An old Kumkum Bhagya-era video of actor Mrunal Thakur resurfaces online, drawing sharp fan criticism

LEISURE | P2



Europe upbeat

Trump "very clear" in a meeting with European leaders that the US wants to achieve ceasefire at Alaska summit with Putin

INTERNATIONAL | P10



New UPI rules

To address financial fraud, NPCI has directed banks and payment apps to halt all peer-to-peer (P2P) collect requests from October 1

BUSINESS | P11



Nod for CWG

The Indian Olympic Association formally approves the country's bid to host the 2030 Commonwealth Games

SPORTS | P12

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BHUBANESWAR | THURSDAY | AUGUST 14, 2025

SHORT **TAKES**

Cheque clearance soon to be faster

MUMBAI: The RBI will introduce a new mechanism from October 4 for clearance of cheques within hours of being presented to banks reducing the current time period of up to two working days. Cheques will be scanned, presented, and passed in a few hours and on a continuous basis during business hours. The clearing cycle will be reduced from the present T+1 days to a few hours. Cheque Truncation System (CTS) currently processes cheques with a clearing cycle of up to two working days. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has issued a circular for introduction of Continuous Clearing and Settlement on Realisation in CTS.

7 kids, 4 women die as pickup hits truck

JAIPUR: A pickup van crashed into a parked truck in Rajasthan's Dausa district in the early hours of Wednesday, killing 11 Uttar Pradesh residents, including seven children, and injuring eight others, police said. The passengers of the pickup vehicle were returning to their village in UP's Etah after visiting Khatu Shyam and Salasar Balaji temple when the accident occurred on Manoharpur highway around 4-5am, Dausa SP Sagar told PTI. Seven children and four women died in the accident, he said. Expressing grief over the incident, President Droupadi Murmu called the loss of lives very tragic and prayed for the recovery of those injured.

Threatful graffiti on Srimandir: Man held

PURI: Puri police had a tough time dealing with an alleged terrorist threat to destroy the Srimandir after a warning was found scribbled on the wall of a small temple located within the Parikrama corridor. Police swung into action and began an investigation. They examined the CCTV footage of the area and found a person writing on the wall. Later, the person was identified as Raghunath Sahu (65) of Gadishagada village under the Kanas block of Puri district. He was spotted in the town and rounded up by the police. During questioning police found that the person is mentally unstable.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



stray dogs the same way we handled all the watchdogs



Kolkata, Wednesday

Restructuring of GPs before 2027 rural polls: Min

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, August 13: The state government Wednesday said it plans to restructure gram panchayats (GPs) before the three-tier panchayati raj elections scheduled for 2027.

Panchayati Raj and Drinking Water (PR&DW) Minister Rabi Narayan Naik said, "We have decided to restructure the gram panchayats before the three-tier panchayati raj elections and also restructure blocks ahead of the 2029 general elections for Lok Sabha and Odisha Assembly."

Naik's statement came a day after Governor Hari Babu Kam bhampati suggested that the state government restructure panchayats. Odisha currently has 6,794 GPs distributed across 314 blocks.

While reviewing various schemes Tuesday, the Governor had suggested a comprehensive study of GPs and revenue villages to explore the possibility of increasing their number.

The panchayat system should be near the people. Decentralisation strengthens the delivery of programmes and enables better monitoring, Kambhampati said

38 model mandis to be set up in 2 years

Seven key proposals from six departments get Cabinet nod

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 13: The state government Wednesday decided to set up 38 model mandis (agri marketing yards) in all 30 districts in two years with a cost of ₹300 crore.

At a Cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi has approved a proposal in this regard along with six others.

These model mandis have been designed to provide seamless and efficient platforms for farmers, traders and other stakeholders by integrating all essential marketing activities under one roof, with upgraded infrastructure and digital systems, Chief Secretary Manoj Ahuja said.

In the first phase, 14 large mandis, 17 medium and seven small ones will be set up in the financial years 2025-26 and 2026-27 with an approximate cost of ₹300 crore, he said.

Out of that, ₹150 crore will be mobilised from the resources of Regulated Market Committees (RMCs) and the remaining amount will be provisioned from the state plan scheme, Ahuja said. The Cooperation

CM unveils MLA LAD web portal

Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Wednesday launched the 'MLA LAD Web Portal', aimed at making the administrative process simpler and time-efficient. Majhi, ahead of a Cabinet meeting here, also unveiled revised guidelines for the CM-SA (Chief Minister's Special Assistance) make the administrative process portant schemes for people in a quick and transparent manner," he said. P3

department has already made provision of ₹50 crore under this scheme in the current financial year. In the next phase, 62 mandis will be developed as model mandis and the process of identification has already started, he added.

The model mandis will have modern storage space, raised concrete drying platforms, cover sheds, quality testing kiosks, cooling chambers, farmers' restsheds, clean toilets, separate facilities for women farmers, eateries/ canteens, vending zones, bank branches & ATMs, parking, electronic weigh bridges, retail outlets

relevant to the farming community and waste disposal facilities.

The Chief Secretary also said that the Cabinet has approved a tender of ₹382.40 crore for 24x7 water supply to all households of Sambalpur, Burla and Hirakud towns of western Odisha. The amount includes construction of the entire project and its operation and maintenance for five years. The construction work is scheduled to start from September and is targeted to be completed by August 2027, he said.

The state government has approved another proposal for implementation of LED public street light project (retrofitting) in all 110 urban local bodies of Odisha with a cost of ₹350 crore, Ahuia said.

The government has decided to establish a world-class Maintenance, Repair, and Overhaul (MRO) facility for aircraft at Biju Patnaik International

Airport (BPIA) here Other key decisions include setting up of a separate Directorate of Museums and promulgation of rules for recruitment of faculties in the government-run colleges of nursing & ANM training centres.

Bihar SIR voter-friendly: SC tion on the SIR ought to be set

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 13: Observing that electoral rolls cannot remain "static" and there is bound to be a revision, the Supreme Court Wednesday said the expanded list of acceptable documents of identity from seven to 11 for Bihar's Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of voters' list was in fact "voter-friendly and not exclusionary.'

As the row over the SIR which has been challenged in the top court escalated, a bench of Justices Surya Kant and Joymalya Bagchi said the Election Commission (EC) had the residual power to conduct such an exercise as it deemed fit. The bench also disagreed with a submission by a petitioner



that the SIR of electoral rolls in poll-bound Bihar had no basis in law and ought to be quashed.

Leaders of Opposition parties including the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) and the Congress, and the NGO Association of Democratic Reforms (ADR) have challenged the electoral roll revision drive in Bihar.

During the hearing of arguments, the ADR submitted that the exercise should not be allowed to be carried out pan-India.

Senior advocate Gopal Sankaranarayanan, appearing for the NGO, said the EC notifica-

it couldn't be allowed to go on. The EC can never conduct such an exercise since inception and it is being done for the first

aside for want of legal basis

and never being contemplated

in law. He, therefore, contended

time in history and if allowed to happen only God knows where it will end, he added.

"By that logic special intensive revision can never be done. One-time exercise which is done is only for the original electoral roll. To our mind, the electoral rolls can never be static," the bench noted. "There is bound to be revision," the top court said, "otherwise, how will the poll panel delete the names of those who are dead, migrated or shifted to other constituencies?

Ask Islamabad: US

on F-16 loss during

Op Sindoor query

LARGER BENCH TO HEAR STRAY DOG CASE TODAY

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 13: After widespread protests across the country following a top court verdict on relocation of stray dogs in Delhi-NCR, a new three judge bench of the Supreme Court will hear the suo motu case Thursday. A bench comprising Justices Vikram Nath, Sandeep Mehta and NV Anjaria will hear the matter.

The directions to permanently relocate all strays from streets to shelters "at the earliest" were passed by a bench comprising Justice JB Pardiwala and Justice R Mahadevan August 11

When some petitioners in another stray dogs-related case mentioned their plea while referring to the August 11 verdict before the Chief Justice of India BR Gavai, he said he "will look **MORE P4&8**

there are still those who clam-

ber up on water and mobile

towers in protest. A hark back

to Veeru's famous drunk scene

when he climbs a water tower

and refuses to come down until

Then there is the bromance be-

Basanti's mausi relents.

AGENCIES

New Delhi, August 13: The US government has reportedly de clined to provide specific answers regarding the fate of Pakistan Air Force-operated F-16 fighter jets during 'Operation Sindoor' The US State Department stated "We refer you to the Government of Pakistan to discuss its F-16s. according to NDTV.

The US reportedly maintains continuous oversight of Pakistan's F-16 fleet through US contractors known as Technical Support Teams (TSTs).

These teams are deployed in Pakistan around the clock to monitor the use of US-built F-16s in accordance with detailed enduse agreements signed by Islam abad and Washington, says the NDTV report. These agreements specify the conditions under which Pakistan may employ the jets in combat and form the foundation for ongoing US sup port in maintaining the fleet.

Consequently, these Technical Support Teams are contractually obligated to be fully aware of the status of all Paki stan-operated F-16s at all times

The US State Department's current response contrasts sharply with information provided by US government sources to Foreign Policy Magazine in 2019, following India's air strikes on the Balakot terror camp, the report says.

Sholay@50: A shared memory that lives on

New Delhi, August 13: When dialogues, characters and scenes become part of popular folklore, woven into the tapestry of national memory that rolls on generation after generation, is when celluloid magic happens. Sholay is that film and it doesn't matter whether you have seen the film or not.

It has been 50 years since the film released, a cult classic so impactful it continues to thrive. almost a living, breathing entity evolving through time and referenced on just about any occasion. And so, a late entrant who walks into a silent conference room savs "Itna sannata kvon hai bhai" and everyone breaks into smiles. The connect is instant. The film is familiar to all.

The Ramesh Sippy masterpiece that melded comedy and romance, terror and tragedy was released August 15, 1975, with a runtime of more than three hours. The response was tepid to begin with but picked up over the weeks that followed. Cinema history was being made in 70 mm.

The cast was impressive -Sanjeev Kumar, Dharmendra, Amitabh Bachchan, Hema Malini, Java Bachchan, and Amiad Khan in an explosive debut as Gabbar Singh. But Thakur, Jai, Veeru, Basanti and Gabbar aren't the only ones who stood the test of time.

Even character artistes who appeared for just a scene or two are remembered in detail.

Samba, Mausiji, Soorma Bhopali, Angrezon ke zamane ke jailer, Kaalia – each a setpiece complete in itself.

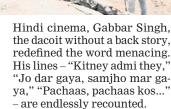
"It was a symphony of all human emotions. It had come without any conscious effort. It just happened," Akhtar who penned the film with Salim Khan, said.

According to film scholar Amrit Gangar, Sholay, despite its spaghetti western influences, defies Western dogma of genre. "It is a great thali film," he said. "It does the magic without being grandly spectacular but it has the power of the words.

Set in a rocky, arid and bleak landscape of post-Independence rural India, the film has aged well despite its feudal setting. The women shine - the motormouth tonga puller Basanti or the silent widow Radha. The playful Veeru-Basanti romance contrasts the unspoken love between Jai and Radha. Both are equally relevant today. The vengeful Thak-

who wants his daughter-in-law to find love again. The most quoted villain of

ur is an upright, progressive man



Many sequences have been embedded in India's collective consciousness. Fifty years on,

tween Jai and Veeru, an abiding friendship that finds expression in a coin - Jai often flips a coin to get his own way and it is only after he dies that Veeru discovers that the coin has two heads.

Such is the popularity of the film that this minting error where both sides carry heads is now called 'Sholay coin'. The song "Yeh dosti hum nahin todenge" represents their bond.

Like a shared memory passed down generation to generation, "Sholay" too lives on.

eisure



CELINE SONG FRUSTRATED OVER MATERIALISTS INTERPRETATION

Filmmaker Celine Song has expressed frustration over the classist interpretation of her recently released film Materialists, starring Dakota Johnson, Chris Evans and Pedro Pascal. Song, who earned immense praise for her debut film Past Lives in 2023, said the accusations that the movie promotes 'broke man propaganda' has been 'very cruel'.

JOLIE PLANS TO MOVE ABROAD FOLLOWING CUSTODY BATTLE

Angelina Jolie is reportedly saying goodbye to Hollywood. The actress is preparing to "put the house up for sale" as she plans to move overseas, a source told People. "Jolie never wanted to live in L.A. full time. She didn't have a choice because of the custody arrangement with Brad," the insider claimed.

Thakur from her Kumkum Bhagya days

has resurfaced online, sparking contro-

versy and fan backlash. The clip, from

dislocated, tail

was that of a

done by little

their fault

torturing

instil empathy,

ness with us.

He is intel-

gentle.



accuracy • reliability • trust

If your heart wishes to be alone, honour the mood. No friends, no music. Drive away and connect to nature if you must. There is a bit of money jingling in if you're dealing in finances, says Ganesha.

TAURUS

Today, you will probably goals, says Ganesha. There will be no dip in the amount of work pressure you will be facing but you will find yourself ready for every challenge. It is time to shift gears and set your eyes on your longterm goals now. Due time and money will be spent on leisure activities in the company of loved ones.

You will keep others under personality, predicts Ganesha. Your long-term goals will start taking shape by the end of the day. You may also expect some good news, generally related to a wedding. You will succeed in all your romantic endeavours.

CANCER

GEMINI

Today, you will accomplish most of your short-term goals and may shift your focus to longterm plans, foretells Ganesha, Now that you have achieved some of your goals, activities. Family will get its due place in your scheme of things in the evening.

Shooting off the charts is it comes to your liveliness today, says Ganesha. Guess there is just something about today that puts a spring in your step and a smile on your face. But whatever it is, it's good for you. At work, you shall be able to bring about new and successful business strategies.

Your gallantry will serve

to impress the gallery; but chances are certain things could well spoil the show, says Ganesha. On reflecting within, find a great deal of mprovement in your inner self. Children will broaden that smile with their antics

LIBRA

It's like a finishing job for you today, says Ganesha, as you complete pending jobs. It was about time things got wrapped up, anyway. But with your high level of energy and vigour you may also have an inclination to begir a new business. Keep at it, and you may find some satisfaction in business deal ings towards the evening, feels Ganesha

SCORPIO

Armed with a good sense of judgement, you will make a number of encouraging changes in your behaviour today, foretells Ganesha. Habits die hard, but all the effort that you put in to refine your routine will pay off brilliantly by the end

SAGITTARIUS

You may just strike the notes of your beloved's heart today. Your presence and presents will make them realise how much you do indeed love them. Expect a trip to posh showrooms and designer shops to buy them expensive gifts. But don't nealect work or your long-term goals, advises Ganesha.

CAPRICORN

On the priority list, you put your work ahead of your family life. As a result, your life partner may have complains about you not giving enough attention to him, her. Today, for once, you'll not let him/ her get disappointed, as you'll plan a romantic getaway with your sweetheart. Professionally, you'll be at your best, winning applauds from the bosses and outshining your opponents.

AQUARIUS

Your family will dote on you today and God knows you deserve it. Just go along with their plans for once, and you'll be surprised by how blessed and cheerful you feel. In business dealings, your forthrightness and charm will win people over, say Ganesha.

PISCES

While a day filled with a lot of stress awaits you at the work place, you will still be able to come out ahead of the competition on account of your sheer brilliance and your powers of persuasion. You will receive many accolades for the way you tackle your projects today, says Ganesha.



600th global film accolades for Biswanath Rath

Bhubaneswar: Internationally acclaimed writer-director Biswanath Rath has created history by becoming the first Odia filmmaker to win 600 international film festival accol ades, including 184 awards, over a career spanning 13 years. The milestone was achieved when his Odia mid-length fiction film Chaari Kaandha won Best Short Film at the Bioscope Global Film Festival, Cuttack. postgraduate in



Screenwriting and Film Direction, Rath, from Jeypore, has earned global acclaim for his short films. documentaries and music videos, which have been screened across continents-from the USA and Europe to Af-

issues, traditional art forms and human stories. Founder of BnR Films, co-run with his wife Archana Rath, he has produced notable works like the award-winning documentary Kotpad Weaving and the trilingual music video Mana Manasi. Many of his films stream on major platforms including Amazon Prime, Epic TV, and Docubay.

Rath credits his success to the

in Odia culture yet resonating with

universal themes, address social

unwavering support of his team, family, and well-wishers, emphasising his commitment to making meaningful and socially relevant cinema. With several feature scripts ready, he is currently in the pre-production phase of a feature-length fiction film in Odia, aiming to elevate Odi-



Mumbai: Actress Karishma Tanna shared a simple yet effective beauty hack on social media to achieve those dense and attractive eyebrows, something a lot of girls desire to have. To start, take some soap and spray it with something

Karishma's beauty hack

to moisten it. Next, take some soap on an eyebrow brush and comb it in the opposite direction, and later gradually in the right direction. You will instantly see volume in your eyebrows. Happy with the eyebrow hack, netizens started

asking the Scoop actress for other hacks in the comment section. One of the Instagram users wrote, "What are

your cheeks hack? So shaped and pointed chin." Another one requested, "Can you share div face pack". The third comment read, "Eyes contemplated your beauty after moments of admiration for you, and hearts felt confused and wished to always love your beauty @karishmaktanna." Friday, Karishma shared her mother-in-law's

recipe for protein and fibre-rich ladoos, which she consumes as her pre-workout snack. "Protein fibre rich ladoos Wch are perfect

for morn pre work out snack or evening hunger pangs. Who wants recipe ???? Recipe by my MIL...Dm me (sic)," Krishma penned on her Instagram handle.

Mrunal under fire lasting impact of old interviews in the digital age. Mrunal, now a successful film actress with recent releases like Son of Sardaar 2, has not responded to

the backlash. Meanwhile, fans continue

bai:

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to celebrate Bipasha's decades-long influence in Bollywood, underscoring

how even casual banter can spark intense public discourse in today's social media-driven world.

AGENCIES

Bhumi raises concern for canines

on the issue of dog confinement, and the recent directive of the apex Court. Wednesday, the actress took to her Instagram, and shared

a series of pictures and videos of her pupper, Bruno and herself. She also penned a long note in the caption, detailing the journey of her furry friend, and how he walked Bruno baba came into our

> just 4 months old. When at @yodamumbai found tered & badly hurt — jaw burnt — yet his spirit warrior. All of this was children who found joy an innocent soul. Not it's ours, for failing to co existence and kind-Bruno is a wise soul. ligent, kind, playful, ing, protective yet The Honourable Supreme Court ruling that allows the picking up of 3,00,000 dogs in Delhi to be put into shelters, I can't help but think of Bruno, and all the Indies who have known nothing but the streets they call home".

The actress further mentioned instead of criminalising their existence punishing those who care, it's better to create stronger reforms and systems,

mass sterilisation drives.

PEANUTS

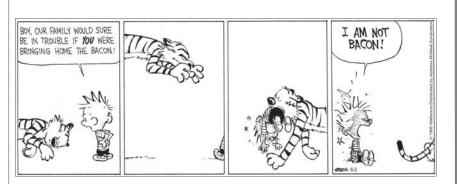
sha's presence

on the global

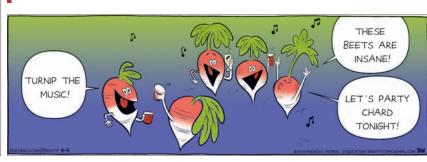
cinematic map.



CALVIN AND HOBBES

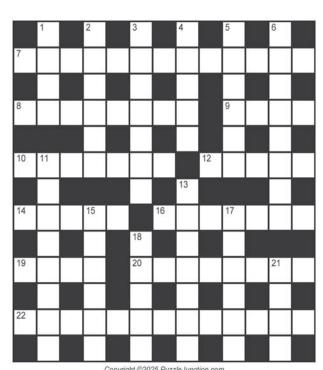


BREVITY



DOST

CROSSWORD



Copyright ©2025 PuzzleJunction.com 20 Bakery buys

(6,7)

1 Decant

4 Bored

5 Nail polish

22 Floor plan feature

cr	OSS
7	Ophthalmolo-
	gist's prescript-

- ion (7,6)8 Lances
- 9 Domestic

A

- 10 Snubs
- 12 Chiggers

- 16 Flaw
- 19 Dire fate
- 14 Like helium
- candles

Down

- 3 Like some

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

- 2 Artist's workroom
- 17 Deficient in amount
 - 18 Close call 21 English prep

6 Big-mouthed

sea birds

11 Venice sights

13 Barber's tool

15 Out in the

school

boonies

SUDOKU

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

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

SOLUTIONS

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0	M	0	Т	Е	Т		Е	Ν	E	M	1	Ε	S
SSWORD	Е				Е		R				С		Н
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SUDOKU

Bhubaneswar: The East Coast Railway (ECoR) has made history by becoming the first railway zone in the country to achieve 100 million tonnes (MT) of freight loading in just 134 days, the fastest among all 17 railway zones in India. This achievement surpasses the previous record of 148 days set in 2024-25, with the milestone reached August 12, 2025 — a full 14 days earlier than last year — highlighting ECoR's consistent growth and operational excellence. Coal, iron ore, and cement were the major contributors to this record. ECoR loaded 57.734 MT of coal, up 4.6 per cent from 55.17 MT last year; 25.984 MT of iron ore, reflecting a 19.4 per cent rise from 21.758 MT; and 0.409 MT of cement, marking a 32.8 per cent increase from 0.308 MT.

Drive to break suicide trend begins

Bhubaneswar, August 13: Following back-to-back suicides of college students in Odisha, the police have launched awareness programmes in various educational institutions in the northern and western regions of the coastal state.

The Higher Education department is also set to begin a campaign in all colleges and universities across the state to tackle the increasing suicide rates among young people.

Four women, three of them college students, died allegedly by suicide in the state in the past four weeks.

"Creating awareness among the students, particularly women, is also our responsibility. We launched awareness campaigns across colleges in Sambalpur, Bargarh, Bolangir, Jharsuguda and Sonepur districts," IG (Northern Range) Himanshu Lal said.

Lal said that the awareness cam-

DD University girl student hangs self

Keonihar: A 22-year-old girl student of Dharanidhar (DD) University allegedly commitday. The deceased was identified as Shiyani Jena, daughter of Krushna Chandra Jena of Nuarampas under Nandipada police limits under Hatadihi block in the district. She was a first year PG student of Anthropology department. Town police sent the body for postmortem and started an investigation. SP Kushalkar Nitin Dagdu also visited the snot and took stock of the situation

paign includes real-life stories, expert guidance from psychologists, and information on helplines and counselling services available to students.

He said that they have got tremendous support from students, parents and local people.

During the campaign Tuesday and Wednesday, officers from local police stations visited colleges and assured the students that the personnel are with them at all times.

The students were made aware of the existing laws and on how to tackle various issues instead of going for suicide, Lal said.

"In the process, I observed that the gap between the students and the police is declining. The students are getting familiar with the cops and mustering courage to open up to police. This is a very positive sign that will help reduce the rate of suicides among stu-

Similarly, under guidance of DIG $\,$ (Eastern Range) Satyajit Naik, a group of police personnel Tuesday visited FM (Autonomous) College in Balasore and launched a mental health awareness programme.

dents," Lal said.

"August 12 was chosen to hold the awareness programme at FM (Autonomous) College because exactly one month ago, a second-year female student of the Integrated BEd department resorted to self-immolation and died two days later. This was essential for the police to start mental health awareness campaign from the institute," a DSP-rank officer said.

He said that the initiative highlights the importance of seeking help and support during difficult times, fostering a community that values mental health and well-be-

The campaign, spearheaded by dedicated police officers, aims to sensitise female students about the critical issues of suicide and self-immolation, fostering resilience, awareness, and access to support systems, another officer said, adding that the programmes are being conducted in collaboration with educational institutions.

"Our aim is to make the female students mentally strong, learn to fight with knowledge in law, coping strategies, and resources to navigate emotional and psychological challenges," said a woman police

CM launches MLA-LAD web portal

Majhi also unveils simplified guidelines for MLA-LAD and CM-SA schemes

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 13: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi inaugurated the MLA-Local Area Development (LAD) web portal and unveiled simplified guidelines for MLA-LAD and Chief Minister-Special Assistance (CM-SA) schemes at Lok Seva Bhawan here Wednesday.

newly-launched MLA-LAD web portal (https://mlalads.odisha. gov.in) will enable online submission of project proposals by MLAs, project need assessments, planning and cost estimation, approvals, work orders, monitoring, inspection, expenditure tracking, and work completion — all within defined timelines.

The portal will also allow MLAs to monitor the real-time status of all projects they recommend in their constituencies. Additionally, detailed information related to these schemes will he accessible to the general public through the portal.

Notably, the MLA-LAD scheme, initiated in 1997–98, has been a strong tool for addressing small yet essential infrastructure needs of citizens. Over the years, the scheme's allocation per constituency has increased from ₹5 lakh to ₹3 crore. For FY2025-26, ₹5 crore has been allocated for each Assembly constituency. The CM said these simplified

guidelines will streamline ad ministrative processes and help ensure timely execution of basic essential and small scale infrastructure needs for the public. It emphasises prioritising important and necessary projects while eliminating unnecessary proposals.

"A strict 30-day timeframe has been set from project recommendation to final approval and issuance of work order. Similarly, the CM-SA guidelines have also been simplified, aiming for faster project execution," he said The fresh guidelines were developed under the supervision of the Chief Secretary and the Development Commissioner.

Issued in public interest by

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Man gets life term in 99 days after crime

Bhubaneswar, August 13: In a swift delivery of justice, a Special POCSO court in Jharsuguda district Wednesday convicted a man to life term, 99 days after he sexually assaulted a visually-impaired minor girl.

The accused raped the minor May 2 last when she had paid a visit to former's house. The accused was living in the close proximity of the victim's house. The accused committed the crime as his family members were fast asleep.

After sexually abusing, he threatened the girl to eliminate her if she discloses the incident before anyone. Police, acting on the complaint lodged by rape survivor's father, launched a manhunt and arrested the accused May 8, six days after the commission of the dastardly crime. In order to make it a foolproof case and ensure the conviction of the perpetrator of the crime, police filed a chargesheet May 28, less than a month following the incident. The investigating officials used modern scientific techniques like DNA analysis and forensic evidence so that the trail ends in conviction.

The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) court, relying on medico-legal evidence and clinching evidence in the chargesheet, convicted the accused under Section 64(2)(k) of BNS and Section 6 of the POCSO Act and sentenced him to undergo life imprisonment.

Orissa HC commutes convict's death penalty in double murder

Bhubaneswar, August 13: The Orissa High Court Wednesday commuted the death sentence of a man to life imprisonment in a double murder case of 2019, saying that 'it is well settled law that the possibility of reformation and rehabilitation of the convict is an important factor which has to be taken into account as a mitigating circumstance before sentencing him to death'.

A division bench of Justices BP Routray and Chittaranjan Dash, taking note of the positive report of the jail authorities regarding the convict, Niranjan Mallik, in death row, commuted the capital punishment awarded by a lower court

"Taking into consideration the report of the jail authority in entirety, it cannot be said that there is no possibility of the convict being reformed and rehabilitated, foreclosing the alternative of a lesser sentence," the bench observed.

"We are therefore inclined to convert the sentence imposed on the appellant (convict) from death to life. but taking note of the severity of the offences including murder of two persons, we are of the view that the convict deserves life imprisonment for the rest of his life," the division bench ordered in the judgment.

According to the case details, Niranjan killed a night watchman, Lochan Sethi, and a 70-year-old woman, Badani Pradhan, at her house in Odagaon of Nayagarh district late January 16, 2019 night over past enmity. "Three other persons, including Pradhan's daughter, also sustained grievous injuries in the attack," according to the pros-

"Niranjan was booked for commission of two murders, one attempt to murder and two grievous hurts with lurking house trespass. A court in Nayagarh district, after examining 27

> witnesses and 94 documents, had awarded death sentence to Niranjan April 27, 2024, it said.

"Upon careful examination of socio-economic background of the convict in the present case, it appears that he hails from the poor economic strata of society without having any criminal antecedent and adverse report

against his conduct," the HC observed. As per the jail authority report submitted before the HC. Niranian is cordial to others and no one spoke evil of him in his village, his conduct inside the jail is normal and cordial to other inmates, the HC said, adding that noth-

ing on his conduct, as per the report of the jail authority, would constitute an aggravating factor against him to confirm the death sentence. "Regardless of the heinous crime

committed by him, his conduct inside iail is quite satisfactory as per the report of the Superintendent of Jail and he had also no other antecedent than the present one to be counted against him to justify his death sentence," the division bench stated in the 53-page order.

Farmer registration deadline extended

Bhubaneswar: The state government has extended the deadline for farmer registration for Kharif season paddy procurement following the di-

rective PROCUREMENT Mohan Charan

Majhi. The CM noted that over 11.5 lakh farmers have already enrolled. The process, which began July 19 and was earlier set to close August 20, will now continue for an extended period to benefit more farmers.



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On World Organ Donation Day, govt confers Suraj Award on 24



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 13: In a heartfelt tribute to selfless organ donors, 24 individuals were posthumously honoured with the Suraj Award at a state-level event held at Lok Seva Bhawan here on the occasion of World Organ Donation Day, Wednesday.

Presiding over the event, Health and Family Welfare (H&FW) Minister Mukesh Mahaling praised the donors and their families, calling organ donation a higher order of noble acts that enlivens others even after death.

He noted Odisha's emergence as a national leader in organ donation, thanks to such inspiring contributions. "Your donations have not only saved lives of others but also brought honour to Odisha," Mahaling said. Welcoming the immediate family

members of the organ donors, H&FW department Secretary Aswathy S said, "Words fail to describe the humanitarian acts and courage of the organ donors and their family members.

She added that one organ donor could save the lives of eight persons in critical stages of their lives. Even one organ donor through tissue donation could give life-relief to around 50 people.

She expressed her gratitude to them on behalf of the people of Odisha.

To mark the occasion, the H&FW Minister conferred the Suraj Award on 24 organ donors which were posthumously received by their immediate family members.

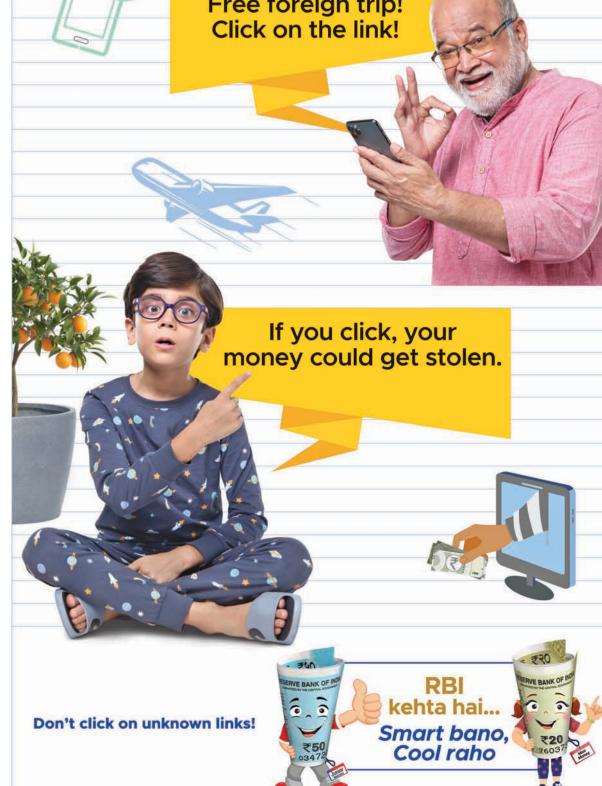
The award carried ₹5 lakh to each

of the bereaved families. Family members of Rashmi Pra-

va Patel of Jharsuguda, Sibun Siddharth Sahu of Nayagarh, Bikash Kumar Sahu of Khurda, Manoi Kumar Sahu of Kendrapara, Alekh Prasad Parida of Balasore, Prahallad Raut of Cuttack, Lata Mahant of Keonjhar, Janmes Lenka of Sundargarh and Pradeep Kumar Jena of Khurda received the Surai Award.

"Family members of Swashriayan Patra of Mayurbhanj, Biswajit Das of Angul, Jayanta Kumar Khamari of Khurda, Ajay Kumar Giri of Kendrapara, Asish Chhalsing of Koraput, Chandrasekhar Nayak of Rayagada, Narasingha Prasad Maharana of Gajapati, Pandae Sabar of Gajapati, Sarat Chandra Biswal of Kendrapara, Pilant Sabar of Rayagada, K Naresh Pattnayak of Gajapati, Arun Bhuyan of Gajapati, Soumya Ranjan Behera of Khurda, Shiba Prasad Jena of Bhadrak, and Rina Prusty of Khurda district also received the award," official sources said.

Notably, the parents of late Suraj Behera had promoted voluntary organ donation in Odisha by donating vital organs of their deceased son. Commemorating their inspiring humanitarian act, the Suraj Award is being presented to organ donors and organisations promoting organ donation in Odisha every year August 13 on the occasion of World Organ Donation Day since 2020. In recognition of the selfless and courageous contribution of the deceased and their families, the last rites of the donors are also being performed with state honour.



For more details, visit https://rbikehtahai.rbi.org.in/ul

For feedback, write to rbikehtahai@rbi.org.in

OrissaPOST

PARTY ACCUSES RULING PARTY OF U-TURN ON REPAINTING POLICY



Bhubaneswar, August 13: The Odisha Pradesh Congress Committee (OPCC) Wednesday slammed the state government for prioritising political optics over public welfare by approving ₹30,000 crore to repaint all government buildings saffron.

Addressing a press conference at Congress Bhawan here, oranjan Dash, Rajani Kumar Mohanty, Krushna Chandra Pati, and party leader Chinmay Sundar Das criticised the move, saying it comes at a time

5 Odia cyclists conquer grueling LEL 2025 ride

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar. August 13: Showcasing exceptional endurance and determination, five cyclists from the Bhubaneswar Cycling and Adventure Club (BCAC) completed the London-Edinburgh–London (LEL) 2025 ride, overcoming some of the harshest weather conditions in the event's history.

Sibasis Mohanty, Kumar Sahoo, Chandrakanta Sahu, Rajesh Patra, and R Ramanarayan Reddy were among the select Indian participants, who braved Storm Floris- a powsystem that brought winds exceeding 100 miles per hour—to complete the endurance ride. The LEL is conducted under the global randonneuring body—Les



Originally planned as a 1,540km ride with over 13,500 meters of elevation gain and a time limit of 128 hours, this year's edition saw unprecedented disruption. Storm Floris forced event organisers to shorten the course to around 1,000 km for most riders due to safety concerns, earning the event an informal new moniker-London-Floris-London.

LASSIFIED

AFFIDAVIT In the court of Magistrate, Bhadrak I Snehalata Mallick, aged about 67 years, W/o-Abhimanyu Nayak, At.- Bankasahi, PO/PS/ Dist.- Bhadrak, Odisha, Pin-756100 declared that I am the permanent inhabitant of the above noted address. My real name is SNEHALATA MALLICK, mentioned in my Passport bearing No. M9488253, but wrongly 'SNEHALA MALLICK' mentioned in my husband's passport bearing No. M9713195.That, I want correction of my name from SNEHALA MALLICK to SNEHALATA MALLICK in my husband's passport.

Cong slams state govt over ₹30K-cr saffron paint plan

with mounting debt, worsening law and order, and rising incidents of violence against women, including burn cases.

gang rapes, and suicides due

to harassment Mohanty revealed that a July 20, 2025, government letter showed the decision, to change the colour of all state-owned buildings, was made in a cabinet meeting. He noted that Odisha's total debt for the 2025-26 fiscal stands at ₹1,34,914 crore, translating to a per capita debt burden of ₹20,177, about 12.7 per cent of the state's GSDP. "At such a time, spending ₹30,000 crore just to paint walls is reckless." he said.

The Congress alleged that the ruling party, which had previously criticised the government over similar repainting exercises, reversed its stance after coming to power. They also expressed suspicion that ₹6,000-7,000 crore from the project could be diverted for upcoming panchayat election expenses through 'PC' (percentage commission) collections.

Pati further noted that the government had already spent ₹100 crore to change bus colours to saffron and altered the packaging of Omfed milk products. "Now, this ₹30,000 crore paint project shocks the entire state,' he said, adding that the Congress would strongly oppose it.

The party vowed to intensify its protest against what it called a politically motivated expenditure.

Loyola to host 15th Aditya **Memorial Inter-School Quiz**



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 13: Loyola School, in association with the Aditya Memorial Foundation (AMF), will host the 15th Aditya Memorial Inter-School Quiz Competition August 16 at the XIMB campus.

'The programme is organised in memory of Aditya Sahu, a bright student and passionate quizzer who lost his life to cancer April 18, 2010. I was the vice principal then, and to honour his passion for quizzing, the competition was started," said

Principal Fr A Amaladoss SJ. Vice-Principal (Senior Section) Nandita Pattanayak highlighted the scale of this year's event, saying, "The quiz coincides with Loyola's silver jubilee celebrations. So far, 21 schools with over 150 participants have registered."

AMF, led by Aditya's father, Mihir Kumar Sahu, has been organising the quiz since 2011. "Through the initiative. we feel his presence and keep his memory alive. Over the years, it has gained immense popularity, and each edition is a moment of pride for us,' Sahu said.

Participants from various schools across the state and neighbouring state, including Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand have already registered. Quiz master Manas Nayak will conduct the event. In order to ensure maximum participation, on-spot registration will also be available at the venue prior to the start of the competition. Actor and MLA Sidhant Mohapatra is likely to inaugurate

Har Ghar Tiranga events POST NEWS NETWORK

Dhauli College organises

Bhubaneswar, August 13:

The joint platform of Central

Trade Unions, Samyukta Ki-

san Morcha (United Farmers'

Front), and the Land Rights

Movement organised a protest

rally Wednesday from Master

Canteen to Lower PMG here un-

der the banner 'Defend National

Sovereignty - Stop Corporate

Loot,' condemning Trump's

The protesters carried plac-

aggressive tariff policy.

Bhubaneswar, August 13: The Lalit Kala Akademi Regional Centre, Bhubaneswar, in collaboration with Dhauli College of Art & Crafts, celebrated the Har Ghar Tiranga programme Wednesday on the college premises.

On the occasion, the Lalit Kala Akademi Regional Centre, Bhubaneswar, organised a watercolour workshop which was attended by nearly sixty students of Dhauli College of Art & Crafts. The students expressed their vision of patriotism through their artworks. Later in the afternoon,



a Tiranga Yatra was held, with staff and students of Dhauli College of Art & Crafts, along with members of Lalit Kala Akademi Regional Centre, Bhubaneswar, participating with the Tiranga

Odisha reacts strongly to SC order on stray dogs

it an attempt to pressure India

while protecting US corporate

interests. They welcomed the

Centre's recent stance against

the move but urged firm ac-

tion to safeguard agriculture,

Protesters warned that the

Comprehensive Economic and

Trade Agreement (CETA) could

threaten food security, health-

care, and economic self-reliance

by allowing cheap British farm

imports and paving the way for

hospital privatisation and high-

dairy, industry, and jobs.

Trade unions, SKM protest Trump tariffs

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, August 13: The Supreme Court's directive to permanently remove stray dogs from the streets of Delhi-NCR has sparked significant backlash in Odisha, with animal welfare activists and citizens questioning its feasibility and

ards and banners and raised

slogans to voice their de-

mands. Leaders from various

workers' and farmers' unions.

including Ramchandra Khun-

tia, Suresh Chandra Panigra-

hy, Bijay Kumar Jena, Dush-

mant Kumar Das, Jayasen

Meher, Mahendra Parida,

Jyoti Ranjan Mohapatra, and

others, also participated in the

Ten central trade unions

and allied groups condemned

Trump's tariff threat, calling

demonstration.

The bench, headed by Justices JB Pardiwala and R Mahadevan, issued the order in response to rising dog bite cases but ruled out the return of sterilised dogs to their original loca tions. The directive also warned of penalties for obstructing dog removal.

While the order is currently applicable only to Delhi-NCR, it has triggered debate in Odisha—home to the country's second-largest stray dog population. at 17.34 lakh (2019 Livestock Census). Since January 2023, over 5.2 lakh dog bite cases have been re-

Animal rights activists like Purabi Patra of Animal Welfare Trust Ekamra stressed the importance of Animal Birth



Control (ABC) programmes over mass sheltering. "Permanent sheltering is unrealistic and costly," she said. Activist Neha Mohany echoed concerns about lack of resources, calling the order "impractical and dan-

Residents, however, are divided. Animesh Pradhan, a dog bite victim, acknowledged the risks and urged faster action from local authorities.

Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation has begun sterilising nearly 70,000 stray dogs. Still, public anxiety remains

er medicine costs. The rally al-

so criticised the government's

pro-corporate policies, citing

the four labour codes, absence

of a legal MSP guarantee, and

privatisation of public enter-

A memorandum was submit-

ted to the Prime Minister and

Governor outlining demands

to reject Trump's tariffs, with-

draw CETA, halt India-US

trade talks, and ensure public

and parliamentary scrutiny of

all trade agreements.

high, especially after fatal at tacks-including the recent death of a para-athlete in Bolangir and a child in Puri, where the Orissa High Court ordered compensation. Animal cruelty incidents

have also risen, with dogs beat en to death in Bhubaneswar's VSS Nagar and Berhampur. Actress Elina Samantaray and other animal lovers say stray dogs deserve compassion, not

CURRENCY BOURSES INDEX VARIATION INDEX VARIATION **INDEX** VARIATION DOLLAR **87.47** • 0.32 SENSEX **80539.91** • 304.32 GOLD ₹100,470 A ₹313 EURO **102.59** \$\(\phi\) 0.63 NIFTY **24619.35** \$\(\phi\) 131.95 SILVER ₹115,245 A ₹150

Burn cases spark 'copycat suicide' concerns

MANOJ KUMAR JENA, OP

Bhubaneswar, August 13: Following the Balasore FM (Autonomous) College self-immolation case, the state has seen a surge in burn-related incidents. with some victims reportedly adopting the method to end their lives. Around five such cases have been reported, mostly involving young women and minors, raising concerns about the sudden rise. Experts have termed this pattern a 'copycat suicide' trend.

Renowned psychiatrist Amrit Pattojoshi said, "These cases are the result of copycat suicides, also known as the

effect. For instance. the Balaso re case was high-profile, and its impact was felt across the state and



the nation. Such incidents affect people who follow the news closely, and for some, it can be mentally contagious. Individuals with a depressed mindset may be influenced and, due to lack of mental health support, take this extreme step, believing it to be the only solution."

Pattojoshi further said, "To prevent this, the media must take responsibility. Continuous coverage and sensational headlines of burn cases for TRP should stop, as repeated telecasts can influence mentally vulnerable individuals. It is high time to self-introspect. Such cases should receive minimal attention and should not be politicised.'

Similarly, motivational speaker and communication educator Debilal Mishra said, "Self-immolation is deeply unfortunate. We are seeing several such instances recentlv, which is highly worrying.

People must remember that their life is precious—not iust for themselves, but also for their families. Such acts often

inspire more of the same.

Self-immolation reflects psychological weakness; it is a decision of a vulnerable mind. We must instead explore our inner strengths in every challenging situation."Students have also shared their views, emphasising the importance of building supportive family relationships and speaking out instead of taking extreme steps.

Jigyansa Das, an MBA student, said, "Women sometimes fall victim to blackmail, which can tragically end innocent

lives. Parents should foster open and transparent re lationships with their children, so they feel free to share



Deepnita Sahoo, a master's student, said women face numerous threats in society. "There is always a solution to



cases," she added.

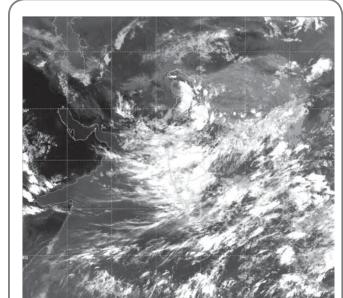
friendly relationships with girl students, so they feel comfortable sharing their concerns, which can help reduce such

Chinmayee Mishra, a second-year graduate student, said, "They say youth are the future of our nation, but their safety is a pressing concern. Students work hard, pushing their limits, vet some take extreme steps due

to others heinous acts. The govern ment must take more effective measures wom-

safety, and victims should never let thoughts of sui-

cide consume their minds.



WEATHER						
	BBSR	СТС	FORECAST			
Max Temp	34.2°	34.8°	Generally			
Min Temp	26.5°	25.4°	cloudy sky			
Humidity	84%	84%	-			
Rainfall	TRACE	Nil				

BOOKING STA

Acharya Vihar-Dayal Agency-9437135727, A.P. Tours and Travel, Maitri Vihar, C.S. Pur-9861301598, Aurobindo Market-Sai Audio & Electronics-9438304668, Airport Road-Sai Baba Variety Store-9090071530, Anish Infotech-Tankapani Road-9861341488

Bapuji Nagar- Dreamland Studio- 9777517314, Baramunda Rental Colony-Maa Ramchandi Communication-9658821469, Baramunda Housing Board Colony-Pappu Variety Store-9040500106, Cuttack Road-Alishan Snacks-8984236754, District Center (Chandrasekharpur)-Sai Google Mart-9776056507, Forest Park-DTDC Couriers & Services (HB Services)-7381024156, IRC Village-Bapi Xerox-9090090404, Gift Hut(Antriksh Gifts & Decors Pvt. Ltd.)-9954781084, Pruthvi Medicine-9853314816, Janpath-Krupajal Book Store-7978646669, Jaydev Vihar-AK Enterprises-7978116618, Subam Sai Books Store-8895550649, Swain Graphics- 9337121249, Jagannath Mobile Point- Janpath Road, Ram Mandir- 9938475415, Kanan Vihar-Auro Electronics-8260697560, Khandagiri- Swosti Mobile Centre- 7992914045, World Solution- 9938317559, KIIT Road-Jugad Jn-9338545031, Laxmi Sagar-Aditya Mobile-9438191836, Lewis Road-Spider Web-7809186415, Metro Satellite City-Arogya Mitra Medicine Store-9853621640, Madhusudan Nagar-Mohapatra Communication-9124446664, Maa Santoshi travels- Gajapati Nagar- 9777675867, Nayapalli- The Cake Room- 7873660137, Near Mayfair Lagoon-Cookieman-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.

Woman kills hubby with paramour, aide

24-year-old Subrat Majhi would often visit 36-year-old Urmila Kerketta of Hari Om Colony at night after Dhruba, 62, goes to sleep

Sundargarh, August 13: A woman allegedly strangled her husband to death with the help of her paramour and an associate over an alleged illicit relationship at Hari Om Colony in Shankara area of this town Tuesday night, police said.

The victim was identified as Dhruba Kerketta, 62, a native of Jaisar village under Subdega block and a retired head clerk of Subdega block office. The accused were identified as Urmila Kerketta, 36, her lover Subrat Majhi, 24, of Tasladihi under Sadar police limits, and associate Bimal Dandasena, 34.

Sundargarh Town police registered a case (349/2025) under Sections 103(1)/3(5) of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and produced them in court. With bail denied, a magistrate sent them to Sundargarh jail, SDPO Nirmal Mohapatra said.

During interrogation, the trio admitted to killing Dhruba, Town police said.

According to IO Bhabagrahi Jena, Urmila had married Dhruba in 2013. Dhruba had been staying in a rented accommodation in Sundargarh for the past 18 months with Urmila and their only son. There. Urmila developed a relationship with

Police said Subrat would often visit Urmila at night after

'Revenge murder'

Khallikote, August 13: A man

was killed Wednesday morning

in a suspected revenge attack

at R Bahadapalli Chhak under

Rambha police limits in Khal-

likote block of Ganjam district.

Police said the victim, Abhi-

manyu Pradhan of R Baha-

dapalli, was on his way to the

local market on a bike to buy

vegetables when a group of

youths allegedly attacked him

near the village square. The at-

tackers struck him on the head

with sharp weapons, killing

him on the spot. Rambha IIC

Kumar Muduli, Chhatrapur SD-

PO Chandan Ghadei, and other

officers arrived at the spot, re-

covered the body, and sent it to

Khallikote community health

Police believe the killing is

linked to August 2 murder of

B Manu Pradhan, also from R

Bahadapalli. Manu, who was

running a grocery shop in the

village, was attacked by a group

centre for postmortem.

of assailants and killed.

rocks Khallikote

POST NEWS NETWORK



Dhruba goes to sleep. Dhruba, who used to take sleeping pills at night, grew suspicious, confronted his wife and warned Subrat over the issue. Finding no solution to the issue, a sexagenarian Dhruba decided to move to his native village along with his family, and also stayed there for four months.

When Urmila refused to stay there, their son was sent to a hostel. Subrat later called Urmila, but was caught and apologised to Dhruba, promising not to call again.

Police said Urmila then plotted with her lover to kill her husband so that they could live together. On Tuesday morning, the couple engaged in a bitter quarrel over phone calls between Urmila and Subrat, police said. Dhruba was allegedly strangled by the accused late Tuesday night.

Investigators said Urmila,

Kendrapara, August 13: Po-

lice Wednesday arrested four

more persons for their alleged

involvement in the gangrape of

a 15-year-old schoolgirl in Ken-

drapara district. With this, the

total number of arrests in the

Police Tuesday arrested a

29-year-old close relative of

the survivor, who allegedly

lured her to a secluded location

where she was sexually assault-

The prime accused was iden-

All five have been booked

under various sections of the

Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita

(BNS) and the Protection of

Children from Sexual Offences

While Mallick has already

been sent to jail after a local

tified as Chittaranjan Mallick,

alias Happy, the Class X stu-

case has risen to five.

ed by the five men.

dent's paternal uncle.

(POCSO) Act.

Kendrapara shame:

All 5 accused held

Tribal girl trafficked, married to man in MP

had told her lover. Subrat.

that her husband had warned

her not to use her phone anymore. Acting on a plan, Subrat

and his friend Bimal arrived

on a motorcycle at midnight at

Urmila's house, While Dhruba

was asleep, the trio allegedly

After the killing, Subrat and

Bimal fled the spot. The next

morning, Urmila informed

Dhruba's brothers that he had

fallen ill after taking sleeping

pills and died at the hospital

When the family arrived

from their village, they no-

ticed injury marks on Dhruba's

neck and suspected foul play.

His brother, Saroj Kerketta,

lodged a complaint at Sundar-

Police detained Urmila for

questioning and later picked

up Subrat and Bimal from near

Tasaladihi. Sundargarh SDPO

Nirmal Mohapatra, Town po-

lice IIC Preeti Manjari Mendu-

li, and a forensic team visited

the crime scene, seized Dhru-

ba's body, and sent it to the

Police said Urmila initially

claimed her husband died from

an overdose of sleeping pills

and even attempted to mislead

investigators. However, call re-

cords from the previous night

and subsequent interrogation

led police to uncover the mur-

court rejected his bail applica-

tion, the four others were pro-

duced in court later in the day,

Police said the accused also

video-recorded the heinous in-

cident. According to the FIR,

the survivor alleged that her

relative visited their residence

on Raksha Bandhan (August 9)

and offered to take her to a tem-

Instead, she was taken to

a deserted spot, where four

others were waiting, and was

It seemed that the crime was

pre-planned and the relative of

the girl was the main accused,

The accused allegedly threat-

The survivor's statement

was recorded Wednesday in

the presence of a magistrate,

ened her with dire consequenc-

es if she revealed the incident

ple in a nearby village.

a police officer said.

an officer added.

police said.

gangraped.

DHH for postmortem.

garh Town police station.

strangled Dhruba.

during the night.

Jajpur, August 13: A 17-yearold tribal girl from this district was allegedly trafficked to Madhya Pradesh, where she was sold and married off to the buyer, police said Wednesday.

Though the incident took place a fortnight ago, it came to light after the family of the girl, who hails from Sukinda Chromite Valley, lodged a complaint with Kaliapani police station Tuesday night.

The victim's family alleged that a friend of the girl lured her with the promise of pilgrimage and sightseeing in MP.

The accused, along with her elder sister, took the minor to Madhya Pradesh July 27. However, there they sold her later to a man who intended to marry her, according to

A day after arriving in Madhya Pradesh, the victim had called her parents over the phone and said she was alright but around a fortnight later, the family came to know that she had been sold and married, with her in-laws allegedly paying money to buy her, the family alleged in the police

The girl sent some photographs and videos of the marriage to one of her friends in the village. Based on the complaint, a case has been registered and further investigations are underway.

"The two accused sisters are under the police scanner... we are taking all steps to nab the culprits," Kalinga Nagar Additional Superintendent of Police (ASP) Suprasanna Mallick said.

Bolangir farmer ends life over crop loss

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhawanipatna/Titilagarh, August 13: A 47-year-old farmer from Khandra village under Sindhekela police limits in Bolangir district died Wednesday after allegedly consuming pesticide, reportedly due to crop loss and an inability to repay a group loan.

The deceased has been identified as Durga Charan Bhoi. Police said Bhoi's crops failed this season, and mounting debt had put him under severe mental stress. He allegedly drank nesticide used for killing weeds Wednesday forenoon.

Bhoi was first taken to Sindhekela hospital and later shifted to Titilagarh subdivisional hospital. As his condition worsened, he was then moved to the DHH, where doctors declared him dead. Bhoi's brother, Bhaskar, lodged a complaint with Bhawanipatna Town police, stating that crop loss and unpaid group debt had driven his elder brother to suicide.

4 held for assaulting girls to remove 'sorcery spell'

spot and detained four accused Subash Deuri; Abhimanyu Ojha from Charigharpur in Brahmabarada area; and Tulasi Mahakud.

Because of their critical condition, the girls were first treated at Dharmasala community health centre. Jyoti was later where their bail pleas were rejected, and they were sent to Ragadi jail, Jenapur police station officer Nirupama

assault later went viral, sparkshifted to SCB Medical College ing outrage among residents and Hospital in Cuttack. Based on Prashant's comand netizens. Jenapur police reached the plaint, police registered a case (258/25) under several Kalisii Gedi and her husband, sections of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita. All the four accused were produced before Chandikhole court Wednesday

Teacher nabbed for alleged Maoist links

POST NEWS NETWORK

POST NEWS NETWORK

Dharmasala, August 13:

Jenapur Police arrested four people, including two women,

on charges of tying up and

beating two sisters in public

allegedly to remove the black

magic spell on them at Panturi

under Gadmadhupur pancha-

yat in Jajpur district, Tuesday.

The suspects were produced be-

According to police, Prashant

Kumar Lenka's elder daughter,

Jyoti Lenka, and his minor

younger daughter were ill.

After several medical consul-

tations failed to improve their

condition, the family took them

to the village's Mangala temple

During the ritual, Tula-

si Mahakud, 26, a woman

from Adampur village under

Kuakhia police limits, alleged-

ly beat the sisters with a stick

and tied them to a pole at the

village square. A video of the

for rituals.

fore the court Wednesday.

Mohana, August 13: A primary school teacher was arrested in Gajapati district recently for his alleged connections with Maoist activities, police said Wednesday.

The suspect, Pratap Kumar Navak. has been working as an ex-cadre assistant teacher at Nua Khajuripada Government Primary School under Adava police station since 2008.

According to Adaya police station officer Shubhrant Panda, Nayak was previously in volved with a Maoist organisation and allegedly participated in violent incidents across various locations. A case (135/11) was registered against him in 2011 at the police station, leadGajapati SP Jatindra Kumar

Panda said several other teachers in Adaya, Mohana and R Udavagiri police station areas face similar allegations of Maoist links and involvement in illegal ganja trafficking. Authorities have urged these individuals to surrender at local police stations. Police have also sent letters to the block education officer (BEO) regarding the matter.

"If they fail to surrender, they will be arrested wherever they are," Panda said.

Mohana BEO Narendra Behera said he has not received any such letter from the police. "If any letter arrives naming a teacher, appropriate action will be taken as per government regulations," Behera added.

ASI suspended for dereliction of duty

Bhadrak: An assistant sub-

Jena said.

inspector (ASI) at Dhamnagar police station was suspended Wednesday on charge of negligence while dealing with a minor girl's abduction case. Bhadrak SP Manoi Raut ordered the suspension after the latter "failed to trace the victin or the accused for nearly two months". A man, along with two accomplices, had June 17 allegedly abducted the schoolgirl from Kankara in Dhamnagar area. Her mother lodged an FIR the same day and the ASI was assigned as the investigating officer (IO). "There was, however, no breakthrough for 55 days. The victim was rescued August 11 from a rented house in Keonjhar district," an officer said. Frustrated over the delay, the girl's family had approached the High Court, which summoned Dhamnagar IIC and the IO to appear in person August 11. Raut issued the order following HC intervention.

Trap cams in Ujalpur as locals spot pugmarks

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, August 13: A couple of days after pugmarks were found in a village near Uialpur forest range of Sundargarh forest division, Forest department officials have installed trap cameras near the area to ascertain the presence of a tiger.

According to forest officials. locals reported seeing a big cat roaming in the forest areas of Lephripada in the district.

Pugmarks were found in a village near Ujalpur forest range of Sundargarh forest division Monday, prompting authorities to set up cameras at several locations

Forest dept officials said locals have claimed that they had seen a big cat roaming in the forest areas of Lephripada in Sundargarh district

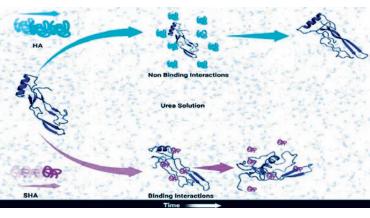
"So far, we have neither di-

to track the animal, officials said.

rectly sighted the big cat nor captured the wild animal in the trap cameras. We have installed additional cameras and deployed a rapid response team in the area," Sundargarh Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) Khushwant Singh told PTI over the phone. The pugmarks are also being

ard, he said. "So far, we have not confirmed the presence of a tiger in Lephri-

NIT Rourkela decodes bone regeneration tech



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 13: Researchers at National Institute of Technology (NIT). Rourkela have uncovered how natural sugar-like molecules in the human body can alter the behaviour of Bone Morphogenetic Protein-2 (BMP-2), a protein responsible for bone formation and repair, according to officials.

Published in the prestigious journal Biochemistry, the findings of this research can be used for advanced treatments in bone and cartilage regeneration, improved implants and more effective pro-

tein-based medicines According to Harekrushna Sahoo, Associate Professor, NIT, Rourkela, "Proteins carry out various functions in the human body -- from building tissues and supporting chemical reactions to acting as signals between cells. However, for the best productivity, they need to be folded or unfolded into precise three-dimensional shapes.

Understanding why and how proteins unfold is a major goal in biology, with implications for medicine, biotechnology and drug delivery, he said.

In this context, BMP-2 plays a crucial role in forming bones and cartilage, healing injuries and guiding stem cells to become

bone-forming cells. However, in the human body, this protein interacts with different Glycosaminoglycans (GAGs), special sugar-like molecules found in connective tissues and joint fluids, Sahoo added.

The team observed that BMP-2 unfolded faster in the presence of Sulfated Hyaluronic Acid (SHA), a type of GAG, compared to regular Hvaluronic Acid or without additives. The researchers found that SHA binds directly to BMP-2 protein, gently altering its structure and making it unfold in a more controlled manner.

"BMP-2 is a critical protein in humans that plays a fundamental role in osteogenesis and bone regeneration. Our study reveals how specific GAG-BMP-2 interactions influence unfolding dynamics and structural stability. These insights allow scaffold designs to actively preserve BMP-2's functional conformation, prolong bioactivity, lower dosage needs and reduce side effects," the researcher said.

Furthermore, the work offers a mechanistic basis for tailoring GAG functional group modifications to modulate protein structure and activity, guiding next-generation pharmaceutical formulation, he said.

Zonal Office, UCO Bank
Building, 2nd Floor, C-2, Ashok
Nagar, Bhubaneswar-751009

GOLD AUCTION NOTICE

lowing persons, who have availed loans against pledge of gold ornaments, from CONCERNED BRANCHES of UCO Bank, have not repaid the amount in spite of our demand notice. Therefore please take notice that if the principal, interest and other charges are not paid on or before Dt.26.08.2025, the pledge ornaments will be publicly auctioned on Dt.29.08.2025 at 12.00 Noon at the Respective Branch premises. The Bank reserves the right to cancel/postpone the auction to any other convenient date without assigning any reasons.

SI. No.	Name & Address of Borrowers / A/c. No.	Balance Outstanding	Weight in (Grams)				
	PHIRINGIA BRANCH, P.O.: Phiringia, Dis Name of the Manager: Priyabrata Karna, M						
1.	Chandramani Digal, At: Bapanga, Balandapada, Gochhapada, Phulbani - 762011 / 10360610020104	₹ 12,000/- + Interest and Charges	6.40				
2.	Alok Sahani, At: Telapali, Sarukoi, Phulbani - 762011 / 10360610020135	₹ 27,000/- + Interest and Charges	8.80				
3.	Gyana Ranjan Bisoi, At: Dindira Gaon, Phiringia - 762011 / 10360610020036	₹ 44,000/- + Interest and Charges	17.09				
KONARK BRANCH, Konark, Dist.: Puri, PIN - 752002,							

Name of the Manager: Kishore Chandra Moharana, Mob.: 9778031638 Prakash Chandra Biswal, At: Sarada, Konark - 752111 / ₹21,500/- + MAITREE VIHAR BRANCH, Maitree Vihar, Bhubaneswar, Name of the Manager: Umesh Chandra Nayak, Mob.: 6371006958

Sambhunath Gochhayat, At: Tarini Nagar, Salia Sahi, Bhubaneswar - 751013 / 18390610015940 The intending bidders may participate in the auction by fulfilling the following terms:

1. The Bank does not guarantee the weight or purity of the jewellery/coins, either of its gold contents 2. The jewel is available for inspection by the intending bidders during business hours on any working

3. The intending bidders have to contact the Respective Branch Head for the Reserve Price of

4. The intending purchaser shall make an earnest money deposit of 25% of Reserve Price (to be computed as per the balance outstanding).

5. The jewel to be handed over to the highest bidder on payment of the balance amount within 24 hours or on the next working day of the bank during its business hours.

6. If the successful bidder fails to pay the amount, the earnest money will be forfeited and the jewel may be resold within 30 days from the date of auction

7. The unsuccessful bidder shall be entitled for the refund of the earnest money immediately after the

8. It shall be lawful for the Bank to stop the auction at any stage without assigning any reason thereto in which case the earnest money shall be returned to whoever makes the deposit

N.B.: For further details please contact Zonal Office Co-ordinator, Mob: 7873016821

Place: Bhubaneswar, Date: 13.08.2025 Authorised Officer, UCO Bank

examined to determine whether they belong to a tiger or a leop-

pada area," Singh added.

He claimed some people were circulating a photograph resembling an incident from four to five years ago in Haridwar.

EAST COAST RAILWAY

Name of Work: OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE OF INOCULUM GENERATION PLANT OF CAPACITYm3 AT CARRIAGE REPAIR WORKSHOP, MANCHESWAR. Advertised Value: ₹ 51,67,888.50

Earnest Money: ₹ 1,03,400.00, Tender Bidding Start Date: 14.08.2025

Date & time of tender closing: At 1500

Manual offers are not allowed against th

ender, and any such manual offer receive shall be ignored. Complete information including e-tende ocuments are available in website

www.ireps.gov.in Dy. Chief Mechanical Engineer Carriage Repair Workshop

PR-467/Q/25-26

EAST COAST RAILWAY e-Tender Notice No. SNTPBBS-DD-082025

Name of Work: PROVISION OF DOUBLE DISTANT SIGNAL TO INCREASE SECTIONAL SPEED TO 130 KMPH IN EX HINDOL (HIN)-CHRD SECTION OF KHURDA ROAD DIVISION ALONG WITH ALTERATION IN WESTRACE MAKE SADASHIBAPUR (SSPR), RAJ ATHGARF (RJGR), RADHAKISHOREPUR (RQP) GHANTIKHAL NIDHIPUR (GHNH), NARA MARTHAPUR (NQR), DHENKANAL (DNKL

Approximate Advertised Value: ₹ 7,33,53,623.23, EMD: ₹ 5,16,800.00, ompletion period: 06 Months.

Date & time of tender closing: At 1500

No manual offers sent by Post/Courie Fax or in person shall be accepted agains such e-tenders even if these are submitte on firm's letter head and received in time All such manual offers shall be considere vithout any consideration.

Complete information including e-tende ocuments of the above e-tender is available in website: www.ireps.gov.in

Note: The prospective tenderers are advise to revisit the website 15 (Fifteen) days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes/corrigendum issued for this tende

Dy. Chief Signal & Telecom Enginee PR-77/Cl/25-26 (Proj), Bhubaneswer



Turn all things to honey; this is the law of divine living

SRI AUROBINDO



Climate Security

while going along with this rhetorical shift may appease some, it should be recognised for what it is: a change in wording. The fundamental economic and technological forces that are pushing the world away from oil, coal, and gas and toward low-carbon, high-efficiency

Over the past two decades, climate change has been a leading item on the global agenda, driving efforts to deploy technologies that will reduce carbon dioxide emissions. Those efforts are now facing headwinds, and not just in the United States. Geopolitical developments elsewhere, like Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, have called attention to the importance of energy affordability and security over other considerations

Policymakers in the US, Europe, and elsewhere initially responded to the war by doubling down on the shift from fossil fuels, and for $\operatorname{\mathsf{good}}$ reason. Oil, coal, and gas are commodities whose prices will always be linked to geopolitical vagaries (that goes for not only global oil markets but also regional gas markets, which

are increasingly linked by trade in liquefied natural gas).

fossil-fuel price spikes. Europe's gas prices peaked at ten times their long-term averlong-term average. While the US Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 is widely considered kindly: The only permanent way to address such bouts with "fossilflation" is to stop using fossil fuels.

Though the blowback against climate

In grappling with these tradeoffs, the European Union delivered the kinds of efficiency measures that Trump's "Department of Government Efficiency" (DOGE) had promised

border adjustment mechanism by requiring 90% fewer companies

promised but never delivered.

Still, fiddling at the climate-policy margins ignores the bigger picture. While Europe and America are taking steps back, China is leaping forward. It alone accounted for over 40% of the record \$2.1 trillion of global investment in the energy transition last year – more than the EU, the United Kingdom, and the US combined

The balance is even more lopsided for specific clean-energy technologies. China produces around 75% of the world's solar panels and 80% of its lithium-ion batteries. That dominance is the result of a concerted green industrial policy, in which innovation plays a key role. The claim that China only manufactures and assembles is woefully outdated. China's electric vehicles, for example, are second to none. BYD, the country's leading carmaker, recently unveiled a groundbreaking charging system capable of adding 470 kilometers (292 miles) of range in just five minutes, putting the company in a

petitive without price support. LONGi, one of the world's top solar manufacturers, formed LONGi Hydrogen in 2021 to pursue green hydrogen production. It now leads the world in electrolyzer manu-

policy has helped lift five other Chinese hydrogen companies into the global top ten. Have Europe and the US already lost this race for

the world's first low-carbon steel plant using electrolyzers made by ThyssenKrupp Nucera, in which the German steelmaker has a ma-

facturing dominance will be difficult, the US has made significant inroads just over the past three years. Earlier this year, it exceeded 50 gigawatts of panel manufacturing capacity, a fivefold increase

be justified only by priorities other than the climate, such as national security or promoting domestic manufacturing. But that is the point. If political conditions require stronger emphasis on technologies like geothermal and nuclear, and if technologies formerly known as tech," so be it. The larger forces propelling us toward decarbonization remain the same.

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Gernot Wagner

fundamental

economic and

technological

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coal, and gas

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have not

abated

high-efficiency

The

or all the uncertainties generated by Donald Trump's administration over the past six months, one thing is clear: "climate" technologies are out, and "energy" technologies are in. But technologies have not abated.

As a case in point, the summer of 2022 brought massive inflation, largely driven by age, and US gas prices at around triple their a misnomer, history will judge the name

policies has been particularly strong at the federal level in the US, Europe, too, has undergone a retrenchment. This is somewhat understandable, even if it is shortsighted. Germany, Europe's largest economy, has been in a recession for more than two years, with high energy prices a chief culprit. Climate technologies that are already commercially viable could help, of course. But taking full advantage of the lower prices of solar, wind, and (increasingly) batteries requires a willingness to reform power markets and pass these savings to households and industrial consumers. It also calls for more upfront public investment, an area where climate priorities compete with other priorities like national security that are often perceived to be more immediate.

but failed to achieve. For example, Europe dialed back its carbon

On the surface, this seems like a decisive blow to the goal of establishing a carbon tariff for imports, commensurate with Trump's DOGE hatchet. But unlike Trump and Elon Musk, the EU ensured that the remaining 10% of importers still accounted for over 90% of emissions. This outcome is far from ideal when viewed solely through a climate lens. But viewed from a broader climate-economic perspective, it is exactly the kind of surgical intervention that DOGE

league of its own globally.

China's dominance extends to technologies that are not yet comfacturing capacity.

These are not isolated examples. China's ambitious industrial

While the US now seems hellbent on turning itself into a petrostate, the EU has a chance to revive its clean-energy fortunes. It is even starting with a significant policy advantage: a CO2 price hovering around \$100 per metric ton means that most low-carbon technologies from clean electrons and electrification to clean molecules like biofuels - are already economically viable. Others, like green hydrogen, will need further support to help climb the learning curve and slide down the cost curve. According to Bernd Heid, a senior partner at McKinsey & Company who leads its Platform for Climate Technologies, around 90% of climate technologies will be in the money by 2030 with a \$100 carbon price.

While China dominates with six top-ten global players, three of the others are European. The Swedish startup Stegra is building

Despite recent political developments, the US, too, has shown that rapid change is possible. Although breaking China's solar manusince 2022. These 50 GW in panel supply roughly matched US demand.

True, onshoring the solar supply chain comes with costs that can "climate tech" must be relabeled as more neutral-sounding "energy

> The writer is a climate economist at Columbia Business School.

FOCUS URBAN DEVELOPMENT

WHY PROPERTY RIGHTS MATTER

with opportunity and promise, they grapple with an invisible, yet decisive force: property rights. Determining who owns the land beneath our expanding metros-and what incentives urban dwellers have to investmay be the key to India's urban transformation.

For most urban families, owning a home is more than shelter-it's a stepping stone toward upward mobility, access to credit, and security in the form of protection from eviction, legal recognition and ability to pass assets to future generations. Yet, millions across India's cities live in houses built on uncertain ground—not for want of effort, but owing to unclear or non-existent property rights. Nearly 1 in 4 urban Indians—an estimated 65 to 98 million—live in slums, according to the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs and UN-Habitat (2019). An additional 15–25% reside in "unauthorised" housing, where formal property rights are absent (MoHUA, 2019). These homes exist in a legal twilight zone—overlooked by authorities, taxed informally yet unrecognised in official records. This legal invisibility has consequences. Families hesitate to invest in upgrading homes or sanitation without legal tenure. Banks won't lend, governments can't plan, and residents remain vulnerable to eviction.

This ambiguity isn't merely a legal technicality but has socio-economic consequences. It discourages investment: why upgrade a home or improve sanitation if the land can be claimed by another party or the government at any time? Lack of formal proof also blocks access to formal credit, insurance, and government schemes. trapping families in cycles of informality and vulnerability.

India's urban development challenge is not just immenseit is deeply layered. As per the 2011 Census, 31.1% of the country's population—over 377 million—resided in urban areas. Yet, the promise of city life is undermined by persistent housing insecurity. While 69%



While India's urban headlines may focus on new skyscrapers, the nation's urban future rests on something more foundational: secure, accessible, and transparent property rights

of urban households own their homes, this figure pales in comparison to 95% in rural India. The crisis of informality is stark: an estimated 65 to 98 million, or 17-24% of urban residents, live in slums with precarious tenure, according to MoHUA. In addition, 15-25% of the urban population live in "unauthorized" housing—structures that exist outside formal legal recognition and are often underserved by civic infrastructure. This tenuous status has broader systemic consequences, with around 66% of all civil cases in Indian courts involving land or property disputes, as per the National Judicial Data Grid. Together, these figures underscore the urgent need to address legal insecurity and property rights in India's cities

Research from around the world consistently demonstrates that secure property rights can catalyse investment and lead to improved social and economic outcomes. For instance, a study in Peru found that enhancing property rights led to a more than two-thirds increase in residential investment in housing renovations (Field, 2005). In Buenos Aires, transitioning poor households from informal usufruct rights to formal property ownership resulted in larger and better-quality homes, smaller household sizes, and improved educational outcomes for children (Schargrodsky & Galiani, 2010). Indian evidence echoes these findings. A 2021

World Bank study revealed that land parcels in Bangalore with clear and guaranteed land titles fetched a 4.3% price premium over similar plots with uncertain ownership. Odisha's JAGA Mission, launched in 2018, granted land rights to over 200,000 households across 109 towns, enabling them to upgrade homes and access piped water, sanitation, and electricity. A study by the Centre for Policy Research (2021) notes that this large-scale slum titling effort in Odisha improved service delivery and significantly reduced eviction risks by formalizing occupancy.

India's own history underscores that property rights reform is complex. Regularization schemes have sometimes benefited intermediaries or politically connected interests rather than intended slum residents. In Nairobi, colonial segregation policies led to informal settlements devoid of titles. Subsequent reforms gave rise to corruption, land cartels, and bribery (Southall, 2005). In Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, even with government encouragement, high titling costs kept uptake low (Manara et al., 2020)

A significant bottleneck that exists in India is the administrative and fiscal burden that property rights impose. Property taxes alone account for 25-36% of the own-source revenue of urban local bodies, underscoring their importance to municipal finance (RBI, 2022). In addition, stamp duty and

registration charges collected across the country amounted to ₹1.9 lakh crore in 2021–22 (RBI, 2022). These figures underscore the fiscal significance of property-related revenues for India's cities—an opportunity to strengthen municipal fiscal capacity, but also hints towards a potential point of fragility, wherein an over-reliance on property-linked revenues, in the absence of secure tenure and reliable land records, may weaken the financial stability of cities.

Property rights reform in India must extend well beyond the mere issuance of paper titles. For such reforms to have meaningful and lasting impact, they must be anchored in simplification, digitisation, and broader urban development strategies. Programmes like the Digital India Land Records Modernization Programme aim to make land records more transparent and accessible, especially in informal or underserved areas where clarity of ownership is often absent. However, titling alone is not sufficient. True change requires integrating property rights with essential services such as water, sanitation, and health infrastructure, so that residents experience tangible improvements in their quality of life. Reforms must also guard against elite capture by ensuring that processes are transparent and participatory, with active involvement from local communities. Finally, to make these reforms inclusive, the cost and complexity of securing property titles must be reduced, particularly for the urban poor and marginalized groups who often face the steepest bureaucratic and financial barriers.

While India's urban headlines may focus on new skyscrapers. the nation's urban future rests on something more foundational: secure, accessible, and transparent property rights. Only by turning land from a source of insecurity into an engine of empowerment can India unlock the promise of its cities.

The writer is a PhD Scholar at the University of Cambridge.

SPECTRUM CULTURE

INDIA'S URBAN

DEVELOPMENT

CHALLENGE

IS NOT JUST

IS DEEPLY

LAYERED

IMMENSE-IT

Business lessons from a traditional sport



Shivaji Mohinta

BEYOND ITS COLOUR AND EXCITEMENT, DAHI HANDI IS A LIVE CASE STUDY IN TEAMWORK, **STRATEGY AND RESILIENCE**

TO THE EDITOR

are most welcome to contribute letters

requested to send their contact

address/email ID. They may also send in their valuable comments, opinion and

suggestions, preferably by email, to:

OrissaPOST

B-15, Rasulgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

Readers of Orissa Post

(100 words), articles and

words). Contributors are

numbers and full postal

columns (between 600-1000

n Sept 2018, I had shared aligned & focused. in Orissa Post an article "Management Lessons from Dahi Handi" on how the traditional Indian festival sport offers surprisingly powerful corporate lessons. This year, as Janmashtami arrives, it's worth revisiting those ideas - with a fresh look at how they apply in today's fast-changing business world.

Celebrated on Janmashtami, Dahi Handi involves teams forming tall human pyramids to reach and break an earthen pot (Handi) filled with curd, suspended high above the ground. Crowds cheer, water is splashed to make the climb tougher, and the winning team

takes home the bounty. Beyond its colour and excitement, this sport is a live case study in teamwork. strategy and resilience. Here is what it can teach today's professionals and leaders:

1. Set a Clear Goal: The Handi or Pot is visible to everyone — the objective is clear. Likewise, in business, goals must be specific, transparent, and shared so every member is

2. Stretched Targets Drive Growth: The Handi is hung high enough to challenge even the best teams. In corporate life, ambitious yet achievable targets push teams to innovate and deliver above par results.

3. One Team, One Goal: A lone star performer cannot win Dahi Handi; every layer of the pyramid matters. Success comes from alignment. coordination, and collective effort. Team effort can win Championships!

4. Right Person, Right Role: From sturdy bases to agile climbers, each position requires the right skill set. Organizations, too, thrive when talent is placed where it can have the most impact.

5. Build Core Competencies: Balance, strength, and endurance in Dahi Handi comes from training. Businesses & the individual employees need to continually invest in building skills to handle bigger challenges. Build a skyscraper of skills.

6. Inter-Departmental Coordination: If one-layer falters, the pyramid collapses. In orgation between teams is critical in reaching the bigger goal.

7. Agile Strategy & Quick Pivoting: Sometimes, the human pyramid loses balance midway — teams must instantly adjust formation to avoid collapse. In today's business environment, markets shift overnight (due to some wild card events), and customer preferences evolve rapidly. Companies that adapt quickly, reassign roles, or change plans on the fly often turn setbacks into breakthroughs.

8. Overcoming Obstacles: Just as water is poured to slow climbers, businesses face competitive and environmental pressures. Preparation, skill, and mental resilience turn these hurdles into stepping stones

9. Celebrate Small Wins: Cheers from the crowd energize the team at each stage. Recognizing interim milestones in the workplace keeps morale high and momentum

10. Creative Problem-Solving: Lord Krishna famously

nizations, seamless collabora- devised clever ways to get to the Handi despite obstacles. Encouraging lateral thinking and innovation helps organizations outsmart challenges.

11. Learn Fast from Failures: Teams get three attempts; each teaches what to do differently next time. Quick learning loops in business separate market leaders from the rest.

12. Welfare & Rewards: Prize money in Dahi Handi is shared amongst all contributors. Fair recognition in the workplace ensures sustained loyalty and commitment. Apart from this, insurance coverage for all the participating "Govindas" has been enhanced as a safety & precautionary measure.

In business — as in Dahi Handi — the journey is as important as the goal. Sometimes you break the Handi, sometimes you don't. But with the right mix of preparation, agility, teamwork and resilience, each attempt takes you closer to success.

> The writer is a business consultant.

Humanitarian crisis

Sir, To avert further deaths and inhuman suffering by starvation, Israel must immediately restore unimpeded access to Gaza, as sufferings there have reached new depths. Reportedly, a quarter of Gaza's population is facing famine, and the rest are suffering from emergency levels of hunger. It is all the more doleful that children under five in Gaza are at risk of acute malnutrition, with serious lifelong physical and mental health consequences. Nearly all civilians in Gaza are in urgent need of humanitarian assistance. An immediate and lasting ceasefire, and a vast increase in humanitarian aid are the need of the hour in Gaza. Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is definitely not a partner in peace. But, eventually he will have to answer international courts for the genocide he committed and for the prevailing crisis in Gaza. There are moments in a nation's story when its fate appears to rest in the hands of a single person — when one figure can determine the country's fall. That is Israel's unfortunate situation today with PM Benjamin Netanyahu..

50 glorious years

Sir, As the nation celebrates its 79th Independence Day on 15 August, Indian cinema and film lovers are all set to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Sholay, the Indian all-time classic that changed the landscape of Indian filmmaking. The movie released in 1975 on 15 August had a lukewarm response at the beginning but through word of mouth its popularity spread and what followed is history. The iconic film, the first to be released in 70 mm screen and in stereophonic sound, broke many records. It had the highest number of prints during that period. The film grossed over ₹30 crore and sold more tickets than any other film of the 1970s. It also had the highest number of golden jubilees and was the longest-running Indian film before Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge of the 1990s broke the record. A film like Sholay can be made only once and there can never be another one!

Ranganathan Sivakumar, CHENNAI

M Pradyu, KANNUR



TWO STATES





While the city has seen

a significant jump in

its Swachh Survekshan

ranking, moving from

140th to 41st in the 2024-

25 rankings, this

improvement

is somewhat

owed by on-

going issues

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The city has

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WB govt mandates daily prime-time screening of Bengali films in all halls

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, August 13: In a major push to promote the Bengali film industry, the West Bengal government Wednesday made it mandatory for all cinema halls across the state to screen regional movies during prime time in each of their screens on all days, an official said.

Prime time is defined as the period between 3 PM and 10 PM, typically the hours of highest footfall in cinemas. This directive comes into effect immediately.

According to a notification, each screen, including those in multiplexes, must dedicate one prime-time slot per day exclusively to Bengali films.

"This decision reflects the state government's long-standing efforts to encourage regional cinema and ensure that Bengali films receive adequate exposure and commercial opportunity in their home state," the official said.

The notification also mentions that amendments to the West Bengal Cinemas (Regulation of Public Exhibitions) Rules, 1956, will be made in due course to align with the new directive. The move is expected to have a significant impact on the local film industry, providing consistent screen space for Bengali films and potentially boosting box office performance and industry investment.

Records of over 100 booths in WB missing

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kolkata, August 13: The records of the voters' lists of around a hundred polling booths in West Bengal, post the last Special Intensive Revision carried out by the Election Commission of India (ECI) in 2002, are not available.

The 2022 list is supposed to be the basis for carrying out the SIR by the Commission this year. Insiders from the office of the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), West Bengal, said that the matter would be brought to the notice of the ECI and permission would be sought to use the draft voters' list for 2003 as the basis of the fresh SIR.

The sources said that, in the case of certain booths, the records of the 2002 post-SIR were not available at all. In some cases, the lists have been damaged in such a way that it is impossible to upload them to the Commission's server.

It is learnt that the majority of the polling booths, whose records are not available, are from South 24 Parganas, Howrah, North 24 Parganas, and Birbhum districts, all being traditional strongholds of Trinamool

Harvana couple

celebrates daughter's

birth after 19 years with

feast for over 8,000

people from 21

surrounding villages

nephew as their own. But in July,

without undergoing any medical

SERB TAKES UPON HIMSELF TO 'CLEAN GURUGRAM' The foreigner's initiative earns praise, sparks

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

introspection

Gurugram, August 13: A Serbian national has gained popularity after his videos of cleaning Gurugram streets began circulating on social media. While his videos are earning him praise from the netizens, they have also sparked introspection for many, who expressed regret that a "foreigner" is taking such a step for the good of the city.

Lazar Jankovic, 32-year-old Serbian na-

tional staying in Sector 55, is on a "journey to clean India." He has already kick-started or participated in various 'clean-up' movements across the country.

In Gurugram, he has taken it upon himself to clean the Millennium City, known for its big corporate towers, sprawling malls and residential complexes.

Under his 'Ek Din, Ek gully (one day, one street)' initiative, he is cleaning at least one street, park or area in Gurugram every day and motivating others to take up the responsibili-

He started this initiative four days ago and posted as many videos till now.



Through his consistent efforts, the Serbian is not just removing litter but

also creating awareness about civic responsibility. Residents have begun volunteering, turning a solo initiative into a community-wide movement.

As per one of the videos, he plans to continue the clean-up drive till Independence Day. Most netizens praised the man's spirit: while some took inspiration from him and pledged to clean their surroundings too, others saw it as a moment for introspection.

In one of the videos shared by 4cleanindia on Instagram, Jankovic can be seen cleaning garbage outside a building, which looks like a residential property.

'As long as it's outside my house, it's not my problem," he says in the video and cleans up the trash in a minute which according to him was lying there for a month.

The post reads "This is an attitude of most people in India,

once this

changes, national staying in Sector 55, changis on a "journey to clean India es will hap-Under his 'Ek Din, Ek gully (one day pen. one street)' initiative, he is cleanin Stop at least one street, park or area pointin Gurugram every day and ing finmotivating others to take up the responsibility. gers and talking

Jankovic, a

32-year-old Serbian

take action and you will see the difference." Gurugram's cleanliness situation is improving

about who

a high waste processing rate but strugis to blame, but gles with getting residents to separate waste at the source. Piles of garbage can be seen at many places but still faces challenges. in Gurugram.

'Deported' Bengal migrant brought back from B'desh

Kolkata, August 13: Nearly a month and a half after Rajasthan Police, aided by the Border Security Force, allegedly pushed Amir Shekh, a migrant worker from Malda in West Bengal, to Bangladesh, the frontier guards Tuesday handed over the "missing" labourer to the Basirhat Police in the bordering North 24 Parganas



Appearing before the Calcutta High Court Wednesday, the BSF, however, submitted that it apprehended Amir who had "inadvertently" crossed over to the neighbouring country earlier, when he was trying to cross back without valid papers.

The high court noted in its order the submission of the additional public prosecutor representing the state police that, in the event the youth's father approaches the police authorities, Amir would be handed over to him subject to production of all necessary records and upon execution of undertaking, if any

Amir's father Jiyem Shekh moved a habeas corpus petition before the high court alleging that his son was first unlawfully detained by the state police in Rajasthan, where he had travelled a few months ago in search of work, and later deported him across the border calling him a Bangladeshi.

According to the petition, 19-year-old Amir, a cedural safeguards".

tion facility outside Sikar. On June 28, he was pushed to Bangladesh, the petitioner alleged.

of Amir, including his Ration Card, Aadhar Card and birth certificate, when Rajasthan Police asked for them following his detention. We even sent a video of the school that Amir went to after the police asked for it. We lost touch with Amir after the police took his phone away. Later, we realised he had been deported to Bangladesh from a social media clip in which Amir was seen pleading for help," said Md Ajmaul Shekh, Amir's uncle.

resident of Malda's Kaliachak, migrated to Paradip in Odisha April 3 and then to Sikar in Rajasthan in search of a livelihood. He was employed in Rajasthan as a labourer. On June 25, Rajasthan police officers, accompanied by armed BSF personnel, conducted an identity verification drive at Amir's worksite and "forcibly detained him without any communication of grounds or pro-He was held in a deten-

"We sent all documents

Haryana's Panipat district after a court-monitored recount found the appellant securing the highest number of votes. A bench of Justices

"Amir has parents at home and aged grandparents as well, who have hardly eaten or slept properly during the last few months. Why did we have to face this harassment and torture? Is speaking Bengali a crime in this country?" he asked.

Stating that the family had mixed feelings of relief and torment after knowing the youth had been brought back, Aimaul demanded that those responsible for his illegal deportation should be brought to justice.



School students carrying national flags run across a paddy field ahead of Independence Day, at a village in Birbhum district, West Bengal

sion)- cum-Election Tribunal, which, April 22, 2025, found grounds for recount-Surya Kant, Dipankar Dating the votes at a booth. ta, and NK Singh ordered However, the Punjab and the Deputy Commission-Harvana High Court overer-cum-Election Officer, Paturned that decision July 1, nipat, to issue a notification prompting Mohit Kumar to within two days declaring appeal to the apex court.

In an order passed July 31, the Justice Kant-led Bench directed the District Election Officer to produce all the EVMs before the Registrar of the Supreme Court.

"The nominated Registrar shall recount the votes, not only of the disputed booth but of all the booths. The recounting shall be duly video-graphed. [T]he recount result shall be duly signed by the learned Registrar, the petitioner and the respondent No 1 or their authorised representative as well as the learned assisting counsel," it ordered.

Pursuant to the top court's directive, the OSD (Registrar) recounted the votes from all booths, with the final tally showing Mohit Kumar securing 1,051 votes against Kuldeep Singh's 1,000.

Accepting the recount, the Justice Surva Kant-Bench observed: "There being prima facie no reason

As music played, food was

of the OSD (Registrar) of ted by the OSD (Registrar) of this Court, especially when the entire recounting has been duly videographed and its result is signed by the representatives of the parties, we are satisfied that the appellant deserves to be declared as the elected Sarpanch of Gram Panchayat, Buana Lakhu Village, District Pa-

nipat, Haryana." However, in the interest of justice, the apex court allowed the parties to agitate the issues, if any, left to be adjudicated by the Election Tribunal, saying that "the Election Tribunal... shall accept the Report

this Court as the final and conclusive report so far as the result of recounting of votes is concerned.' It clarified that the direc-

tion to declare the appellant as the elected Sarpanch of Gram Panchayat Buana Lakhu in Panipat would remain subject to the final judgment of the Election

Disposing of the appeal along with all pending applications, the Supreme Court set aside the impugned Punjab and Hary ana High Court judgment, as the recounting of votes had been completed follow ing its order.

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER BHUBANESWAR (R&B) DIVISION NO. III BHUBANESWAR

bbsrrandb03@yahoo.com

60Estg. No. - 5931 Government of Odisha "e"-Procurement Notice No (20) of 2025-26 Bid Identification No: C.C. (R&B) 03

1	Name of the Work	E.I. (Road) Work - Shifting of 11 KV & LT Line for improvement & widening of Road from Sai Temple square to Jagannath Temple Square & infront of HIG-1 to VIIM - 123. FR Block 7 to 67
2	Total No of works	1 No. work
3	Estimated Cost	i) Rs.32,63,507.00/-
4	Class of Contractor	"HT" Class Contractor
5	Period of Completion	2 (Two) Calendar Months
	Type of Tender	Single Cover System (Online)
7	Date & time of availability of	From 14.08.2025 at 11.30 A.M. to
	bid document in the portal	25.08.2025 at 5.30 P.M.
	Last Date & Time for Receipt of bids in the Portal	25.08.2025 upto 5.30 P.M.
9	Name & Address of the	Er.Narendra Kumar Ghadai,
	Officer inviting Bid	Superintending Engineer, Bhubaneswar
	_	(R&B) Division No. III, Bhubaneswar
		e-procurement portal https://tendersorissa.gov.ir
N.B	: Subsequent corrigendum / a	ddendum if required shall be available in the

tle Bhoomi Devi, the village square echoed with a sentiment not often heard in Harvana's countryside: a daughter's bsite as indicated above

କନିଷ୍ଣ ବର୍ଗ - ୪ଥିଠାରୁ ୭ମ ଶ୍ରେଣୀ

ବରିଷ୍ଠ ବର୍ଗ -୮ମଠାରୁ ୧୦ମ ଶ୍ରେଣୀ

କନିଷ୍ଠ ବର୍ଗ -୪ଥିଠାରୁ ୭ମ ଶ୍ରେଣୀ

ବରିଷ୍ଠ ବର୍ଗ -୮ମଠାରୁ ୧୦ମ ଶ୍ରେଣୀ

OIPR-34185/11/0010/2526

Sd./- Superintending Engineer BBSR (R&B) Division No. III, BBSR

served, and elders blessed lita region where the skewed sex ratio has long been a social challenge: 910 females births per 1,000 males in 2024. The child's mother, overjoyed, said, "We have always loved the son we adopted, but holding my

the appellant, Mohit Ku-

mar, elected, and allowing

him to assume office imme-

The election for the Sar-

panch's post was held No-

vember 2, 2022, in which the

respondent, Kuldeep Singh,

was declared elected. Mohit

Kumar challenged the re-

sult before the Additional

Civil Judge (Senior Divi-

diately.

AGENCIES Jind, August 13: In a heart-warming celebration of new life and changing traditions, treatment, the wife gave birth to a farming family from Haryana's a healthy baby girl — an event

Jind district has welcomed their that the family says was nothing first biological child — a daughshort of a miracle. ter — after 19 years of marriage, They named her Bhoomi and marked the occasion with a Devi. a nod to the nurturing power of the earth. In a move feast for over 8,000 people from 21 surrounding villages that challenged deep-rooted For nearly two decades, the patriarchal customs, the famcouple had been unable to conily performed the traditional ceive and had accepted their 'well worship' ceremony, which fate, even adopting the husband's is often reserved for the birth

"We wanted to send a message

- our daughter is a blessing, and she deserves every honour a son gets," the child's father said.

19 years later, joyous birth in Haryana

A celebration for the community

The family hosted a massive dinner that brought together villagers, relatives, and community leaders. Sarpanchs from 25 khaps, including Thuva and Tapa khap, attended to bless the

newborn. Many of them hailed the event as a step towards changing mindsets in rural Haryana,

own daughter after 19 years has filled my life with a joy I can't

Haryana, despite significant progress in recent years, continues to battle a low child sex ratio. historically linked to gender bias and preference for male heirs. The state has implemented several initiatives, including the 'Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao' campaign, to promote the value of girls.

By celebrating their daughter's birth with the same grandeur traditionally reserved for boys, the family has set what many in the community see as a symbolic precedent — that daughters, too. should be welcomed with pride and joy.

birth is worth a celebration.

No.C-874

ଚିତ୍ରାଙ୍କନ

ଓଡ଼ିଆ ବଲ୍ଲତା

OIPR-13031/11/0201/2526

Phone:0671-2308424, 2308517, 2308927 **CHOUDHURY BAZAR, CUTTACK-753 009** ପବିତ୍ର ସ୍ୱାୟତ୍ତ ଶାସନ ଦିବସ-୨୦୨୫ ପାଳନ ଅବସରରେ କଟକ ମହାନଗର ନିଗମ ଦ୍ୱାରା ନିଗମ ଅଞ୍ଚଳରେ ଥିବା ବିଭିନ୍ନ ୟୁଲର ଛାତ୍ର/ଛାତ୍ରୀଙ୍କୁ ନେଇ ପ୍ରତିଯୋଗିତା ଆୟୋକନ କରାଯିବ **।** କାର୍ଯ୍ୟସୂଚୀ ପ୍ରତିଯୋଗିତାର ନାମ ତାରିଖ ଓ ସମୟ କନିଷ୍ଠ ବର୍ଗ-୪ଥିଠାରୁ ୭ମ ଶ୍ରେଣୀ ୧୭.୦୮.୨୦୨୫, ପୂର୍ବାହ୍ନ ୧୧ ଘ ବରିଷ୍ଠ ବର୍ଗ -୮ମଠାରୁ ୧୦ମ ଶ୍ରେଣୀ କନିଷ୍ଣ ବର୍ଗ-୪ର୍ଥଠାରୁ ୭ମ ଶ୍ରେଣୀ ୧୮.୦୮.୨୦୨୫, ପୂର୍ବାହ ୧୧ ଘ ବରିଷ୍ଠ ବର୍ଗ -୮ମଠାରୁ ୧୦ମ ଶ୍ରେଣୀ ୧୮.୦୮.୨୦୨୫, ଅପରାହ୍ନ ୩ ଘ କଲ୍ୟାଣ ମୟପ୍ତ କନିଷ୍ଠ ବର୍ଗ -୪ର୍ଥଠାରୁ ୭ମ ଶ୍ରେଣୀ ୧୯.୦୮.୨୦୨୫, ପୂର୍ବାହ୍ନ ୧୧ ଘ ଇଂରାଜୀ ବଲ୍ତତା ଚୌଧୁରୀ ବଜାର, ବରିଷ୍ଠ ବର୍ଗ-୮ମଠାରୁ ୧୦ମ ଶ୍ରେଣୀ ୧୯.୦୮.୨୦୨୫, ଅପରାହ୍ନ ୩ ଘ

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୨୧.୦୮.୨୦୨୫, ଅପରାହ ୩ ଘ

national



Unfortunately, why doesn't Rahul Gandhi talk about **Andhra Pradesh? He** doesn't talk because he is in hotline contact with Chandrababu

BJP, NCP DIFFER ON MEAT SALE BAN AUGUST 15

Ruling allies BJP and NCP spoke in different voices after nearly half a dozen civic bodies in Maharashtra ordered closure of meat shops and abattoirs on Independence Day, while Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis Wednesday said the government was not interested in policing people's food choices





ments came from Operation Sindoor were the result of the technology that

ITENDRA SINGH | LINION MINISTER

home is proudly flying the tricolour.

ised, uniting people in love for NAYAB SINGH SAINI | HARYANA CM







2 Naxals killed in encounter

Mohla (Chhattisgarh): Two Naxalites were killed in an encounter with security personnel in Chhattisgarh's Manpur-Mohla-Ambagarh Chowki district Wednesday, police said. The encounter took place in a forest of the Madanwada area when a team of security personnel was out on an anti-Naxal operation, a senior police official told PTI. After guns fell silent, the bodies of two Naxalites were recovered from the spot, he said, adding that further details are awaited.

Bengali actor Basanti Chatterjee dies at 88

Kolkata: Veteran Bengali actor Basanti Chatterjee, who featured in over 100 films, including critically acclaimed movies like 'Thagini' and 'Manjari Opera', died at her residence here, family members said. Chatterjee, 88, who was suffering from cancer for a long time, breathed her last Tuesday night. In a career spanning over five decades, she also acted in popular films like 'Alo', 'Ami Shey O Sakha' and TV serials 'Bhutu', 'Boron' and 'Durga Durgeshari', to name a few. Condoling her demise. Chief Minister Mamata Baneriee said in a post on X. "Her death is an irreparable loss to the world of cinema and stage. My deepest condolence to her next of kin.'

Flights from Hyd cancelled, diverted

Hyderabad: Several flights to and from Rajiv Gandhi International Airport were cancelled or diverted Wednesday due to unfavourable weather conditions, airport sources said. IndiGo flights to Kochi, Chennai, Patna and Ahmedabad-and return services from these destinations-were cancelled, they added. As many as 11 flights were diverted to

Hindu activist's murder: BJP seeks NIA probe

Bangalore: The BJP Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot to prevail upon the state government to hand over the probe into the Koppal to the NIA, alleging a "deep-rooted conspiracy" by Jehadi extremist groups. In a detailed memorandum said Gavisiddappa Nayak, a Scheduled Tribe Valmiki community leader, was front of the Syed Nadeemullah Qadri Mosque at Koppal town.

Rahul has tea with 'dead voters' from Bihar, thanks EC

Delhi, August 13: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi Wednesday said he had a unique experience of having tea with some "dead" voters from Bihar and thanked the Election Commission for it.

A group of seven voters from Bihar met the Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha at his residence and shared their experience of how they were declared "dead" by the EC and their names removed from the electoral rolls.

"There have been many interesting experiences in life, but I never got the chance to have tea with 'dead people'. For this unique experience, thank you Election Commission!" Gandhi said in a post in Hindi on X.

He also shared a video of his meeting with the "dead" voters. In it, Gandhi is heard telling them to move around and see Delhi as the "dead" cannot even be charged tickets

In the video, some of them told Gandhi that they came to know that they were "declared dead" by the EC during the special intensive revision (SIR), and were among the 65 lakh voters whose names have been removed from the electoral rolls of poll-bound Bihar. The group also told Gandhi that they appeared before the Supreme Court Wednesday to get their voting rights back. The apex court is hearing petitions against the special intensive revision of electoral rolls in Bihar.

In a statement, the party later said that seven voters from

BJP taunts Oppn

he BJP Wednesday claimed irregu-The BJP Wednesday Gamed Hiego larities in voter registration in Rae Bareli, Wayanad, Diamond Harbour and Kannauj parliamentary seats and asked Rahul Gandhi, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, Abhishek Banerjee and Akhilesh Yadav to resign as Lok Sabha MPs, alleging they secured victory with "vote chori" It accused the Congress and other opposition parties of running a campaigr against the Election Commission to steal the mandate of "honest and genuine Indian citizens" while compromising national security.

shared tea with Rahul Gandhi today, even as the Election Commission's SIR list had them as "dead". Ramikbal Ray, Harendra Ray, Lalmuni Devi, Vachiya Devi, Lalwati Devi, Punam Kumari, and Munna Kumar all belong to Tejashwi Yadav's constituency, Raghopur.

"The Election Commission has not openly published lists of the people whom it has declared dead, migrated, etc. Our teams on the ground were able to identify these people only because they managed to informally get EC's internal report in two to three polling booths,' the Congress said.

These seven represent only a fraction of "unjustly" deleted voters in two to three polling booths in the constituency, it added.

"This is not a clerical error - it is political disenfranchisement in plain sight. "After 'Vote Chori' was exposed in Bengaluru, it is clear that the Bihar SIR exercise is also compromised. When the living are struck off as dead, the death certificate is issued to democracy itself," the





School students perform during full dress rehearsal for 79th Independence Day celebration in Gurugram, Haryana

Deaf, mute woman gangraped after bike chase; two detained

In the 16-second CCTV footage, the woman, seemingly barefoot, is seen running on a dimly lit deserted road and men chasing her on motorcycles

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Balrampur (UP), August 13: A mentally challenged and deaf-mute woman was allegedly gang-raped in Uttar Pradesh's Balrampur district after being chased by bike-borne men on a deserted road, police said. The horror was captured on CCTV, which helped police identify and arrest two accused.

Opposition parties lashed out at the BJP government over the incident, terming it a grim reflection of the state's law and order situation. The incident came to light after the 21-yearold woman's brother lodged a

complaint at Kotwali HORROR

Dehat police station two days ago, alleging that his deaf-mute and mentally challenged sister was gang-raped. Superintendent of Police Vi-

kash Kumar said an FIR was registered Monday, and an investigation was launched immediately. According to the complaint, the woman was on her way home from her maternal uncle's house when she was forcibly picked up by some unidentified men on a motorcycle and raped at a nearby isolated spot, Additional SP Vishal Pan-

dey said the site of the assault was inspected promptly and the woman was sent for medical examination.

Further legal proceedings are underway in the case, police said. Opposition parties targeted

the BJP government over the incident.

In a post on X, Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav called the crime "extremely heinous" and questioned the Adityanath-led government's claims on maintaining law and order.

Apex court to hear plea on J&K statehood today

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 13: The Supreme Court would Thursday hear a plea for the restoration of statehood to Jammu and Kashmir.

A bench of Chief Justice of India B R Gavai and Justice K Vinod Chandran is likely to hear the matter, according to the causelist. On December 11 2023, the Supreme Court unan imously upheld the revocation of Article 370, even as it ordered that assembly elections be held in Jammu and Kashmir by September 2024 and its statehood be

restored "at the earliest". Last year, a plea was filed in the top court seeking directions to the Centre for the restoration of statehood to Jammu and Kashmir within two months.

The application was filed by Zahoor Ahmad Bhat, an acade mician, and Khurshaid Ahmad Malik, a socio-political activist

"It is submitted that the delay in the restoration of statehood would cause serious reduction of democratically elected gov ernment in Jammu and Kashmir, causing a grave violation of the idea of federalism which forms part of the basic structure of the Constitution of India," the

application said. The assembly elections and the Lok Sabha polls were conducted peacefully in Jammu and Kashmir without any incident of violence, disturbance or any se curity concerns being reported it said. "Therefore, there is no impediment of security concerns, violence or any other disturbanc es which would hinder or prevent the grant/restoration of the status of statehood to Jammu and Kashmir as had been assured by the Union of India in the present

proceedings." the plea said. The non-restoration of the status of statehood of Jammu and Kashmir, the plea said would result in a lesser form of elected democratic government

ED questions Raina for 8 hours in 'illegal' betting app case

New Delhi: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) Wednesday questioned former India cricketer Suresh Raina for more than eight hours in an alleged money laundering case linked to an illegal online betting app, official sources said Raina (38) was seen interacting with CISF personnel and ED staff outside the agency's office in central Delhi before marking his attendance at around 11 am. He left the agency office around 8 pm.The federal probe agency recorded Raina's statement under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) as part of its investigation linked to a sports betting application named 1xBet, the sources said. Raina, who played 18 Tests, 226 ODIs, and 78 T20Is for India, is understood to have been linked to the app through certain endorsements. The ED wanted to understand his links with the app, any endorsement fee earned and the mode of communication between the two parties, according to the sources.

Plea about 'threat' to Rahul filed without his consent: Lawyer

Pune: Hours after filing a plea in a court here claiming apprehension of threat to Rahul Gandhi from the followers of Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, the Congress leader's lawyer on Wednesday said it was filed without Gandhi's consent, and would be withdrawn. He will submit another application Thursday to withdraw the 'Pursis' or the application filed before Judicial Magistrate (First Class) Amol Shinde, said Advocate Milind Pawar. Pawar is representing Rahul Gandhi in a defamation case filed by Satyaki Savarkar, grand-nephew of Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, over certain statements made by the Congress leader against the late freedom fighter and Hindutva ideologue.

Gujarat honour killing victim cracks NEET with high marks

Palanpur: An 18-year-old girl from Gujarat, who was a victim of suspected honour killing, has cracked the highly competitive National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET), a police official said Wednesday. The teen from Banaskantha district was allegedly killed by her father and two uncles June 24 at her native village, said Danta division Assistant Superintendent of Police Suman Nala.

Shimla, August 13: Several

Cloudbursts, flash floods in HP

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

bridges were washed away in Shimla and Lahaul and Spiti districts, while over 300 roads. including two national highways, have been closed across Himachal Pradesh following fresh incidents of cloudbursts and flash floods in the hill state.

A police post was swept away in fresh floods in Ganvi Ravine. while a bus stand and adjoining shops were damaged following heavy rain in Shimla district. Two bridges were washed away, cutting off Koot and Kyav panchayats in the district, officials said. However, no casualty has been reported so far.

Two more bridges were washed away due to floods triggered by cloudbursts in Karpat, Changut and Udgos Nala of the Mayad valley of the tribal Lahaul and Spiti district.

Danger looms large over Karpat village and people have shifted to safe places. Nearly ten bighas of agricultural land were completely damaged, and the district administration has been engaged in relief work, said Ranjit Lahauli, a resident. Cloudbursts also occurred

in Shrikhand hill in Nirmand subdivision and Bathadh hill of Tirthan valley of Banjar subdivision in Kullu district Wednesday evening. Due to the cloudburst in Shrikhand hill, the Kurpan ravine was flooded and the Bagipul market was immediately evacuated by the administration. Damage has been caused on the banks of the ravine. Some cottages on the bank of the Tirthan River have been damaged and some vehicles have also been washed away following a cloudburst.

to the state, particularly given legislative Assembly results were declared October 8, 2024.

82% human-street dog encounters 'peaceful': Research

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 13: Human-street dog interactions in India are predominantly uneventful with 82 per cent of observed encounters involving approachable or neutral behaviour, according to a research on street dogs and public health by the University of Edinburgh.

Data from the research show that only 2 per cent of human-street dog interactions involved aggression such as

barking, chasing, or biting. The findings assume significance as the Supreme Court Monday ordered the removal of stray dogs from all Delhi-NCR

localities and their placement

in shelter homes in view of ris-

The study led by professor Krithika Srinivasan warned that culling or mass removal could undo hard-won public health gains.

ing dog bites and rabies cases.

Reported human rabies cases in India have fallen by nearly 75 per cent over the past two decades, from 274 in 2005 to 34 in 2022, largely due to mass dog vaccination and improved post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP).

However, gaps in timely PEP access and adherence to vaccine schedules remain an issue. Srinivasan also warned that culling or mass removal often backfires, triggering an influx of unfamiliar dogs into vacated areas and creating ecological gaps that may be filled



by other potentially dangerous animals. In a 2022–23 survey across 15

recorded at 4.7 per 1,000 population, lower than the 18.7 per

Will look into it: CJI New Delhi: "I will look into it," Chief

Wednesday when a plea relating to stray dogs was mentioned for urgent hearing in the Supreme Court. The plea by the Conference for Human Rights (India) was mentioned before a bench of the chief justice and Justice K Vinod Chandran by a lawyer. Another bench has already passed an order in relation to stray dogs, the CJI pointed out. On August 11, a bench of Justices J B Pardiwala and R Mahadevan observed that instances of dog bites had given rise to an "extremely grim" situation and ordered the permanent relocation of all strays in Delhi-NCR "at the earliest". On Wednesday, the lawyer referred to a May 2024 order passed by a bench led by Justice J K Maheshwari relegating petitions relating to the stray dog issue to respective high courts. The CJI then assured that he will look into it. 1,000 seen in Cheshire, the UK Public opinion surveys in Chennai, Jaipur and Malappuram (Kerala) found 86 per cent support for dog vaccination and 66 per cent for neutering, while more than 70 per cent opposed culling.

The Opposition rose to 77 per cent among respondents who had been chased or bitten by stray dogs.

The research recommend ed a science-led, community-based approach -- universal and free PEP, sustained vaccination drives, food waste control, community education, and responsible caregiving warning that elimination policies may appear to be a quick fix but fail to deliver sustain able safety outcomes.

other airports. Seven of them later returned and landed in Hyderabad by evening.

Wednesday urged Karnataka murder of a Hindu activist in submitted to the Governor at Raj Bhavan, the BJP legislators brutally murdered August 3 in

national



Some people are trying to politicise this issue. **Mumbai residents will** not fall prey to it

DEVENDRA FADNAVIS I MAHARASHTRA CM

CBSE'S SURPRISE CHECKS AT 10 SCHOOLS

The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has conducted a series of surprise inspections in 10 schools across six states and Union Territories (UTs) to check for violations of norms, officials said Wednesday





stated that the voter lists across various states on the basis of which the general elections were held barely a year ago in 2024, are faulty and riddled

ABHISHEK BANERJEE | SENIOR TMC LEADER

Expressed my heartfelt gratitude for the passage of the Goa Scheduled Reservation Bill in Parliament PRAMOD SAWANT I GOA CM



a sense of respect and devotion towards the Constitution, national symbols, great revolutionaries, and eminent personalities

YOGI ADITYANATH | UTTAR PRADESH CM





platform, even his critics are supporting him for exposing EC on #VoteChori. This is how times change. @

RahulGandhi truly deserves this

@Politicx2029

SHORT **TAKES**

Five dead as bus collides with truck

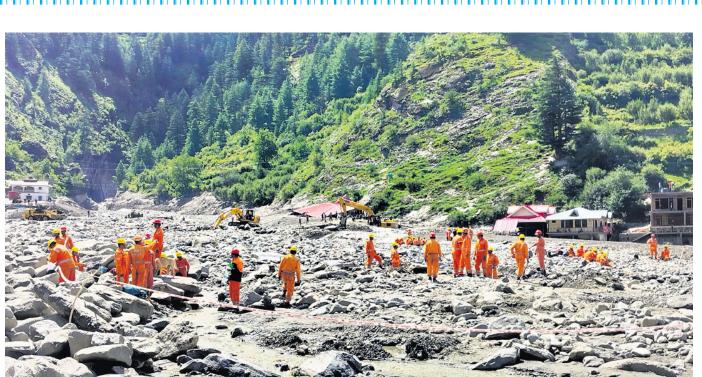
Jaunpur (UP): Five people, including a minor girl, died and 15 others got injured when a roadways bus collided head-on with a truck in Jaunpur district. police said Wednesday. The incident occurred at around 10.30 pm Tuesday near the Guraeni petrol pump in the Khetasarai police station area, they said. The roadways bus coming from Jaunpur and the truck from Shahganj rammed into each other, killing a two-year-old girl, two women and two men, Superintendent of Police Dr Kaustubh said. According to police, the accident was caused by the negligence of the bus driver, who swerved to the right and hit the truck.

DUSU elections to be held Sept 18

New Delhi: The Delhi **University Students' Union** (DUSU) elections will be held September 18 and the counting of votes will take place a day later, the university announced Wednesday. According to a DU notification, voting for day classes will be held from 8:30 am to 1 pm, while students of evening classes will cast their votes from 3 pm to 7:30 pm. The last date for receipt of nomination papers, along with a demand draft of ₹500 as an annual fee and a bond of ₹1 lakh, is September 10 by 3 pm.

Amrit Udyan to open

for public Aug 16 New Delhi: The famed Amrit Udyan, which will open for the public from August 16 to September 14 at the Rashtrapati Bhavan, will feature Babbling Brook among other visual treats, officials said Wednesday. The Babbling Brook garden is a new and serene retreat for this summer garden, where the gentle flow of water and vibrant greenery create a calming atmosphere, said Navika Gupta, **Deputy Press Secretary to** the President, during a media preview of the garden.



Rescue personnel and others during a search and rescue operation in the aftermath of the recent flash floods, at disaster-hit Dharali area, in Uttarkashi

Bihar Cabinet doubles pension for 'JP Senanis'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Patna, August 13: The Bihar government Wednesday announced a two-fold increase in the pension amount for 'JP Senanis', political activists who had been imprisoned during the Emergency for supporting socialist leader Jayaprakash Naravan's movement.

The proposal was cleared

at a cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, who himself was a key figure in the 'JP movement' that began in 1974, a year ahead of the proclamation of the Emergency. "The pension for 'JP Senanis', who had spent more than six months behind bars, has been raised to ₹30,000 per month from ₹15,000, and for those who served shorter prison terms, it has been hiked from ₹7,500 to ₹15,000," a senior official said.

A total of 3,354 'JP Senanis' currently draw pension under the scheme. The development comes ahead of the assembly elections in the state, due later in the year.

Kumar had launched the pension scheme named after Javaprakash Narayan in 2009. Though the CM fulfils the criteria for the pension, he never applied for it. RJD supremo Lalu Prasad is also one of the beneficiaries of the scheme.

The cabinet also gave its nod to acquire 2,627 acres of land at a cost of ₹812 crore, aimed at expanding the industrial area network to boost investment and create employment opportunities, the official said.

Additional Chief Secretary (Cabinet Secretariat) S Siddharth said, "As part of the decision to expand the industrial areas in the state, 991 acres of land will be acquired at ₹351 crore in Begusarai district, while 500 acres will be acquired at ₹219 crore in Patna. The Infrastructure Development Authority will carry out the land acquisition for development of all the five industrial areas in the state."

Wang Yi to visit India; **EAM heads to Russia**

New Delhi, August 13: India has two major diplomatic engagements next week as it is set to host Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi while External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar heads to Moscow, amid a strain in New Delhi's ties with the Trump administration over its procurement of Russian crude oil.

Wang is scheduled to visit India August 18 to hold border talks with NSA Ajit Doval, days ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's planned trip to China to attend the annual summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), authoritative sources said.

Jaishankar is travelling to Moscow August 20 on a twoday visit to hold crucial talks with his Russian counterpart Sergev Layrov, and the focus of the trip is likely to be on preparing grounds for President Vladimir Putin's much awaited trip to India later this year.

The external affairs minister's trip to Russia comes days after Doval travelled to Moscow and met the President and several top-ranking officials.

India's continued procurement of crude oil from Russia is likely to figure in Jaishankar's **NEXT WEEK'S KEY DIPLOMATIC ENGAGEMENTS**

meetings with Russian leaders. US President Donald Trump last week issued an executive order slapping an additional 25 per cent tariff on Indian goods as a penalty for New Delhi's continued purchase of Russian oil. The additional duties raised the overall tariff on India to 50 per cent. The Chinese foreign minister is visiting India primarily to hold the next round of Special Representatives (SR) dialogue on the boundary question, authoritative sources said.

Wang and Doval are the designated special representatives for the boundary talks.

The NSA travelled to China in December last and held the SR talks with Wang, weeks after Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping decided to revive various dialogue mechanisms between the two sides at a meeting in the Russian city of Kazan. It is learnt that Wang will al-

so hold a separate meeting with Jaishankar. Modi is expected to travel to

China later this month to attend the SCO summit.

As per the plan, Modi will embark on a visit to Japan around August 29 and after concluding the trip, he will travel to the northern Chinese city of Tianjin for the summit to be held on August 31 and September 1. Modi's visit to China is being planned amid efforts by the two sides to repair their bilateral ties which came under severe strain following the deadly clashes between Indian and Chinese troops in Galwan Valley in June 2020.

Rahul, INDIA bloc to begin 'Vote Adhikar Yatra' on August 17



New Delhi, August 13: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi along with INDIA bloc leaders in Bihar will embark on a 'Vote Adhikar Yatra' across the state starting August 17 against the revision of electoral rolls and to make the "battle against vote chori" a mass movement, the party said Wednesday.

Congress general secretary in-charge organisation K C Venugopal announced the yatra on X and said the fight to protect our democracy will take place on the streets.

"Starting August 17th, LOP Sh Rahul Gandhi ji and INDIA parties will embark on a massive Vote Adhikar Yatra across Bihar -- against the dangerous SIR exercise, and to make the battle against Vote Chori a mass movement!" he said. In this context, Venugopal

said he met INDIA bloc leaders in Sasaram Wednesday to assess the preparation, mobilisation and set up smooth coordination for the yatra. The yatra will culminate

September 1 with a rally at Patna's Gandhi Maidan.

The Congress Tuesday had claimed that "vote chori" was a "do-or-die" issue for it, and announced a roadmap to take its allegations to the people

through various activities, including 'Loktantra bachao mashaal marches' August 14 evening

Briefing reporters after the meeting, Congress leader and AICC in-charge of National Students' Union of India (NSUI) Kanhaiya Kumar had said that going forward, the Congress will take this to the people with three important programmes.

On August 14, the eve of Independence Day, there will be a 'Loktantra bachao mashaal march' at all district headquarters, Kumar said, adding that between August 22 and September 7, the Congress will hold "vote chor, gaddi chhorh (vote thieves, relinquish power)" rallies in all state headquarters. "Between September 15

and October 15, a signature campaign will be run to save the right to vote and ensure people's participation," he had said, while asserting that the whole INDIA bloc is together Last Thursday, Gandhi cited

data from the 2024 Lok Sabha polls to claim that more than 1 lakh votes were "stolen" through five types of manipulation in the Mahadevapura Assembly segment of Banga lore Central Lok Sabha seat in Karnataka.

Army upgrades LoC security with Al-powered tech

Sunderbani (J&K): Keeping pace with the changing security scenario driven by rapid advancement in AI-powered technology, the Army has gone high-tech with the introduction of state-of-the-art equipment like smart fence system, robotic mules and all-terrain vehicles to fortify security along the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir's Rajouri district, officials said. The newly-introduced equipment, including quadcopters, advanced surveillance tools, bulletproof vehicles, modern weapons and night-vision sights, were all successfully tested during Operation Sindoor between May 7 and May 10, when Indian armed forces carried out missile strikes on terror infrastructure in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) in the wake of the April 22 Pahalgam attack and successfully countered the enemy retaliation. Providing a rare opportunity to visiting mediapersons to witness the Indian Army's unwavering courage and dedication along the LoC in the remote regions of Sunderbani ahead of Independence Day, the Army has activated a threelayered security system and intensified patrolling and vigil all along the border to ensure peaceful celebrations of the event.

Nine suspected Rohingyas detained near India-B'desh border in Cachar

Silchar (Assam): Nine suspected Rohingyas, including two women and five children, have been detained by Assam Police near the India-Bangladesh border in Cachar district. an officer said Wednesday. Cachar Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Numal Mahatta said the detainees were picked up from Katigorah area Tuesday evening following a tip-off from intelligence sources. "They have been staying in India for many years. Recently, they travelled here with the intention of living in this area. They did not attempt to cross the border, but our team intercepted them before they could settle here." Mahatta told reporters. Residents of Bishwanbharpur village in Katigorah area near the border, however, had earlier claimed that they had spotted a group of unfamiliar people in a market and after questioning them, handed them over to the police Tuesday night.

India, S'pore agree to expand cooperation in key areas

New Delhi: Ahead of Singaporean Prime Minister Lawrence Wong's planned trip to New Delhi next month, India and Singapore Wednesday broadly finalised around 10 agreements to boost ties in areas such as advanced technology, connectivity, skilling and digitalisation At the third India-Singapore Ministerial Roundtable (ISMR) here, the two sides are also understood to have deliberated on an ambitious proposal to lay an undersea cable to carry solar energy from India to Singapore that will also provide data connectivity. External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, Commerce Minister Pivush Goval, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and Electronics and Information Technology Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw held the ISMR with six Singaporean ministers.

Court acquits Maliwal accused of revealing rape victim's name

New Delhi: A Delhi court Wednesday acquitted MP and former chairperson of Delhi Commission for Women (DCW), Swati Maliwal, accused of allegedly disclosing the identity of a 14-year-old rape victim who succumbed to injuries. Additional chief judicial magistrate Neha Mittal also acquitted Bhupender Singh, then public relations officer of DCW. The prosecution alleged Singh disclosed the minor rape victim's name to electronic media at Maliwal's behest. According to the FIR, the notice sent by Maliwal as the chairperson of DCW, in which she sought to know about the investigation in the rape case, was "intentionally circulated" on a WhatsApp group and shown by a TV channel.

Six deliveries per thousand are stillbirths: Study

Chandigarh, Jammu and Kashmir, and Rajasthan in north India recorded the highest rates of stillbirth, the findings published in The Lancet Regional Health Southeast Asia journal show

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 13: Over six in every one thousand deliveries in India in 2020 could have been a stillbirth, with higher rates among urban mothers compared to rural. according to an analysis of data from national surveys and the civil registration system.

Researchers, including those from the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Gorakhpur, and the Indian Council of Medical Research, New Delhi, also identified that stillbirth hotspots are located primarily in northern and central India.

Chandigarh, Jammu and Kashmir, and Rajasthan in

north India recorded the highest rates of stillbirth, the findings published in The Lancet Regional Health Southeast Asia journal show.

The team analysed data gathered from the fifth round of the National Family Health Survey (NFHS) and the 2020 report of the civil registration system, which is managed by the Ministry of Home Affairs and records vital events, including births, deaths and stillbirths across India.

"The nationwide stillbirth rate (SBR) in 2020 was 6.548 per 1,000 total births (female: 6.54; male: 6.63). Stillbirth rates were higher among urban mothers compared to rural mothers,"



the authors wrote. A higher rate of stillbirth was also found in districts where pregnant women were anaemic (deficient

in iron) and underweight -- factors known to increase risk of adverse birth outcomes, including stillbirth.

Hygienic menstrual practices and caesarean (C-section) deliveries -- in which a baby is delivered through a surgical procedure -- were associated with a lower rate of stillbirth, especially in Telangana, Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu.

The results were in line with data from NFHS-5, according to which the prevalence of C-section deliveries was about 45 per cent in south India in 2019-2020, the authors said.

Evidence from states including Assam, Meghalaya, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh and Chhattisgarh showed that receiving at least four pre-delivery check-ups and adhering to iron and folic acid supplemen tation during pregnancy can significantly reduce the risk of stillbirth, the team said. Overall, higher rates of still

births were found in regions where pregnant women were anaemic, more deliveries were occurring in public health facilities and a larger fraction of women were having a lower wealth status, they said.

However, there were no disparities in sex-specific rates of stillbirth across the country's districts, even though a higher rate of stillbirths seen among male foetuses may point to a higher biological vulnerabili ty, the researchers said.

international



No one should feel unsafe leaving their homes. From today, every neighbourhood across England and Wales has named, contactable officers to tackle crime in our communities

KEIR STARMER | BRITISH PRIME MINISTER

TYPHOON PODUL

Typhoon Podul made landfall in Taiwan Wednesday, where authorities closed schools and government offices as heavy rain threatened more damage to agriculture in the island's southeast. The storm hit Taitung county on the east coast shortly after noon, moving across the southern third of the island at about 36 kilometres per hour

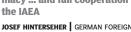




Lebanor cooperation with Iran within based on mutual respect

Joseph Aoun | Lebanese President





MINISTRY SPOKESPERSON







SHORT TAKES

Hindu temple desecrated in US

New York: The signboard of a Hindu temple was defaced in the US city of Indiana, an incident described by the Indian consulate as "reprehensible". The "hateful act" took place at the BAPS Swaminarayan Temple in Greenwood city, the temple's official public affairs account said in an X post Tuesday. This was the fourth time in less than a year that a BAPS temple has been targeted, it said. The Indian Consulate in Chicago took strong note of the act and called it "reprehensible".

Migrant boat capsize leaves at least 20 dead

Rome: A boat carrying nearly 100 migrants capsized off the Italian island of Lampedusa, killing at least 20 people and leaving another dozen missing. the UN refugee agency said Wednesday, Sixty survivors have been brought to a centre in Lamnedusa, said a UNHCR spokesman in Italy, Filippo Ungaro. According to survivor accounts, there were 92 to 97 migrants on board when the boat departed Libya. Authorities have recovered 20 bodies, and were searching for another 12 to 17 survivors. according to the UNHCR.

US national debt

reaches record \$37tn Washington: US national debt reached record USD 37 trillion. The national debt eclipsed

this new milestone years sooner than pre-pandemic projections. The Congressional Budget Office's January 2020 projections predicted the US reaching the milestone after fiscal year 2030. But the debt grew faster than expected as the COVID-19 pandemic shut down much of the US economy and the Trump and Biden administrations borrowed heavily to stabilise the national economy.

Clashes at Serbian anti-govt protests

Belgrade: Clashes erupted at protests in Serbia between opponents and supporters of the government in an escalation of tensions following more than nine months of persistent demonstrations against populist President Aleksandar Vucic. Incidents first started on Tuesday evening in Vrbas, northwest of the capital Belgrade, where riot police separated protesters from the opposing camps outside the ruling Serbian Progressive Party offices in the town. Video footage from the scene showed government supporters throwing flares, rocks and bottles at the protesters, who hurled back

various objects.

Europe hails positive call with Trump

Berlin, August 13: US President Donald Trump was "very clear" in a meeting Wednesday with European leaders that the US wants to achieve a ceasefire at the summit with Russian President Vladimir Putin in Alaska, French President Emmanuel Macron said.

Speaking after the virtual meeting between Trump, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and other European leaders, Macron said Trump was prioritising a ceasefire between Ukraine and Russia. He added that Trump had been clear that "territorial issues relating to Ukraine ... will only be negotiated by the Ukrainian president.'

Following his meeting Friday with the Russian leader, Trump will also "seek a future trilateral meeting" — one involving Trump, Putin and Zelenskyy,

"I think that's a very important point in this regard. And we hope that it can be held in Europe, in a neutral country that is acceptable to all parties,'

German Chancellor Friedrich Merz described the meeting with Zelenskyy and Trump as "constructive."

Speaking alongside Zelenskyy, Merz said after the videoconference that "important decisions" could be made in Anchorage, but stressed that "fundamental European and Ukrainian security interests must be protected" at the meeting.

Merz convened the virtual meetings in an attempt to make sure European and Ukraine's leaders are heard ahead of the summit, where Trump and Putin are expected to discuss a path toward ending Moscow's war in Ukraine.

Zelenskyy and the Europeans have been sidelined from that summit. German government spokesperson Steffen Meyer said the intention of Wednesday's meetings was to "make clear the position of the Europeans.



Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy is welcomed by German Chancellor Friedrich Merz upon arrival in the garden of the chancellery in Berlin, Germany, Wednesday, join a video conference of European leaders with the US President on the Ukraine war

Ukrainian leader Wednesday said his government has had over 30 conversations with partners ahead of the summit in Alaska, but reiterated his doubt that Putin would negotiate in good faith.

Writing on his official Telegram channel, Zelenskyy said there was "currently no sign that the Russians are preparing to end the war," and urged Ukraine's partners in the United States and Europe to coordinate efforts and "force Russia to peace.'

"Pressure must be applied on Russia for an honest peace. We must take the experience of Ukraine and our partners to prevent deception by Russia,' Zelenskyy said.

Trump has said he wants to see whether Putin is serious about ending the war, now in its fourth year, describing Friday's summit as "a feel-out meeting" where he can assess

the Russian leader's intentions. Yet Trump has disappoint-

ed allies in Europe by saying Ukraine will have to give up some Russian-held territory. He has also said Russia must accept land swaps, although it was unclear what Putin might be expected to surrender.

European allies have pushed for Ukraine's involvement in any peace talks, fearful that discussions that exclude Kyiv could otherwise favor Moscow.

Trump Monday ducked repeated chances to say that he would push for Zelenskyy to take part in his discussions with Putin, and was dismissive of Zelenskyy and his need to be part of an effort to seek peace. Trump said that following Friday's summit, a meeting between the Russian and Ukrainian leaders could be arranged, or that it could also be a meeting with "Putin and Zelenskyy and me.'

The Europeans and Ukraine are wary that Putin, who has waged the biggest land war in Europe since 1945 and used Russia's energy might to try to intimidate the European Union, might secure favorable concessions and set the outlines of a peace deal without them.

The overarching fear of many European countries is that Putin will set his sights on one of them next if he wins in Ukraine.

Zelenskyy said Tuesday that Putin wants Ukraine to with draw from the remaining 30 per cent of the Donetsk region that it still controls as part of a ceasefire deal, a proposal the leader categorically rejected.

Zelenskyy reiterated that Ukraine would not give up any territory it controls, saying that would be unconstitutional and would serve only as a springboard for a future Russian

Israel pounds Gaza; 123 dead in 24 hrs

Cairo/Jerusalem, August 13: Israel's military pounded Gaza City Wednesday prior to a planned takeover, with another 123 people killed in the last day according to the Gaza health ministry, while militant group Hamas held further talks with Egyptian mediators.

The 24-hour death toll was the worst in a week and added to the massive fatalities from the nearly two-year war that has shattered the enclave housing more than 2 million Palestinians.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu reiterated an idea - also enthusiastically floated by U.S. President Donald Trump - that Palestinians should simply leave.

"They're not being pushed out, they'll be allowed to exit," he told Israeli television channel i24NEWS. "All those who are concerned for the Palestinians and say they want to help the Palestinians should open their gates and stop lecturing us.

Arabs and many world leaders are aghast at the idea of displacing the Gaza population, which Palestinians say would be like another "Nakba" (catastrophe) when hundreds of thousands fled or were forced out during a 1948 war.

Israel's planned re-seizure of Gaza City - which it took in the early days of the war

before withdrawing - is prob ably weeks away, officials say That means a ceasefire is still possible though talks have been floundering and conflict still rages. Israeli planes and tanks

bombed eastern areas of Gaza City heavily, residents said, with many homes destroyed in the Zeitoun and Shejaia neigh bourhoods overnight. Al-Ahli hospital said 12 people were killed in an airstrike on a home in Zeitoun. Tanks also destroyed several

houses in the east of Khan Younis in south Gaza too, while in the centre Israeli gunfire killed nine aid-seekers in two separate incidents, Palestinian medics said. Israel's military did not comment. Eight more people, includ-

ing three children, have died of starvation and malnutrition in Gaza in the past 24 hours the territory's health ministry said. That took the total to 235 including 106 children, since the war began. Israel disputes those malnu-

trition and hunger figures reported by the health ministry in the Hamas-run enclave.

Hamas chief negotiator Khalil Al-Hayya's meetings with Egyptian officials in Cairo on Wednesday were to focus on stopping the war, delivering aid and "ending the suffering of our people in Gaza," Hamas of ficial Taher al-Nono said in a statement.



Our relationship with both India, Pakistan 'good': US

New York/Washington, August 13: America's relationship with both India and Pakistan is "good", the US State Department has said, asserting that the diplomats are "committed to both nations"

Speaking at a briefing Tuesday, State Department spokesperson Tammy Bruce said that the US working with both nations is good news for the region and the world, and will promote a beneficial future.

"I would say that our relationship with both nations is as it has been, which is good. And that is the benefit of having a President who knows everyone, talks to everyone, and that is how we can bring differences together in this case. So it's clear that the diplomats here are committed to both nations, Bruce said.

She was responding to a question on the possibility of increased US assistance to Islamabad in terms of arms sales following Pakistan Army Chief Field Marshal Asim Munir's meeting with Trump, and whether this was coming at the cost of Trump's relationship with Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Referring to the May conflict between India and Pakistan, Bruce added, "Obviously, we had an experience with Pakistan and India when there was a conflict, one that could have developed into something quite horrible.

Patras/Madrid, August 13: Wildfires caused by arsonists or thunderstorms and fanned by a heatwave and strong winds continued to rage across southern Europe Wednesday, burning houses, farms and factories and forcing the evacuation of thousands of residents and tourists.

Flames and dark smoke billowed over a cement factory that was set alight by a wildfire that swept through olive groves and forests and disrupted rail traffic on the outskirts of the Greek city of Patras, in the northern Pelopon nese west of Athens. "What does it look like? It looks like doomsday. May God help us and help the people here," said Giorgos Karvanis, a volunteer who had come from Athens to Patras to help.

Authorities ordered resi-



dents of a town of about 7,700 people near Patras to evacuate on Tuesday and issued new alerts on Wednesday, advising residents of two nearby villages to leave their homes.

On the Greek islands of Chios, in the east, and Cephalonia. in the west, both popular with tourists, authorities told people to move to safety as fires spread.

In Spain, a volunteer firefighter died from severe burns and several people were hospitalised as state weather agency AEMET warned that almost all of the country was at extreme or very high risk of fire.

The 35-vear-old man had been attempting to create firebreaks near the town of Nogarejas, in the central Castile and Leon re-

the blaze, regional officials said He was the sixth person to die this year in wildfires in Spain. Other victims include two fire fighters in Tarragona and Avi

gion, when he was trapped in

la, according to emergency ser vices. Working in unprepared landscapes puts firefighters lives at risk, said said Alexander Held, a senior expert in fire man agement at the European Forest Institute. Authorities needed to make more effort to anticipate and prevent wildfires by creating buffer zones and clearing combustible vegetation, he said

"Take an industrial building and imagine there would be no fire detectors, no sprinkler sys tems, no fire protection doors and no escape routes - firefight ers would just refuse to go in but in our landscape we expect them to do this," Held said.

Vietnam overhauling economy to become next Asian tiger

Vietnam's transformation into a global manufacturing hub with shiny new highways, high-rise skylines and a booming middle class has lifted millions of its people from poverty, similar to China

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Hanoi, August 13: Beneath red banners and a gold bust of revolutionary leader Ho Chi Minh in Hanoi's central party school, Communist Party chief To Lam declared the arrival of "a new era of development" late last year.

The speech was more than symbolic- it signalled the launch of what could be Vietnam's most ambitious economic overhaul in decades.

Vietnam aims to get rich by 2045 and become Asia's next "tiger economy" — a term used to describe the earlier ascent of countries like South Korea and

The challenge ahead is steep: Reconciling growth with overdue reforms, an aging population, climate risks and

creaking institutions. There's added pressure from President Donald Trump over Vietnam's trade surplus with the US, a reflection of its astounding economic trajectory. In 1990, the average Viet-

namese could afford about USD 1,200 worth of goods and services a year, adjusted for local prices. Today, that figure has risen by more than 13 times to USD 16,385 Vietnam's transformation

into a global manufacturing hub with shiny new highways, high-rise skylines and a booming middle class has lifted millions of its people from poverty, similar to China. But its low-cost, export-led

boom is slowing, while the proposed reforms — expanding private industries, strengthening social protections, and in-



vesting in tech, green energy. It faces a growing obstacle in climate change.

'It's all hands on deck...We can't waste time anymore,' said Mimi Vu of the consultancy Raise Partners

Investment has soared, driv-

en partly by US-China trade tensions, and the US is now Vietnam's biggest export market. Once-quiet suburbs have been replaced with industrial parks where trucks rumble through sprawling logistics hubs that serve global brands.

Vietnam ran a USD 123.5 billion trade surplus with the US trade in 2024, angering Trump, who threatened a 46 per cent US import tax on Vietnamese goods. The two sides appear to have settled on a 20 per cent levy, and twice that for goods suspected of being transshipped, or routed through Vietnam to avoid US trade restrictions. During negotiations with the Trump administration, Vietnam's focus was on its tariffs compared to those of its neighbours and competitors, said Daniel Kritenbrink, a former US ambassador to Vietnam.

"As long as they're in the same zone, in the same ballpark, I think Vietnam can live with that outcome," he said. But he added questions remain over how much Chinese content in those exports might be too much and how such goods will be taxed. Vietnam was prepar ing to shift its economic policies even before Trump's tariffs threatened its model of churn ing out low-cost exports for the world, aware of what econ omists call the "middle-income trap," when economies tend to plateau without major reforms To move beyond that, South

Korea bet on electronics, Tai wan on semiconductors, and Singapore on finance, said Richard McClellan, founder of the consultancy RMAC Advisory. But Vietnam's econo my today is more diverse and complex than those countries were at the time and it can't re ly on just one winning sector to drive long-term growth and stay competitive as wages rise and cheap labour is no longer its main advantage.

business



is undergoing a transformative phase, driven by policy reforms, increased budgetary allocations, and a rising emphasis on indigenous manufacturing. **The BSE India Defence Index offers** investors a transparent, rulesbased, and investable benchmark to capture this growth story

The defence sector in India

ASCI ORDERS MEDIA TO LABEL PAID POSTS, SAFEGUARD EDITORIAL INTEGRITY

The Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI) Wednesday asked media companies to label paid posts on their social media handles. Under the newly added clause, any paid or sponsored post by a media company must carry a clear disclosure right at the start, so audiences know upfront that it is promotional in nature, an official statement said, adding "Advertisement," "Partnership," "Ad," "Free Gift," "Sponsored," "Platform disclosure tags" and "Collaboration" are the acceptable labels



negotiates agreements with equal footing with as the country has changed under

the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi

JITIN PRASADA | MINISTER OF STATE, COM-







two quarters, and urged the private sector to do more as the country navigates through other longer-term challenges

V ANANTHA NAGESWARAN CHIEF ECONOMIC ADVISOR

01 RESULTS

BPCL net up

Mumbai: Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) Wednesday reported a consolidated net profit of ₹6,839.02 crore for the April-June 2025 quarter (Q1 FY26), a jump of 140.67 per cent compared to ₹2,841.55 crore in the same period previous fiscal (Q1 FY25). BPCL consolidated revenue from operations stood at ₹1,29,614.69 crore in Q1 FY26, slightly higher than ₹1,28,106.39 crore recorded in the year-ago period --

reflecting a growth of about 1

per cent, according to its stock

ONGC profit drops

exchange filing.

New Delhi: State-owned Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) has reported a 10 per cent decline in its June quarter net profit on lower oil prices and stagnant production from its aging fields. The company reported a net profit of ₹8,024 crore in the first quarter of 2025-26 fiscal year, compared to ₹8,938 crore earning in the same period last year, a company statement said. Price of natural gas, marginally rose to \$6.64 per million British thermal units in Q1 from \$6.5 in

ABLBL profit rises

New Delhi: Aditva Birla Lifestyle Brands Limited (ABLBL) Wednesday reported a 4.92 per cent rise in its consolidated net profit to ₹24.06 crore for the June quarter of FY26. It posted a net profit of ₹22.93 crore in the April-June period a year ago, according to a regulatory filing.

NPCI bans P2P collect requests in UPI from Oct 1



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, August 13: In order to address financial fraud, National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) has directed banks and payment apps to halt all peer-to-peer (P2P) "collect requests" from October 1.

But merchants can continue to submit collect requests. The "collect request" or "pull transaction" feature allows a user to request money from another subscriber through UPI, a facility often misused by fraudsters to trick users into authorising payments.

When a user attempts a UPI payment on Flipkart, Amazon, Swiggy, or IRCTC apps, these merchants send a collect request to the user's application. The request is processed once the user approves and enters the UPI PIN

"It is hereby informed that by October 1, 2025, UPI P2P Collect shall not be allowed to be processed in UPI," NPIC said in a circular. All member banks and UPI apps are prohibited from initiating, routing, or processing UPI P2P transactions, it further said.

At present, the maximum

TRAI issues manual to assess e-connectivity

This manual is country's first standardised framework to evaluate how effectively buildings are equipped for high-speed, reliable digital access

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi. August 13: The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) Wednesday issued a manual for rating of properties for digital connectivity, the country's first standardised framework to evaluate how effectively buildings are equipped for high-speed. reliable digital access.

With more than 80 per cent of mobile data consumed indoors, and high frequency band signals of 4G and 5G often weakened by modern day building materials, robust in-building networks have become essential for work, education, healthcare, and daily digital services.

Weak indoor connectivity directly affects consumer experience and overall quality of service.

"In the 21st century, digital connectivity is not a luxury it is essential infrastructure just like electricity or water. Today, it powers growth, innovation, and opportunity. This framework is a decisive step towards making every building in India ready for the Digi tal India vision, enabling more citizens to participate fully in our connected economy and laying the foundation for inclusive national growth," said Anil Kumar Lahoti, Chairman, TRAI.

Developed under the Rating of Properties for Digital Connectivity Regulations,



es a uniform assessment methodology for Digital Connectivity Rating Agencies (DCRAs) and serves as a reference framework for Property Managers (PMs) and Service Providers to plan, implement, and maintain future-ready Digital Connectivity Infrastructure (DCI).

It also defines transparent, standardised criteria for property ratings, including fibre readiness, in-building mobile coverage, Wi-Fi coverage, broadband speeds and overall user experience and enables buyers, tenants, and businesses to make informed decisions based on actual digital connectivity performance.

It also encourages developers to integrate robust digital infrastructure from the design and construction stage.

Over the past decade, India has undergone rapid digital transformation, reshaping how citizens work, learn, access healthcare, and engage with public services. Reliable digital infrastructure now underpins economic growth, innovation, and social welfare. With most data usage occurring indoors, ensuring robust in-building digital connectivity has become critical.

Hence the govt is establishing a standardised, collaborative framework for evaluating

Sensex climbs 304 pts

Mumbai, August 13: Stock markets rebounded Wednesday with benchmark Sensex closing higher by 304 points on buying in metal, auto and pharma shares as steady US inflation data propelled a sharp rally in global markets.

The 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 304.32 points or 0.38 per cent to settle at 80,539.91 During the day, it jumped 448.15 points or 0.55 per cent to 80,683.74.

The 50-share NSE Nifty edged up by 131.95 points or 0.54 per cent to 24,619.35. Analysts said retail inflation

slowing to an 8-year low of 1.55 per cent in July led to the positive trend in domestic equities Among Sensex firms, Bharat Electronics, Eternal, Mahindra

& Mahindra, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Tata Motors and Power Grid were the gainers. However, Adani Ports, ITC. UltraTech Cement and Titan

were among the laggards. The BSE smallcap gauge climbed 0.58 per cent and midcap index went up by 0.56 per

cent.

Among BSE sectoral indices, healthcare jumped 1.76 per cent, metal (1.22 per cent) auto (1.18 per cent), consumer discretionary (0.96 per cent), in dustrials (0.70 per cent) and fi nancial services (0.45 per cent)

Oil & Gas and FMCG were the laggards. Shares of Apollo Hospitals Enterprise Ltd spurted by nearly 8 per cent, emerging as lead gainer among Nifty50 shares after the healthcare ser vices provider reported a 42 per cent jump in profit after tax to ₹433 crore in the June quarter.

Paytm shares closed higher by 3 per cent as Paytm Payments Services received the Reserve Bank of India's nod to operate as an online payment aggregator.

As many as 2,230 stocks advanced while 1,861 declined and 155 remained unchanged on the BSE.Among Asian markets South Korea's Kospi, Japan's Nikkei 225 index, Shanghai's SSE Composite index and Hong Kong's Hang Seng settled sharply higher.

2025, UPI recorded over 1,946 crore transactions in a single month for the first time. SBI to revise IMPS **SEBI** permits MF for IAs,

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

charges from Aug 15

New Delhi, August 13: The State Bank of India (SBI) will revise Immediate Payment Service (IMPS) charges for retail customers from August 15, introducing nominal fees for certain online high-value transactions while keeping small-value transfers free.

All customers will continue to receive free online IMPS transfers up to ₹25,000 under the new arrangement. According to reports, charges

will apply, though, for amounts over ₹25,000: ₹2 + GST for transactions over ₹25,000 and up to ₹1 lakh, ₹6 + GST for amounts over ₹1 lakh and up to ₹2 lakh, and ₹10 + GST for transfers over ₹2 lakh and up to ₹5 lakh.

The revised rates do not ap ply to salary package account holders of various government, defence, and corporate categories, who will continue to enjoy waivers for online IMPS transfers, the reports said.

This includes all variants of Defence Salary Package (DSP), Para Military Salary Package (PMSP), Indian Coast Guard Salary Package (ICGSP), Central Government Salary Package (CGSP), Police Salary Package (PSP), Railway Salary Package (RSP), Shaurya Family Pension Accounts, Corporate Salary Package (CSP), State Government Salary Package (SGSP), Startup Salary Package (SUSP), and Family Savings Ac-



count-SBI Rishtev.

With fees ranging from ₹2 + GST for the lowest slab to ₹20 + GST for the highest, branch IMPS charges have not changed.

The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) offers IMPS, a real-time payment system that is accessible around the clock and has ₹5 lakh transaction limit (apart from SMS and IVR channels).

While branch, ATM, and IVR transactions don't require any setup in advance, customers who use mobile banking, internet banking, or SMS banking must first register, the reports stated. For transactions under ₹1.000. Canara Bank currently provides free IMPS. After that, fees range from ₹3 + GST (between ₹1,000 and ₹10,000) to ₹20 + GST (between ₹2 lakh and ₹5 lakh).

Higher-value transactions cost ₹12 + GST at branches and ₹10 + GST online.

The Punjab National Bank waives fees for transactions up to ₹1,000 and charges ₹6 + GST in branches or $\overline{5}$ + GST online for amount up to ₹1 lakh.

RAs deposit compliance

lect" from another person per

transaction is Rs 2,000. The

number of successful P2P cred-

it transactions is capped at 50

a day. While "collect request"

frauds were common in the

early days of UPI, these frauds

have come down dramatically

after NPCI limited the value to

The collect feature allows

users to remind friends or rel-

atives about money owed with-

out sending a separate message

In the past, small shopkeepers

used personal savings accounts

for trade transactions and could

send collection requests to cus-

tomers for pending payments.

Banks and UPI apps now clas-

sify these accounts as merchant

UPI is the leading digital

payments system in the coun-

try with approximately 400

million users. UPI transac-

tions grew from 92 crore in FY

2017-18 to 18,587 crore in FY

2024-25, with a CAGR of 114 per

cent. During the same period,

the value of transactions has

grown from Rs 1.10 lakh crore

to Rs 261 lakh crore. In July

around Rs 2,000.

transactions.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 13: The Security Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has allowed investment advisers and research analysts to use liquid mutual funds and overnight mutual funds for meeting their mandatory deposit requirements, providing an alternative to scheduled bank deposits. Overnight mutual funds are a type of debt mutual fund that invests in overnight securities -- debt instruments with a maturity of just one day. Currently, Investment Advisers (IAs) and Research Analysts (RAs) are mandated to maintain a specified deposit with a scheduled bank. marked as a lien in favour of the Investment Adviser Administration and Supervisory Body (IAASB) or the Research Analyst Administration and Supervisory

Body (RAASB), as applicable. Based on the representations from industry participants and feedback received during public consultations, the board approved the proposal in its June 2025 meeting. The amendments to the Research Analysts rules and Investment Advisers norms were notified by the regulator

on August 6-7, respectively. According to the circular issued Tuesday, SEBI said, "In order to ensure compliance with the deposit requirements under the norms, IAs and RAs will now maintain a deposit in the form of units of a liquid mutual fund or an overnight mutual fund or as a deposit maintained with a scheduled bank.'

Jawa unveils 2025 Yezdi Roadster



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 13: The much-anticipated model from Classic Legends Pvt Ltd's flagship brand, JawaYezdi Motorcycles — the All-New Yezdi Roadster (2025 Yezdi Roadster) has been unveiled nationwide. In this context, the company

organised a special ceremony in Mumbai Tuesday, attended by senior company officials and several distinguished guests. Notably, the All-New Yezdi Roadster has been designed around the exclusive theme "Born out of Line". It comes equipped with a full range of safety features and modern

technology. The model boasts a powerful engine, a large fuel tank with a 12.5-litre capacity, and an attractive design. Available in two variants and four striking colours, the model is expected to appeal strong ly to all customer segments, especially the youth, according to the brand. The starting ex-showroom price has been set at ₹2,09,969. Speaking on the occasion, Anupam Thareja, Co-Founder of JawaYezdi Mo torcycles, said, "We are truly excited to formally unveil our new model, the All-New Yezdi Roadster. We believe this model will bring a fresh and revolutionary change to the market and open up new possibilities in riding experiences. With its attractive design and colour options, it will be a delight for long-distance journeys, offering a truly unique experience.'

ICICI Bank trims min balance requirement

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 13: In a U-turn, ICICI Bank has slashed the minimum monthly average balance (MAB) requirement to ₹15,000 from earlier steep hike of ₹50,000, citing "valuable feedback" from customers

The minimum balance requirement for its new savings bank accounts opened on or after August 1 was raised five times to ₹50.000.

"Following valuable feedback from our customers, we have revised these requirements to better reflect their expectations and preferences. We thank our customers for their continued trust and feedback, which help us serve them better," ICICI Bank posted on its website.

Similarly, the MAB for semi-urban and rural locations have been revised downwards to ₹7,500 and ₹2,500 respectively, it said.

Before August 1, the MAB for semi-urban and rural was ₹5,000. Even after the rollback, the bank has affected a 50 per cent hike across all these seg-

However, the bank said, the revised MAB requirements are not applicable to salary accounts, senior citizens/pensioners (above 60 years), basic savings bank deposit account/ PM Jandhan Yojana, and accounts for people with special They are also not applicable

to savings accounts opened before July 31, 2025.

In case account holders fail to meet the MAB, customers will be liable to pay penal charges of 6 per cent of the shortfall in required MAB, or Rs 500, whichever is lower.



has been inaugurated by Sofia Firdous (MLA, Barabati, Cuttack) in the presence of Subhash Chandra Singh (Mayor, Cuttack Municipal Corporation), Satyaram Sahu (Corporator Ward-25, Cuttack Municipality), Malvika Sharma (Celebrity Guest), Poonam Mishra (Actress), Anisha Sharma (Actress), Thomas Mathew (Executive Director, Joyalukkas), Henry George (COO, Joyalukkas), Rajesh Krishnan (DGM, Retail, Joyalukkas), Anish Varghese (DGM, Marketing) and other dignitaries

Ajanta Shoes hosts Dealer Meet



Bhubaneswar: Ajanta Shoes India Pvt Ltd, hosted its Odisha Dealer Meet in Bhubaneswar Wednesday, uniting key distributors to accelerate growth. The company, celebrating its 70th anniversary in January 2026, is also preparing for an Initial Public Offering (IPO) to drive expansion. Ajanta Shoes aims to achieve ₹1,000 crore in revenue by 2028, targeting a 35 per cent CAGR to solidify its position as a top national footwear brand. Currently holding a 40 per cent market share in Odisha's hawai chappal segment, the brand is diversifying into women's footwear, clogs, and athleisure, while strengthening its presence in West Bengal and Odisha and expanding into Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, and Southern India. "This dealer meet is held every year to showcase our latest innovations," said Dharm Vir Jain, Vice President - Sales & Marketing. "Today, we are launching 350 new footwear designs and unveiling India's first AI-powered smart shoes for men and women. These feature precise step counts, a foot massager with timer, adaptive performance, camera and music control, SOS alert for women's safety— all priced at ₹9,999." The Bhubaneswar event follows similar meets in Kolkata, Ranchi, and Patna. Senior officials including Partha Dasgupta, General Manager - Sales; Nikuj Maharaj, Zonal Sales Manager; Amaresh Tripathi, Regional Sales Manager; and Siddhartha Chakravarty, Marketing Manager, were present.

India's 2030 CWG dream takes flight

IOA approves India's 2030 CWG bid; says Games to include all "medal-earning" sports

New Delhi, August 13: The Indian Olympic Association (IOA) Wednesday formally approved the country's bid to host the 2030 Commonwealth Games during its Special General Meeting (SGM) here with its top officials saying that India would host an "inclusive" edition featuring all "medal-earning" sports.

India has already submitted an Expression of Interest for the 2030 CWG with Ahmedabad as the host city. But the nation will have to submit the proposals for the final bid before the August 31 deadline

IOA President PT Usha said along with Ahmedabad, 2010 host Delhi and Bhubaneswar will also be considered.

"I'm happy that all are together and it was a unanimous decision. Our preparations will go ahead. We can't just tell whether Ahmedabad is the host city. We have good facilities in Bhuhaneswar and even in Delhi also. We will very soon announce where the Games will be held," Usha said after the SGM that lasted just over half an hour.

"The 2026 Glasgow CWG is a scaled down Games because of circumstances. If we get 2030 CWG, it will be full fledged one just like we did in 2010," she added, referring to the pruned roster of the 2026 Glasgow edition where major sports like hockey, badminton, wrestling and shooting have been left out





'm happy that all are together and it was a unanimous decision. Our preparations will go ahead. We can't just tell whether Ahmedabad is the host city. We have good facilities in Bhubaneswar and even in Delhi also. We will very soon announce where the Games will be held

IOA CEO Raghuram Iyer said "we cannot say anything as of now", when asked whether there is a chance of more than one city hosting the 2030 CWG. With Canada having pulled

out of the race, India's chances of getting the 2030 CWG have brightened.

"The plan is to have all our medal-earning sports like shooting, archery, wrestling

etc. Our traditional sports like kabaddi, kho kho, and yoga should also be there," IOA joint secretary Kalyan Chaubey said.

A team of officials from Commonwealth Sport (earlier CGF), led by its Director of Games Darren Hall, recently visited Ahmedabad to inspect the venues and meet Gujarat government officials.

Asked about the feedback from the Commonwealth Sport delegation, Iver said, "I was part of the delegation and they came to look at the venues and the readiness of all the things

that are going to be available at the venues and the infrastruc-

"Overall they have gone back happy and by the end of the month, now that we have the go ahead of the General Body, we will be putting in the proposals.

A bigger delegation of Commonwealth Sport is expected to be in India later this month or in September.

"We will have all the sports we are good at and have a chance of winning maximum medals," said Executive Council member Rohit Rajpal.

"There are three groups of sports. First is core sports of the Commonwealth Games which are always there, then are sports which the host nation can choose and the third one are the additional sports.

"The 2030 will be an inclusive Games and will feature our traditional and indigenous sports also," Rajpal added.

The General Assembly of Commonwealth Sport will decide the host country in the last week of November in Glasgow. India has previously hosted the 2010 edition of the multi-sporting event in Delhi.

The SGM was preceded by the Executive Council meeting Wednesday morning.

The General Body passed the audited statement of accounts for the financial year 2023-24 and also approved the appointment of statutory auditor for the financial year 2024-25.

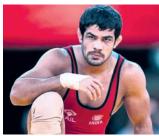
Meanwhile, it's learnt that Iyer's salary has been capped at Rs 13 lakh per month instead of the initially proposed Rs 20lakh per month, which was the bone of contention between Usha and the majority of the EC members during the long internal feud which ended last

"Iyer's salary will now be Rs 13 lakh per month. He has agreed to it," a source privy to the development told PTI.

Iyer's appointment as IOA CEO was announced by Usha in January 2024 but it was ratified only July 24 this year.

SC cancels bail of **Olympian wrestler Sushil Kumar**

Murder case



New Delhi, August 13: The Supreme Court Wednesday cancelled the bail of Olympian wrestler Sushil Kumar, a prime accused in the murder case of junior national wrestling champion Sagar Dhankar, asking him to surrender within a week.

A Bench of Justices Sanjay Karol and Prashant Kumar Mishra allowed the special leave petition (SLP) filed by Dhankar's father, challenging a Delhi High Court order grant ing bail to Sushil Kumar.

Sushil Kumar, along with others, is accused of allegedly assaulting former junior national wrestling champion Dhankar, a resident of Harv ana's Rohtak, and his two friends, Sonu and Amit Kumar, in the parking lot of the city's Chhatrasal stadium, May 4, 2021, over an alleged property dispute.

He has been in judicial custody since June 2, 2021, until the Delhi High Court granted him bail in March this year.

Sushil Kumar was arrested after staying on the run for 18 days following the death of

SHORT **TAKES**

Khalid signs 2-year deal

NEW DELHI: The All India Football Federation (AIFF) Wednesday said Khalid Jamil has taken charge of the senior men's team on a full-time basis for a period of two years with an option to extend his contract by one year depending on results. The AIFF said Jamil has signed the contract after parting ways with ISL team Jamshedpur FC. Jamil will begin his first training camp August 15 at the Dravid-Padukone Centre for Sports Excellence in Bangalore. His first assignment with the Blue Tigers will be the CAFA Nations Cup, where India will face hosts Tajikistan (August 29), Iran (September 1) and Afghanistan (September 4) in Group B.

Historic triumph for WI

TRINIDAD: Shai Hope's unbeaten century and Jayden Seales' six-fer led West Indies to register their first series win over Pakistan since 1991 with an emphatic 202-run win the third and final ODI at the Brian Lara Cricket Stadium. Hope led from the front with an unbeaten 120 to help the West Indies post 2946 and pacer Seales collected six wickets in reply as Pakistan were bundled out for iust 92 to ensure the home side registered a 2-1 series triumph for the first time since November 1991. Hope's 18 century took him past former great Desmond Haynes (17) and into third place for the most ODI centuries by a West Indies men's player with only Chris Gayle (25) and Brian Lara (19) ahead of him.

Tough draw for shuttlers

PARIS: Lakshya Sen will open his campaign against world No 1 Shi Yu Qi of China as Indian shuttlers were Wednesday handed challenging draws for the World Championships, starting here August 25. It will be the fifth meeting between the two shuttlers, with Shi holding a superior 3-1 lead in head-to-head record against the Indian, who won bronze medal in the 2021 edition of the tournament. Former Commonwealth Games gold medallist Lakshya has struggled to rediscover his touch since the semifinal loss at the Paris Olympics last year. The 23-year-old from Almora, currently ranked 21, has struggled with consistency this season, managing only a quarterfinal finish at the All England. Lakshya has shown glimpses of his potential but has struggled to close out key matches this season.

ST LOUIS RAPID AND BLITZ

Gukesh suffers shock defeat

World Champion joint fifth after six games; Caruana snatches sole lead

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

St. Louis (US), August 13: Reigning World Champion D Gukesh had a relatively unremarkable day at the St. Louis Rapid and Blitz, as he lost one game and drew two, placing him in the middle of the standings in the 10-player tournament, which is part of the Grand Chess Tour.

After a shock defeat at the hands of tailender Sam Shankland of United States in the fourth round, Gukesh followed it up with two draws against Maxime Vachier-Lagrave of France and Nodirbek Abdusattorov of Uzbekistan.

Meanwhile, the lead changed hands dramatically as highest ranked American in the fray Fabiano Caruana conceded just a lone draw and defeated overnight leader - the Armenian-turned-American Levon Aronian in the last game of the day to take a two-points lead.

Like Gukesh, Aronian was just able to draw two games and lost one.

With just three rounds to go in the rapid, Caruana, on 10 points out of a possible 12, seems poised to win this section which would mean that



he would have some advantage going ahead in the blitz section which will have a double round-robin comprising 18 rounds in all.

Aronian is still a not-far-behind second on eight points, sharing the second spot with Wesley So, also from United States. A close fourth is Vachier-Lagrave on seven points, while Gukesh shares the next spot along side another US import Leinier Dominguez Perez. who is a born Cuban.

Nodirbek Abdusattorov of Uzbekistan and Liem Le Quang of Vietnam share the seventh spot on five points and another two points behind is Grigoriv Oparin who also changed his federation to United States. The last man standing in the event

is Sam Shankland with the lone prize catch of Gukesh that netted him two points.

The Indian ace had done well to win two games on the trot after losing to Aronian in the opening round but a tougher opponent awaited him in the second round.

Against Shankland, Gukesh tried to go for complications but they backfired as the American is known for his decent tactical skills and won a piece with some precise calculation in the middle game.

Gukesh did not push for more against Vachier-Lagrave and settled for a draw and against Abdusattorov he did not get many chances as the players headed to a king versus king position after 60 moves.

Duplantis defies gravity again

Monaco, August 13: Sweden's Mondo Duplantis broke his own pole vault world record with a clearance of 6.29 metres at the Hungarian Grand Prix meeting in Budapest Tuesday, the 13th time he has set a new world mark as he continues to defy gravity.

The double-Olympic champion maintained his tradition of improving on his previous record by one centimetre, with his second attempt at the Istvan Gyulai Memorial overhauling the mark he set in Stockholm in June.

Duplantis had looked a little off his best form, missing his first attempt at 6.11 and, after Greece's Emmanouil Karalis retired having failed twice at



the same height, the Swede had the bar raised to make his usual world record attempt. "I love Hungary very much. The track is very good. I love the crowd. I would like to return, thank you," Duplantis said.

Gulveer betters own 3000m national record The top middle and long-distance runner

owns NR in three events

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Budapest (Hungary), August 13: India's top middle and long-distance runner Gulveer Singh proved his versatility as he came up with an impressive performance to set the national record in men's 3000m to add to the marks he already owns in 5000m and 10000m. Gulveer Singh came up with an imperious performance in the Gyulai István Memorial, also called the Hungarian Athletics Grand Prix.

Gulveer clocked a time of 734.49s to finish fifth in the Continental Tour Gold meet at the National Athletics Centre in the Hungarian capital. This was the first time that Gulveer was competing in this discipline in Europe. He broke Surendra Singh's record of 750.31 that had stood since 2008. Surendra Singh set the record at Twickenham. United Kingdom.

The 27-year-old, who is supported by Reliance Foundation, finished behind Mathew Kipchumba Kipsang of Kenya (733.23). Eduardo Herrera of Mexico (733.58), Oscar Chelimo of Uganda (733.93), and Valentin Soca of Uruguay (734.28).



Gulveer's previous best in this event was 7.38.26, which came at the Boston University David Hemery Valentine Invitational 2025. Gulveer also holds the na tional record in men's 3000m and 5000 m in indoor athletics.

Gulveer holds the national record of 1318.92s in Men's 5000m set June 9, 2024, at the Portland Track Festival, Port land, United States. He set the national record in the Men's 10.000m when he clocked 2714.88s in November 2024 in the Hachioji Long Distance meet in Hachiji, Japan.

Big spending fuels open Premier League title race

DEFENDING CHAMPION LIVERPOOL KICKS OFF THE SEASON FRIDAY AGAINST BOURNEMOUTH AT ANFIELD

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Manchester (England), Au**gust 13:** The Premier League is back after one of the most unpredictable seasons in recent memory saw Liverpool win a record-equaling 20th title. Manchester City go into meltdown and Manchester United hit new lows.

The new campaign kicks off Friday and teams have spent big in an attempt to capitalize on what looks like being a wide open title race after City's dominance was ended.

Defending champion Liverpool hasn't stood still, with

Florian Wirtz the pick of its signings for a fee that could rise to a British record \$156 million. Pep Guardiola's rebuild at

City began in January with

around \$450 million spent since

then on revamping a team that

saw its four-year title-winning

run snapped last term.

And perennial runner-up Arsenal has finally secured a top-class striker in Viktor Gyokeres as it looks to win its first title since 2004. Chelsea has continued its

heavy-spending policy under American owners Todd Boehly and Clearlake Capital and, fresh from being crowned world club champion, will expect to challenge for the biggest prizes again.

LIVERPOOL HAS A FIGHT ON ITS HANDS ... WITH HISTORY

Liverpool knows just how difficult it is to win back-to-back championships.

Not since 1984 has the club successfully defended the title and it is not alone in struggling to hold onto the trophy. Only Guardiola's City — champion in six out of seven seasons between 2018 and 2024 - has managed to retain the title since

Alex Ferguson's Man United retained its title in 2009.

But Liverpool coach Arne Slot already defied the odds by joining an elite group of coaches to win the title in their first year in the Premier League, following Jose Mourinho, Carlo Ancelotti, Manuel Pellegrini and Antonio Conte. He has brought in high-quality additions, with Wirtz and Hugo Ekitike adding more firepower to Liverpool's attack.

MAN CITY, GUARDIOLA HAVE A POINT TO PROVE

City endured a sudden and dramatic decline last season when its title defense unraveled before Christmas.

Defeat in the FA Cup final against Crystal Palace consigned City to its first trophyless season in eight years.

There were mitigating factors — mainly the injury to

Ballon d'Or winner Rodri. But

Guardiola's extensive rebuild.

including the signings of Omar Marmoush and Rayan Cherki, suggest City's problems were more deeply rooted.

The last time Guardiola relinquished a title, he went on to win the next four. City's Premier League rivals have been

ARSENAL LOOKS LIKE IT HAS SECURED THE MISSING PIECE

No team has been more consistent than Arsenal over the past three seasons — but that

still hasn't delivered a title. The signing of Gyokeres could be the last piece of the puzzle. The Sweden striker outscored Kylian Mbappe, Haa land and Mohamed Salah last term. His overall record for Sporting Lisbon was 97 goals in 102 games. Arsenal will hope he can reproduce that form in England.

IT'S A LONG ROAD BACK FOR **MAN UNITED**

United recorded its lowest finish in the Premier League era (15th) last season, the most losses (18) and its lowest points total (42). Add to that the failure to qualify for any European competition and it was a year to forget.

Coach Ruben Amorim has vowed to bring the good times back. He's signed Premier League-proven forwards in Matheus Cunha and Bryan Mbeumo, along with highly rat ed Slovenia striker Benjamir Sesko. He's also had a full off season to work with his squad -- something he was denied when hired midway through last season.

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