posted a decent growth of 12.3 per cent in July compared to the same month last year, as per SIAM data.

India to see 7% growth despite woes: Deloitte

INDIAN ECONOMY GREW 8.2% IN PREVIOUS FISCAL YEAR



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 22: India continues to be a bright spot in an otherwise gloomy global outlook and the country could clock a 7 per cent growth in the current fiscal despite the headwinds, Deloitte South Asia CEO Romal Shetty has said.

Shetty, who is the youngest chief executive of a Big Four accounting and consultancy firm in India, said inflation is reasonably under control, there has been a pick-up in rural demand and vehicle sales are improving.

"We believe that we would be in the 7-7.1 per cent range in terms of the growth (this fiscal year). You have got the headwinds, the tailwinds... But the fact is, still India is in a better position, in spite of whatever is happening globally but we can't say we're decoupled from the world," he said, adding that the geopolitical crisis in the Middle East and Ukraine and the slowdown in the western world will impact GDP growth.

According to Deloitte projections, growth is likely to be 6.7 per cent in the next fiscal year (2025-26).

In an interview with PTI, Shetty said he expects the Modi 3.0 government to continue with

the economic reforms, including privatisation, at the same pace and there is a tremendous push to get things done within the government departments.

India - the world's fifth largest economy - is set to expand to \$5 trillion and become the third largest within this decade.

Oil price decline is in some sense good for India because the country is a net importer of a lot of things, and the US Fed rate cut will be positive for India.

Observing that India will be the services capital of the world, Shetty said the country has to focus on using technology in agriculture to increase productivity and also look for niche areas where India can dominate globally.

To a question on whether India can achieve the developed nation tag by 2047, Shetty said the per capita income has to increase from \$2,500 currently to \$20,000. If the per capita income rises above a certain level, then the economy also grows at a faster pace from there.

"My own belief is that when the per capita income moves to \$5,000, you will see much more buying happening. So the shape of the economy, the domestic economy itself, will also change. It becomes more self-reliant as well..." Shetty said.

DEBT-RIDDEN

VIL expands footprint

The company awards ₹30k-cr contracts to Nokia, Ericsson, Samsung for 4G, 5G gear supply, the largest deal awarded by any telecom operator during this year

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 22: Cash-strapped Vodafone Idea Limited (VIL) Sunday said it has awarded contracts worth about ₹30,000 crore to Nokia, Ericsson and Samsung for supply of 4G and 5G network equipment for three years.

The deal also marks the first step towards the roll-out of the company's three-year capex (capital expenditure) plan of about \$6.6 billion or ₹55,000 crore announced earlier.

"Vodafone Idea has concluded a mega, about \$3.6 billion (around ₹300 billion), deal with Nokia, Ericsson and Samsung for supply of network equipment over a period of three years. The capex programme is directed towards expanding the 4G population coverage from 1.03 billion to 1.2 billion, launching 5G in key markets and capacity expansion in line with data growth," the company said in a statement.

The supplies against these new long-term awards will start in the coming quarter.

The top priority for the company is to expand the 4G coverage to 1.2 billion Indians, the statement said.

VIL CEO Akshaya Moondra said that the company has started the investment cycle and it is on the journey of VIL 2.0.

"Nokia and Ericsson have been our partners since our inception and this marks another milestone in that continuing partnership. We are pleased to start our new partnership with Samsung," Moondra said.

VIL had recently raised ₹24,000 crore through sale of equity and will fund the capital expenditure from the latest capital.



VIL was the biggest telecom operator formed with the merger of Vodafone India and Idea Cellular in August 2018 with a mobile subscriber base of 40.8cr. With continuous decline in the subscriber, VIL is now left with 21.5cr mobile services subscribers

From here on, VIL will stage a smart turnaround to effectively participate in the industry growth opportunities. We look forward to work closely with all our partners as we move into the 5G era

The company executed some quick-win capex for the deployment of more spectrum on existing sites and the roll-out of some new sites.

VIL said that the small capex roll-out boosted its network capacity by about 15 per cent and an increase in population coverage by 16 million by end September, 2024.

The company claimed that it has started witnessing an improvement in customer experience in select geographies where these roll-outs have been completed.

VIL holds a large spectrum portfolio including mid band 5G spectrum in 17 circles and millimeter Wave 5G spectrum in 16 circles.

After the ₹24,000 crore fundraise, including ₹18,000 crore through a follow-on offer, the company was reeling under the debt of around ₹2.14 lakh crore.

The company had payment obligations of ₹2,09,520 crore towards the government as of June 30, 2024, which included the deferred spectrum payment obligations and adjusted gross revenue liability.

Post ₹24,000 crore fundraise, VIL promoters Aditya Birla Group and Vodafone hold 37.3 per cent and the government 23.2 per cent stake in the company.

Majority of UPI users against transaction fee

FOR THE FIRST TIME, UPI TRANSACTIONS CROSSED 100BN AND CLOSED AT 131BN IN A FINANCIAL YEAR, COMPARED TO 84BN IN 2022-23. IN VALUE TERMS, IT TOUCHED ₹199.89TN, COMPARED TO ₹139.1TN

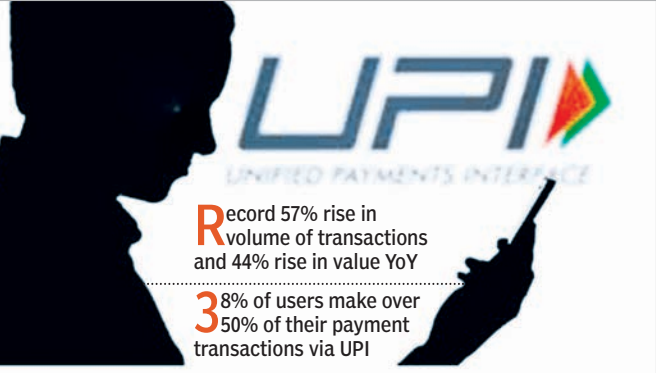
PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 22: Around 75 per cent UPI users will stop using it if any transaction charge is levied on the service, a survey by LocalCircles said Sunday.

The survey found that 38 per cent of users make over 50 per cent of their payment transactions via UPI instead of debit, credit or any other form of digital transaction.

"Only 22 per cent UPI users surveyed are willing to bear a transaction fee on payments, 75 per cent of respondents stated that they will stop using UPI if a transaction fee is introduced," the survey said.

The survey comprising three broad areas claims to have received 42,000 responses from 308 districts but the number of



replies on each question varied. The questions regarding transaction fee on UPI received 15,598 responses.

The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) posted a record 57 per cent rise in the volume of transactions

and 44 per cent rise in value in the 2023-24 fiscal year, compared to the previous fiscal year.

For the first time UPI transactions crossed 100 billion and closed at 131 billion in a financial year, compared to 84 billion in 2022-23. In value terms, it

touched ₹199.89 trillion, compared to ₹139.1 trillion, the report said.

The survey found 37 per cent of respondents shared UPI transaction accounts for more than 50 per cent of their total payment in value terms.

"With UPI rapidly becoming an integral part of nearly 4 in 10 consumers, there is strong resistance to any kind of direct or indirect transaction charges being imposed. LocalCircles will escalate the findings of this survey with the Ministry of Finance and Reserve Bank of India (RBI) so that the pulse of the UPI user is taken into account before any MDR charges are permitted," the survey report said.

The survey was conducted online between July 15 to September 20.

Anil's Reliance starts transformation journey

Anil Ambani's twin strategy of debt reduction, coupled with fresh capital raising, has set the stage for a long-term transformation of the Reliance Group

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 22: Anil Ambani's Reliance Group has in recent years seen marquee firms being auctioned in insolvency proceedings and piling debt-fold businesses. But the group has, in the week gone by, made announcements that investors believe may mark its transformation.

In three days - from September 18 to 20 - the group announced it has turned into nearly zero debt and is implementing long-term fund raising plans that are said to solidify its financial position. Reliance Infrastructure's board



approved fund raising of up to ₹6,000 crore via preferential issue and QIP, while Reliance Power board is meeting September 23 to consider and approve the fundraise via multiple routes.

The speed at which Anil Ambani moved to clear the debt of his companies, and simultaneously announce and execute the fund raising plans for future expansion of his companies, has surprised the investors.

Shares of both firms surged on stock markets.

The announcement to invest ₹1,100 crore by the promoters group in Anil Ambani's flagship

company, Reliance Infrastructure, has further boosted the confidence of investors in the group's revival plans and its long-term growth story, investors said.

Reliance Infrastructure's market capitalisation by the end of this week surged nearly 50 per cent, rising from ₹8,500 crore to ₹12,500 crore.

Similarly, Reliance Power's market capitalisation increased over 25 per cent, moving from ₹11,500 crore to ₹14,600 crore.

Reliance Infra announced a significant reduction in stand-alone external debt, lowering it from ₹3,831 crore to just ₹475 crore. This was achieved by clearing outstanding dues to prominent lenders such as Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC), Edelweiss ARC, ICICI Bank, and Union Bank, according to company filings. The move signals a robust financial recovery and enhances Reliance Infra's financial flexibility.

Hail Kings and Queens of 64 squares



D Gukesh (left) and Atjun Erigaisi were outstanding for India; the victorious women's team

India win 1st Test by 280 runs with more than 5 sessions to spare

Ashwin, Jadeja decimate Bangladesh

AGENCIES

Chennai, Sept 22: Veteran off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin's (6/88) mastery over his craft, underlined by a six-wicket haul, proved too immense for Bangladesh as India cantered to a massive 280-run victory in the first Test with five sessions to spare, here Sunday. Maintaining a clean slate against the Asian neighbours, India now lead the two-match series 1-0.

The victory has historical significance too. This is the first time India have achieved more victories than the tally of losses they have suffered in the longest format since they started playing Tests since 1932. The victory against Bangladesh was India's 179th in Tests more than the 178 losses that they have suffered so far.

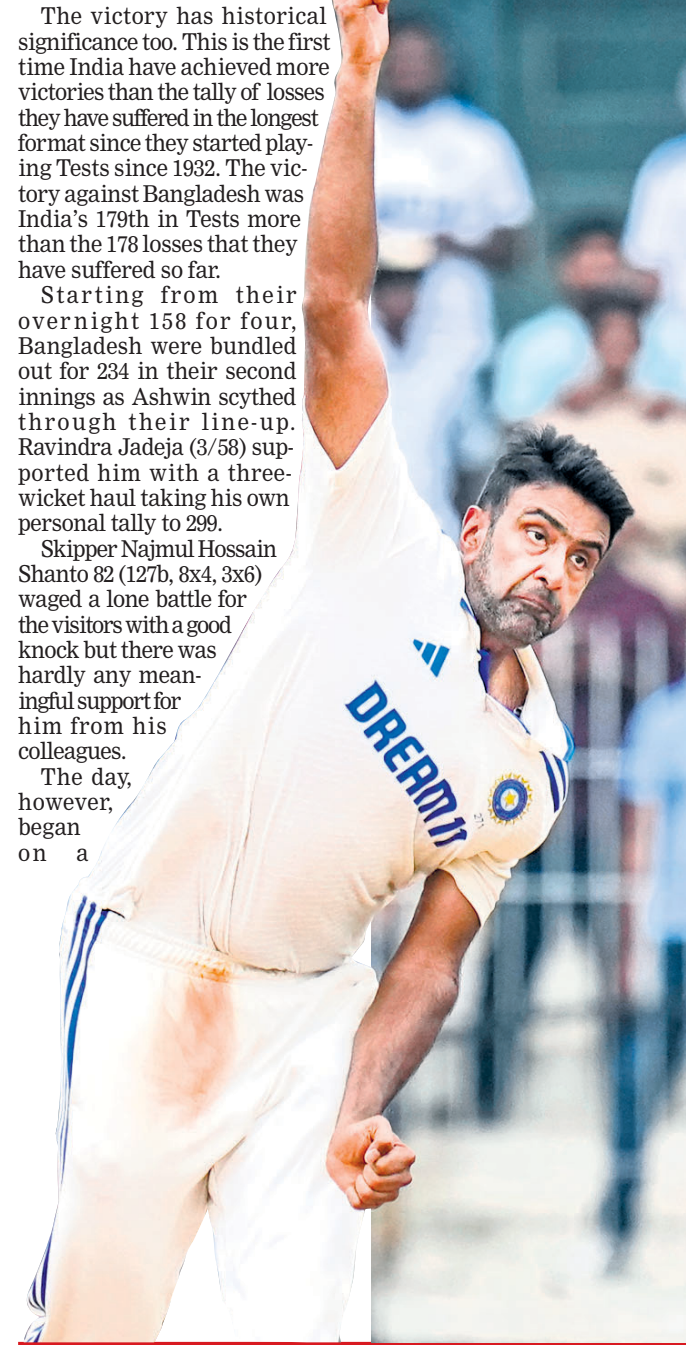
Starting from their overnight 158 for four, Bangladesh were bundled out for 234 in their second innings as Ashwin scythed through their line-up. Ravindra Jadeja (3/58) supported him with a three-wicket haul taking his own personal tally to 299.

Skipper Najmul Hossain Shanto (82 (127b, 8x4, 3x6)) waged a lone battle for the visitors with a good knock but there was hardly any meaningful support for him from his colleagues.

The day, however, began on a

HIGHLIGHT

- 179 - the number of Tests won by India so far going past their tally of losses (178)
- 37 - Number of 5-wicket hauls by Ashwin in an innings of Test, equalling Shane Warne's feat
- 6 - Hundreds for Rishabh Pant in Test cricket, the joint-most by a wicket-keeper for India in the longest format, now level with MS Dhoni



bright note for the Bangladeshis with Shanto and Shakib Al-Hasan (25) extending their fifth-wicket stand to 48 runs, resisting the Indian bowlers in the first hour. However, once Shakib departed with the score on 194, Bangladesh lost the remaining five wickets for just 50 runs.

There was nothing much on the surface for the spinners but Ashwin, who possesses a scientist's acumen, does not need such generosity from the deck or conditions. The Chennai man put into use his ability to find acute angles from around the wicket to left-handers to optimum effect against Shakib. Ashwin pushed the ball a bit deep and it hit the handle of Shakib's bat as he attempted a forward defence, and the resultant edge went into the eager hands of Yashasvi Jaiswal at backward short leg.

Soon, the star off-spinner completed his 37th five-wicket haul, equalling Australian legend Shane Warne, nipping the stay of Mehidy Hasan Miraz (8), who lobbed a catch to Jadeja at long-on. In the process, Ashwin also went past New Zealand legend Richard Hadlee's five-wicket haul tally - 36.

Captain Rohit Sharma was no doubt elated at the clinical way India performed.

"We want to build our team around strong bowling options, we have to be ready to face whatever the conditions offer," Rohit said at the post-match presentation. "No matter what the conditions are, whether we play in India, whether we play outside, we want to build the team around strong bowlers," he added.

Brief scores
India 376 and 287 for 4 decl beat Bangladesh 149 and 234 (Najmul Hossain Shanto 82, Ravichandran Ashwin 6/88, Ravindra Jadeja 3/58) by 280 runs.

BCCI retains same squad

Chennai: The national selectors retained Sunday the Indian team for the second and final match in Kanpur starting September 27. "The men's selection committee has retained the same squad for the second Test of the IDFC FIRST Bank Test series against Bangladesh," the BCCI said in a statement.

INDIAN CHESS TEAMS CREATE HISTORY WINNING FIRST-EVER GOLD MEDALS AT THE CHESS OLYMPIAD

POST NEWS NETWORK

Budapest, Sept 22: India chess teams scripted history as their men's and women's teams clinched their maiden gold medals in the 45th Chess Olympiad after beating their respective opponents in the final round here. The men's team defeated Slovenia after D Gukesh, Arjun Erigaisi and Rameshbabu Pragnanadhaa won their respective matches in the 11th and final round match. The women's team beat Azerbaijan 3.5-0.5 to clinch the title.

two bronze medals in the 2014 and 2022 editions of the tournament. Indian women had won a bronze in the 2022 edition in Chennai.

The International Chess Federation took to X to congratulate the Indian men's and women's team. "Congratulations to Gukesh D, Pragnanandhaa R, Arjun Erigaisi, Vidit Gujrathi, Pentala Harikrishna and Srinath Narayanan (coach). Gukesh beats Vladimir Fedoseev, Arjun Erigaisi prevails over Jan Subeli," the ICF wrote on X.

Going into their 11th and final round match, India needed only a drawn game to win the gold. By winning three matches, the gold was theirs and history was made here.

While the men's team did not lose a single match, the women suffered only one reverse. However the players held the nerves at crucial stages to triumph

to confirm her individual gold medal on the third board as well. After Rameshbabu Vaishali drew her game, the Indian team confirmed the victory with Vantika Agrawal scoring another brilliant triumph. Desmukh was brilliant throughout the tournament, winning all her matches.

"Congratulations to Harika Dronavalli, Vaishali Rameshbabu, Divya Deshmukh, Vantika Agrawal, Tania Sachdev and Abhijit Kunte (Captain)!" the ICF wrote on X.

happy that we've finally won the gold. I still remember how painful it was in the last year when we lost the final round. Honestly I could not sleep last night thinking about those things!" Vaishali said after India's triumph.

Gukesh meanwhile said that he and his mates were determined to go all the way. "Since what happened last time - we were so close as the team to win gold - this time I thought no matter I'm going to do whatever it takes to win the team gold. I did not really think about the individual performance much, I just wanted the team to win," Gukesh said.

Five-time World Champion Viswanathan Anand took to X to congratulate the men's and women's squads. "Congrats to Team India for winning the last round as well. Sensational," Anand wrote on 'X'. Congrats to the women's team also," Anand added.

SHORT TAKES

Para shuttlers shine in Indonesia tourney

New Delhi: Umesh Vikram secured gold in the SL3 event, while the trio of Sukant Kadam, Sivaranjan Solaimalai, and Mandeep Kaur claimed silver medals in their respective categories at the Indonesia Para-Badminton International tournament Sunday. Sukant bagged the silver in the men's singles SL4 event, while Sivaranjan won the silver in men's singles SH6 category. Mandeep clinched the silver in women's singles SL3 category. In the final of men's singles SL3 category, Umesh defeated compatriot and top seed Nehal Gupta 12-21, 21-8, 21-19. Sukant, who had missed out on a bronze medal in Paris after losing to Indonesia's Fredy Setiawan in the play-off, fell short again in the final, losing 14-21, 14-21 to the Indonesian.

Dubois retains heavyweight belt

London: Daniel Dubois is no longer an accidental world heavyweight champion. With a brutal fifth-round knockout of Anthony Joshua in front of 96,000 fans at Wembley Stadium, Dubois showed he might be the real deal - and the future of boxing's marquee division. The 27-year-old Dubois left the ring as the heavyweight's next big thing, having floored Joshua in the first and third rounds before ending the fight 59 seconds into the fifth with a counter right that sent Joshua face first into the canvas. "Are you not entertained?" Dubois roared after his victory.

Haaland gets 100th goal for Man City

Manchester: Erling Haaland scored his 100th goal for Manchester City by giving his team the lead against Arsenal in the Premier League here Sunday. The Norway international reached the landmark figure on his 105th appearance for the defending champions. However, despite being down by a goal and reduced to 10 men in the first half, Arsenal held Man City to a 2-2 draw. Haaland has been in outstanding form this season with his latest goal taking his total for the campaign to 10 in all competitions.

We were meant for this: Sachdev Pratyasa conferred 'Ekalabya Puraskar'

AGENCIES

Budapest, Sept 22: Even as the chess fraternity celebrated India's historical feat at the 45th Chess Olympiad here, senior Indian women's team player Tania Sachdev said Sunday they were meant for the crown after clinching their maiden gold medal.

The Indian team, comprising Sachdev, Harika Dronavalli, Vaishali Rameshbabu, Divya Deshmukh and Vantika Agrawal, accompanied by coach Abhijit Kunte beat Azerbaijan 3.5-0.5 in the final round to get the top honours.

"I'm so overwhelmed right now. I'm so proud of my team, everything that we've done in the open (category) and in the women's segment. Now when I look back, I think this is the moment that we were meant for this," Sachdev told 'chess.com'.

The Indian women had clinched bronze medal in the 2022 edition. FIDE International Master and GM Sachdev shared the sentiment. It was a very, very difficult time. It was hard to celebrate the bronze last time and I'm just so happy right now."

GM D Harika said she finally



HAPPINESS UNLIMITED: (From left) Divya Deshmukh, Vaishali Rameshbabu and Vantika Agrawal have a lot to smile about after the Indian girls created history by winning the gold

managed to achieve her dream after 20 years. "I came into Olympiads as a 13-year-old, 20 years back, with a dream to win an Olympiad medal, and finally, it might happen today!" Harika said after winning her game in the final round. "We played all the strongest teams here and I think we deserve it," Harika added.

While Divya Deshmukh said the team will head over for a lunch after their win, IM and

score, (I'm) feeling really happy," she said.

World Championship challenger D Gukesh meanwhile said he didn't think about his personal achievements and was prepared to do 'whatever it takes' to secure India's maiden gold medal at the Chess Olympiad.

"I feel great, especially with the quality of my games and how we played as a team and despite many close misses in the past, we managed to dominantly win this time. I'm just super happy right now," Grandmaster Gukesh, who secured eight wins in 11 rounds, told International Chess Federation (FIDE) after the match. "I did not really think about the individual performance much. I just wanted the team to win this time," he added.

Gukesh's outstanding run included a stunning victory over World No. 3 Fabiano Caruana in Saturday's crucial match against the USA. "I guess it's just sticking with the discipline and staying focused on the tournament. And once you get into the rhythm, everything happens automatically. Once I got the first four wins, I thought I'd set myself up for a very great tournament," he said.

GM Vantika Agrawal expressed her relief having got over the line. "I am just feeling so happy and relieved. Last two days, I was so stressed like what's going to happen, but knowing that we have won this match with high

KIIT felicitates Olympians, Paralympians

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 22: KIIT DU hosted a momentous event Sunday honouring the students of the varsity who represented India at the recently concluded Olympic and Paralympic Games in Paris. The founder of the university Dr Achyuta Samanta led the celebration, which showcased the achievements of these remarkable athletes and highlighted the vital role of sports in education. Each athlete was awarded a cash prize of Rs 7 lakh as recognition of their achievements. Among them 15 were Olympians and the remaining were Paralympians.

Samanta emphasised that the athletes are the cornerstone of KIIT's success in sports, citing the institution's significant con-



Dr Achyut Samanta poses with the sportspersons during their felicitation programme

tribution to developing athletic talent. Special prizes were awarded to Amit Rohidas and Pravin Kumar for their medal-winning performances.

The athletes honoured were Rohidas (hockey), Kishore Kumar Jena and Annu Rani (javelin throw), Tajinderpal Singh Toor (shot put), Parul

Choudhary (5,000m steeplechase), Jyothi Yarraji (100m hurdles), Priyanka (20km race walk), Prachi and MR Poovamma (4x400m relay), Paramjeet Singh Bisht, Akshdeep Singh and Vikash Singh (20km walk), Ankita (5000m run), Rampal and Praveen (para-athletes in high jump).

Puja to lead U-19 squad

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, Sept 22: Puja Yadav was named skipper Sunday of the 15-member cricket team that will play in the BCCI Women's U-19 cricket tournament. The Odisha eves will play all their matches of the group stage at Nagpur, the Odisha Cricket Association (OCA) said in a release. The Odisha eves will open their engagement against Manipur, October 1.

The squad: Puja Yadav (captain), Prathan Pratishruti, Priyankaree Muduli, Ananya Mishra, Archana Rout, Mitali Sharma, Ananya Behera, Sai Krippa (wk), Suvallaxmi Singh (wk), SB Lorence, Subhashree Pramanik, Bijayalaxmi Behera, Namita Sethy, Ananya Rout and Juli Behera.

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 22: In a significant achievement for Odisha's sporting community, swimmer Pratyasa Ray has been awarded the esteemed 32nd 'Ekalabya Puraskar' for 2024. The decision was taken Sunday here unanimously by the 'Ekalabya Puraskar Committee', which comprises distinguished jury members from various sectors, during a meeting held Sunday.

"Pratyasa Ray, a rising star in swimming with an impressive track record, has emerged as this year's standout recipient. As part of the award, Ray will be awarded a cash prize of Rs 7 lakhs - an increase from the previous Rs 5 lakhs, along with a citation at the award ceremony to be held at a later date," a release said Sunday.

In addition, sprinter Dondapati Mrutyum Jayaram, and badminton player Tanvi Patri will be honoured with citations for their outstanding performances at both the national and international levels. Each of the winners will receive a cash prize of Rs 1.5



PRATYASHA ROY

lakhs, up from Rs 1 lakh, along with citations at the award ceremony.

It should be stated that in the recently-held swimming championships at Mangalore, the Odia swimmer had won a number of medals including a gold in the 4x100m medley relay 'Ekalabya Puraskar', instituted by 'IMPACT', in the year 1993 and managed by IMFA has come a long way to be recognised as the most prestigious sports award in Odisha, drawing parallels with many national awards. The award is given every year to young sportspersons of Odisha in recognition of their outstanding performance in the preceding two years.

LEGENDS LEAGUE CRICKET

WATCH LIVE ACTION TODAY!

VS

7:00 PM ONWARDS

Streaming on

STAR SPORTS FC