



### Mrunal at receiving end

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

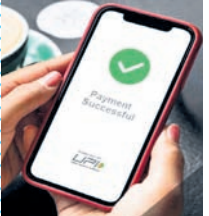
LEISURE | **P2**



### 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**

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



**BURNING IRE:** Members of various trade unions burn an effigy of US President Donald Trump during a march to the American Center in protest against the recent tariffs imposed on India, in Kolkata, Wednesday

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) scheme. “These new guidelines will make the administrative process simpler and help in implementing important schemes for people in a quick and transparent manner,” he said.

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’ rest-sheds, 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, Ahuja 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

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 Joy-malya 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 San-karanarayanan, appearing for the NGO, said the EC notifica-

tion on the SIR ought to be set aside for want of legal basis and never being contemplated in law. He, therefore, contended 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 time in history and if allowed to happen only God knows where it will end, he added.

“By that logic special inten-sive 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?”

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 into it”.

Sholay@50: A shared memory that lives on

AGENCIES

**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 says “Itna sannata kyon hai bhai” and everyone breaks into smiles. The connect is in-

stant. 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, Jaya Bachchan, and Amjad 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 motor-



mouth 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 Thakur is an upright, progressive man who wants his daughter-in-law to find love again.

Hindi cinema, Gabbar Singh, the dacoit without a back story, redefined the word menacing. His lines – “Kitney admi they,” “Jo dar gaya, samjho mar gaya,” “Pachaas, pachaas kos...” – are endlessly recounted.

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

there are still those who clamber 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 Basanti’s mausi relents.

Then there is the bromance between 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.

Ask Islamabad: US on F-16 loss during Op Sindoor query

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, August 13:** The US government has reportedly declined 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 end-use agreements signed by Islamabad 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 support in maintaining the fleet.

Consequently, these Technical Support Teams are contractually obligated to be fully aware of the status of all Pakistan-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.



leisure

FORTUNE FORECAST

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FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181\*

ARIES

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 achieve your short term 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 long-term goals now. Due time and money will be spent on leisure activities in the company of loved ones.

GEMINI

You will keep others under the spell of your magnetic 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

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

LEO

Shooting off the charts is an understatement when 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.

VIRGO

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 improvement 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 begin a new business. Keep at it, and you may find some satisfaction in business dealings 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 of the day.

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 neglect 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 workplace, 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.



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.



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 accolades, 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.



A 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 Africa and Australia. His works, rooted in Odia culture yet resonating with universal themes, address social 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 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 Odisha's presence on the global cinematic map.

PNN



Karishma's beauty hack

**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 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 diy 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.

IAN5

Mrunal under fire

**Mumbai:** An old video of actress Mrunal Thakur from her *Kumkum Bhagya* days has resurfaced online, sparking controversy and fan backlash. The clip, from a light-hearted media interaction with co-star Arjit Taneja, features Mrunal asking, "Would you rather marry someone who is more manly with muscles?" When Arjit replied he preferred a fit partner, she quipped, "Go marry Bipasha then. Listen, I am far better than Bipasha."

While seemingly playful, many viewers perceived the remark as dismissive and body-shaming towards Bollywood star Bipasha Basu. The video quickly went viral, with fans flooding social media to defend Bipasha, calling her a "diva" and highlighting her iconic status—citing even a hit song named after her. Comments ranged from sarcastic jabs to pointed reminders of Bipasha's unmatched glamour and fitness legacy.

The incident reignited debates about celebrity conduct and the role of dog and the re-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 into her life. She wrote, "My lives when he was the brilliant team him, he was bat-dislocated, tail was that of a done by little in torturing their fault — instil empathy, ness with us. He is intel-nurtur-gentle."

ments on physical appearance and the 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 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

**Mumbai:** Bollywood actress Bhumi Pednekar, who was recently seen in the streaming series *The Royals*, has spoken up on the issue of confinement, cent directive of

Bhumi raises concern for canines



Bruno baba came into our just 4 months old. When at @yodamumbai founded & 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. ligit, 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".

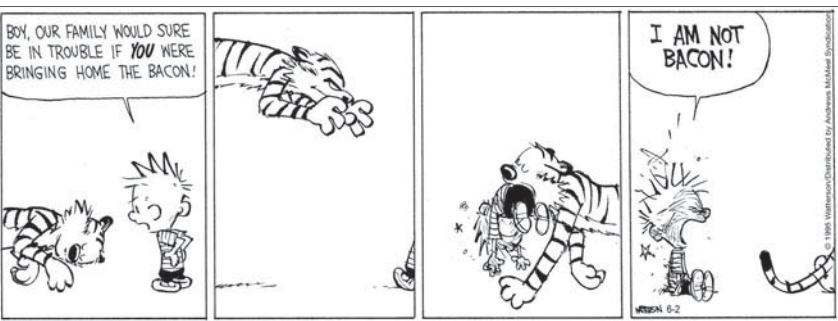
The actress further mentioned instead of criminalising their existence or punishing those who care, it's better to create stronger reforms and systems, mass sterilisation drives.

IAN5

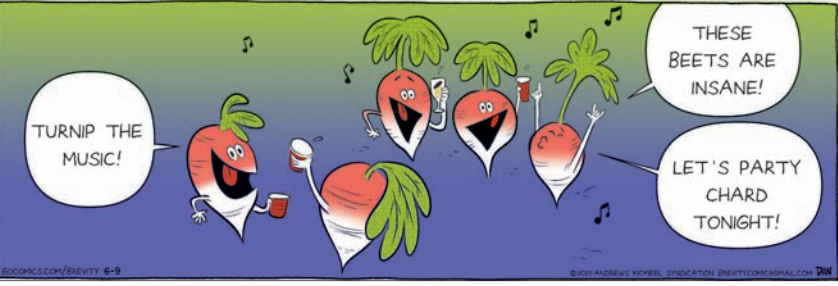
PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

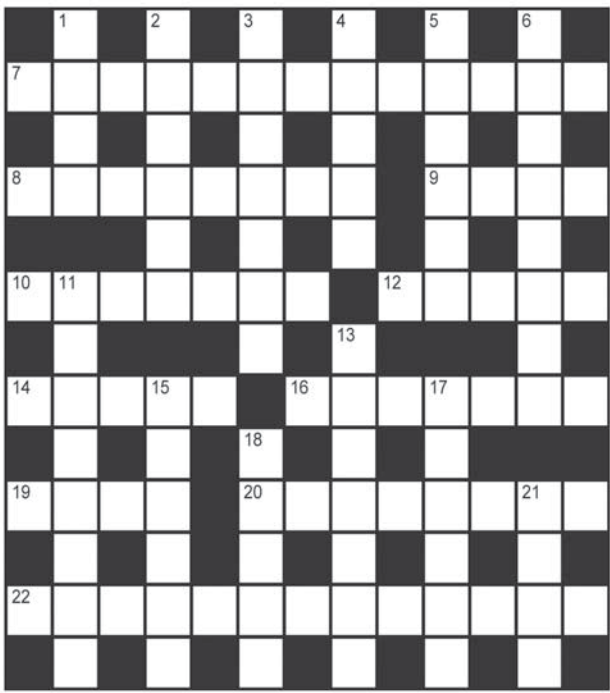


BREVITY



FUN post

CROSSWORD



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- Across

7 Ophthalmologist's prescription (7,6)

8 Lances

9 Domestic

10 Snubs

12 Chiggers

14 Like helium

16 Flaw

19 Dire fate

20 Bakery buys

22 Floor plan feature (6,7)

Down

1 Decant

2 Artist's workroom

3 Like some candles

4 Bored

5 Nail polish

6 Big-mouthed sea birds

11 Venice sights

13 Barber's tool

15 Out in the boonies

17 Deficient in amount

18 Close call

21 English prep school

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

SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

C	H	A	T	I	S	O	L	A	T	E	S
H	A	S	P	I	U	R	S				
R	A	C	C	O	O	N	C	L	O	U	T
O	O	R	G	R	E	P	A				
M	O	T	E	T	E	N	E	M	I	E	S
E			E	R		C	H				
T	A	R	N		B	O	A	S			
W	W		S	D							F
E	L	E	G	A	N	T		O	W	N	E
L	L	S	R	U	A	I					
L	I	F	T	S		O	A	R	S	M	A
S	T	E	L	S	E	G					
W	H	I	T	T	L	E		I	S	L	E

SUDOKU

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

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW







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

PARTY ACCUSES RULING PARTY OF U-TURN ON REPAINTING POLICY



POST NEWS NETWORK

**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, senior spokespersons Manoranjan Dash, Rajani Kumar Mohanty, Krushna Chandra Pati, and party leader Chinmay Sundar Das criticised the move, saying it comes at a time

when the state is grappling 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.



# Trade unions, SKM protest Trump tariffs

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, August 13:** The joint platform of Central Trade Unions, Samyukta Kisan Morcha (United Farmers' Front), and the Land Rights Movement organised a protest rally Wednesday from Master Canteen to Lower PMG here under the banner 'Defend National Sovereignty – Stop Corporate Loot,' condemning Trump's aggressive tariff policy.

The protesters carried placards and banners and raised slogans to voice their demands. Leaders from various workers' and farmers' unions, including Ramchandra Khuntia, Suresh Chandra Panigrahy, Bijay Kumar Jena, Dushmanta Kumar Das, Jayasen Meher, Mahendra Parida, Jyoti Ranjan Mohapatra, and others, also participated in the demonstration.

Ten central trade unions and allied groups condemned Trump's tariff threat, calling

it an attempt to pressure India while protecting US corporate interests. They welcomed the Centre's recent stance against the move but urged firm action to safeguard agriculture, dairy, industry, and jobs.

Protesters warned that the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) could threaten food security, healthcare, and economic self-reliance by allowing cheap British farm imports and paving the way for hospital privatisation and high-

er medicine costs. The rally also criticised the government's pro-corporate policies, citing the four labour codes, absence of a legal MSP guarantee, and privatisation of public enterprises.

A memorandum was submitted to the Prime Minister and Governor outlining demands to reject Trump's tariffs, withdraw CETA, halt India-US trade talks, and ensure public and parliamentary scrutiny of all trade agreements.

# 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, Ranjit Kumar Sahoo, Chandrakanta Sahu, Rajesh Patra, and R Ramanarayan Reddy were among the select Indian participants, who braved Storm Floris—a powerful and unseasonal weather system that brought winds exceeding 100 miles per hour—to complete the endurance ride. The LEL is conducted under the global randonneuring body—Les Randonneurs Mondiaux (LRM).

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.

# 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 the event.

# Dhauili College organises Har Ghar Tiranga events

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, August 13:** The Lalit Kala Akademi Regional Centre, Bhubaneswar, in collaboration with Dhauili 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 Dhauili 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 Dhauili College of Art & Crafts, along with members of Lalit Kala Akademi Regional Centre, Bhubaneswar, participating with the Tiranga to promote patriotism.

# Odisha reacts strongly to SC order on stray dogs

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 compassion.

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 locations. 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 reported in the state.

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 Mohanty echoed concerns about lack of resources, calling the order “impractical and dangerous.”

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

**Mayor contests stray dog relocation order**

In the wake of the Supreme Court's directive regarding stray dogs in Delhi NCR, Bhubaneswar Mayor Sulochana Das has urged the apex court to reconsider the order, warning that relocated dogs are likely to die. She informed that Bhubaneswar has more than 85,000 stray dogs. The Supreme Court has directed the Delhi government and municipal authorities to capture and quarantine stray dogs in Delhi-NCR, but there is no such rule for Bhubaneswar, Mayor Das said.

high, especially after fatal attacks—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 beaten to death in Bhubaneswar's VSS Nagar and Berhampur. Actress Elina Samantary and other animal lovers say stray dogs deserve compassion, not confinement.

MARKET WATCH					
CURRENCY		BOURSES		COMMODITIES	
INDEX	VARIATION	INDEX	VARIATION	INDEX	VARIATION
DOLLAR	87.47 ▼ 0.32	SENSEX	80539.91 ▲ 304.32	GOLD	₹100,470 ▲ ₹313
EURO	102.59 ▲ 0.63	NIFTY	24619.35 ▲ 131.95	SILVER	₹115,245 ▲ ₹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 Werther effect. For instance, the Balasore 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 recently, which is highly worrying. People must remember that their life is precious—not just 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 relationships with their children, so they feel free to share everything and reduce such incidents. The government should also play its part.”

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



every problem; suicide is never one. Parents and teachers can play a pivotal role by building friendly relationships with girl students, so they feel comfortable sharing their concerns, which can help reduce such cases,” she added.

**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, yet some take extreme steps due to others' heinous acts. The government must take more effective measures for women's safety, and victims should never let thoughts of suicide consume their minds.”



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

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

SRI AUROBINDO



## Climate Security

For 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 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 technologies have not abated.

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 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).

As a case in point, the summer of 2022 brought massive inflation, largely driven by fossil-fuel price spikes. Europe’s gas prices peaked at ten times their long-term average, and US gas prices at around triple their long-term average. While the US Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 is widely considered a misnomer, history will judge the name kindly: The only permanent way to address such bouts with “fossilflation” is to stop using fossil fuels.

Though the blowback against climate 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.

In grappling with these tradeoffs, the European Union delivered the kinds of efficiency measures that Trump’s “Department of Government Efficiency” (DOGE) had promised but failed to achieve. For example, Europe dialed back its carbon border adjustment mechanism by requiring 90% fewer companies to comply.

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 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 league of its own globally.

China’s dominance extends to technologies that are not yet competitive 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 manufacturing capacity.

These are not isolated examples. China’s ambitious industrial 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 future?

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 bio-fuels – 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 the world’s first low-carbon steel plant using electrolyzers made by ThyssenKrupp Nucera, in which the German steelmaker has a majority stake.

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

True, onshoring the solar supply chain comes with costs that can 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 “climate tech” must be relabeled as more neutral-sounding “energy tech,” so be it. The larger forces propelling us toward decarbonization remain the same.

The writer is a climate economist at Columbia Business School.

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Arijit Dash

INDIA'S URBAN DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGE IS NOT JUST IMMENSE—IT IS DEEPLY LAYERED



Gernot Wagner

The fundamental economic and technological forces that are pushing the world away from oil, coal, and gas and toward low-carbon, high-efficiency technologies have not abated

### FOCUS URBAN DEVELOPMENT

# WHY PROPERTY RIGHTS MATTER



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

# 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

In Sept 2018, I had shared 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

aligned & focused.

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 orga-

nizations, seamless collaboration 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 strong.

10. Creative Problem-Solving: Lord Krishna famously

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.

## Letters TO THE EDITOR

Readers of Orissa Post are most welcome to contribute letters (100 words), articles and columns (between 600-1000 words). Contributors are requested to send their contact numbers and full postal address/email ID. They may also send in their valuable comments, opinion and suggestions, preferably by email, to: [edit@orissapost.com](mailto:edit@orissapost.com)

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### 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..

Ranganathan Sivakumar, CHENNAI

### 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!

M Pradyu, KANNUR





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 Congress.

SERB TAKES UPON HIMSELF TO 'CLEAN GURUGRAM'

The foreigner's initiative earns praise, sparks introspection

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**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, a 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 responsibility, too.

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, and once this changes, changes will happen. Stop pointing fingers and talking about who is to blame, but is to blame, but take action and you will see the difference."

Gurugram's cleanliness situation is improving but still faces challenges.

While the city has seen a significant jump in its Swachh Survekshan ranking, moving from 140th to 41st in the 2024 rankings, this improvement is somewhat overshadowed by ongoing issues with waste management, particularly in source segregation.

The city has a high waste processing rate but struggles with getting residents to separate waste at the source. Piles of garbage can be seen at many places in Gurugram.

Lazar Jankovic, a 32-year-old Serbian national staying in Sector 55, is on a "journey to clean India"

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 responsibility, too

'Deported' Bengal migrant brought back from B'desh

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**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 district.



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 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 procedural safeguards".

He was held in a detention facility outside Sikar. On June 28, he was pushed to Bangladesh, the petitioner alleged.

"We sent all documents 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.

"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, Ajmaul 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

PTI PHOTO

SC overturns sarpanch election in Panipat

Top court orders EVM recount

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi, August 13:** The Supreme Court has overturned the election of the Sarpanch of Gram Panchayat Buana Lakhu in Haryana's Panipat district after a court-monitored recount found the appellant securing the highest number of votes.

A bench of Justices Surya Kant, Dipankar Datta, and NK Singh ordered the Deputy Commissioner-cum-Election Officer, Panipat, to issue a notification within two days declaring the appellant, Mohit Kumar, elected, and allowing him to assume office immediately.

The election for the Sarpanch's post was held November 2, 2022, in which the respondent, Kuldeep Singh, was declared elected. Mohit Kumar challenged the result before the Additional Civil Judge (Senior Divi-



sion)-cum-Election Tribunal, which, April 22, 2025, found grounds for recounting the votes at a booth. However, the Punjab and Haryana High Court overturned that decision July 1, prompting Mohit Kumar to 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 Surya Kant-Bench observed: "There being prima facie no reason

to doubt the Report submitted by the OSD (Registrar) of this Court, especially when the entire recounting has been duly video-graphed 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 Panipat, 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

of the OSD (Registrar) of this Court as the final and conclusive report so far as the result of recounting of votes is concerned."

It clarified that the direction 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 Tribunal.

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

**OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER**  
**BHUBANESWAR (R&B) DIVISION NO. III**  
**BHUBANESWAR**  
bbsrrandb03@yahoo.com

No.B-397  
60Estg. No. - 5931  
Government of Odisha "e"-Procurement Notice No (20) of 2025-26  
Bid Identification No : C.C. (R&B) 03

Date - 12.08.2025

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 HI&G-1 to VIIM - 123, FR Block 7 to 67
2	Total No of works	1 No. work
3	Estimated Cost	1) Rs.32,63,507.00/-
4	Class of Contractor	"HT" Class Contractor
5	Period of Completion	2 (Two) Calendar Months
6	Type of Tender	Single Cover System (Online)
7	Date & time of availability of bid document in the portal	From 14.08.2025 at 11.30 A.M. to 25.08.2025 at 5.30 P.M.
8	Last Date & Time for Receipt of bids in the Portal	25.08.2025 upto 5.30 P.M.
9	Name & Address of the Officer inviting Bid	Er.Narendra Kumar Ghadai, Superintending Engineer, Bhubaneswar (R&B) Division No. III, Bhubaneswar

Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal <https://tendersorissa.gov.in>  
N.B : Subsequent corrigendum / addendum if required shall be available in the website as indicated above.

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

OIPR-34185/11/0010/2526

19 years later, joyous birth in Haryana

Haryana couple celebrates daughter's birth after 19 years with feast for over 8,000 people from 21 surrounding villages



AGENCIES

**Jind, August 13:** In a heart-warming celebration of new life and changing traditions, a farming family from Haryana's Jind district has welcomed their first biological child — a daughter — after 19 years of marriage, and marked the occasion with a feast for over 8,000 people from 21 surrounding villages.

For nearly two decades, the couple had been unable to conceive and had accepted their fate, even adopting the husband's nephew as their own. But in July, without undergoing any medical

treatment, the wife gave birth to a healthy baby girl — an event that the family says was nothing short of a miracle.

They named her Bhoomi Devi, a nod to the nurturing power of the earth. In a move that challenged deep-rooted patriarchal customs, the family performed the traditional 'well worship' ceremony, which is often reserved for the birth of a boy.

"We wanted to send a message

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

**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, a 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 own daughter after 19 years has filled my life with a joy I can't describe."

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.

As music played, food was served, and elders blessed little Bhoomi Devi, the village square echoed with a sentiment not often heard in Haryana's countryside: a daughter's birth is worth a celebration.

**CUTTACK MUNICIPAL CORPORATION**  
Phone:0671- 2308424, 2308517, 2308927  
**CHOUDHURY BAZAR, CUTTACK- 753 009**

ପବିତ୍ର ସ୍ୱାସ୍ଥ୍ୟ ଶାସନ ବିବଦ-୨୦୨୫ ପାଇଁ ଅବସରରେ କଟକ ମହାନଗର ନିଗମ ଦ୍ୱାରା ନିଗମ ଅଞ୍ଚଳରେ ଥିବା ବିଭିନ୍ନ ସ୍କୁଲର ଛାତ୍ର/ଛାତ୍ରୀଙ୍କୁ ନେଇ ପ୍ରତିଯୋଗିତା ଆୟୋଜନ କରାଯିବ ।

No.C-874

କାର୍ଯ୍ୟସୂଚୀ

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OIPR-13031/11/0201/2526



of the day **QUOTE**

Whatever achievements came from Operation Sindoor were the result of the technology that has been adopted in the last 10 years

JITENDRA SINGH | UNION MINISTER

Today, every home is proudly flying the tricolour. Across the state, Tiranga Yatras are being organised, uniting people in love for the nation

NAYAB SINGH SAINI | HARYANA CM

The government should not interfere. The Election Commission has a constitutional and moral responsibility to ensure that every vote is genuine and no manipulation takes place

SACHIN PILOT | CONG GENERAL SECY

**SHORT TAKES**

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

**Hindu activist's murder: BJP seeks NIA probe**

**Bangalore:** The BJP Wednesday urged Karnataka Governor Thaaawarchand Gehlot to prevail upon the state government to hand over the probe into the murder of a Hindu activist in Koppal to the NIA, alleging a "deep-rooted conspiracy" by Jehadi extremist groups. In a detailed memorandum submitted to the Governor at Raj Bhavan, the BJP legislators said Gavisiddappa Nayak, a Scheduled Tribe Valmiki community leader, was brutally murdered August 3 in front of the Syed Nadeemullah Qadri Mosque at Koppal town.

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

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New 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 Bihar, all very much alive,

**BJP taunts Oppn**

The BJP Wednesday claimed irregularities in voter registration in Rae Bareilly, 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 campaign 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, Lalmoni 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 Congress said.



**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.

**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-

ing dog bites and rabies cases. The study led by professor Krithika Srinivasan warned that culling or mass removal could undo hard-won public health gains.

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

states, dog bite incidence was recorded at 4.7 per 1,000 population, lower than the 18.7 per



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

PTI PHOTO

**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-year-old woman's brother lodged a

complaint at Kotwali Dehat police station two days ago, alleging that his deaf-mute and mentally challenged sister was gang-raped.

Superintendent of Police Vikash 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.

**Cloudbursts, flash floods in HP**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Shimla, August 13:** Several 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 La-

haul 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 Bagpul 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.



**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

**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 causerlist. On December 11, 2023, the Supreme Court unanimously 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 academician, 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 government 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 security concerns being reported, it said. "Therefore, there is no impediment of security concerns, violence or any other disturbances 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 to the state, particularly given legislative Assembly results were declared October 8, 2024.

**Will look into it: CJI**

**New Delhi:** "I will look into it," Chief Justice of India B R Gavai assured 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 recommended 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 sustainable safety outcomes.



of the day

quote

The EC has 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 with irregularities

ABHISHEK BANERJEE

SENIOR TMC LEADER

Expressed my heartfelt gratitude for the passage of the Goa Scheduled Tribes Political Reservation Bill in Parliament

PRAMOD SAWANT

GOA CM

Our country is completing 78 years of Independence and has entered the Amrit Kaal. Every Indian should have a sense of respect and devotion towards the Constitution, national symbols, great revolutionaries, and eminent personalities

YOGI ADITYANATH

UTTAR PRADESH CM

POST OF THE DAY



Once, Instagram was a toolkit for BJP to spread propaganda against Rahul Gandhi. Now, on same platform, even his critics are supporting him for exposing EC on #VoteChori. This is how times change. @RahulGandhi truly deserves this

@Politix2029

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.



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

DEVENDRA FADNAVIS | 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



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



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**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 ch-horh (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 on this.

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 Bangalore Central Lok Sabha seat in Karnataka.

Army upgrades LoC security with AI-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 three-layered security system and intensified patrolling and vigil all along the border to ensure peaceful celebrations of the event.

Wang Yi to visit India; EAM heads to Russia

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 Narayan'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 Jayaprakash 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."

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 mech-

anisms between the two sides at a meeting in the Russian city of Kazan.

It is learnt that Wang will also 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.

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 Piyush Goyal, 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 Bhopender 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 supplementation during pregnancy can significantly reduce the risk of stillbirth, the team said.

Overall, higher rates of stillbirths 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 vulnerability, the researchers said.



of the day

quote

Lebanon desires cooperation with Iran within the framework of sovereignty and friendship that are based on mutual respect



JOSEPH AOUN | LEBANESE PRESIDENT

Our position and our appeal is, very clearly, that Iran still has the choice of deciding to return to diplomacy ... and full cooperation with the IAEA



JOSEF HINTERSEHER | GERMAN FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESPERSON

Japan upholds the rule of law and opposes any actions which increase tensions. Our concern goes to the repeated actions in the South China Sea



ENDO KAZUYA | JAPANESE AMBASSADOR TO MANILA

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 capsizes 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 Lampedusa, 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.



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



Europe hails positive call with Trump

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**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, Macron said.

“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,” Macron said.

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

The 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 disappointed 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 meet-see between the Russian and Ukrainian leaders could be arranged, or that it could also be a meeting with “Putin and Zelenskyy and me.”

Our relationship with both India, Pakistan ‘good’: US

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**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 differenc-

es 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.”

Wildfires rage across southern Europe

REUTERS

**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 Peloponnese 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.

Israel pounds Gaza; 123 dead in 24 hrs

REUTERS

**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 probably 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 neighbourhoods 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, including 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 malnutrition 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 official Taher al-Nono said in a statement.

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 Taiwan.

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 Vietnamese 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 transhipped, 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 preparing to shift its economic policies even before Trump's tariffs threatened its model of churning out low-cost exports for the world, aware of what economists call the “middle-income trap,” when economies tend to plateau without major reforms.

To move beyond that, South Korea bet on electronics, Taiwan on semiconductors, and Singapore on finance, said Richard McClellan, founder of the consultancy RMAC Advisory. But Vietnam's economy today is more diverse and complex than those countries were at the time and it can't rely 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.







# India's 2030 CWG dream takes flight

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

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**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 Bhubaneswar 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 citing the cost factor.



**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 Bhubaneswar and even in Delhi also. We will very soon announce where the Games will be held**

PT USHA | PRESIDENT, INDIAN OLYMPIC ASSOCIATION

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, Iyer 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 infrastructure.

"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 Coun-

cil 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 20 lakh 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 month.

"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.

### ■ Murder case

## SC cancels bail of Olympian wrestler Sushil Kumar



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**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 granting bail to Sushil Kumar.

Sushil Kumar, along with others, is accused of allegedly assaulting former junior national wrestling champion Dhankar, a resident of Haryana'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 Dhankar.

### ■ 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 just 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 medalist 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 Grigoriy 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

REUTERS

**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 Istvan 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 national 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, Portland, 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), August 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 trophy-less 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 warned.

**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, Haaland 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 rated Slovenian striker Benjamin Sesko. He's also had a full off-season to work with his squad -- something he was denied when hired midway through last season.