

Reliving past
 Actor Priyanka Chopra takes to social media to share her nostalgic moments when she was crowned Miss World

LEISURE | P2

Pager detonation
 Dozens of people hurt in Beirut's suburbs and other parts of Lebanon after their handheld pagers explode Tuesday

INTERNATIONAL | P10

Trade deficit widens
 India's exports register steep decline in 13-month falling 9.3 per cent in August to \$34.71 billion

BUSINESS | P11

No new strategy
 India will not need any new strategy when they take on Bangladesh in a 2-Test series, says skipper Rohit Sharma

SPORTS | P12

2 dead, 5 critical in factory mishap

Jharsuguda: Two contractual workers were crushed to death, and five more sustained critical injuries, after a metal filter plate fell on them at the Orissa Metaliks Private Limited (OMPL) factory at Budhipadar in the district, Tuesday. The deceased were identified as Purnachandra Jena, 40, and Alekh Deo Sahu, 35. The mishap occurred at around 11 am when the metal filter plate in the blast furnace unit came off and fell on the workers, trapping them underneath. The injured labourers were rescued and rushed to a private hospital where doctors pronounced Jena and Deo dead. The five injured labourers have been admitted to the intensive care unit of the hospital.

India defeat China

Hulunbuir (China): A determined India claimed their fifth Hero Asian Champions Trophy title with a fighting 1-0 victory over hosts China here Tuesday, completing a display of absolute dominance in the tournament in which they won all their matches. Defender Jugraj Singh scored a rare field goal as the defending champions toiled hard before getting the better of their opponents. Earlier in the day, Pakistan defeated Korea 5-2 to bag the third spot in the six-team competition. P12

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



We were made to build, not bulldoze rights! May be the SC will restore our reputation

MARKET WATCH

| INDEX | VALUE | VAR. |
|--------|----------|---------|
| SENSEX | 83079.66 | ↑ 90.88 |
| NIFTY | 25418.55 | ↑ 34.80 |
| DOLLAR | 84.00 | ↓ ₹0.21 |
| EURO | 93.28 | ↑ ₹0.04 |
| GOLD | ₹73,036 | ↓ ₹460 |
| SILVER | ₹89,249 | ↓ ₹360 |

WEATHER

| | BBSR | CTC |
|----------|--------|--------|
| Max Temp | 33.2°C | 31.6°C |
| Min Temp | 25.7°C | 24.0°C |
| Humidity | 83% | 86% |
| Rainfall | 19mm | 34mm |

FORECAST
 Generally cloudy sky with one or two spells of rain

PM launches Subhadra

Modi also unveils railway, national highway projects worth over ₹3,800 crore

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Sept 17: Prime Minister Narendra Modi Tuesday launched Odisha government's flagship women empowerment programme, 'Subhadra Yojana', besides unveiling railway and national highway projects worth over ₹3,800 crore, marking 100 days of the NDA government 3.0. Besides, he released the first instalment of assistance to nearly 10 lakh beneficiaries under PMAY-G across 14 states, took part in 'Griha Pravesh' celebrations for 26 lakh beneficiaries under the housing scheme, and launched Awaas+ 2024 App for a survey of additional households for the same programme. PM Modi's visit to the state on his 74th birthday would be the first after he attended the swearing-in ceremony of Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi June 12. "I am happy that the Odisha government started its major work by announcing Subhadra Yojana for women. Women's empowerment will be the key to Odisha's development," he said while addressing a massive gathering at the Janata Maidan here. The PM noted that Odisha has everything that is required for



a developed state. "It has a talent pool of youth, the strength of women, natural resources, opportunities for industries, immense possibilities of tourism," Modi said. While participating in the Griha Pravesh celebrations, Modi visited Sabar Sahi slum in Bhubaneswar where he interacted with the beneficiaries. The PM inaugurated the homes of 20 beneficiaries under the PMAY there. Accompanied by the chief minister, Modi visited the home of Antaryami Nayak, a beneficiary of the housing scheme, and savoured the traditional Odia sweet dish, 'kheeri', prepared at his residence. Sharing his experience after he was offered 'kheeri' by a tribal family on the occasion of his birthday in Bhubaneswar, Modi said, "When my mother was alive, I used to visit here and seek her blessing on my birthday. She used to give me jaggery. Today, I got the blessings of a tribal mother who offered me 'kheeri'. The happiness of tribals gives me strength to work for them." The Odisha government's Subhadra Yojana, billed as the largest programme for women, will cover more than 1 crore beneficiaries. Under the scheme, ₹10,000 will be provided to each beneficiary every year in two equal instalments for a period of five years. After the launch, the prime minister initiated the fund transfer into the bank accounts of more than 10 lakh women. He said that the promises made by the BJP during the elections were being fulfilled at a rapid pace. Listing the promises fulfilled so far, he said all the four gates of the Jagannath temple in Puri were thrown open to the public and the 12th-century shrine's Ratna Bhandar (treasury) was also reopened in July after 46 years for making an inventory of valuables and repairing of its structure.

Apex court halts 'bulldozer justice'
 AGENCIES
 New Delhi, Sept 17: Even if there is one instance of illegal demolition, it is against the ethos of our Constitution, the Supreme Court said Tuesday while directing that authorities across the country will not demolish properties, including of those accused of crime, till October 1 without seeking its permission. A bench of Justices BR Gavai and KV Viswanathan clarified that its order will not be applicable to unauthorised structures on public roads, footpaths etc. "Even if there is one instance of an illegal demolition, it is against the ethos of our Constitution," the bench observed. It said till October 1, the next date of hearing, no demolition be carried out "without seeking leave of this court". The top court was hearing petitions alleging properties of those accused of crime were being demolished in several states illegally. Solicitor General Tushar Mehta told the bench that a "narrative" was being built over the demolition of properties. He said there was a petition before the apex court which alleged that because the person belonged to a particular religion, his property was demolished. "Let them bring to your lordships' notice one instance of demolition where the law is not complied (with)," the law officer said. P9

BHARATPUR DGP orders CB probe

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Sept 17: Two days after Orissa POST and Dharitri launched a campaign for justice to a serving Indian Army officer and his female friend who were allegedly assaulted and misbehaved by Bharatpur police who they approached to report a road rage instance in the wee hours of Sunday, a Crime Branch (CB) team Tuesday grilled officials at the police station following a direction from Director General of Police (DGP) YB Khurana for a detailed probe into the alleged incident of police highhandedness. According to reports, ADGP CB-CID, Arun Bothra deputed a five-member team, led by DSP Narendra Behera, to look into the allegations. The investigating agency has also directed the police station to withdraw the complaint lodged against Ankita Pradhan—the friend of Major Gurbansh Singh, attached to 22 Sikh Regiment in Kolkata. The team, which visited the police station in early hours of Tuesday, held a marathon questioning of the police officials for over four hours, during which those concerned with the investigation were asked to produce records related to the case. "We have asked Bharatpur IIC Dinakrushna Mishra to furnish a detailed explanation in this regard. Another team will visit Jharpada Special Jail to record Ankita's statement before submitting a detailed report," said a member of the team. Meanwhile, slamming the police excess, the Central Command of Indian Army Monday took to X to say, "An incident of manhandling of an Army officer by police sta-



IIC among 3 shunted

Late Tuesday night, IIC Dinakrushna Mishra, ASI Sallimayee Sahoo and constable Balam Hansda of Bharatpur police station were transferred by twin city police commissioner Sanjeeb Panda to facilitate fair investigation of the case. While Mishra and Sahoo were transferred to the DCP office, Hansda has been asked to report at RO, Bhubaneswar. Deepak Kumar Khandayatray has replaced Mishra.

tion, Bharatpur, Orissa has been reported in the media. Indian Army takes a serious view of the incidence. Necessary action has been taken up with the state authorities." Addressing a press conference Monday, Ankita's father Brigadier Antaryami Pradhan had demanded the suspension of the IIC. It is learnt that the police station, built at a cost of Rs 4.5 crore and inaugurated March 11, 2024, is not equipped with CCTV cameras. Meanwhile, the Orissa HC, hearing petitions filed by Ankita, ordered the police to provide treatment to her at AIIMS, Bhubaneswar. The HC also posted her bail application hearing Wednesday and directed the investigating officer and IIC to appear before it Wednesday.

Atishi stakes claim to form new Delhi govt

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 17: Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal tendered his resignation to Lieutenant Governor V K Saxena here Tuesday and AAP leader Atishi, chosen by the party as his successor, staked his claim to form a new government. Kejriwal reached the LG Secretariat along with his Cabinet colleagues to resign Tuesday afternoon, days after announcing his decision to quit from the post. Addressing reporters after the meeting, Atishi said, "We have staked claim to form a new government. I will protect the in-

terests of Delhi people." Delhi minister Gopal Rai said, "We have informed the LG about his decision. Atishi has presented her claim to form the government. We have requested the LG to decide on a date for the oath-taking ceremony so that the work of two crore people can be carried on." The chief minister-designate alleged that Kejriwal was facing false charges and being targeted by the Central government's probe agencies. "The Supreme Court not only granted bail him but also made harsh remarks against the Centre and its probe agencies calling them a caged parrot," she added. P9

WB: Major changes in Health, Police ranks

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, Sept 17: Senior IPS officer Manoj Kumar Verma was appointed the new Kolkata Police commissioner, replacing Vineet Goyal, Tuesday, a day after Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee held a meeting with agitating junior doctors and agreed to their demands in a bid to resolve the more than a month-long impasse over the RG Kar hospital incident. Director of Health Services (DHS) Debashis Halder, Director of Medical Education (DME) Kaustav Nayak and Deputy Commissioner of Kolkata Police's North Division Abhishek Gupta were also removed as promised by Banerjee during the meeting. Swapan Soren was appointed the interim DHS while no appointment was announced for the position of the DME. Banerjee, following marathon discussions with the doctors Monday night, announced the decision to remove Goyal. P8

DHARITRI YOUTH CONCLAVE 2024
 CLIMATE CHANGE: BUILDING RESILIENCE

DHARITRI CLIMATE GRANT

Inviting young people and youth organisations of Odisha deeply engaged in climate action with local communities.

Kindly send us entries of your work with simple bio description (250-300 words) and 4 high resolution photos/ a video of your climate action activities to get a chance to win the Dharitri Climate Grant.

You can also nominate someone else by following the same process.

Selected entries will be awarded the **Dharitri Climate Grant** as encouragement and impetus for their climate action work at **Dharitri Youth Conclave 2024** to be held in November at Bhubaneswar.

Chosen entries will also get invited to attend the Conclave with young climate warriors and experts in the field.

Please send details to :
dhariyouthconclave@gmail.com
 Visit : www.dharitriyouthconclave.com
 for details

SAVE THE PLANET
CLIMATE ACTION NOW

leisure



MILEY SUED OVER SIMILARITIES OF HER SONG WITH BRUNO MARS'

Singer-songwriter Miley Cyrus is facing a lawsuit over the alleged similarities between her track Flowers and Bruno Mars' hit track When I Was Your Man. The lawsuit has been filed in a Los Angeles court.

MARVEL STAR LARSON TO MAKE WEST END DEBUT

American actress Brie Larson is set to make her West End debut in Greek tragedy *Elektra*. The Oscar-winning star will perform in poet Anne Carson's adaptation of the *Sophokles* helmed by Tony Award-winner Daniel Fish.



FORTUNE FORECAST

GaneshSpeaks.com
accuracy • reliability • trust
FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181*

ARIES
Today, you will meet with success, and you do it on your own merit, without any divine intervention. You may be a student of science or arts, but you will excel due to your deep knowledge of the subject. There are chances you may decide to study further, says Ganesha.

TAURUS
At work or in business, you are likely to feel uneasy about the people around you, says Ganesha. You will be unable to trust them and will be suspicious of their moves and intentions. Eventually you'll prefer to handle all major and sensitive things in your own hands.

GEMINI
Religious, cultural and intellectual pursuits will keep you busy throughout the day. You will need to compulsorily attend some social function. You will encounter expenses in charitable or philanthropic work. It is a good time for conducting business deals, says Ganesha.

CANCER
You must get ready yourself to handle a few usual situations in an unusual way, foretells Ganesha. You will probably learn a few lessons in public psychology during the afternoon. Before arriving at any crucial decision, weigh the pros and cons with an unbiased mind, says Ganesha.

LEO
You will spend an enjoyable day with your family members today. Even at the work-place you will be thinking of ways to be with your family. You will take time out for some self-improvement projects. It is necessary to bring about some changes in life, says Ganesha.

VIRGO
Take stock of the situation you are in. Assess first and only then make a move, cautions Ganesha. In the afternoon, get footsoles and relieve yourself of the cramped and overworked environment of your desk. Bid your time on bids and sealed tenders using all of your experience and business sense, says Ganesha.

LIBRA
The mind is a pool of infinite thoughts; this is more true for you today than any other day. Ganesha says you will explore the depths of your thoughts. At work, you may share some precious moments with peers of the opposite sex. Intense thoughts and frivolous moments aside, today you may also cultivate a new interest in jewellery and artists.

SCORPIO
The flamboyance with which you do your work leaves people awestruck. At work, your dedication will win rich favour from your bosses. After dusk, let your hair down and have a great time, says Ganesha. Unwind with music or meditation in the night, suggests Ganesha.

SAGITTARIUS
Goldfinger might just be your nickname today. Whatever you take up to do will yield results much more than expected. You would not shy away from showering praise on others for their contribution. Beloved ones will be the cynosure of your attention.

CAPRICORN
Uncertainties - the only certainty of life, will not bog you down. You are ready to take risks and try your luck out. Start a business or project today, and there are fair chances of you succeeding at that, predicts Ganesha. Appreciation and acknowledgement of your sincerity will brighten up your day. Moreover, you possess a rare art of time management, and it will surely boost your image.

AQUARIUS
Today, you will seek direct and frank communication like never before, and it does seem to solve some of your problems. You will remain edgy, and at work, minute things will bother you no end. Later in the day, Ganesha will grant results.

PISCES
Your social standing ought to receive a boost today, and the financial success coming your way today plays no small part in it, says Ganesha. You may find yourself enjoying your own company in the afternoon, but come evening, you are likely to find yourself indulging in some intellectual discussion in the company of like-minded people.

Kangana breaks silence on selling Mumbai property

Mumbai: Days after the release of her much-anticipated film *Emergency* was postponed, actor and filmmaker Kangana Ranaut made headlines by selling her Rs 32 crores office in Mumbai. The property, located in the upscale Pali Hill area of Bandra, had served as the headquarters of her production house, Manikarnika Films, since 2019. In an interview with news portal, Kangana candidly explained the reasons behind this difficult decision.

In her interview, Kangana revealed the financial pressure caused by the delayed release of *Emergency*. "Naturally, my film was supposed to release. I put all my personal property on it. Now that it's not released, so anyway, that's what properties are for - for times of crisis," Kangana shared, reflecting on the financial reality she faced.

Having purchased the property for Rs 20 crore in 2017, the sale marked a significant moment for the actor, who had transformed the bungalow into a creative hub for her film ventures.

For the unversed, originally slated to release September 6,

Emergency has been postponed due to certification delays from the Central Board of Film Certification.

Rasha goes global

Mumbai: Rasha Thadani is rapidly emerging as one of the most exciting talents to watch. With her undeniable charm and magnetic presence, she has already caught the attention of fans everywhere.

Now, her fame is extending beyond borders. Rasha, daughter of Raveena Tandon and Anil Thadani, recently achieved a significant milestone by being invited to an exclusive international event, earning her global recognition. It's a proud moment for her and her family to see her making a mark on the world stage.

The event, attended by high-profile personalities such as Zara Larsson, Harriet Herbig-Matten, Enzo, and Liza Soberano, was a grand affair. Yet, it was Rasha's effortless elegance and style that truly captivated the audience. Her photos from the event have since gone viral, with her bold and striking look creating a buzz on social media. Dressed in a standout ensemble, she exuded confidence, further establishing her reputation as a fashion icon in the making.

As Rasha continues to turn heads internationally, she is

set to leave her mark on Indian cinema with her much-anticipated debut in Abhishek Kapoor's untitled film, alongside Aman Devgan, nephew of Ajay Devgn. The film has made head turns because of it being a launch for both the main leads.

Priyanka delves into nostalgia

Mumbai: Actress Priyanka Chopra took to her social media and shared her nostalgic moments on her husband singer Nick Jonas' birthday as he performed in London, United Kingdom.

They were related to winning the iconic Miss World Title in the year 2000.

"I was crowned Miss World at this arena 24 years ago. I'll never forget my little 18 year old, excited, nervous and competitive self, trying to look and be the best I could be," shared the actress.

Priyanka later wrote, "A memory I will never forget from November 30th 2000 is the feeling of balancing on pencil heels with a gorgeous Hemant Trivedi dress that was falling off the entire evening because my body tape would not stay on, as I was sweating so much from nerves."

The actress concluded, "To be back here watching my husband and his brothers perform with my daughter, family and friends is such a full circle. Life has been good. Gratitude." IANS

Wamiqa's intriguing post

Mumbai: Actress Wamiqa Gabbi, best known for her roles in *Khufiya* has shared an interesting picture that has left her fans in doubt.

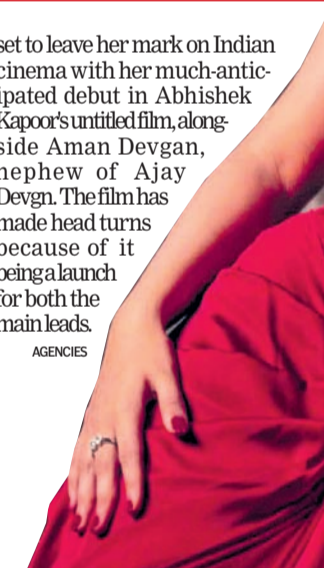
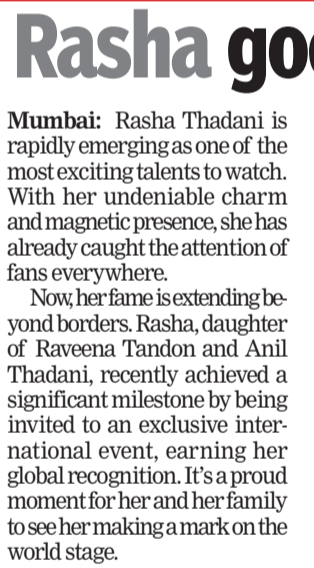
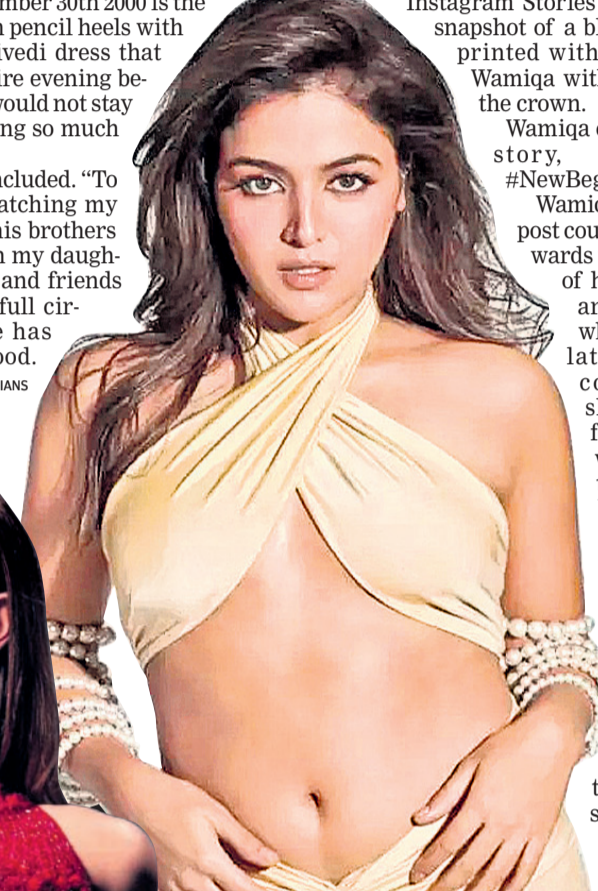
Wamiqa, who has 3.5 million followers on Instagram, took to her Instagram Stories and shared a snapshot of a black notebook printed with the name of Wamiqa with a symbol of the crown.

Wamiqa captioned the story, "#Day1 #NewBeginnings"

Wamiqa's intriguing post could be a hint towards the beginning of her next exhilarating project which can be related to an upcoming OTT show, another feature film, or what-not something out of the box as well.

Wamiqa went on a huge spree with her lead roles streak as she played the lead role in the Malayalam thriller film *9* starring. She also played the iconic character of Niloufer in the Amazon original series, *Jubilee*, which was also released in April 2023.

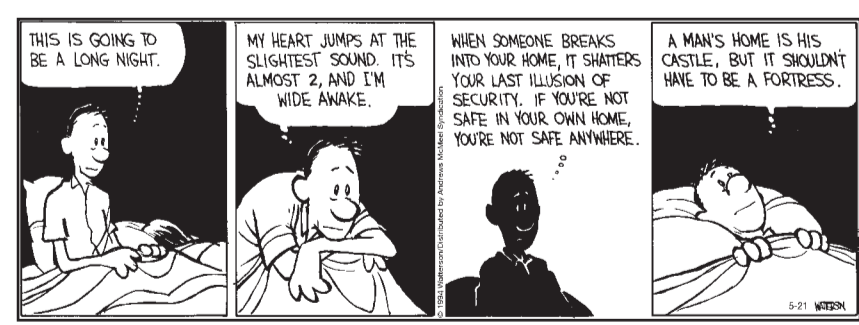
On the work front, Wamiqa will be next seen in the Varun Dhawan-starrer *John* helmed by Kalees and an untitled project which will be helmed by director duo Raj Nidimoru and Krishna D.K.



PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

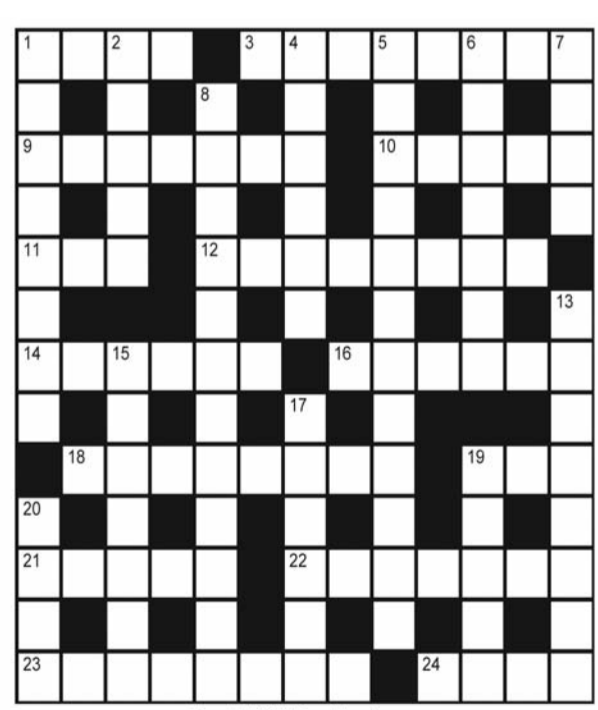


BREVITY



FUN post

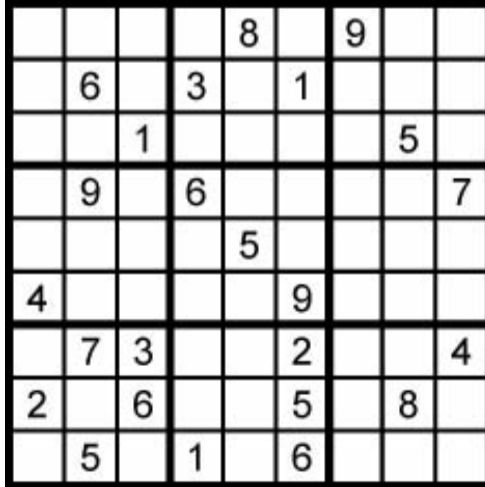
CROSSWORD



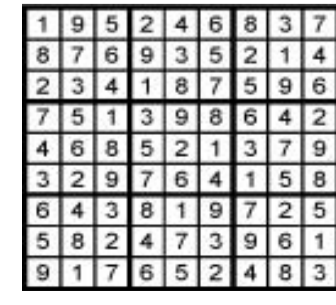
- Across**
- 1 Initial stake
 - 3 Irregular
 - 9 Calendar month
 - 10 Tedium
 - 11 Raises
 - 12 Spy novelist's forte
 - 14 Hospital staffers
 - 16 Park or yard structure
 - 18 Get the most out of something
 - 19 Pack animal
 - 21 "The Republic" writer
 - 22 Polygonal shape
 - 23 Amulet
 - 24 Scottish hillside
 - 4 Assignations
 - 5 Quandaries
 - 6 Befuddle
 - 7 Animal house?
 - 8 Cinematic heartthrobs (7,5)
 - 13 Intellectual centre of France
 - 15 Renaissance man
 - 17 Silver wattle
 - 19 Humidior item
 - 20 Squabble
- Down**
- 1 Quits working devices
 - 2 Ice holding

SUDOKU

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



SOLUTIONS



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown

GRIEVANCE HEARING

Cuttack Collector Dattatraya Bhausaheb Shinde hears public grievances at the Collector's conference hall in the Silver City, Tuesday



PM flags off ₹2,871cr railway projects



Prime Minister Narendra Modi launches railway projects in Bhubaneswar, Tuesday. Dignitaries including Governor Raghubar Das, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, Union Ministers Dharmendra Pradhan and Jual Oram, Deputy Chief Minister KV Singh Deo and Bhubaneswar MP Aparajita Sarangi are seen

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Sept 17: Prime Minister Narendra Modi dedicated to the nation and laid foundation stones of key railway projects valued at ₹2,871 crore in Odisha, Tuesday.

These projects are set to enhance rail connectivity, decongest key routes, and contribute to the socio-economic development of the region, the PM said.

Among the projects inaugurated was the 25km Lanjigarh Road-Ambadola-Doikallu railway section, part of the Vizianagaram-Titilagarh third line project costing ₹432 crore. This section will improve connectivity between western Odisha and Andhra Pradesh and



The PM blessing a child during the 'Griha Pravesh' of a PMAY (Urban) beneficiary in Bhubaneswar facilitate smoother freight movement, officials said. Another project is the 23km Laxmipur Road-Singaram-Tikiri

railway section, part of the Koraput-Singapur road doubling project which was completed at ₹260 crore. This section aims to increase train movement capacity in southern Odisha and ease freight movement from resource-rich areas to major markets.

Modi also dedicated the 41km Dhenkanal-Sadashibapur-Hindol Road railway section of the Budhapank-Salegaon third and fourth line project worth ₹540 crore. This project will augment capacity on a crucial industrial route, ensuring more efficient transportation of goods.

Additionally, the 12.5km Bangurkela-Nowgaon railway section of the Bondamunda-Ranchi doubling project, com-

pleted at ₹239 crore, will reduce congestion and improve connectivity between Odisha and Jharkhand, they added.

In addition, Modi also laid foundation stones of four railway projects.

These include a 7km flyover between Siju and Paradeep coaching yard costing ₹200 crore which will eliminate surface crossings and ensure smoother train movements at Paradeep Port.

The expansion of the Paradeep-Badabandha third and fourth line, spanning 19km and costing ₹300 crore, will boost capacity for both freight and passenger traffic, enhancing connectivity to Paradeep Port, officials said.

The doubling of the MCRL Inner Corridor Phase-1, which will cover 10.93km and cost ₹152 crore, is intended to facilitate smooth coal evacuation.

The highly anticipated 41.9km Jeypore-Nabarangpur New Line, costing ₹748 crore, will connect the tribal-dominated areas of Jeypore and Nabarangpur, fostering economic growth and improving access to markets and resources.

"This aspirational project will link the tribal-dominated areas of Jeypore and Nabarangpur, providing improved access to markets and services for the region's people. The new line is expected to play a transformative role in the economic upliftment of the area, promoting employment, trade, and mobility," the East Coast Railways (ECoR) said in a statement.

Power-hungry people having problem with Ganesh fest: Modi

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Sept 17: Prime Minister Narendra Modi Tuesday said the Congress and its "ecosystem" was angry with him for taking part in Ganesh Puja, claiming that "power-hungry" people were also having problems with this festival.

PM Modi made the comment in an apparent reference to the criticism by the opposition parties for participating in Ganesh Puja rituals at the residence of Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud, while addressing a rally after launching the Odisha government's flagship programme Subhadra Yojana here.

"Ganesh Utsav is not just a festival of faith for our country. It played a very important role in the freedom movement. Even at that time, the British who followed the policy of divide and rule used to hate Ganesh Utsav. Even today, the power-hungry people, who are busy dividing society are having problems with Ganesh Puja. You must have seen that the people of Congress and its ecosystem are angry because I participated in Ganesh Puja," Modi said at the rally.

He also said that Lord Ganesh was "put behind bars" in Congress-ruled Karnataka by these people.

Modi was apparently referring to a viral photo of Ganesh idol in a police van in the southern state.

"The whole country is disturbed because of the picture," he said adding, "We cannot let

CONG HITS BACK

New Delhi: The Congress Tuesday accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi of misusing religion for politics, saying as Maharashtra elections were around the corner, he decided to go with an elaborate camera crew for Ganesh Puja to Chief Justice DY Chandrachud's house in 'contravention of all principles of judicial separation'. The Opposition party also said such proximity between the chiefs of the executive and the judiciary raises doubts about the PM's intentions. The grand old party's attack came after Modi said the Congress and its 'ecosystem' was angry with him for taking part in Ganesh Puja, claiming that 'power-hungry' people who were dividing society were also having problems with this festival. Reacting to the PM's remarks, Congress general secretary, in-charge organisation, KC Venugopal, said, "The difference between true bhakti and misuse of religion for politics is not hidden from anyone."

these hateful elements move forward."

When the Britishers tried to divide the country based on caste and religion, Lokmanya Tilak had organised Ganesh Utsav and awakened the soul of the country, he said.

"Ganesh Utsav teaches us how to remain united and rise above caste and religion...even today, all sections of people in our society participate in Ganesh Utsav without any discrimination. The entire society stands united during the festival," he said.

POOR SPEND LOWERED SMART CITY RANKINGS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 17: The Bhubaneswar Smart City Limited (BSCL) and Rourkela Smart City Limited (RSCL) failed to achieve their targets as the special purpose vehicles (SPVs) spent only 36 per cent and 37 per cent of the allocated funds for the projects, respectively, approved as per their Smart City Plans (SCPs) till March 2022, resulting in the cities' poor performance in the smart city rankings, according to the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG).

In its recently-released report, the auditor said BSCL took up projects worth ₹1,621.94 crore against the target of ₹4,537 crore with a 41 per cent reduction in the number of Area Based Development (ABD) projects. "There were plans for 56 ABD projects worth ₹4,096 crore in case of BSCL. However, it undertook only 33 projects worth ₹939.85 crore," the report said.

The RSCL, which was supposed to take up ₹2,571 crore projects, executed initiatives worth ₹950.46 crore. Although the number of planned ABD projects increased from 30 to 59 in case of RSCL, the corresponding investment was reduced 50 per cent - from ₹1,702.24

CAG REPORT

The CAG attributed the poor performance to non-delegation of required ULB powers to the SPVs with respect to Smart Cities Mission projects and failure to mobilise the required funds as was envisaged in the SCP

Non-adherence to the guidelines of MoHUA while entering into contracts for execution of the projects and disbursement of funds to the executing agencies and lack of monitoring mechanism as well as internal control were also blamed for the poor show

crore to ₹844.49 crore. In case of Pan City projects, the investment was reduced to ₹106.42 crore from the planned ₹869.03 crore although the number of projects remained constant at one, it said.

"In March 2023, the state government attributed the reduction in ABD projects to reasons like non-availability of fund and encroachment-free land. The reply was not acceptable as SPVs like BSCL and RSCL were responsible for mobilising funds and coordinating with other departments for related issues," the CAG said.

The auditor said the performance of the SPVs deprived the cities' dwellers of the envisaged benefits. "As a consequence, both the cities lost their rankings as smart city drastically as stated supra," it said.

The audit observed that ranking of smart cities are done through Geospatial Management Information System (GMIS), a management information system, developed by Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), on the basis of basic parameters like physical progress of work and various outcomes and impacts being generated by them. Due to less physical and financial progress in SCM projects, the smart city rankings of both the cities had reduced, from 1 to 48 and 45 to 65, respectively, for BSCL and RSCL, as of March 2022.

The CAG attributed the poor performance to non-delegation of required ULB powers to the SPVs with respect to Smart Cities Mission (SCM) projects and failure to mobilise the required funds as was envisaged in the SCP. Non-adherence to the guidelines of MoHUA while entering into contracts for execution of the projects and disbursement of funds to the executing agencies and lack of monitoring mechanism as well as internal control were also blamed for the poor show.



UPPING THE ANTE: Student and youth Congress members staging a protest outside the Assembly opposing Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to the state, Tuesday



PUJA AHEAD: Artisans busy shaping a clay idol of Goddess Durga at Kumbhar Sahi in Cuttack, Tuesday

Dhenkanal RI among 2 arrested for bribery

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 17: Vigilance sleuths Tuesday arrested Dhenkanal Sadar Circle revenue inspector (RI) and another person on charges of demanding and accepting Rs 30,000 bribe for submission of favourable report in a mutation case.

RI Barun Kumar Jena and middleman Baram Sahu have been taken into custody for demand and acceptance of Rs 30,000 from a complainant for submission of favourable enquiry report in a mutation case for conversion of agricultural land to homestead land and issuance of land patta in his favour, a Vigilance press statement said. About the crackdown, the anti-corruption wing said following

a complaint, a trap was laid, and Jena and Sahu were caught by the Vigilance team at the RI office while receiving the money from the complainant.

The entire bribe money was recovered from their possession and seized in presence of witnesses, they added.

Following the trap, simultaneous searches were launched on the residential house of Jena located at Hata Road in Dhenkanal and residential house of Sahu at Bhagabanpur in the district.

"In this connection, Cuttack Vigilance PS has registered a case (26/24) under Section 7 and 12 of Prevention of Corruption (Amendment) Act, 2018. The probe is in progress," they added.

CM MEETS AILING BISWABHUSAN



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 17: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Tuesday met former Governor of Andhra Pradesh and Chhattisgarh Biswabhusan Harichandan, who is undergoing treatment at a private hospital here due to illness.

During the meeting, the CM wished for the speedy recovery of Harichandan. Majhi also spoke to the doctors about his health condition and advised them to focus on his speedy recovery, the statement said. Harichandan's son and state's Law Minister Prithiviraj was also present during this meeting.

RSP-Balmer Lawrie pact to augment steel transport

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Sept 17: Rourkela Steel Plant (RSP) has signed an agreement with M/s Balmer Lawrie to augment steel dispatch.

The pact was signed for the provision of three dedicated BFNS 22.9 LSFTO rakes, on a lease and operate basis, for steel transport over distances exceeding 1,000 km.

With this new agreement, RSP's fleet will now include nine BFNS 22.9 LSFTO rakes, which will contribute approximately 30 per cent to the total wagon supply for steel dispatch.

The pact was signed by the representatives from RSP and M/s Balmer Lawrie in the presence of B Palai, CGM in-charge (Iron), RSP, and senior officers of both organisa-

tions last week. It is noteworthy that the dedicated LSFTO rakes will play a pivotal role in transporting RSP's high-quality steel from plant to customers, ensuring a streamlined and efficient supply chain connecting all rail terminals across Indian Railways, including SAIL terminals.

In the customised wagons, load adjustment can be planned better to reduce dead freight.

The number of dispatchable steel rakes will increase leading to additional sales turnover of the company.

The inbuilt lashing mechanism will reduce the loading, metal saddle and lashing cost substantially, while the use of wooden dunnage will be completely eliminated thereby reducing the carbon footprints, RSP sources said.

STA holds cleanliness campaign across state

15-DAY CAMPAIGN, UNDER THE THEME 'SWABHAV SWACHHATA-SANSKAR SWACHHATA', TO CONTINUE TILL OCTOBER 1



ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar/Cuttack, Sept 17: With the objective of completing the Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) targets through 'Swachhata Hi Seva' campaign, the State Transport Authority (STA) conducted cleanliness drives in various regional transport offices (RTOs) across the state Tuesday.

The 15-day campaign, under the theme 'Swabhav Swachhata-Sanskara Swachhata', will continue till October 1.

A cleanliness drive was organised on the premises of Bhubaneswar RTO-1 where officers and staff cleaned the office as well as surrounding areas.

Transport Commissioner Amitabh Thakur, Additional Transport Commissioner Lal Mohan Sethi, Joint Transport Commissioners Pradeep Kumar Mohanty and Bikash Chowdhury were present on the occasion.

Similarly, a massive cleanliness drive was conducted at Cuttack RTO driving testing track under the supervision of Additional Transport Commissioner Indramani Nayak, STA Secretary Chinmayee Biswal, and Deputy Transport Commissioner Biranchi Narayan Adhikari.

The Rourkela RTO also organised a cleanliness drive, where regional transport officer Bibhabanjan Samantasingharay, MVI Manas Ranjan Prusty were

present. Local volunteers from non-profit organisation, Clean and Green, assisted in cleaning the office premises and its surrounding areas.

Notably, SBM was launched October 2, 2014, embracing a 'Whole of Society' approach, making sanitation 'everyone's business.' This year marks the 10th anniversary of the initiative.

According to officials, apart from cleanliness drives, the campaign includes Swachhata pledges, plantation drives, and awareness campaigns to inform sanitation workers about government schemes.

Last Thursday, Housing & Urban Development (H&UD) Principal Secretary Usha Padhee held a review meeting on the preparedness of 'Swachhata Hi Seva' campaign with district Collectors and senior officials from various departments.

During the meeting, Padhee highlighted the critical role of the campaign in achieving SBM targets, particularly focusing on waste management, public participation, and sustainable sanitation practices. She urged district officials to engage citizens, community organisations, and local stakeholders to make the campaign a people-driven movement.



RAIN PAIN: Commuters negotiate a waterlogged road in Jaydev Vihar area of Bhubaneswar following a downpour, Tuesday

OP PHOTO

Majhi urged to order inquiry into student's death

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Sept 17: Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren recently urged CM Mohan Charan Majhi to order a high-level inquiry into the death of an engineering student from Ranchi at a private college in the City.

The student was admitted to the college September 10 and allegedly died after falling from the rooftop of the hostel building

September 13, according to police.

A case of unnatural death was registered at the Khandagiri police station after the incident, police said. "Police take all such cases seriously and an investigation is being done as per the law," Bhubaneswar's DCP Prateek Singh told PTL.

The report of the post-mortem examination was awaited, said Avimanyu Das, the inspector in charge of the Khandagiri PS. "It is not a case of ragging as



all in the hostel were first-year students. The deceased student's roommates were also from

Jharkhand. We are also investigating the allegations of the deceased student's parents," he said.

An official of the ITER College said that as soon as the student was found lying on the floor, the medical team on the campus shifted him to the hospital.

"At the same time, the matter was informed to the police. The post-mortem examination was carried out at AIIMS-Bhubaneswar. It seems to be a case of suicide," he said.

Seminar on Odia periodicals at CUO



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 17: A two-day national seminar titled 'The Role of Magazines and Periodicals of Odisha for Social Prosperity' commenced at the Central University of Odisha (CUO) in Koraput, Tuesday.

Organised by the department of Odia Language and Literature in collaboration with Visva Bharati Praktani, the event was inaugurated by CUO vice-chancellor Chakradhar Tripathi. Visva Bharati Praktani president Mihir Kumar Sahu joined the occasion as the chief guest, and Fakir Mohan Sahitya Parishad president Laxmikant Tripathy delivered the keynote address.

The event was also graced by CUO registrar NC Panda, and academic and administration advisor VC Jha, who attended as guests of honour. Associate professor and department of Odia Language and Literature HoD Rudrani Mohanty, coordinated the seminar and delivered the welcome address.

In his address, Tripathi un-

derscored the importance of the visionary work of Rabindranath Tagore, advocating for the translation of Tagore's ideas into Odia literature. He highlighted the contributions of social reformers such as Utkalmani Gopabandhu Das and recommended translating these works into English, Hindi, and other languages to broaden their reach.

Sahu, speaking at the event, emphasised the role of periodicals in promoting regional literature and noted that alumni of institutions like CUO could play a pivotal role in societal development. Laxmikant Tripathy provided a historical overview of the state's periodicals, tracing their evolution from Kujibara Partika to contemporary publications and their impact on social reform.

Jha discussed the influence of Buddhist literature on social change and drew parallels with the role of periodicals during India's freedom struggle. He suggested that the seminar's outcomes should be documented to inform future policy decisions.

Team Odisha returns from France

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 17: Fifteen participants, who represented the state at WorldSkills 2024 in Lyon, France were greeted by Skill Development department and World Skill Center (WSC) officials on their arrival here Tuesday.

Odisha Skill Development Authority (OSDA) director of Employment and CEO Rashmita Panda, along with Skill Development and Technical Education (SDTE) additional secretary Pinaki Patnaik, deputy principal of WSC Jeetmitra Satapathy, and other officials were present at the Biju Patnaik International Airport to receive the participants.

"Their hard work, passion and commitment to excellence have put Odisha on the global map, showcasing the bolstering skill canvas of the state. Whether it's technology, craftsmanship or creativity, our champions have proven that Odisha's potential is limitless. We celebrate their achievements and look forward to more laurels in the future. Let's give a big round of applause to these inspiring individuals for making us all proud," said Panda.

Amaresh Kumar Sahu and Gedela Akhil earned medal at the international event. Sahu earned a bronze medal in renewable energy, while Akhil received a medallion for excellence in water technology, bringing pride to



AMARESH KUMAR SAHU AND GEDELA AKHIL EARNED MEDAL AT THE EVENT

the state on the global stage.

Praising the achievements, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, in a statement, said, "The accomplishments of our skilled youth at the World Skills Competition are a source of im-

mense pride for Odisha. Their success exemplifies the state's commitment to nurturing young talent and developing skills that meet global standards."

He also noted that the participants' success would inspire many others to aim for excellence on a global platform.

Majhi also acknowledged the contributions of the institutions that supported their training, including the WSC, Central Tool Room and Training Centre (CTTC) and CV Raman Global University.

10th edition of Nuakhai Bhetghat held in Dubai

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 17: The Odia diaspora, Nuakhai Paribar UAE, recently celebrated the 10th edition of Nuakhai Bhetghat at SEE Institute in Dubai.

In the largest Nuakhai celebration held outside India, Odias from across the UAE gathered in large number at the institute hall mirroring a microcosm of Western Odisha.

Consul General of India to Dubai, Satish Kumar Sivan, graced the occasion as chief guest. Guests from Western Odisha also reached Dubai to participate in the special event. Among them were eminent artist Archana Padhi and lyricist-singer Shashwat Tripathy, and international sand artist Sudam Pradhan, who added colour to the occasion with their performance.

Sudam captured everyone's attention with his live performance on stage and later honoured with the 'Juhar Samman UAE'. A live painting of Maa Samaleswari, by Dubai-based Odia artist Mona Biswarupa Mohanty, was greeted with loud cheers.

Earlier, the event began with a special aarti and puja for Maa Samaleswari, where the new grain (specially flown in

ONE OF THE HIGHLIGHTS OF THE FUNCTION WAS THE SERVING OF TRADITIONAL WESTERN ODISHA FOODS, WITH AMBIL BEING A MUCH SOUGHT-AFTER DELICACY

from Western Odisha) was offered to her.

One of the highlights of the function was the serving of traditional Western Odisha foods, with Ambil being a much sought-after delicacy.

As part of the Bhetghat celebrations, a display of Sambalpuri culture was showcased, featuring Western Odisha's language, music, dance, and handlooms. The hall was packed with people, all dressed in Sambalpuri attire.

A special team from Odisha Samaj Abu Dhabi performed a fashion show in Sambalpuri attire. A souvenir was also unveiled to mark the 10th anniversary of Nuakhai celebrations in the UAE.



POOR SLEEP MAY WORSEN FATTY LIVER DISEASE

While a good night's sleep is known to be crucial for overall health, a new study showed it can also prevent cirrhosis among individuals with nonalcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD).

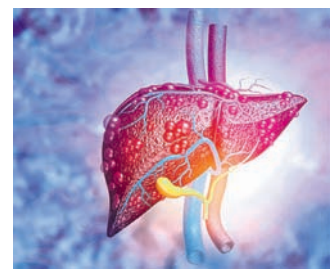
Cirrhosis occurs when the liver is damaged for over a long duration and is replaced by scar tissue. The scarring prevents the liver from working properly, and can eventually lead to liver failure.

The study led by researchers from the Huazhong University

of Science and Technology in China showed an association between a healthy sleep pattern and a decreased risk of cirrhosis among NAFLD patients.

The study on 112,196 NAFLD patients found that poor sleep patterns were associated with an increased risk of progression to cirrhosis. The benefits of good sleep were observed in participants, regardless of low or high genetic risk, according to the journal Hepatology International.

The study provides "more evidence that sleep is really un-



derrated," said Abby Phillips, popularly known as LiverDoc, on social media platform X.

"You can't change your genetic profile and neither can

everyone check their genetic profile. But what can be done is get some good sleep every night," he advised. The human body requires optimum sleep duration of 7-8 hours per night.

"Having a good night's sleep (at least 7-8 hours) has innumerable benefits on liver health and this is something not many are aware of," Phillips said.

Poor sleep is also known to be harmful to health and can lead to problems with memory and focus. It can also raise the risk of headaches, anxiety, and stress.

Another recent study, published in the journal Sleep shows that sleeping late may also raise the risk of early-onset type 2 diabetes.

In the study, people who went to bed after midnight had a 1.46-fold increased risk of developing early-onset diabetes - under the age of 40.

"Each one hour later in bedtime was associated with a 52 per cent increase in the risk of early-onset diabetes," the study showed.

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SHAKEN IN SIX MONTHS

PANIC AS JODA FLYOVER SINKS



The flyover was built by Gujarat-based Chevrox Constructions Private Ltd which had claimed that the bridge has been built using the latest technology

tall claims have fallen flat. Such is the condition of the flyover that it shakes violently when a couple of heavy vehicles pass over it simultaneously. Pictures of the shaking bridge have gone viral on social media recently.

Locals had alleged that the previous state government inaugurated the flyover hastily without conducting proper examination of the bridge as Lok Sabha and Assembly elections were nearing.

They wanted to take credit for construction of the bridge but safety concerns have now cropped up.

This correspondent tried to meet Chevrox Constructions Private Ltd GM Sudip Mukherjee for his comment but he was conspicuously absent.

An engineer of OBCCCL, requesting anonymity, confirmed the cracks on the retaining wall but ruled out any immediate threat to the commuters. The senior officials are aware of the issue and the damaged portion will be repaired soon, he said. He also informed that Keonjhar Collector has been apprised of the development.

risk. Someone can seriously get injured due to the rods, they opined.

Reports said that the flyover was constructed at a plan outlay of ₹250 crore from the funds available from the district mineral foundation (DMF).

Sources said the 3-km long flyover was inaugurated by the former Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on virtual mode March 11, 2024. Hence, the appearance of cracks in less than six months of its inauguration has created serious apprehensions amongst the commuters.

The bridge was built by Gujarat-based Chevrox Constructions Private Ltd which had then claimed that the bridge has been built using the latest technology.

Chevrox head Bipul Barat, its chairman Kishore Birangama, OBBC general manager Narsingh Mohanta who were present at the time of inauguration had claimed that the flyover will last more than 100 years. Mohanata had also claimed that it can endure the movements of heavy to very heavy vehicles. Now, it seems that the

While a crater has formed on the flyover, cracks have also appeared on the retaining walls of the bridge. The left portion of the approach road to the flyover has sunk leading to formation of a crater. The newly-inaugurated bridge developing such problems has raised questions about the durability of the crucial infrastructure.

On being informed, Collector Vishal Singh directed a technical team and Odisha Bridge Construction Corporation Ltd (OBCCCL) engineer to inspect the damage and take necessary steps for its repair, Monday.

It's not just the cracks that are bothering the users. Earlier, concrete slabs were seen loosely hanging at various places while at other places iron rods were found protruding out putting the lives of the commuters at



BIDDING SCIENTISTS: Students display their projects during a district level science exhibition held at Saraswati Sishu Vidya Mandir of Shalikothea under Jaleswar block in Balasore district

Sundargarh Collector leads cleanliness drive

RAJESH MOHANTY, OP

Rourkela, Sept 17: A cleanliness drive led by Sundargarh Collector Manoj Satyaban Mahajan was undertaken on the Main Road near Telephone Bhawan under Ward No-1, Rani Bagicha, here as part of "Swachhta Hi Seva" campaign, Tuesday.

Several other top officials of the district administration also participated in the cleanliness drive.

The Collector was accompanied by two additional district magistrates posted at the district headquarters, executive officer of Sundargarh Municipality, DIPRO and the Rourkela Municipality chairman.

The place near Rani Bagicha was wearing a dirty look always with garbage littering all across. The Collector rose to the occasion



and began the cleanliness drive.

Collector Mahajan said, "One sets an example for others, by taking an initiative on his/her own. I thought the best way to clean the entire town is to create awareness through such programmes

and the message has gone well across the town."

The Collector and other officials were found to be lifting all the garbage and sweeping the street of the dirt and making the entire area clean.

Watery grave for two students in Baripada

POST NEWS NETWORK

Baripada, Sept 17: In a tragic incident, two Plus II second year students drowned while immersing Vishwakarma idol in Kathapal canal on the outskirts of this city in Mayurbhanj district Tuesday morning.

The deceased were identified as Thakur Soren, 18, and Bhagya Prakash Patra, 18, they added.

According to sources, Gopinath Industrial Training Institute (ITI) and Brilliance Higher Secondary School are located on the premises of a private educational institution at Manchabandha here. After the Vishwakarma Puja at the ITI centre, some students of Brilliance School came out with the idol for immersion Tuesday.

Seven students carried the idol to immerse it in a nearby canal. While immersing the idol, Bhagya Prakash accidentally slipped into the water. Seeing



him being swept away by the strong current, Thakur jumped into the water to save Bhagya Prakash. However, due to rainfall, the water level in the canal had risen. As a result, both were swept away and got stuck at the sluice gate. On being informed, Fire Services personnel reached the spot and tried to rescue the two students. Lifeless bodies of Thakur and Bhagya Prakash were recovered after a four-hour long operation.

On being informed, Betnoti SDPO Sudarshan Das and IIC Sasmitta Mahanta, along with their team, reached the scene and initiated an investigation into the matter.

Betnoti SDPO said a case of unnatural death was registered and the bodies were sent to the PRM Medical College and Hospital in Baripada for post-mortem.

Python found in car; rescued

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jajpur, Sept 17: A man was taken aback after he suddenly spotted a python inside his car while parking it at a four-wheeler servicing centre at Tentulikhunta in this district, Monday.

The car owner, who is an educationist, had taken the vehicle for servicing. He first noticed the tail of the python near the dashboard inside his car. When the mechanics of the service centre were informed about it, they panicked and sought help from Snake Helpline member Manibhadra Mallick.

On being informed, Mallick rushed to the spot and started the procedure to rescue the python. By then the snake had entered the AC duct of the car. It took a lot of effort for over five hours by Mallick and locals to bring out the snake. Later the reptile was released in a forest.



Subarnarekha flood situation grim



86 PANCHAYATS AND 345 VILLAGES AFFECTED; 10,000 HECTARES OF FARMLAND SUBMERGED

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhograi/Jaleswar, Sept 17: Incessant rain in the upstream of Subarnarekha river in Jharkhand has resulted in flood in four blocks of Balasore district, a report said Tuesday.

Lakhs of people in Bhograi, Baliapal, Basta and Jaleswar

blocks have been marooned. At Rajghat, where the danger mark is 10.36 metre, water was flowing at 10.98 metre by 6pm Tuesday.

While there is no imminent threat of flood in the other districts, the administration has been directed to remain on alert to meet any kind of even-



tuality.

The floodwater of Subarnarekha crossed both its banks and entered into Bhograi, Baliapal, Basta and Jaleswar blocks as well as into some panchayats of neighbouring Mayurbhanj district. Moreover, the backwaters from East and West Midnapore districts also entered the low-lying areas of Bhograi and Jaleswar.

Due to incessant rain from September 14 to 16, this region in Balasore district experienced 250 mm of rainfall in just three days, resulting in flooding in northern Balasore due to water runoff from West Bengal.

As per the Collector's instructions, various departments have provided preliminary reports on rain and flood-related issues, Tuesday. District agriculture officer Pradeep Kumar Mohanty has provided specific data that says in Jaleswar, 2,050-hectare paddy fields in 105 villages across 35 panchayats are submerged. Similarly, in Bhograi, 7,400 hectares of agricultural land in 237 villages across 50 panchayats are flooded. In Baliapal block, 70 hectares of farmland in two villages of a single panchayat are inundated.

Officials watching elephant with limp

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, Sept 17: A sick approximately 40-year-old elephant is walking with a limp has been located by officials in Bardhana reserve forest under Champua Range of Keonjhar division. Officials said that the elephant has been moving with a limp for the last couple of months.

Officials suspect that the elephant has suffered an injury on its right leg and as a result it is not being able to walk properly. The tusker was seen Monday in Barpada and Jhaliabeda village

localities. Although there is no problem with the availability of food and water in the area, the Forest department is monitoring its movement. Divisional Forest Officer, Keonjhar Dhanraj HD said, "May be other than the injury, old age has also affected the elephant. It can be one of the reasons why its movement has been restricted."

Dhanraj also stated that officials have not noticed any wound on the leg of the elephant. "If the animal needs help, we will intervene at the right time. At this juncture we do not want to disturb the tusker," said Dhanraj.



QC team of RSP coke oven ensures enhanced safety

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, Sept 17: The Karmaveer Quality Circle team from coke ovens department of SAIL's Rourkela Steel Plant has brought about substantial savings for the company apart from enhancing the safety and efficiency of operations in Battery-6.

Notably, Battery-6 houses 67 state-of-the-art 7-metre-tall ovens that make 0.9 million tonne coke annually.

There was a critical concern in the CDCP unit of coke ovens, where mill-fan failures during the dry quenching process led to a halt in fuel gas circulation, risking coke combustion and potential explosions that could damage chamber lids and walls. The existing hydraulic system was insufficient for opening the cooling chamber lids under these conditions, posing serious operational challenges.

The QC team comprising Sanjay Kumar Sahoo, senior technician, Hadibandhu Sahoo, Aswini Kumar Behera, and Deepak Kumar Dey, operators, under the guidance of Kulamani Sahoo, technician and B Panda, senior manager, coke ovens addressed the issue and implemented a crucial modification in the hydraulic system by adding an additional accumulator.

This innovative solution not only enhanced operational safety but also maximised pushing in Battery-6 and cooling cycles in the CDCP unit, leading to a substantial saving of ₹2.7 crore annually. The enhancement ensured the exertion of sufficient hydraulic pressure, allowing for easier lid opening during mill-fan failures, thereby preventing coke burning and explosions. The team's exemplary efforts earned them the prestigious Gold Award at the plant level quality circle competition.



Jhurimal's 'Collective Nuakhai' inspires global audience in US



POST NEWS NETWORK

Sundargarh, Sept 17: The Nuakhai festival, a major cultural celebration in Western Odisha, symbolises the unbreakable bond between the earth, humanity, family and brotherhood. It is celebrated with great fervour every year, representing a deep connection with nature and tradition.

This year however, all eyes are on Jhurimal village under Lephripara block of Sundargarh district, where the 'Collective Nuakhai' tradition is gaining international recognition, reaching as far as the United States.

Recently, during the 'Nuakhai Bhetghat' celebrations organised by the Odisha Culture Centre in Houston, Texas, a documentary on Jhurimal's unique collective tradition was screened. The Indian diaspora was deeply moved by the film and praised the residents of

Jhurimal for their remarkable effort. For the last 12 years, residents of Jhurimal have been practicing this extraordinary custom of organising a 'Collective Nuakhai' where all the families in the village come together to celebrate as one.



This isn't the first time that Jhurimal's 'Collective Nuakhai' has created waves in the US. Last year, a virtual conference showcased the festival, connecting Jhurimal with its diaspora. This year, the villagers created a 15-minute documentary about their festival, which was proudly featured at the Odisha Culture Centre.

After the screening, Dr Gopal Chandra Mahapatra, president of the Odisha Culture Centre and coordinator of the event, said, "Jhurimal's 'Collective Nuakhai' sends a powerful message of unity and brotherhood. As long as this tradition continues, it will inspire not only the villagers but also the Indian diaspora around the world."

Aditya Samal, another prominent member of the centre, echoed the same sentiment. "This collective celebration serves as a remarkable example of community participation and togetherness, offering invaluable lessons to people everywhere," he remarked.

During the Nuakhai festival in Houston, members of the Indian diaspora expressed their admiration for Jhurimal's tradition. They said that the event was a reminder that even small villages can inspire great change, bringing their traditions on a global stage.

Jhurimal's 'Collective Nuakhai' is truly a unique initiative which teaches the world the real meaning of unity, brotherhood, and participation. It demonstrates that no matter how far we travel, our roots and traditions continue to bind us together, crossing boundaries and inspiring communities worldwide, many others observed.

OFFICE OF THE PANCHAYAT SAMITI, BASUDEVPUR
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Letter No. 3647 Date: 11.09.2024
CORRIGENDUM NOTICE
No. i-161: In continuation to the Tender Call Notification No. 01/2024-25 vide Letter No. 3571, Dated: 31.08.2024 and Memo No. 3572, Dated: 31.08.2024 the last date is hereby extended from 17.09.2024 to 25.09.2024 (Wednesday) for filling of bids by 12.00 P.M. and the said tender will be opened on 25.09.2024 at 4.00 P.M. due to partial modification of Tender Call Notice No. 01/2024-25 vide Letter No. 3645, Dated: 11.09.2024.
Sd./- Block Development Officer, Basudevapur
OIPR-19306/11/0003/2425

OFFICE OF THE PANCHAYAT SAMITI, CHANDBALI
At/P.O.: Chandbali, Dist.: Bhadrak, PIN - 756133
No. i-160 **INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)**
BID IDENTIFICATION No. 3/2024-25 Dt.13.09.2024

| Sl. No. | Name of Work | Location | Tender Cost |
|---------|--|------------|-------------|
| 1 | Construction of ACR at Bhabeswar Nodal UP School, Dhamara GP | Dhamara | 12,29,890/- |
| 2 | Construction of ACR at Garipur UGME School, Bhuinburti GP | Bhuinburti | 12,30,288/- |
| 3 | Construction of ACR at Baghanata Primary School, Orasahi GP | Orasahi | 12,31,424/- |
| 4 | Construction of ACR at MDP High School, Nalgunda GP | Nalgunda | 13,56,059/- |
| 5 | Construction of ACR at Dadhibaman Jew High School, Sundarpur | Sundarpur | 13,52,588/- |

1. Class of Contract : C & D
2. Period of Completion : Six Calendar Months
3. Date & Time : 10 A.M. of 17.09.2024 to 1 P.M. of 03.10.24
4. Last Date : Upto 1 P.M. of 03.10.2024
5. Time of Opening : 3.30 P.M. of 03.10.2024
6. Name and Address : Block Development Officer, Chandbali, Bhadrak
7. EMD applicable : 1% of Tender Cost
Further details can be seen from the website portal <https://bhadrak.nic.in/>. The interested bidders can contact office of the Block Development Officer, Chandbali, Dist.: Bhadrak, Contact No. 6372685220.
Sd./- Block Development Officer, Chandbali
OIPR-19183/11/0001/2425

There is no greater pride and glory than to be a perfect instrument of the Master

SRI AUROBINDO



Meloni Model

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer and his Italian counterpart, Giorgia Meloni, who heads the far-right anti-immigration Brothers of Italy party, met in Rome 16 September. This meeting has sparked off a controversy as the two leaders discussed the highly sensitive and thorny issue of tackling illegal immigration. His statement, before the meeting, that he wanted to understand the methods used which have brought about dramatic reduction in migrant arrival numbers in Italy has attracted criticism from members of his own left-leaning Labour Party. Starmer also visited a national immigration coordination centre with Italy's interior minister, Matteo Piantedosi.

Since Labour won elections in July, Starmer has promised to fight illegal immigration even while rejecting the previous Conservative government's plan to deport asylum seekers to Rwanda. Labour MP Kim Johnson told the media it was disturbing to see Starmer "seeking to learn lessons from a neo-fascist government" of Italy. It is noteworthy that the visit came shortly after the UK was rocked by far-right riots during which mosques and migrant accommodation centres were targeted.

Already, the arrival of undocumented migrants and asylum seekers in small boats from France remains a perilous issue for Britain's political parties. More than 22,000 people have made the dangerous crossing of the English Channel so far this year, a slight increase from the same period in 2023. Several dozen have perished, including eight killed when a boat carrying about 60 people ran aground on rocks late last week. The same day, 14 boats carrying 801 people reached Britain.

Home Secretary Yvette Cooper defended the government's decision to seek advice from Italy's right-wing administration with the argument that the government had "a moral imperative to make sure that we are pursuing the criminal gangs who are putting lives at risk."

Interestingly, even though Starmer has rejected the Rwanda plan, he has not ruled out arrangements that would see asylum claims processed offshore.

Italy reached an agreement with Albania in November to host two centres where people would be housed while their asylum claims are processed. Those with rejected asylum claims would be sent back to their countries of origin whereas those with accepted applications will be granted entry into Italy.

Meloni's government has also inked a deal with Tunisia, granting it aid in exchange for greater efforts to stop Italy-bound refugees who leave the North African country to cross the Mediterranean. Rome has also renewed a deal with the Libyan government in Tripoli dating from 2017 under which it provides training and funding to the coastguard to stem departure of refugees and return to Libya of those already at sea.

However, human rights groups have expressed grave concern pointing out that the policy pushes thousands of refugees back to Libya to face torture and abuse under arbitrary detention.

What has irked some of Starmer's own party colleagues is his remark that he believes prevention and stopping people travelling in the first place is one of the best ways to deal with this particular issue. Since the start of the year, refugee arrivals to Italy by sea have dropped markedly, according to the Ministry of Interior. From 1 January to 13 September, a total of 44,675 people arrived compared with 125,806 for the same period in 2023.

Starmer sought to describe his plan to learn a thing or two from Italy on the immigration question for a pragmatic British approach. Whether it is Labour or Conservative, the UK government, understandably, has to be committed to strengthen the country to be a safe and secure abode for its own citizens. The ideas of humane immigration policies need a proper overhaul and thinking. This is something that has been badly missing in the British Isles in the past. Whereas Meloni's brand of politics that fights immigration tooth and nail and discourages neighbouring nations from pushing Moslem immigrants is totally understandable.

Meloni's radical right appears to be least bothered about criticism of its anti-immigration policy. This is borne out by the fact that she has defended Matteo Salvini who is on trial for refusing to allow an NGO boat containing 147 migrants to dock in Lampedusa in 2019. He is now a senior member of Meloni's government. Just prior to Starmer's trip, Prosecutors requested a six-year jail sentence for Salvini in the case. Since assuming office two years ago, Meloni has pursued the same agenda as Salvini, but with greater efficiency.

Labour is right to emphasise the need for cross-border collaboration in tackling human trafficking gangs. Western European governments are expected to also respond with compassion to the various crises in the Middle East, many of which were born out of the attitude of the same people now fleeing their own homes. The other aspect is the immigrants, once settled in their adopted country, do not modify their own habits. They are often resorting to disorderly behaviour and violence just to put their Islamist stamp on everything. This will certainly pave the way for the disintegration and destruction of everything that Europe has stood for, from the times of the Crusaders who fought Islam for 400 years.

To consider Meloni is no role model for modern day Europe may be reading the future wrong.

WISDOM CORNER

Life is a succession of lessons which must be lived to be understood. All is riddle, and the key to a riddle is another riddle. RALPH WALDO EMERSON

If a man does not keep pace with his companions, perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer. Let him step to the music which he hears, however measured or far away. HENRY DAVID THOREAU

A man can be himself only so long as he is alone, and if he does not love solitude, he will not love freedom, for it is only when he is alone that he is really free. ARTHUR SCHOPENHAUER

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

- 1931: Mukden seized by Japanese. On this day in 1931, in the so-called Mukden Incident, the Japanese army in Manchuria used the pretext of an explosion along its railway to occupy Mukden and to increase its control, within three months, to all of Manchuria.
- 1948: A local communist commander seized power in Madiun, Indonesia, as part of a rebellion effort against the Sukarno government in an incident known as the Madiun Affair.
- 1959: Vanguard 3 is launched into Earth's orbit. The geocentric satellite was launched into Earth's orbit by a Vanguard rocket, built by Glenn L. Martin Company, which is now known as Lockheed-Martin.
- 1965: Japanese astronomers Ikeya Kaoru and Seki Tsutomu discovered Comet Ikeya-Seki.
- 1970: American rock guitarist and singer Jimi Hendrix—who fused American traditions of blues, jazz, rock, and soul with techniques of British avant-garde rock to redefine the electric guitar in his own image—died of an overdose of barbiturates in London.
- 1973: West Germany adopts the Deutsche Mark. This action replaced the East German Mark and helped complete the economic reunification part of the union between East and West Germany.

SUSTAINABLE BIOECONOMY

FOCUS CLIMATE CHANGE

The world economy continues to over-exploit nature, despite being fully dependent on it. It is easy to see why this is unsustainable, especially in light of dangerously escalating climate change. With the biodiversity financing gap estimated to be about \$700-900 billion per year, calls are growing ahead of October's United Nations Biodiversity Conference in Cali, Colombia (COP16) to "invest in nature."

But these well-meaning efforts miss the bigger picture. Investing in nature will not save it so long as the global economy consumes more natural resources than the planet can sustain. It is like trying to shift to a low-carbon economy by using expensive carbon-storage schemes, while simultaneously allowing fossil fuel-intensive industries to emit ever more greenhouse gases.

Instead, what is needed is a regenerative global economy that preserves and restores nature and, in so doing, helps the world achieve crucial climate goals. In short, we must work toward a sustainable and equitable bioeconomy.

The bioeconomy comprises a wide range of sectors and business activities. Most obvious are regenerative forms of agriculture, fishing, forestry, and aquaculture. There are also the many ways that technology is combined with land- and sea-based production, from bio-based plastics to bioenergy and biopharmaceuticals. Lastly, there are the many opportunities to financialize nature's value through high-integrity and equitable nature-based carbon and biodiversity credits.

The potential is enormous. The World Bioeconomy Forum estimates the current value of the global bioeconomy at \$4 trillion, with some projections showing that this could rise to \$30 trillion or more by 2050. But the bioeconomy is not automatically sustainable or equitable. It can destroy nature, such as through overfishing and deforestation. Similarly, it can deepen inequalities: land grabs



Well-meaning calls to 'invest in nature' are growing louder ahead of October's United Nations Biodiversity Conference in Cali, Colombia. But the key to preserving the planet is a sustainable, equitable bioeconomy that promotes social inclusion, provides sustainable jobs, and accelerates progress toward climate and nature goals

by foreign investors have already been reported, leaving nature-rich countries and local communities in the Global South worse off.

For example, one major question on the biodiversity agenda is how to ensure fair sharing of the profits earned from the digital sequencing of genetic resources. DNA sequence data—called "digital sequence information" (DSI) in policy circles—have revolutionised the life sciences and are fueling innovation in sectors such as food security, medicine, green energy, and biodiversity conservation. Open access to the SARS-CoV-2 viral sequences was partly responsible for the rapid development of diagnostic kits and vaccines.

DSI also has many commercial applications and offers new opportunities for economic development. It is promising that negotiators recently agreed on a draft recommendation for operationalising the fair and equitable sharing of benefits from DSI, including the creation of a global fund, to be considered at COP16.

Brazil, in its current role as G20 president, has taken the lead in advancing an equitable,

sustainable bioeconomy. This includes establishing the G20 Initiative on Bioeconomy, which recently defined ten voluntary high-level principles that will help policymakers cultivate a bioeconomy that promotes social inclusion, provides sustainable jobs, and accelerates progress toward climate and nature goals. There are high hopes that Brazil will continue this work during its presidency of the UN Climate Change Conference in 2025, and that South Africa will advance a similar agenda when it assumes the G20 presidency at the end of the year.

Several steps can be taken now to facilitate investment in the bioeconomy. Creating common measurement standards and natural capital accounting could help agencies like UN Trade and Development and the World Trade Organization improve bio-trade arrangements and address subsidy problems. Nature pricing could help drive investment by increasing the economic value of a sustainable bioeconomy. Devising trade and investment rules, addressing data shortfalls, and ensuring systematic analysis are vital

for developing a robust bioeconomy. Regional groups such as the European Union and the African Union are well-positioned to begin implementing these changes.

Developing a successful bioeconomy requires an integrated approach, and that starts with enabling policies. Regenerative agriculture, like bioplastics and bioenergy, struggles to compete with carbon-intensive alternatives that often receive significant subsidies. "Bio-businesses" that rely heavily on technology need a supportive ecosystem of business partnerships, research and innovation, regulation, and public financing that is often lacking in low- and middle-income countries.

Such challenges make it harder for Global South countries to advance value-adding sectors that sustainably use their natural assets. Moreover, while several governments are increasingly developing bioeconomy strategies, sovereign-debt crises, and the resulting fiscal pressures, are often a barrier to unlocking domestic public finance or crowding in private investment.

Development finance institutions can and do play an important role in the Global South. In 2024, for example, the International Finance Corporation committed \$56 billion to private companies and financial institutions in developing countries. But many of these institutions lack a bioeconomy strategy or focus, even though investing in the equitable and sustainable use, conservation, and regeneration of natural resources can protect biodiversity, ramp up climate action, generate decent jobs, and accelerate the uptake of clean tech. Realising these opportunities requires more than one investment at a time. Only by coupling national and regional strategies with international cooperation can we build the sustainable, equitable bioeconomy we need.

The writer is Co-CEO of NatureFinance. PROJECT SYNDICATE

IN JEST THIS

The undecideds who will decide US polls



Melvin Durai

INDEED, THE TWO CANDIDATES ARE DISSIMILAR ENOUGH THAT IT SHOULD BE FAIRLY EASY TO CHOOSE ONE OVER THE OTHER

Election polls in America continue to show a tight race between presidential candidates Donald Trump and Kamala Harris. After every major event, including the recent presidential debate, TV networks assemble groups of so-called undecided voters to ask them whether the event has swayed them in any way. Are they leaning toward Trump, leaning toward Harris or still as clueless as before?

Watching from their living rooms, all the "decided" voters can't help shaking their heads in disbelief. "How can anyone still be undecided?" they ask each other. "These candidates are so different from each other. It's like being undecided whether to drink a glass of wine or a glass of swamp water."

Indeed, the two candidates are dissimilar enough that it should be fairly easy to choose one over the other. And yet the fate of America depends on a small per-

centage of undecided voters. Who are these voters? And why is it so hard for them to decide?

Let's meet one of them: Matt, a 30-year-old man who lives in Detroit, a city in the midwestern state of Michigan -- one of the crucial swing states that the candidates are vying to win.

Matt finds himself going back and forth between Trump and Harris. Sometimes it's Harris in the morning, Trump in the afternoon, Harris in the evening, and Trump at night -- during one of Matt's nightmares.

"I don't feel that I have enough information to decide between the two," Matt told his friend Jalen.

"I know," Jalen said. "If only one of them had been president before."

Matt laughed. "I know Trump has been president before, but Harris has not. If only we had two former presidents running against each other, the decision might be easier."

Jalen shook his head. He remembered what had happened the previous night at the Wendy's restaurant they had visited. Matt caused a long backup at the drive-thru window, all because he couldn't decide which Frosty dessert to get: vanilla or chocolate.

"Sir, please make up your mind," the drive-thru worker said.

"I'm trying," Matt said. "Can you give me more information about the chocolate?"

Finally the restaurant manager had to intervene. "Just buy the vanilla," he told Matt. "We'll give you the chocolate for free. You can have both."

"Sounds good," Matt said. "But what if I want to buy the chocolate and get the vanilla for free?"

"That would be fine, too," the manager said.

"Okay. Let me decide what I want to do."

The manager almost pulled out his hair. "Sir, please take

both for free," he said, the exasperation showing in his voice.

He was relieved when Matt agreed, but had to resist the temptation to say, "And please go to McDonald's next time."

Matt enjoyed both Frosties. When he told his girlfriend Jennifer about his experience at the drive-thru, she said, "Chocolate is better. I always get chocolate." Then she smiled and added, "But I understand how difficult these decisions can be."

His other girlfriend, Ashley, wasn't so sympathetic. "You can't go through life being so indecisive," she said. "These are simple decisions."

Matt just nodded. He knew that one of these days, he'd have to stop being "undecided" and give a ring to Jennifer or Ashley. Thankfully he couldn't yet afford an engagement ring.

Having a job would help, of course. But unfortunately for Matt, the last time he applied for jobs, he received two offers.

Eco-friendly bamboo

Sir, World Bamboo Day is celebrated on 18 September every year to raise awareness about bamboo and its many uses. The plant has notable economic and cultural significance in South Asia, Southeast Asia, and East Asia. Its versatility has led to the coinage of such terms as 'bamboo culture', 'green gold', 'poor man's timber', and so on. Bamboo's long life makes it a Chinese symbol of uprightness and an Indian symbol of friendship. In Japan it is symbol of prosperity. Bamboo is used for a wide range of purposes - besides construction, furniture and paper making it is also used as food, medicine and also in making utensils, writing materials, music instruments and martial arts materials. Bamboo helps mitigate climate change, and its organic matter improves soil quality. M Pradyu, KANNUR

Undercurrent of violence

Sir, This refers to "Trump survives 2nd assassination attempt," Orissa POST, Sept 17. Twice within two months, America has narrowly avoided the tragedy of seeing a major political figure assassinated during an election season -- and the toxic forces that such an outrage could unleash in a country wracked by visceral partisan divides. That such incidents happen at all speak of the undercurrent of violence that is a constant shadow over American politics, one that is exacerbated by the easy availability of firearms. Both the nominees Donald Trump and Kamala Harris now address outdoor crowds from behind bulletproof screens. There will now be fresh fears that a tempestuous period running up to the election day could take the country further down a dark road. The near-miss for Trump comes at a moment when the race with Harris is neck-and-neck. While both candidates are fighting over perhaps several hundred thousand movable voters in swing states, it's not clear how much room remains for changing perceptions about Trump, who has been a polarising figure. The former president is all but certain to use the latest events to reinforce his baseless claim that he's a victim of persecution meant to keep him from power. But it's too early to say whether the second apparent assassination attempt will have greater political impact than the first. N Sathasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

Readers of Orissa POST are most welcome to contribute letters (200 words), articles and columns (between 750-1250 words). Contributors are requested to send their contact numbers and full postal address/email ID. They may also send in their valuable comments, opinion and suggestions, preferably by email, to: edit@orissapost.com

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HEMA COMMITTEE REPORT

Malayalam cinema to get new film association

The association will be founded on the principles of 'ethical responsibility, systemic modernization, and empowerment of the workforce, creating a workplace that is fair, just, and reflective of the values we hold as a society'



The note, accessed by the media, is purportedly signed by well-known filmmakers Anjali Menon, Lijo Jose Pellissery, Rajeev Ravi and Aashiq Abu, actress Rima Kallingal and producer Bineesh Chandra

A vision note of the proposed outfit, Progressive Filmmakers' Association, has been circulated among the industry members

The vision note urged film personalities to unite under the Progressive Filmmakers' Association, and assured that the collective would serve as the backbone of a new era for Malayalam cinema

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Thiruvananthapuram, Sept 17: At a time when the Malayalam cinema industry is reeling from the shocking revelations in the Justice K Hema Committee report, a group of film personalities are set to launch a new film body aimed at revitalising the sector and promoting a fair and just workplace.

A vision note of the proposed outfit, Progressive Filmmakers' Association, has been circulated among the industry members.

The note, accessed by the media, is purportedly signed by well-known filmmakers Anjali Menon, Lijo Jose Pellissery, Rajeev Ravi and Aashiq Abu, actress Rima Kallingal and producer Bineesh Chandra.

According to the vision note, the Malayalam film industry, despite its significant contribution to the state's economy and cultural landscape, remains tethered to outdated systems and practices. "As filmmakers-producers, directors, technicians-we are the foundation upon which this industry stands, creating jobs, driving innovation, and fostering creativity. Yet, we often find ourselves navigating an unsystematic, fragmented environment, far removed from the progressive standards of

modern industries," it said.

The vision note urged film personalities to unite under the Progressive Filmmakers' Association, and assured that the collective would serve as the backbone of a new era for Malayalam cinema.

The new association would be built on the pillars of "ethical responsibility, systemic modernization, and empowerment of the workforce, creating a workplace that is fair, just, and reflective of the values we hold as a society". In the note, the filmmakers also pointed out that it is time to bring the Malayalam film industry into the present-embracing modern systems, legal frameworks, and collective responsibility.

Rooted in principles that prioritise equality, cooperation, and social justice, this association would ensure that the rights of everyone in the filmmaking community are safeguarded, while fostering collaboration to elevate the industry to the next

level, it said.

"Together, we can renovate the Malayalam film industry, positioning it as a leader in both creative excellence and industry standards. This is not just a vision for us as filmmakers, but a vision for a better, more equitable future for everyone involved in cinema. Let us move forward, together," the note added.

The development of the formation of a new film association came weeks after differences of opinion had cropped up in the existing outfits like the Association of Malayalam Movie Artists (AMMA) and the Film Employees Federation of Kerala (FEFKA) over the stands it's leadership had taken with regard to the revelations in the Justice Hema Committee report which sheds light into the harassments and exploitations in the Malayalam cinema.

Director Aashiq Abu resigned from FEFKA over the differences recently.

Mumbai bids farewell to its favourite deity

DEVOTEES LINED THE LANES OF LALBAUG IN CENTRAL MUMBAI, BRAVING THE SCORCHING SUN TO BID FAREWELL TO THE FAMOUS 'LALBAUGCHA RAJA' GANESH

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Sept 17: More than 2,700 idols were immersed in Mumbai by Tuesday afternoon on the 11th and concluding day of the Ganesh festival as processions accompanied by troupes of 'dhol-tasha' or drum players set off in the city and other parts of Maharashtra.

Devotees lined the lanes of Lalbaug in central Mumbai, braving the scorching sun to bid farewell to the famous 'Lalbaugcha Raja' Ganesh.

Processions from various parts of Mumbai including Fort, Mazgaon, Byculla, Dadar and Chembur were making their way towards the Arabian Sea and water bodies within the city for immersion, marking the end of this year's festivities.

No untoward incident was reported anywhere, said officials of the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC).

More than 2,700 idols were immersed in the sea and artificial ponds as of 3 pm. They included 2,614 households Ganapati idols, 81 sarvajanik mandals (community group) idols and 12 idols of Goddess Gauri.

As of afternoon, 1,009 idols were immersed in the artificial ponds provided by the BMC to avoid pollution of natural water bodies.

The procession of 'Lalbaug Raja' Ganapati was heading for Shroff Building junction for 'pushpa-vrushti' (flower shower) before reaching Girgaon Chowpatty or beach for immersion.

Chinchpokli-based 'Chintamani Ganapati' was about to reach the Shroff building junction, while several other Ganapati processions had reached Lalbaug area.

BEST, the civic bus service, has diverted buses on several routes on account of immersion processions.

Western Railway and Central Railway would be running special late night trains for the convenience of devotees returning home after immersion processions, officials said.

GANESH IDOL IMMERSION



To promote eco-friendly celebrations, the BMC has introduced a QR code system providing information on nearby artificial ponds. Citizens can scan the code or visit <https://portal.mcgm.gov.in> for directions to these ponds via Google Maps

Police are also using drones for surveillance at key immersion sites such as the beaches at Girgaon, Dadar, Bandra, Juhu Versova and Madh Island, and also at Powai lake. They would also be monitoring the footage of 8,000 CCTV cameras.

More than 24,000 police personnel have been deployed on the streets for security and crowd management.

Thousands of household and 'sarvajanik' (public) Ganesh idols will be immersed at 204 artificial ponds across the city, along with 69 natural water bodies like Girgaon, Dadar, Juhu, Marve and Aksa beaches.

The BMC has deployed more than 12,000 employees and set up 71 control rooms to manage the processions. It has also posted 761 lifeguards and deployed 48 speed boats at the beaches as a safety measure, and citizens have been advised to avoid entering deep waters.

It has also cautioned citizens about blue button jellyfish and stingrays while immersing idols in the sea.

More than 24,000 police personnel have been deployed on the streets for security and crowd management

More than 2,500 traffic police personnel are ensuring smooth movement of vehicles across the city

For efficient coordination, 192 control rooms have been established across various administrative divisions, and 66 observation towers have been erected to monitor key areas

Quick Response Teams, Riot Control Police, Home Guards and Maharashtra Security Force have also been roped in, officials said.

More than 2,500 traffic police personnel are ensuring smooth movement of vehicles across the city. Some roads have been closed for traffic.

For efficient coordination, 192 control rooms have been established across various administrative divisions, and 66 observation towers have been erected to monitor key areas.

To promote eco-friendly celebrations, the BMC has introduced a QR code system providing information on nearby artificial ponds. Citizens can scan the code or visit <https://portal.mcgm.gov.in> for directions to these ponds via Google Maps.

Mosque in Sangli district hosts Ganesh idol for 44 years

Pune: In a remarkable demonstration of communal unity, a mosque in Gothkhindi village in Sangli district of Maharashtra has been hosting Lord Ganesh's idol for the past 44 years during the annual festival. Members of the New Ganesh Mandal have celebrated the festival inside the mosque, highlighting an enduring example of harmony between two communities. Ilahi Pathan, president of the mandal, said Hindus and Muslims celebrate the Ganesh festival with great zeal and devotion every year. "The tradition began in 1961 when, due to heavy rains, local Muslims invited their Hindu neighbours to place the Ganesh idol inside the mosque," Ashok Patil, former president of the mandal, told a Marathi news channel. Although the festival was not observed for several years afterwards, the New Ganesh Mandal was formed in 1980 and has continued this unique tradition ever since. "It has been 44 years since then this Ganesh idol is being installed at this mosque," said Patil. He emphasised the significance of this practice, noting its ongoing impact on community relations.

Samples of 16 people test negative for Nipah

The Kerala government has imposed restrictions on containment zones in Malappuram where a 24-year-old recently died due to Nipah infection

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Thiruvananthapuram, Sept 17: Kerala Health Minister Veena George said Tuesday that 16 people who came into contact with a 24-year-old man, who died of Nipah virus in Malappuram district last week, have tested negative for the disease.

Of the total 225 people on the contact list of the deceased, the samples of 16 people in the high risk category, tested negative at the Manjeri Government Medical College in Malappuram, she told reporters here.



At present, there are 50 people in the high risk category, George said, adding that 77 people on the contact list were health workers.

The minister, who conducted an evaluation meeting in the morning and evening to take stock of the situation, said there is no room for any concern as of now.

She said the Health department is taking all possible steps to check the spread of the disease

by identifying a maximum number of persons who have come into contact with the man, and administering them preventive medicine.

"The samples of those in the high risk category and the persons showing any symptoms are being collected and sent for testing. Samples of more people will be collected today," she said.

Though the chance of any spread of the disease is unlikely,

the samples of every person showing symptoms would be tested.

George further said the state government has been in constant contact with the Centre and the health authorities in Karnataka where the deceased man was studying.

Those who were in contact with him, including his classmates and friends, had been traced with their support.

The restrictions in the containment zones would continue as per the protocol, the minister added.

The Kerala government has imposed restrictions on containment zones in Malappuram where a 24-year-old recently died due to Nipah infection.

Five wards in two panchayats of Malappuram district were declared as containment zones and directions have been issued not to gather in large numbers.



Railway employees clean the premises of Kozhikode railway station under the 'Swachhata Hi Seva 2024' campaign, in Kerala

Maha gets 3 new Vande Bharat trains; 11 so far



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Sept 17: The number of Vande Bharat trains plying in Maharashtra increased to eleven as Prime Minister Narendra Modi flagged off three new services via video link from Ahmedabad Monday.

The new trains will be operated on Nagpur-Secunderabad, Kolhapur-Pune, and Pune-Hubballi routes, officials said.

Until now eight Vande Bharat Express trains were operated on various routes in Maharashtra by the Western Railway and Central Railway.

Mumbai-Ahmedabad and Mumbai-Gandhinagar Vande Bharat trains are operated by Western Railway, and Mumbai-

Madgaon, Mumbai-Solapur, Mumbai-Sainagar Shirdi, Mumbai-Jalna, Nagpur-Raipur, and Nagpur-Bilaspur by the CR.

Swapnil Nila, Chief Public Relations Officer of Central Railway, said Vande Bharat trains on all three new routes are the upgraded 2.0 version of the semi-high speed trains. "Central Railway has presented three more Vande Bharat trains with 21 updates to increase the comfort and safety of passengers," Nila said.

The eight-coach Pune-Kolhapur and Pune-Hubballi Vande Bharat Express trains will run three days per week, while the 20-coach Nagpur-Secunderabad Vande Bharat train will ply six days a week.

Pune-Hubballi Vande Bharat Express will leave Pune at 16.15 hrs Monday and reach Hubballi at 23.40 hrs the same day. The Nagpur-Secunderabad Vande Bharat Express will depart Nagpur at 4.15 PM and reach Secunderabad at 11.25 PM the same day, the CR stated.

South Indian influencers rally after landslides

THE VISIT OF SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS IS PART OF A SERIES OF PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR KERALA TOURISM'S NEW CAMPAIGN, WHICH AIMS TO ATTRACT MORE HOLIDAYMAKERS WORLDWIDE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Wayanad (Kerala), Sept 17: Over 30 social media influencers from the South Indian states gathered at Kalpetta here Tuesday to show their strong support for the hill district's tourism efforts following recent devastating landslides.

The campaign was kicked off by Tourism and Public Works Minister PA Mohamed Riyas,



Wayanad was the first destination chosen for the 'Safe Kerala' campaign launched after the COVID-19 pandemic. However, it lost its advantage after the tragedy and negative news spread

WAYANAD TOURISM REBOUNDS

who unveiled the Kerala Tourism Department's new video, "Ente Keralam Ennum Sundaram," at a ceremony in Mananthavady.

Outside Kerala, the campaign will take off under the tagline "It's Kerala Season," according to an official release here.

Riyas also interacted with the social media influencers, including vloggers and bloggers.

The visit of social media influencers is part of a series of promotional activities for Kerala Tourism's new campaign, which aims to attract more holidaymakers worldwide.

Interacting with the drove of social media influencers, Riyas said the Department of Tourism will organise a 'Tribal Cultural Festival' this year to promote tourism in Wayanad by highlighting the cultural and ethnic heritage of the place.

The minister noted that Wayanad has a special place on tourism map owing to its immense possibilities for adventure tourism and balmy weather.

During his trip to Wayanad, Riyas visited Karlad Lake and stayed in a resort along with his family.

As part of the campaign, social media influencers will visit major tourism destinations in

Wayanad and create content that will help catapult the unique features of mind-blowing landscape and scenic beauty of the district.

They will experience for themselves that Wayanad remains as beautiful as ever, like the rest of Kerala, and generate video content for social media to show it to the world.

The hospitality industry witnessed large-scale booking cancellations after the tragedy that hit Chooralmala and Mundakkai areas of the district, which also triggered a barrage of negative stories that appeared on social media.

Following the aggressive campaign, the picturesque district became a top destination, and due to the heavy rush, booking rooms on weekends in many resorts was difficult.

Wayanad was also the first destination chosen for the 'Safe Kerala' campaign launched after the COVID-19 pandemic. However, it lost its advantage after the tragedy and negative news spread.

national

of the day quote

Best wishes to Atishi ji for fulfilling the responsibility she has been given as the new Chief Minister of Delhi! On one hand she has to continue her work of public service, and on the other hand she has to face the negative politics of the BJP. As a combative and determined young chief minister, may she be successful in every role of hers!

AKHILESH YADAV | SP PRESIDENT

Mine was a private trip, not the government, I had gone with family for some personal work

D K SHIVAKUMAR | KARNATAKA DY CM

During this decade, due to the initiative of the prime minister, there has been a revolutionary and comprehensive change in the mindset of the people. Their vision towards cleanliness has changed

JAGDEEP DHANKHAR | VICE PRESIDENT

SHORT TAKES

UP: 5 dead in factory blast

Firozabad: Five persons, including two children and a woman, were killed due to an explosion at a firecracker godown-cum-factory in Uttar Pradesh's Firozabad district that caused damage to nearby houses, a police official said Tuesday. Eleven persons sustained injuries in the blast, which happened in the factory located in the Naushera area under Shikohabad police station limits Monday night, they said. Local residents also said that around one dozen houses were damaged due to the blast, and roofs of some of the houses have also been damaged. The bodies of the deceased were handed over to their kin after post-mortem, officials said.

India sends aid to Myanmar

New Delhi: India Tuesday sent 32 tonnes of relief supplies to Myanmar in a military transport aircraft under its operation 'Sadbhav' launched two days ago to assist Southeast Asian nations hit by a major typhoon. Various parts of Myanmar, Laos and Vietnam have been reeling under massive floods after Typhoon Yagi, said to be Asia's most powerful storm this year, hit the three countries. India has already sent relief supplies to Vietnam and Laos.

AAP asks Swati Maliwal to quit

New Delhi: The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) has demanded the resignation of Rajya Sabha MP Swati Maliwal after her remarks on senior leader Atishi, who has been named the next Chief Minister of Delhi. Maliwal reads out the BJP's script despite being sent to the Rajya Sabha by the AAP, said senior party leader Dilip Pandey. "Swati Maliwal takes Rajya Sabha ticket from the AAP but takes the script to react from BJP. If she has even a little shame, she should resign as a Rajya Sabha MP and choose the path to Rajya Sabha on a BJP ticket," said Pandey.

Schools, colleges in Manipur reopen

Imphal: After 11 days of closure, all schools, colleges and technical institutions were reopened across Manipur Tuesday. "We expect that attendance of students in all schools and colleges would be normal from Wednesday," a senior official said.



It would be better if the political fight between the ruling party and the Opposition is not bitter to the level of enmity so that the country and public interest are not affected by it
MAYAWATI | BSP CHIEF

MIZORAM FACES SHORTAGE OF FUEL

Mizoram is facing a shortage of fuel and essential commodities, as hundreds of trucks are not plying along a key stretch of a national highway due to poor road condition, officials of several transport associations said. The stretch of National Highway-306 and National Highway-6, particularly in the Kawnpui-Khamrang sector in Kolasib district, needs immediate repair, they said



RG KAR HORROR

Disclosing report might jeopardise probe: SC

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 17: The Supreme Court Tuesday said it was disturbed by the findings given in a status report filed by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) in the rape and murder of trainee doctor at R G Kar government hospital in Kolkata but refused to divulge the details, saying any disclosure may jeopardise the ongoing investigation.

Seeking a status report from the CBI on its probe into financial irregularities allegedly committed by jailed former principal of R G Kar Medical College and Hospital Sandip Ghosh, the top court, referring to the rape and murder case, said the agency is not "sleeping over" the investigation and it needs to be given time to "unearth the truth."

"What the CBI has revealed in the report is really disturbing. What you are flagging is of utmost concern. We ourselves are concerned, CBI has flagged it for us. We are ourselves disturbed by what we have read," the top court told a lawyer who claimed discrepancies in the seizure list and sketch of the crime scene.

A bench comprising Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud and Justices J B Pardiwala and Manoj Misra also asked the protesting junior doctors in West Bengal to resume work and recorded the assurance from the state government that it will not take any adverse or punitive action against them. Taking note of a letter written by the father of the deceased, the top court directed that the "valuable" inputs



furnished by him should be duly considered by the investigating officer.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the CBI, assured the court that the investigating agency will maintain contact with the parents of the deceased junior doctor and keep them informed about the ongoing probe to assuage their genuine concerns.

As the hearing commenced, senior advocate Kapil Sibal, appearing for the West Bengal government, sought stopping of the live proceedings in the case. He alleged that women lawyers working in his chamber were facing threats of acid attacks and rape.

"I have great concerns at what is happening. What happens when you livestream matters like this which has huge emotive implications. We are not representing the accused. We appear for the state government and as soon as the court is making a comment our reputation is getting destroyed overnight. We have 50 years of reputation," Sibal said.

The top court assured Sibal it would step in if there were any threats to lawyers and others. "We will not stop the live streaming of the proceedings. It is in public interest," the bench said.

During the hearing, the apex court took objection to the West Bengal government's 'Rattierer Saathi' programme which prescribes night duty avoidance for women doctors and says that their duty should not exceed 12 hours at a time.

The top court also questioned the West Bengal government's decision to hire contractual employees for the protection of doctors and other staff in hospitals. Senior lawyer Indira Jaising said junior doctors know the people who were at the scene of the crime and the information shall be shared with the CBI in a sealed cover. Meanwhile, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the CBI, submitted that Wikipedia was still showing the name and photo of the victim. The top court then directed Wikipedia to remove all content that identified the victim.

'Can't stop women docs from working at night'

The Supreme Court Tuesday objected to the West Bengal government's 'Rattierer Saathi' programme which stipulated that working hours of women should not exceed 12 hours at a time and prescribed avoiding night duty. A bench comprising Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud and Justices J B Pardiwala and Manoj Misra expressed surprise that the state government has issued such a notification. The top court said if men are working in more than 12-hour shift, women doctors are also entitled to do so. "How can you say that women will not work in night shifts? Women will have objection if you stop them from working in the night," it said. The court ordered that the West Bengal government should immediately correct the notification.

Remove name, photo of victim; SC to Wikipedia

The Supreme Court Tuesday directed free online encyclopedia Wikipedia to remove the photograph and name of the resident doctor. A bench headed by Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud took note of the submission by Solicitor General Tushar Mehta who said Wikipedia was still carrying the name and the photograph of the victim. The top court said provisions of the law are very clear that the identity of the victim in rape and murder cases cannot be revealed. "In the interest of maintaining dignity and privacy of the deceased, the governing principle is that identity of victim in a rape and murder case shall not be disclosed. 'Wikipedia shall take steps to comply with the previous order passed,' the bench, also comprising Justices J B Pardiwala and Manoj Misra, said.

Cong slams 100 days of Modi 3.0

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 17: The Congress Tuesday claimed that the first 100 days of Modi 3.0 was marked by a litany of U-turns and a series of scandals with the government yet again having "failed to act" on India's "mass unemployment crisis".

Congress general secretary in-charge communications Jairam Ramesh said "the non-biological PM and his drumbeating economists" have consistently attacked the idea of jobless growth but the reality of what has been seen since 2014 is perhaps even more stark -- "job-loss growth".

"Yesterday marked a hundred days of this unstable, crisis-ridden Government. Amidst a litany of u-turns and a series of scandals, the government has yet again failed to act on India's mass unemployment crisis -- an issue which the Congress has been consistently sounding the alarm on for the past five years at least," he said in a statement.

The crisis has been of the government's own making, caused by the decimation of job creating MSMEs through the "Tughlakian demonetisation", a hastily rushed through GST, an unplanned COVID-19 lockdown and rising imports from China, Ramesh said.

"The final straw has been the non-biological PM's economic policy of favouring large conglomerates. India's unemployment rate today is the highest it has been in 45 years, with the unemployment rate for graduate youth at 42%," he said. Ramesh said there is an abundance of data proving the extent of this crisis, and two damning trends stand out -- failure to create sufficient employment and shrinking of formal salaried jobs. "The International Labour



Organisation (ILO's) India Employment Report, 2024, finds that each year, around 70-80 lakh youths are added to the labour force, but between 2012 and 2019, there was almost zero growth in employment -- just 0.01%," the senior Congress leader said.

The same report found that in 2022, unemployment was very high among the urban youth (17.2 per cent) as well as rural youth (10.6 per cent), he pointed out and added that the female unemployment rate in urban areas was extremely high at 21.6 per cent.

A report by Citigroup projected that India must create 1.2 crore jobs per year for the next 10 years to employ our youth, Ramesh said.

In fact, the natural corollary of the shrinking of formal sector salaried jobs is an increase in low-wage, informal jobs -- an economic travesty that the RBI KLEMS is capturing, and the government is proudly touting, he said.

Congress general secretary (organisation) K C Venugopal said, "As we look back at the 100 days of the NDA government, we see a whole host of disasters, reversals and a directionless government that is completely failing the people of India."

There is still no vision to solve the unemployment crisis, rural distress or skyrocketing price rise that the ordinary citizen is suffering from, Venugopal said.

NAGALAND KILLINGS

TOP COURT CLOSES CASE AGAINST 30 ARMYMEN

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 17: In a relief to 30 Army personnel, the Supreme Court Tuesday closed the criminal proceedings initiated against them by the Nagaland government for allegedly killing 13 civilians in a 2021 botched operation to ambush militants in Mon district for want of prosecution sanction.

A bench of Justices Vikram Nath and PB Varale noted that the Centre had February 28 last year declined to grant sanction to prosecute the personnel under section 6 of the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA) of 1958. Section 6 of the AFSPA says, "No prosecution, suit or other legal proceedings shall be instituted except with the previous sanction of the

Central Government, against any person in respect of anything done or purported to be done in exercise of the powers conferred by this Act."

The bench said, in case sanction is granted at any stage under Section 6 of the AFSPA, the proceedings pursuant to the impugned FIRs may continue and may proceed in accordance with law and be brought to a logical conclusion. "In view of the aforesaid discussions, the writ petition (Criminal) Nos...are allowed," the bench directed.

The apex court closed the proceedings on two separate petitions filed by the wives of the personnel, including a major rank officer, who sought closure of the case lodged by Nagaland police.



Devotees pass through the 'Charminar' as they carry idols of Lord Ganesh for immersion after the conclusion of the Ganesh Chaturthi festival, in Hyderabad

Suspected Mpox case surfaces in Malappuram

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Malappuram (Kerala), Sept 17: A suspected case of monkeypox infection has been reported from Malappuram district of Kerala after a man who recently returned from Dubai showed symptoms of the disease.

State Health Minister Veena George said that the man on noticing the symptoms had taken precautionary measures by isolating himself from his family and was currently hospitalised in the Manjeri Medical College here.

"His samples have been sent for testing and the results are awaited," the minister said.

Earlier in the day, a district health official said that the patient arrived in Kerala a few days ago and, after falling sick, was first admitted to a private hospital. "From there he was admitted to the Manjeri Medical College. On suspecting that it might be a case of monkeypox, we sent his samples to the Kozhikode Medical College for testing. The results are awaited," the official said.

A new case of monkeypox (Mpox) was reported last week from the national capital after a 26-year-old resident of Haryana's Hisar tested positive for the virus and was admitted to Delhi government-run LNJP Hospital.

The Union Health Ministry had termed it an isolated case, similar to the earlier 30 cases reported in India from July 2022 onwards and said that it was not part of the current public health emergency reported by WHO which is regarding clade 1 of mpox, it underlined. The 26-year-old Hisar native tested positive for mpox virus of the West African clade-2, it had said. The World Health Organisation (WHO) last month declared mpox a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) for the second time in view of its prevalence and spread across many parts of Africa. Mpox infections are generally self-limiting, lasting between two and four weeks, and its patients usually recover with supportive medical care and management.

LANCET'S SHOCKING DISCLOSURE

'Antibiotic resistance to claim over 39mn lives by 2050'

Future deaths from antibiotic resistance are estimated to be highest in South Asia -- including India, Pakistan and Bangladesh -- where a total of 11.8 million deaths directly due to it are forecast between 2025 and 2050, a collaboration of researchers forming the Global Research on Antimicrobial Resistance (GRAM) Project said

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 17: Over a million people around the world died annually due to antibiotic resistance between 1990 and 2021, and more than 39 million could die from antibiotic-resistant infections over the next 25 years, according to a global analysis, published in The Lancet journal.

Antibiotic, or antimicrobial, resistance is when drugs designed to kill infectious bacteria and fungi are rendered ineffective because the bugs have evolved and developed an ability to defeat these drugs. The researchers said deaths due to antibiotic resistance will also be high in other parts of southern and eastern Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. Further, trends between 1990



and 2021 suggested that among people aged 70 years and above, deaths caused by antibiotic resistance increased by more than 80 per cent, and will continue to affect older people more in the years to come, the authors said. Over the same period,

deaths due to antibiotic resistance among children aged under five years fell by more than 50 per cent, they found.

"The fall in deaths from sepsis (a bloodstream infection) and antibiotic resistance among young children over the past three

decades is an incredible achievement. However, these findings show that while infections have become less common in young children, they have become harder to treat when they occur," author Kevin Ikuta, an affiliate professor at the Institute of Health Metrics (IHME), University of Washington, US, one of the collaborators on the GRAM Project, said.

An improved access to health care and antibiotics could save a total of 92 million lives between 2025 and 2050, the authors estimated. The study is the first global analysis of antimicrobial resistance trends over time, they said. An increasing resistance to antibiotics -- one of the "cornerstones of modern healthcare" -- is a major cause for concern and the findings highlighted the signif-

icance of the global health threat, according to author Mohsen Naghavi from the IHME. The analysis was based on data from 520 million people of all ages in 204 countries and territories, taken from a wide range of sources, including hospital and death records, and antibiotic use information.

The estimates produced are related to 22 disease-causing microbes (pathogens), 84 pathogen-drug combinations and 11 infectious symptoms such as bloodstream infections, the authors said. In 2019, deaths related to antibiotic resistance were higher than those from HIV/AIDS or malaria, leading directly to 1.2 million deaths and playing a role in a further nearly five million deaths, according to the first study by the GRAM Project, published in 2022.



We are having elections in Jammu and Kashmir. Rahul Baba went there. He made a settlement with Omar Abdullah. What is their agenda? They will release all terrorists after the elections and hold talks with Pakistan

AMIT SHAH | UNION HOME MINISTER

PM MODI'S GIFT AUCTION

Over 600 items, including a meticulously crafted model of the Ram temple in Ayodhya and a set of sporting memorabilia from the latest Paralympic Games, gifted to Prime Minister Narendra Modi have been put up for an e-auction that began Tuesday



of the day quote

We will not spare you. We'll ensure that bank guarantees of those doing bad work are forfeited and after this, we will blacklist you, not allow you to apply for new tenders

NITIN GADKARI | UNION MINISTER

It is very unfortunate that these people are entering educational campuses and persuading students to participate in unauthorised demonstrations

THOUNAOJAM BASANTAKUMAR SINGH | MANIPUR EDUCATION MINISTER

Rahul Gandhi visits foreign countries and defames India by making such statements. His passport should be cancelled to stop him from making such remarks

RAMDAS ATHAWALE | UNION MINISTER

X POST OF THE DAY

PAATAL E-WAY | Turns out the Delhi-Mumbai expressway, built at a cool 77 Cr per km, comes with a surprise feature.

A secret tunnel to Paatal, exposed by some heavy-duty truck bro! These hidden warp zones are just one of the 'special' add-ons of this (1,05,000 Cr masterpiece, courtesy of @nitin_gadkari's next-level highway tech!

@INC Kerala

SHORT TAKES

CBI custody of Ghosh extended

Kolkata: A Kolkata court Tuesday extended the CBI custody of ex-principal of RG Kar hospital Dr Sandip Ghosh and Tala police station officer in charge Abhijit Mondal for three days in the medic's rape and murder case.

4 of family killed in road accident

Tirunelveli: A 40-year old man and his two children were among four killed on the spot near here Tuesday after their two-wheeler was hit from behind by a truck, police said.

Bus catches fire

Thane: About 90 passengers traveling on a Thane Municipal Transport (TMT) bus had a narrow escape Tuesday evening as the bus caught fire, an official said.

SC HALTS 'BULLDOZER JUSTICE'

Tight slap on face of hate-filled CMs: Cong

THE OPPOSITION PARTY ASSERTED THAT BULLDOZER HAS BECOME A SYMBOL OF HATE, VIOLENCE AND POLITICAL VENDETTA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 17: The Congress Tuesday welcomed the Supreme Court directive against "bulldozer justice", saying it is a "tight slap" on the face of hate-filled Chief Ministers and leaders who were encouraging it.

The Opposition party also asserted that bulldozer has become a symbol of hate, violence and political vendetta. Even if there is one instance of illegal demolition, it is against the ethos of our Constitution, the Supreme Court said Tuesday while directing that authorities across the country will not demolish properties, including those accused of crime, till October 1 without seeking its permission.

A bench of Justices B R Gavi and K V Viswanathan clarified that its order will not be applicable to unauthorised structures on public roads, footpaths and the likes. In a post in Hindi on X, Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra said, "The decision of the Supreme Court holding a mirror to the unjust and inhuman 'bulldozer policy' of the BJP governments is welcome."

"Through such barbaric actions, the policy and intentions of trampling humanity and justice by 'running a bulldozer over the law of the country' have been exposed before the entire country," she said. They believe that under the guise of "instant justice", the rule of mob and fear can be established by crushing the Constitution with the bulldozer of oppression and injustice, Priyanka Gandhi said.

"But this country is run by the Constitution and will run only by the Constitution. The court has made it clear that 'bulldozer



injustice' is not acceptable," she said. Reacting to the development, Congress spokesperson Supriya Shrinete said the Supreme Court has made it clear that the country will be run by the Constitution and not by bulldozer and anarchy.

"The Supreme Court's assertion that bulldozer will not be allowed till guidelines are framed is a tight slap on the face of hate-filled CMs and leaders who were encouraging bulldozer justice by putting a lock on courts," she said in a video statement posted on X.

"Bulldozer has become a symbol of hate, violence and political vendetta. Bulldozer means fanning a storm of hatred against one community, one section. We welcome this verdict and hope that after this, UP Chief Minister (Yogi Adityanath) will not challenge the Supreme Court to keep his bulldozer running and there will be a ban on bulldozer justice of copycats in Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra," she said.

Shrinete asserted that bulldozer has no place in a civilised



society and is used by anarchic elements and goons, not elected chief ministers.

The top court's directive came over petitions alleging properties of those accused of crime were being illegally demolished in several states. Solicitor General Tushar Mehta told the bench that a "narrative" was being built over the demolition of properties. He said there was a petition before the apex court which alleged that because the person belonged to a particular religion, his property was demolished.

The bench also expressed its displeasure over the statements made after the September 2 hearing in the matter during which the apex court had said it proposes to lay down certain guidelines on the issue that would be enforceable across the country. "After that order, there have been statements that the bulldozer will continue... and it all depends in whose hands the steering is," the bench said. It said such statements were made and the court was refraining from saying anything further on that.

The 'meteoric' rise of Atishi in politics

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 17: From being an adviser to the Delhi government to becoming a key face of the cabinet in the absence of senior AAP leaders, Chief Minister-designate Atishi's ascent in the party and government is believed to be "phenomenal" and "meteoric".

Atishi, 43, who holds the highest number of portfolios in the Delhi government, will also hold the distinction of being only the third woman after Sushma Swaraj and Sheila Dikshit to become the Chief Minister of the national capital. She was unanimously chosen as Chief Minister designate during the legislature party meeting here Tuesday. In her first remarks after being chosen to replace Kejriwal, she thanked him and called him her elder brother.

Crediting the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), she said it was only possible here that a first-time politician could be given such a huge responsibility. Being chosen just months short of Delhi polls, Atishi has her task cut out. She will have to hold cabinet meetings to approve and fast track key projects and policies like the Mukhyamantri Mahila Samman Yojana and the Electric Vehicle 2.0 Policy among others.

Atishi was a founding member of AAP and played a pivotal role in shaping its policies, including as a key member of the 2013 Manifesto Drafting Committee. Known for her articulate advocacy, she has been a consistent voice for the party's principles.

She spent seven years in a Madhya Pradesh village, focusing on organic farming and progressive education. This experience played a crucial role in strengthening her dedication to political change, according to a party functionary. Even though Atishi joined AAP in 2013, she stayed in the background working as an adviser to the government on education-related policies and made a foray into



electoral politics only in 2019 when she contested the Lok Sabha polls from East Delhi against BJP's Gautam Gambhir; only to taste defeat.

Before venturing into active politics, Atishi had dropped her surname Marlena, a portmanteau of Marx and Lenin, since she wanted that her political affiliations should not be misconstrued. In the lead up to the 2019 elections, she had accused the BJP candidate of slandering her and distributing pamphlets containing "obscene" remarks about her, which had even led her to breaking down at a press conference.

In 2020, Atishi again contested elections, this time the Delhi Assembly polls, and was elected as an MLA from Kalkaji. She was inducted into the Cabinet at a time when the government was staring at a crisis in the aftermath of arrest of Manish Sisodia in February last year in the excise policy case.

While Sisodia and Kejriwal were in jail, Atishi not only took care of governance but also defended the government and the party whenever it was on a sticky wicket. Be it at the time of Delhi water crisis or when party's Rajya Sabha MP Swati Maliwal alleged assault by Kejriwal's aide Bibhav Kumar, she vehemently thwarted the criticism by the Opposition parties.

Flood-like situation in Bengal; two dead

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, Sept 17: Two persons have died as the flood-like situation in several districts in the southern part of West Bengal remained grim Tuesday following heavy rain and consequent rise in water discharge from barrages within a short span of time, a senior state official said.

Parts of Birbhum, Bankura, Howrah, Hooghly, North and South 24 Parganas, Purba and Paschim Medinipur, Paschim Bardhaman districts are inundated, the CM's Chief Advisor, Alapan Bandyopadhyay, said. While one person died due to wall collapse following rain in Purba Bardhaman district, another died of electrocution in Hooghly district since Monday.

Due to heavy rainfall, 1,33,750 Cusec of water was released from Durgapur Barrage, 40,000 cusec from Kangsabati dam, 2,00,000 cusec from Maithon dam and 50,000 cusec from the Panchet Dam in the last 24 hours. Bandyopadhyay said very heavy rainfall was reported at Baghmundi (134.20 mm) in Purulia district, while heavy rainfall was recorded at Bhairabanki (90.4 mm) and Mukutmanipur (90.6 mm) in Bankura, Kharidwar (106.4 mm) in Purulia, Gopiballapur (90 mm) of Jhargram districts since Monday.

The Rupnarayan, Dwarakeswar, Shilabati, Kaliaghai, Kalapaleswari rivers are flowing above the extreme danger level, he said. Disaster Relief Teams from the Centre and the state are working at Hooghly, Paschim Medinipur, South 24 Parganas, Howrah and some other places.

Bandyopadhyay said 17 state disaster relief teams are currently working in parts of Hooghly, Bankura, Paschim Medinipur, North 24 Parganas, Howrah and Purba and Purba Medinipur districts.

Modi to visit US from Sept 21 to 23

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 17: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will pay a three-day visit to the US beginning September 21 to attend the annual Quad Summit and address the 'Summit of the Future' at the UN General Assembly.

Modi will also address a gathering of the Indian community in New York September 22 during his three-day visit, the External Affairs Ministry said Tuesday.

The two key engagements of the Prime Minister during the visit are expected to be his participation at the Quad Summit and the 'Summit of the Future' US President Joe Biden will host the fourth 'Quad Leaders Summit' in Wilmington, Delaware, September 21. Besides Modi and Biden, it will be attended by Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and his Japanese counterpart Fumio Kishida.

It was India's turn to host the Quad Summit. But following a request from Washington, India agreed to host the Summit next year.

COURT CORNER

Land-for-jobs 'scam': HC grants bail to Lalu's aide

New Delhi: The Delhi High Court Tuesday granted bail to RJD chief Lalu Prasad's close aide Amit Kalyan in a money laundering case linked to the alleged land-for-jobs scam in the Indian Railways, while deprecating the "pick and choose" policy adopted by the Enforcement Directorate (ED). The court noted that despite there being no arrest of any other accused in the case and irrespective of the fact that Kalyan had joined the probe, he was arrested unceremoniously from the Indira Gandhi International Airport while he was travelling to Ranchi.

Excise policy: HC grants bail to Amit Arora, AS Dhall

New Delhi: The Delhi High Court Tuesday granted bail to businessmen Amit Arora and Amandeep Singh Dhall in a money laundering case related to the alleged excise policy scam, paving the way for the release of all the accused being prosecuted in the matter. In the main corruption case being probed by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), several key accused, including AAP chief Arvind Kejriwal, former Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia and BRS leader K Kavitha are on bail. "Bail granted," said Justice Neena Bansal Krishna while granting relief to the two accused, Arora and Dhall. According to the Enforcement Directorate (ED) and the CBI, irregularities were committed while modifying the Delhi Excise Policy 2021-22 and undue favours extended to licence holders.

SC rejects plea to relax advocates' dress code

New Delhi: The Supreme Court Tuesday refused to entertain a PIL seeking exemption for lawyers from wearing black coat and gown in courts during summer, saying there has to be some dress code and they cannot wear 'kurta-pajama', a traditional Indian outfit of a loose-fitting tunic. "Ultimately it is a matter of decorum. You should be properly attired. You have to wear something. You cannot argue in 'kurta pajama' or shorts and T-shirt also..." said a bench comprising Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud and Justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra.

2 YEARS OF PROJECT CHEETAH

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 17: Several promising births, fewer but painful losses, growing optimism and some criticism marked the second year of the internationally acclaimed Project Cheetah, which looks ahead with renewed hope and ambition amid many challenges.

As the grand initiative completes two years Tuesday, authorities are speeding up efforts to bring in a new batch of cheetahs from Africa to the Gandhisagar Wildlife Sanctuary, which will be their second home in India, and setting up a conservation breeding centre in the Bunni grasslands in Gujarat.

They also aim to establish a larger cheetah habitat, spanning the territorial divisions of

Neemuch (about 1,000 sq km) and Mandsaur (500 sq km) in Madhya Pradesh, along with the Bhainsrogarh Wildlife Sanctuary (208 sq km) and Chittorgarh (around 1,000 sq km) in Rajasthan.

In a major boost to the project, 13 cubs were born on Indian soil in the second year, though two of them did not survive. Namibian cheetah Aasha gave birth to three cubs in January. Another female from Namibia, Jwala, also had three cubs that month. Jwala had delivered four cubs last year, but only one survived. South African cheetah Gamine had six cubs in March, bringing the total number of cubs to 13 this year.

Two adult cheetahs, Namibian males Shaurya and Pawan, died this year. Pawan was the only



A military vehicle demonstrates during the India-USA Joint Military Exercise 'Yudh Abhyas 2024' in Rajasthan

TRIUMPHS, TRIALS AND THE ROAD AHEAD



cheetah roaming freely in Kuno National Park. Shaurya died of septicemia in January, and Pawan died in August due to "drowning". Experts say cheetahs generally do not drown. While authorities have been busy preparing the 368-sq km

ters, depending on prey availability.

Ravi Chellam, CEO of Metastring Foundation and Coordinator, Biodiversity Collaborative, said that according to global experience and Namibian laws and policies, it is not a good idea to release these cheetahs because of their extremely long period of captivity, especially the captive-born cubs.

Last month, the Cheetah Project Steering Committee decided to release the African cheetahs and their cubs, born in India, into the wild gradually after the monsoon ends in central India, which usually happens by the first week of

October. Cheetahs were initially released into the wild but were brought back to their enclosures in July-August last year after the deaths of three cheetahs

-- a female named Tbilisi (from Namibia) and two South African males, Tejas and Sooraj -- due to septicemia, an infection that occurs when bacteria enter the bloodstream and spread.

This condition arose from wounds under the cheetahs' thick winter coats on their backs and necks, which became infested with maggots and led to blood infections, according to the government's annual report on Project Cheetah.

The cheetahs are not truly living in the wild, despite spending two years on Indian soil. Cheetahs prefer long journeys, and they could be under severe stress

AFRICAN EXPERT

international

of the day quote

Why do you think China and Russia are so concerned about this partnership? Because we bring a way of life to the rest of the world, that is about inclusivity, about peace, about the peaceful resolution of disputes and it's about hearing everyone's voice in a society

RICHARD VERMA | DEPUTY SECRETARY OF STATE FOR MANAGEMENT AND RESOURCES, US

The UAE is not only our largest trade and investment partner in the Middle East, but it is always one of our most important strategic diplomatic and defence partners in the region

DON FARRELL | MINISTER FOR TRADE AND TOURISM, AUSTRALIA

Because I believe that stability is vital for economic growth, I don't think we're going to get economic growth if we don't stabilize the economy, we're going to do the really hard stuff now

KEIR STARMER | PM, UK

SHORT TAKES

ADB to lend Pak \$2bn annually

Islamabad: The Asian Development Bank has assured Pakistan it will provide \$2 billion annually in new loans to the cash-strapped country amid the government's inability to get cheaper credit due to its worsened ratings, according to a media report Tuesday. The assurance was given by the visiting Asian Development Bank (ADB) President Masatsugu Asakawa during his interaction with Pakistani authorities Monday.

Vietnam braces for another storm

Hanoi: Vietnam is preparing for more flooding with a tropical depression forecast to strengthen into a storm as it heads to its central coast, days after typhoon Yagi set off floods and landslides that killed more than 290 people in the north. With a long coast facing the South China Sea, the Southeast Asian country is prone to tropical storms that can cause large numbers of casualties.

Maldives-China FTA

Male: The Maldives Tuesday announced that the FTA with China is set to take effect January 1, 2025 and the bilateral trade is expected to increase to \$1 billion with its implementation. The Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with China will offer significant benefits to the Maldives, including enhanced opportunities for exporting various goods and providing additional services, Maldives' Minister of Economic Development and Trade Mohamed Saeed told



Everything that we do to support Ukraine also means fostering stabilisation with regards to Moldova. It is clear what the greatest concern of the people here is: that if Ukraine falls, Moldova is the next country in line

ANNALENA BAERBOCK | FOREIGN MINISTER, GERMANY

BOOKER PRIZE 2024

The Booker Prize for fiction shortlist for 2024 featured the largest-ever number of women authors in its 55-year history as well as its first Dutch author



Hezbollah hit by exploding pager

AT LEAST NINE PEOPLE WERE KILLED AND DOZENS OF PEOPLE WERE WOUNDED IN BEIRUT'S SUBURBS AND OTHER PARTS OF LEBANON AFTER THEIR HANDHELD PAGERS EXPLODED

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Beirut, Sept 17: Pagers used by hundreds of members of the militant group Hezbollah exploded near simultaneously in Lebanon and Syria Tuesday, killing at least nine people, including an 8-year-old girl, and wounding several thousand, officials said. They blamed Israel in what appeared to be a sophisticated, remote attack.

Among those wounded was Iran's ambassador to Lebanon. The mysterious incident came amid rising tensions between Israel and Iran-backed Hezbollah, which have exchanged fire across the Israel-Lebanon border since the October 7 attack by Hamas that sparked the war in Gaza.

The pagers that exploded had been newly acquired by Hezbollah after the group's leader ordered members to stop using cell phones, warning they could be tracked by Israeli intelligence. A Hezbollah official told The Associated Press the pagers were a new brand the group had not used before.

At about 330 pm local time Tuesday, pagers started heating up and then exploding in the pockets and hands of those carrying them, particularly in a southern Beirut suburb and the Beqaa region of eastern Lebanon where Hezbollah has a strong presence, and in Damascus, where several Hezbollah mem-



The pagers that exploded had been newly acquired by Hezbollah after the group's leader warned they could be tracked by Israeli intelligence

bers were wounded, Lebanese security officials and a Hezbollah official said. The AP reached out to the Israeli military, which declined to comment. The explosions came hours after Israel's internal security agency said it had foiled an attempt by Hezbollah to kill a former senior Israeli security official using a planted explosive device that could be remotely detonated. It targeted an extraordinary

breadth of people with hundreds of small explosions, all at once, wherever the pager carrier happened to be, that left some maimed. Lebanon's health minister, Firas Abiad, said at least nine people were killed, including an 8-year-old girl, and 2,750 wounded, 200 of them critically, by the explosions. Most had injuries in the face, hand, or around the abdomen. Hezbollah said in a statement that two of its members were

HEZBOLLAH CALLS IT BIGGEST SECURITY BREACH IN WAR WITH ISRAEL. PAGERS ARE USED TO TRY TO AVOID ISRAELI DETECTION

AMID RUSSIAN BAN US PROBES CHINESE URANIUM IMPORTS



REUTERS

Washington, Sept 17: President Joe Biden's administration is probing a surge in imports of enriched uranium from China since late 2023 amid concerns the shipments are helping Moscow sidestep a US ban on imports of the power plant fuel from Russia, Reuters has learned.

US House lawmakers passed the ban on Russian enriched uranium in December 2023 as part of a US effort to disrupt President Vladimir Putin's ability to fund Russia's war on Ukraine.

That month, shipments of enriched uranium from China to the US shot to 242,990 kilograms, according to data from the US International Trade Commission. The imports are significant because from 2020 to 2022 China did not send any enriched uranium to the US.

In May this year, the month that Biden signed the ban, China again sent the US a large amount of uranium, this time totaling 123,894 kilograms. The US Department of Energy

“along with other relevant agencies is closely tracking imports from China to ensure the proper implementation of the recently enacted Prohibiting Russian Uranium Imports Act,” a department spokesperson said, a development that has not been previously reported.

US officials are watching the imports from China and other countries to “ensure they are not importing Russian uranium as part of a scheme to export material produced domestically that they would otherwise have used in their own reactors,” the spokesperson said.

There was no immediate response from the Chinese foreign ministry in Beijing to a request for comment.

Russia is the world's largest exporter of enriched uranium. Imports to the US from Russia through July this year stood at 313,050 kilograms, down 30% from last year. The ban allows some Russian imports to continue until 2028 if there are supply concerns.

Any circumvention of the ban could undermine the US effort to eventually eliminate dependence on Russian fuel for its nuclear power industry, the biggest in the world. It could also weaken the Biden administration's attempts to jumpstart a domestic uranium supply chain, as the ban unlocked \$2.72 billion in public funds to do so.

Bangladesh Opposition demands new election



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dhaka, Sept 17: Thousands of activists and leaders of the Opposition Bangladesh Nationalist Party Tuesday rallied in the nation's capital to demand a democratic transition through an election as an interim government has yet to outline a timeframe for new voting.

The supporters gathered in front of Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) headquarters in Dhaka, where they chanted slogans demanding a new election. The interim government headed by Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus has rolled out a number of plans to reform various sectors of the country, from the Election Commission to financial institutions. But major political parties, including the BNP, which is headed by former Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, want the new election sometime soon.

Yunus took the helm after former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina fled the country during a mass uprising last month, ending a 15-year spell in power. The

protests began in July and morphed into an anti-government movement.

Hasina has been living in India since. In his recent speeches, Yunus hasn't outlined when a new national election would be held and said they would stay in power as long as the people want them to stay.

A team of newspaper editors recently said that Yunus should complete crucial reforms first and stay in power for at least two years.

The BNP initially demanded an election in three months, but later said it wants to allow the interim government time for reforms. The country's main Islamist Jamaat-e-Islami party, which was once officially an alliance partner under Zia's party, also wants to give the Yunus-led government more time before an election.

Tarique Rahman, heir apparent to Zia and the BNP's acting chairman, spoke online from London where he has been living in exile since 2008. He said Tuesday that his party supported the interim government's plans for reforms, but such changes would only be sustained if the people have their say in the process.

He didn't specify when a new election should be held, but said any reforms must be endorsed in the next Parliament.



People watch artists performs a fire kettle show during the Mid-Autumn Festival at a night market in Beijing

SNIPPETS

Meta bans Russia state media outlets

LONDON: Meta said it's banning Russia state media organisation from its social media platforms, alleging that the outlets used deceptive tactics to amplify Moscow's propaganda. The announcement drew a rebuke from the Kremlin Tuesday. The company, which owns Facebook, WhatsApp and Instagram, said late Monday that it will roll out the ban over the next few days in an escalation of its efforts to counter Russia's covert influence operations. “After careful consideration, we expanded our ongoing enforcement against Russian state media outlets Rossiya Segodnya, RT and other related entities are now banned from our apps globally for foreign interference activity”, Meta said in a prepared statement. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov lashed out, saying that “such selective actions against Russian media are unacceptable,” and that “Meta with these actions are discrediting themselves.”



Venezuela ramps up repression after disputed vote

CARACAS: President Nicolas Maduro's government escalated repressive tactics to crush peaceful protests and keep power after Venezuela's disputed election in July, a UN report said Tuesday. Electoral authorities awarded the vote to Maduro, without showing all tallies, but the Opposition said its candidate Edmundo Gonzalez won by a landslide with counts proving that. The UN fact-finding mission, which interviewed several hundred people remotely or in third countries as it is denied access to Venezuela, said authorities tried to dismantle the Opposition, block independent information, and stop protests. “We are facing a systematic, coordinated and deliberate repression by the Venezuelan government, which responds by a conscious plan to silence any form of dissent,” mission head Marta Valinas told journalists in Geneva.



Palestinian poll finds big drop in support for Oct 7 attack

THE POLL, CONDUCTED IN EARLY SEPTEMBER BY THE PALESTINIAN CENTER FOR POLICY AND SURVEY RESEARCH, FOUND THAT 57% OF PEOPLE SURVEYED IN THE GAZA STRIP SAID THE DECISION TO LAUNCH THE OFFENSIVE WAS INCORRECT, WHILE 39% SAID IT WAS CORRECT

REUTERS

Ramallah, Sept 17: A majority of Gazans believe Hamas' decision to launch the October 7 attack on Israel was incorrect, according to a poll published Tuesday pointing to a big drop in backing for the assault that prompted Israel's devastating Gaza offensive.

The poll, conducted in early September by the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research (PSR), found that 57% of people surveyed in the Gaza Strip said the decision to launch the offensive was incorrect, while 39% said it was correct.

It marked the first time since October 7 that a PSR poll found a majority of Gazan respondents

judging the decision as incorrect. It was accompanied by a drop in support for the attack in the West Bank, though a majority of 64% of respondents there still thought it was the correct decision, the poll found.

PSR's previous poll, conducted in June, showed that 57% of respondents in Gaza thought the decision to be correct.

More than 41,000 Palestinians have been killed by the Israeli military offensive that has laid waste to the Gaza Strip since last October, according to the Gaza health ministry.

Israel launched its assault after the unprecedented Hamas raid which killed 1,200 people and resulted in another 250 being abducted, according to Israeli tallies.



PSR said it surveyed 1,200 people face-to-face, 790 of them in the West Bank and 410 in Gaza, with a 3.5% margin of error.

PSR polls since the October 7 attack have consistently shown a majority of respondents in

both Gaza and the West Bank to believe the attack was a correct decision, with support generally greater in the West Bank than Gaza.

PSR said the poll released Tuesday marked the first time

since October 7 that its findings had shown simultaneously in the West Bank and Gaza a significant drop in the favorability of the attack and in expectations that Hamas will win the current war.

Overall, the poll found a majority of 54% of respondents in Gaza and the West Bank thought the decision was correct.

In August, the Israeli military accused Hamas of mounting an effort to falsify the results of PSR polls to falsely show support for Hamas and October 7, though the military said there was no evidence of PSR cooperating with Hamas.

PSR said it had taken the allegation seriously and investigated it. PSR said Tuesday its analysis of the data did not flag

any inconsistencies that would arise when data is arbitrarily altered, and that a review of quality control measures “convinced us that no data manipulation took place”.

Support for October 7 did not necessarily mean support for Hamas or killings or atrocities against civilians, PSR said, adding that “almost 90% of the public believes Hamas men did not commit the atrocities depicted in videos taken on that day”.

The poll showed a drop in the number of respondents in Gaza who said they support Hamas to 35% from 38%. But the Islamist movement remained more popular than Fatah, led by President Mahmoud Abbas, in both in Gaza and the West Bank.

Frenchman accused of mass abuse of wife admits charges

REUTERS

Paris, Sept 17: Dominique Pelicot, the Frenchman accused of drugging his wife and recruiting dozens of strangers to rape her over nearly a decade, Tuesday admitted the various charges he faces and begged his family's forgiveness, French media reported.

Dominique Pelicot had been due to testify last week in a case that has shocked France, but his appearance was delayed due to health issues. He appeared in court with a cane.

“I admit to the charges in their entirety,” Dominique Pelicot, 71, was cited as saying by BFM TV, whose reporter was present in the courthouse.

“I am a rapist just like all the others in this room. I ask my wife, my children, my grandchildren to accept my apologies. I regret what I did. I ask for your forgiveness, even if it is not forgivable,” he said, according to French media.

Pelicot faces charges including rape, gang rape and various privacy breaches by recording and disseminating sexual images.

He told the courtroom he had had a difficult upbringing and had been a victim of rape himself. At times he cried, according to French media.

His former wife, Gisele Pelicot, 72, who was in the courtroom during his appearance on the stand, also spoke, according to French media, saying:

“For 50 years, I lived with a man who I would never have imagined was capable of these acts of rape.”

During a break in proceedings, Dominique Pelicot's lawyer Beatrice Zavarro told reporters “All of the facts will be examined with all of the accused, and everyone will form their own opinion.”

Prosecutors have said Dominique Pelicot, who was initially arrested after trying to film up a woman's skirt, offered sex with his wife on a website called Coco and filmed the abuse. Investigators found 300 photographs and a video of the acts, according to a court document.

In addition to Dominique Pelicot, 50 other men, currently aged 26 to 73, are also on trial on rape charges in the southern city of Avignon.

MASS RAPE TRIAL

of the day quote

The ongoing international trade disruptions along with drop in crude and metal prices have also played key role in bringing down the value of exports. Some of the exporters have diverted to the domestic market as profitability in exports have taken a hit with sharp rise in international freight (both ship and air)

AJAY SRIVASTAVA | GTRI FOUNDER

By the end of this year we plan to expand our sales network to around 170 outlets and next year we plan to take it beyond 200 dealerships

SUMET NARANG | BAJAJ AUTO PRESIDENT
PRO BIKING BUSINESS UNIT

Swiggy works with nearly 4 lakh delivery partners across India. To empower this group, we launched Project Next under our Swiggy Skills initiative. This program helps delivery partners transition from "blue collar" to "white collar" workers

ROHIT KAPOOR | SWIGGY FOOD
MARKETPLACE CEO

SHORT TAKES

Lenovo to make AI servers in India

Bangalore: PC maker Lenovo India will start manufacturing 50,000 GPU-based AI servers in India next year, the company said Tuesday. Besides this, Lenovo announced setting up its fourth largest research and development centre in Bangalore. Lenovo India Managing Director Shailendra Katyal said that the company will make servers locally and also export them from its manufacturing unit in Puducherry. "Lenovo will make 50,000 servers annually. The production will start next year. It will be manufactured at our Pondicherry facility not only for India but it will also be exported from India," Katyal said. Lenovo India is among the companies that have been selected for the ₹17,000-crore IT hardware production-linked incentive scheme.

Infosys ties up with Metro Bank

New Delhi: Indian IT major Infosys Tuesday said it has entered into a long-term collaboration with British community bank Metro Bank to digitise the bank's operations. The collaboration will utilise Infosys Topaz, the firm's AI-first offerings, to enhance Metro Bank's digital capabilities, improve automation, refine data, and embed further AI capabilities. This will assist the bank in increasing efficiency and saving costs, a regulatory filing said. "At the end of this transformation, we will be a very different business, but the true essence of Metro Bank will remain the same -- a high-quality service organisation putting customers centre-stage," Metro Bank CEO Daniel Frumkin said.

Panacea Biotec, Sanofi settle suit

New Delhi: Panacea Biotec Tuesday said it has reached a settlement agreement with Sanofi Healthcare India over patent infringement litigation for a fully liquid hexavalent vaccine, EasySix. Under the terms of settlement agreement, Sanofi has agreed that at present, it would not directly or indirectly commercially launch its fully liquid hexavalent vaccine 'Shan6' in India, Panacea Biotec said in a regulatory filing. Further, Sanofi will also withdraw oppositions against the amendment application filed against Panacea Biotec's patent 'IN272351' on hexavalent vaccine before the Indian Patent Office, it added.



We should be aspiring to go beyond. We should be aspiring to have our own silicon valley

PIYUSH GOYAL | COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY MINISTER

ZINC DEMAND TO GO UP BY 2030: IZA

Zinc demand in India is likely to witness a significant increase by 2030 on the back of emerging sectors like green energy and battery technology, the International Zinc Association said Tuesday. IZA is of the view that energy storage solutions are expected to see a seven-fold rise over the next five years.



Trade deficit widens to 10-month high

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 17: India's exports registered a steepest decline in 13-month falling 9.3 per cent in August to USD 34.71 billion due to global economic uncertainties, while the trade deficit soared to a 10-month of USD 29.65 billion.

According to the government data released Tuesday, imports increased by 3.3 per cent to USD 64.36 billion, which is a record high, due to a significant jump in the inbound shipments of gold and silver.

While gold imports more than doubled to USD 10.06 billion in August from USD 4.93 billion in the same month last year, silver imports swelled to USD 727 million in the month under review from USD 159 million in August 2023.

Due to a decline in petroleum prices, crude oil imports dipped by 32.38 per cent to USD 11 billion. The dip in prices has also impacted the merchandise exports.

The trade deficit, or the gap between imports and exports, in October 2023 was USD 30.43 billion. The merchandise exports in July last year contracted by over 10 per cent.

India's merchandise exports dipped by 1.5 per cent in July.

Exports during April-August this fiscal increased 1.14 per cent to USD 178.68 billion, and imports grew 7 per cent to USD 295.32 billion.



Merchandise trade deficit during April-August 2024 was USD 116.64 billion compared to USD 99.16 billion during April-August 2023.

Briefing the media on data, Commerce Secretary Sunil Barthwal said that in the current global situation, exports is a huge challenge.

Reasons like slowdown in China and continued recession in the EU and the US too are impacting the exports; dipping oil prices and rise in transportation cost due to the Red Sea crisis are hurting the shipments.

"There are a lot of challenges in trade," Barthwal told reporters here.

However, he added that despite these issues India's exports during the first five months of this fiscal have registered a positive growth.

Exports of petroleum prod-

ucts declined by 37.56 per cent to USD 5.95 billion during the month.

To further push the shipments of goods, the commerce ministry is focusing on exploring new markets in regions like Africa.

Besides, he said, 12 champion services sectors have been identified such as education, health care, shipping, and transportation, to push their shipments as they hold huge opportunities.

"We are focusing on these sectors. If we have to reach the USD 2 trillion exports target of goods and services, 50 per cent will be coming from the services sector," he said, adding that these sectors are not impacted by global issues.

"Despite dark clouds, India is a bright spot," the secretary said.

When asked about the high trade deficit, he said it is not a

matter of concern for an emerging economy like India.

He explained that at one point in time, China also maintained larger trade deficits. "There is a huge consumption demand (in India) which is coming from an economy which is growing at double the rate at which the world economy is growing..."

"Once you join the global value chains and it gives you forward and backward linkages, you have to import certain things in order to export," he said.

The other export sectors, which have recorded negative growth during the month, include rice, oil meals, marine products, iron ore, and gems and jewellery.

However, electronic goods, pharma and engineering exports rose 7.85 per cent, 4.67 per cent and 4.36 per cent, respectively, in August.

Wholesale inflation falls to 1.31 per cent in Aug

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 17: Wholesale inflation fell for the second consecutive month to 1.31 per cent in August due to cheaper vegetables, food and fuel, government data released Tuesday showed.

The wholesale price index (WPI) based inflation was 2.04 per cent in July. It was (-) 0.46 per cent in August last year.

"Positive rate of inflation in August 2024 is primarily due to increase in prices of food articles, processed food products, other manufacturing, manufacture of textiles and manufacture of machinery & equipment etc," the industry ministry said in a statement.

As per the data, inflation in food items was 3.11 per cent in August against 3.45 per cent in July. This was led by declining prices of vegetables, which recorded a deflation of 10.01 per cent in August compared to 8.93 per cent in July.

Inflation in potatoes and onions continued to be high at 77.96 per cent and 65.75 per cent in August. The fuel and power category witnessed deflation of 0.67 per cent in August against inflation of 1.72 per cent in July.

Data released last week showed retail inflation was at 3.65 per cent in August on higher prices of vegetables.



This was higher than 3.60 per cent in July.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI), which mainly takes into account retail inflation while framing monetary policy, kept the benchmark interest rate or repo rate unchanged for the ninth consecutive time in August at 6.5 per cent.

India's manufacturing companies have gained after a fall in global commodity prices. Manufactured product prices increased 1.22% year-on-year against a 1.58% rise in the previous month. Fuel and power prices fell 0.67% on-year compared with a 1.72% increase in July, data showed.

Global benchmark Brent crude prices have fallen to below \$75 a barrel from over \$92 a barrel in April, helping major importers like India.

Gold imports doubled to \$10.06bn in August

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 17: Gold imports more than doubled in August to a record high of USD 10.06 billion, mainly on account of a drastic cut in customs duty and ongoing festive demand, according to the Commerce Ministry data.

Gold imports stood at USD 4.93 billion in August 2023.

On record high imports, Commerce Secretary Sunil Barthwal said that the tariff rates on gold have been reduced drastically so that smuggling and other activities can come down.

"And this is the time when jewellers start stocking for their inventories to be sold in the festive season," he told reporters. In the Budget, the government slashed the duty from 15 per cent to 6 per cent.

India's gold imports, which have a bearing on the country's current account deficit (CAD), dipped by 4.23 per cent to USD 12.64 billion during April-July 2024-25.

In 2023-24, India's gold imports surged by 30 per cent to USD 45.54 billion.

Switzerland is the largest source of gold imports, with about 40 per cent share, followed by the UAE (over 16 per cent) and South Africa (about 10 per cent).

The precious metal accounts for over 5 per cent of the country's total imports.

The jump in gold imports pushed the country's trade deficit (difference between imports and exports) to USD 29.65 billion in August.



India is the world's second-biggest gold consumer after China. The imports mainly take care of the demand by the jewellery industry.

India recorded a current account surplus of USD 5.7 billion or 0.6 per cent of GDP in the March quarter. For FY24, the current account deficit narrowed to USD 23.2 billion or 0.7 per cent of GDP against USD 67 billion or 2 per cent of GDP in FY23.

A current account deficit occurs when the value of goods and services imported and other payments exceeds the value of the export of goods and services and other receipts by a country in a particular period.

India is seeking review of certain provisions of the free trade agreement with the UAE, which came into force on May 1, 2022.

The review assumes significance as experts have raised serious concerns over the spurt in imports of precious metals from the UAE under the trade agreement.

Seeking an urgent review of the pact, think tank Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI) has stated that the India-UAE CEPA allows unlimited imports of gold, silver, platinum, and diamonds from the UAE into India with zero tariffs in the coming years.

Labour ministry to move Cabinet note on ELI schemes

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 17: Union Labour Minister Mansukh Mandaviya Tuesday said the ministry will move a Cabinet note on the employment-linked incentive (ELI) scheme announced in the Union Budget 2024-25 in July.

The minister emphasised upon the importance of a robust mechanism to ensure that the benefits of the ELI Scheme reach the true beneficiaries.

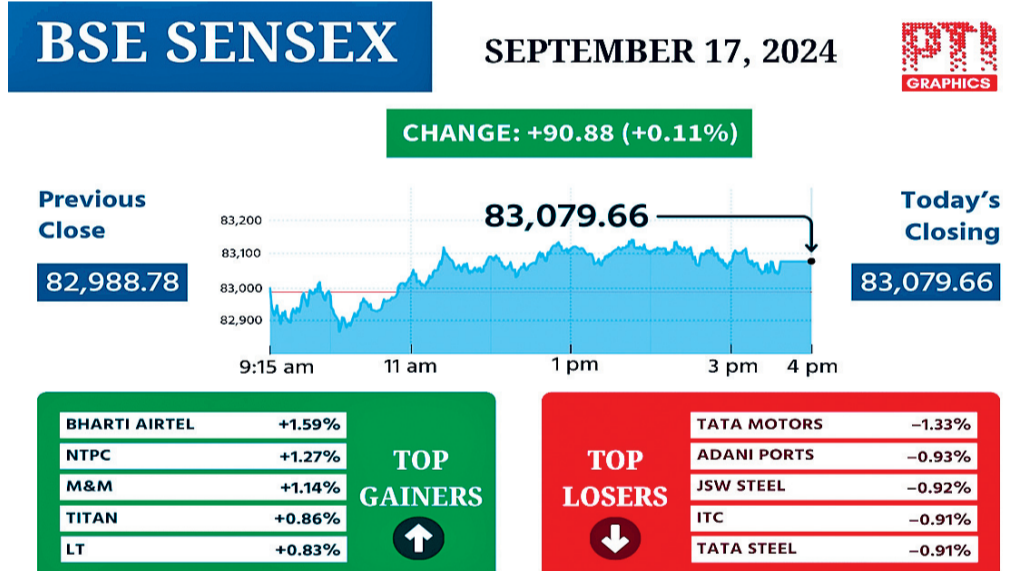
"The ministry is finalising a Cabinet note on ELI scheme and it will be soon placed before the Cabinet for approval," he told reporters here while giving a report card of the first 100 days of the Modi 3.0 government.

The ELI Scheme aims to create over 2 crore jobs in the country in a period of two years. This will significantly contribute to increasing employment opportunities and enhancing livelihood.

Three schemes for 'Employment Linked Incentive' were announced in Union Budget 2024-25 as part of the Prime Minister's package of five schemes and initiatives to facilitate employment, skilling and other opportunities for 4.1 crore youth over a 5-year period with a central outlay of ₹2 lakh crore.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had announced in the Union Budget that the government will launch three employment-linked schemes based on enrolment in Employees' Provident Fund Organization (EPFO).

Sensex closes above 83,000 for first time



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Sept 17: Benchmark Sensex rose by nearly 91 points to close at a fresh lifetime high while Nifty settled above the 25,400 level for the first time in a range-bound trade Tuesday amid firm global trends ahead of the much-awaited US Fed's decision on interest rates.

Extending its record-setting spree for the second day, the 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 90.88 points or 0.11 per cent to settle at a lifetime high of 83,079.66. The key index settled above the 83,000 level for the first time. During the day, it rose by 163.63 points or 0.19 per cent to 83,152.41.

The NSE Nifty gained 34.80 points or 0.14 per cent to settle above 25,400 level for the first time at 25,418.55 - its record closing high.

Among 30 Sensex firms, Bharti Airtel, NTPC, Mahindra & Mahindra, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Titan, Larsen & Toubro, ICICI

Bank, Bajaj Finance, Hindustan Unilever and Reliance Industries were the biggest gainers.

Tata Motors, Tata Steel, Adani Ports, JSW Steel, ITC and Asian Paints were the biggest laggards.

"The Indian market exhibited a subtle positive momentum, driven by the anticipation of a rate cut cycle by the US FED. Although a 25-bps cut is largely factored in, the market remains attuned to the FED's comments on the health of the economy and the future trajectory of rate cuts," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services.

After a flat opening, the Nifty moved within a narrow range with realty and auto shares witnessing gains while metal and pharma ended in the red, Ajit Mishra - SVP, Research, Religare Broking Ltd said.

"Range-bound session continued for a second straight session ahead of key US Fed policy meet decision Wednesday. Also,

investor participation was thin on account of Anant Chaturdashi, and hence buying was seen in select frontline stocks," Prashanth Tapse, Senior VP (Research), Mehta Equities Ltd, said.

Besides rate cut hopes, the Fed chief's comment on the US economy and inflation will be key things to look for as it will give some indication of the future rate cut prospects, Tapse added.

In the broader market, the BSE smallcap gauge declined 0.13 per cent and midcap index edged lower by 0.08 per cent.

Among the indices, realty climbed 0.64 per cent, telecommunication (0.46 per cent), utilities (0.44 per cent), teck (0.34 per cent), auto (0.33 per cent) and IT (0.11 per cent).

Commodities, industrials, capital goods, metal and services were the laggards.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude dipped 0.25 per cent to USD 72.52 a barrel.

Instagram rolling out teen accounts with parental controls

REUTERS

San Francisco, Sept 17: Meta Platforms is rolling out enhanced privacy and parental controls for Instagram accounts of users under 18 in a significant overhaul aimed at addressing growing concerns around the negative effects of social media.

Meta will port all designated Instagram accounts automatically to "Teen Accounts," which will be private accounts by default, the company said Tuesday.

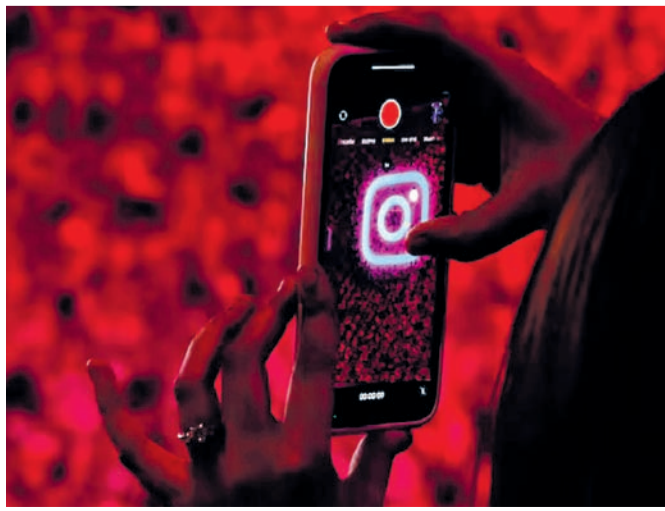
Users of such accounts can only be messaged and tagged by accounts they follow or are already connected to, while sensitive content settings will be

dialled to the most restrictive available.

Users under 16 can change the default settings only with a parent's permission. Parents will also get a suite of settings to monitor who their children are engaging with and limit their use of the app.

Several studies have linked social media use to higher levels of depression, anxiety and learning disabilities, particularly in young users.

Meta, ByteDance's TikTok and Google's YouTube already face hundreds of lawsuits filed on behalf of children and school districts about the addictive nature of social media.



Last year, 33 US states including California and New York sued the company for misleading the public about the dangers of its platforms.

Top platforms, including Facebook, Instagram and TikTok, allow users who are 13 years of age and above to sign up.

Meta's move comes three years after it abandoned development on a version of the Instagram app meant for teenagers, after lawmakers and advocacy groups urged the company to drop it, citing safety concerns.

In July, the US Senate advanced two online safety bills - The Kids Online Safety Act and The Children and Teens' Online

Privacy Protection Act - that would force social media companies to take responsibility for how their platforms affect children and teens.

As part of the update, the under-18 Instagram users will be notified to close the app after 60 minutes each day. The accounts will also come with a default sleep mode that will silence notifications overnight.

Meta said it will place the identified users into teen accounts within 60 days in the US, the UK, Canada and Australia, and in the European Union later this year. Teens around the world will start to get teen accounts in January.

Dominant India retain ACT title

Men in Blue overcome stubborn Chinese resistance to register a record-extending fifth crown



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Hulunbair (China), Sept 17: A determined India claimed their fifth Asian Champions Trophy (ACT) title with a fighting 1-0 victory over hosts China here Tuesday. In the process India completed a display of absolute dominance in the tournament in which they won all their seven matches. Defender Jugraj Singh scored a rare field goal as the defending champions toiled hard before getting the better of their opponents.

It was not easy for Harmanpreet Singh-led India as they failed to break the Chinese defence in the first three quarters. Eventually, Jugraj broke the deadlock in the 51st minute to hand the Paris Olympics bronze medallists a win against a resolute Chinese side that were playing in only

their second international tournament final.

Before this, China's only appearance in the final of an international tournament was in 2006 Asian Games, where they finished second-best after losing 1-3 to Korea.

It was a keenly-contested battle between the two sides in the first two quarters, even though India had better scoring chances. The Chinese defended deep and troubled their rivals with brisk counter-attacks.

Raj Kumar Pal had the first shot at the goal for India but his effort was saved by Chinese goalkeeper Wang Weihao. Raj Kumar recovered quickly and earned India's first penalty corner in the 10th minute with some brilliant stick work. However, Harmanpreet was off target.

Two minutes later, Nilakanta Sharma saw a sharp save from

- India won all the seven games they played in the tournament
- Only 2nd final for China in international competition
- Harmanpreet Singh with 7 goals named player of the tournament
- HI announces ₹3 lakh each for players; ₹1.5 lakh for each support staff

Wang and then, the Chinese goalkeeper showed brilliant reflexes to deny Sukhjeet Singh after being fed by Jugraj. The script was the same in the second quarter with India enjoying most of the possession and China relying on counters.

In the 27th minute, Sukhjeet secured a penalty corner but Harmanpreet's attempt hit the post, as China did enough to

hold India goalless at half time. The nimble-footed Chinese came out with renewed vigour after the change of ends, mounting a series of attacks on the Indian citadel. However, the Indians defended very well. China secured their second penalty corner in the 38th minute, but could not convert.

The Chinese continued their aggressive intent, earning back-to-back penalty corners in the 40th minute but India goalkeeper Krishan Bahadur Pathak was alert under the bar.

It required a brilliant burst from Harmanpreet to finally break the deadlock. The in-form India captain sneaked into the Chinese circle with some fine stick work and neatly passed the ball to fellow defender Jugraj, who pushed it in past the opposition goalkeeper, as India heaved a sigh of relief.

Enjoy good rapport with new support staff: Rohit

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, Sept 17: India captain Rohit Sharma said Tuesday head coach Gautam Gambhir's style is different from his predecessor Rahul Dravid but insisted he shares a good rapport with the new appointee, and the rest of his fresh set of support staff. Gambhir, a two-time World Cup-winning former opener, took charge of the Indian team in July during a white ball tour to Sri Lanka.

"Obviously, Rahul bhai, Vikram Rathour (former batting coach) and Paras Mhambrey (former bowling coach) were a different team and it is only acceptable that the new support staff will bring different perspectives," Rohit said in the pre-series press conference here.

Rohit used his long association with Gambhir during the latter's playing days, and with Abhishek Nayar in the Mumbai dressing room to underline his comfortable working relation with them.

"It's a new (support) staff for sure, but I have known Gambhir and Nayar long enough. Every support staff has its operating style, and that's what we were expecting," Rohit stated.

"I have worked with different coaches over 17 years of my career, and it's vital to understand that all of them have a unique perspective (about cricket), and it's a must that you adjust with them," he added on his dynamics with the new head coach and the latter's team.

Talking about the upcoming series against Bangladesh, the Indian skipper asserted that there is no need to devise a new strategy. Bangladesh defeated Pakistan 2-0 in their first win over the latter in a Test series but Rohit did not read too much into it.

"Every team want to beat



Rohit Sharma speaks to the media in Chennai Tuesday, PTI PHOTO

India have played cricket against almost every top team in the world. So, there's no need to create a whole different strategy

ROHIT SHARMA

India. They take some pride in it. Let them have fun. Our job is to think about how to win the matches. We don't ponder about what the opponent team is thinking about us," said Rohit.

Rohit remarked that manag-

ing the workload of bowlers, particularly of the pacers, will remain a top priority for him as the season contains a total of 10 Tests, including a high-value Border-Gavaskar series against Australia from November.

"You want your best players to play all the games, but that's not always possible because there is so many matches. It is not only Test cricket, there is a T20 cricket happening in the middle of the Test series as well. So, you got to manage your bowlers around it. We have laid out some plans, as to how we are going to manage these bowlers," Rohit informed.

SHORT TAKES

First round exit for shuttler Rawat

Changzhou (China): Rising Indian shuttler Priyanshu Rajawat suffered a straight-game defeat to Canada's Brian Yang as he made an opening-round exit from the China Open here Tuesday. The 22-year-old Indian, who won the Orleans Masters last year, went down 13-21, 16-21 to his Canadian opponent in a 36-minute match. World No. 40 Kiran George is now the lone Indian challenger left in the men's singles.

23-member team for SAFF U-17 tourney

New Delhi: The India U-17 men's team head coach Ishfaq Ahmed named Tuesday a 23-member squad for the SAFF Championships which will be held in Bhutan. India will face Bangladesh (September 20) and Maldives (September 24) in Group A of the tournament. The semifinals will take place September 28, followed by the final September 30. All the matches will be played at the Changlimithang Stadium in Thimphu.

MLC franchise keen to recruit Anderson

London: Former England pacer James Anderson could return to T20 cricket after a decade following a Major League Cricket (MLC) team's interest in hiring his services for the upcoming 2025 season in the US. The 42-year-old, who retired from international cricket in July, has not played any white-ball cricket since 2019. His last T20 match was in the 2014, while his last T20 assignment for England was in 2009. However, "senior officials with at least one MLC team have had their interest pricked by Anderson's comments last month about a return to white-ball cricket", according to a 'BBC Sports' report.

Jamshedpur FC ride on Murray strike

Margao: Substitute Jordan Murray struck in added on time as Jamshedpur FC (JFC) rallied to prevail over FC Goa 2-1 in their ISL match here Tuesday. After FC Goa had taken the lead through Armando Sadiku's strike in the 45th minute, the visitors restored parity in the 74th minute with Javier Siverio hitting the back of the net. Then Murray produced a gem of a swerving shot to ensure full points for JFC

Chess teams continue winning run

GM ERIGAI SI LEADS THE CHARGE WITH HIS 6TH VICTORY ON THE TROT

AGENCIES

Budapest, Sept 17: World No.4 Grandmaster Arjun Erigaisi registered his sixth victory in as many games as the Indian team defeated Hungary in a match of the Chess Olympiad here late Monday night. Erigaisi scored over Russian-turned-Hungarian Sjugirov Sanan on what turned out to be a hard-fought day for the Indian men in the sixth round.

On the top board, D Gukesh played out an easy draw as black against top Hungarian Richard Rapport. Erigaisi won against Sanan while Praggnanandhaa decided to sign peace with former great Peter Leko. However, Vidit Gujrathi did the trick for India with a win over Benjamin Gledura.

It was India's sixth victory on the trot and made them sole leaders in the event as China were held to a draw by a spirited Vietnamese team that scored another great 2-2 result.

In the men's section the real breakthroughs for India came from the third and fourth boards.



GM Arjun Erigaisi during his match against Sjugirov Sanan PHOTO CHESS.COM

Erigaisi delivered a critical win playing with precision. He sacrificed a knight in the middle game, but in the process forced Sanan to give up his queen. After that it was one way traffic for the Indian.

In the women's section, Divya Deshmukh scored the much-needed victory over Elena Daniellian to help India gain an

early lead against Armenia. D Harika played out a draw with Lilit Mkrtchian on the first board while R Vaishali followed suit against Mariyam Mkrtchian.

With the team leading by a 2-1 margin, Tania Sachdev played it safe from a position of strength and played out a draw on the fourth board with Anna Sargasyan to help India win 2.5-1.5.

Sreejesh, Harmanpreet shortlisted for FIH awards

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Lausanne (Switzerland), Sept 17: India captain Harmanpreet Singh was nominated Tuesday for the 'Player of the Year' award by the FIH while the legendary PR Sreejesh will be in contention for 'Goalkeeper of the Year' honour. The International Hockey Federation (FIH) announced the names of the shortlisted candidates on its website.

Both Harmanpreet and Sreejesh played vital roles in India's splendid campaign in the Paris Olympics where the team finished with a bronze. Skipper Harmanpreet led from the front with 10 goals — most for any player in the tournament.

Harmanpreet will compete with Thierry Brinkman (the Netherlands), Joep de Mol (Netherlands), Hannes Müller (Germany) and Zach Wallace (England) for the award. Playing



in his last tournament for India, the venerable Sreejesh put forth resolute display of defence throughout the campaign, especially against Great Britain when the team were reduced to 10 men in the second quarter of the quarterfinals.

India beat Great Britain 4-2 in the penalty shootout to reach the semifinal and later on defeated Spain 2-1 to win the bronze medal contest.

Sreejesh has competition from Pirmin Blaak (the Netherlands), Luis Calzado (Spain), Jean-Paul Danneberg (Germany) and Tomas Santiago (Argentina).

Huge hike in women's T20 WC prize money

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dubai, Sept 17: In a landmark decision, the International Cricket Council (ICC) announced Tuesday equal prize money for men and women in World Cups, starting with next month's women's T20 showpiece, the purse for which has been hiked by a staggering 225 per cent to USD 7.95 million.

The winners of the women's T20 World Cup will walk away with USD 2.34 million from this fund, a 134 per cent increase on the USD one million awarded to Australian women when they clinched the title in South Africa in 2023, said the ICC in a statement.

"The Women's T20 World Cup 2024 will be the first ICC event where women will receive the same prize money as their male counterparts, marking a significant milestone in the sport's history," said the ICC in a release.

The runners-up at the showpiece event next month will get USD 1.17 million in comparison to the USD 5,00,000 South Africa received for reaching the final. The two losing semifinalists will earn USD 6,75,000 (up from USD 2,10,000 in 2023).

GOLD FOR LIFTERS SANTA, JYOSHNA



MINA SANTA JYOSHNA SABAR POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 17: Odia weightlifters Mina Santa and Jyoshna Sabar, both of whom are students of KISS, have won multiple medals at the 2024 Commonwealth Youth, Junior & Senior Weightlifting Championships at Fiji. The tournament which started Tuesday will end September 21. A total of 210 lifters from 25 countries are taking part in the tournament. Among the nations participating are India, England, Malaysia, Singapore, Wales, Canada and Sri Lanka. Santa, representing India

in the 55kg category has won three medals. She bagged two gold medals in the youth and junior segments while in the senior category she finished with a silver medal. In the senior category she lifted 180kg (81kg in snatch and 99kg in clean & jerk).

Sabar, in the 40kg division of the youth category, won the gold medal with a total lift of 123kg (58kg snatch and 65kg clean & jerk). Currently both Santa and Sabar train at the Odisha Tenvic Weightlifting HPC and are also a part of the national camp at SAI Patiala.

Players close to 'going on strike'

MAN CITY STAR SAYS IT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR FOOTBALLERS TO PLAY OVER 50 GAMES IN A SEASON

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Manchester, Sept 17: Manchester City midfielder Rodri has said top soccer players are close to going on a strike because of the number of games they are being forced to play. The Spain international said players are concerned about the way football is headed as more games are added to the calendar in competitions like the Champions League, which starts Tuesday.

Rodri was asked Tuesday if players might start refusing to play because of the calendar. "I think we are close to that," he said

in a news conference ahead of City's Champions League opener against Inter Milan Wednesday. "It's easy to understand. You ask any player, he will say the same - it's not the opinion of (just) Rodri or whoever. I think it's a general opinion of the players. If it keeps this way, it will be a moment when we have no

other option. It's something that worries us because we are the guys who suffer," the player said.

Rodri is expected to

start his first game for City this season when Inter visits Etihad Stadium, having been given an extended break by the club after winning the European Championships with Spain in July. Man City have two more games to play in the first stage of the Champions League and up to seven matches more in the Club World Cup, which is scheduled to take place in the United



States at the end of the domestic season.

Rodri said players can be expected to "perform at the highest level" if they play 40 to 50 games a season. Not 60 to 70 matches, a number Rodri might have to play if City go far in all of the competitions they participate.

Julian Alvarez, who played for City the past two seasons before moving to Atletico Madrid, was picked in 83 match-day squads last season.

Another City player, Phil Foden, played in 72.

"In my humble opinion, I think it is too much," Rodri said. "We have to take care of ourselves because we are the main characters of, let's say, this sport or this business. Not everything is money or marketing. It is also the quality of the show. If people want to see better football, we need to rest and feel refreshed before every game," the Spanish player added.